

# THE STRAIGHT SHOOTER

## NEWS of ENNIS and the MADISON VALLEY, MONTANA for MAY 2015



*Trout live in nice neighborhoods*



- **MADISON VALLEY “HAPPENINGS”** → So much to do here in the spring... → High school & junior high students from across the state of Montana traveled to Ennis to compete in barrel racing, goat tying, bull riding and more at the **Montana State High School Rodeo**. → The **Tap into Ennis – Brew & Spirit Festival** took place in the park, in spite of rain. → The Annual **Virginia City Chamber Dinner & Auction** filled the Wells Fargo Steak House in VC and raised money for their 2015 events. → Runners came from all over for the 20<sup>th</sup> **Annual Madison River Run** along the banks of the Madison River. → The **Virginia City Players** opened their new season in the VC Opera House and the hilarious comedy cabaret, the **Brewery Follies** is back. → Riders saddled up for the **Spring Horseback Poker Ride** in VC and stayed for the **Summer Kickoff Parade**. → Ennis High School graduated 22 seniors this year.



- **COMING JUNE HAPPENINGS** → If you are in town, stop by our **ERA Landmark Arrow** office on Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 PM for our **Business After Hours Open House**. These networking events are hosted by one chamber member per month. → **“Gears for Beers” - Montana’s first Mountain Bike Poker Ride** will be held June 7<sup>th</sup>. It is hosted by the Bale of Hay Saloon in Historic Virginia City and is benefiting the V.C. Rural Fire Dept. Lunch and beer provided! Go to [www.eventbrite.com](http://www.eventbrite.com). → The **Madison Valley Rural Fire Department** is sponsoring the Montana Conference for fire and EMS professionals from June 10 – 13. We should be very safe from fires during that time, with up to 250 volunteer firemen and women from all across the state, here in the valley. ← Our local Realtors love Firemen! → The **Father’s Day Fishing Derby**, on Saturday June 21<sup>st</sup>, is great fun for the kids. There are some whoppers in that pond! → Lots of events happening all around **Montana**, so go to <http://www.virtualmontana.com/events/> and <http://www.visitmt.com/things-to-do/events.html> and <http://livelytimes.com/> to check them all out and make your summer plans in Montana.

- **WANTED! ALIVE! ENERGETIC! AMBITIOUS!** And willing to live and work in Paradise! After a long dry spell, real estate is booming and we desperately need more agents in the Ennis office to take on new listings, show properties and eventually inherit our clients when we start phasing out towards retirement. So if you’ve dreamed about moving to Ennis, Montana but

# WANTED

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wondered what you would do, give us a call. You *could* have what it takes to make a life, make a living and provide a valuable service. We've had 20 wonderful years of turning clients into friends.

➤ **MONTANA NEWS** → Montana **grizzly bears** are on the rise, after years of struggle. None in Ennis though! → Montana's **unemployment rate** fell to 4% in April. So if you want a job, this may be the place to be. → Our own **Deemo's Meats** won 9 awards, including Grand Champion, at a recent Montana Meat Processors Assoc. Convention & Trade Show, competing against 38 processing plants in the cured meat contest. → May was designated as **Wildfire Awareness Month** for 7 western states to remind people to be cautions. In Montana the top causes of wildfire are: agricultural burns, campfires, and sparks from dragging chains, lawnmowers, chainsaws and field machinery. Conditions are favorable for an active fire season. Visit [www.firesafem.org](http://www.firesafem.org). → Every spring the MT FWP issues a message to people to leave new born fawns, birds and other infant wildlife where they find them. **"IF YOU CARE,**

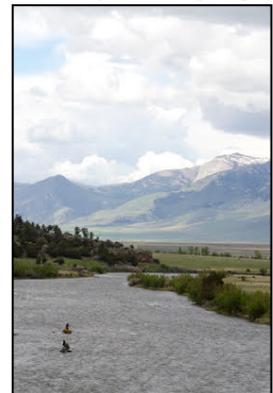


**LEAVE THEM THERE."** Montana law prohibits the capture, feeding, possession and harassment of wildlife – both game and non-game species. Visit [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov) for more information. → Madison County Commissioner, David Schultz, spoke before the House Natural Resources Subcommittee on Federal Lands in Washington DC on the danger to our nation's overgrown, fire-prone forests, from too little planning and too much litigation. **"Our forests can't wait,"** Schultz said. → **Commute from your home in**

**Montana.** Curious about how to talk with your boss about turning your in-house job into a telecommute position? Montana wants to help you. Check out [www.whytele.com](http://www.whytele.com) and The Montana High Tech Business Alliance at [www.mthightech.org](http://www.mthightech.org). ***Then we will help you find your new home from which you will telecommute!*** → Check out [www.DropTrip.com](http://www.DropTrip.com) for a great new shipping idea in MT!

➤ **FISHING REPORT** → In a recent report on the Health of the Madison River, FWP Fisheries Biologist, Pat Clancy, declared, "In the Pine Butte Section, we are **seeing historic numbers of large Brown Trout**. There are more 14" and larger Rainbow Trout than ever, too." Exciting news!

**The Tackle Shop Fishing Report Madison River** for June 1, 2015. June is the month to be in Ennis if you want to catch large fish on dry flies. The famed salmon fly hatch starts about mid-month and it is by far the best time to catch trophy fish in the Madison on dries. For a brief time the salmon fly emerges from its nymph form in the riverbed and has a brief moment as a winged insect. During this time the fish gorge themselves on the floating T-bones from heaven. This hatch is world famous and many anglers try and time the hatch with their visit each year. With the lower water levels in the river this year might just be the best salmon fly hatch in recent memory. Usually the hatch starts mid month and continues upstream for about a week. For those wanting to fish now we have been staying bent mostly bobber lobbing with rubber leg stone fly nymphs and smaller streamers. We have been fishing these on stout 2 X leaders and making sure to get them down with some split shot. Dry fly guys are seeing some caddis as well as may flies during the afternoon. You can take advantage of this by watching the slower areas behind rocks, in slicks, inside turns or anywhere the river slows down. Keep an eye out for risers. They are not that picky and a standard parachute adams, purple haze or X caddis on a 4X tippet will get the job done. As the month rolls along salmon flies, goldens, more caddis and may flies will get into the mix and the river will become a dry fly fisherman's paradise.



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Hatches and water conditions change quickly this month so stop by the store for the latest information. New inventory arriving daily and we are almost fully stocked with the best flies, gear and apparel for fishing the Madison. See John's full reports and more at: <https://www.thetacklesop.com/>.

**Check out other fishing reports at:**

- ✚ Madison River Fishing Company at <http://www.mrfc.com/MadisonRiverMontanaFishing/MadisonRiverReport.aspx>.
- ✚ Dan Delekta at <http://beartoothflyfishing.com/flyfishingreports/uppermadisonriver.htm>.
- ✚ The Madison Valley Ranch at <http://www.madisonvalleyranch.com/blog/>
- ✚ Joe Dilschneider's Montana Trout Stalkers at <http://www.montanatrout.com/>
- ✚ Yellowstone Fly Fishing at <http://www.yellowstoneflyfishing.com/madisonreport.htm>.



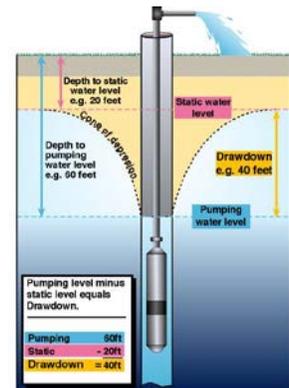
➤ **WEATHER** → The month of May was full of crazy weather – sun, wind, rain, thunder, lightening, hail, snow, sleet, and more! But everyone agrees we need the moisture so not much complaining. The cool weather has slowed down the snow melt, but all the moisture will not do enough to reduce fire danger this year. Our snowpack has already melted below 7,000' and the sooner you lose snowpack the more fires you get. The recorded high in Ennis for the month of May was 78° with a low of 28°. Total precipitation for May was 2.86"! Hallelujah! Everything is green and lush, for a while.

➤ **REAL ESTATE TIPS → DOMESTIC WELLS.** For many people moving to rural Montana, it will be the first time their water supply will come from a private well rather than a municipal water system. It is easy to take this seemingly unending source for granted. There is more to this than just turning on your water faucet. There are several things you should know:

1. **Research the well's history**, find out who drilled the well, know your well's capacity and yield, by obtaining a copy of the well log, and make sure the well was filed on by obtaining a water right certificate for the well. Go to <http://mbmgwic.mtech.edu/> to find a copy of your well log. The well log would be under the name of the person who originally had the well drilled. Go to the DNRC website at <http://nr.is.mt.gov/dnrc/waterrights/default.aspx> to find your water right abstract. If you can't find one under your name, it could still be under the name of the previous owner, if it was not transferred with the sale of the property. If not, make sure you contact the DNRC and file for the water rights in your name.

There is a lot to learn and understand about water rights and a great resource can be found at [www.watersage.com](http://www.watersage.com) and their Blog at: <http://www.watersage.com/blog/list-blog/may-2015/need-land-value-just-add-water/>.

2. **Check the condition of the well** to make sure the well is uphill and at least 100 feet from pollution sources; that surface water doesn't reach it; that the wellhead is visible and above ground; and that the well cap is tightly attached and a screened vent faces the ground.



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3. **Conduct a water test** annually for bacteria. The EPA also recommends testing for nitrate/nitrite and pH. They also recommend consulting with experts about the need to test for contaminants of local concern, such as arsenic, lead or radon.
4. **Have your well system inspected every 10 years** by a qualified well driller or pump installer. The homeowner should inspect their wellhead several times a year. Make sure there are no gopher holes around your well head where water can drain down into your well.
5. **Have a backup plan** to avoid disruptions of service in the case of power outage. Electricity is needed to operate your well pump, and power does occasionally go off. Two simple solutions are to include a retention tank in your well system and/or have an alternative power source.
6. **Wells do go dry** so there is no guarantee that you will always have water.

➤ **FEATURED PROPERTY OF THE MONTH** → **COMMERCIAL LOG BUILDING, CABINS and RV PARK, ON THE MADISON RIVER.**

*aka Crazy Lady Outpost, aka Vigilante Creek Pub, aka Madison Bend, aka Madison River Cabins & RV Park.* Beautiful log building of 3,056 SF + 10 vintage cabins + 2 log cabins + 9 unit RV park, all on 4.808 acres, between US Highway 287 and the **Madison River**, next to the famous Grizzly Bar & Grill, approximately 35 miles south of Ennis. This property has a long history with the original cabins built in 1971 and rented to fishermen. The cabins were remodeled, and the log store + 2 log cabins were added in 1997. It was operated at that time as a convenience store, Laundromat and office for the cabin rentals. The potential for this property is tremendous



for a buyer with vision. It is in a very high traffic, high tourist area, with highway AND river frontage. Yellowstone Park is 30 minutes away, with world-class fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, etc. all around. **A unique property that would be nearly impossible to duplicate anywhere in the Madison Valley.** The entire property - with log building, 10 vintage cabins, 9-space RV park, outbuildings and 2 log cabins, all on 4+ acres with river access, is being offered for **\$1,283,500**. MLS # 205612.

➤ **CURRENT REAL ESTATE MARKET** → WASHINGTON (May 21, 2015) — Despite properties typically selling faster than at any time since July 2013, existing-home sales slowed in April but remained above an annual sales pace of five million for the second straight month, according to the **National Association of Realtors®**. All major regions except for the Midwest experienced sales declines in April. Total **existing-home sales**, which are completed transactions that include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops, declined 3.3 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 5.04 million in April from an upwardly revised 5.21 million in March. Despite the monthly decline, sales have increased year-over-year for seven consecutive months and are still 6.1 percent above a year ago.

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**Lawrence Yun**, NAR chief economist, says sales in April failed to keep pace with the robust gain seen in March. "April's setback is the result of lagging supply relative to demand and the upward pressure it's putting on prices," he said. "However, the overall data and feedback we're hearing from Realtors® continues to point to elevated levels of buying interest compared to a year ago. With low interest rates and job growth, more buyers will be encouraged to enter the market unless prices accelerate even higher in relation to incomes."

Total housing inventory at the end of April increased 10.0 percent to 2.21 million existing homes available for sale, but is still 0.9 percent below a year ago (2.23 million). Unsold inventory is at a 5.3-month supply at the current sales pace, up from 4.6 months in March. The median existing-home price for all housing types in April was \$219,400, which is 8.9 percent above April 2014. This marks the 38<sup>th</sup> consecutive month of year-over-year price gains and is the largest since January 2014 (10.1 percent). With demand far exceeding supply, properties sold in April faster (39 days) than at any time since July 2013 (42 days) and the second shortest time (37 days in June 2013) since NAR began tracking in May 2011. Short sales were on the market the longest at a median of 180 days in April, while foreclosures sold in 50 days and non-distressed homes took 38 days. Nearly half (46 percent) of homes sold in April were on the market for less than a month.

"Housing inventory declined from last year and supply in many markets is very tight, which in turn is leading to bidding wars, faster price growth and properties selling at a quicker pace," says Yun. "To put it in perspective, roughly 40 percent of properties sold last month went at or above asking price, the highest since NAR began tracking this monthly data in December 2012."

The percent share of first-time buyers remained at 30 percent in April for the second consecutive month. First-time buyers represented 29 percent of all buyers in April 2014.

According to Freddie Mac, the **average commitment rate** for a 30-year, conventional, fixed-rate mortgage remained below 4.00 percent for the fifth straight month, falling in April to 3.67 percent from 3.77 percent in March.

NAR President **Chris Polychron**, executive broker with 1<sup>st</sup> Choice Realty in Hot Springs, Ark., cautions that closings for some home sales could drag after August 1 and into the fall as lenders transition to the new closing procedures and documentation required by the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's Real Estate Settlement and Procedures Act and Truth in Lending Act, or RESPA-TILA, integrated disclosure rule. "There likely will be bumps in the closing process while all parties get used to the new requirements," he said. "We hope that the move away from the HUD-1 is smooth, but even if only 10 percent of transactions experience closing issues, that's as many as 40,000 transactions a month."

Polychron — testifying before Congress on May 14 — advocated for a grace period through the end of 2015, which would delay enforcement of the new rules to the slower winter months.

All-cash sales were 24 percent of transactions in April, unchanged from March and down considerably from a year ago (32 percent). Individual investors, who account for many cash sales, purchased 14 percent of homes in April, unchanged from last month and down from 18 percent in April 2014. Seventy-one percent of investors paid cash in April.

Distressed sales — foreclosures and short sales — were 10 percent of sales in April, unchanged from March and below the 15 percent share a year ago. Seven percent of April sales were foreclosures and 3 percent were short sales. Foreclosures sold for an average discount of 20 percent below market value in April (16 percent in March), while short sales were also discounted 14 percent (16 percent in March).

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Single-family home sales declined 3.7 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 4.43 million in April from 4.60 million in March, but are still 6.5 percent above the 4.16 million pace a year ago. The median existing single-family home price was \$221,200 in April, up 10.0 percent from April 2014.

Existing condominium and co-op sales were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 610,000 units in April (unchanged from March) and are 3.4 percent higher than April 2014 (590,000 units). The median existing condo price was \$206,100 in April, which is 0.4 percent higher than a year ago.

April existing-home sales in the Northeast declined 3.1 percent to an annual rate of 620,000, but are 1.6 percent above a year ago. The median price in the Northeast was \$253,200, which is 3.6 percent higher than April 2014. In the Midwest, existing-home sales increased 1.7 percent to an annual rate of 1.22 million in April, and are 13.0 percent above April 2014. The median price in the Midwest was \$173,700, up 11.4 percent from a year ago. Existing-home sales in the South declined 6.8 percent to an annual rate of 2.04 million in April, but are still 3.6 percent above April 2014. The median price in the South was \$189,400, up 8.5 percent from a year ago. **Existing-home sales in the West decreased 1.7 percent to an annual rate of 1.16 million in April, but are still 6.4 percent above a year ago. The median price in the West was \$318,700, which is 10.0 percent above April 2014.**

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*The National Association of Realtors®*, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing 1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries. For additional commentary and consumer information, visit [www.houselogic.com](http://www.houselogic.com) and <http://retradio.com>.

➤ **LOCAL REAL ESTATE MARKET STATISTICS** → We have been slammed! This is the busiest spring we've seen in many, many years. People are shopping, people are buying and people are listing. Something is stirring the pot and we expect it to continue through this summer. **The Southwest Montana Multiple Listing statistics** for the Madison Valley area (including Ennis, Cameron, McAllister, Norris, Virginia City, Harrison, Pony, Whitehall, Cardwell), for the month of **May 2015** totals are as follows:

- **LAND:** 337↑ vacant lots are listed (\$3,000 to \$2,250,000); 9 pending sales (\$27,500 to \$300,000); and a total of 20 lots have sold so far in 2015 (\$7,500 to \$1,200,000), totaling \$2,285,199, which was 92% of asking prices.
- **HOMES:** 103↓ homes are listed (\$85,000 to \$3,375,000); 22 pending sales (\$22,500 to \$1,999,000); and 35 homes have sold so far in 2015 (\$82,500 to \$1,800,000), totaling \$11,515,100, which was 90.5% of asking prices.
- **RANCHES:** 8↓ listed (\$344,000 to \$9,950,000); 1 pending sales, and 1 ranch sold in 2015 (\$5,500,000) which was 66% of asking price.
- **COMMERCIAL:** 26↑ listed (\$56,000 - \$2,950,000); 0 pending sales; and 2 commercial properties sold in 2015 (\$51,500 - \$247,500) which was 84% of asking price.

***"The best investment on Earth is earth."*** Louis J. Glickman, real estate mogul/philanthropist.

➤ **YOU KNOW YOU'RE FROM MONTANA WHEN ....** *You know better than to plan an outdoor event in May!* Weather, distance, and geography play major roles in the forming of a Montanan's character. As far as the weather goes, the clichés surfaced long ago: "If you don't like the weather, wait five minutes," or "It's springtime in the Rockies, it's 40 below!" Some years, you might be skiing fresh snow in July! Weather isn't something you can count on in Big Sky Country, but you can usually count

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on the Memorial Day weekend weather being less than favorable. You'll always see campers braving the weather for those three days: those folks are *real* Montanans.

The vast distances encountered in the state, the 4th-largest in America, also affect the lives of Montanans. The distance from Libby to the eastern border with North Dakota, is 750 miles or so by highway, and it's hundreds of miles from the Wyoming border north to Canada. At its widest, the distance across Montana is the same as the distance from Chicago to Washington, D.C. And we have an array of ecosystems along the way. We have mountains and plains, rain forest and high desert. Great rivers like the Missouri and the Columbia have their headwaters here. We have the Continental Divide, Glacier and Yellowstone Parks. And we have the Great Plains. Weather, distance, and geography all make the Treasure State a special place, and our folks are pretty special, too. *And they know not to plant their flowers before Memorial Day!*



➤ **MONTANA TRIVIA** → *Did you know...Montana's State Insect is the Mourning Cloak Butterfly?*

Montana has one of the most diverse butterfly populations in the U.S. The mourning cloak butterfly was designated as the Montana State Butterfly in 2001. It is a large, unique butterfly, with special markings that do not match those of any other butterfly, making it easily distinguishable. It can have a wingspan up to four inches. This butterfly is one of the longest-lived butterflies in the world (up to ten months). It was given its name because it looked like it was wearing a dark cloak of mourning. This is also one of the friendliest butterflies around. If you simply put out your hand and hold still, chances are that the Mourning Cloak that is fluttering about will alight on you! Read a beautiful story about them at: <http://mtptr.org/post/montanas-state-insect-mourning-cloak-butterfly>. And check them out at: [http://montanakids.com/facts\\_and\\_figures/state\\_symbols/State\\_Butterfly\\_Mourning\\_Cloak.htm](http://montanakids.com/facts_and_figures/state_symbols/State_Butterfly_Mourning_Cloak.htm).



**“I’m in love with Montana. For other states I have admiration, respect, recognition, even some affection. But with Montana it is love. And it’s difficult to analyze love when you’re in it.”**  
*John Steinbeck, from Travels with Charlie.*



**Don & Toni Bowen, Broker Associates with over 75 years of real estate experience, between them - covering residential, commercial, vacant land & ranch properties. We are in the business of "match making."**



*Office manager,*  
**Debbie Reilly-Richardson**



***Thank you in advance for your personal referrals. They are the lifeblood of our business and the greatest compliment you can give us.***

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## USEFUL WEBSITES TO REMEMBER→

### ENNIS AND THE MADISON VALLEY:

<http://www.ennismontana.org/> - for community and local government information

<http://www.ennischamber.com/> - The Ennis Chamber of Commerce website

<http://www.madisonvalleyhistoryassociation.org> – The Madison Valley History Association website

<http://www.mvmedcenter.org> – for information about the Madison Valley Medical Center

<http://www.mvmcf.org> – the Madison Valley Medical Center Foundation website

<http://www.mvvetsmemorial.org> – The Madison Valley Veterans Memorial website

<http://www.madisonvalleyexpeditions.com/> - a source for experiencing *authentic* Montana in our area

### MADISON COUNTY:

<http://madison.homestead.com/index.html> - for Madison County emergency news

<http://www.madison.mt.gov/> - Madison County Government website

<http://virginiacity.com> – Virginia City Chamber of Commerce

### NEWS:

<http://www.madisoniannews.com/> - the latest news from the Madisonian newspaper for Madison Co.

<http://bozemandailychronicle.com/> - news from the big city of Bozeman, an hour northeast of Ennis

<http://www.mtstandard.com/> - news from historic Butte, an hour & ½ northwest of Ennis

### MONTANA:

[www.fwp.mt.gov/](http://www.fwp.mt.gov/) - Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks website – for hunting and fishing regulations

<http://fwp.mt.gov/education/bow/> - “Becoming an Outdoors Woman” – a must for female newcomers!

<http://www.visitmt.com/> - Official website Montana Vacations, Recreation, Accommodations and Travel

<http://www.montanapictures.net> – for people homesick for Montana – a great visual connection

[http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis\\_list.shtml](http://mdt.mt.gov/travinfo/weather/rwis_list.shtml) - State Highway Web Cams

<http://montanakids.com/> - State website for all things KIDS in Montana

<https://www.facebook.com/Ennisrealestate?ref=hl> – Facebook page for ERA Landmark Arrow R. E.

### SKIING:

<http://bigskyresort.com/> – Check out latest snow conditions & things to do at Big Sky

<http://www.lmranch.com/winter/> - Lone Mountain Ranch in Big Sky for cross country trails

[http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross\\_country\\_skiing.php](http://www.westyellowstonenet.com/skiing/cross_country_skiing.php) - Skiing Yellowstone Park Trails

### HORSEBACK RIDING:

[www.wolfpackoutfitters.com](http://www.wolfpackoutfitters.com) – trail riding guides for the Madison Valley

<http://www.sphinxmountainoutfitting.com> – trail riding and outfitting guides in the Madison Valley

### RANCHING:

<http://www.madisonvalleyranchlands.org/> - working to keep the ranching way of life alive

### FISHING:

<http://www.madisonriverfoundation.org> - The Madison River Foundation

<http://www.montanatu.org/> - Montana Trout Unlimited

### GOLFING:

<http://www.madisonmeadowsgolfcourse.com> – Madison Meadows Golf Course in Ennis

### REAL ESTATE:

[www.arrowreal.com](http://www.arrowreal.com) – A wealth of resource information, local listings and a portal to the SW MT MLS

[www.houselogic.com](http://www.houselogic.com) – Helpful information from the National Association of Realtors

[www.trulia.com](http://www.trulia.com) – Search for homes for sale and sold, local information, and research

[www.zillow.com](http://www.zillow.com) – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

[www.homesandland.com](http://www.homesandland.com) – Search for homes for sale and rent, home values and mortgage rates

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