



The AAS Case Study Review
 Workshop in El Paso, Texas
 November 28–30, 2017
see pages 5–6

Sidwell Project Profiles: Tioga County, Penn. & Effingham County, Ill. Upgrade Their Parcel Data Records and Management Processes

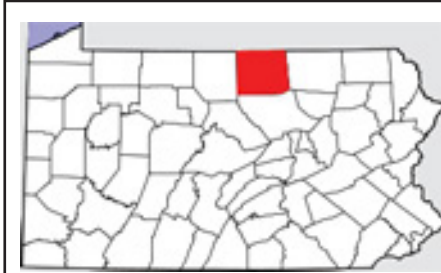


Grand Canyon of Pennsylvania, Wellsboro, Penn.



Tioga County is located in north central Pennsylvania, where the region is lush with trees and the landscape is dissected hills and valleys. Wellsboro, the county seat, is a quaint town with a historical main street/downtown area. Keeping pace with their needs, the county assessment office has diligently developed and maintained a set of hard copy tax maps to support assessment operations.

The county realized the need for GIS and implemented a simple conversion of their existing tax maps. As needs and demands increased, GIS Coordinator Scott Zubek and Assistant Chief Assessor Joshua Zeyn realized that the existing GIS would not hold up to their rigorous needs for accurate



Tioga County
 Area: 1,137 sq. miles
 Parcels: 27,830
 Population: 41,981
 Density: 37/sq. mi
 * as of 2010 census

maps and reliable information, which would be needed to support the implementation of a new computerized mass appraisal system (CAMA) while supporting the demand placed on county resources

because of the Marcellus Shale boom.

Pilot Project

- Sidwell used original source documents and delivered the data in the latest version of the Esri Parcel Fabric.
- The county could visualize what their data could look like, specifically parcel data verified against the CAMA database.
- When completed, it was discovered that in certain instances houses/lots were associated to the wrong parcel and as a result, incorrectly up for delinquent sale.
- County officials realized that

continued on next page

modernizing their operations would have a great impact on the community and decided to move forward with the entire countywide project.

Project and Product Details

• Sidwell captured over 60,000 documents of maps, plats, and other legal documents that were used to construct the countywide parcel layer.

• Through the documents, Sidwell positioned over 2,500 GPS control points in state plane coordinates. The information was helpful in tying establishing a framework for nearby parcels, and building the Parcel Fabric data model.

• For all parcels, Sidwell placed an accuracy value based upon how that parcel was constructed. This will be used by the county for defending assessment values.

Impact

• The parcel fabric has been implemented with the county's LGIM and CAMA system.

• Streamlined efforts allow for dynamic joining of new parcel data and CAMA attributes. The county can take advantage of simple geoprocessing routines to keep this data current and be easier to publish across the jurisdiction.

• The county has complete faith that the data being consumed by its users is accurate and reliable. • Because of the efforts to modernize the GIS, the county can now take full advantage of Esri's solution templates. Their parcel tax viewer utilizes the data from the LGIM.



Effingham County Courthouse, Effingham, Illinois

Effingham County is located in Central Illinois approximately 75 miles southeast of Springfield, the Illinois State Capitol. After being introduced to the concept of Esri's parcel fabric and the Local Government Information Model (LGIM), Effingham County reached out to Sidwell to talk about improving their GIS maintenance workflows and GIS website. Sidwell staff provided support to help the county visualize what modernizing their GIS using the parcel fabric would look like, and the county agreed to move forward with the conversion.

The Challenge

• The county was in need of an updated parcel maintenance workflow and a more robust GIS web solution to take advantage of Esri's ArcGIS Online technology.

The Solutions

• Sidwell migrated the existing county geodatabase to the Local Government Information Model and parcel fabric.

• Services included staging, parcel fabric topology validation and loading of townships, subdivisions, tax parcels, ownership parcels, and right-of-way features.

• Sidwell deployed Parcel Administrator to manage and track county parcel numbers and genealogy.



Effingham County

Area: 480 sq. miles
Parcels: 21,728
Population: 34,242
Density: 72/sq. mi
** as of 2010 census*

• DEVNET's land record solution was integrated with Sidwell's Portico GIS web viewer to improve desktop and



Effingham County, continued
online mapping.

- Sidwell professional services provided the county with the proper training on how to maintain their parcel information in the new environment. Additionally, Sidwell provided their parcel fabric workflow support package to ensure county success in managing the parcel fabric once training has been completed.

Impact

- Sidwell training provided familiarity with editing using the parcel fabric, resulting in new, more productive workflows. • The county now has a modernized GIS website solution using Esri's ArcGIS Online along with Esri basemaps and applications for the LGIM.

- It is easier and quicker for the county to update tax parcels and share shapefiles to other Esri users.
- The public now have access to aerial imagery, and tax parcel information all in one location through Sidwell's Portico web viewer. ❖

"Sidwell has a very good reputation for quality and customer support. We were in need of an updated GIS web solution, and I felt like Sidwell was the right choice for this. Brian Baker, the account manager, and Mark Kemper, the project manager were patient and always had thorough answers for all my questions. I felt comfortable with them, and it was apparent that Sidwell was willing to invest the time to make sure I understood what the LGIM and Fabric was all about."

— Jill Zerrusen,
Effingham County GIS Manager

Congrats to New AAS Designee



Andrew J. Smethers, AAS, earned the Assessment Administration Specialist designation in April. Mr. Smethers is data analyst for the Allen County Assessor's Office in Fort Wayne, Indiana, a position he has held for one year. He has spent his entire assessment career with Allen County,

most recently as a senior residential appraiser.

Mr. Smethers holds a Bachelor of Science in public affairs from Indiana University, Bloomington. He is a member of the Indiana Chapter of IAAO, a veteran of the Indiana Army National Guard, and a volunteer basketball coach for his local YMCA. ❖

—Article and photo reprinted with permission from Chris Bennett and IAAO

We Call It Experience

In recent issues of IAAO's Fair and Equitable, several TEAM consultants have been recognized as being members of IAAO for a large number of years. It got us wondering just how many years of experience we have in TEAM and how many of those years include IAAO membership.

After gathering this information, a few items of interest popped up:

1. Of the 13 TEAM members who responded, the average number

years of experience was 40 and the average years of IAAO membership was 32.

2. Most typically, TEAM members became IAAO members within the first three to four years of their career.

3. Ed Crapo, CFA, AAS, ASA, has 44 years of experience and 40 years as an IAAO member, but the incredible part is that all those years are in the same office! ❖



TEAM Workshops

Check out all our workshops on TEAM's website

Always changing...

The appraisal world does not stand still, therefore our workshops do not remain static. The following workshops have already been updated for 2017:

- Valuation of Barndominiums
- Valuation of High-End & Difficult Homes
- Mass Appraisal Analysis and Benchmarks

Travel Squad



TEAM associates continue to serve in teaching, consulting and speaking capacities. In the second quarter of 2017, we have been in Arkansas, Hawaii, Indiana, Kansas, Louisiana, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, Virginia and Nova Scotia. Looking for a workshop, series of workshops or professional assistance for your location? Visit our website at <http://www.teamconsulting.cc/>.

Now Available:

Video Explains Appraisal Process to Property Owners

TEAM Consulting, LLC and 502 Media Group have produced an award-winning video that explains the fair and equitable appraisal process. This clear and concise tool provides a quick and convenient way to deliver your message.

Video Answers Common Questions About Appraisals

As an appraiser or assessor, you spend countless hours answering questions and fielding appraisal appeals from taxpayers. With each question, it's undeniable that there is widespread confusion about the appraisal process. Often taxpayers are unclear on exactly how appraisers determine a property's worth. This confusion can lead to unnecessary misunderstandings.

We have created a solution that is more effective than presentations, brochures or phone calls:

A custom-branded animation that explains this process in terms that are easy for anyone to understand. The video can be uploaded to your website or your YouTube channel for easy access by your property owners. And it is available in English or Spanish. See for yourself! Preview the English version above.

Let the Video Do the Explaining

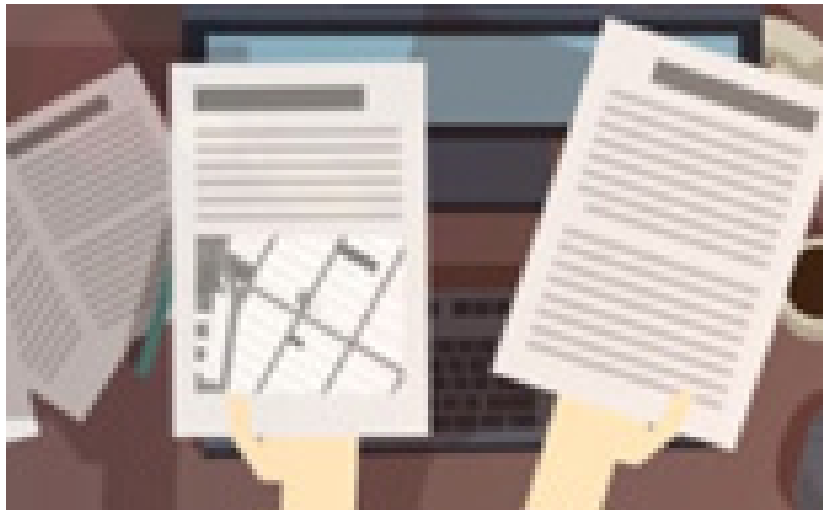
Our goal is to help communicate the appraiser's role in determining fair property values. Our video breaks down each part of this process to clear up any misunderstandings that may exist around property appraisals. Appraisers and property owners alike will appreciate the easy-to-understand information.

See for yourself!

Preview the Appraiser video or the Assessor video below. Once you are ready to order your customized video, simply complete the order form online.



CLICK ON THE IMAGE ABOVE TO PREVIEW THE APPRAISER VIDEO



CLICK ON THE IMAGE ABOVE TO PREVIEW THE ASSESSOR VIDEO

Save Time: Yours & Property Owners'

Fielding questions and processing appeals from taxpayers takes time. Using this video to answer common questions frees you to focus on other demands of your job. ❖

Click Here to
Order Your
Customized
Video Today!

ORDER YOUR CUSTOMIZED VIDEO TODAY!

The AAS Case Study Review Workshop in El Paso, Texas November 28–30, 2017

El Paso Texas Central Appraisal District (CAD) is offering the AAS Case Study Review prepared by Fred Chmura, AAS, and Rick Stuart, CAE, CDEI. This 2½-day workshop provides a review of materials and an understanding of the composition of a case study to help prepare for the AAS Case Study Exam. Topics discussed are:

- USPAP
- Effective tax rates
- Property definitions
- Three approaches to value
- Role of the assessor
- Tax policy
- Assessment administration
- Rates and levies
- Economic principles
- Ownerships and rights
- Attributes in an effective tax system
- Ratio studies
- Reassessment planning

Included are multiple problems associated with the assessment and valuation processes, and the workshop will conclude with a practice four-hour case study exam. This is not an IAAO workshop but one developed by TEAM Consulting, LLC.

Between May 2010 and today, approximately 60 candidates have successfully used this workshop material to obtain their AAS designations. This is a workshop that seldom is offered to the general assessment profession. If you are seeking your AAS, this could be the best opportunity you will have to prep for the IAAO exam. You can see various testimonials on the TEAM website from individuals that have used the material at <http://www.team-consulting.cc/aasreview.html>. *This workshop can take months off the time it will take you to prepare on your own.*

El Paso CAD has arranged for Rick Stuart to proctor the actual IAAO AAS Case Study Exam the day following the review class (December 1). *If you are attending the review class and would like to take the actual exam, please contact IAAO to make the appropriate arrangements.*

El Paso CAD will not seek continuing educational credits from any state or local boards but will provide any needed material if a student wishes to seek the credit.

WORKSHOP INFORMATION

When: November 28 – 30, 2017 (Tuesday – Thursday)

Where: El Paso Central Appraisal District

5801 Trowbridge Drive, El Paso, Texas 79925

Conference Room (Third Floor) • Phone 915-780-2005

Instructor: Rick Stuart, CAE, CDEI

Registration Fee: \$275

Fee includes the material and class. All materials will be provided at the start of the class.

Questions? Please contact Dina Ornelas, EPCAD Administration Dept., at 915.780.2005 or diornel@epcad.org

ATTN Students: It is suggested that students bring a small notebook for use in the practice and actual exam, pencils, erasers and a calculator (even a backup calculator would be good).

REGISTRATION

Name: _____

Entity: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

PAYMENT

Cost: \$275

Send check (payable to El Paso CAD) and registration form to:

El Paso Central Appraisal District
Attn: Administration Department
5801 Trowbridge Drive
El Paso, Texas 79925

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Hotel Accommodations

Although there are multiple hotels within a five-mile radius from the El Paso Central Appraisal District (5801 Trowbridge Drive, El Paso, TX 79925), the following are convenient options.



Holiday Inn El Paso Airport

6351 Gateway Blvd. West
El Paso, Texas 79925
1-888-465-4329
915-772-4088 local
www.holidayelpaso.com

Distance from El Paso International Airport: 1.9 miles
Distance from EPCAD: 0.9 miles about 3 minutes driving
Free shuttle within a 5-mile radius (call for confirmation)
Convenient to: Wells Fargo Bank, Walgreens, Costco, shopping mall, Taco Cabana, Taco Tote, Starbucks, Dunkin' Donuts, Famous Dave's, Corner Bakery



Holiday Inn Express & Suites El Paso Airport

6666 Gateway Blvd. East
El Paso, Texas 79915
1-915-771-6200
elpgaafd@tmihospitality.com



Hyatt Place El Paso Airport

6030 Gateway Blvd. East
El Paso, Texas 79905
915-771-0022

Distance from El Paso International Airport: 4.7 miles
Distance from EPCAD: 1.1 mile or 4 minutes
Free shuttle within a 3-mile radius from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.
<http://elpasoairport.place.hyatt.com/en/hotel/home.html>



El Paso Marriott

1600 Airway Blvd.
El Paso, Texas 79925
915-779-3300
<http://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/elptx-elpaso-marriott>

Distance from El Paso International Airport:
About 0.3 miles
Distance from EPCAD: 1.9 miles via Montana Ave., about 8 minutes
Various eateries within walking distance or by vehicle: Applebee's, Cattle Barron Steakhouse, Chili's, Peter Piper Pizza, various local eateries, and Corner Bakery.



Embassy Suites by Hilton El Paso

6100 Gateway East
El Paso, Texas 79905
Tel: +1-915-779-6222
FAX: +1-915-779-8846
http://embassysuites3.hilton.com/en/hotels/texas/embassy-suites-by-hilton-el-paso-ELPGWES/index.html?WT.mc_id=zDA01MB2OLG34YX

Wyndham El Paso Airport Hotel and Water Park

2027 Airway Blvd.
El Paso, Texas 79925
1-915-778-4241
<http://www.wyndhamhotels.com>

Radisson Hotel El Paso Airport

1770 Airway Blvd.
El Paso, Texas 79925
Reservations: 1-800-333-3333
Tel. 1-915-772-3333
FAX: 1-915-779-3323
Various eateries within walking distance or by vehicle: Applebee's, Cattle Barron Steakhouse, Chili's, Peter Piper Pizza, various local eateries, and Corner Bakery.

Comfort Inn & Suites I-10 Airport

6645 Gateway West
El Paso, Texas 79925
Ph. 915-225-7890
FAX 915-225-7889
<https://www.choicehotels.com/texas/el-paso/comfort-inn-hotels/txf02>

Distance from Airport: 2 miles (9 minutes)
Distance from EPCAD: 1.8 mile (5 minutes)
Amenities: Free parking, Airport shuttle, Business Center, Wi-Fi, free breakfast
Nearby restaurants offer Mexican, Asian, and Italian cuisine; also Famous Dave's Steakhouse.

See you in El Paso!



■ Laura Kussisto, *The Wall Street Journal*, March 24, 2017. "U.S. new-home sales increased sharply for the second consecutive month in February, an indication that growing demand and a pickup in constructions activity could help propel a strong spring selling season for this segment of the market."

■ Jeff Collins, *Orange County Register*, March 29, 2017. "Proposition 13, the voter approved initiative that caps property taxes in California, is a chief cause of the state's exorbitant impact fees on new-home construction, according to a policy expert who addressed California Realtors Tuesday."

The Orange County Register reports:

Chris Hoene, executive director of the California Budget and Policy Center in Sacramento, said at a California Association of Realtors conference in Los Angeles Tuesday that local governments need to boost local property taxes to gain flexibility to address housing costs in their areas." Editor's Note: Good article and particularly on a commercial loophole in Prop 13. <http://bit.ly/2ngT5IF>

■ Laura Kussisto, *The Wall Street Journal*, March 29, 2017. "U.S. home prices rose in January at their fastest rate since mid-2014, a trend that bodes well for sellers but could start to eat into demand as buyers get priced out of the market. The

S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller Indices, which cover the entire nation, rose 5.9% in the 12 months ended in January, the strongest increase in 31 months, up from a 5.7% year-over-year increase in December." <http://on.wsj.com/2ocDMMq>

■ Jonathan Spicer, *Business News*, March 21, 2017. "The run-up in U.S. real estate prices could potentially amplify any future economic downturn, a Federal Reserve official said on Tuesday, urging regulators globally to consider tools beyond interest rates that could help cool the sector. A sharp downturn in U.S. residential and commercial property prices in 2007 and 2008 rocked banks that were highly leveraged in the sector, sparking the global financial crisis and deep recession. With the economic recovery now well under way, bank holdings of commercial and apartment mortgages rose 9 percent and 12 percent, respectively, in the past year." <http://reut.rs/2mOZJ2i>

■ www.nreonline.com, March 20, 2017. "The overall delinquency rate for U.S. CMBS loans climbed by 13 basis points in February month-over-month, to reach 5.31 percent, according to a recent report from research firm Trepp LLC. The rate is the highest the firm recorded in 18 months. According to Trepp researchers, the increase was caused by \$2.3 billion in newly delinquent loans. "A sizable portion of that \$2.3 billion came from notes that were current, but are now 'non-performing loans that are beyond the maturity data,'" they write."

Editor's Note: CMBS is commercial mortgage backed securities and is a component to watch relating to commercial

property valuation. <http://bit.ly/2o4z9ml>

■ Paul Bubny, www.globest.com, April 3, 2017. "Led by the residential sector, construction spending during February reached a seasonally adjusted annual rate of \$1.193 trillion, the Census Bureau said Monday. It's the highest level since April 2006, although the rebound from the previous month's 0.4% drop was lower than economists' estimates." <http://bit.ly/2o68wBm>

■ www.realtor.com, April 10, 2017. "In the Mortgage Bankers Association's most recent weekly measure of purchase loan data, the average recorded size of a home loan was \$318,200 — the largest recorded in the history of the survey, which has been running since 1990. The recent increase in mortgage sizes, which have risen throughout the recovery, is owed to more leveraged properties, not just more expensive ones."

The median down payment for a new home in 2016 was 10%, or 6% for first-time buyers. In addition, while the median mortgage size was only about 3.3 times the median annual income when the MBA began its survey, the median mortgage size is now five times the median income." <http://bit.ly/2okzBAq>

■ *Eye on Housing*, April 10, 2017. "According to the Federal Housing Finance Agency (FHFA), the leverage or loan-to-value (LTV) ratio, which compares the value of a home loan to the purchase price of the home, increased by 140 basis points in 2016, up to 79.2% from 77.8% across all purchases. This figure, which is

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Rick Stuart, CAE, CDEI, is a senior consultant with TEAM Consulting, LLC. He lives in Topeka, Kansas.

the highest LTV ratio recorded since the recession, reflects the growth in the LTV ratio on previously occupied home purchases." <http://bit.ly/2png14k>

Editor's Note: Personally, I do not like these last two articles and the many potential problems they may cause.

■ Mike Murphy, *MarketWatch*, April 10, 2017. "What sounds like a great bargain in San Francisco gets less appealing the longer you read. It's about a 7,200-square-foot property in a ritzy neighborhood with views of the Golden Gate Bridge for the bargain price of \$35,000. The only catch is this property is an alley (shared-driveway) that you can't build anything on. Plus, you have to pay taxes, insurance, and any maintenance expenses." <http://bit.ly/2okF5tc>

■ Paul Vierra, *The Wall Street Journal*, April 10, 2017. "As of March 2017, Toronto's average home price has risen by a steep 29% year over year. The home sale rate increased 17.7% over the same period. As the city's average home price creeps closer to \$1 million CAD (about \$700,000), federal authorities struggle to curb its overheating real estate market and prevent a potential bubble.

Interest from foreign buyers in hard assets such as real estate combined with a prolonged period of low interest rates has fueled a boom in the two cities [Toronto and Vancouver]. That boom has coincided with a buildup in household debt to record levels." <http://bit.ly/2p0Jeh8>

■ Michael Gaynor, *Washingtonian*, April 7, 2017. **Editor's Note:** The article is titled, "How Self-Driving Cars Will Change Local Real Estate" and is an interesting read.

■ Lawrence Yun, *www.builderonline.com*, April 11, 2017.

Some interesting statistics about 2016 vacation home sales:

- Sales down by 21.4%
- Sale price up 4.2%
- Overall share of market sales, down from 16% to 12%

■ *www.realtor.com*, April 12, 2017. "The insights from our most recent consumer survey provide a glimpse into what buyers are looking at today," said Sarah Staley, housing expert for realtor.com. "While we often think of dream homes as being big and bold, that's not what we're hearing from potential buyers today. These insights can help guide potential sellers in deciding which rooms or features to invest in before listing their homes."

Key findings include:

- Large backyards, garages and updated kitchens top list of most searched attributes
- Ranch-style homes and kitchens rule in 2017
- Privacy ranks as shoppers' top goal for buying, largely driven by buyers over age 45
- Millennial shoppers cite family needs as the primary reason for entering the housing market
- Desire for single-family home rises with age." <http://bit.ly/2pvLNw5>

■ *www.htrends.com*, April 12, 2017. "STR's (Smith Travel Research) March 2017 Pipeline Report shows 571,311 rooms in 4,721 hotel projects Under Contract in the United States. The total represents a 14.4% increase in the number of rooms Under Contract compared with March 2016."

■ Ester Fung, *www.wsj.com*, April 19, 2017. "Internet retailing is eating into mall revenue, but competition from newer shopping centers was the most common cause of death for malls over the past decade, according to a study of 72 such properties. While the situations were

different, the dead malls generally struggled to compete with newer malls that offered more modern features and a broader selection of stores, according to Wells Fargo Securities, whose database covers about 1,000 malls." <http://on.wsj.com/2pglrln>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, April 25, 2017. "The S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller U.S. National Home Price NSA Index, covering all nine U.S. census divisions, reported a 5.8% annual gain in February, up from 5.6% last month and setting a 32-month high." <http://bit.ly/2ovVAGm>

■ *Hotel Business Newsletter*, April 25, 2017. "U.S. hoteliers marked a seventh consecutive year of increasing profits in 2016 despite a slowdown in the rate of revenue growth, according to the recently released *Trends in the Hotel Industry* by CBRE Hotels' Americas Research. Total operating revenue, driven by a 0.2% rise in occupancy and a 2.5% growth in average daily rate (ADR), increased by 2.4% in 2016 for the average hotel in its survey sample." <http://bit.ly/2p3LKKv>

■ *Freddiemac.mwnewsroom.com*, April 18, 2017. With inventory tight, home prices outpacing incomes, and interest rates headed higher, affordability has declined, putting a pinch on prospective homebuyers.

For-sale housing inventory, especially of starter homes, is currently at its lowest level in over ten years. The reasons for the lower inventory are:

- Many homeowners are not selling their homes for fear of not being able to find another home they like and that falls within their budget.
- Some borrowers do not want to let go of the extremely low mortgage rate they currently have.

Editor's Note: These are only

a few comments; interesting read.
<http://mwne.ws/2p5xMrz>

■ *www.dsnews.com*, March 24, 2017. "Mortgage fraud risk is up across the country, according to the CoreLogic National Mortgage Application Fraud Risk Index (FRI) for Q1 2017. The FRI is a measure of loan-application level fraud risk in the mortgage industry, based on residential mortgage loan applications processed by CoreLogic Loan Safe Fraud Manager. The index jumped 8 percent in Q1, up to 132 from 113 a year ago and 122 last quarter.

CoreLogic notes that although this is the highest level for the Index since Q3 2010, at that time post-crisis controls against mortgage application fraud were tight. The CoreLogic Mortgage Fraud Consortium grew from 50 percent to 60 percent of applications between Q4 2016 and Q1 2017." <http://bit.ly/2q838z9>

■ *Orange County Register*, May 8, 2017. "The Department of Housing and Urban Development recently released its latest income limits, which are used by government and private agencies to determine eligibility for various assistance programs. The Orange County Register's Jeff Collins looks at the new limits around California, which reveal that a family of four earning at least \$84,450 in Orange County or \$105,350 in San Francisco is considered to be low-income." <http://bit.ly/2qSs9uD>.

Editor's Note: Sure makes buying a home difficult.

■ *www.realtytrac.com*, May 4, 2017. "ATTOM Data Solutions, curator of the nation's largest multi-sourced property database, today released its Q1 2017 U.S. Home Equity & Underwater Report, which shows that as of the end of the first quarter of 2017 there were

nearly 5.5 million (5,497,771) U.S. properties seriously underwater — where the combined loan amount secured by the property was at least 25 percent higher than the property's estimated market value.

The 5.5 million seriously underwater properties at the end of Q1 2017 represented 9.7 percent of all U.S. properties with a mortgage, up from 9.6 percent in Q4 2016 but down from 12.0 percent in Q1 2016. The rate in Q1 of 2012 was 27.8%." <http://bit.ly/2qsuqR7>

■ Robert Frank, *www.cnbc.com*, May 10, 2017. "Sales of \$100 million homes hit a record last year, although a growing number are piling up unsold in 2017, according to a new report. There were 10 homes sold last year for \$100 million or more, according to a report from Christie's International Real Estate. The total value of nine-figure homes sold last year topped \$1.4 billion." <http://cnb.cx/2q5TZ7r>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, May 19, 2017. "The Census Quarterly Starts and Completions by Purpose and Design and NAHB analysis reveals that during Q1 2017 median single-family square floor area and average (mean) square footage for new single-family homes declined to 2,389 sq. ft. and 2,628 sq. ft. respectively. In *Eye on Housing*, NAHB chief economist Robert Dietz reports on new single-family home size, which did see yearly increases for both average and median size." <http://bit.ly/2qyZvRZ>

■ Mike Sorohan, *www.mba.org*, May 17, 2017. "The Pacific Northwest stands out as the nation's hottest residential real estate market, with the Seattle and Portland, Oregon, markets outperforming the country's other major metros areas, according to real estate analytics firm Clear Capital, MBA NewsLink reported May 17." <http://bit.ly/2rAQ99z>

■ Laura Kusito and Sarah Chaney, *www.wsj.com*, May 24, 2017. "Purchases of new, single-family homes, which account for a narrow slice of all U.S. home sales, decreased to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 569,000 in April, down 11.4% from March, the Commerce Department said Tuesday." <http://on.wsj.com/2rTt9zX>

■ City Lab, May 30, 2017, *www.builderonline.com*. "Much of the talk around retail's struggles has focused on losing much-needed jobs, but as CityLab's Alana Samuels reports, tax revenues are also taking a big hit. Small towns across America have already suffered from factory closings, young people leaving for cities, and housing values dropping. With retail closures piling up, these already struggling counties stand to lose a last major source of tax revenue.

Nationwide, sales taxes comprise nearly one-third of the taxes that state governments collect and about 12 percent of what local governments collect, according to Lucy Dadayan, a senior researcher at the Nelson A. Rockefeller Institute of Government, a New York-based research group." <http://bit.ly/2shlxWr>

■ Off the grid: This house doesn't need paint, shingles or electricity, *Dallas Morning News*, May 29, 2017. Submitted by Della Rowley, RMA, Geary County, Kans., appraiser.

"This Frisco, Texas house is a worry-free home," said Jimmy Tanghongs, an engineer that migrated into real estate business. It has nearly 100% masonry exterior, the metal roof is 60% lighter with an economic life of 60 years and the house will generate its own electricity. This 3,600 square foot prototype home comes at a cost of \$700,000." <http://bit.ly/2qye1qY>

■ The Urban Institute, June 6, 2017, *www.builderonline.com*. "The

Urban Institute's Housing Finance Policy Center has posted a new blog about the real estate appraisal industry, showing how a slow and inefficient appraisal system gives an advantage to cash buyers. The blog shares insights from a recent panel discussion held at the Urban Institute about how to modernize the appraisal industry." <http://bit.ly/2rSyKZT>

Editor's Note: This is an interesting read.

■ Joseph De Avila, *www.wsj.com*, June 6, 2017. "Hartford, Connecticut's capital city and hub of the state's insurance industry, is edging closer to joining a small club of American municipalities: those that have sought bankruptcy protection. Half of the city's properties are excluded from paying taxes because they are government entities, hospitals and universities. Other cities in similar situations include Boston, where just over half of the property in the city is tax exempt. In Baltimore, about 32% of the property is tax exempt, and in Philadelphia it's 27%." <http://on.wsj.com/2scB9iA>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, June 9, 2017. "A new study from Trulia and online dating site OKCupid shows that home prices in "America's gay neighborhoods have recovered at a faster rate than non-gay neighborhoods." MarketWatch staffer Quentin Fottrell reports that in 2012, buyers had to pay an average premium of almost 29%, or \$209 per square foot, to live in communities with a higher share of gay, lesbian and bisexual residents. In 2017, home buyers will need to pay a premium of nearly 37%, or \$320 per square foot, to live in these same neighborhoods." <http://bit.ly/2shsVFt>

■ Kirsten Grind, *www.wsj.com*, June 12, 2017. It appears there is a demand once again for subprime

brokers. "Brokers willing to learn the lost art of making risky mortgages are in demand again." <http://on.wsj.com/2tcH2ZW>

■ Esther Fung, *www.wsj.com*, June 12, 2017. Some of the less desirable malls may not have any stores in the future. This article discusses how the current and future empty store space will be occupied. "Some landlords plug empty spaces with churches, for-profit schools and random enterprises while they figure out a long-term plan. Others see a future in mixed-use real estate, converting malls into streetscapes with restaurants, offices and housing. And some are razing properties altogether and turning them into entertainment or industrial parks." <http://on.wsj.com/2sTLOfK>

■ Realty Trac, June 14, 2017, *www.builderonline.com*. "By using data from their Q1 2017 U.S. Home Flipping Report, ATTOM Data Solutions was able to create their home flipping pyramid that gives a break down of home flipping activity. RealtyTrac staffer Daren Blomquist reports on the pyramid which shows that 69% of the single family homes and condos flipped in Q1 2017 were by mom-and-pop investors who completed just one flip, 20% were middle-tier investors who complete two to nine flips, and 11% were top-tier flippers who flipped 10 or more homes." <http://bit.ly/2rryTEP>

■ *www.info@appraisalinstitute.org*, June 6, 2017. "Fannie Mae announced June 6 that it will ease its debt-to-income requirements, raising the ceiling from 45 percent to 50 percent starting July 29, a move that's expected to make it easier for more individuals — particularly millennials with significant student loan debt — to qualify for a mortgage." <http://bit.ly/2rt4dy5>

■ *www.marketwired.com*, June 8, 2014. Freddie "Mac (OTCQB: FMCC) today released the results of its Primary Mortgage Market Survey® (PMMS®), showing the 30-year fixed mortgage rate dropping for the fourth consecutive week and hitting its lowest level in nearly seven months." <http://mwne.ws/2s1cNlj>

■ Core Logic, June 15, 2017, *www.builderonline.com*. "According to the latest CoreLogic Loan Performance Insights Report, the share of mortgages in some form of delinquency decreased to 4.4% in March 2017 from 5.2% during the previous year. CoreLogic staffer Molly Boesel takes a look at this report which shows that the share of mortgages in early-stage delinquency fell to 1.7%, their lowest level since January 2000." <http://bit.ly/2rzLuAP>

■ *www.aia.org*, June 16, 2017. "Architecture firm billings increased for the third consecutive month in April. However, the Architecture Billings index (ABI) score of 50.9 for the month indicates that fewer firms reported billings growth this month than in March. Firms indicated that plenty of work remains in the pipeline, though, as inquiries into new projects and the value of new design contracts both increased again in April." <http://bit.ly/2swlaup>

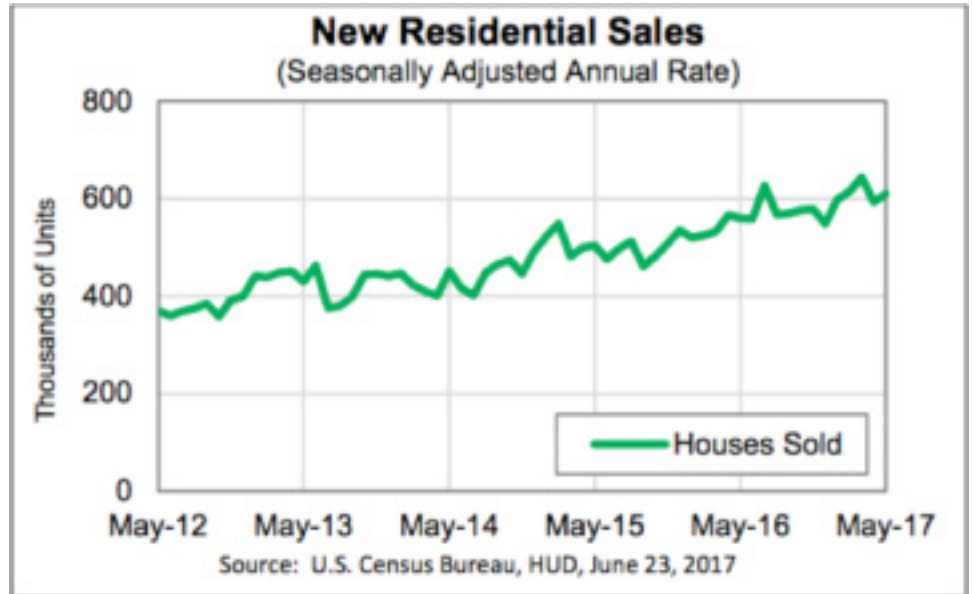
■ *Redfin*, June 16, 2017, *www.builderonline.com*. "Home sales were up in May according to Redfin's Alina Ptaszynski. The median home sale price increased 6.8% in May to \$288,000. Sales increased 7.5% compared to last year, a strong gain despite a severe shortage in the number of homes for sale. Inventory was low in May. The number of homes for sale fell 10.9%, marking 20 straight months of year-over-year declines, though the number of homes newly listed for sale in May increased 3%." <http://bit.ly/2skmeAy>

■ Smith Travel Research, June 15, 2016, www.hotelnewsnow.com. "During the week of 4-10 June, the U.S. hotel industry reported occupancy fell 0.8% to 73%, ADR rose 1.5% to \$128.37 and RevPAR increased 0.7% to \$93.73." <http://bit.ly/2rzY9J1>

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 ■ Jess Bravin, *The Wall Street Journal*, June 23, 2017. "The Supreme Court on Friday fortified environmental land-use regulations against legal challenges, frustrating property-rights activists who hoped their test case would open a host of development restrictions to constitutional attack.

The case involved a fundamental question in evaluating whether a regulation amounts to a "taking" of private property: Should courts look only at the portion of the property affected by regulation—an approach more likely to find a taking—or at the entire property, in which the value potentially lost to regulation likely would be much smaller. The answer: Regulation does not constitute a taking." <http://on.wsj.com/2s6HMz0>

■ Michael Tucker, *www.mba.org*, June 22, 2017. "STR, Hendersonville, Tenn., found 580,068 hotel rooms currently under contract in the U.S., a 13.8 percent increase from one year ago. "Under contract" includes



■ *www.builderonline.com*, June 23, 2017. "Sales of new single-family houses in May 2017 were at a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 610,000, a 2.9% increase from the revised April rate of 593,000 and 8.9% ahead of the pace of May, 2016, according to estimates released jointly by the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development Friday." <http://bit.ly/2sIYWX2>

hotels in the in-construction, final planning and planning stages, but does not include projects in the unconfirmed stage.

The U.S. currently has 191,832 hotel rooms the in-construction stage, said STR Senior Vice President for Operations Bobby Bowers. That represents a 16.4 percent increase year-over-year in the number of rooms under construction." <http://bit.ly/2sodRSO>

■ *www.builderonline.com*, June 26, 2017. "The Pending Home Sales Index decreased 0.8% to 108.5 in May from a downwardly revised 109.4 in April, the third straight month the index has declined, the National Association of Realtors reported Wednesday. The index is now 1.7% below a year ago, which marks the second straight annual decline and the most recent since November and December of last year." ❖

Interesting Buildings

By Rick Stuart, CAE, CDEI

Over the years, I have collected a very large number of photos. They are actually in a file titled "Weird Buildings," but I thought a more appropriate title would be "Interesting Buildings." If you have picture(s) that have piqued your interest, email them to me and I will add to the file and the newsletter. Rstuart17@cox.net



The Brown Palace Hotel in Denver. Submitted by Ruel Williamson.

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