

# PLANNING FOR SUCCESS



## Highlights

### Client Profiles

- **Columbia National Investments Ltd.**
- **Beech Developments Ltd.**

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## NEW FEATURE SECTION OF APLIN & MARTIN NEWSLETTER

This issue of our quarterly newsletter introduces a new feature section that focuses attention on our clients. This gives our readers an opportunity to learn more about the types of clients we work with and the services we provide. In this issue we are pleased to feature two large private land developers active in the Lower Mainland: Beech Developments Ltd and Columbia National Investments Ltd.

Although much of our business is residential development planning, we also provide a wide range of services to both the private and public sectors, including Neighbourhood and Official Community Plan preparations, Land Use Policy, Planning Research, Public Consultation Programs, and overall Project Management.

Our varied background and interests cover a broad spectrum of planning work, as do the services we are able to offer. Our team leadership approach includes strategic planning, critical path scheduling, project management, and budget control.

Our professional services are provided by a team of four planning staff with a wide range of experience. Furthermore, our planning services are supported in-house by the Aplin & Martin Engineering Department, as well as the Murray & Associates Survey Division.

In addition to profiling some of our clients, our newsletter includes A Planner's Perspective section which provides thoughts by the planning team members on the profession of planning. In this issue Sandi Drew offers some insight into the important issue of graphics and display in communicating planning messages. Also included is a feature topic article, highlights of recent land development and real estate statistics, links to useful and interesting websites, and a regular update of our Planning Group Staff.

The last year has been a busy one, which included many new and exciting projects, as well as our sponsorship and involvement in the June 2006 Planning Conference (World Planners Congress) in Vancouver for

the national and provincial planning associations, as well as the United Nations World Urban Forum (WUF 3) which coincided with the planning conference. We look forward to another busy season ahead of sharing ideas and working on projects with both existing and new clients.

The continued strength of the real estate industry has attracted many newer developers who can benefit from Aplin & Martin Consultant's collective experience and knowledge of the land development process.

We look forward to working with many more of you on interesting projects. If you ever have any questions relating to planning, engineering, or survey, please do not hesitate to call us to discuss the services you may require for your project and how we can be of assistance.

We always enjoy hearing your feedback on our newsletters and knowing that the newsletter is read by a wide audience of developers, planners, real estate agents, and many others in the land development industry.

## A PLANNER'S PERSPECTIVE

At Aplin & Martin we strive to ensure our clients' projects are fully appreciated through use of high quality maps / plans and graphics. Like the well-known saying "a picture is worth a thousand words", plans are key tools for Planners to convey complex information in a confined space. Planners rely on graphics to communicate key points and ideas clearly, precisely and accurately to a variety of audiences.

Key elements which Aplin & Martin considers for effective communication using maps and graphics are:

- Avoid complicated maps or maps with too much information as most audiences will review the maps quickly rather than spend time analyzing them.
- Construct maps and graphics to stand alone and not require the viewer to refer to supplemental text to get the full meaning of the map / graphic.
- Select text sizes appropriate for the viewing distance in the venue that the maps / graphics are being displayed in.
- Select a simple font for easier readability and avoid using several type faces to achieve distinction (distinction can be achieved by varying the font size, italicize, bolding or underlining words).
- Refer to maps and graphics in text before they are viewed and avoid separating maps / graphics from the same page from where it is referenced, when possible.

Graphics, such as tables, charts, bullet points, and photos help the viewer to understand key points as they are more quickly and easily understood than words; concrete images are better understood than abstract concepts; and graphics help organize and tie ideas together.

Tables work well for presenting large volumes of detailed information in a compact space (i.e. matrix) and for comparing items displaying values.

Charts work for showing numbers and quantitative information plus exhibiting historical trends / changes / patterns and sequence of events / operations (i.e. flow chart).

Bullets work for listing points / ideas / sequences which get messages across quicker and for adding

interest to written material as it provides variety to the written format.

When using photos, always include a caption; keep photos and relevant text together and use only photos related to the subject.

The communicative effectiveness of a planning presentation reflects on the company's competence, professionalism and quality of work. It is therefore important to invest the time needed to produce a quality presentation that clearly and accurately gets the message across in a style that makes it easy for the audience to understand.

Sandi Drew, ASCT.  
Senior Planning Technologist

## APLIN & MARTIN EXPERIENCE

*Aplin & Martin Consultants Ltd provides professional expertise in Planning and Design, Civil Engineering, Project Management, and also Survey services through our associated firm Murray & Associates. As an integrated interdisciplinary firm with experience throughout British Columbia and overseas, Aplin & Martin offers effective professional consultant services in-house and manages a wide variety of types and sizes of land development projects from initiation to completion. Our public sector experience is equally extensive. In our over 38 years we have forged strong relationships with developers, approving authorities, and a wide range of professional consulting firms.*

*Come in for a complementary preliminary discussion about development options and strategies for a site that you may be considering buying or developing.*



# 10 SMART GROWTH PRINCIPLES

"Smart growth" is a collection of land use and development principles that aim to enhance quality of life, preserve the natural environment, and save money over time. The following smart growth principles ensure that growth is fiscally, environmentally and socially responsible and recognize the connections between development and quality of life. "Smart growth" planning and development incorporates all of these principles:

- 1. Mix land uses.** Each neighbourhood has a mixture of homes, retail, business, and recreational opportunities.
- 2. Build well-designed compact neighbourhoods.** Residents can choose to live, work, shop and play in close proximity. People can easily access daily activities, transit is viable, and local businesses are supported.

- 3. Provide a variety of transportation choices.** Neighbourhoods are attractive and have safe infrastructure for walking, cycling and transit, in addition to driving.

- 4. Create diverse housing opportunities.** People in different family types, life stages and income levels can afford a home in the neighbourhood of their choice.

- 5. Encourage growth in existing communities.** Investments in infrastructure (such as roads and schools) are used efficiently, and developments do not take up new land.

- 6. Preserve open spaces, natural beauty, and environmentally sensitive areas.** Development respects natural landscape features and has higher aesthetic, environmental, and financial value.

- 7. Protect and enhance agricultural lands.** A secure and productive land base, such as BC's Agricultural Land Reserve, provides food security, employment, and habitat, and is maintained as an urban containment boundary.

- 8. Utilize smarter and cheaper infrastructure and green buildings.** Green buildings and other systems can save both money and the environment in the long run.

- 9. Foster a unique neighbourhood identity.** Each community is unique, vibrant, diverse, and inclusive.

- 10. Nurture engaged citizens.** Places belong to those who live, work, and play there. Engaged citizens participate in community life and decision-making.

Source: Smart Growth BC  
[www.smartgrowth.bc.ca](http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca)

# REGIONAL HOME PRICES AND SALES LEVELS FOR SUMMER 2006

The Real Estate Board of Greater Vancouver (REBGV) reports that total residential sales for detached, attached and apartment properties reached 2,998 units in August 2006, a decrease of 17.8 per cent when compared to the 3,649 units sold in August 2005 and an increase of 20.5 per cent when compared to the 2,487 units sold in August 2004.

According to Multiple Listings Service® (MLS®) data, sales of apartment properties decreased by 12.7 per cent to 1,295 sales in August 2006 compared to 1,484 sales in August 2005. The benchmark price of an apartment property in Greater Vancouver, calculated by the MLSLink® Housing Price Index, is \$331,519, up 22.1 per cent from one year ago.

Sales of attached properties decreased by 10.8 per cent in August 2006 to 536 sales, compared to 601 sales in August 2005. The benchmark price of an attached unit is \$406,676, up 20 per cent from a year ago.

Sales of detached properties decreased by 25.4 per cent in August 2006 to 1,167 sales, compared to 1,564 sales in August 2005. The benchmark price of a detached unit is \$653,616, up 19.1 per cent from last year.

Source: [www.realtylink.org](http://www.realtylink.org)

The Fraser Valley Real Estate Board (FVREB) reports that 1,692 sales were processed on the MLS® in August, an increase of 3.5 per cent compared to the previous month and a decrease of 26 per cent compared to record-breaking August 2005 when 2,298 sales were processed.

The average price of a single family detached house in the Fraser Valley in August was \$483,752, an increase of 18.5 per cent compared to August 2005's average of \$408,347.

Townhouses sold for an average of \$294,887 in August, an increase of 17.7 per cent from 2005's price

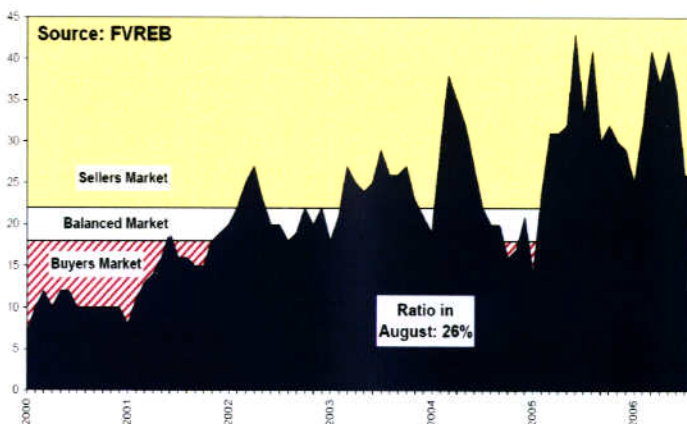
of \$250,595.

The average apartment price decreased 2.3 per cent in one year, from August 2005's average of \$198,103, to \$193,451 this year.

The number of new listings increased compared to last year. Last month the Fraser Valley Board received 2,609 new listings, an increase of 11 per cent compared to the number of new listings received in August 2005, bringing the total active inventory to 6,474 listings in August 2006 - an increase of 14 per cent compared to the same month last year.

Source: [www.fvreb.bc.ca](http://www.fvreb.bc.ca)

Sales-to-Active Listings Ratio, All Types, Fraser Valley



## CLIENT PROFILE: BEECH DEVELOPMENTS LTD.

Beech Developments Ltd., operated by Norm Porter, is a land development company based in Richmond, BC. The company has undertaken several residential, industrial



Artist Rendering of NGH NCP Cluster Housing Site

and commercial development projects in the Lower Mainland and the Fraser Valley over the past two decades.

The company's latest venture is its key role in the development of North Grandview Heights Neighbour-

hood Concept Plan (NGH NCP) in South Surrey. The NCP area covers approximately 845 acres and is located between 176 Street, west to Hwy 99 and between 28 Avenue and 32 Avenue. City of Surrey Council adopted the original NCP in January 1999 which designated most of the area for either one acre residential or one acre gross density residential use. However, there had been little development activity under this land use designation.

In 2004 Beech Developments initiated a partnership with the City of Surrey to amend the North Grandview Heights NCP. Aplin & Martin was retained to coordinate the overall NCP Amendment and provide planning and engineering services. In September 2005, Surrey Council approved an amendment to the NGH NCP. The amendment area covers 281 acres / 114

hectares west of 168 Street to Hwy 99 and allows for urban and suburban residential development at medium densities.

Goals for the NGH NCP include, preservation of environmentally sensitive lands, providing for significant open space, and incorporating sustainable development practices. About 17% of the NGH NCP amendment area is dedicated to parks, watercourse setbacks, green buffers along streets, and multi-use recreation trails. Additionally, three neighbourhood parks are proposed and a minimum of 35% open space retained around cluster housing developments.

The NCP amendment area, when built out, will contain 1,400 to 2,000 new residential dwellings and a population of 3,400 to 4,800 people.

Beech Developments is currently working on projects in various stages of approval and development within the NGH NCP area, as well as other projects in Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Chilliwack, and Washington State.

## CLIENT PROFILE: COLUMBIA NATIONAL INVESTMENTS LTD.

Since 1992, Columbia National Investments Ltd. (CNI), an Abbotsford-based company owned by brothers Steve and Herb Dunton, has worked on subdivisions and land development projects in British Columbia, Alberta and Washington State. Currently, the company has numerous ongoing projects in Chilliwack, Cultus Lake, Abbotsford and the Sunshine Coast.

One of CNI's current ventures is the development potential of 168 acres in Abbotsford's Lower Sumas Mountain area for a comprehensive residential neighbourhood. The proposed plan for this new neighbourhood will be a mixed residential development offering about 2,000 housing units, plus commercial and community facilities. Aplin & Martin provided planning and engineering services for this project.

In June 2006, the com-

pany acquired over 3,000 acres of land on BC's Sunshine Coast for mixed residential development. The land is in three locations:

- Nearby Sechelt - 2,174 acres
- McNabb Creek - 803 acres
- Seaside Park - 309 acres

CNI's approach is to create family

oriented communities with environmentally friendly housing. Resort homes are planned for Seaside Park which will include marinas and associated facilities.

Falconridge, a 114 acre area on southern slopes of Sumas Mountain in Abbotsford, is another of CNI's residential developments. This multi-million dollar development, offering stunning views of the Fraser Valley, will be constructed in three phases for a total of 300 homes.

The CNI team creates quality communities that exist in harmony with the beauty of the landscape. They are committed to smart growth, creating environmentally responsible developments and providing unprecedented green space in the communities that they build.

For further information please contact CNI at 604-864-8439 or email [info@columbianational.ca](mailto:info@columbianational.ca)



Aerial Photograph of Falconridge Site in Abbotsford

## RANGE OF PLANNING SERVICES

*Aplin & Martin's Planning & Design Group is comprised of Planners and technical staff. Our team is well versed in the land use planning policies and development approval processes of British Columbia's municipalities and provincial agencies.*

*What distinguishes Aplin & Martin Consultants Ltd is our dual planning perspective. We have a thorough understanding of planning and development issues from both the Regulatory and Developer perspectives as our client base is drawn from both the public and private sectors.*

*Give us a call any time you are considering purchasing or developing a site and wish to discuss preliminary development options and strategies. We can provide preliminary advice to identify the necessary steps involved and suggest how best to proceed. We take care of managing the details and reducing the risk.*

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MARTIN**  
CONSULTANTS LTD

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*This newsletter is intended for informational purposes only. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this document, no guarantees are made as to the accuracy of its contents.*

**We're on the Web!**  
[www.aplinmartin.com](http://www.aplinmartin.com)

*Remember:  
Failing to plan is  
planning to fail!*

**MURRAY &  
ASSOCIATES**  
LAND SURVEYORS

**APLIN &  
MARTIN**  
CONSULTANTS LTD

## APLIN & MARTIN STAFF UPDATE

We are delighted to announce two anticipated additions to the planning department families.

Maggie Koka and her husband Craig are expecting their first child in December.

Eric Aderneck and his wife Shelley are expecting their second child in early 2006.

We wish them all the best of luck!

Eric is also busy this term teaching an urban planning course (Subdivision Design and Land Development) at Langara College as part of the Applied Urban and Regional Planning Diploma Program.

Sandi Drew is looking forward to another season of co-ed volleyball starting in October. This will be her third season playing in the Hospital League. Originally the league started with hospital employees but has now evolved to include mainly members of the various Vancouver-based ski clubs.

Michael Sanderson and his wife Martha Welsh are busy this fall re-designing their backyard – the big decision is whether to save the large beech tree. The question – sentiment versus practical reality!



Left to Right: Eric Aderneck, Sandi Drew, Michael Sanderson, Maggie Koka

We would like to announce the addition of several new staff members to A&M in recent months: David Fan and Steven Hu, both in the engineering department. We must also say goodbye for now to Derek Hull and Ryan Syjuco, BCIT summer engineering students. Good luck in your studies and hopefully you'll be back for another term next year.

Thank you for your interest in our newsletter and the company and we look forward to working with you in the near future. Anytime you have any planning or land development

questions we are available to help. We appreciate any comments or suggestions for our newsletter.

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## USEFUL & INTERESTING WEBSITES

Planning Institute of  
British Columbia  
[www.pibc.bc.ca](http://www.pibc.bc.ca)

Canadian Institute of Planners  
[www.cip-icu.ca](http://www.cip-icu.ca)

American Planning Association  
[www.planning.org](http://www.planning.org)

CivicInfo BC  
[www.civicinfo.bc.ca](http://www.civicinfo.bc.ca)

Planners Network  
[www.plannersnetwork.org](http://www.plannersnetwork.org)

Smart Growth BC  
[www.smartgrowth.bc.ca](http://www.smartgrowth.bc.ca)

Canada Mortgage &  
Housing Corporation  
[www.cmhc.ca](http://www.cmhc.ca)

Urban Development Institute  
[www.udl.bc.ca](http://www.udl.bc.ca)

BC Home Builders' Association  
[www.chbabc.org](http://www.chbabc.org)

GVRD Stats and Plans  
[www.gvrd.bc.ca/growth](http://www.gvrd.bc.ca/growth)

BC Stats  
[www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca)

Real Estate Board of  
Greater Vancouver  
[www.realtylink.org](http://www.realtylink.org)

Multiple Listing Service  
[www.mls.ca](http://www.mls.ca)

Google Earth  
[www.earth.google.com](http://www.earth.google.com)

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