

# *Preparing Your Home to Become a House*

## *Fix What is Most Visible:*

- **Exterior** — The curb appeal is the most important element of the home. It gives the first impression, whether on line or “in person.” This includes: landscaping, including leaf removal, exterior cleaning, paint, shutter/window condition roof condition and hardscaping (sidewalks, driveways, etc).
- **Interior** — The foyer/entryway — again, this is the first impression. In addition, the most important rooms are: kitchen and master bathroom.
- **Reward** — The home looks great in pictures and in showings. Buyer will be able to fall in love with what they love about the house, instead of noticing what is wrong. Even if the defects are minimal, they will catch the attention of the Buyers and their agents if present.
- **Cost** — Variable

## *Pre-Listing Home Inspection:*

- Buyers will get a **home inspection** as part of their due diligence and is part of almost every contract. Almost all home inspectors find the same things, so it is a good idea to get ahead of this. They will spend a couple of hours evaluating the home, from the roof to the plumbing, and will give recommendations regarding condition as well as repairs/ replacement of fixtures and systems. It helps to get this done and address **major** issues. I have seen people address all the issues. It is a BIG deal to buyers that the sellers are invested in selling their home and have prepared for the sale. It overcomes buyers’ objections immediately.
- If you choose not to address all issues, or if you know about an issue that needs to be addressed but you don’t plan to address it yourself, **you can offer a credit**, as part of the listing, pointing attention to the issue along with the financial remediation.
- **Reward** — The buyers have less ammunition during the negotiations (first negotiation: price; second negotiation: home inspection, where price often comes up again).
- **Cost** — \$400-\$700, depending on the size of the home

## *Home Warranty:*

- Small investment with major return! Covers major home systems and appliances - basically everything that your homeowner’s insurance does NOT cover. Purchase as seller; home is covered during listing. Transfers to the buyer at closing.
- It offers a great incentive for buyers and also ensures that you don’t have to replace the 10-year old hot water heater that is still working but could go at any minute. Buyers, no matter if they are buying the first or the last home, are always conscious of expenses, and those expenses right after the purchase of a home are the scariest to them. I always have Buyers request a home warranty in the contract. Taking the initiative on this further demonstrates that you are covering all the bases and makes the house (and the contract) more attractive.
- **Reward** — Seller & Buyer peace of mind.
- **Cost** — Around \$600; it’s a good idea to include HVAC systems.