

## New bridge signals 'growing market'

From K12

As salesman Chris Lotoski points out, the Golden Ears Bridge, a six-lane crossing of the Fraser River, is scheduled for completion in two years.

Its linkage of Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge on the river's north bank, and Surrey and Langley on the south bank, is expected to change suburban travel patterns as dramatically as the Alex Fraser, downriver, changed habits 20 years ago.

"The Tsakumis family has a strong vision for Pitt Meadows and realize the area will really blossom and grow," Lotoski comments.

Housing prices in Pitt Meadows are increasing in response to the bridge's arrival, he says, and last year surged almost 25 per cent.

Alex Tsakumis says he feels infrastructure construction and all the economic benefits it will generate mean housing prices in Pitt Meadows will only continue to rise.

"Pitt Meadows is an area we've defined as a growing market," he says.

"When we did Keystone we wanted to make that a legacy project and Origin offers you the same high quality for affordable prices. People can invest here and be assured their money will grow."

Tsakumis says the one-hour sell-out was just "amazing" and says buyers very much share the family's expectations for Pitt Meadows and housing values.

"Everyone realizes what is going on with Pitt Meadows with the infrastructure. This is an area where the housing prices will go up."

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### 'Doing it together'

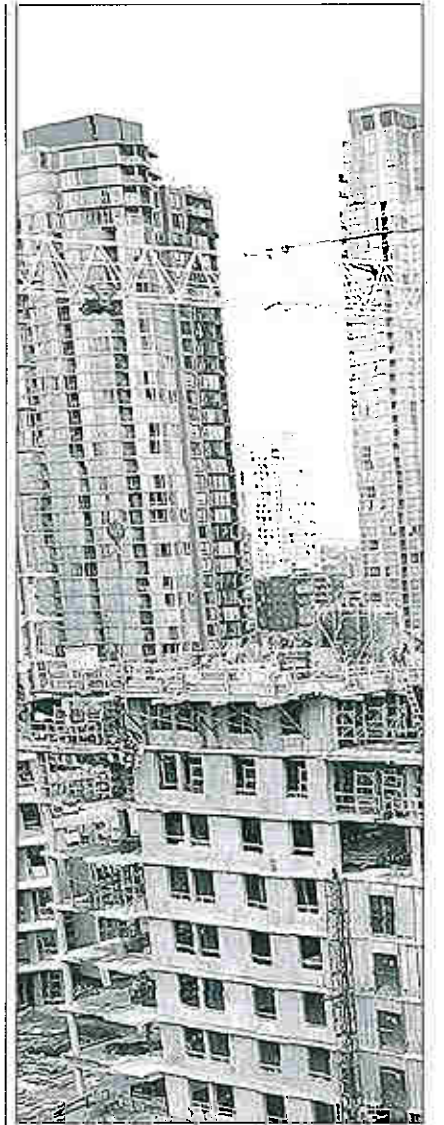
The Brothers Tsakumis, Chris, Alex and Angelo, pose with a model of the Origin project at the development's sales centre.

### Father started company

Alex and Angelo find the properties and supervise development. Chris heads marketing.

"We pride ourselves in doing it together. Everyone [in the company] is on equal terms," Alex says.

The company started 35 years ago when Alex's father built his own restaurant. He eventually began building other commercial projects, like strip malls.



## Islands can be affordable

From K11

Jackson Grills targets the mid-to-high end of the market. A basic, two-metre island starts at \$2,500 and can range up to \$20,000. But there are options for homeowners looking for entry-level models. For example, Canadian Tire sells an "entertainment island" with a granite countertop, 78,000 BTU barbecue, a side burner, a trash container and an exterior faux-stone finish for \$1,200. Modular accessory units can be bought separately with refrigerators, sinks, smokers and food preparation areas to complete the ensemble.

Although kitchens are usually the first to be created, outdoor living areas are not far behind in popularity. Some homeowners are creating exterior living spaces, complete with carpeting, lamps, clocks, artwork and other accessories that mirror what is usually found indoors.

"We are seeing a gradual shift in creating outdoor rooms," said Maeve Burke, spokeswoman for Canadian Tire. "They are more stylish, more conversational, some designed with themes and colour schemes to suit a client's style."

However, Black says that "heating is the key" to extending the time outdoors in many parts of Canada.

At Capital Iron, he has seen sales of outdoor patio heaters rise in popularity, with tabletop models joining two-metre models in providing comfort. Prices range from \$200 to \$1,400. Purists might prefer the look and feel of a traditional fire. Today's fire pits can use wood, natural gas, propane or electricity to provide heat or ambience.

While the dining table is still the centre of outdoor living, sofas, loveseats and side chairs — with colour coordinated weather-resistant cushions — are becoming more common.

While outdoors rooms are great for relaxing, they may not be the best investment a homeowner can make, says Nicole Burgess, a realtor with Pemberton Holmes.

"The value is in the eye of the beholder," she says, adding that much depends on how well the project is done and if the taste for outdoor living catches on. "I just wonder about such a trend, given our weather."

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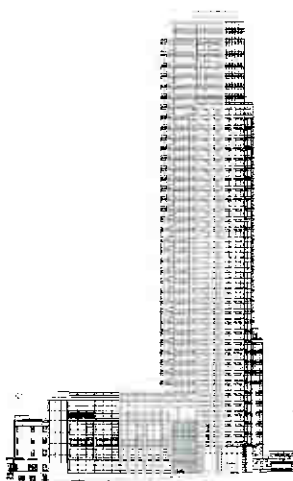
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The promise from the Tsakumis family for the Origin bathrooms is richly patterned cabinet doors, tiled floors and surrounds, porcelain sinks and and bronze lighting bars with frosted glass vanity lights. Home-office alcoves will provide residents with space and privacy.



## Five siblings, parents partners in company

From K5

The Origin developer, Epta Properties, is owned by Alex Tsakumis and four siblings and their parents. (Epta, in Greek, means seven.)

Alex and Angelo share development responsibilities. Chris heads marketing; Kathy, accounting. Roula works in the IT office. A brother-in-law works for the company and another works indirectly as a contract electrician.

"We pride ourselves in doing it together. Everyone [in the company] is on equal terms," Alex says.

The company started 35 years ago when Alex's father built his own restaurant. He eventually began building other commercial projects, like strip malls.

Alex and Angelo, who have a business background in residential projects, persuaded the family to add residential properties to the mix.

"I love it," Alex says of the additional residential work. "It's a lot more detail oriented and has the personal touch. When people have comments or requests, as soon as I get that, we like to respond directly."

The family feels Origin went so quickly because the homes will be located in Pitt Meadows; their specifications were high; their prices reflected location and specs; and because people understand a home in Pitt Meadows is a home in a desirable community.

See **NEW BRIDGE** K15



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# Well priced and finished spurred sell-out

Origin in Pitt Meadows is family firm's second residential development

## NEW HOMES PROJECT PROFILE

### Origin

**Location:** Pitt Meadows  
**Project size:** 70 apartments, 4 storeys  
**Residence size:** 500 sq. ft. – 922 sq. ft.  
**Prices:** \$179,900 – \$288,900  
**Presentation centre:** 12485 Harris Road, Pitt Meadows  
**Hours:** Mon - Thu, 1 p.m. – 6 p.m.; Sat - Sun, noon – 5 p.m.  
**Telephone:** 604-460-8323  
**Web:** originliving.ca  
**Developer:** Epta Properties  
**Architect:** Chris Dikeakos Architects  
**Interior:** Portico Design Group  
**Tentative occupancy:** August, 2008

### WESTCOAST HOMES

Alex Tsakumis reports a regret we might all be so lucky to endure: The quick sell-out of his family's second new-home project means not everyone who wanted to buy got a chance to buy.

The 70 Origin homes were bought within one hour following a recent realtor's open house.

Those who missed out can still buy a Tsakumis home in Keystone, the family's first new-home project, Alex Tsakumis says. (The Origin sales centre is also the Keystone sales centre.)

Or they can wait for the family to deliver on the promise Tsakumis made in an interview — that it will be looking for other building sites in Pitt Meadows.

See **FIVE SIBLINGS** K12



### Partner kitchens

Origin's open kitchens will ensure that meal-making and clean-up are shared affairs, stylishly and efficiently conducted.

### Stone and tile

Granite will top counters; alder or maple veneer will face cabinet doors; and a tumbled slate accent will embroider the porcelain-tiled backsplashes. Ceramic tile will be underfoot.

Under-mounted sinks will expedite clean-up; the separate vegetable sprayer, meal-prep.

PHOTOS BY IAN LINDSAY/VANCOUVER SUN

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