

LIBERTY LAKE — 2046

***DRAFT* CITY OF LIBERTY LAKE**

Housing & Community Services Element

FOR THE 2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

VERSION 04/29/2026

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A. Introduction

The City of Liberty Lake is committed to fostering a vibrant, livable community by addressing both housing needs and community services. Our vision prioritizes strong neighborhoods, high-quality housing, and robust community support systems to enhance the quality of life for all residents. Stable neighborhoods thrive on connections, shared values, and well-maintained public and private spaces, while comprehensive community services ensure that essential human needs are met through collaboration among public and private entities.

By integrating housing strategies with community service programs, Liberty Lake aims to build a sustainable and inclusive environment that supports individuals, families, and the broader community.

B. Housing Goals & Policies

Housing Goal 1: Preserve the aesthetics of existing neighborhoods and support high-quality new development.

Policy 1.1: Encourage infill development within existing residential neighborhoods that is compatible with surrounding structures and uses and is consistent with neighborhood design.

Policy 1.2: Encourage neighborhood developments that protect the environment, provide usable open space, and exhibit exceptional quality and design.

Policy 1.3: Maintain incentives to encourage cluster development while preserving open space and protecting critical areas.

Policy 1.4: Maintain architectural design guidelines that provide detailed, human-scale design, while allowing flexibility to use a variety of building styles.

Housing Goal 2: Enhance housing availability and affordability for all economic segments of the population.

Policy 2.1: Allow various types of suitable-scale housing, including cottage-style housing, duplexes, and other two-unit housing configurations, to be built within low-density residential zones.

Policy 2.2: Periodically review and update development requirements and design standards for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and manufactured homes.

Policy 2.3: Periodically review and update residential parking standards.

Policy 2.4: Support more affordable homeownership by streamlining the subdivision and condominium platting processes.

Policy 2.5: Utilize objective design review processes to streamline permitting and approvals of residential developments.

Policy 2.6: Expand allowable housing options, such as tiny homes, cottage clusters, and co-living developments, in medium-density residential and mixed-use zoning districts to promote a variety of densities and housing types.

Policy 2.7: Develop and implement a multi-family tax exemption program to encourage the private sector to create more affordable housing opportunities.

Policy 2.8: Consider opportunities for mixed-use development in the light industrial zone.

Policy 2.9: Encourage medium- and high-density development by periodically reviewing and updating the standards for multi-family and mixed-use developments.

Policy 2.10: Promote the preservation of existing housing units that provide affordable options for households through loans, grants, and other programs.

Policy 2.11: Periodically assess the effects of policies and regulations on housing affordability and fair housing choice, and reduce regulatory barriers, where necessary.

Policy 2.12: Relax design and development standards for adaptive reuse to support the conversion of existing, underutilized non-residential buildings into housing developments.

Policy 2.13: Protect existing households from displacement.

Housing Goal 3: Accommodate supportive and emergency housing facilities, and support housing for populations with special needs.

Policy 3.1: Periodically review and update development and parking standards for emergency and supportive housing projects and facilities.

Policy 3.2: Support initiatives proposed by affordable-housing advocacy organizations.

Policy 3.3: Enable a continuum of allowable housing options for special-needs populations through periodic policy reviews.

Policy 3.4: Promote housing development in areas that are accessible to public transportation for individuals with mobility challenges.

Policy 3.5: Support both rental and ownership forms of affordable housing in a variety of types and sizes.

Policy 3.6: Support a range of housing types for retirees and seniors, including condominiums, assisted living, co- and independent-living communities near essential services and transit.

Policy 3.7: Enable emergency and supportive housing facilities to include related offices and provide on-site services when located in residential zones through revisions to zoning regulations.

Policy 3.8: Consider introducing temporary or short-term rental programs as transitional housing options for specific groups.

C. Community Services Goals & Policies

Community Services Goal 1: Enhance the quality of life for all City of Liberty Lake residents.

Community Services Goal 2: Facilitate programs addressing the City residents' basic human needs including food, clothing, shelter, primary health care, transportation, and protection from abuse.

Policy 2.1: Support human service agencies and not-for-profits specializing in emergency housing, transitional and supportive housing services, and housing subsidies for low-income residents to improve housing affordability.

Policy 2.2: Support the expansion of the public transit system to reduce transportation costs and improve access to essential services.

Policy 2.3: Foster strong community-school relationships by minimizing travel distances for education and facilitate collaboration between City staff and school staff.

Policy 2.4: Enable non-profits and human service providers to use public facilities for community meetings, childcare support, and events.

Policy 2.5: Support programs addressing human service needs with public and private resources.

Policy 2.6: Promote programs provided by agencies and non-profits for weatherproofing and housing rehabilitation assistance to senior citizens and lower-income residents living in older housing stock.

Policy 2.7: Support health care access for low income, elderly, and disabled residents.

Policy 2.8: Promote caregiver relief programs, including parenting, childcare and eldercare support.

Policy 2.9: Plan for future needs through regular community trend analyses and stakeholder engagement.

D. Housing & Community Services Integration

Affordable & Special-Needs Housing

Affordable housing spans various housing types and price points to meet the diverse needs of the community, offering safe, livable, and suitable shelter options. Ensuring fairness in housing through compliance with state and federal laws promotes equitable access and choice.

Special-needs and supportive housing accommodate people of varying ages, income levels, and abilities by integrating the ability to provide support services and considerations for a variety of housing types into land use and zoning regulations to accommodate varied housing needs, while promoting compliance with fair housing standards.

Infrastructure & Services

Effective housing policies are supported by clear, consistent regulations that reduce development barriers and align with community goals. Concurrently, addressing basic human needs—such as food security, employment assistance, and social support—requires collaboration among local agencies, civic groups, and businesses.

E. Residential Land Capacity Analysis

As a part of the 2026 update process, the City conducted a Land Capacity Analysis (see **Appendix B**, Land Capacity Analysis) to determine if there was adequate supply of vacant land suitable for development in order to meet the population growth and housing demand projected for the City through the year 2046. This analysis assumed a variety of housing types and densities consistent with this Comprehensive Plan and the City's Development Regulations. The analysis indicates that the City's population at build out will be approximately 22,000 which will meet the population targets established for the City. It further indicated that the housing types that are assumed to be affordable for various income levels were allowed under current development regulations, in quantities that would meet projected housing needs by income level.

Projected Population Growth

Liberty Lake's Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) is premised on the forecasted growth for the City of Liberty Lake through 2046, the planning horizon for this Comprehensive Plan. The forecasted population growth is based upon the projected County-wide population growth for this period and then allocated by jurisdiction.

The Spokane County Planning Technical Advisory Committee (PTAC) and the Steering Committee of Elected Officials (SCEO) reviewed Washington States' Office of Financial Management's (OFM's) high, medium, and low population projections for Spokane County, and based upon a regression analysis of the County's actual population growth since the 2017 Periodic Comprehensive Plan, the medium 2046 population projection of 654,665 for Spokane County was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners as the forecasted growth for planning purposes.

Population allocations for individual jurisdictions within the Spokane County then went through a similar review and analysis, with a few hand adjustments for the very small jurisdictions where the regression analysis suggested negative growth, and that allocation was also adopted by the Board of County Commissioners for planning purposes[1] (as detailed in **Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Spokane County Population Forecast

[1] Adopted by the Board of County Commissioners Resolution 24-0348 on June 18, 2024.

FIRST ROUND -- Spokane County Population Estimates

Jurisdiction	Baseline Data (OFM)		OFM Regression (Adjusted)			
	Share2023	Pop2023	Share2046	Pop2046	Δ_{pop}23-46	$\Delta_{\%}$23-46
Spokane County (Whole)	100.00%	554,600	100.00%	654,665	100,065	18.0%
Unincorporated County (inclusive)	29.46%	163,390	*30.38%*	198,870	35,480	21.7%
Unincorporated Outside UGA Only	16.94%	93,934	*15.07%*	98,642	4,708	5.0%
Unincorporated Inside UGA Only	12.52%	69,456	*15.31%*	100,228	30,772	44.3%
Incorporated Spokane County (sum)	70.54%	391,210	69.62%	455,795	64,585	16.5%
Airway Heights	2.03%	11,280	2.74%	17,945	6,665	59.1%
Cheney	2.37%	13,160	2.53%	16,535	3,375	25.6%
Deer Park	0.89%	4,925	0.96%	6,290	1,365	27.7%
Fairfield	0.11%	600	*0.09%*	600	0	0.0%
Latah	0.03%	185	*0.03%*	185	0	0.0%
Liberty Lake	2.37%	13,150	3.35%	21,934	8,784	66.8%
Medical Lake	0.89%	4,915	*0.75%*	4,915	0	0.0%
Millwood	0.35%	1,925	0.30%	1,974	49	2.6%
Rockford	0.10%	570	0.10%	636	66	11.7%
Spangle	0.05%	280	*0.04%*	280	0	0.0%
Spokane	41.96%	232,700	39.11%	256,057	23,357	10.0%
Spokane Valley	19.37%	107,400	19.60%	128,313	20,913	19.5%
Waverly	0.02%	120	0.02%	131	11	9.3%
Source	*CALC*	*OFM*	*REGRESSION*	*CALC*	*CALC*	*CALC*

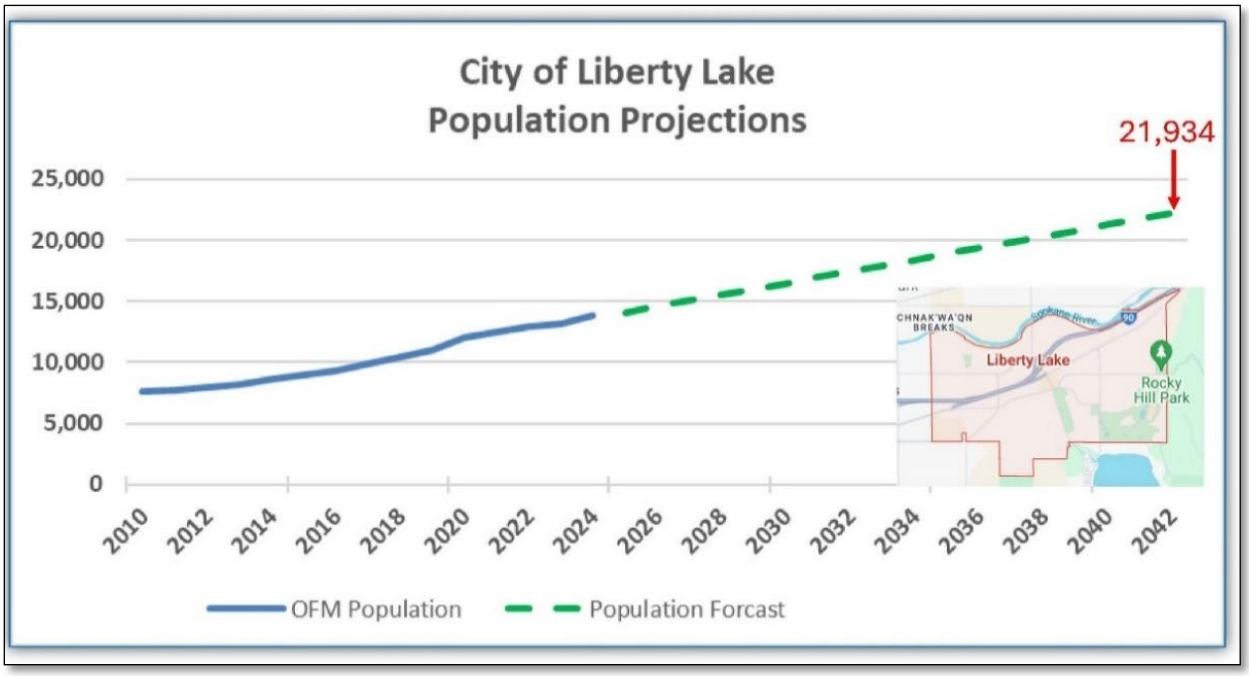
Notes: CALC = Calculated Value, OFM = Office of Financial Management, Δ = delta, or 'change in', inclusive = includes both inside and outside the urban growth area.

Note that the italic "Share2046" values in italics represent hand adjustment to avoid negative growth.

Liberty Lake's projected 2046 population was identified as 21,934. Based upon the City's own regression analysis of actual population growth since the 2010 census, the City is projected to reach this population in 2042 (see **Figure 2**).

To provide a regional context, Kootenai County, Idaho, located to the east of Liberty Lake, is also growing rapidly. From 2020 to 2025, Kootenai County's population grew 9.07%, from 170,628 to 188,450 people. Its population is projected to grow to nearly 320,000 in the next 20 years.

Figure 2. Liberty Lake Population Projection



Existing Housing & Projected Housing Needs

At the time of 2020 Census, the City of Liberty Lake had 4,916 housing units. As of August of 2024, 902 additional housing units had been constructed in the City of Liberty Lake, for a total of 5,818 units.

For purposes of planning for future housing needs, Washington State Department of Commerce's forecast the future housing needs for each County in the State. That housing forecast included not only housing for the projected population growth from 2020 through 2026 (accounting for approximately 60% of the forecasted future housing need) but also includes housing production needed to eliminate renter cost burden (representing approximately 30% of future need projects), and housing needed for the homeless population (representing roughly 10% of future need). The Department of Commerce has forecast that Spokane County would need a total of 75,184 new housing units to be constructed in the period of 2020 through 2046. The Department of Commerce's allocation of permanent housing needs by income level for Spokane County is detailed in the first several rows of **Figure 3**.

In order to allocate the projected housing needs by jurisdiction within the County, the Spokane County Board of County Commissioners adopted the Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) Method C, as developed by BERK Consulting for Washington Department of Commerce, based on a conversion of population growth to housing demand. **Figure 3** details the County-wide allocation of housing units. Liberty Lake's allocation by income level is notated in red. The City's total projected housing need between 2020 and 2046 is 5,180 units.

Figure 3. Spokane County Housing Needs by Income Level

Spokane County

	Permanent Housing Needs by Income Level (% of Area Median Income)								Emergency Housing Needs (Temporary)
		0-30%							
	Total	Non-PSH	PSH	>30-50%	>50-80%	>80-100%	>100-120%	>120%	
Countywide Estimated Housing Supply (2020)	221,840	6,613	937	34,798	91,803	32,035	20,981	34,673	1,192
Countywide Total Housing Needs (2046)	297,024	26,518	6,651	48,418	100,647	36,807	24,918	53,065	4,229
Countywide Additional Units Needed (2020-2046)	**75,184**	**19,905**	**5,714**	**13,620**	**8,844**	**4,772**	**3,937**	18,392	3,037

68.09% ← *Minimum allocation to urban areas (cumulatively) to accommodate needs at all affordability levels. This varies by county and population target.*

91.77% ← *Urban area combined % allocation from user inputs*

HOUSING ALLOCATION FROM SELECTED SHARES

		User Input - % Share of Countywide Housing Growth. Values must sum to 100%	Permanent Housing Needs by Income Level (% of Area Median Income)								Emergency Housing Needs (Temporary) *
		User Input	Total Units Allocated (2020-2046)	0-30% Non-PSH	0-30% PSH	>30-50%	>50-80%	>80-100%	>100-120%	>120%	
Unincorporated County	Existing Combined (Estimate)	-	59,013	1,179	0	5,981	14,559	9,421	9,603	18,270	30
	Future Inside UGA	22.81	**17,149**	4,948	1,420	3,385	2,017	1,088	898	3,393	755
	Future Outside UGA	8.23	**6,188**	0	0	0	728	393	324	4,743	0
Airway Heights	Existing (Estimate)	5.26	3,626	67	0	685	1,997	545	134	198	0
	Future Allocation		**3,955**	1,141	328	781	465	251	207	782	174
Cheney	Existing (Estimate)	2.76	5,354	256	0	935	3,097	690	153	223	0
	Future Allocation		**2,076**	599	172	410	244	132	109	410	91
Deer Park	Existing (Estimate)	1.44	1,902	45	0	434	804	275	99	245	0
	Future Allocation		**1,083**	312	90	214	127	69	57	214	48
Fairfield	Existing (Estimate)	0.00	228	5	0	79	104	23	5	12	0
	Future Allocation		**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Latah	Existing (Estimate)	0.00	88	0	0	35	41	6	2	4	0
	Future Allocation		**0**	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Liberty Lake	Existing (Estimate)	6.89	4,915	39	0	208	1,133	1,238	930	1,367	0
	Future Allocation		**5,180**	1,494	429	1,023	609	329	271	1,025	228
Medical Lake	Existing (Estimate)	0.44	1,828	184	0	159	839	329	96	221	0
	Future Allocation		**329**	95	27	65	39	21	17	65	15
Millwood	Existing (Estimate)	0.14	820	27	0	147	413	142	37	54	0
	Future Allocation		**106**	30	9	21	12	7	6	21	5
Rockford	Existing (Estimate)	0.09	195	0	0	62	85	25	7	16	0
	Future Allocation		**68**	20	6	13	8	4	4	13	3
Spangle	Existing (Estimate)	0.02	127	6	0	42	56	12	3	8	0
	Future Allocation		**15**	4	1	3	2	1	1	3	1
Spokane	Existing (Estimate)	29.74	99,938	3,534	937	19,479	47,090	11,873	7,118	9,907	1,134
	Future Allocation		**22,359**	6,452	1,851	4,413	2,631	1,418	1,170	4,424	983
Spokane Valley	Existing (Estimate)	22.16	43,751	1,265	0	6,515	21,579	7,456	2,792	4,144	0
	Future Allocation		**16,661**	4,806	1,380	3,289	1,960	1,058	872	3,296	733
Waverly	Existing (Estimate)	0.02	55	6	0	37	6	0	2	4	0
	Future Allocation		**15**	4	1	3	2	1	1	3	1

In order to evaluate the adequacy of available lands and zoning within the City of Liberty Lake to meet the projected housing needs for all income levels, the City based the "assumed affordability" of housing types by income level as identified by Washington State Department of Commerce in their publication "Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element". **Figure 4** summarizes the affordability of housing type by income level. Based on a review of Liberty Lake market rate apartments listed on Zillow, it was confirmed that the assumed affordability was consistent with local market conditions.

The City of Liberty Lake applied the "Methodology for Estimating Affordable Housing Funding Gap" outlined in Commerce's HB 1220 Housing Book 2 to develop a general estimate of the funding gap associated with capital costs for new affordable housing development. The results of this analysis are summarized below.

City of Liberty Lake Estimated Affordable Housing Funding Gap

1. Total annual affordable housing units needed: Per Figure 3 above, 2,946 units are needed in the 0-50% AMI brackets. For a twenty (20) year planning period, this would result in an average of 147 new units needed per year to meet Liberty Lake's allocated need.
2. Average annual units produced: Liberty Lake has not had any recent affordable housing production.
3. Gap in annual affordable housing production: The total gap in average annual production in Liberty Lake is 147 units (total annual affordable housing units needed minus average annual units produced).
4. Gap in funding: Based on 147 units and a Spokane County average cost per unit of $217,419 (in 2022 $ per Book 2 Exhibit 27), the rough estimated funding gap is $31,960,593 per year (excluding money paid by tenants/occupants).

Figure 4. Liberty Lake Housing Type Affordability by Income Level

LIBERTY LAKE Housing Type By Income Level			
Housing Type	**>120% AMI**	**80-120% AMI**	**0-80% AMI**
SF/Townhomes	X		
Duplex/Triplex/Quad		X	
Multi-Family/ Condos/Institutional			X
Manufactured Homes		X	
Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)		X	

Based upon Spokane County's presumed housing allocation (as detailed in **Figure 3**), Liberty Lake's projected housing needs from 2020 to 2046 are summarized by income level in **Figure 5.**

Figure 5. Liberty Lake Housing Allocation 2020-2046

LIBERTY LAKE Total Housing Allocation 2020-2046	
Housing Allocation for 0-80% AMI	3,555
Housing Allocation for 80-120% AMI	600
Housing Allocation for >120% AMI	1,025
Emergency Housing (Beds)	228

Land Capacity Analysis (LCA) Methodology

The LCA utilized a five-step process to determine available land capacity.

Step 1: Identification of Housing Units Constructed since 2020: The City inventoried the total number and type of housing units constructed between 2020 and August of 2024, when the LCA analysis was conducted. A total of 902 new housing units were constructed in this time frame.

Step 2: Identification of Entitled Housing Units: Entitled developments include vacant platted residential lots; multifamily residential projects that are vested through an approved binding site plan, were in permit review or under construction as of August of 2024; and, the remaining, unplatted portions of active, phased subdivisions. At the time of this analysis, there were a total of 4,217 entitled housing units.

Step 3: Identify Housing Capacity for Vacant/Not Entitled Residential & Mixed-Use Properties: Housing capacity was hand-calculated for the nearly 185 acres of vacant and unentitled residential and mixed-use properties. Specifically excluded from the analysis were public and private rights-of-way, and platted HOA tracts dedicated to parks, open space, utility corridors and critical areas. A market factor of 30% was deducted from this analysis, consistent with County-wide planning policies. After the market factor adjustment, capacity for a total of 635 dwelling units was identified.

Step 4: Identify Housing Capacity of Underutilized Properties: In the City of Liberty Lake, the only larger-lot residential developments are located in topographically-challenged areas, so this analysis only focused on underutilized mixed-use properties. Nearly 45 acres of underutilized mixed-use properties were identified. After applying the 30% market factor adjustment, it was determined that there was capacity for 173 additional dwelling units.

Step 5: Comparison of Housing Capacity to Projected Housing Demand: **Figure 6** summarizes the Available Housing Capacity in Liberty Lake by Housing Type. **Figure 7** compares Liberty Lake's Housing Capacity to its Housing Allocation (see **Figure 5**), as based upon the Housing Type by Assumed Affordability (detailed in **Figure 4**).

Figure 6. Liberty Lake Housing Capacity, 2020-2046

Liberty Lake Housing Capacity 2020-2046						
Category	Total Units	SF/ Town Homes	Dup/ Tri/ Quad	MF/Condos/ Inst	Man. Home	ADUs
Constructed (as of 8/24)	902	705	28	168	1	0
Entitled	4,217	732	242	3,243		
Vacant/Not Entitled[1]	636	21	361	254		
Underutilized[1]	173			173		
TOTAL ENTITLED	**5,928**	**1,458**	**631**	**3,838**	**1**	-

[1]Market Factor Adjusted

Figure 7. Liberty Lake Comparison of Housing Capacity to Allocation

LIBERTY LAKE Comparison Of Housing Capacity To Allocation		
Income Category	Housing Unit Allocation	Housing Unit Capacity
0 -80% AMI[1]	3,555	3,838
80 -120% AMI	600	632
>120% AMI	1,025	1,458
Total Housing Units	**5,180**	**5,928**

[1]Area Median Income

Based upon this analysis, it appears Liberty Lake has the capacity, under its current zoning regulations, to meet its projected housing demand through 2046. **Appendix B** of this document contains the detailed *Liberty Lake Land Capacity Analysis*.

Population Capacity Based on Housing Type

In order to bring the analysis full circle, the City of Liberty Lake projected population capacity based upon housing type, using housing capacity projections from this analysis, and OFM per capita household size and vacancy rates by housing type. The results are summarized in **Figure 8**, which demonstrated that the City of Liberty Lake has the capacity to support is population allocation of 21,934.

Figure 8. Population Capacity Based on Housing Type

Projected Population Capacity Based On Housing Type					
Description	SF / Town Homes	Dup/ Tri/ Quad	MF / Condos / Inst	Manufactured Hm	ALL UNITS
Total Housing Units, 2020-2046	1,458	631	3,838	1	5,928
Per Capita Household Size[1]	2.855	2.4282075	1.789	2.030534	
Vacancy Rate[1]	0.972	0.906665	0.87	0.98	
Population Capacity, 2020-2046	4,046	1,390	5,973	2	11,411
Liberty Lake 2020 Census Population					13,150
Liberty Lake 2046 Population Capacity					24,561

[1]Based upon OFM rates

F. Barriers to Housing Affordability & Racially Disparate Impacts

In 2021, the Washington State Legislature passed House Bill 1220 (HB 1220) as an amendment to the state Growth Management Act (GMA). HB 1220 requires that local governments plan housing at all income levels and assess the racially disparate impacts (RDI) of existing housing policies. Conditions that indicate that policies have racially disparate impacts can include segregation, cost burden, displacement, educational opportunities, and health disparities. The City of Liberty completed the *Liberty Lake Racially Disparate Impact Analysis* as part of this Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The full analysis is attached to this document as **Appendix F.** The following is a summary of those findings.

Throughout the history of the United States, a combination of laws and practices have impacted where specific groups of people live, what opportunities they have access to, and their ability to build wealth through stable housing. Unfortunately, many of these policies explicitly or implicitly benefited white residents at the expense of all others. The legacy of policies like redlining, which used racial criteria in determining which neighborhoods were suitable for government-backed loans, highway development through predominantly Black neighborhoods, and racial covenants explicitly excluding certain groups from owning specific properties continues to impact non-white communities today.

Historical Context

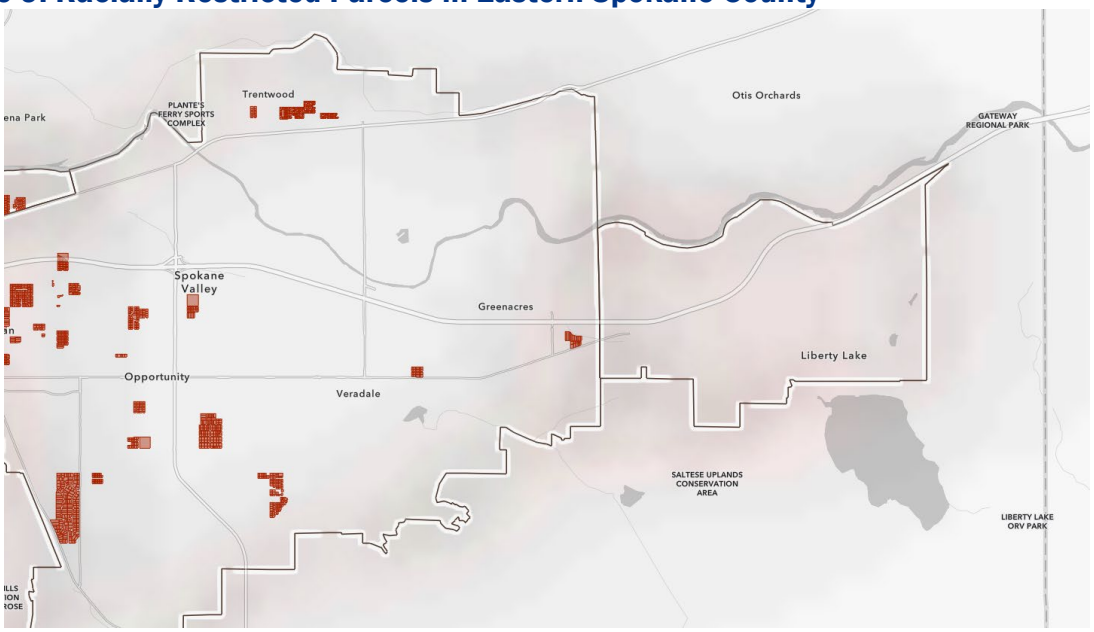
While many cities have acknowledged the harms of these policies, many of which are no longer legal, there are still policies in effect today that hold cities back from rectifying systemic harms. These can include policies that reference vague concepts like “neighborhood character,” as well as those that permit only the most expensive homes to be built, thus shutting lower-income residents out of high-opportunity areas.

Throughout the United States, racial covenants were used to exclude certain races and religious groups from residing in specific neighborhoods, creating exclusive areas for white, Christian residents. These deed restrictions were legally enforceable from 1927 to 1968. Unlike neighboring Spokane Valley, the Washington State Racial Restrictive Covenants Project does not show any known racially restricted parcels or subdivisions in Liberty Lake as shown in

Figure 9. This is largely because most of Liberty Lake's subdivisions were not built until the 1970s and 1980s, when these covenants were illegal.

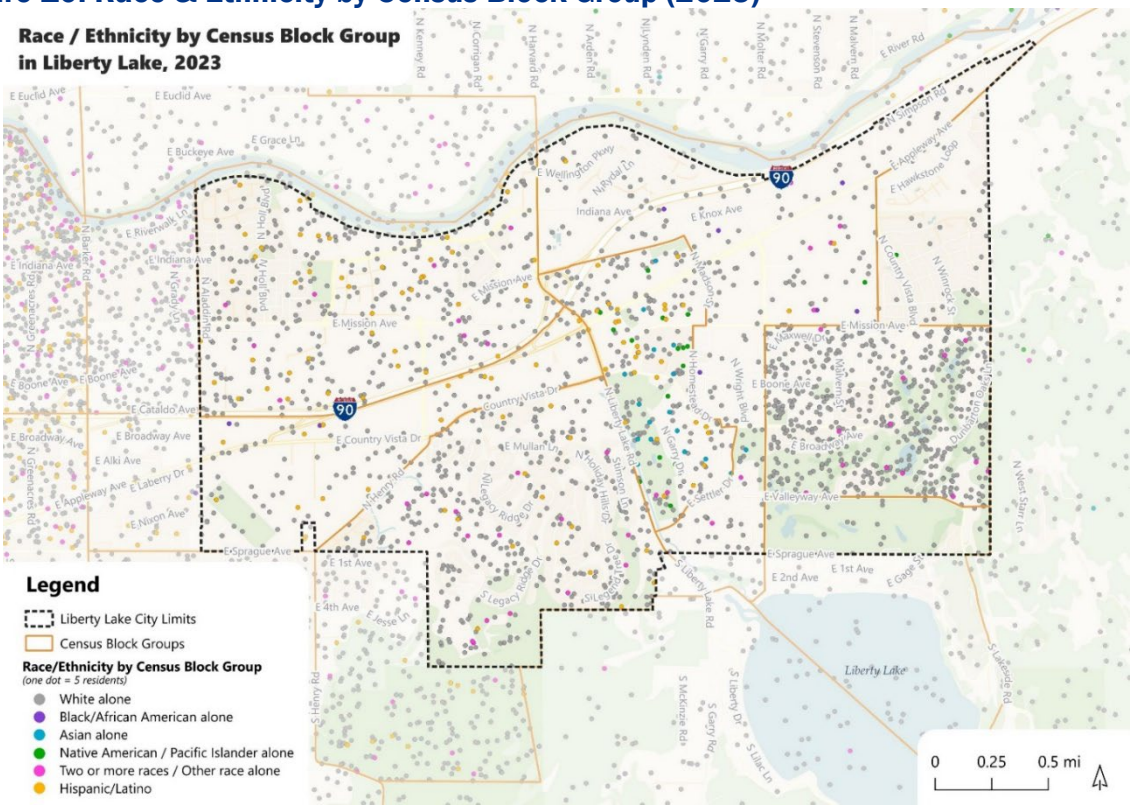
However, as of 2023, Liberty Lake is less diverse than Spokane County overall. Liberty Lake today lacks the diversity of other parts of the county and state – 93 percent of city residents are white as of 2023, with no significant geographic concentrations of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) households. The area east of N Liberty Lake Road, which has small clusters of Hispanic/Latino and Native American/Pacific Islander households, has a relatively high concentration of multifamily housing as shown in **Figure 10**.

Figure 9. Racially Restricted Parcels in Eastern Spokane County



Source: Washington State Racial Restrictive Covenants Project.

Figure 10. Race & Ethnicity by Census Block Group (2023)



Source: US Census Bureau 2023 5-Year ACS; LCG

Assessing Racially Disparate Impacts

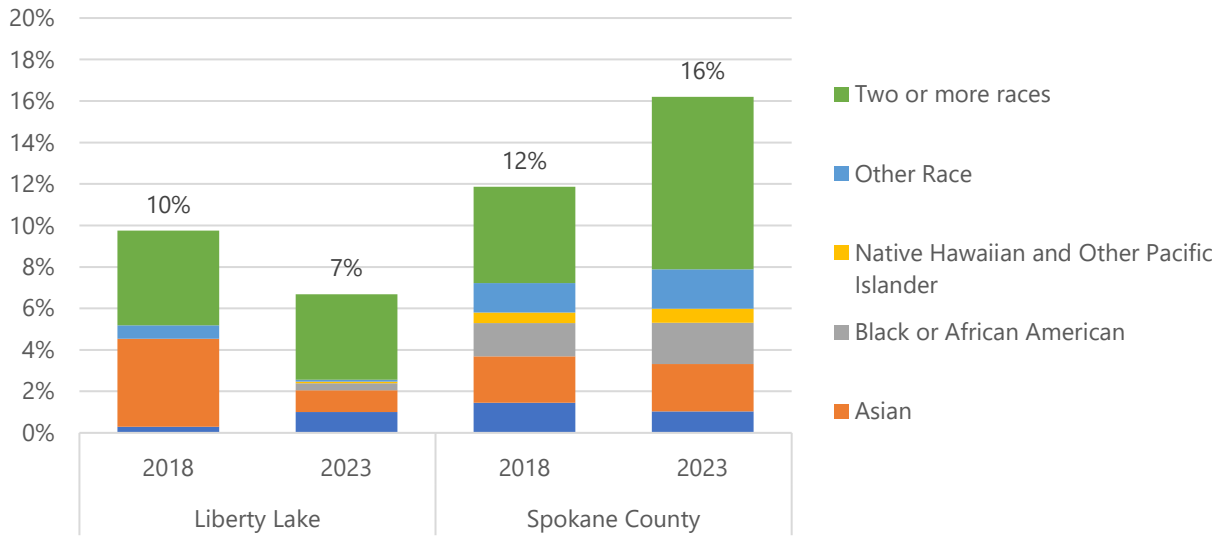
Between 2018 and 2023, Liberty Lake became slightly less diverse. The city grew by more than 3,000 residents over that period but lost Asian and other race residents. The city went from 90 percent white to 93 percent white over the course of five years. Over the same period, Spokane County's population went from 88 percent white to 84 percent white, with Hispanic or Latino and multiracial residents seeing the biggest countywide gains (reference **Figures 11 & 12)**.

Figure 11. Change in Population by Race/Ethnicity, Liberty Lake & Spokane County

	Liberty Lake			Spokane County		
	2018	2023	Change	2018	2023	Change
American Indian and Alaska Native	27	125	98	7,248	5,624	(1,624)
Asian	398	130	(268)	11,117	12,438	1,321
Black or African American	0	43	43	8,009	10,866	2,857
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	252	497	245	27,693	37,356	9,663
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	0	9	9	2,507	3,673	1,166
Other Race	62	12	(50)	7,063	10,357	3,294
Two or more races	428	511	83	23,093	45,201	22,108
White	8,467	11,605	3,138	438,838	456,164	17,326
Total Population	***9,382***	***12,435***	***3,053***	***497,875***	***544,323***	***46,448***

Source: US Census Bureau 2023 5-Year ACS (Table DP05)

Figure 12. Non-White Population of Liberty Lake & Spokane County, 2018-2023



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

Liberty Lake is home to 2,575 homeowner households and 1,375 renter households. Of the homeowner households, just seven percent are cost burdened (spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs), compared with 46 percent of renter households. While just four percent of homeowners spend between 30 and 50 percent of their income on rent, the same is true for 31 percent of renters. In addition, 15 percent of renters are severely cost-burdened, spending more than half of their income on rent. This sharp divide in stability

between renters and owners can result in racially disparate impacts when renters are more likely to be people of color.

In Liberty Lake, 100 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native households and 42 percent of Asian households rent their homes, compared with 35 percent of white households and 22 percent of Hispanic/Latino households. However, in Liberty Lake the cost barriers impact both white residents and residents of color. Among white households, 23 percent spend at least 30 percent of their incomes on rent, compared with 16 percent of Asian and 17 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native households. All of the Asian households experiencing cost burden spend more than 50 percent of their incomes on housing. None of the city's 90 Hispanic/Latino households are cost burdened (see **Figure 13**). **Figure 14** indicates that the percentage of cost burdened households trended downward in the City of Liberty Lake as whole from 2016 to 2021, as well as across all ethnicities and races. Spokane County as a whole also trended downward to a lesser degree in the same period, but notably, the percentage of cost burdened Native Americans, Hispanic and Latino households increased by 7% respectively.

Figure 13. Cost Burdened Households in Liberty Lake (2021)

	White	Asian	American Indian or Alaska Native	Other Race	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	Total
Owner Households						
Not Cost Burdened	2,380	55	-	45	70	2,550
Total Cost-Burdened	200	-	-	-	-	200
Cost-Burdened (30-50%)	105	-	-	-	-	105
Severely Cost-Burdened (>50%)	95	-	-	-	-	95
Not Calculated	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**2,575**	**55**	**-**	**45**	**70**	**2,745**
Renter Households						
Not Cost Burdened	695	25	75	20	20	835
Total Cost-Burdened	680	15	15	-	-	710
Cost-Burdened (30-50%)	470	-	15	-	-	485
Severely Cost-Burdened (>50%)	210	15	-	-	-	225
Not Calculated	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	**1,375**	**40**	**90**	**20**	**20**	**1,545**
Total Households	**3,950**	**95**	**90**	**65**	**90**	**4,290**

Source: US HUD, 2017-2021 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) (Table 9).
Note: CHAS data for Liberty Lake does not include Black/African American or Pacific Islander households

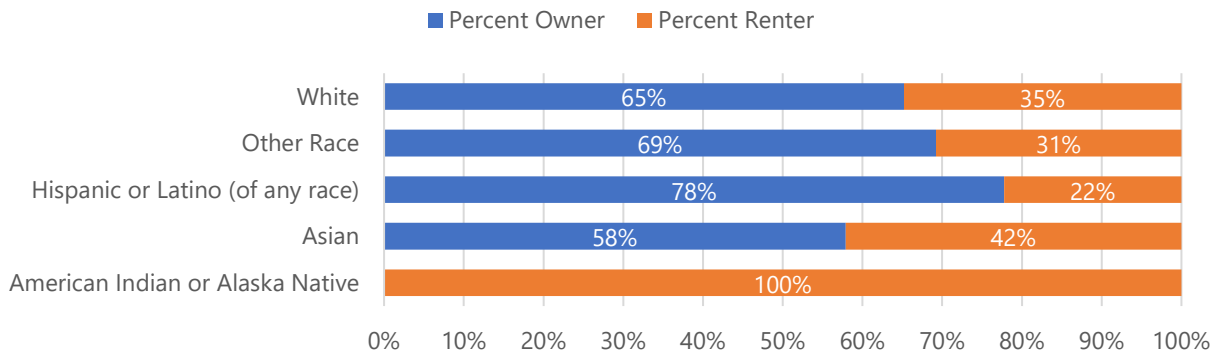
Figure 14. Share of Cost Burdened Households by Race & Ethnicity, 2016-2021

	Liberty Lake		Spokane County	
	2016	2021	2016	2021
American Indian and Alaska Native	-	17%	42%	49%
Asian	52%	16%	36%	29%
Black or African American	-	-	50%	45%
Hispanic or Latino (any race)	-	-	35%	42%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	-	-	57%	51%
Other Race	30%	-	35%	33%
White	28%	22%	32%	28%
Total Cost Burdened	***28%***	***21%***	***32%***	***29%***

Source: US HUD, 2012-2016 & 2017-2021 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS)

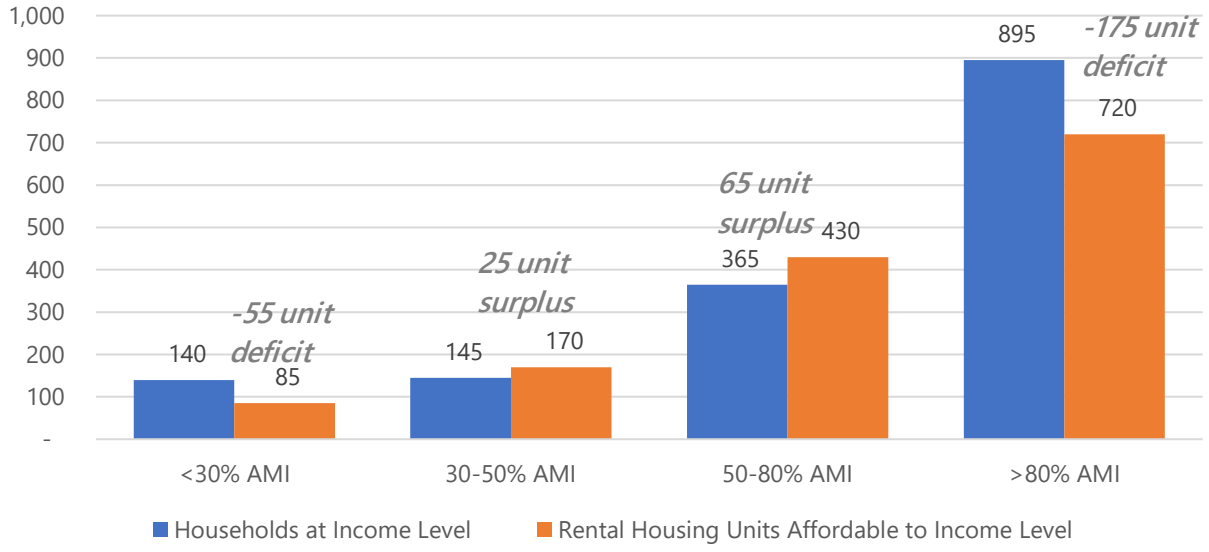
The renter cost burden in Liberty Lake is driven by a shortage of rental units at the high and low ends of the market (greater than 80 percent AMI and less than 30 percent AMI). **Figure 15** below shows the percentage of owners and renters by ethnicity. **Figure 16** shows the current number of rented households compared with the number of rental units affordable to households at each income level. When there are shortages of units corresponding to a given income level, those households will rent units affordable to a different income level. For instance, the lack of housing at greater than 80 percent AMI indicates that there are likely renters at that income level renting units in the 50 to 80 percent range, making it harder for households in that income range to find housing. Alternatively, the shortage of housing units at the less than 30 percent AMI range indicates that households at that income level are likely cost burdened.

Figure 15. Liberty Lake Owner & Renter Households by Ethnicity (2021)



Source: US HUD, 2017-2021 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) (Table 9).

Figure 16. Liberty Lake Renters by Income

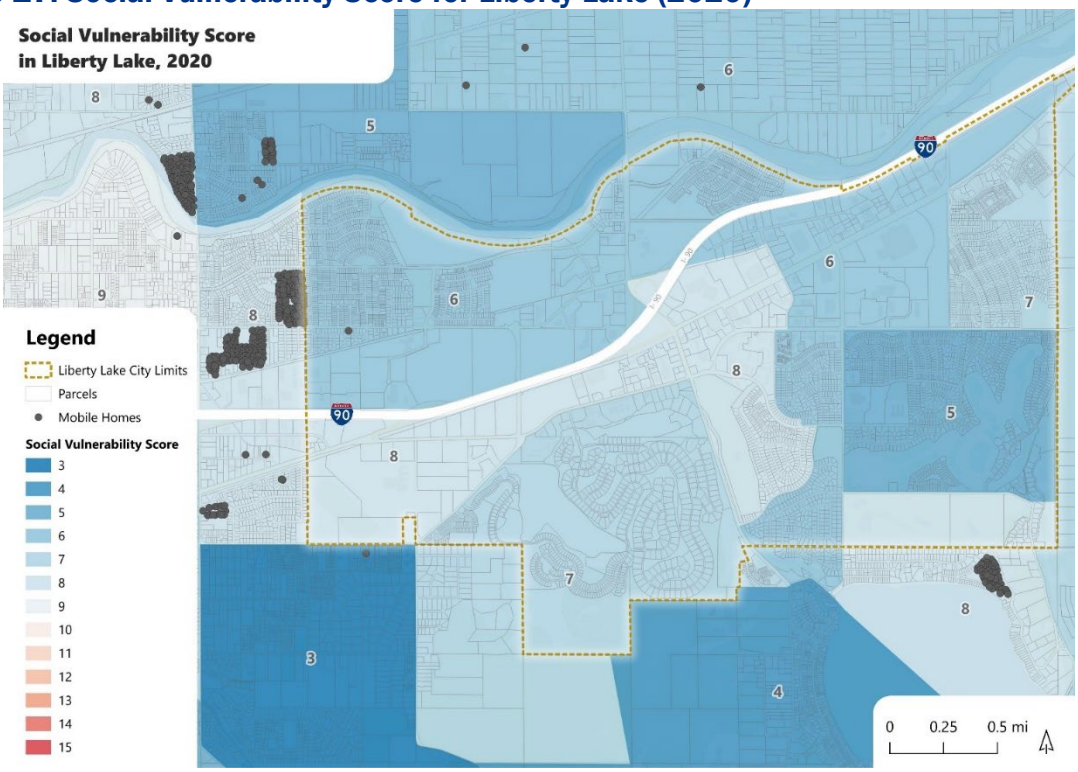


Sources: US HUD, 2017-2021 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) (Table 15C & Table 14B).

The Washington Department of Commerce has created displacement risk maps for communities based on Census tracts. A variety of factors can create a risk that residents may be displaced from their homes, including displacements due to climate change, natural disasters, or economic factors (i.e. the cost of maintaining older housing stock, conversion of mobile home parks, or gentrification). While Liberty Lake has no mobile home parks and extremely limited flood plains, because Liberty Lake is such a small community, the tract-level map does not provide the nuance needed to assess displacement risk created by economic factors within the community. The maps below utilize similar methodology to the Department of Commerce maps using data at the Census block group level. **Figure 17** below shows the social vulnerability score by Census block group for the city. "Social vulnerability" is the susceptibility of social groups to the adverse impacts of hazards and stressors, often due to factors like poverty, lack of resources, and limited access to services. Overall, Liberty Lake has a lower social vulnerability score than many of its neighborhoods in Spokane and Spokane Valley. However, the Census block that contains most of the City's multifamily housing east of N Liberty Lake Road has a higher social vulnerability score than other parts of the city. The adjacent block group to the west also has a relatively high social vulnerability score, but most of the housing in that block group is located outside of Liberty Lake in Spokane Valley.

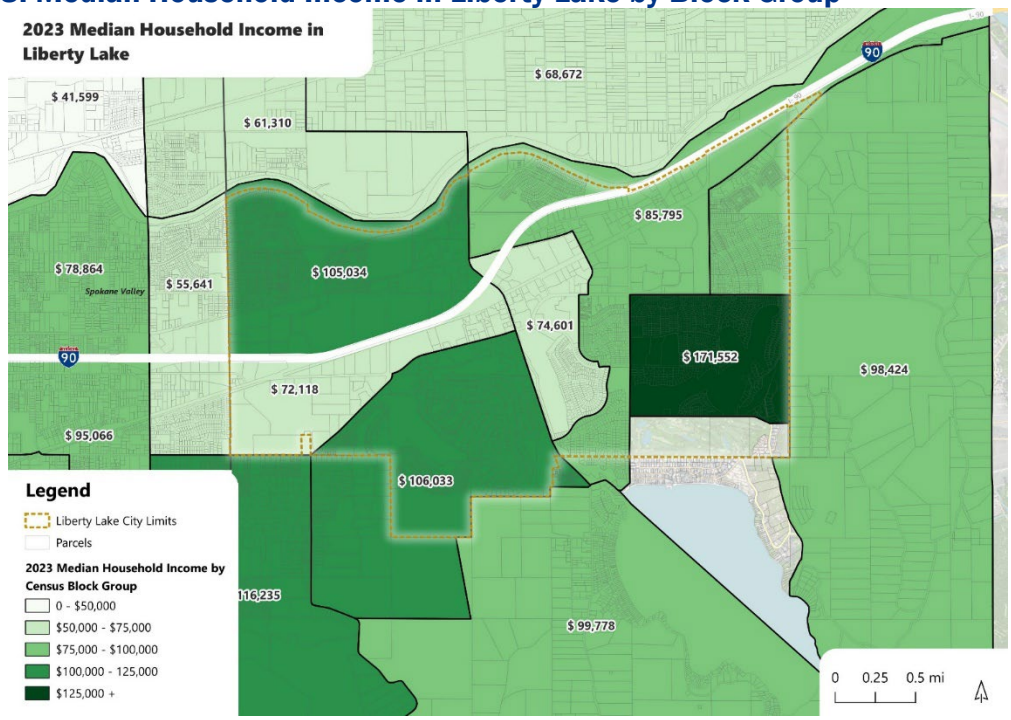
The median income varies considerably by block group in Liberty Lake (see **Figure 18** below), with the lowest-income block groups corresponding to those with the highest social vulnerability scores. This indicates that these block groups have the highest risk of displacement.

Figure 17. Social Vulnerability Score for Liberty Lake (2020)



Source: US Census Bureau 5-year ACS 2013 & 2023 (Table B19013); 2020 Decennial Census (Table DP01); 2010 Decennial Census (Table H11); Washington Department of Commerce.

Figure 18. Median Household Income in Liberty Lake by Block Group



Source: US Census Bureau 2023 5-year ACS (Table B19013).

Figure 19 provides data on Liberty Lake households by income and race. Citywide, 84 percent of households make above 100 percent AMI – this includes 88 percent of Hispanic/Latino households, 83 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native households, 73 percent of white households, and 56 percent of Asian households. According to HUD data, all of the households making less than 30 percent of AMI are white.

Figure 19. Liberty Lake Households by Income & Race, 2021

Income Category (% of AMI)	American Indian or Alaska Native	Asian	Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	White	Not Reported*	All
Number						
Extremely Low-Income (≤30% AMI)	-	-	-	215	-	215
Very Low-Income (30-50%)	15	15	-	135	-	165
Low-Income (50-80%)	-	25	-	605	-	630
Moderate Income (80-100%)	-	-	10	95	25	130
Above Median Income (>100%)	75	50	75	2,905	45	3,150
Total for published estimates	90	90	85	3,955	70	4,290

Percentage					Not Reported
Extremely Low-Income (≤30% AMI)	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%
Very Low-Income (30-50%)	17%	17%	0%	3%	0%
Low-Income (50-80%)	0%	28%	0%	15%	0%
Moderate Income (80-100%)	0%	0%	12%	2%	36%
Above Median Income (>100%)	83%	56%	88%	73%	64%

Source: US HUD, 2017-2021 Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) (Table 1).

Findings & Conclusions

- **Liberty Lake was less diverse in 2023 than in 2018.** Between 2017 and 2021 the share of non-white residents decreased in Liberty Lake while increasing in Spokane County.
- Between 2017 and 2021, Liberty Lake added a significant number of white and Hispanic/Latino residents while losing Asian and other race residents.
- **White households in Liberty Lake are more likely to be cost-burdened** (defined as spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing costs) than other racial and ethnic groups. However, 16 percent of Asian and 17 percent of American Indian/Alaska Native households spend more than 30 percent of their incomes on rent.
- Liberty Lake has **rental housing shortages at the high and low end of the market**. The city needs 55 rental units for households making less than 30 percent AMI and 175 rental units for those making more than 80 percent AMI to meet current demand.
- **Displacement risk is generally low** in Liberty Lake, but as the population continues to grow, the City should consider strategies that might reduce that risk for vulnerable and cost-burdened renter households.
- While **white households are the most likely** of any racial group **to make less than 30 percent of AMI**, Asian households have the highest share of households making less than the median income.

- **Affordability of housing stock and availability of rental housing** within the City of Liberty Lake likely **represent the most significant housing barriers** to more inclusive housing.

Taking a proactive approach in shaping policies to address these challenges will benefit all Liberty Lake households.

Policy Evaluation

To begin to address challenges identified, the *Liberty Lake Racially Disparate Impact Analysis* (**Appendix F**) included a policy evaluation, utilizing Wahington State Department of Commerce's evaluation framework (reference page 14 of **Appendix G).** The results of that analysis were utilized in shaping revised goals and policies contained within this Chapter.

G. Strategies for Increasing Housing Availability & Affordability

While the City of Liberty Lake's existing development regulations permit a variety of mixed-use, middle housing, and other medium-density housing opportunities, demand for housing outpaced availability, and affordability is challenging, throughout the state. The Washington State Legislature has enacted multiple bills in an effort to address the housing shortage and ameliorate the affordability gap across the state. Washington State Department of Commerce has also identified a number of strategies to guide communities in updating their housing policies.

Some of the identified barriers to affordability include areas with severe topography (which limits the density as well as the affordability of development), zoning and density restrictions, some residential design and development standards, residential parking standards, and spacing requirements and capacity for Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH).

After careful consideration of revisions to City development code that have been mandated by recent legislation, as well as other potential tools and strategies that have the potential to increase supply and reduce barriers to affordability, **Figure 19** summarizes mandated strategies (see pages 20 and 21), while **Figure 20** summarizes strategies that are recommended for Liberty Lake for implementation (see pages 23 and 24).

For additional details, please refer to **Appendix H** of this document, containing the *Liberty Lake Housing Policy Analysis, Implementation Strategies & Programs Technical Assistance Memo.*

Figure 20. Mandated Strategies to Increase Housing Supply & Reduce Barriers to Affordability

Required Strategies to Increase Housing Supply and Reduce Barriers to Affordability

Proposed Code Update	Relevant State Legislation	Relevant HAP/Commerce Strategy	Type of Barrier Addressed	Housing Needs Addresses
Allow duplexes and other two-unit middle housing configurations in R-1 zones.	HB 1110, HB 2321	Increase allowed housing types in existing zones. (HAP Z-6) Increase or remove density limits. (HAP Z-7)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Allow up to two ADUs per lot.	HB 1337	Increase or remove density limits. (HAP Z-7) Revise ADU standards. (HAP Z-8)	Development regulations	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Increase the maximum allowable size of ADUs to 1,000 square feet.	HB 1337	Revise ADU standards. (HAP Z-8)	Development regulations	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Allow two ADUs on all lots meeting the minimum lot size requirements for the underlying zone.	HB 1337	Revise ADU standards. (HAP Z-8)	Development regulations	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Allow separate ownership of duplex units or ADUs on the original lot through condominiumization or subdivision.	HB 1110, HB 2321 HB 1337	Subdivision process streamlining. (P-7)	Process Obstacles	• Housing supply • Affordable homeownership
Limit the required spaces to one off-street parking space per unit for two-unit middle housing types on lots smaller than 6,000 square feet.	HB 1110, HB 2321	Reduce off-street parking requirements. (R-1)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Eliminate parking requirements from middle housing and ADUs within one-half mile of major transit stops.	HB 1110, HB 2321 HB 1337	Reduce off-street parking requirements. (R-1)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing

Required Strategies to Increase Housing Supply and Reduce Barriers to Affordability

Proposed Code Update	Relevant State Legislation	Relevant HAP/Commerce Strategy	Type of Barrier Addressed	Housing Needs Addresses
Remove arbitrary limitations on the number of units and residents at a facility and instead utilize parameters such as occupant load per square foot or generally applicable health and safety provisions to determine occupancy.	RCW 35A.21.314	Accommodate emergency/PSH housing facilities.	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Senior housing • Very low-income housing
Relax the design and development standards for adaptive reuse to encourage the conversion of existing non-residential buildings into housing developments.	HB1042	Development regulations	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Allow co-living housing as a permitted use ina ny zone that allows at least six multifamily residential units, including lots zoned for mixed-use (by 12/21/2025).	RCW 36.70A.535	Development regulations		• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Low income rental housing • Transitional & Supportive Housing

Figure 21. Recommended Strategies to Increase Housing Supply & Reduce Barriers to Affordability

Recommended Strategies to Increase Housing Supply and Reduce Barriers to Affordability

Proposed Code Update	Relevant HAP/Commerce Strategy	Type of Barrier Addressed	Housing Needs Addresses
Expand allowable housing options, such as tiny homes, cottage clusters, and co-living developments in R-2, R-3, and mixed-use zoning districts in order to increase the diversity of housing options citywide.	Increase allowed housing types in existing zones. (HAP Z-6)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Increase the maximum density for attached housing in R-2 zones from 12 to 16 units per acre.	Increase or remove density limits. (HAP Z-7)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Remove ADU design standards such as maximum number of bedrooms, six-foot fence, and minimum roof slope.	Revise ADU standards. (HAP Z-8)	Development regulations	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Allow more flexibility in commercial space requirements for housing developments in neighborhood-oriented mixed-use zones.	Relax ground floor retail requirements. (R-2)	Development regulations Limited land availability	Housing supply Middle-income rental housing
Remove manufactured home design standards, such as multi-sectional designs and minimum roof slope.	Manufactured home and tiny house communities. (R-7)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Eliminate the minimum enclosed floor area of 1,000 square feet to allow for "tiny home" developments.	Manufactured home and tiny house communities. (R-7)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing • Very low-income housing

Recommended Strategies to Increase Housing Supply and Reduce Barriers to Affordability

Proposed Code Update	Relevant HAP/Commerce Strategy	Type of Barrier Addressed	Housing Needs Addresses
Eliminate design reviews in R-1, R-2, and R-3 zones for moderate-density housing , and utilize administrative Design Review for multi-family housing of more than 6 units to streamline the approval process.	Permitting process streamlining. (P-6)	Process Obstacles	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Affordable homeownership • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing • Very low-income housing
Adjusting parking mandates for PSH and emergency housing.	Reduce off-street parking requirements. (R-1)	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Senior housing • Very low-income housing
Remove spacing requirements between shelters and PSH facilities.	Accommodate emergency/PSH housing facilities.	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Senior housing • Very low-income housing
Increase or remove transit proximity requirements for PSH and emergency housing.	Accommodate emergency/PSH housing facilities.	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Senior housing • Very low-income housing
Allow offices in conjunction with PSH and emergency housing across all residential zones.	Accommodate emergency/PSH housing facilities.	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Senior housing • Very low-income housing
Allow multi-family residential as a limited use in light industrial zones with appropriate buffers.	Development regulations	Development regulations Limited land availability	• Housing supply • Housing diversity • Middle-income rental housing • Senior housing
Explore temporary or short-term rental programs as transitional housing options for specific groups.	Short-term rental regulations.	Development regulations	• Senior housing • Very low-income housing

H. Housing Implementation Strategies

Following the completion of this Comprehensive Plan, the City of Liberty Lake will undertake amendments to its development codes to reflect the goals, policies, and strategies detailed in this Chapter.

Development code amendments will include expanding opportunities to build cottage housing, duplexes, and accessory dwelling units in low density residential zones. In medium-density residential and mixed-use zoning districts, the City will be expanding affordable housing options, such as tiny homes, cottage cluster, and co-living developments to promote a variety of densities and housing types, as well as relaxing design and development standards for the adaptive reuse of existing, underutilized non-residential buildings in to housing developments.

Implementation will include updating design and parking standards, and looking for opportunities to streamline subdivision and condominium platting processes, as well as residential permitting and approval processes.

The City is committed to supporting both rental and ownership forms of affordable housing and intends to develop and implement a multi-family tax exemption program to incentivize the private sector to create more affordable housing opportunities in future housing projects.

Understanding and responding to the evolving needs of Liberty Lake residents is central to this plan. Through ongoing reviews, public engagement, and strategic policy adjustments, the City will continue to promote housing stability and provide essential community services, fostering a thriving, inclusive, and sustainable future.

The City will continue to monitor and evaluate the progress of the development of the projected pipeline of housing types affordable to all-income levels within the City, and will assess our progress in reducing the percentage of cost-burdened households within the City within five years of the adoption of this plan. We will continue to monitor best practices in encouraging affordable housing and will consider adjustments to development code and programs intended to promote the creation of more affordable housing, as may be applicable or warranted.