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CONTACTS: Listed Below

MAINE REAL ESTATE HOME SALES DOWN IN JULY; MEDIAN SALES PRICES EASE

SOUTH PORTLAND (August 24, 2006) —According to the Maine Real Estate Information System, Inc., Realtors statewide sold 213 fewer homes in July 2006 than in July of 2005, a decrease of 16%.

Though sales slowed, prices dipped only slightly. The median sales price for a single-family existing home was \$190,000 in July, a decrease of 2.61 percent compared to a year ago. The median sales price indicates that half of the homes were sold for more and half sold for less.

Nationally, sales of single-family homes were down 11.4 percent in July. According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR), the national median sales price increased 1.5 percent to \$231,200.

The Northeastern United States also witnessed a regional sales dip of 12.5 percent. NAR reported that the median sales price for those homes decreased 2.1 percent to \$276,000.

Many buyers are wondering: do the dips in statistics indicate a buyers' market? According to Sheryl Gregory, broker of Homestead Realty in Winthrop, the market "has not turned the corner into a buyers' market, but as inventory continues to increase, that may occur. Sellers are more thoughtful in their pricing strategies to capture their particular buyer."

Gregory expects to see the market stay level in the upcoming year. "Rates are fairly stable; although they have climbed somewhat, [they are] still very reasonable historically. Buyers and sellers, as well as brokers, are choosing their relationships carefully to position themselves for a successful transaction," she said.

Is real estate still a quick-turn around investment opportunity? Gregory advises investors to "consult with a professional to help guide them with location hot spots and buyer needs trends so that their investment is more secure. There is still opportunity, but wise choices must be made to put the dollars to work in the right environment. We are cautioning people about the potential for overextending financially."

A chart showing statistics for Maine and its 16 counties follows. The first chart lists statistics for the month of July only, statewide. The second chart compares the number of existing, single-family homes sold (units) and median sales price (MSP) in the rolling quarter of May, June and July of this year and last.

(Continued)

JULY STATEWIDE CHART

From July 1-31, 2005 to July 1-31, 2006

County	# Units Sold 2005	# Units Sold 2006	% Change	MSP 2005	MSP 2006	% Change
STATEWIDE	1427	1196	-16.19%	\$195,100	\$190,000	-2.61%

ROLLING QUARTER CHART

From May 1 - July 31, 2005 to May 1 - July 31, 2006

County	# Units Sold 2005	# Units Sold 2006	% Change	MSP 2005	MSP 2006	% Change
STATEWIDE	4308	4135	-4.02%	\$194,000	\$195,000	0.52%
Androscoggin	351	313	-10.83%	\$149,900	\$168,400	12.34%
Aroostook	89	113	26.97%	\$75,000	\$85,000	13.33%
Cumberland	1089	976	-10.38%	\$253,000	\$255,000	0.79%
Franklin	95	100	5.26%	\$147,000	\$135,000	-8.16%
Hancock	158	179	13.29%	\$205,000	\$187,000	-8.78%
Kennebec	413	397	-3.87%	\$140,000	\$155,500	11.07%
Knox	142	151	6.34%	\$199,000	\$215,000	8.04%
Lincoln	126	120	-4.76%	\$230,000	\$235,250	2.28%
Oxford	211	177	-16.11%	\$142,000	\$143,000	0.70%
Penobscot	484	489	1.03%	\$142,000	\$148,000	4.23%
Piscataquis	44	66	50.00%	\$129,000	\$97,486	-24.43%
Sagadahoc	120	137	14.17%	\$219,950	\$210,000	-4.52%
Somerset	130	131	0.77%	\$101,500	\$112,000	10.34%
Waldo	117	112	-4.27%	\$169,000	\$152,500	-9.76%
Washington	10	12	20.00%	\$81,000	\$100,000	23.46%
York	729	662	-9.19%	\$245,000	\$240,000	-2.04%

Source: Maine Real Estate Information System, Inc. Note: MREIS, a subsidiary of the Maine Association of REALTORS, is a statewide Multiple Listing Service with over 5,200 licensees inputting active and sold property listing data. Statistics reflect properties reported as sold in the System within the time periods indicated.

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