

# RESALE HOMES COLLECTIONS

AURORA/KING  
VOLUME 15, ISSUE 1

Senior Account Executive  
**ZACH SHOUB**  
zach@pcmedia.ca

Account Executive  
**KAREN NEMET**  
karen@pcmedia.ca

Senior Account Executive  
**DIANE BUCHANAN**  
diane@auroran.com

Art Director  
**SARAH DIDYCYZ**

Published By:



THE AURORAN • www.theauroran.com  
King Weekly Sentinel • www.kingsentinel.com

**MARCIA WALTER**  
+ ASSOCIATES

**Marcia Walter** | Broker

Mobile 416-707-5285  
Office 905-939-2000  
marcia@marciawalter.com



Royal LePage RCR Realty, Brokerage  
independently owned and operated.

**ENGEL & VÖLKERS**

dimatteoteam.com  
REALTORS



**Robert Di Matteo**  
416-738-4195

**Andrew Di Matteo**  
416-886-0411

BUYING OR SELLING • CALL US FOR ALL YOUR REAL ESTATE NEEDS  
Extensive • Domestic • Global • Exposure  
Serving York Region with over 30 years of combined experience.

**JULIANNE BOILEAU**  
PUT MY 38 YEARS OF SUCCESSFUL  
REAL ESTATE EXPERIENCE  
IN YOUR CORNER!  
**THE BEST IS THE  
LEAST I CAN DO.  
CALL ME TODAY FOR A  
NO-OBLIGATION HOME  
EVALUATION!**

**RE/MAX**  
HALLMARK YORK GROUP REALTY LTD.

**416-418-6683 DIRECT**  
**TIME2BUY-SELL.COM**

THE MORTGAGE GROUP FSR# 10315  
**Mortgage Experts  
for Seniors**  
Helping senior homeowners  
live comfortably.

- ✓ Access your home equity without selling.
- ✓ Stay in the home you love.

**Carol** | Mortgage Broker - 905.953.6902  
**Cologna** | Carol.Cologna@mortgagegroup.com

**Gord** | Mortgage Agent L1 - 905.953.6990  
**Cologna** | Gord.Cologna@mortgagegroup.com

# Expenses to expect upon buying a HOME

Homeownership is often characterized as a fulfillment of a dream. Indeed, many homeowners feel their ability to buy a home is a reflection of their discipline and commitment to saving money.

**T**hat discipline and dedication can set homeowners up for long-term financial health, providing a unique sense of security along the way. First-time home buyers may not know what to expect upon buying a home, and since each home is unique, it's impossible for even long-time homeowners to say with certainty exactly how things will unfold once those new to home ownership get the keys to their first house. Various expenses might be the only common variable when it comes to homeownership, and some of those expenses may surprise first-time buyers. With that in mind, the following are some expenses first-time buyers can expect once their offers are accepted.

#### DOWN PAYMENT

Conventional wisdom long suggested home buyers should submit a down payment of at least 20 percent of the overall purchase price upon buying a home. Buyers who want to follow that advice would need a down payment of \$80,000 when buying a \$400,000 home. But many home buyers now submit down payments considerably less than 20 percent, particularly in the modern real estate market, which is characterized by high prices and low inventory. The lower the down payment, the higher your monthly mortgage payment will be, so it's best to save as much as possible toward a down payment.

#### PRIMARY MORTGAGE INSURANCE (PMI)

Buyers who cannot come up with a down payment of 20 percent or more will have to pay for primary mortgage insurance, which is typically a set fee that is incorporated into the mortgage payment each month. PMI fees are typically waived once the balance on the mortgage reaches 79 percent or less of the purchase price, though some lenders may waive PMI prior to that if the value of the home increases considerably before the loan balance reaches the predetermined marker.

#### CLOSING COSTS

The amount of closing costs varies widely depending on a host of variables, but Bankrate.com notes it's not uncommon for these costs to come in at somewhere between 2 and 5 percent of the loan principal. Closing costs must be paid no later than when the sale becomes official and buyers sign on the (many) dotted lines. Application and credit fees, title fees, underwriting fees, appraisal fees, and transfer tax are among the various fees that fall under the umbrella of closing costs.

#### MOVING

It's also important that first-time home buyers budget for moving costs. Moving costs vary and may depend on how much buyers already own and how far they're moving. The home renovation experts at Angi estimate that local moves typically cost somewhere between \$883 and \$2,568, while long-distance moves may run buyers anywhere from \$2,700 to \$10,000 or more.

These costs are some of the upfront fees aspiring homeowners can expect when buying a home. Long-term costs, including homeowners' insurance (which is separate from PMI), property taxes, homeowners' association fees, and maintenance are some additional expenses buyers can plan for as they try to determine their home buying budgets.

#### MARKET UPDATE – DECEMBER 2025

##### AURORA

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

**\$1,248,524**

AVERAGE 43 DAYS ON MARKET

NUMBER OF SALES

**41**

41 NEW LISTINGS

SALE TO LIST RATIO

**98%**

YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE

**-10.86%**

##### KING

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

**\$2,148,214**

AVERAGE 56 DAYS ON MARKET

NUMBER OF SALES

**14**

32 NEW LISTINGS

SALE TO LIST RATIO

**92%**

YEAR OVER YEAR % CHANGE

**-8.91%**

\*The statistics provided were obtained from the Toronto Regional Real Estate Board's Market Watch DECEMBER 2025; Summary of Existing Home Transactions for All Home Types, DECEMBER 2025 + Focus on the MLS Home Price Index for Composite, DECEMBER 2025 for York Region's Aurora and King

As we closed out the 2025 year, the activity in the market remained modest. Aurora finished December steady and stable, while King finished off on a quieter note. It's a market where serious buyers are seeing opportunities, and prepared sellers are still getting good prices: especially if their property is well-staged and strongly positioned. This shift toward balance means buyers gain a bit more negotiating room, especially in winter months, while sellers can enjoy fewer showings, but more serious Buyers who are looking. A handful of transactions continued to close, even as year-end typically slows with respect to market pace — with about 40+ homes sold in the month across all types in Aurora and 14 homes sold in King. Despite the favourable lowering of borrowing costs and increase in inventory, many Buyers are still exercising caution. For those thinking of investing, it might be a good time to secure a home in the slower holiday months, with less competition and more motivation and the potential for better pricing. Well priced and well appointed homes are still attracting attention. In an evolving market, Key Advantage is always here as a trusted advisor to talk strategy.

– Provided by Key Advantage Team Royal LePage RCR Realty

Lindsay Strom, Broker  
www.KeyAdvantage.ca | 905-836-1212 | info@KeyAdvantage.ca  
\* Not intended to solicit buyers or sellers currently under contract.



#### WOW!! UNIQUE ONE-OF-A-KIND PROPERTY IDEAL FOR EXTENDED FAMILIES OR LIVE HERE WITH 2 EXTRA POTENTIAL INCOMES OR FOR INVESTORS!!



**\$3,150,000**

Everything is brand new - the gorgeous main house features a separate legal 2 bedroom basement apartment + the detached 3/4 car garage has a legal separate 2 bedroom loft apartment above! Absolutely spectacular newly built 4 + 1 bedroom 2851 square-foot luxury residence has all the bells and whistles! Top quality materials throughout including high-end appliances! Stunning designer gourmet kitchen w/huge island & deluxe quartz countertops open to spacious living room w/beautiful fireplace & large sliding glass door walk out to the huge partially covered deck. Generously sized dining room w/picture window & custom built-in cabinetry! Adjacent to the kitchen is a very large walk-in pantry, which is open to the cloak room and has a rear exit to the deck. Also, an office or 5th bedroom on main level. 9 foot ceiling heights and lots of pot lights plus glass railings on the open staircase add a touch of elegance!



**ANITA KOTSOVOS**  
REAL ESTATE SALES REPRESENTATIVE

Over 30 years of award-winning  
real estate experience!

t: 905.898.1211 c: 416.520.3651  
anitakotsovos@gmail.com  
www.AnitaKotsovos.com



# FIRST-TIME HOMEBUYERS: Why now may be your moment in King Township

For many first-time homebuyers, the idea of entering the market has felt out of reach over the past few years. Rapid price growth, rising interest rates, and uncertainty left many would-be buyers waiting on the sidelines.

Today, that landscape is changing — and for those considering their first purchase, the timing may be more favourable than it has been in years.

Across the Greater Toronto Area, home prices have adjusted from recent highs, inventory levels have improved, and buyers now have more choice and negotiating power. In communities like King Township, this shift has created meaningful opportunities for first-time buyers to enter the market with greater confidence and less competition than we've seen in quite some time.

**A MORE BALANCED MARKET**

When prices soften and listings increase, the market becomes more balanced. That balance matters for

first-time buyers. It means fewer bidding wars, more time to evaluate options, and the ability to include conditions such as financing or inspections — protections that are especially important when purchasing your first home. In King, this has opened the door to a wider range of properties, from townhomes and condos to smaller detached homes that may not have been accessible in recent years.

**GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS THAT HELP**

In addition to improved market conditions, there are several provincial and federal programs designed to support first-time buyers:

- **First Home Savings Account (FHSA):** A powerful savings tool that allows eligible buyers to save toward a first home with tax advantages.
- **Home Buyers' Plan (HBP):** Permits qualified buyers to use funds from their RRSP toward a down payment.
- **Ontario Land Transfer Tax Rebates:** First-time buyers may be eligible for rebates that reduce upfront closing costs.

Understanding how these programs work — and how they can be combined — can make a significant difference in affordability. However, they are most effective when paired with the right purchase strategy and clear guidance.

**WHY KING IS WORTH CONSIDERING**

King Township continues to attract first-time buyers who value space, community, and long-term livability. With its blend of village charm, natural landscapes, and access to surrounding employment hubs, King offers a lifestyle that appeals to buyers looking to put down roots. Entering the market now allows first-time buyers to benefit from today's pricing while building equity in a community with strong long-term appeal.

**GUIDANCE MATTERS — ESPECIALLY THE FIRST TIME**

Buying your first home is not just a financial decision; it's a personal one. Having the right team beside you can make all the difference. The **Michele Denniston Real Estate Group** brings deep local knowledge, proven experience, and a thoughtful, client-first approach to every transaction. We focus on education, clarity, and options — ensuring first-time buyers understand not just what they can buy, but why a particular decision makes sense for their goals.

**Real Advice. Real Options. Real Estate.**

That means clear explanations, honest conversations, and strategies tailored to you — not pressure, guesswork, or one-size-fits-all answers.

**THINKING ABOUT YOUR FIRST STEP?**

If you're a first-time buyer wondering whether now is the right time, a conversation is the best place to start. Understanding today's market, available incen-

tives, and what's possible in King can help you move forward with confidence.

Reach out to the **Michele Denniston Real Estate Group** to begin with real advice — and a clear path toward your first home, [michele@micheledenniston.com](mailto:michele@micheledenniston.com) and her phone number 416-433-8316.

WRITTEN BY: The Michele Denniston Real Estate Team



## MUST BE SEEN!

390 MAIN STREET, SCHOMBERG



### WOW OVER AN ACRE ON MAIN STREET! QUAINT SCHOMBERG.

This grand home is perched high atop Main Street, featuring 13 Foot Ceilings, 7 Bedrooms, 5 Bathrooms, 2 Main Floor Kitchens, Living Rooms, Dining Rooms, and Main floor Laundry Rooms! Separate 4 Car Garage, Tons of Parking. Beautiful Private Picturesque Patio, surrounded by mature trees, perfect for Entertaining. No homes behind as property backs onto protected land. Walk to shops, Restaurants, Patios, Bakery, Groceries and More. Min to Hwy 400, 25 min to Airport. Over 3500 sq ft. Current owners using the entire home. You may want to rent one side or use as a multifamily home as this home is a Legal Duplex. Call me directly for a private showing. You're going to love it!

## FOR LEASE

51 SPRING HILL, KING CITY

### LOCATION! LOCATION! LOCATION!

3 Bedroom 3 bathroom Family Sized Kitchen, Separate Dining Room.  
2nd Floor Laundry Room. Walk to all amenities!  
Min To GO Station & Schools. A++ Tenants,  
Call me to view this outstanding  
Townhome linked only by the garage.

## DON'T MISS THIS ONE!

6 CHURCH STREET, SCHOMBERG

4 Bedrooms 2 Baths  
Steps to Shops, Restaurants, Parks, and Library on Historic Quaint Main Street  
CALL ME TO VIEW THIS  
UPDATED VICTORIAN GEM!

## Global Reach With Local Expertise

## AVENUE

Experience the benefit of our boutique approach and worldwide reach that spans 5 continents and 50+ countries.

905.737.6060

**Elevated Downtown Living** \$4,888,000

**Entertainer's Dream Home** \$3,398,000

Located in the heart of Yorkville, this exquisitely renovated home blends modern luxury with urban convenience. Set on a premium lot beneath a majestic 250-year-old oak, it offers refined living across three levels plus a finished lower level. Highlights include a showpiece Wolf/Sub-Zero kitchen, soaring ceilings, stone fireplace, spa-like primary suite, private terrace and professionally landscaped grounds—an exceptional turnkey opportunity.

Own a private retreat on 1.15 acres in the prestigious Woodland Acres estate community. This custom-built home features a soaring 17-ft foyer, gleaming hardwood floors and sun-filled open-concept living with a floor-to-ceiling marble-surround gas fireplace. The chef's kitchen opens to poolside entertaining, while the finished lower level offers expansive recreation. Professionally landscaped grounds complete this exceptional estate.

**Woodland Acres Luxury Estate** \$3,398,000

**Resort-Style Family Oasis** \$4,900,000

Set on 1.01 acres in coveted Woodland Acres, this custom-built estate offers exceptional privacy, luxury and breathtaking views. Landscaped grounds showcase mature trees, a resort-style pool, cabana and multi-level stone patios—perfect for entertaining or quiet retreat. Inside, elegant principal rooms, a gourmet kitchen and a grand primary suite with balcony and spa ensuite define refined living, while a walk-out lower level adds versatile space.

Stunning western sunset views over Philips Lake create a Muskoka-like setting in Richmond Hill. Set on a double lot with flagstone patios, garden walls, pathways, a bridge and swing, this luxurious home blends elegance and comfort. Features include a gourmet kitchen with lake views, cathedral-ceiling sunroom, main-floor office, elevator access to private bedrooms, finished lower-level living quarters, wine cellar and heated floors.

**Flexible Commercial Unit** \$23 Net Lease

**Prime Development Opportunity** \$7,998,000

Welcome to this 2,288 sq. ft. unit (1,144 sq. ft. office + 1,144 sq. ft. industrial) in the desirable Beaver Creek business area. The office space features three private offices, an open workstation and a meeting room, all with laminate flooring and direct warehouse access. Highlights include 16-ft clear height, 60 Amp electrical, fibre optics, public parking, on-site property management and easy access to Hwy 404 and 407. Allowed uses: office or showroom.

An exceptional opportunity to build your dream lifestyle on approximately 230 acres. About 60% is workable farmland, currently rented to local farmers. This mature, treeed property features serene ponds, offering privacy and tranquility. Located near golf clubs, hiking trails, schools and local farms for fresh produce, with easy access to HWY 7 and a short drive to Lake Simcoe—endless possibilities await!

CALL US TO LEARN HOW OUR MORE THAN 40 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE ALLOWS US TO DELIVER EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE THAT CONSISTENTLY GENERATES THE BEST RESULTS IN ANY MARKET CONDITION

**Christopher Fusco**  
Broker of Record/Team Leader  
416-301-4878  
[cfusco@avenurealty.com](mailto:cfusco@avenurealty.com)

**Emily B. Fusco**  
Broker/Team Leader  
905-737-6060  
[efusco@avenurealty.com](mailto:efusco@avenurealty.com)



*Julianne Boileau*  
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

DIRECT: 416-418-6683  
OFFICE: 905-727-1941  
[JulianneBoileau@hotmail.com](mailto:JulianneBoileau@hotmail.com)  
Time2Buy-Sell.com



**RESALE  
HOMES**  
COLLECTIONS



# NEW YEAR, smarter ways to save energy at home

(NC) A new year is a natural time to rethink everyday habits, including how we use energy at home. According to Natural Resources Canada, 64 per cent of the average home's energy consumption goes toward space heating.

While that's expected during Canadian winters, energy use from air conditioning is also rising during hotter summers. Making a few smart, efficiency-focused updates can help reduce waste, manage costs and create a more comfortable home year-round.

Here are a few tips for a smarter, more efficient home:

**TAKE A FRESH LOOK AT YOUR INSULATION.**

Your AC and furnace work hard to adjust the temperature of the air throughout your home. Don't let all that work—and energy—go to waste. Without proper insulation, the air in your home will equalize to the outside temperature just through contact with the walls and ceiling. Make sure you have a barrier to prevent this, so that your HVAC system only needs to make small adjustments to keep the temperature where you want it.

**ELIMINATE WASTEFUL AIRFLOW.**

Any draughts or breezes you feel inside are the air in your home leaking out, and the outside air leaking in to replace it. Use caulking and other sealants around every window and check your exterior walls for any potential gaps. Put weatherstripping around all your external-facing doors to keep air from flowing through the doorframe, and consider using it on internal doors, too. This can especially help in multi-story homes where cold air can sink to basement level, and warm air can overheat upstairs rooms.

**MAKE SOME SMART UPGRADES.**

Smart home technology has improved to the point where your home itself can help you manage your energy use. Smart home platforms like Samsung's SmartThings can help you monitor and manage your devices' energy usage, create customized energy-saving routines and give you tips to reduce your overall consumption. For instance, rather than trying to maintain one home temperature though the day, a connected thermostat can sense when you wake up or arrive back home and adjust the air when it's needed.

All it takes are some simple upgrades focused on efficiency to regain control of your energy use. Smart investment in insulation, weatherstripping and a responsive home environment will pay dividends in savings as well as convenience.

Learn more about how you can save energy at [samsung.com/ca/smarthings](https://samsung.com/ca/smarthings).

[www.newscanada.com](https://www.newscanada.com)

## YOUR FIRST WINTER MADE EASY: ENERGY-SAVING TIPS FOR HOMEOWNERS

(NC) It's your first winter in your new home. The furnace runs more than you expected, and every time you turn the thermostat up "just a bit," you worry what it will do to your bill.

Energy conservation expert Craig Fernandes, from Enbridge Gas, shares simple ways to stay comfortable and use less energy:

Don't let your thermostat waste heat while you are away. Turning the heat down when you don't need it is one of the easiest ways to save. If you're out at work or away for the weekend, your home doesn't need to be as warm as when you are relaxing on the couch.

A good rule of thumb is to set your thermostat to about 20°C when you're home and awake, and around 17°C when you're asleep or out for several hours. A smart thermostat can do this automatically, by allowing you to set a schedule once and let it run.

Why is a smart thermostat a great investment? For many homeowners, smart thermostats are becoming the "brain" of the heating system. Unlike basic models, smart thermostats can:

- Follow a weekly schedule based on your routine.
- Automatically turn the heat down when no one is home.
- Use outdoor temperature and real-time conditions to adjust your settings.
- Connect to a mobile app so you can check and change the temperature from anywhere.

That means more control, fewer "oops, I left it turned up all day" moments, and less natural gas used over the winter.

Explore more tips to reduce heating costs at [enbridge-gas.com/Ontario](https://enbridge-gas.com/Ontario).

[www.newscanada.com](https://www.newscanada.com)



142 REGATTA AVENUE, RICHMOND HILL  
\$1,749,000



65 ANCHUSA DRIVE, RICHMOND HILL



80 CRANBERRY LANE, AURORA

Happy New Year to our clients, neighbours, and community. We're grateful for your trust and look forward to serving you in the year ahead.

# Key Advantage

HOME. IT'S WHO WE ARE.



LINDSAY STROM  
BROKER

**ROYAL LEPAGE**  
RCR Realty, Brokerage  
Independently Owned And Operated



SUSIE STROM  
REALTOR®

KEYADVANTAGE.CA | 905.836.1212 | INFO@KEYADVANTAGE.CA

# DIY your way to a safer, warmer winter



(NC) Winter prep is important for keeping your home and family safe through the season, but it doesn't have to be complicated. With a few DIY upgrades, you can make your home safer and more energy-efficient. Here's how you can get started:

**AVOID HEAT LOSS.**

Seal drafts around windows, doors and electrical outlets. Use caulking, weather stripping or foam gaskets to keep warm air in and cold air out. Draft stoppers at the base of doors are a quick and affordable fix. Smart thermostats can be a great investment. They learn your schedule and adjust temperatures automatically, helping you save energy when you're away or asleep.

**STAY ON TOP OF HVAC MAINTENANCE.**

Replace your furnace filter every three months. A clean filter improves airflow and helps your furnace run efficiently. While you're at it, check that heating vents aren't blocked by furniture or rugs. It's important to make sure heating vents are clear to keep your heating system from working harder than it has to, which can waste energy and increase your heating bill.

**DON'T LET SNOW AND ICE BUILDUP BLOCK YOUR SYSTEM.**

"DIYers can make a big impact on their home's safety and efficiency--and help save some money on energy," says Craig Fernandes, a residential energy conserva-

tion manager at Enbridge Gas. "Just don't forget to keep your meter and vents clear while tackling those winter prep projects." Clear snow and ice gently with a broom. Avoid using snow blowers or shovels near the meter and never strike it to remove ice.

**GET A HEAD START ON SPRING PROJECTS.**

Planning some spring landscaping or putting up a fence next season? Use the winter months to prep your to-do list. Winter is a great time to plan ahead for outdoor projects like landscaping or putting up a fence. Since you're likely spending more time indoors, you can use the quieter months to research ideas, set a budget and make a to-do list. That way, when spring arrives, you'll be ready to get started without delays. When you do get started, it's important to contact Ontario One Call before digging. It's the law, and helps prevent damage to underground gas lines.

Find more energy-saving and safety tips at [enbridgegas.com/energyefficiency](http://enbridgegas.com/energyefficiency).

[www.newscanada.com](http://www.newscanada.com)



**BRINGING COMFORT HOME, ONE INSTALL AT A TIME.**



Your Community Hardware Store  
Serving York Region and Surrounding Areas



At Aurora Home Hardware, we believe every project isn't just an upgrade: it's about making your house feel like home. From secure new windows and doors to beautifully designed kitchens and bathrooms, our expert team handles every install with care and precision.

*Visit us today and elevate your space!*



**We Offer Many In-House Services to Make Your Life Easier:**

- Window & Door Installation
- Custom Deck Design
- Stihl Dealer
- Kitchen & Bath
- Paint & Painting Supplies
- Delivery

**Do it yourself, Doesn't Mean Do it Alone. Here's How.**

**Aurora**  
Home hardware  
Building Centre

289 Wellington St. E.  
Aurora  
905-727-4751

**Schomberg**  
Home hardware

17250 Hwy 27, Unit 1  
(in the Foodland plaza)  
905-939-HOME (4663)

*Forest Hill*  
REAL ESTATE INC. BROKERAGE  
LEGACY

*Kelly*  *Burt*  
SALES REPRESENTATIVE



Direct 289.221.1481 | Office 365.500.8800 | [kellyburtrealtor@gmail.com](mailto:kellyburtrealtor@gmail.com)

# How growing families can create more space

Many people will admit that home ownership tops their lists of long-term goals.

**F**inding a home that is affordable may require moving into what many real estate agents bill as a “starter home.” But the arrival of a child, and then more children thereafter, could make a home that was perfectly functional for two or three feel too close for comfort.

Anyone who would like to raise a family in the future might want to consider certain factors when choosing a residence or designing living spaces. A home that can grow with life changes can truly be a forever home. The following strategies can expand space when a family grows.

• **DECLUTTER:** It is important to go through belongings regularly and remove anything that is no longer needed. This can be the first step to free up physical space in a room or the home in general. Donate any items that still have utility.

• **REASSESS YOUR EXISTING STORAGE:** Look at different ways to maximize existing storage. Utilizing vertical space is one way to do so, so an investment in shelves, hooks and storage systems that maximize space in an upward direction can get items off the floor. Make use of storage under the stairs or in eaves. Loft beds with open space underneath are great for children's rooms because they maximize floor area.

• **THINK ABOUT TOY STORAGE:** Children love to play with toys, and once kids are in a home, toys will accumulate quite quickly. Have a plan for keeping toys neat and stowed away when not in use. Under-the-bed storage, toy armoires (that are secured to the wall) and furniture that can double as storage, such as storage ottomans, are ideal.

• **REVAMP A CLOSET:** Although closet space may be at a premium, particularly in older homes, a closet can be turned into a nook to hold a desk for a homework station or remote office space. Compact and organized, it's easy to hide away when not in use by closing the door.



• **UTILIZE ROOM DIVIDERS:** Open floor plans have been the norm for some time. But at some point as a family grows, privacy and multi-functional spaces may be needed. It can be costly to put up permanent walls, but bookcases or pieces of tall furniture can be used as room dividers to cordon off areas as specific spaces, like a child's play area.

• **CONVERT A BASEMENT OR GARAGE:** Garages and basements have a reputation for being catch-alls for storage boxes and holiday decorations. However, such rooms have plenty of potential as functional living spaces. Invest in transforming a garage or basement into a room that can grow with the family. At first it may be a play area for young kids. Afterwards, it

can be a gaming or homework hangout. As children grow older, spaces can be converted to a family media room. Having this extra space can free up room in the rest of the house so people can enjoy alone time when they need it.

• **MAXIMIZE OUTDOOR SPACE:** A yard or another outdoor space can add valuable square footage to a home. A covered patio or deck can make the outdoor areas more usable throughout the year and zones can be created for family meals, play and relaxation.

A family home will need more space as the years go on, and homeowners should keep that in mind when making renovations or choosing a property.

## BUDGET-FRIENDLY DINING ROOM RENOVATION IDEAS

Dining rooms can get lost in the home renovation shuffle, as many homeowners tend to focus on renovating kitchens and bathrooms instead. Homeowners do not have to invest a lot of money in renovations to give their dining spaces awe-inspiring makeovers.

Here's how to do so on a budget.

• **LIGHTEN AND BRIGHTEN:** Dining rooms were once very formal spaces. Dark woods, large pieces of furniture, over-the-top chandeliers, and other details could be found in many homes. But now that houses are being built with open floor plans, dining rooms can blend with other spaces, which have moved to lighter-coloured walls, flooring and furniture. A fresh coat of vibrant paint can work wonders and it doesn't cost much. If you can't remove a floor, cover it with a brightly coloured area rug.

• **SWITCH THINGS UP WITH SLIPCOVERS:** Slipcovers can be changed each season to dramatically alter the look of a dining room for little investment. Slipcovers also protect chairs and can be easily laundered after spills.

• **ADD FLOATING SHELVING:** Floating shelves provide much-needed storage or display space without the need to invest in another piece of furniture. Depending on the shelving, they can work in modern design schemes or even farmhouse dining spaces.

• **CLEAR OUT THE CLUTTER:** It might be time to say “so long” to that large curio cabinet and the knickknacks within it. Curio and china cabinets used to be de rigueur, but plenty of people now prefer more open and airy dining rooms. For those who want to keep the cabinet, try decluttering inside to only include the very best display pieces and see if the cabinet can be refinished with paint or a lightly coloured stain.

• **IMPROVE LIGHTING:** Make the chandelier the statement piece of the space. Go for a bold colour or an innovative design. Then add accessories throughout the space that coordinate with the chandelier.

• **ADD BENCH SEATING:** Those who need additional seating may not have to get entirely new furniture. Swap out some chairs for benches, which can fit a couple more guests than chairs.

• **CREATE DEPTH WITH COLOUR:** HGTV says that using various shades of the same colour in a space can add depth. Coordinate drapes, walls, seat fabrics, and accessories for a cohesive design.

Renovating a dining room doesn't require a large investment of time and money. A few simple steps can give dining spaces a whole new feel without busting homeowners' budgets.

### FOR SALE

BAYVIEW & WELLINGTON - 180 JOHN WEST WAY UNIT 403, AURORA

**NEW PRICE ~~\$948,000~~ \$929,000**

2 BEDROOM PLUS DEN • APPROXIMATELY 1,100 SF • 1 PARKING • 1 STORAGE UNIT



The Ridgewood-luxury living in the heart of Aurora. This 2 Bedroom + Den suite offers approx. 1,086 sq. ft. in one of the area's most prestigious residences. Freshly painted and move-in ready, it features hardwood floors, California shutters, built-in cabinetry, and a modern kitchen. The primary bedroom includes a 4-pc ensuite with double vanity and glass shower, plus a well-sized second bedroom and versatile den with custom closet organizers.

Enjoy premium amenities including an outdoor saltwater pool, gym, steam room, theatre, party room, guest suite, and 24/7 concierge. Steps to transit, shopping, dining, parks, and top-rated schools. Ready To Move In!!!

**Are you ready to put your home on the market?  
Ready to move and are overwhelmed?  
Sit back and let us do the work! Give me a call and let's chat!**



**RAFFAELLA DHINGRA**  
SALES REPRESENTATIVE

**Direct: 416.558.7600**

**Office: 905.731.2000**

rdhingra@royalpage.ca | www.dealwithdhingra.com

Servicing Residential & Commercial Clients for over 25 years



Not intended to solicit clients currently under contract with another brokerage. Consumer Choice Award Winner for #1 Brokerage in York Region.

**COMING SOON**

**1400 SQ FT CONDO**



Experience prime condo living in Aurora's sought after Highland Green boasting over 1400 sq ft with split 2 bedroom layout & 2 x 4pc renovated baths. Features sunny south views, hardwood floors, spacious living room with beautiful built in cabinetry, full dining room & separate eat in breakfast room + oversized laundry room. Large primary suite offers 4 pc ensuite & walk-in closet. Parking, locker, security guard, steps to all amenities - restaurants, shops & public transit. **\$938,000!**

*Monica Stohr*

37 Award Winning Years

Top 2% in Canada

Sales Representative

*“Opening Doors  
to Your Dreams”*

ROYAL LEPAGE  
EXECUTIVE CIRCLE™  
AWARD 2024



**REMAX  
Community**

Direct: 416-618-1714 • [www.monicastohr.com](http://www.monicastohr.com)

## What to know about kitchen countertop materials

### QUARTZ

Quartz is considered a low-maintenance and durable countertop material. The home improvement experts at This Old House note that quartz countertops are typically 94 percent ground quartz and now come with an honed, sandblasted or embossed treatment, which makes them appealing to homeowners with varying ideas on the ideal look of a kitchen countertop. Quartz can crack if it's not handled properly, and edges and corners can chip over time. Rounded edges can minimize the risk of chipping. Costs vary by location and product availability, but quartz typically costs about the same as natural stone.

### GRANITE

Consumer Reports notes that no two slabs of granite are the same, and that uniqueness has long appealed to homeowners. Tests run by Consumer Reports found that heat, cuts and scratches did not harm granite, though this material, like quartz, can crack around edges and corners. Granite is a durable material that, if properly maintained, can last several decades. Granite also is nonporous, which makes it resistant to bacteria.

### LAMINATE

Laminate countertops appeal to budget-friendly homeowners and Consumer Reports notes that they're easy to install. Home Depot also notes that laminate countertops come in a wide range of colors, textures and designs. Laminate countertops also are durable, which helps budget-conscious homeowners stretch their dollars even further. Laminate countertops are easily maintained, though it's also easy to permanently damage them with knives, so Consumer Reports recommends always using a cutting board when preparing meals on laminate.

### BUTCHER BLOCK

Butcher block countertops are among the more unique options homeowners may consider. Sometimes referred to as "wood countertops," butcher block countertops are made from wooden strips that are fused together. The home improvement experts at BobVila.com note that butcher block is among the more affordable materials, but the final cost will be dictated by location and availability. BobVila.com notes that butcher block countertops are highly sensitive to liquid, so exposure to moisture should be limited. Sealing butcher block countertops immediately after installation can help protect against bacteria and warping. Though butcher blocks can be high maintenance, many homeowners find the unique look is well worth the extra elbow grease.

# COOKING UP A KITCHEN REMODEL

A successful kitchen renovation project requires careful planning and a detailed vision of what the space will look like upon completion. Whether a homeowner is thinking about giving the kitchen a major overhaul or just a minor refresh, bringing that vision to life doesn't happen overnight.

**T**here is a process that must go into a kitchen renovation. Embarking on a kitchen remodel can be an exciting venture and homeowners may be eager to dive right in, but familiarizing oneself with what to expect prior to the start can help property owners navigate the process more smoothly.

• **INSPIRATION AND DESIGN:** The first phase involves dreaming up kitchen plans and making practical decisions regarding efficiency and functionality. Considerable time may be spent working with a designer and architect, which will involve choosing materials and a color scheme.

• **CREATING A BUDGET:** According to Angi, the average kitchen remodel costs \$26,934, but price ultimately varies depending on the scope of the work. Costs may be less or more depending on the size of the kitchen and the materials chosen.

• **DEMOLITION:** Before a homeowner can have a new kitchen, the old one must be removed. The real physical

transformation begins with the demolition, which tends to be quick but messy. It is essential to set up an alternative "mini kitchen" elsewhere, or expect to be dining out throughout the remodel. The demo process may reveal any issues that will need to be remedied before the real work can begin, such as structural damage, leaks, mold, or other hiccups.

• **CONTRACTOR WORK BEGINS:** It can take one to three weeks for contractors to install plumbing, mechanical components, electrical wiring, ductwork, and more, followed by structural needs and drywall, according to sink and faucet manufacturer Blanco. Flooring and cabinets will follow, and can take another week or more. Fabricating custom countertops is a lengthy process and can represent the bulk of a kitchen renovation timeline. Expect a few weeks for countertops to be measured, made and then installed.

• **APPLIANCES AND FINISHING TOUCHES:** Appliances will be delivered and hooked up at the tail end of the renovation. Finally, the backsplash, fixtures and

lighting are put into place. The last leg of the remodel will include painting, trim work and installation of hardware on cabinets and drawers.

Once all the work is done, it is essential for homeowners to make sure everything is to their liking. According to HGTV and Kitchy Crouse of CK Interior Design, a regular kitchen renovation can take anywhere from six to 12 weeks. With so much time devoted to the space, homeowners should ensure it lives up to their expectations.

As the renovation begins, homeowners should remember that unexpected issues can arise, including delays due to material availability or unforeseen challenges. Maintaining an open communication with the contractor, asking questions and remaining flexible helps. Although a kitchen remodel is initially disruptive, it is an investment that ultimately enhances a home's value.

# Single Detached in Grand Valley

## Starting in the High \$600s



Grand Opening of Our New Models Saturday & Sunday from 1 to 4 PM  
BRAND NEW PLANS AND PRICING, featuring a range of bungalow,  
bungalow and two-storey detached designs on 38' & 42' lots.

 **Thomasfield.com**

  
**MAYBERRY HILL**  
Grand Valley

**RESALE  
HOMES  
COLLECTIONS**

# I SELL HOUSES.

I also know where they fall apart.



By **Julien Laurion**  
Real Estate

Let's clear something up right out of the gate.

I don't just sell houses.

I also know exactly where they fall apart.

Behind the walls.

Under the floors.

And right around the corner from that "charming original feature" everyone pretends not to notice.

That's not cynicism — that's experience.

Because while some people see listings, I see leverage. I see risk. I see opportunity. And in this market, the difference between a win and a regret usually lives in the details no one talks about until it's too late.

We've officially left the era of hopeful pricing and crossed fingers. Buyers are smarter. Sellers are more nervous. And the market is no longer handing out participation trophies.

Good.

This is the kind of market where preparation gets rewarded and shortcuts get exposed.

Most sellers think their biggest challenge is timing the market. It's not. It's understanding how their home will be judged the second a buyer walks through the door — because buyers don't tour homes, they interrogate them.

Floors? Noted.

Kitchen? Judged.

Lighting? Questioned like it's on trial.

Every unfinished detail quietly subtracts confidence. And confidence is currency.

Here's the part most people don't love hearing:

Your house doesn't need more money thrown at it — it needs smarter decisions.

I've watched sellers spend thousands in the wrong places and leave even more on the table. I've also watched homes transform dramatically with a few strategic upgrades that actually move the needle.

The difference isn't budget.

It's strategy.

And that's where being both a realtor and a renovator stops being a fun party fact and starts being a serious advantage.

I don't suggest renovations because they look good on Instagram. I suggest them because I know what buyers will pay for, what inspectors will flag, and what appraisers will actually respect.

On the buyer side? It's just as revealing.

I've seen people walk away from solid opportunities because they didn't understand what a fix really costs. I've also seen buyers fall in love with shiny finishes while ignoring structural red flags that come back to haunt them six months later.

Fear is expensive. So is ignorance.

Knowledge, on the other hand, compounds.

And yes — sometimes that means I tell people things they don't want to hear. Like when a renovation won't pay off. Or when a home is priced for fantasy instead of reality. Or when "doing nothing" is actually the most expensive move of all.

But here's the truth: homes are emotional, but the outcomes don't have to be chaotic.

When you understand both sides of the equation — the market and the materials — you stop guessing. You stop reacting. You start making intentional moves.

And that's how you win in any market.

So whether you're buying, selling, or standing in your kitchen wondering why it still doesn't feel right, remember this: the market doesn't reward hope — it rewards preparation. And when you work with someone who knows how homes are priced and how they're built, there's very little left to chance. I don't just put signs on lawns. I fix problems before they cost you money. All About Homes.

Julien Laurion  
Realtor. Contractor. Local Dad.  
All About Homes.  
Serving Aurora, King City, and the communities in between.

I've got your back from start to finish. I'm a local Realtor who has lived in Aurora for more than 30 years and know it inside and out. With A LOT of home construction experience, I have an eye that will help you make informed decisions re: home concerns and renovations. Let me help you with your next big purchase/move. Please feel free to call or email me directly at 416-402-5530 or julien@bigtuna.ca or check out my socials at @bigtunarealty

# Sell With The #1 Team

on the Toronto Real Estate Board\*



Get an Instant Free Home Evaluation

start.faristeam.ca

\*Unit sales on Toronto Board for 2025 comprising of 44 team members

# LIST WITH ONE OF YORK REGION'S TOP 50 AGENTS!

PROPERTIES NOW AVAILABLE!



**Build Your Own Building! \$3,280,000**  
Aprox. 3/4 Acre Vacant Industrial Lot in High Demand Richmond Hill Location.  
Call Rocco Today!



**Privacy Plus! \$2,499,900**  
Aprox. 5,400 SQFT Bungalow Situated on Almost Half Acre Treed Lot.  
Call Rocco Today!



**Brand New Bungalow! \$2,498,888**  
Aprox. 4,800 SQFT of Luxurious Living Space. Includes Finished Walkout Basement Situated on a 105 by 156 FT Lot.  
Call Rocco Today!



**This One's Loaded! \$1,850,000**  
Modern 2 Storey Home in Aurora With Open Concept 10 FT Ceilings. Open Kitchen/Family Room. Over \$250,000 in Upgrades.  
Call Rocco Today!



**Golf Course Community! \$1,838,000**  
5 Year Old Open Concept Home With Open Kitchen/Family Room. Four Bedrooms, Three Ensuites.  
Call Rocco Today!



**Just Outside Newmarket! \$1,688,000**  
Just Under 4 Acre Rural Estate. Aprox. 2,500 SQFT 2 Storey Home With Finished Basement and 3 Car Garage.  
Call Rocco Today!



**Legal Basement Apartment! \$1,499,900**  
2 Storey Home With 9 FT Ceilings, 4 Bedrooms, 3 Ensuites. Open Kitchen/Family Room.  
Call Rocco Today!



**St. Andrew's Valley Golf Course Community! \$1,499,900**  
Open Concept Bungalow With Premium South Facing Pie Shaped Lot, Aprox. 3,600 SQFT of Living Space Includes Finished Walkout Basement. Call Rocco Today!



**Bungalow on Large Treed Lot! \$999,900**  
Minutes to Upper Canada Mall. 3 Plus 1 Bedroom Home.  
Call Rocco Today!

## RECENT SALES BY ROCCO!



**870 Shadrach Dr, Newmarket**  
**Sold For \$1,482,800**  
Call Today For a Free Market Evaluation!



**286 Miami Dr., Keswick**  
**Sold For \$785,000**  
(Represented the Buyer in this Transaction)  
Call Today For a Free Market Evaluation!



**448 Sydor Court, Newmarket**  
**Sold For \$858,000**  
Call Today For a Free Market Evaluation!

# Rocco Racioppo

BROKER



REMEMBER... YOU GET  
THE RIGHT RESULTS WITH ROCCO!

Call rocco today for a  
**FREE MARKET EVALUATION**

**905-841-4787**  
**ROCCORACIOPPO.COM**

OVER 40 YEARS OF AWARD WINNING SERVICE

## OVER 40 YEARS OF AWARD WINNING SERVICE!

