# Home sales are improving locally, nationally

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SENECA — Home sales increased significantly in October and November, fueled by a strong consumer response in the South, as evidenced by a reported 23-percent surge in sales in that region according to the U.S. Department of Commerce.

The commerce department released figures Wednesday that indicated national sales rose 6.2 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 430,000, up from an original projection of 405,000 in September

Home shoppers in October were acting before lawmakers decided to extend a tax credit for first-time buyers and expand it to some existing homeowners. The credit now covers contracts signed by April 30, 2010, and analysts expect it to further the housing recovery in the coming months.

Bob Hill, a Realtor in Seneca, said his company had seen significant improvement in the past month, and primarily contributed it to faith in a strengthening economy, as well as the $8,000 tax-credit to first time buyers.

"I think we've got more homeowners, is helping," Hill said. "I'd say this month we've doubled last month's sales."




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**A local Realtor has seen significant improvement in sales during the past month, and primarily contributed it to faith in a strengthening economy, as well as the $8,000 tax-credit to first-time buyers.**

Meanwhile, a Realtor at RE/MAX Foothills Realty in Seneca indicated that while they've not seen a significant uptick in sales, there are indications that at the very least they won't get any worse.

"I would say we've not had any definite increase. It's been pretty much on a plateau for the last three or four months," the Realtor said. "I do think the market has bottomed out. There's more people looking and getting interesting in buying, but they're not jumping in yet."

The national median sales price of $212,200 was almost even with $213,200 a year earlier, but up almost 1 percent from September's level of $210,700. Hill said his primary sales surge was mostly due to homes in that price range, as well.

"We've probably been selling more middle income-priced homes," he said. "You're looking at somewhere in the $150,000 to $400,000 range as the hot sellers."

*The Associated Press Contributed to this report*

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