August 20, 2026

Thomas J. Smith
U.S. Census Bureau
4600 Silver Hill Rd
Washington, DC 20233

RE: *Federal Register* notice of July 20, 2026, for the Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (OMB Number: 0607-0110)

Dear Mr. Smith:

The Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) strongly supports the continued collection of data by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions, known as the Survey of Construction (SOC). The data collected through this survey are crucial to key components of BEA's economic statistics.

BEA relies on data collected on forms SOC-QI/SF.1, Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (Single-family Buildings) and SOC-QI/MF.1, Survey of Housing Starts and Completions (Multiunit Buildings) to prepare the national income and product accounts. BEA's use of these data is primarily indirect, in that the information on housing starts, sales price, lot value, and building characteristics from this survey is used in the Census Bureau's Survey of Construction to prepare estimates of the value of residential construction put in place series.

This series is used by BEA to prepare estimates of the residential fixed investment component of gross domestic product (GDP) and of the output of the construction industry for the annual input-output and GDP by industry accounts. Sales, sales price, lot value, and building characteristics data from these forms also are used by the Census Bureau to prepare price indexes for single family structures and price indexes for multi-family structures that are used by BEA to prepare estimates of the real residential fixed investment component of GDP and real output of the construction industry. A list of data used indirectly and directly by BEA is provided in the attachment.

Please keep BEA informed about any modifications to this survey. We are particularly interested in any modifications proposed during the survey's approval process that would substantially affect our use of these data. For additional information, please contact Tiffany Burrell, Source Data Coordinator, on 301-278-9618 or by e-mail at Tiffany.Burrell@bea.gov. Should you need assistance in justifying this survey to the Office of Management and Budget, please do not hesitate to contact BEA.

Sincerely,

Dennis J. Fixler
Chief Economist

Attachment

ATTACHMENT

Survey statistic:	**Used by BEA for:**
Single family:	
Starts	Fixed investment: single family structures
Completions	Fixed investment: single family structures
Sales	Brokers' commissions of sale of structures
Characteristics	Price index: single family structures
Sales price	Fixed investment: single family structures
Lot value	Fixed investment: single family structures
Multi-family:	
Starts	Fixed investment: multi-family structures
Completions	Fixed investment: multi-family structures
Characteristics	Price index: multi-family structures

PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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Docket: USBC-2026-0298
Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (SOC)

Comment On: USBC-2026-0298-0001
Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (SOC) Federal Register Notice

Document: USBC-2026-0298-DRAFT-0005
Comment on FR Doc # 2026-14512

Submitter Information

Name: Anonymous Anonymous

General Comment

The SOC provides the core data behind Principal Federal Economic Indicators, including Housing Starts, Housing Completions, and New Residential Sales. This dataset possesses extraordinary practical utility as Federal Reserve policymakers, HUD officials, and market analysts rely on SOC metrics to gauge national economic health, inflationary pressures, and private fixed investment in GDP calculations. Tracking physical characteristics (square footage, financing type, structure types) ensures federal housing policy remains grounded in real-time supply dynamics.

The Bureau appropriately adjusted its average interview counts (9.6 for single-family; 8.5 for multifamily) to reflect longer construction and sales cycles observed in 2023–2025 data. Utilizing Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) via trained field representatives minimizes reporting friction for builders and property owners. At an estimated 5 minutes per interview, the survey imposes a minimal administrative impact on field respondents while maintaining a statistically robust sample (~19,353 new buildings annually). The Census Bureau's updated burden methodology is transparent, empirically grounded, and accurate.

The Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions delivers critical public utility at a highly optimized operational cost. We urge the OMB to promptly approve this clearance extension for the full three-year period.

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Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (SOC)

Comment On: USBC-2026-0298-0001
Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (SOC) Federal Register Notice

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Comment on FR Doc # 2026-14512

Submitter Information

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General Comment

Public Comment to Docket USBC-2026-0298
Agency Information Collection Activities; Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (OMB Control Number 0607-0110)
The Census Bureau seeks a three-year extension of the Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (Survey of Construction). The survey supplies the monthly economic indicators Housing Starts, Housing Completions, and New Residential Sales. These series are used by the Federal Reserve, HUD, private analysts, and the construction industry to track residential building activity.
The collection is necessary. No alternative private or public source provides comparable national coverage of starts, completions, and sales with the same frequency and geographic detail. The practical utility of the data is high and well-established.

The burden estimate appears reasonable on its face. Sampling approximately 19,353 buildings per year and conducting an average of 9.6 interviews for single-family and 8.5 for multifamily buildings, at five minutes per interview, produces the stated 14,809 annual hours. The modest increase relative to the prior clearance period is attributed to longer construction and sales timelines, which keep buildings in sample longer. That explanation is plausible given recent market conditions. The methodology and assumptions should be retained unless field experience shows systematic over- or under-counting of interviews.

Quality and clarity can still be improved without increasing burden. Ensure that the CAPI instruments clearly distinguish between start, completion, and sale dates and capture physical characteristics consistently across single-family and multifamily forms. Any ambiguity in definitions (for example, what constitutes a “completion” when finishing work is phased) should be resolved in the instrument and interviewer training to reduce follow-up contacts.

Minimizing respondent burden remains important. Field representatives already use electronic questionnaires; continued refinement of skip patterns and pre-population of known data from prior interviews will help. Where builders manage multiple projects, allowing a single point of contact to report across sites, when feasible, would reduce repeated outreach. Automated or electronic submission options for larger builders who already track these data internally should be explored as a longer-term efficiency measure, provided data quality is maintained.

No objection is raised to the extension. The survey should continue. The Bureau should publish the updated burden analysis and any instrument refinements in the final ICR package so the public can verify that the modest increase is fully justified by the longer project durations now observed.

PUBLIC SUBMISSION

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Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (SOC)

Comment On: USBC-2026-0298-0001
Survey of Housing Starts, Sales, and Completions (SOC) Federal Register Notice

Document: USBC-2026-0298-DRAFT-0003
Comment on FR Doc # 2026-14512

Submitter Information

Name: Anonymous Anonymous

General Comment

I recently learned that the number of "immigrants and their US-born offspring numbered approximately 90.9m people in 2023". This has an enormous impact on housing and housing supply as it constitutes almost a third of all peoples in the US. Large swings in the population make it difficult for homebuilders to forecast earnings, and for heritage American first time home buyers to afford homes. Following the price appreciation starting in 2020, an entire generation of young Americans has been largely priced out of the housing market at a time when birth rates are already significantly below the replacement rate. Politics has become a constant flow of miscontextualized information and outright false information, leading to the polarization of our population. Even official data sources are becoming weaponized, and the legitimacy of them questioned - for example, it has recently been highlighted that arrest records often record individuals race as "white" when the name and photo very clearly indicate the individual is not white.

Additional data on the citizenship, legal & migration status, occupational industry, & ethnicity would be informative to the general public in shaping their opinion on public policy.

Furthermore, I recently took the time to review my local cities section 8 housing and school costs. The burden per taxpaying household for section 8 housing was approximately $1,500, and each section 8 household received $48,000/year in taxpayer dollars. This is before the increased burden of additional police calls (over 1,000/year in the housing project I requested data on) and the school system, where annual cost per child was north of $20,000. Cities are increasingly requiring developers to include rent-subsidized units among their market rate units. The true cost of these programs is extremely burdensome for the average individual to uncover. Furthermore, I discovered that leases were not being enforced, with no evictions for non-payment of rent or violent/drug convictions. Collecting and publishing more comprehensive national data on subsidized and low-income housing would allow for a more informed public, and discussions which would ultimately lead to more favorable outcomes.