

For the birds

A feeder filled with peanuts will make blue jays happy, **H4**



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CE ON2 NEW IN HOMES & CONDOS

It's a man's world

Indx Condos is catering to the Bay Street bucks

RYAN STARR
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

Considering that Indx Condos will be the first purely residential tower built in the Financial District, its developers didn't have to spend too long determining the project's target market.

Indx, a 54-storey glass tower to be built at 70 Temperance St., will cater directly to Bay Street's young bucks — 20- and 30-something go-getters who work long hours at their bank/law firm/consulting firm/accounting firm and want to stay tapped into what's happening downtown.

"We see the buyer being someone who works hard, plays hard and views his career as being very important," explains Andrew Hoffman, president of CentreCourt Developments, which is building the project in partnership with Lifetime Developments. "So there's tangible value to living at a central address that's within a five-minute walk to the office."

Indx will have suites that range from 356-square-foot studios up to 820-square-foot three-bedroom units. Condos start in the mid \$200,000s.

The Indx tower — designed by Page & Steele IBI Group Architects — will feature a variety of glass treatments and cut-outs. The top of the building will have stone work that echoes its four-storey limestone base. The podium will house the condo's amenities and 1,500 square feet of street-level retail space. Plans call for Indx to eventually be tied into the PATH network.

INDX continued on H18



Indx Condos on Temperance St., in Toronto's financial district, aims to meet all of the demands of young up-and-comers on Bay St.

YONGE ST.

Bank on it: Massey Tower will be classic

Project will incorporate restored historic Bank of Commerce building

RYAN STARR
SPECIAL TO THE STAR

For years, whenever developer Gary Switzer passed by the abandoned Bank of Commerce building at 197 Yonge St., he felt a deep sense of civic disappointment.

The heritage-listed building — designed by Darling & Pearson Architects and built in 1905 — has sat vacant since 1987, its insides essentially left to rot.

At the moment, the four-storey bank building is cut off from Yonge by a chain-link security fence — a depressing, derelict blight on one of Toronto's premier avenues.

"As a Torontonians, as a citizen, developer and architect, I'd walk by the site all the time and think, 'what's going on?'" says Switzer, president of MOD Developments.

"The whole city is booming and you've got this beautiful old building that's been vacant for so many years.

"It's the kind of site that gets my creative juices going in terms of what should happen there."

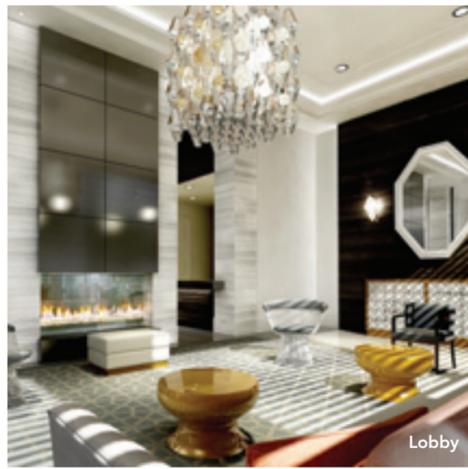
In late January, MOD Developments announced it had bought the site, which includes the adjacent property, once the location of the Colonial Tavern and now a small park.

MASSEY TOWER continued on H18



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HOMES & CONDOS

Planning, building for future growth



PAUL GOLINI JR.

I don't know about you, but I've been anxiously awaiting the release of the most recent census data for Canada and, more importantly, the GTA.

Statistics Canada conducted a census last year — the last one was done in 2006 — and I think the GTA has grown exponentially since then. I wondered if the census data would reflect it?

The first results were released earlier this month and included

the population and dwelling count, and with it, a detailed analysis of growth rates, demographic trends and geographic distribution of the population for every municipality in the GTA.

At BILD, most of our conversations with our members and partners in government and neighbouring agencies are based on this multi-faceted concept of growth and what growth looks like across the GTA. With this census, we'll have a sense of how and where the GTA has grown in the past five years.

There has been a lot of attention given to the growing provinces, like Alberta and British Columbia, but here in Ontario, the population growth in the GTA has been underplayed. Think of it this way: if Ontario, with a population of 12.8 million, were an American state, it

would be the same size as Illinois, the fifth largest state.

According to the data, the population in the GTA increased by 9 per cent — 498,336 people — over the past five years. That would be like the population of the Hamilton packing up and moving to the GTA.

The City of Toronto accounted for about 22 per cent of that growth, but the regions surrounding it were just as significant. For example, York Region's census data revealed that it had the strongest growth rate in the GTA outside the City of Toronto, at 15.7 per cent.

I find this interesting because just last month, BILD and RealNet Canada Inc., the association's source of new home market intelligence, reported that there were more than 45,000 new

homes sold in the GTA in 2011, nearly 10,000 more than the year before. As well, the highrise sales in York Region had doubled in 2011 from the previous year.

Here's how I see these numbers adding up: people want to live in the GTA and our industry is providing well-planned and well-designed communities for them.

GTA growth in the past 5 years equals the population of Hamilton moving here

Another interesting feature of the data release was in the census mapping done to compare population growth by geography. In 2006, the mapping showed population growth in northern GTA municipalities like Georgina, New-

market and King. This most recent census shows growth decreasing in those municipalities and picking up in places like Markham, Richmond Hill and Milton, which remains the fastest-growing municipality in all of Canada.

These population increases result in a healthy housing market and BILD members are working hard to provide a full range of affordable housing choices for homebuyers. To do that, we need our government partners to work with us and focus on removing barriers so that those who wish to call the GTA home can fill in the next census as such.

Paul Golini is the chairman of the Building Industry and Land Development Association (www.bildgta.ca) and can be found on Twitter @bildgta, Facebook, YouTube and BILD's blog (www.bildblogs.ca).

Alpha males can rejoice

INDX from HI

Suites at Indx will have nine-foot ceilings, engineered wood floors and open-concept layouts. The units, designed by Ceconi Simone, are decidedly bachelor-friendly spaces, with black countertops and cabinetry, warm earth tones and clean lines. Some suites will have balconies and floor-to-ceiling windows, depending on the plan.

To further woo the man-about-town, Indx's pads can be upgraded to include a custom closet with double hanging space to accommodate suits, racks for ties and belts and a drawer for cufflinks and watches.

Kitchens come with a 35-bottle wine fridge.

All units have an Energy Star appliance package: a cabinet-covered refrigerator and dishwasher, black electric cook-top, 24-inch stainless steel oven and hood fan and a stainless steel microwave oven.

Given that the target market for Indx is guys who don't have much time to cook, though, suites can be upgraded to a "low-maintenance" kitchen, with the full-sized oven and dishwasher swapped out for a single-rack oven and high-speed



AARON HARRIS FOR THE TORONTO STAR

From left, Robert Galletta, Andrew Hoffman and Brian Brown are the team behind male-oriented Indx condos.

dishwasher.

The amenities include a party room with full-length bar, cocktail lounges and fireplace. The party room opens out to a terrace equipped with barbecues, banquettes and a 12-foot water wall.

There'll be a poker room with two full-size tables, a billiards room with sports lounge and bar, and a golf room with putting green and simulator. Indx will also have a cigar lounge and movie theatre.

WITH THIS MANY alpha males in one building, the gym had better be big — and it will be; a 3,000-square-foot area with free weights, cardio machines, circuit machines, a spin-

ning room, yoga room and separate change rooms for men and women.

For the downtown man on the move, Indx will offer concierge services including drop-off and pickup of dry cleaning or laundry and full-sized fridges for storage of delivered groceries or wine. There's also a shoeshine station in the lobby.

The Indx site is tucked behind the historic Graphic Arts Building on Richmond St. near Bay St.

Designed by Toronto architect F.S. Baker and built in 1912, the Graphic Arts Building has strong ties to Toronto's literary history. It housed The Grip, an advertising and design firm where members of the Group of Seven once worked, as well as

Tom Thomson. It also served as the offices of the defunct *Saturday Night* magazine.

Indx's four-storey limestone base, which matches the cornice lines of the Graphic Arts Building, will have Chicago windows and a canopy at street level, Hoffman notes. "It's a classic base that really ties in with the classic architecture of the Graphic Arts Building and the Bell building to the south."

Marketing guru Robert Galletta, whose team at Blackjet Inc. developed the advertising strategy for Indx, says they've come up with a male-oriented campaign that a "distinct Bay Street buyer" can identify with.

"It's targeting that person who lives to work," he explains. "They've been out of school for a while and are looking to climb the corporate ladder, and it's all about work — they never shut off, they're always connected. Even when they're not at work they're working. If it's going out at night for drinks, they're going out and networking and looking to ladder climb."

The Indx campaign was inspired by the TV character Barney Stinson, the cad played by Neil Patrick Harris on the show *How I Met Your Mother*.

"When he opens his closet he's got 90 different shades of grey suit," Galletta says. "And his apartment is meticulous, very modernist; he's probably never cooked a meal in his kitchen before. He eats out a lot."

"We really wanted to translate those ideas into the Indx campaign."

Marketing campaigns are more effective when they target a specific audience, Galletta notes. By focusing so much on catering to Bay Streeters, though, don't the developers risk alienating other potential buyers?

"We think the (Bay Street) market is extremely deep and there's great demand for this type of offering," says Hoffman. "But also Indx is going to be very well designed so anyone having a unit in this building will feel comfortable with the classic nature of the architecture and the suite finishes."

"And ultimately the location will be a huge driver of demand."

Hoffman doesn't argue when it's suggested that he's designed a condo that he himself would love to live in.

"I did actually," he says. "I'd like to think of myself as being in that 20- to 30-something demographic. But my wife keeps reminding me I've passed it."

Civic disappointment leads to pride of ownership

MASSEY TOWER from HI

It sits between the Bank of Commerce building and its sister structure to the north, the old Bank of Toronto building at 205 Yonge St.

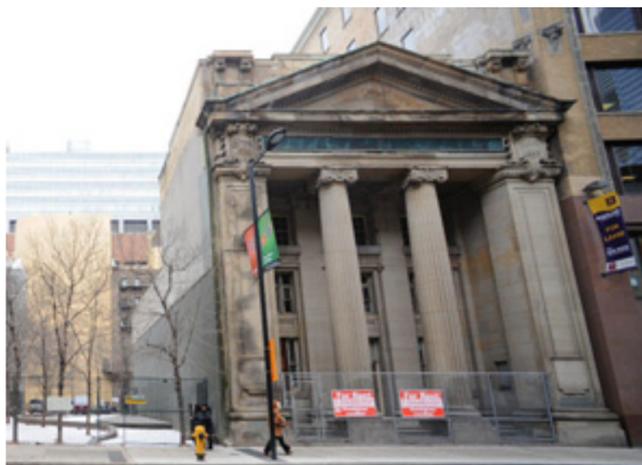
(Built in 1905 and designed by E.J. Lennox — of Casa Loma and Old City Hall fame — the neo-classical Bank of Toronto building, complete with a dome and Corinthian columns, was home to the Toronto Historical Board until 1998. It's owned by an Irish businessman but unoccupied.)

MOD plans to restore the Bank of Commerce building and incorporate it into a proposed mixed-use project that could include a 60-storey tower behind the bank with 650 condos and retail at street level. Switzer says he's exploring the possibility of including office space in the base of the building.

A narrow portion of the site connects to Victoria St. and it will be donated to Massey Hall. The facility's ownership said in a statement that it is exploring "multiple options to revitalize" the legendary concert venue.

To honour the Massey family — of Massey Harris and then Massey Ferguson fame — MOD will be naming the new building Massey Tower.

Designed by Hariri Pontarini Architects, the 60-storey condo tower will use the restored Bank of Commerce as its front lobby. "You walk



COLIN MCCONNELL/TORONTO STAR

MOD plans to restore the Bank of Commerce building and incorporate it into a mixed-use project that could include a 60-storey tower and retail.

up the steps, under the columns, and that's how you enter," says Switzer, formerly the head of high-rise residential construction for Great Gulf Homes.

The heritage building's restoration and renovation will be overseen by Michael McClelland of ERA Architects Inc., who has quite a job ahead of him, Switzer notes.

"We're responsible for dealing with 25 years of broken windows and leaky skylights. On the third floor you can bounce on the floors they're so rotten. In the basement, the whole ceiling looks like it's

about to collapse.

"I feel like we're rescuing this building," he says. "You hear so much about demolition by neglect, and this whole building has been neglected. So something had to happen or who knows what the future would have held."

Behind the bank building will be a parking block that will match the height of the neighbouring Heintzman Building, which abuts the site on its southern end. The top of this parking block will function as a rooftop terrace with pool and other building amenities. The condo

"As a Torontonians, as a citizen, developer and architect, I'd walk by the site all the time and think, 'what's going on?'"

GARY SWITZER
MOD DEVELOPMENTS

tower will rise from here.

The retail component of the project will be located on the property just to the north of the Bank of Commerce building, currently an uninspired park.

To house the retail, architect David Pontarini has designed a transparent glass box that will offer views of the Bank of Toronto building beside it.

"The banks are the elements that stand out, with those beautiful classic stone facades," notes Pontarini.

The donated leg of property that runs behind Massey Hall through to Victoria will likely be used to accommodate an expansion of the theatre's infrastructure, Switzer says. "What's really constrained them for years is that they don't have any proper loading. Right now they have to load all their shows from Shuter St. It's kind of ridiculous. That has also restrained them from ever really renovating the concert hall."

Switzer says his new neighbours are thrilled that something is finally

happening to the derelict site.

"(Massey Hall) has gone to heaven that finally they have a neighbour that they can work with and will help them achieve their dreams," says Switzer. "And the general manager of the Elgin Theatre is thrilled the bank building won't be empty anymore, that there will be more people living on the block who will hopefully come to his theatre."

MOD's plans for the site have been greeted with enthusiasm by James Robinson, executive director of the Downtown Yonge Business Improvement Association.

"Since we were founded in 2001, we've been dealing with issues related to that property. Things like graffiti, homeless people, garbage, pigeons and safety concerns," he says. "And we've been spending years working with the owners and various city agencies and using our own resources to manage what was happening there."

"So the (Massey Tower) announcement is really positive. It's taking us beyond the safety and cleanliness issues that have plagued that block for so long."

"The plan is very forward-thinking."

"To think there'll be residents there, retail, potentially office space, some type of connection with Massey Hall, plus that location just being really critical, this is really quite an exciting time."

"This is long overdue."