

California's housing affordability problems 'as bad as they've ever been in the state's history,' housing director says

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California's housing affordability challenges remain daunting and continue to increase, according to [a draft report from the state's Department of Housing and Community Development](#) released Tuesday.

The report found:

- Housing production over the last decade fell more than 100,000 new homes short of demand and continues to lag, leading to surging prices at all income levels.
- The state's homeownership rates are at their lowest since the 1940s.
- One-third of the state's renters spend more than half their income on housing costs.
- California has 12% of the nation's population, but 22% of the country's homeless population.

“What the report tries to get at is that the facts on the ground for a typical California family are really as bad as they've ever been in the state's history,” said Ben Metcalf, director of the Department of Housing and Community Development.

The report includes a range of potential solutions, including streamlining local and state land-use and environmental rules and boosting funding for low-income housing.

“If there is good news in all this, these are, in some cases, problems that we have created through local and state policies,” Metcalf said. “And because these are challenges that have been created through policies, we know we can fix them.”

The state has not passed major housing legislation in recent years, most notably [failing to reach a deal](#) on Gov. Jerry Brown's proposal to limit some local review of housing projects and spend \$400 million on low-income housing subsidies. This year has already seen a series of housing proposals, including [plans for billions in new spending](#) as well as [faster permitting](#) for cities that have low housing production.