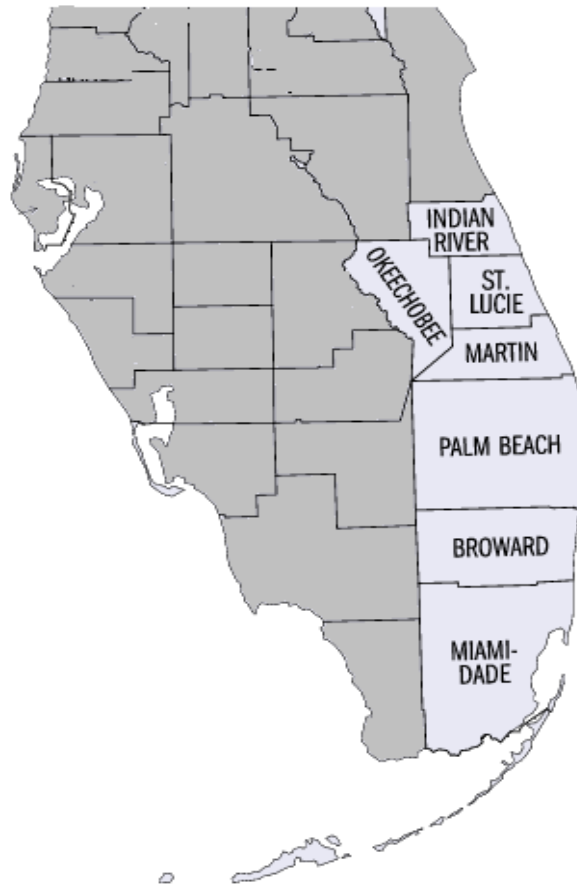




Economic and Market Watch Report

4th Quarter, 2010



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Regional Multiple Listing Service Economic and Market Watch Report

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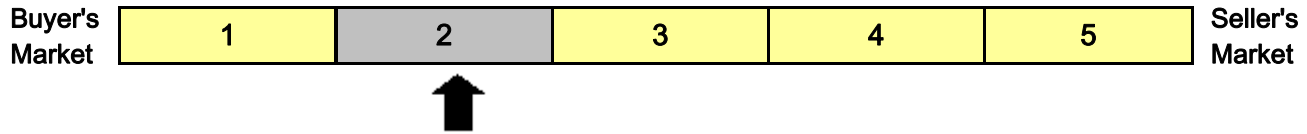
Local Report

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Broward County, FL



Labor Market :

Broward County saw 12,026 layoffs occur during October and November. Despite the decline in employment, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 10.6% during the third quarter to 10.5% in the first two months of the fourth quarter. Continued layoffs are hurting confidence and demand, but sub-5% mortgage rates have kept affordability strong.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$187,100	\$141,800	↓
# Homes on the Market *	1,344	1,219	↑
# Homes Sold **	419	343	↓
# New Homes Built ***	254	136	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	102	120	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33004	\$77,500	-56.58%	2	0.00%	21	100.0%
33009	\$273,700	25.09%	3	-50.00%	54	96.1%
33019	\$173,700	-38.60%	3	-50.00%	224	87.9%
33020	\$113,300	N/A	3	N/A	48	103.8%
33021	\$207,700	102.24%	3	-70.00%	64	97.2%
33023	\$72,400	-4.23%	10	25.00%	79	101.4%
33024	\$114,000	0.62%	7	-12.50%	56	99.7%
33025	\$58,400	-47.43%	5	-72.22%	103	94.9%
33027	\$134,300	-50.17%	3	-25.00%	55	87.6%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Broward County, FL

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33028	\$225,000	-13.39%	1	-50.00%	91	97.9%
33029	\$272,500	11.63%	2	-60.00%	65	91.6%
33060	\$162,900	-18.75%	5	-37.50%	154	89.0%
33062	\$270,600	-26.90%	16	14.29%	300	91.0%
33063	\$79,300	-14.64%	19	-24.00%	60	95.9%
33064	\$70,400	2.92%	27	-28.95%	92	96.9%
33065	\$96,300	1.90%	14	-22.22%	114	94.5%
33066	\$93,400	2.75%	4	-55.56%	185	95.4%
33067	\$183,300	74.90%	11	-35.29%	49	96.2%
33068	\$92,400	15.21%	8	-46.67%	88	93.5%
33069	\$65,600	21.93%	4	-76.47%	86	86.7%
33071	\$167,300	2.64%	5	-68.75%	108	95.2%
33073	\$148,700	-18.74%	21	50.00%	137	95.8%
33076	\$323,100	32.20%	11	83.33%	136	99.7%
33301	\$175,000	-2.78%	1	-83.33%	276	89.5%
33304	\$210,600	40.78%	7	40.00%	350	81.7%
33305	\$290,000	-71.77%	1	-85.71%	30	97.0%
33308	\$352,500	1.64%	10	-33.33%	256	92.0%
33309	\$93,400	25.03%	8	0.00%	83	96.0%
33311	\$72,000	-13.98%	3	-40.00%	111	108.4%
33312	\$105,100	-55.31%	5	-50.00%	69	99.0%
33313	\$35,000	-49.35%	1	-85.71%	122	100.0%
33314	\$55,000	-50.23%	3	-25.00%	126	82.6%
33315	\$124,900	N/A	4	N/A	123	93.9%
33316	\$278,700	-55.08%	4	33.33%	109	97.9%
33317	\$103,100	-41.95%	3	-40.00%	62	93.8%
33319	\$96,000	59.47%	7	-30.00%	168	102.7%
33321	\$96,900	-9.27%	7	-58.82%	177	90.9%
33322	\$154,100	5.91%	8	0.00%	64	99.5%
33323	\$201,400	0.10%	5	0.00%	128	94.5%
33324	\$65,700	-46.72%	3	-40.00%	155	96.6%
33325	\$191,500	13.58%	4	100.00%	100	99.1%
33326	\$146,300	-20.92%	2	0.00%	72	80.4%
33328	\$408,000	109.23%	1	0.00%	28	92.7%
33330	\$465,000	N/A	1	N/A	20	116.3%
33331	\$258,500	-44.01%	2	-33.33%	9	101.0%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Broward County, FL

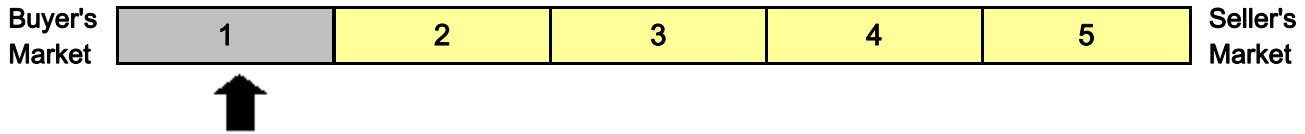
Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33332	\$300,000	N/A	1	N/A	142	100.0%
33334	\$57,400	-49.52%	4	-55.56%	116	96.6%
33351	\$121,500	0.66%	9	0.00%	71	96.2%
33441	\$113,700	-42.60%	22	-37.14%	107	94.5%
33442	\$100,800	-0.40%	28	-26.32%	108	96.1%
OTHER	\$65,000	-65.22%	2	-50.00%	156	96.4%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Indian River County, FL



Labor Market :

Indian River County saw 79 layoffs occur during October and November. Despite the decline in employment, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 15.6% during the third quarter to 14.4% in the first two months of the fourth quarter. Continued layoffs are hurting confidence and demand, but sub-5% mortgage rates have kept affordability strong.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$171,800	\$171,800	↓
# Homes on the Market *	455	482	↑
# Homes Sold **	102	64	↓
# New Homes Built ***	78	51	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	113	101	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

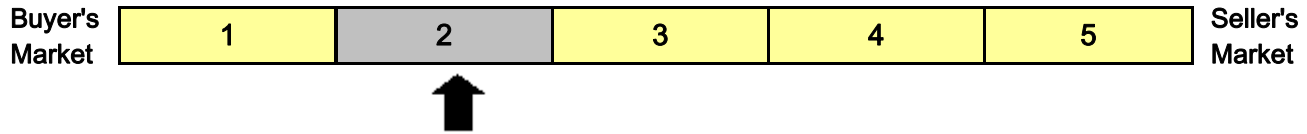
Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
32958	\$151,200	32.98%	17	54.55%	91	89.1%
32960	\$179,100	74.05%	4	-42.86%	144	85.3%
32962	\$95,900	10.87%	15	15.38%	91	94.7%
32963	\$377,100	-3.83%	7	0.00%	99	94.5%
32966	\$197,000	19.83%	3	-57.14%	27	97.1%
32967	\$164,300	85.23%	12	71.43%	145	92.5%
32968	\$177,500	-0.84%	6	20.00%	89	89.4%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Martin County, FL



Labor Market :

Martin County saw 43 layoffs occur during October and November. Despite the decline in employment, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 12.5% during the third quarter to 12.1% in the first two months of the fourth quarter. Continued layoffs are hurting confidence and demand, but sub-5% mortgage rates have kept affordability strong.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$295,700	\$331,000	↔
# Homes on the Market *	1,324	1,323	↑
# Homes Sold **	292	257	↔
# New Homes Built ***	60	15	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	134	158	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

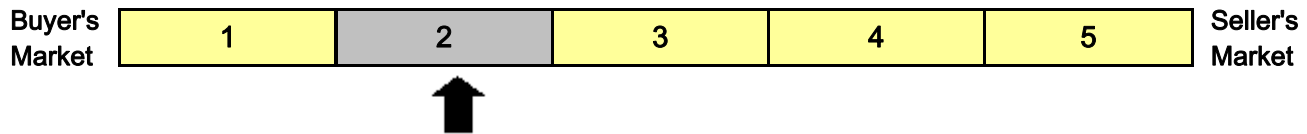
Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33455	\$817,800	147.89%	52	-10.34%	237	87.0%
34956	\$48,300	-27.37%	3	50.00%	75	80.7%
34957	\$113,200	-27.11%	30	7.14%	94	94.0%
34990	\$219,800	-16.52%	48	20.00%	138	94.8%
34994	\$105,000	-7.49%	29	-9.38%	128	95.5%
34996	\$321,800	-33.87%	20	11.11%	272	86.9%
34997	\$146,000	1.04%	54	-11.48%	109	91.0%
OTHER	\$528,300	37.65%	21	-36.36%	181	90.1%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Miami-Dade County, FL



Labor Market :

In the first two months of the fourth quarter, 7,114 jobs were added to the payrolls of Miami-Dade County. As a result of these new jobs, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 13.6% during the third quarter to 13.1% for October and November. This steady job creation will help buyer confidence and fuel home purchases down the road. Mortgage rates near 5% should support this trend.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$304,000	\$186,000	↔
# Homes on the Market *	256	173	↑
# Homes Sold **	48	47	↔
# New Homes Built ***	226	139	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	135	120	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33015	\$140,000	N/A	1	N/A	35	93.3%
33016	\$310,000	N/A	1	N/A	9	105.8%
33032	\$181,000	-27.60%	2	100.00%	74	96.8%
33033	\$186,100	145.19%	5	400.00%	110	97.9%
33056	\$65,000	42.86%	1	0.00%	65	86.7%
33125	\$55,000	N/A	1	N/A	42	81.0%
33127	\$60,500	N/A	1	N/A	6	93.2%
33129	\$221,000	N/A	1	N/A	212	100.0%
33130	\$165,000	307.41%	1	0.00%	220	91.7%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Miami-Dade County, FL

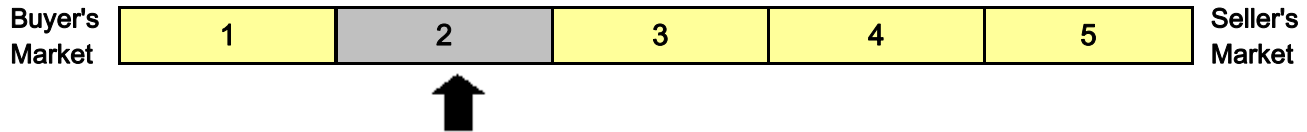
Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33132	\$119,900	N/A	1	N/A	28	100.0%
33133	\$333,700	N/A	2	N/A	68	99.6%
33138	\$110,000	-51.75%	1	0.00%	971	100.0%
33139	\$115,500	-76.90%	2	100.00%	132	92.5%
33143	\$429,900	N/A	1	N/A	284	87.8%
33149	\$205,000	N/A	1	N/A	6	91.5%
33154	\$460,000	N/A	1	N/A	212	100.0%
33155	\$132,500	-47.52%	2	0.00%	27	100.4%
33160	\$79,900	-80.56%	1	-50.00%	403	88.8%
33162	\$84,200	N/A	3	N/A	20	104.2%
33165	\$300,000	N/A	1	N/A	15	88.2%
33167	\$25,000	N/A	1	N/A	92	80.6%
33169	\$245,600	15.74%	5	0.00%	151	97.5%
33174	\$156,000	N/A	1	N/A	70	87.2%
33175	\$39,500	N/A	1	N/A	18	86.6%
33178	\$230,000	-15.13%	1	-66.67%	133	89.5%
33179	\$117,800	N/A	3	N/A	41	94.3%
33180	\$295,000	N/A	2	N/A	160	93.7%
33185	\$270,000	N/A	1	N/A	389	94.7%
33186	\$195,000	N/A	1	N/A	32	100.1%
33196	\$225,000	N/A	1	N/A	25	83.4%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Okeechobee County, FL



Labor Market :

In the first two months of the fourth quarter, 127 jobs were added to the payrolls of Okeechobee County. As a result of these new jobs, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 14.8% during the third quarter to 14.2% for October and November. This steady job creation will help buyer confidence and fuel home purchases down the road. Mortgage rates near 5% should support this trend.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$41,000	\$96,000	↓
# Homes on the Market *	38	34	↑
# Homes Sold **	2	8	↓
# New Homes Built ***	NA	NA	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	52	133	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

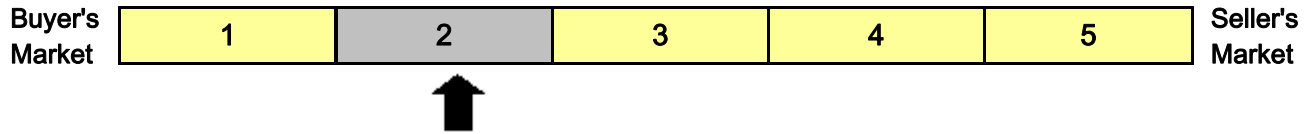
Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
34972	\$40,000	-25.37%	3	200.00%	154	78.8%
34974	\$129,600	27.06%	5	400.00%	121	91.0%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Palm Beach County, FL



Labor Market :

Palm Beach County saw 1,088 layoffs occur during October and November. Despite the decline in employment, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 12.4% during the third quarter to 12% in the first two months of the fourth quarter. Continued layoffs are hurting confidence and demand, but sub-5% mortgage rates have kept affordability strong.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$256,600	\$244,800	↔
# Homes on the Market *	21,407	20,811	↑
# Homes Sold **	4,304	4,429	↔
# New Homes Built ***	350	144	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	149	152	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33401	\$149,500	-24.72%	115	36.90%	193	92.5%
33403	\$88,300	-18.47%	33	10.00%	124	93.8%
33404	\$244,200	-17.69%	138	38.00%	195	89.9%
33405	\$259,200	31.24%	50	6.38%	224	84.6%
33406	\$113,100	-10.17%	47	-14.55%	117	95.1%
33407	\$109,200	3.70%	71	-2.74%	164	89.7%
33408	\$304,000	-7.37%	69	-24.18%	151	87.7%
33409	\$87,100	-16.17%	90	3.45%	110	95.3%
33410	\$272,800	-24.72%	140	-7.28%	163	90.6%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Palm Beach County, FL

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33411	\$153,200	-19.11%	290	21.34%	135	93.8%
33412	\$217,400	-32.13%	52	6.12%	148	92.1%
33413	\$158,300	-8.92%	34	-33.33%	150	96.8%
33414	\$376,800	5.19%	214	-6.55%	139	87.5%
33415	\$62,900	-28.03%	109	0.93%	115	93.8%
33417	\$54,600	-20.29%	72	-23.40%	89	93.4%
33418	\$395,400	14.94%	164	-16.33%	157	86.7%
33426	\$108,300	-11.01%	80	-21.57%	131	93.8%
33428	\$168,400	-19.77%	83	-9.78%	163	90.6%
33430	\$76,700	-51.24%	5	66.67%	243	90.9%
33431	\$323,500	-26.63%	45	-26.23%	135	86.3%
33432	\$670,100	-7.71%	80	-10.11%	250	87.9%
33433	\$215,300	-2.67%	125	7.76%	128	88.7%
33434	\$194,600	6.86%	91	-8.08%	154	88.5%
33435	\$139,700	-6.49%	109	21.11%	153	93.2%
33436	\$149,200	-20.09%	142	-16.47%	154	91.3%
33437	\$202,000	-15.02%	140	-35.48%	162	92.6%
33444	\$194,900	-6.12%	70	6.06%	156	90.2%
33445	\$118,700	-14.67%	93	-26.19%	149	91.6%
33446	\$251,700	-14.94%	96	-16.52%	155	89.3%
33449	\$404,900	10.84%	33	-5.71%	149	93.8%
33458	\$228,000	-16.51%	171	-8.56%	147	92.8%
33459	\$280,000	N/A	1	N/A	249	80.0%
33460	\$133,400	-3.82%	80	12.68%	132	87.8%
33461	\$73,700	-14.90%	71	-19.32%	96	95.8%
33462	\$280,500	82.26%	101	14.77%	157	82.7%
33463	\$104,400	-14.85%	140	11.11%	128	95.6%
33464	\$170,000	N/A	1	N/A	59	95.0%
33467	\$172,100	-24.15%	166	-19.81%	132	93.3%
33469	\$347,500	5.24%	44	10.00%	223	87.3%
33470	\$164,800	-20.50%	91	51.67%	129	96.9%
33472	\$263,600	16.12%	64	23.08%	144	91.4%
33473	\$458,800	2.14%	24	-31.43%	47	97.9%
33474	\$2,625,000	N/A	1	N/A	129	79.8%
33477	\$707,600	44.14%	93	29.17%	208	81.0%
33478	\$245,900	-9.89%	34	-19.05%	183	92.2%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Palm Beach County, FL

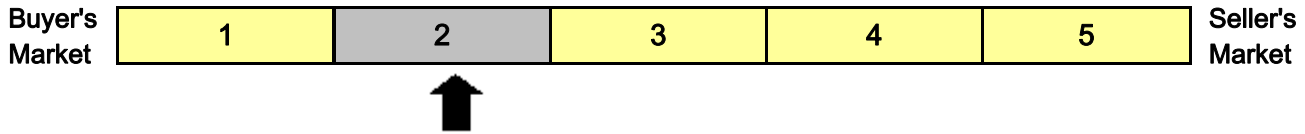
Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
33480	\$1,040,800	1.60%	49	-18.33%	232	80.1%
33483	\$672,400	-11.60%	76	20.63%	274	85.0%
33484	\$96,800	-22.19%	99	-20.16%	127	90.1%
33486	\$218,000	-32.88%	51	-8.93%	132	95.1%
33487	\$313,300	-31.85%	88	-7.37%	155	89.4%
33496	\$497,700	-14.79%	64	-23.81%	164	87.2%
33498	\$329,300	-4.83%	39	18.18%	159	93.0%
OTHER	\$370,000	469.23%	1	-50.00%	509	99.1%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



St. Lucie County, FL



Labor Market :

St Lucie County saw 81 layoffs occur during October and November. Despite the decline in employment, the average monthly unemployment rate fell from 15.5% during the third quarter to 15% in the first two months of the fourth quarter. Continued layoffs are hurting confidence and demand, but sub-5% mortgage rates have kept affordability strong.

Housing Market :

	Q3' 10	Q4' 10	Q1' 11 (Forecast)
Average Price	\$108,300	\$112,000	↔
# Homes on the Market *	3,398	3,291	↑
# Homes Sold **	1,073	955	↔
# New Homes Built ***	54	23	↑
Avg # of Days on Market	115	142	↑

* Available as of Dec. 31, 2010.

** May not add to total of zip codes.

*** During the first two months of 4th quarter.

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
34945	\$242,900	34.50%	5	0.00%	290	92.4%
34946	\$93,800	144.91%	4	-42.86%	152	88.5%
34947	\$80,400	-14.83%	8	0.00%	237	94.4%
34949	\$187,400	-16.93%	44	-26.67%	245	90.5%
34950	\$120,700	192.25%	18	0.00%	117	94.9%
34951	\$87,400	3.92%	37	-28.85%	106	92.0%
34952	\$83,900	-11.40%	147	-5.77%	133	94.1%
34953	\$101,100	-5.07%	282	-42.57%	123	95.8%
34981	\$116,200	19.18%	10	42.86%	228	93.5%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



St. Lucie County, FL

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
34982	\$62,100	-10.39%	59	-10.61%	143	91.5%
34983	\$96,900	6.02%	141	-42.45%	118	95.8%
34984	\$158,600	19.16%	54	-37.93%	134	93.2%
34986	\$164,000	14.21%	99	-49.75%	172	92.3%
34987	\$144,400	-11.68%	42	2.44%	174	97.1%
OTHER	\$178,200	-44.31%	5	-50.00%	309	81.4%

*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.



Others

Data by Zip Codes for Q4 2010

Zip Code	Average Price	Price Change ***	Total # Homes Sold (Quarter)	% Change in # Homes Sold ***	Average Days on Market	% of Asking Price (Sold/ List Price)
32792	\$28,000	N/A	1	N/A	181	112.0%
32903	\$420,000	N/A	1	N/A	98	70.0%
32909	\$250,000	163.16%	1	0.00%	19	89.6%
32940	\$70,000	N/A	1	N/A	572	77.9%
33884	\$75,000	N/A	1	N/A	403	88.3%
34287	\$32,000	N/A	1	N/A	252	80.0%
34786	\$212,000	N/A	1	N/A	205	101.4%
OTHER	\$1,115,000	N/A	2	N/A	378	81.4%

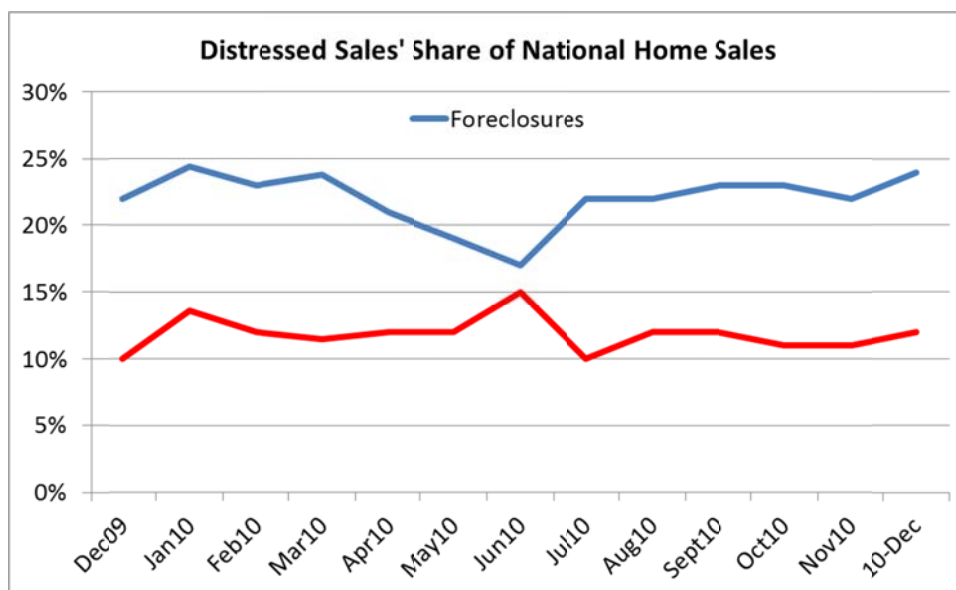
*** % Change of current quarter compared to the same quarter to year ago.

Robo-Signing and You

By Ken Fears
Manager, Regional Economics

The dust had not settled in the wake of the Federal home buyer tax credit before the housing market was hit by another distortion. This time the shock came from the supply side by way of the foreclosure process and the revelation that documentation submitted by some banks was flawed. Several banks imposed a moratorium on foreclosure sales as a result. The question is how did this change impact home sales?

Nationally, the share of foreclosures that sold fell to 22% in November before jumping to 24% in December. Short sales held steady at 11% before climbing to 12%. These patterns suggest that the moratorium imposed by Bank of America, JP Morgan Chase, GMAC, and Ally Financial may have had a slight impact on sales of foreclosures at the national level. However, the scandal did not hold back general consumer demand for housing. Nationally, home sales rose 6.1% in November and surged 12.3% in December as fence sitters moved to get ahead of rising mortgage rates. The inventory of homes slipped by 3.8% and 4.2% over this same time frame. The drop in supply and rise in demand helped drive the months supply down from 10.5 in October to 8.1 in December, its lowest level since March and a trend that helps to ease downward pressure on home prices.



Not all areas of the country were exposed to the problems brought on by flawed foreclosure filings. Only states where foreclosures are part of the judicial process are impacted by the issues surrounding the mass signing of documents. In areas where the process falls under the judicial system, a bank must prove in court that it owns the property before it can proceed with the foreclosure sale. In non-judicial areas, the process is based on the deed of trust, which has a clause explicitly allowing a trustee to sell the property after the trustee makes pre-determined efforts to notify the home owner. While some non-judicial areas may be spared this potential log-jam, both GMAC and Bank of America chose to suspend foreclosure sales in both judicial and non-judicial areas. Consequently, given the size of these two lenders the impacts are likely widespread. BofA did re-start limited foreclosure sales in late October, which might explain the increased share of foreclosures in the December sales report.

According to research done by RealtyTrac, Inc, the foreclosure process in Florida is governed by the judicial process. Consequently, the area covered by Regional MLS, Inc. is likely to experience some disruptions from the moratorium. The impact on the market is hard to quantify. Intuitively, one would expect a decline in foreclosures to reduce supply and help prices, but it might push the supply issue into the spring market once the documentation and signature issues are resolved. Furthermore, the scandal could scare away buyers who are worried about the health of the market and their legal right to buy a foreclosed home. One clear upside is that banks are more likely to be receptive to short-sale offers, particularly if a coalition of state attorneys general move forward with proposed law suits that would extend the moratorium.

It is difficult to say exactly how the robo-signing scandal will impact the local housing market. Markets with relatively tight inventories and stable employment may not be impacted, while markets with high inventory levels may experience a roller-coaster. What's fact is that the true nature of market may not be revealed until later in 2011.

Cheers for the New Year?

by Lawrence Yun, NAR Chief Economist

The total number of home-owning households rises about one million each year. These additional homeowners are the result of powerful yet simple forces of an increasing population. The latest decennial Census count confirms the continuing solid gains in the U.S. population. From 2000 to 2010, our nation's population grew by 27 million -- there are now 308 million people living in the country representing 112 million households.

Because of population increases, one can expect a rising number of homeowners over time. Of course, there will naturally be fluctuations from one year to the next due to changing economic circumstances. One notable past example of this occurred in 1982 when there was no net new addition to the homeowner population despite the ongoing general population increase. If you recall, in 1982 mortgage rates rose to 18 percent – certainly an interest rate not conducive to buying a home.

Year	Homeowners
1960	31 million (estimate)
1970	41 million
1980	52 million
1990	60 million
2000	70 million
2010	75 million

In the past five years, from 2005 to 2010, even a larger anomaly occurred: there was no net new growth in the home-owning population. The main reason for this was the huge housing bubble and the subsequent – and painful – bust which halted homeownership growth. There are currently 75 million home-owning households. That is slightly lower than the 76 million homeowners in 2005. Indeed, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (which tracks homeownership rates), the homeownership rate fell from 69 percent to 66 percent over the past 5 years.

We should remember something important. Those bubble years are artificial; consequently, that 69 percent homeownership rate in 2005 was likely also to have been artificial. A return to a 66 percent homeownership rate could be sustainable – and frankly still very impressive as it means that two-thirds of U.S. households own their own homes. The very low default rates on recently originated mortgage loans (those originated in 2009 and 2010) point back towards solid sustainable homeownership levels for the future. A “back-to-the-long term” trend line would mean adding one million net new home-owning households each year. This powerful supporting demographic force will be present as the overall population is expected to rise to about 340 million by the next Census period in 2020, and then to increase to 420 million by 2050. In terms of home-owning households, that means an increase anywhere from the current 75 million homeowners to 115 million by 2050.

Such a demographic force has a major impact regarding the longer term future. But the short-term dynamics are dominated by economic forces. Fortunately, the economy is showing more definitive signs of improvement. Manufacturing output has been rising. The stock market has recovered nicely. Companies are flush with cash. Consumer confidence has rebounded off very low levels (albeit with more improvement needed). And more importantly, jobs are being created. According to the latest company payroll data released in early January, there were 1.1 million additional jobs in December of 2010 compared to one year before. The household employment

Chief Economist's Commentary

data (based on asking people if they have a job) was even more encouraging: there were 1.3 million more jobs. The official unemployment rate figure of 9.4 percent is based on the household survey not the payroll survey.

Job gains are expected to accelerate in 2011 to something close to 2 million net new jobs. That good news is tempered somewhat by the fact that the unemployment rate will remain stubbornly high at near 9 percent as more discouraged unemployed people – those who are not officially counted as unemployed since they are not looking for work – start looking for a job.

Some release of pent-up demographic demand supported by the improving economy will bump up home sales this year. In addition to new homeowners, there are always a certain percentage of existing homeowners who move – that is, they sell their home and purchase another one. The latest NAR survey of home sellers indicates that recent sellers have been in their current residence for 10 years. That implies one out of 10 homeowners will be moving in a given year. Census data suggests a much longer holding period than 10 years, which is due to many homeowners who remain in their homes until death and thus do not get captured in the NAR survey of recent home sellers. Generally, younger homeowners have shorter tenures in their homes before making the next move. At the same time though, older homeowners are more likely to purchase a second home – be it an investment or vacation home.








Putting all important factors together, existing-home sales are projected to rise 8 percent to 5.2 million units nationwide this year and possibly to 5.5 million in 2012. There will be a bigger percentage increase of 24 percent for new home sales in 2011, but that is due to a very low base figure of only 310,000 new home sale posted in 2010.

Our forecast figures will be updated each month depending on how the economy plays out. And let's be a bit more realistic for this new year: going forward we are unlikely to see the 7 million existing-home sales and 1 million new homes sales we saw during the bubble years. We now know that those figures were in part artificial. The housing market is just trying to settle down – and it will do so at a long-run and sustainable pace.

So, here's to the new year: Cheers!

Economic Monitor

This table reflects data available through January 7, 2011.

Monthly Indicator	Recent Forecast	Likely Direction Over the Next Six Months	Forecast
<p>Existing-home sales rose 5.6% in November to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.68 million units. The national median existing-home price was \$170,600 in November. Going forward, the positive impact of ongoing economic growth and steady job creation should more than offset the modest rise in mortgage interest rates.</p>	Nov 2010 4,680 Oct 2010 4,430 Nov 2009 6,490		Job creation is adding to the buyer pool
<p>New home sales also increased in November, rising 5.5% to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 290,000 units. The West experienced a 37.3% increase in new home sales. Still, sales were 21.2% below their pace in November of 2009. New home inventory at the end of November was 197,000 units – an 8.2 month supply at the current sales pace.</p>	Nov 2010 290 Oct 2010 275 Nov 2009 368		Finally, some recovery from a dismal state
<p>Housing starts rose 3.9% from October to November, posting a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 555,000 units. Single-family starts increased 6.9%. However, building permits – generally a reliable indicator of future starts – declined slightly to 4.0% from October to 14.7% from November of 2009. There is still significant new construction that needs to be completed as well as sold.</p>	Nov 2010 555 Oct 2010 534 Nov 2009 589		Construction loans should steadily appear
<p>Housing affordability continued its march upward. NAR's HAI Index for November registered 184.5 – up from 183.6 in October. The relationship recently between mortgage rates, home prices and income has been the most favorable on record.</p>	Nov 2010 184.5 Oct 2010 183.4 Nov 2009 173.3		Slow wage gain not enough to offset higher rates
<p>Mortgage rates Average 30-year fixed mortgage rates rose 31 basis points in December 2010 to 4.71%. Despite the increase, mortgage rates were still lower than they were in December of 2009. Modest rate increases are not yet a threat to the housing market as long as the job market holds up as anticipated in 2011.</p>	Dec 2010 4.71% Nov 2010 4.30% Dec 2009 4.88%		High budget deficit raises borrowing costs
<p>Employment The U.S. economy created 103,000 new jobs in December, virtually all of which were private-sector payrolls. October's and November's job creation figures were revised upward. Still the December figure was less than what most analysts anticipated. During 2010, the nation added 1.1 million jobs. The unemployment rate did decline in December – to 9.4% -- although that was in part Due to people who stopped looking for work.</p>	Dec 2010 - 103 Nov 2010 -71 12-month total: +1,100		Two million new jobs possible in 2011
<p>Economic Growth continued to improve. Real GDP growth – that is, the output of all goods and services produced in the U.S. – increased 2.6% from the 2nd quarter of 2010 to the 3rd quarter, marking a 5th consecutive quarter of positive GDP growth. This is the 3rd and final estimate of GDP growth based on more complete data. The increase in GDP reflects growth in consumer spending, private investment, export and government spending.</p>	2010:III +2.6% 2010:II +1.7% 2009:III +1.6%		Business spending momentum strengthening

Notes: All rates are seasonally adjusted. Existing home sales, new home sales and housing starts are shown in thousands. Employment growth is shown as month-to-month change in thousands. Sources: NAR, Bureau of the Census, Bureau of Labor Statistics and Freddie Mac.