



This Statesman Corp. project won a SAM (Sales and Marketing) Award for best villa community at a recent gala hosted by the Calgary Region Home Builders Association. Courtesy, Statesman Corp.

FROM KI ROW: Statesman honoured

That particular award was won by the Sterling Group of Companies for its Harmony Creek project in Chestermere.

Rockford's Eversyde Court in the southwest was also a finalist in the best-selling project of the year, an award that went to Statesman Corp. for The Wedge-Woods of New Discovery — Chateau I.

Statesman also won best villa community for the villas in The WedgeWoods of New Discovery. In addition, the company was also honoured for best low rise apartment community up to \$169,999, as well as in the category of \$170,000 and over, for The Landing Tudor Phase II and The Manor Village.

Jayman MasterBuilt took best townhome community \$170,000 and over for The Versailles.

Schaaf credits Rockford's win in part to the experience the company has garnered over the years. "We were one of the first companies building multi-family housing when it wasn't popular at all," he says.

The first project was Shawnessy

Green. "It sold out before a shovel hit the ground, and we knew we were on to a good thing," says Schaaf. "There was a pent-up demand for an affordable product for people to buy."

From there, the company has grown and expanded to Edmonton.

"We have been very consistent over the years offering an excellent product that provides value to the customer," he says.

The company has found a niche developing entry-level housing choices in the suburbs — and taking it a step beyond with innovative designs and unique floor-plans.

"Our emphasis is on the first time buyers, but we have built adult villas from \$250,000 to the \$300,000s," he says.

"We've developed our own niche, and our designs have always emphasized value. We tweak every project and find ways to improve, and new products to use. Customer feedback is important to us."

Schaaf sees a big emphasis on condo development in the future.

“There was a pent-up demand for an affordable product for people to buy”

DARREN SCHAAF, ROCKFORD DEVELOPMENTS



This Sterling Group of Companies development won for best townhome community up to \$169,999. Courtesy, Sterling Group of Companies

"It used to be that if people couldn't afford a single-family home, they'd have to buy a condo," he says. "Now, it's a definite lifestyle choice, and it's also one of the more affordable entry-level products people can buy. Multi-family construction has a good future."

Rockford currently has just two units left of the 48 homes in Newport

Bay, but it has just applied for a development permit for another project across the street backing onto a stormwater lake behind Country Hills Towne Centre.

That project will consist of 200 apartment units in four buildings.

As well, Rockford is pre-selling phase one of Coventry Meadows in the same north central sector for a

total of 76 units, of which half are sold. A show home is expected to open by mid-May. "We are also working on the design stage of a project in the southwest quadrant in the Springbank Hill area," says Schaaf.

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Customer Choice rates companies

MARTY HOPE
CALGARY HERALD

There's always room for improvement, say winners of the Customer Choice Awards.

"No matter what our score, whether we win or not, we all gather together to talk over where we could make improvements we want to make to our systems," says president Christine Scott of Avalon Master Builder. "Typically, we do make two or three changes."

At the recent Calgary SAM (Sales and Marketing) Awards, the company won a Customer Choice Award in the multi-family, small volume category.

Hawthorne Homes, a division of Carma Developers, won an award in the multi-family, large volume

category.

Between Hawthorne and the development company's single-family builder, Heartland Homes, it has won 13 awards and learns from every one of them, says John Olson, vice-president of housing for Carma.

"Our culture here is customer service," he says. "We use the results as a measuring stick to compare ourselves against the rest of the industry."

Avalon Master Builder constructed 70 units in Calgary last year. Winning a Customer Choice Award is important to the

company because it helps it reinforce the good aspects of its services and improve on others, says CEO Ryan Scott.

"People tend to hold you in higher regard when you win an award like this," he says.

In the past four years, Avalon has won a Customer Choice award twice in Calgary, three times in central Alberta, and twice at the provincial level.

The Customer Choice Awards are based on questionnaires filled out by consumers who have purchased new homes in the past year.

They are asked to rate their builder's service — right from the first time they walk into a show home or sales office to after they take possession.

They are also asked to rate the overall buying experience, and whether they would recommend their builder to others.

"Customer expectations are constantly changing and our people have to work hard to keep up with those changes, so it's great that we keep on winning," says Olson, adding that Hawthorne constructs about 200 units annually.

Avalon Master Builder recognizes that it's important to keep buyers up to speed with progress of construction and any problems that may arise, says Christine Scott.

"With customers, the more trust you can build with them, the better," she says. "If you do things right from the get-go, the better it is for everybody."

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John Olson of Carma Developers.



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Kathy McCormick, Calgary Herald
Ryan Scott, CEO of Avalon Master Builder, and president Christine Scott with awards.