

● ERIC MELDRUM · MOVING TO THE ANN ARBOR AREA

THE ANN ARBOR AREA MARKET REPORT

What **\$500K** Actually Buys Around Ann Arbor

A town-by-town read on the last 180 days of home sales — and why the price is the last thing you should be shopping for out here.

Single-family homes · Washtenaw & Livingston County · Realcomp MLS · Trailing 180 days ending [MONTH
YEAR]

Eric Meldrum

TRU LIVING GROUP AT REAL BROKER LLC

The price is the one thing that barely moves.

If you've landed on the Ann Arbor area and now you're trying to figure out which town to plant your family in, you've probably done what almost everyone does. You lined the towns up, sorted them by price, and started leaning toward whatever looked like the best value on paper.

I pulled every single-family home that sold across Washtenaw and Livingston County over the last 180 days to test that instinct. Close to three thousand sales. And here's what the data actually shows: from Ann Arbor out through the towns around it, the sale price barely changes. What changes is what that money buys, and how fast you have to move to get it.

That matters because it flips the whole exercise. If the number is nearly the same in a dozen towns, then price isn't your deciding factor. It's the thing that matters least. The real decision is which version of life that money should buy you: a walkable downtown, a bigger house on a quiet street, land to spread out on, or water off the back deck.

This report is the read I give families before they ever fly in to look. Three things run through all of it, and each one changes how you should be shopping.

2,802

SINGLE-FAMILY SALES,
LAST 180 DAYS

\$460^K

REGION-WIDE MEDIAN
SALE PRICE

2.1^{mo}

MONTHS OF SUPPLY — A
SELLER'S MARKET

Every town, side by side.

Sorted high to low by median sale price. Watch the middle column — **price per square foot** is where the towns actually separate, not the sticker.

Town	Median price	Price / sq ft	Days on market
Dexter	\$565,000	\$274	25
Ann Arbor	\$562,500	\$330	30
Saline	\$560,000	\$243	34
Hartland	\$510,000	\$248	9
Hamburg lakes	\$486,250	\$260	8
Brighton	\$475,000	\$248	9
Whitmore Lake	\$435,000	\$248	18
Howell	\$424,900	\$230	8
Chelsea	\$421,700	\$242	34
Pinckney	\$387,500	\$249	14
Fowlerville	\$364,000	\$219	15
Ypsilanti	\$309,000	\$216	21
Region overall	\$460,000	—	19

How to read this

Ann Arbor is the priciest per foot by a wide margin, but its median sale price sits right on top of Dexter and Saline. That gap between the two price columns is the whole story of this market. The next three pages break down what it means.

Same check. A different life.

The clearest example on the whole map is Ann Arbor against Saline. They sell for the same money. They are not the same purchase.

ANN ARBOR · MEDIAN

1,800_{sf}

\$562,500 · \$330 / SQ FT

SALINE · MEDIAN

2,360_{sf}

\$560,000 · \$243 / SQ FT

Basically the identical price. But the typical Saline home is about **five to six hundred square feet bigger**, on a larger lot, in a real small-town downtown, and still only fifteen to twenty minutes from everything Ann Arbor has.

That is not a cheaper house. It is the same money buying a different life. An extra bedroom. A yard the kids can actually use. A little room to breathe. And you didn't give up the schools or the access to get it. In Ann Arbor that same check is buying the location itself — the walk to the farmers market, the university, one of the best hospital systems in the country ten minutes away. For the right family that is worth every dollar. The point is that it's a choice, not a default.

The one exception worth knowing

Dexter holds its price per foot at around \$274 — the highest in the orbit — because of its walkable village downtown on the river. If you want a true downtown but Ann Arbor feels like too much, that premium is what you're paying for, and it's real.

The fastest market isn't Ann Arbor.

Everyone assumes Ann Arbor is the frenzy — write an offer in an hour or lose the house. The data says the opposite.

29 days

MEDIAN TIME TO SELL — WASHTENAW (ANN ARBOR SIDE)

9 days

MEDIAN TIME TO SELL — LIVINGSTON (BRIGHTON · HOWELL)

An Ann Arbor home is taking about a month to sell — a calm, reasonable pace where you have time to think. Out in Brighton, Howell, and Hartland, homes are moving in about **nine days**. More than **six in ten** Livingston County homes are gone inside two weeks. That's where a lot of these families are landing, and the demand shows up in the speed.

So the towns people assume are the quiet fallback are actually the tightest part of the whole area. That changes how you shop them. In the fast markets you can't browse for a month. You need to be pre-approved, you need to know your towns before you fly in, and when the right house comes up you have to be ready that day. The buyers who lose out here are the ones who think they have time.

What this means for you

Match your urgency to the town. Looking on the Ann Arbor side? You can breathe. Looking at Brighton, Howell, or the lakes? Get your financing and your shortlist locked before you ever book the flight.

A fast market still misprices homes.

This is the part that actually helps you as a buyer — and you can't see it from the outside on Zillow.

1 in 5

LISTINGS CAME OFF THE
MARKET WITHOUT
SELLING

~6%

MEDIAN PRICE CUT ON
HOMES THAT RELISTED

~185

HOMES BACK ON THE
MARKET AFTER STRIKING
OUT ONCE

Over the last 180 days, about one in five listings came off the market without ever selling. In a market this tight, that almost never means nobody wanted the house. It means the price was wrong on day one. The homes that eventually did sell after sitting had to come down — a lot of them around six percent, and some of the higher-priced ones fifteen to twenty percent before they moved.

Right now there are close to two hundred homes back on the market that already failed to sell once. Those sellers have learned their price was too high. **That is exactly where your negotiating room is.** So even in a nine-day market, you can still buy right — you just have to know which listings have already tipped their hand. That read is a big part of what my team does for the families we work with.

Choose the life, then the town.

Since the price lands in the same range almost everywhere, start here instead. Four versions of life, and where in the orbit each one actually exists.

01 Downtown Life

Walk to coffee, know your neighbors, live somewhere with a pulse. You'll use the walkability every day — it's worth the premium per foot.

Best fit: Ann Arbor, Dexter village, downtown Brighton, downtown Howell, Ypsilanti

02 Subdivision Life

Good schools, safe streets, kids on bikes, a real community feel. The largest single group of families making this move.

Best fit: Saline, Brighton, South Lyon, Green Oak & Hamburg Township, newer Ann Arbor pockets

03 Acreage & Privacy

Room between you and the next house. Space to spread out, maybe a pole barn. Usually starts with "I don't want to see my neighbors."

Best fit: Hartland, rural Livingston County, outside Dexter & Chelsea, Pinckney, Hamburg Township

04 Lake Life

Water as part of daily life, not a vacation. Kayak off the back deck on a Tuesday. The corner of this market almost nobody else covers.

Best fit: Hamburg lakes, Pinckney chain, Whitmore Lake, Brighton-area lakes

The trap to avoid

Don't pick your town off a price sort. The prices are all close. Pick the lane that fits your family, then let the right house in that lane come to you.

Let's match your number to the right town.

This is the conversation I have with families every week. Tell me your budget and what you actually want your days to look like, and I'll tell you which of these towns fits, where your money goes the furthest for that life, and how to be ready when the right house comes up.

"If we're a good fit to work together, great. If not, I'll point you in the right direction anyway."

Call, text, or email — or better yet, book a Zoom so we can talk face to face. No pressure, no pitch. Just a real conversation, and it's usually pretty eye-opening.

BOOK A ZOOM

thatdetroitlife.com/contact

CALL OR TEXT

(734) 746-5001

EMAIL

infomi@trulivinggroup.com

WATCH & SUBSCRIBE

youtube.com/@TRULIVINGMICHIGAN

About this data. Figures reflect single-family homes only (condominiums excluded), drawn from Realcomp MLS for the trailing 180 days across Washtenaw and Livingston County. Town labels group the surrounding legal townships into the communities buyers actually search for — for example, Green Oak, Genoa, and Brighton Townships are reported here as "Brighton." All prices are medians and represent a market snapshot as of the report date, not an appraisal or a guarantee of any individual home's value. Real estate market conditions change; for current figures on your specific price range and towns, reach out. Eric Meldrum · Tru Living Group at Real Broker LLC · 738 Grand River Ave, Brighton, MI 48116 · Equal Housing Opportunity.