



# BUILDABLE LAND EVALUATION CHECKLIST

*For Future Homeowners*

**A beautiful lot is not always a buildable lot.**

Use this guide before making an offer, during the investigation period, and before allowing any land contingency to expire. The goal is to know what can be built, where it can be built, and what the site may cost to prepare.

**Prepared by Dennis Fletcher, CPBD**

Dennis Fletcher Design Studio | Design • Plan • Guide

Educational planning resource • September 2026



# How to Use This Checklist

**The safest order**  
1) Screen the property before offering. 2) Put protections in the offer. 3) Obtain written answers during due diligence. 4) Have qualified professionals test what records cannot prove. 5) Decide only after the home, driveway, utilities, wastewater, drainage, restrictions, and budget fit together.

## Three rules that prevent expensive mistakes

- ☐ Do not rely on “the agent said it is buildable.” Ask the responsible government office or qualified professional and keep the answer in writing.
- ☐ Do not treat an online map as final approval. Maps are screening tools; surveys, field tests, agency decisions, and permits control.
- ☐ Do not remove a contingency because one item passed. A septic approval does not prove legal access, a suitable house location, manageable drainage, utilities, or affordability.

## Your result

| WHAT TO VERIFY          | WHY IT MATTERS                                          | PROOF TO KEEP                  |
|-------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| READY TO PROCEED        | Critical items verified; plan fits; costs budgeted.     | Reports, replies, estimates    |
| PROCEED WITH CONDITIONS | One or more approvals, design changes, or costs remain. | Written condition and deadline |
| STOP / RENEGOTIATE      | A deal-breaker exists or risk/cost is unacceptable.     | Written finding and decision   |

**Important**  
This is an educational planning tool. It does not replace a survey, title review, legal advice, engineering, environmental study, septic or well approval, utility commitment, insurance review, or permit. Local rules vary.



# 1. Property Snapshot

|                             |             |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| Property address / location | <div></div> |
| Tax parcel number           | <div></div> |
| County / municipality       | <div></div> |
| Listing price               | <div></div> |
| Acreage shown               | <div></div> |
| Seller / listing agent      | <div></div> |
| Offer deadline              | <div></div> |
| Due-diligence deadline      | <div></div> |
| Settlement date             | <div></div> |

## What must this land support?

☐ Approximate heated area: \_\_\_\_\_ sq. ft.

☐ Stories: \_\_\_\_ Bedrooms: \_\_\_\_ Bathrooms: \_\_\_\_

☐ Foundation: ☐ Slab ☐ Crawl space ☐ Basement ☐ Walkout

☐ Garage: ☐ Attached ☐ Detached Bays: \_\_\_\_

☐ Other: ☐ Workshop ☐ Barn ☐ Pool ☐ ADU/guest house ☐ RV/boat parking

☐ Future additions, outbuildings, business, animals, accessibility, or other needs:

**Why start here?**  
“Buildable” does not mean “buildable for your plans.” A parcel may allow one modest house but not your preferred size, garage, workshop, driveway, septic area, or future addition.

## 2. Before You Make an Offer

### FAST SCREEN — COMPLETE BEFORE YOU COMMIT MONEY

- ☐ Confirm the parcel number and boundaries shown in the listing match the land being sold.
- ☐ Ask zoning whether a detached single-family home is allowed on this parcel.
- ☐ Ask whether it is a legal lot of record and can receive a building permit, subject to normal reviews.
- ☐ Check public-road frontage or recorded access; identify who owns and maintains any private road.
- ☐ Check FEMA and local flood maps; ask whether flood elevation or special construction rules may apply.
- ☐ Screen for wetlands, streams, shorelines, steep slopes, conservation areas, and buffers.
- ☐ Confirm public water and sewer at the property—not merely “nearby.”
- ☐ If sewer is unavailable, obtain all septic/soil records and confirm current requirements.
- ☐ Call the electric utility for the service point, extension process, easements, and written cost estimate.
- ☐ Look for water, dumping, fill, erosion, tanks, old wells/septic, structures, culverts, or utility equipment.
- ☐ Ask a residential designer or architect to make a preliminary fit check using your actual goals.

### Offer protections to discuss with your agent or attorney

- ☐ A feasibility period long enough for agency replies and testing.
- ☐ Written permission for survey, soil/septic, wetland, engineering, and utility investigation.
- ☐ A clear right to terminate and recover the deposit if results are unacceptable, subject to the contract.
- ☐ Appropriate contingencies for title, access, zoning/buildability, septic/well, financing, appraisal, insurance, and environmental conditions.
- ☐ Seller delivery of surveys, plats, permits, tests, leases, covenants, notices, and violations.
- ☐ A clear statement of who pays for tests, restores test areas, and owns reports.

#### Contract language matters

Real-estate rights vary by state. Have a qualified local agent or attorney prepare or review the language. A vague “perc contingency” may not protect against an expensive system, poor house location, or unrelated site problems.

### 3. Questions for the Agent and Seller

#### ASK FOR DOCUMENTS, DATES, NAMES, AND WRITTEN ANSWERS

☐ Has anyone applied to build, subdivide, install a driveway, drill a well, or approve septic here? Result?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Has any test, permit, variance, or approval expired, failed, been denied, withdrawn, appealed, or conditioned?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Are there easements, rights-of-way, private-road agreements, utility/drainage corridors, or access disputes?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Are there HOA, deed, architectural, conservation, agricultural, or minimum-building restrictions?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Has the property flooded, held water, received runoff, or suffered erosion?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Has fill, debris, buried waste, fuel tanks, old septic/wells, a cemetery, or a prior structure existed here?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ What utilities serve nearby homes, who extended them, and from where?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Are mineral, timber, water, development, hunting, farming, or occupancy rights held by others?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Are road projects, rezonings, subdivisions, utilities, special assessments, or development planned nearby?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Why is the land being sold, and what professional reports exist?

Answer / document: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **A seller's answer is a lead—not final verification.**

The seller may be honest and still rely on old information. Confirm legal, regulatory, and technical facts using current records and responsible professionals.

## 4. Legal Lot, Zoning, and Buildable Area

| WHAT TO VERIFY                                                                         | WHY IT MATTERS                                                              | PROOF TO KEEP                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Zoning district and every overlay district.                                            | Overlays may add flood, coastal, historic, airport, or environmental rules. | Dated map and written reply     |
| Detached home allowed; approval administrative or discretionary.                       | Variance, rezoning, exception, or hearing adds time and no guarantee.       | Code section and approval path  |
| Legal lot / lot-of-record / subdivision status.                                        | A tax parcel can still need subdivision or boundary action.                 | Plat, deed, agency confirmation |
| All setbacks and buffers: yards, streets, shorelines, streams, wetlands, well, septic. | Overlapping limits form the true buildable envelope.                        | Dimensioned concept plan        |
| Height, coverage, impervious area, floor area, clearing.                               | A home may fit setbacks but violate another limit.                          | Written standards               |
| Garage, barn, pool, ADU, business, animals, future additions.                          | Long-term goals may be more restricted than the first house.                | Written use confirmation        |
| Moratoriums, permit caps, impact fees, public-facility tests.                          | A legal use may still be delayed, limited, or costly.                       | Current fee/status sheet        |

### Buildable-envelope note

Attach a current survey or plat. Show property lines, setbacks, easements, buffers, flood areas, wetlands, septic and reserve areas, well, utilities, driveway, stormwater, and the proposed home on one scaled plan.

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### Acreage is not usable area

A large parcel may have a small building envelope after every restriction and site need is placed on the same plan.



## 5. Title, Survey, Boundaries, and Access

- ☐ Order a title search/commitment and review exceptions with a qualified title professional or attorney.
- ☐ Obtain the deed, recorded plat, easements, restrictions, and road agreements.
- ☐ Have a licensed surveyor explain boundaries, acreage, encroachments, rights-of-way, and survey needs.
- ☐ Confirm recorded access supports a residence, utilities, construction traffic, emergency vehicles, and future owners.
- ☐ Confirm a driveway can be permitted and built: sight distance, grade, culvert, drainage, turns, and bridge capacity.
- ☐ Confirm who owns, maintains, plows, insures, and repairs a private road—and how cost is divided.
- ☐ Check gates, low wires, narrow lanes, weak bridges, railroad crossings, and seasonal limits.
- ☐ Confirm utility easements reach the building area; do not assume providers can cross neighboring land.
- ☐ Identify fences, sheds, lanes, utilities, or other encroachments across lines.

|                           |             |
|---------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Title professional</b> | <hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Surveyor</b>           | <hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Survey / plat date</b> | <hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Access document</b>    | <hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Road authority</b>     | <hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Driveway status</b>    | <hr/> <hr/> |
| <b>Open exceptions</b>    | <hr/> <hr/> |

**Two kinds of access**  
Legal access is the recorded right to reach the parcel. Physical access means a driveway can actually be permitted and built. One does not prove the other.



## 6. Water, Sewer, Septic, and Well

### CONFIRM CAPACITY, LOCATION, APPROVAL, AND COST

#### Public water or sewer

- ☐ Ask the authority whether service and capacity are available to this parcel.
- ☐ Locate the main/tap/lateral and price extension, road work, easements, pumps, and off-site work.
- ☐ Obtain tap, meter, connection, impact, assessment, inspection, and extension fees in writing.
- ☐ Ask about moratoriums, deadlines, special assessments, mandatory connection, and private-line maintenance.

#### Onsite septic

- ☐ Obtain every soil evaluation, perc test, design, permit, repair record, and agency letter; confirm current validity.
- ☐ Ask the responsible office what evaluation is required now; terminology and procedures vary.
- ☐ Confirm bedroom capacity, system type, design flow, drainfield, reserve area, setbacks, and seasonal limits.
- ☐ Place house, drive, well, grading, stormwater, pool, and future work on the same plan as septic areas.
- ☐ Price the indicated system, including advanced treatment, pumps, monitoring, maintenance, or renewals.

#### Private well

- ☐ Check permits, setbacks, depth/yield patterns, contamination, saltwater intrusion, and treatment concerns.
- ☐ Price drilling, casing, pump, tank, trenching, testing, treatment, and abandonment—not only cost per foot.
- ☐ Confirm the well location works with septic, roads, buildings, property lines, farms, and utilities.
- ☐ Plan for yield and potable-water testing required by authorities, lender, or your own risk standard.

#### **Perc test is not a foundation test**

Septic evaluation studies wastewater treatment and disposal. It does not prove the soil can support a foundation; geotechnical work may be separate.



## 7. Flooding, Wetlands, Drainage, and Environmental Limits

| WHAT TO VERIFY                                                         | WHY IT MATTERS                                                                                                                 | PROOF TO KEEP                     |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| FEMA Flood Map Service Center plus local floodplain office.            | Flood risk affects elevation, design, access, insurance, lending, and cost; maps do not guarantee whether flooding will occur. | Panel/date, zone, local reply     |
| Floodway, coastal/tidal, dam, erosion, and local hazard areas.         | State/local rules may be stricter or cover added hazards.                                                                      | Agency requirements               |
| Wetland/stream screening and field delineation when indicated.         | Online maps are not field determinations; disturbance may need federal, state, or local review.                                | Consultant/agency document        |
| All environmental buffers.                                             | The buffer may restrict more land than the feature.                                                                            | Survey/site plan                  |
| Visit after rain and study land beyond the property.                   | Water follows landform, not property lines.                                                                                    | Photos/topography/drainage review |
| Stormwater, erosion control, disturbance and impervious requirements.  | Facilities take land, design money, construction cost, and maintenance.                                                        | Agency checklist/allowance        |
| Prior uses, fill, tanks, dumping, pesticides, or demolished buildings. | Testing, cleanup, health, or liability concerns may follow.                                                                    | Records/environmental review      |

### Wetland map warning

No mapped wetland does not prove none exists. Field conditions and the applicable regulatory process control. Do not clear, fill, grade, or trench a suspected area before getting advice.

## 8. Soil, Slope, Trees, and Site Construction

- ☐ Use USDA Web Soil Survey for early screening; site decisions may require onsite work.
- ☐ Obtain topography when slope, drainage, flood elevation, retaining walls, septic, or drive grade matters.
- ☐ Ask if geotechnical work is needed for fill, clay, organics, groundwater, rock, steep slopes, retaining walls, or unusual foundations.
- ☐ Price dewatering, undercut, imported fill, rock removal, stabilization, engineered foundations, and retaining walls if indicated.
- ☐ Walk the full driveway route and study grade, curves, ditches, culverts, sight distance, clearing, and equipment access.
- ☐ Confirm rules for specimen, street, forest, buffer, or protected trees and required replacement.
- ☐ Price clearing, stumps, debris, grading, erosion control, topsoil, seeding, and restoration.
- ☐ Determine where excess/unsuitable soil and rock may go and whether fill must be imported.
- ☐ Check neighboring slopes, fields, roads, and development for runoff or sediment.
- ☐ Let the house respond to the land; rotation, stepping, footprint, or foundation changes may save money.

**Visit date / weather**

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**Recent rainfall**

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**Water clues**

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**Slope concerns**

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**Tree concerns**

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**House area**

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**Drive route**

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### Visit more than once

A dry visit can hide seasonal groundwater. If possible, return during or soon after heavy rain and at different times. Never enter without permission.



# 9. Utilities, Communications, and Emergency Service

| WHAT TO VERIFY                                                                    | WHY IT MATTERS                                                      | PROOF TO KEEP           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Electric service point, route, transformer, trench, easements, and customer work. | A nearby line does not guarantee an easy or inexpensive connection. | Written layout/estimate |
| Natural gas or propane availability, tank location, access, setbacks, ownership.  | Fuel choice affects systems, deliveries, and site layout.           | Provider terms          |
| Exact-location internet availability and onsite cellular test.                    | Coverage maps and nearby service can be wrong for the future house. | Provider reply/test     |
| Emergency driveway width, grade, surface, turnaround, bridge, address, gate.      | Long/private drives may need major improvements.                    | Road/fire requirements  |
| Sprinklers, water storage, hydrant distance, wildfire measures.                   | Location can change design, utility, and insurance needs.           | Official/insurer reply  |
| Trash, mail, school bus, snow removal, deliveries.                                | Services may stop at the public road.                               | Provider reply          |
| Electric contact                                                                  | <hr/>                                                               |                         |
| Water / sewer contact                                                             | <hr/>                                                               |                         |
| Fuel contact                                                                      | <hr/>                                                               |                         |
| Internet options                                                                  | <hr/>                                                               |                         |
| Fire / roads contact                                                              | <hr/>                                                               |                         |
| Estimates received                                                                | <hr/>                                                               |                         |

## 10. Restrictions, Neighbors, Taxes, Insurance, and Financing

- ☐ Read all HOA, subdivision, deed, architectural, conservation, agricultural, and road restrictions.
- ☐ Confirm home size, materials, roof, garage, outbuildings, fences, animals, rentals, RVs, and construction deadlines.
- ☐ Check current and allowed nearby farms, poultry, quarries, ranges, airports, industry, venues, lines, pipelines, and subdivisions.
- ☐ Understand protected farm practices, odor, dust, spraying, trucks, noise, lighting, and seasonal activity.
- ☐ Review taxes, assessments, land-use programs, rollback taxes, impact fees, utility charges, and post-construction changes.
- ☐ Ask an insurer about flood, wind, wildfire, private road, response distance, vacant land, and construction coverage.
- ☐ Confirm lender requirements for appraisal, survey, access, utilities, septic/well, flood, title, and down payment.
- ☐ Make sure investigation deadlines allow enough time for testing and agency replies.
- ☐ Compare total project cost and appraisal—not merely cash needed to buy the lot.

### **The neighboring land matters**

A quiet field is not a permanent view unless you own it or a restriction protects it. Check zoning and known approvals for nearby parcels.



# 11. Site-Development Budget

Use written quotes or professional allowances. Include design, testing, permits, construction, inspections, restoration, and contingency. Write “unknown”—never zero—when a cost is unresolved.

| ITEM                               | LOW     | LIKELY  | SOURCE / STATUS |
|------------------------------------|---------|---------|-----------------|
| Survey / topography                | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Title / legal / closing            | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Zoning / variance / subdivision    | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Environmental / flood / wetlands   | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Septic testing, design, and system | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Well / water treatment             | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Water / sewer connections          | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Electric / fuel / communications   | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Driveway / culverts / road         | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Clearing / demolition / disposal   | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Earthwork / rock / imported fill   | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Foundation / retaining walls       | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Stormwater / erosion control       | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Permits / fees / assessments       | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Temporary access / utilities       | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Landscaping / restoration          | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Design / engineering / inspections | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| Site contingency                   | \$_____ | \$_____ | _____           |
| <b>Land price</b>                  |         | \$      |                 |
| <b>Site-development total</b>      |         | \$      |                 |
| <b>House construction</b>          |         | \$      |                 |
| <b>Soft / financing costs</b>      |         | \$      |                 |
| <b>Overall contingency</b>         |         | \$      |                 |
| <b>TOTAL PROJECT</b>               |         | \$      |                 |

## 12. Red Flags — Pause Before Proceeding

- ☐ “Buildable” appears only in marketing; no responsible office or professional confirms a path to approval.
- ☐ Access is verbal, landlocked, disputed, or missing a private-road agreement.
- ☐ The seller blocks ordinary testing or the contract period is too short.
- ☐ Parcel number, acreage, boundaries, deed, plat, or listing facts conflict.
- ☐ A variance, rezoning, subdivision, wetland impact, or neighbor easement is essential.
- ☐ Prior perc, soil, permit, or development applications failed, expired, were denied, or disappeared.
- ☐ Septic supports too few bedrooms, is unusually costly, or conflicts with house/well/drive/reserve area.
- ☐ Utilities are “available” without provider confirmation of capacity, route, easements, or cost.
- ☐ Standing water, wetland plants, fill, debris, erosion, springs, or channels appear near the building area.
- ☐ Driveway is steep/narrow, crosses water, lacks sight distance, or uses an unknown bridge/culvert.
- ☐ The home fits only if boundaries, setbacks, buffers, or environmental features move.
- ☐ A basement is assumed without studying groundwater, rock, slope, or soils.
- ☐ The budget uses zero for unknowns or estimates omit major work.
- ☐ Lender or insurer flags access, flood, utilities, exposure, appraisal, or title.
- ☐ Pressure to waive investigation because “someone else will buy it.”

### **A red flag is a reason to slow down**

Identify the correct expert, get a written answer, price the solution, and decide whether the remaining risk is acceptable. Several open red flags usually justify extension, renegotiation, or withdrawal.



## 13. Verification Tracker

| CONTACT                  | VERIFY                                | DATE / NAME | STATUS                                                      |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Zoning/planning          | Use, lot status, overlays, setbacks   | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Building official        | Permits, flood/fire/access            | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Road authority           | Entrance, sight distance, culvert     | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Health/environmental     | Septic, well, environmental rules     | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Water/sewer authority    | Availability, capacity, fees          | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Electric utility         | Route, extension, easements, cost     | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Land surveyor            | Boundaries, topography, encroachments | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Designer/architect       | House fit and site concept            | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Civil engineer           | Grading, drainage, stormwater, access | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Geotechnical engineer    | Foundation soils, water, rock, fill   | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Environmental consultant | Wetlands and permit path              | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Title/attorney           | Ownership, access, exceptions, rights | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Lender/appraiser         | Finance and valuation                 | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |
| Insurance professional   | Flood, wind, fire, access             | _____       | <input type="checkbox"/> Open <input type="checkbox"/> Done |

### Documents collected

- ☐ Deed, plat, title report, and restrictions
- ☐ Current survey/topography and concept site plan
- ☐ Written zoning/lot status and driveway findings
- ☐ Septic/soil/well findings
- ☐ Utility confirmations and site estimates
- ☐ Flood/wetland/environmental findings
- ☐ Insurance and financing review



# 14. Final Decision Review

DO NOT RELEASE THE LAND CONTINGENCY UNTIL THIS PAGE IS COMPLETE

| DECISION AREA                       | YES                      | NO / OPEN                | EVIDENCE / CONDITION |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Legal lot and intended use          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| House, garage, and future plans fit | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Legal and physical access           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Water and wastewater                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Utilities and communications        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Flood, wetland, environmental       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Soil, slope, drainage, foundation   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Restrictions and neighbors          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Title, boundaries, easements        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Financing, insurance, appraisal     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |
| Site cost and contingency           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | _____                |

## My decision

- ☐ READY TO PROCEED — facts verified, plan fits, costs acceptable.
- ☐ PROCEED WITH CONDITIONS — only if the written conditions below are satisfied.
- ☐ STOP / RENEGOTIATE — remaining risk, limitation, or cost is unacceptable.

Conditions / open items:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

|                           |       |
|---------------------------|-------|
| Decision deadline         | _____ |
|                           | _____ |
| Buyer                     | _____ |
|                           | _____ |
| Agent / attorney notified | _____ |
|                           | _____ |
| Next action               | _____ |
|                           | _____ |



## Reliable Starting Points

Use these resources for early screening, then confirm with the responsible local/state office and the appropriate licensed professional.

### **Dennis Fletcher Design Studio — Buying Land to Build On**

<https://dennisfletcherdesignstudio.com/2026/04/06/buying-land-to-build-on-what-first-time-buyers-miss/>

### **Dennis Fletcher Design Studio — How to Tell If Land Is Actually Buildable**

<https://dennisfletcherdesignstudio.com/2026/04/29/how-to-tell-if-land-is-actually-buildable/>

### **FEMA Flood Map Service Center**

<https://msc.fema.gov/>

### **USDA NRCS Web Soil Survey**

<https://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov/>

### **U.S. EPA — Clean Water Act Section 404**

<https://www.epa.gov/cwa-404/permit-program-under-cwa-section-404>

### **U.S. EPA — Wetland jurisdictional delineation**

<https://www.epa.gov/cwa-404/what-jurisdictional-delineation-under-cwa-section-404>

### **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service Wetlands Mapper**

<https://www.fws.gov/program/national-wetlands-inventory/wetlands-mapper>

### **FCC National Broadband Map**

<https://broadbandmap.fcc.gov/>

## Local records for every parcel

- ☐ Zoning map and code
- ☐ Tax parcel/assessment record
- ☐ Deed, plat, easements, restrictions
- ☐ Floodplain, wetlands, environmental maps
- ☐ Driveway standards
- ☐ Septic/well records
- ☐ Water/sewer service and fees
- ☐ Electric new-service requirements
- ☐ Permit and impact-fee schedules

### **Keep a property file**

Save the map version, date, email, report, estimate, person, phone number, and agency behind every answer. Online information changes and verbal conversations are hard to prove.