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## NEWS

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Kern County New Home Sales Continues to Drive Personality**

“I’ve heard that adversity builds character. If that’s true, then when this housing “downturn” is over, there will be no lack of character within the building industry,” said Robert D. Martinez, Director of Research, MarketPointe<sup>TM</sup> Realty Advisors. That being said, the Kern County new home market continues to slide as net sales volume continues to push to new lows, according to MarketPointe’s<sup>TM</sup> Residential *Trends*<sup>TM</sup> data. A 15 percent drop resulted in 161 net sales this quarter, all of it in the detached sector. The level of activity in the region has begun to fall as projects that have suspended their future phase releases, sell out their standing inventory, dismantle their sales programs and attempt to wait out the market. At the very least, the number of “characters” in the Kern County new home market continues to increase.

Weighted average price in the region mirrored the trend of last year as prices inched upward. While a reversal of price declines may be a welcome respite, a closer look at the related averages mutes any potential optimism. While the weighted average detached price did increase nearly 2 percent this quarter, the weighted average home size increased more than 8 percent. This upswing in the average home size, coupled with the slight increase in the average home price, caused a 6 percent drop in the value ratio for a detached home, the fifth consecutive quarterly decline. This quarter’s per square foot average is the lowest ratio since MarketPointe Realty Advisors began surveying the Kern County market.

Inventory in the 78 active detached projects, one of them audited for the first time this quarter, decreased for the second consecutive quarter. This quarter’s more than 3 percent decline follows a 7 percent drop in the third quarter. Of the 8,334 total units of detached inventory this quarter, nearly 92 percent of it constitutes units within unreleased future phases of existing developments. Inventory that constitutes more immediately available supply stands at 694 units, a 4 percent decline from last quarter. Together, both unsold inventory and inventory that has not yet been made available to the marketplace represent nearly 83 months of total supply, or close to seven years. However, just the inventory that has been made available and remains unsold represents less than seven months of supply.

MarketPointe<sup>TM</sup> Realty Advisors provides new housing market statistics throughout California via its **ResidentialTrends**<sup>TM</sup> new-home database and its **LandTracker**<sup>TM</sup> proposed development database, as well as site specific, tailored housing market research and consulting services. Comprehensive “Housing Market Overviews” providing new home sales, pricing, housing inventory trends, future housing supply, and new and leading developments are available for regions across California by going to [www.marketpointe.com/landing](http://www.marketpointe.com/landing). Phone San Diego at 619-233-3781, Orange County at 714-528-2554, Sacramento at 916-710-1396; [url:www.marketpointe.com](http://url:www.marketpointe.com).