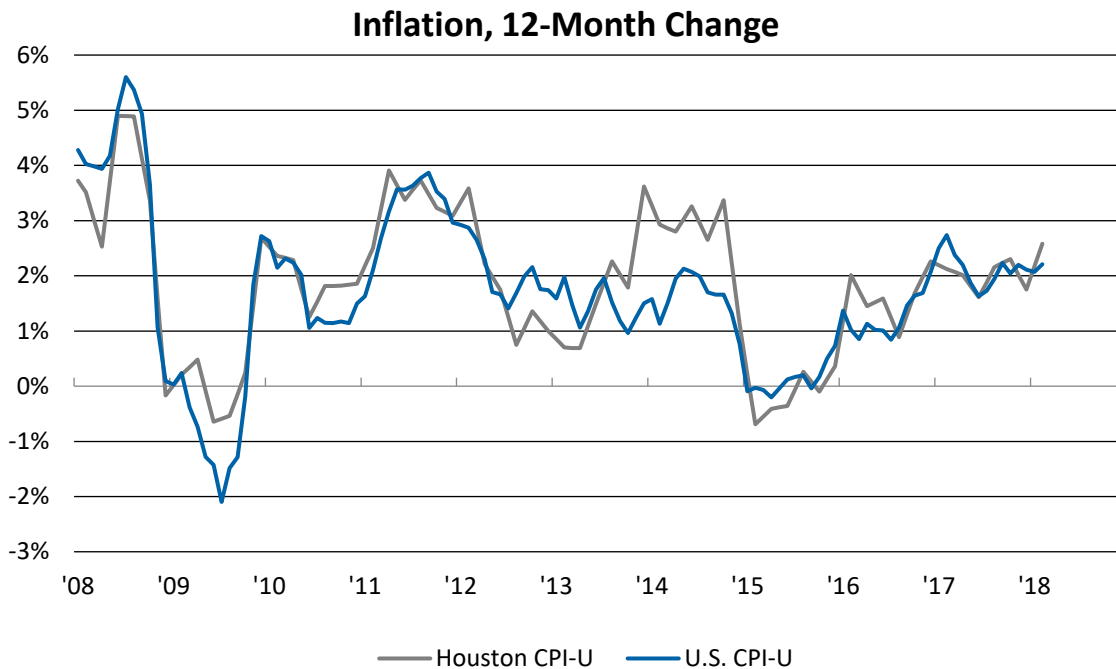




The Partnership sends updates for the six most important economic indicators each month. If you would like to opt-in to receive these updates, please click [here](#).

March 13, 2018

For the latest data, click [here](#).



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, not seasonally adjusted

INFLATION-NATIONWIDE

The cost of consumer goods and services as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) rose 2.2 percent nationwide from February '17 to February '18, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Core inflation (all items less the volatile food and energy categories) increased 1.8 percent since February '17.¹

The cost of energy rose 7.7 percent from the previous February. All three energy components posted gains: motor fuel prices jumped 12.7 percent, electricity costs increased 2.2 percent, and natural gas prices rose 3.8 percent. The shelter index grew 3.1 percent from February '17. Food

¹ CPI data in this commentary are not seasonally adjusted.

prices increased 1.4 percent, with the cost of dining out rising 2.6 percent and grocery prices inching up 0.5 percent.

INFLATION-HOUSTON

Consumer prices in the Houston-The Woodlands- Sugar Land metro area grew 2.6 percent from February '17 to February '18, the fastest annual increase since October '14. Core inflation rose 1.7 percent.

In the 12 months ending February '18, the energy index rose 14.1 percent. All three subcomponents posted gains with natural gas prices rising 3.8 percent, electricity prices jumping 16.9 percent and motor fuel prices increasing 13.1 percent.

Food prices rose 1.6 percent during the previous 12 months, slowing from December's annual gain of 2.4 percent. The cost of dining out increased 3.0 percent in Houston while grocery prices ticked up 0.3 percent. The cost of shelter² rose 1.6 percent.

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² The cost of shelter is typically a third of total consumer expenditures in the Houston area. Although a 1.2 percent increase appears small, it is of greater importance due to its relative weight in calculating overall spending.