



GALE TRACEY AMP- YOUR MORTGAGE PLANNER FOR LIFE

News To Help You Save Time And Money

THE DREAM HOME MAKER!

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2015 shaping up to be the year mortgage rates finally start rising.

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Economists have been warning us for years that our record-low mortgage rates would eventually have to start rising. While a stubbornly slow economic recovery has delayed the onset of higher rates, 2015 may be the year it finally happens.

The US economy has really picked up speed in the past year, allowing the Federal Reserve to wind down its bond-buying stimulus program. Sure, there are still storm clouds ahead: unrest in Ukraine and the Middle East, slow growth in Japan and Europe, less rapid growth in China, and dramatically lower oil prices. But barring any major new crises, economists believe that both the Bank of Canada rate and fixed mortgage rates will start rising by mid to late 2015.



The Bank of Canada's overnight rate has been at or near historic lows since 2008, following the financial crisis. It's the rate that directly influences adjustable mortgage rates. The Bank has been keeping its rate low to encourage borrowing and stimulate spending. But such stimulus is becoming less necessary. Longer-term fixed mortgage rates, on the other hand, are influenced by bond rates. As the economy improves, investors start to fear inflation and demand a higher rate of return on bonds. This causes fixed mortgage rates to rise.

Most economists believe the Bank of Canada will begin to raise its overnight rate sometime in the third quarter of 2015, which would cause adjustable mortgage rates to follow suit. As for fixed mortgage rates, they could start moving higher even sooner. The BC Real Estate Association, for example, believes the 5-year fixed rate will average 5.15% in 2015 (up from 4.89% in 2014) and the one-year rate will average 3.29% (up from 3.14%).

If you're concerned how rising rates could impact your mortgage payments, now may be a good time to consider refinancing to lock in today's still-low rates. For a free analysis of your situation, call Gale Tracey at 604-575-1843 today!

Quote of the Month

"I don't believe you have to be better than everybody else. I believe you have to be better than you ever thought you could be."

- Ken Venturi

Client News

Here are the new and loyal repeat clients who we've assisted with their mortgage needs in the last few months! We'd like to welcome and thank you publicly, and send you our best wishes!

Jill and Clint S. Cloverdale, BC, “Dream House in the Making!” – Repeat Loyal Clients

Laura M, Vancouver, BC, “Just Move In!” – Repeat Loyal Client

Bobbi F, Abbotsford, BC, “Should I stay or should I go?” – Repeat Loyal Client

Stewart, Neil & Carol M., Langley, BC – “Granite and Stainless Steel Kitchen!” Referred by Loyal Client Karen L.

Dave & Tira Z, Port Coquitlam, BC – “No Packing Required!” – Referred by Dee Hnatko, Realtor, Re/Max Sabre Realty, Port Coquitlam

Heather H, Pitt Meadows, BC – “Great Investment!” – Referred by Michelle Forsberg, Realtor, Re/Max Sabre Realty, Port Coquitlam

Larry & Ann, F, South Surrey, BC – “Change is acoming – finally!” – Repeat Loyal Client

Matt & Nara, H, North Van, BC – “Honey Do List Time!” – Repeat Loyal Clients

Lillia N, Burnaby, BC – “My First Home to Decorate!” – Referred by Llawrey Godin, Realtor, Re/Max Sabre Realty, Port Coquitlam

Clay & Carolyn W, Maple Ridge, BC – “Happy to Be Home in our New Home!” – Repeat Loyal Clients

We love giving recognition to our new friends and our wonderful existing clients who are kind enough to refer their friends and relatives to us!

We're all helping each other, which is the whole point of all this! Right?

Seasonal Article of the Month

5 steps to achieving your goals in 2015.

Here are some steps that many high achievers use to create more value in their lives.

- 1. Decide what's important.** What do you really want and why? Write down some possibilities. For instance, “I want to be at my perfect weight, looking good and feeling great.” Then decide which ONE goal is most important and focus on it. One “must” will drive you more than many “shoulds”.
- 2. Break it into steps.** Your goal may seem big and scary. So break it down into several small steps or milestones that are easier to achieve. For example, if your goal is to release 35 pounds of excess weight in the next 7 months, consider setting a milestone of 5 pounds per month. Each time you achieve a small step, you'll be motivated to take the next step.



- 3. Make an action plan for each step.** Even if the step is tiny, you still need to figure out exactly how to make it happen. If your step is to starting eating healthy, decide what foods you will eat, determine your weekly menu plan, make a shopping list and fill your fridge and pantry with only healthy foods.
- 4. Monitor progress.** If you accomplish a step, check it off and acknowledge your win! If you stumble, determine how you stopped yourself and what you can do better next time. Maybe you need to break that step into even smaller pieces or get an accountability partner.
- 5. Reward yourself!** Celebrate each step you achieve. Share your success with others. Treat yourself to something unrelated to your goal. Then move on to the next step until your whole goal is achieved!

Financial Freedom Tip of the Month

Becoming debt-free one baby step at a time.

Let's face it, debt isn't a financial problem, it's a behavior problem. So becoming debt-free takes more than sound financial strategies. It takes a mindset shift that establishes new wealth-building habits.

If you have too many debts, most financial experts will advise you to start paying off the highest-interest debt first. Let's say you have a \$12,000 credit card balance at 18%, a \$4,000 student loan at 3%, and an \$8,000 car loan at 5%. Financially, it makes sense to start paying down your credit card first since that will yield the biggest saving in interest.

However, making relatively small payments towards a large balance owing can leave you feeling discouraged and ready to give up. That's why it's important to make minimum payments on all your other lower-interest debts so you can channel the largest payment possible towards the highest-interest debt. Not only will this save you the maximum amount of interest, it will also speed up the time it takes to pay off the most-expensive debt. Once it's paid off, start making the largest payment possible towards the next most-expensive debt.

The best way to motivate yourself to pay off debts is to save maximum interest by focusing your payments (like a laser beam) on the highest-interest debts first, then moving on to the next. Seek progress, not perfection. Remember, slow and steady wins the race. Keep this up, and one day you'll be completely debt free!



Holistic Health Tip of the Month

The amazing health benefits of raw cacao.

Cacao beans come from the cacao tree, a small evergreen that grows in Mexico and South America. Cacao beans are usually roasted and ground into cocoa, which becomes chocolate when sugar, fats and other ingredients are added. But if cacao beans are dried at low temperature instead, they're called raw cacao. Raw cacao can be eaten whole, in pieces or in powder form, and is believed to offer many health benefits:

- More antioxidant capacity than black tea, green tea or red wine. Antioxidants help slow aging by removing free radicals which injure cells. Antioxidants can also help decrease inflammation that can contribute to arthritis.
- Reduces stress.
- Studies indicate that the anthocyanidins in cacao reduce pancreatic and breast cancer in laboratory animals. More human studies are required, but cacao may help prevent cancer in humans too.
- Reduces the build-up of bad cholesterol. This helps improve circulation and decreases the risk of heart disease.
- Reduces cataracts.
- The theobromine in cacao is a mild stimulant that may be helpful in treating depression. This may explain the euphoric sensation some people feel when eating chocolate.



On the down side, raw cacao's stimulant quality may agitate kidney and liver functioning, and some studies find it to be mildly addictive. As always, before adding a new substance to your diet, consult your medical professional or health food nutritionist.

Quiz Question of the Month

New Year's Trivia Question

What is the date of Chinese New Year in 2015?

- a) February 10
- b) January 1
- c) January 31
- d) February 19

How does this contest work?

The first person to respond with the correct answer will win a \$25 Gift Card to THE VAULT Restaurant!

Resource of the Month

Curious to know how much your home is worth? Here's how to find out... for free with no obligation!

Knowing precisely what your home is worth can make all the difference when it comes time to sell your home. With over 22% of local MLS® listings expiring before they are sold, it is important that you price your home accurately. The correct selling price of your home is the highest price that the market will bear – no more, no less.

The last thing that you want to do is set your price based on guesswork, rumor, greed, or even by having someone promise you an inflated price just to secure a listing. Pricing your property in this manner can cause buyers to be wary of your property, even if you reduce your price at a later date.

That's why we recommend you receive a **NO COST Market Evaluation** from one of our top-notch real estate advisors... with no strings attached. As trusted real estate marketing professionals, they can provide you with a comprehensive market analysis of comparable properties sold and active listings in your neighborhood. With this current market data, you'll be able to determine what your home is worth in today's real estate market. The more information given, the more accurate the evaluation.

To book your no cost market evaluation, call Gale Tracey today at (604) 575-1843.

Answer to Last Month's Quiz

Boxing Day is December 26th. Which of the following does NOT celebrate Boxing Day?

- a) Israel
- b) Canada
- c) Texas
- d) Australia

ANSWER: a) Israel

How do I submit my answer?

To respond with your answer, email me at: gale.tracey@mtgarc.ca. The contest deadline is Jan 30th.

ANNOUNCING LAST MONTH'S WINNERS!

Congratulations to **Julie B.** of Surrey for winning last month's quiz contest! She has won a FREE dinner at the VAULT Restaurant. Enjoy!

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Winter Words

Boggle's World

V	J	Q	S	F	D	H	S	E	A	V	F	D
F	H	D	Z	O	R	X	U	K	F	R	B	E
I	M	I	A	S	N	O	W	B	A	L	L	C
R	Q	C	B	I	C	E	S	C	J	T	I	E
E	X	J	N	E	C	W	S	T	M	K	E	M
P	N	C	S	B	R	H	I	D	S	E	A	B
L	G	S	R	W	E	N	L	N	L	I	Y	E
A	L	N	S	H	E	O	A	C	T	R	U	R
C	O	O	L	B	C	A	I	T	A	E	F	L
E	V	W	E	O	K	C	T	U	E	M	R	D
J	E	M	I	O	I	N	E	R	K	S	J	
X	S	A	G	T	P	A	Y	H	R	C	P	R
B	E	N	H	S	J	H	A	T	C	O	A	T

- boots
- coat
- cold
- December
- fireplace
- frost
- gloves
- hat
- hibernate
- ice
- icicle
- January
- scarf
- skate
- ski
- sleigh
- snowball
- snowman
- sweater

What animals hibernate in winter?

Where do you get warm in winter?

What do you wear in winter?

How's the weather in winter?

