

COVER World-class architects reshape the style of downtown Vancouver in a new development cycle

Transforming the skyline



Photo: Westbank/Stephen Voss

52-storey Westbank tower at the north end of the Granville Street Bridge, designed by celebrated Danish architect Bjarke Ingels.



Photo: BC Investment Management

Roof detail of the 23-storey BC Investment Management Corp. office tower on Thurlow Street, by Musson Cattell MacKay.



Photo: Holburn Group

Iconic architect Arthur Erickson designed the 63-floor Trump International Hotel & Tower, ascending on West Georgia.



Photo: BOMA BC

Credit Suisse tapped Swiss architect Harry Gugger to redesign the 31-storey office tower at Howe and West Pender.



Photo: Oxford Properties

New York-based Kohn Pedersen Fox architects designed the 35-storey MNP tower on West Hastings for Oxford Properties.

GLEN KORSTROM/WI STAFF

WESTERN INVESTOR

Rock-star Danish architect **Bjarke Ingels'** design for a 52-story twisty tower at the north end of the Granville Street Bridge is the latest indication of a dramatic transformation of Vancouver's downtown skyline that has attracted world-class architectural talent.

Aside from Ingels' effort, other towers reflect the final skyscraper from the late iconic Canadian architect **Arthur Erickson** and add to the city's collection of new office highrises

that redefine both energy savings and architectural expression.

Erickson's design for what will now be the **Holburn Group's** Trump International Hotel & Tower on West Georgia Street is also a twisted masterpiece: 63 luxury floors that will ascend as the second-tallest building in Vancouver.

Just blocks away, on Howe Street at West Pender, Swiss architect **Harry Gugger** – known for the Birds Nest Stadium at the Beijing Summer Olympics – has redesigned a 31-storey LEED office tower that will rise above the old Vancouver Stock Exchange. The project is financed by **Credit Suisse**.

On West Hastings, the renowned architectural firm **Kohn Pedersen Fox** of New York City has designed the new MNP tower for **Oxford Properties**. The 35-storey office building, also being built to LEED standards, is now ascending next to the old Marine Building.

Meanwhile, **BC Investment Management Corp.** is building a 23-storey office tower at 745 Thurlow Street, designed by Vancouver's own **Musson Cattell Mackey Partnership**.

And there's more in the pipeline.

According to **City of Vancouver** officials, 19 new office projects totalling 4.9 million

square feet are either under construction, approved or in the application stage. Of those developments, 1.8 million square feet are in the central business district, which runs roughly between Beatty and Bute streets and Robson Street and the waterfront along the Burrard Inlet.

In the downtown south area, bounded by the West End neighbourhood, Yaletown and Robson Street, more than 2,000 new condos

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INGELS IN NYC

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and at least 325 purpose-built rental units in more than a dozen real estate projects are in various stages of development.

The district's population of 17,000 is expected to swell to 26,000 by full build-out, according to the city's assistant director of planning **Kevin McNaney**.

The Ingels-designed tower, by **Westbank**, inched closer to reality September 24 when Vancouver city council sent the proposal to public hearings.

Downtown south

If Westbank's proposal for the 497-foot-tall tower is approved, it promises to inject a cool factor into the southern portion of the downtown core. Ingels, whose latest projects include the 600-unit West 57 condo tower in New York, is recognized as one of the most exciting architects on the planet.

In Vancouver, the twisting tower would have 407 condominiums and 98 market-rental units and be part of a transformation beneath the Granville Street Bridge.

"Council envisages a neighbourhood centre under the [bridge] that would include a drug store, grocery store and shops and services," McNaney said.

Four other condominium projects near Westbank's proposed tower are almost complete. **Onni**'s 41-storey, 300-unit Mark building at 1372 Seymour Street is one block east of the proposed twisty tower. It's set for completion this year.

Go north two blocks from the proposed tower and there's **Rize Developments'** 187-unit, 23-storey Rolston at the corner of Granville and Drake. It, too, is virtually complete.

It's the same story for both **Cressey Developments'** 215-unit, 32-storey Maddox tower at the corner of Howe and Drake and **Concert Properties'** 194-unit, 33-storey, Salt highrise at the corner of Hornby and Drake.

"We're all within three months of completing our projects," confirmed Cressey vice-president of development **Hani Lammam**.

Lammam says that new projects bring renewed interest and buyers into the neighbourhood – which is key. Aside from Salt, each of the projects has unsold units.

According to McNaney, city council's policy is to remove on-ramps to the Granville Street Bridge in order to create future development sites.

Proposed towers

Future condo projects, which do not require

on-ramps to be removed, include **Seacliff Properties'** site at the corner of Hornby and Pacific Boulevard, where legendary restaurateur **Umberto Menghi** recently closed his 37-year-old **Il Giardino** restaurant.

Kitty-corner to Salt is the block bounded by Hornby, Drake, Burrard and Davie streets, where **Jim Pattison Developments** and **Reliance Properties Ltd.** executives want to build a \$500 million mega-project.

But they still need rezoning, McNaney said. The plan, however, is to find an anchor tenant to kick-start development of a 13-storey office tower at the corner of Burrard and Drake.

The Burrard Gateway project's two residential towers include a 47-storey building at the corner of Hornby and Drake streets and a 33-storey structure between Drake and Davie streets on Hornby.

Reliance separately proposes to build a 28-storey residential tower at the corner of Hornby and Davie.

One block south of the Jim Pattison block, at Howe and Drake streets, **Bonds Group of Companies** wants to build the 41-storey, 228-unit Tate on Howe tower.

Other downtown south projects include developments by **Wall Financial** and **Onni** on Richards Street. ♦