

Lofty heights

agoodbuy

The condo unit at 775 King St. W. is a rare-find for a downtown area — the unit is loft-style and amenities include a gym and concierge.



This property is a great buy because it is so difficult to find a loft-style, two-floor condo in downtown Toronto that offers a gym and concierge, amenities that become rarer the closer you get into the city.

Also, a lot of the two-storey “lofts” in the city are hard lofts — referring to old origi-

nal structure loft. This one is a ‘soft’ loft referring to a new condo building.

The property at 775 King St. W. lists for \$557,500 and is 645 sq. ft.

Main features of the new-construction one-bedroom plus den unit building include a 17-foot high ceiling, closed-in balcony.

Restaurant options in the area abound and include Buca, Susur Lee, Blowfish, and night options include numerous local clubs. The Thompson Hotel and Liberty Village are also nearby.

— Listing from Ira Jelinek, Realtor, Harvey Kalles Real Estate Brokerage



Ontario readies industry for tall-wood construction



RICHARD LYALL
RESCON

Wood is good, and it's never been better for residential construction.

This week, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNR) announced the launch of a Mass Timber Program “to encourage low carbon construction and reduce the carbon footprint of the buildings sector,” which includes the release of “Ontario’s Tall Wood Reference” guide to assist in the development of safe alternative solutions for tall wood projects.

RESCON, an association comprised of 200 of the province’s top builders, has been working with MNR and the Ministry of Municipal Affairs (MMA) to create the tall wood guide.

This will help building designers and municipal officials use alternative solutions

to construct wood buildings over six storeys.

Our association was honoured to provide input and share experience in partnership with the ministries. This is an incredible development as this guide will help open the door to a new era of construction innovation.

Mass timber checks off several critical boxes - climate change, building innovation, healthy occupancies and economic development across the province. This program will kickstart its use and encourage the fabrication of locally supplied materials. It is particularly gratifying to see Ontario take a leadership role.

This is a win-win all around. It builds on the initial success for wood buildings in Canada: The University of British Columbia’s 18-storey Brock Commons student residence (currently the world’s tallest wood building), as well as Quebec City’s Origine (13 storeys) and Montreal’s Arbora (eight). I have visited all three, and these buildings

stoked my imagination for what is possible in Ontario. And while mid-rise wood between four and six storeys is slowly catching on here, builders want to go above six — low compared to B.C., Quebec and Europe.

Speaking of Europe, a team of builders and staff recently flew to Bordeaux, France, for the first world congress on tall wood construction called Woodrise. It was a joint Japan-France-Canada symposium on the imperative of intensifying urban areas and fighting climate change by creating more tall wood buildings.

As advocates of timber construction in Canada, it was my honour to join Canada’s Ambassador to Germany, Stephane Dion, and renowned B.C. architect Michael Green as three of the initial signatories of the International Woodrise Alliance.

At the symposium, our team was happy to learn that the model National Building Code of Canada is likely to be amended to allow tall, mass-timber construction by 2020.



Combined with Ontario’s Mass Timber Program, this province could usher in an era of wood innovation to house some of the 100,000 people moving to the GTHA every year.

A wood housing boom also could fill the “missing middle” (mid-rise, stacked

townhomes, semi-detached homes) and boost desperately needed supply across the region.

And while we happily anticipate Ontario’s acceleration of the approval of wood buildings over six storeys, we eventually need to be building even higher with a locally

supplied, renewable resource — wood. Now, we’ll get that chance.

— Richard Lyall, president of RESCON, has represented the building industry in Ontario since 1991. Contact him @RESCONpres or at media@rescon.com.