

# OPAL BY ELEMENT REVOLUTIONIZES RETIREMENT LIVING WITH INTERGENERATIONAL CONCEPT

Project at King Edward and Cambie designed to foster relationships between residents and their families

When Element Lifestyle Retirement Inc. was planning OPAL, a new retirement community at Cambie Street and King Edward Avenue in Vancouver, company members had a particular buyer in mind: their family.

“The very selection of the property was based on my parents’ values and needs regarding community and family. I wanted them to enjoy the legacy they’ve created in retirement living,” explains Candy Ho, director and vice-president of marketing and corporate relations. “We see each other every day of the week. I knew that for my parents to be comfortable and happy in their new home, they needed a setting that their children and grandchildren would also enjoy in a carefree, joyful way.”

Ho’s father, company president Don Ho, is considered one of the country’s pioneers for aging-in-place retirement model, having developed numerous retirement communities in the province prior to starting Element. He was instrumental in influencing the B.C. government to create the Assisted Living Registrar of B.C., and led the co-founding of the B.C. Senior Living Association, which now represents hundreds of facilities in the province. OPAL is Element’s flagship and through it, Element leadership seeks to break through the status quo of “senior homes”.

Slated to begin construction in mid to late February of 2017, OPAL is unlike any other retirement living option in the Lower Mainland, if not Canada. The philosophy behind OPAL, which will provide for independent and assisted living through to complex care, is to create an inviting community for not only retirees and seniors, but for family members in all stages of life.

Candy Ho cites several family purchases. One example is a purchaser who just turned 60, who



OPAL by Element will comprise condos, rental suites and care units, and offer myriad amenities for residents.



took a unit for herself and her visiting children, a unit for her active mother, and reserved a licensed care suite for her father.

“This is not a retirement home designed with a specific focus only on seniors,” says Ms. Ho. “They will no longer need to experience that limiting sense of stigma.”

Suites have thoughtful features for aging in place, but esthetically,

they are beautiful homes. “What really makes it home, though, is the freedom – and encouragement – to invite all ages of family and friends regularly,” clarifies Ms. Ho. “We provide hospitality, support and care services to allow everyone to stay together, regardless of their stage of life or state of wellness. Freed from any feelings of burden and duty, family members are here



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*CANDY HO, DIRECTOR & VICE-PRESIDENT, OF MARKETING AND CORPORATE RELATIONS OPAL DEVELOPMENTS*

to enjoy positive dynamics, and meaningful bonding experiences.”

All programming has been designed specifically to foster intergenerational relationships. Private function rooms will have dining tables for 12 to 24 and a living room set-up with board games. In a sound-proofed room, teachers will facilitate older adults in sew-

ing knitting and sharing life stories with children. There will also be times for free play. Element chefs will host cooking demonstrations and classes, allowing residents to share their famous recipes with each other, or to learn with their grandchildren how to make sushi, or ice cream or pasta from scratch. Multiple generations can grow various herbs and vegetables in rooftop planters, and then contribute to the community at local farmers’ markets. All family members – young and old – are encouraged to take part in the many recreational opportunities and fitness classes in the movement studio, fully equipped gym, the Wellness Spa and the theatre.

The community will also feature a multitude of dining experiences, from casual to more formal. Family and friends of residents – regardless of whether they live at OPAL – are invited to dine with each other as often as possible, with increasing discounts for the guests the more frequently residents enjoy visiting company.

All services at OPAL have one overarching goal, says Ms. Ho. “We believe that this intergenerational experience will help people have healthier mindsets and a greater sense of purpose,” she says.

When complete in early 2019, OPAL will be home to 44 condominiums, 56 rental units, and 30 care units (including one with double-occupancy capacity). The condominiums come in studio through to three-bedroom configurations and range in size from 453 to 2,324 square-foot interiors, and 80- to 970-square-foot patios.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT: [HTTP://OPALBYE-ELEMENT.COM](http://opalbyelement.com) (THE CORPORATE SITE IS [HTTP://ELEMENTLIVING.COM](http://elementliving.com))**