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## **Lower Mainland-Southwest building permits rebound in April**

*Residential surge leads rise in permit values with moderate non-residential gains contributing*

**VANCOUVER, June 5, 2013** – Total building permit values in the Lower Mainland-Southwest region jumped 55 per cent in April 2013 from March 2013, led by a surge in the residential sector, according to Vancouver Regional Construction Association’s analysis of today’s Statistics Canada Building Permit Report.

“Building permits in the Lower Mainland-Southwest region saw a rebound in April due in large part to a jump in residential multi-unit project permits, pushing residential permits to their highest level since July 2012,” said Jan Robinson, interim president of the Vancouver Regional Construction Association (VRCA). “Commercial permits posted a moderate gain as well, while institutional-government permits had a large percentage gain off a low base.”

Total permit values in April 2013 rose to \$694.4 million compared to \$447.8 million in March 2013. Non-residential permits increased 11 per cent to \$118.4 million in April from \$106.8 million in March. Commercial permits rose 15 per cent to \$90.5 million from \$78.5 million, while institutional-government permits jumped 50 per cent to \$17.4 million, while industrial permits fell 37 per cent to \$10.6 million from \$16.8 million. Residential permit values shot up 69 per cent to \$576 million from \$341 million during the same period.

Total building permit values were up two per cent to \$2.172 billion from \$2.129 billion in the first four months of this year compared to the same period last year.

VRCA’s 2013 forecast for total building permits is likely a decline from 2012 led by fewer residential and government permits. Commercial permits will likely provide some offset since market conditions are generally favourable, but some of the proposed downtown office developments could hold off until market prospects improve.

“The outlook for regional commercial and industrial investment is modestly favourable since the regional economy and population base will continue to grow,” says Robinson. “However, stronger economic and market conditions in general will be needed for a significant upturn in commercial and industrial permits beyond 2013. This month’s residential performance is not expected to be repeated as the mild correction phase in the housing market is ongoing.”

### Regional Building Permit Highlights:

- Total permit values in April 2013 rose 55 per cent to \$694.4 million compared to \$447.8 million in March 2013.
  - Total non-residential permit values increased 11 per cent in April 2013 to \$118.4 million compared to \$106.8 million in March 2013.
    - Commercial permits rose 15 per cent to \$90.5 million in April.
    - Institutional-government permits climbed 50 per cent to \$17.4 million in April.
    - Industrial permits fell 37 per cent to \$10.6 million in April.
  - Residential permit values shot up 69 per cent to \$576 million in April 2013 compared to \$341 million in March 2013.
- Total building permit values were up 18 per cent to \$694.4 million from \$588.8 million year over year in April 2013 compared to April 2012.
  - Total non-residential permits were off 52 per cent to \$118.4 million from \$247.1 million last year.
  - Residential permit values were 69 per cent above last year at \$576 million compared to \$341.7 million.

With close to 700 members, VRCA is British Columbia’s largest and most inclusive regional construction association, representing union and non-union, general and trade contracting companies, manufacturers, suppliers and other professionals throughout the Lower Mainland from Hope to Whistler.

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