

SCOOP to become first condo on its block

Avenue study and dedicated streetcar pave the way for St. Clair West mid-rise project



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By Michelle Ervin

SCOOP will become the first condo on its block when the boutique six-storey collection of 72 suites rises at the corner of St. Clair Avenue West and Osler Street, west of Caledonia Road. The project is slated to launch this spring, with shovels expected to be in the ground by fall 2017.

The emerging neighbourhood, West St. Clair West, is situated west of Corso Italia and north of the Junction. It bears all the marks of an area undergoing revitalization, blending established businesses with new art galleries and restaurants.

With at-grade retail and only 50 underground parking spaces, SCOOP is precisely the kind of mixed-use, transit-oriented project City of Toronto planners are trying to encourage along major corridors such as St. Clair Avenue West. Indeed, an avenue study and dedicated streetcar lane paved the way for this mid-rise development.

"We knew about the avenue study and how the City was in favour of mid-rise development along this particular stretch of St. Clair," said Adidharma Purnomo, director of development, Graywood Developments. "We also felt that there's a great opportunity for the purchaser because of the recently developed dedicated transit line right in front of the property itself."

Graywood Developments acquired the 24,000-square-foot corner lot, which is currently leased as a car dealership, last year. The project is already in the site plan phase, as the lot did not require rezoning.

The Toronto-based private investment management company focuses on developing high-quality real estate properties in Canada and in select sites in the U.S and beyond. As Purnomo explained, the company saw in the site an increasingly rare opportunity to offer an affordable price point — starting in the low \$200,000s — in a transit-friendly location in Toronto.

The development will cater to first-time, end-user buyers, including young families and professionals, with design centred on community.

SMV Architects pulled from the palette of the local residential neighbourhood with bronzes and grays. The structure itself will step down to three storeys on Osler Street, providing a sense of transition to the adjacent detached homes.

"SCOOP will be a visual anchor for West St. Clair West's streetscape," said architect Daniel Cowling. "We really wanted to set the tone for any future development in the area by delivering a modern design that emphasizes community."

The interiors by TACT Design are likewise intended to encourage interaction. The lobby, which will be dressed in woods, with brass textures, glossy black walls and recessed lighting as accents, will flow through to the amenities. A library will connect to a communal dining room, which will open out onto a community courtyard featuring a fire pit as well as gardens.

"There is a balance of space and substance in our design for SCOOP," as Michael Krus, lead designer for TACT, put it. "From the suites to the shared space, each element gives the whole project a more inviting, welcoming feeling, which is key to complementing the West St. Clair West community."

The suites will be outfitted with "well-appointed finishes," with layouts that will maximize light and livability (think ample bedrooms and kitchens as well as space for dining rooms). There will include a mix of 43 one-bedrooms and one-bedrooms-plus-dens and 29 two-bedrooms and two-bedrooms-plus-dens, spanning from 550 square feet to 1,200 square feet.

Graywood Developments intends to search for ground-floor retail tenants that will contribute to the life of the local commercial strip — ideally independent businesses such as a coffeehouse, said Purnomo.

Once built, SCOOP will back onto a nearby park, as does another of its Osler Street neighbours, Carleton Village Junior and Senior Sports and Wellness Academy. Across the street from the development site, the Toronto Public Library's St. Clair/Silverthorn Branch is undergoing a renovation.

"Between our project and the architecture of the library across the street ... this area is turning to become something that is quite dynamic and quite vibrant," said Purnomo.

First occupancies are anticipated in the summer of 2019.