

Downtown condos and lofts aim to get creatives with live-work units

A home where you can work. Projects billed raw and organic play to popularity of exposed-brick loft life



CONDO TRENDS
Duncan McAllister
life@metronews.ca

Pockets of Toronto's downtown are becoming hot spots for condo and loft live-work spaces. With the influx of independent, creative, high-tech, advertising and artistic industries, this form of enterprise is popular in the King West and West Queen West neighbourhoods, and both city hall and developers are taking notice.

Councillor Adam Vaughan has seen a significant change in the last 15 years in his Trinity-Spadina ward. "There's been an intensification that's been built up around the transformation of the old warehouse spaces to one of the largest clusters of high-tech media and arts and digital economic centres in the country," he says.

We're now seeing condos

Attracting creative urban businesses

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Trinity-Spadina Councillor Adam Vaughan



The Ten93 midrise project at Queen and Dovercourt features live-work units. CONTRIBUTED

and lofts that cater to the work-at-home enterprise. Authentic downtown lofts with their open-concept studio spaces, rough-hewn timbers and exposed brick make great spaces for creative urban businesses.

Liberty Village has always been a popular live-work zone. With the migration of

75 different advertising and marketing agencies into the area, the Village has become Toronto's Madison Avenue. Popular with the creative and tech sectors, these live-work units suit a micro-office or computer-based business.

Streetcar Developments aims to transform a whole city block at Queen Street West and Gladstone Avenue with their Carnaby project, a combination of condominium residences and commercial spaces suitable for studios and small galleries. While the units themselves are not live-work per se, residents of the building would enjoy a very short commute downstairs. "We really wanted it to be very arts and cultural related.

We want to make sure that there is the ability for studio spaces and to make sure that we do have the ability for artists to be involved in the area," says Streetcar spokesperson Harley Nakelsky.

Ten93 at Queen and Dovercourt is a new mid-rise project from Pemberton Group and RAW architects. The nine-storey mid-rise is billed as raw and organic, which describes the quirky and eclectic stretch of shops, cafés and artists' studios. The condo will add 134 units and new street-level retail to this animated neighbourhood and will feature a number of live-work units with the aim of attracting creative, home-based entrepreneurs.



The Carnaby project includes studio and gallery spaces. CONTRIBUTED

Advantages of working from home

For some, the advantages of working at home are many.

- You don't have to commute in wretched winter weather, the coffee is always good, and it affords a quieter, more private workplace.
- It's not for everyone however: It requires a modicum of self-discipline and not all businesses are cut out for a live-in head office.



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