

newhomes

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With an esthetic that pushes convention, Origin Lofts isn't afraid to be a little different.

The new mid-rise condominium project by Nascent Developments and the Sher Corporation promises to fill a specific niche in the Markham housing market.

"We wanted something that was fresh, that was unique, and there were lots of people in Markham who wanted the same thing," says Shakeel Walji, partner with the Sher Corporation.

"They want modern architecture, something that's outside the box, with a great exterior and great interior space. So that's how we started the evolution of this project."

Inspired by designs from England, the Netherlands and Scandinavia, the site's geometric architecture by Raw Design incorporates colour blocking in white, orange and wood tones, with live moss accents, green roofs and retail at street level. One eight-storey, mid-rise building is joined by a series of three five-storey "loft" buildings, all surrounding a communal courtyard at the McCowan Road and Bur Oak Avenue site.

And it's those lofts that Walji promises will offer a specific subset of Markham buyers something they've been looking for. The two- and three-storey stacked units range from 1,034 to 1,900 square feet, and feature two- and three-bedroom layouts — some with family rooms and flex spaces. The way they're designed makes them ideal for multiple generations of a single family living together, the developer says.

"The units allow for a bedroom with a full bath on the main level. And that allows a grandparent to use that space with no accessibility issues," Walji explains. "Because it's right off of the courtyard in the back, there are no stairs to climb up or down."

As a Markham resident himself, Mohammed Rawra, CEO of Nascent Developments, sees a need for exactly that type of housing option in the local community. In fact, it's a concern he knows well — he lives close to his own parents, but while they see condo living in their future, he favours the idea of



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CONDO THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX

MARKHAM DEVELOPMENT EYES GENERATIONS OF FAMILIES LIVING NEARBY

a more spacious townhome. The lofts fit somewhere in between, letting two different generations find common ground while getting "the support that they need."

"That's the mindset of this

community," he says. "That's the kind of value that it's going to add."

While families — both young and old — are a key demographic at the site, Rawra adds, Markham's growing population means

Origin is seeing interest from other types of buyers as well. With units ranging from 635 to 1,038 square feet, the eight-storey, mid-rise building has layouts ideal for investors and young professionals too. Units

through all four buildings range from \$499,900 to approximately \$1.6 million.

While entirely new construction, the suites themselves are designed with a loft look, featuring 10-foot ceilings in the mid-rise

building and nine- and 10-foot ceilings in the lofts — with a select few units offering 20-foot ceilings in some areas, creating what Walji calls an eye-catching "James Bond style." Meanwhile, Trevisana kitchens feature perforated metal backsplashes and island detailing, adding to the industrial feel brought on by the exposed concrete ceilings.

Interior designer Giovanna Greco says her goal at the project was to "bring an urban esthetic to the suburbs." The principal with Toronto-based firm Progetti Inc. set out to create a look that matched the clean, modern style of the exterior. Green elements will also be picked up inside — in fact, the whole project is being built to LEED Silver standards for sustainable design.

Amenity spaces at the site include a gym, kids' play area, dog wash area and glassed-in games space set under a trellised canopy in the courtyard, which can be closed for shelter on rainy days.

"The common spaces will still have a very loft and industrial type of look, but we're bringing in some greenery through some moss accents that will be in the lobby space and amenities as well," says Greco, who will also be introducing black accents, as well as pops of the same orange found on the outside facade. "The site is geared toward a variety of people, so we want to hit a lot of touch points."

While the design may be what stands out most, the site's location is also a drawing point. The McCowan and Bur Oak site is surrounded by a selection of schools, including Bur Oak Secondary School, Wismer Public School, Stonebridge Public School and Fred Varley Public School — all five minutes away. It's also a six-minute drive from the Mount Joy and Centennial GO Stations, while York Region Transit and TTC bus routes run by. Grocery shopping, the Markville shopping centre, parks and golf courses are short drives away.

Currently in pre-construction, the developers believe Origin will only add to that local community when the project is completed.

"It's one of a kind," says Rawra. "And it's definitely being well-received."

Origin Lofts is scheduled for August 2021 occupancy. To register, visit originlofts.com or call 416-865-0862.

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