

# RAHB and Matrix

## You asked, we answered!

(Updated July 21, 2016)

### ***Is square footage going to become mandatory? (NEW!)***

RAHB will still be sharing listings with regional partners, and it makes sense to have as much consistency of information as possible. The Board decided that square footage – in addition to some other fields that are mandatory on the regional data input form - will become mandatory in Fusion only after careful consideration of all the factors. Square footage is a searchable field and is also information buyers expect to have. Anecdotally, we have heard that there have been complaints from other associations that RAHB listings don't have square footage. Interestingly, about 35 per cent of RAHB listings currently have square footage included on the listing, and that is without a requirement that it be included. Clearly, members do see the value in providing the information.

### ***A few years ago, the RAHB membership voted to remove square footage as a field on the listing form (as it was then). Did that vote not count? (NEW!)***

Anytime RAHB members send a message as clear as a motion to do or not do something, it counts. The Board of Directors takes it very seriously. However, the Directors have to take into account how decisions will affect ALL members. In that particular situation, removing square footage entirely meant that members who wish to include square footage as a searchable field as part of their service to their clients would be unable to do so. The Directors chose to maintain the field as an optional field, and now 35 per cent of listings contain the information.

There was an article that explained this situation in the February, 2012 issue of *REALINFO* – use this [link](#) to read the article on the RAHB blog.

### ***Will there be sold data from the other boards and associations on the new RAHB Matrix system? (NEW!)***

We intend to continue to have both active and sold data on the RAHB's new Matrix system, just the way it is now on the regional Matrix system.

### ***Will RAHB's membership or monthly fees go up as a result of leaving ORTIS? (NEW!)***

Based on the ORTIS model that is developing, costs to RAHB members were forecasted to go up. Continuing with our own MLS® System and full data sharing with those associations and boards around us will allow us to better manage our costs within our budget while ensuring the quality of service you expect from RAHB remains the same.

***I can't make it to any of the webinars. How can I get more information? (NEW!)***

We will be publishing updated Q&As in *The Shift*, as well as any updates on the regional MLS® System and Matrix. As well, all correspondence regarding the regionalization of MLS® data can be found under the MLS® tab (Regionalization) in REALTOR Link®.

RAHB President Kim Alvarez and CEO George O'Neill met with RAHB Brokers of Record and Managers on Friday, July 22 and discussed this new phase of RAHB's involvement in the regional MLS® group. You can ask your Broker or Manager if they have additional information.

And of course, RAHB staff are always available during business hours to answer your questions – call us at [905.529.8101](tel:905.529.8101).

***If RAHB is developing its own Matrix MLS® System, does that mean we won't be cutting over to the regional Matrix system?***

Fully cutting over to the regional Matrix MLS® System would mean that RAHB would be put in a position of having to accept the decisions and direction set by ORTIS, and it is now clear that some of those decisions may disadvantage RAHB and its members.

(ORTIS is the corporation created to manage the contracts associated with the regional MLS® System, and deal with the development and on-going management of the regional Matrix system.)

***What are RAHB's concerns about ORTIS?***

RAHB's directors believe there are a number of fundamental flaws in the way ORTIS is developing that work to the disadvantage of RAHB and its members.

There are issues surrounding possible higher monthly service fees for RAHB members, the business model ORTIS is developing, ORTIS's governance model and decision-making process, and ownership of MLS® data, among other issues. As the largest association in the regional group, we are concerned that our ability to effectively manage the cost and quality of a robust MLS® system will be limited if the as-is approach to ORTIS is adopted. RAHB's first priority is always what is in the best interests of RAHB members, and at this point in time, ORTIS's approach falls short of that priority.

***What happens next?***

RAHB's President will be notifying all the participating associations/boards and the ORTIS Board that:

- RAHB is choosing to build on the fundamentals created in the regional MLS® System
- RAHB will be implementing its own Matrix system that will be compatible with the regional system so that information can be easily shared. The target date for rolling out RAHB's Matrix system is prior to the spring market, 2017
- RAHB members will continue using Fusion in parallel with Matrix, with listings being uploaded to Matrix every 15 minutes so that members of all eight associations/boards continue to benefit from access to listings from all associations, until our own Matrix MLS® System is ready
- RAHB will be negotiating directly with other regional real estate associations/boards for the sharing of MLS® listing data so the benefit of shared listing data can continue

***What if the other associations/boards or ORTIS don't agree to this new arrangement?***

RAHB's directors have every confidence that the other associations/boards and ORTIS will see the benefits of maintaining the current situation because it offers the greatest access to listing information for all regional REALTORS®. All eight associations/boards entered into the regional system project with the intention of sharing listing information and that is currently being done. What RAHB is proposing is building on that intention in a way that will achieve the same goal but in a modified way so risks of increasing costs and lowering quality of service to RAHB's members are mitigated.

We cannot see a situation where any association/boards would prefer to exclude RAHB's listings instead of sharing them, when we are all working in the best interests in of our members.

***Why will RAHB change to a Matrix system of our own if Fusion works now?***

The big disadvantage to continuing with Fusion alone is that there isn't reciprocal communication between Fusion and Matrix. We are looking for information to flow freely among real estate associations, and maintaining Fusion would leave us in the same situation we have now – information goes from Fusion to Matrix, but not Matrix to Fusion. In addition, all RAHB members should be using Matrix for searches and other functionality (beyond loading and editing listings which remains in Fusion for now) so most are ready to switch over when the system is fully ready. Matrix offers many advantages, not the least of which is the choice of using the platform on any mobile or office device you choose.

***If RAHB switches to our own Matrix system, how long will it take?***

RAHB has been in negotiations with CoreLogic, the Matrix vendor, and the system will be ready in early 2017, prior to the spring market

There are, of course, always things that don't go as expected with systems implementations. However, we have tried to anticipate where there might be delays, and have built that into the time line.

***When will this information be public?***

RAHB is advising all parties involved in the regional MLS® System of our decision to pursue Phase 2 of sharing regional MLS® data; that will happen before noon on Monday, July 18. How and when they advise their own members is up to them. From RAHB's point of view, this will be considered public knowledge the morning of July 18, 2016.

That said, we would not like to see misinformation about our decision spread in the market place. We would ask that, if you are talking about this with your friends or colleagues in other associations, you be clear about what is taking place: that RAHB is committed to sharing MLS® listing information with other real estate boards and associations; RAHB will continue to share MLS® listing information via our parallel Fusion system; and when our own Matrix system is ready, it will be compatible with the regional Matrix system so the flow of information between systems is seamless.