



February 2021 Newsletter

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February General Membership Meeting Canceled

***General Membership Meetings Will Resume Tuesday, March 9th at
Atlanta's Finest, 13997 Veterans Memorial Hwy, Winston GA 30187**

Board Meeting February 9th at Atlanta's Finest

Housing Starts Finish Strong in 2020

While housing starts ended the year on a strong note, rising lumber prices and increasing regulatory cost concerns could affect future production. Led by a solid, double-digit gain in single-family starts, overall **housing starts** increased 5.8 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 1.67 million units, according to a report from HUD and the U.S. Census Bureau.

The December reading of 1.67 million starts is the number of housing units builders would begin if development kept this pace for the next 12 months. Within this overall number, single-family starts increased 12.0 percent to a 1.34 million seasonally adjusted annual rate. The multifamily sector, which includes

apartment buildings and condos, decreased 13.6 percent to a 331,000 pace.

Total housing starts for 2020 were 1.38 million, a 7.0 percent gain over the 1.29

total from 2019. Single-family starts in 2020 totaled 991,000, up 11.7 percent from the previous year. Multifamily starts in 2020 totaled 389,000, down 3.3 percent from the previous year.

On a regional and year-to-date basis (January through December of 2020 compared to that same time frame a year ago), combined single-family and multifamily starts are 13.2 percent higher in the Midwest, 7.5 percent higher in the South, 6.2 percent higher in the West and 2.8 percent lower in the Northeast.

WHBA Territory Expansion

Our WHBA "footprint" has now been expanded to 5 Counties with the addition of Paulding and Polk Counties to our established roster of Carroll, Douglas and Haralson Counties.

Your former Executive Officer, Chris Collier, initiated merger talks between our WHBA and the Paulding County Builder Association (Paulding and Polk Territory) in January of 2020. Although there was a strong interest in the merger, the Pandemic derailed the talks. In September, 2020 the Board of Directors of the PCBA decided, due to a lack of financial strength, to discontinue operations of the Association. Under those circumstances, the Association Charter is returned to NAHB and the territory of Paulding and Polk Counties became available to Home Builder Associations that bordered the two counties. A Memorandum was drafted and sent to NAHB in November requesting that the Paulding and Polk Counties Territory be awarded to the Westside Home Builders Association.

From that point in November until now we reached out to our friends and contacts at HBAG and NAHB to help us reach our goal of adding the additional territory. I received a text message on Friday afternoon from Jerry Konter, 2nd Vice Chairman of NAHB, that WHBA had been awarded the Paulding and Polk County Territory. Jerry was in the midst of NAHB Leadership meetings and had previously informed me that his hope was to get approval from the Senior Officers for the allocation of the Paulding and Polk Territory to WHBA by the end of the week.

Jerry is a great friend and a tremendous asset to the State of Georgia's Home Building industry as a senior officer of NAHB. Jerry is a long time member of the Greater Savannah Home Builders Association and a former President of HBAG. Without his help, this Territory Transfer to WHBA would have been delayed until at least the next NAHB Board meetings.

We also have Austin Hackney to thank for his help in getting this Territory Transfer completed. Austin is the former Government Affairs Director at HBAG who has been promoted to the HBAG Executive Officer position. Austin is the individual responsible for getting both the Greater Atlanta HBA and the Bartow/Gordon HBA to relinquish their pursuits of the Paulding and Polk Territory. Obviously Austin is a great friend to WHBA and as an organization we will support any of his initiatives at HBAG. Austin has further offered to have the HBAG Communications Director, Cindy Morley, create a press release relative to the expansion of the WHBA Territory to include Paulding and Polk Counties. We will submit the press release to all appropriate publications in the five county WHBA Territory upon receipt. Austin and Cindy will be joining us at our February Board of Directors Meeting next week.

Greg Wallace, Executive Officer WHBA

WHBA Member OF THE MONTH



Derrick Thompson, CEO/President
Metro Garage Doors, Inc./L& W Insulation and Fireplaces, LLC.

Our family owned and operated company focuses on delivering first-class service and installation of garage doors, insulation and fireplaces. Our commitment to customer satisfaction drives us to provide quality products at an affordable price. Supported by Metro's core principles and values, our well-trained staff is capable of exceeding customer expectations in any situation.



We pride ourselves on truly being a family-owned employee driven company. We use a phrase regularly "Metro Culture". For us, this means that all decisions go back to "Are we treating customers the way that our employees would like to be treated?" We make sure that any successful job where a customer calls in to express their happiness, we send out company wide. We really treat our employees like family, and celebrate their success. We offer incentives for positive reviews online if a customer mentions an employee by name. We celebrate births, graduations, birthdays and weddings like an extended family. We have no doubt that our happy workplace equates to happy customers.

Biden Freezes All Pending Regulations

The Biden administration has implemented a [regulatory freeze](#) for all pending regulations. Of note to the housing community, this action means that the U.S. Department of Labor's final independent contractor rule that was put forth in the waning days of the Trump administration, and scheduled to go into effect on March 8, is likely to face a delay.

The effective implementation date of the independent contractor rule is expected to be pushed back beyond March 8 while the Biden administration determines how to proceed and examines its options on whether to revise or even repeal the rule.

CDC Extends Eviction Moratorium

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has announced it is extending the current order temporarily [halting residential evictions](#) until at least March 31, 2021.

The COVID-19 pandemic has presented a historic threat to the nation's health. It has also triggered a housing affordability crisis that disproportionately affects some communities.

2020 NGBS Important for Developers

The ICC 700-2020 National Green Building Standard® (NGBS), released last year, updated two sections that should be bookmarked for home builders engaged in land use and development. Understanding the changes from the 2015 NGBS will enable developers and builders to determine the compliance path that works best for their project. The 2020 NGBS provides land developers and builders the flexibility needed to [develop land and lots](#) that are sustainable, cost effective and appropriate for their geographic location.

Biden Signs Directive On Fair Housing

President Biden on Jan. 26 signed a presidential memorandum that directs HUD to examine the effects of the previous administration's regulatory actions that may have undermined fair housing policies and laws. [The memorandum](#) directs HUD to take steps necessary based on that analysis to fully implement the Fair Housing Act's requirements.

It also directs HUD to determine if the Trump-era disparate impact rule should be returned to the 2013 standard that made it easier to prove unintentional discrimination.

SGC Horizon Named NAHB's Media Partner

NAHB and SGC Horizon have jointly announced that NAHB has selected SGC Horizon to be its official [media partner](#).

The Partnership is designed to strengthen not just NAHB and SGC Horizon, but also the association's 140,000 members and the 285,000 readers of Pro Builder and other brands under the SGC Horizon umbrella.

Biden Signs Two Executive Orders on Climate Change

President Biden in January signed a series of executive orders, including two related to [climate change policy](#).

The first directs the United States to begin the process to rejoin the Paris Climate Agreement, the 2015 international treaty signed by nearly 200 countries that calls for limiting fossil-fuel pollution that causes climate change. While symbolically significant, the accord relies on commitments made by signatory countries to meet specified goals, but contains no enforcement mechanisms.

In the second order, "Protecting Public

Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis," Biden calls for action to strengthen the role of science and to better enable

accounting for the incremental increases in greenhouse gas emissions. The key metric the executive order discusses is re-establishing and revising the "social cost of carbon" (SCC), which was widely used by the Obama administration.



Answers to Your PPP Questions

The Small Business Administration and U.S. Treasury Department have reopened the expanded Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) for both new borrowers and for certain existing borrowers to apply for a second loan.

NAHB recently held a [series of webinars](#) to help members and home builder associations (HBAs) understand their eligibility for the forgivable loan programs under the \$900 billion COVID-19 relief package signed into law by President Trump in late December. Members and HBAs can access recordings of the webinars on [nahb.org](#).

The SBA and the Treasury Department continue to update guidelines and publish new direction on the application process and use of these funds. Please stay tuned to NAHB communications for updates.

ICC Publishes 2021 IECC Codes

Following a three-year development process, the 2021 ICC family of model building codes has been published. Many changes to the International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) are of particular interest to home builders.

The development of [the 2021 IECC](#) was marked by controversy, culminating in multiple appeals by NAHB and others. Two of NAHB's appeals were upheld by the ICC Board.

But several problematic code changes that had been twice disapproved (first by the code development committee and then at public comment hearings) got into the 2021 IECC as a result of a controversial online ballot heavily influenced by block voting from non-code enforcement government officials that was linked to a single voting guide.

COVID-19 Continues to Affect Home Purchase Plans

As the nation begins to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic, more Americans are interested in [purchasing homes](#), according to NAHB's latest Housing Trends Report.

The share of Americans who are considering the purchase of a home in the next 12 months was 15% in the fourth quarter of 2020, four percentage points higher than a year earlier and the largest year-over-year gain in the three-year history of this series. The gain shows the coronavirus outbreak continues to affect Americans' desire to buy homes.

Millennials stand out among the demographic groups in their intent to buy

a home. Between the fourth quarters of 2019 and 2020, the share of millennials planning a home purchase rose eight points to 27%. The share increased six points to 18% among Gen Xers, three points to 16% among Gen Z, and was flat at 5% among baby boomers.

Geographically, the share of adults with plans to buy a home rose in all four regions during this period, led by the Northeast (up nine points to 19%) and the West (up six points to 18%).

Rose Quint, NAHB's assistant vice president for survey research, provides more analysis in this Eye on Housing blog post.

Home Building Sees Net Job Gains

From May through December, the number of new residential construction jobs created offset the total amount of jobs lost earlier in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The number of residential construction jobs rose by 22,700 in December, well above the 15,800 increase posted in November. In the past eight months, 472,500 residential construction jobs were created, offsetting all the 456,800 [residential construction jobs](#) lost in March and April due to the coronavirus outbreak.

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