

Austin Area Home Seller's Guide

The straightforward path to your
successful sale.

Complete Seller's Guide

Hi, I'm Carissa Cruz!

Welcome! Selling a home is more than a transaction – it's about moving forward to your next chapter with confidence and clarity. I'm a local realtor based in Pflugerville serving Greater Austin (Pflugerville, Round Rock, Leander, Hutto, Georgetown, and North Austin). I created this guide to give you straightforward, honest information about the selling process without any pressure. Whether you're upsizing, downsizing, relocating, or starting fresh, I'm here to help make the process simple and successful. Let's get your home sold for the best possible price – and help you move forward with confidence.

– Carissa Cruz

512-293-6301

Selling a home is a significant financial decision, and having the right information at each stage can make a meaningful difference in your results.

Pricing Your Home Right

Setting the right price from the start is one of the most important decisions you will make in the selling process. A strong **pricing strategy** helps your home attract attention quickly, while overpricing can cause buyers to overlook it and lead to price reductions later. A thorough **comparative market analysis** gives you a realistic view of how similar homes have performed and helps establish a defensible asking price. Your goal is to align **market value** with your financial goals without chasing the market upward in a way that limits exposure. When pricing is strategic, you create urgency, increase showing activity, and improve your chances of receiving competitive offers.

Factor	Impact on Price	Considerations
Location	Proximity to parks, dining, and commuter routes can increase buyer interest.	Consider neighborhood reputation, future development, and access to amenities. Even within the same city, two homes with similar features can price very differently based on location alone.
Property Condition	Well-maintained homes typically sell faster and closer to asking price because buyers see less immediate work. Outdated systems, visible damage, or deferred maintenance often reduce value or trigger repair requests.	Focus on the roof, HVAC, plumbing, and cosmetic updates that make the biggest impression. Small repairs and clean presentation can improve perceived value more than their cost suggests.
Market Trends	In a seller's market, limited inventory can push prices higher and shorten time on market. In a slower market, buyers gain more negotiating power and price sensitivity increases.	Track interest rates, seasonal demand, and local inventory levels before setting a list price. Market conditions can shift quickly, so pricing should reflect current activity.

		rather than old data.
Comparable Sales	Recent sales of similar homes help establish a realistic range for what buyers are likely to pay. Strong comps support a pricing decision and reduce the risk of overshooting the market.	Compare homes with similar square footage, lot size, age, and upgrades. The most useful comps are nearby, recent, and as similar as possible in overall appeal.
Unique Features	Upgrades like a remodeled kitchen, pool, home office, or premium view can justify a higher asking price. Distinctive features may also help your home stand out in a crowded market.	Only count features that add value for your likely buyer pool. Highly personalized improvements may not return full value if they appeal to a narrow audience.
Days on Market	Homes that stay listed too long often develop a stale impression, which can lead to lower offers. A strong initial price can help generate early momentum and prevent the need for repeated reductions.	Monitor showing activity and buyer feedback closely after launch. If interest is weak in the first few weeks, a pricing adjustment may be more effective than waiting.

Working with a Real Estate Agent

A skilled real estate agent provides **professional representation**, market insight, and a clear strategy for moving your sale forward. When choosing an agent, look for local experience, strong communication, a proven marketing approach, and a track record of successful negotiations. Most agents work on commission, which is typically paid from the sale proceeds, so it is important to understand the **commission structure** and the services included. An experienced agent helps you evaluate offers, respond to buyer concerns, and manage the details of contracts, disclosures, and deadlines. Their guidance can reduce stress, protect your interests, and help you navigate the transaction with confidence.

Marketing Your Property

Comprehensive marketing strategies help your home reach the widest qualified audience and create stronger interest from the start.

- **Professional photos and video** showcase your home's best features and create a polished first impression.
- **Virtual tours** give buyers an easy way to explore the layout and flow before scheduling an in-person visit.
- **MLS listing** places your home in front of agents and buyers searching the local market.
- **Online real estate portals** expand visibility across the websites buyers use most often.
- **Social media marketing** helps generate attention through targeted posts, stories, and shareable content.
- **Open houses and broker tours** create opportunities for buyers and agents to experience the home in person.
- **Print materials and signage** reinforce your listing and help attract nearby interest from drive-by traffic.

The Selling Timeline

1. **Initial consultation** – You and your agent review your goals, the local market, and the best plan for pricing and preparation. This is where the selling strategy begins and expectations are set.
2. **Home preparation** – Repairs, decluttering, staging, and deep cleaning help your property look its best. Taking time here can improve both buyer interest and final offers.
3. **Professional photos** – The photographer captures images and video that will be used in your marketing materials. Strong visuals help your listing stand out online.
4. **Listing goes live** – Your home is entered into the market and made available through listing platforms and agent networks. This launch period is often the most important for generating early momentum.
5. **Showings begin** – Buyers and agents start touring the property, either by appointment or during open houses. Feedback from these visits can help guide any needed adjustments.
6. **Receiving offers** – Interested buyers submit formal offers outlining price, terms, and contingencies. Your agent helps you compare the strengths and weaknesses of each one.

7. **Negotiations** — You may counteroffer, accept, or continue discussions until both sides reach agreement. This stage often involves balancing price, timing, repairs, and financing terms.
8. **Under contract** — Once an offer is accepted, the sale moves into the due diligence period. Inspections, appraisal, and lender requirements are typically completed during this phase.
9. **Inspections and appraisal** — Buyers confirm the condition and value of the home before finalizing financing. Any repair requests or valuation issues are addressed at this stage.
10. **Final walkthrough and closing day** — The buyer verifies that the home is in the agreed-upon condition before signing the final paperwork. After closing, ownership officially transfers and the sale is complete.

⚠ Important — A typical home sale timeline is often 30–60 days from contract to closing, but the exact timing depends on market conditions, financing, inspections, and the type of property being sold. Some transactions move faster, while others take longer if repairs, contingencies, or lender delays arise.

Staying flexible and responsive can help keep the process moving smoothly.

Reviewing and Negotiating Offers

When an offer comes in, price is only one part of the equation. Look closely at the buyer’s financing type, because cash, conventional, FHA, and VA offers can carry different levels of certainty and timeline risk. Pay attention to **contingencies**, **earnest money**, and the strength of the buyer’s **pre-approval**, since these details can reveal how likely the deal is to close smoothly. The proposed closing date matters too, especially if you need time to move, coordinate your next purchase, or avoid temporary housing. Also review whether the buyer is asking for **closing costs**, repairs, or concessions, because those requests affect your net proceeds. When you receive multiple offers, strategy becomes just as important as price, and your agent can help you compare both financial value and overall certainty before you respond.

Offer Component	What to Consider
Purchase Price	The highest number is not always the best offer if other terms create risk or reduce your net proceeds. Compare the proposed price against the likelihood of closing and any costs the buyer wants covered. Focus on the full financial picture rather than the headline amount alone.
Financing Type	Cash offers usually provide more certainty, while financed offers depend on lender approval and appraisal results. Conventional financing is often viewed as more flexible than government-backed loans, but every buyer should be reviewed individually. Ask how strong the buyer’s financing position is before deciding.
Earnest Money Deposit	A larger deposit can show stronger commitment and reduce the chance of the buyer walking away casually. Review whether the deposit is enough to reflect real seriousness based on the purchase price and market conditions. Your agent can help you judge whether the amount is competitive or unusually low.
Contingencies	Inspection, appraisal, financing, and home sale contingencies all add potential exit points for the buyer. Fewer contingencies generally mean less risk for you, but they should still be realistic and fair. Pay attention to how long each contingency lasts and what conditions must be met to remove it.
Closing Timeline	A faster closing may be ideal if you need to move quickly, but only if the buyer can realistically keep that schedule. Longer timelines can create flexibility, yet they may also increase the chance of delays or changing market conditions. Make sure the date works for your plans and

	your next housing step.
Buyer Qualifications	Strong income, solid credit, and a complete pre-approval letter can help support a buyer's reliability. Ask whether the lender has already reviewed the buyer's financial documents, not just an initial conversation. Better qualification often means a smoother path to funding and fewer surprises later.
Requested Repairs/Concessions	Repair requests and seller-paid concessions can lower your final return even when the offer price looks attractive. Review each request carefully to see whether it is reasonable based on the home's condition and the local market. Sometimes a clean offer with fewer requests is stronger than a higher-priced offer that comes with costly extras.

Understanding Closing Costs

Seller closing costs are the expenses you pay to complete the transaction, and they can significantly affect your final proceeds. Depending on the market, commission structure, and negotiated terms, these costs often total roughly 6–10% of the sale price. Some items are standard, while others depend on local customs, contract terms, or title company requirements. Reviewing them early helps you estimate your net proceeds more accurately and avoid surprises at the closing table.

- **Real estate commission** – This is often the largest seller expense and is typically shared between the listing and buyer's agents. The amount is usually negotiated in advance and paid from the sale proceeds at closing.
- **Title insurance** – In many transactions, the seller may pay for the owner's title policy or a portion of the title-related fees. This helps protect the buyer from ownership issues discovered after closing.
- **Transfer taxes** – Some cities, counties, or states charge taxes or fees when property changes ownership. These charges vary by location and may be split between buyer and seller depending on local practice.
- **Attorney fees** – If an attorney is required or chosen for the transaction, their services can add to your closing expenses. These fees may cover document review, settlement support, and legal guidance.
- **Prorated property taxes** – Property taxes are often divided between buyer and seller based on the closing date. If you have prepaid taxes, you may receive a credit or owe an adjustment at settlement.
- **HOA fees** – If the property is part of a homeowners association, you may need to pay outstanding dues, transfer fees, or document charges. Be sure to confirm any balance owed before closing day.
- **Outstanding liens** – Any unpaid liens, judgments, or title issues must usually be resolved before the sale can close. These costs are paid from proceeds or settled in advance so the buyer receives clear title.
- **Recording fees** – Local recording offices may charge fees to file the deed and other closing documents. While these costs are usually smaller than commissions or taxes, they still reduce your net amount received.

Home Inspections and Appraisals

During the **inspection contingency** period, the buyer's inspector will review the property and identify any concerns that may need attention.

Buyers may ask for repairs or credits through **repair negotiations**, so it helps to respond thoughtfully and focus on the issues that matter most.

Some sellers choose to make targeted repairs, while others may sell **as-is** depending on the market and the condition of the home.

The **appraisal** is equally important because it confirms whether the home supports the agreed-upon price for the buyer's lender.

If the appraisal comes in low, the parties may renegotiate, the buyer may bring extra cash, or the deal may need another solution depending on the contract terms.

Final Steps to Closing

- Complete any agreed-upon repairs
- Schedule the final walkthrough
- Review the closing disclosure
- Transfer utility accounts
- Gather all keys and garage openers
- Remove personal belongings from the property
- Clean the home before closing day
- Prepare for closing and signing day

✔ **Success Tip** – Stay organized by keeping important documents, repair receipts, and key dates in one place. Maintain open communication with your agent so you can move quickly if anything changes. Flexibility can make the final stretch smoother and help keep your sale on track.

Congratulations on taking this important step toward selling your home.

By staying informed and working closely with your real estate professional, you can move through each stage with greater confidence and clarity.

Lean on your agent for guidance, stay focused on your goals, and trust the process as you move toward closing.

Wishing you a successful home sale and a smooth next chapter ahead.

lpt realty
BROKERAGE FOR LIFE™