A BUYER, SELLER & INVESTOR'S GUIDE

REALITY

REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE

BUY, SELL, INVEST

The Southeast Michigan Real Estate Guide

Real estate decisions based on reality, not emotion.

Honest guidance on how real estate really works: real numbers, real timelines, and no pressure, whether you are buying, selling, or investing.

PREPARED BY

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BEFORE WE BEGIN

Good decisions come from real numbers, not pressure.

Buying, selling, or investing in a home is one of the largest decisions most of us ever make. It should rest on real numbers and a clear head, not on a good sales pitch or a deadline someone invented. That is the whole idea behind this guide, and behind how we work.

I have spent about fifteen years in Southeast Michigan real estate as a licensed Managing Broker, with the designations that matter most here: ABR for buyers, SRS for sellers, PSA for pricing, and RENE for negotiation. Before real estate I worked as a financial and credit counselor, so I tend to read the numbers before I read the room.

Read this at your own pace. When you want to talk through your own situation, the first conversation is free, honest, and completely without pressure. I would rather help you make the right move than any move at all.

Dave Moody

DAVE MOODY • MANAGING BROKER

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

THE PHILOSOPHY

How we consult, and what to expect

01

Consulting means we start with your goals and your numbers, not with a listing agreement. Buyers, sellers, and investors all get the same thing: a clear read on reality and a plan you actually own.

Real numbers first

We look at price, costs, and timing before opinions. A good decision is built on what the math actually says, so you can see the whole picture instead of a hopeful version of it.

Our honest promise

We would rather talk you out of a bad deal than into a good one. If waiting, renting, or a different property serves you better, we will say so plainly, even when it means no transaction for us. That is what a consultant is for.

Real timelines, no pressure

Markets move, but your life sets the pace. We map the timeline for your goal, then let you decide when to act. There is no invented urgency here, and nothing to sign to get honest answers.

Buyers, sellers, and investors

A first time buyer, a family selling to move on, and an investor weighing a flip need different playbooks. We tailor the advice to the goal in front of us rather than fitting everyone into one script.

Free to start, and no strings

The first conversation costs nothing and asks nothing of you. You leave with a clearer picture of your options whether or not we ever work together, because good advice should not depend on a signature.

Key takeaway

Consulting is guidance you can trust because it is not tied to a single outcome. Bring us the goal, and we will show you the real options, the real costs, and the smart next step.

FROM FIRST LOOK TO KEYS IN HAND

Buying a home, step by step

02

Every purchase is a little different, but the path is steady and predictable. Here is the order things usually happen, so you always know what comes next.

1 Get prepared

Gather your documents and set a real budget.

Pull together pay stubs, bank statements, and tax records, and take an honest look at your credit. Knowing your comfortable monthly number keeps the search grounded.

2 Get pre-approved

A lender confirms what you can borrow.

Pre-approval turns a guess into a number and makes your offers credible to sellers. It is the difference between browsing and being ready to buy.

3 Tour with your agent

See homes and learn the local market.

We line up showings, compare properties, and read each neighborhood together so you can tell a fair price from an inflated one.

4 Make and negotiate an offer

Price, terms, and contingencies.

We write a strong, protected offer and negotiate on your behalf. Terms and timing often matter as much as the number itself.

5 Inspection and appraisal

Verify the condition and the value.

An inspection checks what you are buying, and the appraisal confirms the value for your lender. Both can open the door to renegotiate if needed.

6 Closing and keys

Final walkthrough, sign, and move in.

You review the closing figures, do a last walkthrough, sign, and the home is yours. We stay with you through every signature.

> **A steady process, not a sprint**
> From accepted offer to closing usually takes a few weeks, driven by your lender and the details of the deal. Staying responsive with documents keeps everything on schedule.

HOW BUYERS PAY FOR A HOME

Financing options, compared

03

There is rarely one right loan. The best fit depends on your credit, your cash, and your plans. Here are the four you will hear about most, with typical down payments as a starting point.

FHA loan

ABOUT 3.5% DOWN

More flexible credit standards, with mortgage insurance included. A common path for first time buyers and primary residences.

Conventional

ROUGHLY 3% TO 20% DOWN

Strong credit earns the best rates. Private mortgage insurance can drop off once you reach about twenty percent equity.

VA loan

OFTEN 0% DOWN

For eligible veterans and service members. No monthly mortgage insurance, with a one time funding fee and eligibility rules.

Hard money

ROUGHLY 10% TO 30% DOWN

Short term and faster to close, at a higher cost. Mostly used by investors on projects, not by everyday homebuyers.

What to prepare

- Recent pay stubs and W-2s or tax returns
- The last couple of months of bank statements
- A current look at your credit
- A government issued photo ID

Always confirm with a lender

Rates, down payment minimums, and program rules change often and vary by borrower. Use this page to get oriented, then confirm the current details with a licensed lender before you plan around any number.

Not sure which loan fits you?

We work with trusted local lenders and can make an introduction, then help you read the numbers side by side. As a former mortgage loan officer, Dave speaks the language and will not let jargon stand between you and a clear choice.

THERE IS MORE THAN ONE WAY TO SELL

Selling your home, the four paths

04

The right path depends on your goal: top price, speed, certainty, or a clean exit. Here are the four most common ways to sell, with what each one gives up.

Retail sale

Best for top price. List on the open market with photos, marketing, and showings to reach the most buyers.

- Usually the highest sale price
- Takes prep, showings, and time
- Buyer financing and inspections apply

Auction sale

Best for speed and a set date. Sell to the highest bidder within a fixed window and timeline.

- Fast, with a firm closing date
- Final price is not guaranteed
- Fees and terms vary by platform

Short sale

Best when you owe more than it is worth. Sell for less than the loan balance with lender approval.

- An option to avoid foreclosure
- Needs lender sign off, which takes time
- May have credit and tax effects

Wholesale or investor sale

Best for certainty and as-is. Sell directly to a cash investor with no repairs and a quick close.

- Fast, as-is, and low hassle
- Price is below retail by design
- Fewer contingencies to clear

WANT TOP DOLLAR

A retail listing on the open market usually earns the most, if you have time to prepare and show.

NEED IT DONE FAST

An auction or an investor sale trades a bit of price for speed, certainty, and a firm closing date.

OWE MORE THAN IT IS WORTH

A short sale can settle the loan with lender approval and help you avoid foreclosure.

We help you weigh all four

Because we consult first, we can lay these paths side by side against your real numbers and timeline, then help you choose the one that fits your goal instead of ours.

PRICING ON EVIDENCE, NOT GUESSES

What is my home really worth?

05

An online estimate is a starting guess from a formula. A real market analysis is a considered price built from recent local sales, your home's condition, and where the market is right now.

A real market analysis

A pricing strategy built by hand from comparable sales nearby, adjusted for your home's condition, features, and the current pace of the market.

- Uses recent, truly comparable sales
- Accounts for condition and updates
- Reflects local Downriver pricing and timing

An online estimate

A quick figure from a national algorithm that has never seen inside your home. Useful for a rough range, not for setting your price.

- Cannot see condition or upgrades
- Often lags fast moving markets
- Can miss street by street differences

Pricing is a strategy, and we hold the credential for it
As a Pricing Strategy Advisor, Dave prices to attract the right buyers and protect your bottom line. Price too high and the home sits; price it right and it sells for more, faster.

WHAT A REAL ANALYSIS ACTUALLY LOOKS AT

- Recent sales of truly comparable homes nearby
- Your home's condition, layout, and updates
- Current supply, demand, and days on market
- Street level pricing, not just a zip code average

Three things move your number

Condition of the home, **local pricing** in your exact neighborhood, and **timing** in the current market. A free in person walkthrough weighs all three for you.

HOW A CASH OFFER IS REALLY BUILT

How investors think about a deal

06

Investors are not guessing when they make an offer. They work backward from the finished value and subtract every cost and risk. Understanding the math helps you judge any offer you receive.

Fix and flip

Buy below value, renovate, and resell for profit within months. Success rides on accurate repair costs and a disciplined resale price.

Buy and hold

Keep the property and rent it for steady cash flow and long term appreciation. Patience and reliable tenants matter more than a quick exit.

The ARV math, in plain numbers

After repair value (the finished, sold price)	________
– Estimated repairs and renovation	________
– Investor profit	________
– Contingency buffer for surprises	________
– Closing costs and taxes	________
– Resale commissions	________
– Holding costs while owned	________
What is left is the cash offer	**$**

If you are the seller

Now you can read any cash offer for what it is, and decide if speed is worth the discount.

If you are the investor

We help you run the same math on real properties so your offer protects your margin and your risk.

Why a cash offer sits below retail, and when that still wins

All those subtractions are why a cash offer is lower than an open market sale. It can still be the smart choice when speed, certainty, or selling as-is matters more than squeezing out the last dollar.

FOR THE HANDS ON SELLER

Selling on your own, with support

07

Selling by owner can save on commission, but it also means handling pricing, paperwork, negotiation, and legal deadlines yourself. If you want to lead the sale without going it alone, there is a middle path.

The reality of selling by owner
Most for sale by owner sellers underprice or overprice, get less exposure, and lose time on contracts and disclosures. The work does not disappear when you skip an agent. It just becomes yours to manage.

Transaction coordinator

THE PAPERWORK, HANDLED

We manage the contracts, disclosures, deadlines, and closing coordination while you run your own sale and showings.

- Contracts and disclosures done right
- Deadlines tracked to closing
- Best for confident, hands on sellers

Coordinator plus MLS

PAPERWORK AND EXPOSURE

Everything above, plus your home listed on the MLS so it reaches agents and the major search sites buyers actually use.

- Full MLS and syndicated exposure
- Paperwork and deadlines still handled
- Best when reach matters most

EITHER WAY, WE KEEP YOU PROTECTED

- State required disclosures done correctly
- A purchase agreement that guards your interests
- Earnest money, title, and closing coordinated
- Deadlines tracked so nothing slips through

Not sure which fits?
Tell us your goal and your comfort level, and we will point you to the lightest support that still protects you. No pressure to step up to a full listing if you do not need it.

SOMEONE WHOSE JOB IS YOUR INTEREST

Working with a broker who represents you

08

When an agent represents you, they owe you loyalty, honesty, and care. Knowing how representation works helps you get the full value of having a professional on your side.

Buyer agency

A buyer's agent works for you, not the seller. They find homes, run the numbers, advise on offers, and negotiate to protect your money and your position.

Seller agency

A listing agent markets your home, prices it with evidence, screens buyers, and negotiates for the best terms, all while representing your interests first.

Agreements come before showings

Representation is now set in writing before you tour homes, so everyone knows who works for whom and how your agent is paid. Read it, ask questions, and know it is negotiable.

A code of ethics

Members of the National Association of Realtors follow a code that requires honesty, fair dealing, and putting your interests first. It is accountability you can hold us to.

How your agent protects you

From spotting red flags in a contract to holding firm in negotiation, a good agent keeps your interest at the center of every decision and every signature.

Representation you can trust
Dave's credentials, ABR for buyers and SRS for sellers, mean formal training in exactly this: representing your side well. You get an advocate, not just a door opener.

WHENEVER YOU ARE READY, NO PRESSURE

Let's talk about your goals.

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Dave Moody

MANAGING BROKER, REALITY REAL ESTATE BROKERAGE

A licensed Michigan broker with about fifteen years in real estate, and a former financial and credit counselor. His designations include ABR, PSA, RENE, SRS, SRES, and CPRES, which is a fancy way of saying he brings training in buyer and seller representation, pricing, and negotiation to every conversation.

What a first conversation actually sounds like

1. **You talk, we listen.** You tell us the goal in your own words. No forms first.
2. **We look at the numbers.** Price, costs, financing, and the real timeline.
3. **We say plainly what we see**, including the options that do not involve us.
4. **You decide what is next**, on your timeline. Confidential either way.

The right move starts with the real picture.

Clear guidance is one free conversation away.

Free, confidential, and no pressure. Just honest answers and real options.

- Buy with confidence
- Sell for the right price
- Invest with clear eyes

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