

## Portsmouth Area Leads New England in Unaffordability of Housing

Only California is less affordable

According to the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB), the Portsmouth-Rochester, NH-ME, PMSA was the least affordable Primary Metropolitan Statistical Area (PMSA) in the U.S., outside of California, for purchasing a home in fourth quarter 2000. Portsmouth, ranked 174<sup>th</sup> of 180, was the only area among the ten least affordable not in California. The NAHB produced *Housing Opportunity Index: Fourth Quarter 2000*. You may view this report at <[http://www.nahb.com/facts/hoi/2000\\_4Q/complete\\_ranking.htm](http://www.nahb.com/facts/hoi/2000_4Q/complete_ranking.htm)>.

The NAHB estimated median family income and calculated the median sales price for 180 statistical areas in the U.S. It then presented the share of affordable homes sold in 4<sup>th</sup> quarter 2000, given the median family income. Only about one in five homes from the Portsmouth area were affordable for families at the median income level.

Portsmouth was not alone in New Hampshire in lack of affordability. Lowell, MA-NH, PMSA was 168<sup>th</sup>,

nestled between New York, NY, PMSA and Barnstable-Yarmouth, MA, MSA. The Nashua, NH, PMSA was the most affordable area in the state and it ranked 108<sup>th</sup> among the 180. About two of three homes there were affordable. Within New England, Connecticut and Western Massachusetts were the most affordable areas where 2/3 to 3/4 of the homes fell in that category. Within the Northeast, the closer the area is to Boston or New York, the less affordable it is.

The West had by far the largest gap between income and home price. The most affordable area in the West was Anchorage, AK, MSA at 20<sup>th</sup> over all. Next came Albuquerque NM, MSA, all the way down in 88<sup>th</sup> place. The Midwest was at the other end of the scale with the first six most affordable areas. Des Moines, IA, MSA was the most affordable area in the nation with 86.0 percent of the homes affordable for those at median income. Of the 36 areas in the Midwest, fifteen were in the top 25 most affordable areas.

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### Affordable Housing by Metro Area

Metro Area	Affordable Homes for Median Income	Affordability Rank	Comments
Des Moines, IA, MSA	88.9%	1	most affordable in nation
New Haven-Meriden, CT, PMSA	73.9%	55	most affordable in region
Nashua, NH, PMSA	63.1%	108	most affordable in state
Boston, MA-NH, PMSA	43.8%	150	
Lawrence, MA-NH, PMSA	38.9%	154	
Lowell, MA-NH, PMSA	28.6%	168	
Portsmouth-Rochester, NH-ME, PMSA	20.4%	174	least affordable in state
San Francisco CA, PMSA	6.1%	180	least affordable in nation

Source: *Housing Opportunity Index: Fourth Quarter*, [http://www.nahb.com/facts/hoi/2000\\_4Q/complete\\_ranking.htm](http://www.nahb.com/facts/hoi/2000_4Q/complete_ranking.htm)