

Ezra's urban park provides green backdrop to walking lifestyle



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Sarah Graves fell in love with Riley Park. *DON MOLYNEAUX / CALGARY HERALD*

When Sarah Graves and her husband had children, they wanted them to have the benefit of living near wide, open spaces.

At the time, the natural choice was to put down roots at an acreage near Calgary.

Now the couple is ready to downsize and the outdoors are just as important. The difference this time is instead of leaving the city, they're heading to its core. The couple bought a spacious apartment-style condo at a development where historic Riley Park is just a few steps away.

Ezra on Riley Park is planned to have two eight-storey towers, with the base flanked by townhouses. Floors three through six are condos, and levels seven and eight are penthouses. The project is by Birchwood Properties, which is the company behind Quarry Park multi-family developments Bristol Townhomes and Boulevard Townes.

"We just fell in love with Riley Park," says Graves, who grew up in Cambridge, Mass. "I didn't even know it existed, to be honest. I only went to Kensington occasionally when we lived out in the country."

Riley Park is a scenic nine hectare stretch of land at 800 12th St. N.W. It contains a playground, water fountains, cricket pitch, wading pool, picnic tables and Senator Patrick Burns Memorial Rock Gardens.

Graves says she missed the days when shops and services were a walkable distance away. "You move out to the country in order to be in nature but you drive everywhere," adds Graves. Back in Cambridge, she got in a car about once a week.

“(When) we moved to the country, I ended up living in a car,” she says. “We were really looking forward to getting back to that urban existence where you get to walk to get your groceries or this or that. But with that particular spot you don’t give up that amazing bit of nature. It’s like this little oasis.”

At Ezra, condos are available in one bedroom orientations that range from 466 to 645 and two bedroom floor plans range from 747 to 1,496. These condos are priced from \$319,900 and \$549,900, respectively. Prices are before tax. There are also three bedroom units from \$879,900, ranging from 1,521 and 1,532 square feet and townhomes from 1,106 to 1,681 square feet that start from \$799,900.

Getting three bedrooms was important, allowing enough space for their kids to stay when they visit at Christmas, says Graves. Their condo faces south, meaning it’ll get plenty of sunshine, which was another consideration, says Graves.

“I love lots of light in the winter,” she adds.

Condos feature engineered hardwood floors, flat panel doors with polished chrome levers, custom roller shades on exterior windows, decor light switches and an Energy Star front-load washer and dryer. Kitchens come with high-gloss European cabinets, under cabinet lighting, a glass tile backsplash and low profile integrated stainless steel hoodfan.

Ezra brought its largest condos to the market last month, opening sales on its \$3.2 million seventh floor penthouse and \$2.8 million eighth floor penthouse. Both prices are before tax. At press time, three of four total penthouses were available.

Penthouses range in square footage from 3,055 square feet to 3,300 square feet, depending on the tower. The seventh floor penthouse boasts a tape-measure stretching 6,000-square-foot terrace, or the size of a city lot, says Birchwood sales and marketing manager Adele Kerr.

“We think we might have the largest outdoor living space for a condo in Calgary,” Kerr says. “With the views from the terrace of Riley Park and the downtown views, it’s quite spectacular.”

The penthouse layouts are similar in both towers, says Kerr. “What we’re doing since it’s so early on is people are welcome to do some customizing on the penthouses. Our floor plans are offering people inspiration for how we feel the floor plans work best, but they are welcome to make it what they want, their actual dream home.”

But the customization doesn’t end there. Penthouse buyers get to do their own interior decorating.

“They’re going to the suppliers and choosing their flooring and choosing everything themselves just like they would for a single-family home,” Kerr says. “We really want people to be able to make their own.”

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

PROJECT: Ezra on Riley Park.

DEVELOPER: Birchwood Properties.

AREA: The presentation centre is at 1145 Kensington Cres. N.W.

PRICES: Apartment-style condos start at \$319,900, before tax.

HOURS: The presentation centre is open noon to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday and noon to 5 p.m. on weekends.

INFORMATION: ezraonrileypark.com (<http://ezraonrileypark.com>)

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David A Davidsson · Calgary, Alberta

Silly name, fantastic project!! This is exactly what we need in Calgary... Many many more of these, right next to inner city parks, instead of needlessly expensive, super cheaply built, modern looking duplexes that random individuals calling themselves builders are trying to get rich building.

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Diane Marie

Gawd, did they name these after Ezra Levant?

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