



Winter 2015

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A Message from the President

Dear Board of Directors,

We wish you a happy holiday season and a joyous and peaceful New Year! May you share special moments with family and friends.

Sincerely,



Liron Daniels

President R.C.M., P.P.L., B.E.S.

Important ACMO Alert

Bill 106 – Protecting Condominium Owners Act

We have been notified that Bill 106, Protecting Condominium Owners Act 2015, which includes the Condominium Management Services Act, 2015, passed Third Reading on December 3, 2015 by a vote of 89-0. The Standing Committee submitted several amendments to the original draft, and members of the Government Relations Committee will analyze the new version and draft a report for members in the coming days. For now you can visit our website www.acmo.org/condo-act-news for the latest updates including links to the amended version of the Bill.

UNDERCOVER ON THE COMMON ELEMENTS – WHAT TO DO WHEN THE POLICE COME KNOCKING



Condominium corporations are often presented with the challenge of how to deal with police seeking access to the corporation's property for various reasons. The question to be considered is what expectation of privacy from police – if any – a condominium resident should have on the corporation's common elements.

There are certainly times when a condominium corporation may wish to permit police access to the common elements in order to respond to or investigate a crime. So how does the corporation facilitate police access to the property in the appropriate circumstances? Below are some guidelines for a few common situations:

- Where the police attend the condominium property in response to an emergency situation or unit owner complaint, access should be granted.
- When presented with a search warrant, the condominium should comply with the terms of the warrant. However, the property manager or security staff is entitled

to read the contents carefully before permitting access. If there is any ambiguity as to the terms of the search warrant, counsel should be called immediately.

- Conversely, if the police attend at the condominium without a warrant seeking access to the premises or the corporation's records, such as security video footage, access should be denied in a polite manner until such time as the board or property management has had the opportunity to review the matter with counsel.
- Finally, if the police approach the board or property management seeking access to the common elements to investigate an ongoing, non-urgent crime, the board may consider executing an authorization under the *Trespass to Property Act* to permit the police to access the common elements. However, in order to balance the interests of the police investigation with the privacy of other unit owners, the authorization should set out clearly the purposes for which access is being granted, especially the specific unit(s) under investigation.

It is beneficial for a condominium corporation to have a written protocol as to how police inquiries and visits will be dealt with. The board, property management and security staff should all have a copy of the plan on hand, and be familiar with its contents, so that the proper response can be given at a moment's notice.

HOME PRICES IN VANCOUVER AND TORONTO CONTINUE TO RISE

New monthly numbers are in for existing home sales and prices in Vancouver and Toronto, and yes, selling prices continue to move higher at a blistering pace furthering a trend through 2015 — a year many thought would mark a breather in each city's housing boom.

In November, benchmark prices in Vancouver surged 17.8 per cent as sales soared 40.1 per cent, the region's real estate association says. In slightly tamer Toronto, benchmark prices increased a relatively meagre 10.3 per cent as sales climbed 14 per cent compared to November a year ago, making 2015 the most active year on record for the country's biggest housing market (eclipsing red-hot 2007).

The price of a single-family detached home jumped 11.5 per cent in the

Greater Toronto Area, TREB said. That figure — high by any historical standard — was overshadowed by the 22.6 per cent jump in detached home prices in the Greater Vancouver area, data from that city's real board showed.

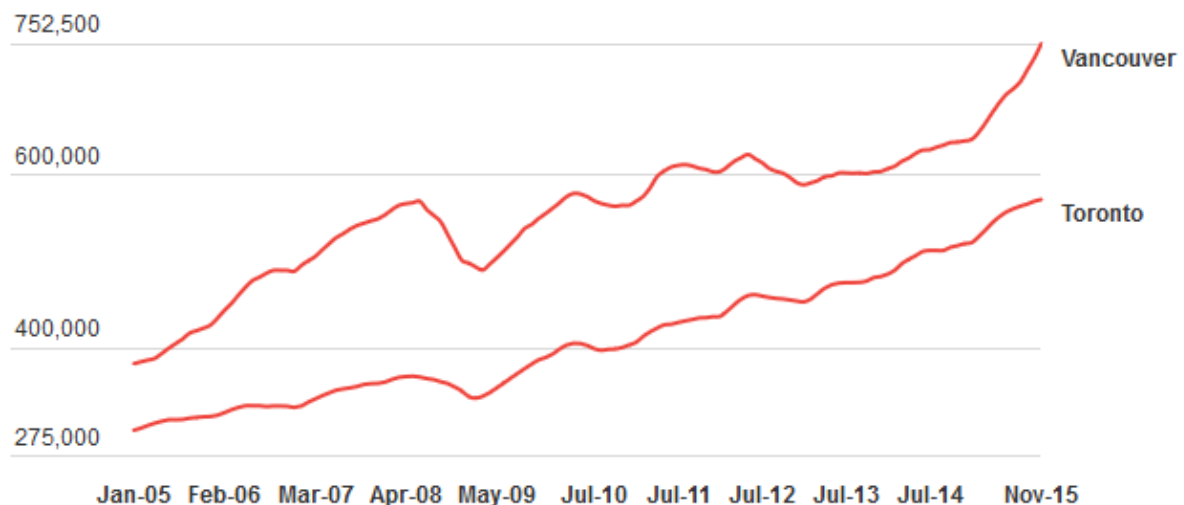
“November is typically one of the quietest months of the year in our housing market, but not this year,” Darcy McLeod, president of the city's real estate association, said.

The Vancouver and Toronto markets have firmly decoupled from the rest of the country, where home prices are moving at a far more slower rate of about 2.5 per cent, according to CREA, the national real estate board.

What's fueling the torrid price gains remains a matter of fierce debate, but many suspect a wave of foreign cash is playing a key inflationary role. Rock bottom interest rates are also continuing to fuel domestic demand.

Benchmark prices

MLS index prices in Vancouver climbed 17.8% last month, and 10.3% in the Toronto area.



SIMPLE TIPS TO SAVE MONEY ON ENERGY THIS WINTER



Whether you live in a “typical” two-storey Ontario home, a condominium townhouse, or apartment, making a few small changes around the house can save you money on your energy bill each month. Here are seven energy-efficiency tips that Ontarians should follow.

- Replace furnace filters every 3 months: potential saving: \$53.00
- Seal leaks around doors, windows and exterior wall electrical outlets: potential saving: \$56.20
- Insulate basement: potential saving: \$99.30
- Insulate attic: potential saving: \$61.40
- Lower thermostat setting by two degrees: potential saving: \$150.00
- Replace furnace with high-efficiency model: potential saving: \$299.70
- Clean heating ducts: potential saving: \$53.00

Based on these numbers, it's clear that taking even a couple of the recommended actions can save significant money. Notice that turning down the thermostat, which requires

no effort or cost whatever to the homeowner, results in one of the most significant savings of all.

Direct Energy recommends a few other supplementary steps that anyone can take that will help make living more comfortable and energy efficient.

- Get a humidifier; adding a humidifier to your heating system lets you turn the thermostat down and be comfortable at lower temperatures.
- Let the sun in; open curtains on your south-facing windows during the day to allow sunlight to naturally heat your home, and close them at night to reduce the chill. Consider installing insulating window treatments to further reduce heat loss.
- Change the direction of air flow on your ceiling fan. For cold winter months the blades should operate in a clockwise direction helping to push the warm air from the ceiling down into the room.
- Have your furnace maintained in the fall to ensure it works efficiently and safely throughout the winter, especially if it's 6 years or older.

With more than 2.7 million single-detached homes in Ontario (Statistics Canada numbers), these changes could amount to nearly \$700 million in energy savings across the province, according to Direct Energy.

SELF DRIVING CARS



Have you heard? Ontario is going to be the first province to test out self driving cars? Some people right now reading this is saying, "Yay!", while some are quick to say, 'uh oh..'. Both have good points to bring to the table.

Regardless where your opinions stand on the subject, self driving cars are on their way. Many believe this will be the end of accidents in the traditional sense – which are mostly avoidable anyway. Many are fearful knowing very well that their industries are going to be massively disrupted. Some industries include but not limited to insurance companies, driving schools, taxis and public transportation, auto manufacturers and mechanics, as well as city planners.

Key thoughts and questions

Self driving will soon be everywhere. Google has clocked in over 1,000,000 miles of automated driving. 14 accidents to date, and never the self-driving car's fault.

There will be huge growth in ridesharing and self driving taxis (think Uber) as the price per self driving car drops. 2009 report states that in Canada,

there is about 607 motor vehicles per 1,000 people. This will drastically fall as the cost of transportation using driverless public transportation and taxis increase.

When less people own cars, how will this impact insurance companies?

When cars drive themselves, what would driving schools teach?

1.2 million deaths a year are avoidable car accidents. Self driving cars will drop this number if not completely eradicate vehicle accidents. What impact will this make on human lives, families, and health care?

Taxi companies in Toronto are complaining about Uber now, what political ramifications will be had when all taxi fleets, shipping fleets (think Fedex trucks, delivery vehicles, etc) when these jobs are gone?

What will happen to auto manufacturers when people stop buying cars – or when this decreases by 50-90%?

What will our cities look like when there's 50-90% less cars on the road as everyone is using autonomous taxis and ride-sharing vehicles?

Do some of these questions seem preposterous? So did the electric car a couple decades ago. So did landing on the moon a century ago.

Things are moving fast. We have one of two options: Live in denial and be unprepared for what's to come. Or embrace the beautiful future that's inevitable.

HUNDREDS SIGN PETITION AMID RUMOURS OF CENSORSHIP FOR 'SCARY' TORONTO MURAL



More than 600 people have signed a petition amid rumours a Toronto mural some have deemed "scary" could be a target for censorship.

The 300-metre-long mural, painted by three artists who are part of the international group Essencia Arts Collective, is located on Lawrence Avenue West, between Caledonia and Benton Roads.

The artwork was approved by the City of Toronto's StreetARToronto program, and completed last month. Shortly after the mural was unveiled, the Essencia group was told that Coun. Frank Di Giorio, who represents Ward 12, had received calls complaining that the painting was "scary."

A petition was created on change.org for those who believe the piece should not be "censored" by the City.

The mural features several brightly-coloured animals, including a tiger, elephant, owl and bear, as well as landscapes ranging from bricked pyramids to choppy waves.



It also depicts polar bears walking past icy blue glaciers, flamingos passing elephants in a desert, and a man fishing in a swirling ocean.

More ominous portions show vultures flying over oil rigs, a person in a gas mask and an apparently post-apocalyptic Toronto skyline.



"The mural, in addition to its aesthetically remarkable character, is a challenging but important statement about the dangers of environmental degradation and a reminder of the natural splendour we stand to lose if the earth is left unprotected," the petition said.

PHOTO PAGE

Here are some photos from our most recent Holiday lunch with the team!



12 TIPS FOR HOLIDAY HOME SAFETY



1. Merry and Bright: Carefully inspect holiday light strings each year and discard any with frayed cords, cracked lamp holders, or loose connections. When replacing bulbs, unplug the light string and be sure to match voltage and wattage to the original bulb.

2. Lights Out: Always turn off holiday lights when you leave the house unattended.

3. Fresh Is Best: Try to purchase a freshly cut tree, as they are more resistant to ignition. Keep your Christmas tree watered and away from open candles. Keep in mind your Condo Rules: Not all Condos permit live Christmas trees.

4. Timing Is Everything: Use an outdoor timer certified by CSA International to switch lights on and off. Lights should be turned on after 7 p.m. to avoid the rush hour.

5. Check for the Certification Mark: When purchasing light strings, extension cords, spotlights, electrical

decorations, gas appliances, or carbon monoxide alarms, look for the certification mark of an accredited certification organization such as CSA International, UL, or ETL to ensure that the products comply with applicable standards for safety and performance.

6. One and Done: Never connect more than one extension cord together; instead use a single cord that is long enough to reach the outlet without stretching, but not so long that it can get easily tangled.

7. The Great Outdoors: When hanging outdoor lights, keep electrical connectors off the ground and away from metal rain gutters. Use insulated tape or plastic clips instead of metal nails or tacks to hold them in place.

8. Climbing Up: Using a ladder when you put up lights? Choose the correct ladder for the job and double check for a certification mark to ensure your portable ladder complies with applicable standards.

9. Keep the Gas Behind Glass: Do not use your gas fireplace if the glass panel is removed, cracked, or broken, and only allow a qualified service person to replace fireplace parts.

10. Sound the Alarm: Test your smoke alarms monthly to make sure they

work, and be sure to install smoke and carbon monoxide (CO) alarms on every level of your home -- especially near sleeping areas.

11. Filter-Friendly Furnace: To help prevent CO hazards in your home, have a qualified heating contractor perform a yearly maintenance check of your furnace and venting system, and clean or replace your furnace filter frequently during the heating seasons.

12. Clean the Clutter: Do not store combustible materials such as gasoline, propane, paper, chemicals, paint, rags, and cleaning products near your gas furnace. Gasoline or propane cylinders should be stored outside the home.

Wishing you a safe and happy Holiday Season!

