

According to the February, 2017, BC Real Estate Forecast, the provincial economy is forecast to expand by 2.5 per cent this year and a further 2.7 per cent in 2018.

More than 50,000 individuals migrated to the province on a net basis during the first nine months of 2016, the highest level since 2008 and a 50 per cent increase from the previous year.

Vancouver Island is expected to benefit significantly from this in-migration, as house-rich baby boomers from other parts of Canada retire and downsize to other types of accommodation.

Employment growth is also expected to remain on a solid footing, supported by international trade, strong population growth and consumer spending. The unemployment rate is forecast to steadily decline from 6 per cent last year to 5.5 per cent in 2018.

These fundamentals are expected to underpin consumer confidence and spending, with retail sales expected to climb by over 5 per cent each year through 2018.

A slower pace of consumer demand is expected to ease some pressure on a relatively-low level of housing supply. In addition, the high level of new home construction will eventually lead to a noticeable expansion of the housing stock, which will more adequately meet demand. However, market conditions will continue to be tilted in favour of home sellers in many regions, while home builders scramble to complete existing projects.

The future for housing is very bright for the Nanaimo/Lantzville region due to a variety of factors. As of January, 2017, inventory of single family homes is near an all-time low, with less than 200 homes currently available; less than half the historic number of over 400 – 500.

The cost of a single family home in the Nanaimo area rose 21 percent in 2016 to \$434,000. In fact, rising house prices in Nanaimo are partially as a result of bidding wars for resales. Unlike other parts of BC, particularly the Lower Mainland, foreign investors are not subject to the 15 percent New Home Tax. Furthermore, as previously desirable retirement havens such as Victoria and Kelowna become more expensive, communities like Nanaimo and Lantzville are becoming more attractive.



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Other relevant statistics (courtesy of Island Health Report, December, 2014) include:

- Nanaimo represented 14.0% (108,000 people) of the Island Health population of 771,660.
- The total Nanaimo population is expected to grow by 30% by 2034, while the proportion of the population over 75 is expected to grow 95%.