

The APPRAISAL

The appraisal process consists of several steps. The following are the major steps in the sequence normally followed by appraisers:

- Research the subject property as to size, bedrooms, baths, year built, lot size and square footage.
- Gather data of recent sales in the subject's neighborhood. The appraiser needs to locate at least three, preferably more, similar-sized homes that have sold in the neighborhood. The homes should be within one mile of the subject property and sold within the past six months. These homes are considered the "Comparable Properties", or "Comps" for short.
- Field inspection consists of two parts: First, the inspection of the subject property; and second, the exterior inspection of the comparable properties that have been selected to estimate the value of the subject property.

The subject inspection consists of taking photos of the street scene, front and rear of the home that may include portions of the yard. The appraiser will make an interior inspection for condition noting any items that would detract from or add to the value of the home. He will also draw a floor plan of the home while doing the inspection. The inspection of the comparable properties is limited to an exterior inspection.

For features that cannot be seen from the street, the appraiser has reports from Multiple Listing Services (MLS), county public records and appraisal files along with other sources to help determine the condition and amenities of the comparable.

After the field inspection has been completed, the appraiser must determine which comparable properties most resemble the subject, making slight adjustments in value for any differences between them. After making the required adjustments, the appraiser will go through the reconciliation process with three comparable properties to determine a final estimated value.

An appraiser will call in advance to set up an appointment. At that time, offer to supply any information about the home's size, number of bedrooms, bathrooms, pool, enclosed patio, etc. The more that is known about the property prior to the inspection, the better the appraiser can focus on researching the most similar comparable. Doing your homework will maximize your chances of having a good appraisal.

While your home is being inspected, do not follow the appraiser from room to room causing distraction. Instead, allow the inspection to go smoothly. In the event the appraiser has any questions, be close by to answer them. The time to mention the things you think are important is either before or following the inspection.



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