

Living Green

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INNOVATIVE COMMUNITY BOASTS SUSTAINABLE DESIGN

BY ALEX MIGDAL
Postmedia Works

The newest innovative neighbourhood from Beaverbrook Communities is raising the bar for sustainable development in Edmonton.

Situated along Ellerslie Road, in-between 50th Street and 34th Street in the city's southeast, The Hills at Charlesworth is a green community that draws on low-impact development and sustainable building practices.

"The Hills at Charlesworth is designed with mixed streetscapes, where one can find duplexes, townhomes and single-family homes all on the same street," says Jesse LaFrance, assistant project manager at Beaverbrook Communities.

All homes at The Hills at Charlesworth are rated on a two-tiered sustainability system. The baseline level includes efficiencies in heating, lighting, and dust mini-

mization. Diamond-level homes boast high-performance appliances, advanced air filtration and design features to allow for a solar-ready home. Each homeowner receives an address plaque with their home's green rating.

Being green is also part of the community life at The Hills at Charlesworth. At the heart of the development is the Sustainability Plaza, a multi-purpose green space featuring innovative amenities such as a solar-powered Wi-Fi system and seating made out of recycled shipping containers.

For nature buffs, Beaverbrook has preserved a beautiful existing wetland in the community. Yet shopping is minutes away at South Edmonton Common and the new Harvest Point Shopping Centre is a five-minute bike ride away.

And all residents will benefit from the Ivor Dent Sports Park, a 56-hectare tournament facil-

ity equipped for soccer, rugby, cricket, tennis, basketball and beach volleyball.

The homes, which start at \$350,000, range from single-family dwellings to duplexes to townhomes. Home exteriors will be finished in strong dark colours and vibrant trims, blending traditional architecture with modern design.

"We're creating something that has visual interest and creates an inviting entrance for neighbours," says LaFrance.

With more than 30 communities built, Beaverbrook is a leader of development in the capital region, LaFrance says. The Hills at Charlesworth encapsulates Beaverbrook's push for sustainable build-

ing and innovative community design in Edmonton.

"The biggest thing from our perspective is setting a precedent in the marketplace that this is the status quo. People demand green living," LaFrance says.

"But if no one sets the standard, we're not being progressive and innovative, and we're not challenging ourselves. I think this community plays an integral role in pushing forward new local developments in that manner."

For more information on The Hills at Charlesworth visit hillsatcharlesworth.ca or call 780-484-4389. Show homes are now open.

Sustainability Plaza features include:



1 Ice Ribbon

Forget ice skating in circles. Instead, glide and zip along a 200-metre ribbon that snakes through the Sustainability Plaza. When temperatures spike and the ice melts, take a walk or jog along the asphalt trail.



2 Native plant species

Enjoy scenic views year-round with lush native plant species that border the trail. The native species require less upkeep and adapt better to local climate and soil conditions.



3 Energy-generating fitness equipment

Exercise doesn't just have to fuel your body. Produce renewable energy as you hop on the bicycle and watch the kids play in the tot lot nearby. Handy plug-ins for your mobile devices and tablets means you're always connected on the go, as kinetic energy recharges your devices.



4 Rain garden

Not even stormwater runoff goes to waste. The plaza's rain garden filters stormwater, helps plants grow and provides a habitat for wildlife. Custom-designed collectors made from repurposed sea can containers funnel the rain water to the garden, while adding a striking vertical design element to the plaza.



5 Tot lot

Kids aged 2 to 5 can swing and slide in this fun mini-playground made out of recycled materials.



6 Wind solar hybrid lights

Good things come in twos. The plaza's hybrid lights run on solar and wind energy, lighting automatically during the night. Besides their minimal upkeep, the lights add a striking sculptural accent to the park.



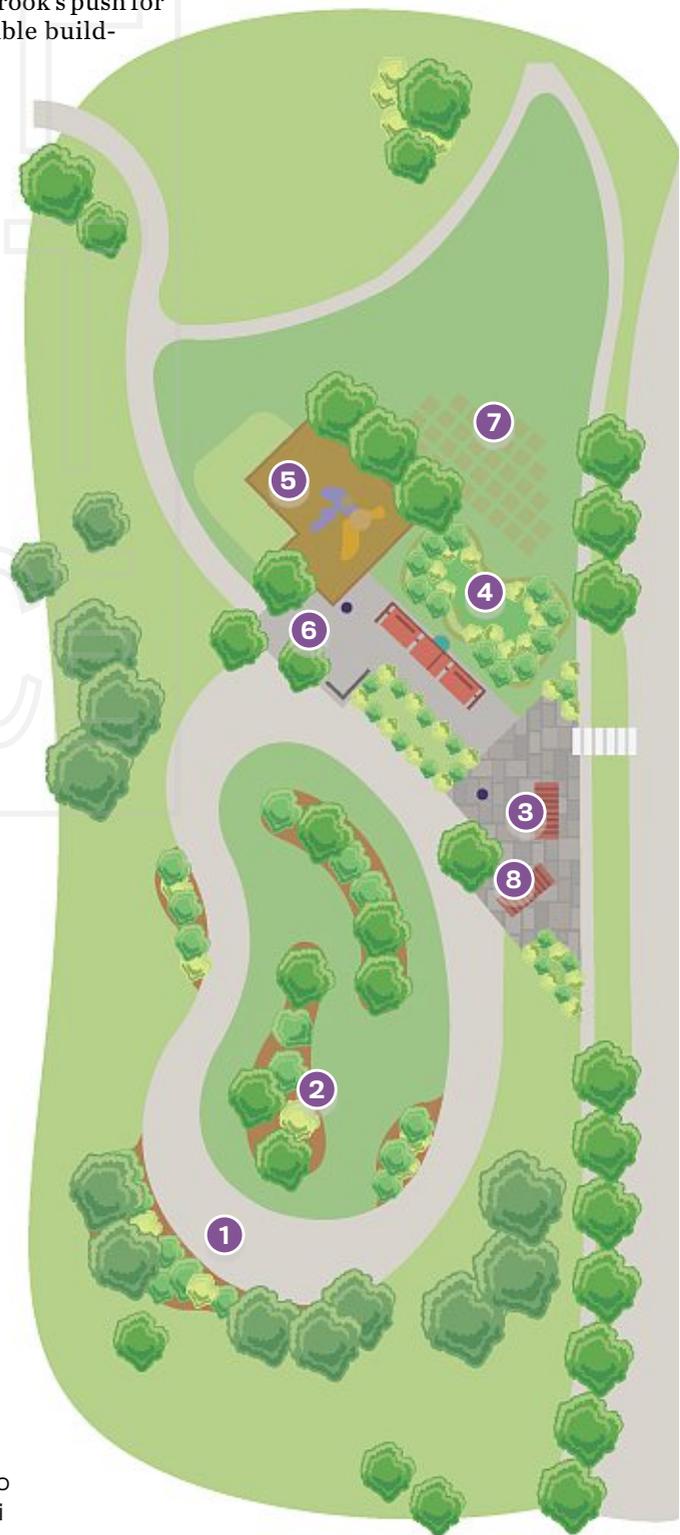
7 Future community gardens

Why slug through the produce aisle when you can grow fresh fruits and vegetables from the plaza's community garden? The garden not only decreases the neighbourhood's carbon footprint, but fosters a sense of stewardship among residents.



8 Shelter with solar-powered Wi-Fi

Dodge the rain and snow with this all-season shelter built from a repurposed container. Solar panels on the roof forward energy back into the electrical grid to power the Wi-Fi system.



Contact the builders of The Hills at Charlesworth:

Alquinn Homes, alquinnhomes.com

Bedrock Homes, bedrockhomes.ca

Dolce Vita Homes, dolcevitalhomes.ca

Jayman Built Homes, jayman.com