



GROUP ESTES *realty*

What Does the Real Estate Market look like for 2019?

Greetings Client Advocates,

January 2019

Happy 2019!!! What's in store for the housing market in 2019? We'll address some of the things to watch and expect. Because whether you're just curious about your home's value or more specifically thinking of buying and/or selling, you may be wondering and we're happy to provide some insight.

Experts forecast their predictions based on past and current trends in the market. The information in this month's flyer outlines what to expect this year. Will the healthy national housing market continue or will an increase in interest rates throw a wrench in the works? Will houses continue to fly off the market? (They're certainly not in our area any longer*.) How will the new tax code impact housing? Our attachment addresses these questions and more.

*From our local perspective, this is an excerpt from a Seattle Times article on January 7th:

“Home prices on the Eastside have now dropped on a year-over-year basis. In Seattle, the median house is nearly \$100,000 cheaper than last spring. And across King County, the number of condos available for buyers has more than quadrupled in the past year.... Buyers who once had to make decisions on home purchases in a matter of days [now have weeks](#) or months to ponder their options and negotiate, because there are so many more homes to choose from.”

So important for us to remind you here -- regardless of the state of the real estate market, the best time to buy or sell a home is when *you're ready* to do so. If you're considering that as an option, please do reach out to us! If you're considering a remodel for yourselves with an eye toward future market value, or wondering what to specifically prep for to sell 'later,' and/or... that too is about your needs and your timing and we're here to assist.

Along the lines of assisting you with your properties, another 'public service announcement' this month is to encourage you to please stick your head into your attic and crawlspace at least once a year. Even with the quarterly exterior pest services that we receive, we found out that we had mice in the attic... gratefully before they did any damage to the insulation! It's sooooo much easier to address preventive maintenance than it is to do the remediation after damage has been caused. And rodents can wreak havoc in both your crawlspace *and* your attic!

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Another public service announcement is on the topic of light rail. Transit access can have a very positive affect on the value of your property. Curious about what the timing looks like? And how things are progressing? We've found some interesting websites for you to check out:

[Check out all the Seattle stations to help plan your commute](#)

[SoundTransit app making it easy to navigate your commuting options!](#)

[The Northgate station will be amazing](#)

[In time stations will be available for easier commutes!](#)

Before wrapping up for this month, we of course have a few vendors to highlight for you this month:

Spotlight Vendors for January

Samuel Lowe - Farmers Insurance - samloweagency.com - 206-753-9684
Insurance

Bob Bengtson - B & C Comfort, LLC - info@bandccomfort.com - 425-402-4456
Air Conditioning, Fireplace Repair, Furnace, HVAC

Bill Stanton - Kemly Electric Inc. - Bill@kemlyelectric.com - 206-782-1670
Electrical

Bonafide Lock & Safe - bonalock@hotmail.com - 425-391-9224 or 425-820-7175
Locksmith

Juan Franco - donfranjuan@hotmail.com - 206-300-6249
House Cleaning

We appreciate your advocacy and are delighted to be of assistance to you and the people that you connect us with.

Sincerely,



Always looking for more ways to be of service ... and working exclusively by referral throughout North King County and South Snohomish County.

If you know of someone who would appreciate the consistent level of service we provide, please introduce us via email, or call / text us with their name and contact information, and we'll be happy to follow up and take great care of them.

The US Housing Market Outlook

Although it's impossible to predict the future, current trends and statistics create a picture of the market's health.

THE NATIONAL MARKET AS WE BEGIN 2019

Home sales are down 1.5 percent from a year ago.¹ Experts say that many buyers are priced out of the market or they're waiting until more homes within their price range are available.

Home prices are up 4.6 percent and the average home value is \$264,800.¹ Sales may be down, but prices will continue to rise. This is good news for sellers, but may keep buyers on the sidelines in high-price markets.

Homes are selling fast. Homes are on the market for an average of only 29 days, with 52 percent of homes on the market for less than a month.¹

Inventory is tight.¹ People are staying in their homes longer and housing starts are at an all-time low.² However, housing permits are up 8.4 percent over last year, which means more inventory to come.³

Competition is high. First-time buyers made up 31 percent of home purchasers.¹ For those in the market to buy, get preapproved for a mortgage to stay competitive. If you need a lender, I can refer you to a great one in my network.

New tax code may have an impact.

The interest deduction is capped at \$750,000 (down from \$1 million) and the property tax deduction is capped at \$10,000. This may mean less expendable cash for those with, or needing, a big mortgage.

Let's set a time to talk about our local market. I'd love to share my housing market insights with you and do an annual review if you currently own.

THREE THINGS TO WATCH FOR IN 2019

1. Interest rates.

Experts predict the Federal Reserve will increase interest rates two times in 2019.⁴ However, increases are expected to be gradual.

2. Inflation.

Inflation is expected to increase slightly in 2019, due in part to a strengthening labor market and tariffs.

3. Strength of economy.

The economy continues to grow and strengthen, a trend that is expected to endure in 2019.

Sources: 1. National Association of REALTORS
2. CNN Money
3. National Association of Home Builders
4. HousingWire
5. Wall Street Journal



Will We See a Market Correction?⁵

Recently, you may have seen news headlines predicting the next recession. The economy has been growing since 2009, the longest stretch in US history.⁵ Since the economy is cyclical, it's only natural to wonder when the economy will begin to retract.

Causes of a downturn. Recessions are often caused by unforeseen events or circumstances that shock the market. Sixty-two percent of experts say an overheating economy will lead to the Fed tightening its belt.⁵ Others say a financial meltdown may be caused by an asset bubble, fiscal crisis or international trade disruptions.⁵

Reason to be optimistic. Housing isn't likely to play a large role in the next recession.⁵ Although affordability remains a concern in many areas of the country, experts say that housing is unlikely to cause another recession.⁵

Take headlines with a grain of salt. Experts predicted recessions in 2011 and 2016, and neither transpired. It is important to remember that growth doesn't last, so a downturn would be considered natural. Over the next year, economists predict the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) will continue to grow and unemployment rates will fall further. The risk of recession in the next year is only about 15 percent, and the changes to the tax code effective this year are expected to drive business investment spending.



Are you thinking of **buying** this year?

Here are three things to do now:

1. **Boost your credit score.**

This may help you secure a better interest rate, which will lower your payment and save you money each month.

2. **Save more for a down payment.**

A bigger down payment equals a smaller mortgage and lower monthly payments.

3. **Please, call or text me!**

Together we can determine the must-have features of your ideal home and connect you with a reputable lender for mortgage preapproval.

Are you thinking of **selling** this year?

Here are three things to do now:

1. **Call me for a free comparative market assessment.**

I'll show you what your home is worth and how I obtain my assessment, as well as offer suggestions to improve your home's value.

2. **Declutter your storage and living spaces.**

It may be easier to sort through and donate items now, instead of waiting until it's time to move.

3. **Assess your home's condition and make a list of potential repairs.** This will help you prioritize the home repair tasks you need to complete before you list your home.