

# Homebuyer's Information Packet

Contact Carol

706-202-9358

Home Featured Listings MLS Listings Sellers Buyers Athens Area Information

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Athens, GA  
Monthly Info | 14 Days  
Cloudy  
79°F  
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Welcome to AthensGeorgiaHomes.com  
Welcome to the official real estate web site of Carol Bitner. If you are looking for homes in Athens, GA or any of the surrounding counties, such as Oconee, Jackson, Oglethorpe, or Barrow, you have reached one of the most trusted real estate experts in the Athens area. Buying and selling your home is an important event. As one of the top real estate agents in the area, my team and I will make sure your home buying or selling experience is seamless and enjoyable... and I have a track record to prove it! Call me! I can help you with all your real estate needs. \*Honesty, Enthusiasm, and Experience... With Your Every Move!

Learn About Carol  
One of the most powerful means of advertising is undoubtedly "word of mouth." The next would be a proven track record of achievements and accomplishments of the professional you are seeking to hire. Carol Bitner has developed a strong reputation over the 20+ years she has been in real estate. Listen to the "word of mouth" that defines Carol and her devotion to you as her client. Read More...

Learn About RE/MAX  
I am so excited to be a part of the RE/MAX family! I became a part of the RE/MAX Associates - Athens, Inc. family in 2004 after leaving another

Featured Listings  
1040 Hickory Lane  
1055 Butler Street  
1325 Oakley Shook Drive  
800 Shagbiter Drive  
1501 Hickory Hill Drive  
1064 Union Point Road  
45 Old Farm Road  
45 Old Farm Road  
888 Albrook Road  
Leamington Canton Road  
Study Our List  
More Listings

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Associates - Athens, Inc.

Please visit my website at: [www.athensgeorgiahomes.com](http://www.athensgeorgiahomes.com)

**Carol Bitner, GRI, CRS, ABR**

Office: 706-433-2680

Direct: 706-202-9358

Fax: 706-769-0392

Email: [carol@athensgeorgiahomes.com](mailto:carol@athensgeorgiahomes.com)

[www.athensgeorgiahomes.com](http://www.athensgeorgiahomes.com)



Associates - Athens, Inc.

**Outstanding Agents. Outstanding Results.**

# The Role of Buyer's Agent

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In 1993 the state of Georgia introduced the "policy of agency." Typically, the listing agent represents the seller and the buyer's agent represents the buyer. Agents can elect to represent either seller or buyer. Agents have a choice! Buyers have a choice! The seller is paying the commission and it is paid to the brokerage of the listing agent. That brokerage in turn pays half of the received commission to the brokerage of the Buyer's agent. The individual agent is then paid on whatever level has been agreed upon in their office contract.

Should the available property be listed by the office of the Buyer's agent, the agents can elect to represent either seller or buyer. In such a case the buyer can have another agent designated to work on their behalf

## **Benefit to the Buyer:**

- Total commitment to the Buyer
- Maximum effort on their behalf
- Exposure to the entire market
- Confidentiality
- Disclosure and loyalty
- Track record of successful negotiations
- Privacy for the Buyer
- Strongest possible protection of Buyer's interests
- Mortgage financing
- Buyers will save money because I will be fighting to safeguard your interest

## **Benefit to me as their agent:**

- Buyer loyalty
- More qualified buyer
- Buyer educated to the marketplace
- Peace of mind, less conflict of interest
- Ability to offer more services

## **Will the Buyer need to sign an agreement?**

Now it is state law for the agent to have an agreement signed in the case of Buyer's Agency. I will extend much effort, time, expertise, loyalty and education to be singularly informed on behalf of my buyers. If you should communicate with another REALTOR®, immediately disclose to them that Carol Bitner is your buyer's agent. As your buyer's agent, they will not put you under pressure to buy.

## **Off to a great start!**

When we embark on our new journey to find a home that fits your lifestyle, we must first take some time to evaluate your specific needs. I will ask you many questions and also do a lot of listening. During the initial meeting, I will attempt to get a clear idea of what you are looking for in a residence. We will determine your approximate price range while considering your overall financial situation. I will explain how I can work to represent you and how I can help you find your perfect home. Also, we will discuss the trends of the local market in Athens and what it has to offer you.

During the initial meeting, it is important for you to be as clear and precise as possible regarding your needs. After we talk and decide how much you can comfortably spend, I will not show you any homes that you may love but cannot reasonably afford. "If I know that you have bad knees and want to avoid stairs, you will not be taken through three story colonials with top-floor master suites." Promoting clear communication with you is crucial. Working together efficiently can save you hours of house hunting.

## **What are you doing now to find the property you want?**

Searching for advertised properties?

Looking for properties with “for sale” signs?

Talking to several agents?

## **Did you know?**

Many properties for sale are never advertised

Many properties on the market do not display “for sale” signs.

Talking to many agents may not increase our chances of finding the right property. The numerous phone calls will be very time consuming.

The best way to find your perfect home is to create a working relationship with a knowledgeable agent who is available. I can offer you many services that will save you time and money in finding the right property. I can provide access to properties on the market which include:

- Re/Max inventory.
- Cooperating broker’s inventory.
- Properties in the Multiple Listing Service
- Unadvertised properties
- Properties without “for sale” signs.

## **I will provide you with accurate property information, including:**

- Comparable property values
- Taxes
- Utilities
- Zoning
- Restrictions
- Association fees
- Public transportation
- Location of schools, churches, shopping centers and recreational facilities. A buyer’s guide information pack is available for out-of-town buyers.

## **I will answer your questions concerning...**

The purchase agreement and other forms (A copy of a purchase agreement is attached)

Loan application and processing (A list of itmes you will need for your loan application is attached. Also, a list of local lenders who I have found reliable)

Settlement documents and procedures

A list of Home Inspectors who have been in the business for a minimum of 5 years

## **Upon selection of property, I will...**

Write your offer for purchase Inform you of all needed information to ensure a smooth closing

## **The Purchase Contract**

An important part of being an informed buyer or seller in a real estate transaction is to understand the purchase contract. Before you sit down with ANYONE to make a written offer to purchase a home or receive an offer on your home, you should take a look at the real estate forms used in your area.

In Athens, the REALTORS® use standard contracts, which have been approved by the local Board of REALTORS® and the Georgia Association of REALTORS®. Complicated commercial properties are generally drawn up with the assistance of real estate attorneys. You will be provided a copy of the paperwork you will be signing so that you can read it at your leisure and understand all the information. Do not hesitate to ask questions about anything that you don't understand. If any of the standard clauses do not fit your particular situation, you can discuss the wording that you would like to have changed. The key here is to familiarize yourself with the paperwork before you have found your new home.

## **Real Estate Finesse**

Many changes can occur in real estate transactions between the initial meeting and the completion of the sale. This is where having a professional to handle the sale of your home makes a big difference.

Real estate professionals view such changes as challenges, rather than problems. Many potential problems are predictable, but anticipating them can minimize their consequences. REALTORS® draw on their experience and the experience of their colleagues to ensure a successful closing for the buyers and sellers. When disputes arise, my expertise will help create a Win-Win situation. This approach to selling real estate makes a difference for my buyers and sellers. I will definitely go that extra mile to handle the countless details and keep my buyers and sellers informed at each step of the transaction.

## **Negotiations**

If you are a buyer, you should be prepared with the proper components to submit an offer. An offer is not only negotiating the price.

I will act as a conveyer of information. There are a few things to look out for in such negotiations:  
Include a finance contingency, even if you have loan pre-approval.  
Insist on a home inspection and termite contingencies.  
Itemize the personal property you want included, such as chandeliers or drapes  
Submit the closing date you prefer

Prior to submitting the offer, I will find comparable recent sales and current active listings for your consideration.

## **Qualifying Guidelines**

You have found the perfect home in Athens, but finding the perfect financing has become elusive. After you completed the application process, your lender has turned you down and you are upset. Can anything be done to turn around this setback?

It depends on why you were turned down. If your income is too low to satisfy one mortgage company, there might be another company with more liberal qualifying guidelines. If you have had credit problems, some lenders may be more willing than others to help you clear them up in a manner that satisfies their underwriters. If your loan runs into problems, sit down with the loan officer and myself to investigate the possibility of using a different lender. The first company may be able to assign the package to a competitor enabling you to use your same credit report and appraisal. You will need the cooperation of your sellers too. While loan rejections are disappointing, they can have happy endings.

# Qualifying for a Loan

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There is a lot of talk about home a loan pre-qualification by mortgage brokers and real estate agents. There is a difference between loan pre-qualification and pre-approval. Pre-qualification, which in today's marketplace is usually done by mortgage broker, mean working with the buyer to determine how much they can afford and which loans are the most likely to be available to them. Loan pre-qualification can save a buyer time and money and can even be a bargaining tool with a seller; however, it is not the same as "pre-qualification approval." The mortgage broker can often get the buyer a pre-qualification letter. Pre-approval means; that the lender has definitely committed to lending the buyer money once the house, itself is approved. Since it is a much stronger pledge, it is much more valuable negotiating tool. Only a lender can give pre-approval, but I may be able to "push through" a pre-approval from underwriters with as little as a phone call. So when you hear someone talking about "pre-approval" make sure that it is lender pre-approval and know that I can help.

## Lenders

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### **Judy Adams-Countrywide Home Mortgage**

Cell: 706-540-9868

Judy\_Adams@Countrywide.Com

[www.judyadamsmortgage.com](http://www.judyadamsmortgage.com)

### **Susan Bogardus-Main Street Bank**

706-227-6971

[sbogardus@mainstreetbank.com](mailto:sbogardus@mainstreetbank.com)

### **Sara Story – Suntrust Bank**

706-354-5206

[www.suntrustmortgage.com](http://www.suntrustmortgage.com)

# Home Inspectors

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The following are home inspectors in this area that have been in business for a minimum of 5 years. Please understand that it is your responsibility to interview these inspectors and make the hiring decision. The Seller will be providing you with a "Disclosure Statement" declaring what they know about the condition of their home. I strongly recommend inspection of new construction whether or not the builder gives a warranty.

- Home Inspection/Resale or New construction (three phase)
- Termite
- Carpenter Ants
- Septic Tank and Lines
- Perk Test (Vacant Lot)
- Flood Plain
- Survey
- UREA Formaldehyde Foam
- Polybutylene pipe
- Structural Inspection
- Stucco/Siding Inspection
- Power Line/Electro Magnetic Fields
- Radon
- Water proofing Inspection
- Lead based paint
- Pool and Spa
- Air Rights
- Mineral Rights
- Special Assessments
- Easements
- Well water testing/Pump Inspection
- Swimming pool/Spa Inspection
- Coring/Rock Survey
- Codes
- Covenants and Restrictions
- Home Owner's Association Audit
- Zoning
- Asbestos
- Toxic Mold
- Etc...

**"As your buyer's agent you can expect me to help you make an informed decision on your next purchase."**

Although appraisers price homes according to what the market will bear for a given property, this is a list of items that appraisers can not tell you about selling your home. A home is more than a place just to lay your head, it is an INVESTMENT!!

## Investment: noun, money that is laid out with an expectation of return

Use this worksheet to determine an estimation of sales price and market time. Enter the initial value of your home and with each category that is applicable, multiply the percentage and write your calculation in the space provided. When finished, subtract or add the calculated values to the initial price and time. This is give your estimation of price and time of sale. If you want to discuss in more detail how certain aspects of your home effect market time and the sales price, please let me know. I will be happy to answer any questions you have!

#Description	Sales Price	Market Time
1. INITIAL VALUE & TIME	Amount to sub from initial price.	Amount to add to initial time.
2. On a thoroughfare	-10%	+20%
3. Very steep driveway up to house	-5%	+10%
4. Driveway down incline to house	-5%	+10%
5. Gully or very steep drop-off behind house	-5%	+4%
6. Creek behind or beside house	-3%	+3%
7. No tall trees around house	-2%	+2%
8. Electric Heat	-10%	+2%
9. No self-cleaning oven	- rep \$	n/a
10. Spanish architecture	n/a	+15%
11. House facing school or business property	-8%	+20%
12. Power lines behind or in view of house	-7%	+25%
13. Bedrooms with different color carpet	- rep \$	+5%
14. Living/ family room with bright red carpet	- rep \$	+5%
15. Animal or smoke odors	n/a	+10%
16. Terrain in yard unsuitable for kids to play	-2%	+10%
17. 2-story drop off from deck	-3%	+25%
18. House exterior needs painting	-3%	+5%
19. Interior needs painting	-3%	+5%
20. Bright/ flowery wallpaper	- rep \$	+3%
21. Cluttered & Messy basement	-1%	+5%
22. Swimming pool	+\$(\$/2)	+33%

\*\* Add/Subtract all calculated amounts to initial values to determine a ROUGH ESTIMATED PRICE/TIME\*\*\*

If the home is not on city/county water and sewer, I strongly recommend that you have a well and septic test done by the local health department. This should be ordered as soon as possible after the contract is accepted. This small precaution can save you time and money if a large problem arises in the future.

- Full attention can be devoted to the buyer's needs without an obligation to match the buyer with a seller-client's property
- A brokerage company's duty of confidentiality enables a buyer-client to provide information without fear of harming their negotiating position.
- Undivided Loyalty to the buyer-client enables the buyer's agent to suggest alternative solutions to the buyer's needs, thus increasing the supply of appropriate properties to the buyer client.
- Buyer's agent can promote the buyer's search for an appropriate property through "Property Wanted" promotions in the print media, to seller's agents and directly to owners of properties that may be appropriate for the buyer.
- Property selection is not limited by the seller's list price. A buyer-client may be able to negotiate the sales price down into his range of affordability.
- A buyer-client will be helped in making an objective evaluation of a property, including both positives and negatives.
- The buyer-client will be assisted in making an objective comparison with competing properties.
- Negotiating strategy will be planned with buyer-client.
- Procedures will be suggested that will strengthen the buyer's negotiating position.
- Price counseling for a buyer-client to compare similar properties, which have sold recently and properties which are currently on the market will be provided.
- Protective clauses will be suggested for the purchase agreement to protect the buyer.
- Financing alternatives which may be in the buyer's best interest will be suggested.
- Negotiating will be done on behalf of the buyer.
- Buyer's agent will follow through until closing, after the purchase contract has been negotiated.

**"I am committed to ensuring your complete satisfaction."**

# Local Property Taxes- Mill Rates for

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Area	Phone	Rate
Athens-Clarke County	706-613-3140	33.20, unincorporated areas
Oconee County	706-769-3921	25.03, unincorporated areas
Madison County	706-795-3356	28.0, unincorporated areas
Oglethorpe County	706-743-8422	21.169, unincorporated areas
Jackson County	706-367-6320	varies with area

After filing for Homestead Exemption, property taxes will be approximately 1% of the sales price.

**“I would like to thank you in advance for the opportunity to assist you with your next purchase”**

# Real Estate Websites

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Most of your real estate questions can be answered at [www.athensgeorgiahomes.com](http://www.athensgeorgiahomes.com) and you will also be able to search any homes that are currently for sale in your area

## **[www.remax.com](http://www.remax.com)**

Find some of the most experience agents available tin different areas

## **[www.google.com](http://www.google.com)**

One of the best search engines available

## **[www.hotwire.com](http://www.hotwire.com)**

A great place to save money on travel, rental cars, etc.

## **[www.maps.google.com](http://www.maps.google.com)**

Information on maps and driving directions

## **[www.expdia.com](http://www.expdia.com)**

Microsoft's site for travel, hotels and rental cars

## **[www.sidewalk.com](http://www.sidewalk.com)**

Microsoft's site for city information and entertainment

## **[www.homeadvisor.com](http://www.homeadvisor.com)**

Microsoft's site for buying a home. This is an incredibly thorough site and offers buyers abundant information including how to decide if an agent is necessary.

## **[www.zip2.com](http://www.zip2.com)**

Get detailed driving directions from your location to anywhere you want to go

## **[www.prepsoftware.com](http://www.prepsoftware.com)**

Prep software is the premiere suite of integrated tools for real estate professionals.

## **[www.whowhere.com/phone](http://www.whowhere.com/phone)**

A very convenient and quick place to locate a phone number, also includes a reverse directory covering toll free numbers, as well.