



# ECONOMIC INDICATORS<sup>®</sup>

FAIRFAX COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET

APRIL 2015

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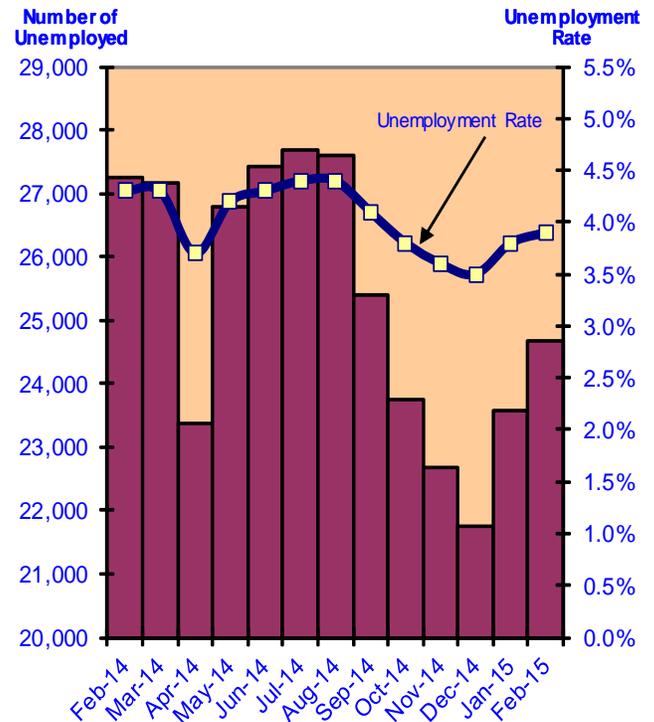
- The unemployment rate in Fairfax County increased to 3.9 percent in February. (See page 1)
- Sales tax receipts in Fairfax County increased 4.6 percent in April from a year ago. (See page 2)
- The Consumer Confidence Index increased in March after decreasing in February. (See page 2)
- The U.S. economy grew at an annual rate of just 0.2 percent in the first quarter of 2015 after growing 2.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014. (See page 2)
- The number of homes sold in Fairfax County in March increased 12.9 percent from a year ago. (See page 3)
- In March 2015, the average sales price of all homes sold in Fairfax County increased 1.7 percent compared to the average sales price in March 2014. (See page 3)
- The number of active listings of homes for sale in the County increased 32.3 percent in March from a year ago. (See page 4)

The *Fairfax County Economic Indicators* is on the Web and can be accessed at:

[http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic/economic\\_indicators.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/economic/economic_indicators.htm)



## FAIRFAX COUNTY UNEMPLOYMENT DATA



Source: Virginia Employment Commission. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

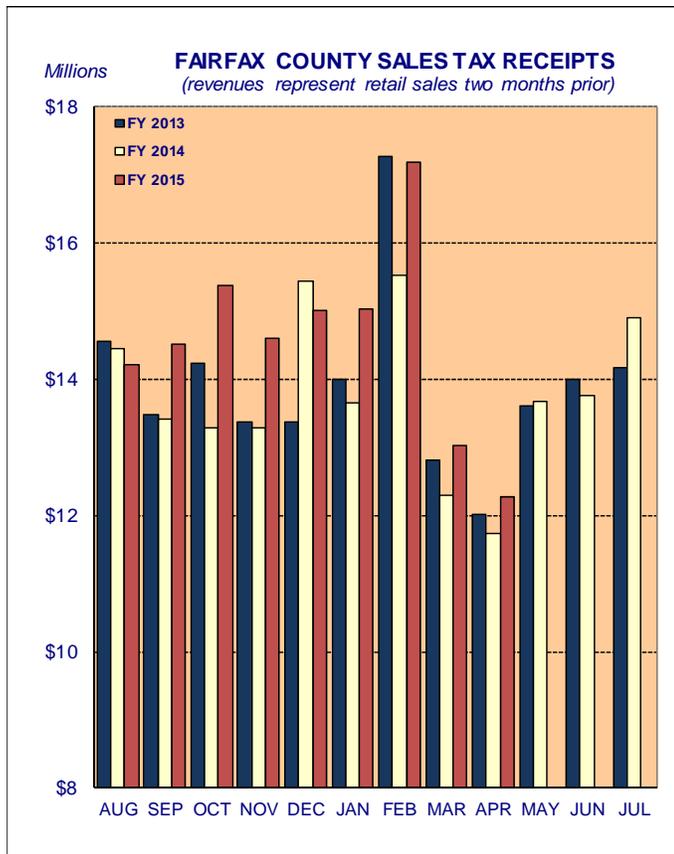
## Employment

The unemployment rate in Fairfax County increased from 3.8 percent in January to 3.9 percent in February. The number of unemployed residents increased over the month from 23,586 to 24,672. The County's unemployment rate was 0.4 percentage points lower than last February.

The February seasonally adjusted unemployment rate in Virginia was unchanged at 4.7 percent. The February rate was down 0.6 percentage points from a year ago.

The U.S. seasonally adjusted unemployment rate decreased from 5.7 percent in January to 5.5 percent in February. Over the year, the unemployment rate was down 1.2 percentage points. Total nonfarm payroll employment increased by 295,000 in February. On average, 266,000 jobs per month were added over the prior 12 months.

## Sales Tax Receipts



Source: Virginia Department of Taxation. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

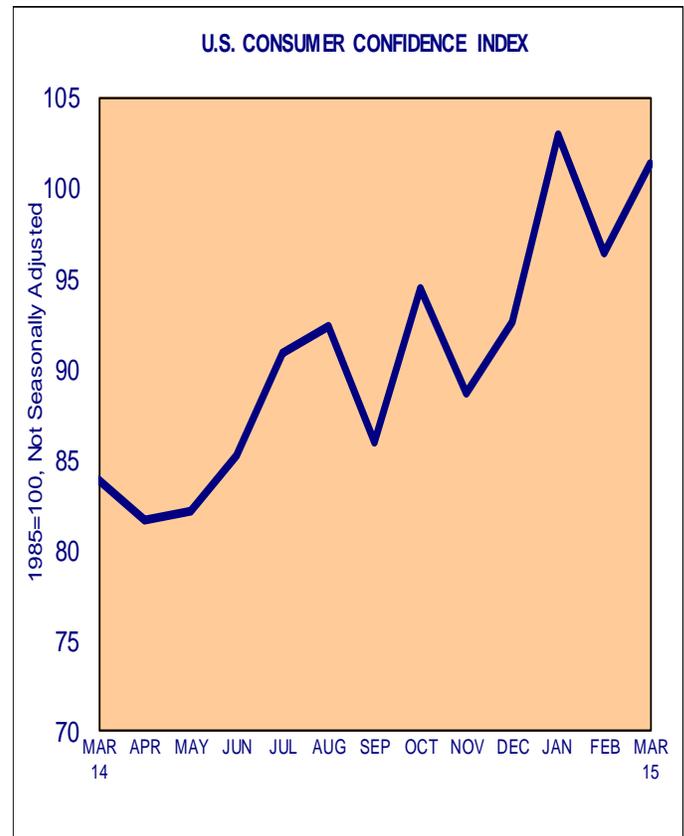
Sales Tax receipts distributed to Fairfax County in April for retail purchases made in February were \$12.3 million, an increase of 4.6 percent over April 2014. Combined, Sales Tax receipts are up 6.6 percent for the first nine months of the fiscal year.

## NATIONAL INDICATORS

### Case-Shiller Home Price Indices

According to the S&P Case-Shiller home price index, home prices were up 5.0 percent for the 12 months ending in February. Home prices in the Washington Metropolitan area posted a 1.4 percent gain during the same period. David M. Blitzer, Managing Director and Chairman of the Index Committee at S&P Dow Jones Indices, said that "Home prices continue to rise and outpace both inflation and wage gains." However, he added that, "While nationally, prices are recovering, new construction of single family homes remains very weak despite low vacancy rates among both renters and owner-occupied homes."

## Consumer Confidence Index



Source: The Conference Board. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

The Consumer Confidence Index increased in March after decreasing in February. The index stands at 101.3 (1985=100), up from 98.8 a month ago. The expectations component increased, while the present situation component decreased. Lynn Franco, Director of Economic Indicators at the Conference Board, said that, "Consumers' assessment of current conditions declined for the second consecutive month, suggesting that growth may have softened in Q1, and doesn't appear to be gaining any significant momentum heading into the spring months."

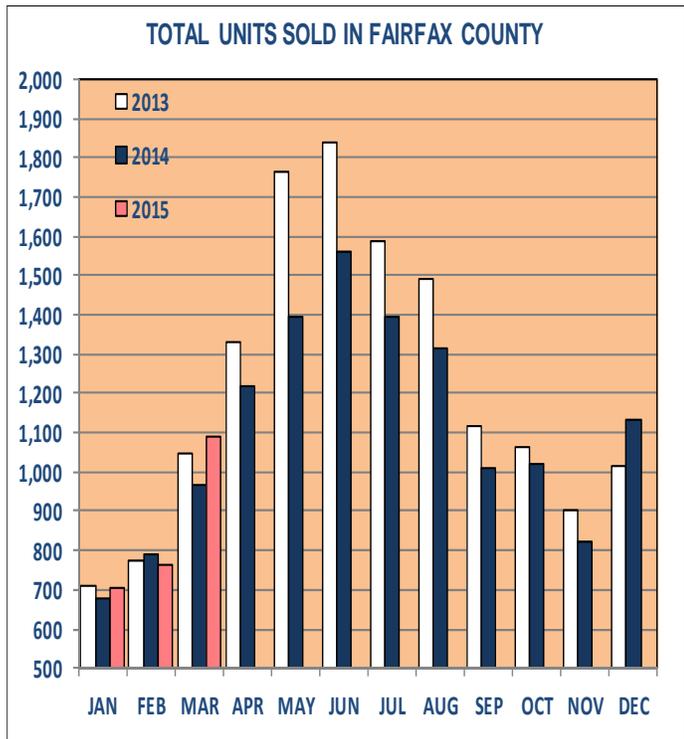
### Gross Domestic Product

According to the advance estimate by the Bureau of Economic Analysis, real gross domestic product (GDP) increased at an annual rate of just 0.2 percent in the first quarter of 2015 after growing 2.2 percent in the fourth quarter of 2014. The slowdown likely reflects temporary factors, such as harsh winter weather. Consumer spending, which makes up more than two-thirds of economic activity, grew 1.9 percent in the first quarter, compared with an increase of 4.4 percent in the fourth quarter. In addition, exports declined 7.2 percent as the strong dollar made U.S. goods more expensive for foreign buyers. Government spending declined 0.8 percent. The advance estimate will be revised twice based on more complete data before it is considered final.

# FAIRFAX COUNTY HOUSING MARKET

## Total Home Sales Volume

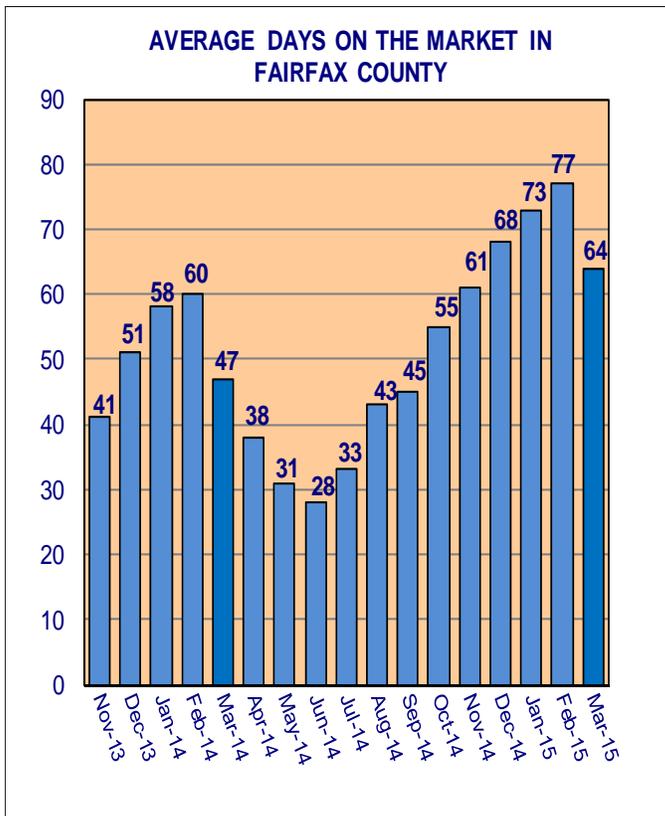
In March, 1,091 homes were sold in Fairfax County, an increase of 12.9 percent over the 966 homes sold in March 2014.



Source: Real Estate Business Intelligence. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

## Average Days on the Market

On average, homes that sold in Fairfax County in March were on the market for 64 days. This is 17 days longer than the 47-day average in March 2014.



Source: Real Estate Business Intelligence. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

## Average Home Sales Prices

The average sales price of all homes that sold in March 2015 in Fairfax County was \$530,158, an increase of 1.7 percent over the March 2014 average sales price of \$521,135. The average March price was down 1.5 percent compared to the 2014 average home sales price of \$538,280.

The average sales price for detached homes that sold in March 2015 was \$694,257, a decrease of 0.5 percent from the March 2014 average of \$697,792. The average sales price of attached homes increased 4.4 percent during the same time period.

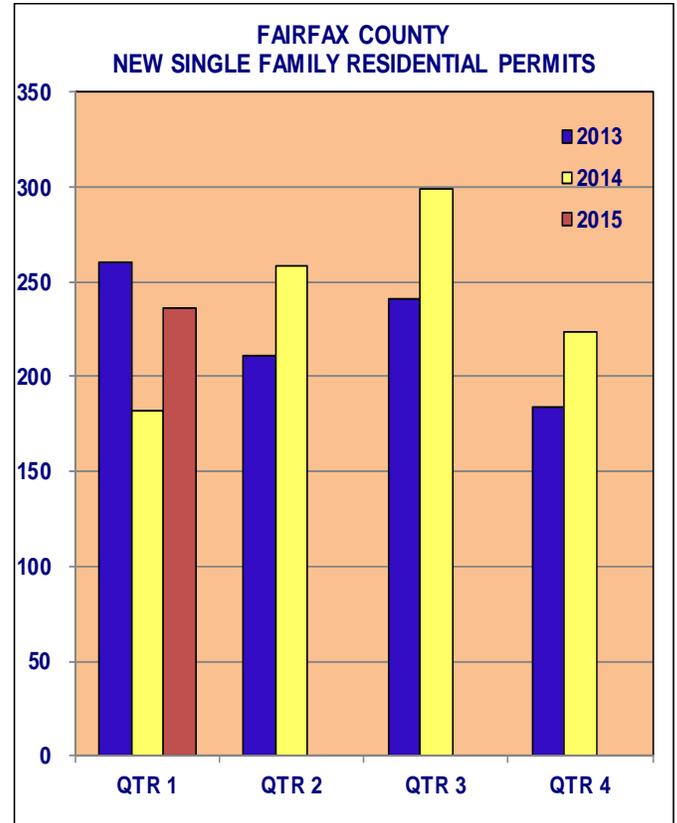
### FAIRFAX COUNTY AVERAGE SALES PRICE OF HOMES SOLD IN MAR 2015 COMPARED TO SALES IN MAR 2014

	MAR 2015	MAR 2014	% Change
All Homes	\$530,158	\$521,135	1.7%
Detached Homes	\$694,257	\$697,792	-0.5%
Attached Homes	\$376,260	\$360,537	4.4%

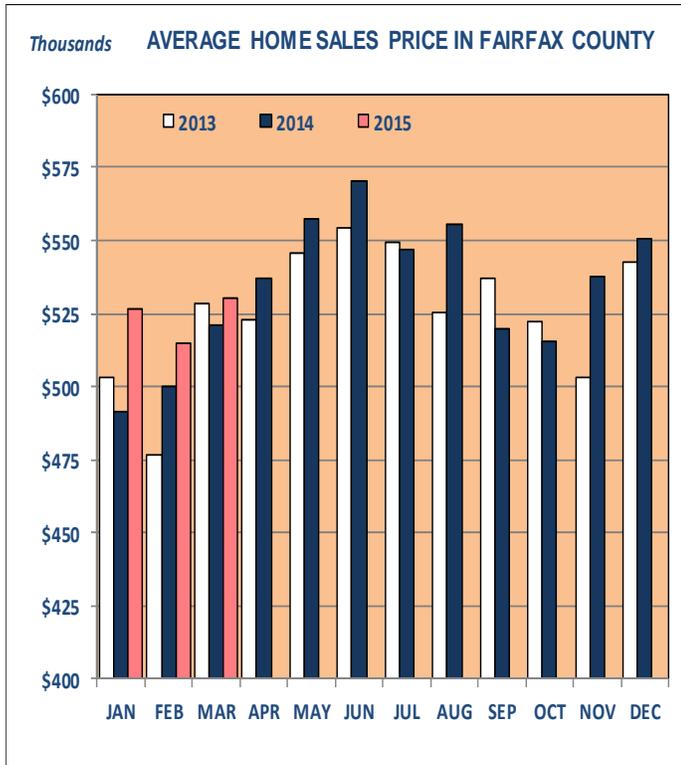
Changes in selling prices and the volume of sales are presented as indicators of the County's real estate market. Average selling price changes do not translate directly into assessment adjustments, since the mix of homes sold is not necessarily reflective of the County's entire housing stock. To read more about Fairfax County tax assessments, please visit: [www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta/tax\\_assessment.htm](http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dta/tax_assessment.htm)

## Single Family Building Permits

During the first quarter of 2015, 236 new single family building permits were issued in Fairfax County. This represents a 29.7 percent increase over the 182 permits issued during the same period in 2014.



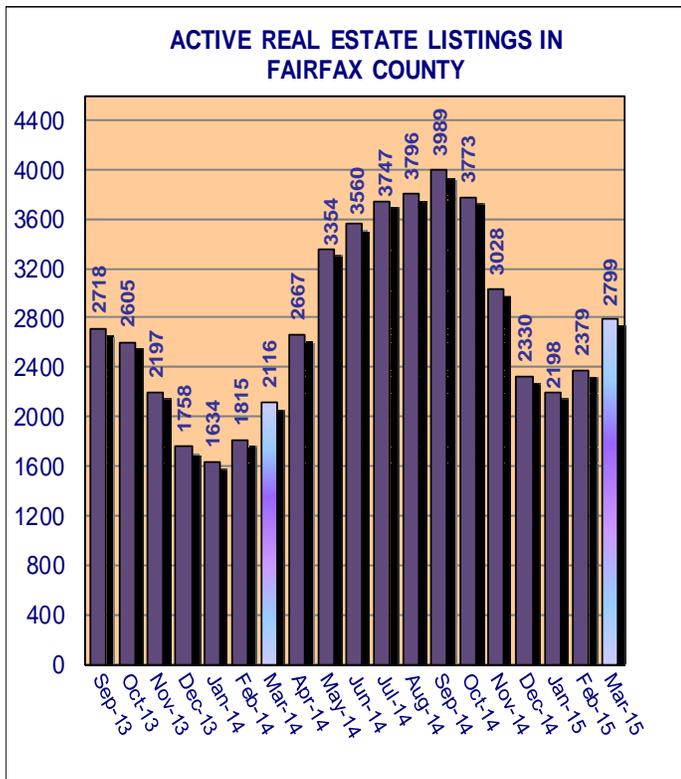
Source: Fairfax County Land Development Services. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.



Source: Real Estate Business Intelligence. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

## Inventory of Homes for Sale

In March, the number of active listings in the County was 2,799, an increase of 32.3 percent over the 2,116 listed in March 2014. Based on the March 2015 listings and the current sales rate, there is approximately a 2.6 month supply of homes for sale in the County, up from the 2.2 month supply a year ago.



Source: Real Estate Business Intelligence. Compiled by the Fairfax County Department of Management and Budget.

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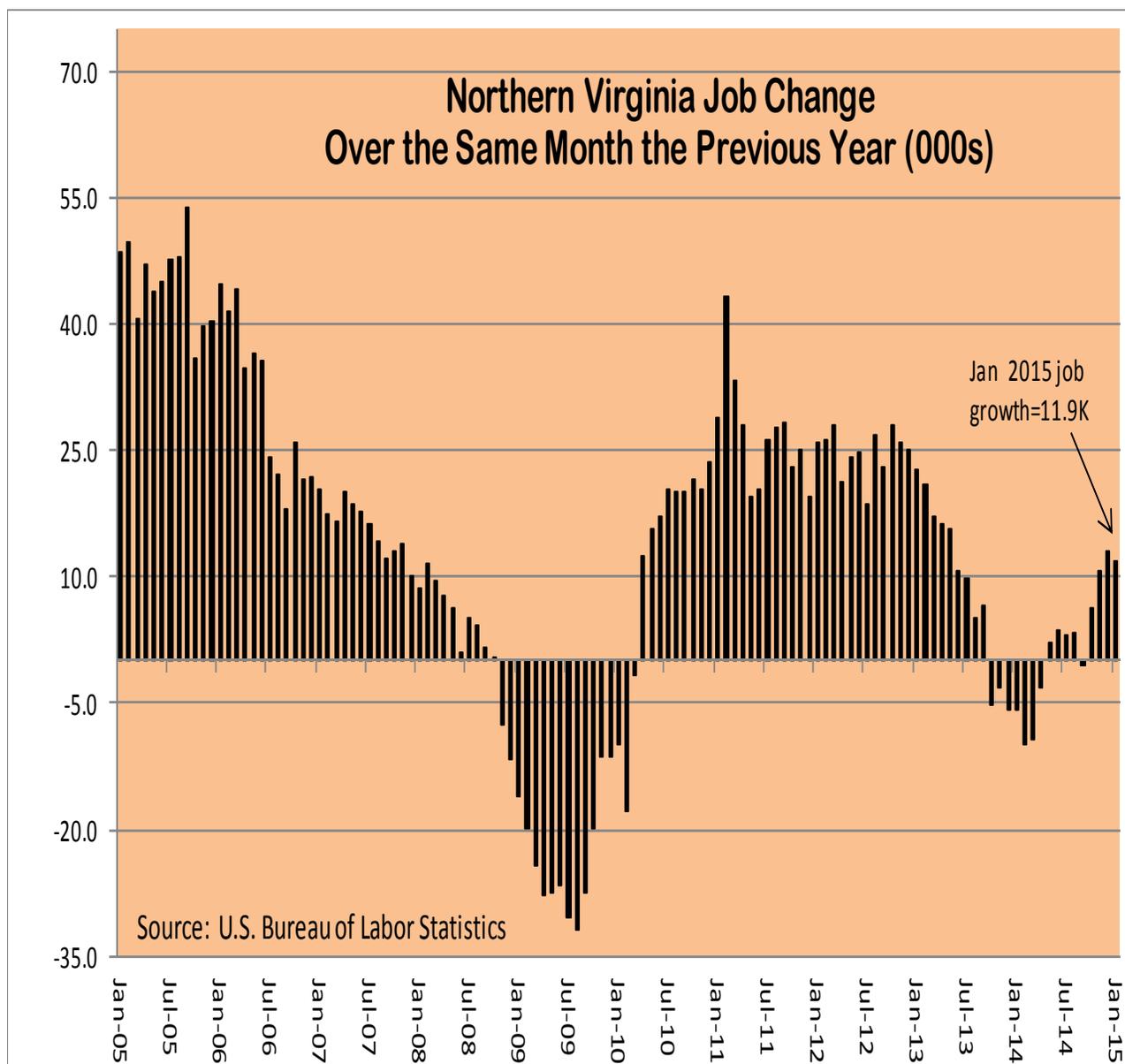
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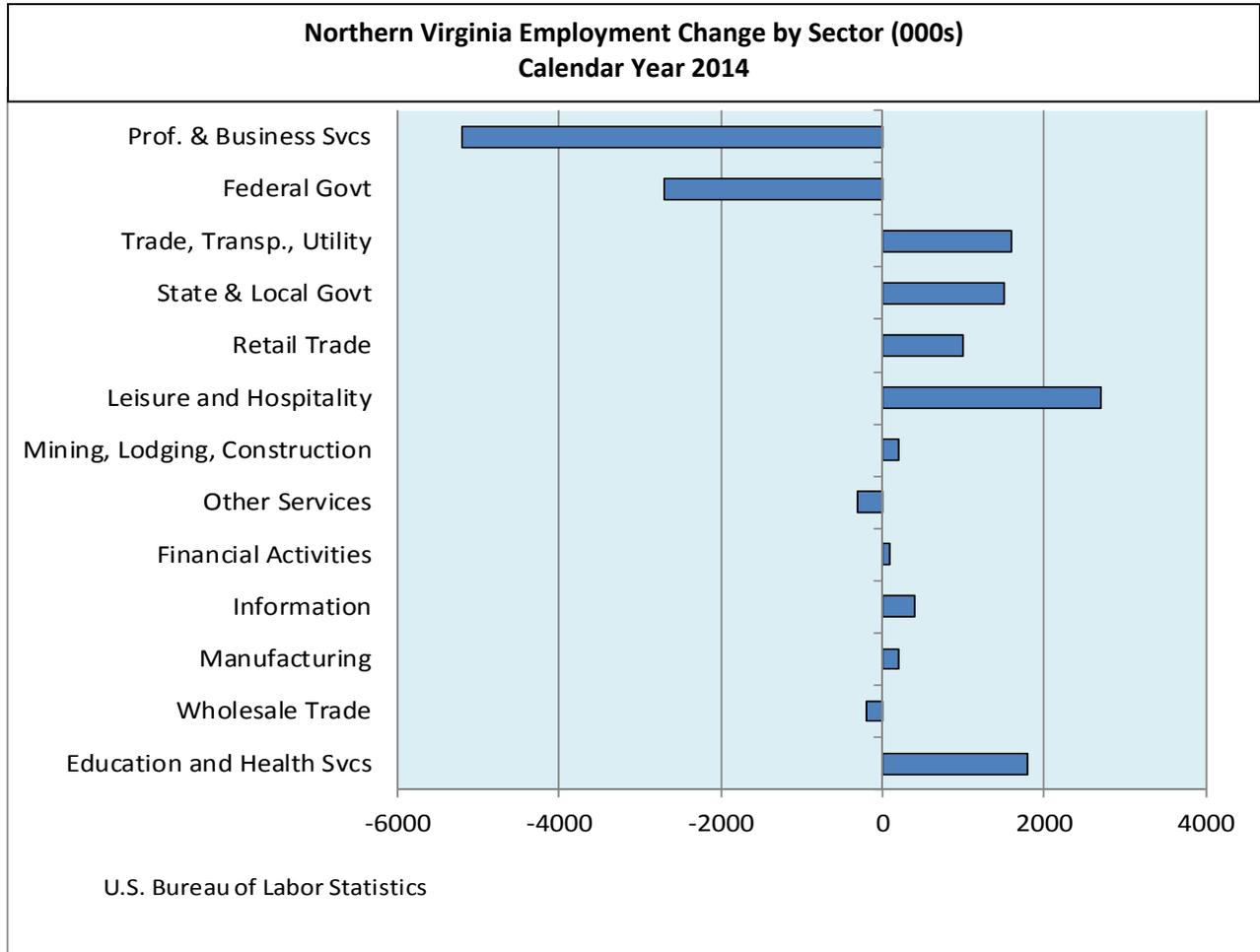
## Northern Virginia Employment

Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics after the annual revision (“benchmarking”), total non-farm employment in Northern Virginia has shown considerable improvement since October 2014. In January 2015, the number of jobs in Northern Virginia was 1,371,700, a gain of 11,900 jobs over last January. For calendar year 2014, job growth was just 1,100 jobs, or an increase of only 0.1 percent, compared to 9,200 jobs added during 2013, or an increase of 0.7 percent. Prior to the federal budget sequestration that went into effect on March 1, 2013, job growth averaged 25,850 in 2011 and 2012 in Northern Virginia.



## Change by Sector in Northern Virginia

During calendar year 2014, the Leisure and Hospitality sector added 2,700 jobs, followed by 1,800 additional jobs in the Education and Health services sector, and 1,500 jobs in the State and Local Government sector. These increases were offset by decreases in the Federal Government sector, which lost 2,700 jobs in Northern Virginia in 2014 compared to the previous year. A significant drop occurred in the Professional and Business Services sector, which lost 5,200 jobs during 2014. The impacts of sequestration are most likely to be noticeable in this sector, which includes many government contractors.



## Employment in Fairfax County

Fairfax County specific employment data are reported on a delayed basis by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and are currently available only through September 2014. The preliminary estimate for total employment in the County through September 2014 is 579,303 jobs, a net decline of 6,717 jobs from a year ago. Fairfax County employment in the Professional and Business Services sector was 207,083 jobs (35.7 percent of total jobs) in September 2014, a decline of 8,758 jobs from a year ago.