



Sunday Column

By Kim Bragman, 2020 Chairman

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5 Questions to Ask When Buying a Home

Buying a home is a big and exciting step, and it can be easy to get lost in the thrill of a big backyard or the perfect kitchen. These five questions will help you stay on track during the home buying process.

1. How do I find a REALTOR® to help me?

In the San Antonio area, there are over 12,000 REALTORS® available and it may seem overwhelming to know where to start when you're about to make one of the biggest purchases of your life. Start your search on SABOR.com and select the REALTORS® you think might be a good fit for you. When interviewing REALTORS®, make sure to ask questions to see how they match your personality and goals. Ask how they communicate with their clients, such as through email or text messages. Ask how many transactions they have been through or if they have experience with first-time home buyers or have special designations that apply to you. While there are many qualified and knowledgeable REALTORS® ready to serve you, like any relationship you need to find the one that best fits you.
2. How old are the big-ticket items, like the roof and HVAC?

Don't let yourself get too caught up in the tall ceiling and designer features of the home and forget about the essential elements. Make sure to ask the age of items that may be costly to repair if they are at the end of their lifespan like the roof, HVAC and water heater.
3. What happens if the inspection comes back with major issues?

Having a home inspected can be nerve-racking, you never know what the inspector may find. If the inspector finds a major issue like foundation problems or a plumbing disaster, remember that your REALTOR® is there to help you. Whether you decide to negotiate repairs or walk away from the home, your REALTOR® is an expert and can help you weigh the pros and cons and make the decision that is best for you.
4. What happens if the appraisal comes back low?

In fast paced markets it is common for homes to have multiple offers which can drive up the sales price of a home. So what happens if your offer is higher than the appraised value? If this happens to you, stay calm, it does not necessarily mean that the deal is going to fall through. Consult with your REALTOR® to find out what options are available to you.

5. How do I prepare for closing?

The closing day is when you'll sign all the deed and loan documents! Check in with your REALTOR® and loan officer to make sure you have everything you need prior to closing day. You will most likely need to bring a cashier's check for your down payment and closing costs or schedule a wire transfer to complete the transaction.

Buying a home is exciting and can be overwhelming. You can relieve stress by staying prepared, asking questions, and setting priorities.