

final DESTINATION

Three Squared Inc. says America's first multifamily dwellings constructed from retired shipping containers will save money and environmental resources.

While new "brick and mortar" construction continues to struggle amid economic woes, and as lumber—a critical new construction material in the residential sector—is harvested faster than it can be replenished, forward-thinking real estate development company Three Squared Inc. is trying something new. The company is moving forward with its cargo container residential and commercial construction initiatives, citing escalating marketplace acceptance and demand driven by what it calls superior cost efficiencies, heightened profitability and minimized build time. The company, whose shipping container building solution offers what it calls systemized and sustainable construction resulting in affordable luxury, has announced an array of significant company projects and other milestones, including:

- Three Squared is slated to build more than \$109 million in projects during the next 24 months across the U.S. and abroad;
- The Rosa Parks condo complex, the company's flagship project in Detroit representing the first multifamily dwelling constructed in the United States from retired shipping containers, is now "shovel ready" with an approved \$603,000 tax credit. Down

payment assistance is available to approved buyers. This 20-unit, four-story condominium complex spans 26,000 square feet and integrates 93 shipping containers. The energy-efficient systems include ductless heating and air system, tankless water heaters and other amenities that combine to reduce each unit's energy costs by up to 80 percent.

- The company's Model Center was scheduled to break ground in Detroit in late 2012, with completion slated for sometime in 2013. The company says it will be ready to accept purchase agreements to its Rosa Parks and Michigan Ave. projects.
- The \$4.5 million Lake Tahoe recreational cabin project includes the construction of 65 recreational cabins on 67 acres of prime property in Lake Tahoe.
- Three Square has launched its patented Cargolinc Systems, which it describes as a proprietary, three-step, comprehensive process it provides to architects, builders/developers and private owners designed to surpass green and sustainable construction and quality standards at a fraction of the cost and time, allowing for higher quality luxury finishes within budget.
- The company has multiple patent filings in process.





tion and has suffered as the U.S. auto and steel industries have undertaken major revampings in the past several decades, has a long and proud history of firsts. With its civic pride returning and sports teams on the comeback, many companies are eyeing the city as a choice location. Whole Foods, for example, is opening its first store there, and Quicken Loans is creating new jobs and setting an important example. The company is encouraging downtown Detroit employees to move to the city by offering financial incentives and down-payment-assistance programs. Detroit is perfectly positioned to be the home of Three Squared's first projects.

"Detroit was selected as our headquarters because of the state and local governing bodies' positive leadership, proactive attitude and commitment to becoming an environmental leader in the 21st century," Horn says. "Land costs are also very reasonable, allowing us to yield attractive margins while keeping our prices to consumers affordable."

"Our company marries the trend toward sustainable green housing solutions with the problems of escalating building costs and a surplus of unlikely yet durable, versatile, widely available, economical and code-friendly shipping containers, which we use as the primary material for construction framing of houses, condominiums, dormitories and other residential, retail and commercial structures," Horn continues. "In fact, our cargo-container-based construction costs an average of half of other building methods."

The use of old shipping containers as housing offers other advantages, says Horn. "The structures take a fraction of the time to build and are more energy efficient than their counterparts because of a high-purposed combination of new technologies our team is creating and blending together," she comments. "What's more, our buildings provide an

elegant balance of simplicity with inherent character and personalized style in each wall. Design is only limited by imagination, not expense. In addition, residents and tenants alike know that their walls have traveled the world and have a story to tell. They've seen the ocean and other countries and have stood the test of time."

Given the range of benefits and advantages, architects, contractors and individuals are increasingly using containers to build homes, offices, apartments, schools, dormitories, artists' studios, emergency shelters and shops across the world, says Horn. They are commonly used to provide temporary secure spaces on construction sites and to add earthquake resistance to any structure. Europe, China and New Zealand have successfully pioneered building sustainable living in great numbers utilizing shipping containers. As one example, Travelodge, a global leader in budget hotel lodging, celebrated the fourth anniversary of its completed hotel in Uxbridge, United Kingdom. The project used shipping containers and came in 10 percent under alternative building estimates, saving the company £500,000, or approximately \$900,000, on the construction.

THE PROBLEM

As the primary material used in new construction, lumber can be a costly commodity that at times is harvested faster than it can be replenished. According to the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE), trees process significant amounts of carbon dioxide through absorption before the gas has a chance to reach the upper atmosphere. The removal of trees without sufficient reforestation can result in devastating habitat damage, biodiversity loss, aridity, soil erosion and bio-sequestration of atmospheric carbon dioxide.

Conversely, Three Squared says retired shipping containers are abundant in the U.S. As many as 21,000 shipping containers arrive in the country daily.

The global economy's dependence on container shipping means that ocean-going metal containers loaded onto large vessels is a way the world conducts busi-

ness daily. The sizable traffic in ocean shipping has resulted in vast fleets of such containers being deployed around the world, traveling from port to port and carrying a wide variety of goods.

Since the U.S. imports many more manufactured goods than it exports in shipping containers, container surpluses are not uncommon in the U.S. When port directors in the country find that they have a surplus of "empties," these can be made available for alternative uses, such as building.

SHIPPING CONTAINER SOLUTION

Three Squared uses retired shipping containers as its primary framing material for new construction. Made of steel and wood, this product is stronger than conventional framing, stackable for creating levels and readily available. The

excess containers on the market significantly reduce the comparative cost, according to Three Squared. With a price tag as low as \$900 each, used shipping containers offer a relatively inexpensive construction medium. Even when purchased new, shipping containers rarely cost more than \$6,000. Cargo containers can be considered an ideal building material as they are strong, resistant to the elements, durable and versatile. Construction is accomplished by simply positioning them. The containers' modular design makes additional construction as easy as stacking more containers—up to 12 high. The interlocking mechanism of the containers facilitates mobility so that structures made from them easily can be disassembled, moved and reassembled.

Three Squared describes itself as a property development market leader

in the cargo-based-construction industry. The goal of the real estate development firm is to "uniquely and effectively employ shipping containers to build safe, cost-efficient and environmentally friendly homes, schools, offices and warehouse space across the globe." The company's Cargolinc Systems have been designed to offer "a more profitable and efficient design and engineering system for construction projects." With a mission of rebuilding America through modular living, Three Squared says it is demonstrating new luxury construction can be executed faster, more affordably and with greater energy efficiency. Those seeking to learn more can visit www.threesquaredinc.com. **C&DR**

The article was submitted by Kern Communications, Woodland Hills, Calif.

We love Detroit and are thrilled to be building there and help lead turning both the city's and our nation's economy around."

— LESLIE HORN

"We are the perfect solution to construction for all types of projects," says Leslie Horn, CEO of Three Squared. "With the U.S. new construction industry desperate for ways to cut costs without undermining quality, green home construction gaining significant momentum and a growth rate from \$49 billion to \$140 billion (representing 20 percent of new construction) forecasted over the next five years, shipping-container-based construction is an extraordinarily well-positioned solution. This is especially true for America's multifamily, mixed use and commercial markets that are completely underserved, even as demand for this segment rises. For these reasons and more, our cargo-container-based building options are being extremely well received in both the domestic and international marketplace, as our recent array of milestones exemplifies. We love Detroit and are thrilled to be building there and help lead turning both the city's and our nation's economy around."

Detroit, although it has lost popula-

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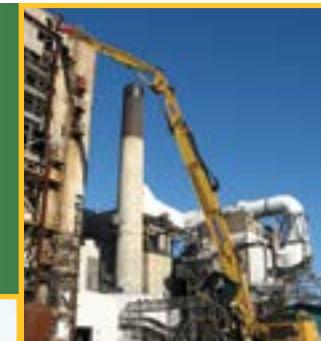
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