

# Home Selling Guide

**SOLD!**

*Liz Moore*  
*and associates*

Real Estate. Reinvented.

**Sally Sheard**  
REALTOR®

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# Thinking of Selling?

Selling a home is one of the largest, most important financial transactions most people will make in a lifetime. And yet, many times consumers choose the real estate agent who guides and advises them “by accident”...they hook up with an agent that answered an ad or sign call, or the first agent they meet at an open house. I’m not suggesting that is necessarily a problem, but I would offer some advice as you consider hiring a REALTOR® to sell your home:

Your agent should have a specific marketing plan for your property, tailored to reach a specific target profile buyer. In most cases, there will be several demographics involved, and your agent should be able to effectively outline a strategy to reach them all.

Marketing should include print media, online efforts, and a plan to reach out to other agents.

The ability to “tell your home’s story” is key, through expert photography and compelling copy. Details matter. You should ask to see samples, and the agent should be able to elaborate on a game plan that spans the length of the listing. Quite simply, your agent’s marketing plan should “wow” you!

Your agent should be excited about your property, and should be able to easily articulate its benefits and value to prospective buyers. Equally important is their ability to identify potential objections, and have a plan to overcome them.

Lastly, and perhaps most important of all, is your agent’s willingness to be both honest and direct with you. While that may sound obvious, what I mean is they must be able to deliver difficult messages, and tell you the truth and the bottom line (either about your home’s market value, or that outdated wallpaper even though it’s your favorite), even when it’s not what you want to hear. An agent who is afraid to tell you that the price you want is too much will allow you to make expensive mistakes when positioning your property, and those relationships often end with an expired or cancelled listing as well as a disappointed seller.

In this magazine, we have highlighted some of the most important considerations when selecting the right agent and agency to market your home. Need some specific advice? Please feel free to contact me at 757-775-1785 or [sallysheard@lizmoore.com](mailto:sallysheard@lizmoore.com), and I would be happy to help!

*Sally*  
Sally Sheard  
REALTOR®

“ Just hours before we were supposed to move, we found out our appraisal was \$3500 lower than we anticipated. Our household goods were packed, the moving van was on its way, and everyone was lined up to help us move. We felt we had no choice but to cough up the extra money - we didn't have time to negotiate. ”



“ I wish we would have known about all the repairs that the home inspection required **before** we agreed to a sales price – I definitely would have negotiated differently. ”

“ With the repair negotiation in the eleventh hour before closing, we had to hire the contractor who was available, and that cost us a pretty penny! I wish we had more time to bid the work. ”

## Surprises Can Be Great... But not when you're selling real estate!

The creation of Liz Moore and Associates has been a journey. We began by surveying thousands of local families who had recently bought or sold real estate. We found too many had one unfortunate experience in common: frustrating and expensive last minute surprises. We heard story after story about unforeseen expenses, delays, and the stress of having to make major decisions under pressure.

After hearing stories like these, we took a step back and evaluated the real estate transaction from beginning to end. We discovered we can take many of the surprises, and much of the stress, out of the moving equation for sellers and for buyers. At Liz Moore & Associates, we've pioneered a solution that

reorganizes the process, saving both money and time for our clients.

We order a professional property inspection by an independent home inspector and a market evaluation by a licensed appraiser. Best of all, this is done at our expense. This allows our agents to accurately pinpoint true market value, ensures that you are advised of value and potential repair issues up front before negotiating price and committing to terms, and avoids eleventh hour discoveries that can derail a sale. Liz Moore and Associates takes the surprise, and a lot of the stress, out of home selling.

Learn about “No Surprises” at: [lizmoore.com/selling](http://lizmoore.com/selling)





# Your Home. Reinvented.

## Does home staging really work?

“We are so convinced that having a listing professionally staged means a quicker sale and higher net proceeds for our sellers,” says Liz Moore, “that we are now going to provide an initial staging consultation to our listing clients at our expense.”

According to a recent Home Gain survey, 94% of homes staged by a professional stager sold in 29 days or less, compared to an average of 145 days for non-staged homes. Even more compelling is the finding that \$724 invested in staging (the average cost) netted the seller \$2,145 more in price – a 196% return on investment!

A staging consultation is in addition to the legendary Liz Moore “No Surprises” program: a pre-listing appraisal and up front home inspection provided to Liz Moore sellers – all at no expense to our clients. What does a home stager do? One of Trez Robinson’s (Staged2SellVA.com) favorite mantra’s is that she is a “de-decorator.” A stager’s role is to take away the personality and style of the current owner, so that prospective purchasers can more easily visualize themselves moving in.



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There are a number of ways to accomplish this:

- Remove personal photos and effects.
- De-clutter so that buyers focus on the “bones” of a house rather than the distractions of the stuff in the house.
- Neutralize colors, so prospective buyers don’t object to the current owner’s personal taste, or that they will need to invest time and money in repainting before they move in (need to neutralize and curious about what color? Trez recommends Sherwin Williams Believable Buff).
- Remove any “extra” furniture, so rooms look and feel more spacious. Same goes for things on shelves, mantles and tables – minimalize, so lookers are seeing the room, not your things.
- Remove window treatments - let light shine in!

Download a copy of our home staging checklist at:  
[lizmoore.com/selling](http://lizmoore.com/selling)



# Should I Update My Home Before I Sell?

This is a classic home seller's dilemma. And, like so many questions, it really depends on your specific situation. There are a number of improvements that are "no brainers"...so, let's take a look at those first. The least expensive investments with the greatest returns are undoubtedly the following:

1. Fresh paint. Choose a neutral color, and give the interior a bright new look. You may want to consider doing some early packing, and not re-hang all of your pictures. Less clutter will make rooms appear larger, and the new owner will not have to fill holes.
2. Landscaping. A carefully manicured lawn and weed-free beds are an indication that the property is well cared for. Mulch and some color in the flower beds go a long way toward creating that important curb appeal.
3. Replace carpet if necessary. New flooring in a neutral color allows the buyer to feel that they are moving into a "new" home.

All three of those improvements tend to encourage a stronger offer on your property, because the prospective buyer is not moving in with a laundry list of "to-do's" which are likely to be estimated at a higher cost than you'll actually pay. By doing them in advance, you preclude a buyer for reducing his offer price by the amount he feels he'll need to invest.

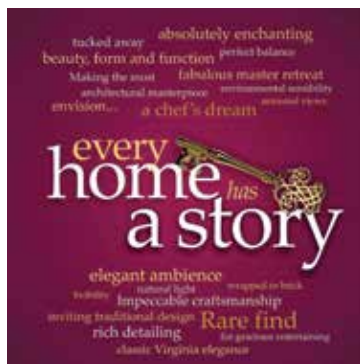
Other additions that aid in marketability are minor kitchen and bathroom remodeling, such as replacing dated counter tops and appliances, and refacing/replacing out of style cabinets. Because these improvements can be a bit more pricey than painting and landscaping, be sure to include your Liz Moore REALTOR® in the decision making process. Not only will your agent be able to advise you whether or not the project makes sense, he or she will also be able to guide you to affordable and reputable contractors to do the work.

Carefully consider any major renovations such as room additions, garage conversions, swimming pools, etc. It's important that you make those investments to enjoy while you are living in the home, because chances are that you will not recoup but a fraction of your cost. Garage conversions, for instance, may add a great bonus room or extra bedroom, but when it comes time to sell, you'll have to subtract the value of the garage that you no longer have. If garages are customary in your area, the loss will most likely exceed the gain.

Get some improvement advice and find out what your home is worth at:  
[info.lizmoore.com/whatismyhomeworth?](http://info.lizmoore.com/whatismyhomeworth?)



# Dynamic Photography and Copy



There is a big difference between a house and a home, and understanding that difference – and, more importantly, being able to communicate it to prospective buyers is essential. Using dynamic ad copy in marketing materials is a great way to differentiate your home from the others. Our book of ad copy ideas titled “Every Home Has a Story” helps our agents create fresh and exciting descriptions of the properties they represent. They are never at a loss for words!

Lighting, perspective, and an eye for the details that can make the difference – all these things are key to ensuring an extraordinary visual representation of your home’s best features. For that reason, at Liz Moore & Associates, our agents hire a professional photographer when appropriate to ensure that we are making the best possible first impression of our listings.

With such a high volume of prospective buyers beginning their search online, having captivating photos, and lots of them, is absolutely essential. Slide shows are preferable to virtual tours, with the exception of those few properties that photograph well panoramically. Many online home searches actually rank their results by the number of photos, and so this strategy can put your home near the top of the list. The signature Liz Moore oval photo is another way to catch both the buyer and the agent eye when scanning multiple listings on Realtor.com or in the MLS.

Twilight photography is a great way to help your property stand out among the sea of available homes for sale. This spectacular effect is achieved by photographing the home at just the right moment at dusk with all the interior lights on and carefully selected exposure settings on the equipment.

Download your copy of  
“Every Home Has A Story” at:  
[info.lizmoore.com/every-home-has-a-story](http://info.lizmoore.com/every-home-has-a-story)



# Questions To Ask When Interviewing An Agent

1. What methods should be used to accurately pinpoint the value of my home? How often are low appraisals encountered?
2. What issues might I face as a result of home or termite/moisture inspections performed after I've negotiated price & terms?
3. Are there any fees that will be charged above & beyond the brokerage fee? What's included in the brokerage fee?
4. Specifically, how will my home be marketed & how will results be measured?
5. Will I have exclusive representation, or is it possible my agent could be a dual agent juggling a buyer's interests as well as mine?
6. If we encounter any legal issues during the process, will I have access to a real estate attorney at no charge?
7. How will prospect inquiries from ad & sign calls be handled? What about internet leads?
8. How will incoming offers on my property be analyzed to ensure my bottom line is protected & the prospective buyer is qualified to purchase?
9. Who can help with reliable contractor referrals?
10. What kind of communication can I expect from my agent throughout the process?

Download "Questions to Ask When Interviewing An Agent" at:  
[info.lizmoore.com/10-questions-to-ask-when-interviewing-an-agent](http://info.lizmoore.com/10-questions-to-ask-when-interviewing-an-agent)



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# Exclusive 10 Step Pricing Methodology

In the last 12 months, nearly as many listings expired, cancelled or were withdrawn from the market as sold. For sellers who are serious about getting their homes sold, that presents a huge dilemma. Clearly, traditional methods for marketing real estate have become outdated and ineffective. CMAs alone are no longer a reliable tool for predicting a home’s market value.

At Liz Moore & Associates, we take a different approach to both pricing and marketing.

We don’t believe “one size fits all” for a marketing plan, nor do we believe a computer program can effectively recommend a market value. Getting listings sold in today’s real estate climate takes experience,

knowledge, finesse, and old fashioned hard work.

We have reinvented the process by beginning with the end in mind, and have accordingly developed a pricing methodology that delivers better results for our clients. Our agents perform a rigorous 10 step analysis before they recommend a positioning strategy specifically for your home.

We are confident that when you compare our analysis to a traditional CMA (CMA stands for “comparative market analysis” where agents allow the computer to generate a recommended price range), you will begin to understand why Liz Moore & Associates is the best choice to market your home.

## Step 1

### Odds of selling

In such a dynamic market, it is essential to constantly evaluate the trends relative to your market segment.

We study months’ supply of inventory, absorption rates, and a number of other factors to determine if it is a buyer’s or seller’s market, and where we need to position your listing to be the best value in its category.

## Step 3

### Create a positioning strategy

Perhaps the most important step in the process, in this phase we look through the prospective buyers’ eyes, and run likely search scenarios to evaluate the active competition.

It’s important to remember that not all competition is comparable! Based on the results of these searches, we will make an initial positioning recommendation.

## Step 2

### Identify target buyer profiles

To catch a buyer, you have to think like a buyer! Yet most agents skip this critical step. In order to develop an effective marketing strategy, we must first determine our target. Then we can predict with relative accuracy what’s important to them and how they will search for a home, and develop the most effective marketing plan to reach them directly.

## Step 4

### Adjustments

Once we have an idea of the direct competition, we analyze your home’s best features and challenges in a weighted comparison. This is a credit/debit process that accounts for external factors like backing up to a busy road, or updates such as a remodeled kitchen.

This is an art as opposed to a science. Your agent’s experience for this step is critical.



Step  
5

## Will it appraise?

Because most buyers today get a mortgage, we need to also consider what a lender will lend in terms of an appraisal.

Because appraisers approach value in an entirely different way than buyers (they look backward 6 months for sold comparable sales, rather than considering the current competition), this is a totally different calculation. We take the guesswork out of this step with our exclusive “No Surprises” prelisting appraisal at our expense.

Step  
7

## Staging consultation

Recent trends in home staging have demonstrated that staged homes sell faster and for more money than their unstaged counterparts.

We believe so strongly that staging provides the competitive advantage for our sellers that we invite a professional stager in to consult with our clients... at our expense.

Step  
9

## Benchmarking - price per square foot

Another consideration for today’s buyer is a comparison of price per square foot of competing homes.

Unless the competition is very similar, this can be a tricky calculation - which is why it is so important that the analysis be completed up front.

Step  
6

## Condition assessment

Another critical component of value is the property’s condition. Is it move in ready? Or does it need paint, repairs or updating?

Our “No Surprises” pre-listing home inspection can identify issues up front, so that you can put your home’s best foot forward when it hits the market. We will prepare a list of recommended items to get your home show ready.

Step  
8

## Benchmarking - assessed value

Because buyers and their agents will do their homework, we work to stay one step ahead of them.

We’ll research your current tax assessment in order to spot appreciation or depreciation trends for the neighborhood, accuracies in data (square footage or features), and ratios of sold prices to assessed value.

Step  
10

## Forecasting

Markets are dynamic, and values change with each new closing or new listing coming on the market.

We study expired and pending sales daily, so that we can recommend adjustments as necessary to stay in front of the market. We will set you up on an automatic e-mail search of your market segment, so that you can monitor changes in real time as well.

## Armed with all of this information

we will recommend an initial positioning range. Then, depending on your goals and the pace of the market, we review activity, feedback, and trends in the market every 30-45 days to ensure we maintain that competitive advantage.

Download our pricing methodology at:  
[info.lizmoore.com/the-liz-moore-10-step-pricing-methodology](http://info.lizmoore.com/the-liz-moore-10-step-pricing-methodology)



# Niche Websites

## Targeting your prospective buyer

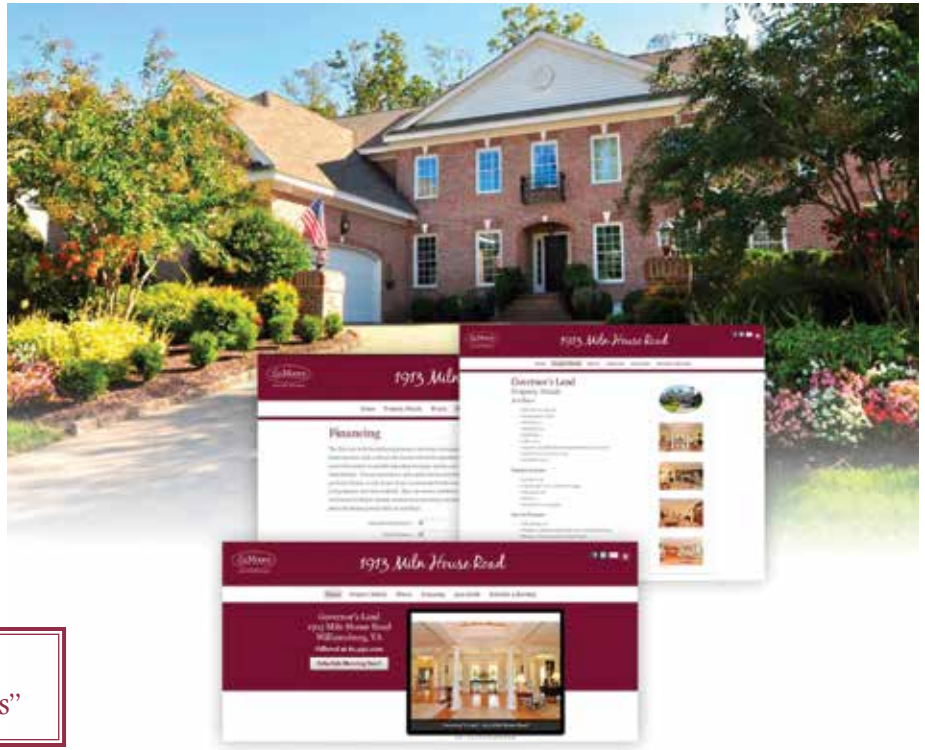
We manage over 20 different stealth/niche websites and blogs exclusively for Liz Moore clients, with content targeting specific buyer profiles for your home and featuring appropriate listings. From military, to seniors, to investors and first time home buyers.

Link to all our niche websites at:  
[lizmoore.com/about/virtual-offices](http://lizmoore.com/about/virtual-offices)



# Custom Property Websites

We now create an individual custom website for each of our properties, complete with pages for the photographs and important details a prospective buyer wants to see... all to give your home that critical selling advantage in this very competitive real estate marketplace. Individual property URLs - one more weapon in our arsenal of brilliant marketing tools to ensure that your Liz Moore & Associates real estate experience is the best one you've ever had.



See examples of property websites at:  
[lizmoore.com/listings](http://lizmoore.com/listings) and click "Details"



## The Best A Home Can Be

Check out Liz's List at: [lizmoore.com/lizlist](http://lizmoore.com/lizlist)

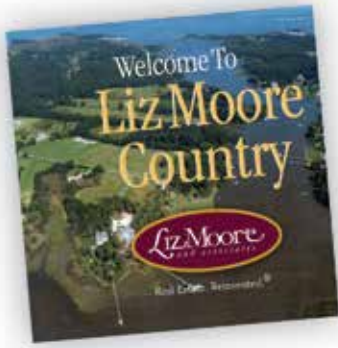
One of the most valuable resources that REALTORS® can provide is their network of talented, reliable contractors and service providers. Because we deal with coordinating home repairs on a daily basis, we know who does the best work, at a fair price, and who is reliable "after the sale."

At Liz Moore & Associates, our mission is to deliver above and beyond service - and we surround ourselves with vendors and partners who share our philosophy.

We've launched Liz's List as a dynamic directory of our favorite contractors, along with their contact information and endorsement from our agents.



# The Art & Science of Marketing Your Home to Sell



## Developing a winning strategy

At Liz Moore & Associates, we take a different approach to marketing. We don't believe that "one size fits all" for marketing. Getting listings sold in today's real estate climate takes experience, knowledge, finesse, and old fashioned hard work. We have reinvented the process by beginning with the end in mind, and have accordingly developed a marketing methodology that delivers better results for our clients. Below is a general overview of some of our strategies to give you a sneak peek into the elements that will be included when your Liz Moore agent customizes a marketing strategy specifically for your home.



## Unparalleled online exposure

Because online strategies are what produce the highest number of buyers in today's market, we focus a tremendous amount of money, time, and energy into this marketing segment. In addition to custom property websites, niche websites, and digital magazines, we have a full time Online Guru whose primary responsibility is to market our inventory online and through Social Media efforts.



## Print media and target mailing

Newspaper, magazine, and direct mail are all components of our overall marketing plan. We enjoy prime positions in a number of local publications with the goal of highlighting our inventory and driving traffic to our websites and digital magazines.

Perhaps the most powerful resource in our marketing arsenal is the personal networks of our many top agents, and we oversee a mailing campaign to all 17,000+ of them regularly.

## Event marketing

Property tours, broker opens, open houses, holiday home tours, and the like are all strategies that can generate interest in your listing. We also employ a series of educational and real estate related and other community events both on site in our offices and out in our community that afford the opportunity to connect with prospective buyers.



## Powerful collateral

At Liz Moore & Associates, we have a fabulous graphic designer on staff to create beautiful, professional highlight sheets and mailing pieces to compliment our marketing strategy of your home. Whether we are detailing extraordinary features, or showcasing spectacular photography, the takeaways, brochures and mailings are each individually designed to maximize both the emotional appeal and value of your property.



Download our complete marketing strategy at:  
[info.lizmoore.com/download-our-marketing-strategy](http://info.lizmoore.com/download-our-marketing-strategy)

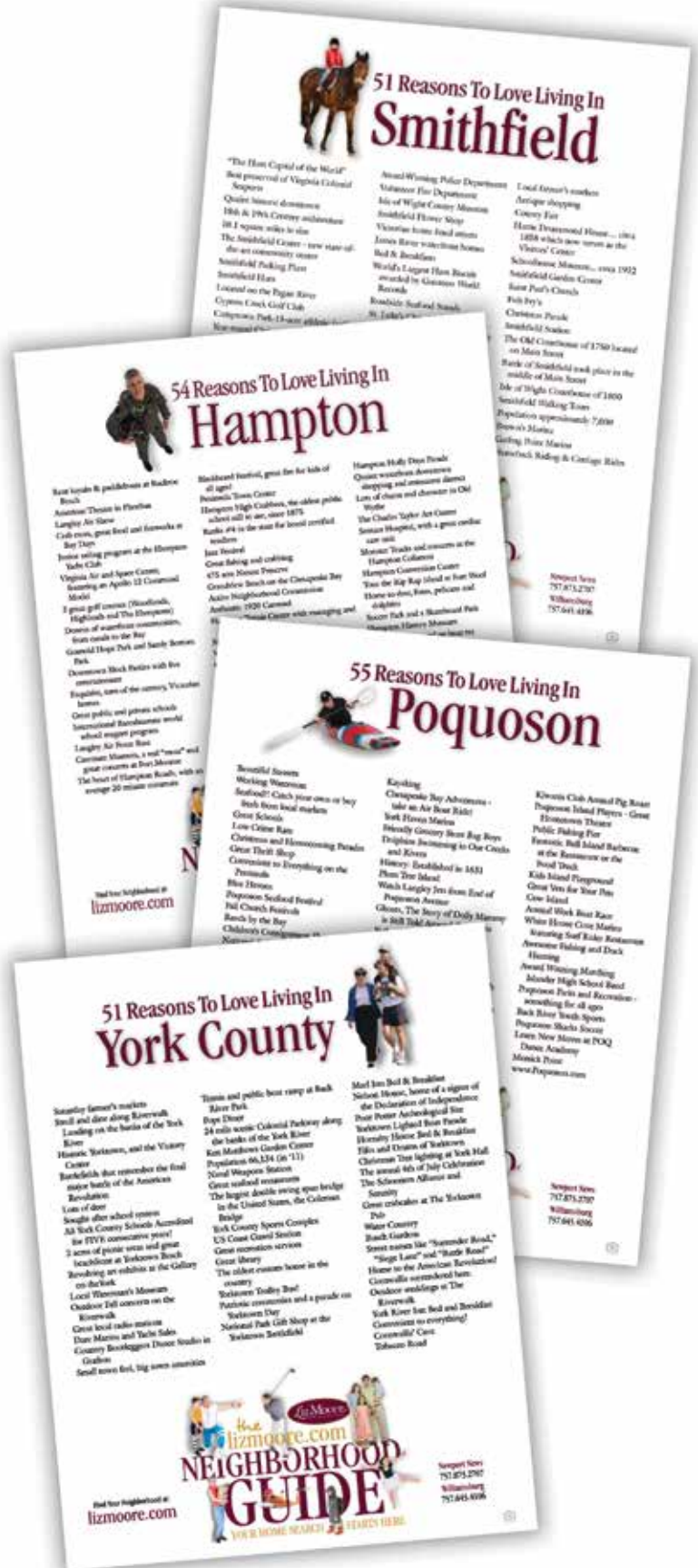
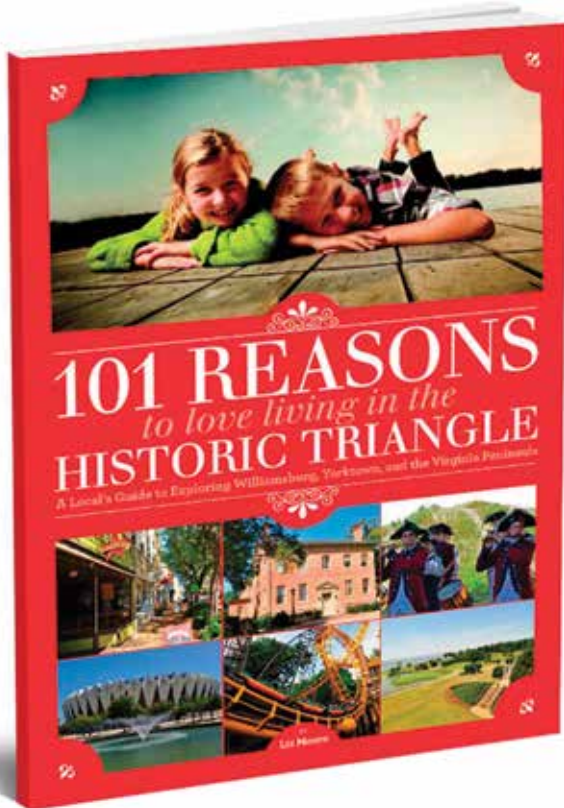


# Selling Your Community

Reasons to love guides

We recognize that prospective buyers begin their search by looking at communities and neighborhoods, and then narrowing their focus to specific properties. Accordingly, we have created aggressive strategies, both online and in print, to capture them during this phase of the search. From our individual neighborhood websites, to our popular 50 Reasons to Love Living In series, when it comes to neighborhood marketing on a hyper local level, we wrote the book (literally!).

## 101 Reasons - the book



Order your print or e-Book at: [lizmoore.com/101](http://lizmoore.com/101)



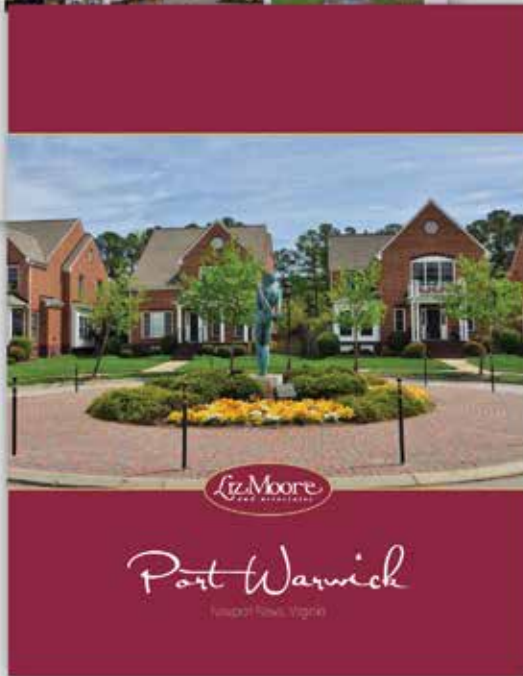
# Hyper-local neighborhood guides



Port Warwick is an award-winning, mid-rise community located off Jefferson Avenue in Newport News, Virginia. Conceived and developed by Bobby Foreman, president of Tower Park Corporation, Port Warwick was conceived to be the urban and residential community of the city's new and vibrant central business district. At the corner of the Port Warwick community lies Sycamore Square, a vibrant new green space designed after the great squares of London. It was named after the Newport News water and Publicly owned water, William Street. Surrounding the Square is a vibrant retail and business district featuring over 80 locally owned specialty shops, professional services, numerous great businesses and medical buildings. More in progress, over 1,500 people call Port Warwick home, living in houses, townhomes, live above lofts, apartments and condominiums on or near Sycamore Square.



In addition to shopping and dining in the community, the Port Warwick Conservancy, the property owner association, and the Port Warwick Foundation, sponsors a series of events and activities in Sycamore Square from a weekly outdoor concert series to an annual arts and sculpture festival.



## Online city and neighborhood guides

See our online neighborhood guides at:  
[lizmoore.com/neighborhoods](http://lizmoore.com/neighborhoods)

## Love Where You Live!

We are excited to announce as part of our “Love Where You Live” campaign, Liz Moore and Associates will be lighting up the small screen with spots sharing the many reasons to love living in Coastal Virginia.

See our “Love Where You Live” spots at:  
[lizmoore.tv](http://lizmoore.tv)





# Extra! Extra!

## Liz Moore Digital Magazines



### Always Current

Each magazine is dynamically updated, so even our newest listings are featured in the appropriate issues providing increased internet exposure for our clients. Searching for your next home? Flipping through the pages is a fun way to check out what's available.

### Easy to Use

Visit our newsstand at [www.lizmoore.com/magazines](http://www.lizmoore.com/magazines), and simply click on one of the issues that interests you. Subscribe to one or more of our magazines, and they will be delivered free to your inbox once a month.

### Valuable Insights

Each new issue will contain articles on subjects pertinent to the title written by experts with your specific interest in mind. From money-saving advice to ideas on decorating your home - even all the best things to see and do in your area. You won't want to miss one month!

[lizmoore.com/magazines](http://lizmoore.com/magazines)