

A Message from the President of the Youngstown Columbiana Association of REALTORS®

4 WAYS TO CASH IN ON HOME IMPROVEMENTS YOU CAN MAKE DURING COVID

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From masks to hand sanitizers and safe social distancing, the world around us has changed thanks to the fight to dampen the Covid-19 curve. One of the areas that has felt the effects of the virus is in contracting services for home improvements. Some projects are more challenging than others, whether it is getting on the schedule of backed up contractors or following the guidelines for a safe environment for people to work, deciding what projects you should tackle to increase your home value now has to contend with Covid-19 challenges. But don't worry, I'm here to help...as always!

Reaping the payoff rewards of a home improvement is always a challenge. While completing a big-ticket project in a time of economic uncertainty is now even more difficult, if you're a seller with a house in need of a little TLC, you should redirect your attention to lower-budget upgrades that yield a return and appeal to buyers. Here are 4 improvement projects under \$10,000 that Realtor.com identified as ways you can quickly update your home before listing it on the market.

NEW FRONT DOOR (\$2,000 OR LESS)

The first experience a potential buyer sees is your front door. Whether it is a fresh coat of paint, new door handles, accessories like address numbers or a doorknocker or lights, these small things can make the entry of your house make them feel like home. Even if you need a new door, this investment is one that can easily be done and add value to the experience.

KITCHEN OR BATHROOM (\$9,000 OR LESS)

Outdated kitchens and bathrooms can sink the value of a home. With more people staying at home for cooking and entertaining, the kitchen is the natural gathering place in a home. Food unites people and having an updated area to entertain, from a safe distance of course, or bond with family helps put potential buyers in a place where they can see themselves when touring your house.

For bathrooms, new vanities, tile, fixtures, and showerheads are key attributes people look at when touring your "lue." Also, a deep clean, making sure the rings in the bathtubs and toilets are gone, helps make them feel you are taking this Covid time seriously and they are purchasing a clean home.

BACKYARD UPGRADES (\$500-\$10,000)

Backyards used to be a separate piece of the house. Now, everyone views it as an extension of the home. Pools have become a hot commodity, as have fountains, ponds and just a relaxing area with a small fire pit. A small water feature or fire pit makes a huge impression and can be installed as little as \$500. Landscape lighting, flowers and a patio with furniture provides a welcomed escape for people to feel like they have a place to enjoy the outdoors while feeling safe at home.

HOME OFFICE (\$1,000-\$7,500)

Zoom® calls and virtual schooling are now causing people to look for space in potential homes that have spot to get work done. Whether it is an extra bedroom or a small space in the basement, converting an area with some furniture, accessories and shelves can be an inexpensive way to show the versatility of your home for people to comfortably work or learn without leaving the house.

I'm ready to get back to normal, but as long as masks and social distancing exists, preparing your home to sell has shifted the focus of the types of home improvement projects your house needs. These ideas are the shot in the arm your home may need to yield a better sale price, but always consult your REALTOR® for their expert opinion because your home might just be ready to go as is.

Patrick Burgan is the 2021 President of the Youngstown Columbiana Association of REALTORS®