



# Quarterly Housing News

Volume 8, Issue 4

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## Chairman's Corner



As the housing prices in the region continue to climb, more and more of the area's low-income families are turning to rental assistance programs to help allay the cost of rental housing. One of the largest assistance programs aiding the region's working families is the Federal Housing Choice Voucher program, or Section 8. As of June 30 of last year, more than 27,000 families relied on the program to provide their families with a safe place to live. However, as indicated by the increasing number of families on local program waiting lists, many more families are struggling to secure and maintain housing in our region.

Barbara Favola  
Chair, Washington Area Housing Partnership

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## More than 69,000 Local Families in Need of Rental Assistance

Between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004, local public housing authorities provided rental assistance to approximately 27,247 low-income families through the federal Housing Choice Voucher Program. Although this is an 1.5 percent decrease from the number of families served by the program in fiscal year 2003, the need for assistance securing and retaining affordable rental housing has not lessened. During the 12-month period ending June 30, 2004, the number of families waiting to receive a housing choice voucher increased 32.1 percent from 52,542 families in 2003 to 69,383 families. More than half of these families (58.4 percent or 40,488) are in the District of Columbia. Due to the large number of families seeking assistance, the average wait time to receive a voucher is nearly 3 years (2 years, 7 months or approximately 949 days).

### Housing Choice Voucher Program Activity

Jurisdiction	Number of Housing Choice Vouchers Leased			Number of Families on Waiting List		
	2004	2003	% Change	2004	2003	% Change
City of Alexandria <sup>1</sup>	0	1,591	Not available	0	1,384	Not available
Arlington County	1,380	1,181	16.9%	5,400	4,267	26.6%
District of Columbia	10,097	8,921	13.2%	40,488	27,904	45.1%
Fairfax County	3,146	3,146	0.0%	6,503	6,909	-5.9%
Frederick County <sup>2</sup>	278	0	Not available	170	0	Not available
Loudoun County	354	770	-54.0%	1,190	1,060	12.3%
City of Manassas <sup>3</sup>	0	197	Not available	0	282	Not available
Montgomery County	5,338	5,413	-1.4%	10,000	4,200	138.1%
Prince George's County	4,384	4,186	4.7%	2,374	2,801	-15.2%
Prince William County	1,903	1,900	0.2%	2,700	3,191	-15.4%
City of Rockville	367	344	6.7%	558	544	2.6%
<b>COG Region</b>	<b>27,247</b>	<b>27,649</b>	<b>-1.5%</b>	<b>69,383</b>	<b>52,542</b>	<b>32.1%</b>

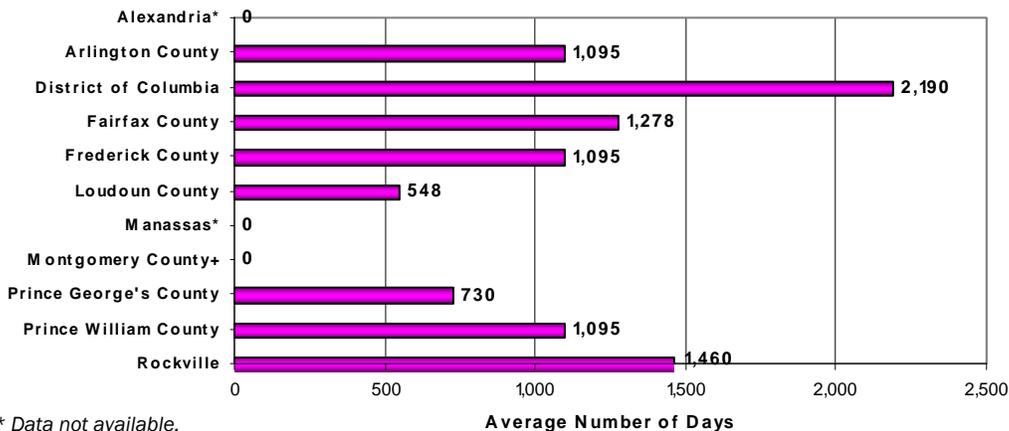
Source: "Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments 2004 Assisted Housing Survey"

<sup>1</sup> Data not provided for 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Prior to 2004, Frederick County did not participate in the Assisted Housing Survey.

<sup>3</sup> Data not provided for 2004.

### Average Wait for Assistance (days)



\* Data not available.

+ County's waiting list is currently closed and they have ceased issuing vouchers.

## Fairfax County Continues to Lead Region in Home Sales

Fairfax County led the region in home sales (6,188 units) during the fourth quarter 2004, followed by Montgomery and Prince George's counties (4,467 units and 4,060 units respectively). Arlington County experienced a decrease in fourth quarter sales, with 26 fewer units sold during the last three months of 2004 than during the same period in 2003. Overall, the region saw an 11 percent increase in fourth quarter home sales between 2003 and 2004.

*Fourth Quarter Home Sales by Jurisdiction, 2004 and 2003 (Adjusted)*

Jurisdiction	1st Qtr 2004	2nd Qtr 2004	3rd Qtr 2004	4th Qtr 2004	4th Qtr 2003 (Adj)	Change, 2003 - 2004	
						#	%
City of Alexandria	611	945	976	872	750	122	16.3%
Arlington County	687	1,135	1,109	874	900	-26	-2.9%
District of Columbia	1,853	2,704	2,366	2,653	2,444	209	8.6%
City of Fairfax	91	118	115	141	90	51	56.7%
Fairfax County	4,105	7,204	7,316	6,188	5,565	623	11.2%
City of Falls Church	32	67	86	63	45	18	40.0%
Frederick County	842	1,354	1,417	1,125	1,103	22	2.0%
Loudoun County	1,357	2,440	2,470	2,198	1,860	338	18.2%
City of Manassas	185	295	370	303	269	34	12.6%
City of Manassas Park	77	114	129	118	91	27	29.7%
Montgomery County	3,066	4,959	5,279	4,467	4,068	399	9.8%
Prince George's County	3,101	4,170	4,464	4,060	3,838	222	5.8%
Prince William County	1,984	2,926	3,192	2,891	2,362	529	22.4%
<b>COG Region</b>	<b>17,991</b>	<b>28,431</b>	<b>29,289</b>	<b>25,953</b>	<b>23,385</b>	<b>2,568</b>	<b>11.0%</b>

Source: Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc.

## Region's Average Home Sale Price Tops \$400,000 During Fourth Quarter 2004

*Average Home Sales Price, Fourth Quarter 2004 and 2003 (Adjusted)*

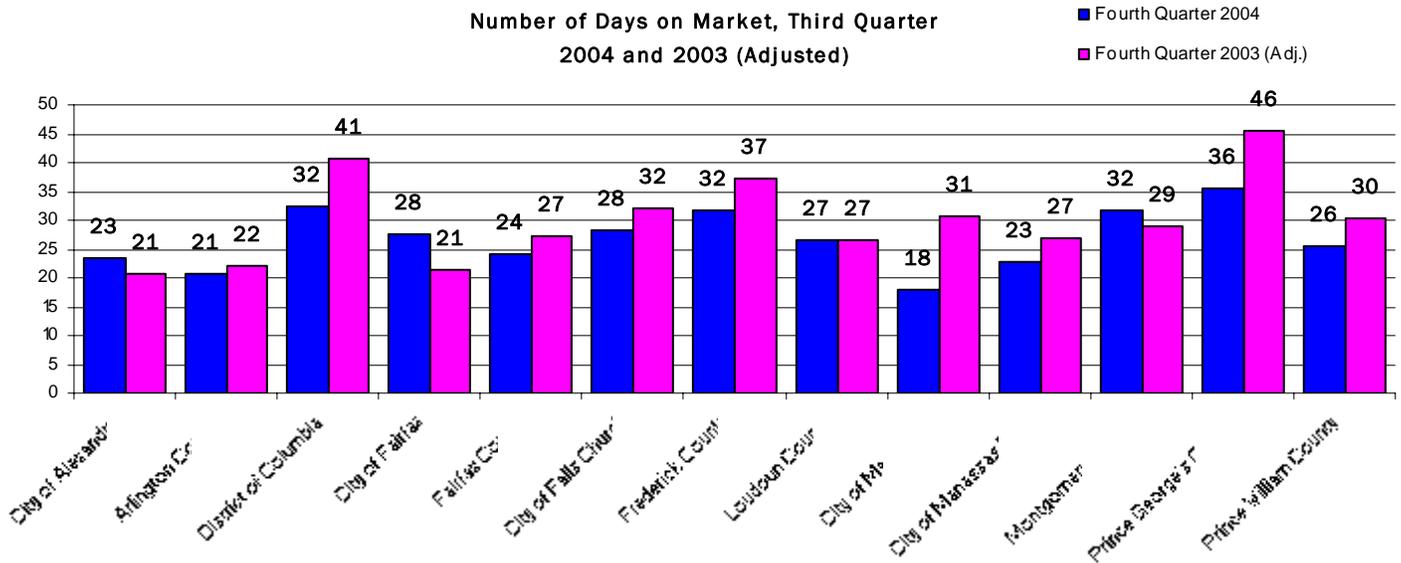
Jurisdiction	1st Qtr 2004	2nd Qtr 2004	3rd Qtr 2004	4th Qtr 2004	4th Qtr 2003 (Adj)	Change, 2003 - 2004	
						#	%
City of Alexandria	\$360,046	\$426,888	\$406,668	\$422,878	\$354,866	\$68,012	19.2%
Arlington County	\$430,317	\$453,840	\$466,756	\$476,629	\$397,856	\$78,773	19.8%
District of Columbia	\$399,566	\$452,664	\$445,325	\$462,305	\$389,532	\$72,773	18.7%
City of Fairfax	\$324,869	\$381,456	\$387,848	\$402,720	\$323,796	\$78,924	24.4%
Fairfax County	\$396,885	\$446,978	\$451,499	\$460,508	\$377,850	\$82,658	21.9%
City of Falls Church	\$510,839	\$535,883	\$527,485	\$552,382	\$442,071	\$110,311	25.0%
Frederick County	\$250,633	\$280,680	\$292,648	\$302,555	\$244,244	\$58,311	23.9%
Loudoun County	\$389,451	\$421,347	\$436,155	\$451,465	\$371,158	\$80,308	21.6%
City of Manassas	\$233,624	\$259,042	\$284,646	\$297,015	\$226,925	\$70,091	30.9%
City of Manassas Park	\$239,682	\$274,951	\$298,929	\$309,469	\$241,278	\$68,191	28.3%
Montgomery County	\$386,595	\$435,050	\$440,360	\$439,771	\$376,196	\$63,575	16.9%
Prince George's County	\$208,899	\$230,481	\$245,520	\$257,186	\$201,636	\$55,550	27.5%
Prince William County	\$286,222	\$318,390	\$336,240	\$352,966	\$274,561	\$78,405	28.6%
<b>COG Region</b>	<b>\$340,909</b>	<b>\$387,235</b>	<b>\$392,336</b>	<b>\$402,315</b>	<b>\$330,277</b>	<b>\$72,039</b>	<b>21.8%</b>

Source: Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc.

\* Above figures include average prices of single-family detached/attached homes and condominium units sold.

During the three month period ending December 31, 2004 the average home sales price in the region rose to \$402,315, a 21.8 % increase over the average sale price during the same period in 2003. Average sales prices rose more than 16 percent in every jurisdiction with the highest increases occurring in Prince William County (28.6 %) and the cities of Manassas (30.9 %) and Manassas Park (28.3 %).

## Time to Sale Decreases 3.3 Percent

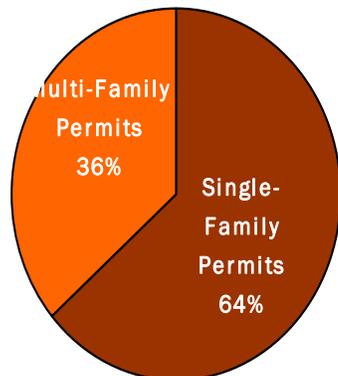


- Homes in the COG region sold 3.3% faster during the fourth quarter 2004 than during the same period last year (down to 27 days from 30 days).
- Homes sold fastest in the City of Manassas (18 days) and slowest in Prince George's County (36 days).

## Loudoun County Leads Region in Residential Construction Permitting

During the last three months of 2004, Loudoun County issued 1,394 residential construction permits (23.8% of the region's total). Permitting activity was slowest in Arlington County, where only two residential construction permits were issued during the fourth quarter 2004.

**Distribution of Construction Permits  
Third Quarter 2004**



**Residential Construction Permitting, Fourth Quarter 2004**

Jurisdiction	Fourth Qtr. 2004		
	SF	MF	Total
City of Alexandria <sup>1</sup>	74	290	364
Arlington County	2	0	2
District of Columbia	23	324	347
City of Fairfax	14	0	14
Fairfax County	541	594	1,135
City of Falls Church <sup>2</sup>	0	0	0
Frederick County <sup>3</sup>	212	0	212
Loudoun County	1,280	114	1,394
City of Manassas <sup>4</sup>	0	0	0
City of Manassas Park <sup>5</sup>	0	0	0
Montgomery County	508	507	1,015
Prince George's County	419	0	419
Prince William County	651	298	949
<b>COG Region</b>	<b>3,724</b>	<b>2,127</b>	<b>5,851</b>

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

<sup>1</sup>Permitting data not available for January and September, 2004.

<sup>2</sup>Permitting data not available for January through June, August and September, 2004.

<sup>3</sup>Permitting data not available for March, 2004.

<sup>4</sup>Permitting data not available for January through September, 2004.

<sup>5</sup>Permitting data not available for January through September, 2004.



The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) is the regional organization of the Washington area's local governments and officials, plus area members of the Maryland and Virginia legislatures and the U.S. Congress. COG provides a focus for action on issues of regional concern such as housing policy, comprehensive transportation planning, economic development, and population growth and its implications for the region. COG is supported by contributions from participating local governments, federal and state government grants and contracts and through donations from local foundations and the private sector. If you would like to learn more about COG's involvement in the region's housing issues, please visit our website at [www.mwcog.org](http://www.mwcog.org) or call Stacy Pethia, Housing Planner, at 202-962-3753.



The Washington Area Housing Partnership (WAHP) is a regional public-private partnership affiliated with, and located within, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. The mission of WAHP is to expand affordable housing opportunities within the metropolitan Washington region. In its role as an information clearinghouse, the Partnership maintains and reports data on various aspects of the region's housing market. This includes the Annual Regional Housing Report, an assessment of the region's rental housing stock and analysis of the Decennial Census of the Population and Housing, the American Housing Survey and the Home Mortgage Disclosure Act. If you are interested in learning more about the Partnership, please contact Keith Fleury, Housing Programs Manager, at 202-962-3346, or visit the Partnership website at [www.wahpdc.org](http://www.wahpdc.org).



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The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and the Washington Area Housing Partnership would like to thank our following supporters:



The "Quarterly Housing News" is a companion to the "Regional Housing Report," released by COG on an annual basis. The "Quarterly Housing News" provides quarterly updates on housing trends throughout the COG member jurisdictions. To subscribe to this and other newsletters, please visit COG's website at [www.mwcog.org/publications/subscribe](http://www.mwcog.org/publications/subscribe).

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