THE SMART SPEND BLUEPRINT

Small changes, big difference. What to update before you list, what to skip, and what it means in dollars and days.

412 Maple Street

Circleville, OH 43113

3 bed | 2 bath | 1,640 sq ft | Built 1994
Likely list range: $235,000 to $250,000

Prepared for Mark and Lisa Sample
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The short version

Recent sales in Circleville and Logan Elm area (last 9 months) show updated homes selling for about **$23,500 more** (10%) and going under contract about **25 days sooner** than dated homes. The plan below is built to capture that gap with the least spend, and to keep you from spending on things buyers in this price range do not pay for.

$5,500 to $9,300	$10,000 to $12,400	about 17 days	$1,250
RECOMMENDED SPEND	ESTIMATED VALUE ADDED	ESTIMATED TIME SAVED	CARRYING COST AND CREDITS AVOIDED

Net effect of the Do list, midpoint estimate: **+$5,050** after the cost of the work. Value added is an estimate range, not a promise. The comps set the ceiling.

Note: total value added is capped at the premium the comps actually show for updated homes. Once the best return items use that premium, the remaining items get little or no value credit.

Every item, one table

Improvement	Cost	Value added	Days	Verdict
Deep clean, declutter, and carpet clean	$400 to $900	$1,600 to $1,950	3	DO
Paint front door black, new handle set and house numbers	$150 to $350	$500 to $625	3	DO
Mulch, edge beds, trim shrubs, power wash walk and siding	$400 to $900	$1,050 to $1,300	3	DO
Interior paint, main level and primary bedroom, neutral	$2,200 to $3,200	$3,800 to $4,850	3	DO
Replace light fixtures (entry, dining, kitchen, hall, two baths)	$700 to $1,300	$1,100 to $1,300	2	DO
Replace GFCI outlets in kitchen and baths, add missing handrail to basement stairs	$250 to $450	n/a (credit)	2	DO
Replace laminate counters with butcher block	$1,400 to $2,200	$2,000 to $2,350	2	DO
Paint oak cabinets soft white, matte black hardware	$2,800 to $4,200	$3,700 to $4,200	2	CONSIDER
Hall bath refresh: vanity, top, faucet, mirror, light	$1,200 to $2,000	$1,450 to $1,750	2	CONSIDER
Replace all carpet with luxury vinyl plank	$6,500 to $9,000	$5,800 to $7,000	3	CONSIDER
Finish the basement	$25,000 to $40,000	$20,300 to $22,750		SKIP

Improvement	Cost	Value added	Days	Verdict
Quartz countertops	$3,800 to $5,200	$350 to $400		SKIP
Full hall bath remodel (gut, tile, new tub)	$12,000 to $18,000	None beyond items above		SKIP

Do these

These pay for themselves in value, in time, or in avoided buyer credits, and the comps support them.

Deep clean, declutter, and carpet clean

Whole house | Confidence: High

Every photo improves. Clutter score was 2 in the living room and primary bedroom. This is the cheapest thing on the list and it moves showings.

Cost	**$400 to $900**
Value added (est.)	**$1,600 to $1,950**
Equity effect	**+$1,150**
Days saved (est.)	**3 ($150 carrying cost)**

Paint front door black, new handle set and house numbers

Exterior | Confidence: High

The faded burgundy door is the first thing in photo one. Black reads current and hides wear.

Cost	**$150 to $350**
Value added (est.)	**$500 to $625**
Equity effect	**+$300**
Days saved (est.)	**3 ($150 carrying cost)**

Mulch, edge beds, trim shrubs, power wash walk and siding

Exterior | Confidence: High

North side siding has green algae and the beds are bare. A weekend fixes both.

Cost	**$400 to $900**
Value added (est.)	**$1,050 to $1,300**
Equity effect	**+$525**
Days saved (est.)	**3 ($150 carrying cost)**

Interior paint, main level and primary bedroom, neutral

Main level | Confidence: High

Living room is forest green and the kitchen is a 90s yellow. All three updated comps were painted neutral. The dated comps that sat the longest had dark paint.

Cost	**$2,200 to $3,200**
Value added (est.)	**$3,800 to $4,850**
Equity effect	**+$1,600**
Days saved (est.)	**3 ($150 carrying cost)**

Replace light fixtures (entry, dining, kitchen, hall, two baths)

Whole house | Confidence: Medium

Brass and frosted glass throughout. Six fixtures at hardware store prices, installed in a day.

Cost	**$700 to $1,300**
Value added (est.)	**$1,100 to $1,300**
Equity effect	**+$200**
Days saved (est.)	**2 ($100 carrying cost)**

Replace GFCI outlets in kitchen and baths, add missing handrail to basement stairs

Systems | Confidence: High

Both will show on an FHA or VA appraisal and on any inspection. Fixing now keeps the widest buyer pool and avoids a renegotiation.

Repair cost	**$250 to $450**
Likely buyer credit if left	**$700**
Credit avoided, net	**$350**
Days saved (est.)	**2**

Replace laminate counters with butcher block

Kitchen | Confidence: Medium

In this price band butcher block recoups better than quartz. Pairs with the cabinet paint. Quartz would add $2,500 for little extra return here.

Cost	**$1,400 to $2,200**
Value added (est.)	**$2,000 to $2,350**
Equity effect	**+$350**
Days saved (est.)	**2 ($100 carrying cost)**

Consider these

Close calls. Worth doing if budget and timeline allow, or if the Do list comes in under estimate.

Paint oak cabinets soft white, matte black hardware

Kitchen | Confidence: Medium

Cabinet boxes are solid and doors align. Two of three updated comps had painted cabinets. Skipping this leaves the kitchen looking like the dated comps.

Moved to Consider because the Do list would exceed your stated budget. Add it back if the budget allows.

Cost	**$2,800 to $4,200**
Value added (est.)	**$3,700 to $4,200**
Equity effect	**+$450**
Days saved (est.)	**2 ($100 carrying cost)**

Hall bath refresh: vanity, top, faucet, mirror, light

Hall bath | Confidence: Medium

Vanity top is cracked at the corner and the mirror is glued to the wall. This is the bath buyers see. Tub surround is sound, so re glaze only if it stains.

Moved to Consider because the Do list would exceed your stated budget. Add it back if the budget allows.

Cost	**$1,200 to $2,000**
Value added (est.)	**$1,450 to $1,750**
Equity effect	**+$0**
Days saved (est.)	**2 ($100 carrying cost)**

Replace all carpet with luxury vinyl plank

Whole house | Confidence: Medium

Carpet is worn but clean and odor free. A professional clean gets most of the photo benefit at a fraction of the cost. Revisit only if cleaning fails.

Cost	**$6,500 to $9,000**
Value added (est.)	**$5,800 to $7,000**
Equity effect	**$-1,350**
Days saved (est.)	**3 ($150 carrying cost)**

Skip these

Buyers in this price range and area are not paying for these. Keep the money.

Finish the basement

Basement | Confidence: High

This is a major project with a national recoup near 70% and a six week timeline is not enough. Leave it clean, dry, and well lit for the buyer to finish.

Cost	**$25,000 to $40,000**
Value added (est.)	**$20,300 to $22,750**
Equity effect	**$-10,950**
Days saved (est.)	**0 ($0 carrying cost)**

Quartz countertops

Kitchen | Confidence: Medium

Comps in this band do not show a premium for stone over a clean new surface. Butcher block delivers the update at half the cost.

Value estimate reduced: the items above it already account for most of the premium the comps show. Buyers pay for updated once, not per project.

Cost	**$3,800 to $5,200**
Value added (est.)	**$350 to $400**
Equity effect	**$-4,150**
Days saved (est.)	**1 ($50 carrying cost)**

Full hall bath remodel (gut, tile, new tub)

Hall bath | Confidence: Medium

The comps show buyers here pay for updated, not remodeled. The refresh above gets most of the benefit for one tenth of the cost.

Value estimate reduced: the items above it already account for most of the premium the comps show. Buyers pay for updated once, not per project.

Cost	**$12,000 to $18,000**
Value added (est.)	**None beyond items above**
Equity effect	**$-15,000**
Days saved (est.)	**1 ($50 carrying cost)**

The plan, in order

Stop at any tier. Each tier stands on its own.

Tier 1: Weekend budget ($1,200 to $2,600)

- Deep clean, declutter, and carpet clean (Do)
- Paint front door black, new handle set and house numbers (Do)
- Mulch, edge beds, trim shrubs, power wash walk and siding (Do)
- Replace GFCI outlets in kitchen and baths, add missing handrail to basement stairs (Do)

Tier 2: Prep budget ($4,100 to $6,500)

- Interior paint, main level and primary bedroom, neutral (Do)
- Replace light fixtures (entry, dining, kitchen, hall, two baths) (Do)
- Hall bath refresh: vanity, top, faucet, mirror, light (Consider)

Tier 3: Investment budget ($10,700 to $15,400)

- Paint oak cabinets soft white, matte black hardware (Consider)
- Replace laminate counters with butcher block (Do)
- Replace all carpet with luxury vinyl plank (Consider)

Sequence

1. Condition and safety fixes. 2. Anything that makes dust (flooring, counters, cabinets). 3. Paint. 4. Fixtures and hardware. 5. Clean, declutter, stage, photograph.

Timeline: you mentioned about 6 weeks before listing. Tiers 1 and 2 fit inside that with room for photos. Tier 3 items need contractor scheduling in the first week.

The sales this is based on

6 recent sales, Circleville and Logan Elm area, last 9 months.

Address	Sold	Days	Condition	What it had
118 Ridgeview Dr	$265,000	6	Updated	Painted cabinets, quartz, LVP, neutral paint
2201 Cedar Ct	$262,000	9	Updated	New vanities, fresh paint, new fixtures
77 Pinecrest Ln	$258,000	14	Updated	Kitchen counters and paint, original baths
301 Elm St	$241,000	28	Dated	Oak cabinets, laminate, carpet throughout
930 Court St	$238,500	34	Dated	Original 90s finishes, price reduced once
56 Lancaster Pike	$232,000	51	Dated	Dark paint, worn carpet, two price reductions
Updated median	**$262,000**	**9**		
Dated median	**$238,500**	**34**		

How the numbers work

Cost ranges come from local contractor pricing and national remodeling cost data adjusted for Central and South Central Ohio. Value added is the cost multiplied by a recoup range drawn from the Zonda Cost vs Value report and agent survey data, then adjusted by what the comps above actually show. The combined value estimate is never allowed to exceed the premium the comps show for updated homes. Days saved allocates the gap between updated and dated comps across the recommended items, and carrying cost uses about $50 per day for this home. Buyer credits for condition items assume buyers price a known defect at 1.5 to 2 times the repair cost.

This analysis is an estimate prepared to help you decide where to spend before listing. It is not an appraisal, a guarantee of sale price or timing, or a contractor bid. Actual results depend on market conditions, the quality of the work, pricing, and buyer demand at the time of listing. Get written quotes before starting any project over $1,000.