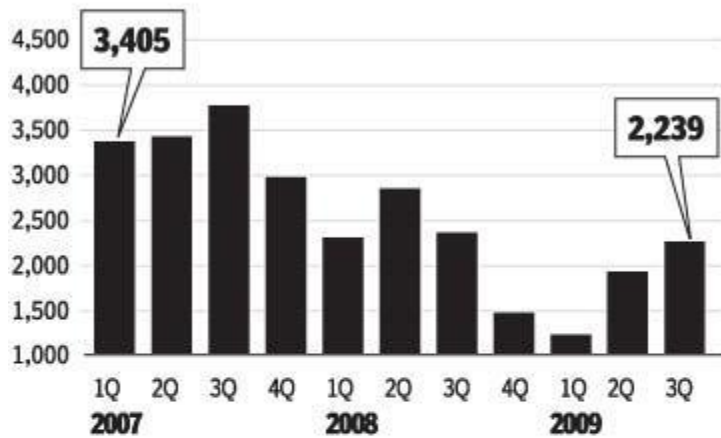


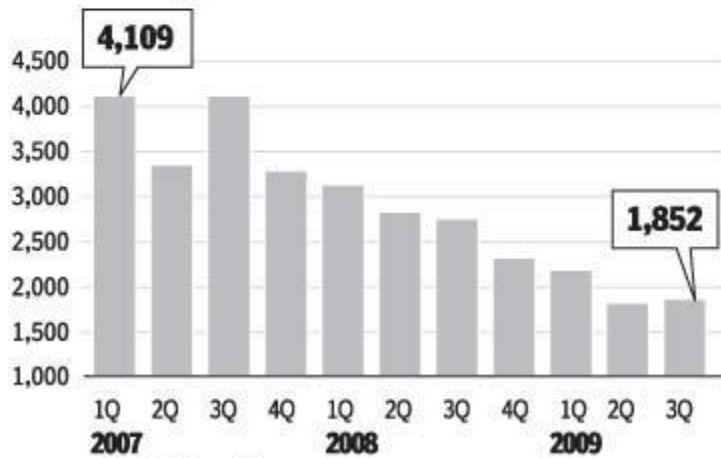
# Central Texas new-home market report

Some experts say there are signs the market is beginning to rebound.

## New home starts



## Closings



Source: Residential Strategies Inc.

**Linda Scott** AMERICAN-STATESMAN

# New-home market might be bottoming out

By Shonda Novak  
AMERICAN STATESMAN STAFF  
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**Central Texas' new-home market might be bottoming out, Residential Strategies Inc. said in releasing its third-quarter starts and closings figures Thursday.**

The 2,239 new homes that builders started from July through September were down 5.4 percent from the same quarter last year — but up 17 percent from this year's second quarter, Residential Strategies reported.

**"This is a positive sign and perhaps a signal that the successive quarterly decline in activity may be coming to an end," said Ted Wilson, a partner with the housing market research firm. Wilson said that much of the strength this summer was attributable to the \$8,000 federal tax credit for first-time homebuyers, which is set to expire Nov. 30, though there are proposals to extend it.**

What some others said:

Eldon Rude, Austin director for research firm Metrostudy: "We are not seeing the level of job relocations in the area that will result in the return to strong housing demand in the near term. Until we do, our housing market will remain challenging."

But Rude predicted that with new homes in shorter supply, "the region's continued household and population growth — albeit at subdued levels — will keep the industry viable as we wait for the end of this down cycle in the economy."

- Mark Sprague, a housing industry consultant who works with investors: "The entry level is what's moving. Luxury (housing) is very slow."

**But compared with many other cities, the Austin market is in good shape, he said: "I talk to investors and equity groups all over the world," including places where "jobs are being lost right and left. Other markets are so depressed. ... We are in a good place."**

Courtesy of JB Goodwin