



A Fresh Perspective

February 2011

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market update

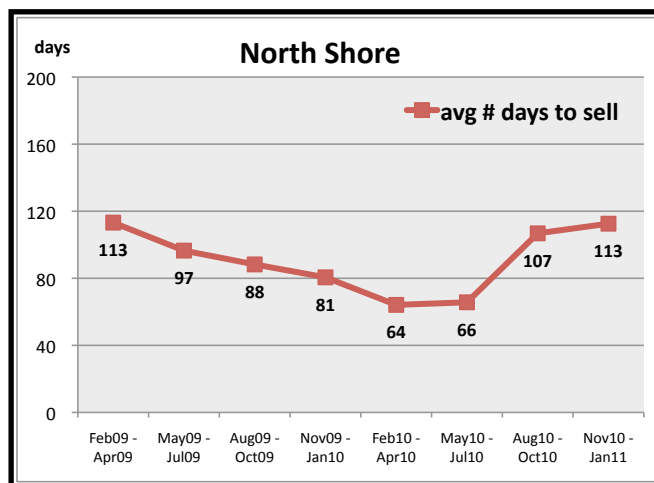
North Shore housing sales picked up noticeably in January after the slower Christmas period, displaying the same buoyant market conditions that were experienced from September until mid-December.

Sales of single-family homes were particularly brisk for this time of year as they outpaced January sales for each of the 3 prior years.

Benchmark prices of detached homes slipped by 3% in North Van and by 1% in West Van compared to January 2010. By comparison, in the same period, they increased by 12% in Vancouver West and by a whopping 23% in Richmond!

Single-family homes that sold on the North Shore during the three-month period of Nov-Jan took an average of 113 days to sell (North Van-86 days, West Van-141 days).

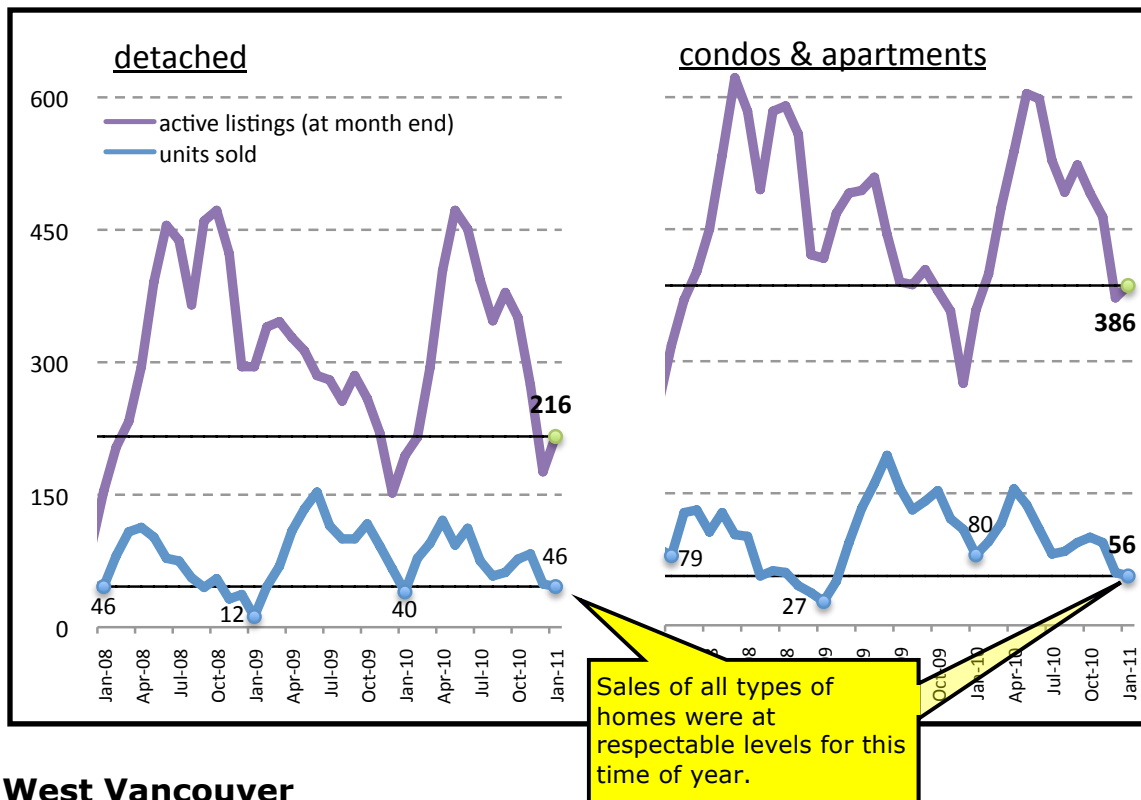
For a complete copy of the January 2011 Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver ("REBGV") market report, call me or visit my website at www.danmuzzin.com/news.html.



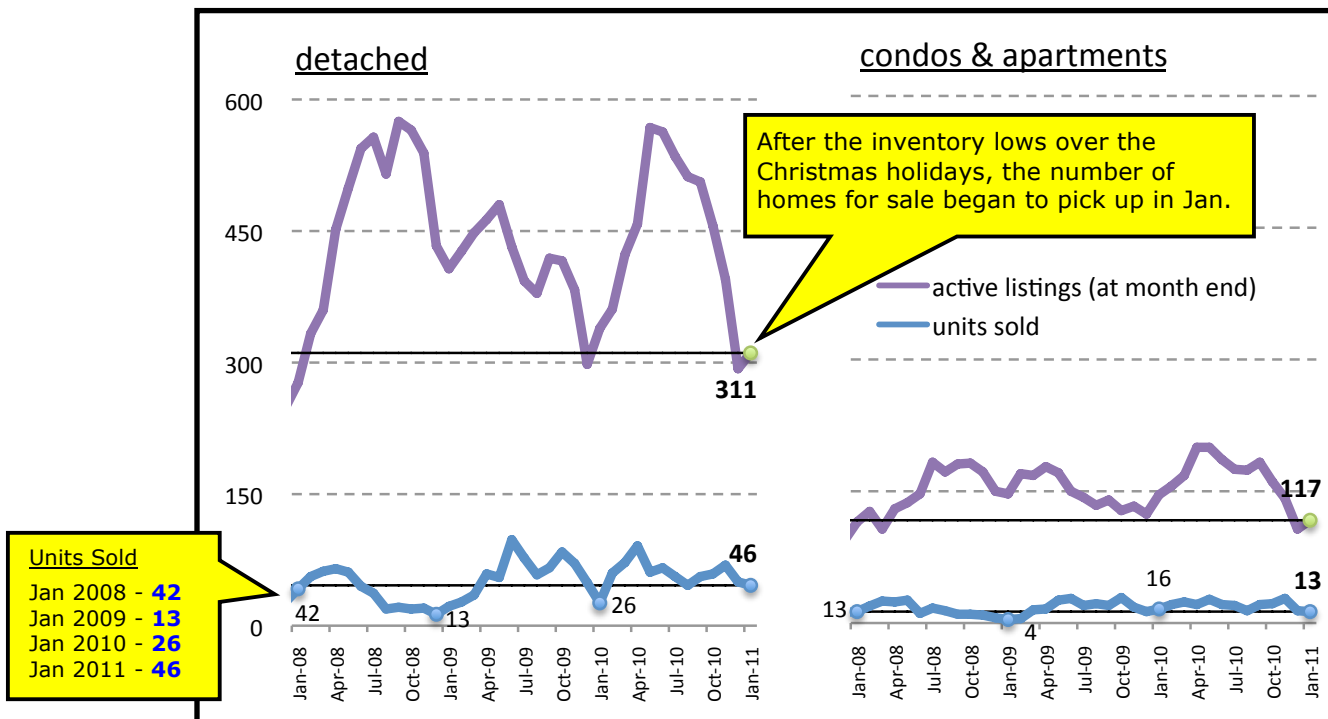


The following charts show the inventory of homes for sale on the last day of each month from Jan 2008 to January 2011, and the sales for each month.

North Vancouver



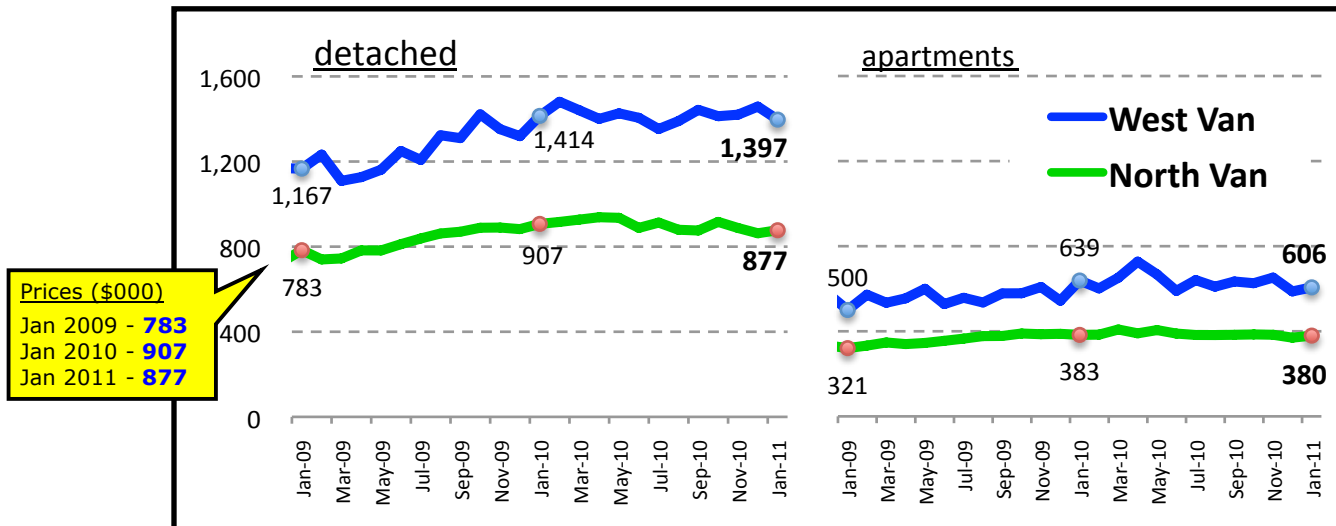
West Vancouver



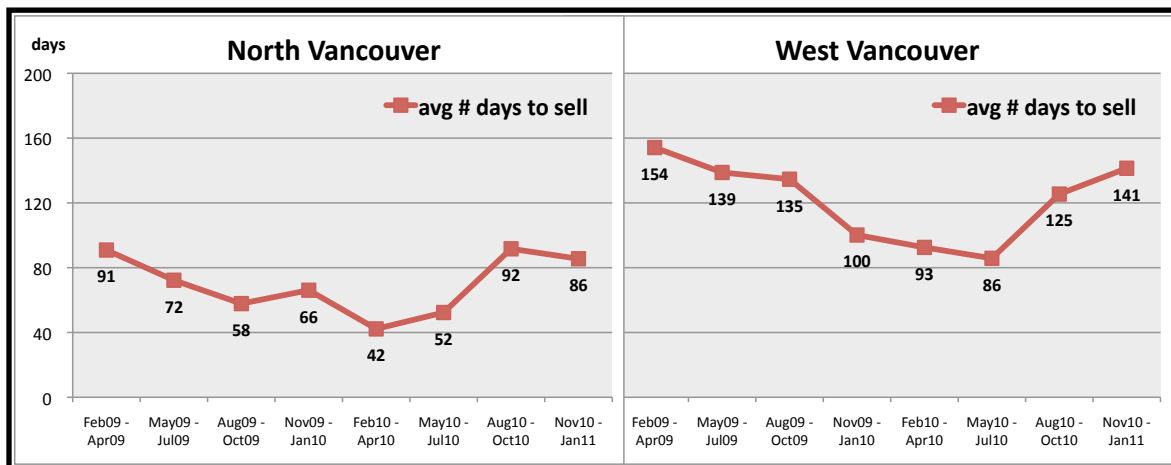


selected metrics

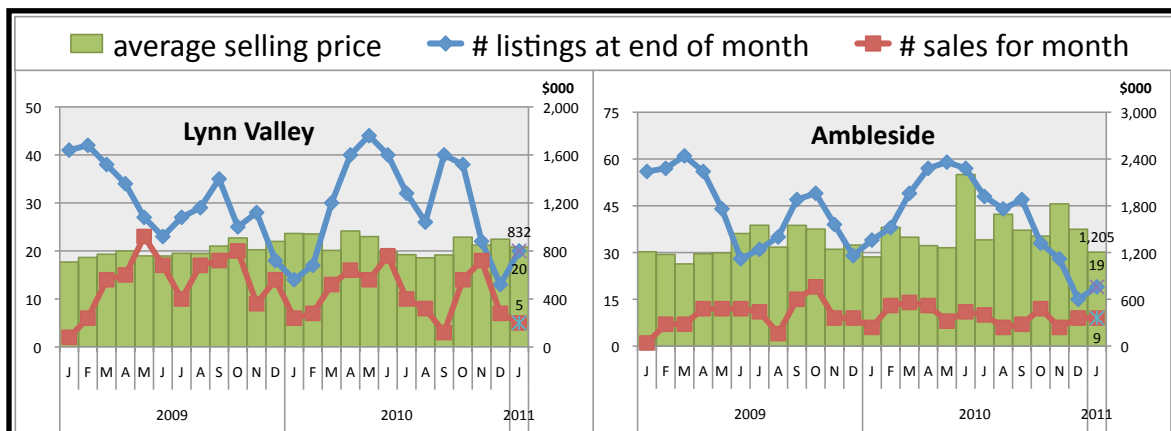
benchmark prices (\$000)



average # of days on market (call me for stats in your local area)



neighbourhood statistics (call me for stats in your local area)





amended mortgage rules

Mindful of rising consumer debt levels, in mid-January the federal government announced three new changes to Canada's mortgage rules.

Effective March 18, 2011, the new measures will:

- Reduce the maximum amortization period to 30 years (from 35) for new government-backed insured mortgages with loan-to-value ratios of more than 80%. This is intended to significantly reduce the total interest payments Canadians make on their mortgages and enable families to build up equity in their homes more quickly.
- Lower the maximum amount Canadians can borrow when refinancing their mortgages, to 85% (from 90%) of the value of their homes. This will promote saving through home ownership and limit the repackaging of high-interest consumer debt, like credit card debt, into mortgages guaranteed by taxpayers.

Effective April 18, 2011, the federal government will:

- Withdraw its insurance backing on lines of credit secured by homes. The intention is to ensure risks associated with consumer debt, that is unrelated to house purchases, are managed by financial institutions and not borne by taxpayers.

Notwithstanding the above, I was recently reminded that borrowers having high credit scores might still secure conventional mortgages with 40-year amortization periods, and it's still possible to obtain mortgages with zero down payments.

great value – remembering Vancouver Olympics

exerpts from Patriot Hearts! –by John Furlong

By the time I arrived at the arena it was jammed with people wearing the now iconic Team Canada jerseys ...more than an hour before game time people were already blowing horns and beginning chants of "We Want Gold, We Want Gold."

...there was more at stake than just Olympic hockey bragging rights ...I knew what we had accomplished, was aware of the unprecedented nationalistic fervour the Olympics had ignited across the country. But I felt winning would mean the difference between ever-lasting glory and a fortnight that would still be considered great but not, perhaps, become immortalized.

Before the second period was finished, however, the United States would make the score 2–1 on a goal by Ryan Kesler... ...the last minute of regulation time was pure torture. When the U.S.'s Zach Parise tied the game with 24 seconds left I closed my eyes and covered my face in my hands.

I'm not sure I took a breath again until seven minutes and 40 seconds into overtime. When Sidney Crosby scored ...it was like a valve blew in the arena and a beautiful energy was released...