



Real Estate Big News in 2002



Sales Expected to Surpass \$18 Billion

Despite a year of economic ups and downs and speculations of a housing bubble, the BC real estate market shone in 2002, solidifying its position as a major contributor to the province's economy. Although MLS® sales numbers for December are not in yet, the dollar volume of residential real estate sales will likely surpass \$18 billion – an impressive \$3 billion increase over last year's totals – and unit sales are expected to top 80,000. Dollar volume sales in BC have not exceeded the \$18 billion mark since 1993, although more units were sold in that year.

The year began with a bang when the Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver recorded the highest num-

ber of sales for the month of January since 1989. In the spring, many factors, including low interest rates and strong job creation, led to the hottest residential real estate market in Greater Vancouver in eight years, with 3,785 homes sold in April. Consumers also began to wade back into the condominium market, where sales showed a remarkable 85 per cent year-over-year increase. Across the province, housing starts soared. The month of May alone saw a 90 per cent increase over the same period in 2001.

The value of Canadian building permits rose to an unprecedented \$4 billion in July. According to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, the

pace of construction seen in 2002 was the highest in 12 years (the end of the late 1980s housing boom), and the increase from 2001 is on pace to be the second highest since 1958.

Not surprisingly, more people showed interest in becoming REALTORS in 2002. The number of students enrolled in the Real Estate Salesperson's Pre-Licensing Course rose to 1,548, compared to 488 the previous year. Enrollment in BCREA's Applied Real Estate Course also surpassed expectations with 542 students registering in 2002, a 94 per cent increase over last year's total of 279 students.

A growing trend saw real estate become a popular choice for investors as they pulled their money out of a not-so-brisk stock market. More consumers opted for a reliable and solid investment. A survey released by Royal LePage showed that, of 76 national markets studied in the fourth quarter, 96 per cent of both detached bungalows and standard two-storey homes, as well as 94 per cent of standard condos, appreciated in value over the same period in 2001. According to Richard Wozny, vice-president and manager, Royal LePage Advisors Inc., real estate has offered an average return on investment of eight per cent over the past 20 years.

Some economists have suggested the frenzied pace of the housing market could lead to a collapse, as was the case in 1990. But, unlike the bubble that burst 12 years ago, many analysts say today's new home development is based on demand instead of speculation, and investment buying is more controlled.

While the consensus seems to be that the 2003 market will not quite meet the levels we saw in 2002, this year is sure to be another successful one for REALTORS in BC.

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EDUCATION

Enhance your professionalism & success with the cpe Certificate Program

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LONG-RANGE PLAN PRINCIPLES

- Building membership relations
- Responding to communication needs
- Provincial leadership status as an advocate for the profession
- Excellence in education services
- Enhanced service options for member boards
- Non-dues revenue development
- Equitable fee structure

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President's Report



President Dennis Wilson

We're Back!

Welcome to BCREA's first paper newsletter in over three years. In that time, we have come to realize that there is no one way to communicate with everyone. Therefore, even though the *Bulletin* and *Legally Speaking* are now published in paper format, BCREA will continue to offer e-mail subscriptions

to both through REALTOR Link™.

During several strategic planning exercises, the 2002-03 Board of Directors recognized communications as the basis of everything BCREA does. To that end, the Association's Long-Range and Strategic Plans reflect a new commitment to communications. Paper newsletters are just the beginning of the new initiatives you will start to see from BCREA in 2003.

The Association is committed to raising the profile of the real estate industry. To help us develop a unique public identity and demonstrate the vitality of our dynamic profession, we have renovated BCREA's logo. You will see this logo



BRITISH COLUMBIA
REAL ESTATE
ASSOCIATION

on all BCREA publications. So will the public, media, government and business communities.

We look forward to our new challenges with renewed energy and optimism. Thank you for your support, and please offer your comments and suggestions at any time.

President

For BCREA's 2002-03 Strategic Plan, go to BCREA's REALTOR Link™ homepage and look under the heading About Us for Strategic Plan.

Meet Your Directors

President:
Dennis Wilson

Vital statistics:
Company:
Re/Max Performance Realty

Home board:
Fraser Valley Real Estate Board

Licensed since:
1980 (as an agent since 1993)

Volunteer since:
1987

BCREA Director since:
1999



"I've been an active REALTOR for over 20 years, and truly enjoy my career. One of the highlights has been volunteering

- first with the Fraser Valley Real Estate Board and now with BCREA. As a volunteer I have the opportunity to contribute to our profession and leave my mark, but I get far more than I give.

I have learned more about all aspects of the real estate industry in just a few years than I could have expected in a lifetime."

Dennis Wilson

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Real Estate Act Reform

January saw the end of the first round of stakeholder consultation sessions.

BCREA representatives have now presented information and input sessions at all 12 member boards, including over 900

REALTORS. Several hundreds of REALTORS have also responded to BCREA's fax-in feedback sheets.

Once all of the feedback has been compiled, BCREA will present the results to members and seek more input to ensure the submission to the government accurately represents what members want. *Real Estate Act Update – What You've Told Us* will take place at the Banff Western Connection V on January

23, 2003. Please contact Kim by phone 604-742-2784 or e-mail kimm@bcrea.bc.ca if you are interested in attending.

The February *Bulletin* will also summarize the presentation made in Banff in January, and more detailed information will be distributed to subscribers of the One Profession, One Voice Update e-mail list. To sign up for the update, please send an e-mail to

kimm@bcrea.bc.ca, with "One Profession, One Voice" in the subject line, or call 604-742-2784.

Your input is driving this process, and we still need to know what you think. Please send your comments on the Real Estate Act reform process to BCREA Executive Officer Robert Laing at robertl@bcrea.bc.ca.



THE LAND CENTRE

Web Library for Real Estate Boards

The Land Centre is making its collection of web resources available to BCREA, boards and

REALTORS. The links offer a wealth of real estate-related information organized by subject, including leaky condos, cohousing and land trusts. The resources are available through a temporary page on the Land Centre's website: www.landcentre.ca/board-library.cfm.

Boards can also link topics to their own websites or REALTOR Link™ pages, allowing REALTORS easy access.

There is no charge for the service, made possible through the ongoing support of The Real Estate Foundation of BC. Watch BCREA's REALTOR Link™ homepage for more information.

Residential Tenancy Office (RTO) News

The prime lending rate of the principle banker to the province on January 1, 2003 was 4.5 per cent. In accordance with section 3(b) of the Residential Tenancy Regulation, the interest rate to be paid on security deposits for 2003 is 0.0 per cent.

After January 15, 2003, the RTO will not accept Applications for Director's Orders for Return of Security Deposits and Notices of Claim. Applications to Vary or Cancel a Director's Order will continue to be accepted until March 31, 2003. Tenants who are unable to reach agreements with their former landlords on return of security deposits will continue to have access to intervention and arbitration.

For more RTO information, visit www.pssg.gov.bc.ca/rto or call toll-free 1-800-665-8779 between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm.

REALTORS Nabbed in Grow House Sweep

Two Ontario REALTORS were among 39 people charged after police raided alleged marijuana grow operations in 56 homes in six Toronto-area municipalities in December. Police seized 35,518 marijuana plants worth an estimated \$35 million.

According to the York Regional Police, an investigation determined the operations were led by two real estate agents who leased homes using fictitious information, and used those homes to grow marijuana. The real estate companies that employed the

suspects had no knowledge of the operations.

This news comes at a time when REALTORS are doing their best to be proactive in helping the police combat grow operations. A new national awareness campaign, sponsored by The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA), aims to inform REALTORS of the health and safety issues associated with the rising number of marijuana grow operations in residential houses.

To learn more about the CREA Grow House awareness campaign follow this link: www.realtorlink.ca/dms/docview.asp?docid=023430006.

Toll-Free Line for Strata Inquiries

In September, The Real Estate Foundation of BC approved a \$45,000 grant for the Condominium Home Owners' Association to set up a toll-free telephone advisory service for questions regarding strata property legislation and related topics.



- > Local inquires call 604-584-2462, local 1
- > Outside of the Lower Mainland, call 1-877-353-2462, local 1.

Spotlight On: The cpe Certificate Program

With increasingly self-reliant consumers in today's highly-competitive business environment, a superior standard of real estate practice for REALTORS is essential. High-level Continuing Professional Education (cpe) is more important now than ever before.

BCREA responds to your need for continuing education by developing relevant, practical and useful seminars to reflect changes in all areas of the profession, including residential real estate, ethics, legislation, finance, commercial/property management, technology, management and legalities. The seminars give you the competitive edge necessary for success, resulting in enhanced professionalism

and stronger relationships with your clients.

All cpe seminars are developed with REALTORS in mind. Materials are drawn from years of industry experience and provide you with real, practical value. Seminar leaders are dynamic

The seminars give you the competitive edge necessary for success

industry experts who bring their knowledge and experience to you in an informative, entertaining style. The seminars are fast-paced, yet encourage discussion and interaction. You will receive a comprehensive manual at each cpe seminar to help you retain the new knowl-

edge and skills long after the seminar is over.

Who can take a cpe seminar?

The cpe program is for all REALTORS. New salespeople and seasoned pros will find seminars to enhance professional skills and provide solutions for the most challenging issues.

How do I enroll?

cpe seminars are developed by BCREA and delivered to you by your local real estate board. Contact your board for information on upcoming cpe seminars and to register.

The registration fee for each seminar is determined by your board. All seminar materials are included in the fee, which may qualify as a tax-deductible business expense. Certificates, perfect for framing, are presented after successful completion of four seminars.

Each *Bulletin* issue will profile one of the over 20 available cpe courses. Look for a profile on *Property and Other Disclosures: What a REALTOR Needs to Know* in the February issue.



Coast Whistler's January White Sale

Enjoy the convenient location of this full service hotel at special rates available for BCREA members.

Until January 30, 2003, book a hotel room at the Coast Whistler Hotel for as little as \$179 per night, or take advantage of the Power Special, which includes three nights accommodation in a standard hotel room and a two-day lift ticket for Whistler/Blackcomb, all for only \$396 per person.

For reservations call toll-free 1-800-663-5644 or e-mail reserve@coastwhistlerhotel.com and ask for your "preferred corporate rate." For more information, visit www.coastwhistlerhotel.com.

cpe Seminar Schedule

Help position yourself for success
- enroll in a cpe seminar today!

Date	Title	Instructor	Location
Jan. 17	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	REBGV - Richmond
Jan. 20	Project Marketing for the Leading Edge Professional	Roger McKinnon	VIREB - Nanaimo
Jan. 23	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	VIREB - Campbell River
Jan. 24	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	VIREB - Nanaimo
Jan. 29	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	REBGV - Coquitlam
Jan. 30	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	REBGV - Vancouver
Jan. 31	Tax Tips for Selling Real Estate	Don Nilson	KADREA - Kamloops
Feb. 12	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	REBGV - North Vancouver
Feb. 13	Buyer Agency	Jim McCaughan	KREB - Castlegar
Feb. 14	Buyer Agency	Jim McCaughan	KREB - Cranbrook
Feb. 27	Legal Update 2002/2003	Mike Mangan	REBGV - Vancouver