

U.S. Housing Starts and Non-Residential Construction¹

Table 2-1

U.S. housing starts: Privately owned and total,¹ by type of structure and region,² 1997-2001

Period and region	Single units			Multi-unit			Total privately owned	Percent
	Town-house	Detached	Total	2 to 4 units	5 or more units	Total		
<i>Thousands of units</i>								
1997:								
Northeast	22	89	111	5	21	26	137	10
Midwest	28	210	238	17	48	65	304	20
South	39	468	507	13	151	164	671	45
West	15	263	278	10	76	86	363	25
Total	104	1,030	1,134	44	296	340	1,475	100
1998:								
Northeast	24	98	122	5	21	26	148	9
Midwest	31	242	273	13	45	58	330	20
South	45	529	574	15	155	170	743	46
West	17	286	303	9	83	92	395	24
Total	117	1,155	1,271	43	303	346	1,617	100
1999:								
Northeast	26	101	126	9	20	29	155	9
Midwest	37	251	289	9	50	59	348	21
South	45	534	580	8	159	167	747	46
West	19	289	308	6	78	84	392	24
Total	127	1,175	1,302	32	307	339	1,641	100
2000:								
Northeast	24	94	118	9	27	36	154	10
Midwest	38	223	260	11	46	57	317	20
South	49	506	556	11	147	158	714	46
West	15	282	297	8	79	87	384	24
Total	126	1,105	1,231	39	299	338	1,569	100
2001:								
Northeast	20	91	111	11	28	39	150	9
Midwest	43	226	269	9	52	61	330	21
South	59	531	590	9	132	141	731	46
West	18	285	303	7	81	88	391	24
Total	140	1,134	1,273	36	293	329	1,602	100
2002:								
Northeast	22	96	118	10	31	41	159	9
Midwest	55	222	277	10	63	73	350	21
South	62	566	628	11	143	154	782	46
West	21	315	336	7	72	79	415	24
Total	160	1,199	1,359	38	309	347	1,706	100

¹ Totals may not add due to rounding.

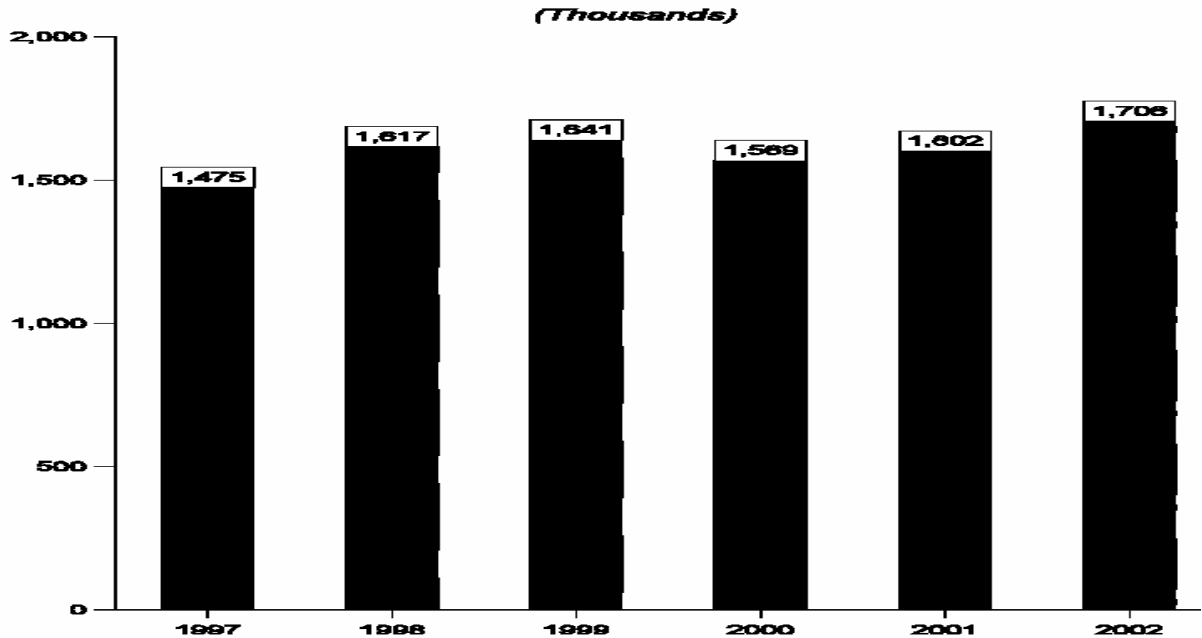
² Regions correspond to U.S. Census regions as shown in figure 2-3.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Series C20 reports 96-2, 97-2, 98-2, 99-2, and 20 00-2, <http://www.census.gov/const>.

1. Demand for wood structural building components is driven by the markets for new residential construction, residential repair and remodeling and nonresidential commercial construction, all of which remained strong during 1997-2001. **Falling interest rates, strong immigration, and rising housing values, which boosted consumer confidence, all contributed to a strong housing market.**
2. In 1997, privately owned housing starts totaled 1.5 million. During 1998-2001, housing starts were approximately 1.6 million per year, and in **2002, housing starts were approximately 1.7 million.**
3. One domestic industry representative suggested that U.S. demand for housing was such that 2002 housing starts could have reached 2 million if the supply of labor was adequate.
4. **In 2002, the South accounted for 46% of all privately owned housing starts.** The Northeast 9%, the Midwest 21%, and the West 24% accounted for the remainder.
5. The size of houses also affects the demand for wood structural building components. Houses have doubled in size since 1950. Driving the size increase are trends toward larger rooms, higher ceilings, and larger garages. During 1997-2001, the average size of single family, detached houses, which accounted for approximately 70% of all U.S. privately, owned housing starts, increased by approximately 11% to 2,272 square feet of furnished floor space. The trend towards larger houses is expected to continue.

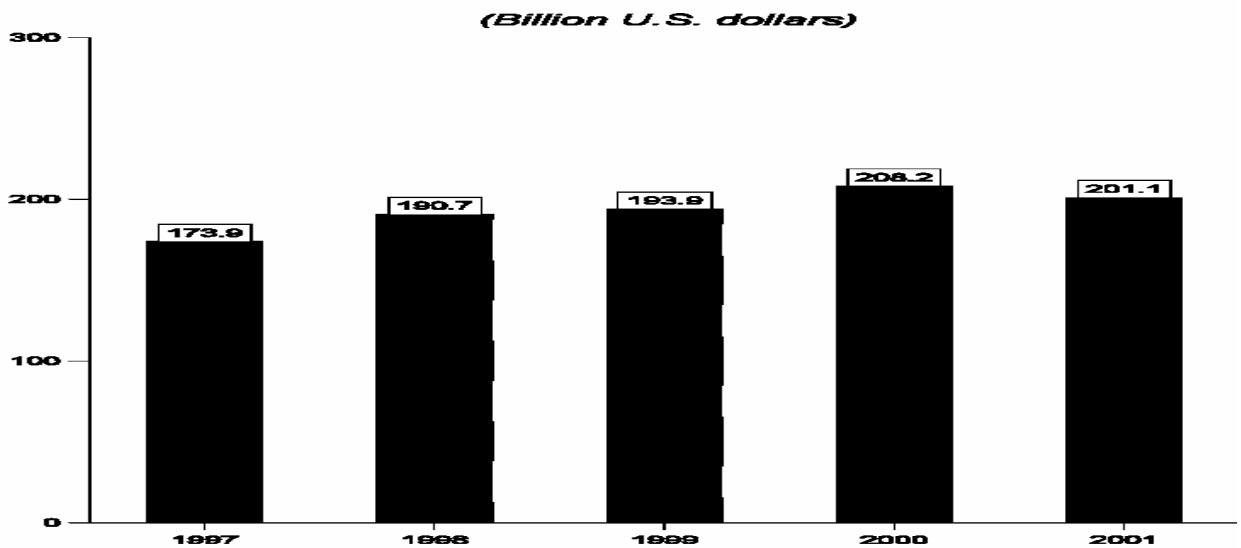
6. Likewise, U.S. expenditures for nonresidential commercial construction increased at an average compound annual rate of 3.7% from \$174 billion in 1997 to \$201 billion in 2001. The total consumption of structural building materials (e.g., lumber, EWP, concrete, and steel) used in the production of floors, walls, and roofing rose by 19% between 1997 and 2000.

Figure 2-1
Privately owned U.S. housing starts, 1997-2002



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "New Privately Owned Housing Units Started," found at <http://www.census.gov/const/startan.pdf>, retrieved Mar. 3, 2003.

Figure 2-4
U.S. nonresidential construction expenditures, 1997-2001



Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

ⁱ All facts taken directly from the U.S. International Trade Commission Publication 3596 entitled "Conditions of Competition in the U.S. Market for Wood Structural Building Components" from ITC Investigation No. 332-445 April 2003. U.S. International Trade Commission, Washington, DC 20436, www.usitc.gov