

Your Complete Wellington North Home & Rural Property Selling Checklist

Selling a rural property, hobby farm, or village home in Wellington North requires specific preparation. Work through each phase in order. Check off every item before moving to the next phase. Call Kevin Flaherty at 226-270-6433 with any questions.

The Wellington North Market Difference

Selling in Mount Forest, Arthur, or the surrounding rural townships is fundamentally different from selling in a dense urban subdivision. Buyers are drawn to the space, the agricultural heritage, and the patriotic community spirit of the area. However, they also require reassurance regarding rural infrastructure. A well-prepared property that transparently addresses well water quality, septic system capacity, and internet connectivity will always sell faster and for a higher price than one with unanswered questions. Use this guide to eliminate buyer hesitation before your property even hits the market.

Phase 1: Rural Infrastructure Due Diligence

- Locate your original septic system installation permit and design drawings
- Confirm the maximum daily flow (bedroom count) your septic was designed for
- Schedule a septic tank pump-out and obtain a written inspection report
- Locate your well record (available through the Ontario Ministry of Environment)
- Conduct a zero-count water test for coliform and E. coli
- Consider installing a UV filtration system if water tests are inconsistent
- Gather documentation for any shared wells or registered easements
- Locate your property survey to confirm exact acreage and boundaries
- If selling an estate/probate home, confirm the status of the Certificate of Appointment
- Consult your accountant regarding the Lifetime Capital Gains Exemption for hobby farms
- Review any Conservation Authority restrictions (e.g., Grand River or Maitland Valley)
- Gather WETT certificates for all wood-burning stoves and fireplaces
- Confirm ownership status of propane tanks and hot water heaters
- Document the age and condition of the roof on the main house
- Document the age and condition of roofs on all major outbuildings
- Review your current mortgage terms, discharge penalties, and portability options
- Choose a real estate lawyer experienced with rural and agricultural zoning
- Test your internet speed and document the provider for potential buyers
- Locate manuals and service records for generators or backup power systems
- Gather utility bills for the past 12 months to demonstrate carrying costs
- Locate any transferable warranties for recent home improvements
- Identify any unpermitted work that may need to be disclosed
- Gather documentation for any recent energy efficiency upgrades
- Confirm property tax amounts and assessment details for the listing

Key Principle: The Bedroom Count Trap

One of the most common issues when selling rural properties is a mismatch between the home's current bedroom count and the

capacity of the septic system. In Ontario, septic systems are sized based on maximum daily flow, which is calculated by bedroom count. If a previous owner added a bedroom in the basement without upgrading the septic system, the property may be non-compliant. Discovering this during Phase 1 allows you to address it proactively, rather than having a buyer's inspector flag it as a major defect during negotiations.

Phase 2: Property & Outbuilding Preparation

- Declutter the main house, removing 30-40% of personal items to maximize space
- Deep clean all rooms, paying special attention to windows to showcase rural views
- Address any deferred maintenance: leaky faucets, loose hinges, or cracked tiles
- Freshen paint in high-traffic areas using neutral, light-reflecting colours
- Stage vacant rooms with transitional furniture to help buyers visualize scale
- Ensure the driveway is graded, filled, and accessible for low-clearance vehicles
- Clear brush, debris, and scrap metal from the immediate vicinity of the house
- Clean out the barn or workshop, organizing tools and removing hazards
- Ensure all outbuilding doors, latches, and windows operate smoothly
- Verify that electrical panels in outbuildings are safe, covered, and labeled
- Clean and organize the tack room or feed storage areas if applicable
- Ensure all fencing and gates are secure and in good repair
- Mow the lawn around the house and trim fence lines for maximum curb appeal
- Power wash the exterior of the house and any visible outbuildings
- Ensure exterior lighting is functional, especially near barns and walkways
- Clean out gutters and ensure downspouts direct water away from the foundation
- If you have livestock, establish a clear protocol for securing them during showings
- Ensure the septic bed area is clear of deep-rooted plants or heavy equipment
- Remove any old, unused vehicles or machinery from the property
- Stage the porch or deck to highlight the outdoor rural lifestyle
- Repair or replace damaged screens on all windows and doors
- Ensure all interior doors open and close without sticking
- Clean and inspect the chimney if you have a wood-burning fireplace
- Replace all burnt-out lightbulbs with matching, high-wattage LED bulbs

Rule: Outbuildings Add Value, But Only If Accessible

Buyers looking at rural properties in Wellington North place a high premium on barns, workshops, and driving sheds. However, if these outbuildings are packed with decades of accumulated items, buyers cannot assess their structural integrity or visualize their own use for the space. Clearing outbuildings is just as important as decluttering the main house. A clean, well-lit workshop with an upgraded electrical panel can be the deciding factor that secures a premium offer.

Phase 3: Selecting Your Rural Realtor

- Interview at least two realtors with proven experience in Wellington County

- Ask how they determine the value of workable acreage versus bush or wetlands
- Demand a written marketing plan that specifically targets urban GTA buyers
- Insist on Video Narrated VR Animated Online Showings to pre-qualify distant buyers
- Ask how they plan to market the outbuildings and equestrian facilities
- Confirm their syndication reach extends beyond the local MLS board
- Ask about the size and engagement of their active buyer database
- Discuss their strategy for highlighting high-speed internet and rural amenities
- Review their track record for sale-to-list price ratios in rural markets
- Ensure they understand the nuances of selling heritage homes in Mount Forest/Arthur
- Ask how they handle showings for properties with acreage and outbuildings
- Confirm they will provide professional photography, including drone shots of the land
- Discuss their communication protocol and feedback reporting system
- Review and sign the listing agreement, ensuring all terms are clear
- Complete the Seller Property Information Statement (SPIS) with full disclosure
- Provide your realtor with a list of the top 5 things you love about the property
- Discuss the best days and times for hosting physical showings
- Confirm the process for handling multiple offers if they occur

The Power of Video Narrated VR Showings

Rural properties often require buyers to drive an hour or more for a viewing. Traditional photos are not enough to convince an urban buyer to make the trip. Video Narrated VR Animated Online Showings allow buyers to explore the exact layout of the house and outbuildings from their living room. The narration highlights key features like upgraded insulation, new roofing, or high-speed internet. This ensures that when a buyer does book an in-person showing, they are already highly qualified and genuinely interested in the property.

Phase 4: Pricing Strategy & Market Launch

- Review recent comparable sales for similar rural properties in Wellington North
- Adjust pricing based on the condition of outbuildings and the quality of the land
- Factor in the value of updated infrastructure (e.g., new septic or geothermal heating)
- Set a strategic list price designed to attract multiple qualified buyers
- Review all listing details, photos, and VR tours before the property goes live
- Confirm the online showing accurately captures the flow of the house and land
- Ensure the listing highlights proximity to Arthur, Mount Forest, or major highways
- Prepare the home for the first weekend of showings (clean, bright, and accessible)
- Establish a routine for quickly securing pets or livestock before showings
- Review the initial buyer feedback and adjust the presentation if necessary
- Ensure a visible, professional For Sale sign is placed at the end of the driveway
- Monitor online traffic and engagement metrics for your property listing
- Stay flexible and accommodating for showing requests, especially from out-of-town buyers

Pricing Strategy: Acreage and Use

Pricing a rural property requires more than just looking at the house next door. The value of your land depends heavily on its use. Workable, tiled acreage commands a different price per acre than dense bush or wetlands. Additionally, the presence of functional equestrian facilities or updated hobby farm infrastructure must be accurately assessed. A specialized rural comparative market analysis is essential to ensure you do not leave money on the table.

Phase 5: Offers, Conditions & Closing

- [] Evaluate the full offer, including the deposit size, closing date, and conditions
- [] Understand the standard rural conditions: well flow/quality, septic, and financing
- [] Negotiate with a clear understanding of your walk-away number
- [] Cooperate fully with the buyer's home inspector and provide access to all buildings
- [] Facilitate access for the buyer's septic inspector and well technician
- [] If issues arise during inspection, negotiate repairs or credits strategically
- [] Engage your lawyer immediately once the offer is accepted and conditions are met
- [] Begin the packing and moving process, focusing on outbuildings and large equipment
- [] Arrange for the transfer or cancellation of utilities, internet, and insurance
- [] Provide the buyer with manuals, keys, and codes for all rural systems and gates
- [] Complete the final walkthrough, ensuring the property is left in broom-swept condition
- [] Sign the final closing documents with your lawyer and hand over the keys
- [] Cancel your property insurance only AFTER the closing is officially confirmed
- [] Leave a welcome note or list of local contacts (plumber, snow removal) for the new owners

Rural Infrastructure Disclosure Worksheet

Use this worksheet to gather the essential details about your property's systems. Having this information readily available builds immense trust with potential buyers and their agents.

System / Feature	Details & Status
Well Type (Drilled/Dug)	
Well Depth & Flow Rate	
Last Water Test Date	
Water Treatment (UV/RO)	
Septic Tank Size (Litres)	
Septic Bed Type	
Last Pump-Out Date	
Heating Fuel Source	
Internet Provider & Speed	
Roof Age (Main House)	
Roof Age (Outbuildings)	
Electrical Panel (Amps)	

Showing Preparation Checklist (Quick Reference)

Keep this quick checklist near the door to ensure the property is perfect before every showing.

- Turn on all interior and exterior lights (including outbuildings)
- Open all blinds and curtains to maximize natural light
- Secure all pets and livestock according to the agreed protocol
- Empty all garbage and recycling bins
- Wipe down kitchen and bathroom counters
- Ensure the driveway and walkways are clear of equipment or vehicles
- Leave any requested documentation (surveys, water tests) on the kitchen island

Room-by-Room Preparation Worksheet

Walk through your home with a critical eye. Rate each room on a scale of 1-5 for cleanliness, decluttering, and repair needs. Note any immediate actions required before listing.

Room	Score	Action Items / Repairs Needed
Kitchen		
Primary Bedroom		
Ensuite Bathroom		
Living Room		
Dining Room		
Guest Bedrooms		
Main Bathroom		
Mudroom / Entry		
Basement		
Garage		
Barn / Workshop		
Deck / Patio		

Ready to get started? Book your free home evaluation today.

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