

Downsizing In Your Retirement Years – What to Consider

By Marsha Westerfield

When you are ready to retire, your home could be one of your most valuable assets. Therefore, selling your house at retirement age presents a different set of considerations than when we were younger. Whether you are downsizing, buying in a new community or moving in with family, it takes careful planning to get the most out of your equity.

It is critical to find a real estate agent knowledgeable about the process, the current market and the needs of clients. And most importantly someone you feel comfortable with and trust through the process. Having lived in your home for many years, it is natural to be unsure of its current value. However, lack of knowledge about current prices could cause you to accept much less for your home than it is worth. You also may wait too long to accept a fair offer under the mistaken belief that a higher one may be around the corner. Finding out the current price for your home so you don't lose out on a sale is extremely important. Your Real Estate Agent will provide you with a CMA, Competitive Market Analysis based on similar homes in your area that have sold.

Selling your home presents an ideal time to sort through your belongings. "Decluttering" a term used by real estate agents, means removing knick-knacks,

excess furniture and family photos from your home before putting it on the market. Decluttering makes a house look spacious and helps potential buyers picture their belongings in the house rather than yours. You may have some items you may wish to sell or giveaway to family or friends before moving. Valuables, medications, guns and other personal items should be kept out of sight.

There are several things to consider when looking for your new home.

- **Location, location, location.** You may wish to find a home that is close to doctors or family members.
- **Single level home.** Stairs are no longer our friends as we get older. Make it easier on yourself.
- **Open concept and wide hallways.** Something we don't like to think about but we never know when we might need accessibility to wheelchairs.
- **Step in Shower.** Bathtubs can be great to soak and relax in but can also be an obstacle if you can't get in or out of them safely. A step-in shower provides accessibility on a floor level making life much easier.
- **Buy less than you can afford.** Once you've retired your monthly income is likely not going to change. Don't put yourself in a situation that could put you in financial stress



My parents are going thru these years right now. Their needs are changing every day. This is a part of life that is very tough to watch and deal with. Thankfully, they've raised six children that love them very much and take care of their needs as much as we possibly can. My parents are Christians and taught us to love God, our family and our jobs. Whatever the job is, work hard, take pride, be kind and caring to all. After 31 years in the aluminum industry and now 12 years in the Real Estate Market I take great pride in my job. I am a full time Realtor and many of my clients are repeat clients. Also, what started as a client relationship is now a friendship. Every transaction is important to me, it's likely the biggest investment the client will make. Make sure you have someone looking out for you or your parent's needs.

Marsha Westerfield, Realtor Home Realty, Inc.



The Simple Things in Life

As we become older, we realize the need to downsize our living space with less to care for.

Whether it's relaxing on the swing while enjoying the peace and quiet, or playing with our grandkids; time is what's most valuable.

If you or your parents are upon this stage in life, please contact me. I will be sure to serve you with the utmost care and respect as I assist you through this new chapter in your life.



Marsha Westerfield

270-316-2240

Email: MarshaWesterfield@gmail.com

Website: www.MarshaWesterfield.com

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