

Mahogany leads residential building permit applications

JOSH SKAPIN

After three consecutive years leading all Calgary communities in demand for new homes, Mahogany appears to be ready for another bustling year.

The southeast lake community had 111 applications for residential building permits between Jan. 1 and the end of March, the most of any community in Calgary, says the city's planning and development department. Applications may include more than one permit.

This counts 106 applications for single-family building permits, a total that, again, topped all areas in the city.

"... People are feeling more confident in the marketplace, and they know that investing in a new home in a lasting community is a sound financial decision," says Nicole McLaws, Hopewell's marketing manager. "In Mahogany, homes are affordable, and purchasers get so much value — and with today's buyers, who are so savvy, well-

researched and careful with their dollar, we know that we need to offer the best quality, best location and best lifestyle, and that's exactly what we strive to do.

"We have the city's largest lake, 265 acres (107 hectares) of green space, gorgeous wetlands, shopping and restaurants, playgrounds and so much more. In addition, the demand is there because people want to live in a new community that has everything they need to make life easy," she adds. "People are so busy that to know you have everything you want and need only minutes from home is a real draw."

For interest in new single-family homes, the early part of 2017 has eclipsed activity from the same time a year ago, says Peter Skolaude, an area sales manager for Calbridge Homes in Mahogany.

"There's definitely a very marked difference between 2016 and 2017," says Skolaude. "Definitely quite a bit more activity in January, February and March than we experienced last year over the same



The southeast lake community of Mahogany paced all ends of the city in demand for new single-family homes over the first quarter of 2017. HOPEWELL RESIDENTIAL

months. But it's also just the vibe, the feeling of the buyers."

Skolaude sells in Mahogany's Reserve Collection, which are lake-side estate homes. They range from around 2,200 to 3,000 square feet.

"A lot of our buyers tend to be on a longer time cycle, so a lot of people who have been looking for the last year and a half to two years, they're pulling the trigger," says Skolaude. "They're seeing value there. They're seeing their existing homes come up in value."

"... People have a lot more confidence in buying something new," he adds.

The Calgary Real Estate Board says the benchmark price on single-family homes was \$503,900 in March, up from \$501,900 a month earlier.

Along with Calbridge, builders in Mahogany include Excel Homes, Homes by Avi, Hopewell Residential, Jayman Built and Morrison Homes.

Following Mahogany, three other communities had at least 50 residential building permit applications over the first quarter of 2017, says the city's planning and development department.

Cornerstone by Walton Develop-

opment and Management had 99, there were 69 in Redstone by Qualico Communities, and 52 in Legacy by WestCreek Developments. Cornerstone and Redstone are in northeast Calgary, and Legacy is in the southeast.

For single-family building permit applications, Mahogany was followed by 99 in Cornerstone, 64 in Redstone, and 50 in Legacy.

In the month of March alone, Cornerstone led the way. It paced the city with 47 residential building permit applications of all kinds, followed by 37 in Mahogany, and 30 in Redstone.

Built Green sees rise in enrolment to certify new energy-efficient homes

JOSH SKAPIN

More homes in the Calgary area were enrolled to be put through the paces of the Built Green Canada program over the first three months of 2017 than the same time last year.

Built Green Canada is a national organization with a certification program that rates the level at which a home is energy efficient, measuring factors such as the materials and methods used in its construction, ventilation, waste

management, water conservation and indoor air quality.

Enrolments from builders in the Calgary area soared 95 per cent over the first quarter of this year compared to the same time in 2016, says Built Green.

The Calgary area, including builds in Airdrie, Cochrane, Chestermere, and Okotoks, recorded 346 enrolments of single-family homes between Jan. 1 and the end of March, up from 177 year over year.

During this time, the most ac-

tive builders in the program were Jayman Built, Excel Homes, Partners Development Group, Sterling Homes and Mission Homes, says Built Green.

Homes completed through the program in the first quarter of 2017, however, dipped 40 per cent to 152 in 2017 from 252 year over year.

"Given the economic downturn, last year builders were focused on selling their existing inventory; therefore, completions were up while enrolments were down,"



The Sonata by Jayman Built, which was one of the most active builders through the Built Green Canada program in the first quarter of this year. DUSTIN HOFFERT/DCPIX PHOTOGRAPHY

says Built Green executive director Jennifer Christenson.

There's also stronger interest from house hunters in energy-efficient homes, says Christenson.

"We're seeing that consumer

demand is up," she says. "The 2016 Canadian Home Buyer Preference National Study shows that 62 per cent of homeowners say a high performance home is a 'must have.'"

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