



SOLID OAK
REALTY

Home Buyer's Guide

JASON ANDERSON
SOLID OAK REALTY



Introduction

Your Real Estate Agent

As your real estate agent, my role is to represent your best interests throughout the entire home buying process. I will help you find properties, analyze market data, write and negotiate offers, coordinate inspections, track deadlines, and guide you from our first conversation all the way to the closing table.

The word Home is deeply meaningful to me, and I believe that it's deeply meaningful to you too. It will, or has been, your place of rest, memories, challenges, growth, and joy. Whether you're buying or selling your home, it's a transition time in your life that requires care and thoughtfulness.

I can relate with this as I moved 7 times in 8 years. My first career was serving the US Army as an AH-64 Apache helicopter pilot. I had the honor and privilege to fly missions and lead teams in South Korea, Afghanistan, and Eastern Europe. Although I left home a lot, I always looked forward to coming home. To me, real estate is more than a career, It's a passion. The professionalism required to fly, fight, and lead, is the same professionalism I bring to real estate.



I've been a real estate agent since 2020. My first year I learned the business under an experienced Broker at a Remax firm and started the company, VeteranPCS, which connects moving military families with trusted veteran and military spouse real estate agents, nationwide. My second year in real estate my business quadrupled and I became a top performer in the area. After learning under a major brokerage firm I discovered practices and fees that no longer aligned with my mission so I stepped out and started my own brokerage firm, Solid Oak Realty. As a Broker-Owner I continue to serve personal clients as well as lead a team of real estate agents and guide them through their transactions. Competency, transparency, and communication are at the heart of our values.

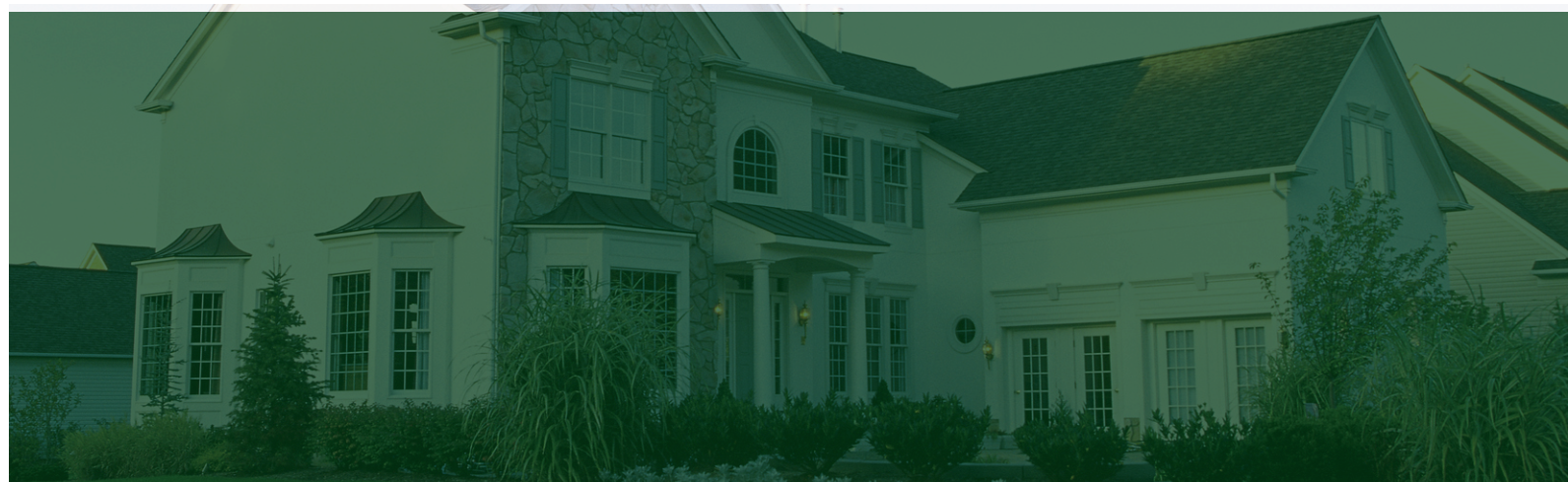
Other Key Players

Your Mortgage Lender

Your lender evaluates your financial qualifications, determines how much you can borrow, explains loan programs, calculates your monthly payment, and ensures your loan is fully approved by the time we close on your new home. The mortgage lender you work with is your choice. I have several recommendations for lenders that I have worked with for years and deliver great service with low rates and low fees.

The Title Closer

The title company handles the legal side of transferring ownership. They research the property's history, ensure the title is clear, prepare closing documents, hold your earnest money, and facilitate the final signing at closing. Choosing the title company is typically on the Seller as they are the ones paying for the title insurance on the home, however, the title closer does not advocate for either side, they are simply an intermediary.



The home buying road map

Pre-Approval

Planning for Closing Costs

What To-Do and Not-To-Do

Home Showings

Making an Offer

Earnest Money

Home Inspections

Appraisal

Home Insurance

Preparing for Closing

Closing on your Home



Pre-Qualification vs. Pre-Approval

Pre-Qualification: An estimate of what you might qualify for based on basic information you provide.

Pre-Approval: A verified financial review including credit, income, assets, and debt. This is what sellers expect with offers and makes your offer much stronger.

What Goes Into a Pre-Approval?

Your lender will review:

- Credit score
- Income and employment
- Debt-to-income ratio (DTI)
- Bank statements and assets
- Past two years of tax returns

How the Credit Pull Works



Lenders perform a soft or hard credit pull depending on the stage. They will ask for authorization so it's important to communicate with your lender if you want to wait to pull credit if you are several months early in the process.

Most pre-approvals are valid for 90–120 days. After that another credit pull will be needed.

Planning for Closing Costs

Typical closing costs range 1%–2% of the purchase price. On a \$500,000 home, expect \$5,000–\$10,000 depending on:

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|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Taxes and insurance | 4. Title fees |
| 2. Loan fees | 5. Appraisal and underwriting |
| 3. Interest rate buy-downs | 6. HOA fees |

Some or all of these closing costs can be negotiated to be paid by the Seller. In most cases the seller will pay any transfer fees. Some HOAs will require capital upfront as a new home owner. We will see any of these requirements in the HOA docs as well as the status letter after we are under contract.

I am not an expert in HOAs, if there are in depth questions or concerns I may refer you to an attorney if questions are outside my scope of practice.

What To-Do and Not-To-Do

To Do

- Communicate frequently
- Bring up any financial concerns early
- Take notes during showings
- Ask a lot of questions
- Pay bills and credit card statements on time
- Communicate any stressors early

Not to Do

- Apply for any new credit (lets talk about it first)
- Make a lot of unnecessary financial transfers
- Dwell on questions or stressors through the process
- Pay off any big debts without discussing it first
- Sign anything without us reviewing

Home Showings

What to Expect

You'll be mainly looking for if the home suits your wants and needs. I'll be looking for red flags, concerns, and resale potential. Consider the condition of mechanical systems, layout, neighborhood feel, and any HOA rules. It can be important to drive the surrounding neighborhood to get a feel of the surrounding area.

MLS Access

You'll receive access to a personalized MLS portal to search, save favorites, and request showings. The MLS is where all real estate agents in the area list homes and make updates to price and terms so its the most accurate.

Writing an Offer

I research comparables, neighborhood trends, seller motivation, and pricing strategy. Together we determine price, concessions, deadlines, inclusions/exclusions, and fee allocation.

Accepting an Offer

Sellers can accept, counter, or reject. Once both parties sign, you're under contract and contingencies begin.

Earnest Money

Earnest money is typically 1% and can be paid by check, wire, cashier's check, or electronic payment. It is held by the title company and refundable if terminating for inspection, insurance, loan, HOA, home sale contingencies, or due diligence contingencies.

Home Inspections

Typical cost: \$600–\$800. Recommended:

- General inspection
- Sewer scope
- Radon test
- Termite inspection (VA loans)

Optional: structural, mold, and roof inspections.

Appraisal

The lender orders the appraisal. If it comes in low, we may negotiate price or concessions. If it comes in high, nothing changes in the contract, you close on your home with instant equity.



The Final Steps

Home Insurance

Consider deductible, roof age, coverage limits, and personal property. You can get multiple quotes to determine the best policy for you. You'll send your accepted quote to your lender, which will ultimately be paid through escrow (your mortgage payment).

Preparing for Closing

Signing can be in person, remote notary, or hybrid. Lender issues Clear to Close, title balances numbers, and you bring a cashier's check or wire funds 1-2 days prior.

Final Walkthrough & Closing

We confirm home condition and repair completion. Closing takes 30-60 minutes and is led by the title closer. You'll need an ID for closing. Once signed, you own your home.



janderson@solidoakre.com



719-445-1843 or 952-913-7999



solidoakre.com

