

Unseasonal Increases on Texas Gulf Coast Support 2008 Boom Theory

The Texas Gulf Coast is America's affordable oceanfront dreamland and it has a voice now to let the nation know – and the country is listening, are you?

Why is 2008 so significant?

The year 2008 marks the first year for baby boomer retirees. According to the North Carolina Center for Creative Retirement, which is nationally known for tracking retirement migration trends, Texas has emerged as a retirement mecca ranking 2nd behind Florida. The wave of retirees flocking to Texas will have a strong impact on Texas communities and their economies as well.

Factors such as a strong economy and population growth, a steady increase in oceanfront property value, TexasGulfCoastOnline.com internet marketing, and traffic increases during off season have helped Texas gain an advantage when it comes to attracting investors, developers and retirees to its beautiful Gulf Coasts. The word is definitely out about the Texas Gulf Coast and we are seeing the beginning of the boom expected in 2008. [Click here to read: Texas Coast Poised for Real Estate Boom in 2008](#)

Texas Economy

The Texas economy is showing a higher growth than the overall national average. Factors such as population growth, job growth, low cost of living and strong export numbers to China and Mexico have contributed to the economy's strength and Texas' overall appeal.



- **Population:** In a recent article in Tierra Grande, Here We Grow Again, demographer Steve Murdock states that Texas saw a population growth rate of 12.7 percent between 2000 and 2006, double the national rate. According to Murdock, if the trend continues the population in Texas will increase up to 25 million by 2010.

The state's remarkable growth has fueled rapid growth in Texas real estate markets since 2000, particularly in urban and suburban areas. According to Mark Dotzour, the chief economist for the Real Estate Center at Texas A&M University, the current Texas housing market is one of the strongest in the United States. Texas housing is still very affordable, and the low tax structure and pro-business climate makes Texas a destination for corporate relocation that strives to compete in the global marketplace.

- **Job Growth:** Increased employment rates and anticipated growth create an ideal residential environment throughout the state of Texas.

According to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), employment in Texas grew by 23,100 jobs in September for a total of 217,400 new jobs for the year. This marks a 4.3 percent unemployment rate for the month, down from 4.8 percent last year and well below the national average of 4.7 percent.

According to a BizJournals Survey, three Texas regions were ranked in the Top 10 Hottest Job Markets across the country. Houston, Dallas-Fort Worth and Austin ranked fifth, sixth and eighth, respectively. Austin boasts one of the state's lowest unemployment rates at 3.5 percent, while the Dallas-Fort Worth rate mirrors that of Houston and the state at 4.3 percent.

Houston and the Gulf Coast region gained more than 64,500 jobs since September 2006, with construction and business services jobs, the region's top job producers, up over 10,000 each. This growth in construction jobs for the area is evidence of the increase in home building in and around the Texas Coast.

- **Low Cost of Living:** The cost of living remains affordable throughout the state's metropolitan areas with home prices far below the national average. While the national median home price is \$223,000, the median price for a single family home in Houston and Austin, is approximately \$150,000, while in San Antonio and Dallas-Fort Worth, the median price is just under \$200,000. Texas' lower living costs give it a distinct advantage when it comes to attracting retirees, especially over states like California and Florida, where home-price increases in the last few years hit bubble proportions.
- **Exports:** Nearly 18 percent of Texas jobs are supported by the international trade sector according to a recent study. "Texas is unsurpassed by any other state in total exports," says John Castellani, president of Business Roundtable. "From computers to crops, the workers and farmers of Texas are reaping the benefits of reduced foreign barriers abroad." Total Texas exports increased 238 percent since 2000 and the state continues to be the nation's top agricultural exporter with \$3.5 billion in trade in that sector alone.

In 2005, companies in the state sold products to more than 215 foreign nations, including the top export country Mexico. China is also one of Texas' fastest growing trade partners. Texas exports to China hit \$6.64 billion last year, up 35.54 percent. And the vote by Panamanians in October to increase the size of their canal to accommodate the largest container ships should mean a boost in Asian cargoes from Houston all the way to the proposed inland port in South Dallas.

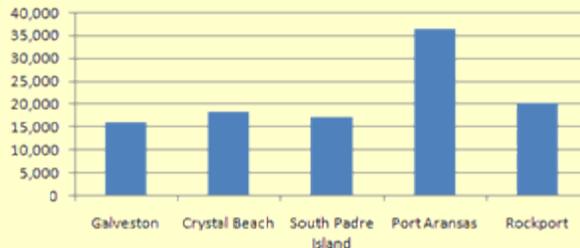
The Business Roundtable attributes much of the increase in Texas and other state's exports to new trade agreements that have come out of Washington. The pending free trade agreement with Korea, the world's tenth largest economy, should create more opportunities for exporters, according to the group.

Overall, the Texas economy is strong and that strength is likely to continue to increase. A strong economy, forecasted growth and housing prices below the national average create an atmosphere that is ideal for purchasing a new home in Texas. This kind of job creation and investment capital is one of the fundamental pre-cursors to real estate appreciation and sales.

Oceanfront Property Values

While South Padre Island, a market with high inventory volume which has been a popular destination for Americans nationwide, is being hit by the real estate market downturn and associated buyer hesitancy, other smaller markets such as Crystal Beach on the Bolivar Peninsula are being discovered by both developers and homebuyers. Median prices on the Texas Gulf Coast are still experiencing a steady increase. While sales may have decreased in some parts of the Texas Gulf Coast such as in South Padre, the median prices have held a steady increase from last year.

**Median Price Increase
2006 to 2007**



When comparing five different areas of the Texas Gulf Coast you can easily see that they each experienced an increase in median price. While not all areas increased at the same rate, they all experienced an increase by at least 15,000. Galveston had the lowest increase in median price while Port Aransas has seen the highest increase from 2006 totaling a \$36,000 increase.

These steady increases in property values have also allowed for property on the Texas Gulf Coast to remain affordable. Compared to waterfront property in California and Florida, Texas still has some of the most affordable waterfront lots in the country, adding to the area's appeal.

Success of TexasGulfCoastOnline.com

"TexasGulfCoastOnline.com has become the top destination for second home and vacation home buyers looking at the increasingly popular Texas Coast region," said Michael Stuart, CEO. "We offer consumers what they need to make an educated decision about one their largest and most intimate investments."

In the October-December issue of Tierra Grande magazine, editor Bryan Pope discusses life on the Texas coast. The article mentions that "the Texas coast ... is finally catching the nation's attention after years of going virtually unnoticed," and is "a region that more than a few developers are now referring to as the last frontier in beach development."

The article also references that "the data supports it - the Texas coast's regional market analysis site: TexasGulfCoastOnline.com reports that the median price for a single-family beachside home is \$160,000 on the Bolivar Peninsula and \$230,000 in Port Aransas." [Click here to read full By The Sea article.](#)

AliceDonahue.com and TexasGulfCoastOnline.com are bringing national attention to South Padre Island and the Texas Gulf Coast on an unprecedented scale. AliceDonahue.com has been promoting South Padre Island since 2005 and has served over 3 million hits in the last three years. TexasGulfCoastOnline.com has been online since the beginning of this year and has already served over 300,000 unique visitors.

TexasGulfCoastOnline.com's success can be attributed to providing all the information consumers need in one place, in an Ad free, easy to navigate portal with 100's of categorized links to Government and other resources that aide the consumer's decision making process.

Some of the services provided on the portal include:

- A view of all the major coastal MLS's - a consumer can literally see every property for sale on the Texas coast.
- An overview of every new major development on the Texas Gulf Coast with real and objective consumer commentary.
- Complete and interactive sales and market analysis charts and graphs
- A magazine-like news blog that covers local and national real estate related topics with interactive consumer comments.

Increase in traffic during the off-season

While it has been normal to see a seasonal interest from vacation-home buyers during the spring and summer months, we have seen an increase of interest during the off-season as well. Website traffic has increased during the off-season and the office of Alice Donahue Real Estate has also seen an increase in numbers during the off-season compared to other years. Patty Nuckols, an agent from Alice Donahue's Real Estate office, says "Our office has not

seen a dramatic drop in calls compared to the summer months this year."

At any given time we have over 300 people on our web sites shopping for Texas coastal property. Imagine a real estate office that had 300 people in it at one time, only the power of the internet allows for such numbers. There is indeed a lot of interest on the Texas Gulf Coast with the site now serving real estate content unique to the Texas Gulf Coast to over 5000 people a day.

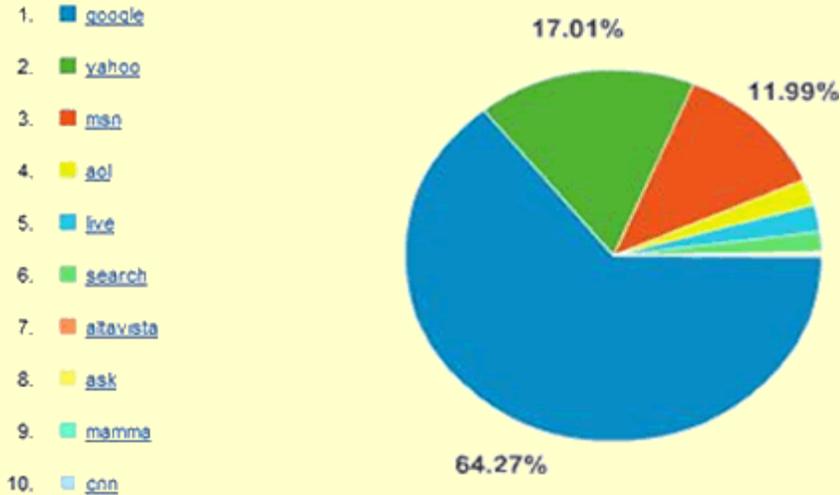
Where are shoppers coming from?

The Texas Coast is attracting visitors from all over the world and the country. It is no surprise since oceanfront property values on the Eastern and Western coasts have skyrocketed in the past years and it is also now increasingly difficult to find land available for developments in these areas.

Below are the top 10 Countries, States and US Cities that make up the traffic to TexasGulfCoastOnline.com's website. The graph represents the top 10 search engines sending visitors to the site and the percentage of visitors coming in from each one.

Top 10 Countries	Top 10 States	Top 10 Cities
1. United States	1. Texas	1. Houston
2. Canada	2. California	2. Austin
3. Mexico	3. New York	3. San Antonio
4. United Kingdom	4. Florida	4. Harlingen
5. India	5. Illinois	5. Dallas
6. Germany	6. Colorado	6. Corpus Christi
7. Australia	7. Arizona	7. Richardson
8. Japan	8. New Jersey	8. Galveston
9. Spain	9. Missouri	9. Hamshire
10. Netherlands	10. Massachusetts	10. McAllen

Top 10 Search Engines



Conclusion

The word about the Texas Gulf Coast is out! Investors and developers have been acquiring land in the past few years to build new communities in the area expecting to meet a large demand from not only vacation goers but baby boomer retirees as well. The strength of the Texas economy coupled with affordable waterfront property has been instrumental in generating interest in this part of the coast. Large metropolises with growing population and job growths will also help increase demand for the area. 2008 is certainly looking good for the Texas Gulf Coast!

Rating

1 2 3 4 5

Comments

By National Association of Realtors @ Friday, November 23, 2007 4:03 PM

Most Metro Areas See Modest Price Gains

The majority of U.S. metropolitan areas showed rising or stable home prices in the third quarter, with most experiencing modest gains compared with a year earlier, says the latest quarterly survey by the NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®.

In the third quarter, 93 out of 150 metropolitan statistical areas show increases in median existing single-family home prices from a year earlier, including six areas with double-digit annual gains and another 21 metros showing increases of 6 percent or more. Fifty-four areas had price declines, and three were unchanged. Regionally, prices rose in both the Northeast and Midwest, as did the national condo price.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says the data underscores the fact that all real estate is local. "Some metro areas are hot while others are experiencing localized problems," he said. "The report also shows that home prices in the vast midsection of America, from the Appalachians to the Rockies, are affordable and, perhaps, even undervalued.

NAR President Richard Gaylord says consumers need to understand what's going on in their own area. "There is no such thing as a national housing market – it doesn't perform like the equities markets," he says. "What's really important for consumers is to make informed decisions based on individual needs, desires, and timelines in a given area. Most people plan to stay in a home for 10 years, and for buyers with a long-term view, housing is an excellent investment."

In the condo sector, metro area condominium and cooperative prices – covering changes in 59 metro areas – show the national median existing condo price was \$226,900 in the third quarter, up 2 percent from \$222,500 in the third quarter of 2006. Forty-one metros showed annual increases in the median condo price, including six areas with double-digit gains; 18 areas had price declines.

The strongest condo price increases were in Bismarck, N.D., where the third quarter price of \$133,300 rose 22.3 percent from a year earlier, followed by the Austin-Round Rock area of Texas, at \$171,700, up 19.2 percent, and the Portland-Vancouver-Beaverton area of Oregon and Washington, where the median condo price of \$210,200 rose 14.9 percent from the third quarter of 2006.

The strongest residential price increase in the South was in the Charlotte-Gastonia-Concord area of North Carolina and South Carolina, at \$220,100, up 11.0 percent from a year ago, followed by the Beaumont-Port Arthur area of Texas, with a 10.2 percent gain to \$129,100, and Corpus Christi, Texas, at \$140,500, up 7.6 percent.

— REALTOR® Magazine Online

By REALTOR Magazine @ Thursday, November 29, 2007 5:22 PM

Top-10 Best Performing Housing Markets

As anybody who has ever sold real estate knows, there are no national markets, only local markets.

The adage holds true when you look at the condition of the real estate business nationwide. Business may be tough in many places, but it's not tough all over.

Here are the top 10 best performing housing markets, according to Forbes magazine, their third quarter median home sale prices and the percentage that prices have risen compared to third quarter 2006.

Austin Texas, \$188,200, 7.2 percent
San Antonio Texas, \$154,700, 5.7 percent
Salt Lake City, \$246,700, 14.1 percent
Charlotte, N.C., \$220,000, 11 percent
San Jose, Calif., \$852,500, 9.4 percent
San Francisco, \$825,400, 8.6 percent
Raleigh, N.C., \$229,500, 7.5 percent
Pittsburgh, \$127,700, 6.1 percent
Seattle, \$394,700, 6 percent
Portland, Ore., \$299,700, 5.2 percent

By David Amerland Texas Real Estate Magazine @ Sunday, December 02, 2007 11:19 PM

Real Estate is where gold used to be fifty years ago. It is the only form of investment which offers a secure steady return for the future and a guarantee of some kind in times of uncertainty.

Like most forms of investment like this, Real Estate also goes through cycles of rise and dip - and for most of the continental United States the dip effect is very much in force.

Texas is the exception. While house prices have showed a little decline in the Lone Star State the trend there is very much against the rest of the country and the Realtors' mood is buoyant.

When you look at the state of a speculative market like that you begin to realize that what you need is a good resource guide to help you find information fast.

With recent figures from the Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight, showing that home prices in Texas increased 6.9% during first quarter 2007, well above the 4.3% national average, getting the information you want fast can make the difference between finding a great deal and buying a property at a good price and having to pay more, months later.