REAL ESTATE WITH LISA SEARS

THE SOUTHERN OREGON

PROPERTY SELLER'S GUIDE

Preparing, protecting and selling your property with confidence

Whether you're selling the home you live in, an inherited property, a vacant home, a rental or investment property, a second home, or a property you own from afar, the right plan can make the process considerably easier.

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You're away. I'm here. Consider it done.

A BETTER SALE STARTS WITH BETTER QUESTIONS

Start With Your Situation

No two property sales start in exactly the same place.

Maybe you're ready to move and simply want to know what your home is worth and what you should do before putting it on the market.

Maybe you've inherited a property and aren't sure where to begin. Perhaps the home is vacant and you're concerned about maintenance, security or what might be happening while no one is there.

You may own a rental or investment property and be weighing whether it's time to sell. Or you have a second home you no longer use enough to justify keeping.

And sometimes the biggest complication is simply distance. The property is in Southern Oregon, but **you aren't.**

> **You need good information before you start spending money or making decisions about the property.**

SELLING MY HOME A smart plan for pricing, preparation, marketing and timing.	**INHERITED PROPERTY** Family, title, property-condition and timing questions may need to be sorted out.
VACANT PROPERTY Condition, security, insurance and local oversight may be just as important as marketing.	**RENTAL / INVESTMENT** Tenancy, condition, timing and financial considerations can affect strategy.
SECOND HOME You may be maintaining a property you rarely use and deciding whether keeping it still makes sense.	**LIVING OUT OF AREA** You need someone local who can coordinate what needs to happen here while keeping you informed.

You don't need to have everything figured out before you begin. You need to know what questions to ask and what should happen next.

PLAN BEFORE YOU SPEND

Before You List

A little planning before the property hits the market can save a lot of scrambling later.

What is most important to you?

Highest possible price? A particular timeframe? Minimizing the work you need to do? Sometimes those goals work together, and sometimes we need to decide which matters most.

What condition is the property really in?

Look beyond cosmetics. Deferred maintenance, roof or HVAC concerns, plumbing issues, septic or well systems, pest activity, landscaping and other property-specific issues may affect preparation and marketing.

What information and documents do you already have?

Depending on the property: permits, repair invoices, warranties, surveys, well or septic information, rental documents, HOA information, insurance records or estate and trust documents.

Is anyone living in the property?

An owner-occupied home, tenant-occupied rental and vacant property each require a different preparation and showing strategy.

Who needs to be involved in decisions?

Inherited property, trusts, multiple owners and family situations can all make this important. Identifying decision-makers early can prevent unnecessary delays.

> **The goal isn't to make the property perfect. It's to understand what you're working with before you decide what to do next.**

ONE OF THE MOST EXPENSIVE SELLER QUESTIONS

What Should You Fix?

Don't spend money just because you're getting ready to sell.

One of the easiest mistakes sellers make is assuming everything should be repaired, replaced or updated before listing. Sometimes an improvement makes sense. Sometimes it doesn't.

Will this issue make buyers hesitate?

A leaking faucet and a failing roof aren't viewed the same way. Some problems affect confidence in the property. Others are primarily cosmetic.

Will fixing it improve presentation?

Cleaning, removing clutter, improving curb appeal and taking care of obvious deferred maintenance can make it easier for buyers to appreciate the property.

Is the likely benefit worth the cost and time?

A major remodel shortly before selling may not make financial sense. The goal isn't to turn your home into someone else's dream house before they buy it.

USUALLY WORTH EVALUATING	THINK CAREFULLY BEFORE DOING
Cleaning and decluttering Landscaping and exterior cleanup Minor repairs and deferred maintenance Touch-up paint where needed Lighting and presentation Odors, pet damage or heavily worn areas	Major kitchen or bathroom remodels Replacing functional systems simply because they're older Expensive cosmetic upgrades based on personal taste Projects that could delay the listing substantially

> **There isn't one repair list that works for every seller.**

That's why I prefer to walk through the property with a seller before they start spending money. We can separate what may actually help the sale from what may simply cost money.

POSITIONING MATTERS

Pricing the Property Intelligently

Your asking price should be based on today's competition, not yesterday's market.

Automated estimates can be interesting. The price a neighbor received two years ago can be interesting too. Neither tells the whole story.

RECENT COMPARABLE SALES What have genuinely similar properties sold for?	**CURRENT COMPETITION** What else can a buyer purchase at approximately the same price?
PROPERTY CONDITION How does your home compare with competing properties in maintenance, updates and presentation?	**LOCATION + CHARACTERISTICS** Lot size, acreage, neighborhood, views, outbuildings, wells, septic systems and other Southern Oregon characteristics can matter.
MARKET RESPONSE Showing activity, buyer feedback and competing listings provide additional information once the property is listed.	**THE OBJECTIVE** A price supported by the market and appropriate for the property, followed by a strong launch.

> **Pricing isn't about "giving your house away." It is about positioning the property so buyers see its value.**

Pricing too high can reduce early interest and leave a property sitting on the market. Pricing without understanding the property's unique characteristics can leave money on the table.

A good pricing conversation should leave you understanding not just the recommended price, but why it makes sense.

LOCAL EYES MATTER

When the Property Is Vacant

An empty house still needs attention.

Once a home becomes vacant, it's easy to think of it as simply waiting to be sold. Unfortunately, houses don't stop having problems just because nobody is living in them.

INSURANCE Tell your insurance professional when a property becomes vacant or unoccupied and ask whether your existing coverage is still appropriate.	**UTILITIES** Turning everything off isn't necessarily the best solution. Systems may need to remain operational depending on the property, season and circumstances.
REGULAR CHECKS Someone should be looking at the property periodically. A problem discovered quickly is usually much easier to deal with.	**EXTERIOR APPEARANCE** Landscaping, accumulated mail, garbage containers and other visible signs can make it obvious that nobody is living there.
SECURITY Doors, windows, gates and other access points should be secure. Lighting, cameras or other measures may be worth considering.	**SMOKE + WILDFIRE** If you're away from the area, local help can be especially valuable when conditions change.

What about unauthorized occupants?

Oregon law includes procedures that may apply when unauthorized occupancy is suspected. This is not an area where a property owner should rely on a quick internet summary or attempt a do-it-yourself removal. Circumstances matter, and appropriate legal guidance should be obtained.

> **The best vacant-property problem is the one discovered early, before it becomes a much bigger problem.**

Some Properties Need More Than a Standard Selling Plan

Sometimes the real estate isn't the complicated part. The situation is.

Inherited property

Determine who has authority to sell and whether probate, a trust, multiple heirs or other ownership issues are involved. You may also be dealing with belongings, deferred maintenance or a property you know very little about.

Rental or investment property

Lease terms, occupancy, property condition, access for showings and Oregon landlord-tenant requirements may affect how and when the property can be marketed. Tax questions may warrant a conversation with your CPA.

Second home

Compare the true carrying cost with how much you're using the property. Insurance, taxes, utilities, maintenance, landscaping and travel can add up.

Rural Southern Oregon

Wells, septic systems, water rights, access, acreage, zoning, outbuildings, wildfire considerations and other property-specific features may require additional homework.

You live somewhere else

Distance changes the logistics, not your ability to sell. Someone still needs to check the property, meet contractors, provide access, notice problems and keep preparation moving.

> **Your situation should determine the selling strategy. The selling strategy shouldn't force your situation into a standard template.**

You shouldn't have to get on an airplane every time something needs attention.

PART 1

From Preparation to Closing

A good selling process should feel organized, not chaotic.

1. Start with the property and your goals

We talk about why you're considering selling, your timing, the property's condition and anything unusual about the situation. If you're not in Southern Oregon, much of this can be handled by phone, video and electronic communication.

2. Understand the property

Before recommending a strategy, I want to understand what we're selling. That may mean walking the property, reviewing available records, identifying deferred maintenance, looking at comparable properties and determining whether there are issues that deserve attention before listing.

3. Make a preparation plan

We decide what should be cleaned, repaired, improved, removed or simply left alone. When local help is needed, I can assist with coordinating appropriate vendors and access so the process keeps moving.

4. Establish the pricing strategy

We'll review relevant comparable sales, current competition, property condition and the characteristics that make your property different. My job isn't simply to give you a number. It's to help you understand the information behind it.

5. Prepare the marketing

Professional photography, thoughtful listing copy, online exposure and additional marketing should work together to tell the property's story accurately and attract the right buyers.

> **Technology supports the process. It doesn't replace personal judgment or communication.**

I use current technology and AI tools strategically where they can improve marketing, research, organization and visibility.

PART 2

From Preparation to Closing

6. Launch and monitor

Once the property is on the market, we watch what happens. Showing activity, questions, feedback, competing properties and offers all give us information.

7. Evaluate offers and negotiate

Price matters, but it isn't the only thing that matters. Financing, contingencies, inspection periods, closing timelines, concessions and other terms can change the strength of an offer.

8. Manage the transaction

After accepting an offer, there are still inspections, appraisal when applicable, title and escrow requirements, documents, deadlines and plenty of details to manage.

9. Get to closing

Many parts of a transaction can be handled electronically, which can be particularly helpful when you're outside Southern Oregon. Whether you're across town or across the country, you should know what's happening and what comes next.

> **My goal is simple: no unnecessary surprises.**

QUESTIONS WORTH ASKING

Choosing the Right Agent

Don't just ask, "What do you think my house is worth?"

That's important. It shouldn't be the only question. Ask things that tell you **how the person actually works.**

HOW DID YOU ARRIVE AT THE PRICE? Ask to see the comparable sales, current competition and reasoning.	**HOW WOULD YOU PREPARE THIS PROPERTY?** A vacant rural property shouldn't necessarily have the same plan as an occupied home in town.
WHAT WOULD YOU NOT SPEND MONEY ON? This may be one of the best questions you can ask.	**HOW WILL YOU MARKET BEYOND THE MLS?** Ask about photography, online marketing, property-specific marketing and communication.
WHO WILL I COMMUNICATE WITH? Know whether you'll work directly with the agent you hired or primarily with other team members.	**HOW OFTEN WILL I HEAR FROM YOU?** Define good communication before the listing agreement is signed.
HAVE YOU HANDLED A SITUATION LIKE MINE? Especially useful for vacant, inherited, tenant-occupied, rural, second-home or out-of-area sales.	**WHAT HAPPENS WHEN SOMETHING GOES WRONG?** Real estate transactions don't always follow the script. Experience matters most when they don't.

> **You're choosing the person who will help you make decisions when the answers aren't obvious.**

PART 1

Your Seller Planning Checklist

Use this to see what you know, what you don't know and what may need attention.

Your goals

- ■ Why am I considering selling?
- ■ Do I have an ideal selling or closing timeframe?
- ■ Is maximizing price my highest priority, or are convenience, timing and simplicity equally important?
- ■ Are there other owners or family members who need to be involved in decisions?

Property condition

- ■ Are there repairs or maintenance items I already know about?
- ■ Are there roof, plumbing, electrical, HVAC or structural concerns?
- ■ If applicable, what do I know about the well, septic system, water rights, access or other rural-property features?
- ■ Is there anything about the property I've been meaning to investigate but haven't?

Documents and information

- ■ Do I have records of major repairs or improvements?
- ■ Are warranties, permits or invoices available?
- ■ Do I have HOA information, if applicable?
- ■ For a rental, do I have the lease and relevant tenancy records?
- ■ For inherited, estate or trust property, do I know who has authority to make decisions and sign documents?

PART 2

Your Seller Planning Checklist

Preparing the property

- What needs cleaning or decluttering?
- What needs repair?
- What could improve the property's first impression?
- What am I considering spending money on?
- Have I determined whether those expenses make sense before starting the work?

If the property is vacant

- Has the insurance company been notified of the property's occupancy status?
- Are utilities being handled appropriately?
- Is someone checking the property regularly?
- Are doors, windows and other access points secure?
- Is landscaping or exterior maintenance being handled?
- Is there a plan if a problem occurs while I'm away?

Financial considerations

- What does the property cost me each month while I own it?
- Are there mortgage, tax, insurance, HOA, utility or maintenance expenses to consider?
- Should I speak with a CPA, attorney, insurance professional or other advisor before making certain decisions?

> **What would make this sale feel successful to me?**

Write down the answer. It's surprisingly easy to become focused on the mechanics of selling and lose sight of what you're actually trying to accomplish.

LOCAL KNOWLEDGE. MODERN TOOLS. PERSONAL SERVICE.

About Lisa Sears

Experience matters most when you know how to use it.

I've worked in real estate for over 30 years, beginning my career in Hawaii and later making Southern Oregon my home.

Over the years, I've worked with many different kinds of properties and sellers: straightforward home sales, vacant properties, rentals and investment properties, second homes, rural properties, inherited homes, local sellers and sellers who are hundreds or thousands of miles away.

One thing I've learned is that real estate rarely becomes difficult because someone forgot how to put a house in the MLS.

It becomes difficult when something unexpected happens. A repair needs to be coordinated. An inspection uncovers something. A family member has a question. A document is missing. A property needs attention. An offer isn't as straightforward as it first appears.

That's when experience, communication and problem-solving matter.

> **But technology isn't the relationship. I am.**

I use today's technology, including AI-powered tools, to help with research, marketing, visibility and organization. I'm an **AI Certified Agent(TM) through the Krem Institute of Artificial Intelligence**, and I'm continually learning how to use new technology intelligently in my business.

When you hire me, I personally work with you. I believe in answering the phone, explaining what's happening and helping you make informed decisions without creating unnecessary drama.

As a member of **eXp Realty's Luxury Division**, I also believe exceptional service shouldn't depend on the price of the property.

A Luxury Experience at Every Price Point.

A PLACE TO START

You Don't Have to Figure It Out Alone

Sometimes the best first step isn't listing the property.

It may be figuring out what the property is worth. It may be deciding whether to repair something. It may be understanding what to do with a house you've inherited. It may be determining whether you're ready to stop being a landlord.

Or you may simply be thinking about selling your Southern Oregon home and wondering what the process would look like.

That's enough reason to have a conversation.

> **No pressure. No obligation. Just a place to start.**

LET'S TALK ABOUT YOUR PROPERTY

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You're away. I'm here. Consider it done.
Serving property owners throughout Southern Oregon, including Jackson and Josephine counties.