

REAL ESTATE

Movin' on up in the Beltline



DAVID PARKER

Land and construction costs have certainly had an impact on the cost of new condominiums in the downtown and Beltline districts, but there is no let up in the number being built. More buildings mean more people which, in turn, results in a vibrancy that brings safer streets, better services and retail operations.

It's exciting to see what is happening to the Victoria Park community. Streets such as 1st Street S.W. are being transformed so quickly the problematic night clubs are disappearing. And when Colours by Batistella, Union Square, the retail around the super-successful Hotel Arts and the renovated pub in the Radio Block are completed, it will be a most desirable address.

One of the earlier renovations on 1st Street was the Manhattan Lofts, a conversion from a historic 1912 building that proved a winner. I see that a top-floor suite is on the market for \$749,000, but the posh unit boasts 1,600 square feet and has a remarkable ceiling height of six metres.

It will be even more attractive when construction is complete on the remaining two office buildings in the adjoining IBM Campus complex.

Most of the cranes soaring over the Beltline skyline are in the eastern portion, but Connaught has attracted a number of developers and new projects in the west end, which will no doubt force up the price of older suites in the area.

I like what's happening along 8th Street S.W. It's becoming a nice stroll down to the Bow River, all the way from 17th Avenue. The corner of 7th Avenue is still a place many try to shy away from, but moving the LRT station to the next block east with a much improved design should help clean up that area.

The Torode 10-storey office tower, 8 West, at the corner of 8th Avenue which is still under construction, will be a good addition as will the recently approved new Calgary Board of Education centre that will incorporate the former Dr. Carl Saffran School.

It already has two fairly new high-end condominium complexes in Emerald Stone and Residences at Mount Royal. Marketing is about to start on Astoria on 10th just around the corner on 10th Avenue. The 34-storey tower will add another 229 suites to the Connaught market as well as provide for two levels of office space and street level retail.

Apparently, the owner is trying to purchase the West Canadian building at the adjacent site on the corner of 8th Street, which would become another quality residential tower.

Other Connaught residences already announced include Centron's towers on the site of the former Kai Mortensen store along 11th, and the lofty towers called Lausanne and Montreaux at 10th Avenue and 14th Street. And the Bennett Glass property on 11th Avenue has also been sold for residential development.

With all of this action, I would suggest now is a good time to buy a re-sale condo in the district — and there are plenty to choose from in all shapes and sizes.

A bachelor suite is on the market for under \$200,000. Only 324 square feet, it has been completely renovated and upgraded with hardwood floors, granite countertops, stainless steel appliances and designer lighting that is going to prove just right for someone wanting to get out of the rental pool.

There are several other one-bedroom suites, but a renovated two-bedroom in a concrete building that has been repainted on the outside and sports a nice lobby area with slate tiles can be bought for \$269,900.

Vantage Pointe took a long time to build and I'm not too keen on its massive outline, but people have now moved in and must be enjoying some incredible views from the 26 storeys. There are at least a dozen suites up for sale already, ranging from \$297,500 for a 521-square-foot unit on the 18th floor to a corner unit of 875 square feet with an asking price of almost \$400,000.

It's interesting to note that promotional material for almost all of them mention being next door to a Co-op store. Midtown Market really has proved to be a winner for the Co-op and the people in Vantage Pointe can also brag about having their own wine cellar in the form of the Co-op liquor store on the main level that carries some very fine labels.

Having both a Co-op and a Safeway store in Connaught is a big plus compared with the east end of the Beltline where residents have to travel quite a way for groceries. They can look forward to the opening of a Sunterra Market.

HOT PROPERTIES

A glance at the ever-changing real estate landscape in Calgary and area. Each week, we highlight four noteworthy homes — from the dreamy to the affordable and the not-so.

HIGH



Aspen Woods is a relatively new district in Calgary, but it's attracting a lot of interest with its classic estate homes.

This 6,200-sq.-ft. walkout on a ravine impresses from the first look. A grand foyer and a two-storey great room with a soaring vaulted ceiling which is open to the second floor seal the good impression.

For \$3.6 million, it has all the high-end amenities such as a wine room, theatre room, five-car garage, nine bathrooms and a music room.

In a unique layout, the master bedroom is on the main floor.

A lovely covered patio with a view of the ravine completes the picture. MLS #C3268465 Royal LePage

LOW



One thing older suburbs have going for them is well-established yards. This \$349,900 Beddington two-storey is no exception.

A nicely treed front yard with planter boxes gives the stylish home a West Coast feel.

A dark wood panelled corner fireplace continues the natural look inside.

There are only two bedrooms upstairs, but they are very large.

And who needs to be indoors anyway, when you have a nice deck where you can enjoy sunsets from the hot tub.

MLS #C3263583 ReMax

RURAL



Once upon a time, Bragg Creek was a quaint village with little cabins on the banks of the Elbow River. It's still quaint, but the cabins aren't so little anymore.

This 1994 two-storey split, extensively renovated three years ago, spans 4,250 sq. ft. and all the rooms make great use of the space.

A living room has floor to ceiling cut-out windows and a cathedral ceiling; the kitchen is flooded with light from skylights above and windows beside the breakfast table; the master suite of angles and peaks is massive with a sitting area and a large lounge.

This \$1.39-million estate home also has a nanny suite, dog shower, wrap-around verandah and bonus room. MLS #C3249194 Royal LePage

VACATION



It's difficult to find lakefront property in Alberta, so it's all the more surprising to see two remarkable homes for sale on central area lakes.

Both homes are closely priced: \$1.3 million at Sylvan Lake's Half Moon Bay and \$1.2 million at Gull Lake.

The 875-sq.-ft. Sylvan property is a true cabin with wood walls, floors and ceiling and a rock fireplace.

The Gull Lake house could never be called a cabin. Thoroughly modern, it nevertheless evokes a country charm on a leafy laneway.

Built in 2003, the 2,675-sq.-ft. home has seven bedrooms, four baths and a walkout level. It's beautiful, elegant and contemporary. Outside, a long dock extends out into the lake.

— Compiled by Michele Jarvie, Calgary Herald



Lee Gunderson, for the Calgary Herald

Get a groovy vibe going with a '60s-inspired party.

FROM GI PARTY PAD: Set the mood '60s style

Lava lamps were borrowed from neighbours' children, a circular chair was rescued from a trash pile and a movie poster from Russ Meyer's *Faster, Pussycat! Kill! Kill!* replaced our usual art. I had fallen in love with an ornately framed painting of a seductively clad '60s woman. But at \$50, it was too dear for my art budget. I struck a deal with the store owner to rent it for the night at a fraction of the cost.

I had a dance stage built (Wood Work 4U, \$50) and hired two go-go dancers for the night (\$125 a dancer). I moved all the furniture out of the front room to make way for dancing and changed the lights to red and blue bulbs.

The family room became the 'chill-out lounge.' My poppy loveseat set was the focal point and leather chairs and benches from other rooms were brought in. A shag rug and blow-up and beanbag chairs completed the look. A DVD played psychedelic images on the TV.

The kitchen housed the martini bar and bartender. Wine was set up outside the kitchen so guests could help themselves. Beer on ice was available on the back deck. The 1960s-inspired food was laid out, buffet style, in the dining room.

Still looking for those last details? Replace the bathroom lights with black lights and leave out body paints for guests to bring back the body-painting craze of the late '60s. Try scattering paperbacks on coffee tables. How about a game of Twister tucked to the side to break out after midnight?

Empty a shelf and line it with Campbell's tomato soup cans as homage to Andy Warhol and pop culture. String daisy heads along pieces of thread and hang them, cascading, over a door or on a wall.



And don't forget the outdoors. To honour the venue of the original love-ins, the back garden and deck need to be included in the overall party scheme. Large throw pillows, low tables and candles galore invite guests to come out, sit and enjoy the summer night.

My own social experience was a roaring success. Like *Summer of Love* activities, my party attracted friends of various ages, from 'go-go dancers' to 'hippies' to 'socialites' and even a couple in togas. There was free food, free drink and love was felt by all.

For just one night, my place was a swinging party pad filled with how professor and playwright Eric Bentley once described hippies: "the middle class in fancy dress."



Photos, Leah Hennel, Calgary Herald

Set a summer of love with daisy tea towels, above, and a glass pitcher, top, and sari-inspired beaded organza table runners, right, all from Willow Studio in Kensington.



Creating the party pad

Charity and thrift stores

Northwest:

- Goodwill Industries of Alberta, 4625 Varsity Drive N.W.
- Women In Need Thrift Store, 6432 Bowness Road, N.W.

Northeast:

- Goodwill Industries of Alberta, 154 1440 52 St. N.E.
- Salvation Army Thrift Stores, 999 36 St. N.E.
- Calgary Inter-faith Furniture Store, (this is still open) 635 35 Ave. N.E.
- Value Village, 3405 34 St. N.E.

Southwest:

- Women In Need Thrift Store, 1403 14 St. S.W., 2907 Richmond Rd S.W.

Southeast:

- Goodwill Industries of Alberta, 10426 Macleod Tr.
- Salvation Army Thrift Stores, 916 42 Ave. S.E., 3A-3200 17 Ave. S.E.; 9919 Fairmont Dr. S.E.; 2840 Glenmore Tr. S.E.
- Women In Need Thrift Store, 1 3525 26 Ave. S.E. and 134 71 Ave. S.E.
- Value Village, 104 58 Ave. S.E.

the poster. Look for ones that reflect the '60s culture, such as photographs of fashion models and celebrities, political protests, the rock 'n' roll lifestyle, movie posters and psychedelia. Check out these stores:

- Movie Poster Shop, 112 16th Ave. N.W.
- Movie Goods, 9 3600 21 St. N.E.
- Prints Charming, 1409 11 St. S.W. 229-0220
- IKEA, 8000 11 St S.W.

Coffee table novels

The Cold War, the Vietnam War, the Sexual Revolution and the psychedelic hippy movement influenced the writers of the '60s. Paperback editions of these titles would add a subtle touch of authenticity to your party.

- The Prophet, Kahlil Gibran
- The Hobbit, J.R.R. Tolkien
- James Bond thrillers by Ian Fleming
- Catch 22, Joseph Heller
- The Spy Who Came in From the Cold, John Le Carre
- Clockwork Orange, Anthony Burgess

Movies

Check out the exhilarating party scenes in these movies (at Casablanca Video, 2101 33rd Ave. S.W. or 2100 4th St. S.W.)

- Breakfast at Tiffany's
- The Apartment
- The Party
- The Bear and the Doll
- Last Details

Final touches

These inexpensive items are perfectly retro and available at Willow Studio, 1437 Kensington Rd. N.W.

- Ceramic garden sandal pot in orange, lime, or yellow (\$15)
- Sari-inspired beaded organza table runner in red or purple (\$28)
- Tea towels with daisies in pink, yellow or blue (\$8.90/set of two)
- Glass pitcher with daisies (\$41)
- Gypsy beaded shawl (\$37.50).

Services

- Wood Work 4U: Thomas P. Murphy (owner), 547-0639

Summer lovin' music

In 1967, there was an insatiable hunger for the Beatles' Sgt. Pepper's Lonely

Hearts Club Band, and the San Francisco Sound was made famous by the Grateful Dead, Janis Joplin and Jef-

erson Airplane. Jimi Hendrix was the king of hard rock. Other hits of 1967 included:

- I'm a Believer, the Monkees
- Light my Fire, the Doors
- Somethin' Stupid, Nancy and Frank Sinatra
- I Heard it

Through the Grapevine, Gladys Knight and the Pips

- Incense and Peppermints, the Strawberry Alarm Clock.
- Respect, Aretha Franklin
- Higher and Higher, Jackie Wilson

Posters and art

The ultimate pop art form in 1967 was

