
JUNE 2026 UPDATE
THE
SW FLORIDA
HOUSING
INTELLIGENCE
REPORT
DEMAND
DOWN
PROPERTY TAX
RELIEF!
BUILDERS
SLOWING
BUY OR RENT?
THE TRUTH!
WHAT THIS MEANS FOR BUYERS, SELLERS & HOMEOWNERS!

Written by

Ed Zoller

1-239-980-2792

"SW Florida's Housing Expert with over 6416 transactions and over $354mil+ in SOLD Real Estate"

7/1/2026

www.Leecountymarketupdate.com

Save our Homes from Excessive property tax bill

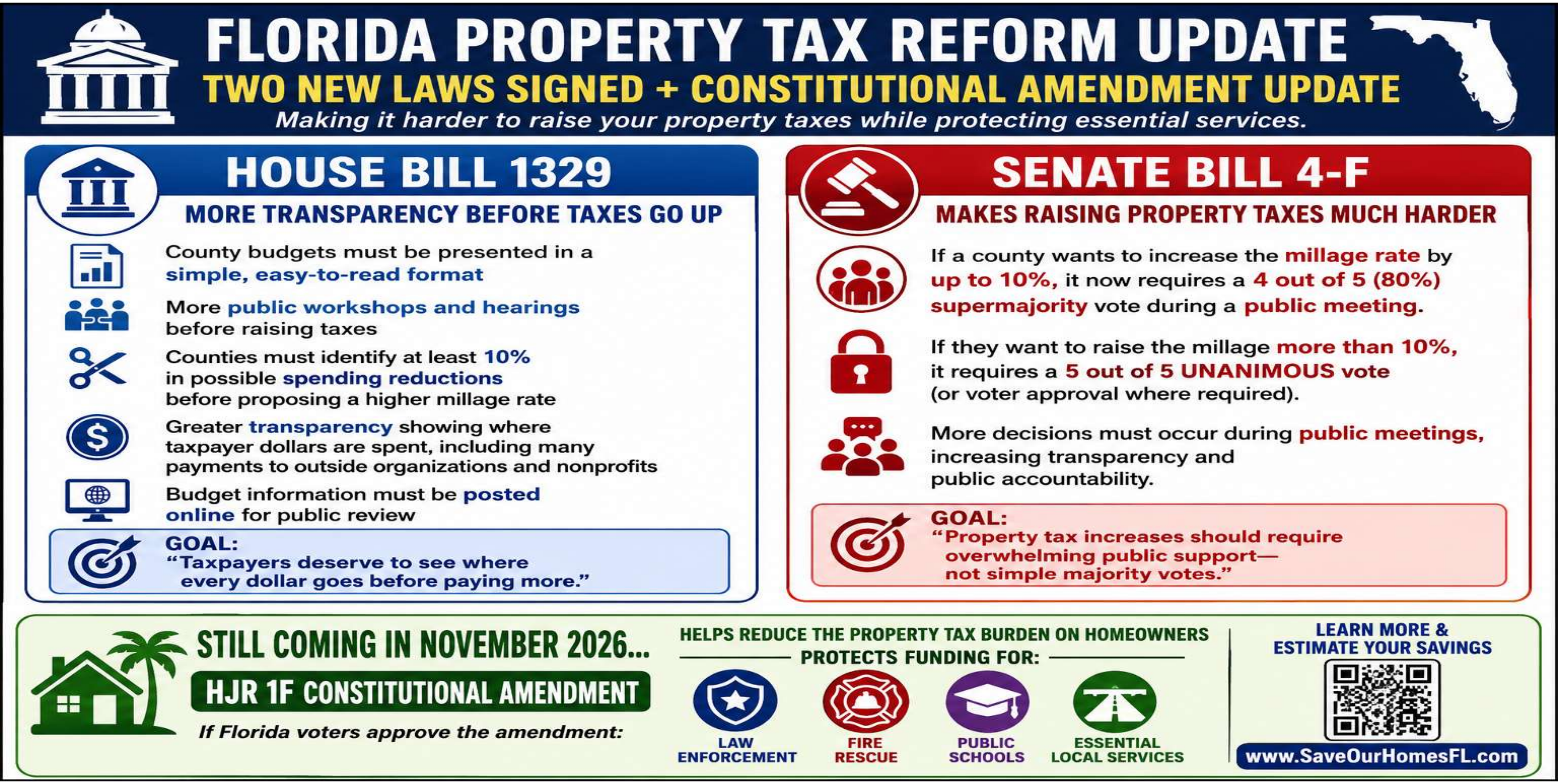
Florida's Governor Ron Desantis just called for a special session starting this week to get the Florida house and senate together to ratify this bill so Floridians can vote in the November election. Back in February a bunch of bills were passed through the house, a few got approved, but the senate tabled and squashed everyone of them due to a factor none of them addressed. This new bill proposed actually has that concern addressed and solved. Let me go through the 5 bullet points of the new bill and where it is far batter than previous bills.

- **Exempt Homestead Properties From Taxation.**
  ~~Exempts the first $250,000~~ of a homestead's value from taxation and requiring, through law, a schedule for full elimination. This ~~Includes~~ schools. $***150,000 year 1 and $250,000 Year 2 and DOES NOT INCLUDE SCHOOLS!***
- **Ensure Funding For Core Services.**
  Requires local governments to use remaining property taxes solely for core public needs including public safety, education and schools, infrastructure, and natural resources. Law enforcement, Schools, Fire fighters, parks will be protected and those funds collected cannot be redistributed elsewhere like it does currently.
- **Protect Small Businesses/Landlords.**
  Limits future property tax assessments on businesses and creates a more stable tax environment for local businesses. This means the current cap on taxes rising for non-homesteaded properties of 10% will be dropped to 5% cap giving relief to commercial, landlords, multifamily which should trickle down to renters of those buildings.
- **Ensure Fairness For Florida Residents.**
  Requires any person who establishes Florida residency after January 1, 2027, to maintain Florida residency for up to five years prior to receiving the increased homestead exemption. This keeps it fair so people just don't move here to dodge property taxes. New buyers will still receive the $50,000 exemption.

This final point is what solved the messes of previous bills.

- ~~**Create A State Trust Fund To Assist With Core Local Services.**~~
  Establishes a trust fund to provide grants to local governments to assist with the continuation of core local services. This is important because if the previous failed bills would have gone into play, many counties in Florida depend on State property taxes to fully function. The State will provide grants to many of the **fiscally constricted counties** like Dixie, Baker, Calhoun, Glades, Highlands, and Hendry county will get funds from Florida's surplus from this trust fund so they can fully operate without feeling any pain or cutting jobs/services.

60% of Primary Resident home owners in Florida own a home worth less than $250,000 meaning those people will have no state property taxes EXCEPT THE SCHOOL PORTION WHICH IS ABOUT 50% OF YOUR TAX BILL.

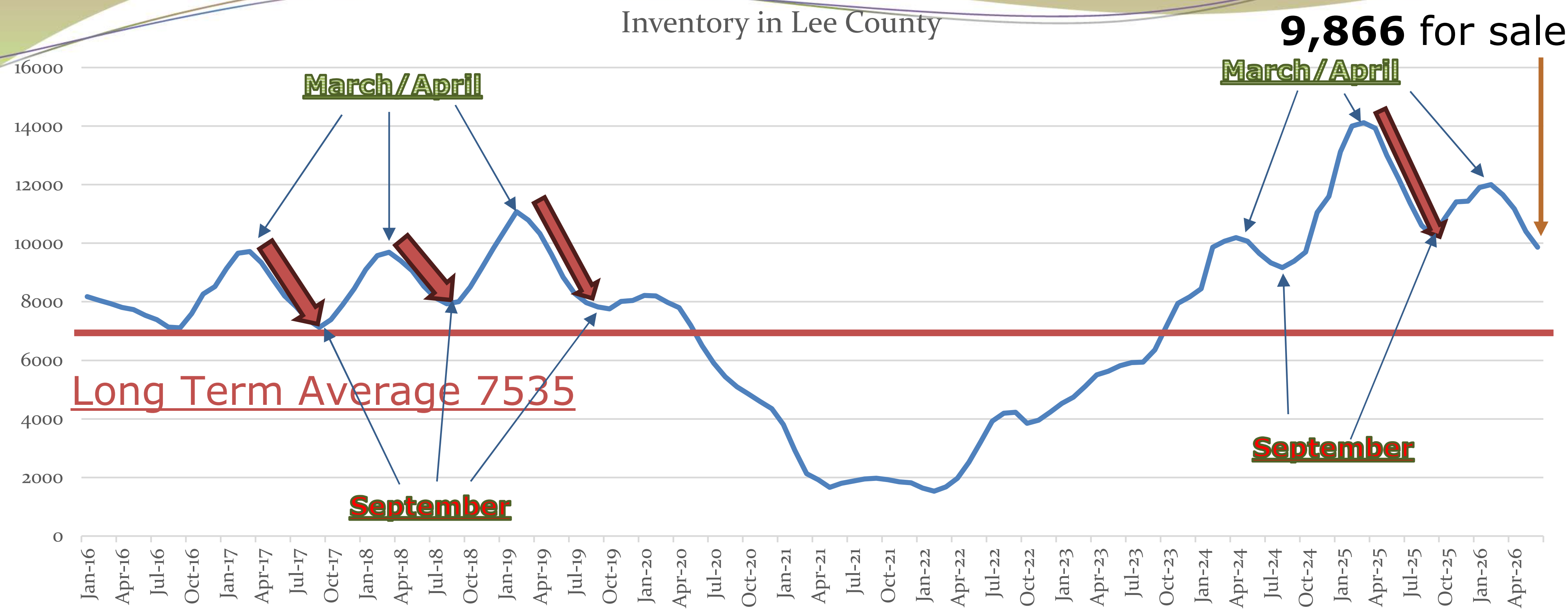


House Bill 1329 is all about **transparency**. Counties now have to make their budgets much easier for taxpayers to understand, hold more public workshops, and identify potential spending reductions before asking homeowners to pay more.

Senate Bill 4-F raises the bar even higher. If local officials want to increase the millage rate by up to 10%, **they now need a four-out-of-five supermajority vote in a public meeting**. If they want to go beyond a 10% increase, they need a unanimous five-out-of-five vote, unless voter approval is required.

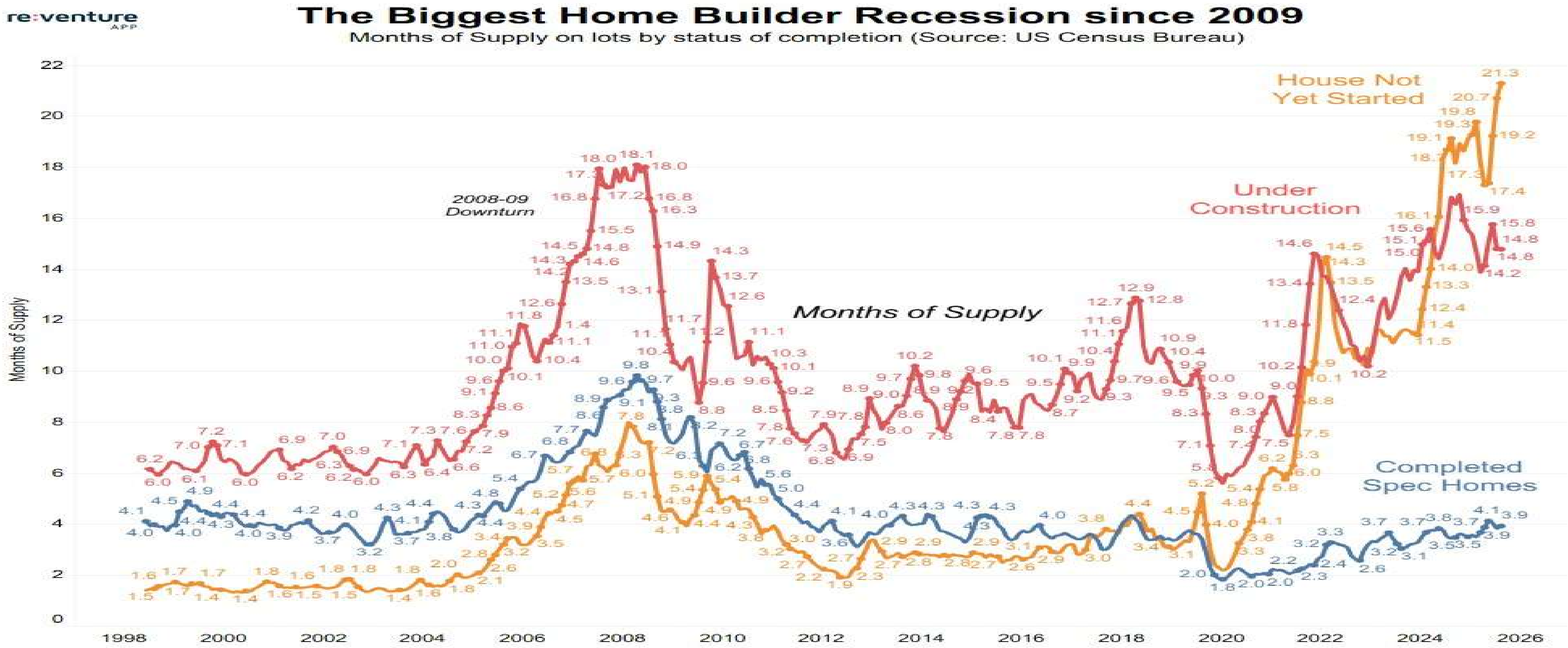
Finally, don't forget the constitutional amendment coming before Florida voters in November. If approved, it would provide additional property tax relief while protecting funding for our schools, police, fire rescue, and other essential services."

Supply of Inventory for sale in SW Florida



Inventory went **DOWN** in June by 5.6% **showing a positive sign for inventory reducing**, **and is 19% less than this time last year**. **This shows a slow down of inventory coming off the market compared to last month.** Trend analysis shows this is expected as since 2016, inventory goes up in Septemeber (What we call **Prepping for Season**), Peaks in March (**Start of Season**), then Drops until September (What we call the **Dead zone**). This is as predictable as it comes. This is a positive sign that the peaks do not go back to the massive amount we had back last year. Still 9866 places for sale is still **30% higher than it should be compared to our long term average.** 3 months ago we broke the trend of 5 **consecutive increases of inventory with our 4th of what should be a 7 month trend to the downside.** Using this graph, we can predict this trend should continue to decrease next 3 months. If inventory continues to decline, then it will look more promising for sellers in the far future, but we need to look at demand. An abundance of INVENTORY MEANS LOWER PRICES and Price reductions. **Of this inventory, 1748 of the existing inventory are New Construction which is a drop of over 260 homes. WAIT!!! WHAT?? DID THAT MANY SELL? Answer is NO! Over 260 of these homes expired/terminated/withdrawn from the market. So they didn't sell, they were just taken off to be put on later. This gives the illusion builders have little inventory on their sheets, but I would expect these homes to go somewhere. Probably back on the market.**

Biggest Home builder Crisis since 2009



🏗 **Biggest Builder Slowdown Since 2009**

📈 **What the Data Shows**

🔶 **21.3 Months** – Homes Permitted but **Not Started.** Highest level on record. Builders are delaying future construction

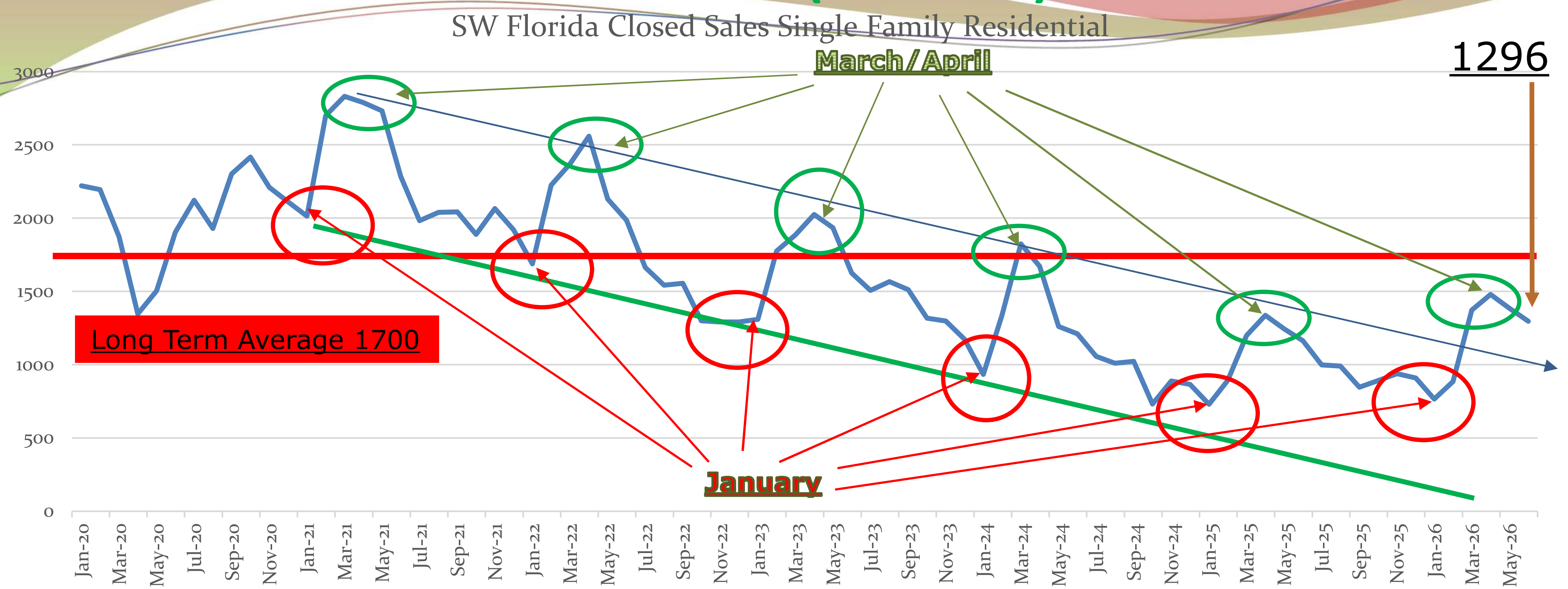
🔴 **14.8 Months** – Homes **Under Construction.** Highest since the 2008 housing crash. Demand for future homes is slowing

🔵 **3.9 Months** – Completed Move-In Ready Homes.Still selling well.Buyers are getting incentives and rate buy-downs

What this mean is Builders are pumping the brakes on future construction. Expect fewer new housing starts over the next 6–12 months. This summer should be tougher for builders and sellers... **...but one of the best negotiating opportunities we've seen in years for buyers.**

This graph tells us builders are starting to hit the brakes. In my opinion, builders are going to keep pulling back on future construction while fighting hard to sell the homes they already have completed. I don't believe 2026 is another 2008—but when I compare the warning signs, history is definitely starting to rhyme. That's why I believe this summer will be much tougher for builders and sellers, but much better for patient buyers.

SW Florida Demand (Solds)



Last month in June, **Sales went DOWN 6% again!** We also Expect this because it does it every year. Just like the last graph, we can expect demand to continue to drop every month until January. Also we looked last month at the drop in pending sales and expected less sales as well. Just like the last graph, Very Predictable! Every May, sales go down and continue to drop until January. Sales increase drastically February-April (Our Season), then always starting in May it drops continuously until the following year. So 3 months up, 9 months down. The biggest drops month over month always come in September and January where for the last 6 years the drops in sales are double digits. So lets us combine the last 2 graphs. Inventory starts going up in Septemeber, January Demand hits yearly lows, March has the most demand and most inventory, then both Drop until Septmeber. Rinse and Repeat.

Expect sales to continue to fall over the next 6 months. **Compared to last year June we are up 11.3%.** Rates are sitting at the time of writing this at **6.63** which is the same as last month. NEW FED CHAIR WARCH reports no planned rate drop, and is considering a rate hike for 2026. This is a 5 month Negative trend. Of the 1296 Sales for June, 380 were new construction, a DROP OF 10% from last month. This is 29.3% of all sales even though they only have 19% of the total inventory clearly showing that builders still control the market meaning more turmoil for the resale market which will cause the resale market to continue to fail on playing catch up as long as new homes are less expensive than used. The main problem with our market is pricing. **Expect future sales to continue to go down as expected but something else may also be a driving factor for price to diminish…PLUMMETING RENT!**

Squashing the News

CAPE CORAL – FORT MYERS RENTAL CRASH

RENTS DOWN ~25% IN 1 YEAR – BUYING STILL COSTS MORE THAN RENTING

2ND WORST RENT DROP IN THE NATION

Top 15 Cities – Biggest Rent Cuts since 2022

% Change in Apartment Rents from Aug 2022 to Feb 2026 (Source: Apartmentlist.com)

Rank	Metro, State	Rent Aug 2022	Rent Feb 2026	% Drop
1	Austin, TX	$1,636	$1,272	-22.2%
2	Fort Myers, FL	$1,571	$1,267	-19.4%
3	Colorado Springs, CO	$1,631	$1,374	-15.8%
4	North Port, FL	$1,686	$1,444	-14.4%
5	Phoenix, AZ	$1,565	$1,343	-14.2%
6	San Antonio, TX	$1,331	$1,149	-13.7%
7	Raleigh, NC	$1,566	$1,352	-13.7%
8	Denver, CO	$1,827	$1,598	-12.5%
9	Salt Lake City, UT	$1,596	$1,408	-11.8%
10	Lakeland, FL	$1,343	$1,189	-11.5%
11	Atlanta, GA	$1,611	$1,427	-11.4%
12	Boise City, ID	$1,466	$1,299	-11.4%
13	Orlando, FL	$1,686	$1,500	-11.0%
14	Nashville, TN	$1,510	$1,348	-10.7%
15	Dallas, TX	$1,562	$1,398	-10.5%

FORT MYERS/CAPE CORAL APARTMENT RENTS DOWN 19.4%
2ND WORST DROP IN THE COUNTRY

25% RENT CUT IN CAPE CORAL

Median Apartment Rents in Cape Coral

(Source: Apartmentlist.com)

RENTAL DEMAND HAS COLLAPSED

- Rents are far below pandemic highs and continue falling.
- Landlords are offering concessions to keep units rented.

BUYING vs. RENTING – THE REAL NUMBERS

BUYING TODAY	
Maximum Purchase Price	$231,989
Home Price	$380,000
Mortgage Rate (30 yr)	6.60%
Down Payment (4%)	$15,200
Monthly P&I	$2,403
Property Tax (1.53%/yr)	$485
Insurance (Home)	$150
HOA / CDD (Est.)	$0
Maintenance & Repairs (1%/yr)	$317
TOTAL MONTHLY COST	$3,355

RENTING TODAY	
Monthly Rent	$1,750
Rent Increase (per yr)	3.5%
Renter's Insurance (yr)	$600
Security Deposit	$1,800
TOTAL MONTHLY COST	$2,350

BUYING COSTS $1,005 / MONTH MORE THAN RENTING TODAY

THE BOTTOM LINE

TO BREAK EVEN BUYING vs. RENTING
HOME PRICE WOULD NEED TO BE ~14% (or) $1 LOWER
(39% Discount)

5-YEAR DIFFERENCE IN NET WORTH
RENTING BUILDS $76,962 MORE WEALTH THAN BUYING

IF YOU INVEST THE DIFFERENCE IN STOCKS AT 6.0%
$145,169
AFTER 5 YEARS

KEY TAKEAWAY

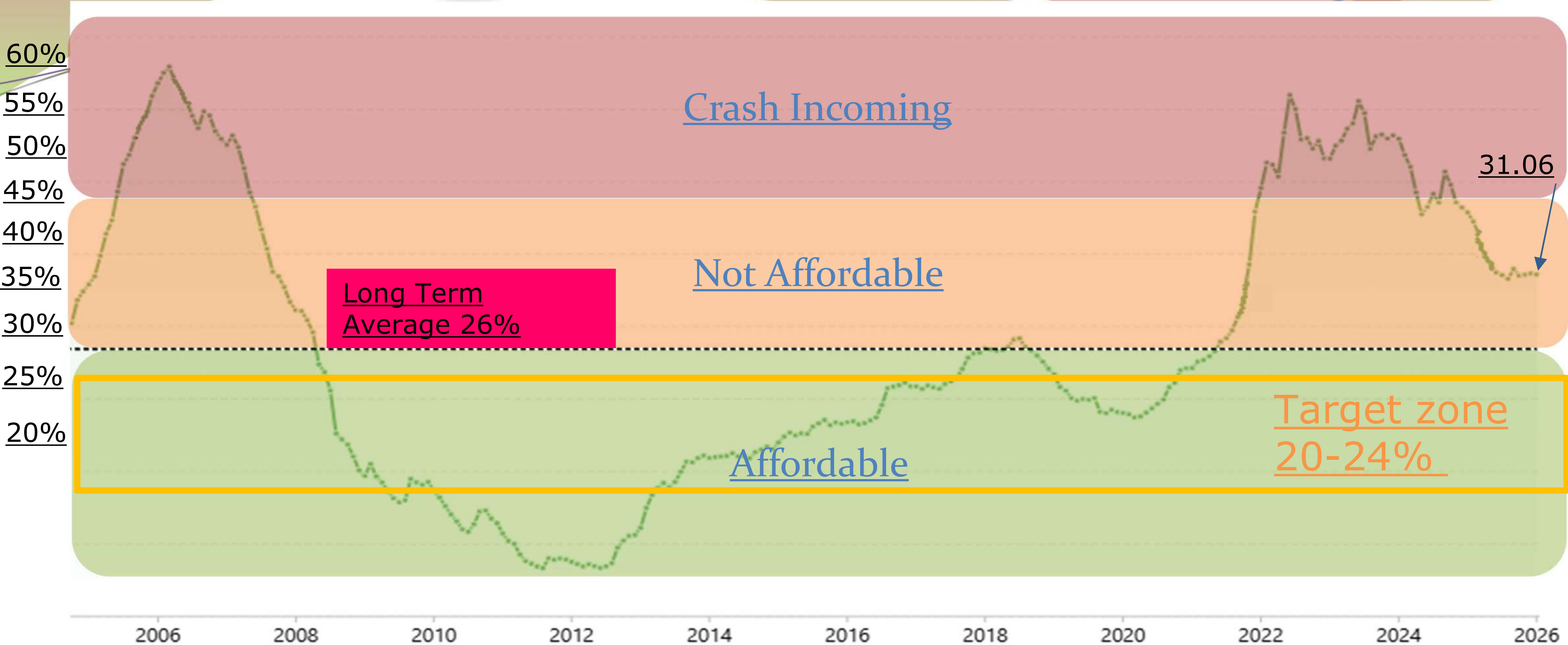
- Rents have crashed in Cape Coral – Fort Myers.
- Buying today still costs significantly more than renting, but buying builds wealth over time.
- A price correction of ~39% would bring homeownership closer to monthly cost parity with renting.

RENT CRASH + BUILDER INVENTORY SURGE = TOUGH SUMMER FOR BUILDERS & SELLERS, GREAT NEWS FOR BUYERS!

One of the biggest myths I hear is that it's *always* better to buy than rent. The truth is, it depends on the numbers. Right now, apartment rents in Cape Coral and Fort Myers have **dropped nearly 25%,** making us one of the biggest rental corrections in the country. When I plug today's median home price, mortgage rates, taxes, insurance, and maintenance costs into this calculator, renting actually comes out ahead financially over the next five years at current prices. That's why I tell buyers to stop guessing and start doing the math. Every situation is different, and I have a calculator that can run these numbers specifically for your income, down payment, and the home you're considering. Sometimes buying makes perfect sense, and sometimes waiting is the smarter financial move. My job is to help you figure out which one is right for you."

"Don't buy because someone on YouTube told you to. Don't rent because someone on YouTube told you to. Run the numbers first." "If you'd like me to run the numbers for your situation, just give me a call. It only takes a few minutes, and it could save you tens of thousands of dollars."

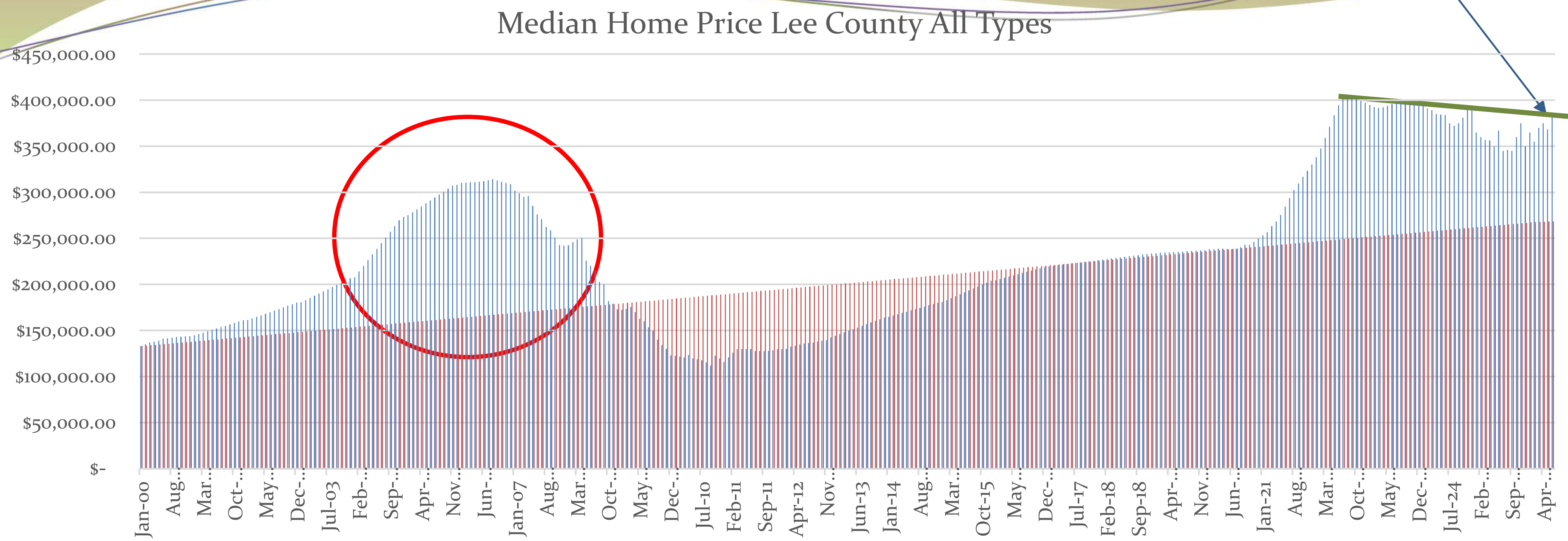
Affordability Graph Mortgage Payment as % of Income



This affordability graph is all you need to see to get a forecast of what is to come. I have color coded the shaded areas. This graph takes the average income of Lee County, takes the average 1690 sq ft 3 bedroom 2 bathroom 2 car garage average location home and calculates the mortgage payment including Principal, Interest, Taxes, and Insurance on that home and divides it by GROSS monthly household income. As you can see when the graph is in the red area, A crash has happened every time. Noone can afford over 45%+ of their GROSS income to a mortgage. From 2008, once it hit the affordable shaded area of under 26% it stayed there for 10 years. Popped up in 2018 when feds tried increasing rates, then dropped them drastically and back down into the green graph it went for another 3 years. Then COVID happened and back off to the top of the mountain it went again topping off at just over 50%. With interest rates hitting 9 month highs, prices remaining higher, and insurance also remaining high, We are going in the wrong direction for affordability. Homes are now less affordable than they were last month by far. Target Monthly payment should be under $1750/month. Currently it is $2185/month. Needs to drop another $435/month or another 19%

Median Home price

$381,000



Compared to last month, Median home value went **UP 2%** Hate how slow this time around it is taking for Price to play catch up! See how fast we crashed last time? Nice and smooth and steady like a mountain top. This one is taking forever. In 2023, after we peaked, I was begging it to crash already. I prayed for fast so we can get back to normalcy. My prayers went unanswered. This is going to draw itself out until it breaks. Expect this graph to show these months of stubborn behavior with ups and downs. Taking the Lower sales in June, this number is not as relevant as to when we sell 2x to 3x as much normally. There were **87 Homes that sold for over $1mil in June**, which is a **drop of 32% from last month**, the first sign of the weakening of the High-End Home market. The highest home sold was **$9.5 Mil home on Bonita Beach** with over 5200 sq ft under air this month. The more $1mil homes that sell, the higher this median home price is overinflated. I look at this graph to show trends, and the trend being stubborn. **393 home sales were new construction which is over 30% of all sales, BUT a drop of 7.5% compared to last month. Orange line is what the home prices should be based on household income and current rates.** The secret for buyers is waiting and having patience to get a monthly payment like you were buying at the orange trend line in price. That Orange line depicts what the homes prices should be if we didn't have the COVID/05 BOOM since 2000. Prices have to do with affordability, people, and income. Based on those factors, the median selling home price should be $260,000 or a **drop of 31% further**.

Home Value Growth Month over Month for Lee County

Tracking Month over Month home Value Growth helps pin point changes in the market and signals a crash and/or bottom and WHEN STABIIZATION OCCURS! As you can see from this graph the years from 2013-2021 shows a steady line of positive growth with a rapid escalation in 2022 and part of 2023 which is almost identical to that seen in 2005-2006. The bubble popped last time in February 2006/2007, which signaled the start of the crash when this graph first hit negatives. It remained negative until January 2012 or **59 consecutive months** until it stabilized late 2012. Currently **The Zillow Home Value index** is **-0.35,** and last months we were at -0.26, -0.17, -0.24, 0.38, -.51.-0.72, -0.93, -1.17, -**1.28**, -1.27, -1.22 -1.04, -.085, -0.69%, -0.65%, and -.62% so that is **34 consecutive months of negative home value** so far, AND this is the 3rd consecutive month of increased NEGATIVE value growth showing a slow down of the market. It got further away! Now it is still really low and negative. A pessimist would say, it is still losing a 1/3% a month which is not stable, and an optimist would say, Hey…at least it is better than last year? It still lost .35% of value this month and that's 4+% a year, if it continues at this rate for the whole year. As this graph makes it way to 0, and shows support, then we can say the market finally stabilized. Do look left on the graph to see this happened in 2007 as well, where it increased a few times then dropped further. So even with the household income going up, interest rates higher, we are still not affordable. NOT STABILIZED YET!

Statistics as compared to last month

June 1st 2025

- Total Housing for sale 10,403
- Total SF Homes Sold 1385
- Total Sales Pending 1305
- **New construction 4sale 2012**
- Average Time on Market 95
- Median Asking Price $375,000
  Median Selling Price $368,000
- % of asking price sold 98.7%

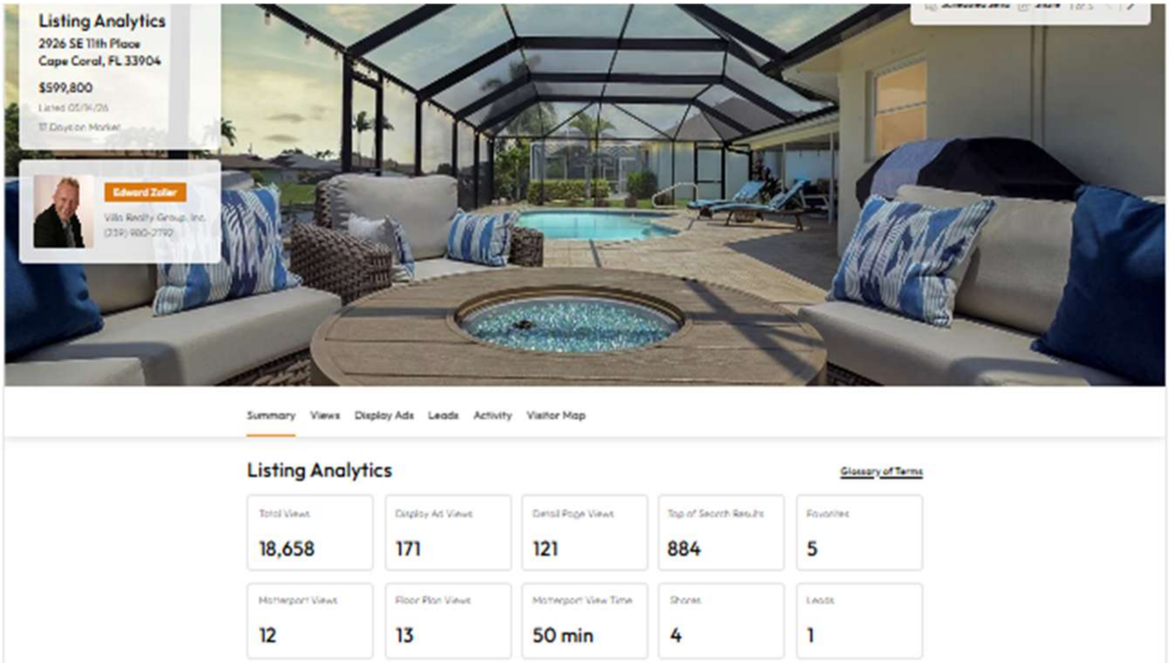
July 1st 2026

- Total Housing for sale 9,866 6%
- Total SF Homes Sold 1296 6%
- Total Sales Pending 1226 6%
- Total New construction 1748 13%
- Average Time on Market 95
- Median Asking Price $389,000 3%
- Median Selling Price $381,000 3%
- % of asking price/sold 97.9%

In Summary: Inventory went down 5%, going under 10k homes. Sold inventory (Demand) went down 6% signaling season is more than over and we start our slow climb down. Pending sales dropped 6%, but BIG NEWS Builders had 264 homes disappear! 13% drop?!?! Really? When did that happen? So, I looked into it. Guess how many new constructions were terminated/Withdrawn/or expired? 260 on the nose. HA! Tricky but I figured you all out. Median asking price and selling prices increased 3%, and % of asking price is near 100%, but remember buyers are picky now. They will wait for a seller to drop their price to even go out and see the home. The % of new homes for sale is 17% of our total inventory which shows more buyers heading toward new homes over used homes as new builds are over 30% of our sales. With this data, it still seems buyers will have the advantage for the many months of 2026. With this data we predicted almost all of it. The lowering from May-September of inventory, the crash of buyers starting the summer months, etc. This is why I trust data over feelings. Now with this data, we can predict sales getting weaker as the pending sales drop, builders will still run the show this whole year, and with rising interest rates potentially, this may compound the desire for new construction over resales. As long as they keep with their negative profits, and 100k incentives, they will eventually get through their inventory. Bad news for resales.

Advice for Sellers

- Your Fake COVID equity I showcased every month this whole year is not fully gone. There is still FAKE COVID EQUITY but it is rapidly decreasing as buyer demand hits all time lows. So what does a seller need to do in this market to sell?
- Get a pre-inspection on your home to show buyers that they will not need to do many repairs, AND offer concessions, buydowns, etc to make it more affordable. Every dollar matters now.
- Go take a look at any of my listings on Zillow by typing in my name. All photos are SEO optimized, I have 24/7 virtual openhouses on all listings, and have 100x more views than my latest competitor. Here is a snap shot of my latest listing in 2 weeks.

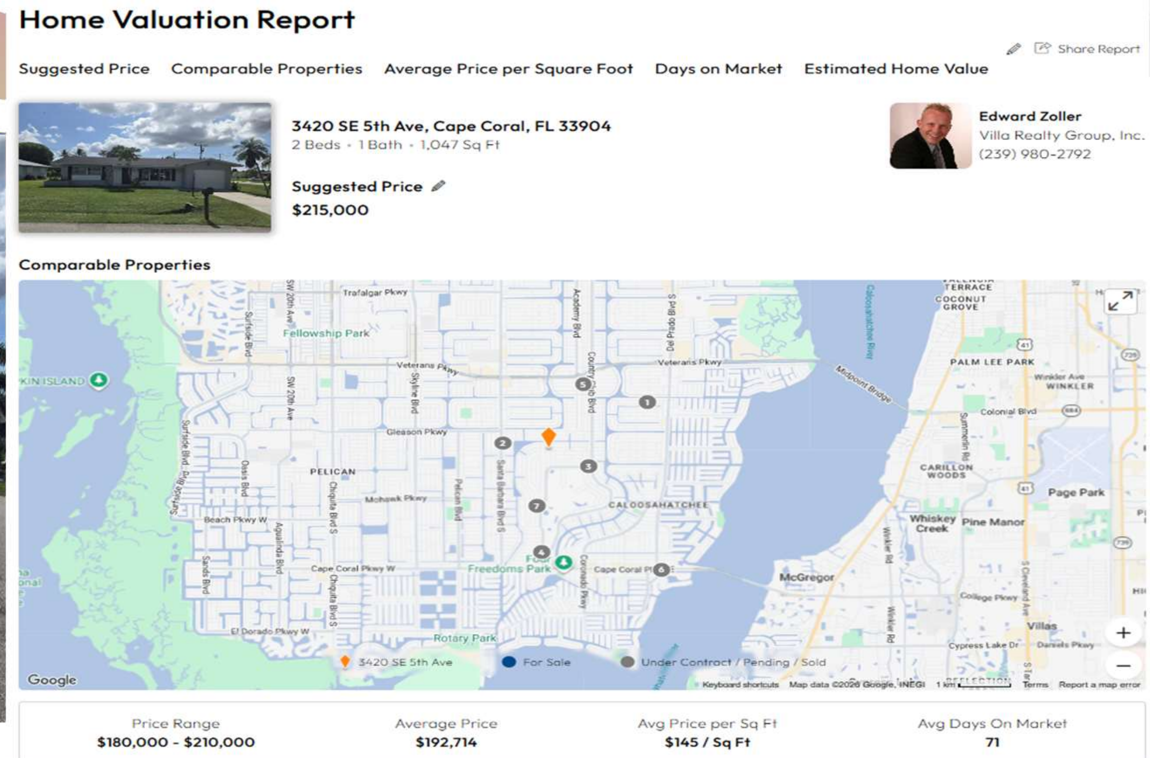


- Price yourselves according to the market
- Market your home differently than the competition. Rookie agents will have no idea how to set their homes apart from the horde.

Advice for Buyers (Same every month)

- Patience Patience Patience Patience PatienceX3. Wait for your deal. Buyers need to qualify, find what they want, narrow down their search, then strike at sellers/builders at the most opportune time. It's a market of falling daggers! **Don't catch blades…catch feathers**. Wait for your price. Forget the rates, forget the hype, wait until the perfect home hits your target number. Get Interest rates of 4% today by waiting for it. Use this data to help you negotiate with sellers.
- Pick YOUR Payment and wait until the builders come to you as they currently control the market that is out of control.
- Wait for your deal and DO NOT SETTLE!
- 10,000+ homes is a huge pile of inventory to sell. Sellers are going to be motivated and never be afraid IF you love the home or product to make an offer, but remember how you structure it is more important than the price 5x fold.

Deal of the Month



Asking Price $175,000. Oversized 1/3 acre oversized corner lot with city utilities in and paid which has a brand new 2024 roof. After going into the property and visually looking at it, I determined renovation to not exceed $20,000 tops since roof was already brand new. Replumb, Refloor, New kitchen and bathrooms, new electric panel, paint and drywall. Math was simple:

1. Evaluate home: Use 3 different ways to Value the Property: Value $210,000 fixed up
2. Estimate Reno and pad 25% $25,000
3. Cover Closing costs and commission like we were flipping: $13,650
4. Take that number and round down for cushion. I came up with $150,000 starting bid with a cap at $171,350

The agent had 7 offers on this home and asked for highest and best. We stuck to the model and offered $165,350, but filled out the whole contract, no blanks, complete and in what I call EASY MODE for the listing agent and explained what steps I would be taking to get trades in there immediately for estimates. Agent told me I was not the highest, but I was the best. We got it under contract for $165,350. All quotes this week have come back at under $17,000 for all of those repairs. .

Data acquired comes from the following sources

- **US Census Bureau**
- **Zillow.com**
- **FRED (Federal Reserve Economic Data)**
- **Realtor.com**
- **SWFLMLS (Our local board of realtors)**
- **Mortgage Brokers Association or MBA**
- **Bureau of Labor Statistics BLS.GOV**
- **Zillow**
- **Reventure APP**
- **National Association of Realtors**
- **Apartmentlist.com**

BUY SMART. DO THE NUMBERS. MAKE THE RIGHT MOVE.

I am Available for you anytime. Call me anytime to discuss.

TO GET PREPARED TO BE A BUYER IN THIS MARKET,

YOU NEED TO GET QUALIFIED FIRST.

I can help!

3 MIN

GO TO

www.teacherscanbuyhomes.com

AND FILL IN A 3 MINUTE SURVEY TO GET STARTED TODAY!

QUICK & EASY 3 MIN SURVEY | SEE WHAT YOU CAN AFFORD | GET PREPARED. BE READY.

NEW VIDEO EVERY MONTH!

Ed Zoller

Realtor | Villa Realty Group / Owner Teacherscanbuyhomes

E-mail: ed@villarealty.com

www.teacherscanbuyhomes.com

www.Leecountymarketupdate.com

CALL OR TEXT ME ANYTIME!

239-980-2792

VILLA REALTY GROUP

Look forward to hearing from you soon!