

News Release

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Recovery on track in February

The local housing market continued to make steady gains in February, with sales of detached homes up 27.7% over February 2009 and 38.2% year to date and sales of condos up 19.4% month over month and 34.2% year to date. “These percentage gains look impressive,” cautions Richard Thyssen, President of the London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS®, “but we must factor in the significant downturn which began early last year and from which we only began to recover in the Fall of 2009. What we are seeing is a steady return to the more vibrant, solid market we were enjoying before the global financial crisis.” A total of 605 homes exchanged hands last month; the ten year average for home sales in February stands at 620. “To put this into perspective,” says Thyssen, “the last decade has witnessed the highest volume of sales in our Association’s nearly seventy-five year history, which means that it looks as if we’re back on solid ground again. We’ve been very fortunate.”

In St. Thomas, London’s sister city, 44 homes exchanged hands for an average \$168,645. The ten-year average number of units sold in February stands at 51. “You see these kinds of swings in smaller markets,” explains Thyssen. “In January 2010, for example, there were 37 homes sold in St. Thomas, up 60.9% from the previous year, whereas a month later, in February, 44 homes sold, down 15.4%. It’s the overall trends that we begin to see over several months or on a quarterly basis that give us the real picture of how a market is performing.”

The average price of a detached home in February 2010 year to date was \$235,883, up 4.5%, while the average price of a condo rose 13.6% to \$168,805. The average price of total residential (both detached and condo) was up 6.0% to \$222,680. “These upward price adjustments also speak to a recovery,” says Thyssen.

“The resale housing market is becoming more balanced in a number of provinces,” said Canadian Real Estate Association President Dale Ripplinger. “A more balanced market is likely to result in smaller price increases going forward, with buyers in less of a rush due to an increase in supply

The best-selling house style in LSTAR's jurisdiction for the month of February was the two-storey, followed by the bungalow, the ranch, and the townhouse condo:

| House Style | Units Sold | Average Price |
|-----------------|------------|---------------|
| 2 storey | 138 | \$299,817 |
| Bungalow | 103 | \$165,615 |
| Ranches | 77 | \$288,205 |
| Townhouse Condo | 55 | \$162,661 |

Homes in LSTAR's jurisdiction continue to maintain their affordability compared to other major Ontario and Canadian centres. According to the Canadian Real Estate Association's Residential MLS® Report for January 2010 (the most current available), the average price year-to-date for:

- **London and St. Thomas, \$222,680**
- Calgary, \$397,518
- Durham Region, \$289,195
- Edmonton, \$317,920
- Hamilton-Burlington and District, \$287,414
- Kitchener-Waterloo, \$296,735
- Ottawa, \$318,425
- St. Catharine's & District, \$239,152;
- Toronto, \$409,058; and
- Greater Vancouver, \$639,074

The London and St. Thomas Association of REALTORS® represents nearly 1,500 real estate brokers and sales representatives from Middlesex and Elgin Counties. As members of the Canadian Real Estate Association, LSTAR members may use the REALTOR® trademark, which identifies them as real estate professionals who subscribe to a strict code of ethics. The Association operates the local Multiple Listing Service® (MLS®) and provides ongoing professional education courses for its members. It also participates in the Ontario Real Estate Association's Quality of Life program. Advertisements of local MLS® property listings and information about the services provided by a REALTOR® can be found at www.REALTOR.ca. More information about LSTAR is available at www.lstar.ca.