Rate on 30-year loan dips to 4.41 percent

Average U.S. rates for fixed mortgages declined this week, edging closer to historically low levels.

Mortgage buyer Freddie Mac says the average for the 30-year loan fell to 4.41 percent from 4.51 percent last week. The average for the 15-year loan eased to 3.45 percent from 3.56 percent.

Mortgage rates have risen about a full percentage point since hitting record lows a year ago.

The increase was driven by speculation that the Federal Reserve would reduce its bond purchases.