

F

A S T F A X

Saguenay

RENTAL MARKET REPORT

Proportion of vacant dwellings on the rise

According to Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), the Saguenay census metropolitan area (CMA) rental market posted a vacancy rate of 5.2 per cent in October 2003. This was a moderate increase over the rate of 4.9 per cent recorded in October 2002.

The rise in the vacancy rate is mainly attributable to the intense construction of rental housing for seniors that prevailed in the area over the past 24 months. In fact, the 325 units of this type that were started need an absorption period spread out over several months. In addition, strong growth was also observed in the traditional rental housing construction segment in 2002 and 2003.

The survey conducted in October revealed that rents went up by about 3.5 per cent, compared to the results obtained in 2002. The most significant rental hike was noted for two-bedroom dwellings (3.9 per cent), that is, the unit type with the lowest vacancy rate (3.2 per cent).

Among the 28 CMAs across Canada, Saguenay sits on top. It is effectively the area that has the highest vacancy rate, along with Saint John. At the other end of the spectrum are the CMAs of Québec (0.5 per cent), Sherbrooke (0.7 per cent) and Montréal (1.0 per cent), which have the three tightest rental markets, both in the province and the country. To complete the overview of centres with 100,000 or more inhabitants in the province of Quebec, Gatineau and Trois-Rivières have vacancy rates of 1.2 per cent and 1.5 per cent, respectively.

CMHC's annual rental market survey was conducted at the beginning of October. In the Saguenay CMA, it covered a total stock of 8,576 apartments contained in privately initiated rental buildings with three or more housing units.

Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

OCTOBER 2003 SURVEY

| Apartment Vacancy Rates (%) | 2002 | 2003 |
|------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Bachelor | 5.7 | 6.8 |
| 1-Bedroom | 7.2 | 8.9 |
| 2-Bedroom | 4.2 | 3.2 |
| 3-Bedroom + | 3.3 | 5.1 |
| Total | 4.9 | 5.2 |

| Average Apartment Rents (\$) | 2002 | 2003 |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Bachelor | 302 | 309 |
| 1-Bedroom | 370 | 374 |
| 2-Bedroom | 440 | 457 |
| 3-Bedroom + | 477 | 494 |

| Apartment Units (2003) | Vacant | Total |
|-------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Bachelor | 33 | 482 |
| 1-Bedroom | 189 | 2,118 |
| 2-Bedroom | 140 | 4,378 |
| 3-Bedroom + | 81 | 1,598 |
| Total | 443 | 8,576 |

Customer Service | 866 855-5711
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**Apartment Vacancy Rates (%)
by Zone and Bedroom Type
Saguenay CMA**

| Market Zone | Bachelor | | 1-Bedroom | | 2-Bedroom | | 3-Bedroom + | | Total | |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Chicoutimi-Nord | ** | ** | ** | 10.8 | 6.1 | 4.3 | 3.6 | ** | 7.3 | 4.8 |
| Chicoutimi-Sud | ** | 6.9 | 5.5 | 10.6 | 4.1 | 2.8 | 1.9 | 1.5 | 4.4 | 5.1 |
| Former Chicoutimi City | 6.8 | 6.7 | 6.8 | 10.6 | 4.5 | 3.1 | 2.3 | 1.6 | 4.9 | 5.1 |
| Jonquière | ** | ** | 7.6 | 6.8 | 3.1 | 2.5 | 3.8 | 6.7 | 4.4 | 4.5 |
| La Baie | ** | ** | 9.3 | 5.6 | 6.9 | 6.4 | 5.5 | 12.7 | 6.8 | 8.3 |
| Metropolitan Area | 5.7 | 6.8 | 7.2 | 8.9 | 4.2 | 3.2 | 3.3 | 5.1 | 4.9 | 5.2 |

**Average Apartment Rents (\$)
by Zone and Bedroom Type
Saguenay CMA**

| Market Zone | Bachelor | | 1-Bedroom | | 2-Bedroom | | 3-Bedroom + | |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|
| | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 | 2002 | 2003 |
| Chicoutimi-Nord | ** | ** | ** | ** | 409 | 408 | 480 | ** |
| Chicoutimi-Sud | ** | ** | 379 | 386 | 450 | 485 | 511 | 525 |
| Former Chicoutimi City | ** | ** | 375 | 381 | 443 | 472 | 505 | 514 |
| Jonquière | ** | ** | 359 | 375 | 439 | 451 | 468 | 501 |
| La Baie | ** | ** | 380 | 320 | 431 | 367 | 406 | 406 |
| Metropolitan Area | 302 | 309 | 370 | 374 | 440 | 547 | 477 | 494 |

** Sample too small to disclose results

Saguenay Area Zones as per the former municipalities

Zone 1: Chicoutimi-Nord, Saint-Honoré, Shipshaw, Canton Tremblay

Zone 2: Chicoutimi-Sud

Zone 3: Jonquière, Larouche, Laterrière

Zone 4: La Baie

METHODOLOGY

Every year in October, Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) conducts a Rental Market Survey to determine the number of unoccupied units and the rents charged in rental buildings. The survey is performed through samples in all urban areas with 10,000 or more inhabitants. The results presented in this publication reflect the situation in apartment buildings that have been on the market for at least three months. CMHC contacted the building owners or managers either by telephone or by sending an enumerator to meet with them. The survey took place over the first two weeks of October and the results represent the conditions prevailing on the market during that period.

DEFINITIONS

Unoccupied unit: A unit is considered to be unoccupied if, at the time of the survey, it is immediately available for rent.

Rent: The rental data corresponds to the actual amounts paid by tenants for their units. Amenities and utilities such as heating, electricity, parking, hot water and laundry facilities may or may not be included in the monthly rent indicated for each unit. The average rents presented in the publication represent the average rental rates for different units in the market sector. These rates may include all or some services.

Apartment building: An apartment building is any structure with three or more rental units without private entrances.

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