

## Partners In Housing


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Quality of Life –  
It Begins at Home

**HOME BUILDERS**  
ASSOCIATION OF WINSTON-SALEM • Building Professionals

&

 Winston-Salem Regional Association of REALTORS®, Inc.

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# Quality of Life – It Begins at Home

## Working Together

In 1994 our local Home Builders and REALTORS® joined together as **Partners in Housing** to work jointly on governmental issues that affect our industries and our communities. Since then, the Winston-Salem Association of Home Builders' 750 members and the Winston-Salem Regional Association of REALTORS'® 1500 members have been working closely together, along with other organizations and local government officials, to help build strong, viable communities in Forsyth, Davie, Stokes, and northern Davidson Counties. Two of our major goals are to keep the American Dream of homeownership alive and to enhance the livability and quality of life of our communities.

## Keeping Homeownership Affordable

We believe that every citizen has the right to housing that is safe, affordable and located close to the workplace. Homeownership creates wealth, and housing remains the primary source of wealth for most North Carolinians. In addition, homeownership helps build healthy neighborhoods and towns. However, the dream of homeownership is evaporating for more and more households. A recent study by the National Association of Home Builders finds that the ever increasing number of permit fees, regulations, proffers, taxes, and impact fees, are dramatically affecting a home's selling price. Every \$819 increase paid at the beginning of construction adds \$1,000 to the cost of a median priced house. In general, adding just \$1,000 onto the price of a house forces 700 households out of the new house market!

Therefore, each new proposed change in fees or regulations, no matter how small, is very important. We encourage all local officials to study every new proposal that comes before them carefully. The choices they make will greatly impact the ability of families to find decent, affordable, conveniently located homes.

## Maintaining a High Quality of Life

As REALTORS® and Home Builders who live in our communities, and work and raise their families here, we also understand the value of having first-class schools, roads, and water and sewer systems. High quality infrastructure benefits all citizens and is paramount to maintaining the health and desirability of our entire community. But, rather than sharing the cost of these facilities among all citizens, some local governments think the answer is turning to transfer taxes, impact fees, and costly new regulations on building. When that happens, the real estate and building industries bear all of the costs. That results in higher house prices, which can eventually lead to fewer homeowners, higher assessments and higher real estate taxes for everyone.

We appreciate that elected officials are faced with difficult choices every day in how to meet the needs and desires of our citizens, with the limited amount of money that is available. But, when absolutely necessary and additional revenue is essential, **there are other options available.** We can all work together to create broad based revenue sources to improve and maintain our state and local infrastructure in a manner that distributes the costs fairly and evenly, rather than placing the burden just on a few.

Partners in Housing is always eager to work with our local governmental staffs and officials to explore these options for keeping our communities great places to live, work and play, while also keeping the American Dream of Homeownership possible for as many households as possible.

