

Report to National Marketing Committee

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The housing market in 2011 has shown a marked gain in momentum. It appears that the recent announcement in the mortgage finance rules is in fact bringing the existing pool of hesitant buyers towards making purchase decisions.

MLS markets have reported a decline in the overall inventory levels despite lower sales numbers, which means that there is not a huge seasonal influx of new listings being added. This has helped ease the downward pressure on prices that builders are facing at this time.

Builders still struggle with the implementation of various changes in building code and fire code which are being applied somewhat differently from one jurisdiction to the next.

There definitely is a general sense of optimism when you speak to builders or trades alike despite the fact that there has been a slight decline in new home pricing over the past quarter.

While a few builders are still marketing price reductions in an attempt to deal with any inventory issues they may have, the majority of the market is getting the message. The more successful campaigns are clearly defining the target audiences; sell the value of the product being offered, and selling the advantage of dealing with that builder member. Most builders are now in full supply of "new" lot inventory having gone through a period of very slow sales with no new phases or subdivisions being brought on. Home buyers now have a good selection of various amenities, sizes, and lot orientations to choose from to build the home they want.

The J.D. Power & Associates Customer Satisfaction survey results will now be released in conjunction with the local HBAs housing award ceremonies. This was previously done at the Provincial Conference, but left HBA's struggling to find alternative methods of determining "Builder of the Year". In April the CHBA - Edmonton Region will launch its first ever RCIC (Residential Construction Industry Conference) with exhibitors, and 80+ training sessions over two days.