

A Guide To Buying A Home



Get To Know Brooklyn



How I Help You As A Realtor



Brooklyn Biggerstaff 

Brooklyn@windermere.com
509-991-3284
BrooklynBiggerstaff.com

I take great pride in helping others achieve their goals, cultivating trust, and investing in strong relationships. My goal as a Realtor is to help guide you in the purchase of your home, while helping make the process go as seamless and stress-free as possible for you. I'm here to help, advise, and counsel – offer recommendations, provide data, as well as reassurance. Ultimately, I will be there to support you through one of the largest financial decisions you may make – and also one of the best long-term investments.

I enjoy what I do – it's fun! I like being there for people. I love building strong, genuine relationships and friendships with my clients based on trust and kindness.

As your trusted real estate advisor, you can be confident that working with me means I have your best interest in the forefront to help you navigate the twists and turns of the buying process, so you reach your goal to buy a house you're proud to call home.



All in, for you.™

My Team



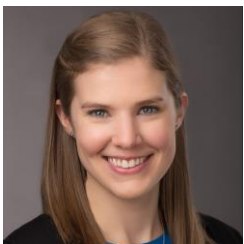
The Windermere North Difference

The Windermere North office is a family legacy of excellence and innovation for more than 30 years. The brokers and support staff who make up the office are as diverse as the community they serve. What we all have in common is a warm and friendly attitude, a desire to help one another succeed, and a better than average sense of humor. The level of support, the willingness to collaborate, the sense of family these all make Windermere North different from the typical real estate office. Whatever that special something is, people say they can feel it as soon as they walk in the door.



Michele Hagen, Licensed Assistant

Michele helps me help you! Many steps go into a successful listing or sale, and she is busy in the background helping me prepare and execute the successful results you are looking for. Her energy and enthusiasm bring great value to my clients' outcomes. My clients benefit from her efficiency and attentiveness to details.



Megan Dalton, Transaction Coordinator

Megan's keen organizational skills in overseeing the technical details of your transaction creates a high level of communication every step of the way, from contract to closing. It is Megan's goal to help make your transaction as seamless as possible with clear calendar reminders and looping in all parties involved in your transaction so there are no surprises.



Linda Hauanio, Marketing Manager

Linda helps me accomplish all things marketing for my clients. She develops high quality pieces to help showcase the features and benefits of your home. She assists in the production and execution of informational marketing, which helps keep my clients informed. Her assistance enables me to be focused on my most important role—taking care of you while you buy or sell your home.



How I Help You

Buy Your Home

Helping you find and purchase a home is only one facet of my job.

MY SERVICES

- › Explain real estate principles, contracts and documents
- › Refer you to a reputable lender that can help you assess your financial situation and pre-approve you for a loan
- › Help you determine the types of homes and neighborhoods that most fit your needs
- › Arrange tours of homes that meet your criteria
- › Provide you with detailed information about homes you're interested in
- › Determine the market value of homes you're interested in
- › Assist you in writing and negotiating a mutually-accepted purchase and sale agreement
- › Accompany you to the inspection
- › Coordinate necessary steps after inspection
- › Work with the escrow company to ensure all needed documents are in order and completed in a timely manner

YOUR BENEFITS

- › Be more likely to find the home that meets all your criteria
- › Decrease the amount of time it takes to find your home
- › Understand all the terms, processes and documents involved
- › Have current market information to make informed decisions
- › Have a skilled negotiator on your side
- › Have peace of mind that all the details are being handled



WINDERMERE GIVES YOU

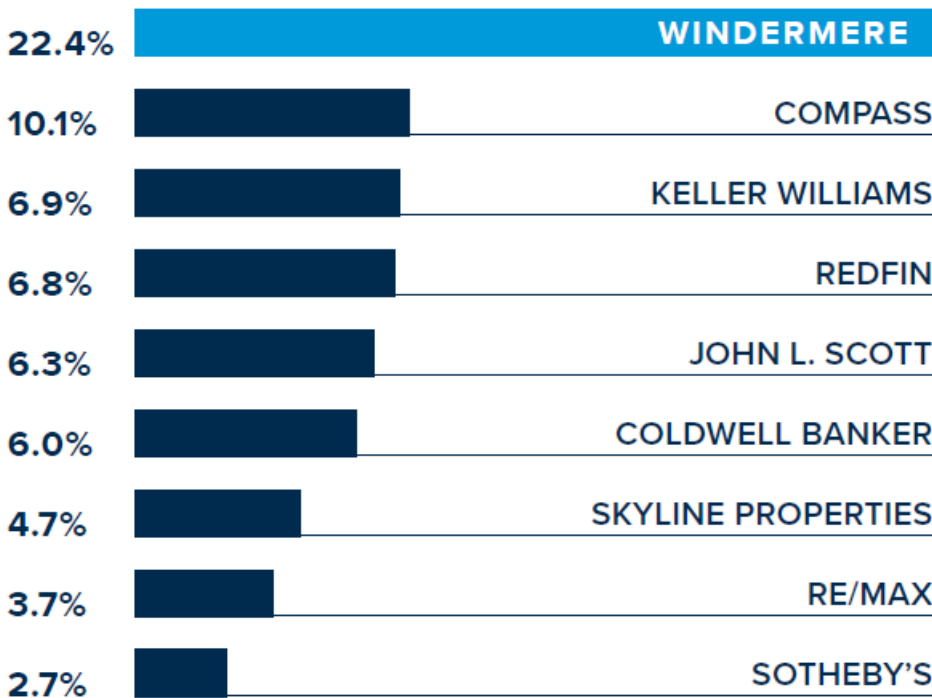
The Buyer's Edge

When competing against multiple offers, buyers represented by Windermere are far more likely to win.

63%

Nearly two thirds of all home sales in our region involve multiple offers*.

Winning Buyers (competing against multiple offers)

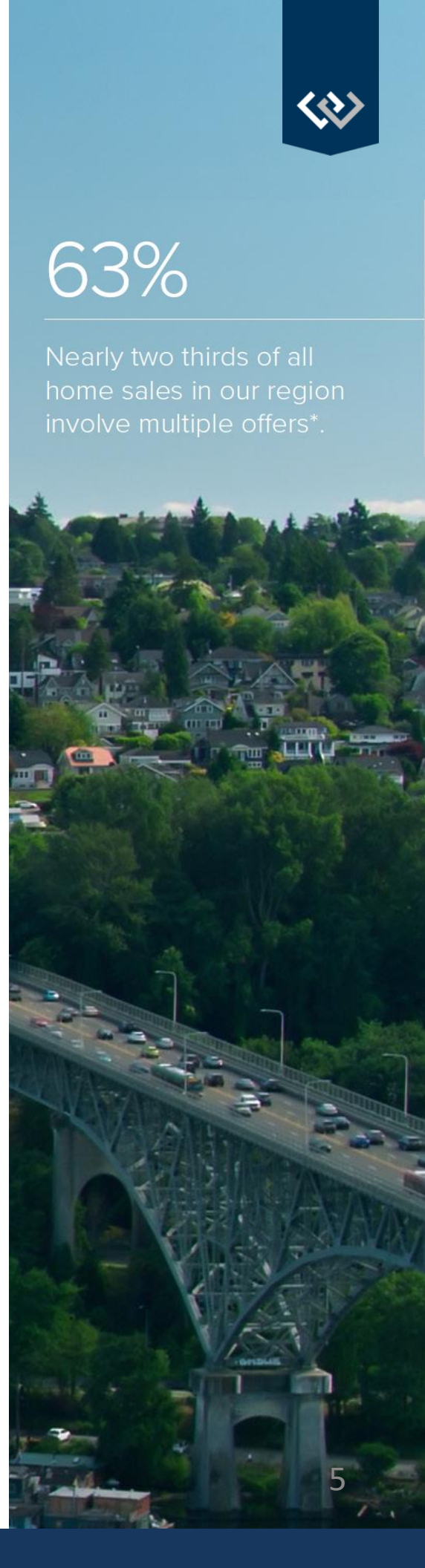


Buyers choosing Windermere increase their odds of succeeding in a competitive market because:

- Windermere brokers receive extensive training on how to (a) craft the most competitive offer for their buyer, and (b) position it to have the greatest appeal to the seller
- Windermere brokers adjust their negotiating techniques based on real-time market conditions
- A market-wide survey of Northwest MLS agents indicated that they are more confident about completing transactions with Windermere brokers than with brokers from any other firm

windermere.com

*Multiple offers are factored based on residential home sales that close above original list price.
**Market share data reflects 2021 sales of Seattle and Eastside single family homes.



Preparing To Buy A Home



How do I start?

Get Pre-Approved

Getting pre-approved will kickstart your home buying process. It will give you a better idea of how much you can borrow, your estimated monthly mortgage costs, and what interest rate you can expect on your loan. When sellers see you've been pre-approved, they know to take your offer seriously.

What do I do after getting pre-approved?

Yes, getting pre-approved is a productive first step in buying a home. But once you're pre-approved, there are certain actions that can derail your buying process. Here are 5 Mistakes to Avoid After Pre-Approval:

- > Large purchases
- > Quitting or changing job
- > Unpaid bills
- > New Credit
- > Paying off debt

What does it cost to buy a home?

Some expenses that come with buying a home are easier to account for than others. Knowing the costs of the buying process will help you budget for a home purchase. Here are 10 Costs Associated with Buying a Home.

- >Down Payment
- >Homeowners Insurance
- >Mortgage Payment
- >Closing Costs
- >HOA Fees (if applicable)
- >Property Taxes
- >Appraisal & Inspection Fees
- >Utilities
- >Moving Costs
- >Repairs & Remodeling (if applicable)

Do I have to put twenty percent down?

When it comes to making a down payment, it isn't twenty percent or bust. Granted, lenders view a twenty percent down payment as less risky and therefore won't require you to purchase private mortgage insurance (PMI), but if a lump sum payment of that size isn't in the cards for you, you're not out of luck. We can talk about private mortgage insurance (PMI) and other alternative financing options that can create a path to homeownership.

Do I need homeowners insurance?

If you have a mortgage, your lender will likely require you to purchase homeowners insurance. Read more on [The Importance of Homeowners Insurance](#) to understand what a typical homeowners insurance policy covers and how much coverage you need.



How much house can you afford?

Financing

Determining how much you can afford before you begin your home search will save you valuable time. I can help you locate a lender who will assist you in finding a financing package that will best meet your needs. But there are a few steps you should consider beforehand to make the process as smooth as possible:

CREDIT REPORT

It's important to check your credit report before you see your lender because:

- › Lenders check this to determine the amount of loan you qualify for
- › It allows you to correct any mistakes in the report before lenders see it
- › If there are any blemishes in your report that are not errors, you should be prepared to explain them to your lender

You are entitled to one free request each year from each of the three credit bureaus. The best way to do this is to go online to AnnualCreditReport.com.

CREDIT SCORE

You may want to check your credit score at the same time you check your credit report (usually for a fee). This score influences how much lenders are willing to loan to you and at what interest rate.

DOWN PAYMENT

Most lenders will give better financing terms to borrowers that can put a 20 percent down payment on the purchase. If you are unable to do so, you will likely be required to purchase Private Mortgage Insurance (PMI) and perhaps pay a higher interest rate.

PREAPPROVAL

A letter of preapproval from a lender shows that they have checked all your documentation and are prepared to make you a loan. Getting preapproved prior to starting your home search saves you time by:

- › Keeping you focused on viewing only the homes that are within your budget
- › Helping you obtain your financing more quickly once you find a house you want to buy



Buyer's Terms

LOAN AMOUNT

The amount of the mortgage based on the purchase price, minus the down payment.

DOWN PAYMENT

Cash that the buyer provides the lender as their portion of the purchase price. The down payment is considered the buyer's equity (or cash investment) in their home.

POINTS

Fees charged by the lender to offset their interest rate, if it's below the prevailing market rate. One point equals one percentage point—so one point on a \$100,000 loan would be \$1,000.

APPRAISAL FEE

The amount paid for the lender's appraisal of the property.

CREDIT REPORT FEE

The fee charged by the lender to obtain a credit report on the buyer.

TITLE INSURANCE FEE

A one-time premium that a buyer pays for protection against loss or damage in the event of an incorrect search of public records or misinterpretation of title. The title insurance policy also shows what the property is subject to in terms of liens, taxes, encumbrances, deed restrictions and easements.

ESCROW FEE

The amount a buyer pays the escrow company or closing agent for preparing papers, accounting for all funds and coordinating the information between all parties involved in the transaction.

CLOSING COSTS

A general term for all the estimated charges associated with the transfer of ownership of the property.

PREPAID INTEREST

The amount of interest due on the loan during the time period between closing of escrow and the first mortgage payment, due at the time of closing.

PITI

The estimated house payment, including principal, interest, taxes and insurance.

PRINCIPAL AND INTEREST

The loan payment, consisting of the amount to be applied against the balance of the loan, and the interest payment, which is charged for interest on the loan.

TOTAL CASH REQUIRED

The total amount of cash the buyer will need, including down payment and closing costs.

PREMIUM MORTGAGE INSURANCE (PMI)

Insurance for the lender, to cover potential losses if the borrower defaults on the loan.

The Triangle of Buyer Clarity



The Triangle of Buyer Clarity is an expert tool for a buyer to help determine the parameters of your home search in order to save you time and money. The longer a buyer is looking for a home the more it costs them in the end. The relationship between Price, Location, and Features/Condition is paramount in helping you as a buyer gain clarity and efficiency in their search.

For instance, if a buyer is set on a turn-key home that requires no updates, they may have to go up in price or further out in location. The sides of the Triangle are often adjusted to make an uneven triangle, resulting in an effective home search and a successful purchase.

I look forward to analyzing your desired home features in relation to your budget and possible locations in order to determine the most effective shape of your Triangle to help you find success!



Making An Offer



So, you've found the home you can see yourself living in—what's next? How does it all work? Where do you sign? I will guide you through the process, but in the meantime, here's a preview of what you can expect.

Negotiation

When making an offer on a home, I will negotiate on your behalf regarding price, repair costs, contingencies, timelines, and more to get you the best deal. The value of working with me kicks into high gear during this phase of the buying process.

Contracts

The legal agreement both the buyer and seller enter into once the buyer's offer has been accepted by the seller. Signed by both parties, it outlines the terms and conditions of the sale and brings you one step closer to having keys in hand!

Earnest Money

Earnest money, also known as a good faith deposit, is money put down after your offer is accepted and deposited into an escrow account to show the seller that you're serious about buying. In return, the seller agrees to take the home off the market. When the sale closes, the earnest money goes toward your down payment or closing costs.

Financing

After your offer is accepted, the next step is to get final loan approval. During this process, your lender will decide if they're willing to approve your mortgage based on your creditworthiness, the home's appraisal, its title history, and other factors. Breaking down your budget, taking your time to get your finances in order, and explore financing options will give you the best chance of securing a mortgage loan.

Title Report

This is a report for you and your lender detailing the history of the home you're buying to ensure that there are not closing legal barriers to purchasing it.

Closing

During this final step of the home buying process, ownership is transferred from the seller to the buyer, closing costs are paid, and several legal documents are prepared and signed, all leading to the closing date. After closing is finalized and recorded and the funds are disbursed, the home is yours!



Purchase & Sale Agreement

Once you've found the home you want to buy, together we'll complete the Purchase and Sale Agreement. This is the contract in which you and the seller outline the details of the property transfer. Once both parties agree on the terms of the contract and sign, you are now considered to be "under contract." The Purchase & Sale Agreement usually consist of the following:

- Buyer & Seller information
- Property details
- Pricing & financing
- Fixtures and appliances included/excluded in the sale
- Closing & possession dates
- Earnest money deposit amount
- Conditions under which the contract can be terminated
- Contingencies or conditions that must be met for the sale to go through



Answers to

Frequently Asked Questions

How does my offer get presented to the seller?

In today's electronic world, offers are sent via email to the seller's agent. I will call the agent to let them know it's coming and tell them a little bit about you and the details of your offer. Then I will follow up with the agent again to confirm receipt of your offer.

Does it cost me money to make an offer?

When you write the offer on the home you've chosen, you will be expected to include an earnest money deposit. The deposit is a sign of your good faith that you are seriously interested in buying the home.

Where does my earnest money go?

Once the buyer and seller have a mutually accepted offer, the earnest money is deposited into a trust account. That deposit becomes a credit to the buyer and becomes part of the purchase expense.

Is that all the money that's involved?

Some lenders require the cost of the appraisal and credit report at the time of the loan application.

Can I lose my earnest money?

Real estate contracts are complicated legal transactions. This is another area where having a knowledgeable and professional agent is a necessity. Rarely does the buyer lose the earnest money. Most often, if the transaction falls apart, there are circumstances beyond the buyer's control that cause it to happen. If the buyer willfully decides, however, that they no longer want to buy the house and has no legal reason for rescinding their offer, then the seller has the right to retain the earnest money.

What happens if I offer less than the asking price?

If you offer less money, the seller has three options. They can accept the lower offer, counter your offer or reject it completely. Remember that there could be another buyer who is also interested in the home you've chosen. If they happen to write an offer at the same time you do, the seller will have two offers to compare. There are usually many aspects of each offer to consider, but ultimately the seller will want to accept the best and most complete offer. In active real estate markets, homes often sell for their listed price. In hot markets, there may be many buyers vying for the same house, which sometimes drives the final sale price above the original listing price.

As a real estate professional, I can help you plan your strategy, based on the current real estate market in our area.

What if I need to sell my home before I buy a new one?

To put yourself in the best negotiating position before you find the new home you want, hire a qualified real estate agent to help you put your home on the market. Once you write an offer on a new home, your offer will be "contingent" upon the sale of your home. A buyer in this position may not have the same negotiating power as one whose home has already sold (or at least has an accepted offer). The seller may be hesitant to accept your offer because there are too many things that must happen before the sale can close.



The Path to Closing

CLOSE THE DEAL

Once a buyer and seller have agreed to the details of a home sale, there's one final piece—the closing. "Closing" is when you and the seller sign all the paperwork and pay your share of the settlement fees, and the documents are recorded. Settlement obligations vary widely due to specific contract language, local laws and customs. My job is to manage those complex details to make it as easy as possible for you.

I WILL

COORDINATE WITH CLOSING SERVICE PROVIDERS

WORK WITH THE ESCROW COMPANY

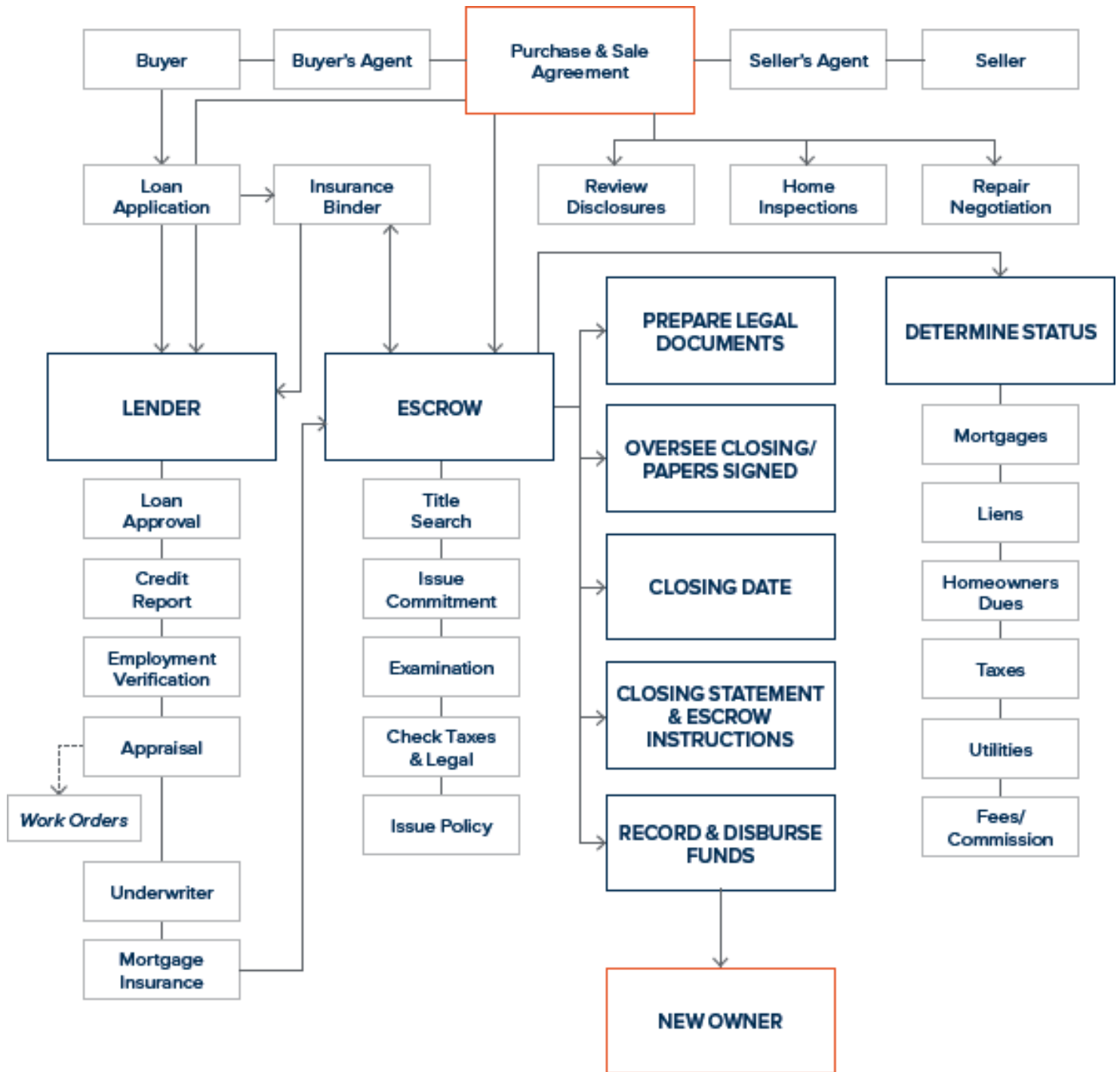
HELP FACILITATE A TIMELY CLOSING

GUIDE YOU THROUGH THE PROCESS

PROVIDE TIMELY UPDATES



Coordinating The Closing



Settlement & Closing



Who Pays For What?

During the negotiation stage of the transaction, a mutually agreed-upon date for closing is determined. “Closing” is when you and the seller sign all the paperwork and pay your share of the settlement fees, and the documents are recorded. Settlement obligations vary widely due to specific contract language, local laws and customs. Prior to closing, the closing agent (usually an escrow or title company or attorney) will complete a detailed settlement statement for both buyer and seller. As your Windermere agent, I can help you understand which of the following typical settlement fees apply to you.

SELLER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:	BUYER IS RESPONSIBLE FOR:
Owner’s title insurance policy*	Lender’s title insurance policy*
1/2 escrow fee*	1/2 escrow fee*
Excise tax*	Recording fees
Real estate commissions*	Surveys
Utility payoffs	1st year fire insurance
Loan balances	1st year flood insurance <i>(if applicable)</i>
Doc preparation fees <i>(power of attorney, etc.)</i>	Doc preparation fees <i>(quit claim deed, etc.)</i>
Miscellaneous fees <i>(wire, courier, signing fees)</i>	Miscellaneous fees <i>(wire, courier, signing fees)</i>
Pro-rated property taxes	Pro-rated property taxes
Home warranty <i>(depends on contract)</i>	Home warranty <i>(depends on contract)</i>
Homeowner’s Association Fees including:	Homeowner’s Association Fees including:
Pro-rated association dues	Pro-rated association dues
Resale certificate / miscellaneous fees	Transfer fee / capital contribution
FHA/VA financing <i>(other seller fees may apply)</i>	Property inspection
	Pest inspection
	Lender Fees including:
	Appraisal
	Credit report
	Loan origination fee*
	Loan interest*
	Private mortgage insurance*

Fees determined by sales price and/or loan amount. Payment of fees above can be negotiated within contract.

Wire Fraud

Keeping You Aware

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM WIRE FRAUD

Real estate buyers and sellers are targets for wire fraud and may have lost hundreds of thousands of dollars because they failed to take a few simple steps.

Here are some standard wire procedures:

- Wire instructions are sent via secure email and/or hard copy delivered to you.
- We encourage you to confirm wire instructions by phone prior to sending wire.
- We will NEVER email you to change our wire instructions. If we ever have a change we will personally call you.

3 simple things you can do to help deter wire fraud:

- 1) Be vigilant when reviewing any non-secure transaction-related emails, especially if you use free web-based email services such as Gmail, Hotmail, or Yahoo mail.
- 2) Assume scammers are monitoring your email and go with your gut when reviewing email. If something seems not quite right or suspicious, do not open it or click on any links.
- 3) Instead of replying to non-secure emails, forward the email, then enter in a verified email address you know to be correct. Better yet, ask your escrow contact to initiate a secure email conversation for transaction related inquiries.



Windermere Way

Why Choose Windermere

IT'S ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS

In 1972, John Jacobi set out to change the real estate industry by putting relationships before sales quotas, with an emphasis on service to our clients and our community.

Over 40 years later, this mission has helped grow Windermere into one of the largest independent real estate companies in the nation, with more than 300 offices and 7,000 agents throughout the Western U.S. and Mexico.

What this means for you:

- Exceptional service
- Unsurpassed integrity
- A strict code of ethics
- Locally owned and operated offices
- Neighborhood knowledge
- Market expertise
- Premium tools and services
- Giving back to our communities

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Every year, Windermere closes its offices for one day to help make a positive difference in our local communities. It all started in 1984 when a handful of Windermere owners and agents came together to make repairs at a local elementary school.

Thirty years and more than one million hours of community service later, we've continued this tradition through neighborhood - enhancing projects in the areas where our Windermere teams live and work.



While the real estate industry has changed substantially over the years, our core values of relationships, community, collaboration, and professionalism have remained central to how we do business, and will continue to do so for years to come.

Within these core values is an outline of how we believe our clients deserve and expect to be treated. It is intended to provide total transparency about how we do business, while letting our clients know that Windermere agents hold themselves to an even higher level of competence and accountability.

High Standards

Working With Windermere

When you work with a Windermere agent, you can expect that:

- Your interests as the client will always come first.
- Your agent will be up-to-date on the latest real estate laws and local issues.
- Your agent will not discriminate against any party based on race, religion, sex or other legally protected classes.
- Your agent will treat you and everyone involved in your transaction with the greatest respect.
- Your agent will follow all MLS rules and the NAR code of ethics.
- Your agent will keep you informed promptly and regularly.

In short, our Standards of Practice ensure that Windermere agents hold themselves to an even higher level of competence and accountability.

We hope this translates into a more satisfying real estate experience and peace-of-mind for our clients, knowing that doing right by them is our highest priority.

If you would like a copy of our Standards of Practice, I would be happy to provide one to you.



CODE OF ETHICS

Something you may not know is that Windermere takes its standard of service to its clients very seriously.

As members of the National Association of REALTORS®, we agree to abide by a strict code of ethics that is based in professionalism and consumer protection.

To further reinforce our commitment to our clients, Windermere has built upon the REALTOR® code of ethics by establishing what we call our Windermere Standards of Practice outlining how we believe our clients deserve to be treated.

Moving & Packing Tips



The process of moving is long and complex. Being organized, knowing what needs to be done, and tackling tasks efficiently can make your move significantly less stressful. Here's a checklist to keep you on task and help make your move successful.

SIX TO EIGHT WEEKS BEFORE:

- Use up things that may be difficult to move, such as frozen food.
- Get estimates from professional movers or truck rental companies if you are moving yourself.
- Once you've selected a mover, discuss insurance, packing, Loading and delivery, and the claims procedure.
- Sort through your possessions. Decide what you want to keep, what you want to sell and what you wish to donate to charity.
- Record serial numbers on electronic equipment, take photos (or video) of all your belongings and create an inventory list.
- Change your utilities, including phone, power and water, from your old address to your new address.
- Obtain a change of address packet from the post office and send to creditors, magazine subscription offices and catalog vendors.
- Discuss tax-deductible moving expenses with your accountant and begin keeping accurate records.

TWO TO FOUR WEEKS BEFORE:

- If you're moving to a new community, contact the Chamber of Commerce and school district and request information about services.
- Make reservations with airlines, hotels and car rental agencies, if needed.
- If you are moving yourself, use your inventory list to determine how many boxes you will need.
- Begin packing nonessential items.
- Arrange for storage, if needed.
- If you have items you don't want to pack and move, hold a yard sale.
- Get car license, registration and insurance in order.
- Transfer your bank accounts to new branch locations. Cancel any direct deposit or automatic payments from your accounts if changing banks.
- Make special arrangements to move pets, and consult your veterinarian about ways to make travel comfortable for them.
- Have your car checked and serviced for the trip.
- Collect items from safe-deposit box if changing banks.

TWO TO THREE DAYS PRIOR:

- Defrost your refrigerator and freezer.
- Have movers pack your belongings.
- Label each box with the contents and the room where you want it to be delivered.
- Arrange to have payment ready for the moving company.
- Set aside legal documents and valuables that you do not want packed.
- Pack clothing and toiletries, along with extra clothes in case the moving company is delayed.
- Give your travel itinerary to a close friend or relative so they can reach you as needed.



Pack a “first day” box with items you will need right away.

MOVING DAY: OLD HOME

- Pick up the truck as early as possible if you are moving yourself.
- Make a list of every item and box loaded on the truck.
- Let the mover know how to reach you.
- Double-check closets, cupboards, attic, basement and garage for any left-behind items.

MOVING DAY: NEW HOME

- Be on hand at the new home to answer questions and give instructions to the mover.
- Check off boxes and items as they come off the truck.
- Install new locks.
- Confirm that the utilities have been turned on and are ready for use.
- Unpack your “first day” box (see list for suggested contents).
- Unpack children’s toys and find a safe place for them to play.
- Examine your goods for damage.

MOVING ESSENTIALS:

- furniture pads
- handtruck or dolly
- packing tape
- bubble wrap
- newspapers or packing paper
- scissors
- utility knife
- labels
- felt-tip markers
- cornstarch packing “peanuts”
- plenty of boxes

FIRST DAY BOX:

- scissors
- utility knife
- local phone book
- coffee cups
- teakettle
- instant coffee or tea, soft drinks
- pencil and paper
- soap
- bath towels
- trash bags
- shelf liner
- paper plates
- snacks
- toilet paper
- children’s toys and books



#TackleHomelessness

As a loyal 12, I am proud that Windermere is the Official Real Estate Company of the Seattle Seahawks. But I'm also proud of how this partnership is being used to help homeless families in our community.

Windermere has a long history of helping low-income and homeless families through the Windermere Foundation, which since 1989 has raised more than \$44 million to support programs and organizations that provide shelter, food, children's programs, emergency assistance, and other services to those in need. Every time I sell a home, a portion of my commission goes toward this important cause. And now, for every Seahawks home game defensive tackle, the Windermere Foundation will donate \$100 to Mary's Place, a non-profit organization that provides shelter and services that support families on their journey out of homelessness.

So I hope you'll join our network of agents and 12s as we cheer on the home team as only Seahawks fans can, and help us make a difference in the lives of those who need it most.



Windermere Gives Back

Commitment To Community



FUNDS PROVIDED IN 2021

\$2,381,640

2021 Average Grant ... **\$3,454.47**



- Youth/Child Programs ... **28%**
- Emergency Assistance ... **24%**
- Food Support ... **15%**
- Shelter ... **11%**
- Education/Counseling ... **8%**
- Scholarships ... **5%**
- School Assistance ... **3%**
- Fundraising Expenses ... **2%**
- Administrative Expenses ... **2%**

Since 1989, over \$46 million has been raised by the Windermere Foundation and has allowed us to support non-profit organizations dedicated to helping low-income and homeless families.

WINDERMEREFUNDATION.COM



At Windermere we help people buy and sell homes, but we also help build community. I'm proud to support the Windermere Foundation which has raised over \$44 million in the past 33 years for low-income and homeless families right here in our local community.

BUYING A HOME

If You Can
Dream It,
We Can Find it.



All in, for you.TM

Brooklyn Biggerstaff
Broker, Realtor

Phone: (509) 991-3284

Email: Brooklyn@Windermere.com

Website: www.BrooklynBiggerstaff.com