

Something weird happened to prices on Tuesday

Hey friend,

Something quietly strange happened Tuesday. For the first time since November 2024, the national home price index went up instead of down. A tenth of a percent — basically a rounding error — but after twenty months of the chart pointing one way, even a flat line counts as a plot twist. CREA also said out loud that the Greater Golden Horseshoe is back in balanced territory, which is the polite way of saying nobody has the upper hand anymore.

Meanwhile Ottawa hosted 3,000 municipal officials arguing about development charges, Oshawa got cranes on a lot empty since 1987, and an Ajax project went into receivership without a shovel touching dirt.

The price index blinked

- Sales rose 0.5% month-over-month in July — a fourth straight gain.
- The MLS Home Price Index ticked up 0.1%, its first monthly rise since November 2024.
- New listings fell 1.6%, a third consecutive drop. Sales-to-new-listings hit 51.3% — squarely balanced.
- Inventory: 4.7 months, tightest all year.
- For sellers: the window where buyers dictate everything is closing, and faster than most people noticed.

Development charges got a billion-dollar sweetener

- AMO ran August 16–19 in Ottawa — sold out, 3,000+ delegates from 444 municipalities.
- Ford pushed the \$8.8-billion DC partnership. Opt in, cut rates 30–50% for three years.
- New: a \$1-billion stream for municipalities that never charged DCs at all.
- Applications open October 29.
- DCs add tens of thousands to a new build. Watch which GTHA municipalities opt in before you shop pre-construction.

Waterloo's bottleneck isn't demand — it's water

- Chair Karen Redman took a delegation to AMO on August 17.
- Top ask: funding for water capital projects. Servicing capacity, not buyer appetite, is capping what KW and Cambridge can build.
- Also on the list — ION Stage 2 and Breslau GO service.
- Buying KW land or holding long? Water allocation decides which pockets absorb units this decade and which sit on ice.

Oshawa breaks ground. Ajax breaks down.

- Medallion started work Thursday on The Foundry District — 23 downtown acres vacant since 1987.
- Phase one: two rental towers, 500+ homes, 30% affordable. Full build-out ~3,000 rentals, backed by \$188 million.

- Forty minutes west, Valour Group's 1,481-unit Ajax project hit receivership — zero construction, ~\$30.8 million owed.
- Same week, opposite endings. On pre-construction, who's building it matters as much as what. Ask me first.

Ottawa folds Canada Lands into Build Canada Homes

- As of Monday, Canada Lands' holdings moved under the federal public-land housing agency.
- The portfolio includes Downsview, plus Mississauga and St. Catharines sites.
- Downsview's Arbo project: 540 homes, 40% affordable minimum, inside a \$283-million infrastructure spend.
- A decade-long story — but if you own nearby, the timeline just got more credible.

QUICK HITS

- ReHousing launched a free tool for converting Toronto houses into multiplexes.
- Big-bank prime sits at 4.45%, down from 4.70%.
- Bank of Canada decides September 2 — held at 2.25% six meetings running.
- CREA's next package lands September 15: signal or wobble.

BY THE NUMBERS

- 2.25% — Bank of Canada overnight rate.
- 3.94% — lowest insured five-year fixed, as of August 21.
- \$674,819 — national average price in July, up 0.2% year-over-year.
- 51.3% — sales-to-new-listings ratio nationally.
- \$1,003,956 — GTA average price in July. Kitchener-Waterloo benchmark: \$633,300.

LET'S TALK

These headlines land differently depending on whether you're buying, selling, holding or just watching. If something here made you curious — or nervous — reply and tell me. I'd rather talk it through over coffee than have you make a six-figure decision off a chart you saw online.