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Home market boasts record 22.5% gain

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Home-buying contracts in the Denver-area soared by a record 22.5 percent last month from June 2010, as the market rebounded without last year's tax credits skewing year-over-year comparisons.

There were 4,751 homes placed under contract in June, compared with 3,885 in June 2010. The percentage increase is the largest June-over-June increase on record, said Gary Bauer, who released a monthly housing report based on Metrolist data.

In the first part of the year, the market was faring poorly compared to 2010, because the home buying tax credits - providing up to \$8,000 for first-time home buyers - required homes to be placed under contract by April 30, 2010. Initially, the government required the homes to be closed by the end of June, but changed that until the end of September to give people more time.

"This is really the first time this year we are comparing the market to last year, without any artificial help from the tax credits," Bauer said

June a \$1 billion month

June also was the first month that closings topped \$1 billion this year, he said. The dollar volume of closings was \$1.08 billion, virtually the same as the \$1.1 billion in June 2010, which was

the last time the \$1 billion threshold was crossed for an individual month.

"I'm fairly happy with this month," Bauer said. "We're showing there is some resiliency in the market."

The only surprise in the report, he said, is that there were only 19,580 unsold homes on the market last month, a 15.7 percent drop from the 23,240 in June 2010, and almost identical to May, when there were 19,573 unsold homes on the market.

"I expected there to be another 2,000 homes on the market," Bauer said. "This is the heart of the summer sales season, and I expected more people to list their homes by now."

This was a 10-year low for a June inventory. The last time the market saw fewer homes listed in June was in 2001, when the inventory stood at 16,826.

The average price of all single-family homes closed, however, fell to \$292,239 from \$299,375 in June 2010, a 2.4 percent dip. That, however, was because of the mix of homes being sold, Bauer and others said.

The average price was up 4.6 percent from May,



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