Alberta

HOUSING NOW

YOUR LINK TO THE HOUSING MARKET

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

THIRD QUARTER 2003

New Home Market

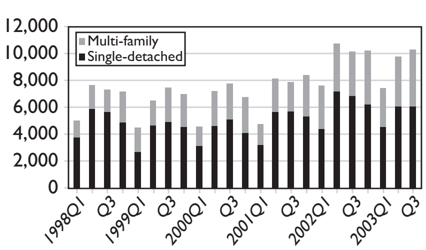
New Apartments Bolster Housing Starts in Third Quarter

On the heels of a nine per cent year-over-year drop in second quarter, total housing starts across Alberta improved by 1.7 per cent in the third quarter. A surge in multiple unit construction helped to counter further moderation in single-detached activity. Total housing starts in the third quarter reached 10,321 units compared with 10,152 reported in July to September of 2002.

Strong demand for housing has been supported by continued low mortgage rates, population growth and a robust labour market. The consumer is also being encouraged by an economy driven by strong capital expenditures in the energy sector and higher levels of oil and gas exports. Oil and gas exploration is poised to hit record levels in the upcoming winter drilling season. Employment growth across the province has averaged close to 2.9 per cent so far this year, representing 48,000 new jobs. People from other parts of Canada continue to move to this province in search of employment opportunities. Population gains will fuel growth in the number of households and help keep demand for rental and owned housing at robust levels.

While total housing starts inched higher across the province, the activity levels varied depending on location. On the whole, urban areas outpaced rural Alberta, but the city numbers were bolstered by Canmore and Okotoks. These two communities were moved into the urban area count this year as their populations moved above 10,000 based on the 2001 census. In the Metro areas, multi-unit activity had a big impact on the total starts numbers. In Edmonton, total starts were up by 49 per cent in the third quarter thanks to a huge increase in multiple starts - especially condo apartments. In contrast, Calgary's total starts were down by 19 per cent from July to September of last year due to a sizable drop in multi-family construction. Grande Prairie experienced higher third quarter starts, with both singles and multiples in positive territory. Meanwhile, total starts in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Red Deer and Fort McMurray all dropped back from levels reported in the same three month period of 2002.

Alberta Housing Starts



Source: CMHC

To the end of September this year, total starts province-wide have fallen by 3.4 per cent from January to September 2002 to 27,537 units. In Calgary, total starts to the end of September were 1.2 per cent behind the production levels recorded in three quarters of 2002, with higher multiple unit starts failing to counter a drop in new singles. Year-to-date total housing starts in Greater Edmonton were 7.4 per cent above production levels recorded from January to September of 2002 - largely due to a stronger multi-unit sector.

Single-Detached Starts Pull Back

Following a 16 per cent drop in the second quarter, single-detached starts across the province fell by 11.7 per cent in the third quarter compared with the same three-month period of 2002. Readers should keep in mind that the 6,840 single-detached starts which occurred in the third quarter of 2002 represented the best total of any third quarter on record. Activity in Alberta's two CMAs moved lower, with starts down by 2.8 and 14.3 per cent, respectively, in Edmonton and Calgary. Among the larger CAs, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge and Medicine Hat reported

IN THIS ISSUE:

ANALYSIS

1. New Apartments Bolster Housing Starts in Third Quarter
1. Single-Detached Starts Pull Back
2. Single-Family Inventories Remain On The Rise
2. Fewer New Singles Available For Under $200,000
2. Multiple Unit Starts Surge Higher
2. Multi-Unit Inventories Remain High

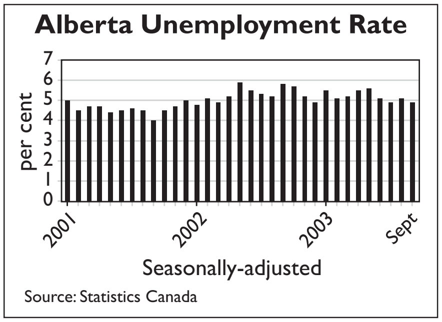
STATISTICAL TABLES

3 Starts
4 Completions
5 Single Family Absorptions by Price Range
6 Under Construction
6 Complete and Not Occupied
7 Housing Activity Summary

CMHC SCHL

HOME TO CANADIANS

Canada



higher single-detached starts in the third quarter (year-over-year) while construction levels fell in Red Deer and Fort McMurray.

To the end of September, builders started work on 16,595 single-detached units throughout the province, representing a 9.5 per cent drop from the number of units started in the first nine months of 2002. Units under construction were down by 6.4 per cent in September compared with the same month last year. Since the end of the first quarter, rising inventories of unsold new houses and higher resale listings have put a damper on new construction in many communities.

While the majority of Alberta's cities have seen lower single-family numbers so far this year, there have been a few exceptions, notably Brooks (+57%), Cold Lake CA (+18%) and Lethbridge (+4%). In Medicine Hat, production levels to-date have largely matched the pace set in the first nine months of 2002. The Wood Buffalo CA has experienced the largest retreat, with single starts down by over one-third from the robust performance tallied during the same period last year.

Single-Family Inventories Remain On The Rise

Single-detached housing completions province-wide fell by half a per cent in the third quarter (from 2002Q3), following a 17 per cent increase in the first half of the year. Despite this modest retreat in completions, inventories of completed and unoccupied new units continued to rise in Alberta's five biggest cities. At the end of September, there were 1,450 unabsorbed new singles (including show homes) on the market in Edmonton, Calgary, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Red Deer combined. This compares with 1,295 units that were on-hand at the end of the second quarter and 990 units reported in September 2002. This time last year, inventories had been drawn down to very low levels as the industry struggled to keep pace with surging consumer demand for new housing.

While Calgary is home to the largest stock of unsold new singles, inventories have increased from last September by the largest margin in Medicine Hat (+152%), followed by Edmonton (+78%) and Red Deer (+65%). Among the five largest cities, only Lethbridge had fewer new units in inventory compared with September 2002.

Fewer New Singles Available For Under $200,000

As shown in Table 3, the vast majority of new single-family homes sold in Alberta's largest cities are priced over $200,000. In the third quarter of 2002, just under one half of all singles sold in the five major cities were priced over $200,000. During the same time frame this year, the proportion priced beyond that point has risen to two-thirds of the market. Of the 4,558 units absorbed from July to September of this year, under 34 per cent were priced $199,999 or less. Price increases this year have arisen on a number of fronts, including land, materials and labour. For example, prices for OSB, which is now a major component of new housing, have soared in 2003. Land prices have also shot up, as developers face higher costs for replacement land and development fees in many cities.

Multiple Unit Starts Surge Higher

Following a modest increase in the second quarter, multi-unit starts surged by just under 30 per cent in the third quarter compared with the same time frame in 2002. Multiple starts in all areas reached 4,281 units compared with 3,312 semi, row and apartment units started in July to September of last year. This brought the year-to-date total to 10,942 units after nine months of construction, representing a 7.5 per cent gain over January to September of 2002. Multi-units under construction were up by 14 per cent in September to 12,919 units. Apartments account for over 70 per cent of these units in progress, the majority of which are condominiums located in downtown Edmonton and Calgary.

Metro Edmonton provided much of the boost to the third quarter multi-unit start numbers, with production levels up by 157 per cent to 2,315 units. The lion's share of this growth came within Edmonton City, where multis climbed by over 250 per cent from the third quarter of 2002. In Calgary, multiple starts in the third quarter were off by 26 per cent. Despite this decline, year-to-date multiple starts in Calgary were still well ahead of 2002 numbers to the end of September due to the very strong activity recorded in the first half of the year.

Looking at the larger CAs, Grande Prairie saw a substantial increase in multiple-unit starts in the third quarter and was 13 per cent ahead on a year-to-date basis at the end of September. Fort McMurray produced modest gains in the third quarter but remained well back of last year's strong pace after nine months of construction activity. New multi-unit production levels in Lethbridge, Medicine Hat and Red Deer were down both in the third quarter and on a year-to-date basis to the end of September. Among the smaller cities of over 10,000 population, large increases in multiple starts during the third quarter were reported in Camrose, Cold Lake CA, and Wetaskiwin.

Multi-Unit Inventories Remain High

Multi-unit completions surged by 57 per cent across the province in the third quarter, with large volumes reaching completion in both Edmonton (+141%) and Calgary (+52%). So far this year, 9,861 new multiple units have completed construction, representing an increase of over 37 per cent from the first nine months of 2002. New apartments, both condo and rental, have contributed heavily to these numbers. In urban areas over 10,000 population, there were 6,242 apartments completed in the first nine months of this year, representing an increase of over 71 per cent from the same period in 2002. The surge in the supply of both new condo and rental apartments will put upward pressure on apartment vacancy rates in many communities this fall.

Despite this run-up in completions, inventories of completed and unoccupied new units did not change substantially from the end of the second quarter thanks to strong demand. Multiple-unit absorptions in the five largest cities rose by 43 per cent from the third quarter of 2002. This said, multi-unit inventories are still well above the levels recorded at the end of September of last year. Across the five biggest cities, inventories of unabsorbed new multiple dwellings stood at 1,373 units, representing an increase of 87 per cent from September 2002. Over half of this inventory is rental apartments, with the majority of these found in Downtown Edmonton. At the end of September, the Capital region had 176 per cent more unabsorbed new multiple units than were on hand the same time last year. Only Red Deer experienced a bigger increase on a percentage basis. In Calgary, September's inventory of new multiples was up by 26 per cent year-over-year, while the unoccupied new stock in Lethbridge and Medicine Hat was lower.

For More Information, Please Contact:
Richard Goatcher
Senior Market Analyst
Telephone: (780) 423-8729
Toll Free: 1-877-722-2642
Fax: (780) 423-8702
E-mail: Rgoatche@cmhc-schl.gc.ca

Table 1
ALBERTA STARTS ACTIVITY BY AREA - 3RD QUARTER 2003

	Single		Multiple			Total		Chg
AREA	2003	2002	Semi	Row	Apt	2003	2002	2003/2002
EDMONTON CMA	**1822**	**1874**	**162**	**272**	**1881**	**4137**	**2776**	**49.03**
EDMONTON CITY	1062	1093	102	245	1605	3014	1647	83.00
CALGARY CMA	**2188**	**2552**	**176**	**276**	**546**	**3186**	**3908**	**-18.47**
CALGARY CITY	1846	2114	146	223	512	2727	3294	-17.21
BROOKS TOWN CA	15	8	2	0	0	17	40	-57.50
CAMROSE CA	19	24	14	8	16	57	28	**
CANMORE CA	22	N/A	2	59	0	83	N/A	**
COLD LAKE CA	74	66	0	0	26	100	66	51.52
COLD LAKE TOWN	3	5	0	0	8	11	5	**
BONNYVILLE TOWN	6	21	0	0	18	24	21	14.29
GRANDE PRAIRIE CA	147	128	16	0	68	231	158	46.20
LETHBRIDGE CA	167	157	26	24	4	221	266	-16.92
LLOYDMINSTER CA	52	64	0	0	0	52	78	-33.33
MEDICINE HAT CA	126	121	24	20	14	184	195	-5.64
OKOTOKS CA	52	N/A	0	0	157	209	N/A	**
RED DEER CA	221	268	32	18	0	271	394	-31.22
WETASKIWIN CA	5	6	12	0	8	25	14	78.57
WOOD BUFFALO CA	139	174	30	18	155	342	365	-6.30
WOOD BUFFALO USA (Fort McMurray)	139	161	30	18	155	342	352	-2.84
ALBERTA URBAN	**5049**	**5442**	**496**	**695**	**2875**	**9115**	**8288**	**9.98**
ALBERTA RURAL	**991**	**1398**	**100**	**78**	**37**	**1206**	**1864**	**-35.30**
TOTAL	**6040**	**6840**	**596**	**773**	**2912**	**10321**	**10152**	**1.66**

Table 1b
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA STARTS ACTIVITY BY AREA - YEAR TO DATE

	Single		Multiple			Total		Chg
AREA	2003	2002	Semi	Row	Apt	2003	2002	2003/2002
EDMONTON CMA	**4904**	**4990**	**744**	**556**	**3351**	**9555**	**8896**	**7.41**
EDMONTON CITY	2943	2968	576	472	2924	6915	6022	14.83
CALGARY CMA	**6554**	**7200**	**574**	**987**	**2537**	**10652**	**10782**	**-1.21**
CALGARY CITY	5595	6104	432	812	2444	9283	9307	-0.26
BROOKS TOWN CA	47	30	6	16	24	93	80	16.25
CAMROSE CA	44	60	18	8	24	94	106	-11.32
CANMORE CA	64	N/A	6	119	149	338	N/A	**
COLD LAKE CA	194	164	4	0	30	228	170	34.12
COLD LAKE TOWN	16	9	0	0	8	24	9	**
BONNYVILLE TOWN	22	23	0	0	18	40	23	73.91
GRANDE PRAIRIE CA	348	362	34	12	168	562	552	1.81
LETHBRIDGE CA	409	395	48	68	10	535	537	-0.37
LLOYDMINSTER CA	129	156	0	0	0	129	172	-25.00
MEDICINE HAT CA	325	323	42	28	28	423	545	-22.39
OKOTOKS CA	186	N/A	12	50	176	424	N/A	**
RED DEER CA	580	702	88	60	83	811	1135	-28.55
WETASKIWIN CA	15	19	18	0	12	45	41	9.76
WOOD BUFFALO CA	368	554	42	37	155	602	933	-35.48
WOOD BUFFALO USA (Fort McMurray)	366	510	42	37	155	600	889	-32.51
ALBERTA URBAN	**14167**	**14955**	**1636**	**1941**	**6747**	**24491**	**23949**	**2.26**
ALBERTA RURAL	**2428**	**3373**	**187**	**253**	**178**	**3046**	**4562**	**-33.23**
TOTAL	**16595**	**18328**	**1823**	**2194**	**6925**	**27537**	**28511**	**-3.42**

*** indicates a greater than 100 per cent change*

Table 2
ALBERTA HOUSING COMPLETIONS BY AREA - 3RD QUARTER 2003

	Single		Multiple			Total		Chg
AREA	2003	2002	Semi	Row	Apt	2003	2002	2003/2002
EDMONTON CMA	**1767**	**1479**	**310**	**148**	**977**	**3202**	**2073**	**54.46**
EDMONTON CITY	1163	888	246	130	866	2405	1228	95.85
CALGARY CMA	**2465**	**2396**	**174**	**353**	**1038**	**4030**	**3427**	**17.60**
CALGARY CITY	2108	2039	132	283	1003	3526	2929	20.38
BROOKS TOWN CA	11	10	6	4	0	21	14	50.00
CAMROSE CA	15	32	2	0	32	49	34	44.12
CANMORE CA	23	N/A	4	4	61	92	N/A	**
COLD LAKE CA	75	71	0	0	4	79	73	8.22
COLD LAKE TOWN	5	2	0	0	0	5	2	**
BONNYVILLE TOWN	16	6	0	0	0	16	6	**
GRANDE PRAIRIE CA	146	185	10	0	53	209	247	-15.38
LETHBRIDGE CA	159	171	26	5	20	210	186	12.90
LLOYDMINSTER CA	52	62	0	0	0	52	66	-21.21
MEDICINE HAT CA	131	124	14	0	0	145	246	-41.06
OKOTOKS CA	60	N/A	8	22	19	109	N/A	**
RED DEER CA	191	259	54	19	0	264	323	-18.27
WETASKIWIN CA	7	7	4	0	4	15	13	15.38
WOOD BUFFALO CA	111	214	10	11	48	180	392	-54.08
WOOD BUFFALO USA (Fort McMurray)	109	200	10	11	48	178	378	-52.91
ALBERTA URBAN	**5213**	**5010**	**622**	**566**	**2256**	**8657**	**7094**	**22.03**
ALBERTA RURAL	**966**	**1198**	**53**	**90**	**2**	**1111**	**1404**	**-20.87**
TOTAL	**6179**	**6208**	**675**	**656**	**2258**	**9768**	**8498**	**14.94**

Table 2b
ALBERTA HOUSING COMPLETIONS BY AREA - YEAR TO DATE

	Single		Multiple			Total		Chg
AREA	2003	2002	Semi	Row	Apt	2003	2002	2003/2002
EDMONTON CMA	**4969**	**3620**	**710**	**328**	**2735**	**8742**	**5675**	**54.04**
EDMONTON CITY	3138	2193	556	298	2352	6344	3719	70.58
CALGARY CMA	**6721**	**6145**	**560**	**843**	**2658**	**10782**	**9430**	**14.34**
CALGARY CITY	5691	5236	404	645	2564	9304	8190	13.60
BROOKS TOWN CA	53	45	14	16	0	83	63	31.75
CAMROSE CA	57	53	6	0	32	95	67	41.79
CANMORE CA	112	N/A	38	35	61	246	N/A	**
COLD LAKE CA	192	174	2	0	4	198	186	6.45
COLD LAKE TOWN	23	10	0	0	0	23	10	**
BONNYVILLE TOWN	26	11	0	0	0	26	11	**
GRANDE PRAIRIE CA	347	403	34	28	53	462	558	-17.20
LETHBRIDGE CA	410	385	46	13	32	501	433	15.70
LLOYDMINSTER CA	138	163	0	0	0	138	176	-21.59
MEDICINE HAT CA	329	277	38	35	20	422	450	-6.22
OKOTOKS CA	209	N/A	44	38	19	310	N/A	**
RED DEER CA	597	640	122	48	422	1189	794	49.75
WETASKIWIN CA	19	18	22	0	4	45	34	32.35
WOOD BUFFALO CA	383	594	24	79	202	688	897	-23.30
WOOD BUFFALO USA (Fort McMurray)	376	553	24	79	202	681	856	-20.44
ALBERTA URBAN	**14536**	**12517**	**1660**	**1463**	**6242**	**23901**	**18763**	**27.38**
ALBERTA RURAL	**2463**	**2950**	**188**	**159**	**149**	**2959**	**3881**	**-23.76**
TOTAL	**16999**	**15467**	**1848**	**1622**	**6391**	**26860**	**22644**	**18.62**

*** indicates a greater than 100 per cent change*

Table 3
ALBERTA - CENTRES OF 50,000 POPULATION AND OVER
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES - ABSORBED BY PRICE RANGE - 3RD QUARTER

	< $110,000	$110,000 -139,999	$140,000 -169,999	$170,000 -199,999	$200,000 -249,999	$250,000 +	Total
EDMONTON CMA	**11**	**30**	**202**	**382**	**577**	**439**	**1641**
CALGARY CMA	**0**	**1**	**201**	**381**	**862**	**1016**	**2461**
LETHBRIDGE CA	0	48	60	33	20	12	173
MEDICINE HAT CA	0	6	23	19	27	21	96
RED DEER CA	0	16	68	35	44	24	187
TOTAL	**11**	**101**	**554**	**850**	**1530**	**1512**	**4558**

Table 3b
ALBERTA - CENTRES OF 50,000 POPULATION AND OVER
SINGLE FAMILY HOMES - ABSORBED BY PRICE RANGE - 2002

	< $110,000	$110,000 -139,999	$140,000 -169,999	$170,000 -199,999	$200,000 -249,999	$250,000 +	Total
EDMONTON CMA	**33**	**91**	**344**	**386**	**360**	**248**	**1462**
CALGARY CMA	**0**	**23**	**420**	**513**	**767**	**684**	**2407**
LETHBRIDGE CA	1	52	62	23	18	13	169
MEDICINE HAT CA	2	12	44	26	14	14	112
RED DEER CA	0	39	93	46	47	28	253
TOTAL	**36**	**217**	**963**	**994**	**1206**	**987**	**4403**

Table 4
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
UNDER CONSTRUCTION - SEPTEMBER 2003

	Single		Multiple			Total		Chg
AREA	2003	2002	Semi	Row	Apt	2003	2002	2003/2002
EDMONTON CMA	**3,245**	**3,184**	**646**	**454**	**4,587**	**8,932**	**7,454**	**19.83**
EDMONTON CITY	1,848	1,813	444	350	4,020	6,662	5,356	24.38
CALGARY CMA	**3,806**	**4,043**	**548**	**999**	**3,318**	**8,671**	**8,429**	**2.87**
CALGARY CITY	3,132	3,319	426	870	3,260	7,688	7,368	4.34
BROOKS TOWN CA	19	12	2	16	24	61	54	12.96
CAMROSE CA	22	24	16	8	24	70	60	16.67
CANMORE CA	20	N/A	2	137	173	332	N/A	**
COLD LAKE CA	74	78	2	0	26	102	78	30.77
COLD LAKE TOWN	26	32	2	0	8	36	32	12.50
BONNYVILLE TOWN	6	16	0	0	18	24	16	50.00
GRANDE PRAIRIE CA	136	90	22	0	115	273	157	73.89
LETHBRIDGE CA	256	228	48	81	76	461	377	22.28
LLOYDMINSTER CA	49	70	0	0	0	49	82	-40.24
MEDICINE HAT CA	181	190	36	28	28	273	455	-40.00
OKOTOKS CA	68	N/A	2	20	157	247	N/A	**
RED DEER CA	309	307	66	91	182	648	1,091	-40.60
WETASKIWIN CA	4	7	10	0	8	22	23	-4.35
WOOD BUFFALO CA	156	179	30	58	308	552	597	-7.54
WOOD BUFFALO USA (Fort McMurray)	156	179	30	58	308	552	597	-7.54
ALBERTA URBAN	**8,345**	**8,412**	**1,430**	**1,892**	**9,026**	**20,693**	**18,857**	**9.74**
ALBERTA RURAL	**1,190**	**1,776**	**189**	**222**	**160**	**1,761**	**2,687**	**-34.46**
TOTAL	**9,535**	**10,188**	**1619**	**2114**	**9186**	**22,454**	**21,544**	**4.22**

Table 4b
PROVINCE OF ALBERTA
COMPLETE AND NOT OCCUPIED - SEPTEMBER 2003

	Single		Multiple			Total		Chg
AREA	2003	2002	Semi	Row	Apt	2003	2002	2003/2002
EDMONTON CMA	**601**	**338**	**115**	**27**	**719**	**1462**	**650**	**
CALGARY CMA	**684**	**554**	**106**	**61**	**255**	**1106**	**888**	**24.55**
LETHBRIDGE CA	26	29	2	0	1	29	35	-17.14
MEDICINE HAT CA	73	29	6	8	7	94	99	-5.05
RED DEER CA	66	40	15	3	48	132	52	**
Total	**1450**	**990**	**244**	**99**	**1030**	**2823**	**1724**	**63.75**

N\A: not available

** indicates greater than 100 per cent change

Table 5
ALBERTA
HOUSING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity	Ownership					Rental				Total
	Freehold			Condominium		Private		Assisted		
	Single[1]	Semi[1]	Row	Row	Apt	Row	Apt	Row	Apt	
STARTS										
Third Quarter	5049	496	52	543	2133	100	742	0	0	9115
Previous Year	5442	712	26	628	1075	132	273	0	0	8288
Year-To-Date 2003	14167	1636	157	1570	5280	214	1467	0	0	24491
Year-To-Date 2002	14955	1598	55	1306	3647	283	2105	0	0	23949
UNDER CONSTRUCTION										
2003	8345	1430	158	1590	7039	144	1987	0	0	20693
2002	8412	1226	46	1134	4920	185	2934	0	0	18857
COMPLETIONS										
Third Quarter	5213	622	26	492	1762	48	494	0	0	8657
Previous Year	5010	556	22	470	648	128	260	0	0	7094
Year-To-Date 2003	14536	1660	95	1235	3966	133	2276	0	0	23901
Year-To-Date 2002	12517	1264	52	1105	2724	170	931	0	0	18763
COMPLETED & NOT ABSORBED[2]										
2003	1450	244	4	87	327	8	703	0	0	2823
2002	990	184	1	52	238	1	258	0	0	1724
TOTAL SUPPLY[3]										
2003	9795	1674	162	1677	7366	152	2690	0	0	23516
2002	9402	1410	47	1186	5158	186	3192	0	0	20581
ABSORPTIONS[2]										
Third Quarter	4654	573	26	447	1618	52	474	0	0	7844
Previous Year	4403	537	21	465	764	132	316	0	0	6638
12 month Average	1486	159	11	117	383	17	227	0	0	2400

[1] May include units intended for condominium.
[2] Centres of 50,000 population and over.
[3] Sum of units under construction, complete and unoccupied

DEFINITIONS AND BACKGROUND NOTES

Starts and Completions Survey

The purpose of this survey is to measure new residential construction activity. The common unit of measurement is the "dwelling unit" (as opposed to value).

The Starts and Completion Survey enumerates dwelling units in new structures only; such units being designed for non-transient and year-round occupancy. Thus, excluded from the survey are conversions, vacation homes, cottages and collective type dwellings.

Starts - refer to units where construction has advanced to the footing or foundation stage and in the case of multiples, a start applies to the individual unit.

Under Construction - refers to units that have started but are not complete (i.e. units under construction from the previous month plus starts for the current month minus completions during the current month plus/minus any adjustments to units under construction which may include cancellations of projects, re-initiations of projects and/or changes in tenure status).

Completions - refer to units where all proposed construction work has been performed or in some cases where ninety percent of all construction work is completed and the structure is fit for occupancy.

Completed and Unoccupied - refers to completed units of new construction which have never been occupied or sold (i.e. completed and unoccupied units from the previous month plus completions during the current month minus absorptions for the current month).

Total Supply - refers to the total supply of new units and includes, units under construction and units that are completed but not occupied (i.e. under construction plus completed and unoccupied for the current month).

Absorptions - refers to newly completed units which have been sold or rented. The number of absorptions is obtained from a survey initiated when the structure is completed. Units pre-sold or pre-leased are not included until the completion stage (i.e. completed and unoccupied units from the previous month plus completions for the current month minus completed and unoccupied units for the current month).

Dwelling units have been divided into four categories:

The definition of types of dwellings used are in accordance with those used in the Census.

Single-Detached - This type is commonly called a "single-house". It comprises only one-dwelling unit which is completely separate on all sides from any other dwelling or structure including linked homes which are attached below ground.

Semi-Detached - In this category each one of two dwellings are located side-by-side in a building and are separated by a common wall extending from ground to roof or by a garage.

Row - This category comprises a one-family dwelling unit in a row of three or more dwellings separated by common or party walls extending from ground to roof.

Apartment and Other - This category includes all dwelling units other than those described above. It includes structures such as: duplexes, double-duplexes, triplexes, row-duplexes, apartments proper and dwellings over or behind a store or other nonresidential structure. In accordance with the definition, single-detached units with legal secondary suites are included in this category.

Geographical coverage of the survey includes all metropolitan areas, census agglomerations and urban centres of 10,000 population and over, as defined by the Census. These areas are enumerated completely each month. The remainder of the branch territory is covered on a sample basis four times a year in March, June, September and December.

Market Absorption Survey

The purpose of this survey is to provide an indication of the short-term demand for home ownership and rental dwellings. The survey is designed to measure the rate at which units are sold or rented after they are completed.

The geographical coverage of the Market Absorption Survey is all metropolitan areas and all urban centres of 50,000 population and over.

In the Market Absorption Survey, certain dwellings are excluded for various reasons. These are: dwellings financed by CMHC or NHA Section 6, Non-profit Public and Private initiated housing, which are not subject to normal market criteria and dwellings constructed for model purposes. Absorption in this report is defined as take up monitored at completions plus those from inventory. For the short term, absorptions are a function of actual completions and inventory levels.

1996 Census Definitions

A **Census Metropolitan Area** refers to the main labour market area of an urbanized core having 100,000 or more population. The Edmonton CMA includes 35 municipalities and Calgary CMA includes nine. *Note: Wood Buffalo USA includes Fort McMurray City and Wood Buffalo includes Ft. McMurray CA*

A Census Agglomeration refers to the region labour market area of an urbanized core housing between 10,000 and 99,999 population. CMA's and CA's are created by Statistics Canada and are usually known by the name of the urban area forming their urbanized core. They contain whole municipalities (or census subdivisions) and are comprised of:

1. Municipalities if (a) at least 40% of the employed labour force living in the municipalities work in the urbanized core or (b) at 25% of the employed labour force working in the municipality live in the urbanized core.
2. Other municipalities if (a) at least 40% of the employed labour force living in the municipality work in the urbanized core or (b) at 25% of the employed labour force working in the municipality live in the urbanized core.