

With the completion of the Sierra and Palomar towers, Concert Properties Ltd. completed the third and final phase of its master-planned Village Gate West development in the Toronto borough of Etobicoke.

The \$180-million project, consisting of four towers and a lush green space between them, bucks the trend of condo development – it is based entirely on rental units, including a resort-like seniors retirement called Tapestry.

The four-storey townhouses along Bloor establish a street presence and allow the towers to blend with the neighbourhood. “This is reflective of Concert’s commitment to building assured rental housing in Toronto and Vancouver,” says Kelly Wilson, Concert’s vice president, development. “While we also develop condo homes, Concert’s formation in 1989 was inspired by the need for affordable rental housing and the company has developed 4,200 rental homes.

to a multi-faceted approach to reducing energy and water consumption.”

The completed structures, Sickie stresses, enhance the overall master plan. “We worked closely with the municipal planners and urban designers to produce a comprehensive series of buildings,” he says. “The townhouse component performs an important urban design role by defining the streetscape along Bloor. The Islington subway station is nearby and because many residents walk to it daily, we wanted to create a nice promenade.”

Interior designer Carmen Dragomir, with esQape Design Inc., says the interiors work in conjunction with the architecture and enhance the contemporary feel of the facade. “Sierra is based on a cool colour palette, while Palomar has a warmer colour scheme approach,” she says. “When selecting the finishes, we kept functionality and maintenance in mind. Porcelain tiles were used in public

# Village Gate West – Palomar and Sierra Towers

by Irwin Rapoport

Our vision for Village Gate West was to create a real sense of place within a walkable, transit-oriented rental community that offers residents a higher level of quality and amenities than they would typically find in other purpose-built rental developments.”

The complex has three floors of underground parking and the ground floor of each tower has a spacious lobby and amenity rooms – an exercise room and party and meeting rooms. These amenity rooms open onto green space.

“The towers are basically rectangular,” says Brian Sickie, the partner in charge and designer with Page + Steele/ IBI Group Architects, “but we rounded the key edges on the southeast sides to minimize the overlook of the two towers as they are close together and have suites that look towards Lake Ontario.”

Concert follows sustainability principles, with both Sierra and Palomar targeting LEED Silver certification. “Sustainability was integrated on every front,” says Wilson, “from the brown-field site the buildings are located on

spaces and laminate flooring for the amenities, as well as durable rubber flooring for the fitness centre.

“Both towers have a similar wood veneer and stainless-steel lobby wall feature, created almost as a signature for the towers and coordinated with the colour scheme of each building,” she adds. “We accomplished a clean line design style with colour accents used predominantly in artwork and accessories. Each public space has areas with elements that create a cohesive space and a visual flow when walking from one amenity space into another.”

NAK Design Group created the landscape design, which focused on the streetscape and central green space. “The internal street was developed as a typical residential street with sidewalks and street trees,” says landscape architect Sibylle von Knobloch. “A pedestrian connection between the towers provides access from the internal street to the plaza at the corner of Bloor and Dunbloor Road. The townhouses not only provide an appropriate scaled presence along

Bloor, but delineate the south edge of the central open space. A gazebo anchors the views from the walkway and provides a venue for sitting and gathering. Trees were used extensively to define and connect spaces within the courtyard, and provide a scale that people can relate to.”

Deltera Contracting Inc. began construction in the spring of 2009. “The challenge,” says Mario Cimicata, Deltera’s senior project manager, “was managing the construction of the towers and the townhomes simultaneously, while maintaining access to the site that had completed and operational buildings. There was almost a full-storey elevation change from the courtyard in the middle of the site and the street level at Bloor, which caused some delivery and equipment organization challenges.”

He adds that “our reputation for working together with our industry-leading team allowed us to utilize aggressive construction schedules and maintain our motto of ‘on time and on budget.’ This was crucial as Concert was eager to occupy the towers rapidly.” ■

PHOTO: PHILIP CASTLETON / COURTESY CONCERT PROPERTIES



## LOCATION

7 & 3 Summerland Terrace  
Etobicoke, Ontario

## OWNERS

Concert Properties Ltd.  
Sun Life Assurance Company of Canada (co-owner)  
Borealis (co-owner)

## DEVELOPER

Concert Properties Ltd.

## ARCHITECT

Page + Steele/ IBI Group Architects

## GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Deltera Contracting Inc.

## STRUCTURAL ENGINEER

Jablonsky, Ast and Partners

## MECHANICAL ENGINEER

M.V. Shore Associates (1993) Limited

## ELECTRICAL ENGINEER

Trace Engineers

## INTERIOR DESIGN

esQape Design Inc.

## LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

NAK Design Group

## TOTAL AREA

Sierra - 170,000 square feet  
Palomar - 230,000 square feet

## TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST

\$100 million

## Page+Steele / IBI Group Architects

are proud to be Architects of Record for the Sierra and Palomar towers at Village Gate West.

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“Proud to have participated in the Village Gate West - Palomar and Sierra Towers project”

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