

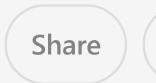
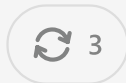
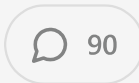
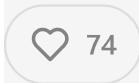
EVENING EDITION

When more housing becomes a hard sell

The U.S. agrees it needs more homes, but fights over where and how reveal deeper conflicts about growth and change.



HALINA BENNET
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Density reforms can win in city hall, but they can be a harder sell at the ballot box.
(Photo via [Getty Images](#))

The White House now estimates that the United States is short roughly 10 million homes due to a long slowdown in homebuilding after 2008 and continued populatio

and income growth. Prices have risen 82 percent since 2000, far outpacing income gains, [the Associated Press reports](#).

The Trump administration's current approach is at odds with itself. It leans heavily deregulation, arguing that cutting what it calls a "bureaucrat tax" on construction could unlock millions of new homes. At the same time, though, Trump has said he wants home values to rise, not fall, which complicates any affordability agenda built on increasing supply.

Meanwhile, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced on Friday that it is distributing more than [\\$1.1 billion](#) in Indian Housing Block Grant funding to nearly 600 tribal communities, marking the 30th anniversary of the Native American Housing Assistance and Self-Determination Act. The formula grants can be used for housing construction, services, and rehabilitation, as well as crime prevention and safety improvements.

Over the past three decades, the block grant program has supported the development or preservation of more than 160,000 homes in tribal communities, according to HUD, though housing conditions across Indian Country remain among the worst in the country by most measures. The size of the investment this week won't close that gap, but it is one of the more substantive funding announcements HUD has made recently.

While the administration attempts to navigate this deficit, here is the state of housing across the country:

Sun Belt markets cool while the Rust Belt heats up

A new analysis from the [American Enterprise Institute Housing Center](#), covered by Fortune this week, documents a striking "reversion to the mean" in U.S. home prices. Nationwide, prices rose just 1.1 percent in the year through February — the slowest appreciation rate A.E.I. has observed since it began tracking this data in 2012. A.E.I. is projecting that through the first weeks of April, the trend will fall into negative territory.

Among the lowest performers over the past year are Cape Coral, Fla., down nearly 1 percent; North Port, Fla.; Memphis, Tenn.; Tucson, Ariz.; and Palm Bay, Fla. Leading the pack in the other direction are Kansas City, Mo., at 8.6 percent, followed by cities across the Rust Belt. All told, 28 of the country's 53 largest metros saw price decreases through February, including essentially all markets in Florida, California, and Texas. Conversely, price growth was positive across the Rust Belt.

The dynamic at play is a result of Sun Belt markets overshooting during the pandemic. Supply has caught up, and buyers who face 6.5 percent mortgage rates simply cannot support the prices that prevailed at sub-3 percent rates. Rust Belt cities, which never got overheated, are now benefiting from being relatively cheap.

Density reforms are foiled in Colorado

Last week, housing plans took a hit in Lakewood, Colo., where voters in a special election decisively [repealed](#) the city's recently adopted [zoning changes](#) that would have allowed duplexes, triplexes, and other multi-unit buildings across suburban neighborhoods. The repeal won with roughly 65 percent of the vote.

That result is a reminder that YIMBY-style reforms, even when passed by elected officials, can face a different reception when taken directly to voters, especially in places where homeowners perceive density as a threat to neighborhood character. Lakewood sits just west of Denver and is one of the metro's larger suburbs. Colorado legislature has been pushing for housing reform for several sessions now.

Virginia gets a manufactured housing law

Governor Abigail Spanberger has signed [legislation](#) making it substantially easier to site manufactured homes across Virginia. Previously, factory-built homes were largely restricted to agricultural zones unless individual localities opted in to broader allowances (which most had not). The new law, which passed the General Assembly with near-unanimous bipartisan support, will expand where manufactured homes can be placed and goes into effect this summer.

Advocates for the bill were adamantly pushing back against the trailer-park stigma [WMRA reports](#). “Today, the technology is phenomenal,” said the bill’s House sponsor Delegate Michelle Maldonado. Virginia built [about 1,550](#) manufactured homes last year, putting it 23rd nationally. The industry’s state association praised the change for removing barriers that restricted building for decades. Manufactured homes typically run meaningfully cheaper than site-built housing, and the bill represents a tool for expanding the housing supply without requiring fights about rezoning.

Corporate conversions in Cleveland

Cleveland, Ohio, has become a national leader in converting office buildings and department stores into apartments, with roughly 30 such projects since 2013, [according to the Wall Street Journal](#). As a result, the downtown population is up 12 percent since 2019 while rents are still below the national average. Adaptive-reuse units are often cheaper than new construction — about \$1,083 for a studio versus \$1,210 in new builds. These units open up housing possibilities, especially for new renters like Gen Z, empty nesters, and “reverse commuters” such as professionals who work outside downtown but prefer living in the heart of the city.

YIMBY, Indiana

Indiana’s new housing bill, which Governor Mike Braun signed Monday, targets local zoning and regulatory barriers, pushing cities to allow smaller lots, reduce parking mandates, and streamline approvals, while also capping or limiting certain fees. The usual “abundance” [debates are at play](#), but the law marks a positive step in the direction of nationwide supply-side reforms.

A California law boosts housing without a fight

A new report out of San Diego highlights the success of California’s density bonus law. The policy allows developers to build more units than zoning would otherwise permit if they include affordable housing, and [Circulate Planning & Policy](#) reports that the law is now responsible for a large share of new approvals.

The targeted incentive is layered onto the existing system that aligns developer economics with public goals, rather than a preemption of local zoning or an overhaul of the status quo. Between 2021 and 2024, the law was used to approve more than 140,000 homes, and in 2024 it accounted for nearly half of units in multifamily projects according to Circulate.



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City Of Trees City Of Trees Apr 15

Liked by Ben Krauss

I wanted to save this for Housing Wednesday that Matt retweeted yesterday with another comment how the UK is so cooked, and how remarkable it is that it's the LibDems of all parties in this case

https://x.com/hoffman_noa/status/2043996051707686957

"Ed Davey announces new Lib Dem locals policy that all new developments must come with a GP surgery - he says no new doctors = no new developments

Davey says funding guarantees for GPs must be in place before any residents move in to new bu

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Neeraj Krishnan Neeraj Krishnan Apr 15

'She said Lakewood is a "great little neighborhood and we want to keep it that way — family orie

<https://coloradosun.com/2026/04/08/lakewood-housing-voters-strike-down-pro-density-zoning>

As an apartment dweller I agree. We are family disoriented degenerates over here.

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