

# THE NUMBERS

Our monthly data showing leading trends affecting western real estate markets

**W**hile resale home activity continued to be steady in many parts of Western Canada this summer, there are signs that new-home construction may be entering a slower season in the months ahead.

**Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.** (CMHC) has told lenders it will limit the volume of mortgages it will let them repack-age as mortgage-backed securities in the remainder of 2013, a move that could lead to a minor lift in borrowing costs. (CMHC assured *Western Investor* the move won't affect consumers' access mortgage insurance.)

Meanwhile, **RealNet Canada Inc.** indicates the acquisition of land for residential development in Calgary and Vancouver is slowing. Sales in the first half of 2013 were down by 52 per cent and 30 per cent, respectively, from the same time a year earlier. RealNet hailed this as a sign of a "collective slowdown" in the residential land market.

Digging a little deeper, pricing of resale homes in all markets except Calgary – where the House Price Index has steadily increased 14.1 per cent since January 2012 – has been stable or declined slightly this summer.

Cities where prices increased invariably saw house starts increase, while the remainder saw minor gains or decreases in month-over-month home starts. Winnipeg was the exception, where the average resale price fell 4.1 per cent while home starts surged 61.7 per cent between June and July.

Residential markets may be shifting to more placid times ahead but the good news is the numbers indicate an orderly transition rather than a sudden stall. ♦

– Peter Mitham

## 1% Bank of Canada overnight lending rate

### Commercial real estate

	OFFICE VACANCY RATE*	INDUSTRIAL VACANCY RATE
Vancouver	8.3%	7.1%
Calgary	7.8%	6.3%
Edmonton	10.1%	5.2%
Regina	4.4%	3.8%
Saskatoon	5.3%	5.5%
Winnipeg	10.6%	3.9%

\*Regional office vacancies. Source: Colliers International, CBRE Ltd. As of Q2 2013.

### Retail sales (000s)

B.C.	\$5,151,874
Alberta	\$6,132,629
Saskatchewan	\$1,574,210
Manitoba	\$1,481,784

Source: Statistics Canada. July 2013.

### Building permits (000s)

Vancouver	\$643,721
Calgary	\$552,242
Edmonton	\$417,125
Regina	\$80,767
Saskatoon	\$138,070
Winnipeg	\$159,818

Source: Statistics Canada. June 2013.

### Labour

	UNEMPLOYMENT RATE	AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES
B.C.	6.6%	\$887.07
Alberta	4.8%	\$1,045.69
Saskatchewan	4.1%	\$916.71
Manitoba	5.4%	\$804.20

Source: Statistics Canada. July 2013.

### Resource sector

GOLD	COPPER	OIL	NATURAL GAS
\$1,314 per ounce	\$3.27 per pound	\$103.40 per barrel	\$3.30 per gigajoule

All prices in U.S. dollars. Prices as of August 9, 2013.

### Apartment rental vacancy rate

	APARTMENT RENTAL VACANCY RATE	AVERAGE RENT*
Vancouver	2.9%	\$1,255
Calgary	1.2%	\$1,202
Edmonton	1.2%	\$1,077
Regina	1.9%	\$1,011
Saskatoon	3.3%	\$1,020
Winnipeg	1.9%	\$939

\*Two-bedroom apartment.

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp./Rental Market Report. Spring 2013.

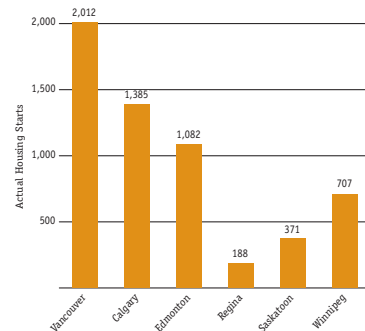
### MLS home price (all types combined)

Vancouver	\$601,900
Calgary	\$407,000
Edmonton	\$350,726
Regina	\$306,100
Saskatoon	\$308,900
Winnipeg	\$262,727

All types of homes composite price/metro region.

Source: Local real estate boards and associations as of July 31, 2013.

### Actual housing starts\*, July 2013



\*Total all types of residential.

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corp.