

Section B: Narrative

The Importance of an Address

Between January 2021 and December 2021, 26% of the homeless population in Mason County who resided in emergency shelters and transitional housing had experience chronic homelessness previously. This means that by experiencing chronic homelessness, this population did not have a permanent address so one may ask why an address is important. Not only does it show that a person has a home to go to each night, but it can also be important for putting on a resume to get a job, have housing stability, and safety. An address provides a place to receive mail, can help with applying for a job, voting, and can contribute to some emotional factors such as a sense of self-worth, pride, confidence, and a place to call home. An address can be a gateway to gaining a home and without an address, an individual cannot receive disability benefits, social security, or other government benefits and they cannot open a bank account to collect earnings from their employer. An address is more than just a place, but it means so much more and can have an impact on the lives of the homeless population.

The Solution to Homelessness: More Housing

Nationally the distribution of bed inventory in the homeless crisis response system from the 2020 Annual Homeless Assessment Report shows bed capacity for people experiencing homelessness is 41.8%. This means there is not enough shelter beds available for the homeless population. The Point in Time Count data further shows that we do not have enough open units to house everyone unsheltered right now, the unofficial PIT data for 2022 showed there was at least 107 unsheltered people in Mason County which means we currently do not have enough housing available for the unsheltered population. More shelter beds are not the solution because in the case of temporary emergency shelters, they could be exited back to homelessness but more housing that is subsidized could help to provide permanent housing, while a shelter can be a temporary option until the client is landlord ready. If enough housing was available, then temporary emergency shelters wouldn't be needed. Mason County population also has growth so that means there is even more need for housing. Mason County has had an increase in growth in the total population over 2020 and 2021. The growth rate for 2020 was 2.08% and in 2021 2.04%. The Washington State Office of Financial Management has projected the 20-year population growth for Mason County and the urban areas. These further displays that with the increase of growth, more subsidized housing is needed.

Mason County and urban growth area 20-year population projection

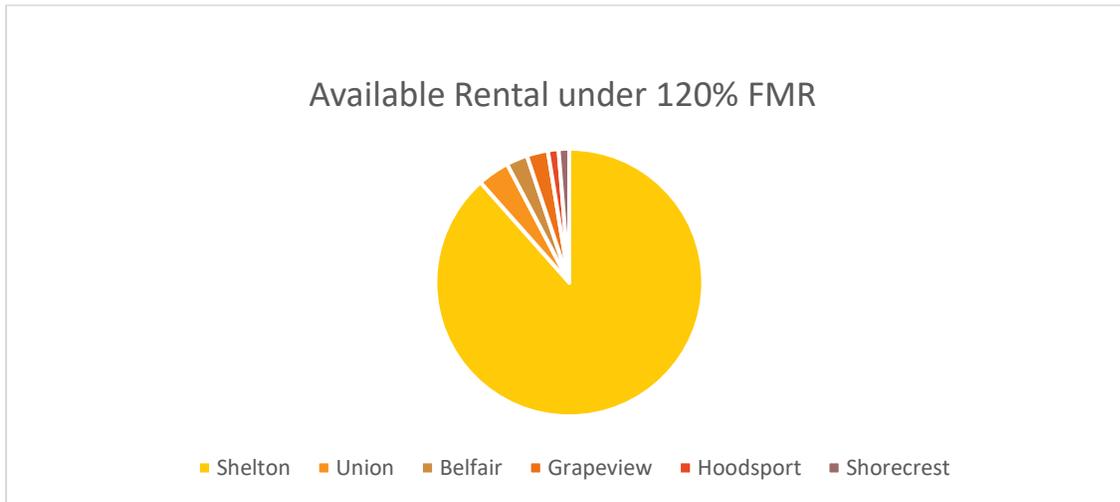
	2016	2036	Population Increase	Percent Increase 2016-2036
Mason County Total	62,320	83,800	21,480	34%
City of Shelton	10,070	16,200	6,130	61%
Shelton UGA	3,740	7,220	3,480	93%
Urban Growth	2,990	4,720	1,730	58%
Rural County	45,520	55,660	10,140	22%

When looking at Mason County, current housing availability, the following was found about 2021 Mason County Rentals availability that was less than 120% of the Fair Market Rent (FMR) as this is the amount subsidized vouchers can cover. A count of 78 unduplicated rentals were found in Mason County that met the less than 120% rental amount.

Analysis of rentals available under 120% FMR. FMR is the amount that a subsidize voucher can cover based on the current poverty levels in Mason County.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Number of Rentals</u>
Shelton	69
Union	3
Belfair	2
Grapeview	2
Hoodsport	1
Shorecrest	1

Graph of available rental under 120% FMR.



Housing Type: Number of bedrooms available that available based on the average of units under 120% of Fair Market Rent.

<u>Bedrooms</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Average < 120% Fair Market Rent (FMR)</u>
1	18	\$1,098
2	34	\$1,275
3	23	\$1,732
4	1	\$1,800

When looking at the amount of housing needed two options are to look at the coordinated entry system and the point in time count. The amount of total homeless from the Point in Time Count was 178 people in 2020 and due to COVID only a shelter count was in 2021 which showed 94 people in households which is the minimum number of total homeless on one night.

In 2021, Mason County conducted a Point in Time Count of sheltered homeless but did not conduct a PIT count of unsheltered. This was due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and HUD waived the count this year. The Point in Time Count can show the demographics of those who currently need housing. Below shows the sheltered data from 2021.

Official Point in Time Data showing the demographics of the individuals and households from the 2020 and 2021 sheltered Point in Time Count.

	Households with Children and Adults		Households without children		Households with only Children	
	Households	People	Households	People	Households	People
2020	25	83	86	90	<10	<10
2021	18	57	37	37	0	0

This shows from 2021 that about 40% or 37 people of the sheltered homeless population are in households without children. The unofficial primarily data for 2022 shows that there was 47 people of the sheltered homeless population that are in households without children. This shows the need for more studios and 1-bedroom than what is currently available and at <120% FMR. The coordinated entry list also sees single adult households, older adults, and individuals who would benefit from more studios, one bedrooms, tiny homes, or other forms of permanent housing.

	Households with Children and Adults		Households without children		Households with only Children	
	Households	People	Households	People	Households	People
2022	28	84	47	47	<10	<10

*** 2022 is unofficial primarily data that needs to be approved by the Department of Commerce**