

CITY TO COUNTRY

THE ACREAGE BUYER'S GUIDE

Your step-by-step guide to buying rural property in Alberta

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REAL ESTATE



WELCOME TO

Country Living

Buying an acreage is about more than a home. It is about the lifestyle, land and rural systems that come with it. This guide helps you ask the right questions before you commit.

INSIDE THIS GUIDE

- Location & lifestyle
- Land, title & zoning
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- Costs & financing
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Location & lifestyle

Find the property that fits your everyday life.

Your reason for moving

More space, privacy, horses, a workshop or a slower pace? Identify your priorities and what you can realistically maintain.

Commute & services

Drive your route in winter and at peak times. Consider school transportation, emergency response, medical care, shopping, internet and cell coverage.

Usable acreage

A parcel's size does not tell you how much land is practical. Check slope, drainage, tree cover, pasture, wetlands and fencing.

Future plans

Before planning a barn, suite, home business or subdivision, confirm what the municipality allows.



Land, title & zoning

Beautiful land is not always buildable land.

Land use districts

Confirm current zoning and permitted or discretionary uses with the municipality. Animal units, buildings and secondary dwellings vary by district.

Title & registrations

Have your lawyer review restrictive covenants, easements, rights-of-way, road widening reservations and other registered documents.

Boundaries & access

Review survey information, a Real Property Report where appropriate, and legal year-round road access. A visible driveway alone is not proof of access rights.

Environmental constraints

Investigate flood hazards, wetlands, setbacks, steep terrain, former industrial uses and any relevant development limitations.



Water & wells

Know both the quality and quantity of your supply.

Identify the source

Is the home supplied by a private well, cistern, shared system or another source? Request well drilling records and available service history.

Test water quality

Arrange independent laboratory testing for bacteria and relevant chemical parameters. Clear water is not necessarily safe water.

Evaluate well performance

Ask a qualified professional about well flow, recovery and sustainable yield. Consider seasonal changes and household needs.

Treatment & upkeep

Understand filtration, softeners, disinfection, pump condition, pressure tanks and expected ongoing costs.



Septic systems

An essential part of rural home ownership.

Know the system

Identify whether the property uses a septic tank and field, mound, treatment unit or other approved system.

Review records

Ask for permits, installation date, pumping and service records, repairs and any compliance concerns.

Arrange an inspection

A qualified septic professional can assess condition, components and suitability; discuss the system's capacity for your household.

Plan ahead

Septic repairs and replacement can be significant. Confirm where the system is located before planning additions or landscaping.



Inspections & due diligence

Look beyond the listing photographs.

Home inspection

Assess roof, structure, foundation, heating, electrical and plumbing with an experienced inspector.

Outbuildings

Inspect barns, shops, arenas and fences. Confirm permits, structural condition, utilities and intended uses.

Property documents

Review title and registrations with your lawyer, municipal permit history and available surveys.

Specialist reviews

Depending on the property, consider well, septic, environmental, geotechnical, drainage or other qualified specialists.



Costs & financing

Budget for the property, not just the purchase price.

Monthly essentials

Allow for property taxes, insurance, utilities, internet, heating fuel, water treatment and waste services.

Seasonal upkeep

Consider snow clearing, gravel roads, mowing, fencing, tree care, drainage and equipment.

Animals & buildings

Livestock, barns and arenas add feed, maintenance, utilities and insurance considerations.

Financing & tax questions

Speak to your lender and insurer early. Property size, condition and land use can affect approval; ask qualified advisers about GST where applicable.



Your acreage checklist

Questions to answer before removing conditions.

- [ ] Define your lifestyle, location and realistic budget
- [ ] Confirm financing and insurance availability
- [ ] Verify zoning, animal allowances and intended uses
- [ ] Review title, registered documents and legal access
- [ ] Review surveys, boundaries and building permits
- [ ] Arrange a home and outbuilding inspection
- [ ] Review well records; test water quality and yield
- [ ] Inspect septic system and maintenance history
- [ ] Assess flood, drainage and environmental concerns
- [ ] Confirm internet, utilities and winter road access
- [ ] Budget for upkeep, repairs and closing costs



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READY TO FIND YOUR ACREAGE?

I would be honoured to help you navigate acreage buying in the Foothills, Rocky View and surrounding Alberta communities.

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Educational information only. Verify property-specific details with the municipality and qualified professionals.