

Looking for your Next Neighbourhood

In real estate, we often use the expression, “Looking for a new home.” But, while the home is important, so is the neighbourhood. In fact, you should focus just as much attention on the neighbourhood you choose to target as you would the homes for sale there.

What should you look for in your next neighbourhood? To help you make that determination, ask yourself the following questions:

- *What type of neighbourhood do I want to live in? Urban? Suburban? Countryside?*
- *What do I want to have nearby, within walking or easy driving distance? (For example, grocery store, public school, hospital, playground.)*
- *Am I okay with some traffic noise and congestion or is a quiet area better suited to me?*
- *Is having transit and other convenient commuting routes important to me?*
- *What demographic would I like the neighbourhood to have? Families? Older residents?*
- *What do I want to live nearer to than I do now? (Friends, family, work, hobbies.)*



Going through these questions is likely to help narrow your choices to a few potential neighbourhoods. Your next step is to find out the current selling price for homes in those neighbourhoods. That will help you match neighbourhoods to your budget. Ideally, at least one neighbourhood will come to the surface as the ideal one for you. When that happens, start seeing listings!



Showing your Home when You Don't Have Time to Prepare

When you're selling your home, you'll usually have plenty of time to prepare for buyer viewings. You'll have time to clean, declutter, take the dog to doggie daycare, etc. So, when a buyer sees your home, they'll have every reason to be impressed.

But, what do you do if a buyer wants to see your home right away — and you're *not* prepared? Assuming you want to accommodate the request, rather than put them off, here are some quick tips:

- Set expectations. Ensure the buyer agent knows the home is in “lived-in” condition at the moment.
- Focus on neatening the place. You won't have time for extensive cleaning. So, pick up as much clutter as possible.
- Make the beds.
- Quickly wipe countertops, especially in bathrooms and the kitchen.
- Make sure all rooms are well-lit, particularly if the viewing is in the evening.
- Make the foyer as neat and clean as possible. That's where buyers form their first impressions.
- Take your pets with you, and be absent during the viewing. (If that's not possible remain in one room.)

You may only have a few minutes, but there's a lot you can accomplish in that time.

Do You Need a Real Estate Crystal Ball?

If you were planning to sell your home this season, wouldn't it be nice to peer into a crystal ball and see what the experience is going to be like? Wouldn't it be handy to know whether you're up against a buyer's or seller's market, what homes like yours are selling for right now, and how many offers you're likely to get?

That kind of real estate crystal ball would be nice! In fact, you'd likely feel much more confident moving forward if you knew what the selling experience was going to be like.

Well, unfortunately, a crystal ball doesn't exist. However, you can still get a fairly clear picture of what's likely to happen should you list your home this season.

For example, drawing on recent market data, you can find out how much your home is likely to sell for right now. That information alone will help you plan, especially if you are also buying a new home.

You can also get an estimate of how long your home will take to sell. Again, this is driven by recent market data. For example, if homes similar to yours are taking an average of 21 days to sell, then you can expect your home to be on the market for approximately that long.

You can also quickly find out what you need to do to prepare your home for listing. Will it need a new coat of paint? Will professional staging be recommended? All of that can be



determined based on an inspection of the current state of your home and an understanding of local market conditions.

So, as you can see, you really don't need a crystal ball. There's plenty of information available to give you a sense of what the experience of selling this season is going to be like. And, if you're like most homeowners, having that information will give you the clarity and confidence you need to move forward.