

# Foreclosures rising in LA

**Gregory J Wilcox**

Posted online: Friday, June 06, 2008 at 1310 hours IST

Foreclosures hit a record pace in April across the San Fernando Valley, soaring 201 per cent from a year earlier and pounding down home prices, researchers say.

During April, 608 families lost a home to foreclosure, up from 202 a year earlier and 511 in March, according to the San Fernando Valley Economic Research Center.

Foreclosures are now on pace to break the quarterly record of 1,854 set in the third quarter of 1996—the most recent time the housing market was in a slump, said Daniel Blake, director of the Center at California State University, Northridge.

## The trend is not encouraging

Advertisement

“The signs are, it’s going to go up,” Blake said of the foreclosure total. “We’re pushing on that record number.”

The glut of homes on the market pushed the price of a median single-family home down to \$505,000, a loss of 21 per cent, or \$125,000, from the year-earlier price, the report said. It was up by \$5,000, however, from a month earlier.

With notices of default—the first step in the foreclosure process—increasing from 663 in April 2007 to 1,560 a year later, there’s no indication the housing slump will end anytime soon, the Center said.

There were 660 default notices issued in March.

## The worst is yet to come

“There is no indication we’re through the worst of it, especially with (default notices) rising,” said Andrew LaPage, an analyst at DataQuick Information Systems, which generated the numbers for the research centre.

During April, 964 new and previously owned houses and condos were sold, down 29 per cent from a year earlier. It’s the lowest sales total for an April since DataQuick began tracking the market in 1988, Blake said. Sales did jump 25 per cent from March, however, marking the third consecutive month of increases. This was also the first month-to-month gain from March to April since 2004.

Reports from two Realtor trade associations showed similarly strong monthly gains.

“What it may mean is more open deals are closing, and we’re turning the corner on the financial crunch,” Blake said. “(Lenders) get their portfolios in order and lending practices together, so they just don’t say no.”

But Blake is reluctant to read too much into the April numbers. While he doesn’t think April’s median price is the bottom for this cycle, he noted that the year-over-year decreases are moderating.

### Volatility makes predictions difficult

“There is too much going on in the financial markets, between jumbo and non-jumbo loans and their terms, to say anything definitive about price trends at this point, but they bear watching over the next several months,” Blake of California State University said.

The Valley fared slightly better in April than Los Angeles County as a whole.

Sales countywide fell 31 per cent from a year earlier, to 5,016 transactions, DataQuick said.

And for the entire six-county Southern California region, sales fell 19 per cent, to 15,615 transactions. That's the highest level in eight months, but one of the lowest ever for an April.

# New NC Set for Certification Hearing; Why an NC President Resigned; Little Tokyo Now Little Seoul



Neighborhoods LA

*Edited by Sara Epstein*

The first neighborhood council certification hearing in more than a year is set for June 16. The Voices of 90037 Neighborhood Council application will be considered and if approved would make the group the 89th certified council in Los Angeles.

This applicant would, in effect, replace the Vernon/Main NC which was decertified by the BONC for their inability to hold an election and get quorums for meetings among other things.

The East Hollywood was the last NC certified. That was on April 19 of last year. Wilmington was the first NC certified on December 11, 2001. Altogether there have been 91 applicants certified. Three have been decertified.

The Voices of 90037 NC hearing will be held at the Normandie Avenue Elementary School at 4505 S Raymond Ave. Details at [www.lacityneighborhoods.com](http://www.lacityneighborhoods.com).

●●●

Foreclosures Hit Record but Worst is Yet to Come  
This from Rick Orlov at the Daily News

Foreclosures hit a record pace in April across the San Fernando Valley, soaring 201 percent from a year earlier and pounding down home prices, researchers said.

During April, 608 families lost a home to foreclosure, up from 202 a year earlier and 511 in March, according to the San Fernando Valley Economic Research Center.

Foreclosures are now on pace to break the quarterly record of 1,854 set in the third quarter of 1996 - the most recent time the housing market was in a slump, said Daniel Blake, director of the center at California State University, Northridge.

●●●

Two New Valley Schools  
This from the Daily News

Construction has started on a new LAUSD high school in Granada Hills, one of two schools to start construction this week in the San Fernando Valley. Connie Llanos in the Daily News.

Sitting on the former site of Granada Hills Community Hospital, Valley Region High

School No. 4 will alleviate overcrowding at Granada Hills, Monroe, Kennedy and Northridge Academy high schools.

Today the district will break ground on a new elementary school in Canoga Park.

●●●

### Why I Resigned as Palms NC President

By George Garrigues

Well, frankly, I am a better journalist than I am a political leader.

It is true, as I mentioned in an apology letter I sent to the Westside Neighborhood Council after I famously lost my temper during one of its meetings, that I had recently been undergoing some severe personal stress.

But, more than that, my inability to guide the Palms Neighborhood Council in the direction that I promised to do when I was elected was simply driving me nuts.

I couldn't even get a simple motion by the Representative Assembly passed to mail information and phone numbers about our city government to every resident of Palms.

As I told some of the Representative Assembly members, one simply doesn't treat an unpaid elected leader of a community organization in such a cavalier fashion.

Too, for more years than I care to think about, I've been battling the inattention of the Mayor, our three city council members (Weiss, Rosendahl and Wesson) and the Department of Neighborhood Empowerment, all of whom have simply refused to take a stand in favor of democracy in our neighborhood.

Of course by this time you should know that I am referring to the way that the Westside Village area has been torn from the rest of Palms and stuck like a piece of flypaper to the very nice but still distant community of Mar Vista.

And now, free of political responsibilities and constraints, I can also get back to being a community journalist — which I have been doing for more than half a century now. (See the result of Garrigues' community journalism at: [www.palmvillagesun.info](http://www.palmvillagesun.info).)

●●●

### Sushi to Kimchi

This from Booyeon Lee at the Los Angeles Business Journal.

Little Tokyo is about to take on a distinct Korean flavor.

In a transaction that marks a turning point for the area, the Little Tokyo Shopping

Center last week was purchased by a group of Korean-American investors.

While non-Japanese landlords of Little Tokyo properties have become common, this sale of the large shopping mall on Alameda Street will lead to a cultural change: Korean businesses, including a grocery, spa and electronics store, will replace the current Japanese tenants, said Ryan Oh of Coldwell Banker, who brokered the deal for the new owners.

Little Tokyo and nearby downtown have seen an influx of Korean-Americans as well as non-Asians, he explained. Meanwhile, much of the ethnic Japanese population has slowly decamped for Torrance and other areas.

“The downtown population is booming and much of Little Tokyo is still catering to Japanese tourists, not the local community,” Oh said. (Complete story at [www.labusinessjournal.com](http://www.labusinessjournal.com).)

●●●

### Reseda Pride Day

From Garth Carlson at Reseda NC

On June 14, The LA Neighborhood Housing Service, the Community Redevelopment Agency and the Reseda Neighborhood Council will participate in the national Neighborhoods Week by having a cleanup and block party in Reseda.

Bassett St between Crebs and Geyser will be the location that will see five homes repaired, painted and landscaped to help improve the look of the neighborhood.

□□□

CityWatch

Vol 6 Issue 46

Pub: June 6, 2008