

Realtors help build communities

BY ANN HANNAH



When it comes to turning an average street corner into the heart of a prosperous, revitalized neighbourhood, Greater Toronto Realtors play an important role. Through research, marketing skills and networking activity, your Realtor can help turn a humdrum area into a vibrant, desirable community. Their work has been pivotal to breathing new life into areas like Liberty Village, Regent Park and Ossington Village, and their efforts aren't limited to existing downtown neighbourhoods.

From being in-the-know with respect to the toniest new condo projects to having an ear to the ground on the latest up-and-coming neighbourhoods, Torontonians are indisputably preoccupied with all things real estate, and this fixation benefits our city on a number of fronts.

For example, studies have shown that real estate transactions create jobs and economic growth in many sectors. Research from Altus Group estimates that between 2008 and 2010, residential Multiple Listing Service (MLS) housing transactions created \$19 billion nationwide in spin-off activity and more than 155,000 jobs annually.

The allure of Toronto real estate has also contributed to our city's high ranking in a range of independent international surveys. From being one of the most livable cities, to one of the world's most promising economic engines, to one of the most successful towns overall, Toronto consistently achieves top marks on a global scale and, in doing so, continues to attract buyers from all over the world.

One of the most concrete examples of our real estate fixation's pay-off relates to community revitalization. Ours is a city of neighbourhoods and from the reaches of the 905 region to the heart of the downtown core, no matter what area we call home, we tend to be fiercely proud of it. This fervent loyalty is a positive thing: Studies have shown that people with strong connections to family and friends in the community are consistently happier than those without social ties.

With their access to a database of new construction projects in the GTA, Realtors also play a key role in promoting new developments throughout the city, planting the seeds that, in time, grow into strong communities.

The ability to make enthusiasm for a community contagious, to advise you as to the specific plans on every corner, and to connect clients with the right residential and commercial developers involves considerable commitment. Greater Toronto Realtors are genuinely passionate about life in our city. They are often the first in line to support elements that are woven into the fabric of every prosperous neighbourhood like minor league sports, street festivals and community clean-ups.

Getting an early lead on an up-and-coming community can result in a very profitable long-term investment, and helping you recognize an area's hidden potential is where your Realtor comes in. If you are interested in taking advantage of opportunities in the next emerging Toronto neighbourhood, talk to a Greater Toronto Realtor and visit TorontoRealEstateBoard.com.



Ann Hannah is the President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 34,000 Realtors in the Greater Toronto Area.