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Article Title:

Betting on Urban Lifestyle

By: Angie Anaya Borgedalen**Article Source:** Dispatch Tribune**Full Text:** Northland real estate investors Tim Harris and Craig Porter bet that empty nesters and young professionals will take a shine to urban living.

So far, their vision is becoming a reality. In the past month, 82 condominiums out of 144 initially planned have been sold in a 1970s former bank building they own at 11th and Walnut streets in downtown Kansas City.

Porter and Harris are among a small group of investors in Wall Street Tower, 1101 Walnut St., a 20 story building being converted into condominiums, office and commercial space.

Two other friends with a vision for the former Mercantile Tower bank building are Frank Cucchiara and Jim Haug, both with Northland ties. Jason Townsend is project manager and an investor.

Harris of Liberty said this was an exciting time to be involved in the rebirth of downtown Kansas City.

'I always wanted to do a deal in downtown Kansas City,' Harris said. 'It's very exciting right now, and there's a lot of energy in the market.'

However, all that interest in downtown building is attracting out-of-town buyers and making it more difficult to find viable properties.

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'We're looking for other opportunities, but they're getting snapped up,' Harris said.

Harris gives a lot of credit to Mayor Kay Barnes for her efforts to revitalize downtown.

'This will be her legacy of success--an exciting, revitalized downtown Kansas City,' Harris said. 'I predict that in five years you'll see some major difference in downtown Kansas City, and in 10 years you won't recognize it.'

Porter of Kansas City said there probably would be offices on the first three or four floors and nine living units per floor on the other 17 floors. He said prices ranged from about \$140,000 to \$500,000.

A small building adjacent to WallStreet Tower will be torn down and rebuilt as upscale condominiums overlooking the park, Harris said.

Porter said he had reserved a condo on the 20th floor with a bird's-eye view of the new sports arena.

Porter said the impressive panoramic view from the condos made selling them easy.

'The view is spectacular,' he said.

The condos also will overlook the new entertainment district, the H&R Block headquarters and the restored President Hotel.

[Mike Burke](#), former Kansas City councilman who attended a recent open house at WallStreet Tower, said he was impressed.

'I think it's marvelous,' [Burke](#) said. 'They've taken a building that was in foreclosure and done something wonderful with it.'

Porter said that, when completed, the contemporary bronze metal and glass building will feature sidewalk cafes and a fitness center in the lower level and a swimming pool on the roof of the parking garage.

'What we're selling is a lifestyle that will rival Chicago, Dallas, Denver and New York,' Porter said.

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