

Sacramento Bee

Home prices rise despite fewer sales

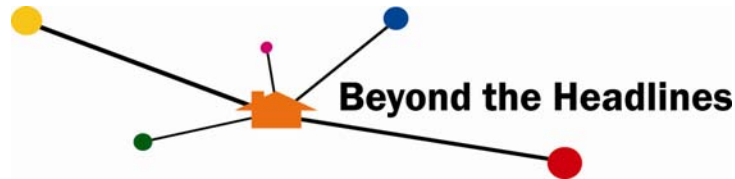
Following the expiration of the federal home buyers tax credit, sales of existing, single-family homes in California declined 4.2 percent during the month of June compared with the prior year, according to the CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (C.A.R.) June sales and price report. Meanwhile, the median price of existing homes in California rose 13.6 percent on a year-to-year basis to \$311,950. The median price is the point at which half of the homes on the market sell for more and half for less.

KEEP THIS IN MIND

- Although the median home price in California rose in June on a year-to-year basis, in month-to-month comparisons the median price declined 3.8 percent, according to C.A.R.'s report. Despite the slight decline in month-to-month home sales, California's housing market continues to recover at a quicker pace than the national housing market. Nationwide, home sales declined 5 percent in June and the median price rose only 1 percent, according to a report from the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR).
- C.A.R. expects home sales to be lower in the second half of the year because of the absence of the federal home buyers tax credit, but sales should remain above the long-run average and be significantly higher than the trough in 2007.
- According to C.A.R. President Steve Goddard, "It's important to keep in mind that home prices are substantially below their peaks and interest rates remain at historic lows, making this a very affordable time for many first-time buyers to purchase a home of their own."
- Home prices continued to post modest gains in June, due in large part to the lean inventory of homes for sale in many regions of the state. C.A.R.'s Unsold Inventory Index slightly rose to 4.8 months in June compared with 4.6 months in May and 4.2 months in June 2009. However, inventory remains well below the long-run average of a 7.1-month supply. The index indicates the number of months needed to deplete the supply of homes on the market at the current sales rate.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://www.sacbee.com/2010/07/23/2909637/home-prices-rise-despite-fewer.html>



In Other News...



Los Angeles Times

Credit rescoring can help you qualify for a mortgage

Rapid rescoring by independent, legitimate firms use procedures approved by the three major credit bureaus and can help correct errors or omissions that are dragging down your scores.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://www.latimes.com/business/realestate/la-fi-harney-20100725,0,7390703.story>



Los Angeles Times

Sellers should ensure that condo projects are on approved list for FHA mortgages

Condominium owners who are trying to sell in today's agonizingly slow housing market should make sure that their community is on the Federal Housing Administration's approved list. Ditto for someone who is thinking about refinancing a condo.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://www.latimes.com/business/realestate/la-fi-lew-20100725,0,7727492.story>



Wall Street Journal

Mortgage delinquencies fall in June, still near record high

Some 9.39 percent of all loans were 30 days or more past due, down from 9.54 percent in May, according to LPS Applied Analytics, which tracks loan data. An additional 3.69 percent of mortgages were in some stage of foreclosure, down from 3.72 percent in May and the record high of 3.81 percent in March.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/developments/2010/07/26/mortgage-delinquencies-fall-in-june-still-near-record-highs/>



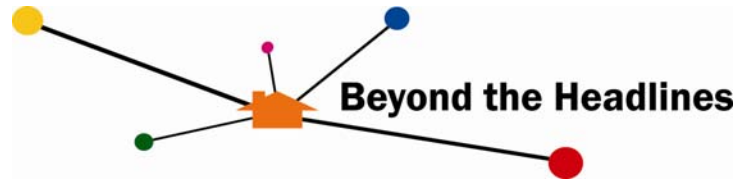
Los Angeles Times

Home prices tick up 4.6 percent in May

Home prices in 20 major U.S. cities gained in May, according to data released Tuesday, boosted by the effects of federal tax credits that have now expired.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-home-prices-20100728,0,7277846.story>



San Diego Union-Tribune

Consumer confidence falls to lowest since February

Americans' confidence in the economy eroded further in July amid worries about a still-stagnant job market. The report raised concerns about the overall economy and the back-to-school season.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://www.signonsandiego.com/news/2010/jul/27/consumer-confidence-falls-to-lowest-since-february/>



Wall Street Journal

The threat of "sidelined" home sellers

How many homeowners have been sitting on the sidelines during the housing downturn, waiting for massive price plunges to pass? The prospect of home-price stabilization is raising that question in some of the nation's housing markets, say real-estate agents, who report an uptick in listings from "sidelined" sellers testing the waters.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://blogs.wsj.com/developments/2010/07/27/the-threat-of-sidelined-home-sellers/>



Bloomberg

Americans tap \$8.3 billion in home equity, least in a decade

Americans in the second quarter tapped the smallest amount of home equity in a decade, showing households are focused on repairing tattered finances.

To read the full story, please click here:

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-07-28/americans-use-of-8-3-billion-in-home-equity-last-quarter-least-in-decade.html>



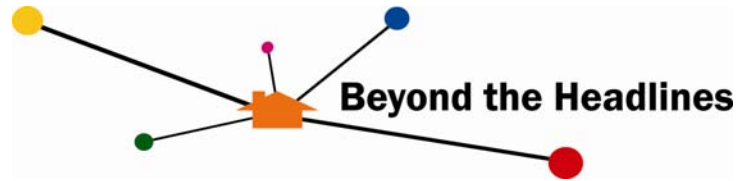
Wall Street Journal

Doubling down on housing

The housing crash has left at least 11 million people in the unenviable position of owing more on their homes than they are worth—and many more millions with properties worth far less than they paid for them.

To read the full story, please click here:

http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704421304575383490870014662.html?mod=WSJ_hpp_sections_personalfinance



What you should know about the market

- Federal foreclosure-prevention programs have been expanded to encourage delinquent borrowers to avoid foreclosure by streamlining the short-sale process. In the new program, participating lenders now are required to advise eligible sellers of the minimum amount they will accept for the short sale prior to the house being listed for sale. If the seller secures an offer for the agreed price and meets the lender's terms of the short sale, the lender must approve the proposed sale within 10 days.
- Another component of the new streamlined process requires the property to be listed with a licensed real estate professional who works in the community where the property is located. However, homeowners should be aware that because short sales require the bank to accept an amount less than the amount due on the mortgage, lenders may not approve a short sale, even if the price is comparable to recent sales in the neighborhood.