

# WHY LOWER INTEREST RATES DON'T ALWAYS MEAN BETTER HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

## FACTORS AFFECTING AFFORDABILITY:

- Affordability hinges on the house-price-to-income ratio and mortgage rates.
- Realtors' Housing Affordability Index (HAI) measures if a typical family qualifies for a mortgage on a median-priced home.
- When interest rates go up, house prices often go down, which affects affordability in different ways.

#### IMPACT OF INTEREST RATES ON AFFORDABILITY:

- Larger-than-expected rate cuts may not always lead to improved affordability.
- While lower rates reduce mortgage payments, they can also fuel demand, driving up house prices and potentially offsetting affordability gains.

#### **IMPACT ON HOMEOWNERS:**

- Most existing homeowners have locked in low mortgage rates and remain largely unaffected by rate fluctuations.
- The impact of rising rates is more keenly felt by prospective homebuyers entering the market.

#### **INDIRECT EFFECTS OF MONETARY POLICY:**

• Monetary policy changes influence mortgage rates and house prices. Easier policies may lower rates but could also fuel demand, raising house prices.

### **CONCLUSION:**

• Lower rates don't always ensure better affordability. Analyzing combined effects of rates and house prices is essential for a comprehensive understanding of affordability trends.

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