

ARE YOU READY TO MAKE THE BIG MOVE?



If you are considering making a transition to your next home in the coming months you're not alone. So far this year, more than 73,000 other GTA residents have made the decision to put down new roots.

In fact, hundreds of thousands of people move around or into the GTA each year. According to Statistics Canada's 2011 National Household Survey, more than 600,000 GTA residents reported moving in the year leading up to the survey day. With a homeownership rate close to 70 per cent in the GTA, a lot of these people were buying a home, and at the outset of nearly every one of these transitions indecision was likely a common hurdle. If you're faced with a similar stumbling block, as a first step toward deciding when to sell consider the data.

Since those who achieve strong selling prices typically also buy when the market is driving such conditions, your decision should not be based primarily on prices. Instead, consider factors that will allow you to carry a new mortgage for the long-term, such as interest rates and employment statistics.

Demand in your local area is another important factor to keep in mind. If the house three doors down is also for sale, you might mistakenly prefer to avoid direct competition when, in fact, nearby available properties serve as an ideal opportunity for exposure to a larger pool of potential buyers.

It's important to make a thorough assessment of your reasons for wanting to move in order to avoid the possibility of sentiment affecting your judgment once the process begins, and to have a clear idea as to your future needs.

Being able to envision your next home and view your existing dwelling as a product being taken to market are key indications that you're prepared to make the transition.

Consider whether your current home's square footage and features are right for your needs, whether you are close enough to work and schools, and whether your neighbourhood truly reflects your lifestyle preferences. If any of these key factors aren't in line, that's a signal it's time to move.

Closely examining your personal finances. It's important to consider factors such as your mortgage balance and any penalties for breaking your current financing agreement. As part of this process, it's wise to hash out a rough budget that includes the approximate purchase price of your next home, applicable taxes, professional fees and moving expenses. As well, a realtor can offer you insight into recent selling prices of comparable homes in your area.

Once you're armed with all of this information, ask yourself if you're ready to make the transition. The way you live in a home and the way you show a house can be very different: be sure that you have the time needed to get your home ready for market and that you have enough flexibility to allow for viewings.

To get an objective perspective on whether now is the right time to make your next move, talk to a Greater Toronto realtor and for more information on the process of buying and selling a home visit TorontoRealEstateBoard.com.



Paul Etherington is president of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 39,000 realtors in the Greater Toronto Area. Write to Paul to share your thoughts and questions at trebpres@trebnet.com.