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Experience You Can Trust

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It's almost impossible to get through the day without being exposed to at least some real estate news. Open the paper and you'll find an item on the housing market. Turn on the TV and you'll be greeted with a news report about housing prices moving up or going down.

It can all be very confusing, especially if you've been thinking about making a move - now or sometime in the future.

What you may need is a simple, easy-to-understand explanation of what's going on in your local real estate market and the opportunities available to you.

You see, the national real estate market - which is often featured in newspapers and on TV - doesn't necessarily reflect what's going on locally.

Yet, it's the local market conditions that affect you most.

So, give me a call if you have any questions, or you want an update on the local real estate scene. I'll explain what's going on in clear, simple terms.

Characteristics of a Desirable Street

Sometimes you know a desirable street when you see one. For example, it's obvious that a home on a cul-de-sac is enticing mainly because there isn't any through traffic.

What are the other characteristics of a desirable street that may not be as obvious? Here are just a few:



Sidewalks. A sidewalk in front of your home is not only handy, it also adds to the property's curb appeal. In addition, if you have kids, a sidewalk makes it easier - and safer - for them to play and visit neighborhood friends.

Mature trees. Trees lining the street add depth and beauty. Most homeowners value front yard trees and would miss them if they were gone.

Safety. Unfortunately, some streets are more prone to crime and other issues requiring police intervention than others. Clearly, homeowners appreciate a street that's known for being safe and located in a neighborhood with a low crime rate.

Pride-of-ownership. When considering buying a home, take a walk along the street. Do homeowners take good care of their properties? If so, that sign of pride-of-ownership indicates it's a great place to own a home.

Location. Where the street is located is just as important as its characteristics. Are things you want, such as parks, schools, shopping, etc. nearby? Is the street in a desirable area overall?

Noise. This is a characteristic that can be invisible to the home buyer. If the street is in a flight path, or near a busy highway used by rush-hour commuters, you want to know!

A great street can dramatically add to the enjoyment of a home. As your real estate agent, I can answer your questions about the characteristics of streets you're considering and the surrounding area.

The ABC's of Fire Safety

When it comes to home fire safety, a little preparation and precaution go a long way toward ensuring your family, your home, and your valuables are protected. Consider the following important information about preventing, fighting and escaping residential fires.



Fires and Fire Extinguishers

Fires are classified into different types, depending on the material burning. Fire extinguishers are similarly classified according to the type of burning materials they are designed to extinguish: A type for paper, wood and natural fabric; B type for grease, oil and combustible fuels; and C type for electrical fires. Since residential fires can involve any type of material, every home should have at least one multi-purpose ABC fire extinguisher that is easy to use. In addition, if you store chemicals, you should have an extinguisher designed for that specific chemical in order to ensure that no adverse reaction is caused by the mixture of the burning chemical with the fire extinguisher solution. For example, a poisonous gas is produced when chlorine comes in contact with ammonia, yet ammonia is found in most Class A extinguishers. Remember that your fire extinguishers should be positioned near (but not too close to) cooking areas, fireplaces and other likely sources of fire, and should be inspected and/or replaced according to safety guidelines.

Smoke Detectors

There should be at least one smoke detector on every floor of your home, as well as outside each bedroom in larger homes. If any resident is hearing-impaired, consider strobe-light alarms. To avoid false alarms, only use smoke detectors designed for specific areas. For example, ionization types are best for bedroom areas, and less sensitive photo-electric detectors are better for the kitchen. Some building and safety codes require hard-wired detectors that are permanently connected to AC power, with back-up battery power. Keep all smoke detectors dust-free, and don't paint them. Remember to test and replace the batteries regularly, and note the units' expiry dates.

Security Precautions, Prevention and Protection

It is wise to do whatever you can to protect your family and valuables by preventing fires, rather than only reacting to them. For instance, experts urge all homeowners to discourage smoking indoors, especially in bedrooms, and to be wary of purchasing flammable fabrics and furnishings, or unsafe, unapproved building materials. It's also recommended that you ensure that your priceless valuables and critical financial records are kept in a fire-proof safe,

preferably away from home, or that you keep copies of critical documents elsewhere. As the saying goes, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Selecting the Right Mover

The last thing you want on moving day is a problem with the moving company. Ideally, you want them to show up on time, handle your possessions with care, and act professionally. Here are some tips that will help you choose the best mover for your needs.



1. Get a recommendation from someone you trust. That could be a friend, family member or colleague. As your real estate agent, I can also recommend some reputable movers.
2. Get everything in writing. Make sure you understand exactly what you'll be paying. Ask about circumstances where extra charges may be applied.
3. Ask if the moving company is certified.
4. Reputable moving companies are fully insured. Ask to see the company's certificate of insurance or some other proof of coverage.
5. Avoid part-time movers who work weekends. Usually, they're not professionals. You may save some money, but you'll be taking a risk.

Have questions about making your moving day go smoothly? Call today.

Notable, Quotable, Quotes!



“Success usually comes to those who are too busy to be looking for it.”

Henry David Thoreau

“We did not change as we grew older; we just became more clearly ourselves.”

Lynn Hall

“Small opportunities are often the beginning of great enterprises.”

Demosthenes

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