



# Informed Move Method

A GUIDE TO HELP METRO DETROIT  
FAMILIES UPSIZE THEIR HOMES  
WHILE STILL LIVING BUSY LIVES.

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**DOBI**  
REAL ESTATE

## This home was always meant to be a stepping stone.

When you first bought it, it suited you just fine! It provided enough space for you and your little family, and you loved the location near work, friends and your favorite spots to socialize. At the time, you weren't all that concerned with the quality of the schools, proximity to family, having a proper mudroom or the size of the yard. You were willing to live with the home's imperfections, like the outdated kitchen, tiny bedrooms and fragmented floor plan. You made the home your own, and you were proud of it!

## But the novelty has worn off..

Every day you look around and cringe. Your family is growing, your kids are growing, but the space isn't evolving with you. You're so tired of tripping over the kids' stuff. It feels like it's EVERYWHERE. There is no dedicated play or rec area, so all the games and toys are in plain sight. The entry and garage are already filled to the max, so now the shoes, jackets and sports gear are spilling into the living spaces.

You spend a lot of time in the kitchen making meals, prepping school lunches,

cleaning up after messes. You wish it were a space you loved to look at. You wish it provided functional storage for all the things you use on a daily basis. Instead, it's dated and cramped, and your countertops are cluttered with all the things you can't fit in your cabinets. And forget about having the kids help with the cooking or baking. You end up stepping on each and making an even bigger mess.

You're working from home now and don't have a true office space. Your files and supplies travel around the house with you as you try to find a quiet place to work. You're constantly apologizing to clients and coworkers for the background noise. And your kids have colored on your work documents on more than one occasion!

The kids are developing their own interests. They don't always want to play together anymore. But there isn't enough room in the house or yard for them to spread out and do their own thing. So they spend their time at home fighting for space, privacy and who gets to control the television in your family room. You know that soon enough they will be busy with their own activities and friends. You don't want to spend this precious time together arguing.



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## You know it's time to repaint, make certain repairs, and replace that old furniture.

Everything is starting to look worn and doesn't reflect how your taste has evolved. But you don't want to invest any more money into this home knowing that it's not working for you. It also makes you worry about selling your home. Will buyers pay top dollar if everything is looking tired?

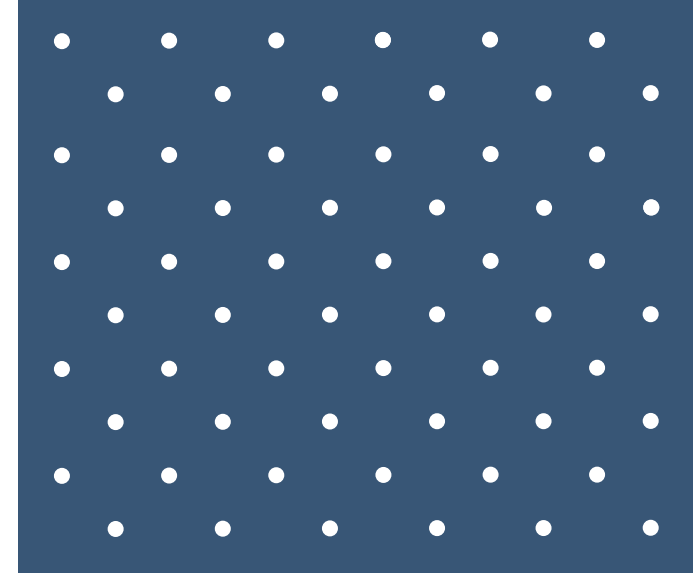
You'd love to invite your family and friends over more, but the preparation is overwhelming and exhausting. Purge and organize the toys, stash clutter in the basement, deep clean, buy some fresh home accessories, rearrange furniture so you can seat everyone in one room...and the list goes on.

You're ashamed that you care about what others think of your home. You have so much to be grateful for. But the fact is, you're embarrassed by your living situation. It just doesn't reflect who you are. And you can't help comparing your home to those of your friends. You feel like you're falling short on several levels.

Organizing and cleaning feels like a full-time job. It's so overwhelming that you sometimes feel paralyzed as to where to start. You also feel like you're the only one in the house doing any level of deeper cleaning, purging and organizing, and you resent that no one else pitches in. Doesn't your family realize that you have more important things to do than to constantly be focused on the house?

## You've considered adding on or renovating, but this would mean a major life disruption.

It would also mean a lot of time dedicated to planning, decision-making, managing contractors, etc. – and you're already short on time between work and family. With the costs of labor and materials these days and construction delays, it's probably more efficient just to move. Plus, there are certain things you can't change about your property, like the location and size of the yard.



## The truth is...

Your home should be your “happy place.” A place that gives your family relief and comfort after a long day of activity and work. You want everyone to come home and love their surroundings – and be proud to share them with friends and family. Instead, it’s a place that just adds to the stress of life.

## You need to act now but...

You have so many questions and are unsure of where to start.

- What will your house sell for?
- Can you afford the home you really want in the right school district?
- Do you have to sell before you buy?
- If you have to sell first, what if you can’t find your next home in time to move?
- How much down payment will be required?
- What interest rate will you qualify for?
- How will a higher mortgage payment affect your budget and long-term financial goals?

There is a lot at stake, and you want this next move to be the right one.

## It’s more than just cramped spaces...

The level of frustration and negative energy in the house is rising. Everyone is irritable and snapping at each other because no one has enough of their own space. The kids are constantly complaining about each other. You’re yelling more than you’d like and the guilt is eating away at you. You’re tired of the living situation affecting the mood at home, and you know it will only get worse as the kids continue to grow. It’s unhealthy to live like this long-term, and you worry about lasting damage to your relationships.

## You feel like if you don’t act soon, you’ll be completely failing your family.

If any of this resonates with you, don’t worry! You are not alone and you are not a failure. I have been exactly where you are. That is why I created my Informed Move Method to help metro Detroit families upsize their homes while still living busy lives. I use my expertise as an attorney, my experience in my own personal moves and home renovations, and my understanding as a busy, working parent to guide your family to a happier life with as little stress as possible.





## Here's how my method helps:

### 01 No surprises here!

First, we meet at your house for an exploratory meeting. We'll tour your home, and I'll ask detailed questions about the property and any improvements you've made over the years. Then we'll sit down and discuss what is and isn't working for your family in the home, neighborhood and community. I will start gathering information about what you need and want in your next home. I have a questionnaire that helps guide our conversation, so we can get clear on your priorities and goals. This may be your first time selling a home, or maybe it has been years since you last sold a home. Our initial meeting is also a time for you to ask all of your burning questions about the process.

Second, I will follow up within 24 hours with an analysis of your home's value using the information I gathered from our tour. From there, I like to loop in a mortgage lender if you

need one. Sometimes we can find creative ways to buy your next home before selling your current home. So, gathering the right information and connecting you with the right people is essential. There can be a lot of "surprise" expenses along the way. I'll give you an estimate of the costs so you can feel as financially prepared as possible. With a clear picture of the budget, we can then finalize a timeline and plan for your move.

**Because of my legal background, I feel strongly about education. I don't want to move ahead 100 miles per hour until we know that it's a good time for you to move. My goal in this first step is to educate you on what's happening in the market and the selling and buying process. We take the time needed up front to talk through everything, so you feel really prepared and confident moving forward.**

## 02 Your Customized Prep

I believe that preparing your home for sale is the most crucial step of the process, especially if you want to sell for the highest price possible. This is what gives your home an edge over the other homes for sale in your area, in your price range. It's what helps your listing photos pop online and attract the right buyers. So, I always start the process by taking a thorough tour of your home and providing a customized checklist of recommended prep work. And then I help.

For example, if you have a challenging layout or rooms that are empty, I may hire my professional stager. Sometimes we can use your existing furnishings and décor and just rearrange or edit them. Sometimes we bring in new furnishings and décor to better

highlight the home. If your home is relatively show-ready to begin with, perhaps I send my professional cleaners to help with a deep clean.

If your home needs repairs, I can refer you to trusted service providers. If you're overwhelmed with purging, organizing and packing, I can connect you with companies that specialize in this. No matter the case, I am always looking for the most cost and time-efficient solutions for you. And if you don't have time to get estimates and coordinate the work, I'll handle that for you.

**You lead a busy life, and my goal is to make this step as easy and stress-free as possible, while still striving for the best possible result.**

## 03 More Than Window Shopping

We know your budget and we have a timeline. Now it's time to start searching for your next home! I'll set up an auto search through the MLS alerting you to new listings hitting the market in your search criteria. I will be researching those listings to find the ones that best fit your needs. I will also be networking with other local agents to find upcoming and off-market listings. If we're not finding what you need, it's time to get creative. I will locate homes in your target area that may be a fit and contact the homeowners to find out if they're interested in selling.

But I don't stop there. I understand that you're busy, and you may not have time to see homes as they hit the market. I can preview homes for you, or even take you on FaceTime tours from wherever you are. That way you don't waste your time on homes that are a no-go. When we finally do look at homes in person, don't worry if you can't find a sitter...

I have snacks and activities for your kids while you take the time you need to tour homes. I'm totally flexible and will make sure you can focus on what's important until we find "the one."

Once we're ready to make offers and sign documents, you can be assured that I've got your back. My legal career centered on negotiating and drafting contracts, so I'm uniquely qualified to help you through this part of the process. A teensy tiny disclaimer here: I can't be your legal representative. BUT I do have a wealth of experience to lean on.

**My job is to make sure you stay focused on your plan and goals and are educated when you need to be. When things get emotional in negotiations, I will be the level head. By the end of this step, you'll have an accepted offer on your forever home!**

# 04 Price, Photos and Press Live

Now let's pivot back to your current home. We did all the hard work and your current home is looking better than ever! (In fact, you might question whether you want to move now;) Next, we set a strategic listing price, and I start executing on a marketing plan customized to your property and target buyer.

I capture your home's features through professional photography, floor plans, and sometimes videography. I also have you fill out a questionnaire about why you purchased the home in the first place and what your life has been like while living there. And don't leave anything out. No detail is too small including what you like about the neighborhood. This all helps me craft a compelling listing story to accompany the beautiful photography.

In addition to featuring your home on MLS, I create a separate guide for the house that I provide to buyers and buyer agents. I highlight any improvements, details, area amenities, and other features that will attract buyers. I use social media and email campaigns to market your property, and I network with other agents and industry people who may have interested buyers.

**Once your listing is "live," I'll be coordinating and navigating showings until we receive the right offer. My legal background comes in handy again on this side of the table. I will advise you of negotiation strategies and potential outcomes. Then I will make sure that everything is documented as it should be to minimize any potential issues down the road.**





## 05 The Home Stretch!

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This is the home stretch. I am behind the scenes dealing with the paperwork and legwork required for closing, so you can focus on your move. I have checklists and tools that help with packing and moving.

Closing day is always exciting! It's time to celebrate this big moment in your lives, and I am grateful to be celebrating with you.

**Then I leave you to enjoy your new home and this next chapter. But don't think this will be the last you hear from me. I'll stay in touch and be your resource for all things home-ownership and community related. A leak, a remodel, a recommendation, anything...I'm your gal. The relationship after closing is truly my favorite part of my work!**



# The Verdict?

Finally, this is “THE” home on the block. Your family and friends visit all the time. You can picture your kids and their friends hanging out when they’re older. You’re already planning a big neighborhood party for next summer. This neighborhood and school district are exactly what you want for your family. You feel proud of the life you’re providing your family and can’t wait to make more memories.



# Need some evidence? Here's what my clients are saying:

“ Finding our dream home in this market was not easy but Alexandra Lannen's incredible attention to detail, sense of urgency and knack for understanding her clients' needs, style & budget, made what is typically an extremely stressful process one that Nick & I were able to enjoy every step of the way!! Alexandra's extensive legal background & impressive understanding of contracts, negotiation tactics and

transaction management truly set her apart from her peers in the industry. If you are dreaming of a new home in 2022, reach out to Alexandra Lannen @DOBI Real Estate! You'll be so happy you did!!!

- Sarah P

“ I would highly recommend Alexandra when buying or selling! Searching for a new home in this market was stressful. Alex helped us find a house based on our criteria and put together a competitive, and fair offer. Alex also sold our house in less than 3 days getting way over our asking price! Overall she was a pleasure to work with, extremely responsive, and her knowledge and approach were difference-makers.

- Nick V

“ Alex was an absolute joy to work with. She is very responsive and attentive to all of her clients needs. She is also very

knowledgeable about the local housing markets and industry as whole which she uses to find the perfect home for you. She has great connections for any of your housing needs throughout the home buying process. I definitely recommend working with Alex if you are looking for a relator!

- Andrew K

“ Alexandra is amazing! She helped me sell my home and with her thorough preparation, attention to detail, and knowledge of our market, we got an offer within 24 hours of listing it for over the asking price. She gave great advice step of the way and was so pleasant to work with. I highly recommend her services!

- Ann M

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## About Alexandra

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**One of the last significant memories I have of practicing law is crying in my boss's office. It was the end of an extremely tough year. Our daughter was around three years old. My husband and I had nearly killed ourselves working that year. Yes, we are both attorneys. Early mornings, late nights, so much stress...and so much family time missed. My boss had just given me a heads' up on what we would be receiving as bonuses for our work that year.**

It was like a punch in the gut. It hardly felt like enough to justify all the family sacrifice. My eyes welled up with tears, and I couldn't hold them back. I was so embarrassed to be crying as a grown, professional woman...to an older man no less. But it was also a telling moment for me. Something had to change in our lives so that we could raise our daughter the way we wanted.

**This is where my real estate journey comes in, but first let me rewind a bit.**

I was licensed in 2011 after attending law school at Wayne State University. I worked for a large, Detroit-based law firm for most of my legal career. I started

this career during the Great Recession. At that time many respected banks were struggling with troubled business loans. I helped them restructure those loans, and a lot of the deals involved real estate. As the economy rebounded, I changed gears. Clients were setting up new businesses and buying and selling businesses and real estate. These types of transactions became my specialty.

During this time, my husband and I got married and had our daughter. I suddenly became acutely aware that this wasn't what I wanted. She would spend 10 hours a day with our nanny, and I missed out on a lot. And the truth was, I didn't love practicing law enough to justify being away from her that much. Not only that, I had been struggling for years with untreated postpartum depression.



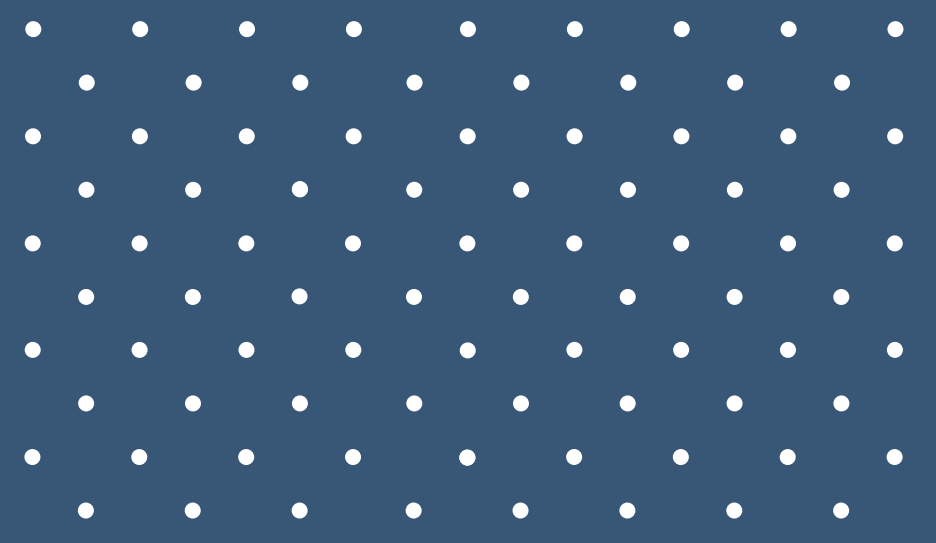
This all led to the aha moment at the beginning of my story. I started thinking about what was next career-wise. I also started working with a therapist to treat the depression.

As my health improved, so did everything else. I had the clarity to start planning for the next chapter. In the meantime, we had purchased a fixer-upper in a great Birmingham neighborhood. We made some improvements, sold for a nice profit and bought the next house. From there, I was hooked on residential real estate and studying the market became my hobby.

So when I was considering what was next, it “clicked.” Turn my hobby into a career. I could utilize my legal expertise and have a flexible schedule with my family life. From there, I got my broker’s license and joined a team on a part-time basis. It was terrifying to leave a steady law job. After a couple of years of straddling the two worlds, I made the leap to selling real estate full-time and never looked back!

**One of the things I love most about my real estate business, and that I realized I was missing in my commercial law practice, is the personal relationships with clients.**

It’s a privilege to be a part of your life in such a personal way - learning about your challenges, goals, financial situation and so forth. I enjoy the bond that comes along with this, and I truly feel invested in your success. Moving and upsizing your home is a huge decision and can be complex, so it’s important that you’re confident and informed to make the right choices.





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**If you're ready to  
upsized your home,**

SEND ME A MESSAGE AND LET'S  
CHAT ABOUT THE NEXT STEP!

START CHAT IN FB  
MESSENGER



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