

WHEN TWO CONDOS BECOME ONE, OPPORTUNITIES OPEN

IN FULL VIEW



The efforts of architect Tyler Engle begin at the front door with a wide and long entry vestibule lined with a wall of warm Brazilian cherry ribbed with steel. It provides space for storage and holds a bathroom, all while drawing visitors into the living room. Noni finds a warm place to nap in front of it.

IF YOU were to sit on the living-room sofa at Dave Roberts' house, you would be sitting right over First Avenue in downtown Seattle. Directly below is the Seattle Art Museum's Hammering Man. Dead ahead, at what looks to be the end of the road, stands the Space Needle. And that's just what you get from one window.

It's the working waterfront, Qwest and Safeco fields and Mount Rainier in the guest bedroom.

There's the city in all its towering glory from the living room's new bay window.

Puget Sound and the Olympics from the master bedroom.

And then there are two terraces: one water view and one city. Pioneer Square, the Central Library, ferries, islands.

Yes, Roberts has it all: 360 degrees of wow. The whole pie, of which most downtowners can request only a slice.

We'll call it the two-condo view.

"When I moved downtown in 1990 people thought I was crazy, even though I worked in Pioneer Square," says Roberts. But Roberts has lived at The Watermark Tower (designed by Bumgardner Architects and built in 1983) on First Avenue for all of those 20 years. His wheels are on a bicycle. Goes weeks without driving his car.

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Tour downtown homes

"THE SPACES FOR URBAN LIVING: Downtown Home Tour" focuses on the varied lifestyles of downtown Seattle's condo and apartment dwellers, and the unique spaces they have created. This year's self-guided walking tour, 1-5 p.m. Sunday, June 27, features homes within walking distance of the Pike Place Market.

Advance tickets are \$25, available at www.pikeplacemarket.org. Tickets are \$30 the day of the tour and are available at the registration tent next to Rachel the Pig at the Market entrance or at BoConcept, 901 Western Ave.

Money raised helps the Market Foundation provide services for downtown low-income residents, including the Pike Market Medical Clinic, Senior Center, Child Care & Preschool and Downtown Food Bank.



"We really wanted to look up and down First Avenue," Engle says of the window next to the sofa, which sits right over the street in a bay projection. "And his seated view from the desk (seen beyond the doorway) looks back at the Olympics." The condo is in the Watermark Tower, which was done by (Albert) Bumgardner's office in 1983-84, near the end of Postmodernism, Engle says. "It's really an Art Deco knockoff. We tried to respect the context of this now-30-year-old building."

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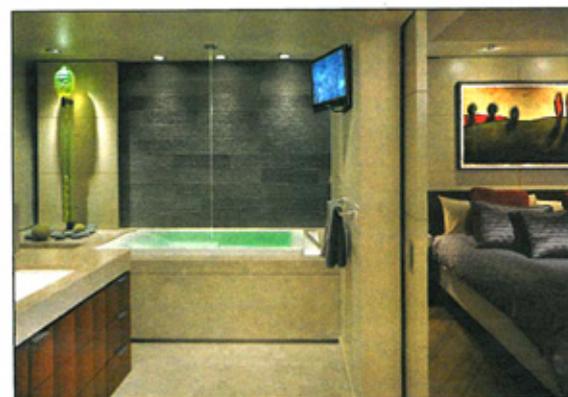
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From the office Roberts can see the length of his condo, through the living room to the dining room. The ceiling coffered in a grid using the building's structure in the living room adds height, hides beams and wrestles the acoustics to the ground.

The chiseled bluestone tile wall travels from bedroom to bathroom, as does the Sea Grass limestone nightstand countertop. The floor and tub surround are also limestone.



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Walks each day to his job as CEO of PopCap Games in Belltown with his trusty dachshund, Noni. "Back then you couldn't find anything more than 1,000 square feet," he laments.

So, when the opportunity arose in 2007, Roberts bought the condo next door and set about turning a 1,150-square-foot-home into 2,300 square feet. The expansion, completed in 2009, gave Roberts a formal living room, office and larger bedrooms (there are two, and three bathrooms).

"It feels enormous to me now," he says, sitting in the living room of easy-to-sink-into furniture dressed in rust, cream, gray, beige and black by interior designer Elaine Marlatt of Define Design Group. Golden morning light is its perfect accessory.

Architect Tyler Engle was charged with uniting and anchoring this conjoined unit. The architect's efforts begin at the front door with a wide and long entry vestibule lined with a hardworking wall of warm Brazilian cherry ribbed with steel. It not only camouflages storage, it holds a guest

bathroom. The wall also draws visitors into the living room, and once there, it turns, travels across that space and becomes a backdrop for the large Augusti Puig painting. Welcome.

Coffered ceilings add as much height as possible, hide beams and wrestle the acoustics to the ground.

Barn sliders close off the master wing of bedroom, bath and office, or as Roberts calls it, "the selfish wing." Another seals off just the bedroom.

Krekow Jennings turned drawings into reality with precision contemporary construction.

So how could Roberts open his just-finished, everything's-just-right home to the masses for this year's Downtown Home Tour?

The question is, how could he not? "How can you live in downtown and not support the Market Foundation?" he asks. "When you live downtown, the Market is more than just a tourist attraction you bring your friends to." 

Rebecca Teagarden is assistant editor of Pacific Northwest magazine. Benjamin Benschneider is a magazine staff photographer.