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Covenant Realty Newsletter

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How to Find The Right Neighborhood Before You Find The Right Home

I have been blessed to work with clients in many different areas of DFW and I can say that no two clients have had the same needs when looking for a home. To begin the ground work of purchasing a home, it is vital to find the areas that fit your basic criteria. Until you have this important piece of information, you will feel a lot like a lost tumble weed being blown wherever the wind is headed regarding your home search.

A significant need that many people might not think about instinctively is an area's present crime rate. Resale value will be affected here of course, but also personal safety should be a non-negotiable with everything else being equal. For example, making small decisions like buying a home with or without a garage in a moderate crime area can result in car vandalism that the home owner might not think about up front. To check out crime statistics in different neighborhoods, one available resource you can check into is: <http://spotcrime.com>.

For many people, school districts will play an important role in determining the desirability of a neighborhood. Even for those without children or plans of having children, school districts are a key determining factor in neighborhood stability and **resale value**.

For many families, ease of travel is usually very high up on the list. For example, that is why you can get a lot more house for the money in say Plano or Frisco than a home in the Greenland Hills or Lakewood subdivisions close to downtown Dallas. Escape routes for your daily work commute, your day to day errands, and children's activities are important. For a particular client I'm currently working with, ease of journey to her children's private school is very important since she will be going back and forth sometimes 3 to 4 times daily.

Social activity is another item that will usually be high on the list for a buyer. There is no set formula here because what one person will like another one will not like for the same reason. For example, the gingerbread homes in lower Greenville appeal to younger professionals looking for something social on the weekends. This same area might be crossed off the list for a family with children for that very reason of too many bars and restaurants too close for comfort.

The moral of the story here is that your own list will have different answers on it when these questions are asked. The key here is that you have to find out what is important to you and see how the different areas rate in relationship to your needs.

Here at Covenant Realty Corporation, it is our job to be experts on the areas in our territory. If you or someone you know is getting ready to step into the circle, we would be glad to help. Comprehensive knowledge of the area and skillful representation are a phone call away.

Coming Soon – 1213 Monterey Circle Pitman Creek Estates



Be the first to see!
Soon to boast new floors in the kitchen and dining room. If you know of anyone trying to get into the Pitman Creek Estates community, this is a home that will go quickly once it goes live in the MLS in the next few weeks.

\$275,000



Why Hiring a Home Stager Is More Important Than Ever

Deciding whether to hire a home stager isn't an easy decision. In tough economic times there's a tendency for homeowners to cut back on any added fees. However, that could be a big mistake. Research indicates that the need for a home stager is even more important during a buyer's market as competition is tougher. The following quiz can help you determine if you'd benefit from hiring a home stager:

1. Does the Sales Price of the Home Place It Into the Luxury or Jumbo Mortgage Range?

If so, there's a good chance you'd benefit from hiring a home stager. Not only is the competition among higher-priced homes even more dramatic than it is in affordable areas, but potential buyers expect to be impressed.

Quick Quiz

Each month I'll give you a new question.

Just email me at answers@covenantrealtycorp.com or call us at 972-424-7092 for the answer.

What actor is known for linking to other actors through chains of movies they've been in together?

Why Not Pass Me to a Friend?

If you've enjoyed this newsletter and found its information useful, please pass it to a neighbor, friend or co-worker.

And if you have any comments about it, don't forget to give me a call or send an email!

2. Does the Property Have Problem Areas?

For example, older homes may have eight-foot flat ceilings, smaller bedrooms and other age-related amenities that have fallen out of favor. Hiring a professional problem-solver is a good investment to ensure that you obtain top dollar for your property without breaking the bank.

3. Was the Property a Cookie-Cutter Model?

This is a commonly encountered problem for condo owners and for those who own properties in modest single-family, tract-built neighborhoods where there is limited variation to differentiate one property from another. The challenge is to stand out from the crowd in order to attract attention and seal the deal.

Wondering How Much Your Home Is Worth?

How has the price of your home changed in today's market? How much are other homes in your neighborhood selling for?

If you're wondering what's happening to prices in your area, or you're thinking about selling your house I'll be able to help.

I don't pressure you into listing with us or waste your time. Give me a call for free advice on what is right for you after discussing your circumstances.

Call me at 214-912-1703.

Alternatively, stop by the office. The address is on the back page of this newsletter.

Sincerely,



Get What You Want by Using the Right Words

Thanks to the marvel of modern-day technology, most of us are writing more than ever. Whether it's disputing a billing error or simply sending out a corporate email, it's essential to write compelling, clear and concise text. Following are some essential tips to achieve maximum results in minimum time:

1. Use the KISS Method: KISS stands for Keep It Simple, Stupid. George Orwell's rules for effective writing state that you should never use a long word when a short one would do, and you should avoid jargon and eliminate extra words whenever possible. By avoiding filler, fluff and other hyperbole the message is clear and easier to read.

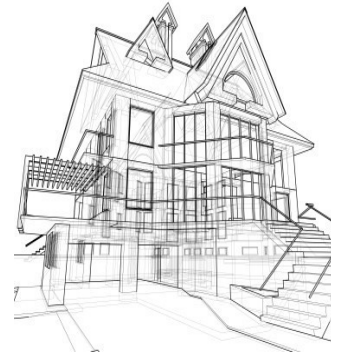
2. Get the Goal in Mind: Before you begin writing, determine the main objective or goal of the message. People are bombarded with too much information, so make it easy for readers to understand the main purpose by presenting it early in the message. Support the position with relevant facts, figures and data, and then provide an actionable ending with complete contact information.

3. Read and Review: Do a last-minute review by carefully reading through the entire text prior to printing or sending. Spelling, synonyms and syntax errors, incorrect contact information, or other simple mistakes can destroy a message and reflect negatively on the sender. When sending messages by email, check the recipient list and use a relevant title for the subject line. It makes email easier to find and helps prevent unpleasant surprises.

Covenant Realty Scribbles

Looking for something different? Check out Covenant Realty's blog for more monthly articles written in between newsletters.

www.CovenantRealtyCorp.com/blog



Covenant Realty Corporation:

Full Service, Full Time, For Your Peace of Mind

Ryan Kirkpatrick

Realtor Associate

Plano

February

Entire Year

Collin and Denton, TX

	2009	2010	Change	2009	2010	Change
New Listings	404	442	+9.4%	783	836	+6.5%
Closed Sales* (Reported)	187	176	-5.9%	346	293	-15.3%
Closed Sales* (Projected)	187	197	+5.3%	346	314	-9.2%
Average Sales Price**	\$288,700	\$245,903	-14.8%	\$262,986	\$257,644	-2.0%
Median Sales Price**	\$214,000	\$205,000	-4.2%	\$199,000	\$205,000	+3.0%
Percent of Original List Price	93.9%	94.5%	+6%	93.3%	94.6%	+1.4%
Average Days On Market	96	80	-16.9%	94	86	-9.2%
Single-Family Detached	1,073	1,078	+5%	-	-	-
Townhouse-Condo	124	80	-35.5%	-	-	-

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

Here is a quick snapshot of activity in Pitman Creek, an upscale subdivision in Plano, Texas.

This is just one neighborhood and one city to give you an example of where I begin when finding value for your home from a numbers perspective. When you're ready to find out more give me a call!

SOLDS: 2009 Total of 7 Sales

- Avg. Sales Price: \$256,578
- Average Price per Square Foot: \$93.65
- Average Square Footage: 2,704
- Maximum Sales Price: \$360,000
- Maximum Price per Square Foot: \$118.34
- Maximum Square Footage: 3229

ACTIVES Properties On The Market: As of 4/7/2010-8

- Average List Price: \$272,500
- Average Price: per Square Foot \$92.95
- Average Square Footage: 2,922
- Maximum List Price: \$375,000

Ask the Agent: This Month's Question

I think my house needs a fresh coat of paint before I put it up for sale. Where should I apply the brush to make my home look attractive to buyers?

Repair blemishes: If you've got cracked or peeling paint, you'll certainly want to repaint before you put your house on the market. Tired paint makes buyers think the house hasn't been well maintained.

Tone down your color scheme: While the colors in your home might appeal to you personally, it's important if you are selling your home that they appeal to the widest market possible. So that means avoiding bright, unusual colors and changing colors that were fashionable a few years ago but now look dated.

Types of paint: If you have imperfections in your walls, choose a paint with a flat finish, as this will conceal them. Make sure you use washable paints in bathrooms and kitchens - an interior flat enamel is good for this.



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Live MLS search on the site!

“A good character is the best tombstone. Those who loved you and were helped by you will remember you when forget-me-nots have withered. Carve your name on hearts, not on marble.”

~Charles Spurgeon

A Marketing Plan With Free Professional Home Staging? Covenant Realty Corporation

The key to selling a home is first, price. After price, presentation is a close second. For many homeowners, they have heard of staging, but they don't know too much about it and it is probably too expensive, right? You have enough expenses to handle to get the house ready for its big day. Professional home stagers are practiced in the art of preparing a home for resale. They work with the “flow” of a home, eliminate clutter, edit and arrange furniture, and even assist in enhancing curb-appeal. With the aid of a professional home stager, your house can make a notable first impression on potential homebuyers.

For a limited time Covenant Realty Corporation is offering to pick up the tab for the first two months of the professional staging fee (an average savings of \$1,500). When you compliment that with professional photography, a home that is priced correctly through a comparative market analysis, print advertising as well as your home being syndicated over 35 of the most popular computer real estate networks including media on Youtube - our marketing plan is explosive in comparison to others.

Full Service, Full Time, For Your Peace Of Mind - Covenant Realty Corporation

