

Housing Market Indicators

Monthly Update



December 2019

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

National housing market indicators available as of December showed activity in housing markets improved overall. Trends in some of the top indicators for this month include:

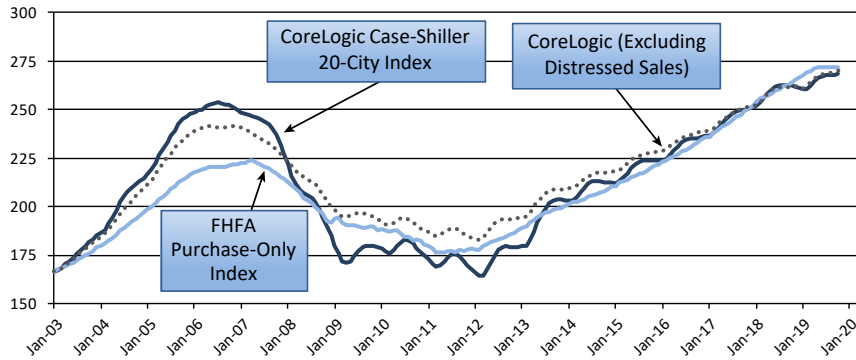
- **Purchases of new homes rose.** New single-family home sales increased 1.3 percent to 719,000 units (SAAR) in November from a downwardly revised pace of 710,000 in October. Sales were up 16.9 percent from a year ago. Purchases rose in the Northeast and West Census regions, while staying constant in the Midwest. Note that monthly data on new home sales tend to be volatile. (Sources: HUD and Census Bureau)
- **Sales of previously owned (existing) homes fell slightly.** The National Association of Realtors® (NAR) reported that November sales of existing homes (including single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums, and cooperatives) were down 1.7 percent to 5.35 million units (SAAR) from a downwardly revised pace for October of 5.44 million units but were 2.7 percent higher than a year earlier. Sales were down in the South and West Census regions. Low mortgage rates typically strengthen sales, but the supply of housing is still relatively low.
- **Construction of single-family homes rose to their highest level since January.** Single-family housing starts were up 2.4 percent to 938,000 homes (SAAR) in November and were 16.7 percent higher than a year earlier. Starts were up in the Northeast and West Census regions. Multifamily housing starts (5 or more units in a structure), at 404,000 units (SAAR), rose 2.3 percent from October and 4.4 percent from a year earlier. Note that month-to-month changes in the construction of multifamily homes are often volatile. Total housing starts were up 3.2 percent to 1.37 million units (SAAR) and were 13.6 percent higher than one year ago. (Sources: HUD and Census Bureau)
- **Year-over-year house price increases were fairly steady, with annual gains ranging from 2 to 5 percent.** The Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA) seasonally adjusted purchase-only house price index for October estimated that home values rose 0.2 percent over the previous month and 5.0 percent over the previous year, down from a 5.2 percent annual gain in September. The FHFA index shows that U.S. home values are 24 percent above their peak, set in March 2007 during the housing bubble, and stand 57 percent above the low point reached in May 2011. Another index tracked in the Monthly Update, the non-seasonally adjusted (NSA) CoreLogic Case-Shiller® 20-City Home Price Index, posted a 0.09-percent increase in home values in October and year-over-year returns of 2.2 percent, up from an annual gain 2.1 percent for September. Annual house prices gains have been accelerating since July 2019 according to this index. (The FHFA and CoreLogic Case-Shiller® price indices are released with a 2-month lag.)
- **The inventory of existing homes on the market fell, while the supply of new homes remained the same.** The listed inventory of new homes for sale, at 323,000 units at the end of November, was unchanged from October but was down 3.3 percent year-over-year. That inventory would support 5.4 months of sales at the current sales pace, down slightly from 5.5 months the previous month due to a higher rate of sales in November. Available existing homes for sale, at 1.64 million units in November, were down 7.3 percent from the previous month and down 5.7 percent from one year ago. The listed inventory represents a 3.7-month supply, down from 3.9 months in October. A shortage of homes for sale—especially at the lower end of the market—has been a constraint on purchases for several years.
- **The gain in homeowners' equity was modest in the third quarter of 2019.** Homeowners' equity (total property value less mortgage debt outstanding) increased \$3.4 billion (0.02 percent) in the third quarter from a gain of \$31.4 billion the previous quarter, for a total of nearly \$18.7 trillion. The gain over the last four quarters was nearly \$907 billion, an increase of 5.1 percent. Home-price growth, the primary driver of gains in equity, has lessened over the last year. (Source: Federal Reserve)
- **The number of underwater borrowers continued to decline.** As of the third quarter of 2019, CoreLogic estimated that the number of underwater borrowers decreased by 78,000 homeowners to 1.96 million, or 3.7 percent of residential properties with a mortgage—the lowest share of homes in negative equity since CoreLogic started tracking it in the third quarter of 2009. One year ago, 2.17 million homeowners (4.1 percent) were reported in negative equity. The number of homeowners in negative equity has fallen by 10.1 million since the end of 2011, when negative equity began to show significant improvement. (Source: CoreLogic)
- **Mortgage rates are near three-year lows.** The 30-year fixed rate mortgage (FRM) reached an average weekly low in December of 3.68 percent the week ending December 5, up from November's weekly low of 3.66 percent the week ending November 21. One year ago, the 30-year FRM was 4.81 percent. (Source: Freddie Mac)



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House Prices Continued to Rise in October

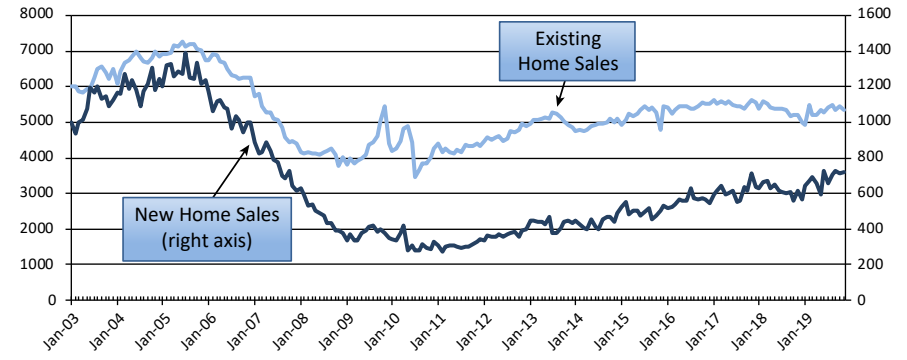
Monthly House Price Trends by Index (\$ Thousands)



Sources: Standard & Poor's, Federal Housing Finance Agency, CoreLogic, and HUD. See Note 1, Sources and Methodology.

New Home Sales Rose, But Existing Home Sales Fell

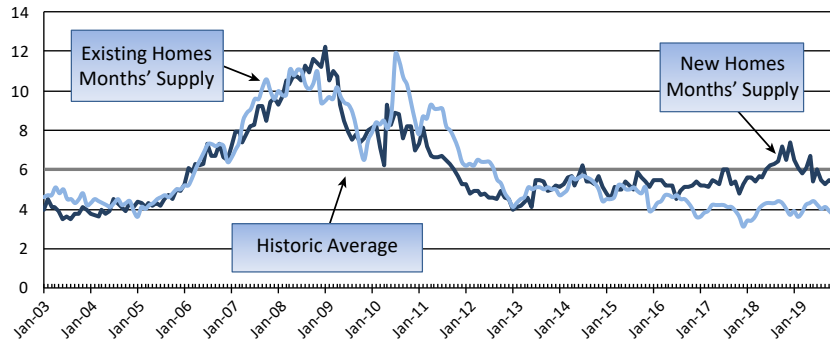
Monthly Sales (Thousands)



Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate
Sources: National Association of Realtors®, Census Bureau, and HUD. See Note 2, Sources and Methodology.

The Months' Supply of Homes for Sale Fell for Both New and Existing Homes

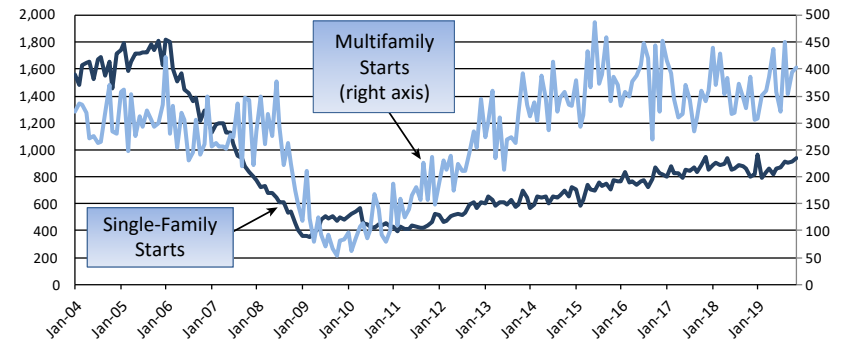
National Months' Supply of New and Existing Homes (Months)



Sources: Census Bureau, National Association of Realtors®, and HUD.

New Construction Rose for Both Single-Family and Multifamily Housing

National Housing Starts (Thousands)



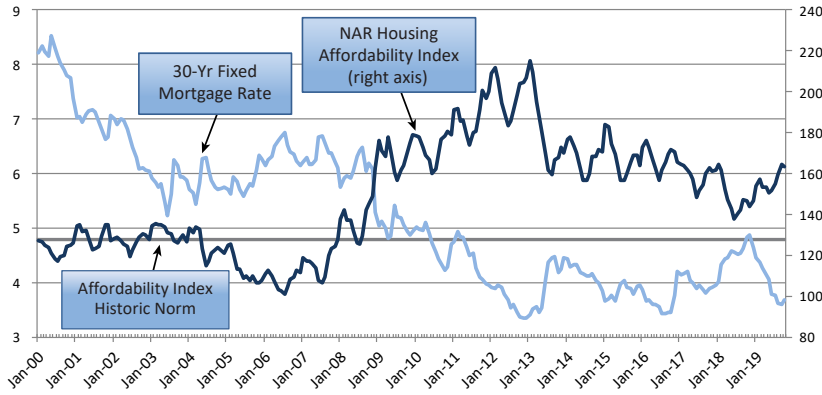
Seasonally Adjusted Annual Rate
Sources: Census Bureau and HUD.



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Homeownership Affordability Remains Above Historic Norm, Mortgage Rates Continue To Be Low

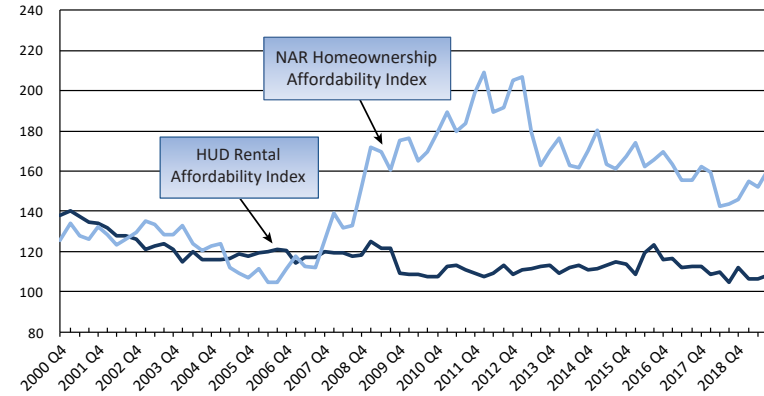
Percentage Rates and Index Values



The historic norm of 128 is the median value of NAR's composite housing affordability index since 1989. Sources: Freddie Mac and National Association of Realtors®.

Rental Affordability Remains a Challenge Due to Rising Rents

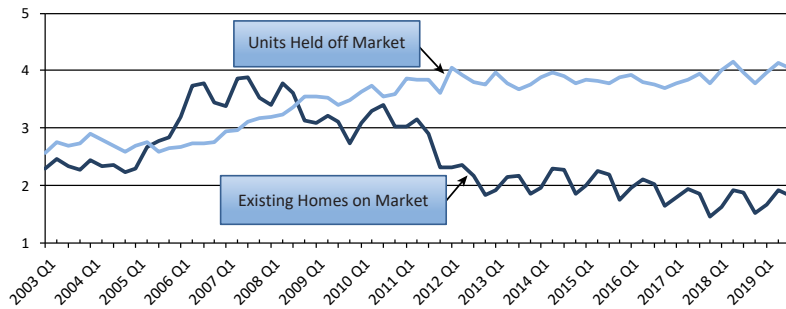
Rental and Homeownership Index Values



Sources: Census Bureau ACS and 2000 Decennial Census, BLS, CPS, HUD, and National Association of Realtors®. See Note 3, Sources and Methodology.

Supply of Existing Homes Fell in the Third Quarter, Number of Units Held off the Market Remains High

Existing Homes Available for Sale (End of Period) and Total Vacant Housing Units (Year Round) off Market (Millions)

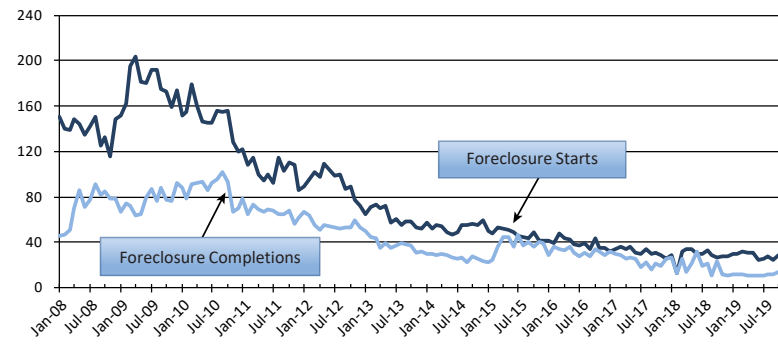


Sources: National Association of Realtors® and Census Bureau.

Foreclosure Filings Have Remained Low

Monthly Foreclosure Actions (Thousands)

(Includes investor, second home, and jumbo properties)

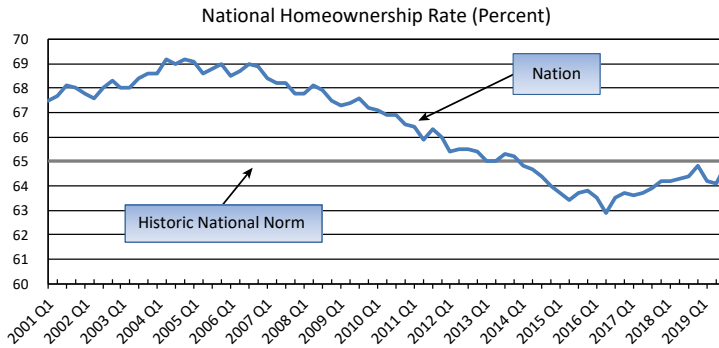


Foreclosure starts are default notices or scheduled foreclosure auctions, depending on the state. Source: ATTOM Data Solutions. See Note 4, Sources and Methodology.



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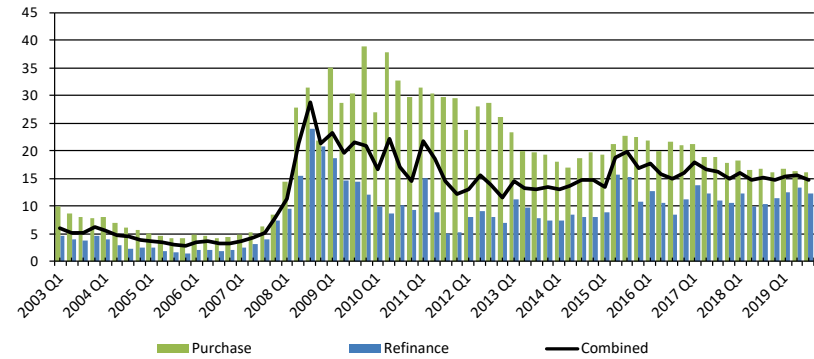
The National Homeownership Rate Rose After Declining for Two Straight Quarters



The historical norm of 65 percent is the average national homeownership rate since 1965. Sources: Census Bureau and HUD.

FHA Mortgage Lending

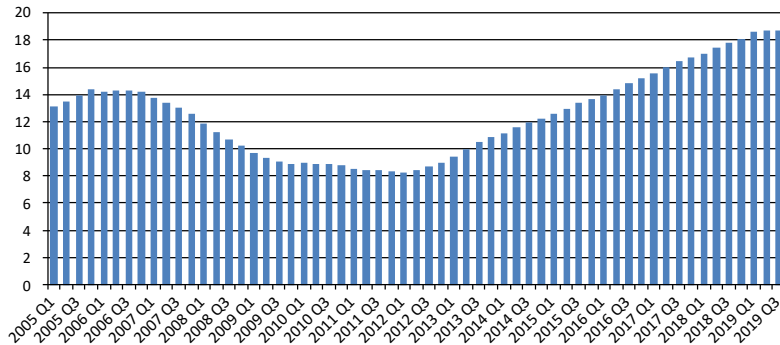
FHA as Share of Quarterly Mortgage Originations by Type (Percent)



Sources: MBA and HUD. See Note 5, Sources and Methodology.

Home Equity Has Surpassed Its Peak Set at the End of 2005 Since the Third Quarter of 2016

Owners' Equity in Household Real Estate at End of Period (\$ Trillions)



Source: Federal Reserve Board.



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HOUSING MARKET FACT SHEET				
Indicator	This Period	Last Period	Year Ago	Latest Release
Mortgage Rates (30-Yr FRM, percent)	3.74	3.73	4.55	26-Dec-19
Homeownership Affordability (index)	163.5	164.8 (r)	146.7	October-19
Rental Affordability (index)	107.9	106.6	104.8	3rd Q 19
Home Prices (indices)				
CoreLogic Case-Shiller (NSA)	218.4	218.2 (r)	213.7	October-19
FHFA (SA)	280.2	279.5 (r)	266.9	October-19
CoreLogic - Excluding Distressed Sales (NSA)	208.5 (s)	207.6 (s,r)	202.1 (s)	October-19
Home Sales				
New (thousands, SAAR)	719	710 (r)	615	November-19
Existing (thousands, SAAR)	5,350	5,440 (r)	5,210	November-19
First-Time Buyers (thousands, SAAR)	2,003 (s)	2,030 (s,r)	1,922 (s)	November-19
Distressed Sales (percent, NSA)	3	3	4	October-19
Housing Supply				
New Homes for Sale (thousands, SA)	323	323 (r)	334	November-19
New Homes for Sale - Months' Supply (months, SA)	5.4	5.5 (r)	6.5	November-19
Existing Homes for Sale (thousands, NSA)	1,640	1,770 (r)	1,740	November-19
Existing Homes - Months' Supply (months)	3.7	3.9	4.0	November-19
Vacant Units Held Off Market (thousands)	4,041	4,138	3,963	3rd Q 19
Housing Starts				
Total (thousands, SAAR)	1,365	1,323 (r)	1,202	November-19
Single-Family (thousands, SAAR)	938	916 (r)	804	November-19
Multifamily (thousands, SAAR)	404	395 (r)	387	November-19
Mortgage Originations (thousands)				
Purchase Originations	1,354.1	1,281.9	1,316.6	3rd Q 19
Refinance Originations	790.0	501.5	475.2	3rd Q 19
FHA Mortgage Originations (thousands)				
Refinance Originations	46.2 (p)	45.6 (r)	15.2	November-19
Purchase Originations	68.3 (p)	70.7 (r)	56.5	November-19
Purchases by First-Time Buyers	54.8 (p)	43.0 (r)	46.4	November-19
Mortgage Delinquency Rates (percent)				
Prime	1.9 (s)	1.8 (s)	1.8	November-19
Subprime	16.9 (s)	16.4 (s)	23.2	November-19
FHA	9.2	9.0	8.9	November-19
Seriously Delinquent Mortgages (thousands)				
Prime	193 (s)	199 (r,s)	192	November-19
Subprime	42 (s)	43 (r,s)	174	November-19
FHA	329	318	328	November-19
Change in Aggregate Home Equity (\$ billions)	3.4	31.4 (r)	348.4	3rd Q 19
Underwater Borrowers (thousands)	1,965	2,043 (r)	2,173	3rd Q 19
National Homeownership Rate (percent)	64.8	64.1	64.4	3rd Q 19
Foreclosure Actions (thousands)				
Foreclosure Starts	25.0	28.7	28.2	November-19
Foreclosure Completions	14.0	13.5	11.5	November-19
Short Sales	2.6 (p)	2.7 (r)	3.6	October-19
REO Sales	11.2 (p)	12.3 (r)	16.9	October-19

SA = seasonally adjusted, NSA = not SA, p = preliminary, r = revised, b = brackets include units in process, s = see Additional Notes in Sources and Methodology.



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SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

A. Items in Table

Description	Frequency	Sources	Notes on Methodology
Mortgage Rates (30-Yr FRM)	Weekly	Freddie Mac	Primary Mortgage Market Survey, as reported for 30-Year fixed rate mortgages (FRM).
Homeownership Affordability	Monthly	National Association of Realtors®	NAR's Housing Affordability Index as reported. A value of 100 means that a family with the median income has exactly enough income to qualify for a mortgage on a median-priced home. An index above 100 signifies that a family earning the median income has more than enough income to qualify.
Rental Affordability	Quarterly	HUD	HUD's Rental Affordability Index measures whether a typical renter household has enough income to qualify for a lease on a typical rental home at the national level based on the most recent price and income data. A typical renter household is one that earns median income and a typical rental home is a median-priced rental unit. It is assumed that a renter household can qualify for a lease if the annual rent is not greater than 30 percent of the renter household's annual income. A value of 100 means that a renter household with median income has exactly enough income to qualify for a lease on a median-priced rental home. An index value above 100 signifies that a household earning the median income of renter households has more than enough income to qualify. For more information on HUD's rental affordability index and methodology, see the Second Quarter 2016 issue of HUD's National Housing Market Summary on their U.S. Housing Market Conditions website: http://www.huduser.gov/portal/ushmc/home.html .
Home Prices			
CoreLogic-Case-Shiller (NSA)	Monthly	Standard and Poor's	Case-Shiller 20-metro composite index, January 2000 = 100. Standard and Poor's recommends use of non-seasonally adjusted (NSA) index when making monthly comparisons.
FHFA (SA)	Monthly	Federal Housing Finance Agency	FHFA monthly (purchase-only) index for U.S., January 1991 = 100.
CoreLogic - Excluding Distressed Sales (NSA)	Monthly	CoreLogic	CoreLogic national combined index, distressed sales excluded, January 2000 = 100. (Only available as NSA). Also see additional note in Section C below on the CoreLogic HPI.
Home Sales (SAAR)			
New	Monthly	HUD and Census Bureau	Seasonally adjusted annual rates. A newly constructed house is considered sold when either a sales contract has been signed or a deposit accepted, even if this occurs before construction has actually started.
Existing	Monthly	National Association of Realtors®	Seasonally adjusted annual rates. Existing-home sales—which include single-family homes, townhomes, condominiums and co-ops—are based on transaction closings. This differs from the U.S. Census Bureau's series on new single-family home sales, which are based on contracts or the acceptance of a deposit.
First-Time Buyers	Monthly	NAR, Census Bureau, and HUD	Sum of seasonally adjusted new and existing home sales (above) multiplied by National Association of Realtors® annual estimate of first-time buyer share of existing home sales.
Distressed Sales (NSA)	Monthly	CoreLogic	Short sales and REO (Real Estate Owned) sales as a percentage of total existing home sales (current month subject to revision).
Housing Starts			
Total (SAAR)	Monthly	HUD and Census Bureau	Housing starts are divided into three components: single-family, multifamily, and two-to-four unit structures. Start of construction occurs when excavation begins for the footings or foundation of a building. As of September 1992, housing starts include units being totally rebuilt on an existing foundation.
Single-Family (SAAR)	Monthly	HUD and Census Bureau	Single-family housing includes fully detached, semi-detached (semi-attached, side-by-side), townhomes and row houses. For attached units, each must be separated from the adjacent unit by a ground-to-roof firewall to be classified as a single-family structure. Also, these units must not share common facilities (i.e., heating/air-conditioning systems, plumbing, attic, or basement). Units built one on top of another and those built side-by-side that do not have a ground-to-roof firewall or have common facilities are not considered single-family units.
Multifamily (SAAR)	Monthly	HUD and Census Bureau	Multifamily housing has five or more units in a structure.
Housing Supply			
New Homes for Sale (SA)	Monthly	HUD and Census Bureau	As reported.
New Homes for Sale - Months' Supply (SA)	Monthly	HUD and Census Bureau	As reported.
Existing Homes for Sale (NSA)	Monthly	National Association of Realtors®	As reported.
Existing Homes - Months' Supply	Monthly	National Association of Realtors®	As reported.
Vacant Units Held Off Market	Quarterly	Census Bureau	As reported in Census CPS/HPS Table 4. Estimates of Housing Inventory, line item "Year-round vacant, held off market for reasons other than occasional use or usually reside elsewhere." Vacant units can be held off the market for a variety of reasons.
Mortgage Originations			
Refinance Originations	Quarterly	Mortgage Bankers Association and HUD	HUD estimate of refinance originations based on MBA estimate of dollar volume of refinance originations.
Purchase Originations	Quarterly	Mortgage Bankers Association and HUD	HUD estimate of home purchase originations based on MBA estimate of dollar volume of home purchase originations.



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SOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

A. Items in Table (continued)

FHA Originations			
Refinance Originations	Monthly	HUD	FHA originations reported as of date of loan closing. Estimate for current month scaled upward due to normal reporting lag and shown as preliminary.
Purchase Originations	Monthly	HUD	
Purchases by First-Time Buyers	Monthly	HUD	
Mortgage Delinquency Rates (NSA)			
Prime	Monthly	Black Knight Financial Services	Total conventional mortgages past due (30+ days) but not in foreclosure, divided by conventional mortgages actively serviced.
Subprime	Monthly	Black Knight Financial Services	Total conventional mortgages past due (30+ days) but not in foreclosure, divided by conventional mortgages actively serviced.
FHA	Monthly	HUD	Total FHA mortgages past due (30+ days) but not in foreclosure, divided by FHA's insurance in force.
Seriously Delinquent Mortgages			
Prime	Monthly	LPS Applied Analytics, MBA, and HUD	Conventional mortgages 90+ days delinquent or in foreclosure, scaled up to market.
Subprime	Monthly	LPS Applied Analytics, MBA, and HUD	Conventional mortgages 90+ days delinquent or in foreclosure, scaled up to market.
FHA	Monthly	HUD	Mortgages 90+ days delinquent or in foreclosure.
Change in Aggregate Home Equity	Quarterly	Federal Reserve Board	Difference in aggregate household owners' equity in real estate as reported in the Federal Reserve Board's Flow of Funds Accounts of the United States for stated time period.
Underwater Borrowers	Quarterly	CoreLogic	As reported.
National Homeownership Rate	Quarterly	Census Bureau	Homeownership in the U.S. as a percentage of all households.
Foreclosure Actions			
Foreclosure Starts	Monthly	ATTOM Data Solutions (Formerly RealtyTrac)	Foreclosure starts are reported counts of notice of default or scheduled foreclosure auction, depending on which action starts the foreclosure process in a state.
Foreclosure Completions	Monthly	ATTOM Data Solutions	Real Estate Owned (REO).
Short sales	Monthly	CoreLogic	Count of Short Sales for the month as reported (current month subject to revision).
REO Sales	Monthly	CoreLogic	Count of REO (Real Estate Owned) Sales for the month as reported (current month subject to revision).

B. Notes on Charts

1. Monthly house price trends, shown as changes in respective house price indices applied to a common base price set equal to the median price of an existing home sold in January 2003, as reported by the National Association of Realtors®. Indices shown: S&P/CoreLogic Case-Shiller 20-metro composite index (NSA), January 2000 = 100, FHFA monthly (purchase-only) index for U.S. (SA), January 1991 = 100, and CoreLogic-Distressed Sales Excluded (Monthly) for U.S. (NSA), January 2000 = 100. Also see additional note below in Section C on the CoreLogic HPI.
2. Reported seasonally adjusted annual rates for new and existing home sales.
3. A comparison of the affordability of renting a home to purchasing a home, added as of the September 2016 release. HUD's Quarterly Rental Affordability Index is compared to NAR's Composite Quarterly Affordability Index. See note above on Rental Affordability.
4. Filings of a notice of default or scheduled foreclosure auction, depending on which action starts the foreclosure process in a state, are reported for foreclosure starts. Foreclosure completions are properties entering REO. Both as reported by ATTOM Data Solutions (formerly RealtyTrac).
5. FHA market shares are FHA purchase and refinance originations divided by HUD estimates of purchase and refinance mortgage originations, as noted in "Mortgage Originations" above. See additional note below on FHA market share.

C. Additional Notes

Beginning in May 2019, NAR replaced its Composite Housing Affordability Index (HAI), which was based on the 30-year fixed rate mortgage and adjustable rate mortgages (ARM), with a Fixed HAI based only on the 30-year fixed rate mortgage.

Black Knight enhanced their database as of December 2017 data, increasing their database coverage by nearly 1 million additional loans through several new contributors and improved coverage of certain types of data. In addition, HUD added filters to make sure all FHA and VA loans were excluded from the data to ensure reporting of only conventional loans. The November 2017 changes in reported data are mainly due to the additional filters.

FHA Market Share data were updated in the June 2017 report based on the most recent HMDA data and revised house price estimates. FHA market share estimates were based on new methodology beginning with the October 2013 report; estimates were revised back through Q1 2011. See the FHA Market Share report on their website for an explanation of the new methodology: http://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/housing/rmra/oe/rpts/fhamktsh/fhamktqtrly.

The estimate for first-time buyers was revised downward from 35 percent for 2016 to 34 percent for 2017 with the October 2017 release of the NAR Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers 2017 report. The annual reporting of first-time buyers differs from NAR's monthly Realtors Confidence Index survey because the annual survey, for the most part, represents purchases of homes by owner-occupants and does not include purchases by investors, as in the monthly survey.

CoreLogic's House Price Index (HPI) estimates are based on new methodology beginning with their June 2016 report, which includes data through April 2016. A variety of modeling and other enhancements to their HPI and its forecast, including a 14-percent expansion in the number of transaction pairs, were made.