

NEW HOME PROJECT PROFILE

West Coast-inspired low-rise boon for buyers

Surrey apartments in Newton neighbourhood close to all amenities, without Vancouver prices

Mirra

Project location: 138th Street and 75A Avenue, Surrey

Project size: 71 units in the first phase

Residence size: studio, 468 sq. ft.; one-bedrooms 554 — 685 sq. ft.; one-bedroom and den starting at 659 sq. ft.; two-bedroom at 835 sq. ft. and two-bedroom and den at 893 sq. ft.

Prices: From \$154,900

Builder/Developer: Wanson Development

Architect: Burrows Huggins

Interiors: D.D.G. (design specifications) BYU (display suite furnishings)

Sales centre: 13778 76th Avenue

Hours: noon — 5 p.m. Thurs — Sat

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Occupancy: April 2011



Like many real-estate projects, sale and construction of the Mirra new-home project in Surrey's Newton neighbourhood was temporarily put on hold last year as uncertainty rumbled through world economies. But the delay has turned out to be a boon to aspiring homeowners.

Half of the units at Mirra — a 156-unit West Coast-inspired low-rise — are priced at under \$200,000, a figure that's "very affordable in Vancouver dollars," said Nick Askew, president of Pacesetter Marketing, which is handling sales for the project.

And Mirra, a product of Wanson Development, will have much to offer those who make it their home. Their residences will be within walking distance to restaurants, stores, groceries and transportation hubs.

"Newton is a real walkable community," said Askew. "There's a lot of infrastructure that makes it neighbourhood-friendly."

The location is about six blocks away from the Newton bus exchange and a 10-minute drive from the King George Sky-Train station.

Newton is also one of the five Surrey town centres Mayor Dianne Watts wants to see spruced up as part of the growing city's Townshifft makeover contest. The competition is designed to create more livable, walkable and sustainable hubs in each of the areas. Newton's theme is *New Town: Connecting Density to Transit*.

The Mirra's first phase is a four-storey

wood-frame building made up of 71 units with 12 different floor plans.

The majority of units are one-bedroom suites, but options range from a 468-square-foot studio to an 893-square-foot two-bedroom and den.

The exterior is an homage to West Coast sensibilities, with its use of stone, wood and post-and-beam construction.

A second phase with 86 suites will be released early next year.

Half of the homes are eligible for a mortgage promotion, which allows buyers to pay less than \$300 a month for a year after putting down a 10 per cent deposit.

This, Askew explained, means that a \$170,000 one-bedroom, which might

have a \$650 monthly mortgage, comes out to only \$150 a month for the first year after the developer's subsidy. The average monthly rent for the area is about \$750 per month.

"It makes it more affordable for first-time homebuyers to buy and for the savvy investor, it makes a lot of sense," said Askew.

On display at the presentation centre is a 659-square-foot one-bedroom-and-den unit that feels spacious, despite its compact size.

The floor plan is typical open-concept, but stands out because it isn't meant to be divided as a living room and dining room.

Instead, buyers can put their dining table in the middle of the L-shaped kitchen, or go with the optional add-on of an island, which does double duty as a work space and dining table.

The floors are engineered hardwood, in a dark walnut.

All suites have patios or balconies, while most boasts full height pantries for extra storage in the kitchen.

For the units with dens, a big plus is the location of the den along the outside wall, so instead of the typical dark, windowless cubbies that pass for dens in other projects, the dens at Mirra are airy and light-filled which make them a good spot for a home office or a kids' playroom.

To keep the units affordable, amenities are kept to a minimum.

There's no pool, for example — Askew said research found only 20 per cent of tenants would use it regularly — which keeps monthly strata fees down to 22 cents per square foot.

Mirra is scheduled to be completed in spring 2011.



The Mirra sales staff is selling the new-home project with the assistance of a representation of a 660-square-foot one-bedroom-and-den apartment. The exterior is a homage to West Coast sensibilities, with its use of stone, wood and post-and-beam construction.

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