THE FUTURE OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

A CALIFORNIA 100 ISSUE ROADMAP FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION

March 2022

California is undergoing a housing crisis of extraordinary scale and complexity. Adding to problems of unaffordable housing, Californians are struggling with displacement from gentrification, high rates of homelessness, overcrowding, long commutes from inland regions, and residential segregation by race, ethnicity, and class.

The politics of housing in the state also feels intractable at times. Cities continue to rely on exclusionary zoning tactics to thwart new supply, while developers, labor unions, NIMBYs, YIMBYs, and tenant advocates all stake out conflicting positions of what is needed to solve the crisis. The state has spent decades allowing its housing problems to worsen, and it will likely take decades of action to solve the resulting crisis.

Fortunately, there are signs of change—hints of policy reform that could put California on a housing trajectory that is more accessible, sustainable, and equitable. The state has bolstered tenant protections, dramatically increased the housing production targets that local governments need to meet, and has made it easier to build up to four residential units out of one single-family lot. Developers are also using innovative methods to reduce construction costs, and communities have organized around renter protections and have pushed for innovative solutions such as community land trusts, real estate cooperatives, and community investment funds.

FROM RESEARCH TO ACTION

What will these changes mean for current and future generations of Californians, and how can we make sure that California's future in housing and community development remains innovative, resilient, inclusive, sustainable, and equitable?

In March 2022, the California 100 Initiative released a policy and future scenarios report on housing and community development, developed jointly by the **UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Studies, cityLab at UCLA,** and the **UC Berkeley Terner Center for Housing Production.** The teams conducted extensive primary and secondary research, and spoke with a wide array of experts in the public and private sectors to examine possible scenarios and policy options for future-focused action.

"California's housing experts agree: We need a 'Yes, and' approach to housing—yes to more homes, and yes to a social equity agenda. These solutions are popular, and packaged together, they form a vision of the future—one of security, fairness, sustainability, and choice—that Californians are ready to embrace" said report authors **Shane Phillips** of the UCLA Lewis Center, **Carolina Reid** of the UC Berkeley Terner Center for Housing Innovation, and **Dana Cuff** of cityLAB UCLA. "It's a vision that is idealistic but achievable, and California deserves nothing less."

FUTURE SCENARIOS

Other key takeaways from the California 100 report include a consideration of policy options that improve housing under **four future scenarios** that center around two critical dimensions: whether or not we will see high levels of new housing production in the state, and whether Californians will primarily think of housing as a means to maximize private financial gain or as a means to advance social equity.

In a context of high housing production, the scenarios range from innovations in housing policies and home construction that improve environmental sustainability, to unchecked housing production in suburban and rural areas that accelerates the climate crisis and magnifies the destructive impacts of forest fires. In a context of low housing production, California could easily see a scenario with further retrenchment of suburban enclaves and deepening racial inequity, to the acceleration of a middle-class exodus that is ineligible for public support, and yet, cannot afford high rents or mortgage payments.

Whatever the scenario, the research commissioned by California 100 indicates that we should refrain from “doing nothing” as a default option. In order for California to perform better under these various scenarios, the state will need to research, deliberate over, and enact solutions that advance **innovation** (such as in housing construction and financing), **resilience** (such as new approaches to zoning and permitting that enable communities to bounce back faster from economic and environmental disasters), **inclusion** (such as increasing public support for homeownership), **sustainability** (by making careful and more efficient use of natural resources), and **equity** (with well-resourced policies that are designed to repair the damage from past and ongoing inequities in housing, finance, and regional planning).

Artist rendering of future scenarios in housing and community development
Source: California 100

THE CALIFORNIA 100 ROADMAP

The California 100 report on policies and future scenarios is the first step in a multi-stage process that is designed to inspire and engage Californians—from a variety of sectors and all walks of life—to build a stronger future for current and future generations. In the summer of 2022, our expert and intergenerational Commission will conduct a series of listening sessions throughout the state, to solicit feedback on the ideas generated by our research and to generate additional big and bold ideas for consideration by public and private agencies, as well as by everyday Californians. We will also be generating insights from our policy innovation projects throughout the state that cover a variety of topics, and our deep engagement on questions of science and technology as they relate to a variety of issues, including housing and community development.

In early 2023, we will take these various policy ideas and scenarios, and engage in a process of deliberative democracy featuring a representative cross-section of California residents. The goal of this deliberative exercise is to understand the conditions under which Californians from various walks of life can come to agreement on the long-term challenges facing the state and, importantly, the kind of bold and visionary solutions we need to put the state on a stronger trajectory for the next century.

California 100 will also be engaging intentionally with young Californians, who have the most to gain or lose in the coming century. Our team members will engage young people throughout the state, including in high school and college settings, and will organize a statewide youth summit that will produce a manifesto for the future of California.

Finally, in Winter and Spring 2023, our intergenerational Commission will draft a vision and strategy document for the future of California, based on briefing materials that build on insights from the various streams of work. California 100 will then launch a culminating event in early summer 2023 that serves as the formal launch of the vision and strategy document and, importantly, also brings together leaders and partners from our various streams of work and prior engagement.

Our culminating event in the summer of 2023 will:

1. Showcase the pressing need for California to prioritize long-term futures,
2. Build an ambitious yet achievable vision and strategy that are grounded in rigorous research and community engagement, and
3. Inspire others to do the same, providing tools that a variety of partners (including policymakers, government agency officials, business leaders, activists, researchers, and next-gen leaders from various sectors) can use to build their own aspirational visions and strategies for California's long-term success.

ABOUT CALIFORNIA 100

The California 100 Initiative envisions a future that is innovative, sustainable, and equitable for all. Our mission is to strengthen California's ability to collectively solve problems and shape our long-term future over the next 100 years. California 100 is organized around 15 policy domains and driven by interrelated stages of work: research, policy innovation and engagement with Californians. California 100's work is guided by an expert and intergenerational Commission. Through various projects and activities, California 100 seeks to move California towards an aspirational vision—changing policies and practices, attitudes and mindsets, to inspire a more vibrant future.

California 100 staff members compiled this roadmap document, drawing on research in two publications—a Policies and Future Scenarios Report and a Facts-Origins-Trends Report—by authors from the UCLA Lewis Center for Regional Studies, cityLab at UCLA, and the UC Berkeley Terner Center for Housing Production. The two housing-related publications are part of California 100's larger research stream of work, built in partnership with 20 research institutions across the state.

California 100 sponsored grants for data-driven and future-oriented research focused on understanding today and planning for tomorrow. This research, anchored in California 100's 15 core policy domains, forms the foundation for the initiative's subsequent work by considering how California has gotten to where it is and by exploring scenarios and policy alternatives for what California can become over the next 100 years.

The California 100 Initiative is incubated through the University of California and Stanford.

CALIFORNIA 100 RESEARCH TEAM

Henry E. Brady, PhD., Director of Research
Lindsay Maple, M.P.P., Deputy Director of Research
Ava Calanog, M.P.P., Assistant Director of Research

THE CALIFORNIA 100 EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

Allison Berke, Ph.D., Director of Advanced Technology
Henry E. Brady, Ph.D., Director or Research
Amy Lerman, Ph.D., Director of Innovation
Jesse Melgar, M.P.P., Director of Engagement
Karthick Ramakrishnan, Ph.D., Executive Director

READ MORE

To learn more about the future of housing and community development in California, visit the California 100 website at California100.org, where you will find our detailed reports on the topic, and more information about our research partners.