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THE VANCOUVER SUN

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2007

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EDITOR MICHAEL SASGES 604-605-2467 • E-mail homes@png.canwest.com

## HOME THOUGHTS

### Saving on easy street

Looking forward to the day you will become an empty-nester (or your exit from the natal home will allow your parents to enjoy empty-nester benefits)?

A Bank of Montreal survey, of potential first-time homebuyers, found that almost one in three Canadians between the ages of 21 (yeah, so?) and 34 (aarghh-hh!) who are saving for their first-home down-payment are living with their parents.

In Canada's biggest cities, such as Vancouver and Toronto, the percentages are even higher, suggesting that staying with mom 'n' pop is the fastest route to mounting the property ladder.

The survey, conducted by Decima Research, polled 1,205 young adults in Vancouver, Halifax, Montreal, Toronto, Winnipeg and Calgary.

"A red hot real estate market and rising home prices have likely contributed to this trend," a news release from the bank quoted one of its vice-presidents as saying.

"But these factors may also contribute to a sense of urgency amongst young first-time homebuyers who feel they don't have the requisite finances and may have to scramble to cobble together a down payment. Some of this anxiety may be avoidable by developing a financial plan early that sets realistic short-term and long-term plan."

But Canadians aged 21 to 34, on average, have been saving for their down payment for only 1.6 years.

### Tips for home sellers

Before you put up the "For Sale" sign, do your homework.

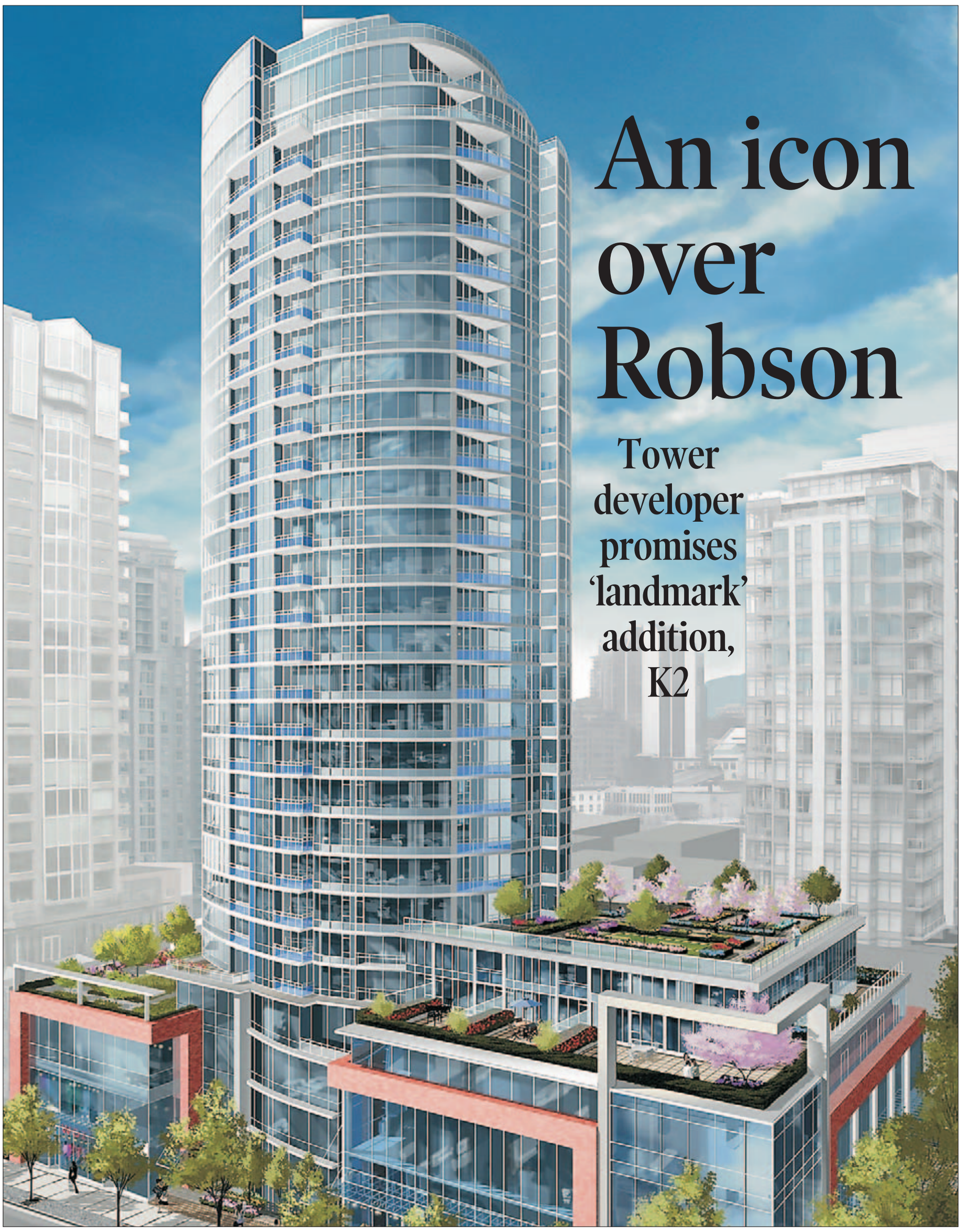
The No. 1 tip to selling your home isn't about decluttering and giving your house curb appeal. The main point to a quick sale has everything to do with you. Or rather you not being in the home.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp. says the best thing you can do is leave the house in an agent's hands so a buyer can imagine the house as their new home — not yours.

Other should-dos on CMHC's list include making a good first impression, so mow your lawn, clean and paint your window frames, walls and doors and repair driveways and walkways.

Once inside the doors, potential buyers don't want to see excess clutter so make sure there's a good flow of traffic throughout the house and give your home a good spring cleaning and a fresh coat of paint.

Visit www.cmhc.ca or call Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) at 1-800-668-2642 for more information.



# An icon over Robson

## Tower developer promises 'landmark' addition, K2

# Downtown residences at an iconic location to reflect pride of place

## Development will sit kitty-corner to the public library, with Yaletown, theatres and shops nearby

### ATELIER ON ROBSON

**Location**: Downtown Vancouver
**Project size**: 202 homes
**Residence size**: 525 sq. ft. – 1,500 sq. ft., 1 bedroom, 1 +den, 2 bedrooms, 2 +den
**Prices**: From $339,000
**Presentation centre address**: 400 Robson, when it opens end of May
**Phone**: 604-228-2020
**Web**: atelieronrobson.com
**Developer**: Magellen 20/20
**Architect**: IBI/HB Hancock Bruckner
**Interior design**: Robert Ledingham
**Tentative construction completion**: Fall, 2009

BY MIA STAINSBY
VANCOUVER SUN

NEW HOMES
PROJECT PROFILE

Atelier on Robson will rise on one of the last remaining residential sites on Robson Street, the buzz of urban Vancouver outside and a cool, contemporary calmness inside.

Developer Henry Man completed many condo projects as former senior vice-president and COO of Concord Pacific Developments in Vancouver and COO of Concord Adex Developments in Toronto (at the same time) but he's particularly hands-on with this one. He wants it to be something of a legacy for him and the word 'iconic' is a recurring part of the Atelier lexicon.

"Architecturally, it's going to be very strong and fitting of an iconic location," he says.

"It's at a very strong, international corner. Construction costs, being so high, it's hard to spend as you wish, but this is an iconic location and it's going to be my flagship location."

PHOTOS BY IAN SMITH/VANCOUVER SUN

It stands kitty-corner to another Vancouver icon, the Vancouver Public Library with its Roman coliseum reference.

As well, it will be walking distance to Yaletown, theatres, shopping on Robson, and of course, the library. Depending on the position of the suites, there are views of the North Shore mountains, Coal Harbour, Burrard Inlet, Stanley Park and the majestic, glaciated Mount Baker.

The City has plans for a park on an adjacent property.

"There are two Starbucks nearby," he says, as if it were Vancouver's barometer of street life.

Its proximity to shopping, sports and entertainment centres, the Canada Line (once completed) and a famous street (Robson) will appeal to international buyers, he says.

"During the 2010 Olympics, residents have a view from the observation deck, of Library Square where Olympic festivities will be taking place," he says, although he isn't marketing internationally.

As a developer, Man stands at a different place in life from his former days of juggling up to 10 projects at a time. The deeply religious man retired in 2002 to devote more time to family and church. "I was making 20 trips a year to Toronto

See CONDOS WILL K21
The Partywall pair K22

### Tower to sit at landmark

**Builder and architect in the rain, the developer of the Atelier on Robson, Henry Man (above, left) and the new-home project's architect, Martin Bruckner, are introducing another, and residential, purpose into a landmark downtown Vancouver intersection, Robson at Homer.**

### Design reflects the library

A neighbouring structure, the Vancouver Public Library's main branch, very much influenced the design of the Atelier on Robson tower.

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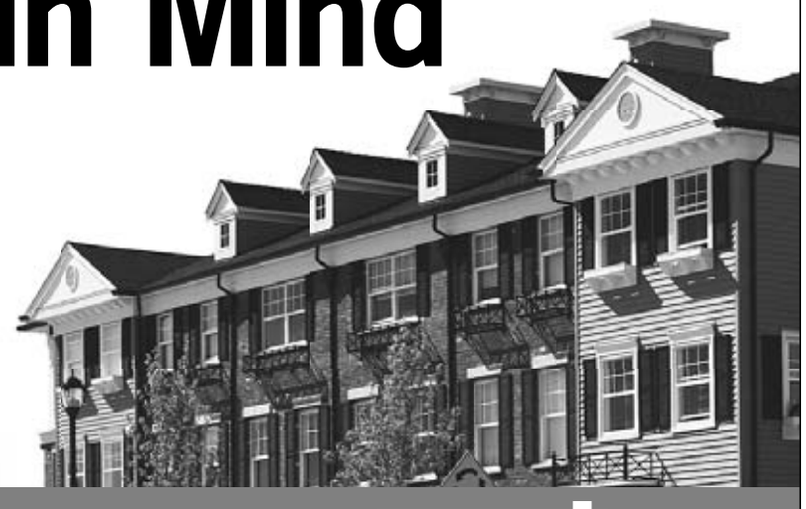

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The Atelier on Robson tower's circular curves will reflect the design of the adjacent Vancouver Public Library (above) and the Westin Grand Hotel.

# Condos will have a contemporary look

From K2

and five to Asia," he says. "I wanted to spend time with the family, watch soccer games; I want to achieve a balance, which is very elusive."

But one thing led to another and he was back in the game. But now he oversees only one property at a time. The last one was Freesia at Seymour and Helmcken.

Atelier, designed by IBI/HB Hancock Bruckner, riffs on the circular curves of the Vancouver Public Library and the Westin Grand Hotel, which limns the curves of a piano. "Our building therefore has flowing curves to respect the neighbourhood buildings," he says.

"The look and feel will be contemporary and high-end. The podium level will be 50 feet high with the clean look of glass and not a lot of framing. We've pulled the tower back from the podium for a feeling of space around the building."

Upon walking through the door, you enter a lobby, designed for memorable first impressions with a 20-foot ceiling, limestone walls, granite floor, chandeliers resembling crystal balls and a 12-foot-wide fireplace. Off to one side, there will be a lounge area with Corbusier-style furniture. "When visitors go in, I'd like to think they'd be very impressed," says Man. "I'm spending a lot of time working with the interior designer [the top-notch Robert Ledingham]."

Other amenities include a gardening deck, restricted elevator access where residents can only go to their own floor, and a parking spot, included in the price. "People can travel and be away and have peace of mind," Man says of the restricted elevator access. (For that matter, they could live in another country for part of the year.)

There will be a 24-hour concierge service, not only for the exclusivity but for security. "They'll be able to monitor various parts of the building by video."

Part of Man's impact on design is in its space efficiency, maximizing the usable over wasted space. "People talk about dollars per square foot but if some of the square footage is in extra long corridors, you're paying for corridors space that's not usable, so I try to minimize that. It takes a lot of gymnastics because you have to balance mechanical elements," says Man, who has an engineering degree as well as an MBA.

"Now that I'm doing one project at a time, I can pay more attention to details. I think the architect thinks I spend too much time there," he laughs.

Individual suites are outfitted with high-end Sub-Zero, Liebherr and AEG appliances, which will be integrated into the wood cabinetry. Buyers can choose colours and stone countertops. Condo ceilings are commonly eight-feet but Atelier ceilings will be eight feet, six inches and some will be as high as nine feet, six inches.

Eastern suites will have floor-to-ceiling glass frontage but western exposures will have more solid panels and "fins" which will act like shallow awnings to cast a shadow in the afternoon as protection from the summer heat. "The placement of the balconies was important and we tried to use it to advantage on the west side," Man says.

As for pricing, he says his approach is aggressive. That is, lowered cost for faster sales.

"The price is a little lower than market so the selling period is shorter, therefore, I can start construction sooner. It compresses the cycle."

For a guy who can sound all business, he waxes poetic when it comes to Atelier: "I'm incredibly lucky to have this site. I'm blessed, I tell people. It's not only on Robson Street, it all lines up, like the sun and the moon."

Atelier will go on the market sometime next month, he says and be completed by fall, 2009.

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From the previous page

"With aging parents living on the North Shore, the developers found that there was a real gap in what was available — stay in a single-family home, move to a small condominium, that was geared more towards singles and young couples, with no amenities, or move to a retirement home — generally a rental building with meals, housekeeping, activities and other support services.

"There was little out there that offered a quiet adult-only building, with larger condominiums and amenities that would allow for large gatherings and some social interaction with people of a similar age."

The age "criteria" for Vista 29 residency has been endorsed by the regulator responsible for the project, the District of North Vancouver, she says.

"This is done in part to ensure that there is a variety of housing options available on the North Shore.

"It encourages developments in which condominiums are larger and amenities are included that are geared towards the mature household."

Recent Harbourview projects include Chairlift Ridge and Dundarave Mews in West Vancouver; The Crescent in Edgemont Village; and Hearthstone Court in Lower Lonsdale.

Principals Al Saunders and Stefen Elmitt are outdoor-sport enthusiasts, Lawson reports. "They'll only do a job if they can ride their bikes to the job site."

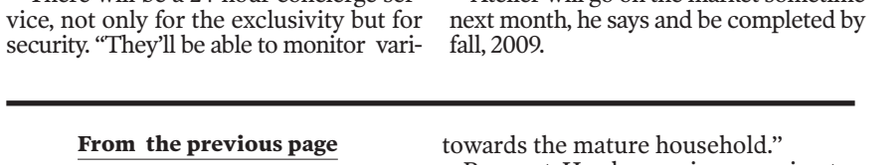
That sustainable-living practice is one reason the grounds at Vista 29 are receiving sustainable-residency attention from the two developers.

The public art they are installing, for example, will not only shade passersby. It will provide a water-catchment funnel.

"It's North Vancouver, home of the first LEED-certified residential building in B.C. and home of the first non-smoking building in Canada.

"It only stands to reason that with these developers commitment to the North Shore and their way of life that their development would be green."

*homes@png.canwest.com*



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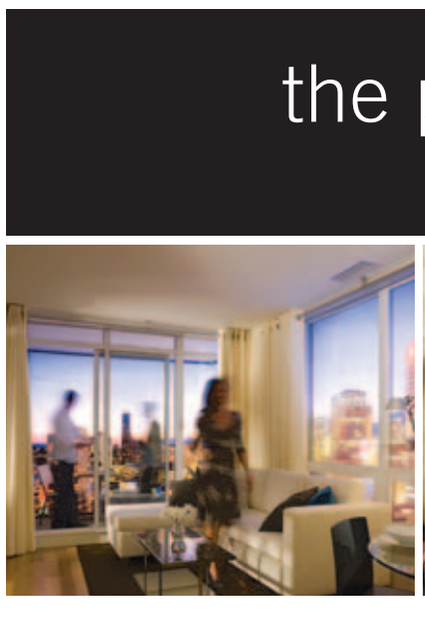

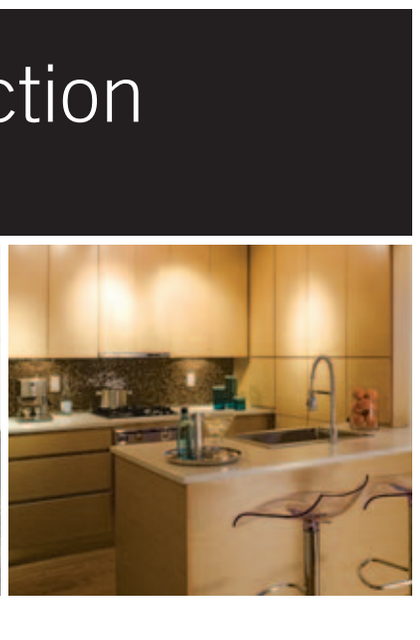

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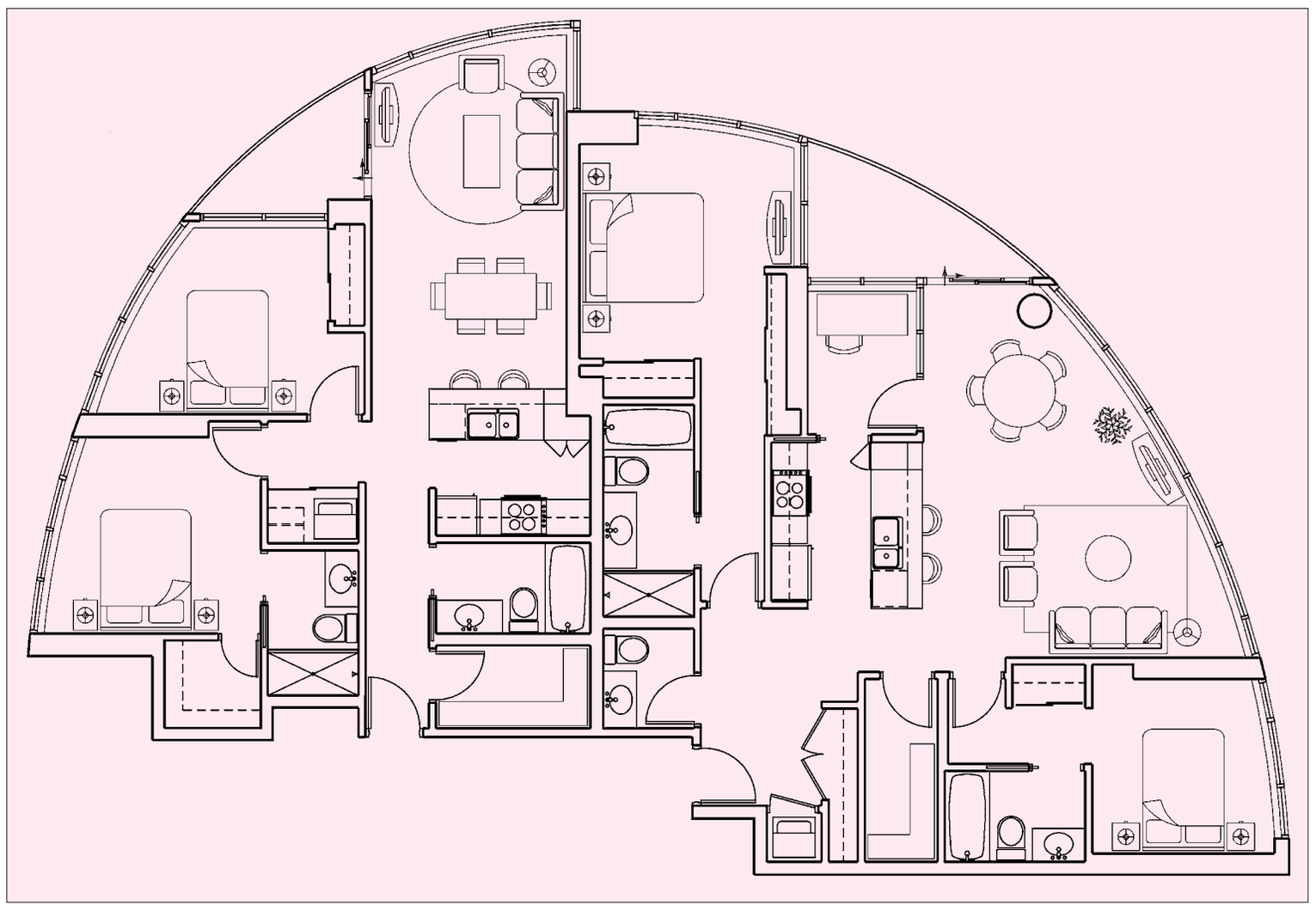

**Illustrations of the influence of the Vancouver Public Library across the Robson and Homer intersection, these partywall neighbours in the Atelier on Robson tower, when it is built, will rise together from the eighth to 30th floors.**

**The two-bed, two-bath residence on the left will offer occupants almost 900 square feet of living space, with balcony.**

**Its two-bed, 2½ bath neighbour will offer occupants almost 1,200 square feet, with balcony.**

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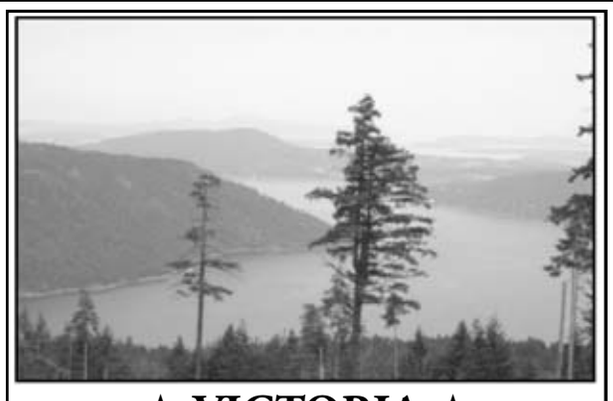

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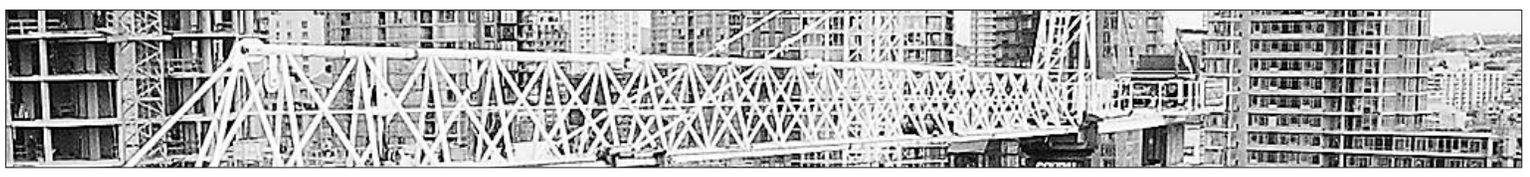

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