

# YOUR HOUSE YOUR HOME

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO CENTRAL ALBERTA HOMES

MARCH 15, 2019

Central Alberta's  
**OPEN HOUSE  
LISTINGS**  
inside



Exploring **CONDOS**  
and **TOWNHOUSES** A12

Caring for Kitchen  
**COUNTERTOPS** A4

Improve your Home's  
**CURB APPEAL** A14

39310 RANGE ROAD 250,  
RURAL LACOMBE COUNTY

**OLD FASHION CHARM**

1166 sq. ft. country-style bilevel.

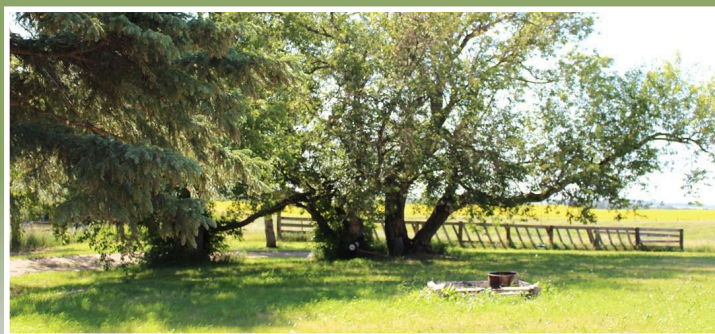
4 beds, 3 baths. **\$389,000**



**Margaret Comeau**  
403-391-3399



OnTrack Realty  
See page 7 for more details



VIEW OUR E-EDITION ONLINE AT  
**www.yourhouseyourhome.ca**



**Network Realty Corp. 403-346-8900**  
3608-50 Ave www.networkrealtycorp.ca



**NORM  
JENSEN**  
403.346.8900



**Commercial Land  
for Sale**

130 acres. Ideal property for various types of industries requiring rail service.



**Land For Sale  
Downtown Sylvan Lake**

Excellent location with a view of the lake! Seller has plans for a 10 unit apartment.



**Super Value,  
Business Only for Sale**

Superb location on Gaetz Ave. Very high traffic area. Store includes bakery and meat counter. Very long standing profitable business.



**Cozy Bi-Level Located  
In Quiet Area of Penhold**

3 Bdrms, 2 Bths, air conditioning, new paint throughout, alarm, new hot water tank and furnace, lots of room for garage and RV parking.



**Michael  
Holmes**



**5211 56 St, Innisfail**

Stunning 2 storey, overlooks Dodd's Lake.  
MLS #CA0149555.  
**\$669,900**



**#13, 1 Avenue, Joffre**

3 bed home on 3 lots. Low property taxes, close to Red Deer. MLS #CA0145640.  
**\$189,900**



**#13 North Loop, Joffre**

Spacious mobile, recently renovated!  
MLS #CA0151471.  
**\$72,500**



**5112 64 Ave, Ponoka**

Modern mobile with lot. Priced reduced!  
MLS #CA0148937.  
**\$155,500**



**2017 25 Ave, Delburne**

Great starter home or revenue property. Recently renovated!  
MLS #CA0153982.  
**\$120,000**

**Call Michael at 403.350.5579 | michaelholmes@royallepage.ca**



**Les  
Anderson**  
403.350.1932



**PARKVALE - HUGE LOT (75X128)**

Can be subdivided into 2 lots & build 2 single family homes. On a dead end street, only steps away from Barrett Park. Nice home on the property with a 28'x28' garage. **\$309,900**



Stunning top floor condo over 1,700 sq. ft. overlooking the City! This has it all! Bright, open & spacious! 3 bedrooms, 3 full baths, great kitchen, granite counter tops, island & lots of cabinets. 2 decks to enjoy the outstanding view. **\$399,900**



**INCREDIBLE VALUE!**

Assessed at over \$163,000 and now on the market at only **\$119,900!** Concrete building, 2 bdrms, lots of upgrades. Great investment! Call Les at 403-350-1932

**CALL LES AT 350-1932 TO VIEW, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE LISTINGS!**



**Alex  
Wilkinson**  
Follow or  
contact me on  
403-318-3627



**206 - 28470 HWY 592**

Fabulous updated acreage just minutes to Red Deer on pavement! 4 bdrms, 4 baths with double attached garage situated on 1.6 acres.

**Call Alex to view!**



**120 HENDERSON CRES  
PENHOLD!**

Awesome 3 bdrn fully fin. & updated townhome. Yard is fully fenced with 2 car parking pad. Upgraded flooring & stainless appliances! **Call Alex**



**23 STEWART STREET**

Location is fabulous for this fully finished Sunnybrook home just steps to the local school and parks. Home comes with detached double garage!



**21 CHURCHILL CRES  
JUST LISTED!**

This awesome fully finished home. Great location. Close to schools! **Call Alex!**



**14 - 5816 65 STREET**

Main floor for easy access! Here is a cute little one bedroom main floor unit, ready to move in. **Call Alex!**

**Call me "Munday": Call me "Anyday" | 403-598-7721 | bmunday@shaw.ca**



**Barb Munday**  
**ROYAL LEPAGE**  
NETWORK REALTY CORP.



**Sunday, Mar. 17 2-4 pm  
#24 939 RAMAGE CRESCENT**

Gated adult community, fully finished, main flr laundry, 3 bdrms, 2 baths, reduced to **\$294,000**. Imm. possession.



**NEW LISTING**

1376 sq. ft fully finished bi-level in Deerpark, close to schools, shopping, **\$349,999**



**CONDO**

2 bdrn, 1 bath, low fees, starter or investment **\$107,000**



**TOWNHOUSE**

No condo fees, 3 bdrn, 3 bath, single att. garage Reduced to **\$272,500**. Imm possession

**Barb is pleased to announce she has joined the firm of Royal LePage Network Realty Corp as an associate and licensed assistant to top producer JACQUI FLETCHER.**  
**Please call us for your Real Estate Needs.**




**ROYAL LEPAGE**
**Network Realty Corp. 403-346-8900**  
 3608-50 Ave www.networkrealtycorp.ca

**Doug Wagar**

403.304.2747


**OPEN HOUSE SUN 2-4 PM**  
 8 BARNER AVENUE

**QUIET STREET**

 1160 sq. ft., 4 beds, 3  
 baths, central air! Fireplace,  
 double garage, shows  
 great. **\$319,900**

**JUST LISTED!**

 Westpark on a close, 5  
 beds, 2 baths, double  
 garage, large yard. Priced  
 not to last at **\$266,500**

**WONDERFUL**

 fully finished bi-level,  
 3 beds, 3 baths,  
 over-sized double garage,  
 pie lot! **\$335,000**

**SUPER AFFORDABLE**

 adult condo! 3 beds,  
 2 baths, gas fireplace,  
 attached garage!  
**\$194,900**

**BEAUTIFUL ADULT**  
**CONDO**

 3 beds, 3 baths, gas  
 fireplace, double attached  
 garage! **\$359,900**
**FOR A FREE MARKET EVALUATION,  
 CALL DOUG WAGAR AT 403.304.2747**

**Tracy Thody**

 Call or text  
 403-358-8605

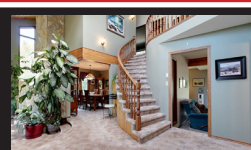
**\$1,450,000**
**OPEN HOUSE: SUNDAY, MAR. 17, 1-3 PM**

**23 BANNERMAN CLOSE**

 -5 bedroom / 3 bath / triple car attached garage  
 -Walkout Bungalow backing onto creekside reserve  
 -Jaw dropping quality and craftsmanship throughout

**\$1,050,000**

**EQUESTRIAN ACREAGE**

 - 4 bedroom / 4 bath / Double car garage  
 -Heated indoor arena (60x112) 2 outdoor arenas

 For more info, visit: [www.dustysmithteam.ca](http://www.dustysmithteam.ca)

# House hunting tips and tricks

Looking to buy a home? Here are some strategies to keep you on the right track while you search for the perfect place to settle down in.

- Know your budget and stick to it. Being aware of the amount you can afford—which won't necessarily be the same amount that your lender will offer—is essential to the house hunting process. Only seriously consider those abodes that are within your means.
- Make a list of needs and wants. Rate each of your wants on a scale from one to five. This list will allow you to instantly recognize a suitable find when you see one.
- Pay attention to the neighborhood. Only consider houses that are in areas with the amenities, services and lifestyle that suit you and your family.
- Research online to get an idea of what's out there, but don't let what you see on the web determine if a home's right for you or not. Always visit in person if the house meets your needs and the price and neighborhood are the right fit.
- Take notes and pictures when you visit homes, as it's easy to forget what you saw and where you saw it after visiting multiple properties.
- Educate yourself on market values and trends

in your desired neighborhood(s). This way, you'll know a good—or at least reasonable—deal when you see one.

The most important thing when it comes to buying a home is to find a place that meets your needs and budget. Avoid being swayed by emotion and instead rely on reason and research to make the right decision.



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## Caring for kitchen countertops

Kitchen remodels are a popular home improvement project that help homeowners recoup large percentages of their initial investments at resale. A kitchen remodel can invigorate a home and make the most popular room in the house more functional.

According to HomeAdvisor, a home-improvement informational guide, homeowners spend an average of \$22,000 on kitchen remodels. However, lavish projects can cost more than \$50,000. Protecting such investments is important and requires that homeowners understand how to properly maintain kitchen features so they have the longest life possible. This includes the new countertops that make the kitchen look complete.

Countertops come in various materials, not all of which should be treated the same way. Quartz, granite, marble, laminate, and tile countertops require different types of maintenance.

### Quartz

Engineered quartz countertops are popular. Quartz countertops are nearly maintenance-free and resistant to stains, scratches and even heat. Quartz will not need to be sealed like natural stone and can be cleaned using just a damp cloth with a mild, nonabrasive soap.

### Granite

Polished or honed granite countertops offer a high-end look that adds instant value to a kitchen. Natural variations in granite give each kitchen a custom look. To keep granite countertops clean, avoid abrasive cleansers that can scratch, and opt for warm, soapy water instead. Stains are possible, but can be remedied with a baking soda paste left to sit for a couple of hours, advises Angie's List. Wipe



up oils, acids and soda promptly to avoid stains, and follow advised sealing routines.

### Marble

Marble is a natural stone that is porous and will need to be resealed periodically. Because marble has high levels of the mineral calcite, it can be reactive when acids come in contact with it, and etch marks may appear. Promptly wipe away tomato juice, lemon juice, perfume, or toothpaste. Marble is softer than granite and will wear at a faster rate. Avoid scratching and exercise caution when using knives or sharp objects around marble.

### Laminate

One of the more budget-friendly materials, laminate countertops can be fabricated to mimic the look of natural stone, wood or even quartz. Laminate is less resistant to damage than other materials and will need a gentle touch. Formica® says to never use abrasive cleansers, scouring pads or steel wool when cleaning laminate countertops. For tough stains, an all-purpose cleaner should suffice when applied with a nylon-bristled brush. Test any cleanser in a discreet area first.

### Tile

Cleaning tile countertops requires getting into crevices along the grout lines. A toothbrush and a mildew-fighting cleaner or bleach diluted with water is advised. Also, unglazed tiles need to be sealed yearly. Some soap may leave residue, which can be removed with a solution of vinegar and water.

Check with the manufacturer or installer of the countertops to learn more about the ways to clean and maintain new counters.



# RED DEER HOME SHOW

## Renew! Refresh!

The spring show that offers great advice, great deals, and 1000's of products and experts under one roof!

**March 15-17**  
**Westerner Park, Red Deer**

### Show Hours:

Friday, 12 pm - 8 pm

Saturday 10 am - 6 pm

Sunday 10 am - 5 pm

**SAVE \$3.00:**

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403-346-8900

**Janice  
Mercer**

403.598.3338

[jjmercerc.ca](http://jjmercerc.ca)



**Stop by and visit us at booth 174 and see what's happening in the Real Estate Market!**

## Decorating small spaces

Warm weather often inspires renewed vigor in decorating or organizing a home. People who live in apartments, small homes or condos or those who have embraced the "tiny house" movement must rely on clever decorating to maximize their spaces. Here are some ideas when space is at a premium.

- Go vertical. Utilize vertical space, such as lights hung on a wall beside a bed instead of lamps on a nightstand or bookshelves and other shelving to keep items off of the floor.
- Bench seating: Benches can provide more seating when entertaining guests and also can be moved to the living room or elsewhere as needed. Place a small bench in a foyer and put some wicker bins beneath for storage.

- Utilize natural light. Rooms that have ample light can seem more spacious. Pull up blinds (or skip them if privacy isn't an issue) and use the sunshine to help spaces appear more airy.







Custom-built decks can expand usable outdoor entertaining spaces. Decks can surround pools and create outdoor patio areas that make it easy to establish multitiered living spaces, improving the functionality of outdoor areas.

Certain deck trends have emerged as industry experts' top picks for the upcoming remodeling and renovation season. For those thinking of revamping an existing deck, or building an entirely new one, these trends are on point.

- **Established perimeters:** "Picture framing" is not a new trend, but one that has taken greater hold in recent years. The term refers to aesthetically appealing designs that conceal the ends of deck boards for a clean finish. Some designs feature contrasting material colors on the ends for even more impact. This helps create refined perimeters for a polished look.

- **Roof-top decking:** Urban areas also can benefit from decking to create usable outdoor spaces. In fact, many new condominium and townhouse communities are incorporating roof-top decks into their designs, particularly in communities with water views or other impressive vistas. HGTV experts suggest roof-top decks feature light-colored materials and fixtures to help keep the area cool even in direct sunlight.

- **Distressed hardwood:** Builder and Developer, a management resource for professional homebuilders, says that the trend for using distressed hardwoods at home has

migrated outside. Some decking manufacturers have recently introduced low-maintenance composite deck boards that mimic the look and feel of distressed, rustic hardwood flooring. This weathered appearance gives the look of age without the upkeep of real aged wood.

- **Wooden walkways:** Decking can be the more traditional design people envision with a patio table or outdoor furniture. But it also can consist of wooden walkways or a low-laying patio to accentuate the yard.

- **Mixed materials:** Homeowners may be inspired by commercial eateries, breweries and urban markets in their exterior design choices. Decks featuring composite materials and aluminum railings blend sophistication, urban appeal and comfort.

- **Personal touches:** Homeowners can customize their decks with personal touches. It's not unheard of to wrap columns in stone or glass tiles for more impact. And a vast array of decking colors now enables fun interpretations for outdoor areas.

- **Fire pit conversation area:** Many decks can incorporate water or fire elements for visual appeal. Gas-fueled fire elements can expand the functionality of decks beyond the warm seasons, or make enjoying them practical on nights when the temperature plummets.

Decks are reimagined in many different ways with continually evolving trends.



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**#36 369 INGLEWOOD DRIVE \$244,900**


A well priced and great starter or empty nester home. This immaculate two storey condo offers 3 bdms (large master with walk-in closet and vaulted ceiling), 1&1/2 bathrooms, hardwood flooring, an open floor plan, 2 assigned parking stalls.

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**Margaret  
Comeau**  
403-391-3399

**\$239,500**
**4715 47  
AVENUE**

Sweet Bilevel in Lacombe. 3 bedrooms 2 baths Detached garage, fully finished Quick possession


**\$139,000**
**56 CARROLL  
CRESCENT #104**

WITH MANY Amenities; Suite has open floor plan; 5 Appliances; Beauty Salon; Dining room service optional; Craft room; Guest suite; Handy bus service weekly; Condo fee \$277.83 IMMEDIATE POSSESSION


*Reduced!*
**\$265,000**
**56 LARNE PLACE,  
PENHOLD**

5 Bedroom Bilevel; Spacious kitchen; Large west facing living room; Family room 11x24, Mature yard; Quiet Close, faces a green. Huge Garage 27x27; Fenced. IMMEDIATE POSSESSION


*Feature Home*
**\$389,000**
**39310 RR 250,  
LACOMBE COUNTY**

1168 sq ft Bi-level Home; 4 Beds, 3 Baths; Fully Finished; newer flooring through the main and lower level; newly painted; new furnace & water tank. Shop [49x101] has gas, metal barn [36x176] two approaches; mature landscaping; surveyed; IMMEDIATE POSSESSION


**\$339,000**
**27008 HIGHWAY  
597**

3 km east of Blackfalds. 8.75 acres, mobile with 3 beds, 2 baths, 2 additions, quick possession, on pavement. Mature trees, large deck, private location. Great spot for a new home.

## How to choose a real estate agent

A good agent can be immensely valuable in facilitating real estate transactions but a bad one can add undue stress to the process. So how do you weed out the good from the bad? Here are some strategies that can help.

### Referrals and reviews

A great place to start is by asking the people you know — friends, family, colleagues and neighbours — if they can recommend a real estate agent. Another way to go about finding suitable candidates is to read online reviews

### Interview prospects

Try to find at least three candidates to meet with and

interview. You'll want to ask them about the following:

- Their experience and past results, especially within the last six months
- What certifications they have
- With which markets and neighbourhoods they're most familiar
- Their strategies for marketing your home
- Whether you'll be dealing with them specifically or with a member of their team
- Their rate
- Get and check references

There's little that can give you a clearer idea as to each candidate's strengths and weaknesses than speaking with past clients.

# Must-have kitchen remodel features



Homeowners looking to renovate often see room for improvement in their kitchens and bathrooms. The National Association of Home Builders' Remodeling Market Index Survey, which measures conditions in the remodeling market, indicates that, in 2015, the two most common remodeling jobs were bathroom remodels (81 percent) and kitchen remodels (79 percent). According to HGTV and Statistics Brain, a new kitchen remodel for a kitchen measuring 12 by 12 feet may cost homeowners anywhere from \$17,000 to \$37,000.

Before investing so much into their remodeling projects, homeowners should think carefully about the features that will improve their time spent at home. When planning a kitchen renovation, homeowners may want to consider the following upgrades to make the room more enjoyable while improving its functionality.

## Oversized sink

Although high-efficiency dishwashers are popular, deep sinks to soak soup pots or woks are still useful. Deep sinks may be preferable to double sinks, especially for homeowners who use lots of kitchen tools when preparing meals.

## Soft-closing hinges

When replacing cabinets (or just the hardware), consider installing soft-closing hinges and slides on doors and drawers. These devices eliminate slamming and caught fingers, reducing noise and injuries in the kitchen.

## Foot-pedal water operation

When outfitting a sink, think about foot controls,

which are popular in doctors' offices and hospitals. Turning on the water with the tap of a foot can reduce the transfer of pathogens to faucets from hands during food preparation. These pedals also free up hands for other tasks.

## Bottom's up

People likely spend more time raiding the refrigerator than the freezer on any given day. Rather than having to bend down to seek out that favorite flavor of Greek yogurt, choose a model with the fridge on top and freezer on the bottom, especially if anyone in the household has mobility issues. When shopping for refrigerators, French-door style units may offer even more access, making it easy for homeowners to slide fruit trays, sheet cakes and other large items into the fridge.

## Extra lighting

A kitchen should be a balance of form and function. A combination of overhead lighting, decorative lighting and task lighting can illuminate all areas of the space effectively.

## Appliance garages

Architectural and design resource Houzz says that appliance garages are popular kitchen additions, too. Set at countertop level, these cabinets allow people to keep small appliances plugged in but tucked neatly behind closed doors.

Kitchen remodels are a sizable investment, and renovations can be customized to make the kitchen more hospitable for all in residence.



# OPEN HOUSE

## CENTRAL ALBERTA'S OPEN HOUSE LISTINGS

### SATURDAY, MARCH 16

### RED DEER

100 Irving Crescent..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Keri Jensen..... ROYAL LEPAGE NETWORK REALTY... 304-2707 ..... \$479,900..... Inglewood  
 132 Cameron Crescent.. **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Allan Melbourne..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 304-8993 ..... \$319,900..... Clearview Meadows  
 198 Lalor Drive ..... **3:00 - 5:00 pm** ..... Nadine Marchand ..... RCR ROYAL CARPET REALTY..... 358-0546 ..... \$524,900..... Laredo  
 37 Lundberg Crescent ... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Nadine Marchand ..... RCR ROYAL CARPET REALTY..... 358-0546 ..... \$579,900..... Laredo  
 #407, 60 Lawford Ave..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Bob Gummow ..... ROYAL LEPAGE NETWORK REALTY... 598-7913 ..... \$198,900..... Lonsdale  
 142 Jaspar Crescent..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Lori Loney ..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 350-9700 ..... \$309,900..... Johnstone Crossing  
 4 Markle Crescent..... **11:00 - 1:00 pm** ..... Roxann Klepper ..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 872-4546 ..... \$545,000..... Morrisroe Extension  
 68 Carter Close ..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Kim Fox ..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 506-7552 ..... \$625,000..... Clearview Ridge  
 68 Thompson Crescent.. **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Roxann Klepper ..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 872-4546 ..... \$625,000..... Timberstone  
 14 Chism Close ..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Ed Katchur ..... MAXWELL REAL ESTATE SOLUTIONS... 506-7171 ..... \$264,900..... Clearview Meadows  
 #72 26540 Hwy 11..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Kim Lindstrand..... MAXWELL REAL ESTATE SOLUTIONS... 318-7178 ..... \$599,900..... Balmoral Heights

### SATURDAY, MARCH 16

### OUT OF TOWN

85 Coachmen Way..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Tim Maley..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 550-3533 ..... \$289,000..... Blackfalds

### SUNDAY, MARCH 17

### RED DEER

23 Bannerman Close ..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Tracy Thody ..... ROYAL LEPAGE NETWORK REALTY... 346-8900 ..... \$1,450,000 - Bower  
 37 Lundberg..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Nadine Marchand ..... RCR ROYAL CARPET REALTY..... 358-0546 ..... \$579,900..... Laredo  
 130 Longmire Close..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Danielle Perry ..... CENTURY 21 ADVANTAGE..... 505-9596 ..... \$699,900..... Laredo  
 8 Barner Ave ..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Doug Wagar ..... ROYAL LEPAGE NETWORK REALTY... 346-8900 ..... \$319,900..... Bower  
 23 Jenner Crescent..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Rick Burega ..... ROYAL LEPAGE NETWORK REALTY... 350-6023 ..... \$399,900..... Johnstone Park  
 939 Ramage Cres. #24..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Barb Munday ..... ROYAL LEPAGE NETWORK REALTY... 598-7721 ..... \$294,000..... Rosedale Meadows  
 18 Lewis Close ..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Carol Clark..... COLDWELL BANKER ON TRACK REALTY ... 350-4919 ..... \$509,000..... Lancaster Green  
 195 Piper Drive ..... **1:00 - 3:00 pm** ..... Kim Fox ..... REMAX REAL ESTATE CENTRAL ALBERTA ... 506-7552 ..... \$725,000..... Pines  
 83 Ellis Street ..... **2:00 - 4:00 pm** ..... Kim Lindstrand..... MAXWELL REAL ESTATE SOLUTIONS... 318-7178 ..... \$210,000..... Eastview Estates

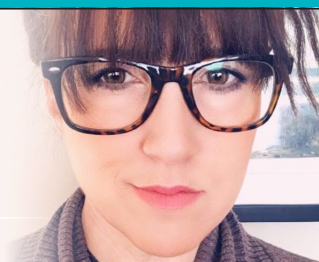
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**YOUR HOUSE YOUR  
HOME**

YOUR WEEKLY GUIDE TO CENTRAL ALBERTA REAL ESTATE

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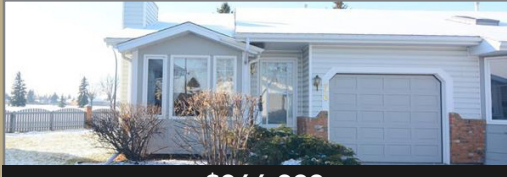
**BOB  
WING**

403-391-3583

## CENTURY 21 Advantage

21 photos of every property

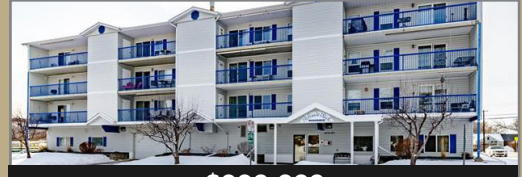
Parkland Mall,  
Red Deer



**\$244,900**

### 56 COSGROVE CLOSE

FULLY FINISHED, ADULT BUNGALOW: CLEARVIEW A 2 + 1 bedroom, 2 bath, end unit in clean condition that features a nat. gas fireplace and vaulted ceilings in the living room, oak kitchen, finished basement, garage, and a covered deck with a view of the park!



**\$229,900**

### 405, 4522 - 47A AVENUE

ADULT CONDO IN GOOD DOWNTOWN LOCATION! This 2 bed/2 bath unit with Euro cabs and open design is right across from The Golden Circle and Rec. Centre swimming pool, walking distance to shopping, transit, etc., well built/maintained with 2 indoor parking stalls!

**"SENIORS REAL ESTATE SPECIALIST" Designation!**

# *The rise of the town center:* **Bringing an urban feel to suburban living**

Town centers are trending in communities across the country. These mixed-use complexes have a variety of features that make them attractive to young professionals, families and seniors. Town centers marry apartments, condos or townhouses to commercial office space and retail shops while providing recreational areas to offer the convenience of city living in suburban areas.

Many developers and architects support town centers. Unlike suburban sprawl with acres upon acres of space between houses and shops, town centers promote the concept of proximity as a profitable and attractive real estate design principle. While some town centers date back to the mid- to late-1990s, it was not until the 2000s that such centers were embraced on a wide scale. According to LMN Architects, which piloted the development of Redmond Town Center in Oregon, lifestyle trends that reflect the pressures of modern society have created a demand for town centers.

Here are some of the reasons why town centers are growing in popularity and why one may be coming to a town near you.

- **Casual interaction:** Town centers provide common areas where residents and visitors can gather and spend time together. This fosters a more relaxed and homey feel than congregating in a mall anchored by department stores.

- **Recreation:** Recreational opportunities

for active people attracts many people to town centers. Centers may include park land, walking paths, fountains, bandstands for local performers, rooms to embrace the arts, and/or pools.

- **Mixed retail:** Town centers frequently feature a mix of national retailers and small mom-and-pop shops. This helps to create a "Main Street" vibe in the community.

- **Housing options:** Living within a town center enables residents to have amenities right outside their doors. Housing complexes attached to retail stores and recreational areas ensures residents that something to do is never too far away.

- **Attracts visitors:** Travelers passing through may be enticed by the offerings of town centers, making them more inclined to stop for a bite to eat or to do some shopping in these communities.

- **Nearby schools:** Schools may be included in the blue prints of town center projects to accommodate families. Individuals who reside and socialize within the center will have the luxury of sending their children to the same school.

- **Transit hub:** Some town centers are built around a train or bus station, offering residents easy access to mass transit.

Town centers located in suburban areas represent a way to infuse close-knit, urban-style living outside of big cities.



# 6 options for funding your next home improvement project

Before starting a home improvement project, either on one's own or with the assistance of a professional contractor, homeowners must first consider the costs involved. According to the home improvement resource HomeAdvisor, more than one-third of homeowners do not understand what hiring a professional will cost, and then cannot successfully budget and secure financing once they have set their sights on a renovation project.

HomeAdvisor says that some of the more popular projects, such as remodeling a kitchen or bathroom or building a deck, can cost, on average, \$19,920, \$9,274 and \$6,919, respectively.

Homeowners may find that the more expensive renovations require them to secure some type of financing. Those who have never before sought such financing may want to consider these options.

**1. Cash-out refinancing:** With cash-out refinancing, a person will begin the mortgage process anew with the intention of paying off the current mortgage balance, and then taking out additional funds for other purposes. Cash-out refinancing is a way to tap into a home's existing equity for use on improvements or other expenses, such as college tuition.

**2. Home equity line of credit:** The financial experts at Bankrate indicate that a HELOC works like a credit card, with the house as collateral. There is a credit limit, and borrowers can spend up to that limit. The interest rate may or may not be fixed. However, the interest may be tax-deductible if the financing is used to improve, buy or build a home.

**3. Home equity loan:** Individuals also can borrow against equity in their homes with a fixed interest rate through a home equity loan. Most lenders will calculate 80 percent of the home value and subtract a homeowner's mortgage balance to figure out how much can be borrowed, according to the financial advisory site The Simple Dollar.

**4. Personal loan:** Homeowners can shop around at various financial institutions for competitive personal loans to be used for home improvement purposes. Funds may be approved within one business day, which can be ideal for those who want to begin their improvements soon.

**5. Personal line of credit:** A personal line of credit allows borrowers to borrow only the money needed at the time, and offers a variable interest rate that is generally lower than fixed loan rates. Again, like a credit card, PLOC gives a person a maximum borrowing amount and is ideal for ongoing purchases.

**6. Credit cards:** In a pinch, credit cards can be used to finance improvements, but they do come with the cost of very high interest rates if the balance is not paid in full by the time the bill comes due. However, for funding smaller projects and maximizing rewards points through home improvement retailers or specific credit card company promotions, credit cards can be a way to earn various perks in addition to the benefit of improving a home.

Homeowners looking to finance their next improvements should speak to a financial advisor and shop around for the best types of funding for them.

## CONDOMINIUM *Seminar*

Condo prices are the lowest they have been in years! It's the perfect time to move from your home into a more secure space with less responsibilities. Let someone else look after lawn care, snow removal, repairs, maintenance, etc. Condo living can give you access to amenities like heated parking, party room, craft room, fitness area, guest room, library, fun social events and even a pool.

If you are concerned about the "mystery" around condominium ownership, come to this seminar. Find out how it all works and get your questions answered.

### *Session Dates:*

**March 23 @ 1:00 pm or 3:00 pm**  
3515 49 Ave (Bella Rose)

**April 6 @ 1:00 pm**  
5300 48 St (Sierras at Heritage)

**April 27 @ 1:00 pm**  
5213 61 St (The Views at St. Joseph)

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# Exploring **condos** and **townhouses**

Individuals have many options when seeking places to call home. Among those options are condominiums and townhouses. While quite similar, condos and townhouses are different. Learning what sets these residences apart can help people find the right fit for them.

## Condominiums

Condos are private residences owned by an individual or family in a private building. According to Realtor.com, condos are similar to apartments. However instead of paying rent, condo dwellers own the space. Condos share common areas, such as pools, recreation rooms, gyms, and outdoors spaces.

People may be attracted to condos because there is very little maintenance involved. Condos can be in large buildings similar to apartment buildings, and living spaces may be confined to one floor. High-rise condominiums may resemble skyscrapers, a condo owner shares ownership of the land, the roof, the staircases, and the exterior of the condominium complexes. The only thing the condo owner may own outright is his or her individual living space.

Condo owners typically rely on maintenance companies and other contractors to handle the repairs and upkeep of the spaces outside of the interior of one's specific condo. Residents typically pay condominium fees to a condo board to manage and cover these expenses. Because of the multiperson ownership, condos place strict restrictions on what can and can't be done to the property.

## Townhouses

Townhouses are usually multileveled attached properties. Townhouses may fall within a row of other homes or be an end unit where only one side is attached.

Many people are drawn to townhouses because of their various levels and architectural styles. Some also feel that townhouses provide more of a traditional home feel than condominiums. Townhouses may come with a small parcel of land, a driveway or a private garage.

Although there may be some community amenities accessible to owners of townhouses, such amenities are rare. However, because townhouse communities do not handle as much maintenance — exterior repair and roof maintenance may be the responsibility of the townhouse owner — homeowners association fees tend to be less expensive than those incurred by condo owners.

Townhouse owners typically take ownership of the home, the roof and the land that lies below it. However, both townhouse and condo owners are urged to read the bylaws of their communities, which should specifically list responsibilities of the owner versus the homeowner's association or condo board.

Condos and townhouses have similarities and differences, but both can be ideal places to live for those who desire help with maintenance and worry-free living.

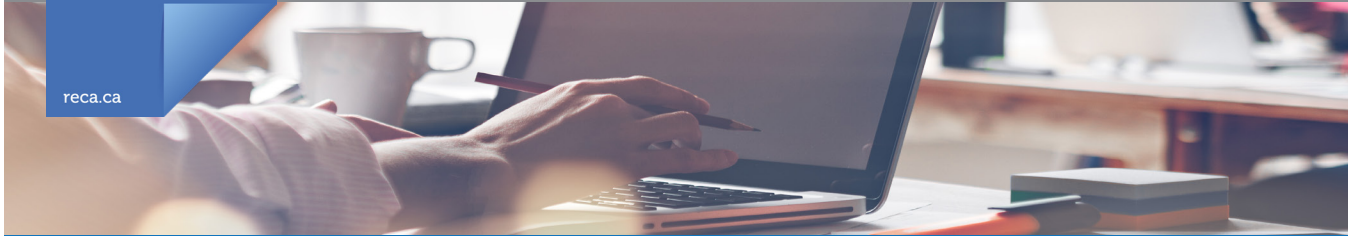


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# ASK CHARLES

The authority for a positive real estate experience.



**I saw a house for sale, and I want to check it out – will I have to sign a contract to get a real estate professional to show me the house?**

The short answer is no. If you see a house for sale and you simply want a real estate professional to show you that house, you're not required to sign a contract.

Simply viewing a home with a real estate professional doesn't trigger a regulatory requirement to sign a contract with that real estate professional. However, if you start sharing confidential information such as your motivation for buying or your financial qualification, the real estate professional has a responsibility to clarify your working relationship, at which point they are going to provide you with some documents to review.

In the process of clarifying your working relationship, the first document a real estate professional should present to you is the Consumer Relationships Guide. The Consumer Relationships Guide is a mandatory document for real estate professionals when they begin working with a buyer or seller of residential real estate. It explains the different types of working relationships between real estate professionals and consumers.

The Consumer Relationships Guide is not a contract. It does not commit you to a specific ongoing working relationship with your real estate professional, but it is an essential information piece for consumers to understand what working with a licensed real estate professional entails. Among other things, it discusses responsibilities and obligations.

The Consumer Relationships Guide contains an acknowledgement that consumers have to sign indicating they've read the Guide, understand it, and have been provided with an opportunity to ask the real estate professional questions about it. Consumers need to review and sign the Guide before entering into any contract with a real estate professional.

Some real estate professionals may actually present the Consumer Relationships Guide and request that you sign the acknowledgement even before showing you a single property, but that specific practice is not a requirement.

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*"Ask Charles" is a monthly question and answer column by Charles Stevenson, Director of Professional Standards with the Real Estate Council of Alberta (RECA), [www.reca.ca](http://www.reca.ca). RECA is the independent, non-government agency responsible for the regulation of Alberta's real estate industry. We license, govern, and set the standards of practice for all real estate, mortgage brokerage, and real estate appraisal professionals in Alberta. To submit a question, email [askcharles@reca.ca](mailto:askcharles@reca.ca).*



# Improving a home's curb appeal



An attractive front entrance area gives a home curb appeal that invites both guests and potential home buyers. Upgrading a home's exterior can be as simple as painting or as complex as installing new windows or adding a patio.

Inspiration for a curb appeal "makeover" that reflects the owner's budget and decorating choices are easy to find online. Stop by the nearest Woodcraft store for tools and supplies, along with helpful advice from the staff, or visit Woodcraft.com to shop and read how-to blogs and articles.

## Repair & Paint

One of the easiest and quickest ways to boost curb appeal is to paint (and repair if needed) a home's front door, molding and trim. Painting garage doors, porches, shutters, doorsteps, flower boxes, furniture, mailboxes/stands, and window trim are other potential projects, as is changing the front door hardware.

## Remove, Replace & Build

Replacing windows, gutters and downspouts; adding molding to a door; building — outdoor furniture, a unique mailbox and stand, or flower containers; and adding or expanding a patio area/porch require a large investment of time and money.





# Top three ways to increase the resale value of your home



If you're planning on selling your home, it's wise to consider making a few strategic upgrades. A fresh coat of paint is a great place to start, but if you have the budget, certain renovations can raise the value of your property and accelerate its sale. Wondering which projects to tackle? Consider the following.

## An extra bathroom

Putting in an extra bathroom isn't cheap, but you'll make a profit in the long run. You don't want to eat up too much usable space, but if you have a rarely used closet or perhaps a room under the stairs, then go ahead and put in that call to your contractor. Existing bathrooms can also be updated for a decent return on investment.

## The kitchen

If you can only update one room in your house, make it the kitchen. Modern cabinetry, granite countertops, recessed cabinet lighting and new appliances will add real value to your home — as much as seven per cent, in fact.



## An income suite

Nothing entices buyers quite like the possibility of offsetting mortgage costs with rental income. Whether it's in your basement or another part of your home, an income suite is guaranteed to increase the value of your property.



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**\$229,900**

**No Condo Fees**

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**Great Neighbourhood!**

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**BLACKFALDS**

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**Shows Well!**

5 bed, 3 bath bilevel with open floor plan, heated 24x26 garage, fenced and landscaped yard.

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**PENHOLD**

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1434 sq. ft., 3 bed, 2 bath bilevel with 24x26 attached garage. Spring possession, close to schools and multi-plex.

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**Fully Finished**

4 bdrm, 3 bath 1560 sq. ft. modified bilevel with a 23x25 garage backing onto green and blocks from all amenities in Clearview Market. Immediate possession available.

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**DEVELOPER PROMO! \$15,000 REBATE  
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**Brand New 3 bed, 3 bath 2 Storey** with vinyl plank flooring, quartz counters in kitchen, fireplace, stainless appliances.

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Why not rent part of your home & let someone else help with your mortgage payments? Legally suited home in Garden Heights. 3 beds up, 2 bdrm suite down, 12 appliances included, great investment!

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2 storey, 3 bdrms/3baths with lots of windows, a gorgeous kitchen, bonus room, micro office, mudroom, tons of upgrades, RV parking & across the street from a playground.

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Stunning 1545 sq. ft. modified bilevel, open floor plan with 3 bdrms, 2 baths, micro office, gorgeous kitchen, custom shower, covered deck, heated garage & more!

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3bdrm/3 bath + bonus room. Quartz countertops, amazing kitchen w/butlers pantry, mudroom, 5pce ensuite, 24x24 garage, so many extras!!! Laredo.

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**Best Lot in Laredo!**

Stunning new beauty, 3 bdrm, 3 bath family home with so many extras, windows & a view you will love!

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**\$634,900**

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**Family 1st Showhome!**

Perfect space for the whole family, 2199 sq. ft., 2 storey with 4 bdrms, 3 full baths, micro office, walk-thru pantry, fireplace, bonus room, spacious garage, extras galore, all backing onto walking trail & pond in Laredo!

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