

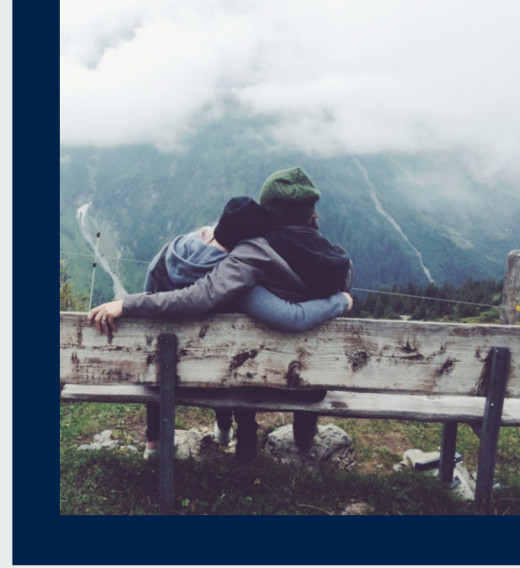
AM I READY TO  
*downsize?*



**HOWELL**  
*realty group*

# WELCOME

*my friend*



There's a host of reasons for downsizing to a smaller home. You might want to pocket the savings and build upon your nest egg. Maybe you're ready for a new adventure and eager to move to a high-rise condo in the city. Or finally—the kids have flown the coop, and you don't need the extra bedrooms and bathrooms anymore.

Whatever your motive is for downsizing, an honest evaluation of your expectations is essential to make an informed decision. That's why I think it is wise to ask yourself these questions before you even start looking for smaller homes.

*Lindsay, Kerri & Tuesday*

# MEET OUR TEAM

*Lindsay*



**Lindsay  
Howell**

With a deep-rooted connection to Grant County, I bring both a professional expertise and a personal touch to your real estate journey.

*Kerri*



**Kerri  
Mitchener**

Kerri is as real as they come! She is a driving force for anything she has a passion for. She is smart, she is passionate, she is fair, but she definitely is honest.

*Tuesday*



**Tuesday  
Liddick**

Tuesday is bringing a passion for helping people. Her patience and ability to be detail-oriented are crucial to aiding in the transactions with her clients.

**HOWELL**  
*realty group*

# UPSIDES OF *downsizing*

## LOWER PHYSICAL BURDEN

Moving into a smaller space may reduce the amount of yard or housework on your to-do list.



## A SAFER ENVIRONMENT

Moving from a 2 story home to a single story will remove a major fall hazard; stairs.

## FEWER DECISIONS

Paring down your personal belongings will help you simplify your everyday life - thus helping you make few decisions each day.







**EMOTION**

# FEARS ABOUT AGING IN PLACE

When a young family moves into a home, they often aren't thinking about what it will be like in 20 or 30 years. But as you age, you may have to make tough realizations about how your body will hold up to the demands of your current home.

We're not talking about maintenance and upkeep (though those points are important) we're talking about whether the baths and showers have grab bars, how often you need to climb the stairs, and whether the doorways are large enough to allow for wheelchair or walker access. The aging in place movement helps seniors and disabled members of the community stay in their homes, and is perfect for those who'd rather downsize to an accessible home than go into an assisted living facility.

## EMOTIONAL AGONY

Sadly, for some people, the home they live in is a constant reminder of something they've lost. Empty nesters, widows or widowers, divorcees, even people who've lost a job may find that it's time to scale down and move on.

Your home is literally the first thing you see when you wake up in the morning. If it causes more heartache than pleasure, take a moment to consider what it would be like to live someplace new. If that thought lifts a weight from your shoulders, then it's likely time for you to downsize.



# A GROWING DESIRE TO SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE



**One amazing facet of the late '90s and early 2000s boom in large housing was that many of the people who settled in large homes ended up wishing that they had purchased or built a smaller home.**

In fact, a 2023 survey showed that a full 60 percent of people who lived in homes 2,000 square feet or larger said they hoped to downsize.

Some of that is certainly due to the financial considerations we discussed already, but some of it may also be driven by a more thoughtful mindset. Typified by the tiny house movement, some people seek to downsize in order to strip away unneeded complications and focus on what matters most.



**MONEY**





# HOW WILL DOWNSIZING BENEFIT MY RETIREMENT?

## THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT QUESTION.

It needs to be asked whether you are retired, heading towards retirement, or just planning in advance. Retirement usually means living on a fixed income, unexpected home repairs, escalating taxes or other unplanned expenses. All of these are sincere hardships in retirement. I would advise talking to your financial planner about how your real estate fits into your retirement planning. We often assume that downsizing will result in fewer expenses for housing. However, that is not always the case.



# YOUR MONTHLY HOUSING EXPENSES HAVE RISEN ABOVE 43%

When it comes to how much of your monthly budget should be spent on housing expenses, 43% is the magic number.

No, we didn't just pull that percentage out of a hat—the U.S. government has been using 43% as the standard for housing affordability since the United States National Housing Act of 1937. Since that time, any household paying above 43% of their income on housing is considered financially burdened.

While you're still working, your housing costs may fit comfortably within your budget. But the simple act of retiring can unexpectedly push some retirees into the "burdened" bracket.

Housing cost burdens increase with age as expenses continue to rise and income is reduced in retirement.

Those who are just getting by because they haven't figured out how to live on a fixed income, that's a sign to downsize into a smaller place with a more reasonable monthly mortgage payment. Seniors who want to avoid getting a part-time job say at a fast-food restaurant just to make ends meet the need to calculate how much house they can afford in retirement.

The Merrill Lynch survey found that a whopping 64% of downsizing retirees are making the transition to a smaller home to cut down on their housing expenses.

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**HOWELL**  
*realty group*





# YOU WANT TO CONVERT YOUR HOME EQUITY INTO INCOME

Are you confident you've saved enough to fund your desired retirement lifestyle?

A 2023 Retirement Confidence Survey by the Employee Benefit Research Institute found that only 3 in 10 retirees are “very confident” that they have enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement.

The effects of inflation are heavy on Americans' minds, as 67% of retirees are concerned that the increasing cost of living will make it harder for them to save money. Four in ten workers and 3 in 10 retirees are not confident their money will be able to keep up with inflation in retirement, a significant increase compared with the one-third of workers who felt this way last year.

If you're not, you may be counting on your current home equity for retirement income. In fact, covering everyday expenses is the number one reason retirees give for wanting to tap into their equity.

The reason why is no mystery—it's because, for most homeowners, that equity is their most valuable asset. That asset can be expensive to maintain.

It stands to reason then, if you're accessing that income to pay your everyday expenses like housing costs, it'll eventually become depleted—unless you've invested that equity in a low-risk retirement account that pays out monthly dividends.

Downsizing your home is one of those things you can do to enhance your lifestyle during retirement. It's all about converting the home equity into a stream of income that will last the remainder of your life.

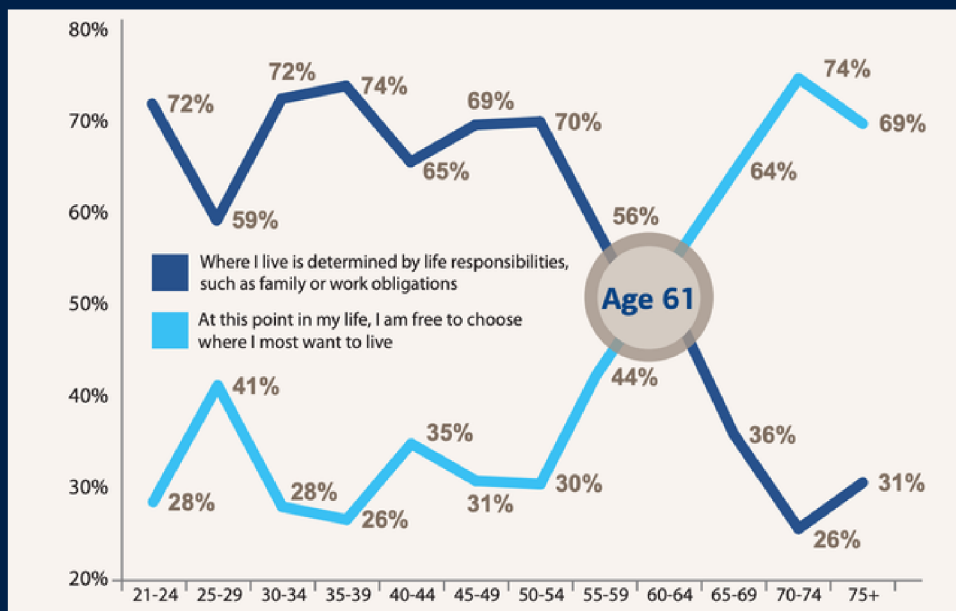


# YOUR CAREER NO LONGER TIES YOU TO YOUR LOCATION

Finding that ideal downsized home that's both affordable and accessible may seem like an impossible dream—especially if you're attempting to buy in your existing neighborhood. But the beauty of retirement is that you no longer need to let your career dictate where you live.

The Merrill Lynch survey found that age 61 was the sweet spot for retirees when they were able to take their pick of where to live—and this freedom can be a big help financially. Without a workplace to worry about, you're free to shop around for the states, cities, and neighborhoods with the lowest property taxes, utilities, sales taxes, and more.

You may even find that you don't need to sacrifice square footage at all if you don't want to if you choose to move to a less expensive area. While 51% of those retirement-aged homebuyers surveyed by Merrill Lynch did downsize, 19% purchased the same-sized home and 30% purchased a larger home after retiring. This proves that it is possible to upsize your home while still downsizing your actual monthly housing expenses. Choosing to downsize is a difficult decision to make. Choosing the best time to downsize is even trickier. But if you play your cards right, your move into a less expensive home has the potential to save you money, and make you money, too.





**MAINTENANCE**

A close-up photograph of an elderly person's hands. The skin is wrinkled and aged. The person is wearing a gold bracelet on their left wrist and a gold ring on their right ring finger. The hands are resting on a dark, textured surface.

“

If you make the  
move too late,  
your home  
just starts  
deteriorating.

”

# MAINTENANCE IS BECOMING OVERWHELMING

If the cost and physical activity it takes to maintain your property have become intimidating, then it's likely time to downsize and find something with less overwhelming maintenance. While every home will occasionally require maintenance that lies outside your physical or financial comfort zone, if you're regularly struggling to perform the chores required to maintain your property and your home has become a source of frustration, it's time to find a solution. Homeownership should be a pleasure, not a source of physical exhaustion or mental anguish.

The garden patio where you learned of the impending arrival of your first grandchild, the wall where you charted the heights of your kids (and grandkids!), the driveway where your kid spent hours playing basketball.

It's precious memories like these that lead retirees to linger longer in their family home than is wise for their health and their financial stability. If sentiment tempts you to hang on to your home too long, it'll wind up doing more damage to your finances than you'd expect.

“

**If you make the move too late, your home just starts deteriorating. Then you're going to have to spend equity to repair your house before it goes on the market. You don't know how much that delayed maintenance is going to cost you if you wait too long to replace the roof or air conditioner.**

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## **YOUR HOME HAS FEATURES THAT NO LONGER FIT YOUR LIFESTYLE**

Back in the day when your kids were building blanket forts in all the bedrooms, the bathrooms had to wait for lines, and your teens were tussling over the remote in the TV room, there were times when even your spacious home felt too small to contain the chaos.

These days though, most of those bedrooms are now rarely-opened storage, there's a strange smell coming from your unused guest bathroom, and the TV room has become a dust-catcher.

Now that you're only using a handful of rooms in your house (the master bath, bedroom, kitchen, and the smaller, cozier den), it hardly makes sense to pay for heating, cooling, and lighting rooms that you don't even use.

Your home may have features that will take a physical toll as you grow older, like stairs, high-maintenance landscaping, or a steep driveway. Weather in your area is also a consideration as shoveling snow or mowing the lawn becomes more difficult with each passing year.

A survey conducted by Demand Institute found that aging-friendly accessibility was a key factor among baby boomers looking to move, with single-story, low maintenance, and disability accessibility topping the list of most desired features.



**SPACE / STUFF**



## WHEN IS THE LAST TIME WE USED THAT ROOM?

One of the biggest signs you're ready to downsize is unused rooms in your house. Are there rooms you only enter to clean? If you have a formal dining room, living room, den or an entire basement that is no longer being used, it's a good time to think about downsizing. Try counting which rooms you use more than twice a week to estimate how much square footage you're using. The next step is to analyze if the rooms you use are being fully utilized.

- Is there extra seating in your family room?
- Do you have a cabinet in your kitchen that is only opened for a couple select dishes?
- Does your back closet have coats and shoes from grown and absent children?
- Do you know what's in your attic?

## IS THE FLOOR PLAN PRACTICAL FOR YOUR NEEDS?

When you're downsizing, every square inch counts, so an optimal floor plan is critical to maximizing space—and your happiness.

Yet you shouldn't bypass a house you deem too small based on square footage alone.

## SHOULD I CONSIDER A CONDO INSTEAD OF A SMALLER HOUSE?

A smaller house can give you more space and privacy from your neighbors—but you'll still have grass to mow. A condo is typically cheaper, has less maintenance and upkeep, but you might not save as much as you think once you factor in HOA fees.

In addition to the HOA fees, buyers should ask if they can conform to the association rules, which may dictate things like how many pets you can have or what color you can paint your door.



# WHAT WILL I DO WITH ALL MY STUFF?



Here's a twist: You should really think about what you want to keep instead of what you want to get rid of.

Do you have a home gym, office setup, a guest room for visitors, or multiple sets of den furniture? Deciding what you really need to keep will help you answer the basic number of bedrooms question. This, in turn, helps as you decide how small the next home can truly be."If you decide to part with your stuff, remember to factor in storage costs.

We have guides to help with this! If you are interested in receiving our guide to downsize, just reach out to us and we will mail it to you!



“ Whether you're traveling for business or pleasure, if you're rarely home then the mortgage interest, taxes, and utility costs to maintain that property is almost money down the drain. If it feels like you're not making the best use of your home, reconsider. ”





*Thank you*  
**FOR BEING HERE!**

We are excited to get to work together! Please let us know if you have any questions or would like more information on how we can help you downsize.



*Lindsay*

Cell: 765.506.0010

Office: 765.662.9202

[lindsay@howellrealtygrp.com](mailto:lindsay@howellrealtygrp.com)



**HOWELL**  
*realty group*