

The Healthiest Housing Markets for 2009

Builder, in conjunction with Hanley Wood Market Intelligence, debuts its metric for determining markets with the best and least potential.



1. Houston, Texas

2008 Total Building Permits: 42,697

They like to do things big in Houston. Now the metro area, home to more than 5.8 million people, can lay claim to being the largest home building market in the country, with 42,697 building permits. The market is still benefiting from an influx of population and jobs and rebuilding in [the wake of Hurricane Ike](#). Employment was up 2.5 percent last year, representing the addition of an incredible 65,000 jobs. Home building activity in Houston has only fallen 31 percent since 2005. Also, existing-home prices rose in Houston through the first three quarters of last year. They finished the year at a median of \$151,600, even with the previous year. Roughly one-third of the home building action is in Harris County, followed by Houston proper and Fort Bend County.