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CANDIDATE RESOURCES

**RELOCATION GUIDE**

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## RELOCATING TO THE VANCOUVER AREA

Vancouver is consistently rated as one of the top cities in the world to live and work in. With its mild climate and spectacular surroundings, it is a mecca for outdoor activities. Vancouver is also a diverse city, with cultural and economic opportunities. As a regular contender for the “Silicon Valley North” nickname, IT professionals are seeking opportunities within Vancouver’s Lower Mainland.

Relocating to another city, province or even country for a job can be a daunting task. There are several aspects to take into consideration, such as cost-of-living, climate, lifestyle and healthcare. It’s important to learn as much as you can about your new city of residence prior to your move.

At IT/IQ, we are dedicated not only to helping you find the job that is the best fit for you, but also to providing you with the resources to transition into your new role as seamlessly as possible. We developed this relocation guide to aid you in your move to Vancouver and equip you with the resources you need to settle into your new life.

# RELOCATION CHECKLIST

If you are moving to BC there are a number of things you will need to do before and after you arrive, including:

- Secure accommodations
- Hire movers or rent a moving truck
- Make necessary travel arrangements
- Arrange to have vehicles transported (if needed)
- Complete a change of address with all relevant parties
- Have your mail forwarded (if necessary)
- Register for healthcare coverage - Medical Services Plan
- Change your driver's licence
- Certify, register, license and insure your vehicle
- Set up utilities - BC Hydro (electricity), Fortis BC (gas), Telus, Shaw, etc. (telephone)
- Find a family doctor and other relevant medical professionals
- If you have children, locate childcare centres, schools, etc.
- Register with Election BC

## MOVING TO THE VANCOUVER AREA

**Finding a home:** Whether you're planning to buy a home or rent, you'll want to do research on Vancouver's array of different neighbourhoods. Here are some valuable resources for finding a home in the Lower Mainland:

- [Rent BC](#)
- [Vancouver Craigslist - Housing](#)
- [Vancouver Kijiji - Real Estate](#)
- [Multiple Listings Service - Realtor.ca](#)
- [Realty Link Online](#)

**Additional Details:** You will want to familiarize yourself with the following aspects prior to moving to BC, such as housing, utilities, insurance, childcare and healthcare costs. The following links will provide you with relevant information:

- [Government of BC - Moving to or Around BC](#)
- [Canada Revenue Agency - Information on Moving](#)
- [Canada Post - Change of Address](#)
- [Medical Services Plan \(MSP\) - Medical Coverage](#)
- [PharmaCare College of Physicians and Surgeons of BC](#)
- [Government of BC - Education](#)
- [Childcare Resource and Referral Program](#)
- [Elections BC - Voter Registration](#)
- [ICBC - Moving](#)
- [Fortis BC - Start, stop or move your service](#)
- [Telus - Moving](#)



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## EMIGRATING TO BRITISH COLUMBIA

Moving to British Columbia, Canada, from another country involves many steps and can be a complicated and lengthy process. The rules for immigration are subject to change without notice, therefore it is important to ensure you have the most current information. For more information on immigration to Canada, please visit the [Government of Canada – Work in Canada webpage](#).

If you do have an offer of employment in BC, be aware that approval is not guaranteed; the process could take quite a long time. Your prospective employer may be able to assist you throughout the process, but there are certain guidelines that organizations must follow in order to hire foreign workers. In most cases, employers must fill out a [Labour Market Opinion Application](#), which requires federal approval. You may also apply to be assessed for the [Federal Skilled Workers Program](#). Having an offer of employment may expedite the application process. More [information on hiring immigrants and temporary foreign workers](#) as well as other valuable facts about living and working in BC, can be found on the [WelcomeBC website](#).

## VANCOUVER'S LOWER MAINLAND

Vancouver benefits from a temperate climate with an average annual temperature of 11°C. The summer months (July and August) are warm and dry, and the winters are mild, though rainy. November through March are the wettest months, but precipitation does vary throughout the Lower Mainland. North Vancouver has the highest levels of precipitation, whereas White Rock has the lowest.

It snows only 11 days out of the year, on average, defying Canada's reputation as the "Great White North." Vancouver's mild climate makes this city ideal for year-round outdoor activities.



## WEST COAST LIFESTYLE

Vancouver is known for its active, outdoor lifestyle. It also has a wide range of cultural activities to enjoy, including **museums**, **galleries**, **festivals**, **symphonies** and **theatres**. You'll find plenty of variety in restaurants, clubs and pubs to choose from. There's a number of family friendly activities, including **Telus World of Science**, **Vancouver Aquarium** and a multitude of **parks**, **recreation facilities** and **indoor play centres** all over the Lower Mainland.

With **Vancouver Island**, the **Gulf Islands**, the **Sunshine Coast** and **Whistler** nearby, a quick holiday away from the Lower Mainland is easily accomplished. **BC Ferries** can take you to numerous destinations and the newly improved Sea-to-Sky Highway makes **Whistler** just an hour and forty minutes away.

## LOWER MAINLAND NEIGHBORHOODS

**Yaletown:** What was once strictly an industrial area, is now one of the trendiest and liveliest areas downtown. In addition to boasting numerous restaurants, coffee shops and boutiques, Yaletown is also a short walk from several major organizations and business districts.

Yaletown is extremely accessible, with several public transportation options servicing the area, including buses, the **SkyTrain**, the **Aquabus** and **False Creek Ferries**. Travelling by foot or by bike is also possible in Yaletown and throughout downtown Vancouver. Yaletown is no stranger to the arts, with plenty of **galleries** and **festivals** also in the area. There is something for everyone in this revitalized downtown neighbourhood.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1a9ctD5>

**Kitsilano:** To many Vancouverites, Kitsilano (Kits) is the heart of our city. Situated on the southern bank of False Creek, Kits features ample opportunities to appreciate the outdoors. Though the neighbourhood is predominantly residential, two of Vancouver’s major retail districts are located in Kits – [West 4th Avenue](#) and [West Broadway](#). Within both shopping hubs are a wide range of cafes, restaurants and shops, not to mention a great selection of organic markets.

Kitsilano also provides quick access to a number of busy business districts. Downtown is just a short trip away across the Burrard Street Bridge, and public transit is easily accessed. There are many buses that run through the area, as well as the Aquabus and False Creek Ferries at Granville Island. A short bus ride either downtown or to Cambie Street will also bring you to a selection of SkyTrain stations.

Kitsilano is also home to a number of cultural events and destinations, such as the [Museum of Vancouver](#), the [Vancouver Maritime Museum](#), [HR MacMillan Space Centre](#), [Bard on the Beach Shakespeare Festival](#), [Greek Day](#) and the Kitsilano chapter of the [Car Free Vancouver Day Festival](#).

Map: <http://bit.ly/1e41q6i>



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**Gastown:** Known as the “birthplace of Vancouver,” Gastown is a unique neighbourhood located close to the waterfront on the northeast side of Vancouver’s downtown core. Gastown is a mix of old and new **cafes, restaurant, art galleries** and **shops**. An eclectic range of businesses have set up shop in Gastown; it has gained a reputation as a centre for **technology and new media**. After several periods of decline and rebirth, Gastown continues to grow and develop into a thriving community.

From Gastown, many public transportation options are available; Waterfront Station sits on the northwest side of Gastown where the SkyTrain, West Coast Express and the SeaBus can all be accessed.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1bBt2fJ>



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**Chinatown:** Vancouver’s Chinatown is the third largest in North America. It’s located on the east side of Vancouver’s downtown core. Though still predominantly considered a tourist destination, Chinatown has been going through a transformation in recent years, with more residences being built and businesses moving in to the area. With its close proximity to major downtown business districts, Chinatown is a convenient location to set up residence.

The Stadium-Chinatown SkyTrain station is located on Beatty Street at Dunsmuir, and a large number of buses also run through the area. Major routes, such as Hastings Street and the Trans-Canada Highway are also just minutes away from Chinatown

Map: <http://bit.ly/1cVRWbf>



**False Creek:** False Creek is a neighbourhood named for the inlet it is situated on. Both the north and south shores of False Creek were originally designated for industrial use, but were later developed. The south shore became a predominantly residential neighbourhood. The land on the north shore of False Creek was purchased by the BC government and developed for Expo '86. The neighbourhood was transformed into a mixed-use area, with residences, BC Place stadium, and a wide variety of commercial retailers. False Creek is also home to the Vancouver Olympic Village, built for the 2010 Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games.

False Creek enables quick access to a variety of transportation options, such as the Aquabus, False Creek Ferries, buses and the SkyTrain.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1aZWTdo>



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**Burnaby:** Burnaby is the third most populated city in British Columbia. This city offers plenty of parks, leisure facilities, restaurants and shopping facilities, such as **Metropolis at Metrotown**, the largest shopping centre in BC. Metrotown is one of the city's four town centres and a major business district in Burnaby. Burnaby's other town centres include **Brentwood**, **Lougheed**, and **Edmonds**. There are nearly 20 business districts in Burnaby, including **Lake City Business Centre**, **Burnaby Business Park**, and **Glenlyon Business Park**.

Travel throughout the city and into Vancouver is easily accomplished by transit, with numerous SkyTrain stations throughout the city and quick access to buses. Many major businesses also have offices in Burnaby as well as two major post-secondary institutions – British Columbia Institute of Technology and Simon Fraser University.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1d3gj6S>

**North and West Vancouver:** The major draw for living on the North Shore is nature. With the ocean below and the mountains above, there is stunning scenery surrounding both North and West Vancouver. There are **three ski hills**, **plenty of hiking** and **mountain biking trails** and, a wide range of **parks**. You'll find all the big-city amenities you need in North and West Van as well as quick access to downtown Vancouver via the two bridges, or SeaBus.

The Seabus runs from Lonsdale Quay in North Vancouver to Waterfront Station. From there, commuters can catch a bus or SkyTrain. In addition, there are two bridges providing access to Vancouver and Burnaby – the Lions Gate (First Narrows) Bridge and the Iron Worker's Memorial (Second Narrows) Bridge. Living on the North Shore can be a great option for those who are working in Vancouver. Though West Vancouver is quite expensive, North Vancouver is a bit more reasonable. The trade-off is the convenience of the close-proximity to Vancouver and the spectacular surroundings.

Maps: <http://bit.ly/1f2dsaR> (North Vancouver)  
<http://bit.ly/1eFEys7> (West Vancouver)



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**Richmond:** The City of Richmond borders on Burnaby to the north and New Westminster to the east. It is home to the [Vancouver International Airport \(YVR\)](#) and is the fourth largest city by population in Metro Vancouver. Richmond is well known for its [Night Market](#), which is said to be even larger than [Vancouver's Chinatown Night Market](#). This city has plenty of amenities, with a great selection of restaurants, cafes and shopping centres to choose from. It is also home to [Steveston Village](#), a charming fishing village on the water with a rich history.

Due to its proximity to Vancouver and its lower real estate costs, Richmond is home to quite a number of corporate head offices, making it a fantastic choice for commercial and residential needs. From Richmond, neighbouring cities are easily accessed by the SkyTrain (Canada Line), buses and major bridges and freeways, such as Highway 99 and Highway 91. Housing costs are lower in Richmond than in Vancouver, but it is close enough to offer quick and easy access to downtown. The ride to downtown Vancouver from Richmond on the Canada Line Skytrain is just 25 minutes.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1IHntDs>

## OTHER NEIGHBOURHOODS

Bordering on City of Burnaby, you'll find New Westminister, Coquitlam and Port Moody. Housing costs in New Westminister as well as the Tri-Cities (Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody) are considerably lower than in the City of Vancouver, yet feature many of the amenities and outdoor attractions that make the Lower Mainland so desirable. Pitt Meadows and Maple Ridge are located further east of the Tri-Cities.

**New Westminister:** As the former capital city of the province, New Westminister is steeped in **history**. There's a mix of historical buildings with classic architecture to modern homes with views of the Fraser River. This city provides many amenities, such as **shopping centres, markets, restaurants** and **leisure facilities**.

New Westminister has numerous SkyTrain stations and a broad selection of bus routes, allowing for quick access to Vancouver and other areas. Access to major routes, such as Highway 91 and the Trans-Canada Highway is also easy, and commuting to Vancouver is accomplished with relative ease.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1nhlQaV>



**Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody:** Coquitlam, Port Coquitlam and Port Moody make up the Tri-City region in the Lower Mainland. All three cities offer opportunities for **outdoor recreation** and a great selection of **cafes, restaurants, shops, cultural centres** and **leisure facilities**. In your downtime, you can hike, go biking, lay on the beach, see a play, or take an art class. These three cities offer big city amenities with the hospitality of a small town.

The Tri-Cities are well-served by public transportation (buses, SkyTrain and the West Coast Express), allowing for easy access to Vancouver. There are also several major driving routes that are easy to access from all three cities, which will bring you into Vancouver and other surrounding cities (Lougheed Highway, Barnet Highway and the Trans-Canada Highway).

Maps: <http://bit.ly/1gc0jOG> (Coquitlam)  
<http://bit.ly/1fQpJDj> (Port Coquitlam)  
<http://bit.ly/1barRGF> (Port Moody)

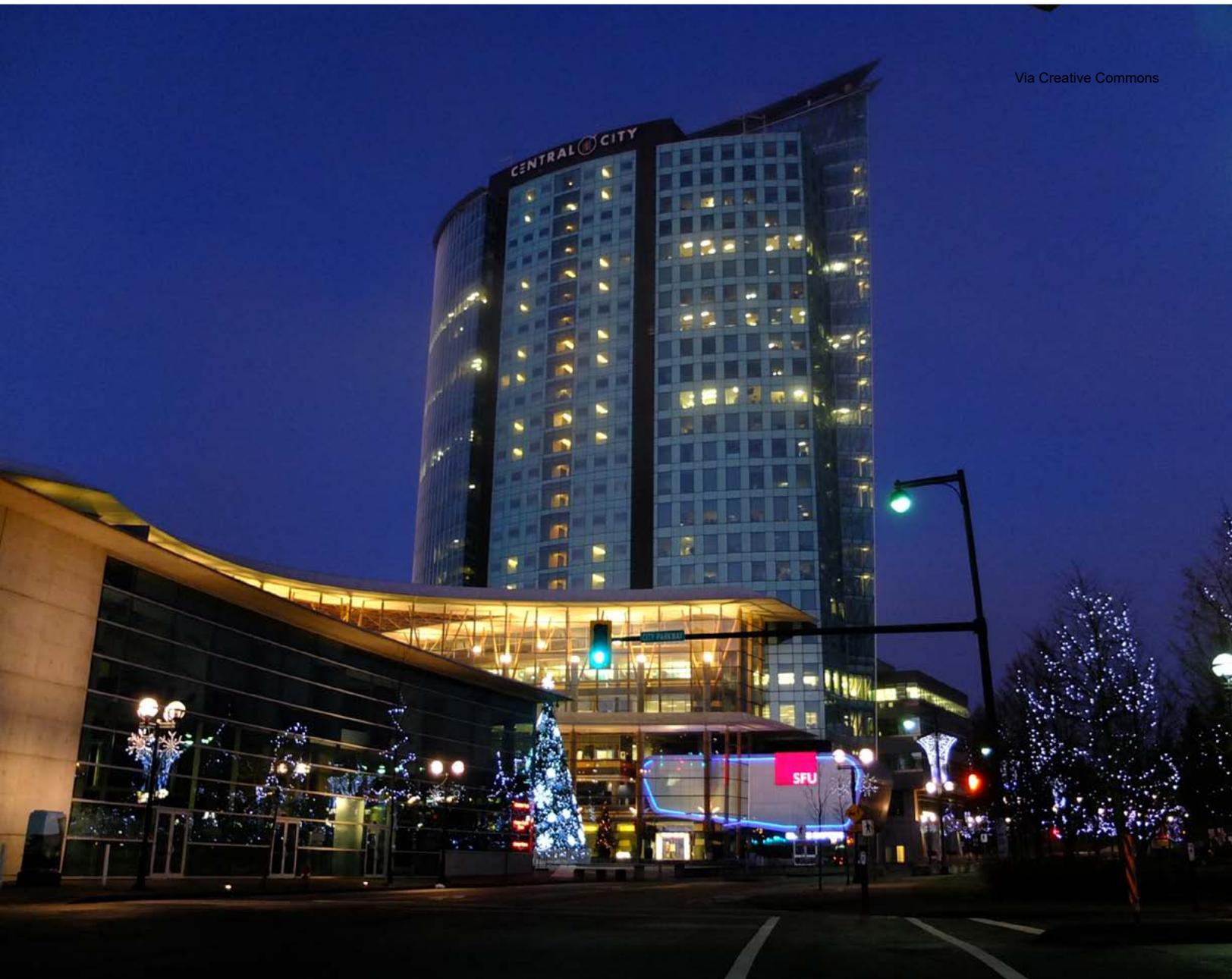
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**Surrey:** Just across the Port Mann Bridge are the cities of Surrey, White Rock and Langley. Surrey is the second largest city by population in BC and is well known for its cultural diversity, recreation opportunities and its ever-growing population. Additionally, it has a great transportation infrastructure and less expensive housing. For your days off, Surrey is well known for its many **festivals**, including the largest **Canada Day festival** in Western Canada.

Surrey offers great transit options with numerous bus routes and access to four SkyTrain stations. In addition, access to other areas of Metro Vancouver can be gained by the Trans-Canada Highway, Highway 91 and Highway 99.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1bat1Ss>



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**Langley:** Langley borders on Surrey to the east and offers a slower pace and a real sense of community. Langley offers all of the typical big-city amenities with a rural feel; the city is surrounded by acres of both parkland and farmland.

The City of Langley is well-served by TransLink, offering a number of major bus routes as well as community shuttles. The Fraser Highway and the Trans-Canada Highway are major routes for travel in and out of the city. Though there are no SkyTrain stations in Langley, the nearest station in Surrey is less than 30 minutes away. Downtown Vancouver is less than an hour's drive away, though travel time varies depending on traffic congestion.

Map: <http://bit.ly/1bxGtuo>

**White Rock:** White Rock is nearly 50 kilometres south-east of Vancouver. Housing costs, though lower than Vancouver's, are a bit higher than other outlying regions, as White Rock is a very desirable community. This quaint, seaside community offers some of the **most stunning scenery** in the region, and is known for being one of the sunniest locations in the Lower Mainland.

White Rock is also serviced by TransLink, offering several major bus routes and community shuttles. Major routes for travel to and from the city include the King George Highway, Highway 99 and the Trans-Canada Highway. White Rock is not serviced by the SkyTrain, but the closest station in Surrey is less than 30 minutes away and the Bridgeport Station in Richmond is a little over 30 minutes away.

Maps: <http://bit.ly/1bxGCxP>



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**Abbotsford and Mission:** Both Abbotsford and Mission are roughly an hour's drive east from Vancouver. Abbotsford is the largest city in BC by area and is the fifth largest municipality in the province. Mission borders on Abbotsford to the north. Both cities offer a small-town feel with a large number of amenities and cheaper housing costs.

Abbotsford and Mission are serviced by the [Central Fraser Valley Transit System](#) and Mission is home to the most easterly West Coast Express station. The ride to downtown Vancouver on the West Coast Express takes 1 hour and 15 minutes.

Maps: <http://bit.ly/LFIKfY> (Abbotsford)  
<http://bit.ly/1km6FQV> (Mission)

## COST OF LIVING

In order to help you better understand and plan for moving to the Vancouver Lower Mainland. Each of the figures outlined in this chart represent an average monthly cost of an unfurnished apartment or condominium in the corresponding neighbourhoods. Each category represents the average monthly cost of generally available rental properties.

	Yaletown	Kitsilano	Gastown	North/West Vancouver	Burnaby (Metrotown)	Richmond	New Westminster	Tri-Cities	Pitt Meadows, Maple Ridge	Surrey, White Rock, Langley	Abbotsford, Mission
1-bdrm	\$2295	\$2135	\$2051	\$1655	\$1445	\$1778	\$1451	\$1265	\$1152	\$1176	\$871
2-bdrm	\$2750	\$2889	\$3255	\$2637	\$2254	\$2205	\$2029	\$2053	\$1395	\$1555	\$1295
3-bdrm	\$4438	\$3943	\$4500	\$3528	\$2949	\$2548	\$2625	\$2157	\$2085	\$2275	\$2172

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