



Housing starts pick up again

by Scott Taylor, Sun Media, December 8, 2009

Ottawa housing starts are still lagging behind last year's pace, but if November is any indication, they're about to make a strong comeback.

According to data released Tuesday by Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC), total housing starts in Ottawa reached 668 units last month.

That's a rousing 35.8% increase over November 2008, though the number of starts up to December 1 fall 23.5% short of the total by this date a year ago.

New starts of more affordable semi-detached homes and townhomes continued to signal a strong presence of first-time buyers.

Similarly, the 293 new single-detached homes exceeded last year's growth by 10%, for the highest margin in over a year.

Ottawa-Carleton Construction (custom home builder) owner **Frank Porcari** said his booming business means he needs to hire new workers.

"I've got two projects I just started and others already on the go, so obviously I'm looking for new people," he said. "Business is going very well. We're pouring foundation in one and framing another. It never slows."

Although November saw year-over-year growth across the region, Nepean dominated construction activity with 177 new starts.

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