



# 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 Their First Time

In some ways, market conditions in many areas of the country favor first-time home buyers; they have more choices and access to financing at near-historic low rates, and they don't have to sell an existing home to take advantage of current opportunities.

This has not been lost on many new buyers – NAR research estimates that in 2007, first-time home buyers purchased approximately 2.5 million homes.

Compared to repeat buyers, first-time home buyers are more racially diverse. One-quarter of first-time purchasers identify themselves as Black/African-American, Hispanic/Latino, Asian/Pacific Islander or other minority, compared to 13 percent of repeat buyers. They also plan to stay in their homes for less time – 7 years – than repeat buyers, who plan to stay for 10 years.

#### Story Springboard

- A first time for everything  
Talk to Realtors® in your community about their first-time buyers: How are they different from repeat buyers? Can they identify trends among their first-time buyer clients? Interview people who have recently become homeowners about why they decided to buy now.

### In Real Estate They Trust

Many of today's consumers have long-term confidence in the housing market, according to recent research. Fifty-nine percent of those polled in a recent Associated Press-AOL Money & Finance survey said that now is a good time to buy a home, and nearly 54 percent of people surveyed in a recent Reuters/Zogby Index agree.

The AP-AOL poll yielded some other interesting results:

- 40 percent think that housing prices will rise soon.
- 35 percent think the prices of homes in their neighborhood are about right.

Consumers aren't alone. NAR's monthly Realtor® Confidence Index indicates that Realtors® believe that their local market conditions are improving.

#### Story Springboard

- Calling all consumers  
Ask Realtors® in your area for their insights and perspectives on where they think the local real estate market is headed. Conduct your own poll with buyers, sellers, renters and homeowners to gauge how people in your community feel about homeownership and housing issues. To read the latest Realtor® Confidence Index, visit [www.realtor.org/research.nsf/pages/reprs](http://www.realtor.org/research.nsf/pages/reprs).

### Renters Feeling the Squeeze

As many would-be home buyers remain on the fence about becoming homeowners, demand for rental space is increasing.

Data from NAR's most recent *Commercial Real Estate Outlook* report show that vacancy rates are down from last year, and average rent is projected to rise 5.3 percent in 2008, up from a 3.1 percent increase in 2007. According to one real estate research firm, the first quarter of 2008 was the 24<sup>th</sup> consecutive quarter for rising rents.

For the latest information on the residential rental market, visit [www.realtor.org/research.nsf/pages/commercialHome?OpenDocument](http://www.realtor.org/research.nsf/pages/commercialHome?OpenDocument).

#### Story Springboard

- To rent or buy – that is the question  
NAR's *Commercial Real Estate Outlook* includes metro market information. What's the rental market like in your area? Interview Realtors® who specialize in residential rentals in your community to find out who's renting – are many renters would-be home buyers, or do most choose to rent instead of buy, and why?

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

