

Searching for Land:

Considerations

Involve your builder, if possible!

Geography:

- Is the location good for your daily activities?
 - Where are the closest grocery stores, post offices, schools, etc.
 - Are there buses to schools?
- Are the roads paved sufficiently to your needs?
- Consider the seasons:
 - Is it in a wildfire danger zone? Flood plane? Will winter travel be difficult?
- Where is the closest fire station and hydrant?
- Is there room for future projects – shops, gardens, etc.
- Which direction will the home face? Which direction will the yard face?
Where will the shady or sunny areas be?

Land Amenities:

- Is the land governed by a development – Is there an HOA or CCRs to follow?
Some things to look at:
 - Animals permitted
 - Land usage restrictions (restrictions on fencing, building size, landscaping, paving, etc)
 - House color choice
 - Outbuilding requirements
 - Square footage and building materials requirements
- If there is not an HOA or CCRS, is there a likelihood that the home you want to build will retain its value based on comparables in the area?
- Is there a paved driveway?
- Are there setbacks and easements to consider?
- Are utilities already brought in?

Utilities:

- Water
 - Can you connect to public utilities, or will you have to drill a well?

- If well, look into well reports in the surrounding area. This public record information will allow you to see what kind of water supply you might expect.
- How difficult is it to obtain a permit to drill a well in the area of the land?
- What are the hookup fees?
- Septic / Sewer
 - If connecting to an existing system, what are the requirements and cost?
 - If installing a new system, what is the cost and is there a specific system required? Soil types can change the required septic designs.
 - If there is existing septic, how long since it has been used? What are the requirements in the area regarding inspections if usage has lapsed for some time?
- Power and Gas
 - What types of gas are available in the area
 - Are you close enough to more populated areas that outages may be fixed quickly? If not, consider a backup generator in case of larger outages in which your location may not be first on the list for repair.
- Internet and Phone Services
 - What providers and service expectations are there for this area?

Land Value:

- Is this land in a price range you can afford?
- Look at overall end value – based on location will your land increase in value over time? Is the area likely to change in the coming years?
- How much work will need to be done to build on the land?
 - Will there be a need to remove trees to build?
 - Will it be difficult to bring in equipment to the site?
- Consider the potential excavation costs:
 - Look at the surrounding landscape – is it extremely rocky? Large rocks can increase an excavation budget *rapidly*.
 - Is there major work to be done to prepare land for building? How much cut-in or leveling will be needed? (hint: the flatter, the better)
- Will the floorplan and style we want fit well on this lot? (Example: a rancher style is not easily built on a hillside without extensive excavation costs)