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## Arlington County

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By Susan Straight  
Special to The Washington Post  
Sunday, March 25, 2007

Metro helped shape Arlington County, and it continues to shape the county's housing market.

The median sales price for single-family houses and townhouses fell 1 percent last year, to \$565,000, according to a Washington Post analysis of county sales records. Condo sales, which make up a big part of the Arlington market, were reviewed separately.

However, prices increased in five Zip codes, including those closest to Metro stations. Prices fell in four other Zip codes, either not within walking distance of Metro station or in the western end of the county.

The most dramatic change was a 59 percent increase in the median sales price in Rosslyn, Zip code 22209. However, the non-condo housing there is a mix of high-end properties and small ones, so the median price can swing radically. In 2006, there was a near-doubling of sales, from \$1 million to \$2 million, including the \$1.8 million sale of a luxury townhouse in the Monument Place development that was built in 2000, said Stephanie Barker Greault, an agent with Long & Foster in Arlington. According to Greault, eight houses sold for \$970,000 to \$1.98 million in 2005, while 14 homes sold for about the same price range in 2006.

The next strongest growth in median sales price was in Zip code 22202, Crystal City and Pentagon City, where the median sales price rose 9 percent. The Zip code includes the neighborhoods of Aurora Hills, Addison Heights and Oak Crest. "Those are real hot areas. . . . They not only benefit from being very commuter-friendly by vehicle, but you can also walk to the Metro," Greault said.

Prices rose 6 percent in Zip code 22203, which includes Ballston, and 5 percent in Zip code 22201, which includes the Clarendon and Court House neighborhoods. "The common theme is the proximity to the Metro. All of those neighborhoods have a very feasible walk to Metro," said Billy Buck of Buck and Associates, an Arlington real estate company.

In Zip code 22205, which includes the East Falls Church Metro station, prices fell 2 percent. A lot of the neighborhoods in that Zip code, however, are not close to the station.

Buck said that when clients are torn between two homes, the one closest to Metro tends to win. "Having restaurants and movie theaters is great, but the practicality of being able to walk to the Metro increases quality of life and convenience," he said.

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