

Quarry Park a testament to developer's vision for former gravel pit

BY MARTY HOPE, FOR THE CALGARY HERALD MARCH 28, 2014



"We were looking for a concrete structure, and we found it" with the Champagne condos, explain Peter, left, and Gail Krenkel. "The finishings are high end, and there is a European look to it."

Photograph by: Adrian Shellard, Calgary Herald

When the initial plans for Quarry Park were unveiled, there were those Doubting Thomases who dismissed the vision as just so much blue sky dreaming.

Now, nine or so years after Remington Development Corporation threw a huge tent party to introduce Calgary to its idea for transforming an ugly duckling southeast gravel pit between the communities of Douglasglen and Riverbend into a successful — and highly popular — mixed-use community, the detractors have pretty much been hushed.

The change has been so dramatic that unless you've been living in the surrounding communities, it

would be difficult to remember when Quarry Park was a Lafarge gravel pit, says Remington president Cody Clayton from the company boardroom overlooking the still-developing community.

“A lot of people thought we were off our rockers in the beginning, but now we’ve become a poster child for development of mixed-use communities in the suburbs,” Clayton says.

At the heart of the 175-hectare Quarry Park is a corporate village currently made up of about two million square feet of office space housing prestigious names like Imperial Oil, Bayer Cropscience Canada, Cardel Homes and the community’s first business resident, Jacobs Engineering Group.

“Jacobs was the impetus for everything else that has happened here,” Clayton says. Between then and now, 100,000 square feet of retail has been established in The Market at Quarry Park, and there have been about 220 single-family homes, along with another 200 townhouses and riverfront condos, and 150 rental apartments built.

By the time build out occurs, in about 2020, the amount of office space will have doubled, there will be 2,000 housing units, and a full-service, 200-room hotel. Add to this the fact that work will start next month on a 110,000-square-foot recreation centre that will be opened by the end of 2015.

From the beginning, Quarry Park was envisioned as a business park where people could live close to their jobs. And that, Clayton is pleased to say, is happening. About 30 per cent of home sales are to people working in the community, “and that continues to rise yearly,” he says. Currently, the resident count sits at about 700 and will reach 5,000 at build out.

In all, approximately 4,000 people from all areas of the city hold jobs in Quarry Park and the city has been “very proactive” about providing public transit into the community for people to get to and from their jobs, Clayton says. It is also accessible from several transit and bus rapid transit routes, including the crosstown service.

The community also has its own 10-kilometre stretch of pathway system and is tied to the city’s 700-kilometre network.

Glen Deibert, director of residential sales for Remington, says activity has been steady with potential buyers having an increasingly greater choice of housing options.

“We’re seeing nothing but growth on the residential side, as well,” he says. “And the buyer profile is expanding as a result, with everyone from young professionals to mature buyers with and without families.”

Remington is not only doing developer duty, but has donned a residential builders’ hard hat as well by successfully creating the Champagne condos, and has introduced a three-storey project called The Gates, and a rental complex called The Laurier which has appealed to both corporations and downsizers.

Peter and Gail Krenkel bought in Champagne.

“We shopped around, looked at several areas and homes,” Gail says. “(In the end) we liked Champagne and Quarry Park very much.

“We were looking for a concrete structure, and we found it with Champagne, the finishings are high end, and there is a European look to it.”

On the single-family side, Cardel Homes has been involved with Quarry Park since the beginning and now Albi Homes offers buyers an additional option. Brownstones and townhouses are being built by Birchwood Properties.

Deibert says single-family homes are priced at an average of \$750,000 to more than \$1 million, townhouse pricing starts at around \$550,000, while condos begin at \$300,000 and approach the \$2-million mark.

“The success of Quarry Park has come about because of Remington’s commitment to quality in all aspects of the development, as well as knowing what residents and businesses want and need — and providing it,” Clayton says.

What you need to know

COMMUNITY: Quarry Park, in southeast Calgary.

DEVELOPER: Remington Development Corporation.

BUILDERS: Remington Development Corporation condominiums and rental product; single-detached homes by Cardel Homes and Albi Homes; townhouses by Birchwood Properties.

INFORMATION: Visit www.quarrypark.ca or www.remingtoncorp.com.

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