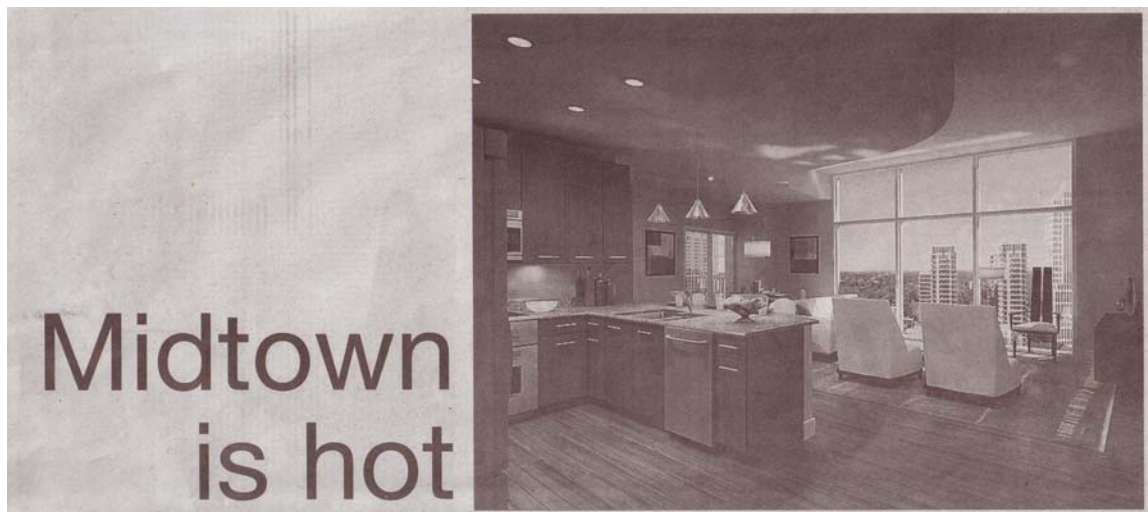
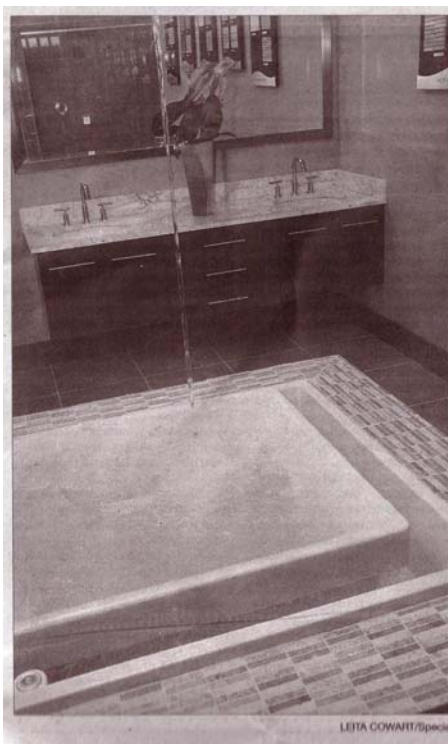


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LEITA COWART/Special

— for moving in and moving up

By Clare Morris
For Intown Living

It's hard to believe, but anyone who can recall the drive down Peachtree Street in Midtown just a few years ago will remember that the area was less than inviting.

Drive the same stretch through Midtown today, and you'll notice some astonishing changes. For starters, you may want to ditch the car and walk — along wide sidewalks lined with shops and restaurants. You'll have your pick of places to live nearby. And you'll probably have to dodge a few construction scaffolds.

The rebirth of Midtown hasn't been limited to just Peachtree Street. Throughout the district, developers are turning buildings into lofts and putting up new spaces that sell out quickly. Moving in are people eager to live the pedestrian-friendly life close to cultural attractions, great places to eat and work centers.

"The one demographic that's missing from Midtown is families with children," said David Tufts, president of Coldwell Banker/The Condo Store. "That's only

because condos aren't usually meant for children. But I think we'll see that the next piece in Atlanta's growth is a school system that will bring families back to town."

Meanwhile, the list of buyers eager to live intown continues to stretch from first-timers to empty nesters. And in between is the market's most prized commodity; the move-up buyer.

"The numbers of move-up buyers are huge," Tufts said. "They're across the board in any price range."

Regardless of their position in the market, today's intown buyers share a common desire to live in well-appointed spaces. The demand is heavily fueled by baby boomers who want grand, elegant entertaining spaces, plenty of room for their belongings and a guest room for the grandkids.

A good example of this is happening at Aqua, Tufts said. The new property at 976 W. Peachtree St. incorporates a number of high-level finishes, from Viking appliances and granite counters in the kitchens to the sok tubs that allow bathers to fill the water to the brim and watch it spill over the infinity

edge into a recirculating reservoir. Amenities include a lobby accented with walls of glass and water, a pool and a club room. Prices start in the high \$200,000s and go up to \$1 million.

Another Midtown project that has sparked buyers' interest hasn't even begun construction. The Premier at Fox Plaza is planned to tower 30 stories over North Avenue at Peachtree Street with 210 homes, a lavish amenities package, a restaurant and retail stores. Prices will be in the \$300,000s.

A block south of the Premier, buyers are snapping up condos at the Reynolds on Peachtree, where one- and two-bedroom units come with features from 10-foot ceilings to hardwood floors. Prices start in the \$200,000s.

Some skeptics of Midtown's building boom wonder when the condo-mania will end. Tufts doesn't expect the area's popularity to fade away anytime soon.

"Our population's growing and our economy is strong," he said. "In addition, traffic is getting worse. There are a lot of strong factors out there that will continue to make Atlanta a very strong condo market."

At Aqua, some homes will feature Kohler's sok tub with an infinity edge in the master bath. The example at the sales center, left, is set into a tile deck with 360-degree access and a ceiling-mounted tub filler. Aqua's floor-to-ceiling windows, top, will offer spectacular views of the Midtown skyline.