



## The 8 Healthiest Housing Markets

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Many of the housing markets projected to have the biggest gains into 2012 tend to be the home to major universities, strong private sector employment, or have nearby military bases, according to a list of the healthiest housing markets by Builder Magazine. Builder teamed with Hanley Wood Market Intelligence to compile its annual list of the healthiest housing markets in the country, factoring in housing projections from Moody's Economy.com. The list was based on projected price appreciation, population growth, income growth, and improving employment picture.

The following are the eight cities that topped Builder's list, including projected housing permits in 2011 and 2012.

### 1. Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington Minn.-Wis.

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 4,511

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 10,118

Home prices here are expected to rise 8 percent next year, the highest growth projected in the 100 cities analyzed. As a hub for medical technology and headquarters for several large companies, employment is expected to grow 2.5 percent in 2012.

### 2. Fort Collins-Loveland, Colo.

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 1,004

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 1,650

With Colorado State University the major employer here and often ranked as one of the best cities to live in the country, households are expected to grow by 2.7 percent in 2012 and employment is expected to grow 2.6 percent. Housing permits are expected to rise 50 percent as well, according to Moody projections.

### 3. Salt Lake City, Utah

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 1,294

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 1,181

With lots of high-tech businesses, Salt Lake City is poised to have some gains in employment and income in the coming year. After a drop in home prices, prices are expected to rebound and increase 4.7 percent next year.

### 4. Jacksonville, Fla.

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 2,284

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 4,363

Jacksonville has a strengthening employment picture, with a military presence and a growing financial services sector. Employment is expected to increase 3.2 percent in 2012. With stabilizing home prices already, prices are expected to rise 5 percent next year and housing permits are expected to double.

### 5. Miami-Fort Lauderdale-Pompano Beach, Fla.

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 2,708

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 7,522

This metro area is expected to reverse course with jobs forecasted to grow by 2.7 percent, home prices stabilizing, and housing permits expected to double. The rebound is expected to be mostly driven by two major projects, the CitiCentre and Resorts World Miami, are expected to add tens of thousands of jobs in coming years.

### 6. Charlottesville, Va.

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 634

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 798

The city is home to the University of Virginia and also continues to attract a surge in second-home buyers from the Washington, D.C., area. Home prices are expected to rise 1 percent in 2012 and median income is forecasted to grow by 3.7 percent.

#### **7. Colorado Springs, Colo.**

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 2,099

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 3,639

The biggest employers in Colorado Springs are military bases and the Air Force Academy, which are expected to see big growth when the troops from Afghanistan return. Home prices are expected to rise 2.6 percent, employment to grow by 1.4 percent, and households to increase by 1.8 percent in 2012.

#### **8. Oklahoma City, Okla.**

2011 Building Permit Forecast: 3,417

2012 Building Permit Forecast: 5,284

At 6.1 percent, Oklahoma City has one of the lowest unemployment rates in the country. Furthermore, the job market is expected to continue to rise there, and incomes are projected to increase 3 percent next year. While the area has seen a drop in home prices recently, housing prices are projected to rebound and increase 2.6 percent as Oklahoma City's low cost of living continues to attract businesses and new households.

[See which other cities made Builder's top 20 list.](#)

Source: *"Healthiest Housing Markets: Mid-2011 Update," Builder Magazine (2011)*

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