

On a clear evening west of downtown Toronto, passersby may find their eyes drawn to the rooftop of the city's newest residential community, CityPlace Luna.

Luna will please the eye by day as well. "The massing of the face to the south conforms to a subtle convex curve at the north edge of the site formed by the existing roadway," says Deni Poletti, principal/partner at Core Architects Inc. "The strong convex crescent shape becomes the leitmotif of the site."

"Because of the gentle curve of the buildings, every unit is different," says Gabriel Leung, director of development for Concord Adex Development Corporation, explaining that the building boasts more than 70 different unit types.

Certain unit layouts are particular to Luna. The "LTD" units, for instance, sit atop the podium and boast two storeys each. Entrances on the lower floor lead to a south-facing view, while the upper floor offers views to both the south and north. "We pioneered this unit type in this project," Leung says.

The ground-floor townhomes include attached garages, destined to appeal to buyers seeking greater security and the feeling of living in a house.

Buyers won't have much longer to wait for their homes. "Concord Adex wanted to minimize construction cost and accelerate the schedule," says Arnie Kalnins, project manager for PCL Constructors Canada Inc. "PCL was able to build the structure at a pace of one floor every three days."

Luna is one of the final residential projects to sprout on a substantial parcel of former railway lands mere blocks west of downtown Toronto. Other finished developments nearby have been occupied for several years, and many retail operations call the area home. "The banks are all there," chuckles Tim Gorley, executive vice-president at Page + Steele / IBI Group Architects.

Businesses are also set to move into the southeast part of the Luna lot around the time residents move in, adding to the bustle. "It will make street life more vibrant," says Leung.

Retail needs may eclipse motoring needs, according to Gorley. "Actual parking sales are less than you might expect," he says. "Downtowners increasingly rent cars, they use services like ZipCar to avoid owning a car."

The site itself, within easy walking distance to the city's core, is well-served by public transit. A pedestrian bridge will span the gap over the railway lines between CityPlace to the south and Front Street, a main road leading downtown.

Because the rail lines to the north and the Gardiner Expressway to the



CityPlace Block 26E Luna

by Luigi Benetton

south sandwich CityPlace, acoustics and vibrations were a concern. Builders achieved acceptable sound transmission coefficients via careful choices of window design and glazing.

However, the north wall of the underground parking garage doubles as a retaining wall abutting the railway land, so it was designed according to requirements from CN. "The north wall, in conjunction with other structural elements, will act inelastically should a train topple into it," explains Philip Jones, contract administrator for Halcrow Yolles Partnership Inc. (Such an event is unlikely; several factors combine to keep train speeds very low in the area.)

Though Lake Ontario lies nearby, Luna's builders have not had to contend with water, thanks to a sporting neighbour. "Pumping operations at the Rogers Centre have lowered the water table," Gorley says.

Concord Adex ensured the land would contain as many trees and trails

as it does suites and shops. Parks lining the north and south boundaries link to the eight-acre CityPlace Central Park in the middle, which Luna faces.

Luna's builders also installed services for the north linear park along Luna's north edge. These services (water, electricity and so forth) were designed and built independently of any Concord Adex building in preparation for turnover to the City. "It was a project within a project," says Al Medeiros, a partner with MCW Consultants Ltd.

Soil remediation performed on the former brownfield made the entire neighbourhood ready to welcome those who now call CityPlace home. "Concord Adex removed contaminated soil from all the sites," Gorley says.

There's even some green in Luna itself. "About 200 exit signs were changed from electrical to 'photoluminescent' or 'glow-in-the-dark,' which consumes absolutely no power," says Kalnins. "Since most exit signs are electrically illuminated 24 hours a day, eliminating

LOCATION

Tower R: 25 Capreol Court
Tower Q: 8 Telegram Mews
Toronto, Ontario

OWNER/DEVELOPER

Concord Adex Development Corporation

ARCHITECT OF RECORD

Page + Steele Inc. / IBI Group Architects

DESIGN ARCHITECTS

Core Architects Inc.

GENERAL CONTRACTOR

PCL Constructors Canada Inc.

STRUCTURAL CONSULTANT

Halcrow Yolles Partnership Inc.

MECHANICAL/ ELECTRICAL CONSULTANT

MCW Consultants Ltd.

INTERIOR DESIGN

Mike Niven Interior Design Inc.

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECT

Ferris+Associates Inc.

TOTAL AREA

594,000 square feet

TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST

Undisclosed

the power requirement for roughly 200 signs definitely helped reduce the building's power consumption."

Variable-speed drives power main pumps and makeup air units throughout Luna. "Motors can operate at peak performance when required and adjust according to the demand in the building," Medeiros explains.

For all its practicality, Luna is no shrinking violet, by day or by night. "Random reflective glass panels on the exterior face of the balconies offer a three-dimensional textual pattern to the facade," says Poletti, "as well as acting like a mirror to the changing moods of the Toronto sky."

Two artists were commissioned to create works on the ground and in the sky. Sculptor John McEwen, whose "Searchlight Starlight Spotlight," a group of tall steel perforated cones stand to the east of the Air Canada Centre, created "Stardust and Time" for Luna. The seven corten panels features backlit cutouts, and surround a bronze bear, another of McEwen's creations. Ottawa's Adrian Gollner adorned the glazed mechanical penthouse expressions with LED light boxes, using a pattern similar to that on the tower's reflective glass panels. Luna's isn't the only rooftop to receive Gollner's treatment. The rooftops of each CityPlace building will glow a different colour. Together, they form "Warm by Night," the public art program Concord Adex commissioned to crown its works.

"It's like painting the sky," says Leung. ■