



Quarterly Housing News

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Chairman's Corner



Northern Virginia continues to be the center of residential mar-

ket activity as more than one-third of the region's construction permits were issued by Northern Virginia jurisdictions in the past three months and 60 percent of the region's homes sales occurred in those areas. Once again, all COG jurisdictions saw the price of homes escalate. The average home sales price increased by more than 20 percent in almost every jurisdiction and rose 22 percent regionally since the second quarter of 2003.

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Local jurisdictions recognize the increasing difficulty local families are experiencing in locating affordable housing and are constantly working to develop programs to increase the local work-force housing stock and assist families in securing decent housing. Programs are designed to address homeownership, elderly and disabled housing, and rental housing issues. In the next several issues of the "Quarterly Housing News," we will highlight some of the region's best local efforts.

This month, we are showcasing Prince William County's efforts to encourage low-income families to work towards self-sufficiency through the federal Family Self-Sufficiency and Housing Choice Voucher programs.



Prince William County Office of Housing and Community Development

The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program is designed to assist participants of the federal Housing Choice Voucher program become self-reliant and no longer dependent upon public assistance. Prince William County's program has 130 active families, and is currently in the process of filling 15 open slots from a waiting list of over 31 families. Program participants are escrowing at a rate of 62 percent, and 84 percent of families have escrow balances. To escrow, a family must increase earned income above the amount earned at the beginning of the contract, and pay a higher share of rent than was paid when entering the program. Those who are currently not escrowing are receiving individualized case management to assist with issues that contribute to unemployment and underemployment. Families who also participate in the Welfare to Work program receive firm guidelines on work requirements and are achieving comparable rates of progress toward self-sufficiency. Families who are both Welfare to Work voucher recipients and Family Self Sufficiency program participants have a particularly high success rate of program compliance and employment stability.

A coordinated approach to case management has been found to be successful in managing a relatively large caseload of families. Among the organizations with whom this has been successful are the Northern Virginia Family Service, the Department of Social Services and faith based organizations. These departments and organizations have consistently filled gaps in resource availability for families who otherwise lack access to appropriate services on their own. In addition, consistent communication with appropriate housing staff when providing services has proved invaluable in delivering holistic case management for each family. Concerted case management between organizations, which encourages information sharing and leads to the elimination of isolation for a family in need of services, seems to work best in delivering the correct services to families who need them, and in turn encourages progress.

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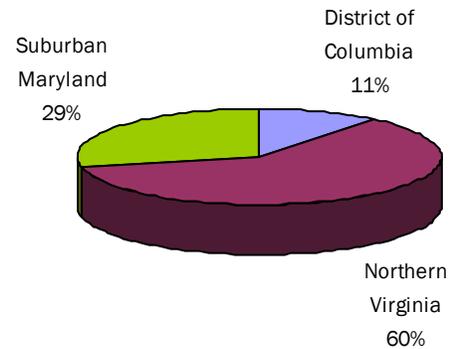
Regional Home Sales Concentrated in Northern Virginia Communities

Homes sales in Northern Virginia accounted for 60 percent (15,244 units) of the total second quarter sales for the region. Fairfax County recorded the most number of homes sold (4,959) during the second quarter 2004, while the City of Manassas Park saw the greatest percentage increase (34.1%) in homes sales over second quarter 2003. A total of 28,431 homes sold during the period April–June 2004, a 16.5 percent increase over the same period in 2003.

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

Jurisdiction	1st Qtr 2004	2nd Qtr 2004	2nd Qtr 2003 (Adj)	Change, 2003 - 2004	
				#	%
City of Alexandria	611	945	856	89	10.4%
Arlington County	687	1,135	948	187	19.7%
District of Columbia	1,853	2,704	2,257	447	19.8%
City of Fairfax	91	118	116	2	1.7%
Fairfax County	4,105	7,204	6,422	782	12.2%
City of Falls Church	32	67	53	14	26.4%
Frederick County	842	1,354	1,171	183	15.6%
Loudoun County	1,357	2,440	1,984	456	23.0%
City of Manassas	185	295	297	-2	-0.7%
City of Manassas Park	77	114	85	29	34.1%
Montgomery County	3,066	4,959	4,350	609	14.0%
Prince George's County	3,101	4,170	3,499	671	19.2%
Prince William County	1,984	2,926	2,359	567	24.0%
COG Region	17,991	28,431	24,397	4,034	16.5%

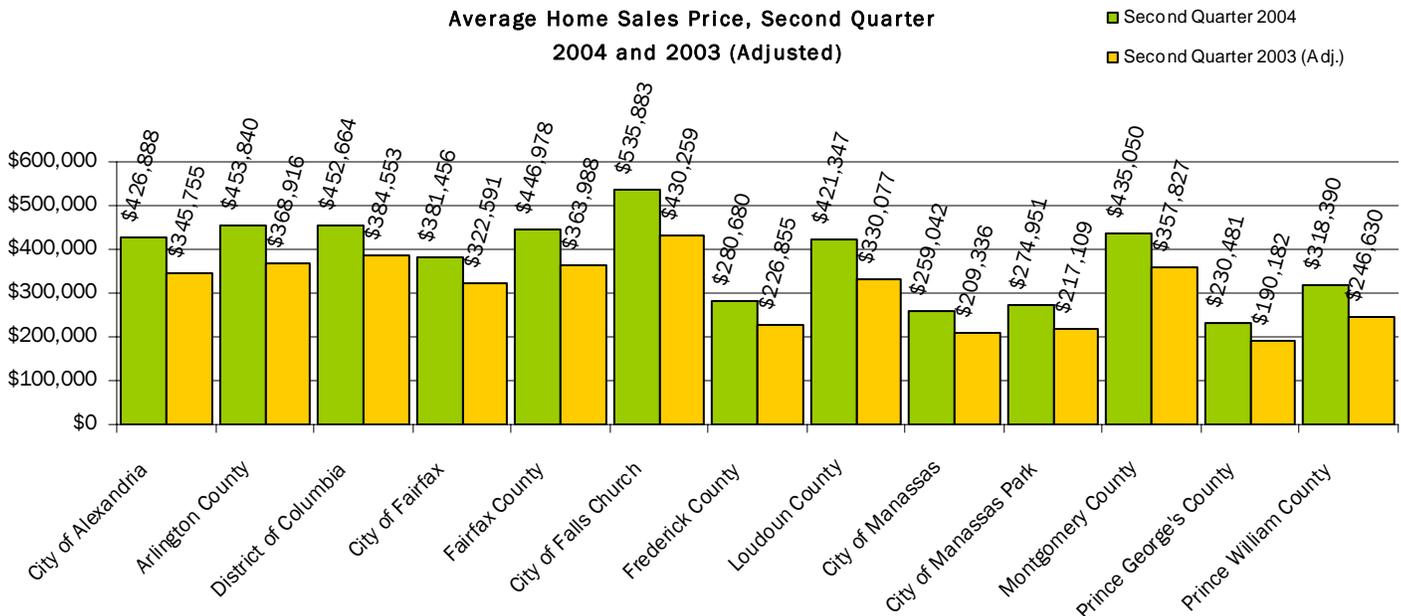
Percentage of Regional Home Sales
Second Quarter 2004



Source: Metropolitan Regional Information Systems, Inc.

Average Price of Homes Jumps Nearly 30% in Prince William County

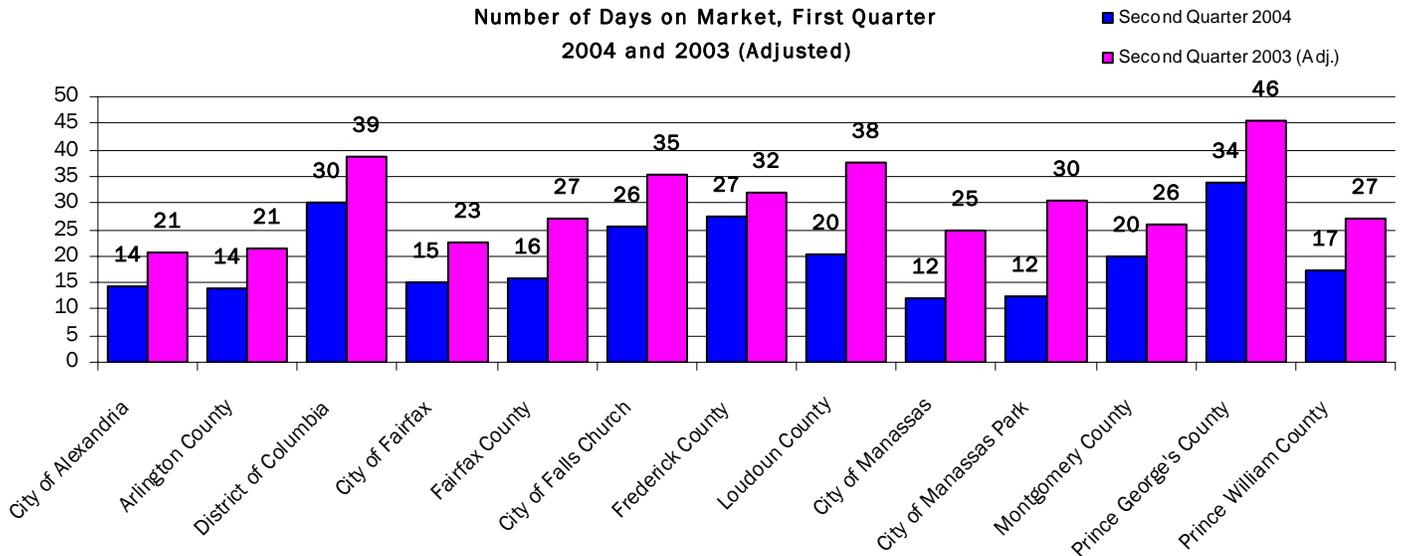
Average Home Sales Price, Second Quarter
2004 and 2003 (Adjusted)



The average home sales price in the region rose to \$387,235 during the second quarter 2004. This is an increase of 22.4 percent over the average price during second quarter 2003. Prince William County experienced the greatest increase in average sales price between June 2003 and June 2004 (29.1%), while average prices in the District of Columbia rose the least (17.7%). Second quarter average sales prices were highest in the City of Falls Church (\$535,883) and Arlington County (\$453,840) and lowest in Prince George's County (\$230,481) and the City of Manassas (\$259,042).

On Average, Homes Selling Within 20 Days

Homes throughout the region remained on the market an average of 20 days during the second quarter of this year, a 33 percent decrease from the same period last year.. Homes in the cities of Manassas and Manassas Park sold in the least number of days (12), while homes remained on the market longest in Prince George's County (34 days) and the District of Columbia (30 days).



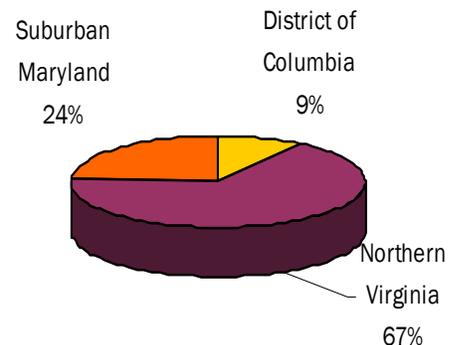
Most Residential Construction Permits Go Toward Single-Family Housing

Residential Construction Permitting, Second Quarter 2004

Jurisdiction	First Qtr. 2004			Second Qtr. 2004		
	SF	MF	Total	SF	MF	Total
City of Alexandria ¹	110	289	399	51	40	91
Arlington County	12	0	12	3	0	3
District of Columbia	91	62	153	75	685	760
City of Fairfax	9	0	9	17	0	17
Fairfax County	787	495	1,282	769	1,411	2,180
City of Falls Church ²	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frederick County ³	160	0	160	466	0	466
Loudoun County	1,253	425	1,678	1,504	99	1,603
City of Manassas ⁴	0	0	0	0	0	0
City of Manassas Park ⁵	0	0	0	0	0	0
Montgomery County	603	193	796	371	418	789
Prince George's County	420	0	420	570	73	643
Prince William County	1,123	207	1,330	1,457	32	1,489
COG Region	4,568	1,671	6,239	5,283	2,758	8,041

More than 8,000 residential construction permits were issued regionally during the second quarter of 2004. The majority of those permits (65.7%) were for single-family homes. Permitting activity was centered in Northern Virginia jurisdictions which accounted for 67 percent of all permits. Fairfax County issued permits for the construction of the highest number of multi-family units (1,411), while Loudoun County permitted construction of the most single-family homes (1,504).

**Share of Regional Permits
Second Quarter 2004**



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

¹Permitting data not available for January, 2004.

²Permitting data not available for January through June, 2004.

³Permitting data not available for March, 2004.

⁴Permitting data not available for January through June, 2004.

⁵Permitting data not available for January through June, 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 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, Senior Housing Planner, at 202-962-3346.



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