



Housing, Climate, and Disruptive Governance

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Executive Director

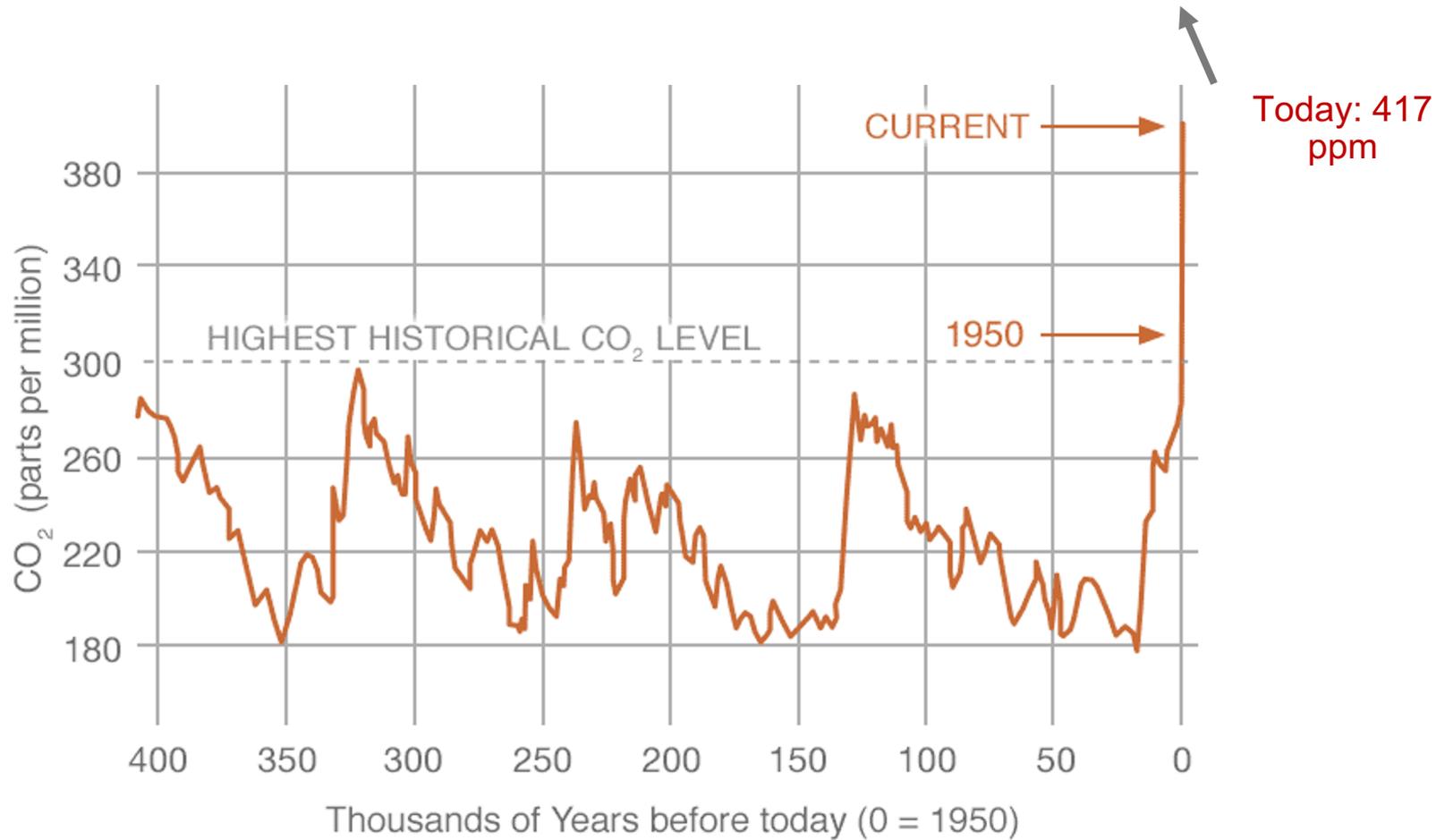
Summary

- Equitable climate stabilization is California and humanity's single most important issue
- California's interrelated challenges: too much greenhouse gas and too few homes
- Building more of the right housing in the right places can mitigate climate impacts AND reduce housing costs and inequities
- Solutions require disruptive and experimental governance

Lessons from Monterey County

- Microcosm of California's housing, climate, and equity challenges
 - 1% of California's population
 - 12 cities out of California's 482
 - Climate change impacts: fires, floods, mudslides, and sea level rise
 - Dramatic wealth gap between the coast and valley ("lettuce curtain")
- LandWatch has 20+ years experience

“The Last Time CO₂ Was This High, Humans Didn’t Exist”



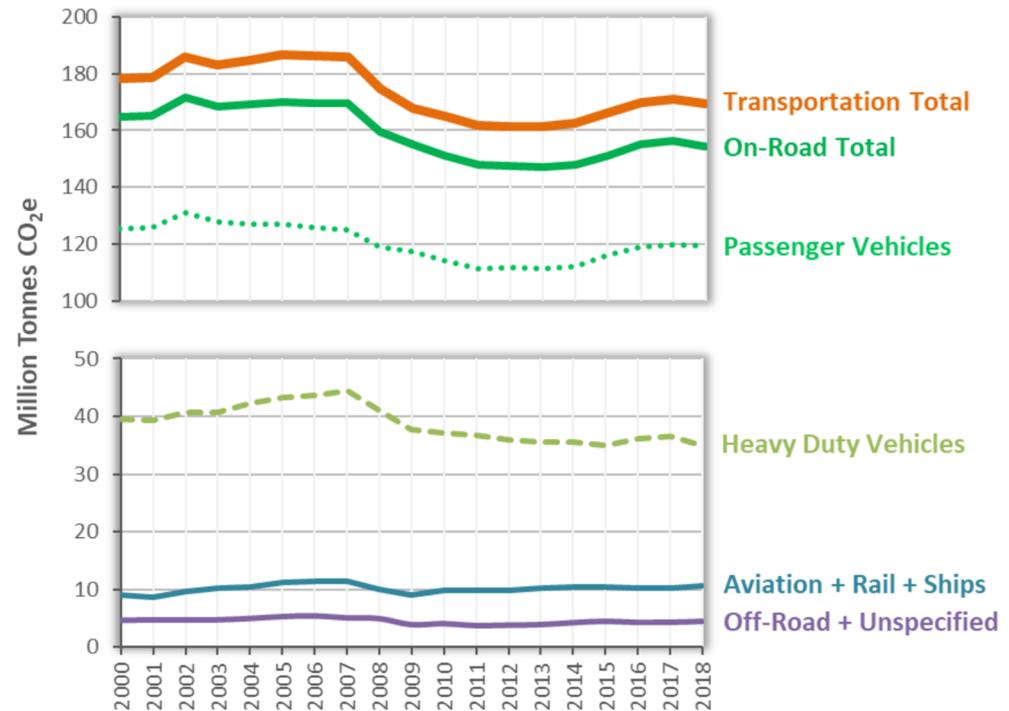
Climate Emergency Threats



- **Rapid changes in physical systems:** precipitation patterns, ocean circulation, wind systems, ice melting, ocean acidification, sea level rise, fires, groundwater, drinking water.
- **Collapse of biological systems:** losses of agricultural crops, fish populations, forests, biodiversity generally.
- **Escalating economic costs:** commodities, energy, transportation, drinking water, food, insurance, social services

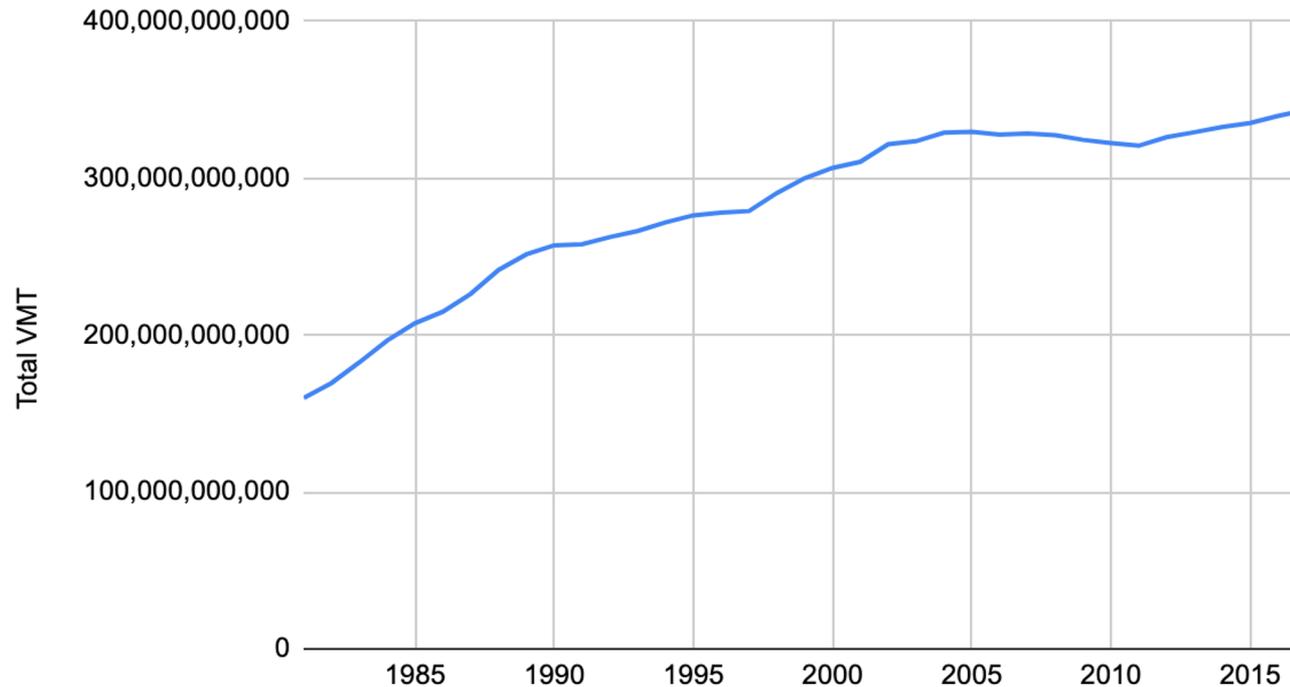
Housing Policy Is Climate Policy

- In California, about 40% of greenhouse gas emissions are from transportation, and they are increasing. In some California counties, two-thirds of emissions are from vehicles.
- The relationship between housing and transportation emissions is not complicated.
- The housing crisis is in our cities and job centers.
- California is short 3.5 million homes.



More People Driving More

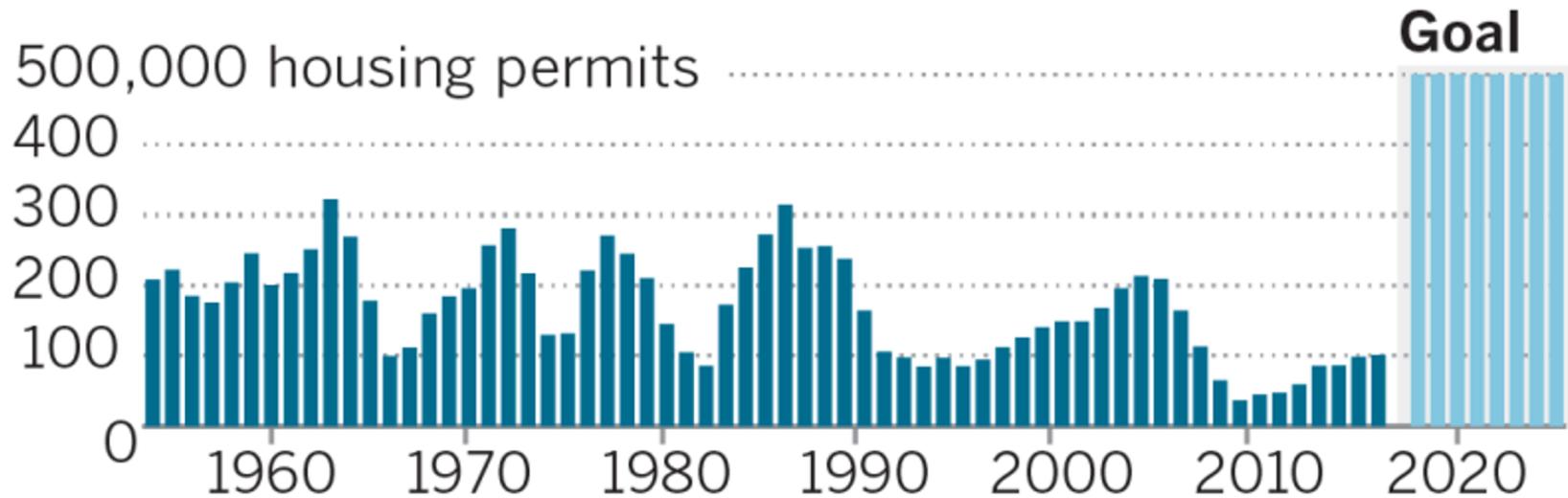
Total VMT



115% growth in total vehicle miles traveled (VMT), 1981-2017

Supply Matters – A Lot

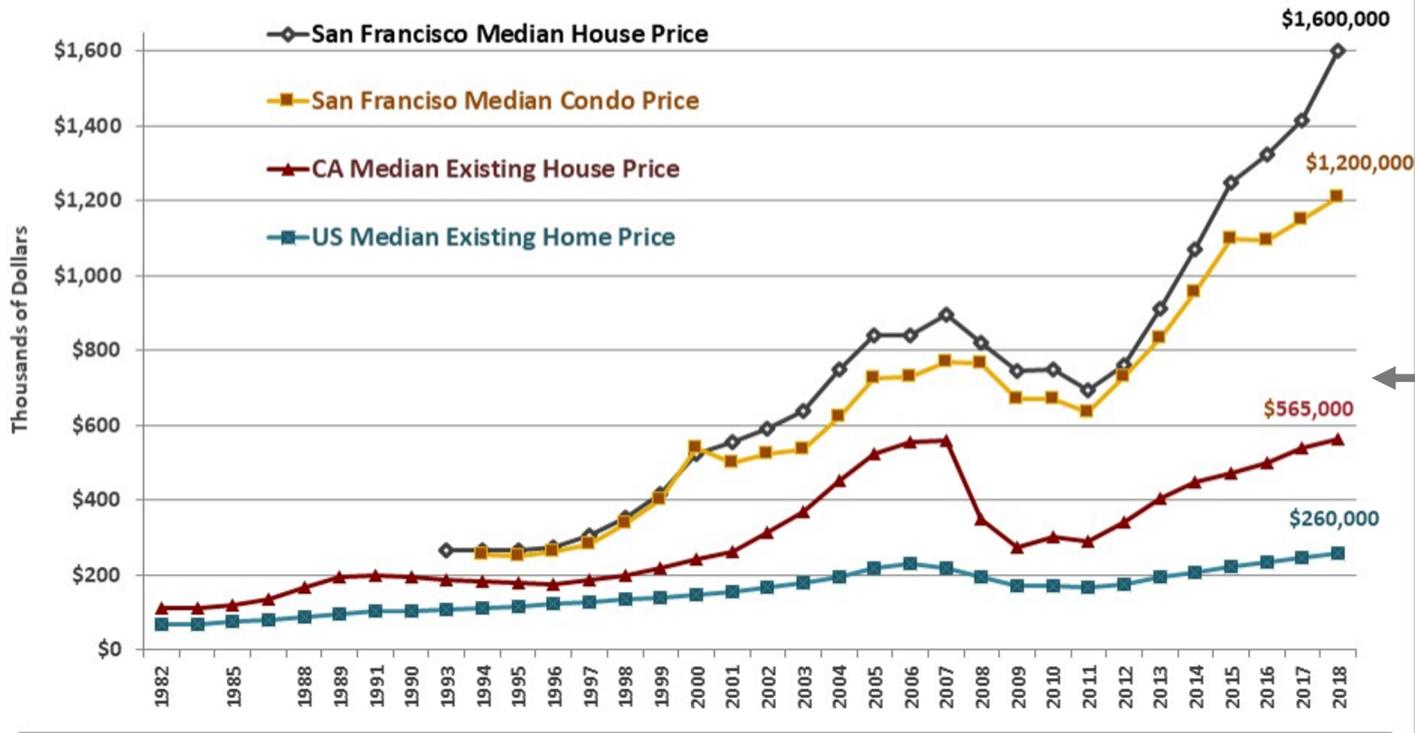
California's Housing Production Shortfall – 3.5 million homes (at least)



Source: Construction Industry Research Board @latimesgraphics

California's Affordability Crisis

Median Home Sales Prices by Year
San Francisco, CA and U.S. Trends

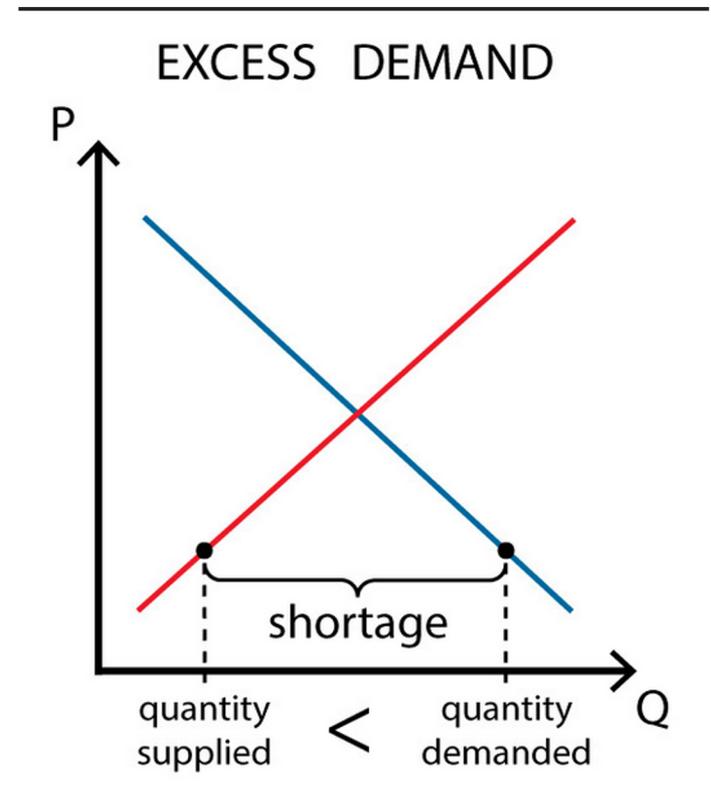


CA 2020 Median House Price
\$700,000



LAO: Increased Supply, Lower Costs, Less Displacement

- “Lack of supply drives high housing costs.
- Building new housing indirectly adds to the supply of housing at the lower end of the market.
- Housing becomes less desirable as it ages . . . but lack of new construction can slow this process.
- More supply places downward pressure on prices and rents.
- Lower costs reduce chances of displacement”



Need for Disruptive Reform

- “The root of the crisis is simple: It’s very, very hard to build homes in California.”
- “California wants to be the future, but its governing institutions are stuck in the past. Its structures of decision making too often privilege incumbents who like things the way they are over those who need them to change.”

California Is Making Liberals Squirm, NY Times, Ezra Klein, Feb. 11, 2021



Status Quo Is Unacceptable



... and dangerous

Economic Realities

- Can't address climate without building a lot more homes. Similarly, can't reduce housing prices.
- There will be more displacement with the status quo.
- Market forces will determine prices. Private market will produce vast majority of new housing.
- Government's key leverage is to lower costs it controls
 - Zoning
 - Processes
 - Fees
 - Other regulations

Actions Required



- Address climate crisis and affordability crisis simultaneously
- Right places
- Better home options
- Address equity

What the State Can Do

- **Create incentives to build what's needed where it's needed**
 - Public funding for affordable housing
 - Ministerial and by-right approvals until housing goals met
- **Re-imagine regulations**
 - Streamlining
 - State mandates for minimum higher densities and faster processes within cities

Positive Signs



- Recovery from pandemics revealing new options
- Legislative and gubernatorial commitment to action
- Federal partnership with new climate-focused administration
- Emerging local government leadership

Questions?



Contact

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LandWatch's mission is to protect Monterey County's future by addressing climate change, community health, and social inequities in housing, transportation, and land use.

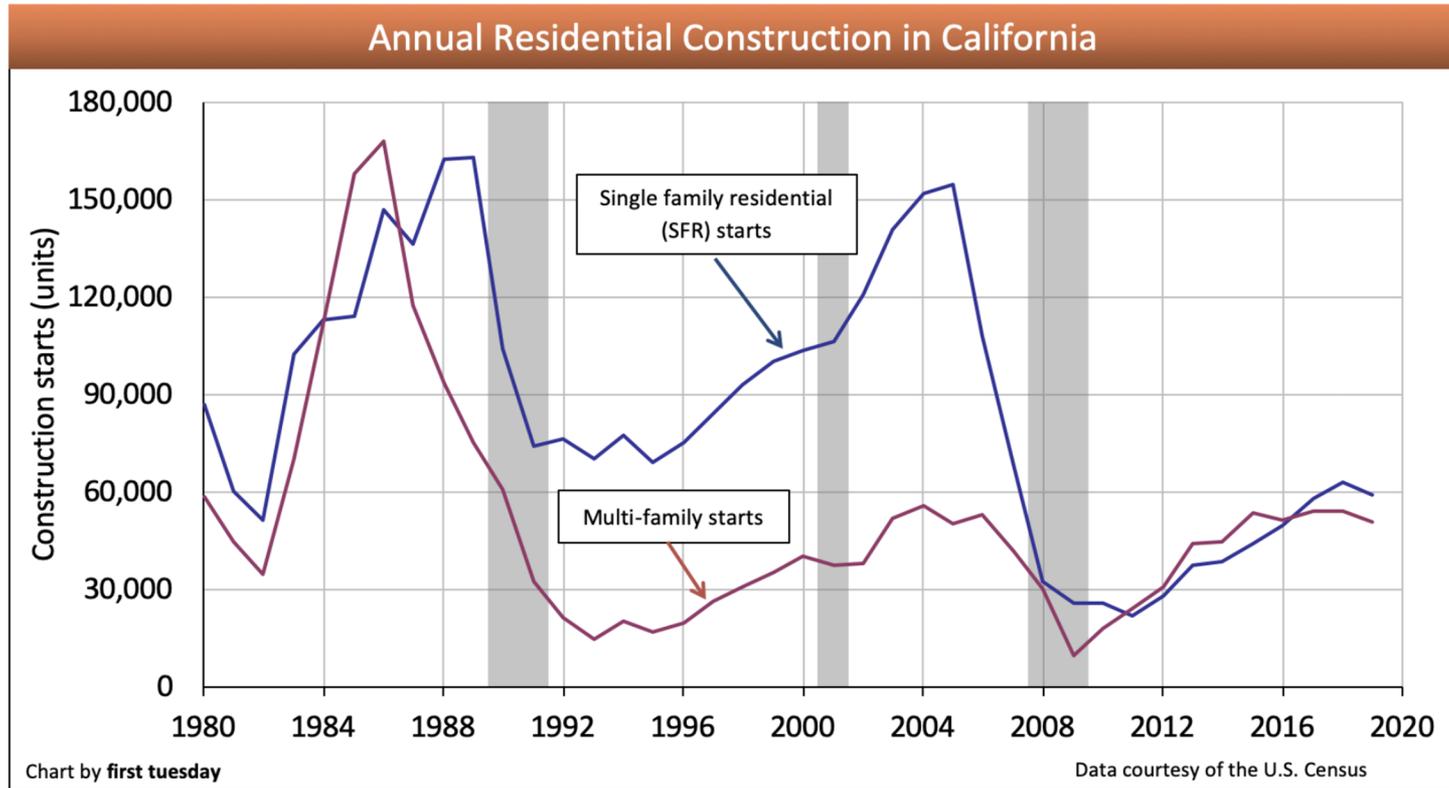
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References: California Climate and Housing References

END OF PRESENTATION

Housing Starts 20% of California's Housing Goals



California ranked 49th in the country in housing production per capita