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Market to help shape Folsom-Main enclave

By J.K. Dineen

The burgeoning high-rise enclave growing between the future Transbay Transit Center and Rincon Hill will get its first grocery store, a locally owned market on the ground floor of the 656-unit Lumina condo development at Main and Folsom streets.

The 9,500-square-foot store, Market on Main, won't open for a year, but it will start off a new pedestrian-oriented Folsom Street, which city planners are billing as a boulevard of bike lanes, retail shops, wide sidewalks, pocket parks and ample greenery. It's a sign that the area is on its way to becoming a neighborhood.

Carl Shannon, senior

managing director of Tishman Speyer, which is developing Lumina, said a grocery store has been a top priority for residents in existing neighborhood towers.

"When we talked to residents at the Infinity, the thing that really jumped out was that everyone said we really need a market where we can get prepared food and high-quality groceries we can take upstairs and cook," Shannon said. "San Francisco is a very food-driven culture, and our residents are no exception to that."

Tishman Speyer also built the Infinity, the 650-unit, two-tower complex at 201 Spear St.

Folsom Street straddles two city planning areas, with the Transbay

Transit Center to the north and Rincon Hill to the south. The areas are similar, with both emphasizing high-rise residential towers. The Rincon Hill plan, adopted more than a decade ago, calls for 2,200 housing units, most of which are either built or under construction. Buildings in the transbay plan, the first of which are just coming out of the ground, will total 4,500 units.

'High-quality street'

Paul Chasan, an urban designer with the City Planning Department, said Folsom is going to be "the seam that combines the two planning areas." He said the area would have "Manhattan densities" but would feel comfortable with 25-foot-wide sidewalks, protected bike lanes, curb extensions, outdoor cafe seating and street trees.

"It's going to be like La Rambla for San Francisco — a really high-quality street," Chasan said, referring to the tree-lined pedestrian street in Barcelona, Spain.

The evolution of the eastern end of Folsom Street will be slow, largely because the largest site along the street currently is home to the temporary Transbay Terminal and won't be available until the new transit center opens in 2017. In addition to Lumina, one other major development is under construction along the street: the 447-unit tower at Folsom and Fremont streets. Eventually there will be more than 2,000 new units along the strip, with retail lining all the blocks.

So far, sales in Lumina have been brisk, with 176 units in contract since the sales center opened three months

ago. They are not cheap — averaging close to \$1,400 a square foot. The first structure in the four-building complex, a 71-unit mid-rise at 318 Main St., is sold out and will open in July. So far, more than 80 percent of buyers have come from the Bay Area and about 50 percent already live in San Francisco. Tishman Speyer is meeting its affordable housing requirements by building a 190-unit affordable project at 1400 Mission St.

The operator of the grocery market is the Market Co., which is about to open its first store at 1355 Market St., Twitter's headquarters building.

Building community

To build interest, Market on Main will initially provide daily coffee service, weekly wine-and-cheese welcome receptions in Lu-

mina's club lounge, monthly dinners and quarterly rooftop barbecues. Chris Foley, a partner in the market, said his group will work to train and hire residents of District Six, which includes high-income areas such as Rincon Hill but also some of the city's poorest areas in the Tenderloin and along Sixth Street.

"We are all about local," Foley said. "Local producers, local produce, local employees. We are all about building community, in the building and in the neighborhood."

The Market Co. intends to open a Market on Polk at the intersection of Clay Street, just off the developing Van Ness corridor.

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