

TODAY'S HOMES & CONDOS

metrolandmedia
Connected to your community™

NEW HOME BUYER'S GUIDE SERVING TORONTO & YORK REGION

MAY 22 - JUNE 4 DISTRIBUTION: 337,500

Springtime new home shopping checklist

Hugh Heron

Principal and Partner in the Heron Group of Companies and President of Heathwood Homes



Spring and summer are great times to look for a new home, especially if you are considering buying from a builder you aren't familiar with. I always suggest that people check out completed communities by that company, and even knock on the doors of homeowners and ask how their purchase experiences went. In the spring and summer, landscaping is greening up and maturing, and you get the full impact of the community that was once simply a builder/developer's vision.

As you drive through a neighbourhood, keep a few things in mind.

- Do the homes have individual character, yet blend harmoniously with the other houses to create attractive streetscapes? You can get a feel for whether this builder's community vision fits with your own idea of "home."
- Communities take on a unique character once boulevard trees mature and neat sidewalks frame the green sod. Do you find this character pleasing and cohesive?
- Do the owners exhibit pride in their homes? Is their landscaping kept up, lawn mowed, exterior neat and tidy? This can be an inclination of how happy they are with their homes and surroundings.
- If this is an infill community nestled into an established area, does it fit in well with the existing homes and other buildings?
- Do the homes appear to be solid and constructed well?
- Does it appear that architectural controls were in place to ensure curb appeal?

- Are there ample places for residents to walk to for socializing and recreating? If there are parks or storm water management ponds, for example, are they well placed and inviting?
- Will there be thoroughfares through the property, or are the homes situated on quieter cul-de-sacs?
- If you have a family, does this look like a community where you would like your children to grow up?
- Did the builder select a location that is convenient, with local amenities such as schools and shopping close by?
- If you do chat with current homeowners, were they pleased with the service they received, from the moment they set foot into the sales office, through to after their purchase?

Remember that in addition to a builder having a vision for a piece of land, as a new home buyer, you have to envision your life there and what it can become in the future. Looking at completed communities can help you imagine the home you

are thinking of buying from this company.

You may be purchasing strictly from designs, so learn how to read a floorplan, and ask the sales representative to explain any abbreviations you do not understand. Get the full picture before you buy. Ask about the surroundings, the community amenities, architectural controls to ensure attractive streetscapes.

I am proud to have anyone considering Heathwood Homes drive and walk through our mature communities and ask our homeowners what they think. In fact, I love visiting these neighbourhoods myself and enjoying the finished product of what was once just an idea for a parcel of land!

Hugh Heron is Principal and Partner in the Heron Group of Companies and President of Heathwood Homes, as well as a former Member of the Board of Directors of Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, and a Past President of the Toronto Home Builders' Association and the Ontario Home Builders' Association.

