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AURORA/KING

VOLUME 7, ISSUE 9

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The summer Real Estate market in review

July and August were very busy months for the Toronto real estate market and all the factors highlighted the “hot” market we are experiencing. With the total number of sales YTD being up 10.7% over last year and the number of homes available for sale down 9.1%, some multiple offers situations and homes selling quicker were the natural results in many areas. *Continued on page 4*

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HOW TO CREATE A WINTER-FRIENDLY *outdoor living space*

For many homeowners, the arrival of fall and winter marks an end to time spent lounging and dining al fresco on the patio. But cold air does not necessarily mean patio furniture must be packed up until flowers bloom anew in spring.

the space more functional in winter. An overhead shelter on a deck can be outfitted with heaters (and fans to provide a cooling effect in summer) and allow residents to sit outside and watch snow fall without getting wet.

PLANT THE RIGHT TREES. Coniferous trees prevent wind, which can be especially harsh in winter. Homeowners who are unsure about which direction wind typically comes from can consult a landscape architect to determine where to plant the trees to ensure they're most effective.

FIRE UP THE PATIO. A firepit or fireplace can warm up an outdoor living area, making such a space warm and cozy even on a cold winter night. A patio with a built-in firepit can cost a pretty penny, but such an addition can withstand winter weather better than a standalone firepit, which might be vulnerable to being tipped over by winter winds.

INSTALL LIGHTING. The sun sets early in winter, so homeowners won't be able to rely on natural light to illuminate their outdoor living spaces well into the evening like they do in summer. Heat lamps can be used to both warm and illuminate a space, serving dual, budget-friendly functions.

In its 2017 Home Design Trends Survey, the American Institute of Architects found that consumers continue to emphasize practical features that expand the functionality of their homes via heavy investment in outdoor living spaces. The survey found that the popularity of outdoor living spaces increased by 72 percent between 2012 and 2017, highlighting just how much homeowners enjoy spending time outdoors. By taking measures to make their outdoor living spaces winterproof, homeowners can enjoy these areas of their homes even more.

COVER YOUR DECK. A covered deck may appear to make the space less enjoyable during spring and summer. However, covered decks can protect residents from the sun on especially hot days while also making

With the right adjustments, outdoor living spaces can be enjoyed throughout winter.

Real Estate Market Update – Aurora

- FreeImages.com/Genta Brakkee



Seller's Market in Aurora

At the current rate of Buyer's demand in Aurora, there's just under four months of supply remaining compared to a month more of inventory last year. Indeed it's a Seller's market and the month of September has begun with 13 per cent less homes of all descriptions available for sale than in the prior year.

There were 69 sales of all home types which was thirteen per cent down year over year. The median price of homes that sold was up by \$26,150 to \$854,000. The average price for all home types was \$915,060 which is a slight decrease of 2.5 per cent since the same time of the prior year.

On average it took 35 days for homes to sell and this number would need further investigation as some homes are placed on the market multiple times. Sellers on average received 97 per cent of their asking price. There were 174 homes placed

for sale in August and at the end of the month, a total of 275 homes were available for sale.

Year to date there have been 11 per cent more sales accounted for in Aurora with a near 6 per cent decrease in homes placed for sale. Speak to your REALTOR® today about your next move in real estate.

– Written by Connie Power

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*The statistics provided herein were obtained from the
Toronto Real Estate Board; Regional Housing Market Tables;
York Region, Aurora for August of 2018, 2019 and the
Summary of Existing Home Transactions of all home types,
April, May 2018, 2019 for all TREB Areas.

***Not intended to solicit those currently under a real estate contract.



Easy ways to clean up leaves

Autumn is marked by colorful foliage and plummeting temperatures. Once those leaves reach peak color, they fall from the branches and collect on lawns, necessitating cleanup projects. For homeowners with big yards, such a project can be tiring and time-consuming. However, there are ways to make leaf cleanup easier.

One of the easiest ways to clean up leaves is to reach for a lawn mower rather than a rake. The mower will cut leaves down to smaller sizes, creating an effective mulch that can add nutrients back into the lawn. Davey, a lawn and landscape solutions service, says that mowed leaves also can be collected in a mower bag and added to garden beds or compost piles.

For those who prefer manual raking, select a rake with tines that will not skewer the leaves in the process. Big rakes also can make faster work of gathering leaves into piles.

The home improvement resource The Family Handyman advocates for the use of a lawn sweeper. This is a manual device that has a rotating sweeping brush that gathers up lawn debris and leaves into an attached hopper bag. Like mowed leaves, the bag can be emptied into a compost pile or distributed where needed.

Raking leaves onto a large tarp is another option. Once it's full, the tarp can be taken to the curb where many towns will collect the leaves seasonally. Otherwise, the tarp can be used as a funnel to put leaves into a gardening bag or another appropriate receptacle.

Leaf blowers remain a fast option for cleaning up yards, but they require electricity or gas and can be noisy. Still, they are a popular choice for large landscapes or when quick work needs to be made of leaf clean-up.

Leaves will fall in autumn, but luckily homeowners have various methods at their disposal to tame the mess.

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Published By:



Continued from the cover

There has been a much stronger price growth in the semi-detached, townhouse and condominium apartments segment than the above average numbers indicate. Those numbers have been greatly reduced by the detached home market segment, which has been impacted by the most by the OSFI stress test. Detached homes over \$2,000,000 have experienced a slower pace of price growth, with average detached prices remaining lower than last year's levels in some parts of the GTA. This segment represents a great opportunity to trade up for some and a chance for others to move back into the city if they can accommodate the mortgage stress test.

The rental market continues to be strong and investors continue to purchase pre-construction condominiums for the rent and long-term capital appreciation. In response to increased construction prices and in an effort to stay affordable, builders are bringing out smaller units between 350-500 sq. feet in size and these



will be grabbed up quickly due to the price range. Once again, no surprise, we are just following what has happened in other major cities around the world.

With one or two mortgage providers currently offering 5-year fixed mortgages at 2.49% and several others gearing up to match that rate in October, it

seems the Fall market hold further increased activity.

If you are considering buying or selling, or know someone who is, please give me a call, I would love to help and put my knowledge and experience to work for you.

Have a great September!

Call Anita for more info on the cover home!



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Prevent growth of mold/mildew in colder months

Mold and mildew are not only unsightly, but unhealthy. These fungi grow readily in damp areas and are found in the air breathed both indoors and outside. If left unaddressed, mold and mildew can threaten the health of a home's inhabitants.

Mildew is a type of mold that remains relatively flush with the surface it grows on. Other molds can grow puffy in appearance. Molds serve the purpose of destroying organic materials, but in high amounts, these microorganisms can cause respiratory problems, sinus congestion, throat irritation, headaches, and other issues, particularly when mold grows unchecked indoors, says Better Homes and Gardens. As a result, it is essential to address mold before it becomes problematic.

According to Polygon, a drying technology and temporary climate solutions company, the wet season in winter is when molds often grow and expand. Mold can break down the integrity and strength of the surfaces where it grows.

Homeowners can employ the following strategies to prevent mold growth.

- Keep all surfaces clean, using proper cleaning products. Diluted bleach solutions are highly effective at killing microscopic fungi, viruses and bacteria.
- Reduce moisture and humidity by ensuring sufficient air circulation in rooms, particularly bathrooms and kitchens. An exhaust fan will help remove moisture quickly.
- Fabrics covered in mildew that can be laundered should be carefully removed and washed in chlorine bleach and hot water. An oxygen bleach product also can be effective.
- Invest in a dehumidifier that can reduce moisture in the home in problem areas, such as damp basements or garages.
- Fix plumbing leaks as soon as possible.
- Remove damp leaves and snow from areas around the foundation of the home. Ensure that gutters and downspouts are clear of debris and can shuttle water away from the house effectively.
- Replace cracked or defective mortar in basements.
- Make sure all seals on windows and doors are not compromised and are in good working condition.
- Be sure an HVAC in-line humidifier is adjusted to the right setting and isn't pumping too much moisture into the heated air; otherwise, the added humidity can contribute to mold.
- If there is a flood or water infiltrates a home in other ways, hire a professional service to help clean and dry the home effectively.

Mold and mildew are problematic, but with diligence they can be kept at bay.



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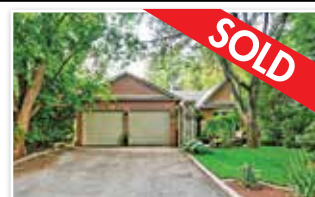
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134 BATSON DRIVE, AURORA



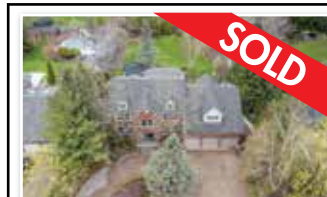
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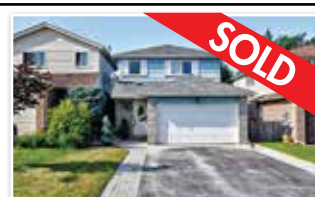
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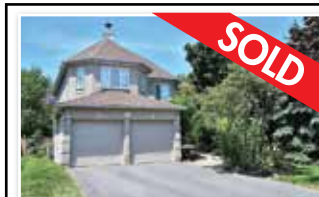
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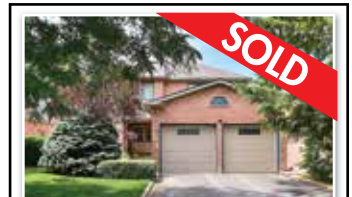
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DESIGN *rooms* more easily

Redesigning a room can involve several steps, from choosing a paint palette to taking down walls to buying new furniture. When it comes time to put the space back together, finding an appealing furniture arrangement or layout renovation that maximizes space efficiently can be challenging if it requires moving heavy pieces of furniture around. To make such tasks easier, homeowners can rely on a bevy of room-designing apps that enable one to manipulate a room in the digital realm.



Some people have great spatial reasoning and can work out designs in their head or by plotting items on graph paper. But many homeowners may need a little extra help. By figuring out a floor plan, anyone can start laying out their furniture and other design elements.

Room planners come in various forms, from free downloads available through popular furniture

companies to pay-for-use, third-party software. The following are some of the more popular room planners homeowners can utilize.

AMIKASA: This app enables users to create room layouts using furniture and more from real brands. It features a walk-through mode so you can take a virtual tour afterwards.

AUTODESK HOMESTYLER: Brought to you by the company that produces professional design programs for architects and designers, like AutoCAD, Autodesk and Revit, this user-friendly technology allows you to create 3D renderings and move around furniture, decorative items, appliances, and other elements right in the app.

FLOOR PLAN CREATOR: Start with the basics by plotting out precise and accurate floor plans. This app enables you to create multiple floor rooms in 3D and get automatic figures for perimeters, walls and more.

IKEA HOME PLANNER TOOLS: The free, easy-to-use home planner tool from the popular furniture giant enables you to see how items from the store can look in your space — before you bring it home. The Kitchen Planner from the company also makes it simple to enter Ikea components and see how much the proposed kitchen design may cost.

MAGIC PLAN: This is another popular feature-filled app for planning designs. The technology even allows you to take a picture of your existing room and create floor plans.

PLANNER 5D: This is an extensive room-design tool that helps you design rooms down to the smallest architectural details. It also can be taken outdoors for landscaping and pools, utilizing 3D graphics.

ROOM SCAN PRO: This app draws floor plans simply by having you hold the phone up to a wall. The software will then scan the circumference and plot out the requisite measurements.

These are just a few of the room planners that can make it easier to see what a finished design product may one day look like.



Exterior renovations that improve curb appeal

NEGLECTING A HOME'S EXTERIOR can be a disservice to homeowners, particularly those looking to increase the value of their homes. Curb appeal is important, as a home's appearance can greatly affect prospective buyers' perceptions.

Knowing which projects can offer the most bang for their remodeling buck can help homeowners make the right choices when improving the exterior of their homes. The following are some areas where homeowners can direct their focus if their end goal is a great-looking home with added value, as determined by the 2019 "Cost vs. Value Report" from Remodeling magazine. This report compares the average cost of 22 remodeling projects with the value those projects retain at resale across 136 markets.

GARAGE DOOR REPLACEMENT: Homeowners can recoup 97.5 percent of their investment on a new garage door. This remodel tops the list for good looks and value. The average cost of \$3,611 is for replacing an existing two-car garage.

MANUFACTURED STONE VENEER: Replacing a portion of vinyl siding with stone veneer can greatly improve curb appeal, adding style that can set a home apart. Homeowners can expect to recoup a 94.9 percent return on their investment.

WOOD DECK ADDITION: A wooden deck on the rear or side of a home enhances homeowners' ability to enjoy the outdoors year-round. A wood deck addition recoups 75.6 of the cost of homeowners' initial investment.

SIDING REPLACEMENT: Not only does old or weathered siding look unsightly, it can impact the energy efficiency of a home. Even though a siding replacement project is costly — at roughly \$16,000 — it offers a 75 percent return and peace of mind that the home is being well-protected from the elements.

NEW ENTRY DOOR: Replacing an existing door with a 20-gauge steel door complete with clear dual-pane half-glass panel, jambs and an aluminum threshold with composite stop gets homeowners 75 percent of their initial investment back at resale. Improving the door isn't all about good looks, either. A door that isn't well-insulated or secure can be problematic.

In addition to these improvements, homeowners would be wise to focus on some upgraded landscaping, an upgraded roof, new windows, and improved exterior lighting as surefire ways to add curb appeal and potential value to their homes.

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Ask Big Tuna, The Renovating Realtor



By Julien Laurion
The Big Tuna of Real Estate

Hi Julien, I chatted with you briefly at the street sale in June and I thought I would ask you a question. There was a news piece on television recently that discussed conditional clauses and general clauses when buying a home. I am still renting and thinking about taking the jump, I am confused. Can you clear this up for me? Sincerely, Alice



Hi Alice, this is a common area of confusion which is why it is best to use a Realtor when purchasing a home. A conditional clause means that the seller of the home accepts that the offer to purchase the home is dependent on a future event. The condition can be in the favour of the buyer or the seller. The party in whose favour the condition is stated has the option to back out of the deal if the condition is not met. Conditional clauses are typically used to cover things like financing and other key factors that can affect purchasing the home.

For example, a conditional clause would read like this: "THIS OFFER IS CONDITIONAL upon the Buyer arranging, at the Buyers own expense, satisfac-

tory financing and home insurance. Unless the Buyer gives notice in writing delivered to the Seller personally or in accordance with any other provisions for the delivery of notice in this Agreement of Purchase and Sale or any Schedule thereto not later than 6 p.m. on the 5th business day following acceptance of this agreement... that this condition is fulfilled, this Offer shall be null and void and the deposit shall be returned to the Buyer in full without deduction or delay..."

In this example, this condition allows the buyer five business days to find satisfactory home financing and insurance. Should they not be able to do so, both parties have the option to walk away.

There are many other examples of conditional clauses – on the sale of the purchaser's home, on the inspection of the home etc.

Sometimes the purchaser requests that the purchase of the house is conditional on the seller doing something or fixing something. In those types of circumstances, if the seller does not follow through and do what was promised, it can allow the purchaser to walk away from the deal or to request a reduction in price.

The purpose of conditional clauses is to allow the parties to make a deal dependent on a future event that is not known to them at the time of purchase and sale. These types of clauses can protect both the buyer and seller. There are many nuances in the area of conditional clauses and the consequences of either party failing to meet the condition.

When a purchaser wants to make an offer of purchase with conditional clauses, it is wise to use a Realtor like me, and in some situations, additional assis-

tance from a real estate lawyer may also be required. If you want to chat more, do not hesitate to reach out.

Who is Big Tuna, The Renovating Realtor?

Julien Laurion AKA Big Tuna, is a local Real Estate Sale Representative with RE/MAX Hallmark York Group Realty in Aurora. I am a real estate agent who has expertise in both Real Estate and Renovations and have been involved in this community for over 20 years. If you have a question for my monthly article or if you are considering buying, selling or leasing a home please feel free to call or email me directly at (416) 402-5530 or julien@bigtuna.ca or by alternatively visiting my website www.bigtuna.ca or Facebook page @bigtunarealty

Things to consider before warming up next to your first fire this winter

A warm fire can make even the coldest winter day more enjoyable. Fireplaces may not get much use in spring or summer, but come late fall and throughout the winter, the fireplace can be a great place for families to gather.

Before fireplace season hits full swing, homeowners might want to brush up on a few fireplace facts so they can safely enjoy nights spent sitting by the crackling flames.

The Chimney Safety Institute of America advises homeowners with fireplaces to hire a CSIA-certified chimney sweep to clean their fireplaces. After a lengthy period of non-use, various issues could be affecting the chimney, many of which might not be noticeable to an untrained eye. Professional, certified chimney sweeps have extensive knowledge of fireplaces, making them valuable resources who can let homeowners know if any safety issues developed since fireplaces were last used.

The National Protection Agency recommends that chimneys be swept at least once per year.

A full inspection of the chimney might be in order as well. Chimney service technicians will conduct thorough examinations of readily accessible portions of the chimney exterior and interior and accessible portions of the appliance and the chimney connection. The CSIA recommends that homeowners who plan to use their chimneys as they have in the past request a Level 1 inspection, which will examine the soundness of the chimney structure and flue as well as the basic appliance installation and connections. Technicians also will verify if the chimney is free of obstruction and combustible deposits.

Homeowners also should inspect their chimney dampers before lighting their first fires of the season. Dampers should open and close smoothly. If not, a ser-

vice technician can help fix or replace the damper.

Firewood is another thing homeowners must consider before lighting their first fires of the season. The CSIA says that well-seasoned firewood works best, noting that wood that is not well-seasoned will produce more smoke than heat. In addition, the home improvement resource This Old House recommends using dense wood that's been split and stored in a high and dry place for at least six months. Oak is an example of dense wood that, when stored properly, can make for an enjoyable fireplace experience. Avoid softwoods like pine. Pine can produce a lot of creosote, which is a byproduct of wood combustion. Creosote is highly flammable, and as it builds up in a chimney, the risk for a chimney fire increases. Choosing the right wood, making sure it's well-seasoned and having a chimney professionally cleaned can reduce the risk

of a creosote-related chimney fire. A Level 1 inspection should determine if there are potentially dangerous levels of creosote deposits in the chimney.

Before nestling up to a fireplace this winter, homeowners should consider a host of factors and safety measures to ensure their fireplaces are safe and ready for the season ahead.



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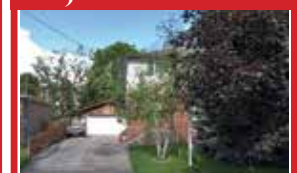
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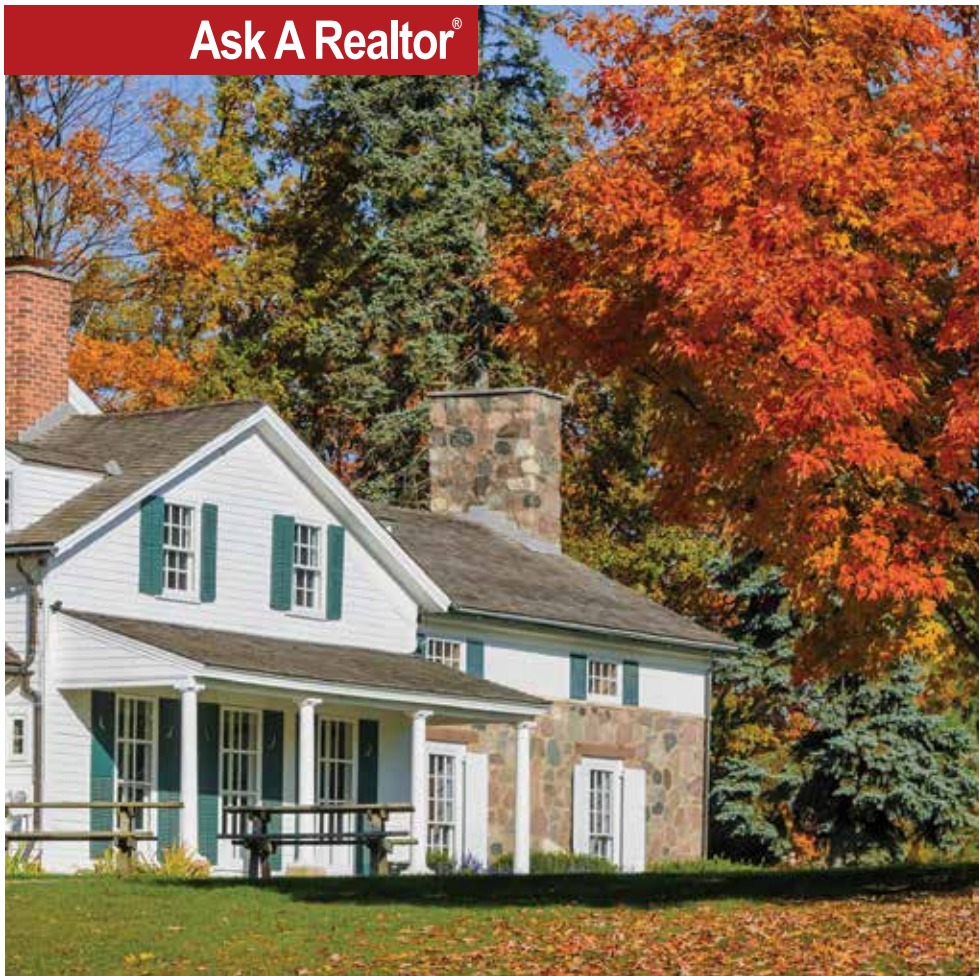
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We love the third house we saw today, do you think we should offer the full price?

So many factors go into pricing a home and before taking the next step to offer on a home ask your REALTOR® to dig further into the market value of the home.

It's good to view a competitive market analysis of similar homes in the area and the recent sales activity. Also an analysis of homes that were unsold and have come off the market.

It's important to be aware of recent assessments and the age of the home. What condition is the home in and how much work will it need now or in the near future; does the price take this into account.

So many Buyers are challenged more than ever with stricter lending guidelines in place, being pre-approved prior to any offer is of the utmost importance to limit surprises.

Understanding the average and median home pricing in the community as well as how quickly homes are selling and what the current demand is versus the supply of homes for sale will always be beneficial. As seasons change, demand also fluctuates and competition can be more fierce or wane.

It's prudent to arrange for a home inspection as a condition, finance, condominium status certificate and others and a conditional offer may still be considered even in competition. Buyers should discuss with their lender first whether waiving finance is suggested.

After market analysis is completed, the story behind the asking price should be more understood as to whether the home is at market value, above or below. While the Selling agent may not share how little the Seller is willing to accept a general understanding of the range in home value will be attained and negotiation can begin towards purchasing a home.

– Written by Connie Power

Connie Power Assistant Manager, Sales Representative CNE® SRS® ABR® SRES® for RE/MAX Hallmark York Group Realty Ltd., Brokerage serving York region and beyond in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA).

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