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January Area Sold Statistics

Area Real Estate Figures Follow December to January Trend

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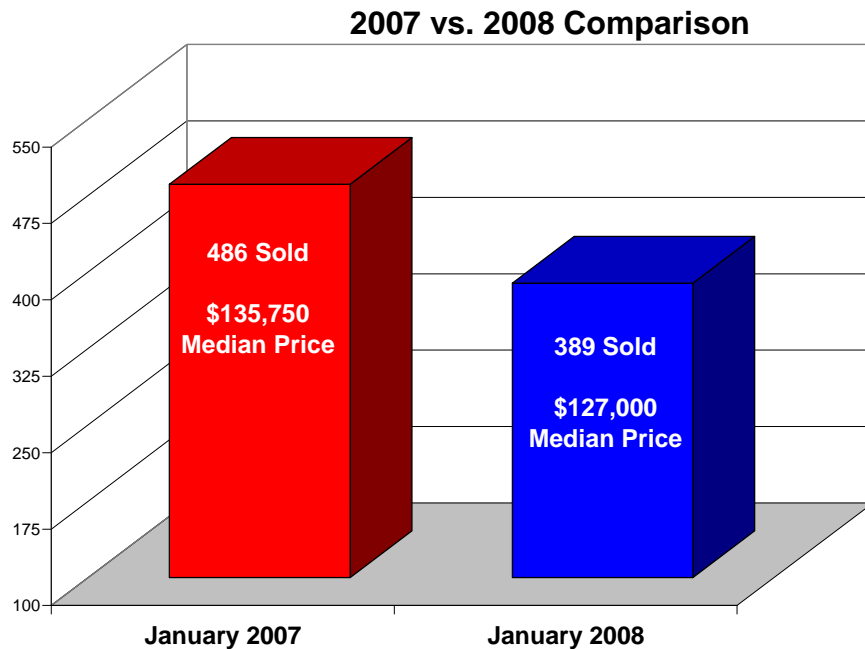
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Area Real Estate Figures Follow December to January Trend

Area real estate sales followed historical trends with a month-to-month decline in the total number of transactions, posting 389 total sales in the year's opening month. The January 2008 figure represents about an 18 percent drop from December of last year, according to the Multiple Listing Service (MLS) of the Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®. On average, the December to January dip shows a 20 percent annual decrease since 2000. Solely compared to the previous year, the total number of transactions was also down by 20 percent.

"Market conditions continue to favor buyers," explained Pam Duffy, President of the Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®. "While the numbers are off from what we have seen in the three previous record years in our area, buyers and sellers can still be confident in the viability of homeownership as one of the safest, long-term investments you can make."

Despite the decline, the health of the real estate market in Northwest Georgia and Southeast Tennessee remains high. One indicator centers on affordability. Looking at the median price – the price at which half sold for more and half sold for less – January showed a value of \$127,000. This figure represents a 6.4 percent drop from the same time last year and only about a 2 percent drop from December. The affordability of the local market is astounding when compared to the country's aggregate median price of about \$201,100, as reported by the National Association of REALTORS®.



"The spring and summer months will always out perform the winter ones," adds MLS President Randy Durham. "But we're also contending a tenuous public perception of real estate. For months, we've been force-fed a flood of national information about a failing housing industry; it's misinformation and the fence sitters really need to investigate the great opportunity that exists locally."

The greater Chattanooga area's housing market has continued along at a reasonable and, more importantly, a sustainable pace. "We didn't see the unsound price appreciations and inventory surges from new construction and unwarranted development," contends Duffy. "This market was insulated from the worst killers of sound real estate performance. Certainly, the numbers are a little softer but the principles of a healthy market remain in place for Chattanooga."

"The dynamics of a good market are here right now. Inventory is high, sound financing is available with interest rates at record lows and home prices are viable. I'd take this market over any those other ones," defends Durham.

As local economic activity strengthens, the area's real estate market will only continue to improve. This is a unique time to take advantage of market conditions and consumers can start off by contacting a member of the Chattanooga Association of REALTORS®. With a REALTOR® buyers and sellers alike will have someone looking at for their interests, pledged to the REALTOR® Code of Ethics. With over 1,900 members of the organization, it represents the premier source of real estate information in Southeast Tennessee and Northwest Georgia.