

New in Homes & Condos

»TORONTO STAR«

SECTION H
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HEARTS & SOLES

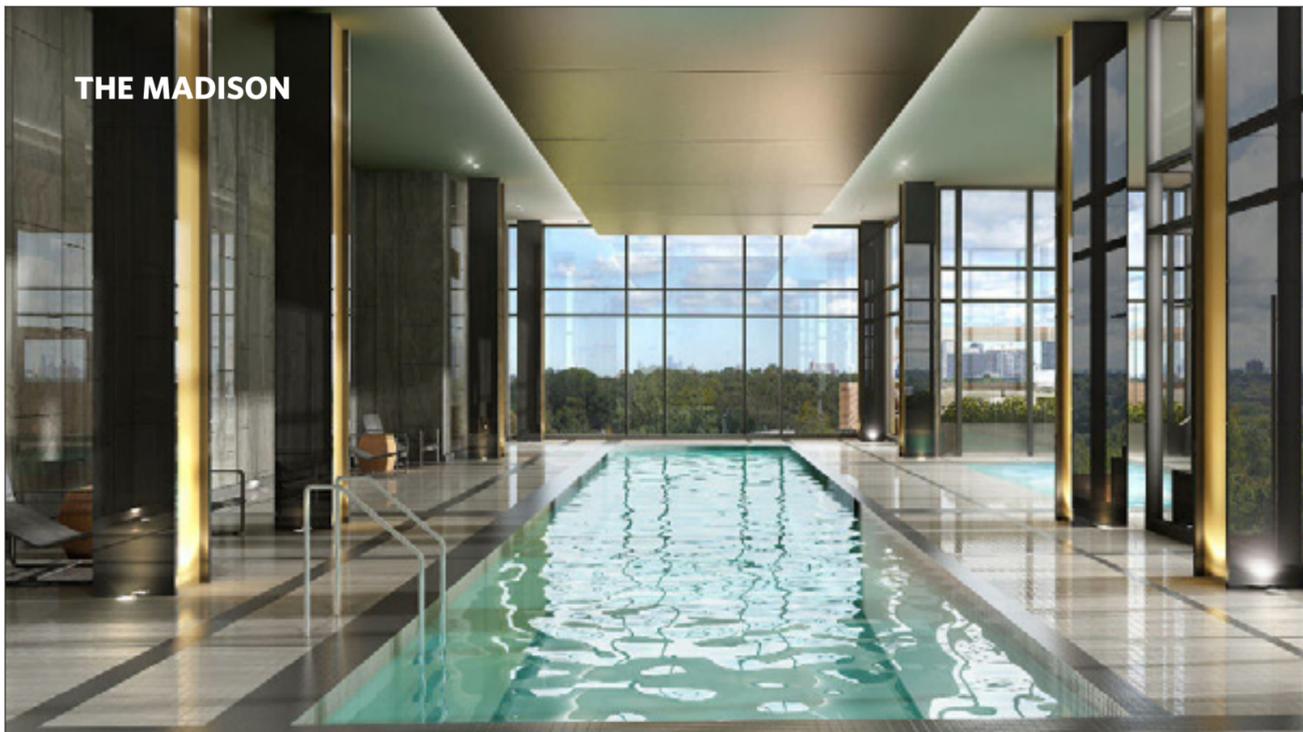
Leo DelZotto and Hugh Heron Walk for Life, **H2**

New condo warranty questions? Find the answers.



Tarion.com

CE 012



THE MADISON

UPTOWN MARKHAM

Building to smart growth principles

Mixed-use development is the latest to be built under Places to Grow

TRACY HANES
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

The launch of Uptown Markham, a \$2 billion mixed-use development along the Rouge River Valley, will boost the Town of Markham's reputation as the 905 leader in smart growth principles.

The Times Group Corp. project will eventually include 4,500 residential condo units and 950,000 square feet of commercial and office space on a 35-hectare (86-acre) site along Highway 7 between Warden Ave. and Birchmount Rd. It's the newest development under the province's Places to Grow plan.

The first phase of Uptown Markham is River Park, which includes two highrise and one midrise European-style condominium building. There will be a total of 580 suites in the three buildings. Also part of the first phase is Uptown Square, a commercial plaza in the heart of the community that will house 15 retailers. Those so far include a major upscale grocery store, coffee shop, bank, artisan bakery café and home outfitting franchise.

The developers say it is the largest new condominium development in Canada being built to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Gold standards. Sustainability has been a key component of the project, says Times Group president Hashem Ghadaki.

MARKHAM continued on H16

MIDTOWN MAKEOVER

The Madison will give the tired stretch of Eglinton east of Yonge a residential and retail reinvigoration with the addition of 644 condos and a large grocery store

RYAN STARR
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Niomey Massey thinks that the stretch of Eglinton between Yonge and Mt. Pleasant could use a bit of livening up.

"It's kind of worn out," says Massey, the project manager for The Madison, a 644-unit condo to be built on the site where the York Theatre used to operate.

"Both Yonge St. and Mt. Pleasant Rd. have restaurants, flower shops, clothing stores, coffee places — everything to support the community."

By contrast, she notes, Eglinton Ave. E., with its small, old-school retailers and smattering of bars and eateries, "doesn't really provide the link it can."

Enter The Madison.

Occupying the entire block of Eglinton between Dunfield Ave. and Lillian

St., the development will include 644 condos and 53,600 square feet of retail space, anchored by a 40,000-square-foot grocery store. (Currently, the area has a 24-hour Metro in the basement of the Yonge Eglinton Centre.)

"We've got a great opportunity here," says Miguel Singer, principal with Madison Homes, the project's developer. "This will allow for the beginning of a revitalization of that commercial quadrant on Eglinton."

The Madison will have two glass towers, one 33 storeys, the other 30. The towers will be connected by an eight-floor podium that will house some residential suites, the building amenities, as well as the two-storey retail complex.

In addition to the grocery store, there will be space for a number of other larger shops and services, "comple-

mentary retail that's geared to the lifestyle mode of that area," Singer notes.

Residences at The Madison range from 500-square-foot one-bedroom units to 1,000-square-foot two-bedroom-plus-den suites. Prices start in the mid \$200,000s.

The condos, designed by Toronto's Munge Leung, will have nine-foot ceilings, laminate flooring and most homes will have balconies or terraces.

The target market for The Madison? If you said Young and Eligible, you're only half right. "It's much more than that today," says Singer.

"The demographics there have become quite broad over the past decade."

More younger families are moving into the neighbourhood, he says.

EGLINTON continued on H16

The Madison will feature a saltwater lap pool as part of its 22,000-square-feet of amenity space.



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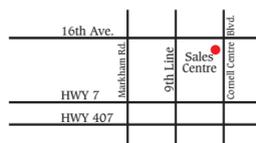
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CE 012

HOMES & CONDOS

Midtown getting a fresh new look

EGLINTON from H1

There are loads of local empty nesters looking to shift into the low-maintenance condo lifestyle, Singer adds.

Kitchens come with granite countertops, under-cabinet lighting, islands in select suites, and a stainless steel appliance package that includes a built-in wall oven and cooktop.

Bathrooms will have CaesarStone countertops, frameless glass shower stalls and ceramic floor tile. "All the high-end buttons you need," says Singer's sister Nelly Zagdanski, a principal with Madison Homes.

The suites also come with stacked washer-dryers.

Amenity space is ample, with 16,000 square feet of it indoors and an additional 6,200 square feet of adjoining outdoor space, including barbecue areas, five cabanas and a fire pit.

The outdoor space is connected to the indoor party room, which will have TVs, Wi-Fi access, a card table, pool table, demonstration kitchen (suitable for cooking events), private dining room and a two-sided bar.

"The bar services the outdoor space and the indoor amenity space," Zagdanski explains. "Half of it faces inside and we have these retractable doors so that in the summertime you can open it up and be serving outside as well."

There will be an additional out-

THE MADISON

Site Location: Eglinton Ave. E. between Dunfield Ave. and Lillian St.

Developer: Madison Homes

Architect: Kirkor Architects

Interior designer: Munge Leung

Occupancy: Spring 2015

Project size: 644 condos, eight-storey podium, two towers

Units: 500 sq. ft. one-bedroom to 1,000 sq. ft. two-bedroom-plus-den.

Price: From mid-\$300,000s

Amenities: 22,000-square-foot of amenity space, including BBQ areas, cabanas, indoor-outdoor bar, party room, private dining room, demonstration kitchen, gym, saltwater lap pool, hot tub.

Retail: Major grocer and additional large-scale shops and services.

Sales centre: 101 Eglinton Ave. E. (project is still in pre-registration with sales expected to launch this summer).

Information: 416-482-8090, www.themadisoncondos.ca



The Madison will consist of 644 condos in two towers connected by an eight-storey podium.

door amenity area on the eighth floor, at the top of the podium, that has been designed as a "zen style outdoor garden retreat" for residents who want to get away from it all (water feature included).

Fitness buffs will no doubt dig the two-level gym that overlooks the hustle and bustle on Eglinton below and includes a yoga room with outdoor terrace. Chlorine haters will love the saltwater lap pool. There will also be a co-ed sauna and steam room off the pool deck, as well as a hot tub.

"We had a real advantage here because of the way the building is laid

out with the two towers and the central podium," says Zagdanski. "We got to have the benefit of combining the amenity areas, which will help keep maintenance costs down."

The project is slated to go on sale in early summer and occupancy of the building is scheduled for spring 2015.

This is Madison Homes' initial foray into the development of a highrise condo. Up until a few years ago, the company was focused primarily on the construction of low-rise communities.

But with provincial policies hav-

ing made sprawling subdivisions an endangered species, Singer says his firm saw the writing on the wall and began shifting toward the highrise condo world.

The company has a long history in retail and commercial development, he notes, which could help to explain the builder's grand vision of The Madison infusing the lifeblood of Eglinton with its retail offerings. "We're very comfortable with mixed-use development," he says.

And he's got Toronto's mixed-use specialists on the case: Kirkor Architects, the same firm that did Hullmark Centre — the mammoth

office/condo currently under construction on the northeast corner of Yonge and Sheppard — and the Festival Tower, the 46-storey condominium that's built atop the TIFF Bell Lightbox at the corner of King St. W. and John St.

"We've put together a team that has experience solving the issues that come out of mixed-use development," Singer says. "These are much more involved in terms of making sure the spaces work well together. It's not just the typical stick up a highrise and move on."

Indeed, these days good design means that the condo building must actively seek to engage the street life. "It's really a three-way relationship," Singer says. "It's the retail to the condo, condo to the retail, and the pedestrian to the retail. And if it's done correctly, it can lead to a beautiful synergy between the different types of uses."

Speaking of synergies, residents of The Madison will also benefit from the light rail transit expansion planned for the Eglinton corridor.

While the aim is for The Madison to provide a bigger retail bang for the area, Massey stresses that the idea is not to drive away Eglinton's existing smaller shops.

"With the larger retail coming in, I think there is an opportunity for those other retailers," she says. "They're going to see a spinoff. They'll become healthier and more vibrant because of a greater level of pedestrian activity on Eglinton."



PC's lighted planters sit on a deck, above, and their Simply Salad Bowl's al fresco mix, below.

HOT HOME PRODUCTS

Some inspiration for the gardening season

VICKY SANDERSON
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Given the damp and dreary April endured by this corner of the planet, the proverbial May flowers should be popping up like NDP MPs in Quebec.

Sadly, at my own home, what's more in evidence are muddy, barren patches and a knotted tangle of Creeping Charlie marching purposefully across the lawn. Hope lies close at hand, though, in the form of a slightly warmer than normal spring and summer and a huge offering of outdoor plants from a variety of retailers.

If you need a dose of inspiration to get gardening, take a visit to the Toronto Botanical Garden's (www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca) annual sale, which runs until 5 p.m. Saturday. There you'll find master gardeners offering growing tips and information on plant and colour trends. Farther afield is the Canadian Tulip Festival (www.tulipfestival.ca) in Ottawa, which runs until May 23.

Urban dwellers can also get great information at LEAF (Local Enhancement and Appreciation of Forests, www.yourleaf.org), a non-profit organization that works to protect and improve the urban forest and oversees a native species planting program and sells Native Garden Kits that attract either songbirds or butterflies. The window for ordering a kit for spring has closed, but you can order now for a fall planting. Two sizes are available, covering from 25 to 64 square feet, which costs \$125 and \$325.

Whatever area of your outdoor space you decide to tackle, you want to ensure that you're working from

a good base. Turf Revolution is an all-natural landscaping product company that sells organic options for improving lawns, as well as both vegetable and flower gardens. The entire line is free from animal by-products, manure, synthetics or processed human sewage.

As a pet owner, one product that caught my eye was Salt Stopper, a naturally-mined calcium magnesium sulphate that the company says neutralizes road salt and pet urine and can be used as a spot treatment for areas damaged by either.

Because I prefer not to water the lawn and garden, I also like the sound of Time Sav'r Topdresser, an organic pelletized compost made from leaf and yard trimmings which is free of weed seeds. It increases the soil's water-holding capacity, which increases drought tolerance. For more information and a list of retailers and www.turfrevolution.com.

President's Choice lawn and garden line has been expanding for the last few years as it tries to carve out a niche as the go-to place for new products (www.pc.ca). This year's selection, which should be rolling into stores this week, does not disappoint.

Those who missed out on the spring-blooming Bloomerang lilac, which begins reblooming in mid-summer, is back and selling at about \$30 for a shrub that grows to about five feet. Two new plants are a lovely gingery-orange Huecherella (about \$10 for a five-inch pot) and a velvety-black petunia (\$2.99 each or \$2.50 if you buy a flat of 10 or more).

My top pick, however, may just



have to be the 12-inch Simply Salad Bowls, which are pre-planted with salad greens in three mixes. Not only do they make a pleasing outdoor arrangement, but you can pluck a few leaves from one to make a fresh salad. To that end, I'd plan to buy three or more so I could rotate harvesting. In doing so, I'm told that at least three full harvests could be gotten from a single bowl.

Having an outdoor watering station would also add to the convenience of using these for summer suppers on the deck. Home Depot's spring/summer catalogue has an image of a DIY water station, directions for which can be found on their new online channel with easy-to-execute projects. Go to www.homedepot.ca/knowhow to find directions.

Lounging and entertaining on summer evenings would be further enhanced with clever solar-powered planters from PC Home. These white resin planters, which are 18-inches in diameter and just under 20-inches high, can be used to hold plants and illuminate walkways. I love the idea of using them as ice-buckets to keep summer beverages cool throughout the evening. They sell for \$85. If you don't find them this weekend at your local Loblaws store, don't panic — they may not arrive until late May.

You can read Vicky's On the House blog at www.thestarblogs.com/onthouse. Contact Vicky Sanderson at vswriter@sympatico.ca and follow her on Twitter @vickysanderson.

Condo project will follow Places to Grow plan

MARKHAM from H1

The Times Group will dedicate 20 hectares (50 acres) to parkland, bike trails and valley lands.

The company will also contribute \$6 million to help improve the valley lands, says Ghadaki. New parkland will be created, the existing network of trails and bike routes expanded, riverbanks restored, trees planted, areas naturalized, a children's play area created and educational kiosks installed to highlight flora and fauna.

"This is a significant legacy development," says Times Group marketing director Elmar Busch, who described it as one of the most environmentally and family friendly developments in the country.

"I think this will make a great statement along Highway 7, with a signature building that will stand the test of time," Markham Mayor Frank Scarpitti said at the launch, held in the sales office in Majestic Court, another Times Group project that was the first LEED Gold registered condo in York Region.

The developers worked closely with the town during the planning process, Scarpitti says. "The Times Group wants to have excellence in sustainable communities. No part of this development will be more than 200 metres away from public transit. It is a significant part of our vision for Markham Centre."

It is also one kilometre from picturesque Main Street Unionville, with its restored heritage buildings, boutiques and cafés, and has direct access to major traffic arteries.

"This is going to be a great project," says regional councillor Jim Jones, who noted that holistic planning started in Markham in the early 1990s, moving away from spot rezoning to master-planned communities, long before smart growth, peak oil concerns or Green Belt legislation came into being. "It has smaller blocks and it is built more to human scale (than a previous plan

for the site by another developer). And Hashem has put a road in so people can enjoy the valley lands."

The Rouge River Valley separates Uptown Markham from another large mixed use development, Downtown Markham by the Remington Group.

To meet LEED Gold objectives, waste will be diverted to reduce landfill loads during construction and the condos will include recycling facilities, bicycle storage, water-efficient landscaping and rainwater collection for irrigation use. Suites will include double-glazed Low-E windows with argon gas, heat recovery ventilators, low-flow shower heads and dual-flush toilets, individual sub-metering of electricity and water, and Energy Star appliances.

Though River Park is surrounded by schools, it is catering to families with its \$500,000 indoor/outdoor play centre geared to children 2 to 6-years-old, to be shared by the three condo buildings.

"No other condo in Canada has a play centre like this," says Busch. "It is not a daycare. Supervision will be by the parents. This will be a place where they and their children can socialize."

Other amenities will include 24-hour concierge, two-storey indoor swimming pool area with sauna, party room with kitchen and bar, fitness facility, yoga studio, games room, screening theatre, business centre with library and guest suites.

Suites are available in one bedroom and one bedroom-plus-den layouts ranging from 587 to 686 square feet, while two bedroom and two-bedroom-plus-den suites are 791 to 1,292 in size. Prices range from \$240,000 to \$600,000.

The sales office is located at 60 South Town Centre Blvd. and is open from Monday to Thursday, noon to 7 p.m., closed Friday, and Saturday and Sunday from noon to 5 p.m. More information at www.uptownmarkham.com.



River Park Uptown Markham is a major new condominium development by the Times Group that will bring 4,500 new condo units to the town.