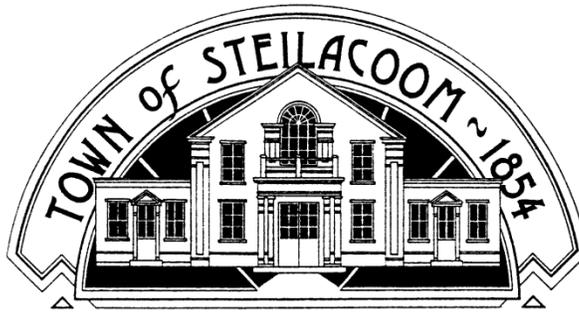


HOUSING ELEMENT

With proposed changes



HOUSING ELEMENT

Introduction

Some of the most significant challenges facing communities planning under GMA are requirements related to housing. Specifically, the Act requires a housing element that recognizes the vitality and character of established neighborhoods and that makes adequate provisions for the existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

Demographic statistics illustrate the complex and sometimes overwhelming need for quality affordable housing across the country. The costs of land and housing have risen dramatically in many areas of Washington.

Median housing values and contract rents for Pierce County and Steilacoom are illustrated in Figure 4.1.

Figure 4.1 Median housing values and contract rent 1990 -2010 (source US Census)

	Median Housing Value			Median Contract Rent		
	1990	2000	2010	1990	2000	2010
Pierce County	\$81,500	\$149,600	\$251,400	\$373	\$554	\$911
Steilacoom	\$96,300	\$188,500	\$298,000	\$399	\$679	\$1049

It is likely that the Steilacoom housing market will continue its trend toward more expensive units as the supply of developable vacant land decreases over time. Also contributing to the cost of housing in Steilacoom are the well-known Puget Sound views, small town characteristics, and other cultural and physical amenities enjoyed in the community. The resulting high land costs encourage the development of large, higher priced homes. Trends such as these emphasize the need to preserve and maintain the existing housing stock while providing quality rental units for those families or individuals that are not able to or prefer not to purchase their own homes.

This element addresses all applicable requirements of the Growth Management Act and the County-Wide Planning Policies for Pierce County, Washington by including: an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs, the identification of sufficient land for housing, a statement of housing goals and policies, and adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community. This element is consistent with other elements of this comprehensive plan. Consistency ensures that the findings and recommendations of the housing element will not conflict with the land uses described in the land use element.

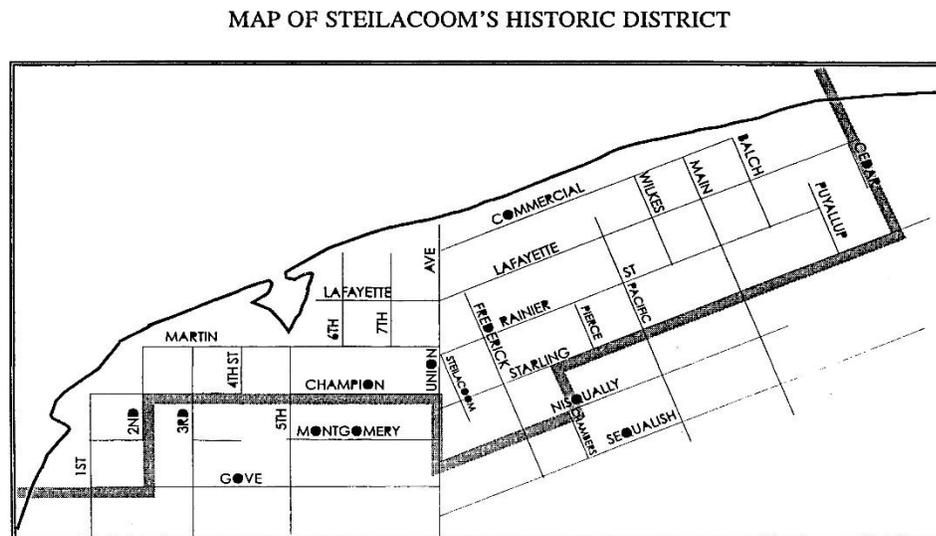
Historic District

The Town of Steilacoom was incorporated in 1854, the first incorporated town in the newly formed Washington Territory. The new town served as a busy center for commerce in the early days of the Territory. In 1975, the Town's historic district was the first district placed on the National Register of Historic Places in Washington State. Regulations encouraging preservation of Steilacoom's architectural past are detailed in Steilacoom Municipal Code Chapter 2.14.

Since 1985, the Town has been a Certified Local Government, a designation that reflects the Town's commitment to historic preservation. CLG status allows the Town to compete for historic preservation grants administered by the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and made available through the National Park Service.

The Historic Preservation and Review Board reviews proposed changes to the exterior of buildings within the Historic District, as well as new construction. The boundaries of the Historic District are shown on Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2 Historic District



Land Use Assumptions

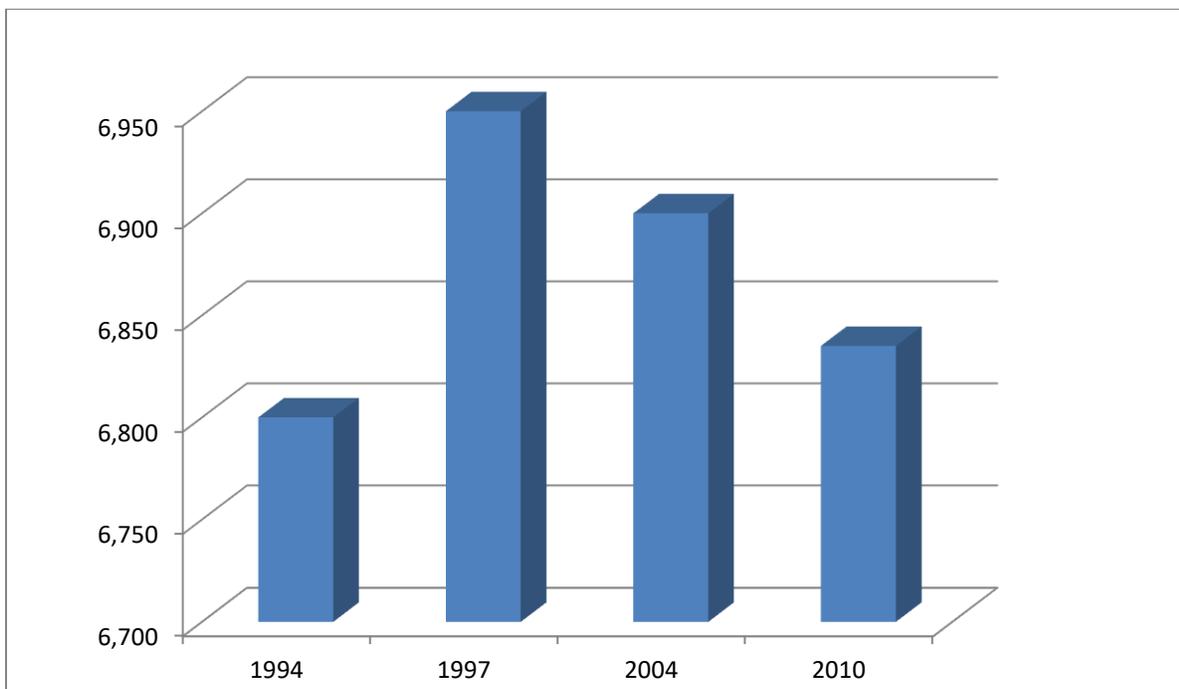
As set forth in the Land Use Element, the Town assumes that there will be a gradual increase in new residences throughout town, **but no change to the land use pattern.** Vacant or underutilized land will gradually be developed in accordance with the established land use pattern. The 2035 target of 3,385 total dwelling units can be accommodated within the area designated for housing under the current zoning regulations. **Re-designating the former Industrial area to a mixed-use Master Planned Development area increases the amount of available area for housing.**

Population Projections

The Growth Management Act requires each community within Pierce County to estimate how many new residents it can expect in the next 20 years. This population estimate is used to determine housing, as well as public service and facilities, within the community and throughout the region.

Twenty-year population projections for Pierce County have been made in 1994, 1997, 2004 and 2010. Each projection has been based upon the state of the economy at the time the projection was made. In 1994, the Town estimated that it should plan for a population of 6,800 by the year 2014. In 1997, the allocation was boosted to 6,950 by the year 2017.

Figure 4.3 20-Year Population Projections



Population projections made in the 2000s reflect the slower pace of growth the Town has experienced, as well as a better understanding of the buildable lands in Town. The

latest population target requires the Town to plan for a population of 6,835 by the year 2030. This Comprehensive Plan assumes that the 2030 population numbers will carry over to 2035 without change

In addition to the population targets, the 2010 targets included a housing unit target of 3,385 dwelling units and an employment capacity target of 788 for the Town. The targets are adopted by Pierce County Council ordinance following a recommendation by the Pierce County Regional Council, and have targets for each jurisdiction within the County. The 2014 Buildable Lands Report determined that the Town has sufficient land capacity to meet all these targets. This Comprehensive Plan assumes that the 2030 population and employment numbers will carry over to 2035 without change

Housing Capacity

All the jurisdictions within Pierce County are required to participate in a “Buildable Lands Report” by RCW 36.70A.215. This report is designed to determine the amount of undeveloped and underdeveloped land remaining in each jurisdiction, and the amount of housing units that can be accommodated under the current zoning regulations. Pierce County collects data from all 23 incorporated jurisdictions in the county, and issues the report. The first report was in 2002, the second in 2007, and the most recent in 2014.

The 2014 Report estimates that the Town has about 137 net acres of vacant or underutilized lands left for residential development in the R-7.2, R-9.6, MF, CS and CG zones. **The Master Planned Development area was not included in the Report, as it residential use was not allowed at that time.** The net figure is arrived at by subtracting out 12% for roads, 10% for critical areas and 5% for parks and open space. Additionally, there are nearly 15 acres in the R-9.6 zone that have at least preliminary approval for development encompassing 54 lots.

In the 2010 Census reported that the Town had 2,793 existing housing units, including houses, apartments and condominiums. The 2014 Buildable Lands Report estimates that the Town has capacity for another 676 housing units under the current zoning regulations, which is more than enough to accommodate the target of 3,385 dwelling units.

The acreage available for housing is calculated by deducting from the gross acreage assumed percentages for roads, critical areas and park and open space. The 137 acres also includes a large percentage of land that could be developed at higher densities under the current zoning. This underdeveloped land may or may not be redeveloped.

This undeveloped and underdeveloped land represents about 10% of the Town's total land area. Most vacant unplatted parcels are found in the Saltar's Point and Cherrydale neighborhoods. Platting these areas will require attention to environmental constraints, especially wetlands. These sites may also be potential sites for assisted living facilities, group homes, townhouses, and other nontraditional housing types.

The remaining vacant land is comprised of previously platted residential lots that are generally 7200-9600 square feet in size. These lots are suitable for one single family detached home and are concentrated in the Saltar's Point and Old Town neighborhoods. Some of these lots have existed since the Town of Steilacoom incorporated. It is likely that some of them remain undeveloped because of natural environmental constraints.

Re-designation of the Industrial area as a Master Planned Development area adds more area that could be developed as residential properties. The exact number of acres devoted to residential will not be known until a site plan and agreement are approved by the Town Council.

Current and Future Aggregate Demand for Housing

The Great Recession that began in 2007 took its toll on the Steilacoom housing market, as it did throughout the United States. Vacancy rates rose from 3.3% in the 2000 Census to 8.4% in the 2010 Census. The State Office of Financial Management places the vacancy rate at 8.3% for 2014. The relatively high vacancy rate compared to that experienced in the prior decade indicates a lower demand for housing within the Town.

Permits for new single family residences dropped from 15 in 2000 to 6 in 2010. In 2013, the Town issued permits for only 9 new single family homes. Platting activity has also dropped. **No plat applications, for housing developments of five or more lots, have been applied for since 2009. None of the last three plats, granted preliminary approval between 2007 and 2009, have yet to be developed.**

It is expected that the housing market will recover, but whether it will be as strong as that seen between 2000 and 2008 is unknown. Steilacoom remains a desirable location. Given the current housing situation, it is more probable that the rate of housing production will remain around 10 homes per year for the foreseeable future.

Assessment of Housing Needs

The Growth Management Act requires an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs. Many factors determine the extent of the need for housing. This assessment summarizes the requirement to consider existing and projected housing need. Population characteristics and the existing housing stock are reviewed to identify those segments of the community that will have the most significant needs over the next twenty years.

Inventory of Current Housing Stock

The Town's housing units are primarily in single family units. Data from the 2000 and 2010 Census is set out in Table 4.4

Figure 4.4. Inventory of Housing Units by Structure Type

Housing Type	2000 Census	2010 Census
Single unit	1862	1986
Two or more units	786	807

Population Characteristics

Demographic characteristics and trends are important to consider when determining housing needs. It is particularly critical to consider the segments of the community whose housing needs are not typically met by the private housing market. Examples of these segments may include the young, elderly, the very low income, and those with other special needs.

The 2010 Census data for Steilacoom confirmed an aging population trend, most probably due to lifestyle changes, advances in health care technology, and the general aging of the "baby boom" generation. Data from the 1990, 2000 and 2010 Census indicates that age groups over 40 are representing an increasingly larger share of Steilacoom's population. The population under 40 years of age made up 61.5% of the population in 1990. By 2010, that percentage had shrunk to 47.1%. See Table 4.5. The anticipated growth in older age groups will not only impact housing, but also community service activities.

Figure 4.5 Population by Age 1990 – 2010 (Source: US Census)

	1990	2000	2010	Change 1990 - 2010	% 1990	% 2000	% 2010
Total Population	5,728	6,049	5,985	+257			
Under 10	847	710	646	-201	14.8	11.7	10.8
10 – 19	719	823	712	-7	12.6	13.6	11.9
20 – 29	1,031	822	771	-260	18.0	13.6	12.9
30 – 39	922	854	689	-233	16.1	14.1	11.5
40 – 49	756	912	764	+8	13.2	15.1	12.8
50 – 59	650	800	924	+274	11.3	13.2	15.4
60 – 69	489	622	758	+269	8.5	10.3	12.7
70 – 79	240	360	468	+228	4.2	6.0	7.9
80 and over	74	146	253	+179	1.3	2.4	4.3

U.S. Census data continues to show a decreasing number of married couple households, especially those with children under 18 years of age. In 1990, 61.3% of family households in Steilacoom were married couples; in 2000 that percentage

dropped to 53.7%, in 2010 the figure was 50.3%. Single parent families and the number of households with at least one person aged 60 or greater have simultaneously increased over the same time period.

Ethnically, the Town, as well as Pierce County, will likely continue the diversification illustrated by prior U.S. Censuses. Racial and ethnic breakdowns are set out in Table 4.6.

Figure 4.6 Racial and Ethnic makeup 1990-2010. (Source: US Census)

Year	Total Population	Total one race	White	Black / African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian	Hawaiian Pacific Islander	Other	Two or more races	Hispanic Latino	Total pop 18+
2010	5985	5546	4616	280	44	436	83	87	439	402	4770
2000	6049	5694	4746	405	51	355	37	100	355	327	4671
1990	5728	*	4719	530	52	324*	*	103	*	260	4327

**Note: The 1990 Census did not have responses for "one race" or "two or more races", and included Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders in the Asian category.*

Affordable Housing

RCW 36.70A.020(4) mandates that the Town encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population, along with promoting a variety of residential densities and housing types, and encouraging preservation of the existing housing stock. Because income is an indication of buying power, it is perhaps the single most significant factor when considering housing needs and affordability.

Under the Countywide Planning Policies for Pierce County, affordable housing means housing available to households earning up to 80% of the countywide median income. (Policy AH-3.1.1)

According to the US Census, the median income for Pierce County for 2008-2012 was \$59,105. Therefore, affordable housing for the purposes of this Comprehensive Plan is housing affordable to households with incomes of \$47,284 per year or less.

Affordable housing for owned dwelling units includes the cost of the mortgage, amortization, taxes, insurance and condominium or association fees, if any, that cost no more than 30% of the owner's gross annual household income. Affordable housing for rental units is defined to include rent and utility costs. WAC 365-196-410 (e)(i) (A) and (B).

Figure 4.7 Owner Costs as a Percentage of Household Income 2005-2012 average Town of Steilacoom (Source, US Census)

Percentage of Household Income	Percentage of Households
30.0 to 34.9%	10.3%
35.0% or greater	15.8%

Total	26.1%
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Figure 4.8 Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income 2005-2012 average Town of Steilacoom (Source, US Census)

Percentage of Household Income	Percentage of Households
30.0 to 34.9%	16.5%
35.0% or greater	28.2%
Total	44.7%

Not surprisingly, a greater percentage of renters spend more than 30% of their income on housing costs than do homeowners.

Figures 4.7 and 4.8 include all income brackets. The percentages of households at or under the County median income spending more than 30% on housing costs are set out in Figure 4.9

Figure 4.9 Monthly housing costs as a percentage of household income 2007-2011 5-year average Town of Steilacoom (Source: US Census)

Annual Income	Housing Costs 30% or more of monthly income, owner occupied	Housing Costs 30% or more of monthly income, rental
Less than \$20,000	6%	16.9%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	5.3%	15.1%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	4.2%	12.4%

This table illustrates that the greatest need for affordable housing is in the rental segment.

Populations with Special Needs

According to the Pierce County Consortium’s *2010-2015 Consolidated Plan (Consolidated Plan)*, the groups listed under Figure 4.10 often have special housing needs. In many cases, these housing needs are met in higher density urban areas where community, health, and employment services are typically concentrated. The *Consolidated Plan* did not determine the extent of housing need for these special needs populations for individual municipalities or areas.

Figure 4.10: Special Needs Populations

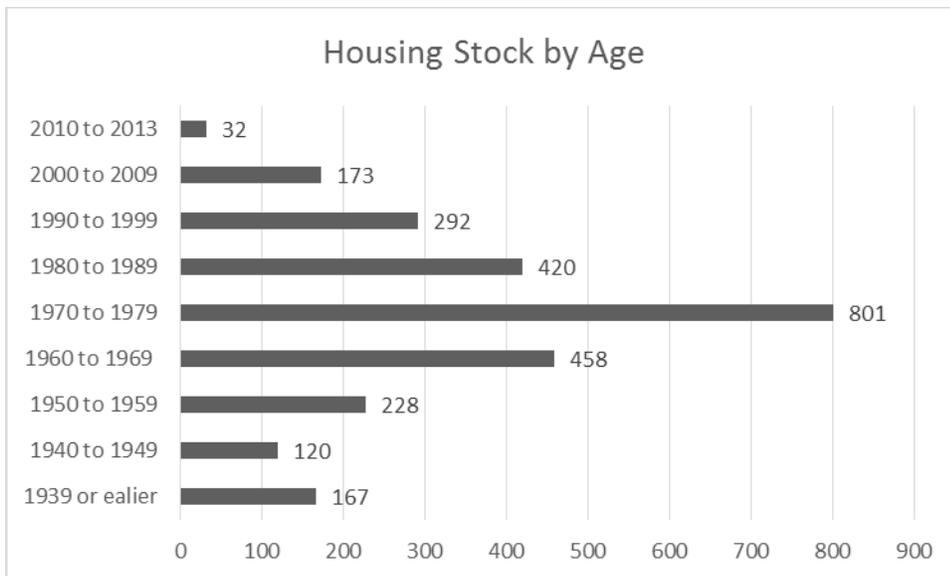
- Seniors and Frail Elderly

- Persons with Disabilities
- Large Households
- Single Parent Households
- Persons with HIV/AIDS
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse
- Households on Public Assistance
- Homeless

Condition of Housing Stock

About 6% of the existing housing stock was built before 1940. Steilacoom experienced a large housing boom between 1960 and 1990, when 63% of the housing stock was constructed. The continued maintenance of these homes should be encouraged to preserve the current and future stock of affordable units. Older Town residents on limited incomes often have difficulty keeping up with ongoing maintenance. Needed repairs are sometimes deferred as a result.

Figure 4.11 Housing stock by decade built



Source: 2009-2013 American Community Survey, Town records

New Housing Units Needed To Reach Growth and Affordability Targets

In order to reach the Town’s housing target of 3,385 units, the Town would have to add 592 units to the existing stock of 2,793 units (Census 2010). A housing unit can be any space used for a domicile, a single family home, an apartment, a condominium, a duplex unit or accessory dwelling unit. The 2014 Buildable Lands Report estimates that the Town will have to add an additional 63 “displaced units” to meet the target. This is because some of the new units will be built on land currently underdeveloped, for example, having one house on enough land to support two or more lots. Pierce County

assumed that some existing dwelling units will have to be demolished, or displaced, to make way for redevelopment, and then replaced, leaving the Town with a target of 655 new units.

As stated earlier, the Town has sufficient land area to accommodate 676 new dwelling units at the current zoning levels. However, this calculation understates the Town’s capacity as it does not include Accessory Dwelling Units, which are available in the R-7.2 and R-9.6 zones, or duplex construction, which is allowed on 14,000 square foot lots in the R-7.2 and R-9.6 zone. **Nor does it include the newly re-designated Master Planned Development area which can include single and multi-family housing.**

In Figure 4.12, using data from the 2014 Buildable Lands Report, the number of potential new dwelling units that could be created by zoning district are shown. The net acres of underdeveloped or vacant land were calculated by Pierce County after subtracting out areas for roads, critical areas and park spaces. The next two columns show the calculations for the number of either single family units or duplex units. To derive potential single family units, the net acreage was divided by the minimum lot size for the zoning district. For the R-7.2 zone, the minimum lot size is 7,200 square feet, for the R-9.6 zone, the minimum lot size is 9,600 square feet. To derive potential duplex units, the net acreage was divided by the minimum lot size for a duplex, which is 14,000 square feet for both zones, then multiplied by two units. These numbers are added to the exiting single family lots, that is, lots that meet the minimum lot size for the particular zone and are too small to develop as duplex lots.

Depending on how the remaining acreage is developed, the Town has capacity to absorb a significant increase in population without a change in zoning. The Town’s capacity exceeds its 2035 target.

Redevelopment of the **Industrial Master Planned Development** area into mixed-use commercial and residential area could occur. **which could significantly increase the amount of area available for use as housing.** This Comprehensive Plan does not include the **Industrial Master Planned Development** area in its residential calculations. **No plan for redeveloping the Industrial area has been submitted to the Town, and redevelopment would require a Comprehensive Plan amendment and much study prior to becoming reality. Development of this area requires submission and Town approval of a site plan and development agreement before development could occur.**

Figure 4.12 Potential Dwelling Units by Zone

Zoning District	Net Acres of Underdeveloped or Vacant Land	Number of Potential Single Family Units	Number of Potential Duplex Units	Number of Potential Multi-family Units	Existing Single Unit lots (includes those with preliminary approval)	Total Units <i>Single Family</i>	Total Units <i>Duplex</i>
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R-7.2	13.25	80	82	n/a	93	173	175
R-9.6	74.18	334	460	n/a	149	483	609
MF	1.24	n/a	n/a	15	n/a	15	15
CS	.34	n/a	n/a	4	n/a	4	4
CG	.12	n/a	n/a	1	n/a	1	1
Total						676	804

The Town's goal is that 25% of the Town's 20-year growth be affordable housing, or housing that costs less than \$1175 per month. The Town is planning for 655 new housing units, of which 25%, or 164, should be affordable. The Town's median rental cost is \$1049 per month, which is below the 'affordable' rate. The Town assumes that most, if not all, new affordable units will be rental units rather than owner-occupied.

Therefore the Town needs to produce, over the next 20 years, 164 units of housing that rent for less than the median rental. The R-9.6 zone alone has room for 460 new duplex units, but most residential development in Town over the last decade has been in single family construction. ~~Because of the economic downturn, no new housing developments have been proposed in Steilacoom since 2009.~~ The Town should monitor new development and, if necessary, consider incentives to encourage more affordable housing choices.

Strategies to Meet Existing and Future Housing Needs

Local Strategies

➤ Adequate Land Designated for Housing

The Growth Management Act requires that the housing element identify "sufficient land for housing, including, but not limited to government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities." All of these types of housing can be built on land designated for residential uses in Steilacoom. Government-assisted single family and duplex units, and manufactured housing are permitted on any land zoned for residential use.

The development of new multifamily units can occur on property currently used for multifamily purposes as part of a redevelopment project. A small number of new apartment units could also be built in conjunction with redevelopment of commercial lands. Group homes and foster care facilities are permitted in all residential zones. Assisted living facilities are conditional uses within all residential areas.

As noted above, the land use element designates sufficient land to meet the housing needs of all residents, regardless of the type of housing units they will live in. ~~The addition of the Master Planned Development area increases the land available for residential development.~~

RCW 35.21.687 requires the Town identify and catalog Town-owned real property that is not required for Town purposes, and is suitable for development of affordable housing. As of 2014, the Town does not have any real property in this category. If the

Town decides to surplus any of its real property, the suitability of the property for affordable housing will be included in the decision to surplus the property.

➤ Affordable Housing

The Growth Management Act also requires that the housing element "make adequate provisions for existing and projected [housing] needs of all economic segments of our community." (RCW 36.70A.070(2)). Special strategies are included within this housing element to ensure that this requirement is met.

Part of the existing and future need for affordable housing and special housing are addressed at a regional level. Those in need of affordable housing or special housing (i.e. homeless or emergency shelters, nursing homes, and correctional and juvenile institutions) often are in need of other services such as counseling, medical care, and job training. These types of services cannot be effectively provided by small and moderate sized communities.

To meet these service needs, Pierce County and its towns and cities (with the exception of Tacoma, Bonney Lake and Lakewood) have joined together as members of the Pierce County Urban Consortium. The Consortium receives money from the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) fund, the Emergency Shelter Grant (ESG) program, and the Home Investment Partnership Program (HOME) program. The amount of money received varies from year to year based on a host of variables. The objectives of the Consortium are to fund projects that benefit low and moderate income people, to prevent or eliminate slums or blight, and to meet urgent needs threatening community health or welfare. Each year, the Consortium distributes funds to the member jurisdictions that have submitted applications. Any agency receiving this federal funding is required by the National Affordable Housing Act of 1990 as amended to publish a Consolidated Plan.

A Consolidated Plan has been prepared by the Pierce County Department of Community and Economic Development on behalf of all members of the Consortium. The Consolidated Plan describes barriers to affordability and sets out a 5-year strategy to eliminate these barriers. The Consolidated Plan also describes housing strategies for people not ordinarily served by the private real estate market (i.e., the homeless, people leaving mental and physical health institutions, and those in need of temporary or emergency shelters). As a member of the Consortium, residents of the Town of Steilacoom also have access to other housing and community service programs including, but not limited to, the Pierce County Housing Repair Program, Homeownership and Opportunity for People Everywhere (HOPE) and Home Investment in Affordable Housing (HOME).

➤ Accessory Dwelling Units

Allowing accessory dwelling units, sometimes called "mother-in-law apartments", can provide a way for Steilacoom residents to provide housing to older parents, siblings,

friends, and others. The small income obtained from renting an accessory dwelling unit can provide low or fixed income Steilacoom home owners with the additional resources they need to keep their homes, do basic home repairs, and buy necessities such as food and medicine. Accessory dwelling units are allowed in all residential zones, subject to compliance with certain regulations.

➤ Cluster / Small Lot Development / Duplexes

Cluster and small lot development can potentially reduce the costs associated with land development and may lead to the provision of more affordable housing for moderate income residents. The length of utility lines such as water and sewer lines, and roads and sidewalks are typically shorter and therefore less expensive when houses are built closer together. Cluster development is allowed in new subdivisions of more than 2.5 acres under the planned area development regulations.

Duplexes can reduce construction costs in the same manner as clustered housing. Duplexes are allowed in all residential zones on lots that exceed the minimum sizes.

➤ Group Homes / Adult Family Homes / Assisted Living Facilities

Continued allowance of group and adult family homes in residential zones can also lead to the development of housing units for those who need affordable housing and/or who have special needs. Assisted living facilities can address the needs of residents who require more intensive medical care and/or supervision. Group homes and adult family homes are allowed in all residential zones as required by state law. Assisted living facilities are allowed in all residential zones subject to a conditional use permit.

➤ Boarding Houses

Boarding houses with five (5) or fewer residents are currently allowed in all residential areas. Boarding houses can provide a particularly inexpensive housing opportunity for residents. Homesharing is a related strategy in which two or more unrelated individuals share the rental cost of a home. Military personnel and college students are often able to take advantage of homesharing opportunities. Boarding houses are allowed in all residential zones subject to compliance with certain regulations.

➤ Manufactured Housing

Manufactured or modular homes are permitted in all residential areas of Steilacoom. Design and construction materials have improved substantially for housing of this type. The use of manufactured housing can reduce the cost of new construction by up to 30%. The construction of manufactured housing is supported by the Town of Steilacoom Municipal Code.

➤ Mixed Use Development

Mixed use development refers to the combination of housing with other types of land uses. Apartments located above commercial buildings form an example of mixed use development. Town regulations permit housing units in commercial areas as a way to increase the supply of housing affordable to median and below median income households. **The Master Planned Development area is specifically dedicated to a mix of housing and commercial development.**

➤ Property Tax Exemption Programs

As required by State law, the Pierce County Assessor administers a property tax exemption program whereby lower income senior and disabled homeowners can qualify for exemptions on portions of their property tax assessment, depending on income. Steilacoom homeowners that qualify for this program are encouraged to take advantage of its benefits as a way to reduce housing costs.

➤ Reduced Utility Rates

Some communities offer reduced utility rates for low income residents and/or senior citizens in an effort to stabilize the cost of housing. Rate reductions are particularly helpful to those families earning extremely low and/or fixed incomes. The Town's HELP program assists qualified residents, who, in times of crisis, have exhausted all other types of financial assistance for paying delinquent utility bills. The Town pursues potential ways to expand this program through grant funding opportunities on a regular basis.

➤ Monitoring

In addition to the effectiveness of its housing strategies, the Town shall continue to document the demographic trends and housing needs as new and more complete information becomes available. New information of this type shall be considered for incorporation into the housing element as appropriate. Local efforts to document the condition of the community's housing stock and trends in demolition, in particular, are encouraged.

➤ Disseminate Information

The Town shall display and distribute information regarding existing County and State housing programs and services.

Regional Efforts

➤ *Pierce County Urban Consortium*

Continued participation by Steilacoom in the Consortium, and support of the implementation of the Consolidated Plan are important steps to help meet the regional need for affordable and special housing and necessary support services.

Assessment of Progress toward Goals

To measure the Town's progress toward achieving the Housing Element's Goals and Policies, the Town staff shall annually compile and issue a report containing the following information:

Number of new housing developments approved, methods used to achieve compatibility with surrounding neighborhood, and methods used to enhance the natural characteristics of the land

- Number of building permits for new residential units issued
- Number of new housing units in plats approved prior to 2004
- Number of multi-family and duplex housing units approved
- Ratio of multi-family to single family housing units in Town
- Number of group homes, modular homes, assisted living facilities, accessory dwelling units, and other non-traditional dwellings issued
- Number of design reviews completed by the Preservation & Review Board, number approved as submitted, number approved as modified, and number rejected
- Extent and nature of contact between Town and County Consortium
- List of surplus land considered appropriate for low-income housing
- Number of permits issued for housing repair, maintenance and rehabilitation projects
- Number of affordable housing units permitted
- The Town's CLG status
- Information from Planning Commission neighborhood meetings, including number, topic, date, attendance
- Information from Planning Commission surveys

This report shall be presented to the Planning Commission and Town Council. The report may be used as a basis for revision, refinement or enhancement of the Comprehensive Plan and implementing regulations.

Housing Goals and Policies

Housing is often described by physical characteristics such as architectural styles, date of construction, condition, and dwelling type, size and density. Physical descriptors alone do not adequately define how housing contributes to neighborhood character. Ultimately, a neighborhood's character can only be made complete by its residents and their relationships to one another and to their shared environment. In Steilacoom, a small town atmosphere is the most valued aspect of neighborhood character.

The housing goals and policies encourage preservation of essential qualities of Steilacoom's small town atmosphere, while also providing housing in an environmentally responsible manner. These qualities include diversity, historic significance, and neighborliness.

Rising land and improvement costs and other factors, together with comparatively modest increases in household income, make housing affordability a critical issue throughout the region. While not recommending substantial increases in density, the housing goals and policies do support the consideration and implementation of innovative land use and regulatory strategies to ensure housing is available for all existing and future economic segments of the community.

The housing goals and policies are organized as follows:

- ▶ Neighborhood identity
- ▶ Households and community
- ▶ Affordability

Housing Goal 1: Neighborhood Identity

Housing will enhance Steilacoom's small town atmosphere by promoting the retention of unique neighborhood identities and characteristics.

Policy H 1.1. New housing developments shall be sited and designed to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and enhance natural characteristics of the land.

Policy H 1.2. Within the Town's Historic District, design review shall emphasize preservation of or compatibility with architectural styles found within the District and the surrounding neighborhood.

Policy H 1.3. The Town shall strive to maintain its Certified Local Government designation.

Policy H 1.4 Housing development within the Master Planned Development will be integrated with commercial development in accordance with an approved site plan. A mix of types of housing within the Master Planned Development shall be encouraged.

Housing Goal 2: Households and Community

Residential areas should promote a sense of community in residents.

Policy H 2.1. The Town recognizes the importance that public facilities and improvements such as streets, sidewalks, parks and schools play in maintaining and enhancing the livability of residential neighborhoods. Public facilities and improvements should be sited and designed to enhance the neighborhoods where they are located whenever possible.

Policy H 2.2. New residential developments should be designed to incorporate elements such as common open spaces, recreational areas, and sidewalks to provide residents with opportunities to live and play together.

Policy H 2.3. New residential developments should be designed to provide its residents with opportunities for physical activity, including walking and bicycling paths.

Policy H 2.4. The Town's regulations shall encourage a range of residential development types including retirement facilities.

Policy H 2.5. New residential development shall incorporate low impact development techniques including bioretention, green roofs, permeable pavement and similar techniques.

Housing Goal 3: Housing Affordability

The Town will encourage the availability of housing for all existing and projected economic segments of the community, with the goal of satisfying at least 25% of the Town's twenty-year population growth allocation through housing affordable to those earning 80% or less of the countywide median income.

Policy H 3.1. The Town recognizes the fact that the existing housing stock is an important source of affordable housing units. The housing element will establish provisions to preserve the existing housing stock through repair, maintenance, and rehabilitation.

Policy H 3.2. Development regulations and standards should avoid unnecessary barriers to the renovation and improvement of existing homes built to previous Town standards.

Policy H 3.3. Development regulations should respond to the housing needs of community residents and those who cannot afford or do not choose to live in single family housing.

Policy H 3.4. Group homes, modular homes, assisted living facilities, accessory dwelling units, and similar nontraditional housing types shall be allowed whenever these units can be designed and maintained to be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood and community.

Policy H 3.5. Development regulations and standards should provide flexibility to allow single family homes to be built on lots platted to previous Town standards. Issues such as maximum lot coverage and setbacks should be included within the regulations to ensure that these infill homes will not detract from the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Policy H 3.6. The Town should consider all available local, county, state, and federal funding opportunities and private resources in the development of affordable housing and should participate in the regional or countywide coordination of housing related plans and programs.

Policy H 3.7. The Town shall maintain an inventory of surplus public lands that may be suitable for use by nonprofit housing providers to use for affordable housing. The Town shall consider affordable housing needs and opportunities associated with properties described in the inventory before disposing of them.

Policy H 3.8. The Town shall periodically monitor and assess progress toward meeting its 20-year population allocation using the available data and analyses provided by federal, state, and Town sources.

Policy H 3.9. The Town shall comply with all federal and State anti-discrimination and housing laws. The Town shall treat all residential structures occupied by persons with handicaps in the same manner as all other similarly situated residential structures occupied by a family or other unrelated persons.

Policy H 3.10. The Town shall explore and identify opportunities to reduce land costs for non-profit and for-profit developers to build affordable housing, including:

- Dedication or sale at less than market value of surplus land for affordable housing projects.
- Identification of opportunities to assemble, reutilize, and redevelop existing parcels.
- Review and streamlining of development standards and regulations to advance public benefit, provide flexibility, and minimize housing costs.