

Site

The Urban Capital Magazine

VOLUME 7 | DECEMBER 2017





This page: a close-up of the two-storey feature wall in Tableau's amenity lobby, as taken by Jose Uribe while under construction earlier this year

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Site Magazine

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On the cover

Jose Uribe photographs the undulating balconies of Urban Capital's close-to-completed Smart House

Letter

Welcome to the seventh edition of Site. This is Urban Capital's 20th anniversary, so in addition to our usual offerings—a review of our year and our work, as well as Condo 101, where we attempt to demystify what we do—this year we take a look at what makes Urban Capital tick. So urban blogger and repeat Site contributor Brandon Donnelly takes a look at what's behind our expansion across the country, while we also mine our archives for renderings from past projects (and how they compared to what we ultimately delivered), and some of the crazy things we've spent money on over the years. Having spent a good part of 2017 figuring out how to build the twisting 61 storey towers that make up M City's Phases 1 and 2, we also look at some of the technical issues we had to deal with.

2017 was another year of launches for us—principally the mammoth **M City** development, totaling 1,600 units, but also **Queensway Park**, **Kingsway by the River** and **Harris Square**, the final Phase of River City, all in Toronto, and Phase 2 of **Gorsebrook Park** in Halifax. As well, a number of buildings we launched in 2016 started construction, including **No 1 River Landing** in Saskatoon and Phase 1 of Gorsebrook Park in Halifax. Finally, we spent a good amount of time looking at new projects outside of Toronto (stay tuned for news of new developments in Montreal, Saskatoon and possibly Ottawa and Edmonton).

Enjoy our 2017 Site Magazine, once again designed in-house by **Lee Morgan**, and we look forward to seeing you again next year.

DAVID WEX

MARK REEVE

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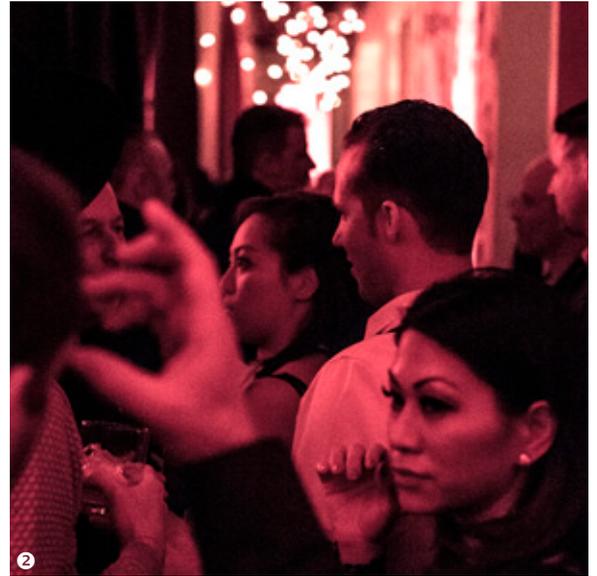
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A year in our life

TAYA COOK, UC's official chronicler—and Head of Development—looks back at 2017.

DECEMBER 15, 2016

Naughty or Nice #6

1 2 It was 6 pm. There was a whiteout outside, our caterer was stuck in a ditch and the uber surge reached mortgage payment heights. And just when we thought we'd be stuck having an intimate fête, the people arrived. Two hundred of them. Proving that come hell or high snow storm, a UC party is not to be missed.

MARCH 15, 2017

RC3 is tres chic

4 River City has received a lot of local design attention, but accolades from Europe have a certain *je ne sais quoi*. At the MIPIM Future Project Awards in Cannes, RC3 took home 1st runner up in the Tall Buildings category. This award, which recognizes exceptional architecture globally, may be our favourite yet.

MARCH 27-29, 2017

Closing time

We have a secret office ritual. One we equally look forward to, and dread. It starts with the song “Closing Time” being played in the office and is followed by hours (and subsequent days) of lawyer calls, bank calls and purchaser calls. It's the day that a project closes and all our buyers (except the inevitable stragglers) become official owners of their condos. This month we transferred ownership at both Glasshouse and Southport over two days, proving that *every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end*.



MARCH 22, 2017

M City launches...

🍷🍷 There's something about line ups that conjures up images of teenage girls waiting for the chance to see a pop star. Or in the case of M City, eager purchasers and brokers waiting for the chance at a condo. Arguably one of the most anticipated launches in the GTA this year, M City Phase 1 came bursting through the door to unprecedented fanfare.

APRIL 2017

...and then announces twins

🍷 One month after launching Phase 1, M City reveals Phase 2: the twin sister and perfect counterpoint to the wildly successful first building. This gorgeous pair of 61-storey towers twist and turn together over Mississauga City Centre, knocking everyone's socks off and achieving record sales in the process. To celebrate, we went back to the office and got working on Phase 3 (and 4 and 5).

APRIL 22, 2017

No. 1 River Landing follows in Saskatoon

🍷🍷 Sure, hundreds of agents lining up in Toronto is great, but lining up on a cold late-winter morning in Saskatoon is next level. With camping chairs and Tim's in hand, our prairie friends did it with Canadian style at our No. 1 River Landing second launch (where we added 4 new floors).

APRIL 26, 2017

River City Wins Big at the OAA

🍷 The Ontario Association of Architects bestowed a Design Excellence Award on River City, making it the first multi-residential project to receive OAA recognition in many years. But as a further surprise, we also took home the Lieutenant Governor's Award, the first ever for a multi-res building. Given the sheer number of architects working in this space, top prize was quite a coup.



MAY 29, 2017

More lines for QWP

2 If you're from downtown and happened to be driving along The Queensway this day, you may have wondered what the massive queue was about. On the other hand, if you're already in the know, it would be clear. The Queensway is on the brink of major change, and with a committed councillor, fantastic restaurants (Sushi Kaji anyone...) and a long established community and schools, we were happy to bring our urban style to the neighbourhood, with our launch of Queensway Park.

JUNE 13, 2017

K2 Comes to the Kingsway

4 Only months after launching the hugely successful first phase at Kingsway by the River, it was time to bring Phase 2 to this beautiful, storied Etobicoke neighbourhood. Mission accomplished. Construction on both phases is scheduled for early 2018.

JULY 13, 2017

20,000 people make us #1

5 When we launched our corporate Facebook page we wanted to be #1. With project updates, new launch info, design inspiration and industry musing, we actually reached top spot relatively quickly. Now with over 20,000 followers, we've reached another milestone. If you haven't already - come join the crowd!

AUGUST 3, 2017

Once every twenty years

1 In 2017, thanks to some timely Netflix documentaries, minimalism was in, and at our head office we took it to heart. In a short eight hours, 20 years worth of old paper files were pulled from the depths of storage and slated for a final trip to the shredder. Amongst the findings: newspaper clipping from Ottawa circa 2000, details on what blinds people selected in their condo over a decade ago, and a hilarious photo of David, Mark and CORE Architects' Deni Poletti (see #6 as proof).



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6



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SEPTEMBER 14, 2017

Start me up

We headed out east to celebrate two Gorsebrook Park starts in one eventful night: the start of construction of Phase 1, and the start of sales of Phase 2. To make the most of the beautiful Maritimes weather, we made a last minute decision to move the bar outside and had a somewhat impromptu party on the sales centre driveway. As our purchasers and neighbours joined us to celebrate, we were reminded that East Coast hospitality is the one to beat.

SEPTEMBER 19, 2017

River City wins again. And again. And again.

🏆 At the Toronto Urban Design Awards, River City Phase 2 took home an Award of Merit in the Tall Private Building in Context category. Then one month later River City Phases 1 and 2 won a Canada Green Building Award. Then in December it was RC3's turn, for a Canadian Architect award. Keep them coming.

SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

River Landing's Non-Ground Breaking Party

🔨🎉 It's odd to celebrate the start of construction when your building is well underway, but at River Landing that's the benefit of building on top of a newly constructed parking garage. So with our above-ground formwork as a backdrop, a who's who of Saskatoon celebrated the "start of construction", followed fittingly with a sprinkling of Saskatchewan snow.

NOVEMBER 2017

Urban Capital turns 20

🎵 The Macarena was the number one song, the Spice Girls were in their prime and while most of the UC staff were still in high school, Mark and David were starting their business. Who knew that over the next 20 years they would be responsible for over \$2 billion in development, and for re-shaping neighbourhoods across the country. It's kind of a big deal.

Naughty or Nice 2016

Every year Urban Capital puts on one of the best Christmas parties in the industry (or so we're told). For 2016 the theme was a naughty night during Prohibition. To reminisce, we decided to print a selection of our photo-booth shots. The concept for 2017, coming December 14th—the 90's, in honour of Urban Capital's 20th Anniversary.

THE 6TH ANNUAL NAUGHTY OR NICE PARTY

PROHIBITION **XXX**

December 15, 2016 • 6:00 pm onward • 17 Nelson Street, Toronto
Prohibition era attire encouraged (but not required)
RSVP by December 1st to info@urbancapital.ca • Food, drinks, music and dancing

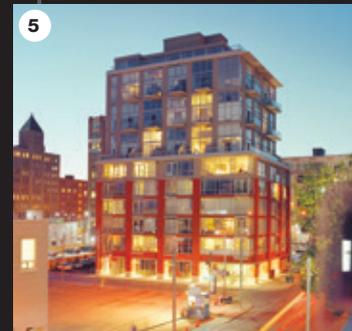
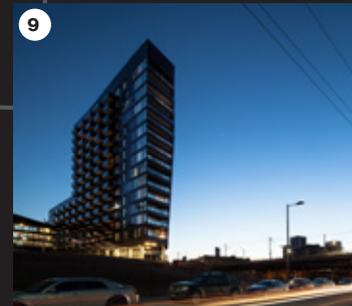
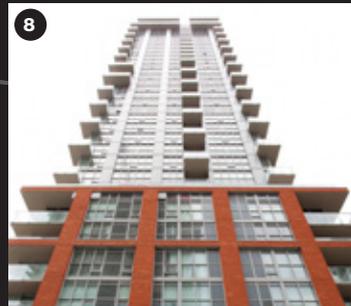


 URBAN CAPITAL





Urban Capital Portfolio 2017

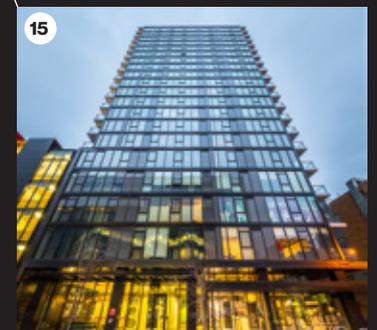


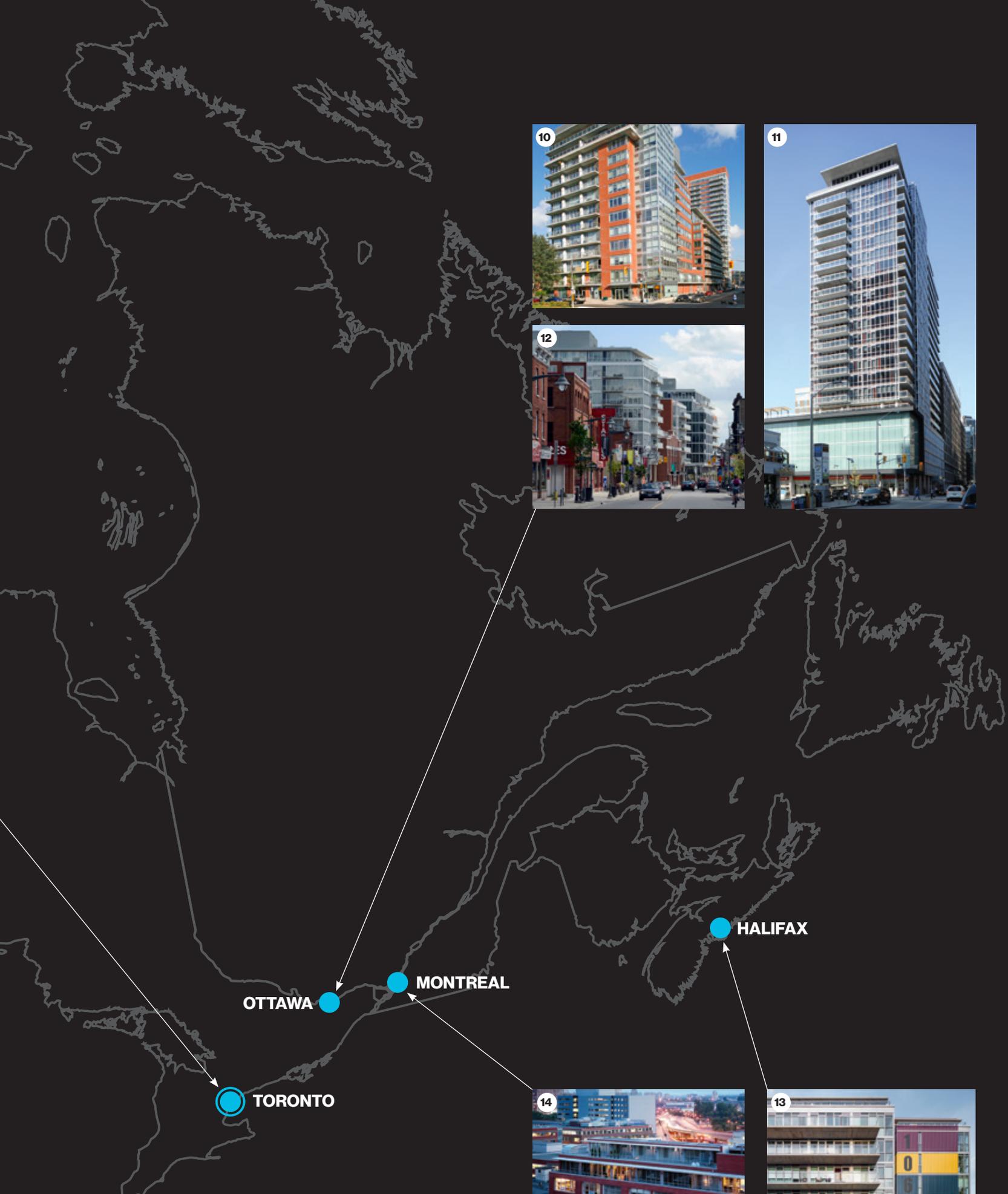
● SASKATOON

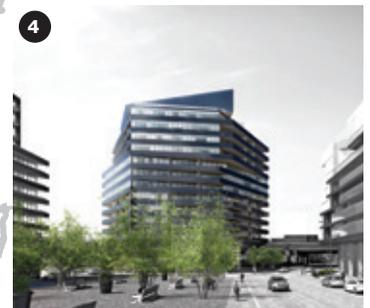
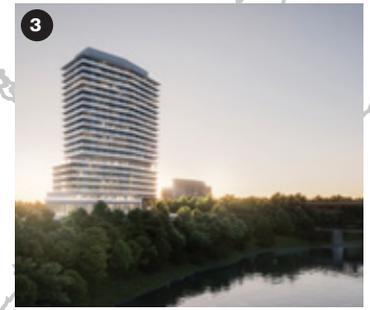
● WINNIPEG

Completed Projects

TORONTO 1. Camden Lofts, 2001 | 2. Trinity Bellwoods, 2014 | 3. Tableau, 2016
 4. Nicholas, 2015 | 5. Charlotte Lofts, 2002 | 6. River City 2, 2015 | 7. St. Andrew
 on the Green, 2008 | 8. Boutique, 2010 | 9. River City, 2013 | **OTTAWA** 10. East
 Market, 2007 | 11. Mondrian, 2012 | 12. Central, 2015 | **HALIFAX** 13. Southport,
 2016 | **MONTREAL** 14. McGill Ouest, 2008 | **WINNIPEG** 15. Glasshouse, 2016







 SASKATOON

 WINNIPEG

Current Projects

SASKATOON 1. No. 1 River Landing | **GTA** 2. RC3 | 3. Kingsway by the River | 4. Harris Square | 5. Queensway Park | 6. M City | 7. The Ravine | 8. Smart House | **HALIFAX** 9. Gorsebrook Park



COMPLETED 1999

Camden Lofts

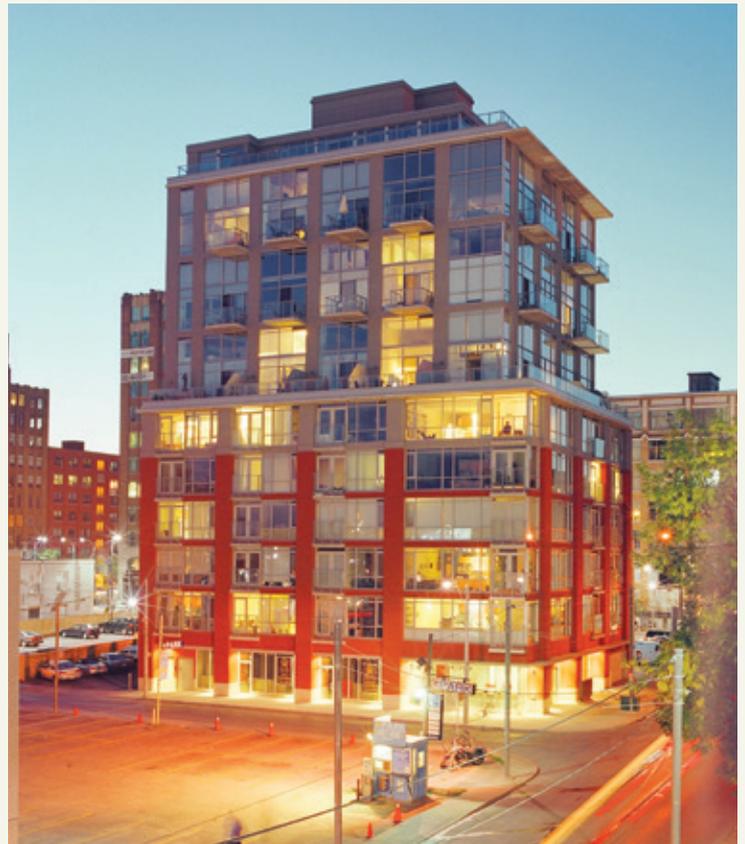
LOCATION King-Spadina, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** This is the building that started it all. Launched when residential development was not actually permitted in the area — the project required special city council approval — this seminal development created a precedent for the subsequent residential projects that ultimately redefined this part of the city. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 9-storey building containing 48 units. **ARCHITECTURE** Core Architects and Oleson Worland Architects. **INTERIOR DESIGN** Cecconi Simone. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Dundee Realty, Toronto.



COMPLETED 2002

Charlotte Lofts

LOCATION King-Spadina, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Urban Capital's second development in the King-Spadina area. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 13-storey building containing 66 units. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** Core Architects. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Chard Developments, Vancouver.

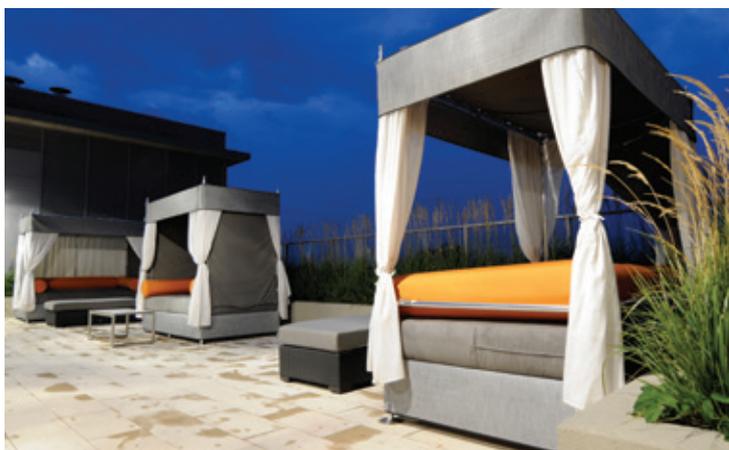
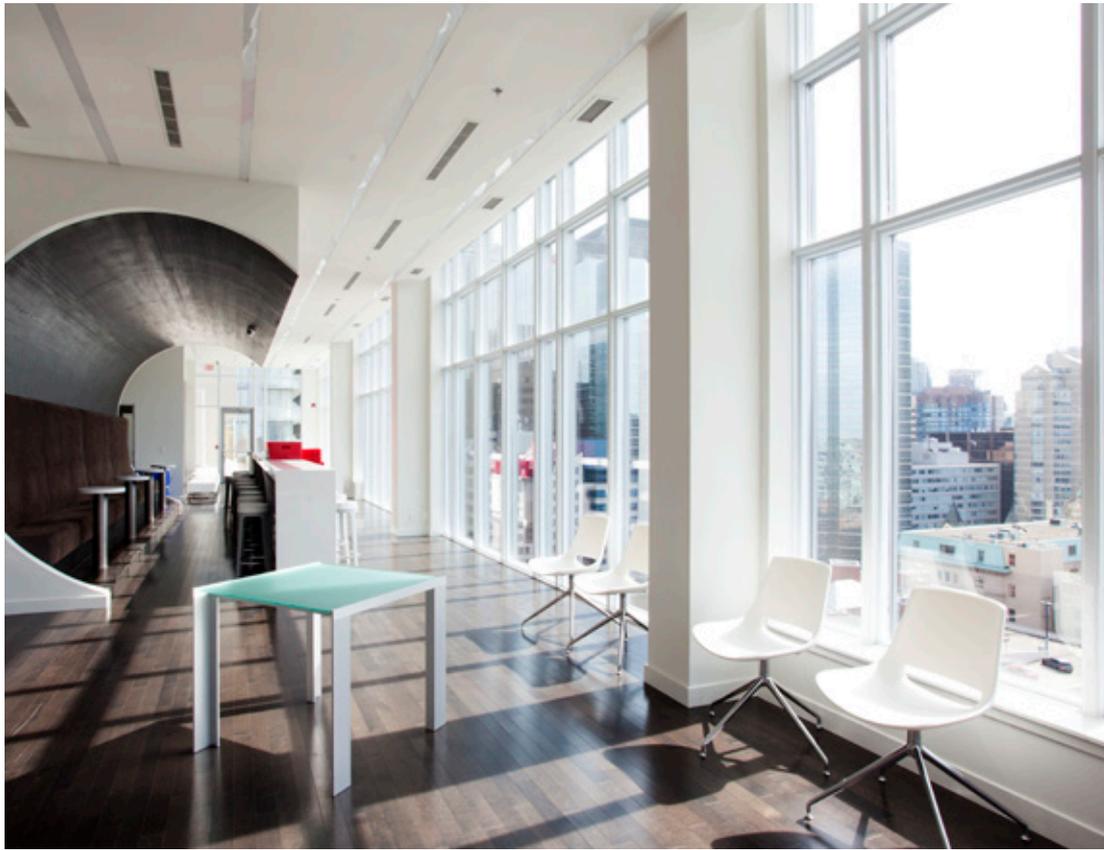




COMPLETED 2008

St. Andrew

LOCATION 9 Burnamthorpe Crescent, Etobicoke. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Luxury condominium **SIZE / PROGRAM** 9 floors, 106 units. St Andrew on the Green is a finely proportioned, nine storey terraced building located on a winding lane overlooking the Islington Golf Club in Toronto's Islington Village neighbourhood. **ARCHITECTURE** Turner Fleischer Architects **INTERIOR DESIGN** Bryan Patton Interior Design.



COMPLETED 2011

Boutique

LOCATION Entertainment District, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Two-phase urban condominium development at the nexus of the Entertainment and Financial Districts, offering a combination of condominium and boutique hotel-style amenities. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 35-storey tower and 16-storey mid-rise building containing a total of 637 units. **ARCHITECTURE** ZAS Architects and Core Architects. **INTERIOR DESIGNER** Cecconi Simone. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Malibu Investments, Toronto and Alit Developments, Tel Aviv.



COMPLETED 2012

Trinity Bellwoods

LOCATION Little Italy, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Contemporary freehold townhouse development. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 45 townhomes ranging in size from 1,900 to 2,650 square feet. **ARCHITECTURE** Richard Wengle Architects. **INTERIOR DESIGN** Cecconi Simone. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Shram Homes, Toronto.



COMPLETED 2013

Nicholas

LOCATION Yonge-Bloor, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Residential glass tower located on cobblestoned Nicholas Street, just south of Toronto's premier shopping district, and incorporating the heritage Planing Mill Building at its base. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 35 storey tower containing 308 units. **ARCHITECTURE** Core Architects. **INTERIOR DESIGN** Cecconi Simone. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Alit Developments, Tel Aviv.



COMPLETED 2016

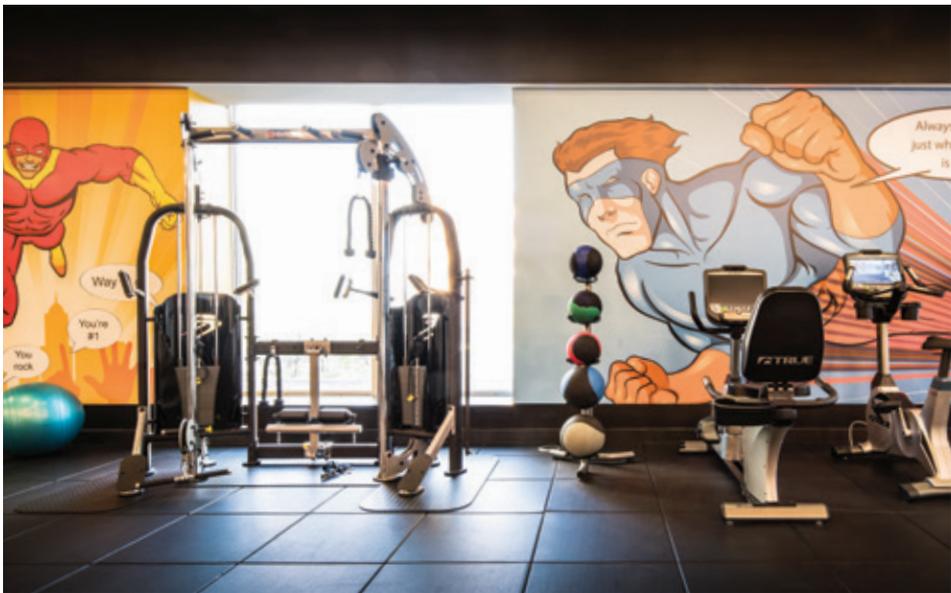
Tableau

LOCATION Entertainment District, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** 36 storey mixed-use development. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 410 residential suites, 25,000 square feet of office space, publicly accessible plaza with 90-foot public artwork, retail space at grade. **DESIGN** Wallman Architects, Cecconi-Simone Interior Design, Claude Cormier Landscape Architects, Artist Shayne Dark, Grant Algar (furnishings). **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Malibu Investments, Toronto and Alit Developments, Tel Aviv.

A “condo-collaboration of art, fashion, design and good taste,” Tableau is Urban Capital’s most recent offering in Toronto’s Entertainment District, following on the heels of Camden Lofts, Charlotte Lofts and Boutique. The building is centred around a huge structural table which divides the mixed-use development into three zones: residential suites “above the table”; condo amenities “on the table”; and commercial space, retail space and a huge Claude Cormier designed public plaza featuring a 90-foot artwork by Canadian artist Shayne Dark “below the table.”









PHASE 1 COMPLETED 2013
PHASE 2 COMPLETED 2015

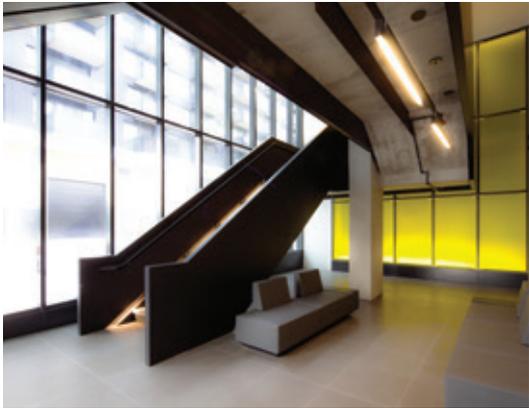
River City

LOCATION West Don Lands, Toronto. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 4 phases, 1,100 units. **ARCHITECTURE** Saucier+Perrotte Architects with ZAS Architects. **INTERIOR DESIGN** Saucier+Perrotte. **STATUS** Phase 1 completed 2013, Phase 2 completed 2015, Phase 3 under construction.

Designed by Montreal-based Saucier+Perrotte Architects with Toronto-based ZAS Architects, Urban Capital's 4-phase River City development is unlike anything else in Toronto, with a unique architectural aesthetic that responds to both the new parkland and the significant transportation infrastructure that surrounds the site. River City was the first component of the West Don Lands revitalization, kickstarting the transformation of what was previously a derelict district into the thriving neighbourhood that the West Don Lands is today. Urban Capital won the right to develop River City in 2008 after an extensive public tender process in which 18 national and international developers participated. The company's proposal won based on overall design, neighbourhood vision, and environmental commitment. Phases 1 and 2 were completed in 2013 and 2015, respectively; Phase 3 will be completed in 2018; and Phase 4 (Harris Square) is projected to be completed in 2020.







UNDER CONSTRUCTION

RC3



Saucier+Perrotte takes its daring River City design to new heights with RC3. Merging the matte black aesthetic of Phase 1 with the cantilevered white boxes of Phase 2, RC3's 29 storeys of randomly stacked cubes liberates Toronto condominium design from its usual constraints.



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Harris Square

LOCATION West Don Lands, Toronto **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Final phase of River City **SIZE / PROGRAM** 140 units, retail at grade **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** Saucier+Perrotte Architects and ZAS Architects.

The fourth and final phase of the award-winning River City development, Harris Square takes its name from the public square that it faces. Continuing Saucier+Perrotte's penchant for bold forms, the building is designed as a series of gyrating pentagonal plates, reflecting the five sides of the site itself, and allowing for oversized balconies and terraces on many floors. Also responding to its context, the building connects Harris Square in front of it with Underpass Park behind by lifting itself up at the ground level, creating a relatively column free 5 metre high open space between the two public spaces. Launching in spring 2017, Harris Square will cap what has been one of Urban Capital's most successful and noteworthy developments.

COMPLETION 2018

Smart House

LOCATION Queen & University, Toronto. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 256 micro-condo units; retail space on Floors 1 and 2; 16,000 square feet of Class A office space on Floors 3 and 4. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGNERS** Architects Alliance, II X IV Design, Aya Kitchens. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Malibu Investments, Toronto.

Toronto's (and maybe Canada's) first development designed exclusively as "micro-condos," Smart House makes living at an expensive location such as Queen and University affordable by delivering units that are small in size (as small as 276 square feet) but highly functional through smart design. Developed in partnership with Malibu Investments, Smart House looks critically at all the elements inside a condominium—from kitchens and bathrooms to storage—to make sure they are "right sized" and efficiently designed for smaller space.

Launched in October 2013, Smart House received an unprecedented amount of press for pushing the envelope in terms of units size and condo functionality. The market response to this new concept was exceptional, with over half of the units selling out immediately.



CONSTRUCTION COMMENCING 2018

Kingsway by the River

LOCATION Dundas West @ Royal York, Toronto. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 21-storey condominium, 80 stacked townhouses, 12-storey mixed use building with 30,000 square feet of retail, and over 20,000 square feet of onsite parkland. **ARCHITECTURE** Wallman Architects. **INTERIOR DESIGN** Bryon Patton Interior Design. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Northern Realty Advisors.

In the heart of Toronto's prestigious Kingsway neighbourhood, Urban Capital has created a vision for an elegant, classically modern community perched above the Humber River Valley, with expansive onsite parkland and renaturalization of the surrounding conservation lands.

Architecture and interior design are informed by the international style, relying on clean lines and an interplay with the natural environment. Condominium suites feature sweeping balconies over the Humber River, with views to the adjacent parks, Lambton Golf Course and the downtown skyline as the backdrop.



CONSTRUCTION COMMENCING 2018

Queensway Park

LOCATION Queensway Village, Toronto **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Mixed use condominium development **SIZE/PROGRAM** 172 residential units, retail at grade **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** RAW Architects, Toronto **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Rosewater Group.

It's a neighbourhood of richly treed streets, excellent schools and a 3.1 hectare park. Perfectly located between Toronto's western suburbs and downtown hub, it also has an eclectic mix of stores, restaurants and services that are only a taste of what's to come. And at the heart of it all will be a decidedly urban and sophisticated development – Queensway Park.

Named after the park that borders it to the north – a community hub that includes a kids play area, playing fields and spaces to simply unwind – Queensway Park brings Urban Capital's signature downtown style, keen eye for what's next, and commitment to good development to the new Queensway Village, a budding retail strip that is today being transformed into a pedestrian-oriented main street with an increasingly residential vibe.

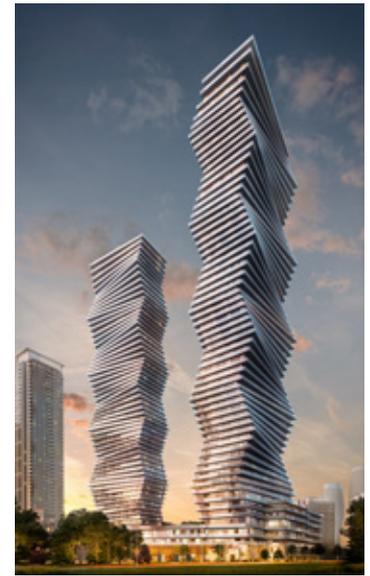
Siteportfolio Toronto Up Next

CONSTRUCTION COMMENCING 2018

Ravine

LOCATION Don Valley Parkway & York Mills, Toronto. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Master-planned community. **PROGRAM / SIZE** Seven buildings; 1,600 units. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Alit Developments, Tel Aviv.

Urban Capital is coming uptown to give one of Toronto's most picturesque neighbourhoods a renaissance. Ravine, a new master-planned community in York Mills at the DVP, will ultimately comprise a total of seven buildings with over 1,600 units on 13 acres, with two acres of new parkland and two more acres of dedicated conservation lands, overlooking the Don Valley and the spectacular Brookbanks Park.



CONSTRUCTION COMMENCING 2018

M City

LOCATION Mississauga City Centre. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 15-acre, 4.3 million square feet master planned community with 10 towers and over two acres of public parkland. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** (Phase 1 & 2): Core Architects, Cecconi-Simone Interior Design. **DEVELOPMENT TEAM** Urban Capital and Rogers Real Estate Development Limited, Toronto.

In 2007 Urban Capital and Rogers Real Estate Development Limited began the meticulous journey of taking a 15-acre greenfield site through master site plan approvals. Ten years later, the last major development parcel in Mississauga City Centre is launching as the one-of-a-kind "M City". This future-forward community will be defined by world-class architecture and technology, and a lively pedestrian experience with new parkland and outdoor spaces.

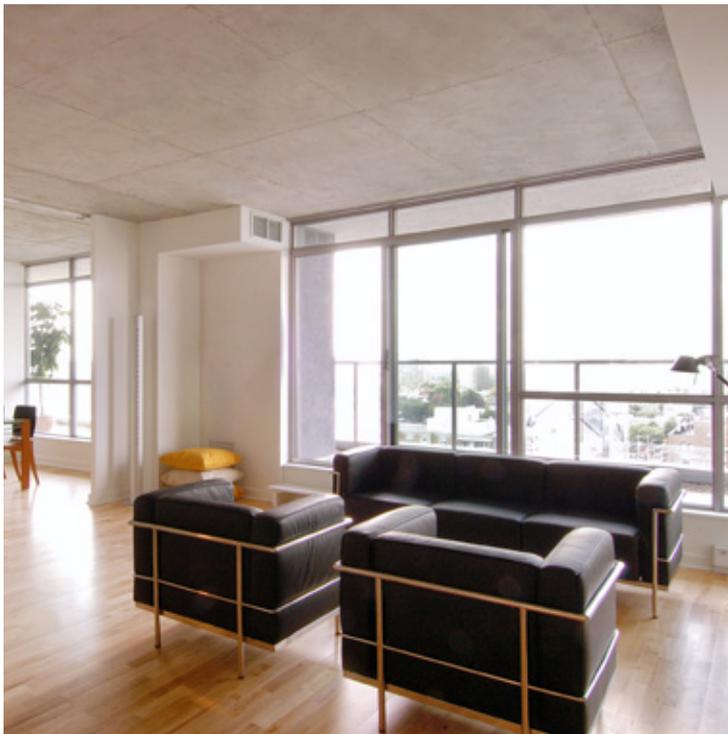
Phases 1 & 2 were launched in early 2017 with immediate sell-out success. The iconic 61-storey twin towers were designed by CORE Architects, winners of a design competition run by Urban Capital to establish the western gateway of Mississauga's downtown core. The amenity program features outdoor pools, a rooftop skating rink and splash pad, a movie theatre, sports bar, and more.



COMPLETED 2007

East Market

LOCATION Byward Market, Ottawa. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Urban Capital's first foray outside of Toronto, introducing the company's signature architecture, interior design and affordable loft-style units to the Ottawa market and becoming a catalyst for the city's subsequent condo boom. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 420 units over three phases. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** Core Architects. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Taggart Group, Ottawa.



COMPLETED 2011

Mondrian

LOCATION Downtown Ottawa. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Glass tower with red glass panels interspersed among the linear window system, as an homage to the Dutch painter Piet Mondrian. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 23-storey building containing 249 units, sitting atop a five-storey public parking podium enclosed in a glass screen. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** Core Architects. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Taggart Group, Ottawa.



COMPLETED 2015

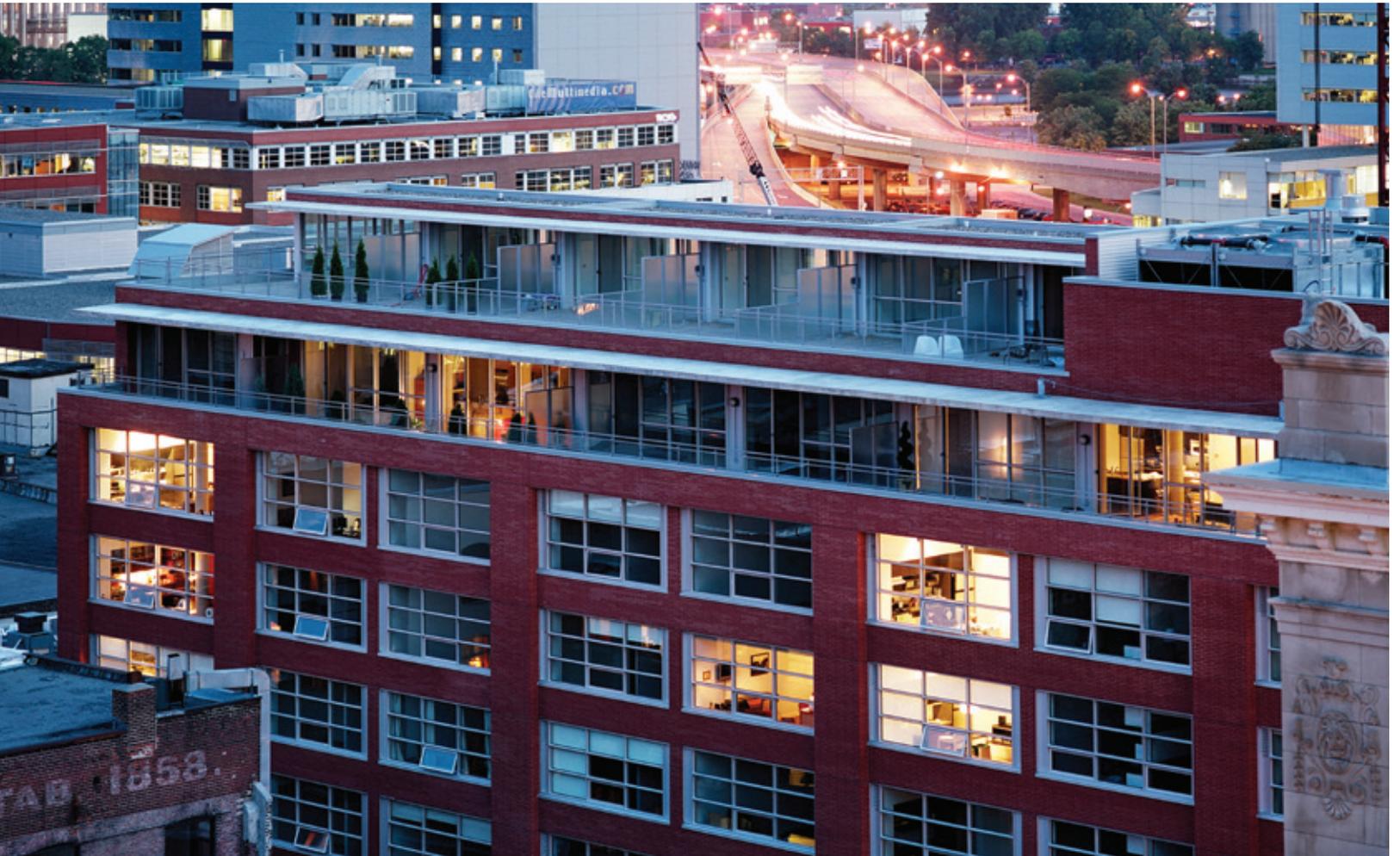
Central

LOCATION Centretown, Ottawa. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 3 phases, 540 units; 25,000 square feet of retail space. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** CORE Architects, Toronto. **STATUS** Phase 1 completed 2011; Phase 2 completed 2013; Phase 3 completed 2015. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Taggart Group, Ottawa.

Central is a 3-phase, 540-unit LEED Gold mixed-use development, developed jointly with Ottawa's Taggart Group. Located over two city blocks south of Bank and Gladstone, the multi-phase development filled an urban void between Ottawa's downtown core and trendy Glebe neighbourhood, reenergizing a district previously characterized by surface parking lots. The third phase of Central, called "Hideaway", incorporated extensive outdoor amenities including a Caribbean style pool surrounded by private cabanas.



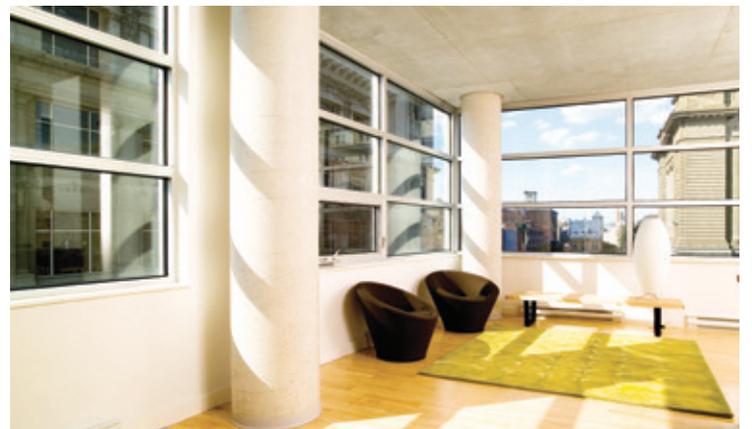




COMPLETED 2008

McGill Ovest

LOCATION West of Old Montreal. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Two-phase glass and brick building; Urban Capital's first development outside of Ontario. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 9-storey mid-rise building containing 244 units. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** Core Architects. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Metropolitan Parking, Montreal.



Up Next in Montreal

Urban Capital is working on an 800 unit pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use development on a 12.2 acre former industrial site in one of Montreal's inner suburbs. Tentatively called "Quartier", the project will be comprised of five mid-rise buildings, 90 stacked townhouses, a commercial/retail centre, open public squares and a two acre park. Stay tuned for more information on Urban Capital's return to Canada's second largest (but definitely most stylish) city.

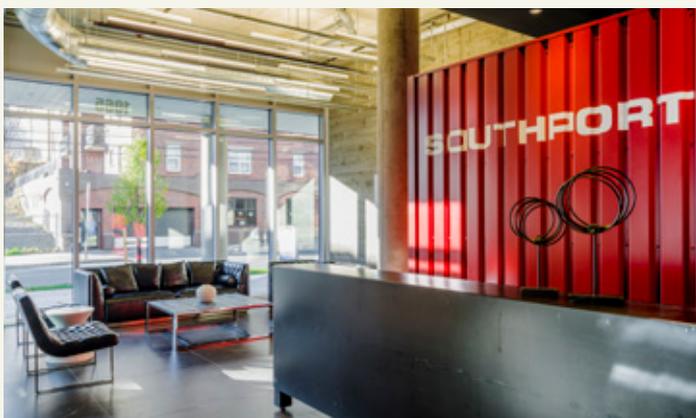


COMPLETED 2016

Southport

LOCATION South End, Halifax. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 142 units. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** RAW Design and Michael Napier Architects. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNER** Killam Properties, Halifax.

Urban Capital's first development out east, Southport is a nod to Halifax's rich shipping history. Located where the city's historic South End meets the Port of Halifax, the building is clad in corrugated metal panels reminiscent of shipping containers, for a maritime industrial look that's fresh, urban, and out-of-the-ordinary. The development introduced Urban Capital's loft-style condominium residences to the Halifax market, and adds some project-specific features such as roof-top amenity space centred on a repurposed shipping container.

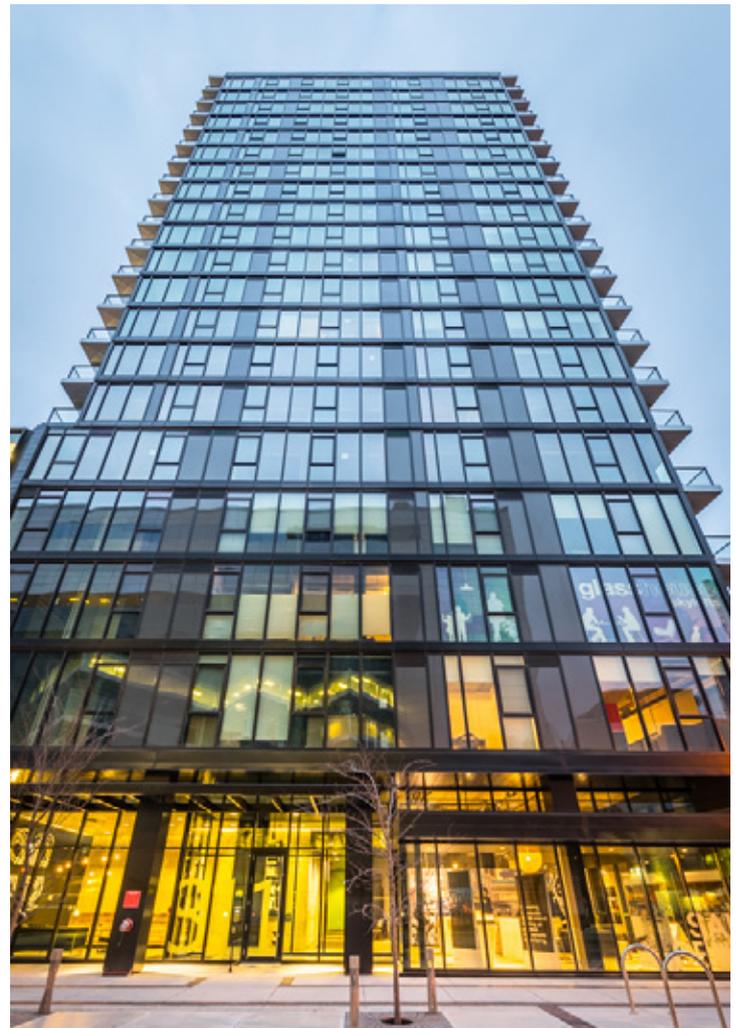


PHASE 1 UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Gorsebrook Park

LOCATION South End, Halifax. **PROJECT DESCRIPTION** Contemporary design condominium building facing Gorsebrook Park. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 165 units. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** architects Alliance, Toronto, and Michael Napier Architects, Halifax. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS** Sonco, Halifax and Marco, Halifax.

Gorsebrook Park is Urban Capital's second development in Atlantic Canada's economic hub. Capitalizing on its coveted location next to Gorsebrook Park in the city's leafy South End, the development offers a unique fusion of sophisticated modern design and pastoral serenity. The elegantly simple two-storey lobby connects to the building's common amenity room and then on to the park beyond, creating a physical and emotional connection between the entrance on Wellington Street and Gorsebrook Park behind. Amenities include a parkside pool and outdoor lounge, turning Gorsebrook Park into an extended backyard.



COMPLETED 2016

Glasshouse

LOCATION Downtown Winnipeg. **SIZE / PROGRAM** 194 units.
ARCHITECTURE Stantec. **INTERIOR DESIGN** Stantec and Grant Algar.

Glasshouse is Urban Capital's first foray onto the Prairies. The 194 unit tower is the residential component of Winnipeg's Centrepoin project, a multi-use development that includes an Alt Hotel, 100,000 square feet of Class A office space, and two restaurants. Glasshouse brings Urban Capital's urban living concepts to Winnipeg, introducing a style and urban sensibility not previously available in this market. The building has been a key catalyst in the residential rejuvenation of the city's downtown.

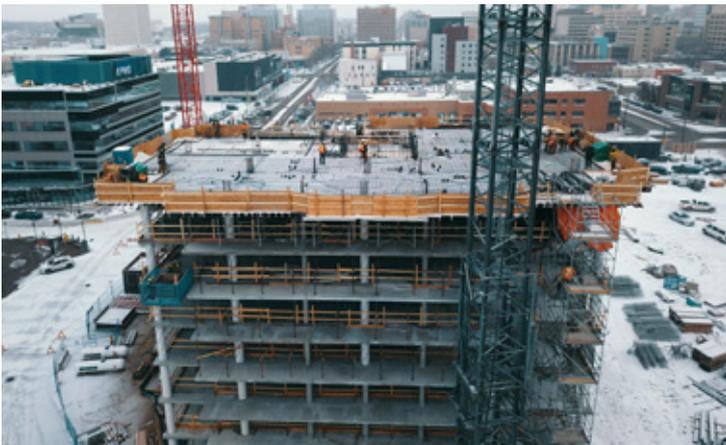
UNDER CONSTRUCTION

No. 1 River Landing

LOCATION River Landing, Saskatoon. **SIZE / PROGRAM** Approximately 120 units, the residential component of the mixed use “River Landing” development. **ARCHITECTURE & INTERIOR DESIGN** Lemay Michaud, Montreal, and aodbt Architects, Saskatoon. **DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS** Victory Majors, Saskatoon, and Bockstael Construction, Winnipeg.

Urban Capital’s second development out west brings it to the banks of Saskatoon’s South Saskatchewan River, one of the most beautiful urban locations on the Prairies. Called “No. 1 River Landing”, the residential component of the mixed-use River Landing development will complement an adjacent Alt Hotel (by Quebec-based Groupe Germain) and two Class A office buildings. All four buildings will surround a new approximately half acre public plaza.

No. 1 River Landing continues Urban Capital’s plan to bring sophisticated, high-design condominiums to new Canadian markets. The development close to sold out in the first weekend of its sales, confirming a keen interest in urban living in this beautiful prairie city.



Up Next in Saskatoon

Hot on the heels of its highly successful launch of No 1 River Landing, Urban Capital is working on a second development in the “Paris of the Prairies”. Perched on the south bank of the South Saskatchewan River, just off of the city’s hip Broadway Avenue, this approximately 100 unit building will bring the elegant modernism of Toronto’s architectsAlliance to this very prominent Saskatoon location.



The Canada mission

Urban Capital is on a pan-Canadian mission to build from coast to coast. Brandon Donnelly finds out why.



Today the world economy is spiky. Wealth is concentrating itself in a select number of “superstar cities” around the globe. The result of these forces is something that urban studies theorist Richard Florida has labeled “winner-take-all-urbanism.”

In a recent study of housing prices, Florida examined the more than 11,000 zip codes across America using data from Zillow.com. What he discovered was that only 160 of them have a

median home price of \$1 million or more, and that 80% of those are located in the metro areas of just three “superstar cities”: New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco.

The same phenomenon is playing itself out in Canada, where real estate headlines are mostly centered around two dominant regions: Greater Toronto and Greater Vancouver. As of September 2017, the only Canadian cities to see double digit year-over-year price increases were

Toronto and Vancouver, as well as their respective “spillover” cities: Hamilton and Victoria.

Indeed, just this past fall, RioCan – the largest real estate investment trust in Canada – announced that it had put one hundred of its properties up for sale in order to rebalance its portfolio in favour of the Toronto region. Ed Sonshine, CEO of RioCan, told the Globe and Mail: “We are going to be very Toronto-centric when we are done this.”

Urban Capital, on the other hand, is concertedly working against this trend. While over half of its developments tend to be in the Greater Toronto Area, the firm has also directed a good part of its efforts to other cities, including some decidedly mid-sized ones. The company, it seems, is on a mission – to build high-design urban condominiums across the country and take the title of “Canada’s condominium builder.” But what is driving this mission, and how is Urban Capital able to successfully pull it off in today’s economic landscape?

THE URBAN CAPITAL BACKSTORY. To properly answer these questions it’s important to understand the genesis of the company, which was born in 1996 with a 48-unit boutique condominium development on a small side street in Toronto’s Fashion District called Camden. But the Camden Street of 20 years ago was not the Camden Street of today. Instead of being at the centre of Toronto’s vibrant King-Spadina district, Camden was a dusty nowhere. Few people believed that there was a market for residences at this location, or anywhere else in the downtown core for that matter.

Because of the perceived undesirability of the location, it took Urban Capital partner David Wex two years to sell about thirty of the units. And this was at an average price of \$195 per square foot. Developers in this city now pay more than that for the land alone.

The building Urban Capital developed (jointly, with Dundee Realty) on the site – Camden Lofts – had its share of missteps, as did other pioneering downtown projects at the time, but it got built and, more importantly, it set the stage for the company’s Canada-focused growth strategy. One of the things that excited David about Camden Lofts was that he was able to act as an urban regenerator by introducing design-focused living to a then undesirable area of the city.

TORONTO TO ... SASKATOON? Following Camden Lofts (and its sister project Charlotte Lofts, built two blocks away a few years later), it didn’t take long for Wex and partner Mark Reeve to start looking beyond Toronto. And the first city they looked at was Ottawa. This was a natural choice: the nation’s capital is close to Toronto, and it’s in the same province, which means many of the codes and regulations are the same.

When Urban Capital acquired its first development site in that city it ended up being very similar to Camden – an underutilized

surface parking lot, this time adjacent to a Salvation Army hostel, at the scruffy end of the city’s Byward Market. And what Urban Capital ended up building – its three-phase, 420 unit East Market project – was the first major condominium development proposed in the city in over a decade. Urban Capital may have expanded beyond Toronto, but it brought with it the belief that sensible and contextual infill development has the ability to regenerate important city centre neighbourhoods.

It also brought Toronto-style design to Ottawa. Think raw concrete, floor-to-ceiling windows, exposed ductwork and free-form layouts. And this became a theme for its future developments in other cities. Urban Capital now brings the same product, with the same design aesthetic, as it develops in Toronto to all its new markets.

East Market was a big success, with 50% of its first phase sold on its launch weekend. “When we started in Toronto, people said this wasn’t New York – people don’t want to live in an industrial space in a former industrial area,” says Wex. “And then we went to Ottawa, and people said this wasn’t Toronto; people don’t want to live in a ‘cool’ space downtown. But in both cases they were wrong. People were looking for something different, something that was design-forward, affordable and urban – and that something was lacking in the market. This applied in Ottawa, a city of 600,000, as much as Toronto, at 2 million, and New York, at 10.”

Following East Market, Urban Capital launched ground-breaking projects in Montreal (McGill Ouest, 2003), Winnipeg (Glasshouse, 2012), Halifax (Southport, 2013) and Saskatoon (No 1 River Landing, 2016). All were very much about exporting Urban Capital’s brand of design-focused urban living. The team was always careful to avoid a Toronto-centric attitude, but by and large it was the Urban Capital condominium gone Canada-wide.

So far this approach has worked exceptionally well, and not just for Urban Capital but for the cities in which they build. In all of the above cities, Urban Capital’s developments were the first or among the first of their kind on the market, making their mark by demonstrating that downtown residential infill could work on a large scale.

Loretta Martin, Development Manager at CentreVenture, Winnipeg’s downtown revitalization agency, spoke to Site about how Urban Capital’s Glasshouse project raised the bar for design and development in that city when it was completed in 2016. “There is a sense that the downtown is now at a turning point with respect to development and investment,” says Martin. “Glasshouse and the larger Centrepoint project of which it is part have finally created the momentum that CentreVenture was looking for since its creation.”

CANADA’S LOCAL DEVELOPER. A key component of Urban Capital’s expansion model

is partnering with locals, typically family-owned construction firms, whether the Taggarts in Ottawa, Marco Construction in Halifax, or the Bockstaels and Nassers in the Prairies. Local partners give invaluable local knowledge and “cover” to Urban Capital outside its home base, especially in markets where there could be some anti-Toronto sentiments. “They also tend to know the good restaurants,” David adds.

THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF WORKING ACROSS THE COUNTRY. Clearly there are challenges to entering a new market. Beyond learning about the local vagaries of each place, there’s the bigger challenge of often trying to “make a market.” In almost all of the markets that Urban Capital has entered, there was generally no evidence indicating that the market could support the type of product that UC builds.

This has led Urban Capital to largely eschew market studies for its new cities. “Market studies are kind of useless for what we do. They are typically retrospective rather than prospective, which means they will generally tell you that you can’t do what you’re trying to do, because it hasn’t been done before. So it’s a leap of faith,” says David. And indeed, when Urban Capital enters a new market it usually ends up setting a record for condo pricing (new high) and for unit sizing (new low).

The beauty of new, underserved cities, of course, is that there’s little to no competition. Urban Capital has also found it relatively easy to make a splash in these markets by exporting the sales, marketing, and design expertise it has honed over the last two decades in Toronto’s hyper-competitive condo industry. It gets to play big fish in a small pond.

But that doesn’t necessarily make these pan-Canadian projects easy. Making the math work is still exceptionally difficult. The land is obviously far less expensive than comparable sites in Toronto, but the end sales prices are often much lower, and construction costs can often be higher, which was the case, for example, with Glasshouse. Urban Capital also tends to pair a Toronto-based design architect with a local architecture firm, further driving up its design costs, usually by as much as 20%. And there have been cases where Urban Capital was perhaps a bit too ambitious with respect to its ability to “make a market”.

SO WHY DO IT? The reality is that it’s not just the allure of less competition and the ability to play “big fish” that keeps Urban Capital expanding across the country. It’s about something more fundamental: a mission to build a national brand that puts Canada on the map in terms of good urban design and strong healthy cities.

“I know it sounds hokey, but there’s definitely an agenda about this”, says Wex.

When you combine Urban Capital’s

To learn more about how Urban Capital builds in other cities, check out Condo 101: How to build in other markets, at urbancapital.ca/condo101

Canada-wide focus with its roots as an urban regenerator, you get an intrinsically motivated corporate mission to bring the company's own varietal of high-design condominiums to cities all across the country. It's about balancing private interests with the public good, and hopefully leaving behind a made-in-Canada legacy of good multi-residential design.

THERE'S MORE CANADA LEFT. From Camden Lofts in Toronto in 1996 to No. 1 River Landing in Saskatoon in 2016, Urban Capital has remained true to its conviction that

sensible infill development can act as an urban regenerator, and that high-design urban living has a place in all Canadian cities.

As a Torontonian, it's hard to imagine anyone ever questioning this. But we once did. There was a time when developers only wanted to build office towers in Toronto's core and the city had to encourage residential development.

For other Canadians, this kind of urban lifestyle is perhaps a bit more novel. But the success of projects such as East Market, McGill Ouest, Southport, Glasshouse and No. 1 River Landing show that there is in fact a market for this kind

of housing, even if it would never show up in a market study.

Luckily, Urban Capital has never been one to shy away from the unproven. So watch for "Canada's condominium builder" to add more locales to its ever growing list of cities in the new year. This pan-Canadian mission is far from over. Urban Capital is determined to make Canada a little less spiky or, at the very least, a little more urban and a little more modern. **UC**

Case Studies: Urban Capital's two newest markets.



No 1 River Landing, Saskatoon

In 2016 Urban Capital entered the Saskatoon market to develop what eventually became known as No. 1 River Landing.

Located along the largely unadulterated shore of the South Saskatchewan River, the site is an idyllic interface between the city's downtown to the north and waterfront to the south. But before No. 1 River Landing, the site sat empty for nearly four decades; this despite its being clearly identified as a precinct of incredible city building potential.

Raymond Moriyama's Meewasin Valley Project 100 Year Conceptual Master Plan of 1977 – also known as "The Moriyama Plan" – was the study

that first set the stage for development in the River Landing area. It is what subsequent planning documents were built upon and it is what spurred the creation of the Meewasin Valley Authority, the current steward of the river valley.

But for a number of reasons, one of which is the fact that for over the last half century Saskatoon's growth has been mostly suburban, nothing ever happened at River Landing. It sat dormant until the early 2000's, when a significant public investment was made in the hopes of kickstarting private development.

But even then, the private investment never quite followed like everyone had hoped. An 11-storey seniors residence was erected, but the perception remained that the public money spent on the area was largely a waste because it failed to spur meaningful investment. That was until Urban Capital, partnering with local

developer Victory Majors, proposed a crisp 21-storey condominium known as No. 1 River Landing.

"While not the first development in the area, No. 1 River Landing really became the symbol for its revitalization", says Michael Velonas, Planning and Conservation Manager at the Meewasin Valley Authority. "It's the first modern high-rise condominium in Saskatoon. It introduced a new kind of urban lifestyle to the city. And because of its success, we are seeing it act as catalyst for more infill development in the downtown."

Given how long it took to develop the site, one has to wonder whether it would have ever happened without Urban Capital's love for all things Canadian. "I asked David if he had completed a market study before doing the project," says Velonas. "And he told me that if he had done one he would likely never have come to Saskatoon."

Glasshouse, Winnipeg

In 1999, the City of Winnipeg created an arms-length agency known as CentreVenture Development Corporation. Its mandate was and continues to be centered around revitalizing the downtown core.

At the time of its inception, Winnipeg's downtown hadn't seen a privately funded commercial high-rise development since the 1980's, according to Loretta Martin, Development Manager at CentreVenture. And in terms of residential development: "Who knows?" says Martin. "It had been decades since anyone had built multi-family in the downtown."

In the early years of the agency, CentreVenture completed a number of small developments, including heritage projects and area plans. Eventu-

ally something known as the Sports, Hospitality, and Entertainment District (The SHED) was formed in an attempt to leverage the city's new Bell MTS Place hockey arena as an anchor for urban revitalization.

This led CentreVenture to assemble a development site just to the north of the arena with one fairly simple goal: catalyze a true mixed-use development that would, among other things, introduce additional residential uses into the downtown core.

To kickstart the project, CentreVenture managed to secure Stantec as an anchor tenant and then found a group of local developers to build the office component. But in order to fulfill the mandate of creating a true mixed-use development, the team and uses needed to grow.

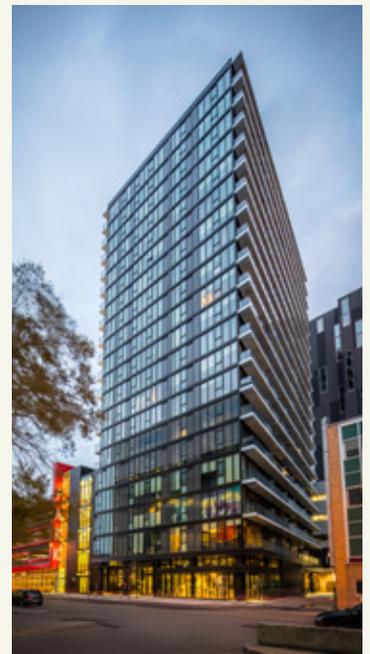
This led to the Group Germain coming onboard to develop an Alt Hotel, who then brought in Urban

Capital so that residential uses could be added to the broader project – now known as Centrepoint. This was the birth of Glasshouse, a 194-unit condominium tower and Urban Capital's first foray onto the Prairies.

Completed in 2016, Glasshouse had an immediate impact. "This kind of housing and level of design sophistication simply didn't exist in downtown Winnipeg before Glasshouse", says Martin. "Today it has become a bit of a status symbol to say you live there. There's a certain degree of prestige attached to it."

But perhaps more importantly, Glasshouse and the larger Centrepoint project have finally created the momentum that CentreVenture was looking for since its creation.

"There is also a sense", says Martin, "that the entire industry has had to step up their game because of how high the bar was raised with Centrepoint."



Building tall buildings

At 61 storeys each, M City's twin towers will take a lot of know-how and experience to execute. Site Magazine reached out to some of the key players to get their tricks of the trade. By Steven Barr, with contributions from CORE Architects, RJC, RWDI, Smith + Andersen, Soberman Engineering, and Ellis Don

Increasing concentrations of population around large cities is underlying the development of high-density living at an unprecedented scale. Not just evident in downtown cores, but peripheral urban centres around the GTA and other major Canadian markets are seeing a new wave of mega-towers to meet this demand.

Earlier this year, Urban Capital and Rogers Real Estate Investments Limited launched the first two phases of M City in Mississauga, Ontario. A 10-tower master-planned community on a 15-acre un-serviced "greenfield" site, M City will see the construction of over 6,000 units across 4.3 million square feet in towers that reach sky-high at 60+ storeys.

Unlike development in Toronto's 19th century urban core, this new territory affords the exciting opportunity to make architecture that is unapologetically big. But with big buildings come big engineering. Indeed, the project meetings at M City tend to reach capacity, filling boardrooms with the design and construction professionals needed to pull this off. As we gear up for construction on the twin 61-storey buildings of Phases 1 & 2, we asked the team to highlight some key challenges in bringing this vision to life.

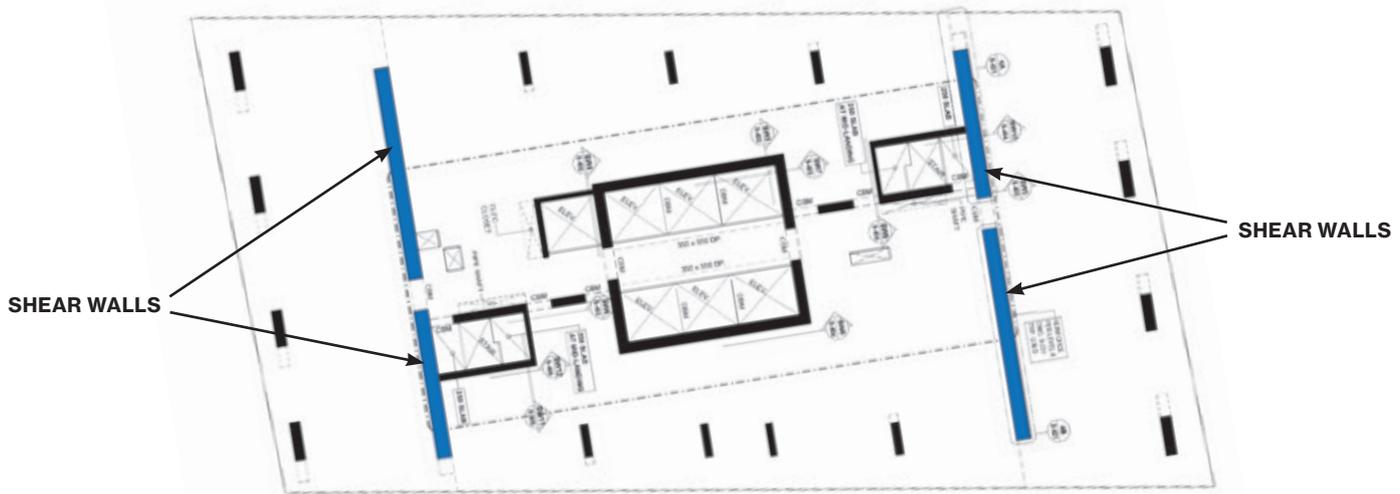
Sculptural Exterior, Livable Interior.

Architects: CORE Architects

The towers' unique appearance results from the rotation of the floor plates. In each building there are seven typical floor plate shapes (A, B, C, D, E, F and G), beginning with a rectangle (D) and skewing first towards one extreme (G), then skewing back through D to the other extreme (A). The corners of each floor plate shift over 1 m from the plate below. This is done with short shear walls that 'walk' along with the skewing and overlap above and below.

Unlike other sculptural towers that sacrifice the livability of the units to achieve unique shapes, the precise geometric procedures here do not compromise the layouts of the rooms.





Twisted By Gravity

Structural Engineers: Read Jones Christoffersen

The dramatic articulation of M City's building massing was achieved by tilting end columns back and forth up the height of the tower. This tilting creates a tendency for the building to twist back and forth under its own self-weight (gravity).

With this in mind, we employed a novel configuration of coupled shear walls, where only two lines

of shear walls were used. These wall lines were located one bay in from each end of the tower to maximize the distance between them, which dramatically reduced the building's tendency to twist under gravity loads. By forcing the lateral stiffness onto two wall lines (as far apart as possible), this twisting effect is mitigated.

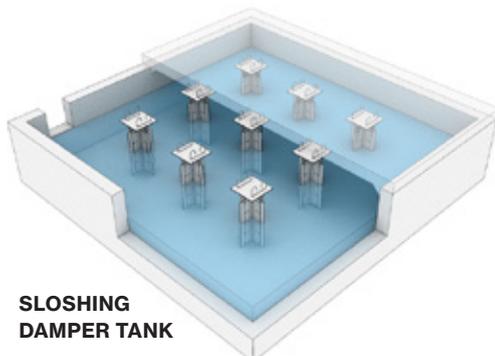
As a building's height and slenderness increase, innovative structural framing is required. Tall slender structures can also become susceptible to

dynamic interaction with the wind. In addition to the wind pushing and pulling on the broad faces, it also peels off the corners of the building, creating a swirling wind current known as a "vortex", which causes the building to sway ever so slightly from side to side. As a result, tall buildings require structural engineering that focuses not only on the strength and stability of the structure, but also on the motions that occupants feel from the interaction with wind.

Slosh Tanks and Building Sway

Wind Engineers: Rowan Williams Davies & Irwin

While this swaying effect would be imperceptible from street-level, occupants of tall buildings may actually feel the motion, which can cause comfort issues. To combat this at M-City, each tower will have two large sloshing damper tanks placed at the upper level mechanical penthouses. These water-filled slosh tanks effectively counteract the dynamic motion created by wind, whereby the building sways in one direction and the water in the tank sloshes in the opposite direction. The energy of the sloshing water is dissipated by drag created as the water passes through a series of screens within the tank. The dissipated energy has a counteracting effect on the motion created by wind. We conducted scale wind tunnel tests in order to optimize a slosh tank design specific to the M City buildings and their microclimate.



SLOSHING DAMPER TANK

During the detailed design stage we studied not only the impact of wind on the building, but the impact of the building on wind. Tall buildings tend to intercept winds at higher elevations and redirect them to the ground level – referred to as "down-washing flow." A pedestrian-level wind study will quantify the resultant wind environment against established comfort and safety criteria. For M City, we built a full scale model of Phases 1 & 2, as well as the future build-out of the entire M City master plan, and placed it in the context of the surround-

ing neighbourhood, all of which was constructed building-by-building in perfect scale size. The model was then fitted with multiple sensors and placed in a wind tunnel, where we used simulated wind scenarios to get a precise picture of the wind behaviour at street-level and at the outdoor amenity areas. With each round of testing, the team tried different configurations to mitigate wind impacts, from changes to the actual building façades to wind screens at grade-level, to ensure the area is comfortable for its intended use.



WIND TUNNEL

Stopping Stack Effect

**Mechanical & Electrical Engineers:
Smith + Andersen**

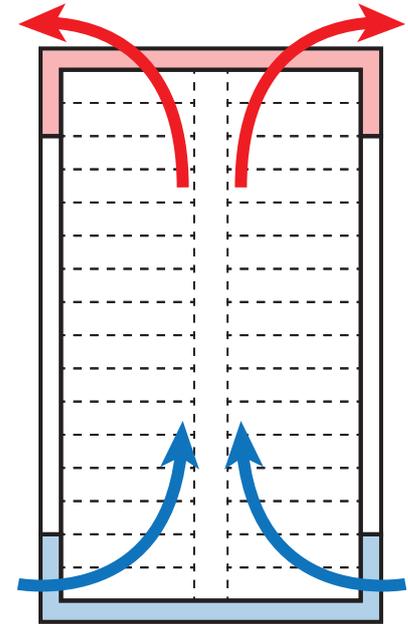
One of the central mechanical concerns in high-rise developments is stack effect. Stack effect is the movement of air into and out of buildings as a result of air buoyancy due to differences in indoor and outdoor temperatures. In winter, warm air rises to the top of the building, sucking cold air in at the bottom. This effectively pressurizes the top of the building. In summer the reverse occurs: cool air falls and gets pushed out at the bottom of the building, which draws in hot outside air at the top.

Stack effect is a vicious cycle: in winter, as the warm air rises, residents at the upper levels may feel overheated so they open a window, which pulls in cold air at the lower levels. In turn, residents at the lower levels feel cold and turn up their thermostats, thus forcing more hot air upwards. It's a condo version of the age-old thermostat battle, and it's a terribly inefficient use of energy too.

As buildings get taller, the stack effect gets

worse. Residents can physically feel the effects of the pressurized airflow: building entrance doors become impossibly heavy to open; elevator doors struggle to close and stay fully closed; a wind whistles beneath suite entry doors.

To combat stack effect, you must impede airflow from the lower levels up through vertical paths such as elevators, stairs, and mechanical penetrations, and out of openings in the upper half of the building. At M City, we addressed the biggest stack effect contributors first: openings to the outdoors. Often referred to as "pressurizing the lobby," the design challenge is to make up for air that is escaping further up the building – in part this is handled by designing an HVAC system that supplies more outside air than it exhausts. The M City lobbies impede airflow through the introduction of main entry vestibules with high-performance automatic door hardware, and elevator vestibules that are sealed off from the main lobby. Further, careful attention has been given to the various penetrations in the building envelope – exit stairs, mechanical shafts for ducts and piping, outside-air intakes – and how they should be sealed against air leakage.



STACK EFFECT DIAGRAM



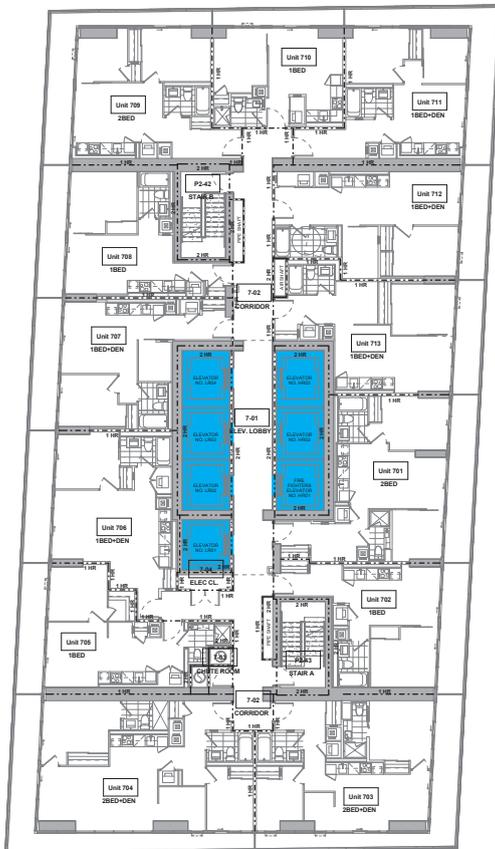
Elevators

Elevator Consultant: Soberman Engineering

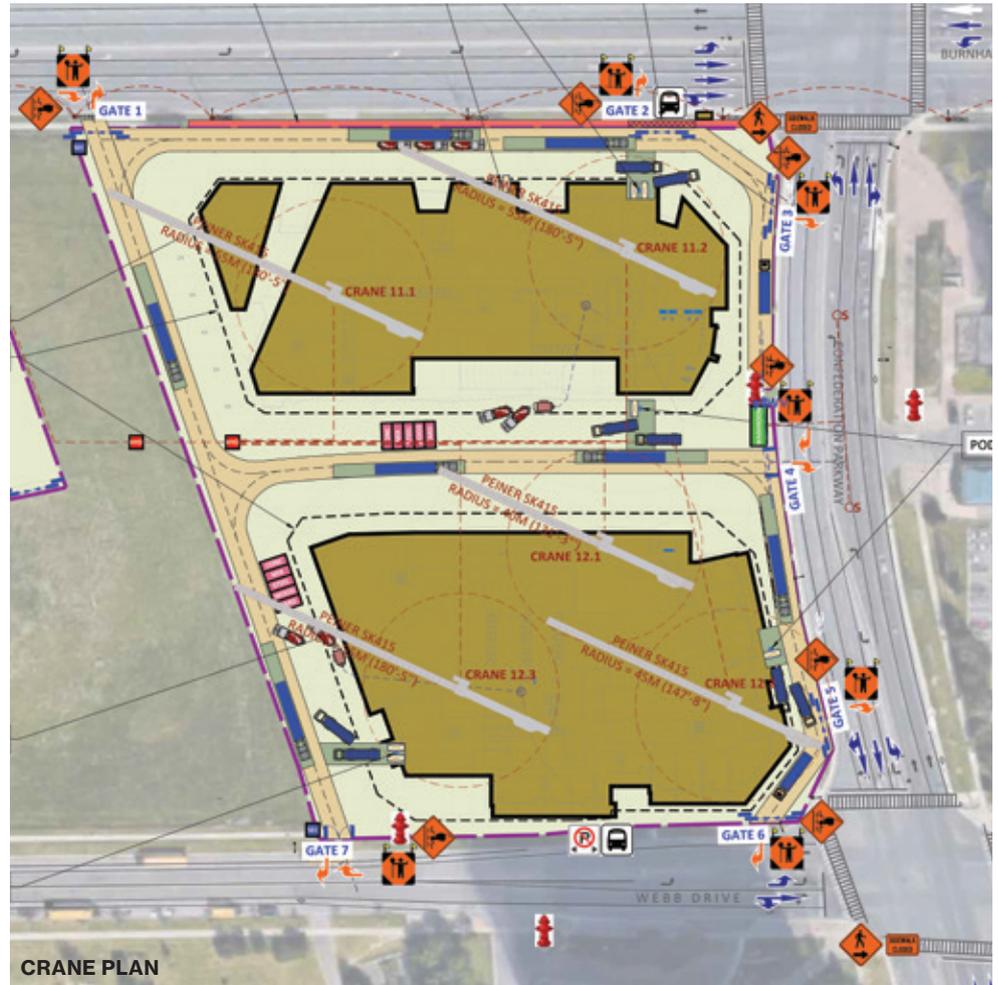
Tall buildings exist by the grace of elevators. Building access plays a crucial role in the development and feasibility of these structures. There are many factors considered when determining the best solution for vertical traffic flow. Some factors considered at M City were:

- Separating elevator banks for high rise and low rise floors
- Size (capacity) of the elevator cabs
- Speeds of cars
- Number of cars
- Door sizes and opening speeds.

Naturally these decisions come at a cost – financial costs, lost saleable area – and ultimately will have a major impact on how residents experience life at M City. With buildings that accommodate nearly 800 units each, our key objective was to minimize elevator wait times, and ensure ride comfort. As such, we decided it would be most prudent to split the elevator banks in separate stacked towers (zones) to minimize continuous shafts over the tower's total height – with dedicated elevators for the ground floor retail, podium levels, lower tower levels, and upper tower levels. We also opted for high-speed elevators and larger capacity cabs. Taken together, the result is reduced wait times that out-perform industry standards typical of other buildings around Toronto and the GTA.



SEVEN ELEVATOR BANKS - M CITY PHASE 1



Cranes and Concrete Pumps

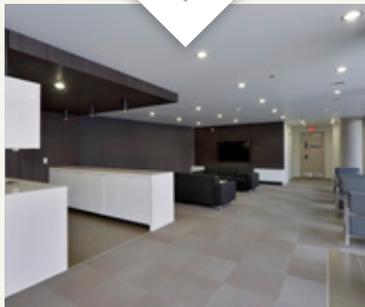
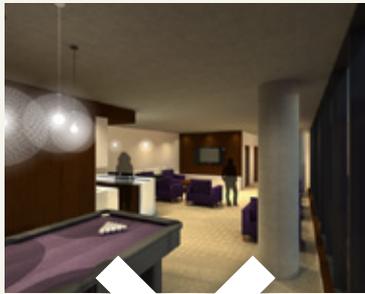
Construction Managers: Ellis Don

A project of this magnitude and design complexity will have several key stages that will allow for a successful execution. The general idea is to create a flow state for labour and material so that each trade that works on a typical floor knows exactly what they are doing when they start their day. This building is quite different than a standard high rise due to the changing floor plates; with seven different layouts it has to be ingrained in the trades that they are effectively building seven separate nine-story buildings folded together like a deck of cards. Usually it would take a good crew around three to five floors to gain a full understanding of what they are doing on each given day. With the complexity of M City it will require a greater attention to detail and increased focus on the daily plan in order to develop that flow state.

With all projects higher than 20 floors, the cycling of material to feed the construction can create issues. Getting material to the floor takes time, and the higher the building the more time is needed for material staging. There are ways to counteract this scheduling challenge by fine-tuning the process. One of the ways is to use a concrete pump to feed all of the concrete pours. This frees up the crane to complete lifts around the project and prepare for work on the following day. The

pump is set up at street-level and is piped up the building to a placing boom, which can be utilized without occupying the crane. In situations like this the pours can be staggered allowing the crane and the crews to remain busy throughout the day, even during times when the concrete is being placed. Staggering the pours would mean that you would be pouring each floor in two halves. For example, on the same day we can pour the north half slab of the 30th floor and the south half columns of the 29th floor. The forming would then be rotated in between these pours with the column formwork going up to the 30th floor slab and the tables going to the 29th floor. This allows for the formwork trade to work in a way where they do not have to remove all of the walls and fly them down to a staging area on the ground only to bring them back up three days later.

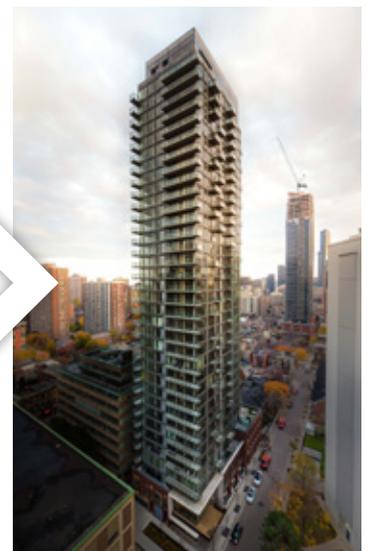
Each tower will have two cranes and a concrete placing boom. Hammerhead cranes and concrete placing booms will climb up the towers to facilitate the top floor; a luffing crane will complete the podium; and a derrick on the roof will remove the hammerhead crane and placing boom when construction is complete. Furthermore, we will utilize concrete pump trucks to complete the podium pours while the tower concrete placing boom can feed the tower levels. This creates more efficiency with the crane time without sacrificing schedule.



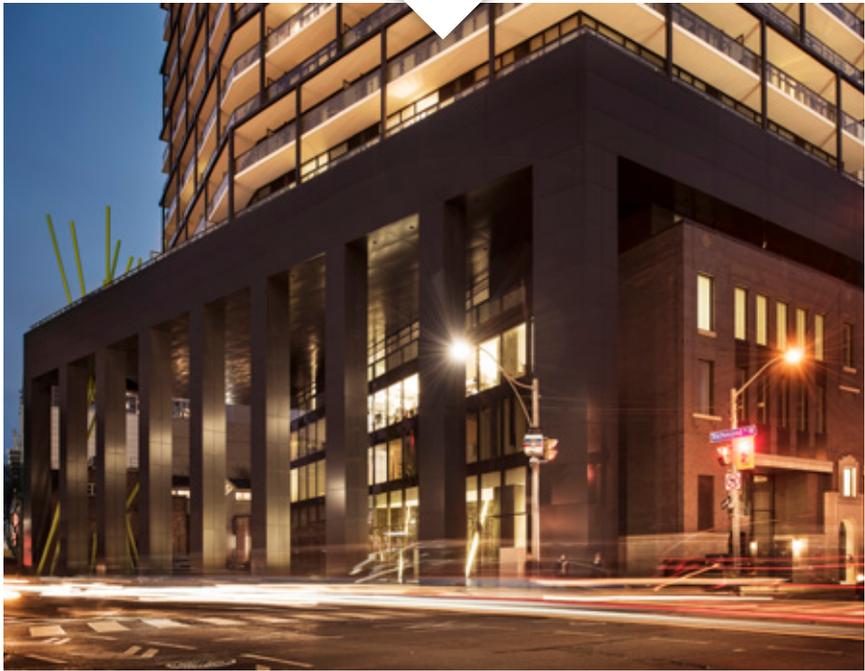
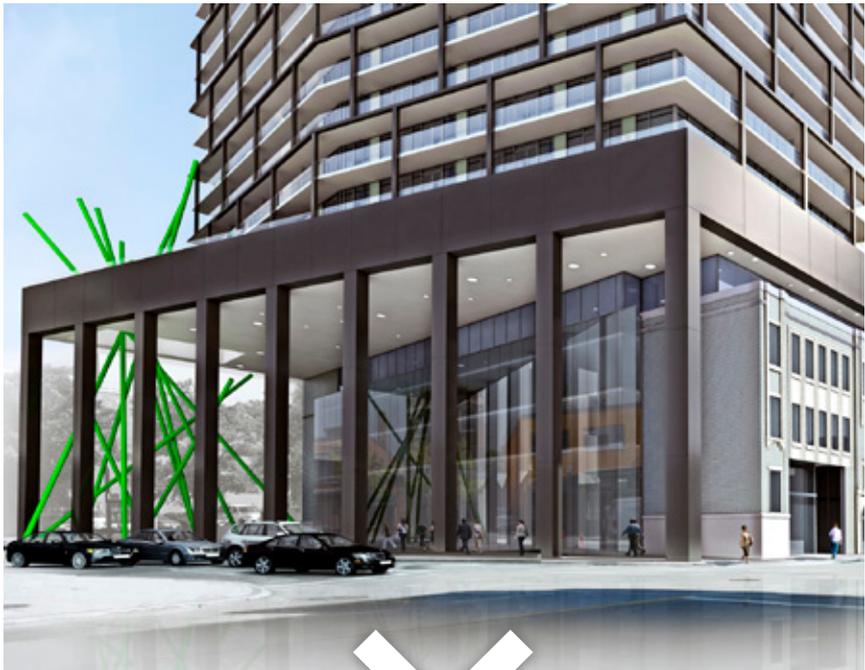
Visions realized

Building renderings are a big part of the marketing hype needed to pre-sell condominium buildings, and commissioning renderings is usually the first thing we do when getting a project off the ground. But did you ever wonder how these visualizations turn out out in the cold light of day? We decided to take a look and, quite frankly, were pretty impressed with what we discovered.

THIS PAGE CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Central, rendering by Designstor | Southport, rendering by Norm Li | Nicholas, illustration by Michael McCann. **PAGE 47:** Central, rendering by Designstor | River City, rendering by Designstor. **PAGE 48:** RC3, Tableau and River City, renderings by Designstor.



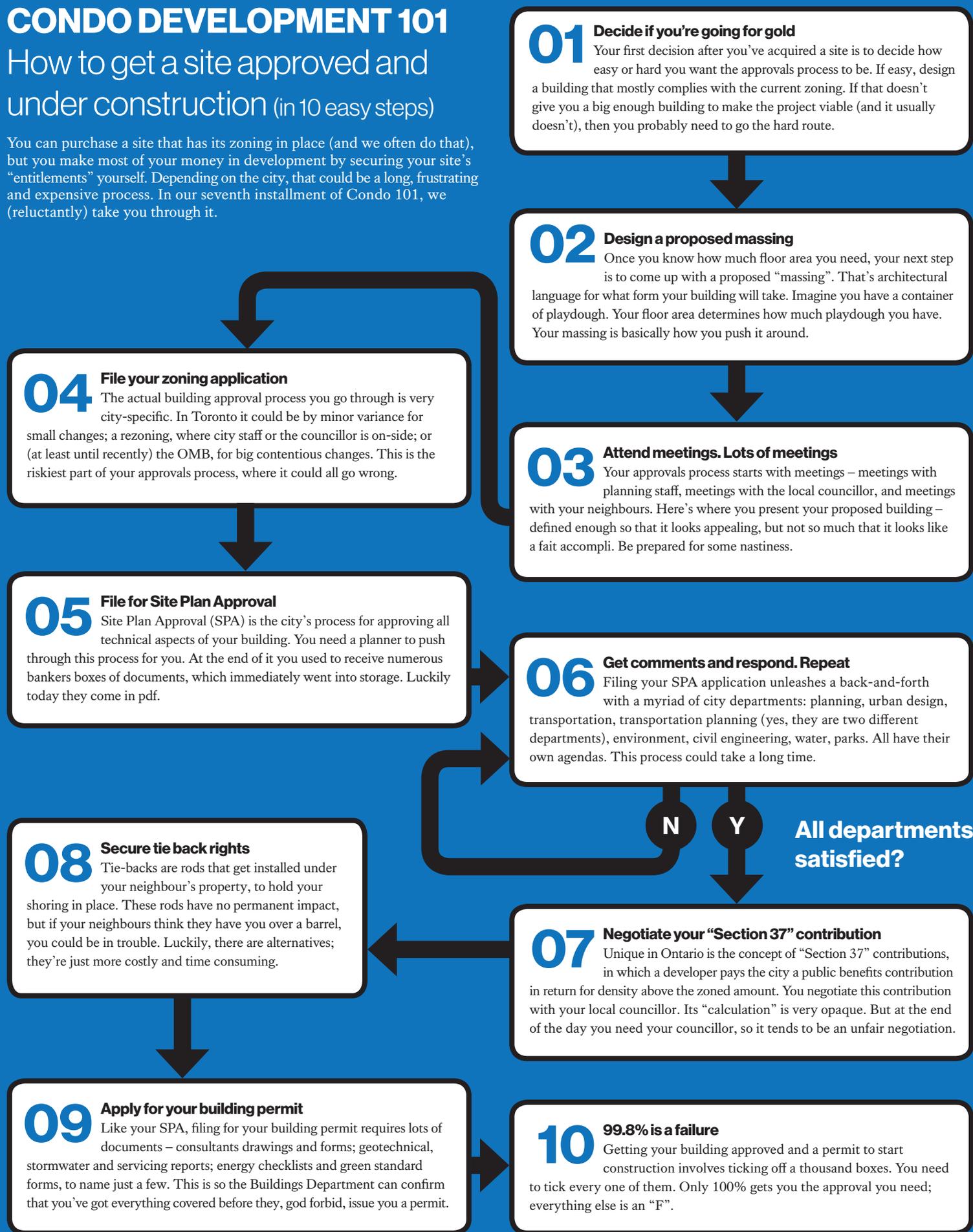




CONDO DEVELOPMENT 101

How to get a site approved and under construction (in 10 easy steps)

You can purchase a site that has its zoning in place (and we often do that), but you make most of your money in development by securing your site's "entitlements" yourself. Depending on the city, that could be a long, frustrating and expensive process. In our seventh installment of Condo 101, we (reluctantly) take you through it.



01 Decide if you're going for gold
Your first decision after you've acquired a site is to decide how easy or hard you want the approvals process to be. If easy, design a building that mostly complies with the current zoning. If that doesn't give you a big enough building to make the project viable (and it usually doesn't), then you probably need to go the hard route.

02 Design a proposed massing
Once you know how much floor area you need, your next step is to come up with a proposed "massing". That's architectural language for what form your building will take. Imagine you have a container of playdough. Your floor area determines how much playdough you have. Your massing is basically how you push it around.

03 Attend meetings. Lots of meetings
Your approvals process starts with meetings – meetings with planning staff, meetings with the local councillor, and meetings with your neighbours. Here's where you present your proposed building – defined enough so that it looks appealing, but not so much that it looks like a fait accompli. Be prepared for some nastiness.

04 File your zoning application
The actual building approval process you go through is very city-specific. In Toronto it could be by minor variance for small changes; a rezoning, where city staff or the councillor is on-side; or (at least until recently) the OMB, for big contentious changes. This is the riskiest part of your approvals process, where it could all go wrong.

05 File for Site Plan Approval
Site Plan Approval (SPA) is the city's process for approving all technical aspects of your building. You need a planner to push through this process for you. At the end of it you used to receive numerous bankers boxes of documents, which immediately went into storage. Luckily today they come in pdf.

06 Get comments and respond. Repeat
Filing your SPA application unleashes a back-and-forth with a myriad of city departments: planning, urban design, transportation, transportation planning (yes, they are two different departments), environment, civil engineering, water, parks. All have their own agendas. This process could take a long time.

08 Secure tie back rights
Tie-backs are rods that get installed under your neighbour's property, to hold your shoring in place. These rods have no permanent impact, but if your neighbours think they have you over a barrel, you could be in trouble. Luckily, there are alternatives; they're just more costly and time consuming.

07 Negotiate your "Section 37" contribution
Unique in Ontario is the concept of "Section 37" contributions, in which a developer pays the city a public benefits contribution in return for density above the zoned amount. You negotiate this contribution with your local councillor. Its "calculation" is very opaque. But at the end of the day you need your councillor, so it tends to be an unfair negotiation.

09 Apply for your building permit
Like your SPA, filing for your building permit requires lots of documents – consultants drawings and forms; geotechnical, stormwater and servicing reports; energy checklists and green standard forms, to name just a few. This is so the Buildings Department can confirm that you've got everything covered before they, god forbid, issue you a permit.

10 99.8% is a failure
Getting your building approved and a permit to start construction involves ticking off a thousand boxes. You need to tick every one of them. Only 100% gets you the approval you need; everything else is an "F".

Where the money goes

Over the past twenty years we've acquired sites, run promotions, constructed buildings and welcomed new homeowners. Along the way we've spent money on some pretty peculiar things. Herewith, a (random) list of some of the things you might be surprised to see in our Accounts Payable.



Surprisingly legitimate business expenses

Rebuilding a 90 year old wall	\$1,329,590
Money to buy off nightclub owners	\$1,325,000
1,202 bottles of Veuve Clicquot	\$100,968
A condo made of ice ②	\$90,564
A condo that lasted a weekend ①	\$75,421
A 24 hour party in NYC	\$22,674
128 disco balls	\$3,840
A hot pink Vespa	\$2,218
Fifty 1970s wigs ③	\$1,500

And not so surprising...

Anticipated Development Charges at M City 1 & 2	\$80,000,000
Development Charges already paid in TO	\$17,352,902
Development Charges paid in Winnipeg	\$346
A massive concrete screw-up	\$9,563,876
3,896 fridges	\$3,701,256
Print ads to date	\$2,689,457
Print ads this year (2017)	\$48,387
Social media this year (2017)	\$61,295
Past purchaser referral fees	\$170,291
Paid Tarion compensation for deficiencies	\$0



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Urban Capital prides itself on developing beautiful, design-forward condominiums. For over 20 years it has been a leader in architectural and interior design, environmental sustainability, and commitment to cities. From Toronto's King-Spadina in 1996 to Ottawa and Montreal in the 2000s and Halifax, Winnipeg and Saskatoon today, it has always pushed the envelope in condominium design and development. Check us out in one of six Canadian cities.