

Real estate revival in 'land of opportunity'

JOSH ZIMMERMAN

PERTH has been labelled "the land of opportunity for savvy investors" as widespread development and a quietly resurgent State economy combine to lift the property market out of the doldrums in 2018.

Massive State Government investment in Metronet, Optus Stadium, Yagan Square and Elizabeth Quay is forecast to begin paying off, while a rash of shopping centre upgrades will be a boon to the suburbs.

No one is predicting the dizzying capital gains witnessed mid-mining boom but property experts say there is plenty of value on offer and are feeling bullish about the new year.

Property researcher Terry Ryder, founder of real estate website Hotspotting, said 42 suburbs in Perth recorded sales growth in the December quarter, a stark contrast to zero in the final three months of 2016.

"We provide reports to clients right around Australia and what we're saying is that Perth is the land of opportunity for savvy investors," Mr Ryder said.

MOMENTUM WEALTH'S PICKS FOR PRICE GROWTH IN 2018

Best for first homebuyers	Best for investors	Best within 15km of CBD	Best to avoid in 2018
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Lynwood 👉 South Lake 👉 Craigie 👉 Kewdale 👉 Eden Hill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Bassendean 👉 Warwick 👉 Bibra Lake 👉 Willagee 👉 Doubleview 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Nedlands 👉 Bayswater 👉 Booragoon 👉 Scarborough 👉 Bateman 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 👉 Baldivis 👉 Byford 👉 Piara Waters 👉 Ellenbrook 👉 Alkimos



"Jobs are being created and resources projects are being started, which is very positive for the WA economy and the property market."

Property Council of Australia WA executive director Lino Iacomella predicted the popularity of 6000 as a residential postcode would surge as home owners jockeyed to be close to the new attractions in the CBD.

Communities along the Midland rail line, including Maylands, Meltham and Bayswater, were already seeing growing demand for home and development sites.

"This follows the public and private infrastructure work associated with Metronet and the Forrestfield-Airport rail link," he said.

"Early investors will benefit from long-term commitments for new stations in Redcliffe/Belmont and Forrestfield."

Mr Iacomella said suburbs near retail centre expansions, especially those with apartment precincts such as Garden City in Booragoon, would also be enticing to investors and owner-occupiers.

His hot tip for outside the metropolitan area was Bunbu-

ry, where waterfront development around Koombana Bay and a burgeoning lithium industry should help boost demand.

Momentum Wealth managing director Damian Collins said Scarborough "has the potential to be the Bondi of Perth".

"There is a lot of redevelopment, particularly around the foreshore, and the beachside pool is ready to go," he said.

"When money is spent on public infrastructure, it is usually only after it opens and people realise the benefits that

we see a boost to surrounding property prices."

Scarborough's makeover coupled with shopping centre upgrades at Karrinyup and Innaloo mean the wider City of Stirling is shaping as a popular choice for real estate in 2018.

Jarrad Rose recently bought a four-bedroom, two-bathroom townhouse in Innaloo and said one of the main factors in his decision was convenience. "I'm two minutes from the beach, two minutes from Osborne Park and five minutes from the city," he said.

Centrality was key point for

Mr Collins, who suggested first homebuyers look at established homes in areas with good access to the CBD.

"I'd be looking at Lynwood, South Lake and Craigie where the markets are starting to recover already," he said.

"To the east, Kewdale and Eden Hill are only around 10km from the city but you can get a decent property for sub \$500,000."

Mr Collins said investors would be best advised to buy in areas with low vacancy rates and decent rental returns, and view capital gains as a more long-term consideration.

"You can get a home in Willagee or Bibra Lake in the mid \$500,000 range and the vacancy rate in both is less than 3 per cent, compared to around 6.3 per cent in Perth overall," Mr Collins said.

The investment consultant predicted Perth's median house price would rise between 2 and 4 per cent in 2018 but warned growth would not be across the board, with aspirational and inner-city suburbs performing much better than areas on the fringes of Perth.

COTTESLOE, YOU HAVE A CHALLENGER

ONCE synonymous with drunken backpackers and dingy pubs, Scarborough is mounting a challenge to Cottesloe's mantle as best beachside destination in Perth.

Long-time residents Curt and Georgia Vernon have witnessed firsthand their suburb being transformed from a rundown tourist trap to thriving, family-friendly locale.

A major milestone in that revitalisation arrives on January 22, when the City of Stirling's \$26 million outdoor pool opens its doors to the public.

Mr Vernon, who swims laps at Bold Park Aquatic, said he and daughters Poppy, 4, and Kit, 2, were looking forward to making the switch.

"If Scarborough keeps developing at its current pace, there will be nowhere else like it in Perth," he said.

"We're on the beach but still close to the city, there are great parks, restaurants and cafes and now we've got a pool."

Mrs Vernon said the family had recently visited the new Scarborough Sunset Markets, part of extensive Metropolitan Redevelopment Authority work to reactivate the foreshore.

She said El Grotto Bar, on The Esplanade, was another favourite for nights without the kids.

Peard Real Estate sales associate Mandy Bizzaca said Scarborough had not been immune to the Perth-wide downturn in the property market but was now showing signs of recovery.

"All the investment in public infrastructure has certainly helped and Scarborough and the surrounding suburbs offer a combination of good schooling, shopping and easy access to the freeway," she said.

"A lot of young families are moving into the area, especially as older residents choose to downsize to townhouses or apartments that are easier to maintain."

Josh Zimmerman



Pool time: Georgia and Curt Vernon with their daughters Poppy and Kit are looking forward to using the new Scarborough beachside pool. Picture: Justin Benson-Cooper