

From Dirt to Dream Home

The Complete Guide to Buying New Construction
in Gainesville, Ga
From Contract to Closing Without
Costly Mistakes

Written by Shannon Sanborn
The Flying Realtor
20+ Years of Hands-On Construction Experience



CHATAHOOCHIE
HOME PARTNERS

What You need to Know Before You Buy New Construction

Buying a new construction home sounds simple... but there's a lot happening behind the scenes that most buyers never see.

From contracts and timelines to inspections and builder decisions—

this guide will walk you through what to expect, so you can move forward with confidence and avoid costly mistakes.

- Pre-Owned vs. New Construction: What's the Difference?
- Understanding Builder Contracts (What to Watch For)
- Inspections: What You Can and Should Do
- Pros & Cons of Buying New Construction
- The Step-by-Step Buying Process
- The Full Timeline from Contract to Closing

Tools to Help You Make the Right Decision

- Builder Questionnaire
- New Construction Checklist
- Questions to Ask Before You Sign

Have Questions About Buying New Construction?

I'm here to help you navigate the process from start to finish—so you don't make the mistakes most buyers do.

*Buying the right home isn't just about the house—
it's about making a decision you feel confident in.— Shannon Sanborn*

Meet Your New Construction Guide

Built by Grit. Fueled by Faith. Committed to Home.

My name is Shannon Sanborn, and I'm a Gainesville, Georgia Realtor who believes real estate should be more than a transaction—it should be a relationship built on trust, guidance, and results.

Real Experience That Matters

20+ Years of Hands-On Experience

I don't just understand how homes are bought and sold—I understand how they're built. From job sites to foundations to working alongside builders, that experience shapes how I guide clients here in Gainesville through one of the biggest financial decisions of their lives.

How I Approach This Business

I bring a faith-driven mindset into every part of my business—not just in what I say, but in how I serve, communicate, and guide people through important decisions.

Who I Help In Gainesville

Whether you're buying your first home in Gainesville, downsizing, or relocating to the area—you deserve someone who will tell you the truth, advocate for your goals, and walk with you every step of the way.

My Mission

To serve Gainesville and Hall County families with honesty, grit, and heart—creating a real estate experience rooted in local knowledge, fueled by faith, and focused on what matters most.

This isn't just about closing deals—
it's about helping people build lives and legacies right here in Gainesville that last.



Shanon Sanborn
The Flying Realtor
Call or Text: (706)969-4210



Understanding New Construction: What You're Really Getting Into

The Basics of Buying New Construction (What Most Buyers Don't Know)

Buying a new construction home gives you something most buyers want—a brand-new space that no one has lived in before.

But what many people don't realize is this:

Not all “new construction” is the same.

Most buyers don't realize this until it's too late.

1. Fully Custom Build

You purchase land and work with a builder to design your home from the ground up.

Pros:

Full control over layout and design

Completely personalized

Cons:

Takes the most time

Requires more decisions and involvement

2. Semi-Custom / Production Build

You choose a home in a community and customize certain features like finishes, cabinets, and flooring.

Pros:

Balance between customization and convenience

More predictable timeline

Cons:

Limited design choices

Builder controls the process

3. Move-In Ready (Spec Home)

The home is already built or nearly finished—you simply purchase it.

Pros:

Fastest option

Minimal decision-making

Cons:

Little to no customization

What you see is what you get

What This Means for You

Every option comes with trade-offs—time, cost, control, and convenience.

Choosing based on what looks good... instead of what actually fits their life

The right isn't about the best option - it's about the right option for you

HOME INSPECTIONS

Why You Still Need an Independent Inspection on a New Construction Home

The Biggest Misconception

A lot of buyers believe:

“It’s a brand-new home... it should be perfect.”

But here’s the truth:

New construction homes can still have issues—sometimes ones you can’t see.

Different crews, tight timelines, and fast-paced building schedules can lead to things being missed.

Why an Independent Inspection Matters

- Even when working with a reputable builder, an independent inspection gives you:
- A second set of eyes focused on YOU
- Protection before problems become expensive
- Confidence that your home was built correctly

This isn’t about questioning the builder—it’s about protecting your investment.

What Inspectors Look For

- Electrical systems
- Plumbing systems
- HVAC systems
- Structural components
- Roofing and exterior work
- Overall installation quality

They’re not just looking for major issues—they’re catching the small things before they become big problems.

The 3 Inspections You Should Consider

1. Foundation Stage Inspection

Before everything is built on top of it

Why it matters:

Catches structural issues early—when they’re easiest to fix

2. Pre-Drywall Inspection

Before the walls are closed up

Why it matters:

This is your only chance to see what’s behind the walls
(frames, wiring, plumbing)

HOME INSPECTIONS

Why You Still Need an Independent Inspection on a New Construction Home

3. Final Inspection

Right before closing

Why it matters:

Ensures everything is complete, functioning, and done correctly

What Most Buyers Don't Realize

Builders often have their own inspections...

But those inspections are for code compliance—not necessarily quality.

Code minimum does not always mean top quality.

Bottom Line

Skipping an inspection might save you a little money upfront...

But it can cost you thousands later.

— SERVING GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA / HALL COUNTY —

MOST BUYERS MISS THIS.

— THAT'S WHERE COSTLY MISTAKES HAPPEN. —

The 3 critical inspections that protect your investment, your timeline, and your **peace of mind**.

1



FOUNDATION STAGE INSPECTION

Before everything is built on top of it.

Why it matters:

Catches structural issues early—when they're easiest to fix.

2



PRE-DRYWALL STAGE INSPECTION

Before the walls are closed up.

Why it matters:

Your only chance to see what's behind the walls (frames, wiring, plumbing).

3



FINAL INSPECTION

Right before closing.

Why it matters:

Ensures everything is complete, functioning, and done correctly.



IN GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

This is where experience matters.



**TRUST THE PROCESS—
BUT VERIFY THE WORK.**



**THREE INSPECTIONS.
ONE SMART DECISION.**

*Protect your home.
Protect your future.*
IN GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA.

BUILDER'S CONTRACTS

5 Critical Things Every Buyer Needs to Understand Before They Sign

When buying a new construction home, the builder's contract is one of the most important documents you'll sign.

But here's what most buyers don't realize:

Builder contracts are written to protect the builder—not the buyer.

That doesn't mean they're bad...

It just means you need to understand what you're agreeing to before you sign.

Here are 5 things you need to pay close attention to:

1. Scope of Work & What's Actually Included

Not everything you see in a model home is automatically included in your contract.

Pay attention to: • Materials and finishes

- What's considered an "upgrade"
- What's included vs. what's extra

Why this matters:

You don't want surprises later when something you expected isn't included.

2. Change Orders (This Is Where Costs Add Up Fast)

Once you sign the contract, any changes you make are called change orders.

What to know: • Changes usually come with additional costs

- They can delay your timeline
- Pricing is controlled by the builder

Why this matters:

Small changes can quickly turn into big expenses.

3. Warranties — What's Covered (and What's Not)

Most builders offer warranties—but they don't all cover the same things.

Pay attention to:

- What's covered vs. excluded
- Length of coverage
- What qualifies as a claim

BUILDER'S CONTRACTS

5 Critical Things Every Buyer Needs to Understand Before They Sign

Why this matters:

You need to know what protection you actually have after closing.

4. Disputes & How Problems Are Handled

If something goes wrong, how it gets resolved is already written in the contract.

Look for:

- Mediation or arbitration clauses
- Whether you can go to court
- Who controls the process

Why this matters:

Some contracts limit your options more than you might expect.

5. The Kickout Clause (Most Buyers Overlook This)

This clause can allow the builder to cancel the contract under certain conditions.

Examples might include:

- Delays in financing
- Missed deadlines
- Other contract terms not being met

Why this matters:

This can impact your ability to secure the home—even after going under contract.

Where most buyers get caught off guard in builder contracts

— SERVING GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA / HALL COUNTY —

STRONG CONTRACTS. FEWER SURPRISES.

— WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE YOU SIGN. —

The 3 contract details that protect your investment,
your timeline, and your peace of mind.

1



TIMELINE & DELAYS

Know the expected completion date—and what happens if it's delayed.

Why it matters:

Protects you from open-ended timelines and costly rent or rate lock extensions.

2



PRICING & ALLOWANCES

Understand what's included, what's not, and how changes are handled.

Why it matters:

Prevents unexpected costs and budget-blowing upgrades.

3



WARRANTY & POST-CLOSING PROTECTIONS

Review warranty terms and who to contact if issues arise after you close.

Why it matters:

Ensures the builder stands behind their work—long after you move in.



IN GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA

This is where experience matters.



PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT—
START WITH A STRONG CONTRACT.



KNOW BEFORE YOU SIGN.
BUILD WITH CONFIDENCE.

*Protect your home.
Protect your future.*
IN GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA.

Pre-Owned vs. New Construction

Which one actually fits your lifestyle, timeline, and long terms goals?

Pre-Owned Homes (Resale)

Pros

- Typically less expensive
- More desirable, established locations
- Known neighborhood dynamics
- Property values can be evaluated before purchase
- Homes tend to have more character and uniqueness
- Closer proximity to schools, shopping, and places of worship
- Lower property tax profile (in many cases)

Pre-Owned Homes (Resale)

Cons

- May require repairs and/or renovations
- Older appliances and fewer modern features
- Financing can sometimes be more difficult
- Limited inventory of move-in ready homes
- Potential competition from other buyers
- Unexpected maintenance costs

IMPORTANT TIP!

Don't choose based on new vs. old.

Choose based on what fits your lifestyle, your timeline, and your long-term goals.

Pre-Owned vs. New Construction

Which one actually fits your lifestyle, timeline, and long terms goals?

New Construction Homes

Pros

- Brand-new home with builder warranties
- Customizable floor plans and design options
- Energy-efficient features and newer systems
- Lower maintenance costs in the short term
- Builder incentives and financing options may be available
- Modern layouts and open-concept designs

New Construction Homes

Cons

- Typically more expensive than resale homes
- Location may be farther from established areas
- Property values may be less established
- Can feel “cookie-cutter” depending on the community
- Ongoing construction in the neighborhood
- Additional costs for upgrades and finishes
- Potential for higher property taxes over time

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PRE-OWNED VS, NEW CONSTRUCTION

— WHICH ONE ACTUALLY FITS YOUR LIFESTYLE, TIMELINE, AND LONG-TERM GOALS? —

THERE IS NO “BETTER” OPTION—ONLY THE BETTER OPTION FOR YOU.

PRE-OWNED HOMES (RESALE)	NEW CONSTRUCTION HOMES
✓ PROS • Typically less expensive • More desirable, established locations • Known neighborhood dynamics • Property values can be evaluated before purchase • Homes tend to have more character and uniqueness • Closer to schools, shopping, and places of worship • Lower property tax profile (in many cases)	✗ CONS • May require repairs and/or renovations • Older appliances and fewer amenities • Financing can be more difficult • Limited inventory of move-in ready homes • Potential competition from other buyers • Unexpected maintenance costs
✗ CONS • Typically more expensive than resale homes • Location may be farther from established areas • Property values may be less established • Can feel “cookie-cutter” depending on the community • Ongoing construction in the neighborhood • Additional costs for upgrades and finishes • Potential for higher property taxes over time	✓ PROS • Brand-new home with builder warranties • Customizable floor plans and design options • Energy-efficient features and newer systems • Lower maintenance costs in the short term • Builder incentives and financing options may be available • Modern layouts and open-concept designs

PROTECT YOUR INVESTMENT. START WITH A CLEAR PLAN.

KNOW BEFORE YOU BUY. MOVE FORWARD WITH CONFIDENCE.

In Gainesville, Georgia—
this is where experience matters.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

From Contract to Closing - What to Expect When Buying New Construction Homes In Gainesville, GA

1. Educate Yourself on the New Construction Process

Start with understanding how new construction actually works.

Unlike resale, you're buying a home that doesn't fully exist yet — which means timelines, decisions, and expectations are different. Taking time to learn the process upfront helps you avoid costly mistakes and make better decisions from day one.

2. Team Up with the Right Lender

Get pre-approved and understand your true budget early.

New construction often comes with different timelines, rate considerations, and builder incentives. The right lender will help you structure your financing correctly and avoid surprises as the build progresses.

3. Find a Local Realtor Who Knows New Construction

Not all Realtors understand the new construction process — and that matters.

Builders have their own representatives, but they work for the builder. Having your own Realtor ensures someone is protecting your interests, helping you navigate decisions, and guiding you through the entire process.

4. Research the Builder

Do your homework before committing.

Look into the builder's reputation, quality of work, and past communities. Ask questions, read reviews, and if possible, walk completed homes. The builder you choose will directly impact your experience and the quality of your home.

STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS

From Contract to Closing - What to Expect When Buying New Construction Homes In Gainesville, GA

5. Negotiations (In Writing)

Everything needs to be in writing.

In new construction, negotiations often happen through upgrades, incentives, or closing cost contributions — not just price. Verbal agreements don't count. Make sure every detail is documented in the contract.

6. Design & Construction

You're building your home — not buying the model.

What you see in the model home often includes upgrades. Take time to understand your options, selections, and costs upfront so there are no surprises later in the process.

7. Home Inspection

Don't skip inspections — even on a brand-new home.

Builders conduct their own checks, but having your own independent inspection ensures everything is built correctly and gives you peace of mind before moving forward.

8. Know Your Coverage

Understand what's covered — and what's not.

Builder warranties vary. Know what's included, how long coverage lasts, and how to file a claim. This protects you after closing, not just during the build.

9. Look to the Future

Plan beyond closing day.

New construction timelines can shift, which affects your move, your current home, and your financing. Thinking ahead helps you stay prepared and avoid last-minute stress.

Every Step Matter

The more you understand the process the more confident you'll be - and the smoother your experience will be from contract to closing.



Your New Construction Resources

The right information can make all the difference when buying new construction. Below are the exact tools, checklists, and resources I use to help buyers navigate the new construction process with clarity and confidence.

If you have questions or want guidance through the process, I'm here to help you make the right decisions every step of the way.

Shannon Sanborn

The Flying Realtor | Gainesville, GA

Built on grit. Fueled by faith. Committed to home.

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NEW CONSTRUCTION BUYER RESOURCE

Your guide to buying new construction — whether the home is move-in ready or still being built inside a community.



UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS
We break down the new construction process step-by-step so you know what to expect and what matters most.



KNOW YOUR BUILDER
Get local insight on trusted builders, reputations, warranties, timelines, and what to look for.



UNDERSTAND THE NUMBERS
Understand pricing, upgrades, lot premiums, incentives, and true costs upfront—no surprises.



PROTECT YOUR CONTRACT
We review contracts, timelines, and contingencies so you can sign with confidence and peace of mind.





**KNOWLEDGE TODAY.
CONFIDENCE TOMORROW.**

The right information makes all the difference.
Let's build your future—together.



BUILT ON GRIT. FUELED BY FAITH. COMMITTED TO HOME.

— Helping buyers in Gainesville & Hall County navigate new construction with confidence. —



EARLY CONSTRUCTION STAGES BREAKDOWN

A step-by-step look at the early stages of construction - so you know exactly what's happening and what decisions you'll need to make

Every builder's process is slightly different - but these are the core steps most buyers go through

1 Foundation Stage

Building Process

- ☐ Building Permit
- ☐ House Staking
- ☐ Land Clearing
- ☐ Footings
- ☐ Foundation
- ☐ Garage Floor

Key Decisions During This Stage

- Brick / Stone Veneer (if applicable)
- Roof Color
- Vinyl Siding
- Kitchen Cabinets
- Kitchen Countertops
- Plumbing Fixtures
- Fireplace Surround Stand
- Flooring

2 Framing & Rough-In Stage

Building Process

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Framing | ☐ Rough In HVAC |
| ☐ Fireplace | ☐ Rough In Plumbing |
| ☐ Roof Shingles | ☐ Rough In Phone & Cable |
| ☐ Vinyl | ☐ Rough In Electrical |
| ☐ Siding Brick / Stone Veneer | ☐ Insulation |

Key Decisions During This Stage

- Phone & Cable Location
- Light Fixtures
- Vinyl Flooring
- Ceramic Tile
- Flooring Carpet

INTERIOR & FINISHING STAGES BREAKDOWN

A step-by-step look at the final stages of construction - where your home truly comes together and the details matter most

This is where your vision becomes reality - and where the final decisions shape how your home looks, feels, and functions.

3 Interior Stage

Building Process

- ☐ Install Flooring
- ☐ Drywall
- ☐ Interior Trim
- ☐ Kitchen Cabinets
- ☐ Paint
- ☐ Flooring Installation
(LVP, Tile, etc.)

Key Decisions During This Stage

- Interior Paint Colors
- Interior Options
(Door Handles, Interior Trim, etc.)

4 Finishing Stage

Building Process

- ☐ Deck & Porches
- ☐ Finish HVAC
- ☐ Finish Flooring
- ☐ Finish Plumbing
- ☐ Finish Electrical
- ☐ Irrigation System

Key Decisions During This Stage

- ☐ Landscape & Sod
- ☐ Interior Hardware-Shelving, Locks, etc...
- ☐ Crawl Space / Insulation Details
- ☐ Sidewalks & Drive Ways
- ☐ Final Clean-Up
- ☐ Certificate Of Occupancy

This is where everything comes together - and your home is prepared for move in

NEW CONSTRUCTION BUYER STRATEGY

Smart decisions to help you save money, avoid mistakes,
and buy with confidence

1. Hire a Real Estate Agent

Use your own representation from day one.

Builder reps work for the builder — not for you. Having your own agent ensures your interests are protected, helps you negotiate upgrades, and guides you through the entire process.

2. Evaluate Lenders

Shop for the best financing — not just convenience.

Even small differences in rates can cost you thousands over time. Compare lenders, understand builder incentives, and choose what truly benefits you — not just what's easiest.

3. Shop Builders

Not all builders are the same.

Take time to compare quality, warranties, and past communities. The builder you choose directly impacts your experience — and your home.

4. Location Still Matters

New doesn't always mean better location.

Pay attention to surrounding development, future growth, and resale potential. The right location protects your investment long-term.

5. Think Beyond the Model Home

Upgrades add up fast.

It's easy to fall in love with upgrades — but every decision impacts your bottom line. Focus on long-term value, not just appearance.

The right strategy upfront can save you thousands - and make the entire process smoother from start to finish.

SMART NEW CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY (CONTINUED)

Smart decisions during this stage can protect your budget, your timeline, and your long-term investment.

6. Control Your Budget

Base prices rarely reflect the final cost of a new home.

Upgrades can add up quickly if you're not paying attention. Know your numbers upfront and make decisions based on long-term value — not just what looks good in the moment.

7. Build With Resale in Mind

Even if you plan to stay long-term, resale value still matters.

Avoid over-upgrading beyond the neighborhood, and focus on features that appeal to a wide range of buyers — not just personal preference.

8. Understand Your Timeline

Building a home takes time — and delays can happen.

If you're selling your current home or coordinating a move, plan carefully and build in flexibility. The more prepared you are, the smoother the process will be.

9. Be Prepared for Delays

No matter what timeline you're given, delays are always a possibility.

Weather, labor shortages, and material delays can all impact your build. Stay flexible, stay informed, and avoid making rigid plans too early.

Smart decisions during this stage can save you thousands — and make your entire experience smoother from start to finish.

SMART NEW CONSTRUCTION STRATEGY (FINAL STEPS)

These final decisions can impact your timeline, your costs, and how smoothly your move comes together.

10. Stay Involved in the Process

Staying engaged helps prevent delays and costly mistakes.

Visit the site when possible, stay in communication with your builder, and keep track of progress. The more involved you are, the fewer surprises you'll face.

11. Avoid Last-Minute Changes

Changes during construction can delay your timeline and increase costs.

Once selections and plans are finalized, stick with your decisions unless absolutely necessary. Small changes can create bigger delays than expected.

12. Plan for Temporary Housing

Your move-in timing may not line up perfectly.

Delays or timing gaps can happen, especially if you're selling a home or ending a lease. Have a backup plan in place so you're not rushed into decisions.

13. Learn Your Home Systems

Understanding your home protects your investment.

Take time to review manuals, ask questions during walkthroughs, and learn how everything works. This helps you avoid costly mistakes and maintain your home properly.

The right preparation doesn't just protect your investment — it makes the entire experience smoother, more predictable, and far less stressful.

MY MISSION

To serve families in Gainesville and Hall County with honesty, grit, and heart — creating a real estate experience rooted in local knowledge, fueled by faith, and committed to the people and places that matter most.

This isn't just about closing deals — it's about helping people build lives, create memories, and make decisions they feel confident about long after the closing table.

I believe in doing things the right way — even when it's not the easiest way.

That means being honest, communicating clearly, and always putting your best interests first.

Whether it's guiding you through new construction, helping you avoid costly mistakes, or simply being there when you need answers — my goal is to make the process simple, clear, and stress-free.

Built on grit. Fueled by faith. Committed to home.

— SERVING GAINESVILLE, GEORGIA / HALL COUNTY —

BUILT ON GRIT. FUELED BY FAITH. COMMITTED TO HOME.

This is more than real estate — it's about serving people **the right way**, every step of the journey.



HONEST GUIDANCE.
STRONGER DECISIONS.



LOCAL KNOWLEDGE.
REAL ADVANTAGE.



COMMITTED TO FAMILIES.
FOCUSED ON WHAT MATTERS.

WHAT MY CLIENTS ARE SAYING

Real experiences from buyers and sellers I've had the privilege to serve in Gainesville and Hall County.



**"SUPERB AGENT!
STRONGLY
RECOMMEND!"**

MATTHEW



**"VERY COMMITTED TO
HELPING YOU AND
YOUR FAMILY!"**

CLAYTON



**"PROFESSIONAL,
COMMUNICATIVE,
KNOWLEDGABLE, AND ONE
OF THE MOST RELIABLE
AGENTS YOU'LL FIND IN
REAL ESTATE"**

KYLE



**"MADE THE ENTIRE
PROCESS SMOOTH AND
STRESS-FREE FROM
START TO FINISH"**

SONYA



**"SHANNON TOOK THE TIME TO EXPLAIN EVERY STEP
OF THE PROCESS AND MADE SURE WE FELT
CONFIDENT IN EVERY DECISION. HIS KNOWLEDGE
OF THE AREA AND NEW CONSTRUCTION REALLY
MADE A DIFFERENCE. WE COULDN'T HAVE ASKED
FOR A BETTER EXPERIENCE."**

Chris

Trusted by families across Gainesville and Hall County.

WHAT YOU CAN EXPECT FROM ME

Buying new construction is a major decision — and who you work with matters. Here's how I show up for my clients every step of the way:

- Clear, honest guidance — so you can make confident decisions
- Straightforward communication — no surprises, no confusion
- Strategic advice to help you avoid costly mistakes
- Strong advocacy — making sure your best interests come first
- Consistent updates so you always know what's happening
- A proactive approach to finding the right home and opportunity
- A focus on long-term value — not just the transaction

Let's Get Connected

If you're thinking about new construction in Gainesville or Hall County, I'd be honored to help guide you through the process.



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