

## A LOOK AT THE TOTAL REAL ESTATE MARKET.

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In this series of article, we normally look at only residential property in five of the most popular areas north of the Broad River. This month, in an effort to present a more comprehensive picture and detect any emerging trends of the real estate market in our area, we will look at all of Northern Beaufort County to include Fripp and Harbor Islands. In addition to residential data are all classes of real estate, such as undeveloped and commercial property. The following charts compares the total northern Beaufort Count real estate market for the first 8 months of 2009 to the same period in 2010.

### Total Sales For Northern Beaufort County 1/1/09 – 8/15/09

	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	TOTAL PRICE	LISTING COUNT
LIST PRICE	\$269,685	\$195,000	\$101,671,431	377
SOLD PRICE	\$249,230	\$189,000	\$93,959,994	
DOM	209	158		

### Total Sales For Northern Beaufort County 1/1/10 – 8/15/10

	AVERAGE	MEDIAN	TOTAL PRICE	LISTING COUNT
LIST PRICE	\$237,749 (-12%)	\$189,950 (-2.5%)	\$106,036.155 (+4.2%)	446 (+15%)
SOLD PRICE	\$219,406 (-12%)	\$180,200 (-5%)	\$97,855,150 (+4%)	
DOM	222 (+5%)	141 (-10%)		

### Comparison of 2009 and 2010 Closings By Type

(As of 8/11 /08 and 8/15/10)

Type	2009 Number	2010 Number	2009 % of Total	2010 % of Total
Commercial Builds + Land	4	3	1.1%	0.7%
Land (undeveloped)	42	71	11.1%	16.0%
Condominiums/Townhouses	20	32	5.3%	7.0%
Single Family Home	293	328	77.7%	73.5%
Mobile Homes	18	12	4.7%	2.7%
TOTAL	377	446	100%	100%

I must say the above numbers are encouraging. Although there is the usual volatility we have come to expect, the upper peaks seem to be a little above 2009, (please see monthly chart on the LIBPA web site at [www.libpa.org](http://www.libpa.org)). Total sales volume is up (+4%), and number of listings sold up (+15%). Another good sign is the Days On the Market (DOM) being down (-10%). The fact that median prices are off (-5%) may not be considered a good sign, but as mentioned in an earlier article, there is usually a time lag when it comes to home prices. When sales were falling...prices continued to rise for almost two years.

I suspect that, even now with sales appearing to be picking up; prices may still continue to soften in some areas and price brackets. There were fears in the industry that the \$8000 tax allowance which expired at the end of April would have a more negative effect than it did. There was a drop in May and June, but the market seems to have shrugged it off and is moving forward...all be it at a snails pace!

I do feel the commercial numbers give us cause for concern. Only three commercial buildings sold in the last seven and a half months. This apparent weakness in the commercial real estate market is indicative of the national commercial picture. It is an indication of how few new businesses are starting up. Another factor is the fact that commercial financing can be lot harder to obtain than regular conforming loans. It goes without say that this is putting a damper on a lot of people's entrepreneurial spirit.

I know everyone is looking and hoping we have hit the bottom of this real estate correction cycle, and many forecasters, in the past, have prematurely said we had hit bottom. Looking at the overall numbers for the first seven months of this year, I feel we may well have seen the worse, and that we will slowly but surely claw our way out of this great real estate recession. We could well look back at 2009 as being the worse of the worse years we have seen in a lifetime. Let is all hope that is the case.