

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA
Timed Outline

Suggested Timing

Welcome and Introduction.....	10 min
Module 1: Principles of Pricing.....	50 min
Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables	80 min
Module 3: Preparing the CMA.....	95 min
Module 4: Presenting the CMA	25 min
Module 5: Working with Appraisers	25 min
Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits.....	30 min
Conclusion	15 min
Exam	30 min

Suggested Schedule

Welcome and Introduction.....	8:30 am – 8:40 am
Module 1: Principles of Pricing	8:40 am – 9:30 am
Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables	9:30 am – 10:00 am
Break.....	10:00 am – 10:15 am
Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables, cont'd.....	10:15 am – 11:05 am
Module 3: Preparing the CMA	11:05 am – 12:15 pm
Lunch.....	12:15 pm – 1:15 pm
Module 3: Preparing the CMA, cont'd.	1:15 pm - 1:40 pm
Module 4: Presenting the CMA.....	1:40 pm – 2:05 pm
Module 5: Working with Appraisers	2:05 pm – 2:30 pm
Break.....	2:30 pm – 2:45 pm
Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits.....	2:45 pm – 3:15 pm
Conclusion	3:15 pm – 3:30 pm
Exam	3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA
Timed Outline

Welcome and Introduction	10 min
---------------------------------	---------------

Module 1: Principles of Pricing	
What Is a CMA?	10 min
The Purpose of CMAs.....	5 min
Who Needs CMAs?	10 min
Valuation Language and Basic Principles	10 min
Pricing and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics	10 min
Exercise 1.1	5 min
Total	50 min

Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables	
The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject	10 min
Exercises 2.1–2.2	10 min
Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables	10 min
Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Comparables.....	10 min
Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables: Imperfect Information	10 min
Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets	10 min
Exercise 2.3	20 min
Total	80 min

Module 3: Preparing the CMA	
Methods of Adjusting Comparables.....	10 min
Exercise 3.1	10 min
Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables.....	20 min
Date of Sale and Time Adjustments	10 min
Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments	10 min
Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments.....	10 min
Exercise 3.2	25 min
Total	95 min

**Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA
Timed Outline**

Module 4: Presenting the CMA

What the CMA Report Contains	5 min
Guiding Clients through the CMA	5 min
The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing	5 min
Using Local MLS or RPR Statistics	5 min
Exercise 4.1	5 min
Total	25 min

Module 5: Working with Appraisers

Exercise 5.1	5 min
The Appraiser's Role and Responsibilities.....	5 min
Steps in Working with the Appraiser	5 min
How to Read an Appraisal Report	5 min
When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price	5 min
Total	25 min

Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

Listening to the Market.....	5 min
Educating Clients	5 min
The Pricing Pyramid	5 min
Revisiting Price.....	5 min
Exercise 6.1, 6.2	5 min
Legal and Ethical Requirements	5 min
Total	30 min

Conclusion

RPR Workbook Walkthrough	10 min
Questions and Answers	5 min
Total	15 min

Exam	30 min
-------------------	---------------

Course Learning Goals

At the conclusion of this course, students will be able to

- Select appropriate comparables and make accurate adjustments to them for use in developing home price opinions
- Guide sellers and buyers through the details of CMAs and the underlying pricing principles that inform them
- Interact effectively with appraisers

Learning Objectives

Module 1: Principles of Pricing

- Identify the purpose and benefits of CMAs
- Define key terms related to pricing
- Interpret Article 11 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics as it relates to pricing properties

Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables

- Recognize appropriate criteria, resources, and guidance in choosing comparables
- Identify causes of imperfect information and its consequences with for pricing properties
- Use appropriate comparables in a CMA

Module 3: Preparing the CMA

- Explain key principles of pricing that impact CMAs
- Recognize correct guidance, as well as common challenges and errors, in adjusting comparables
- Adjust comparables, using values developed from appropriate averages and cost data

Module 4: Presenting the CMA

- Discuss CMA documents and pricing conclusions with clients
- Address client concerns about pricing
- Explain value principles to clients

Module 5: Working with Appraisers

- Recognize the purpose of appraisals and the scope of the appraiser's role
- Describe how real estate agents can work constructively with appraisers
- Assess an appraisal and proceed appropriately when you think it contains inaccuracies

Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

- Recognize strategies and tactics for keeping up to date on your markets
- Recognize common client misconceptions about price
- Employ best practices for pricing properties in your daily work

Introduction

- A. Welcome
- B. Instructor and Student Introductions
- C. About This Course
- D. How to Earn the Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) Certification
 - 1. Benefits
- E. What You Will Learn
 - 1. Module 1: Principles of Pricing
 - 2. Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables
 - 3. Module 3: Preparing the CMA
 - 4. Module 4: Presenting the CMA
 - 5. Module 5: Working with Appraisers
 - 6. Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

I. Module 1: Principles of Pricing

- A. Learning Objectives
- B. What is a CMA?
 - 1. Not the Same: CMAs and Appraisals
- C. Valuation Services Matrix
- D. The Purpose of CMAs
- E. Who Needs CMAs?
 - 1. Sellers
 - 2. Buyers
 - 3. Agents
- F. Valuation Language and Basic Principles
 - 1. Cost, Price, and Value
- G. Market Value According to Fannie Mae
- H. Pricing and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics
 - 1. What the Code Says
 - 2. Value or Price?
 - 3. Interpreting the Code: The Importance of Competency

II. Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables

- A. Learning Objectives
- B. The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject
- C. Characteristics of Comparables
 - 1. Date of Sale
 - 2. Location
 - 3. Size
 - 4. Micro Markets
 - 5. Amenities
 - 6. Improvements
 - 7. Number of Comparables
- D. Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables
 - 1. Highest and Best Use
 - 2. Arm's-Length Transactions
- E. Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Comparables
- F. Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables: Imperfect Information
- G. Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets
 - 1. MLS
 - 2. Public Records
 - 3. REALTORS Property Resource® (RPR®)
 - 4. Agency and Company Files

III. Module 3: Preparing the CMA

- A. Learning Objectives
- B. Methods of Adjusting Comparables
 - 1. Cost-Based Adjustments
 - 2. Market-Based Adjustments
 - 3. The Importance of Market Expectations
 - 4. Making the Adjustment
 - 5. Applying the Principles of Substitution and Market Expectation
 - 6. Substitution
- C. Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables
 - 1. What the Guidance Says
 - 2. Interpreting the Guidance
- D. Date of Sale and Time Adjustments
- E. Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments
 - 1. Bedrooms
 - 2. Bathrooms
 - 3. Gross Living Area
 - 4. Age
 - 5. Lot Size

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA
Course Description and Outline

- F. Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments
 - 1. Double Dipping
 - 2. The Wrong Reasons to Adjust
 - 3. Outliers
 - 4. Stigmatized Properties

IV. Module 4: Presenting the CMA

- A. Learning Objectives
- B. What the CMA Report Contains
- C. Guiding Clients through the CMA
 - 1. Understanding the Market
 - 2. Considering the Comparables and Competition
 - 3. Moving from a Price Range to a Listing/Offer Price
 - 4. Getting to Agreement
 - 5. When Sellers and Buyers Disregard Your Pricing Recommendations
- D. The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing
- E. Using Local MLS or RPR Statistics

V. Module 5: Working with Appraisers

- A. Learning Objectives
- B. The Appraiser's Role and Responsibilities
- C. Steps in Working with the Appraiser
 - 1. Meet the Appraiser
 - 2. Prepare Appraiser's Package
 - 3. Appraiser's Package Contents
 - 4. Appraisal Tools
 - 5. Return Appraiser Calls
- D. How to Read an Appraisal Report
 - 1. Interpreting an Appraisal Report
 - 2. Red Flags in an Appraisal
- E. When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price
 - 1. Distressed Markets and "Low" Appraisals
 - 2. Challenging an Appraisal
 - 3. The Long Life of an FHA Appraisal

VI. Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

- A. Learning Objectives
- B. Listening to the Market
 - 1. Staying Up-to-Date on Market Changes
 - 2. Revisiting Historical Data
 - 3. Developing Human Resources
 - 4. Following Industry News
- C. Educating Clients
 - 1. Seven Deadly Seller Sins
 - 2. Five Buyer Bloopers
 - 3. When Homes Sell Quickly: "I Should Have Asked More!"
 - 4. Sellers in the Driver's Seat
 - 5. What Clients Can and Cannot Control
- D. The Pricing Pyramid
- E. Revisiting Price
- F. Legal and Ethical Requirements
 - 1. Confidentiality Obligations
 - 2. Standard of Practice 1–9
 - 3. Records Retention

VII. Conclusion

- A. Key Learning Points
- B. Questions and Answers

VIII. Exam (depending on sponsor requirements)



Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

Instructor and Student Manual

v2.0



Copyright ©2018 Center for Specialized REALTOR® Education

V 2.0

Note: The National Association of REALTORS® and the Center for Specialized REALTOR® Education, their faculty, agents, and employees are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, financial, tax, or other professional services through these course materials. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the student should seek competent professional advice.

Center for Specialized REALTOR® Education

430 North Michigan Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60611

www.pricingstrategyadvisor.org

psa@realtors.org

Acknowledgements

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® expresses gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals for their subject matter and industry expertise, input and feedback, and commitment to providing the best education for today's real estate professionals:

Lynn Madison,

ABR®, ABRM®, BPOR, GRI, PSA, SFR®, SRES®
Schaumburg, Illinois

Melanie McLane,

ABR®, CRB, CRS, e-PRO®, GREEN®, GRI, PSA, RAA, RSPS, SRES®
Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania

Candy Cooke,

ABR®, CRB, CREI, e-PRO®, GAA, GREEN®, GRI, PSA, SFR®, SRES®, TAHS, TRLP
Austin, Texas

Maurice Hampton,

ABR®, AHWD, CIPS e-PRO®, GREEN®, MRP, PSA, RENE, RSPS, SFR®, SRS
Chicago, Illinois

Contents

- Introduction1**
 - Welcome..... 3
 - Instructor and Student Introductions..... 3
 - About This Course..... 3
 - How to Earn the Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) Certification 4
 - What You Will Learn 4
- Module 1: Principles of Pricing7**
 - Learning Objectives 9
 - What Is a CMA? 9
 - Valuation Services Matrix..... 11
 - The Purpose of a CMA 12
 - Who Needs CMAs? 12
 - Valuation Language and Basic Principles..... 15
 - Market Value According to Fannie Mae..... 17
 - Pricing and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics 18
- Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables25**
 - Learning Objectives 27
 - The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject 27
 - Characteristics of Comparables..... 27
 - Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables 32
 - Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Comparables..... 34
 - Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables 35
 - Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets..... 36
 - REALTORS Property Resource (RPR®) 37
- Module 3: Preparing the CMA49**
 - Learning Objectives 51
 - Methods of Adjusting Comparables 51
 - Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables 56
 - Date of Sale and Time Adjustments 56
 - Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments 56
 - Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments 59

Module 4: Presenting the CMA.....	65
Learning Objectives	67
What the CMA Report Contains	67
Guiding Clients through the CMA.....	69
The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing.....	70
Using Local MLS or RPR Statistics	72
Module 5: Working with Appraisers	75
Learning Objectives	77
The Appraiser’s Role and Responsibilities.....	77
Steps in Working with the Appraiser.....	78
How to Read an Appraisal Report	80
When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price	81
Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits.....	85
Learning Objectives	87
Listening to the Market	87
Educating Clients	91
The Pricing Pyramid.....	93
Revisiting Price.....	94
Legal and Ethical Requirements	94
Conclusion	96
Resources	99
Valuation Workbook Sample Pages.....	101
RPR® Valuation Exercise.....	107
Helpful Websites	119
Glossary	120



Introduction

Welcome

NAR is pleased to welcome you to today's course on pricing properties, CMAs, and the role of agents in the valuation process. Please take advantage of this opportunity to engage in the subject matter, ask questions, and share your experiences and opinions. You all have something to learn and something to contribute.

Slide: Introduction

Instructor and Student Introductions

I-Note: **ASK** students to introduce themselves and briefly state their real estate interests and experience.

About This Course

The 21st century has so far presented multiple challenges to the real estate industry, notably, a housing boom and rising property values in the early 2000s, followed by economic decline, mortgage defaults, and now a seller's market in many areas. Determining property values depends more than ever on professional expertise and competence, the best use of technology, and a commitment to approaching the pricing assignment from all pertinent perspectives.

This course is specifically designed to help residential real estate agents and brokers enhance their skills in pricing properties, creating CMAs, working with appraisers, and guiding clients through the anxieties and misperceptions they often have about home values.

How to Earn the Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) Certification

Slide: Earning the PSA Certification

I-Note: **REVIEW** certification requirements and benefits.

Slides: PSA Benefits

- ▶ Be a member in good standing of the National Association of REALTORS®.
- ▶ Complete the Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA course and pass the exam (if required in your state for CE).
- ▶ Complete two webinars.
- ▶ Submit an online application and a one-time fee of \$179.

Benefits

- ▶ Education in classroom and online formats
- ▶ Use of the PSA logo and name on your marketing materials to promote your certification
- ▶ Downloadable PSA certificate
- ▶ Differentiation as a PSA at NAR.realtor and realtor.com®
- ▶ Quarterly e-newsletter
- ▶ Facebook private networking group

For more information on PSA Certification Program requirements and benefits, go to www.pricingstrategyadvisor.org.

What You Will Learn

This course will discuss the following topics:

Module 1: Principles of Pricing

- ▶ What Is a CMA?
- ▶ The Purpose of a CMA
- ▶ Who Needs CMAs?
- ▶ Valuation Language and Basic Principles
- ▶ Market Value According to Fannie Mae
- ▶ Pricing and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics

Slides: About This Course

I-Note: Briefly **REVIEW** the main topics in each module.

Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables

- ▶ The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject
- ▶ Characteristics of Comparables
- ▶ Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables
- ▶ Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Principles
- ▶ Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables
- ▶ Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets
- ▶ REALTORS Property Resource® (RPR®)

Module 3: Preparing the CMA

- ▶ Methods of Adjusting Comparables
- ▶ Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables
- ▶ Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments
- ▶ Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments

Module 4: Presenting the CMA

- ▶ What the CMA Report Contains
- ▶ Guiding Clients through the CMA
- ▶ The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing

Module 5: Working with Appraisers

- ▶ The Appraiser's Role and Responsibilities
- ▶ Steps in Working with the Appraiser
- ▶ How to Read an Appraisal Report
- ▶ When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price

Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

- ▶ Listening to the Market
- ▶ Educating Clients
- ▶ The Pricing Pyramid
- ▶ Revisiting Price
- ▶ Legal and Ethical Requirements



Module 1: Principles of Pricing

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to

- ▶ Identify the purpose and benefits of CMAs
- ▶ Define key terms related to pricing
- ▶ Interpret Article 11 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics as it relates to pricing properties

This Module looks at some of the important foundational concepts behind pricing properties, beginning with an overview of comparative market analyses. In addition to defining a CMA, we will define some other basic pricing terminology that will be used throughout the course. Finally, we will consider components of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics that relate directly to pricing properties.

What Is a CMA?

A CMA is an estimate of the probable selling price of a property. The price typically is expressed as a range rather than a single quantity.

A CMA reflects the following information:

- ▶ An inspection of the subject property
- ▶ An analysis of the subject neighborhood
- ▶ An analysis of local and regional market information and trends
- ▶ A description of comparable properties that are similar to the subject property

In this course, we will touch on all these aspects of a CMA, paying particular attention to the critical task of identifying and analyzing comparable properties. A key principle of CMAs is that they are built on comparisons between the property being evaluated and other properties—both those recently sold and those on the market now—that are substantially similar to it. CMAs must be prepared by a licensed real estate broker, agent, or salesperson, or a registered, licensed, or certified appraiser.

Not the Same: CMAs and Appraisals

A CMA reflects a licensed real estate broker's analysis of similar, recently sold properties to derive an indication of the probable sales price of a particular property. It is not an appraisal and should not be referred to as one. Module 5 discusses what appraisers do and how real estate agents work with them.

**Slides: Module 1
Learning Objectives and
Topic Overview**

I-Note: **REVIEW** Module learning objectives and topics.

Slide: What Is a CMA?

Exam Question 21

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** the purpose and content of a CMA.

**Slides: CMAs versus
Appraisals**

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

I-Note: **SUMMARIZE** the types of valuation services used in residential real estate transactions. (next page).

A CMA is one of four main valuation services used in residential real estate transactions, as summarized below. Note that a CMA may be used for a variety of purposes. In this course, we focus on its purpose in buying and selling residential real estate.

Valuation Services Matrix

Valuation	Definition	Who	Use
CMA	An estimate of the probable selling price of a property	Real estate licensees	A CMA helps identify or project a house's listing or selling price. The CMA is not the only factor in determining listing price; rather, it is a guide for the owner to see the active and sold competition and is used to help the seller determine a listing price. The CMA can also be used, depending on state laws, for a variety of other purposes, including loan modifications, short sales and foreclosure/REO purchases, value trend analysis, mediation, and negotiation. It should not solely be used to value collateral in a real estate transaction where a mortgage is being originated.
Appraisal	As defined by the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, the act or process of developing an opinion of value	Licensed or certified appraisers	Generally used to value collateral in a real estate transaction. Appraisals are required for most federally related transactions above \$250,000. Exceptions include transactions where no new money is involved. In practice, appraisals are used for the vast majority of purchase money transactions involving a loan. For the most part, lenders or servicers determine the use of appraisal or other methodology for transactions that are not purchase money.
Automated Valuation Model	Service or software that provides property valuations, often based on mathematical modeling	Lender, servicer, appraisal staff, investor	Often used by lenders or secondary markets to confirm valuations provided in appraisal report, but should not solely be used to value collateral in a real estate transaction where a mortgage is being originated. May be used as a valuation option for other transactions, such as refinances. Also used to verify appraisal reports.
Broker Price Opinion	An estimate of the probable selling price of a property	Real estate licensees	May be used, depending on state laws, for a variety of purposes, including loan modifications, short sales and foreclosure/REO purchases, value trend analysis, mediation, and negotiation; should not solely be used to value collateral in a real estate transaction where a mortgage is being originated.*

Source: <https://www.nar.realtor/appraisal-valuation/valuation-services-matrix>

* Where permitted by states, BPOs and CMAs are technically permitted for purchase money transactions when the home is less than \$250,000. However, CMAs are not typically used for this purpose. In June 1994, the federal regulators published a final rule that increases to \$250,000 the threshold below which national banks are not required to obtain appraisals prepared by licensed or certified appraisers for real estate loans.

Slide: Valuation Services Matrix

Slide: The Purpose of a CMA

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** the purpose of a CMA,

Exam Question 1

The Purpose of a CMA

The purpose of a CMA is to establish an accurate range of value for a property that a seller wishes to sell or a buyer wishes to buy. An accurate range is one that reflects market conditions at the time and place of the desired transaction.

After an accurate property value range has been determined, the CMA is used to help sellers identify an asking price and buyers identify an offer price. In other words, a CMA provides an objective, market-driven starting point for pricing properties.

Who Needs CMAs?

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** the uses and advantages of CMAs for sellers, buyers, and agents.

Sellers, buyers, and real estate professionals all need and use CMAs. Let's take a closer look at each group's motivations for using CMAs and the benefits they derive from them.

Sellers

Slide: Advantages for Sellers

Exam Question 2

Every agent has a story (probably many stories!) of sellers who overestimated the value of their home. Many factors can contribute to this misperception of value. Sellers might hear exaggerated sales amounts for neighboring homes through local gossip. They might apply broad market trends and simplistic assumptions to come up with an unreasonably high value. They might believe they can recoup the cost of every home improvement they have made over the years. Perhaps above all, they attach a high value to their home based on their emotions and pride of ownership.

A CMA provides the data and reasoning to help sellers see not only the value of their home, but also why that value is accurate. Sellers who understand the objective logic for valuing their home are more likely to list their home at an accurate price for its market. As a result, they are also more likely to sell their home quickly and efficiently. Owners who are able to sell promptly avoid much of the stress and disruption of repeated showings of their homes. If they are under pressure to move—for example, for a job or to downsize to a more affordable home—an efficient sale saves them further anxiety.

Sometimes sellers undervalue their property, such as when an estate is interested in selling a home quickly to distribute the proceeds. A CMA helps protect sellers against undervaluing as well as overvaluing a home.

Buyers

Buyers are often at a great disadvantage in knowing the market value of a home they want to purchase. First-time homebuyers might be especially naïve about the many variables that affect the market. If they are moving to a different location—even if just to a bordering town—they could be unaware of local trends that differ significantly from those of their current neighborhood.

A CMA allows buyers to make offers based on objective data relevant to the specific market. Buyers are less likely to make a lowball offer in a competitive market, potentially losing the home to another buyer. They are less likely to make a too-high offer that eventually is scuttled because a lender won't offer a mortgage at that price. And they are less likely to overpay for a home, thus freeing up their financial resources for other important life expenses.

Agents

To serve the best interests of their buyer and seller clients, real estate agents need CMAs.

A well-researched CMA is a listing agent's greatest tool in pricing a home appropriately. A listing that is properly priced is more likely to sell quickly and efficiently. A listing that is overpriced will not be competitive in its market and will more likely languish without offers. Overpriced, unsold listings are efficiency- and income-killers for agents. And they don't generate warm feelings or recommendations from clients.

Complaints about incorrect pricing are among the top legal claims made against real estate professionals. When buyers feel they have overpaid or sellers feel they have undersold in property transactions, they are apt to feel resentful, angry, and cheated, and are likely to blame the professionals who guided them, including their real estate agent.

Are you acting as a disclosed dual agent in a transaction? Requirements are state-specific, but if you prepare a CMA for the seller while acting as a disclosed dual agent, you should also do so for the buyer. Not doing so puts the buyer at a disadvantage.

Slide: Advantages for Buyers

Slide: Advantages for Agents

Exam Question 28

I-Note: **CAUTION**
students who represent both the buyer and seller to provide a CMA to both.

Exam Question 3

Advantages of CMAs for...

Sellers

- ▶ Sellers receive a fact-based, objective assessment of their home's value.
- ▶ Sellers don't experience the stress and disruption that can occur when homes languish on the market.
- ▶ Sellers are protected from undervaluing their home.
- ▶ Sellers avoid the delay that occurs when they accept a high offer and the property does not appraise for the offer price.

Buyers

- ▶ Buyers receive fact-based, objective information about homes, which is especially important when they are not familiar with the local market.
- ▶ Buyers are less likely to lose the home they really want because their offer is too low.
- ▶ Buyers are less likely to encounter problems obtaining a mortgage because the house appraises below the offer price.
- ▶ Buyers are less likely to overpay for a home, thus preserving financial resources for other important home and life expenses.

Agents

- ▶ Listings don't languish, sapping agents' time, energy, and income.
- ▶ Clients are less likely to feel resentful about—and blame the agent for—the price they paid or received.
- ▶ Clients are more likely to be satisfied and recommend the agent's services to others.

Valuation Language and Basic Principles

Before exploring the process of researching, preparing, and presenting CMAs, it is important to understand some basic terms and concepts of valuation.

▶ **Subject**

The property being evaluated.

▶ **Comparable**

A recently sold property in the subject's market that is substantially similar to the subject. Comparables are used as a basis for determining the value of the subject. *Comp* is often used as an abbreviated version of *comparable*.

▶ **Competition**

A currently listed property that can compete for the buyers of a given subject.

▶ **Adjustment**

The amount added to or subtracted from the sales price of a comparable property to arrive at an indicated value for the subject property. Not all comparables require adjustments. Module 3 has more details about when adjustments are needed and how to make them.

▶ **Neighborhood**

A loosely defined geographical location within a city, town, or suburb. A neighborhood often consists of social communities with considerable face-to-face interaction among their members. Neighborhoods are important because prices vary considerably in different neighborhoods.

▶ **Cost**

The total amount spent to acquire or build a property or property component. A cost is a historic quantity and does not vary over time.

▶ **Price**

The amount for which a specific property sold at a particular point in time, or at which a property is currently being marketed. Price might or might not reflect market value.

▶ **Market Value**

The most likely price a property should sell for in a competitive and open market, where both buyer and seller act prudently and knowledgeably and neither is under any undue duress to complete the transaction, and where the property has been exposed to the open market for a reasonable time. The market value is also referred to as the fair market value.

Slide: Valuation Principles

I-Note: **DEFINE** each term. **AFFIRM** that students understand the distinction between comparables and competition as well as between cost, price, and market value.

Slide: Cost, Price, Value

▶ **Market Price**

What a property actually sells for. This value is set by the buyers and sellers and is not always the same as market value.

Note that the terms *cost*, *price*, and *value* are often used interchangeably—and incorrectly so. Consider sellers, who often think that maintenance costs should contribute dollar for dollar to the price of their home; this is an example of confusing *cost* with *value*. For example, if sellers recently installed a new roof that cost them \$15,000, they might expect this improvement to boost the value of the home by \$15,000. But roofs are among the minimum requirements for a house: A buyer expects the home to have one, and not all of the maintenance cost can be recouped in the sale price. All other things being equal, a home with a new roof would have a higher value than a home with an older roof—but that higher value probably will not reflect the full cost of the new roof.

▶ **Conformity**

Maximum value is created when the property is in harmony with its surroundings. When the property conforms to existing neighborhood standards and is similar in design, construction, size, and age, its value will be more than if it does not.

▶ **Contribution**

The value of any part of a property is measured by its effect on the value as a whole. One part of this is that value can decrease as the number increases. A three-bedroom home with one bath compared to a three-bedroom with two baths will add significant value for the second. If the same property has three baths, the value of the third would not be as great as the value of the second. The other principle of contribution is apparent in the difference between the value of a swimming pool or indoor basketball court and the value of an updated kitchen or bath. The updated features will add value, whereas the pool or basketball court might not.

▶ **Regression**

The principle that a higher-priced property is worth less if located amid lower-priced properties.

▶ **Progression**

The principle that the value of an inferior property is enhanced if surrounded by properties of greater value.

▶ **Substitution**

The maximum value of a property is set by what it would cost to purchase an equal property. Buyers will not pay more for a property than the cost of acquiring it elsewhere.

▶ **Sales comparison approach**

One of three valuation techniques used to determine market value. The sales comparison approach is generally the only technique used by real estate agents. Appraisers may use this approach or others, such as the cost approach and income approach. In the sales comparison approach, the subject property is compared to recently sold comparable properties and adjustments are made for the differences between the subject and each comparable.

Slide: Valuation Principles

Market Value According to Fannie Mae

Fannie Mae (the Federal National Mortgage Association) is a congressionally chartered, shareholder-owned company that is the nation's largest supplier of home mortgage funds. Fannie Mae's definition of *market value* is a bit more formal than the definition provided previously, and worth considering:

Slide: Fannie Mae Market Value

Market value is the most probable price that a property should bring in a competitive and open market under all conditions requisite to a fair sale, the buyer and seller, each acting prudently, knowledgeably and assuming the price is not affected by undue stimulus. Implicit in this definition is the consummation of a sale as of a specified date and the passing of title from seller to buyer under conditions whereby:

- ▶ buyer and seller are typically motivated;
- ▶ both parties are well informed or well advised, and each acting in what he or she considers his/her own best interest;
- ▶ a reasonable time is allowed for exposure in the open market;
- ▶ payment is made in terms of cash in U.S. dollars or in terms of financial arrangements comparable thereto; and
- ▶ the price represents the normal consideration for the property sold unaffected by special or creative financing or sales concessions granted by anyone associated with the sale

We will see the significance of some aspects of Fannie Mae's definition later in the course as we consider specific pricing situations.

Slide: Code of Ethics:
Article 11

Exam Question 5

I-Note: **REMIND** students that NAR's Code of Ethics has as its primary purpose to conscientiously protect and promote the interests of the public that real estate professionals serve. This commitment to ethical conduct also provides the public with the assurance that when dealing with us, their interests rightfully come first.

Slides: Standards of
Practice 11-1

I-Note: **USE** your discretion in discussing those parts of Article 11 that are most pertinent to CMAs.

Pricing and the REALTOR[®] Code of Ethics

For a description of their roles and responsibilities, real estate professionals can find no better resource than the Code of Ethics developed by NAR. Article 11 focuses on the real estate agent's role and responsibilities in listing properties, advertising, representing a seller or buyer, and concluding transactions. Article 11 also outlines a real estate professional's responsibilities when preparing an opinion of property value or price.

What the Code Says

ARTICLE 11 READS:

The services which REALTORS[®] provide to their clients and customers shall conform to the standards of practice and competence which are reasonably expected in the specific real estate disciplines in which they engage; specifically, residential real estate brokerage, real property management, commercial and industrial real estate brokerage, land brokerage, real estate appraisal, real estate counseling, real estate syndication, real estate auction, and international real estate.

REALTORS[®] shall not undertake to provide specialized professional services concerning a type of property or service that is outside their field of competence unless they engage the assistance of one who is competent on such types of property or service, or unless the facts are fully disclosed to the client. Any persons engaged to provide such assistance shall be so identified to the client and their contribution to the assignment should be set forth. (Amended 1/10)

STANDARD OF PRACTICE 11-1 READS:

When REALTORS[®] prepare opinions of real property value or price they must:

- 1. be knowledgeable about the type of property being valued,*
- 2. have access to the information and resources necessary to formulate an accurate opinion, and*
- 3. be familiar with the area where the subject property is located unless lack of any of these is disclosed to the party requesting the opinion in advance.*

When an opinion of value or price is prepared other than in pursuit of a listing or to assist a potential purchaser in formulating a purchase offer, the opinion shall include the following unless the party requesting the opinion requires a specific type of report or different data set:

- 1. identification of the subject property*
- 2. date prepared*

3. *defined value or price*
4. *limiting conditions, including statements of purpose(s) and intended user(s)*
5. *any present or contemplated interest, including the possibility of representing the seller/landlord or buyers/tenants*
6. *basis for the opinion, including applicable market data*
7. *if the opinion is not an appraisal, a statement to that effect*
8. *disclosure of whether and when a physical inspection of the property's exterior was conducted*
9. *disclosure of whether and when a physical inspection of the property's interior was conducted*
10. *disclosure of whether the REALTOR® has any conflicts of interest (Amended 1/14)*

STANDARD OF PRACTICE 11-2 READS:

The obligations of the Code of Ethics in respect of real estate disciplines other than appraisal shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the standards of competence and practice which clients and the public reasonably require to protect their rights and interests considering the complexity of the transaction, the availability of expert assistance, and, where the REALTOR® is an agent or subagent, the obligations of a fiduciary. (Adopted 1/95)

Value or Price?

Article 11 and its Standards of Practice use the terms *value* and *price* to mean the same thing. But you should be aware that among real estate professionals and in different states, these terms are sometimes used to refer to different practitioners and tasks. The terms *value* and *valuation* sometimes are reserved to pertain to appraisals and the work of appraisers, whereas *pricing* pertains to CMAs, listing prices, and the work of real estate brokers and agents. In some states, agents are able to value (they are allowed to perform BPOs), and in some states, they can do an appraisal.

For the rest of this course, we generally will use the terms *price* and *pricing* to refer to the work of real estate agents preparing value opinions for their clients.

The Importance of Competency

The article and standards make clear that REALTORS® must be competent in preparing opinions of price. Competency is gained through experience and affiliation with another REALTOR® who has experience and knowledge. No one comes into the business competent. We all find ourselves involved in “new waters” doing things in real estate we have not done before. However, agents must recognize when the level of competence required is beyond their abilities, and act accordingly. Again, these requirements are incumbent on realtor-appraisers as well as realtor-brokers.

SPECIFICALLY, ACCORDING TO STANDARD OF PRACTICE 11-1, REALTORS® MUST:

► **“...be knowledgeable about the type of property being valued.”**

Many agents have experience in pricing residential property, but not complex commercial or special-purpose property. For example, consider an agent whose business is entirely focused on high-rise condominium units. This agent will be at a distinct disadvantage in attempting to form a price opinion on a single-family home. Agents should ask themselves, “Do I understand this segment of the market and how it behaves?”

► **“...have access to the information and resources necessary to formulate an accurate opinion.”**

The agent must be able to consult relevant resources in forming an opinion about property price, such as the MLS and public records. Agents should ask themselves, “What types of data and information are required to price this property, and do I have access to that data and information?”

► **“...be familiar with the area where the subject property is located.”**

This requirement speaks to the need for geographic competence, the agent’s knowledge of the marketplace in which the property is located. Each geographic market has its own quirks and nuances, and agents can easily find themselves out of their area of competence. Agents should ask themselves, “Do I have geographic competency in this area?”

If a REALTOR® lacks any of the preceding aspects of competence, he or she must disclose this in advance to the buyer or seller who is requesting the price opinion. The buyer or seller can then make an informed decision about whether to have the REALTOR® proceed with the opinion.

Note that Article 11 states that REALTORS® can “engage the assistance of one who is competent” when they undertake to provide services outside their own field of competence. In a situation like this, the REALTOR® must also identify the person(s) so engaged and their specific contribution to the client.

Consider, for example, an agent who is asked to list and price a commercial property, but his focus has always been residential. The sellers know the agent personally and want him to represent them. Fortunately for our agent, he works in a large company with a commercial division. He will seek the assistance of a commercial practitioner—and expect to pay for that assistance, either in a split commission or a referral fee.

Finally, note that Standard of Practice 11-1 lists the specific information that must be included in a pricing opinion when “an opinion of value or price is prepared other than in pursuit of a listing or to assist a potential purchaser in formulating a purchase offer.” This course focuses on pricing properties within the context of listing a property or preparing a purchase offer, but property owners ask for price opinions for many other reasons as well. For example:

- ▶ The sellers are getting a divorce, and it is amicable (so far). One party wants to buy the other one out, so they need a price for the house.
- ▶ The property is an estate, and the family might keep it—they want a price.
- ▶ A consumer is questioning the assessed value on his home, used to calculate property taxes. In his location, assessed value is supposed to be the market value of the property, so he wants a price.

The Code is very specific about what information must be included in your report for cases like these. And the competency requirements are just as relevant in these situations as any other.

Appraisers also must meet competency requirements, as outlined by USPAP. Many appraisers are also REALTORS® and have access to the MLS. These REALTOR®/appraisers must abide by both USPAP *and* the NAR Code of Ethics.

USPAP contains the generally accepted standards for professional appraisal practice. According to USPAP, the appraiser’s competency applies to his or her familiarity with a specific type of property, a market, a geographical area, and an analytical method.

Before accepting or entering into an agreement to perform an appraisal assignment, the appraiser must identify the problem to be addressed and have the knowledge and experience needed to complete the assignment competently. If the appraiser does not have the required knowledge and experience, he or she must:

- ▶ Disclose this fact to the client before accepting the appraisal assignment,
- ▶ Take appropriate steps to complete the assignment competently, and
- ▶ Describe in the appraisal report his or her lack of knowledge or experience and the steps taken to complete the assignment competently.

Complete USPAP rules and guidelines can be found at www.uspap.org.

Exam Question 11

**Slides: REALTOR
Appraisers**

Slide: Exercise 1.1

Exercise 1.1:
Is Agent Alex Competent to Develop This Price Opinion?

Alex is a residential agent in a fairly large city. He concentrates on the north side of this city because he lives there and his office is there. He prospects in several residential subdivisions on the north side of town. For each of the following scenarios, explain why Alex is or is not competent to develop the price opinion. If he is not competent, describe what assistance—if any—he might enlist to undertake a price opinion for the scenario.

Scenario #1

Alex is asked to price a property in one of the residential subdivisions where he is very active and regularly prospects for new business.

Scenario #2

Alex has a good friend on the south side of the city who asks for his help in pricing his home to sell. Alex is not familiar with the south side, but his MLS encompasses it. His large company has a branch office on the south side, and he knows many of the agents in that office.

Scenario #3

Alex has a good friend who owns a recreational property three hours away, on a lake. The friend wants to know a price at which to sell it. Alex has been to the cabin one time on a fishing trip. At a state convention, Alex talked to a REALTOR® who specializes in recreational property in that part of the state. This REALTOR® told him, "It's a very unusual market. Each lake community has its own set of values and prices. Which side of the lake you are on makes a difference, as well as how deep the water is near your cabin."



Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Recognize appropriate criteria, resources, and guidance in choosing comparables
- ▶ Identify causes of imperfect information and its consequences with respect to pricing properties
- ▶ Use appropriate comparables in a CMA

A critical component of preparing a CMA is selecting appropriate comparables. This Module looks at characteristics and criteria you will use to match comparables as closely as possible with the subject property. We will consider Fannie Mae guidance on selecting comparables in particular. Module 2 also covers both roadblocks to and tools for identifying comparables.

The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject

The general parameters for choosing comparables are determined by the subject home. The subject's number of bedrooms and bathrooms, the size of its living space and lot, the neighborhood and school district(s) in which it is located, its age and condition—all these characteristics form the parameters for choosing comparables.

Of course, a comparable is never perfectly similar to the subject. But a central goal in preparing a CMA is identifying comparables that are as similar as possible—physically, functionally, and geographically—to the subject. The more similar the comparable, the fewer adjustments you will need to make and the more accurately you can determine the value of the subject and price it correctly.

Characteristics of Comparables

Agents preparing CMAs must consider a variety of characteristics in identifying potential comparables, including:

- ▶ Location
- ▶ Date of sale of the property
- ▶ Size
- ▶ Floor plan or style
- ▶ Amenities (e.g., pool, security system, fenced yard)
- ▶ Age

2 Slides: Module 2 Learning Objectives and Topic Outline

I-Note: **REVIEW** Module learning objectives and topics.

Exam Question 4

Slide: Optimal Similarity to Subject

I-Note: **STATE** the optimal goal for comparables. **DESCRIBE** characteristics of comparables. **EMPHASIZE** that date of sale, location, and size are the three most important characteristics to match to subject when choosing comparables.

Slide: Characteristics of Comparables

- ▶ Number of bedrooms and baths
- ▶ Garage size
- ▶ Improvements (e.g., additions, new roof, new appliances, cosmetics)
- ▶ Potential negatives (e.g., busy street, near business/industrial district)

Of these, location, date of sale, and size are the most important.

Exam Question 3

Agents also must aim for an adequate number of comparables to consider in forming their price opinion. Let's look at several of these characteristics in more detail.

Location

Slide: Location

Comparables should be as geographically similar to the subject as possible. This might seem obvious, but in practice location similarity can vary widely:

- ▶ In a densely populated urban area, location similarity might mean that all the comparables for a high-rise condominium unit should come from the same building.
- ▶ In a suburban neighborhood, location similarity might mean that comparables should be in the same development as the subject, if possible, or at least within a mile of it.
- ▶ In an expansive, sparsely populated rural community, location similarity might mean that comparables can occur anywhere within a township border—or even beyond.

Other features of location (e.g., proximity to a particular school district, public transportation, or an industrial area) can qualify or disqualify a property as being similar to the subject.

Following are guidelines to follow when selecting comparables with respect to the location of the subject property:

SUBURBAN/SMALL TOWN

- ▶ Same subdivision
- ▶ Same neighborhood
- ▶ Same school district, if schools are a driving force in the market
- ▶ One-mile radius
- ▶ Same complex for multifamily homes

CITY/URBAN

- ▶ Condominium: same building
- ▶ Single-family home:
 - ▲ One-half mile radius
 - ▲ Same neighborhood

RURAL

- ▶ Five-mile radius
- ▶ Same high school, if necessary

Agents sometimes expand the location in which they are searching for comparables when they have difficulty finding properties that match the subject in terms of other criteria.

Date of Sale

A comparable should reflect a recent date of sale relative to the time of the subject CMA. A general guideline is that a comparable's date of sale should fall within 90 days of CMA research. Markets can change rapidly, and an interval of longer than 90 days might mean you are no longer comparing "apples to apples."

Here are guidelines to follow when selecting comparables with respect to the date of sale, depending on the market.

STABLE MARKET

- ▶ No more than a 3 percent change in price in the last six months
- ▶ Comparables no more than six months old

CHANGING MARKET

- ▶ More than a 3 percent appreciation or depreciation in the last six months
- ▶ Comparables no more than three months old

The 90-day guideline mentioned earlier is sometimes shifted to a longer interval for a variety of reasons. For example, in slow markets, finding an adequate number of similar properties that have sold within 90 days can be difficult. When agents are unable to identify comparables that are sufficiently similar in terms of function, size, amenities, or location, they might expand the date of sale interval to include more candidates for comparables. At the outside, agents usually try to choose comparables with sales dates within six months of the subject CMA.

Exam Question 12

Slide: Date of Sale

Slide: Adjusting for Time

If a comparable is more than six months old, an adjustment for time will probably need to be made. Depending on the market, the price of homes nine months or a year ago may be very different from the price today. This adjustment can be made by looking at the median sales price of properties at the time the comparable sold and the median price today. The percentage difference will be the adjustment. Adjustments will be covered in more detail in Module 3.

Size

Slide: Size

Comparables should be the same size, or close to the same size, as the subject, in terms of both living area and lot size.

Micro Markets

Slide: Micro Markets

Some housing markets are so specific that they are referred to as micro markets. For example, in Sullivan County, Pennsylvania (population 6,000 in 2017), there is a remote, upscale, second-home town called Eagles Mere that is a micro market. Micro markets exist in every marketplace—you can probably think of a similar example in or near the area where you work.

In the case of a micro market, expanding the area in which to look for comparables won't work; the micro market is too specific and narrowly defined. Instead, it is necessary to use comps from the same town, no matter how old they are, and adjust them for time.

Amenities

Slide: Amenities

Comparables should reflect the amenities or features of the subject as closely as possible. This is a broad category for comparing properties—everything from lofts to finished basements, soaker tubs to swimming pools, fireplaces to patios, and security systems to solar panels. Finding a comparable that exactly matches the subject in terms of amenities is unlikely—again, the goal is to identify comparables that are as similar as possible.

Some amenities are sensitive to changing demands and tastes, and their value to typical buyers varies from market to market. When you consider the importance of an amenity in pricing a property, you must think about whether it is “hot or not.”

Improvements

Slide: Improvements

Comparables' improvements should match the subject's as closely as possible. Improvements can range from required maintenance to style updates to additions. If the subject has a brand-new kitchen and the only comparables you can find have 20-year-old kitchens, you will need to adjust the comparables.

2. Choosing Appropriate Comparables

An improvement might be an over-improvement, depending on the market where it is located and the probable buyer. For example, expanding a one-car garage to a three-car garage could be an improvement in a suburban neighborhood populated by families with growing children. Or it could be an over-improvement in an urban center that is well-served by public transportation and populated by young singles or couples who prefer not to own automobiles.

Exercise 2.1:

Amenities and Improvements in Your Market

- 1. For your market, what are three amenities or improvements that are trending upward in popularity?**

- 2. For your market, what are three amenities or improvements that were once popular but are now in decline?**

Slide: Exercise 2.1

I-Note: Answers will vary by market, but possibilities include: outdoor kitchens, great room, open floor plan, two master bedrooms, and oversized shower stalls in the master bath.

Answers will vary by market, but possibilities include: soaker tubs, two-story foyers, and formal living and dining rooms.

Slide: Number of Comparables

Slide: Number of Comparables

Number of Comparables

How many comparables should you identify for your CMA research? The answer is a range: from at least three to as many as you can find that are appropriate to the subject.

Unsold listings that are similar to the subject—that is, competing properties—are often included in CMA reports, and many lenders ask for them in appraisals. In a market with a large supply of competing properties, the agent should include a section in the CMA report that includes the competition, to impress upon the seller what he or she is up against. Recently sold comparables provide definitive data, and recently listed competition helps the seller recognize and respect the homes contending for the same buyers.

In some markets, the number of appropriate comparables can be quite high and therefore daunting to analyze. Later in this Module, we will look at tools, such as the REALTORS® Property Resource, that can help with this task.

In some markets, it can be difficult to find enough (or any) comparables. An example of an extreme case is a unique home like a geodesic dome or pyramid. But there are more mundane instances as well, such as in volatile markets—rapidly gentrifying or declining, for example. Situations like this might require expanding the criteria for what constitutes a comparable. It might be necessary to look at similar properties that are quite geographically distant from the subject or that sold years earlier, rather than days or months earlier. Then, appropriate adjustments must be made to the comparables.

Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** principles for choosing comparables.

So far, we have seen that a critical goal in choosing comparables is to identify those that are as similar as possible to the subject. We will now consider several fundamental principles that also factor into this task.

Highest and Best Use

Slide: Highest and Best Use

The concept of highest and best use is fundamental in pricing properties. The highest and best use is the reasonable and probable use of a property that will support the highest present value of the land. A mnemonic to remember the conditions for highest and best use is PLEM.

- ▶ Physically possible
- ▶ Legally permissible
- ▶ Economically feasible
- ▶ Maximally productive

2. Choosing Appropriate Comparables

The highest and best use of the subject might not be the current use. Sometimes the highest and best use of a residential property is to remove the structure and redevelop the land. For example:

- ▶ A small, older, poorly maintained home in a neighborhood that has experienced a significant number of teardowns and construction of newer “McMansion” homes: The highest and best use for the subject could well be to raze the structure and build a new, larger home on the land.
- ▶ A single-family residential property on a multiple-acre lot in an area of increasing population density: The highest and best use of the subject could be to remove the single-family home and develop apartment or condominium buildings on the land instead, zoning permitting.

Knowing the most current zoning information for the property is critical in determining its highest and best use. Zoning ordinances can change, and what was once residential-only might now be commercial also. An agent who does not have the correct zoning information can make a big mistake in estimating the worth of a property.

Determining that the current use of a residential property is not highest and best—and what it should be instead—can be a challenging task. An agent who is out of his or her competence zone should seek expert advice from a competent local appraiser in making this determination.

Arm’s-Length Transactions

An arm’s-length transaction is one in which both buyer and seller act willingly and under no pressure, with knowledge of the present conditions and future potential of the property, and in which the property has been offered on the open market for a reasonable length of time and there are no unusual circumstances. An example of a transaction that violates the arm’s-length criteria would be an estate sale in which the sellers sold the home at a price well below market value to close and disperse the proceeds quickly.

Some non–arm’s-length transactions can be used—with appropriate adjustment—as comparables. Others should not be used under any circumstances. Examples of the latter include one spouse buying out the other in a divorce or one heir buying out other heirs to an estate. In these cases, not only are the parties related, but they already have an ownership interest in the property.

Distressed sales are considered to be non–arm’s-length. The term *distressed sales* refers to foreclosures and short sales, selling at discounts of 15 to 20 percent from non-distressed market prices. This can exert a major negative impact on overall market prices. If distressed sales are an anomaly in the

Exam Question 4

Exam Question 7

Slide: Arm’s-Length Transactions

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** the concept of an arm’s-length transaction.

Exam Question 9

Slide: Distressed Properties

market, they should be avoided as comparables unless no other comps are available. However, when an area is overrun with these kinds of listings, investors often move in and *create* the market, successfully making low offers and driving down prices. If listings of distressed properties characterize the market, they can (and should) be used as comparables.

Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Comparables

Exam Question 10

I-Note: **PRESENT** Fannie Mae guidance.

Slide: Fannie Mae Guidance

Fannie Mae's *Selling Guide* includes a section titled "Selection of Comparable Sales." Although this guidance is addressed to appraisers, real estate agents preparing CMAs are wise to apply this guidance also. Many lenders and underwriters follow Fannie Mae's guidance, so following it in your CMA increases the likelihood that your pricing recommendation will mesh seamlessly with the eventual formal appraisal of the subject—a happy conclusion for all involved in the transaction. You can think of Fannie Mae's guidance as best practices that should inform your approach to choosing comparables.

You can access Fannie Mae's guidance on choosing comparables at <https://www.fanniemae.com/content/guide/selling/b4/1.3/08.html>.

Several components of Fannie Mae's guidance should sound familiar to you based on the previous discussion of choosing comparables in this Module. For example:

- ▶ Comparables do not need to be identical to the subject but should be as similar as possible (similar physical and legal characteristics).
- ▶ Comparables should appeal to the same probable buyers (market participants) as the subject.
- ▶ If a chosen comparable is significantly different from the subject, it is necessary to adjust its price to reflect the differences (consider these factors in the market value).
- ▶ Comparables should come from within the same neighborhood as the subject whenever possible. But this guideline is flexible if the best comparables available are in competing neighborhoods.

If true comparables cannot be found for the subject, it might be necessary to use very different properties as comparables.

Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables

Selecting comparables can pose challenges for a variety of reasons. The common thread among these reasons is that information about comparable properties is imperfect or missing from the usual sources that agents consult.

- ▶ **Wrong or misleading information in databases**
For example, some aggregation sites are not always up to date, showing properties as listed for sale that have already closed. They also might lack pertinent details about a transaction, such as whether the seller contributed to the financing.
- ▶ **No photos**
A recent trend among listing agents is pulling photos from the MLS after properties have sold, in response to buyers' concerns about privacy. Although it is not required, many agents comply with this request. But photos are an important tool in selecting comparables; agents who don't have access to them are at a disadvantage when preparing CMAs. Contacting the listing agent to see if he or she can provide the photos is one way around this dilemma. If this is a trend in your area, consider downloading and saving photos when the listings are still active, so you have them.
- ▶ **Changing markets**
When markets are volatile—for example, when a neighborhood is in a state of rapid gentrification or decline—it can be difficult to identify comparables. In such a market, the guideline of choosing comparables that were listed or sold within 90 days of your CMA research might result in candidates that are no longer truly comparable with the subject. To evaluate comparables, agents must be able to gauge when and how markets are shifting.
- ▶ **Too much personal property in contract**
Some residential real estate transactions include tangible property that is not classified as real estate—items such as furnishings, artwork, antiques, machinery, and equipment. For example, consider sellers of a lakefront property who own a speedboat they will no longer have use for in their new home. They include it in the property sale, which skews the price up by \$10,000. If this property is used as a comparable, the sales price should be adjusted down by \$10,000. But an agent who sees only the sale price in the MLS might fail to do so.
- ▶ **Not every sale is a market-driven transaction**
As noted earlier, not every sale or listing represents an arm's-length transaction. And the fact that a transaction is not arm's-length generally is not obvious from marketing sources such as the MLS. Often it is necessary to dig into public records to make this determination. One

Slide: Roadblocks

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** roadblocks to choosing comparables

I-Note: **COMPARE** stable and changing markets. **PROVIDE** rules of thumb for percentage of change and age of comps.

clue might be that the seller is the financial institution that holds the mortgage on the property. This might indicate a foreclosure with a sales price that is not representative of the market.

Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets

Slide: Analyze the Market

In preparing a CMA, agents can turn to a number of resources—some more useful than others—to identify comparables and analyze the market.

MLS

Slide: MLS

The primary purpose of the MLS is to provide a facility for making an offer of cooperation and publishing a unilateral offer of cooperation and compensation by a listing broker to other broker participants in that MLS. In other words, the compensation offered to a cooperating broker by the listing broker is published within the MLS to other cooperating brokers.

I-Note: **INFORM** students that MLS services are all computerized, allowing members to perform number crunching of all kinds. **NOTE** that this is very useful in pricing property and determining trends in the market. This is the main reason people use MLS for pricing property.

Although the chief use of MLS services is assisting in the sale of a property, most computerized MLS services allow members to number-crunch multiple possibilities—that is, to perform statistical analyses of properties and their features. This is helpful in pricing property and determining trends in the market.

An agent working in a market where many sales are not in the MLS faces a significant task. For example, many new construction sites are not listed with brokers because the builder is selling the facilities. If this is the case, the agent will need to access public records for information.

Public Records

Slide: Public Records

According to Merriam-Webster's *Dictionary of Law*, a *public record* is any document or record required to be made or kept by law, such as a record made by a public officer or a government agency in the course of the performance of a duty. Public records are subject to inspection, examination, and copying by any member of the public.

I-Note: **SUMMARIZE** disclosure/non-disclosure details for the state in which students are located or working.

The most often-used public records for identifying comparables are county assessors' tax data, property records (e.g., deeds, mortgages, liens, leases), and land surveyor charts.

Public records are often maintained in physical files. Many public records are available via the Internet or other sources. Even though they are public, their accessibility is not always simple, free, or easy.

2. Choosing Appropriate Comparables

Access to public records might also vary by state. Public records in non-disclosure states contain information that a sales transaction has taken place, but the sale price is not disclosed. In non-disclosure states, the information on non-brokered, non-MLS sales is limited.

REALTORS Property Resource (RPR®)

The RPR® is a national repository of information on millions of properties in the United States, accessible only by members of NAR and participating MLS/CIEs.



The RPR® provides a detailed view of each property, including public record and assessment information, details of prior transactions and sales history (where available), zoning, permits, mortgage and lien data, neighborhood demographics, and schools. The repository merges information from the MLS and CIE (Commercial Information Exchange) with publicly available data and psychographic and lifestyle information.

Because this information is all in one place, RPR® can enhance an agent's productivity. Search features yield nationwide property results, as well as local market-to-market comparisons. Trends, unique maps, and reliable reports are also available. Agents can use RPR®'s advanced reporting tools to enhance their sales and listing presentations.

The following RPR® tools can be used to identify comparables and prepare CMAs: property search, school search, subject property data adjustments, recent sales and comparative listings, neighborhood facts, and red flags where distressed properties are involved. RPR® contains built-in tools for constructing and adjusting lists of comparables, plus there is a valuation workbook designed for appraisers that agents can use as a comprehensive CMA.

I-Note: **ASK** students to share an experience when they had difficulty locating sales information and how they solved the problem.

4 Slides: RPR

Exam Question 13

I-Note: If you have an internet connection along with access to RPR® through your MLS, you can show students the features directly from RPR® that are shown on the slides. For more background and training materials, visit the RPR® blog at www.blog.narrp.com.

Realtors Property Resource® Valuation Workbook Contents

- ✓ Cover with agent contact information and branding
- ✓ Subject Property: Home Facts
- ✓ Subject Property: Extended Home Facts
- ✓ Subject Property: Property History
- ✓ Subject Property: Sales and Financing Activity History
- ✓ Neighborhood Aerial Map
- ✓ Flood Zone Map with Subject Property Ranking
- ✓ Sales and Comparables Analysis Summary
- ✓ Historical Range of Comparable Homes
- ✓ Comparables and Adjustments Map
- ✓ Comparables Selected in Analysis
- ✓ Comparables Property Facts and Photos (each comp)
- ✓ Local Market Conditions Summary
- ✓ Local Market Conditions: Sales of Similar Property (with and without distressed properties)
- ✓ Local Market Conditions: Sales of Single-Family Homes
- ✓ Total Sales and Listings
- ✓ List price vs. Sales Price
- ✓ Median Days on Market
- ✓ Sales Price vs. RVM
- ✓ Absorption Rate
- ✓ General Market Health Charts
- ✓ Median Sales Price vs. Sales Volume
- ✓ Median Listing Price vs. Listing Volume
- ✓ Listing Inventory
- ✓ Price per Bedroom of Homes Sold
- ✓ Median Sales Price by Square Footage
- ✓ Price Range of Homes Sold
- ✓ Price per Square Foot of Homes Sold
- ✓ Age Range of Homes Sold
- ✓ Number of Bedrooms in Homes Sold
- ✓ Estimated Home Values Map
- ✓ 12-Month Change in Estimated Value Map
- ✓ Estimated Value per Square Foot Map
- ✓ Market Snapshot: All Detached Homes within 0.8 Miles Map
- ✓ Active Listings Map



Address	5569 N Route 44 Hwy, Jersey Shore, PA 17740	5519 N Route 44 Hwy, Jersey Shore, PA 17740	122 Ramsey Dr, Jersey Shore, PA 17740
MLS Name	West Beach Valley Board Of REALTORS MLS	West Beach Valley Board Of REALTORS MLS	West Beach Valley Board Of REALTORS MLS
MLS Listing ID	168-7291	168-7292	168-7297
Property Type	Single-Family Residence	Single-Family Residence	Single-Family Residence
Total Baths	2.0	1.1	1.0
Living Area (sq ft)	2,800	2,750	1,485
Living Area (sq ft) Range (Incl)	1,800 - 3,800	1,800 - 3,800	1,485 - 1,485
Basement (sq ft)	1,800	364	-
Lot Area	0.7 acres	0.7 acres	0.64 acres
Lot Dimensions	100x300	100x300	300x150
Garage (sq ft)	-	-	-
View	Mountain, Residential	Residential	Mountain
Style	Mountain, Residential	Residential	Mountain
Quality of Construction	-	-	-

Automated Valuation Models

Automated valuation models (AVMs) are online databases that try to match up similar properties to give an idea of the range of sales prices that have historically been recorded. County assessors were some of the first to use such services because of budget and personnel limitations. However, this information is limited to basic factual data, such as the size of the property, number of rooms and bedrooms, age of the property, and area surrounding the property.

Although AVMs provide quick and convenient information, they may miss important value-influencing characteristics. For example, depending on data accessibility, AVMs may be unable to distinguish distinct property characteristics such as the school district in which a property lies, whether there is a nearby river, or if the property is in or near a resort. They also cannot take into account the effect of changing neighborhoods. AVMs provide useful information about the subject and comparable properties, but agents should not rely exclusively on them in preparing CMAs.

Savvy agents should be familiar with what online consumer-oriented AVMs such as Zillow or Trulia have to say about a subject property. Clients often consult these sites, so agents should be prepared to explain to clients how these AVMs work and the margin of error for their data and estimates.

Realtors Valuation Model® (RVM®)

The Realtors Valuation Model® (RVM®) is an AVM produced using MLS listing content licensed by RPR®, along with the assessment, deed, mortgage, and distressed property information in the RPR database.

The RVM® is the only AVM that uses listing content that is 100 percent licensed directly from MLSs around the country by RPR®. As a result, the RVM® provides accurate and timely inventory data and creates as close to a real-time value index as exists in the market. Although not a substitute for an appraisal, the RVM®, provided by the REALTOR® organization, has established a new standard for automated valuations.

If an RVM is displayed on a property in RPR®, the RPR® Property Report will provide an estimated value based on real-time MLS data and assemble a comprehensive profile of the neighborhood and property.

I-Note: **INVITE** comments from the participants on their experiences in using AVMs.

Access to RPR® and RVM®

All REALTORS® have access to RPR® as an exclusive REALTOR® member benefit. But only those REALTORS® who participate in MLSs that share data with RPR® have the benefit of the RVM®. If an MLS does not share data, value estimates are calculated by an automated valuation model using only publicly available information on past sales, not MLS data. Each MLS chooses whether to share data with REALTORS® who are not subscribers. Some MLSs share on-market listings with all REALTORS®, some only with their own subscribers. Find out if your MLS shares data by visiting <http://blog.narrpr.com/rpr-partners>.

Create an account and take the RPR® application for a test drive at www.narrpr.com. To learn how to use the app, visit the RPR® Blog at blog.narrpr.com/training for free video tutorials as well as information about continuing education credit for classroom training and online RPR classes.

Slide: Other Resources

Agency and Company Files

In many agencies, one resource to keep in mind is prior files on same-property transactions. These can prove helpful in getting a perspective on pricing trends, property features, and positive selling points.

Exercise 2.2 Next Page

I-Note: **DIVIDE** the class into work groups. **INSTRUCT** the groups to select up to 4 comps and provide a rationale for selecting each. **RECONVENE** the class. **ASK** the workgroups to report which comps they selected and why. **RECORD** each group's list of comps on a flip chart page for later reference. **INFORM** the groups that their selected comps will be used later in the course to develop a price range for recommendation to the seller.

Exercise 2.2: Selecting Comparables

Review the detailed property descriptions for the subject property and 11 comparables on the pages that follow. Afterwards, select which comps would you choose and explain why.

SUBJECT PROPERTY



Style:	2 Story
Bedrooms:	4
Bathrooms:	2 full – 2 half
Garage:	2
GLA:	2,400
Basement:	Full-Finished
Kitchen:	Stainless Appliances, Granite
Other:	Hardwood Floors
Fireplace:	Yes
Exterior:	Brick, Cedar, Deck, Fence
Year Built:	1985
Taxes:	\$9,843
School:	Washington

Subject Information:

- UPDATED KITCHEN AND BATHS
- MASTER BEDROOM WITH PRIVATE BATH
- FAMILY ROOM WITH FIREPLACE
- 2-STORY FOYER
- ALL MAJOR COMPONENTS IN GOOD CONDITION INCLUDING NEW FURNACE AND GARAGE DOOR
- ALL APPLIANCES REMAIN
- FORMAL DINING ROOM
- NEWLY REFINISHED HARDWOOD FLOORS ON THE ENTIRE UPPER LEVEL
- CUSTOM BUILT-IN BOOK SHELVES

NOTES:

1. All appliances means stove, refrigerator, dishwasher
2. Assume all have air conditioning

Slide: Exercise 2.2

COMP #1



Style:	2-story
BR:	3
Bath:	1 full – 1 half
Garage:	1
GLA:	1,800
Basement:	Full, finished
Kitchen:	Stainless, Granite
Fireplace:	No
School:	Washington
Exterior:	Frame/brick, deck, fenced
Year Built:	1949
Taxes:	\$6,984
Location:	3 blocks
Date Sold:	3 months ago
Sales Price:	\$360,000
Financing:	Conv.

Details:

This side walk community home is move in ready! Tons of updating done to this home including: newer windows, furnace ('11), kitchen ('16), bathroom ('11), freshly painted inside and out ('16), tuck pointing ('15), shed ('15). Enjoy this brand new kitchen with 42 inch cabinets, brand new appliances and countertops. Full bath with floor to ceiling slate tiles surrounding tub. Hardwood floors throughout. Grab your book and enjoy the reading nook off living room on main level. Don't forget about the finished family room space in basement. Extra-large storage space for this home! Fully fenced in yard, shed, garden and larger patio space, all perfect for entertaining.

COMP #2

Style:	2 Story
BR:	4
Bath:	2 Full – 1 half
Garage:	2
GLA:	2,200
Basement:	Full – Partially finished
Kitchen:	Ceramic floor, appliances
Fireplace:	Yes
School:	Adams
Exterior:	Aluminum, brick, patio
Year Built:	1976
Taxes:	\$9,462
Location:	1 mile
Date Sold:	6 months ago
Sales Price:	\$340,000
Financing:	Conv.



Details:

Beautiful curb appeal welcomes you home! Spacious 4 BR, 2-1/2 bath two-story home with a court location. Concrete driveway and front entry lead to open the foyer with newer ceramic tile flooring. Spacious living room and dining room both have neutral carpeting and newer bay windows with window seats. The kitchen has newer ceramic tile flooring, newer stove and refrigerator. The basement has a finished recreation room and a large storage and utility room too. Leaf-guard gutters, central vac, intercom, and mechanical updates.

COMP #3



Style: 2 Story
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,000
Basement: Full unfinished
Kitchen: All appliances, granite
Fireplace: No
School: Washington
Exterior: Vinyl siding, deck, fenced
Year Built: 1985
Taxes: \$8,270
Location: Same block
Date Sold: 1 month ago
Sales Price: \$340,000
Financing: FHA

Details:

LARGE FAMILY ROOM W/ATRIUM DOOR TO DECK; CUSTOM GOURMET KITCHEN W/GRANITE, SS APPLCS, CUSTOM LIGHTING AND GARDEN WINDOW; HUGE MASTER BR W/VAULTED CEILG; BATH HAS DOUBLE-BOWL GRANITE VANITY; FENCED YARD & SHED; SIDING & ROOF -2 YRS; FURNACE, WASHER, DRYER - 4 YRS. EXCLUDE: FR SHELVING UNITS & TV

COMP #4

Style: Ranch
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full
Garage: 2
GLA: 1,800
Basement: Full – Partially finished
Kitchen: All appliances, granite
Fireplace: No
School: Washington
Exterior: Brick
Year Built: 1978
Taxes: \$7,312
Location: ½ mile
Date Sold: 2 months ago
Sales Price: \$370,000
Financing: Conv.



Details:

KITCHEN HAS AN AMPLE EATING AREA AND ACCESS TO OUTSIDE PATIO. FAMILY ROOM HAS A STYLISH BRICK FIREPLACE, GAS LOGS AND STARTER. LARGE SKYLIGHT GIVES THIS ROOM PLENTY OF NATURAL LIGHTING. ALL BEDROOMS HAVE HARDWOOD UNDER CARPETING. MASTER BEDROOM HAS A FULL BATH FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE. LARGE RECREATION ROOM AND STORAGE MAKE THIS HOME THE SMART CHOICE. SIDE LOAD 2 1/2 CAR ATTACHED GARAGE IS ANOTHER PRACTICAL FEATURE. MANY NEWER UPGRADES INCLUDE: FURNACE 2 1/2 YEARS; A/C 2 YEARS AND HUMIDIFIER, 6 MONTHS. MANY NEWER WINDOWS, ALSO.

COMP #5



Style: 2 Story
BR: 4
Bath: 3 full – 1 half
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,450
Basement: Full – Partially finished
Kitchen: All appliances, washer/dryer
Fireplace: Yes
School: Adams
Exterior: Vinyl, brick
Year Built: 1972
Taxes: \$9,614
Location: 1.5 miles
Date Sold: 4 months ago
Sales Price: \$330,000
Financing: FHA

Details:

CHARMING HOME IN A MUCH SOUGHT AFTER NEIGHBORHOOD! AT A VERY ATTRACTIVE PRICE! VERY CLEAN FRESHLY PAINTED INTERIORS AND NEW CARPETS. TOTALLY NEW TEAR OFF ROOF! GENEROUSLY SPACIOUS MASTER B/R VERY LARGE OTHER B/Rs. VACANT AND READY FOR IMMEDIATE POSSESSION UPON CLOSING. MOTIVATED SELLER. BRING ON YOUR OFFERS!

COMP #6

Style: Split level
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,300
Basement: Lower level
Kitchen: All appliances, washer/dryer
Fireplace: Yes
School: Washington
Exterior: Vinyl, brick
Year Built: 1973
Taxes: \$5,150
Location: 2 blocks
Date Sold: 1 month ago
Sales Price: \$340,000
Financing: Conv.



Details:

Hardwood floors, more hardwood under the carpet in bedrooms, bay window, granite counter tops, ceramic tile back splash, solid oak 6 panel doors, updated baths and more... Check out the custom kitchen work and storage area. Family room has Sterno fireplace on one end and wall to wall cabinets and shelving for all your entertainment needs on the other. Large, clean, dry, easy access crawl space. Sun room has sliding doors and high quality blinds on three sides. Lower level opens to back yard area. Split-level living at its best.

COMP #7



Style:	2 Story
BR:	4
Bath:	2 full
Garage:	2
GLA:	1,700
Basement:	Full unfinished, exterior access
Kitchen:	All appliances
Fireplace:	No
School:	Washington
Exterior:	Cedar
Year Built:	1950
Taxes:	\$6,495
Location:	1 mile
Date Sold:	6 months ago
Sales Price:	\$330,000
Financing:	Conv.

Details:

This 2-story with oversize lot (100 x 132) nestled among tall pines trees will surely impress. Home offers 4 bedrooms one that is being used as office located on the first floor with three good size bedrooms upstairs. Recently built (2013) 28 x 22 Garage totally rebuilt from the ground up with extra storage and working area. Enjoy great back yard fun with your huge 30 x16 deck. Other notables, New Driveway (2014) Well tank and pump (2014) most carpet installed (2010).

COMP #8

Style:	2 Story
BR:	3
Bath:	1 full – 1 half
Garage:	1
GLA:	1,500
Basement:	Full – Partially finished
Kitchen:	All appliances
Fireplace:	Yes
School:	Washington
Exterior:	Brick
Year Built:	1946
Taxes:	\$7,487
Location:	1 mile
Date Sold:	1 month ago
Sales Price:	\$325,000
Financing:	Conv.



Details:

ARCHED DOORWAYS, HARDWOOD FLOORS, FORMAL LIVING RM W/COZY FIREPLACE, REMODELED KITCHEN W/36" RAISED PANEL WHITE CABINETS, GRANITE CTRPS, NEWER APPL'S, LIGHT/BRIGHT FAMILY RM W/SLIDERS TO CONC. PATIO-W/VIEWS OF BEAUTIFULLY LANDSCAPED FENCED YARD-IDEAL FOR OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING! REMOD BATHS, FINISHED BASEMENT REC. RM, NEWER WINDOWS, ROOF, EXTERIOR RAILINGS, EXCEL. CLOS/STORAGE.

COMP #9



Style: 2 Story
BR: 4
Bath: 2 full – 1 half
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,300
Basement: Partial – unfinished
Kitchen: Stainless, granite
Fireplace: Yes
School: Adams
Exterior: Aluminum, brick
Year Built: 1977
Taxes: \$7,255
Location: 1 mile
Date Sold: 7 months ago
Sales Price: \$350,000
Financing: Conv.

Details:

Formal living & dining room boast virgin Oak floors under carpet. Huge sun drenched eat-in kitchen with Oak cabinets, bay window & all S.S appliances. Large master suite with his & hers closets, separate dressing area, full bath, & shower with all ceramic tile. Guest bath with ceramic tile floor, tub, & shower. Oak floors in all bedrooms. All major updating done! Roof, windows, furnace, & A/C 2005. Hot water & sump pump 2016.

COMP #10

Style: 2 Story
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full – 1 half
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,150
Basement: Full finished
Kitchen: All appliances
Fireplace: Yes
School: Washington
Exterior: Aluminum, brick, deck
Year Built: 1985
Taxes: \$10,645
Location: 5 blocks
Date Sold: 2 months ago
Sales Price: \$370,000
Financing: Conv.



Details:

All new stainless appliances June 2016*freshly painted June 2016*all new insulated siding, gutters & downspouts 2013*new carpeting*roof, furnace & air 10 years*skylights in 2 bathrooms*1st floor den/playroom/office*large deck off kitchen*cul de sac*very well kept home*The wall between the office and kitchen can be removed to make the kitchen larger.



Module 3: Preparing the CMA

Are you taking this course to...



Earn your PSA certification?
Learn more about CMAs?
Fulfill your ABR® or SRS elective?

**Regardless of why you're here,
being PSA certified will
elevate your career!**



Your Pricing Strategy Advisor certification is only two steps away:

- 1 watch two PSA webinars
- 2 submit your application and pay a one-time certification fee

Make your expertise even more valuable!

Visit PricingStrategyAdvisor.org for more information.



Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to

- ▶ Explain key principles of pricing that impact CMAs
- ▶ Recognize correct guidance, as well as common challenges and errors, in adjusting comparables
- ▶ Adjust comparables, using values developed from appropriate averages and cost data

After you have identified appropriate comparables to use in a CMA, you almost certainly will need to make adjustments to some or all of them to use them in pricing the subject. This Module details how to make adjustments—and will give you appropriate guidance to use while doing so.

Methods of Adjusting Comparables

There are two primary methods of adjusting comparables: cost-based and market-based. When you are adjusting comparables, some property features lend themselves better to the cost-based method and others to the market-based method. Some features can be adjusted either way.

Cost-Based Adjustments

In the cost-based method, the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on the actual cost to construct or add it. Although this is typically not how real estate agents create CMAs, there are times when using the cost-based method is necessary.

You might need to use the cost-based method when a buyer, logically, would make an adjustment the same way. For example, suppose a house goes through foreclosure and the former owners have removed the furnace. Because buyers want a furnace, they will make an adjustment for this in the price of the house, and the agent should also do so when preparing a CMA for this client. In fact, a savvy agent will obtain estimates for a new furnace to have an answer to the inevitable question, “What will it cost me to install a furnace?”

The cost of a property feature can vary significantly from market to market and over time. Many experienced agents have contractors they can call to obtain estimates of construction and repair costs. If you have not yet developed such resources, the following tools might be helpful:

- ▶ NAR Remodeling Impact Report: nar.realtor/reports/remodeling-impact
- ▶ Remodeling Magazine Cost vs. Value Report: www.costvsvalue.com
- ▶ Pillar to Post Cost Guide: <https://pillartopost.com/costguide/>

2 Slides: Module 3 Learning Objectives and Topic Overview

I-Note: **REVIEW** Module learning objectives and topics.

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** methods for adjusting comparables.

Slide: Cost-Based Adjustments

Slide: Market-Based Adjustments

Market-Based Adjustments

In the market-based method, the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on market knowledge or a paired-sales analysis. The differences between the comparable and the subject are isolated, and an adjustment is applied based on the market value of the item being adjusted.

Exam Question 17

There is no definitive list of values that can be applied universally when pricing property. But with market knowledge of a specific area, agents can develop good estimates of value for specific house features. They learn from experience, for example, the value of four bedrooms versus three bedrooms, or 2.5 baths versus 1.5 baths, in a particular market. They can then use these amounts to make adjustments for differences between comparables and the subject. Periodic brainstorming with local appraisers can also help agents determine the value of an adjustment.

Sometimes a house feature is uncommon or unfamiliar, or the market is changing and historical experience is no longer a sufficient guide to value. Sometimes an agent is new to a market and has not yet developed a good experiential understanding of feature values in it. In these circumstances, a paired-sales analysis is needed to develop an adjustment amount. In a paired-sales analysis, a specific feature is compared across multiple comparable transactions to isolate its effect on price.

Exam Question 16

In appraisal textbooks, the term *paired sales* refers to when two properties are identical in every respect except one; the difference in price is then attributed to this feature. The problem is that true paired sales are rare because houses almost always are different in a number of ways. However, with time and experience in your market, you will develop a feel for adjustments.

Slide: Paired-Sales Analysis

Let's look at an example of a paired-sales analysis. Consider four comparables that differ only in the size of the garage:

Slide: Paired-Sales Analysis Example

- ▶ Sale A sold for \$255,000 with a two-car garage
 - ▶ Sale B sold for \$255,500 with a two-car garage
 - ▶ Sale C sold for \$260,000 with a three-car garage
 - ▶ Sale D sold for \$261,000 with a three-car garage
-
- ▲ Matching A with C—value of garage is \$5,000
 - ▲ Matching A with D—value of garage is \$6,000
 - ▲ Matching B with C—value of garage is \$4,500
 - ▲ Matching B with D—value of garage is \$5,500

I-Note: **REFER** to the examples to illustrate the concept of paired sales.

We now have four possible adjustment amounts for the difference between a three-car garage and a two-car garage in a comparative analysis. Which one do we use? Choosing one of the middle numbers (\$5,000 or \$5,500) is a good approach. Alternatively, we could use an average of the four values as the adjustment amount. In this case, the average works out to \$5,250, and we usually don't use numbers that precise to adjust a comp. But the average amount reinforces that either \$5,000 or \$5,500 would be a good choice because it falls right between them.

Slide: The Value of the Garage

The Importance of Market Expectations

When making adjustments, it is critical to keep market expectations in mind. Market expectations are what a probable buyer presumes to find in a house of a particular age, type, location, and price range (the lower the price, the lower the expectations). If a comparable is lacking a feature that the market expects it to have, you must adjust for this deficiency!

Slide: Market Expectations

For example, market expectations are that a home in Florida has central air conditioning. If it doesn't, the market will penalize that property. In this example, the amount of the penalty would probably be the cost to remedy the deficiency. In other words, what would it cost to install central air conditioning? This adjustment can be made using the cost approach.

I-Note: **DISCUSS** the influence of market expectations.

Other differences from market expectations require the market-based approach to making adjustments. For example, a buyer might pay \$1,500 less for a house with only one bathroom, as opposed to two bathrooms. The \$1,500 is not the cost to install a bathroom, but instead represents the buyer's opinion of the value of the second bath. This adjustment amount must be determined through an agent's market experience or a paired-sales analysis.

When you calculate adjustment amounts using the market-based method, make sure you derive the data from a pool of comparables similar to the subject. Adjustments will vary according to price range because market expectations change with a price range. A good example for a garage is that at the lowest price range, a buyer might not expect a garage and might not pay significantly more for a garage. However, at the upper price ranges, not only do buyers expect garages, but in many markets, at specific price points, their expectations for the number of car bays in the garage goes up. For example, in some markets, once we cross the \$500,000 threshold, buyers expect a three- or four-car garage, not just a two-car garage. Make sure you are comparing "apples to apples."

Slides: Making the Adjustment

Making the Adjustment

Regardless of whether you obtain the adjustment amount from the cost-based method or the market-based method, it is applied to the sale price of the relevant comparables. In other words, you adjust what is known (the sale price of a comparable) to estimate what is unknown (the subject's value).

In our previous garage example, let's say we determined that the adjustment amount for a two-car versus three-car garage is \$5,000. This amount is either added to or subtracted from the comparables' sales price to equate to the subject.

- ▶ If the subject property has a three-car garage, the adjustment would be plus \$5,000 to the two comparables with two-car garages. The comparables with three-car garages do not need to be adjusted for this feature.
- ▶ If the subject property has a two-car garage, the adjustment would be minus \$5,000 to the comparables with three-car garages. The comparables with two-car garages do not need to be adjusted for this feature.
- ▶ The same amount is used in each adjustment.

Two acronyms can help you remember this adjustment principle:

SBA = If the **S**ubject is **B**etter, **A**dd to the value of the comp.

CBS = If the **C**omp is **B**etter, **S**ubtract from the value of the comp.

Remember that adjustments for the same feature should be made at the same amount, regardless of the adjustment method you use. For example, if an adjustment for an extra bathroom on one comp is \$2,000, all comps within the same number of bathroom differential should be adjusted the same amount.

Financing Concessions

Any money the seller gives to the buyer in the initial contract as a condition of the sale needs to be adjusted. An interest rate buy down, closing cost credits to the buyer, payment of assessments that show on the comp need to be a deduction from the value of the comparable. If the seller sold their house for \$100,000 and paid \$3,000 in closing costs to the buyer, the \$3,000 would be deducted from the sales price.

Applying the Principles of Substitution and Market Expectation

Some values are easy to identify. For example, it is easy to identify the value of a lakefront lot versus one that does not front the lake by looking at properties that sold on the water versus those that did not and arriving at a value for the lakefront.

When paired sales analyses are not available, agents use their expertise of the market to determine what a typical buyer would be willing to pay for that type of amenity in that market at that time.

Here is where we apply the principle of market expectations to adjusting comparables. Market expectations, as noted earlier, are what a probable buyer presumes to find in a house of a particular age, type, location, and price range. Only those differences between the subject and the comparable that are important to the majority of buyers willing—that is, buyers would be willing to pay more or less for the feature—are adjusted upward or downward.

Substitution

Substitution follows the premise that a prudent buyer will pay no more to acquire one particular property, or any component in a property, than what it would cost him or her to either buy elsewhere, build new, or put the component in. The principle of substitution, along with market expectations, drives the market-based pricing model.

In plain terms, substitution means that the real estate market is competitive: A buyer will generally go for the least expensive house that satisfies his or her criteria, all other things being equal. For this reason, agents need to be as accurate as possible in the adjustment of the comps. For example, if a buyer can get a home with a three-car garage for \$5,000 more in other homes on the market, he or she is not going to pay \$7,000 more for one because the seller wants more or “it cost more to build.”

Consumers employ the principle of substitution with other big-ticket items as well. For example, a person who has decided on a particular make and model of vehicle will not usually pay more at one dealership than the cost of acquiring it at another dealership.

Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables

Again, Fannie Mae guidance is aimed at appraisers and appraisals, but real estate agents do well to apply it in adjusting comparables for CMAs.

Slide: Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables

Fannie Mae's guidance emphasizes that adjustments must be market-based, not arbitrary or boilerplate values. It also acknowledges—once again—that sometimes appropriate comparables cannot be found because the subject is so unique or because of particular conditions. In that case, sales that best indicate the value of the subject must be selected and adjusted appropriately.

Exam Question 18

Note also that Fannie Mae requires appraisers to adjust comparables to reflect any sales or financing concessions that might affect sales price. This is why agents usually need to provide a copy of the sales agreement to appraisers—so they can check for such concessions.

Once again, the guidelines also emphasize the importance of commentary about adjustments. It is not enough to simply state that an adjustment has been made. Appraisers must provide their logic and reasoning for making them.

Date of Sale and Time Adjustments

Slide: Date of Sale Adjustments

The date of sale and the time adjustment (market conditions) are critical elements in determining an accurate value because the appraisal is based on a specific date in time (effective date of appraisal). The comparable sales being considered must be analyzed by the appraiser to determine if there have been any changes in market conditions from the time the comparable went under contract to the effective date of the appraisal. This analysis will determine whether a time adjustment is warranted. Adjustments may be either positive or negative depending on the market changes over the time period analyzed. Time adjustments should be supported by other comparables (such as sales, contracts) whenever possible; however, in all instances the appraiser must provide an explanation for the time adjustment in the appraisal report.

Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments

I-Note: **DISCUSS** specific considerations in determining adjustments.

What constitutes a bedroom? When is a bathroom a full bath? Different MLSs sometimes have different criteria for these features and others. And some MLS definitions do not match the definition an appraiser would use to give value. In this section, we look at some specific home features and how to characterize them when selecting and adjusting comparables.

Bedrooms

Many municipalities have requirements for minimum bedroom size. In general, bedrooms should be at least 90 square feet in size and have natural light, ventilation, and a window that provides an emergency exit to outdoors. Because of the requirement for a bedroom window exit, a basement room with a small window can't be called a bedroom for FHA lending.

Closets are not required by lenders and others for a room to be a bedroom. Historic homes might not have closets because wardrobes were in use when these houses were built.

A tandem or captive bedroom is one that does not have hall access but must be reached through another room. Some markets count these as bedrooms; most do not. Be careful to compare only like-style bedrooms. A bedroom with its own hall access would have more value than a tandem bedroom.

Bathrooms

A full bathroom includes at least three out of these four features:

- ▶ Toilet
- ▶ Sink
- ▶ Bathtub
- ▶ Shower

A half-bath consists of a sink and toilet.

Some markets use the $\frac{3}{4}$ bath category—toilet, sink, and tub or shower, but not both. When in doubt, following Fannie Mae guidance is probably a good idea: A toilet, sink, and bathtub or shower constitute a full bath. This is also the definition that an appraiser would use, so a CMA that follows this definition will synchronize with an eventual appraisal of the property.

Gross Living Area

Commonly referred to as square footage in many MLSs, gross living area is defined by Fannie Mae as finished above-grade areas measured from the exterior building dimensions. Garages and basements (including those that are partially above-grade) should not be included in GLA. For example, a walk-out basement with finished rooms would not be included in the above-grade room count or GLA.

Rooms that are not included in the above-grade room count and GLA can add substantially to the value of a property. Comparisons should be made only by comparing above-grade areas with above-grade areas and below-grade areas with below-grade areas.

Slide: Bedrooms

Exam Question 19

Slide: Bathrooms

Slide: Gross Living Area

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** how to adjust for gross living area.

Slide: Adjusting for GLA

Adjusting for Gross Living Area

Although GLA should be as close to the subject as possible, if it is not the same, adjustments need to be made—unless the variance is insignificant.

- ▶ Generally speaking, if the difference in GLA is 20 percent or less, no adjustment is made. An exception to this guideline would be for a small house (800 to 1,000 square feet). In this case, a 20 percent difference is significant and should be adjusted for.
- ▶ Calculating per-square-footage price is tricky. Technically, you should subtract the land value from the total price to determine the actual cost per square foot. Because we don't usually separate land value from house value, when you divide the sales price by the square footage, you have an inexact calculation but a usable figure. This simplification is generally valid in a homogenous neighborhood—similar types of houses and similar lot sizes. It is not appropriate for very large lots or acreage.

Age

Slide: Age

Every attempt should be made to find comps in the same neighborhood as the subject property; that would mean no adjustment for age. If either the subject or the comparable is new construction, an appropriate adjustment would need to be made.

Age adjustments are not consistent across the spectrum of home ages. For example, if you had to compare a 10-year-old home to a brand-new home, it would usually be a significant adjustment; but the adjustment for a 20-year-old home to a 30-year-old home might be minimal or nothing at all.

Some think an age adjustment means very little. Some think it means a lot. The question is really whether any adjustment needs to be made at all. If you had a choice to buy two identical houses with the exception that one was new and the other was 40 years old but rehabilitated, modernized, and improved until it looked just like the new home, would you pay the same price for the older home as you would the "like new" home? Appraisers call this effective age, which is how old the house is in terms of wear and tear, and overall conditions. Generally, the lower the effective age, the higher the price.

Lot Size

Slide: Lot Size

Again, because of neighborhood characteristics, lot size will probably be similar enough that no adjustment will be needed. Determining land value to make lot adjustments can be very difficult.

The house on a smaller-sized lot will generally sell at a discount, compared with other homes in the neighborhood. Consider what the land is used for: Does it provide off-street parking? Is it used for recreation?

In rural areas, lot sizes can vary tremendously. The home site is the most expensive parcel; owners who obtain extra land for a garden, storage buildings, more privacy, and so on generally pay much less per acre than they did for their home site. Two other important considerations in rural areas are:

- ▶ What is the minimum lot size, per local regulations?
- ▶ Can the property support an on-site sewage system (and possibly allow for expansion or repair of that system)?

Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments

Certain errors are not uncommon in adjusting comparables, and certain situations pose challenges for agents as they select and adjust comparables. You should be alert for these.

Double-Dipping

The term *double-dipping* refers to adjusting for a feature more than once. For example, consider a comparable that is identical to the subject except that it has an additional room—a sunroom. One way to adjust for this difference would be to determine the value of the additional square footage contributed by the sunroom. Another way to adjust would be to determine the cost of constructing a sunroom addition. The important caution is not to make both adjustments—that would be double-dipping.

The Wrong Reasons to Adjust

Agents sometimes feel pressured to make adjustments that are not supported by market data. For instance, a seller in Minnesota angling for a higher listing price might argue that her home's built-in swimming pool should prompt an upward adjustment of comparables that do not have built-in swimming pools. But the typical buyer in Minnesota probably does not place a high value on a feature that can be used only a few months per year. Making this adjustment to keep the seller happy would likely result in an inflated price.

Sometimes the pressure is internal, with an agent trying to justify a higher listing price to win a client. Whatever the motivation, the only correct reason to make an adjustment is because the market indicates it.

Outliers

An outlier is a property that sold for a price that is extremely high or low based on all other comparables. Often the reason for the outlying price cannot be determined by an agent preparing a CMA.

Slide: Challenges

I-Note: **CAUTION**
students regarding
potential mistakes and
how to avoid them.

Exam Question 20

Slide: Exercise 3.1

If you have enough ordinary comparables to conduct an accurate market analysis, it is best to omit outliers from your list of comparables. If you do need to include an outlier, you will need to adjust it accordingly. For the purposes of calculating average sales price among multiple comparables, an outlier is usually omitted from the calculation because it will skew the result.

Exam Question 22

I-Note: **RECONVENE** the work groups. **INSTRUCT** the groups to use the comps they selected, the sample Evaluation Figures, and the CMA Analysis Worksheets to formulate a price range, list price, and rationale to persuade the seller to accept the recommended list price.. **ALLOW** about 25 minutes for the groups to complete the assignment. **ASK** each group to report only the price range they formulated. **INFORM** the groups that they will be asked later to report recommended list prices and rationales.

Stigmatized Properties

A stigmatized property is a home in which an actual or rumored event might diminish a buyer’s desire for the property even though the property is not physically affected. Such events include murder, suicide, criminal activity, and alleged haunting.

A stigmatized property often sells for a price that is not reflective of its market—probably much lower. Like outliers, stigmatized properties should be avoided when identifying comparables. When this is not possible, they must be adjusted accordingly.

Exercise 3.1:
Adjusting Comparables and Arriving at a Price Range

Look back at the comps you selected in Exercise 2.2. Use these comps and the sample Evaluation Figures on pages 65–66 to complete the CMA Analysis Worksheets that follow.

Based on the analysis worksheets, what is the price range for the subject property?

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

Evaluation Figures

The following figures are for illustration purposes only. They may or may not reflect the actual values in your marketplace. DO NOT use these values in formulating actual CMAs without verifying their accuracy for your marketplace.

AIR CONDITIONING

Central vs none	\$2,000—\$6,000
Functional window unit	\$250
Whole house ceiling fan	\$1,000—\$2,500

APPLIANCES

Oven/range and dishwasher are expected to remain in the home.

Make adjustment for appliances in very bad condition or if there are upscale (Viking, Sub-Zero) appliances in one but not the other

\$0—\$500 each

AGE

No adjustment may be needed for less than 5 years 25%—.5%/year

BASEMENT

Partial versus none	\$ 8,000—\$15,000
Full versus none	\$15,000—\$20,000
Walk out—add to above	\$ 5,000—\$10,000

BASEMENT (FINISHED)

Below-average finishing	\$1,000—\$3,000
Average finishing	\$5,000—\$10,000
Superior finishing	\$10,000—\$20,000

BATHROOMS

Full

2 vs 1	\$3,000—\$5,000
3 vs 2	\$2,000—\$3,000
4 vs 3	\$1,500—\$2,000

Half

First half bath	\$2,000—\$3,000
Additional	\$1,500—\$2,500

BEDROOMS (ONLY IF FUNCTIONAL AND NOT IN BASEMENT)

3 vs 2	\$6,000—\$8,000
4 vs 3	\$4,000—\$6,000
5 vs 4	\$3,000—\$5,000

BRICK (ALL BRICK – NOT FACE BRICK)..... \$4,000—\$10,000

BUSY STREET (DEDUCTION)

Backing to a busy street	\$2,000—\$5,000
Fronting a busy street	\$5,000— Deck
14 x 14	\$2,000—\$4,000
Multilevel and very large	\$8,000—\$12,000

DINING ROOM

“L” or combination versus none	\$2,500—\$5,000
Separate versus “L”	\$1,000—\$4,000
Separate versus none	\$4,000—\$8,000

FAMILY ROOM (FIRST FLOOR) \$8,000—\$25,000

On main living level versus in the basement	\$2,000—\$8,000
---	-----------------

FIREPLACE \$4,000—\$6,000

FENCE \$2,000—\$4,000

GARAGE

Per stall	\$5,000—\$10,000
-----------------	------------------

HARDWOOD FLOOR \$5,000—\$7,000

LOT SIZE

If lot is significantly larger in same neighborhood (20% or more) Up to \$10,000

Depth over 150 ft does not add value

Corner lot may be a deduction of up to \$10,000 if no back yard

PATIO

10 x 20 concrete	\$1,000
------------------------	---------

Very large free-form aggregate stone	\$2,000—\$5,000
--	-----------------

POOL, DEPENDING ON LOCATION

In-ground—possibly	\$6,000—\$10,000
--------------------------	------------------

Above-ground—no value; may have negative value

PORCH

Screened vs patio or deck	\$2,000—\$5,000
---------------------------------	-----------------

Screened w/permanent roof and footings	\$5,000—\$10,000
--	------------------

Permanent with windows	\$10,000—\$20,000
------------------------------	-------------------

SQUARE FOOTAGE

Determine a square foot price that's reasonable and use the same value for each comp. Many experienced agents and appraisers will use 35%–50% of the number.



Module 4: Presenting the CMA

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Discuss CMA documents and pricing conclusions with clients.
- ▶ Address client concerns about pricing.
- ▶ Explain value principles to clients.

Slide: Module 4
Learning Objectives and
Content Overview

I-Note: **REVIEW** Module
learning objectives and
topics.

What the CMA Report Contains

Among other things, a CMA report is a marketing tool, and its length, complexity, and design will vary according to an agent's preferred business practices. The final CMA report can vary from a two-page summary to dozens of pages of analysis and photographs. Generally, it contains the following:

Slide: CMA Content

- ▶ A description of the market for the subject
- ▶ A description of the subject neighborhood
- ▶ A list and descriptions of the comparables used in developing a price for the subject
- ▶ An analysis of the comparables used, including adjustments made (This information is typically presented in a table format, with the subject and comparable features arranged side-by-side for easy comparison.)
- ▶ Any commentary needed to clarify the procedures and logic that the agent applied in choosing and adjusting comparables
- ▶ A price range for the subject, based on analysis of the comparables

Some agents prefer not to include the amount of adjustments and focus instead on what was adjusted for. This avoids potential arguments from the seller that an adjustment is "not enough." Choose the approach that you feel comfortable with, and be prepared to defend actual adjustment numbers if you use them. Tools like the RPR® can help.

Refer to page 38 of this manual for a model of content and organization for a comprehensive CMA generated through the RPR®. Sample pages from the CMA can be found in the Resources section of this manual (see page 100).

Slide: CMA Disclaimer – If Needed

I-Note: **ASK** students what kind of disclaimers they have used.

Exam Question 14

Common Disclaimer Information

Your CMA may include one or more disclaimers. A disclaimer is a formal statement that says a person is not legally responsible for something, such as the information given in a brochure, ad, or online; or a claim that a person has no direct involvement or connection with it.

Familiar disclaimers in CMAs include the following examples:

- ▶ This is a market analysis, not an appraisal, and was prepared by a licensed real estate broker or associate broker, not a licensed appraiser.
- ▶ This market analysis is based on information we had on [date]. This information might need to be updated.
- ▶ This analysis has not been performed in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, which requires valuers to act as unbiased, disinterested third parties with impartiality, objectivity, and independence and without accommodation of personal interest. It is not construed as an appraisal and may not be used as such for any purpose.

A disclaimer must be specific to the situation. It needs to fit the context of what is being disclaimed. A disclaimer is not a guarantee that you will not be sued. If you should not be doing something, do not do it. Disclaimers cannot compensate for poor judgment.

Some states have their own disclosures that they require to be used on CMAs. Please check your state's requirements.

Of course, you will not simply present the CMA report to your clients without comment or leave them to interpret the results on their own. The CMA is the opening of a dialogue between agent and client. Your mutual goal is to arrive at an appropriate price for the subject and, in a reasonable timeframe, close a transaction. The CMA is a means to reaching those goals. The rest of this Module looks at discussion points and client education issues that often flow from the presentation of the CMA.

Guiding Clients through the CMA

Sellers and buyers alike are apt to jump to the bottom line when looking at the CMA. They are most interested in the price range that emerges from all the analysis. A wise agent will guide clients through all the information in the CMA to demonstrate how the final figures were derived. Asking clients for their impressions and interpretations of the information presented will give you a better understanding of their concerns and possible sticking points in moving a transaction to a successful conclusion.

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** how to best guide a client through a CMA.

Understanding the Market

Begin by spending some time with the client looking at the local market and neighborhood information. Ask an open-ended question to gauge the client's understanding at this point, something like, *"Mr. and Mrs. Seller, what do you think this market data indicates about how quickly your home is likely to sell?"*

Slide: **Understanding the Market**

Considering the Comparables and Competition

Next, spend some time discussing the comparables that were used in deriving the price range. People are naturally curious about others' homes—and how theirs compares—so this can be an engaging part of the CMA presentation for clients. Sellers are likely to focus on differences between their home and the competition, so be prepared to explain how you adjusted for these.

Slide: **Comps and Competition**

This is also a good time to discuss the competition with a seller. You will want to alert the client about any current listings that are direct competitors to their home, and the listing prices of those competitors.

Moving from a Price Range to a Listing/Offer Price

The CMA concludes with a price range for the subject—but a listing or offer price needs to be a single number. In addition to the CMA price range, you and your client will want to consider several market averages in arriving at a list price.

Slide: **From Price Range to List Price**

The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing

Slide: Supply and Demand

Supply and demand is the principle that the value of any good or service will rise as demand increases and supply decreases, and fall as demand decreases and supply increases. This principle might be more familiar to real estate agents as embedded in the concept of buyers' and sellers' markets:

- ▶ Sellers' market conditions exist when the demand for homes to purchase is high and the supply is low. Home prices are generally heading upward in a sellers' market.
- ▶ Buyers' market conditions exist when demand is low and supply is high. Home prices are generally flat or heading downward in a buyers' market.

Exam Question 15

Absorption Rate

Slide: Absorption Rate

We can determine more precisely what market conditions exist by calculating the absorption rate. The absorption rate is an estimate of the rate at which a particular classification of properties for sale or lease can be successfully marketed in a given area. To analyze supply and demand, an absorption rate must be developed.

To calculate absorption rate, you need to determine the number of competitive properties currently on the market and divide that number by the number of properties that have been selling per month.

For example, if 4 homes are sold every month and there are 44 homes for sale, it will take 11 months to sell all the homes currently for sale. If there are 80 homes for sale, the absorption rate will be 20 months, or almost 2 years, for all the homes to sell. This does not take into account the number of homes that will eventually come on the market in addition to those already for sale.

How far back should you look in calculating absorption rate? The recommendation is to go back three months to determine the average absorption rate and then compare this figure with just the previous month's absorption rate to see the trend:

Slide: Interpreting Absorption Rate

- ▶ Sellers' market conditions—Absorption rate is 1–3 months
- ▶ Normal market conditions—Absorption rate is 4–6 months
- ▶ Buyers' market conditions—Absorption rate is 7+ months

Understanding market conditions is an important factor in preparing a CMA for your client. Buyers and sellers need to know what kind of market they are operating in, because it impacts pricing and competition, and agents must be able to communicate this to their clients.

Exercise 4.1: **Using Absorption Rate to Advise Clients**

Rita is a REALTOR® who has tracked sales of single-family, two-story Colonial homes in her market area for the past two years using the following parameters:

- ▶ 10–30 years old
- ▶ 2,200–2,600 square feet
- ▶ 3–5 bedrooms
- ▶ Two-car garage
- ▶ 2½ baths
- ▶ Lot size of ⅓ to ½ acre

Slide: Exercise 4.1

Rita discovers that during the past 12 months, 48 houses that meet this description have sold in her market of competing neighborhoods. What is the absorption rate for this market?

Knowing this, how should Rita advise sellers of similar homes in each of the following scenarios?

A. There are currently 12 homes like this on the market.

B. There are currently 22 homes like this on the market.

C. There are currently 62 homes like this on the market.

I-Note: Exercise 4.1 Answers

The absorption rate is 4 per month (48 divided by 12).

A. This is a seller's market; 12 homes is a 3-month supply. The sellers can be aggressive with their pricing.

B. This market is almost "in balance" because this is a 5½-month supply. In some markets that experience seasonal slowdowns, this could be trending toward a buyer's market. For example, in most of the northern section of the United States, the market slow around Thanksgiving and picks up again when nicer weather arrives in the spring..

C. Ouch! This is a buyers' market, with more than a 15-month supply of homes! That means even if no other homes come on the market, it will take over 15 months to work through the inventory. In this market, the best strategy for the seller is to aggressively price the property—meaning lower than the competition.

The seller or buyer will probably ask you what price you would recommend, so you need to have an answer prepared in advance. But it is wise to first ask them what they think:

- ▶ “Ms. Seller, after looking at the market information and competition, what list price from the range do you think is right for your home?”
- ▶ “Mr. and Mrs. Buyer, after considering the market data and similar homes, what offer price from the range seems reasonable to you?”
- ▶ “Mr. and Mrs. Seller, the market is indicating the value of your home to be between \$x and \$x. Currently, homes in our marketplace are selling for 96 percent of list price. Based on these numbers, where would you want to list?”

Getting to Agreement

Your goal is to reach agreement with the seller or buyer on a listing or offer price for the home. If they select a figure from within the CMA price range, this goal is accomplished. If not, further discussion is needed.

Ask the seller or buyer to explain their thinking if they suggest a price outside the CMA range. They might reveal one of the common client misconceptions about value, which you can then address, always supporting your response with the facts presented in the CMA.

In addition to agreeing on price, agents and listing clients should try to reach some common understanding about how much and at what intervals the list price will be adjusted if offers do not materialize at the original asking price.

When Sellers and Buyers Disregard Your Pricing Recommendations

When sellers are determined to price their property—or when buyers are determined to make an offer—well outside the range suggested by the CMA, agents should obtain a written, signed statement from them acknowledging that they have independently decided to do so despite the agent’s advice.

2 Slides: Reaching Agreement

I-Note: **SUGGEST** tactics for reaching agreement on price and handling misconceptions about pricing.

Slide: When They Won’t Listen!

Misconception about Price	Possible Agent Response
<p>Seller: “We can always come down in price, but we can’t go up! Let’s start at a higher number.”</p>	<p>Explain that homes priced above what the market indicates are apt to take longer to sell, with accompanying stress, opportunity costs, and real costs to owners. Homes that languish on the market also tend to get passed over for consideration by potential buyers the longer they are listed.</p>
<p>Seller: “I’ve heard the market is hot right now, so I want to price my home aggressively.”</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Buyer: “I’ve heard this is a buyers’ market, so I want to get a bargain.”</p>	<p>Use the absorption rate to demonstrate whether the market is buyers’, sellers’, or neutral.</p>
<p>Seller: “We completed a \$XX remodel of the kitchen last year, and that cost should be added to the suggested price range.”</p>	<p>Clarify the difference between cost to the seller and value to the prospective buyer. Explain that the CMA uses comparables that also include the upgrade in question (or have been adjusted for it), so this value is already reflected in the suggested price range.</p>
<p>Seller or Buyer: “Zillow® says the house is worth more [less] than what your price range shows.”</p>	<p>Fortunately, you also checked Zillow® in advance and are ready for this question! Explain that AVMs might contain incomplete or out-of-date information. They do not adjust for issues such as condition of the property and sales concessions. For these reasons, their price conclusions might not be accurate.</p>
<p>Seller: “My neighbor’s very similar home sold for more than your price range.”</p>	<p>If the neighbor’s home is a true comparable, it should be in your CMA and you will be able to show the client the adjustments that likely contributed to its higher selling price. If you disqualified it as a comparable, you will be able to explain that as well—for instance, the home sold too long ago and doesn’t reflect the most current market conditions. If public information was not available on the house, explain that only known, verifiable information can be used in forming value opinions.</p>



Module 5: Working with Appraisers

Why let the fun stop here?

Put your new pricing skills to good use by earning your PSA certification!



You're almost there!

Becoming a Pricing Strategy Advisor is only two quick steps away:

- 1 watch two PSA webinars
- 2 submit your application and pay a one-time certification fee

Make your expertise even more valuable!

Visit PricingStrategyAdvisor.org for more information.



Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Recognize the purpose of appraisals and the scope of the appraiser's role.
- ▶ Describe how real estate agents can work constructively with appraisers.
- ▶ Assess an appraisal and proceed appropriately when you think it contains inaccuracies.

The appraisal can confirm—or refute—the validity of the offer/list price for a home. As such, the appraisal process can be a tension point for all parties to a transaction. This Module looks at the purpose of appraisals, the appraiser's role, and how agents can work constructively with appraisers and clients through the appraisal process.

The Appraiser's Role and Responsibilities

Real estate agents should understand the role and responsibilities of appraisers so that they can educate their clients about the critical appraisal step in residential home sales.

What Appraisers Do

In a nutshell, an appraiser provides an opinion of value. To do so, he or she uses the following general process:

1. Based on the specific assignment, determine the appropriate scope of work, including the following:
 - ▶ What type of property inspection is needed (interior, exterior only, or none)
 - ▶ What approaches to value are required (sales comparison approach, cost approach, or income approach)
 - ▶ Any lender-specific requirements
2. Inspect the property, if needed.
3. Research various resources for information about the subject and market area, including county and municipal records, MLS records, and other data services.
4. Review recent sales and listings of comparable properties, in much the same way that agents do when they prepare CMAs.
5. Use an appropriate approach, or combination of approaches, to develop an opinion of the property value. There are three main approaches:

2 Slides: **Module 5 Learning Objectives and Topic Overview**

I-Note: **REVIEW** Module learning objectives and topics.

I-Note: **COMPARE** appraisals and CMAs.

Slide: **What Appraisers Do**

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** the appraiser's process.

Exam Question 23

- ▶ **Sales comparison approach:** This approach uses recent sales of comparable properties. Characteristics such as the living area of the home, land area, style, age, quality of construction, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, and presence or absence of a garage are analyzed and compared. This is often the primary approach used in appraising a residential property.
 - ▶ **Cost approach:** This approach reflects the appraiser's opinion of the current cost to construct the existing house, minus any estimated depreciation, plus the value of the land. This approach is more relevant for newer homes or home features that have little or no depreciation.
 - ▶ **Income approach:** This approach generally is used on properties that have some income-generating potential. In a residential context, this would include properties that have two, three, or four living units. It typically is not used for one-unit homes in neighborhoods where residences are primarily owner-occupied.
6. Prepare an appraisal report that contains sufficient information for the intended users to understand and use it.

Who the Appraiser Works For

I-Note: **CLARIFY** who the appraiser works for.

In a residential property sale, the appraiser works for the mortgage lender. The mortgage lender orders the appraisal and is the appraiser's client. Sometimes a lender will use an appraisal management company to manage the appraisal process. An AMC will order an appraisal on behalf of the lender. Some lenders order the appraisal directly from an appraiser.

Slide: **The Appraiser's Client**

The homebuyer receives a copy of the appraisal. The Equal Credit Opportunity Act requires creditors to automatically send a free copy of home appraisals and all other written valuations on the property after they are completed, regardless of whether credit is extended, denied, incomplete, or withdrawn.

Looking for answers or clarification regarding the appraisal process? You can find NAR's guide for Residential Appraisal Process at the following link.

https://www.nar.realtor/sites/default/files/handouts-and-brochures/2014/FAQ_Appraisal_brochure_0114_Electronic_Desktop_vFinal.pdf

Steps in Working with the Appraiser

Slide: **Working with the Appraiser**

Real estate agents and appraisers are not opponents. Each plays a critical role in the transaction. Each is bound by legal and professional obligations that circumscribe their work. Agents can do their part to ensure a constructive working relationship with appraisers and an efficient appraisal process.

Meet the Appraiser

For a residential sale, the appraiser typically needs to inspect the property and will contact the seller or agent to make arrangements to do so. You should meet the appraiser at the property and be prepared to answer any questions he or she might have about the property or neighborhood. Allow the appraiser the necessary space and time to complete the inspection.

Prepare Appraiser's Package

Prepare an Appraiser's Package in advance and have it available for the appraiser at the property.

Appraiser's Package Contents

- ▶ Plats
- ▶ Surveys
- ▶ Deeds
- ▶ Covenants
- ▶ HOA documents
- ▶ Floor plans
- ▶ Specifications
- ▶ Neighborhood details
 - ▲ Clearly defined boundaries
 - ▲ Clearly defined school boundaries
 - ▲ Trends and changes for the area—use MLS stats
- ▶ Recent similar-quality comparables
 - ▲ Why you used what you used
 - ▲ Why you didn't use the others—explain
 - ▲ Verify that the information (square footage, school districts, etc.) is correct
- ▶ Detailed lists and dates of upgrades, remodels, and costs
- ▶ Energy-efficient features
- ▶ Multiple offers on the property at time of sale

Agents are allowed to communicate with the appraiser and provide additional property information, including a copy of the sales contract.

I-Note: **PROVIDE** an overview of the steps in working with the appraiser.

Exam Question 24

Slide: Appraiser's Package Contents

I-Note: **SUMMARIZE** the contents of the appraiser's package.

Appraisal Tools

Agents can find a wealth of agent resources, legal information, and field guides and toolkits about the appraisal process at <https://www.nar.realtor/appraisal-valuation/valuation-tools>

Slide: Return Appraisers Calls

I-Note: **ADMONISH** students to return appraisers' calls promptly. **REMIND** them that they should seek the client's permission before sharing certain information.

Exam Question 26

Slide: Interpreting the Appraisal

Exam Question 25

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** the components of an appraisal report and how to read them.

Return Appraiser Calls

The appraiser might have follow-up questions after visiting the property. Be sure to respond to such requests promptly. It is in your and your client's best interest for the appraiser to have complete and accurate information sooner rather than later.

A good appraiser, in a rapidly changing market, might contact you regarding pending sales or sales that have closed but for some reason have not yet been closed out in the MLS. If an appraiser asks you about pending sales, please be certain to obtain your client's permission before sharing that information.

How to Read an Appraisal Report

There is no single, universal form used for appraisals, but Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation) have developed residential appraisal report forms that many appraisers and AMCs use as is or with minor variations. Regardless of the format or style, appraisal reports consistently include certain information.

Interpreting an Appraisal Report

A credible appraisal contains certain essential elements. You should be able to locate all of the following in the appraisal report:

- ▶ Clear identification of the property appraised
- ▶ Description of the appraiser's scope of work
- ▶ The identity of the client and any other intended users of the report
- ▶ The intended use of the report
- ▶ The definition of value used
- ▶ The effective date of the value
- ▶ Relevant characteristics of the subject (Relevant characteristics is how appraisers typically refer to the concept of market expectations—what a typical buyer would expect to find for the property.)
- ▶ Identification of the method(s) used to value the property
- ▶ Presentation of the method(s) used to value the property

- ▶ Description of the neighborhood and market conditions for the neighborhood
- ▶ The appraiser's final value opinion of the property

An appraisal that uses the sales comparison approach to valuation (typical for residential transactions) is based on comparisons between the subject and comparables. In such an appraisal, you should see tables of comparable properties and their relevant characteristics, with adjustments made as needed. You might even see some of the same comparable properties in the appraisal report that you used in developing your CMA of the property.

Red Flags in an Appraisal

A reconciliation of market data that doesn't make sense might indicate a flawed appraisal. For example, of the three comparables, comp #1 required only 1 percent net and 3 percent gross adjustments, comp #2 required only 3 percent net and 5 percent gross adjustments, and comp #3 required 20 percent net and 25 percent gross, yet comp #3 was the comparable the appraiser reconciled to. Reconciliation is not an average of market data, but the appraiser should reconcile to the most similar comp or comps.

Here is an example of typical commentary regarding reconciliation in an appraisal: "Comp #1, which required the least net and least gross adjustments, is considered most similar to the subject. Its adjusted value is \$229,500; comp #2, which was extremely close, has an adjusted value of \$231,000; I have reconciled between these comparables at \$230,000."

When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price

A lender is unlikely to offer a mortgage above the appraised value amount. So when a home appraises below the buyer's offer price, a variety of possible responses are set in motion. At a minimum, the buyer and seller must begin negotiating terms again; in a worst-case scenario, the buyer walks away from the deal altogether.

I-Note: **HIGHLIGHT** potential red flags in an appraisal report.

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** the result of a property that appraises below offer price.

Slide: Distressed Markets

Distressed Markets and “Low” Appraisals

Real estate agents and sellers are often—understandably—unhappy when appraisals come in lower than the offer price on the home. It is important to remember that appraisers, like agents, are bound by legal, professional, and ethical obligations. USPAP requires appraisers to research “such comparable data as are available to the appraiser in the normal course of business.” That means appraisers must look at all the comparables. If the market is being run by investors, and short sales and foreclosures are making up the market, the appraiser cannot ignore relevant market data—he or she must use these comparables in forming a value opinion. If short sales or foreclosures are an anomaly, they shouldn’t be used, but if they are very prevalent, the appraiser will have to use them.

Slide: VA Tidewater Initiative

VA Tidewater Initiative

If the VA appraisal is going to be short of purchase price, the appraiser invokes the Tidewater Initiative, which is different from the typical FHA or conventional appraisal process.

The typical Tidewater process looks like this:

- ▶ Appraiser provides Tidewater notice to POC (typically lender’s contact)
- ▶ POC notifies agents
- ▶ Agents provide comps to POC for delivery to VA within 2 working days
 - ▲ Must be closed comps
 - ▲ Pending sales contracts used to support a time adjustment must include original contract and all addendums
- ▶ Appraiser cannot discuss contents of appraisal
- ▶ Additional information is reviewed by appraiser
- ▶ Completed appraisal is uploaded to the VA portal
- ▶ Lender POC is notified of completed appraisal
- ▶ Lender’s VA underwriter performs review
- ▶ Appraisal is provided to Veteran

Challenging an Appraisal

Although we tend to refer to this as a “challenging an appraisal,” a better way to look at the situation is that we have a “sales variation” and are requesting reconsideration. Working to get the appraisal reconsidered should not be a battle with the appraiser. Starting the process with an attitude that the appraiser is “wrong” will only put the appraiser on the defensive and lower your chances of anything changing.

Most appraisers are ethical and competent, and most appraisals are accurate. Occasionally, however, agents and homeowners might have reason to believe an appraisal is sufficiently flawed that it does not accurately estimate a property’s value.

After reading and evaluating the appraisal, you might feel that it contains inaccurate information or is missing pertinent information about the subject or comparables. If you think the appraisal is inaccurate in any way, the procedure for requesting corrections is to contact the appraiser’s client (the mortgage lender) in writing.

Once an appraisal assignment is completed and sent to the appraiser’s client, an appraiser may not discuss the results of the report with anyone but the client who ordered the appraisal, or parties designated by the client.

The request for reevaluating the appraisal must be done by the buyer or the buyer’s agent, not by the listing agent. The buyer agent should not begin the process of appealing a low appraisal without the permission of the buyer.

In your written inquiry, request that your concerns be addressed by the appraiser. Keep in mind that you need to give the appraiser a fact-based reason to adjust the appraisal. The appraiser should then review the appraisal. If he or she finds that additional credible information is relevant to the appraisal assignment, the appraiser should provide a revised appraisal with comments that address your concerns.

When reviewing the appraisal, you should look for:

- ▶ **Problem comparables:** Comparable sales that are older than is preferred, are at a greater distance, are not arm’s-length, or are not logical.
- ▶ Comps that should have been used but were not.
- ▶ Comps that were used that should not have been.
- ▶ Adjustments that either don’t make sense or are not consistent.

Slide: How to Challenge a Low Appraisal

I-Note: **DESCRIBE** how to challenge an appraisal. **CAUTION** students that the appraiser cannot discuss the report with anyone but the client who ordered the appraisal or those designated by the client.

Slide: Appraising the Appraisal

► **Incorrect data:**

The address, parcel number, flood plain number, and/or census track number are wrong.

► **Incorrect descriptions:**

The house, as described, does not appear to be the subject property. Incorrect data and incorrect descriptions can happen when an appraiser copies a previous report as the basis for a new appraisal but forgets to redact the incorrect or update the data.

A reconciliation of market data that doesn't make sense might indicate a flawed appraisal. For example, of the three comparables, comp #1 required only 1 percent net and 3 percent gross adjustments, comp #2 required only 3 percent net and 5 percent gross adjustments, and comp #3 required 20 percent net and 25 percent gross, yet comp #3 was the comparable the appraiser reconciled to. Reconciliation is not an average of market data, but the appraiser should reconcile to the most similar comp or comps.

Here is an example of typical commentary regarding reconciliation in an appraisal: "Comp #1, which required the least net and least gross adjustments, is considered most similar to the subject. Its adjusted value is \$229,500; comp #2, which was extremely close, has an adjusted value of \$231,000; I have reconciled between these comparables at \$230,000."

Slide: The Long Life of an FHA Appraisal

I-Note: **ALERT** students to the long life of an FHA appraisal and explain why it is important.

Slide: Benefits

Slide: Fannie Mae Inspection Waiver

The Long Life of an FHA Appraisal

Real estate agents and sellers must be aware of the long life of FHA appraisals, and their potential effects for pricing property.

An FHA appraisal stays with a property for 120 days (4 months). Suppose a property appraises for \$2,000 less than the offer price, the seller does not reduce the price, and the transaction fails. If this property sells FHA again in the next 120 days, that same appraisal will be used again. The agent should have sufficient market knowledge to guide the seller on this. What percentage of transactions in this price range sell FHA? If the percentage is significant, and depending on the seller's situation, taking the lower price in the beginning might have been a better decision.

In addition, a problem exists if this situation occurs in a changing market. The appraisal should be adjusted if the market is increasing and the agent or seller needs to discuss with the lender how the appraisal might need to be challenged. Conversely, if the market is going down, the argument could be made that the new value should be more than \$2,000 less than the old appraisal.



Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Recognize strategies and tactics for keeping up to date on your markets
- ▶ Recognize common client misconceptions about price
- ▶ Employ best practices for pricing properties in your daily work

Having considered CMAs and their components in some detail, it's time to take a step back and look at some general strategies and tactics for sharpening and maintaining your pricing skills.

Listening to the Market

Keeping up to date with their markets is a critical and never-ending process for successful real estate agents and fundamental to pricing properties accurately.

Staying Current on Market Changes

There is no magic to staying abreast of market conditions—diligence, attention, time, and effort are required. Agents must develop—and maintain—the tools and resources they need to understand their markets both intuitively and analytically. Having a “feel” for your markets is a good thing; being able to quantify and support that feel for clients is equally important.

Successful agents employ a variety of strategies to stay up to date on markets. Most MLSs have the ability to analyze the market to keep your clients current on market changes, including tools that can show you:

- ▶ Percentage of list price received
- ▶ Days on market
- ▶ Absorption rate (months' supply of inventory)
- ▶ Range of properties that are selling, sitting, and expiring
- ▶ Ratio of new listings coming on the market versus those going off
- ▶ Median sales price—going up or down
- ▶ Number of closed sales as compared with previous months—trends

Revisiting Historical Data

“What's past is prologue,” wrote William Shakespeare, meaning that previous events set the stage for current situations. Whenever real estate agents prepare a CMA, they are revisiting historical data such as the sales prices of recently sold homes and absorption rates.

**Slide: Module 6
Learning Objectives and
Topic Overview**

I-Note: **REVIEW** Module learning objectives and topics.

**Slide: Listening to the
Market**

I-Note: **STRESS** the importance of staying current on market changes. **HIGHLIGHT** MLS data to monitor.

CMAs are focused on short-term trends—the immediate market. But agents also need to recognize and understand longer-term trends. Absorption rates are a good example of this. Knowing the absorption rate for a particular house category in a particular market 1 year ago, 2 years ago, 5 years ago, and so on, can begin to reveal patterns of neighborhood growth, decline, or redevelopment.

Retain your data analyses for future reference and reconsideration. The CMA you prepared for a buyer several years ago might help you generate a listing price range when that client decides to sell. This does not mean that you can use the same CMA and data for both tasks. But the old CMA will point to comparables that might be useful in the new analysis.

Slide: Cultivating Contacts

Developing Human Resources

A single person cannot hope to master all the complexities of residential real estate. Wise real estate agents develop personal contacts and relationships that can help them keep current with the market and fill in their knowledge gaps about pricing:

I-Note: **RECOMMEND** ways to take advantage of network contacts to sharpen skills.

- ▶ More experienced agents can help you refine your pricing skills and interrogate your assumptions and approaches in developing CMAs.
- ▶ Agents in other geographical areas can provide insight when you must consider comparables outside the subject neighborhood.
- ▶ Contractors and home inspectors can provide information about repair, replacement, and building costs when you are using a cost approach to adjust comparables or estimate cost of needed changes to the subject home.
- ▶ Lenders can help you keep abreast of changes in mortgage rates, products, and practices that impact affordability.
- ▶ Builders can provide pricing information about homes that often are not listed in the MLS or public records, as well as information about building costs.
- ▶ Appraisers can confirm or challenge the value of specific adjustments.

Following Industry News

There are dozens of resources—or more—for staying up to date on industry and market trends; following are just a few of the most highly regarded:

- ▶ National Association of Realtors (www.realtor.org) for news, research, and statistics, among a wealth of other industry and professional information and resources.
- ▶ Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University (jchs.harvard.edu) for housing policy issues. Among other information, JCHS publishes an annual *State of the Nation's Housing* report.
- ▶ Freddie Mac (www.freddiemac.com) for economic and housing research.
- ▶ Bankrate (www.bankrate.com) for national average mortgage rate daily and average mortgage rates and points in top 10 markets.
- ▶ The S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Indices (us.spindices.com/index-family/real-estate/sp-case-shiller), which measure U.S. residential real estate prices. The indices track changes in the value of residential real estate nationally and in 20 metropolitan markets.

Slide: Sources of Industry News

I-Note: **INFORM** students about NAR's yearly publication, *Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers*, which addresses such questions as: Who are today's homebuyers and sellers? Do they use the services of a real estate professional? What role does the Internet play? This tool provides the answers in a user-friendly format, designed to allow easy comparisons with previous studies, using a mix of charts, graphs, and tables.

Exercise 6.1:
How Do You Stay Up to Date?

List three resources, other than the ones listed earlier, that you have used to stay up to date on your markets.

Answers will vary by student experience.

List three resources that you plan to explore or develop in the next six months to help you keep up to date on your markets.

Educating Clients

Continuously pursuing your own professional development with respect to value and pricing is a challenge. Educating clients about these issues can be even more challenging. Clients often lack the perspective, terminology, or experience to appreciate the forces that impact pricing, and it is up to their agent to help them understand.

Seven Deadly Seller Sins

Several seller mistakes or misconceptions occur rather predictably in residential real estate, in particular:

1. Pricing higher than the competition.
2. Refusing reasonable offers early on.
3. Not putting the property in the best possible condition for sale.
4. Making showing the property difficult.
5. Becoming emotionally attached to the property and forgetting that that emotional attachment does not add value in the eyes of the buyers.
6. Blaming the agent for the market.
7. Not reducing the price in a timely manner, causing market aging.

Advantage accrues to agents who anticipate these “sins” and help their clients overcome them.

Five Buyer Bloopers

Buyers also are prone to certain transgressions:

1. Believing AVMs have the right value.
2. Listening to people who bought houses years ago—the market has changed.
3. Believing people who insist that every house is overpriced by X%.
4. Not listening to their agents when they explain sellers’ market conditions.
5. Not getting preapproved prior to looking at properties, then finding they can’t afford what they want, and then expecting the seller to lower the price for them.

I-Note: **PRESENT** and **COMMENT** on sellers’ sins and buyers’ bloopers.

Slide: Seven Deadly Seller Sins

Slide: Five Buyer Bloopers

What you've learned in this course should help you educate sellers about the drawbacks of pricing higher than the competition and the fallacy of blaming the agent for the market. With a well-documented CMA in hand, you can show the seller the nature of the competition and explain, with concrete data, the dangers of pricing above it. The parallel for a buyer client is that you can show the risk of making an offer too far below the market price. For sellers and buyers, you are able to demonstrate that the *market* dictates pricing—not the whims of agents or the dreams of buyers and sellers.

Slide: "I Should Have Asked for More!"

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** how to respond to seller's concerns about selling quickly.

When Homes Sell Quickly: "I Should Have Asked More!"

The flipside of a listing languishing for months is one that sells promptly at or near its listed price. Sellers might be quick to feel remorseful in this situation, thinking they could have gotten a higher price, and they might direct their remorse at you, their agent. Agents who have done their due diligence on pricing can explain that a prompt sale indicates that the home was priced appropriately for the market, which resulted in a timely sale.

Sellers in the Driver's Seat

Another good way to educate your sellers—and keep them informed of what is happening in the market—is to put them into your MLS prospect search as if they were buyers for their own home. They will then get updates on new listings, price reductions, and other relevant data in real time. Seeing the market mechanics with their own eyes is often more compelling than hearing it filtered through you. This strategy will also assist you in keeping the lines of communication open with them if it becomes necessary to revisit price.

Slide: Putting Sellers in the Driver's Seat

Slide: What Clients Can and Cannot Control

What Clients Can and Cannot Control

Educating your clients about pricing includes advising them on what they can and cannot control. Understanding their power—and the limits of their power—to affect the price of the home should help reduce their stress and increase their satisfaction with the entire transaction process.

I-Note: **SUMMARIZE** conditions that clients can and cannot control.

CLIENTS CAN CONTROL:

- ▶ **Putting the Property in the Best Possible Condition for Sale**
Repairs, cleaning, de-cluttering, and staging all contribute to placing the home in the best possible light and supporting the listing price.
- ▶ **Facilitating Showing of the Property**
In a buyer's market, a listing that is difficult to show due to seller constraints is in a losing position relative to the competition. In any market, most potential buyers are more at ease and receptive to viewing the home when the owners are absent.

CLIENTS CANNOT CONTROL:

- ▶ **The Economic Climate**
The economic climate affects the decisions and capabilities of both sellers and buyers. Aspects of the economic climate include interest rates, the availability of money, the ease or difficulty of obtaining a mortgage, federal monetary policy, and employment rates.
- ▶ **The Supply of Available Homes**
An abundance or deficit of competition is not within the seller’s or buyer’s control, nor is the corresponding effect on pricing.

The Pricing Pyramid

Another tool for explaining to sellers the dangers of overpricing is the pricing pyramid. A quick Google search turns up multiple versions of this familiar infographic, but a typical representation looks like this:



The pricing pyramid illustrates that as list price increases above market value, a smaller percentage of potential buyers will look at the home. A picture is sometimes worth a thousand words. This visual tool can help sellers quickly understand the advantages of staying within the price range determined in the CMA when settling on an asking price.

2 Slides: Educating Clients—The Pricing Pyramid

I-Note: **PRESENT** the pricing pyramid as an aid to help sellers understand that advantages of market pricing.

Exam Question 27

Slide: Revisiting Price

I-Note: **DISCUSS** tactics for revisiting price.

Exam Question 29

I-Note: **REVIEW** legal and ethical requirements. **CAUTION** students on the confidentiality of CMAs.

Revisiting Price

When a listing is languishing in spite of timely and reasonable adjustments to the listing price, agents must be prepared to revisit their original pricing analysis, including the following tactics:

- ▶ If you used competition in your original CMA, revisit your sources to see if any of them have sold and, if so, at what prices.
- ▶ Review current market data, including list price/sales price ratio and days on the market.
- ▶ Prepare an updated CMA for the seller using current comps.
- ▶ Ask the agents who have shown the listing what feedback they have received.
- ▶ Talk to the clients about having an appraisal done.

Legal and Ethical Requirements

Agents must observe a number of legal and ethical requirements when pricing properties. Module 1 discussed these in the context of Article 1 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics. Here, we look at confidentiality and record-retention issues.

Confidentiality Obligations

CMAs are subject to confidentiality requirements as specified by state law. In addition, the REALTOR® Code of Ethics, Article 1, Standard of Practice 1-9, addresses the issue of agency confidentiality:

STANDARD OF PRACTICE 1-9

The obligation of REALTORS® to preserve confidential information (as defined by state law) provided by their clients in the course of any agency relationship or non-agency relationship recognized by law continues after termination of agency relationships or any non-agency relationships recognized by law. REALTORS® shall not knowingly, during or following the termination of professional relationships with their clients:

1. *reveal confidential information of clients; or*
2. *use confidential information of clients to the disadvantage of clients; or*
3. *use confidential information of clients for the REALTOR®'s advantage or the advantage of third parties unless:*
 - a. *clients consent after full disclosure; or*
 - b. *REALTORS® are required by court order; or*

Conclusion

Slide: Concluding Questions

I-Note: **SUMMARIZE** topics covered in the course.

Thank you for your active participation in this course. In summary, we have discussed the following topics:

- ▶ The purpose and benefits of CMAs
- ▶ Terminology of pricing and valuation
- ▶ The Code of Ethics as it relates to pricing
- ▶ How to identify appropriate comparables, and where to find information about them
- ▶ The role of supply and demand in pricing
- ▶ How to adjust comparables
- ▶ Specific challenges and special situations in making adjustments
- ▶ Guiding clients through the CMA
- ▶ Working with appraisers
- ▶ Honing your pricing skills and practices

Mastered the CMA? Now what?

Let the world know
just how skilled you are
by adding **PSA** to your name!



How to get certified as a Pricing Strategy Advisor:

- 1 watch two PSA webinars
- 2 submit your application and
pay a one-time certification fee

Watch your inbox for an email about these steps!

Visit PricingStrategyAdvisor.org to get started today!





Resources

Valuation Workbook Sample Pages



West Branch Valley Association of REALTORS®/MLS
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

VALUATION WORKBOOK

Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740



Presented by

Melanie McLane

REALTOR® | Pennsylvania Real Estate License: RM421897

Pennsylvania Appraisal License: RL001214L

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Mobile: (570) 660-9671

Main: melanie@themelaniegroup.com

Jackson Real Estate

226 Allegheny St
Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resources® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Listing Date: 6/22/2018
 MLS Name: West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS® MLS
 MLS Listing ID: WB-84486



Legend: ★ Subject Property

FOR SALE • Active: 6/22/2018

Result of Sales Comparison Analysis

\$245,306 (or \$111 / sq ft)

Last Analysis Update: 8/21/2018

\$231,245 – \$257,500
 (or \$105 – \$116 / sq ft)

Number of Comps Chosen

7

Comps Range

\$215,000 – \$259,900

List Price

\$269,000

List Date: 6/22/2018

Current Estimated Value

\$235,170

Last RVM® Update: 7/24/2018

Days in RPR: 60

RVM® Est. Range: \$223,412 – \$246,928

RVM® Confidence: ★★★★★

➔ RVM® Change - Last 1 Month: –

⬆️ RVM® Change - Last 12 Months: 127.48%

This report contains data and information that is publicly available and/or licensed from third parties and is provided to you on an "as is" and "as available" basis. The information is not verified or guaranteed. Neither this report nor the estimated value of a property is an appraisal of the property. Any valuation shown in this report has been generated by use of proprietary computer software that assembles publicly available property records and certain proprietary data to arrive at an approximate estimate of a property's value. Some portions of this report may have been provided by an RPR user; RPR is not responsible for any content provided by its users. RPR and its information providers shall not be liable for any claim or loss resulting from the content of, or errors or omissions in, information contained in this report.

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
 Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Comps Selected In Analysis



Address	52 Ruth Ln Jersey Shore, PA 17740	110 Woodside Cir Jersey Shore, PA 17740	144 Ruth Ln Jersey Shore, PA 17740
Status	🏠 Subject Property	🏠 Sold	🏠 Sold
MLS Name	West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS®/MLS	West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS®/MLS	West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS®/MLS
MLS Listing ID	WB-84486	WB-80564	WB-81378
Proximity		3.3 Mi. W	.09 Mi. NW
Value	\$245,306	\$250,000	\$245,000
Price Per Sq. Ft.	\$111	\$106	\$100
Sale/Finance Concession	-	-	-
Property Type	Single Family Residence	Single Family Residence	Single Family Residence
Property Subtype	Residential - Single Family	Residential - Single Family	Residential - Single Family
Total Rooms	8	6	7
Total Rooms Above Grade	-	-	-
Bedrooms	3	3	4
Bedrooms Above Grade	-	-	-
Living Area sq ft range (low)	-	-	-
Living Area sq ft range (high)	-	-	-
Total Baths	1.2	2.2	2.1
Total Baths Above Grade	-	-	-
Full Baths	1	2	2
Full Baths Above Grade	-	-	-
Partial Baths	2	2	1
Partial Baths Above Grade	-	-	-
Living Area (sq ft)	2,212	2,351	2,450
Living Area Above Grade (sq ft)	2,212	2,351	2,450
Basement (sq ft)	-	-	-
Finished Rooms Below Grade	-	-	-
Lot Size	0.56 acres	0.6 acres	0.59 acres
Lot Dimensions	24394 SF	26005 SF	167x154
Garage	Garage-Double Attached	Yes	Garage-Double Attached
Garage (sq ft)	-	-	-
Pool	No	Yes	No
Location	Outside City Limits, Underground Utility, Residential, Other Recreation Nearby, Near Rail, State Forest Nearby	Developing, Paved Streets, Underground Utility, Residential, Near Rail	Developing, Paved Streets, Views, Residential
Tenure	-	-	-
View	-	-	-
View Factors	Residential	Residential	Residential
Style	-	Contemporary	-
Quality of Construction	-	-	-

SAMPLE





West Branch Valley Association of REALTORS®/MLS
www.wbvamls.com

Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Local Market Conditions: Summary

The Local Market Conditions tables summarize trends and statistics in the local market: properties similar in size in the area around the subject property in the Sales Comparison Analysis.

Results shown in this report are derived from a search of MLS records for 2 to 4 bedroom, 2 to 4 bathroom, 1,659 to 2,765 sq. ft., single family residence listings located within 0.8 miles of the subject property.

Inventory Analysis	Trend (span)		Trend (span)		Trend (Total)	
	Last 7-12 Months (6-month period)	Last 4-6 Months (3-month period)	Last 3 Months (3-month period)			
Sales	4	150% ↑	3	100% →	150% ↑	
Absorption Rate (sales/month)	0.67	150% ↑	1	100% →	150% ↑	
Total # of Active Listings (on last day)	7	100% →	7	100% →	100% →	
Months of Housing Supply	10.5	67% ↓	7	100% →	67% ↓	
Median Comp Sales Price	\$149,250	60% ↓	\$204,900	22% ↓	\$45,000	111% ↑
Median Comp Sales Days in RPR	257	100% →	257	5% ↓	13	5% ↓
Median Comp Listing Price	\$90,000	99% →	\$89,000	185% ↑	\$165,000	183% ↑
Median Comp Listing Days in RPR	-	-	-	-	-	-
Median Sales Price as % of List Price	0.92%	109% →	1%	97% →	0.97%	106% →

Comparable Properties in Local Market	Currently for Sale	Sales Within the Last 12 Months
Count	7	9
Range	\$90,000 – \$269,000	\$1,444 – \$229,000
Average	\$173,800	\$104,443
Median	\$165,000	\$67,600

Property Attributes	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Year Built	1890	1992	1943
Living Area (sq ft)	1,092	2,636	1,766
Lot Size	3,720	26,775	14,881
# Samples	20	-	-

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



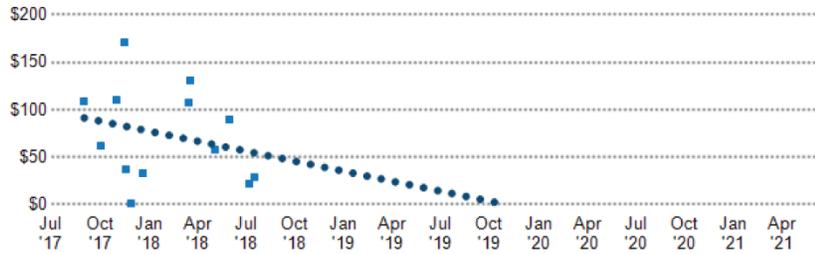
Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Price per Square Foot

This graph compares the local market's median estimated home value per square foot with sample properties in the market.

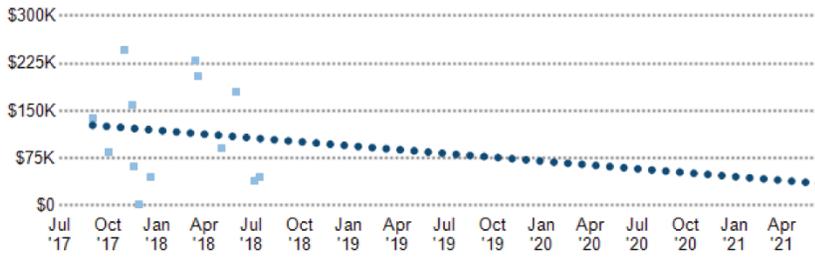
- Price / sq ft
- Trend



Median Sales Price

This graph compares the local market's median sales price with the sales price for the sample properties in the market.

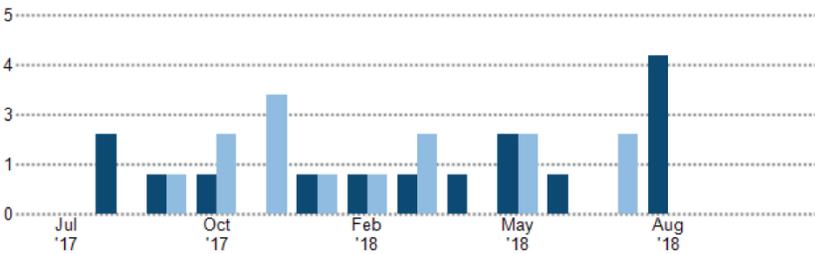
- Sale Price
- Trend



Total Sales and Listings

This graph compares the number of sales with the number of listings in the local market.

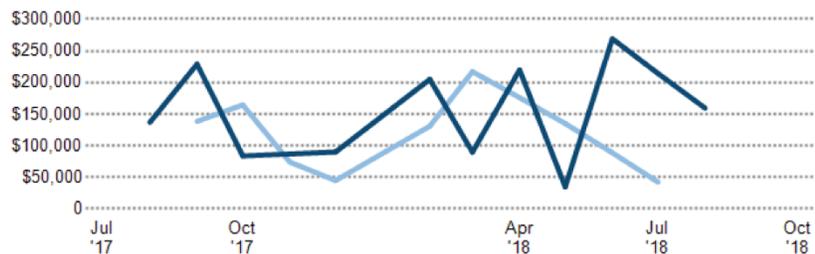
- Listings
- Sales



List Price vs. Sales Price

This graph compares the median listing price with the sales price in the local market.

- Listing Price
- Sales Price



Median Days in RPR

This graph displays the median days in RPR in the local market.

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved. Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



West Branch Valley Association of REALTORS® NMLS
901.406.0000 (ext. 100)

Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

General Market Health Charts

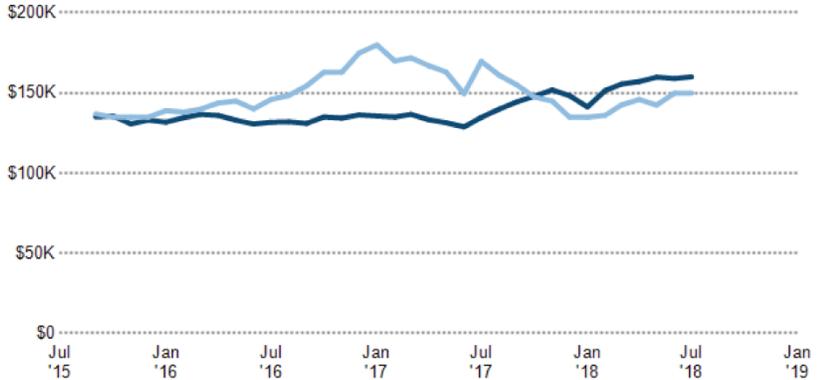
Median Estimated Home Value vs. Median Listing Price

This chart compares a ZIP code's median estimated home value with its median listing price. Estimated home values are generated by a valuation model and are not formal appraisals.

Data Source: Public records data; listing price data from on- and off-market listings sources

Update Frequency: Monthly

- Median Estimated Value
- Median List Price



Median Sales Price vs. Sales Volume

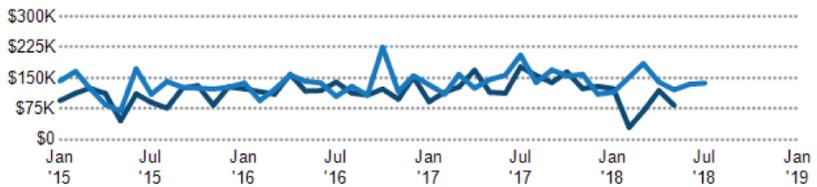
This chart compares the price trend and sales volume for homes in an area. Home prices typically follow sales volume, with a time lag, since sales activity is the driver behind price movements.

Data Source: Public records and listings data

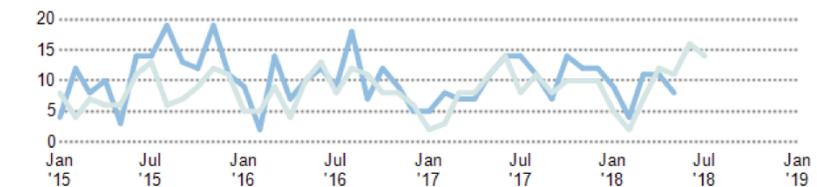
Update Frequency: Monthly

- Median Sales Price Public Records
- Median Sales Price Listings
- Sales Volume Public Records
- Sales Volume Listings

Median Sales Price



Sales Volume



Median Listing Price vs. Listing Volume

This chart compares the listing price and listing volume for homes in an area. Listing prices often follow listing volume, with a time lag, because supply and demand drive price movements.

Data Source: On- and off-market listings sources

Update Frequency: Monthly

- Median List Price
- Listing Volume

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018

RPR® Valuation Exercise

The following section is intended to be a hands-on demonstration of how to use a powerful tool that is available to any NAR member. RPR is an invaluable member benefit offered exclusively to REALTORS® at no additional cost. RPR services every segment of the real estate industry: Residential, Commercial, Brokers, Appraisers, Associations and MLSs. While you can access how-to videos and success strategies on www.rprnar.com, this exercise will show you how you can apply the tool to mastering your CMA process. In order to follow along in this exercise, go to www.rprnar.com, log in, and search a property of your choice.

Home Details—Summary

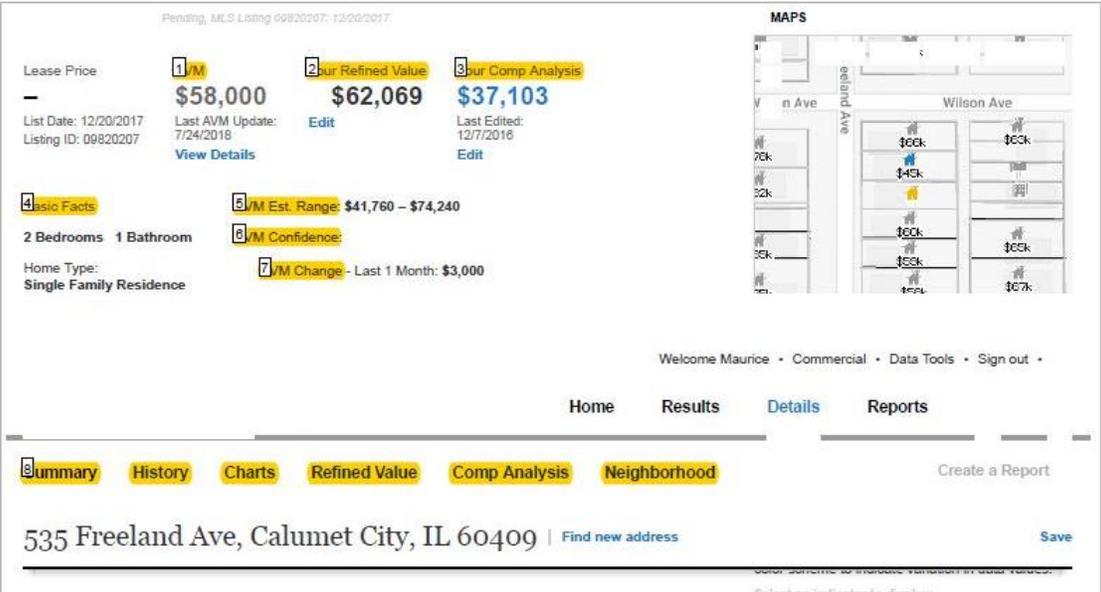
Searching home details enables you to see critical information about the property including value, which is particularly important to your CMA. Recall from Module 2 that automated valuation models (AVMs) are online databases that try to match up similar properties to give an idea of the range of sales prices that have been historically been recorded. As with any data source, the information is only as good as the data input, so it is invariably important to double-check, confirm, and verify the featured home facts.

NAVIGATING HOME DETAILS

When you are navigating throughout the entry, you should be taking note of key fields that will help inform your CMA. The home details page houses a number of these noteworthy fields. Note the highlighted fields in the example below; these fields give you critical insight into the property.

- 1. AVM
- 2. Refined Value
- 3. Comp Analysis
- 4. Basic Facts
- 5. AVM Est. Range
- 6. AVM Confidence
- 7. AVM Change
- 8. Navigation tab

I-Note: **EXPLAIN** to students what each highlighted feature is and what it means. Ensure they understand each part and can apply it effectively.



Navigate to your example property's home details. What is your example property's AVM change? Think about how this AVM change impacts your CMA.

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

PROPERTY HISTORY

As you continue to research the Home Details Summary, you are likely to notice notes and details about the property. While this information can be incredibly valuable to you and your CMA research, you need to double check facts with local county records. Do note that historical photos can be of intrinsic value to you, but there are restrictions on their use.

This section also gives you the ability to review lease details and make changes to the home facts.

The screenshot displays a real estate listing interface. On the left, there is a 'Notes' section with a text area and a 'Property Notes' button. Below this are sections for 'Homeowner Facts' (including owner name, mailing address, and occupancy status) and 'Lease Details' (including lease option, date available, and price per sq ft). On the right, a 'Compare Historical Records' section titled 'HOW THIS ZIP COMPARES Calumet City, IL 60409' features three bar charts comparing the property's metrics to Cook County and Illinois. The metrics are Median Estimated Home Value, 12-Month Change in Median Estimated Home Value, and Median Sales Price.

Area	Value
60409	\$112,590
Cook	\$284,950
Illinois	\$239,800

Area	Change
60409	22.6%
Cook	2.1%
Illinois	1.8%

Area	Price
60409	\$60,000
Cook	\$237,000
Illinois	\$195,000

Navigate to your example property's homeowner facts. Can you see any historical photos of the property? Explain how you will use them.

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

TRENDS AND DATA

When you are preparing your CMA using RPR, you should take the time to view and research the trends and data available to you in the Home Details Summary. As you filter through trends in this section, note the listing data and the price changes here. Other fields of use include the MLS numbers and listing agents. As you aggregate this data, keep in mind that you need to confirm this information against other live sources.

PUBLIC RECORD

As you make your way to the end of the Home Detail Summary, it is worth taking the time to learn some final, extra details about the property you are researching. Is the property in an existing flood zone? Does the property have a good walkability score? What type of deed does the property owner hold? These are all answers you can typically find at the end of the Home Detail Summary report for a property in RPR.

Final items worth noting in the Home Details Summary:

- ▶ Flood Zone
- ▶ Walkability Score
- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Legal Description
- ▶ Tax Info
- ▶ Deed Records

Other Details³ (from Listing and Other Data Sources)

Building Condition: Average

Schools⁴ (from Listing Data)

Loading...

Legal Description⁵ (from Public Records)

Parcel Number: 30-08-312-003

City/Municipality/Township: THORNTON

Census Tract: 170318260.003026

Carrier Route: C003

Abbreviated Description: LOT:5,4 BLK:3 DIST:37 CITY/MUNI/TWP:THORNTON SUBD:F R MOTTS ADD TO VILLAGE OF HAMMOND SEC/TWNRNG/MER:SEC 08 TWN 36N RNG 15E MAP REF:30-08-SW (E&F)

Plat Map: Loading...

Notes:

Add note here

(1000 characters left)

Tax Info⁶ (from Public Records)

Assessment Year: 2016

Assessed Value - Land: \$1,350

Assessed Value - Improvements: \$3,613

Total Assessed Value: \$4,963

Assessor Market Value Year: 2017

Total Assessor Market Value: \$49,630

Tax Rate Code Area: 37029

Tax Year: 2016

Total Tax Amount: \$1,633

Tax Exemption Code: Homestead

Notes:

Add note here

(1000 characters left)

Deed Records⁷ (from Public Records)

Document Type: Corporation Deed

Recording Date: 1/11/2010

Sales Price: \$20,500

Sales Price Code: Full amount computed from Transfer Tax or Excise Tax.

Buyer Name: MAURICE HAMPTON

Buyer ID: Individual(s)

Seller Name: THE BANK OF NEW YORK

Seller ID: Trustee

Document #: 1001116001

Navigate to your example property’s deed records. What document type does your example property have? Identify the buyer and seller:

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

Comparative Analysis

Now that you have a sense of the summary of home details, you should begin your analysis using the comp analysis tool in RPR. You can navigate to this tool by following this path: Home>Property Search>Details>Comp Analysis. As you create a comparative analysis, you can search for comps and set parameters for those searches. You can eliminate and add comps. Your goal is not to provide an exact value; rather, you are aiming to provide a price range.

2775 W Vista Pines Trl, Prescott, AZ 86303 | [Find new address →](#)
 Save

Property Summary

FOR SALE	Days in RPR	Date	Amount	\$/sq ft	Living Area	Lot Size	Beds	Baths	Built
2775 W Vista Pines Trl Prescott, AZ 86303	67 days	6/14/2018 <small>List Date</small>	\$1,995,000 <small>List Price</small>	\$621	3,213 sq ft	4.97 acres	3	2	1998

→

Create

- Comparative Analysis:** build an estimate based on comps
- Sales Comparison Analysis:** a more detailed evaluation

} [What's the difference?](#)

1 Confirm Home Facts

Modify the facts about this property, like square footage and bedrooms. We will use these facts when you search for comps.

2 Search for Comps

Using our custom search tools, select the right comps for this home. The calculated price and range are based on price per square foot. You can customize your reports to include this information or not.

3 Make Adjustments

Rate your comps in relation to your subject property.

4 Review Comp Analysis

If you want to round the number or change the value based on your local expertise, click edit and enter a Recommended Price and Price Range for this property. This will appear in your Seller's Report.

5 Get a Seller's Report

When you are satisfied with your analysis, preserve it or share it by generating a report.

Home Facts: Confirmed | [Edit](#)

Average of Comps: **\$588,116** | [Edit](#)

After choosing your comps

Range: \$515,426 – \$695,752
(or \$183 per sq ft)

Adjustments: **+\$74,375** | [Edit](#)

After rating your comps

Result of Comp Analysis: **\$662,491** | [Edit](#)

Range: \$540,951 – \$800,115
(or \$206 per sq ft)

[Create Report](#)

RPR COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS STEPS

1. Confirm Home Facts

Modify the facts about this property, like square footage and bedrooms. These facts are data points used when you search for comps.

2. Search for Comps

Select the right comps for this home. The calculated price and range are based on price per square foot. You can customize your reports to include this information or not.

3. Make Adjustments

Rate your comps in relation to your subject property.

4. Review Comp Analysis

If you want to round the number or change the value based on your local expertise, click edit and enter a Recommended Price and Price Range for this property. This will appear in your Seller's Report.

5. Get a Seller's Report

When you are satisfied with your analysis, preserve it or share it by generating a report.

Navigate through the Comparative Analysis steps listed above using your example property. What is the recommended price range you arrived at?

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

I-Note: **HIGHLIGHT** a number of useful features to the student, including: detailing what each section does and how they inform pricing, running through each step and why each is important, and why we prefer price range.

DEMONSTRATE the five step process live in RPR.

RPR allows you to share data features on your website, Facebook, and Twitter. Workshop some ideas for how you could share data using this tool:

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

SETTING UP YOUR COMP SEARCH

The comps that the tool serves up is only going to be as good as the information you give the tool in the search setup page. You might have known properties that you can use for your comp search, but more than likely, you will need to search for your comps. You will more than likely be able to identify high quality, accurate comps if you follow the following steps in the RPR Comp Analysis Search:

- ▶ Select similar property types in the Property Type field.
- ▶ Select the appropriate property statuses and apply. Note that you can select multiple.
- ▶ Select the appropriate date in the Recent Date field.
- ▶ Ensure all the property details are as similar to the subject property in your initial search as possible and expand your search from there if needed.

This Property



535 Freeland Ave
Calumet City, IL 60409

Days in RPR	Date	Amount	\$/sq ft	Living Area	Lot Size	Beds	Baths	Built
239 days	12/20/2017 List Date	- Lease Price	-	950 sq ft	4,500 sq ft	2	1	1923

2 Search for the comps you want to use

Add a known property
 Search an area for several properties (then pick the ones you want to use)

1 PROPERTY TYPE

- ... Show All
- Single Family Residence
- Condo/Townhouse/Apt
- Mobile/Manufactured
- Multifamily/Multiplex
- Lot/Land
- Farm/Ranch
- Coop
- Other Residential

2 PROPERTY STATUS

- ... Show All
- Active For Sale
- Pending
- Public Record
- 3 Stressed**
- Under Contract
- Sold
- Withdrawn
- Expired
- Cancelled

KEYWORDS (You can add up to 6)

Enter a keyword

DATE (applies to off-market properties)

Recently

Date Range To:

5 PROPERTY DETAILS

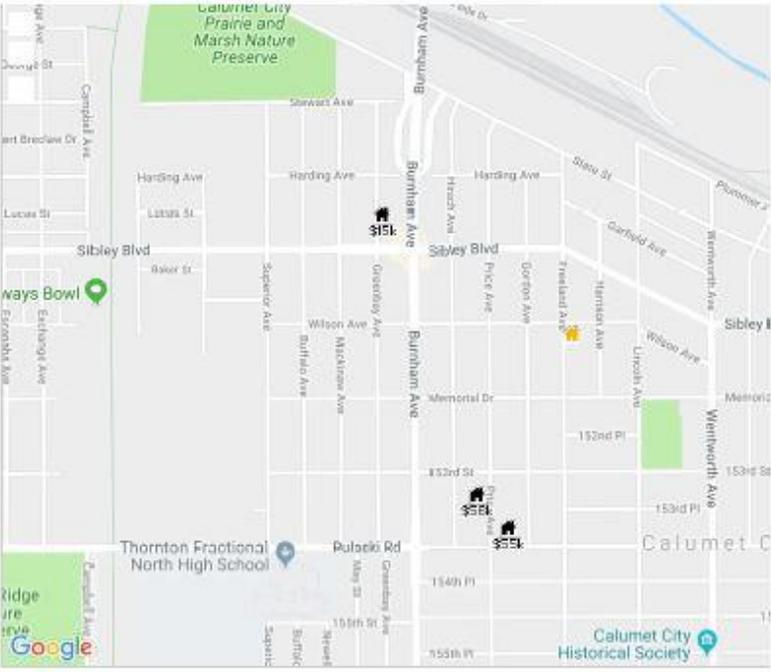
Beds To:

Baths To:

Living Area To: sq ft

Lot Size To:

Draw a shape
Use a custom area
Use a geography



MAP LEGEND

Property Type (Icons) Property Status (Colors)

Single Family Subject Selected Off Market

114

CHOOSING YOUR COMPS

Adjusting your comps is among the most daunting and most important steps in this process. In RPR, The process can be rather straightforward as long as you know what you are looking for in the tool. When you are in the middle of the property valuation process, RPR allows you to search for the comps you want to use. Note that you have the ability to draw a shape, use a custom area, or use a geography.

The following is a list of criteria that will ensure that you are creating a correct, appropriate comp list:

- ▶ Confirm that you are using the area you wish to proceed with by checking the Search Area result.
- ▶ Ensure you have chosen the correct property classification in the Property Type field.
- ▶ The Property Status field criteria depends on the situation of the property.
- ▶ Consider market conditions when you are selecting a date range.

This Property



535 Freeland Ave
Calumet City, IL 60409

Days in RPR	Date	Amount	\$/sq ft	Living Area	Lot Size	Beds	Baths	Built
239 days	12/20/2017	—	—	950 sq ft	4,500 sq ft	2	1	1923
	List Date	Lease Price						

2 Search for the comps you want to use

Add a known property

Search an area for several properties (then pick the ones you want to use)

1 Facets you used to search

5 Search Area: Area shown on map

6 Property Type: Single Family Residence

7 Property Status: Active For Sale

Standing

Abld

10 Date Range: Within last 6 months

11 Property Details: Beds: 2 to 2, Baths: 1 to 1

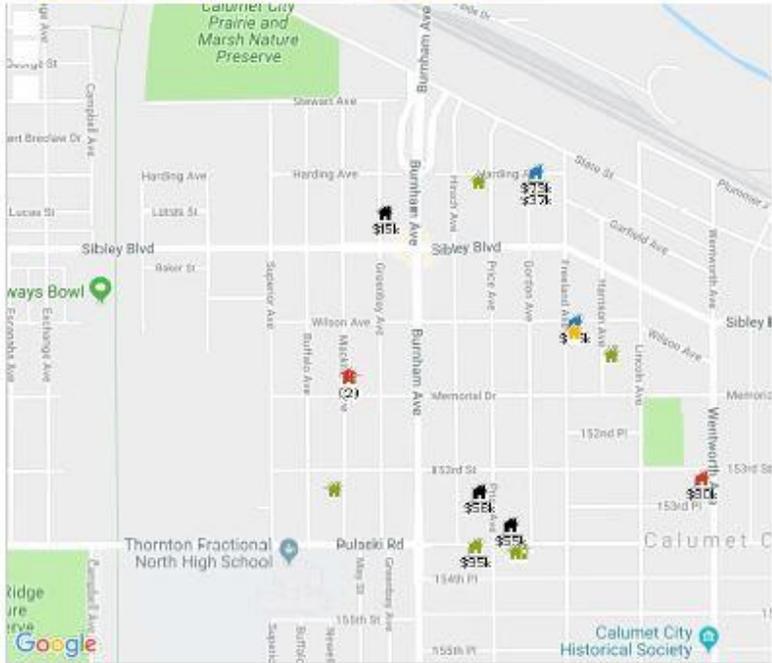
12 Living Area: 700 to 1,200 sq ft

Modify Search

2 Draw a shape

3 Use a custom area

4 Use a geography



Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

Now that you have identified your ideal comp, move outward on the map until you have achieved the appropriate number of comps. Your results page will feature properties in the following format:



.25 MI. 49 days 1/3/2018 Sold Date \$37,020 Sold Price 23 30 sq ft 4 5 0 ss
437 Gordon Ave, Calumet City, IL 60409
APNE: 30-08-111-053
Owner: U S Bank National Association
Details
 7 Add to Comps List

Follow the same steps outlined above. How many comps did you identify for your example property? What considerations did you make when you applied market conditions?

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

OTHER COMP CONCERNS

When identifying and refining your comps, do not forget to keep the following in mind:

- ▶ Choose comps based upon closest closing date.
- ▶ Show price per square comparison.
- ▶ Verify square footage is as close as possible to the subject property.
- ▶ Ensure the bedroom count is as close to the subject property as possible.
- ▶ Ensure the bathroom count is as close to the subject property as possible.
- ▶ Choose comps that are as close as possible though this many not be a factor in older communities such as 100 year old plus homes. This range may be 40 years.

Reporting Considerations

Another benefit of using RPR to work through your comp analysis is that you can utilize the reporting that is available in the tool. With a variety of report types, control over elements to include, and multiple delivery methods, the presentation of the work you put into your CMA will shine in the report styles available.

When you are finalizing the content of your report, pay attention to the following options:

SELECT A REPORT

- ▶ You can choose from a variety of report types, including property report, seller's report, property flyer, mini property report, valuation workbook, market activity report, neighborhood report, or school report. Your selection should reflect the audience of the report you are generating.

PERSONALIZE YOUR REPORT

- ▶ Consider whether you would like to personalize the report with a client or potential client's name and custom message.

COVER PAGE ELEMENTS

- ▶ Your report could include the following elements: name, agent photo, license number, cell phone, work phone, office phone, fax, email, broker logo, brokerage name, office name, or office address. Simply select or deselect them using the radio button function.

PROFILE INFO

- ▶ Last but not least, make sure that your RPR profile has your most up-to-date contact information. You have put in the work; you want to be sure that your clients are able to get ahold of you.

RUN REPORT

- ▶ Click the "Run Report" button at the bottom of the page. Note: your report will expire after 30 days so it is advisable to download a copy of the report if you need to retain it longer.

1 535 Freeland Ave, Calumet City, IL 60409 | [Change Address](#)

2 **Select a report**

- P Property Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- S **Seller's Report** [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- FI Property Flyer [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- M Mini Property Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- V Valuation Workbook [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- A Market Activity Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- N Neighborhood Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- Sc School Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)

3 **Personalize your report**

Include Recipient Name:

Message:

(250 characters left)

4 **Delivery method**

- Display now (you can open or download as a PDF)
- Email to: Cc to Me
From: Mauricehampton@centeredrealty.com

NOTE: Reports expire after 30 days. Please download a copy of this report if you need to retain it longer.

1 CUSTOMIZE YOUR REPORT

5 **Select cover page elements to include:**

- All Elements
- Name Broker Logo
- Agent Photo Brokerage Name
- License # Office Name
- Cell Phone Office Address
- Work Phone
- Office Phone
- Fax
- Email

6 **Generate Report Preferences**

- Show Page Numbers

[Manage Custom Pages](#)

7 **YOUR PROFILE INFO**

Maurice Hampton
 Centered International Realty Corp
 9851 S. Wood St
 Chicago, IL 60643

Centered
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Office: (312) 488-0487
 Mobile: (312) 806-3026
 Work Fax: (312) 277-1925

Main: Service@centeredrealty.com

Follow the same steps outlined above to produce a report. Share your result with a colleague and ask them to comment on your results. How can you continue to improve your process?

I-Note: **LEAD** a discussion based on the questions.

Helpful Websites

Bankrate:

www.bankrate.com

Fannie Mae:

www.fanniemae.com

Freddie Mac:

www.freddiemac.com

Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University:

jchs.harvard.edu

National Association of REALTORS®

- ▶ **2018 Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice:**
www.nar.realtor/about-nar/governing-documents/code-of-ethics/2018-code-of-ethics-standards-of-practice
- ▶ **PSA (Pricing Strategy Advisor) Certification:**
www.pricingstrategyadvisor.org
- ▶ **REALTORS Property Resource® (RPR)®:**
www.narrpr.com
- ▶ **RPR® Blog:**
blog.narrpr.com/training
- ▶ **Remodeling Impact Report:**
nar.realtor/reports/remodeling-impact
- ▶ **Valuation Services Matrix:**
www.realtor.org/appraisal/valuation-services-matrix

Pillar to Post Cost Guide:

<https://pillartopost.com/costguide/>

Remodeling Magazine Cost vs. Value Report:

www.costvsvalue.com

S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Indices:

us.spindices.com/index-family/real-estate/sp-case-shiller

Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP):

www.uspap.org

Glossary

A

Absorption analysis

A study of the number of units of residential or nonresidential property that can be sold or leased over a given period of time in a defined location.

Adjustment

The amount added to or subtracted from the sales price of a comparable property to arrive at an indicated value for the subject property.

Agency

Refers to the relationship between a principal and an agent whereby the principal, expressly or by implication, authorizes the agent to work under the principal's control and on the principal's behalf (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_agency).

Agency, dual

Dual agency occurs when the same agent represents both the seller and the buyer. Individual state laws vary and interpret dual agency rather differently.

Agent

The licensed real estate salesperson or broker who represents buyers or sellers.

Appraisal

The estimation of a home's value based on sales of comparable properties in the neighborhood is one method of doing an appraisal. Appraisals are conducted by a licensed appraiser and are used in the loan process to ensure that the value of the home is equal to or greater than the purchase price.

Appraiser

A person who possesses the education, training, and experience necessary to accurately render an opinion as to the value of real estate.

B

Broker price opinion (BPO)

(1) The real estate broker's opinion of the expected final net sale price, determined prior to the acquisition of the property (www.realtor.org).

(2) An estimate prepared by a real estate broker, agent, or sales person that details the probable selling price of a particular piece of real estate property and provides a varying level of detail about the property's condition, market, and neighborhood, and information on comparable sales, but does not include an automated valuation model (www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ203/content-detail.html).

C

Client

The party or parties who engage an appraiser (by employment or contract) in a specific assignment.

Code of ethics

Rules of ethical conduct, such as those that govern the actions of members of a professional group.

Comparable

A recently sold property in the subject's market that is substantially similar to the subject. Comparables are used as a basis for determining the value of the subject.

Comparative market analysis (CMA)

- (1) Used to help establish a realistic price range for a home, a CMA usually includes a review of comparable properties in the immediate area currently on the market or that have recently sold.
- (2) An estimate of a home's value compared with others. This differs from an appraisal in that property currently for sale may be taken into consideration (competition for the subject property).

Competency rule

The rule that an appraiser must be competent to perform the assignment, acquire the necessary competency to perform the assignment, or decline or withdraw from the assignment.

Competition

A currently listed property that can compete for the buyers of a given subject.

Confidential information

Information that is either identified by the client as confidential when providing it to an appraiser and that is not available from any other source, or classified as confidential or private by applicable law or regulation.

Conformity

The principle that maximum value is created when a property is in harmony with its surroundings.

Contribution

The principle that the value of any part of a property is measured by its effect on the value as a whole.

Cost

The total amount spent to acquire or build a property or component. Cost may or may not reflect value. Cost is a historic quantity and does not vary over time.

Cost-based method

A method for adjusting comparables in which the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on the actual cost to construct or add it.

D

Debt reduction

The process of reducing the amount of money owed on an unsecured loan or purchase.

Depreciation

Loss in value due to any cause, including physical deterioration, functional obsolescence, and external obsolescence.

Distressed sales

Generally refers to foreclosures and short sales, selling at discounts of 15 to 20 percent from nondistressed market prices. This can exert a major negative impact on overall market prices.

F

Fair market value

The most probable price real estate should bring in a sale occurring under normal market conditions.

Fannie Mae

The Federal National Mortgage Association, a leading source of financing for mortgage lenders, providing access to affordable mortgage financing in all markets at all times.

Foreclosure

A legal process in which a default in payment or other terms of the mortgage note causes the property used as security for the mortgage to be sold to satisfy the debt. The title to the property in the mortgage is passed either to the holder of the mortgage or to a third party.

Foreclosure sale

Property sold to the highest bidder, typically at auction.

Freddie Mac (FHLMC)

A leading, government-sponsored enterprise and publicly traded company that creates guidelines on suitable properties, down payment, income and credit requirements, and the maximum mortgage amount. The maximum loan limit is reset each year by Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae.

H

Highest and best use

The reasonable and probable use of a property that will support the highest present value of the land.

L

License law

Refers to individual states' real estate laws, regulations, and the licensing requirements for real estate agents in a specific jurisdiction.

Limiting conditions

Specifications in an appraisal report that restrict the assumptions in the report to certain situations (e.g., date and use of the appraisal, definition of value, definition of surveys used or not used, etc.).

M

Market-based method

A method for adjusting comparables in which the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on market knowledge or a paired-sales analysis.

Market expectations

What a probable buyer presumes to find in a house of a particular age, type, location, and price range.

Market price

The price at which a property actually sells. This value is set by buyers and sellers and is not always the same as market value.

Market value

The most likely price a property should sell for in a competitive and open market, where both buyer and seller act prudently and knowledgeably and neither is under any undue duress to complete the transaction, and where the property has been exposed to the open market for a reasonable time.

Mortgage

A legal document in which real estate is named as the security or collateral for the repayment of the loan.

N

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR)

The National Association of REALTORS®, “The Voice for Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing over 1.2 million members, including NAR’s institutes, societies and councils, involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

Neighborhood

A loosely defined geographical location within a city, town, or suburb that often consists of social communities with considerable face-to-face interaction among their members.

Neighborhood life cycle

The period during which most of the properties in a neighborhood undergo the stages of development, equilibrium, decline, and revitalization.

O

Outlier

A property that sold for a price that is extremely high or low based on all other comparables.

P

Paired-sales analysis

An analysis in which a specific feature is compared across multiple comparable transactions to isolate its effect on price.

Personal property

Identifiable tangible objects that are considered by the general public as being “personal” (e.g., furnishings, artwork, antiques, gems and jewelry, collectibles, machinery and equipment). All tangible property that is not classified as real estate.

Price

The amount asked, offered, or paid for a property.

Progression

The principle that the value of an inferior property is enhanced if surrounded by properties of greater value.

Q

Qualitative

Pertaining to, or concerned with, quality or qualities.

Quantitative

Pertaining to, or concerned with, measuring quantity.

Quick sale

A quick sale involves buying a property for a price lower than its normal value. This normally happens when the mortgage loan could not be paid by the borrower or home owner. After a couple of months that the debtor failed to pay for the loan, the lender decides to sell the property for a lower price, rather than putting too much pressure on the borrower (<http://ezinearticles.com/?What-is-a-Quick-Sale-in-Real-Estate?&id=3703139>).

R

Real estate

An identified parcel or tract of land, including improvements, if any.

Real estate owned (REO)

If a foreclosure sale is unsuccessful, ownership of the property is transferred involuntarily to the lender.

Real property

The interests, benefits, and rights inherent in the ownership of real estate.

Regression

The principle that a higher-priced property is worth less if located amid lower-priced properties.

S

Sales comparison approach

One of three approaches to value in appraisal theory. In this approach, value is estimated by comparing similar properties that have sold recently to the subject property.

Salesperson

Any person who, for compensation or valuable consideration, is employed either directly or indirectly by a real estate broker to work with a client to sell or offer to sell; or to buy or offer to buy; or to negotiate the purchase, sale, or exchange of real estate; or to lease, rent, or offer for rent any real estate; or to negotiate leases thereof or improvements thereon. Such a salesperson or agent must secure a state license.

Scope of work

The type and extent of research and analyses in an assignment. An appraiser must identify the problem to be solved, determine and perform the scope of work necessary to develop credible assignment results, and disclose the scope of work in the report.

Selling price

The actual price that a buyer pays for a property.

Short sale

As used in MLS rules, a short sale is defined as a transaction where title transfers, where the sales price is insufficient to pay the total of all liens and costs of sale, and where the seller does not bring sufficient liquid assets to the closing to cure all deficiencies.

Stigmatized property

A property in which an actual or rumored event might diminish a buyer's desire for the property even though the property is not physically affected.

Subject

The property being evaluated.

Substitution

The principle that the maximum value of a property is set by what it would cost to purchase an equal property. Buyers will not pay more for a property than the cost of acquiring it elsewhere.

Supply and demand

The principle that the value of any good or service will rise as demand increases and supply decreases, and fall as demand decreases and supply increases.

V

Valuation

The act of assessing the value or price of a property or investment.

Value

The subjective judgment on the relative worth of something.



Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

Student Manual

v2.0

Copyright ©2018 Center for Specialized REALTOR® Education

V 2.0

Note: The National Association of REALTORS® and the Center for Specialized REALTOR® Education, their faculty, agents, and employees are not engaged in rendering legal, accounting, financial, tax, or other professional services through these course materials. If legal advice or other expert assistance is required, the student should seek competent professional advice.

Center for Specialized REALTOR® Education

430 North Michigan Avenue

Chicago, Illinois 60611

www.pricingstrategyadvisor.org

psa@realtors.org

Acknowledgements

The NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® expresses gratitude and appreciation to the following individuals for their subject matter and industry expertise, input and feedback, and commitment to providing the best education for today's real estate professionals:

Lynn Madison,

ABR®, ABRM®, BPOR, GRI, PSA, SFR®, SRES®
Schaumburg, Illinois

Melanie McLane,

ABR®, CRB, CRS, e-PRO®, GREEN®, GRI, PSA, RAA, RSPS, SRES®
Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania

Candy Cooke,

ABR®, CRB, CREI, e-PRO®, GAA, GREEN®, GRI, PSA, SFR®, SRES®, TAHS, TRLP
Austin, Texas

Maurice Hampton,

ABR®, AHWD, CIPS e-PRO®, GREEN®, MRP, PSA, RENE, RSPS, SFR®, SRS
Chicago, Illinois

Contents

- Introduction1**
 - Welcome..... 3
 - Instructor and Student Introductions..... 3
 - About This Course..... 3
 - How to Earn the Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) Certification 4
 - What You Will Learn 4
- Module 1: Principles of Pricing7**
 - Learning Objectives 9
 - What Is a CMA? 9
 - Valuation Services Matrix..... 11
 - The Purpose of a CMA 12
 - Who Needs CMAs? 12
 - Valuation Language and Basic Principles..... 15
 - Market Value According to Fannie Mae..... 17
 - Pricing and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics 18
- Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables25**
 - Learning Objectives 27
 - The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject 27
 - Characteristics of Comparables..... 27
 - Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables 32
 - Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Comparables..... 34
 - Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables 35
 - Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets..... 36
 - REALTORS Property Resource (RPR®) 37
- Module 3: Preparing the CMA49**
 - Learning Objectives 51
 - Methods of Adjusting Comparables 51
 - Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables 56
 - Date of Sale and Time Adjustments 56
 - Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments 56
 - Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments 59

Module 4: Presenting the CMA.....	65
Learning Objectives	67
What the CMA Report Contains	67
Guiding Clients through the CMA.....	69
The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing.....	70
Using Local MLS or RPR Statistics	72
Module 5: Working with Appraisers	75
Learning Objectives	77
The Appraiser’s Role and Responsibilities.....	77
Steps in Working with the Appraiser.....	78
How to Read an Appraisal Report	80
When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price	81
Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits.....	85
Learning Objectives	87
Listening to the Market	87
Educating Clients	91
The Pricing Pyramid.....	93
Revisiting Price.....	94
Legal and Ethical Requirements	94
Conclusion	96
Resources	99
Valuation Workbook Sample Pages.....	101
RPR® Valuation Exercise.....	107
Helpful Websites	119
Glossary	120



Introduction

Welcome

NAR is pleased to welcome you to today's course on pricing properties, CMAs, and the role of agents in the valuation process. Please take advantage of this opportunity to engage in the subject matter, ask questions, and share your experiences and opinions. You all have something to learn and something to contribute.

Instructor and Student Introductions

About This Course

The 21st century has so far presented multiple challenges to the real estate industry, notably, a housing boom and rising property values in the early 2000s, followed by economic decline, mortgage defaults, and now a seller's market in many areas. Determining property values depends more than ever on professional expertise and competence, the best use of technology, and a commitment to approaching the pricing assignment from all pertinent perspectives.

This course is specifically designed to help residential real estate agents and brokers enhance their skills in pricing properties, creating CMAs, working with appraisers, and guiding clients through the anxieties and misperceptions they often have about home values.

How to Earn the Pricing Strategy Advisor (PSA) Certification

- ▶ Be a member in good standing of the National Association of REALTORS®.
- ▶ Complete the Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA course and pass the exam (if required in your state for CE).
- ▶ Complete two webinars.
- ▶ Submit an online application and a one-time fee of \$179.

Benefits

- ▶ Education in classroom and online formats
- ▶ Use of the PSA logo and name on your marketing materials to promote your certification
- ▶ Downloadable PSA certificate
- ▶ Differentiation as a PSA at NAR.realtor and realtor.com®
- ▶ Quarterly e-newsletter
- ▶ Facebook private networking group

For more information on PSA Certification Program requirements and benefits, go to www.pricingstrategyadvisor.org.

What You Will Learn

This course will discuss the following topics:

Module 1: Principles of Pricing

- ▶ What Is a CMA?
- ▶ The Purpose of a CMA
- ▶ Who Needs CMAs?
- ▶ Valuation Language and Basic Principles
- ▶ Market Value According to Fannie Mae
- ▶ Pricing and the REALTOR® Code of Ethics

Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables

- ▶ The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject
- ▶ Characteristics of Comparables
- ▶ Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables
- ▶ Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Principles
- ▶ Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables
- ▶ Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets
- ▶ REALTORS Property Resource® (RPR®)

Module 3: Preparing the CMA

- ▶ Methods of Adjusting Comparables
- ▶ Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables
- ▶ Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments
- ▶ Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments

Module 4: Presenting the CMA

- ▶ What the CMA Report Contains
- ▶ Guiding Clients through the CMA
- ▶ The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing

Module 5: Working with Appraisers

- ▶ The Appraiser's Role and Responsibilities
- ▶ Steps in Working with the Appraiser
- ▶ How to Read an Appraisal Report
- ▶ When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price

Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

- ▶ Listening to the Market
- ▶ Educating Clients
- ▶ The Pricing Pyramid
- ▶ Revisiting Price
- ▶ Legal and Ethical Requirements



Module 1: Principles of Pricing

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to

- ▶ Identify the purpose and benefits of CMAs
- ▶ Define key terms related to pricing
- ▶ Interpret Article 11 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics as it relates to pricing properties

This Module looks at some of the important foundational concepts behind pricing properties, beginning with an overview of comparative market analyses. In addition to defining a CMA, we will define some other basic pricing terminology that will be used throughout the course. Finally, we will consider components of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics that relate directly to pricing properties.

What Is a CMA?

A CMA is an estimate of the probable selling price of a property. The price typically is expressed as a range rather than a single quantity.

A CMA reflects the following information:

- ▶ An inspection of the subject property
- ▶ An analysis of the subject neighborhood
- ▶ An analysis of local and regional market information and trends
- ▶ A description of comparable properties that are similar to the subject property

In this course, we will touch on all these aspects of a CMA, paying particular attention to the critical task of identifying and analyzing comparable properties. A key principle of CMAs is that they are built on comparisons between the property being evaluated and other properties—both those recently sold and those on the market now—that are substantially similar to it. CMAs must be prepared by a licensed real estate broker, agent, or salesperson, or a registered, licensed, or certified appraiser.

Not the Same: CMAs and Appraisals

A CMA reflects a licensed real estate broker's analysis of similar, recently sold properties to derive an indication of the probable sales price of a particular property. It is not an appraisal and should not be referred to as one. Module 5 discusses what appraisers do and how real estate agents work with them.

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

A CMA is one of four main valuation services used in residential real estate transactions, as summarized below. Note that a CMA may be used for a variety of purposes. In this course, we focus on its purpose in buying and selling residential real estate.

Valuation Services Matrix

Valuation	Definition	Who	Use
CMA	An estimate of the probable selling price of a property	Real estate licensees	A CMA helps identify or project a house's listing or selling price. The CMA is not the only factor in determining listing price; rather, it is a guide for the owner to see the active and sold competition and is used to help the seller determine a listing price. The CMA can also be used, depending on state laws, for a variety of other purposes, including loan modifications, short sales and foreclosure/REO purchases, value trend analysis, mediation, and negotiation. It should not solely be used to value collateral in a real estate transaction where a mortgage is being originated.
Appraisal	As defined by the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, the act or process of developing an opinion of value	Licensed or certified appraisers	Generally used to value collateral in a real estate transaction. Appraisals are required for most federally related transactions above \$250,000. Exceptions include transactions where no new money is involved. In practice, appraisals are used for the vast majority of purchase money transactions involving a loan. For the most part, lenders or servicers determine the use of appraisal or other methodology for transactions that are not purchase money.
Automated Valuation Model	Service or software that provides property valuations, often based on mathematical modeling	Lender, servicer, appraisal staff, investor	Often used by lenders or secondary markets to confirm valuations provided in appraisal report, but should not solely be used to value collateral in a real estate transaction where a mortgage is being originated. May be used as a valuation option for other transactions, such as refinances. Also used to verify appraisal reports.
Broker Price Opinion	An estimate of the probable selling price of a property	Real estate licensees	May be used, depending on state laws, for a variety of purposes, including loan modifications, short sales and foreclosure/REO purchases, value trend analysis, mediation, and negotiation; should not solely be used to value collateral in a real estate transaction where a mortgage is being originated.*

Source: <https://www.nar.realtor/appraisal-valuation/valuation-services-matrix>

* Where permitted by states, BPOs and CMAs are technically permitted for purchase money transactions when the home is less than \$250,000. However, CMAs are not typically used for this purpose. In June 1994, the federal regulators published a final rule that increases to \$250,000 the threshold below which national banks are not required to obtain appraisals prepared by licensed or certified appraisers for real estate loans.

The Purpose of a CMA

The purpose of a CMA is to establish an accurate range of value for a property that a seller wishes to sell or a buyer wishes to buy. An accurate range is one that reflects market conditions at the time and place of the desired transaction.

After an accurate property value range has been determined, the CMA is used to help sellers identify an asking price and buyers identify an offer price. In other words, a CMA provides an objective, market-driven starting point for pricing properties.

Who Needs CMAs?

Sellers, buyers, and real estate professionals all need and use CMAs. Let's take a closer look at each group's motivations for using CMAs and the benefits they derive from them.

Sellers

Every agent has a story (probably many stories!) of sellers who overestimated the value of their home. Many factors can contribute to this misperception of value. Sellers might hear exaggerated sales amounts for neighboring homes through local gossip. They might apply broad market trends and simplistic assumptions to come up with an unreasonably high value. They might believe they can recoup the cost of every home improvement they have made over the years. Perhaps above all, they attach a high value to their home based on their emotions and pride of ownership.

A CMA provides the data and reasoning to help sellers see not only the value of their home, but also why that value is accurate. Sellers who understand the objective logic for valuing their home are more likely to list their home at an accurate price for its market. As a result, they are also more likely to sell their home quickly and efficiently. Owners who are able to sell promptly avoid much of the stress and disruption of repeated showings of their homes. If they are under pressure to move—for example, for a job or to downsize to a more affordable home—an efficient sale saves them further anxiety.

Sometimes sellers undervalue their property, such as when an estate is interested in selling a home quickly to distribute the proceeds. A CMA helps protect sellers against undervaluing as well as overvaluing a home.

Buyers

Buyers are often at a great disadvantage in knowing the market value of a home they want to purchase. First-time homebuyers might be especially naïve about the many variables that affect the market. If they are moving to a different location—even if just to a bordering town—they could be unaware of local trends that differ significantly from those of their current neighborhood.

A CMA allows buyers to make offers based on objective data relevant to the specific market. Buyers are less likely to make a lowball offer in a competitive market, potentially losing the home to another buyer. They are less likely to make a too-high offer that eventually is scuttled because a lender won't offer a mortgage at that price. And they are less likely to overpay for a home, thus freeing up their financial resources for other important life expenses.

Agents

To serve the best interests of their buyer and seller clients, real estate agents need CMAs.

A well-researched CMA is a listing agent's greatest tool in pricing a home appropriately. A listing that is properly priced is more likely to sell quickly and efficiently. A listing that is overpriced will not be competitive in its market and will more likely languish without offers. Overpriced, unsold listings are efficiency- and income-killers for agents. And they don't generate warm feelings or recommendations from clients.

Complaints about incorrect pricing are among the top legal claims made against real estate professionals. When buyers feel they have overpaid or sellers feel they have undersold in property transactions, they are apt to feel resentful, angry, and cheated, and are likely to blame the professionals who guided them, including their real estate agent.

Are you acting as a disclosed dual agent in a transaction? Requirements are state-specific, but if you prepare a CMA for the seller while acting as a disclosed dual agent, you should also do so for the buyer. Not doing so puts the buyer at a disadvantage.

Advantages of CMAs for...

Sellers

- ▶ Sellers receive a fact-based, objective assessment of their home's value.
- ▶ Sellers don't experience the stress and disruption that can occur when homes languish on the market.
- ▶ Sellers are protected from undervaluing their home.
- ▶ Sellers avoid the delay that occurs when they accept a high offer and the property does not appraise for the offer price.

Buyers

- ▶ Buyers receive fact-based, objective information about homes, which is especially important when they are not familiar with the local market.
- ▶ Buyers are less likely to lose the home they really want because their offer is too low.
- ▶ Buyers are less likely to encounter problems obtaining a mortgage because the house appraises below the offer price.
- ▶ Buyers are less likely to overpay for a home, thus preserving financial resources for other important home and life expenses.

Agents

- ▶ Listings don't languish, sapping agents' time, energy, and income.
- ▶ Clients are less likely to feel resentful about—and blame the agent for—the price they paid or received.
- ▶ Clients are more likely to be satisfied and recommend the agent's services to others.

Valuation Language and Basic Principles

Before exploring the process of researching, preparing, and presenting CMAs, it is important to understand some basic terms and concepts of valuation.

▶ **Subject**

The property being evaluated.

▶ **Comparable**

A recently sold property in the subject's market that is substantially similar to the subject. Comparables are used as a basis for determining the value of the subject. *Comp* is often used as an abbreviated version of *comparable*.

▶ **Competition**

A currently listed property that can compete for the buyers of a given subject.

▶ **Adjustment**

The amount added to or subtracted from the sales price of a comparable property to arrive at an indicated value for the subject property. Not all comparables require adjustments. Module 3 has more details about when adjustments are needed and how to make them.

▶ **Neighborhood**

A loosely defined geographical location within a city, town, or suburb. A neighborhood often consists of social communities with considerable face-to-face interaction among their members. Neighborhoods are important because prices vary considerably in different neighborhoods.

▶ **Cost**

The total amount spent to acquire or build a property or property component. A cost is a historic quantity and does not vary over time.

▶ **Price**

The amount for which a specific property sold at a particular point in time, or at which a property is currently being marketed. Price might or might not reflect market value.

▶ **Market Value**

The most likely price a property should sell for in a competitive and open market, where both buyer and seller act prudently and knowledgeably and neither is under any undue duress to complete the transaction, and where the property has been exposed to the open market for a reasonable time. The market value is also referred to as the fair market value.

► **Market Price**

What a property actually sells for. This value is set by the buyers and sellers and is not always the same as market value.

Note that the terms *cost*, *price*, and *value* are often used interchangeably—and incorrectly so. Consider sellers, who often think that maintenance costs should contribute dollar for dollar to the price of their home; this is an example of confusing *cost* with *value*. For example, if sellers recently installed a new roof that cost them \$15,000, they might expect this improvement to boost the value of the home by \$15,000. But roofs are among the minimum requirements for a house: A buyer expects the home to have one, and not all of the maintenance cost can be recouped in the sale price. All other things being equal, a home with a new roof would have a higher value than a home with an older roof—but that higher value probably will not reflect the full cost of the new roof.

► **Conformity**

Maximum value is created when the property is in harmony with its surroundings. When the property conforms to existing neighborhood standards and is similar in design, construction, size, and age, its value will be more than if it does not.

► **Contribution**

The value of any part of a property is measured by its effect on the value as a whole. One part of this is that value can decrease as the number increases. A three-bedroom home with one bath compared to a three-bedroom with two baths will add significant value for the second. If the same property has three baths, the value of the third would not be as great as the value of the second. The other principle of contribution is apparent in the difference between the value of a swimming pool or indoor basketball court and the value of an updated kitchen or bath. The updated features will add value, whereas the pool or basketball court might not.

► **Regression**

The principle that a higher-priced property is worth less if located amid lower-priced properties.

► **Progression**

The principle that the value of an inferior property is enhanced if surrounded by properties of greater value.

▶ **Substitution**

The maximum value of a property is set by what it would cost to purchase an equal property. Buyers will not pay more for a property than the cost of acquiring it elsewhere.

▶ **Sales comparison approach**

One of three valuation techniques used to determine market value. The sales comparison approach is generally the only technique used by real estate agents. Appraisers may use this approach or others, such as the cost approach and income approach. In the sales comparison approach, the subject property is compared to recently sold comparable properties and adjustments are made for the differences between the subject and each comparable.

Market Value According to Fannie Mae

Fannie Mae (the Federal National Mortgage Association) is a congressionally chartered, shareholder-owned company that is the nation's largest supplier of home mortgage funds. Fannie Mae's definition of *market value* is a bit more formal than the definition provided previously, and worth considering:

Market value is the most probable price that a property should bring in a competitive and open market under all conditions requisite to a fair sale, the buyer and seller, each acting prudently, knowledgeably and assuming the price is not affected by undue stimulus. Implicit in this definition is the consummation of a sale as of a specified date and the passing of title from seller to buyer under conditions whereby:

- ▶ buyer and seller are typically motivated;
- ▶ both parties are well informed or well advised, and each acting in what he or she considers his/her own best interest;
- ▶ a reasonable time is allowed for exposure in the open market;
- ▶ payment is made in terms of cash in U.S. dollars or in terms of financial arrangements comparable thereto; and
- ▶ the price represents the normal consideration for the property sold unaffected by special or creative financing or sales concessions granted by anyone associated with the sale

We will see the significance of some aspects of Fannie Mae's definition later in the course as we consider specific pricing situations.

Pricing and the REALTOR[®] Code of Ethics

For a description of their roles and responsibilities, real estate professionals can find no better resource than the Code of Ethics developed by NAR. Article 11 focuses on the real estate agent's role and responsibilities in listing properties, advertising, representing a seller or buyer, and concluding transactions. Article 11 also outlines a real estate professional's responsibilities when preparing an opinion of property value or price.

What the Code Says

ARTICLE 11 READS:

The services which REALTORS[®] provide to their clients and customers shall conform to the standards of practice and competence which are reasonably expected in the specific real estate disciplines in which they engage; specifically, residential real estate brokerage, real property management, commercial and industrial real estate brokerage, land brokerage, real estate appraisal, real estate counseling, real estate syndication, real estate auction, and international real estate.

REALTORS[®] shall not undertake to provide specialized professional services concerning a type of property or service that is outside their field of competence unless they engage the assistance of one who is competent on such types of property or service, or unless the facts are fully disclosed to the client. Any persons engaged to provide such assistance shall be so identified to the client and their contribution to the assignment should be set forth. (Amended 1/10)

STANDARD OF PRACTICE 11-1 READS:

When REALTORS[®] prepare opinions of real property value or price they must:

- 1. be knowledgeable about the type of property being valued,*
- 2. have access to the information and resources necessary to formulate an accurate opinion, and*
- 3. be familiar with the area where the subject property is located unless lack of any of these is disclosed to the party requesting the opinion in advance.*

When an opinion of value or price is prepared other than in pursuit of a listing or to assist a potential purchaser in formulating a purchase offer, the opinion shall include the following unless the party requesting the opinion requires a specific type of report or different data set:

- 1. identification of the subject property*
- 2. date prepared*

3. *defined value or price*
4. *limiting conditions, including statements of purpose(s) and intended user(s)*
5. *any present or contemplated interest, including the possibility of representing the seller/landlord or buyers/tenants*
6. *basis for the opinion, including applicable market data*
7. *if the opinion is not an appraisal, a statement to that effect*
8. *disclosure of whether and when a physical inspection of the property's exterior was conducted*
9. *disclosure of whether and when a physical inspection of the property's interior was conducted*
10. *disclosure of whether the REALTOR® has any conflicts of interest (Amended 1/14)*

STANDARD OF PRACTICE 11-2 READS:

The obligations of the Code of Ethics in respect of real estate disciplines other than appraisal shall be interpreted and applied in accordance with the standards of competence and practice which clients and the public reasonably require to protect their rights and interests considering the complexity of the transaction, the availability of expert assistance, and, where the REALTOR® is an agent or subagent, the obligations of a fiduciary. (Adopted 1/95)

Value or Price?

Article 11 and its Standards of Practice use the terms *value* and *price* to mean the same thing. But you should be aware that among real estate professionals and in different states, these terms are sometimes used to refer to different practitioners and tasks. The terms *value* and *valuation* sometimes are reserved to pertain to appraisals and the work of appraisers, whereas *pricing* pertains to CMAs, listing prices, and the work of real estate brokers and agents. In some states, agents are able to value (they are allowed to perform BPOs), and in some states, they can do an appraisal.

For the rest of this course, we generally will use the terms *price* and *pricing* to refer to the work of real estate agents preparing value opinions for their clients.

The Importance of Competency

The article and standards make clear that REALTORS® must be competent in preparing opinions of price. Competency is gained through experience and affiliation with another REALTOR® who has experience and knowledge. No one comes into the business competent. We all find ourselves involved in “new waters” doing things in real estate we have not done before. However, agents must recognize when the level of competence required is beyond their abilities, and act accordingly. Again, these requirements are incumbent on realtor-appraisers as well as realtor-brokers.

SPECIFICALLY, ACCORDING TO STANDARD OF PRACTICE 11-1, REALTORS® MUST:

▶ **“...be knowledgeable about the type of property being valued.”**

Many agents have experience in pricing residential property, but not complex commercial or special-purpose property. For example, consider an agent whose business is entirely focused on high-rise condominium units. This agent will be at a distinct disadvantage in attempting to form a price opinion on a single-family home. Agents should ask themselves, “Do I understand this segment of the market and how it behaves?”

▶ **“...have access to the information and resources necessary to formulate an accurate opinion.”**

The agent must be able to consult relevant resources in forming an opinion about property price, such as the MLS and public records. Agents should ask themselves, “What types of data and information are required to price this property, and do I have access to that data and information?”

▶ **“...be familiar with the area where the subject property is located.”**

This requirement speaks to the need for geographic competence, the agent’s knowledge of the marketplace in which the property is located. Each geographic market has its own quirks and nuances, and agents can easily find themselves out of their area of competence. Agents should ask themselves, “Do I have geographic competency in this area?”

If a REALTOR® lacks any of the preceding aspects of competence, he or she must disclose this in advance to the buyer or seller who is requesting the price opinion. The buyer or seller can then make an informed decision about whether to have the REALTOR® proceed with the opinion.

Note that Article 11 states that REALTORS® can “engage the assistance of one who is competent” when they undertake to provide services outside their own field of competence. In a situation like this, the REALTOR® must also identify the person(s) so engaged and their specific contribution to the client.

Consider, for example, an agent who is asked to list and price a commercial property, but his focus has always been residential. The sellers know the agent personally and want him to represent them. Fortunately for our agent, he works in a large company with a commercial division. He will seek the assistance of a commercial practitioner—and expect to pay for that assistance, either in a split commission or a referral fee.

Finally, note that Standard of Practice 11-1 lists the specific information that must be included in a pricing opinion when “an opinion of value or price is prepared other than in pursuit of a listing or to assist a potential purchaser in formulating a purchase offer.” This course focuses on pricing properties within the context of listing a property or preparing a purchase offer, but property owners ask for price opinions for many other reasons as well. For example:

- ▶ The sellers are getting a divorce, and it is amicable (so far). One party wants to buy the other one out, so they need a price for the house.
- ▶ The property is an estate, and the family might keep it—they want a price.
- ▶ A consumer is questioning the assessed value on his home, used to calculate property taxes. In his location, assessed value is supposed to be the market value of the property, so he wants a price.

The Code is very specific about what information must be included in your report for cases like these. And the competency requirements are just as relevant in these situations as any other.

Appraisers also must meet competency requirements, as outlined by USPAP. Many appraisers are also REALTORS® and have access to the MLS. These REALTOR®/appraisers must abide by both USPAP *and* the NAR Code of Ethics.

USPAP contains the generally accepted standards for professional appraisal practice. According to USPAP, the appraiser’s competency applies to his or her familiarity with a specific type of property, a market, a geographical area, and an analytical method.

Before accepting or entering into an agreement to perform an appraisal assignment, the appraiser must identify the problem to be addressed and have the knowledge and experience needed to complete the assignment competently. If the appraiser does not have the required knowledge and experience, he or she must:

- ▶ Disclose this fact to the client before accepting the appraisal assignment,
- ▶ Take appropriate steps to complete the assignment competently, and
- ▶ Describe in the appraisal report his or her lack of knowledge or experience and the steps taken to complete the assignment competently.

Complete USPAP rules and guidelines can be found at www.uspap.org.

Exercise 1.1:
Is Agent Alex Competent to Develop This Price Opinion?

Alex is a residential agent in a fairly large city. He concentrates on the north side of this city because he lives there and his office is there. He prospects in several residential subdivisions on the north side of town. For each of the following scenarios, explain why Alex is or is not competent to develop the price opinion. If he is not competent, describe what assistance—if any—he might enlist to undertake a price opinion for the scenario.

Scenario #1

Alex is asked to price a property in one of the residential subdivisions where he is very active and regularly prospects for new business.

Scenario #2

Alex has a good friend on the south side of the city who asks for his help in pricing his home to sell. Alex is not familiar with the south side, but his MLS encompasses it. His large company has a branch office on the south side, and he knows many of the agents in that office.

Scenario #3

Alex has a good friend who owns a recreational property three hours away, on a lake. The friend wants to know a price at which to sell it. Alex has been to the cabin one time on a fishing trip. At a state convention, Alex talked to a REALTOR® who specializes in recreational property in that part of the state. This REALTOR® told him, "It's a very unusual market. Each lake community has its own set of values and prices. Which side of the lake you are on makes a difference, as well as how deep the water is near your cabin."



Module 2: Choosing Appropriate Comparables

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Recognize appropriate criteria, resources, and guidance in choosing comparables
- ▶ Identify causes of imperfect information and its consequences with respect to pricing properties
- ▶ Use appropriate comparables in a CMA

A critical component of preparing a CMA is selecting appropriate comparables. This Module looks at characteristics and criteria you will use to match comparables as closely as possible with the subject property. We will consider Fannie Mae guidance on selecting comparables in particular. Module 2 also covers both roadblocks to and tools for identifying comparables.

The Goal: Optimal Similarity to the Subject

The general parameters for choosing comparables are determined by the subject home. The subject's number of bedrooms and bathrooms, the size of its living space and lot, the neighborhood and school district(s) in which it is located, its age and condition—all these characteristics form the parameters for choosing comparables.

Of course, a comparable is never perfectly similar to the subject. But a central goal in preparing a CMA is identifying comparables that are as similar as possible—physically, functionally, and geographically—to the subject. The more similar the comparable, the fewer adjustments you will need to make and the more accurately you can determine the value of the subject and price it correctly.

Characteristics of Comparables

Agents preparing CMAs must consider a variety of characteristics in identifying potential comparables, including:

- ▶ Location
- ▶ Date of sale of the property
- ▶ Size
- ▶ Floor plan or style
- ▶ Amenities (e.g., pool, security system, fenced yard)
- ▶ Age

- ▶ Number of bedrooms and baths
- ▶ Garage size
- ▶ Improvements (e.g., additions, new roof, new appliances, cosmetics)
- ▶ Potential negatives (e.g., busy street, near business/industrial district)

Of these, location, date of sale, and size are the most important.

Agents also must aim for an adequate number of comparables to consider in forming their price opinion. Let's look at several of these characteristics in more detail.

Location

Comparables should be as geographically similar to the subject as possible. This might seem obvious, but in practice location similarity can vary widely:

- ▶ In a densely populated urban area, location similarity might mean that all the comparables for a high-rise condominium unit should come from the same building.
- ▶ In a suburban neighborhood, location similarity might mean that comparables should be in the same development as the subject, if possible, or at least within a mile of it.
- ▶ In an expansive, sparsely populated rural community, location similarity might mean that comparables can occur anywhere within a township border—or even beyond.

Other features of location (e.g., proximity to a particular school district, public transportation, or an industrial area) can qualify or disqualify a property as being similar to the subject.

Following are guidelines to follow when selecting comparables with respect to the location of the subject property:

SUBURBAN/SMALL TOWN

- ▶ Same subdivision
- ▶ Same neighborhood
- ▶ Same school district, if schools are a driving force in the market
- ▶ One-mile radius
- ▶ Same complex for multifamily homes

CITY/URBAN

- ▶ Condominium: same building
- ▶ Single-family home:
 - ▲ One-half mile radius
 - ▲ Same neighborhood

RURAL

- ▶ Five-mile radius
- ▶ Same high school, if necessary

Agents sometimes expand the location in which they are searching for comparables when they have difficulty finding properties that match the subject in terms of other criteria.

Date of Sale

A comparable should reflect a recent date of sale relative to the time of the subject CMA. A general guideline is that a comparable's date of sale should fall within 90 days of CMA research. Markets can change rapidly, and an interval of longer than 90 days might mean you are no longer comparing "apples to apples."

Here are guidelines to follow when selecting comparables with respect to the date of sale, depending on the market.

STABLE MARKET

- ▶ No more than a 3 percent change in price in the last six months
- ▶ Comparables no more than six months old

CHANGING MARKET

- ▶ More than a 3 percent appreciation or depreciation in the last six months
- ▶ Comparables no more than three months old

The 90-day guideline mentioned earlier is sometimes shifted to a longer interval for a variety of reasons. For example, in slow markets, finding an adequate number of similar properties that have sold within 90 days can be difficult. When agents are unable to identify comparables that are sufficiently similar in terms of function, size, amenities, or location, they might expand the date of sale interval to include more candidates for comparables. At the outside, agents usually try to choose comparables with sales dates within six months of the subject CMA.

If a comparable is more than six months old, an adjustment for time will probably need to be made. Depending on the market, the price of homes nine months or a year ago may be very different from the price today. This adjustment can be made by looking at the median sales price of properties at the time the comparable sold and the median price today. The percentage difference will be the adjustment. Adjustments will be covered in more detail in Module 3.

Size

Comparables should be the same size, or close to the same size, as the subject, in terms of both living area and lot size.

Micro Markets

Some housing markets are so specific that they are referred to as micro markets. For example, in Sullivan County, Pennsylvania (population 6,000 in 2017), there is a remote, upscale, second-home town called Eagles Mere that is a micro market. Micro markets exist in every marketplace—you can probably think of a similar example in or near the area where you work.

In the case of a micro market, expanding the area in which to look for comparables won't work; the micro market is too specific and narrowly defined. Instead, it is necessary to use comps from the same town, no matter how old they are, and adjust them for time.

Amenities

Comparables should reflect the amenities or features of the subject as closely as possible. This is a broad category for comparing properties—everything from lofts to finished basements, soaker tubs to swimming pools, fireplaces to patios, and security systems to solar panels. Finding a comparable that exactly matches the subject in terms of amenities is unlikely—again, the goal is to identify comparables that are as similar as possible.

Some amenities are sensitive to changing demands and tastes, and their value to typical buyers varies from market to market. When you consider the importance of an amenity in pricing a property, you must think about whether it is “hot or not.”

Improvements

Comparables' improvements should match the subject's as closely as possible. Improvements can range from required maintenance to style updates to additions. If the subject has a brand-new kitchen and the only comparables you can find have 20-year-old kitchens, you will need to adjust the comparables.

2. Choosing Appropriate Comparables

An improvement might be an over-improvement, depending on the market where it is located and the probable buyer. For example, expanding a one-car garage to a three-car garage could be an improvement in a suburban neighborhood populated by families with growing children. Or it could be an over-improvement in an urban center that is well-served by public transportation and populated by young singles or couples who prefer not to own automobiles.

Exercise 2.1:

Amenities and Improvements in Your Market

- 1. For your market, what are three amenities or improvements that are trending upward in popularity?**

- 2. For your market, what are three amenities or improvements that were once popular but are now in decline?**

Number of Comparables

How many comparables should you identify for your CMA research? The answer is a range: from at least three to as many as you can find that are appropriate to the subject.

Unsold listings that are similar to the subject—that is, competing properties—are often included in CMA reports, and many lenders ask for them in appraisals. In a market with a large supply of competing properties, the agent should include a section in the CMA report that includes the competition, to impress upon the seller what he or she is up against. Recently sold comparables provide definitive data, and recently listed competition helps the seller recognize and respect the homes contending for the same buyers.

In some markets, the number of appropriate comparables can be quite high and therefore daunting to analyze. Later in this Module, we will look at tools, such as the REALTORS® Property Resource, that can help with this task.

In some markets, it can be difficult to find enough (or any) comparables. An example of an extreme case is a unique home like a geodesic dome or pyramid. But there are more mundane instances as well, such as in volatile markets—rapidly gentrifying or declining, for example. Situations like this might require expanding the criteria for what constitutes a comparable. It might be necessary to look at similar properties that are quite geographically distant from the subject or that sold years earlier, rather than days or months earlier. Then, appropriate adjustments must be made to the comparables.

Fundamental Principles for Choosing Comparables

So far, we have seen that a critical goal in choosing comparables is to identify those that are as similar as possible to the subject. We will now consider several fundamental principles that also factor into this task.

Highest and Best Use

The concept of highest and best use is fundamental in pricing properties. The highest and best use is the reasonable and probable use of a property that will support the highest present value of the land. A mnemonic to remember the conditions for highest and best use is PLEM.

- ▶ Physically possible
- ▶ Legally permissible
- ▶ Economically feasible
- ▶ Maximally productive

2. Choosing Appropriate Comparables

The highest and best use of the subject might not be the current use. Sometimes the highest and best use of a residential property is to remove the structure and redevelop the land. For example:

- ▶ A small, older, poorly maintained home in a neighborhood that has experienced a significant number of teardowns and construction of newer “McMansion” homes: The highest and best use for the subject could well be to raze the structure and build a new, larger home on the land.
- ▶ A single-family residential property on a multiple-acre lot in an area of increasing population density: The highest and best use of the subject could be to remove the single-family home and develop apartment or condominium buildings on the land instead, zoning permitting.

Knowing the most current zoning information for the property is critical in determining its highest and best use. Zoning ordinances can change, and what was once residential-only might now be commercial also. An agent who does not have the correct zoning information can make a big mistake in estimating the worth of a property.

Determining that the current use of a residential property is not highest and best—and what it should be instead—can be a challenging task. An agent who is out of his or her competence zone should seek expert advice from a competent local appraiser in making this determination.

Arm’s-Length Transactions

An arm’s-length transaction is one in which both buyer and seller act willingly and under no pressure, with knowledge of the present conditions and future potential of the property, and in which the property has been offered on the open market for a reasonable length of time and there are no unusual circumstances. An example of a transaction that violates the arm’s-length criteria would be an estate sale in which the sellers sold the home at a price well below market value to close and disperse the proceeds quickly.

Some non–arm’s-length transactions can be used—with appropriate adjustment—as comparables. Others should not be used under any circumstances. Examples of the latter include one spouse buying out the other in a divorce or one heir buying out other heirs to an estate. In these cases, not only are the parties related, but they already have an ownership interest in the property.

Distressed sales are considered to be non–arm’s-length. The term *distressed sales* refers to foreclosures and short sales, selling at discounts of 15 to 20 percent from non-distressed market prices. This can exert a major negative impact on overall market prices. If distressed sales are an anomaly in the

market, they should be avoided as comparables unless no other comps are available. However, when an area is overrun with these kinds of listings, investors often move in and *create* the market, successfully making low offers and driving down prices. If listings of distressed properties characterize the market, they can (and should) be used as comparables.

Fannie Mae Guidance on Choosing Comparables

Fannie Mae's *Selling Guide* includes a section titled "Selection of Comparable Sales." Although this guidance is addressed to appraisers, real estate agents preparing CMAs are wise to apply this guidance also. Many lenders and underwriters follow Fannie Mae's guidance, so following it in your CMA increases the likelihood that your pricing recommendation will mesh seamlessly with the eventual formal appraisal of the subject—a happy conclusion for all involved in the transaction. You can think of Fannie Mae's guidance as best practices that should inform your approach to choosing comparables.

You can access Fannie Mae's guidance on choosing comparables at <https://www.fanniemae.com/content/guide/selling/b4/1.3/08.html>.

Several components of Fannie Mae's guidance should sound familiar to you based on the previous discussion of choosing comparables in this Module. For example:

- ▶ Comparables do not need to be identical to the subject but should be as similar as possible (similar physical and legal characteristics).
- ▶ Comparables should appeal to the same probable buyers (market participants) as the subject.
- ▶ If a chosen comparable is significantly different from the subject, it is necessary to adjust its price to reflect the differences (consider these factors in the market value).
- ▶ Comparables should come from within the same neighborhood as the subject whenever possible. But this guideline is flexible if the best comparables available are in competing neighborhoods.

If true comparables cannot be found for the subject, it might be necessary to use very different properties as comparables.

Roadblocks to Choosing Comparables

Selecting comparables can pose challenges for a variety of reasons. The common thread among these reasons is that information about comparable properties is imperfect or missing from the usual sources that agents consult.

- ▶ **Wrong or misleading information in databases**
For example, some aggregation sites are not always up to date, showing properties as listed for sale that have already closed. They also might lack pertinent details about a transaction, such as whether the seller contributed to the financing.
- ▶ **No photos**
A recent trend among listing agents is pulling photos from the MLS after properties have sold, in response to buyers' concerns about privacy. Although it is not required, many agents comply with this request. But photos are an important tool in selecting comparables; agents who don't have access to them are at a disadvantage when preparing CMAs. Contacting the listing agent to see if he or she can provide the photos is one way around this dilemma. If this is a trend in your area, consider downloading and saving photos when the listings are still active, so you have them.
- ▶ **Changing markets**
When markets are volatile—for example, when a neighborhood is in a state of rapid gentrification or decline—it can be difficult to identify comparables. In such a market, the guideline of choosing comparables that were listed or sold within 90 days of your CMA research might result in candidates that are no longer truly comparable with the subject. To evaluate comparables, agents must be able to gauge when and how markets are shifting.
- ▶ **Too much personal property in contract**
Some residential real estate transactions include tangible property that is not classified as real estate—items such as furnishings, artwork, antiques, machinery, and equipment. For example, consider sellers of a lakefront property who own a speedboat they will no longer have use for in their new home. They include it in the property sale, which skews the price up by \$10,000. If this property is used as a comparable, the sales price should be adjusted down by \$10,000. But an agent who sees only the sale price in the MLS might fail to do so.
- ▶ **Not every sale is a market-driven transaction**
As noted earlier, not every sale or listing represents an arm's-length transaction. And the fact that a transaction is not arm's-length generally is not obvious from marketing sources such as the MLS. Often it is necessary to dig into public records to make this determination. One

clue might be that the seller is the financial institution that holds the mortgage on the property. This might indicate a foreclosure with a sales price that is not representative of the market.

Resources for Identifying Comparables and Analyzing Markets

In preparing a CMA, agents can turn to a number of resources—some more useful than others—to identify comparables and analyze the market.

MLS

The primary purpose of the MLS is to provide a facility for making an offer of cooperation and publishing a unilateral offer of cooperation and compensation by a listing broker to other broker participants in that MLS. In other words, the compensation offered to a cooperating broker by the listing broker is published within the MLS to other cooperating brokers.

Although the chief use of MLS services is assisting in the sale of a property, most computerized MLS services allow members to number-crunch multiple possibilities—that is, to perform statistical analyses of properties and their features. This is helpful in pricing property and determining trends in the market.

An agent working in a market where many sales are not in the MLS faces a significant task. For example, many new construction sites are not listed with brokers because the builder is selling the facilities. If this is the case, the agent will need to access public records for information.

Public Records

According to Merriam-Webster's *Dictionary of Law*, a *public record* is any document or record required to be made or kept by law, such as a record made by a public officer or a government agency in the course of the performance of a duty. Public records are subject to inspection, examination, and copying by any member of the public.

The most often-used public records for identifying comparables are county assessors' tax data, property records (e.g., deeds, mortgages, liens, leases), and land surveyor charts.

Public records are often maintained in physical files. Many public records are available via the Internet or other sources. Even though they are public, their accessibility is not always simple, free, or easy.

Access to public records might also vary by state. Public records in non-disclosure states contain information that a sales transaction has taken place,

but the sale price is not disclosed. In non-disclosure states, the information on non-brokered, non-MLS sales is limited.

REALTORS Property Resource (RPR®)

The RPR® is a national repository of information on millions of properties in the United States, accessible only by members of NAR and participating MLS/CIEs.



The RPR® provides a detailed view of each property, including public record and assessment information, details of prior transactions and sales history (where available), zoning, permits, mortgage and lien data, neighborhood demographics, and schools. The repository merges information from the MLS and CIE (Commercial Information Exchange) with publicly available data and psychographic and lifestyle information.

Because this information is all in one place, RPR® can enhance an agent's productivity. Search features yield nationwide property results, as well as local market-to-market comparisons. Trends, unique maps, and reliable reports are also available. Agents can use RPR®'s advanced reporting tools to enhance their sales and listing presentations.

The following RPR® tools can be used to identify comparables and prepare CMAs: property search, school search, subject property data adjustments, recent sales and comparative listings, neighborhood facts, and red flags where distressed properties are involved. RPR® contains built-in tools for constructing and adjusting lists of comparables, plus there is a valuation workbook designed for appraisers that agents can use as a comprehensive CMA.

Realtors Property Resource® Valuation Workbook Contents

- ✓ Cover with agent contact information and branding
- ✓ Subject Property: Home Facts
- ✓ Subject Property: Extended Home Facts
- ✓ Subject Property: Property History
- ✓ Subject Property: Sales and Financing Activity History
- ✓ Neighborhood Aerial Map
- ✓ Flood Zone Map with Subject Property Ranking
- ✓ Sales and Comparables Analysis Summary
- ✓ Historical Range of Comparable Homes
- ✓ Comparables and Adjustments Map
- ✓ Comparables Selected in Analysis
- ✓ Comparables Property Facts and Photos (each comp)
- ✓ Local Market Conditions Summary
- ✓ Local Market Conditions: Sales of Similar Property (with and without distressed properties)
- ✓ Local Market Conditions: Sales of Single-Family Homes
- ✓ Total Sales and Listings
- ✓ List price vs. Sales Price
- ✓ Median Days on Market
- ✓ Sales Price vs. RVM
- ✓ Absorption Rate
- ✓ General Market Health Charts
- ✓ Median Sales Price vs. Sales Volume
- ✓ Median Listing Price vs. Listing Volume
- ✓ Listing Inventory
- ✓ Price per Bedroom of Homes Sold
- ✓ Median Sales Price by Square Footage
- ✓ Price Range of Homes Sold
- ✓ Price per Square Foot of Homes Sold
- ✓ Age Range of Homes Sold
- ✓ Number of Bedrooms in Homes Sold
- ✓ Estimated Home Values Map
- ✓ 12-Month Change in Estimated Value Map
- ✓ Estimated Value per Square Foot Map
- ✓ Market Snapshot: All Detached Homes within 0.8 Miles Map
- ✓ Active Listings Map



Property	5569 N Route 44 Hwy, Jersey Shore, PA 17740	5519 N Route 44 Hwy, Jersey Shore, PA 17740	125 Ramsey Dr, Jersey Shore, PA 17740
Address	5569 N Route 44 Hwy, Jersey Shore, PA 17740	5519 N Route 44 Hwy, Jersey Shore, PA 17740	125 Ramsey Dr, Jersey Shore, PA 17740
MLS Name	West Beach Valley Board Of REALTORS BELS	West Beach Valley Board Of REALTORS BELS	West Beach Valley Board Of REALTORS BELS
MLS Listing ID	160-7291	160-7290	160-7297
Price Per Sq. Ft.	\$75	\$92	\$114
Property Type	Single-Family Residence	Single-Family Residence	Single-Family Residence
Property Subtype	Residential - Single Family	Residential - Single Family	Residential - Single Family
Total Bedrooms	4	4	4
Bedrooms Above Grade	4	4	3
Living Area (sq. Ft.)	2,800	2,750	1,465
Living Area Above Grade (sq. Ft.)	1,800	1,650	1,465
Living Area Below Grade (sq. Ft.)	1,000	1,100	0
Total Bathrooms	2.0	1.1	1.0
Bathrooms Above Grade	2.0	1.1	1.0
Bathrooms Below Grade	0	0	0
Full Bathrooms	2	1	1
Partial Bathrooms	0	0	0
Living Area (sq. Ft.)	2,800	2,750	1,465
Living Area Above Grade (sq. Ft.)	1,800	1,650	1,465
Living Area Below Grade (sq. Ft.)	1,000	1,100	0
Price Per Sq. Ft.	\$75	\$92	\$114
Lot Area (sq. Ft.)	0.7 Acres	0.7 Acres	0.64 Acres
Lot Dimensions	100x300	100x300	300x100
Garage (sq. Ft.)	0	0	0
Garage Type	None	None	None
Location	Residential	Residential	Residential
View	Mountain, Residential	Residential	Mountain
View Factors	Mountain, Residential	Residential	Mountain
Style	Mountain	Ranch	Ranch
Quality of Construction	None	None	None

Automated Valuation Models

Automated valuation models (AVMs) are online databases that try to match up similar properties to give an idea of the range of sales prices that have historically been recorded. County assessors were some of the first to use such services because of budget and personnel limitations. However, this information is limited to basic factual data, such as the size of the property, number of rooms and bedrooms, age of the property, and area surrounding the property.

Although AVMs provide quick and convenient information, they may miss important value-influencing characteristics. For example, depending on data accessibility, AVMs may be unable to distinguish distinct property characteristics such as the school district in which a property lies, whether there is a nearby river, or if the property is in or near a resort. They also cannot take into account the effect of changing neighborhoods. AVMs provide useful information about the subject and comparable properties, but agents should not rely exclusively on them in preparing CMAs.

Savvy agents should be familiar with what online consumer-oriented AVMs such as Zillow or Trulia have to say about a subject property. Clients often consult these sites, so agents should be prepared to explain to clients how these AVMs work and the margin of error for their data and estimates.

Realtors Valuation Model® (RVM®)

The Realtors Valuation Model® (RVM®) is an AVM produced using MLS listing content licensed by RPR®, along with the assessment, deed, mortgage, and distressed property information in the RPR database.

The RVM® is the only AVM that uses listing content that is 100 percent licensed directly from MLSs around the country by RPR®. As a result, the RVM® provides accurate and timely inventory data and creates as close to a real-time value index as exists in the market. Although not a substitute for an appraisal, the RVM®, provided by the REALTOR® organization, has established a new standard for automated valuations.

If an RVM is displayed on a property in RPR®, the RPR® Property Report will provide an estimated value based on real-time MLS data and assemble a comprehensive profile of the neighborhood and property.

Access to RPR® and RVM®

All REALTORS® have access to RPR® as an exclusive REALTOR® member benefit. But only those REALTORS® who participate in MLSs that share data with RPR® have the benefit of the RVM®. If an MLS does not share data, value estimates are calculated by an automated valuation model using only publicly available information on past sales, not MLS data. Each MLS chooses whether to share data with REALTORS® who are not subscribers. Some MLSs share on-market listings with all REALTORS®, some only with their own subscribers. Find out if your MLS shares data by visiting <http://blog.narrpr.com/rpr-partners>.

Create an account and take the RPR® application for a test drive at www.narrpr.com. To learn how to use the app, visit the RPR® Blog at blog.narrpr.com/training for free video tutorials as well as information about continuing education credit for classroom training and online RPR classes.

Agency and Company Files

In many agencies, one resource to keep in mind is prior files on same-property transactions. These can prove helpful in getting a perspective on pricing trends, property features, and positive selling points.

Exercise 2.2: Selecting Comparables

Review the detailed property descriptions for the subject property and 11 comparables on the pages that follow. Afterwards, select which comps would you choose and explain why.

SUBJECT PROPERTY



Style:	2 Story
Bedrooms:	4
Bathrooms:	2 full – 2 half
Garage:	2
GLA:	2,400
Basement:	Full-Finished
Kitchen:	Stainless Appliances, Granite
Other:	Hardwood Floors
Fireplace:	Yes
Exterior:	Brick, Cedar, Deck, Fence
Year Built:	1985
Taxes:	\$9,843
School:	Washington

Subject Information:

- UPDATED KITCHEN AND BATHS
- MASTER BEDROOM WITH PRIVATE BATH
- FAMILY ROOM WITH FIREPLACE
- 2-STORY FOYER
- ALL MAJOR COMPONENTS IN GOOD CONDITION INCLUDING NEW FURNACE AND GARAGE DOOR
- ALL APPLIANCES REMAIN
- FORMAL DINING ROOM
- NEWLY REFINISHED HARDWOOD FLOORS ON THE ENTIRE UPPER LEVEL
- CUSTOM BUILT-IN BOOK SHELVES

NOTES:

1. All appliances means stove, refrigerator, dishwasher
2. Assume all have air conditioning

COMP #1



Style:	2-story
BR:	3
Bath:	1 full – 1 half
Garage:	1
GLA:	1,800
Basement:	Full, finished
Kitchen:	Stainless, Granite
Fireplace:	No
School:	Washington
Exterior:	Frame/brick, deck, fenced
Year Built:	1949
Taxes:	\$6,984
Location:	3 blocks
Date Sold:	3 months ago
Sales Price:	\$360,000
Financing:	Conv.

Details:

This side walk community home is move in ready! Tons of updating done to this home including: newer windows, furnace ('11), kitchen ('16), bathroom ('11), freshly painted inside and out ('16), tuck pointing ('15), shed ('15). Enjoy this brand new kitchen with 42 inch cabinets, brand new appliances and countertops. Full bath with floor to ceiling slate tiles surrounding tub. Hardwood floors throughout. Grab your book and enjoy the reading nook off living room on main level. Don't forget about the finished family room space in basement. Extra-large storage space for this home! Fully fenced in yard, shed, garden and larger patio space, all perfect for entertaining.

COMP #2

Style:	2 Story
BR:	4
Bath:	2 Full – 1 half
Garage:	2
GLA:	2,200
Basement:	Full – Partially finished
Kitchen:	Ceramic floor, appliances
Fireplace:	Yes
School:	Adams
Exterior:	Aluminum, brick, patio
Year Built:	1976
Taxes:	\$9,462
Location:	1 mile
Date Sold:	6 months ago
Sales Price:	\$340,000
Financing:	Conv.



Details:

Beautiful curb appeal welcomes you home! Spacious 4 BR, 2-1/2 bath two-story home with a court location. Concrete driveway and front entry lead to open the foyer with newer ceramic tile flooring. Spacious living room and dining room both have neutral carpeting and newer bay windows with window seats. The kitchen has newer ceramic tile flooring, newer stove and refrigerator. The basement has a finished recreation room and a large storage and utility room too. Leaf-guard gutters, central vac, intercom, and mechanical updates.

COMP #3



Style: 2 Story
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,000
Basement: Full unfinished
Kitchen: All appliances, granite
Fireplace: No
School: Washington
Exterior: Vinyl siding, deck, fenced
Year Built: 1985
Taxes: \$8,270
Location: Same block
Date Sold: 1 month ago
Sales Price: \$340,000
Financing: FHA

Details:

LARGE FAMILY ROOM W/ATRIUM DOOR TO DECK; CUSTOM GOURMET KITCHEN W/GRANITE, SS APPLCS, CUSTOM LIGHTING AND GARDEN WINDOW; HUGE MASTER BR W/VAULTED CEILG; BATH HAS DOUBLE-BOWL GRANITE VANITY; FENCED YARD & SHED; SIDING & ROOF -2 YRS; FURNACE, WASHER, DRYER - 4 YRS. EXCLUDE: FR SHELVING UNITS & TV

COMP #4

Style: Ranch
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full
Garage: 2
GLA: 1,800
Basement: Full – Partially finished
Kitchen: All appliances, granite
Fireplace: No
School: Washington
Exterior: Brick
Year Built: 1978
Taxes: \$7,312
Location: ½ mile
Date Sold: 2 months ago
Sales Price: \$370,000
Financing: Conv.



Details:

KITCHEN HAS AN AMPLE EATING AREA AND ACCESS TO OUTSIDE PATIO. FAMILY ROOM HAS A STYLISH BRICK FIREPLACE, GAS LOGS AND STARTER. LARGE SKYLIGHT GIVES THIS ROOM PLENTY OF NATURAL LIGHTING. ALL BEDROOMS HAVE HARDWOOD UNDER CARPETING. MASTER BEDROOM HAS A FULL BATH FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE. LARGE RECREATION ROOM AND STORAGE MAKE THIS HOME THE SMART CHOICE. SIDE LOAD 2 1/2 CAR ATTACHED GARAGE IS ANOTHER PRACTICAL FEATURE. MANY NEWER UPGRADES INCLUDE: FURNACE 2 1/2 YEARS; A/C 2 YEARS AND HUMIDIFIER, 6 MONTHS. MANY NEWER WINDOWS, ALSO.

COMP #5



Style: 2 Story
BR: 4
Bath: 3 full – 1 half
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,450
Basement: Full – Partially finished
Kitchen: All appliances, washer/dryer
Fireplace: Yes
School: Adams
Exterior: Vinyl, brick
Year Built: 1972
Taxes: \$9,614
Location: 1.5 miles
Date Sold: 4 months ago
Sales Price: \$330,000
Financing: FHA

Details:

CHARMING HOME IN A MUCH SOUGHT AFTER NEIGHBORHOOD! AT A VERY ATTRACTIVE PRICE! VERY CLEAN FRESHLY PAINTED INTERIORS AND NEW CARPETS. TOTALLY NEW TEAR OFF ROOF! GENEROUSLY SPACIOUS MASTER B/R VERY LARGE OTHER B/Rs. VACANT AND READY FOR IMMEDIATE POSSESSION UPON CLOSING. MOTIVATED SELLER. BRING ON YOUR OFFERS!

COMP #6

Style: Split level
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,300
Basement: Lower level
Kitchen: All appliances, washer/dryer
Fireplace: Yes
School: Washington
Exterior: Vinyl, brick
Year Built: 1973
Taxes: \$5,150
Location: 2 blocks
Date Sold: 1 month ago
Sales Price: \$340,000
Financing: Conv.



Details:

Hardwood floors, more hardwood under the carpet in bedrooms, bay window, granite counter tops, ceramic tile back splash, solid oak 6 panel doors, updated baths and more... Check out the custom kitchen work and storage area. Family room has Sterno fireplace on one end and wall to wall cabinets and shelving for all your entertainment needs on the other. Large, clean, dry, easy access crawl space. Sun room has sliding doors and high quality blinds on three sides. Lower level opens to back yard area. Split-level living at its best.

COMP #7



Style:	2 Story
BR:	4
Bath:	2 full
Garage:	2
GLA:	1,700
Basement:	Full unfinished, exterior access
Kitchen:	All appliances
Fireplace:	No
School:	Washington
Exterior:	Cedar
Year Built:	1950
Taxes:	\$6,495
Location:	1 mile
Date Sold:	6 months ago
Sales Price:	\$330,000
Financing:	Conv.

Details:

This 2-story with oversize lot (100 x 132) nestled among tall pines trees will surely impress. Home offers 4 bedrooms one that is being used as office located on the first floor with three good size bedrooms upstairs. Recently built (2013) 28 x 22 Garage totally rebuilt from the ground up with extra storage and working area. Enjoy great back yard fun with your huge 30 x16 deck. Other notables, New Driveway (2014) Well tank and pump (2014) most carpet installed (2010).

COMP #8

Style:	2 Story
BR:	3
Bath:	1 full – 1 half
Garage:	1
GLA:	1,500
Basement:	Full – Partially finished
Kitchen:	All appliances
Fireplace:	Yes
School:	Washington
Exterior:	Brick
Year Built:	1946
Taxes:	\$7,487
Location:	1 mile
Date Sold:	1 month ago
Sales Price:	\$325,000
Financing:	Conv.



Details:

ARCHED DOORWAYS, HARDWOOD FLOORS, FORMAL LIVING RM W/COZY FIREPLACE, REMODELED KITCHEN W/36" RAISED PANEL WHITE CABINETS, GRANITE CTRPS, NEWER APPL'S, LIGHT/BRIGHT FAMILY RM W/SLIDERS TO CONC. PATIO-W/VIEWS OF BEAUTIFULLY LANDSCAPED FENCED YARD-IDEAL FOR OUTDOOR ENTERTAINING! REMOD BATHS, FINISHED BASEMENT REC. RM, NEWER WINDOWS, ROOF, EXTERIOR RAILINGS, EXCEL. CLOS/STORAGE.

COMP #9



Style: 2 Story
BR: 4
Bath: 2 full – 1 half
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,300
Basement: Partial – unfinished
Kitchen: Stainless, granite
Fireplace: Yes
School: Adams
Exterior: Aluminum, brick
Year Built: 1977
Taxes: \$7,255
Location: 1 mile
Date Sold: 7 months ago
Sales Price: \$350,000
Financing: Conv.

Details:

Formal living & dining room boast virgin Oak floors under carpet. Huge sun drenched eat-in kitchen with Oak cabinets, bay window & all S.S appliances. Large master suite with his & hers closets, separate dressing area, full bath, & shower with all ceramic tile. Guest bath with ceramic tile floor, tub, & shower. Oak floors in all bedrooms. All major updating done! Roof, windows, furnace, & A/C 2005. Hot water & sump pump 2016.

COMP #10

Style: 2 Story
BR: 3
Bath: 2 full – 1 half
Garage: 2
GLA: 2,150
Basement: Full finished
Kitchen: All appliances
Fireplace: Yes
School: Washington
Exterior: Aluminum, brick, deck
Year Built: 1985
Taxes: \$10,645
Location: 5 blocks
Date Sold: 2 months ago
Sales Price: \$370,000
Financing: Conv.



Details:

All new stainless appliances June 2016*freshly painted June 2016*all new insulated siding, gutters & downspouts 2013*new carpeting*roof, furnace & air 10 years*skylights in 2 bathrooms*1st floor den/playroom/office*large deck off kitchen*cul de sac*very well kept home*The wall between the office and kitchen can be removed to make the kitchen larger.



Module 3: Preparing the CMA

Are you taking this course to...



Earn your PSA certification?
Learn more about CMAs?
Fulfill your ABR® or SRS elective?

**Regardless of why you're here,
being PSA certified will
elevate your career!**



Your Pricing Strategy Advisor certification is only two steps away:

- 1 watch two PSA webinars
- 2 submit your application and pay a one-time certification fee

Make your expertise even more valuable!

Visit PricingStrategyAdvisor.org for more information.



Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to

- ▶ Explain key principles of pricing that impact CMAs
- ▶ Recognize correct guidance, as well as common challenges and errors, in adjusting comparables
- ▶ Adjust comparables, using values developed from appropriate averages and cost data

After you have identified appropriate comparables to use in a CMA, you almost certainly will need to make adjustments to some or all of them to use them in pricing the subject. This Module details how to make adjustments—and will give you appropriate guidance to use while doing so.

Methods of Adjusting Comparables

There are two primary methods of adjusting comparables: cost-based and market-based. When you are adjusting comparables, some property features lend themselves better to the cost-based method and others to the market-based method. Some features can be adjusted either way.

Cost-Based Adjustments

In the cost-based method, the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on the actual cost to construct or add it. Although this is typically not how real estate agents create CMAs, there are times when using the cost-based method is necessary.

You might need to use the cost-based method when a buyer, logically, would make an adjustment the same way. For example, suppose a house goes through foreclosure and the former owners have removed the furnace. Because buyers want a furnace, they will make an adjustment for this in the price of the house, and the agent should also do so when preparing a CMA for this client. In fact, a savvy agent will obtain estimates for a new furnace to have an answer to the inevitable question, “What will it cost me to install a furnace?”

The cost of a property feature can vary significantly from market to market and over time. Many experienced agents have contractors they can call to obtain estimates of construction and repair costs. If you have not yet developed such resources, the following tools might be helpful:

- ▶ NAR Remodeling Impact Report: nar.realtor/reports/remodeling-impact
- ▶ Remodeling Magazine Cost vs. Value Report: www.costvsvalue.com
- ▶ Pillar to Post Cost Guide: <https://pillartopost.com/costguide/>

Market-Based Adjustments

In the market-based method, the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on market knowledge or a paired-sales analysis. The differences between the comparable and the subject are isolated, and an adjustment is applied based on the market value of the item being adjusted.

There is no definitive list of values that can be applied universally when pricing property. But with market knowledge of a specific area, agents can develop good estimates of value for specific house features. They learn from experience, for example, the value of four bedrooms versus three bedrooms, or 2.5 baths versus 1.5 baths, in a particular market. They can then use these amounts to make adjustments for differences between comparables and the subject. Periodic brainstorming with local appraisers can also help agents determine the value of an adjustment.

Sometimes a house feature is uncommon or unfamiliar, or the market is changing and historical experience is no longer a sufficient guide to value. Sometimes an agent is new to a market and has not yet developed a good experiential understanding of feature values in it. In these circumstances, a paired-sales analysis is needed to develop an adjustment amount. In a paired-sales analysis, a specific feature is compared across multiple comparable transactions to isolate its effect on price.

In appraisal textbooks, the term *paired sales* refers to when two properties are identical in every respect except one; the difference in price is then attributed to this feature. The problem is that true paired sales are rare because houses almost always are different in a number of ways. However, with time and experience in your market, you will develop a feel for adjustments.

Let's look at an example of a paired-sales analysis. Consider four comparables that differ only in the size of the garage:

- ▶ Sale A sold for \$255,000 with a two-car garage
- ▶ Sale B sold for \$255,500 with a two-car garage
- ▶ Sale C sold for \$260,000 with a three-car garage
- ▶ Sale D sold for \$261,000 with a three-car garage
- ▲ Matching A with C—value of garage is \$5,000
- ▲ Matching A with D—value of garage is \$6,000
- ▲ Matching B with C—value of garage is \$4,500
- ▲ Matching B with D—value of garage is \$5,500

We now have four possible adjustment amounts for the difference between a three-car garage and a two-car garage in a comparative analysis. Which one do we use? Choosing one of the middle numbers (\$5,000 or \$5,500) is a good approach. Alternatively, we could use an average of the four values as the adjustment amount. In this case, the average works out to \$5,250, and we usually don't use numbers that precise to adjust a comp. But the average amount reinforces that either \$5,000 or \$5,500 would be a good choice because it falls right between them.

The Importance of Market Expectations

When making adjustments, it is critical to keep market expectations in mind. Market expectations are what a probable buyer presumes to find in a house of a particular age, type, location, and price range (the lower the price, the lower the expectations). If a comparable is lacking a feature that the market expects it to have, you must adjust for this deficiency!

For example, market expectations are that a home in Florida has central air conditioning. If it doesn't, the market will penalize that property. In this example, the amount of the penalty would probably be the cost to remedy the deficiency. In other words, what would it cost to install central air conditioning? This adjustment can be made using the cost approach.

Other differences from market expectations require the market-based approach to making adjustments. For example, a buyer might pay \$1,500 less for a house with only one bathroom, as opposed to two bathrooms. The \$1,500 is not the cost to install a bathroom, but instead represents the buyer's opinion of the value of the second bath. This adjustment amount must be determined through an agent's market experience or a paired-sales analysis.

When you calculate adjustment amounts using the market-based method, make sure you derive the data from a pool of comparables similar to the subject. Adjustments will vary according to price range because market expectations change with a price range. A good example for a garage is that at the lowest price range, a buyer might not expect a garage and might not pay significantly more for a garage. However, at the upper price ranges, not only do buyers expect garages, but in many markets, at specific price points, their expectations for the number of car bays in the garage goes up. For example, in some markets, once we cross the \$500,000 threshold, buyers expect a three- or four-car garage, not just a two-car garage. Make sure you are comparing "apples to apples."

Making the Adjustment

Regardless of whether you obtain the adjustment amount from the cost-based method or the market-based method, it is applied to the sale price of the relevant comparables. In other words, you adjust what is known (the sale price of a comparable) to estimate what is unknown (the subject's value).

In our previous garage example, let's say we determined that the adjustment amount for a two-car versus three-car garage is \$5,000. This amount is either added to or subtracted from the comparables' sales price to equate to the subject.

- ▶ If the subject property has a three-car garage, the adjustment would be plus \$5,000 to the two comparables with two-car garages. The comparables with three-car garages do not need to be adjusted for this feature.
- ▶ If the subject property has a two-car garage, the adjustment would be minus \$5,000 to the comparables with three-car garages. The comparables with two-car garages do not need to be adjusted for this feature.
- ▶ The same amount is used in each adjustment.

Two acronyms can help you remember this adjustment principle:

SBA = If the **S**ubject is **B**etter, **A**dd to the value of the comp.

CBS = If the **C**omp is **B**etter, **S**ubtract from the value of the comp.

Remember that adjustments for the same feature should be made at the same amount, regardless of the adjustment method you use. For example, if an adjustment for an extra bathroom on one comp is \$2,000, all comps within the same number of bathroom differential should be adjusted the same amount.

Financing Concessions

Any money the seller gives to the buyer in the initial contract as a condition of the sale needs to be adjusted. An interest rate buy down, closing cost credits to the buyer, payment of assessments that show on the comp need to be a deduction from the value of the comparable. If the seller sold their house for \$100,000 and paid \$3,000 in closing costs to the buyer, the \$3,000 would be deducted from the sales price.

Applying the Principles of Substitution and Market Expectation

Some values are easy to identify. For example, it is easy to identify the value of a lakefront lot versus one that does not front the lake by looking at properties that sold on the water versus those that did not and arriving at a value for the lakefront.

When paired sales analyses are not available, agents use their expertise of the market to determine what a typical buyer would be willing to pay for that type of amenity in that market at that time.

Here is where we apply the principle of market expectations to adjusting comparables. Market expectations, as noted earlier, are what a probable buyer presumes to find in a house of a particular age, type, location, and price range. Only those differences between the subject and the comparable that are important to the majority of buyers willing—that is, buyers would be willing to pay more or less for the feature—are adjusted upward or downward.

Substitution

Substitution follows the premise that a prudent buyer will pay no more to acquire one particular property, or any component in a property, than what it would cost him or her to either buy elsewhere, build new, or put the component in. The principle of substitution, along with market expectations, drives the market-based pricing model.

In plain terms, substitution means that the real estate market is competitive: A buyer will generally go for the least expensive house that satisfies his or her criteria, all other things being equal. For this reason, agents need to be as accurate as possible in the adjustment of the comps. For example, if a buyer can get a home with a three-car garage for \$5,000 more in other homes on the market, he or she is not going to pay \$7,000 more for one because the seller wants more or “it cost more to build.”

Consumers employ the principle of substitution with other big-ticket items as well. For example, a person who has decided on a particular make and model of vehicle will not usually pay more at one dealership than the cost of acquiring it at another dealership.

Fannie Mae Guidance on Adjusting Comparables

Again, Fannie Mae guidance is aimed at appraisers and appraisals, but real estate agents do well to apply it in adjusting comparables for CMAs.

Fannie Mae's guidance emphasizes that adjustments must be market-based, not arbitrary or boilerplate values. It also acknowledges—once again—that sometimes appropriate comparables cannot be found because the subject is so unique or because of particular conditions. In that case, sales that best indicate the value of the subject must be selected and adjusted appropriately.

Note also that Fannie Mae requires appraisers to adjust comparables to reflect any sales or financing concessions that might affect sales price. This is why agents usually need to provide a copy of the sales agreement to appraisers—so they can check for such concessions.

Once again, the guidelines also emphasize the importance of commentary about adjustments. It is not enough to simply state that an adjustment has been made. Appraisers must provide their logic and reasoning for making them.

Date of Sale and Time Adjustments

The date of sale and the time adjustment (market conditions) are critical elements in determining an accurate value because the appraisal is based on a specific date in time (effective date of appraisal). The comparable sales being considered must be analyzed by the appraiser to determine if there have been any changes in market conditions from the time the comparable went under contract to the effective date of the appraisal. This analysis will determine whether a time adjustment is warranted. Adjustments may be either positive or negative depending on the market changes over the time period analyzed. Time adjustments should be supported by other comparables (such as sales, contracts) whenever possible; however, in all instances the appraiser must provide an explanation for the time adjustment in the appraisal report.

Specific Considerations in Determining Adjustments

What constitutes a bedroom? When is a bathroom a full bath? Different MLSs sometimes have different criteria for these features and others. And some MLS definitions do not match the definition an appraiser would use to give value. In this section, we look at some specific home features and how to characterize them when selecting and adjusting comparables.

Bedrooms

Many municipalities have requirements for minimum bedroom size. In general, bedrooms should be at least 90 square feet in size and have natural light, ventilation, and a window that provides an emergency exit to outdoors. Because of the requirement for a bedroom window exit, a basement room with a small window can't be called a bedroom for FHA lending.

Closets are not required by lenders and others for a room to be a bedroom. Historic homes might not have closets because wardrobes were in use when these houses were built.

A tandem or captive bedroom is one that does not have hall access but must be reached through another room. Some markets count these as bedrooms; most do not. Be careful to compare only like-style bedrooms. A bedroom with its own hall access would have more value than a tandem bedroom.

Bathrooms

A full bathroom includes at least three out of these four features:

- ▶ Toilet
- ▶ Sink
- ▶ Bathtub
- ▶ Shower

A half-bath consists of a sink and toilet.

Some markets use the $\frac{3}{4}$ bath category—toilet, sink, and tub or shower, but not both. When in doubt, following Fannie Mae guidance is probably a good idea: A toilet, sink, and bathtub or shower constitute a full bath. This is also the definition that an appraiser would use, so a CMA that follows this definition will synchronize with an eventual appraisal of the property.

Gross Living Area

Commonly referred to as square footage in many MLSs, gross living area is defined by Fannie Mae as finished above-grade areas measured from the exterior building dimensions. Garages and basements (including those that are partially above-grade) should not be included in GLA. For example, a walk-out basement with finished rooms would not be included in the above-grade room count or GLA.

Rooms that are not included in the above-grade room count and GLA can add substantially to the value of a property. Comparisons should be made only by comparing above-grade areas with above-grade areas and below-grade areas with below-grade areas.

Adjusting for Gross Living Area

Although GLA should be as close to the subject as possible, if it is not the same, adjustments need to be made—unless the variance is insignificant.

- ▶ Generally speaking, if the difference in GLA is 20 percent or less, no adjustment is made. An exception to this guideline would be for a small house (800 to 1,000 square feet). In this case, a 20 percent difference is significant and should be adjusted for.
- ▶ Calculating per-square-footage price is tricky. Technically, you should subtract the land value from the total price to determine the actual cost per square foot. Because we don't usually separate land value from house value, when you divide the sales price by the square footage, you have an inexact calculation but a usable figure. This simplification is generally valid in a homogenous neighborhood—similar types of houses and similar lot sizes. It is not appropriate for very large lots or acreage.

Age

Every attempt should be made to find comps in the same neighborhood as the subject property; that would mean no adjustment for age. If either the subject or the comparable is new construction, an appropriate adjustment would need to be made.

Age adjustments are not consistent across the spectrum of home ages. For example, if you had to compare a 10-year-old home to a brand-new home, it would usually be a significant adjustment; but the adjustment for a 20-year-old home to a 30-year-old home might be minimal or nothing at all.

Some think an age adjustment means very little. Some think it means a lot. The question is really whether any adjustment needs to be made at all. If you had a choice to buy two identical houses with the exception that one was new and the other was 40 years old but rehabilitated, modernized, and improved until it looked just like the new home, would you pay the same price for the older home as you would the "like new" home? Appraisers call this effective age, which is how old the house is in terms of wear and tear, and overall conditions. Generally, the lower the effective age, the higher the price.

Lot Size

Again, because of neighborhood characteristics, lot size will probably be similar enough that no adjustment will be needed. Determining land value to make lot adjustments can be very difficult.

The house on a smaller-sized lot will generally sell at a discount, compared with other homes in the neighborhood. Consider what the land is used for: Does it provide off-street parking? Is it used for recreation?

In rural areas, lot sizes can vary tremendously. The home site is the most expensive parcel; owners who obtain extra land for a garden, storage buildings, more privacy, and so on generally pay much less per acre than they did for their home site. Two other important considerations in rural areas are:

- ▶ What is the minimum lot size, per local regulations?
- ▶ Can the property support an on-site sewage system (and possibly allow for expansion or repair of that system)?

Potential Mistakes and Special Challenges in Making Adjustments

Certain errors are not uncommon in adjusting comparables, and certain situations pose challenges for agents as they select and adjust comparables. You should be alert for these.

Double-Dipping

The term *double-dipping* refers to adjusting for a feature more than once. For example, consider a comparable that is identical to the subject except that it has an additional room—a sunroom. One way to adjust for this difference would be to determine the value of the additional square footage contributed by the sunroom. Another way to adjust would be to determine the cost of constructing a sunroom addition. The important caution is not to make both adjustments—that would be double-dipping.

The Wrong Reasons to Adjust

Agents sometimes feel pressured to make adjustments that are not supported by market data. For instance, a seller in Minnesota angling for a higher listing price might argue that her home's built-in swimming pool should prompt an upward adjustment of comparables that do not have built-in swimming pools. But the typical buyer in Minnesota probably does not place a high value on a feature that can be used only a few months per year. Making this adjustment to keep the seller happy would likely result in an inflated price.

Sometimes the pressure is internal, with an agent trying to justify a higher listing price to win a client. Whatever the motivation, the only correct reason to make an adjustment is because the market indicates it.

Outliers

An outlier is a property that sold for a price that is extremely high or low based on all other comparables. Often the reason for the outlying price cannot be determined by an agent preparing a CMA.

If you have enough ordinary comparables to conduct an accurate market analysis, it is best to omit outliers from your list of comparables. If you do need to include an outlier, you will need to adjust it accordingly. For the purposes of calculating average sales price among multiple comparables, an outlier is usually omitted from the calculation because it will skew the result.

Stigmatized Properties

A stigmatized property is a home in which an actual or rumored event might diminish a buyer's desire for the property even though the property is not physically affected. Such events include murder, suicide, criminal activity, and alleged haunting.

A stigmatized property often sells for a price that is not reflective of its market—probably much lower. Like outliers, stigmatized properties should be avoided when identifying comparables. When this is not possible, they must be adjusted accordingly.

Exercise 3.1:

Adjusting Comparables and Arriving at a Price Range

Look back at the comps you selected in Exercise 2.2. Use these comps and the sample Evaluation Figures on pages 65–66 to complete the CMA Analysis Worksheets that follow.

Based on the analysis worksheets, what is the price range for the subject property?

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

	Subject	Comp. #	SBA +	CBS –
Date of sale	--			
Price	--			
Seller concessions	--			
Loan type	--			
Proximity	--			
Style	2 sty			
BR	4			
Baths	2 full, 2 half			
Garage	2			
GLA	2400			
Basement	Full, finished 1200 sf			
Kitchen	Stainless appliances, granite			
Other	Hardwood floors			
Fireplace	Yes			
Year built	1985			
School district	Washington			
Other				
Adjusted value				

Evaluation Figures

The following figures are for illustration purposes only. They may or may not reflect the actual values in your marketplace. DO NOT use these values in formulating actual CMAs without verifying their accuracy for your marketplace.

AIR CONDITIONING

Central vs none	\$2,000—\$6,000
Functional window unit	\$250
Whole house ceiling fan	\$1,000—\$2,500

APPLIANCES

Oven/range and dishwasher are expected to remain in the home.

Make adjustment for appliances in very bad condition or if there are upscale (Viking, Sub-Zero) appliances in one but not the other

\$0—\$500 each

AGE

No adjustment may be needed for less than 5 years 25%—.5%/year

BASEMENT

Partial versus none	\$ 8,000—\$15,000
Full versus none	\$15,000—\$20,000
Walk out—add to above	\$ 5,000—\$10,000

BASEMENT (FINISHED)

Below-average finishing	\$1,000—\$3,000
Average finishing	\$5,000—\$10,000
Superior finishing	\$10,000—\$20,000

BATHROOMS

Full

2 vs 1	\$3,000—\$5,000
3 vs 2	\$2,000—\$3,000
4 vs 3	\$1,500—\$2,000

Half

First half bath	\$2,000—\$3,000
Additional	\$1,500—\$2,500

BEDROOMS (ONLY IF FUNCTIONAL AND NOT IN BASEMENT)

3 vs 2	\$6,000—\$8,000
4 vs 3	\$4,000—\$6,000
5 vs 4	\$3,000—\$5,000

BRICK (ALL BRICK – NOT FACE BRICK)..... \$4,000—\$10,000

BUSY STREET (DEDUCTION)

Backing to a busy street	\$2,000—\$5,000
Fronting a busy street	\$5,000— Deck
14 x 14	\$2,000—\$4,000
Multilevel and very large	\$8,000—\$12,000

DINING ROOM

“L” or combination versus none	\$2,500—\$5,000
Separate versus “L”	\$1,000—\$4,000
Separate versus none	\$4,000—\$8,000

FAMILY ROOM (FIRST FLOOR) \$8,000—\$25,000

On main living level versus in the basement	\$2,000—\$8,000
---	-----------------

FIREPLACE \$4,000—\$6,000

FENCE \$2,000—\$4,000

GARAGE

Per stall	\$5,000—\$10,000
-----------------	------------------

HARDWOOD FLOOR \$5,000—\$7,000

LOT SIZE

If lot is significantly larger in same neighborhood (20% or more) Up to \$10,000

Depth over 150 ft does not add value

Corner lot may be a deduction of up to \$10,000 if no back yard

PATIO

10 x 20 concrete	\$1,000
------------------------	---------

Very large free-form aggregate stone	\$2,000—\$5,000
--	-----------------

POOL, DEPENDING ON LOCATION

In-ground—possibly	\$6,000—\$10,000
--------------------------	------------------

Above-ground—no value; may have negative value

PORCH

Screened vs patio or deck	\$2,000—\$5,000
---------------------------------	-----------------

Screened w/permanent roof and footings	\$5,000—\$10,000
--	------------------

Permanent with windows	\$10,000—\$20,000
------------------------------	-------------------

SQUARE FOOTAGE

Determine a square foot price that's reasonable and use the same value for each comp. Many experienced agents and appraisers will use 35%–50% of the number.



Module 4: Presenting the CMA

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Discuss CMA documents and pricing conclusions with clients.
- ▶ Address client concerns about pricing.
- ▶ Explain value principles to clients.

What the CMA Report Contains

Among other things, a CMA report is a marketing tool, and its length, complexity, and design will vary according to an agent's preferred business practices. The final CMA report can vary from a two-page summary to dozens of pages of analysis and photographs. Generally, it contains the following:

- ▶ A description of the market for the subject
- ▶ A description of the subject neighborhood
- ▶ A list and descriptions of the comparables used in developing a price for the subject
- ▶ An analysis of the comparables used, including adjustments made (This information is typically presented in a table format, with the subject and comparable features arranged side-by-side for easy comparison.)
- ▶ Any commentary needed to clarify the procedures and logic that the agent applied in choosing and adjusting comparables
- ▶ A price range for the subject, based on analysis of the comparables

Some agents prefer not to include the amount of adjustments and focus instead on what was adjusted for. This avoids potential arguments from the seller that an adjustment is "not enough." Choose the approach that you feel comfortable with, and be prepared to defend actual adjustment numbers if you use them. Tools like the RPR[®] can help.

Refer to page 38 of this manual for a model of content and organization for a comprehensive CMA generated through the RPR[®]. Sample pages from the CMA can be found in the Resources section of this manual (see page 100).

Common Disclaimer Information

Your CMA may include one or more disclaimers. A disclaimer is a formal statement that says a person is not legally responsible for something, such as the information given in a brochure, ad, or online; or a claim that a person has no direct involvement or connection with it.

Familiar disclaimers in CMAs include the following examples:

- ▶ This is a market analysis, not an appraisal, and was prepared by a licensed real estate broker or associate broker, not a licensed appraiser.
- ▶ This market analysis is based on information we had on [date]. This information might need to be updated.
- ▶ This analysis has not been performed in accordance with the Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice, which requires valuers to act as unbiased, disinterested third parties with impartiality, objectivity, and independence and without accommodation of personal interest. It is not construed as an appraisal and may not be used as such for any purpose.

A disclaimer must be specific to the situation. It needs to fit the context of what is being disclaimed. A disclaimer is not a guarantee that you will not be sued. If you should not be doing something, do not do it. Disclaimers cannot compensate for poor judgment.

Some states have their own disclosures that they require to be used on CMAs. Please check your state's requirements.

Of course, you will not simply present the CMA report to your clients without comment or leave them to interpret the results on their own. The CMA is the opening of a dialogue between agent and client. Your mutual goal is to arrive at an appropriate price for the subject and, in a reasonable timeframe, close a transaction. The CMA is a means to reaching those goals. The rest of this Module looks at discussion points and client education issues that often flow from the presentation of the CMA.

Guiding Clients through the CMA

Sellers and buyers alike are apt to jump to the bottom line when looking at the CMA. They are most interested in the price range that emerges from all the analysis. A wise agent will guide clients through all the information in the CMA to demonstrate how the final figures were derived. Asking clients for their impressions and interpretations of the information presented will give you a better understanding of their concerns and possible sticking points in moving a transaction to a successful conclusion.

Understanding the Market

Begin by spending some time with the client looking at the local market and neighborhood information. Ask an open-ended question to gauge the client's understanding at this point, something like, *"Mr. and Mrs. Seller, what do you think this market data indicates about how quickly your home is likely to sell?"*

Considering the Comparables and Competition

Next, spend some time discussing the comparables that were used in deriving the price range. People are naturally curious about others' homes—and how theirs compares—so this can be an engaging part of the CMA presentation for clients. Sellers are likely to focus on differences between their home and the competition, so be prepared to explain how you adjusted for these.

This is also a good time to discuss the competition with a seller. You will want to alert the client about any current listings that are direct competitors to their home, and the listing prices of those competitors.

Moving from a Price Range to a Listing/Offer Price

The CMA concludes with a price range for the subject—but a listing or offer price needs to be a single number. In addition to the CMA price range, you and your client will want to consider several market averages in arriving at a list price.

The Role of Supply and Demand in Pricing

Supply and demand is the principle that the value of any good or service will rise as demand increases and supply decreases, and fall as demand decreases and supply increases. This principle might be more familiar to real estate agents as embedded in the concept of buyers' and sellers' markets:

- ▶ Sellers' market conditions exist when the demand for homes to purchase is high and the supply is low. Home prices are generally heading upward in a sellers' market.
- ▶ Buyers' market conditions exist when demand is low and supply is high. Home prices are generally flat or heading downward in a buyers' market.

Absorption Rate

We can determine more precisely what market conditions exist by calculating the absorption rate. The absorption rate is an estimate of the rate at which a particular classification of properties for sale or lease can be successfully marketed in a given area. To analyze supply and demand, an absorption rate must be developed.

To calculate absorption rate, you need to determine the number of competitive properties currently on the market and divide that number by the number of properties that have been selling per month.

For example, if 4 homes are sold every month and there are 44 homes for sale, it will take 11 months to sell all the homes currently for sale. If there are 80 homes for sale, the absorption rate will be 20 months, or almost 2 years, for all the homes to sell. This does not take into account the number of homes that will eventually come on the market in addition to those already for sale.

How far back should you look in calculating absorption rate? The recommendation is to go back three months to determine the average absorption rate and then compare this figure with just the previous month's absorption rate to see the trend:

- ▶ Sellers' market conditions—Absorption rate is 1–3 months
- ▶ Normal market conditions—Absorption rate is 4–6 months
- ▶ Buyers' market conditions—Absorption rate is 7+ months

Understanding market conditions is an important factor in preparing a CMA for your client. Buyers and sellers need to know what kind of market they are operating in, because it impacts pricing and competition, and agents must be able to communicate this to their clients.

Exercise 4.1:
Using Absorption Rate to Advise Clients

Rita is a REALTOR® who has tracked sales of single-family, two-story Colonial homes in her market area for the past two years using the following parameters:

- ▶ 10–30 years old
- ▶ 2,200–2,600 square feet
- ▶ 3–5 bedrooms
- ▶ Two-car garage
- ▶ 2½ baths
- ▶ Lot size of $\frac{1}{3}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ acre

Rita discovers that during the past 12 months, 48 houses that meet this description have sold in her market of competing neighborhoods. What is the absorption rate for this market?

Knowing this, how should Rita advise sellers of similar homes in each of the following scenarios?

A. There are currently 12 homes like this on the market.

B. There are currently 22 homes like this on the market.

C. There are currently 62 homes like this on the market.

The seller or buyer will probably ask you what price you would recommend, so you need to have an answer prepared in advance. But it is wise to first ask them what they think:

- ▶ “Ms. Seller, after looking at the market information and competition, what list price from the range do you think is right for your home?”
- ▶ “Mr. and Mrs. Buyer, after considering the market data and similar homes, what offer price from the range seems reasonable to you?”
- ▶ “Mr. and Mrs. Seller, the market is indicating the value of your home to be between \$x and \$x. Currently, homes in our marketplace are selling for 96 percent of list price. Based on these numbers, where would you want to list?”

Getting to Agreement

Your goal is to reach agreement with the seller or buyer on a listing or offer price for the home. If they select a figure from within the CMA price range, this goal is accomplished. If not, further discussion is needed.

Ask the seller or buyer to explain their thinking if they suggest a price outside the CMA range. They might reveal one of the common client misconceptions about value, which you can then address, always supporting your response with the facts presented in the CMA.

In addition to agreeing on price, agents and listing clients should try to reach some common understanding about how much and at what intervals the list price will be adjusted if offers do not materialize at the original asking price.

When Sellers and Buyers Disregard Your Pricing Recommendations

When sellers are determined to price their property—or when buyers are determined to make an offer—well outside the range suggested by the CMA, agents should obtain a written, signed statement from them acknowledging that they have independently decided to do so despite the agent’s advice.

Misconception about Price	Possible Agent Response
<p>Seller: “We can always come down in price, but we can’t go up! Let’s start at a higher number.”</p>	<p>Explain that homes priced above what the market indicates are apt to take longer to sell, with accompanying stress, opportunity costs, and real costs to owners. Homes that languish on the market also tend to get passed over for consideration by potential buyers the longer they are listed.</p>
<p>Seller: “I’ve heard the market is hot right now, so I want to price my home aggressively.”</p> <p><i>or</i></p> <p>Buyer: “I’ve heard this is a buyers’ market, so I want to get a bargain.”</p>	<p>Use the absorption rate to demonstrate whether the market is buyers’, sellers’, or neutral.</p>
<p>Seller: “We completed a \$XX remodel of the kitchen last year, and that cost should be added to the suggested price range.”</p>	<p>Clarify the difference between cost to the seller and value to the prospective buyer. Explain that the CMA uses comparables that also include the upgrade in question (or have been adjusted for it), so this value is already reflected in the suggested price range.</p>
<p>Seller or Buyer: “Zillow® says the house is worth more [less] than what your price range shows.”</p>	<p>Fortunately, you also checked Zillow® in advance and are ready for this question! Explain that AVMs might contain incomplete or out-of-date information. They do not adjust for issues such as condition of the property and sales concessions. For these reasons, their price conclusions might not be accurate.</p>
<p>Seller: “My neighbor’s very similar home sold for more than your price range.”</p>	<p>If the neighbor’s home is a true comparable, it should be in your CMA and you will be able to show the client the adjustments that likely contributed to its higher selling price. If you disqualified it as a comparable, you will be able to explain that as well—for instance, the home sold too long ago and doesn’t reflect the most current market conditions. If public information was not available on the house, explain that only known, verifiable information can be used in forming value opinions.</p>



Module 5: Working with Appraisers

Why let the fun stop here?

Put your new pricing skills to good use by earning your PSA certification!



You're almost there!

Becoming a Pricing Strategy Advisor is only two quick steps away:

- 1 watch two PSA webinars
- 2 submit your application and pay a one-time certification fee

Make your expertise even more valuable!

Visit PricingStrategyAdvisor.org for more information.



Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Recognize the purpose of appraisals and the scope of the appraiser's role.
- ▶ Describe how real estate agents can work constructively with appraisers.
- ▶ Assess an appraisal and proceed appropriately when you think it contains inaccuracies.

The appraisal can confirm—or refute—the validity of the offer/list price for a home. As such, the appraisal process can be a tension point for all parties to a transaction. This Module looks at the purpose of appraisals, the appraiser's role, and how agents can work constructively with appraisers and clients through the appraisal process.

The Appraiser's Role and Responsibilities

Real estate agents should understand the role and responsibilities of appraisers so that they can educate their clients about the critical appraisal step in residential home sales.

What Appraisers Do

In a nutshell, an appraiser provides an opinion of value. To do so, he or she uses the following general process:

1. Based on the specific assignment, determine the appropriate scope of work, including the following:
 - ▶ What type of property inspection is needed (interior, exterior only, or none)
 - ▶ What approaches to value are required (sales comparison approach, cost approach, or income approach)
 - ▶ Any lender-specific requirements
2. Inspect the property, if needed.
3. Research various resources for information about the subject and market area, including county and municipal records, MLS records, and other data services.
4. Review recent sales and listings of comparable properties, in much the same way that agents do when they prepare CMAs.
5. Use an appropriate approach, or combination of approaches, to develop an opinion of the property value. There are three main approaches:

- ▶ **Sales comparison approach:** This approach uses recent sales of comparable properties. Characteristics such as the living area of the home, land area, style, age, quality of construction, number of bedrooms and bathrooms, and presence or absence of a garage are analyzed and compared. This is often the primary approach used in appraising a residential property.
 - ▶ **Cost approach:** This approach reflects the appraiser's opinion of the current cost to construct the existing house, minus any estimated depreciation, plus the value of the land. This approach is more relevant for newer homes or home features that have little or no depreciation.
 - ▶ **Income approach:** This approach generally is used on properties that have some income-generating potential. In a residential context, this would include properties that have two, three, or four living units. It typically is not used for one-unit homes in neighborhoods where residences are primarily owner-occupied.
6. Prepare an appraisal report that contains sufficient information for the intended users to understand and use it.

Who the Appraiser Works For

In a residential property sale, the appraiser works for the mortgage lender. The mortgage lender orders the appraisal and is the appraiser's client. Sometimes a lender will use an appraisal management company to manage the appraisal process. An AMC will order an appraisal on behalf of the lender. Some lenders order the appraisal directly from an appraiser.

The homebuyer receives a copy of the appraisal. The Equal Credit Opportunity Act requires creditors to automatically send a free copy of home appraisals and all other written valuations on the property after they are completed, regardless of whether credit is extended, denied, incomplete, or withdrawn.

Looking for answers or clarification regarding the appraisal process? You can find NAR's guide for Residential Appraisal Process at the following link.

https://www.nar.realtor/sites/default/files/handouts-and-brochures/2014/FAQ_Appraisal_brochure_0114_Electronic_Desktop_vFinal.pdf

Steps in Working with the Appraiser

Real estate agents and appraisers are not opponents. Each plays a critical role in the transaction. Each is bound by legal and professional obligations that circumscribe their work. Agents can do their part to ensure a constructive working relationship with appraisers and an efficient appraisal process.

Meet the Appraiser

For a residential sale, the appraiser typically needs to inspect the property and will contact the seller or agent to make arrangements to do so. You should meet the appraiser at the property and be prepared to answer any questions he or she might have about the property or neighborhood. Allow the appraiser the necessary space and time to complete the inspection.

Prepare Appraiser's Package

Prepare an Appraiser's Package in advance and have it available for the appraiser at the property.

Appraiser's Package Contents

- ▶ Plats
- ▶ Surveys
- ▶ Deeds
- ▶ Covenants
- ▶ HOA documents
- ▶ Floor plans
- ▶ Specifications
- ▶ Neighborhood details
 - ▲ Clearly defined boundaries
 - ▲ Clearly defined school boundaries
 - ▲ Trends and changes for the area—use MLS stats
- ▶ Recent similar-quality comparables
 - ▲ Why you used what you used
 - ▲ Why you didn't use the others—explain
 - ▲ Verify that the information (square footage, school districts, etc.) is correct
- ▶ Detailed lists and dates of upgrades, remodels, and costs
- ▶ Energy-efficient features
- ▶ Multiple offers on the property at time of sale

Agents are allowed to communicate with the appraiser and provide additional property information, including a copy of the sales contract.

Appraisal Tools

Agents can find a wealth of agent resources, legal information, and field guides and toolkits about the appraisal process at <https://www.nar.realtor/appraisal-valuation/valuation-tools>

Return Appraiser Calls

The appraiser might have follow-up questions after visiting the property. Be sure to respond to such requests promptly. It is in your and your client's best interest for the appraiser to have complete and accurate information sooner rather than later.

A good appraiser, in a rapidly changing market, might contact you regarding pending sales or sales that have closed but for some reason have not yet been closed out in the MLS. If an appraiser asks you about pending sales, please be certain to obtain your client's permission before sharing that information.

How to Read an Appraisal Report

There is no single, universal form used for appraisals, but Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac (the Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation) have developed residential appraisal report forms that many appraisers and AMCs use as is or with minor variations. Regardless of the format or style, appraisal reports consistently include certain information.

Interpreting an Appraisal Report

A credible appraisal contains certain essential elements. You should be able to locate all of the following in the appraisal report:

- ▶ Clear identification of the property appraised
- ▶ Description of the appraiser's scope of work
- ▶ The identity of the client and any other intended users of the report
- ▶ The intended use of the report
- ▶ The definition of value used
- ▶ The effective date of the value
- ▶ Relevant characteristics of the subject (Relevant characteristics is how appraisers typically refer to the concept of market expectations—what a typical buyer would expect to find for the property.)
- ▶ Identification of the method(s) used to value the property
- ▶ Presentation of the method(s) used to value the property

- ▶ Description of the neighborhood and market conditions for the neighborhood
- ▶ The appraiser's final value opinion of the property

An appraisal that uses the sales comparison approach to valuation (typical for residential transactions) is based on comparisons between the subject and comparables. In such an appraisal, you should see tables of comparable properties and their relevant characteristics, with adjustments made as needed. You might even see some of the same comparable properties in the appraisal report that you used in developing your CMA of the property.

Red Flags in an Appraisal

A reconciliation of market data that doesn't make sense might indicate a flawed appraisal. For example, of the three comparables, comp #1 required only 1 percent net and 3 percent gross adjustments, comp #2 required only 3 percent net and 5 percent gross adjustments, and comp #3 required 20 percent net and 25 percent gross, yet comp #3 was the comparable the appraiser reconciled to. Reconciliation is not an average of market data, but the appraiser should reconcile to the most similar comp or comps.

Here is an example of typical commentary regarding reconciliation in an appraisal: "Comp #1, which required the least net and least gross adjustments, is considered most similar to the subject. Its adjusted value is \$229,500; comp #2, which was extremely close, has an adjusted value of \$231,000; I have reconciled between these comparables at \$230,000."

When a Property Appraises Below Offer Price

A lender is unlikely to offer a mortgage above the appraised value amount. So when a home appraises below the buyer's offer price, a variety of possible responses are set in motion. At a minimum, the buyer and seller must begin negotiating terms again; in a worst-case scenario, the buyer walks away from the deal altogether.

Distressed Markets and “Low” Appraisals

Real estate agents and sellers are often—understandably—unhappy when appraisals come in lower than the offer price on the home. It is important to remember that appraisers, like agents, are bound by legal, professional, and ethical obligations. USPAP requires appraisers to research “such comparable data as are available to the appraiser in the normal course of business.” That means appraisers must look at all the comparables. If the market is being run by investors, and short sales and foreclosures are making up the market, the appraiser cannot ignore relevant market data—he or she must use these comparables in forming a value opinion. If short sales or foreclosures are an anomaly, they shouldn’t be used, but if they are very prevalent, the appraiser will have to use them.

VA Tidewater Initiative

If the VA appraisal is going to be short of purchase price, the appraiser invokes the Tidewater Initiative, which is different from the typical FHA or conventional appraisal process.

The typical Tidewater process looks like this:

- ▶ Appraiser provides Tidewater notice to POC (typically lender’s contact)
- ▶ POC notifies agents
- ▶ Agents provide comps to POC for delivery to VA within 2 working days
 - ▲ Must be closed comps
 - ▲ Pending sales contracts used to support a time adjustment must include original contract and all addendums
- ▶ Appraiser cannot discuss contents of appraisal
- ▶ Additional information is reviewed by appraiser
- ▶ Completed appraisal is uploaded to the VA portal
- ▶ Lender POC is notified of completed appraisal
- ▶ Lender’s VA underwriter performs review
- ▶ Appraisal is provided to Veteran

Challenging an Appraisal

Although we tend to refer to this as a “challenging an appraisal,” a better way to look at the situation is that we have a “sales variation” and are requesting reconsideration. Working to get the appraisal reconsidered should not be a battle with the appraiser. Starting the process with an attitude that the appraiser is “wrong” will only put the appraiser on the defensive and lower your chances of anything changing.

Most appraisers are ethical and competent, and most appraisals are accurate. Occasionally, however, agents and homeowners might have reason to believe an appraisal is sufficiently flawed that it does not accurately estimate a property’s value.

After reading and evaluating the appraisal, you might feel that it contains inaccurate information or is missing pertinent information about the subject or comparables. If you think the appraisal is inaccurate in any way, the procedure for requesting corrections is to contact the appraiser’s client (the mortgage lender) in writing.

Once an appraisal assignment is completed and sent to the appraiser’s client, an appraiser may not discuss the results of the report with anyone but the client who ordered the appraisal, or parties designated by the client.

The request for reevaluating the appraisal must be done by the buyer or the buyer’s agent, not by the listing agent. The buyer agent should not begin the process of appealing a low appraisal without the permission of the buyer.

In your written inquiry, request that your concerns be addressed by the appraiser. Keep in mind that you need to give the appraiser a fact-based reason to adjust the appraisal. The appraiser should then review the appraisal. If he or she finds that additional credible information is relevant to the appraisal assignment, the appraiser should provide a revised appraisal with comments that address your concerns.

When reviewing the appraisal, you should look for:

- ▶ **Problem comparables:** Comparable sales that are older than is preferred, are at a greater distance, are not arm’s-length, or are not logical.
- ▶ Comps that should have been used but were not.
- ▶ Comps that were used that should not have been.
- ▶ Adjustments that either don’t make sense or are not consistent.

▶ **Incorrect data:**

The address, parcel number, flood plain number, and/or census track number are wrong.

▶ **Incorrect descriptions:**

The house, as described, does not appear to be the subject property. Incorrect data and incorrect descriptions can happen when an appraiser copies a previous report as the basis for a new appraisal but forgets to redact the incorrect or update the data.

A reconciliation of market data that doesn't make sense might indicate a flawed appraisal. For example, of the three comparables, comp #1 required only 1 percent net and 3 percent gross adjustments, comp #2 required only 3 percent net and 5 percent gross adjustments, and comp #3 required 20 percent net and 25 percent gross, yet comp #3 was the comparable the appraiser reconciled to. Reconciliation is not an average of market data, but the appraiser should reconcile to the most similar comp or comps.

Here is an example of typical commentary regarding reconciliation in an appraisal: "Comp #1, which required the least net and least gross adjustments, is considered most similar to the subject. Its adjusted value is \$229,500; comp #2, which was extremely close, has an adjusted value of \$231,000; I have reconciled between these comparables at \$230,000."

The Long Life of an FHA Appraisal

Real estate agents and sellers must be aware of the long life of FHA appraisals, and their potential effects for pricing property.

An FHA appraisal stays with a property for 120 days (4 months). Suppose a property appraises for \$2,000 less than the offer price, the seller does not reduce the price, and the transaction fails. If this property sells FHA again in the next 120 days, that same appraisal will be used again. The agent should have sufficient market knowledge to guide the seller on this. What percentage of transactions in this price range sell FHA? If the percentage is significant, and depending on the seller's situation, taking the lower price in the beginning might have been a better decision.

In addition, a problem exists if this situation occurs in a changing market. The appraisal should be adjusted if the market is increasing and the agent or seller needs to discuss with the lender how the appraisal might need to be challenged. Conversely, if the market is going down, the argument could be made that the new value should be more than \$2,000 less than the old appraisal.



Module 6: Honing Your Pricing Habits

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this Module, you will be able to:

- ▶ Recognize strategies and tactics for keeping up to date on your markets
- ▶ Recognize common client misconceptions about price
- ▶ Employ best practices for pricing properties in your daily work

Having considered CMAs and their components in some detail, it's time to take a step back and look at some general strategies and tactics for sharpening and maintaining your pricing skills.

Listening to the Market

Keeping up to date with their markets is a critical and never-ending process for successful real estate agents and fundamental to pricing properties accurately.

Staying Current on Market Changes

There is no magic to staying abreast of market conditions—diligence, attention, time, and effort are required. Agents must develop—and maintain—the tools and resources they need to understand their markets both intuitively and analytically. Having a “feel” for your markets is a good thing; being able to quantify and support that feel for clients is equally important.

Successful agents employ a variety of strategies to stay up to date on markets. Most MLSs have the ability to analyze the market to keep your clients current on market changes, including tools that can show you:

- ▶ Percentage of list price received
- ▶ Days on market
- ▶ Absorption rate (months' supply of inventory)
- ▶ Range of properties that are selling, sitting, and expiring
- ▶ Ratio of new listings coming on the market versus those going off
- ▶ Median sales price—going up or down
- ▶ Number of closed sales as compared with previous months—trends

Revisiting Historical Data

“What's past is prologue,” wrote William Shakespeare, meaning that previous events set the stage for current situations. Whenever real estate agents prepare a CMA, they are revisiting historical data such as the sales prices of recently sold homes and absorption rates.

CMAs are focused on short-term trends—the immediate market. But agents also need to recognize and understand longer-term trends. Absorption rates are a good example of this. Knowing the absorption rate for a particular house category in a particular market 1 year ago, 2 years ago, 5 years ago, and so on, can begin to reveal patterns of neighborhood growth, decline, or redevelopment.

Retain your data analyses for future reference and reconsideration. The CMA you prepared for a buyer several years ago might help you generate a listing price range when that client decides to sell. This does not mean that you can use the same CMA and data for both tasks. But the old CMA will point to comparables that might be useful in the new analysis.

Developing Human Resources

A single person cannot hope to master all the complexities of residential real estate. Wise real estate agents develop personal contacts and relationships that can help them keep current with the market and fill in their knowledge gaps about pricing:

- ▶ More experienced agents can help you refine your pricing skills and interrogate your assumptions and approaches in developing CMAs.
- ▶ Agents in other geographical areas can provide insight when you must consider comparables outside the subject neighborhood.
- ▶ Contractors and home inspectors can provide information about repair, replacement, and building costs when you are using a cost approach to adjust comparables or estimate cost of needed changes to the subject home.
- ▶ Lenders can help you keep abreast of changes in mortgage rates, products, and practices that impact affordability.
- ▶ Builders can provide pricing information about homes that often are not listed in the MLS or public records, as well as information about building costs.
- ▶ Appraisers can confirm or challenge the value of specific adjustments.

Following Industry News

There are dozens of resources—or more—for staying up to date on industry and market trends; following are just a few of the most highly regarded:

- ▶ National Association of Realtors (www.realtor.org) for news, research, and statistics, among a wealth of other industry and professional information and resources.
- ▶ Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University (jchs.harvard.edu) for housing policy issues. Among other information, JCHS publishes an annual *State of the Nation's Housing* report.
- ▶ Freddie Mac (www.freddiemac.com) for economic and housing research.
- ▶ Bankrate (www.bankrate.com) for national average mortgage rate daily and average mortgage rates and points in top 10 markets.
- ▶ The S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Indices (us.spindices.com/index-family/real-estate/sp-case-shiller), which measure U.S. residential real estate prices. The indices track changes in the value of residential real estate nationally and in 20 metropolitan markets.

Exercise 6.1:
How Do You Stay Up to Date?

List three resources, other than the ones listed earlier, that you have used to stay up to date on your markets.

List three resources that you plan to explore or develop in the next six months to help you keep up to date on your markets.

Educating Clients

Continuously pursuing your own professional development with respect to value and pricing is a challenge. Educating clients about these issues can be even more challenging. Clients often lack the perspective, terminology, or experience to appreciate the forces that impact pricing, and it is up to their agent to help them understand.

Seven Deadly Seller Sins

Several seller mistakes or misconceptions occur rather predictably in residential real estate, in particular:

1. Pricing higher than the competition.
2. Refusing reasonable offers early on.
3. Not putting the property in the best possible condition for sale.
4. Making showing the property difficult.
5. Becoming emotionally attached to the property and forgetting that that emotional attachment does not add value in the eyes of the buyers.
6. Blaming the agent for the market.
7. Not reducing the price in a timely manner, causing market aging.

Advantage accrues to agents who anticipate these “sins” and help their clients overcome them.

Five Buyer Bloopers

Buyers also are prone to certain transgressions:

1. Believing AVMs have the right value.
2. Listening to people who bought houses years ago—the market has changed.
3. Believing people who insist that every house is overpriced by X%.
4. Not listening to their agents when they explain sellers’ market conditions.
5. Not getting preapproved prior to looking at properties, then finding they can’t afford what they want, and then expecting the seller to lower the price for them.

What you've learned in this course should help you educate sellers about the drawbacks of pricing higher than the competition and the fallacy of blaming the agent for the market. With a well-documented CMA in hand, you can show the seller the nature of the competition and explain, with concrete data, the dangers of pricing above it. The parallel for a buyer client is that you can show the risk of making an offer too far below the market price. For sellers and buyers, you are able to demonstrate that the *market* dictates pricing—not the whims of agents or the dreams of buyers and sellers.

When Homes Sell Quickly: "I Should Have Asked More!"

The flipside of a listing languishing for months is one that sells promptly at or near its listed price. Sellers might be quick to feel remorseful in this situation, thinking they could have gotten a higher price, and they might direct their remorse at you, their agent. Agents who have done their due diligence on pricing can explain that a prompt sale indicates that the home was priced appropriately for the market, which resulted in a timely sale.

Sellers in the Driver's Seat

Another good way to educate your sellers—and keep them informed of what is happening in the market—is to put them into your MLS prospect search as if they were buyers for their own home. They will then get updates on new listings, price reductions, and other relevant data in real time. Seeing the market mechanics with their own eyes is often more compelling than hearing it filtered through you. This strategy will also assist you in keeping the lines of communication open with them if it becomes necessary to revisit price.

What Clients Can and Cannot Control

Educating your clients about pricing includes advising them on what they can and cannot control. Understanding their power—and the limits of their power—to affect the price of the home should help reduce their stress and increase their satisfaction with the entire transaction process.

CLIENTS CAN CONTROL:

- ▶ **Putting the Property in the Best Possible Condition for Sale**
Repairs, cleaning, de-cluttering, and staging all contribute to placing the home in the best possible light and supporting the listing price.
- ▶ **Facilitating Showing of the Property**
In a buyer's market, a listing that is difficult to show due to seller constraints is in a losing position relative to the competition. In any market, most potential buyers are more at ease and receptive to viewing the home when the owners are absent.

CLIENTS CANNOT CONTROL:

▶ **The Economic Climate**

The economic climate affects the decisions and capabilities of both sellers and buyers. Aspects of the economic climate include interest rates, the availability of money, the ease or difficulty of obtaining a mortgage, federal monetary policy, and employment rates.

▶ **The Supply of Available Homes**

An abundance or deficit of competition is not within the seller's or buyer's control, nor is the corresponding effect on pricing.

The Pricing Pyramid

Another tool for explaining to sellers the dangers of overpricing is the pricing pyramid. A quick Google search turns up multiple versions of this familiar infographic, but a typical representation looks like this:



The pricing pyramid illustrates that as list price increases above market value, a smaller percentage of potential buyers will look at the home. A picture is sometimes worth a thousand words. This visual tool can help sellers quickly understand the advantages of staying within the price range determined in the CMA when settling on an asking price.

Revisiting Price

When a listing is languishing in spite of timely and reasonable adjustments to the listing price, agents must be prepared to revisit their original pricing analysis, including the following tactics:

- ▶ If you used competition in your original CMA, revisit your sources to see if any of them have sold and, if so, at what prices.
- ▶ Review current market data, including list price/sales price ratio and days on the market.
- ▶ Prepare an updated CMA for the seller using current comps.
- ▶ Ask the agents who have shown the listing what feedback they have received.
- ▶ Talk to the clients about having an appraisal done.

Legal and Ethical Requirements

Agents must observe a number of legal and ethical requirements when pricing properties. Module 1 discussed these in the context of Article 1 of the REALTOR® Code of Ethics. Here, we look at confidentiality and record-retention issues.

Confidentiality Obligations

CMAs are subject to confidentiality requirements as specified by state law. In addition, the REALTOR® Code of Ethics, Article 1, Standard of Practice 1-9, addresses the issue of agency confidentiality:

STANDARD OF PRACTICE 1-9

The obligation of REALTORS® to preserve confidential information (as defined by state law) provided by their clients in the course of any agency relationship or non-agency relationship recognized by law continues after termination of agency relationships or any non-agency relationships recognized by law. REALTORS® shall not knowingly, during or following the termination of professional relationships with their clients:

1. *reveal confidential information of clients; or*
2. *use confidential information of clients to the disadvantage of clients; or*
3. *use confidential information of clients for the REALTOR®'s advantage or the advantage of third parties unless:*
 - a. *clients consent after full disclosure; or*
 - b. *REALTORS® are required by court order; or*

Conclusion

Thank you for your active participation in this course. In summary, we have discussed the following topics:

- ▶ The purpose and benefits of CMAs
- ▶ Terminology of pricing and valuation
- ▶ The Code of Ethics as it relates to pricing
- ▶ How to identify appropriate comparables, and where to find information about them
- ▶ The role of supply and demand in pricing
- ▶ How to adjust comparables
- ▶ Specific challenges and special situations in making adjustments
- ▶ Guiding clients through the CMA
- ▶ Working with appraisers
- ▶ Honing your pricing skills and practices

Key Learning Points

Write down one or two ideas, insights, or suggestions you will take away from this course.

Questions and Answers

Use this time to ask questions about the material discussed during course.

Mastered the CMA? Now what?

Let the world know
just how skilled you are
by adding **PSA** to your name!



How to get certified as a Pricing Strategy Advisor:

- 1 watch two PSA webinars
- 2 submit your application and
pay a one-time certification fee

Watch your inbox for an email about these steps!

Visit PricingStrategyAdvisor.org to get started today!





Resources

Valuation Workbook Sample Pages



West Branch Valley Association of REALTORS®/MLS
EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

VALUATION WORKBOOK

Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740



Presented by

Melanie McLane

REALTOR® | Pennsylvania Real Estate License: RM421897

Pennsylvania Appraisal License: RL001214L

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Mobile: (570) 660-9671

Main: melanie@themelaniegroup.com

Jackson Real Estate

226 Allegheny St
Jersey Shore, Pennsylvania

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resources® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Listing Date: 6/22/2018
 MLS Name: West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS® MLS
 MLS Listing ID: WB-84486



Legend: ★ Subject Property

FOR SALE • Active: 6/22/2018

Result of Sales Comparison Analysis

\$245,306 (or \$111 / sq ft)

Last Analysis Update: 8/21/2018

\$231,245 – \$257,500
 (or \$105 – \$116 / sq ft)

Number of Comps Chosen

7

Comps Range

\$215,000 – \$259,900

List Price

\$269,000

List Date: 6/22/2018

Current Estimated Value

\$235,170

Last RVM® Update: 7/24/2018

Days in RPR: 60

RVM® Est. Range: \$223,412 – \$246,928

RVM® Confidence: ★★★★★

➔ RVM® Change - Last 1 Month: –

⬆️ RVM® Change - Last 12 Months: 127.48%

This report contains data and information that is publicly available and/or licensed from third parties and is provided to you on an "as is" and "as available" basis. The information is not verified or guaranteed. Neither this report nor the estimated value of a property is an appraisal of the property. Any valuation shown in this report has been generated by use of proprietary computer software that assembles publicly available property records and certain proprietary data to arrive at an approximate estimate of a property's value. Some portions of this report may have been provided by an RPR user; RPR is not responsible for any content provided by its users. RPR and its information providers shall not be liable for any claim or loss resulting from the content of, or errors or omissions in, information contained in this report.

S A M P L E



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
 Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Comps Selected In Analysis



Address	52 Ruth Ln Jersey Shore, PA 17740	110 Woodside Cir Jersey Shore, PA 17740	144 Ruth Ln Jersey Shore, PA 17740
Status	🏠 Subject Property	🏠 Sold	🏠 Sold
MLS Name	West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS®/MLS	West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS®/MLS	West Branch Valley Board Of REALTORS®/MLS
MLS Listing ID	WB-84486	WB-80564	WB-81378
Proximity		3.3 Mi. W	.09 Mi. NW
Value	\$245,306	\$250,000	\$245,000
Price Per Sq. Ft.	\$111	\$106	\$100
Sale/Finance Concession	-	-	-
Property Type	Single Family Residence	Single Family Residence	Single Family Residence
Property Subtype	Residential - Single Family	Residential - Single Family	Residential - Single Family
Total Rooms	8	6	7
Total Rooms Above Grade	-	-	-
Bedrooms	3	3	4
Bedrooms Above Grade	-	-	-
Living Area sq ft range (low)	-	-	-
Living Area sq ft range (high)	-	-	-
Total Baths	1.2	2.2	2.1
Total Baths Above Grade	-	-	-
Full Baths	1	2	2
Full Baths Above Grade	-	-	-
Partial Baths	2	2	1
Partial Baths Above Grade	-	-	-
Living Area (sq ft)	2,212	2,351	2,450
Living Area Above Grade (sq ft)	2,212	2,351	2,450
Basement (sq ft)	-	-	-
Finished Rooms Below Grade	-	-	-
Lot Size	0.56 acres	0.6 acres	0.59 acres
Lot Dimensions	24394 SF	26005 SF	167x154
Garage	Garage-Double Attached	Yes	Garage-Double Attached
Garage (sq ft)	-	-	-
Pool	No	Yes	No
Location	Outside City Limits, Underground Utility, Residential, Other Recreation Nearby, Near Rail, State Forest Nearby	Developing, Paved Streets, Underground Utility, Residential, Near Rail	Developing, Paved Streets, Views, Residential
Tenure	-	-	-
View	-	-	-
View Factors	Residential	Residential	Residential
Style	-	Contemporary	-
Quality of Construction	-	-	-

SAMPLE





West Branch Valley Association of REALTORS®/MLS
www.wbvamls.com

Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Local Market Conditions: Summary

The Local Market Conditions tables summarize trends and statistics in the local market: properties similar in size in the area around the subject property in the Sales Comparison Analysis.

Results shown in this report are derived from a search of MLS records for 2 to 4 bedroom, 2 to 4 bathroom, 1,659 to 2,765 sq. ft., single family residence listings located within 0.8 miles of the subject property.

Inventory Analysis	Trend (span)		Trend (span)		Trend (Total)	
	Last 7-12 Months (6-month period)	Last 4-6 Months (3-month period)	Last 3 Months (3-month period)			
Sales	4	150% ↑	3	100% →	150% ↑	
Absorption Rate (sales/month)	0.67	150% ↑	1	100% →	150% ↑	
Total # of Active Listings (on last day)	7	100% →	7	100% →	100% →	
Months of Housing Supply	10.5	67% ↓	7	100% →	67% ↓	
Median Comp Sales Price	\$149,250	60% ↓	\$204,900	22% ↓	\$45,000	111% ↑
Median Comp Sales Days in RPR	257	100% →	257	5% ↓	13	5% ↓
Median Comp Listing Price	\$90,000	99% →	\$89,000	185% ↑	\$165,000	183% ↑
Median Comp Listing Days in RPR	-	-	-	-	-	-
Median Sales Price as % of List Price	0.92%	109% →	1%	97% →	0.97%	106% →

Comparable Properties in Local Market

	Currently for Sale	Sales Within the Last 12 Months
Count	7	9
Range	\$90,000 – \$269,000	\$1,444 – \$229,000
Average	\$173,800	\$104,443
Median	\$165,000	\$67,600

Property Attributes

	Minimum	Maximum	Average
Year Built	1890	1992	1943
Living Area (sq ft)	1,092	2,636	1,766
Lot Size	3,720	26,775	14,881
# Samples	20	-	-

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



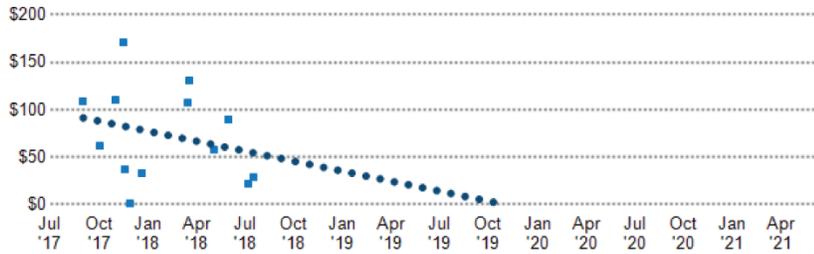
Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

Price per Square Foot

This graph compares the local market's median estimated home value per square foot with sample properties in the market.

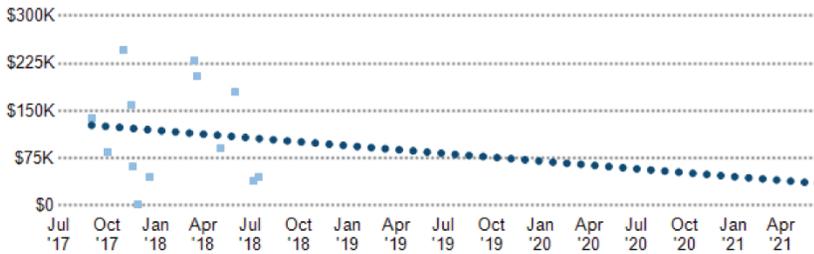
- Price / sq ft
- Trend



Median Sales Price

This graph compares the local market's median sales price with the sales price for the sample properties in the market.

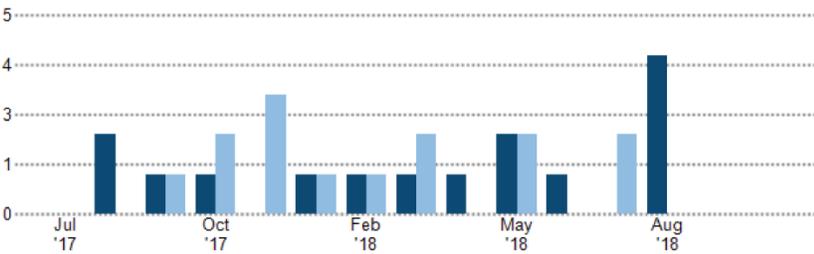
- Sale Price
- Trend



Total Sales and Listings

This graph compares the number of sales with the number of listings in the local market.

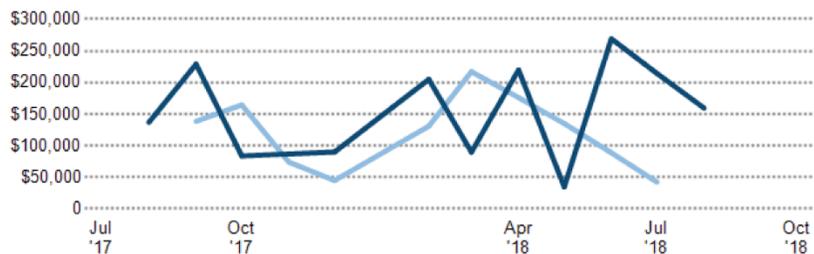
- Listings
- Sales



List Price vs. Sales Price

This graph compares the median listing price with the sales price in the local market.

- Listing Price
- Sales Price



Median Days in RPR

This graph displays the median days in RPR in the local market.

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved. Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018



West Branch Valley Association of REALTORS® NMLS
901.406.0000 (ext. 100)

Valuation Workbook

File ID: 52 Ruth Ln, Jersey Shore, PA 17740

General Market Health Charts

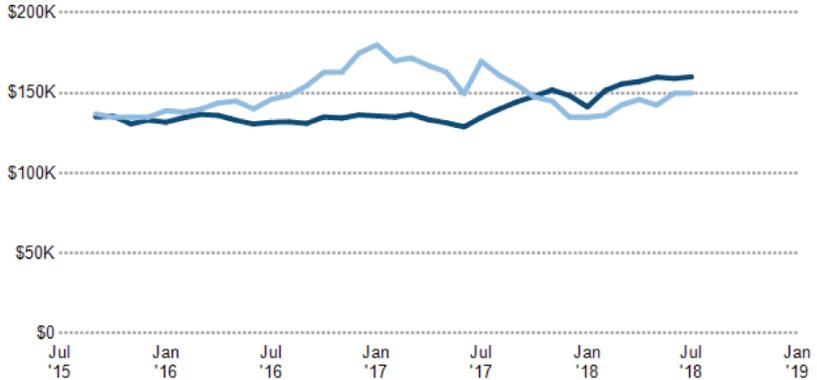
Median Estimated Home Value vs. Median Listing Price

This chart compares a ZIP code's median estimated home value with its median listing price. Estimated home values are generated by a valuation model and are not formal appraisals.

Data Source: Public records data; listing price data from on- and off-market listings sources

Update Frequency: Monthly

- Median Estimated Value
- Median List Price



Median Sales Price vs. Sales Volume

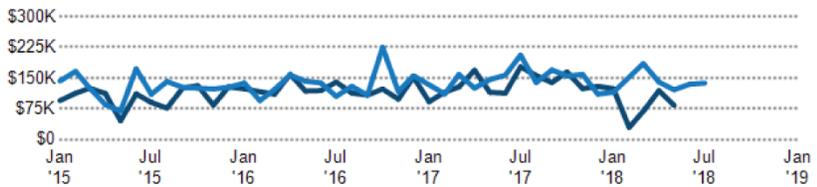
This chart compares the price trend and sales volume for homes in an area. Home prices typically follow sales volume, with a time lag, since sales activity is the driver behind price movements.

Data Source: Public records and listings data

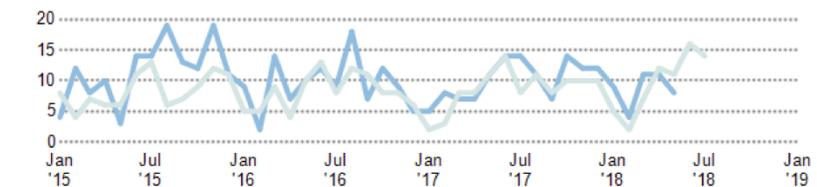
Update Frequency: Monthly

- Median Sales Price Public Records
- Median Sales Price Listings
- Sales Volume Public Records
- Sales Volume Listings

Median Sales Price



Sales Volume



Median Listing Price vs. Listing Volume

This chart compares the listing price and listing volume for homes in an area. Listing prices often follow listing volume, with a time lag, because supply and demand drive price movements.

Data Source: On- and off-market listings sources

Update Frequency: Monthly

- Median List Price
- Listing Volume

SAMPLE



Copyright 2018 Realtors Property Resource® LLC. All Rights Reserved.
Information is not guaranteed. Equal Housing Opportunity.



8/21/2018

RPR® Valuation Exercise

The following section is intended to be a hands-on demonstration of how to use a powerful tool that is available to any NAR member. RPR is an invaluable member benefit offered exclusively to REALTORS® at no additional cost. RPR services every segment of the real estate industry: Residential, Commercial, Brokers, Appraisers, Associations and MLSs. While you can access how-to videos and success strategies on www.rprnar.com, this exercise will show you how you can apply the tool to mastering your CMA process. In order to follow along in this exercise, go to www.rprnar.com, log in, and search a property of your choice.

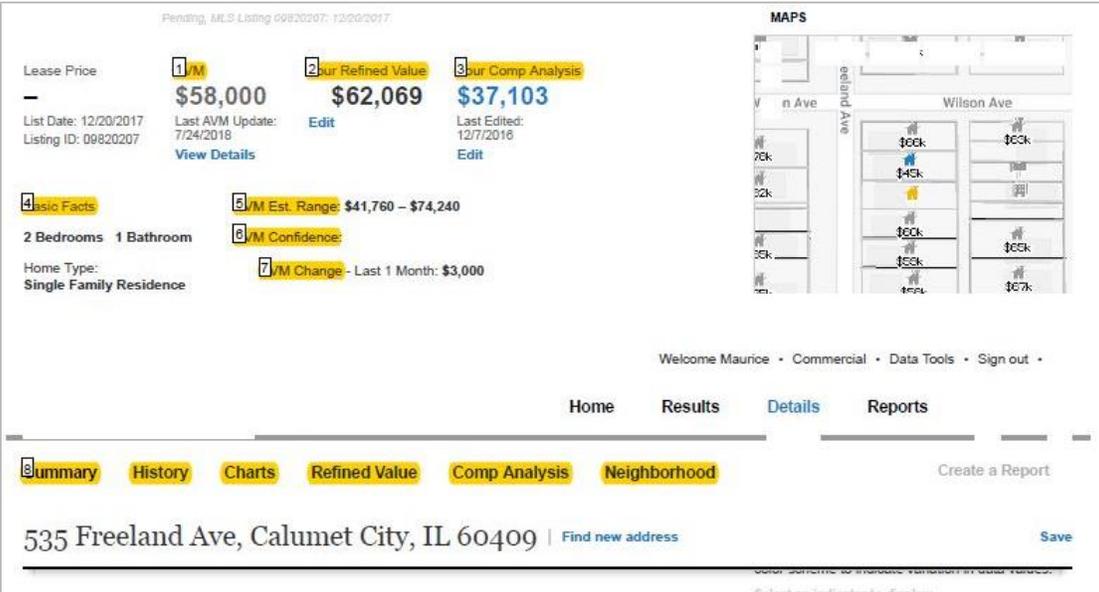
Home Details—Summary

Searching home details enables you to see critical information about the property including value, which is particularly important to your CMA. Recall from Module 2 that automated valuation models (AVMs) are online databases that try to match up similar properties to give an idea of the range of sales prices that have been historically recorded. As with any data source, the information is only as good as the data input, so it is invariably important to double-check, confirm, and verify the featured home facts.

NAVIGATING HOME DETAILS

When you are navigating throughout the entry, you should be taking note of key fields that will help inform your CMA. The home details page houses a number of these noteworthy fields. Note the highlighted fields in the example below; these fields give you critical insight into the property.

- 1. AVM
- 2. Refined Value
- 3. Comp Analysis
- 4. Basic Facts
- 5. AVM Est. Range
- 6. AVM Confidence
- 7. AVM Change
- 8. Navigation tab



Navigate to your example property's home details. What is your example property's AVM change? Think about how this AVM change impacts your CMA.

PROPERTY HISTORY

As you continue to research the Home Details Summary, you are likely to notice notes and details about the property. While this information can be incredibly valuable to you and your CMA research, you need to double check facts with local county records. Do note that historical photos can be of intrinsic value to you, but there are restrictions on their use.

This section also gives you the ability to review lease details and make changes to the home facts.

The screenshot displays a real estate listing interface. On the left, there is a 'Notes' section with a text area and a character count. Below it are buttons for 'Property Notes', 'Add a Note', 'Load Photos', and 'Seller's Proceeds'. The 'Homeowner Facts' section includes owner names, mailing address, and occupancy status. The 'Lease Details' section lists lease options, availability, and price per square foot. The 'Home Facts' section is partially visible. On the right, a 'Compare Historical Records' section provides a bar chart for 'HOW THIS ZIP COMPARES' in Calumet City, IL 60409. It compares the median estimated home value and the 12-month change in median estimated home value for the zip code, Cook County, and Illinois.

Area	Value
60409	\$112,590
Cook	\$284,950
Illinois	\$239,300

Area	Change
60409	22.6%
Cook	2.1%
Illinois	1.8%

Area	Value
60409	\$60,000
Cook	\$237,000
Illinois	\$195,000

Navigate to your example property's homeowner facts. Can you see any historical photos of the property? Explain how you will use them.

TRENDS AND DATA

When you are preparing your CMA using RPR, you should take the time to view and research the trends and data available to you in the Home Details Summary. As you filter through trends in this section, note the listing data and the price changes here. Other fields of use include the MLS numbers and listing agents. As you aggregate this data, keep in mind that you need to confirm this information against other live sources.

PUBLIC RECORD

As you make your way to the end of the Home Detail Summary, it is worth taking the time to learn some final, extra details about the property you are researching. Is the property in an existing flood zone? Does the property have a good walkability score? What type of deed does the property owner hold? These are all answers you can typically find at the end of the Home Detail Summary report for a property in RPR.

Final items worth noting in the Home Details Summary:

- ▶ Flood Zone
- ▶ Walkability Score
- ▶ Schools
- ▶ Legal Description
- ▶ Tax Info
- ▶ Deed Records

Other Details ³ (from Listing and Other Data Sources)

Building Condition: Average

Schools ⁴ (from Listing Data)

Loading...

Legal Description ⁵ (from Public Records)

Parcel Number: 30-08-312-003

City/Municipality/Township: THORNTON

Census Tract: 170318260.003026

Carrier Route: C003

Abbreviated Description: LOT:5,4 BLK:3 DIST:37 CITY/MUNI/TWP:THORNTON SUBD:F R MOTTS ADD TO VILLAGE OF HAMMOND SEC/TWNRNG/MER:SEC 08 TWN 36N RNG 15E MAP REF:30-08-SW (E&F)

Plat Map: Loading...

Notes:

Add note here

(1000 characters left)

Tax Info ⁶ (from Public Records)

Assessment Year: 2016

Assessed Value - Land: \$1,350

Assessed Value - Improvements: \$3,613

Total Assessed Value: \$4,963

Assessor Market Value Year: 2017

Total Assessor Market Value: \$49,630

Tax Rate Code Area: 37029

Tax Year: 2016

Total Tax Amount: \$1,633

Tax Exemption Code: Homestead

Notes:

Add note here

(1000 characters left)

Deed Records ⁷ (from Public Records)

Document Type: Corporation Deed

Recording Date: 1/11/2010

Sales Price: \$20,500

Sales Price Code: Full amount computed from Transfer Tax or Excise Tax.

Buyer Name: MAURICE HAMPTON

Buyer ID: Individual(s)

Seller Name: THE BANK OF NEW YORK

Seller ID: Trustee

Document #: 1001116001

Navigate to your example property's deed records. What document type does your example property have? Identify the buyer and seller:

Comparative Analysis

Now that you have a sense of the summary of home details, you should begin your analysis using the comp analysis tool in RPR. You can navigate to this tool by following this path: Home>Property Search>Details>Comp Analysis. As you create a comparative analysis, you can search for comps and set parameters for those searches. You can eliminate and add comps. Your goal is not to provide an exact value; rather, you are aiming to provide a price range.

2775 W Vista Pines Trl, Prescott, AZ 86303
[Find new address →](#)
[★ Save](#)

Property Summary

	FOR SALE	Days in RPR	Date	Amount	\$/sq ft	Living Area	Lot Size	Beds	Baths	Built
	2775 W Vista Pines Trl Prescott, AZ 86303	67 days	6/14/2018 <small>List Date</small>	\$1,995,000 <small>List Price</small>	\$621	3,213 sq ft	4.97 acres	3	2	1998

➔

Create

- Comparative Analysis:** build an estimate based on comps
- Sales Comparison Analysis:** a more detailed evaluation

}

[What's the difference?](#)

1 Confirm Home Facts

Modify the facts about this property, like square footage and bedrooms. We will use these facts when you search for comps.

Home Facts:  Confirmed | [Edit](#)

2 Search for Comps

Using our custom search tools, select the right comps for this home. The calculated price and range are based on price per square foot. You can customize your reports to include this information or not.

Average of Comps: **\$588,116** | [Edit](#)

After choosing your comps

Range: \$515,426 – \$695,752
(or \$183 per sq ft)

3 Make Adjustments

Rate your comps in relation to your subject property.

Adjustments: **+\$74,375** | [Edit](#)

After rating your comps

4 Review Comp Analysis

If you want to round the number or change the value based on your local expertise, click edit and enter a Recommended Price and Price Range for this property. This will appear in your Seller's Report.

Result of Comp Analysis: **\$662,491** | [Edit](#)

Range: \$540,951 – \$800,115
(or \$206 per sq ft)

5 Get a Seller's Report

When you are satisfied with your analysis, preserve it or share it by generating a report.



Create Report

RPR COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS STEPS

1. Confirm Home Facts

Modify the facts about this property, like square footage and bedrooms. These facts are data points used when you search for comps.

2. Search for Comps

Select the right comps for this home. The calculated price and range are based on price per square foot. You can customize your reports to include this information or not.

3. Make Adjustments

Rate your comps in relation to your subject property.

4. Review Comp Analysis

If you want to round the number or change the value based on your local expertise, click edit and enter a Recommended Price and Price Range for this property. This will appear in your Seller's Report.

5. Get a Seller's Report

When you are satisfied with your analysis, preserve it or share it by generating a report.

Navigate through the Comparative Analysis steps listed above using your example property. What is the recommended price range you arrived at?

RPR allows you to share data features on your website, Facebook, and Twitter. Workshop some ideas for how you could share data using this tool:

SETTING UP YOUR COMP SEARCH

The comps that the tool serves up is only going to be as good as the information you give the tool in the search setup page. You might have known properties that you can use for your comp search, but more than likely, you will need to search for your comps. You will more than likely be able to identify high quality, accurate comps if you follow the following steps in the RPR Comp Analysis Search:

- ▶ Select similar property types in the Property Type field.
- ▶ Select the appropriate property statuses and apply. Note that you can select multiple.
- ▶ Select the appropriate date in the Recent Date field.
- ▶ Ensure all the property details are as similar to the subject property in your initial search as possible and expand your search from there if needed.

This Property



535 Freeland Ave
Calumet City, IL 60409

Days in RPR	Date	Amount	\$/sq ft	Living Area	Lot Size	Beds	Baths	Built
239 days	12/20/2017 List Date	- Lease Price	-	950 sq ft	4,500 sq ft	2	1	1923

2 Search for the comps you want to use

Add a known property

Search an area for several properties (then pick the ones you want to use)

1 PROPERTY TYPE

... Show All

Single Family Residence

Condo/Townhouse/Apt

Mobile/Manufactured

Multifamily/Multiplex

Lot/Land

Farm/Ranch

Coop

Other Residential

KEYWORDS (You can add up to 6)

Enter a keyword Add

DATE (applies to off-market properties)

Recently

Date Range To:

5 PROPERTY DETAILS

Beds To:

Baths To:

Living Area To: sq ft

Lot Size To:

2 PROPERTY STATUS

... Show All

Active For Sale

Pending

Public Record

3 Stressed

Under Contract

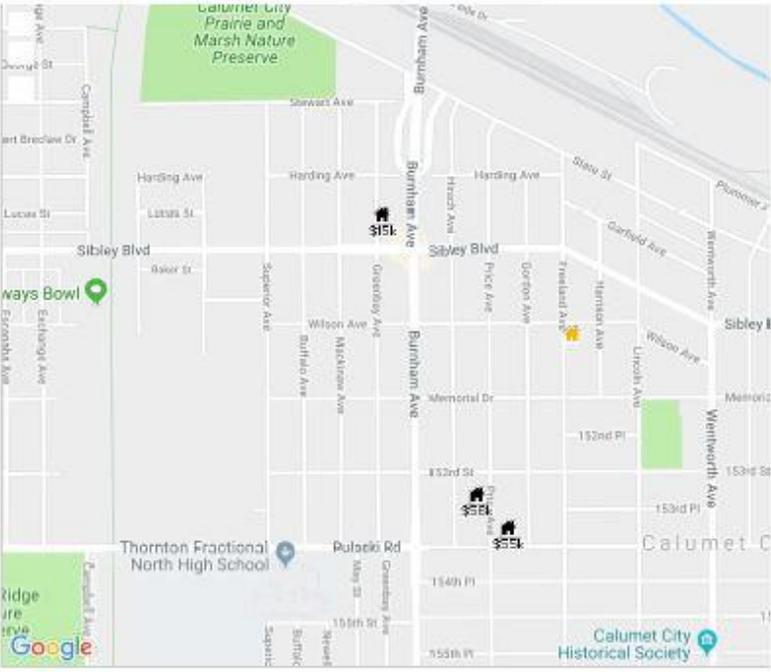
Sold

Withdrawn

Expired

Cancelled

Draw a shape



MAP LEGEND

Property Type (Icons) Property Status (Colors)

Single Family Subject Selected Off Market

114

CHOOSING YOUR COMPS

Adjusting your comps is among the most daunting and most important steps in this process. In RPR, The process can be rather straightforward as long as you know what you are looking for in the tool. When you are in the middle of the property valuation process, RPR allows you to search for the comps you want to use. Note that you have the ability to draw a shape, use a custom area, or use a geography.

The following is a list of criteria that will ensure that you are creating a correct, appropriate comp list:

- ▶ Confirm that you are using the area you wish to proceed with by checking the Search Area result.
- ▶ Ensure you have chosen the correct property classification in the Property Type field.
- ▶ The Property Status field criteria depends on the situation of the property.
- ▶ Consider market conditions when you are selecting a date range.

This Property



535 Freeland Ave
Calumet City, IL 60409

Days in RPR	Date	Amount	\$/sq ft	Living Area	Lot Size	Beds	Baths	Built
239 days	12/20/2017 List Date	- Lease Price	-	950 sq ft	4,500 sq ft	2	1	1923

2 Search for the comps you want to use

Add a known property

Search an area for several properties (then pick the ones you want to use)

1 Facets you used to search

5 Search Area: Area shown on map

6 Property Type: Single Family Residence

7 Property Status: Active For Sale
Pending
Sold

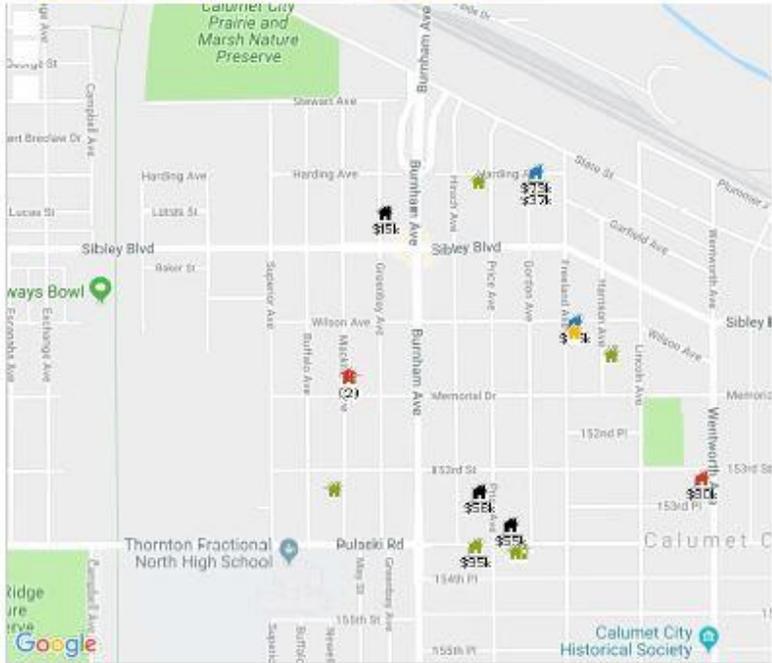
10 Date Range: Within last 6 months

11 Property Details: Beds: 2 to 2, Baths: 1 to 1

12 Living Area: 700 to 1,200 sq ft

Modify Search

2 Draw a shape 3 Use a custom area 4 Use a geography



Pricing Strategies: Mastering the CMA

Now that you have identified your ideal comp, move outward on the map until you have achieved the appropriate number of comps. Your results page will feature properties in the following format:



.25 MI. 49 days 1/3/2018 Sold Date \$37,020 Sold Price 23 30 sq ft 4 5 0 BR
437 Gordon Ave, Calumet City, IL 60409
APN#: 30-08-111-053
Owner: U S Bank National Association
Details
7 Add to Comps List

Follow the same steps outlined above. How many comps did you identify for your example property? What considerations did you make when you applied market conditions?

OTHER COMP CONCERNS

When identifying and refining your comps, do not forget to keep the following in mind:

- ▶ Choose comps based upon closest closing date.
- ▶ Show price per square comparison.
- ▶ Verify square footage is as close as possible to the subject property.
- ▶ Ensure the bedroom count is as close to the subject property as possible.
- ▶ Ensure the bathroom count is as close to the subject property as possible.
- ▶ Choose comps that are as close as possible though this may not be a factor in older communities such as 100 year old plus homes. This range may be 40 years.

Reporting Considerations

Another benefit of using RPR to work through your comp analysis is that you can utilize the reporting that is available in the tool. With a variety of report types, control over elements to include, and multiple delivery methods, the presentation of the work you put into your CMA will shine in the report styles available.

When you are finalizing the content of your report, pay attention to the following options:

SELECT A REPORT

- ▶ You can choose from a variety of report types, including property report, seller's report, property flyer, mini property report, valuation workbook, market activity report, neighborhood report, or school report. Your selection should reflect the audience of the report you are generating.

PERSONALIZE YOUR REPORT

- ▶ Consider whether you would like to personalize the report with a client or potential client's name and custom message.

COVER PAGE ELEMENTS

- ▶ Your report could include the following elements: name, agent photo, license number, cell phone, work phone, office phone, fax, email, broker logo, brokerage name, office name, or office address. Simply select or deselect them using the radio button function.

PROFILE INFO

- ▶ Last but not least, make sure that your RPR profile has your most up-to-date contact information. You have put in the work; you want to be sure that your clients are able to get ahold of you.

RUN REPORT

- ▶ Click the "Run Report" button at the bottom of the page. Note: your report will expire after 30 days so it is advisable to download a copy of the report if you need to retain it longer.

1 535 Freeland Ave, Calumet City, IL 60409 | [Change Address](#)

2 **Select a report**

- P Property Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- S **Seller's Report** [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- FI Property Flyer [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- M Mini Property Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- V Valuation Workbook [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- A Market Activity Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- N Neighborhood Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)
- Sc School Report [More Details](#) | [Show Sample](#)

3 **Personalize your report**

Include Recipient Name:

Enter name:

Message:

Type message here

(250 characters left)

4 **Delivery method**

- Display now (you can open or download as a PDF)
- Email to: Cc to Me

From: **Mauricehampton@centeredrealty.com**

NOTE: Reports expire after 30 days. Please download a copy of this report if you need to retain it longer.

[Run Report](#)

1 CUSTOMIZE YOUR REPORT



3 Select cover page elements to include:

- All Elements
- Name
- Agent Photo
- License #
- Cell Phone
- Work Phone
- Office Phone
- Fax
- Email
- Broker Logo
- Brokerage Name
- Office Name
- Office Address

5 Report Preferences

Show Page Numbers

[Manage Custom Pages](#)

7 YOUR PROFILE INFO



Maurice Hampton
Centered International Realty Corp
9851 S. Wood St
Chicago, IL 60643

Centered
INTERNATIONAL REALTY

Office: (312) 488-0487
Mobile: (312) 806-3026
Work Fax: (312) 277-1925
Main: Service@centeredrealty.com

Follow the same steps outlined above to produce a report. Share your result with a colleague and ask them to comment on your results. How can you continue to improve your process?

Helpful Websites

Bankrate:

www.bankrate.com

Fannie Mae:

www.fanniemae.com

Freddie Mac:

www.freddiemac.com

Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University:

jchs.harvard.edu

National Association of REALTORS®

- ▶ **2018 Code of Ethics & Standards of Practice:**
www.nar.realtor/about-nar/governing-documents/code-of-ethics/2018-code-of-ethics-standards-of-practice
- ▶ **PSA (Pricing Strategy Advisor) Certification:**
www.pricingstrategyadvisor.org
- ▶ **REALTORS Property Resource® (RPR)®:**
www.narrpr.com
- ▶ **RPR® Blog:**
blog.narrpr.com/training
- ▶ **Remodeling Impact Report:**
nar.realtor/reports/remodeling-impact
- ▶ **Valuation Services Matrix:**
www.realtor.org/appraisal/valuation-services-matrix

Pillar to Post Cost Guide:

<https://pillartopost.com/costguide/>

Remodeling Magazine Cost vs. Value Report:

www.costvsvalue.com

S&P/Case-Shiller Home Price Indices:

us.spindices.com/index-family/real-estate/sp-case-shiller

Uniform Standards of Professional Appraisal Practice (USPAP):

www.uspap.org

Glossary

A

Absorption analysis

A study of the number of units of residential or nonresidential property that can be sold or leased over a given period of time in a defined location.

Adjustment

The amount added to or subtracted from the sales price of a comparable property to arrive at an indicated value for the subject property.

Agency

Refers to the relationship between a principal and an agent whereby the principal, expressly or by implication, authorizes the agent to work under the principal's control and on the principal's behalf (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Law_of_agency).

Agency, dual

Dual agency occurs when the same agent represents both the seller and the buyer. Individual state laws vary and interpret dual agency rather differently.

Agent

The licensed real estate salesperson or broker who represents buyers or sellers.

Appraisal

The estimation of a home's value based on sales of comparable properties in the neighborhood is one method of doing an appraisal. Appraisals are conducted by a licensed appraiser and are used in the loan process to ensure that the value of the home is equal to or greater than the purchase price.

Appraiser

A person who possesses the education, training, and experience necessary to accurately render an opinion as to the value of real estate.

B

Broker price opinion (BPO)

- (1) The real estate broker's opinion of the expected final net sale price, determined prior to the acquisition of the property (www.realtor.org).
- (2) An estimate prepared by a real estate broker, agent, or sales person that details the probable selling price of a particular piece of real estate property and provides a varying level of detail about the property's condition, market, and neighborhood, and information on comparable sales, but does not include an automated valuation model (www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/PLAW-111publ203/content-detail.html).

C

Client

The party or parties who engage an appraiser (by employment or contract) in a specific assignment.

Code of ethics

Rules of ethical conduct, such as those that govern the actions of members of a professional group.

Comparable

A recently sold property in the subject's market that is substantially similar to the subject. Comparables are used as a basis for determining the value of the subject.

Comparative market analysis (CMA)

- (1) Used to help establish a realistic price range for a home, a CMA usually includes a review of comparable properties in the immediate area currently on the market or that have recently sold.
- (2) An estimate of a home's value compared with others. This differs from an appraisal in that property currently for sale may be taken into consideration (competition for the subject property).

Competency rule

The rule that an appraiser must be competent to perform the assignment, acquire the necessary competency to perform the assignment, or decline or withdraw from the assignment.

Competition

A currently listed property that can compete for the buyers of a given subject.

Confidential information

Information that is either identified by the client as confidential when providing it to an appraiser and that is not available from any other source, or classified as confidential or private by applicable law or regulation.

Conformity

The principle that maximum value is created when a property is in harmony with its surroundings.

Contribution

The principle that the value of any part of a property is measured by its effect on the value as a whole.

Cost

The total amount spent to acquire or build a property or component. Cost may or may not reflect value. Cost is a historic quantity and does not vary over time.

Cost-based method

A method for adjusting comparables in which the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on the actual cost to construct or add it.

D

Debt reduction

The process of reducing the amount of money owed on an unsecured loan or purchase.

Depreciation

Loss in value due to any cause, including physical deterioration, functional obsolescence, and external obsolescence.

Distressed sales

Generally refers to foreclosures and short sales, selling at discounts of 15 to 20 percent from nondistressed market prices. This can exert a major negative impact on overall market prices.

F

Fair market value

The most probable price real estate should bring in a sale occurring under normal market conditions.

Fannie Mae

The Federal National Mortgage Association, a leading source of financing for mortgage lenders, providing access to affordable mortgage financing in all markets at all times.

Foreclosure

A legal process in which a default in payment or other terms of the mortgage note causes the property used as security for the mortgage to be sold to satisfy the debt. The title to the property in the mortgage is passed either to the holder of the mortgage or to a third party.

Foreclosure sale

Property sold to the highest bidder, typically at auction.

Freddie Mac (FHLMC)

A leading, government-sponsored enterprise and publicly traded company that creates guidelines on suitable properties, down payment, income and credit requirements, and the maximum mortgage amount. The maximum loan limit is reset each year by Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae.

H

Highest and best use

The reasonable and probable use of a property that will support the highest present value of the land.

L

License law

Refers to individual states' real estate laws, regulations, and the licensing requirements for real estate agents in a specific jurisdiction.

Limiting conditions

Specifications in an appraisal report that restrict the assumptions in the report to certain situations (e.g., date and use of the appraisal, definition of value, definition of surveys used or not used, etc.).

M

Market-based method

A method for adjusting comparables in which the value of a particular feature of a property is estimated based on market knowledge or a paired-sales analysis.

Market expectations

What a probable buyer presumes to find in a house of a particular age, type, location, and price range.

Market price

The price at which a property actually sells. This value is set by buyers and sellers and is not always the same as market value.

Market value

The most likely price a property should sell for in a competitive and open market, where both buyer and seller act prudently and knowledgeably and neither is under any undue duress to complete the transaction, and where the property has been exposed to the open market for a reasonable time.

Mortgage

A legal document in which real estate is named as the security or collateral for the repayment of the loan.

N

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS® (NAR)

The National Association of REALTORS®, “The Voice for Real Estate,” is America’s largest trade association, representing over 1.2 million members, including NAR’s institutes, societies and councils, involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

Neighborhood

A loosely defined geographical location within a city, town, or suburb that often consists of social communities with considerable face-to-face interaction among their members.

Neighborhood life cycle

The period during which most of the properties in a neighborhood undergo the stages of development, equilibrium, decline, and revitalization.

O

Outlier

A property that sold for a price that is extremely high or low based on all other comparables.

P

Paired-sales analysis

An analysis in which a specific feature is compared across multiple comparable transactions to isolate its effect on price.

Personal property

Identifiable tangible objects that are considered by the general public as being “personal” (e.g., furnishings, artwork, antiques, gems and jewelry, collectibles, machinery and equipment). All tangible property that is not classified as real estate.

Price

The amount asked, offered, or paid for a property.

Progression

The principle that the value of an inferior property is enhanced if surrounded by properties of greater value.

Q

Qualitative

Pertaining to, or concerned with, quality or qualities.

Quantitative

Pertaining to, or concerned with, measuring quantity.

Quick sale

A quick sale involves buying a property for a price lower than its normal value. This normally happens when the mortgage loan could not be paid by the borrower or home owner. After a couple of months that the debtor failed to pay for the loan, the lender decides to sell the property for a lower price, rather than putting too much pressure on the borrower (<http://ezinearticles.com/?What-is-a-Quick-Sale-in-Real-Estate?&id=3703139>).

R

Real estate

An identified parcel or tract of land, including improvements, if any.

Real estate owned (REO)

If a foreclosure sale is unsuccessful, ownership of the property is transferred involuntarily to the lender.

Real property

The interests, benefits, and rights inherent in the ownership of real estate.

Regression

The principle that a higher-priced property is worth less if located amid lower-priced properties.

S

Sales comparison approach

One of three approaches to value in appraisal theory. In this approach, value is estimated by comparing similar properties that have sold recently to the subject property.

Salesperson

Any person who, for compensation or valuable consideration, is employed either directly or indirectly by a real estate broker to work with a client to sell or offer to sell; or to buy or offer to buy; or to negotiate the purchase, sale, or exchange of real estate; or to lease, rent, or offer for rent any real estate; or to negotiate leases thereof or improvements thereon. Such a salesperson or agent must secure a state license.

Scope of work

The type and extent of research and analyses in an assignment. An appraiser must identify the problem to be solved, determine and perform the scope of work necessary to develop credible assignment results, and disclose the scope of work in the report.

Selling price

The actual price that a buyer pays for a property.

Short sale

As used in MLS rules, a short sale is defined as a transaction where title transfers, where the sales price is insufficient to pay the total of all liens and costs of sale, and where the seller does not bring sufficient liquid assets to the closing to cure all deficiencies.

Stigmatized property

A property in which an actual or rumored event might diminish a buyer's desire for the property even though the property is not physically affected.

Subject

The property being evaluated.

Substitution

The principle that the maximum value of a property is set by what it would cost to purchase an equal property. Buyers will not pay more for a property than the cost of acquiring it elsewhere.

Supply and demand

The principle that the value of any good or service will rise as demand increases and supply decreases, and fall as demand decreases and supply increases.

V

Valuation

The act of assessing the value or price of a property or investment.

Value

The subjective judgment on the relative worth of something.