

Upscale Downtown

TIMING RIGHT FOR HIGH-END HIGH RISE AT SALT LAKE CITY'S GATEWAY

The Parc Condominiums are the latest addition to the multifamily housing at the Gateway mixed-use development in Salt Lake City.

The 500-unit, 10-story high-rise is located at the north end of Gateway and built on top of a parking garage and retail stores. Two-story townhouses are on the west side of the project, with one-, two- and three-bedroom units on the remaining eight floors. A garden terrace skirts the building on the third-floor level, and all the units have balconies.

Scot Safford, a partner with the Parc's owners - the Cowboy Group of Salt Lake City - said the upscale condominiums are part of a national trend.

"All you have to do is visit any downtown in the country and you know a project like this is a no-brainer," he said. "There is a resurgence of people wanting to live downtown. They don't want to commute anymore. Also, older people who've had their kids move out don't want or need a big house and a yard. This is what they're looking for."

Architect Mark Humphreys, AIA, agrees.

Humphreys is with Dallas-based Humphreys & Partners Architects - partners in the approximately \$15 million design-build project with Tingey Construction of Salt Lake City.

"Condos are the hottest thing," he added. "Not only older people but young people today are pretty smart. They have seen that things like stocks and stock options can be no great deal, but things hold value, and they take into account the choice of renting or owning something that will appreciate in value."

A 20-YEAR FIRST

The Parc is the first high-rise residential building built in the city since the American Towers project more than 20 years ago.

The structure is post-tensioned concrete, which accomplished several things for the design, said Russell Merrill, PE, of Dunn Associates

Retail shops and a terrace conceal the parking garage for the Parc Condominiums.

PHOTO COURTESY OF HUMPHREYS & PARTNERS ARCHITECTS

in Salt Lake City, the structural engineers on the project.

"The architects wanted a lot of floor-to-ceiling height short floor-to-floor height," he said. "It saves money on the exterior skin and you can just hang your ductwork and pipe from the slab."

Humphreys said all of his firm's high-rises are post-tensioned. "Generally, it turns out concrete gives us better cost and shear value," he said. "We especially wanted good shear value with the Parc because of the seismic zone Salt Lake City is in."

Merrill added that the concrete also offers good sound insulation and is easily finished with plaster. In the parking garage, the concrete isolates the sound from the retail operations on one side and the town homes on the other.

HIDING THE GARAGE

Coordinating design and construction on top of a parking garage and the existing retail wasn't easy, Humphreys said. The retail shops the Parc is built above are owned by the Boyer Group.

"We had to work with about four different owners and architects and everyone had their different needs," he added. "It was tough, but in the end, I think we've ended up with a great project."

A component of the project that may be under appreciated is that the parking garage is enclosed and invisible from the street. Residents enter the garage through the entrance at the North Gate apartments, directly south of the Parc. The townhomes cover the garage on the west while the large plaza on the third floor of the high rise covers the remaining portion.

"It's great for a lot of reasons," Humphreys said. "First of all, during the winter in Salt Lake City, who is going to be excited about going out to an open parking garage? Also, parking garages are ugly."



The new Parc Condominiums at the Gateway (foreground) are expanding the options for urban living in Salt Lake City. SUMMER 2004 ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING QUARTERLY



Units at the Parc feature high-end finishes.



SUMMER 2004 ARCHITECTURE & ENGINEERING QUARTERLY

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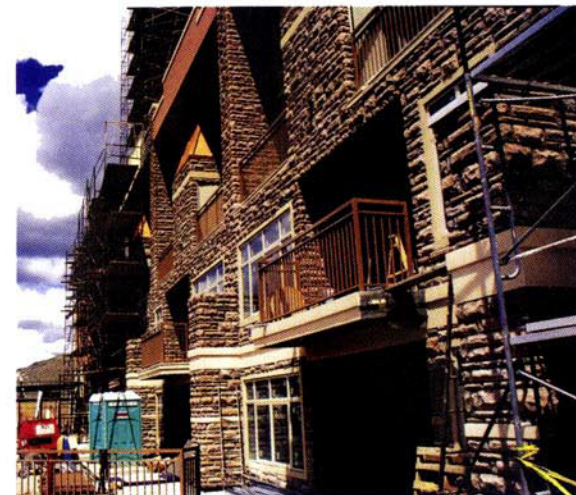
You can try to encapsulate them in a façade but you are not fooling anyone. They are necessary but they are not good neighbors in an urban environment. Some places like Vancouver don't even allow them."

The plaza not only provides a large, private outdoor common area for the residents, filling it with more units would have been detrimental to the overall design.

"One of the best things about this project is the views from the units," Humphreys said. "You look out over the Gateway and toward the Wasatch Mountains in the background and it's one of the best views you can have in the city. If we would have built more units, they would have been looking into each other, and in a higher-end project like this, that's not something people would tolerate."

Humphreys said the timing was right for this type of multifamily residential project.

"The Cowboy partners are ahead of the curve. I think they hit this just right." ■



Ground level units are two story homes.