

Expanding A City

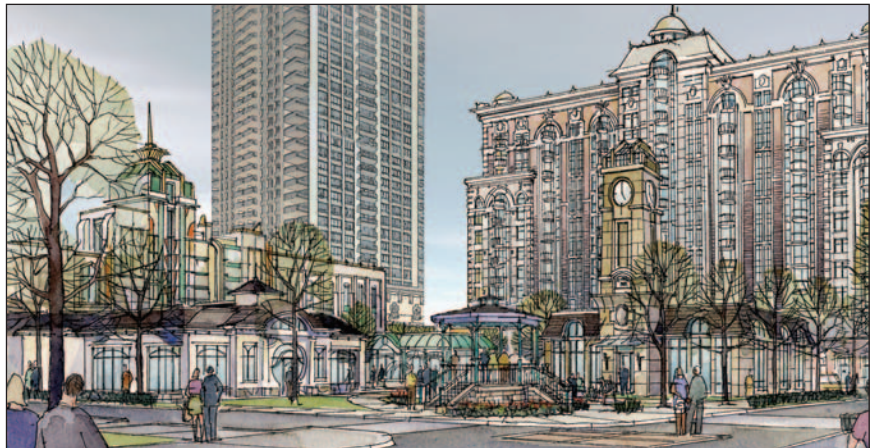
Riverside Park, a unique mixed-use development and one of the largest contiguous infill parcels in any major U.S. city, takes shape in downtown Chicago.

Take 62 acres of prime real estate along the Chicago River at the foot of the Chicago Loop, add a beautiful river walk and park system and much-needed retail and restaurant establishments for the already booming residential population, and what do you get? A unique integrated urban village environment in a vibrant new pedestrian-oriented community within blocks of Lake Michigan and downtown Chicago. At least that's the vision for Riverside Park, a development by Roosevelt/Clark Development, LP.

About 3 years ago, Roosevelt/Clark Development purchased the property, which runs along the south branch of the Chicago River, south of Roosevelt Road to 16th Street and east to Clark Street. The site is "access challenged," according to Judi Fishman, senior project director for the development. Her company worked closely with the city to figure out a way to get in and out of the site and plan for a mixed-use development.

"The main road on the north is 30 feet above the height of the ground, and there's a metro track running completely along the eastern border," she says. "There are other railroads along the southern border, and the river is on the western border, so there was no way to get in and out."

Roosevelt/Clark Development is in association with Rezmar Development Company, which has played a major role in the explosive growth of Chicago's South and West Loop markets, as well as River West and Lakeview on the city's north side. The company has created a wide spectrum of urban habitats — apartments, townhomes, lofts, row hous-



Riverside Park is a collaboration of Roosevelt/Clark Development, LP, The McGarey Group and BMac Real Estate, LLC, that will open in 2007 in Chicago.

es and more — at a wide range of price points. On Riverside Park, the developer is currently working with the city of Chicago to access appropriate funds for building the infrastructure to access the site, and will begin construction on the development in the fall.

The 10-year project will begin with a first mixed-use phase off Roosevelt Road on the north side of the property. The first phase will include three levels of parking for roughly 3,000 cars and about 600,000 square feet of retail space with 1,100 residential units above it. The first phase of the project is expected to open in the spring of 2008. When completed, Riverside Park will include one- and two-story retail space in varying sizes and elevations. A collection of restaurants, entertainment and nightlife purveyors will complement prominent national fashion and home retailers, European-style cafes and gathering places, boutiques, galleries and personal services. The retail storefronts will open onto sidewalks facing both sides of two new

boulevards that will extend into the heart of the urban village from Roosevelt Road. The proposed boulevards will face generous parks and green space, fountains, seating areas, ornamental landscaping and a children's play area.

On the residential side, a total of about 4,600 residential units are planned in various styles and price points — including studios, mid-rise condos, high-rise condominiums, lofts, townhomes and row houses. Residential condominium buildings will be located above the retail shops in the Retail District of the development. The buildings will feature living units with ample views of the streets below. Entrance lobbies to each of the residential buildings will be located adjacent to retail storefronts on the street level. Ample parking for the residential and retail uses will be in close proximity on the street level and in parking structure below the shopping areas.

The retail and condominium base of the buildings will be clad in limestone, brick, stucco, aluminum and

glass. Decorative lights, awnings, canopies and banners will celebrate the retail activities on the street level. The upper floors of the buildings will be designed to enhance and enliven the Retail District with articulated balconies and operable windows.

SUPERB SITE

The Riverside Park property is one of the largest contiguous infill parcels in any major U.S. city and offers a string of amenities for residents and shoppers. The site is within blocks of a Metra commuter railroad line, all three subway and El lines, Roosevelt Road bus line, and will be serviced by the trolley and water taxis. It's only 5 blocks from Grant Park and Chicago's Museum Campus and approximately 1 mile from McCormick Place, the nation's largest convention center. The site also has excellent access to major highways, including the Dan Ryan and Eisenhower Expressways and Lake Shore Drive.

More than 1.6 million people with an average household income of \$67,000 live within a 15-minute drive of Riverside Park, and more than 600,000 people with an average household income of \$81,687 are within a 10-minute drive. Over 40,000 residential units that have been built in the central area within the past 10 years.

"There's a resurgence of people who want to live in the city of Chicago," notes Fishman. "The South Loop began its establishment as a residential area through the conversion of old printer and manufacturing build-

ings to loft living. After that, townhouses and high-rises started to go up, and now there's a nice mix of all different kinds of residential uses."

"The housing boom is absolutely phenomenal," adds Denver McGarey of The McGarey Group, who is handling retail leasing for the project. "The second thing driving our project is the fact that most people don't realize there are 53,000 students in the Loop at different universities. That's the size of Ohio State University."

The McGarey Group is renowned for its comprehensive planning, development and leasing of preeminent urban retail projects throughout the United States. Among the company's recent projects are Atlantic Station, a 138-acre urban mixed-use brownfield development with more than 1.2 million square feet of retail/entertainment in Midtown Atlanta, and Gallery Place, a 650,000-square-foot urban entertainment center and mixed-use retail, office and residential complex located adjacent to the MCI Center in Downtown Washington, D.C.

"I look forward to taking the knowledge and experience gained from Atlantic Station, a very similar project, and applying it here," says Bruce McLeod, owner of BMac Real Estate, LLC, a retail consultant on the project.

BMac Real Estate served as managing director of retail for Atlantic Station, with principal responsibility for the 811,000 square feet of retail development scheduled to open in

October 2005. Bmac was involved in all aspects of design, leasing, construction and management.

"Riverside Park is an extraordinary retail opportunity because the South Loop is exploding residentially and woefully understored," McLeod says. "The city of Chicago is losing almost \$2 billion to the suburbs because of the lack of shopping and the difficult parking situation that exists; the numbers are eye-popping."

The primary market, indeed, is greatly underserved by existing retail and restaurants, adds Fishman.

"Chicago is a lovely, lively city; it has the Michigan Avenue corridor, the North Avenue corridor and the State Street Corridor, and certainly other shopping, but those are the concentrated areas of lifestyle-type shopping, and the area is significantly underserved."

With such a phenomenal, ever-growing residential base and superior amenities, and such a need for lifestyle retail and restaurants, the development opportunity is truly unique, says McGarey.

"Because we're open-air, and not a seven- or eight-level enclosed center, to get up this close with a colony of restaurants, entertainment and retail mixed in with great Chicago retailers and restaurants, it's almost unfair," he notes.

"Everyone on our team keeps saying, 'We're not building a project; we're merely expanding a city.'" **SCB**

— Susan H. Fishman