

## Guest Column: Pre-qualification is essential in today's market

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Let's talk about the importance of getting prequalified in today's competitive market.

If you remember last week, I told you the importance of working with a local Realtor© and how your agent can help you navigate through the home buying process. Having a prequalification letter in place before you start looking at homes is important first step on the path the home ownership.

The reality of the real estate market today is there are far too few homes on the market for the number of buyers in place and ready to buy those homes. As of today's writing, there are 43 homes for sale in Del Norte County. Those homes include all mobile homes in a park, all manufactured homes on land, and all homes with a view. They range in price from \$45,000 to \$2,950,000. There are a few homes that are being sold by the owner and are not represented in this count.

Add to the low inventory the number of people looking to buy a home. Currently there are 103 real estate agents active in our community trying to help their clients buy a home.

Think about that for a minute, there are 103 active Realtors© and 43 active properties. Assuming that each agent has only one client they are working with, there are at least two buyers for each property.

Let's dive down a little bit deeper to the reality of the situation. If you are looking for a single-family stick-built home, there are 34 as of today's writing, and if you need financing to purchase that home your inventory to choose from is only 28 homes. If you start to narrow your search to fit your budget, you could easily be down to one or two homes to choose from.

So now when you do find the home you want, you have to think about your competition. Properties receiving multiple offers are very common in this market. If there is an offer between you and another, your offer does

not have a pre-qualification letter and the other offer does, there is a very good chance your offer will be placed into a back up position while the offer with the loan in place will be accepted.

If you are a first-time home buyer, I strongly urge you to have a conversation with a local Realtor© so you can save yourself some disappointments later.

*Donna DeWof is a seasoned real estate broker, and was named Realtor of the Year in 2021 by the Del Norte County Board of Realtors.*