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Advertising content

City Living

June 13, 2007

Pet projects

Accommodating condominiums welcomed by pet-owning urbanites

By Suzanne Monson
 Contributing writer

The cat's out of the bag: Urban living is the new lifestyle of choice for posh pups, metro mutts and fashionable felines.

In fact, as Seattle's cosmopolitan landscape grows more pet-friendly by the day, paws of preference are pointing downtown, where condominium selections are becoming the cat's meow.

From Belltown and Midtown to Uptown and South Lake Union, boutique and high-rise towers alike are welcoming Fluffy and Fido with amenities that make even an alley cat feel like a glamour puss.

Look for upscale pet lounges, rooftop-terrace dog runs and special grooming stations as condos unleash a variety of extras for four-legged friends.

Surrounding shops, off-leash parks and doggie day cares make downtown dwelling even more appealing.

"Pets are an important part of our lives," attests Ben Kakimoto, an animal-shelter "foster parent" volunteer and Seattle Center branch agent with John L. Scott Real Estate. That's one of the reasons Kakimoto designed his professional Web site with a "four-paws" system, offering condominium buyers a look at the pet-friendly status of nearly 90 buildings from Magnolia to First Hill.

With downtown Seattle's human population surging by 44 percent between 1995 and 2005 - even before the completion of some of downtown's most high-profile condominium choices - their pets are getting much attention.

And as condominium sales downtown increase, Seattle Animal Shelter director Don Jordan can see the paw prints on the wall.

"With all the growth and change going on around South Lake Union and beyond, it's reasonable to assume that animals will become an important part of this," says Jordan.

Erika Clibborn, a representative of Williams Marketing, one of the region's oldest and most successful agencies of its kind, already sees this happening. "A lot of buyers are selling larger homes because their children are leaving home - but their pets are their new babies," confirms Clibborn. "I've had clients walk in and get so excited when they discovered that not only did they love their new condominium home, but their pets were really welcome. It was really a draw."

Kakimoto sees this puppy love in parks, select eateries and downtown retailers, too.



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"When you walk around downtown to smaller cafes or boutique upscale pet stores, you'll see water bowls set out for dogs," he says. "If you're new to downtown, shopping or eating at these places or going for a walk to the park with your dog is a great ice-breaker, a great way to meet new people."

At Olive 8, the 231-condominium tower under construction near the heart of downtown's retail core, pet-friendly features are arranged to respect the needs of those without their own cat or dog, says Leslie Williams.

"We'll be moving here ourselves," says Williams, "so it was important for us to be able to bring our cat. It doesn't take pets too long to adapt to new places. But what is important to pets and pet owners isn't just that pets are welcome, but that they are wooed."

It's a dog's life

Every dog has its day, as the old saying goes. But in downtown Seattle, active canine companions don't limit the good life to a mere 24 hours. Some exercise amenities are round-the-clock for pet owners who appreciate the privilege of stretching their pet in the security of their own building, especially when it's dark or the weather is unwelcome.

At ESCALA, the 275-home tower rising up at Fourth and Virginia, an indoor "dog lounge" will run a 58-foot stretch along the outside of the building. With a partial cap for fresh air, yet covered for exercise, this lounge provides space for pups to romp with neighbor pooches. Owners may prefer to watch from within their own adjacent, glass-enclosed lounge.

In the Financial District, at the 24-story 5th and Madison, the boutique building features a second-level garden terrace complete with its own pet-exercise area. The space complements the residential tower's other everyday quality-of-life amenities, including a library, fitness center and lounge.

Rub-a-dub-tub

Whether it's bathing a beagle, brushing a boxer or clipping a cockapoo, there's no reason to get your own dander up over grooming your pet. That's because several new high-rises are featuring bathing studios.

At the Martin, a midcentury modern design building with 172 homes at the convergence of Belltown and downtown at Fifth Avenue and Lenora Street, a designated pet-grooming station will feature a raised tub for shampooing your schnauzer and a large walk-in stall for showering your sheepdog.

The grooming station is just steps away from the Martin's own sixth-level dog park.

At Olive 8, Leslie Williams says, the building's pet-exercise area is as important to buyers as the tower's upscale game room, lounge and terrace.

"Plus, we went an extra step and put the pet bathing station in a designated area so residents can wash their pet, and then let them shake [off excess water] outdoors, behind a separate door, so they're not bothering anyone," she says.

This content has been prepared by the advertising department of The Seattle Times Company. For more information about City Living contact webmaster@nwhomes.com.

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