

National Association of REALTORS®

Sustainability Resource Guide:

Integrating sustainability principles and knowledge for
REALTOR® associations with a goal to positively
impact business practices



Created by NAR's Sustainability Program,
with input from the Sustainability Advisory Group

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Foreword

A Letter from the 2018 Chair of the Sustainability Advisory Group

REALTORS® are amazing change agents. As the real estate market continues to change, all aspects of our industry – including how state and local associations interact with our membership – depends on adaptation. As such, I am so honored to be appointed the first ever Chair of the Sustainability Advisory Group at NAR to help lead the sustainability conversation for our membership. Research shows real estate consumers are requesting more information about the sustainability aspects of their real estate investment. Through this interest, consumers are demanding REALTORS® be more knowledgeable on topics like energy efficiency, healthier homes, walkability, building performance, and weather-related risks. Sustainability is a great way to elevate the value that REALTORS® provide to clients, and the value our associations provide to REALTORS®.

Community involvement has also been a cornerstone of REALTOR® associations for a long time. Sustainability opens the door for community engagement that includes the social, environmental, and economic aspects that consumers prioritize. By including sustainability in the outreach plan for associations, our industry can provide a new breed of service for topics like reduced operating costs, sustainable communities, and maintenance costs of homes. Use this guide to assist in solving the variety of sustainability-related problems faced by our industry.

The information detailed here provides guidance for everything from current association programs to research that can benefit members. This guide also includes examples of ways boards and members can increase involvement in sustainability topics and issues affecting markets all over the country. Each element of this guide is intended to help boost understanding and integration of this important element of business planning – to answer the question, “how does this apply in my area?” You might be surprised by what is already in your backyard.

Use this Sustainability Resource Guide to help address growing consumer interest by providing an evaluation of sustainability topics in any market, and discussing how sustainability is integrated into the build environment. It is my hope that with the commitment of our boards and members, we can layer sustainability into the already amazing work happening by REALTOR® associations around the country. Ultimately, incorporating sustainability into our association at multiple levels can improve social capital for our organization and industry, helping to change the narrative for REALTORS® and positioning them as professionals poised for our changing environmental, economic and social needs.



Todd Shipman, REALTOR®, GRI, AHWD
2018 Chair of NAR's Sustainability Advisory Group
Lakes Sotheby's International
Edina, MN

Introduction

In creating this guide, NAR envisioned a one-stop resource that curates significant principles, initiatives, organizations, policies, programs, research, and contact persons at the intersection of sustainability and real estate. We know consumers have a growing interest in sustainability, and we know that REALTORS® encounter this topic in their daily businesses. We developed this guide primarily for local associations to help field member questions about sustainability; we hope it provides you with an understanding of the broader conversation, the players, and the resources available to help you get involved.

REALTOR® Sustainability Program Goals

The National Association of REALTORS® (NAR) is a leader in the dialogue on real estate sustainability among real estate agents, brokers, trade associations, and consumers. This program:

- conducts outreach to members, trade associations, and agencies to raise awareness and engagement in NAR sustainability efforts.
- coordinates association benefits and resources for its members.
- introduces corporate social responsibility and triple bottom line concepts into NAR's decision-making practices, allowing NAR to educate and support sustainability in real estate through environmental, social, and economic contexts.

Vision & Mission

Vision Statement:

REALTORS® thrive in a culture of sustainability that promotes viability, resiliency, and resource efficiency.

Member Mission:

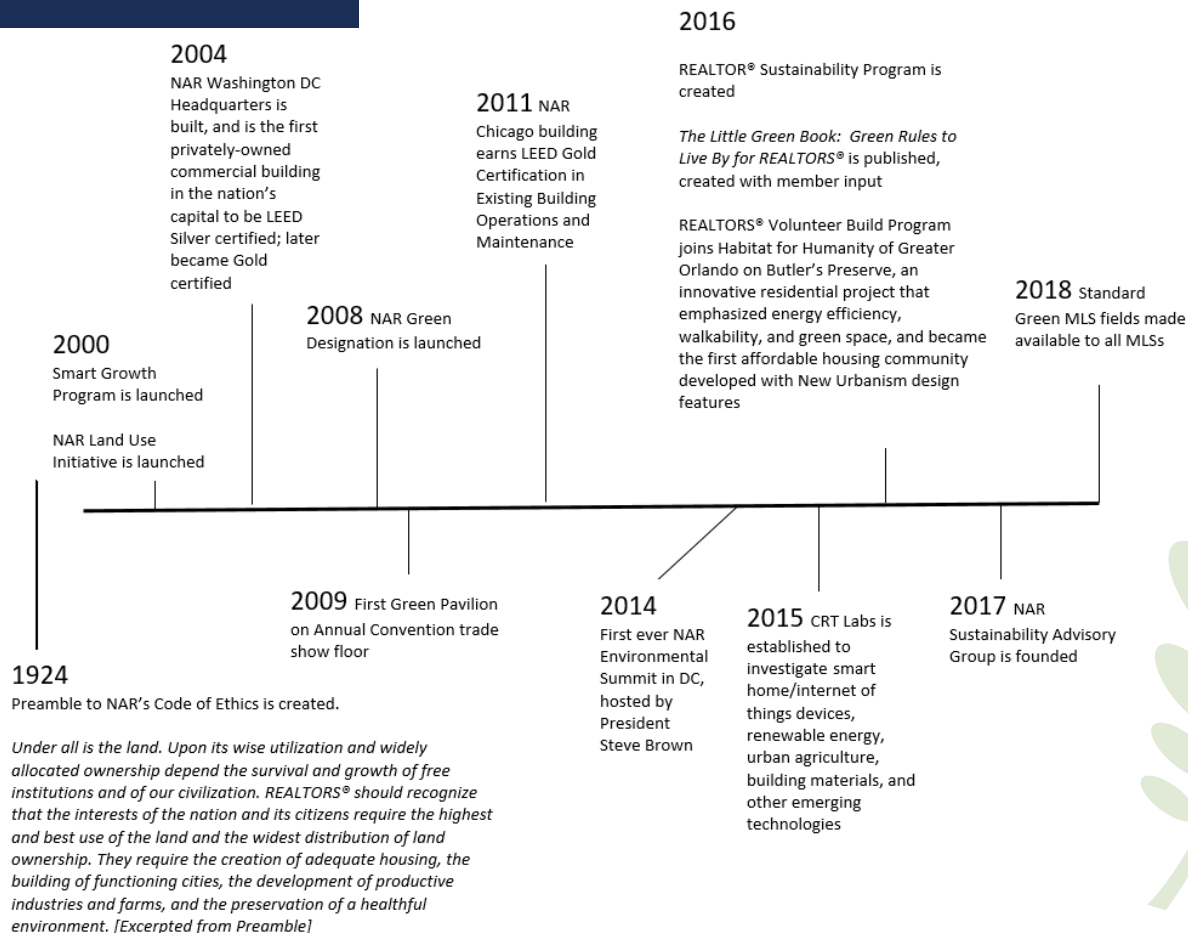
Provide leadership and strategies on topics of sustainability that benefit members, REALTOR® associations, and communities.

NAR's Sustainability Program was created in 2016 to position the association as a leading voice in sustainability for our industry. These vision and mission statements are an outcome of a member-driven Sustainability Strategy Meeting in 2016, in which REALTORS® from around the country explored how sustainability topics can and will continue to impact the real estate industry. Sustainability Strategy Meeting attendees created a way forward for NAR's Sustainability Program.

To find out more, visit www.nar.realtor/sustainability

Timeline

NAR's Sustainability Story



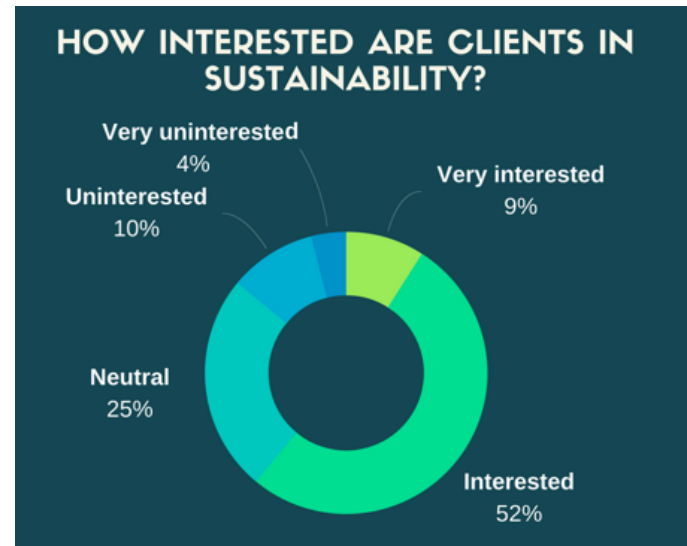
Industry Highlights

Home buyers and sellers are seeking sustainable solutions in their homes and communities

NAR Research supports that homeowners, buyers, and sellers (or 'consumers') want to live in homes that are comfortable, safe, low maintenance, and affordable. Each of these are benefits of greener homes.

Supporting research from NAR:

- 61% of REALTORS® said their clients are interested in sustainability (2018 REALTORS® & Sustainability Report).
- REALTORS® say their clients want more sustainability features in their homes: When asked which items were most important to clients, REALTORS® say 95% of clients seek "comfortable living space," 87% seek "proximity to frequently visited places," and 78% find utility costs important (2018 REALTORS® & Sustainability Report).
- 84% of home buyers find heating and cooling costs in their home at least "somewhat important," according to NAR's Home Buyer and Seller Report & Generational Trends Report.



Source: 2018 REALTORS® & Sustainability Report

Industry Highlights

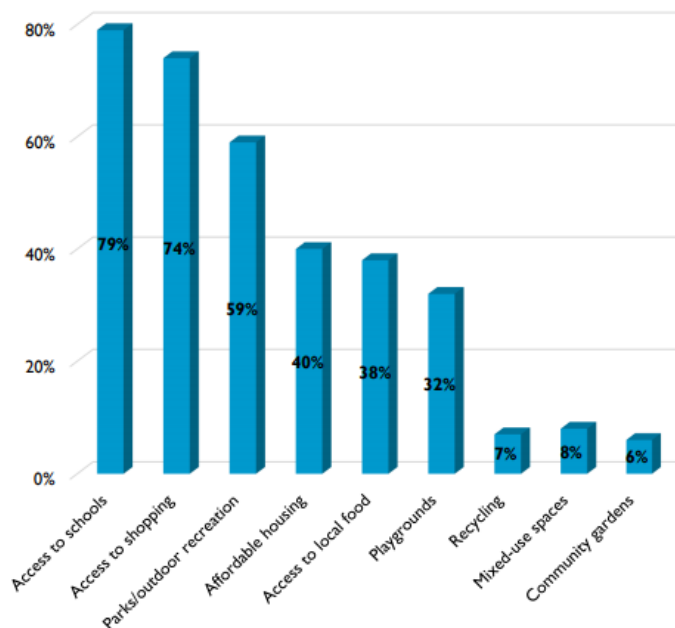
Interest in sustainability expands beyond the home into the community.

NAR Research points to a shift in the way people interact with their homes; increased interest exists for neighborhoods that promote viability, accessibility, and adaptability. REALTORS® and associations can engage with consumers about their priorities through sustainable community events or activities that promote the in-demand neighborhood features that REALTORS® identified in the *2018 REALTORS® & Sustainability Report*.

Neighborhood Features

- The neighborhood features that clients looked for included access to schools (79 percent), access to shopping (74 percent), parks and outdoor recreation (59 percent), and affordable housing (40 percent).

Neighborhood Features Clients Look For



Note: Respondents were permitted to select as many responses as they felt applicable. The percentage distribution may therefore sum to more than 100 percent.

Industry Highlights

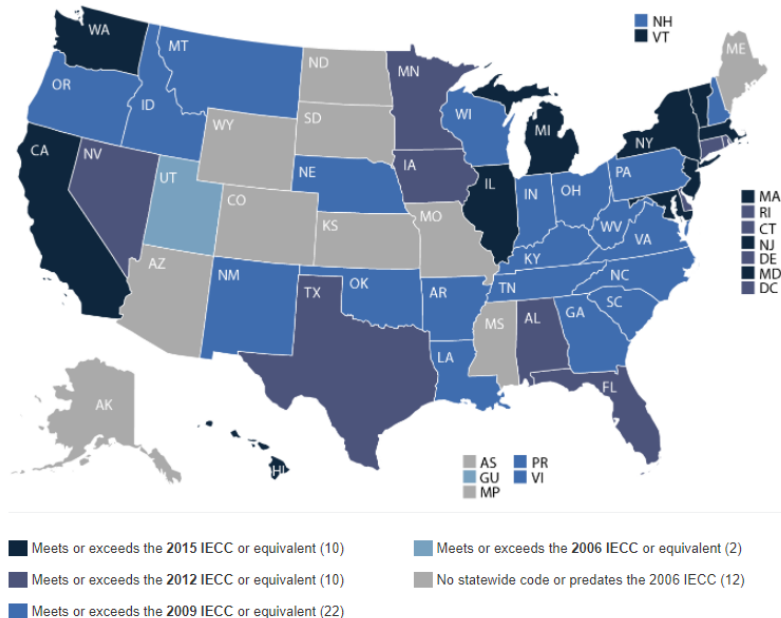
Evolving industry standards are changing the conversation about sustainable home features.

New building codes are improving the energy efficiency of homes. Industry professionals, like REALTORS®, builders, and appraisers can promote the features of such homes, which meet the demands of consumers.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, homes built to the 2012 or 2015 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) are 15-16% more efficient than those built to the 2009 code.

The Council of MLS (CMLS) supports standardization of green data fields through resources like the Green Data Best Practices and the Green MLS Quick Start Guide. Agents can benefit from using green data fields to promote energy efficiency, improve data integrity on listings, and encourage accurate valuation of green features on new or existing properties.

Residential Code Status



Residential Code Status, Building Codes Assistance Project (BCAP)

Industry Highlights

Green MLS Data can help REALTORS® remain essential to consumers.

Listing home energy information in a standardized, searchable way is a first step to better property data. Better data can lead to more accurate valuation. Industry research consistently shows a price premium when green data fields are used for certified homes*. NAR and CMLS are collaborating to improve the consistency, availability, and expanded usage of green data fields. This collaboration will help educate REALTORS® on how to interpret and communicate the data to strengthen the value proposition of REALTORS® with consumers.

Supporting Research from NAR:

- NAR Research (*2018 REALTORS® & Sustainability Report*) says that 71% of REALTORS® find value in promoting energy efficiency in a residential listing; 70% of commercial agents find value in the same.

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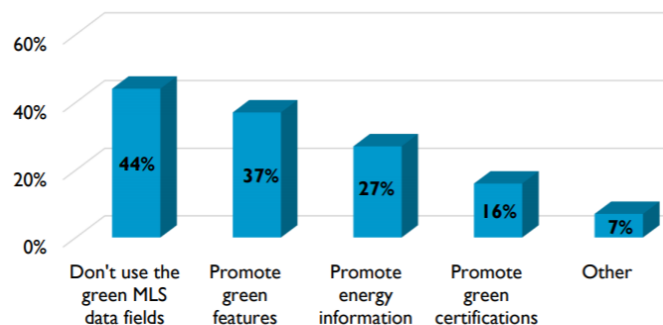
[Appraisers Analysis of Pearl National Home Certification Sales Premiums \(2017\)](#)

[ENERGY STAR New Homes and the Impact of Certification on Maryland Home Prices \(2017\)](#)

[Selling Into the Sun: Price Premium Analysis of a Multi-State Dataset of Solar Homes \(2015\)](#)

[The Value of Green Labels in the California Housing Market \(2012\)](#)

Uses of MLS Green Data Fields



Note: Respondents were permitted to select as many responses as they felt applicable. The percentage distribution may therefore sum to more than 100 percent.

Industry Highlights

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- According to the *2018 REALTORS® & Sustainability Report*, 40% of agents were aware of the availability of green data fields in their MLSs, and this group uses green data fields in multiple ways.
- Forty-four percent of survey respondents claimed they did not use Green MLS data fields; this offers an opportunity for organizations like NAR and CMLS to provide tools to ensure that industry professionals start leveraging these fields to best represent property features and remain relevant to consumer demands. Find links to helpful CMLS tools in the Programs & Resources section of this guide.

The conversation about sustainability and real estate is dynamic and ever changing.

This guide provides an overview of significant topics, but is not all-inclusive. REALTORS® and association staff should be aware of trends, liabilities, and local considerations. Speak with your Regional Vice President (RVP), Government Affairs Director (GAD), or Association Executive (AE) for further conversation on topics pertinent to your market. Several examples of significant topics are provided below. You may also find more detailed information on [nar.realtor](https://www.nar.realtor).

- Residential and commercial energy score mandates
- Solar financing and ownership
- Transportation and infrastructure
- Impact of climate events on communities

Below is a list of common policies that may be encountered in local jurisdictions; this list is not all-inclusive.

Policy Issue	Sustainability Benefit	Real Estate Nexus
Traditional Energy Sources (oil, coal, nuclear, etc.)	Contributes to grid stability; bridge to a fully renewable economy	Many buildings use traditional electrical-generating sources
Energy Efficiency (demand management, etc.)	EE activities reduce demand for energy, create a more efficient economy and reduce CO2 emissions	Many commercial and residential properties are becoming more energy efficient, either through new construction or renovation
Renewable Energy Sources (solar, wind, etc.)	Do not create CO2 emissions; there will always be wind and sunlight; easier on the environment	Can help to supplement a property's energy profile and reduce utility costs
Building Performance (data, MLS, technology, etc.)	Educates property owners to understand the energy features of a property	These tools help property owners assess a property's energy usage and how to become more energy efficient
Adaptation/Mitigation to Extreme Weather Events and a Changing Climate (flooding, hurricanes, wildfires, etc.)	Helps communities to prepare to withstand a disaster and recover more quickly and efficiently	People and communities that have adapted to or mitigated against a changing climate are better protected, as are property values
Housing Development, Finance Insurance and Valuation (flood insurance, mortgage products, etc.)	These tools help incorporate risk, mitigation and renovation into financial decision-making	Helps individual homeowners to withstand a disaster and recover more quickly
Infrastructure (roads, water, electrical grid, etc.)	Helps systems within a community operate more efficiently, allowing citizens to prosper and protecting the environment	Better infrastructure protects property values and allows community systems to operate more effectively

NAR Sustainability Policy: Dynamic and Continually Evolving

In 2016, a group of members developed a member mission statement and member vision statement about sustainability in real estate. The discussion culminated with the driving principles that real estate professionals thrive in a culture of sustainability that promotes viability, resiliency, adaptability, and resource efficiency. Real estate practitioners reflect the community in which they sell property, and an increasing number of communities now support sustainability. As economic, social, and environmental expectations expand, so too will market behaviors, business practices, and NAR's advocacy positions on a whole host of public policy activities.

NAR's advocacy positions on public policy issues have been guided by several principles, including:

- The staunch protection of property rights;
- Balancing economic development with environmental protection, while focusing on how these issues effect housing, real estate, homeowners and NAR members; and
- Educating consumers so they can make informed decisions about their housing choices.

This section summarizes two policies that serve as examples of how NAR positions the organization to be a centrist voice in complex and controversial public policy issues, while still protecting and promoting the core principles of property ownership, property rights and a free market.

These policies reinforce and emphasize the core principles of property rights, environmental stewardship, and voluntary local action based on market-based approaches to resolving environmental policy challenges. Where appropriate, they also emphasize our opposition to point-of-sale mandates.

Water Resources (Adopted May 2008)

The National Association of REALTORS® supports healthy, clean and abundant supplies of water.

We support finding voluntary, market-based solutions to address excessive pollution and degradation of the nation's waterways, while always being mindful of, and vigorously defending, private property rights. We also support adequate federal funding for a well-developed system of water resources infrastructure and technology to ensure water quality and quantity nationwide.

We support the responsible use and management of our nation's water resources so that residential, commercial, and industrial development can proceed without degrading the nation's water and without excessive regulatory encumbrances.

We believe that the development of a comprehensive federal water resources policy should take into account traditional state, local and private water rights and uses. We pledge to cooperate with federal, state and local agencies responsible for water resources to educate REALTORS®, their clients, homeowners and consumers on water resource issues and the value and benefits of protecting water supplies.

Global Climate Change (Adopted May 2017)

To help advance an economically prosperous and environmentally sustainable future, the National Association of REALTORS® is committed to supporting cost-effective strategies that facilitate a positive, voluntary market response to energy efficiency, resiliency, and sustainability.

Policies should be market-based, cost-effective and energize the nation's innovative entrepreneurial spirit.

Development of public global climate change policy should be guided by, and be respectful of, the key principles of protecting private property rights, maintaining housing affordability and availability, long-term sustainability and NAR Smart Growth principles.

NAR supports:

- Regional, state and local planning for the creation of resilient and sustainable buildings and communities.
- Regional, state and local planning efforts to implement cost-effective strategies that proactively mitigate against, and facilitate the adaptation to, the effects of extreme weather events and ecosystem change.
- Regional, state and local approaches based on market principles to reduce greenhouse gases and to conserve energy.
- Solutions that encourage sustainable practices and energy efficiency through incentives such as expedited permitting and tax benefits.
- Voluntary efforts to improve transparency and accounting of energy efficiency.

NAR opposes:

- Transaction-triggered mandates.
- Requirements that impose undue economic impact on property owners and managers.
- The application of laws and regulations in ways that do not meet their original intent or statutory purpose.

Organizations & Initiatives

NAR Partnerships and Affiliates in the Sustainability Area

NAR is affiliated with or has collaborated with the industry organizations listed here; they each provide valuable resources or relationships for real estate professionals.



CCIM Institute
Commercial Real Estate's
Global Standard for Professional Achievement

The CCIM Institute is an NAR affiliate and commercial real estate's most influential professional organization, with members closing \$200 billion annually in commercial real estate deals. For 50 years, the Institute has been building opportunities through its respected education program, led by established practitioners. In addition to conferring the prestigious CCIM designation, the CCIM Institute offers CCIM Green, an online program that helps members identify efficiency retrofits and sustainability projects for commercial real estate properties. CCIM members can use the tool to profile buildings, get savings recommendations, and competitively bid projects to a network of more than 250,000 qualified solutions. Through a structured procurement process, members and their clients can achieve lower upfront costs and increase the internal rate of return on green projects.

Learn more about CCIM Green.



**Council of
Multiple Listing
Services**

Council of Multiple Listing Services (CMLS) is the professional trade organization serving hundreds of MLSs around the country. They serve to advance the MLS industry through unified leadership, cooperation, and education across the real estate industry. NAR and CMLS have worked together in many capacities, but continue to support each other in Green MLS data education, implementation, and utilization. NAR has supported CMLS resources such as CMLS Green Data Best Practices, Home Energy Information Guide, and Quick Start Guide to Green MLS Fields. Find CMLS tools in the Programs & Resources section of this Guide.

Organizations & Initiatives

NAR Partnerships and Affiliates in the Sustainability Area



The Institute of Real Estate Management (IREM) is an NAR affiliate comprised of 20,000 members from around the world with a goal to advance the profession of real estate management. IREM confers the CPM®, ARM®, ACoM, and AMO® credentials, as well as the Certified Sustainable Property (CSP) certification, a recognition program for existing office properties, multifamily communities, and shopping centers. IREM has also developed a thoughtful sustainability mission statement and outlined key goals to support its endeavor to be a leader in promoting the sustainable use of resources.

Learn more about IREM's sustainability initiatives:

- [IREM Sustainability Mission Statement](#)
- [IREM Certified Sustainable Property Program](#)
- [IREM Sustainability Topic Page](#)



The [Green REsource Council](#) was founded in 2008 to make the knowledge of green real estate practices available to real estate professionals by providing credentials for education. The Green REsource Council confers NAR's Green Designation and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of NAR. NAR's Green Designation teaches agents about energy efficiency and sustainability in existing homes and new construction, and provides a suite of exclusive benefits to help designees succeed in this market segment. NAR's Green Designation program is offered as a live lecture/classroom course and also be [taken online](#).

Contact The Green REsource Council at greendesignation@realtors.org for more information.



nahb.org/Green

As a cooperating industry organization, the National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) provides tools, resources, research, and education to home builders around the country. NAHB confers the Certified Green Professional (CGP) credential and has co-developed the National Green Building Standard (NGBS) with the International Code Council (ICC). Collaboration between NAHB and NAR helps provide information to each respective membership about the changing industry standards, consumer expectations around sustainable communities and home performance, and the value of working with knowledgeable home professionals.

National Complete Streets Coalition

The National Complete Streets Coalition (NCSC) launched Complete Streets in 2004, an approach that, according to NCSC, “integrates people and place in the planning, design, construction, operation, and maintenance of our transportation networks.” Complete Streets is focused on safety, accessibility, and ease of use for all people and multi-modal transportation in a community; this approach may reduce reliance on cars, which reduces carbon emissions and traffic congestion. It enables communities to provide more options for transportation, such as walking or biking, which can improve health and increase foot traffic to commercial spaces. NCSC promotes the adoption and implementation of Complete Streets policies at all levels of government and, to date, over 1,200 policies nationwide have been adopted. NAR played a critical role in getting Complete Streets incorporated into the federal transportation authorization bill that passed Congress in 2015, and NAR continues to collaborate with and advise the Coalition as it shifts its focus to issues related to implementation and equity. NAR has also worked with REALTOR® associations to help pass policies, conduct planning sessions, or conduct walkability audits as part of Smart Growth grants offered to state or local REALTOR® associations.

To learn more, contact Adriann Murawski, Policy Representative, State and Local Government Affairs, Advocacy Group, and member of National Complete Streets Coalition Steering Committee at amurawski@realtors.org.

Organizations & Initiatives

NAR Partnerships and Affiliates in the Sustainability Area



Real Estate Roundtable (RER) represents the leadership of the nation's top 100 privately owned and publicly held real estate ownership, development, lending and management firms, as well as the elected leaders of 16 major national real estate industry trade associations. RER discusses a variety of policy issues connecting real estate with several areas of the economy including those affecting energy, environment, infrastructure, and other policies.



Urban Land Institute (ULI) covers a variety of sustainability initiatives around sustainable building performance, smart growth, resilience, healthy places, and land use topics. Many of their initiatives benefit their membership and communities through concepts like education, energy, and resource reduction.



The U.S. Department of Energy's Home Energy Information Accelerator (HEIA) works with many home performance initiatives, including Home Energy Score (HES), which is a simple look at a home's energy usage. HEIA collaborates with NAR and other national organizations to provide education and resources to real estate professionals about home energy use.

Organizations & Initiatives

NAR Partnerships and Affiliates in the Sustainability Area



U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) is an organization dedicated to sustainable building design, construction, and operation in a variety of building types. USGBC develops and confers the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) building rating system. NAR's Washington and Chicago buildings have achieved LEED Gold certification for high performance in areas that include energy and water conservation, location efficiency, construction materials, and indoor air quality.

Learn more [about USGBC](#) and its [LEED rating system](#)

Programs & Resources



Council of Multiple Listing Services (CMLS) is the professional trade organization serving hundreds of MLSs around the country. The links below provide timely content to REALTORS and related industries that push MLSs forward on sustainability topics. Use these resources as education tools or to engage with your MLS about green data.

Learn about additional CMLS resources for green data:

- [CMLS Home Energy Information Guide](#)
- [CMLS Quick Start: Guide to Green MLS Fields](#)
- [CMLS Green Sheet: Solar Power Fields](#)
- [CMLS Green Sheet: Automated Efficiency Models](#)
- [Partnering With Data Consumers – A CMLS Best Practices White Paper](#)
- [2018 CMLS Green Data Best Practices Guide](#)



Programs & Resources



CRT Labs is a research group operated by the National Association of REALTORS'® Center for REALTOR® Technology (CRT). The primary goal for CRT is to track emerging technologies that will affect real estate, educate members, advocate for the proper use of technology, and innovate when there is a gap between what is needed and what is available.

- [The Smart Home Checklist](#)
Provides advice for buyers, sellers, and renters to maximize security, privacy, and personal safety in a home equipped with smart devices.
- [CRT Labs Smart Home Glossary](#)
A list of commonly used smart home phrases and terms, with definitions.
- [CRT Labs Smart Home and IoT FAQ](#)
Commonly asked questions about smart homes and the Internet of Things.
- [CRT Labs Smart Home Simplified](#)
One-sheet introductions to the major smart home device categories. REALTORS® and REALTOR® associations should feel free to print and distribute these; you may also post these PDFs to your web site or blog.
- [CRT Labs Pocket Guide to Cleaner Air: Plants for Commercial Spaces](#)
Commercial spaces often come with additional considerations, such as expenses and ease of care, as well as thinking about worker productivity and other business needs. These considerations are addressed in Plants for Commercial Spaces, including care tips and information about how adding greenery can help workers focus, stay healthy, and stay productive.

Programs & Resources



The Green REsource Council and NAR's Green Designation were established in the spring of 2008 in response to the increased interest by real estate buyers, sellers, and practitioners to go green. The Green Designation provides advanced training in green building and sustainable business practices so that members can seek out, understand, and market properties with green features.

- Learn more about [NAR's Green Designation](#) and [Green REsource Council](#)



HouseLogic provides free information and tools that homeowners can use to make smart and timely decisions about their homes. The site provides information on all aspects of sustainability, from green remodeling ideas and energy ratings to energy-based tax rebates and credits.



Programs & Resources

NAR Library Resources

NAR's library provides a wealth of online resources available at no cost to REALTOR® members and staff. See this section for online journals, ebooks, and References pages on a variety of topics, including many topics related to sustainability.

Online Journals

The journals listed below are available through EBSCO, a dynamic and searchable database that houses academic and news articles, white papers, and research. Email librarians@realtors.org for password.

- *Energy, Sustainability & Society*
An interdisciplinary forum of discourse for systemic energy innovation, the journal covers the entire innovation process ranging from scientific research to innovative approaches for technology implementation, as well as the analysis of economic, social and environmental impacts of sustainable energy systems.
- *Environment, Development & Sustainability*
Covers all aspects of the environmental impacts of socio-economic development including technical, economic, ethical, and philosophical aspects of sustainable development; sustainability and its practical implementation.
- *Journal of Economics & Sustainable Development*
Covers topics in economics and development, including sustainability management, corporate governance, public policy, food systems, industrialization, and more.
- *Journal of Strategic Innovation & Sustainability*
Covers innovation and sustainability research, policy analysis, and best practices in large and small enterprises, including public and private sector service organizations, state and national governments, and local and regional societies and economies.

Programs & Resources

eBooks and Audiobooks

NAR's digital books collection contains thousands of titles on all aspects of the real estate industry, including sustainability-related topics, all free to NAR association staff and members.

- Visit the [Digital Collection](#) website to view all titles, including a collection on Resource Efficiency

Reference Pages

All the research has been done for you! The Reference pages below offer links to articles, eBooks, websites, statistics, and more to provide a comprehensive overview of perspectives on a particular topic.

- [Agricultural/Farm Land](#)
- [Wind Farms](#)
- [Trails and Greenways](#)
- [Resource Efficient Homes](#)
- [Resource Efficient Mortgages](#)
- [Solar Energy Features and Tax Credits](#)
- [Water Rights and Resource Issues](#)

Programs & Resources

NAR Placemaking Initiative

The REALTOR® Party's Placemaking program provides technical and financial assistance to help REALTOR® associations become engaged in placemaking in their communities.

- **Placemaking for REALTOR® Associations**

Learn the details of placemaking, the kinds of projects placemaking entails, how to organize them, and where to go for assistance and resources.

- **Spaces to Places Blog**

See and learn about placemaking projects in action across the country.

- **Placemaking Webinars**

These webinars provide more in-depth information on various types of placemaking and how REALTORS® are involved in placemaking activities in their communities.

- **Build a Better Block**

A detailed view of the better block program and information better block is and information to help you and your partners plan and organize a better block event. Ideas generated at a better block may lead to permanent placemaking projects.



Smart Growth

The NAR Smart Growth program, established in 2000, focuses on providing education and advocacy resources to support REALTOR® associations at the state and local levels. Through the REALTOR® network of 1,600 state and local associations and boards, NAR serves as a catalyst and resource to share expertise, research, training, and other forms of assistance to participating state and local associations.

- **Smart Growth Polling Program**

Associations that want to understand how community residents feel about various growth and development issues can use the program to help formulate association land-use related policies that reflect the needs and desires of those who live in the community. NAR will cover the cost of the polling when using NAR's consultants.

- **Customized State Smart Growth Legislation Program**

State associations that are looking to proactively alter the state's land use laws in order to permit development that reflects smart growth principles can use this resource to help set the stage for sustainable development practices in your state. NAR will split the costs of the program with the state association.

- **Smart Growth Action Grant**

Smart Growth Action Grants support a wide range of land use and transportation-related activities. These activities must support REALTOR® engagement in land use and/or transportation-related community issues with the primary goal of affecting public policies that support development that meets one or more of the 10 Smart Growth Principles. The project should also raise the profile of REALTORS® as community leaders and enhance REALTOR® relationships with local elected officials.

Programs & Resources

NAR Smart Growth Advisory Board

The Smart Growth Advisory Board is comprised of fourteen members with expertise in smart growth and land use planning. The group meets formally twice per year to oversee related programmatic activities. The Smart Growth Advisory Board operates under NAR's governance structure, and members can apply to participate as at-large members for staggered two-year terms. To learn more, contact staff executive Hugh Morris (hmmorris@realtors.org).

REALTOR® Sustainability Program

The REALTOR® Sustainability Program was founded in 2016 as a means for member discussion, education, and strategic thinking on the intersection of sustainability and real estate. The program's goal is to support sustainability in real estate through environmental, social, and economic contexts in all market types. It also supports the “Greening the MLS” initiative by working collaboratively with related organizations to provide information and resources to members. Sustainability Program staff oversee research and production of the annual *REALTORS® and Sustainability Report*, create articles for *REALTOR® Magazine*, and produce various fact sheets and resources on sustainability topics.

To learn more, contact Amanda Stinton, Director, Sustainability & Green Designation at astinton@realtors.org or visit www.nar.realtor/sustainability.

Walkable Community Resources

Browse resources from the REALTOR® Party on the significance of and demand for walkable communities, including recent research findings that point to significant positive impacts on sales and rental prices.



Programs & Resources

NAR Sustainability Advisory Group

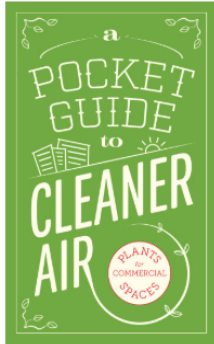
Created in 2017, NAR's Sustainability Advisory Group is a governance group that facilitates member discussion and education on sustainability topics related to NAR and the real estate sector. Comprised of 40 members reporting to the NAR Leadership Team, the group evaluates timely topics and meets formally twice per year to discuss the strategic integration of sustainability into all aspects of residential and commercial real estate.

The Sustainability Advisory Group's purpose is to:

1. Evaluate, monitor, analyze, and implement means and methods for integrating sustainability into all aspects of residential and commercial real estate.
2. Recommend the design, implementation and evaluation of a Sustainability Plan and Triple Bottom Line (social benefits, environmental considerations, and strong economies) practices to promote and support sustainability throughout NAR and the real estate sector.
3. Provide information and make recommendations to NAR Leadership Team for appropriate discussion, creation, revisions, or improvements to policies and programs, as necessary.
4. Provide information and proposed resources on sustainability-related issues to the NAR Leadership Team.

The Sustainability Advisory Group operates under NAR's governance structure, and members can apply to participate as standalone or committee representatives for a two-year term.

To learn more, contact staff co-executives: Joe Molinaro (jmolinaro@realtors.org), Russell Riggs (rriggs@realtors.org), and Amanda Stinton (astinton@realtors.org)

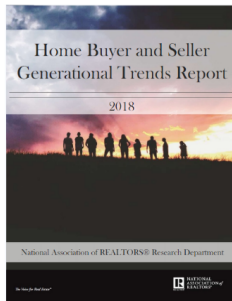


A Pocket Guide to Cleaner Air: Plants for Commercial Spaces (CRT Labs)

Commercial spaces often come with additional considerations, such as expenses and ease of care, as well as thinking about worker productivity and other business needs. These considerations are specifically addressed in *Plants for Commercial Spaces*, as are care tips and information about how adding greenery can help workers focus, stay healthy, and stay productive.

Community and Transportation Preference Survey

National poll of 3,000 adults in the fifty largest metro areas. The report covers consumer preferences and behaviors related to walking, biking, and driving; policy priorities related to transportation; and housing choices related to walkability and transportation.

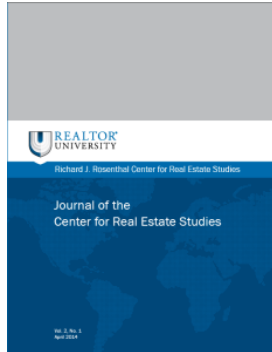


Home Buyer and Seller Generational Trends Report

Published since 2013, this report provides insights into differences and similarities across generations of home buyers and home sellers. Generational comparisons are provided for numerous topics, including the age of home purchased, the importance of environmentally-friendly features, and desired neighborhood features.

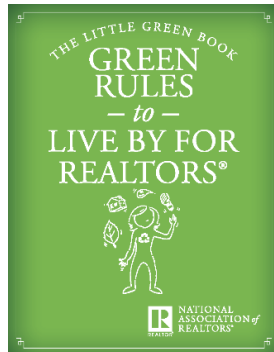
Publications & Research

Publications and Research Reports Published by NAR



The Journal of the Center for Real Estate Studies

This journal of the Center for Real Estate Studies is published three times each year by the Rosenthal Center and presents sponsored research as well as articles written by and for practitioners on topics and issues of importance to today's real estate industry, including subjects related to sustainability. Pertinent recently-published articles include: *The Market for Manufactured Homes; Promoting Sustainable Homeownership in California; The Impact of Green Building Certificates on Real Estate; and The Impact of Water Quality on Housing Prices.*



The Little Green Book: Green Rules to Live By for REALTORS®

This short booklet focuses on the instructions, philosophies and rules members of the National Association of REALTORS® utilize to educate, list and support clients' needs. This guide was created with support from the NAR Green REsource Council with input from hundreds of NAR members, including many members with the NAR Green Designation. The foreword was provided by 2014 NAR President Steve Brown, who held the association's first Environmental Summit. The Little Green Book includes tips that are presented in a fun, light-hearted way with realistic advice from REALTORS®. It's a great tool for new agents and seasoned professionals to incorporate green into their business.

Publications & Research

Publications and Research Reports Published by NAR

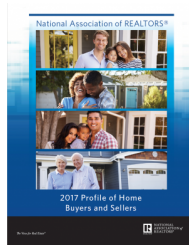


On Common Ground Magazine

Published twice annually by NAR's Smart Growth Program (May and November), *On Common Ground* contains articles on cutting-edge land planning techniques and a wide range of views on smart growth issues, with the goal of encouraging dialog among REALTORS®, elected officials, and other interested citizens.

At no cost to associations, NAR can mail copies of the magazine directly to local public officials.

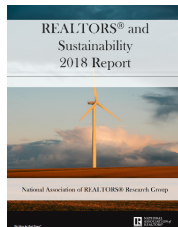
Learn more about direct mailing, ordering print copies, reading the online magazine, or downloading the *On Common Ground* mobile app.



Profile of Home Buyers and Sellers

This annual NAR survey of recent home buyers and sellers provides detailed insights into their unique experiences with this transaction.

The importance of efficient/environmentally friendly features is discussed.



REALTORS® and Sustainability

Published annually, this report surveys NAR member about sustainability issues facing the industry, including: availability of MLS and CIE green data fields, promotion of green features and energy information in the MLS and CIE, clients' interest in sustainability, and the value of energy efficiency promotion in listings.

Remodeling Impact Survey

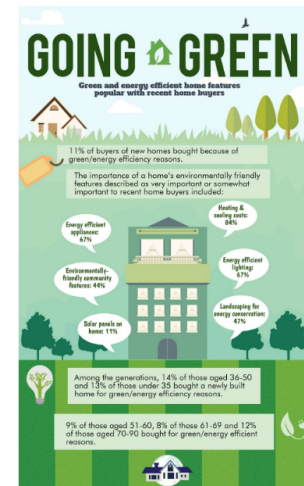
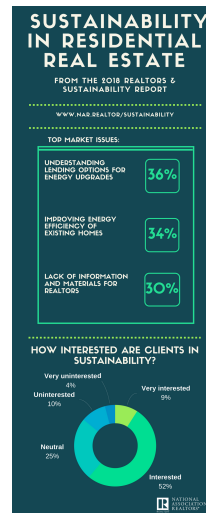
Homeowners and renters remodel, redesign, and restructure their homes for a variety of reasons. This report surveyed REALTORS®, consumers who have completed remodeling projects, and members of the National Association of the Remodeling Industry. It shows the reasons for remodeling, project success, and the increased happiness found in the home once a project is completed. Energy efficiency is cited as a common desired outcome for several remodeling projects.

Smart Homes and REALTORS®

Survey of REALTORS® on smart homes and smart devices, including client interest in common features that tech-savvy clients seek, and popular brands.

Infographics

- REALTORS® and Sustainability
- Sustainability in Real Estate
- Going Green
- Millennials: The Generation that Walks the Talk
- Community & Transportation Preference Survey
- Energy Efficient Features



Sustainability in Action

A Look at How the Real Estate Industry Has Embraced Sustainability in Business and Community

Community Projects

Through partnerships between REALTOR® associations and local organizations, NAR's Placemaking Grant funds the creation of public space projects, like pocket parks, trails, and gardens.



Traverse Area AOR (MI) trailhead space.
Credit: *On Common Ground*

REALTOR® associations looking to include sustainability in their outreach can use the ideas below for inspiration. See the [Spaces to Places](#) blog for more examples.

The [Greater Fairfield Board of REALTORS®](#) (CT) created a pocket park to educate visitors on sustainable gardening and native plants.

The [Traverse Area Association of REALTORS®](#) (MI) helped fund a trailhead for the Leelanau Trail, complete with a wayfinding kiosk created from an old English phone booth and landscaping to welcome visitors.

The [Green Mountain Association of REALTORS®](#) (VT) collaborated with the Waterbury Area Trails Alliance to build a new mountain bike and cross country skiing trail system within the Little River State Park.

Green in Governance

To address a variety of market issues, state and local associations might consider a sustainability committee, such as the examples below.

[Orange County Association of REALTORS®](#) (OCAR) (CA) keeps sustainability top of mind for agents through its governance process. The Green committee, one of OCAR's eighteen committees, meets quarterly with a goal of educating REALTORS® on green housing trends and the impact on real estate business. The group provides resources that educate agents and consumers, offers guidance on marketing green properties, and keeps REALTORS® up-to-date on local green guidelines.

Sustainability in Action

A Look at How the Real Estate Industry Has Embraced Sustainability in Business and Community

The Scottsdale Area Association of REALTORS® (SAAR) (AZ) formed its Sustainability Committee in 2018 with a mission to “seek, find, create, educate, and promote the expansion of sustainable practices through the entire real estate process.” The committee promotes business practices that help consumers understand sustainable construction, and empowers the association to be a leader in sustainable practices.

Events & Education

REALTOR® associations are already engaging with their communities through sustainability events. Consider ideas like the ones below for integrating sustainability throughout your association or fulfilling the Consumer Outreach Core Standard.

The Fort Collins Board of REALTORS® (FCBR) hosts regular events to promote awareness of green initiatives: its annual FCBR Recycling Challenge invites community residents to bring paper to member brokerage offices for recycling; the office with the highest poundage for recycling wins. FCBR's Green REALTOR® of the Year and REALTOR® & Affiliate Office of the Year awards are given annually in recognition of efforts to integrate sustainability practices into businesses.

Devoting a page or section to your website is an easy way to educate members about sustainable trends and initiatives that impact their businesses, and several associations are doing that quite well. Portland Metropolitan Association of REALTORS® (PMAR) (OR) divides its sustainability site into four categories:

- Welcome, for basics including cost savings information, green home features commonly listed in the MLS, and glossaries
- REALTOR® Education, for certifications and publications
- REALTOR® Business Practices, for tips on incorporating sustainable practices into the office
- Homeowner Resources, with cash and tax incentives organized by project

Santa Cruz County Board of REALTORS'® (AZ) website contains an extensive Community Development section with topical pages on Smart Growth, Sustainability, Planning, Local Stakeholders, Grant Programs, Development Toolkits, Community Preference, and more. Each topical page is a robust directory to related sources and authoritative information.

Sustainability in Action

A Look at How the Real Estate Industry Has Embraced Sustainability in Business and Community

Green Association Buildings

LEED, or Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, is conferred by the U.S. Green Building Council. It is the most widely used green building rating system in the world, and several REALTOR® associations have made it a goal to obtain LEED certifications for their new and existing buildings, including the following examples.

Alabama Association of REALTORS® designed its building to meet LEED Silver certification requirements; when the building was completed in 2010, it exceeded standards and now holds LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council.

Austin Board of REALTORS'® (TX) headquarters building, completed in 2015, received LEED Gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council and was recognized as a Platinum Austin Green Business Leader by the Austin Green Business Leaders, a city program that recognizes organizations in seven areas of sustainability. Among the many sustainable design features implemented, the building's solar rooftop panels and solar screen windows contributed energy back into the grid; irrigation uses gray water for drought-resistant plantings; and staff members receive reusable cups and have access to electric vehicle charging stations.



Austin Board of REALTORS® Headquarters
Architecture and interior design services: STG Design.
Photographer: Casey Dunn

Sustainability in Action

A Look at How the Real Estate Industry Has Embraced Sustainability in Business and Community



NAR building in Washington, D.C.
Credit: NAR Archives.

The National Association of REALTORS® building in Washington, D.C., completed in 2004, was the first newly constructed building in the nation's capital to earn LEED Silver certification; it has since earned the Gold certification.

NAR's headquarters in Chicago earned its Energy Star rating from the Environmental Protection Agency and obtained the LEED EB O&M Gold certification in 2011. As of 2018, a Master Vision project was approved, which takes into account sustainability, life cycle cost, and equipment efficiency.

Northern Virginia REALTORS® (NVAR) began building its LEED Certified Green Building in 2009, complete with underground parking, green roof, eco-friendly materials, passive solar and HVAC, sustainable lighting and plumbing choices, and rigorous recycling standards during construction and in tenant operations.

Several other REALTOR® associations hold, or are in the process of implementing green features or pursuing certification on their new or existing buildings.

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Glossary

This glossary compiles terminology as identified by the NAR Sustainability Advisory Group at NAR's RLMTE 2018 meeting. Terms were identified for their significance within the intersection of real estate and sustainability. Definitions are sourced from Green Resource Council, Oxford Living Dictionaries, Investopedia, government entities, and company and organization information.

alternative energy - Term used for an energy source that is an alternative to using fossil fuels. Generally, it indicates energies that are non-traditional and have low environmental impact. The term alternative is used to contrast with fossil fuels according to some sources. By most definitions, alternative energy doesn't harm the environment, a distinction which separates it from renewable energy which may or may not have significant environmental impact. Also referred to as 'renewable energy.'

biomass - A renewable organic matter, and can include biological material derived from living, or recently living organisms, such as wood, waste, and alcohol fuels.

bioswale - A landscape element, often a planted strip along a street or parking lot, for the purpose of capturing surface water runoff and filtering out silt and pollution before the storm water enters the drainage system or groundwater.

built environment - Man-made structures, features, and facilities viewed collectively as an environment in which people live and work. New and existing homes, office space, commercial and industrial buildings, and parks and recreational areas are all part of the built environment.

energy audit - A special inspection performed to determine where there are energy inefficiencies in a home or building. A qualified tester uses methods and measurements that comply with industry standards and involves collection of detailed data and an engineering analysis. A written report should include recommendations and a detailed cost and savings analysis.

Glossary

energy data reporting/energy benchmarking - Now law in many cities, energy benchmarking serves as a mechanism to measure energy performance of a single building over time, relative to other similar buildings, or to modeled simulations of a reference building built to a specific standard (such as an energy code). Energy data reporting facilitates energy accounting, comparing a facility's energy use to similar facilities to assess opportunities for improvement, and quantifying/verifying energy savings.

energy efficiency financing - With a goal to reduce upfront costs of implementing energy efficiency projects, several financing options are available to property owners and buyers, whether they want to invest in green homes or buildings, make energy efficient improvements, or undertake significant retrofits. Energy Efficient Mortgages (EEM) are loan products that consider a home's energy efficiency when determining the qualifying ratios for a buyer; EEMs primarily apply to new construction. In most markets, Energy Improvement Mortgages (EIM) are available for any buyer interested in making energy efficiency improvements to an existing home. Other examples of energy efficiency financing include on-bill financing, property tax financing (see PACE financing), and Energy Service Performance Contracting (ESPC). Property owners and buyers interested in energy efficiency financing should speak with a financial advisor to learn about terms, risks, and options in their markets.

energy labeling - Not to be confused with energy labels required by the U.S. Department of Energy that are affixed to appliances to estimate energy usage and operating costs, energy labeling in this context refers to domestic and international programs that rate building performance. Examples include HERS (defined below), Home Energy Score (U.S. Department of Energy), Home Energy Performance Score Systems (Oregon), EnerGuide (Canada), and Energy Performance Certificate (UK).

Energy Star® - A certification granted by the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Department of Energy for household appliances or buildings that perform at specified levels of energy efficiency.

geothermal - Energy extracted from the natural heat of the earth's rocks and fluids.

Green Guides - Guidelines published by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) providing standards for advertising claims that a product is green.

Glossary

green home - A high-performance home, often more efficient in resource use, and most commonly associated with a newly built home.

greenfield - Area of land that has not been graded, compacted, cleared, or disturbed and that supports (or could support) open space, habitat, or natural hydrology.

green MLS fields - MLS data fields, such as Green Building Verification, Green Verification Body, and Green Verification Rating, which help buyers quickly find green homes, make it easy to fully promote the special features and benefits of a greener home, and support apples-to-apples comparisons when it is time to appraise a home.

healthy home - Healthy homes include an improved indoor environment free of harsh chemicals, allergens, pests, mold, or other contaminants, with a goal to promote wellness.

Home Energy Labeling Information eXchange (HELIX) - HELIX is an effort by stakeholders in six New England states and New York to develop a database that will automatically populate real estate listings (whether accessed through the MLS or third-party portals) with home energy information from Home Energy Score and other sources as available and approved by the seller. Formed in 2016, the goal of HELIX is to provide a replicable, open source model usable elsewhere. The HELIX database will be implemented across the seven state region in 2018. See [Northeast Energy Efficiency Partnerships \(NEEP\)](#) for more information.

Home Energy Rating System (HERS) - Third-party scoring system established by the Residential Energy Services Network (RESNET) that provides a snapshot of a home's energy performance. Homes built to the specifications of the HERS Reference Home (based on the 2006 International Energy Conservation Code) scores a HERS Index of 100, while a net zero energy home scores a HERS Index of 0. Each 1-point decrease in the HERS Index corresponds to a 1% reduction in energy consumption compared to the HERS Reference Home. Thus, a home with a HERS Index of 85 is 15% more energy efficient than the HERS Reference Home, and a home with a HERS Index of 80 is 20% more energy efficient. An energy rater trained by RESNET can provide the diagnostics required for a HERS Score.

Glossary

heat island effect - The thermal absorption by hardscape, such as dark, nonreflective pavement and buildings, and its subsequent radiation to surrounding areas. Other contributing factors may include vehicle exhaust, air conditioners, and street equipment. Tall buildings and narrow streets reduce airflow and exacerbate the effect.

Home Energy Score (HES) - Developed by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) and its national laboratories, the Home Energy Score provides comparable and credible information about a home's energy use. Like a miles-per-gallon rating for a car, the Home Energy Score is based on a standard assessment of energy-related assets shown on a one-to-ten scale, where a ten represents the most efficient homes. DOE-trained Home Energy Score Assessors can provide the Home Energy Score within an energy audit, home inspection package, or as a standalone product.

home performance - Describes how all aspects of a home work together as one comprehensive system with the goal of creating the most comfortable, healthy, and resource-efficient place in which to live.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) - Green building certification program created by the U. S. Green Building Council (USGBC). The comprehensive rating system (based on prerequisites and points) takes a whole building approach factoring in community resources & public transit, site characteristics, water efficiency, energy efficiency, materials & resources, indoor environmental quality, awareness & education, and innovation.

National Green Building Standard (NGBS) - The National Green Building Standard (also known as the ICC-700) is the ANSI-approved, above code rating system for residential green construction. It can be applied to new and existing single and multi-family projects as well as land developments. Certification of the National Green Building Standard is provided by the NAHB Research Center. Additional information is found at www.nahbgreen.org.

net-positive - Refers to buildings that go beyond net-zero, by generating more energy than needed for building operation.

net-zero - Refers to buildings generating their own energy needs through renewable on-site power generation.

Glossary

PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing - Mechanism for paying for energy efficiency, renewable energy, and water conservation upgrades to buildings, such as new heating and cooling systems, lighting improvements, solar panels, water pumps, and insulation; available for private commercial (C-PACE) and residential (R-PACE) properties.

renewable energy - Energy that is generated from natural processes that are continuously replenished. This includes sunlight, geothermal heat, wind, tides, water, and various forms of biomass. This energy cannot be exhausted and is constantly renewed. Also referred to as 'alternative energy.'

resilience - While sustainability strives to achieve balance among the planet's natural resources, the concept of resilience acknowledges disruptions, such as natural disasters, and looks to adapt to extremes and "manage in an imbalanced world" (Zolli, 2012). The concept of resiliency in ecosystems was introduced in 1973 (Holling), but the relationship between sustainability and resilience, and conceptual preferences for resilience over sustainability, have recently gained momentum in various fields, including urban planning and ecology.

retrofitting - The process of rethinking an existing home, building, or development plan after completion to include newer features, such as green or eco-friendly features.

return on investment (ROI) - A performance measure used to evaluate the efficiency of an investment; ROI measures the amount of return on an investment relative to the investment's cost. To calculate ROI, the benefit (or return) of an investment is divided by the cost of the investment. The result is expressed as a percentage or a ratio. Calculating ROI on real estate should factor in variables including maintenance expense, rental income, and/or money borrowed to make the initial investment.

Smart Growth - An approach to development that encourages a mix of building types and uses, diverse housing and transportation options, development within existing neighborhoods, and community engagement. The Smart Growth Program offers state and local REALTOR® associations a way to engage with government officials, community partners and the general public in planning and designing a community's future.

Glossary

smart home technologies - Series of automated processes whereby homeowners can control the home's HVAC, lighting, locks, and other processes remotely.

solar photovoltaic (PV) - A system that captures light from the sun and converts it into electricity through solar panels usually installed on roofs.

Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) - A solar incentive that allows homeowners to sell certificates to their utility. A homeowner will earn one SREC for every 1000 kilowatt hours (kWhs) produced by their solar panel system. An SREC can be worth as much as \$300 in certain markets. SRECs exist as a result of a regulation known as the renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Renewable portfolio standards are state laws that require utilities to produce a specific percentage of their electricity from renewable resources. Nearly 30 states and Washington, D.C. have an RPS, and eight states have a renewable portfolio goal.

total cost of ownership (TCO) - Accounts for the purchase price of an asset plus the costs of maintenance and operation throughout the asset's lifecycle. Further, TCO acknowledges the complete set of necessary expenses for a homeowner to live in one location over another. This could include items like transit or gas costs, landscaping and yard upkeep, maintenance of appliances or HVAC systems and filters, etc., and is not limited to home performance. TCO is a significant concept at the intersection of sustainability and real estate because the introduction of energy-efficient features in property development is associated with additional costs for developers and, in turn, property purchasers. When cost savings from energy efficiency after the initial purchase are taken into consideration, TCO is a practical tool for changing value perceptions of properties with sustainable features.

triple bottom line (TBL) - Introduced in 1994 by John Elkington, TBL seeks to broaden the focus on the financial bottom line by businesses to include social and environmental responsibilities; triple bottom line measures a company's degree of social responsibility, its economic value, and its environmental impact.

urban infill - Redevelopment of sites, in the core of metropolitan areas, for commercial and residential purposes.

Glossary

volatile organic compound (VOC) - An organic gas with harmful effects on air quality. VOCs are frequently associated with paint, pesticides, carpet, and adhesives.

walkability/Walk Score® - Walk Score is a company that measures walkability on a scale from 0 - 100 based on walking routes to destinations such as grocery stores, schools, parks, restaurants, and retail. The company's mission is to promote walkable neighborhoods, and over 30,000 websites incorporate Walk Score ratings. Walk Score is a part of Redfin and was originally incubated at Front Seat.

watershed - An area of land that drains all the streams and rainfall to a common outlet such as the outflow of a reservoir, mouth of a bay, or any point along a stream channel; sometimes used interchangeably with drainage basin or catchment. Watershed Protection refers to an environmental movement that monitors our daily actions and their effects toward the conservation, development, utilization, and proper disposal of water in order to maintain safe and effective drainage for the various water systems surrounding us.

WELL Building Standard® - Performance-based system for measuring, certifying, and monitoring features of the built environment that impact human health and wellbeing, through air, water, nourishment, light, fitness, comfort, and mind. WELL Certified™ spaces and WELL Compliant™ core and shell developments can help create a built environment that improves nutrition, fitness, mood, and sleep patterns. The WELL Building Standard® is third-party certified by the Green Business Certification Incorporation (GBCI), which administers the LEED certification program and the LEED professional credentialing program.

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