HOUSING NOW
Halifax
YOUR LINK TO THE HOUSING MARKET
Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation
VOLUME 9, EDITION 3
MARCH 2005

Sales Sound but Starts Sluggish in First Quarter of 2005

✓ Construction activity for the first quarter of 2005 was weak in Metro Halifax while most other urban areas of the province experienced a significant increase in housing starts. In Metro Halifax, both single and multiple unit starts showed significantly lower levels of activity last month than in March 2004, despite favourable home ownership conditions and fair weather.

✓ Housing start activity in Metro in the first quarter of 2005 amounted to only half of the number of starts experienced during the first quarter of 2004. All unit types experienced a decline last quarter with the most significant aspect of this decline being that there were no rental units started in Metro Halifax. Halifax also experienced a 92 per cent decrease in condo starts, a 76 per cent decrease in semi-detached starts, a 30 per cent decrease in row starts and a 15 per cent decrease in single detached starts.

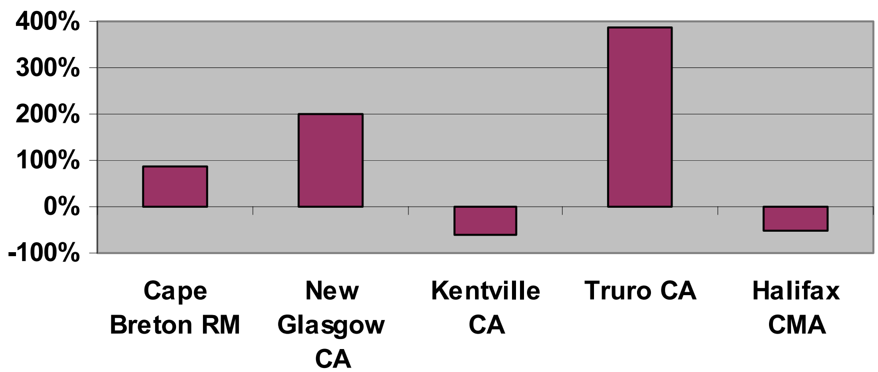
✓ Completions during the first quarter of 2005 also lagged well behind the completions level of the first quarter of 2004, reporting 38 per cent or 220 fewer completions of all unit types. The decrease came largely as a result of significantly fewer condo and rental unit completions which were not offset by the increase in single-detached and row-unit completions.

✓ Total absorptions during the first quarter of 2005 were 29 per cent higher than during the same period of 2004, indicating that housing demand remains quite healthy. Single-detached, row and rental units all saw an increase in absorptions while there were declines in condo and semi-detached absorptions. As a result, the number of units that are completed and not absorbed through the first three months of 2005 amounts to approximately one-tenth the number available at this time last year. This significant difference can be fully attributed to having no new condo or rental units completed and unabsorbed as of March 2005.

✓ Five of seven sub-markets in Halifax saw a decline in starts during the first quarter of 2005, compared with the first quarter of 2004, as the availability of building lots within the urban core

Most Urban Areas Experience Increase in Activity

2004-2005 % change in total housing starts by urban centre



IN THIS ISSUE

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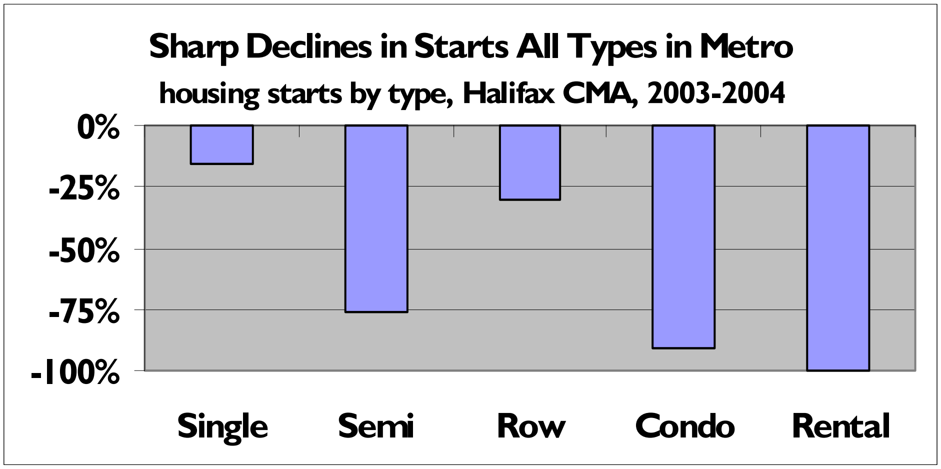
remains insufficient to satisfy demand. Sackville and Halifax County Southwest were the two sub-markets that saw an increase in construction activity in the first quater of this year compared with Q1 2004. Halifax City and Bedford Hammonds Plains were the two sub-markets that saw the largest decline in starts and this can be largely attributed to the lack of condo and rental starts during the first quarter of this year.

✓ On the completions side, four of seven sub-markets saw an increase in the number of units completed during the first three months of this year compared to the same quarter last year. Halifax City, Bedford Hammonds Plains and Sackville were the areas that saw a decrease in activity over the same comparative period.

✓ The number of units under construction during the first quarter of 2005 was below the level set in March of 2004 in four of seven sub-markets last month. Increases in the number of units under construction were found in Dartmouth City, Sackville and Halifax County Southwest.

✓ There was a 17 per cent increase in sales of new single-detached houses in Halifax during the first three months of 2005, increasing from 188 during the first quarter of 2004 to 220 this year. Both split-level and 2-storey houses saw an increase in the number of sales last quarter with increases of 57 and 19 per cent respectively. Despite the increase in number of sales, the average sale price of the new single-detached houses sold to date this year decreased only one per cent compared to the average sale price during the first quarter of 2004. The



average sale price for the first quarter of 2005 was $236,555 compared with $238,651 in 2004.

✓ Fifty-five per cent of the new single-detached houses sold during the month of March 2005 had a sale price of less than $200,000 compared with 47 per cent in March of 2004. Twenty-seven per cent of the new single-detached homes sold last month had a sale price greater than $250,000, with the remaining houses selling for between $200,000 and $249,999. March saw a 9 per cent increase in total sales of new single-detached houses compared with the previous month, with 76 sales last month compared with 70 in February of this year.

✓ March 2005 also saw an increase in the number of new single-detached houses that were unoccupied, increasing 12 per cent to 36 houses from 32 in February 2005. More than 55 per cent of the unoccupied new single-detached houses had a price tag of less than $250,000 and the average price of these unoccupied homes was 3 per cent lower than the average price in February at $273,441.

✓ Looking at the resale market, Halifax County East, Bedford Hammonds Plains and Dartmouth City were the only sub-markets that saw a decrease in the number of MLS® sales with each sub-market experiencing more than a 20 per cent decline compared with the first quarter of 2004. During the first quarter of 2004, average MLS® sale price increased in all of the sub-markets, with the largest increases experienced in Halifax County East and Sackville.

✓ At the provincial level, a strong pace of single-detached homebuilding in Cape Breton, Truro and to a lesser extent New Glasgow was sufficient to generate a slight increase in first quarter urban single starts, despite the 15 per cent decline in Metro Halifax. Kentville and Halifax were the only urban areas of the province to see a decline in housing activity, comparing the first quarter of this year to the first three months of 2004.

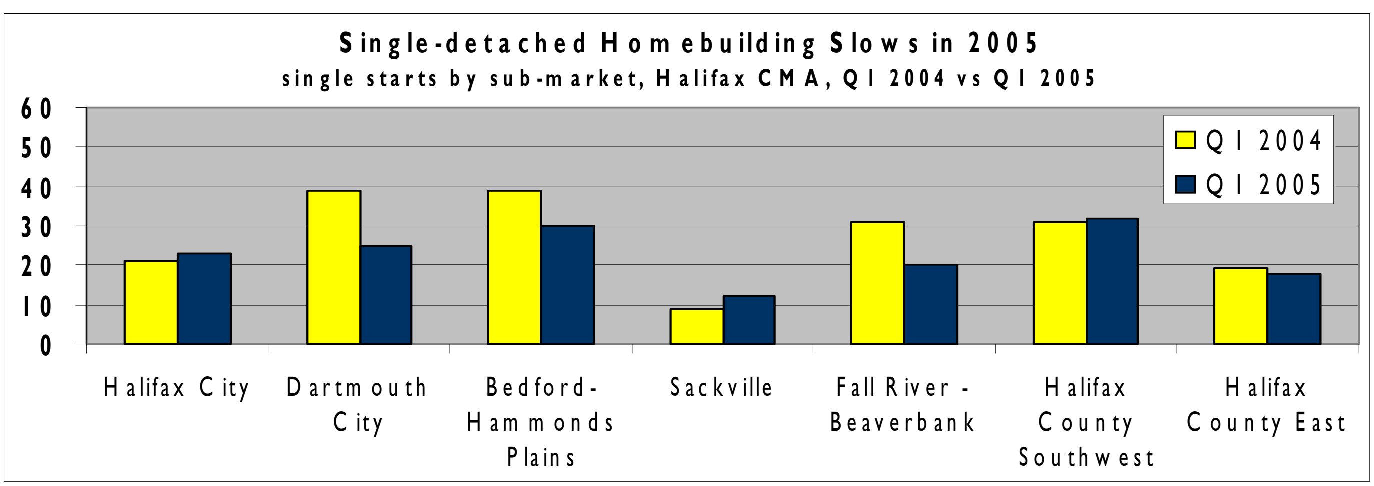


TABLE 1
ACTIVITY SUMMARY BY INTENDED MARKET
HALIFAX CMA
MARCH 2005

		FREEHOLD					GRAND
		SINGLE	SEMI	ROW	CONDOMINIUM	RENTAL	TOTAL
PENDING STARTS	- Current Month	102	20	0	0	235	357
	- Previous Year	37	12	0	0	12	61
STARTS	- Current Month	45	4	14	0	0	63
	- Previous Year	83	12	11	79	61	246
	Year-To-Date 2005	160	8	37	8	0	213
	Year-To-Date 2004	189	34	53	91	61	428
UNDER CONSTRUCTION	- 2005	300	20	77	402	690	1,489
	- 2004	322	42	139	704	541	1,748
COMPLETIONS	- Current Month	83	12	23	0	0	118
	- Previous Year	61	12	0	16	285	374
	Year-To-Date 2005	229	34	55	40	2	360
	Year-To-Date 2004	185	36	8	66	285	580
COMPLETED & NOT ABSORBED	- 2005	37	7	4	0	0	48
	- 2004	47	12	12	81	327	479
TOTAL SUPPLY	- 2005	337	27	81	402	690	1,537
	- 2004	369	54	151	785	868	2,227
ABSORPTIONS	- Current Month	79	13	27	0	0	119
	- Previous Year	64	17	0	16	22	119
	Year-To-Date 2005	221	31	59	103	98	512
	Year-To-Date 2004	189	42	4	45	116	396
	3-month Average	106	8	22	158	57	351
	12-month Average	125	12	15	50	57	259

Source: CMHC

TABLE 2
HOUSING ACTIVITY BY AREA AND BY INTENDED MARKET
HALIFAX CMA
MARCH 2005

	Ownership							Ownership					
	Freehold					GRAND		Freehold					GRAND
STARTS	SINGLE	SEMI	ROW	CONDO	RENTAL	TOTAL	**COMPLETIONS**	SINGLE	SEMI	ROW	CONDO	RENTAL	TOTAL
HALIFAX CITY													
Current Month	14	2	10	0	0	26	Current Month	9	6	0	0	0	15
Previous Year	2	6	0	0	61	69	Previous Year	10	10	0	0	245	265
Year-To-Date 2005	23	2	19	8	0	52	Year-To-Date 2005	12	14	24	40	2	92
Year-To-Date 2004	21	16	0	8	61	106	Year-To-Date 2004	32	18	8	50	245	353
DARTMOUTH CITY													
Current Month	1	2	4	0	0	7	Current Month	18	2	18	0	0	38
Previous Year	15	2	6	0	0	23	Previous Year	7	0	0	16	22	45
Year-To-Date 2005	25	2	14	0	0	41	Year-To-Date 2005	61	14	26	0	0	101
Year-To-Date 2004	39	14	15	4	0	72	Year-To-Date 2004	21	0	0	16	22	59
BEDFORD-HAMMOND PLAINS													
Current Month	5	0	0	0	0	5	Current Month	17	0	5	0	0	22
Previous Year	26	4	5	79	0	114	Previous Year	13	2	0	0	18	33
Year-To-Date 2005	30	0	4	0	0	34	Year-To-Date 2005	39	0	5	0	0	44
Year-To-Date 2004	39	4	38	79	0	160	Year-To-Date 2004	39	4	0	0	18	61
SACKVILLE													
Current Month	3	0	0	0	0	3	Current Month	5	0	0	0	0	5
Previous Year	4	0	0	0	0	4	Previous Year	6	0	0	0	0	6
Year-To-Date 2005	12	2	0	0	0	14	Year-To-Date 2005	22	0	0	0	0	22
Year-To-Date 2004	9	0	0	0	0	9	Year-To-Date 2004	23	0	0	0	0	23
FALL RIVER-BEAVERBANK													
Current Month	7	0	0	0	0	7	Current Month	10	0	0	0	0	10
Previous Year	9	0	0	0	0	9	Previous Year	4	0	0	0	0	4
Year-To-Date 2005	20	0	0	0	0	20	Year-To-Date 2005	24	0	0	0	0	24
Year-To-Date 2004	31	0	0	0	0	31	Year-To-Date 2004	20	0	0	0	0	20
HALIFAX COUNTY SOUTHWEST													
Current Month	8	0	0	0	0	8	Current Month	11	2	0	0	0	13
Previous Year	16	0	0	0	0	16	Previous Year	12	0	0	0	0	12
Year-To-Date 2005	32	2	0	0	0	34	Year-To-Date 2005	50	4	0	0	0	54
Year-To-Date 2004	31	0	0	0	0	31	Year-To-Date 2004	38	12	0	0	0	50
HALIFAX COUNTY EAST													
Current Month	7	0	0	0	0	7	Current Month	13	2	0	0	0	15
Previous Year	11	0	0	0	0	11	Previous Year	9	0	0	0	0	9
Year-To-Date 2005	18	0	0	0	0	18	Year-To-Date 2005	21	2	0	0	0	23
Year-To-Date 2004	19	0	0	0	0	19	Year-To-Date 2004	12	2	0	0	0	14

Source: CMHC

TABLE 3
UNDER CONSTRUCTION BY AREA
AND INTENDED MARKET
HALIFAX CMA
MARCH 2005

		OWNERSHIP					
		FREEHOLD					GRAND
		SINGLE	SEMI	ROW	CONDO	RENTAL	TOTAL
HALIFAX CITY							
	Current Month	32	6	32	108	453	631
	Previous Year	48	22	48	516	459	1093
DARTMOUTH CITY							
	Current Month	72	8	28	179	221	508
	Previous Year	88	16	53	73	4	234
BEDFORD-HAMMOND PLAINS							
	Current Month	50	0	8	115	11	184
	Previous Year	50	4	38	115	72	279
SACKVILLE							
	Current Month	20	2	9	0	5	36
	Previous Year	11	0	0	0	0	11
FALL RIVER-BEAVERBANK							
	Current Month	28	2	0	0	0	30
	Previous Year	35	0	0	0	0	35
HALIFAX COUNTY SOUTHWEST							
	Current Month	60	2	0	0	0	62
	Previous Year	51	0	0	0	0	51
HALIFAX COUNTY EAST							
	Current Month	38	0	0	0	0	38
	Previous Year	39	0	0	0	6	45

Source: CMHC

TABLE 4 SALES AND PRICE OF NEW SINGLE-DETACHED HOUSES BY TYPE HALIFAX CMA MARCH 2005				
Type	**Current Month**	**Previous Year**	**Year-To-Date 2005**	**Year-To-Date 2004**
Bungalow				
Sales	11	6	32	31
Average Price	$201,209	$247,167	$199,875	$205,707
Median Price	$185,000	$232,000	$189,900	NA
Split Level				
Sales	13	10	33	21
Average Price	$205,500	$184,560	$220,388	$169,657
Median Price	$189,400	$184,900	$198,900	NA
1.5 Storey				
Sales	0	1	2	2
Average Price	$0	$200,000	$309,950	$525,000
Median Price	$0	$200,000	$309,950	NA
2 Storey				
Sales	40	36	121	102
Average Price	$291,105	$312,764	$265,659	$279,940
Median Price	$0	$290,000	$245,900	NA
Other				
Sales	14	11	29	32
Average Price	$169,229	$181,036	$170,924	$182,743
Median Price	$182,300	$185,000	$180,000	NA
Unknown				
Sales	1	0	3	0
Average Price	$167,000	$0	$217,267	$0
Median Price	$167,000	$0	$194,900	NA
Total				
Sales	79	64	220	188
Average Price	$241,332	$262,180	$236,555	$238,651
Median Price	$198,900	$215,450	$215,900	NA

Source: CMHC

'Note: Total single detached sales data above may not match single detached absorption data in table 1.Discrepancies are due to dwellings which are absorbed but for which no price data are collected being included as absorptions in Table 1 but not as sales in Table 4 above. These dwelling are typically mobile homes on leased land which are not priced due to nature of land tenure.

TABLE 5 - MONTHLY NEW SINGLE-DETACHED HOUSE SALES BY PRICE RANGE HALIFAX CMA

	<$174,900		$175,000-$199,999		$200,000-$249,999		$250,000-$299,999		$300,000-$399,999		>$400,000				
Period	sales	per cent	sales	per cent	sales	per cent	sales	per cent	sales	per cent	sales	per cent	Total Sales	Average Price	Median Price
March 2004	9	14.5%	20	32.3%	9	14.5%	10	16.1%	11	17.7%	3	4.8%	62	$262,180	$215,450
April 2004	11	13.6%	22	27.2%	18	22.2%	17	21.0%	9	11.1%	4	4.9%	81	$259,227	$221,500
May 2004	19	19.6%	37	38.1%	26	26.8%	6	6.2%	8	8.2%	1	1.0%	97	$221,517	$198,700
June 2004	16	16.2%	36	36.4%	20	20.2%	15	15.2%	11	11.1%	1	1.0%	99	$238,690	$200,000
July 2004	21	11.3%	39	21.0%	57	30.6%	33	17.7%	32	17.2%	4	2.2%	186	$253,467	$229,800
August 2004	18	19.8%	39	42.9%	13	14.3%	11	12.1%	10	11.0%	0	0.0%	91	$211,098	$189,000
September 2004	53	23.5%	51	22.6%	63	27.9%	31	13.7%	26	11.5%	2	0.9%	226	$224,824	$206,900
October 2004	17	13.0%	37	28.2%	37	28.2%	24	18.3%	14	10.7%	2	1.5%	131	$243,154	$219,500
November 2004	31	18.1%	52	30.4%	52	30.4%	23	13.5%	11	6.4%	2	1.2%	171	$227,312	$205,000
December 2004	33	18.8%	45	25.6%	58	33.0%	26	14.8%	12	6.8%	2	1.1%	176	$222,863	$209,900
January 2005	13	18.8%	16	23.2%	26	37.7%	5	7.2%	9	13.0%	0	0.0%	69	$223,006	$209,950
February 2005	6	8.6%	18	25.7%	22	31.4%	17	24.3%	7	10.0%	0	0.0%	70	$244,007	$229,900
March 2005	14	18.4%	28	36.8%	13	17.1%	9	11.8%	10	13.2%	2	2.6%	76	$241,332	$198,900

Source: CMHC

TABLE 6 - MONTHLY NEW SINGLE-DETACHED UNOCCUPIED HOUSES BY PRICE RANGE HALIFAX CMA

	<$174,999		$175,000-$199,999		$200,000-$249,999		$250,000-$299,999		$300,000-$399,999		>$400,000				
Period	units	per cent	units	per cent	units	per cent	units	per cent	units	per cent	units	per cent	Total Units	Average Price	Median Price
March 2004	5	11.9%	9	21.4%	8	19.0%	10	23.8%	7	16.7%	3	7.1%	42	$285,969	$260,000
April 2004	1	2.5%	12	30.0%	7	17.5%	10	25.0%	8	20.0%	2	5.0%	40	$298,667	$269,900
May 2004	2	5.1%	7	17.9%	4	10.3%	8	20.5%	15	38.5%	3	7.7%	39	$330,406	$305,000
June 2004	2	5.4%	2	5.4%	2	5.4%	9	24.3%	20	54.1%	2	5.4%	37	$325,632	$305,000
July 2004	1	3.2%	5	16.1%	8	25.8%	3	9.7%	12	38.7%	2	6.5%	31	$304,156	$290,000
August 2004	2	6.3%	4	12.5%	8	25.0%	3	9.4%	13	40.6%	2	6.3%	32	$304,080	$300,000
September 2004	3	9.7%	4	12.9%	5	16.1%	4	12.9%	13	41.9%	2	6.5%	31	$308,021	$300,000
October 2004	3	14.3%	1	4.8%	3	14.3%	1	4.8%	10	47.6%	3	14.3%	21	$353,414	$324,000
November 2004	4	16.0%	2	8.0%	5	20.0%	3	12.0%	8	32.0%	3	12.0%	25	$326,096	$284,000
December 2004	3	10.3%	3	10.3%	9	31.0%	3	10.3%	10	34.5%	1	3.4%	29	$277,176	$232,000
January 2005	3	12.5%	3	12.5%	7	29.2%	3	12.5%	7	29.2%	1	4.2%	24	$276,850	$226,000
February 2005	3	9.4%	3	9.4%	12	37.5%	3	9.4%	10	31.3%	1	3.1%	32	$282,403	$230,000
March 2005	2	5.6%	8	22.2%	11	30.6%	5	13.9%	9	25.0%	1	2.8%	36	$273,441	$225,000

Source: CMHC

Note: Sales and unoccupied house data above may not match single detached absorption and completed & not absorbed data in table 1.Discrepancies are due to dwellings which are absorbed but for which no price data are collected being inlcuded as absorptions in Table 1 but not as sales in Table 4 above. These dwelling are typically mobile homes on leased land which are not priced due to nature of land tenure.

Table 7: MLS® Residential Sales Activity by Area

	March											
	2004				2005				Per Cent Change			
SUBMARKET	Sales	Average List Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days on Market	Sales	Average List Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days on Market	Sales	Average List Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days on Market
Bedford - Hammonds Plains	66	$ 243,314	$237,862	63	63	$ 226,895	$221,688	82	-4.5%	-6.7%	-6.8%	28.9%
Dartmouth City	141	$ 154,571	$151,671	55	120	$ 165,665	$161,984	na	-14.9%	7.2%	6.8%	na
Fall River - Beaverbank	37	$ 193,972	$191,479	108	33	$ 171,171	$170,974	74	-10.8%	-11.8%	-10.7%	-31.6%
Halifax City	101	$ 207,649	$202,252	65	137	$ 244,282	$238,829	94	35.6%	17.6%	18.1%	46.4%
Halifax County East	30	$ 136,920	$129,670	73	23	$ 157,330	$152,665	122	-23.3%	14.9%	17.7%	67.7%
Halifax County Southwest	40	$ 171,243	$158,385	79	41	$ 194,438	$186,214	73	2.5%	13.5%	17.6%	-7.7%
Sackville	45	$ 130,158	$126,903	41	50	$ 147,190	$144,835	62	11.1%	13.1%	14.1%	50.2%

	YEAR-TO-DATE											
	2004				2005				Per Cent Change			
SUBMARKET	Sales	Average List Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days on Market	Sales	Average List Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days on Market	Sales	Average List Price	Average Sale Price	Average Days on Market
Bedford - Hammonds Plains	153	$ 225,365	$220,729	77	120	$ 230,439	$225,420	91	-21.6%	2.3%	2.1%	18.4%
Dartmouth City	368	$ 154,044	$150,937	60	291	$ 167,592	$163,155	na	-20.9%	8.8%	8.1%	na
Fall River - Beaverbank	79	$ 179,760	$176,550	115	79	$ 188,304	$185,731	77	0.0%	4.8%	5.2%	-33.0%
Halifax City	252	$ 212,366	$205,711	74	279	$ 234,082	$228,346	100	10.7%	10.2%	11.0%	33.7%
Halifax County East	78	$ 136,334	$129,739	94	60	$ 159,300	$154,049	86	-23.1%	16.8%	18.7%	-7.8%
Halifax County Southwest	94	$ 163,425	$156,596	92	102	$ 179,683	$173,894	89	8.5%	9.9%	11.0%	-3.9%
Sackville	92	$ 126,045	$122,826	46	128	$ 147,063	$143,976	71	39.1%	16.7%	17.2%	53.0%

Source: Nova Scotia Association of Realtors Celerity System

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Total metro area data is not provided because it is not official CREA data

TABLE 8

STARTS AND COMPLETIONS BY AREA AND INTENDED MARKET

NOVA SCOTIA

FIRST QUARTER 2005

STARTS	SINGLE	SEM	ROW	APARTMENT	TOTAL	COMPLETIONS	SINGLE	SEM	ROW	APARTMENT	TOTAL
CAPE BRETON RM											
Current Quarter	32	2	0	0	34	Current Quarter	21	2	0	0	23
Previous Year	14	0	0	4	18	Previous Year	11	2	0	4	17
Year-To-Date 2005	32	2	0	0	34	Year-To-Date 2005	21	2	0	0	23
Year-To-Date 2004	14	0	0	4	18	Year-To-Date 2004	11	2	0	4	17
NEW GLASGOW CA											
Current Quarter	6	0	0	0	6	Current Quarter	23	2	0	0	25
Previous Year	2	0	0	0	2	Previous Year	22	0	0	0	22
Year-To-Date 2005	6	0	0	0	6	Year-To-Date 2005	23	2	0	0	25
Year-To-Date 2004	2	0	0	0	2	Year-To-Date 2004	22	0	0	0	22
TRURO CA											
Current Quarter	18	0	0	19	37	Current Quarter	83	2	4	7	96
Previous Year	5	2	0	0	7	Previous Year	38	0	4	48	90
Year-To-Date 2005	18	0	0	19	37	Year-To-Date 2005	83	2	4	7	96
Year-To-Date 2004	5	2	0	0	7	Year-To-Date 2004	38	0	4	48	90
KENTVILLE CA											
Current Quarter	2	0	0	0	2	Current Quarter	5	2	0	0	7
Previous Year	3	2	0	0	5	Previous Year	10	4	0	0	14
Year-To-Date 2005	2	0	0	0	2	Year-To-Date 2005	5	2	0	0	7
Year-To-Date 2004	3	2	0	0	5	Year-To-Date 2004	10	4	0	0	14
RURAL NOVA SCOTIA											
Current Quarter	124	0	0	14	138	Current Quarter	487	10	18	6	521
Previous Year	103	0	0	0	103	Previous Year	336	30	0	8	374
Year-To-Date 2005	124	0	0	14	138	Year-To-Date 2005	487	10	18	6	521
Year-To-Date 2004	103	0	0	0	103	Year-To-Date 2004	336	30	0	8	374

Source: CMHC

KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS
HALIFAX

Indicator	Period	2005	2004	% change
Metro Halifax Labour Force (000's)	March	216.5	210.5	2.9%
Metro Halifax Employment (000's)	March	201.4	196.0	2.8%
Metro Halifax Unemployment Rate	March	7.0%	6.9%	---
Building Permits ($ 000's)	February			
Residential		10,888	15,080	-27.8%
Non-Residential		8,566	8,774	-2.4%
Total		19,454	23,854	-18.4%
Metro Halifax Consumer Price Index	February	126.1	123.2	2.4%
Metro Halifax New Housing Price Index	February			
Total		121.7	121.1	0.5%
House		124.1	123.2	0.7%
Land		116.5	116.2	0.3%

Sources:
Statistics Canada - Labour Force Survey
Statistics Canada - Monthly Building Permits Survey
Statistics Canada - Consumer Price Index
Statistics Canada - New House Price Index

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