

Concert Properties

A DEVELOPER WITH A DIFFERENCE

by Susan M Boyce

CONCERT[™]
a developer with a difference



Harbourside in North Vancouver

They're straight shooters with a no-nonsense, practical approach to the business of building. They believe honesty, integrity, hard work and diversification are keys to success and have an unfailing willingness to share their expertise with others. Yet from the most junior team member right up to the chairman and CEO, the people who make up Concert Properties also have an irrepressible sense of creativity, adventure and pure joie de vivre that's kept this Vancouver-based company on the leading edge of housing construction for 24 years.

In 1993, Concert pioneered the micro suite at 600 Drake in downtown Vancouver — functional, compact and fully self-contained apartments that provided an affordable option and sense of pride the might otherwise have been unattainable. Also an early adopter of the transit-oriented communities experts now consider the hottest development trend, Concert's Collingwood Village master planned community was an ambitious, visionary transformation of industrial land near Boundary and Kingsway. The development, a combination of condominium residences and rental apartments, garnered numerous awards of excellence.

And when Concert and the YMCA put their heads together in a unique partnership, the result was dramatic — an iconic marriage of ultra-urban condominium homes and a state-of-the-art community fitness centre. "This was pure outside-the-box thinking and a great partnership," explains Brian McCauley, president and COO. "The Y realized a fabulous 92,000-sq.-ft. facility that achieved a \$14.6 million profit, and we realized a highly successful 42-level residential tower."

New Communities Evolving

Despite a sluggish market, Concert faired well throughout 2012 and currently has no standing inventory — although McCauley notes the company has nearly 3,500 upcoming new homes in different phases of planning or approval. "We're using this time to our advantage, consciously positioning ourselves so we can launch new projects when the timing is best." He's particularly excited about three of them — all large-scale, master planned communities that showcase Concert's diversity.

Located on 12 acres in North Vancouver, Harbourside has already been partially developed into a business park. While current zoning would permit the remaining lands be further expanded as commercial space, Concert had a different vision — a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, and sustainable community where people can live, work, shop and play.

After a successful July 2012 application to amend the City of North Vancouver's Official Community Plan (OCP) to allow residential development on the site, Concert began the rezoning application process. If approved, a total of 18 buildings with 216,000 sq. ft. of high-quality office space, 55,000 sq. ft. of retail, a 100,000-sq.-ft. hotel plus 795,000 sq. ft. of residential (including 100,000 sq. ft. of rental) will ultimately occupy this site.

"We anticipate Harbourside will become a destination for those across the North Shore and beyond," McCauley says. He notes Concert plans to enhance the City of North Vancouver's only pedestrian-accessible waterfront by utilizing an integrated design approach that incorporates public amenities such as a boardwalk and beach. After rezoning, a community-lead process will guide programming of both the original and the newly dedicated, eight acres of public parks that Concert will fund and construct.



The Robert Lee YMCA and Patina
in Vancouver



Collingwood was a leader in transit-oriented,
master planned communities



Concert won the Customer Choice Georgie Award
consecutively from 2008 to 2011

Bringing a fresh outlook to Southeast False Creek, an as yet unnamed development located at Quebec St. and First Ave. will lay claim to being one of the last residential projects on Vancouver's waterfront. Preliminary designs suggest this site will bring 800 to 900 homes to this popular neighbourhood located just steps to the Seawall, Science World, and both the Main Street SkyTrain Station and Olympic Village Canada Line Station. A rezoning application will be submitted in 2013.

And in Coquitlam, Concert will redevelop an 8.26-acre site located just blocks from the coming Evergreen Line Station. "This project is a direct response to the City of Coquitlam's Transit-Oriented Development Strategy to encourage higher-density, transit-oriented development around Evergreen Line stations," McCauley says.

Giving Back

Throughout its 24-year history, Concert has also maintained a strong philanthropic commitment. For the company, it's simply about doing what's right.

Its donated space for the first Community Crime Prevention Office in Canada, volunteered project management services for a ten-bed hospice in East Vancouver for residents who are terminally ill and initiated an annual fundraising golf tournament that has generated \$1.6 million for trades training across Canada. "We take pride in giving back to the communities where we build, and these are some of the ways we achieve that goal," McCauley says.

At Your Service

"We've never been the largest builder in terms of volume," McCauley acknowledges. "But what sets us apart is our commitment to quality and service." And while the company has been honoured with numerous awards and industry accolades, it's still the ones recognizing these values that means the most to McCauley. "We're extremely proud to have been the recipient of the Customer Choice Georgie Award consecutively from 2008 to 2011. It comes down to respect for our purchasers, and when our purchasers respond this way, it's the most important acknowledgement we can get that our dedication has paid off."

Concert Properties is found online at ConcertProperties.com