

Housing Still the Top Sector

In Portland

By Melody Finnemore



Housing in the downtown area is spreading out from the Pearl District to South Waterfront and the River districts. A major redevelopment of the Burnside area by OPUS NW is in the planning phases.

The Portland Art Museum project called for renovation of the Masons Temple. Hoffman Construction is the general contractor.

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Portland's construction market enjoyed a robust year in 2005 and will continue to grow this year, according to John Mitchell, senior economist for US Bank's western region.

"We've got declining vacancy rates and a lot of big projects that are under way, so it looks like it's going to be a pretty good

year," he said. "We're experiencing job growth and population growth that is higher than the national rate, plus there is the federal highway bill and falling vacancies.

"You put all of those things together and you see upward pressure on construction rates, especially in non-residential growth." >>

Portland Activity Report

Kim Lane, business development manager for Portland's Walsh Construction Co., said current projects such as The Strand, New Columbia Phase II and The Crane Building foretell of increased activity ahead. In addition, Walsh will begin several affordable senior housing projects in late August.

"I think 2006 will be another busy year and that will go into 2007," she said.

Steve Tinney, Andersen Construction Co.'s business development manager, said times also look good for his general contracting firm.

"We're going to start some pretty big projects this year, like the Cronin Block, 24th Place (The Westerly) and The Metropolitan," he added. "We'll see an expansion in our business this year."

Meanwhile, the Portland Art Museum finished an historical restoration of the 141,000-sq.-ft. North Building. Completed in October, the newly renamed Mark Building features 28,000 sq. ft. of additional gallery space and an underground passage and gallery linking it to the adjacent Belluschi Building, which underwent a \$45 million renovation and expansion in 2000.

The restoration, designed by Ann Beha Architects Inc. of Boston and built by Portland's Hoffman Construction Co., also included new space for the Northwest Film Center, a 33,000-volume Art Study Center and Library, and a pair of renovated ballrooms.

Here are a few of the projects driving Portland's construction market:

The Metropolitan

Bounded by Northwest Lovejoy and Marshall streets and 10th and 11th avenues, the 225-ft.-tall Metropolitan is designed as the River District's tallest structure. Its 19-story tower will feature 121 condominiums.

An adjacent four-story building will house 20,000 sq. ft. of live/work space. The pair will be connected by 20,000 sq. ft. of ground-level retail space and two floors of underground parking.

Andersen Construction broke ground on the Metropolitan in August and is expected to finish the \$64 million project in August 2007. BOORA Architects of Portland designed the building for LEED silver certification and included sustainable elements such as energy-efficient mechanical and glazing systems, stormwater retention for landscape irrigation and natural ventilation.

The Strand

Portland's South Waterfront will soon boast several mixed-use towers, including a three-building development called The Strand. The project consists of a 13-story tower at the southeast corner, an 11-story tower at the southwest corner and another 11-story structure on the north end of the site.

The three towers will sit above an underground parking garage with room for 361 spaces, 261 of which are for residents. The public will have access to the remaining parking spaces and a restaurant on the site's northeast corner.

Ankrom Moisan Associated Architects of Portland designed the \$90 million project, and Riverplace Partners LLC is the developer.

Walsh Construction began building The Strand in February 2005. The 13-story tower will be finished in October, the 11-story structure to the north is slated for completion in December and the 11-story tower on the southwest corner will be done in July 2007.

Pac West Communications



John Ross Condominiums

Also on the South Waterfront is the John Ross, a 31-story tower that will house 286 residential units and 20,000 sq. ft. of retail space on the first level.

Gerding/Edlen Development Co. and Williams & Dame Development, both of Portland, formed a joint venture to develop the John Ross.

GBD Architects and Thompson Vaivoda & Associates Architects, also of Portland, are the project architects.

The 325-ft.-tall tower features an elliptical design that is intended to provide every unit with a view while minimizing the tower's impact on the environment and other nearby residential views.

The John Ross is designed for LEED gold certification and incorporates



The Tram will connect the two campuses at the Oregon Health Sciences University.

Portland Aerial Tram

The 3,300-ft. Portland Aerial Tram is designed to connect Oregon Health & Science University's Marquam Hill campus with a mixed-use neighborhood of houses, offices and medical facilities being planned in the North Macadam Urban Renewal Area along the Willamette River.

Kiewit Pacific Co. of Vancouver, Wash., is the construction manager/general contractor and began the project in September. The tram is scheduled to be finished late this fall at a cost of \$55 million.

Apollo Sheet Metal



Hoffman Construction is the general contractor for the John Ross Condominiums.

environmentally sensitive materials and finishes, an ecoroof and a stormwater management system that filters rainwater.

In order to finish the \$75 million project by an April 2007 deadline, Hoffman Construction is utilizing "top-down construction," which allows work on the upper stories to occur at the same time the underground parking is built. The ambitious schedule also requires a three-phased occupancy.

Burnside Bridgehead

Crews will first pour the slab for the building pedestal, which provides the base for the condo tower. Work can then occur concurrently; the tower will be erected and the space for the parking garage excavated at the same time. Excavation takes place floor by floor. Beams are placed and a new concrete slab poured. Then excavation of the next parking level occurs, until the correct depth is reached.

"The system works best when schedule is the most critical factor of the project," said Bill Drinkward, project manager for Hoffman.

The Portland Development Commission last year selected Opus Northwest LLC to develop a "significant mixed-use gateway project" on five city blocks at the east end of the Burnside Bridge near downtown Portland. The project area totals 195,500 sq. ft. in the city's Central Eastside Urban Renewal Area.

PDC's goal is to redevelop the area with a landmark retail/commercial, housing and office project. As part of its agreement with PDC, Opus will work with Catholic Charities to develop 135 affordable housing units, all of which would be available to families at 60 percent of median family income or lower.

Opus Northwest's initial plans for the site included a Lowe's home improvement store. However, resistance from area residents led Opus to reconsider the idea. The company is currently developing a comprehensive plan for the site. <<