HOMEBUYER GUIDE



HOWARD HANNA
REAL ESTATE SERVICES

portside
REAL ESTATE GROUP

WELCOME TO YOUR HOME BUYING JOURNEY

I hope this letter finds you in great spirits. I am thrilled to extend a warm welcome to you as you embark on the exciting journey of finding and acquiring your new home. As your dedicated real estate agent, I am here to guide you every step of the way, ensuring that this process is as smooth and enjoyable as possible.

Buying a home is a significant milestone, and I am honored to be a part of this important chapter in your life. Whether you're a first-time homebuyer or a seasoned property owner, my commitment is to make this experience tailored to your needs and preferences. Together, we will explore the vibrant real estate market, discover neighborhoods that align with your lifestyle, and ultimately find a place you can proudly call home.

In the coming weeks, we will work closely to identify your criteria, schedule viewings, and navigate the intricacies of the home buying process. From understanding financing options to coordinating inspections, my goal is to provide you with comprehensive support at every turn.

Thank you for choosing me as your real estate partner. I am confident that, together, we will find the perfect home that meets your unique desires and requirements. If there is anything specific on your mind or if you'd like to discuss your preferences further, please don't hesitate to reach out.

Once again, welcome to your home buying journey! I am excited to embark on this adventure with you and look forward to helping you find a place where wonderful memories will be made.

Best Regards,



Kevin Thibodeau
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REALTOR®, Portside Real Estate Group



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THE BUYING PROCESS

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WHY WORK WITH A BUYER'S AGENT?

A buyer's agent offers indispensable support to potential homebuyers by leveraging their local expertise, access to a wide range of property listings, and adept negotiation skills. With the ability to save buyers time, provide valuable market insights, navigate complex processes, and offer objective advice, a buyer's agent becomes an essential ally in the pursuit of a new home. Their connections to professionals and commitment to exclusively representing the buyer's interests further enhance the overall home-buying experience, ensuring clients make well-informed decisions and secure the best possible deal in the real estate market.

Brokerage Connections Offering Exposure to Upcoming Listings

Relationships with Industry Professionals

Experienced Agents with High Level of Professionalism

Strong Internal Network

Objective Advice + Assistance Navigating the Home Buying Process

Expertise and Local Knowledge

Access to Active Listings

Strong Negotiation Skills

Market Analysis

THE BUYER AGENT AGREEMENT

Before we get started with your home search, we will review and complete the Buyer Agent Agreement. This allows your agent to:

#1 Allows agent to provide professional, top-notch service to assist you with locating, negotiating, and closing on your next home!

#2 Enables the agent to connect you with property-related professional assistance and local resources.

#3 Establishes a confidential working partnership between you and the appointed agent.



GET PRE-APPROVED

The next step in your home buying journey is to obtain pre-approval from a bank or mortgage company. When choosing a lender, we encourage you to explore local financing options, this is key in a competitive market.
While each bank or mortgage company may require different documentation, at a minimum you'll want to gather copies of:

Pay stubs and tax returns/W2s
Recent financial statements
Monthly payments such as car or student loans

PRE-QUALIFIED

A prequalification generally means that a mortgage lender collects some basic financial information from you to **estimate how much house you can afford.**

VS.

PRE-APPROVED

After you've been prequalified for a mortgage, you can then pursue a mortgage preapproval. You'll want to speak to a home loan expert and provide some documentation so they can verify your income and assets.

CLOSING COSTS

Through this process, you'll also learn what your closing costs will be in addition to your down payment.

YOUR TEAM

At this point in the process, you'll want to connect me with your lender to ensure a smooth transaction. You'll also be introduced to your Transaction Team soon,
visit page 17 to meet your team!

WHAT TYPE OF FINANCING IS RIGHT FOR YOU?

CONVENTIONAL LOAN

The most common type of home loan, which is offered through private lenders.

FHA LOAN

Loans designed for those with high debt-to-income ratios and low credit scores, and most commonly issued to first-time homebuyers. Offered by FHA-approved lenders only and backed by the Federal Housing Administration.

VA LOAN

Loans designated for veterans, spouses, and reservists, offered through private lenders and guaranteed by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs.

USDA LOAN

Loans for homebuyers in designed rural areas, backed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

COMMERCIAL LOAN

If you are looking to purchase a multi-unit or investment property, it's likely that you'll be working with a commerical loan. This type of loan.....

OTHER LOANS

Depending on your situation, there may be a specific type of loan that better fits your needs. Your lender will go over these options with you!

CASH OFFER

Another option is a cash offer, no pre-approval, but you will still need to provide proof of funds.

GOOD FAITH ESTIMATE

When you apply for a mortgage, your lender is required to give you a Loan Estimate: a standardized form that gives you important details about the mortgage you're applying for. The mortgage Loan Estimate includes your estimated interest rate, monthly payment, closing costs and other details.

PROOF OF FUNDS

This proves the you have the funds on hand to afford the property of interest. Common types of proof of funds documents include: bank statements, investment account statements, balance certificates issued by financial institutions, and letters from financial institutions confirming the availability of funds.



START YOUR SEARCH

Before you start touring homes, it's important to determine where you want to live and what type of amenities you are looking for. Let's start with what we call your "Wish List". This can be found on pages 12 + 13 of this booklet. Take some time to think about what type of home you want, the location of the home, and amenities...just to name a few. This will help us ensure we are showing you homes that meet your needs and wants!

As you create your wish list, consider if you prefer a neighborhood setting versus a private setting with land, commute time, proximity to friends + family, and leisure activities.
Are schools important to you? Ask around + learn more about the areas of interest to you.

Don't forget, your agent is an expert in the local real estate market and is a great resource for answering your questions about the various communities + local amenities.

HOUSE HUNTING TIPS

√ ASK AROUND
√ TAKE NOTES
√ DRIVE BY THE NEIGHBORHOOD
√ KEEP AN OPEN MIND
√ BE FLEXIBLE
√ BE READY TO MAKE AN OFFER!



MAKE AN OFFER

You've found your new home!
Now it's time to make an offer.
We will provide you with a comparable home analysis to gauge the market value of the home you are interested in.

Together, we will develop a buying strategy to ensure you are in the strongest position to present the best offer for the home and in the negotiating process.

Remember, as your buyer's agent, we only represent your interest!

NEGOTIATION

We will walk you through the contract process and explain any area which is unclear to you and answer questions. We will present your offer to the seller's agent and be in contact with you through the negotiation process giving you valuable advice + support along the way.

When the negotiating is done and everyone agrees, the final offer is accepted an signed by both parties. Once signed, it legally becomes the Purchase + Sale Agreement.

UNDER CONTRACT TIMELINE

Offer Accepted

STEP-BY-STEP
UNDER CONTRACT GUIDE

1

Earnest Money Deposit (EMD)

Earnest money is part of your down payment paid before closing to show you are serious about purchasing a home.

2

Due Diligence

Due diligence is the period of time when a buyer examines a home's condition and contract terms before becoming legally obligated to purchase. Due diligence is your time to discover and consider any financial risk associated with investing in a home.

3

Renegotiate if Necessary

The home inspection will tell you if there are any dangerous or costly defects in the home that need to be addressed. You can then choose to either terminate the agreement, ask the seller to make repairs, or negotiate a lower price and handle the repairs yourself.

4

Complete Your Mortgage Application

Once you've come to an agreement on the final offer, it's time to finalize your loan application and lock in your interest rate if your haven't done so already. You may need to provide additional documentation to your lender upon request.

5

Order an Appraisal

An appraisal will be ordered by your lender and will give you one last financial check that your new home is worth and appraises for the purchase price.

6

Homeowners Insurance

You'll want to secure homeowners insurance to protect your home from damages covered in your policy. Homeowners insurance is required by mortgage lenders and you must purchase a policy before closing on your home.

7

Clear to Close

At least three days before your closing, lenders are required to provide you with a closing disclosure with your final loan terms and closing cost for your to review.

8

Get Ready to Move!

Next, we'll work with you to schedule a final walk through and you'll also want to start transferring utilities to your name and scheduling movers, more on that on the next page!



PRE-CLOSING

Utilities

We will provide you with a list of all of the utility companies to call to ensure utility service remains on at the house after closing and subsequently gets transferred into your name. You should arrange this transfer a few weeks prior to closing and ask for it to take effect on the closing day.

Movers

In the State of Maine, possession is given at closing. That means that you cannot have the movers enter the home until closing is complete. So - if you are scheduled to close at 10:30 in the morning, your movers should not be scheduled to start unloading until later that afternoon - or even the next day. Closing usually takes about an hour.

CLOSING DAY

Walk Through

We will schedule a final walk through - a time for you to go through the house just prior to the actual closing - to make sure the house has not been damaged during the move and to make certain the home inspection items have been properly handled. Usually, we will do the walk through just prior to (the same day or day before) the closing.



BUYER WISH LIST

Consider neighborhood setting versus private setting with land, commute time, proximity to friends/family, and leisure activities.

LOCATION

Where is your ideal neighborhood?

Neighborhood: _____

Neighborhood: _____

Neighborhood: _____

SCHOOL DISTRICT

Do you have a preference on school district?

School: _____

School: _____

School: _____

PROPERTY FEATURES

Ideal Price: _____

# of Bedrooms: _____

# of Bathrooms: _____

Garage: Y/N Number of spaces: _____

Ideal Square Footage: _____

Yard Size: Small or Large

TYPE OF HOME

- ☐ Single-Family
- ☐ Condo
- ☐ Multi-Unit
- ☐ Other _____

amenities

THE HOUSE NEEDS TO BE CLOSE TO:

- ☐ Work: _____
- ☐ Highways: _____
- ☐ Shopping Centers
- ☐ Other: _____

- ☐ Airport
- ☐ Public Transportation
- ☐ Restaurants

- ☐ Downtown
- ☐ Beach/Lake
- ☐ Grocery Store

Deal Breakers: _____

PROPERTY AMENTITIES

Historic	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
New Construction	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Green Build	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Pool	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Deck	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Exterior	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Waterfront/Views	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Primary Suite	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
First Floor Primary Suite	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
No Stairs	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Office	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Fireplace/Wood Stove	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
Gourmet Kitchen	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Other: _____

MUST HAVE

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

WOULD LIKE TO HAVE

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____



1% BACK TO MAINE

INVESTING IN MAINE'S TOMORROW

At Portside Real Estate Group, we happily donate 1% of top line revenue to Maine-based non-profits. That means by choosing to work with us, you will help make a difference in our communities!

1% Back to Maine focuses on the next generation, Maine's youth. By supporting and addressing systemic Maine problems including generational poverty, substance abuse, and limited access to medical care, education, and food. Portside is committed to giving one percent of gross revenue to Maine's future.



OUR IMPACT

$1,250,000+

RAISED FOR LOCAL NON-PROFITS

63+

GRANTS FUNDED

LEARN MORE HERE!

PAST BENEFICIARIES

thrive new england

Wayfinder SCHOOLS

Youth Connection

Telling Room

MYC



CULTIVATING COMMUNITY

THE LOCKER PROJECT
FEEDING THE FUTURE

Housing Resources for Youth

Indigo ARTS ALLIANCE

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF SOUTHERN MAINE

THE ECOLOGY SCHOOL

S.E.E.D. EST. 2020
STUDENTS · EMPOWERED · TO · END · DEPENDENCY

Coastal Kids Preschool

CAMP SUSAN CURTIS
Where Maine Children Grow

MAINELY TEETH
Dental Clinic

PORTLAND PARKS CONSERVANCY

White Pine Programs

Big Brothers Big Sisters OF SOUTHERN MAINE

PORTLAND HOUSING AUTHORITY

Safe Families *for* Children

LEARNINGWORKS

FARMS FOR FOOD EQUITY

Maine Intercultural Communication Consultants

the summer camp

YLJ YOUTH LED JUSTICE

YOUR HOME GIVES BACK

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APPRAISAL
An informed estimate of a home's value, generally done by an independent, professional licensed appraiser and typically required and ordered by the lender in conjunction with the mortgage application.

BACKUP OFFER
If a buyer wants a home already under contract, they may request to be "next in line" by submitting a backup offer. Backup offers must still be negotiated with any fees – like earnest money – paid.

CLOSING
The last step of homebuying, also called the settlement. You sign all the necessary documents to finalize the sale and take responsibility for the mortgage loan.

CLOSING COSTS
Also known as settlement costs, these are the costs incurred when getting a mortgage or buying a home. They might include attorney fees, preparation and title search fees, discount points, appraisal fees, title insurance and credit report charges.

CLOSING DISCLOSURES (ALTA)
A closing document that provides key information about your loan, such as the interest rate, monthly payments and closing costs. The lender must give you this document at least three business days before you close on the loan and the information should match the Loan Estimate you received when you applied.

COMP/COMPARABLES
These are recently sold properties similar to the home you want, with approximately the same size, location and amenities. They help an appraiser determine a property's fair market value.

CONTINGENCIES
Conditions in a sales contract that must be satisfied before the home sale can occur. Some common contingencies: The appraised value must support the sales price, the house must pass inspection, and the borrower must be approved for a loan.

DEED
A document that legally transfers ownership of real estate. As the buyer, your deed is signed and delivered to you at closing.

DOWN PAYMENT
The amount of cash you can put toward the purchase price of a home. Down payments often range from 3 to 20 percent of the home price.

DUE DILIGENCE
Due diligence is the period of time when a buyer examines a home's condition and contract terms before becoming legally obligated to purchase. Due diligence is your time to discover and consider any financial risk associated with investing in a home.

EARNEST MONEY DEPOSIT (EMD)
Earnest money is part of your down payment paid before closing to show you are serious about purchasing a home. It is also known as a good faith deposit.

ESCALATION CLAUSE
An escalation clause, or "escalator," is a section in a real estate contract that states that a prospective buyer is willing to raise their offer on a home should the seller receive a higher competing offer. The clause will state how much more the buyer is willing to pay than the highest offer and their spending limit. Essentially, escalation clauses offer buyers protection if other potential buyers outbid them.

HOMEOWNERS INSURANCE
Homeowners insurance protects your home from damages covered in your policy. Homeowners insurance is required by mortgage lenders and you must purchase a policy before closing on your home.

INSPECTION
A visual and mechanical examination of a home to identify defects and assess the home's condition performed by a licensed individual.

PITI
PITI is an acronym used to show the four elements of your monthly mortgage payment: principal, interest, tax and insurance.

PRIVATE MORTGAGE INSURANCE
Private mortgage insurance is a policy that protects your lender in case you default on your loan. Usually, if your down payment is less than 20% on a conventional loan, you will also need to pay for PMI.

PREQUALIFICATION
A lender will estimate in advance how much you can borrow to buy a home based on information that you provide. The prequalification is not a commitment to lend and you will need to submit additional information for review and approval.

PRE APPROVAL
A lender's conditional agreement to lend you a specific amount of money, made after confirming your financial information such as income and assets. Conditions may include a home appraisal and that there are no significant changes to your finances.

PURCHASE + SALE AGREEMENT
A purchase agreement is a contract between a buyer and seller stating the terms of the home sale. It may stipulate conditions like sale price, what appliances will stay in the home and when the buyer will move in.

TITLE INSURANCE
Insurance that protects against issues, such as tax lien or other legal claim, that would affect ownership of the property.

UNDERWRITING
The lender reviews submitted documents to verify the borrower's finances and other factors related to the home, such as the title search and appraisal, then decides to approve or deny the loan.

YOUR TRANSACTION TEAM
WILL INCLUDE:

Lender:

Title Company:

NOTES

PROPERTY NOTES

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