

**The Ultra experience:** own a new home in the heart of Surrey with 40 floors of views at **WestStone's Ultra » p.4**



June 24, 2010

# New LOCAL Home.com

## Strongest economic growth in a decade expected

Virtually every province and sector of the Canadian economy has rebounded sharply, building on the momentum that first emerged in late 2009 and accelerated into 2010, according to Scotia Economics' latest Provincial Trends report.

Released last week, the report says that even with some likely moderation in growth going forward, the strong early year performance has elevated growth rates and "pushed Canada to the top of G7 economic rankings."

**Scotia Economics expects Canadian output growth to average 3.6 per cent this year, the strongest advance in a decade.**

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Several factors generating the renewed economic gains – strength in emerging market demand, substantial fiscal stimulus, targeted tax incentives and firmer commodity prices – are all supportive of growth for the remainder of the year, says Scotia Economics economist Alex Koustas.

In the report, Koustas notes in B.C., the turnaround seen in real estate, commodities and transportation – combined with the boost of the 2010 Olympic Games, is estimated to lift GDP growth to 3.8 per cent in 2010.

"(B.C.) is a dominant world player in mining and resource exploration," says the report, although it notes "euro zone austerity measures present a downside risk."

A slower pace of growth is expected later this year and into 2011, due to such factors as reduced fiscal and monetary risk, and more moderate housing activity across the country, the report says. But on the positive side, it notes "the province's information technology industry is expected to regain its footing and rehire the majority of the positions cut during the recession."



L-R: Concept to Design interior designer Cindy Young; Carolyn Stewart, principal; and Kylie Brundell, senior interior designer all agree that adding 'bling' to the home can be much easier if clients know what they want from the start, rather than as an afterthought. *Rob Newell photos*

## Bring on the bling at home

Make your house shine with thoughtful finishes that work

MAGGIE CALLOWAY

Your brand-new dream home is purchased or built, or you are still in the discussion stage with your architect, builder and interior designer.

The decisions about heating and cooling systems, exterior finishes, and a myriad of other interior and exterior choices have been

made and now – as every interior designer will likely advise, it is better to make choices at the beginning of this process rather than at the end – the homebuyers get to have fun choosing the bling: the art, the lighting, and every piece that puts the finishing touches on the new home.

It's natural to think that making these finishing decisions is an extra, something to deal with once living in the home. This, of course, is an option, but professionals feel strongly that these details are an integral part of the whole, that to have a harmonious flow

throughout the home, each design decision must be done in concert with the others.

A Metro Vancouver home both architecturally designed and completely finished inside by Concept To Design Inc. illustrates the importance of making decisions sooner rather than later.

"When we were able to do the interior design, after designing the home, it was a dream job," says company principal Carolyn Stewart.

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# Symposium brings industry, government together to talk affordability

TRICIA LESLIE

Housing is hot in Metro Vancouver. But affordability continues to be a real problem.

That's why building industry representatives will meet with all three levels of government – municipal, provincial and federal – this fall, in a symposium intended to address the issue of home affordability, Canadian Home Builders' Association B.C. president Bob Deeks announced Friday in Vancouver.



Bob Deeks

Calling it a "substantial step," Deeks said it will be the first time that builders and industry representatives will meet with all three levels of government to address barriers to housing affordability in Metro Vancouver, such as pyramid taxation.

"I think this is the first time this has ever been done. We're excited," Deeks said.

On a home that costs \$550,000 to \$560,000, the homebuyer may pay as much as \$70,000 in taxes, Deeks said.

In 2010, it is estimated the residential construction industry – in Metro Vancouver alone – will generate upward of \$7 billion into the economy.

**"I don't think we're ever going to get the government to get rid of (the Property Transfer Tax). But what we want to remove is the double-dipping."**

"B.C. has some of the highest housing costs in North America," Deeks said.

Everyone needs to get together to look at how to use existing resources to mitigate that cost, he added.

Affordable housing does not mean social, or subsidized, housing, Deeks noted.

"What we're talking about is affordable housing for families. That will be the focus at the symposium."

Between 250 to 300 people from the industry and government are expected to attend the symposium. No date has yet been given.

Other issues the residential building industry hope to address includes the much-maligned Property Transfer Tax, which Deeks said can add \$8,000 to \$15,000 to the cost of a house.

"I don't think we're ever going to get the government to get rid of it," Deeks said. "But what we want to remove is the double-dipping."

Industry wants government to only charge the PTT once, when the home is sold to the owner, instead of up to three times, said Deeks.

## Correction

In the *New Local Home* June 17 edition, an error was printed regarding a name. Mae Suffron is the co-owner of The Creative Design Works. *New Local Home* staff apologize for the mistake with deepest regrets.

Who knew a bathroom could be so beautiful? This Concept to Design bathroom shows how luxuriously comfortable and enjoyable a bathroom can be. Raef Grahne Photography



# Reflect your style with some bling

**Off the front:** "The finishing touches reflect the style of the homeowner." – Carolyn Stewart, designer

"It's so rewarding for me to design the house and see it finished. The interior design now reflects the architecture I had in mind ... I love it when we can do a complete circle."

The millwork, which is a major design element throughout the home, is spectacular. Stewart notes that each and every door arch in the home is custom-made.

Homeowners can have great house design and excellent colours, but without the bling, there is no personality, she says.

"To us, the last finishing touches reflect the style of the homeowner and reflects the style and function of the space, and also, lets you do something that is a little more characteris-



One key piece, such as a sparkling chandelier, can add a lot to one room. Mae Suffron photo

tic than just a typical room." Lighting the home is important, not only for functionality, but to also help reflect the style of the homeowners within each space, Stewart says.

The success of a homeowner's lighting plan can be broken down into three parts: function, mood and harmony.

ADD SOME BLING

Even just one element, such as a chandelier, can set the mood.

Creative Design Works' Mae Suffron designed a highrise downtown condo, for example, with a twinkling chandelier that adds sparkling bling to the cityscape views visible through massive windows.

"This is a perfect example of the 'wow' factor," Suffron says.

"Homeowners – who like the rest of us are on a budget – should think about using great designs from (home furnishing stores) for most of the bling, then go big and make a statement, such as this chandelier, with a couple of key pieces."

Ensuring harmony with the home's lighting is key as well; though it has different functions in each room, all elements should flow together to create a unified effect.

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# Add some home finish; make it shine

CONTINUED FROM P.2

The design team at Kenorah was generous and enthusiastic about sharing its thoughts on what makes a home interior special.

The photo of a client's bathroom is a case in point. It is a sleek, elegant and modern bathroom and there, at the far end, is a fabulous old-style bathtub set in front of stunning wallpaper and placed under a chandelier.

A different take on bling can be seen the home of Kenorah's Deb Salazar.

A mid-century modern home that was totally redone by Salazar pays tribute to the style of the home while making it work in today's world.

Cork flooring throughout unifies the space, while remaining beautiful, functional and sustainable. Every finishing piece was carefully chosen to enhance the home's style, such as a simple dining table with an elegant lighting fixture above.

Whether purchasing a new condo, apartment, rowhome, townhome or detached, single-family home, it is clear designers agree it is best for homebuyers to have a vision in place first, rather than after the new home is completed, to ensure visual, functional and stylish splendour.

With an overall vision in place, it can be much easier for homeowners to bring on the bling.

ADD SOME BLING



A kitchen and ensuite completed by Kenorah (top left and top right) show how adding some bling can make a home shine. Using metals such as tin, copper and bronze for kitchen backsplashes can add sparkle and reflect natural light throughout the room (photos courtesy of Kenorah). At left, Concept to Design photos show how elements such as chandeliers, wallpaper, mirrors and furniture pieces can add polish to any home.

Raef Grahne Photography

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Ultra, a 40-floor concrete and glass highrise comprised of 362 urban condominiums, is on its way to the heart of Surrey. The third phase of WestStone Properties' master-planned urban village community, Ultra will join the first two phases – Agenda and Element, two lowrise buildings with 206 apartments completed in 2009.

"It's going to be the highest residential tower in Surrey City Centre," WestStone vice-president of sales and acquisitions Bob Dominick says of Ultra.

"The views are astounding ... you can see right across the Strait of Georgia. Surrey looks totally different from that height."

Ultra sits in the ultimate location in the new, emerging Surrey City Centre, just steps from Central City, SkyTrain, Simon Fraser University and Surrey's new civic centre development. The revitalization of Surrey City Centre



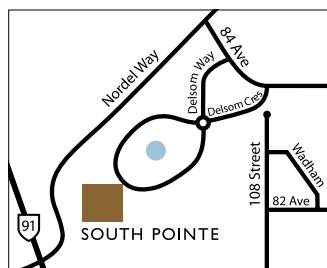
CONTINUED ON P.5 Homes at Ultra, which will be Surrey's largest residential tower in the city centre, will offer sweeping views of the Georgia Strait – and beyond.



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A SkyTrain enters Surrey Central Station (top), while students rush to the Surrey SFU campus (above). Living at Ultra – beside the SFU campus – means having the convenience of transit, education, shopping, business, dining and leisure opportunities just steps away.

## 'It's a definite place for the future'

CONTINUED FROM P.4

includes a new regional library that is now under construction, a new, 165,000-square-foot city hall, expanding the SFU campus and enlarging Surrey Memorial Hospital, as well as a new RCMP E Division headquarters.

The neighbourhood is destined to become a thriving cosmopolitan area that is the commercial, residential, educational, entertainment, civic and cultural heart of the fast-growing city, Dominick says.

He notes that Surrey was recently ranked as the best place in B.C. to invest in the residential real estate market, in a new report by Real Estate Investment Network of Canada.

Entitled Top Canadian Investment Cities, Surrey also ranked as the fourth-best city in Canada to invest in residential real estate.

"It's a definite place for the future," Dominick says of Surrey, and specifically, of Ultra's location.

CONTINUED ON P.6

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# Ultra views at home

## Affordable homes in the heart of Surrey

CONTINUED FROM P.5

"It will be an area that all the residents of Surrey can be proud of."

Every single Ultra home has a balcony, and homes range in size from 400 sq. ft up to 1,250 sq. ft.; purchasers can peruse studios, one-bedrooms, one-bedroom-plus-dens, two-bedrooms and penthouse suites.

Along with the condo homes, there will be 11 townhomes as well, graced with a green podium roof.

Residents will have exclusive access to amazing amenities as well, including a fully equipped fitness centre and media room.

WestStone's reputation of always using high-end, top-of-the-line finishings applies at Ultra; Dominick says the homes will be clean and chic with excellent finishings.

"We always finish to really high standards."

Right now is the best time to buy an Ultra home, since WestStone is offering pre-Grand Opening pricing, Dominick adds.

Prices start at \$169,900. Visit [www.urbanvillageliving.com](http://www.urbanvillageliving.com) for more information.



Homes at WestStone Properties' Ultra in Surrey's city centre range from studios to penthouses, with a wide variety in between (more photos on page 7).

# A great place to invest



Homes at Ultra will be sleek and clean, with high-end, stylish finishings to complete the new condo dwellings and 11 townhomes. Photos/renderings courtesy of WestStone Properties

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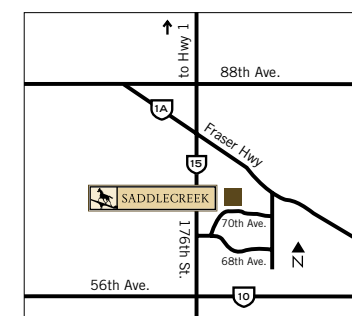
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