

CENTRAL FLORIDA REAL ESTATE NEWS

Keeping You Up To Date On Housing Trends
& The Local Real Estate Market

Provided By: Phil Holliday, Real Estate Specialist

August Edition

Consumer Guide: How Solar Panels Impact a Real Estate Transaction in Central Florida

Understanding Solar Before You Buy or Sell

As solar energy becomes more popular across Central Florida, more homes are being equipped with rooftop solar panels. While solar can provide long-term energy savings and environmental benefits, it also introduces unique considerations when buying or selling a home. Whether you're a homeowner preparing to sell or a buyer considering a solar-powered property, understanding how solar affects a real estate transaction can help you avoid surprises and make informed decisions.

Is the Solar System Owned or Leased?

One of the first questions to ask is whether the solar panels are owned outright, financed, or leased.

- **Owned Systems:** These are typically viewed as an asset and may increase a home's appeal. Buyers receive the benefits of lower electric bills without assuming another payment.
- **Financed Systems:** If there is an outstanding loan, the seller may need to pay it off before closing or negotiate with the buyer to assume the loan, subject to lender approval.
- **Leased Systems:** A lease remains with the solar company. Buyers generally must qualify to assume the lease, and not all buyers are willing or able to do so. This can add extra steps and extend the closing process.

Solar Can Affect Home Value

Studies have shown that owned solar systems may increase a home's market value, particularly when utility costs are a major concern. However, the added value depends on several factors, including:

- Age and condition of the system
- Remaining warranty coverage
- Energy production history
- Local buyer demand
- Whether the system is owned or leased

An appraiser may also consider these factors when determining the property's value.

Documentation Matters

Before listing a home with solar, sellers should gather important documentation, including:

- Original purchase or lease agreement
- Financing information
- Warranty documents
- Maintenance records
- Utility bills showing energy savings
- Permits and final inspection approvals

Having these documents readily available helps buyers feel confident and can prevent delays during escrow.

Home Inspections and Insurance

Buyers should ask whether the solar system has been regularly maintained and if any repairs have been completed. It's also important to verify:

- The roof's age and condition.
- Whether removing panels would be necessary for future roof replacement.
- Homeowners insurance coverage for the solar system.
- Any manufacturer or installer warranties that transfer to the new owner.

Utility Savings Can Be a Selling Feature

Many Central Florida homeowners enjoy lower monthly electric bills thanks to abundant sunshine. Sellers who can demonstrate actual utility savings often provide buyers with a clearer understanding of the financial benefits. Providing 12 months of electric bills can be an excellent marketing tool.

Questions Buyers Should Ask

Before purchasing a home with solar, buyers should ask:

- Who owns the system?
- Is there a remaining loan or lease?
- What are the average monthly electric bills?
- Is there a battery backup system?
- Are warranties transferable?
- Who installed the system?
- Has the roof been inspected recently?

Consumer Guide: How Solar Panels Impact a Real Estate Transaction in Central Florida continued

Working With Experienced Professionals

Solar-equipped homes often require additional coordination between lenders, title companies, solar providers, appraisers, and real estate professionals. Having experienced guidance throughout the transaction helps ensure that financing, documentation, inspections, and closing proceed smoothly.

The Bottom Line

Solar energy can be a tremendous advantage for homeowners in Central Florida, offering lower utility costs and increased energy efficiency. However, every solar installation is different, and understanding ownership, financing, warranties, and documentation is essential before buying or selling.

If you're considering purchasing or selling a home with solar panels, taking the time to understand the details can save time, reduce stress, and help you make the best financial decision.

As your Central Florida real estate professional, I'm here to help you navigate every aspect of the transaction—from understanding solar agreements to negotiating terms that protect your interests. Together, we can ensure your next move is powered by confidence.

Has Central Florida's Love Affair with Fixer-Uppers Come to an End?

For years, Central Florida buyers eagerly searched for the next "fixer-upper" opportunity. Whether inspired by popular home renovation television shows or the dream of building instant equity, many buyers were willing to overlook outdated kitchens, aging roofs, and worn flooring in exchange for a lower purchase price.

Today's market tells a different story.

As inventory has increased across much of Central Florida, buyers have become more selective than they have been in years. Instead of looking for homes that require months of renovations, many are searching for properties they can move into immediately.

Why the Shift?

Several factors have changed buyer priorities. Renovation costs continue to climb. Labor shortages, material prices, and longer project timelines have made remodeling far more expensive than many buyers anticipated. What once seemed like a weekend DIY project can quickly become a five-figure investment. Higher monthly housing costs matter. While mortgage rates have stabilized compared to recent peaks, buyers remain focused on keeping their total monthly expenses manageable. Adding renovation loans or paying for repairs after closing often stretches budgets beyond what's comfortable.

Time is valuable. Many buyers simply don't want to spend months coordinating contractors, waiting for permits, or living in a construction zone. Families relocating to Central Florida often prefer homes that are ready from day one.

Move-In Ready Homes Have the Advantage

Homes that are clean, well-maintained, and updated continue to attract the strongest interest. Features such as fresh paint, modern kitchens, updated bathrooms, newer roofs, and energy-efficient systems help buyers feel confident they're making a smart investment.

These homes frequently receive more showings, stronger offers, and may spend less time on the market than comparable homes requiring significant updates.

What This Means for Sellers

If you're thinking about selling, now is the time to evaluate your home through a buyer's eyes.

You don't necessarily need a complete renovation, but addressing deferred maintenance, improving curb appeal, completing minor repairs, and professionally staging your home can make a significant difference. Even relatively inexpensive improvements can create a stronger first impression and help justify your asking price.

Pricing is equally important. Buyers today have more choices, and overpriced homes that require work are often the first to be overlooked.

There Is Still a Market for Fixer-Uppers

Fixer-uppers haven't disappeared completely. Investors, experienced renovators, and buyers looking for sweat equity still actively seek opportunities. However, they're typically expecting a meaningful discount to compensate for today's higher renovation costs and increased risk. Simply put, the premium once paid for "potential" has diminished.

The Bottom Line

Central Florida's long-standing love affair with fixer-upper homes may not be over entirely—but it has certainly cooled. Today's buyers are placing greater value on convenience, predictability, and move-in readiness. For sellers, understanding this shift can make the difference between a home that sells quickly and one that lingers on the market. If you're considering buying or selling in Central Florida, I'd be happy to provide a personalized market analysis and discuss the strategies that are working in today's market. The right preparation and pricing can help you achieve the best possible results.

Is Owning a Second Property Right for You? Weighing the Pros and Cons in Central Florida

For many homeowners, the idea of owning a second property is exciting. Whether it's a vacation home near the attractions, an investment property generating rental income, or a future retirement retreat, a second home can provide both financial opportunities and lifestyle benefits. Here in Central Florida, demand for vacation homes, long-term rentals, and retirement properties continues to attract buyers from across the country. But before taking the plunge, it's important to understand both the advantages and the challenges that come with owning a second property.

The Benefits of Owning a Second Property

Build Long-Term Wealth

Real estate has historically been one of the most reliable ways to build wealth. As property values appreciate over time, your second home may grow in value while you continue paying down the mortgage.

Generate Additional Income

Many buyers purchase a second property to create rental income. Depending on the location and local regulations, a property can be rented long-term or, in approved areas, as a short-term vacation rental. Rental income may help offset mortgage payments, taxes, insurance, and maintenance costs.

Enjoy Your Own Vacation Home

Imagine having a place that's always ready for weekend getaways, family vacations, or holiday celebrations. Instead of booking hotels, you'll have a home that's familiar, comfortable, and available whenever you want to visit.

Prepare for Retirement

Many buyers purchase a second home years before retirement. They rent it while they're still working, allowing tenants to help pay down the mortgage before eventually moving in themselves.

Diversify Your Investments

A second property can diversify your financial portfolio beyond stocks and retirement accounts. Many investors appreciate owning a tangible asset that may provide both appreciation and cash flow.

The Challenges to Consider

Higher Monthly Expenses

Owning another property means another mortgage payment (if financed), property taxes, homeowner's insurance, utilities, HOA fees (if applicable), and ongoing maintenance expenses.

Maintenance Never Stops

Every property requires attention. Lawn care, HVAC servicing, roof maintenance, plumbing repairs, and unexpected repairs become your responsibility—even when you're hundreds of miles away.

Financing Can Be More Challenging

Second homes and investment properties often require larger down payments and may carry slightly higher interest rates than primary residences. Lenders also evaluate your debt-to-income ratio more closely.

Market Conditions Can Change

While Central Florida has experienced strong long-term growth, no real estate market moves upward forever. Buyers should purchase with long-term goals rather than expecting quick appreciation.

Property Management Decisions

If you don't live nearby, you'll likely need a professional property management company to handle tenant communication, maintenance requests, inspections, and rent collection. While convenient, these services reduce your monthly profits.

Is Now a Good Time?

Today's Central Florida market offers buyers more inventory and greater negotiating power than we've seen in recent years. That means there are more opportunities to compare properties, negotiate pricing, request seller concessions, and find a home that fits both your budget and long-term goals.

Whether you're looking for a vacation home near Orlando's world-famous attractions, a rental property in a growing community, or a retirement home to enjoy in the future, careful planning is the key to making a smart investment.

My Advice as Your Central Florida Realtor

Buying a second property isn't simply about finding another house—it's about selecting the right property that supports your financial goals and lifestyle.

Before you buy, ask yourself:

- What is my primary purpose: vacation, investment, retirement, or a combination?
- Can I comfortably afford the monthly expenses if the property is vacant for several months?
- Will I manage the property myself or hire professional management?
- Does the location have strong long-term growth potential?
- What are the local rental rules, HOA regulations, and insurance requirements?

Answering these questions before making an offer can help you avoid costly surprises and increase the likelihood that your investment works for you over the long term.

Let's Explore Your Options

Whether you're purchasing your first investment property, searching for a vacation home, or planning for retirement, I'd be happy to help you evaluate neighborhoods, compare financing options, estimate potential rental income, and identify properties that align with your goals.

Owning a second property can be a rewarding investment when approached with careful planning and realistic expectations. The right property purchased at the right time can provide years of enjoyment while helping build your long-term financial future. Thinking about buying a second home in Central Florida? Let's talk. Together, we'll find the property that's right for your lifestyle, your budget, and your future.



Phil Holliday
Real Estate Specialist



702-525-7655



Doc@PhilHolliday-
Realtor.com

PhilHolliday-Realtor.com



PREFERRED
REAL ESTATE
BROKERS

Agent Spotlight

Phil Holliday is a dedicated real estate professional with Preferred Real Estate Brokers, specializing in helping clients buy and sell homes in both Central Florida and Las Vegas. With years of experience in the industry, Phil combines local market knowledge, cutting-edge technology, and a client-focused approach to make every real estate transaction smooth and successful. One of Phil's unique offerings is his Perfect Home Finder program, a personalized service that goes beyond the standard MLS listings. By working closely with clients to identify their precise needs and preferences, Phil uses advanced target marketing to identify pre-listed and off-market properties that perfectly match each client's criteria. This program is especially valuable for buyers who want exclusive access to homes that aren't widely available. Whether you're a first-time homebuyer, a seasoned investor, or looking to relocate, Phil is committed to helping you find your dream home with ease and expertise. Reach out today to experience a superior level of service in Central Florida or Las Vegas real estate.

Recommended Service Professionals

As a real estate professional, I work with many local professionals and want to recommend those that found to give exceptional service. Here are a few of my top choices, please be sure to tell them I referred them to you

Vince Gaudio
407-961-2203
Guaranteed Rate

VinceGaudio@Rate.com

Jacob Bonnell
407-999-0045
Florida DUI Group

jacob@flduigroup.com

Omar Carmona
407-757-1628
Carmona Law

carmona@carmonalaw.com



Marc Burke
407-901-5161
Condo Metropolis
Marc@Condometropolis.com



Ahmadd Saddiq
407-716-7715
Land Trust Title of Central Florida
Ahmad@landtrusttitlecfl.com

