

## Condo will attract young professionals: mayor

By Lisa Weighton - Victoria News

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A clamoring bulldozer scrapes the earth, piling mounds of dirt where the future 834 residential development will be planted on Johnson Street.

It's about two years away from growing into the serene, green, eco-chic 14-storey rendering portrayed in info pamphlets, but Mayor Dean Fortin has a clear vision of its place in Victoria.

"You go to Tim Hortons next door, skip over to Chinatown hit Lucky bar on the way home," and go to work the next day.

Fortin said "young and funky" urban professionals attracted to the development will help keep Victoria's downtown core vibrant.

And it's attracted a lot of under-30s and first-time home-buyers, said developer David Chard.

That's due to pricing, with units starting at \$198,000, and penthouses coming in at more than \$500,000.

"Part of what they've tapped into here is a market that has been ignored. We've had a lot of high-end condos going up, these are smaller units, more affordable," Fortin said.

So much so that he'd like to buy one for his daughter.

The 834 broke ground Tuesday, the largest residential development to do so in downtown within the last year.

The development, situated at the former Peacock Billiards site, is set to be completed in the fall of 2011.

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