

# on the map

## TAKING THE ACTION UPTOWN

Steps from Gateway Terminal, a future LRT and Sheridan College, DUO Condos is an attractive choice for students in Brampton

IRIS BENAROA

Jason Pantalone, president and managing partner at National Homes, didn't need to be sold on why Brampton is a good spot to set down roots. The developer's dad, Rocco, spent 30 years perfecting the stacked-town-home model in the west-end city.

"We've developed thousands of acres in Brampton and built roughly 6,000," says Pantalone of Rocco's tenure, which started in 1992 with the formation of National Homes.

During that period, the senior Pantalone earned a reputation for his solid low-rise product. "But over the last eight years my brother Matthew, sister Deena and I took over the business," says Pantalone. "We've focused on higher-density, transit-oriented developments."

Beyond Brampton, National Homes is developing a 400,000-square-foot high-rise community in Burlington on Plains Road, in the Aldershot community. And in Markham, at Castlemore and Markham Road, there's Station Town, a half-a-million-square-foot high-rise project (which has since sold to another developer).

Still, "everyone thinks of National as a low-rise developer," says Pantalone, who expects DUO Condos, situated at the corner of Malta and Steeles, will change that.

Designed by IBI Architects, the 2.6-acre DUO Condos will have two towers connected by an expansive outdoor courtyard. The first 26-storey structure features 350 suites. Units range from studios to two bedrooms plus den and start in the \$400,000s, for sizing ranging from 419 to 844 square feet. Occupancy is set for early 2025.

Slated for the vibrant Steeles Avenue corridor — and built in partnership with highrise specialist Brixen Developments — the towers will bring 800-plus units to the area.

The immediate vicinity is also seeing action from i2 Developments, who are behind Stella 1 & 2 Condominiums, as well as Southside Towns.

Across the street, plans are underway to redevelop the 190-store Brampton Shoppers World. The sprawling mall and parking lot will become a pedestrian-oriented condo community being developed by RioCan, with Sheridan College Davis Campus nearby, five minutes west of DUO Condos. A new LRT station, with the Malta bus at DUO's doorstep and ZUM bus stops minutes away, should grab the attention of housing-scouting students.

"It'll cater towards students that want to live in the community they grew up in," says Pantalone, listing a co-work space with a view of the rooftop terrace as an amenity students will love.



PHOTOS: NATIONAL HOMES AND BRIXEN DEVELOPMENTS

The 2.6-acre DUO project will include two towers connected by an expansive outdoor courtyard.

### YOU ARE HERE

- 1. Hike, bird watch or picnic at one of 14 sites (with shelter and barbecues) at the sublime Heart Lake Conservation Park.** There's also fishing, boat rentals, a pool and a splash pad. 10818 Heart Lake Rd.
- 2. The Carrick and Tyers-designed Turnberry Golf Club is modelled after the classic links courses in Scotland.** Enjoy a meal at the popular Restaurant NINE18, with its wraparound heated terrace overlooking the course. 10100 Heart Lake Rd.
- 3. It's a 15-minute drive to Bramalea City Centre, a sprawling shopping mall with big-box retailers like Best Buy, Hudson's Bay, H&M and Roots.** 25 Peel Centre Dr.

"We brought on global architecture firm IBI Architects to create a beautiful building, unlike anything Brampton has ever seen," says Alexander D'Orazio, co-founder and principal of Brixen Developments. "Sawtooth balconies will create an interesting building and juxtapose black and white materiality," says D'Orazio. "The podium is spectacular: the masonry ties in with the low-rise neighbourhood, and the tower creates a strong presence." On the ground level, he

says, "we've envisioned a kiosk, where people could get a coffee while sitting or walking through the courtyard."

D'Orazio likens the partnership with National Homes to a marriage. "It's a perfect fit. They have a good, 30-plus-year reputation and track record in Brampton."

The goal, says D'Orazio, is to transport a Toronto feel to Brampton.

"We wanted to bring an urban condo you'd see downtown, uptown. So we're offering yoga, a party room, a playground and a large outdoor terrace," says D'Orazio. "It's a really nice amenity package that will make this building unique for Brampton."

The amenities by EsQape Design are well rounded. In addition to yoga, the fitness studio is equipped with car-

dio, pilates and spinning sections and a separate room for private classes or a group session.

There will also be a dining and social room, with a full kitchen and bar.

Suite interiors, meanwhile, are "light, functional and luxurious," says Carmen Dragomir, EsQape Design's principal.

"We have almost 3,000 names of registrants who want to buy the first phase and only been marketing for the last month," says Pantalone.

Suites in the first tower at DUO Condos include studios, one bedrooms, one bedrooms plus flex space, two bedrooms and two bedrooms plus den. Prices start in the \$400,000s. For more information, visit [duocondos.ca](http://duocondos.ca).

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If your neighbours aren't greeting the roar of your snowblower engine like residents of a country being liberated by peacekeeping tanks, you are misusing your power.

CHAD HUCULAK, ON PROPER SHOVELLING ETIQUETTE, A20

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