



## NICHIHA CASE STUDY

# Endi Apartments in Duluth, MN

When you build on the scenic shores of Lake Superior, stunning views contrast with the harsh winters that these buildings must endure. But ENDI, a \$36 million development by Harbor Bay Real Estate Advisors, still needed to look like the luxury apartment project it was intended to be. That's why DSGW Architects selected Nichiha over traditional fiber cement siding products—for looks and performance. And the price was right, too.

DSGW had specified Nichiha products on past projects, "but we had really used it more as a statement piece," said John Erickson, architect for the Minnesota-based firm. "We wanted a certain look for ENDI, but at over 250,000 square feet, this was a big project. We didn't think we could afford to use Nichiha for the full structure, so we originally planned to use another cementitious siding product."

The mixed use development features commercial tenants on the ground floor and 143 luxury apartments above, below and on the ground floor. Amenities include a fitness center, clubroom, technology area, private chef's kitchen for entertaining, outdoor terrace with a bocce ball court and more. The architects knew the exterior needed to reflect the high end nature of the complex, so they combined VintageWood (installed vertically and horizontally) with Illumination panels (oriented horizontally) for a unique look that combines the sleek aesthetic of Illumination's smooth, satin finish with the natural warmth from VintageWood, all from one supplier.



## PROJECT DETAILS

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### ARCHITECT

DSGW Architects

### GENERAL CONTRACTOR

Northridge Construction

### SIDING INSTALLER

Webster Construction

### LOCATION

Duluth, MN

### PRODUCTS

Nichiha Illumination Series and VintageWood™ Panels

### COMPLETION

Winter 2016

## CHALLENGE

ENDI is built on a slope, and the side of the development facing Lake Superior stands six stories tall, giving everyone access to stunning views. But this also means the structure faces the very worst that Mother Nature can dish out. Frigid temperatures and 90 mile-per-hour winds are not uncommon. Building exteriors simply must be durable, which explains the common use of brick in the area.

## SOLUTION

But the developer wanted ENDI to stand out, with a sleek, modern design aesthetic. Nichiha's panel thickness offers durable performance, and the clip installation system provided assurance that the panels would be installed efficiently, correctly and securely.

## RESULTS

ENDI's exterior combines the warmth of wood from VintageWood panels with the sleek aesthetic from custom-colored Illumination panels. The thicker panels provide a high quality look that matches the persona of this luxury complex. And Nichiha's installed price—within one dollar per square foot of the competing cement siding product—easily justified the clear upgrade in performance.

“When the client saw the difference in thickness and quality, they knew they wanted to choose Nichiha because they saw it as the better product.”

KATHERINE GERZINA, DSGW ARCHITECTS



They chose both Bark and Cedar colors for the 10-foot VintageWood panels, and used the Color Xpressions system to paint the 6-foot Illumination panels to match Sherwin-Williams colors Naval, Dovetail and Iron Ore. “With Nichiha, we were able to get the colors we wanted,” said Katherine Gerzina, designer with DSGW. “This made it so much nicer, because we could choose virtually any color. Custom colors with the other siding product would have really blown the budget.”

Erickson added that Nichiha also gave them the commercial residential aesthetic they wanted, “with a cleaner, sleeker, more contemporary look and a thicker, more substantial product. The other siding option would have looked more like a typical house, which was not the quality look we wanted.”

Duluth is a brick market; “that’s the familiar material here,” added Gerzina. “So by combining brick on the lower level with both Nichiha products above, we got to combine old school, traditional brick with the new, sleek, modern look of Nichiha. They really complement each other and gave us nice design flexibility.”

While DSGW wanted an expensive look, they still needed to keep things real. Erickson said, “Northridge, the contractor, wisely factored in the fact that the competing product would have had to be installed over furring strips. The pricing for the Nichiha system already included everything. When they considered all costs, Nichiha and the other siding ended up being within about one dollar per square foot of each other.”

Erickson admitted that they were surprised to learn that the two were so close in price. “When the developer realized they would only pay one dollar more per square foot for a much

better performing, better designed, better looking product, the decision was made. Plus, we got the value add from the thicker panels with Nichiha.”

DSGW had originally considered specifying metal panels, but were happy to simplify with Nichiha. “By not using the metal panels, you get rid of one more step in the construction process,” said Erickson. “The same crews installed both the VintageWood and the Illumination panels; they use the same installation system. It also saved us from having to design different material interfaces, so the detailing process was also simpler.”

He added, “There was so much value added when we were able to design ENDI with Nichiha because of the thickness of the product, the custom colors and the overall finish.” The resulting design gives the developer a sleek, sophisticated structure that will perform, even under Duluth’s harsh weather.



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Nichiha USA Inc., a subsidiary of Nichiha Corporation, was established 1998 and is headquartered in Norcross, Ga. Nichiha Corporation, an international leader in fiber cement technology for more than 35 years, has 13 plants worldwide and markets distinct patterns of fiber cement siding products in the U.S. In 2007, Nichiha opened its first U.S. manufacturing plant in Macon, Ga., responding to an increase in demand for fiber cement products in the Southeast market. For more information, call 1.86.NICHIBA1 or visit [www.nichiha.com](http://www.nichiha.com).

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