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I hope everyone had a great holiday! As we enter into a new year we all wonder what is in store for us. We recently had a presentation on the economy (National, State, and Local) with emphasis on the housing market by Dr. Jim Gaines, Chief Economist for the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M. It was truly fascinating and I thought I'd pass along some of his wisdom in regards to our local area.

First off he shows us that the Bastrop County Employment is up significantly in 2018 and tremendously since 2011. To see chart, [click here](#). This is a great indicator of our growth commercially, which is required to stabilize the housing market we've been experiencing.

Next he stated that our Bastrop County Population will increase to 272,723 people by the year 2050. To see chart, [click here](#). Note in 2018 it was estimated to be 84,761! That's over 3 times what have now. Think about what this would mean, how we will handle all of these new people and what it will do to your property value! This is why the City is working on the Building Bastrop scenarios so the growth will be handled in a manner that will work for everyone. These numbers are staggering. They should give you a good idea of your investment in the community and it looks like it will continue to prosper.

The last slide I'd like to share with you is the Bastrop County Median Home Price. It has gone up 9.6% EACH year for the past 3 years with a 10% increase just last year. The price is up 56% from 2011 - 2017. Another good indicator that it's a great time to own a home in Bastrop County! To see the chart, [click here](#).

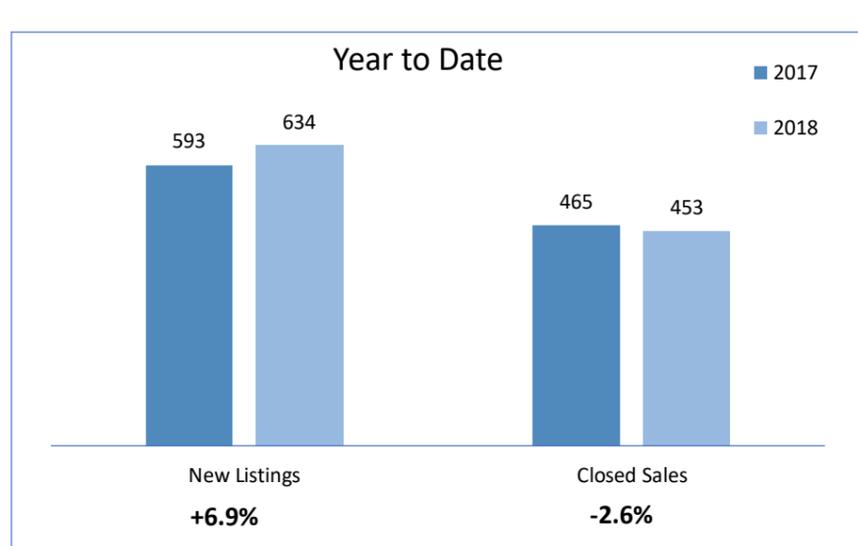
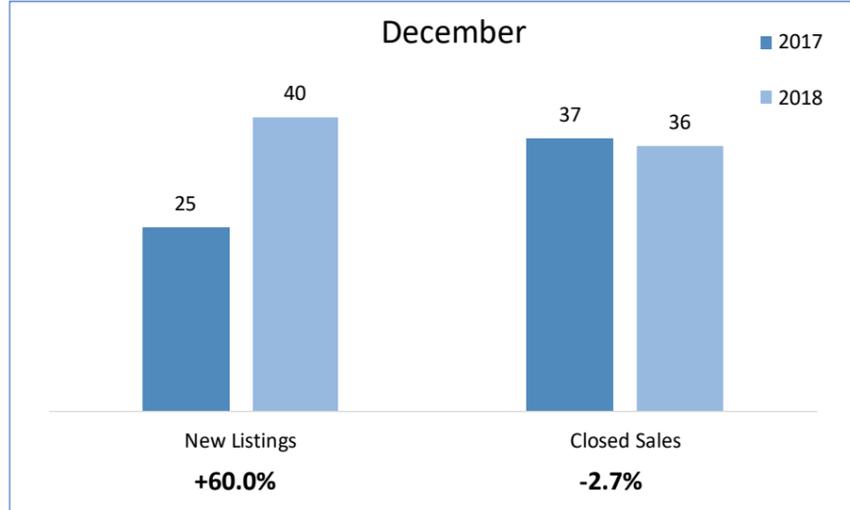
With that said, he did state that the past 2 years have been overwhelmingly good for our area. However, it will slow a bit in 2019, as we've already seen. That does not mean it will not continue to grow and homes will continue to go up in value, just not at the insane rate it has been. The slowing will be gradual and we will still be in a great market. Don't let the economists talking about other areas, or the nation, detract from the great market we have going here. We're very lucky to be in this area as we should be stable for quite a while. I hope you all found this as interesting as I did!

Remember my business is based on referrals. I'd be honored to help your friends or family with their real estate needs.



Bastrop Area Monthly Statistics

Below are the current statistics for the Bastrop Area. The average home sale price for December was \$236,061, which is up 1.5% from the previous year. The average home sale price for 2018 is \$225,704, which is up +4.2% from 2017.



Around Town



Upcoming Events

January 10th - Sip, Shop, & Stroll

Sip, Shop and Stroll is one of the most anticipated events in Elgin. On the 2nd Thursday of every month, take a stroll through downtown Elgin to shop and dine while enjoying music along the way.

January 19th - Family Crisis Center Annual Dinner & Dance Gala

This years theme is Angels & Outlaws, doors open at 6:00 pm with a beer and wine social, catered rib eye steak dinner with all the trimmings @ 7:00 pm, The Triumphs take the stage at 8:00 pm. raffle chances, silent and live auction action, dance and costume contest with prizes for the winners. For more information, [click here](#).

Safe and Warm

As winter is fast approaching, the professionals at HomeTeam Inspection Service provide homeowners with the following tips to ensure their homes are well prepared and more energy-efficient throughout the coming months.



- Inspect around windows and doors for cracks and seal any openings with caulk or weather stripping to prevent air and water from getting into your home.
- Have a professional evaluate the amount of insulation in your home to ensure it is properly insulated and will keep your energy costs down.
- Replace batteries in smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors to make sure they're working properly.
- Visibly check the fireplace opening for loose or missing bricks and have screens in place to protect against any embers that may escape.
- Look for raised, loose or missing roof shingles and replace them, if needed, to prevent water from getting in and creating leaks.
- Remove hoses from outside spigots and store them during the winter months.
- Clean debris from gutters to prevent water from collecting and freezing.
- Make sure all downspouts are pointed away from the foundation.
- Have the HVAC units inspected and change furnace filters monthly for cleaner indoor air and maximum energy efficiency.
- Program thermostats to lower temperatures while at work or sleeping.

These simple steps can help homeowners maintain the overall health and safety of their home during the winter season.

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