

The way we were then...



Photo by Patricia Beck

Whither they goest, we will go

Freeways are key to residential growth

Freeway corridors will continue to be the key to residential growth in southeast Michigan during 1979.

That is the word from the Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan (BASM) which expects home building in the area to be strong despite the talk of a pending recession this year.

The association expects housing starts for southeast Michigan in 1979 will be down about eight percent compared to 1978 but the decline will occur only in scattered communities.

In fact, 20 of the active-building communities along eight growth corridors around Detroit actually will have increased building activity this year while only 15 will have less, according to James Raisin, president of the BASM.

Bruce W. Robinson, an analyst from Southfield specializing in housing trends, says the principal growth corridors are along: I-94 to St. Clair; M-53 from Detroit to

Utica; I-75 from Detroit to Flint; M-59; I-696 from Detroit to Lansing; M-14 from Livonia to Ann Arbor; I-94 from Detroit to Ann Arbor; and I-75 from Detroit to Toledo.

Of a projected home-starts total of 21,200 along these corridors, some 5,125 are expected to occur in the belt from Detroit to Lansing.

Included in this corridor are Southfield, Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Bloomfield, Novi, Wixom, Milford and Brighton. Among the top growing communities in this corridor, in terms of housing starts, will be Southfield, with 1,000 starts vs. 939 in 1978; Farmington Hills, with 1,750 compared to 1,400; and Novi, with 750 vs. 576.

The second-hottest building corridor, according to Robinson, will be Detroit-Ann Arbor with 4,000 of the total and 1,750 of these located in Canton — up from 1,600 in 1978.

Third in activity is projected to be Detroit-Utica with the leaders

being Warren, Sterling Heights, and Shelby. Next comes the Detroit-St. Clair strip with leading growth communities including Chesterfield, Roseville, Fraser and Clinton.

Fifth in building strength will be Detroit-Flint where 2,450 units are expected to be built. Included among the active communities are: Troy, 750 vs. 1,013 in 1978; Avon, 1,250 vs. 1,370; Independence, 150 vs. 244 and Orion, 200 vs. 182 in 1978.

Next comes the M-59 corridor which includes growth communities such as White Lake, Highland, Waterford, Commerce and Hartland.

Seventh in activity will be along M-14 where Livonia will build 300 vs. 401, Plymouth Township 500 vs. 289, Northville 250 vs. 163, and Salem, 100 vs. 39 in 1978.

Eighth on the list will be the Detroit-Toledo corridor with growth to be enjoyed by Taylor, Brownstown Township, Riverview and Southgate.

REALTORS IN THE booming Plymouth-Canton market expect a healthy year in 1979 despite the recession and mortgage interest rates in excess of 10 percent.

According to most realtors in this area, the continued action in sales exists primarily because of a fear by buyers that house prices will continue to rise.

"If the first half of January is a basis by which to judge," says Bob. Bake of Bake Realty, "we will be due for a record year and last year was a good year."

Bake noted that home prices in the Plymouth-Canton area now run from a low of \$45,000 to \$110,000 or more.

Another reason for the intense movement in home sales, says realtor Sam Dibble, is the corporate transfers. "Most of the movement now is toward places like Canton Township, Northville, and Plymouth Township. The larger companies keep shifting their people and there always is a demand for homes, or even exchanges.

"And another thing is the rising cost. The average price of a home in Plymouth during 1978 was \$60,000. But in December it rose to \$70,000. While that was just for the month it could be taken as a sign that prices are going much higher in the year ahead. So, there is every reason for the activity reaching new highs."

William Decker agrees. "I am very optimistic about the current year. There are ever so many people, especially young couples where both the husband and wife are working, who want new homes. Many of them are in the market for lived-in homes. Then there are the new people coming to the area."

"The high interest rate hasn't caused much of a slowdown in that both husband and wife are working and can meet interest payments," adds realtor Bill Fehlig. "And in many cases where young couples are pressed, their parents are helping them out. So there is little, if any, falling off."

...The way we are now



Photo by Charlie Kidd