



HOME DELIVERY

Residential Real Estate Trends, Issues and News for Consumers

The National Association of REALTORS® distributes *Home Delivery* every month to real estate, personal finance and consumer journalists as a resource for background or story ideas.

It's a Nice Place to Work, But You Can't Live There

Disneyland's current zoning battle over a potential residential development that would include affordable housing highlights a problem in many resort areas – the workers who help make these places a terrific place to visit can't afford to live where they work.

Some Realtors® at this month's 2007 NAR Resort & Second Home Symposium learned how to expand housing opportunities in resort areas through NAR's Home from Work™ program. In the first half of this decade, the number of households who paid more than half their income for housing increased by nearly 2 million, to a record 15.8 million, and working families have been hit especially hard, according to research from Harvard University's Joint Center for Housing Studies.

Story Springboard

• Living near luxury
Interview government officials and employers in vacation areas that are popular with people from your community about the state of workforce housing in the area. Learn more about the workers in those regions, where they live, and how much they spend on housing. Talk to the local association of Realtors® about housing affordability from their members' perspectives, and what initiatives are currently underway to address the issue.

For Homeownership, 20 is the New 30

Twenty-somethings are a bigger portion of the total home buying population than ever before, and they aren't putting homeownership on hold for marriage or other life events.

U.S. Census Bureau data shows that homeownership among the under-30 crowd has been rising. In 1993, less than 15 percent of people younger than 25 owned their own home, but by 2006, one in every four people in this age group were homeowners. About a third of people ages 25 to 29 owned a home in 1993; by 2006, 42 percent were homeowners.

This trend has influenced the recent resurgence of many downtown areas, and is part of the reason that condo sales have increased as a percentage of all homes sold, from 6 percent of the total market a decade ago to 13 percent in 2006.

Story Springboard

• Why buy when many rent?
Talk to some under-30 homeowners in your area about why they decided to buy when they did. Was it part of an investment strategy? Were they influenced by parents or others? Are these younger owners following national trends of urban or condo living, or are there other demographic patterns in your area? Interview Realtors® about what they're seeing in their clientele – are home buyers getting any younger, from their perspective?

Take It Outside

According to NAR research, 39 percent of recent home buyers made improvements to their landscaping shortly after moving in, and another 20 percent planned to upgrade their landscaping within 2 years of buying the home.

Homeowners like to put their home's best face forward, whether they plan to sell or settle in for the long haul.

REALTOR® Magazine Online recently reported on 14 new trends that bring a home's backyard to the forefront. To learn more, visit

www.realtor.org/rmo/landscape_slideshow/landscape_slideshow_may07.html

Story Springboard

• Value is in the eyes of the beholder
Some landscape features, such as in-ground pools, can enhance a home's value in certain neighborhoods while depressing it in others. Talk to Realtors® about what really gets the attention of local buyers when it comes to the great outdoors, and what trends are hot or not in your area. Are homeowners springing for luxury barbecue pits, or are they communing with nature in their meditation zone?

Please contact Stephanie Singer, 202/383-1050, or via e-mail at ssinger@realtors.org, for additional ideas, sources, data and resources.

