

# U.S. Data Review

- Housing starts: downside volatility in multi-family; solid results in single-family

**Michael Moran**

Daiwa Capital Markets America  
 212-612-6392  
 michael.moran@us.daiwacm.com

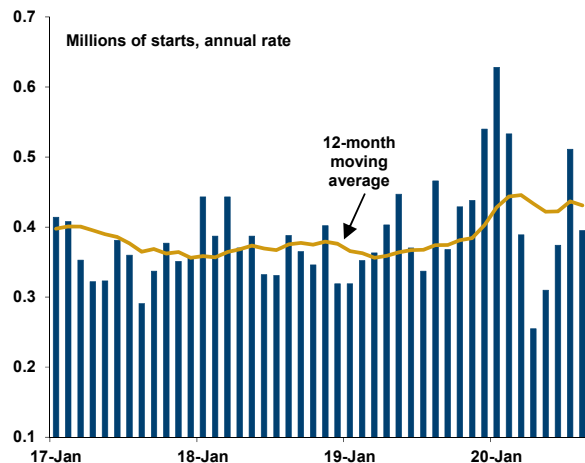
## Housing Starts

Housing starts fell 5.1 percent in August to 1.416 million units. The results were softer than the expected drop of 0.9 percent to 1.483 million units. However, the softness was concentrated in the volatile multi-family sector, which fell 22.7 percent from a high-side reading in the prior month. Even with the noticeable decline in August, multi-family starts remained within the recent range. With 395,000 units started in August, multi-family starts were not far below the average of 403,000 from last year, and they equaled or exceeded the averages in all other years of the prior expansion (chart, left).

Single family starts were firm in August, increasing 4.1 percent after sizeable gains in the prior three months (two of them at double-digit paces). In addition results in the prior two months showed a net upward revision, with the combined total in June and July 3.5 percent firmer than previously believed. All told, single-family starts in August were in line with the hefty totals around the turn of the year, before the coronavirus was a factor in the economy (chart, right).

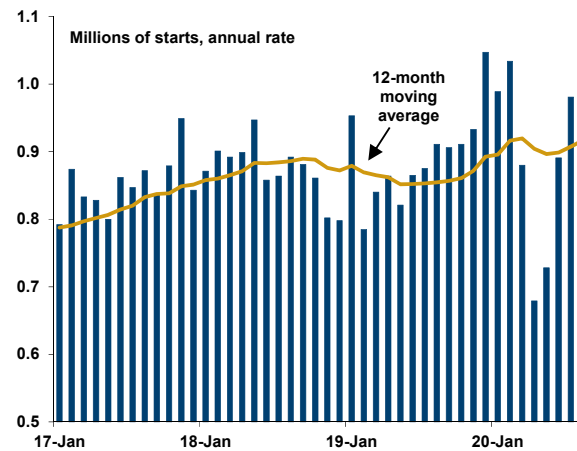
Building permits fell 0.9 percent in August, but like starts, the drop was concentrated in the multi-family sector, which fell 14.2 percent. Single-family permits rose 6.0 percent. Many of the single-family permits could have been used for starts in August, but the firm increase also offers reason to be optimistic about continued strong results.

### Multi-Family Housing Starts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau via Haver Analytics

### Single-Family Housing Starts



Source: U.S. Census Bureau via Haver Analytics

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