



Property Buyer's Guide

Start with Financing

Acquiring a loan for rural property or vacant land can be a challenge. Typically, requirements are more stringent. Prepare yourself for a higher down payment and higher interest rates.

If you're having trouble getting pre-approved for a loan, go to your Realtor® for help. It's important to be pre-approved before going out to look at properties.

Define Your Criteria

1. **Location:** In residential areas, consider your proximity to amenities, school districts, attractions, traffic flow, and safe neighborhoods. In rural areas you should think about the quality of roads, access to property, utility access, and soil types.
2. **Use:** Identify all of the ways you plan on using your property. This will help you determine the type of zoning to look for in a property. Work with the appropriate city or county agencies to help you identify the zoning you need.
3. **Terrain:** Some properties are mostly flat and others have steep hillsides. Grading land can be quite expensive so consider the property's terrain beforehand.
4. **Access:** Some properties have nicely paved or graded roads, others require an easement through the neighbor's property, and occasionally a property may not have any legal access. Consider the access you require for your property.
5. **Local Restrictions:** If you plan on farming or using your property for anything that may produce unwanted noise or smells, consider restrictions imposed by local CC&Rs or city ordinances.

Inspections

For nearly every residential transaction, a pest inspection and home inspection is performed. Many rural properties don't have a house, so do you need any inspections? Most likely, yes. Rural properties or lots will have surveys performed to clearly identify the property boundaries, and depending on the property's intended use there are a variety of other inspections available to help you make an informed purchase.

Choose the Right Realtor®

Some Realtors® work primarily with rural property or vacant land. These agents understand the unique complexities of transactions involving farmland and lots. They can also help you get in touch with affiliated professionals including rural/ag lenders, rural appraisers, developers, etc. Finding a Realtor® who understands your needs and navigate the transaction smoothly, with save you time and money.

Once your offer to purchase get's accepted, check out our guide on the escrow process

