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# Commentary

Canada's economy remains resilient. It continues to fare better than other major industrial counterparts thanks to its healthy financial and banking system, which for the second straight year has been ranked the soundest in the world by the World Economic Forum.

The Canadian housing market continues to benefit from low interest rates and improving lending conditions. Concerns surrounding increased access to financing have eased as Canadian mortgage lenders and borrowers, including first-time home buyers, are being "extremely prudent" with their lending and borrowing, according to a study done by the Canadian Association of Accredited Mortgage Professionals (CAAMP).

While the persistent strength of the Canadian dollar and the low level of U.S. demand represent headwinds for Canadian manufacturers and exporters who rely heavily on U.S. customers for their business, experts expect the ongoing recovery to be driven by domestic demand once temporary government stimulus measures expire.



# The Numbers That Drive Real Estate

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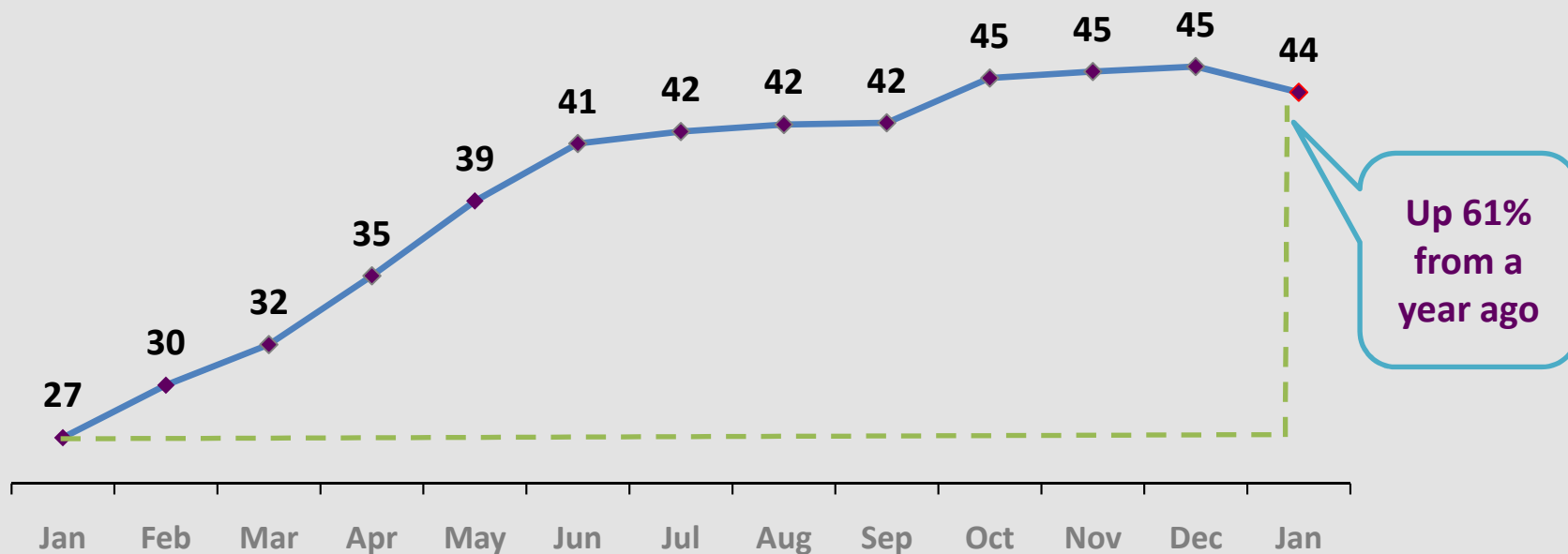


# Home Sales

*In Thousands*



**Existing-home sales activity reached 43,910 units in January.** This stands 61 percent above activity in January 2009 and is 63 percent above December 2008 level, when sales reached their lowest levels since June 2000. Low interest rates, coupled with upbeat consumer confidence and a healthier economic outlook, continue to lend support to national sales activity.



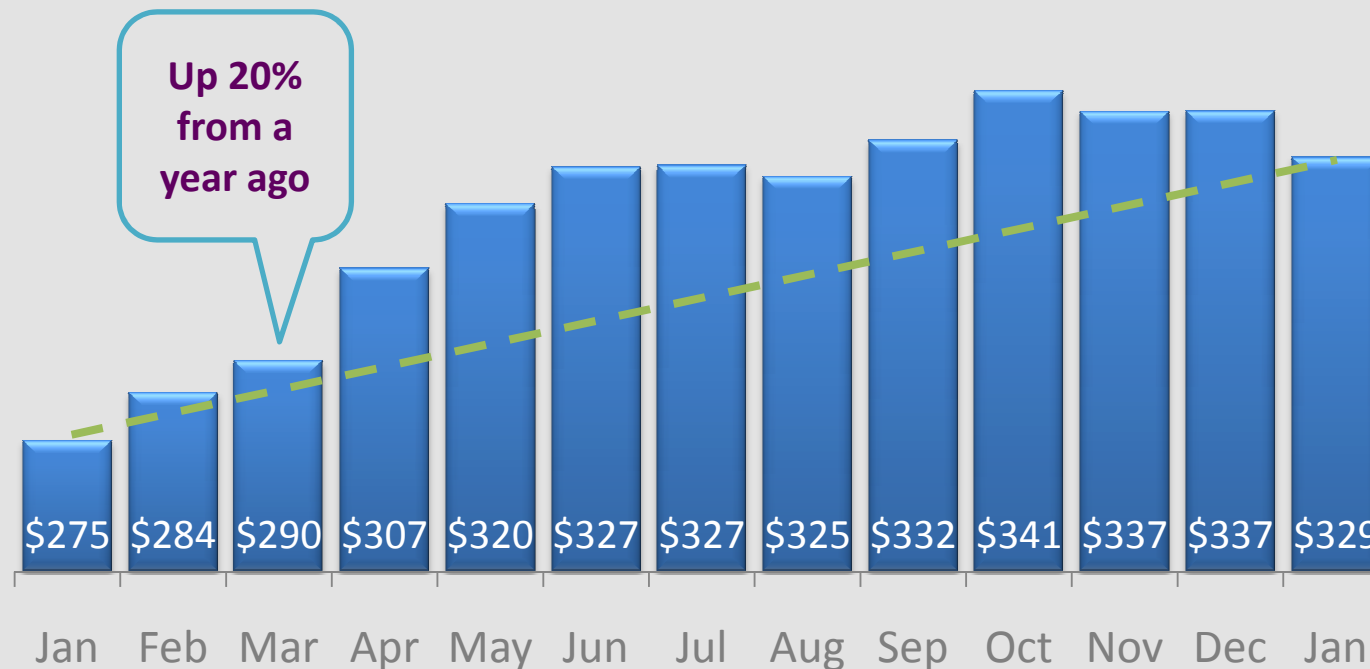


# Average Home Price

## *In Thousands*



The national average home price was \$328,537 in January, up 20 percent from the same month last year when prices fell to the lowest level in almost three years. This large year-over-year increase is a reflection of the continuing recovery in Canada's priciest markets, where high priced homes have helped to lift the overall national average.

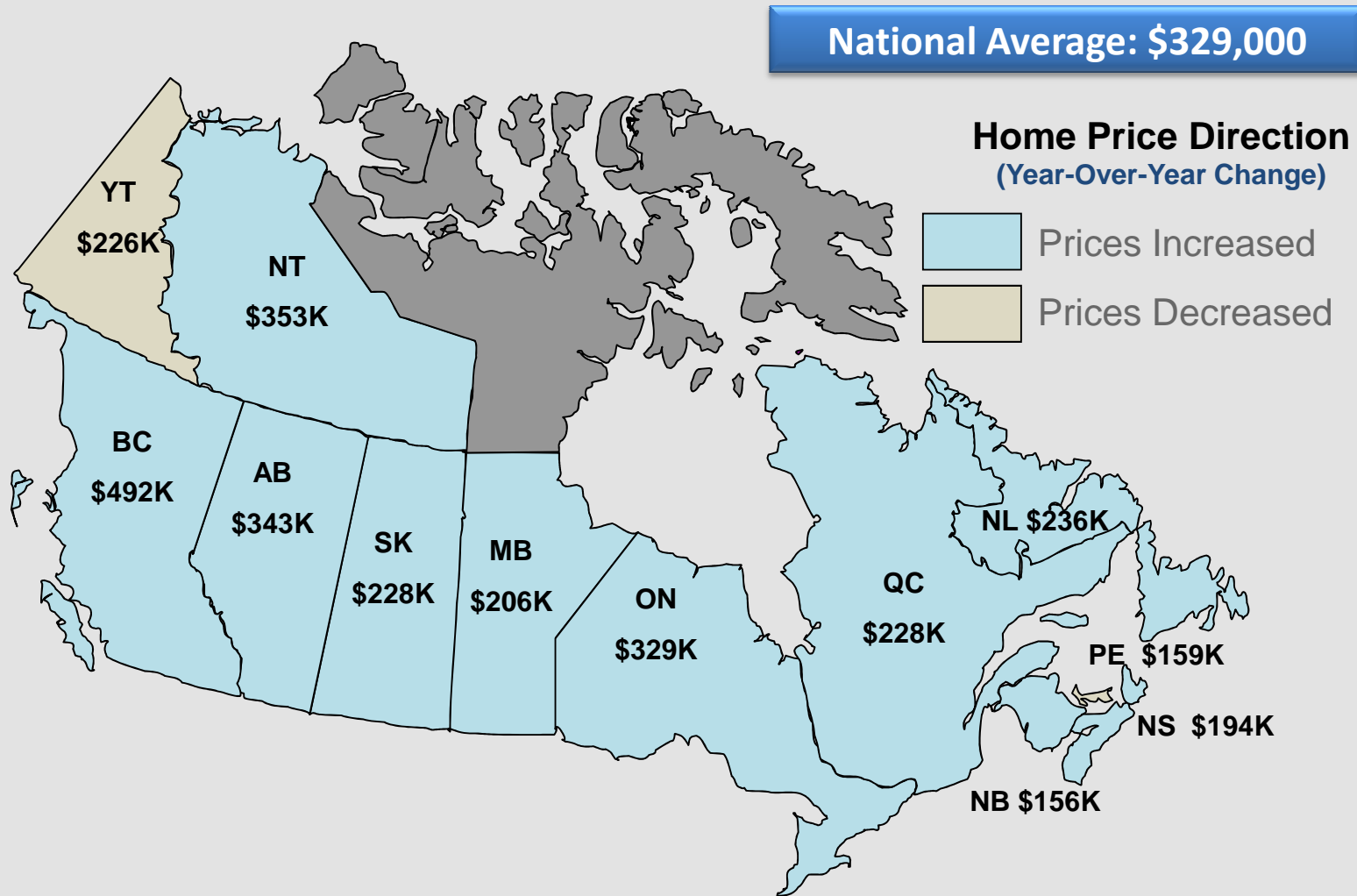




# Home Prices by Province and Territory



*10 out of 12 experienced an increase in home price*



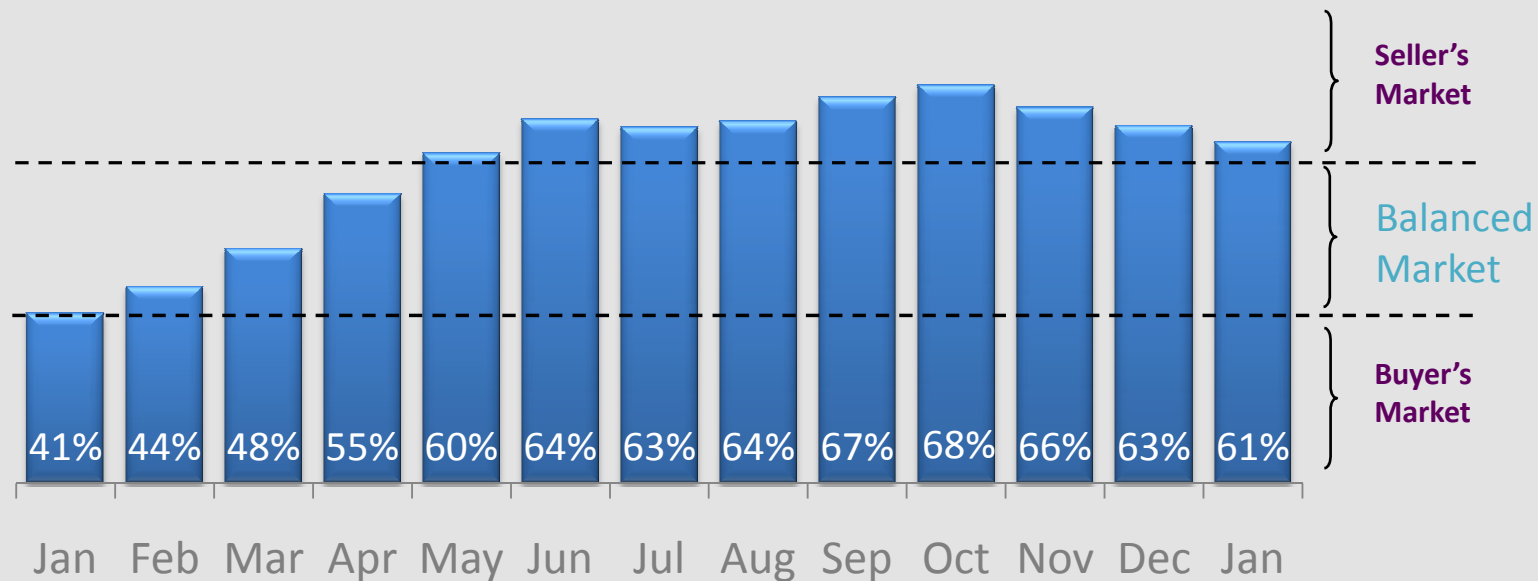


# Inventory — Number of homes available for sale

## Sales-to-Listings Ratio



While new listings ticked up three-tenths of 1 percent to 71,479 units from December 2009, the highest level since November 2008, strong demand for resale homes continued to pare down inventories. At the end of January 2010, there were 18 percent fewer homes listed for sale than the same month in 2009. There were 4.4 months of inventory in January. The sales-to-listings ratio was 61 percent, indicating the market's movement toward more balanced territory.



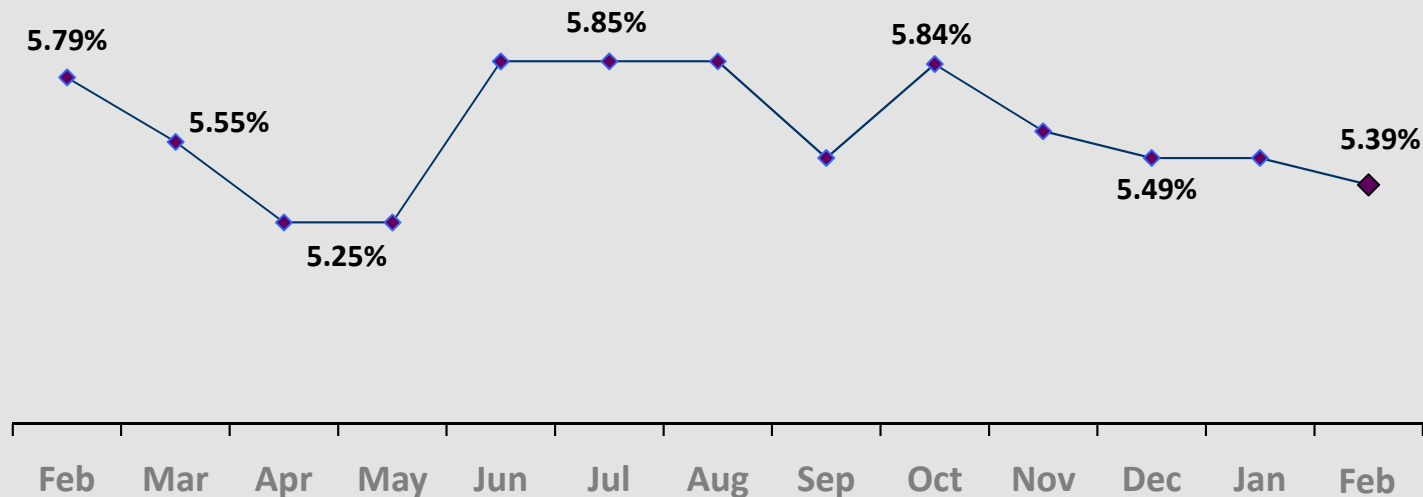


# Mortgage Rates

*Average for: 25-Year Amortization, 5-Year Term*



In February, the 5-year conventional mortgage rate edged down to 5.39 percent, 0.4 percent lower than this time last year as the Bank of Canada restates its commitment to hold its benchmark overnight lending rate steady at 0.25 percent until the end of 2010's second quarter.







# Recent Key Events

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MLS Debate

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## MLS debate

On February 8, 2010, the Competition Bureau filed a case against The Canadian Real Estate Association (CREA) in the Competition Tribunal, alleging that CREA had restricted access to the MLS in ways that were anti-competitive.

The legal challenge to strike down some of CREA's rules relating to the MLS system in Canada came after discussions aimed at a negotiated settlement failed.

In October 2009, the Competition Bureau announced that it wanted key sections of CREA's access rules removed based on findings of its three-year investigation.

No date has yet been set for the Competition Tribunal hearing. The verdict may impact how agents and consumers view information about homes for sale in Canada.



# Topics for Home Buyers, Sellers, and Owners

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Going Green:  
Cleaning Style

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# Going Green: Cleaning Style



Going green in the home has been gaining in popularity. Cleaning products are often loaded with chemicals while white vinegar can shine up your home cost effectively, leaving it spick-and-span without chemicals. If your home is for sale, a clean presentation is always important for attracting buyers.

1. **Glass Cleaner:** Fill a spray bottle with half white vinegar and half water. Spray, wipe away, and see it shine.
2. **Wood Polish:** Combine 1 teaspoon of olive oil and half a cup of vinegar. Put on a clean, soft cloth and polish as normal.
3. **Remove corrosion or buildup on showerheads:** Soak in vinegar overnight.
4. **Remove soap buildup:** Scrub with 1 part salt, 4 parts vinegar solution.
5. **Remove odors:** Leave a bowl of vinegar in the room overnight.
6. **Remove odors from kitchen sink:** Pour in 1 cup vinegar; let it sit for at least an hour.
7. **Laundry:** Add half a cup to the rinse cycle to “make brights brighter,” soften fabric, and remove odors and stains from cloth baby diapers.

# Your Local Market

Although it is important to stay informed about what is going on in the national economy and housing market, many different factors impact the real estate market in your area.

**Talk to your Keller Williams agent for assistance interpreting the conditions in your local market.**



Keller Williams associates are equipped with all the knowledge and information to help navigate you through the process of buying or selling a home in this challenging market.

# About Keller Williams Realty



Founded in 1983, Keller Williams Realty, Inc., is an international real estate company with more than 74,175 associates and 693 offices located across the United States and Canada. The company began franchising in 1991, and following years of phenomenal growth and success, became the third-largest U.S. residential real estate firm in 2009.

The company has succeeded by treating its associates as partners and shares its knowledge, policy control, and company profits on a system-wide basis.

Focusing on helping associates realize their fullest potential, Keller Williams Realty is known as an industry leader in its family culture, unmatched education, profit sharing business model, phenomenal coaching program, and technology offerings. The company provides associates with all the tools needed to grow and thrive in today's market.

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