

Porch Views & Property News



A Quick Hello from Me

December was full in the best way: community gatherings, service, leadership, and a lot of meaningful moments that reminded me why I care so deeply about this work and the people it connects. As the calendar turns, I'm carrying that momentum forward – just with a sharper lens and a steadier pace.

Professionally, I'm stepping into 2026 grounded in preparation and perspective. Whether I'm working alongside clients, sitting at a policy table, or supporting the organizations that matter to me, the through-line remains the same: thoughtful planning, clear communication, and showing up with intention.

January isn't about easing off – it's about lining things up. And I'm looking forward to what that creates in the months ahead.



From My Porch to Yours

January always brings a different view from the porch. The lights are packed away, the garden is quieter, and the neighborhood settles back into its everyday pace. The mornings feel sharper, coffee stays warm a little longer, and Benni is far more selective about how long he's willing to hang outside.

I've come to appreciate this part of the year because it strips things back a bit. There's less noise competing for attention and more space to notice what's actually happening – in our homes, in the neighborhood, and in the routines we fall into without thinking much about them. It's a month that lends itself to checking in rather than rushing ahead.

This is also the time of year when conversations feel a little more grounded. It's not necessarily a restart, but maybe a reset – just a little room to breathe and take inventory of what is ahead and the new opportunities that come with a new year.

From my porch to yours, Benni and I hope January gives you a sense of steadiness – a chance to settle in, look around, and move forward feeling rooted right where you are.

What I'm Seeing in the Market

National: Toward the end of 2025, home sales increased as mortgage rates eased, gradually bringing buyers back into the market. About **4.1 million homes** are selling annually, inventory is higher than last year, and prices have held steady, with the typical U.S. home around **\$415,200**. As rates continue to soften, NAR expects more households to regain affordability heading into 2026.

Virginia: Statewide, the same pattern played out. More than **9,000 homes** sold recently, slightly above last year, while growing inventory gave buyers more options and allowed homes to stay on the market a bit longer. The statewide median price remained around **\$430,000**, reinforcing that values stayed steady even as the pace normalized. The story across Virginia wasn't decline – it was recalibration.

Hampton Roads: Here in our region, buyers ended the year with more homes to choose from than they had a year earlier, creating welcome breathing room. Prices remained steady, and the typical home continued to sell in about **three weeks** – still faster than many markets nationwide. What stood out locally wasn't speed or slowdown, but balance: a market that moved forward without the pressure that defined the past few years.

★ *Across Hampton Roads, **single-family homes are selling more quickly than condos**, while **condos remain a strong affordability option** – especially for first-time buyers and down-sizers.*



January Home Care: Start the Year on Solid Ground

Cold weather puts extra strain on your home. A few quick January check-ins can help prevent winter wear and set you up well for the months ahead.



🔑 **Seal Winter Drafts:** Check doors and windows for air leaks and add weatherstripping where needed.

🔑 **Mind Exterior Drainage:** Clear downspouts and walkways so winter rain drains away from the foundation.

🔑 **Test Safety Devices:** Check smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and replace batteries if needed.

🔑 **Protect Plumbing:** Open cabinets under exterior sinks and drip faucets during hard freezes.

What's Simmering: Crock Pot White Chicken Chili

After weeks of holiday cooking, hosting, and prep, January calls for something simpler. This white chicken chili is my go-to take-a-break meal – easy to prep, easy to double, and just as good reheated or pulled from the freezer on a busy night.



Cheers to a recipe that lets you step back while dinner takes care of itself!

Makes: 4–6 servings Prep: 10 minutes

Ingredients:

- 1½–2 lbs chicken breasts or thighs
- 2 cans white beans, drained and rinsed
- 1 small onion, diced
- 2–3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can mild green chiles
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 tsp chili powder
- ½ tsp paprika
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 4 oz cream cheese or ½ cup sour cream

Directions:

1. Add all ingredients except cream cheese/sour cream to the slow cooker.
2. Cook on Low for 6–7 hours or High for 3–4 hours, until chicken is tender.
3. Shred chicken directly in the pot.
4. Stir in cream cheese or sour cream and let warm through before serving.

Porch Tip: This recipe freezes beautifully. You can make a double batch and tuck half away – future-you will be grateful on a cold January night.

Feeling at Ease At Home

A few things worth keeping in mind this month – whether you own, rent, or simply want the place you live to feel comfortable and cared for.

- Winter reveals patterns. Cold weather highlights small comfort issues – drafts, drainage, temperature swings – worth noticing, even if someone else handles the fixes.
- Planning doesn't require orders. January is a good time to think through what might change this year – space needs, routines, timing – without committing to anything yet.
- A calmer pace helps everyone. When things slow slightly, it's easier to observe, ask questions, and make choices that fit your life – at home and beyond.

Simple strategies to keep in mind as the season unfolds.



THE MARKET & THE MOOD ... CITY BY CITY

Real estate isn't just about data points—it's about how people actually live. Whether you're tracking prices or just curious what's going on across town, this quick roundup brings it all together with insight—and a little personality.

Virginia Beach: Steady Demand, More Choice

- 🔑 Median Sale Price: \$405,000 (▲ 8.0% MoM)
- 🔑 Median Days on Market: 23 (▲ 11.7% MoM)
- 🔑 Sale-to-List Price Ratio: 99.6% (▲ 0.1% MoM)
- 🔑 Inventory: 749 homes (▲ 21.1% MoM)
- ⚖️ Market Lean: Seller-Leaning (≈ 1.6 months supply)



Market Snapshot:

Virginia Beach ended the year with more inventory and a slower pace, giving buyers more room to compare options. Prices stayed steady, and homes that are priced well and show well continue to move.

Norfolk: Balanced Pace, Selective Demand

- 🔑 Median Sale Price: \$313,000 (▼ 0.6% MoM)
- 🔑 Median Days on Market: 27 (▼ 7.1% MoM)
- 🔑 Sale-to-List Price Ratio: 99.4% (▲ 0.2% MoM)
- 🔑 Inventory: 521 homes (▲ 12.5% MoM)
- ⚖️ Market Lean: Balanced (≈ 2.7 months supply)



Market Snapshot:

Norfolk saw more homes come to market while the pace improved slightly. Pricing stayed steady, and buyers are moving with intention—strong presentation still matters.

Chesapeake: Strong Prices, More Inventory

- 🔑 Median Sale Price: \$433,500 (▲ 4.5% MoM)
- 🔑 Median Days on Market: 24 (▼ 11.1% MoM)
- 🔑 Sale-to-List Price Ratio: 100.0% (▲ 0.2% MoM)
- 🔑 Inventory: 584 homes (▲ 26.3% MoM)
- ⚖️ Market Lean: Seller-Leaning (≈ 2.0 months supply)



Market Snapshot:

Chesapeake closed the year with higher inventory and strong pricing. Buyers have more options than last month, but well-priced homes are still trading close to list.

Portsmouth: Affordable Options, Calmer Pace

- 🔑 Median Sale Price: \$275,000 (≈ flat MoM)
- 🔑 Median Days on Market: 28 (▼ 8.8% MoM)
- 🔑 Sale-to-List Price Ratio: 97.4% (▼ 2.2% MoM)
- 🔑 Inventory: 274 homes (▼ 14.5% MoM)
- ⚖️ Market Lean: Balanced (≈ 2.2 months supply)



Market Snapshot:

Portsmouth remains one of the region's most approachable price points. The pace is steadier and buyers have room to negotiate—condition and pricing strategy matter.

Hampton: Steadier Pace, More Choice

- 🔑 Median Sale Price: \$289,000 (▲ 8.9% MoM)
- 🔑 Median Days on Market: 34 (▼ 12.0% MoM)
- 🔑 Sale-to-List Price Ratio: 98.5% (▼ 1.0% MoM)
- 🔑 Inventory: 355 homes (▲ 30.8% MoM)
- ⚖️ Market Lean: Balanced (≈ 2.4 months supply)



Market Snapshot:

Hampton's inventory grew and the market pace eased, giving buyers more choice. Sellers still do well when they price realistically and prep thoughtfully.

Suffolk: Space & Stability, More Time to Sell

- 🔑 Median Sale Price: \$416,000 (▼ 2.6% MoM)
- 🔑 Median Days on Market: 47 (▼ 5.9% MoM)
- 🔑 Sale-to-List Price Ratio: 99.4% (▲ 0.1% MoM)
- 🔑 Inventory: 467 homes (▲ 44.6% MoM)
- ⚖️ Market Lean: Balanced (≈ 3.0 months supply)



Market Snapshot:

Suffolk continues to attract buyers looking for space, but growing inventory has stretched timelines. Values remain steady.

Sources: REIN MLS; Domus Analytics (Nov 2025); Realtors Property Resource® (RPR) Market Activity (Nov-Dec 2025); Howard Hanna Market Reports. Information deemed reliable but not guaranteed.

Ask
Jennifer...

Looking to match your move with your lifestyle? Want a neighborhood or zip-code level breakdown? Message me directly—I've got your area covered.

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THE PRE-LISTING EXPERIENCE: WHERE PREPARATION MEETS PRESENTATION



Before a home ever hits the market, there's important work that happens behind the scenes. It's the part most people never see, but it's what keeps the process clear, organized, and on track.

Here's how it works...

- ◆ Property & Records Review – Property detail verified before pricing.
- ◆ Lifestyle Snapshot – Schools, walkability, and daily rhythms that shape value.
- ◆ Pricing Signals – We study real-time buyer data, not guesswork.
- ◆ Market Reality – Active listings, recent closings, and timing trends.
- ◆ Audience Strategy – Who the likely buyer is—and how we'll reach them.
- ◆ Next Steps – Walk-through, prep, photography, and go-live plan.



Each step is designed to replace uncertainty with calm clarity.

It's how we turn preparation into presentation—and first impressions into results.

Thinking about a 2026 move?
A guided pre-listing review
now gives you clarity later.

WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND? "SHOULD I BUY NOW OR WAIT"

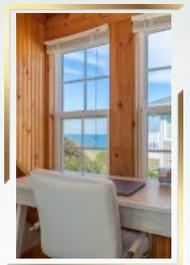
This question followed us through 2025 and is still top of mind heading into 2026. With mortgage rates in the low-to-mid 6% range and plenty of predictions about what's next, it's easy to feel like timing has to be perfect. **It doesn't.**

What made the biggest difference over the past year wasn't guessing where rates would go – it was being ready. Buyers who understood their payment comfort zone, had strong pre-approval in place, and did the upfront work were able to move with confidence when the right home appeared.

Today's rate is a planning number, not a life sentence. If the numbers work now, you can move forward knowing you'll have options later if rates ease – and if they don't, you're still in a home that fits your budget and lifestyle.

Locally, inventory increased, homes spent a bit more time on the market, and buyers had more room to negotiate than in recent years. That breathing room often mattered just as much as the rate itself.

The takeaway from 2025 was clear: *waiting for a "perfect" moment wasn't the advantage. Being prepared was.*



Curious about home value
& equity? Scan here!

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