

Clark County Market Report

November 2018

Mike Lamb

Broker at Windermere Stellar, Vancouver, WA

Mike@MikeLamb.info

360-921-1397

October was a lot like September for the Clark County real estate market, so it continued to be good but not great. You could see that best in the 686 *New Pending Residential Sales* submitted to RMLS, down only 0.4% from September, down 9.7% from October 2017, down 7.7% from October 2016, and down 10.3% from October 2015. Yet even though *New Pending Residential Sales* were weaker than in the last three Octobers, they were up 14.2% from October 2014 and up 31.9% from October 2013. In fact, this was still the fourth best October for new sales since 2005. Still, with new sales activity slower since September, the backlog of pending sales waiting to close shrank 6.4% from September to 1,167, down 19.1% from October 2017. At the rate sales closed in October that represents 1.72 months of closings, down from around 2.0 months during the summer.

Closing activity was remarkably similar to new sales activity in October. That was reflected in the 680 *New Closed Residential Sales* reported to RMLS, up 0.4% from September, but down 6.3% from October 2017. Interestingly though, that was up 4.9% from October 2016, and down 13.2% from October 2015, yet much better than in any other October since the 2005 record. As a result, by the end of the month there had been 8,014 *Solds Year To Date* reported to RMLS. That was down just 1.6% from October 2017, which the best since 2005's record, and down 0.9% from October 2016, but up 2.9% from October 2015, and up 21.8% from October 2014. And more significantly, total sales for the year were much better than in any other October since 2005.

Listing activity also slowed in October, but more significantly it was the best it has been for the month this decade. You could see that in the 843 new residential listings submitted to RMLS, down 11.4% from September, but up 0.6% from October 2017, and up 9.6% from October 2016. Even so, the result of the slower listing activity was that inventory shrank a bit. At the end of October there were 2,545 *Active Listings* available, down 1.2% from September, but up 25.1% from October 2017, up 18.7% from October 2016 and up 7.7% from October 2015. In fact, there were more *Active Listings* in October than in any other year for at least the last 20 years. Furthermore there were just 1.23 new listings for each new pending sale, and only 2.25 months of standing residential inventory available.

With the slowdown in new sales activity, the increase in average prices began to moderate in October. For example, *Average Sale Price-All MLS* was \$389,876, up 8.3% from October 2017 and up 20.9% from October 2016. Similarly *Median Sale Price-Residential* was \$359,900, up just 0.8% from September, up 3.9% from October 2017, up 38.4% from the previous high in October 2006, and up 102.3% from October 2011, which was the low during the downturn. And the average residential sale price was \$397,600, up 14.8% from October 2017, and up 12.8% from October 2016.

	NOVEMBER 2018	Change from Nov. 2017
Active Listings	2,545	25.1%
Solds Year To Date	8,014	-1.6%
New Closed Residential Sales	680	-6.3%
New Pending Residential Sales	686	-9.7%
Average Days on Market-Res. Solds	52	23.8%
Average Sale Price-All MLS	\$389,876	8.3%
Median Sale Price-Residential	\$359,900	3.9%

The changes in the market in September and October were partially due to typical seasonal influences. But the similarity between September and October may also indicate a more significant change to a somewhat more normal, less frenetic market. Time will tell if that proves true, yet even despite the recent changes the data in every category was significantly better than it has been since 2005, except for the last three years. Furthermore, price changes at the rate we saw in October are much more sustainable over the long run. Additionally, improving listing activity and inventory is very good news for this market. And to put all this in perspective, if closing activity remains at levels comparable to October, in terms of total sales this year will finish as one of the three or four best in at least the last twenty years.