



MARK GOLDADE PERSONAL REAL ESTATE CORPORATION



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Condo Buyer's Guide for Manitoba

Introduction:

Buying a condo in Manitoba, especially in vibrant cities like Winnipeg, offers a unique blend of urban living, community amenities, and reduced maintenance responsibilities. This guide will walk you through the essential steps, considerations, and legal aspects specific to the Manitoba market, ensuring a smooth and informed condo purchasing experience.

1. Understanding Condo Living:

Benefits of Condo Living:

- **Maintenance-Free Lifestyle:** Exterior maintenance, landscaping, and common area upkeep are typically handled by the condo association.

- **Amenities:** Many condos offer shared amenities such as fitness centers, pools, party rooms, and security services.
- **Community:** Condos provide a sense of community with shared spaces and events.

Considerations:

- **Monthly Fees:** Condos require monthly fees for maintenance, amenities, and reserve funds.
- **Rules and Regulations:** Condos have bylaws and regulations that owners must follow.
- **Shared Responsibility:** Decision-making about common areas and shared amenities is handled collectively.

2. The Buying Process:

Step 1: Determine Your Budget:

- Assess your financial situation.
- Get pre-approved for a mortgage.
- Consider additional costs like condo fees, taxes, and insurance.

Step 2: Find a Real Estate Agent:

- Choose an agent experienced in the Manitoba condo market.
- Discuss your needs, preferences, and budget.

Step 3: Start Your Search:

- Explore different neighborhoods in Winnipeg or other Manitoba cities.
- Attend open houses and view listings online.
- Consider factors like proximity to work, schools, and amenities.

Step 4: Make an Offer:

- Work with your agent to draft an offer.
- Include conditions such as financing approval and home inspection.
- Negotiate terms with the seller.

Step 5: Conduct Due Diligence:

- **Home Inspection:** Hire a professional inspector to check the unit and common areas.
- **Condo Documents:** Review the condo corporation's financial statements, bylaws, rules, and reserve fund study.

Step 6: Finalize the Purchase:

- Secure mortgage financing.
- Satisfy any conditions in the purchase agreement.
- Review and sign closing documents with your lawyer.

3. Legal Considerations in Manitoba:

7-Day Cooling-Off Period:

- **What It Is:** In Manitoba, condo buyers have a 7-day cooling-off period after signing the purchase agreement. During this time, you can cancel the contract without penalties.
- **Importance:** Use this time to review all documents, consult with your lawyer, and ensure you're making an informed decision.

Disclosure Requirements:

- **Condo Disclosure Statement:** The seller must provide a disclosure statement outlining key details about the condo corporation, including financials, reserve fund status, and bylaws.
- **Review Period:** Carefully review the disclosure statement with your real estate agent and lawyer to identify any potential issues.

Title Search and Legal Review:

- **Title Search:** Your lawyer will conduct a title search to confirm the seller's legal ownership and ensure there are no liens or encumbrances on the property.
- **Legal Review:** Your lawyer will review the purchase agreement and condo documents to protect your interests.

4. Financing Your Condo:

Mortgage Options:

- **Conventional Mortgage:** Typically requires a 20% down payment.
- **High-Ratio Mortgage:** For down payments less than 20%, requires mortgage insurance through CMHC or a private insurer.

Mortgage Pre-Approval:

- Obtain pre-approval to determine your budget and show sellers you are a serious buyer.
- Compare mortgage rates from different lenders.

Condo Fees and Reserve Funds:

- **Monthly Fees:** Cover maintenance, amenities, and the reserve fund.
- **Reserve Fund:** A savings account for major repairs and replacements in the condo complex. Ensure the reserve fund is adequately funded to avoid special assessments.

5. Moving In and Settling Down:

Before Moving In:

- Arrange for utilities and services.
- Notify your address change to relevant parties.
- Schedule your move-in date with the condo management.

Settling Into Condo Life:

- Familiarize yourself with the condo bylaws and rules.
- Participate in condo meetings and get involved in the community.
- Explore the neighborhood and enjoy the amenities.

6. Frequently Asked Questions:

1. What are condo fees and what do they cover?

- **Answer:** Condo fees are monthly payments made to the condo corporation. They cover maintenance, utilities for common areas, amenities, insurance, and contributions to the reserve fund.

2. Can condo fees increase?

- **Answer:** Yes, condo fees can increase based on the annual budget prepared by the condo board. Increases may be necessary to cover rising costs or to ensure the reserve fund is adequately maintained.

3. What is a reserve fund study?

- **Answer:** A reserve fund study is an assessment conducted by experts to determine the amount of money required for future major repairs and replacements of common elements. It ensures the reserve fund is adequately funded.

4. What is a status certificate?

- **Answer:** A status certificate is a document provided by the condo corporation that includes important information about the condo, such as the financial status, reserve fund balance, and any pending legal actions. It is essential for buyers to review this document.

5. Can I rent out my condo?

- **Answer:** It depends on the condo bylaws. Some condos allow rentals, while others have restrictions or require approval from the condo board. Review the bylaws before purchasing if you plan to rent out your unit.

6. What are special assessments?

- **Answer:** Special assessments are additional charges imposed by the condo corporation for unexpected expenses or major repairs not covered by the reserve fund. Ensure the reserve fund is well-managed to minimize the likelihood of special assessments.

Contact Information:

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