

WHAT IS WORKFORCE HOUSING?

Workforce housing is any type of housing that is affordable for the working class – typically low-to-moderate income earners – that is near their jobs and other essential services.

Housing is considered affordable when a household spends **no more than 30%** of their monthly income on housing-related costs. Rising home prices and rents are challenges for everyone in our community, but are particularly challenging for workforce households who do not qualify for state and federal housing assistance but also do not make enough money to rent or buy on the open market.



BENEFITS OF WORKFORCE HOUSING

- ENSURES OUR WORKFORCE CAN LIVE IN THE SAME COMMUNITY THEY SERVE
- REDUCES COMMUTE TIMES AND TRAFFIC CONGESTION
- REDUCES SPRAWL AND PRESERVES FARMLAND
- MINIMIZES PRESSURES ON SMALLER CITIES AND RURAL AREAS IN WHATCOM COUNTY

When these essential workers cannot afford to live in the communities they work, they are forced to move farther away or forgo other basic needs such as health care or food.

STATS IN WHATCOM COUNTY

AVG APARTMENT RENT INCREASED*



7%

While rental vacancy rates have decreased, rents are more expensive and there are less apartments available.

MEDIAN HOME PRICES INCREASED*



20%

With a median home price of \$565,000, homeownership is out of reach for workforce households.

*from 2020 to 2021

WHATCOM WORKFORCE PROFILE



TRANSIT OPERATOR

EMPLOYER

Whatcom Transportation Authority

SALARY

\$55,500 annually

SO, WHAT COULD THEY AFFORD?

Assuming a two-person workforce household could bring in about \$100,000 annually and should pay no more than 30% of their monthly income on housing related costs, they could afford a house worth \$385,000.

That is \$180,000 less than the median home price in Whatcom County in 2021 of \$565,000 and does not factor in the need for a down-payment.

