The Bakersfield Association of REALTORS® is a non-profit organization serving over 2,300 member and is the largest trade association in Kern County. Members of the Bakersfield Association of REALTORS® not only help make the dream of homeownership a reality, they help build better communities. In small towns and large cities across the nation, REALTORS® advocate for public policy that promotes homeownership and protects private property rights.

One portion of the vision of the Bakersfield Association of REALTORS® includes positioning, educating and assisting REALTORS® and community partners to create housing opportunities for all through advocacy, outreach, grants, programs, employer assisted housing program, trainings, and resources that help expand housing availability and insure an adequate supply of rental housing and home ownership opportunities in their communities.

Additionally, REALTORS® believe in the importance of a culture that fosters diversity and inclusion. We fully embrace perspectives from all walks of life—regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, national origin, socioeconomic status, political affiliation or any other qualities by which we may define ourselves. Our members are committed and sworn to uphold a strict Code of Ethics, treating all clients equally, regardless of their race, color, religion, sex, handicap, familial status, national origin, sexual orientation, or gender identity. The REALTOR® commitment to diversity and equality is perhaps the strongest in real estate, even going a step farther than the federal Fair Housing Act, which does not include sexual orientation and gender identity as protected classes against housing discrimination. We believe equal opportunity in housing can best be achieved not only through observance of the law but through education, and mutual cooperation of the real estate industry and the public in a free and open housing market.

REALTORS® fight to protect and preserve the American Dream. Perhaps better than any other group, REALTORS® recognize and understand how homeownership has the potential to change lives and enhance futures for people from every background and in every corner of this country.

The financial and tax benefits of owning a home vs. renting are very clear. Homeownership also provides many benefits to the family, children, and the community, such as increased education for children, lower teenage pregnancy rate, and a higher lifetime annual income for children.

However, homeownership can be a challenge for some consumers. Rising home prices, housing supply shortages, lack of quality jobs, slow economic growth and depressed rates of new construction are making it increasingly difficult for many families and first-time buyers to achieve homeownership.

In Kern County, in spite of housing affordability ranking much higher locally than most communities in California, only 50% of the families in Kern County have the jobs and resources needed to make homeownership a reality. With the median home price of $271,990, qualifying annual income to purchase a median home at that price needs to be $51,200. The monthly mortgage payment on a median home at this price would be $1,280 (includes taxes and insurance).

Creating a workforce development system that ensures job quality in our community is a top priority for the Bakersfield Association of REALTORS®. Without quality jobs, homeownership remains a dream instead of reality.

Homeownership encourages people to build roots and invest in their neighborhoods. It is well documented that homeowners volunteer, serve on community boards and are even more likely to vote...
in local elections. What’s more, studies have shown that the children of homeowners perform better in school and go on to earn more money as adults. Neighborhood crime rates are lower in communities with higher home ownership rates.

Quality jobs would increase the opportunities for workers to achieve home ownership which would in turn increase the quality of life in our community for the reasons listed above.

Economic growth and development are critical to the long-term health and vibrancy of our community. A diversity of economic activity will create jobs and ensure the future growth of Bakersfield. We must work together to consistently pursue opportunities and policies, which will support small business and attract the economic opportunities necessary to expand our tax base, create quality and higher paying jobs, and deliver necessary services.

This is why the Bakersfield Association of REALTORS® believes it is critical to engage with private partners, such as the Kern Community College District, as well as key stakeholders, housing industry trade groups and lawmakers at every level of government to raise awareness about the challenges facing home buyers and to promote solutions that address critical housing needs.
REALTOR® RESOURCES

Homeownership Resources

**Housing Stabilization – A Guide for Collaboration and Initiatives**
This task force guide assists REALTOR® associations with creating a local Housing Stabilization Task Force to help homeowners, renters, and landlords manage the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Housing Opportunity Toolkit**
A collection of resources and information for both individual REALTORS® and REALTOR® Associations.

**COVID-19 Consumer Guides**
*Protect Your Investment* and *Protect Your Credit* are guides that REALTORS® and associations can share with homeowners who are facing financial challenges due to the coronavirus pandemic.

**Financial Readiness**
NAR encourages associations to work with providers of financial education along with partners such as schools and community organizations to support evidence-based and age appropriate activities.

**Homelessness Resources**
A collection of resources and information to assist associations with their efforts to prevent and reduce homelessness.

**Ambassadors for Cities: Affordable City Living**
A PDF publication featuring examples of public/private partnerships between REALTORS® and cities.

**Employer-Assisted Housing Guide**
The guide provides a roadmap for your association to plan and implement an EAH initiative to help increase affordable housing opportunities for working families in your community.

**Establishing a Charitable Foundation**
A field guide providing information on tax and legal issues related to foundations, fundraising ideas, useful websites and more.

**Inclusionary Zoning**
A field guide providing background information on inclusionary zoning, case studies, considerations in developing inclusionary zoning and more.

**Workforce Housing Forum Guide**
The Workforce Housing Forum Guide: A Strategy for Outreach and Advocacy outlines how to plan and conduct a workforce housing forum to identify and develop strategies to address a community’s workforce housing needs.
Housing Opportunity Grants

https://realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/housing-opportunity

Housing Opportunity Grants support state and local REALTOR® Associations’ activities that create or improve systems, programs, and policies that expand access to housing that is affordable.

Land Use Initiative

https://realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/land-use

The Land Use Initiative (LUI) assists state and local REALTOR® Associations in their public policy advocacy of land-use issues. NAR will provide an analysis of proposed legislative and regulatory land-use, and real estate transactional, measures – comprehensive plans, amendments, legislation, ordinances or regulations – that impact the transfer of property and/or the interests of REALTORS®.

Smart Growth Grant

https://realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/smart-growth

Smart Growth Action Grants support state and local REALTOR® Association’s activities in a wide range of land-use and transportation-related activities with the primary goal of affecting public policies that support development that meets one or more of the 10 Smart Growth Principles. The goal of the program is to position REALTORS® as leaders in planning and designing a community’s future while enhancing REALTOR® relationships with local elected officials.

Transforming Neighborhoods

https://realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/housing-opportunity/resources/transforming-neighborhoods

Transforming Neighborhoods, provides REALTORS® with the opportunity to learn alongside their local partners about underlying factors that keep vacant abandoned and deteriorated properties “stuck” in decline and explore ways bring these properties back to productive use to create vibrant and equitable communities.

Vacant, abandoned, and deteriorated (VAD) properties have severe negative impacts on neighborhoods and the people living in them, including economic, social, psychological, physical, and environmental. Developing a comprehensive, community-driven approach to address the negative impacts of VAD properties requires the coordinated efforts of a wide range of public, private, and community stakeholders.

Diversity and Inclusion Grants

https://realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/diversity/grant-applications

The Diversity Program provides funding to state and local REALTOR® Associations to enhance the inclusion of diversity in their leadership and collaborate with local chapters of national multicultural real
estate organizations. The Diversity and Inclusion Grants can support state and local association activities in several key target areas.

**Rural Housing Advocacy**

Community Outreach Programs to Address Rural Challenges

https://realtorparty.realtor/community-outreach/rural-outreach-initiative/programs

**Advocacy**

The REALTOR® Party is a powerful alliance of REALTORS® and REALTOR® Associations working to advance public policies at all levels of government and candidates that build strong communities, protect property interests, and promote a vibrant business environment.

REALTORS® work to defend property ownership and private property rights, but our association’s overriding commitment is to ensure homeownership is always in reach for those who have worked hard and have made the sacrifices necessary to secure a mortgage.