

MARKET VIEW

An outlook that remains unbeatable

I'M very lucky, my new office is directly opposite the Alexandra Headland beach, so I look across to the park and the ocean. This is a pretty unbeatable view.

It's a thriving little microcosm of all the things that make the Sunshine Coast so great – people having fish and chips at the beach, people of all ages walking across the road with their wetsuits and surfboards, youth on skateboards at the skate park, people enjoying a latte at the Attic Café next door. Holidaymakers and locals alike, enjoying the beautiful surrounds.

Specifically, Alex is a mixture of commercial, residential, and holiday accommodation. It was the only Coast suburb named in this year's RP Data Report about the fastest capital growth suburbs in Australia, experiencing a median growth of 40% over the past 12 months.

Obviously as the impact of higher interest rates is starting to reflect in the marketplace, Alex won't be totally exempt from this.

However, it is anticipated that demand for properties in Alex will remain strong, ensuring it remains a prime real estate location on the Sunshine Coast and indeed South-East Queensland.

In the long-term we anticipate demand will keep price growth steady on the Sunshine Coast in general

PROFESSIONAL VIEW

with Amber Werchon, director of Amber Werchon Property

and certainly in prime areas such as Alex.

The market has toughened due to higher interest rate rises, increased petrol prices and the fallout from the sub-prime prices, therefore creating a market which is more price driven – where buyers are looking for value.

However, there are still plenty of buyers out there as we still have a housing shortage and double the national average growth.

Interstate migration has been a huge driving force in the explosion of the Queensland economy, particularly in the housing sector. Many retirees are also attracted to the Sunshine Coast, as well as sea changers.

The temperate climate and the attractive topography of the mountains (hinterland) and the sea, make this such an attractive lifestyle destination for people of all ages.

Families seek a safe, healthy environment for their children, but still need access to major infrastructure, such as hospitals and quality schools. We have all that here.

I grew up on the Sunshine Coast

and have been proud to make it my home and the base for my business. I see my future here. In that time I have learnt many, many lessons. I try to live by the following beliefs:

- ◆ Attitude is everything
- ◆ Your health and your happiness is your wealth
- ◆ Focus on the big picture, don't sweat the small stuff.

One of the greatest challenges has been obtaining a work-life balance and in particular, switching off at night. Starting my own business has also been a challenge, but I embrace challenges in my life, and seek them out.

In my career, I've been very fortunate to have been the recipient of some major industry awards, including REIQ Salesperson of the Year for an historic third time in a row this year.

Another highlight has been starting my own business, Amber Werchon Property, in June 2008.

A personal highlight was my recent engagement to my partner Paul McHugh. Paul proposed on a trip to Vietnam in May this year. We have a wonderful relationship and I am looking forward to sharing my life with him.

My greatest inspiration has been my mum. I always say it. She's always been there for me in every facet of my life, supporting me always. I



hope that when we have children of our own one day, I can be the type of mother to them, that she has been to my sister and me.

The best book I have read is *The Journey* – this is a life changing book to inspire each and every one of us to heal ourselves physically and spiritually. It delves deep into the heart to show us how we all have the power to be truly free.

As for working in the community, I held a fundraiser at Corbould Park earlier this year to raise money for the Energex Rescue Helicopter. There are so many worthy causes that I would like to endorse.

I think for spiritual and emotional wellbeing it is important to be benevolent. I have enjoyed great financial success and totally believe in giving

something back.

The future of the Coast is bright, no doubt about that, and it's a great time to be opening a new business.

As long as we can keep an acceptable balance between growth and protection of our natural assets, people will continue to want to live here and enjoy everything this wonderful region has to offer.

There are factors such as infrastructure management, environmental sustainability and quality of life issues that are challenges for the newly amalgamated Sunshine Coast Regional Council and residents.

But, I have great confidence in the future of this area, and wish to grow my business here, and it's hard to imagine a better place to raise a family as well.