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THE HEART OF A COMMUNITY

BY CHERYL MAH

Imagine an inviting place where you can visit the library, shop, dine and enjoy outdoor events — where you can meet friends and family. A bustling centre of activity that brings the community together. That's exactly what the District of North Vancouver is creating with its Lynn Valley Library and Town Centre development.

Centrally located at the south west corner of Lynn Valley Road and Mountain Highway intersection, the Lynn Valley Library and Town Centre project will become the new heart of the community.

Designed by Henriquez Partners Architects, the project features a dynamic mix of retail, restaurants, offices, public plaza, library and community space.

When completed, the development will be comprised of a 40,000 square foot library and an adjoining 3,000 square foot community meeting room. It will offer approximately 39,000 square feet of retail and office space with 220 underground

parking spaces. A two level restaurant pad of up to 4,250 square feet will front Lynn Valley Road. A central 12,000 square foot public plaza ties all the buildings together.

At \$39.2 million, it is one of the bigger projects for the district and a key element of the official community plan which was approved in 1998. The project will bring renewed energy to the district and set a precedent for future developments in the Lynn Valley area.

"The old library facility was seismically not up to standard so this was a combination of really trying to determine a core — a Lynn Valley Town Centre area and at the same time looking for a replacement for the existing library," says Gavin Joyce, director of corporate services and major capital projects at the District of North Vancouver.

According to Ross Forman, Remax Commercial Realty, leasing demand has been strong for the commercial space at the centre.

To date, 80 per cent of the space is already pre-leased with net asking rates ranging from \$20 to \$35 per square foot, per annum. The operating costs and taxes are estimated to be \$12 per square foot per annum.

“Demand was there for the building,” says Forman. “The rental rates I thought were high to start but realistically they’re in line with the market. The market is pretty strong with lots of tenants calling that you just can’t place.”

The project will create much needed community meeting space for social events and activities, says Joyce, in addition to providing a gathering place where people can shop, dine and enjoy the outdoors.

“We’re not just taking any tenant that wants the space. We’re looking for the right mix of tenants to achieve a vibrant pedestrian oriented town centre where people want to come to meet and shop and enjoy social events,” explains Joyce.

Tenants so far include Vancity, Delany’s Coffee House and Papa John’s Pizza. The centre will also be home to a RCMP community policing station.



Above: Library atrium stairwell

“We expect tenants to move in as early as a couple of weeks prior to Christmas or shortly after. Vancity and Delany’s are in build out right now. The majority of the tenants will be operational in spring of 2008,” says Joyce.

DARWIN

We are proud to be the General Contractor of the Lynn Valley Library and Town Centre project

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Above: Library atrium lights handcrafted in Italy.
Left: The Town Centre will offer 39,000 square feet of retail and office space in a two storey building.

Another highlight is two pieces of public art that have been incorporated into the overall project design. Two large sculptural glass pieces will reflect the historical and geographic relevance of the site.

One will be located at the centre of the plaza to capture and celebrate Lynn Valley's historic logging industry and local forest landscape. The other will be incorporated into the three panel window of the community room.

"The site is the old site of the original Lynn Valley store in 1908 so there will be some etched glass on front of the community room which will replicate that old store," says Joyce.

The state-of-the-art library will serve as the anchor for the district's new town centre, providing a focal point for community activities. The old facility, located a block away, served the community for nearly four decades.

The three storey building will feature automated check-in and streamline self check-out of materials. It will be the district's first LEED project. The goal is to achieve LEED silver.

"Henriquez Partners have designed an absolutely beautiful building," says Len Mclean, Darwin Construction project manager.

The project is also the first LEED for Mclean, "Being my first one, it's been a good experience — very educational. I think it's a great idea."

Construction on the 18 hectares (44 acres) site began in fall 2005. The project was originally slated to be complete at the end of May this year. Substantial completion is now expected by the end of October.

"Some of the major challenges have definitely been increment weather — that has been a huge factor for us. Another part of the delay would be materials — being able to get materials on time. It was very difficult to get things on site on time," recalls Mclean. "Manpower has been a huge factor as well."

The unique design added to the complexity of the project.

"On this site there's basically every type of construction possible in these buildings. We've got concrete, masonry block, wood framing, structural steel and it all has to come together," he says. "The retail building was supposed to be

a simple wood frame building which turned out to be about the most complex building that I've ever done."

Having no existing town centre, this project will fulfill an important community vision.

"It's being built to a very high standard so this is really one of the cornerstone pieces of the redevelopment of Lynn Valley," says Joyce. ♦



Martello

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Golf Tip #6

COURSE MANAGEMENT – The beauty of the game of golf is that anybody, with any ability, can play. It's a competition against the golf course and nobody else. So if you are a 25 handicap; play the golf course like you are a 25 handicap, and not a tour player.

Try this exercise next time you play and see how easy it is to lower your score. Let's take the case of the 25 handicapper. Take a look at the scorecard and see which holes you would get strokes on if you were playing a match. The first hole is a par five and the number 3 handicap hole, which means that you would get two strokes, making that hole a par seven. Seven's easy; almost too easy? That's my point. If you play each hole based on your handicap, you will be amazed at how simple the game can be at times. I would bet that the first time you try this you will have a good score; less PRESSURE!

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