



910 Cleveland Avenue
Mount Vernon, WA 98273
(360)-336-6214

www.mountvernonwa.gov



Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce

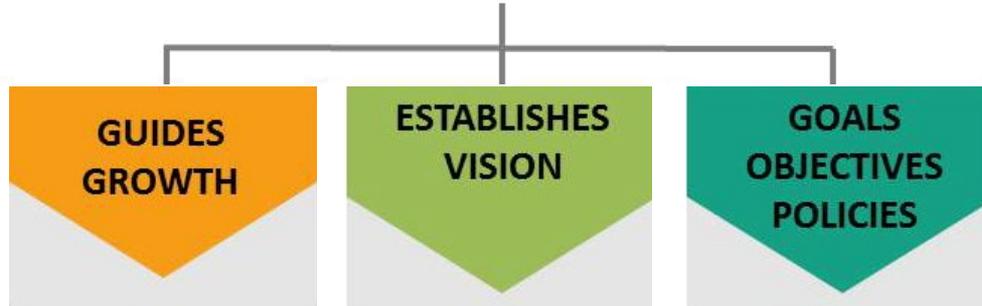
Comprehensive Plan

February 26, 2025

WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?



COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



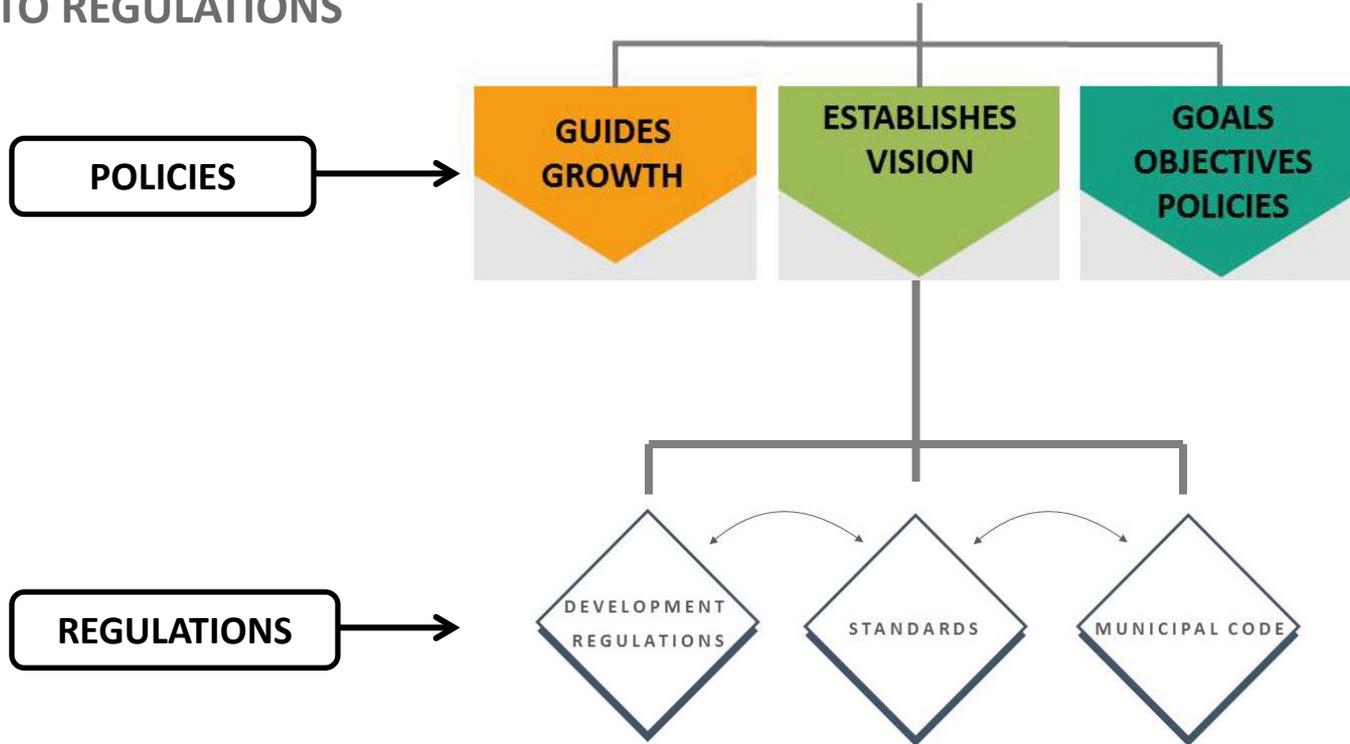
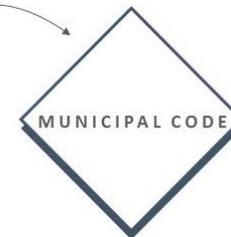
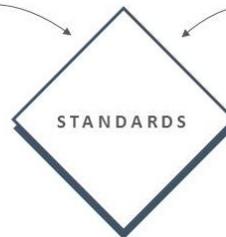
RELATIONSHIP
TO REGULATIONS

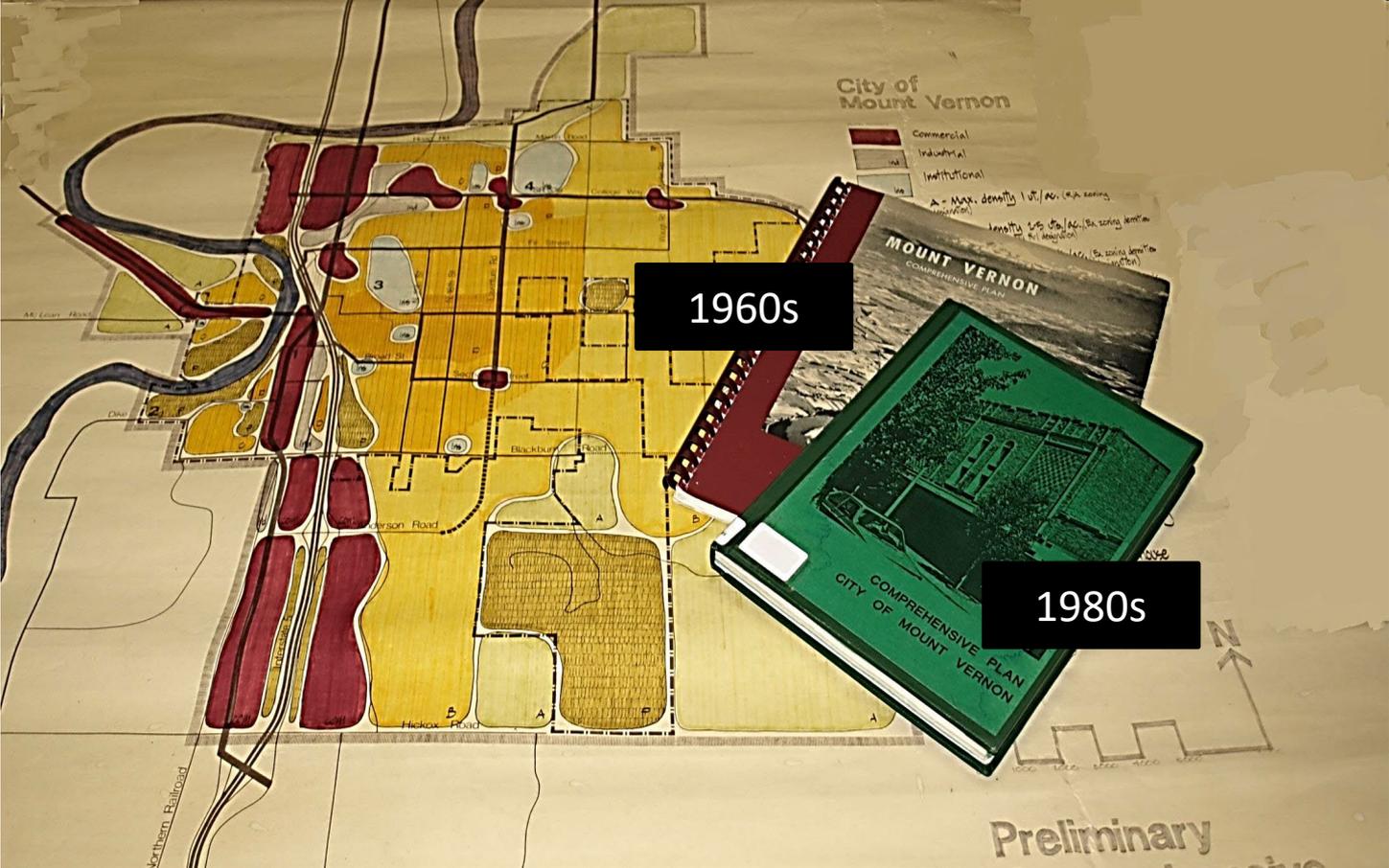
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

POLICIES



REGULATIONS





1960s

1980s

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN MOUNT VERNON

Preliminary
Comprehensive
Land Use Plan

GMA HISTORY

July 1990/ 1991

Growth Management Act - RCW 36.70A

15 GOALS:



1

REDUCE SPRAWL

2

PROTECT CRITICAL AREAS

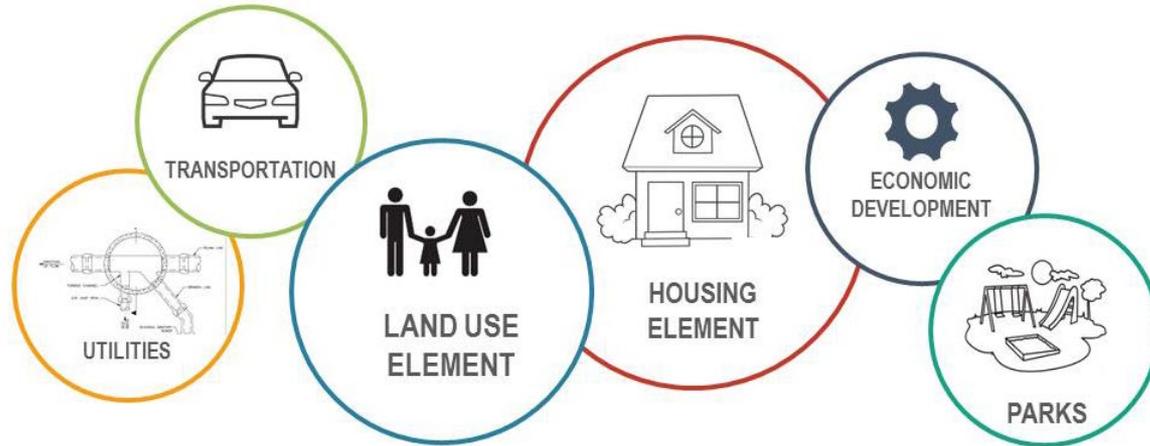
3

PROMOTE ECONOMIC GROWTH

4

COORDINATE PLANNING

Elements of the Plan



- Updated every 10 years – deadline **DECEMBER 2025**
- 20 year horizon - **2025 to 2045**

Plan Inputs



$$37,679 \text{ (existing)} + 8,781 \text{ (new)} = 46,460$$

Visual representation: 8 black person icons under a bracket representing 37,679 existing people, plus 3 grey person icons under a bracket representing 8,781 new people, followed by an equals sign and the total 46,460.



$$13,233 \text{ (existing)} + 5,180 \text{ (new)} = 18,413$$

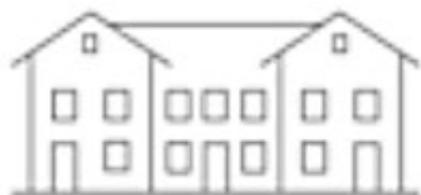
Visual representation: 6 black house icons under a bracket representing 13,233 existing homes, plus 3 grey house icons under a bracket representing 5,180 new homes, followed by an equals sign and the total 18,413.



$$18,781 \text{ (existing)} + 4,778 \text{ (new)} = 23,559$$

Visual representation: 5 black gear icons under a bracket representing 18,781 existing jobs, plus 3 grey gear icons under a bracket representing 4,778 new jobs, followed by an equals sign and the total 23,559.

Future housing needs broken down by area median income (AMI) groups



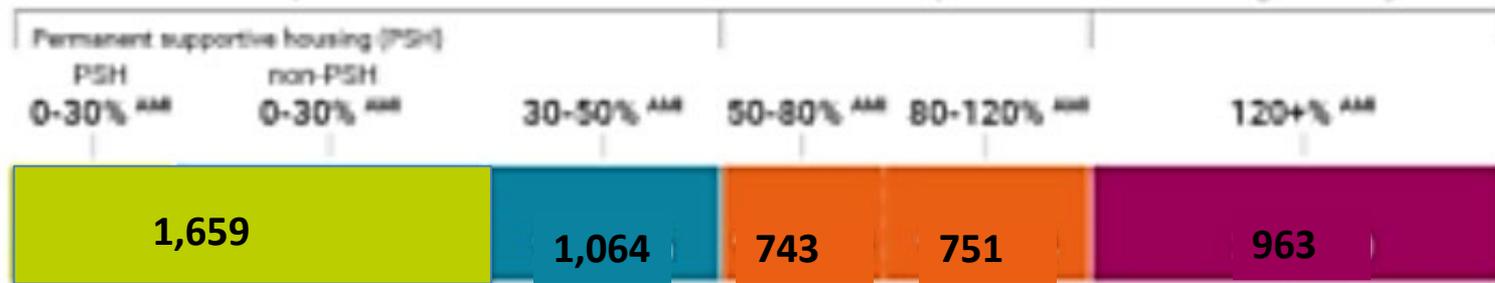
Apartments



Multi-plex



Single family

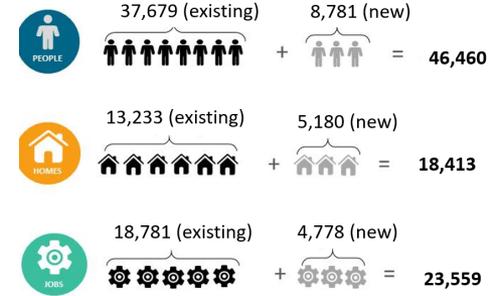


5,180 new homes will be needed in the next 20 years

In addition, there will also need to be:

85 Emergency housing beds (temporary housing)

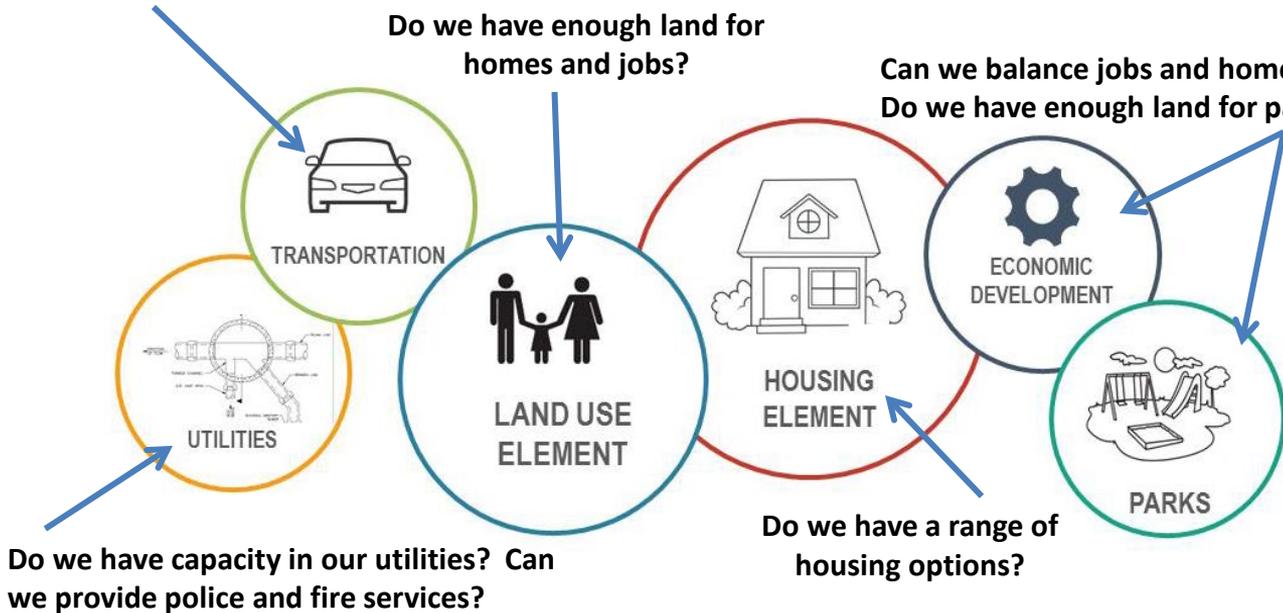
Plan Inputs



Will our roads support this many new vehicles?

Do we have enough land for homes and jobs?

Can we balance jobs and homes?
Do we have enough land for parks?



Mount Vernon 2045

TIMELINE



DRAFT GROWTH ALTERNATIVES

- Continuation of Public Participation Plan with outreach
- Background information and projections analyzed, and initial draft growth alternatives made and presented



DRAFT UPDATE DOCUMENTS

- Draft Elements released for review and comments
- Changes and updates to documents in response to public, stakeholder, and other comments received



> > > > > > > > **COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND PUBLIC COMMENTS WELCOME THROUGHOUT THIS PROCESS** > > > > > > > >



PLANNING PROCESS INITIATED

- Public Participation Plan created, approved and started
- Background information collected and analyzed
- Population/employment projections updated



SEPA PROCESS

- Refinement of growth alternatives and Elements
- SEPA scoping and determination of process (e.g. MDNS or EIS) made
- Issuance of initial SEPA documents



ADOPTION PROCESS

- Public meetings and hearings before the Planning Commission & City Council
- Changes/Updates to documents and final adoption by City Council

PROGRESS TO DATE



INITIAL CITIZEN INPUT
Survey, Public Meetings



JOBS & HOUSING DATA
OFM Projections
DRAFT Housing Needs Assessment



ELEMENTS UPDATED

- Buildable Lands
- Transportation Element
- Land Use Element
- Housing Element
- Utilities/Public Services
- Health & Wellness



PROCESS AND ADOPTION

- SEPA, Commerce, Public Hearings

QUESTIONS SO FAR?

- What is the Comprehensive Plan?
- Why are we updating it?
- Where are we in the process?

NEXT - AFFORDABLE HOUSING
ISSUES...

HOUSING ISSUES

- How do housing issues fit into the Comprehensive Plan?
- What is the City's statutory responsibility related to housing?
- What is affordable housing?



Mount Vernon Comprehensive Plan

Housing Needs Assessment Summary

PREPARED FOR



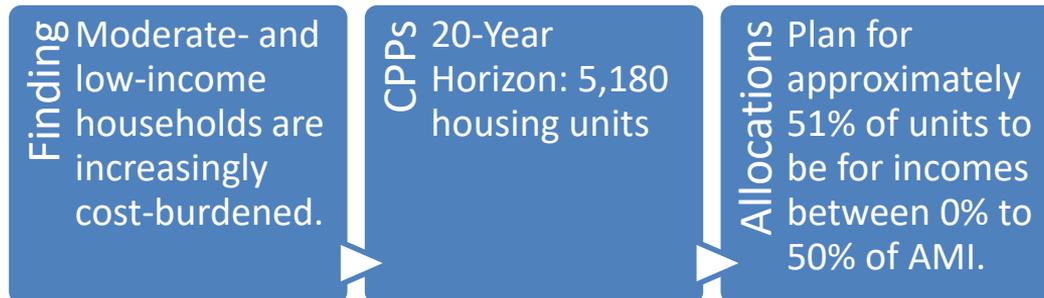
PREPARED BY



NOVEMBER 2024

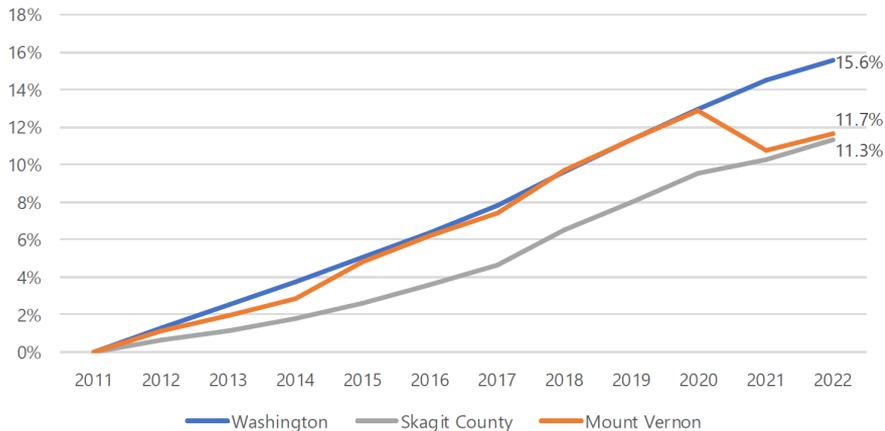
Housing Needs Assessment Draft

- Analyze conditions, trends, and gaps in Mount Vernon's housing stock.
- Describe the current housing stock and evaluate how the City will plan for the next 20 years of housing growth (allocations defined in the County-wide Planning Policies).
- Consistency with HB 1220.



Population Growth and Age

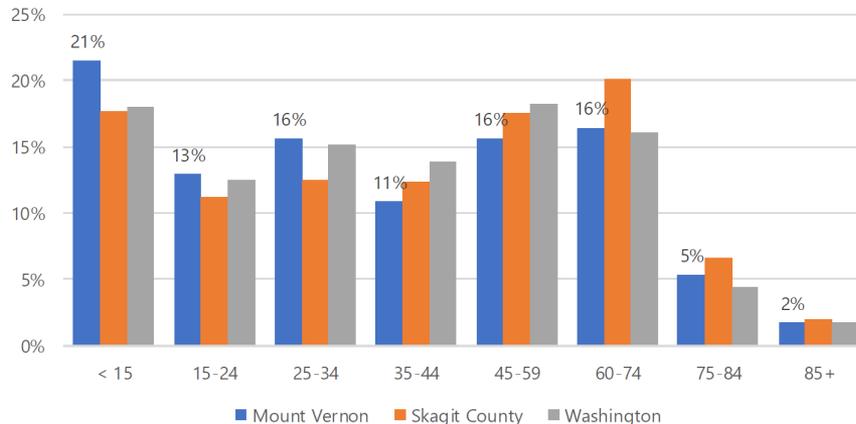
Cumulative Population Growth, 2011-2022



Source: US Census Bureau 5-Year ACS, Table DP05.

Mount Vernon is the largest city in Skagit County with 34,120 people in 2022, up nearly **12 percent** since 2011.

Share of Population by Age Group, 2022



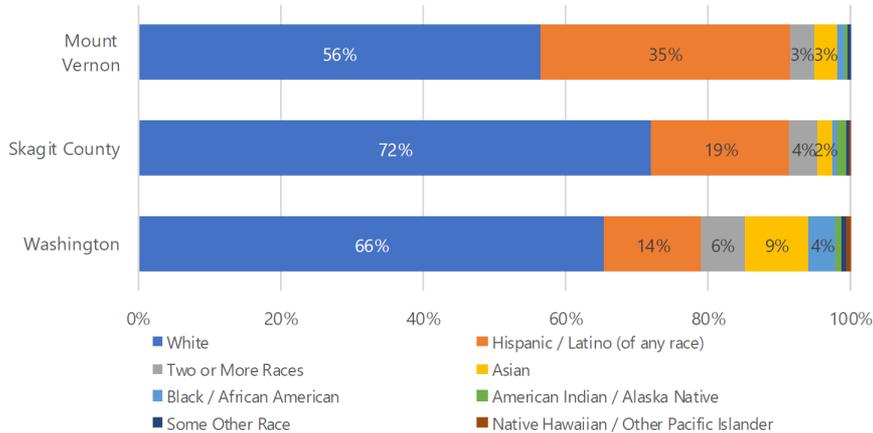
Source: US Census Bureau 2022 5-Year ACS, Table DP05.

Mount Vernon has more children and young adults than the County and State.

The younger population suggests a need for **family-sized homes** and **smaller units** for young adults.

Race, Ethnicity, and Language

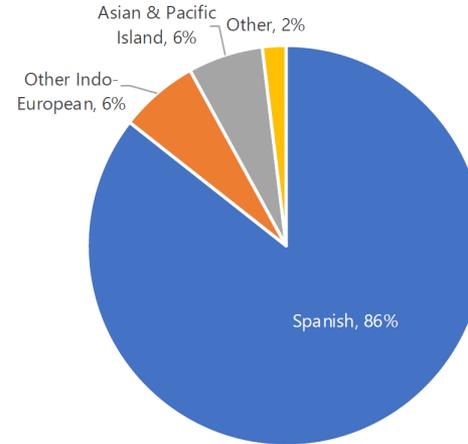
Race and Ethnicity, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau 2022 5-Year ACS, Table DP05.

Mount Vernon is **more diverse** than Skagit County and Washington state. 56 percent of residents are white, and over one-third are Hispanic or Latino.

Non-English Languages Spoken at Home in Mount Vernon



Source: US Census Bureau 2022 5-Year ACS, Table S1601.

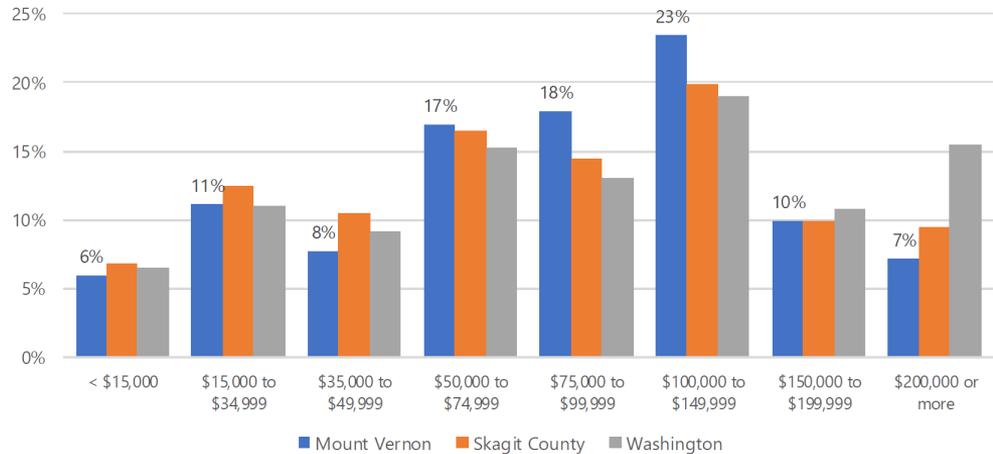
There is a large indigenous Mexican community. **Spanish** is the most common non-English language.

Household Income

Median household income in Mount Vernon is **\$87,076**, higher than Skagit County (\$82,029) but below the state (\$90,325).

About **48 percent** of residents earn more than 100% of the Area Median Income.

Household Income Distribution, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau 2022 5-Year ACS, Table S1901.

Jobs in Mount Vernon

Health care and social assistance is the largest sector in Mount Vernon, followed by educational services and retail trade.

From 2011 to 2021, health care increased by **over 1,000 jobs**, compared with decreases in other sectors, particularly the **service sector**.

22 percent of Mount Vernon workers live in the City.

Mount Vernon Workforce by Home Location, 2021



Source: US Census via LEHD OntheMap.

Jobs by Sector in Mount Vernon, 2011-2021

	2011	2021	Change
Health Care and Social Assistance	3,551	4,627	1,076
Educational Services	2,022	1,982	(40)
Retail Trade	1,816	1,957	141
Public Administration	1,099	1,125	26
Construction	692	1,084	392
Manufacturing	559	829	270
Accommodation and Food Services	911	711	(200)
Other Services (excl. Public Administration)	769	551	(218)
Administration & Support, Waste Mgmt & Remediation	511	544	33
Finance and Insurance	274	435	161
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	471	370	(101)
Wholesale Trade	368	302	(66)
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	410	157	(253)
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	146	150	4
Utilities	106	144	38
Transportation and Warehousing	327	138	(189)
Information	191	135	(56)
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	192	89	(103)
Management of Companies and Enterprises	49	1	(48)
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	0	0	0
Total	14,464	15,331	867

Source: US Census via LEHD OntheMap.

Wages and Affordability

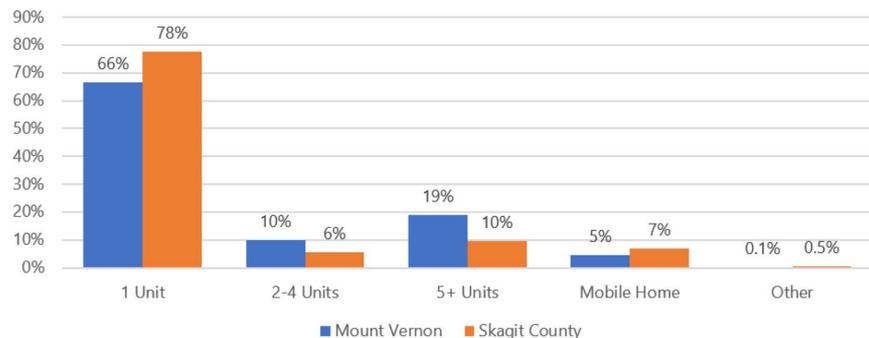
Mount Vernon’s employment sectors include jobs at a **wide range of wage levels**, showing a need for housing at a variety of price points.

Average Wages and Housing Affordability by Occupation, Anacortes-Mount Vernon Metro Area (May 2023)

	Annual Wage	Monthly Income	Affordable Monthly Housing Cost (30% of Income)
Physicians	\$312,880	\$26,073	\$7,822
Physician Assistants	\$157,040	\$13,087	\$3,926
Nurse Practitioners	\$137,940	\$11,495	\$3,449
Registered Nurses	\$106,080	\$8,840	\$2,652
Secondary School Teachers	\$98,110	\$8,176	\$2,453
Electricians	\$96,000	\$8,000	\$2,400
Middle School Teachers	\$94,950	\$7,913	\$2,374
Elementary School Teachers	\$94,770	\$7,898	\$2,369
Librarians	\$86,850	\$7,238	\$2,171
Licensed Practical Nurses	\$75,910	\$6,326	\$1,898
Plumbers, Pipefitters, & Steamfitters	\$72,310	\$6,026	\$1,808
Carpenters	\$68,730	\$5,728	\$1,718
Construction Laborers	\$58,000	\$4,833	\$1,450
Medical Assistants	\$50,990	\$4,249	\$1,275
Teaching Assistants	\$47,450	\$3,954	\$1,186
Retail Salespersons	\$44,360	\$3,697	\$1,109
Cashiers	\$38,450	\$3,204	\$961

Housing Type and Age

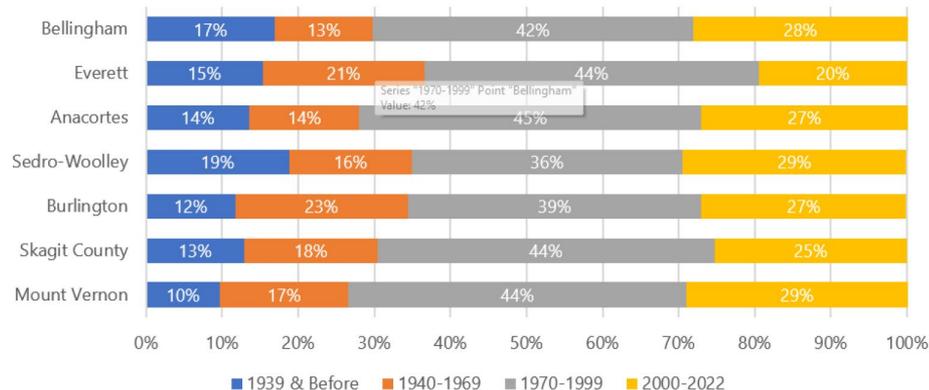
Share of Housing Units by Structure Type, 2022



Source: US Census Bureau 2022 5-Year ACS, Table DP04.

19 percent of Mount Vernon’s housing is in **multifamily structures** with five or more units, compared with ten percent in Skagit County.

Share of Housing Units by Year Built, 2022



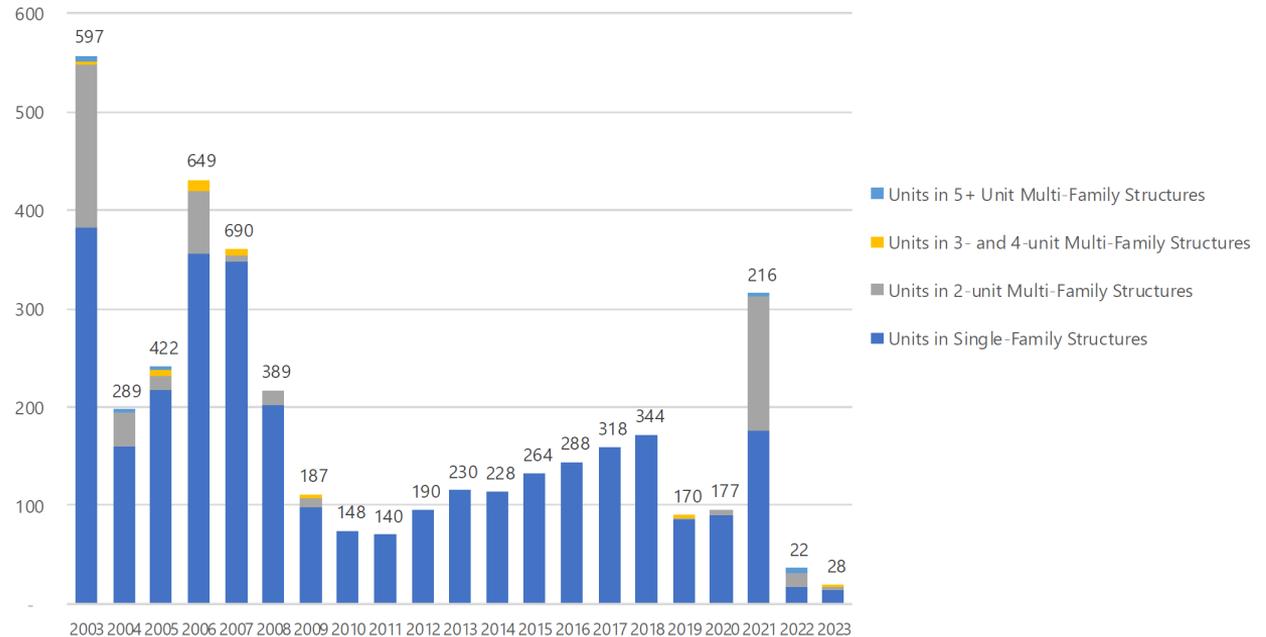
Source: US Census Bureau 2022 5-Year ACS, Table DP04.

64 percent of Mount Vernon’s housing units were built between **1970 and 2009**, and many older homes nearing 50 years likely need repairs

Housing Permit Trends

Housing production has **sharply declined** in the last 2 years, and multifamily units (light blue) make up a small fraction of units that are permitted, particularly in recent years.

Housing Units Permitted in Mount Vernon by Structure Type, 2003-2023



Source: US Census Bureau SOCDS Building Permit Database.

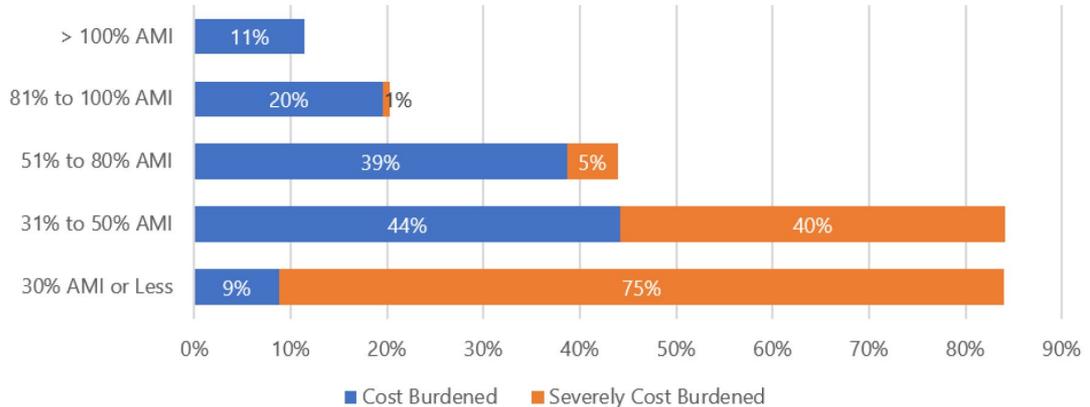
Housing Cost Burden

Households spending more than **30 percent** of their income on housing are considered “cost-burdened.” If they spend more than **50 percent**, the household is considered “severely cost-burdened”

Over **4,500** Mount Vernon households are cost-burdened, with 1,949 (43 percent) spending at least half their income on housing costs.

Lower-income households are much more likely to be cost-burdened.

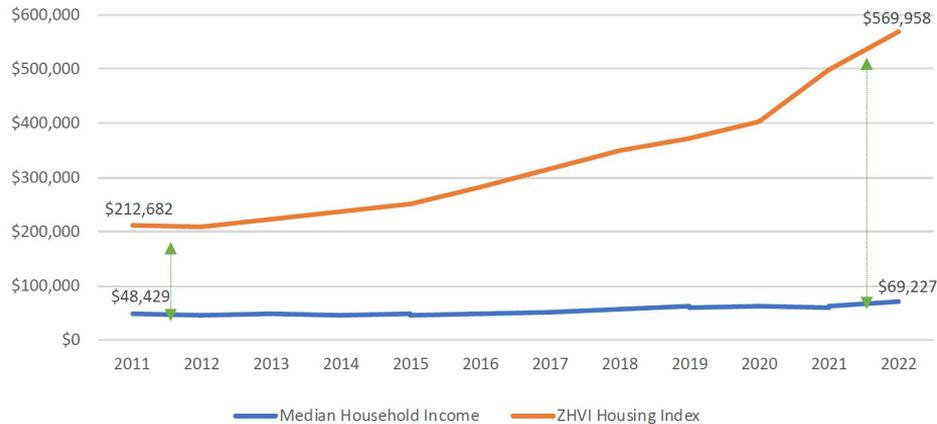
Cost Burdened Households by Income Level in Mount Vernon



Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) CHAS Data, 2016-2020.

Housing Affordability

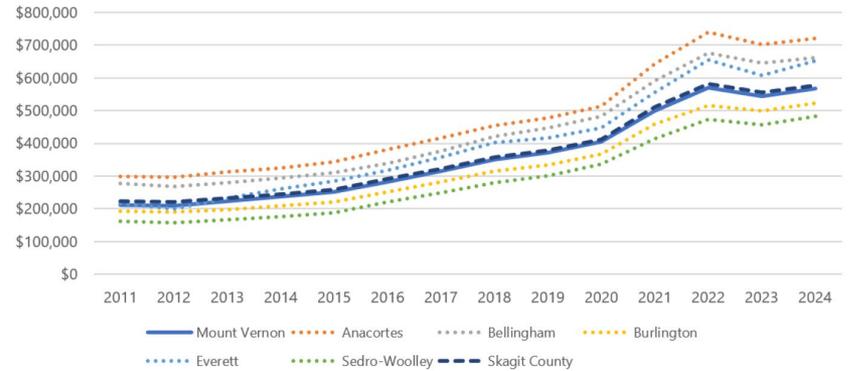
Median Household Income and Home Prices in Mount Vernon



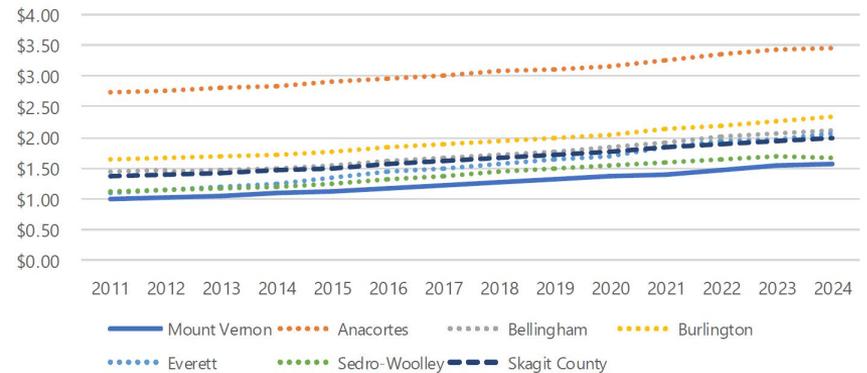
Housing costs have risen in Mount Vernon, especially since the pandemic, and the gap between home prices and incomes has **widened significantly**.

Home prices are similar in Mount Vernon to nearby jurisdictions, though **multifamily rents are lower** than nearby cities and the Skagit County average.

Home Prices in Mount Vernon and Comparison Geographies



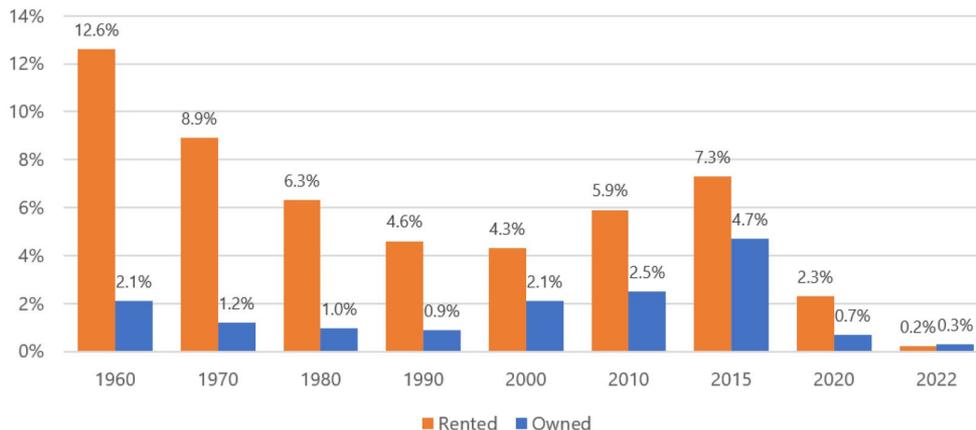
Rents in Mount Vernon and Comparison Geographies



Vacancy Rates

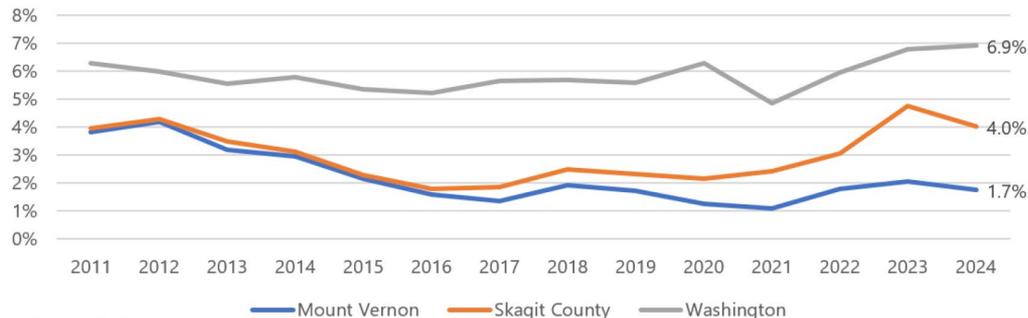
The city has the **second lowest rental vacancy** rate in the county after Sedro-Woolley, contributing to rising housing costs.

Housing Vacancy Rates by Tenure, 1960-2022



Source: US Census Bureau 5-Year ACS (Table DP04).

Vacancy Rates for Multifamily Rental Housing, 2011-2024



Source: CoStar.

Housing Needs Assessment and North Star Leadership Work

➤ Connection to the Housing Needs Assessment.

1. Sufficient land for projected housing demand.
 2. Deficits and surpluses of housing units and types.
 3. Gap analysis: Are current conditions providing the right environment that yields adequate housing stocks for different needs and income levels?
-



- ✓ Mixed-use in Commercial zones
- ✓ By right in residential zones
- ✓ Parking reductions
- ✓ Affordable housing fee reductions

HOUSING ISSUES IN CONTEXT:



HOUSING ISSUES IN CONTEXT



- Economic Growth
- Consumer Confidence
- Job Markets
- Interest Rates
- Federal Spending

QUESTIONS SO FAR?

- Housing issues Nationally, Regionally or Locally?

NEXT – Jobs and Economic
Development...

JOBS TOO

The GMA requires that the City plan for job growth – just like we plan for new homes.

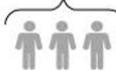


37,679 (existing)



+

8,781 (new)



=

46,460



13,233 (existing)



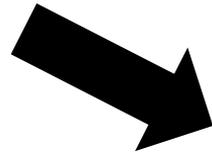
+

5,180 (new)



=

18,413



18,781 (existing)



+

4,778 (new)



=

23,559

JOBS TOO



E.D. Hovee Report (2006)

- 1) Burlington and Skagit County were outpacing the City's creation of jobs.
- 2) Balance Jobs – to – Homes ratios

Updates:

As part of this process, City will be updating the Hovee Report and exploring potential for greater mixed-use in commercial zones.

JOBS TOO



BALANCING JOBS AND HOMES

QUESTIONS FOR STAFF

Thank
YOU.
