



PRICED OUT

A Regional Report

Assemblymember Mariko Yamada

The Housing Situation in the 4th Assembly District

More and more people in California find themselves priced out of the current housing market. Foreclosures have forced more people into the rental market, pushing up rents across the state.



People who are key to the local economy cannot even afford to *rent* a home. To afford a two-bedroom apartment, a family in the district needs an average annual income of \$42,380 — significantly more than child care workers, teacher assistants, and pharmacy aides earn.

Homeownership is even further out of reach. As of October 2012, median home prices were still high in district areas like Napa (\$360,000), Saint Helena (\$850,000), and Davis (\$460,000). Even with home prices dropping, a home buyer in the district must earn, on average, more than \$64,532 a year to afford a median-priced home (\$293,312) — assuming a near-perfect credit score, sufficient savings for a down-payment and zero monthly debt (e.g. car payments, student loans, credit cards).

In Yolo County alone:

Affordable Homes Needed: 19,980
Affordable Homes Available: 17,050
Shortage: 2,930



Some of the residents in your district who would benefit from more affordable homes include:

VERY-LOW-INCOME EARNERS*

Child Care Workers	\$ 22,468
Cashiers	\$ 23,003
Veterinary Assistants	\$ 23,783
Teacher Assistants	\$ 26,059
Pharmacy Aides	\$ 26,743

*below 50% of median income for a family of four

LOW-INCOME EARNERS**

Preschool Teachers	\$ 33,857
Dental Assistants	\$ 33,915
Bookkeepers	\$ 36,118
School Bus Drivers	\$ 37,154
Paramedics and EMTs	\$ 38,377

**below 80% of median income for a family of four

Older Adults

In today's market, many adult children and their parents cannot find homes that make economic sense. Due to high housing prices, many grandparents are seeing their children and grandchildren move away to lower-cost communities, often out of state. Seniors who can no longer drive are often not able to find an affordable home in their community with easy access to medical care, daily needs, and services. And those on limited, fixed incomes are sometimes not able to find any quality housing alternatives.

When older adults have an affordable place to live, they are better able to afford medical care, prescriptions, and nutritious food. Older adults with access to family, neighbors, and friends are less isolated, which benefits their long-term physical and mental health. Grandchildren with nearby grandparents benefit from their life experience, love, and care. And families who live close to aging relatives are able to provide help that allows their relatives to remain at home, reducing public costs of nursing homes and other institutional care.

Health Care

When individuals or families move frequently, live in overcrowded or substandard conditions, or are homeless, it is much more difficult to address health problems proactively. Homeless children, veterans, persons with mental illnesses, and older adults are especially at risk. For example:

- Homeless children have twice as many ear infections, 5 times as many stomach and diarrhea problems, and 4 times more asthma as housed children.
- Homeless veterans often have Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and/or substance abuse problems, along with high rates of hepatitis C, diabetes, prostate cancer, and HIV/AIDS, all potentially life-threatening conditions without proper treatment.

From the stability of a home, it is much easier to contact health and mental-health care providers, receive appointment reminders, plan transportation, obtain medications, and maintain relationships with doctors and therapists. And when medical and dental assistants, nurses' aides, medical receptionists, and others can afford to live in the area, it also increases health-care providers' ability to recruit and retain key lower-paid staff.

Children and Education

Despite foreclosures and home price declines, finding an affordable home is an ongoing challenge for working families in the 4th District. Families with low incomes move 50 to 100% more frequently in search of a home they can afford, so children must move from school to school. Homelessness is an even greater challenge to families, and 2011 Point-in-Time estimates found 230 homeless individuals in Napa County, 468 in Yolo County, and 4,539 in Sonoma County. Increasing options for families to afford a safe and stable home for their children will result in better outcomes for children. They will benefit from:

- Less exposure to violence.
- Increased school attendance.
- Reduced stress, illness, and mental-health problems.
- Having a safe place to play, do homework, and share family time.

Local schools will also benefit from increased family stability. Teachers can better plan for staffing and resources, and both teachers and classmates will experience fewer disruptions so they can focus on student achievement.