



Apartment building planned downtown: 246 units to be offered in 14-story 'Vistana,' along with retail space

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A new option for urban renters in San Antonio is less than two years away.

San Antonio-based Cross & Co. on Wednesday unveiled plans for The Vistana, a 14-story apartment building that will offer 246 rental units on Santa Rosa Street between Commerce and Houston streets on the west side of downtown.

The art deco-style building is expected to cost \$38 million and is eligible for a 10-year tax abatement.

The project includes 30,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, four stories of parking and nine residential floors.

Apartments are expected to start at \$650 per month for a 500-square-foot studio. There will be 50 floor plans, from small studios to 2,400-square-foot, two-story penthouses.

Across the country, downtown living has emerged as a new trend, and San Antonio is no exception.



(Courtesy illustration)

Construction of The Vistana, on Santa Rosa Street across from Milam Park, could begin in December and finish in spring 2008.

Ultra-luxurious condominium towers are the new big thing in downtown real estate — La Cascada has a \$1 million penthouse on the market, for example. Two other downtown condo projects, La Residenza at Piazza San Lorenzo and Vidorra, are currently pre-selling.

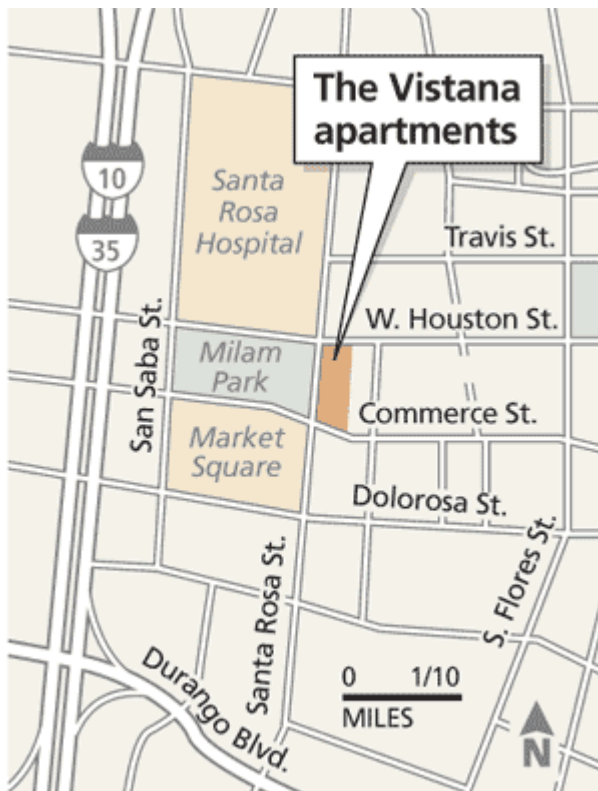
Units at Vidorra start at about \$279,000; at Piazza San Lorenzo, about \$600,000.

There are 1,862 downtown apartments, but few have come in since the 153-unit Cadillac Lofts and the 90-unit Maverick Apartments opened in 1999, according to Downtown Alliance San Antonio.

The Vistana's loft-style units will have 10-foot ceilings, concrete floors and ceilings, walk-in closets and big windows.

A sixth-floor amenity deck will include a pool, fitness room, movie theater and business center. Picnic areas, barbecue grills and seating areas are planned for a landscaped rooftop courtyard.

Two companies are on board with plans for the building. AT&T will wire it for its new U-verse service, which includes digital TV, high-speed Internet and phone. Sterling Bank will lease part of the ground floor for a drive-through branch.



PATRICK ZELLER/STAFF

The Vistana will take up an entire city block across Santa Rosa Street from Milam Park, and it will include 140 public parking spaces.

Ed Cross, a principal in Cross & Co., expects to begin construction on the building in December, with completion scheduled for spring 2008.

Cross said architects of RVK Inc. of San Antonio were asked to design the building with lots of big windows to take advantage of the views of the downtown skyline and Milam Park.

The name reflects that design choice, blending the Spanish words for "view" and "window."

"I wanted a building that would be timeless," Cross said.

The City Council last week unanimously approved a 10-year tax abatement for the project. Bexar

County commissioners are expected to vote on the abatement next month.

"We have a goal of creating more options for downtown residents," said Ramiro Cavazos, the city's economic development director.

Wednesday's unveiling at Milam Park drew a crowd of more than 100, including County Judge Nelson Wolff and City Manager Sheryl Sculley.

"It's an exciting time to live downtown," Sculley said.

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