

The condos at Printers Corner make sufficient use of narrow space by creatively expanding a compact floor plan.

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Smaller lives  
**larger**  
in new development

*Clever, creative and innovative design makes up for lack of space*

By LACEY SIKORA

*Contributing Reporter*

When it comes to housing, bigger is not necessarily better, particularly when the space is meticulously planned. In today's housing market, discerning home buyers realize that what matters most is how the space is used. New developments like Winthrop Properties' Printers Corner in Printers Row cater to a new breed of resident.

Offering one bedroom condominiums with floor plans that measure approximately 800 square feet and two-bedroom homes at approximately 1,100 square feet, Printers Corner does not offer the oversized homes that many associate with luxury. Instead, the developers used clever design and effi-

cient planning of every room to pack a luxurious punch into livable homes with a smaller footprint.

While smaller condos sometimes fall into the cookie-cutter trap of relying on a basic layout, creative planning can give a smaller home all the personality of a larger home. In breaking the common mold on smaller condominiums, the developers of Printers Corner focused on what buyers really want. Noting that, "many new construction condominiums are quite similar in their layout and tend to be 'vanilla boxes,'" Bob Horner, co-principal of Winthrop Properties, says that at Printers Corner, "buyers can tell the difference the moment they walk in the door."

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# LARGER

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In many small condos, residents and guests enter the front door and walk straight into a living space without a transitional area. Not so at Printers Corner, where every floor plan includes a formal foyer space. According to Horner, "it makes all the difference. People can take a pause when entering the home, and hang up their coat or set their bag down." In an environment like Chicago, where winters necessitate coats, scarves, hats and boots, a coat closet and formal foyer go a long way to eliminating clutter in the living spaces of a smaller home.

Printers Corner makes the most of the space of a one-bedroom condominium. In another use of creative planning, the building's unique architectural plan makes every unit a corner unit. Such innovative design allows all of the units to benefit from views with multiple exposures. Not only do the corner plans make for great views, but by bringing the cityscapes into the homes, the living areas feel large and open. The use of floor-to-ceiling windows enhances the effect. Also, all of the units feature private balconies, allowing residents the opportunity to expand their entertainment options to the outdoors.

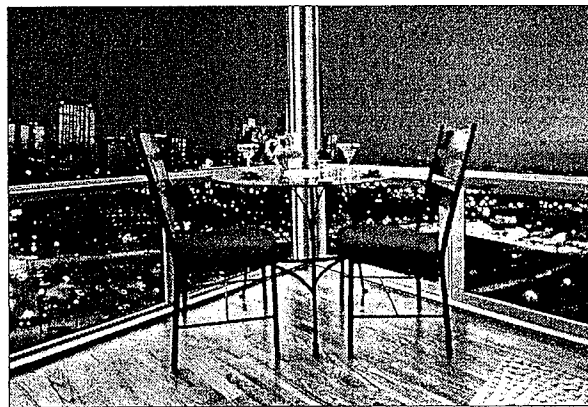
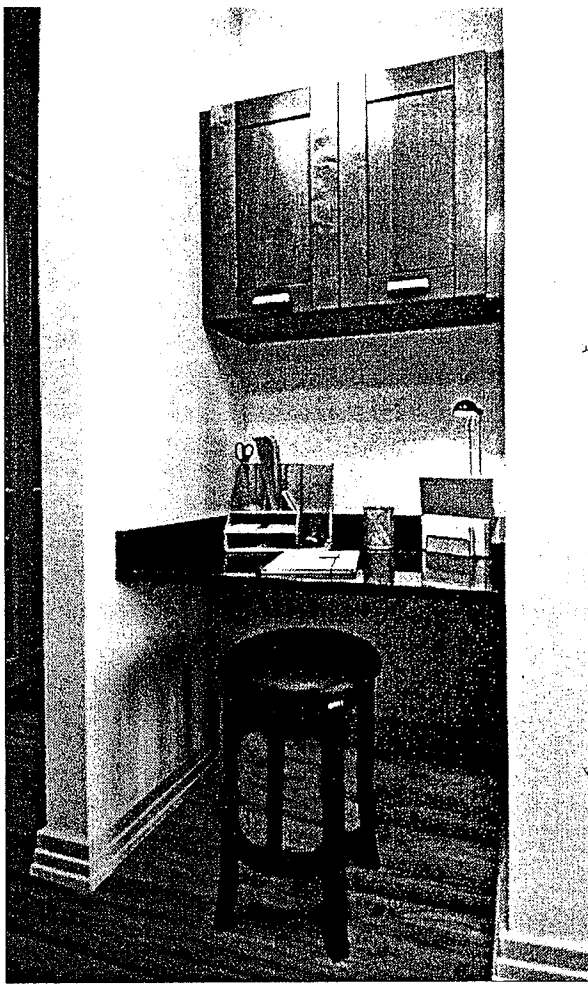
The developers also gave a lot of thought to how residents were likely to use the space in their condos.

"Just about everyone has a home computer, but in a smaller condominium, finding a place for it, along with all the wires, printer, etc., can be a challenge," says Ibrahim Shihadeh, co-principal. "So we took a few extra square feet and built in a computer desk with overhead cabinets for storage. And all your hook-ups, including a phone line and power source, are right there." Horner adds that having a dedicated space for papers and electronics keeps those necessary items from becoming space-wasting clutter in the living room or bedroom.

Both Horner and Shihadeh note that cubic square footage is another important aspect to their design aesthetic. While some smaller condos feature standard 8 or 9-foot ceilings, all of the Printers Corners homes feature standard 10-foot ceilings. According to Horner, "Nothing opens up a space more than having high ceilings."

Most buyers today appreciate an open floor plan for living and entertaining, but in a smaller condo, it can be difficult to effectively provide space for mundane kitchen tasks while also making the home presentable for guests. In the kitchen of the Printers Corner condominiums, every need has been anticipated, making these kitchens not only efficient, but spacious places to entertain and relax with friends and family. Custom 42-inch cherry or maple cabinets resemble built-in furniture, and the cabinet's self-closing mechanisms keep the kitchen neat and clean.

A more compact floor plan doesn't have to mean less-than-stellar appliances. A well-planned kitchen at Printers Corner includes GE Stainless Steel appliances such as a 21 cubic foot refrigerator, a built-in dishwasher, built in microwave, and gas range. Pull spray faucets and under-cabinet lighting are practical additions to the chef's kitchens. Extra thick 1 1/4-inch granite countertops and pendant lighting over the



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A computer desk (top) is built into the wall complete with a phone line and power source. (Below) The building's architectural plan makes every unit a corner unit, affording the luxury of multiple skyline views.

kitchen islands provide a luxurious touch to a smaller home. The kitchen islands which open up into the living space of the condos provide an open floor plan that makes the living areas seem expansive.

Careful planning can make the bedroom of a smaller condo feel larger. The developers of Printers Corner ensured that every bedroom in their one and two bedroom units featured windows. Horner notes that, "The sunlight and airy feeling make the homes feel so much bigger." In addition, all of the bedroom closets in the master bedrooms feature closet organizers, virtually doubling the storage capabilities of the closets.

"In current economic times, everyone has concerns about not over-extending themselves," says Horner. "Winthrop Properties saw a way to provide people with homes at a smaller price point by creating smaller homes with the features of larger homes."