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REIQ REPORT REVEALS GOOD NEWS FOR QLD PROPERTY

The REIQ released its quarterly report into the state's real estate market this week, with generally positive news for the state's markets, especially in the southeast corner.

The Gold and Sunshine coasts ended the year with a bang, surging past Brisbane LGA's 2.6 per cent growth and delivering stellar growth of 7.7 per cent and 6.4 per cent respectively to the median house price.

These coastal markets clearly are highly desirable, offering world-class beaches and a relaxed lifestyle without compromising on quality of life. In the past, moving to a regional centre meant sacrificing access to good coffee, or career opportunities, or good shopping, or even fast internet and phone coverage. These days, those sacrifices are, generally speaking, not necessary. As a result, demand is pushing up property prices.

The southeast areas of Ipswich and Logan were strong performers. Ipswich median house price grew 3.4 per cent, outperforming Brisbane LGA's growth of 2.6 per cent, to finish the year on \$517,000. This market is now 20.2 per cent higher than five years ago, delivering sustainable growth for this market.

Logan grew 2.6 per cent, a solid result for this growth corridor, to deliver a 2017 median house price of \$390,000. This is a highly desirable market for first-home buyers looking to get a foot on the property ladder and bargain hunters would do well to search for good buys around Logan and Ipswich because they are consistent performers.

Brisbane LGA grew 2.6 per cent, to a new record annual median house price of \$665,000. This is modest growth, but it is steady and sustainable. The apartment market has contracted 2.2 per cent, to an annual median unit price of \$440,995.

Regional Queensland had a relatively good year, with many markets either holding steady or delivering moderate, steady growth. This is a marked improvement on previous years where many were classed as falling markets, with consistently contracting median house and unit prices.

Fraser Coast enjoyed 2.6 per cent growth to the median house price, to end the year on \$316,000. This market has turned a corner and there are promising signs for more growth in the year ahead.

Bundaberg produced 2.2 per cent median house price growth and the Bundaberg median house price of \$285,000 is 1.1 per cent higher than it was five years ago, which is a positive milestone for this region.

Looking at the five-year growth, Toowoomba shines as the strongest regional market outside the southeast corner, with 20.3 per cent growth for median house price. The garden city ended the year with 1.4 per cent house price growth for the 12 months to December, to finish on \$355,000.

Rockhampton eased 1.9 per cent, with the median house price now \$265,000. Even though this is a fall in prices, we are optimistic this market is turning a corner soon and will start to stabilise. The median unit price in Rocky is \$295,000, which is \$30,000 more expensive than a house. This is an indicator of the popularity of relatively new apartments in this market compared with established houses.

Mackay data is starting to support the anecdotal evidence, with demand stabilising and prices firming. The median house price held steady throughout 2017 and this market is on its way to being classed as a steady market.

The Townsville market slipped about 2.5 per cent over 2017, to deliver an annual median house price of \$328,000. Recent rains have delivered joyous optimism and as the city greens up for the first time in a long time, it's hard to imagine buyers will pass up some of the outstanding buying opportunities on offer in this market.

Cairns remains one of the strongest and most consistent regional markets, delivering whopping growth (for regional Queensland!) of 3.8 per cent to the annual median house price, which finished the year at \$410,000. This is a market that has gone from strength to strength and if all conditions remain the same, we expect this good performance to continue.

As many of our markets start to stabilise it's an opportune moment for buyers to snap up some good buying opportunities before prices rise again. Make sure you do your research and look for those bargains that best suit your needs and budget.

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