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July 2026 Santa Cruz County Market Outlook

Data through June 2026

Market
Research
COMPASS INTERNATIONAL HOLDINGS

July 2026

Housing Market Report

The Bay Area housing market is the center of national attention this summer. AI-driven wealth has offset persistently higher mortgage rates, pushing demand in a handful of neighborhoods to dramatic levels.

The most intense competition is concentrated in San Francisco itself. In June, 44 homes in the city sold for at least \$1 million over asking (see charts, next page). Sales in San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin are running well above last year's pace.

Other parts of the Bay Area are more exposed to AI's other edge: jobs, inflation, and rates. Most buyers need a mortgage, and rates have stayed elevated — though still below last year's level. Nationally, inflation remains well above what policymakers and bond markets are comfortable with, driven by energy costs, government spending, and quite possibly the AI investment boom itself. Mortgage rates spent another month near 6.5%.

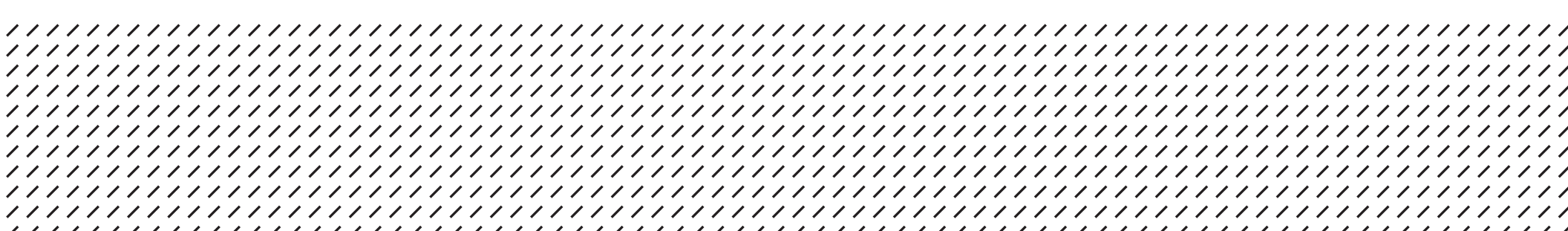
Santa Clara County is feeling a different edge: Bay Area tech companies have cut 58,000 jobs so far in 2026, and in the South Bay, inventory is climbing while average sale prices trail last year.

In many ways, the Bay Area is leading the nation's housing story in both directions — new wealth pulling the top of the market to record heights, while job insecurity and high rates weigh on buyers further down. It's always worth watching the Bay Area markets closely as we often signal where the rest of the country is headed next.

Mike Simonsen

Chief Economist, Compass International Holdings

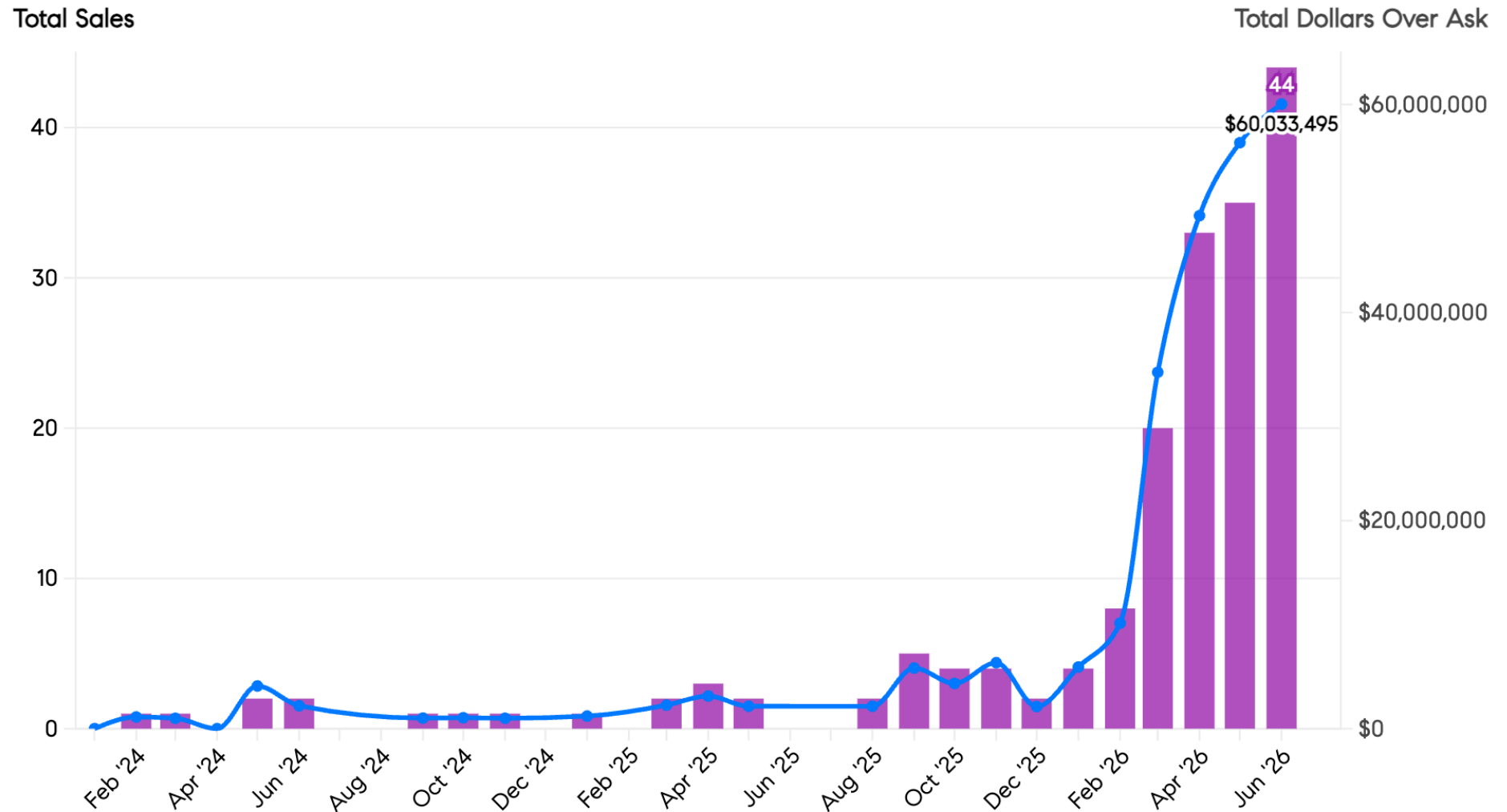
The first section of this report are select macro-economic and demographic data for the country and the Bay Area. In the second half of the report, we share all the details of the housing market.



AI Boom Hits San Francisco Home Sales

In June, 44 transactions in San Francisco closed at least \$1 million above the final ask price.

■ Dollar Volume ■ Transaction Count

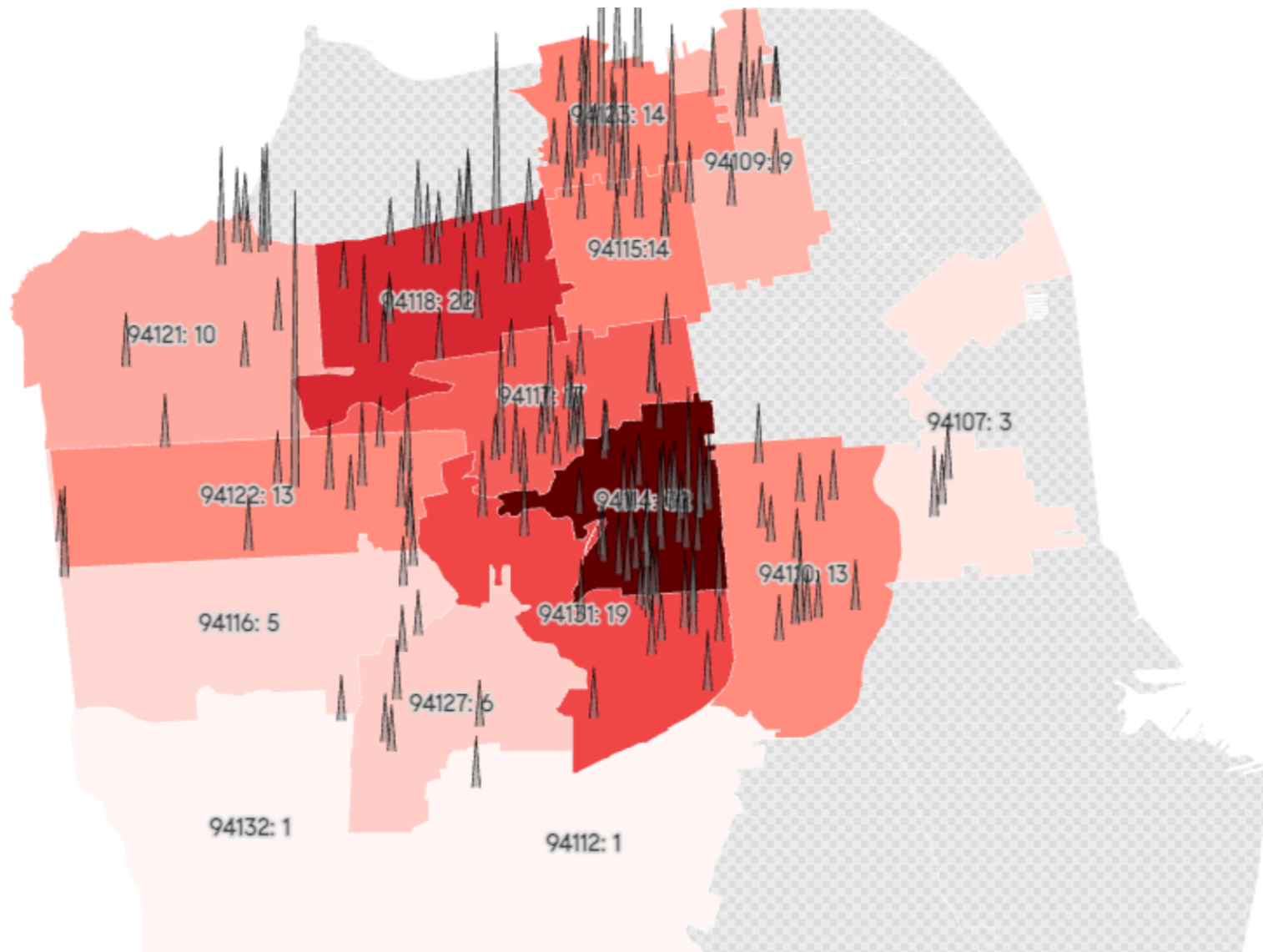


Source: Compass via MLS Data • Home sales where sale price exceeded the final list price by at least \$1 million.

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Where The Money is Concentrating

San Francisco home sales at least \$1 million over the asking price. The pace of those closing at least \$1 million over ask illustrates the most desirable neighborhoods.

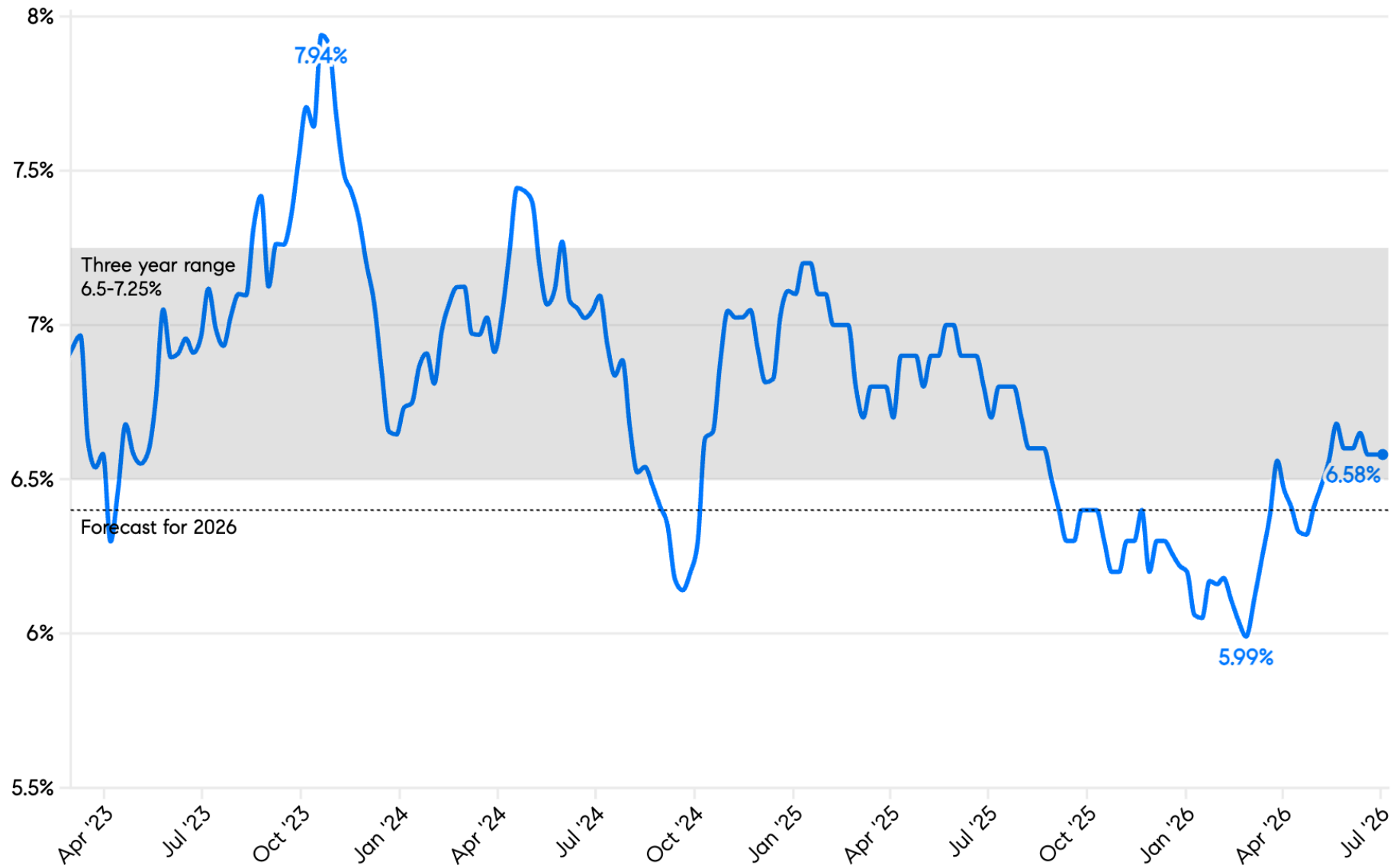


Source: Compass via MLS data • Home sales where sale price was at least \$1 million over the final ask price. The height of each spike represents the total dollars over asking.

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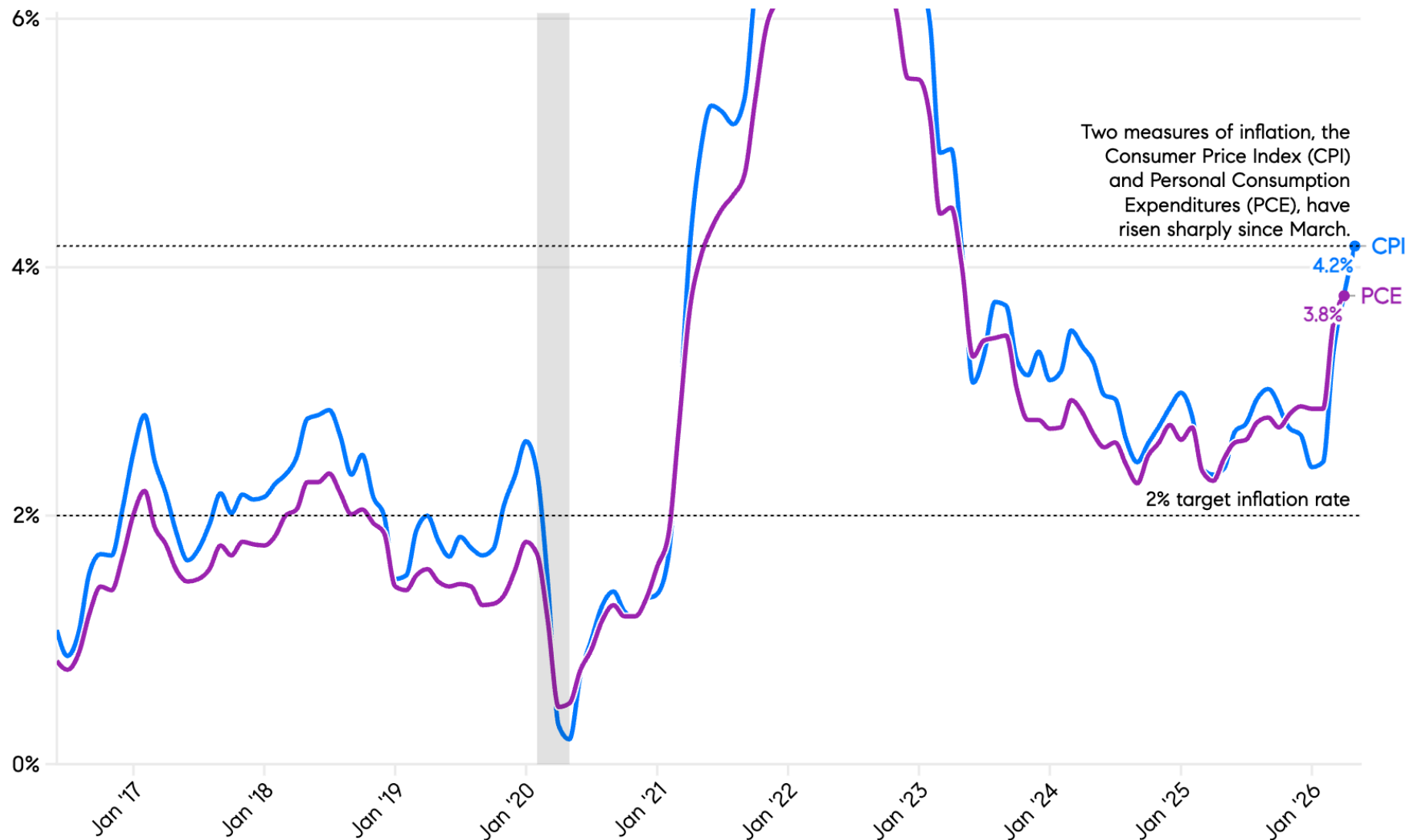
Mortgage Rates Stay In The Mid-6s

Interest have stayed elevated due persistent inflation news and recently improved jobs data. Still at the low-end of the range over the past three years, any push into the upper 6s is likely to slow home purchase demand again.



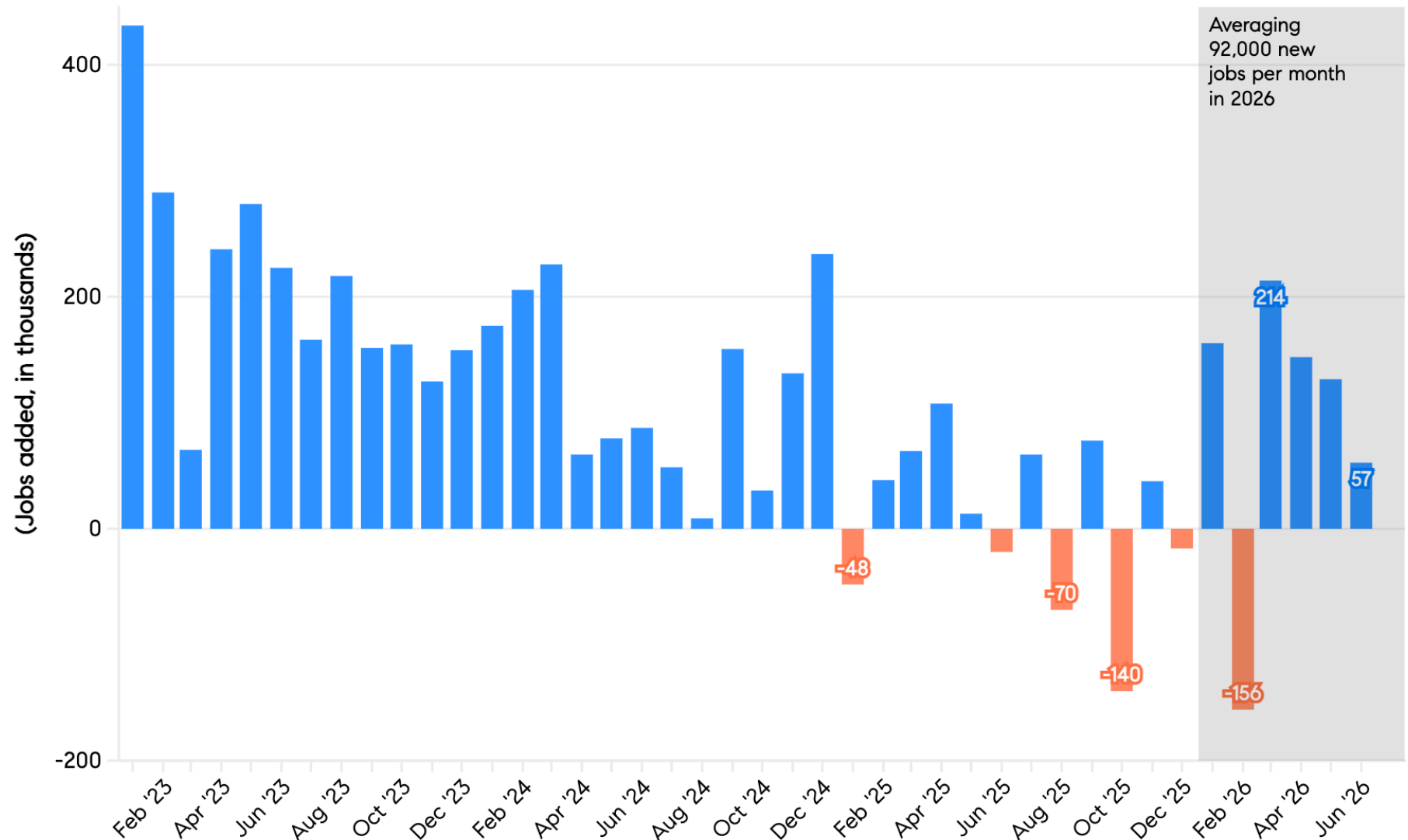
Inflation Accelerates in June

Tariffs, oil, and government spending are all contributing to re-accelerating inflation. Recently falling oil prices are not yet visible in the inflation data. Inflation has forced interest rates higher, adding to affordability challenges with real estate.



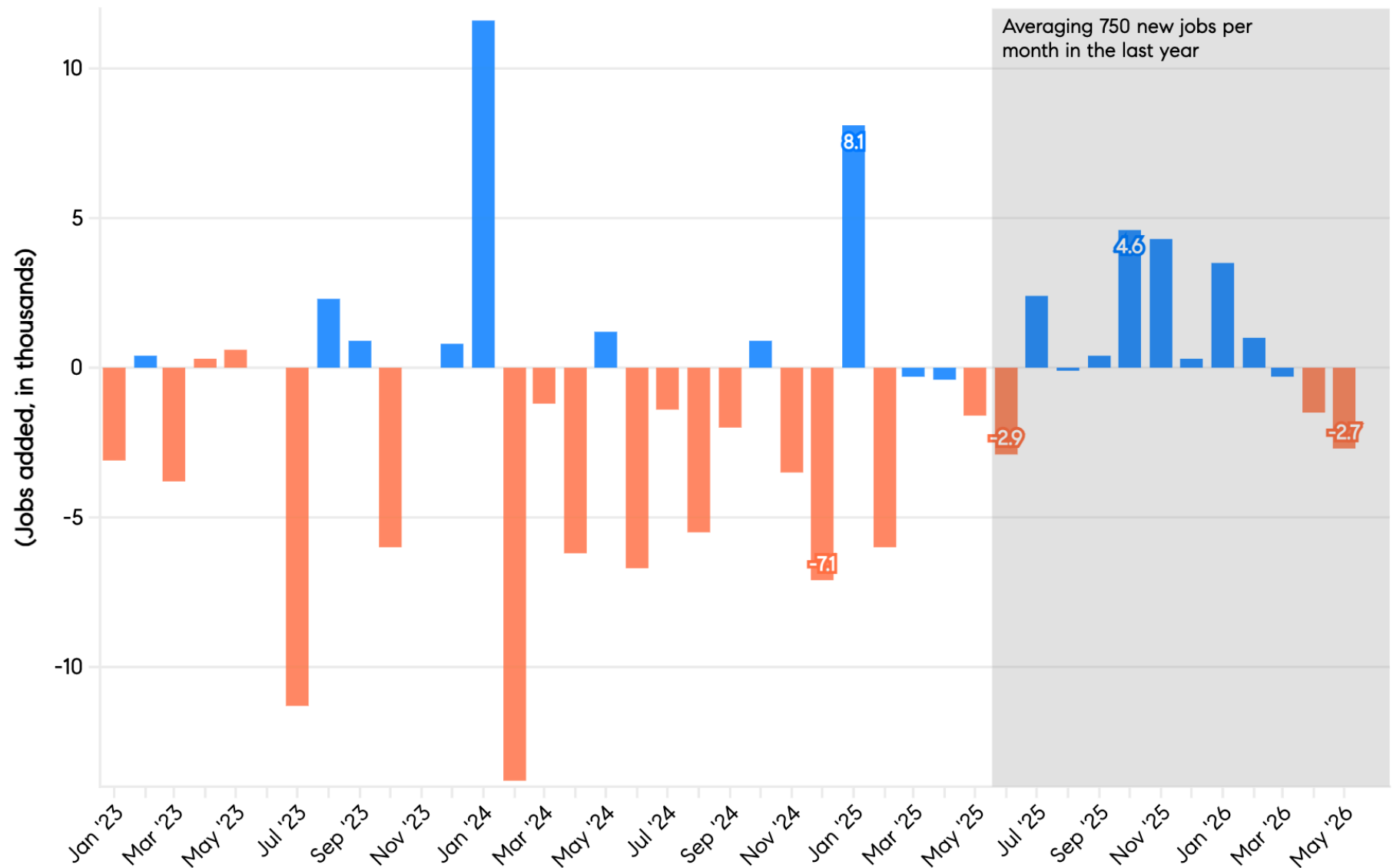
National Employment Grows Slowly

The labor market shows four months of growth after a very weak 2025. Corporate profitability is improving, AI investment is booming, and government spending is unabated, all of which are drivers of continued expansion in 2026. An improving labor market is generally positive for housing.



Bay Area Job Growth Slows Again

While the most recent 12 months have been mildly positive for job growth in the Bay Area, the most recent two months report a weakening job market again.

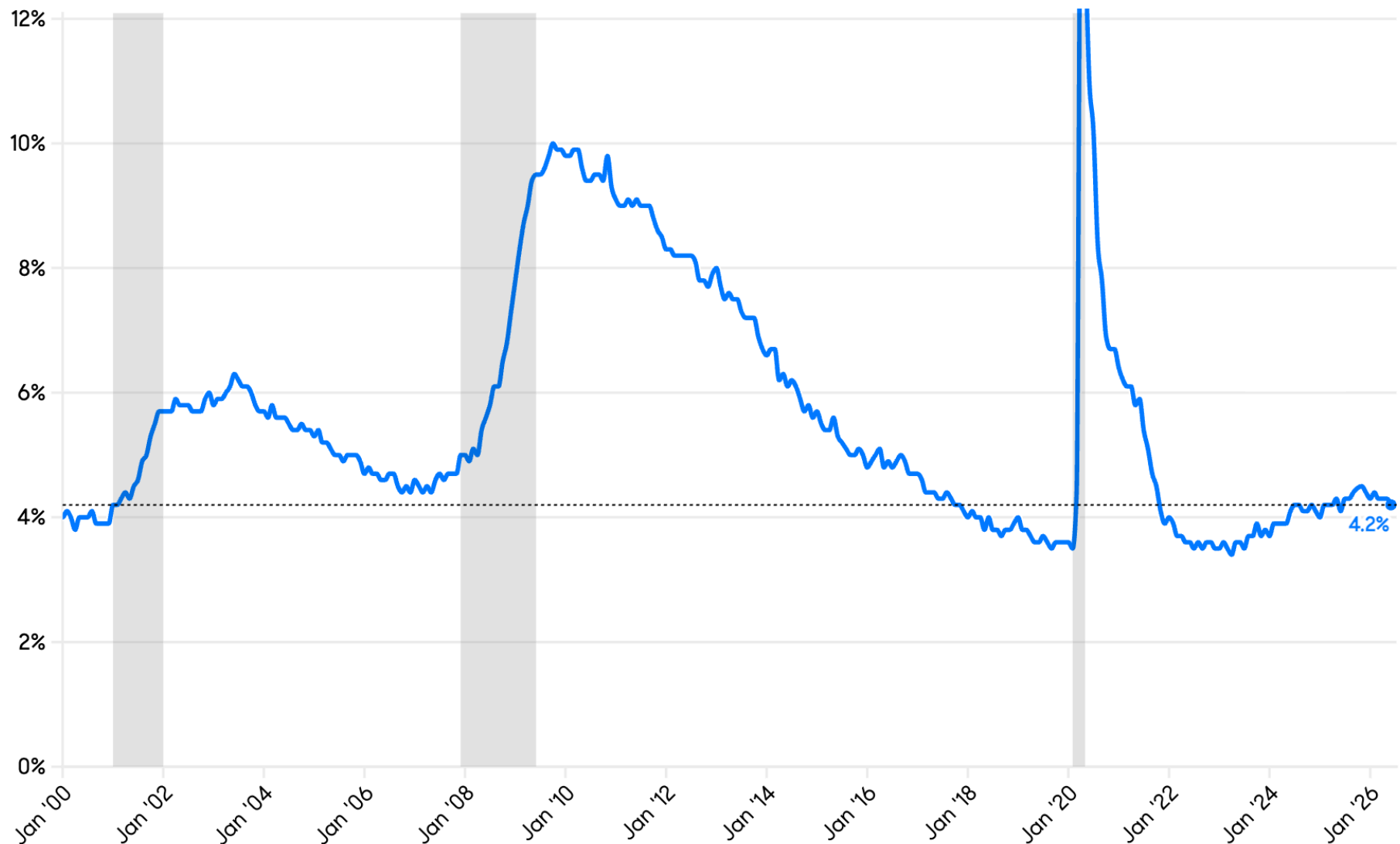


Source: BLS Non-Farm Payrolls, Total jobs, seasonally adjusted

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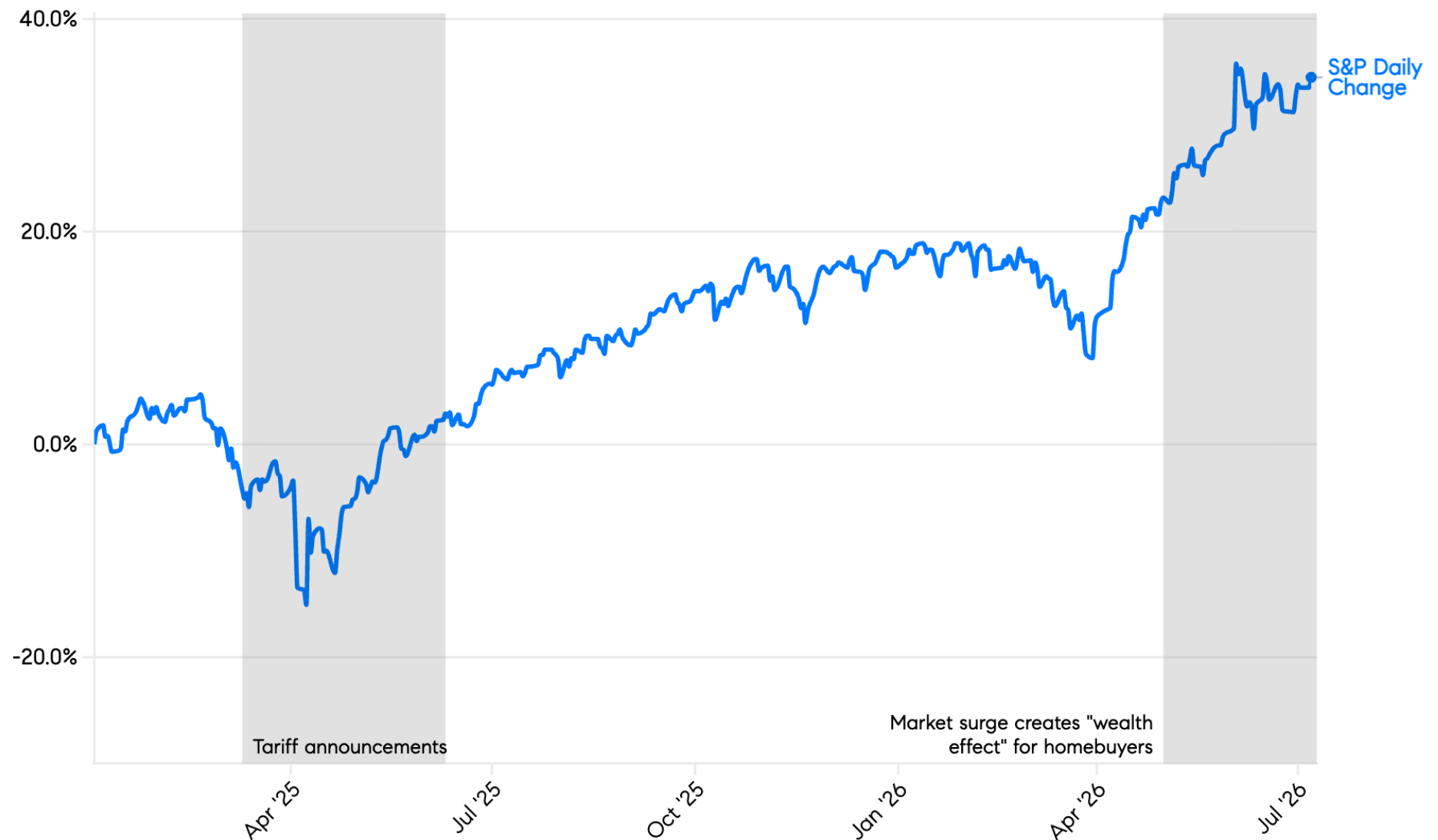
June Unemployment Declined

Headline Unemployment (U3) has moved lower since November. The June numbers defied expectations and dropped to 4.2%. Continued low unemployment implies very few distressed home sales but also generally holds interest rates higher.



Wealth Effect Drives Home Purchase Demand

With stock markets near all time highs, a powerful "wealth effect" is created for potential homebuyers. The opposite effect was felt in 2025 after tariffs slowed the economy and ate up business profits. This wealth effect has had dramatic results in the Bay Area with AI related market boom and IPOs in the pipeline.

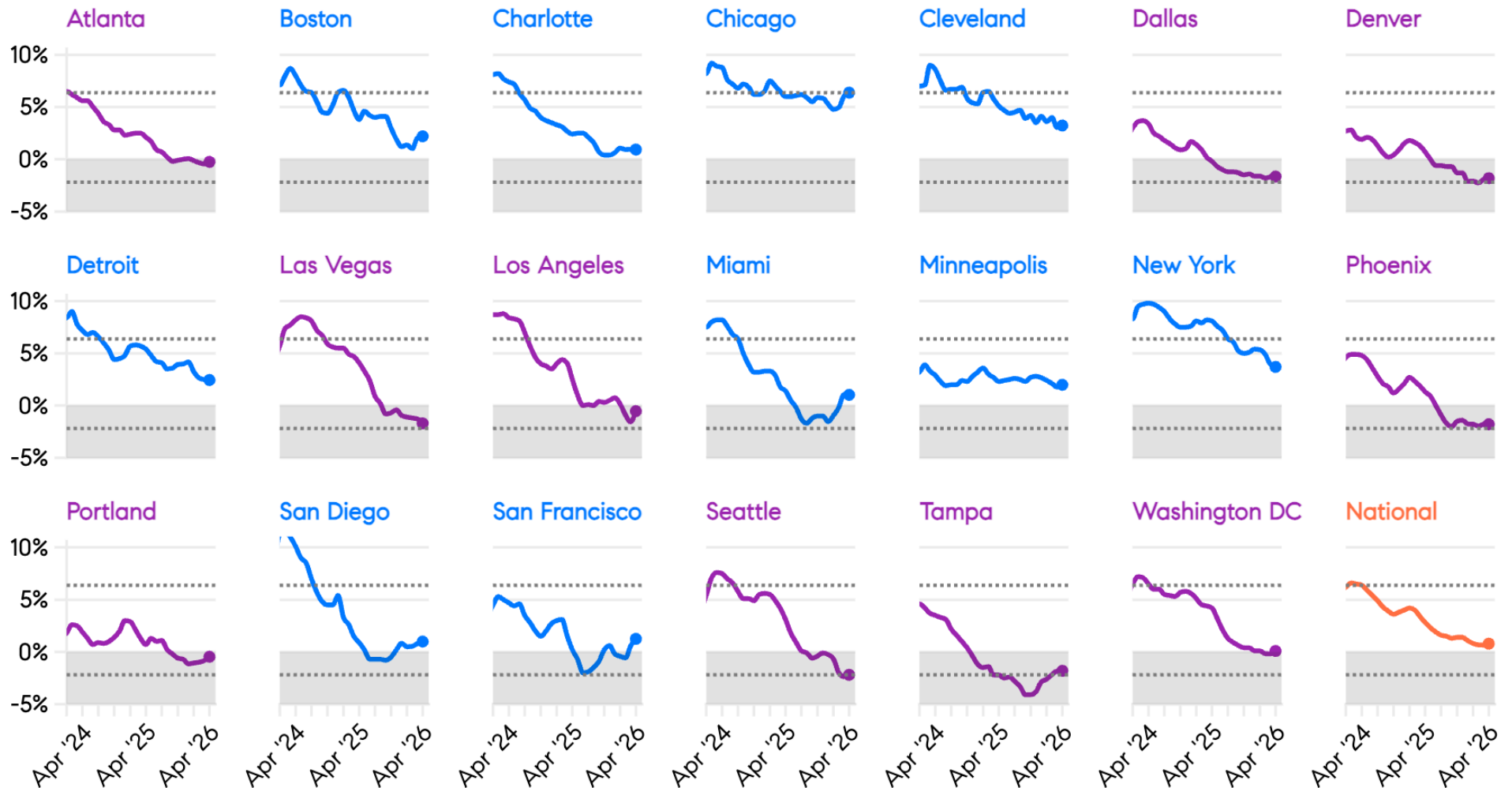


Source: MarketWatch.com
Index change vs. Jan 1, 2025

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Bay Area Sales Price Growth is Accelerating

According to the Case Shiller Index, nationally home prices are only 0.8% above last year. San Francisco prices have recently swung positive while other Western US cities show prices falling compared to last year.



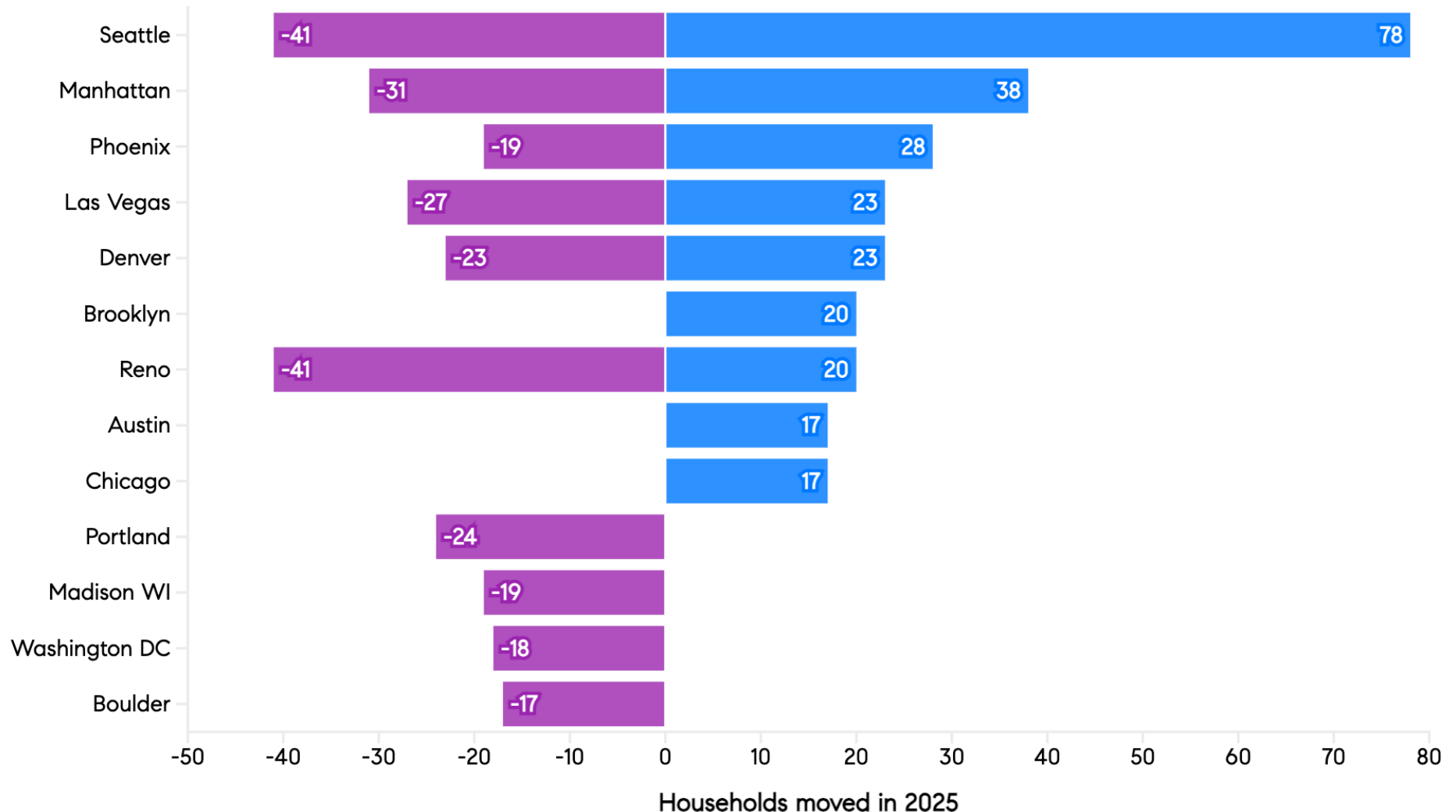
Source: S&P CoreLogic Case-Shiller • Purple cities have home price appreciation vs. March 2025. Orange cities have home price declines from Mar 2025. Dotted lines are top and bottom performing markets. Gray area is below 0%

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Bay Area Migration Sources & Destinations

In 2025, inbound migration to the Bay Area resumed for the first time in many years. Seattle and Austin are net inbound to San Francisco. Lower cost of living cities remain popular destinations for outbound movers.

■ Inbound ■ Outbound



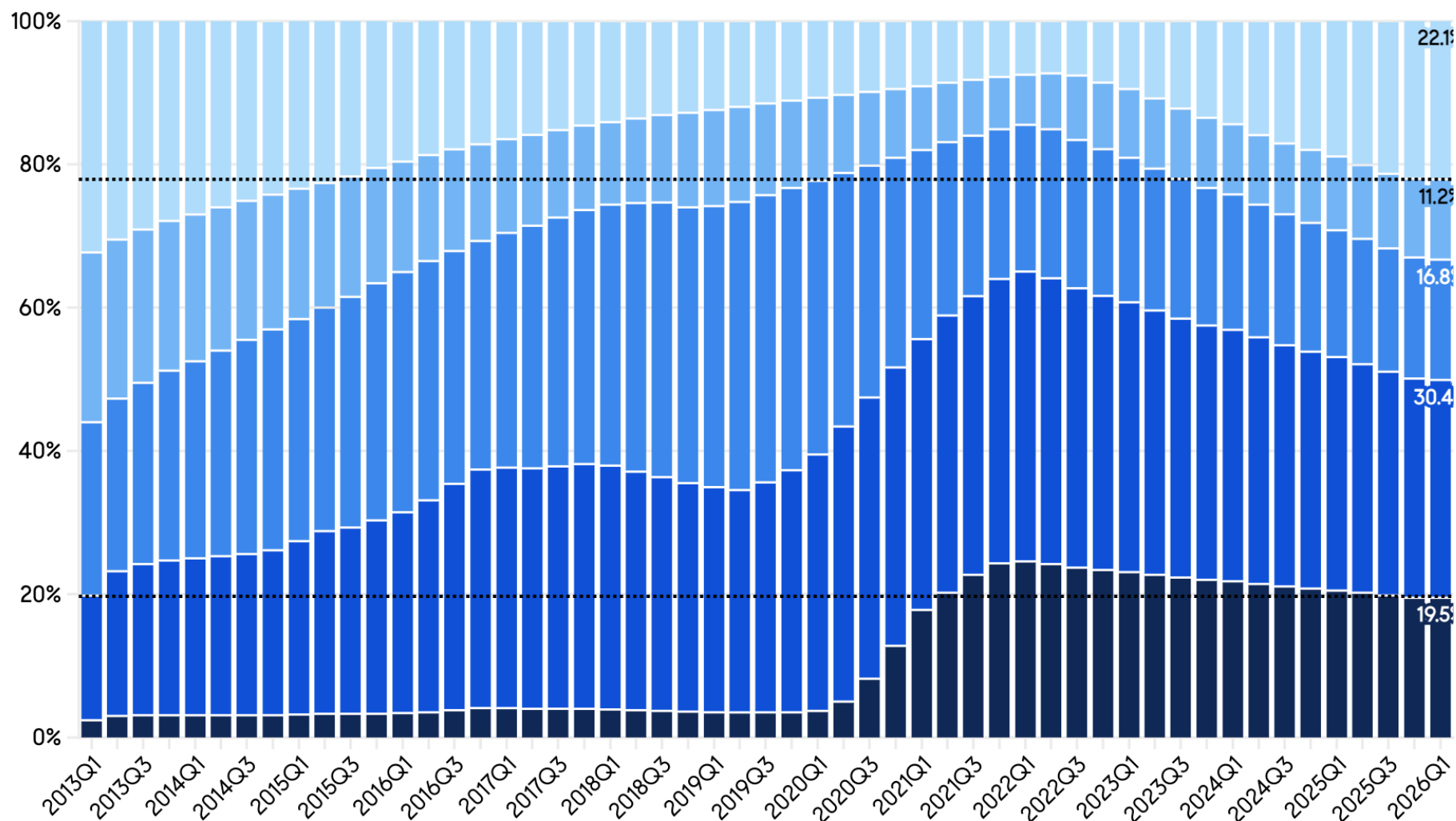
Source: Censai Analytics • Top 10 inbound and outbound counties tracked. Sources include change of address forms and voter registration changes. Likely undercounts students and non-voters.

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Expensive and Cheap Mortgages

More mortgages now carry a 6-plus% rate than under 3%. Homeowners with very cheap mortgage payments are reluctant to ever sell, so inventory remains tight and sales are fewer than normal. Over time, fewer homeowners are locked-in to ultra low rates and home sales will grow.

■ <3% Interest Rate ■ 3-4% ■ 4-5% ■ 5-6% ■ >6% Rate

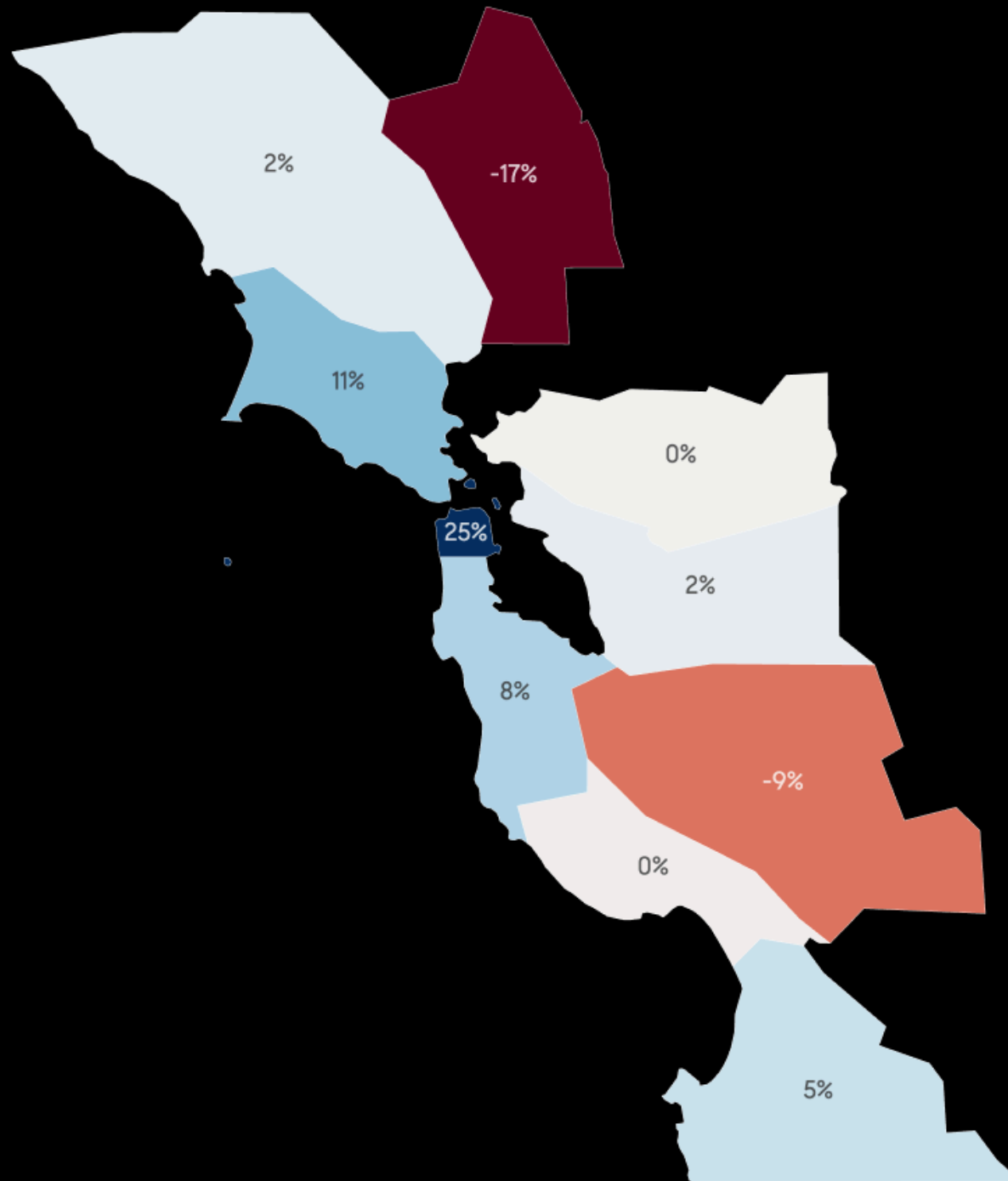


Santa Cruz Market

Report created in good faith using public and proprietary data from sources deemed reliable but may contain errors and is subject to revision. Data is pulled at the end of the month, and last-period figures may still be preliminary due to late-reported activity. All numbers are approximate and may change, including Private Exclusive sales and other transactions not publicly reported at the time of publication.



Home Price Change vs 2025

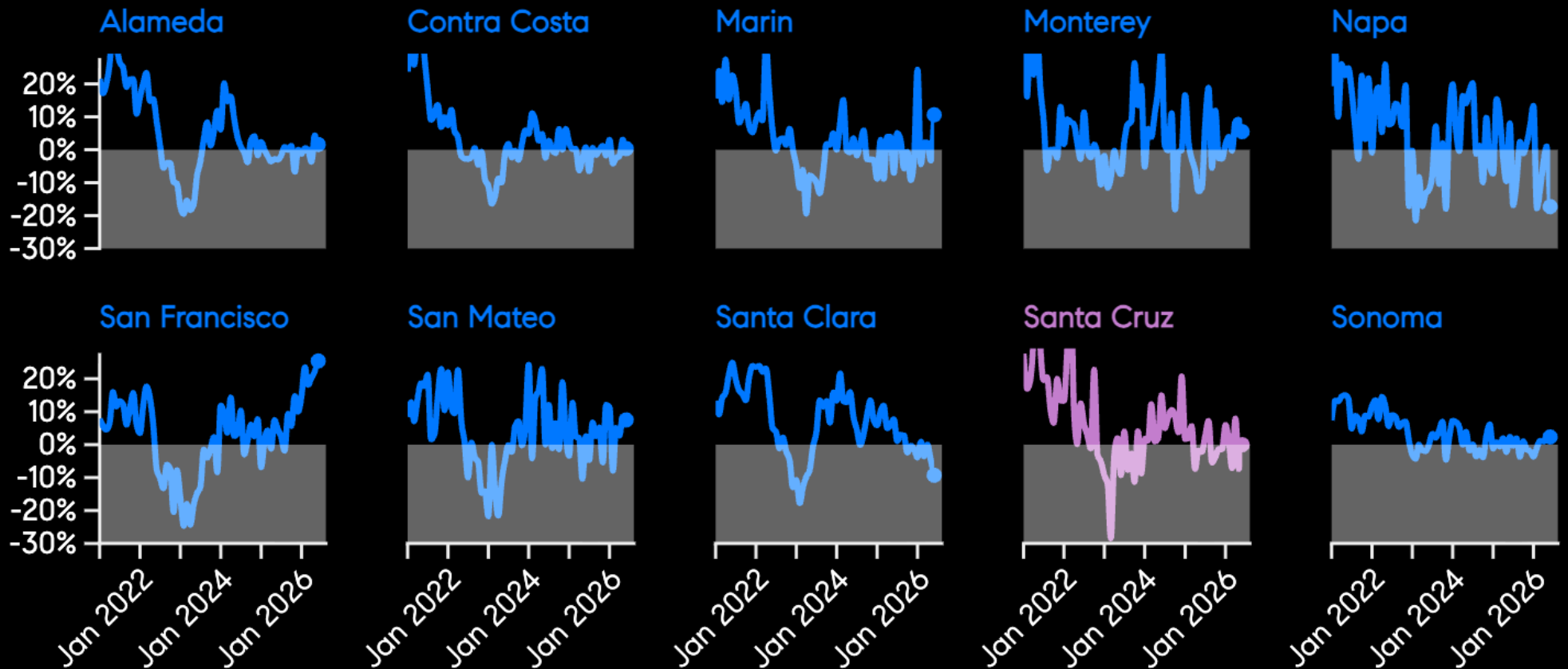


Source: Compass via MLS data • Median sales price single family homes

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Home Price Changes Over Time

Median sales prices in Santa Cruz have been unchanged compared to June of 2025.



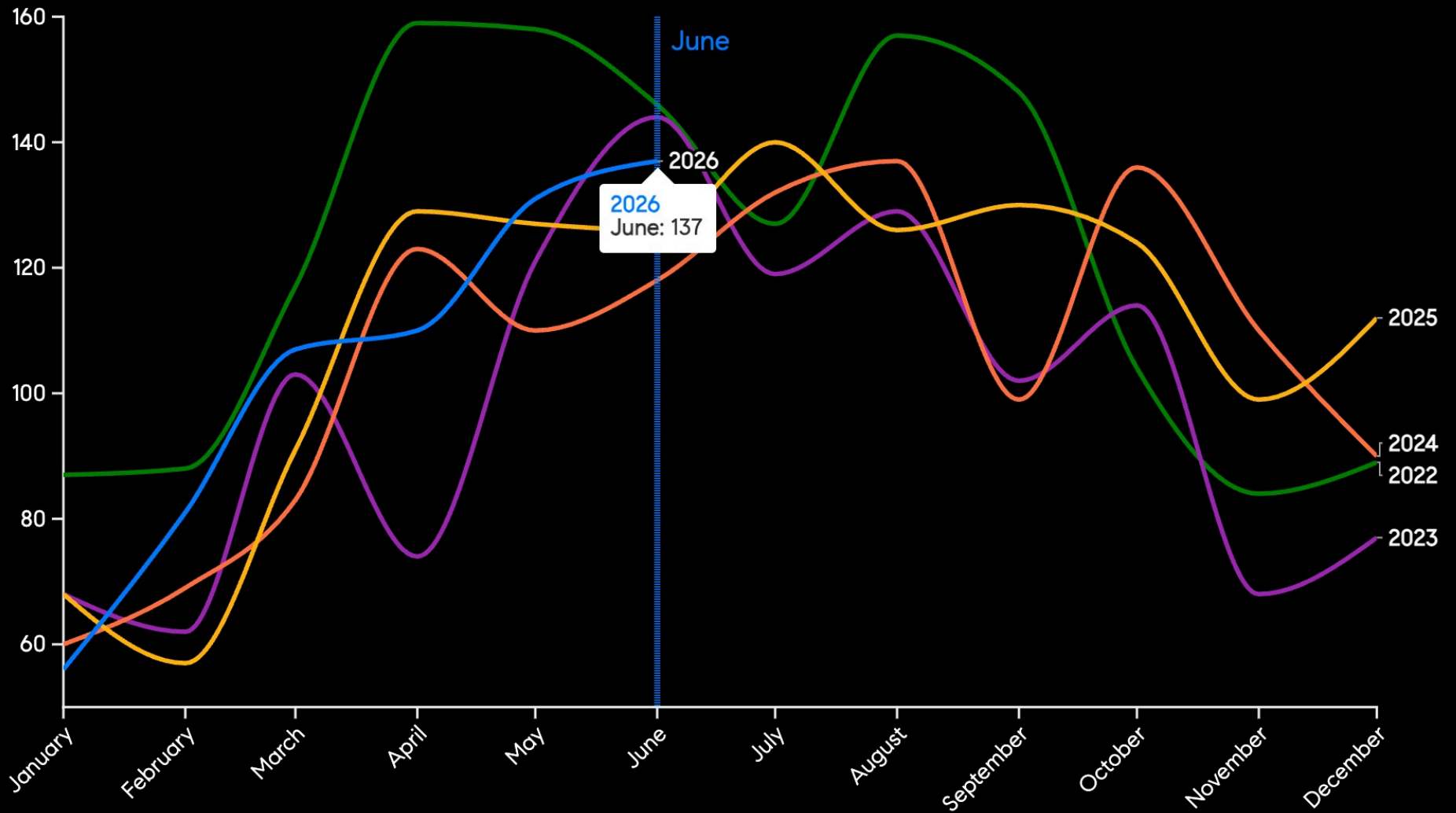
Source: Compass via MLS data • Median sales price for single family homes, change vs same month 1 year prior

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Closed Sales

Single Family Homes

Santa Cruz County ▼



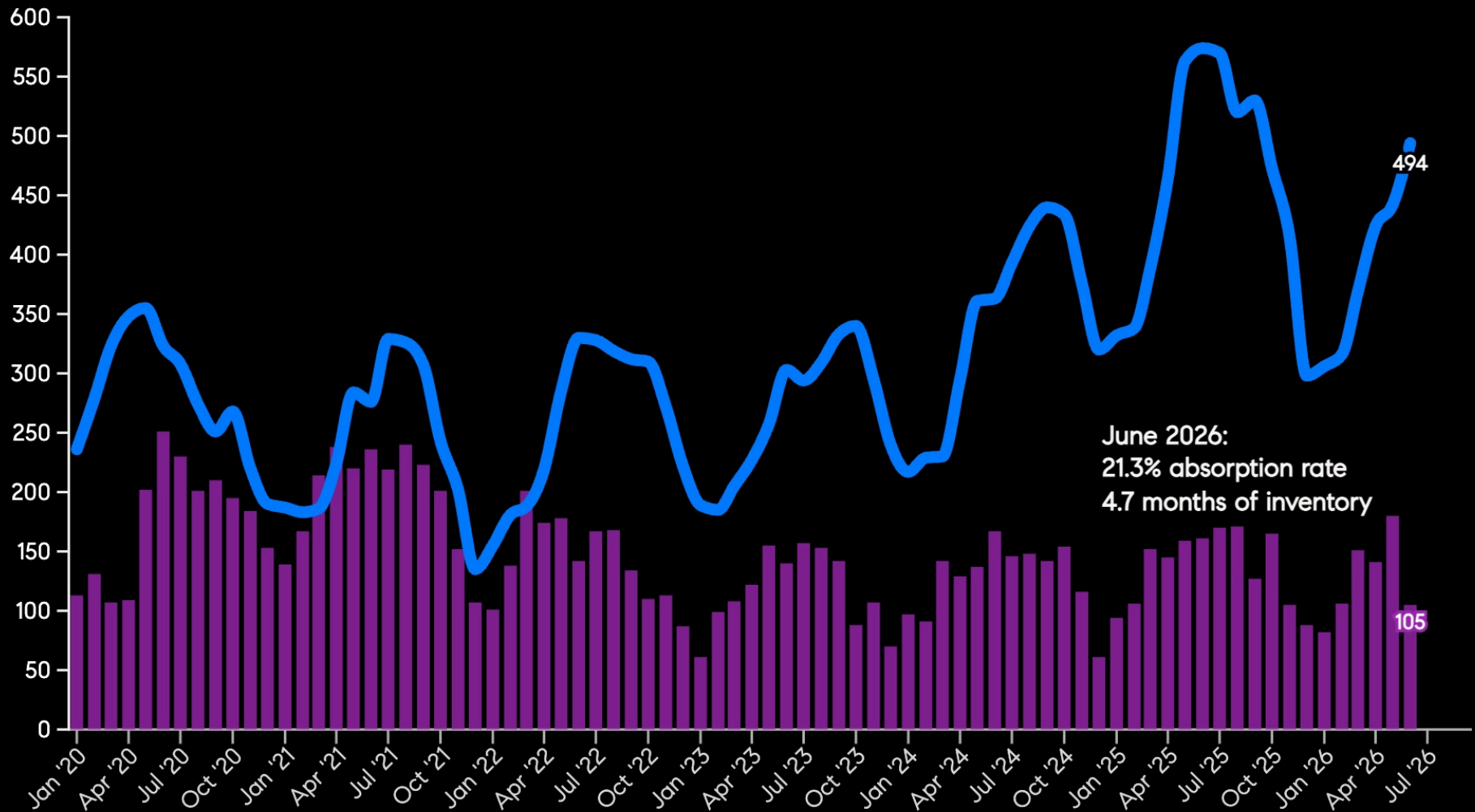
Source: Compass via MLS · Single Family

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Active Listings and Pending Sales

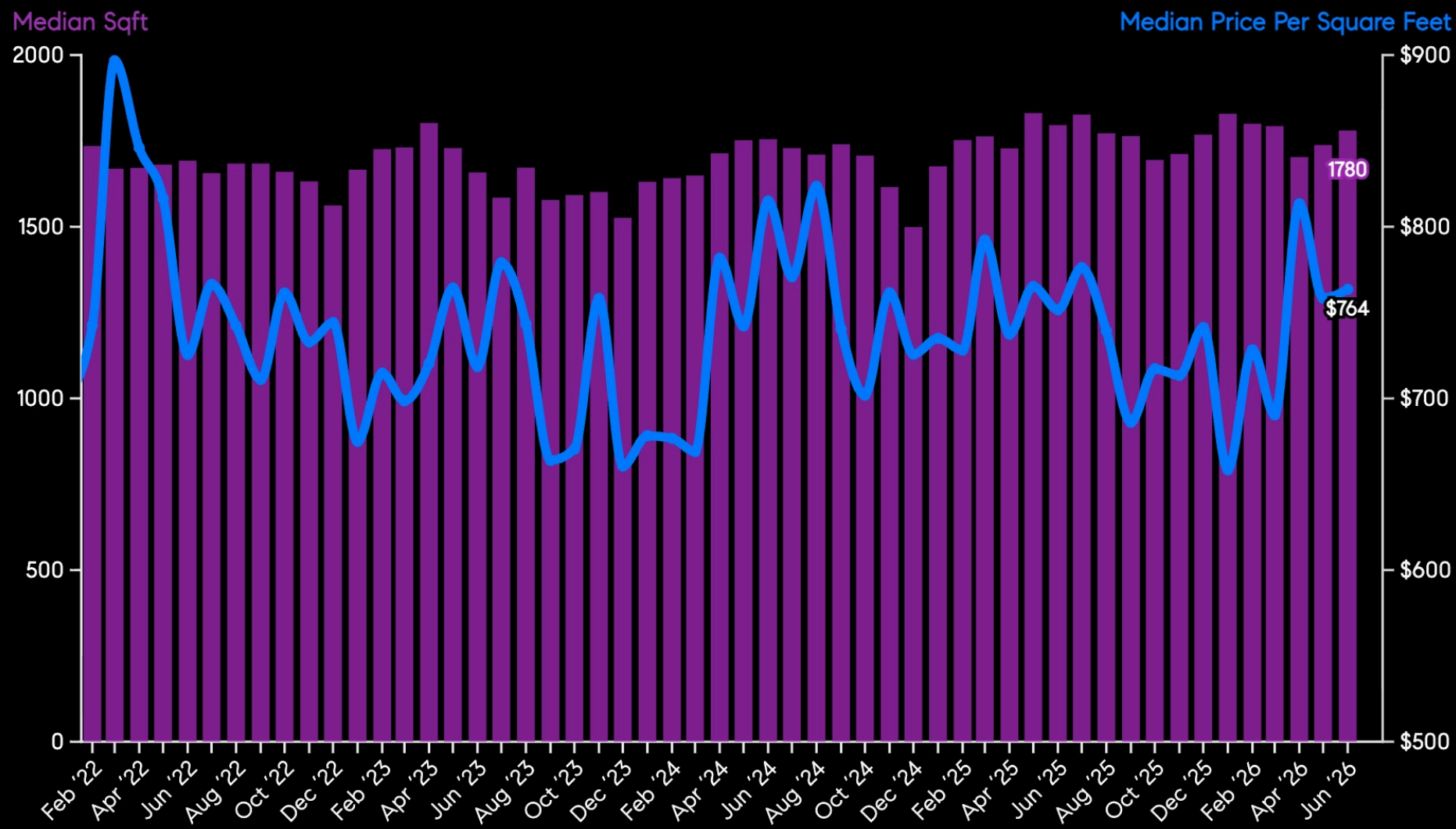
Santa Cruz County

Active Pending



Price Per Square Foot and Median Square Feet

Santa Cruz County



Source: Compass via MLS data · Single Family Homes

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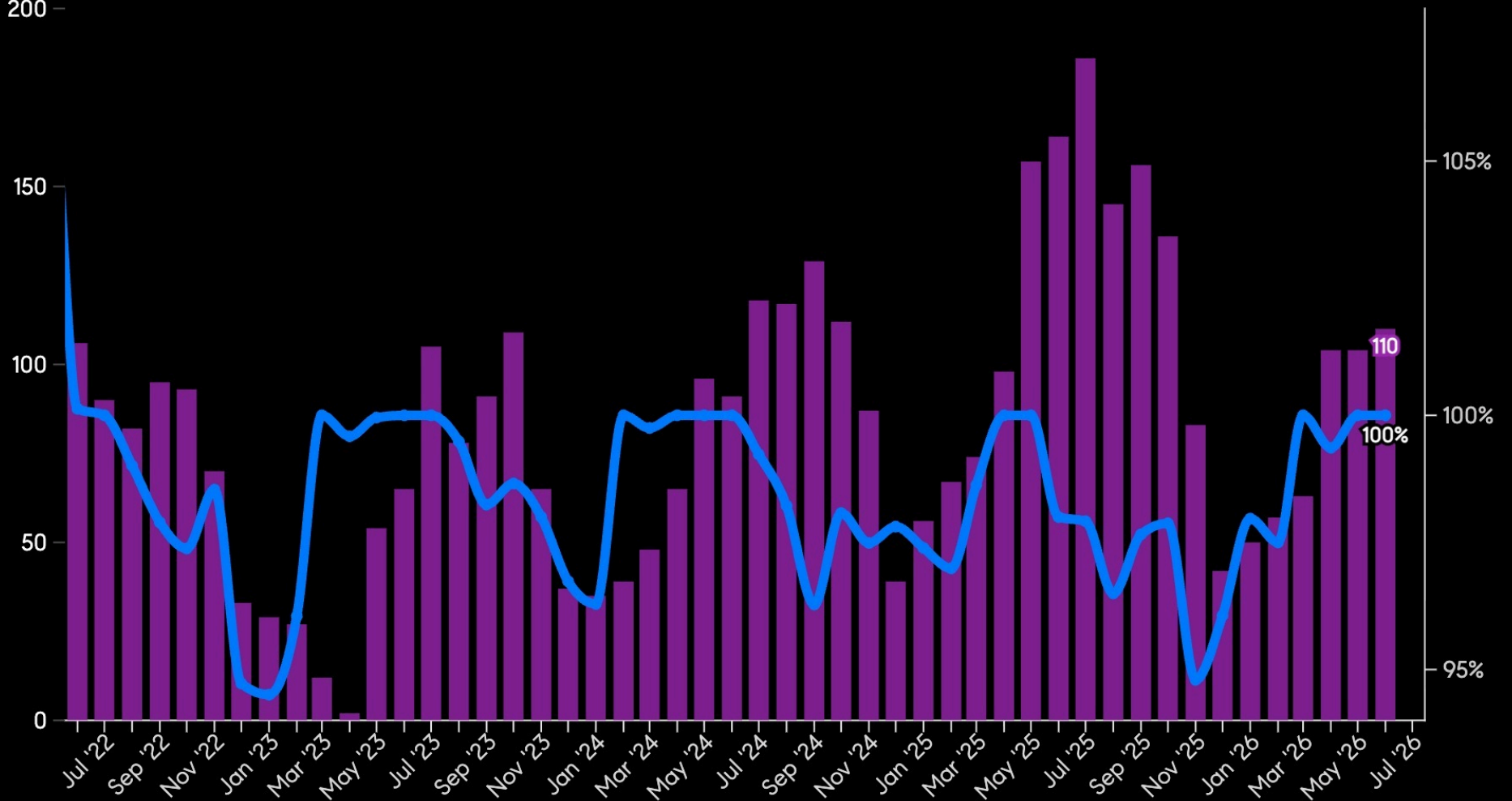
Sale-To-List-Price Ratio

Santa Cruz County

Total Price Reductions

200 —

Sale-To-List-Price Ratio

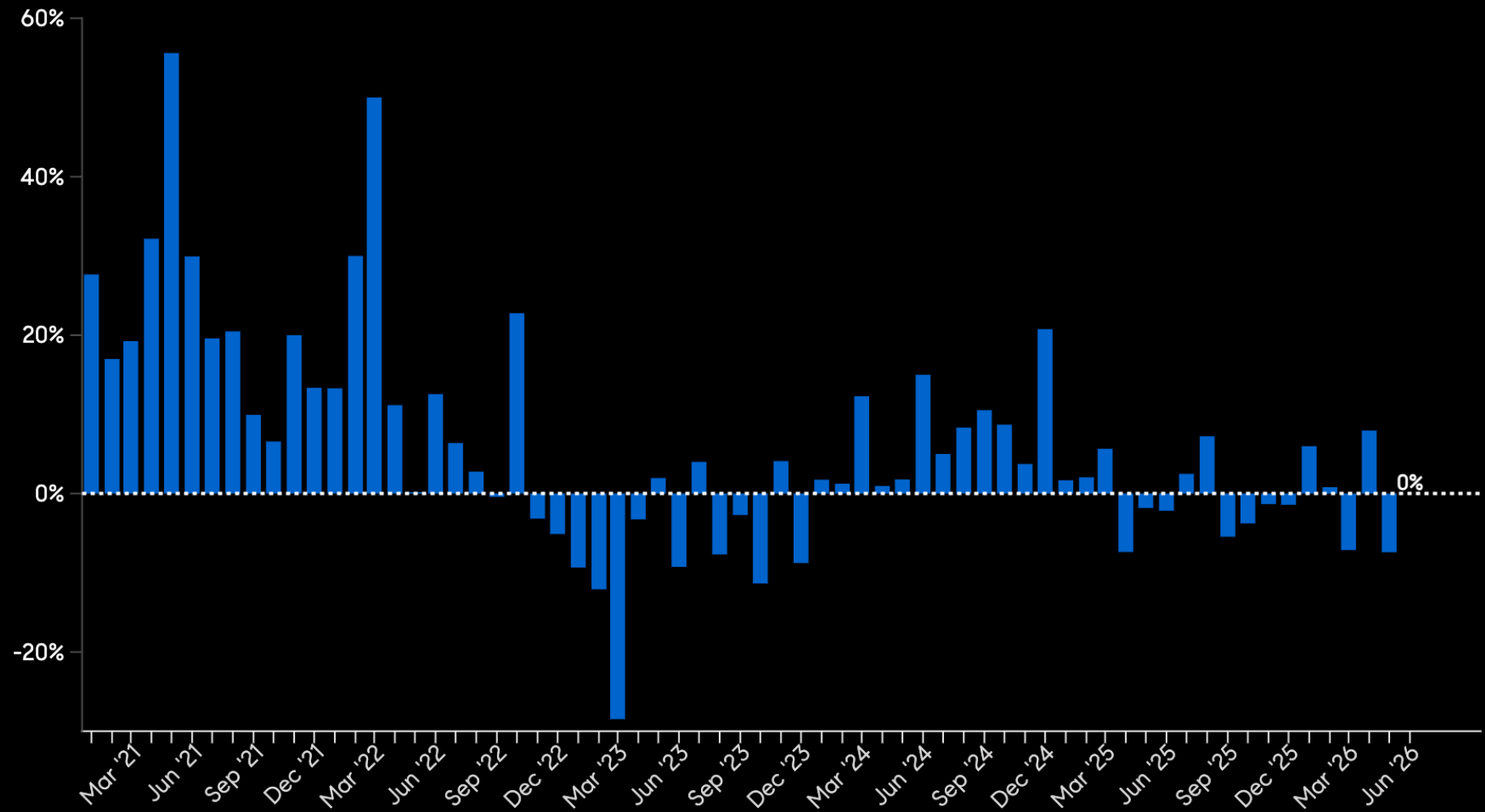


Source: Compass via MLS · Single Family Homes

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Median Price Year Over Year Change

Santa Cruz County



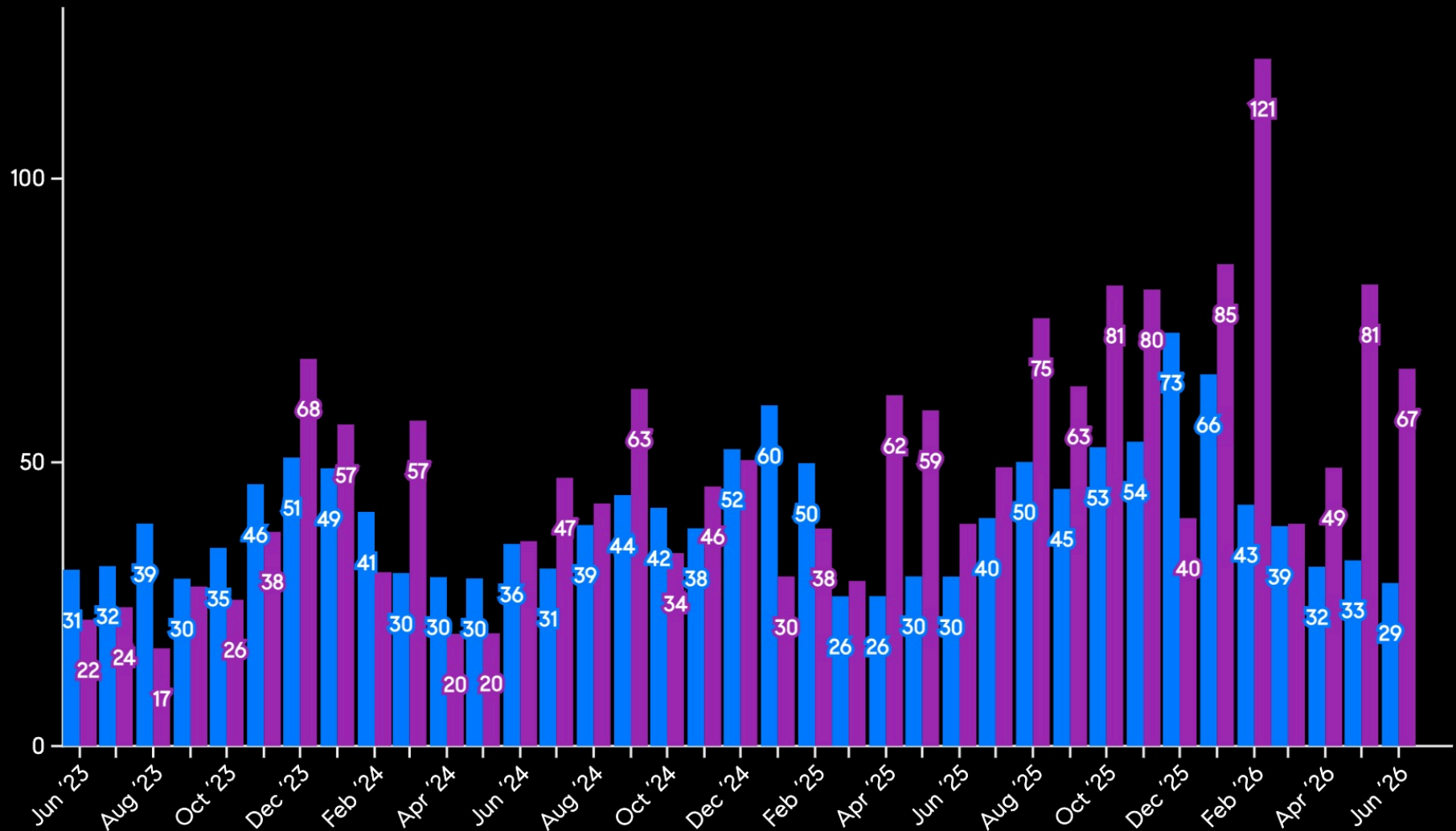
Source: Compass via MLS

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Average Days on Market

Santa Cruz County

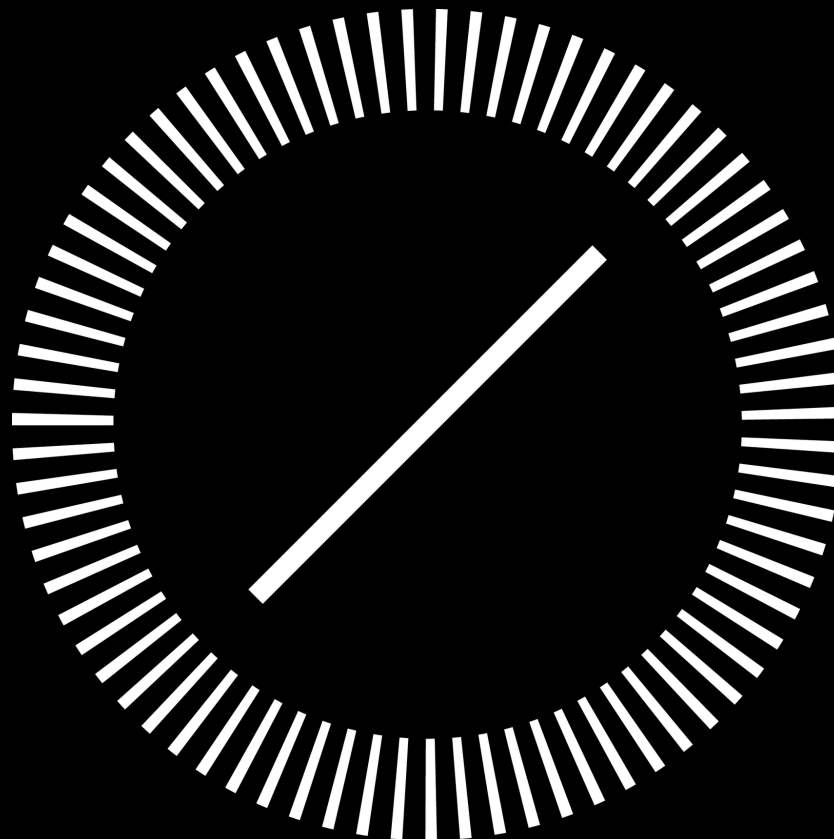
Single Family Condo



Local Santa Cruz County Communities

June 12 month rolling average for local single family homes

City	Median Sale Price	MDN % Change	PPSFT	Closed Sales	Closed % Change	Pendings
Aptos	\$1,467,500	-0.09	\$800	245	0.24	248
Ben Lomond	\$992,500	0.05	\$579	54	-0.23	53
Boulder Creek	\$707,500	0.02	\$507	114	0.07	118
Capitola	\$1,650,000	-0.08	\$1,148	57	0.58	55
Felton	\$839,000	0.02	\$597	71	-0.19	70
La Selva Beach	\$1,910,000	0.32	\$979	16	0.14	15
Santa Cruz	\$1,550,000	0.03	\$936	407	-0.02	408
Scotts Valley	\$1,400,000	0	\$705	100	0.05	106
Soquel	\$1,450,000	-0.05	\$838	60	0.15	62
Watsonville	\$849,000	0.01	\$561	215	0.04	216



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