SOLD by Craig



THE MOVE-UP PLANNER · EDITION OCTOBER 2026

Your next home, *without* the gap.

Selling one home and buying the next is one move with two halves. Timing, equity, Property Transfer Tax, lender rules and a 90-day plan, so both halves land together.

Craig Johnston, REALTOR®

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Craig Johnston Personal Real Estate Corporation · Royal LePage Elite West

ROYAL LEPAGE® ELITE West



WELCOME

Move-up math isn't first-time math.

Selling the home you own and buying a bigger one means two contracts, two timelines, often two mortgages, and one family trying to live through all of it.

Most of the move-up families I work with are going from a condo to a townhome, or from a townhome to a detached home with room for a growing family. When things go wrong, it's usually one of four things: the sale and purchase happen in the wrong order, the in-between costs weren't budgeted, the Property Transfer Tax was underestimated, or the neighbourhood looked great on paper and didn't fit daily life.

This planner walks through each of those, with the numbers, a timeline and the questions to ask your lender. Read it once, then use it as a checklist.

Craig Johnston

REALTOR® · Craig Johnston Personal Real Estate Corporation · Royal LePage Elite West

A NOTE BEFORE YOU START

This planner is general information, not legal, tax, mortgage or financial advice. Property Transfer Tax, mortgage rules and market conditions change, so confirm your numbers with your mortgage professional and your lawyer or notary before you list or write an offer.

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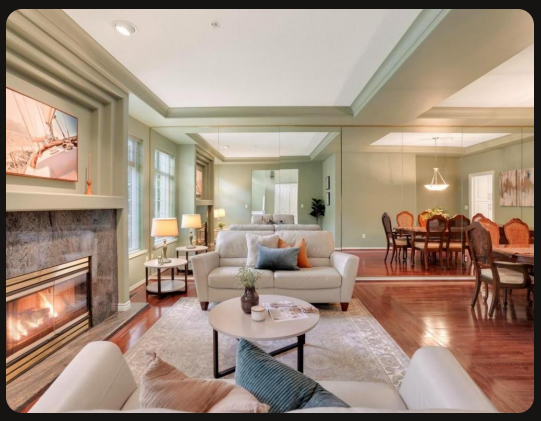
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MEET CRAIG

Craig Johnston, REALTOR®

I was born in Port Moody, grew up on Ioco Road and have lived in the Tri-Cities for more than 47 years. Helping families move up is the core of what I do.

I plan the sale and the purchase as one move: one budget, one calendar and one negotiation strategy that protects both sides of it. That's where most of the money in a move-up is won or lost.

I'll tell you what I really think about timing, including when the right move is to wait and prepare for another season.

TEAM RECOGNITION

Awards earned as a member of my Royal LePage team, based on team sales.

Medallion Club Team, Greater Vancouver REALTORS®, 2021–2025

- ✓ Top 1% Team — Greater Vancouver REALTORS®, 2023–2025
- ✓ Top 2% Team — Royal LePage nationwide, 2023–2025
- ✓ President's Club, Royal LePage, 2023–2025
- ✓ 36+ Google reviews of my own
- ✓ BCFSA licence 187645 · Royal LePage Elite West

STRATEGY

The four ways to move up.

There’s no single best order. There’s the right one for your equity, your lender approval and the market you’re selling into. Pick wrong and you either overpay, undersell, or live out of boxes for six weeks.

A Sell first, then buy

List your home, get a firm sale, then shop seriously. You know exactly what you can spend.

Works best when: A balanced or cooling market, or when you can’t carry two homes.

The real risk: The right home may not appear in time, so you may need a short-term rental.

B Buy first, then sell

Secure the next home, then list yours right away.

Works best when: Homes like the one you want are scarce, and your lender has approved you to carry both.

The real risk: Carrying two homes, or accepting less to sell by a deadline.

C Buy subject to sale

Your offer depends on selling your home by a set date. Sellers often add a time clause: if another buyer appears, you have a short window to remove the condition or step aside.

Works best when: Slower markets, when sellers will accept the condition.

The real risk: Being bumped by a buyer without a home to sell.

D Bridge financing

A short-term loan covers your new down payment until your sale completes.

Works best when: Both deals are firm and the gap is days or weeks, not months.

The real risk: Interest and fees, and lenders usually need a firm sale first.



RIGHT NOW

Which one fits right now?

The market you're selling into matters as much as the one you're buying in. Here's where detached homes in the Tri-Cities stood in September 2026.

City	Detached benchmark	1-year change	Sales-to-active (detached)	Average days on market
Coquitlam	$1,584,400	−6.6%	9.8%	50
Port Moody	$1,903,500	−8.4%	10.8%	44
Port Coquitlam	$1,240,600	−8.5%	15.3%	48

Source: Greater Vancouver REALTORS® MLS® Home Price Index and monthly REALTOR® Reports, September 2026 (released October 2, 2026). Below about 12% for several months is generally a buyer's market; 12% to 20% is balanced.

What a slower market changes

- ✓ Homes take longer to sell, so **buying first carries more risk**: plan for your home to take weeks, not days.
- ✓ Sellers are more open to **subject-to-sale offers** when fewer buyers are competing.
- ✓ You have **more room to negotiate** dates and terms on the home you're buying.
- ✓ Your own price has to be right from day one; the gap between price and value shows quickly.

Five questions that decide it

- ☐ Can we qualify to carry both homes, even for a short time?
- ☐ How much equity will we have after every selling cost?
- ☐ Would we be comfortable in a short-term rental for a month or two?
- ☐ How unique is the home we want, and how often do they come up?
- ☐ Is our timing fixed by school, work or a lease?

"His creativity, top-notch communication skills, and a solid plan were instrumental in selling high and buying low."

SUE H. · SOLD AND BOUGHT · GOOGLE REVIEW

The latest numbers
soldbycraig.ca/market-reports/

TIMING

Lining up the dates.

The most common avoidable cost in a move-up is paying for two homes at once, or having nowhere to live for a week. The fix is in the dates you negotiate.

COMPLETION
Title and money change hands, through the lawyers or notaries.

POSSESSION
You get the keys, usually the day after completion.

ADJUSTMENT
Property taxes and strata fees are split from this date, usually possession day.

TIGHTEST
1 day
You hand over your keys and get the new ones the next morning. Efficient, with no margin for a delay.

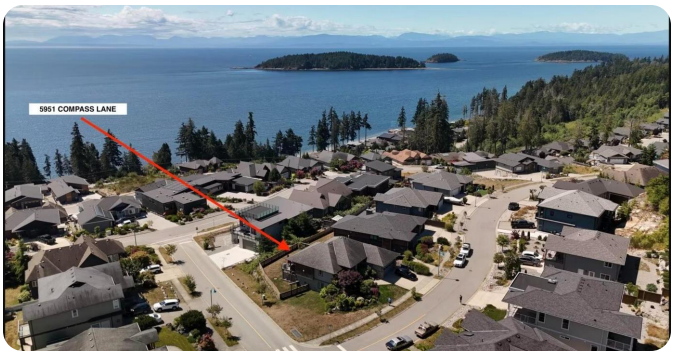
COMFORTABLE
3–7 days
Keys to both homes at once. Time to move, clean and fix small things without a rush.

IF THE GAP IS LONGER
Plan it
A rent-back from your buyer, a short-term rental, storage, or bridge financing.

How to line them up

- ✓ Ask for some flexibility on dates in both contracts. Many buyers and sellers will move a few days if you ask early.
- ✓ If you buy first, choose your sale's completion date to match before you list.
- ✓ Keep enough cash on hand for about a month of both homes' costs, just in case.
- ✓ Book movers early, and confirm a same-day move-out and move-in in writing.
- ✓ Insure both homes for any overlap, and tell your insurer when one sits empty.





EQUITY

Your real equity number.

Start with what your home would probably sell for, not a neighbour's asking price, and subtract everything that comes off at completion. What's left is the money you actually have to move with.

Line	Example on a $1.2M sale	Note
Expected sale price	$1,200,000	Probable, after a normal listing period
Mortgage payout	−$620,000	Balance on the completion date
Commission (example)	−$40,000	One structure: 7% on the first $100,000, 3% on the rest. Negotiable.
GST on commission	−$2,000	5%
Legal or notary fees	−$1,600	Get a written quote
Prepayment penalty	−$3,000	Ask your lender; it can be much more on a fixed rate
Equity for your next home	$533,400	Before moving costs and your cushion

THE PENALTY SURPRISE

On many fixed-rate mortgages, the penalty for paying out early is the greater of three months' interest or the interest rate differential (IRD), and the IRD can be many thousands. Ask your lender for a written payout and penalty quote early, and ask whether you can port the mortgage to your next home.

PROPERTY TAXES AND STRATA

Taxes and strata fees are adjusted on the adjustment date. If you've prepaid them, you're usually credited back; if any special levy is approved, check who pays it in the contract.

GET YOUR OWN NUMBER

Your Equity Map does this math with your real numbers: your likely sale price, what you'd walk away with, and your next-home ceiling. It's free and it doesn't commit you to anything.

PROPERTY TRANSFER TAX

Budget the tax on your next home.

Property Transfer Tax is paid by the buyer on completion, in cash, on top of your down payment. Move-up buyers pay it at full rates, and on a larger home it adds up quickly.

Purchase price	Property Transfer Tax
$1,200,000	$22,000
$1,500,000	$28,000
$1,800,000	$34,000
$2,000,000	$38,000
$2,200,000	$44,000
$2,500,000	$53,000

Calculated at the standard BC rates, with no exemptions.

How it's calculated

- ✓ 1% on the first $200,000
- ✓ 2% on the part from $200,000 to $2,000,000
- ✓ 3% on the part above $2,000,000
- ✓ A further 2% on residential value above $3,000,000 (5% in total)

THE $2 MILLION LINE

The 3% rate only applies to the part of the price above $2,000,000. A home at $1,995,000 carries $37,900; at $2,050,000 it's $39,500. Not a cliff, but worth knowing when you negotiate near it.

NO FIRST-TIME EXEMPTION

The first-time buyers' exemption is for people who have never owned a principal residence anywhere. If you've owned before, it doesn't apply, even if you used it last time.

BUYING NEW?

The newly built home exemption can remove the tax on a qualifying new home up to $1,100,000, phasing out to $1,150,000, for Canadian citizens and permanent residents who move in.

What your lender needs.

How much you can borrow for the next home depends on how your lender treats the one you're selling. Get this clear before you shop, not after you fall for a house.

01 **Your home is already sold (firm)**
The lender can rely on the sale, and you usually qualify on the new home alone. This is the simplest approval, and one reason selling first is often easiest to finance.

02 **Your home is listed but not sold**
The lender may count the costs of both homes against your income. Make sure your pre-approval looks at this case specifically.

03 **You plan to keep and rent it**
Lenders count part of the expected rent as income, and the share varies by lender. Your existing mortgage still counts. It changes what you can afford a lot, so map it with your broker.

ASK YOUR BROKER FOR THREE NUMBERS

What you could borrow (1) carrying both homes, (2) once your home is firmly sold, and (3) if you keep it as a rental. The gaps between those numbers tell you which of the four strategies are really open to you.

- ✓ **Bridge financing** usually needs a firm sale on your current home.
- ✓ **Porting your mortgage** can avoid a penalty; ask whether yours allows it.
- ✓ **The stress test** still applies: you qualify at the higher of 5.25% or your rate plus 2%.
- ✓ At **$1.5 million and up**, you need at least 20% down.



Choosing the neighbourhood.

Move-up families usually weigh space, schools and the daily commute differently than first-time buyers do. Visit on a weekday evening, not just at a Saturday open house.



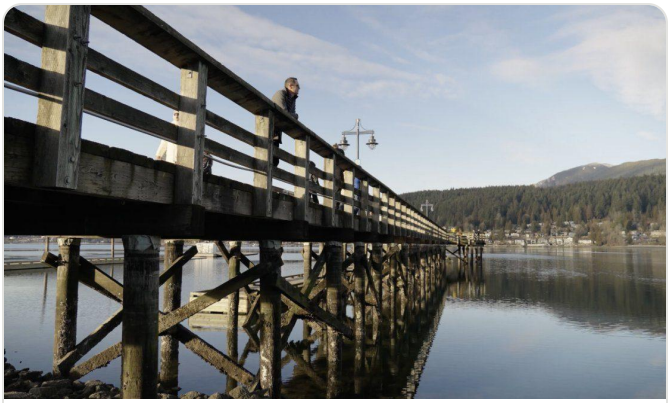
Burke Mountain

Coquitlam's newest detached homes and townhomes, family layouts and new schools. A longer drive to transit.



Westwood Plateau

An established neighbourhood above Lafarge Lake and Town Centre. Larger lots; some homes ready for updates.



Heritage Mountain and Port Moody

Quiet hillside streets and views, waterfront parks and the Millennium Line. Smaller lots near the stations.



Port Coquitlam

Often the most attainable detached prices in the Tri-Cities, with the Traboulay PoCo Trail and a West Coast Express station.

Check the school catchment for the exact address with School District 43 before you offer. Catchments follow streets, not neighbourhood names, and two homes a few doors apart can be in different ones.

SD43 school locator
Look up any address

The in-between budget.

Every move-up has costs between the two homes. Budget them on purpose, so they don’t come out of your down payment.

Item	What to budget	Notes
Professional movers	Get two or three quotes	Depends on distance, size and the day of the week
Packing supplies or a packing crew	Get quotes	
Short-term rental, if there’s a gap	Get quotes	Varies widely by season
Storage, if there’s a gap	Get quotes	Monthly
Bridge financing	Ask your lender	Interest plus a setup fee
Two sets of costs for any overlap	About a month’s worth	Mortgage, taxes, strata, insurance, utilities
Utilities, change of address, small fixes	Set aside a little	Locks, paint touch-ups, an appliance

KEEP A FLOAT

Keep about a month of both homes’ costs, plus a cushion, in a separate savings account. Most families get it back after completion. Having it there keeps stress from making decisions for you.

ASK FOR A RENT-BACK

If your buyer agrees, you can stay in your home for a short time after completion and pay them rent. It can close a short gap without a second move.





YOUR TIMELINE

Your 90-day countdown to list.

The homes that sell best were being prepared well before the sign went up. Start 90 days out and your first week on the market is your strongest.

WEEKS 12 TO 9

Decide and plan

- [ ] Choose your strategy (A, B, C or D) with me and your broker.
- [ ] Get the three pre-approval numbers from your broker.
- [ ] Ask your lender for a written payout and penalty quote.
- [ ] Book a walk-through and get your Equity Map.

WEEKS 8 TO 5

Prepare the home

- [ ] Declutter room by room: donate, sell or store.
- [ ] Fix the small things; ask me before anything large.
- [ ] Gather strata documents, permits and warranties.
- [ ] Book painters and a staging consult if it will pay off.

WEEKS 4 TO 2

Present it

- [ ] Deep clean before photo day.
- [ ] Photos, video, floor plans and aerial footage where it fits.
- [ ] Approve the listing copy and your property page.
- [ ] Confirm your lawyer, broker and movers.

WEEKS 1 TO 0

Launch and negotiate

- [ ] Go live everywhere at once.
- [ ] Showings and open houses, with feedback passed on.
- [ ] Review offers with dates that match your purchase.
- [ ] Remove subjects and confirm both completion dates.





AVOID THESE

Ten move-up mistakes.

All of them are avoidable, and all of them cost money.

01 Listing without a pre-approval that covers carrying both homes.

02 Underpricing your home to sell fast, and giving up equity you needed for the next one.

03 Assuming the mortgage penalty is three months' interest when, on a fixed rate, it can be the much larger IRD.

04 Forgetting the 3% tax rate on the part of a price above $2 million.

05 Leaving a weekend overlap with no insurance plan for both homes.

06 Choosing a neighbourhood from one Saturday visit instead of a weekday evening drive.

07 Trusting a neighbourhood name instead of checking the school catchment for the exact address.

08 Signing a buy-first contract without checking your broker's current numbers that week.

09 Not asking for flexible dates in both contracts.

10 Booking movers with no buffer in case the keys are late.



"He laid out the strategy upfront, the listing generated a lot of interest, and we had an acceptable offer in under a month."

FJ YOUNG · SOLD IN COQUITLAM, JULY 2026 · GOOGLE REVIEW

WHAT MY CLIENTS SAY

In their own words.

Excerpts, word for word, from my Google reviews.

"We received seven offers, and Craig held firm on our priorities: no subject to sale and achieving our price. We took the home off the market over Christmas, but behind the scenes Craig continued working. When we re-listed in January, it sold in just three days to buyers he had been nurturing — at the price we wanted."

JIM TURNBULL · SOLD AND BOUGHT, JANUARY 2026

"Craig was there with us everyday. Guiding us to our next step we were kept informed daily sometimes multiple times a day as to what was happening... Our home sold in only 6 days with multiple offers."

GERRY & ALINE HOWITSON · SOLD, NOVEMBER 2025

"Craig is a true professional and I would highly recommend him to anyone looking to buy or sell their home. His approach is clear, data-driven and resulted in multiple offers for our sale."

ROBERT SHIN · SELLER, JULY 2025

"Throughout our journey, Craig demonstrated immense patience and understanding. He went out of his way to provide extra resources and various options to consider on both the buy and sell side."

JUSTIN J. · BUYER AND SELLER

"He went above and beyond what was required and managed to sell our condo at one of the slowest times of the year! From helping with the staging to being available to show to the unit at any time, Craig managed to sell our place when other comparable units nearby had been sitting for weeks!"

ALEX KADHIM · SELLER, FEBRUARY 2023

"No matter value of the property, Craig puts great care into preparing high-quality marketing content, ensuring each listing is presented at its absolute best. Craig presents very professionally and is very responsive with his communications."

ALLAN LIANG · SELLER, MARCH 2025

Read all 36+ reviews at soldbycraig.ca/reviews/

YOUR NEXT STEPS

Ready when you are.

You don’t need every answer before we talk. You just need to be far enough along that the conversation is useful.

01

Get your Equity Map

Your likely sale price, what you’d walk away with, and your next-home ceiling. Free.

soldbycraig.ca/home-evaluation/

02

Book a 20-minute move-up call

Which of the four strategies fits, and whether this is the season or the next one. No pitch.

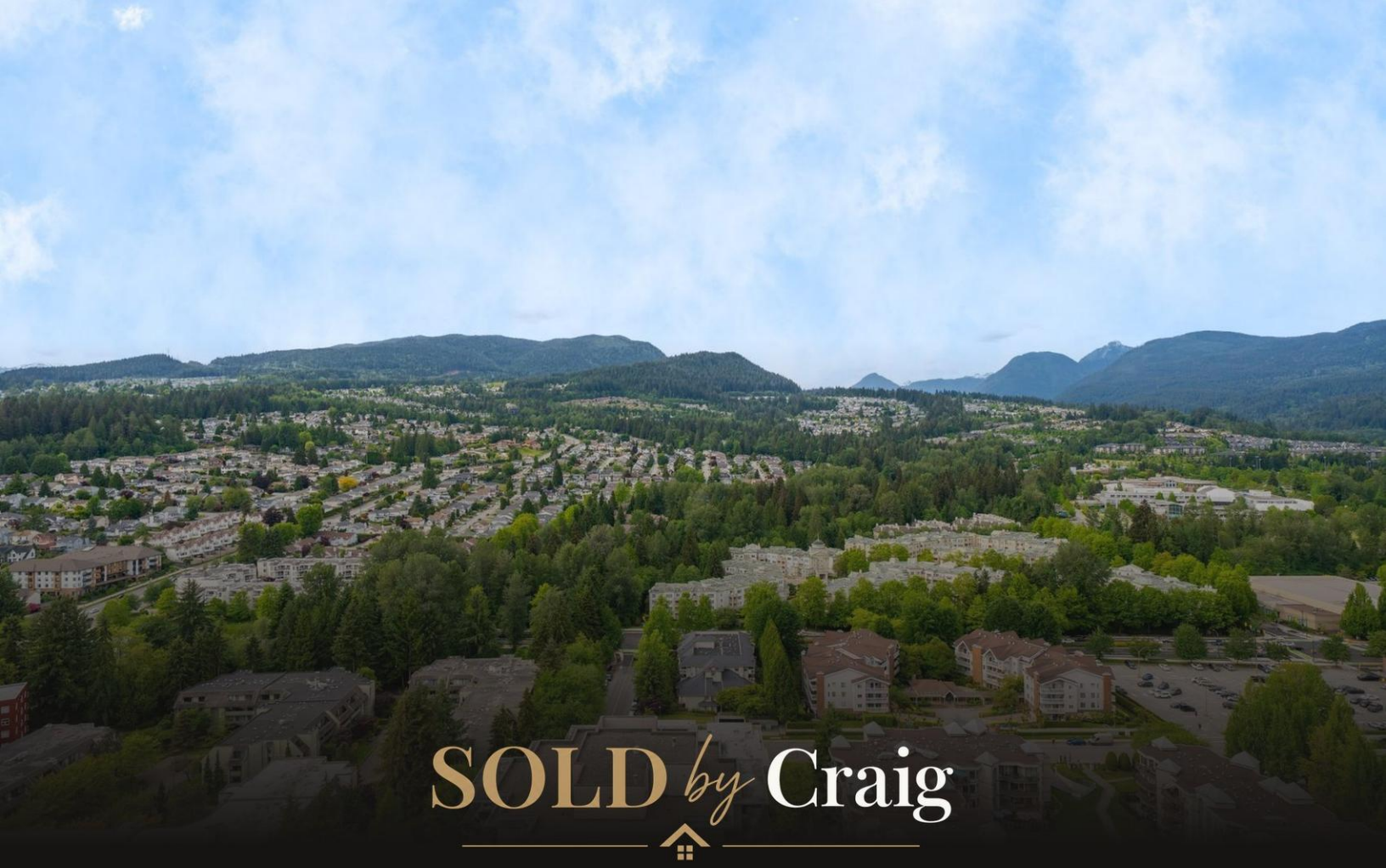
soldbycraig.ca/book-a-strategy-call-with-craig-johnston/

03

Call your broker and lender

Ask for the three pre-approval numbers and a written payout and penalty quote.

Or call or text me directly: **604-202-6092** · Craig@SoldByCraig.ca



SOLD by Craig

One move, *two halves.*

Let’s plan both, together.

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