

CHARLOTTETOWN HOME PRICES REMAIN LARGELY FLAT IN FINAL QUARTER OF 2013

Stable real estate market sees modest price increases for most housing types

CHARLOTTETOWN, January 9, 2014 – The Royal LePage House Price Survey and Market Survey Forecast released today showed relatively level year-over-year prices across all housing types surveyed in Charlottetown.

Prices of detached bungalows rose by 0.6 per cent to \$173,000 and standard condominiums increased by 0.8 per cent to \$128,000. Standard two-storey homes showed no change and stayed at an average price of \$205,000.

“The market leveled off at the end of 2013,” said Ken Peters, broker and owner, Royal LePage Peters and Lank Realty. “There is a fair amount of inventory available for all housing types, in part because unit sales in the spring and summer buying seasons were lower than usual. With these extra homes still on the market there is more choice for buyers, which keeps prices from rising too much.”

According to Peters unit sales were down approximately nine per cent across the island in 2013, and Charlottetown was no exception. He said that the market was up and down this year, with sales coming in bunches followed by long lulls.

Peters forecasts that prices and unit sales in the Charlottetown residential real estate market will remain flat or slightly down in 2014. “House prices will be pretty stable in the year ahead, which is par for the course for real estate on the island. Historically we have only seen small year-over-year changes, and we don’t expect 2014 to be any different.”

He also suggested that several factors are having an effect on residential real estate, including the lack of year-round employment, potential layoffs, and emigration of young people and families to other provinces.

Nationally, in the same quarter, the average price of a home in Canada increased between 1.2 per cent and 3.8 per cent in the fourth quarter.

The survey showed year-over-year average price increases in the fourth quarter of 2013 of 3.6 per cent to \$418,282 for standard two-storey homes and 3.8 per cent to \$380,710 for detached bungalows, while the average price of a standard condominium rose 1.2 per cent to \$246,530. Prices are expected to maintain healthy momentum into 2014, with Royal LePage projecting a 3.7 per cent increase nationally from 2013 and a shift to a seller's market in the first portion of the year in a number of regions.

“A few short months ago, the country's housing market emerged from a year-long correctional cycle of dramatically slowed sales volumes. Later 2013 was marked by a transition to buoyant sales volumes and above average price growth,” said Phil Soper, president and chief executive of Royal LePage. “In the absence of some calamitous event or material increase in mortgage financing costs, we expect this positive momentum to characterize 2014. In fact, we expect a market tipped decidedly in favour of sellers for the first half of the year, after which we project a shift to a more balanced market.”

“We predict continued upward pressure on home prices as we move towards the all-important spring market. In addition to normal demand, housing prices in Canada this year will be influenced by buyers who put off purchase plans in the very soft spring of 2013,” continued Soper. “Talk of a ‘soft landing’ for Canada's real estate market in the new year is misguided. We expect no landing, no slowdown, and no correction in the near-term. Conditions are ripe for as strong a market as we saw in the post-recessionary rebound of the last decade.”

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About the Royal LePage House Price Survey

The Royal LePage House Price Survey is the largest, most comprehensive study of its kind in Canada, with information on seven types of housing in over 250 neighbourhoods from coast to coast. This release references an abbreviated version of the survey which highlights house price trends for the three most common types of housing in Canada in 90 communities across the country. A complete database of past and present surveys is available on the Royal LePage

website at www.royallepage.ca. Current figures will be updated following the complete tabulation of the data for the fourth quarter of 2013. A printable version of the fourth quarter 2013 survey will be available online on February 6, 2014. Housing values in the Royal LePage House Price Survey are Royal LePage opinions of fair market value in each location, based on local data and market knowledge provided by Royal LePage residential real estate experts.

About Royal LePage

Serving Canadians since 1913, Royal LePage is the country's leading provider of services to real estate brokerages, with a network of nearly 15,000 real estate professionals in over 600 locations nationwide. Royal LePage is the only Canadian real estate company to have its own charitable foundation, the Royal LePage Shelter Foundation, dedicated to supporting women's and children's shelters and educational programs aimed at ending domestic violence. Royal LePage is a Brookfield Real Estate Services Inc. company, a TSX-listed corporation trading under the symbol TSX:BRE.

For more information, visit www.royallepage.ca.

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