



April home prices rise 11.9 per cent in Greater Vancouver over 2006

'Prices beginning to eat into sales and demand,' CMHC market analyst says

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Lower Mainland real estate prices took big steps up in April despite a downward trend in sales and an upward trend in the number of listings.

In Greater Vancouver, the so-called benchmark price for a typical single-family house hit \$659,069 in April, an 11.9-per-cent increase from the same month in 2006, according to Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver statistics released Wednesday.

Vancouver sales did climb 1.3-per-cent to 3,387 units compared with April a year ago, thanks to a big jump in townhouse sales.

However, the number of property listings on Vancouver's market jumped almost 26 per cent to 11,347 units.

Elsewhere, the Fraser Valley Real Estate Board reported that the average single-family house price increased 15 per cent to hit \$523,205 in April compared with the same month a year ago.

Fraser Valley sales, however, declined five per cent to 1,781 units in April compared with the same month a year ago, while the pool of property listings increased 51 per cent to 5,130 units compared with a year ago.

Robyn Adamache, a market analyst with Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp., said prices are still rocketing upward because typically there is "a bit of a lag time" between prices and changes in the market.

"Prices are sticky on the way down," Adamache added.

In the Lower Mainland's situation, however, down simply means the price increases slowing from double digits to single digits, which Adamache expects to happen by the end of the year and through 2008.

"Certainly prices are beginning to eat into sales and demand," Adamache said, but the province's overall economic conditions remain strong with lots of new residents moving to the Lower Mainland and the region still generating a lot of new jobs.

Brian Naphtali, president of the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver, said townhouse sales in Richmond and Burnaby came close to record levels. April sales of townhouses across Greater Vancouver were up 17.6 per cent to 634 units.

Naphtali added that properties sold more quickly in April with the average number of days a listing stayed on the market declining to 39 from 56 days in January.

Fraser Valley Real Estate Board president Jim McCaughan noted that Fraser Valley prices were up between 12 and 17 per cent from Mission to north Delta.

McCaughan added that demand for condominiums is increasing in the valley "partly due to affordability, but also [as] a lifestyle choice."

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PRICE HEIGHTS

April listings are for number of units sales and prices:

Greater Vancouver

Detached homes:

1,403 units -2.6%

\$695,069* +11.9%

Townhouses:

634 units +17.6%

\$432,490 +13.8%

Condominiums:

1,366 units -1.2%

\$355,108 +14.7%

Fraser Valley

Detached homes:

907 -10.9%

\$523,205** +15%

Townhouses:

346 +0%

\$320,702 +13%

Condominiums:

324 +8.4%

\$213,901 +12.5%

* Benchmark price for a theoretically typical sale.

** Average price

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