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PHOTO COURTESY OF THE HULBERT GROUP

The Parkside, an urban resort located in Victoria, will not only offer luxurious suites but a commitment to the environment. The project is aiming for LEED Platinum status, something no facility in Canada and no resort in the world has yet achieved. Completion of the project is scheduled for January, 2008.

SUSTAINABILITY

Parkside aims for platinum

Victoria's Parkside resort is going for LEED PLatinum status, not for marketing reasons but because "it's the right thing to do"

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Correspondent

There's no law requiring Aviawest Resort Group to minimize the environmental impact of the Parkside

urban resort it's developing in Victoria, B.C. Nor is it likely that potential investors in the luxurious time-share have been shopping specifically for 'green' projects to buy into. So why bother?

"It's the right thing to do," says developer Andrew Pearson.

Moreover, he expects it to pay off. "Energy efficiency makes economic sense by reducing our operating costs over a relatively short recap period" he says.

Investors will reap the benefits too, he adds, and that was another motivation to be environmentally conscious. "Our purchasers will take more pride in their resort ownership and appreciate our product as good value, since their operational costs will be lower."

Aviawest has been in the habit of 'greening' the projects it develops and/or operates. In the case of Parkside, however, the color the developer is aiming for is platinum. That's LEED Platinum, the top category of certification available under the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. To date, no facility in Canada nor any resort in the world has achieved LEED Platinum.

A design by The Hulbert Group, Parkside will have 126 suites in two concrete buildings. Excavation began this year on a former downtown Victoria hospital site which had been remediated. Footings were underway in early June. Completion is anticipated by January 2008. Hard construction cost is pegged at \$42 million.

Parkside's eight-storey and six-storey buildings will be joined by a three-storey glass atrium. The project will also contain two levels of underground parking and two levels of commercial space.

Among amenities will be a swimming pool, rooftop gardens and extensive landscaping, the latter incorporating trees that were saved from Crystal Gardens, a Victoria attraction shut down a few years ago.

LEED credits are earned in five categories: site, energy, water, materials, indoor environment and innovation and design process. Fifty-two of a possible 70 credits are required to achieve LEED Platinum and if Aviawest's Parkside attains its goal, it will be the first facility in Canada and the first resort in the world to do so.

Pearson figures he's got 54 credits covered. He likes the LEED program because it provides a measuring stick and a way to recognize environmental initiatives.

Space doesn't permit listing all the measures Aviawest has planned in its quest for the pinnacle. It's the plans for Parkside's rooftop gardens and reuse of grey water that Pearson finds especially interesting and satisfying.

Covering more than half the roof surface, rooftop gardens will help to reduce the heat island effect and, thereby, energy requirements. The gardens are also part of the stormwater reduction plan. Rainwater from the roof will be retained for irrigation and non-potable water usage.



PHOTO COURTESY OF AVIAWEST

A bird's eye blueprint of the Parkside project reveals an extensive atrium and rooftop gardens, features intended to push the project to LEED Platinum status.

Gray water – wastewater from sources other than toilets – will be collected from commercial areas and staff shower facilities and used for non-potable water requirements and in the heat exchange system. Consideration was given to having a dual wastewater collection system from each unit, but that additional water would not have yielded any more benefit, Pearson reports.

Recycling of grey water and stormwater will reduce the burden on municipal water and wastewater systems. As well, it will lower the facility's cost of buying water and lessen its sewer bills, which are based on volume of water bought.

Michael Wong, project coordinator for The Hulbert Group, singles out the project's fritted glass sunshades as a design feature that "adds another dimension to the buildings." The shades will look like clear glass with opaque horizontal stripes and will be incorporated into the curtainwall system to cut down on heat gain.

Designing and coordinating a green project takes a little more time, but it's far from overwhelming, Wong comments. Stantec Consulting is LEED coordination consultant to the architect.

Aviawest intends to prepare an information brochure for property users and visitors. Measures such as bicycle storage and change and shower facilities for those who bike to work and a rewards program are planned as incentives for staff to be environmentally conscious.

Project consultants include Reed Jones Christoffersen Ltd, structural engineering and building envelope; R A Duff and Associates Inc, electrical; Stantec (Vancouver), mechanical; Stantec (Victoria), civil; Forth Land Planning, landscape design; The Interior Design Group, interiors; and LMDG Building Code Consultants

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