

4M Homes Missing, 6K Homes on 10 Acres, and an \$11B Power Line

Before we jump into this week's news, we've got an exciting announcement: Green Builder Media is proud to officially launch VISION House Asheville, our newest demonstration project in partnership with Alair Homes and Alair Asheville | Red Tree, Located in Asheville, North Carolina. Coming on the heels of Hurricane Helene, the project couldn't be more timely. The demonstration project will showcase high-performance building science, climate-ready construction, healthy indoor environments, smart technologies, solar energy, water-saving solutions, and innovative products from some of the industry's leading manufacturers. Over the next year, we'll be documenting every step of the journey—from design and construction to performance and occupancy—and sharing what we learn along the way. You can follow the project using the link in the show notes or visit greenbuildermedia.com and click on the VISION house tab in the nav bar.

Now, let's get into this week's news.

A fascinating experiment is underway in Vancouver, Canada, where the Squamish Nation is building one of the densest residential developments in North America called SIN-AWK. When complete, one of Canada's largest net-zero operational carbon communities will deliver about 6,000 homes across 11 towers on just 10 acres of land. The first residents have already moved in. What makes the project so notable is how it got built. Because the land is under Squamish jurisdiction, the project wasn't subject to many of the zoning battles, appeals, and neighborhood objections that often slow housing projects for years. The result is a high-density, car-light, net-zero community designed to help address affordability while reducing environmental impacts.

https://www.nytimes.com/2026/06/15/opinion/vancouver-housing-crisis-development.html?campaign_id=190&emc=edit_ufn_20260620&instance_id=177513&nl=from-the-times®i_id=77365004&segment_id=221824&user_id=b8ab28a4d2300850b737d596210360b3

A new housing report card is out, and the results tell a pretty simple story: the states making housing more affordable are generally the states building more housing. Realtor.com ranked every state on affordability and homebuilding activity. Indiana took the top spot, followed by Iowa, South Carolina, Texas, and North Carolina. What do they have in common? Lower regulatory barriers, more available land, and stronger construction activity. They're adding supply. At the bottom of the rankings was New York. What's interesting is that New York City is actually seeing a surge in apartment

construction and office-to-residential conversions. Thousands of new units are entering the market. But that's the point. Even with all that activity, New York is still trying to dig out of decades of underbuilding. Statewide affordability remains among the worst in the nation. And that's not just a New York problem. This week, Redfin reported that the median U.S. home-sale price topped \$400,000 for the first time ever and Zillow just reported that 242 cities now have starter homes valued at \$1 million or more. Plus, pending home sales declined for the fourth straight week as buyers continue pulling back. Normally, weaker demand would cool prices. But prices keep rising because there still aren't enough homes. The U.S. remains short roughly four million housing units, and only 11 states have median home prices that are considered affordable for median-income households. Almost all of them are in the Midwest and South.

<https://commercialobserver.com/2026/06/nyc-multifamily-construction-boom/>

<https://www.realtor.com/research/state-report-cards-2026>

<https://www.inman.com/2026/06/12/median-home-price-tops-400k-buyer-demand-falls/>

<https://www.zillow.com/research/million-dollar-starter-home-36452/>

As states search for ways to make housing more affordable, some are taking a closer look at building codes. Colorado, Texas, Idaho, and others are loosening certain requirements, including allowing some apartment buildings to be built with a single stairway instead of two. Supporters say it lowers costs, opens up smaller infill lots, and makes more housing projects financially feasible. But not everyone is convinced. Fire safety advocates warn that many of these rules were created after deadly fires and accidents. In an emergency, a single stairwell may have to serve as both the escape route for residents and the access route for firefighters. Some states are also scaling back electrical safety requirements and slowing code updates to reduce costs. Critics argue the savings are relatively small compared to the potential risks. The bigger question is one we're hearing more often across housing: How do we make homes more affordable without compromising safety? Because solving the housing shortage is important. But so is remembering why many of these codes existed in the first place.

<https://stateline.org/2026/06/22/states-are-changing-fire-codes-to-make-housing-cheaper-some-safety-experts-are-worried/>

One of the biggest energy stories of the year happened this week as the massive \$11 billion SunZia project officially came online. The system includes a 550-mile

transmission line capable of delivering 3,000 megawatts of New Mexico wind power across the Southwest—enough electricity for roughly one million homes. Why does that matter? While SunZia is expected to eliminate about 9 million metric tons of carbon emissions each year, the bigger takeaway is about infrastructure because the challenge today is moving renewable energy to where people actually need it. This project is a reminder that the future of clean energy depends as much on transmission lines and grid capacity as it does on wind turbines and solar panels.

<https://electrek.co/2026/06/19/sunzia-one-giant-us-power-line-wind-power-for-1-million-homes/>

Speaking of infrastructure, it's not just electricity that residents expect to be available on day one. A new multifamily housing report from Parks Associates found that internet connectivity has become one of the most important amenities for apartment residents. Nearly half of renters say having internet available at move-in is a top priority, and more than 40% expect it to be ready the moment they walk through the door. The report argues that connectivity is no longer just an amenity—it's infrastructure. In fact, residents who already have property-provided internet rank it as the number one feature they want in their next home. The research also found that good connectivity supports many of the smart building technologies developers are increasingly deploying, from access control and security systems to smart thermostats and leak detection. It's another reminder that housing today isn't just about walls and roofs. Increasingly, it's about the digital infrastructure that allows people to live, work, learn, and connect from home.

<https://www.parksassociates.com/downloads?>

When homeowners imagine their ideal bathroom, they think about spa-like experiences—rainfall showers, natural light, and luxurious retreats. But when it's time to spend money, they make different choices. This week's COGNITION Hot Take reveals one of the biggest gaps between aspiration and action in bathroom design. Heated floors ranked relatively low on homeowners' wish lists, yet they emerged as the most common wellness-focused upgrade during actual renovations. Similar patterns appeared with soaking tubs, better lighting, and smart controls. The reason is simple: when budgets meet reality, homeowners prioritize features that improve daily comfort and convenience over features that simply look luxurious. The data also highlights a significant opportunity. Only about 22% of homeowners have intentionally upgraded their bathrooms for wellness, suggesting most have yet to invest in the category at all. For builders and designers, the takeaway is clear: homeowners may be inspired by luxury, but they're more likely to spend on comfort.

<https://www.greenbuildermedia.com/blog/the-bathroom-wellness-gap>

Moving a sofa through the front door just got easier with our editors' product of the week, ProVia's Signet fiberglass entry door system. It features vented sidelites with removable mull posts, allowing homeowners to create a wider opening when moving large furniture, appliances, or other bulky items. The vented sidelite also provides fresh air and natural ventilation through a retractable screened opening, while a multi-point locking system and hidden hinges maintain security and a clean appearance.

<https://www.greenbuildermedia.com/blog/you-bought-your-home-at-the-right-time.-could-you-do-it-again>

I'll close today's podcast with some good news. A new report from the Smart Energy Consumer Collaborative found that homebuyers care about energy performance far more than the real estate industry may realize. Researchers analyzed 143 million home listings, surveyed more than 1,500 real estate professionals, and spoke with over 1,000 recent homebuyers. What they found is a pretty significant information gap. Homes with solar panels sold for about 2% more when solar was actually mentioned in the listing. Homes with heat pumps also saw a price premium. Yet one-third of homes with solar never mentioned it in their listing, and heat pumps were referenced only 8% of the time. The takeaway? Buyers increasingly value lower utility bills, energy-efficient systems, and clean energy technologies—but they're often not getting the information they need to make informed decisions. For builders, remodelers, and housing professionals, that's a real opportunity. The industry has spent years talking about energy efficiency as a cost. This research suggests it may be time to start talking about it as an asset.

<https://smartenergycc.org/research-release-home-buying-in-the-energy-transition/>

That's our show. Thanks for watching—like, subscribe, and share. I'll see you next week!