

SCOTTSDALE Airpark News

MARCH 2017

7 interior design trends
in Airpark residences

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Optima's newest
live-work-play options

+ Artisanal
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chandeliers



Capturing KIERLAND

✓ Optima Kierland president David Hovey says the project has exceeded initial sales goals.

< The 12-story condominium tower will be the first tower in the Optima Kierland project.



High-rise condos are taking shape around Kierland Commons, continuing a trend of real estate following retail that's transforming the Valley. But which living environment will own the vibrant shopping, dining and entertainment hub?

By Jimmy Magahern / Photos by Larry Mangino

The cranes have been looming over Kierland Commons for almost a year now, as construction crews have been adding floor after floor to the first two of four residential towers at Optima Kierland, a high-rise luxury condominium and apartment complex going up on the northwest corner of Scottsdale Road and Kierland Boulevard. Pre-leasing kicked off in February and residents are projected to start moving in around May.

Just a block north of the Optima project, construction is set to begin soon on other condo buildings.

High-rise and mid-rise condos are starting to surround Kierland, echoing a trend toward inward residential development that has been observed lately in downtown and uptown Phoenix and in Tempe, with high-density condominium and apartment projects rising up around already vibrant

shopping, dining and entertainment hubs. It's a reversal from the typical growth pattern that made the Valley of the Sun the unflattering model of suburban sprawl. Historically, home building here has always happened first, with retail centers and office complexes filling in around the homes to serve the new suburban population. "Retail followed rooftops to the Valleys' suburbs," notes Catherine Reagor, senior real-estate reporter for The Arizona Republic. "But now new housing is chasing new infill restaurant and shopping hubs."

Optima Kierland is the first development to follow this trend in North Scottsdale.

"I think our customers are really looking for the adjacency to all these really great existing amenities that have developed around Kierland," says David Hovey Jr., president of Optima, which already has two developments further south in Scottsdale: Optima

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< (Photo special to Scottsdale Airpark News)

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Camelview, a condo tower similar in design to the one being built at Kierland, and Optima Sonoran Village, a luxury apartment complex. "Obviously it's a great location; you've got all these popular entertainment, retail and restaurant operations right there already. There's also great golf and recreation in the immediate area. And being able to walk across the street to all these fantastic existing amenities, I think, makes our location second to none."

Mike Rousculp, chief of staff / director assistant at the American Express Desert Ridge Campus across from the Mayo Clinic, agrees the location was what sold him on moving from his current home near 12th Street and Missouri to Optima Kierland.

"I live about 30 minutes away from where I work," he says, "and moving to the Optima will drop my commute down to 7 or 8 minutes." But it's not all about mere convenience for Rousculp, who's signed up to move into a 1,500 square foot second-story condo with his partner and their two dogs as soon as construction is done. "Everything's really centrally located over here now. We spend a lot of time going over to the Kierland mall for dinner and things like that anyways, so it was obvious when the building started popping up that this was where we wanted to be."

Rousculp, in his mid-40s, is a Gen-Xer stuck between the two demographics, Millennials and Boomers, that are driving the shift to develop residential spaces in places where people can walk or bike to work or play – the so-called "live-work-play" concept. But the Kierland area is also drawing an even older demographic: folks in their 70s and beyond who are choosing to live in active urban



Optima Kierland buyer Mike Rousculp lives and works in the Scottsdale Airpark area.

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hubs rather than the traditional retirement developments.

Mary and John Cooper, both in their late 70s, are set to move into Optima Kierland as a way of downsizing from the 7,000-square-foot home they currently own in Silverleaf, the luxury home community nestled in the canyons of the McDowell Mountain Preserve in North Scottsdale.

They're not retiring – the Coopers already passed that phase when they moved to Phoenix 20 years ago, originally settling in Desert Mountain, the private gated community centered around six Jack Nicklaus signature golf courses in the high Sonoran Desert northeast of Carefree. But all that peace and quiet quickly grew too sedate for Mary.

"That's in the middle of nowhere, as far as I'm concerned," she says.

They moved about 15 miles south to Silverleaf, into a sprawling home that eventually became too big. "With all the maintenance and the landscaping," Cooper says, "it was just a little much."

Finally the couple heard about Optima Kierland, and decided to buy up several units and combine them into one large penthouse near the top of the tower.

"We got very excited about it," Cooper says. "We got in very early, so we were able to get up on the 11th floor. We combined four units, so it's about 4,000 square feet – still pretty big. But we still want that big expanse. And we're going to be facing west, toward the Westin Kierland golf course. We want to see the sunsets from up there."

Combining units is one of the unique options Optima Kierland offers.

"With the condos, we have about 40 different floor plans now, and we're allowing our buyers to customize," Hovey says. "About half of our buyers are going for custom condo units, where they'll buy two or three, sometimes up to five units, and combine them. And we will customize a home for them. It's really rare to find condominium developers who will allow this much customization. Some of our penthouse buyers have combined up to six units."

Hovey, the son of another award-winning architect, David

Hovey Sr., who made his name building distinctive residential buildings around the Chicago area (his Old Orchard Woods apartment complex employing three interlocking glass and aluminum towers overlooking a forest preserve in Skokie, Illinois, is a signature achievement), gets a little technical when describing how the multiple unit combinations work. "We keep the window wall in the same spot and we try to keep all of our plumbing shafts and HVAC shafts in the same spot," he says. "And then we can basically customize to whatever floor plan they like."

Hovey is the first to admit Optima Kierland is not a true live-work-play arrangement. Unlike the Plaza Lofts at Kierland Commons, which are located directly above some of the retail outlets overlooking the mall's central plaza and in an adjacent nine-story tower, "all we have is condominiums and apartments," he says. But it's close enough to the action that residents will feel that "high connectivity" with the restaurants, bars, shops and office complexes nearby.

"There's shopping right across the street with Kierland Commons and Scottsdale Quarter. There are going to be office buildings around the immediate area as well. So residents will be adjacent to all that."

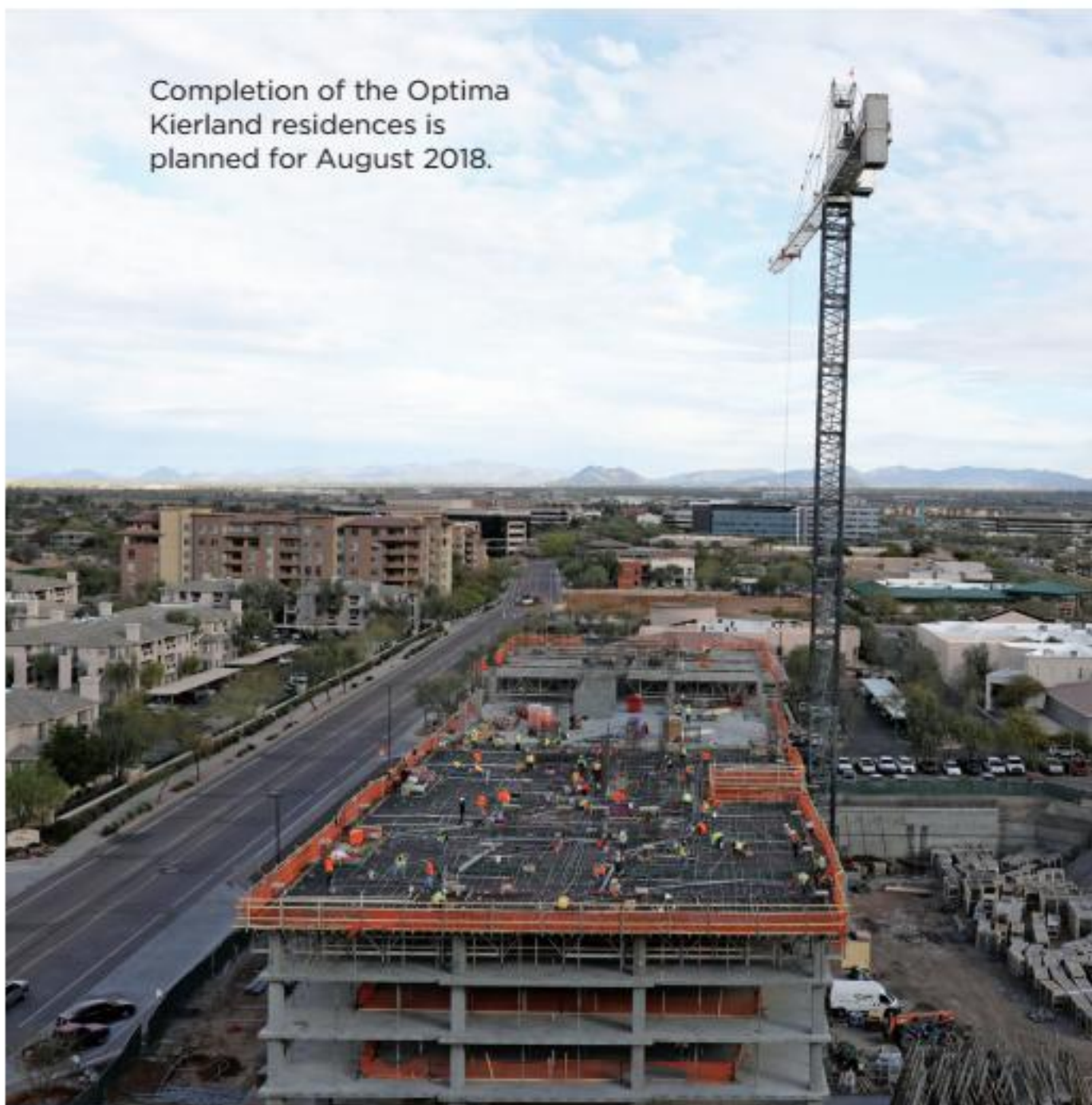
Residents will also be privy to a wide range of amenities on each tower's first floor and rooftop.

"All of our amenities are on grade level and on the roof," Hovey explains. "On the roof of each building we have a pool, a spa, barbecues, fire pit. Lounge seating. Kitchen and bar for the condos. On grade level for the condos we have a 16,000-square-foot fitness center, with all the latest cardio equipment and weight machines. Indoor basketball courts, squash courts, an indoor golf simulator, hot tub, cold plunge."

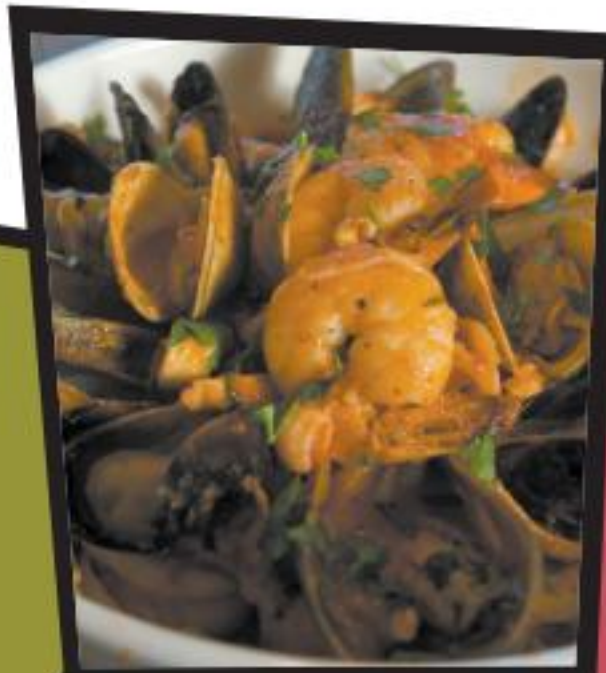
"I'm really looking forward to the rooftop pool and deck," says Rousculp, who's read that the rooftop pools will have elevated, negative-edge decks that are supposed to eliminate the need for railings that would otherwise obscure the view. "Based on what I've seen, it'll have an unobstructed view in

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Completion of the Optima Kierland residences is planned for August 2018.



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any direction," he adds. "You'll be able to see for miles."

The towers will also incorporate the unique "vertical landscaping" found at Optima Camelview, where gardens grow from terraces up and down the outside of the building. "It feels like it's done well, environmentally," Rousculp says. "Hopefully it's energy-efficient and all those kinds of things."

For the Coopers, the Optima location, which overlooks both Kierland Commons and the Scottsdale Quarter shopping districts as well as the Westin Kierland golf course, puts all the amenities of your average 55+ community within easy walking distance, even if none of those restaurants and leisure activities are technically on the property's grounds.

"We're going to join a golf club over at the Westin Kierland, and it won't take us long to get to the golf course," Mary says. "And we eat out every night of the week, so we can just go downstairs, walk across the street and have our choice of restaurants."

The Coopers are a prime example of a new type of retirees attracted to the Kierland area: older adults who, instead of relocating to age-restricted master planned communities, are flocking to high-density urban areas naturally surrounded by plenty of amenities and activities, along with a multi-generational mix of neighbors for human contact. Ironically, the generation is seeking the same type of live-work-play environment trending with Millennials and young professionals.

"We like to be around younger people," Cooper explains. "We like to walk and see the young kids splashing in the pool. It

makes us feel younger."

They're not worried about settling into a place without assistive care. "We figure we'll get that when we need it. And a lot of times you can just get your own care. You don't need to live in a place where there's nurses and doctors and healthcare facilities all around. We don't need that – not yet. And if we do, we'll just move on."

Besides, the Coopers, who lived for a time in New York City in the kinds of condo towers that have nattily-dressed doormen who greet residents courteously at the entrance every day, expects the Optima Kierland will neatly work in tandem with the surrounding businesses.

"I shop at Kierland quite a lot," Mary says. "My expectations are that if I shop a lot and have a lot of bags, I'll bet they'll bring 'em over to my condo. That would be nice." ■

LIVE-WORK-PLAY



▲ Overture Kierland

(Special to Scottsdale Airpark News)

Not far from Optima Kierland, another mid-rise luxury condo tower, the Overture Kierland by the developer Greystar, is being built specifically for the 55 and older demographic, with its marketing materials targeting "older adults seeking a resort-style living environment within close proximity to the retail and dining opportunities of Kierland Commons."

The Overture won't offer any of the medical-type services residents would find at a Continuing Care Retirement Community that features independent and assisted living sections to serve residents' changing health and social needs as they age — although the Overture's plans call for "resident-focused health services" that, in addition to offering a fitness center and classes on healthy living, may feature "limited medical."

But the new stripe of retirees seeking out the urban condo life exhibit little concern with that. Particularly with the aging Boomer population, the new goal in seeking a retirement home is to find a place with "high connectivity" to a vital urban center, where not only amenities but people — often younger, and willing and able to help their older counterparts with chores and basic heavy lifting — are just a few steps away.

Kierland isn't the only place in North Scottsdale where this kind of environment is flourishing. Toscana of Desert Ridge is a condo community adjacent to both Desert Ridge Market Place and the High Street shops that, like the condos at Kierland, also has a view of a prestigious golf course — in this case, the JW Marriott's Wildfire Golf Club.

"High Street is really blossoming, it's finally taking off," says Shantelle Monongye, communications director for the Statesman Group of Companies, which owns Toscana. "It's like a mini Scottsdale Quarter, with a lot of great restaurants and shops and a lot of fun entertainment as well. It's definitely a place to be."

Unlike Optima Kierland, which goes for the high-rise glass and concrete look, Toscana retains more of the traditional luxury resort look Scottsdale is famous for. But it does offer some forward-thinking options.

"The building's kind of unique, and lends itself toward a variety of demographics, because of the short-term lease capabilities we offer," Monongye says. "You can lease for as little as 30 days. So this caters to the secondary homeowner who wants the luxury amenities of Toscana but can also offset their investment by leasing it out through our on-site property management. The units are fully furnished, all the way down to the housewares. So if a secondary homeowner or an investor purchases it to lease out, they don't have to spend a ton of time furnishing it, it's all already there."

Monongye says condos are taking off because people are looking both for more freedom and for more social interaction.

"Especially now, when people are trying to minimize their lives and reduce clutter, condos are the way to go," she says. "Whether you're a Millennial or an empty-nester, some people just love that lock-and-go lifestyle, where they are able to travel and not have to worry about yard work and maintenance. Just have the necessities of what they need within a 1,400-to-1,500 square-foot condo, and then to be a part of a community, where they can have that social aspect around them within walkable distance. I think it's what a lot of people are looking for right now."