



NEWS YOU CAN USE ***December 2018***

NEWS

[NAR Board Passes Business-Oriented Strategic Plan](#)

The NAR Board of Directors at its meeting in Boston on Monday adopted a five-year strategic framework to provide a more visionary, holistic, and business-oriented approach reflective of NAR's expanding role in technology and other arenas critical to real estate. It also approved policies supporting remote notarization, Opportunity Zones, and inflation indexing for capital assets. It also passed Core Standards changes for commercial boards, changes to enhance cooperation among brokers, and a rule change on evaluating ethics complaints while a criminal action is pending. [Access Special INS with complete meeting summary.](#)

[NAR Governance Review Launches](#)

A new presidential advisory group (PAG) is looking at what changes, if any, should be made to the structure of NAR's governance system. [The Game Changer PAG](#) is composed of more than 50 members and association executives who will look at the structure, process, people, resources, and operating environment of NAR's governance system. It will not delve into state and local association governance.

[Installation of New Leadership Team](#)

NAR's 2019 Leadership Team was installed on Monday at the association's Board of Directors meeting: John Smaby of Edina, Minn., president; Vince Malta of San Francisco, president-elect; Charlie Oppler of Tenafly, N.J., first vice president; and John Flor of Chetek, Wis., treasurer. Also on the team are two appointed vice presidents: Brian Copeland of Nashville, Tenn., vice president of association affairs, and Tracy Kasper of Caldwell, Idaho, vice president of advocacy.

[Former NAR Exec. Almon Smith Dies](#)

Almon R. "Bud" Smith, who ushered in a technological era at NAR and led a staff restructuring as chief executive from 1991 until 1997, [passed away](#) Oct. 29. "He was able to make tough decisions and find balance between sustainable association growth and fiscal responsibility," says NAR CEO Bob Goldberg. "He

always did what was right for the organization, our members, and our staff, and you knew his heart was in the right place.”

[NAR, FEMA Seek Better Disaster Preparedness](#)

2018 NAR President Elizabeth Mendenhall and Federal Emergency Management Agency Administrator Brock Long [signed a Memorandum of Agreement](#) last week on natural disaster preparedness. The MOA represents a partnership effort between FEMA and NAR to educate and help Americans better prepare for disasters. It also allows REALTORS® to continue building on the REALTORS® Relief Foundation, which makes donations from REALTORS® and others available to households in need after a disaster.

[What the Midterms Mean for Real Estate](#)

Access and share a webcast with Shannon McGahn, NAR senior vice president of government affairs, on how the national midterm elections will impact REALTORS®’ legislative agenda in Washington. She’s joined by political consultant Doug Sosnick and NAR policy staff in a [Facebook Live webcast](#) that aired last week. Also, watch and share a [recap of REALTOR® Party coverage](#) on the night of Nov. 6 as the election happened.

[Reminder: Board Passes NAR Strategic Plan](#)

In case you missed it: The NAR Board of Directors at its meeting in Boston earlier this month adopted a five-year strategic framework to provide a more visionary, holistic, and business-oriented approach reflective of NAR’s expanding role in technology and other arenas critical to real estate. It also approved policies supporting remote notarization, Opportunity Zones, and inflation indexing for capital assets. It also passed Core Standards changes for commercial boards, changes to enhance cooperation among brokers, and a rule change on evaluating ethics complaints while a criminal action is pending. [Access Special INS with complete meeting summary.](#)

[Commitment to Excellence Site Open](#)

NAR has opened its interactive Commitment to Excellence (C2EX) website to members. The site lets members assess how they stack up on professional standards such as knowledge of the Code of Ethics, advocacy efforts, technology mastery, and staying safe. Some tasks must be completed to get the C2EX endorsement. [Access](#) to the site requires an nar.realtor name and password.

[Paradise AE Recounts Escape from Wildfire](#)

A [story and video](#) published by REALTOR® Magazine provide details about the efforts of the AE of the Paradise (Calif.) Association of REALTORS® to maintain operations in the aftermath of the deadly wildfire that destroyed the Northern California town earlier this month. NAR, through the REALTORS® Relief Foundation, has teamed up with the California Association of REALTORS® Disaster Relief Fund and pledged \$1 million to help victims of the Camp Fire,

which impacted Northern California, including Paradise, and Southern California's Woolsey Fire. [Donate](#) to the REALTORS® Relief Foundation.

UPDATES

Opportunity Zone Rules Proposed

The U.S. Treasury Department released [proposed rules for the Opportunity Zones](#) tax incentive that was included in the 2017 tax reform act. The zones have the potential to have a large impact on economically depressed areas by using capital gain tax reductions to attract long-term investment capital. The zones are designated by states and approved the U.S. Treasury Department.

NAR Urges OK of Consumer Protection Chief

Kathleen Kraninger [should be confirmed](#) as director of the federal agency that looks after Americans' financial interests, the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection, NAR says in a letter sent jointly with other industry groups to the Senate Banking Committee. She's a former head of the White House Office of Management and Budget and has years of experience in Washington.

Candidate and Issue Campaign Training

Register for the REALTOR® Party [Issue and Candidate Campaign Training](#) to learn how to leverage NAR's resources to meet your advocacy campaign goals in 2019. The program includes 10 webinars and in-person, hands-on training in April.

Conforming Loan Limits to Rise 6.9%

The maximum conforming loan amount that Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac can back will increase to \$484,350 from \$453,100 in 2019, a 6.9 percent increase, the Federal Housing Finance Agency announced. For high-cost areas, the limits—which are also used to define FHA limits—will rise to \$726,525 from \$679,650. “Without this assurance that loan limits keep up with home price growth, borrowers across the country risk being pushed out of the market altogether as mortgage rates and rising home prices continue to hold back potential homebuyers,” NAR President John Smaby said in a [statement](#) applauding the government's announcement. [Determine your area's limit.](#)

Increase to Res. Appraisal Threshold Proposed

The Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, and the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation have released a proposed rule that would increase the threshold for residential real estate transactions requiring an appraisal from \$250,000 to \$400,000. [More.](#)

RESOURCES

[Business-Building News from Boston](#)

Ways to be more profitable and better manage your risk from REALTOR® Magazine's write-ups from the 2018 REALTOR® Conference & Expo last week in Boston. [Session write-ups](#) include how to value your book of business, avoid legal claims against you, improving your website, get new value out of old listings, and surviving in today's era of online trolls.

[Importance of Adopting Domain Names First](#)

Share a [RealtyTimes piece](#) by long-time real estate pro Saul Klein on the importance of being the first to use new top-level domains that are appropriate for your industry. One new domain of importance to your board and your members is [.realestate](#), which is available exclusively to you and your members until Nov. 26, when it becomes available to the public.

[Associations Achieve Commercial Benchmarks](#)

Nine associations have been recognized with [commercial services accreditation](#): Beverly Hills/Greater Los Angeles Association of REALTORS® (5 stars), Central Oklahoma Commercial Association of REALTORS®, Michigan Commercial Board of REALTORS®, Scottsdale (Ariz.) Area Association of REALTORS®, Texas Association of REALTORS®, Greater Hartford (Conn.) Association of REALTORS®, Arcadia (Calif.) Association of REALTORS® (4 stars), and Bay East (Calif.) Association of REALTORS® and Knoxville Area (Tenn.) Association of REALTORS® (3 stars). For more info contact [Jean Maday](#).

[Member Discount on International Conference](#)

You can receive 46 percent off registration for the 30th annual [MIPIM World Real Estate Conference](#) in Cannes, France, using NAR's member discount. MIPIM features 26,000 participants, 5,400 commercial real estate investors, 3,800 CEOs and other executives, 3,100 exhibiting companies, and 360 speakers. People from 100 countries will be there. You can get the best price if you register before Jan. 6.

[Savings on Pet Health Insurance](#)

You can be prepared for unexpected or expensive veterinary bills with member savings on [pet health insurance](#) through the REALTOR Benefits® Program. The insurance includes a multi-pet discount and coverage includes preventive and wellness care.

[Share Financial Planning Resources](#)

NAR launched the [Center for REALTOR® Financial Wellness](#) this summer. The online resource is designed to help REALTORS®, no matter their age, industry experience, or amount of wealth, navigate financial planning and prepare for retirement. Share the center's [marketing materials](#) to help you get the word out.

[A Powerful Digital Advertising Solution](#)

[Adwerx has partnered with NAR](#) under the REALTOR Benefits® Program to offer REALTORS® a brilliantly simple digital advertising solution for real estate, along with an exclusive bonus offer. Associations can even utilize Adwerx's service for advertising locally to consumers and directly to members. Adwerx also offers webinars and personalized training for offices. Learn more about how Adwerx can work for you!

[Share Commitment to Excellence Program](#)

Commitment to Excellence (C2EX) is a new NAR program that empowers REALTORS® to evaluate, enhance, and showcase their highest levels of professionalism. It's not a course, class, or designation—it's an endorsement that REALTORS® can promote when serving consumers and other REALTORS®. [Share this new program](#)

[New Agent Advice from Realtor.com®](#)

Realtor.com® has created a hub to help break through the barriers to success that hold back the careers of new agents. Visit [realtor.com®](#)'s [hub for new agents](#), full of short videos, tips, ideas, and insights from successful new agents.

[RPR® App Enhanced](#)

The RPR® app has been enhanced with a new map display. A button on the map screen expands to show a host of icons representing popular search criteria, such as distance, travel time, traffic, and schools. [Details.](#)

[Members Saved \\$60 Million in One Year](#)

More than 800,000 REALTORS® saved \$60 million in one year by leveraging their REALTOR® membership and taking advantage of at least one offer through NAR's REALTOR Benefits® Program. NAR members saved time and money with savings and special offers from industry-leading companies including FedEx, FCA US LLC (including Jeep®), DocuSign, Intuit® (QuickBooks® Self-Employed and TurboTax®), and Dell. [Discover](#) how you can benefit.

LEGAL

[Ex Agent on Why She Went to Prison](#)

A [cautionary tale](#) by a former real estate agent who went to prison for mortgage fraud and money laundering. The agent spoke last week at the 2018 REALTORS® Conference & Expo.

[Decisions Enhance Ethics Efforts](#)

The latest [Voice for Real Estate](#) news video looks at two decisions earlier this month by the NAR Board of Directors to enhance cooperation among brokers and keep ethics complaints on track. The first allows associations to process ethics complaints while criminal litigation is pending, and the other aligns MLS

rules with other rules requiring listing brokers to provide written notification to cooperating brokers on the disposition of their offer. [More.](#)

NAR: Competition in Real Estate Is Essential

An [article on nar.realtor](#) highlights steps NAR has taken since 2008 that have given consumers unprecedented access to listing data while empowering the brokerage community to adopt and leverage the power of the internet. A settlement agreement between NAR and the Department of Justice intended to ensure that NAR policies relating to Virtual Office Websites (VOWs) did not suppress technological innovation, reduce competition on price and quality, or reduce efficient cooperation among brokers expired on Nov. 18, 10 years after it went into effect. NAR continues to keep the VOW policy in place as outlined in the agreement. [REALTOR® Magazine story.](#)