

**LEADING INDEX INDICATES GROWTH TO CONTINUE**

The Brazoria County Index of Leading Economic Indicators increased in February to 126.50, which is 0.63 percent above the previous month's index and 12.59 percent above the previous year. The Leading Economic Index, which is designed to forecast the economic performance of the county over the next three to six months, has been above the six-month moving average for the last twelve months. This is significant because if the leading economic index is consistently above the six-month moving average the county is likely entering into or currently experiencing a period of positive economic growth (Figure 1).

The largest increase in the index was in the Brazoria County Stock Index. The stock index, which is made up of the eight largest publicly traded companies within the county, increased 0.52 percent in the month of February and 26.44 percent over the last year.

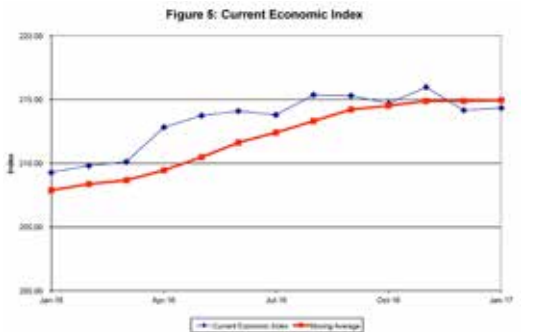
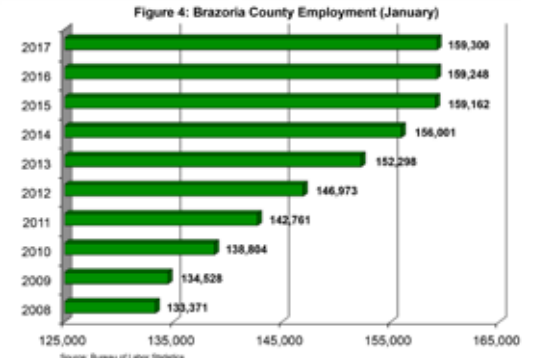
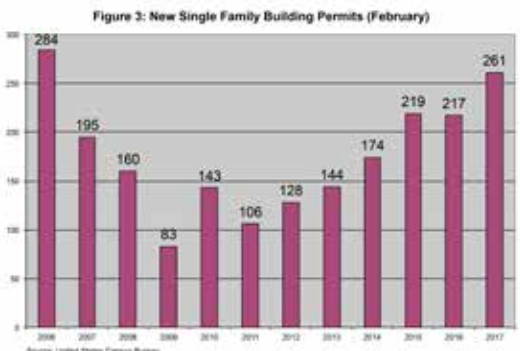
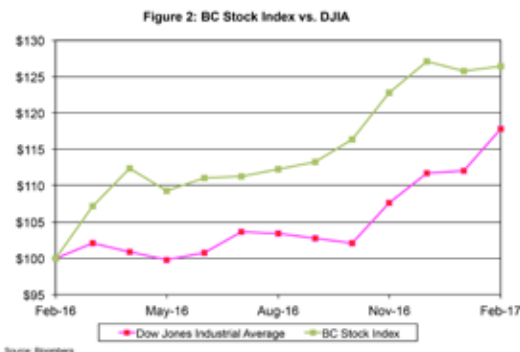
By comparison, the Dow Jones Industrial Average increased 5.19 percent in February and increased 17.80 percent over the last year (Figure 2). Brazoria County New Single Family Building Permits increased 20.28 percent over the last year from 217 to 261 permits, which is the most permits filed in the month of February since 2006 (Figure 3).

The preliminary figure for Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland Average Weekly Manufacturing Hours in February is 43.40 hours per week compared to 42.50 hours per week last year, which represents an increase of 2.12 percent.

**CURRENT ECONOMIC INDICATORS**

The Brazoria County Index of Current Economic Indicators, which is designed to provide information about the current status of the economy, increased to 214.31 in January. The index is 0.06 percent above the previous month and 2.40 percent higher than

last year. Sales Tax Receipts were 7.67 percent lower over the last year, however February Sales Tax Receipts were 23.88 percent higher than the last year. The \$2,848,424 of receipts in February is the highest amount of receipts ever recorded in that month. The county also recorded the largest number of individuals ever employed in the county at 159,300, which is 0.03 percent higher than last year (Figure 4). Houston-Galveston-Brazoria CPI posted an increase of 2.19 percent over the last year, while Hotel/Motel Tax Receipts in the county decreased by 0.55 percent. The Brazoria County Current Economic Index has been above the six-month moving average for ten of the last twelve months. This is significant because if the current economic index is consistently above the six-month moving average then the county is likely experiencing a period of economic growth (Figure 5).



**LAGGING ECONOMIC INDICATORS**

The Brazoria County Index of Lagging Economic Indicators is used to confirm the growth or slowdown in the economy. The lagging economic index is 0.34 percent above the previous month's index and 0.39 percent below the previous year. Brazoria County Foreclosure Notices increased from 50 to 69 foreclosure notices over the last year. The 69 notices is the second lowest number of foreclosures notices filed since the inception of the index. The unemployment rate in the county was 6.01 percent compared to 4.56 percent in February of last year. The lagging economic index has been above the six-month moving average for the five of the last six months, which indicates the economy has been experiencing a period of economic growth (Figure 6).



# BRAZORIA COUNTY, TEXAS BUSINESS CYCLE INDICATORS

## APRIL 2017

<b>Brazoria County Economic Indices:</b>	<b>Feb 2017</b>	<b>Jan 2017</b>	<b>Dec 2016</b>	<b>Nov 2016</b>	<b>Oct 2016</b>
Leading Economic Index (2003 = 100)	126.50	125.71	124.91	123.69	120.08
Current Economic Index (2003=100)	-	214.31	214.17	215.93	214.67
Lagging Economic Index (2003 = 100)	134.07	133.61	134.58	134.13	133.02

<b>Brazoria County Leading Economic Index*</b>	<b>Feb 2017</b>	<b>Jan 2017</b>	<b>Feb 2016</b>	<b>Jan-2017 to Feb-2017</b>	<b>Feb-2016 to Feb-2017</b>
Leading Economic Index (2003 = 100)	126.50	125.71	112.35	0.63%	12.59%
<b>Components:</b>					
Brazoria County Stock Index (12/31/2003 = 100)	173.37	172.46	137.11	0.52%	26.44%
New Single Family Building Permits (Seasonally Adjusted)	256	253	241	1.08%	6.06%
<i>New Single Family Building Permits (Unadjusted)</i>	261	256	217	1.95%	20.28%
Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland Avg. Wkly. Mfg. Hrs. (Seasonally Adjusted)	43.50	43.35	43.37	0.35%	0.30%
<i>Houston-The Woodlands-Sugarland Avg. Wkly. Mfg. Hrs. (Unadjusted)</i>	43.40	42.10	42.50	3.09%	2.12%

\*(Data for the Leading Index is one month behind due to the lag in obtaining building permits)

<b>Brazoria County Current Economic Index**</b>	<b>Jan 2017</b>	<b>Dec 2016</b>	<b>Jan 2016</b>	<b>Dec-2016 to Jan-2017</b>	<b>Jan-2016 to Jan-2017</b>
Current Economic Index (2003 = 100)	214.31	214.17	209.28	0.06%	2.40%
<b>Components:</b>					
Sales Tax Receipts (Constant 1982-1984 \$'s, Seasonally Adjusted)	1,220,292	1,214,769	1,146,994	0.45%	6.39%
<i>Sales Tax Receipts (Current \$'s, Unadjusted)</i>	2,403,784	3,025,724	2,603,433	-20.56%	-7.67%
Household Employment (Seasonally Adjusted)	160,167	160,208	159,271	-0.03%	0.56%
<i>Household Employment (Unadjusted)</i>	159,300	160,839	159,248	-0.96%	0.03%
Hotel/Motel Tax Receipts (Constant 1982-1984 \$'s, Seasonally Adjusted)	2,487,358	2,493,712	2,471,415	-0.25%	0.65%
<i>Hotel/Motel Tax Receipts (Current \$'s, Unadjusted)</i>	4,419,589	3,661,118	4,444,206	20.72%	-0.55%
Houston-Galveston-Brazoria County CPI	218.41	217.76	213.72	0.30%	2.19%

\*\* (Data for the Current Index is two months behind due to the lag in obtaining the data for hotel/motel tax receipts)

<b>Brazoria County Lagging Economic Index***</b>	<b>Feb 2017</b>	<b>Jan 2017</b>	<b>Feb 2016</b>	<b>Jan-2017 to Feb-2017</b>	<b>Feb-2016 to Feb-2017</b>
Lagging Economic Index (2003 = 100)	134.07	133.61	134.60	0.34%	-0.39%
<b>Components:</b>					
Brazoria County Foreclosure Notices (Seasonally Adjusted)	72	70	65	2.59%	11.40%
<i>Brazoria County Foreclosure Notices (Unadjusted)</i>	69	85	50	-18.82%	38.00%
Prime Rate Charged By Banks	3.88	3.88	3.50	0.00%	10.86%
Unemployment Rate (Adjusted)	5.81%	5.77%	4.51%	0.75%	28.69%
<i>Unemployment Rate (Unadjusted)</i>	6.01%	5.94%	4.56%	1.18%	31.80%

\*\*\* (Data for the Lagging Index is one month behind due to lag in obtaining unemployment data)