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MAKE



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News by Jill

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JILL'S ANNUAL REPORT ON THE EDMONTON 2008 HOUSING FORECAST—What's the Bottom Line?

"A POWERHOUSE OF AN ECONOMY" Ron Gilbertson, President and CEO, Edmonton Economic Development Corporation.

"NORTHERN ALBERTA IS THE BEST PLACE TO BE TO WATCH THE WORLD GO BY" Ian Glassford, CFO, Servus Credit Union.

Ron Gilbertson explained that there is over \$200 billion in major projects in our service area. Some of these are:

- Canadian Natural Resources
- Suncor Energy
- Shell Canada/Chevron
- Syncrude Canada
- Conoco Phillips Canada
- Alberta Infrastructure & Transportation
- OPTI Canada/Nexen Inc.
- SynEnCo Energy
- Petro-Canada Oil & Gas
- North West Upgrading

I was amazed at the positive energy he exuded! He said the projected Edmonton GDP was "slowing down to an overheated economy—4.5% instead of 2—3%", and although the stream of immigrants from Canada was slowing down, in-migration was accelerating from international sources. On the housing front, he commented that our housing costs were still just below average. Some interesting statistics to make you feel good are that in Edmonton, you need to spend 21—40% of your income on a house; in Calgary its 45%, Toronto is 50% and Vancouver is 70—80%!

On a National Level....

In addition to personal income tax savings, as of January 2008, a further one percentage point will be trimmed from the federal Goods & services Tax rate. As well, corporate tax relief will be substantially enhanced over the next 5 years in a bid to achieve the lowest tax burden on a business investment among G7 nations. Ambitious investment agendas from Ottawa and the Provinces for Canada's transportation, education and health care infrastructure also will continue to underpin job creation and enhance our national competitiveness.

**"ALBERTA'S OIL SANDS ARE INCREASINGLY BEING VIEWED AS THE
WORLD'S LARGEST AND MOST POLITICALLY STABLE SOURCE OF OIL"**

More predictions for 2008

Sonny Mirth (QC), Partner, Reynolds, Mirth, Richards & Farmer LLP referred to his crystal ball, (made by Fisher Price) and talked about Condominiums. He talked about \$243 billion worth of development in Northern Alberta and commented that agriculture was doing very well on top of that. His feeling was that **"there would be no significant impact from the U.S. recession"**. There will be 38,000 condo units available in 2008 which includes new buildings which represent 25% of the market and condo conversion which represent 75% of the market.

Marc Perras, the new President of the Realtors' Association of Edmonton, pointed out that despite the brutal ending to 2007, the year end residential average selling price for single family homes was up 11.7% and the average price for condominiums was up 11.4%. What happened was that the prices were up to about 24% in July and then dropped back by 12% by the end of the year.

Increases will be restrained by a large supply of listed homes and steep price hikes over the past 18 months—offsetting the positive effects of a strong economy, positive in-migration, nearly full employment and low interest rates. Mark's conclusion was one of guarded optimism. He forecasts a balanced market with an average single family price of \$397,303 and condos at \$263,400 and an **increase of around 4% for 2008**. (Courtesy: Edmonton Journal, January 10, 2008.)

TEN MISTAKES SELLERS MAKE WHEN PREPARING A HOUSE FOR SALE!

1. Just because you love it does not mean everyone else will. This is the biggest and most common mistake. Ensure your property appeals to the broadest buying public, which means neutralize the colour palette or decorating style.
2. Closets and pantries are crowded and cluttered. Crammed spaces give viewers the perception that there is not enough storage space and that the house is bursting at the seams.
3. The furnishings are too big or there are too many for the space. The corners of the room need to be seen.
4. "Clean" means different things to different people. It may be common sense to some, but the best way to maintain the value of your single largest investment is to follow a regular cleaning schedule. When your house is on the market, it has to be clean and ready for showing every minute of the day.
5. You love your pet so everyone else will, right? WRONG! Some potential buyers are really averse to animals. If you have pets, vacuum daily and remove them when you have showings.
6. Don't hide damage to flooring, counter tops, walls or other permanent fixtures. This is a big no-no. Reveal—never conceal—problem areas, and be sure to reflect any deficiencies and necessary repairs in the list price.
7. Don't forget about safety and security. Strangers are coming into your house. Pack away gun collections, knife blocks, as well as precious items and jewelry.
8. Don't designate a space above grade as a storage room. Potential buyers want to know exactly how many bedrooms are available, and using a room above grade for storage will negatively impact their perception of the house. Use spaces in the basement for storage.
9. Don't leave dated or worn fixtures. The best way to increase equity in your house is to implement periodic upgrades. The simple and least costly upgrades include light fixtures, taps and faucets, door and cabinet hardware and drapery and window treatments.
10. Don't rush to put the house on the market before it is presentable. First identify the competition then make your house present better than any house currently on the market.