

February 24, 2026



Daily News &amp; Views

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## Top News

**Buyers gaining bargaining power on price**

With home sales still sluggish and homebuilders offering a range of incentives, more sellers of existing homes are turning to price reductions to compete. See where reductions are most prevalent and why sellers generally remain equity-rich in today's market, despite the discounting.

**Full Story:** [NAR REALTOR® News Now](#) (2/24)

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### How ChatGPT Turns Hyper-Local Buyer Guides into Leads

Live Webinar:  
Thurs, Feb 29th 12pm ET

**The ChatGPT System That Delights Buyers and Generates Leads**

Imagine sending a buyer a complete, personalized home purchase plan minutes after your consultation — or handing a neighborhood-specific guide to someone at an open house before they even ask. One ChatGPT system does both. Learn how this Thursday at 12pm ET. [Register for the training >](#)

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## Best Practices in Sales &amp; Marketing

**Budget-friendly ideas to boost a home's value**

Is your client thinking about remodeling? In this episode of [Real Estate Today](#), learn what buyers notice and what they may even pay more for—and where homeowners tend to overspend.

**Full Story:** [NAR REALTOR® News Now/Styled, Staged & Sold](#) (2/23)

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## Gen Z finds creative paths to homeownership



First-time buyer programs are proving crucial for young adults as they navigate the complex housing market. With the help of credit unions, for example, buyers are accessing grant funding, low-down-payment options, and financial counseling.

Experts emphasize that buyers don't need perfect credit or a large down payment, and highlight the importance of budgeting for closing costs.

**Full Story:** [KPNX-TV \(Phoenix\)](#) (2/23)

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## Real Estate Trends

### Map: Where escrow costs are rising significantly

Over the past year, many homeowners have looked at their monthly housing expenses and thought, "Why is this higher?" Their mortgage rate hasn't changed. They didn't refinance. They didn't take on a new loan. And yet, they're paying more each month. Using national, metropolitan, and county-level data from 2019 through 2024, an NAR analysis examines how escrow costs and their share of total monthly owner costs have changed over a five-year period.

**Full Story:** [National Association of REALTORS®/Economists' Outlook](#) (2/23)

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### Texas market split as entry-level, luxury homes lead sales

The Texas housing market is displaying unusual trends, with starter and high-end homes in high demand. Many homeowners with low mortgage rates remain "locked in," hesitant to sell and face higher payments, contributing to the stagnation in the middle market. "[There are] situations of home selling over asking 5 to 10 percent and other homes that sit for a year. I don't know of any real estate market in the last 100 years where we've seen those two spectrums in the same market," says Joe Atkins of Joe Atkins Realty.

**Full Story:** [WFAA-TV \(Dallas-Fort Worth\)](#) (2/23)

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## Why designers dislike TVs above fireplaces in 2026



(Boris SV/Getty Images)

Interior designers are advising against mounting TVs above fireplaces, calling it a dated trend that makes living rooms look less attractive and can cause neck strain because of the height. They suggest using the space above the mantel for art or photography instead.

**Full Story:** [Hunker](#) (2/21)

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## Multifamily, data centers drive CRE investment in 2025

Commercial real estate investment saw a boost in 2025, with transaction volume and lending increasing despite economic challenges, according to DLA Piper. Investors spent more than \$225 billion on multifamily, office, industrial and retail properties, with residential remaining a favored property type. Data center investments surged, driven by AI adoption.

**Full Story:** [Commercial Property Executive](#) (2/23)

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### Technology & Innovations

## OpenAI plans AI-powered speaker with camera for 2027

OpenAI is developing an AI-powered smart speaker with an integrated camera, aiming for a February 2027 launch. The device will use visual intelligence to monitor environments, recognize faces and objects, and proactively assist users. The speaker, OpenAI's first major hardware initiative, raises privacy concerns due to its always-on cameras.

**Full Story:** [Gadget Review](#) (2/23)

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### Legislation & Regulation

## California bill aims to preserve affordable housing supply

A bill introduced in the California legislature aims to bolster the state's affordable housing by creating the Community Anti-Displacement and Preservation Program. The bill would fund and rehabilitate unrestricted housing units and prevent resident displacement. The bill does not specify funding sources or costs.

**Full Story:** [The Center Square](#) (2/23)

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## The Last Issue's Most-Read Stories

### **REALTOR® brand—and your hard work—on display**

[NAR REALTOR® News Now](#) (2/23)

### **5 rules for beautiful, functional kitchens**

[Better Homes and Gardens](#) (2/21)

### **Trump to focus on affordability in State of the Union**

[Realtor . com](#) (2/23)

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