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AWARD WINNER



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The Land Game

We're putting the July issue of *Professional Builder* to bed at the same time that we're packing our bags for San Diego and PCBC, formerly known as the Pacific Coast Builders Conference. It's an event that we look forward to all year long. A bellwether of trends and a wellspring of new ideas, PCBC is the place to be to hear experts and luminaries share innovative concepts, talk about what they're working on, and weigh in on home building's most heated topics.

A look at the lineup of panel discussions reveals that land is nothing if not a hot topic this year. A session on how builders and developers each can win in the development of MPCs; a panel discussion that asks if urban infill is, as the program states, "The Last Refuge of the Private Builder?"; and a seminar on how to get land deals done all speak to one of the most pressing issues many of you face: how to play the land game to your best advantage.

No need for travel, though. Land is an issue we're addressing right here, right now. "Land, Lots, and Opportunity" by senior editor Mike Beirne explores the approaches that smart builders are taking to acquire land. While Mike was talking to sources about the strategies that are working best, it became clear that there's more than one way to play the game. Reinvention can be a part of the deal; some builders are getting into development. Honing new skills is a part of the plan, and some are getting more artful at approaching banks. For others, making the most of what you've already got is a wise strategy—playing up your advantageous position as a local, for example.

Other stories this month examine the topic of land in yet more ways. "The Seaside Effect" by contributing editor Sue Bady invokes one of the most iconic town planning projects in America.

The story takes a look at several inspired new examples, highlighting the valuable lessons we've learned from successful Traditional Neighborhood Developments. "Good Neighbors" by architect Michael Medick underscores the essential role that good home design and sensible lot use play in creating Master Planned Communities that draw a range of buyers. One of the keys is product variety and offering options that suit all manner of life stages. When you're a community where it's easy for buyers of many stripes to imagine living, your homes have the potential to command higher resale prices than the competition. And banks like that.

The land question won't be going away anytime soon, and we'd like to hear about your own approaches. If you have a moment, tell us about it in our comments section on ProBuilder.com or drop us a line.

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There's more than one way to improve your land position.