DIANA GANDY
REALTOR®

REALTOR® | LICENSE #852785

AUSTIN BUYER MONEY GUIDE

THE PRICE IS NOT THE PAYMENT.

A practical guide to the numbers that decide whether a home fits your life - not just your preapproval.

THE PURPOSE

Use this before serious touring to separate the lender's maximum from the monthly number and cash commitment that actually feel comfortable.

DIRECT CONTACT

(737) 353-5523
diana@ascendgroupre.com | dgandy.com

ASCEND GROUP | lpt realty
BROKERED BY LPT REALTY, LLC

START WITH YOUR LIFE, NOT THE LISTING

Build the number before the search.

A preapproval answers a lender question. Your search range should answer a different one: what can you own comfortably while keeping the rest of your life intact?

Monthly comfort

01

The total housing payment you can make without crowding out savings, travel, childcare, debt goals, or the life you are trying to keep.

MY COMFORTABLE TOTAL

Cash ceiling

02

How much you are willing to use for the purchase after preserving the emergency and repair cushion you want to keep.

MAXIMUM CASH AT CLOSING

Financing lane

03

The loan amount, rate structure, down payment, and mortgage-insurance assumptions your lender is actually modeling.

LENDER SCENARIO / PREAPPROVAL

Ownership cushion

04

Money left after closing for moving, repairs, maintenance, deductibles, and the first surprises that come with ownership.

RESERVE I WANT TO KEEP

DIANA'S READ

Buy the payment, not the price.

List price is a filter. The monthly total and cash required are the numbers that decide whether the property belongs in your search.

Principal + interest
Your loan payment before other ownership costs.

Property taxes
Local taxing units and property-specific facts matter.

Home insurance
Use an actual quote, not a generic estimate.

Mortgage insurance
May apply depending on loan and down payment.

HOA / condo dues
Usually separate from the mortgage payment.

MUD / PID / assessments
Verify what applies to the actual property.

Know what belongs in the number.

The lender's Loan Estimate is the starting point. Property-specific taxes, insurance, dues, assessments, and condition can change what a home actually asks of you.

Your monthly total

COMFORTABLE TOTAL HOUSING PAYMENT

$ ____________________

- Principal + interest ________
- Mortgage insurance, if any ________
- Property taxes ________
- Home insurance ________
- HOA / condo dues ________
- MUD / PID / assessments ________
- Maintenance reserve ________

Diana's read: if a cost is not collected through escrow, it does not disappear. Budget it separately before deciding the home fits.

Where the real numbers come from

1 **Lender**
Use the loan scenario and Loan Estimate for principal, interest, mortgage insurance, estimated escrows, closing costs, and estimated cash to close.

2 **Tax records + local taxing units**
Confirm current tax information and which jurisdictions tax the property. A seller's exemptions may not match yours after purchase.

3 **Property-specific insurance quote**
Ask an insurer for an actual quote and compare coverage, deductibles, and exclusions. Sample rates are not a substitute for the property quote.

4 **HOA / MUD / PID documents**
Verify recurring dues, transfer fees, assessments, district obligations, and rules tied to the property.

5 **Inspection + property records**
Condition, age of systems, permits, solar obligations, and deferred maintenance help shape the ownership budget after closing.

Texas tax note

Texas has no state property tax. Local taxing units set and collect property taxes, so the number is property-specific and can differ meaningfully across nearby homes.

Same price. Different reality.

This illustration keeps the loan payment the same so the property costs are easy to see. The point is not the example numbers. The point is the comparison.

ILLUSTRATION | HOME A

$500,000 purchase price

Principal + interest	**$2,400**
Property taxes	**$690**
Home insurance	**$190**
HOA / assessments	**$0**
ILLUSTRATIVE MONTHLY TOTAL	$3,280

ILLUSTRATION | HOME B

$500,000 purchase price

Principal + interest	**$2,400**
Property taxes	**$980**
Home insurance	**$320**
HOA / assessments	**$255**
ILLUSTRATIVE MONTHLY TOTAL	$3,955

$675 / month apart

before utilities, maintenance, and any property-specific items not shown here.

CASH TO CLOSE

Down payment is only one piece.

Your Loan Estimate separates closing costs from the amount you actually need to bring. Credits, deposits, prepaids, and escrow funding can change the final figure.

1. **Down payment**
   The portion of the purchase price you are not financing.
2. **Loan + settlement costs**
   Lender charges and transaction costs shown on the Loan Estimate.
3. **Prepaids + initial escrow**
   Items such as prepaid interest, insurance premium, and escrow funding may be due at closing.
4. **Deposits, credits + adjustments**
   Amounts already paid or credited can reduce what remains due at closing.

Illustration only. Actual taxes, insurance, loan payment, dues, assessments, credits, and closing figures vary. Use the property records, insurer quote, governing documents, and lender disclosures for the transaction you are considering.

YOUR NEXT MOVE

Turn the budget into a search range.

A Buyer Planning Session puts your payment comfort, cash plan, financing next step, and search priorities into one practical starting point.

01

Your comfortable range

A search range built around the payment and cash commitment you actually want.

02

Your financing next step

What needs to happen with a lender or loan scenario before serious touring.

03

Your property-cost guardrails

Taxes, insurance, dues, assessments, and condition questions to verify before an offer.

04

Your search brief

A clearer plan for price, priorities, location constraints, timing, and tradeoffs.

BUYER PLANNING SESSION

Start with the number that lets you sleep at night.

Bring a preapproval, rough numbers, saved homes, or nothing but an idea. We will turn what you know now into a practical next step.

Diana Gandy
(737) 353-5523
diana@ascendgroupre.com
dgandy.com

MAKE AN APPT

Current public guidance referenced: Consumer Financial Protection Bureau Loan Estimate / Closing Disclosure resources; Texas Comptroller property-tax guidance; Texas Department of Insurance home-insurance shopping guidance. Educational marketing material only - not lending, tax, insurance, legal, appraisal, or inspection advice.