



ISLAND COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION AGENDA

January 7, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Meeting to be held in the Board of Island County Commissioners Hearing Room, Room 102B, 1NE 6th St., Coupeville, WA and online. Interested parties can attend or join remotely at the link or via phone number listed below:

Join Zoom Webinar

<https://zoom.us/j/97877856809?pwd=Naz7gsObqb7D6vh2jwrYuPXgpU5GED.1>

Webinar ID: 978 7785 6809

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma, WA)

Webinar ID: 978 7785 6809

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES –
4. PUBLIC COMMENT – *Submittal of written comments are encouraged prior to the day of the meeting. Public Comment may be submitted via email to PlanningCommission@IslandCountyWA.gov. Please state your name and address when giving public testimony. Public comments are limited to 3 minutes per person.*
5. DIRECTOR'S REPORT –
6. WORK SESSION – Planning staff have released the draft elements, development regulations, and SEPA documents for the 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update. Planning will present an overview of Housing related changes in the draft Housing and Land Use Elements, and the draft development regulations.
7. ADJOURN

Please visit our website for related documents: <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/235/Planning-Commission>
The public may submit comments in writing to Planning & Community Development at 1 NE 7th St., Coupeville, WA 98239 or PlanningCommission@IslandCountyWA.gov.



Island County Planning and Community Development

Jonathan Lange, AICP, CFM
Director

1 NE 7th St., Coupeville, WA 98239

Ph: Whidbey 360-679-7339 | Camano 360-387-3443 | Fax: 360-679-7306

Email: PlanningDept@islandcountywa.gov | <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/207/Planning-Community-Development>

~ **MEMORANDUM** ~

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Long Range Planning
DATE: January 7, 2026
SUBJECT: 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update – Housing Work Session

Planning and Community Development released the draft comprehensive plan and development regulation updates in December 2025. At this work session, Planning will discuss all housing related changes in the Housing and Land Use Elements, and the draft development regulations.

Documents related to this discussion:

- [Draft Housing Element](#)
- [Draft Land Use Element](#)
- [Draft Development Regulations](#)

Attachment: Presentation.

For more information, please contact:

Emily Neff (360) 678 - 7807 or e.neff@islandcountywa.gov



Island County 2045 Comprehensive Plan

Housing

Long Range Planning
January 7, 2026

Work Session Reminders

Purpose: Hear Input on Housing Policy and Code Changes

Reminders:

- Goals and Policies are guiding principals that will frame current and future code updates.
- Focus on the “what” not the “how” during these conversations.
- Keep in mind the need to balance competing priorities.
- Consider what our future communities could look like and how to support growth in ways that reflect our unique islands.

What topic lives where (Housing)?

Housing

- Goals and policies that support preservation of existing housing, development of new housing and housing types, and supportive housing strategies.

Land Use

- Goals and policies that guide the land use code and provide a framework for what types of uses are allowed in different zones.

Development Regulations

- Code changes to support housing allocations and provide greater flexibility in housing types to increase capacity and affordability.

Housing Requirements

- In 2021, House Bill 1220 amended the Growth Management Act (GMA) to instruct local governments to “plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all income levels.”
- Purpose of State’s affordable housing mandate is to highlight where jurisdictions are not meeting the housing needs of their community and make adequate provisions.
- Requirement: Demonstrate capacity for housing at all income levels to accommodate Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) allocations.

Approach to Housing

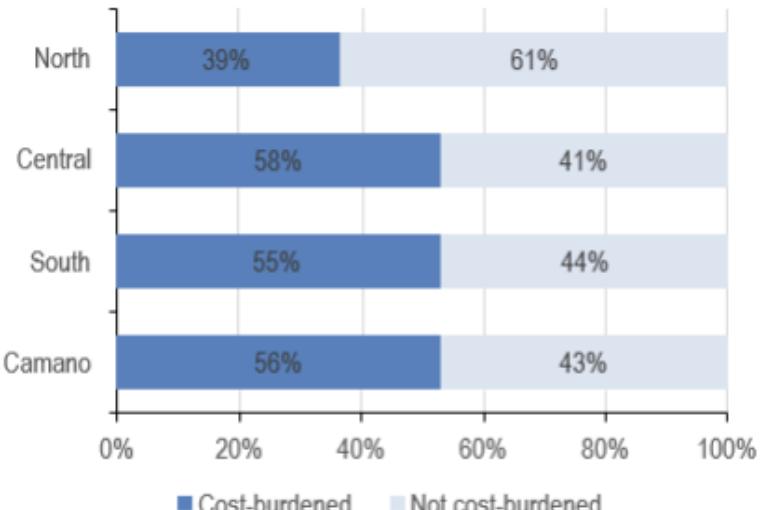
Overarching Goal: Increase density where density already exists and keep rural lands rural.

- Cities took a larger share of growth than previous Comp Plans (67%).
- Density changes and planning for infrastructure to support housing development.
- More flexibility for housing types to increase affordability.

Key Findings in Housing Needs Assessment

- **Big increase in cost burdened households (from 35% to 52%).**
- **Median rent has increased \$600 per month since 2017.**
- **Housing prices have increased 50% since 2017.**
- **Vacancy rates remain high, above state average.**
- **Very few multi-family units are being built.**

Figure 4-7. Housing Cost Burden by Area 2023

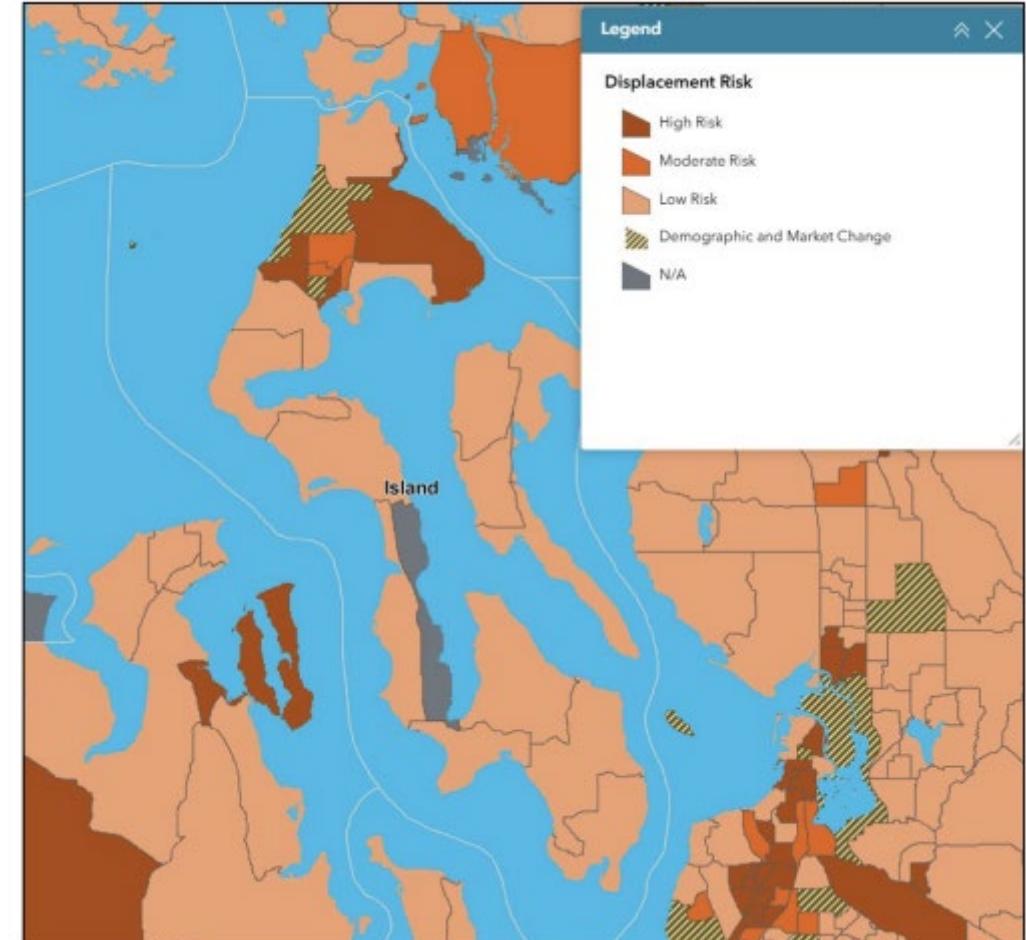


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2023 ACS 5-Year Estimate

Key Findings in Housing Needs Assessment Cont.

- Population continues to age.
- Households with higher incomes continues to increase.
- Many communities lack ethnic and racial diversity.
- Home ownership rates are 20% higher than state average.
- Displacement risks are highest in the north Whidbey area.

Figure 4-14. Displacement Risk Map for Island County (Dept. of Commerce)



Displacement risk means residents who lose their housing due to factors outside their control and cannot find commensurate housing options in their community.

Creating Capacity

Income Levels	Zone Categories	Projected Need	% from HAPT	Total Zone Capacity	Capacity Surplus/Deficit
0-30%	Multifamily	500	4%	26	- 474
30-50%		486	7%	44	- 442
50-80%	Moderate Density	414	13%	212	-202
80-100%		196	14%	565	369
100-120%	Low Density	187	14%	2,225	2,038
120%+		604	47%	4,833	4,229

Key Changes

- Increased density in mixed-use Limited Areas of More Intensive Rural Development (LAMIRDs).
- Planning for infrastructure in the LAMIRDs and the County's Non-Municipal Urban Growth Area (NMUGA), e.g., Freeland.
- More flexibility in housing types: Rural Clusters, Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), Recreational Vehicles (RVs).
- Updates to comply with new State requirements: Co-Living Housing, and Supportive Housing.
- Policy work on Short Term Rentals (STRs).

Policy Changes

Summary of Policy Changes for Housing

Mixed-use LAMIRDs

- Land Use policies to encourage multi-family and mixed-use housing development in LAMIRDs (LU 5.4, LU 5.7).
- Land Use policy to incentivize and support the development of community septic and LOSS systems to support more intensive uses in LAMIRDs (LU 5.5).
- Housing policies to accommodate infill development in LAMIRDs through minimum density requirements and increased height limits (H 1.7, H 2.6).

Short Term Rentals

- Housing policy to support regulations on short-term rentals to reduce impacts on long-term housing (H 1.6).

ADUs

- Housing policies to support development of ADUs as an affordable housing type (H 2.10, H 2.16).

Policy Changes

Summary of Policy Changes for Housing

Summary of Policy Changes for Housing	
Rural Clusters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Use policy to provide flexibility for clustered housing developments, with density bonuses for affordable housing (LU 6.1).• Land Use policy to support open space preservation through cluster developments (LU 7.1).• Housing policies to support a variety of housing types to increase affordability of housing in rural areas (H 2.3, 2.4, H 2.9).
Infrastructure to support density	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Use policies to provide flexibility for community sewer solutions (LU 2.3, LU 3.13.1).• Land Use policy to require new developments to connect to community water and wastewater systems (LU 5.13).• Housing policies to support innovative septic solutions (H 2.1, H 2.9, H 2.17, H 4.3).
Supportive Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing policies to support the development of more affordable and supportive housing types (Housing Goals 3, 4 and 5).• Land Use policies to support the development of more affordable and supportive housing types (LU 1.4, LU 1.7, LU 5.6, LU 5.8)

Development Regulations Changes

Summary of Code Changes for Housing

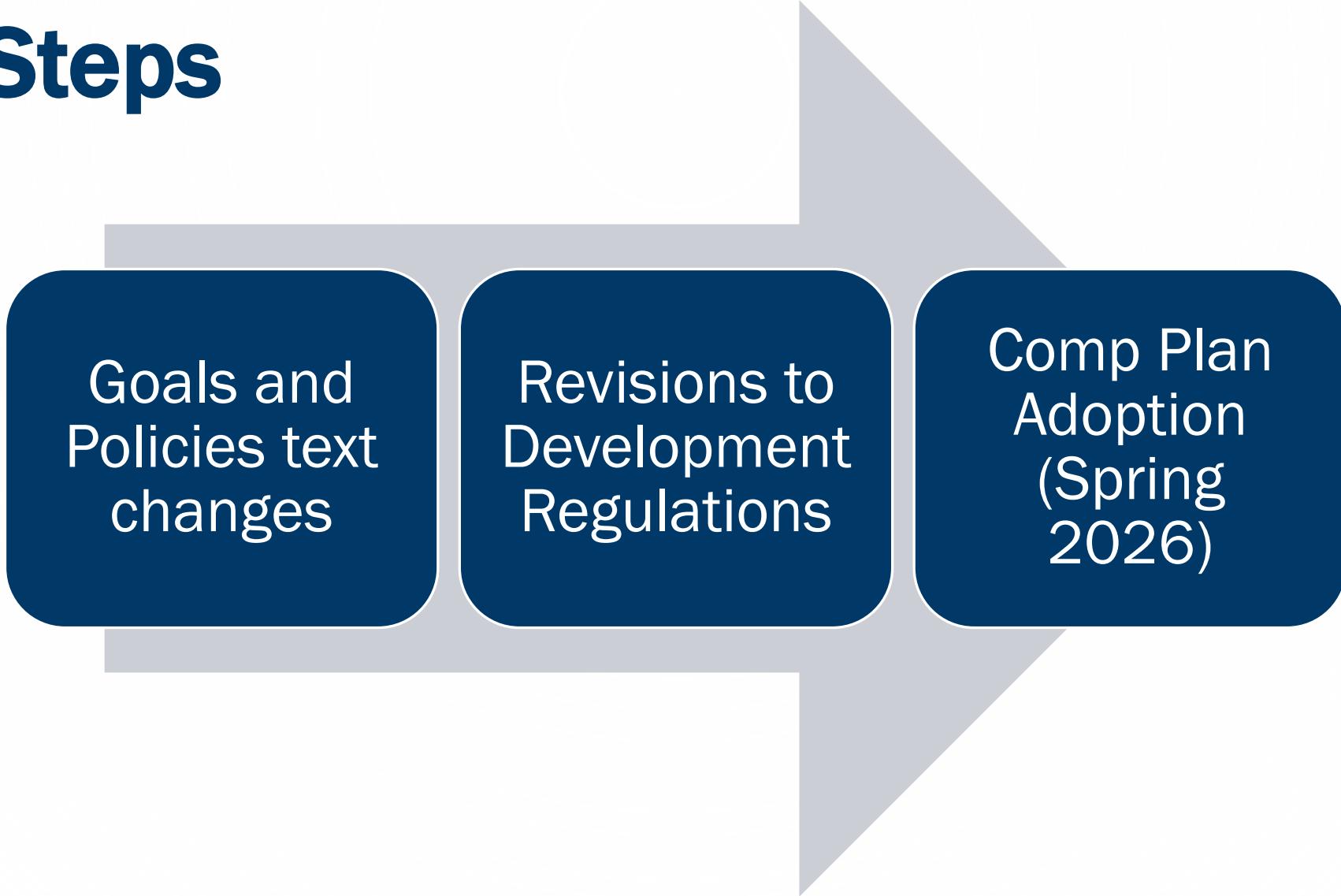
Mixed-Use LAMIRDs

- Minimum lot size one-half acre
- Minimum density 4 du/acre, maximum density 8 du/acre
- Up to 12 du/acre available to affordable housing developments
- Existing non-conforming lots allow for a duplex/triplex/fourplex
- Allow for multi-family development in Mixed-use LAMIRDs
- Prohibit certain space intensive uses: Mini storage, outdoor storage, warehouses, Single Family Residences
- Height Increases

Decisions Needed

- Overall approach to meeting housing allocations: density in already dense areas
- LAMIRD changes: density, height limits, and minimum housing requirements
- ADUs: affordable units
- STRs: commitment to study and future policy/regulations
- Rural Clusters: more flexibility in housing types and density bonus for affordable developments
- Infrastructure changes to support housing: commitments to fund, partner, and study to find solutions

Next Steps



Goals and
Policies text
changes

Revisions to
Development
Regulations

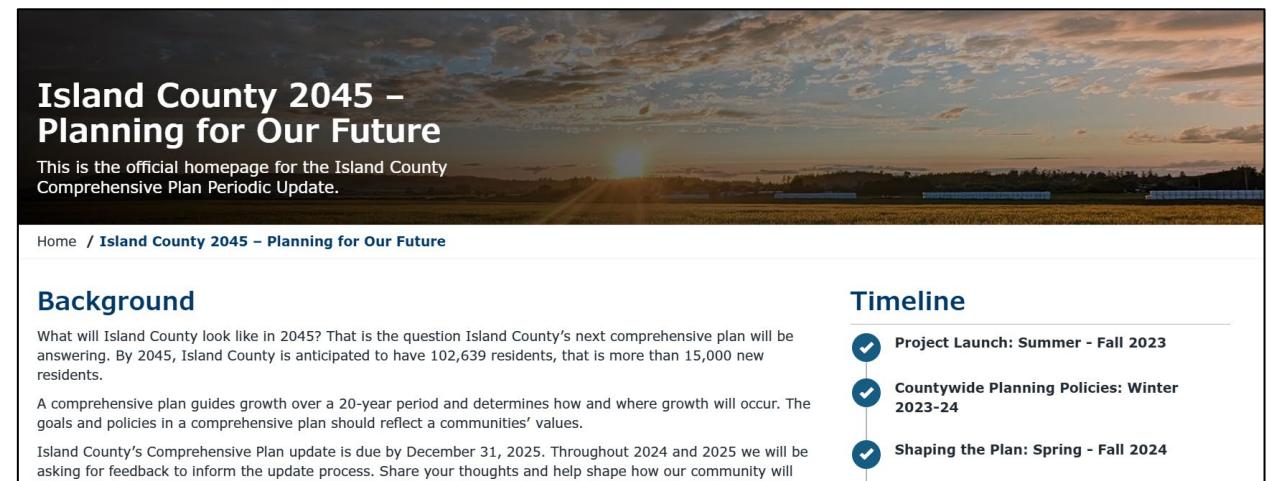
Comp Plan
Adoption
(Spring
2026)

Public Engagement Reminders

Comment Period: Dec. 10 to Feb. 9

How to Comment:

- **Website:**
www.islandcounty2045.com
- **Email:**
CompPlan@islandcountywa.gov
- **Snail Mail:** Attn PCD, 1 NE 7th Street, Coupeville, WA 98239
- **In Person:** at Board or Planning Commission meeting



Island County 2045 – Planning for Our Future
This is the official homepage for the Island County Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

Home / Island County 2045 – Planning for Our Future

Background

What will Island County look like in 2045? That is the question Island County's next comprehensive plan will be answering. By 2045, Island County is anticipated to have 102,639 residents, that is more than 15,000 new residents.

A comprehensive plan guides growth over a 20-year period and determines how and where growth will occur. The goals and policies in a comprehensive plan should reflect a communities' values.

Island County's Comprehensive Plan update is due by December 31, 2025. Throughout 2024 and 2025 we will be asking for feedback to inform the update process. Share your thoughts and help shape how our community will

Timeline

- Project Launch: Summer - Fall 2023
- Countywide Planning Policies: Winter 2023-24
- Shaping the Plan: Spring - Fall 2024

[Subscribe to our Email Updates!](#)

Meeting Opportunities

Public Meetings:

- Oak Harbor – The Center:
Thursday, January 15, 5 to 6:30 pm
- South Whidbey – Clinton Comm Hall: Tuesday, January 20, 5 to 6:30 pm
- Camano – County Annex Bldg:
Saturday, January 24, 10 to 11:30 am

Board and Planning Commission Mtgs:

Coupeville:

- Wednesday, January 7 (Housing)
- Wednesday, January 14 (Environment)
- Wednesday, January 21 (Infrastructure)
- Wednesday, February 4 (Econ Development & Clinton)



Questions?

Long Range Planning
CompPlan@islandcountywa.gov
www.islandcounty2045.com

Housing For All Planning Tool (HAPT)

Figure 8 – HAPT Allocations (Following reassessment November 2025)

Island County	
User Input - % Share of County Population Growth. Values must sum to 100%	
33.27 %	
4.88 %	
6.22 %	
55.63 %	

Projection Year: 2045

Population Target = 99,202

	Permanent Housing Needs by Income Level (% of Area Median Income)							Emergency Housing Needs (Temporary)
	Total	0-30%		>30-50%	>50-80%	>80-100%	>100-120%	
Countywide Estimated Housing Supply (2020)	37,272	1,210	18	2,915	7,479	5,878	4,734	15,038
Countywide Additional Units Needed (2020-2045)	7,176	846	762	1,560	1,266	560	527	1,655
Sum of Allocation to Jurisdictions (from User Inputs)	7,176	846	762	1,560	1,266	560	527	1,655

100.00%	Met Target	<-- Sum of user inputs for jurisdiction shares of county future net housing need. If below 100%, increase shares. If above 100%, decrease shares.						
	Permanent Housing Needs by Income Level (% of Area Median Income)							Emergency Housing Needs (Temporary)
	Total	0-30%		>30-50%	>50-80%	>80-100%	>100-120%	
Unincorporated Island County	25,445	598	8	1,580	3,311	3,676	3,788	12,484
Allocation Method A (2020-2045)	2,388	270	230	486	414	196	187	604
Coupeville town	1,017	73	0	191	162	77	118	396
Allocation Method A (2020-2045)	350	40	34	71	61	29	27	89
Langley city	743	74	0	34	90	125	107	313
Allocation Method A (2020-2045)	446	50	43	91	77	37	35	113
Oak Harbor city	10,057	465	0	1,110	3,916	2,000	721	1,845
Allocation Method A (2020-2045)	3,992	486	455	912	714	298	278	849

* The location of 10 existing permanent supportive housing units within Island County is unknown. Therefore, they are not included in the jurisdiction table below.

**Note: Oak Harbor's allocations include 257 units that represent the capacity of a proposed annexation area that is planned to be completed through an Interlocal Agreement as a part of the City's and County's Comprehensive Plan updates. If the annexation does not proceed, the 257 units will be accommodated elsewhere in the city and county.*

County's Housing Allocations

By Area Median Income Level (AMI)

	Total Housing Units	0-30% (PSH and non-PSH)	30-50%	50-80%	80-100%	100-120%	120+	Emergency Housing
Existing Stock	25,445	606	1,580	3,311	3,676	3,788	12,484	28
2045 Allocations	2,388	500	486	414	196	187	604	73