

## Ontario seniors invited to live in Harmony

**Harmony Village-Sheppard, a retirement community to open in Toronto in 2011, aims to boost the harmony quotient among its residents with what it calls unprecedented programming**

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When Jack Pong went looking for retirement accommodation for his mom a few years back, he wasn't impressed with what the marketplace had to offer. So the Toronto developer decided to build his own retirement community.

The result of that decision is Harmony Village-Sheppard, located in Toronto. The project debuts with a sales office and model suite this month and is set to break ground in 2009 and welcome residents by 2011.

It's a community, Pong says, that will take a holistic approach to retirement living, with numerous programs and services to support its aging-in-place philosophy and a resort-like atmosphere designed to appeal to baby boomers as they begin scouting for retirement homes.

To accomplish his goal, Pong partnered with St. Paul's L'Amoreaux Centre, a non-profit organization that provides accommodation, support services and social and recreational programs for more than 5,000 clients in northeast Toronto. This collaboration, he maintains, will allow Harmony Village to offer an unprecedented number of programs, ranging from cooking to computer classes, tai chi to aqua fitness and Pilates, music and dance, social clubs, information workshops and seminars and much more. "We will have in excess of 100 programs, more than any other community that we've heard of, not just in Canada, but in North America."

The programs, overseen by St. Paul's L'Amoreaux, will be housed in a 60,000-square-foot community centre that will include a health club, spa, pool and fitness centre. This facility will also host services such as medical offices, a pharmacy, hearing and rehabilitation centres plus a quarter-mile indoor walking track, the width of a shopping-mall corridor, lined with retail stores, offices and a cappuccino bar.

"It's a place to get exercise and also for social interaction," Pong says.

A gourmet restaurant will feature continental and Asian cuisines and a dining package is included with occupancy. Outdoor landscaping will incorporate ponds, gardens walking trails and retreat areas.



Artist's rendering of Harmony Village-Sheppard, slated to open in Toronto in 2011.



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"We are not just catering to today's seniors," he adds. "We're catering to the baby boomers, like myself, by giving them what they've been used to. They've grown up with all the luxuries and they are not looking for anything less in retirement. If I don't build this, then where will I live?"

In order to ensure that residents are integrated into the community and get the most out of the services and programs, a case manager will be hired for every 150 residents, mandated to keep in touch with those residents, make sure they are aware of programs that interest them and are not isolated, and to stay in contact with family members. Volunteers can provide a personal "friendly visiting" service, knocking on doors daily to make sure residents are well.

The condo suites will be one and two-bedroom units, with or without dens, 500 to 1,800 square feet, most with balconies and terraces. Starting price for the units is \$170,000.

They feature open-concept designs and nine-foot ceilings, modern kitchens with Energy Star appliances, and 24-hour response sensors. Barrier-free designs are available. While the apartments are designed for independent seniors, there will be a section with assisted-living services including 24-hour nursing staff onsite.

The Village will incorporate the latest environmental technology and practices including geothermal heating and cooling, solar technology, greenroofs and water-conservation features.

This will result in no use of fossil fuels and "huge energy savings" in the long term, Pong states. In addition, he adds, fresh air will be piped into every suite, something else that's new in the multi-housing industry and creates a healthier environment.

The sales office and model are located at 3260 Sheppard Avenue. For information call 416-493-0123 or visit [harmonyvillage.ca](http://harmonyvillage.ca) on the internet.



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