

## Buying Property For Your New Home – Tips from a Raleigh Custom Home Builder

### Which Should You Choose:

#### A parcel of land or a lot in a development?

There are a lot of things to consider when choosing a lot for your new home, beginning with what you want and what that costs.

If you're planning to build in the Raleigh area, **you've already handled the most important decision** – the region where you want to live. The Raleigh/Durham/Chapel Hill area has been rated a "Best Place to Live" over and over again, by respected entities such as Forbes and Sperling.

Other answers might not be as easy to find. In fact, the piece of property you choose is so important, and there are so many variables to consider, that **we'll be providing a three-part series to help guide you through the process.**

As a custom home builder in the Raleigh area, Stanton Homes is often asked these kinds of questions - and we're **pleased to provide some tips** to keep in mind as you make your decision about what property to buy.

#### Buying a Lot Part 2: Should I buy an individual parcel of land, or a lot in a subdivision or development?

There are advantages and disadvantages to either approach, even if your budget is unlimited.

#### A parcel of land

**Seclusion** – A larger parcel of land can mean distancing yourself from neighborhoods. You could be surrounded by fields or forests, without anybody else close by. Sound peaceful? Be sure it's going to stay that way. Find out just who owns that land around the property. How is the area zoned? Any highways, malls, or industrial usage likely to creep up on your privacy in the coming years? And do you really want all that much privacy – or will a neighborhood with acreage – as opposed to square feet for each lot – provide the kind of space you're looking for?

**Horses and Animals** – A lone parcel of land in the country may more likely be zoned for horses or other farm animals. That's great if you plan to raise chickens and pigs or get milk from your own cow. But if your main consideration is a place to keep your horses, don't rule out a more populated area entirely, until you've checked out "horse

communities” designed for people who are more interested in keeping a horse on their property than they are in running a ranch.

**Price** – An “undeveloped” piece of land usually costs less. If your main consideration is lots and lots of land, that can be a good way to go. Just be aware that your building costs may be higher, starting with the prep the property will need, along with special conditions, transport, time and materials.

**Commissions and Fees** – A piece of land outside of a community is less likely to have had a sales team and extensive marketing working to make sure you saw it. Lots in neighborhoods sometimes require that a commission be paid to the selling agent when a home is built, whether or not you are working with a buyer’s agent.

### **A lot in a development**

If you’re coming from a condensed area such as New York, Dallas, San Francisco or other large cities where neighborhoods equate to teensy lots, stripped foliage and no privacy, you’ll be pleasantly delighted by what the Raleigh/Triangle offers.

**Lot Sizes** – Depending on the location, and your budget, there are many neighborhoods where the lot size is over .25 acres. Some offer lots with an acre or more, and, at the upper end of the spectrum, even up to 10 acres per lot. In general, you’ll get more land for your money – and still have the choice of being in an established neighborhood – in the areas around Clayton, Fuquay-Varina, Youngsville, and Pittsboro – all just a short drive from the more populated points of Research Triangle Park and Raleigh.

**Plenty of Trees** – Although if you’d prefer a lot without a lot of foliage, you can find that, too – many developments in the Raleigh area have been planned to retain a wooded feel. Some back up to protected waterways or woodlands, offering plenty of privacy even when other homes are nearby. Not all empty spaces are waiting for new homes to be built – some are zoned to stay that way. Ask plenty of questions about what’s going to be around your lot!

**Roads and Sidewalks** – Don’t take roads for granted! If you’re looking at a development, you shouldn’t have to worry about the infrastructure. Developers are required to build roads, and sometimes even sidewalks, as well as drainage and street lights in most neighborhoods. That infrastructure is usually kept up by the city or county you’re living in. This isn’t always the case if your parcel of land is located in the countryside. That road may be dirt, or gravel – and you may be responsible for its upkeep.

**Zoning** – Even inside a neighborhood, zoning is important. You’ve got a buffer from what happens outside the development, simply by existing within an area that’s going to remain the way it is when you buy, there. But always make sure you know what’s outside

the perimeter. If the land a block away is zoned commercial or industrial, that's going to hurt your property value. Little neighborhood strip malls can be appealing. But you really don't want them right next door.

**Appraisals and Comps** – Most neighborhoods have guidelines as to the types and sizes of homes being built. There may be a wide range of square footage and sales prices. But having homes in the same neighborhood with at least some similarities will help appraisers find the appropriate value for your home.

**Neighborhood Guidelines and Homeowner's Associations** – Guidelines and associations vary widely. If it's important to you that your new home is not next to a manufactured home, and that hot pink is not an exterior color on your street, you may want to consider buying a lot in a neighborhood. Check homeowner's guidelines carefully. They're there to protect you, as well as the overall value of the subdivision.

**City Utilities** – Being in a neighborhood doesn't guarantee that you'll have access to city utilities, but it does increase the chances. A developer is more likely to get the city to extend services to 120 new homes than to a single new home on one lot.

In general, the farther from the center of town, the less likely you'll have access to city water or sewer. Even in a neighborhood, your property may need a well and a septic system. For more about water and sewer issues, check out the full article: [Build On Your Lot Custom Homes - Water and Sewer - Raleigh Custom Home Builder Series Part One](#)

If you need a septic system, be sure your lot "perks." This means the land is able to absorb the septic system processes. A specially engineered system for a "no perk" lot can cost \$25,000 to \$100,000 and require lots of extra maintenance and city approval processes.

**Surveys: How Big Is That Lot?** – Look for the neon orange or red flags that mark property lines on lots or parcels. If you're looking at lots in a new neighborhood, surveys have probably been completed recently, and property lines will be clearly marked. If you're looking at individual parcels of land, ask when the most recent survey was done, and have your agent or builder walk the property line with you.

**Electricity** – If you're buying a lot in a neighborhood, the developer will make sure you've got electricity. If you're buying a larger parcel, make sure Progress Energy or other local utilities have already been brought to at least the edge of the property. If they haven't, you may need to pay for power to be extended from the nearest pole – and you may need to work out access with any neighbor that the power lines need to cross.

**Social Activities** – Check out the neighborhood. How friendly does it feel? Even if you're looking for privacy, those neighbors are going to be an important part of your life. Are you going to feel comfortable striking up the BBQ and inviting them over once in a while? Do they seem like the kind of folks who will look out for you when you need a hand? Look for a friendly wave when you're driving by, and be sure to wave back.

Whether you find a great piece of property off a private road, or a wonderful neighborhood with an available homesite, make sure to get all your questions answered before you sign a contract. If you've already chosen a home plan, make sure that the lot you'd like to build on will support that plan.

This is Part 2 of a three part series on finding a lot that's perfect for you.

Here's part 1 – learn about where to look, what to avoid, and how well your home will fit on the lot.

[Buying a Lot - Tips from a Raleigh Custom Home Builder \(Part 1 of 3 - What Should I Look For?\)](#)



### **Custom Building a Home on Your Lot in the Raleigh Area**

Building a home on your lot in the Raleigh area is an exciting process. You've probably already spent time looking at different home plans, and you may even have the home plan of your dreams picked out.

As a Raleigh custom home builder, **we have a unique perspective on the home building**

**process**, and are happy to share our expertise.

No matter who you choose to build your new home, we suggest that you **make sure to walk through homes by that builder** that will be finished at a similar level to the home you've chosen, or have your builder's representative point out any optional features in a model home that you have chosen not to include in your new home.

Watch for the next parts in this series, and good luck with your new home!

[\*\*Build On Your Lot Custom Homes - Water and Sewer - Raleigh Custom Home Builder Series Part One\*\*](#)

[\*\*Build on Your Lot Custom Homes - Permits and Fees - Raleigh Custom Builder Series Part Two\*\*](#)

[\*\*ENERGY STAR Homes in Raleigh - What is an ENERGY STAR home, and how does it save money and resources?\*\*](#)

## [Raleigh Custom Builder Tips - Interior Trim Information, from Baseboards to Crown Molding and Everything In Between](#)

### **Raleigh and the Triangle Area**

Whether you're looking at relocating to Raleigh to start your career, to find a friendly place to raise a family, or retiring in a terrific climate, Raleigh and the Research Park Triangle has something to offer you. Great schools, Forbes rated #1 in 2007 for Businesses and Careers, lots of lakes and golf courses, top-rated cultural centers, universities, and hospitals - and all only two hours to the ocean and three hours to the mountains - it's no wonder that Raleigh is a "Best Place to Live"!

### **Stanton Homes - Building Exceptional Living Experiences**



**Stanton Homes** - bringing you information about life and experiences in the Triangle area.

Whether you're looking for a beautiful home in a Triangle neighborhood, or want a custom home built on your lot, find out more about what this local Raleigh custom home builder can do for you at [Stanton Homes](#).

[Contact us](#) today, or call 919-278-8070.

With signature elliptical archways and [homes starting in the \\$250s](#), Stanton Homes is building exceptional living experiences in the Raleigh area.

**Stanton Homes**

