

LOWNEY'S FINAL PHASE



What began with the conversion of chocolate factories in Griffintown has grown beyond all expectation

Montreal Gazette 22 Apr 2017 MEGAN MARTIN

Launched in 2004, Lowney Lofts is often regarded as one of the first massively successful condo projects in Montreal. In fact, it's often cited as the first breath of life into the now rejuvenated Griffintown neighbourhood.

Since its launch more than a decade ago, the development has sprawled into a community of its own. With 1,700 units in 15 buildings spread over four blocks of development, Lowney truly changed the landscape of Montreal — and influenced other up-and-coming projects in the process.

"It's really amazing to look back and think of our first two buildings, which were done by converting old Griffintown chocolate factories into lofts," said Laurence Vincent, vice-president of sales and marketing at Prével, the developer behind

the Lowney project. "You really had to have vision to buy in the area at the time, because Griffintown then looked nothing like it does today; there were no trendy restaurants or other residential projects."

As such, developers weren't surprised that their new project wasn't initially a total hit with buyers.

"It took time to sell out the first two buildings," Vincent said. "In fact, we even considered not continuing with future phases of the project, but slowly people started moving into their units, and getting a feel for the neighbourhood, inviting their friends over and making the most of the common spaces we created — which, at the time, were really unique — and that's when everything took off."

The next phase sold much quicker, and developers were

heartened to see a true community emerging within their project.

"People were really excited," Vincent said.

"In our fifth, sixth, and seventh buildings we noticed that 60 to 70 per cent of buyers were either upgrading their existing Lowney unit or were referred directly by someone who owned a condo in the project — and everyone just kept telling us that they couldn't envision leaving the project because of the unique vibe we were able to achieve."

While there weren't any more buildings planned after the seventh instalment, requests from buyers kept pouring in, and so developers scrambled to find land just south of the original buildings, and construction continued.

"It became truly bigger than us —

bigger than we ever could have imagined," Vincent said.

Just what makes the project so special? At the time of its design, Lowney was one of the first developments in Montreal to include amenities that would vastly improve the quality of its tenants' lives.

"Buildings always had things like parking or a gym, but we were thinking beyond that," Vincent said. "We wanted to give our buyers a way to enjoy themselves and make the most of their units and our buildings; we wanted people to have fun."

In order to do that, Lowney got creative with its common spaces by building what they refer to as chalets urbains (urban chalets) which are covered rooftop lounge spaces that let guests entertain, get together, and mingle in good weather and bad. Moreover, integrated walkways that link the common areas of the buildings make it easy to get to know your neighbours. The Lowney buildings also include pools, barbecues, spa areas, and so on.

"We started understanding how important these common spaces were to our clientele," Vincent said.

“I think other projects picked up on that, because today it’s very common to see these sorts of communal spaces, but back in 2004 and 2005 it was rare to see these types of fun amenities.”

Now, in what’s expected to be its final phase, the developers are hoping to finish the project on a high note.

The last buildings, dubbed Lowney sur Ville, are currently under construction at the corner of Ann and Ottawa Sts. in Griffintown. This final block will include 215 units in four 20-storey buildings. Condos will range from 357 to 1,002 square feet, and prices will run from \$140,000 to \$412,000.

In keeping with the spirit of the original project, the last phase will feature a chalet urbain, a rooftop terrace, gym, and indoor and outdoor pools.

“I wish we could do more phases, but we can’t seem to find any available land in the area at this point,” Laurence Vincent said. “So these are likely the last Lowney buildings.”

Aside from changing the face of Griffintown, Vincent said what often sticks with her most about the entire



Lowney sur Ville, being built at the corner of Ann and Ottawa Sts. in Griffintown, will include this rooftop terrace with its spectacular view of the Montreal skyline.

project are the buyers she’s come to know over the years.

“A lot of our clientele basically grew up with us,” she said.

“They bought a small unit in our

project, a studio, and then met someone who also lived at Lowney, and together they bought another unit and moved in together — and then fast-forward a few years, and

they’ve had kids so they upgrade again.”

Karl Perreault and Geneviève Beauregard, both Lowney residents, are one such couple.

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Lowney sur Ville, Phase 4, will number more than 200 condos – from studio to three-bedroom units – ranging in size from 357 to 1,002 square feet. Features include: engineered wood flooring; quartz or granite countertops; wall strapping to support wall-hung televisions and wall-mounted air-conditioning units; a heated floor in the master bathroom; and electrical appliances, including a washer and dryer.



An aerial view of Lowney sur Ville, Phase 4, in Griffintown.

“Our love story began at Lowney, the two of us in a one-bedroom condo,” they said in a prepared statement.

“When we decided to have a child, it only felt natural to stay at

Lowney, only now in a twobedroom unit at Lowney sur Ville.”

In addition to stories like this, Lowney residents have regularly organized activities together, including a running club, and on holidays like Halloween the kids living in Lowney are able to trickor-treat without leaving their building.

“It’s been amazing to see how lives have transformed within the community we created,” Vincent said.

“It’s really a special place.”



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