Becoming a Housing-Ready City

Charles Marohn | @clmarohn
@strongtowns



STRONG TOWNS



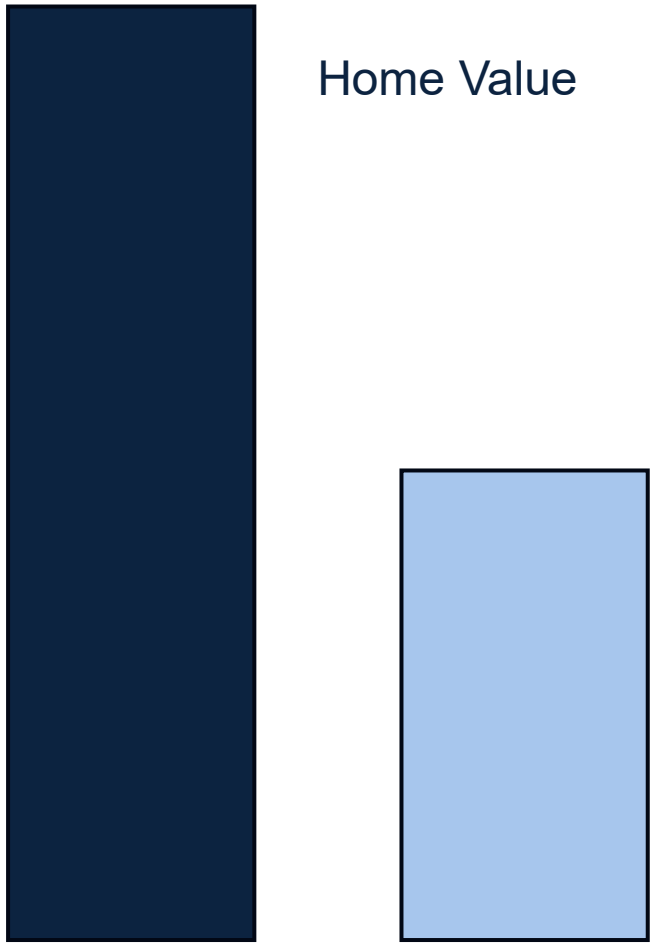


Two Housing Conversations

Housing prices

Housing prices

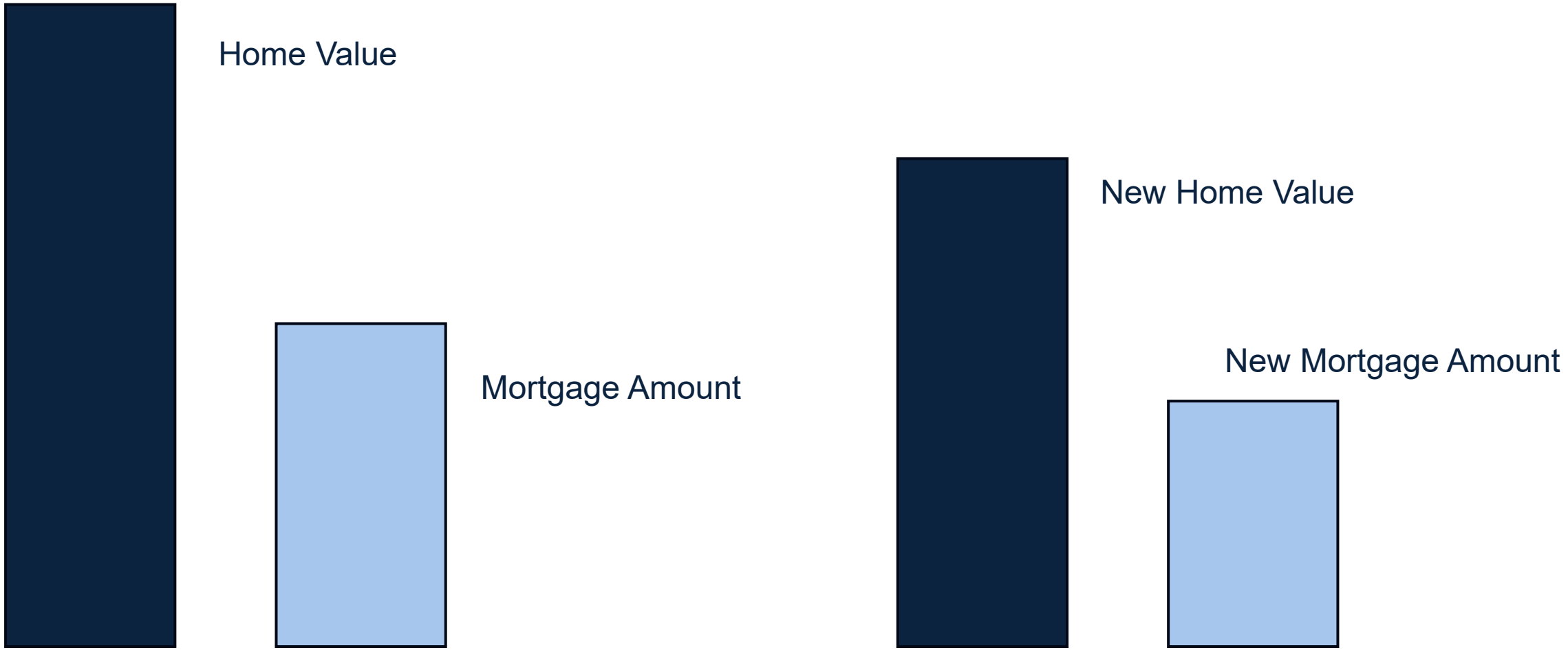
Pre-Great Depression Housing



- Local Banks
- 50% Down Payment
- Interest Only Loan
- 5-year Term w/ Balloon Payment

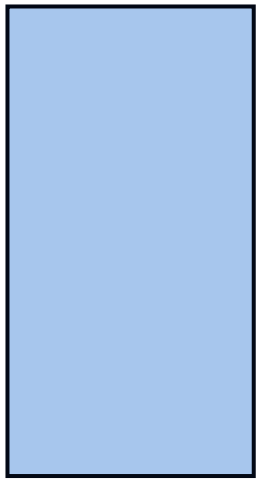

THE UNEMPLOYED
DOUGHNUTS
FREE SOUP
&
HORAN
BAILIFF
PARKING

Great Depression Home Value Decline

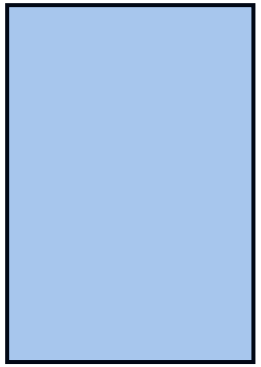


Great Depression Home Value Decline

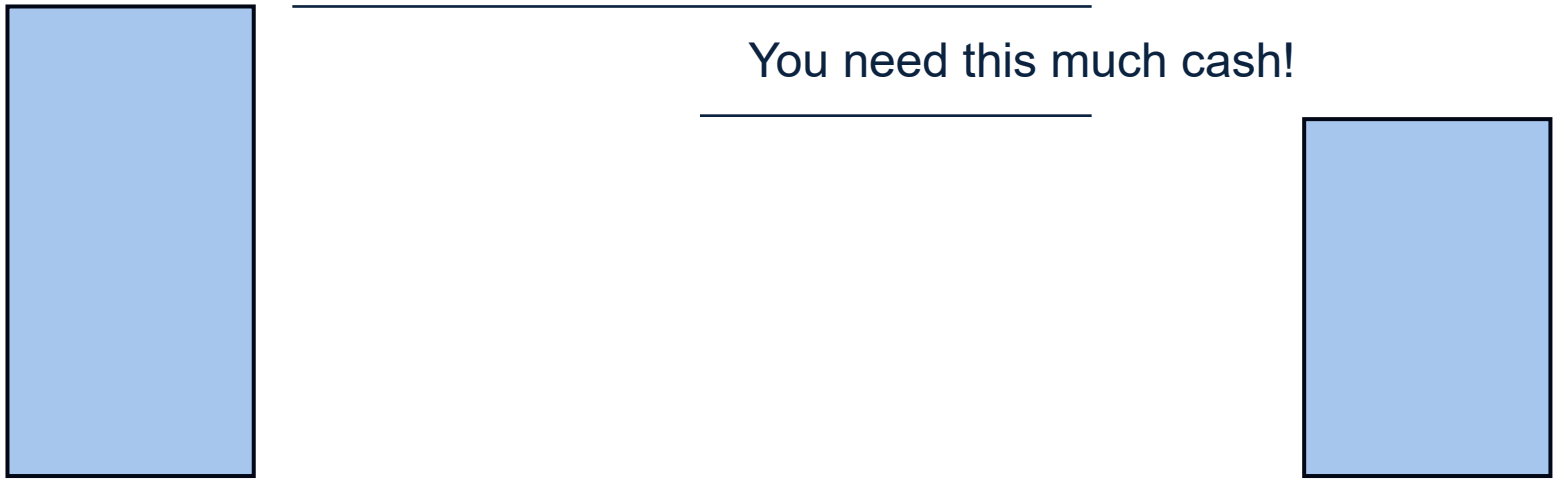
What you owe.



What the bank will lend you.



Great Depression Home Value Decline

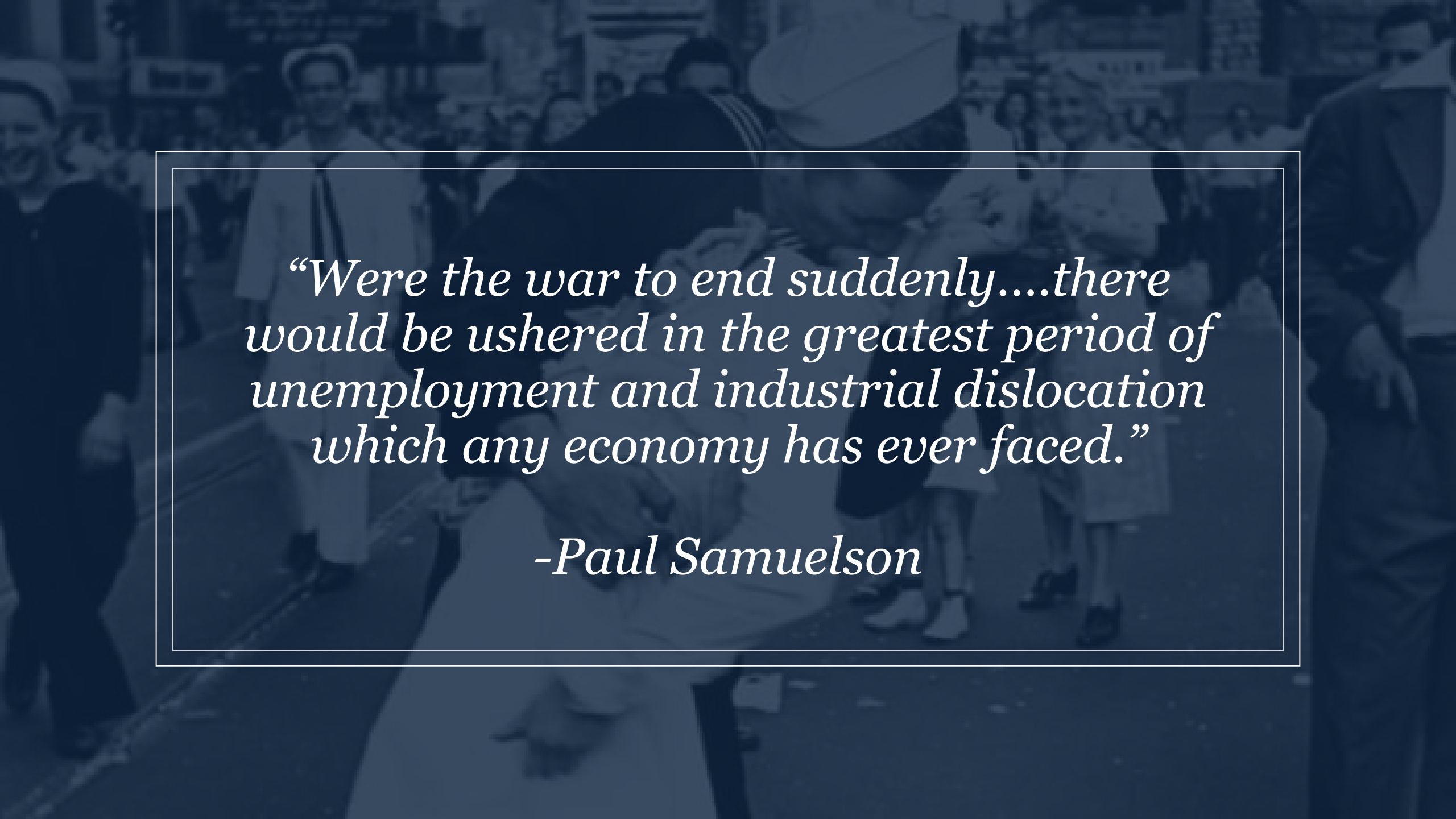



THIS 135 ACRE
FARM
Will Be Sold at
PUBLIC AUCTION
ON PREMISES JULY 30 1 P.M.
DR M.C. MOSES. OWNER,
New Carlisle Ohio.

New Deal Housing Initiatives

- Government purchase of mortgages in default
- Refinancing over 20 years
- Lower interest rates
- Principle + Interest
- Create a secondary market for 30-year mortgages (Fannie Mae)
- Lower down payments to 20%
- Provide mortgage insurance




“Were the war to end suddenly….there would be ushered in the greatest period of unemployment and industrial dislocation which any economy has ever faced.”

-Paul Samuelson


EXHIBIT HOME
Levitt & Sons




INTERSTATE

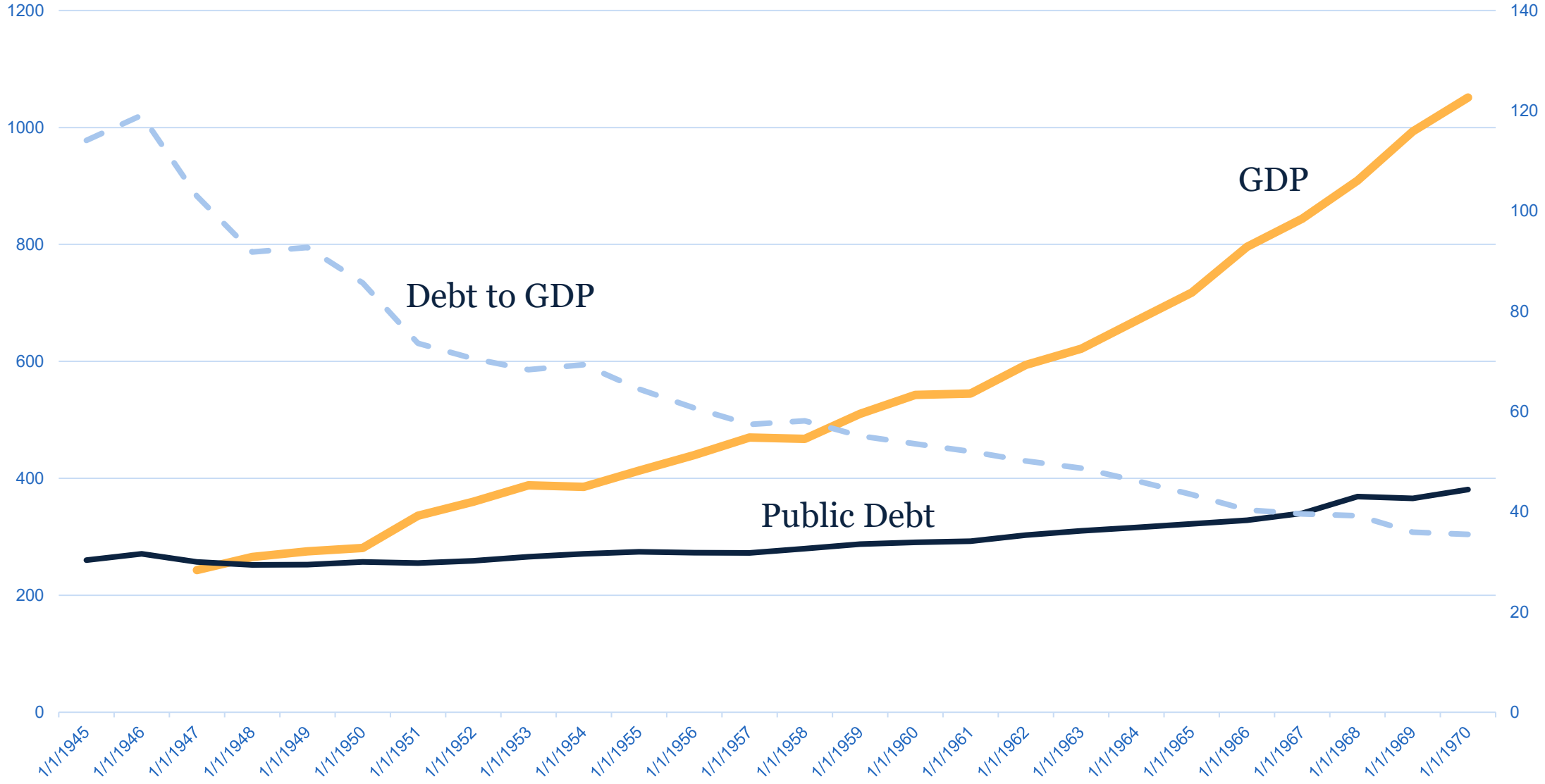




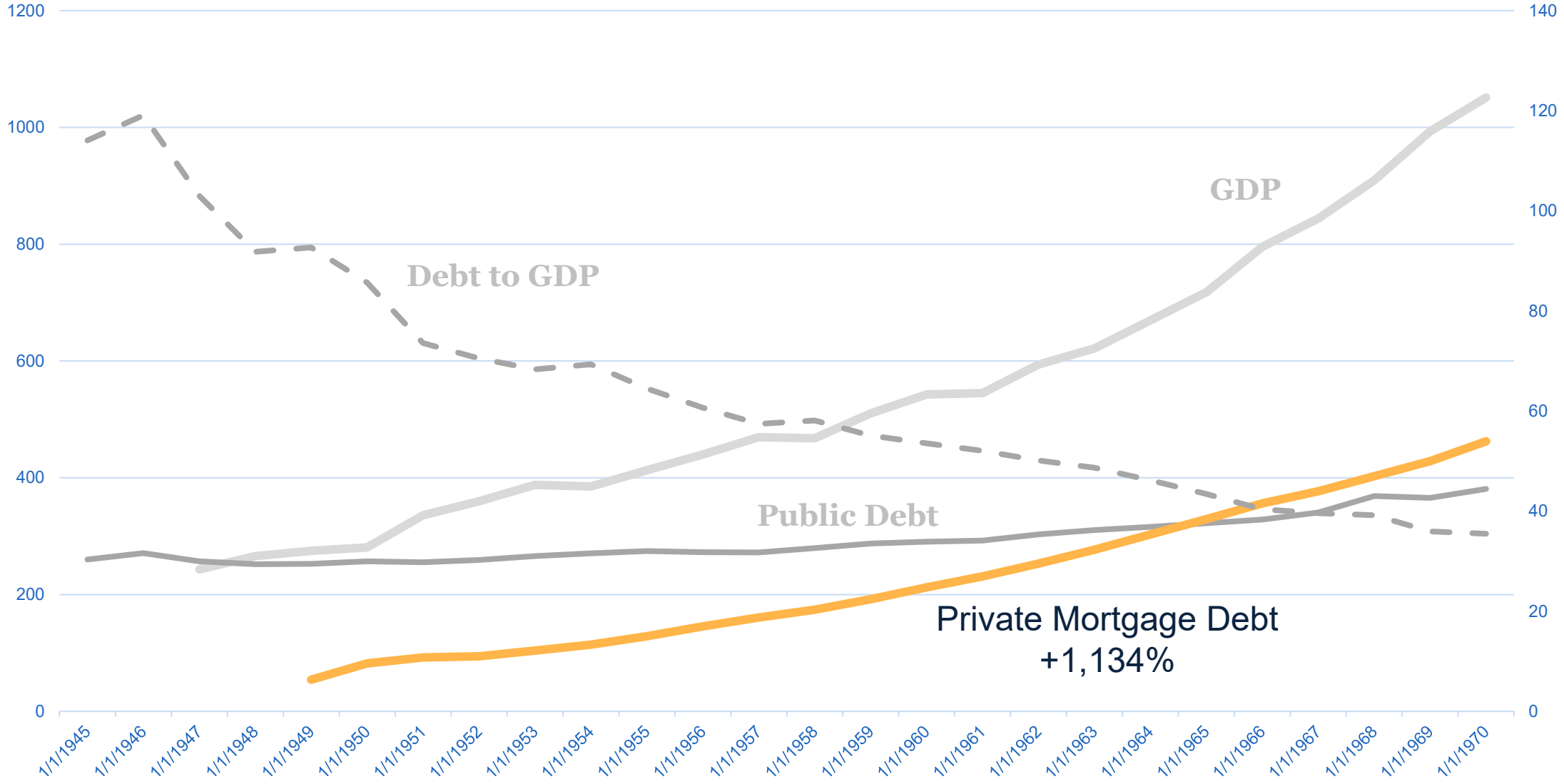
Make it easier for more people to borrow more money to pay more for housing.

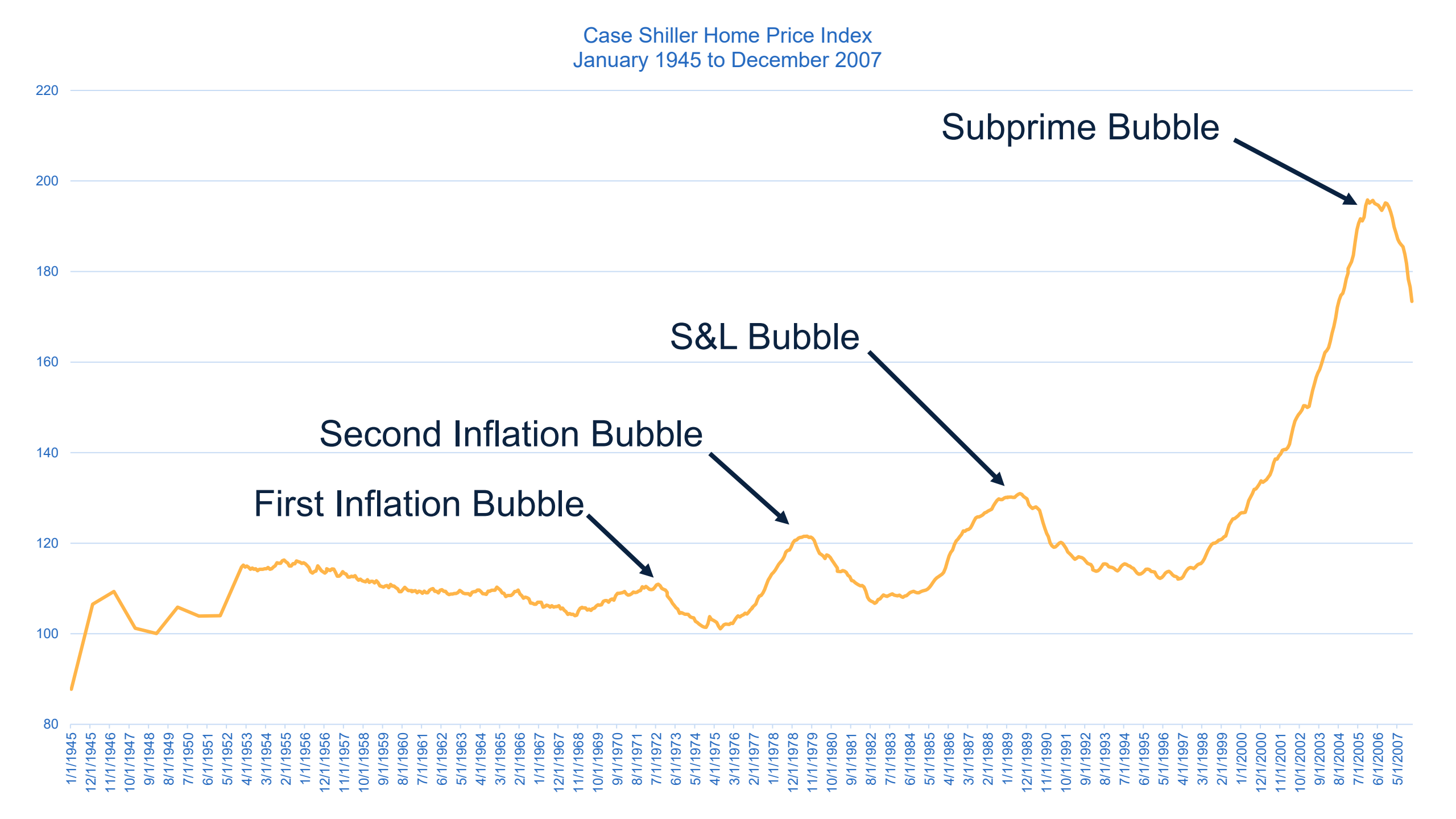


This was wildly successful!



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Case Shiller Home Price Index
January 1945 to December 2007
Subprime Bubble
S&L Bubble
Second Inflation Bubble
First Inflation Bubble
220
200
180
160
140
120
100
80
1/1/1945
12/1/1945
11/1/1946
10/1/1947
9/1/1948
8/1/1949
7/1/1950
6/1/1951
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11/1/1957
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7/1/2005
6/1/2006
5/1/2007





These are Financial Products

(secondarily, they serve as shelter)

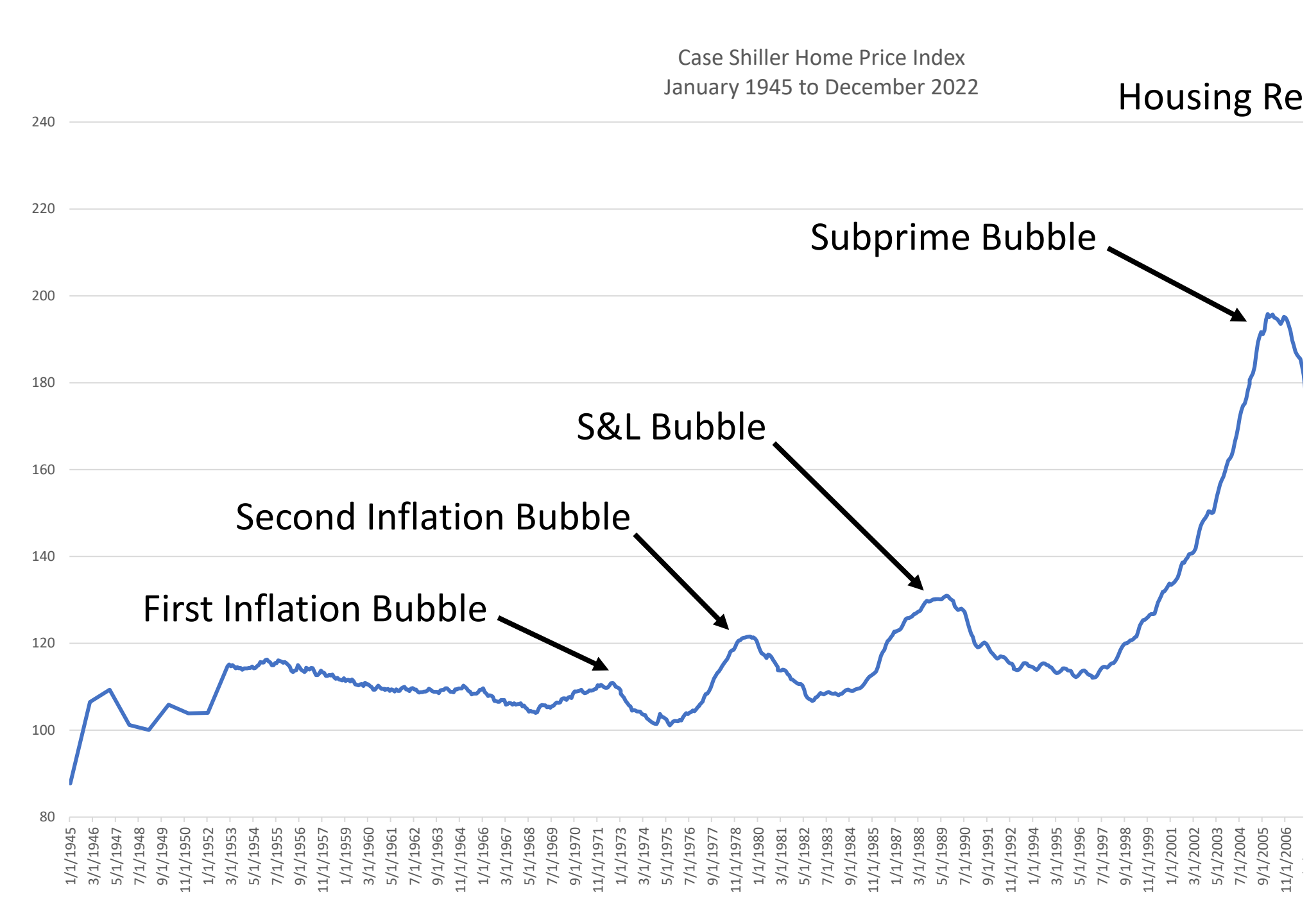


What is the product?

Who is the product?






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January 1945 to December 2022
Housing Re
Subprime Bubble
S&L Bubble
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11/1/2006

Making it easier for more people to borrow more money to pay more for housing is not the answer.



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Trump proposes 50-year mortgage plan as housing costs soar

The plan would lower and elongate the monthly payments needed to buy a home.



By **Mason Leath**
November 10, 2025, 5:43 PM ET • 6 min read



Trump administration moves forward with plan to introduce 50-year mortgagesSome longtime allies of President Donald Trump are not on board with the idea, and experts warn the proposal could drive up prices.Nathan Howard/Reuters

The American Dream may have just gotten a five-decade payment plan.





These are Financial Products

(secondarily, they serve as shelter)

Distribution of Investment Capital for Housing








Accessory Apartment



Backyard Cottage

(Not an ADU)


Starter House
(Not a Tiny House)



Housing-Ready Cities

How to Escape the Housing Trap

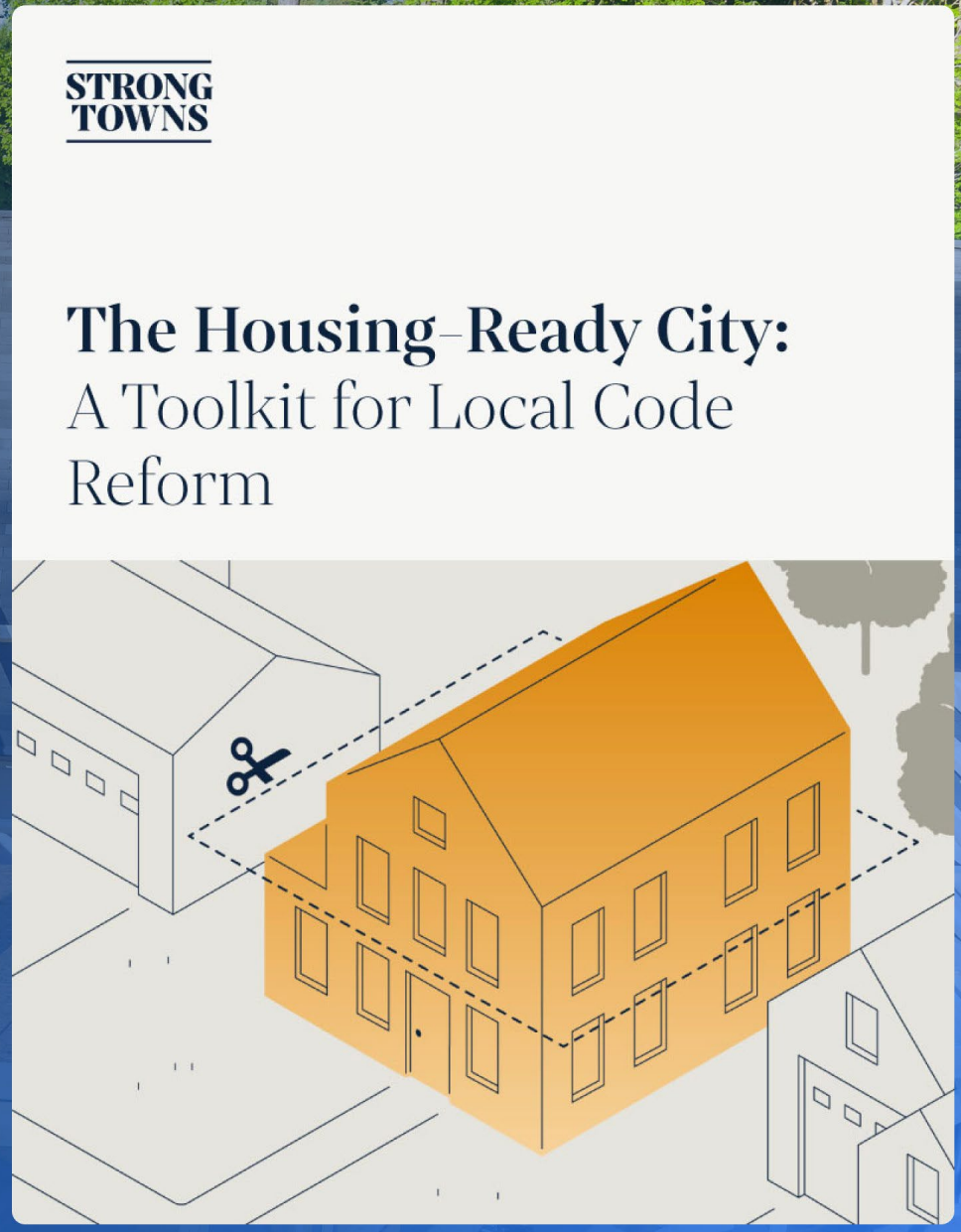
STRONG TOWNS

1. Code Reform
2. Incremental Developers
3. Localize Finance

Photo Credit: Kronberg Urbanists + Architects

Toolkit

Six Policies Every City Needs To Be "Housing Ready"



Download at **strongtowns.org/housingready**

Toolkit

Who Will Build the "Housing Ready" City?

Download at **strongtowns.org/housingready**

STRONG TOWNS

Who Will Build the Housing-Ready City?

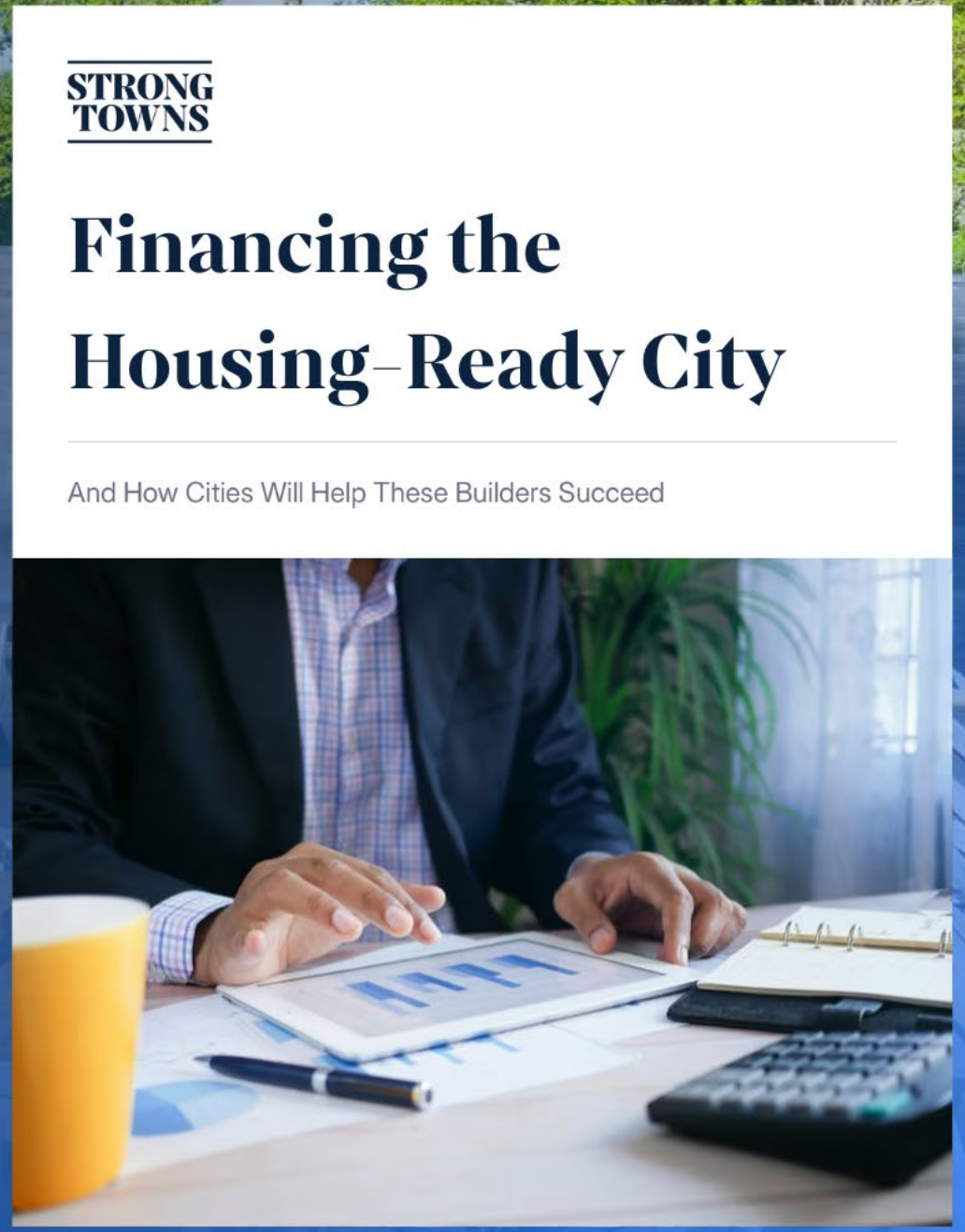
And How Cities Will Help These Builders Succeed



Toolkit

Financing the Housing-Ready City

Comming Early 2026



Oswego, New York

Micro Grants



Muskegon, Michigan
Tax Increment Financing



Minnesota

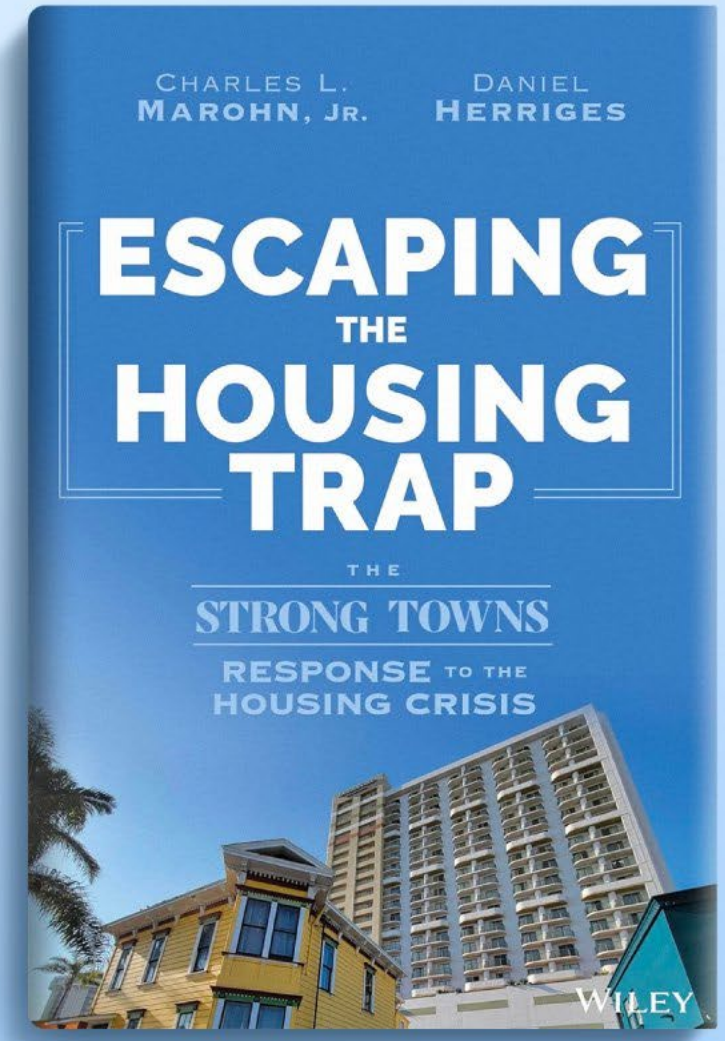
Special Assessments



Florida

Co-sign Loans





Learn what power you have to heal your town's housing market.

STRONG TOWNS

The Housing-Ready City:
A Toolkit for Local Code Reform



STRONG TOWNS

Who Will Build the Housing-Ready City?

And How Cities Will Help These Builders Succeed



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