

Living in Mississauga

The Real Estate Market Watch

Spring 2016

What to Do Before Listing Your Home A Spring Market Starter Guide for Sellers

With the spring's warmer weather finally in sight, many GTA homeowners are looking to take advantage of this year's "Spring Market" by selling their homes while the area's average home price is still at a record high. In a competitive real estate market like ours here in the GTA, home sellers always have lots of work to do after selecting and hiring a real estate agent - from open houses and showings, to scouring the market for the new property of their dreams.

What many would-be sellers may not know, however, is that there are many ways to get the ball rolling before you actually list your property for sale, and even before choosing a realtor.

1. Start with "Curb Appeal."

Since you'll never get a second chance to make a great first impression, the first thing you need to do is make sure that the exterior of your property is clean, healthy, and safe. To-do list items could potentially include:

- Making sure that trees and bushes are neatly trimmed;
- Removing natural or other debris from the lawn (e.g. leaves, pine cones, dog toys);
- Consider removing/replacing any dead trees or plants;
- Removing leaves and other build-up from your eavestroughs;
- Replace burned out bulbs for exterior lighting
- Checking the lawn to make sure that it is freshly-cut, weed-free, and healthy throughout.

For a professional touch, consider hiring a landscaping company and/or yard care provider -- they will be able to help your front-lawn fauna shake off the wear and tear of winter, making a huge difference in the curb appeal of your home.

2. Consider hiring a property inspection company.

It is often recommended to have an inspection done on your property before you list. Pre-listing inspections for sellers are fairly common -- according to the web site for the major North American inspection firm Carson Dunlop, pre-listing inspections for sellers represent about 35 per cent of the total jobs the company takes on.

By identifying hidden trouble spots within your home - or, possibly, finding it to be in better condition than you thought - the report from a pre-listing inspection can help you (and your real estate sales representative) to determine a fair asking price for the property. If the report is positive, it can also be made accessible to buyers and their agents after the property is listed.

3. Upgrade to Eco-Friendly Appliances and Fixtures

More than ever, buyers across the GTA are focusing on energy efficiency and eco-friendliness as major factors when considering a potential new home. To that end, there are a few low-cost investments you can make that can help your home look more attractive, while reducing its demands for energy and water:



Image courtesy of www.2sistershomestyling.com.



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- Replace your analog thermostat with a newer one (e.g. Nest) that can be programmed remotely from smart devices.
- Think about installing low-flow showerheads - this cost-effective change has the extra benefit of lending your bathrooms a more stylish edge.
- If you haven't already, consider replacing your lightbulbs with LED models, which usually offer lower energy costs and improved light quality throughout the home.

4. Consider seeking help from a professional staging company.

“Staging” refers to making your home’s interior clean, attractive, and appealing to potential buyers. When it comes to staging, getting an early start before you list is always a great idea, as it helps ensure that your home is open-house-ready as soon as it’s on the market.

Staging, however, is a bit more difficult than simply cleaning up your house or condo. Depending on the home itself and your budget, the process can involve many steps - from removing personal effects, to renting temporary furniture and arranging it in the most eye-catching fashion.

“Home staging creates a lasting first impression, and highlights the best features of the home, while minimizing any flaws,” says Kit Lee, co-founder of 2 Sisters Homestyling, a staging company based in Markham.

“A home staging expert will address necessary updates and improvements in advance – elevating property conditions, and reducing the chances of a costly price reduction requested by the buyer.”

5. Begin the search for a knowledgeable, licensed real estate agent.

While you’re focusing on getting your home ready to list, you might also find the time to start looking for a great real estate agent, who can help with listing your current home as well as searching for a new one. There are a couple of good places to start:

- Look around at the “FOR SALE” signs in the area. After all, the best way to ensure that your sales representative really knows your neighbourhood is to select one who is already active in buying and selling there.
- Ask your friends and family who live nearby. Who did they work with during their last home search/sale? Were they satisfied with the quality of their agent’s service and negotiations? Trust is a big part of the relationship between agent and client, so many new buyers and sellers start with obtaining referrals and recommendations.

After you have written down a couple of names, it’s time to do some homework. Based on their current listings, do they specialize in the type of home you’re looking for? You will also want to ensure that the agent’s brokerage conveys a professional image, and makes sure all of its sales representatives’ licenses are up-to-date.

Here in Mississauga, Living Realty’s sales team is here to help answer your questions about selling, and provide you with even more tips and information on getting started. We can even help you find your new home right here in town -- after all, our Mississauga branch office has been active in the community for 30 years. Feel free to give us a call anytime at (905) 896-0002, or visit our office at 1177 Central Parkway West, Unit #32.

Mississauga Homeownership Goes Digital with PingStreet

MISSISSAUGA - Up until very recently, if a Mississauga resident was looking to confirm their next garbage collection date or report a pothole, the only way to do so would be to fire up an internet browser or by making a phone call.

Over the past year, however, the city’s more smartphone-savvy residents have a quick and easy option for doing both -- and more -- thanks to **PingStreet**, a city services-focused mobile “app” now available across the City of Mississauga.

Originally unveiled in December of 2015, the PingStreet app’s Mississauga functionality was made possible by a partnership between the City and eSolutions Group, a tech firm headquartered in Waterloo, Ontario. Currently, PingStreet Mississauga allows residents to:

- Request temporary parking permits for residential streets
- Report neighbourhood problems, such as sidewalk/road damage, graffiti, and illegal signs
- Access up-to-date contact information for Mississauga’s mayor and ward councillors
- Access a calendar of upcoming community events
- Stay on top of city updates, via news releases and notifications
- View updated waste collection schedule for your neighbourhood

According to the City of Mississauga’s official website, the team behind the app are planning to add more features throughout the course of this year. Residents can currently download it, free of charge, at the Apple App Store, Google Play, Blackberry World, and the Windows Store.

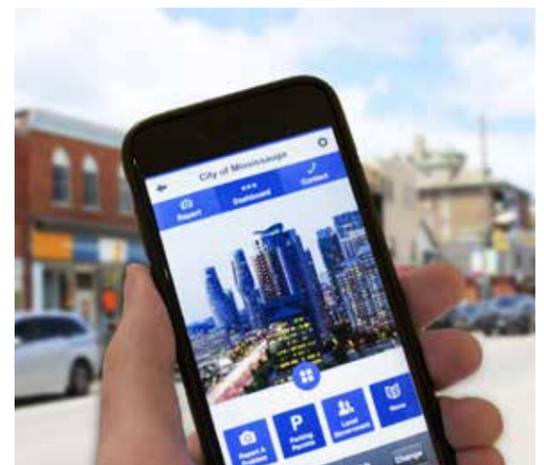
According to Ivana Di Millo, Director of Communications at the City of Mississauga, PingStreet’s Mississauga-based users will even have (at least at first) a slight advantage over those accessing the app in other participating cities.

“Mississauga is the first municipality to fully integrate its existing software used by the City’s 3-1-1 team with the app,” Di Millo said in a statement issued last November.

“This means that the service requests submitted through the app go directly from the citizen to the appropriate business unit for resolution.”

To date, PingStreet’s growing roster of participating GTA municipalities also includes Aurora, Brampton, Whitchurch-Stouffville, and Pickering. For more information on the company, you can check out their official website at www.pingstreet.ca, or even follow them on Twitter at [@PingStreetCA](https://twitter.com/PingStreetCA).

Background information for this article, as well as the official quote above, were obtained via the Newsroom section of the City of Mississauga’s official website, www.mississauga.ca.



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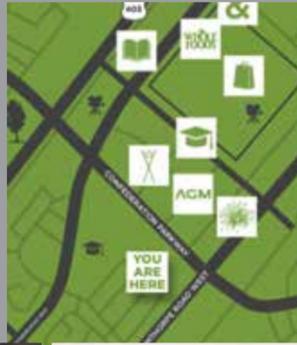
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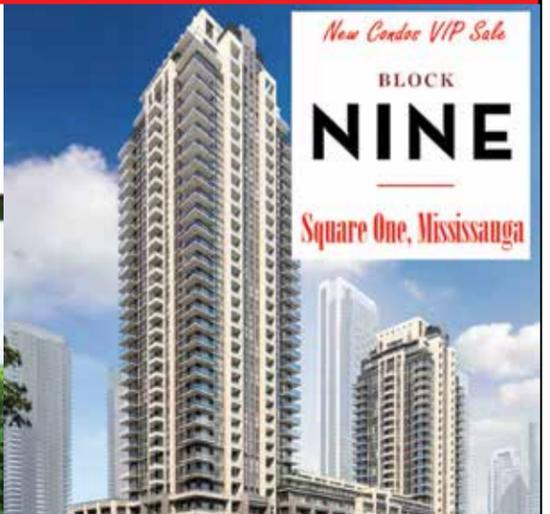
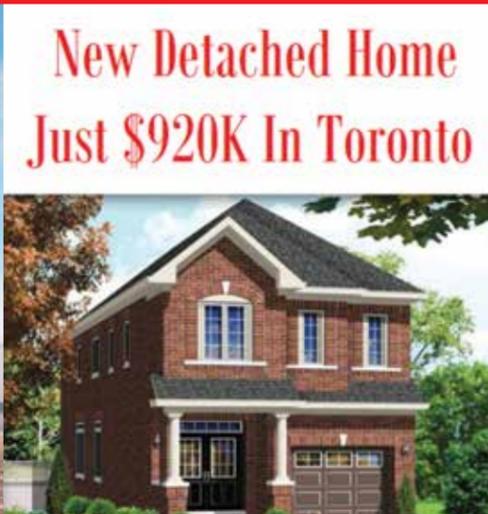
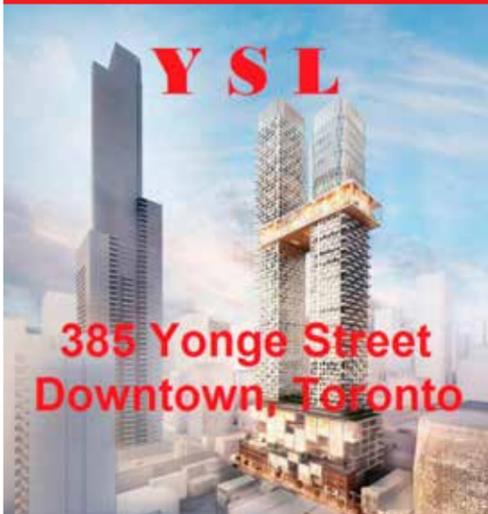


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