

CHARLOTTE URBAN

HOME

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CELEBRATING INSPIRATIONAL DESIGN AND PERSONAL STYLE





TRENT HASTON

Our job is to couple true budgets and reality with a purchaser's dreams.

Making A House Your Home

As the real estate market heats up while we pull out of the recession, my project managers and I have been looking at homes for sale *with* our clients prior to making purchase offers. They find a house they like, but they want to know how much it will cost to add their wish list items to it. These wish list items can be cosmetic improvements like fresh paint, floors and curb appeal or more major enhancements like master bathrooms, kitchens and added square footage. Our job is to couple true budgets and reality with a purchaser's dreams. I will give a rundown of the "usual suspects" that people want in their new homes. Not only do these items add improved livability, they bring maximum return when trying to sell a home in the future.

Curb Appeal. It is common for a client to find a home with nice bones and an ideal floor plan, but they hate the dated exterior. Customers improve curb appeal with cosmetic details such as a new front door, additional windows and exterior window treatments. Some bigger enhancements range from a new front stoop, various roof aspects and changing the exterior veneer to a more durable or

attractive material. Existing wood may be replaced with brick, or dated brick may be painted. Other exterior improvements include new driveways, walkways, hardscapes and landscapes.

Interior Cosmetics. The most common items on customers' wish lists involve cosmetic changes to the interior of the home. They want the home to feel snazzy and new, but with an ageless approach. This could include a combination of fresh and durable floor finishes like hardwoods, tile, stone and carpet. Nice moldings such as crown, casings and wall panels do a great job of breaking up paint colors and adding detail lines. So much can be done with paint colors too. You can create endless possibilities with durable and standout finishes like oil on moldings and texture on the walls. Nice modern lighting is often underrated. This can include recess cans, under-cabinet lights, accent and directional lights, as well as decorative fixtures in the right locations. The right light can enhance any room immediately.

Kitchens. Customers always want a nice spacious kitchen; as everyone knows this is where



family and guests congregate. We do a lot of custom cabinets that are durable, with a mix of wood and stain products. Functional storage that reaches the ceiling is on trend, and cool rolling ladders are commonly used for accessibility. Ageless stone or synthetic countertops are typically requested, and customers are going big with their counter space. Appliances that work great and have a lot of space are a must as well, as people are falling back in love with cooking and hosting friends for dinner parties.

Bathrooms and Closets. Like kitchens, we spend a lot of time in our bathrooms and closets, so customers want them to be just as roomy as the rest of the home. We are seeing requests for more his-and-hers vanities, make-up tables and water closets. Spa-like elements are also popular, such as warm flooring in the closets (cork) and bathrooms (heated), large Jacuzzi tubs, warm glass accents and all the shower bells and whistles you can think of.

If you are in the market for a new home, consider looking for one a little under your budget with room to add your own wish list items. Look past a dated exterior or interior, an unsuitable kitchen or a small bathroom/closet, and consider what it could be with just a few improvements. This will make it YOUR home, and will also add value for any future sell. ❖

Trent Haston is CEO of Andrew Roby and has spent many years in project management, focusing on style and craftsmanship for custom home projects. For more information call 704-334-5477 or visit www.andrewroby.com.

