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Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Fewer Housing Starts in April

For the second consecutive month, new housing activity across the Edmonton region fell in April compared with the same month of 2003. Total housing starts throughout Metro fell by 11 per cent from April 2003 to 878 units. For the year-to-date, new home starts have dropped marginally to 3,099 units, 20 fewer (-0.6%) than witnessed in the same four-month period last year.

Single-detached starts fell short of last April's tally by 2.1 per cent, representing 11 units less than the 524 singles started in April 2003. April's performance represented the ninth month in a row that single-family starts have failed to surpass the activity levels recorded a year earlier. Within Edmonton City, single-detached starts moved up by 1.8 per cent year-over-year in April to 333 units. Other communities reporting higher activity included Morinville, Spruce Grove and Stony Plain.

To the end of April, single-family starts across Metro have dropped by eight per cent from the performance observed in the first four months of 2003. Within Edmonton City, single starts have fallen by four per cent so far this year. Most other centres, with the exception of Leduc City, Morinville and Stony Plain, have also reported fewer single-detached starts this year. Builders are attempting to reach a more

sustainable level of production and contain their inventories of unsold spec homes.

With absorptions outpacing completions in April, single-family inventories moved downward from the numbers reported in March. The number of completed and unoccupied singles, including show homes, stood at 637 units, down from 715 unabsorbed units in March. While April's inventory represented the lowest level since October 2003, it was still 54 per cent higher than the 413 units on hand in April of last year. The mix of inventory between show homes and spec units also changed from the previous month, with more show homes on display but fewer spec units in stock. Show homes represented over half of the unabsorbed inventory in April, compared with 41 per cent in March.

Following a strong beginning to the year in January and February, multiple-unit starts experienced back-to-back monthly declines in March and April. Starts for semi-detached, row, and apartment units in the Edmonton CMA dropped by 21 per cent in April to 365 units compared with 462 in April 2003. Apartments and semi-detached starts fell by 29 and 22 per cent, respectively, while row-unit starts experienced an increase from four units last April to 30 units this year.

Despite April's pullback, total new multi-family activity so far this year has remained 12 per cent ahead of multi-unit starts in the first four months of 2003. While the City of Edmonton has experienced a moderate three per cent increase after four months, bigger gains have been achieved in suburban areas such as Leduc City, Spruce Grove and Strathcona County.

Table 3 summarizes Metro's housing activity by dwelling type. Rental unit starts have fallen back so far this year, with developers responding to concerns about rising vacancy rates. In contrast, condominium apartment construction has remained very robust with

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more than double the number of units started compared with January to April 2003. As of April, condo apartments under construction stood at 4,292 units, 73 per cent more than in April of 2003.

As witnessed in the new single-detached segment, multi-family absorptions exceeded completion levels in April, helping to further reduce the inventory of completed an unoccupied units. Total inventory stood at 482 units in April, down from 534 units in March. Inventories are now at their lowest point in 13 months but this situation may reverse itself in the months ahead considering the high volume of units still under construction. Condo apartments will be the segment to watch. Inventory numbers are much higher than a year ago and the total supply figure (inventory + units under construction) for condo apartments was up by 75 per cent in April, representing an increase of over 1900 units.

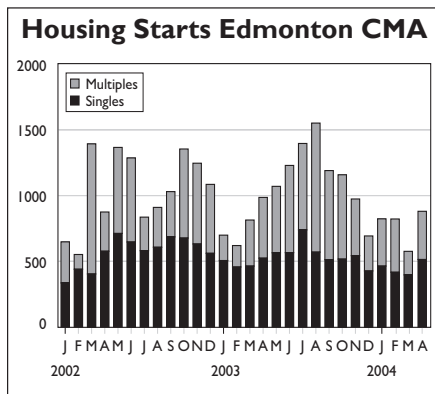


Table I
EDMONTON CMA
STARTS ACTIVITY BY AREA APRIL 2004

AREA	Single		Multiple			Total		% Chg 2004/2003
	2004	2003	Semi	Row	Apt	2004	2003	
BEAUMONT TOWN	7	12	0	0	0	7	12	-41.67
CALMAR TOWN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**
DEVON TOWN	14	8	0	0	0	14	8	75.00
EDMONTON CITY	333	327	94	30	223	680	779	-12.71
FORT SASKATCHEWAN CITY	5	10	2	0	0	7	14	-50.00
GIBBONS TOWN	1	2	0	0	0	1	2	-50.00
LEDUC CITY	12	7	0	0	0	12	9	33.33
LEDUC COUNTY	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	0.00
MORINVILLE TOWN	6	5	2	0	0	8	7	14.29
PARKLAND COUNTY	15	17	4	0	0	19	17	11.76
SPRUCE GROVE CITY	18	16	2	0	0	20	16	25.00
ST.ALBERT CITY	21	31	0	0	0	21	33	-36.36
STONY PLAIN TOWN	21	15	0	0	0	21	15	40.00
STRATHCONA COUNTY	54	57	8	0	0	62	57	8.77
STURGEON COUNTY	4	11	0	0	0	4	11	-63.64
OTHER CENTRES	0	4	0	0	0	0	4	**
TOTAL	513	524	112	30	223	878	986	-10.95

Table IB
EDMONTON CMA
STARTS ACTIVITY BY AREA YEAR TO DATE

AREA	Single		Multiple			Total		% Chg 2004/2003
	2004	2003	Semi	Row	Apt	2004	2003	
BEAUMONT TOWN	29	33	0	0	0	29	33	-12.12
CALMAR TOWN	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	0.00
DEVON TOWN	39	44	8	0	0	47	44	6.82
EDMONTON CITY	1203	1253	246	51	831	2331	2347	-0.68
FORT SASKATCHEWAN CITY	18	23	6	6	0	30	43	-30.23
GIBBONS TOWN	2	4	0	0	0	2	4	-50.00
LEDUC CITY	43	19	0	0	41	84	31	**
LEDUC COUNTY	7	10	0	0	0	7	10	-30.00
MORINVILLE TOWN	9	8	8	0	0	17	10	70.00
PARKLAND COUNTY	38	43	8	0	0	46	43	6.98
SPRUCE GROVE CITY	58	71	4	15	0	77	73	5.48
ST.ALBERT CITY	69	106	8	0	0	77	136	-43.38
STONY PLAIN TOWN	46	41	0	0	0	46	43	6.98
STRATHCONA COUNTY	197	260	76	0	0	273	266	2.63
STURGEON COUNTY	24	27	0	0	0	24	27	-11.11
OTHER CENTRES	7	7	0	0	0	7	7	0.00
TOTAL	1791	1951	364	72	872	3099	3119	-0.64

** Indicates 100% change or greater



HOUSING NOW provides an overview of a survey conducted monthly by CMHC. These surveys deal with Housing Starts, Completions and Absorptions for all CMA's across Canada. For more information please contact Richard Goatcher in Market Analysis at (780) 423-8729 or by fax at (780) 423-8702.

Table 2
EDMONTON CMA
HOUSING COMPLETIONS BY AREA APRIL 2004

AREA	Single		Multiple			Total		% Chg 2004/2003
	2004	2003	Semi	Row	Apt	2004	2003	
BEAUMONT TOWN	0	9	0	0	0	0	9	**
CALMAR TOWN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**
DEVON TOWN	6	5	0	8	0	14	5	**
EDMONTON CITY	236	355	58	20	180	494	644	-23.29
FORT SASKATCHEWAN CITY	1	7	4	0	0	5	98	-94.90
GIBBONS TOWN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**
LEDUC CITY	8	10	4	0	4	16	10	60.00
LEDUC COUNTY	5	8	0	0	0	5	8	-37.50
MORINVILLE TOWN	3	1	0	0	0	3	1	**
PARKLAND COUNTY	13	14	0	0	0	13	14	-7.14
SPRUCE GROVE CITY	5	13	10	0	0	15	31	-51.61
ST.ALBERT CITY	15	30	2	0	0	17	38	-55.26
STONY PLAIN TOWN	6	21	0	0	0	6	21	-71.43
STRATHCONA COUNTY	99	28	28	0	0	127	28	**
STURGEON COUNTY	11	14	0	0	0	11	14	-21.43
OTHER CENTRES	9	4	0	0	0	9	4	**
TOTAL	417	519	106	28	184	735	925	-20.54

Table 2B
EDMONTON CMA
HOUSING COMPLETIONS BY AREA YEAR TO DATE

AREA	Single		Multiple			Total		% Chg 2004/2003
	2004	2003	Semi	Row	Apt	2004	2003	
BEAUMONT TOWN	25	60	0	0	0	25	60	-58.33
CALMAR TOWN	2	2	0	0	0	2	2	0.00
DEVON TOWN	20	37	0	8	0	28	37	-24.32
EDMONTON CITY	1119	1292	236	85	437	1877	1843	1.84
FORT SASKATCHEWAN CITY	18	27	10	0	0	28	165	-83.03
GIBBONS TOWN	2	1	0	0	0	2	1	**
LEDUC CITY	40	46	8	4	32	84	54	55.56
LEDUC COUNTY	28	20	0	0	0	28	20	40.00
MORINVILLE TOWN	10	5	2	0	0	12	5	**
PARKLAND COUNTY	60	65	0	0	0	60	65	-7.69
SPRUCE GROVE CITY	44	58	26	14	0	84	116	-27.59
ST.ALBERT CITY	96	108	4	0	0	100	146	-31.51
STONY PLAIN TOWN	41	48	4	0	47	92	87	5.75
STRATHCONA COUNTY	322	289	50	22	0	394	300	31.33
STURGEON COUNTY	48	53	0	0	0	48	53	-9.43
OTHER CENTRES	27	10	4	0	0	31	10	**
TOTAL	1902	2121	344	133	516	2895	2964	-2.33

** Indicates 100% change or greater

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Table 3
EDMONTON CMA
HOUSING ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity	Ownership					Rental				Total
	Freehold			Condominium		Private		Assisted		
	Single	Semi	Row	Row	Apt	Row	Apt	Row	Apt	
STARTS										
April	513	112	0	30	176	0	47	0	0	878
2003	524	144	0	4	221	0	93	0	0	986
Year-To-Date 2004	1791	364	0	72	711	0	161	0	0	3099
Year-To-Date 2003	1951	332	43	66	334	61	332	0	0	3119
UNDER CONSTRUCTION										
2004	2687	664	23	342	4292	57	1055	0	0	9120
2003	3139	710	38	196	2476	69	1751	0	0	8379
COMPLETIONS										
April	417	106	8	20	143	0	41	0	0	735
2003	519	70	4	20	70	10	232	0	0	925
Year-To-Date 2004	1902	344	12	113	366	8	150	0	0	2895
Year-To-Date 2003	2121	238	8	75	91	10	421	0	0	2964
COMPLETED & NOT ABSORBED										
2004	637	117	8	34	133	0	190	0	0	1119
2003	413	78	1	11	46	0	438	0	0	987
TOTAL SUPPLY										
2004	3324	781	31	376	4425	57	1245	0	0	10239
2003	3552	788	39	207	2522	69	2189	0	0	9366
ABSORPTIONS										
April	495	110	4	16	133	0	107	0	0	865
3-month Average	499	80	3	24	123	3	99	0	0	831
12-month Average	538	90	4	25	145	7	142	0	0	951

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