



# Myrna Higgs' Market Report

Helping you is what we do.™

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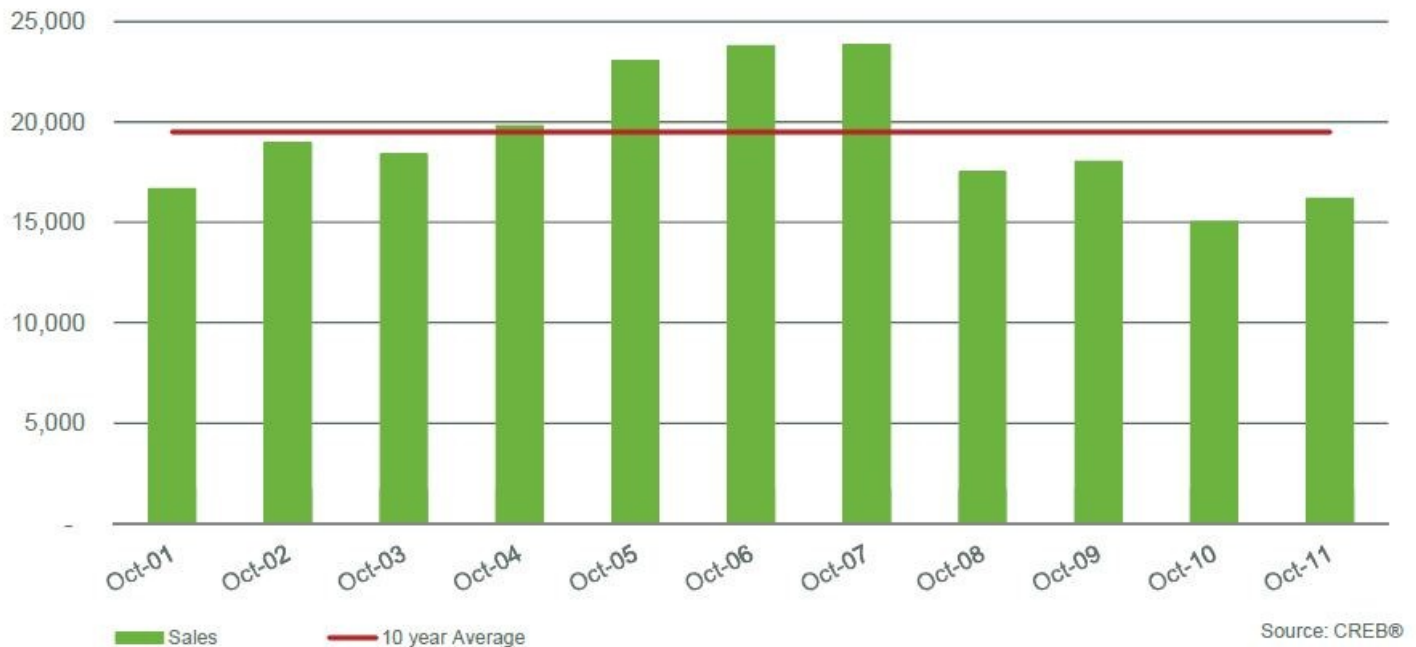
## Top Tips On Selling Your Home Over The Holidays

Vacation time and slower work schedules create an ideal time for open houses. However, as homes fill up with presents, decorations and visitors, sellers are often faced with the challenge of striking the right balance between cozy and crammed. Keeping your home tidy and sparingly decorated doesn't mean sellers can't celebrate the season in style, but remember that buyers are looking for just the right amount of sparkle.

We know that potential buyers can be put off by a home that has too many personal items. So while trying to manage the Christmas clutter, sellers should also remove items that remind buyers that the home belongs to someone else. To assist sellers, Royal LePage Solutions has compiled a top ten list of things to avoid when selling a home during the holiday season.

- TOO MANY LIGHTS:** A home will dazzle more if lights are kept to a tasteful minimum. Sellers should opt for white lights instead of multi-coloured flashing bulbs to provide a more neutral glow to a home.
- FORGETTING TO CLEAR THE SNOW:** Snow can look beautiful on trees, but driveways and walkways should be cleared as soon as the flakes fall. Buyers should be able to move freely during an open house so it's important to remember all the outdoor paths and patios around your home.
- NO LIFE OR LANDSCAPING:** Give buyers a chance to imagine the potential in your landscape. Frost-resistant plants like flowering kale or miniature trees allow sellers to liven up walkways without taking away the buyer's ability to envision his or her dream outdoor spaces.
- NOT COZY:** Everyone appreciates a warm, cozy home - especially in the winter. Set the thermostat at a warm temperature for the whole day, and be mindful that some thermostats have low temperature pre-sets during the day when no one is at home. When the home is attended, fireplaces and candles could also be lit to create a comfortable environment throughout the day.
- ENGAGE THE SENSES:** Simmering a pot of cider with cinnamon during open houses or showings will create a warm and festive feeling.
- LINGERING ODORS:** Be aware of those holiday dishes that may leave a strong odour. If possible, wait until showings are completed before cooking those traditional favorites -- potential buyers will appreciate a neutral environment.
- HIDING A HOME'S SEASONALS BESTS:** Photos of the home's back and front yards, gardens and patios in spring and summer will show potential buyers what the house looks like when it is not buried under snow and when the leaves are still on trees.
- DON'T LET THE TREE TAKE OVER:** A smaller Christmas tree, with minimal decorations, will create the appearance of more space. A huge tree, on the other hand, will make the room look smaller, and busy decorations can intensify clutter.
- PRESENTS SHOULD NOT BE PRESENT:** It is important to cut back on clutter when showing a home; hide the wrapped presents to keep them out of eyesight.
- TOO MANY DECORATIONS:** Remember, when selling a home during the holidays, less is always more. Whimsical ornaments can be great accents during the holidays, but be mindful not to go overboard. When it doubt, remove it!

## CITY OF CALGARY SINGLE FAMILY AND CONDOMINIUM SALES YEAR TO DATE



### Several Calgary Communities Get a Boost in Sales and Price

Calgary, November 1, 2011 – Calgary residential sales totalled 16,184 after the first 10 months of the year, an increase of eight per cent over last year. Over 61% of Calgary's established communities saw increased sales levels compared to last year. Garrison Woods, Collingwood and Mahogany saw the largest sales increase at 170 per cent combined; nearly half of all Calgary communities recorded price increases, with Shaganappi, Chinook Park and Downtown leading the way with a combined average price increase of 55%

A boost in full time jobs throughout the year is gradually translating into improved sales in the real estate sector. Consumers are taking advantage of price stability and a healthy variety of selection. While these gains are moderate, we are set to outpace 2010 sales. Single family home sales totalled 988 for the month of October 2011, an 11% increase over October 2010, but continue to remain well below historical levels. Year-to-date sales totalled 11,503, a 10% increase over last year.

October listings have edged upwards over last year's levels, increasing by nearly two per cent, but year-to-date there are six per cent less listings than levels recorded last year. Consumers are feeling more confident about the local real estate market.

The average price of single family homes for the month of October 2011 was \$455,399, while the median price was \$395,000, an increase of 2% compared to last year. This is primarily due to the rise in the number of luxury homes sales. Despite the monthly price increase, however, year-to-date figures remained stable at levels comparable to the previous year. Condominium sales for the first 10 months of the year totalled 4,681, a 3% rise over the same period last year. Inventory levels remained at 1,935 units, resulting in supply.

The condominium market has significantly tightened compared to last year, however, moving into winter, we expect to see a rise in months of supply. Condominium year-to-date average and median prices in 2011 were \$288,736 and \$262,500, respectively, a slight decline over the first 10 months of 2010. The decline is mostly due to increased sales in units priced under \$200,000.

Overall, the resale housing market continues to show signs of improvement and, with no near term change in interest rates, we can expect the market will continue to see moderate and stable growth throughout the rest of the year.

Source: CREB

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