

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING AGENDA



City of Lake Stevens Vision Statement

We are a thriving community that promotes a vibrant economy, preserves natural beauty, and supports an exceptional quality of life for all.

February 5, 2025 - 6:00 PM

**HYBRID - Live in Conference Room A in Building A at City Hall (1812 Main St.) or
Remote via Zoom
Join Zoom Meeting:**

City of Lake Stevens is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

[Zoom Link](#)

or call in at: 253-215-8782 Meeting ID: 87424175963 Passcode: 568710

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Roll Call**
- 3. Guest Business**
- 4. Action Items**
 - A. Approve minutes of Planning Commission Special Meeting of January 8, 2025
- 5. Public Hearing**
 - A. Minor Revisions to 2024 Comprehensive Plan David Levitan
- 6. Discussion Items**
 - A. Planning Commission Training David Levitan
- 7. Commissioner Report**
- 8. Planning Director's Report**
 - A. Planning & Community Development 2024 Annual Report
 - B. Planning Commission Extended Agenda
- 9. Adjourn**

THE PUBLIC IS INVITED TO ATTEND

The City of Lake Stevens strives to provide accessible opportunities for individuals with disabilities. Please contact Human Resources, City of Lake Stevens ADA Coordinator, (425) 622-9400, at least five business days prior to any City meeting or event if any accommodations are needed. For TDD users, please use the state's toll-free relay service, (800) 833-6384, and ask the operator to dial the City of Lake Stevens City Hall number.

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



Agenda Date: 2/5/2025

Subject: Approve minutes of Planning Commission Special Meeting of January 8, 2025

Contact Person/Department: , Community Development

Budget Impact:

Legal Review: No

RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION REQUESTED:

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

APPLICABLE CITY POLICIES:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. 1-8-25 Planning Commission Special Meeting MInutes

PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES



HYBRID/REMOTE AND IN PERSON AT THE MILL

January 8, 2025

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 PM by Chair Connor Davis

MEMBERS PRESENT: Commissioner Bruce Morton, Commissioner Michael Duerr, Vice-Chair Janice Huxford, Commissioner Jennifer Davis, Council Liaison Ryan Donoghue

MEMBERS ABSENT: Jennifer Davis

STAFF PRESENT: Community Development Director Russ Wright, Senior Planner David Levitan, Planning Manager Christi Schmidt, Administrative Assistant Dawn Erickson

OTHERS PRESENT: No additional attendees

Chair Davis called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Roll Call: All were present except Commissioner Jennifer Davis. Vice-Chair Huxford moved and Commissioner Packard seconded that the absence be excused; motion carried unanimously.

Guest business: None

Approval of Minutes: Minutes of November 6, 2024 were approved as written. Commissioner Morton made the motion, and Commissioner Packard seconded; the motion was carried unanimously.

Election of Officers: Janice Huxford was unanimously elected as Chair, and Jennifer Davis was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair.

Discussion Items: Senior Planner Levitan thanked the Commissioners for their feedback from the survey distributed the previous week (Attachment 1). It will provide for a more substantial discussion at the joint meeting with the City Council on January 21, 2025. He referenced Attachment two, a *draft* lookahead to keep the Commissioners informed on upcoming topics to be covered and what drives the schedule (such as statutory deadlines). After a question about the specific purpose of the joint meeting, Director Wright stated that the purpose of the joint meeting was to bring the two boards together and to recognize the work done by the Planning Commission. Planning Commission is an advisory body, with Council being a regulatory body that passes legislation through ordinance. It was suggested that the role of the Council Liaison be redefined and how the information that goes to City Council is discerned. Director Wright said

the flow of information from PC meetings to Council via staff and the Council liaison is currently very good. Still, it would not be inappropriate for the PC Chair or Vice-Chair to attend Council meetings and share their perspective directly with Council regarding projects for which Planning Commission has made a recommendation.

The Commissioners also requested to be kept more informed on Capital Projects so that they are more prepared to answer questions from community members.

Commissioner Morton would like to discuss UGA expansion and past expansion requests that the county has denied. Staff informed the commissioners that the County Council only considers requests once every five years. It might be helpful to understand the reason(s) why the County denies requests for UGA expansion.

New Chair Huxford asked what the Planning Commission could ask for/from the City Council regarding information-sharing so that the Commissioners can stay informed and inform inquiring community members. The Commissioners want to avoid the same type of rumors around the recent Comprehensive Plan zoning amendment. Director Wright suggested a new agenda item where the Liaison could spend five minutes per meeting to provide Council updates. He also offered to provide staff time to train Commissioners on how to find information when asked questions by the community. Senior Planner Levitan agreed that training might be valuable. Commissioner Duerr suggested it would be helpful to review the scope and authority of the Planning Commission. Then, during the joint session, how the Council's priorities align with the Planning Commission's priorities can be discussed. It was agreed that legislative deadlines and community impacts would determine the priorities of the Planning Commission.

Commissioner Connor Davis emphasized that transparency on council actions is critical and would go a long way toward positive communication between the Council and the Planning Commission, citing the Chapel Hill property sale as an example. Director Wright again pointed to the defined roles of the two bodies. He requested some time to consider options.

Director Wright summarized that the two actionable items for the joint meeting are 1) better communication flow between the council and PC and 2) defining the Council's project priorities. He also suggested future surveys to get feedback before meetings on various topics throughout the year.

Commissioner's Reports: None

Director's Report: Director Wright shared that the 2024 department report is in progress and will be shared with the Commissioners when completed. Snohomish County Tomorrow is forming exploratory meetings to improve communication and consider other topical areas. The City is looking to incorporate AI into workflows this year and will soon begin testing this.

Adjourn: Motion by Commissioner Morton to adjourn the meeting at 6:53 p.m. The motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully,

Dawn Erickson, Administrative Assistant

PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



Agenda Date: 2/5/2025

Subject: Minor Revisions to 2024 Comprehensive Plan

Contact Person/Department: David Levitan, Community Development

Budget Impact:

Legal Review: No

RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION REQUESTED:

Hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to City Council to approve minor changes to the Housing Element (Attachment 1) and Land Capacity Analysis (Attachment 2) of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan (LUA2023-0195), which was adopted by City Council Ordinance 1188 on October 22, 2024. The amendments are shown as track changes and address comments from the Department of Commerce, which requested that the city 1) provide a quantitative analysis of emergency housing needs in Lake Stevens and 2) expand the discussion of adequate provisions for housing affordability.

The City Council is scheduled to hold a public hearing on February 25, 2025 to consider the Planning Commission's recommendation. No changes are proposed to any other chapters/appendices or the future land use map of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan as adopted by Ordinance 1188, and no changes are proposed to the concurrent rezones adopted by Ordinance 1189.

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

At their [October 2, 2024 meeting](#), the Planning Commission held a public hearing on the 2024 Comprehensive Plan and Concurrent Rezones. After continuing the hearing to an [October 9, 2024 special meeting](#) to allow for additional public comment, the Planning Commission [made a recommendation](#) to City Council to approve the 2024 Comprehensive Plan and Concurrent Rezones. The City Council held a separate public hearing during their [October 22, 2024 meeting](#), at the conclusion of which they approved motions to adopt [Ordinance 1188](#) (2024 Comprehensive Plan) and [Ordinance](#)

1189 (2024 Concurrent Rezones).

As required by state law ([RCW 36.70A.106](#)), the city submitted the adopted ordinances to the Washington State Department of Commerce (“Commerce”) within 10 days of final adoption. In reviewing the ordinances, Commerce staff noted that based on [updated Commerce guidance](#) (issued in September 2024), all jurisdictions are required to prepare a quantitative analysis of emergency housing needs. The city had initially used the August 2023 Commerce guidance document, which noted that jurisdictions that allow emergency housing in any zone where hotels are a permitted use were exempt from the quantitative analysis requirement.

Commerce staff also requested that the city’s Housing Element (Chapter 3) and Land Capacity Analysis (Appendix B) include a more detailed discussion of adequate provisions for housing affordability to more clearly address the requirements of [Section RCW 36.70A.070\(2\)\(d\)](#) of the Growth Management Act (GMA).

In response, staff has made amendments to pages 3-10 through 3-11 of the Housing Element (Attachment 1) and pages 1 through 4 and 7 through 14 of the Land Capacity Analysis (Attachment 2) in track changes format. No other changes to the 2024 Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Map (as adopted by Ordinance 1188) or Concurrent Rezones (as adopted by Ordinance 1189) are proposed. In general, the changes in Attachments 1 and 2 demonstrate that:

1. The city has adequate zoned capacity to meet its allocation of emergency housing (304 beds); and
2. The city will need to adopt some minor code amendments to reduce barriers to the adequate provision of emergency housing, permanent supportive housing (PSH), and housing affordable between 0-80% of area median income (AMI).

Commerce staff has reviewed the proposed changes and indicated that they will bring the plan into full compliance with the GMA (Attachment 3).

[RCW 36.70A.130\(2\)\(a\)](#) generally limits comprehensive plan amendments to once per year. However, because the proposed changes are intended to address Commerce comments to bring the plan into compliance with the GMA, the City Attorney has determined that the amendments may occur outside of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan docket, so long as they are limited to amendments to address the Commerce comments.

Per LSMC 14.16C.040, comprehensive plan amendments are Type VI (legislative) land use applications, and subject to the public noticing requirements in [Chapter 14.16B LSMC](#), Part VI. On January 24, the city issued [the notice of public hearing](#) for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan, which was posted at City Hall, on the city website, and in the

Everett Herald and emailed to parties of record. As of January 30, city staff has not received any public comments.

The proposal is also subject to review as a non-project action under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA). Following the completion of an environmental checklist and an evaluation of the original proposal's potential environmental impacts, on September 23 the city issued a [Determination of Nonsignificance](#) (DNS). City staff has determined that none of the proposed amendments in Attachments 1 and 2 would result in environmental impacts beyond those evaluated under the September 23, 2024 DNS. Following, the city issued an [Addendum to the DNS](#) on January 27, 2025.

Review Criteria

Per LSMC 14.16C.040(c), amendments to the Comprehensive Plan shall be in conformance with the Lake Stevens vision, consistency requirements, and revisions and amendments sections of [Chapter 1 \(Introduction\)](#) of the 2015 Comprehensive Plan, which remain the same in the 2024 plan. As part of its October 9, 2024 recommendation to City Council, the Planning Commission determined that the plan met the review criteria. The proposed minor changes have been analyzed against the same criteria:

1. *The amendment must be consistent with the Growth Management Act and other applicable State laws;*

Response: The plan is subject to review by the Department of Commerce for compliance with the Growth Management Act (GMA), which necessitated the changes proposed as part of this amendment. This criterion is met.

2. *The amendment must be consistent with the applicable County-wide Planning Policies;*

Response: The plan as proposed (including the amendments to Attachments 1 and 2) is consistent with all Countywide Planning Policies. This criterion is met.

3. *The amendment must not be in conflict with the Community Vision or other goals, policies and provisions of the Comprehensive Plan;*

Response: The proposal is to make minor refinements to the 2024 plan adopted by Ordinance 1188, which was previously determined to be consistent with and help establish the policy foundation for implementing the Community Vision. This criterion is met.

4. *The amendment can be accommodated by all applicable public services and facilities, including transportation;*

Response: Chapters 7 (Public Services), 8 (Transportation), and 9 (Capital Facilities) of the 2024 plan evaluate the ability of public services and capital facilities (including transportation) to meet the future needs of the community based on the adopted growth targets. Proposed improvements in the adopted capital facilities plans for partner agencies and utility districts will provide the needed public services and facilities to accommodate projected growth through 2044. This criterion is met.

5. *The amendment will change the development or use potential of a site or area without creating significant adverse impacts on existing sensitive land uses, businesses, or residents;*

Response: The 2024 Comprehensive Plan is a non-project action that is not specific to any individual site. The SEPA environmental checklist prepared for the proposal determined that there would not be any significant adverse impacts, and a Determination of Non-significance (and subsequent addendum) was issued for the proposal. This criterion is met.

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6. *The amendment will result in long-term benefits to the community as a whole, and is in the best interest of the community.*

Response: The 2024 Comprehensive Plan provides a roadmap for future growth and development in Lake Stevens, as well as community priorities such as natural resource protection, climate change adaptation and mitigation, recreational opportunities, a multimodal transportation system, and quality public services and capital facilities. This criterion is met.

Public Comments and Planning Commission Recommendation

Following a short staff presentation on the proposed amendments to the adopted 2024 Comprehensive Plan, members of the public will have an opportunity to provide oral testimony (in person or via Zoom) on the proposed changes. As the remainder of the plan remains unchanged from version adopted by City Council Ordinance 1188, and the changes do not impact the concurrent rezones approved by Ordinance 1189, public comments should be limited to the proposed amendments. Commissioners will then have an initial opportunity to ask additional questions on the proposal.

At the conclusion of the February 5 meeting, **staff recommends that the Planning Commission forward a recommendation to City Council to approve the changes to the adopted 2024 Comprehensive Plan, as shown in Attachments 1 and 2.**

Next Steps

The City Council is scheduled to hold a public hearing on February 25, 2025 to consider the Planning Commission's recommendation and to amend Ordinance 1188.

APPLICABLE CITY POLICIES:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment 1 - Updated Housing Element (Chapter 3)
2. Attachment 2 - Updated Land Capacity Analysis (Appendix B)
3. Attachment 3 - Commerce Review Email

Chapter 3

Housing



A Vision for Housing

The city of Lake Stevens will provide a fair and equitable regulatory framework that supports the creation of high-quality and diverse housing types that meets the needs and preferences of the community across all income levels and demographics.

INTRODUCTION

The Housing Element serves as a roadmap for providing housing opportunities for current and future Lake Stevens residents at all income levels and across a variety of housing types, while recognizing the unique characteristics of the community and natural environment. It is largely guided by Statewide Planning Goal 3 as outlined in RCW 36.70A.020, and includes:

- A description of the local, regional and state context;
- An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs;
- Goals, policies and objectives;
- An evaluation of new state requirements and growth targets;
- Provisions for the preservation, improvement and development of housing;
- Identification of sufficient land for housing; and
- Provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.

This element examines Lake Stevens' current housing inventory, evaluates its condition, and illustrates how housing options addressing the diverse needs of the community can be accommodated over the next 20 years. While Lake Stevens is not mandated or expected to directly construct housing units, it is the city's responsibility to facilitate and advocate for housing development by both private and public sectors through the city's planning frameworks and regulations.

As discussed in more detail later in this chapter, Lake Stevens has a demonstrated need for a variety of housing types, including single-family residences, middle housing, accessory dwelling units (ADUs), multifamily units, emergency housing, permanent supportive

housing and transitional housing. This element provides an overview of housing data and highlights specific trends relevant to Lake Stevens and utilizes numerous sources, including:

- *U.S. Census Bureau's 2022 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates*
- *2016-2020 US HUD Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)*
- *2023 Lake Stevens' Housing Action Plan (HAP) and Housing Needs Analysis (HNA)*
- *Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM)*
- *2023 Snohomish County Housing Characteristics and Needs Report (HO-5 Report)*
- *2021 Snohomish County Buildable Lands Report*

Housing supply and affordability is a regional issue, with each jurisdiction required to do their fair share to ensure they meet the future needs of their community while working collaboratively with neighboring jurisdictions. In Lake Stevens, the city works with the Department of Commerce (Commerce), the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC), and Snohomish County to analyze trends and needs to help inform Lake Stevens on how best to plan for future growth in a sustainable, equitable, and collaborative manner.

This chapter's intent is to assess current housing trends, present policies, and craft strategies that will help meet its 2044 population and housing growth targets at a variety of different income levels. As detailed in the Land Use Element (Chapter 2), Lake Stevens has the zoned capacity to meet its 2044 population and housing targets, with the adoption of the proposed map amendments in Figures 2.4 and 2.5. Lake Stevens' largest existing deficit of housing is that which serves households making less than 80% of the area median income (AMI), most notably at or below 30% of AMI (extremely low income). Lake Stevens will require a combination of policies, regulations, programs and partnerships to meet these needs.

PLANNING CONTEXT

State Planning

Per RCW 36.70A.070(2), the Housing Element is one of the six mandatory elements required by the Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA has seen extensive changes related to housing since this element was last updated in 2015. Most prominent among these changes was the adoption of House Bill 1220 (2021), which revised the language in the GMA to require jurisdictions to “plan for and accommodate” housing affordable to all income levels,

based on growth targets at a variety of income levels. HB 1220 also added requirements related to the provision of permanent, transitional, and emergency housing, which are discussed later in this chapter. Overall, the GMA requires comprehensive plans to:

- Include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs that identifies the number of housing units necessary to manage projected growth;
- Include a statement of goals, policies, objectives, and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing, including single-family residences, middle housing, and multi-family housing at all income levels;
- Identify and amend policies, regulations, and implementation measures that may result in racially disparate impacts, displacement and exclusion in housing;
- Identify sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, permanent supportive housing and emergency housing, transitional housing, and group homes and foster care facilities; and
- Make adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community.

In addition, 2023 saw the adoption of middle housing and accessory dwelling unit (ADU) bills (HB 1110 and HB 1337) that aim to further expand infill housing opportunities, which will be an important source of future housing given the city's lack of vacant land. These bills focus on increasing the potential supply of moderate-income and market rate housing in the region at moderate densities. As a Tier 2 jurisdiction as defined by House Bill 1110, Lake Stevens is required to allow at least two dwelling units per lot that is residentially zoned, and at least four units per lot that is either within ¼ mile of major transit stops or provides at least one affordable unit. HB 1337 provides the ability to develop up to two accessory dwelling units (ADUs) per residential lots. The city amended its development code in March 2024 to comply with both HB 1110 and 1337 and has factored this additional capacity into its analysis of future housing needs.

Regional Planning

PSRC’s VISION 2050 plan provides a regional strategy for housing in the four-county Puget Sound region. VISION 2050’s policies are based on the regional growth strategy and emphasize locating housing near growth and employment centers and along transportation corridors.

Housing

Goal: The region preserves, improves, and expands its housing stock to provide a range of affordable, accessible, healthy, and safe housing choices to every resident. The region continues to promote fair and equal access to housing for all people

Vision 2050 Housing Goal (Source: PSRC)

Key housing-related elements of this strategy include:

- Designing diverse housing to align with the Regional Growth Strategy, ensuring a balance of job opportunities and housing for current and projected needs.
- Providing a spectrum of housing types for all income levels, especially prioritizing low- to middle-income households, and ensure an equitable regional distribution.
- Enhancing housing options, especially affordable ones, in areas near transit infrastructure, bridging the density gap between single-family and multifamily units.
- Promoting homeownership opportunities, particularly for low- to middle-income groups, while addressing historical disparities faced by communities of color.
- Encouraging jurisdictions to streamline development standards and foster inter-jurisdictional collaborations and public-private partnerships for better housing solutions.
- Proactively identifying and addressing potential displacement risks for marginalized communities, deploying strategies to minimize associated impacts.

Countywide Planning

In advance of each Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update cycle, Snohomish County adopts an updated set of countywide planning policies (CPPs), which must be consistent with the GMA and Vision 2050. The current CPP (as amended in 2021) for housing reads:

“Snohomish County and its cities shall promote fair and equitable access to safe, affordable, and accessible housing options for every resident through the expansion of a diverse housing stock that is in close proximity to employment, services, and transportation options.”

The countywide planning policies identify numerous challenges that the county and local jurisdictions face over the next 20 years. These include:

- Adequate supply of affordable housing for all household types, income levels, and housing unit types;
- Adequate supply of quality housing options in proximity or satisfactory access to places of employment;
- Community concerns about density and design;
- Adequate resources for, and equitable distribution of, low-income, emergency, transitional and permanent supportive housing;
- Housing types suitable for changing household demographics and an aging population; and
- Maintenance of existing affordable housing stock, including mobile home and manufactured housing.

In 2023, the county issued its Housing Characteristics and Needs Report, also known as the HO-5 Report, which requires the county and cities to create a housing report that:

- Describes the measures that jurisdictions have taken to implement or support housing CPPs;
- Quantifies and maps existing characteristics that are relevant to the results prescribed in the housing CPPs; and
- Identifies the number of housing units necessary to meet the various housing needs of the project population.

Housing growth targets for Snohomish County jurisdictions were derived from the regional growth strategy identified in Vision 2050 and allocated to individual jurisdictions and unincorporated areas following a collaborative process through Snohomish County Tomorrow. For the 2020-2044 planning period, Lake Stevens was allocated an additional 4,915 additional housing units. As shown in Figure 3.1, these housing units are allocated at specific household income levels, and the city must demonstrate the capacity to

accommodate housing types affordable at each income range, based on guidance from the Washington State Department of Commerce.

Overall, the city must demonstrate adequate zoned capacity to accommodate the following projected housing needs based on a percentage of area median income (AMI), which as of 2024 was \$150,700 for a family of four and \$105,400 for a single person:

- 1,168 units at 0-30% AMI (Extremely Low Income)
 - Includes 456 Units of Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
- 820 units at 30-50% AMI (Very Low Income)
- 549 units at 50-80% AMI (Low Income)
- 458 Units at 100-120% AMI (Moderate), provided as middle housing units
- 1,920 units at 120% AMI or greater (Market Rate), provided in SFR units
- 304 beds of emergency housing

For permanent supportive housing (PSH) – permanent housing with integrated supportive services that aim to provide housing stability to households with at least one member with a disability - and other extremely low (0-30% AMI) and very low income (30-50%) households, jurisdictions are expected to provide this zoned capacity via multifamily housing, primarily apartments.

The HAP and subsequent analysis show that city has adequate zoned capacity at 50% and above of AMI, which can be met through a combination of detached single-family homes, duplexes, middle housing (triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage housing) and accessory dwelling units (ADUs). It is the projected need at lower income levels that required the city to consider both map amendments and policy changes to accommodate its full spectrum of housing needs. The proposed map amendments incorporated into Chapter 2 include several targeted map amendments and concurrent rezones to provide more multifamily housing (apartments and condos) opportunities. These include:

- Rezoning areas within and adjacent to the 20th St SE Corridor subarea to Multifamily Residential (MFR), most notably the east side of 99th Ave SE north of 20th St SE and the south side of 20th St SE west of Cavalero Road;
- Rezoning areas within and adjacent to the Lake Stevens Center subarea to MFR; and

- Rezoning parcels within and adjacent to the Downtown Lake Stevens subarea.

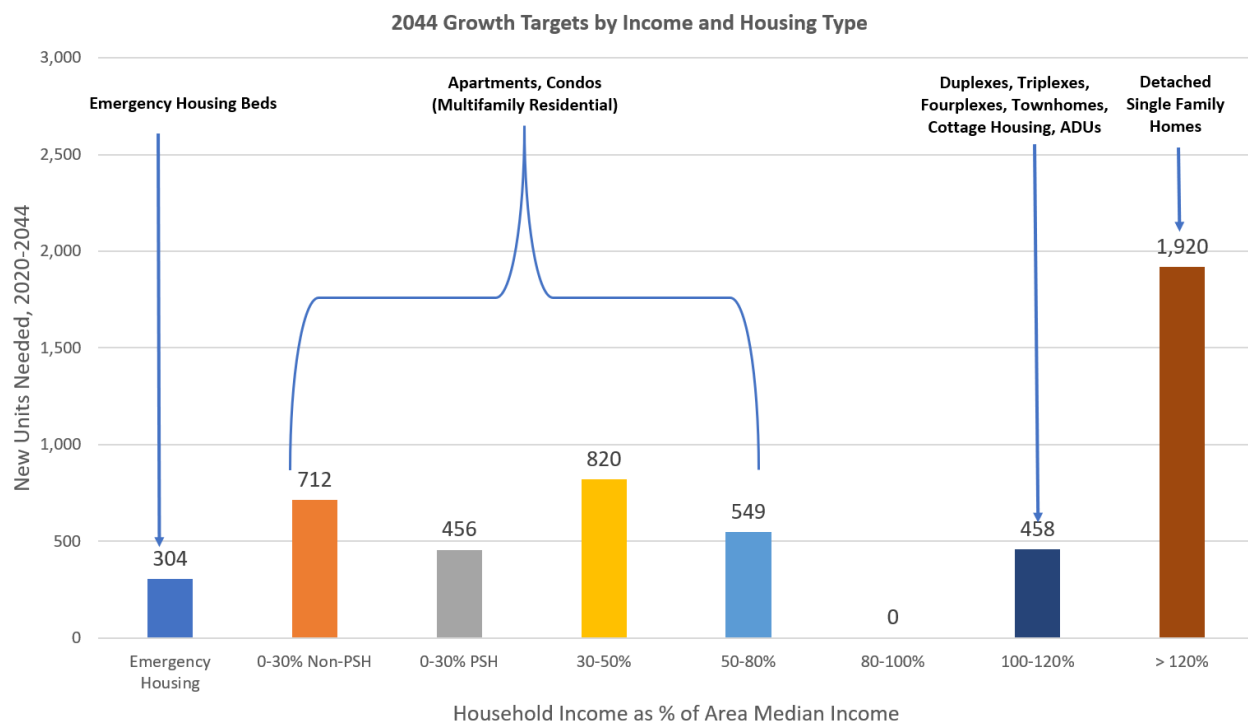


Figure 3.1 – 2044 Growth Targets by Income and Associated Housing Types

Source: Snohomish County, City of Lake Stevens

The HO-5 Report prioritizes cost-efficient housing production, exploring diverse infrastructure funding methods ranging from existing revenue streams to impact fees and bonds, ensuring they mirror the cost of new public amenities without unduly inflating housing costs. A cornerstone of the county's approach is the promotion of long-term affordable housing. This involves deploying a suite of incentives, from zoning changes to density bonuses. Additionally, metropolitan and core cities, especially those with high transit connectivity, are tasked with implementing strategies that protect historically marginalized communities from displacement, ensuring that both residents and neighborhood-based businesses are preserved and supported.

Lake Stevens Planning

As the demographic patterns in the county change, housing demand and needs will also continue to change. Over the past 15 years, the city has undertaken extensive subarea planning efforts as well as adopted zoning and development code amendments that have increased housing options, densities, and capacity in the city. These include code

amendments in 2020 that expanded middle housing opportunities in most residential zones, well ahead of the adoption of HB 1110 and HB 1337 in 2023. These regulations support a shift from lower-density single-family housing to moderate-density housing and more efficient land use, which provides housing opportunities to a broader range of incomes.

In 2023, the city adopted a Housing Action Plan (HAP) that serves as the housing needs analysis (HNA) and general policy foundation for this Housing Element and is included as Appendix G to the Comprehensive Plan. The HAP, along with the HO-5 Report, showed that the city had adequate zoned capacity to meet its overall housing growth targets and those at higher income ranges (80% of AMI and above), but that additional zoned capacity was needed to accommodate housing units at types affordable at below 80% of AMI, most notably apartment units and other multifamily residential housing (Figure 3.2).

The Department of Commerce provides guidance on relating zone categories to housing types and income levels. For Puget Sound and other higher-cost communities, this relationship is shown in Table 3.1.

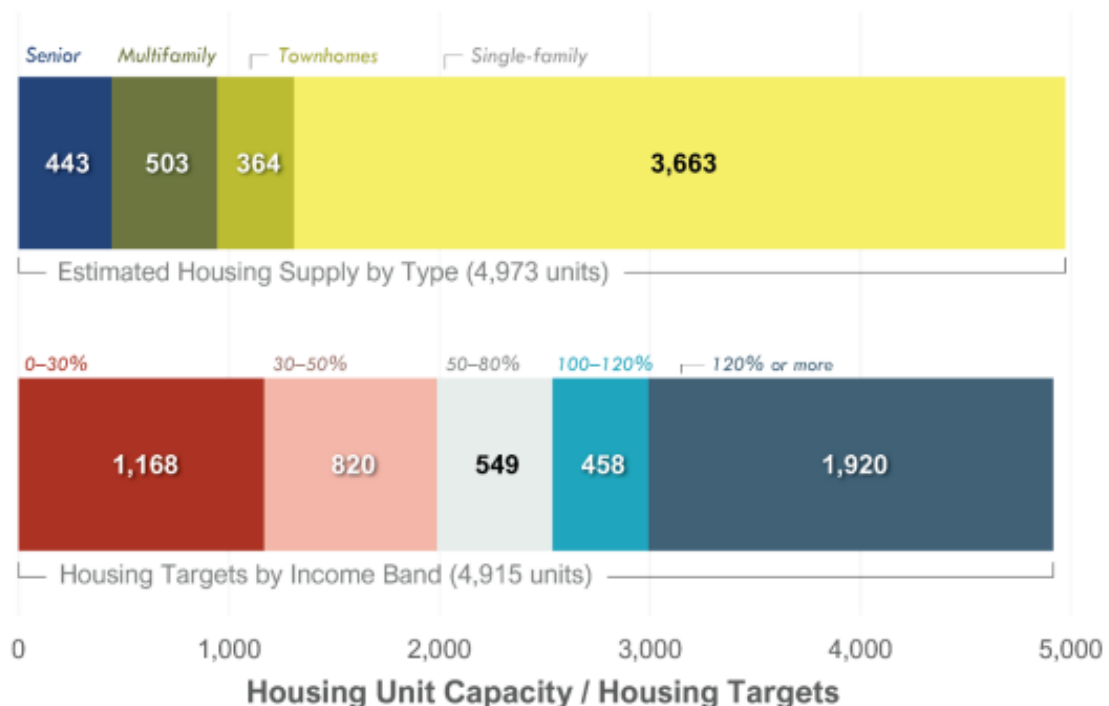


Figure 3.2 – Comparison of 2021 Zoned Capacity to 2044 Growth Targets

Source: City of Lake Stevens, Snohomish County BLR

Zone category	Typical housing types allowed	Lowest potential income level served		Assumed affordability level for capacity analysis
		Market rate	With subsidies and/or incentives	
Low Density	Detached single family homes	Higher income (>120% AMI)	Not feasible at scale*	Higher income (>120% AMI)
Moderate Density	Townhomes, duplex, triplex, quadplex	Higher income (>120% AMI)	Not typically feasible at scale*	Higher income (>120% AMI)
Low-Rise Multifamily	Walk-up apartments, condominiums (2-3-floors)	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)	Extremely low, Very low, and Low-income (0-80% AMI)	Low income (0-80% AMI) and PSH
Mid-Rise Multifamily	Apartments, condominiums	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)	Extremely low, Very low, and Low-income (0-80% AMI)	Low income (0-80% AMI) and PSH
High-Rise/Tower	Apartments, condominiums	Higher income (>120% AMI)	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)
ADUs (all zones)	ADUs on developed residential lots	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)	N/A	Moderate income (>80-120% AMI)

Table 3.1 – Housing Types by Income in Puget Sound

Source: Dept of Commerce

As required by state law, the city completed a land capacity analysis (LCA) to evaluate its ability to meet its housing growth targets at individual income bands. The LCA (Appendix B) determined that the city did not have adequate zoned capacity to meet its future needs at the extremely low (0-30% AMI), very low (30-50% AMI), and low (50-80% AMI) income bands, including permanent supportive housing (PSH).

Adequate Provisions

As summarized in Tables 3.2 and 3.3 and discussed in more detail in Appendix B, the proposed land use and zoning map amendments reflected in Figures 2.4 and 2.5 (Chapter 2) would allow the city to meet its 2044 growth targets at all income bands. The LCA ~~also~~ initially ~~noted~~s that the city ~~was~~is not required to quantify the capacity needed to meet its emergency housing needs so long as it allows emergency housing in all zones where hotels are permitted, which was based on 2023 guidance from the Department of Commerce. However, based on revised Commerce feedback in November 2024, the city updated the LCA in January 2025 to include a quantitative analysis of emergency housing needs in the city.

Appendix B also includes Adequate Provisions Checklists to meet the requirements of RCW 36.70A.070(2) by identifying and assessing potential barriers to the production of housing units that the city has historically not seen sufficient supply of to meet projected demand. These include 1) emergency housing and permanent supportive housing (Table 5) and 2)

Low-Rise and Mid-Rise Housing (Table 6), which are the assumed development type for housing at or below 80% AMI, per Table 3.1 above. The checklists in Appendix B build upon recent housing policy and implementation work, including the 2023 Housing Action Plan and 2024 code amendments to comply with HB 1110 (middle housing) and HB 1337 (accessory dwelling units). Adequate provisions checklists were not prepared for housing types where significant barriers do not exist (primarily due to recent code updates to comply with state legislation), such as ADUs and middle housing.

Income Band(s) (% AMI)	Housing Types Serving Range	Associated Zoning Districts	2044 Growth Target	Current (2023) Capacity	Surplus or (Deficit)
0-30% (non-PSH) 30-50%	Apartments, Condos	MFR, CD, MU, MUN, CBD, PBD (PBD to be eliminated)	2,081	1,780	(301)
0-30% (PSH)	PSH	MFR, CD, MU, MUN, CBD, PBD (PBD to be eliminated)	456	0	(456)
100-120%	Duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage housing, ADUs	R4, R6, R8-12	458	1,829	1,371
120% and above	Detached single-family residences	WR, R4, R6, R8-12	1,920	2,930	1,010

Table 3.2 – Housing Types by Income Band with Projected Surplus or Deficit

Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Net Acres	Assumed Density	Projected Increase in MFR	Projected Reduction in SFR
R4	MFR	15.1	20 un/acre	302	(60)
R8-12	MFR	12.8	20 un/acre	256	(102)
R8-12	CD	5.8	30 un/acre	174	(47)
R4	CBD	0.3	30 un/acre	9	(1)
R6	CBD	1.1	30 un/acre	33	(7)
Total				774	(217)

Table 3.3 – Proposed Zoning Map Amendments to Meet 2044 Growth Targets

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

Population Data

According to the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM), the populations of Snohomish County and the larger four-county region both grew by approximately 20% between 2010 and 2023 (Figure 3.3). Lake Stevens has witnessed even more rapid population growth during this period, growing from just under 30,000 residents (which accounts for a series of annexations between 2006 and 2009) to 41,260 in 2023, an increase of nearly 40% (Figure 3.4).

In the past decade, the city has methodically annexed lands within the Urban Growth Area (UGA), adhering to a vision of establishing "One Community Around the Lake." Approximately 400 acres remain within the city's UGA, situated to the northeast and southeast, which are available for annexation. While annexations have played a major role in the city's population growth (including a large annexation in 2021 that added approximately 3,000 residents), new housing production has also contributed significantly to this growth, as discussed in the next section.

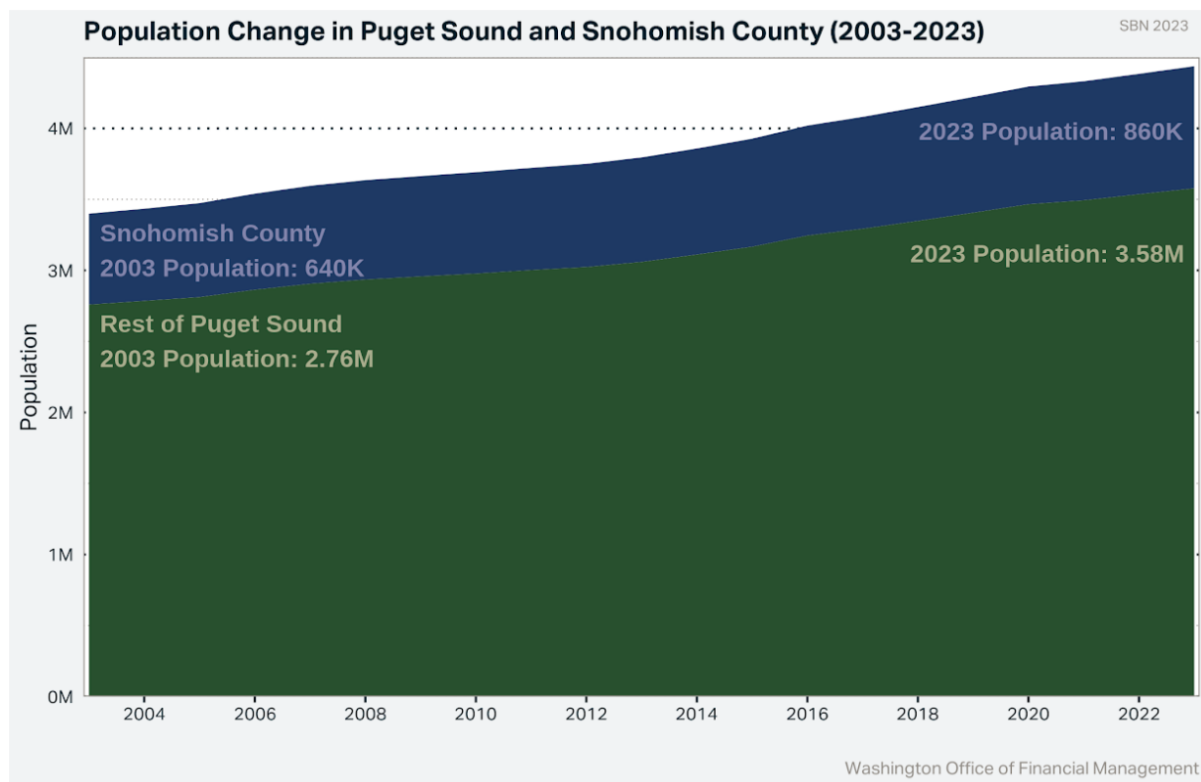


Figure 3.3: Population Change in Snohomish County and the Region (Source: OFM)

According to the 2022 ACS, the median age of Washington residents is 38.4, nearly identical to that of Snohomish County at 38.8. Lake Stevens' median age sits just below that of the state and county at 34.4. The age distribution of Lake Stevens shows a larger percentage of young families, with a relative gap of individuals in their 20s (Figure 3.5). Approximately 8.7% of the population in Lake Stevens is aged 65 and over. Planning for the future housing needs of these demographics, which may include an increased need for multifamily dwellings, senior housing, assisted living facilities, group homes, and infill housing, will be important to adequately accommodate an aging population and those just entering the housing market in the future.

Lake Stevens currently has an average household size of 2.94 people, which is the largest in Snohomish County. The city of Lake Stevens is less ethnically diverse than Snohomish County, with approximately 85% of its 2020 population identifying as non-Hispanic White, as shown in Figure 3.5. As discussed later in this chapter, there are differences in housing tenure (rental vs ownership) by race and ethnicity that merit additional discussion and policy considerations.

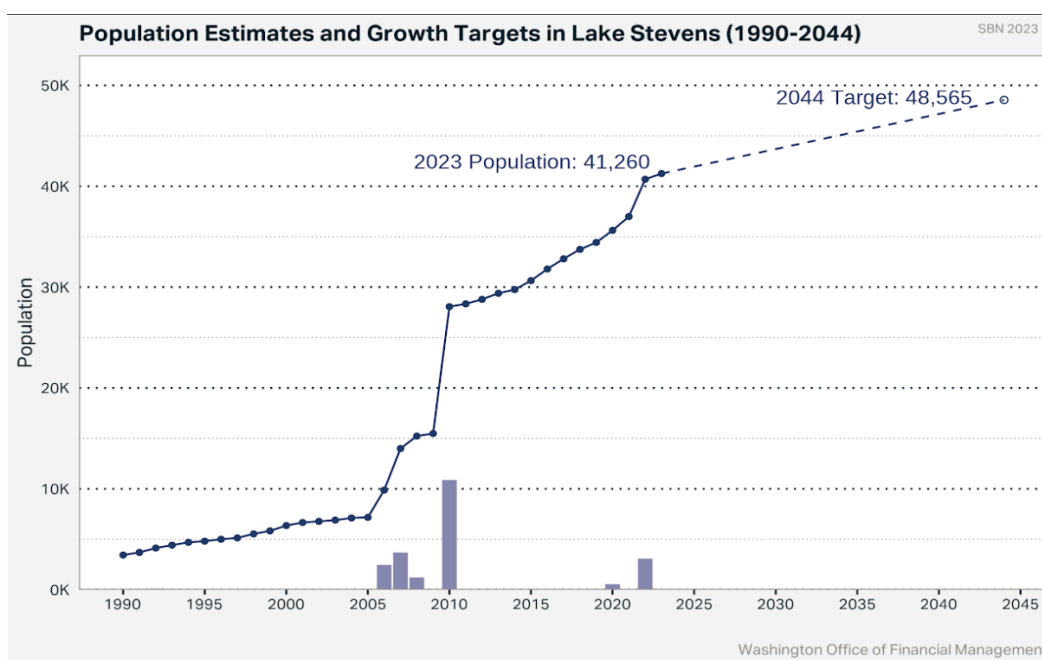


Figure 3.4: Population Growth and Projections in Lake Stevens (Source: OFM)

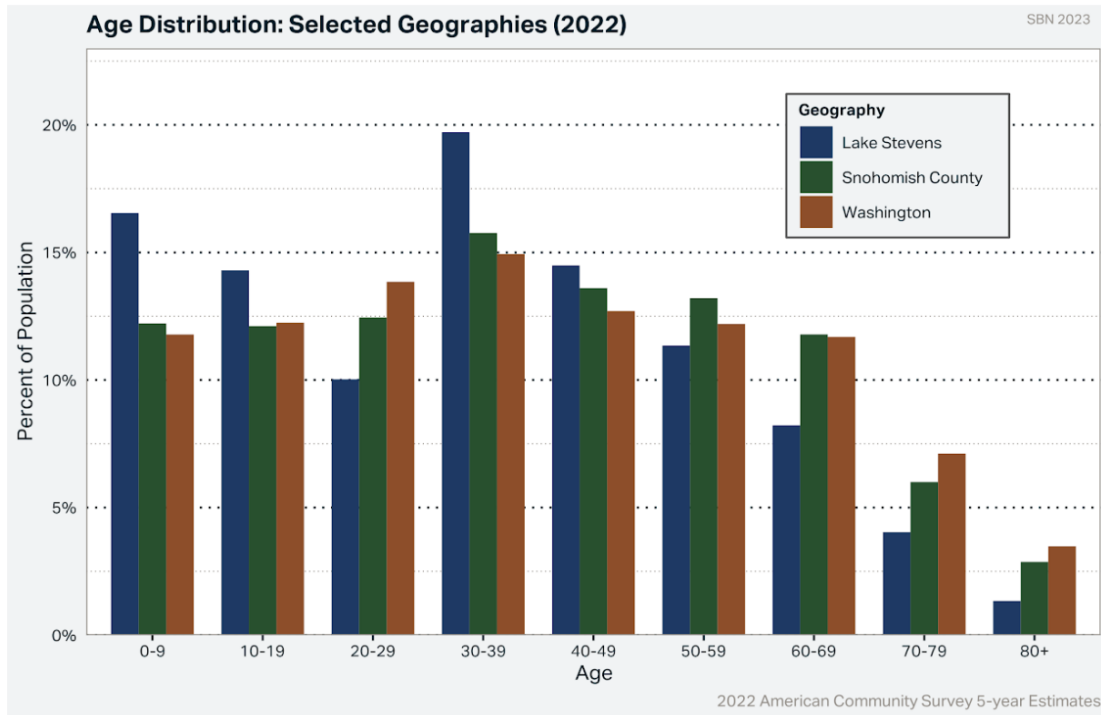


Figure 3.5: Age Distribution in City/County/State (Source: 2022 5-Year ACS)

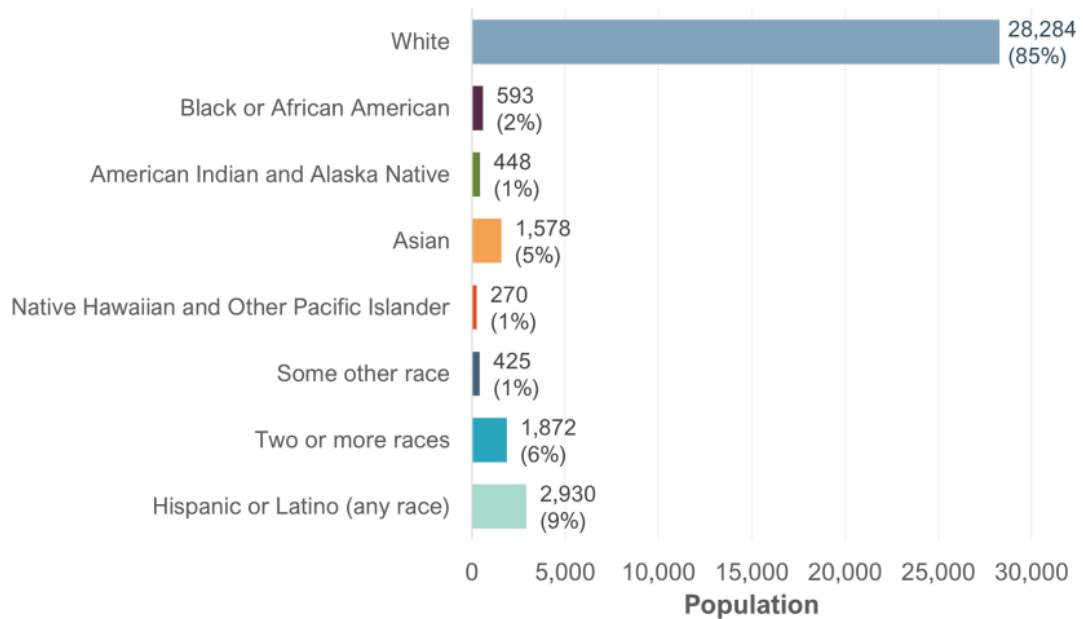


Figure 3.6: City Population by Race and Ethnicity, 2020 (Source: 2020 5-Year ACS)

Housing Stock

According to OFM data, as of April 2023 there were an estimated 14,516 dwelling units in Lake Stevens and 336,690 dwelling units in Snohomish County. Lake Stevens has a significantly higher percentage of its housing stock comprised of detached single-family homes (81.2%) than the county (64.6%), reflecting its history as a suburban bedroom community. Historically, the city has lacked a supply of mid-size and large multi-family buildings, as shown in Figure 3-7.

According to the 2022 ACS, the percentage of owner-occupied units in Lake Stevens was 76.4%, compared to 68.6% in Snohomish County. This has grown slightly since 2012 (74.3%), when the county average was 67.3%. During this period, the statewide ownership rate has remained relatively stable at around 64%, while the rate in the four-county Puget Sound region has decreased slightly from 61.7% to 61%. This suggests a local housing market more supportive of homeownership than elsewhere in the county and region – recent sale prices in the city may reflect more affordable units than nearby jurisdictions. According to the HAP, rental vacancy rates as of 2022 were about 3%.

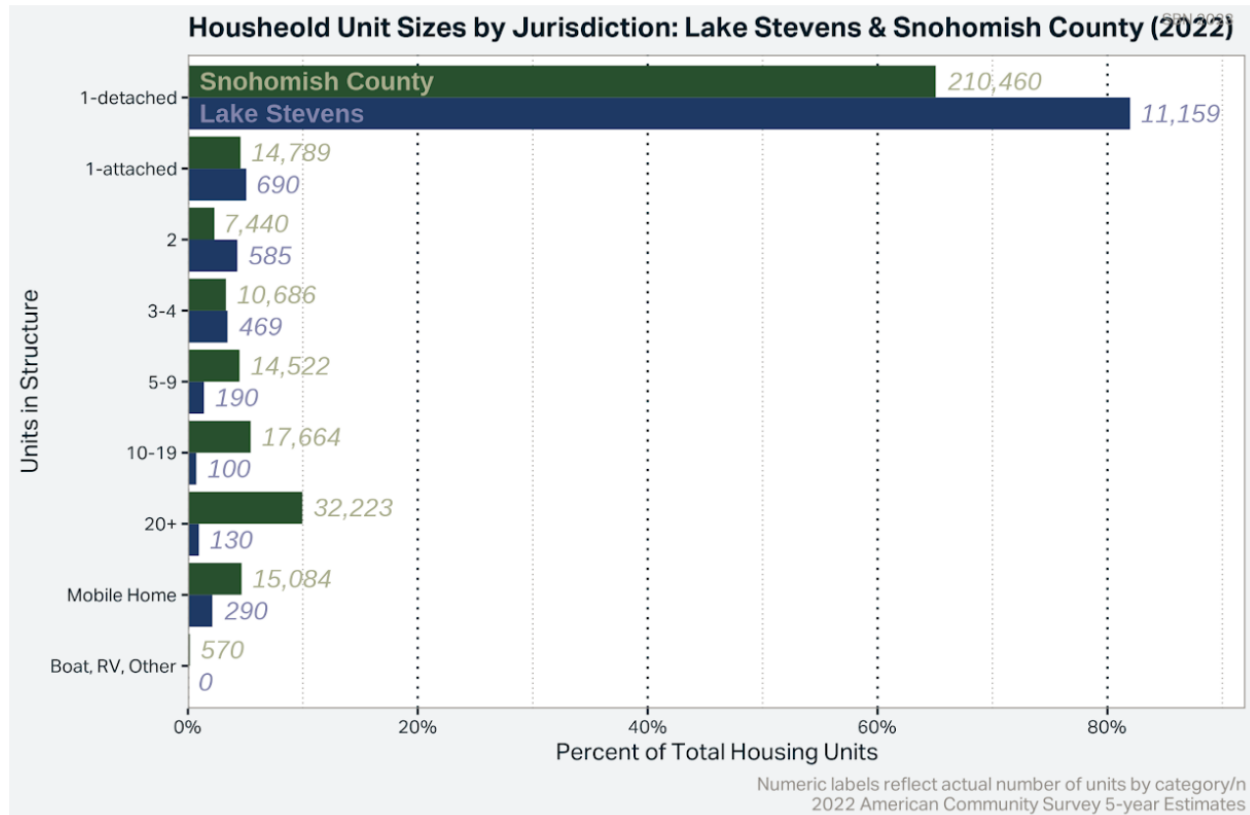


Figure 3.7 – Household Unit Size by Jurisdiction (Source: 2022 5-Year ACS)

The average lot size in Lake Stevens varies by zone, which are described in more detail in Chapter 2 (Land Use). Historically, most homes were on lots with 9,600 square feet or more. Through the 1990s and early 2000s, several planned residential developments (PRDs) were constructed with smaller lot sizes between 4,000 and 6,000 square feet. Many of the areas annexed into the city between 2000 and 2009 contained small-lot subdivisions. While lot sizes have decreased, home sizes have increased during the same time, which has impacted housing affordability. Recent city ordinances have greatly diversified lot sizes and density allowances to support more efficient and affordable housing options, with up to four units now allowed in most residential zones via the city’s infill housing ordinance.

Following these recent code amendments and subarea planning efforts, the city has increased its supply of middle housing and multifamily housing in recent years. Between 2010 and 2022, the city added nearly 3,000 housing units (not including existing units that were annexed), including nearly 1,300 units between 2020 and 2022. As shown in Figure 3.8, over 400 new multi-family units were completed between 2020 and 2022, adding an important supply of rental housing and more affordable options than detached single-family residences. The city receives credit towards its 2044 growth target for this recent supply.

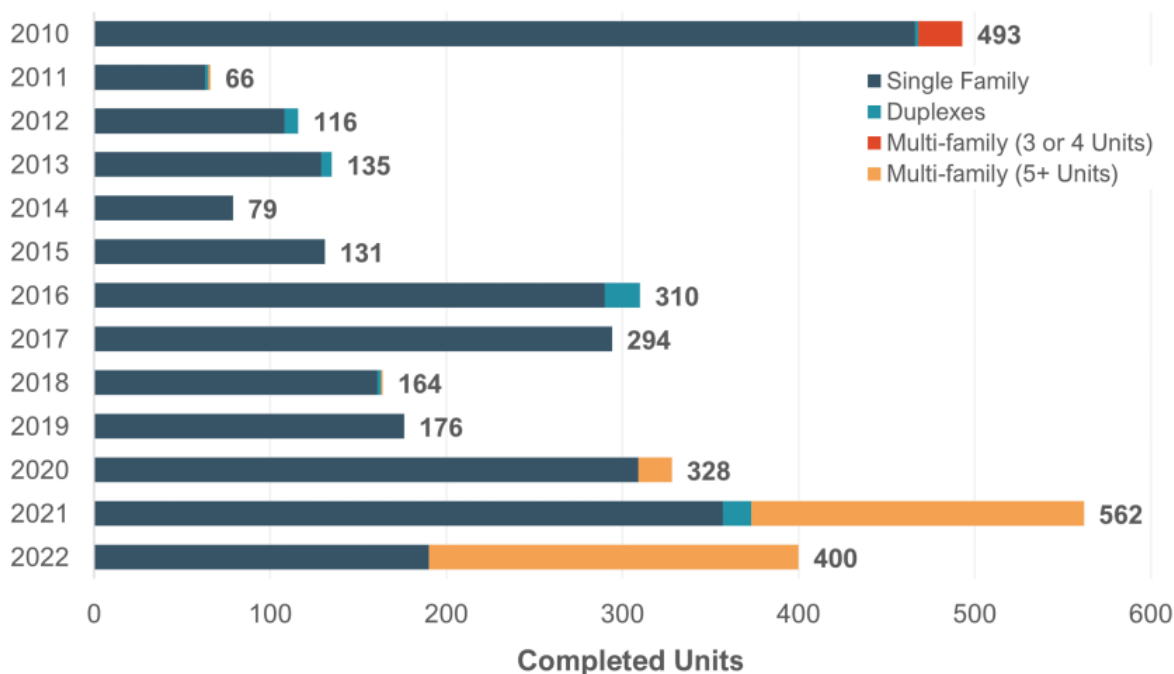


Figure 3.8 – Housing Units Completed, 2010-2022 (Source: OFM)

Household Income, Housing Costs and Housing Equity

One of the most significant challenges confronting Lake Stevens is assessing and addressing housing affordability for its residents. Residents' quality of life is heavily influenced by their ability to find housing that meets their needs and within their financial capabilities.

"Affordable housing" is generally understood as housing that is within reach for households earning up to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Such households are categorized as "low-income." Those earning up to 50% of the AMI are termed "very low-income," while those at or below 30% of the AMI are identified as "extremely low-income." These income ranges are reflected in the housing growth targets discussed earlier in this chapter, with the city expected to provide housing types that meet the needs of households at a variety of incomes.

In Lake Stevens, households of color tend to have a higher representation among renters and those with lower incomes. Out of all households, around 16% identify as households of color, including Hispanic/Latino households. These households are more likely to rent, with about 48% renting their homes, compared to 42% of white households. By income, 38% of households of color fall into the category of low income (earning less than 80% of the area's median income), a percentage that is notably higher than the 29% seen in white households. Housing affordability challenges are more pronounced for households of color. While 53% of all renters in Lake Stevens experience housing cost burdens, this figure jumps to 64% for renters of color, indicating a significant disparity in financial strains related to housing.

The term "housing affordability", as recognized by lenders, real estate sectors, and government agencies, is based on the concept that housing expenses should not exceed 30% of a household's gross monthly income. For homeowners, this percentage encompasses taxes, insurance, and other housing-related costs. In the context of rentals, utilities are accounted for within this 30% bracket.

Figure 3.9 illustrates the proportion of Lake Stevens households by race/ethnicity and income for the year 2019. Overall, approximately 51% of city households make 100% or more of the region's median family income (MFI), including 53% of non-Hispanic households and 44% of minority households. Approximately 29% of non-Hispanic white households make 80% or less of AMI, compared to 38% of minority households. In response, the city has developed several equity-related policies to address racial disparities in household income and housing opportunities.

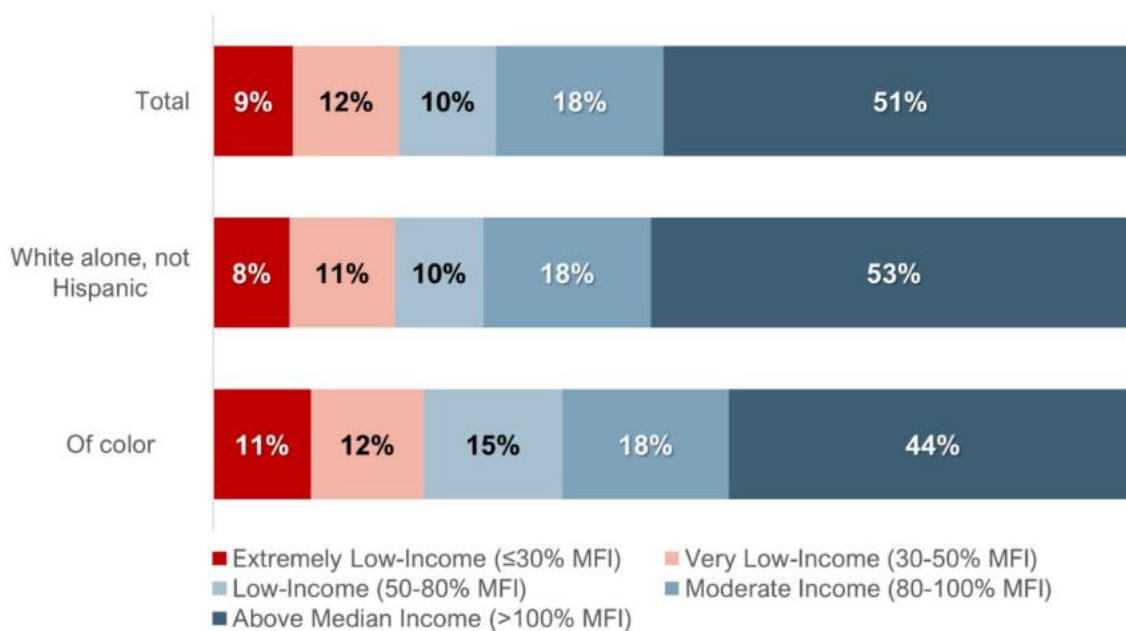


Figure 3.9 – Households by Race/Ethnicity and Income (Source: 2015-2019 CHAS)

Households spending beyond this threshold are labeled "*cost burdened*." Those allocating more than 50% of their monthly income to housing are deemed "*severely cost burdened*," which jeopardizes their ability to cover essential needs such as food, transportation, and healthcare. While Lake Stevens has a slightly higher median income than the county, significant sections of the city's population face housing as a notable financial burden. According to CHAS data, nearly 20% of the city's households have incomes below 50% of the Area Median Income (AMI), highlighting the crucial need for affordable housing options.

As shown in Figure 3.10, as of 2019 housing cost burden was a significant issue in Lake Stevens. Given the region's high housing costs, this problem is not unique to Lake Stevens and has been increasing over the past decade. However, race and ethnicity are significant factors in housing cost burden, with 64% of minority households cost-burdened or severely cost-burdened, compared to 49% of non-Hispanic white households. Approximately 16% of city residents – about one of out every six residents – are severely housing cost burdened.

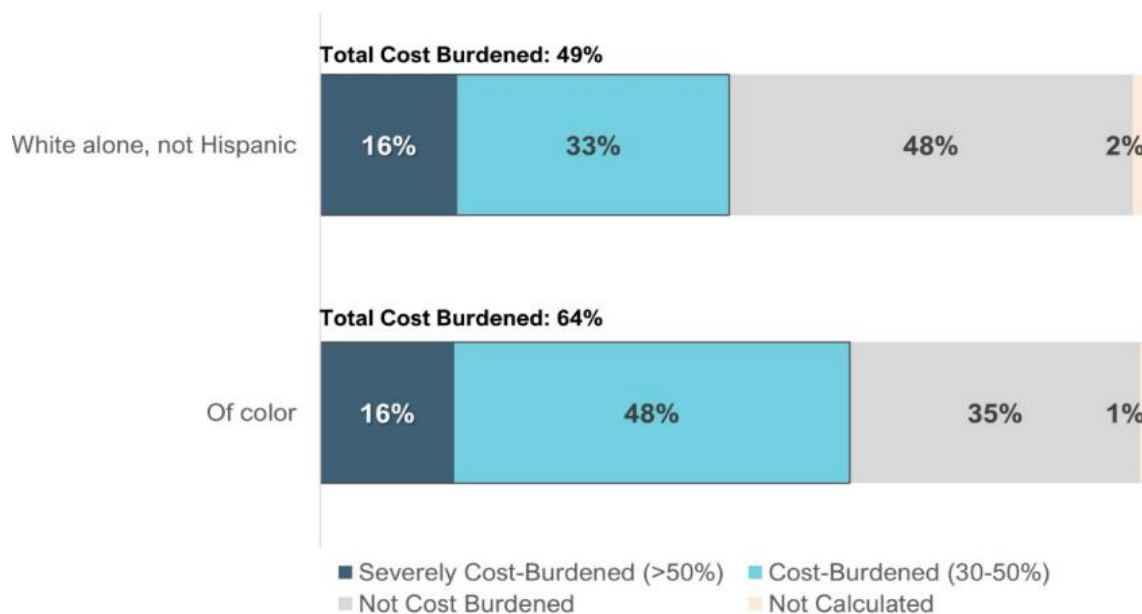


Figure 3.10 – Housing Cost Burden by Race/Ethnicity (Source: 2015-2019 CHAS)

The median home sales price in Lake Stevens in 2023 was \$755,000. To afford the median home price without being cost-burdened, a family of four would require an annual income of at least approximately \$180,000 per year based on an assumed 20% down payment and 6% interest rate, which is approximately 120% of the county AMI. Rental households are on average smaller in size than those that own their own homes. However, smaller units are more difficult to find in Lake Stevens, with only 21 percent of units being comprised of one or two-bedroom units, while 47 percent of total households in the city include two individuals or less. This indicates a need for more one and two-bedroom units in the city to support the needs of the large number of smaller households.

Future Housing Needs

The Snohomish County Council adopted a 2044 population target of 1,136,309, which translates to a need for approximately 167,000 additional housing units. As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, Lake Stevens' 2044 housing unit target is 4,915 additional units. Following code updates and zoning changes, Figure 3.2 shows that the city has adequate overall capacity to meet this growth. However, per Figures 3.1 and 3.11, over 50% of this housing need is at or below 80% AMI, needs which cannot be met by the city's current and projected supply of land for detached single family residences.

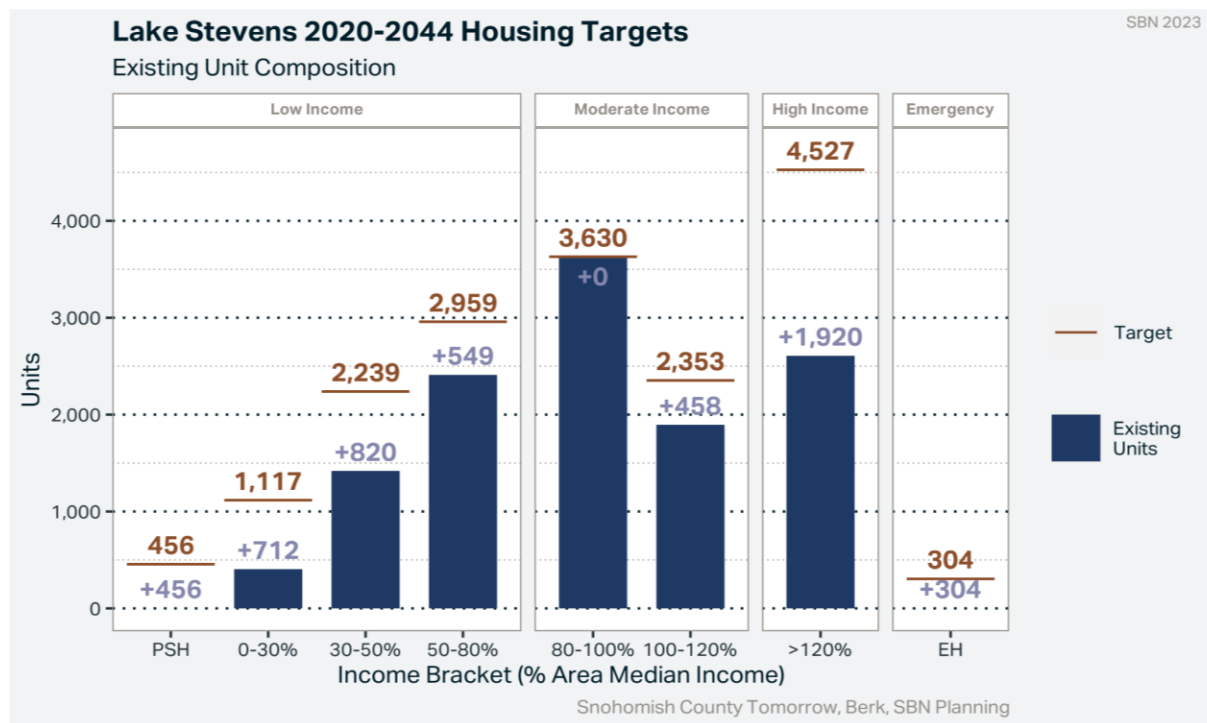


Figure 3.11 – Existing Housing and Housing Needs by Income (Source: 2021 BLR)

Land Use Map and Policy Amendments to Accommodate Future Housing Needs

The Land Use Element identifies land area for single-family, multifamily and mixed-use housing as well as transitional, emergency, and permanent supportive housing. As discussed in Chapter 2, this plan has incorporated several land use map amendments (summarized in Table 3.3) to increase the supply of land that can accommodate multifamily housing, which) is the assumed housing type for households with incomes $\leq 80\%$ AMI. Additional analysis can be found in the land capacity analysis in Appendix B.

In addition, the city has identified several strategies to meet its housing targets across all income ranges and housing types and address preferences for different types of housing. Increased housing choices will help ensure the city's housing supply meets the needs of a diverse population. By allowing additional mixed-use neighborhoods and adopting policies and implementing code language that permit duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and other middle housing throughout the city, Lake Stevens has taken strides to allow a wider variety of housing. In addition, the city has embraced small lot development as a standard for subdivisions. As new and innovative housing patterns emerge to provide

increased housing affordability, the city will evaluate how these are compatible with existing neighborhoods.

Racially Disparate Impacts and Risk of Displacement

As amended, the GMA requires cities to analyze zoning, policies and other conditions that have resulted in racially disparate impacts – that is, historic decisions that have resulted in decreased housing opportunities for minorities, manifested in things such as lower home ownership rates and higher housing cost burden, which are discussed above.

Given the lack of vacant land, the city will need to rely primarily on infill development and redevelopment to meet its housing growth targets. However, this also increases the risk of displacement of existing residents, including lower income and minority residents. The goals and policies in this chapter also address mitigating the displacement of existing residents that could result from new development.

The city utilized PSRC’s Displacement Risk tool to identify areas where residents may be at greater risk of displacement, based on factors including socio-demographics, transportation qualities, neighborhood characteristics, housing, and civic engagement. As shown in Figure 3.12, the entirety of Lake Stevens falls within the “Lower” displacement risk category. This category is comprised of census tracts with displacement risk scores in the bottom 50% of the score range, indicating a lower risk of displacement in the city than in the four-county region, which shows 32% of the region’s population in census tracts at moderate risk of displacement, and 13% of the region’s population in census tracts at higher risk of displacement

The city’s 2023 Housing Action Plan noted that the city’s historic reliance on detached single-family housing may have contributed to racially disparate impacts given the differences in income levels (Figure 3.9) and housing cost burden (Figure 3.10) based on race and ethnicity. Given that most of the city has been annexed since 2006, the city has not documented historic zoning, disinvestment, or infrastructure availability policies and regulations that resulted in racially disparate impacts. However, this plan includes several new goals and policies that aim to specifically address and remedy potentially disparate impacts.

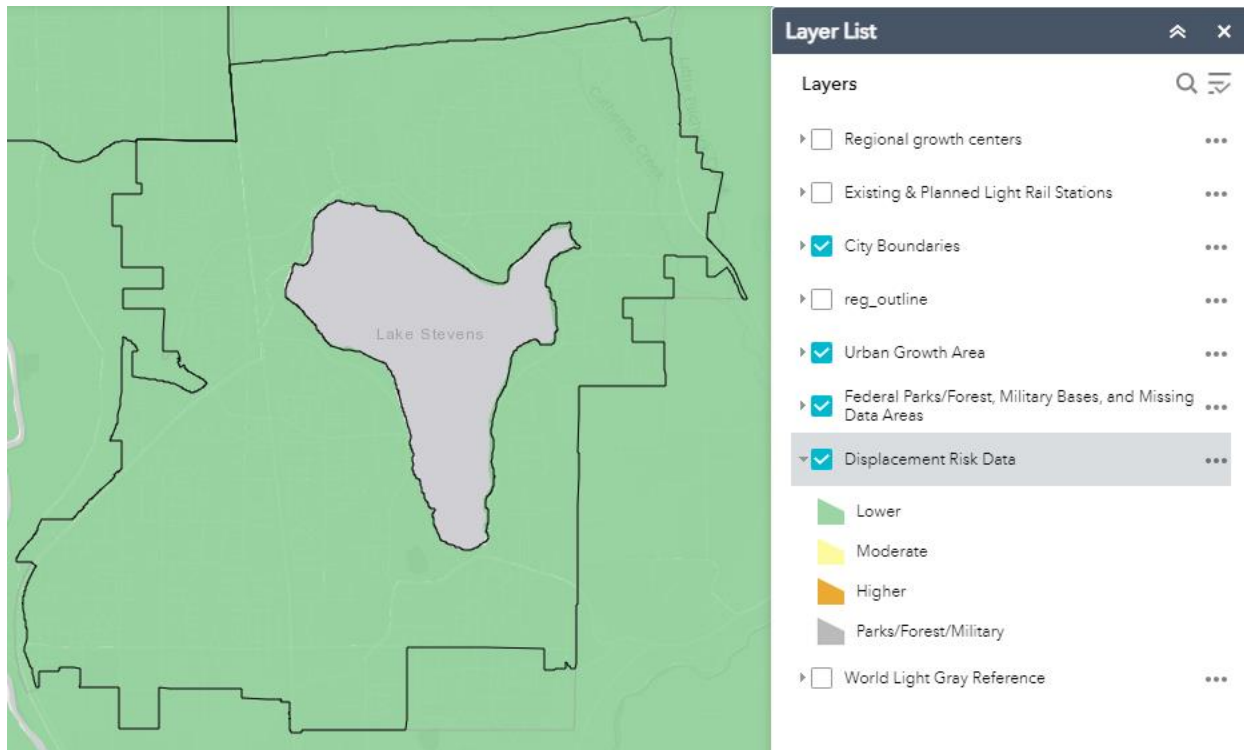


Figure 3.12 – Displacement Risk in Lake Stevens (PSRC Displacement Risk Tool)

While the identified displacement risk in Lake Stevens is low, this housing element includes several proposed policies that aim to address and reduce potential disparities to provide more equitable housing opportunities for the entire community. The city has updated its development code to expand middle housing opportunities in historically single-family zoning districts, to increase affordability and homeownership and rental opportunities for all residents.

Permitting and Supporting Permanent Supportive Housing and Emergency Housing

Under the GMA, cities are required to provide policy language that:

- Allows emergency housing and emergency shelters in all zones that allow hotels (Commercial District, Central Business District, and Local Business) and eliminates impact fees for emergency housing. Per its growth targets, the city is required to demonstrate it has the capacity (beds) for 304 people requiring emergency housing, which it does within its existing commercial zones. The updated goals and policies in this section provide new language supporting this requirement.

- Allows permanent supportive housing and transitional housing in all zones that allow hotels and/or residential uses. As discussed in Chapter 2, the city has determined that it has adequate capacity within its existing commercial districts (which allow hotels) to accommodate the allocated 456 units of PSH, and new policy language has been added to this chapter supporting this requirement.

STRATEGIES TO ACHIEVE HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Lake Stevens has a vested interest in improving housing affordability for all its residents. Housing affordability is a function of land availability, density of development, local household income, and quality of housing. This is in line with the city's desire to be a sustainable community. With the residential design guidelines, careful site planning, open space, and environmental review standards, these types of developments can successfully be integrated into the Lake Stevens community. The following section includes a description of specific land use strategies that support a sustainable and affordable community for all residents.

The following section includes many land use strategies that implement housing affordability goals and policies and is largely based on the 2023 HAP. For example:

- The city has adopted a variety of zones, including high-density residential and mixed-use, to increase development efficiency;
- The city allows innovative housing options, such as small lot single family and middle housing, in most of its residential zones, and complies with HB 1110 and 1337 (2023);
- The city has adopted cluster subdivision and planned residential subdivision regulations;
- The city permits up to two accessory dwelling units per residential lot;
- The city has created density bonus provisions within its subareas; and
- Current city regulations support mixed-use development and home occupations.

As the city updates its procedural and development regulations, it will look for implementation opportunities to develop codes that support increased access to affordable housing. More innovative strategies that incentivize affordable development, such as reduced parking minimums, may also be explored in areas with access to essential services and amenities. Providing opportunities and resources for alternative development and

ownership models, such as co-op housing and alternative, community land trusts, and bespoke financing, may greatly increase all residents' equity generation opportunities. The city will also continue to be an active participant with the Alliance for Affordable Housing, Housing Authority, and Snohomish County on housing topics.

Land Use Strategies

- **Increasing Housing Capacity:** Increasing opportunities for development in targeted areas throughout the city not only facilitates the development of additional housing but also broadens the scope for establishing diverse residential, commercial, and mixed-use spaces within the target area, contributing to a more vibrant community.

Reducing per-unit land costs can be directly approached by decreasing minimum lot sizes, increasing height limits, and enabling higher-density utilization. The city must evaluate aspects such as compatibility with existing residences, potential expansion of utilities, and adherence to long-range population forecasts, ensuring infrastructural and service provision capacity aligns with future urban demands.

- **Lot Size Averaging:** Lot size averaging within new subdivisions allows varied lot sizes to facilitate minimum densities on sites encumbered by critical areas and associated buffers and setbacks.
- **Innovative Housing Options:** Innovative housing encourages diversity in housing choices ranging from large-lot single-family residences to small-lot developments or middle housing, including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, and accessory dwelling units. Innovative housing options are meant to expand options for a different segment of the population, including singles, single-parent households, starter families, and seniors.
 - **Small Lot:** Small lot zoning districts such as those included in the High-Density Residential land use and alternative subdivision methods, including Planned Residential Developments and Cluster Subdivisions, allow denser housing options, with specific design review and controls to integrate these developments into existing neighborhoods.
 - **Infill Housing:** As large tracts of vacant land are developed, “urban infill” will provide most of the city’s housing supply. Infill development may include short subdivisions on large lots or the redevelopment of existing parcels without the demolition of existing structures. Infill development provisions already established in Lake Stevens allow for attached and detached single-family

housing, small multifamily complexes (e.g., triplexes and fourplexes), and accessory dwelling units to meet density and affordability goals. The city adopted code amendments in 2020 and 2024 that greatly expanded infill housing opportunities throughout the city.

- **Minimum Densities:** Jurisdictions may require that new subdivisions or multifamily developments achieve minimum densities as opposed to a maximum land use density. This approach can help discourage sprawl, reduce the unit cost of land, and improve the cost-effectiveness of capital finance plans.
- **Density Bonuses:** Providing density bonuses in exchange for the construction of affordable housing can incentivize a developer to provide such housing. Alternatively, the city could adopt policies to reduce development standards for projects that provide affordable housing, including but not limited to reduced setbacks, street standards, parking, sidewalks, and utilities. As a Tier 2 jurisdiction, HB 1110 has imposed some minimum density bonuses for middle housing, but the city may want to explore additional changes beyond the minimum to support broader housing goals.
- **Inclusionary Zoning:** Inclusionary zoning programs typically require that a percentage of lots in a new subdivision or residential units in a new apartment project be set aside for low-cost housing. Density bonuses are often provided to offset the cost of the inclusionary requirement.
- **Cluster Subdivisions:** Cluster subdivisions offer a means of keeping housing development costs down by reducing minimum lot sizes and confining development to the most suitable portion of a building site. Cluster housing may entail the use of shared driveways and parking areas, reduced but more usable yard space, and architectural "techniques" to maintain privacy and a sense of space.
- **Planned Residential Development (PRD):** The city also encourages PRDs that offer incentives to projects that integrate mixed-income housing and mixed types of housing (detached, duplex, and apartments) and encourage clustering to achieve desired densities while protecting environmentally sensitive areas. PRDs do not directly provide affordable housing but make more efficient use of land and capital facilities to keep costs lower.
- **Shared Housing:** With the steady trend of larger houses for fewer people, there is a greater opportunity for shared housing arrangements, whereby non-related persons live together and share the housing costs.

- **Cottage Housing Developments (CHD):** Cottage housing developments have been proposed to provide smaller detached housing in single-family neighborhoods.
- **Cluster Housing:** Cluster housing is an architectural/design technique used in urban settings to obtain high-density single-family units on small lots. This may include cluster housing around joint community areas.
- **Manufactured Housing:** Manufactured (mobile and modular) housing provides an established record of successfully addressing affordable housing needs. Manufactured homes may occur throughout the city in standard residential neighborhoods or in dedicated parks.
- **Mixed-Use Development:** Mixed-use developments integrate various land uses into a single development or district, such as office, commercial and residential buildings grouped together in a single building or around a single site. Mixed-use developments may offer more acceptable sites for higher-density housing than established single-family neighborhoods. Mixed-use developments situated along transportation routes can help reduce reliance on private vehicles, provide housing opportunities for persons who require public transportation, and may produce an income stream from commercial rents that help subsidize low-cost housing.
- **Home Occupation/Live Work:** Another innovative housing concept is allowing expanded home occupations or live/work arrangements, where the homeowner could maintain a business inside or separate from the home. Traditional home occupation rules require that all activity occur inside the home with strict limits on signing, appearance, etc. The newer concept would have a more mixed-use appearance where a professional office could occur on a first floor, with a residence occupying the balance of the building.

Administrative Procedures

- **Streamlined Approval Processing:** Holding costs are one of the hidden expenses in a housing development budget. They include the variety of costs involved in carrying a project through the development phase, such as insurance, office and staff, equipment, security patrols, landscape maintenance, the financing of land and construction, etc. Shorter approval periods translate into less expensive development

costs. At the state level, jurisdictions are subject to specific review and approval timelines in RCW 36.70B.080, which SB 5290 (2023) revised effective January 1, 2025. Many jurisdictions in Snohomish County are also studying or have adopted permit streamlining for affordable housing projects. It has proven successful in reducing the processing time for projects while ensuring compliance with development codes.

- **Priority Permit Processing:** Priority permit processing can reduce housing costs by minimizing the amount of time and expense involved in permit and approval processing. The more permits that receive priority attention, however, the less valuable the incentive may become if the priority waiting line is as long as the normal waiting line. Priority processing is most effective when used selectively, such as an inducement to develop a particular type of housing the market is not currently producing. If priority processing is offered as an incentive to develop low-cost housing, the city should establish a means of ensuring the housing is occupied by persons in need of low-cost housing and the housing remains affordable for an extended period.
- **Impact Mitigation Payment Deferral:** Jurisdictions can minimize the effect of impact fees on market-rate housing by deferring the collection of impact mitigation payments from the permit approval stage of development to either final project approval or occupancy. In Lake Stevens, for instance, school mitigation fees are deferred to the building permit stage rather than at the subdivision phase. Deferring the collection of impact fees can reduce the developer's finance costs.

Housing Production & Preservation Programs

- **Housing Preservation:** Existing housing often provides the best source of affordable housing. As such, preservation and enhancement of the existing stock must be a key element in a program for assuring affordable housing.
- **Public Housing Authority:** While the city has not created its own housing authority, the Housing Authority of Snohomish County, created pursuant to the enactment of the Housing Authorities Law in 1939, provides housing assistance within the city limits. The city is also a member of the Alliance for Affordable Housing.

The Housing Authority can underwrite the cost of low-income housing development by various means, including eligibility to administer HUD housing assistance programs and payment contracts, exemption from property taxes on housing

authority facilities, and authority to issue tax-exempt bonds and low interest bond anticipation notes. Under state statute bonds and other obligations of a housing authority are neither a debt of its respective city nor are cities liable for housing authority obligations.

- **Public Development Authority (PDA):** Jurisdictions interested in coordinating their initiatives in the areas of economic development, community revitalization, and low-income housing may consider creating a public development authority (PDA) to achieve these ends. Under RCW 35.21.730-757, cities or towns to “improve general living conditions in the urban areas of the state” and “to perform all manner and type of community services” may create PDAs.

PDAs may exercise many of the powers of housing authorities, such as owning and selling property, contracting for services, loaning and borrowing funds, and issuing bonds and other debt instruments. Any property owned or operated by a PDA that is used primarily for low-income housing receives the same exemption from taxation as the municipality that created it. By statute, all PDA liabilities must be satisfied exclusively from PDA assets and PDA creditors are denied any right of action against the municipality that created it.

- **Public and Nonprofit Housing Developers:** A less direct mode of involvement may be to establish cooperative agreements with public or nonprofit housing developers to ensure adequate levels of low-income or special needs housing is available in the community. In addition to the Everett and County housing authorities, there are non-profit organization and other potential partners to assist with the production of emergency housing (including homeless shelters), permanent supportive housing, and transitional housing.

The city may encourage the production of these types of housing by committing land use incentives, modified development standards, surplus land or financial resources to a housing authority or nonprofit-sponsored projects targeted for their jurisdiction.

- **Market Housing:** By far, private market housing provides the greatest number of dwelling units in Lake Stevens. Lake Stevens currently has a surplus in zoned capacity for market-rate housing serving residents at or above 100% AMI. While affordable and moderate-income housing supply should be prioritized, it is important to maintain housing options for all income brackets in the city. There is some evidence that providing opportunities for market-rate housing as residents’ incomes increase maintains vacancies at more affordable tiers.

GOALS AND POLICIES

GOAL 3.1 PROVIDE A RANGE OF HOUSING TYPES AND CHOICES TO MEET THE CURRENT AND FUTURE HOUSING NEEDS OF LAKE STEVENS RESIDENTS REGARDLESS OF INCOME LEVEL OR DEMOGRAPHIC STATUS

Policies

- 3.1.1 Plan for and zone sufficient buildable lands to meet the city’s housing growth targets at all income levels and accommodate a variety of housing types and densities throughout the city, including single-family, manufactured housing, middle housing, multifamily, mixed-use and accessory dwellings.
- 3.1.2 Consider the cumulative impact of map amendments, rezones and land use policy decisions that may reduce affordability, contribute to displacement of existing residents and impact employment or residential capacity.
- 3.1.3 Continue to allow diverse subdivision methods including short subdivisions, formal subdivisions, cluster subdivisions, planned residential developments and unit lot subdivisions to create diverse buildable lot types throughout the city.
- 3.1.4 Allow a variety of middle housing types in all residential zoning districts.
- 3.1.5 Encourage the distribution of multifamily housing including apartments, condominiums, townhomes and multiplexes throughout the city in appropriate zoning districts and in mixed-use and commercial developments.
- 3.1.6 Permit manufactured homes in all residential zoning districts in the city and encourage their preservation as a source of affordable housing.
- 3.1.7 Allow up to two accessory dwelling units per residential lot and encourage their development as an opportunity for affordable home occupancy or ownership.
- 3.1.8 Explore updates to city programs such as the Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) program that have the potential to increase the city’s supply of affordable housing.
- 3.1.9 Identify strategies to increase multifamily and mixed-use housing supply within the city’s subareas.

**GOAL 3.2 INCREASE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL RESIDENTS TO HAVE FAIR AND
EQUITABLE ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, SAFE, AND SANITARY HOUSING**

Policies

- 3.2.1 Provide opportunities for supportive, mixed income and affordable housing throughout the city. Some clustering of supportive and affordable housing may be appropriate within proximity to public transportation, medical facilities or other essential services.
- 3.2.2 Support land uses and development regulations designed to increase housing opportunities for current and future residents, seniors, disabled, or other special-needs populations in proximity to shopping, health care, services, recreation facilities and public transportation.
- 3.2.3 Encourage a range of independent living, assisted living and skilled care facilities affordable to seniors and other special-needs residents at a variety of income levels throughout the city.
- 3.2.4 Allow emergency housing and emergency shelters in all zoning districts where hotels are permitted and adopt a clear and objective process and standards for their siting, with a focus on areas within proximity of transit and services.
- 3.2.5 Allow permanent supportive housing and transitional housing in all zones where either residential uses or hotels are allowed.
- 3.2.6 Coordinate with regional organizations, housing authorities and nonprofit affordable housing providers to identify emergency housing and shelters, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing options.
- 3.2.7 Support the acquisition, rehabilitation, and preservation of existing affordable housing by agencies and organizations as an alternative to new construction.
- 3.2.8 Eliminate impact fees for emergency housing.
- 3.2.9 Evaluate city policies, regulations and land use patterns that may have contributed to racially or socially disparate impacts and exclusion of certain residents and work to remedy them.
- 3.2.10 Work with the county and local affordable housing providers to identify areas at risk of increased displacement of existing residents and explore and develop anti-displacement strategies to mitigate the potential impacts of redevelopment.

- 3.2.11 Identify city-owned real property that is surplus to its needs and viable for affordable housing development for extremely low- to moderate-income households.
- 3.2.12 Provide reasonable accommodations from zoning and development standards to residents with disabilities.
- 3.2.13 Identify programs and strategies that aim to address historic inequities in homeownership opportunities and increase opportunities for communities of color.

GOAL 3.3 ENCOURAGE THE USE OF INNOVATIVE TECHNIQUES TO EFFICIENTLY USE LAND, PROTECT NATURAL RESOURCES AND ADAPT TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Policies

- 3.3.1 Develop innovative zoning regulations to encourage infill development, including small multiplexes, small lot single-family subdivisions, compact/cottage housing, manufactured housing, and accessory dwelling units.
- 3.3.2 Encourage planned residential developments and other development concepts that allow flexibility in lot sizes, setbacks and other development standards in exchange for community benefits such as protecting natural resources and features and providing affordable housing options.
- 3.3.3 Explore innovative techniques and programs that can facilitate the creation of affordable housing, including but not limited to, a housing trust fund, inclusionary zoning, design/regulation flexibility, impact fee waivers, and streamlined processing.
- 3.3.4 Encourage voluntary efforts to provide affordable housing within new multifamily and single-family housing developments.
- 3.3.5 Implement strategies and actions from the city's Climate Sustainability Plan that support access to and the development of a wide range of housing types in the city.
- 3.3.6 Work with partner agencies to incentivize the installation of solar panels, electric vehicle charging stations, and other improvements in residential neighborhoods to make homes more energy efficient and resilient to climate change.

GOAL 3.4 PROMOTE AN EFFECTIVE STREAMLINED PERMIT PROCESS THAT INCLUDES MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT AND NOTIFICATION WITH THE PUBLIC THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS

Policies

- 3.4.1 Implement regulations, procedures and process improvements that provide predictability to applicants and meet statutory review timelines for residential permit applications while maintaining opportunities for meaningful public involvement and comment.
- 3.4.2 Implement streamlined approval processing procedures, such as centralized counter services, continuing pre-application conferences, thorough handouts summarizing building permit and approval requirements, automate over the counter permits, area-wide environmental assessments, reducing the number of residential zoning districts, reducing complicated administrative procedures, concurrent permit and approval processing, expedite routine applications, meet or exceed permit review timeframes, and elimination of multiple hearings for a single project.
- 3.4.3 Periodically review existing and new development regulations to ensure a continued public benefit, adequate flexibility and minimization of housing costs.
- 3.4.4 Provided expedited permitting to projects with a demonstrated public benefit, including affordable housing and green building projects.
- 3.4.5 Evaluate the use of various infrastructure funding methods including existing revenue sources, impact fees, local improvement districts and general obligation bonds to minimize housing productions costs.
- 3.4.6 Ensure impact fees for new housing reflect the proportionate share necessary to build infrastructure to support growth per Chapter 82.02 RCW.

GOAL 3.5 PROVIDE A BALANCED DEVELOPMENT PATTERN, WHICH PROMOTES PEDESTRIAN ACTIVITIES, A SENSE OF COMMUNITY AND SAFETY

Policies

- 3.5.1 Promote residential development in areas that allows pedestrian access to commercial areas, employment, public transportation routes, schools and park or recreational areas.
- 3.5.2 Develop and provide a range of housing options for workers, at all income levels which promote accessibility to jobs and provide opportunities to live in proximity to work.
- 3.5.3 Ensure that new development is consistent with citywide and applicable neighborhood goals and policies, including but not limited to, sustainable site

standards, climate change adaption, access to trails and other active transportation, landscaping requirements, building design guidelines and affordability, to ensure new and existing neighborhoods are attractive and safe places to live.

- 3.5.4 Prioritize funding transportation facilities, infrastructure and services that explicitly advance the development of housing in designated growth centers.
- 3.5.5 Expand the supply and range of housing options, including affordable units, in designated growth centers.
- 3.5.6 Strive to provide housing in good condition with high-quality designs, protections from noise, odors, and other environmental stresses.
- 3.5.7 Encourage and incentivize the development of efficient and environmentally sensitive housing practices to minimize impacts to infrastructure and natural resources.

GOAL 3.6 PROMOTE MEASURES THAT WILL PROLONG THE USEFUL LIFE OF STRUCTURES

Policies

- 3.6.1 Invest in infrastructure (storm drainage, street paving, and recreation) to support desired growth patterns and prevent depreciation of property values.
- 3.6.2 Implement an active code enforcement program to help motivate owners to repair and improve maintenance of their structures and avoid extensive deterioration of housing units.
- 3.6.3 Promote public and private home improvement grants and loans, available from the utility companies, charitable organizations and public agencies, for housing repair and maintenance.
- 3.6.4 Support the preservation of existing subsidized, lower-cost and affordable housing.
- 3.6.5 Coordinate with neighborhood-based groups and volunteer organizations to promote rehabilitation and community revitalization efforts.
- 3.6.6 Coordinate with partner agencies and special districts to deliver services and provide infrastructure within residential neighborhoods and ensure alignment with adopted service standards and capital improvement plans.

GOAL 3.7 ENCOURAGE INTERJURISDICTIONAL EFFORTS AND PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS TO ADVANCE THE PROVISION OF AFFORDABLE AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING THROUGHOUT THE CITY AND REGION

Policies

- 3.7.1 Promote housing strategies that address housing needs identified in the Snohomish County Countywide Planning Policies for creating affordable residences for all households.
- 3.7.2 Work with Snohomish County Housing Authority, the Alliance for Affordable Housing, other jurisdictions and housing agencies to coordinate a regional approach to funding and meeting the housing needs of Snohomish County.
- 3.7.3 Support housing legislation and financial support at the city, county, state and federal levels which promotes the goals and policies of the Housing Element.
- 3.7.4 Periodically update the city's Housing Action Plan to evaluate the effectiveness of housing policies and regulations in meeting the housing needs for Lake Stevens.
- 3.7.5 Coordinate with Snohomish County on monitoring housing characteristics, needs and available buildable lands capacity.
- 3.7.6 Support housing goals that are consistent with Vision 2050 to accommodate needed housing and facilitate an equitable distribution of affordable housing.



Subject: **Housing and Land Capacity Analysis for 2024-2044 Comprehensive Plan**
(Revised January 2025)

BACKGROUND / DISCUSSION

In October 2024, the city of Lake Stevens ~~is currently undertaking a completed a~~ periodic update to its Comprehensive Plan. One of the key drivers for the periodic update ~~was~~ identifying how the city ~~would~~ meet 2044 growth targets for population, employment and housing units, including any needed land use map amendments (and corresponding rezones) to accommodate said growth.

The growth targets for Snohomish County jurisdictions are derived from the regional growth strategy identified in Puget Sound Regional Council's [Vision 2050](#), which are allocated to individual jurisdictions and unincorporated areas following a collaborative process through Snohomish County Tomorrow. The growth targets are adopted as [Appendix B](#) to Snohomish County's [Countywide Planning Policies](#). The population growth target was translated into housing units based on anticipated future household size.

Lake Stevens Growth Targets	2019/2020 Estimate	2044 Target	2020-2044 Increase
Population	38,951	48,565	9,614 people
Employment	5,675	8,894	3,219 jobs
Housing Units	13,473	18,388	4,915 housing units

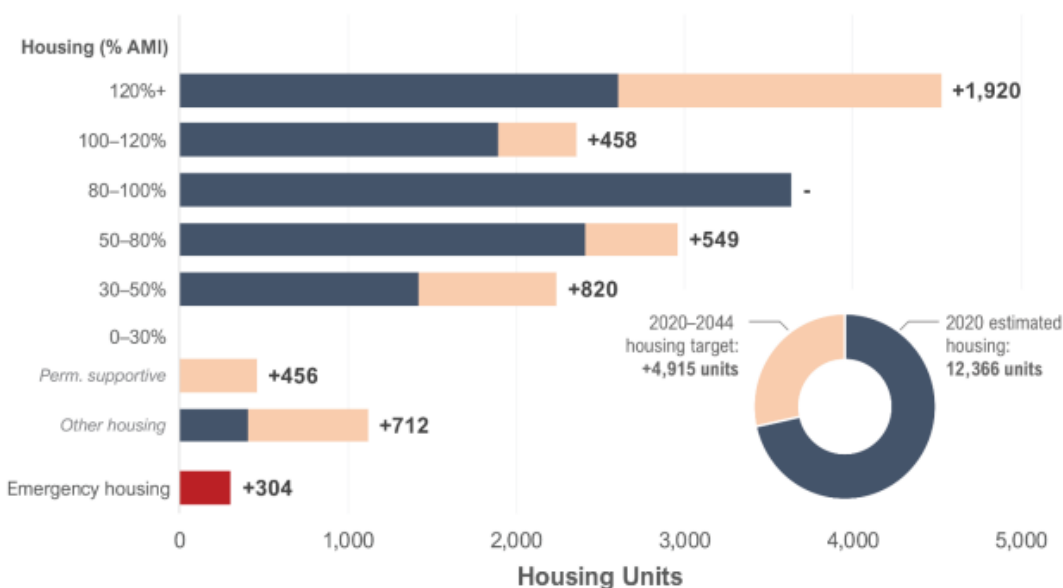
Overall, the city must plan for an additional 4,915 housing units and 3,219 jobs between 2020 and 2044. Growth since 2020 is credited towards the city's targets. To gauge the city's ability to meet these growth targets, staff compared the targets to the city's existing zoned capacity for residential and employment, which was calculated as part of Snohomish County's [2021 Buildable Lands Report](#) (BLR). The assumptions in the BLR and the city's progress in meeting its housing growth targets were assessed in the 2023 [Housing Action Plan](#) and have been further revised, as discussed below.

There are several important caveats when evaluating the city's zoned capacity (as assessed in the BLR) against its 2044 growth targets:

- [HB 1220](#) amended the Growth Management Act (GMA) to require cities to plan for housing needs at all income levels and corresponding housing unit types. The city must demonstrate that it has adequate zoned capacity to accommodate its allocated housing needs.
- Per [Department of Commerce guidance](#), at a minimum the land capacity analysis must:

- Present a table of allocated housing needs by income level and permanent supportive housing and emergency housing needs.
- Relate each type of housing need to zones that can reasonably accommodate those needs.
- Show that there is enough capacity to meet each type of housing need.
- If there is insufficient capacity for any type of housing need, the city must identify and implement zoning changes that provide enough capacity prior to plan adoption.
- As illustrated in Exhibit 23 of the city's 2023 Housing Action Plan (HAP), Lake Stevens was allocated 4,915 housing units, with approximately half above 100% of area median income (AMI), and the other half below 80% AMI, including 456 permanent supportive housing (PSH) units. The city was also allocated 304 beds of emergency housing.

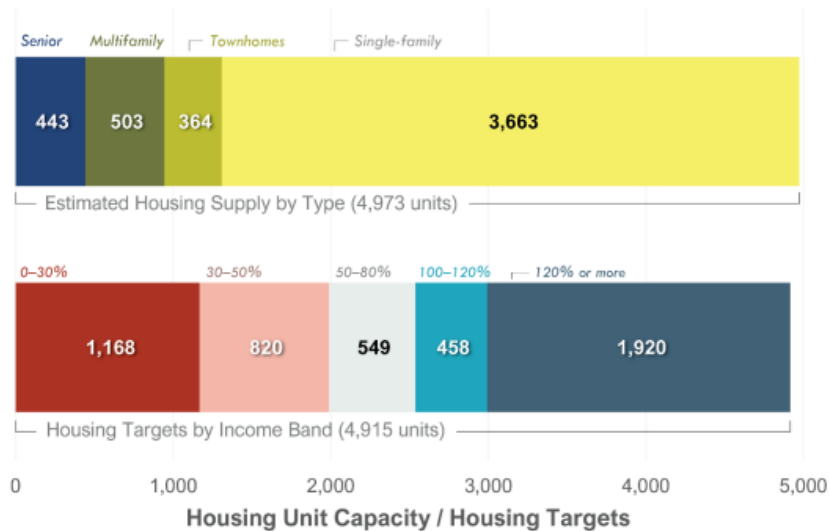
Exhibit 23. Revised 2020–2044 Lake Stevens Housing Targets, HO-5.



Source: Snohomish County Tomorrow, 2023.

- Exhibit 24 of the 2023 HAP showed that the city had adequate overall capacity (4,973 units) within its residential zoning districts, but that approximately 75% of this capacity (3,663 units) was for single-family (assumed to be detached single-family residences).
- In March 2024, the city amended its development code to comply with HB 1110, and now allows duplexes on all lots that permit a detached single-family residence. [LSMC 14.46](#), Part III (Infill Development and Middle Housing) also allows for the production of other middle housing types (triplexes, fourplexes, courtyard apartments) within the city's historically single-family residential zones (R4, R6, and R8-12) on slightly larger lot sizes (150% of minimum lot size for a triplex and 175% for a fourplex).

Exhibit 24. Comparison of 2019 BLR Capacity to 2020–2044 Lake Stevens Housing Targets.



Source: Snohomish County, 2021; Snohomish County Tomorrow, 2023.

- Recent years have seen an increase in development of duplexes, triplexes, townhomes and other middle housing types within the R4, R6, and R8-12 zoning districts, as the market has begun catering to more diverse housing needs and aims to best utilize infill development opportunities due to the lack of vacant land in the city.
 - As such, the city has allocated 20% of its projected supply of 3,663 SFR units included in the 2023 HAP as being likely to develop as duplexes or other middle housing, which matches the 20% density bonus included in LSMC 14.46.
 - This results in an estimated supply of 2,930 detached single-family residences (3,663 units x 0.8) and 1,465 middle housing units (3,663 units x 0.2 x 2 units/lot) within the city's WR, R4, R6, and R8-12 zoning districts. When added to the estimated supply of 364 townhomes calculated in the 2023 HAP analysis, the city estimates it has a current capacity of 1,829 middle housing units associated with the 100-120% AMI income band.
- This results in a large projected surplus at the 100-120% AMI range (as shown in Table 2), even when accounting for the potential development of PSH in these zones (see additional discussion below).
- City staff also reassessed the assumptions in the 2021 BLR for residential development (including emergency housing) within the city's commercial and mixed-use zones, which allow for multifamily residential development but were not included in the BLR population capacity estimates that were later translated to housing units.
- Table 1 shows the city's calculated residential capacity for multifamily residential units within commercial and mixed-use zones, which results in additional capacity for 834 MFR units. As discussed in Chapter 2 (Land Use), the city is proposing to eliminate the PBD zone as part of the 2024 Comprehensive Plan, with most previous

PBD areas now ~~proposed as zoned~~ MFR. However, the PBD zone has negligible MFR capacity (~6 units).

- Factoring in the 503 units of MFR housing and 443 units of senior housing (assumed to be provided as MFR units) calculated in the 2023 HAP, the city estimates it has the capacity for 1,780 MFR units (503+434+834).
- ~~Per RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d) (as amended by HB 1220) requires jurisdictions to include in their housing element “adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community”, including emergency housing.~~ Emergency housing must also be allowed in any district that allows hotels, while permanent supportive housing (PSH) must be permitted in any district that allows hotels or allows for residential development.
- ~~Per LSMC Table 14.40-II, The city currently has multiple commercial and mixed-use zoning districts that allow for hotels, and the draft Housing Element (Chapter 3) includes a policy (3.2.4) to allowing emergency housing anywhere hotels are permitted.~~
- ~~When the city first completed this analysis, it did so under August 2023 guidance from the Department of Commerce, which had interpreted the GMA as amended by HB 1220 to. Given this, the LCA does not require a quantitative analysis of emergency housing capacity so long as the jurisdiction allows emergency housing wherever hotels are a permitted use.~~
- ~~However, in reviewing the city’s plan as adopted by Ordinance 1188 in October 2024, Commerce staff pointed to updated guidance issued in September 2024 (after the city’s draft plan was issued) that requires a quantitative analysis of emergency housing capacity in all situations, which required the city to update this analysis.~~
- ~~In addition, Commerce staff requested that the plan include additional discussion of adequate provisions and the completion of the Adequate Provisions Checklist for emergency housing, PSH, and extremely and very low-income housing units. This is because, as shown in Exhibit 23 of the city’s 2023 Housing Action Plan, historically the city has not seen the production of permanent supportive housing, emergency housing, or extremely low and very low-income (0-50% AMI) housing at rates needed to meet its 2044 growth targets. These checklists are included as Tables 5 and 6 at the end of this analysis.~~
- ~~For the emergency housing analysis, the city has opted to utilize Option B (assumed density method) from the September 2024 Commerce guidance.~~
- Proposed policy 3.2.5 calls for permanent supportive housing to be permitted in all residential zones and zones that permit hotels.
- Although PSH is permitted in all residential zones, including those where the city has a documented surplus of detached single-family housing and middle housing capacity, the city estimates that it has a projected deficit of 456 units of PSH.
- Based on Commerce guidance, Table 2 identifies the housing types and zoning districts associated with each income band. The 2044 growth target for each income band is then compared to the existing zoned capacity, with the surplus (or deficit) shown in the right column.
- Units at 0-50% AMI are assumed to require subsidies, while 50-80% AMI are market rate.

Table 1 – Estimated Residential Capacity within Commercial and Mixed-Use Zones (2023)

Zone	Parcel Count	Existing Units	Gross Acres ¹	Net Acres ²	Base Capacity ³	Total Capacity ⁴	Income Band(s)
MU	13	15	5.19	2.59	38.89	23.89	0-30%, 30-50%, and 50-80%
MU Vacant	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
MU Redevelopable	13	15	5.19	2.59	38.89	23.89	
MU Partially-Used	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
MUN	132	140	22.41	11.20	168.04	28.04	0-30%, 30-50%, and 50-80%
MUN Vacant	0	0	0.32	0.16	2.43	2.43	
MUN Redevelopable	129	138	21.76	10.88	163.21	25.21	
MUN Partially-Used	2	2	0.32	0.16	2.40	0.40	
CBD Total	19	20	6.70	3.35	50.24	30.24	0-30%, 30-50%, and 50-80%
CBD Vacant	0	0	1.02	0.51	7.68	7.68	
CBD Redevelopable	18	20	5.67	2.84	42.56	22.56	
CBD Partially-Used	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
PBD Total	13	8	1.92	0.96	14.42	6.42	0-30%, 30-50%, and 50-80%
PBD Vacant	0	0	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
PBD Redevelopable	7	7	1.20	0.60	9.00	2.00	
PBD Partially-Used	1	1	0.00	0.00	0.00	-1.00	
CD Total	115	97	112.35	56.17	842.59	745.59	0-30%, 30-50%, and 50-80%
CD Vacant	0	0	20.53	10.26	153.96	153.96	
CD Redevelopable	87	81	82.08	41.04	615.60	534.60	
CD Partially-Used	17	16	9.74	4.87	73.03	57.03	
Mixed-Use / Commercial	292	280	148.555	74.28	1,114.16	834.16	

1. Area minus critical areas.
2. Gross area minus reduction factor for parking, roads and utilities (25% used for residential uses and 50% used for MFR, mixed-use and commercial).
3. Base capacity multiplies the net acres by the zoning capacity, measured in units per acre.
4. The total capacity is a total of the revised base including middle housing.

Table 2 – Housing Types by Income Band with Projected Surplus or Deficit

Income Band(s) (% AMI)	Housing Types Serving Range	Associated Zoning Districts	2044 Growth Target	Current (2023) Capacity	Surplus or (Deficit)
0-30% (non-PSH) 30-50% 50-80%	Apartments, Condos	MFR, CD, MU, MUN, CBD, PBD (PBD to be eliminated)	2,081	1,780	(301)
0-30% (PSH)	PSH	MFR, CD, MU, MUN, CBD, PBD (PBD to be eliminated)	456	0	(456)
100-120%	Duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, townhomes, cottage housing, ADUs	R4, R6, R8-12	458	1,829	1,371
120% and above	Detached single family residences	WR, R4, R6, R8-12	1,920	2,930	1,010

- Table 2 estimates that the city has adequate capacity to meet its 2044 housing growth targets, except for a projected 301-unit deficit of multifamily housing units affordable at lower income ranges (0-80% AMI) and 456 units of PSH, for a total of 757 units.
- Given this projected deficit, the city is proposing several land use and zoning map amendments to increase its capacity for MFR development at different income brackets and for supportive housing, as shown in Figures 2.4 (Future Land Use Map) and 2.5 (Zoning Map).
- Table 3 includes an analysis of increased MFR development capacity resulting from proposed land use and zoning map amendments from traditionally single-family residential zones (R4 and R8-12) to zoning districts associated with potential MFR development (MFR, CBD and CD)
- Table 3 does not factor in proposed land use and zoning map amendments from PBD to MFR, MUN to MFR, or MU to CBD, which have similar densities and are proposed as housekeeping amendments intended to simplify the city's zoning hierarchy.
- The assumed densities in Table 3 are higher (approximately double) than those in Table 1 due to the lack of existing development on the parcels proposed to be rezoned.
- Overall, Table 3 shows that the proposed rezones have the potential to increase MFR (including that required for PSH) by 774 units while reducing SFR capacity by 217 units.
- These amendments would provide the city with the necessary zoned capacity to address its projected deficit of 757 units at the 0-30%, 30-50%, and 50-80% AMI income bands (including PSH), as required by the GMA.

Table 3 – Proposed Zoning Map Amendments to Meet Lower Income Band Growth Targets

Current Zoning	Proposed Zoning	Net Acres	Assumed Density	Projected Increase in MFR Units	Projected Reduction in SFR Units
R4	MFR	15.1	20 un/acre	302	(60)
R8-12	MFR	12.8	20 un/acre	256	(102)
R8-12	CD	5.8	30 un/acre	174	(47)
R4	CBD	0.3	30 un/acre	9	(1)
R6	CBD	1.1	30 un/acre	33	(7)
Total				774	(217)

- As it relates to emergency housing, the city intends to allow (or already allows) emergency housing in all zones that allow hotels as a permitted use. These include:
 - Local Business (LB)
 - Business District (BD)
 - Central Business District (CBD)
 - Commercial District (CD)
 - Public/Semi-Public (P/SP) (currently requires an administrative conditional use permit)
- Most of these zones (other than P/SP) are focused within the city's three adopted subareas, which provide access to transit, retail and commercial uses, and services that would be beneficial when siting emergency housing.
- Given the current absence of existing hotels in Lake Stevens, the city is likely to need to rely on either the conversion of existing commercial and mixed-use buildings or the development of new structures (including microhomes or tiny home villages) to meet its emergency housing needs within these zones. Please note Lake Stevens has almost zero vacancy rates in existing commercial buildings.
- Utilizing the density prototypes included on pages 48-49 of the September 2024 Commerce guidance and from other cities in the region, the city would anticipate a mix of the emergency housing development concepts shown in Table 4.

Table 4 - Lake Stevens Emergency Housing Development Concepts

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Zoning</u>	<u>Beds</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Density (beds/acre)</u>
<u>North King County Enhanced Shelter</u>	<u>Shoreline</u>	<u>Mixed Business</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>2.66</u>	<u>23</u>
<u>Hope House</u>	<u>Spokane</u>	<u>Downtown South</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>0.45</u>	<u>200</u>
<u>Quince Street Village</u>	<u>Olympia</u>	<u>Downtown Business</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>1.41</u>	<u>71</u>

- Based on a mix of these prototypes, the city would anticipate an average density of 60 beds/acre within its commercial, mixed-use, and public/semi-public zones, which is on par with the assumptions in the Commerce guidance.
- Given the city's projected need for 304 emergency housing beds by 2044, this results in a need for approximately 5.1 acres of land for emergency housing.
- Table 1 shows approximately 74.3 acres of land available for residential development within these commercial and mixed-use zones, not accounting for potential development of surplus public/semi-public (city, state, school district, etc.). At 60 beds/acre, this results in a maximum capacity of 4,458 emergency housing beds, a surplus of 4,053 beds over the city's 2044 growth target.
- When factoring in the zoning map amendments that were approved in October 2024 via Ordinance 1189, allocating 5.1 acres towards the city's 2044 emergency housing needs would still allow the city to meet its 2044 growth targets for housing and employment, as required by the GMA.
- As such, the city has adequate land capacity to meets its emergency housing needs and meet the adequate provision requirements for all housing types as mandated by the GMA. Potential barriers to the provision of emergency housing and permanents supportive housing are shown in Table 5, while potential barriers to extremely low, very low-, and low-income housing are shown in Table 6.

Table 5 – Supplementary Barrier Review Checklist for PSH and Emergency Housing

Barrier	Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)	Why or why not? Provide evidence.	Actions needed to address barriers.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS			
<u>Spacing requirements (for example, minimum distance from parks, schools or other emergency/PSH housing facilities)¹</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>The city is currently lacking regulations of PSH and permanent emergency housing, including spacing requirements.</u>	<u>Develop clear and objective development regulations, with spacing requirements that balance best practices, community needs, and state legislation, including RCW 35A.21.430.</u>
<u>Parking requirements</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>The city is currently lacking regulations of PSH and permanent emergency housing, including parking requirements.</u>	<u>Develop clear and objective development regulations, with parking requirements that balance best practices, community needs, and state legislation, which are slated for review in 2025.</u>
<u>On-site recreation and open space requirements</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city does not currently have on-site recreation and open space requirements for PSH and emergency housing and intends to utilize similar standards as those for other housing types.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Restrictions on support spaces, such as office space, within a transitional or PSH building in a residential zone</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>While the city does not currently have standards for PSH and emergency housing, these uses are expected to be located primarily within the MFR, commercial and mixed-use zones, which generally allow for a mix of uses. Development standards within</u>	<u>N/A</u>

¹ Note that RCW 35A.21.430 expressly states requirements on occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use may not prevent the siting of a sufficient number of permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing or indoor emergency shelters necessary to accommodate each code city's projected need for such housing and shelter under RCW 36.70A.070(2)(a)(ii). The restrictions on these uses must be to protect public health and safety.

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)</u>	<u>Why or why not? Provide evidence.</u>	<u>Actions needed to address barriers.</u>
		<u>residential zones will be consistent with best practices and state law.</u>	
<u>Arbitrary limits on number of occupants (in conflict with RCW 35A.21.314)</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>City regulations are currently consistent with RCW 35A.21.314</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Requirements for PSH or emergency housing that are different than the requirements imposed on housing developments generally (in conflict with RCW 36.130.020)</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city will be developing PSH and emergency housing regulations in 2025 and intends to comply with RCW 36.130.020 and other state legislation.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Other restrictions specific to emergency shelters, emergency housing, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing</u>	<u>NO</u>	<u>The city will be developing PSH and emergency housing regulations in 2025 and intends to comply with RCW 36.130.020 and other state legislation.</u>	<u>N/A</u>

Table 6 – Low-Rise or Mid-Rise Housing Barrier Review Checklist (0-80% AMI)

Barrier	Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)	Why or why not? Provide evidence.	Actions needed to address barrier.
<u>DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS</u>			
<u>Unclear development regulations</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>LSMC 14.48 (Density and Dimensional Regulations), 14.56 (Streets and Sidewalks), 14.72 (Parking) and 14.76 (Screening and Trees) contain clear and objective development regulations for low-rise and mid-rise multifamily housing.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>High minimum lot sizes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Per LSMC Tables 14.48-I and 14.48-II, the city's MFR, commercial and mixed-use zones (where low-rise and mid-rise MFR is permitted) do not have a minimum lot size.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Low maximum densities or low maximum FAR</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city does not have a maximum density or FAR in these zones.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Low maximum building heights</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The maximum building height in the MFR, commercial and mixed-use zones is 55 feet, with a 10-foot height bonus available within the city's three subareas for projects that provide affordable housing or a parking structure.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Large setback requirements</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Setbacks within the MFR, commercial and mixed-use zones range from 0-10 feet.</u>	<u>N/A</u>

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)</u>	<u>Why or why not? Provide evidence.</u>	<u>Actions needed to address barrier.</u>
<u>High off-street parking requirements</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Per LSMC 14.72-I, MFR units outside of the city's subareas are required to provide two parking spaces per unit plus one additional space for every four units (senior housing has slightly lower requirements). Parking requirements in subareas are slightly lower, with Table 14.38-III showing a minimum of 1.25 stalls per unit (0.5 units per senior housing unit). The code does allow for parking reductions when certain conditions are met.</u>	<u>Evaluate potential reductions in parking requirements, especially within the city's subareas and in close proximity to transit. The city's 2025 long-range planning work program includes proposed amendments to the city's streets and parking code.</u>
<u>High impervious coverage limits</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The maximum impervious surface in the MFR zone is 80%, and there is no maximum within the city's mixed-use and commercial zones (projects must demonstrate compliance with the city's stormwater regulations).</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Lack of alignment between building and development codes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The building and zoning codes are regularly monitored for consistency and are updated as needed.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Other (for example: ground floor retail requirements, open space requirements, complex design standards, tree retention regulations, historic preservation requirements)</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Outside of the MFR zone, current development regulations require ground floor retail/commercial as part of multifamily housing developments.</u>	<u>As part of the city's 2025 work program, explore allowing MFR as a standalone permitted use (or as part of a horizontal mixed-use project) within the city's commercial and mixed-use zones in certain situations.</u>
<u>PROCESS OBSTACLES</u>			

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)</u>	<u>Why or why not? Provide evidence.</u>	<u>Actions needed to address barrier.</u>
<u>Conditional use permit process</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>MFR housing does not require a CUP</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>Design review</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city previously eliminated its Design Review Board and all design review is administrative. The city will be updating its design review process to comply with HB 1293, including more clear and objective design review standards.</u>	<u>Update code to further comply with HB 1293 and other recent state legislation.</u>
<u>Lack of clear and accessible information about process and fees</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city has developed a series of handouts and checklists designed to simplify the development process, including for MFR housing. The city's fee resolution was updated in late 2024 to reflect changes required by SB 5290 and include clear and concise information.</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>Permit fees, impact fees and utility connection fees</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city spent considerable time updating its fees resolution to demonstrate compliance with SB 5290. Impact fees for MFR units are significantly less than those for SFR units.</u>	<u>No</u>
<u>Process times and staffing challenges</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city will be hiring an Assistant Planner in early 2025, with the primary role serving to review building permits and staff the planning counter and respond to questions from residents and the development community.</u>	<u>N/A</u>

<u>Barrier</u>	<u>Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)</u>	<u>Why or why not? Provide evidence.</u>	<u>Actions needed to address barrier.</u>
<u>SEPA process</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>The city has adopted Planned Action Ordinances for its three subareas, with two of the three still showing significant residential capacity and the city evaluating increasing the residential threshold in the third subarea. The city has also adopted higher SEPA flexible thresholds, with MFR projects up to 60 units exempt from SEPA review.</u>	<u>N/A</u>
<u>LIMITED LAND AVAILABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS</u>			
<u>Lack of large parcels for infill development</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>The 2021 BLR shows a lack of large parcels with infill development potential in Lake Stevens.</u>	<u>The city will need to rely on more infill development of smaller lots. As part of its housing implementation work in 2025, it will explore potential updates to its development regulations.</u>
<u>Environmental constraints</u>	<u>Yes</u>	<u>Many of the remaining developable parcels have significant environmental constraints.</u>	<u>As part of its work on Housing Implementation Work and Critical Areas Update in 2025, the city will consider how to further balance environmental protection and housing production.</u>

David Levitan

From: Aken, Jeff (COM) <jeff.aken@commerce.wa.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 4:35 PM
To: David Levitan
Subject: RE: Housing Question-Lake Stevens Adopted Plan

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi David,

I heard back from our housing team and the additional materials you shared addressed their concerns on the comprehensive plan. We appreciate your collaboration and effort making these changes.

ja

From: David Levitan <dlevitan@lakestevenswa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, January 23, 2025 3:59 PM
To: Aken, Jeff (COM) <jeff.aken@commerce.wa.gov>
Subject: RE: Housing Question-Lake Stevens Adopted Plan

External Email

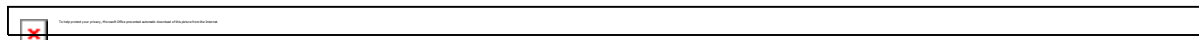
Hi Jeff:

Our city attorney is recommending that we adopted an amended ordinance for the Comprehensive Plan to reflect the changes we made to the Housing Element and LCA (track changes versions attached) to comply with GMA, which we plan to do in February.

Can you and the Housing Team take a look at the track changes in these two documents and give us any initial thoughts before we hold our public hearing with City Council, which is scheduled for February 25? We are meeting with the Planning Commission on February 4, but I realize that is a pretty tight turnaround.

Thank you.

David



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



Agenda Date: 2/5/2025

Subject: Planning Commission Training

Contact Person/Department: David Levitan, Community Development

Budget Impact:

Legal Review: No

RECOMMENDATION(S)/ACTION REQUESTED:

No action is required. Staff will provide a training on the Planning Commission's role and relevant state, regional and local regulations that contribute to the planning framework under which the Commission operates.

SUMMARY/BACKGROUND:

During the Planning Commission's [January 8, 2025 meeting](#) and [January 21, 2025 joint meeting](#) with the City Council, commissioners discussed their policy priorities and explored ways to increase public engagement and improve communication and coordination with the City Council. Leading up to and during those discussions, several commissioners expressed an interest in receiving additional background information and training on the role of the Planning Commission and the regulatory framework that influences their work.

In mid-January, staff emailed commissioners a link to the [Short Course on Local Planning](#) organized by the Washington Department of Commerce. However, as five of the seven commissioners have joined the Commission since staff last provided a similar training and the Short Course has limited opportunities for questions and interaction, staff agreed that such a training would be useful as the Commission begins their 2025 work program, which was approved by the City Council at their January 28 meeting.

Attachment 1 includes an overview of some of the general topics that will be covered during the Commission's February 5 work session. Staff will prepare a PowerPoint

presentation addressing these areas, as well as additional items that came out of the joint meeting, including:

- Strategies for identifying Commission and Council priorities early in the planning process to help shape the project's scope of work. Staff will use the Process Code update as an example for how this might be done.
- How to better relay to the Commission and the public code amendments that are being driven by state mandates (implementing recent housing legislation, critical areas updates, etc.) vs those being initiated by the city.
- Discussion of how state mandates may or may not dovetail with city priorities, such as how the Lake Stevens Industrial Center can help meet 2044 employment growth targets while still reflecting the Commission and Council's vision for the area.

Staff sees this is an opportunity for a conversation as opposed to just a presentation, so commissioners are encouraged to ask questions and provide their feedback.

APPLICABLE CITY POLICIES:

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Attachment 1 - PC Training Memo

MEMORANDUM



Planning and Community Development

DATE: January 31, 2025
TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Russ Wright, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Planning Commission Primer

The Planning Commission is created under the authority of [Chapter 2.64 Lake Stevens Municipal Code \(LSMC\)](#). Its primary responsibility is to act as the planning advisory body for all matters relating to land use, comprehensive planning and zoning and make recommendations to the City Council.

What does this mean?

- Planning Commission recommends an annual work program and ratification of the annual Comprehensive Plan docket to the City Council.
- The planning staff advises the Planning Commission on professional and legal matters related to land use (plan and code) amendments to make recommendations to the City Council.
- Planning Commission recommendations should be based on criteria found in the Municipal Code, Comprehensive Plan or State Law.
- The Planning Commission holds workshops to discuss issues and solicit public comment on amendments to the comprehensive plan, zoning code and some rezones.
- The Municipal Research and Service Center (MRSC) has published [best practices for Planning Commissioners](#).

What rules affect the Planning Commission?

- All city officials (elected or appointed) are subject to the Open Public Meetings Act (OPMA) [Chapter 42.30 of the Revised Code of Washington](#) (RCW). This law requires decisions made by public officials to occur in open public meetings. Planning Commissioners cannot caucus or discuss city business together before or after meetings in person or via other communication means.
- All city officials are subject to the [Public Records Act Chapter 42.56 RCW](#). Written or electronic communications related to city business should be open to the public and must be provided with a records request. Staff recommends not using personal devices for anything other than direct communication on schedules or accessing packets or meetings.
- All city officials are subject to the Appearance of Fairness Doctrine [Chapter 42.36 RCW](#) – simply put you cannot act as a decision-maker if you have a personal or financial interest in a project under review.

- The Planning Commission utilizes Robert’s Rules of Order to help run its meetings, which outline basic parliamentary procedures for running effective meetings. MRSC provides a [summary of Robert’s Rules](#), which are incorporated into the Commission’s Rules of Procedure.

What laws/regulations should Planning Commissioners be familiar with?

- The Planning Enabling Act was adopted in 1959 and is found in [Chapter 36.70](#) of the Revised Codes of Washington (RCW). It provides cities and counties with the authority to adopt local land use and planning regulations.
- The Shoreline Management Act (SMA) was adopted in 1971 and is found in [Chapter 90.58 RCW](#). The SMA applies to all shorelines of the state (Lake Stevens, Catherine Creek and Little Pilchuck Creek) and areas within 200 feet of their ordinary high-water mark (OHWM). It is implemented through the city’s [Shoreline Master Program](#) (SMP). The Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing and making recommendations on amendments to the SMP but is not involved with project-level review such as shoreline substantial development permits or variances.
- The Growth Management Act (GMA) [Chapter 36.70A RCW](#) was adopted in 1990. It provides the foundation for land use planning in Washington state. It includes 15 statewide planning goals (RCW 36.70A.020) that are implemented locally through a jurisdiction’s comprehensive plan and addresses a variety of other topics and requirements, including public participation and critical areas (wetlands, streams, steep slopes, etc.) regulations.

Comprehensive plans have mandatory and optional elements (or chapters) and can be amended no more than once per year (with a few exceptions). Every 10 years the city must complete a full update to its plan known as a periodic update, which the city completed in October 2024. The GMA has seen several significant updates in recent years, including changes to Housing Element requirements (HB 1220, 2021)) and the addition of climate change and resiliency as a statewide planning goal (HB 1181, 2023), which must now be addressed in local comprehensive plans. MRSC provides a good [GMA Basics Summary](#).

- [Vision 2050](#) is developed by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and provides the regional plan for growth in Snohomish, King, Kitsap and Pierce counties. Local comprehensive plans in the four-county region must be consistent with Vision 2050 and its multicounty planning policies.
- Local plans in Snohomish County must also comply with the [Countywide Planning Policies](#). City staff works with the county and other jurisdictions to periodically update these policies.
- The City’s Land Use (Zoning) Code can be found in [Title 14 LSMC](#). Title 14 includes local development regulations (dimensional standards, permissible uses, critical areas, streets and parking, open space, etc.) as well as land use review procedures and requirements, including [Type VI legislative amendments](#) for which the Planning Commission makes a recommendation to City Council following a public hearing.
- Additional information can be found in the [Short Course on Local Planning](#).

2024 Planning and Community Development (PCD) Year End Report

2024 Department Highlights

PCD was busy reviewing development applications – land use permits remained consistent and business licenses increased. Residential and commercial development were steady with new neighborhoods, varied housing types and new commercial projects under design or construction.



The team completed several long-range planning projects.

- 2024 Comprehensive Plan update
- Four code amendments
- After an extensive study, the City Council approved a new fee schedule for building and land use permits based on cost recovery.
- Consultants were selected for the Civic Campus and Lake Stevens Historical Museum.

Partial PCD Staff Photo

PCD continued to emphasize process improvements, staff training and internal growth.

- Process improvements focused on permit workflows with a goal to reduce review times and increase clarity, citations and consistency of city comments across departments.
 - PCD revised or created 23 Standard Operating Procedures
 - Staff revised 21 application forms and updated 79 checklists
 - Migrated our department files into SharePoint
- All staff had opportunities for training and to attend conferences to increase their skills.
 - Staff took advantage of 69 training opportunities, earning over 81 educational credits throughout 2024 to stay current on ever-evolving land use and permitting requirements and best practices, which lead to several certifications.
- Staffing:
 - We said hello to Dawn Erickson, our first dedicated administrative support person.
 - We said goodbye to Mariamne Busby, which opened an opportunity for Cody Schwindt to successfully compete for the Civil Plan Reviewer position.
 - In turn, we welcomed Gloriana Huhta onto our team as the new Permit Lead.
 - Jill Needham moved into the Planner position and will take on more complex projects.
 - Caleb Glaser moved into the Building Inspector 2 role after earning additional credentials and additional responsibilities.

2024 PCD Permit Highlights

Residential Building Permits

- Vintage Senior Housing – 188 units
- Village Concepts Assisted Living – 141 units
- Single-Family Residences – 81 reviewed / 147 completed

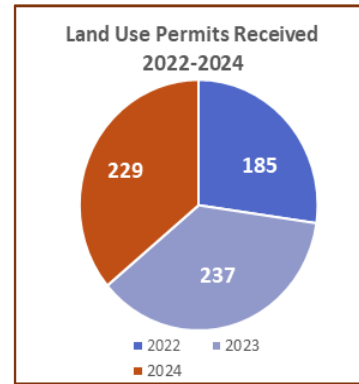
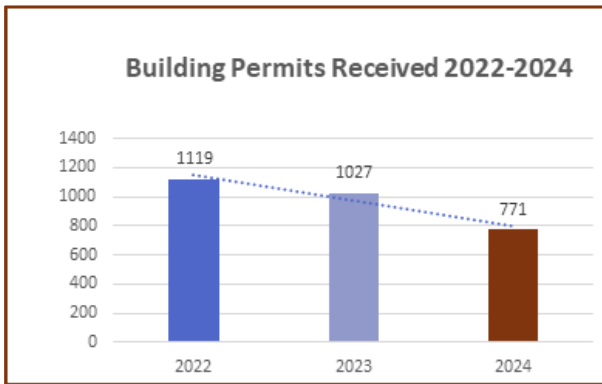
Residential Land Use Permits

- 8 active subdivisions – 303 new lots in the queue
- 4 active townhome projects – 141 units in the queue
- ADUs – Applied: 4 new/1 alteration; Issued - 2 new/2 alterations

6,226 Building inspections (17 per day) & 694 Land Use inspections (2 per day) completed



Fagerlie Subdivision Under Construction



Three-Year Land Use and Building Permit Trends

The three-year trends show an overall decline in building permits between 2022 and 2024, with land use permits staying steady for the last two years. This may reflect reduced land availability or higher development costs. However, **in the last two years, the number of land use permits has exceeded the prior five-year average.**



Each land use permit generates multiple Building Permits



Most approved land use permits create a multiplier for building permits. For example, a **30-lot subdivision would include a building permit for each residence plus construction-related building permits**. There is generally a one-to-two-year lag between approved land use and building permits. We anticipate an increase in 2025 and 2026 building permit activity.



Village Concepts Assisted Living Facility Under Construction

Civic Building & Land Use Permits

- Sno-Isle Library
- Food Bank repair
- Bayview Trail
- Main Street improvements
- Sewer lift station and capacity improvements
- 91st Ave Multi-Use Path

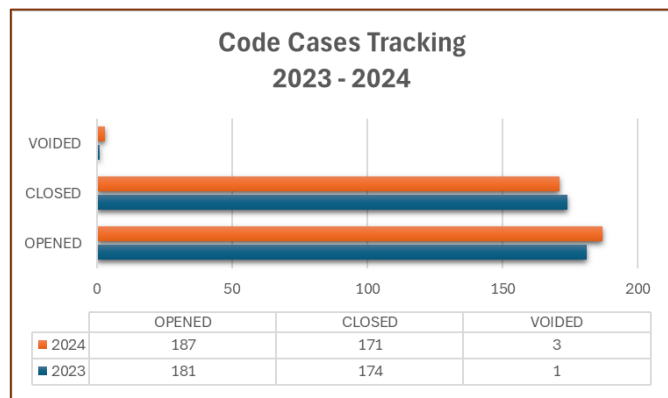
Commercial Land Use Permits

- South Lake Business Park
- Lakeshore Plaza
- Meyer Industrial
- Panda Express
- Pursuit Fitness
- AJ Family Dentistry
- Planet Fitness

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement focused on customer compliance, remained proactive in response times and continued to monitor violations. The number and flow of open and closed code cases were broadly consistent with the previous year.

- 2024 saw 187 cases opened and 171 cases closed, compared with 181 and 174, respectively, for 2023.
- New compliance forms and processes were developed with concise steps for customers, resulting in faster case resolution.



Two-year Code Enforcement Trends

2024 PCD Long-Range Planning and Economic Development Highlights

Long-Range Planning

2024 Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update dominated the 2024 Long Range Planning Work Program and represents the first major plan update since 2015. Community engagement was integral to the process:

- 7 Planning Commission work sessions
- 4 City Council work sessions
- 2 Open houses
- Outreach at community events
- An interactive GIS story map describing proposed map changes
- A comprehensive project website, including a FAQ document
- Extensive public noticing in advance of the public hearing



Important Changes to the 2024 plan:

- Addressed changes to the Growth Management Act for housing, climate change/ sustainability and multimodal transportation
- Aligned the city plan with countywide and regional policies
- Adopted new growth targets through the year 2044
- Targeted rezones to increase the supply of multi-family housing and commercial areas.

Lake Stevens Growth Targets	2019/2020 Estimate	2044 Growth Target	2020-2044 Increase
Population (people)	38,951	48,565	9,614
Employment (jobs)	5,675	8,894	3,219
Housing Units (units)	13,473	18,388	4,915

Lake Stevens 2044 Growth Targets

Code Amendments

- *Ordinance 1160* – 2021 International Building Codes updated building, construction and fire regulations, which became effective February 28, 2024.
- *Ordinance 1179*—Code Clean Up corrected code inconsistencies and improved the administration of existing code to comply with state housing legislation, notably HB 1110 (middle housing) and HB 1337 (accessory dwelling units). It became effective on March 6, 2024.
- *Ordinance 1185* – The Solicitor License ordinance amended the local Solicitor License code and became effective on July 3, 2024.
- *Interim Ordinance 1192* – Project Permit Review adopted local regulations to be consistent with SB 5290. The interim code is effective through December 2025 and will be replaced by permanent rules as part of a larger process code amendment in 2025.

Code Amendments in Action – the City Council and staff spent considerable time working on a short-term rental ordinance in 2023 with a citizen’s committee and the Planning Commission. Since its inception, staff have approved 23 short-term rental applications and renewed eight applications in 2024. There have been no reported problems to date.

Economic Development and Other Outreach

Department Goal: Maintain A Unique and Vibrant Community That Promotes Economic Growth and Healthy Neighborhoods with Sustainable Development and Environmental Protection

The **91st Ave NE Sidewalk Project design was completed in 2024** after several months of public and council engagement.



Photo Simulation of Future 91st Ave SE Improvements

- This roadway will provide a blueprint for future active commercial roads with bike paths and inviting sidewalks and pedestrian areas. Complete design is slated for January 2026.
- This project will connect neighborhoods to shopping and recreation areas and provide multiple safe transportation options when completed.

Other economic development activities this year focused on marketing surplus city properties with the assistance of a real estate broker; coordinating the floor plan of the Lake Stevens Historical Museum; and bringing on a design team to complete the Municipal Service Campus.

Beautification Plan

- City-branded wayfinding signage was installed in the first quarter of 2024 throughout the city at several key locations.

- PCD worked with a consultant to create an official “City of Lake Stevens” flag. The flag contains each district’s icon and brings them together under the “*One Community Around the Lake*” banner. The flag was carried during the Association of Washington Cities Annual Conference in June 2024.



- Staff has been coordinating with the Mayor and an HOA on a future mural to be painted on the long wall at SR-9 and Market Place.

External Collaboration

- In May 2024, city staff and council members traveled with members of the Economic Alliance to Washington DC, to discuss countywide needs with our delegates. The city of Lake Stevens met individually with our delegates to address city priorities, including transportation, housing and other topics.
- City staff actively participated with Snohomish County Tomorrow (SCT) – the Community Development Director serves as co-chair of the Planning Advisory Committee and as the city and town representative to the Puget Sound Regional Council. The Community Development Director will participate on an exploratory committee in 2025 to evaluate the role of SCT as a regional group to improve communication across sub-committees.



- PCD participated in a year-long pilot project as part of a Community Transit Community Working Group comprised of community representatives. The Community Working Group developed the service area and recommended the mode of transportation, resulting in the Zip Shuttle program. The Zip Shuttle provides over 50 daily rides.

CT Community Working Group

- PCD staff continues to participate in the Alliance for Affordable Housing. Notable accomplishments in 2024 included revised demographic information for the cities completing their comprehensive plans.
- PDC Code Enforcement staff meets monthly with code enforcement staff from the cities of Monroe, Sultan and Snohomish for consistency of code application across jurisdictions.
- The building officials from Monroe, Stanwood, Duvall, Gold Bar and Sultan meet monthly to discuss policy and ensure consistency across jurisdictions. Snohomish County and Woodinville have recently joined the group.

The cities of Lake Stevens, Monroe and Stanwood, received the WABO Award for their efforts coordinating with neighboring jurisdictions preparing and implementing handouts pertaining to the recent building code updates.

2025 PCD LOOK AHEAD

Process Improvements

Automation and Simplification are PCD's themes for 2025!

PCD's goal is to become more efficient as we perform regular activities to improve workflows and productivity.

- The 2024 upgrades to our permitting software provided additional automation opportunities for us to simplify workflows for plan review and inspections. Automation will increase permitting consistency and make reporting easier to comply with SB 5290.
- Future SharePoint and GIS integrations will also increase efficiency.

As a city, staff will begin testing artificial intelligence (AI) across our various tasks using Microsoft Copilot.

- In PCD, AI can assist in preparing public notices, form updates and similar tasks.
- This tool will help us improve customer service through online prompts for permits and long-range projects.

Reduce meetings and focus on those that are purposeful.

Increase cross-training on processes and promote a holistic understanding of work to reduce silos to improve consistency and predictability, improving customers' experiences.

Projects

The 2025 Long-Range Work Program will focus on overhauling the permit process, revising streets and parking, updating critical areas, implementing additional housing / mixed-use tools, and reimagining the Lake Stevens Industrial Center. It will also oversee the annual docket.

Other projects will include adding beautification signs, public art, and continued coordination with external agencies.

PCD staff will deliver the Museum project this year and manage the development of the Civic Campus, which should be under construction in late 2025.

Training and Staffing

We will add a new assistant planner in the first quarter and a building supervisor later in the year to improve our customer service and response times. We also plan to hire a planning intern to help with long-range projects.

All staff will continue to receive additional training and certifications focusing on technology and best industry practices, allowing us to keep up with changing codes and techniques.

PC Extended Agenda - February 5, 2025

	1/8/2025	1/21/2025	2/5/2025	2/19/2025	3/5/2025	3/19/2025	4/2/2025	4/16/2025
Code Updates								
Process Code Update (Interim ordinance expires December 9)				D	D		D	
Streets/Sidewalk/Parking				I		D		D
Industrial Center Zoning							I	
Housing Implementation						I		
Critical Areas Update (December 31 deadline)								I
Parks Impact Fees							I	
Long Range								
2024 Comprehensive Plan Minor Updates			PH					
2025 Annual Docket Ratification				I	PH			
Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan (December 31 deadline)								
Administrative								
Election of Officers	I							
Annual Work Plan Discussion	D							
Joint Meeting with City Council		D						
PC Training (Role, Relevant regulations)			D					

KEY

I- Introduction & Discussion

D- Discussion

PH- Public Hearing

Joint Meeting