

The new vertical city

- ▶ New condo developments are melding existing culture with a new community
- ▶ Combining these spaces makes for efficient use of land



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It's not uncommon to find retail and office spaces located below residential condominium towers these days, but this trend starts to take on new meaning with the blending of interesting and diverse residential and cultural spaces.

Take Toronto's TIFF Bell Lightbox for example: a mixed-use development combining the 43-storey Cinema Tower with a six-storey podium housing theatres, galleries and studios — the new home to the Toronto International Film Festival.

Condo residents enjoy direct VIP access to the venue.

What buyers want

This creates an added value to an otherwise single use building that appeals to buyers.

"I would say certainly,

that our purchases are showing a preference to buildings which have more interest in them than just typical residential buildings," says Martin Blake, vice president of the Daniels Corporation.

He maintains there's a move to people wanting diversity in the residential form.

"It's people saying, 'You know, I'd really like to have some good commercial at the base of my building.'"

Regent Park revamp

As part of Toronto's Regent Park revitalization project, Daniels' Paintbox condos will house a new community arts and cultural centre in the base of the building.

"The ability for us to have the Paintbox condominiums connected to a part of the arts and cultural centre certainly has been something that everyone is very excited



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MARTIN BLAKE, VICE PRESIDENT OF THE DANIELS CORPORATION

about," says Blake. **Growing up not out** Combining these spaces also makes for efficient use of land.

"We're a vertical city and have the ability to build on top and with that comes the benefit of the density of the neighbour-

hood and where you're able to actually not take up another acre of the park because you need an arts and cultural centre. It's quite the opposite: you put it on the residential side and the part which is directly across the street is now this won-

derful six-acre park," Blake explains.

This new development melds existing culture with a new community.

'Neighbourhood spirit'

Toronto Ward 28 councillor Pam McConnell has been instrumental in real-

izing the Regent Park vision.

"One of the things we're trying to do is build the neighbourhood spirit as well as the bricks and mortar," she says.

"So there is the 400-person performance venue, it will have the Regent Park school of music, the film festival and the museum.

All that comes out of the work in Cabbagetown and Regent Park, and trying to make sure that the culture that was there before is really embedded in the community."

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