



HOUSING

The predominant land use in Mukilteo is single-family residential with over 54% of the city zoned for single-family residences. Housing also is provided for within the city's two multi-family residential zones and in the commercial zones that allow for mixed use developments. Multi-family residential zones make up 7% of the city's area while another 7% of the city is in a commercial zone where mixed use development is allowed. Any housing units located outside of these zones are nonconforming uses.

Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.070 (2) of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), the city's Comprehensive Plan's Housing Element is required to ensure the vitality, character, and distinctiveness of established residential neighborhoods. The element should:

- Include an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs; and
- Include policies and mandatory provisions for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing; and
- Identify sufficient land for housing to accommodate projected population growth; and
- Make adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments.

Snohomish County’s [Countywide Planning Policies](#) (CPPs) related to housing reflect both GMA requirements and the goals of the regional growth strategy described in [Puget Sound Regional Council’s Vision 2040](#). Housing goals in Vision 2040 include preserving, improving and expanding housing stock to provide a range of housing options affordable to all segments of the population. Every resident should have fair and equal access to healthy and safe housing options.

Mukilteo, Snohomish County, and other county municipalities collaborated in drafting the “[2013 Housing Characteristics and Needs in Snohomish County](#)” report which will be frequently cited in this Housing Element. The municipalities also collaborated in preparing the “[2013-2014 Growth Monitoring Report](#)” which includes population and housing targets for the year 2035.

Addressing housing demand must be done on a regional level, as acknowledged in both the housing CPPs and the housing report, because it is beyond the capacity of local governments to meet on their own the demand for housing by all populations. The regional approach is also necessary because government policies and regulations only play a secondary role in determining housing supply. The supply of housing is primarily determined by complicated interactions between government policies and regional market forces. While government policies can impact housing supply, the impact of regional market forces is much more significant.

Mukilteo’s role in helping meet regional housing needs should include a focus on minimizing regulatory obstacles which impede construction of new housing in general and affordable and special needs housing in particular. As such, Mukilteo has adopted regulations as required by the state to allow accessory dwelling units and manufactured housing to be located in the city. The goal behind all of the City of Mukilteo’s housing policies is to do this while still protecting the vitality and character of established residential neighborhoods.



HOUSING - GENERAL POLICIES

Half of the housing units in Mukilteo, both single- and multi-family, were built in 1990 or later, so it can be assumed most of Mukilteo’s housing stock is in relatively good condition. It is sound policy to maintain and retain existing units to minimize the need to build new housing.

HO1: RETENTION OF EXISTING HOUSING STOCK SHOULD BE A CITY PRIORITY.

Market-rate affordable housing units are most likely going to be located in older structures. Unfortunately, development regulations can sometimes indirectly make it more attractive to demolish an older structure and build a new dwelling unit rather than to maintain and remodel the existing unit. **Programs that support the rehabilitation and maintenance of older and/or historical housing stock should be investigated and supported (HO1a).** Similarly, regulations and other factors can force people, especially retirees, to move out of their house even though their preference would be to stay. **Programs that assist residents to age in place and stay in their dwelling units even after retirement should be investigated and supported (HO1b).**

While housing is part of the built environment, care must be taken to ensure impacts on the natural environment are minimized.

HO2: HOUSING POLICIES, PROGRAMS, AND REGULATIONS DESIGNED TO SUPPORT AND PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY AND WHICH MINIMIZE THE IMPACT ON ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED.

Providing fair and equal access to housing to the entire population is promoted by the Growth Management Act, Vision 2040, and Snohomish County CPPs.

HO3: THE CITY SHALL SUPPORT FAIR AND EQUAL ACCESS TO HOUSING FOR ALL PERSONS REGARDLESS OF RACE, COLOR, RELIGION, GENDER, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, AGE, NATIONAL ORIGIN, FAMILIAL STATUS, SOURCE OF INCOME, OR DISABILITY.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The City of Mukilteo alone cannot ensure there is enough affordable housing to meet the needs of all populations residing in the city. Providing enough housing that is affordable to the lowest economic segments of the population is probably the greatest housing challenge facing the city. In fact, it may not be feasible for such housing to be located within city limits due to Mukilteo’s high land values. This is why a regional approach to meeting housing needs is required.

HO4: THE CITY SHALL ACTIVELY COLLABORATE WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES, PUBLIC AGENCIES, AND PRIVATE ENTITIES TO ADDRESS HOUSING ISSUES; INCLUDING THE ISSUE THAT THERE IS AN INADEQUATE SUPPLY OF HOUSING THAT IS AFFORDABLE FOR LOWER INCOME SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION.

While there is a range of options available to the City on how and what level it participates in addressing regional housing needs, because the City has finite resources it must strategically plan where those resources are used. **The City shall be an active participant with Snohomish County and other county municipalities in compiling the “Housing Characteristics and Needs in Snohomish County” report as required by Countywide Planning Policy (HO4a).**

The Alliance for Housing Affordability (AHA) of Snohomish County was created in 2014 through Snohomish County Tomorrow. Mukilteo played an important role during the entire process that resulted in the AHA formation; from guiding a feasibility study, drafting a Memorandum of Understanding, and ultimately to getting an Inter Local Agreement creating the alliance signed by 13 cities in the county, Snohomish County and the Housing Authority of Snohomish County.



Continuing its past history with AHA, **the City shall be an active participant with the Alliance for Housing Affordability and other inter-jurisdictional efforts to promote and contribute to an adequate and diversified supply of housing countywide (HO4b).**

The vast majority of housing in Mukilteo and the region is constructed by the private sector as driven by the market. As shown on the following page in Chart 4: Mukilteo Household Income, the majority of the households in Mukilteo



exceed the median income of Snohomish County. This fact is reflected in the private market. **Public and private partnerships designed to retain and promote affordable housing options should be formed (HO4c)** to facilitate the construction of affordable housing in the city and region.

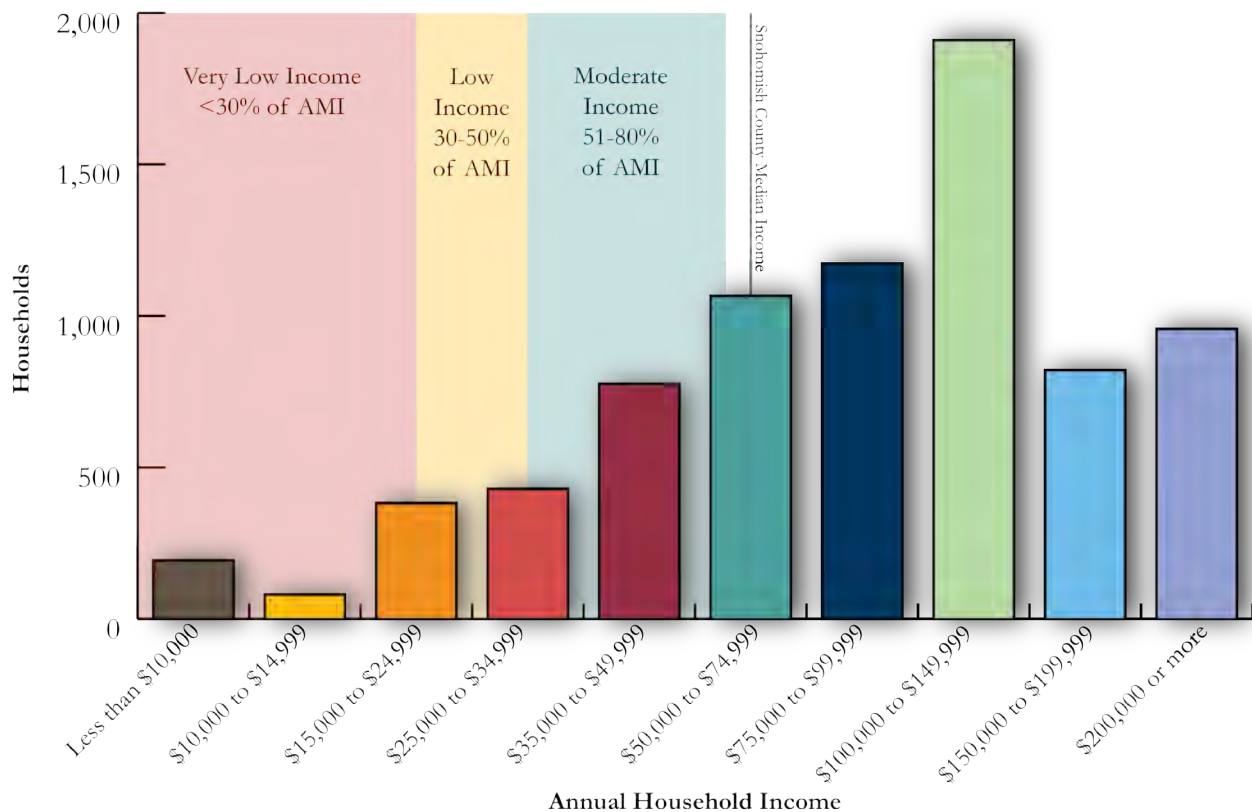
While generally the most effective way to address housing issues is on a regional basis, there are opportunities where the City can act on its own and have an impact on housing supply. Those opportunities could include adoption of flexible development regulations that encourage innovative housing design that can lead to greater efficiency in the use of land for housing. Or, they could include enacting legislation that provides financial incentives to housing developers that encourages them to build more multi-family and affordable housing units. **The City shall pursue programs on its own that will actively preserve existing affordable housing units, facilitate creation of additional affordable housing units, and assist private homeowners in maintaining their houses (HO4d).**

Even though it may be difficult to locate affordable housing within city limits, Mukilteo still has an obligation to ensure its policies and regulations allow for the possibility of the construction of affordable housing units here.

HO5: A WIDE VARIETY OF HOUSING OPTIONS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED IN THE CITY’S RESIDENTIAL AND MIXED USE ZONING DISTRICTS TO MEET DEMANDS FOR HOUSING, INCLUDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

HO6: WHEN ADOPTING NEW REGULATIONS AND FEES THE CITY SHALL CONSIDER THE ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS THEY WILL HAVE ON THE CREATION OF NEW AFFORDABLE HOUSING.

CHART 4: MUKILTEO HOUSEHOLD INCOME



INVENTORY & ANALYSIS OF HOUSING STOCK

The Washington State Office of Financial Management estimated there were 8,664 housing units in Mukilteo as of April 1, 2015. Detached single-family residences make up 64% of those units. Over the last 20 years, with the development of almost all of the parcels in the city’s multi-family residential zones and through the recent trend of providing housing units in mixed use developments, the proportion of multi-family dwelling units in Mukilteo has increased to its current level of 36%. As Mukilteo approaches its theoretical “built-out” stage, available land for new residential units has dwindled. Currently, there are only two undeveloped parcels zoned multi-family zone and very few single-family parcels large enough to be subdivided, most of which are only large enough to be divided into two lots.

Because 51.6% of the dwelling units in Mukilteo were built in 1990 or later, most are in good condition.

Of the occupied dwelling units, two-thirds are owner-occupied.

Mukilteo’s housing target, as assigned by the Snohomish County Tomorrow 2013-2014 Growth Monitor Report, is 9,211 housing units by the year 2035. This means an additional 570 units need to be built in the next 20 years. Mukilteo has the land use capacity to meet this target as shown in the 2012 Snohomish County Buildable Lands Report, which analyzes the buildable areas of vacant, partially-used, and redevelopable land to estimate their capacity to accommodate construction of new dwelling units. Specifically, the report finds that Mukilteo has the capacity for an additional 563 housing units (313 single-family; 250 multi-family units) under current zoning designations and development regulations.

While the City has the land use capacity to accommodate current and future house demands on the whole, it is not likely the existing and potential housing units will be able to accommodate the housing needs of all populations, especially the “Very Low” and “Low” income sectors of the economy.





To estimate whether housing is affordable the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses household income groupings. These groupings are based on area median income (AMI). The 2015 AMI for Snohomish County is \$67,777 per year. While there are six classifications, the ones of interest are the “Very Low”, “Low” and “Moderate” income groups which are defined as follows:

- Very Low Income = less than 30% of AMI
- Low Income = 30-50% AMI
- Moderate Income = 51-80% AMI

A housing unit is considered to be affordable if no more than 30% of the household’s income is spent on housing. The following table shows the maximum monthly affordable rents and mortgage payments for Very Low Income, Low Income, and Moderate Income households in Mukilteo:

TABLE 4: MAXIMUM MONTHLY AFFORDABLE

	Monthly Income	Rent	Mortgage Payment
Very Low Income	<\$1,694	\$508	\$443
Low Income	\$1,695-\$2,824	\$847	\$791
Moderate Income	\$2,825-\$4,519	\$1,356	\$1,265



The 2013 Housing Characteristics and Needs Report estimates Mukilteo currently has the following number of existing affordable housing units for each group is as follows:

TABLE 5: AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS

	Rent	Mortgage Payment	Total
Very Low Income	44	19	63
Low Income	278	59	337
Moderate Income	1,214	360	1,574



There are more Very Low Income and Low Income households in Mukilteo than there are housing units that would be affordable for them. With population growth, the number of households in Mukilteo that earn Moderate Incomes or less will increase further so the current deficient in the number of affordable housing units will only increase if more affordable units aren’t built. The following table, Table 6: Affordable Housing Analysis illustrates the sufficiency/deficiency.

TABLE 6: AFFORDABLE HOUSING ANALYSIS

	Total Households (Current)	Projected Additional Households by 2035	Number of Affordable Housing Units Needed by 2035	Existing Affordable Housing Units	Deficient/ Sufficient of Affordable Housing Units
Very Low Income	423	62	485	63	422 Deficient
Low Income	639	62	701	337	364 Deficient
Moderate Income	1,005	96	1,101	1,574	473 Sufficient

Ideally, the new housing units constructed in the next 20 years will help shrink the deficits of housing units affordable to the two lowest income groups. However, no policy or regulatory changes the city may enact can make that happen. Only regional and national efforts, in the form of providing more money to build affordable housing, can impact this deficit.

While there are not enough affordable units to house the Very Low and Low Income households in Mukilteo, some assistance is available. There are 103 units of assisted housing in the city. Of these, 42 are assisted with Section 8 housing vouchers. The use of vouchers is constrained in the City, as voucher holders must find units whose rents do not exceed the “Fair Market Rents” (FMRs) as established by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Generally, FMRs are set at the 40th percentile of rents in Snohomish County. Because of the high land values in Mukilteo rents are also high and typically exceed the FMR level. The remaining 61 units are permanent workforce housing subsidized units. However, the mechanism providing for the workforce subsidized units may expire in 2017.

In addition, Mukilteo’s population is aging which will lead to an increase in the number of retired people and thus may increase the demand for more affordable housing, with the added challenge of providing housing that serves the needs of elderly and disabled people.

TABLE 7: DISABLED POPULATION

	Disabled	Population of Age Group	Percentage of Age Group
Under 18	179	4,679	3.8%
18-64 Years Old	679	13,404	5.1%
65 Years Old & Older	788	2,393	32.9%
Total	1,646	20,477	8.04%

Without funding to build housing units, the City will have to continue to work creatively to address its housing challenges. Over the past years, development regulations have been updated to allow a more diverse mix of housing types. The City has also begun to collaborate with neighboring jurisdictions to develop new and innovative ways to promote creation of more affordable housing units.