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A Note from Ann:

Are We in a Housing Bubble?

While I'm no economist, I do follow those that are and it is my opinion that we are Not in a Housing Bubble. There are many factors that have compiled to get us where we are today. It is a very different market than it was in 2008. The crash of 2008 was due to lax lending policies, lending to those that were not financially capable of carrying their loans and giving them Adjustable Rate Mortgages that would balloon after a few years rendering them unable to pay those loans. That is a very simplified version of a very complex problem, but in a nutshell, that's what happened and the market was over-inflated with an abundance of buyers that would not have been able to buy with stricter lender regulations.

Bringing us to today, our lending market is very stable. The problem we are experiencing is due to many factors, but it all boils down to Supply and Demand. In an nutshell, here's a quick synopsis of the perfect storm:

- Coronavirus. Sellers do not want to list their homes and have strangers possibly bring the virus into their home while viewing
- Lumber and construction suppliers decide the market is going to slow during the pandemic so they cut back on their manufacturing. Little did they realize they were very wrong - everyone suddenly had home projects to do and new home construction is at an all-time high. Builders can't keep up and need more lumber!
- The above leads to higher costs of building supplies, causing housing prices to rise
- Everyone decides they want to live in the country after the pandemic (live off the land, life's too short, etc.) so we see a mass movement to buy in rural areas (shortage of homes due to excess buyers)
- Investors decide the stock market is too unstable so they move to "hard" assets and prefer real estate. Your every day Joe needing a home to live in is having to compete with an investor with very deep pockets who waives the appraisal (so when it doesn't appraise for the sale price they make up the difference), making it impossible for some to buy the homes they so desperately need. This in turn is raising the home values with higher priced "comps" now on the market.
- Now that home prices have gone up as much as 30% in the past year, many sellers would love to sell but are afraid they can't buy with higher prices and competition against investors driving homes over list price.

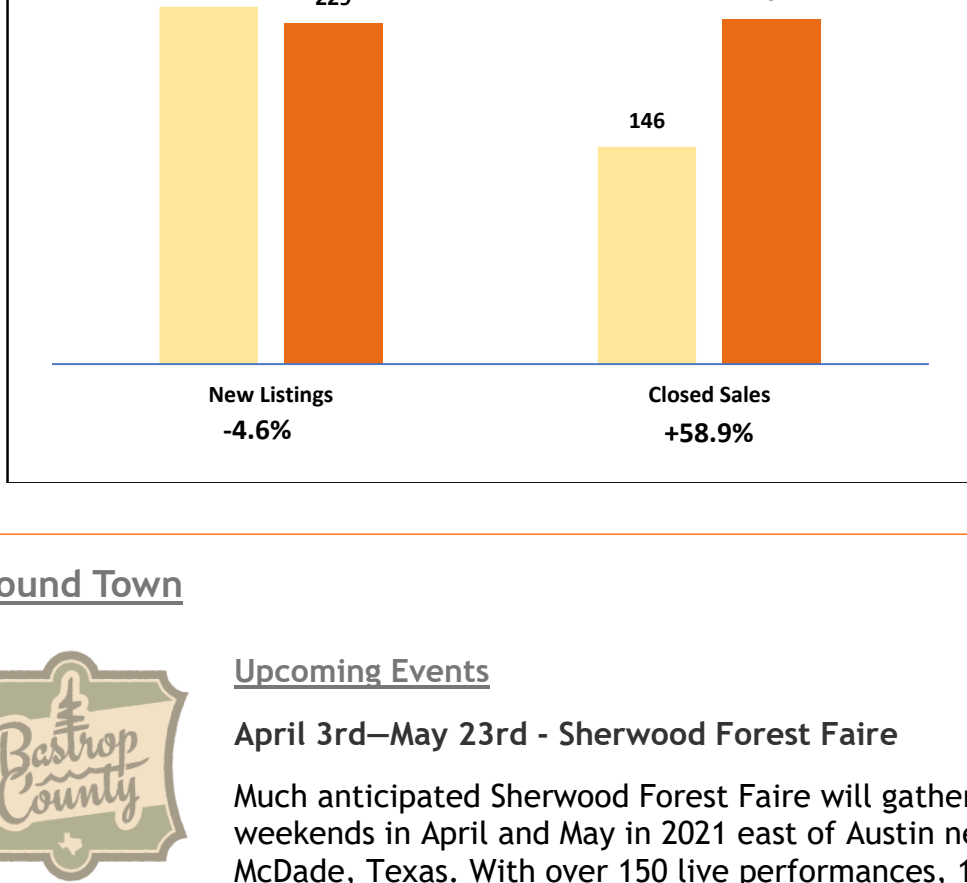
However, this cannot go on forever and markets do rise and fall. I do not see a crash coming. I do see inventory eventually levelling out and possibly even a correction in home values somewhere down the road. So if you're waiting for a foreclosure market to pop up - I think you're going to wait a very long time. However, if you are buying at these higher prices, you might see your value go down in the future as the market stabilizes. This is all purely speculation, but there are absolutely no parallels to the 2008 crash. Arm yourself with knowledge and do what is best for your situation.

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Bastrop Area Monthly Statistics

Below are the current home statistics for the Bastrop Area. The average home sale price for April was \$322,055, which is up 16.7% from the previous year. The average home sale price for 2021, so far, is \$297,859, which is up 13.1% from 2020.



Around Town



Upcoming Events

April 3rd—May 23rd - Sherwood Forest Faire

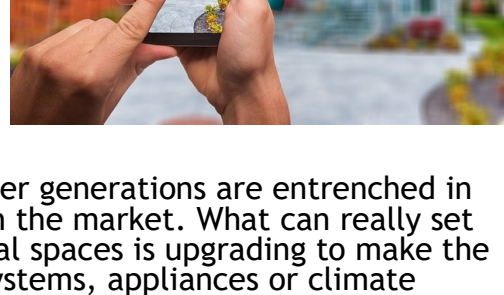
Much anticipated Sherwood Forest Faire will gather weekends in April and May in east of Austin near McDade, Texas. With over 150 live performances, 170 artisans, and the famed archery and jousting contests, this event is Central Texas' Renaissance Faire to attend. Costumes are encouraged and welcomed during these medieval times. To purchase tickets or for more information, [click here](#).

May 22nd - Perseverance in the Pines Golf Tournament 2021

Teams of four (or as individual golfers placed in teams) are invited to join in the Perseverance in the Pines Golf Tournament to be held at Pine Forest Golf Club along the Colorado River in Bastrop, Texas. The event includes a \$100,000 shootout among other prizes, and is a commemorative event and fundraiser for the Bastrop County Long Term Recovery Team as BCLTRT remembers Bastrop County's 10 years of recovery from the Bastrop County Complex Wildfires, the largest in Texas history. Those who are not golfing can join in the fun with lunch and more. To register or for more information, [click here](#).

Home Upgrades to Attract Millennial Buyers

Millennials are starting to become a force in the real estate market. But with any new generation of buyers, tastes and needs of clientele change. What home features are millennials looking for? Here we cover a few upgrades to attract these new potential buyers.



Smart tech—It's no secret that younger generations are entrenched in the hottest or newest technologies on the market. What can really set your home apart from more traditional spaces is upgrading to make the house "smarter." Whether security systems, appliances or climate control systems, smart devices not only can make your home run more efficiently, but can also show buyers your property is modern and a great investment.

Home office space—Even before the pandemic, younger generations gravitated more toward the idea of working from home. Think about converting or staging an extra bedroom into a dedicated work-at-home space. This will help buyers truly envision how their life may look after purchasing the home.

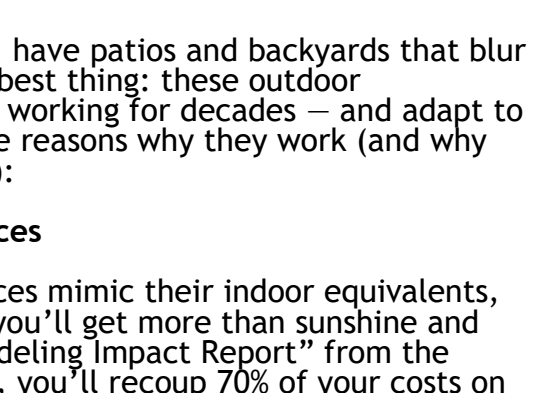
Green home—Millennials trend toward being more environmentally conscious and expect their future home to be as well. When marketing your property, be sure to highlight all of the great energy saving/energy-efficient features you may have currently installed. You may also want to consider adding new green appliances, such as a water-conserving dishwasher, or more heat- and A/C-efficient windows and doors to show potential buyers you mean business when it comes to conservation.

USB charging outlets—People are more connected to their devices than ever before, and millennials being one of the generations leading the charge. Consider changing out the dated electrical outlets around your home for ones adapted with USB charging capabilities. This lets people charge their devices all around the house without having to constantly switch plugs and cords for various appliances. It may seem like a small touch, but it could go a long way in showing that your home is fit for tech-savvy individuals.

5 Things Perfect Outdoor Entertaining Spaces Do (and Yours Can, Too)

By: Kelley Walters

These 5 timeless ideas work because they're both fun and functional.



Outdoor entertaining spaces aren't always equal when it comes to home value (think about that house with the falling-down above-ground pool with no curb appeal at all).

Homes that get them right, though, have patios and backyards that blur inside and outside spaces. And the best thing: these outdoor entertaining space ideas have been working for decades — and adapt to most any house today. Here are five reasons why they work (and why you may want to add to your home):

#1 They Function Like Indoor Spaces

The more outdoor entertaining spaces mimic their indoor equivalents, the more functional they are. And you'll get more than sunshine and memories: According to the "Remodeling Impact Report" from the National Association of REALTORS®, you'll recoup 70% of your costs on resale after building a new patio. An outdoor kitchen gets 71%.

- A couple of small ways to get more functionality in your outdoor space:
- Add built-in benches for seating.
 - Hang a chandelier or pendant lights for functional lighting over a dining space.

#2 They Create Privacy Without Blocking Light

Precast-concrete geometric blocks protect privacy without blocking light or air in outdoor entertaining spaces. Plus, they're super affordable and durable.

Use them to screen a patio or yard, fence in your patio, or as a vertical element to make small yards feel larger. It's a small project with big impact.

#3 They Find Clever Ways to Provide Shade

Low, sloping roofs help transition from indoors to outdoors by casting shade and protection from the elements.

- If extending the roof isn't an option for your home or budget (fair), you can still make some shade. For example:
- Try a pergola planted with vines.
 - Or a retractable awning, which keeps the sun off when you want it to, and rolls back into place when you don't.
 - Tons of affordable, ready-to-hang shades and sails are available, too.

#4 They Use Lots of Windows — and Big Ones

Large windows help merge inside and outside living. Even if you don't have the ultimate in window bling like this atrium, you can increase the natural light in your home. Consider:

- Trading smaller windows and doors for big accordion, pocket, sliding or swinging doors, or replacing a plain wall with a wall of glass doors.
- Adding a corner window, to create the effect of an atrium or courtyard.

#5 They Take 'Entertaining Outdoors' Seriously

Though a sport court isn't exactly a high ROI project, being the fun house on the block certainly does a little something to a home's appeal.

And, after all, an outdoor entertaining space should do just that: entertain. Here's to a fun summer season!

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