









2023-2027

Consolidated Plan for Thurston County and the City of Olympia

Needs assessment and housing market summary

11.11.2022

Your input will help us create a safer, healthier community for all of us.

See page 8 for information on how you can help guide our planning process.

Help identify our community priorities.

Priorities	Goals
Affordable housing	Affordable housing
Homeless assistance and prevention	Homeless continuum of care
Public services	Land acquisition
Public facilities and infrastructure	Public services
Economic development	Public facilities and infrastructure
	Economic development
	General administration

Thurston County and the City of Olympia receive Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Thurston County also receives HOME Investment Partnership (HOME) funding from HUD. Approximately $2.4 million per year is anticipated from these funding sources.

A requirement for receipt of these funds is to prepare a Consolidated Plan covering a five-year period. The goal of the Consolidated Plan is to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing, suitable living environments, and expanding economic opportunities, principally for low- and moderate-income persons.

The Consolidated Plan must identify the priority needs for the County and City and describe strategies they will undertake to serve the priority needs. The **current 2018-2022 Consolidated Plan** identified the priorities and goals shown on the left.

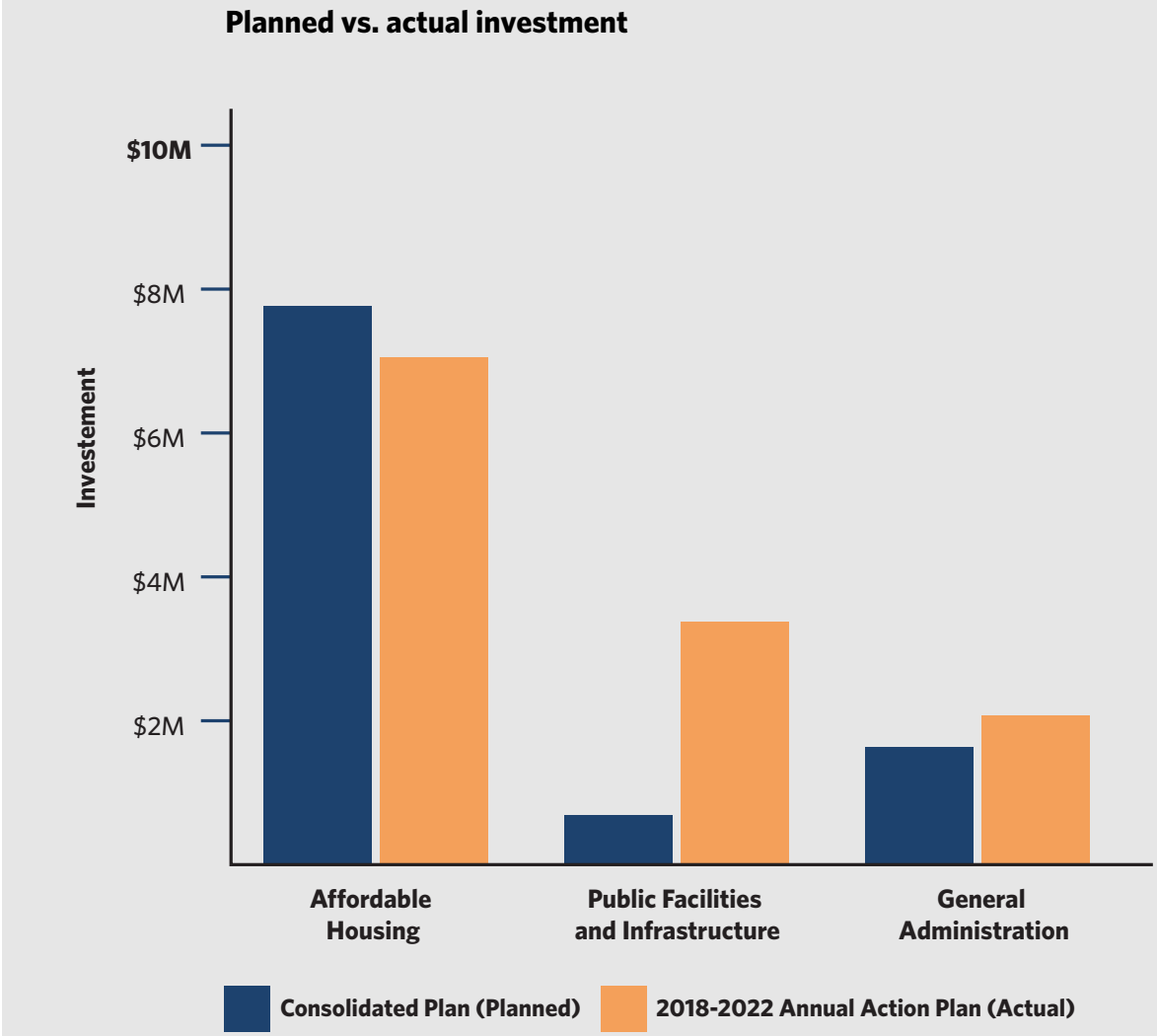


figure 1: In the last five years, there was more investment in public facilities and infrastructure than was planned.

How have Thurston County and Olympia met their goals these past five years?

During this time, Thurston County and the City of Olympia have added new sources for funding affordable housing ("Home Fund").

For the past five years, less has been allocated to affordable housing than planned. These funds were shifted primarily to public facilities and infrastructure.

In preparation for the 2023-2027 Consolidated Plan, an updated Needs Assessment and Housing Market Analysis was prepared and can be found on the Thurston County website (***www.thurstoncountywa.gov/phss/Pages/ohhp-consolidated-plan.aspx***).

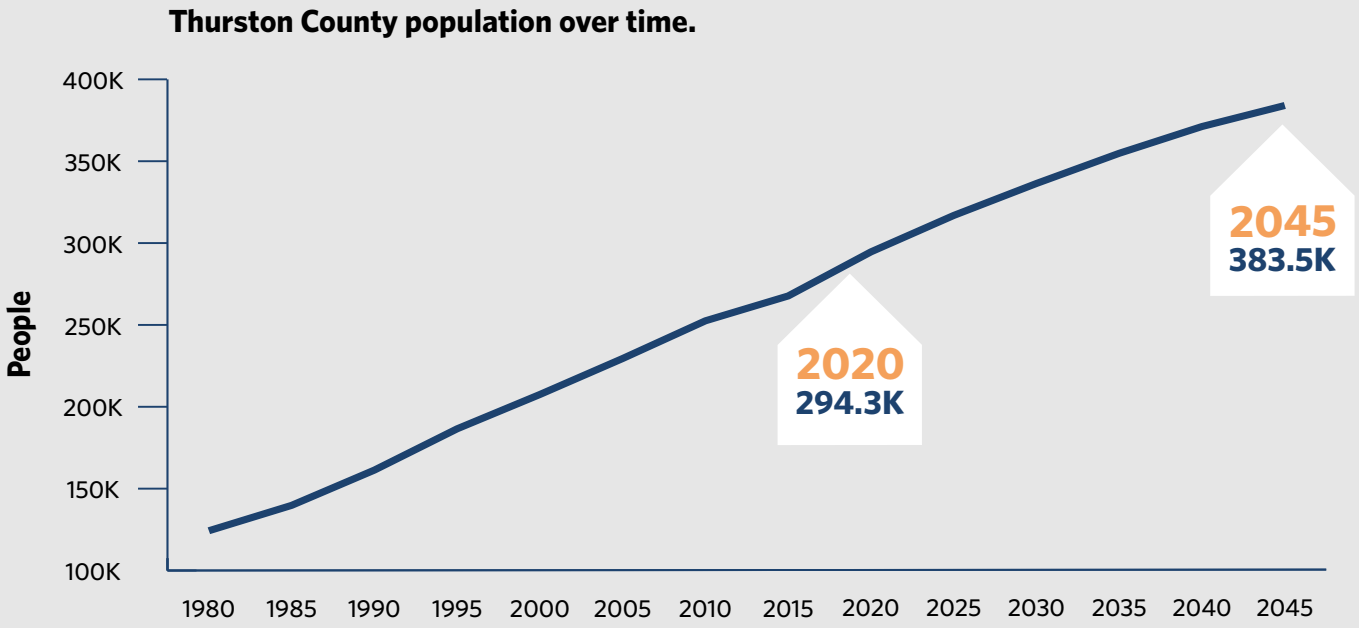


figure 3: Thurston County population has risen sharply, a trend that is expected to continue for years to come.

More growth is expected

Thurston County has been one of the fastest growing counties in Washington State since 2000. In 2000, there were 207,355 people in 86,652 housing units. In 2022, there are an estimated 300,500 people in 124,606 housing units.

The forecast for growth to 2045 in Thurston County is for an additional 83,000 people in an additional 51,400 housing units. Olympia is forecast to add another 18,661 people in an additional 13,750 housing units.

Housing costs have seen sharp increases

Since 2015, median home prices in Thurston County have risen sharply. Median home prices have increased 55%. Average rent has increased 39%. Meanwhile, household income has increased less than 13%.

The increase in housing costs also burdens the Housing Choice voucher program administered by the Housing Authority of Thurston County. Since 2017, they have seen their per-unit cost increase 36%.

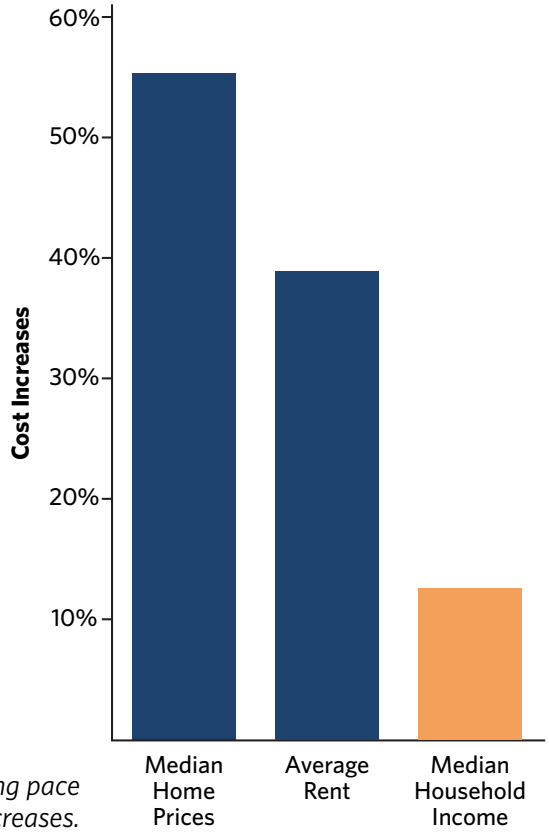


figure 2: Income is not keeping pace with housing cost increases.

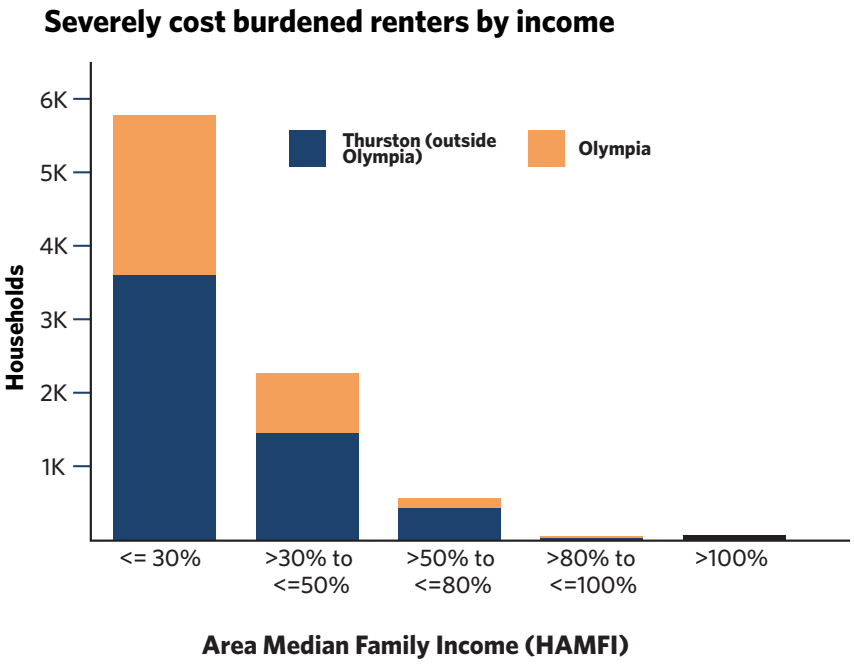


figure 4: Low income renter households are far more likely to pay more than 50% of their income than higher income households.

Housing costs place undue burden on low-income households

The measure of housing affordability is that a household does not pay more than 30% of their household income on housing costs, including utilities.

Approximately 31% of Thurston County households, and 36% of Olympia households, pay more than 30% of their income for housing. 13% of Thurston County households, and 17% of Olympia households, are severely cost burdened, paying more than 50% of their income towards housing.

The households most impacted are low-income renters. 73% of renter households earning 30% or less of HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI), and 32% of households earning >30% to <=50% HAMFI, are paying more than 50% of their income towards housing (severe cost burden).

Housing is starting to look different

There are several things that affect what housing is getting built in the community. In the past decade, housing stock has begun to see increased development of multifamily units and often with fewer bedrooms. This trend is particularly found in the more urban areas of Thurston County, such as Olympia.

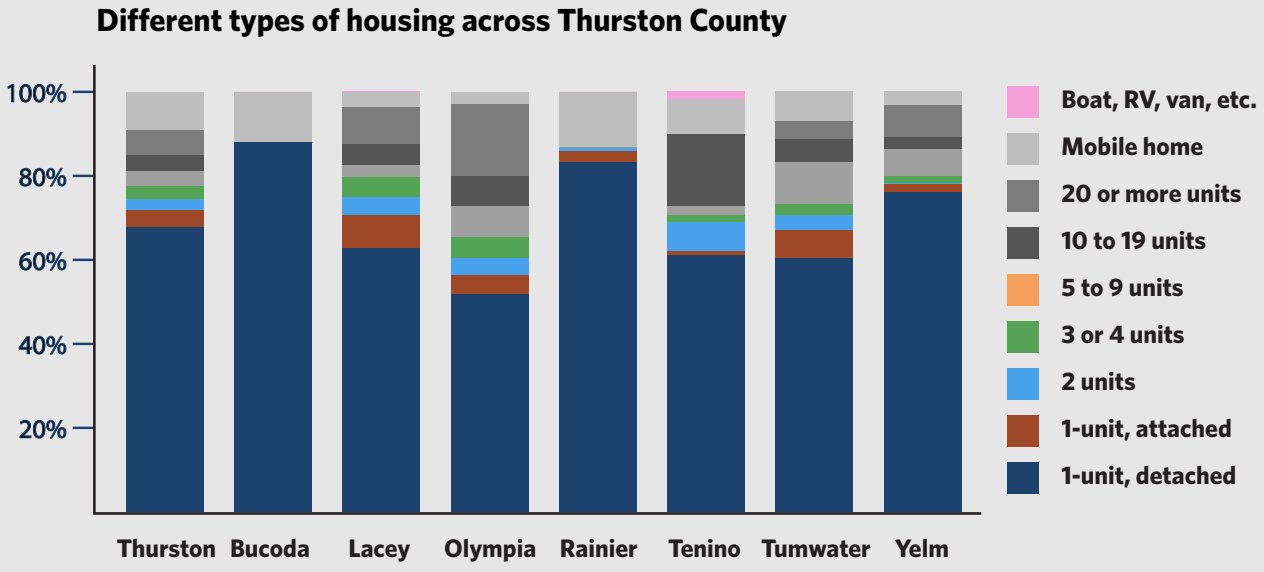


figure 5: 1-unit, detached housing stock is less common in urban locations and the proportion of 1-unit, detached housing stock has decreased significantly in the last twenty years and will continue to do so.

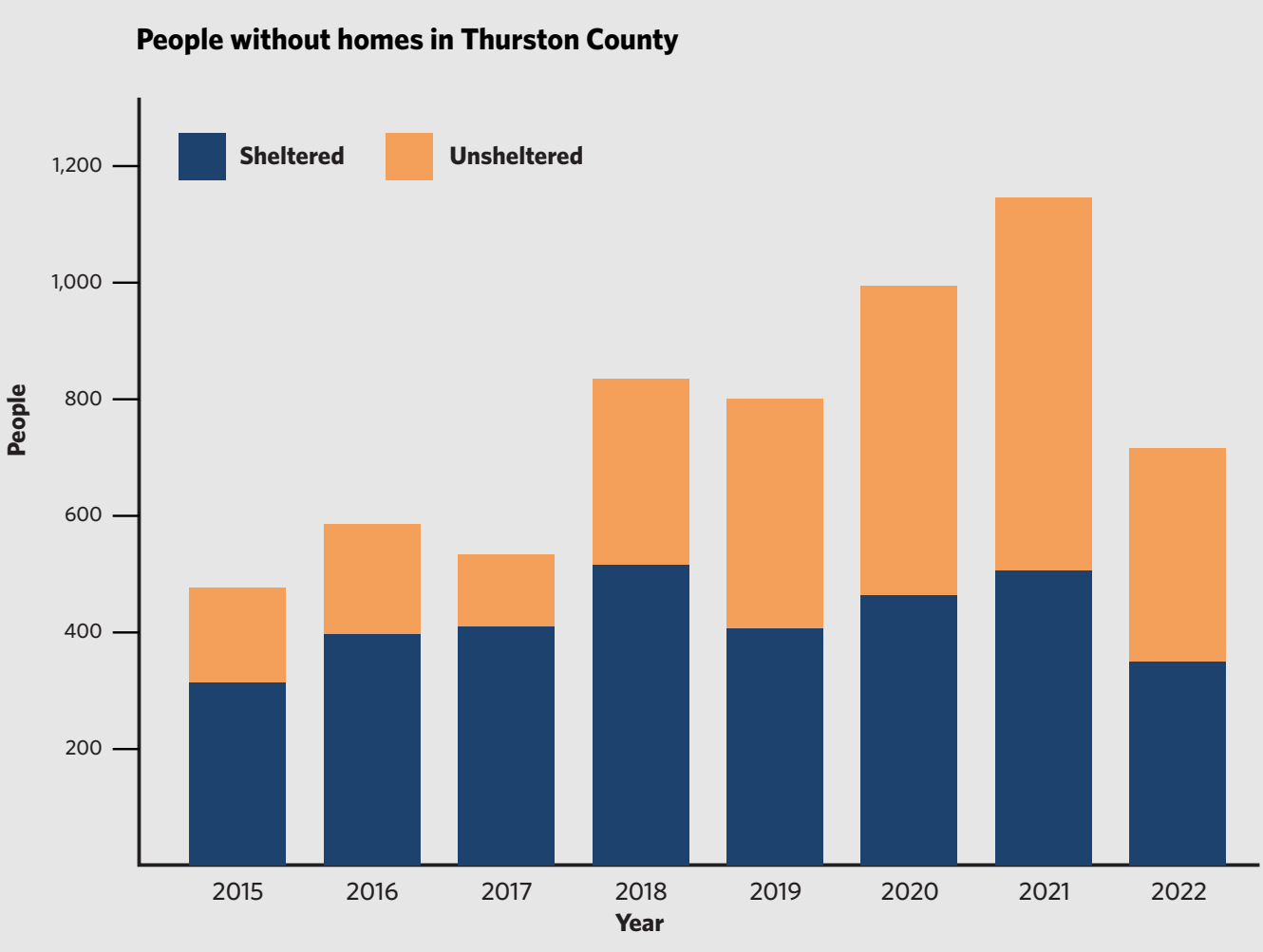


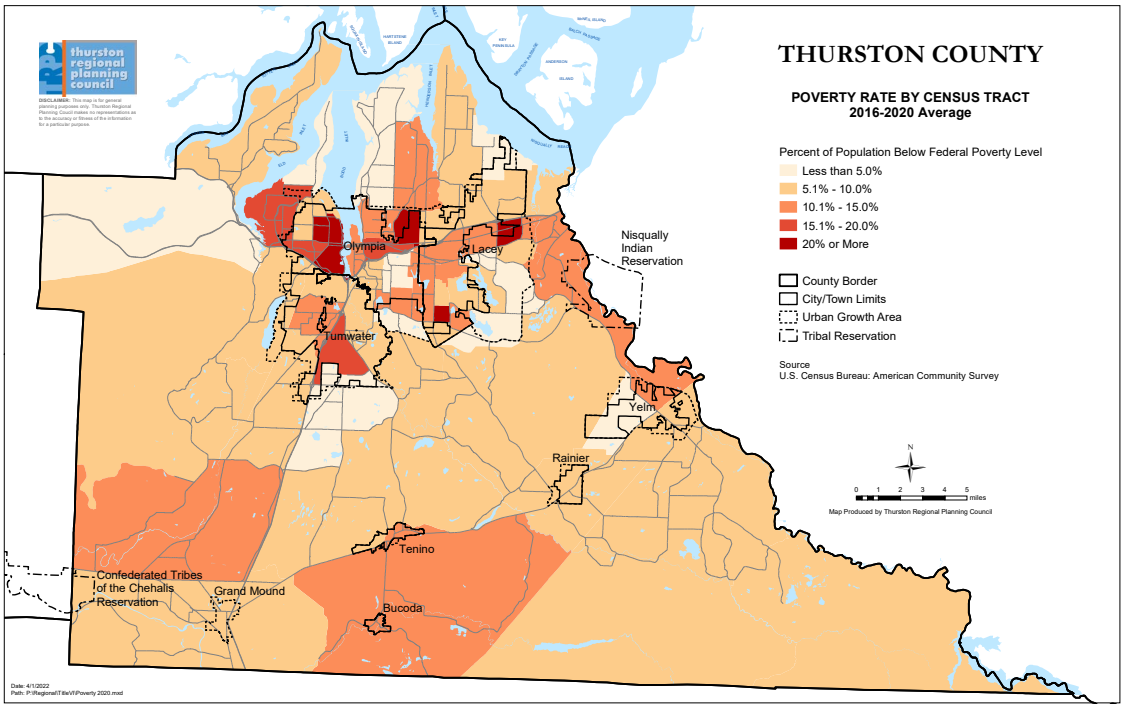
figure 6: The number of people without homes continues to be very high.

The number of people who are without homes has increased

The Point in Time (PIT) count, required by HUD and Washington State, is an attempt to get an annual count of all persons staying in temporary housing programs (sheltered count) and places not meant for human habitation (unsheltered count).

The 2021 and 2022 PIT counts are a story of the COVID pandemic. In 2021, the count was based on observation and no surveys were conducted. In 2022, Thurston County engaged in an abbreviated survey, but many people were missing from this total number, as they did not consent to being surveyed. These counts do not capture those doubled-up (staying with friends and family) nor those who were in a jail or hospital who don't have a permanent address.

On June 14, 2018, the Thurston County Board of Health (BoH) declared homelessness a public health crisis. In 2019, Thurston County adopted the Thurston County Homeless Crisis Response Plan (HCRP) (***www.thurstoncountywa.gov/bocc/boccdocuments/FINAL_Housing5YearPlan.pdf***), a community-based framework for a strategic, focused approach to ending homelessness. The plan is intended to result in positive and innovative systemic changes in the way Thurston County addresses homelessness. The 5-year plan was last updated in November 2021 (***deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/6uv5tzs0zu8bgrn7x73j8sqhqbprtpx7/file/886019912676***).



Poverty in Thurston County

A handful of locations in Thurston County contain a high percentage of people living below the Federal Poverty Level.

source: Thurston Regional Planning Council

There are concentrations of low-income and poverty

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

Reviewing data and maps provided by sources such as HUD's CPD maps (***egis.hud.gov/cpdmaps***), or EPA's Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (***www.epa.gov/ejscreen***), you can see that parts of the community have higher concentrations of racial and ethnic minorities, lower-incomes, and environmental risks, such as lead-based paint.

The population is aging

In 2020, there are an estimated 20,000 more people living in Thurston County that are 65 and older than there were in 2010.

Aging populations in Thurston County from 2010 to 2020

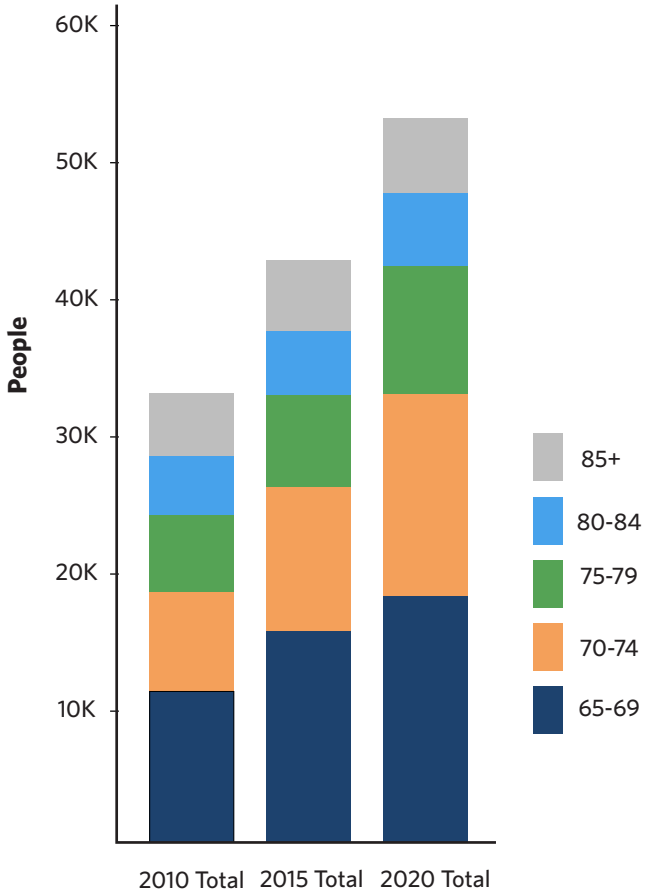


figure 7: Aging populations grew over 60% since 2010.

How do you think Thurston County and its city partners should be spending their allotted CDBG and HOME funds?

The following are some of the options for use of the HUD funds provided to Thurston County and the City of Olympia:

Housing	Public facilities	Economic development	Public services
Multifamily housing	Street and sidewalk improvements	Microenterprise assistance	Housing services
Homebuyer assistance	Water and sewer	Job creation	Education and childcare
Rental assistance	Community buildings	Façade improvements	Employment (job training)
Repair/ rehabilitation, including energy efficiency	Special needs (e.g. shelters, group homes)	Business incubator	Health services
Accessibility improvements	Accessibility improvements		Senior services

Meetings with community and nonprofit leaders will be convened to help refine priorities. A public hearing on priorities will be held early in 2023.

Please take a short survey to provide your input on what Thurston County and our cities should most emphasize based on your sense of the most critical needs in our region.

Provide feedback here:
www.thurstoncountywa.gov/phss/Pages/ohhp-consolidated-plan.aspx

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Go to ***www.thurstoncountywa.gov/phss/Pages/ohhp-consolidated-plan.aspx*** or email Jacinda Steltjes at ***jacinda.steltjes@co.thurston.wa.us*** or Tom Webster at ***thomas.webster@co.thurston.wa.us***.