



**PARCEL 4 STATS**

Usage: Market housing.  
 Materials: Alucobond with brushed finish.  
 Clear anodized aluminum frame windows. Glass canopies with painted steel outriggers. Exterior roller blinds in aluminum housings.

**West Building**

110,600 SF  
 12 Stories  
 40 Suites

**East Building**

57,000 SF  
 8 Stories  
 20 Suites

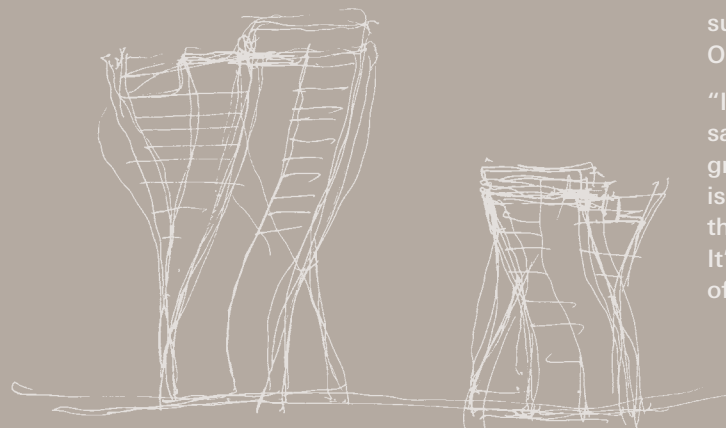
Butting into False Creek and surrounded by open space on three sides is Parcel 4. Architects Arthur Erickson and Nick Milkovich collaborated on the conceptual design for the parcel. Lawrence Doyle Young + Wright Architects, now known as IBI/HB Architects, carried out subsequent design with architectural services from Milkovich and Doyle during construction. “We were lucky, we got a great site,” says Milkovich of the commission. “The challenge was to live up to it.”

Originally, there was a U-shaped massing for the building, but the team was unhappy that the configuration produced inside corner suites looking into each other. Erickson argued for removing the centre and shifting the density to two higher buildings flanking a north-south garden. “Arthur said it opened the middle and let the sun through to the waterfront,” says Milkovich. “It opened views for Parcel 3, and created a semi-public garden.”

Managing the height became a challenge, however, due to a public garden to the west. “We leaned the back end of the west building to avoid shading at certain times of day,” says Milkovich. “Then you have to lean the other end to counteract it, for seismic reasons. That’s how the form came about.”

“What intrigued us was how to clad something like that,” he says. “You can’t do standard residential tower glazing, so we developed something we called fishscale – a series of metal and glass panels that stepped to follow the shape. It’s texture; it articulates the form.”

With the death of Arthur Erickson in May 2009, Parcel 4 is the last design by one of Canada’s most revered architects.



**Design with a Twist**

It’s described as a deck of cards that are twisted – each floor offset so the shape of the building changes as it rises. But a simple description doesn’t translate to simple construction.

“The design is extremely intricate, extremely complicated,” says Doug Dalzell of Keith Panel Systems, the company that engineered the building’s cladding. “To comprehend what Erickson was up to takes a lot of time, because it’s very subtle. There are over 7,000 panels on the job, and hardly one the same as any other.”

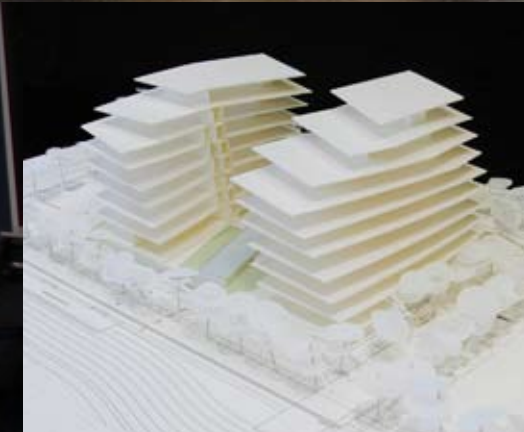
“Very little was not challenging,” agrees architect Brian Sim of IBI/HB Architects. He gives multiple examples: unstable post-industrial soils, parking below sea level, contractors developing city streets, buildings and waterfront at the same time and the site-wide challenges of implementing sustainability measures against the Olympic deadline.

“It was intriguing, and fulfilling,” says Sim. “There’s going to be a great sigh of relief when [the Village] is done. But it was one of those things you like to be involved with. It’s going to stand out as an example of how progress can be made.”



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At left, a concept sketch of Parcel 4 by Arthur Erickson. Above, Parcel 4 under construction. At right, a paper scale model highlights the unique twisting of the building forms, “like a deck of cards you put your hand on and twisted.”



**PROFILE**

**Nick Milkovich**

MAIBC, FRAIC  
 Nick Milkovich Architects Inc.

“Becoming an architect is a long maturing process,” says Nick Milkovich, reflecting on a lifetime of craft. “It’s a lifelong journey of exploration, and in that is the joy.”

Milkovich enjoyed his work on the Olympic Village, particularly the collaborative problem solving with other building professionals as the team brought Erickson’s twisting building design to life. “I enjoy the act of building something,” says Milkovich. “I had a feeling that in today’s world of time and budget concerns the ideal and pride of building exceptionally was slipping away. But there are times when everyone is intrigued by the challenges of a project where the people doing the work get excited and take pride in their efforts. In some respects that was evident on the Olympic Village project. I hope some of that enthusiasm can be built on.”

Milkovich says the evolution of architecture towards sustainable design is crucial. “I think [sustainable design] is really common sense. Even if we didn’t have to do this because of the abused environment, it’s the right thing to do. We’ve just beaten up on the planet and taken from it, and it’s time to get in sync.”