

# Downtown Dynamo



"In the first month we had 28 sales—it was just a madhouse every day," says Windwater Homes president and CEO Andrew Choy of his Houston infill project. The three-story Alessandria model (pictured) is 2,762 square feet with a price tag of \$267,888.

Photos: Tanya Sherbin, Sloan



First Floor



Second Floor



Third Floor

## Houston

Andrew Choy was used to building master planned communities in the Houston suburbs, but a strong market demand brought him downtown. Through extensive research, the president and CEO of Windwater Homes learned that there was a void in the urban marketplace. Young singles and couples tired of two-hour commutes, and empty-nest baby boomers moving back into the city, were searching for upscale, contemporary homes that wouldn't break the bank. "We talked to people living in luxury apartment communities and paying \$1,500 to \$1,800 a month in rent," says Choy. "We told them that for the same payment they could have a single-family home."

So he built it, and they came. Windwater Village, a 205-unit community on 21 city acres, had 28 sales in its first month. "We offer an alternative to what our competitors are selling," Choy explains of his detached plans. "They're selling \$400,000 townhomes with



garages in the front," he says. "Ours have rear garages, the Mediterranean style gives an immediate perception of value, and they start in the \$170s."

This self-contained community offers jogging trails and a pool, park, and fitness center to meet the needs of its health-conscious buyers. A state-of-the-art technology package in every home includes high-speed digital Internet access, prewiring for multiple phone lines, and cable television and digital satellite connections.

In this urban location, tight security is a must. So the community is fenced in by an 8-foot wall, and it has a guard gate. In addition, security cameras are located throughout the neighborhood and wired directly to each home.

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**Project:** Windwater Village, Houston; **Sales started:** July 1999; **Total number of units:** 205; **Number released:** 50; **Sales through August 1999:** 28; **Price:** \$170,000 to \$290,000; **Unit size:** 1,693 to 2,990 square feet; **Density:** 14 units per acre; **Developer/Builder/Architect:** Windwater Homes, Houston; **Land planner:** K.C. Engineering, Houston; **Landscape architect:** Sweitzer and Associates, Houston; **Interior designer:** Belinda Gordon, Houston; **Marketing consultant/Ad agency:** Boe Creative Services, Cypress, Texas

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