

# Community Affairs News

## Foreclosures

Continued foreclosures and the fallout for communities in New England remain major concerns. In an op-ed piece published in March in many New England newspapers, Boston Fed President Eric Rosengren wrote: “Communities across New England and the nation are grappling with the souring of subprime mortgages and a jump in foreclosures. . . The situation won’t be easy to solve. However, one thing is clear: The time to act is now. There are steps that many of us can take right now - borrowers, lenders, public officials and regulators.”

The Community Affairs unit at the Boston Fed has focused its energies on efforts to help minimize the impact of foreclosures on low- and moderate-income communities. We are making available a wide range of resources including research, data, and consumer information. Many of these resources are available on our website at <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/foreclosures>. Other resources can be obtained by contacting staff directly at the numbers listed on our website at <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/commaff/staff.htm>. We welcome your input on these initiatives.

## Research and Data

We are currently expanding our research and data analysis on several topics, including:

- **Foreclosure patterns in New England.**  
Using Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data and Warren Group data, we are supplying nonprofits and municipalities with statistics they can use to inform their foreclosure prevention and intervention programs.
- **Neighborhood and regional mortgage and delinquency trends.**  
Using Loan Performance data and National Delinquency Survey data we will provide timely updates to nonprofits and municipalities on mortgage and delinquency issues in their areas (e.g., mortgage resets and the volume of REOs).
- **Housing and mortgage related issues affecting the senior population.**  
This study investigates issues concerning seniors, such as the rapid increase in the use of reverse mortgages.
- **Community impacts.**  
Using qualitative and quantitative data, we are examining the impacts of residential foreclosures beyond homeownership. The first step of this effort is to examine the potential impact of higher foreclosures on small business lending in the region.

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## Consumer Resources

In partnership with the Bank's Consumer Regulation Outreach unit, we are working with community groups to promote consumer resources made available by public, private, and nonprofit organizations. These resources include a mortgage relief fund and a website:

- **The Mortgage Relief Fund** is a joint initiative of the Boston Fed and several New England banks. Each bank will work with borrowers to explore mortgages with more-attractive terms than they may have now. The program is aimed at borrowers who are paying high rates despite good payment histories and are residing in homes that are worth more than their outstanding mortgage loan balance; it is not designed for borrowers who are seriously delinquent on their mortgage payments or facing imminent foreclosure. For more information on this program visit <http://www.mortgagerelieffund.com>
- **The Informed Homebuyer** (<http://www.theinformedhomebuyer.org>) is a website created by the Consumer Regulation Outreach unit to help consumers obtain the information they need to make better decisions about obtaining or refinancing a mortgage, or if they are facing foreclosure.

## Community Development Advisory Council

Three times a year, Boston Fed President Eric Rosengren convenes a council of community development experts from around New England. The Council provides insight on a variety of community development issues. At recent meetings, members discussed the local impacts of foreclosures in distressed neighborhoods as well as the impact of the subprime market and foreclosures on the community development lending environment. For more information on the Council, please visit our website at <http://www.bos.frb.org/commdev/necdac/necdac.htm>