Real Estate News

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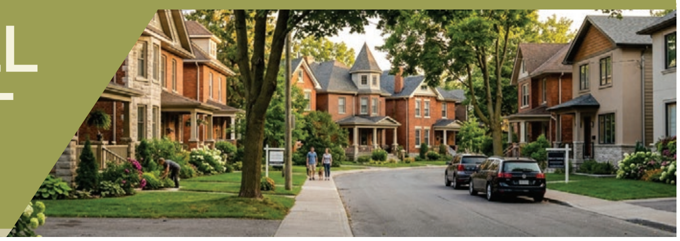
OTTAWA HOME SALES PULL BACK SHARPLY IN AUGUST

While Prices Hold Steady



MARKET OVERVIEW

Ottawa's housing market lost momentum in August. Sales declined sharply both year over year and from the previous month, reversing July's incremental improvement and widening the year-to-date gap compared with 2025.

The slowdown was not driven by a new influx of supply. New listings and active listings both declined from July, but sales fell much faster, weakening the relationship between available supply and demand. Listing activity also suggests that some sellers may be pausing or reassessing their plans, rather than proceeding under current conditions. Months of inventory rose to its highest August level since 2016.

Pricing remained comparatively stable. The average sale price and composite benchmark price were both slightly higher than a year earlier, while the median price declined modestly. Overall, August presents a softer picture heading into the fall market, with mixed indicators of market strength and weakness.

"Prices remained relatively steady despite the pullback in sales, which tells us this is not a simple story of the market moving uniformly in one direction," said OREB President. "Buyers are seeing less competitive conditions and have more time to make decisions, while sellers are facing more competition and may need to be thoughtful about pricing and positioning their homes for the current market. One month does not establish a trend, but the shift in sales and inventory is something we'll be watching closely as we head into the fall market."

RESIDENTIAL MARKET ACTIVITY

A total of 1,002 homes were sold through the MLS® System in August, down 18.6% from August 2025. Sales also declined 24.4% from July. By comparison, the median July-to-August decline over the previous 10 years was 5.8%, confirming that this year's slowdown was substantially larger than normal seasonal variation. The August total tied 2022 for the lowest August sales count since 2016.

Sales decline extended across all three major property types:

Single-family sales fell 16.3% year over year to 535 transactions.

Townhouse sales fell 19.9% to 310.

Apartment sales fell 22.3% to 136.

This broad-based weakness differs from earlier months, when the softer activity was more concentrated in townhouses and apartments.

Year to date, 9,283 homes have sold in Ottawa, down 6.9% from the same period in 2025. The year-to-date shortfall widened from 5.2% at the end of July, reversing the incremental improvement recorded last month. Total year-to-date dollar volume was approximately $6.5 billion, down 7.2% year over year.

PRICES AND MARKET BALANCE

The average residential sale price was $688,253 in August, up 0.3% from a year earlier and 0.7% from July. The median price was $622,357, down 1.2% year over year and 2.0% from July.

The MLS® Home Price Index, a measure less affected by changes in the types of properties sold, recorded a composite benchmark price of $637,700. This was 1.0% higher than in August 2025 and 0.6% higher than in July. Taken together, the price measures indicate that values were considerably steadier than sales activity.

There were 2,119 new listings in August, unchanged from a year earlier and down 16.2% from July. Active listings totalled 4,496, up 11.3% year over year but down 3.9% from July. The monthly declines in new and active listings were broadly consistent with seasonal patterns, but active inventory remained at its highest August level since 2016.

The decline in active listings should not be interpreted as inventory being absorbed primarily through sales. An OREB review of listing records indicates that terminations, cancellations and expirations became more prominent relative to completed transactions through the summer. Although these non-sale removals declined from July, sales fell more sharply, meaning a greater proportion of properties left the market without producing a sale. One explanation for this behaviour could be that some sellers may be stepping back or reassessing their plans to sell under current conditions.

MONTHS OF INVENTORY

Single Family: 4.0 Townhome: 4.1 Apartment: 6.3

THE EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS KIT
EVERY HOMEOWNER SHOULD HAVE

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A grab-and-go bag is a compact emergency kit stored in an easily accessible location, containing the essential items you would need if you had to leave your home quickly. Whether the reason is a wildfire evacuation, flood warning, gas leak or another emergency that makes your home temporarily uninhabitable, having these essentials ready can make a stressful situation far more manageable.

Rather than purchasing a pre-packaged kit, consider assembling one yourself using items already available in your home.

PRIORITIZE ITEMS THAT ARE DIFFICULT TO REPLACE

The primary purpose of a grab-and-go bag is to protect the documents and information that would be most challenging to recover.

Include photocopies of identification for every member of the household, such as passports, driver's licences, birth certificates and permanent resident cards. Add your insurance policy number, your insurance broker's contact information, mortgage or lease documents, a list of current drug prescriptions and dosages, and your veterinarian's contact information if you have pets.

It is also wise to store digital copies of these documents in a secure cloud service and email a copy to yourself. Printed copies remain valuable in situations where your phone is unavailable or cannot be charged.

PACK ESSENTIAL SUPPLIES FOR SEVERAL DAYS

While emergency preparedness guidelines often recommend enough supplies for three days, planning for up to a week provides additional flexibility should you be displaced for an extended period.

Your kit should include prescription medications, a written copy of prescriptions, glasses or contact lens supplies, a phone charger, a fully charged power bank, cash in small denominations, a change of clothing, comfortable footwear, basic toiletries and a first aid kit.

Households with children should include a familiar comfort item, such as a favourite toy or book. Pet owners should pack a leash, carrier, food, water bowl and copies of vaccination records, as many emergency shelters require proof of immunization.

CREATE A VISUAL INVENTORY OF YOUR HOME

One of the most valuable steps homeowners can take for insurance purposes is to document their belongings before an emergency occurs.

Using your phone, record a video walkthrough of your home while describing the contents of each room. Open closets, cupboards and drawers, and capture valuable items along with the serial numbers of major appliances, electronics and tools. Be sure to include storage areas such as the garage, basement and shed.

This simple record can significantly streamline the insurance claims process by providing clear documentation of your belongings. Save the video to a secure cloud service rather than relying solely on your phone.

If you own jewellery, artwork, collectibles or other high-value possessions, speak with your insurance broker to confirm whether they require additional coverage beyond the limits of a standard home insurance policy.

STORE YOUR KIT WHERE IT IS EASY TO ACCESS

Keep your emergency kit in a location that can be reached quickly when leaving your home, such as a front hall closet or mudroom. Avoid placing it in storage areas that require moving boxes or accessing difficult spaces such as attics or crawl spaces.

Some households may also benefit from keeping a smaller version of the kit in their vehicle, particularly if they live in rural areas or commute long distances.

REVIEW YOUR KIT REGULARLY

A grab-and-go bag should be reviewed at least twice a year to ensure its contents remain current.

A simple way to remember is to inspect the kit when changing the clocks, testing smoke alarms or at the beginning of spring and fall. Replace expired medications, recharge the power bank, update documents as needed and ensure clothing still fits growing children.

REVIEW YOUR INSURANCE COVERAGE BEFORE YOU NEED IT

A grab-and-go bag is only one component of emergency preparedness. It is equally important to understand what your home insurance policy does and does not cover.

For example, many homeowners assume all forms of water damage are automatically included in their policy. In reality, overland flood protection and sewer backup coverage are often optional endorsements, and availability may depend on the property's location.

A conversation with your insurance broker can help clarify your current coverage and identify any gaps before an emergency occurs.

For evacuation information and emergency alerts, consult your provincial emergency management agency. Homeowners in wildfire-prone areas can also access free preparedness resources and home assessment tools through FireSmart Canada.

Preparing a grab-and-go bag requires only a modest investment of time, but it can make a significant difference during an emergency, allowing you to focus on your family's safety rather than gathering essential belongings under pressure.