



**Tom Payne**

Senior Loan Consultant, loanDepot  
 NMLS# 1017004 #174457 Licensed in all 50 States  
 2835 St. Rose Parkway, Suite 120 Henderson, NV 89052

Office: 702-303-0243  
 Mobile: 702-303-0243  
[tompaynemortgage@gmail.com](mailto:tompaynemortgage@gmail.com)  
[View My Website](#)

## Housing Market Ended Summer With a Bang

Looking at the calendar (and the weather, depending on where you live), summer may seem like an increasingly distant memory, but for housing market data, things are just heating up.

Whether we're talking about the housing market or almost any other aspect of the economy, the biggest economic reports tend to be released **long after** the days when the underlying economic activity was actually taking place. Case in point, among this week's reports was the final GDP figure for the months of April through June!

The housing-related reports released this week are more timely by comparison. Taken together, they suggest the housing market had a fantastic summer. The Census Bureau reported a 7.1% surge in New Home Sales for August on top of a revision that increased July's total by 4.8%. The annual pace of 713k units is very close to a post-crisis high and the **3rd highest in more than a decade**.

### New Home Sales



## National Average Mortgage Rates



	Rate	Change	Points
<b>Mortgage News Daily</b>			
30 Yr. Fixed	6.89%	0.00	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.33%	+0.01	0.00
30 Yr. FHA	6.33%	+0.01	0.00
30 Yr. Jumbo	7.05%	0.00	0.00
5/1 ARM	6.58%	0.00	0.00
<b>Freddie Mac</b>			
30 Yr. Fixed	6.77%	-0.09	0.00
15 Yr. Fixed	6.05%	-0.11	0.00

Rates as of: 7/22

## Market Data

	Price / Yield	Change
MBS UMBS 5.5	99.39	-0.01
MBS GNMA 5.5	99.78	+0.00
10 YR Treasury	4.2379	-0.0146
30 YR Treasury	4.4561	-0.0164

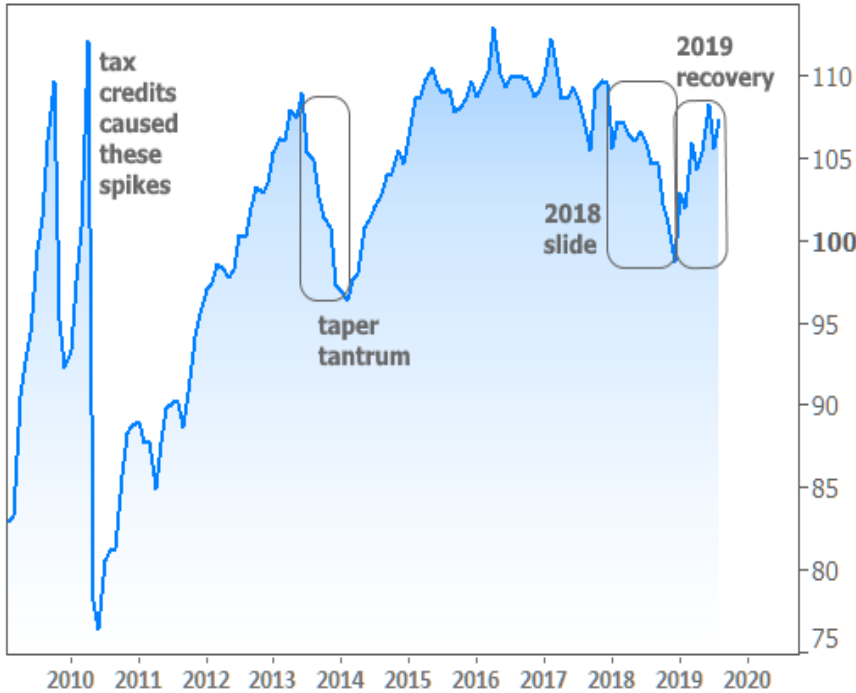
Pricing as of: 7/23 12:40AM EST

## Recent Housing Data

		Value	Change
Mortgage Apps	Jul 10	206.1	-0.19%
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%
Builder Confidence	Mar	51	+6.25%

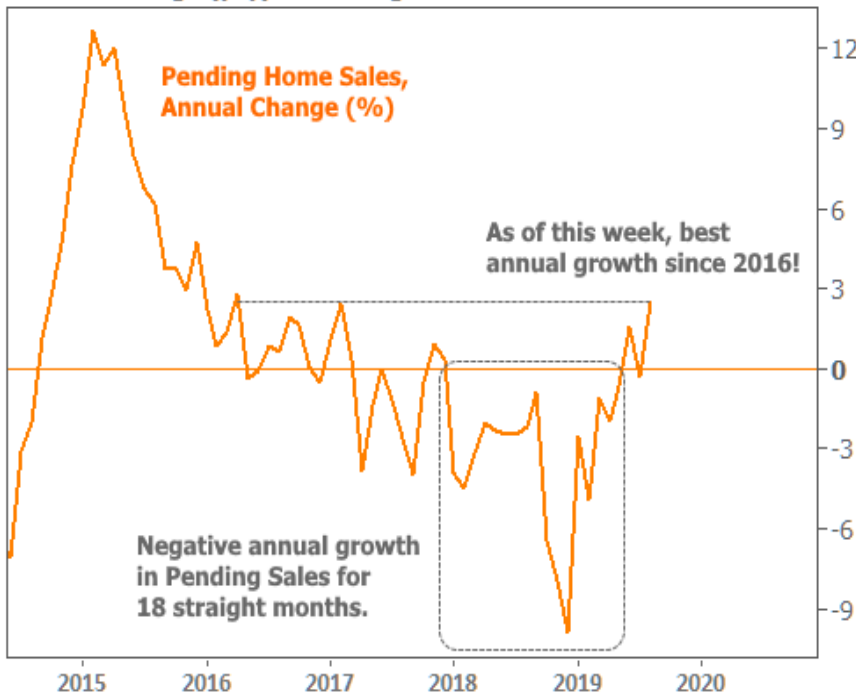
The National Association of Realtors' Pending Home Sales data also spoke to summer ending on a high note for housing. While the 1.6% increase isn't that impressive, the gains are important as they **solidify a recovery** from 2018's home sales slump.

Pending Home Sales

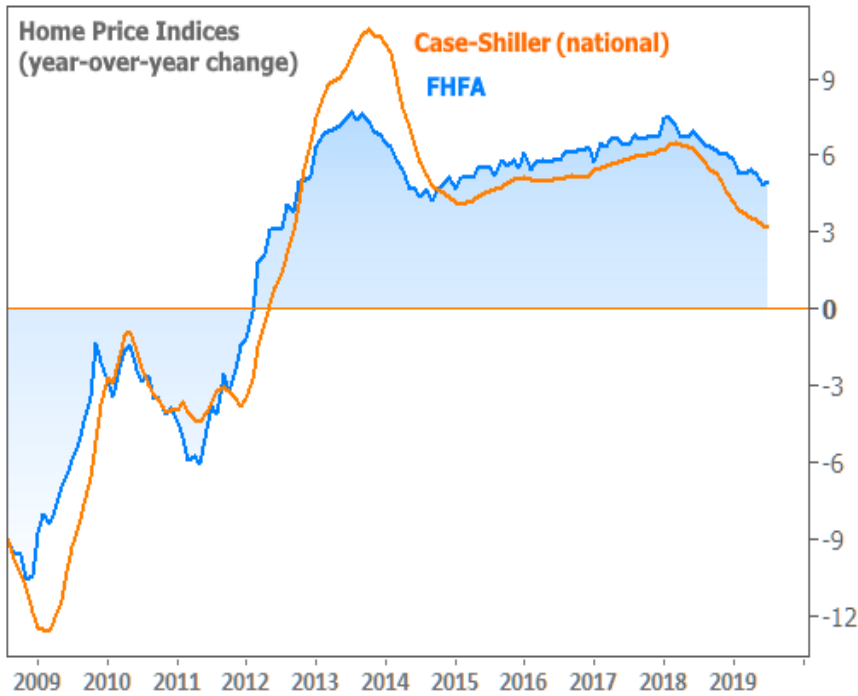


Perhaps even more importantly, this pushes the annual growth rate farther into positive territory after 18 months in the red, and to the **highest levels since 2016**.

Percent Change (y/y) in Pending Sales



Slightly less timely and slightly more open to interpretation were the two major home price indices, which were updated to cover July as of this week. Both Case-Shiller and the FHFA agree that **home prices are still moving higher** in annual terms, but that's about it. Whereas Case-Shiller said prices were unchanged from June to July and only 3% higher from last year, the FHFA reported a 0.4% monthly increase and a year-over-year total of 5.0%. Neither report is necessarily better than the other. They just have slightly different methodologies.



Discrepancies aside, the merits of annual home price appreciation of 3% versus 5% are debatable. On the one hand, higher home values are generally good for the housing market, but a **SUSTAINABLE** pace of improvement is also important. With other economic reports showing inflation running between 1.8% and 2.4%, the lower of the two home price reports may arguably be the better news, as long as it's not flashing a warning about further deceleration in price growth.

2019's big drop in mortgage rates could certainly help with that. The cost of financing is a huge but stealthy factor in home price appreciation. It definitely played a role in 2013's deceleration (seen in the chart above). Then, falling rates in 2014 helped momentum shift back in the other direction. Notably, rates had been falling for at least 9 months before the home price data showed any effects. If history repeats itself, that bodes well for home prices at least being able to avoid much more deceleration, all other things being equal.

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## Recent Economic Data

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
<b>Monday, Sep 23</b>				
9:45AM	Sep U Markit Svcs PMI Flash	50.9	51.3	50.7
9:45AM	Sep U Markit Mfg PMI Flash	51.0	50.3	50.3
9:45AM	Sep U Markit Comp Flash PMI	51.0		50.7
<b>Tuesday, Sep 24</b>				

## Event Importance:

No Stars = Insignificant

☆ Low

★ Moderate

★★ Important

★★★ Very Important

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
9:00AM	Jul Monthly Home Price yy (%)	5.0		4.8
9:00AM	Jul CaseShiller 20 yy (%)	2.0	2.2	2.1
9:00AM	Jul CaseShiller 20 mm SA (%)	0.0	0.1	0.0
9:00AM	Jul Monthly Home Price mm (%)	0.4		0.2
10:00AM	Sep Consumer confidence	125.1	133.5	135.1
1:00PM	2-Yr Note Auction (bl)	40		
<b>Wednesday, Sep 25</b>				
7:00AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index	261.4		269.7
7:00AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index	1928.0		2274.1
10:00AM	Aug New home sales-units mm (ml)	0.713	0.660	0.635
10:00AM	Aug New home sales chg mm (%)	7.1	3.5	-12.8
1:00PM	5-Yr Note Auction (bl)	41		
<b>Thursday, Sep 26</b>				
8:30AM	Q2 GDP Final (%)	2.0	2.0	2.0
8:30AM	w/e Jobless Claims (k)	213	212	210
10:00AM	Aug Pending Sales Index	107.3		105.6
10:00AM	Aug Pending Home Sales (%)	1.6	0.9	-2.5
1:00PM	7-Yr Note Auction (bl)	32		
<b>Friday, Sep 27</b>				
8:30AM	Aug Core PCE Inflation (y/y) (%)	1.8	1.8	1.6
8:30AM	Aug Durable goods (%)	0.2	-1.0	2.0
8:30AM	Aug Nondefense ex-air (%)	-0.2	0.0	0.2
10:00AM	Sep Consumer Sentiment (ip)	93.2	92.0	92.0
<b>Monday, Sep 30</b>				
9:45AM	Sep Chicago PMI	47.1	50.2	50.4
<b>Tuesday, Oct 01</b>				
10:00AM	Sep ISM Manufacturing PMI	47.8	50.1	49.1
10:00AM	Aug Construction spending (%)	0.1	0.4	0.1
<b>Wednesday, Oct 02</b>				
7:00AM	w/e MBA Purchase Index	263.8		261.4
7:00AM	w/e Mortgage Refinance Index	2202.6		1928.0
8:15AM	Sep ADP National Employment (k)	135	140	195
9:45AM	Sep ISM-New York index	875.4		879.0
<b>Thursday, Oct 03</b>				
7:30AM	Sep Challenger layoffs (k)	41.557		53.480
8:30AM	w/e Jobless Claims (k)	219	215	215
10:00AM	Sep ISM N-Mfg PMI	52.6	55.0	56.4
10:00AM	Aug Factory orders mm (%)	-0.1	-0.2	1.4
<b>Friday, Oct 04</b>				

Date	Event	Actual	Forecast	Prior
8:30AM	Sep Non-farm payrolls (k)	136	145	130
8:30AM	Sep Unemployment rate mm (%)	3.5	3.7	3.7
8:30AM	Sep Average earnings mm (%)	0.0	0.3	0.4

## Update: Buyer Broker Agreement

After requests from real estate companies, a nonprofit consumer watchdog group the Consumer Federation of America has developed a list of factors to consider when creating a buyer contract in preparation for upcoming practice changes in the industry.

CFA released its “Proposed Criteria for Evaluating Home Buyer Contract Forms” on Tuesday. The 15 criteria focus on the contracts’ form – whether the documents are readable and understandable – and content – whether they are fair to homebuyers.

- the document’s expiration date (CFA recommends buyers asks for a three-month contract and never sign one longer than six months)
- the right to terminate the contract
- the disclosure that compensation is negotiable
- the broker’s compensation clearly stated and that the buyer broker can’t receive additional compensation for facilitating a sale
- that any additional fees, such as for showing a home, will be deducted from the broker’s commission if there is a successful sale
- that the commission is due only if there is a successful closing
- that buyers have an obligation – for no longer than 60 days, CFA recommends – to pay a broker who earlier showed them a home they purchased after the contract ended
- seller concessions paid directly to buyers
- dual agency not pre-approved by the contract
- an explanation of how a broker treats different buyer clients interested in the same property
- that buyers should not be required to first go through mediation or arbitration if they have a complaint

Contact me for more information. 702-303-0243 or [TPayne@loandepot.com](mailto:TPayne@loandepot.com)

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Tom Payne

