

HOMELESS SOLUTIONS STRATEGIES WORKGROUP

“Identify 2-3 alternatives solutions to living unsheltered in Whatcom County, with priority given to solutions that can be initiated to prevent people from sleeping outside.”

Point in Time Count of Homelessness

742 People Experiencing Homelessness Counted Jan 2017

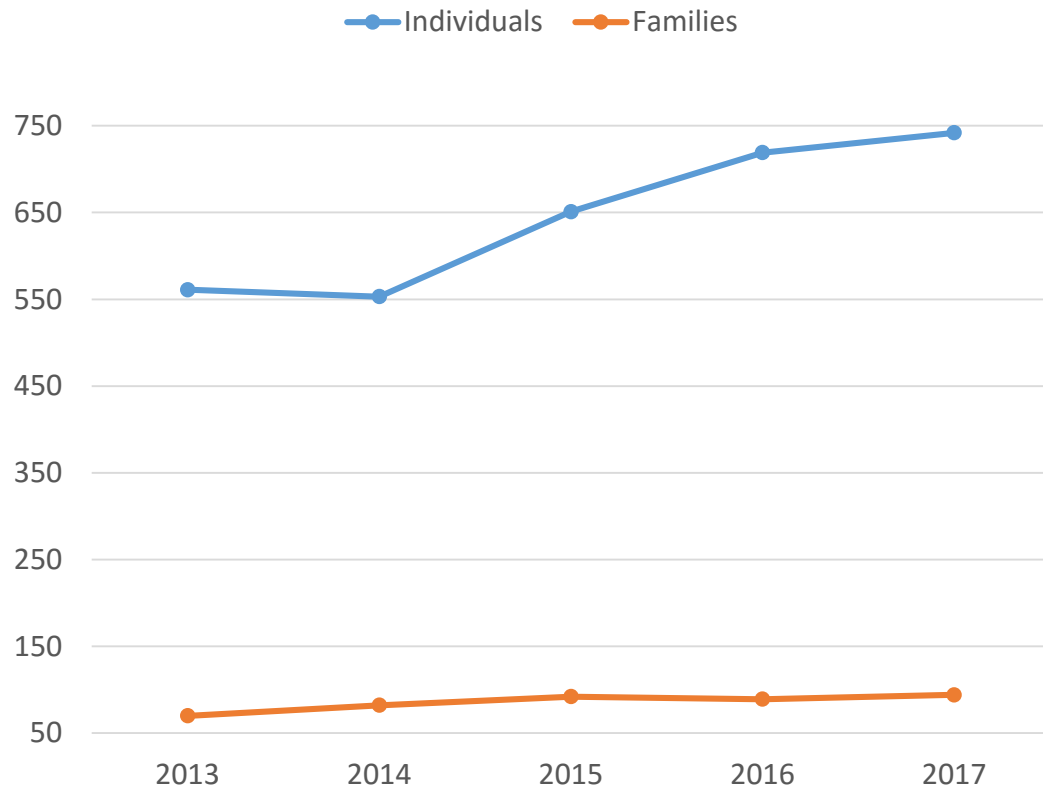
- **272 unsheltered** – stayed outdoors, in cars, or other places not meant for habitation
- **470 sheltered** – stayed in emergency shelter or transitional housing

Notes:

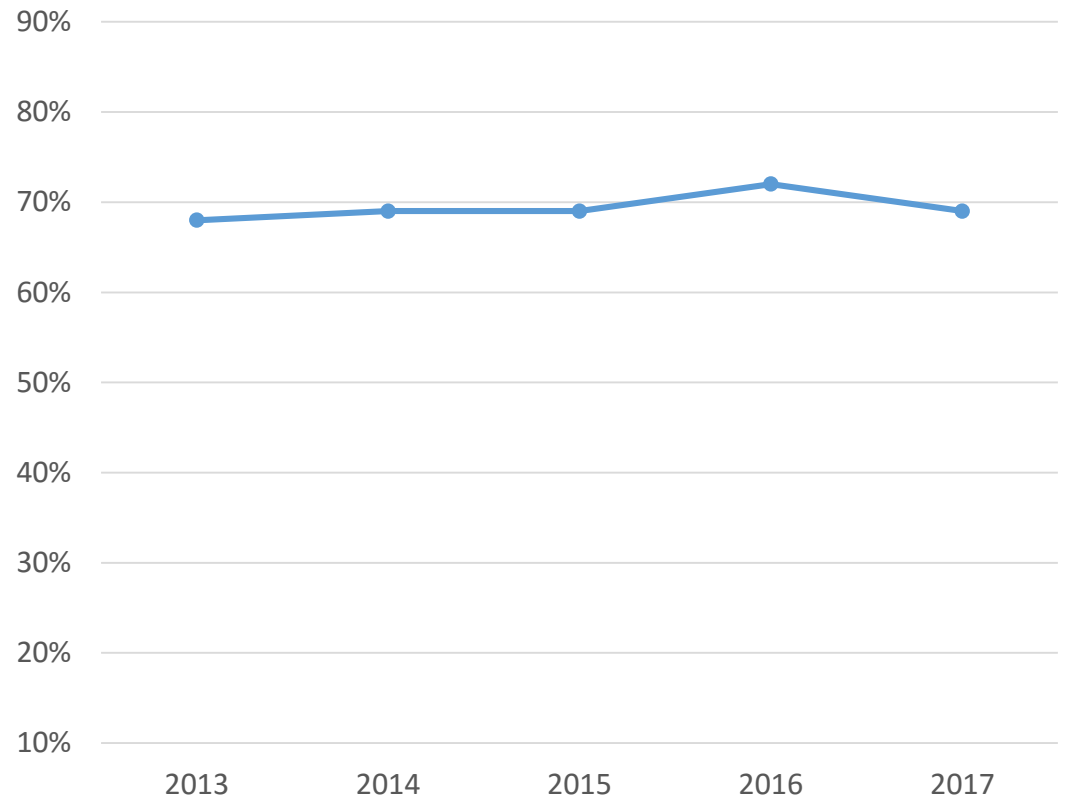
- The Lighthouse Mission added 40 beds in their shelter just 3 months prior to this count – allowing 40 people to be sheltered rather than unsheltered
- This count is widely believed to undercount the numbers

Change in Homelessness – Point in Time Count

Number Experiencing Homelessness

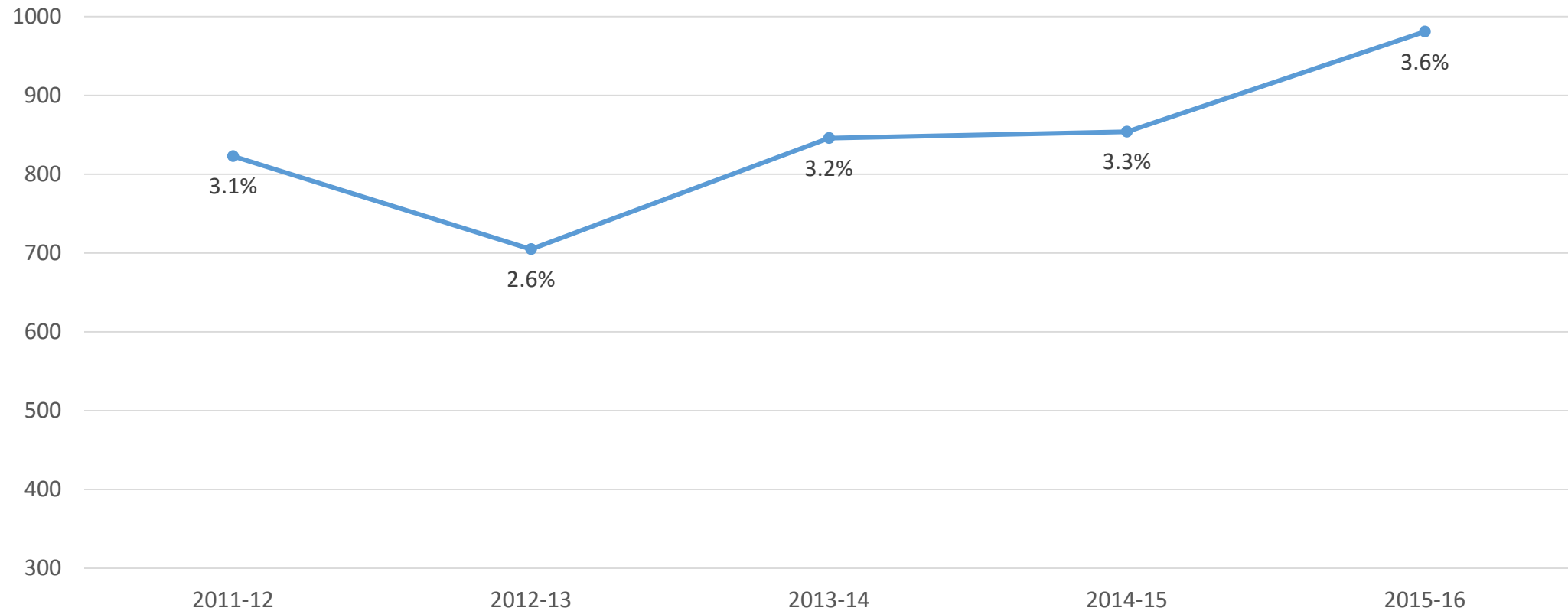


Last Stable Housing in Whatcom County



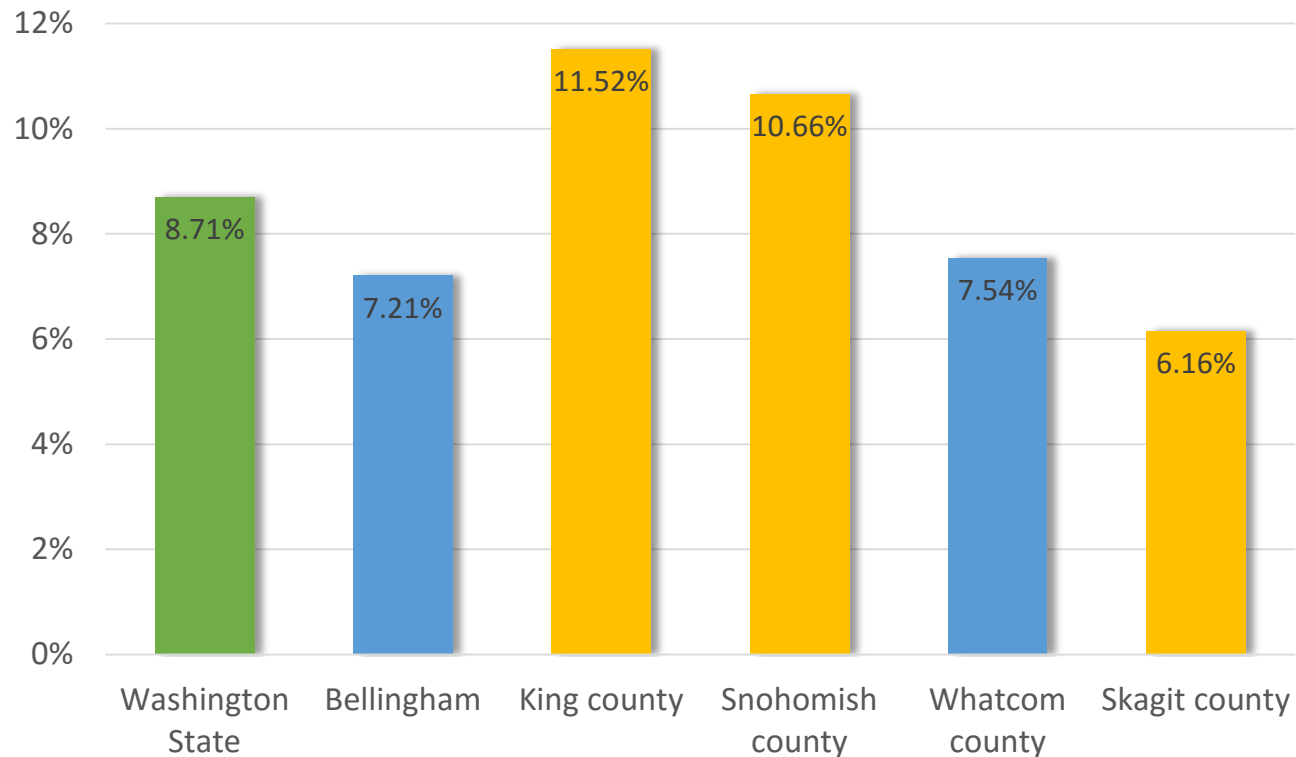
Change in Homelessness - Youth

Number experiencing housing crisis during school year in WC Public Schools



Context of housing crisis

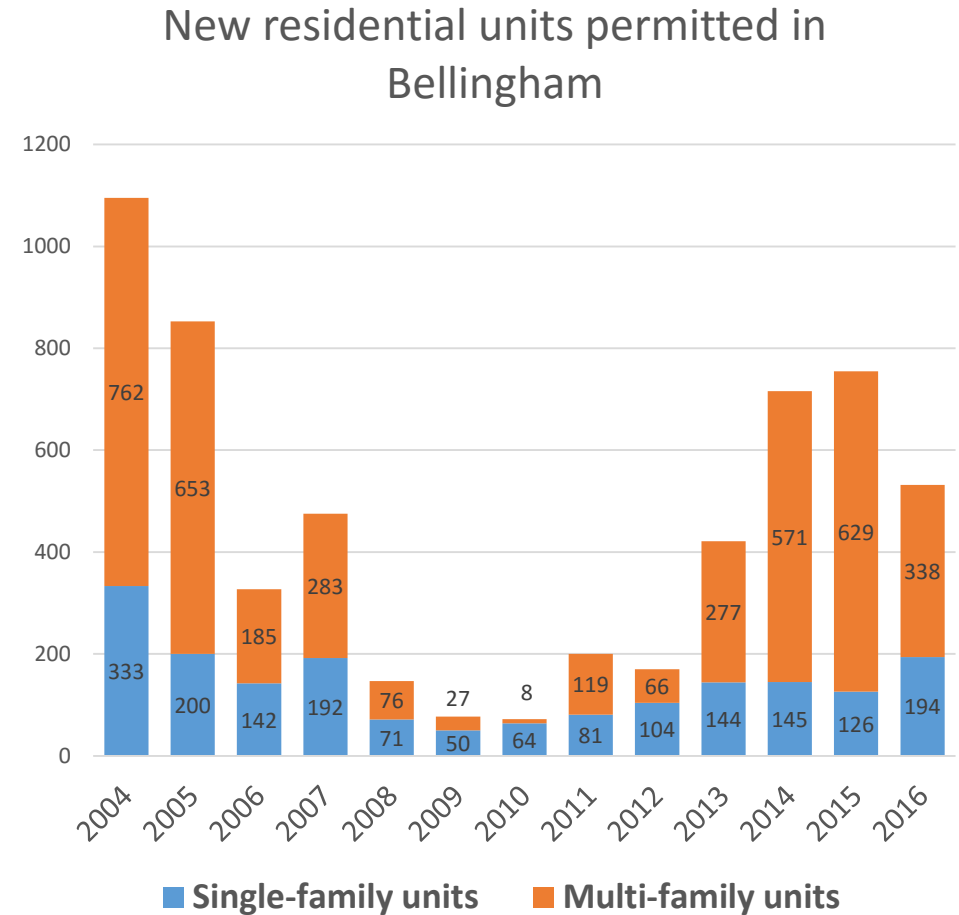
Percent change in population: 2010-2017



Our population is growing, but not more so than many other places in the state. **Our growth since 2010 is a little below state average.**

Housing supply fell behind population growth

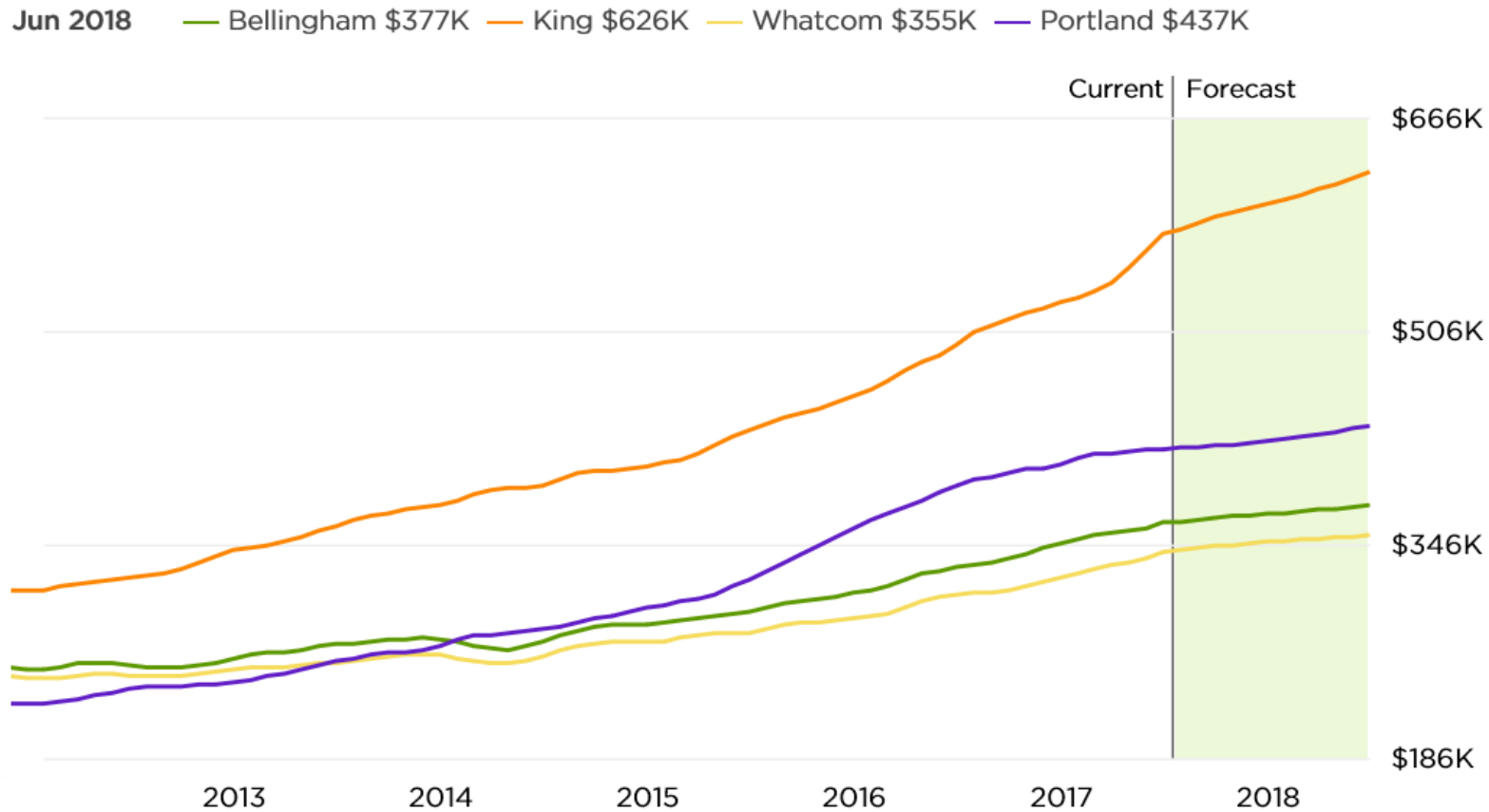
- Break in construction during recession
- Now construction is catching up, but it will take time.
- Demand for homes is greater than supply



Sources: City of Bellingham internal permit data; Census data population estimates.

* Uses average rate of 2.1 people per household

Housing prices are steadily increasing regionally and statewide



Sources: <https://www.zillow.com/bellingham-wa/home-values/>

For low income households, there is a substantial gap between the cost of rentals and what they can afford

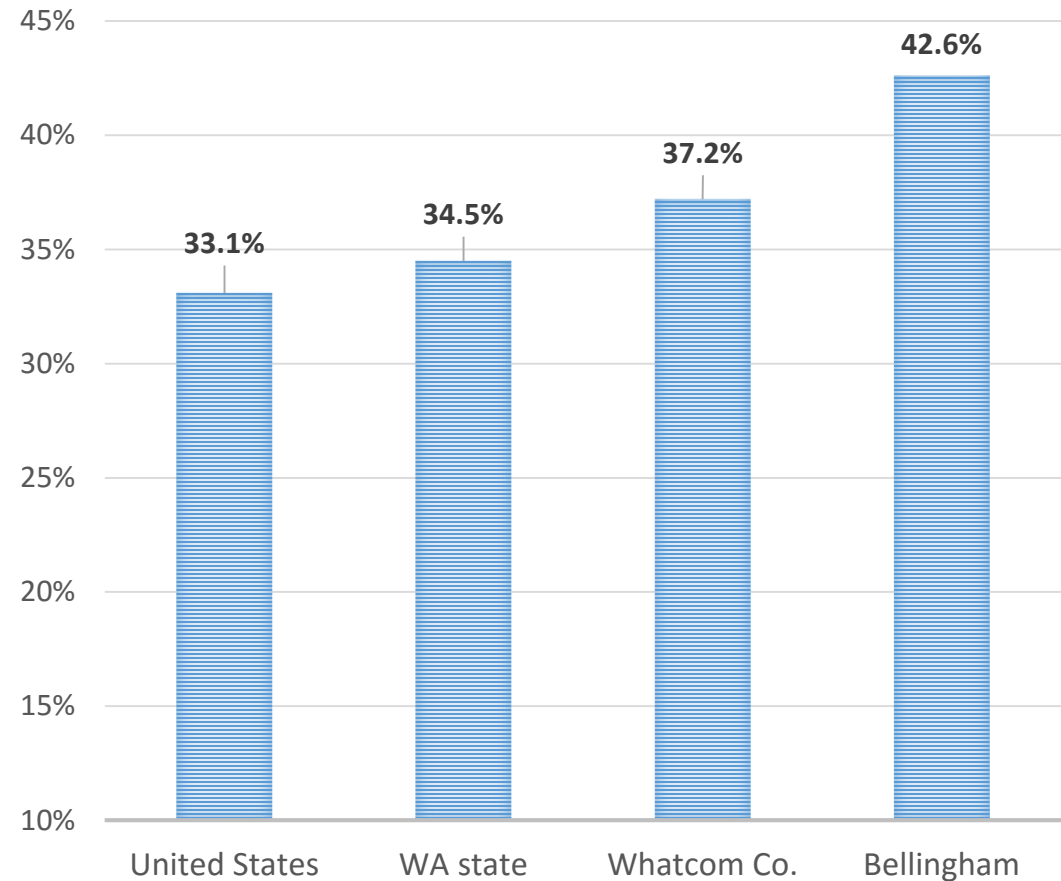
Bellingham's rent standard for a 2-bedroom apartment is \$1,065 (110% of HUD's fair market rent). **At that price**, housing would be unaffordable to a family of three earning less than about 85% of the area median income.

Income level for a family of three	Monthly income	Affordable housing costs (30% of income - \$150 for utilities)	Difference (rent - affordable housing cost)
30% AMI	\$1,476	\$ 293	\$ (772)
50% AMI	\$2,460	\$ 588	\$ (477)
80% AMI	\$3,936	\$ 1,031	\$ (34)
100% AMI	\$4,920	\$ 1,326	\$ 261
Average renter income	\$2,340	\$ 552	\$ (513)

Housing cost burden in Whatcom County and Bellingham is above average

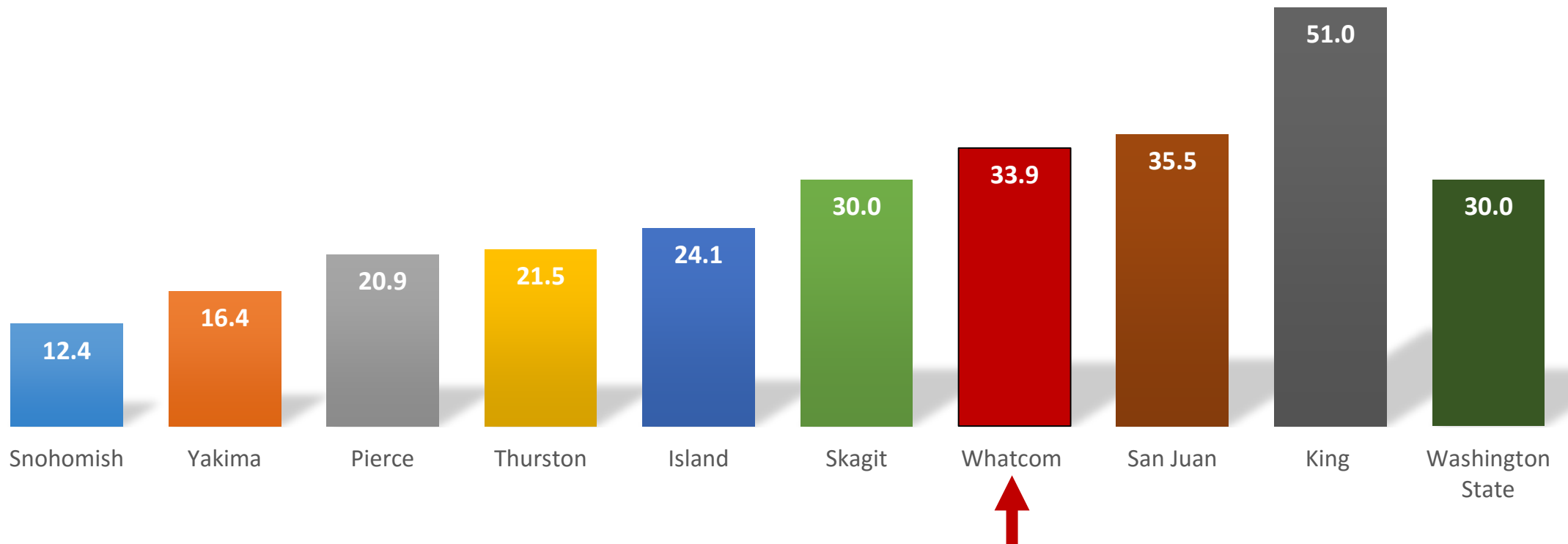
The percentage of households that pay over 30% of their income for housing is above the average in the state, and the US.

<30% of income going to housing	Not cost burdened
30%-50% of income going to housing	Cost burdened
>50% of income going to housing	Severely cost burdened



The proportion of people experiencing homelessness in Whatcom county is close to the state average

Number of people homeless per 10,000 residents by county (2016)



Sources: WA Department of Commerce: 2016 Point in Time Count (www.commerce.wa.gov/pit)

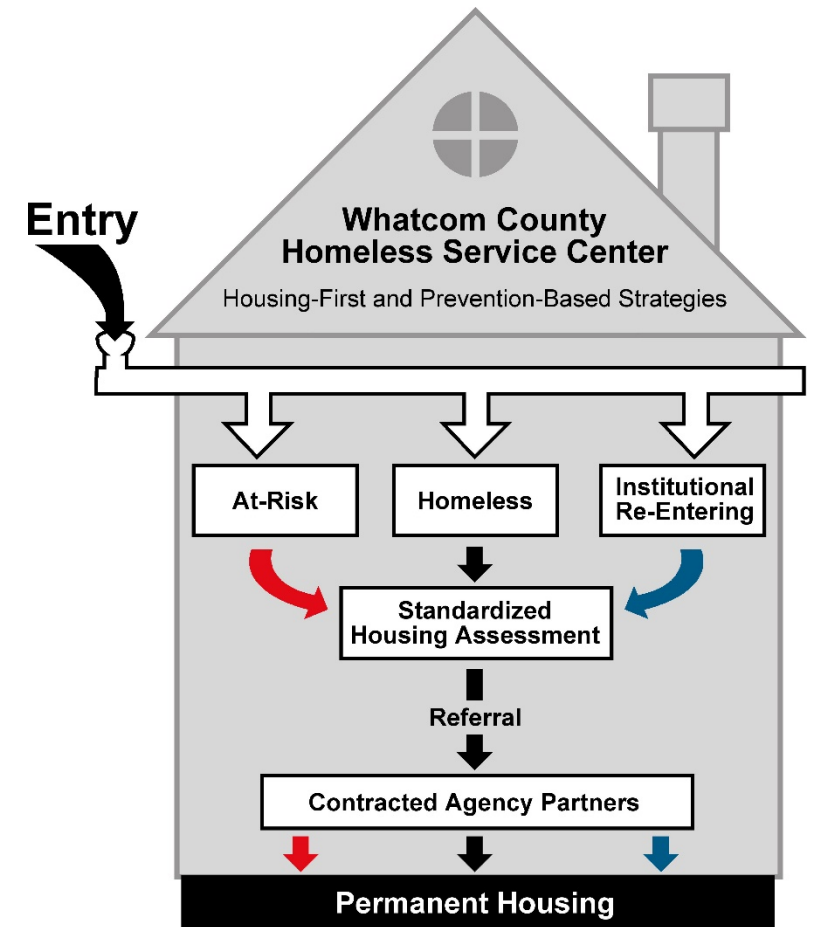
Whatcom County's Role in Homeless Housing Services

Whatcom County Health Department Administered by Human Services Division

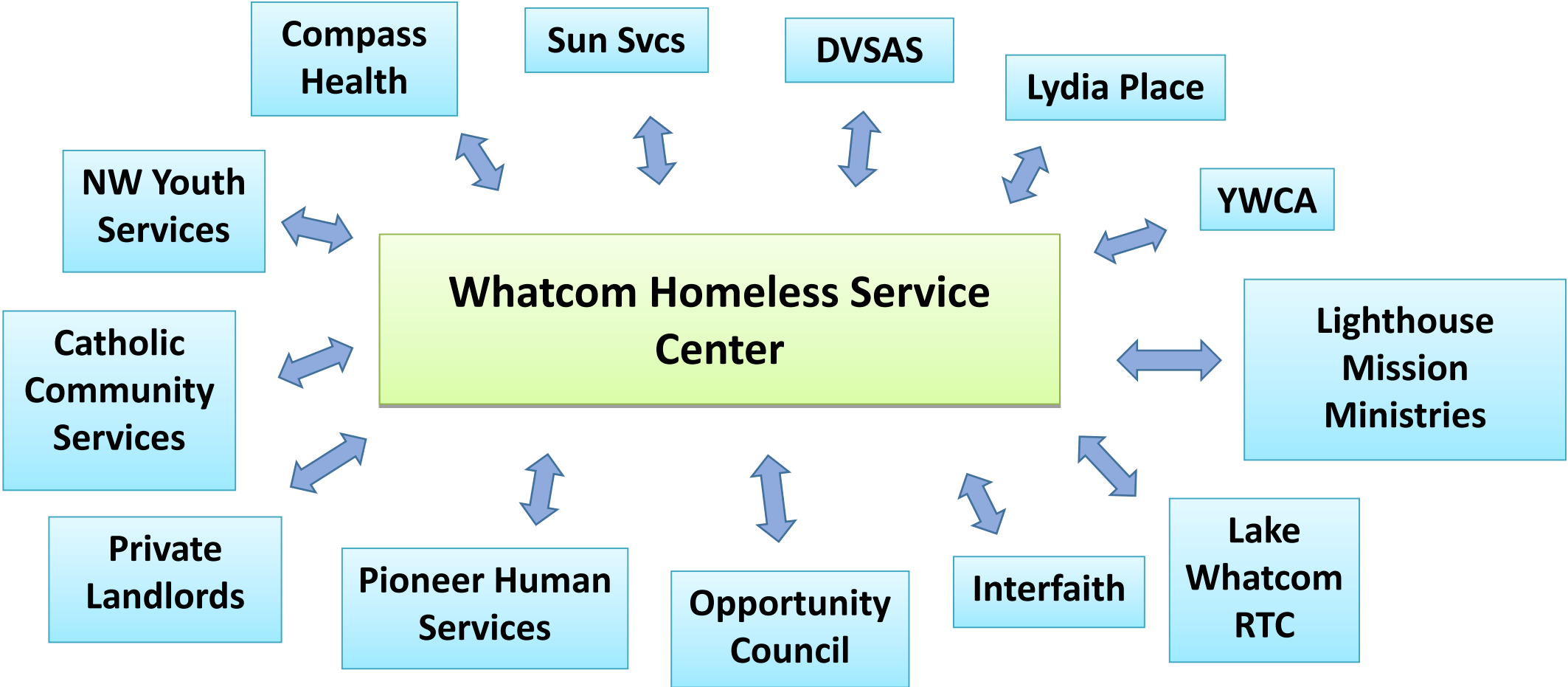
- Responsible for the 10 year plan to end homelessness
 - Homeless Coalition, Point in Time Count, Strategic Planning, Housing Advisory Committee (set by Interlocal)
- Uses local funds to leverage federal funding
- Facilitates community partnership for homeless housing system
- Coordinates with the behavioral health system
- Partnered to establish Homeless Service Center

Whatcom County's Coordinated Entry

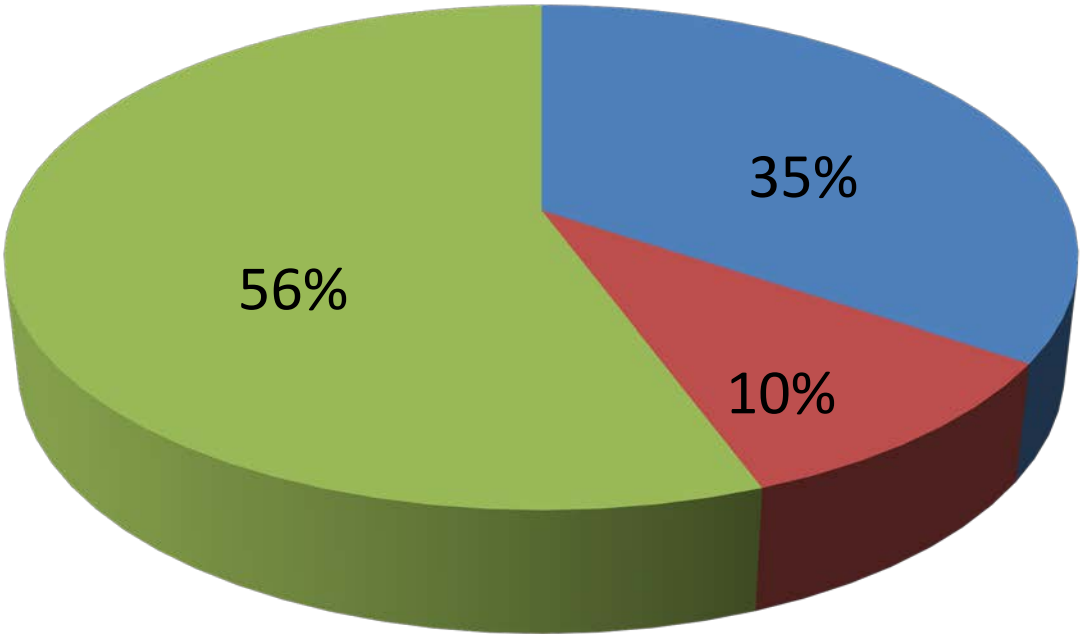
- Coordinated Entry is a best-practice for homeless housing systems
- Opportunity Council's Whatcom Homeless Service Center is our hub for coordinated entry and rental assistance distribution. WCHD supports key staff:
 - HMIS (state-wide database) coordinator
 - Housing retention manager
 - Project manager
 - Leasing Specialist
 - WCHD spends approximately \$331K annually, split almost evenly from local and other sources



Housing System Partners



Whatcom County's Housing Expenditures



2018 Budget = \$4.67m

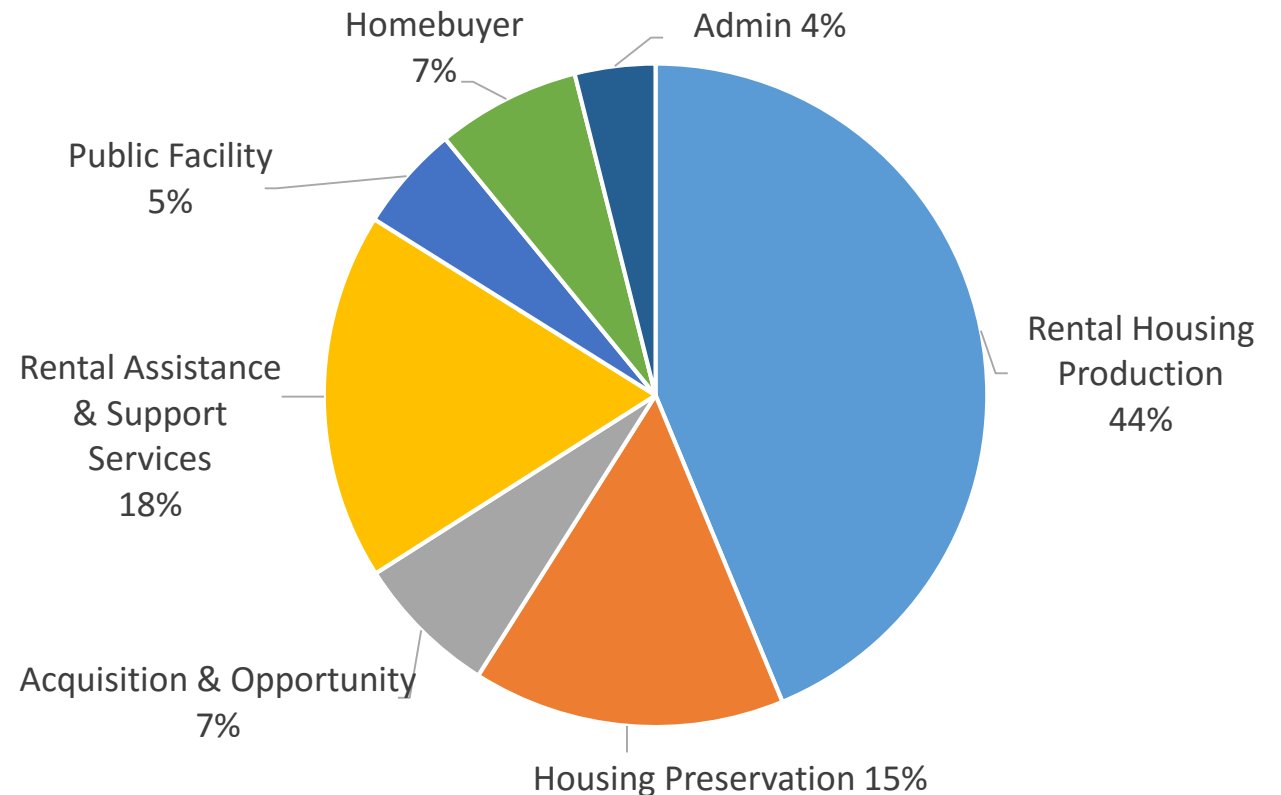
Local Funds = 58%

■ Rental Assistance ■ Shelter ■ Case Management

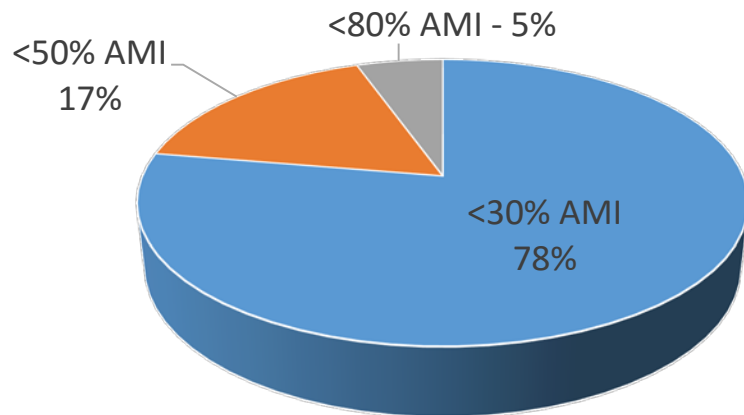
City of Bellingham Housing & Services Expenditures

- The City provides about \$5,000,000/year in housing and services funding.

Annual Action Plan Average Funding Allocations

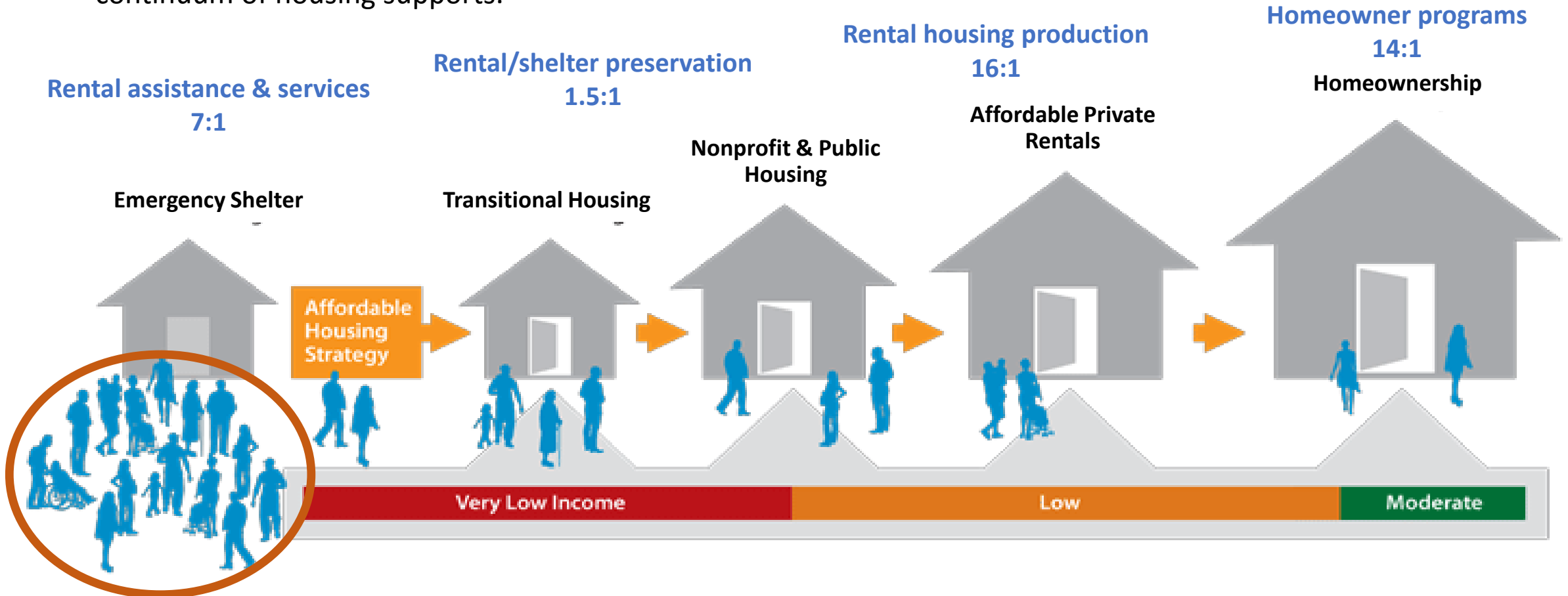


Levy priority populations



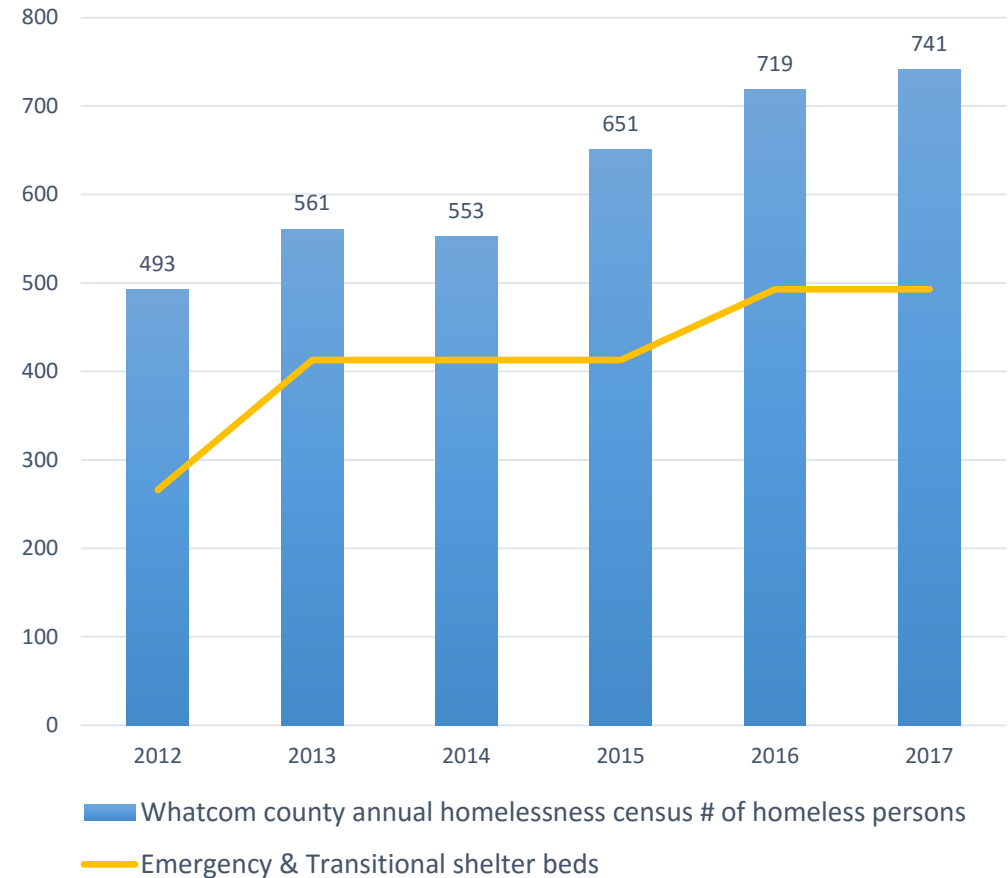
Housing Continuum – Leveraging

Overall leveraging of City Levy funds is over **\$12 for every \$1 spent**. The degree of leveraging varies across the continuum of housing supports.



The need for shelter, services, and affordable housing is exceeding our current capacity

- 742 people are homeless at a point in time, and about 1,000 people experience homelessness over the course of a year.
- This winter, the number of emergency shelter beds available has risen to 160 with plans to raise it to 190.



Estimated Need / Gap

- The 2017 Point-in-Time count was **742 homeless individuals** in Whatcom County.
- Of those, **272 were unsheltered**.
- 120 sheltered at LMM at the time (interim).
- **Need alternatives to living unsheltered for 300+**