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California Construction NEWS

Emerald-Shapery Center becomes latest addition to San Diego skyline

**SAN DIEGO METRO
EDITION**

by Carolyn Chambers

If nature is indeed perfect, then the Emerald-Shapery Center in San Diego should be a perfect building.

The Center is a joint venture of Shapery Enterprises and Tokyu Corporation of Japan, and the \$132 million hotel and office complex promises to be the most spectacular addition to the San Diego skyline to date.

Located on a full city block bounded by Broadway, State, Columbia and "C" streets, the finished 18- to 30-story complex will boast eight hexagonal glass and granite towers surrounding a 100-foot atrium.

Part of the complex will be a 27-story, 427-room hotel, managed by Emerald Hotels, a subsidiary of Tokyu Corporation. The other part will be a 30-story, 375,000-square-foot office tower.

The complex also will have 17,066 square feet of commercial space on the ground floor of the office tower, and 31,500 square feet of ballroom and meeting rooms in the hotel.

The atrium, which will join the hotel and office building, will consist of two glass hexagons ranging in height from eight to 10 stories.

Developer Sandor Shapery, who did the preliminary designs for the building, said he was just imitating a part of nature by using the hexagons.

"I've always had an interest in architecture and science," Shapery said, "I started studying crystals and found they were mostly hexagons. I just copied a higher power."

The buildings, in fact, look like a cluster of emerald crystals.

As it turned out, that hexagonal design also allows for 15 percent more office space than a square building, and also more window space.

It's a 'cluster of crystals' —Emerald-Shapery Center—



The \$132 million Emerald-Shapery Center Promises to be a spectacular addition to the San Diego skyline

Besides the space efficiency, Emerald-Shapery Center also will be extremely energy efficient due to the use of a thermal storage system.

Instead of running a normal air conditioning system at peak hours, the thermal storage system will make ice at night and pump cold water through the vents during the day. That system should cut the building's energy costs by two-thirds, Shapery.

Other amenities of the complex include a health spa, concierge service, catering to office tenants, a public art exhibit and restaurants. There also is comprehensive secretarial service available, as well as telex, telephone answering and word processing services offered through Headquarters Company, which has signed a lease agreement for the office tower.

Three levels of subterranean parking containing about 420 spaces will be available and can be increased through the use of valet parking for office tenants, hotel guests and clients.

Perhaps the most stunning feature of the complex will be the exterior. Each tower will boast a granite facade on the first four floors, and above that a facade of synthetic aggregate stone and green glass.

The complex is the first major development by Shapery, who said he originally bought the site in 1979 to build a Hyatt Regency Hotel when the city was going to build a convention center nearby.

When the convention center initiative was defeated in 1980, Shapery said he sort of put the development on the back burner until 1985 when office space started becoming scarce in the city.

Shapery got involved with Tokyu Corporation, which is providing \$100 million in cash for the project, after staying in an Emerald Hotel in Anaheim.

"I was so impressed with the operation of the hotel that I asked for the president's name," Shapery said, "I sent him a letter and a package on the project, and after a few months, he became my partner."

Space in the office towers ranges from \$22 to \$29 per square foot. According to Shapery, about 25 percent of the office space has been leased.

Grading on the project has begun, and construction on the buildings is scheduled for early 1989.

Dillingham Construction, NA, Inc. is the general contractor for the project. The leasing agent is Grubb & Ellis.

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