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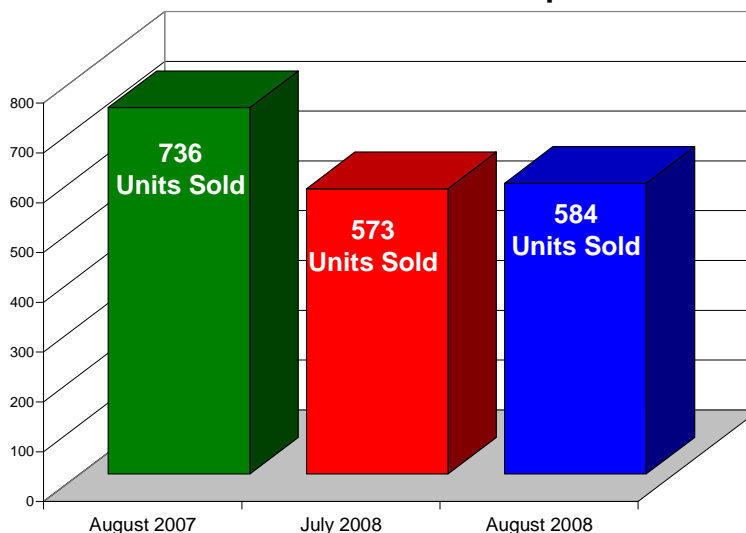
## Soft August Sales But Prices Remain Stable and Viable

CHATTANOOGA, TN – September 24, 2008 – The local real estate market remained soft in the month of August according to the latest figures released by the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) of the Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®. With 584 units sold in August, the market was off 20.7 percent when compared to August 2007. Compared to the previous month's reported number, the August figures are virtually unchanged, but up by a less than 2 percent margin. The numbers reflect the continued, shaky consumer confidence rippling through major sectors of the economy.

“We've entered some challenging times but real estate remains a sound way to build equity and grow a nest egg to prepare for the future,” contends Pam Duffy, President of the Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®. “Subprime mortgages and caustic loans helped many in this country make homeownership a reality, but not at the cost we anticipated and we're now working through attempts to get our financial and secondary mortgage markets back on track. We are optimistic that responsible action and intervention measures by the Federal government will rebound us towards a better functioning market that continues to keep homeownership at the cornerstone of the American Dream.”

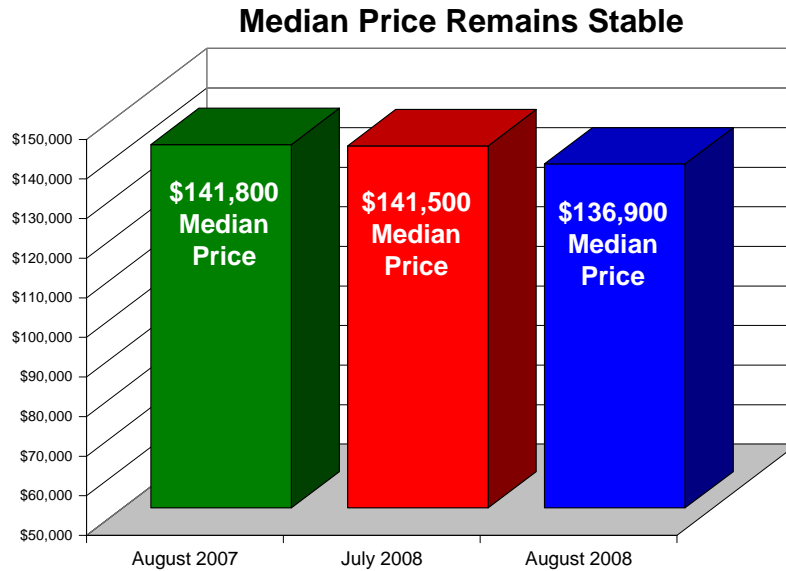
“It's going to take some time to work through the process towards stabilization,” said MLS President Randy Durham. “In this time we'll really see what drives any housing market – real demand, where people buy and sell real estate based on their individual needs and changes in lifestyle. Growing families want more space, a new job or promotion can come with a move to a new town and new home, and retirees sometimes want to downsize or move closer to family or to a special place, like Chattanooga, to enjoy those golden years.”

**Statistical Sales Comparison**



Adds Durham, “Home sales are still happening. People who can get past the negative headlines and hesitant, soured confidence will discover that this is an attractive market. Inventory is high, providing lots of choices for buyers, mortgage rates are at record lows, and most properties are competitively priced to sell now.”

The competitive price is reflected by the median price, the price at which half of all units sold for more and half sold for less. For August the median price figure for Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia was \$136,900, which is fairly consistent with other figures reported throughout the year. It does, however, represent a small, 3 percent decrease from the same time last year and, coincidentally, the previous month. The affordability of the local market can be clearly seen when compared to the median price most recently reported by the National Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, which saw a national aggregate median price of \$203,100.



Another figure to look at is the number of days houses are staying on the market. In August of this year, the average days-on-market was 115 days or less than 4 months. It's a positive statistic when compared to August of last year, where the figure was 111 days and 125 days in July of this year.

“With rising energy costs, pain at the pump, and the tightening of purse strings we’re all dealing with in these challenging times, the ability to get more house for your dollar here than in just about any other market out there is an attractive factor consumers should not overlook,” believes Duffy. “Our local economy is poised for a boost with an influx of new jobs and investments. It makes it all the more crucial to restore market liquidity and keep the process of moving capital fluid now and in the future.”

“Sales are down and people are nervous, we understand that. But if people look at their own situation and needs, they may find this to be the right market for them and will be looking back five years from now glad they made the decision to buy,” says Durham.

To learn why this is the Right Time, Right Market, the Chattanooga Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> wants people to visit [www.RightTimeRightMarket.com](http://www.RightTimeRightMarket.com). The informative Web site offers up-to-date information about the state of the Northwest Georgia and Southeast Tennessee real estate market while also offering helpful tips on buying or selling a home, information on renting versus owning a home, information on the temporary tax credit for first-time home buyers, and area facts for those relocating or retiring to the greater Chattanooga area.

The Chattanooga Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup>, the region’s premier voice for real estate, is made up of over 1,900 real estate professionals engaged in every aspect of real estate throughout Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia. Consumers working with a REALTOR<sup>®</sup> can be confident in the level of professional service they are receiving, as only REALTORS<sup>®</sup> set themselves apart from others in the business as industry leaders who adhere to the strict REALTOR<sup>®</sup> Code of Ethics.