

Home prices fell at record pace in June: report



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Home prices fell a record annual 15.9 percent in June, but the monthly rate of decline slowed from May which suggested the decimated housing sector may be stabilizing, according to Standard & Poor's on Tuesday.

"While there is no national turnaround in residential real estate prices, it is possible that we are seeing some regions struggling to come back, which has resulted in some moderation in price declines at the national level," said David Blitzer, chairman of the index committee at S&P, in a statement.

The S&P/Case-Shiller composite index of 20 metropolitan areas slipped 0.5 percent in June from May, bringing the measure down 15.9 percent from June 2007.

The month-over-month drop in the 20-city index was the smallest since July 2007.

In June, nine of the 20 cities tracked showed home price increases compared with seven in May, S&P/Case-Shiller said.

The 20-city figures came in less weak than what analysts polled by Reuters had expected.

S&P said its composite index of 10 metropolitan areas slipped 0.6 percent in June versus May, for a 17.0 percent year-over-year drop.

On a quarterly basis, single-family home prices plunged a record 15.4 percent in the second quarter from a year earlier, surpassing the steep drop in the first quarter,

While the pace of price decline slowed in June, the housing market, which has been a severe drag on the U.S. economy, remained weak.

Not one regional market has showed a positive return over the past 12 months and seven of the metro areas are reporting declines of more than 20 percent.

Las Vegas remained the most dismal housing market, showing a 28.6 percent annual decline in June. Miami and Phoenix were the next weakest markets, recording 28.3 percent and 27.9 percent annual price drops, respectively.

Courtesy of JB Goodwin