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April 11, 2008

Unico plans housing on Dexter Avenue site

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Unico Properties is planning to build its first residential development in Seattle.

The project will be at 1701 Dexter Ave. in the Lake Union area. Unico wouldn't comment on the development or say if this will be the first of several apartment buildings it intends to construct using modular, pre-fabricated units.



Photo courtesy of Mithun [\[enlarge\]](#)

The developer introduced its "inhabit" apartments last fall and installed one on the rooftop park below the Rainier Square tower.

But Diane Sugimura, director of Seattle's Department of Planning and Development, said she understands Unico plans such a pre-fab project on the Dexter Avenue site.

Unico has applied to the city for early design guidance.

The firm introduced the so-called "inhabit" apartments in October by installing one on the rooftop park below the Rainier Square tower.

"I thought they were really cool," said Sugimura.

Unico has said inhabit — which one company official called "the iPod of apartments" —

represents the future of urban living. The units, designed by Mithun and Seattle's HyBrid Architecture, can be linked in groups of 50 to 100, and stacked up to five high. They come in studio to three-bedroom sizes and can be arranged to fit a variety of building sites.



Unico is targeting Generation-Yers. Rents will likely start at the higher end of middle-market, it said, but could move to lower-middle market in time. Studios will be about 450 square feet and one-bedrooms about 650. The apartments will have smaller appliances and "green" features.

They can be completed on a tighter schedule than traditional construction, the firm has said, noting permit approval can take as little as six days, and manufacturing can be done in three weeks.

Sugimura said the city is putting together a team familiar with processing such projects in anticipation of Unico's pre-fab development and because others have expressed interest in that type project.

"I assume that Unico will want to do more," said Sugimura. "This is how you gain some costs savings if you do multiple productions."

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