



Columnists The D
detnews

[Local News](#) | [Sports](#) | [Autos Insider](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Weblogs](#) | [Forums](#) | [Photos](#)

Search Detroit:

Thursday, May 10, 2007

[Print this](#) [Comment on this](#)

Essentials
[Homepage](#)

1-week archive:
[Tue Wed Thu Fri](#)
[Sat Sun Mon Today](#)

- [Photo Galleries](#)
- [Photo Store](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
- [Weather](#)
- [Horoscope](#)
- [Lottery](#)
- [Crossword](#)
- [Sudoku](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

Opinions
[Editorials](#)
[Blogs](#)

Columnists
[CyberSurveys](#)
[Forums](#)

Autos

- [Autos Insider](#)
- [Auto Shows](#)
- [Autos Weblog](#)
- [Drive](#)
- [-- New Car Photos](#)
- [-- Car Reviews](#)
- [-- Latest Deals](#)
- [-- Model Reports](#)
- [Joyrides](#)
- [Dream Cruise](#)

Business

- [Business](#)
- [Money & Life](#)
- [Careers](#)
- [-- Find a Job](#)
- [Real Estate](#)
- [-- Find a Home](#)

Metro

- [Metro/State](#)
- [Wayne](#)
- [Oakland](#)
- [Macomb](#)
- [Livingston](#)
- [Commuting](#)
- [Obituaries](#)
- [-- Death Notices](#)
- [Schools](#)
- [Detroit History](#)
- [Nation/World](#)

Hope for housing

Median sale prices for homes in southeastern Michigan rose last month.

Residential and condominium median sale price:



Source: Realcomp

Pending home sales in southeastern Michigan were up in April compared to the same month in 2006.

Pending residential and condominium sales:



The Detroit News

Brian O'Connor

Housing market on the mend, some say

Median prices show gains; pending deals in April signal stagnant Metro market may be rebounding.



Spring is a time of hope and Metro Detroit homeowners got just a little blossom of long-needed encouragement Wednesday.

The first small bit of good news: median home prices edged up 3.1 percent from March to April, according to Realcomp of Farmington Hills, a multiple listing service. Another hopeful sign is that the region's pending home sales for April were up 2 percent compared to April 2006.

"That's a solid indication that May is going to be a great month," said Gary Reggish, a broker with Remerica United Realty of Novi and president-elect of the Western Wayne Oakland County Association of Realtors. "The market is definitely picking up in terms of

Advertisement

FREE SHIPPING

The Perfect Couple

Buy 1, Get 1 FREE

Navigation System, V CAST Music & Video Ready

only \$49.99

AFTER \$50 INSTANT ONLINE DISCOUNT W/ NEW 2-YR ACTIVATION PER PHONE

SHOP

call 800-7...

- [Get free headlines by e-mail](#)
- [Get text alerts on your cell phone](#)

[Nation/World](#)
[Politics/Gov](#)
[-- Election](#)
[Health](#)
[Religion](#)
[Technology](#)
[Sports](#)
[Lions/NFL](#)
[Pistons/NBA](#)
[Red Wings/NHL](#)
[Tigers/MLB](#)
[Shock/WNBA](#)
[MSU](#)
[U-M](#)
[More Colleges](#)
[High Schools](#)
[Golf](#)
[Motor Sports](#)
[Outdoors](#)
[More Sports](#)
[Scoreboards](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[Entertainment](#)
[Events](#)
[-- Events Calendar](#)
[Movies/TV/DVD](#)
[-- Movie Finder](#)
[-- TV Listings](#)
[Eats & Drinks](#)
[-- Restaurants](#)
[-- Wine Report](#)
[Books](#)
[CD Reviews](#)
[Casino Guide](#)
[Michigan's Best](#)
[Living](#)
[MichMoms](#)
[Lifestyle](#)
[Homestyle](#)
[Fitness](#)
[Forums](#)
[News Talk](#)
[Faith Talk](#)
[Autos Talk](#)
[Mom Talk](#)
[Schools Talk](#)
[Wings Talk](#)
[Lions Talk](#)
[Pistons Talk](#)
[Tigers Talk](#)
[Big 10 Talk](#)
[High Schools](#)
[Movie Talk](#)
[Tech Talk](#)
[Weblogs](#)
[Blog Index](#)
[Amber Arellano's Blog](#)
[Anime Blog](#)
[Architecture Blog](#)
[Autos Blog](#)
[Big Ten Blog](#)
[Bizarro News](#)
[Bullard's Pundit Blog](#)
[Crafts Blog](#)
[Dads Blog](#)
[Daniel Howes Blog](#)
[Entertainment Blog](#)
[Fashion & Shopping](#)
[Food Blog](#)

traffic and as far as sales are concerned. The overall numbers are very encouraging."

That encouragement is badly needed because the Metro Detroit real estate market is still very troubled. Overall, April sales were down 7.2 percent from April 2006 while median prices still were off 5.8 percent compared with a year ago. Meanwhile, the number of homes sporting "For Sale" signs was up 21.6 percent in April over the same period last year.

Michigan's troubles partly reflect the downturn in real estate across the nation. On Tuesday, the National Association of Realtors lowered its projections for existing home sales to 6.29 million this year and 6.49 million in 2008. Last year, sales were 6.48 million.

In some cases overheated, speculative markets saw their bubble burst and sent property values plummeting. And while the rest of the nation doesn't share our unemployment woes, they have been similarly walloped by the meltdown in the sub-prime mortgage market.

Meanwhile, Michigan was the only state to see real estate values decline in 2006, according to federal data, while the state continues to lead the nation in unemployment and Detroit heads the list for home foreclosures. On the same day that Realtors were touting these small gains, Texas auctioneer Hudson & Marshall announced that it will open up bids on nearly 500 foreclosed Michigan homes in May, after successfully selling another 300 foreclosed Detroit p March.

Metro Detroit Realtors say the pickup in activity and encouraging trend in prices troubled real estate market may be starting to level off.

"I haven't seen prices decrease any further in the last four months," Reggish said.

Realcomp also reported:

In Macomb County, April sales were down 5.4 percent compared to April 2006 while pending sales increased 17 percent. The median sale price dropped 2.1 percent from April.

In Livingston County, sales were up 6.5 percent from last April and pending sales were up 6 percent. Median prices were up 5.5 percent.

In Oakland County, sales were down 3.3 percent from April 2006, and pending sales were flat, along with median sale prices.

In Wayne County, April sales were down 5.8 percent compared to 2006, but pending sales were up 4.9 percent. Median sale prices were up 20 percent.

Real estate professionals say there are two forces at work in the market. While th

▶ [Get The Detroit News on your PDA](#)

More from Brian O'Connor


Previous Columns

- ▶ [Wish on a star, but get buried in s](#)
- ▶ [Housing market on the mend, som](#)
- ▶ [It's Cinco de Mayo, and I feel just f](#)
- ▶ [Buying jobs, or buying trouble?](#)
- ▶ [Missed out on refund? Fix it](#)

Related Articles and Links

- ▶ [Metro home foreclosures surge in](#)
- ▶ [Metro home sales still lag 2006](#)
- ▶ [Pulte to ax nearly 1,900 jobs](#)
- ▶ [S&P housing index shows first qu: since 1990-91](#)
- ▶ [Existing U.S. home sales, prices di](#)
- ▶ [New U.S. home sales boom in Apri median prices fall](#)
- ▶ [Warren a surprising third in new h region](#)
- ▶ [Permits for new homes fall 48%](#)
- ▶ [Home sales show signs of life](#)
- ▶ [New home permits plummet in reg](#)
- ▶ [Metro home sales pick up](#)
- ▶ [Glut of homes has created the ulti buyer's market](#) BIZ-METRO-REAL-ESTATE

- ▶ [Printer friendly version](#)
- ▶ [Comment on this story](#)
- ▶ [Send this story to a friend](#)
- ▶ [Get Home Delivery](#)

[Golf Blog](#)
[Health Blog](#)
[Henry Payne's Blog](#)
[High School Sports](#)
[Homestyle Blog](#)
[Laura Berman Blog](#)
[Lions/NFL Blog](#)
[Mears Photoblog](#)
[Moms Blog](#)
[Motor Sports Blog](#)
[Music Blog](#)
[NASCAR/Racing Blog](#)
[Neal Rubin Blog](#)
[Nolan Finley Blog](#)
[Outdoors Blog](#)
[Photo Blog](#)
[Pistons/NBA Blog](#)
[Politics Blog](#)
[Scott Burgess: Autos Sports Blog](#)
[Sports & Celebs](#)
[Sports Buzz](#)
[Technology Blog](#)
[Terry Foster Sports](#)
[Tigers Blog](#)
[Tom Long Movies](#)
[Travel Blog](#)
[TV Blog](#)
[Wings/NHL Blog](#)
[RSS](#)
 [Feeds](#)

in foreclosures and other troubled properties has swelled the inventory of unsold hurt real estate prices, the volume of home sales isn't far off the peaks of the recent years.

"We sold more houses in 2005 and 2006 than we did in the boom years, so that's the bottom is dropping out in Michigan," Reggish said.

Instead, Realtors say the roster of unsold homes has grown for two reasons. One : number of homeowners trapped in adjustable-rate mortgages who owe more than th are worth and can't afford to sell at a loss. The second is that some homeowners cor homes at unrealistically high prices.

"When a house is on the market for a year and a half there is only one reason: the high," Reggish said. "If they don't want to be realistic, then they need to remove the from the market."

In fact, some Realtors say the price drop is a necessary correction that will keep h affordable for the important sector of first-time home buyers.

"At one point between 2003 and 2005 prices were going up as much as 8 percent percent a year," said Marge Whetsine, a broker with Keller William Realty in North you keep doing that year after year, pretty soon the houses are unaffordable for the : home buyers."

You can reach Brian O'Connor at (313) 222-2145 or boconnor@detnews.com.

More Columnists Headlines

- ▶ [Here's real scandal behind 'scandals'](#)
- ▶ [Don't believe TV when it comes to fluid intake](#)
- ▶ [GM's Lutz to play NPR game show](#)
- ▶ [Will gender pay gap ever be closed?](#)
- ▶ [Bread pudding loves the blues](#)
- ▶ [Standout Merlot is a great buy](#)
- ▶ [Turn dandelion greens into a delicacy](#)
- ▶ [Some banana muffins for Mom](#)
- ▶ [Gift ideas abound for police academy grads](#)
- ▶ [Man bothered by marriage jitters](#)
- ▶ [Giovanni's loads up on Italian wine](#)
- ▶ [Metal for the masses](#)
- ▶ [Ask Melody](#)
- ▶ ['Rule' or be ruled](#)
- ▶ [Bento box bargains](#)
- ▶ [Opinion: Driving while black or brown](#)
- ▶ [Opinion: Don't buy 'Starbucks fallacy' about taming Chinese repression](#)
- ▶ [Put a stamp on this way to feed the poor](#)
- ▶ [Jet cleaning method unclogs stubborn pipes](#)