



MASON COUNTY
COMMUNITY SERVICES

Housing and Homelessness In Mason County



2016-2017

Executive Summary

This summary will attempt to describe housing and homelessness in Mason County. Data is from the Washington Office of Financial Management, the U.S. Census and the Homeless Information Systems Database (HMIS) managed by the Department of Commerce.

A Profile on Housing and Homelessness in Mason County

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

HOUSING

HOUSING GOALS AND VISION

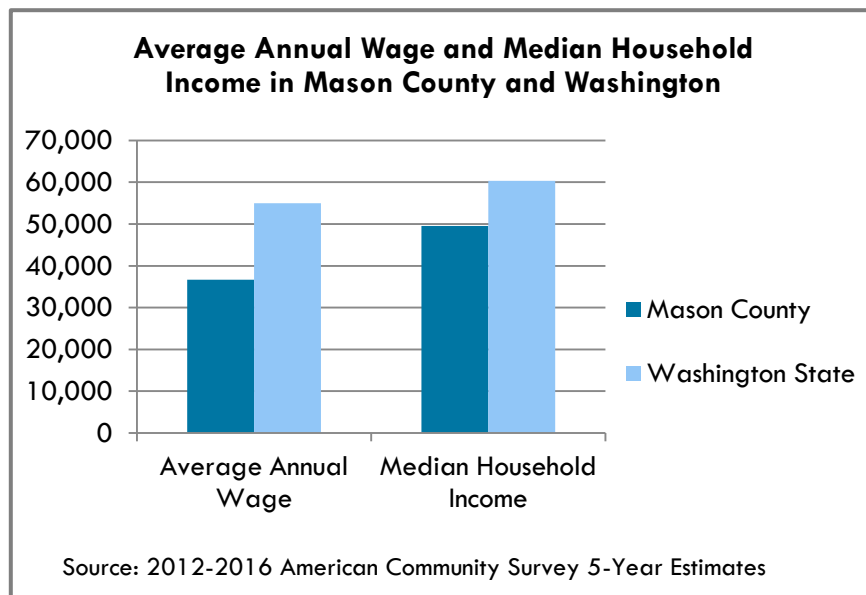
The Mason County Comprehensive Plan cites economic instability in recent years as having dramatically impacted the housing situation in Mason County. As a result, development has stalled, the need for low income and affordable housing has increased, and the population of un-housed persons continues to rise. In order to assure adequate affordable housing that is available and accessible to all income levels, Mason County plans to review zoning and building regulations to ensure we encourage affordable and accessible housing and are responsive to demographic changes.

In addition, we plan to identify and utilize incentives and creative “out of the box” thinking to maximize the potential for appropriate growth, rehabilitation, and maintenance of Mason County’s housing stock; while also increasing low-income housing units to both ease the affordable housing shortage and the cost burden borne by low-income citizens.

Affordable Housing

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers households that pay more than 30 percent of their income for rent or housing costs (including utilities) in need of housing assistance. In Mason County the largest proportions of the population have a housing cost burden that is either less than 20 percent of their income, or **more** than 30 percent of their income. Meaning a large proportion of the county is considered housing cost burden and in need of assistance according to the HUD definition.

In 2014, on average residents of Mason County had an annual wage and income well below the state of Washington’s averages. For Mason County, average annual wage was \$36,693 compared to the state’s average of \$55,003. The median household income for 2010-2014 was \$49,538 for Mason County compared to \$60,294 for the state. In 2013, Mason County ranked 30th in the state in per capita personal income.



According to the Mason County 2036 Comprehensive Plan the “affordability gap” in Mason County, or the comparison of very low and extremely low income households to housing units by cost, continues to be a concern. The following table depicts the income distributions of households in Mason County and identifies the affordable cost of housing for each income classification.

Income Distribution and Affordable Housing Costs

Income Status	Definition	Annual Income Range	Monthly Affordable Housing Costs	Households	
				Number	Percent of Total
Extremely Low Income	<30% Median Income	< \$14,861	\$371.53	2,657	11.5%
Very Low Income	30% to <50% Median Income	\$14,861 to <\$24,769	\$371.53 - \$619.22	3,059	13.2%
Low Income	50% to <80% Median Income	\$24,769 to <\$39,630	\$619.22 - \$990.75	2,492	10.8%
Moderate Income	80% to <95%	\$39,630 to <\$47,061	\$990.75 - \$1,176.52	3,431	14.9%
95% and above Median Income		=/>\$47,061	=/>\$1,176.52	11,460	49.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates
 Median Family Income, 2014 US Census - \$49,538
 Formula: Median Family Income (MFI) x % Below MFI ÷ 12 x 30%

The Fair Market Rent Documentation system cited a fair price for a two-bedroom home in the year 2015 as \$876, which is well above the monthly affordable housing cost of families that fall into the extremely low income and very low income categories, as seen above. Even families falling into portions of the low income category may find it difficult to find affordable housing based on fair market rent. Comparatively, in the City of Shelton, the median monthly housing cost for a household was \$903 according to the US Census. For the 2018 year, fair market rent for the same two-bedroom home will be \$935.

NEARLY 35% OF MASON COUNTY RESIDENTS CANNOT AFFORD A MONTHLY HOUSING COST AT THE FAIR MARKET RENT FOR A 2-BEDROOM UNIT AT \$935 PER MONTH

City of Shelton

The 2015 US Census cites median household income for the City of Shelton was \$37,833, as compared with \$50,406 for Mason County and \$61,062 for the state. As a result, a higher percentage of individuals in the City of Shelton live in poverty (28.6%) than in Mason County (16.9%) or the State (11.3%). With this knowledge, the 2017 City of Shelton Comprehensive Plan warns, in order to meet the broad needs of the community, there needs to be suitable housing for people at all income levels as well as housing that meets the needs of seniors, people with disabilities and the homeless.

Housing Conditions

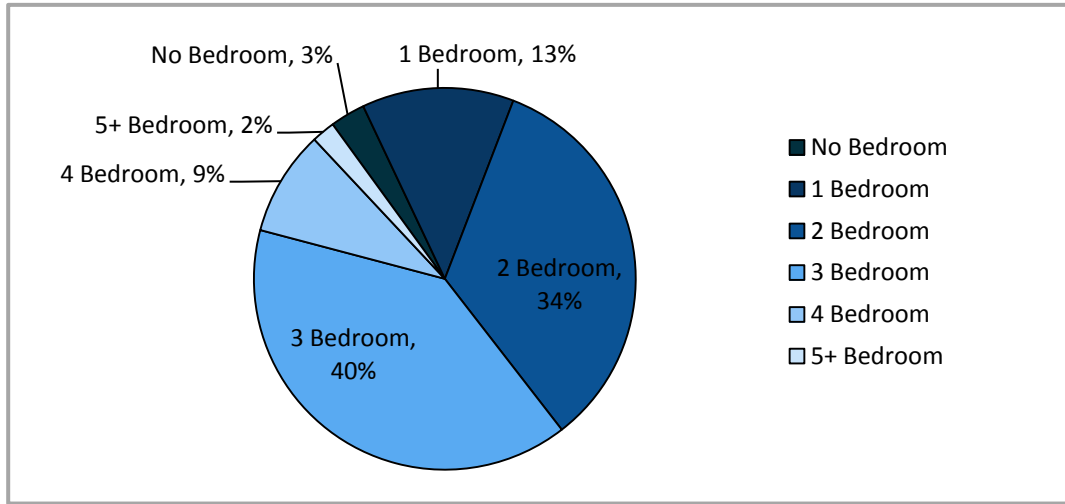
Housing Occupancy	Estimates
Total housing units	32,617
Occupied housing units	22,454
Vacant housing units	10,163
Homeowner vacancy rate	4.0
Rental vacancy rate	7.7

Source: 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Of the total number of housing units in Mason County nearly a third of homes are unoccupied or vacant. According to the American Community Survey, the homeowner vacancy rate for the county is 4.0, whereas the rental vacancy rate is 7.7. The largest percentage of homes in Mason County consists of 3 bedrooms. In the city of Shelton, the majority (69%) of housing is single-family and the overall ownership rate of single-family housing is 56 percent, slightly lower than the state average of 63.2 percent.



Mason County Housing Stock by Number of Rooms



Source: U.S. Census, 2015 American Housing Survey

Mason County Households by Type

Household Type	Percent of Population
Married Households	51%
With Children Under 18 Years of Age	25%
Without Children Under 18 Years of Age	75%
Single Parent Households	14%
One-person Households	28%
Other Households	7%
% Households without Children	35%

Married households make up 51 percent of the household types in Mason County, with three quarters of those households having children less than 18 years of age. Nearly 1 in 7 homes in the county are single parent households; whereas 35 percent of households have no children as occupants and 28 percent are one-person households.

Source: U.S. Census, 2015 American Housing Survey

HOUSING PROJECTIONS

In the year 2036, The Washington State Office of Financial Management projects that Mason County’s population will increase to 81,616, which is an approximate increase of 31 percent over the next two decades. The Mason County 2036 Compressive Plan believes this increase will be slightly higher with a population of 83,800 people, with an approximate increase of 34 percent over the same time span.

Mason County Housing Projection 2016-2036

	2016 Housing Units	2036 Housing Units	Number of New Housing Units	% Increase 2016-2036
Mason County Total	33,400	44,000	10,650	32%
City of Shelton	3,900	5,000	1,150	30%
Urban Growth Areas (Allyn, Belfair, Shelton)	3,000	4,500	1,500	50%
Rural County	26,500	34,500	8,000	30%

Source: Washington State Office of Financial Management



HOMELESSNESS

WHAT IS THE DEFINITION OF HOMELESS?

According to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), a person is considered homeless if they are:

- Fleeing Domestic Violence
- Sleeping in an area or structure not meant for human habitation (e.g. outside, vehicle, or abandoned building)
- Staying in an emergency shelter or in a transitional housing program

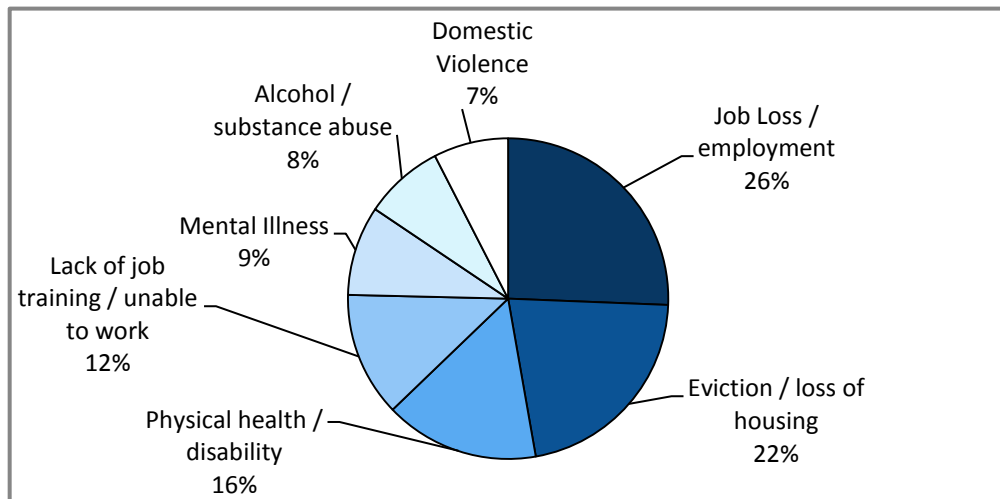
Point in Time Count

The number of people who are homeless in Mason County is thought to be on the rise. In a national effort to conduct a homeless census, every county across the United States participates in a Point in Time Count (PIT Count) to determine a snap-shot of how many persons are experiencing homelessness. The PIT Count follows the United States Department of Housing & Urban Development definition of homelessness and has two categories that count toward homelessness: Sheltered and Unsheltered. Sheltered refers to any persons staying in a shelter that is either night by night, short-term (usually 90 days) and transitional housing (up to two years of temporary housing) programs. Unsheltered homelessness includes outdoors, vehicle, abandoned building, and a structure that is not meant for human habitation (e.g. potable water, heat, ability to cook, restroom and ability to bathe). Housing situations that do not count under this definition include temporarily living with family or friends, “couch surfing”, currently in a hospital, detox or other facility, or currently in jail.

Results of the January 26th, 2017, Annual Point in Time Count				
Total Homeless Count	Unsheltered Individuals	Sheltered Individuals	Chronically Homeless	84
262	144	118	Veteran	14
			Unsheltered Youth (<18)	36
			Sheltered Youth (<18)	36
			Male	110
			Female	152

Source: Homeless Information Systems Database, 7/1/2016-6/30/2017

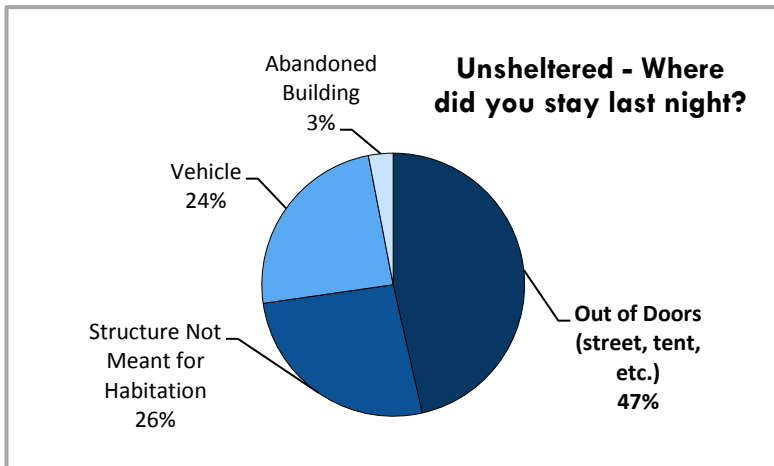
PIT Count: Top 7 Causes of Homelessness



Source: Homeless Information Systems Database, 7/1/2016-6/30/2017



The number one reason for becoming homeless cited by individuals in the PIT Count is job loss/unemployment, followed by eviction/loss of housing and physical health/disability. Once homeless, the majority of individuals stayed somewhere that is classified as Out of Doors like the street or a tent.



Continued understanding and efforts are needed to reduce the number of people living outside.

Residents Served

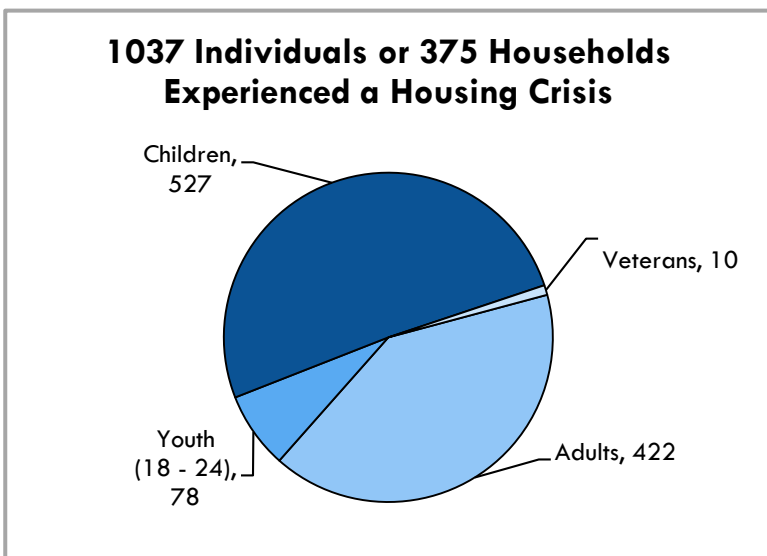
Between July 1st 2016 and June 30th 2017, an estimated 2,553 individuals and 1,480 households were served by housing assistance and homeless services in Mason County. In addition, over 34,000 community meals were served to those in need by Community Lifeline.

Source: Homeless Information Systems Database, 7/1/2016-6/30/2017

THE NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS IN MASON COUNTY SERVED OVER 2,553 INDIVIDUALS STRUGGLING WITH HOMELESSNESS OR HOUSING INSECURITY FROM 7/1/2016 TO 6/30/2017

Housing Crisis Support Center

Crossroads Housing operates the Housing Crisis Support Center which started in May of 2016 and serves as a front door to community members facing a housing crisis. The Housing Crisis Support Center determines what type of crisis a person/family is in and matches them up with available resources. The following graph shows the number of households that sought services through the Coordinated Entry System known locally as the Housing Crisis Support Center:



- #### Top Barriers to Housing
- Lack of affordable housing stock
 - Lack of voucher supported housing
 - Ability to earn a livable wage
 - Employment availability
 - Lack of job training / unable to work
 - Criminal history
 - Mental illness
 - Chemical dependency
 - Poor rental history
 - Increasing rent / rent over 30% of household income

Source: Homeless Information Systems Database, 7/1/2016-6/30/2017

CONCLUSIONS

Can we end Homelessness? Ending homelessness is talked about in terms of subpopulations achieving functional zero; equilibrium between the number of persons that enter into homelessness and those that enter into permanent housing. It has become generally accepted that due to the complexity of factors that contribute to why people end up homeless, new or repeat incidences will, unfortunately, not completely end. What can be done that is common to any subgroup is to reduce the number of new incidences of homelessness, chronic homelessness and the returns to homelessness.

In January 2017, The Department of Commerce released the State of Washington Homeless Housing Strategic Plan with the vision of “no person left living outside”. The goal in Mason County is to reduce the number of people classified as unsheltered homelessness to align with Washington State’s plan and serve those in our community with the most need.

The full Mason County 2036 Comprehensive Plan is available on the Mason County website:
<http://www.co.mason.wa.us/community-services/planning/2036-comp-plan-update/index.php>

The full City of Shelton Comprehensive Plan November 2017 is available on the City’s website:
<http://www.sheltonwa.gov/Table%20of%20Contents.pdf>
The Housing Components can both be found in Chapter 5 of each report.

The full Profile on Homelessness in Mason County is available on the Mason County website:
<http://www.co.mason.wa.us/forms/Health/2016-2017-homelessness-profile.pdf>



Community Resources

Agency	Services	Address	Phone	Website
Crossroads Housing	Housing Crisis Response Center, Family Emergency Shelter, Rapid Re-Housing, Transitional Housing, Case Management	71 Sargison Lp Rd, Shelton, WA 98584	360-427-6919	crossroads-housing.net
Community Lifeline	Dinners 7 days per week, Showers, Cold Weather Shelter for Single Adults, Case Management	218 N. 3rd St., Shelton, WA 98584	360-462-4439	cllshelton.org
Housing Options for Students in Transition (HOST)	Youth HOST Homes, case management	807 W. Pine St., Shelton, WA 98584	360-426-7664 ext. 17012	mason-co-host.org
Turning Pointe Domestic Violence and Survivor Advocacy Center	Domestic Violence Shelter, Case Management, Support Groups	210 Pacific Ct., Shelton, WA 98584	360-432-1212	turningpointe.org
Community Action Council	Housing & Essential Needs (HEN), Energy Assistance, Weatherization, Legal Advocacy, WIC, Emergency Food Assistance	807 W. Railroad Ave., Shelton, WA 98584	360-426-9726	caclmt.org
North Mason Resources	Housing Crisis Response Center, Case Management, Literacy, Employment Assistance	140 St. Rt. 300, Belfair, WA 98528	360-552-2304	nmresources.org