



Hayes Valley's 8 Octavia Breaks Ground

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Construction kicked off this week on the 47-unit condo development 8 Octavia, situated at Market and Octavia in Hayes Valley. The Stanley Saitowitz/Natoma Architects-designed project will sit where the Central Freeway once ran, and the site has been vacant since that roadway was torn down in 2002.

Octavia Boulevard was thoughtfully reworked in 2005 to create a more pedestrian-friendly stretch, and having a new residential development will give the area a boost where it's needed. 8 Octavia will sit in the midst of a very busy intersection that includes motorists heading to the 101 on ramp from Octavia, as well as the usual Market Street traffic and Muni flow.

But DM Development and DDG, the forces behind 8 Octavia, are working to build a sleek, smartly designed building on a pie-shaped slice of land. The goal, according to Saitowitz, is to present the project as a modern-day interpretation of the Victorian-era homes that pervade Hayes Valley. He says that the exterior will feature a fluid, changing facade, units with flexible space and lightwells that will be like urban versions of the traditional yard. Floor plans include junior one bedrooms and one-, two-, and three bedrooms. There will also be three 3BR penthouses and one 2BR townhome. Among the available floor plans at 8 Octavia is a "pod" concept, designed to maximize living space by containing the kitchen, bath and washer/dryer within a single efficient module. The "flex space" floor plan offers a living space that can be portioned into multiple rooms by sliding movable wall panels.

Innovative features at 8 Octavia include keyless entry into the building and individual homes via smartphones. The building also features user-controlled window louvers to modulate solar heat and privacy. Residences include efficient lighting and appliances alongside finishes that include wood flooring, European cabinetry and floor-to-ceiling windows.

There will reportedly be approximately 24 parking spaces for the residences, and 26 bike stalls. Two ground-floor retail spaces will be included.

For buyers looking for a central location near the Castro, downtown, Duboce Triangle, Civic Center and the mid-Market district, 8 Octavia is an excellent option. I'm thinking the design may trump other more cookie-cutter condo developments which are on the way.

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