



# The News is Good

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

May 29, 2009

In Canada, there's no doubt that real estate is one of the major engines driving our economy, generating more than \$47,000 in spin-off spending per transaction.

Given that real estate is very much a local business, many Greater Toronto Area homeowners have been keeping a close eye on resale housing statistics for indications as to our city's economic outlook.

As we are now at the height of the spring market, which is traditionally a very robust period, it is an opportune time to take a look at how resale housing in the Greater Toronto Area is faring.

I'm happy to report that the news is good.

Greater Toronto REALTORS® reported 4,561 transactions in the first half of May. The average price of homes in the GTA is also within one per cent of the May 2008 average of \$398,148.

Markets around the world may be struggling but in the Greater Toronto Area, resale housing is holding firm.

While these figures are encouraging, if you're planning your next move it is important to set realistic expectations based on market averages. Currently for example, the average number of days that a property remains on the market is 35 compared to last May's 31 days. As well, sellers are getting 97 per cent of the asking price compared to 98 per cent a year ago.

Good news for sellers is that the number of homes available for sale has tightened compared

to a year ago. Nearly 23,000 properties are listed for sale on the TorontoMLS system, compared to more 27,000 properties that were available in May 2008.

Historically low interest rates also continue to benefit the market with respect to affordability.

From a broader perspective, the news is also encouraging. For example, in its most recently released March Interim report, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development restated the projection it asserted in November 2008, that Canada will lead the G7 nations in economic recovery in 2010.

While our nation's unemployment levels are a concern, they are at least holding steady. According to Statistics Canada, the unemployment rate remained unchanged in March and April at eight per cent.

I have full confidence that in time, the world will return to its former economic strength. In the meantime, Greater Toronto Area residents can rest assured that our resale housing market continues to operate on an even keel.

For more detailed information on the Greater Toronto Area resale housing market I encourage you to talk to a REALTOR® and visit [www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com](http://www.TorontoRealEstateBoard.com).

*Maureen O'Neill is President of the Toronto Real Estate Board, a professional association that represents 28,000 REALTORS® in the Greater Toronto Area.*