

Average home price lower in 2009 than '08

But December's prices 9% higher than one year ago

BY CASSANDRA KYLE, THE STARPHOENIX JANUARY 5, 2010

More homes sold in the Saskatoon region in 2009, and at a lower average price, than in 2008, figures released Monday by the Saskatoon Region Association of Realtors (SRAR) show.

A total of 3,822 houses were purchased in the region last year, a nine per cent increase over 2008 when 3,520 houses found new owners. Homes in the Saskatoon area sold for an average price of \$278,779 in 2009, a three per cent drop from a year earlier.

The majority of home sales last year took place in the \$300,000 to \$350,000 price range, SRAR's executive officer Harry Janzen wrote in the association's monthly report. Significant activity was also noted in the \$275,000 to \$300,000 price range.

Additionally, SRAR figures show local real estate agents sold a total of \$1.065 billion worth of residential property in the city last year, a five per cent increase over 2008 when residential real estate worth \$1.013 billion was sold.

Meanwhile, for the month of December, 211 homes sold in the region, an increase of 31 per cent from December 2008 when 161 homes were purchased.

SRAR figures indicate Saskatoon-area houses sold last month at an average price of \$291,554, a nine per cent increase from the same month a year earlier when the average selling price was \$266,420.

The number of homes on the market continued to drop through 2009, including the last month of the year. At the end of December, 703 homes were listed on the market as compared to the 1,127 homes listed for sale at the end of December 2008. Last month, local agents listed 212 properties, a 13 per cent decline from the 245 homes listed in the same month a year earlier.

Outside of the city, a total of 951 properties sold in 2009 at an average price of \$258,996, a nine per cent increase in number and a 15 per cent increase in price from the 869 homes that sold for an average of \$224,421 in 2008.

During the month of December, 47 homes located outside of Saskatoon were purchased, a 68 per cent increase from December 2008 when 28 houses were bought in the area.

Janzen wrote all indicators point to a stable, steady real estate market this year. However, he said unknown variables, such as the price of potash and oil, can affect the marketplace.

Still, consumer confidence in the region remains optimistic, a sign of strong consumer spending, he said.

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