

Ezra breaks ground on construction next to Riley Park



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Published on: November 6, 2015 | Last Updated: November 6, 2015 10:18 AM MST



The front exterior of Ezra on Riley Park. *SUPPLIED / CALGARY HERALD*

Historic Riley Park is about to get a new next-door neighbour.

Shovels are in the ground to start construction at Birchwood Properties' two-tower condo development Ezra on Riley Park. The first building is now almost 50 per cent sold and the current starting price is \$319,900, before tax. Ezra will take root at 1234 5th Ave. N.W. and its presentation centre is a 10-minute walk away at 1145 Kensington Cres. N.W. Birchwood's most recent builds include townhouses in Quarry Park and Cochrane.

First possessions at Ezra are expected to be available in spring 2017.

Seeing construction activity has provided an upswing of interest in the project, says Birchwood's sales and marketing manager Adele Kerr.

"It's really becoming a reality now," Kerr says. "We have had quite a few people who have been just waiting to see some activity on site just to have the confidence to move ahead. So this past couple of weeks, we have seen the traffic has just picked right back up in our sales centre."

Starting construction has also been an important milestone for existing purchasers Ezra, she adds.

"We had some people buy later in the spring and they have been patiently waiting for construction to start. We were hoping to start in September and then things got delayed a little bit," Kerr says. "We had a celebration with our purchasers who all got to come on site and take a little shovel of dirt for themselves."

While there are 12 apartment-style floor plans, eight flats and seven townhomes on tap at Ezra, units with big square footage have proven to be the sales centre preference so far. All three-bedroom condos at Ezra are spoken for, says Kerr.

"Even though we have only released the east tower, we've got names for the three bedrooms in the west tower already," Kerr says, adding the first condo sold at Ezra was a three-bedroom layout.

"What we have been selling right now is the large two bedrooms," she adds. "I think that's because there's a lot of competition for small one bedroom product in the city — so much in downtown and East Village."

And with wider-reaching condos has been a distinct demographic of buyers. Namely, people who are in it for the long haul.

"We're not attracting investors, we are attracting people who want that particular spot on the park," Kerr says. More specifically, "downsizing empty-nesters from larger homes," she adds.

Sales on the second building at Ezra are expected to launch in early 2016. The development's sales centre is open noon to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and noon to 5 p.m. on weekends and holidays.

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