

## SALES BRISK AT RIVER DISTRICT DEVELOPMENT

CLAUDIA KWAN



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*Homes at Quartet are being built to LEED gold equivalency, with a heat pump system for energy efficiency, NEST thermostats, and a variety of eco-friendly materials.*



*Wesgroup's River District project Quartet is comprised of three concrete buildings: Encore, Opus and Chorus. Three-quarters of the homes were snapped up in just over a week of sales.*

By the time the Quartet phase of Wesgroup's River District masterplanned community is complete in three years, residents will have the best of all possible options, says Wesgroup senior sales manager Ivy Wu. That includes a complete community designed around

convenience, access to great amenities and an address in Vancouver.

To tell the story of the overall community first requires a little backtracking. Marketing for the first phase of the project — 1 Town Centre — began around this time last year. Demand was so high, it pushed up the sales timeline for 2 Town Centre and then 3 Town Centre. All three of those phases are sold out.

The flurry of activity for the three concrete buildings of Quartet (Encore, a highrise; Opus, a mid-rise; Chorus, a low-rise) has been equally impressive, with three-quarters of the homes snapped up in just over a week of sales.

"I was a little surprised," Wu acknowledges with a smile. "But I think it speaks to how hot the market is, and I'm happy people are realizing this is the best value in Vancouver."

The demographic mainly involves end users, and includes first-time homebuyers, young couples upsizing from smaller homes in other areas of the city who still want to live in Vancouver, and downsizers buying for themselves, or for grown children who they want to have living closer to them. Others are looking to shorten their commute to their workplaces in Vancouver from the suburbs. Wu says there are also Calgarians hoping to retire eventually to Vancouver, and using easy access to the airport to hop in and out in the meantime.

Different buyer groups are drawn to different types of homes, of course. The first-time homebuyers and professional couples are snapping up one-bedroom and two-bedroom units, while some of those moving up within the market are springing for twolevel stacked townhomes. With more than 900 square feet in the interiors of the large homes, huge decks make indoor-outdoor living a real possibility.

Homes in other buildings include access to private roof decks that vastly expand the amount of usable space

available. Downsizers cashing out of single-family homes in the neighbourhood have the budget for some of the larger homes, says Wu, with funds likely left over after the purchase.

**Project name:** Quartet

**Project size:** 109 homes in 18-storey concrete highrise; 121 homes in 10-storey concrete construction mid-rise; 28 homes in six storey concrete construction low-rise; 258 homes total

**Project location:** 8538 River District Crossing & Marine Way, Vancouver

**Residence size:** 560 — 1850 sq ft, 1 — 3 bed homes

**Prices:** from \$319,900

**Developer:** Wesgroup

**Architect:** Paul Goodwin, GBL Architects

**Interior design:** in house design

**Sales centre:** 8700 Kinross St, Vancouver (south of Marine Way)

**Hours:** noon — 5 p.m., daily

**Telephone:** 604-879-8830

**Website:** [www.riverdistrict.ca](http://www.riverdistrict.ca)

**Sales began:** late April

**Occupancy:** Summer 2019

## Offering convenience a priority



Kitchen counters at Quartet will be topped with quartz. The concierge will also take deliveries of groceries and store them in a cold locker for residents.

The homes are built to LEED gold equivalency, with a heat pump system for energy efficiency, NEST thermostats, and a variety of eco-friendly materials. Laminate floors, quartz countertops, and large-format tiles are intended to be both esthetically pleasing and easy to maintain.

Wu says offering convenience was a big priority. The concierge will go beyond standard package service by taking delivery of groceries. They will be stored in a cold locker until a resident can retrieve them, with the assistance of an access code text-messaged to their mobile device.

Transit is still a work in progress, she acknowledges, although there are promises of increased transit service for the River District, located just north of the Fraser River in South Vancouver, as well as promises of a new elementary school for the community.

When Quartet is finished in the summer of 2019, the fitness facility housed in 1 Town Centre will also be complete. Dubbed "Club Central," the 14,000-square-foot building will be for the exclusive use of residents of Town Centre and Quartet. It includes a gym, swimming pool, hot tub, sauna, steam room, yoga and dance studio, squash courts, and basketball court, as well as a children's activity area and social lounge for parties.

Residents can also head outside to a private park, community garden plots, a children's play area, or for a walk, jog, or cycle on paths along the Fraser River. A community centre a short stroll away offers a variety of fitness classes, and hosts social events like movie nights, knitting clubs, and the local farmer's market.

The central plaza of Town Centre is also expected to be a hub of activity. It actually guided the look and feel of the community.

"We wanted to make sure sunlight would be able to reach the plaza during evening hours for most of the year," says Paul Godwin, principal of GBL Architects. "The towers were pulled back, and the mid-rise buildings were stepped back with terracing. We capitalized on that by creating sky townhomes with really large sundecks with south orientation toward the river."

Godwin wanted to honour the industrial nature of the Fraser River with the buildings, and to avoid having the homes look too much like offerings elsewhere in the city; floor-to-ceiling glass encasing a building's exterior can read as too uniform. Instead, he employed a larger variety of materials, like corrugated metal panels, brick, painted concrete, and wooden accents. Steel posts supporting the canopies over the retail areas echo the pilings under wooden piers for the river.

Retail and office spaces will help create pedestrian activity around the plaza.

Plans are underway for a 5,000-square-foot grocery store, coffee shops, a wine store, dental office, drugstore and a designated spot for a daycare. Sales manager Wu says residents won't need to hop into their vehicles to pick up odds and ends.

With so much to offer, Wu believes it's no surprise purchasers are flocking to Quartet.