

Pick of the litter: family pets form a big part of new home selection

BY JOSH SKAPIN, CALGARY HERALD FEBRUARY 5, 2016



Carissah Klaassen and her dog in Quarry Park. Don Molyneaux/Calgary Herald

When interior decorator Carissah Klaassen set out to find her next home, meeting the needs of her lovable four-legged pal was a must.

Like anyone resettling with a pet, that dog, cat, bird or fish can't be an after-thought. Klaassen kept her eye on animal-related restrictions in the bylaws, the size and layout of her condo, its location in the building and what the area had to offer.

It didn't take long for the leash to pull in the direction of Quarry Park.

Klaassen and her nine-year-old French bulldog Katelyn moved to a 920-square-foot, one-bedroom condo at multi-family development Champagne last June.

"She's a part of the family, so you definitely want her to be happy, too," Klaassen says.

Quarry Park is a mixed-use community by Remington Development Corp. that is accessed off 18th Street S.E. and boasts 36 hectares of parks and green space and

more than 10 kilometres of paved walking paths. At Champagne, bylaws stipulate that up to two pets are allowed in each condo. Board approval is required for any beyond that.

“I picked Quarry Park because it’s super central to the dog park,” says Klaassen of its proximity to Sue Higgins Park, the largest fenced off-leash area in Calgary. The 62-hectare site stretches along the Bow River’s west bank. “And then it’s right along the major bike path that goes throughout Calgary.

“So, it’s perfect for dogs. It’s central, it’s easy. You jump outside and you’re on the bike path right away, which is great.”

Klaassen also liked that her new place kept them conveniently close to Katelyn’s veterinarian.

In picking the layout, Klaassen said she wanted an open concept, giving Katelyn more unobstructed space to trot around the condo. Easy access outside was also important to Klaassen, who selected a convenient spot on the second floor of one of the boutique project’s five-storey buildings.

“The stairs are just outside of our door — we go down one flight, and we’re outside,” Klaassen says.

Speaking of outdoor access for pets, that’s one of the conveniences at Zen Cranston Solar, by Avalon Master Builder.

The veteran builder’s new townhouse development, noted for its rooftop solar panels, has a fenced private yard for each unit.

“I think the beauty of our product is it’s not just an open space. You can let your dogs out and let them run,” says Avalon’s sales and marketing manager Terra Davidson. “There’s security and safety that way. So instead of having to get a leash and take them out every single time, you can just let the dog out.”

Davidson notes, however, while their yard is private, residents have the responsibility of picking up after their pet.

When it comes time to head out for a walk with the dog, Davidson says Cranston delivers with both amenities in the community and its position near Fish Creek Provincial Park.

“It’s amazing the walking paths that Cranston has for when you do walk the dog,” she adds. “That’s what Cranston is marketed around — nature.”

Zen Cranston Solar is planned to include 66 townhomes with prices starting from \$260,000s, including tax.

“If you don’t have a dog when you move in, you can get one. There are so many people that love the condo lifestyle, that they have maintenance-free living, and that they still can have a pet,” Davidson adds.

Downtown Calgary is also proving to be a desirable landing spot for pet owners, says Battistella Developments sales and marketing director Chris Pollen. The inner-city developer is behind Ink, which is one of the skyscrapers set to join the skyline in Calgary's East Village.

He recalls a recent visitor to the sales centre pointing out a spot in the show suite where his cat can perch and watch the traffic go by.

"Dogs, cats, fish, birds, they're such a part of the family now that I think a lot of developers are thinking differently about what a pet is in the family these days," Pollen says.

All pets at Ink are to be registered and are subject to approval of the condo board.

In general, Pollen says, "Take your 10 days when you are reviewing the condo docs to find the provision in the bylaws that speak about pets and how the building accepts them. Every building is going to be a little bit different, in terms of policies. Some will indicate the number of pets, the size your pets can be, some will indicate no pets — but almost all of them will indicate pets have to be registered with the building."

Ink also has built-in amenities with pet owners in mind, including a sensible feature following a fun afternoon exploring East Village.

"On the main floor of our building we have bike storage for all homeowners, and there's also a bike wash and a dog-wash station," Pollen says. "So if you're living in East Village, you're probably going to be out on St. Patrick's Island, you're probably throwing sticks, your dog is going to be jumping in the water, he's going to come home muddy. Well, we give you that option there so you don't have to (bring) it through the building, which is a nice feature."

Brookfield Residential says it's seeing a strong turnout from dog owners at the sales centre for its new inner-city development

Altadore 36, which features townhomes and flats. That comes as no surprise, says general manager for business development, Calgary homes urban and north, Ryan Moon.

"It is the dream community for dogs," he says. It's near River Park off-leash area, North Glenmore Park, and Sandy Beach, which is a 33-hectare dog magnet along Elbow River.

jskapin@calgaryherald.com

© Copyright (c) The Calgary Herald