



CHICAGO
scene
HOMES
YOUR SUCCESS IS OUR MISSION

THE ULTIMATE CHICAGO HOME BUYERS GUIDE



**BERKSHIRE
HATHAWAY**
HomeServices
Chicago

PH. 312-416-3480 | CHICAGOSCENE.COM



Mark Kaplan

Helaine Cohen

Ted Widen



ChicagoScene.com

Who Are We?

Mark Kaplan of Marc Construction and Development, Helaine Cohen of Chicagocondofinder.com, and Ted Widen of ChicagoScene.com have teamed up to help Chicagoans buy, sell or lease a house or condo. Together we have formed an extraordinary team of real estate professionals with many years of experience. We have helped thousands of buyers, sellers, and renters successfully complete their transactions in a timely and efficient manner, while minimizing their stress and anxiety.

Mark has decades of experience and has helped people buy and sell over a billion dollars in real estate. Mark has had the opportunity to develop many residential and commercial developments in Illinois, Wisconsin & a residential development on the top of Bald Eagle Mountain at Deer Valley Ski Resort in Utah.

Helaine is the founder of ChicagoCondoFinder.com, which caters to the downtown condo market. She has consistently been recognized among the Top 1% of brokers in Illinois. Her extensive market and building knowledge, neighborhood insights and dynamic marketing plans capitalize on the latest tech tools, and provide prime exposure to serve the needs of buyers and sellers.

Ted is the founder of ChicagoScene.com, and Publisher of Chicago Scene magazine. His company is well known for producing major events such as the New Year's Eve Party at the Drake Hotel and the Chicago Scene Boat Party, which has been taking place for over 20 years.



Choose your real estate agent wisely

There are so many factors that go into making the right decision as to who is going to represent you in one of the most important financial decisions that you'll be making in your lifetime.

You want an agent that that will go above and beyond for you. Your agent should have extensive market knowledge, and be a strong negotiator who can successfully close your deal on the best possible terms. A good agent can save you time and money, and is the key to making your transaction go smoothly and efficiently.

Every home that comes on the market has unique characteristics that affect its value. Whether it be location, size, age, condition, neighborhood, or just overall appeal, an agent's knowledge of the market can save you time, energy and money. Their skills allow them to sift through the marketplace, and show you the best homes to meet your needs. The experienced agent knows the best neighborhoods, schools, parks, restaurants and shopping. They will guide you to the most sought after and attractive areas.

Once finding the home of your dreams price becomes very important. Your realtor needs to have the skills to fight for you when it comes to price. You want someone that is a skilled

negotiator on your side. The price that is ultimately decided can vary by thousands of dollars. Your real estate representative will make a huge difference as to what price you ultimately pay for your new home. Remember you won't be personally negotiating, your real estate representative will be doing it for you.

Your agent will recommend a mortgage broker that can prequalify you, an attorney that can represent you, and an inspector that will make sure that there are no faults or problems with your prospective home. Your agent can also recommend contractors to assist you with painting, repairs, or any other issues pertaining to the home.

If you are buying a home, it is important to have an exclusive buyers agency relationship with your agent. This means your agent will represent only your interests in a transaction, and has a fiduciary obligation to act in your best interest, and keep all your personal and financial information confidential.

Last but not least, you want a real estate agent that is fun and enjoyable to work with. You're going to spend a lot of time with your chosen agent. Your agent will be the quarterback of your entire team comprising of mortgage brokers, lawyers, appraisers, inspectors, closing officers and possibly contractors. Make sure that your agent is working for you, has your trust and someone that you truly enjoy working with.





Benefits of having an Exclusive Buyer agency

Agent Responsibilities

Fiduciary responsibility: A duty of loyalty is one of the most fundamental fiduciary duties owed by an agent to his principal. This duty obligates a real estate broker to act at all times solely in the best interests of his principal to the exclusion of all other interests, including the broker's own self-interest.

Undivided Loyalty: The agent must act only in your best interest and put that above their own and those of other people. The agent must avoid conflicts of interest and must protect your negotiation position at all times.

Confidentiality: The agent must keep information confidential, even after your relationship ends. Confidential information includes your personal information, information about the property, and information about the transaction

Reasonable care and skill: The agent must exercise reasonable care and skill in all their duties. They must meet the standard of a reasonable and competent member of the real estate industry.

Full accounting: The agent must account for all money and property they receive while acting on your behalf. Everything a client puts in the care of an agent – for example, money, keys or documents – is returned when the agreement ends.

Pre-Approval

This is undoubtedly one of the most important steps when purchasing a home. Knowing your budget is fundamental. The first step is to consult with a recommended Mortgage Broker or Lender and complete the required documentation to become pre-qualified.



It takes a **team** to close a real estate deal successfully - you need a good **quarterback**

All the people involved in a real estate transaction



Costs of Purchasing a Home

- Down Payment (0% to 20%)
- Due Diligence (Home Inspection, Condo Document Review)
- Legal Fees
- Taxes & City Stamps

Costs of Home Ownership

- Mortgage
- Property Taxes
- HOA- Condo Fees
- PMI - Private mortgage insurance
- Insurance
- Utilities
- Maintenance



Home Search

When searching for a home, there are a number of crucial factors to take into consideration, and your agent can help guide you through this process. Some key considerations are:

- **Choose your Area or Neighborhood**
- **Property Type:** Single Family, Condo, Townhouse, COOP, Highrise, Midrise, Lowrise Walkup
- **Lifestyle:** Schools, shopping, transit, amenities, distance from work
- **Unique Criteria:** Lake access, downtown or lake views
- **Short and Long Term Goals:** Blending your anticipated length of ownership with your future goals and plans

Once we identify your criteria, we begin searching for properties that meet your needs. We pride ourselves on getting to know our clients on a deeper level than most, and therefore are able to diligently choose properties that we know will be a good fit.

- Saved Searches – We can set you up to receive on a daily or weekly basis all of the properties that fit your criteria.
- We will begin to send you properties that match your criteria. You will be able to easily mark the ones you prefer, allowing us to get a better understanding of what will be the right fit. You'll also be notified in real-time as new listings that match your criteria come on the market.



Making an Offer

You've found the Right Home, Time to Make an Offer!

Once we've found the right home, it's time to make your first offer! While at times it can be difficult to pull the trigger, again beware that the good homes move quickly and we don't want you to miss out on the opportunity and end up becoming discouraged.

When writing a purchase contract, the following factors will require your input:

- i. Purchase Price
- ii. Due dates and amount of Earnest money Deposits
- iii. Possession Date
- iv. Goods Included / Excluded
- v. Contingency Dates for Due Diligence (Attorney approval and inspections)
- vi. Closing Date

Financing: Once your offer has been accepted you will work with your mortgage broker to get a final approval for your home loan. The mortgage Broker will now require a copy of the purchase contract and MLS details.

Home Inspection: We highly recommend professional home inspections for everyone. While homes may look beautiful on the surface, sometimes upon a more thorough assessment there can be concerns and issues that could be costly to you. With a pre-owned home, there will always be normal wear and tear, but home inspections will allow you to identify issues that won't be identified via a walk through. If anything surfaces, we will work with the sellers agent to find a solution. The inspection is also an excellent learning opportunity. If you decide to use one of our preferred professional inspectors, you will learn the ins-and-outs of your home.

Condo Document Review: When placing an offer on a Condominium, it is important to have an attorney review the appropriate documents pertaining to the management and structure of the condo. This will ensure the budget is sufficient, there are no unknown special assessment, and there will be no unexpected costs following your possession.

Walk Through - 24 Hours before Closing

This is your opportunity to insure any work to be agreed to be done after your inspection has been completed. Typically we will do a walk-through 24 - 48 hours prior to possession to ensure the home is in the proper condition as outlined in the contract.



Moving Checklist

1-3 Months in advance - Book a Mover

3-4 WEEKS PRIOR TO MOVE

- Make an inventory of everything to be moved
- Donate any unwanted clothing or furniture
- Book the moving elevator and confirm parking arrangement for truck
- Contact insurance company to transfer policies (life, homeowners)
- Review Tax deductions on moving expenses
- Request change of address kit from post-office
- Prepare a list of friends, business firms and personal accounts who should be notified of your upcoming move

Arrange cut-off/activation dates for utility companies:

- Telephone
- Cable
- Gas/Electricity/Water
- Garbage

2 WEEKS PRIOR TO MOVE

- Purchase any moving supplies - visit youmove.me to access our full catalogue of supplies with free delivery!
- Make an appointment with a service technician to prepare major appliances for shipment (i.e. plumber, electrician)
- Have rugs and draperies cleaned and leave wrapped when returned
- Obtain written appraisal of antique items to verify value

Make a plan to dispose of flammables that can't be transported:

- Aerosol Cans
- Cleaning Fluid
- Ammunition
- Fireworks
- Household Liquids
- Oil Cans/Paint/Thinner
- Propane Tanks

1 WEEK PRIOR TO MOVE

- Check furniture for dents and scratches
- Label items you need to access easily
- Clean out the refrigerator/plan to defrost and dry day before move

- Drain equipment: water hoses, propane tank, gas/oil lawnmowers
- Schedule to have utilities turn on at your new home
- Make a plan to transport house plants
- Confirm travel arrangements for pets and family

DAY OF MOVE

- Designate boxes and items as "last load" items
- All loose items are packed in boxes
- All electronics are unplugged from a power source. Plasma TV's should be unplugged the day before so they are at room temperature on move day.
- All pictures are removed from the walls
- All boxes are labeled with their destination room in your new home on the top and sides of each box
- All heavy and breakable items are removed from dressers and desks
- All contents are removed from appliances
- All items are removed from the top of furniture
- All linens are removed from beds
- All rooms, closets, cabinets have been checked
- Disassemble bedroom sets to save time

Prepare an essentials box:

- Toilet Paper (unopened)
- Snacks/Instant Coffee
- Scissors/Pocket Knife
- Garbage Bags
- Change of Clothes
- Dish Soap and Towel
- Pet Food and Dish
- Flashlight
- Portable Tool Kit
- Towels
- All-Purpose Cleaner (unopened)
- Mug/Plate/Cutlery
- Shower Curtain
- Important Records/Documents

Before you leave the house:

- Water shut off
- A/C shut off
- Lights turned off
- Windows shut and locked
- Surrender house keys
- Check for items left behind



Let us help you find your perfect home

Contact Ted, Mark or Helaine at : Chicagoscene.com

Please give us a call at: **312-416-3480**

Find us on all of these Social Media Platforms:    

