



# SELLER'S GUIDE

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Jameel Batshon & Ramez Bahu







## The Cornerstone Realtor Team

Our commitment to giving back to the community. We would like to highlight the marketing aspect of our services, providing you with a detailed understanding of the approach we take and the outcomes you can expect.

We are deeply committed to our business and passionate about what we do. We embrace technology, continuously educate ourselves, and run our real estate business as a full-time career. Our dedication ensures that we are well-versed in the ever-changing real estate market and the latest digital marketing trends.

Since 2005, Cornerstone Realtor Team has been dedicated to giving clients quality service with their three basic principles of Integrity Honesty and Excellence. With our local Tri-Valley expertise and our global presence as a part of Century 21 Real Estate Alliance, we are fully equipped to deliver extraordinary service and experiences to our clients.

You can trust us to act on your behalf, provide exceptional services, and protect your personal and financial interests when selling your home. Our goal is to make the selling process seamless and stress-free for you.

We appreciate your consideration and look forward to the opportunity to work with you. If you have any questions or would like to discuss your real estate needs, please reach out to us.

Thank you!

# Should I Sell?

With all the shifts happening in the housing market lately, you might be thinking about whether it's the right moment to sell your home. Here are some usual questions you could be asking, along with responses to help you make a choice that you're comfortable with.

## 1. Is There Still a Demand from Homebuyers?

If you're concerned that there might not be many buyers interested this spring, there's no need to fret. Mortgage rates have been decreasing since last autumn, encouraging more buyers to come back into the market. This indicates that there's still a strong interest in buying homes right now -- and this interest could grow even more if mortgage rates continue to drop. So, there's a good chance you could still see buyers vying for your home this spring.

## 2. Is Selling Now a Worthwhile Decision?

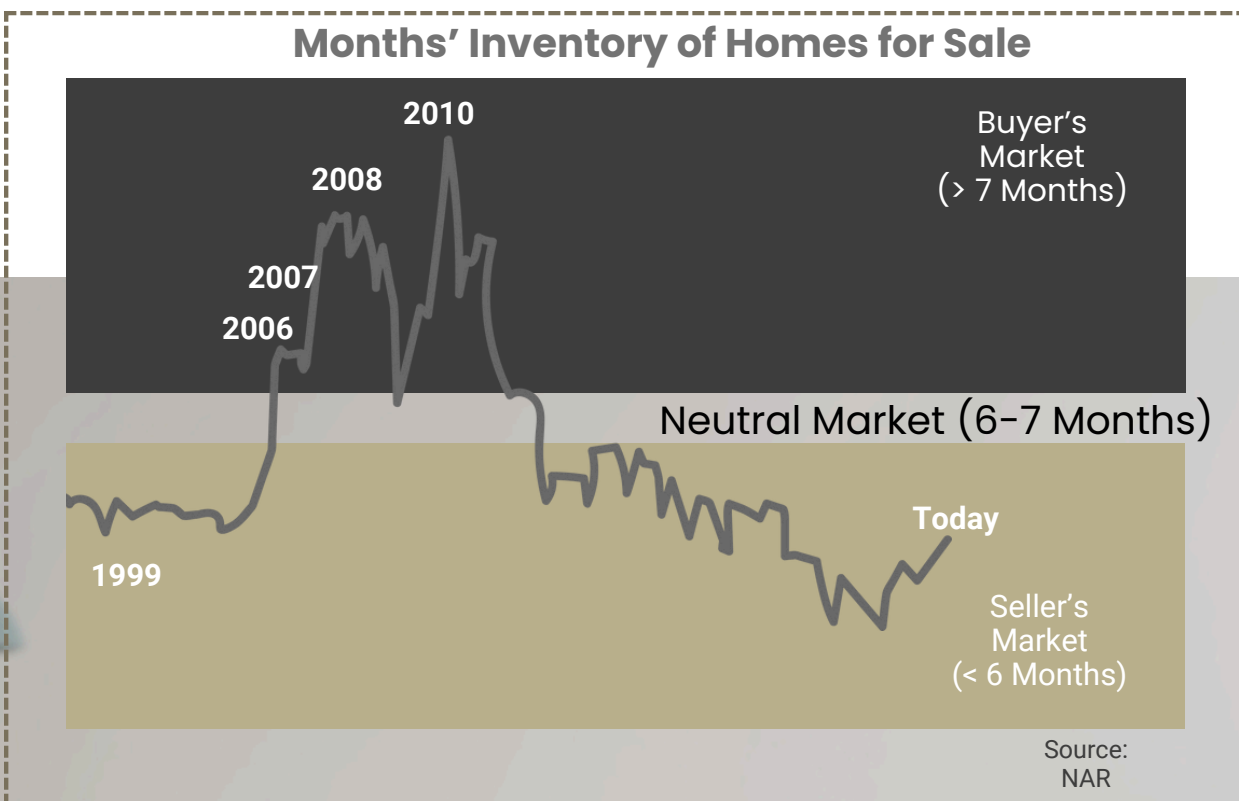
The number of homes available for sale is still on the lower side, which means we're currently in a seller's market (refer to the graph below). Since there are more buyers than available homes, people are eagerly looking for more choices, making your home more noticeable. Even though the inventory remains limited, it has seen a slight increase lately, suggesting you might find more possibilities for your own house hunt. The graph below helps illustrate the current state of home inventory.



### 3. Are Home Prices Experiencing a Decline?

In simple terms, they aren't falling. Recent information indicates that home prices are still going up in many areas across the country. Even though prices can differ from one place to another, specialists predict that they will keep increasing, but at a gentler rate, in the coming years.

So, with home values currently growing, you can feel confident about selling your house this spring.



#### **Ultimately**

If you're thinking about selling your house this winter, let's chat so you have the advice and information you need to make the right choice.

# Why Do You Want To Move Right Now?

If you're considering selling your house right now, it's likely because something in your life has changed—not because of the current market conditions

While things like mortgage rates and home prices are important in deciding whether to sell, it's crucial not to let these market factors overshadow your original reasons for considering a move. What matters most are your lifestyle needs and any changes in your life. As mentioned in a recent article from Realtor.com, sometimes you just need to move due to significant life events like a new job, a new baby, a divorce, a death, or any other major change in your life.

Here are some of the most common reasons people decide to sell their homes. You might find that one or more of these reasons speak to you and could be enough to justify making a move.

## 1. Relocation

Various factors can serve as motivation for a move to a new area. These may include a change in employment, a desire to be nearer to friends and family, the aspiration to reside in your dream location, or simply seeking a change in scenery.

## 2. Upgrading

A significant number of homeowners opt to sell when transitioning to a larger home. This often occurs when there's a requirement for additional space, whether it's for entertaining, establishing a home office or gym, or accommodating a growing number of family members with extra bedrooms.

## 3. Downsizing

Another reason homeowners may choose to sell is when there's more space than needed, perhaps due to someone moving out recently. It could also be prompted by recent retirement or a general readiness for a change in living arrangements.

#### 4. Change in Relationship Status

Divorce, separation, or marriage are other common reasons individuals sell.

#### 5. Health Concerns

In cases where a homeowner experiences mobility challenges or health issues necessitating specific living arrangements or modifications, selling their current house to find one better suited to their needs becomes a viable option.

With higher mortgage rates and rising prices, there are some affordability challenges right now—but your needs and your lifestyle matter too.

**If you're considering selling your house to find a new one that better aligns with your needs, we'd be happy to assist. Let's connect, and we can guide you through the process, helping you find a home that suits your preferences and requirements.**



# Are Low Rates Good for Sellers?

## 2 Reasons Why...

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If you've been waiting to sell your house and make a move because you thought mortgage rates were too high, the news that they've dropped from their highest point last fall is encouraging for you.

Mortgage rates have decreased since last October, when they reached a high of 7.79%. They might not return to the low 3% we experienced a few years back, but they are predicted to keep falling throughout this year, despite some expected ups and downs. Here are two reasons why the drop in rates, and the anticipation that they will continue to decrease, are great news for you:

First, you might not feel as tied to your current mortgage rate anymore. With rates lower than a few months ago, the idea of leaving your current low rate for a new one isn't as daunting. When rates were nearing 8%, the thought of moving meant possibly accepting a much higher rate. Now, with rates having dropped, the gap between your current rate and what you might get on a new mortgage isn't as wide, making the idea of moving more financially feasible than before.

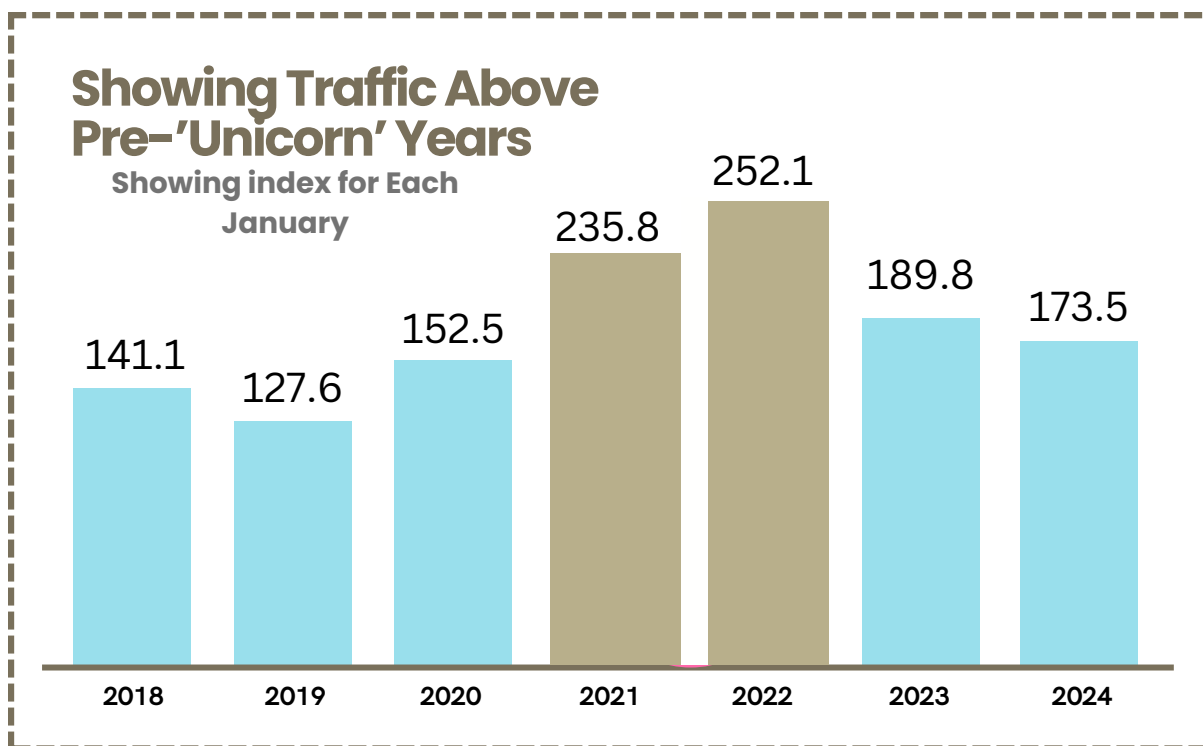
As Lance Lambert, the founder of ResiClub, put it, we might be experiencing the peak of the "lock-in effect." This means that some people looking to upgrade their homes or seeking a lifestyle change might be accepting that the incredibly low rates of 3% and 4% might not come back any time soon.

When mortgage rates go down, buyers can save money on their home loans, which makes buying a house more appealing and affordable. With rates dropping from their high point last fall, more buyers might feel encouraged to re-enter the market and pursue purchasing a home. This increase in buyers leads to greater demand for available homes, including yours, potentially making it an excellent time to sell.

# It's Still A Good Time to Sell?

The housing market might not be as wildly active as it was a couple of years back, but there's still a significant number of people purchasing homes. And there's data available that supports this fact.

The ShowingTime Showing Index tracks how often buyers are going out to look at homes. The graph below uses this index to illustrate the level of buyer activity across the last seven Januarys. In this graph, higher numbers indicate there's more traffic of buyers at home showings.



In the graph, the years considered exceptionally unique or "unicorn" years are highlighted in pink. You'll notice that there has been a decrease in demand since those years, primarily due to the rise in mortgage rates. However, when you look at 2024 and compare it to the green bars on the left, which represent what was considered normal in the market from 2018 to 2020, it's clear that buyer activity is still above what was typical during those years.

# Equity Can Offset Affordability Challenges

Are you thinking about selling your house? If so, today's mortgage rates may be making you wonder if that's the right decision. But your equity can help with some of those affordability concerns.

An article from Bankrate provides a clear explanation of what home equity is and how it increases over time. Home equity is essentially the difference between the current value of your home and the amount you still owe on your mortgage. It's like the portion of your home that you've fully paid for.

You begin to accumulate equity from the moment you make a down payment to purchase your home. As you continue to pay down your mortgage, your equity increases. Additionally, your equity grows as the value of your home goes up over time.

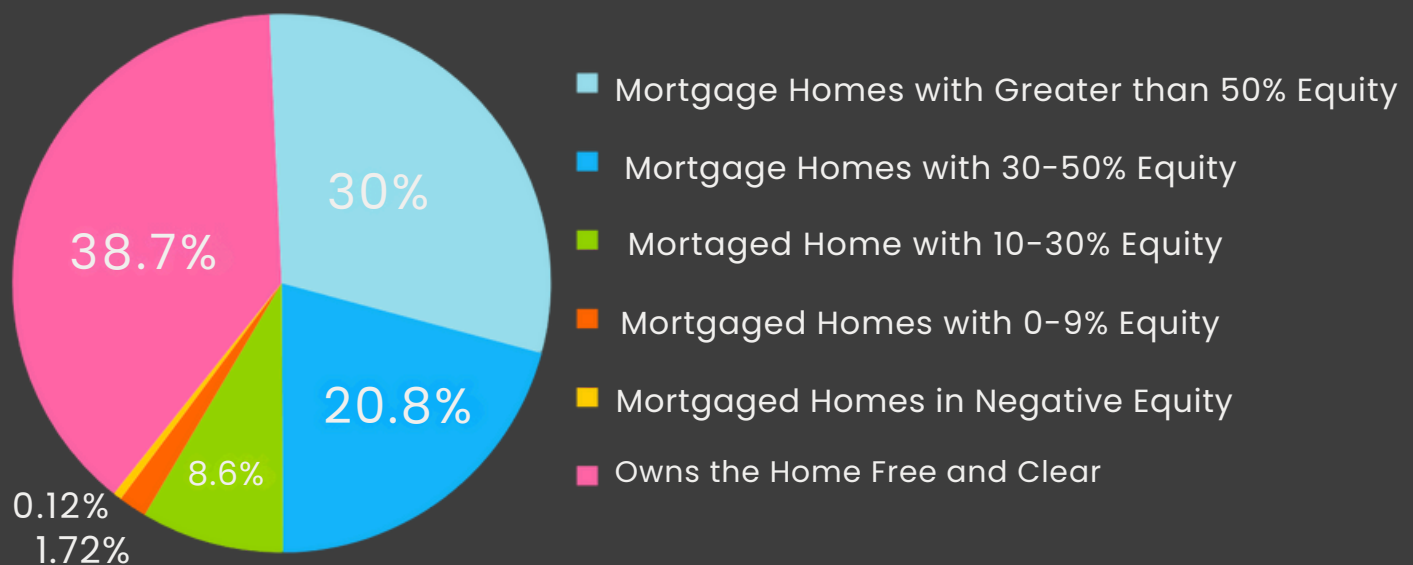
Think of equity as a straightforward calculation: it's the current value of your home minus the remaining balance on your mortgage. And here's something to consider: your equity might have increased more than you realize recently. With home prices surging in the past few years, the value of your home – and consequently your equity – might have significantly risen. So, you could have more equity at your disposal than you think.



According to the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), the Census, and ATTOM, a property data provider, just over two-thirds (68.7%) of homeowners have either fully paid off their mortgages or have at least 50% equity (see chart below):

## Americans Sitting on Tremendous Equity

68.7% Have Paid Off Their Mortgage or Have at Least 50% Equity



Source FHFA Census, ATTOM

This means that nearly 70% of homeowners currently have a substantial amount of equity. Understanding how equity can address your affordability concerns is crucial in today's market challenges. Here's how your equity can make a significant difference when you decide to move:




## 1. Be an All-Cash Buyer:

If you've been residing in your current home for an extended period, the equity you've built up may be sufficient to purchase a new house without needing to take out a loan. In such a scenario, you can become an all-cash buyer, eliminating the need to borrow money and eliminating concerns about mortgage rates.

## 2. Make a Larger Down Payment:

Your equity can be utilized for your next down payment. It might even enable you to make a larger down payment, reducing the amount you need to borrow and minimizing the impact of current interest rates. As Experian explains, "Increasing your down payment lowers your principal loan amount and, consequently, your loan-to-value ratio, which could lead to a lower interest rate offer from your lender."



The average U.S.  
homeowner now has  
about \$300,000 in  
equity.

-CORELOGIC

# What You Need to Do When Selling?

If you're thinking about selling your home and moving this spring, you might be feeling a mix of excitement and a little bit of nostalgia about leaving your current place. To feel sure about your choice, keep these two crucial tips in mind.

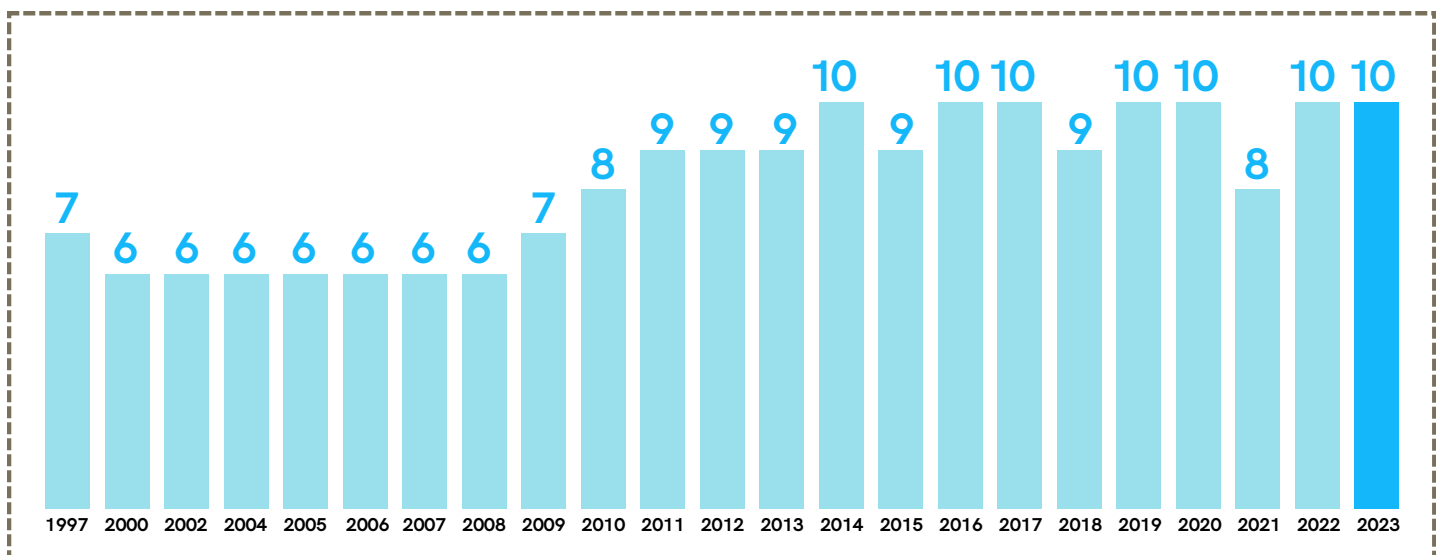
## 1. Manage Your Feelings

Nowadays, people are keeping their homes for longer periods than before. Data from the National Association of Realtors (NAR) shows that since 1985, the average duration a homeowner keeps their house has gone up from six years to ten years (refer to the graph below):

Staying in a home longer than what was once typical means you might develop a stronger emotional bond with your space. This is especially true if it's the first home you purchased or where your family has grown. Such a home likely holds a very special place in your heart. Each room is filled with memories, making it challenging to separate from the sentimental value attached to your home.

**Today's homeowners are staying in their houses for an average of 10 years**

Source: NAR



For some homeowners, the deep emotional connection to their home can make it difficult to separate their feelings from the home's actual market value. This is where the expertise of a real estate professional becomes invaluable. They can assist with negotiations and developing the best pricing strategy, ensuring that your decisions are guided by objective market insights rather than personal attachment. Trust in their experience, as they're focused on protecting your interests.

## 2. Present Your Home in Its Best Light

Your taste in decor and how you've tailored your home over the years might hold significant value to you, but it might not resonate with potential buyers. That's why it's crucial to prioritize your home's first impression, aiming to appeal to a wide range of buyers.

Prospective buyers want to envision their own lives in the space, imagining their own furniture and personal items in the home, rather than being surrounded by your personal effects and memories. Jessica Lautz, Deputy Chief Economist and Vice President of Research at NAR, emphasizes the importance of staging: "Buyers want to easily envision themselves within a new home, and home staging is a way to showcase the property in its best light."

A real estate professional can offer valuable advice on preparing your home for sale, ensuring it's presented in the most appealing way possible to attract potential buyers.



# What You Need to Do When Selling?

If you're considering selling your house by yourself, a process known as "For Sale by Owner" or FSBO, it's important to think about a few key points. Choosing to go the FSBO route means you'll be handling numerous tasks on your own, and this can sometimes be quite overwhelming.

A recent study by the National Association of Realtors (NAR) highlighted that for individuals selling their homes independently, the most challenging aspects are accurately pricing their home and handling the required paperwork. Here's how an agent can assist in navigating these tricky areas:

1. Pricing Expertise: Real estate agents have a deep understanding of the local market and can provide a pricing strategy based on comparative market analysis. This helps in setting a competitive price that attracts buyers without underselling your property.

2. Paperwork Guidance: The process involves a lot of paperwork, including contracts, disclosures, and legal documents. An agent can help ensure that everything is completed correctly, reducing the risk of potential legal issues down the line.

By addressing these challenges, an agent can make the selling process smoother and more efficient, potentially saving you time and stress.



Setting the right price for your house is crucial when you're aiming to sell. If you decide to sell on your own, commonly known as FSBO (For Sale by Owner), you might encounter a couple of major pitfalls. First, there's the risk of overpricing your house, which can scare off potential buyers from even considering your listing. On the flip side, underpricing your home could lead to a quick sale but at the cost of not getting the full value your house might warrant. As NerdWallet points out, making a strong first impression is key in attracting buyers, and getting the price right is a big part of that.

This is where the expertise of a real estate agent can be invaluable. Agents have a deep understanding of the local market and can set a price that reflects what buyers are currently willing to pay, ensuring your home makes a splash from the get-go.

When it comes to paperwork, selling a house isn't just about signing a few documents. There's a myriad of legal paperwork, each with its own set of rules and regulations. Navigating this on your own can be daunting and even risky, as any errors could lead to legal issues or delays in the selling process. Real estate agents are well-versed in handling this aspect of the sale, ensuring everything is in order and reducing the risk of potential legal headaches.

So, rather than trying to manage everything solo, partnering with a real estate agent can provide you with the expertise and guidance needed to navigate both pricing and paperwork smoothly, allowing for a more secure and potentially more profitable sale.

# TESTIMONIALS

70 FIVE STAR YELP REVIEWS & 40 FIVE STAR ZILLOW REVIEWS



Dealing with Jameel & Ramez has been a pleasure. They helped us buying a new church property. They made the process so easy. They quickly responded to every request from us. They were very professional and hope to be able to work with them again. We gladly recommend them to others.

-NICK SHAMIYEH



It's my dream to buy my own house!!I was trying before them but it did not work!!When I meet Jameel and Ramez Even the first day I was very comfortable with them!!They help me my any step!!It's very hard to buy the house in US ,I'm sure everybody knows that. I wasn't believe I will make it to by house what I like it!!!Because before them I had so much harder time!

-HATICE DUMAN



Jameel and Ramez were so great to work with. They were very helpful through every step of the process and always had our best interest in mind. They got us a great price on our house and it sold in a very short amount of time.

-STEVE WARNER



Jameel is a professional realtor in every way. These guys can get a home listed and sold faster than anyone else. If you are in or around Dublin this is your go to real estate company. You won't be disappointed.

-CASEY LEWIS



Jameel and his group did an excellent job at selling my parents' home. Jameel helped with getting contractors aboard to get the house ready to sell. The house received an offer over the asking and was finalized in less than 30-days

-SCOTT FABEL



I highly, highly recommend Ramez and Jameel for your real estate and financing needs! They're super professional, honest and work hard to get you the best outcome. Their years of experience in the industry and relationship building skills really helped us get what we wanted (as buyers) in this crazy market!

-VANESSA H



INTEGRITY.....who we are  
HONESTY.....is what we speak  
EXCELLENCE.....is what you get

