



Fixing the Broken Housing Market in Orange County



The housing market in Orange County—like other California communities—is broken. Wages are not keeping pace with housing costs, and the variety of affordable home choices is small.

As a result, key contributors to our local economy cannot even afford to rent homes. In 2006, an Orange County resident needed an income of \$59,400 to afford a two-bedroom apartment—significantly more than firefighters, paramedics, and preschool teachers earned on average.

Homeownership is even further out of reach. Median household income in the county is \$78,300. However, a first-time buyer must earn \$171,222 to afford the median-priced home (\$599,280).

Income needed to buy the county median-priced home = \$171,222
County household median income = \$78,300

The gap between wages and the cost of homes in Orange County highlights the need for wider variety in the housing market. Today's housing market is the equivalent of a supermarket that sells filet mignon and caviar, but no hamburger or macaroni and cheese. Californians need the market to provide a full range of housing choices for people at all income levels.

One proven solution? State investment that spurs the private market to build that range of affordable homes.



ORANGE COUNTY RESIDENTS WHO BENEFIT FROM STATE INVESTMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOMES

VERY-LOW-INCOME EARNERS*

Counselors	\$39,250
Dental assistants	\$30,906
Preschool teachers	\$23,200
Paramedics	\$22,047
Home-health aides	\$20,819

*50% of median income

LOW-INCOME EARNERS**

Librarians	\$57,986
Accountants	\$56,654
Elementary school teachers	\$56,422
Firefighters	\$50,381
Mail carriers	\$48,766

**80% of median income

