



Fixing the Broken Housing Market in Santa Barbara County



The housing market in Santa Barbara 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, a Santa Barbara County resident needed an income of \$42,920 to afford a two-bedroom apartment—significantly more than dental assistants, preschool teachers, and bookkeepers earned on average.

Homeownership is even further out of reach. Median household income in the county is \$65,800. However, a first-time buyer must earn \$181,568 to afford the median-priced home (\$635,490).

Income needed to buy the county median-priced home = \$181,568
Santa Barbara County household median income = \$65,800

The gap between wages and the cost of homes in Santa Barbara 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.



SANTA BARBARA COUNTY RESIDENTS WHO BENEFIT FROM STATE INVESTMENT IN AFFORDABLE HOMES

VERY-LOW-INCOME EARNERS*

Dental assistants	\$30,887
Preschool teachers	\$29,946
Bank tellers	\$25,394
Property managers	\$24,428
Paramedics	\$23,186

*50% of median income

LOW-INCOME EARNERS**

Elementary school teachers	\$49,618
Social workers	\$44,602
Mental health counselors	\$35,098
Bookkeepers	\$33,499
Medical secretaries	\$32,119

**80% of median income

