T E N N E S S E E

EXISTING HOME GUIDE

A Practical Guide to Buying an Existing Home in Tennessee

PREPARED BY

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Buying an Existing Home in Tennessee

Buying an existing home can feel overwhelming, especially in a competitive market. This guide explains the main ways to buy real estate, how to strengthen your offer, how to find accurate property information, and how the Tennessee buying process works — with Chester A. Hood, Gary Rabideau, and Connor Mayne supporting you every step of the way.

> **TIP:** *Keep this guide handy as you begin your search, and bring any questions to Chester, Gary, or Connor — their contact details are on the last page.*

Meet Your Team

You're not navigating this alone. Between the three of us, we bring decades of combined experience across land, valuation, the building process, financing, and today's digital marketplace — so every angle of your purchase is covered.

Chester A. Hood

Broker

- 34+ years in Tennessee real estate, specializing in land evaluation and the building process.
- 18 years as a Professional Real Estate Appraiser, with thousands of completed appraisals from simple to complex.
- 10 years as a mortgage broker — he knows both sides of the financing table.
- Your go-to for valuation accuracy, appraisal-gap strategy, and knowing what a property is really worth.

Gary Rabideau

Managing Broker

- 24+ years in real estate; Managing Broker of a leading office in Goodlettsville.
- Certified Master Gardener with an insider's read on Tennessee soils, drainage, and land conditions.
- Experienced negotiator with established local relationships across the market.
- Your go-to for property research, neighborhood insight, and negotiating strong terms.

Connor Mayne

Affiliate Broker

- Technology and social-media specialist who surfaces listings and market shifts early.
- Tracks off-market opportunities and digital leads before they reach the open market.
- Keeps your search fast, connected, and ahead of the competition.
- Your go-to for finding new opportunities first and staying a step ahead online.

Ways to Buy Real Estate

1. Mortgage Loan

Traditional mortgage programs allow buyers to finance a home with down payments typically ranging from 10–20%. There are also government-backed options with lower barriers to entry:

- **FHA loans** — down payments as low as 3%.
- **VA loans** — often 0% down for qualified veterans, which are especially common around Tennessee's military communities.

With 10 years as a mortgage broker on top of his real estate career, **Chester** can walk you through which loan program fits your situation and help line up pre-approval before you start touring homes.

2. Cash Offers

Even if you don't have the full cash price on hand, certain programs let you make a cash offer and still secure a mortgage afterward. In a competitive market, that's a major advantage because:

- Sellers tend to prefer cash offers.
- Cash offers remove financing uncertainty for the seller.
- You can compete in bidding wars without having the full amount in cash.

Gary's negotiating experience helps position a cash-backed offer so it stands out, while **Connor** helps you move quickly when the right listing appears.

3. Appraisal Differences

In fast-moving markets, homes sometimes appraise below the agreed purchase price. Buyers can strengthen an offer by agreeing to cover part or all of that difference, and there are programs that help bridge the gap — making your offer more competitive without putting your budget at risk.

This is squarely **Chester**'s wheelhouse. With 18 years as a Professional Real Estate Appraiser, he can tell you whether a price is realistic before you offer, and help you build an appraisal-gap strategy grounded in what the property is actually worth.

Find Accurate Property Information

Accurate property information is essential — and it's easy to be misled by a polished listing. Chester, Gary, and Connor help you verify the details that actually affect value and livability:

- Property history — prior sales, permits, and any red flags in the record.
- Comparable sales (“comps”) — what similar nearby homes have actually sold for.
- Neighborhood trends — whether values are rising, steady, or softening.
- School zones — confirming the actual attendance zone, not just the nearest school.
- Local taxes — the current assessed value and tax bill for the property.
- HOA rules — dues, restrictions, and governing documents where applicable.
- Condition reports — inspection findings and disclosed defects.
- Market value accuracy — an appraiser's read on whether the price holds up.

Here each of us plays to our strength: **Chester** verifies value and comps through an appraiser's lens, **Gary** reads the neighborhood, land, and local market, and **Connor** pulls current data and digital sources to keep the picture up to date.

How Your Team Supports You

From your first question to the day you get the keys, Chester, Gary, and Connor work together so nothing falls through the cracks:

- **Loan options —** Chester guides you through mortgage, FHA, and VA programs and pre-approval.
- **Cash-offer programs —** we help you weigh whether a cash-backed offer strengthens your position.
- **Appraisal strategies —** Chester's appraisal background helps you handle any gap with confidence.
- **Property research —** Gary and Connor dig into history, comps, and neighborhood data.
- **Negotiation —** Gary's experience helps secure the best possible terms.
- **Closing preparation —** we keep every step on track through to signing.

The Process of Buying a Home in Tennessee

1. Pre-Approval

Choose a loan program and get pre-approved. This sets your budget and strengthens your offer. Chester can help you compare programs and line up a lender before you start.

2. Home Search

We help you find accurate property information, schedule showings, and evaluate neighborhoods — with Gary reading the local market and Connor surfacing new listings early.

3. Making an Offer

You choose your offer strategy, and we help you structure it to compete:

- Traditional mortgage.
- Cash-offer program.
- Appraisal-gap coverage.
- Contingencies — inspection, financing, and others as appropriate.

4. Inspection Period

Licensed inspectors evaluate the home's condition, and you can negotiate repairs or credits based on what they find. Chester's building-process background helps you interpret the results.

5. Appraisal

Your lender orders an appraisal to confirm value. If there's a gap between the appraisal and the price, Chester's appraisal expertise helps you navigate your options.

6. Underwriting

The lender verifies your income, assets, and the property details before issuing final approval. We help keep documentation moving so nothing stalls.

7. Closing

You sign the final documents, transfer funds, and receive the keys. We make sure you know exactly what to expect at the table.

Summary: Your Tennessee Buying Guide

This guide helps you understand your mortgage options, the advantages of a cash-backed offer, appraisal-gap strategies, how to find accurate property information, and each step of the Tennessee buying process — all with Chester, Gary, and Connor supporting you along the way.

Reach Out Any Time

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SoundCheck
Realty Group

For further assistance & more detailed guideline, contact:

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