

Townhouses vs Condominiums

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{loadposition content_right} Townhouses and Condominiums have similar properties and values although there are legal differences.

Both Townhouses and Condominiums share at least one common wall with one or more neighbors. Townhouses are built in rows or plots in which the building contains 2-6 units within the building structure. With a Townhouse property the owner purchases the ground that underlies their unit and often the land in front and along side their townhouse. So these properties generally include a front yard with a possible side yard or backyard depending upon the building configuration.

Condominium buyers purchase their unit which includes full ownership of only the living unit within the walls of their condominium. The parking areas, landscape, stairs, and other facilities within the condominium complex is owned by a separate condominium entity that is shared among all property owners.

The legal ownership of land is not significant to some people. If a property owner wants to plant their own garden area without consulting the condominium community agreement then owning the property has some advantages. However, sharing community resources through a condominium association has other advantages.

Condominiums can contain multiple units vertically where townhouses are generally limited to 1, 2 or 3 story buildings. A 2-story condominium complex allows the stacking of units so that ground level units do not have stairs while the upper floor units have better views throughout the unit. These lower level properties would be better for handicapped residents who can't climb stairs while the upper level units may provide views and more security.

In condominium complexes many property resources are shared such as landscaping, garbage services, water services, etc. Therefore, condominium associations require dues that cover these costs as well as shared maintenance costs such as roofing repairs and external painting. Townhouse owners need to share the cost of roofing repairs, however there may not be a formal dues agreement and committees as exist in condominium associations.

We will generally blur our discussions of townhouse and condominiums complexes together. We use the condominium term for both types of units since it applies to a broader scope of building types and sizes.