

FEATURE ARTICLE

OPPORTUNITY AWAITS ONE OF CANADA'S FIRST LIFESTYLE CENTRES IS COMING TO TOWN

Lifestyle centres are all the rage throughout the United States – currently there are more than 100 hundred centres open in warm and cold climates including Denver, Chicago and Detroit.

Why all the excitement?

These mixed-use developments provide the community with a dynamic and exciting place to live, work and play. They feature up-scale shops, convenient parking, fashionable restaurants and trendy bars, entertainment, pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and a pleasant ambiance. They are home to business parks for corporate head offices, professional office space and are proven magnets for hi-tech companies because corporate businesses like to locate in campus-like settings with amenities close by. They are tourist draws. Not to mention they help revitalize other areas within the community, such as downtown cores.

So is one of the first lifestyle centres in Canada coming to Toronto? No. Ottawa? No. London? No. It's coming to Barrie!

The former Molson Park property is slated to become one of Canada's first lifestyle centres. Two hundred acres of exclusive retail shopping, delectable restaurants, plush hotels, memorable entertainment, a prestige business park, valuable industrial and manufacturing buildings, and a 20-acre environmentally-protected park for everyone's use.

It will bring 300 new businesses, 4500 new jobs and thousands of tourists to Barrie – translating into about \$145 million in local annual employment income.

The best part is, when tourists come to Park Place, they're coming to Barrie. These new visitors will be introduced to everything Barrie has to offer – the beautiful waterfront, golfing, skiing, arts and culture, and more.

That's not the only way Barrie will benefit financially. Park Place will be paying \$16 million in development charges to help with south-end infrastructure improvements. And, once the development is complete, Barrie's non-residential revenue stream will increase by 22 per cent, with the more than \$10 million in taxes paid annually - that should help ensure that local property taxes stay where they are for a while. Park Place will make a financial investment for road and traffic improvements needed to accommodate the development.

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The most exciting thing is, this mixed-use development will be both functional *and* nice to look at. The prestige office campus will bring much needed high paying jobs to the community, and the professional offices will be a draw for doctors and other professionals. The entire development will be situated around water fountains, an outdoor fireplace, stylish outdoor patios and people-friendly streetscapes. Not to mention a fitness centre and spa, a comedy club, children's entertainment, live theatre, movie theatres and so much more.

So how did Barrie get so lucky? Let's not wonder why, and definitely, let's not lose it! Let's start getting excited about one of Canada's first lifestyle centres coming to our growing community.

For more information about Park Place, please visit www.parkplacebarrie.com

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