

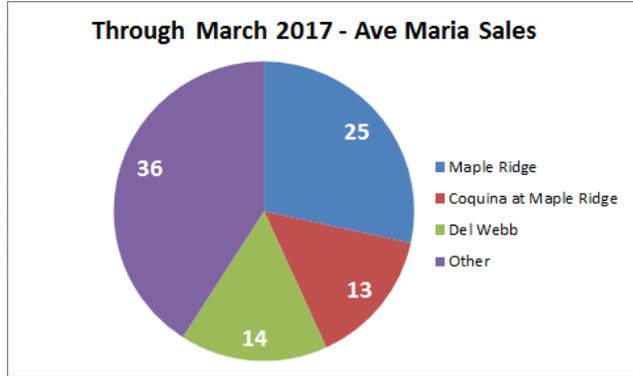
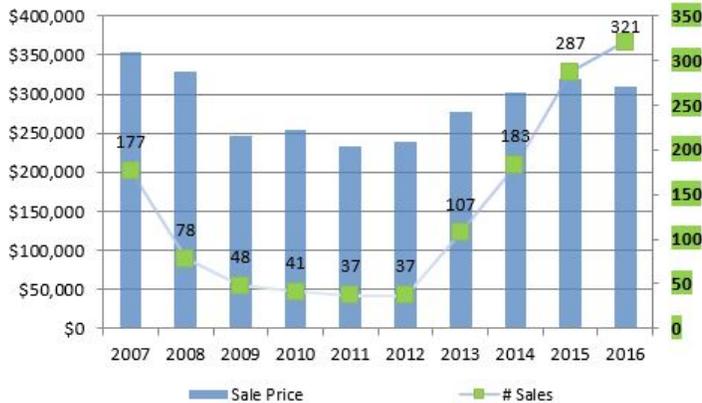


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What's Up With Ave Maria?



Roughly 20 miles east of the Immokalee Road and I-75 interchange lies a small town that's breaking all kinds of sales records and has become the top selling community in all of Southwest Florida. And many who are reading this haven't even been there or know how to get there. Ave Maria was an afterthought during the downturn in the market from 2009-2012, but since 2013, the community has absolutely been on fire. And if it's still somewhere that's out-of-sight and out-of-mind to you, you need to take a trip out there.

Sales in the community started out strong in 2007 with 177 closings, but the timing of the last decades' housing collapse was brutal for the fledgling community and by 2011, annual sales had dipped to 37 homes.

2012 wasn't any better, again with 37 homes sales. But the return of the housing market served as a rising tide for the struggling community, and in 2013 annual sales rebounded to 107. Ave Maria has been on fire ever since with 183 sales in 2014, 287 sales in 2015, and 321 sales posted in 2016. And as of April, 2017 was on pace to surpass the 2016 sales.

Of course, the market for all properties in Southwest Florida has improved over the past five years. But not to this degree. Ave Maria's growth explosion is due to a single built-in advantage. PRICE. While the pace of sales has soared, the median price has not. In fact, the median price for new home sales actually declined from 2015 to 2016 and has remained relatively flat over a three year period. One community in particular, Maple

Ridge, has been the primary driver of affordable housing. The median price for a new home in Ave Maria was \$308,935 in 2016 and buyers are swarming Ave Maria to take advantage of houses that would cost them 25-30% more in new Naples communities 20 miles west.

While the primary advantage is certainly price, another major advantage has been the location. Yes. The location is an advantage. Among the buyers in Ave Maria are families from the east coast of Florida who can utilize I-75 and State Road 29 to easily access Ave Maria. For many families, Ave Maria offers an hour and a half one-way commute (not too different from living in Kendall but working in Fort Lauderdale) and the opportunity to live and raise kids in a quiet, family-friendly community.

Only time will tell how Ave Maria fills out, supports Ave Maria University, and develops its own character. But if the past few years are any indication, we'll all know exactly where it is soon.



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