

Eight Months In

It's now August, can you believe that? We are 2/3 of the way through this year and I must admit, it's been an exciting summer. While challenges and adversity aren't always pleasant, the wealth of knowledge and insight gained through the experience tends to provide a level of comfort on the backend. I know for many of you, the past couple of years have proven difficult in every aspect of the word.

While it still may be difficult to discern the light at the end of tunnel, from everything I've read, it is still there. The true test of future success lies squarely on those willing and able to adapt to the market of today. Realtors® must be willing to embrace adversity while at the same time leveraging the ability to adapt. This will distinguish and set them up for future success because they have the appetite to work through the challenges and stay focused on the slow and steady climb out.

Correction is a part of history. No matter how you look at it, adjustments in value and levels of appreciation will shift. All too often, we go from congratulating ourselves on the huge rise in the value of our homes, to wondering how on earth our children will be able to afford a home of their own. Unfortunately, the more society calls on government and bureaucracy to legislate a solution – the more complicated the matter becomes. Simple market dynamics of supply and demand are thrown out the window and complex theoretical formulas are adopted, resulting in higher prices for everyone.

Many cities throughout the state adopted financial models during the boom that are now proving to be ineffective in today's economic climate. It's easy for anyone to point the finger in blame, but the truth of the matter is, no amount of finger pointing is going to address the problem at hand. Municipalities are looking for solutions and unfortunately, entities exist in which promised beneficial results are only a vote away.

I wonder what would happen if a city decided to step out of their comfort zone and focus their abilities on establishing an environment of greater accountability within the bureaucratic system - at the same time, incentivizing housing concepts and partnering with the private sector to bring in higher paying jobs. Economic development certainly isn't the "cure all" for all of society's woes, but it sure would present an opportunity to put additional dollars into the city and county coffers without the need to suggest a new tax or fee.

Salinas Business License Tax

This week,

Thank you to those who attended the Salinas Brokers and Agents meeting on Thursday (8-7-08) at the Grower- Shipper Association office. The meeting was certainly productive and I sincerely appreciate the participation, input and feedback from those who were in attendance.

For those of you who were unable to attend, I will attempt to bring you up to speed as to where we currently stand as it relates to this ongoing challenge.

Next week should provide an opportunity for all of us to have some clear direction as to what our next steps will be as we navigate this delicate issue with the City of Salinas. MCAR President Dean Provence, along with Association CEO Sandy Haney, Salinas Broker Gloria Moore, Association Attorney Paul Gullion and I will be meeting with the new Salinas City Manger, Mayor Donohue, Councilmember Villegas, the City Attorney & the City Finance Director to discuss MCAR's primary concerns and possible solutions to resolve this issue.

Although we remain optimistic that the city will appropriately adjust its' current taxing methodologies after an adequate presentation of the facts, there remains a chance that other options will need to be vetted should the discussion fail to produce results.

We are anticipating a productive discussion and will certainly update the membership next week as to where we stand.

Until next time,

Kevin

Government & Public Affairs Update

It goes without saying that the months leading up to years end will be busy to say the least.

If you've kept up with the Salinas Business License Tax issue you know that Monday is an important day as it relates to our advocacy efforts with this issue.

Discussions will continue in a couple of weeks with the Monterey County Assessor on the viability of moving forward with a plan to reinstate proposition 90 in the county.

The new MCAR Blog & Forum is set to launch officially on August 16th and I look forward to engaging many of you in conversation through our new form of media.

MCAR's new Public / Community Affairs sub committee will be meeting in September for the first time. This committee was established to provide an opportunity for members to give back to the communities in which they live and work in. More information on how you can participate along with additional committee concepts to come in future Stone Reports.

Step up to Green continues in its efforts to provide a vehicle for a voluntary, incentive based approach to "Green" certification of existing residential units and communities. A new website and informational media should be ready by sometime in September.

Election, election, election. This is obviously a big year when it comes to politics. Our country will have a new President-elect and the make-up of our local boards, council's and commissions will most certainly transform. MCAR's Board of Realtors® Political Action Committee (BORPAC) will be busy in September interviewing numerous candidates for local offices.

This is but just a few of the exiting things in front of us this year. I look forward to updating you all as issues, challenges and successes evolve throughout the rest of this year.

Kevin