

## Highrise aims for best of Victoria

Project to arise on 'phenomenal site'

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If you live in the Lower Mainland of B.C. and pay any attention to real estate, it's hard not to know something about Bosa Properties.

The company that began in Burnaby in the 1960s with eight brothers — sons of Italian immigrants — is almost a household name here.

For more than four decades, Bosa has been developing property throughout Greater Vancouver, and over that time has become a highrise expert.

There are Bosa projects beginning with just about every letter of the

alphabet, from Acqua in Richmond to West at HighGate Village in Burnaby.

Now, for the first time, Bosa has crossed the Strait of Georgia to build a highrise tower near Victoria's Inner Harbour in the master-planned community of Bayview Place.

"It didn't take long to realize that this is a phenomenal site," says Bosa's senior vice-president Daryl Simpson, "so close to the harbour, views are phenomenal, you have all the things that are best about downtown without actually being downtown and some of the challenges of being downtown."

Bayview Place is an eight-hectare parcel of land on one end of the peninsula of land that divides Victoria's Inner Harbour from Esquimalt Harbour.

On the Victoria side, it's connected to the city by a bridge, making it an easy 10-to 15-minute

walk to downtown.

The developer of Bayview Place and the mastermind behind the master plan is Ken Mariash, originally from Calgary.

Mariash began to acquire the eight hectares in the late 1990s with the intention of creating a mixed-use community with a large residential component.

When it's complete, around 2020, Bayview Place will include nine residential buildings, a hotel, stores, restaurants, green spaces and a Granville Island-style market in the old Roundhouse, built by Canadian Pacific Railway in 1913.

The city's railway station for passenger service up and down Vancouver Island may also move to Bayview

Place; it's in the process of being relocated.

"We're looking at trying to accommodate the new station," says Mariash. "It could be quite exciting with the train coming and going from the Roundhouse area."

Even though it's taken longer than Mariash expected to get all the approvals he needed from the city, he says his plan is moving ahead and he expects the next 10 years to be more productive than the last 10.

"I think everybody's happy with the way the first building came out and I think people in general — especially the neighbourhood — (are) very supportive of the overall vision and plan.

The first residence to go up was Bayview One, a low-rise brick building with spacious floor plans, high-end appliances and — almost unheard of, for Victoria at least — amenities such as air conditioning, 24-hour security and concierge service.

Promontory at Bayview Place — Bosa's first contribution to Bayview Place — will have some similarities, but also a lot of differences, most notably its height.

"This is taking Bayview One and turning it on its side," says Simpson, "so it's a 21-storey building, 10 stories taller than that building — similar to what you find in Vancouver, so it's a very urban design."

Another big difference is the size of the suites.

Even the largest two-bedroom suite at Promontory will be smaller than the smallest two-bedroom at Bayview One; 1,051 square feet compared with 1,180 square feet.

But while Promontory suites will be less generous in size, they'll still come with high-end interiors.

"You've got a Miele dishwasher, Miele fridge, AEG Electrolux cooking appliances, undermount sinks, composite stone counters, full-height wood-grained cabinetry, air conditioning, built-in LCD TVs in the kitchen," says Simpson.

And if their relatively small size is a problem, Bosa has the answer for that. "We have a collection called our estate suites. We've taken a one-bedroom and perhaps a studio, or a two-bedroom beside it, and combined it and made it a custom home."

What if you want a penthouse but you don't want to pay for one? They can do that, too.

"If you want penthouse-sizing 1,800 square feet or 2,000 square feet, but don't want to pay the real penthouse premium to be on the top of the building, you're happy to be on the fifth floor or the 10th floor — we can do that for you here," says Simpson.

The buyers Simpson foresees are diverse, ranging from people who



Courtesy, Bosa Properties (Bayview) Inc.

### An artist's rendering of Promontory at Bayview Place in Victoria, B.C.

want to spend a few months of the year in Victoria to people already living there.

Studio suites with 468 square feet start at \$219,900, while the largest two-bedroom-plus-den suites are priced from \$569,900.

Promontory will take several years to build, and buyers will need to wait awhile longer for some amenities.

Bosa plans to build a second tower beside Promontory with a swimming pool, hot tub, gym, firepit, barbecue and guest suite. Residents of Promontory will share those amenities. Simpson says Bosa hopes to bring that second tower to market next year.

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