

CHOOSING THE “RIGHT” NEW HOME COMMUNITY

When you are buying a new home it is important to choose a location and a community that is right for you, your family and your future, experts advise - and they note the decision goes far beyond simply location.

Today, new home builders do more than simply build a home, they aim to incorporate their projects into the community, often creating a community as a result. Across Metro Vancouver, from Langley and White Rock to the shores of False Creek and the Fraser River, thriving neighbourhoods with schools, public facilities and jobs all began with one new house, or a cluster of condominiums and townhomes.

Public spaces and civic buildings are given priority today, as are parks, which tend to be centrally located instead of on the periphery. Sidewalks are a must, and pedestrian traffic is encouraged. The automobile is often de-emphasized with pedestrian access to all central points with walkways, and parking spaces tucked discreetly behind houses or underground, out of view from the street.

New home buyers seek a friendly neighborhood atmosphere, a place where design matters and they can safely walk down a tree-lined sidewalk when they want to. Another factor that may increase the sense of community in a

neighborhood is a trend toward mixed pricing. Many architects today are looking to integrate income groups and age groups in a neighborhood by designing houses that appeal to a broad public spectrum.

The current and future structure of your household may also affect your decision, so you should determine if various facilities such as daycare, schools and recreational amenities will meet your needs.

A family that buys a starter home in a development that also includes higher-priced homes can later move up, but their children will be able to stay in the same schools and their parents can still enjoy the same neighbors and friends while utilizing familiar neighborhood businesses and services.

Certain considerations will be important regardless of your household structure. You should be concerned about the quality of the services available in the area. You may want to visit the area before you make your decision and talk to people who live there about the quality of the services they receive.

A good way to organize your thoughts and prioritize your options is to write each feature on a card. After you have a stack of features, arrange them in their order of importance to you as you begin searching for that “right” new home community.

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New neighbourhoods in the Lower Mainland start with one new house or a cluster of new condominiums or townhomes. The challenge is finding the right neighbourhood for yourself, your family - and your future.”

