



Legalized.

2021 IMPACT REPORT





# A letter from Brian

**BRIAN HANLON**  
**CEO AND CO-FOUNDER**  
**CALIFORNIA YIMBY**



## 2021 was a hell of a year for California YIMBY.

Legislation we sponsored and championed will reduce fees for homebuilding, streamline 'missing middle' upzonings, remove technical prohibitions on otherwise zoning-compliant housing proposals, and end a century of exclusionary single-family home zoning by legalizing duplexes and lot-splits throughout California. We also partnered with the Governor to develop a new office that will provide technical assistance to cities and enforce state housing law.

In other words, our legislation will accelerate homebuilding and help make California a more affordable place to live, work, and raise a family.

## Why was 2021 so different?

California YIMBY implemented a new legislative strategy: sponsor many smaller bills, which in total, represent massive policy change. Prior investments in coalition and relationship-building paid off, as did our methodical media and legislative campaigns. We also learned from our experiences and improved at delivering legislative wins.

## We're just getting started.

While our victories are fast by the plodding standards of state policymaking, they aren't coming fast enough to staunch the continued out-migration of Californians for TX, NV, and AZ. The transitory, pandemic-induced rent reductions in places like San Francisco aren't sufficient to give people starting out, starting again, or struggling to remain in their community housing they can afford.

California YIMBY remains committed to transforming the built environment of our state to make it more inclusive, sustainable, vibrant, and prosperous for everyone. Stay tuned for our ambitious 2022 legislative agenda. In the meantime, we have a lot to celebrate!

*Brian Hanlon*



# 2021: Incremental Victories → Big Impact

We dropped the high-risk / high-reward proposition of one major bill in favor of sponsoring many housing bills, which combined, yield massive change.

**WE PASSED 5 OF OUR 6 TARGET BILLS THROUGH THE LEGISLATURE,  
AND THE GOVERNOR SIGNED 4 OF OUR 6 TARGET BILLS.**

*"California YIMBY's policy expertise and statewide organizing has been a game-changer for housing affordability in the Golden State. Ending California's housing shortage and affordability crisis is a monumental effort, and we need all hands on deck -- we're lucky to have California YIMBY leading the charge."*

**SENATOR SCOTT WIENER**



**LEGISLATIVE:** Passed 5 bills, including SB 9, which abolished single-family home zoning in California

**EXECUTIVE:** Created the Housing Accountability Unit within the state government to hold cities accountable to state housing law

**COALITIONS:** Launched the Alliance for Housing and Climate Solutions, expanded our network of grassroots racial and economic justice partners, and deepened our collaboration with YIMBY groups and lobbying shops in Sacramento

**MEDIA:** Earned massive support from local, state, and national press for our legislative agenda, often quoting California YIMBY

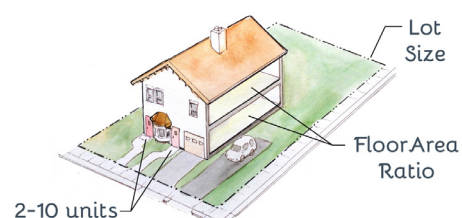
**SB9** ✓ SIGNED



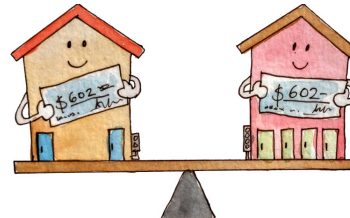
**SB10** ✓ SIGNED



**SB478** ✓ SIGNED



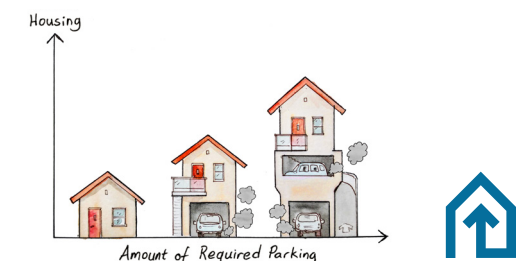
**AB602** ✓ SIGNED



**SB477** ! PASSED, VETOED



**AB 1401** ✗ REINTRODUCE 2022



# 12 Bills → 2.2M+ Homes\*

**SB 167**  
*Sen. Skinner*

**AB 2923**  
*Asm. Chiu*

**AB 68**  
*Asm. Ting*

**AB 881**  
*Asm. Bloom*

**SB 330**  
*Sen. Skinner*

**AB 725**  
*Asm. Wicks*

**AB 1851**  
*Asm. Wicks*

**AB 3182**  
*Asm. Ting*

**AB 602**  
*Asm. Grayson*

**SB 9**  
*Sen. Atkins*

**SB 10**  
*Sen. Wiener*

**SB 487**  
*Sen. Wiener*

**Housing  
Accountability Unit**  
*Gov. Newsom*

**2017**



**2018**



**2019**



**2020**



**2021**

Founding  
of California  
YIMBY

**FOR 2021 BILL DETAILS, READ ON.**

[For 2017-2020 bill details, please see our 3-Year Report ↗](#)

\*According to a [UCLA study](#), recent ADU laws will permit the construction of 1.5M new ADUs, given current costs and rent.

\*A [UC Berkeley](#) study estimates that SB 9 would yield about 700,000 new homes.





# SB 9

## Plex on Plexes for 700K New Homes

SB 9 will allow homeowners to split their property into two lots and build two homes on each lot. If a homeowner does not split their lot, they may build a 4-plex by combining SB 9 with AB 68, the ADU law we sponsored in 2019.

This hard-fought bill upends a century of discriminatory single-family home zoning, and like early ADU legislation, provides a legal platform to expand lot-splits and 4-plexes in the future.



*"SB 9 and similar legislative efforts are crucial to ensuring families of color can afford to rent or buy a home in a variety of neighborhoods. CA YIMBY's advocacy is essential to ensuring California is for everyone, now and in the future!"*

**ADAM BRIONES**

CEO AT CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY BUILDERS

**The New York Times**

### ***After Years of Failure, California Lawmakers Pave the Way for More Housing***

To ease an affordability crisis, the Legislature voted to open suburbs to development, allowing two-units on lots long reserved for single-family homes.



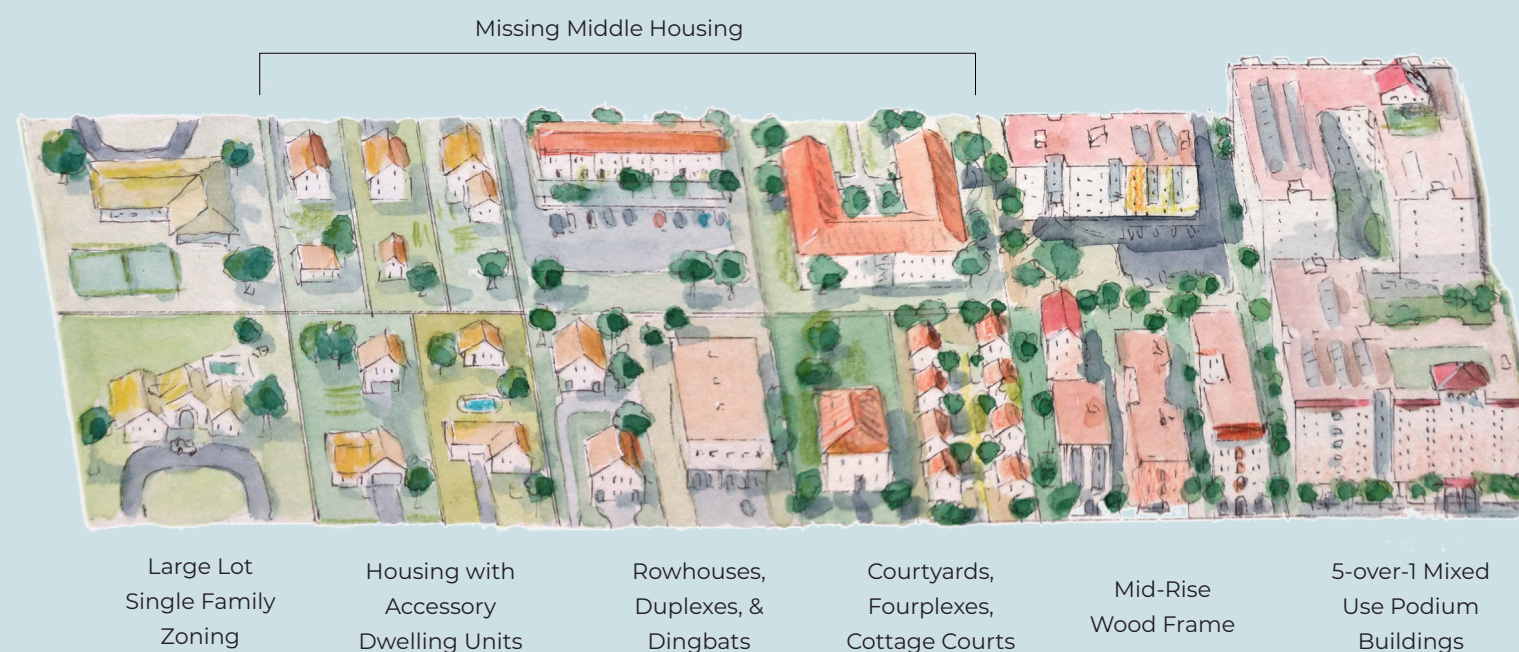


# SB 10 & SB 478

## “Missing Middle” Victories

Missing-middle housing is relatively cheap to build, can be built at scale by many homebuilders, and fits into existing neighborhoods.

We partnered with Sen. Wiener to legalize and accelerate the production of these missing-middle homes.



*"In every city, there is a determined few who will sink to any low to block multifamily homes—even weaponizing environmental laws. SB 10 restores a bit of balance and empowers me to do my part to ease the housing and climate crises by legalizing homes near jobs without years of delay."*

**ALEX FISCH**

MAYOR OF CULVER CITY



**SB 10 WILL ALLOW CITIES TO QUICKLY LEGALIZE BUILDINGS WITH 3 - 10 HOMES IN NON-SPRAWL AREAS.**

**SB 478 WILL PREVENT CITIES FROM USING TECHNICALITIES LIKE FLOOR-AREA RATIOS TO BLOCK THESE HOMES FROM BEING BUILT IN MULTI-FAMILY ZONED AREAS.**





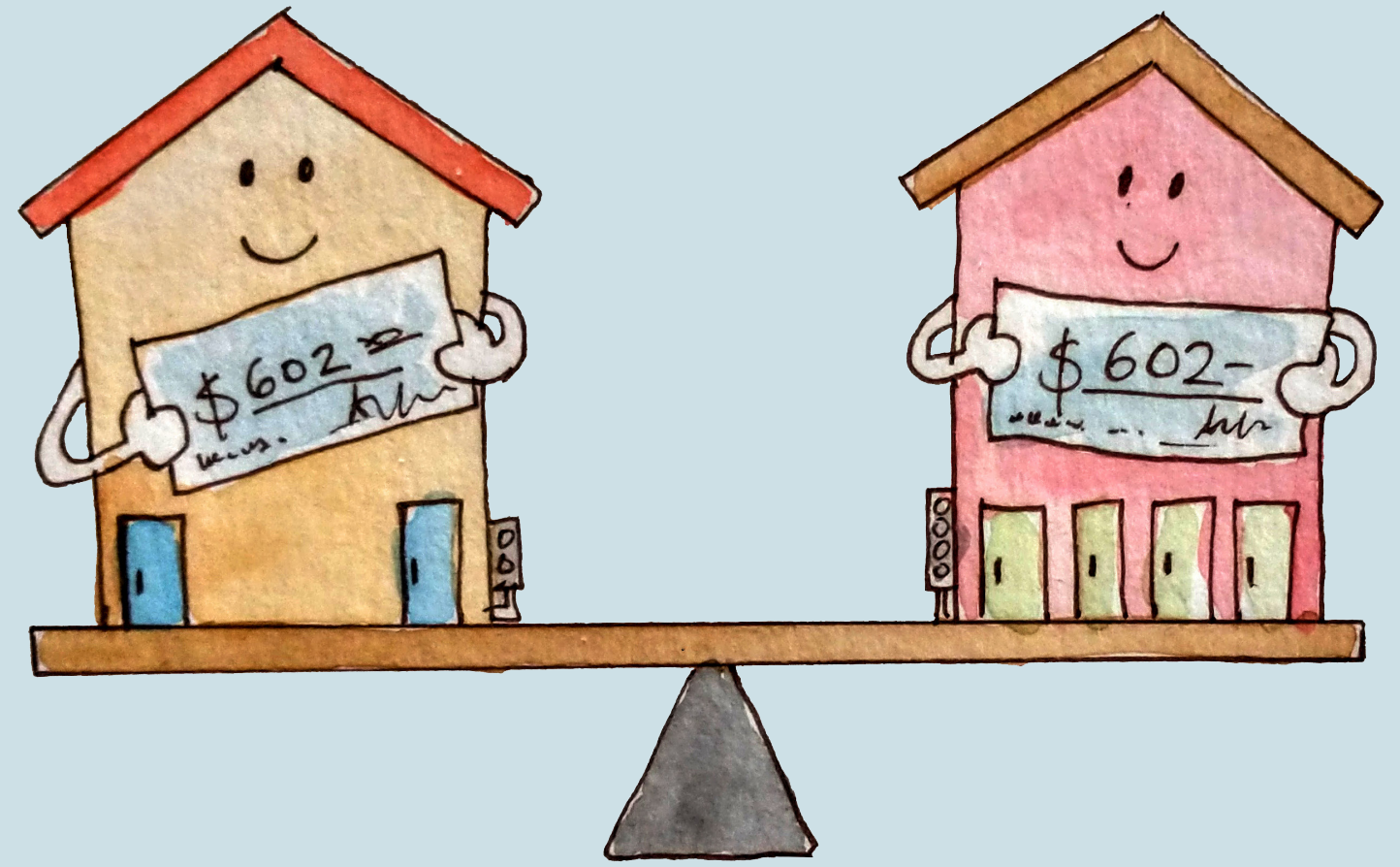
# AB 602

## Reduce Fees for Homebuilding

*"Impact Fees are a significant cost impediment to building affordable housing. AB 602 will help level the playing field resulting in lower development costs to house more low- and moderate-income Californians."*

**MEEA KANG**

DIRECTOR, COUNCIL OF INFILL BUILDERS



Housing is scarce and expensive partly because of the ridiculously high fees local governments charge homebuilders.

AB 602 will require housing fees to be proportional to the size of a new home, so that smaller homes pay smaller fees.

This bill also establishes important fee transparency requirements for local governments, and permits the public to challenge the often bogus studies used to justify high fees for homebuilding.





# California gets serious about upholding housing law: Housing Accountability Unit

The Housing Accountability Unit (HAU) is a new training and enforcement division within the state housing agency that we pitched to the Governor's Office. The HAU will provide technical assistance to local governments to help them comply with state housing law. When cities violate state housing law, the HAU will develop legal cases for referral to the Attorney General.

*"California YIMBY helped us develop and secure passage of the new Housing Accountability Unit, which is key to the Governor's housing policy implementation efforts."*

**JASON ELLIOTT**

SENIOR COUNSELOR TO  
GOVERNOR GAVIN NEWSOM



*Governor Newsom Signs Legislation to Increase Affordable Housing Supply and Strengthen Accountability, September 28, 2021. ➤*





# Amplifying and Activating the YIMBY Movement for State Legislation

As the YIMBY movement leader for state policymaking, California YIMBY coordinates policy development, political strategy, and grassroots activation for YIMBYs across the state.

## AMPLIFYING YIMBY VOICES IN SACRAMENTO

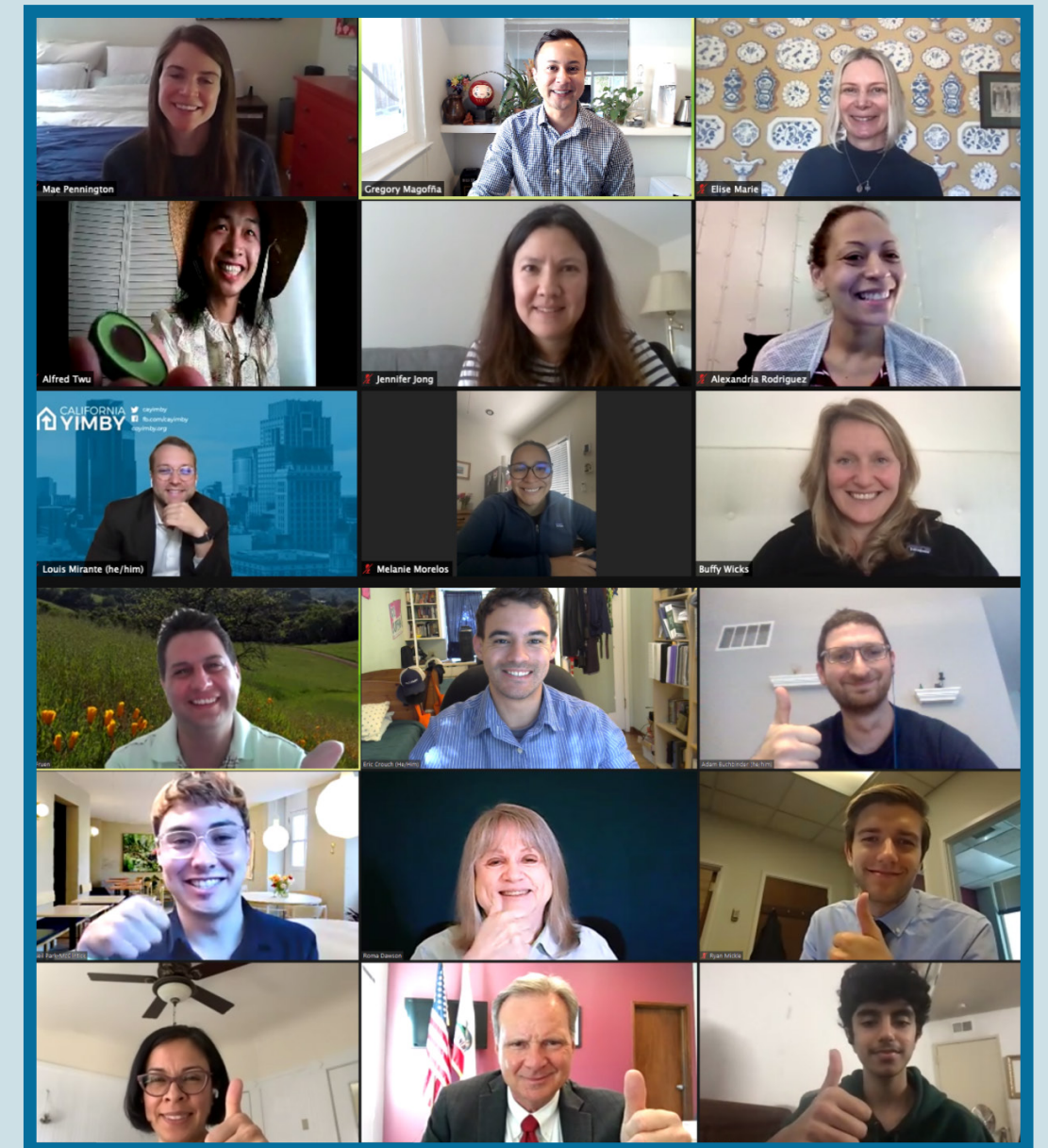
**Lobby Week** - we gather hundreds of YIMBYs from all over California and prepare them to make hard asks of their representative to pass housing legislation.

**Elevate Local YIMBY Activism** - we provide guidance on policy and insider information to set our partners up for success in the Capitol, author op-eds, and schedule in-district office visits with their legislators.

## RAPID RESPONSE TEAM

We marshal YIMBYs across the state to call in to legislative committee hearings to express support for housing bills.

We coordinate closely with legislators and our lobbying partners to target key committee hearings, especially when NIMBY opposition is expected to turn out in force.



*YIMBYs meet with Senator Dave Cortese and Assemblymember Buffy Wicks.*





# Building a Strong and Diverse Movement

## CALIFORNIA YIMBY CONVENES SEVERAL COALITIONS AND NETWORKS TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE PRO-HOUSING POLICY

**Home Building Alliance (HBA):** Business groups, affordable housers, policy shops, and other influential organizations in Sacramento lobby together to move votes.

**Housing Working Group:** Racial and economic justice, transit advocacy, and local YIMBY groups work together to advance racial equity and educate elected officials.

**Alliance for Housing & Climate Solutions:** Environmental conservation and pro-housing groups collaborate to accelerate infill homebuilding while limiting sprawl development in sensitive areas.

**Local Elected Official Working Group:** Local elected officials share best practices for housing policy and politics, provide feedback on state legislation, and engage their legislators to support our bills.

*"It's mission critical for us to collect the input of diverse stakeholders and uplift the needs of our most vulnerable neighbors to ensure our policy solutions benefit all Californians."*

**KONSTANTIN HATCHER**

ORGANIZING DIRECTOR



*Legislators with their signed housing bills in September, 2021. ➤*





# Our Media Narrative is Winning

**CALIFORNIA YIMBY CONTINUES TO LEAD THE MEDIA NARRATIVE ON PRO-HOUSING REFORMS, IN CALIFORNIA AND NATIONALLY.**

The  
Economist

Build, baby, build

California ends single-family zoning

**Vox**

**America's racist housing rules  
really can be fixed**

The New York Times

**Can America Really Drive Its Way  
Out of Climate Change?**

Los Angeles Times

California enacts two laws to slice through local  
zoning rules

## IN 2021 WE:

- Were mentioned/quoted in nearly 500 original articles and over 1,000 syndicated articles in local, state, and national press
- Secured strong editorial board support and op-ed placements in SF Chronicle, Sacramento Bee, New York Times, LA Times, OC Register, and San Bernardino Sun.

*"What's most encouraging to me is a broader change you can sense in the politics of this issue. At every level of power in California, the state's political actors have realized they need to find ways to build. Inaction is no longer a viable option. Even the politicians who oppose development have to pretend to favor it.."*

**EZRA KLEIN**

NEW YORK TIMES OPINION COLUMNIST





# Educating Californians on Key Issues

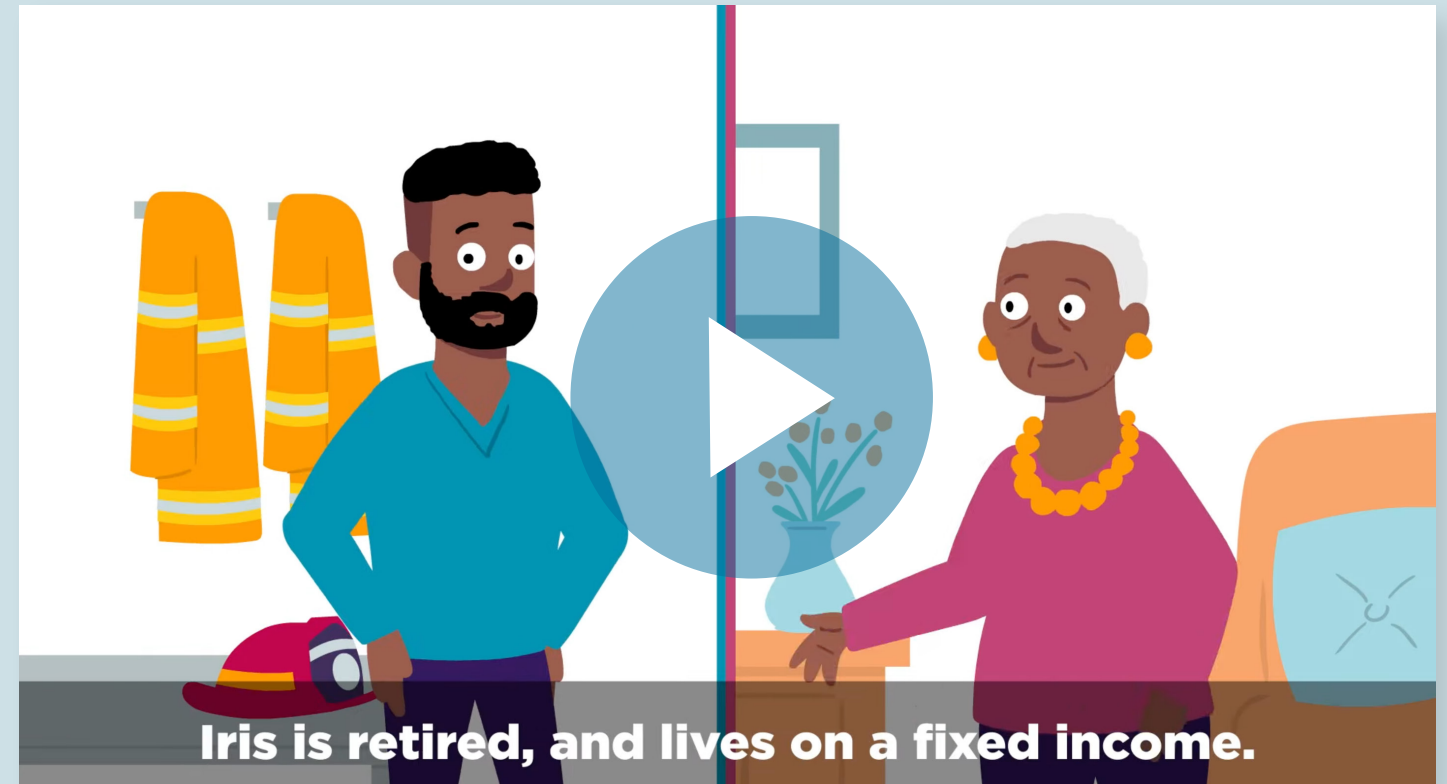
California YIMBY's communications and digital teams help shape the discussion of housing issues among grassroots activists, policy makers, and legislative staff, with accessible, educational content designed to inform and activate.

For example, our educational and outreach programs have elevated a wonky, technical issue -- parking reform -- to top-of-mind among key target audiences.

In 2021, we expanded into educational videos to help non-technical audiences understand the connection between housing policy, affordable home ownership, and climate change.

**CITYLAB**

**Cities Need Housing. Parking Requirements Make it Harder.**



**LET'S BUILD AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING FOR EVERYONE.**

[PLAY VIDEO ↗](#)





Help us legalize more homes!

