

VISTAS MAKES ITS OPENING OFFICIAL / HIGH-RISE ALONG JAMES IN RICHMOND HAS BEEN A HOME FOR SOME SINCE SUMMER

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Richmond Times-Dispatch

Edition: Final

Section: Business

Vistas on the James opened officially yesterday, even though the first residents moved in this summer.

The 18-story high-rise along the James River is the latest addition to urban chic living in downtown Richmond.

The 160-condo complex is wedged between a canal, two streets and a railroad track on less than an acre.

"The biggest challenge was just trying to wedge the thing in," said Mike Parkinson, assistant project manager from the Fairfax division of Manhattan Construction Co., the general contractor. The developer was Dominion Realty Partners.

All but about 15 units are sold. Prices range from the low \$300,000s to more than \$1 million. The units average 1,100 square feet, although some were combined.

Buyers are a cross-section of people, said Bill White, president of Joyner Fine Properties, the agent for the property. Some residents live elsewhere but do business in Richmond, he said. "Others are young couples who don't want to mow the yard." Some are empty nesters.

Mayor L. Douglas Wilder, who lives there, commented on the ambience.

"It's a trophy place to live," he said. Wilder also has a weekend home in Charles City County.

About 80 percent of the units have river and city views. The city views sold as well as the river views, White said.

The units have floor-to-ceiling windows with 11-foot ceilings.

The ground level has a business center and fitness facility with space for retailers. Condos are on the upper floors.

Keywords: HOUSING; REAL ESTATE; RICHMOND; CITY

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