



The Art, Science +  
Business of Housing

**JUNE 27-28, 2018**

San Francisco, Moscone Center

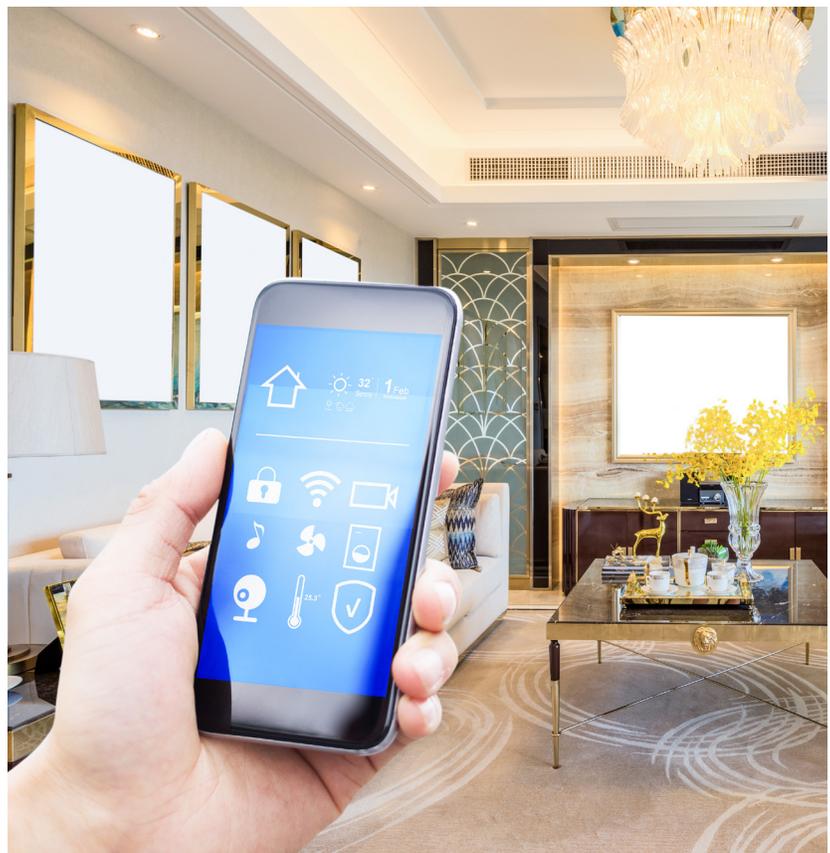


## What is the most important trend in housing and why? Answer: Green Building

Green building has been called a trend. Buzzwords like solar energy, indoor air quality, transit friendly development, and sustainability have been used increasingly over the past decade and more to describe the emerging green building marketplace. However, green building is not a trend: it's the new norm. Construction that seeks to lessen a building's footprint on the environment while providing added comfort and economic benefits to occupants are increasingly desired and expected by renters and home buyers on the West Coast. More and more local communities are requiring dense, urban, and low-carbon-footprint developments as a way to meet climate action goals or support local, regional and international climate commitments. Furthermore, large metropolitan areas, as well as entire states like California, are now requiring green building strategies as part of zoning regulations and building codes. Mainstream green is the new trend.

**There's a reason green strategies are now popular.** In the U.S., buildings account for over 12% of water use, 40% of CO2 emissions, 65% of all waste outputs, and more than 70% of electricity consumption.

While these impacts on the building sector can seem daunting, there's good news: green buildings strategies offer solutions to many of these problems by conserving resources, regenerating sites, and providing economic and societal benefits. The building sector has shown it can be part of the solution while also maintaining a competitive edge.



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## Green building strategies do not need to be expensive or flashy.

Many of the solid best practices—like conserving water through low-flow plumbing fixtures, orienting the buildings to take advantage of natural heating and cooling, and recycling large amounts of construction waste—do not add cost to construction anymore. It's this fact that led California to adopt CALGreen, the most comprehensive green building code in the nation. In CALGreen, the building code now requires a set of fundamental green construction practices for nearly every permitted project. From low-emitting paints, flooring and carpets to high efficiency HVAC systems: California's codes have leveled the playing field for building green in the Golden State. It's easier than ever to build green.

Other states are watching, too. Washington and Oregon have aggressive regional programs that reward green home building. Furthermore, both states have renewed their green building criteria through governor executive orders or through the building code. Green is now mainstream on the West Coast.

## But with green building practices going mainstream, how does one standout?

Rating systems like LEED have adapted and now reward projects that build to green codes like in California. In addition, local programs like Oregon's Earth Advantage Home Certification and Washington's Built Green Program provide pathways for leadership recognition by building on top of the local regulatory conditions. As the codes raise, leaders in the market are still finding ways to get rewarded for their exemplary performance.

In short:

Green building has become mainstream. **Are you on board?**



### Wes Sullens

Director, Codes Technical  
Development  
U.S. Green Building Council

Join Wes at PCBC 2018  
for his session

**Tuesday, June 16, 2:00pm**  
Reducing Friction for Green  
Multifamily Buildings

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