

10 MINUTES WITH...

Cheryl Shindruk

EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT OF GERANIUM CORP.



EXECUTIVE VICE-PRESIDENT OF Geranium Corp., Cheryl Shindruk, joined Geranium in 2003, excited by the entrepreneurial spirit of a progressive development and home building company. “I grew up in a family business which operated seven days a week. I feel this introduction to employment prepared me well to work with an owner-operated company like Geranium,” Shindruk says.

With a master’s degree in city planning, she combined her education with early work experience in the public sector and then as a consultant involved in planning policy, land use and development approvals work.

“Communities are organic entities that evolve and change over time. To have the chance to be part of the process to create memorable, exciting, attractive communities was a fascinating opportunity to me,” says Shindruk, who chose her planning profession because of the opportunity to be involved in community building. She adds, “Everything you see on the ground has been the function of an extensive process which has been many years in the making. When you think about it, what we do is pretty fundamental and forms the foundation on which lives are lived. That’s exciting!”

The eldest of five, Shindruk was born and raised in the prairies. In 1994, she planned to leave Winnipeg to discover “the world outside

Manitoba.” A chance meeting at a planning conference led to an invitation to travel east and she followed her heart, and her now husband, to Toronto.

Geranium, based in Markham, has both a land development and a home building division, which provides the company a greater control over the design of a new neighbourhood or community plan. Shindruk believes the process enables her team to ensure they are planning for and building homes that the community wants.

“The scope and nature of the land developments now within Geranium Corporation’s portfolio, means that Geranium Homes – our home building division – has a good supply of land to build on. In essence, we control the ‘manufacturing’ process from start to finish. It also means that we have a big responsibility.”

Shindruk reflects on the company’s past accomplishments. “Navigating a stringent and highly complex planning process, we have achieved approvals for Friday Harbour on Lake Simcoe. Also in Simcoe County, the Bond Head Secondary Plan and Hwy.



NAME OF DEVELOPER

Geranium Corp.

COMPANY TRACK RECORD

Geranium Corp. is one of only a few, fully integrated land development and building companies in Ontario. Its expertise encompasses land acquisition, planning and process, engineering and servicing. Since becoming established in the mid-1990s the firm has assembled an impressive portfolio of land holdings. Broad in scope and imagination, the firm's communities currently under development include a magnificent resort village, golf course and marina at Big Bay Point on Lake Simcoe; new live/work/play areas in Bradford/Bond Head; communities of several hundred homes in the greater Barrie area; and an extremely successful master-planned ravine community in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

Established in 1977, Geranium Homes – the company's housing division – was the 2012 Home Builder of the Year, an honour awarded annually by the Building Industry and Land Development (BILD) Association; and received the Canadian Home Builders Association's 2011 Grand Sam Award.

CURRENT PROJECTS

The Neighbourhoods of Cardinal Point in Stouffville; Forest Trail Estates in Ballantrae; The Verandas in Port Hope; The Village at Sally Creek in Woodstock.

PAST PROJECTS

Heritage Port Hope; The Neighbourhoods of Cardinal Point, Phase 1, 2, 3 and 4; and completed communities in Aurora, Mississauga, Richmond Hill, Victoria Harbour, Brampton, Bolton, Newmarket, Lindsay, Courtice, Cobourg, Whitby and Cambridge.

For an overview of Geranium Homes' communities, visit geraniumhomes.com

400 Employment Lands Secondary Plan in Bradford West Gwillimbury, and a major secondary plan for Midhurst. Our residential and commercial developments in Stouffville have been very successful, attracting major businesses and over 600 families to date."

Geranium's philosophy promotes the importance of contributing to the social fabric and well-being of the broader community as a component of its land planning. "Wherever we work, Geranium contributes to initiatives and causes that are important to that particular community," says Shindruk. These include the United Way of York Region and of Greater Simcoe County; food banks; shelters; hospitals; and arts and cultural organizations.

The company is proud of the community building it does. "We've won awards for that work and take comfort in knowing that our efforts also generate economic activity that provides jobs and prosperity for communities," Shindruk says. "But helping community organizations gives us the opportunity to contribute towards the enrichment the social fabric of the community, the glue that holds us all together."

Geranium not only contributes to the communities where it owns property, it also believes in having a voice at the industry level. Shindruk has served for five years as Chair of the Building Industry and Land Development (BILD) Association's Simcoe Chapter and is now also a member of the BILD Board and Executive. "My involvement with BILD enables me to be engaged in debate and discussion about issues affecting the broader land development industry. Through BILD, I have the opportunity to help give the industry a voice and participate in advancing public policy."

On the horizon, Shindruk is looking forward to seeing the Simcoe developments take shape as construction gets underway. In Stouffville, Geranium's first mixed use, midrise Main Street development will be launching for sales in late 2013 or early 2014.

For Shindruk, the ultimate satisfaction in her career at Geranium comes from seeing the communities that exist for so long on paper be built and occupied.

"I'd say we are relatively small in number of employees, second to none in expertise and scope of our developments. In terms of corporate culture – extremely professional; built on a foundation of family values – integrity, honesty, hard work – with a focus on quality people and products. With a hint of zany to keep it fun."