

ChicagoBuilder

The Newsletter of the Home Builders Association of Greater Chicago



February 2018

NAHB Economist Predicts Continued Growth

The newly enacted tax law will likely spur job and economic growth and keep single-family housing production on a gradual upward trajectory in 2018, according to NAHB Chief Economist Robert Dietz, who offered his forecast in [a panel discussion](#) during the International Builders' Show in Orlando in January.

"We expect that tax reform will boost GDP growth to 2.6% in 2018, and this added economic activity will also bode well for housing, although there will be some transition effects in high-tax jurisdictions," Dietz said. "Ongoing job creation, wage increases and tight existing home inventory will also boost the housing market in the year ahead."

Dietz offered this forecast:

- 30-year fixed-rate mortgage will average 4.31% in 2018 and 4.82% in 2019.
- 1.21 million total housing starts in 2018 and overall production to grow an additional 2.7% to 1.25 million units in 2019.
- Single-family starts to rise 5% in 2018 to 893,000 units and increase an additional 5% to 940,000 next year.
- Multifamily starts to edge 1.6% lower this year to 354,000 units. This is a sustainable level due to demographics.
- Residential remodeling activity is expected to register a 7% gain in 2018 over last year.

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Plan Now for Bringing Housing Home™

There is no shortage of issues on NAHB's advocacy radar. Excessive regulation, the National Flood Insurance Program, housing finance reform – these are just a fraction of the key issues NAHB is discussing with lawmakers.

This year, NAHB will conduct Bringing Housing Home™ featuring in-district meetings with members of Congress to discuss these and other critical issues affecting the home building industry. [Bringing Housing Home™](#) is scheduled for April 30 – May 5, 2018.

For more information, contact Karl Eckhart, NAHB vice president, intergovernmental affairs, at 800-368-5242, x8319, or keckhart@nahb.org.

NAHB Elects 2018 Leadership Team

NAHB members elected Randy Noel, a Louisiana-based custom home builder, as 2018 chairman of the board during the Builders' Show in Orlando.

Greg Ugalde, a Connecticut builder and developer, was elected first vice chairman, and Dean Mon, a New Jersey builder and developer, was elected second vice chairman. John "Chuck" Fowke, a Florida custom

home builder, joined the leadership ladder with his election as third vice chairman. 2017 Chairman Granger MacDonald, a Texas builder and developer, remains on the leadership team as immediate past chairman.

Rounding out [the association's leadership](#) is CEO Jerry Howard, who heads NAHB's professional staff in Washington, D.C.

New Campaign Promotes Workplace Safety

NAHB has created a new public awareness campaign to help building industry pros get the resources needed to help keep residential construction

workers safe. The [Safety 365](#) campaign is a joint effort of NAHB's Construction Safety Committee and Builders Mutual Insurance Co.

Recruit New Members, Become a Spike

Membership matters. When we work together, united, we are a stronger voice for our industry.

If you're an NAHB member doing business regularly with someone who is just getting started in the housing industry, then help them understand the value of an NAHB membership.

Recruit new members.

[Become a spike.](#)

Rule Addresses Small Business Health Plans

The Department of Labor recently issued a proposed rule intended to expand access to health coverage by allowing more employers to form [Small Business Health Plans](#), also known as Association Health Plans.

This would give small businesses, including many home building firms, access to better and more affordable health care plans, allow them to negotiate lower costs for coverage, and level the playing field for smaller firms that want to help their workers and their families address health care costs.



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Paths and Ponds Replacing Pools and Club Houses

When it comes to building new communities, the traditional pool and clubhouse will no longer suffice if you want to stand out from your competitors.

This was one of the key messages delivered at an educational seminar on new amenities for lifestyle buyers during the Builders' Show in Orlando in January.

“Great community amenities equip people with what they need and empower them to act,” said Teri Slavik-Tsuyuki, the founder and principal of [tst ink llc](#). in Encinitas, Calif. “Find a way to give buyers memories and create a point of view.”

Echoing that theme, Thomas Kopf of [DTJ Design, Inc.](#) based in Boulder Colo., said that builders should design communities that “create the opportunity for experiences.” He emphasized several key themes:

- **Nature.** Consumers are interested in communities that offer trails, ponds and walking paths.
- **Social.** Small cafés within a community center, outdoor fireplaces, fire pits and community gardens provide people a sense of pride in where they live and a place to gather year-round.
- **Unique.** Knopf cited unique entry features to the community such as a wall designed to look like the remnant of a building that used to exist on the site to provide people places to stop and look at the view. Other suggestions: make a culvert look like a bridge, or leave bicycle pumps and tools in designated areas along trails to encourage people to stop and congregate.



Parasol Park at Great Park Neighborhoods, Irvine, Calif. Photography by Damian Tsutsumida.

Anthony Faranda Dietrich of [Charter Homes & Neighborhoods](#) based in Lancaster, Pa., said his firm builds communities that “connect people to each other.”

“We’re all about the experience, bringing people into open space and providing a neighborhood experience.”

Charter Homes & Neighborhoods has developed communities where stormwater facilities are designed as a pond. “We landscape the area heavily and turn the homes so that they face water, adding value to the community,” Dietrich said.

Other unique design features include a pocket park consisting of a half-acre of longitudinal green space and a “terra park” that contains climbing walls and a sledding hill. In one community, every year there is a Christmas tree lighting ceremony that brings the residents together.

“We believe what people value is connectivity, and we’ve created the great American neighborhood,” Dietrich said.

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Putting a Dollar Value on NAHB Advocacy

NAHB economists have put a dollar value on selected member benefits and advocacy victories achieved in 2017. Add up the dollar value of NAHB services and advocacy victories and you get an average of **\$7,500 per housing start** for a typical home builder.

That figure demonstrates how much value NAHB delivers for members. Just a few of the advocacy victories achieved in 2017 that contribute to that number include:

- \$1,600 Suspension of OSHA Beryllium Rule
- \$1,200 Reductions in Builder Taxes
- \$700 Protection of Builder Interest Deduction
- \$700 Elimination of Flawed Duct Proposal
- \$1,000 Preservation of Options in Building Codes

These numbers represent the value per housing start a typical builder will see in 2018 as a result of key NAHB advocacy victories achieved in 2017. Some members will experience more of these benefits than others.

Capital One Spark Business Credit Card Is Latest NAHB Member Benefit

NAHB and Capital One in January launched the Capital One Spark Business Credit Card for NAHB members, EOs and HBA staff.

The Spark business card offers NAHB members unlimited 2% cash back on all purchases: There is no cap, 0% interest for the first six months and no annual fee.

With 2% cash back on all purchases, NAHB members can put hundreds and even thousands of dollars each year back into their businesses.

Members can also add their employees at no additional cost to earn unlimited 2% cash back for purchases made on their cards, too.

Read about additional benefits and sign up at the NAHB members-only [Capital One Spark Business](#) page. To learn more about this and other Member Advantage programs, visit nahb.org/ma. For additional information, contact [Sarah Swango](#), director of NAHB affinity programs.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

The Chicagoland Sales & Marketing Council
Presents : International
Builder Show Review

February 13, 2018

INSTALLATION OF
OFFICERS CITY & REG &
COURT OF HONOR
INDUCTEE

Tuesday Feb 13, 2018

Meet the Commissioner
Wednesday Feb 28, 2018

"Academy of Appliance
Awards" night at Grand
Appliance and TV

March 28, 2018

View The Calendar

SAVE THE DATE

JUNE 7, 2018

PWB - Women in
Construction Breakfast
Panel

Featuring:

Randy Fifield
and other Speakers