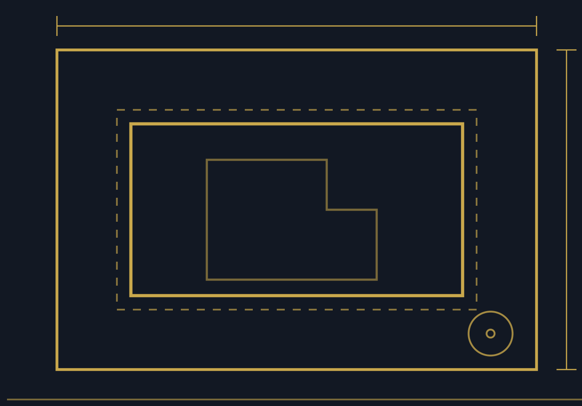
A SOUTH TAMPA HOMEOWNER'S GUIDE

Before You Say Yes

What to know when a builder wants to buy your home



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WHY THIS GUIDE EXISTS

Sometimes the land is the story.

If you own an older home in South Tampa, there's a good chance a builder has already sent you a letter, a postcard or a text. I've gotten them too.

I grew up in Sunset Park. My childhood home flooded four times before my parents finally sold it to a builder. After Hurricane Helene, I watched investors reach out to neighbors who were still pulling up wet flooring.

Selling to a builder can be the right decision. My own family made it. But a quick offer at a vulnerable moment is not the same thing as knowing what your property is worth.

> When someone wants your property, find out why before you decide what it's worth.

HOW A BUILDER SEES YOUR LOT

They aren't buying your house. They're buying what comes next.

Most builders work backward from the finished product. Roughly, the math looks like this:

Finished Home Value		Build Costs		Builder Profit		Their Land Offer
What the new house could sell for	−	Construction, demolition, permits, site work	−	The margin that makes the project worth it	=	What they can pay you

That doesn't make their offer unfair. It means you should run the same numbers before you respond.

SELLING DIRECT

WHAT YOU MAY GAIN

A simpler sale. No repairs, no staging, no showings. More privacy and more certainty, and you sell the home as it sits today.

WHAT YOU MAY GIVE UP

Competition. The chance another builder, or a traditional buyer, would pay more. And sometimes, ever knowing what the open market would have paid.

WHAT MOVES SOUTH TAMPA LAND VALUE

Two lots a few blocks apart can be worth very different money.

There is no universal price per square foot for South Tampa land. These are the things a builder is weighing, and the things you should understand first.

01 Lot size and shape

Width, depth and odd angles change what fits.

02 Zoning

What the district allows, plus any historic or overlay rules.

03 Setbacks

The building envelope, or how much house the lot can hold.

04 Flood zone

Required elevations can add real cost to new construction.

05 Trees and site conditions

Protected trees and soil can limit design or add expense.

06 Divisibility

A lot that could become two homes is a different conversation.

07 Utility access

Easy connections keep a project simple.

08 School district

Inside or just outside the Plant High district matters.

09 Nearby new construction

What finished homes on your street are selling for.

10 The builder's own economics

Costs, price points and appetite differ from builder to builder.

> A builder's offer tells you what that builder will pay. It doesn't always tell you what the market will.

WORTH KNOWING

Flood zone and evacuation zone are not the same thing.

Flood Zone

Set by FEMA flood maps. Drives flood risk, building elevation requirements and insurance. This is the one that affects a builder's costs.

Evacuation Zone

Based on storm surge. Tells you when to leave before a storm. It's about safety planning, not construction rules.

YOUR CHECKLIST

Before you respond to a builder.

Don't assume the offer is too low. Don't assume it's great, either. Get the information first.

- ☐ **What is it worth as a home?**
  Current resale value to a traditional buyer.
- ☐ **What is it worth as land?**
  Recent nearby teardown and lot sales.
- ☐ **What is new construction selling for nearby?**
  The number the builder is working backward from.
- ☐ **What do the zoning and lot allow?**
  Size, setbacks and whether the lot could be divided.
- ☐ **What are the flood considerations?**
  Flood zone, required elevation, and what that does to build costs.
- ☐ **Who else is building on my street?**
  More than one interested builder changes the conversation.
- ☐ **What are the terms, not just the price?**
  Deposit, timelines, contingencies and assignment rights.
- ☐ **What would the open market pay?**
  You can choose not to test it. Just don't skip knowing.

CONTRACT TERMS TO READ TWICE

TERM	WHAT IT MEANS	WHY IT MATTERS
Feasibility period	Time for the builder to study the lot and decide.	A long window ties up your property while they can still walk.
Deposit	Money held while the deal is pending.	Know how much, and when it becomes non-refundable.
Survey + soil testing	The builder confirms boundaries and site conditions.	Findings here are a common reason to renegotiate price.
Financing	Whether the purchase depends on a loan.	Cash and financed offers carry different certainty.
Assignment rights	The builder can transfer the contract to someone else.	The company that signs may not be the one that closes.
Closing + extensions	When the deal closes and whether it can be pushed.	Extensions can stretch your timeline well past the date you planned around.

OFFER WORKSHEET

Put the offers side by side.

Price is one line on this page. The rest of it decides how much of that price you actually keep, and how sure you can be that it closes.

	OFFER A	OFFER B
Buyer / builder		
Offer price		
Deposit amount		
Deposit non-refundable after		
Feasibility / inspection period		
Cash or financed		
Assignment allowed?		
Closing date and extensions		
Sold as-is?		
Can I stay after closing?		
Closing costs and commission		

A note on commission. Real estate compensation is negotiable and can be structured different ways, including as part of the deal with the builder. Have that conversation upfront. The real question is whether representation improves your overall position.

Got a builder offer?
I'm happy to take a look.

You don't need to have decided to sell. I'll research the lot, recent land sales, zoning and nearby new construction so you know what you own.

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