

MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release:
September 8, 2010



North Okanagan Housing Market Cools as Summer Ends

Vernon, BC - The North Zone of the Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board (OMREB) reported August 2010 sales activity of all MLS® property types ended summer on a flat note with cool temperatures mid-month bringing an early move into fall. While buyers have more selection as inventory continues to build and sales volumes improve year-to-date, unit sales are down from last year and remain similar to last month.

Inventory increased 7.79% to 2,726 from 2,529 and new listings dropped 8.94% to 326 from 358 over last August but dropped 20.48% over last month's 410. Compared to the units sold last year at this time, overall sales declined 31.32% in August to 105 from 156 – down slightly (1.9%) from last month (103). Total residential sales dropped 31.82% over last August to 98 from 142 – in line with the 99 sold in July, while the 54 single family units sold decreased by 19.4% over August 2009 (67) – up 10.2% over last month (49). Sales activity year-to-date (YTD) has declined by 1.22% compared to the first eight months of 2009 to 1,052 units from 1,065 and sales volumes are down to \$355,012,322 from \$363,160,164 in 2009.

“BC home sales bottomed out in July and remained flat in most markets during August – an expected summer lull created by a flurry of sales earlier this year with rock bottom interest rates,” says Darcy Griffiths, OMREB Director and REALTOR® in the North Zone. “Going into fall, sales activity is expected to regain momentum as recent downward pressure on fixed-term mortgage rates could improve consumer confidence and spark renewed buyer interest. However, short-term interest rates are starting to edge higher as the economy strengthens, so buyers should not postpone purchases. When inventory begins to decline over the coming months, the choice of properties will continue to narrow. Now is the best time for buyers to negotiate a good price on that dream home while the great selection and low mortgage rates are still available.”

“A relatively large number of homes for sale has created the most favourable supply conditions for home buyers in more than a year,” notes Cameron Muir, BCREA Chief Economist. However, with newly listed MLS® residential units now declining, tighter market conditions may emerge this fall as the property selection drops.

Griffiths adds, “When selling a home in a market that favours buyers, it is important for sellers to work with a real estate professional who knows how to establish the right price for your property. Sellers need to be patient as more choice for buyers requires more time to evaluate decisions in this competitive market.”

The North Zone of OMREB covers an area from Predator Ridge north to Vernon and Coldstream, and also includes the surrounding areas of Falkland, Enderby, Grindrod, Armstrong, Spallumcheen, Lumby and Cherryville. The Okanagan Mainline Real Estate Board (OMREB) is comprised of 1,181 member REALTORS® and 86 real estate offices in the Southern Interior of BC.

For the most comprehensive source of all real estate listings, home buying and selling information, visit our national websites at www.realtor.ca and www.icx.ca. To find out about the advantages of using a REALTOR®, visit www.howrealtorshelp.ca

All OMREB listings are published in the **MLS® Real Estate Review** magazine available at all real estate offices and various locations in the Central Okanagan, North Okanagan, the Shuswap and Revelstoke areas. For comprehensive Board-wide statistical information, please visit our local public site: www.omreb.com

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DISCLAIMER: Monthly sales statistics are based on the sales reported by real estate offices as of the last day of the month. There may be some lag time in reporting sales and minor adjustments in total results are made accordingly.