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The Housing Element

Access to housing is a fundamental human need. A home supports physical and mental health, financial stability, educational and economic opportunity, and quality of life. Diverse, healthy, and safe housing that is affordable across the income spectrum is needed for our city to thrive.

The Housing Element of the Comprehensive Plan establishes goals and policies to address our city's housing needs now and into the future. Housing is also an important part of the Land Use Element, which describes where we allow and encourage different types of new homes, and the Human Services Element, which sets City goals and policies for housing assistance, and funding for nonprofit organizations providing affordable housing units.

The following challenges will need to be addressed with the update to the Housing Element. Many of these challenges are identified in Kirkland's Housing Strategy Plan but continue to persist. Goals and policies of the Housing Element also need to be reevaluated to align with best practices in equitable and inclusive planning.



Changing Housing Need

Kirkland has established itself as a vibrant and desirable city to live, work, and play. Our community is also part of a rapidly growing regional job center bringing more people into our city to find work. Although Kirkland is an immensely livable place, this growth has contributed to escalating housing costs and increased commutes for community members who can no longer afford to live in Kirkland. At the same time our population has become more diverse, older, and our household sizes have decreased.



Questions We Will Be Exploring

1. How should the Housing Element respond to Kirkland's current and future housing needs?
2. Which housing types are most needed in Kirkland?
3. Where do we need more housing?

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KIRKLAND 2044 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



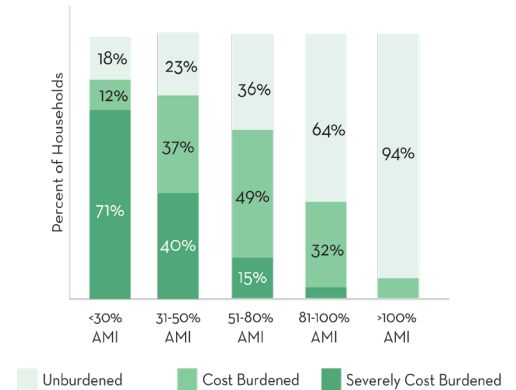
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Affordability

The issue of housing affordability reaches most people in a community, since the quality of life in a city is tied, to a large extent, to the ability of its residents and local employees to find the kind of housing they desire at a price they can afford. Kirkland will need to address its current and future housing affordability issues to meet the needs of all income levels for our city to continue to thrive.

The chart to the right shows the percent of Kirkland households that are cost burdened by income level. When households spend more than 30% of their income on housing, they are cost burdened and struggle to afford other necessities. Households are severely cost burdened when they pay more than 50% of their income on housing.

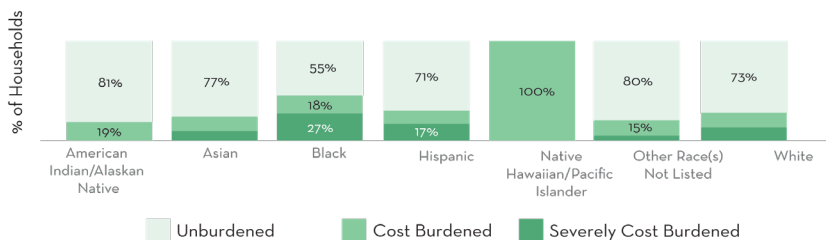
Affordable Housing Units by Income
(CHAS, 2015-2019)



Housing Inequity

Our housing landscape reflects market forces, proactive planning for diverse housing, cultural preferences, and a history of discriminatory practices. In the past, racist housing policies and practices explicitly denied homeownership to people of color and limited where they could live. Kirkland’s current housing landscape has some traces of these past practices. It is vital that Kirkland address this legacy of inequity by crafting policies to reverse its outcomes and to create a more equitable future. The following chart shows the percent of Kirkland households that are cost burdened by race and ethnicity.

Kirkland Household Cost Burden by Race/Ethnicity
(CHAS, 2015-2019)



Housing Resources

Learn more about housing issues with these useful resources.

- [Housing 101 - PRSC](#)
- [Housing Strategy Plan - Kirkland](#)
- [Housing Dashboard - Kirkland](#)
- [Regional Affordable Housing Dashboard - King County](#)
- [Racial Residential Segregation - PSRC](#)
- [Equity Report for the Comprehensive Plan Update - Kirkland](#)

Housing & Human Services Survey

