

Goal 10 HOUSING ELEMENT

County Housing Profile Summary

In 2018-2019, Morrow County worked with cities in the County and a team of consultants to conduct a county-wide housing study, including an analysis of future housing needs, an inventory of buildable residential land, and a set of strategies to address current future housing needs. That effort helped form the basis for the most recent update of this Housing Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan.

Morrow County has an estimated 2018 population of 11,927 (Portland State University (PSU) population estimate). The population in the unincorporated portions of the County (4,419 people) is a significant percentage of the county's total population. In total, the county has grown by roughly 900 people, or 8% since 2000. This growth rate is less than the state overall, which grew by 21% in that same timespan. Despite the slower growth rate than the state, the county and its cities continued growth is indicative of a continued need for more housing, including to meet the needs of local workers and support economic development goals of Morrow County, the Port of Morrow and cities in the county. The communities in the northern portion of the county (Boardman and Irrigon) have seen the highest growth rates during the past two decades, compared to other areas of the County.

Morrow County had an estimated 4,617 housing units in 2018, with an estimated total vacancy rate of 8%, or roughly 400 units. Detached single-family homes represent an estimated 60% of housing units, while mobile homes represent an additional 32% of the inventory. Units in larger apartment complexes of five or more units represent just 3% of units, and other types of attached homes represent an additional 5% of units. (Attached single family generally includes townhomes, some condo flats, and -plexes which are separately metered.) There is a small share of households living in RV's and other non-traditional or temporary housing.

A large share of owner-occupied units (66%) are detached homes, or mobile homes (33%). Renter-occupied units are more distributed among a range of structure types. 74% of rented units are estimated to be detached homes or mobile homes, while the remainder are some form of attached unit. An estimated 11% of rental units are in larger apartment complexes of 5 or more units.

Morrow County's housing stock reflects the pattern of development in the area over time with 83% of the housing stock built before 2000. Roughly a third of the stock was built in the 1980's and 1990's, a quarter in 1970's, and another quarter in 1960's and earlier. Generally speaking, owners are more likely to live in newer housing, while rental housing is more evenly distributed among the time periods.

In comparison to the state, Morrow County and its cities tend to have a lower share of both owner and renter households spending more than 30% of their income on housing costs. Nevertheless, 22% of county households fall within this category. Renters have disproportionately lower incomes relative to homeowners. The burden of housing costs is felt more broadly for these households, and there is a need for more affordable rental units in Morrow County, as in most communities in Oregon.

There is support for more ownership housing at price ranges above \$200,000. This is because most housing in the county is clustered at the lower price points, while analysis of household incomes and ability to pay indicates that some residents could afford housing at higher price points. Additionally, there is a need for rental units at the lowest price level to serve those households currently paying a high share of their income towards rent. The County's housing needs analysis indicates a modest surplus of apartments in the \$300 to \$900 per month rent range. This represents the common range of rent prices in the county, where rents for most units fall. Rentals at more expensive levels generally represent single family homes or larger properties for rent.

The County is projected to add roughly 720 new households between 2019 and 2038, with accompanying population growth of 2,025 new residents. (The number of households differs from the number of housing units, because the total number of housing units includes a certain percentage of vacant units. Projected housing unit needs are discussed below.) Moreover, it is projected that the home ownership rate in the county will decrease slightly over the next 20 years from 74% to 72%, which remains higher than the current statewide average (61%). This is because the forecasted demographic trends of age and income of future households point to a somewhat growing share of households inclined to rent over the 20-year period. Based on the PSU projections, unincorporated areas are anticipated to lose some households as existing areas are annexed to urbanized areas over time. However, in reality there is likely to be some continued growth in rural areas, including in some existing unincorporated rural communities.

The 2019 Housing Needs analysis and buildable lands inventory study found that the unincorporated areas of Morrow County have the greatest amount of buildable residential land among the jurisdictions in the county. However, most of that land is zoned for low-density, rural residential uses with a density of 1 unit per two acres. Most of this land is not located in close proximity to employment centers in the cities which limits the potential demand for residential construction. Lands that are in relatively close proximity to cities with good transportation (and transit), yet outside UGBs and unable to be served with urban infrastructure may be good candidates for rural housing development.

Findings

- The Housing Needs Analysis results (2019) show need for nearly 600 net new housing units by 2039.
- Of the new units needed, roughly 48% are projected to be ownership units, while 52% are projected to be rental units.
- 55% of the new units are projected to be single family detached homes, while 14% is projected to be some form of attached housing, and 31% are projected to be mobile homes.
- Of ownership units, 66% are projected to be single-family homes, and 33% mobile homes.
- An estimated 26% of new rental units are projected to be found in new attached buildings, with 11% projected in rental properties of five or more units, and 10% in duplexes.
- Mobile homes are projected to remain an important share of Morrow County's affordable housing base.

Strategies to Meet Future Housing Needs

As part of the 2018-19 Morrow County Housing Study, the project team identified a set of strategies that the County and its cities can implement to meet a range of local housing needs to accommodate households of varying sizes, incomes, and other circumstances. Strategies vary in their applicability among different jurisdictions in Morrow County. A list of strategies that may be applicable to the unincorporated portions of Morrow County follow. Additional information about these strategies can be found in the Morrow County Housing Strategies Report (2019).

- **Land Supply Strategies**
 - Evaluate and Address Infrastructure Issues
 - Ensure Land Zoned for Higher Density Uses is not Developed at Lower Densities
 - Increase the Supply of Rural Residential Land in the County
- **Policy and Code Strategies**
 - Adopt Supportive and Inclusive Comprehensive Plan Policies
 - Enhance Local Amenities and Services
 - Adopt Minimum Density Standards
 - Incentivize Affordable and Workforce Housing
 - Encourage Cottage Cluster Housing
 - Support Accessory Dwelling Units
- **Incentives for Development**
 - System Development Charges (SDC) and/or Fee Waivers
- **Funding Sources and Uses**
 - Construction Excise Tax
 - Local Housing Development Funds
 - Other Property Owner Assistance Programs
 - Public/Private Partnerships
 - Land Acquisition/ Use Public Lands
 - Community Land Trust
 - Regional Collaboration & Capacity Building

POLICIES

1. The county shall create opportunities to increase the supply of housing to allow for the expected population growth and to provide for the housing needs of the citizens of Morrow County.
2. The county shall encourage and cooperate with public agencies, non-profit organizations, and private developers-in supporting the creation of housing for people with low and moderate incomes.
3. The county shall encourage efficient use of residential land within the Urban Growth Boundaries.
4. The county shall encourage residential development that provides prospective buyers with a variety of residential lot sizes, diversity of housing types, and a range in prices.
5. County recognizes that an important role for counties in relation to Goal 10 is maintaining strong agreements with cities regarding management of urban fringe areas that are outside city limits and within urban growth boundaries. By maintaining strong measures that prohibit intensive development in those areas under county jurisdiction, county can ensure that once annexed, the areas in question can be developed efficiently and cost-effectively to urban standards.
6. Joint Management Agreements between county and cities will reflect county support for efficient and cost-effective residential development inside city limits.
7. The county ~~will~~ shall encourage sponsors of major construction projects in the area to help the county plan for and accommodate temporary populations of construction employees.
8. The county recognizes that residential housing needs will continue to grow and will work with cities in the county to provide a sufficient amount of residential land to accommodate residential growth.
9. The county will emphasize the need for the appropriate type, location and phasing of public facilities and services sufficient to support housing development in areas presently developed or undergoing development or redevelopment.
10. The county (in cooperation with the cities and others) shall regularly monitor and periodically update an inventory of buildable residential land.
11. Decisions on housing development proposals shall be expedited when such proposals are in accordance with zoning ordinances and with provisions of comprehensive plans.
12. Ordinances and incentives shall be used to increase population densities in urban areas, consistent with findings of the 2019 Morrow County Housing Study findings, and taking into consideration (1) key facilities, (2) the economic, environmental, social and energy consequences of the proposed densities, and (3) the optimal use of existing urban land.
13. County recognizes that certain communities have a large inventory of dilapidated, unsound, substandard structures. County shall provide resources where appropriate to improve or abolish unsound structures
14. County shall employ strategies that support the federal Fair Housing Act and other state and federal fair housing requirements and affirmatively further fair housing.
15. County shall allow and support the development of Accessory Dwelling Units in all residential zones, in accordance with state law and consistent with carrying capacity of water and natural resources. In particular, county will explore opportunities to permit ADUs for senior and handicap individuals.

16. The county shall provide flexibility in implementing the residential zoning standards to support the development of a wide range of housing types while mitigating the impacts of development.
17. The county shall support the maintenance and development of manufactured homes as an affordable housing choice in appropriate locations.
18. The county shall encourage maintenance and rehabilitation of the existing housing stock.
19. The county shall plan and regulate residential development to meet housing needs while preserving and protecting natural resources and reducing risks associated with natural hazards.
20. County will support the recommendations of the 2019 Housing study as follows:
 - a. Review and update residential design standards
 - b. Prepare standards for accessory dwelling units (ADUs)
 - c. Prepare development code provisions for a 10-acre residential zone that could be applied in the future to meet the demand for rural residential housing based on processes initiated by property owners.
21. Morrow County recognizes the connection between housing and workforce for employment lands and will support housing development to enhance prosperity for businesses.
22. Morrow County recognizes the nexus between creating new housing opportunities in the more remote communities of the county, i.e. the Willow Creek Valley and the long-term viability of those cities. To that end, Morrow County will provide support for new housing opportunities in and near those cities.