



# Some encouraging news and numbers

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TREB PRESIDENT'S COLUMN AS IT APPEARS IN THE TORONTO STAR

February 12, 2010

No matter where your travels take you throughout the Greater Toronto Area these days, you'll find that real estate is on many people's minds.

From office lobbies to restaurants to subway trains, snippets of conversations about the market can be heard. This is a reflection of how profoundly our city's real estate market affects all of us. Indeed, the quick rebound in the real estate market (GTA and Canadian) contributed greatly to the recovery experienced in the economy to date. The Canadian Real Estate Association estimates that each resale home transaction in Canada results in over \$46,000 in additional spending across many different sectors of the economy. Obviously, this spending also helps with keeping people employed and creating new jobs as we continue to recover from the recession.

Regardless of whether you're planning a move in the near future, it's important to keep up to date on the GTA real estate market as it has such a tremendous impact on the broader economy.

In January, 4,986 homes changed hands throughout the Greater Toronto Area. This figure far exceeds last January's 2,670 sales, which took place in the depths of our short-lived recession. Most significantly, it is comparable to January 2008's 5,075 transactions and the 5,173 sales that took place in January 2007, the latter of which was the strongest year on record. Breaking down the numbers, there were 1,973 sales in the 416 Area and 3,013 transactions in the 905 Region last month.

Condominium apartments comprised 47 per cent of all sales in the 416 and nearly 13 per cent of all 905 transactions last month. By contrast, at this time a year ago condominiums comprised 43 per cent of 416 sales and 11 per cent of 905 transactions, despite the fact that in last year's struggling economy, a condominium

purchase may have been a more affordable option for many homebuyers. Condominium living is becoming an increasingly popular option for a broader array of households in the GTA.

With respect to prices, there is more encouraging news. Currently, the average price of a home in the GTA is \$409,058, which represents a 19 per cent increase over the January 2009 average price of \$343,632. The increase was even more significant in the 905 Region, where last January's average price of \$328,935 rose more than 20 per cent to \$396,556 last month. In the 416 Area the average price rose 17 per cent from \$364,416 a year ago to \$428,151 in January.

There are currently 12,052 resale homes available for sale throughout the GTA as compared to 20,450 a year ago. As we move toward the spring market though, we can expect more listings as homeowners react favourably to recent months' activity. The average home price will continue to grow in the GTA, but at a more moderate pace.

To find out more about market conditions in your specific neighbourhood, talk to a Greater Toronto REALTOR®. They can advise you on recent sales in the area so that you can make informed decisions when planning your next move. Be sure to visit [www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com](http://www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com) as well, where you will find GTA listings, plain language explanations of common real estate forms, information on government programs and much more.

*Tom Lebour is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 28,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.*