



Dan Clifton

Principal Broker and Mortgage Guru, Clifton Mortgage Services, LLC

NMLS # 284174

670 N Orlando Ave Suite 101 Maitland, FL 32751

Office: 888-681-0777 x1001

Mobile: 407-252-3039

Fax: 866-512-0169

dan@cliftonmortgageservices.com

[View My Website](#)

Pending Sales Post First Gain in Three Months

There was a **slight uptick** in contract signings for home purchases in October after two straight months of declines. The National Association of Realtors® (NAR) said today that its Pending Home Sales Index (PHSI) inched up by 0.2 percent to 107.7 in October. The September index was revised up from 106.8 to 107.5 but still represented a loss compared to August. The index is now 3.9 percent higher than in October 2014 and has increased on a year-over-year basis for 14 consecutive months.

NAR's index is based on contract signings and is a leading indicator of home sales. Contracts typically become closed transactions in 60 days or less.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, noted that pending sales have been relatively flat through the fall and said it reflected continuing low inventories and home prices that are rising too fast in some markets. "Contract signings in October made the most strides in the **Northeast**, which hasn't seen much of the drastic price appreciation and supply constraints that are occurring in other parts of the country," he said. "In the most competitive metro areas - particularly those in the South and West - affordability concerns remain heightened as low inventory continues to drive up prices."

According to Yun, although contract activity has **slightly trended downward** since the spring, the ongoing strengthening of several local job markets continues to fuel the improved demand for buying that has now pushed existing-sales above a 5 million sales pace for eight consecutive months.

"Areas that are heavily reliant on **oil-related jobs** are the exception and have already started to see some softness in sales because of declining energy prices," adds Yun.

NAR projects that existing home sales will **continue to increase** in the upcoming year but that those ongoing inventory shortages and rising home prices and interest rates will likely temper sales growth to around 3 percent resulting in 5.45 million home sales in 2016. Home prices are expected to slightly moderate from a 6 percent increase in 2015 to 5 percent next year.

"Unless sizeable supply gains occur for new and existing homes, **prices and rents will continue to exceed wages** into next year and hamstringing a large pool of potential buyers trying to buy a home," says Yun.

National Average Mortgage Rates



	Rate	Change	Points
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Mortgage News Daily

30 Yr. Fixed	6.43%	+0.02	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	5.95%	0.00	0.00
30 Yr. FHA	5.82%	+0.02	0.00
30 Yr. Jumbo	6.62%	0.00	0.00
5/1 ARM	6.28%	-0.01	0.00

Freddie Mac

30 Yr. Fixed	6.35%	-0.51	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	5.51%	-0.65	0.00

Mortgage Bankers Assoc.

30 Yr. Fixed	6.44%	-0.06	0.54
15 Yr. Fixed	5.88%	-0.16	0.68
30 Yr. FHA	6.36%	-0.06	0.85
30 Yr. Jumbo	6.75%	+0.07	0.39
5/1 ARM	5.98%	-0.27	0.65

Rates as of: 8/30

Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Aug 28	226.9	+0.49%
Building Permits	Mar	1.46M	-3.95%
Housing Starts	Mar	1.32M	-13.15%
New Home Sales	Mar	693K	+4.68%
Pending Home Sales	Feb	75.6	+1.75%
Existing Home Sales	Feb	3.97M	-0.75%

Two of the regions had a month-over-month increase in their PHSI in October while the other two posted losses. The Northeast gained 4.5 percent to 93.6 in October, and is now 6.8 percent above a year ago and the index in the West climbed 1.7 percent in October to 106.2, and is 10.4 percent above a year ago.

	Value	Change
Builder Confidence	51	+6.25%
Mar		

On the downside the South saw a loss of 1.7 percent to an index of 118.1 in October putting its index down 0.3 percent on an annual basis. In the Midwest the index declined 1.0 percent to 103.9 in October, but remains 3.3 percent above October 2014.