



# Comprehensive Plan Housing

## Background

The Washington State Growth Management Act requires that comprehensive plans include a chapter on housing. This chapter includes several pieces of analysis, including an inventory of current housing stock, a breakdown of current housing costs, potential locations of housing for various income segments, the state of housing discrimination in the County and many more.

## Importance

The housing element is a crucial piece of any functional comprehensive plan. It works to ensure that residents are able to find quality, affordable housing in the area within the planning horizon (20 years). Additionally, the housing types and uses allowed are drivers in creating meaningful neighborhoods and place, both in urban and rural communities.



## Key Concepts

**Affordability:** For planning purposes, a housing unit is considered affordable when its occupant spends 30% or less of their income on housing costs.

**Density:** The density of housing is a key consideration when working on the comprehensive plan. Some rural areas are best served by more sparsely located structures, while others, within urban growth areas for example, are better served by more dense housing within or near services. Finding the right balance is a large portion of the County's work on this element.

**Displacement:** Defined by residents of an area being forced to vacate. This could be because they can no longer afford their homes, their home is demolished for redevelopment, or any number of other governmental and market-factor causes. Displacement is a key factor in gentrification.

**Preservation:** Rather than demolishing existing structures and building new ones in their stead, preservation encourages the rehabilitation and maintenance of existing housing stock. Housing preservation plays a significant role within the GMA's requirements.