Gauge of economy's future health up

A measure of the U.S. economy's future health rose solidly in April, buoyed by a sharp rise in applications to build homes and a better job market.

The Conference Board said Friday that its index of leading indicators increased 0.6 percent last month to a reading of 95. That followed a 0.2 percent decline in March.

The index is intended to signal economic conditions three to six months out.