

Cherri and Sandra's

News You Can Use

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Remodel or Buy? Which is Right for You?

The decision of whether to remodel an existing home or buy another one has become more difficult because the price of real estate has stopped rising consistently across much of Canada. A few years ago, the benefits of remodelling were quite simple due to the cost savings. Today it isn't as straightforward. The following are some things to think about when deciding whether to remodel or purchase a new property:

Lifestyle: Does your home continue to reflect your lifestyle? Experts agree the home should reflect anticipated lifestyle changes for the next five to seven years. If not, it might be a good idea to consider purchasing a new property.

Maintenance: Does your home require more maintenance and upkeep than desired, especially compared to newer homes? New homes offer the ability to "right size" the levels of yard work, repairs and other needs associated with home ownership.

Cost and Value: There are many factors that can weigh into the cost and value of a given property, including tax credits/write-offs, long-term appreciation, current level of depreciation, access to amenities, property taxes and insurance, utilities, maintenance, and much more. If you are not sure how to properly evaluate the true cost and value of your current property compared to a prospective property, ask your agent to provide estimates of principal, interest, taxes and insurance for comparable properties in the same neighbourhood.

Community: Access and affiliation with friends, family and the local community are important when deciding whether or not to remodel or buy new, yet they are easily overlooked by many homeowners. Depending upon the age of the neighbourhood, it may be difficult or even impossible to find other properties in the immediate area. On the other hand, over time many communities experience a decline in desirability as crime rates, traffic and other problems start to creep in.

Don't forget Cherri and Sandra's Referral Program!

If you refer our services to a family member, neighbour or friend who is looking for a realtor in the Fraser Valley, we will say "thank you" by rewarding you with our **Referral Bonus of \$500** (when the lead results in a completed sale).

November 2009

October Home Sales Brisk in the Fraser Valley

FVREB News Release, November 3, 2009

The Fraser Valley Real Estate Board (FVREB) processed 1,704 sales on its Multiple Listing Service (MLS®) in October, an increase of 122 per cent compared to the 768 sales during the same month last year.

"We've had a reversal. Last October was unseasonably slow and now this past month was one of the strongest real estate markets we've had in the Fraser Valley in the last decade," said FVREB President, Paul Penner. "We continued to see resale buyers from Greater Vancouver and first-time buyers from all over the Lower Mainland taking advantage of competitive interest rates and lower prices in the Fraser Valley."

Although the MSLLink® Housing Price Index (HPI) benchmark price of all three residential property types combined has increased by 7.4 per cent in the last six months in the Fraser Valley, prices for each property type remain at or below what they were one year ago.

The benchmark price of a detached home in October was \$491,128, an increase of 0.4 per cent compared to October 2008, when it was \$488,983. The benchmark price of townhouses decreased 2.1 per cent from \$319,160 in October 2008 to \$312,339 last month. The benchmark price of apartments also decreased year-over-year by 2.3 per cent, going from \$245,635 in October of last year to \$240,048 in October 2009.

"We expect to see prices remain competitive in the Fraser Valley," added Penner. "Even during our unusually busy summer, prices were sensitive to location and property type."



TREELAND REALTY

4 Tips to 'Plan Your Way to Success'

Setting aside time to plan the week ahead can help relieve any stress you might be feeling as a result of unfinished business.

It also allows an emotional release once the week is done and helps increase productivity.

The following suggestions will help you come up with a good plan and learn how to stick with it:

Prioritize by Importance: Planning provides a systematic method to increase productivity without sacrificing quality by establishing a hierarchy of needs. Make a list of "must do" versus "can do if time allows" items.

Time Management: Experts agree the first step in time management is the ability to properly prioritize one's time. Beside each item you listed above, indicate how long you expect the activity to take. Build in a little

buffer by adding 10% more time to each activity to accommodate emergencies or unanticipated events.

Stay on Track: Planning allows everyone to see the "big picture" while simultaneously outlining the details required to accomplish each task. Planning also keeps the lines of communication open and assures all stakeholders understand the proper process required to complete a job.

Reward: Not only does good planning help increase productivity, but it also reduces stress, helps you relax and it increases personal satisfaction by giving you a sense of accomplishment. Lower blood pressure, less anxiety and greater focus keep your mental faculties and emotional well-being running like a well-oiled machine so you are able to accomplish more in less time. Take time to reward yourself and others for meeting goals and objectives each week.

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

I want to sell my home, but with three children it's hard to keep the place looking tidy. Any tips?

It's important to get your storage in order. Invest in taller shelving units, which will take up less floor space, while providing space for books or storage containers.

Line the top of your child's bedroom walls with shelves, and place items up high that you would rather your child not have access to. Pegs are another fantastic way to use wall space, and young children will enjoy hanging up things on the pegs.

Closet organizers should reach all the way from floor to ceiling. Place rarely used items on higher shelves, and keep frequently used items within your child's reach.

Do not overlook the available space on the back of your child's bedroom or closet door. Shoe organizers with clear plastic pockets make wonderful storage containers for small stuffed animals and cars, art supplies, and dolls.

How to Find Travel Deals for the Holidays

Whether you are searching for the best price on flights, the most reliable carrier or simply want the best seat in the house, there are plenty of websites worth checking out.

Big Three Travel Sites

For one-stop holiday travel shopping, go to www.expedia.ca, www.orbitz.com or www.travelocity.ca where you can book a flight, reserve a hotel room and even rent a car.

Awesome Aggregators

To search for the best rates on flights, try out www.mobissimo.com, www.sidestep.com, www.quixo.com or www.bookingbuddy.com.

Discount Daredevils

If your travel plans are flexible, you may be able to snag flights that compete with cargo prices by going to www.hotwire.com, www.biddingfortravel.com or www.priceline.com. Sites like www.onetravel.com, www.travelzoo.ca and www.lastminute.com also specialize in last-minute bookings.

Fare Forecasting

If you're worried about paying too much, go to newly created Bing Travel at www.bing.com/travel/. The site allows comparative price searches, fare forecasting and the ability to search multiple sites all at once.



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