

New Homes

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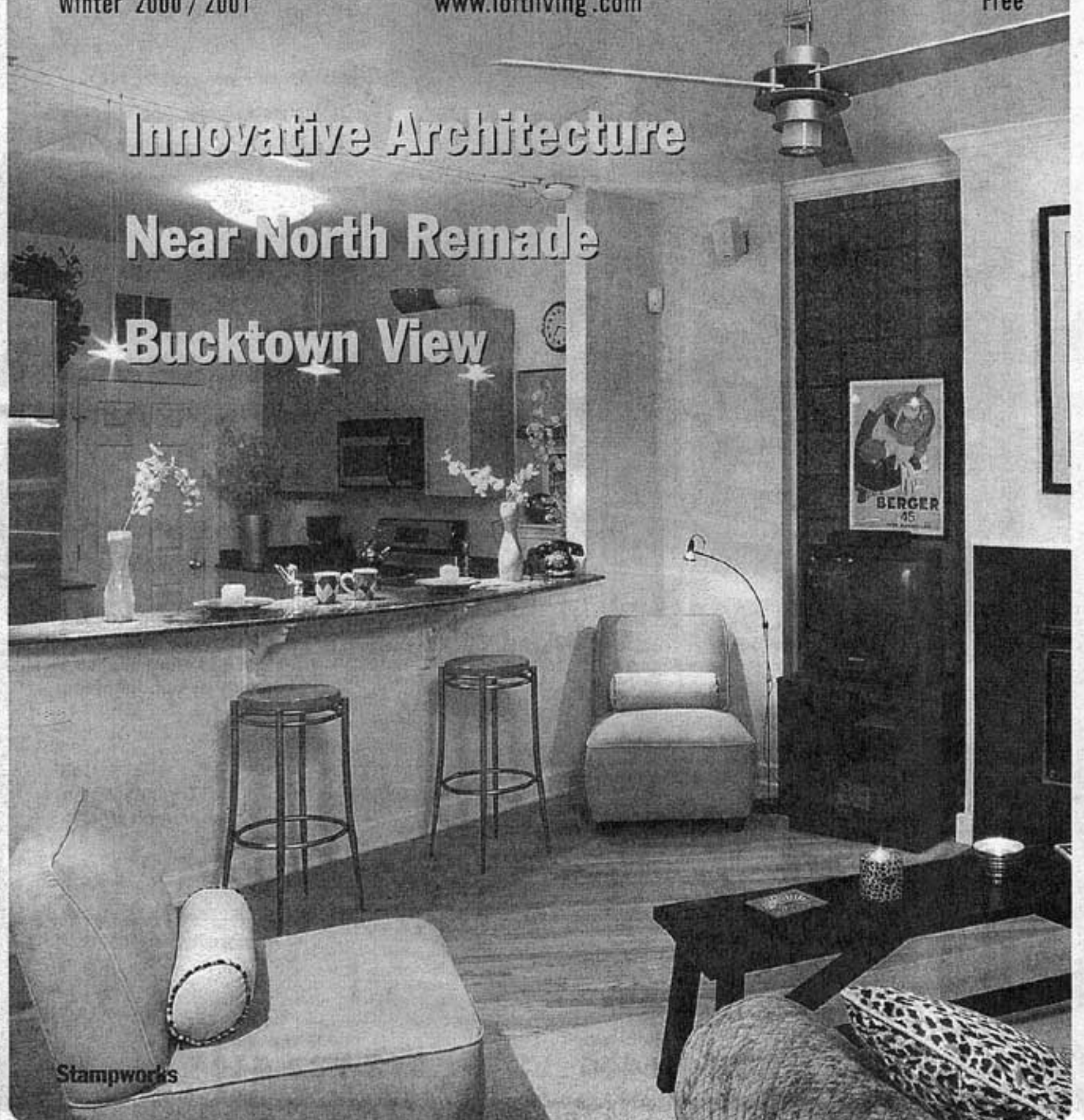
Free

Innovative Architecture

Near North Remade

Bucktown View

Stampworks



Neighbors

Bucktown bound?

Trendy neighborhood appeals to urban professionals, families

By Margaret Wappler

Stories have come and gone regarding how Bucktown, one of Chicago's hippest neighborhoods, earned its name. The staid version reports that the moniker came from the goats (a male goat is called a buck) that grazed in the neighborhood's pastures around the turn of the 20th century. The more risqué version alludes to the ladies-of-the-nights who sold their services for a dollar in the area's numerous brothels. Whichever you choose to believe, there's no arguing that Bucktown is appealing not for what it once was but for what it is today: an artist's neighborhood with trendy restaurants, quaint shops and beautiful, charming homes.

Like its history, the exact borders of Bucktown are somewhat sketchy, but according to the Wicker Park-Bucktown Chamber of Commerce, Bucktown is bound by Fullerton Avenue to the north, Bloomingdale Avenue to the south, Western Avenue to the west and Ashland Avenue to the east. With access to the Damen and Western Blue Line L stops and the Kennedy Expy., Bucktown is a gateway to anywhere on the North Side and getting downtown is a snap—15 minutes is the most you'll spend tooting in traffic.

Bucktown's sister neighborhood just to the south, Wicker Park, may get all the attention thanks to publicity-getters like MTV's reality show, "The Real World," setting up camp there last year—but don't let that fool you into thinking Bucktown is just a wallflower in Chicago's landscape. With its own distinct personality, Bucktown has plenty to offer, particularly to



Bucktown View at 2342 W. Bloomingdale is a four-story brick-and-limestone building with 27 condos.

urban professionals with families who desire tree-lined streets and sophisticated housing along with a bustling nightlife and rich, eclectic culture. Real estate agents realized long ago the potential of this idyllic neighborhood. Catch a deal in Bucktown while you still can—before housing prices become lakefront-inflated.

One especially noteworthy development is Bucktown Commons, a six-story, 30-residence luxury space at Concord Place and Milwaukee Avenue. Bucktown Commons features breathtaking views, 10-foot ceilings, carpeting, oversized balconies or terraces, and Euro-style kitchens and baths. Marked by a dramatic entry and lobby area, the Bucktown offers indoor heated garage spaces (\$22,500), central bicycle storage and a landscaped rear yard. Equipped

with central air-conditioning and gas-fired heating, the Bucktown Commons units are priced to sell. The remaining two units are base-priced from \$287,900 to \$389,900, with per-square-foot prices ranging from \$190 to \$212. Call Erin Gianone with Oculus Development at (773) 854-0940 for more information.

Another development with loads of allure is the Bucktown View, a 33-residence, new condominium development at 2342 W. Bloomingdale. The four-story brick-and-limestone building features six two- and three-bedroom duplexes with 1,620 to 1,850 square feet of living space, plus 27 condominium residences with 1,150 to 1,335 square feet of living space; prices range from \$276,900 to \$389,900.

With only five units left, Bucktown View residences boast patios, balconies or private roof decks, not to mention a common sun deck with dazzling city views. One of the most unique attractions of the View is its landscape-style artwork located outside the front door—a blocklong mural adorns the former railroad embankment of Bloomingdale Avenue. Created by developer Inace Fogelson of Paramount Homes (773-528-9077), the mural depicts prairie scenes, flowers and other imagery sure to ease you into a relaxed state of mind.

With gentrification pushing ever westward, the borders of Bucktown are hazy for good reason. More and more developers are learning that just a few blocks west of Western Avenue is not much different than just a few blocks east, with one notable difference that benefits the buyer—cost. If you purchase a condominium in the burgeoning West Bucktown area, you're likely to pay 30 percent less, according to developer Dave Darbin of Durbin Residential. Buck City Lofts is one of Durbin's properties selling for a song; two-bedroom lofts start in the low \$200,000s, while one-bedroom spaces can be had for around \$150,000. Unlike Bucktown View and Bucktown Commons, Buck City is an old loft building rehabbed to heighten its rustic interior, while throwing in some state-of-the-art fixtures for a hint of luxury.

"This is a great old loft building at a reasonable price," Darbin said. "A great value bound to appreciate." You can see a sample model at Durbin headquarters, 1740 N. Maplewood; call Mike Ramirez at (773) 252-3600 for more information.