



Select the right neighbourhood

Bill Johnston

TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO SUN

March 11, 2011

The process of buying a home involves many crucial decisions and few are as important as the location you choose. Identifying a great neighbourhood before it becomes well known can make an already solid investment even more lucrative in the long term, but with gentrification well underway throughout the majority of Toronto, spotting such opportunities can be challenging.

With the help of a Greater Toronto REALTOR® though, you'll find that there are a number of neighbourhoods throughout the city that offer modest prices and their own unique flare.

If for example, you've always wished for a little place near the water, Lakeshore Village, located along Lakeshore Boulevard West between Kipling and Islington, could be the right neighbourhood for you. Featuring property near the waterfront, this area may lack a bustling boardwalk but it does include its share of parkland. Many of the streets end in green patches near the lake and the scenic beauty of Colonel Sam Smith Park can also be found nearby. While this community is still evolving, it has always held the potential to resemble a quaint coastal village, and the abundance of film production in the area is a testament to this notion. With quick access by Go Train, TTC street car and Lakeshore Boulevard, it's really only a stone's throw from downtown.

Not quite as far west and further north, you'll find a number of other emerging communities like the Junction, near Dundas Street West and Keele; Brockton Village, located further east along Dundas toward Lansdowne; and Bloordale, which can be found by traveling north on Lansdowne to Bloor. These neighbourhoods have a friendly, bohemian feel and offer alternatives to the established communities of Bloor West Village and High Park nearby.

On the other side of the central core nestled due south of Riverdale, you'll find Riverside. This neighbourhood includes a mix of new townhouses, stylish lofts and businesses in Victorian era buildings. With coffee shops, art galleries, antique stores, and nearby Riverdale and Jimmie Simpson parks, there are plenty of ways to spend your free time in Riverside. While the area is home

to the Don Jail, its closure is nearing, and conversion plans for the older section of the facility are underway, to be opened as part of Bridgepoint Health in 2013. Riverside is just minutes to the central core by streetcar and offers convenient access to further reaches of the Greater Toronto Area via the Don Valley Parkway, and the Gardiner/ Lakeshore combination.

Moving a little further north and to the east you'll find a stretch of Danforth Avenue between Donlands and Main which, although it's home to young families with children and dogs, is anything but ordinary. It boasts a rich cultural mosaic that is reflected in its eclectic mix of cafes. Here you can find everything from Mexican to Thai to Tunisian cuisine. You'll also find plenty of cozy coffee shops and bakeries in the area, and like Riverside, it offers proximity to downtown without the gridlock.

If shopping is one of your favourite pastimes, the mid-rise condominiums popping up around Yorkdale Shopping Centre might appeal to you. Located at Dufferin and Lawrence and along Allen Road, at Wilson and at Sheppard, these developments range in size from 400 to 1,500 units. With great shopping and plenty of green space thanks to nearby Downsview Park, they are attracting a range of buyers from retirees who have called the southern reaches of the area home for decades, to young singles who appreciate the proximity to subway transit.

These are just a few of the many opportunities that exist throughout the GTA. To learn more about all of your options, talk to a Greater Toronto REALTOR® and visit www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com

Bill Johnston is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 31,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.

Follow TREB on www.twitter.com/TREB_Official, www.Facebook.com/TorontoRealEstateBoard and www.youtube.com/TREBChannel