

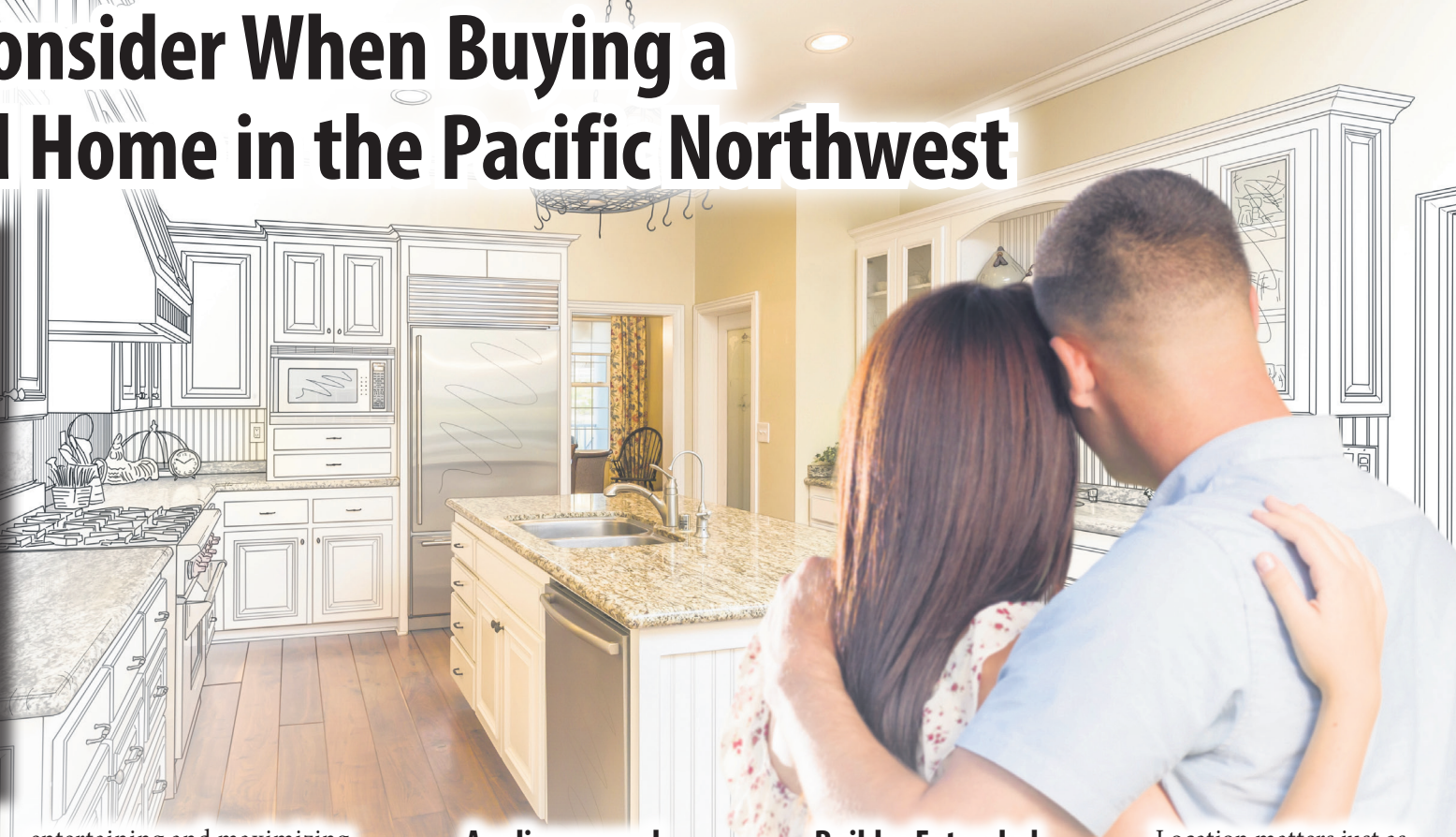
LEWIS COUNTY CHAPTER OF OLYMPIA MASTER BUILDERS



What to Consider When Buying a New-Build Home in the Pacific Northwest

Join us for the OMB Lewis County Chapter Meeting

Thinking about joining OMB—or want to get more from your membership? Join us for the OMB Lewis County Chapter Meeting on Wednesday, January 21st, at the Moose Lodge in Centralia. Connect with local professionals and learn how OMB membership can help you grow and succeed.



You're ready to buy a new home. You've secured financing and chosen the community you want to live in, but before touring model homes or signing a contract, it's important to think through what features matter most—especially in the Pacific Northwest, where climate, terrain and lifestyle play a big role in home design.

New-build homes offer many advantages, from modern layouts to energy efficiency that meets today's codes. Still, the details matter when finding the right fit for your family and the region you'll call home. Here are four key items to consider when purchasing a new-build home in the Pacific Northwest.

Floor Plan and Layout

Your floor plan shapes how you live day to day, and Northwest buyers often balance indoor comfort with outdoor connection. Open layouts remain popular for

entertaining and maximizing natural light during darker winter months, while defined spaces—such as home offices or flex rooms—are increasingly important for remote or hybrid work.

While basements are less common in some Pacific Northwest areas due to soil and groundwater conditions, daylight or walkout basements can be a valuable option where available, offering extra living space or storage. Outdoor living also ranks high, with many buyers prioritizing covered patios or decks that allow year-round use despite rain. Mudrooms, generous entryways and ample storage are especially practical for wet weather, outdoor gear and active lifestyles.

When choosing a floor plan, think not only about how you live today but how your needs may change over time—whether that means space for growing families, multigenerational living or aging in place.

Appliances and Upgradeable Features

As you tour model homes, pay close attention to what comes standard versus what can be customized. In the Pacific Northwest, energy-efficient upgrades are often top priorities due to rising energy costs and regional sustainability goals.

Many buyers choose to invest in high-efficiency appliances, heat pump systems for heating and cooling, enhanced insulation and upgraded windows to improve comfort year-round. Kitchens remain a focal point, but practical upgrades like durable flooring, moisture-resistant finishes and improved ventilation are especially valuable in the region's damp climate.

Ask builders about options for energy-efficient appliances, smart home features, flooring materials suited for wet conditions and lighting choices that brighten darker months.

Builder Extended Warranty Programs

Given the Pacific Northwest's weather patterns, understanding your builder's warranty program is critical. Most new homes include coverage for workmanship and materials for the first year, with systems like HVAC, plumbing and electrical typically covered for two years. Structural components may carry warranties of up to 10 years.

Be sure to ask how warranties address moisture management, roofing, siding and ventilation—key considerations in a rainy climate. Partnering with a reputable, local builder who understands regional building requirements and responds promptly to warranty concerns can provide long-term peace of mind.

Location matters just as much as the home itself. In the Pacific Northwest, buyers often look for access to transit options, walkable amenities and proximity to outdoor recreation such as parks, trails and waterways. Consider commute times, access to grocery stores and healthcare facilities, and the availability of emergency services.

Families may want to evaluate local schools and childcare options, while all buyers should ask about future development plans that could impact traffic, views or neighborhood character. In growing communities, understanding zoning and long-term planning can help you make a more informed decision.

Ready to find the right new home for your family in the Pacific Northwest? Visit omb.org to connect with trusted local builders and explore options that align with your lifestyle, budget and long-term goals.

Neighborhood and Location Considerations

OMB Lewis County Industry Advocacy Update

Lewis County Housing and Development: Key Meetings and Policy Activity Ahead

As local governments resume regular meeting schedules following the holiday break, several jurisdictions across Lewis County are beginning early-year discussions that may affect housing development, permitting, and construction costs in the weeks ahead.

While January agendas are still taking shape, the coming month will include multiple meetings where land use policy, permitting processes, and housing-related issues are expected to be discussed. These early conversations often set the direction for later policy decisions.

Lewis County

The Lewis County Board of Commissioners is expected to resume regular

meetings in January, with early agenda items likely to include implementation of recently adopted planning policies and discussion of work programs for 2026. While no major housing policy votes are currently scheduled, county-level actions related to land use regulations and environmental standards can have broad implications for rural development and housing feasibility.

Residents and builders are encouraged to monitor commissioner agendas as they are posted for updates related to growth management, infrastructure planning, and regulatory implementation.

Centralia

The Centralia City Council is resuming regular meetings in January. Early-year council agendas often include planning and development updates, code amendments, and staff briefings that affect residential construction and redevelopment within city limits.

While no specific housing ordinances are scheduled for immediate action, builders and property owners should watch for discussions related to permitting timelines, development standards, and infrastructure coordination.

Chehalis

The Chehalis City Council is also returning to a full meeting schedule this month. Housing-related topics in Chehalis typically surface through planning commission referrals, zoning updates, or discussions tied to economic development and infrastructure capacity.

Upcoming meetings may include informational briefings or early policy discussions rather than final decisions, making this a key period for awareness and public input.

Smaller Cities and Towns

Other Lewis County cities, including Winlock, Morton, Vader, Napavine, and Pe Ell,

are expected to resume regular council meetings throughout January and early February.

While these jurisdictions often have lighter agendas, development-related items such as zoning interpretations, subdivision approvals, and infrastructure coordination can arise with limited notice. Interested residents and builders should review posted agendas closely as meetings approach.

Port of Centralia

The Port of Centralia continues to play a role in land use and infrastructure planning tied to employment and industrial areas. While no housing-specific actions are scheduled in the immediate term, port decisions related to land disposition and infrastructure investment can influence long-term housing demand and development patterns in the region.

Looking Ahead

January and early February are typically characterized by study sessions, planning updates, and early policy discussions rather than final votes. However, these meetings often shape the policy direction that emerges later in the year.

Residents, builders, and property owners with an interest in housing availability and affordability are encouraged to stay informed, attend meetings when possible, and participate early in discussions that may affect future development across Lewis County.

Meeting agendas, dates, and times are available through individual jurisdiction websites and public meeting calendars as they are posted.

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For more information, please contact Olympia Master Builders Government Affairs Director, Jessie Simmons, at ga@omb.org or (360)754-0912.

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The BIG Home & Remodel Show Is Back—And Bigger and Better Than Ever!

Mark your calendars! The BIG Home & Remodel Show returns to Olympia on Saturday, April 18 through Sunday, April 19, 2026, at Saint Martin's University – Marcus Pavilion. This highly anticipated weekend event is a must-attend for homeowners, remodelers, builders, and anyone dreaming about improving their home or investing in their next project.

For local businesses, the BIG Home & Remodel Show is also an incredible opportunity to shine. With an average of 1,500 engaged customers attending over the weekend, vendors gain direct access to homeowners who are actively planning and ready to connect. It's a proven platform to showcase your products, services, and expertise while building brand awareness and meaningful leads.

Interested in becoming a vendor?

We'd love to have you! You do not need to be an Olympia Master Builders (OMB) member to participate, though OMB members enjoy a 20% discount on booth space—just one of the many benefits of membership.

Returning vendor registration opens January 21, 2026, with new vendor registration opening February 5, 2026. New vendors who would like to be added to the waitlist can email Jenn at membership@omb.org.

Don't miss your chance to be part of one of the region's most successful home shows—whether you're attending for inspiration or exhibiting to grow your business, the BIG Home & Remodel Show is where ideas and opportunity come together.