

Home Prices in Niagara/St. Catharines See Sizable Growth in Fourth Quarter of 2017

Continued migration from the Greater Toronto Area and surrounding markets maintains strong seller's market

NIAGARA/ST. CATHARINES, January 10, 2018 – The aggregate price of a home in the Niagara/St. Catharines region saw significant growth in the fourth quarter of 2017, rising 23.5 per cent year-over-year to \$394,794, according to the Royal LePage House Price Survey¹ released today.

When broken out by housing type, the median price of a bungalow and two-storey home continued a double-digit climb in the fourth quarter, rising 23.5 per cent and 23.4 per cent year-over-year to \$370,781 and \$415,197, respectively.

“The crux of our region’s positive real estate story has always been widespread affordability, and the final months of 2017 proved to be no different,” said Brad Johnstone, broker of record, Royal LePage Niagara Real Estate Centre. “Home prices in the last year saw one of the largest year-over-year growth rates in our history, spurred by GTA retirees, investors and families recognizing the Niagara and St Catharines region’s value proposition. While this level of frenzied appreciation cannot last forever, our region continues to enjoy a migration of buyers from the GTA and adjacent hub markets, like Barrie, Kitchener, Waterloo and Cambridge, maintaining our strong seller’s market.

“Real estate news this year was characterized by market changes and corrections,” continued Johnstone. “Niagara and St. Catharines remain a consistently affordable place to live, with an excellent quality of life and convenient proximity to other urban centres. As we enter the new year, we anticipate this will generate new activity in the condominium sector as the local economy strengthens and demand among first-time buyers grows.”

Nationally, Canada’s residential real estate market saw strong, but slowing year-over-year price growth in the fourth quarter of 2017. The Royal LePage National House Price Composite, compiled from proprietary property data in 53 of the nation’s largest real estate markets, showed that the price of a home in Canada increased 10.8 per cent year-over-year to \$626,042 over the three-month period. When broken out by housing type, the median price of a two-storey home rose 11.1 per cent year-over-year to \$741,924, and the median price of a bungalow climbed 7.1 per cent to \$522,963. During the same period, the median price of a condominium appreciated faster than any other housing type studied, rising 14.3 per cent to \$420,823 on a year-over-year basis.

“To prospective homeowners in our largest cities, condominiums represent the last bastion of affordability,” said Phil Soper, president and CEO, Royal LePage. “This is especially true for first-time buyers whose purchasing power has been reduced by tightening mortgage regulations.”

¹ Aggregate prices are calculated using a weighted average of the median values of all housing types collected. Data is provided by RPS Real Property Solutions.

In line with Royal LePage's previous [Market Survey Forecast](#), Royal LePage predicts that the price of a home in Canada will increase 4.9 per cent by the end of 2018. Looking ahead, the company anticipates that the new OSFI stress test will slow the housing market in the first half of 2018, as buyers adjust their expectations and many market participants take a "wait and see" approach.

"The unsustainably high rates of home price appreciation witnessed in recent years in B.C. and Ontario were dangerous to the stability of not only the housing market, but to the broader economy itself," continued Soper. "Policy measures like the OSFI stress test will quell runaway housing inflation to an extent. However, we do foresee an upswing in demand in the latter portion of the year, as prospective buyers adjust to the new realities. To put it another way, the demand is still there."

About the Royal LePage House Price Survey

The Royal LePage House Price Survey provides information on the three most common types of housing in Canada, in 53 of the nation's largest real estate markets. Housing values in the House Price Survey are based on the Royal LePage National House Price Composite, produced quarterly through the use of company data in addition to data and analytics from its sister company, RPS Real Property Solutions, the trusted source for residential real estate intelligence and analytics in Canada. Commentary on housing and forecast values are provided by Royal LePage residential real estate experts, based on their opinions and market knowledge.

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 close to 18,000 real estate professionals in more than 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.

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