

NEW-HOME PROJECT PROFILE

## On the waterfront 365 days of the year

Victoria apartments from Concert rise on former industrial property on the Gorge waterway

**365 Waterfront**

**Location:** Victoria  
**Project size:** 84 residences, 6-storey building  
**Prices:** From \$595,000  
**Telephone:** 1/250-382-3382  
**E-mail:** TeamVictoria@ConcertProperties.com  
**Web:** 365 Waterfront.com  
**Developer:** Concert Real Estate Corporation  
**Architect:** Nigel Baldwin Architects Ltd./Richard Henry Architect, Vancouver  
**Interiors:** BBA Design Consultants Inc., Vancouver  
**Occupancy:** Immediate

BY SUZANNE MORPHET

When Concert Properties purchased land near Victoria's Gorge waterway, the company didn't need to come up with a name for the development. The address says it all: 365 Waterfront Crescent, or as Rod Wilburn, the company's vice-president of sales and marketing, puts it: "Waterfront living 365 days a year."

But as Wilburn points out, it's not just about being on the waterfront, but being part of the Selkirk Waterfront Community, an award-winning, mixed-use development that was the home of the Victoria Sawmill for a century.

Jawl Development of Victoria purchased the 10-hectare property in 1991 from Fletcher Challenge Canada, then set to work planning a vibrant community that would be pedestrian-friendly, safe and attractive for living, working and recreation.

The recreation part was easy — the adjacent Galloping Goose rail line would become a biking, rollerblading and walking route. As well, Jawl built and donated facilities for a rowing and paddling club.

Designing the rest of the community was more complicated, but Jawl Development's urban design team worked with a technical committee of city staff to produce an Urban Design Manual with detailed guidelines, including building heights and street widths. These were the first such guidelines for a large-scale project in Victoria and set a precedent.

(Selkirk Waterfront was precedent-setting in another way, too. Just as construction was getting started, the leaky condo crisis became public. According to West Coast Environmental Law, one of the first condominiums at Selkirk "was used as an example of a rain-screen performance building to show the industry how condominiums should be built.")

As a result of the crisis in condominium construction, Selkirk Waterfront took longer than the anticipated seven years to be built.

Today, the site is complete, except for a small undeveloped lot at the south end. Terasen Gas has its Vancouver Island headquarters here, and the B.C. Ministry of Environment is here. As well, there's a Montessori school, a daycare, an assisted-care facility for seniors, commercial space for restaurants, shops and a fitness centre. In the northern half of the site — furthest from the light industrial



area and buffered by offices and commercial buildings — there are low-rise apartments, condominiums and townhouses.

And now there's 365 Waterfront, a terraced concrete, steel and glass building that is four storeys at the front and six at the back, with 84 suites, including six penthouses.

"Virtually every suite in the building has some exposure to the water, and many have complete exposure to the water," says Wilburn. "It's like being on a ship: there's unobstructed views over the water and the waterfront."

The company didn't have a lot of flexibility in the height and form of the building because of the community's overall design guidelines, but Wilburn notes that in addition to water views, each suite's principal living area has a southern exposure.

"Facing south is extremely valuable... The light is wonderful [and] because the building is a low-rise, you also have the sense of being connected with the trees and the streets and the park."

The units are spacious, with generous decks and garden terraces. "Entertainment-size is the term we've used," says Wilburn, commenting on the floor plans. The six penthouses appear to have almost as much outdoor living space as indoor.

The project was not built to LEED standards, but Concert did follow the LEED framework and best practices in sustainability. Each suite has dual-flush toilets and low-flow shower heads. Green roofs help absorb storm water and the uppermost roof area has "rough-ins" to allow solar hot water heating to be installed in future.

According to Sharon Bortolotto, the interior designer for 365 Waterfront and principal of BBA Design Consultants, the idea was to create the feeling of seaside luxury and "this oasis of calm in an urban setting... it's a great sophisticated development."

CONTINUED ON PAGE F10

The goal for the interiors at 365 Waterfront was a seaside-luxury sensibility worthy of an 'oasis of calm in an urban setting,' says Sharon Bortolotto, the new-home project's interior designer. Bortolotto chose neutral colours and textures for homes and common areas, to evoke the marine environment. She points to 'the timelessness and the quality of the finishes and the spaciousness of the suites' as the building's defining characteristics.

### Live in Seattle's Belltown Neighborhood

**GALLERY**  
 THE NEW LOOK OF BELLTOWN LIVING



Live at Gallery in Belltown, Seattle's most sought after downtown destination, and enjoy water or Space Needle views. With easy access to the UW, Seattle University, dining, shopping, Seahawks games, theaters, and newly reduced prices, now's the time to buy!

Homes priced from \$239,000

**LIVEATGALLERY.com**

Sales Center Open Daily 11am - 6pm | 206.441.0300  
 2911 Second Ave, Seattle, WA 98102

Seller reserves the right to change the product offering without notice.



NEW-HOME PROJECT PROFILE: FROM F9

# 365 building includes three bicycle-storage rooms

Bortolotto chose neutral colours and textures for the suites, as well as the lobby, to evoke the marine environment. She points to “the timelessness and the quality of the finishes and the spaciousness of the suites” as the building’s defining characteristics.

The building was designed to appeal to empty nesters, people who’ve lived in a house and still want the spacious rooms and quality finishes a house can offer, but don’t need extra bedrooms or a basement.

Three bicycle storage rooms were included because Concert figured buyers would likely have an active lifestyle. And that’s exactly the type of people who are buying, says project sales manager Alison Wedekind.

“The average age of our buyers is 50-55 and we have a combination of working, semi-retired and retired professionals,” she says. “One of the things I find very telling about the demographic here is that the bike rooms are very well-used — a good sign that many people have made the choice to be here because of the building’s proximity to the Galloping Goose trail.”

Of the 84 suites, 65 have already sold, with three-quarters of the buyers coming from southern Vancouver Island, 10 per cent from the mainland and the rest from Alberta or further east.

Alan Newberry moved back to Victoria — his hometown — from Vancouver to buy a condo here and is delighted with the new 1,200-square-foot suite with two bedrooms and a den, which he shares with his partner Carol.

“It is a special village near the city, but far enough away from the noises of downtown, and because of its proximity to the water is a choice place to live,” he says. “It is something like Granville Island in Vancouver, only smaller and quieter.”

Newberry describes himself and Carol, both educational administrators in their earlier lives, as “retired active!”

“You might see us out Nordic walking or cycling or walking to the nearby organic bread bakery or walking on a beach trail downtown (25 minutes). My partner paddles with a club in the Gorge just outside our door, and she golfs.”



‘It is a special village near the city, but far enough away from the noises of downtown,’ says 365 Waterfront resident Alan Newberry.

Another part of the appeal, says Newberry, was Concert’s “excellent reputation.” This is the company’s fourth project in Victoria, but it has been building rental housing in Vancouver since 1989 and is now a diversified real estate developer with commercial and industrial properties,

in addition to apartments and condominiums in B.C., Alberta and Ontario. The company is owned by Canadian union and management pension plans.

“We say that we’re owned by 200,000 British Columbians,” explains Wilburn, “so we feel we hold

ourselves up to a very high standard in terms of our integrity.”

Over the years, Concert has won many awards, including a Customer Choice George Award two years in a row from the B.C. chapter of the Canadian Homebuilders Association. “We’re very proud of that one, because the

customer is the boss,” says Wilburn.

“It’s probably the most successful project in Victoria. We’ve sold over 50 homes in the last year. For this type of building, that’s a very good success rate.”

*Special to The Sun*