



For Immediate Release

Sarasota Association of Realtors

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January 2009 pending sales jump almost 18 percent

In the face of national economic doom and gloom, pending sales in the Sarasota real estate market rose to 683 in January 2009 as reported by members of the Sarasota Association of Realtors®, topping the 500 level for the 13th month in a row. Pending sales last month were much higher than the 516 reported in January 2008, which indicates that local real estate has bucked the national downward to some extent.

Pending sales reflect contracts executed by buyers and sellers. The recent numbers demonstrate a steady, strong pattern, indicating buyers have become more active in the Sarasota market as the traditional season heats up.

“These are certainly historic times for our nation’s economy, and we must be realistic and understand that higher unemployment and the recession impacts everyone,” said 2009 SAR President Bill Geller. “But we must also understand that even during downturns, opportunities exist for savvy buyers. The Sarasota market is blessed with tremendous, high quality properties, and the lower prices have made this area a goldmine of opportunity. With the guidance of a well-trained, professional local Realtor®, buyers can be assured that they will find the perfect property in today’s market environment.”

Overall closed sales in the first month of 2009 stood at 319, compared to 327 in January 2008, a year-to-year decline of only 2.4 percent. Sales totaled 406 December 2008, but the monthly decline was expected, especially during a four-year election cycle, when real estate activity often sees a lull prior to a new administration taking office.

The recent signing of the \$787 billion American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, plus the Obama administration’s enactment of the \$75 billion Housing Support and Foreclosure Prevention program should help improve the real estate markets even more in the months ahead, said Geller.

“We are clearly seeing a focus by this administration on the root of the economic problems – the real estate downturn,” said Geller. “There have been several initiatives adopted which include suggestions by the National Association of Realtors®, and we are hopeful these programs will help us back on the road to recovery.”

For instance, first-time homebuyers who meet eligibility requirements and purchase a home this year prior to Dec. 1 are eligible for a tax credit of \$8,000. Unlike the 2008 tax credit, this one does not have to be repaid. Combined with historically low interest rates, experts expect this program to generate an increase in sales.

“And the ripple effects of expenditures for household items, moving costs, furnishings and so on should provide a needed shot in the arm for our local economy,” said Geller.

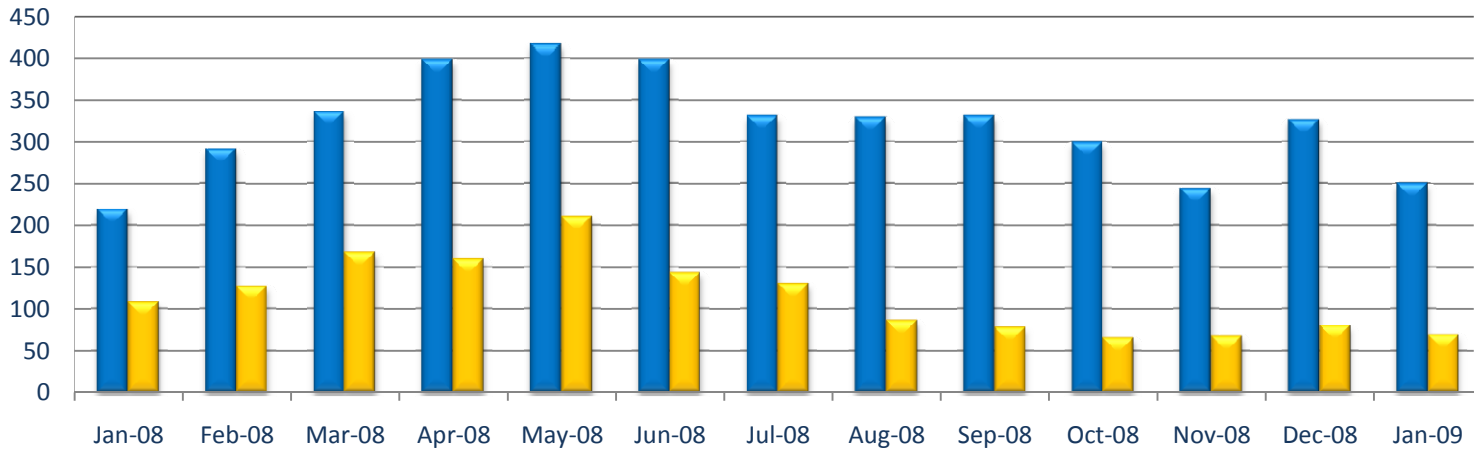
The median sale price for single family homes declined to \$149,950 in January 2009 after coming in at \$175,000 in December 2008, for a 14 percent decline. Condominium prices fell to \$220,000 in January 2009 from the December 2008 figure of \$255,000, also 14 percent decline. While statistics have not been tabulated breaking down the number of short sales and foreclosures, many local agents and brokers have indicated these sales have dominated their recent business, which tends to impact the median sales prices substantially.

Another important market tracker – the absorption rate of properties on the market – continues to track lower than last year at this time for both single family homes and condominiums. Absorption rate is the number of months it would take to sell the entire remaining listed inventory in a particular category, based upon the sales for that particular month.

For January 2009, the absorption rate for single family homes stood at 25.3 months, compared to 39.0 months in January 2008. For condominiums, the absorption rate was at 38.4 months in January 2009, substantially lower than the 52.0 months reported in January 2008.

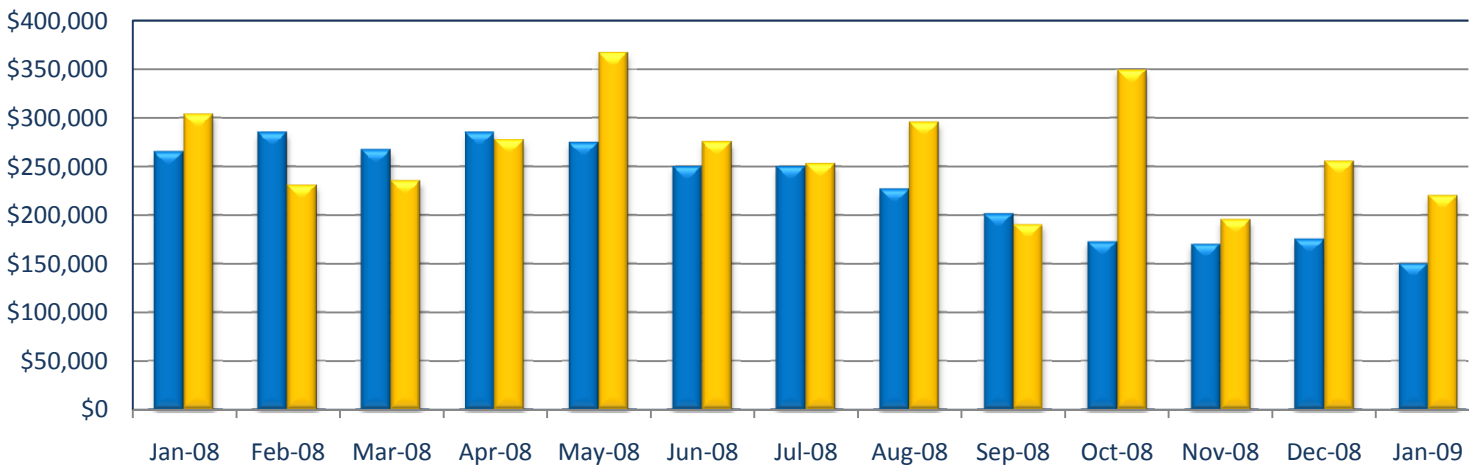
Unit Sales

■ Single Family
■ Condo



Median Sale Price

■ Single Family
■ Condo



Single Family

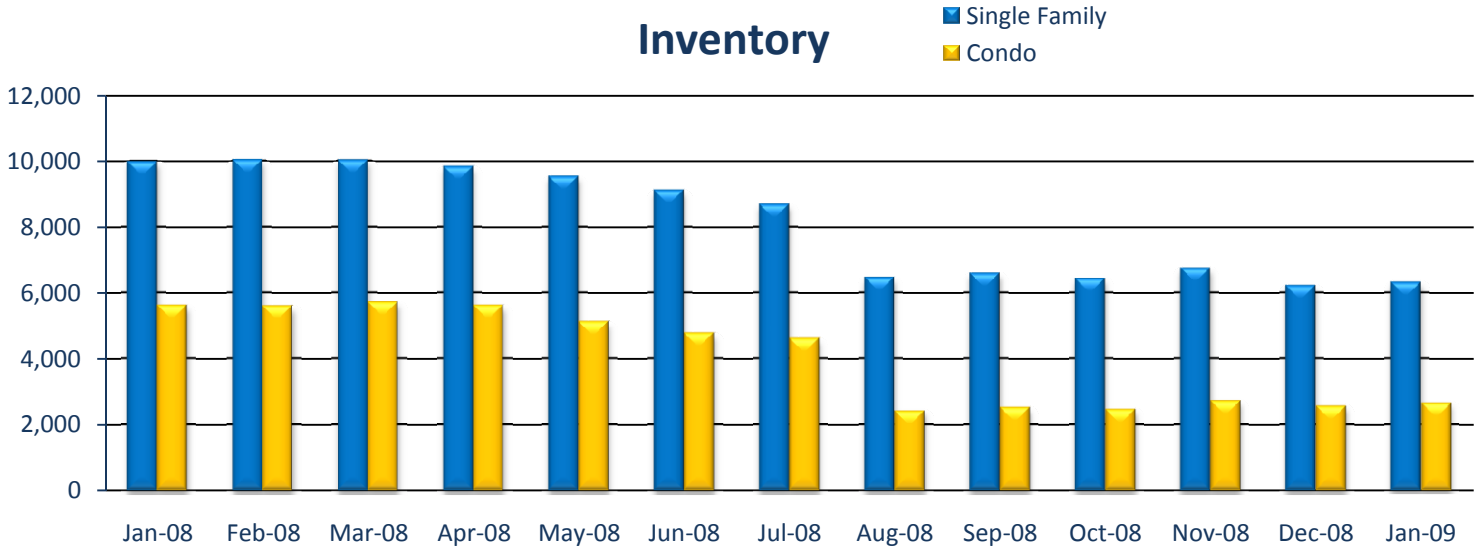
	#Active	#Sold	%Sold	Average DOM	Median Sale Prices	Median Last 12 Months	Months Inventory	Pending Reported	%Pending	# New Listings	# Off Market
This Month	6319	250	3.9	152	\$149,950	\$235,000	25.3	536	8.5	1018	236
This Month Last Year	8538	219	2.8	157	\$265,000	\$300,000	39.0	384	4.5	1747	532
Last Month	6224	326	5.2	159	\$175,000	\$240,000	19.1	468	7.5	819	293
YTD	-	250	-	152	\$149,950	-	-	536	-	1018	-

Single Family – Sale Price Vs. List Price % Rates

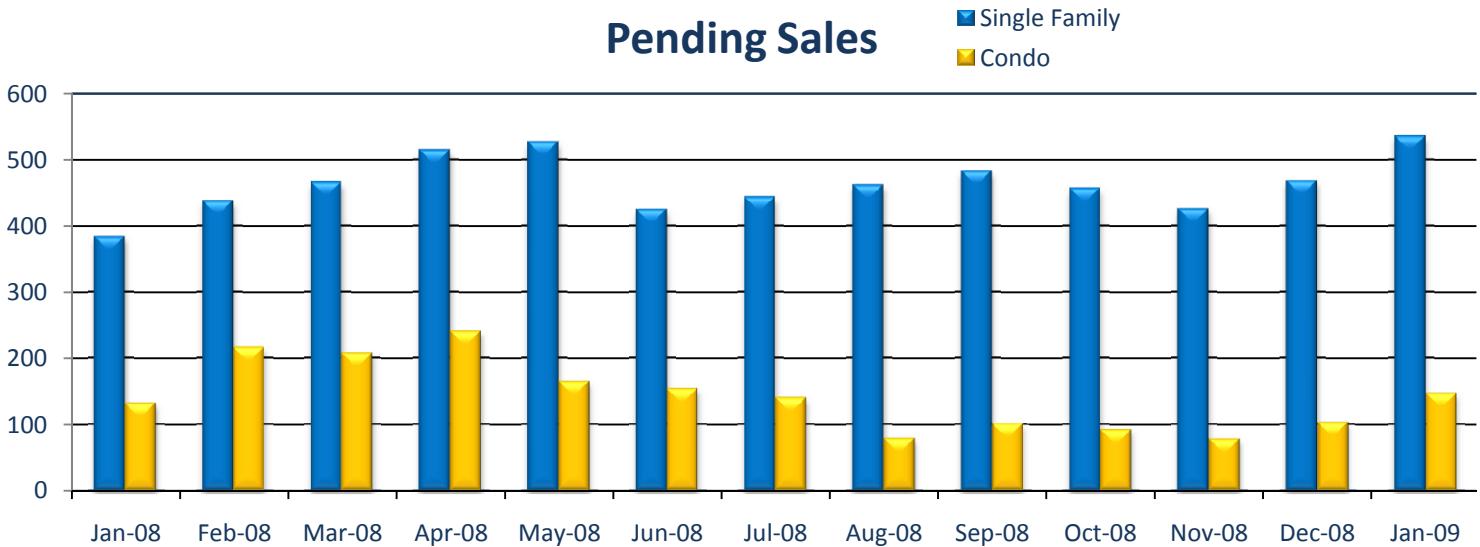
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2008	92.0	92.0	93.2	93.3	92.0	93.0	93.0	92.0	93.1	93.1	92.0	93.0
2009	93.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Statistics were compiled on properties listed in the MLS by members of the Sarasota Association of Realtors[®] as of February 10th, including some listings in Manatee, Englewood, Venice, and other areas. Single-family statistics are tabulated using property styles of single-family, half duplex, and manufactured. Condo statistics include condo, co-op, townhouse, and villa.

Inventory



Pending Sales



Condo

	#Active	#Sold	%Sold	Average DOM	Median Sale Prices	Median Last 12 Months	Months of Inventory	Pending Reported	%Pending	# New Listings	# Off Market
This Month	2647	69	2.6	177	\$220,000	\$310,000	38.4	147	5.6	415	145
This Month Last Year	5610	108	1.9	182	\$303,500	\$430,000	52.0	132	2.4	854	258
Last Month	2546	80	3.1	177	\$255,000	\$325,000	31.8	103	4.0	320	480
YTD	-	69	-	177	\$220,000	-	-	147	-	415	-

Condo – Sale Price Vs. List Price % Rates

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec
2008	91.0	91.1	91.0	91.0	92.0	92.0	93.0	90.0	90.0	91.0	91.0	91.0
2009	91.0	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Median sales price is the middle value, where half of the homes sold for more, and half sold for less. Listings sold were closed transactions during the month, while pending sales account for contracts executed by buyers and sellers during the month, that may not have closed yet. DOM indicates the average number of days that sold properties were on the market before a contract was executed.