



Bayview Residences enjoys stunning views

Pamela Irving, Journal Special Projects Writer
Published: Monday, March 31

Patricia Mariash's dream soars far above Victoria's inner harbour, where float planes buzz through the air and kayaks slip across the waters below.

"This is my baby, my dream child," says Mariash from the ninth floor of Bayview Residences, a high-end urban resort boasting superb water views.

When construction is eventually complete, there will be five buildings on nearly 20 acres.

It is one of those brilliant Victoria days with gentle sea breezes and dazzling sunshine. We don blue hard hats before getting on the elevator and stepping out into open air on a construction site nine storeys later. The sheer drop-off of the concrete floor must be carefully negotiated, as it is dotted with rebar, tools and timber.

When complete, the corner unit condo we are standing in will sell for \$1.5 million. Prices at Bayview will range from \$385,000 to \$2.5 million for a penthouse.

"These are the best views anywhere in the world," says Mariash, gazing across the inner harbour at the mountains of Olympic National Park to the south, the Empress Hotel to the east, Sooke Hills to the west, and majestic Mount Baker to the north.

This \$1-billion development is on the last piece of developable land in the densely populated inner part of the city.

Mariash is known to her staff as "the

behind the scenes half" of the Mariash team. Her husband Ken came from Tisdale Sask., took a masters of business degree at the University of Alberta, and is noted for developments such as the Deerfoot Meadows complex in Calgary.

Patricia is the design intelligence behind Bayview, but is taking centre stage as lead on Bayview and is already well known for her support of cultural initiatives like the Alberta Ballet in Edmonton and the Victoria Symphony Splash, performances on a barge in the inner harbour.

Originally from Los Angeles, Mariash founded an award-winning commercial interior architecture business that completed more than 2,000 projects. She married Ken 10 years ago and added her skills to the commercial real estate development business.

Interior architecture refers to the design, space planning and finishings for interior spaces. Patricia worked on commercial interiors, meaning corporate headquarters, offices, law firms, and movie studios.

Part of the Bayview Residences waterfront property in the Songhees district was formerly a landfill. It has been sealed with a thick layer of clay and made into a park.

Another 10 acres, which the Mariashes bought from Canadian Pacific Railway, includes the 1912 E&N railway roundhouse, which is a protected historic site.

Ideas for revitalizing the landmark brick buildings include restaurants, a pub, a railway interpretative area, an organic

food market, community offices and artisan spaces.

Mariash is excited about the potential. "Local businesses will participate and are helping to shape the vision of it," she says. In 2005, Mariash hired ex-premiers Brian Tobin of Newfoundland and Mike Harris of Ontario as advisers to help steer the project through potential political quagmires.

Both ex-premiers bought their own individual piece of Bayview. Tobin is known to quip that Harris bought the place "just to the left of his."

Bayview has a range of buyers from families to second homebuyers and investors. Most are professionals looking for a retreat close to their hometowns of Calgary or Edmonton.

Albertans were obviously charmed by the charter flight for investors when Bayview launched two years ago, but stayed for the quality of both life and design.

"I challenge you to find better quality anywhere in Canada," Mariash says. She has personally selected every finishing detail, from taps to tiles to countertops.

Baby boomers with bank accounts are buying multiple suites to host visiting children and grandchildren. "I had no idea there was a market for this when we started," shrugs Mariash.

Bayview Victoria is to be ready for occupancy this summer. The website is www.bayviewvictoria.com