

on the market

There were 10 new site openings last month and over 30 new openings in the last three months. Builders have a renewed sense of confidence after weathering the initial effects of the pandemic.

Last month, some of the builders that launched new offerings were Pace Developments, Marlin Spring, Kingsmen Homes, Bradley Homes, Lormel Homes, Paradise Homes, Arista Homes, Opus, Deco and Starlane Homes.

Year-to-date low-rise sales totals for the Total Market Area are 8,740 for 2020. The recent trend to increased sales needs to continue through the rest of 2020 if total sales are to surpass 2019 numbers.

Last month, there was an average of 6.3 sales per active site (with 270 active sites in total.) New releases must be priced aggressively or may be out of reach for new home buyers in certain areas.



Maple
Julien Court
Pace Developments

Prices range from \$1,099,990 to \$1,199,990 for 2,118 sq. ft. to 2,175 sq. ft.
Townhomes and semi-detached homes
www.juliencourt.ca



Oakville
Glen Abbey Encore
Primont Homes

Prices range from \$1,319,990 to \$1,519,990 for 2,096 sq. ft. to 3,061 sq. ft.
Detached homes on 36' and 38' lots
www.primonthomes.com



Richmond Hill
Richmond Green
Conservatory Group

Prices range from \$1,049,990 to \$1,844,990 for 1,866 sq. ft. to 4,229 sq. ft.
Townhomes plus detached homes on 30' and 36' lots
www.conservatorygroup.ca



Lindsay
Sugarwood
Kingsmen Homes

Prices range from \$340,000 to \$670,000 for 1,300 sq. ft. to 3,200 sq. ft.
Townhomes on 20' lots plus detached homes on 37' and 42' lots
www.thekingsmen.ca



Barrie
Yonge and Go
Bradley Homes

Prices range from \$574,000 to \$584,000 for 1,281 sq. ft. to 1,376 sq. ft.
Townhomes
www.bradleyhomes.ca

Contractors can ill-afford construction delays



RICHARD LYALL
RESCON

Ontario's construction industry must remain healthy if the province is to dig out from the economic doldrums caused by COVID-19. Holding up a development to wait for "utility locates" certainly doesn't help matters.

Contractors need certainty that projects won't be delayed. They can't afford to lose build time as a result of gas companies and telecommunications firms being unable to provide timely markings of underground services.

They've complained about the problem for years, to no avail. An estimated 85 per cent of all locate requests are late which is a very real and significant problem, especially for the residential construction industry.

In Ontario, we have a One Call system which is mandatory through the Ontario Underground Infrastructure Notification System Act, 2012, and enables contractors, excavators and homeowners to make one locate request to a call centre instead of having to call each utility separately. The system is used to mini-

mize the risk of severing a natural gas line, a water main and other underground infrastructure.

However, contractors are facing long delays while waiting for utilities to provide the locates. For larger projects, where there are up to 10 different companies responding to a request, some of the locates expire by the time all the locates are received, necessitating a frustrating and very unnecessary second round of locate requests.

While most jurisdictions have a deadline of three days to respond to locate requests, Ontario has a legislated deadline of five business days. The delivery of locates, however, often occur several weeks after a deadline.

The Residential and Civil Construction Alliance of Ontario (RCCAO) has proposed a six-point plan to speed up locates. The proposal was sent to the offices of Premier Doug Ford and to the Minister of Government and Consumer Services, as well as 19 MPPs who are on the Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs.

For starters, RCCAO has suggested that the board of directors of One Call be restructured so that half of the

members are non-utility representatives. This would help to remove the "pro-utility" bias of the board and perhaps lead to prosecutions of utilities that are habitually late in providing locate services to contractors.

RCCAO is also suggesting that stakeholders and One Call work together to maximize the sharing of locate responses among contractors and subcontractors working on the same construction site. Currently, multiple contractors bidding or working on a common construction project must each request their own locates.

Our province is depending on construction. We can not let late locates stand in the way of our recovery. The steps recommended by RCCAO would improve response times and allow builders to keep the shovels going.

RCCAO has urged action on the issue before. The Alliance sounded the alarm with a report in 2015 but nothing was done. This time, however, One Call needs to answer the bell.

Richard Lyall, president of Rescon, has represented the building industry in Ontario since 1991. Contact him at media@rescon.com.

Prepare yourself and ask the right questions



NICOLE ATTIAS
IN CLOSING

When making a huge purchase like buying a new home, how you conduct yourself is very important. Are you dealing with a sales rep who wants to make a quick sale, or someone who really cares about leading you to making the right decision? Learn how to assess your particular situation in order to make the right decision. Top 3 tips for doing so include:

1. Getting past the sales pitch. Experienced sales reps know how to introduce themselves and keep you engaged

during an open house or simple conversation. It is your job to ask as many questions as possible. 'How long has the property been on the market?' and, 'Have there been any offers?' are simple examples. Buying a home is a lot of work. Take your time. 'Did they receive offers and reject them?' 'When was the plumbing last done?'

2. Make comparisons. It is your job to speak to different people and assess different options. Purchasing a home is the largest investment you will ever make. Build trust with your realtor. Do your research about various properties and anything special about the neighbourhood. Focus on the big picture.

3. Hold your emotions inside. Always have the next step in mind. Sales reps are great at reading your body language and feelings. It is what they do day-to-day. Your job is to stay level-headed to get the best deal done once you have reached your final decision. Keeping your cards close to home will allow you to contain your natural excitement and be in a much stronger financial situation.

There are numerous tips for making the right buying decision. When purchasing a home, it is a good idea to get into the salesperson's mind space. Stay focused and challenge what you hear. Take your time and have your list of questions prepared and handy well in advance.

Do you have a question about the home buying process? Connect with Nicole at nicole@prospect2win.com, on LinkedIn or visit www.prospect2win.com.