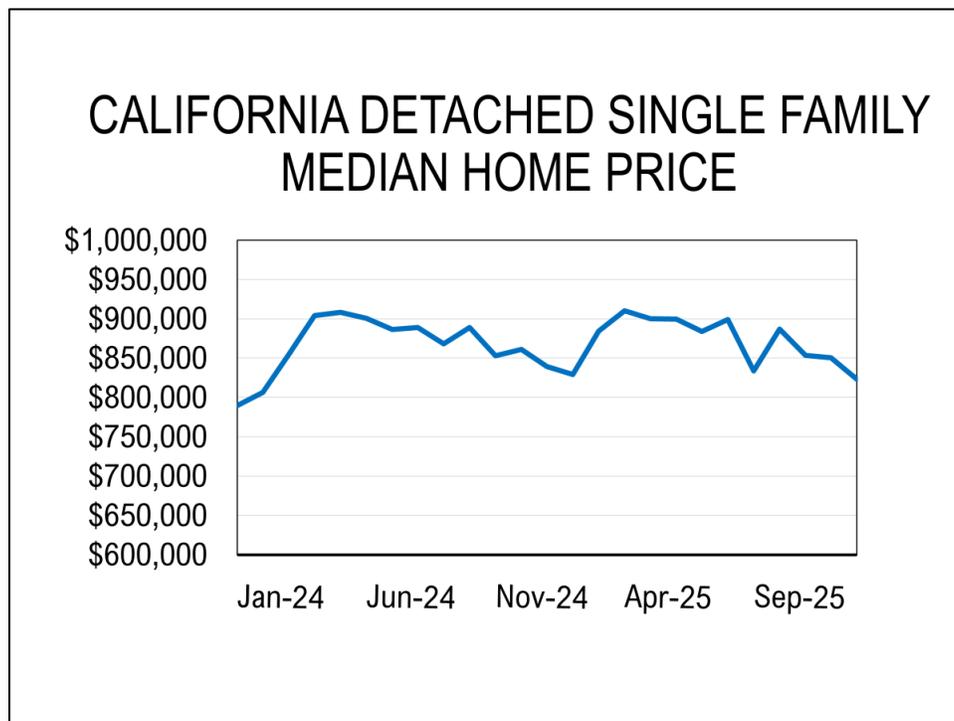


Current Economic News

California Home Prices Hit Lowest Level Since February 2024

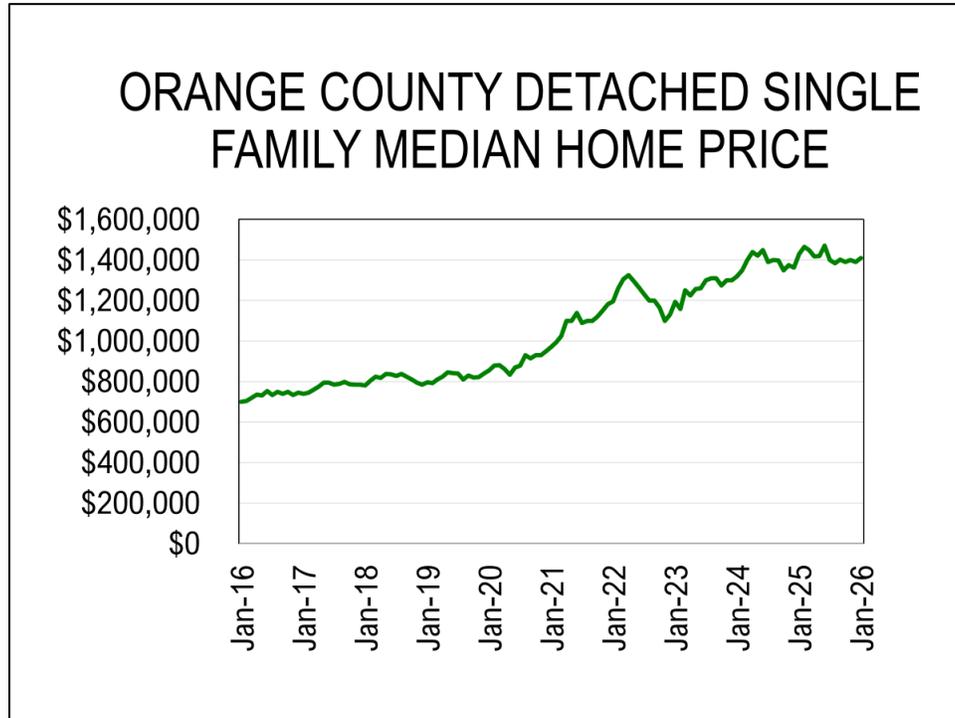
February 19, 2026, by Cloe Hughes

Yesterday, the California Association of Realtors released their [January Home Sales and Price Report](#). The median single-family home price in California was \$823,180 in January – a 3.2% decrease from \$850,680 in December 2025 and a 1.9% decrease from \$839,130 in January 2025. This marks the lowest median home price since February 2024.



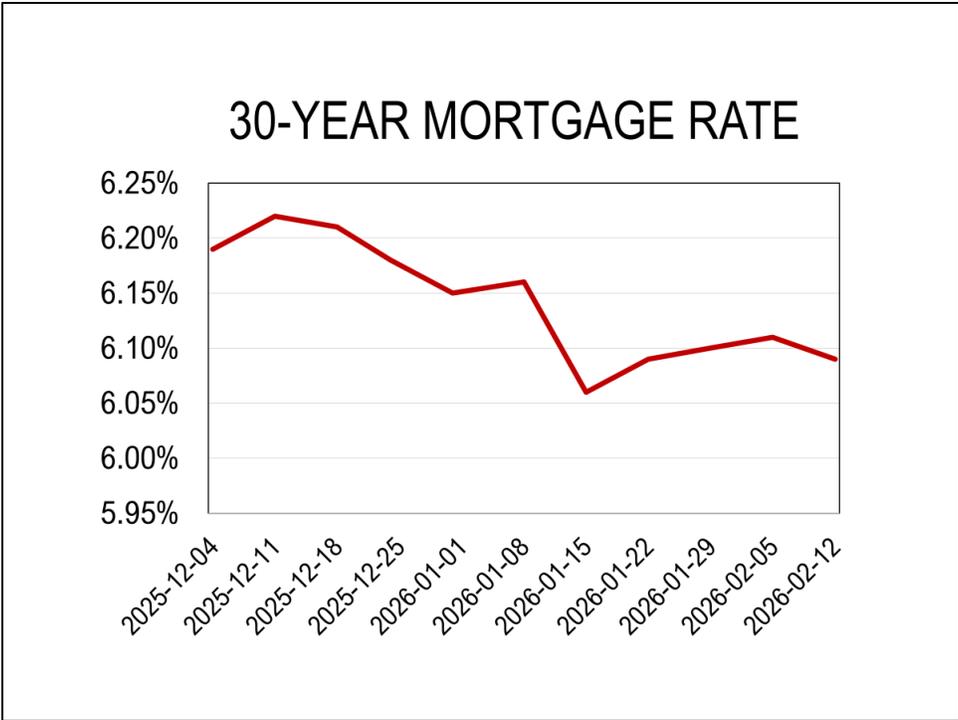
The report also notes a decrease in existing detached single-family home sales, down 10.8% from December 2025 and 1.3% from January 2025. This continues a 40-month streak of seasonally adjusted annualized home sales remaining below 300,000 units. With both prices and sales lower than the previous year, California's housing market was off to a slow start this January, likely due to still high mortgage rates amidst economic uncertainty.

On the local level, the median price for existing single-family detached homes in Orange County is \$1,410,000, a 1.4% decrease from \$1,430,000 in January 2025. However, the price of single-family homes in OC is marked by an overall upward trend, increasing by 101.5% from January 2016 when median single family home price was just \$699,900.



The A. Gary Anderson Center for Economic Research, which maintains its own housing affordability index, forecasted in December that Orange County's index would increase from 46.9 in the third quarter of 2025 to 49.9 by the end of the first quarter of 2026. While this is a slight improvement, an index of 49.9 means that median family income would be only 49.9% of what is required to qualify to purchase a median-priced home. By comparison, the Anderson Center forecasted an index of 118.8 nationally and 66.7 statewide.

While both Orange County and California are relatively low in affordability, pending statewide home sales increased 34.6% from December, which CAR attributes to the sharp drop in mortgage rates in mid-January.



CAR economists are expecting an increase in the housing supply in the coming months. They are hopeful that this higher housing supply, along with lower mortgage rates, will generate momentum in the housing market.