

## **HOME SALES, PRICES CLIMB ACROSS GREATER BOSTON AREA IN NOVEMBER**

**Boston, MA.** — Sales of single-family homes and condominiums rose on an annual basis for a second consecutive month across the Greater Boston region in November as modestly lower mortgage rates and an uptick in new listings after Labor Day resulted in a burst of buyer activity for several weeks early this fall. The increase in sales volume combined with the improved purchasing power experienced by buyers also helped lift median selling prices which had softened after peaking at the beginning of the summer, according to a new report issued by the Greater Boston Association of Realtors® (GBAR).

In the single-family home market, sales increased on an annual basis by 4.9 percent in November, climbing from 796 homes sold in November 2023 to 835 last month. Meanwhile, condominium sales increased a modest 0.3 percent from 651 units sold last November to 653 in November 2024. On a month-to-month basis sales activity did decline, but that's typical at this time of year given buyer interest tends to ease as the weather cools and holidays approach. Sales of single-family homes decreased 6.3 percent from 891 homes sold in October, while condo sales fell 10.4 percent from 729 units sold one month earlier. Additionally, on a historical basis, last month's sales volume for both single-family homes and condominiums was the sixth lowest of any November in the past 20 years.

“There was a lot of hesitancy among buyers to make an offer over the summer, but once mortgage rates dipped below 6 ½ percent many got off the fence and jumped into the market. We also saw a significant bump in new listings after the Labor Day weekend which helped to re-ignite buyer interest and trigger a busy few weeks of activity early this fall,” said GBAR President Jared Wilk, a broker with the Shulkin Wilk Group at Compass in Wellesley. “Buyer demand slowed over the past two months however as the impending presidential election, approaching holiday season, and modest rise in mortgage rates since October caused many to become more cautious and put off their homebuying decision until next year,” he noted.

Despite the recent softening in demand, median selling prices continued to increase on an annual basis to reach new record highs for November. In the single-family home market, the median sales price rose 9 percent over the past year from \$793,500 in November 2023 to \$865,000 this November, and improved 1.2 percent from the previous month when the median was \$855,000 in October. On an annual basis, the median sales price has increased for 17 consecutive months dating back to July 2023. It's also the second consecutive month that the single-family home median sales price has risen on a month-to-month basis, though the median price remains 9.9 percent below the all-time high of \$960,000 set this June.

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The condominium median selling price rose a more modest 3.1 percent on an annual basis in November, climbing from \$679,000 last November to a new record high for the month of \$700,000 in November 2024, and was unchanged from October when the median was also \$700,000. It's the second consecutive month the median selling price for condos has increased on an annual basis, but it's still 6.6 percent below the record high monthly median of \$750,000 set this past June.

"Inventory levels are healthier this fall than they were this time a year ago, offering buyers a larger selection of homes to choose from, but demand still exceeds supply at most price points and that's helped to keep upward pressure on prices," stated Wilk. "Buyers also were able to take advantage of improved purchasing power during the early fall as mortgage rates and prices were lower than they were this summer, and this allowed them to be bid more aggressively on properties, which also accounts for some of the appreciation in selling prices we saw in November," the GBAR president explained.

Not surprisingly, given the persistent imbalance between supply and demand, the GBAR report found that the majority of properties sold in November did so at or near full asking price. Last month, the typical single-family home sold for 100 percent of its original list price, while the typical condo received 98.3 percent of its initial sale price.

"Sellers still have an edge in this market, but not to the extent they did previously," Wilk asserted. "As we've gotten deeper into the fall, we've seen fewer offers, more price adjustments, and longer listing times before properties go under agreement. Buyers also tend to become more selective and act with less urgency at this time of year since there are not as many people to compete against, so most properties need to be priced fairly and in excellent condition to sell at full asking price," he said.

Notably, active listings of single-family homes and condominiums reached a three-year high in late-September and have continued to top year ago levels the past two months. Last month, active listings for single-family homes rose 5.7 percent on an annual basis, from 1,149 homes for sale in November 2023 to 1,215 this November, while condo listings increased 7.7 percent, from 1,595 units for sale last November to 1,718 in November 2024. However, since the start of the fall market, inventory levels have declined on a month-to-month basis each of the past two months. In November, single-family listings fell 27 percent from 1,666 homes for sale and condo listings slid 24 percent from 2,254 units for sale in October.

"With the peak selling season over, we're not seeing a lot of new inventory being listed for sale," Wilk observed. "For those who are thinking about putting their property on the market, this may be an opportune time to do so since there are fewer properties to compete against during the winter months. However, sellers should always be mindful that pricing needs to reflect current market conditions, meaning properties can take longer to sell and they may need to be flexible on price given there are fewer buyers in the market at this time of year," he stated.