

GOAL 10: HOUSING BACKGROUND REPORT

PURPOSE: To provide for the housing needs of the residents of Clatsop County.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Population within the county has historically varied dependent upon several factors. Growth in the lumber and fishing industries in the first two decades of the 20th century led to a rapid increase in population for the county and for the City of Astoria. In 1920, Astoria, with a population of 14,027, was the third largest city in the state. The Astoria fire of 1922 and the general economic depression of the 1930s caused a decrease in population. In the 1940s, there was considerable wartime activity which caused a substantial increase in the population. The post-war boom kept population levels high through 1950. By 1960, however, the number of people had begun to decline significantly. The closing of the Tongue Point Naval Station in 1962 caused a sharp decrease in county population, reaching a low in 1963. Construction work on the Astoria-Megler Bridge and the pulp mill at Wauna brought a new influx of people to the County by 1965. Continued rapid population growth up to 1970 brought the population in all areas of the county back to nearly equal or slightly higher levels than the 1960s.

Between 1970 and 1980, the population of Clatsop County increased by 14.1% from 28,473 to 32,489. Following adoption of its original comprehensive plan in 1980, the total population of Clatsop County remained relatively stable, showing a slow, but steady growth rate. Overall growth rates during that period may have been influenced by national recessions in the 1970s and 1980s, greater reliance on and improvements to logging and milling equipment and machinery, as well as by environmental protections and technological advancements enacted in the 1980s and 1990s that impacted the wood products industry.

In the late 2010s, the continuing decline in anadromous fish returns caused by warming oceans, Columbia and Snake River dams, pollution, and over fishing, in combination with changes to fishing industry rules that prohibited the use of gillnets on the main stem of the Columbia River may also have affected population levels as residents may have moved to other locations to seek out employment opportunities. As of 2017, the last year for which data was available, 1,440 persons were employed as a result of fisheries in Clatsop County (Source: ECONorthwest calculations using data from NOAA, NMFS, and AK CFEC). Per data included in the 2019: ECNSVY County Business Patterns, published by the United State Census Bureau, there were 39 businesses in Clatsop County that identified as agriculture, forestry fishing or hunting. Those businesses employed 294 persons with an annual total payroll of \$15,118,000.

Throughout the 2000s, changes to technology have also influenced how and where people work as broadband and increased access to and affordability of computers permitted people to work remotely. This trend has accelerated during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic as many businesses shifted to remote work. This change, coupled with the desire of many people to leave more densely populated urban areas for more rural destinations; the loss of residential housing units that may have been converted to second or vacation homes or short-term rentals; rising inflation; and global supply chain disruptions have increased housing prices and decreased housing availability in Clatsop County, as discussed later in this goal. It should also be noted that while remote work may influence population growth within Clatsop County, many portions of unincorporated county have poor to non-existent broadband opportunities.

Data from the U.S. Census Bureau, detailing county population from 1960 through 2020 is shown on **Table 1**, below.

TABLE 1: HISTORIC POPULATION (1960-2020)			
YEAR	POPULATION	CHANGE	% CHANGE
2020	41,072	3,986	10.74%
2010	37,086	1,496	4.2%
2000	35,590	2,164	6.47%
1990	33,426	577	0.17%
1980	32,489	4,016	14.10%
1970	28,473	1,093	3.99%
1960	27,380	-	-

Source: United States Census Bureau

CURRENT POPULATION / HOUSING PROFILE

Population

As discussed above in the Historical Perspective section, the 2020 Decennial Census identified the population of Clatsop County as 41,072. This population is distributed as shown on **Table 2**.

TABLE 2: POPULATION		
Jurisdiction	2010 Population	2020 Population
Unincorporated Clatsop County	13,011	14,217
Astoria	9,477	10,181
Cannon Beach	1,690	1,489
Gearhart	1,462	1,793
Seaside	6,457	7,115
Warrenton	4,989	6,277
TOTAL	37,086	41,072

Source: 2010 and 2020 Decennial Census, United States Census Bureau

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

Portland State University Population Projections

In 2019, Portland State University's Population Research Center staff began the process to update the population forecasts for Clatsop County and its incorporated cities. The report, which was released on June 30, 2020, provides population forecasts through 2070. The model, which is based on an assumption that future growth will occur within Urban Growth Boundaries, also assumes that unincorporated areas will lose population over time as those areas are annexed into adjacent cities. The forecast, which utilized 2000 and 2010 Decennial Census data, generally under-projected estimated population growth in Clatsop County, as shown on **Table 3**, below. For the City of Cannon Beach, population growth was over-projected.

TABLE 3: PSU POPULATION RESEARCH CENTER FORECASTS (2020-2070)

Area	Population (2000)	Population (2010)	AAGR ¹ (2000-2010)	Population (2020) est.	Population (2045)	Population (2070)
Clatsop County Total	35,630	37,039	0.4%	38,254	40,419	42,525
Outside UGBs	12,164	12,377	0.2%	12,969	12,459	11,812
Astoria	10,345	9,782	-0.6%	9,815	9,852	9,876
Cannon Beach	1,603	1,693	0.5%	1,652	1,715	1,786
Gearhart	1,318	1,508	1.4%	1,516	1,634	1,756
Seaside	6,095	6,657	0.9%	6,716	7,325	8,156
Warrenton	4,105	5,022	2.0%	5,586	12,459	11,812

Source: Coordinated Population Forecast 2020 through 2070 Clatsop County, Population Research Center, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University

¹AAGR: Average Annual Growth Rate

REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ANALYSIS

2021 REGIONAL HOUSING NEEDS ANALYSIS (RHNA)

HB 2003, which was adopted in 2019, required Oregon Housing and Community Services (OHCS) to develop a methodology to conduct a regional housing needs analysis to identify the total number of housing units necessary to accommodate anticipated populations in a region over the next 20 years.

OHCS developed the mandated methodology and issued a revised version of *Implementing a Regional Housing Needs Analysis Methodology in Oregon*, in March 2021. This technical report estimates the number of households in each income category and in each region that will need dwelling units that are affordable to them, now and over the next 20 years, and allocate those units down from the regional to the city level. The resulting report estimates the number of needed housing units by income for each of Oregon's 241 cities. This report noted the following for the North Coast region, which is comprised of Columbia, Clatsop, Tillamook and Lincoln counties:

TABLE 4: SUMMARY OF HOUSING NEEDS BY REGIONS AND STATE (2020-2040)

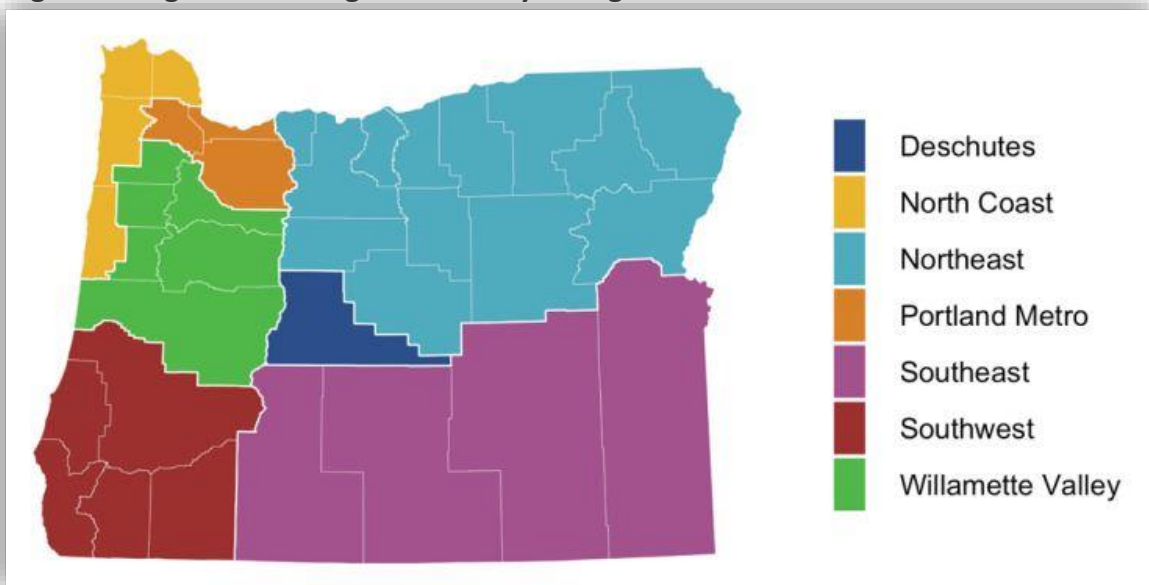
Region	New Units Needed				
	Projected Need ¹	Underproduction ²	Housing for the Homeless ³	Total Units	% of Units
Portland Metro	224,683	59,488	10,683	294,853	51%
North Coast	14,731	295	2,309	17,335	3%
Willamette Valley	101,704	35,913	8,972	146,589	25%
Southwest	34,896	10,287	4,579	49,761	9%
Deschutes	49,856	4,837	1,194	55,887	10%
Northeast	16,731	-	899	17,630	3%
Southeast	965	-	538	1,503	0%
Oregon	443,556	110,819	29,174	583,559	100%
% of Units	76%	19%	5%	100%	

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PUS, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count; ODE, SY 2018-2019 McKinney Vento data

¹ Estimated projected need for housing units based on population projections. Need is first calculated based on region then allocated to local jurisdictions.

² Lack of sufficient units to meet demand; based upon a national ratio of 1.14 units per household. Regions with less than 1.14 units per household are considered under-producers.

³ Based on Point-in-Time counts and McKinney Vento Homeless Assistance Act data.

Figure 1: Regional Housing Needs Analysis Regions

Source: ECONorthwest

Table 5 details the underproduction of housing units within the North Coast region based upon median family income.

TABLE 5: HOUSING NEED BY INCOME, NORTH COAST REGION (2020-2040)

Median Family Income	New Units Needed				
	Projected Need ¹	Underproduction ²	Housing for the Homeless ³	Total Units	% of Units
+120% (\$77,130+)	6,421	23	-	6,444	37%
80-120% (\$51,420 to \$77,130)	2,777	51	-	2,828	16%
50-80% (\$32,140 to \$51,420)	2,890	94	69	3,054	18%
30-50% (\$19,280 to \$32,140)	1,494	64	185	1,743	10%
0-30% (\$0 to \$19,280)	1,148	62	2,055	3,265	19%
North Coast Region	14,731	295	2,309	17,335	100%
% of Units	85%	2%	13%	100%	

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PUS, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; HUD, FY 2018 Income Limits; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count; ODE, SY 2018-2019 McKinney Vento data

Within the North Coast region, the report allocates the housing needs to the five cities as shown in **Tables 6-10**, below. These allocations are considered the Beta Version for the cities. As noted in the report, the units may not add up exactly to the total units and the share of units may not add up exactly to 100% due to rounding errors. The RHNA did not allocate units to unincorporated Clatsop County, consistent with the purposes of Goal 14: Urbanization.

TABLE 6: ASTORIA NEEDED UNITS (RHNA BETA VERSION)

Median Family Income ¹	New Units for Each of the Following:					
	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	Manufactured and Other	Multifamily	Total Units	% of Units
+120%	265	0	0	0	265	32%
80-120%	126	0	0	0	126	15%
50-80%	151	0	0	0	151	18%
30-50%	52	0	0	49	101	11%
0-30%	10	0	81	85	175	21%
Total Units	603	0	81	134	818	100%
% of Units	74%	0%	10%	16%	100%	

¹ The RHNA utilized FY 2018 Median Family Incomes (MFI) issued by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In FY 2018 the MFI for nonmetro areas in Oregon was \$54,700. The FY 2022 MFI is \$71,800.

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PSU, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; HUD, FY 2018 Income Limits; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count

TABLE 7: CANNON BEACH NEEDED UNITS (RHNA BETA VERSION)

Median Family	New Units for Each of the Following:					
	Single-	Single-	Manufactured	Multifamily	Total	% of Units

Income	Family Detached	Family Attached	and Other		Units	
+120%	63	0	0	0	63	32%
80-120%	30	0	0	0	30	15%
50-80%	36	0	0	0	36	18%
30-50%	12	0	0	12	24	12%
0-30%	2	0	19	20	42	21%
Total Units	143	0	19	32	194	100%
% of Units	74%	0%	10%	16%	100%	

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PSU, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; HUD, FY 2018 Income Limits; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count

TABLE 8: GEARHART NEEDED UNITS (RHNA BETA VERSION)

Median Family Income	New Units for Each of the Following:					
	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	Manufactured and Other	Multifamily	Total Units	% of Units
+120%	43	0	0	0	43	32%
80-120%	21	0	0	0	21	15%
50-80%	25	0	0	0	25	18%
30-50%	8	0	0	8	16	12%
0-30%	2	0	13	14	29	21%
Total Units	99	0	13	12	134	100%
% of Units	74%	0%	10%	16%	100%	

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PSU, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; HUD, FY 2018 Income Limits; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count

TABLE 9: SEASIDE NEEDED UNITS (RHNA BETA VERSION)

Median Family Income	New Units for Each of the Following:					
	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	Manufactured and Other	Multifamily	Total Units	% of Units
+120%	248	0	0	0	248	32%
80-120%	118	0	0	0	118	15%
50-80%	141	0	0	0	141	18%
30-50%	49	0	0	46	94	12%
0-30%	9	0	76	79	164	21%
Total Units	564	0	76	125	765	100%
% of Units	74%	0%	10%	16%	100%	

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PSU, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; HUD, FY 2018 Income Limits; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count

TABLE 10: WARRENTON NEEDED UNITS (RHNA BETA VERSION)

Median Family Income	New Units for Each of the Following:					
	Single-Family Detached	Single-Family Attached	Manufactured and Other	Multifamily	Total Units	% of Units
+120%	358	0	0	0	358	32%
80-120%	171	0	0	0	171	15%
50-80%	204	0	0	0	204	18%
30-50%	70	0	0	66	137	12%
0-30%	13	0	110	115	237	21%
Total Units	816	0	110	181	1,107	100%
% of Units	74%	0%	10%	16%	100%	

Sources: ECONorthwest analysis; PSU, 2020-2070 Coordinated Population Forecasts; HUD, FY 2018 Income Limits; U.S. Census Bureau, 2018 ACS 1-year PUMS estimates; HUD, 2019 PIT count

HB 2003 also required cities over 10,000 population to study the future housing needs of their residents and to develop strategies that encourage the production of housing needed by their residents. This report is called a Housing Needs Analysis (HNA). HB 2003 also required cities of 10,000 population to prepare a Housing Production Strategy (HPS) within a year of completing the HNA. The HPS must outline a list of specific tools, actions, and policies that the city plans to take to address the housing need identified in the HNA. The HPS must also include a timeline for adopting and implementing each strategy. In Clatsop County, only the City of Astoria has a population greater than 10,000. The HNA for the City of Astoria must be completed by the end of 2024. Clatsop County is not required to prepare either an HNA or an HPS for unincorporated areas.

On February 16, 2022, the Department of Land Conservation and Development presented preliminary findings for a report on efforts to develop a legislative proposal for incorporation of a regional housing needs analysis into future state and local planning processes. This analysis, which is required by HB 5006, must be submitted by December 31, 2022.

CLATSOP COUNTY HOUSING NEED

CLATSOP COUNTY HOUSING STRATEGIES REPORT - 2019

General Conclusions

In 2019, Clatsop County and the cities of Astoria, Warrenton, Gearhart, Seaside and Cannon Beach, completed a housing study to identify opportunities and weaknesses associated with housing supply in Clatsop County. That report concluded that while the County has a surplus of potentially buildable lands, certain types of housing and housing products at specific price-points are either missing from the county's housing inventory, or are not provided in sufficient quantities. Other findings from the study included:

- The use of residential structures for non-residential uses should be discouraged and/or

controlled. The study recommended that this also include the use of homes for short-term rental and investment income, but not non-primary residences.

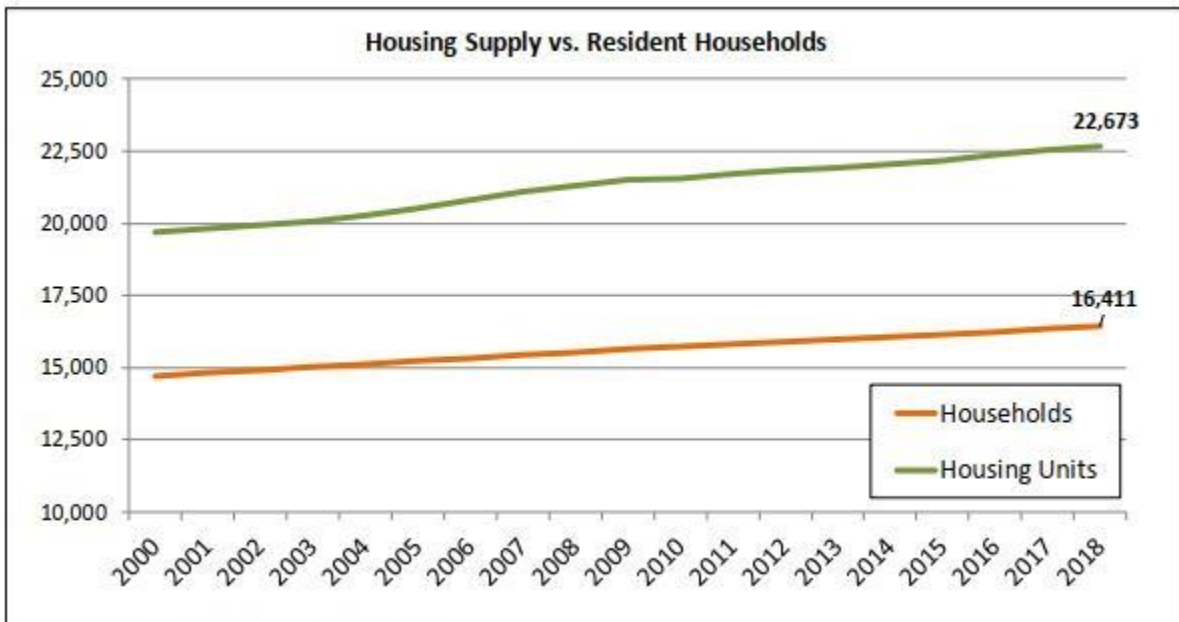
- Use available residential land efficiently, by encouraging the maximum density allowed in higher density zones.
- Focus on providing and encouraging workforce housing. While subsidized housing is very important, there are already existing programs and institutions that provide those types of units at the lowest price points. By focusing on workforce housing, the goal is to allow some older housing units to become available to lower income residents as workers transition to newer housing.

While many of the recommendations contained in the study are directed at incorporated areas, some would also be applicable to unincorporated Clatsop County. Those applicable recommendations have been incorporated into the Goals, Objectives, and Policies section of Goal 10.

Housing Inventory

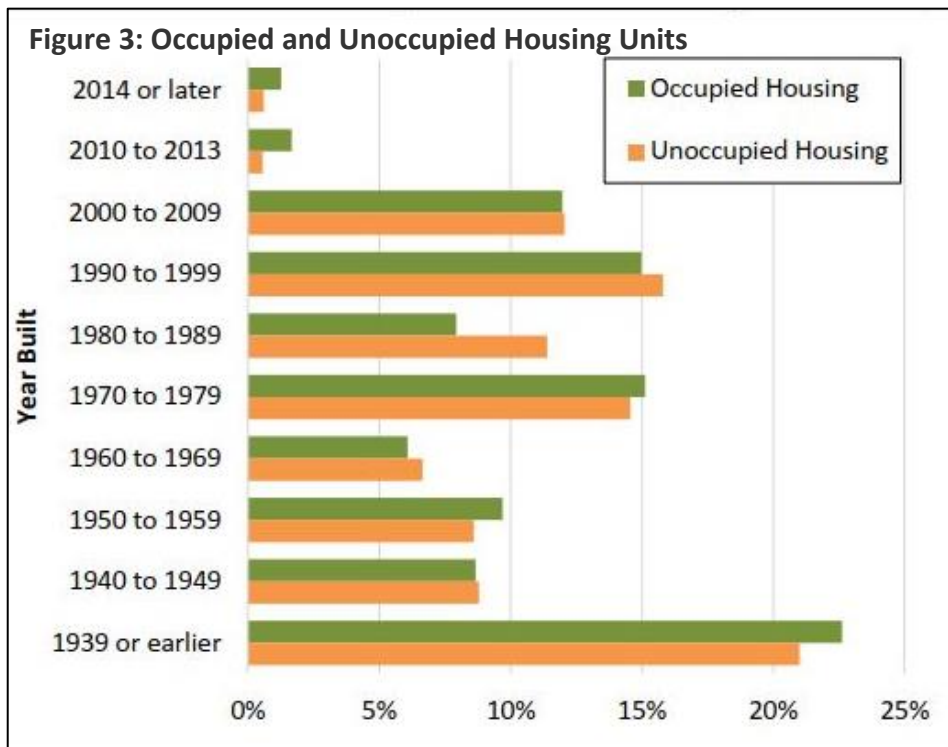
Figure 2, below, details the number of housing units in Clatsop County (incorporated and unincorporated) versus the number of households.

Figure 2: Housing Units and Households



Source: PSU Population Research Center, US Census, *Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report*

Figure 3 details the age of housing units within all of Clatsop County and whether those units are occupied or unoccupied.



Source: American Community Survey, 2017 5-Year, B25034; B24036; US Census, *Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report*

As indicated on Figure 3, and as noted in the *Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report*, over 60% of housing was built prior to 1980, and over 40% as built prior to 1950.

Land Supply

The 2019 *Housing Strategies Report* determined that on a County-wide basis and in most of the individual cities within the County, there is an adequate

supply of buildable residential land to meet future projected housing needs through 2038. To determine the amount of land available, each parcel in the county was classified based on the development status of the parcel. This classification was intended to separate parcels that had capacity for development from those that did not. The classification was based upon the amount of potentially developable area on the parcel and the valuation of improvements (buildings, other structures). Improvement values were sourced from Clatsop County Assessor data. Four categories were developed to classify the parcels (Source: *2019 Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report*):

- **Developed:** Parcels with more than 5,000 square feet of unconstrained land (i.e., land not included in a Special Hazard Flood Area; National Wetland Inventory; Local Wetland Inventory; or Beach and Dune Overlay) and that had an improvement value of more than \$10,000. Those parcels had sufficient area for development, but had improvements, so it was unlikely that they would be redeveloped or had the capacity for new development.
- **Constrained:** Parcels with less than 5,000 square feet unconstrained land. These parcels were assumed to not be developable due to the small area on the lot where development was not constrained by environmental resources or hazards.
- **Partially Vacant:** Parcels with more than a half-acre of unconstrained land and improvement value less than \$150,000. These parcels were considered potentially

developable because they had a sufficient land area on the lot that was not constrained, and the value of the improvements was relatively low compared to the land area. This may mean that this was a large site with a small structure or a structure that was in poor condition that would be likely to redevelop, if the zoning permitted subdivision or redevelopment.

- **Vacant:** Parcels with more than 5,000 square feet of unconstrained land and improvement value less than \$10,000. These parcels had sufficient area for development and little to no improvements.

Figure 4 indicates that much of the vacant or partially-vacant residential land, as described above, is concentrated in Warrenton and Astoria, while the supply is much lower in Gearhart,

Figure 4: Housing Unit Capacity by Jurisdiction (Residential Zones)

HOUSING UNIT CAPACITY BY JURISDICTION (RESIDENTIAL ZONES)



Source: 2019 Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report; (buildable land available shown in acres)

Seaside and Cannon Beach. While unincorporated Clatsop County is shown as having 3,860 acres of potentially vacant or partially-vacant land, it must also be considered that the minimum-required parcel size in most rural residential zones is two acres. That parcel size requirement is established by Oregon Revised Statutes (ORS) and implemented in Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR). Because the housing study utilized a minimum parcel area of 5,000 square feet, which is a typical urban-level lot size, it is likely that the minimum parcel size required on rural lands would yield significantly fewer residential sites than indicated in the study.

New Construction

As shown in Table 1 above, while the overall population of Clatsop County has increased by 5,482 persons between 2000 and 2020, **Table 11**, shows that the number of new housing units constructed in unincorporated Clatsop County between 2005 and November 2021 was 912, which is when the County took over operation of the building program from the state. Based on the 2020 Census, the average household size in Clatsop County is 2.31 persons, a total of

2,373 new housing units would have been required for these new residents.

**TABLE 11: NEW HOUSING CONSTRUCTION – UNINCORPORATED CLATSOP COUNTY
(2005-NOVEMBER 2021)**

	Clatsop Plains	Elsie-Jewell	Seaside Rural	Northeast	Southwest Coastal	Lewis & Clark Olney Wallooskee	TOTAL
2021	38	2	0	12	7	14	73
2020	28	1	2	15	5	11	62
2019	30	1	1	13	3	14	62
2018	26	0	3	14	5	16	64
2017	13	4	1	17	9	12	56
2016	18	4	3	14	4	13	56
2015	17	0	1	13	8	11	50
2014	10	2	2	7	3	7	31
2013	3	2	3	13	0	6	27
2012	7	0	0	11	1	13	32
2011	7	4	2	15	4	7	39
2010	5	3	6	16	6	8	44
2009	9	3	1	10	4	6	33
2008	12	4	2	16	4	7	45
2007	22	4	5	16	2	9	58
2006	27	6	3	23	4	23	86
2005	26	11	4	29	10	14	94
TOTAL	298	51	39	254	79	191	912

Source: Clatsop County Building Codes

Housing Units

Per information from the recently-completed 2020 Decennial Census, there are 23,017 housing units in Clatsop County, including incorporated and unincorporated areas. Of those units, 17,533 were occupied and 5,484 were vacant at the time the census was completed.

Information presented by the Oregon Employment Department, which was based on data from the 2019 U.S. Census American Community Survey 5-year estimates, indicates that 22.5% of housing units in Clatsop County are unavailable for residents. Those units are unavailable as they are either used for seasonal/vacation homes, recreational homes or for occasional use by the owner. Between 2010 and 2020, the number of vacant or seasonally occupied dwelling units decreased by 5.5%, or 320 units.

Information regarding changes to the number of housing units, household size, and occupied and vacant units between 2010 and 2020 is provided in **Table 12**. This information includes both incorporated and unincorporated Clatsop County.

TABLE 12: CLATSOP COUNTY AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE AND HOUSING UNITS				
	2010	2020	Change #	Change %
Total Housing Units	21,546	23,017	1,471	6.8%
Occupied	15,742	17,533	1,791	11.4%
Vacant or seasonally occupied	5,804	5,484	-320	-5.5%
Average Household Size	2.29	2.31	0.02	0.9%
Group Quarter Facilities¹	N/A	67	N/A	N/A

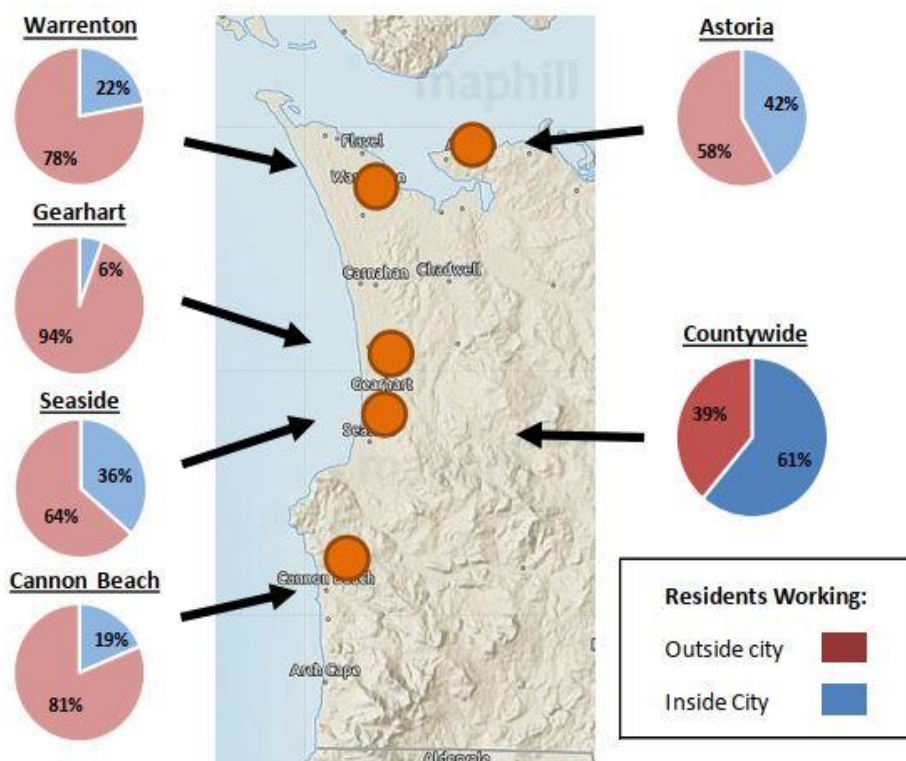
Source: 2020 Decennial Census compiled by Population Research Center, College of Urban and Public Affairs, Portland State University

¹Group Quarter Facilities as of October 2019; not known in 2010

Employment Location and Income

While median household income, as discussed above, is one of several factors that affect housing affordability, employment center locations may influence where residents work versus where they can afford to live. Per the 2019 *Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report* an estimated 39% of working residents work somewhere outside of the county. Within the cities, it is very common for local working residents to work outside of their local community. **Figure 5**

Figure 5: Employment Centers Versus Place of Residence



Source: US Census Employment Dynamics

Source: 2019 *Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report*

details where Clatsop County residents are employed versus where they reside. It should be noted that these employment and residence patterns may have been greatly altered due to the oncoming pandemic and more study is required. Additionally, the study does not appear to have accounted for workers who telecommute all or part of the time. During the pandemic, telecommuting significantly increased for both residents within the County as well as those who relocated to Clatsop County from other areas.

CURRENT CONDITIONS

NORTHWEST OREGON HOUSING AUTHORITY (NOHA)

The Northwest Oregon Housing Authority's mission is to ensure access to "safe, affordable, decent housing for eligible residents of Columbia, Clatsop and Tillamook counties and to break the poverty cycle by providing opportunity for self-sufficiency.

NOHA manages three properties in Clatsop County:

- Alder Court Apartments (Warrenton – 40 units)
- Sandhill Apartments (Seaside – 32 units)
- Owens-Adair Apartments (Astoria – 46 units)
- Clatsop Shores Apartments (Seaside – 42 units)

Information on NOHA's website states that the waiting list for the Housing Choice Voucher Program is approximately three years.

In April 2022, NOHA announced plans to construct an additional 50 units at the Owens-Adair multi-family residential development. The proposed project would increase affordable housing options for low-income seniors and disabled persons earning 30-50% of the area median income.

COMMUNITY ACTION TEAM (CAT)

The Community Action Team's (CAT) mission is to connect people with resources needed to become self-sufficient. CAT operates the Northwest Regional Housing Center, which provides affordable housing opportunities for families of modest means living in Clatsop, Columbia and Tillamook counties. The center works to identify innovative programs and services designed to make affordable housing opportunities more available for first-time homebuyers, current homeowners, renters and unsheltered persons.

In 2018, CAT released a Needs Assessment report, which identified lack of affordable housing as the number one need its clients identified on a written survey. Information in this report also noted that in Cannon Beach and Gearhart, over 50% of the homes are non-primary residences. The report also included information from the 2012-16 American Community Survey (ACS) estimating that over 36% of households in Clatsop County are cost-burdened.

CAT's 166 units of affordable housing is located throughout the tri-county area, including in Vernonia, Cannon Beach, St. Helen's and Scappoose. CAT also offers 0%, deferred-payment loans, with no monthly payment for housing repairs and weatherization projects. Other housing-related programs offered by CAT include:

- Foreclosure and eviction prevention
- Mortgage and property taxes payment assistance
- Temporary rental assistance
- Home heating cost assistance
- Deposit assistance

SUBSTANDARD HOUSING AND UNSHELTERED PERSONS

Point-in-Time Survey

The 2019 Point-in-Time (PIT) survey, a Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-sponsored count of sheltered and unsheltered people experiencing homelessness, recorded 894 homeless persons in Clatsop County. Of those 894 persons, 356 (39.8%) were children. Of the persons counted, 201 (22%) reported experiencing chronic homelessness. Information from the 2020 and 2021 PIT surveys for Clatsop County was not from the Oregon Housing and Community Services. Because more current information specific to Clatsop County is not available, it cannot be determined what impacts the coronavirus pandemic may have had on the number of unsheltered people within the county.

Impacts

As noted in further detail in other goals of this comprehensive plan, the ongoing demand for housing, lifestyles changes brought on by the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, and escalating housing prices have created a situation where an increasing number of persons are experiencing unshelteredness or are forced into sub-standard living situations. At times, these housing crises may be accompanied by mental or emotional health issues and/or alcohol/chemical dependency issues. Unsheltered persons, or persons domiciled in sub-sheltered situations may not have onsite access to potable water and/or functioning waste treatment facilities. In some cases, human waste and solid waste are being buried, burned, dumped directly on the ground or dumped into streams, creeks, and rivers. Because many of the water supply systems within unincorporated Clatsop County draw on groundwater and surface waters the dumping of human waste and trash increases the likelihood of contaminants entering those systems.

PANDEMIC AND HOUSING MARKET TRENDS

In March 2020, the coronavirus pandemic resulted in changes worldwide that have significantly altered housing markets, including in Clatsop County. Some people choose to leave more densely populated areas and relocate to more rural areas. Others benefited from remote work

options, which no longer tied workers to a specific geographic location. As a result of the increase in home buyers, the median selling price of a home in Clatsop County rose from \$322,500 in November 2018 to \$502,500 in September 2021 (Source: Realtor.com). While some of these home sales were to households that become permanent Clatsop County residents, many will remain vacation homes and some of those will be used for short-term rentals.

The increase in median housing prices, coupled with a lack of long-term rental units, will amplify pressure to increase housing stock by constructing new residential units. While Goal 14 stresses that higher intensity uses and dense development be directed to urban areas, market forces are increasing housing development on rural lands, and this trend is expected to continue. Encroaching residential development has the potential to impact inventoried Goal 5 resources, including wildlife habitat, groundwater, and open spaces.

SHORT-TERM RENTALS AND VACATION HOMES

On August 25, 2021, Clatsop County adopted Ordinance 21-03, which established a moratorium on the processing of applications for short-term rental units. The moratorium, which became effective on September 1, 2021, is currently in effect through June 22, 2023. In June 2022, the Board of Commissioners adopted Ordinance 22-05, which added short-term rentals as a permitted use in 16 different zoning districts. Following adoption of the ordinance, three citizens filed a petition to place repeal of the ordinance before the voters at the May 16, 2023 election. Pending the outcome of the referendum, Ordinance 22-05 has not been enacted.

Within unincorporated Clatsop County there are 186 licensed short-term rental units. Of those units, 73 are located within Arch Cape and 21 are located within the Cove Beach community in the southwest quadrant of the county. Sixty-six rentals are located in the unincorporated areas of Warrenton, Gearhart and Seaside in the Clatsop Plains planning area. All of these locations are in close proximity to the Pacific Ocean and are highly-desired by visitors. Whether and where to allow short-term rentals has become a contentious issue. Concerns for quality of life in residential neighborhoods must also be balanced with the public's right to access the State's beaches and sensitivity to owner's property rights.

Data from 2020 Decennial Census indicates that over 5,400 housing units in Clatsop County are vacant, while the Oregon Department of Employment estimates that as much as 22.5% of the County's housing units are unavailable to residents because they are used as short-term rentals, recreational homes, or occasional use homes.

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TRANSPORTATION

As the demand for housing increases there is also a corresponding increase in the need to provide new roads to those homes. Again, while Goal 14 directs new housing development primarily to urban areas, partitioning and subdividing of rural lands continues to occur in unincorporated Clatsop County. The construction of new roads, or the expansion of existing roads, requires those costs to be passed on to the purchasers of the newly-created parcels. During the pandemic, materials have increased in price for a variety of reasons, including labor shortages and supply-chain issues. Increased costs and shortages also impact construction materials and appliances, further increasing new construction costs.

Continued pressure to direct housing and services away from urbanized areas, in contravention to the requirements of Goal 14, may result in an increase in vehicle miles travelled by persons who live on rural residential lands that are located further away from employment centers, shopping, schools, medical facilities, and/or recreation centers. The costs associated with increased vehicle miles traveled are shown below in Table 2.

TABLE 14: ENERGY BURDEN ON CLATSOP COUNTY HOUSEHOLDS	
% of Energy-Burdened ¹ Households	23%
Average annual electricity cost	\$1,236
Average annual natural gas cost:	\$627
Average vehicle miles traveled per household	21,825
Average vehicle maintenance cost (fuel, maintenance, repairs)	\$3,500
Annual energy burden gap	\$422
Federal Poverty Level (Family of 3)	\$21,720

Source: 2020 Biennial Energy Report, Oregon Department of Energy

¹“Energy Burdened” households are those that spend more than 6% of their income on purchasing energy

POTABLE WATER AND SEPTIC CONSTRAINTS

Concerns regarding water quality and quantity, the impacts of septic systems on the coastal lakes and creeks, and a decreasing capacity to treat septage from those systems have arisen within the past several years. These concerns over water quality/quantity are also reflected in the Strategic Plan approved by the Board of Commissioners in December 2020, and discussed in further detail below and in the “Future Conditions” section of this goal.

Water Quantity and Quality

In 2020, the City of Warrenton, which had previously supplied potable water to houses within the Clatsop Plains planning area, adopted a moratorium which prohibited the issuance of any new water connections outside the incorporated boundaries of the city.

In Oregon, the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has the primary responsibility for groundwater protection. DEQ, in coordination with the Oregon Department of Human Services Drinking Water Program, the Oregon Water Resources Department, and the Oregon

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Department of Agriculture implement the majority of federal and state programs related to groundwater. Per information from the Oregon Water Resources Department there are four observation wells currently located at Camp Rilea.

The Oregon Water Resources Department has identified a portion of the Clatsop Plains planning area where limited groundwater yield has been noted as a groundwater resource concern. The areas around Big Creek and Gnat Creek have been identified as areas of significant concern for ground water supply.

In 2021, Clatsop County and the Association of Oregon Counties (AOC) entered into an agreement to conduct a water needs study for the County. The project, which began in March 2022, will consist of a series of community forums designed to bring stakeholders from all communities of interest together to produce a comprehensive inventory of water needs and water resource availability. This work would support the requirements of Goal 6 (Air, Water and Land Resources Quality) and assist decision makers as they work to identify needed housing projects and locations.

Failing Septic Systems

The majority of development in unincorporated Clatsop County is required to utilize onsite wastewater treatment systems, or septic systems. These systems can be expensive to install, maintain and replace. Malfunctioning or failing septic systems are a health hazard. These systems can discharge untreated sewage onto the ground, infiltrating into groundwater resources, or may outfall directly to surface water, impacting drinking water resources and wildlife habitat. Some residents may be unaware that their septic systems are failing or may allow those systems to fail because they cannot afford the maintenance and/or repair costs associated with the systems.

CRAFT3, utilizing funds from the Clean Water State Revolving Fund, provides below-market rate loans to assist low-income property owners. However, those funds are distributed throughout the state and the amount budgeted for this program is not sufficient to address the need. During the 2021 legislative session, HB 3090 was introduced. This bill would have appropriated moneys to DEQ to award grants for on-site septic system low-interest loan programs and to cover related administrative costs. That bill was not approved during the legislative session.

Currently, an issue has arisen regarding the disposal of septage from pumped systems. As the Warrenton wastewater treatment plant nears capacity, in 2019 the City began to curtail hours of operation and established stricter standards for wastes that would be accepted. These operational changes have required septage haulers to utilize facilities outside of Clatsop County, including sites in Columbia and Tillamook counties and in Washington state. The increased costs to dispose of septage are costs that are ultimately borne by the property owner. In order to address this issue, the Board of Commissioners in November 2021 approved a contract with Jacobs Engineering to conduct a feasibility study for the development and siting

of a biodigester.

In early 2022, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) announced that it had obtained \$15 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that local governments may apply for in order to repair or replace failing septic systems. Clatsop County has been in discussions with CRAFT3 and the Community Action Team to further develop a program to apply for and utilize these funds. A formal Notice of Funding Availability is anticipated to be released in the summer of 2022.

FUTURE CONDITIONS

CLIMATE CHANGE

On March 10, 2020, Governor Brown issued Executive Order 20-04, directing state agencies to take actions to reduce and regulate greenhouse gas emissions. The executive order establishes new science-based emissions reduction goals for Oregon. The executive order directs certain state agencies, including the Oregon Building Codes Division, to take specific actions to reduce emissions and mitigate the impacts of climate change; and provides overarching direction to state agencies to exercise their statutory authority to help achieve Oregon's climate goals.

Specifically, the Oregon Building Codes Division has been tasked with the following directive regarding new residential construction:

- Adopt building energy efficiency goals for 2030 for new residential and commercial construction. The new goals are required to reduce annual site consumption of energy by 60% from the 2006 Oregon residential and commercial codes. This reduction does not include energy used for transportation or appliances.

The Governor's directives are intended to reduce the emission of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in order to mitigate or reduce the rate at which climate change is occurring. These new requirements and energy efficiency codes may decrease utility costs associated with homeownership or rental properties, but it is also possible that newly-implemented technology and standards may inflate the initial cost to construction new housing. Additionally, the directive does not address retrofitting existing homes, which may have higher energy costs due to older technology, less stringent insulation requirements, or a general condition of deferred maintenance.

In February 2020, the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute published a report that identifies increased risks due to climate change for Clatsop County. This study projects higher chances of drought periods, heavy rains, flooding, wildfire, loss of wetland ecosystems, increased ocean temperatures and chemistry changes, changes to average daily temperatures, increased heat waves, and increased coastal hazards such as erosion.

This study notes that Oregon's average temperature warmed at a rate of 2.2°F per century from 1895-2015. In Clatsop County, average temperature is projected to warm between 0.9°-3.5°F by

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2039. Corresponding, the number of hot days (90° or warmer) will increase between 0.6-0.8 days by 2039 and the number of warm nights (65°F or greater) will increase between 0.2-0.3 days by 2039. In June 2020, Clatsop County, and much of the Pacific Northwest experienced a once-in-a-thousand-year “heat dome”. This oppressive heat mass, which lasted for a day in western Clatsop County and for several days to the east, resulted in damage to vegetation and death in humans.

These projected changes have impacts for housing costs, including:

- Wildfires, coastal erosion and flooding may place homes at risk and may result in increased insurance premiums
- Increasingly warmer or colder days will require more energy use to cool or heat homes and businesses.
- Increasing frequency of heavy rainfall events will require additional measures to convey runoff away from homes and other buildings.

CHANGES TO HOUSING MARKET TRENDS AND NEEDS

Traditional Housing Products

Following the end of World War II and implementation of the Servicemen’s Readjustment Act of 1944 (G.I. Bill), which provided low interest mortgages to returning veterans for the purchase of homes, the primary focus of new housing construction has been single-family detached dwellings. As land and housing costs have increased single-family detached housing has become too expensive for many first-time purchasers. Additionally, the coronavirus pandemic has increased an interest in being in closer proximity to family and friends. Cottage cluster housing, which is discussed in the *Clatsop County Housing Strategies Report*, is based on a concept of clustering several smaller homes together on a single parcel of land. The smaller home size and the shared cost of the land could assist lower-income persons and first-time home buyers to attain homeownership. Such types of development, however, are not currently permitted under county zoning regulations.

Economic Development and Housing

The policies identified in Goal 9 are designed to promote economic growth, and consequently, employee wages. Emerging industries such as mass timber and mass plywood have the potential to further the economic development policies in Goal 9, while supplying a sustainable source of construction materials for single- and multi-family housing.

An October 2020 article published by Adam Scouse, Stephen S. Kelley, Shaobo Liang and Richard Bergman in *Sustainable Cities and Society*, Volume 61, found that the impact assessment results indicated that construction of the 12-story building using a mass timber design generated larger economic impacts than traditional concrete frame construction and generated additional earnings for households of all income levels. Panels must be produced locally to realize the full economic benefits of mass timber construction as importing panels

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from outside the state creates economic leakage that reduces economic benefits. Congregating production facilities in standard, densely-populated urban industrial areas in the state also negates economic benefits that could be obtained in rural counties if facilities were distributed geographically and demographically.

Additional policies and background information related to economic development can be found in Goal 9.

Transitional Housing

As the housing crisis has accelerated in the Pacific Northwest and in Clatsop County specifically, it has become evident that alternative housing types should be considered to more fully address the needs of unsheltered persons. Because over 80% of Clatsop County is zoned for resource uses (farm / forest) state statutes severely restrict where such types of housing can be constructed. Additionally, many forms of transitional housing – pallet homes, RVs, or other types of temporary structures are not addressed through building codes. In order for the County to fully pursue these types of alternative housing, additional code requirements at a local level will likely be required.

Rural Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

In 2019, the Oregon legislature adopted SB 391. SB 391 allows counties to permit accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on rural residential lands, subject to specific criteria outlined in the bill. If the Board of Commissioners chooses to allow ADUs on rural residential lands, the *Land and Water Development and Use Code* (LAWDUC) would need to be amended to incorporate the use and associated development standards. In addition to the specific standards included in SB 391, discretionary items will need to be identified and standards developed.

SB 391 is closely linked to SB 762, which requires adoption of statewide wildfire hazard maps and related wildfire provisions, including a revised definition of the wildland-urban interface and the wildfire hazard zones. While SB 391 became effective immediately upon signing by the Governor, it cannot be implemented by counties until the wildland-urban interface definition is revised and wildfire maps are finalized.

In order to complete this process two statewide wildfire rulemaking committees have been established. A revised definition of “wildland-urban interface” was adopted by the rulemaking committee on October 22, 2021. Work to develop wildfire hazard risk maps is ongoing, but is expected to be completed by mid-2022.

In order to be able to implement the provisions of SB 391 as quickly as possible following completion of the above tasks, staff is providing an overview to the Planning Commission in order to begin formulation of possible code amendments that may be required. It is anticipated that additional work sessions with both the Board of Commissioners and the Planning Commission will be required before bringing back a final set of amendments in April or May 2022.

Short-term Rental Units and Vacation Homes

As discussed above, the County has enacted a moratorium on the issuance of new short-term rental licenses. During the moratorium the County is conducting public town hall meetings in

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order to identify revisions to the short-term regulations and standards. As this process has not yet been completed, it cannot be determined what impacts, if any, short-term rental units may have on unincorporated Clatsop County over the 20-year planning horizon.

WATER QUALITY AND SEPTIC SYSTEMS

During the process of updating the Clatsop County Comprehensive Plan and associated community plans, it has become apparent that the communities are strongly concerned about water quantity and quality and that there is insufficient current data available to provide a foundation for policy and projects.

It should be noted that the City of Warrenton issued an emergency order in March 2020, which prohibits new connections or expansion of existing water services outside of the city boundaries. Because much of the new residential development west of Highway 101 relies on water from Warrenton, this moratorium has had an impact on new development in the Clatsop Plains Planning Area.