



Amy McConnell
2025 STAR President

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STAR Monthly News

STARK TRUMBULL
AREA REALTORS®

Powering REALTORS® Across Stark, Carroll, and Trumbull Counties...

President's Message

2025 | December

2026 Vision: Building a Sustainable, Growth-Ready Real-Estate Business

A Message to the Members of Stark Trumbull Area REALTORS®

As we step into a new year, our industry continues to shift toward stability, opportunity, and long-term growth. Throughout 2025, we explored trends, strategies, and best practices that equip REALTORS® to build businesses rooted in consistency and trust. For STAR members, the path forward is clear: success in 2026 belongs to those who are intentional, relationship-focused, and committed to elevating their professionalism.

A Market Returning to Balance

The outlook for 2026 reflects a more stable environment. Interest rates are gradually leveling, buyers are regaining confidence, and appreciation is normalizing. This creates space for REALTORS® to shine as informed advisors, not just transaction facilitators.

A steady market rewards agents who stay engaged, educated, and proactive. You don't need to predict what's coming – you need a plan that keeps you visible and valuable.

The Core of a Sustainable Business: Relationships

One theme resonated all year long: agents who prioritized relationships outperformed those who relied solely on lead generation. Your sphere of influence remains your most powerful growth engine.

In the new year, stay committed to:

- Consistent communication with past clients and your SOI
- Post-closing care and meaningful follow-up
- Providing clarity, coaching, and confidence in a shifting market

A thriving real-estate business is built on trust – and trust is built over time.

Marketing With Purpose and Consistency

2026 doesn't require more marketing – it requires smarter marketing. Agents succeed when they simplify their approach and show up consistently.

Strengthen your presence by focusing on:

- Local, educational content
- A dependable video strategy
- Clean, current branding and digital profiles
- Email marketing that stays consistent year-round
- An annual refresh of your marketing assets

Authenticity and clarity matter more than flashy tools.

Diversifying Your Business for Long-Term Growth

Many REALTORS® are expanding beyond traditional deals by guiding investors, assisting renters, learning property management basics, or adding niche expertise. Diversification deepens your value and strengthens income stability.

For 2026, consider where you can enhance your knowledge or extend your services in ways that align with your goals and strengths.

Intentional Planning: Your Competitive Advantage

Before diving into the year, take time to reflect on 2025:

- What generated real results?
- Which relationships fueled your business?
- What systems or habits need refining?
- Where can you streamline or delegate?

Agents who commit to structured planning – and follow it – consistently rise to the top.

Moving Forward Together as STAR

Our association's mission remains the same: support, elevate, and empower REALTORS® throughout Stark and Trumbull counties. In 2026, STAR will continue fostering growth through:

- Peer collaboration and shared best practices
- Educational opportunities and industry insights
- A culture rooted in ethics, professionalism, and community service
- Support for members seeking stronger, referral-driven, sustainable businesses

The Bottom Line

2026 will reward REALTORS® who embrace the role of trusted advisor, strengthen their relationships, stay visible through purposeful marketing, and build with long-term vision. As STAR members, we are positioned to make this our strongest and most sustainable year yet – together.

Amy McConnell
2025 STAR President



GET INVOLVED
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Association

TODAY



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Classes & Events

DECEMBER

- DEC 8 Growth & Connection Committee | Staff Liaison: [Maggie McAbier](#)
- DEC 13 [REGISTER NOW](#)
Breakfast with Santa
MAPS Air Museum | 2260 International Pkwy, North Canton, OH 44720
- DEC 24-26 OFFICES CLOSED | Christmas
- DEC 31 OFFICES CLOSED | New Years

JANUARY

- JAN 1-2 OFFICES CLOSED | New Years
- JAN 7 Leg. Affairs / RPAC Committee | Staff Liaison: [Rich Cosgrove](#)
- JAN 9 Affiliate Committee | Staff Liaison: [Collene Burgess](#) / [Maggie McAbier](#)
- JAN 12 Growth & Connection Committee | Staff Liaison: [Maggie McAbier](#)
- JAN 15 [REGISTER NOW](#)
Presidents Installation
Haymaker's Mill | 7192 Wales Avenue NW North Canton, OH 44720
- JAN 19 OFFICES CLOSED | Martin Luther King Day
- JAN 22 [REGISTER NOW](#)
MLS NOW CE | Listing Input 1:30-3:30
7110 Whipple Ave NW, Suite B, North Canton, OH 44720

FEBRUARY

- FEB 4 Leg. Affairs / RPAC Committee | Staff Liaison: [Rich Cosgrove](#)
- FEB 9 Growth & Connection Committee | Staff Liaison: [Maggie McAbier](#)
- FEB 9 [REGISTER NOW](#)
First Time Home Buyers Seminar
STAR Office | 7110 Whipple Ave NW Suite B, North Canton, OH 44720
- FEB 13 Affiliate Committee | Staff Liaison: [Collene Burgess](#) / [Maggie McAbier](#)
- FEB 16 OFFICES CLOSED | Presidents Day
- FEB 19 [REGISTER NOW](#)
MLS NOW CE | My Matrix and More 1:30-3:30
7110 Whipple Ave NW, Suite B, North Canton, OH 44720
- FEB 26 [REGISTER NOW](#)
New Member Orientation 2:00-3:30
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A Note from the CEO

A Heartfelt Farewell to Four Remarkable Leaders

Saying goodbye is never easy—especially when it's to people who have given so much of their time, talent, and heart. As their terms on the Board of Directors come to a close, I want to personally thank Arden Lingenhoel, Antonio Valdez, Amanda Talkington, and Donna Pugh for their years of dedicated service.

Each of you brought something truly special to the table—your leadership, your voices, your ideas, and your commitment to the membership made a lasting impact on our organization. I am grateful not only for what you contributed professionally, but also for the friendships we built along the way. Those connections mean more to me than you know, and they will truly last a lifetime.

While I am sad to see you step away from the Board, I understand that all seasons change. Please know that the door is always open, and I sincerely hope you will consider returning to Board service in the future. Your experience, wisdom, and passion are valued more than ever.

Thank you again for the countless hours, thoughtful discussions, and unwavering dedication you gave to this association. Your legacy will continue to shape our future.

I also invite everyone to join us on **January 15** as we celebrate the Installation of our new President, Emily Levitt, along with our newly elected slate of Board of Directors. It will be a wonderful evening of recognition, new beginnings, and gratitude for those who have served before.

With heartfelt appreciation and warm wishes to you all,
Collene



Collene Burgess
Chief Executive Officer

cburgess@star.realtor
office: (330) 494-5630



Arden Lingenhoel



Antonio Valdez



Amanda Talkington



Donna Pugh



Committee involvement in your association is one of the best things you can do for your business. You will discover lifelong friends and mentors, and in many cases, do some good in your community along the way.

get INVOLVED with STAR



FREE

Annual Event

for STAR Members
& their Families

Breakfast with Santa

Sponsored by the Stark Trumbull Area REALTORS® Affiliate Committee

Sat, December 13 at Maps Air Museum

2260 International Parkway, North Canton, OH 44720



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9:30 - 10:30

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with Santa

10:30 - 12:00

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with Santa





2026

INSTALLATION

of Officers and Directors

Awards Ceremony



Emily Levitt

2026 STAR President

THURS Jan 15, 2026
4:00 PM to 6:00 PM

Haymaker's Mill

7192 Wales Avenue North West
North Canton Ohio 44720

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4:00 pm Cash Bar

4:30 pm Hors d'oeuvres

5:00 pm Installation

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January 22: Listing Input

The Matrix Listing Input class should be taken by those who have broker permission to input listings. This class will go over how to properly use the input portion of Matrix while following MLS Now rules.

February 19: My Matrix and More

Explore the My Matrix tools, including custom headers and grids, personalized email signatures with photos and links, speedbar shortcuts, team settings, hot sheets for market tracking, and portal notifications to monitor prospect activity.

March 19: Realist: Using Tax Data

Learn how to get more from Realist tax data, including report views, sorting, search tips, flood and assessor maps, neighbor profiles, label downloads, finding comps (even with zero results), setting preferences, and using mortgage calculators.

April 16: CMA

Learn how to find comps using radius or map searches and create a CMA package with customizable reports, cover pages, and stats—saved under the contact for easy editing, printing, or emailing anytime

May 21: Listing Input

The Matrix Listing Input class should be taken by those who have broker permission to input listings. This class will go over how to properly use the input portion of Matrix while following MLS Now rules.

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To learn more, please allow 15 minutes after your class for a brief lesson.

MLS NOW LEARNING



STARK TRUMBULL
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Fall In **LOVE** With Your New Home

First Time Home Buyers Seminar

MONDAY February 9, 2026

5:00 pm to 6:00 pm at the STAR Office

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QUESTIONS? Contact Maggie McAbier
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December 2025 GAD Report

Flipping The Script

State senators advanced a measure out of committee last week which gives county auditors greater control over the home valuation process. County auditors reappraise homes on a six-year cycle. But midway through, they adjust those values based on a statistical sample, known as the triennial update. Under current law, state tax officials review the auditor's work, and if they disagree, they can order an auditor to adjust valuations. The auditor can appeal that decision, but they carry the burden of proof.

[Ohio House Bill 124](#), known colloquially as the "flip the script" bill, puts the onus on tax officials. Instead of an auditor appealing, they're given the benefit of the doubt, and tax officials can appeal if they believe the auditor got it wrong.

Lake County Auditor Chris Galloway said that's as it should be. "County auditors are in the best position to determine which sales are valid within their counties," he said.

There are several instances where local knowledge matters. A home sale between John Smith and Jane Doe looks normal on paper, Galloway said, but the auditor might know they're siblings. Since it's not an arm's length sale it shouldn't be included.

Other sales could be outliers, due to renovation for instance, and they'd skew the formula for other homes. The measure "allows for these kinds of inaccuracies to be corrected," Galloway said. "This creates a fairer and more accurate valuation process for all taxpayers."

No one testified against the proposal, and it passed out of committee unanimously.



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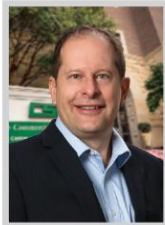
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Monthly Market STATS

October 2025

[CLICK HERE](#) to check out our Blog for shareable assets and watch social media for November STATS soon!

MarketUPDATE

STARK COUNTY

Stark Trumbull Area REALTORS®
Single-Family & TownHome Listing
Analysis of Stark, Trumbull, & Carroll Counties



NEW Listings
632



SOLD Listings
367



Average SALE Price
\$270,827



Average MARKET TIME
30 Days

OCTOBER 2025

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MarketUPDATE

CARROLL COUNTY

Stark Trumbull Area REALTORS®
Single-Family & TownHome Listing
Analysis of Stark, Trumbull, & Carroll Counties



NEW Listings
28



SOLD Listings
23



Average SALE Price
\$258,660



Average MARKET TIME
58 Days

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MarketUPDATE

TRUMBULL COUNTY

Stark Trumbull Area REALTORS®
Single-Family & TownHome Listing
Analysis of Stark, Trumbull, & Carroll Counties



NEW Listings
205



SOLD Listings
154



Average SALE Price
\$202,374



Average MARKET TIME
45 Days

OCTOBER 2025

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Membership Report November 2025

New Salespersons

Tamara Cross, *KW Chervenik Realty*
 Kyle Crum, *KW Legacy Group*
 Tara Burgan, *C21 HomeStar*
 Jason Betts, *C21 HomeStar*
 Nicholas Casto, *EXP Realty*
 Melanie Bradford, *EXP Realty*
 Jwaun Miller, *KW Legacy Group*
 Ethan Kuntz, *KW Legacy Group*
 Curtis Bromer, *KW Legacy Group*
 Melissa Lennon, *Cutler Real Estate*
 Angela Gibson, *BHHS Stouffer Realty*

Transfers from Another Board

Maria Martelo
 Cynthia Slabaugh
 Elizabeth Basen
 Janel Knapp
 Nerissa Horn
 Laura Baum
 Steven Higley
 Shonnie Myers
 Linda Higley
 Gregory Smith Jr
 Greg Burger
 Lisa Hughes
 Jennifer Henderhan
 Germaine Davis
 Jeff Rath

Transfers from Another Board Cont.

Jenna Ford
 Michael Yezbak
 Brent Smith
 Johnny Brost
 Madison Brost
 Joseph Procaccio
 Emma Allen

Office Transfers

Jessica Conrad, *KW Chervenik Realty*
 Katherine Ford, *McDowell*
 Christopher Hofmann, *Re/Max Infinity*
 Zaurice Stephens, *EXP Realty*

Dropped Members

Seloni Khetarpal
 Bethany Shackle
 Mazie Tietze
 Zachary Beal
 Chassity Staten
 Justice Bolyard
 Amanda Schoeppner
 Michael Swope
 Brandon Shank
 D'Shante Lee
 Anna Myers
 Barbara Gleason
 Traci Baytos



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Danette Stone – Title Processing
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DUES BILLING BREAKDOWN

State & National Dues

\$521
 Billed Nov 4
 2025

Due December 31, 2025

\$25 Late Fee Applies on January 6, 2026
 Membership & MLS Access will be suspended
 on February 7 for non-payment of dues.

\$295 = Ohio Realtors

\$201 = NAR

\$156 Dues +
 \$46 Mandatory Consumer Ad
 Campaign Assessment

**\$25 = Optional STAR
 RPAC Contribution**

Local (STAR) Dues

\$225
 Billed May 1
 2026

Due June 30, 2026

\$25 Late Fee Applies on July 7, 2026
 Membership and MLS Access will be suspended
 on August 4 for non-payment of dues.



Candice Likely, Administrative Assistant

Contact for: Membership & Dues Inquiries,
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Orientation Dates

Thursday, February 26

Thursday, June 4

Thursday, September 24

Thursday, November 12



Sign-Up TODAY!

Real Estate Firms Cite Housing Affordability and Rising Costs as Biggest Challenges

[Published November 19, 2025 | NAR Newsroom](#)

WASHINGTON (November 19, 2025) – Real estate firms are bracing for continued challenges related to housing affordability and rising industry costs, according to the [2025 Profile of Real Estate Firms](#) published by the National Association of REALTORS® today.

Top challenges for real estate firms

- Housing affordability (56%)
- Industry costs (36%, up from 34% in 2023)
- Local economic conditions (35%, up from 34% in 2023)

Despite these challenges, 38% of firms expect their profitability to increase in 2025, up from 30% in 2023—the last time this survey was conducted.

"Real estate firms are on the frontlines of the industry and are seeing firsthand how housing affordability and local economic conditions are impacting their clients," said Jessica Lautz, NAR deputy chief economist. "Firms are also experiencing the rising cost of running their businesses. While the current real estate market is challenging, the majority of firms expect profitability to at least remain stable."

The report measures characteristics of real estate firms nationwide to determine how they operate and assess what lies ahead. NAR surveyed its broker members to better understand firms' demographics, composition and characteristics from the executive and manager perspective.

Additional key findings from the report

- 46% of sales volume is generated from repeat business and 44% from past client referrals.
- 35% of firms are actively recruiting—down 5% from 2023.
- 81% of real estate firms have a single office (identical to 2023), with two full-time real estate licensees on average (down from three in 2023).
- 19 years: The amount of time the average residential firm has been operating (up from 16 years in 2023).
- 25 years: The amount of time the average commercial firm has been operating (identical to 2023).

BIGGEST CHALLENGES CITED BY FIRMS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY 56%

RIISING COSTS OF
THE INDUSTRY 36%

LOCAL OR REGIONAL
ECONOMIC
CONDITIONS 35%

KEEPING UP WITH
TECHNOLOGY 34%

Source: 2025 Profile of Real Estate Firms



- 71% of firms encourage agents to pursue certifications and designations.
- 61% of firms encourage agents to take additional training classes.

About the National Association of Realtors®

As America's largest trade association, the National Association of Realtors® is involved in all aspects of residential and commercial real estate. The term Realtor® is a registered collective membership mark that identifies a real estate professional who is a member of the National Association of Realtors® and subscribes to its strict Code of Ethics. For free consumer guides about navigating the homebuying and selling transaction processes – from written buyer agreements to negotiating compensation – visit facts.realtor.

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