

2026 Home & Real Estate Guide

Winter



Real Estate

OCTOBER 1 – DECEMBER 31, 2025

TOP 5 F.C. HOME SALES

1. 6609 ROCKMONT CT, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22043 • 2. 1010 N TUCKAHOE ST, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22046
3. 2123 NATAHOA CT, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22043 • 4. 6211 WATERWAY DR, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22044 • 5. 6320 CROSSWOODS CIR, FALLS CHURCH, VA 22044

#1 \$3,100,000

#2 \$3,000,000

#3 \$2,850,000

#4 \$2,785,000

#5 \$2,710,000

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7616 Wood Mist Lane
Falls Church VA 22043
\$515,000

FOR SALE

WestLee Condo
2200 N Westmoreland St. #516
Arlington VA 22213
\$675,000

FOR SALE

WestLee Condo
2200 N Westmoreland St. #415
Arlington VA 22213
\$445,000

UNDER CONTRACT

1120 Kensington Rd.
McLean VA 22101
\$1,060,000

Bethany Ellis
REALTOR®, Associate Broker
SRES, E-PRO, CRS, Relocation Specialist
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E: Bethany.Ellis@LongandFoster.com
W: www.BuyandSellwithBethany.com

MARKET EXPERT

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2116 N. Ohio Street Arlington, VA

10+

Competing Offers

\$1,150,000

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UNDER CONTRACT

911 Hillwood Ave
Falls Church, VA
\$1,400,000
(Representing Buyer)

UNDER CONTRACT

730 11th Street NE
Washington, D.C.
\$449,950

FOR SALE

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Each Keller Williams Office is independently owned and operated.

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The Bitici Group is a proud supporter of the Meridian Girls Basketball program. Join us on Friday, February 13th for Youth Night to cheer on our Mustangs as they take on Skyline High School! JV starts at 6:00 PM and Varsity at 7:30 PM. There will be giveaways and competitions. Free entry for kids wearing Falls Church Rec t-shirts!

Average Price: 4Q '25

\$1,508,746
Falls Church City (22046)

\$867,833
Bailey's X-roads (22041)

\$859,642
Sleepy Hollow (22042)

\$1,371,800
Pimmit Hills (22043)

\$1,309,000
Lake Barcroft (22044)

Days on the Market

19
Falls Church City (22046)

20
Bailey's X-roads (22041)

22
Sleepy Hollow (22042)

32
Pimmit Hills (22043)

29
Lake Barcroft (22044)



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When Appraisals and List Prices Clash: What Buyers Should Expect

BY FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

Appraisals vs. List Price: What Homebuyers and Sellers Should Expect and Why Professionals Matter

In a fast-moving real estate market, it is easy to assume that a home's list price tells the whole story. After all, buyers make offers based on it, sellers celebrate when it is exceeded, and neighbors use it as a benchmark for their own property values. But between a signed contract and a successful closing stands a critical checkpoint that can either validate a deal or force a difficult renegotiation: the appraisal.

Understanding the difference between list price and appraised value, and what goes into determining each, can help buyers and sellers avoid surprises and protect their financial interests.

List Price vs. Appraised Value

The list price is what a seller, advised by a real estate professional, believes the home can

reasonably sell for in the current market. It reflects recent comparable sales, local demand, condition, upgrades, and broader market trends. In competitive markets, list prices may even be intentionally set to encourage multiple offers.

An appraisal, by contrast, is an independent, third-party assessment of a home's fair market value. Lenders require appraisals to ensure the property is worth at least the amount being financed. If the appraisal comes in below the agreed-upon purchase price, the lender will not cover the difference, regardless of how competitive the market may be.

This is where deals can stall or fall apart.

What Goes Into an Appraisal

A licensed appraiser evaluates a home using standardized methods designed to remove emotion from the equation. While the exact process varies, most appraisals consider:

- Comparable sales, often

called "comps," meaning recently sold homes similar in size, location, age, and condition, typically within the last six months

- Square footage and layout, including above-grade living space, bedroom and bathroom count, and overall functionality
- Condition and improvements, such as renovations, structural integrity, roof age, HVAC systems, and visible maintenance issues

- Location factors, including school districts, proximity to amenities, traffic patterns, and neighborhood stability
- Market conditions, whether prices are trending upward, flat, or declining

Importantly, appraisers focus on closed sales, not asking prices or pending contracts. That distinction alone can explain why appraisals sometimes lag behind rapidly rising markets.

Why Appraisals Come in Low

A low appraisal does not necessarily mean a home is overpriced, but it does signal a disconnect

between the contract price and documented market data. This can happen when demand surges faster than sales data can keep up, when unique upgrades are difficult to quantify, or when a buyer is willing to pay a premium that the lender cannot justify.

When this occurs, buyers may need to bring additional cash to closing, sellers may need to reduce the price, or both parties must renegotiate terms. Without professional guidance, these moments can become emotional and contentious.

The Value of Hiring Professionals

This is where experienced real estate and appraisal professionals play an essential role.

A skilled real estate agent does far more than suggest a list price. They analyze comparable sales strategically, anticipate appraisal risks, and help structure contracts that protect their clients. This can include appraisal contingencies, escalation clauses, or detailed documentation of upgrades that can

help support value.

Licensed appraisers, meanwhile, provide the objective foundation lenders rely on. Their independence safeguards both buyers and financial institutions, ensuring homes are not overleveraged and values remain grounded in reality.

Together, these professionals help translate market dynamics into informed decisions, especially in competitive or shifting markets.

The Bottom Line

In real estate, price is not the same as value, and understanding that difference can save buyers and sellers time, money, and stress. Appraisals are not obstacles. They are safeguards. While no professional can eliminate every surprise, working with experienced, local experts dramatically improves the odds of a smooth transaction.

In the end, the strongest deals are not just the ones that win bidding wars, but the ones that hold up under scrutiny from contract to closing.





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What’s Changed in the Market as Workers Return to the Office?

BY FALLS CHURCH NEWS-PRESS

As the pandemic recedes further into the rearview mirror and office buildings refill, the real estate market is undergoing another important transition. The widespread shift to remote work reshaped housing preferences almost overnight, sending buyers in search of space, flexibility, and comfort. Now, as more people return to offices either full time or in hybrid arrangements, buyers are reassessing what they truly need from their homes and where they want to live.

During the height of remote work, homes became multifunctional spaces. They served as offices, classrooms, gyms, and sanctuaries. Extra bedrooms, finished basements, and dedicated workspaces moved from luxury to necessity. Buyers were willing to trade longer commutes for larger homes, and suburban and exurban markets surged as city living temporarily lost its appeal.

That shift is no longer as absolute. While remote and hybrid

work remain common, more employers are asking workers to return to the office several days a week. This change is not reversing the real estate trends of the past few years, but it is reshaping them.

Space is still important, but it is no longer the single driving factor it once was. Buyers still value home offices, yet they are now looking for flexibility rather than a room with a permanent desk and door. A guest room that can double as an office, or a dining area that converts into a workspace, is often sufficient. Many homeowners discovered during the pandemic that large houses come with higher maintenance costs, longer cleaning times, and increased energy use. As commuting becomes a regular part of life again, those tradeoffs are being reconsidered.

Location is regaining importance. Buyers who once moved far from employment centers are once again factoring commute times into their decisions. Neighborhoods within reason-

able driving or transit distance of major job hubs are seeing renewed interest. Walkability, access to public transportation, and proximity to restaurants, parks, and shops are once again strong selling points.

Urban areas that experienced an exodus during the remote-work boom are gradually reawakening. Younger professionals, in particular, are rediscovering the appeal of city living. Cultural events, dining, entertainment, and social connection matter more when people are not spending every workday at home. Condos and townhomes near downtowns and transit corridors are drawing more attention than they did just a few years ago.

Suburban markets remain strong, especially for families seeking good schools and safe neighborhoods, but the picture is more mixed. Inner-ring suburbs close to employment centers continue to attract buyers, while farther-out areas are seeing demand cool slightly. Some sellers are adjusting expectations as buyers

become more selective and price growth moderates.

Hybrid work has left a permanent imprint on housing preferences. Even workers returning to offices often do so only part of the week. As a result, homes still need to support remote work, but without being designed entirely around it. Multi-purpose rooms, comfortable layouts, and outdoor spaces remain appealing. Energy efficiency, strong internet connectivity, and smart-home features are also high on buyers’ lists.

Today’s buyers are seeking balance. They want homes that support productivity on remote days and convenience on office days. They are prioritizing neighborhoods that offer both quality of life and reasonable access to work. Rather than chasing extremes, either all-remote or fully office-centered living, buyers are settling into a middle ground.

The real estate market is not returning to its pre-pandemic form, but it is stabilizing into

something more sustainable. The lessons of remote work have not been forgotten, yet the value of community, proximity, and connection is reasserting itself. For buyers and sellers alike, understanding this shift is key to navigating today’s market.

Mortgage rates and affordability are also shaping how return-to-office pressures play out. Even buyers who would prefer to move closer to work may find themselves priced out of certain neighborhoods or locked into low-rate mortgages they secured years ago. That “rate lock-in” effect is keeping inventory tight in many markets and limiting mobility. The result is that some households are adapting their existing homes with modest renovations, such as adding built-ins or improving soundproofing, instead of relocating.

Home is still more than a place to live. It reflects how we work, how we connect, and how we choose to spend our time. As work patterns evolve, so too will the places we call home.

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Falls Church Native

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Meet Your Home Experts

A Falls Church News-Press Advertorial

Albert Bitici - The Bitici Group at KW Metro Center



The new year has brought renewed energy to the real estate market. New buyers are entering with confidence, while many buyers from last year - who paused their search due to uncertainty - are back and ready to move. As demand strengthens and competition increases, we're seeing the scales tip once again in favor of sellers. In this evolving landscape, success hinges on smart positioning, precise pricing, and a strategic marketing plan designed to maximize value. If you've been considering selling, now is the time to have a focused conversation about your goals and opportunities. Let's discuss a winning selling strategy and position your home to stand out in today's market.

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CHRIS & MATT EARMAN - Weichert Realtors - Falls Church



As Lifelong residents of Falls Church City, we've experienced first hand the growth and changes to the local and regional Real Estate Market. My past experiences in Mortgage & Finance, running local small businesses, volunteering, being involved in the local school systems, and building relationships over the decades, gives us a unique perspective and advantage in representing our clients in the local Northern Virginia Real Estate Market.

We are fully committed to providing you with a higher level of service that will make your real estate experience as easy and stress-free as possible. Our team of experienced Agents, gives us additional flexibility and availability for our Clients.

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Matt Earman • cell 703.328.4563 • Matt@EarmanRealEstate.com

Bethany Ellis - Long & Foster

Hi, I'm Bethany...

With two decades of experience in the real estate industry, I am committed to providing my clients with the highest level of service and expertise. My journey as a real estate agent has been driven by a passion for helping people find their dream homes and make sound investments. Honesty and integrity are the cornerstones of my practice. I believe in building strong, lasting relationships with my clients based on trust and open communication. My deep knowledge of the local market allows me to guide you through every step of the buying or selling process with confidence and clarity. I take pride in going above and beyond to ensure my clients' needs are met. Whether you're a first-time homebuyer, looking to sell, or seeking an investment property, I am here to provide personalized support tailored to your unique situation. My dedication to your success is unwavering, and I am always ready to advocate for your best interests. Let's work together to turn your real estate goals into reality!

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As Sales Manager for the Brownstones at Birchwood by Miller & Smith, Eric Hansen brings expertise, honesty, and a genuine passion for helping buyers feel confident in their next chapter. He takes pride in guiding homeowners toward beautifully designed spaces that offer comfort, convenience, and a true sense of coming home. millerandsmith.com/birchwood.

Eric Hansen • (571) 835-4422 • ehansen@millerandsmith.com

ROCK STAR realty group

Happy New Year!

As the new year begins, it's the perfect moment to embrace fresh starts and new possibilities. While winter is often thought of as a slower season, the real estate market is alive with opportunity—especially for buyers and motivated sellers ready to make a move. We are seeing an increase in inventory, which means:

For buyers, this creates more choices, better negotiating power, and the ability to make more confident decisions.

For sellers, it signals stability and motivated buyers—especially for homes that are well-priced and well-presented

My ROCK STAR realty group and I are your go-to resource for all-things real estate. Stop by Northside Social, Falls Church, on Wednesdays | 10:00–11:00 AM for our ROCK the House coffee to talk more. We'll buy you a cuppa!

Cheers to an exciting year ahead!

703.867.8674 • ROCKSTARrealtygroup.com

Kelly Millspaugh Thompson, Concierge Real Estate Services

As a Falls Church City native and small business owner Kelly strives to make buying and selling less overwhelming for her clients. Kelly opened STYLISH PATINA her Home+Gift shop in 2012 and has been a licensed Realtor since 2019. She has been recognized as a Platinum Producer by NVAR and Top Producer by Arlington Magazine. Kelly is known for her cutting edge marketing, business savvy and concierge approach to Real Estate. She and her team are able to manage all aspects of buying and selling a home: home prep, liquidation, organization, renovation, moving, and design. This has proven to be a unique and highly sought after combination of skills. Kelly has a passion for helping folks as they transition through life stages - needing a larger home for a growing family or downsizing. Kelly is a mother of 5 and understands the stress of moving with children and the overwhelm of transitioning out of a home you raised your family in when it comes time to simplify. These big life transitions are where she finds the most joy in helping families. If you are looking for a Realtor with compassion and commitment to making your next Real Estate transaction less stressful contact Kelly, 703-303-3700.

703.303.3700 • realestate@stylishpatina.com

Angie Rorrer-Keller Williams Metro Center

Angie is a trusted Real Estate Professional with KWMC and proud Northern Virginia native, Licensed in VA since 2019, Angie brings more than 35 years of experience in customer service and sales, delivering personalized top-notch service to every client. Her background in relationship-driven sales and client advocacy allows her to anticipate needs, communicate clearly, and negotiate effectively. Angie approaches every transaction with a strategic mindset and a commitment to excellence. She is recognized for her professionalism, strong work ethic and client first approach. Angie is dedicated to guiding buyers and sellers with integrity, care, and exceptional results.

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