

HOME SELLING GUIDE



AVENUE
REALTY

THE WAY HOME

HOME SELLING GUIDE



At Avenue Realty we take pride in the extra effort and attention we give all of our listings. We enjoy helping homeowners understand the home selling process and the things they can do to make their home more appealing to buyers. We also take a very thoughtful look at more than just the home. We help to market the neighborhood and surrounding area as well.

We guarantee our customers will be completely satisfied with our services and performance. If a client is not happy with the services being provided by one of our Realtor[®]s, they will be replaced with another Avenue Realtor[®] or we will cancel our listing agreement, on the spot, without a fee. Guaranteeing performance is our way of staying focused on the quality of service provided and we have yet to disappoint a client.



AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP

Tell your neighbors you are listing your home. We have found that neighbors are motivated to recruit friends and family to live in their neighborhood. The more people who know your home is for sale the better!

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QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF

1. Why do I need a Realtor?

You have decided to sell your home. Do you really need to hire a Realtor® to help with the process? Truth be told, no. Do we think you are at a disadvantage if you don't? Absolutely. A licensed Realtor® is extremely helpful during the many phases of a home sale. First a Realtor® will walk through your home and help you address any issues that may preclude you from receiving top dollar. Once your home is listed for sale, a Realtor® will launch a marketing campaign. Your Realtor®'s list of proven contacts is extremely helpful with both these processes and can save you money and stress.



When you receive an offer your Realtor® becomes invaluable. This is probably your biggest financial transaction to date and not the time to test your DIY skills. A real estate contract has many aspects that require negotiation and awareness of the process. Different types of seller ownership and/or buyer loans require different inspections. Loan commitment dates are often overlooked, but are very important when reviewing an offer. Most offers will come with several contingencies and each one needs to be thoughtfully considered and understood.

AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP

Ask your Realtor® what they will do for you throughout the process. Will they help guide you through the process of preparing your home for sale? Ask to see examples of brochures and marketing done for previous clients. Remember the Realtor® you hire is working for you so put him/her to work!

2. What should I look for in a comprehensive marketing plan?

It is now time to understand the comprehensive marketing plan tailored to your specific home. Avenue Realty will provide you with a comprehensive marketing plan to your specific home, which includes traditional print media (e.g., magazine ads, flyers, mailers, postcards, etc.), open house strategy, and digital marketing strategy. At Avenue Realty we invest in marketing to a level that is unparalleled by our competition and the effectiveness is noticeable in our results.

Putting a sign in your yard and offering to do an open house is not of much value to a seller. Putting your home on Zillow, MLS and other websites is a very basic start. These things are certainly essential, but they are not a comprehensive marketing plan. See below for what is.

IMPRESSIVE ONLINE PRESENCE



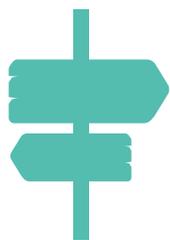
98% of home buyers use the internet to find their next home. This means that while these potential buyers are searching through Zillow, REALTOR.com and Trulia you want to make sure that your home stands out from the rest. This can be done through professional photography, a personalized landing page, and social media marketing strategies.

CUSTOM LANDING PAGE



Your home will have its own landing page created by our digital marketing team. This page will include professional photographs of your home, contact form for scheduling showing appointments, interactive map, neighborhood description, and detailed information about your home. It can easily be found online by simply typing in your address such as 123MainStreet.com.

SIGNAGE FOR THOSE WHO SEARCH THE ROADS RATHER THAN THE INTERNET



We have taken time and conducted focus groups to ensure that the Avenue Realty brand and signage is easy to recognize, see, and read from a car. Why is this so important? Roads are littered with signage from garage sales, to political elections, to homes for sale. Avenue Realty has vertical signs making it easier to spot, especially in areas where the vegetation is overgrown. Large QR codes linked to your home's information can be scanned from a car rather than running out in the rain hoping there is still a flyer left in the "take one" tube. We will make sure potential buyers can find your home and learn about it quickly and easily.



“TAKE ONE” FLYER

A sign with a QR code isn't for everyone, so we do provide “take one” flyers that are professionally developed and printed. We believe it is important to use color photos and many interior pictures when creating these flyers. If a potential buyer has stopped to take a flyer we know they like the neighborhood and the outside of your home, so now it is time to peak their interest enough so they ask to see the inside. A well-done flyer can lead to more showing requests.



BROCHURE

A photograph of your house on printer paper with a sales price doesn't help the potential buyer remember what is so wonderful about your home. Avenue Realty will produce a high-end brochure with thoughtful information about your home and neighborhood. With professional photographs showcasing your home and pertinent information at their finger tips, buyers will remember why your home is at the top of their list.



OPEN HOUSE

Open houses are great, but putting up an Open House sign isn't advertising. An open house needs to be advertised through digital marketing. Avenue Realty makes sure the right people know about your home and upcoming open house. We also offer to offset our open house times. For example, instead of hosing an open house from 12-2pm like most others, we can host yours from 1-3pm or 2-4pm allowing for buyers to come to your home once other open houses have closed their doors.

AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP



Professional photography is proven to drive traffic to your home from buyers searching the Internet. This is not the time for camera phone images! Poor photographs equal less time a potential buyer focuses on your home when browsing online. This subsequently results in less foot traffic, longer days on the market, and lower sales price.

3. What are ideal terms for me and my family?

It is never too early to think about the terms you would accept when an offer comes. Thinking through the entire selling process will also help you to decide how you will approach preparing your home for sale and the list price. It is almost impossible to prepare for any situation, but **the questions below should help you be prepared for most offers.**

What is the lowest net price you will accept? (sales price less commissions, subsidies, fees)

How much of an earnest money deposit do you expect with an offer? (1% is standard)

What is your desired closing date?

Do you want the option to rent-back?

Which contingencies you will accept (financing, home sale, inspections)?

Would you consider seller assistance towards a buyer's closing costs?

Are you open to seller paid repairs or replacements (e.g., painting allowance, allow buyer to choose new-carpet if the old one needs to be replaced)?

Will you leave the draperies?

Will you leave any furniture or perhaps the outdoor patio set, etc?

You will also want to consider other out-of-pocket costs such as:

Termite Inspection

Home inspection repairs

Transaction and closing fees (typically slightly less than 1% of sales price)

AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP

Determining the terms you will accept in advance will allow you to be an objective negotiator rather than an *emotional* one.

4. How can I better prepare my home to receive top dollar?

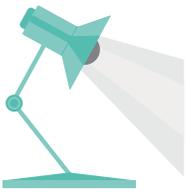
You need to take an objective look at your home, which is an understandable challenge for most sellers. Buyers are going to be more inclined to make an offer on a home that has been well maintained, priced correctly, and where they can visualize living. It may take a little work to get your home show ready, but it will be worth it.

QUICK FIXES



Make sure you have repaired or replaced anything that is not in working order or not in good condition. Now is the time to fix the door that always sticks, re-caulk the bathtub, fix the broken electrical outlet, etc. This list of “quick fixes” may seem daunting. Don’t worry, Avenue Realty has a network of resources to help you complete these items quickly and get your home on the market in move-in ready condition. These quick fixes are important because a home that is move-in ready will almost always receive a higher sales price than one that is not.

STAGING



Most sellers know that a clean and de-cluttered home will sell faster, but that doesn’t mean you should throw everything you own into a closet or garage. Buyers are turned off by overflowing closets and garages because they will immediately think your home does not have ample storage space. To resolve this issue, consider a pre-listing garage sale. If you still have more belongings than will fit comfortably in your home, rent a storage unit. It may be a little money out of your pocket, but well worth the small investment if it helps your home sell quickly and at your desired price.

A home that is decorated well and de-personalized will sell more quickly than a home that hasn’t been updated in decades and is cluttered with family photo walls. Remember, a buyer is more likely to make an offer on a home where they can visualize themselves and their family. If you are not sure how to accomplish this, Avenue Realty has the design and home staging resources and experience to help you.

HOME IMPROVEMENTS



Before making any major improvements, consult with your Realtor® or an appraiser on the value that will be added to your home by making the improvement. A bathroom remodel may not give you the return on investment you are hoping for, but maybe new kitchen countertops will really make an impact. When you list your home with Avenue Realty, we will help you identify where you should spend money on improvements and where you wouldn’t see a return on investment.

THE SELLER'S TO-DO LIST

- Clean your kitchen and appliances – wipe down cabinets, oven, exhaust hood, fridge, etc
- Have your carpets steam cleaned
- Re-caulk sinks and tubs
- Fix or re-install any doors that are broken or missing
- Replace any missing window screens
- Clean out the gutters
- Purchase a new front door mat
- Give your front door a fresh coat of paint
- Paint the interior of your home neutral colors
- Depersonalize
- Rent a storage unit and de-clutter
- Clean out closets (1/2 full is best)
- Make sure all light bulbs are working
- Purchase lamps if more light is needed

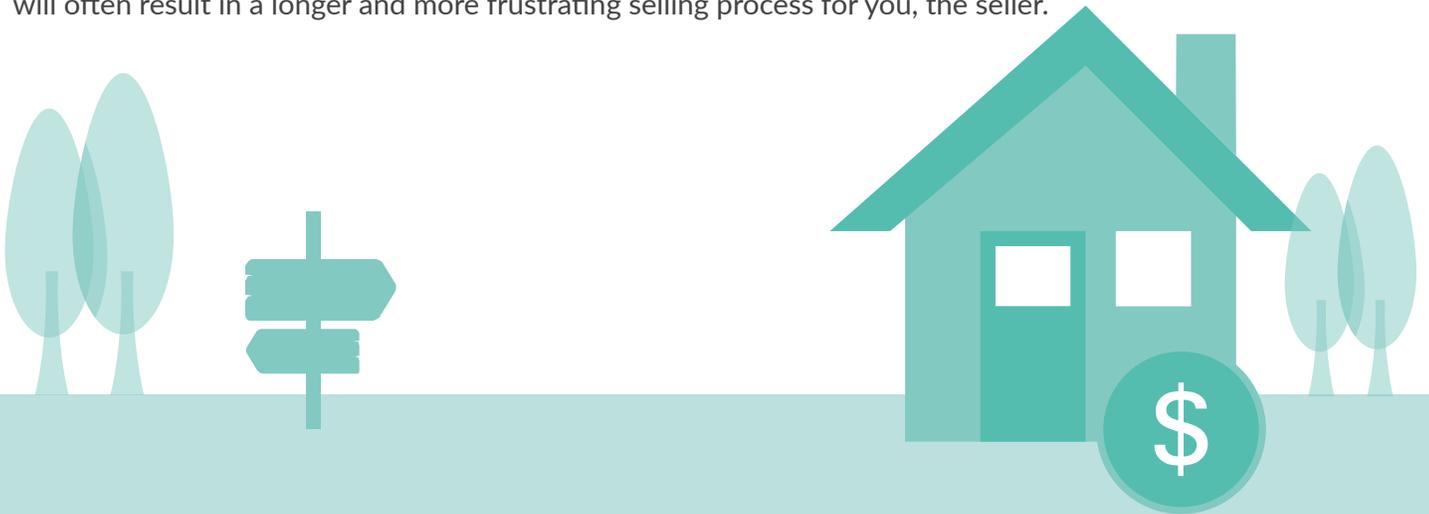
AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP

Purchasing a one-year home warranty can protect you against any unexpected issues on major appliances and home systems (e.g., heating system breaking, appliances malfunctioning, etc.) while you are prepping your home for sale and while it's on the market. This also serves as an incentive to buyers to buy your home over a similar one. Also, get your HVAC system serviced prior to listing your home so you can be proactive when a potential buyer starts asking questions about the "health" of the major systems in your home. It is always nice as a seller to simply reply to one of the most common questions from a buyer with a receipt showing a well maintained HVAC system.

5. How do I determine the price of my home?

Once your home is prepared for sale, it is time to set a price. When determining a list price, there are different factors affecting your home's value which need to be considered. Besides the home itself, location, schools and neighborhood are a huge consideration. If you live in an area that is growing, has good infrastructure, and a strong local economy, the price of your home will be positively affected. Conversely, people leaving the area, a saturated market, and loss of jobs will result in a lower home price.

Avenue Realty will assist you in taking a very objective approach to pricing your home. We can provide you with a comprehensive report of the sales activity in your neighborhood and utilize other pricing techniques we have mastered over the years including evaluating expired listings and pending sales. Setting a price that can be supported by objective data will help your home sell more quickly and at the right price. Sometimes, a pre-listing appraisal is helpful. Be wary of a listing agent who does not provide data to support a list price. You don't want to hire a Realtor® just based on a desirable list price especially if it can't be supported. This will often result in a longer and more frustrating selling process for you, the seller.



AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP



Research completed at Cornell University has determined that buyers will pay more for a home with a listing price that does not end in zeros. So, as silly as it may seem, a list price of \$349,975 will more likely lead to a higher offer than the same home listed at \$350,000.

6. What should I be doing to help sell my home once it is on market?

The short answer is, have a plan for home showings and present yourself as an accommodating seller.

BE ACCOMMODATING



If it requires less time for a buyer's Realtor® to coordinate showing their client your home, they are more likely to highlight your home. A listing that says "Please allow 48 hours notice. Showing appointments can be made on Tuesday through Friday from 10am to 2pm" will probably have fewer showing than one that says, "Please allow 1 hour advance notice. Can show 7 days a week from 9am to 7pm".

KEEP YOUR HOME "SHOW-READY"



While your home is on the market, always be prepared for the last-minute showing by doing your best to keep your home clean, de-cluttered and organized. Make sure to clean those dirty dishes in the sink and take out the trash! Yes, it's annoying when a buyer's Realtor® doesn't provide sufficient notice. However, your home will be off the market and heading to closing soon enough, so be patient. If a buyer's Realtor® is in the neighborhood with their client and wants to swing by, do your best to pick up and leave the home to allow it to be shown. You want to capitalize on every single showing when a Realtor® brings a qualified buyer.

LEAVE



There is no reason for you to be home while your home is being shown to a buyer. Not only is it unnecessary, but it can distract a buyer from freely walking through the home and visualizing themselves living there.

BE PREPARED TO NEGOTIATE QUICKLY



At Avenue Realty we have found that nearly 80% of the time the first offer a seller receives is the best one. So, mentally prepare to respond quickly when the first offer is received because you want to take advantage of a buyer's interest and engage in any subsequent negotiations.

AVENUE REALTY QUICK TIP

Don't light candles to make your home smell good before a showing. Potential buyers will wonder what you are covering up. Instead open your windows (weather permitting) and let your home get some fresh air. Also, turn on the lights, clean up the dishes in the sink, and take out the trash before a showing.

7. Is there anything I need to do after accepting an offer?

Once you have accepted an offer to purchase and you and the buyer have signed all the contractual documents, the result is a legally-binding ratified contract. Although a celebration is order, we suggest our sellers to be cautiously optimistic. There are a few mores steps in the process.

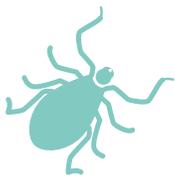
HOME INSPECTION



A home inspector will come to your home, document any needed repairs, and submit a report to the potential buyers. This is paid for by the buyers and is typically done within 7-14 days after the contract is ratified. Within a few days of the home inspector submitting a report, you will receive a home inspection addendum from the buyer asking for repairs on items the inspector flagged as needing repair. A radon gas test may also be conducted at this time.

This is when your Avenue Realty Realtor® can help you decide which repairs to make. Safety issues are typically addressed by a seller. You may agree to also fix cosmetic issues. Alternatively, you may want to obtain repair estimates and offer a sum of money for repairs. This is a recommended method when dealing with cosmetic repairs. It eliminates the buyer saying the repair you made wasn't "good enough" or to their taste. Receipts are typically required for all home inspection work.

TERMITE INSPECTION



Unless you prefer organizing a termite inspection yourself, we will do this for you once the home inspection and appraisal have been completed. Usually the termite inspection is paid for by the seller at the time of closing as a line item on the Closing Disclosure. A termite report showing no active termite activity is needed by almost all lenders before they will finalize a loan.

HOME APPRAISAL



The buyer's lender will set up a time for a buyer paid appraisal. This step is to ensure that the bank is not issuing a loan for more than the home is worth. If the home appraisers for more than the sales price, you will simply be notified that the home appraised. However, if the home appraises below the sales price you will be made aware of the appraised value and negotiations will begin again. In the situation of a low appraisal, the buyer has the option to proceed with the sale and make up the difference between the sales price and appraised value with cash or request that you lower the sales price to the appraised value. If the buyer requests that you lower the sales price to the appraised value and you don't agree to the request, the appraisal contingency addendum has specific language that will allow the buyer to exit the sales contract without penalty.

8. What are the final steps before closing?



CONFIRMING BUYERS' FINANCING

While you are packing up your things, we will be keeping you informed as the buyers receive their final loan approval. This means we are one step closer to closing.



UNDERSTANDING THE CLOSING COSTS

The Closing Disclosure will detail every penny associated with the sale of your home including closing costs, what you owe or will receive at settlement, commissions and subsidies to be paid, etc.

FINAL DAYS TO-DO LIST

- Tell utility companies the final date of service
- Keep the house in good condition and at a minimum have it broom swept
- Address items identified in the inspection report, as required
- Leave any manuals for the home's appliances and service provider contact numbers for the new owners



FINAL WALK THROUGH

Either day the prior to or day of closing the buyers and their Realtor® will do a final walk through. At this time they will make sure you completed all the inspection items that were agreed upon and that the home is in the condition they expected and there is no new damage since the inspection.

9. Do I need to bring anything to the closing?



ALL KEYS, DOOR OPENERS,
ALARM SYSTEM CODES



PHOTO ID



RECEIPTS FROM ANY BUYER
REQUESTED REPAIRS

(if they have not already been submitted)

10. Celebrate



Congratulations! You just sold your home so take some time to celebrate the moment. Chances are it took several months and hard work to get to the closing table, but you did it. Thanks for letting Avenue Realty help sell your home and reach this milestone with you.

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