



# Consolidated Plan Overview

FOR THE PERIOD OF JUNE 2023 TO  
JULY 2027

**Needs  
Assessment**

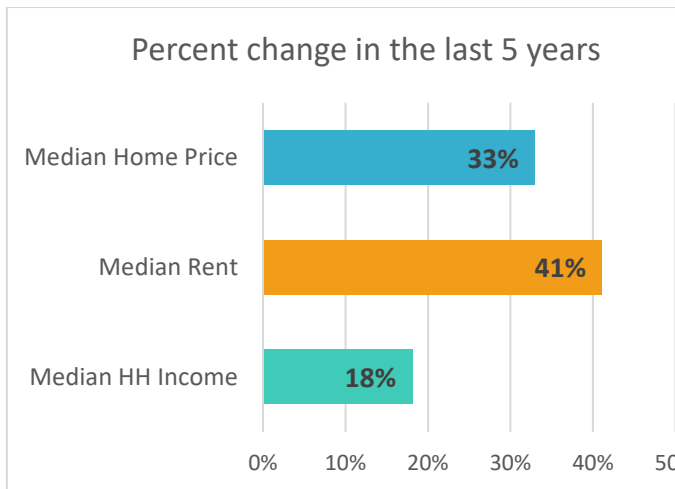
**Market  
Analysis**

**Strategic  
Plan**

# Needs Assessment

## Incomes don't stretch as far

People in Bellingham are earning more, but not enough to keep up with the increased cost of housing. Home and rent prices have escalated dramatically, and too many people are paying more than they can afford for housing.



Increasing housing costs mean that residents have fewer dollars to put toward other basic needs. Providers that offer basic needs assistance like food have seen a dramatic increase in demand. For example, the Bellingham Food Bank recorded its busiest week ever in 2022. Visits to the food bank have *more than doubled* since February 2020, from 17,000 to 35,000 monthly.

Increasing housing costs, especially rent, put low-income families at higher risk of housing instability when their incomes do not keep up. Read on to see how this has played out in Bellingham.

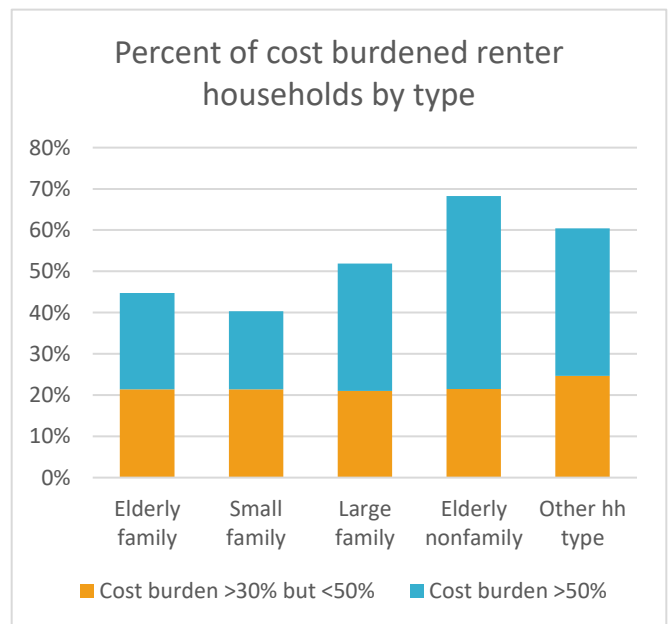
\*The most recent available data source was used, which was 2021 for incomes 2022 for rents and home prices.

## Paying too much for housing

Renters are significantly more likely to pay too much of their income for housing than are homeowners. This trend can be observed across all types of renter households – not just young adults or students.

Cost burden is when a household pays more than 30% of their income for housing, and severe cost burden is when they pay over 50%. Nine percent (9%) of homeowners are severely cost burdened, compared to 33% of renters. There are over four times as many severely cost burdened renter households in Bellingham as there are homeowner households.

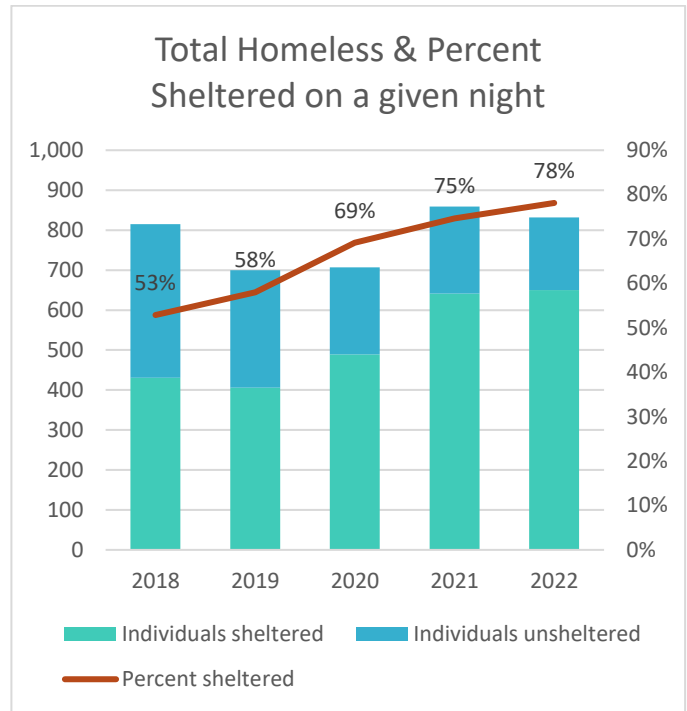
Meanwhile, cost burden among homeowners has decreased in the past five years. Generally, the longer a household has owned their home, the more insulated they are from cost burden.



## Homelessness in Bellingham

Homelessness remains stubbornly high, but there has been some progress. Many more people have access to shelter than five years ago, which means that fewer people are forced to sleep in unsafe places such as in vehicles, tents, or on the street.

Homelessness is still increasing in Bellingham, as it is across our region. As housing costs rise, more people become homeless. The Whatcom County Point-in-Time count does an annual census of how many individuals are without a home on a given night. In 2018 there were 815 individuals counted, and in 2022 it was 832. However, the percent who were sheltered was 78% in 2022, compared to only 53% in 2018 – a significant increase. That shows that when we add shelter beds, people will use them (even if there is not a significant increase in the population who are unhoused).



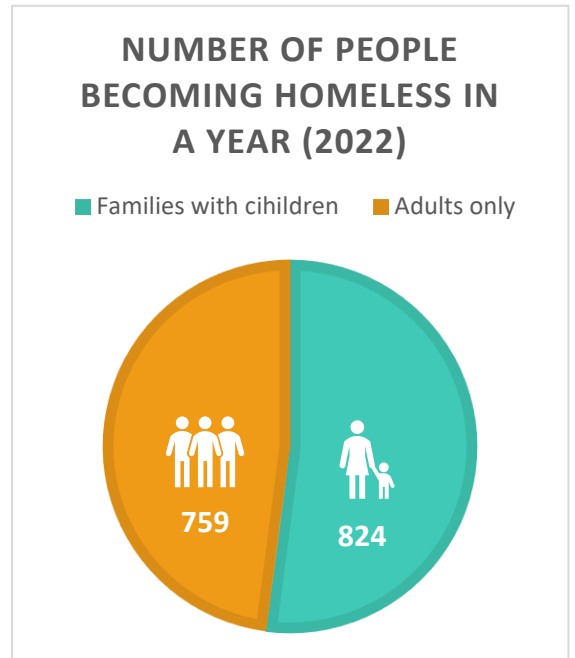
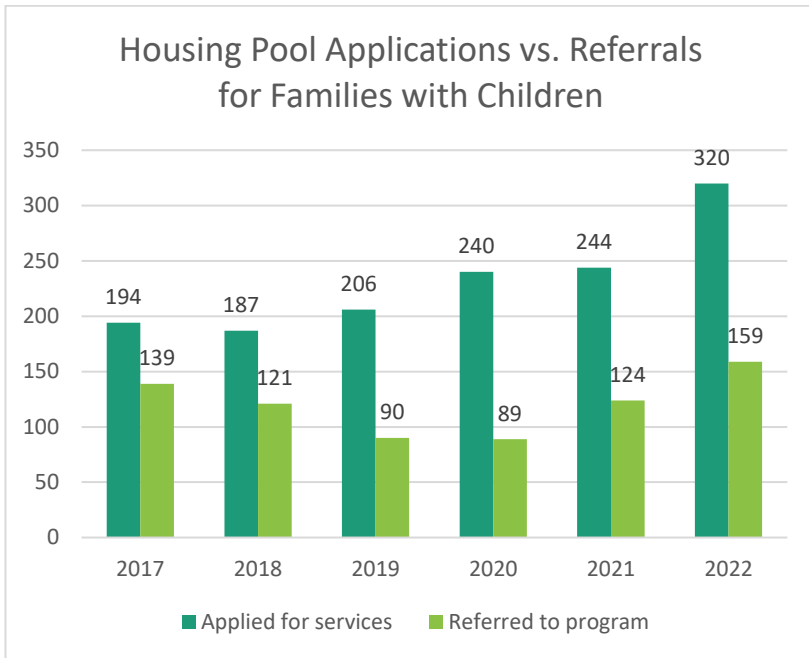
## Family homelessness is on the rise

Of serious concern is the trend over the past five year of increased family homelessness. Families with children have long been a top priority in our community. Despite this, more and more are falling into homelessness or are at risk, and our resources for aiding these families are too few.



From 2017 to 2022, families with children applying for services through the Whatcom Homeless Service Center has increased by 65%. In 2022, over half (52%) of the new intakes for the housing pool were people in families with children. Not only is there an increase, but due to a tight housing market and multiple barriers, these families are remaining longer in shelter situations that are unsuitable for children. Our primarily shelter option for families with kids is motel stays.

Housing programs in general are seeing clients take much longer to find stable housing, even once they have the support of a case manager or a rental assistance voucher. Due to low vacancy rates and limited agency capacity, average stays in emergency and transitional housing on average are often twice as long as they were before than pandemic.



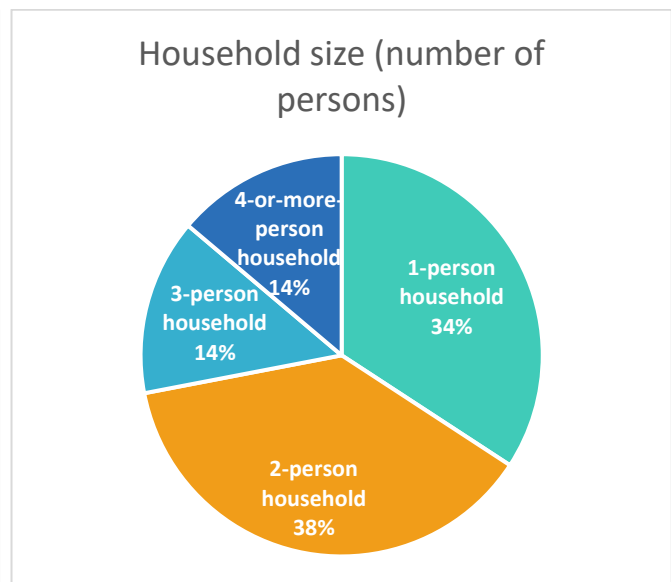
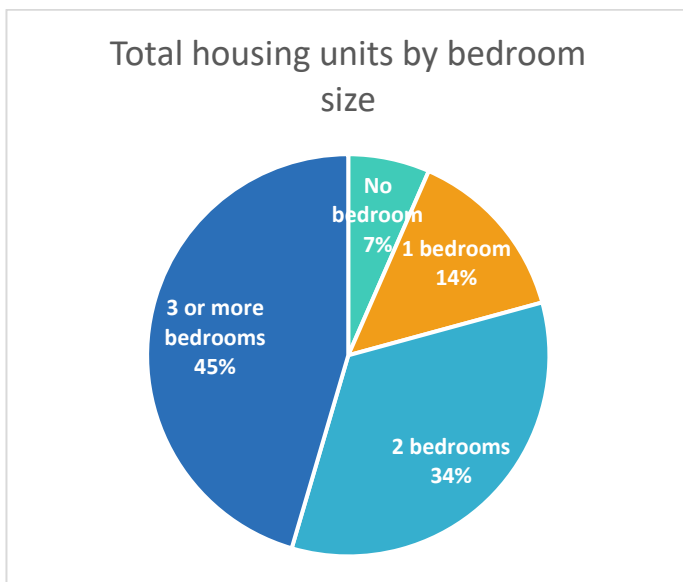
Alternative or additional graphics for homelessness.

# Market Analysis

## Housing stock

Our existing housing stock does not match our current population. Household composition is changing, and smaller family sizes are becoming more common. Meanwhile, most of our housing is built for larger households.

The two pie charts below illustrate a disconnect between the housing units that exist in Bellingham and the households that live here. Forty-five percent of our housing units have three or more bedrooms, while only 28% of our households or families have 3 or more people. The market is providing larger houses than people need or can afford in today’s market.



## Homeownership

There are very few opportunities for moderate income households to become homeowners. Most of the new housing being built are rental units. High demand keeps prices high even in neighborhoods that were formerly affordable.

Rental housing units, primarily apartments, are being added to the housing market in much greater quantity than ownership units (condos, townhomes, or single-family homes); 80% of new residential units permitted in the past 5 years were multi-family housing. In general, most multi-family housing is intended for the rental market, and single-family housing is intended for homeownership. Density helps our community accommodate more residents, but rental costs will continue to rise in the private market. Ownership options for moderate income families are important to break the cycle of cost burden and housing instability.



## Construction costs

A key factor that exacerbates the housing shortage is the cost of construction. Homebuilders must either charge market prices or need steep public subsidies to break even on new homes.

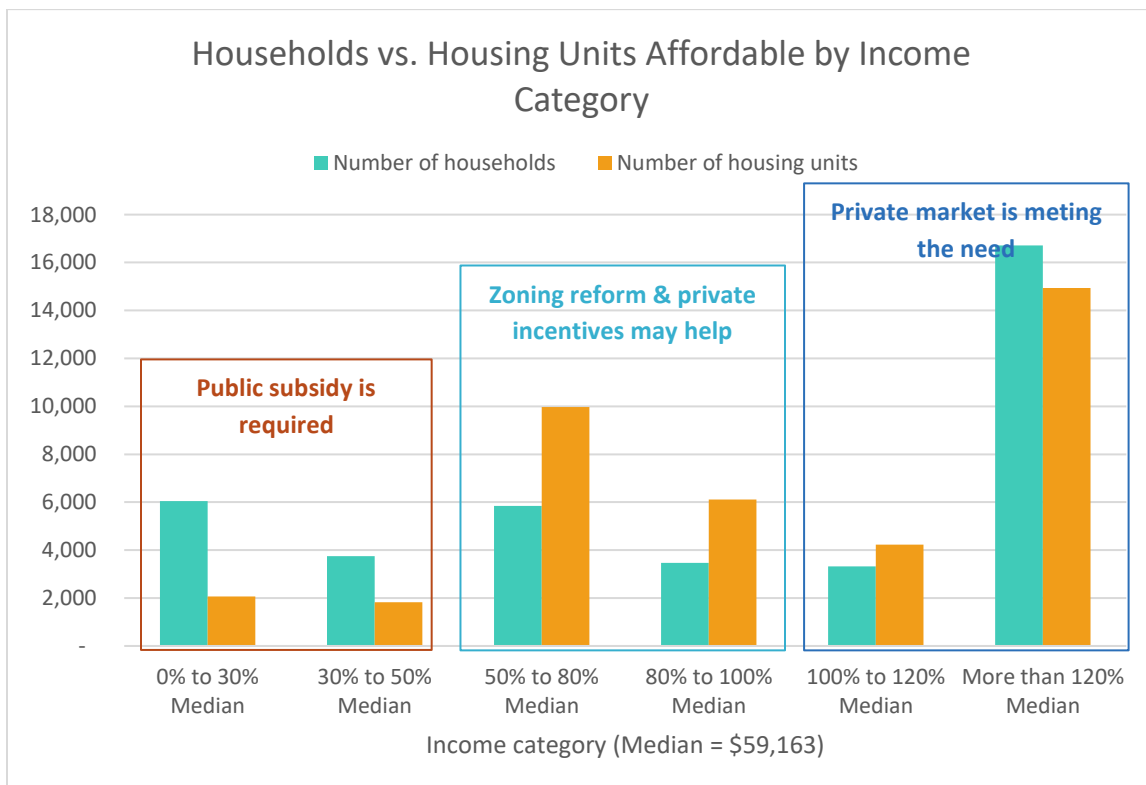
Construction costs are at historic highs. Recent capital costs for a non-profit to build a single apartment in a large multi-family building are about \$400,000 *per apartment*. This decreases the number of units that can be built with public funding sources, because our housing dollars don't go as far.



## Housing stock and household incomes

There is a severe lack of housing that is affordable to those who earn less than 50% of the median income (about 25% of the households in Bellingham). At current construction costs and interest rates, the private market cannot provide housing that is affordable to these households and other interventions are necessary.

Current local and federal funding dollars are not sufficient to make up the existing gap to meet this need. The chart below shows the number of housing units compared to the number of households whose income would make those units affordable, and overlays with what types of intervention would be needed to balance the housing supply with the incomes of Bellingham residents.



**SUMMARY OF RESPONSES TO NOFA (deadline was extended to noon on 2/9 - additional applications added)**

**CAPITAL PROJECT APPLICATIONS**

Title	Program	Funding Request	Budget	Request % of Budget	PreviouslyFunded?	Notes
Bellis Fair Family Housing + Childcare	Opportunity Council - Housing Production/Pres	\$6,173,619	\$32,036,634	19%	No	Nearly \$6m of this ask is for development of 60 units. The remainder is for the childcare component (\$186,876).
Bellis Fair Family Housing, Phase II land acq	Opportunity Council - Housing Production/Pres	\$875,000	TBD		No	Full site needs to be acquired for above project, but this amount is attributable to a future project.
Garden St Apts Acquisition	YWCA - Housing Production/Preservation	\$97,142	\$2,009,134	5%	No	Currently occupied 11 unit apartment building to transition to YWCA client occupancy.
Barkley Early Learning Center	YMCA - Childcare Acquisition/Development	\$200,000	\$3,342,800	6%	Yes	We helped them purchase the tenant improvements last year; this is for shell
Karen Durham House (contingency)	SHH - Karen Durham House acquisition	\$291,033	\$1,078,883	27%	Yes	Add'l to the \$158k already invested. Requested only in the event that Commerce \$ does not come through
TBD	Land acquisition for development pipeline					
		<u>\$7,636,794</u>				

**HOUSING AND HUMAN SERVICES APPLICATIONS**

Title	Program	Funding Request	Program Budget	Request % of Budget	PreviouslyFunded?	Goal	Beneficiaries	AMI
Alternatives to Hunger (Bellingham Food Bank)	Free Grocery Program	\$50,000	\$3,300,000	2%	Yes	Increase access to basic needs (food, medical care) other than housing	25,000	100%
Bellingham Childcare & Learning Center	Tuition Assistance	\$20,000	\$90,000	22%	Yes	Increase access to affordable childcare	72	38%
Bellingham Public Schools	Family Resource Center at Carl Cozier	\$50,000	\$73,500	68%	Yes	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	515	87%
Brigid Collins House	Family Support Case Management	\$30,000	\$315,553	10%	Yes	Increase likelihood that formerly homeless households will remain stably housed (case r	40	100%
D.I.S.H. Foundation	DISH Foundation Vocational Training and On the Job	\$25,000	\$162,640	15%	No	Provide seniors or disabled adults with supports that improve quality of life	45	67%
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services	Safe Start	\$25,000	\$37,705	66%	Yes	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	60	100%
Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Services	DVSAS Safe Shelter	\$35,200	\$609,826	6%	Yes	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	135	100%
Lydia Place	Mental Health Program	\$82,755	\$488,485	17%	Yes	Increase likelihood that formerly homeless households will remain stably housed (case r	100	100%
Lydia Place	Family Housing Program	\$471,625	\$2,854,413	17%	Yes	Increase likelihood that formerly homeless households will remain stably housed (case r	675	100%
Max Higbee Community Recreation Center	Max Higbee Center Weekday Program	\$40,000	\$485,379	8%	Yes	Provide seniors or disabled adults with supports that improve quality of life	179	98%
Mercy Housing Northwest	Senior Support Services	\$15,000	\$66,014	23%	Yes	Provide seniors or disabled adults with supports that improve quality of life	112	99%
Northwest Youth Services	Teen Court Program	\$24,300	\$46,685	52%	Yes	Reduce vulnerability to homelessness (job training, literacy) other than housing	20	60%
Northwest Youth Services	Whatcom Transitional Living Program	\$48,000	\$740,879	6%	Yes	Increase likelihood that formerly homeless households will remain stably housed (case r	8	100%
Northwest Youth Services	Positive Adolescent Development ('PAD') Emergency	\$49,995	\$735,836	7%	Yes	Increase likelihood that formerly homeless households will remain stably housed (case r	45	100%
Northwest Youth Services	The Ground Floor Day-Use Center	\$85,000	\$439,066	19%	Yes	Increase access to basic needs (food, medical care) other than housing	400	100%
Northwest Youth Services	Whatcom Education & Employment Service	\$25,900	\$75,333	34%	Yes	Reduce vulnerability to homelessness (job training, literacy) other than housing	55	100%
Opportunity Council	Volunteer Chore Program	\$29,600	\$83,827	35%	Yes	Provide seniors or disabled adults with supports that improve quality of life	175	100%
Opportunity Council	Maple Alley Inn	\$30,000	\$175,000	17%	Yes	Increase access to basic needs (food, medical care) other than housing	750	100%
Opportunity Council	Whatcom Homeless Service Center	\$97,114	\$235,563	41%	Yes	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	760	96%
Opportunity Council	Housing Navigation	\$54,114	\$80,236	67%	Yes	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	456	95%
Rebound of Whatcom County	Roots Family Enrichment Program	\$30,000	\$140,058	21%	Yes	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	65	72%
Sean Humphrey House a nonprofit corporation	Sean Humphrey House a nonprofit corporation	\$18,700	\$502,232	4%	Yes	Increase access to basic needs (food, medical care) other than housing	6	100%
Sean Humphrey House a nonprofit corporation	Karen Durham House - Resident Food and Needs	\$18,700	\$291,220	6%	No	Increase access to basic needs (food, medical care) other than housing	6	100%
Whatcom Council on Aging	Meals on Wheels and More	\$50,000	\$2,357,464	2%	Yes	Increase access to basic needs (food, medical care) other than housing	450	78%
Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center	WDRC Housing Stability Program	\$197,300	\$272,300	72%	No	Reduce the number of newly homeless households (prevention, diversion)	275	82%
Whatcom Literacy Council	Gaining Jobs & Self Sufficiency Through Literacy	\$15,000	\$274,138	5%	Yes	Reduce vulnerability to homelessness (job training, literacy) other than housing	25	88%
YWCA Bellingham	YWCA Housing Programs	\$50,000	\$608,599	8%	Yes	Increase likelihood that formerly homeless households will remain stably housed (case r	144	100%
		<u>\$1,668,303</u>						

**LETTERS OF INTEREST**

Title	Program	Funding Request
Bellingham Public Schools	Family Resource Center - Prevention of Hmlessness	\$90,000
WHSC	Roommate matching/homeshare	TBD
Opportunity Council	Community Education	\$97,843
Opportunity Council	Prevention Services	\$156,040
		<u>\$343,883</u>