

## NEW-HOME | PROJECT PROFILE



PHOTOS BY WARD PERRIN/PNG

# A hidden gem gets a new reason to sparkle

The Marpole neighbourhood is on the rise as a new condo development moves in

## HQ

**Project Location:** 1338 SW Marine Dr., Vancouver

**Project size:** Five-storey mixed-use concrete building with ground-floor retail and 108 residential suites on top four floors

**Residence sizes:** JR 1 Bed + Den 493-569 sq. ft.; 1 Bed + Den 517-633 sq. ft.; 2 Bed + Den 767-963 sq. ft.

**Prices:** JR 1 Bed + Den from \$229,900-\$298,900; 1 Bed + Den from \$309,900-\$331,900; 2 Bed + Den \$439,900-\$499,900

**Sales Centre:** 1336 SW Marine Dr., Vancouver

**Hours:** Noon - 6 p.m. daily (except Fridays)

**Telephone:** 604.264.8880

**Email:** info@HQLiving.ca

**Web:** www.HQLiving.ca

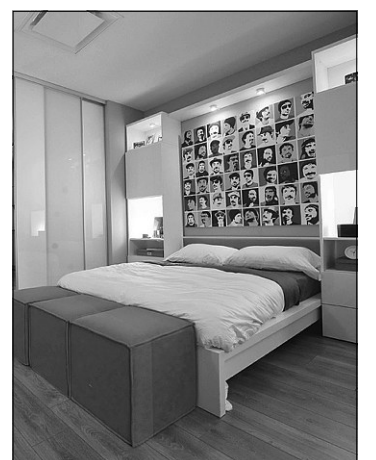
**Developer:** Century Group

**Sales and Marketing:** Magnum Projects Ltd.

**Architect:** Dys Architecture

**Interior Designer:** Portico Design Group

**Occupancy:** Spring 2013



BY MARY FRANCES HILL

If Vancouver has a last frontier — a neighbourhood pegged by residents, politicians and developers as the city's undiscovered jewel — it would be Marpole.

Recent headlines tell of plans for highrise towers at 70th and Granville; there are proposals for redevelopment of the Coast Hotel and for a nearby marina — and a five-storey condominium project now in pre-sales on Marine Drive called HQ.

In the middle of all this change stands Serene Chow.

A bright, outgoing 27-year-old lawyer who's lived for 15 years with her family in the heart of Marpole, she's been looking for a condo of her own for the last eight months.

After searching in Burnaby, Richmond and downtown Vancouver, she found exactly what she wanted: A two-bedroom, 841-square-foot condo at HQ on Marine Drive.

Chow has done her homework.

She stopped people in the street near the Marine Drive

site to get a feel for the area.

"I stopped people on the street in Marpole and I said, 'I'm a first-time homebuyer, can you tell me more about these few blocks?' They probably thought, 'Who is this crazy lady asking me all these questions about my neighbourhood?' But everyone was so nice."

She asked people if the community was friendly, if most homes were owner-occupied, and if people were bothered by noise from the Arthur Laing Bridge, Marine Drive, or by planes overhead.

She was pleased with what she heard.

Most homes in the area were owner-occupied, residents told her. Traffic noise from the Arthur Laing Bridge wasn't an issue.

"They told me that after a while, you don't notice any noise. It's not a big deal at all."

Chow was assured, too, by HQ's architecture and design, which includes concrete

construction and triple-glazed windows.

The developer touts the value and efficiency of the homes for young people, couples and first-time homebuyers.

"We wanted to make these homes as efficient as possible, so there is very little unutilized space in these homes," says Alexa Paukkunen, sales and marketing director for Magnum Projects, which is working with Century Group, HQ's developers.

The smallest suite, a junior one-bedroom, starts at \$229,000; "but 75 per cent of our homes are priced at \$339,000 and under," Paukkunen notes.

HQ's showroom on Marine Drive features a junior one-bedroom (or studio) and a two-bedroom suite. Both are arranged to showcase the ways in which homeowners can take advantage of their space.

The junior one-bedroom has a spacious feel at 509 square feet. There is an additional 80

square feet of enclosed patio. Pocket doors separate the bedroom and kitchen/living room areas, and all homes come with quartz kitchen counters, glass tile backsplashes, and deep sinks.

The kitchen area in the two-bedroom unit curves around the wall to leave an open square space for dining. The master bedroom includes a walk-in closet between the sleeping area and ensuite bathroom. While small, the ensuite bathroom comes with a wide shower; the second bathroom includes a deep tub.

Cupboards stretch full height to the ceiling and doors open vertically; wine organizer, recycling bins and lower-cupboard organizers are conveniently stowed.

Ground-floor condos will have patios and small green spaces; a common room and gym are available to all.

About 30 per cent of HQ buyers are already Marpole residents, Paukkunen adds.

"There are a lot of people that do like the area and stay, and other people buy here because they know that so much change is coming."

The blocks surrounding HQ include a car lot, a community theatre and big-box retailers today, but the future will look very different.

Three residential towers containing 357 homes — 31 of them rentals — will be part of the redevelopment of the Safeway shopping complex at Granville and 70th Avenue.

Within a few blocks, other developers have either introduced plans to the city or have forged ahead with projects that will add hundreds of homes and new retail space.

Plans are set for a new marina facing HQ across the Fraser River in Richmond; a redevelopment of the Coast Hotel is planned to include 76 residential units at Southwest Marine and Oak; 587 homes are slated for Marine Landing at 64th and Cambie by Intracorp; another

440 units are proposed for PCI Development's Marine Gateway; and PCI plans to build 800 units at 57th and Granville. Parklane Homes, meanwhile, has proposed nearly two million square feet of residential space in the area.

Chow says she's impressed with both the people who now make up her community, and those who will transform it by the time she moves into her condo in the spring of 2013.

"There's an aging population — it's like people have built their lives in Marpole and like to settle there because it's safe, and there a lot of young people, too."

"It's a good area for young families and people who want to have kids. It's not too hip and it's modernizing itself all the time."

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