INLAND VALLEYS EALTOR

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE INLAND VALLEYS ASSOCIATION OF REALTORS®

# **NAR HOME Survey:** Desire to Buy Strong Despite Affordability, Economic Concerns

FOR MORE INFORMATION GO TO PAGES 18-20



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# Building a Culture of Involvement at IVAR



MIKE STOFFEL, 2015 IVAR PRESIDENT

As I complete my year as President of IVAR and prepare to pass the gavel to 2016 President Scott Gieser, I'm proud to reflect on the work we have done over the past few years and the bright future our board of directors and staff have built for this association.

I began my year touting the importance of our government affairs program and end the year on the same note. We have built this program to be responsive and effective. Led by CEO Mark Dowling and Government Affairs Director Paul Herrera, we have exactly that. In 2015, we were once again able to prove it.

This was a year when our members asked that we work to rein in problems created by PACE financing in Riverside County. As the year started, we were beginning a dialogue with the HERO program to learn more and figure out how to work on it. As it progressed, we quickly realized that we had a mountain of work ahead of us. IVAR researched, worked with members and their clients, built our case and made our advocacy on behalf of consumers and public campaign to try to take the thorns out of PACE.

The year ends with the federal government having announced it is working on exactly that. Even before that happened, local leaders and PACE administrators themselves began looking at and implementing reforms to chip away at the issues. The work isn't done, but the progress is substantial. Elsewhere, IVAR created new partnerships with other local associations to work on this issue and others. We reached out more to consumers and heard from a growing group of members who want to be involved in our advocacy mission.

It was also a year when almost 600 members voluntarily contributed to the REALTOR® Action Fund – besting the mark set the previous year which was also an improvement on the year before that. As we head into 2016, I urge every one of you who have seen the work of our government affairs team to make sure you include a voluntary contribution to the RAF in your membership renewal. Those voluntary funds are what allows us to have an impact at every level of government.

Want to see how that makes a difference? Just read Paul Herrera's column on the REALTOR® Party wins in Washington, D.C. last month. If you own a home, lease a home, have a business or own a rental, you benefitted in some way from legislation completed just last month. That benefit is probably in the range of thousands of dollars each year.

That's why supporting the REALTOR® Action Fund is an investment and not a contribution. It provides returns. It gives you and your clients a voice at City Hall, Sacramento, DC and all points in between that matter to your business and clients.

Thank you for making 2015 a great year to serve as President of the Board of Directors.

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# **GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE**



PAUL HERRERA, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS DIRECTOR

# REALTORS<sup>®</sup> Close Year Successful Year in Washington, D.C.

In December, Congress delivered a more than 2,000-page budget bill chock full of nearly every imaginable provision you've heard discusses – and many you have not – to close out the lawmakers' work ahead of the holidays. For REALTORS® and their clients, the bill delivered a series of wins on critical priorities.

Accompanying legislation, known as the "tax extenders" bill, will help owners of residential and commercial real estate right away by ensuring that expiring tax provisions continue to benefit homeowners.

The complete rundown of real estate provisions within the omnibus bill is available online via the NAR site at http://goo. gl/8ZrDV3. You can also read a 2015 yearin-review for federal issues at http://goo.gl/ EG5XLP.

#### **Omnibus Bill Highlights – Federal Tax Policy**

 Tax Forgiveness on Forgiven Mortgage Debt – In California, most short sale situations were already exempted from facing income tax liability on the forgiven debt through separate state legislation. However, a gap existed for many beneficiaries of loan modifications that allowed them to stay in their home through some amount of debt forgiveness. Congress included a 2-year extension of the federal debt forgiveness provisions to cover most situations through the end of 2016.

- Mortgage Insurance Premium Deductibility – The ability for homeowners to deduct mortgage insurance premiums lapsed in 2015. Congress has now extended it through the end of 2016.
- Energy Tax Credit for New Homes Congress also extended an expired tax credit worth up to \$2,000 for energyefficient new homes through the end of 2016.

# Omnibus Bill Highlights – Commercial Real Estate

- Leasehold Improvement Depreciation Congress delivered a pleasant surprise by making the 15-year depreciation schedule on leasehold improvements a permanent part of the tax code. Lawmakers had only anticipated a twoyear extension similar to the other items in federal tax policy.
- Immediate Expensing of Business
   Equipment and Certain Real Estate -
- Energy Efficient Commercial Buildings (Section 179D) – The deductions available for energy efficient commercial buildings

received a two-year extension through 2016, matching the extension for residential structures.

 Immediate Expensing of Business Equipment and Certain Real Estate – This item will benefit many small and medium-sized businesses as they pay for equipment, real estate and leasehold improvements. In addition to making the provisions of this beneficial tax policy permanent, a \$250,000 annual cap has been removed and all business assets will have the same \$500,000 yearly limit, which will be indexed for inflation.

## **Eminent Domain Seizure of Mortgages**

In a blast-from-the-past, the Omnibus bill took care of any remaining possibilities that an eminent domain scheme such as the one proposed in San Bernardino County in 2011 will ever be carried out. The Omnibus bill included a provision prohibiting FHA and Ginnie Mae from insuring or securitizing a loan on a home seized through eminent domain. This extends a policy already in place for Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac and targets a financing possibility for the eminent domain plan previously envisioned.

### **FHA Condo Policies**

This item was not part of the omnibus, but is nonetheless notable. In November, FHA announced a series of new rules related to financing condo sales. The new rules closely follow proposals developed by the National Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> to increase access to FHA financing for condos and improve the difficult recertification process. For more information, visit: http://www.realtor.org/fha.





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# Legal Live Webinar: December Forms Revisions

Twice a year, with the approval of the C.A.R. Standard Forms Committee, C.A.R. releases new and revised forms. The first forms release occurred in April. The second forms release is scheduled for December 14. All in all, the December release will have a total of more than 30 new or revised forms and four forms will be discontinued.

While many of the changes in the December forms release are relative minor, others have the potential to impact the way licensees conduct business going forward. Join C.A.R. Attorneys Neil Kalin and Howard Fallman on Tuesday, December 1, from 1:30 to 2:30 pm for a Legal Live Webinar discussing the new and revised forms and how they may affect your real estate practice. The Webinar will discuss changes to the Residential Purchase Agreement, the Residential Listing Agreement, the Request for Repairs and the Seller Multiple Counter Offer and new forms such as the Delivery of Notices Addendum, two subdivision forms, and an Agricultural Addendum to name a few.

You can sign up for this webinar at http://www.car.org/ legal/LegalWebinars/live/. Space is limited and may fill up fast. You may want to sign up as quickly as you can. As soon as you register you should immediately receive a confirmation email which you will need to attend the webinar.

# Selected Forms Revisions: The RPA and the RLA

Among the forms changes that you will most likely want to know about are changes to two of the most used C.A.R. forms: the California Residential Purchase Agreement and Joint Escrow Instructions (RPA) and the Residential Listing Agreement (RLA).

# RPA

The RPA is being revised to provide the ability to write an offer with some or all of the buyer's contingencies removed or waived. The Standard Forms Advisory Committee heard comments from many REALTORS<sup>®</sup> around the state that buyers were wanting to write non-contingent offers and that this was very difficult to do with the current RPA format. Notwithstanding that buyers are acting against their broker's advice in doing so, buyers were asking for the ability to do this and often simply putting a zero in the contingency period in

the offer. Because the RPA was not designed to accommodate a zero in the contingency period, this has created an unclear legal result. Are there no contingencies or just no contingency period? Does this mean that the seller will still have to provide the buyer with a Notice to Perform, thus in reality creating at least a two day contingency period? The December release, after providing a warning to buyers to not write a noncontingent offer without having first conducted appropriate investigations of the property, will allow the buyer to write an offer removing the contingencies on the ATTACHED AND SIGNED BY BUYER Contingency Removal Form (CR). It will also provide that the buyer who has removed their physical investigation contingency will still have the right to access the property to conduct non-contingent investigations for a set amount of time.

## RLA

The Residential Listing Agreement (RLA) will also have two significant changes. First, the RLA will now be able to be used with a probate, trust or manufactured home listing, as well as with a traditional sale. By checking the appropriate box in the RLA, either the Manufactured Home Listing Addendum (MHLA) or the Probate Listing Addendum (PLA) will be automatically attached to the RLA. This was done because the Manufactured Home Listing Agreement and the Probate Listing Agreement, as well as the Trust Listing, were essentially the same agreement as the RLA. To facilitate the signing of a listing by the representative of a probate estate, conservatorship or trust, or by a power of attorney or the representative of another legal entity, the Representative Capacity Signature Disclosure (For Seller Representatives) (RCSD-S) will be referenced near the seller's signature and automatically attached if the box is checked.

A second significant change will be found in the "safety clause" or "protection period" provisions. In the current RLA, the listing agent has three days after the expiration or cancellation of the listing to provide the seller with a list of "protected buyers" who have either entered the property or written an offer on the property. If one of these buyers should buy the property within the protection period, the original listing agent would be entitled to a commission.

In practice this currently means that if the seller enters into a listing with a new broker immediately after the first listing expires, that new listing broker may not know for three days if there are any protected buyers and how many there may be. When the revised RLA is released in December, the listing agent who wants to preserve his or her rights to "protected buyers" will have to provide the seller with their names NO LATER than the end of the listing period or any extension or cancellation. The Notice of Protected Buyers (NPB) is intended for this purpose. Instead of waiting until the listing has expired to collect the names of protected buyers, listing agents will want to keep a rolling list of buyers who have entered the property or written an offer.

# PACE Programs

PACE (Property Assessed Clean Energy) financing programs, which include the HERO program, California First and Ygrene are being utilized by homeowners to finance energy and water conservation and renewable energy improvements to their homes. The programs create problems for sellers when they sell their homes due to the super priority status of the lien put on the property for the financing. While programs tout the ability of the seller to transfer the lien to the buyer, most buyers with conventional financing will not be able to purchase the home unless the lien is paid off by the seller prior to close. REALTORS® and other groups are concerned about a lack of adequate disclosures of the financing terms, including prepayment penalties and high interest rates along with some of the representations and advertising that may overpromise potential "savings." Detailed information on PACE programs and the issues surrounding them is available in the **O&A PACE Liens and Solar Leases.** 

There are also concerns about unscrupulous contractors convincing homeowners to hire them to make overpriced and underperforming (as far as energy savings) improvements to their homes and finance those improvements through a PACE program. Homeowners who believe they have been taken advantage of or even approached by such unscrupulous contractors should inform the PACE program in their area and also contact the Contractors State License Board to file a complaint or in egregious cases even contact local law enforcement or their county district attorney's office.

PACE programs know that unscrupulous contractors hurt their programs' reputations and usually have systems in place to try to make sure that contractors approved by their programs meet certain standards. However, even with such standards, unscrupulous contractors may end up getting approved. In order to help rid their programs of such contractors and to address any problems created by them, programs may assist homeowners to resolve any problems they have with contractors who approach them or who do work for them. The HERO Program, for example, offers HERO Protect <sup>™</sup>, a service which assists consumers who are having an issue with a contractor, whether or not the problem is related to a HERO related job.

# IVAR CALENDAR

FRIDAY, JANUARY 1ST HOLIDAY IVAR CLOSED IVAR Riverside & Rancho Cucamonga

MONDAY, JANUARY 4TH Education CRMLS Training 9:00am – 3:00pm IVAR Rancho Cucamonga

# WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 6TH

Networking IVAR Breakfast Meeting 8:00am – 9:30am IVAR Riverside

# **FRIDAY, JANUARY 15TH**

Education New Member Orientation 9:00am – 12:00pm IVAR Riverside

MONDAY, JANUARY 18TH HOLIDAY IVAR CLOSED IVAR Riverside &

**Rancho Cucamonga** 



# Housing Data – November 2015



# Inland Valleys Association of REALTORS<sup>®</sup> (IVAR)

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#### Mark Dowling, Chief Executive Officer

Welcome to the Inland Valleys Association of REALTORS (IVAR) monthly housing update. As a member benefit, IVAR produces monthly and quarterly housing reports to help members and area leaders better understand what's going on in the regional housing market. When reviewing the latest housing data from the region, there are a few noticeable trends emerging over the last several months:

• The housing market continues to show strength by closing out the year with solid increases in Pending Sales, Sold Listings, Median Sales Price and Sales Volume.

• Over the course of 2015, Sales Volume has showed strong growth with a year-over-year increase of more than 11%.

• The market continues to reflect a steady Median Sales price gain for the region, demonstrated by a yearover-year increase of 6.2%. However, over the last six months, Median Sales prices have been flat.



		Nov-2014	Nov-2015	Annual Change				
Monthly New Listings	New Listings	3,455	3,413 🤳	-1.2%				
	Pending Sales	2,763	3,222 1	<b>14.2%</b>				
	Sold Listings	2,670	2,562 🤳	-4.2%				
	Median Sales Price	\$301,000	\$320,000	► <b>5.9%</b>				
HOI, Dec, Pau, Cap, Pau, Pau, Pau, Pru, Pru, Pra, Cab, Oc, HOI, VU, U, U	Sales Volume (\$M)	\$898	\$900 1	▶ 0.2%				
Monthly Closed Listings	Price/Sq.Ft.	\$170	\$181 쉮	► 6. <b>3</b> %				
	Sold \$/List \$	97.37%	98.16% ϯ	• 0.8%				
	Days on Market	52	50 🤳	-4.0%				
1500	CDOM	63	62 🤳	-1.6%				
All data used to generate these reports comes from the California Regional Multiple Listing Service, Inc. If you have any questions about the data, please call the CRMLS Customer Service Department between the hours of 8:30am to 9:00pm Monday thru Friday or 10:00am to 3:00pm Saturday and Sunday at 800-925-1525 or 909- 859-2040.								
Monthly Median Sales Price								
Stepson Ste	315 320	325 325	326 32	2 325 320				
280	prants warants	unders andres	RUB 2015 SEP 2015	Octobio Novalio				

IVAR Member Services: 951.684.1221 | Rancho Cucamonga: 909.527.2133 | Office FAX: 951.684.0450







The following monthly data shows "YEAR-OVER-YEAR" (YOY) changes as well as current conditions in the real estate market								
	YOY Sales	YOY Median	Median		Total Days on			
	Transactions	Sales Price %	Sales Price \$	Price per Sq.Ft.	Market			
Alta Loma	-13%	-4%	\$ 540,000	\$ 243	81			
Banning	-18%	11%	\$ 200,000	\$ 147	61			
Beaumont	-4%	14%	\$ 274,000	\$ 135	58			
Bloomington	<b>4</b> 33%	14%	\$ 263,000	\$ 200	74			
Canyon Lake	<b>20%</b>	-13%	\$ 335,000	\$ 172	106			
Chino	-19%	<b>1</b> 6%	\$ 434,000	\$ 227	52			
Chino Hills	17%	-2%	\$ 540,000	\$ 296	84			
Claremont	-18%	<b>1</b> 3%	\$ 575,000	\$ 303	81			
Colton	-18%	<b>1</b> 6%	\$ 241,500	\$ 167	58			
Corona	1 4%	6%	\$ 412,500	\$ 216	64			
Diamond Bar	-10%	-15%	\$ 483,000	\$ 331	74			
Eastvale	11%	6%	\$ 499,000	\$ 165	82			
Fontana	-20%	7%	\$ 320,000	\$ 197	53			
Hemet	2%	6%	\$ 185,000	\$ 120	50			
Highland	<b>□</b> > 0%	18%	\$ 290,000	\$ 160	66			
Jurupa Valley	28%	13%	\$ 355,000	\$ 205	67			
La Verne	-35%	7%	\$ 610,000	\$ 339	66			
Lake Elsinore	-7%	7%	\$ 300,000	\$ 147	95			
Loma Linda	50%	9%	\$ 355,000	\$ 174	31			
Menifee	1%	4%	\$ 299,900	\$ 150	58			
Montclair	7%	5%	\$ 354,990	\$ 252	38			
Moreno Valley	-11%	5%	\$ 257,000	\$ 154	57			
Murrieta	17%	8%	\$ 350,000	\$ 161	65			
Norco	-12%	3%	\$ 465,000	\$ 224	102			
Ontario	-11%	13%	\$ 345,000	\$ 241	62			
Perris	2%	13%	\$ 255,000	\$ 132	63			
Pomona	13%	2%	\$ 320,000	\$ 246	65			
Rancho Cucamonga		4%	\$ 415,000	\$ 236	57			
Redlands	-4%	-1%	\$ 327,000	\$ 202	54			
Rialto	-28%	9%	\$ 282,900	\$ 179	52			
Riverside	2%	10%	\$ 335,000	\$ 193	53			
Romoland	300%	17%	\$ 223,000	\$ 152	44			
San Bernardino	-17%	11%	\$ 210,000	\$ 164	52			
San Dimas	-18%	23%	\$ 535,000	\$ 326	39			
San Jacinto	-2%	10%	\$ 220,000	\$ 120	56			
Sun City	6%	10%	\$ 203,000	\$ 131	93			
Temecula	-15%	3%	\$ 395,000	\$ 185	66			
Upland	6%	3%	\$ 465,000	\$ 251	67			
Wildomar	-36%	4 11%	\$ 305,000	\$ 150	79			
Winchester	-10%	4 14%	\$ 370,000	\$ 147	51			
Yucaipa	-10%	14%	\$ 330,000	\$ 186	74			
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Riverside	242	\$85,643,700				
Corona	148	\$62,301,300				
Murrieta	154	\$59,673,500				
Rancho Cucamonga	113	\$51,082,100				
Temecula	101	\$50,215,900				
Chino Hills	63	\$40,238,800				
Fontana	\$38,724,30	00				
Menifee	\$33,687,400					
Moreno Valley	\$31,693,500					
Ontario	\$29,563,900					
San Bernardino	\$28,412,700	Тар Г				
Upland	\$27,172,400	Top 5				
Hemet	\$24,681,900	communities had				
Eastvale	\$24,638,900					
Lake Elsinore	\$21,572,000	combined Sales				
Chino	\$20,865,200					
Pomona	\$20,144,300	Volume of \$309M				
Claremont	\$18,815,000					
Diamond Bar	\$18,085,200					
Perris	\$17,599,300 67	Bottom 27				
Redlands	\$15,523,400					
Yucaipa	43 \$15,357,700	communities with				
Beaumont	\$14,611,400	combined Color				
Winchester	\$12,770,000	combined Sales				
Rialto	\$12,324,200	Volume of \$302M				
Highland	\$12,296,300					
San Dimas	\$10,890,800					
Canyon Lake	\$9,566,900					
La Verne	\$8,794,000					
San Jacinto	\$8,352,080					
Jurupa Valley	\$7,978,110					
Norco	\$7,921,900 15					
Wildomar	\$7,481,980					
Alta Loma	\$7,383,400	Legend:				
Colton	\$6,565,800	Legena.				
Banning	\$6,423,900					
Montclair	\$5,517,280	The BLUE bars show				
Bloomington	\$4,248,000					
Loma Linda	\$4,185,500	the last month's sales				
Sun City	\$3,600,600	volume for each city.				
Romoland	12 \$2,723,400					



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Jurupa Valley	44	I			1				83.3%	
Bloomington	26	22 communit						73	.3%	
Montclair	24						41.2%			
Sun City	31	with an increa		34.8%						
Banning	42	in New Listings								
Yucaipa	60	25.0%								
La Verne	25		_			19.0%				
Ontario	116					18.4%				
Wildomar	46					17.9%				
Hemet	216				1	6.1%				
Redlands	75					5.4%				
Claremont	32				14	.3%				
Pomona	84				12.0	)%				
Norco	23				9.5%			Legend	:	
Perris	96				9.1%					
Menifee	126				7.7%			The column of numbers on the left is the # of		bers
San Jacinto	74				7.2%					
Canyon Lake	24			4	.3%			new listir	ngs in each d	city
Lake Elsinore	99	2.1%				for last month.				
Rancho Cucamonga	159			1.9	9%			-		
San Bernardino	195	1.0%				The BLUE bars show the		the		
Riverside	308	0.3%					annual percent change	-		
Temecula	149	-1.3%					since the same quarter,		ter,	
San Dimas	32	-3.0%				1 year ag	<b>;</b> 0.			
Diamond Bar	58	-3.3%				-				
Colton	43		-6.5%				-			
Chino Hills	68		-6.8%							
Beaumont	66		-7.0%							
Rialto	72		-10.0%							
Corona	186		-11.0%			10	• • • • • • •			
Upland	62	-11.4% <b>19</b> communit								
Murrieta	174		-11.7%		>	-		ge in New		
Highland	48		-12.7%			Listing	gs (year-c	over-year)	)	
Moreno Valley	157	-19.3	1%							
Fontana	148	-20.0	%							
Chino	66	-20.5								
Loma Linda	14	-26.3%								
Eastvale	40	-27.3%								
Winchester	31	-31.1%								
Alta Loma	9	-40.0%								
Romoland	4 -50	0.0%								
-	1	1	I			I			1	







The IVAR team has worked hard to improve services and make IVAR a better business association. IVAR is committed to defining its service and building member relationships not with promotional gimmicks and giveaways, but rather by refining a businessminded approach to serve our members' professional needs with our problem-solving approach. By focusing on value-added services, IVAR is committed to being the board of choice for Inland Empire REALTORS.

If you have any questions or suggestions on how IVAR can provide better services, please feel free to contact us.

Mark Dowling, Chief Executive Officer

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# NAR HOME Survey: Desire to Buy Strong Despite Affordability, Economic Concerns

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WASHINGTON (December 17, 2015) — Although only half of surveyed households believe the economy is currently improving, nearly all young renters eventually want to buy a home, and a convincing majority still view homeownership as part of their American Dream, according to a new quarterly consumer survey released today by the National Association of Realtors<sup>®</sup>. Additionally, a newly-introduced index tracking the financial outlook of households found that compared to earlier this year an increasing share believes their personal financial situation will improve in the months ahead.

NAR's inaugural quarterly household survey, Housing Opportunities and Market Experience (HOME), tracks topical real estate trends, including current renters and homeowners' views and aspirations regarding homeownership, whether or not it's a good time to buy or sell a home, and expectations and experiences in the mortgage market1. New questions may be added to the survey each quarter to reflect timely topics impacting real estate.

The HOME survey data reveals that an overwhelming majority of current renters who are 34 years of age or younger want to own a home in the future (94 percent). Overall, 83 percent of polled renters have a desire to own, and 77 percent

believe homeownership is part of their American Dream.

Lawrence Yun, NAR chief economist, says the survey's findings debunk the notion that young adults aren't interested in buying a home. "Despite entering the workforce during or immediately after the worst of the financial and housing crisis, the desire to become a homeowner appears to be a personal goal for a convincing majority of young renters," he said. "Furthermore, there appears to be sizeable, pent-up demand for buying that currently remains untapped because of a variety of economic and personal reasons impacting many households."

The top two reasons given by renters for not currently owning was the inability to afford to buy (53 percent) and needing the flexibility of renting rather than owning (19 percent). When asked what would likely be the main reason for buying in the future, renters cited lifestyle considerations such as getting married, starting a family or retiring (33 percent) and an improvement in their financial situation (26 percent).

"A combination of factors such as rising rents and home prices, limited supply, repaying student debt, and getting married and having children later in life has more to do with the currently underperforming share of first-time buyers than the idea that buying a home is not as desirable as it used to be," adds Yun.

#### Households lukewarm about the U.S. economy

Among all households (renters and homeowners) in the survey, the results highlight a split between those who agree the U.S. economy is on the right track and those who disagree. Only half of respondents believe the economy is currently

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improving, and 44 percent think the economy is actually in a recession.

Renters were only slightly more optimistic about current economic conditions, with 57 percent believing the economy is improving. Regardless of their confidence in the U.S. economy today, over three-quarters (76 percent) of those who don't think the economy is improving still want to eventually buy a home.

"The promising stretch of job creation in several parts of the country in recent years has the housing market in 2015 on track for its best year of sales since the downturn," says Yun. "However, that only half of surveyed households believe the economy is improving can be attributed to the fact that some areas have been slow to recover and wages have yet to grow in a meaningful way for far too many families."

Adds Yun, "With roughly 26 million more people in the U.S.2 compared to the peak year of home sales in 2005 (7.08 million), the pace of existing sales would likely be more robust if not for the economy's subpar growth since the downturn and wage gains that have failed to keep pace with rents and home prices."

# Homeownership remains good financial decision, part of American Dream

Despite uncertainty about the economy's current performance, at least 84 percent of all households within all surveyed age groups and education levels believe owning a home is a good financial decision. When asked if they believe this strongly or moderately, 76 percent who believe it's a good decision feel strongly about it.

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Additionally, at least 85 percent of surveyed households in each age category as well as across all education levels believe homeownership is part of their personal American Dream. The most appealing aspects of homeownership cited by those with this feeling include a place to raise a family (36 percent), owning their own place (26 percent) and a nest egg for retirement (14 percent).

# Good time to buy, but skeptical about ability to obtain a mortgage

NAR's survey found that more homeowners (82 percent) than renters (68 percent) during the polling period believe that it's a good time to buy a home. Furthermore, of those who thought it was a good time to buy, 64 percent felt strongly about buying. Among current owners, 61 percent believe it is a good time to sell a home, of which 53 percent felt strongly that it was a good time to sell.

According to the survey, roughly two-thirds (65 percent) think it would be very or somewhat difficult to obtain a mortgage. Furthermore, there are differences among income brackets. Renter households making between \$30,000 and \$40,000 were the most likely to be declined a mortgage (10 percent), while 51 percent of those who make more than \$50,000 a year have not tried but feel confident they would succeed in getting a mortgage. Overall, five percent of renters have recently tried and failed to obtain financing for a home.

By nearly double the amount of other responses, the most common reason homeowners purchased a home was for lifestyle changes such as getting married, starting a family or retiring (35 percent). Eighteen percent said the desire to settle down in one location influenced their decision to buy, and 15 percent cited an improvement in their financial situation.

#### Direction of home prices, financial outlook on the rise

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Reflecting the ongoing recovery of home values throughout most of the country, 89 percent of respondents said home prices in their communities have either risen or stayed the same in the past year. Looking ahead toward the next six months, 91 percent of respondents believe home prices in their community will increase or stay the same.

The HOME survey also calculates a monthly Personal Financial Outlook Index3 measured by household type, age, income and type of location. Since tracking began in March, the index representing all households has slowly trended upward to its highest current reading in December – reflecting stronger confidence that respondents' financial situation will be better in six months. Currently, renters, younger households and those living in urban areas are more optimistic about their future financial situation.

"Young adults, who make up the majority of all renter households, are typically more optimistic about their future," adds Yun. "As more of them settle down and begin plans to start a family, the allure of owning their own home as well as the long-term financial stability homeownership provides will drive their emergence into the housing market. However, the extent to how fast this occurs will greatly depend on more entry-level housing supply coming onto the market and needed improvements in affordability conditions."

#### About NAR's HOME survey

In March through early December 2015, a sample of U.S. households was surveyed via random-digit dial, including half via cell phones and the other half via land lines. The survey was conducted by an established survey research firm, TechnoMetrica Market Intelligence. Each month approximately 900 qualified households responded to the survey. The data was compiled for this report and a total of 9,034 household responses are represented.

The National Association of Realtors<sup>®</sup>, "The Voice for Real Estate," is America's largest trade association, representing over 1.1 million members involved in all aspects of the residential and commercial real estate industries.

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