

Appendix A: Data and Methodology

1. Background on APR Data

In recent years, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) has begun to collect and publish data about how much housing is being approved and built in every jurisdiction throughout the state. California has a longstanding Housing Element policy, which requires local jurisdictions to update their land use and zoning plans to allow enough homes to meet their projected population growth. Jurisdictions must submit Annual Progress Reports (APR) to HCD to monitor their progress. In recent years, the APR data has been made available to view as a dashboard, or to be downloaded directly from the department's website.¹

This APR data is self-reported by local jurisdictions, and many submissions contain data errors.² Some efforts have been made to clean up this data and to control for errors, as documented in the appendices for this report. Still, there are limits to how reliable this data is. For example, the APR data show that in 2024, there were 48,120 homes approved using Bonus Law. That figure may not be exactly correct if any single jurisdiction misreported their numbers. Aggregate numbers and trends over time are more reliable inferences one could make from the data, even if there are errors. For example, it is very likely to be true that in 2024, there were roughly three times as many homes approved using Bonus Law than in 2020.

Despite their limitations, the APR data still represent the best and most easily available tools to measure progress on California's efforts to reform housing policy. In 2022, HCD adopted a 10-year housing data strategy,³ and has continually updated its practices to encourage both participation and accuracy from California's local governments.⁴

Before the availability of the consolidated APR data, academics lamented that California did not have a "database tracking each municipality's affordable housing production."⁵ That made capturing an overall picture of progress nearly impossible. Researchers had fairly limited methods to evaluate the impact of housing laws. Papers

¹ Annual Progress Reports - Data Dashboard and Downloads Website, California Department of Housing and Community Development, available at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/housing-open-data-tools/apr-dashboard>, last visited January 16, 2026. The data analyzed for this report was downloaded from the HCD website on October 6, 2025.

² Shazia Manji, Ryan Finnigan, Chae Kim, Molly Miller, Blaire Frett, Petra Reyes, Streamlining Multifamily Housing Production in California: Progress Implementing SB 35, *Turner Center for Housing Innovation* (August 2023), page 9, available at <https://turnercenter.berkeley.edu/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/Turner-Center-SB-35-Paper-August-2023-Final.pdf>; Jesse O'Sullivan, *Increasing the Effectiveness of California Density Bonus Law*, 47 *Real Est. L.J.* 386, at 420-21 (2019).

³ Data Strategy, California Department of Housing and Community Development (2022), available at <https://www.hcd.ca.gov/docs/data-strategy.pdf>.

⁴ Manji et al., *supra* note 2, at 22.

⁵ John Infranca, *The New State Zoning: Land Use Preemption amid a Housing Crisis*, 60 *Boston College L. Rev.* 823 (2019), page 843, available at <https://bclawreview.bc.edu/articles/289>.

had to extrapolate estimates based on limited survey results,⁶ or rely on fairly esoteric inferences tied to census data.⁷ They had to cobble together information from many disparate sources including surveys, case studies, and individual project lists provided by helpful jurisdictions.⁸

With the APR data, researchers have a new ability to evaluate the impact of many streamlining policies for housing.

2. Prior Uses of APR Data

One of the first studies to make use of this APR data was from the Turner Center to evaluate the use of Senate Bill 35.⁹ That piece of legislation allows projects to be approved ministerially if they include a certain percentage of affordable units, and meet specific labor standards.¹⁰ The Turner Center found that between 2018 and 2021, a total of 156 projects were approved using Senate Bill 35, or had a pending application. That totaled over 18,000 potential new homes across the four-year period.¹¹

More recently, the nonprofit advocacy group YIMBY Law used APR data to publish a report evaluating the impact of a broader variety of streamlining laws.¹² The report found that they “have come up against widespread implementation challenges.”¹³

The streamlining laws YIMBY Law evaluated included:

⁶ Robert A. Johnston, Seymour I. Schwartz, Geoffrey A. Wandersforde-Smith & Michael Caplan, *Selling Zoning: Do Density Bonus Incentives for Moderate-Cost Housing Work*, 36 Wash. U.J. Urb. & Contemp. L. 45 (1989), page 52, available at <https://journals.library.wustl.edu/urbanlaw/article/8485/galley/25318/view>.

⁷ Sherry Ryan and Bridget Elaine Enderle, *Examining spatial patterns in affordable housing: the case of California density bonus implementation*, *Journal of Housing and the Built Environment*, Vol. 27, No. 4 (November 2012), pages 413-425, available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10901-011-9259-0>.

⁸ Johnston, et al. *supra* note 6, at 50. (“to address these four questions, we analyzed three primary data sets: a statewide survey of cities and counties, two case studies of innovative city programs, and a financial analysis of hypothetical projects”); Ryan & Enderle, *supra* note 7 at 416-417 (“The San Diego Housing Commission, a public agency established by the City of Council in 1979, supplied the ‘Density Bonus Master List’ for this study.”); Jenny Schuetz, Rachel Meltzer, Vicki Been, *31 Flavors of Inclusionary Zoning: Comparing Policies From San Francisco, Washington, DC, and Suburban Boston*, *Journal of the American Planning Association* (2009), page at 444, available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01944360903146806>.

⁹ Manji et al., *supra* note 2.

¹⁰ Senate Bill 35 (2017), available at https://leginfo.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB35.

¹¹ Manji et al., *supra* note 2, at 7.

¹² *California’s Streamlining Laws: Lessons from the Field*, YIMBY Law (February 2025), available at <https://www.yimbylaw.org/law-journal/californias-streamlining-laws-dlf8x>.

¹³ *Id.* at 6.

- Senate Bill 35 (2017) – By-right approvals for projects that meet certain affordability and labor provisions.¹⁴
- Senate Bill 9 (2021) – By-right duplexes and fourplexes in most single-family zoned neighborhoods.¹⁵
- Assembly Bill 2011 (2022) – Residential projects on property zoned for commercial use.¹⁶
- Senate Bill 6 (2022) – Residential projects on property zoned for commercial use.¹⁷
- Senate Bill 4 (2023) – Production of affordable homes on lands owned by religious institutions. (However, this law is not tracked in the APR data).¹⁸

3. Use of APR Data for This Report

The data in this report was derived from a copy of the APR data downloaded on October 6, 2025. All of the files used to search through that data and derive calculations are attached to this report in Appendix C.¹⁹

An augmented APR data file was created to include additional columns and rows for the purposes of calculations. As errors were discovered and verified in the APR data, they were updated in the file and logged in the Data File Directory in the electronic Appendix C.

Bonus Law is only available to projects with five or more units. As a way to exclude data errors, queries to the APR data for projects that were coded as using Bonus Law were limited to those with five or more units. All queries are documented in the Queries file, and the outputs in the file named Queries Output. The queries used for each Figure are documented on the Index of Graphics file.

As an example for a query, the data used to construct Figure 1 relied on the following filters:

- All projects with 5 or more units (≥ 5 in the “AP_Total” column).
- All projects marked as using Bonus Law (All projects with “DB,” “DB;Inc,” “DB;Inc;Other,” or “DB;Other” in the “DR_TYPE” column).
- Each year was run with the “Year” column.

¹⁴ Senate Bill 35 (2017), available at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=201720180SB35.

¹⁵ Senate Bill 9 (2021), available at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB9.

¹⁶ Assembly Bill 2011 (2022), available at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220AB2011.

¹⁷ Senate Bill 6 (2022), available at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220SB6.

¹⁸ Senate Bill 4 (2023), available at https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202320240SB4. This law is not tracked in the APR data.

¹⁹ Appendix C, available at <http://www.circulatesd.org/winwinbonus>.