



OUR VALLEY OUR FUTURE 2022 REGIONAL HOUSING SURVEY FINDINGS



RESEARCH REPORT

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**Prepared for the Regional Housing Approach initiative
In Our Valley Our Future's 2022-26 Action Plan**

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Partnering Organizations: Chelan-Douglas Housing Solutions Group, Chelan County, Wenatchee Valley Chamber of Commerce, Housing Authority of Chelan County and the City of Wenatchee, City of Leavenworth, City of Wenatchee, City of East Wenatchee, Chelan-Douglas Community Action Council, Common Ground Housing Trust, Upper Valley MEND, Chelan Valley Housing Trust

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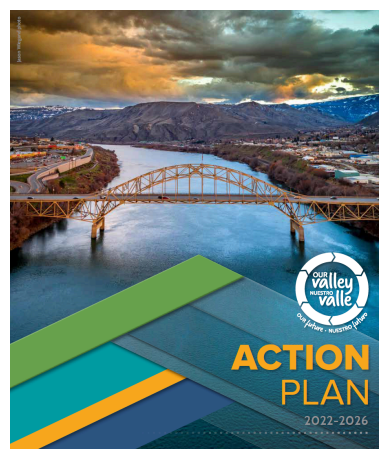
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Introduction

In May 2022, a total of 1,519 residents of Chelan and Douglas counties completed an online regional housing survey conducted by Our Valley Our Future (OVOF). The survey is one of the first steps in OVOF's Regional Housing Approach initiative, one of nine game-changers in the OVOF 2022-26 Action Plan. The housing initiative is designed to build on growing regional collaboration to generate ideas and solutions to fix a regional housing crisis. The 29-question survey was crafted to gain greater insight into residents' perceptions of housing market issues and their comfort level with potential solutions. The information derived from this survey will provide decision-makers, community leaders and the overall community with another lens through which to view the issue, to collaborate, and to find solutions.

The OVOF Regional Housing Survey was made available from May 13 through May 31. The demographics of survey respondents generally reflects the overall community's demographics. Of the people who completed the survey, 67 percent are from Chelan County, 32 percent from Douglas County, and 17 percent from the Upper Wenatchee Valley. About 24 percent of overall respondents self-identified as Latino. Household income levels of survey respondents generally matched the region's income levels. One exception was found in the number of people aged 25 to 44. That age group had a much larger participation in the survey compared with their actual share in the region. That anomaly is perhaps due to the fact that many first-time homebuyers — a group that has been adversely impacted by the lack of affordable housing — fall into that age range.



Because the survey was not a scientific random sample, it cannot claim to be statistically representative of the region's population. That said, the fact that survey participants of different backgrounds and locations closely reflect actual regional demographics lends significant credibility to survey results.

Beginning on Page 5 are the results of the survey, including a set of cross-tabulated results. The cross-tabulated results draw out connections between subgroups within the community and their housing choices, comparisons of how Chelan County and Douglas County respondents answered questions, and comparisons of how 2017 survey respondents and 2022 survey respondents answered similar questions.

In one of the questions — Question No. 23 — survey participants were able to write their own personal housing story. More than 350 survey respondents did so, and those stories, which put a human face to the survey statistics, can be found on Pages 15 and 23.

Executive Summary

Chelan and Douglas counties have changed tremendously over the past several decades. Economically, the two-county area has become a true regional hub, with growing retail, health care, tourism, and technology sectors, and with mainstay industries such as agriculture and public power humming along. The region's natural environment and outdoor assets, family-friendly towns, and abundant services have attracted new residents, including remote workers who arrived during the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet the economic growth and immigration — along with wages not keeping pace with costs, lack of developable land in Chelan County, rising cost of construction materials, land-use regulations, advent of short-term rentals, and other factors — have led to a persistent shortage of affordable housing in the region. This has been particularly true for many middle- and low-income people, including those who fill essential jobs. The lack of affordable housing has hurt employers attempting to fill jobs and left those who are cost-burdened with little or no disposable income. In some cases, people have become unhoused.

Indeed, it's unlikely there is a bigger issue in the minds of residents than housing today. About 90 percent of the more than 1,500 residents who completed the 2022 Our Valley Our Future (OVOF) Regional Housing Survey cited housing availability and affordability as either an "extremely important" or an "important" issue for the community today. This response falls closely in line with what OVOF found in 2021 when it received input from more than 2,000 residents in the development of the new OVOF Action Plan. The two biggest issues — as identified by residents in that research — were housing and adapting to growth.

This year's OVOF housing survey provided residents with an opportunity to tell their own personal housing stories. More than 350 residents did so, describing the challenges they and their family members have been facing. *To read these stories, see Pages 15 and 23.*

To get a sense of how deeply the housing crisis is impacting people, the survey asked residents if they have considered relocating to another city or area over the past two years due to housing issues. A significant majority (62 percent) say they have considered relocating. An even bigger share — 73 percent — of people aged 18 to 34 say they have considered relocating.

About one-third of the OVOF survey respondents indicate their households are currently spending more than 30 percent on housing. (A housing unit is considered unaffordable if a household has to spend more than 30 percent of its income on it.) Of note, since 2017, the median home sales price in Chelan and Douglas counties has risen by 66 percent, according to Pacific Appraisal's monthly real estate reports. At the same time span, the median household income has risen by about 17 percent in the region, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

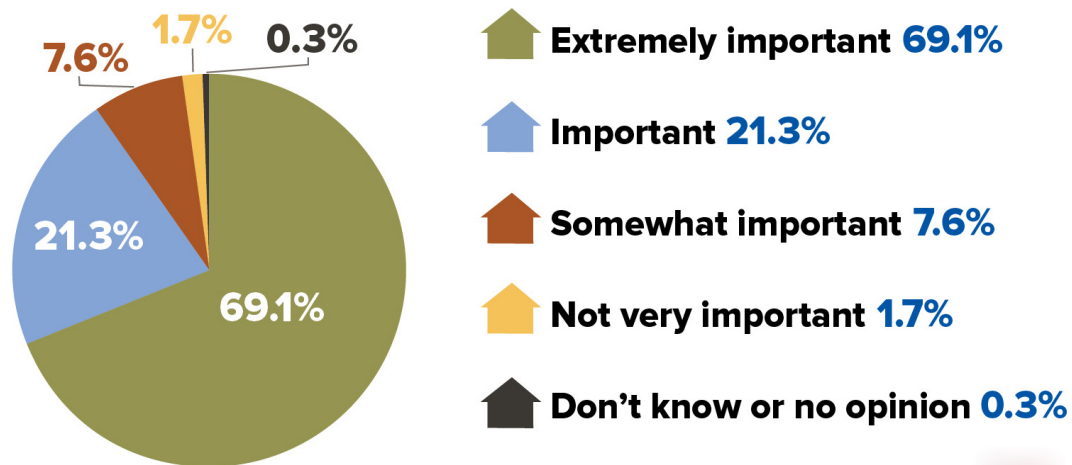
About 88 percent of survey respondents believe there is a need for more diverse housing types in the region. This is particularly an issue for those with low- and middle-incomes and those who don't desire a lot of living space, such as millennials and seniors. In the personal stories they wrote, some survey respondents pointed out the current construction mix of mostly larger single-family homes and apartment buildings doesn't match their needs.

Results for Each Survey Question

Question No. 1: How important is the issue of housing affordability and availability in Our Valley (Chelan and Douglas counties)?

Results: About 90 percent of survey respondents living in Chelan and Douglas counties say the issue of housing availability and affordability is either “extremely important” or “important” for the community.

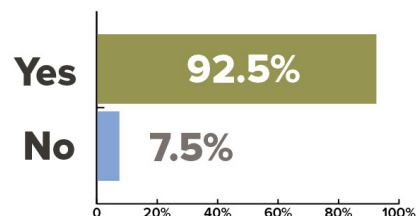
How important is the issue of housing affordability and availability?



Question No. 2: Median home sale prices have increased by 66.3 percent in Chelan and Douglas counties since 2017. Do you view this as a problem?

Results: This question was asked to help educate and to gauge perceptions about the rising cost of housing. A large majority of survey respondents (93 percent) view the rising cost of for-sale homes since 2017 as a problem, while 7 percent do not.

Median home sale prices have increased by 66.3 percent in Chelan and Douglas counties since 2017.
Do you view this as a problem?



Question No. 3: Do we need more choices in terms of the types of housing that are available in Our Valley?

Results: This question was asked to broadly assess whether people are satisfied with the current mix of housing choices. A very high percentage of respondents — 88 percent — believe there is a need for more choices when it comes to housing types in the region.

- Yes: 87.5 percent
- No: 8.8 percent
- Don't know or no opinion: 3.7 percent

Question No. 4: What types of housing would you like to see more of in Our Valley?

Results: This question was directed toward those who support more housing choices as a way to measure their support for specific housing types. Respondents could select more than answer. Here are the results (with the most popular first):

1. Single-family homes for rent: 59.3 percent
2. Single-family homes for sale: 57.1 percent
3. Apartments owned by a government entity or a nonprofit: 43.6 percent
4. Apartments: 39.5 percent
5. Non-traditional housing (Accessory dwelling units, container homes, tiny homes, courtyard-style housing): 39.3 percent
6. Permanent supportive housing for the homeless: 36.6 percent
7. Townhouses for sale: 33.3 percent
8. Duplexes and fourplexes for sale: 32.1 percent
9. Condominiums for sale: 30.6 percent
10. Active adult living housing, also known as "55+" housing: 27.7 percent
11. Workforce housing in downtown areas: 27.4 percent
12. Manufactured housing: 22.2 percent
13. Senior housing, including independent living, assisted living, and nursing home facilities: 21.1 percent
14. Owner-occupied homes on community owned land (community land trust model): 20.3 percent

Question No. 5: Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are allowed in many neighborhoods. They are small, secondary dwelling units built on the same lot as the main house, and can be either attached or built independently. How interested would you be in building an ADU?

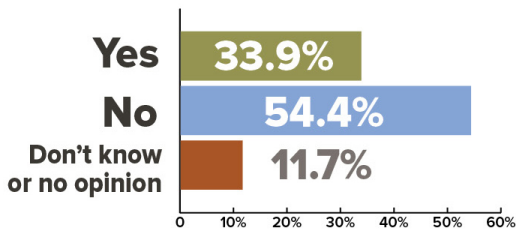
Results: This question was asked to gauge respondent's interest in having an ADU on their property. Results are mixed, with 28 percent of respondents expressing they are either extremely or very interested, 20 percent with a moderate degree of interest, and another 41 percent indicating they are not at all interested or just somewhat interested.

- Not all interested: 21.5 percent
- Slightly interested: 19.0 percent

- Moderately interested: 20.1 percent
- Very interested: 14.3 percent
- Extremely interested: 13.4 percent
- I am not a property owner: 11.7 percent

Question No. 6: Do you think the free market will automatically correct problems with housing affordability and availability, without additional community involvement, in Our Valley?

Results: This question was asked to gauge whether residents have faith in the free market eventually improving the housing inventory so that affordability and availability of homes are no longer a community problem. More than half (54 percent) of respondents say they don't believe the free market will automatically correct the housing problem, while 34 percent say it will.



Do you think the free market will automatically correct problems with housing affordability and availability?



Question No. 7: Which of the following have the most responsibility to address the issue of housing affordability and availability in Our Valley?

Results: This question was asked to get a better idea of who needs to step up to address the region's housing problems, in the eyes of residents. Survey respondents were asked to rank the choices in order of highest responsibility. Here are the final rankings:

Which of the following have the most responsibility to address the issue of housing affordability and availability?

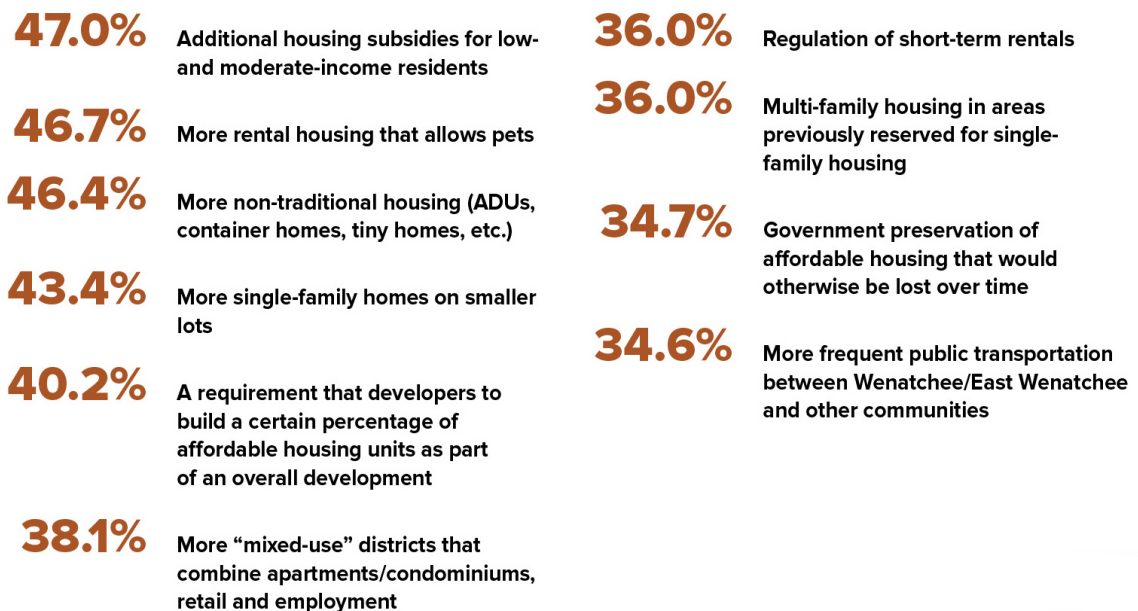
- 1** Housing Industry
- 2** Government
- 3** Large Employers
- 4** Landlords

- 5** Free Market
- 6** Non-Profit Organizations
- 7** Public-Private Partnerships
- 8** Community Members

Question No. 8: Which of the following options meant to improve housing affordability and availability in your community do you support?

Results: This question was asked to determine which options that residents perceive are the best ways to make housing more affordable and available to all in the region. Respondents could select more than one answer. The fact respondents could choose any or all of 23 options. **NOTE: Below in the graphic, are the top 10 options chosen by residents. Below the graphic are the results for the final 13 options.**

Which of the following options do you support for your community?

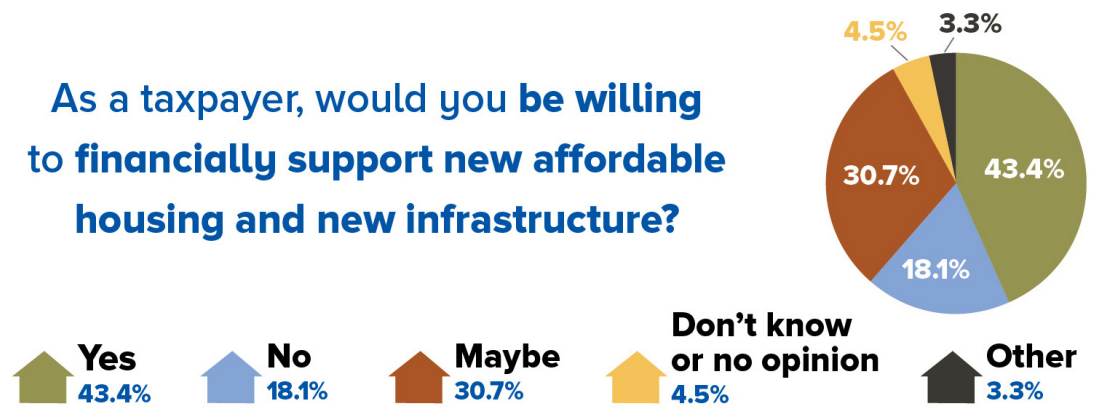


11. More apartments: 34.4 percent
12. Government construction of affordable homes: 32.7 percent
13. Permanent supportive housing for the homeless: 32.5 percent
14. Government expansion of infrastructure (roads, utilities) to open up more land for housing: 28.3 percent
15. More owner-occupied homes on community owned land (community land trust model): 27.1 percent
16. Expansion of the urban growth boundary in the Wenatchee and East Wenatchee areas: 25.3 percent
17. Sale of surplus government land to affordable-housing developers at little or no cost: 24.2 percent
18. Taller apartment and condo buildings (three stories or more): 23.5 percent
19. Reduction in building codes that add to the cost of a new home or remodel: 22.8 percent

- 20. Reduction and/or waiver of permit fees and utility connection fees paid by developers and builders: 21.4 percent
- 21. Streamlined development review process: 21.0 percent
- 22. Reduced parking standards for housing developments: 9.7 percent
- 23. Other (please specify): 8.4 percent

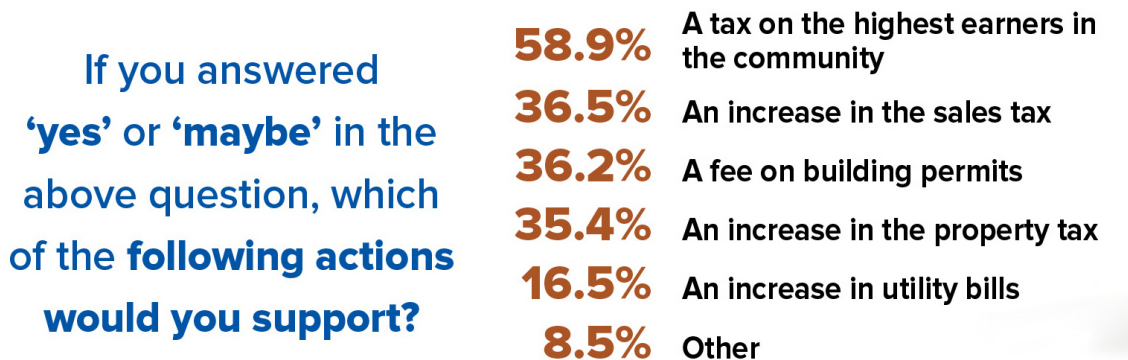
Question No. 9: As a taxpayer, would you be willing to financially support new affordable housing in your community along with new infrastructure (roads, utilities) for housing?

Results: This question was asked to broadly assess whether respondents are interested in helping pay for new affordable housing and new infrastructure (such as roads and utilities) in their own community. Forty-three percent of respondents say they would be



Question No. 10: If you answered 'yes' or 'maybe' in the above Question No. 9, which of the following actions would you support that would generate funding to address Our Valley's affordable housing needs?

Results: This question was asked to get a better idea of which revenue generators are acceptable to respondents who answered either 'Yes' or 'Maybe' to whether they would financially support new affordable housing and infrastructure. Respondents could select more than one answer.



Question No. 11: Which of the following best describes the housing you currently live in?

Results: This question was asked to help assess respondents' current housing type. Those living in single family homes were slightly under represented in the results of the survey. While 63 percent of housing units in Chelan and Douglas counties are single-family homes, 52 percent of the survey respondents live in single family homes.

- Single-family house: 52.1 percent
- Apartment: 17.1 percent
- Townhouse: 7.5 percent
- Condominium: 8.5 percent
- Duplex or triplex: 5.5 percent
- Manufactured home: 4.3 percent
- Non-traditional home (ADU, steel-and-glass container home, tiny home, courtyard-style housing): 2.0 percent
- Car or RV: 0.8 percent
- Shelter: 0.1 percent
- Other (please specify): 2.1 percent

Question No. 12: Does your current home have too many bedrooms, just the right number of bedrooms, or too few bedrooms for your family's needs?

Results: This question was asked to gauge whether people perceive their current home as being too large or too small, or just the right size. A 2016 housing study conducted in the Greater Wenatchee Area found a mismatch in the size of homes and the needs of residents. A majority of survey respondents (65 percent) say their homes have just the right amount of bedrooms, while 35 percent say their home doesn't match their needs.

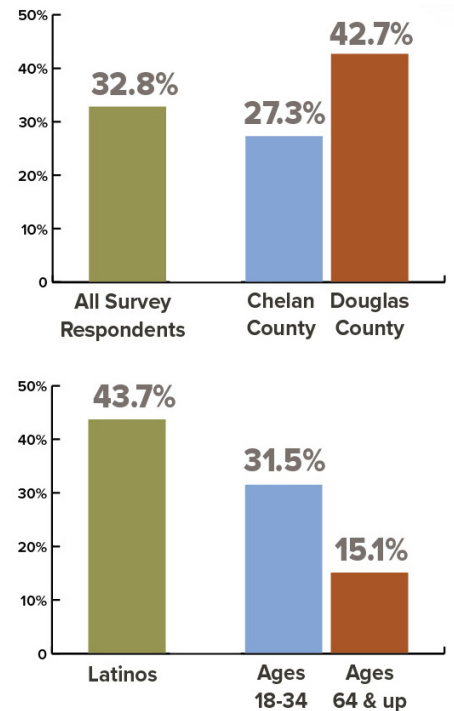
- Too many: 17.3 percent
- Just the right amount: 65.0 percent
- Too few: 17.7 percent

Question No. 13: What percentage of your total annual household income would you estimate is spent on housing (either rent or mortgage)?

Results: This question was asked to get a sense of how many households are devoting more than 30 percent of their gross monthly income on housing. The 30-percent rule — that a household should spend no more than 30 percent of its income on housing costs — has long been accepted in financial circles. The federal government defines cost-burdened households as those who pay more than 30 percent of their income for housing and who may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. Severe cost-burdened households are those defined as ones paying more than 50 percent of their income on housing.

About one-third of all survey respondents (32.8 percent) said more than 30 percent of their household's income is going toward housing, including 14.4 percent who are spending more than 40 percent.

- Less than 10 percent: 4.5 percent
- 10 to 20 percent: 15.3 percent
- 20 to 25 percent: 22.6 percent
- 25 to 30 percent: 16.8 percent
- 30 to 35 percent: 11.0 percent
- 35 to 40 percent: 7.4 percent
- 40 to 50 percent: 6.9 percent
- More than 50 percent: 7.5 percent
- I own my home and am mortgage-free: 8.0 percent



Question No. 14: If you are living in a rental unit now, is your monthly rent above what you can afford, at what you can afford, or below what you can afford?

Results: This question was asked to understand renters' perceptions of their own spending on housing. About 41 percent of renters believe they are paying more than they can afford.

- Above what I can afford: 41.1 percent
- At what I can afford: 52.5 percent
- Below what I can afford: 6.4 percent

Question No. 15: If you are living in a rental unit, do you continue to rent because you can't afford to buy a house?

Results: This question was asked to get an idea of whether housing prices are keeping renters from moving into homeownership — and to what degree. Seventy-six percent answered in the affirmative.

- Yes: 76.4 percent
- No: 11.5 percent
- Don't know or no opinion: 12.1 percent

Question No. 16: If you are living in a rental unit, do you continue to rent because you can't find a house to buy?

Results: This question was asked to get an idea of whether the lack of housing choices is keeping renters from moving into homeownership — and to what degree. Seventy-three percent answered in the affirmative.

- Yes: 72.8 percent
- No: 14.4 percent
- Don't know or no opinion: 12.8 percent

Question No. 17: If you (or someone you know) has recently been seeking rental housing in Our Valley, what are the greatest challenges?

Results: This question was asked to as a follow-up to Questions No. 15 and 16 to determine which challenges are the biggest obstacles for people seeking a home to rent. Respondents could select more than answer.

1. Overall cost of renting : 67.7 percent
2. Inadequate supply of rentals: 60.1 percent
3. Poor quality of available rental housing: 44.6 percent
4. Down payment such as 1st and last month's rent: 36.2 percent
5. Finding a rental with the right number of bedrooms: 34.1 percent
6. Fees for rental applications: 27.0 percent
7. Distance from potential housing to work, schools or other services: 26.4 percent
8. Fees for rental waiting lists: 23.4 percent
9. Poor credit or inadequate credit: 17.9 percent
10. Access to transportation: 13.5 percent
11. Background check for rental applications: 12.6 percent
- 12 Other: 8.7 percent

Question No. 18: If you have a home mortgage, is your monthly mortgage above what you can afford, at what you can afford, or below what you can afford?

Results: This question was asked to understand homeowners' perceptions of their own spending on housing. About 28 percent of homeowners believe they are paying more than they can afford.

- Above what I can afford: 28.0 percent
- At what I can afford: 60.3 percent
- Below what I can afford: 11.7 percent

Question No. 19: If you or someone you know has recently been seeking to purchase housing (e.g., single-family home, condo, town home, etc.) in Our Valley, what are the greatest challenges?

Results: This question was asked to as a follow-up to Question No. 18 to determine which challenges are the biggest obstacles for people seeking to buy a home. Respondents could select more than answer.

1. Inadequate supply of reasonably priced homes: 69.5 percent
2. Overall cost of housing: 69.5 percent
3. Inadequate supply of homes: 54.3 percent
4. Poor quality of available housing for purchase: 35.4 percent
5. Not the right-sized house or type of house: 31.6 percent
6. Distance from potential housing to work, schools or other services: 18.5 percent
7. Finding a lender: 14.5 percent
8. Inadequate credit: 13.1 percent
9. Access to transportation: 12.4 percent
10. Other: 4.4 percent

Question No. 20: If you do NOT live in the town or area where you work, what has kept you from moving closer to your work?

Results: This question was asked to determine why some people are not living close to where they work and whether housing plays a role in that arrangement. Respondents could select more than answer.

1. I can't afford to live in the town where I work.: 37.9 percent
2. I can't find a home to buy or rent in the town where I work.: 33.5 percent
3. I am happy living where I am and don't want to live in the community where I work.: 30.1 percent
4. My commute doesn't take too long.: 28.9 percent
5. I am able to work remotely.: 23.0 percent
6. Link Transit service fits my transportation needs.: 14.0 percent
7. I car pool with others.: 9.1 percent
8. I bike to work.: 2.9 percent
9. Other: 9.8 percent

Question No. 21: What kinds of services and amenities located close to where you live are most important to you?

Results: This question was asked to understand survey respondents' perceptions of what services and amenities in close proximity to their homes are important to them. Respondents could select more than answer.

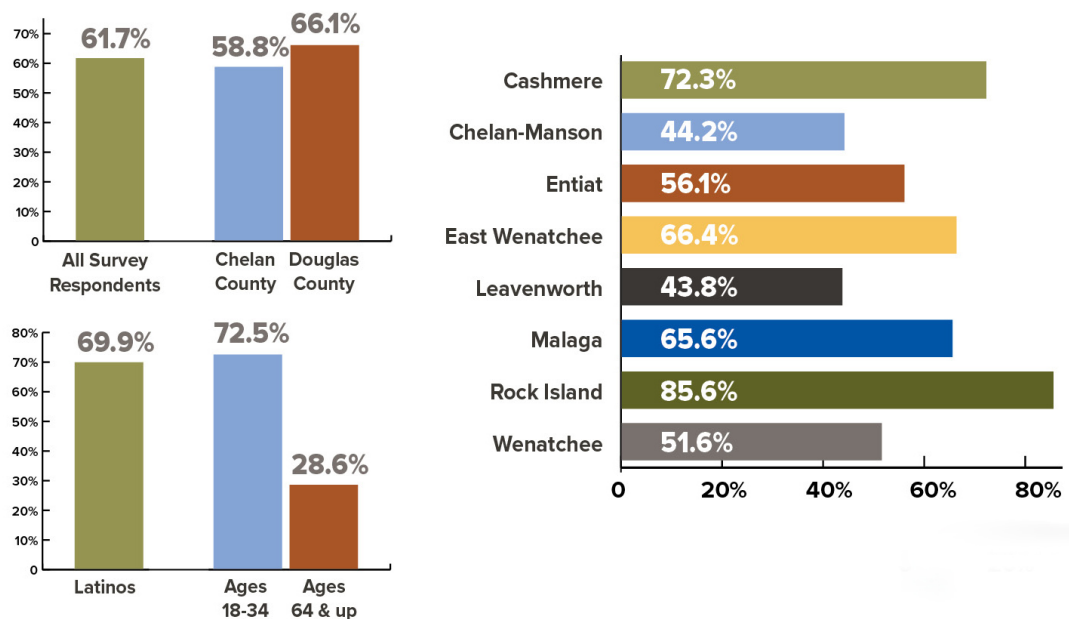
1. Grocery stores: 72.1 percent
2. Employment / jobs: 55.4 percent

3. Shops & restaurants: 47.4 percent
4. Medical facilities: 45.9 percent
5. Parks & Recreation facilities: 41.3 percent
6. Trails: 39.0 percent
6. Schools: 39.0 percent
8. Entertainment: 26.4 percent
9. Public transportation: 26.2 percent
10. Libraries: 22.9 percent
11. Parking: 19.1 percent
12. Child care/Pre-school: 18.7 percent
13. Places of worship: 14.5 percent
14. Social services: 13.5 percent
15. Other: 2.3 percent

Question No. 22: Given the cost and availability of housing in Our Valley, have you considered relocating to another city (inside or outside our region) at any time within the past two years?

Results: This question was asked to gauge how deeply the housing crisis in the region is impacting people. A significant majority (62 percent) say they have considered relocating due to housing issues. One-third of respondents (33 percent) say they have not considered relocating.

Survey respondents who **have considered relocating** to another city (inside or outside our region) at any time over the past two years due to housing:



Question No. 23: How have you, your family or your business or organization been affected by the challenge of housing affordability and availability in Our Valley?

Results: Below are several of the stories written by survey respondents. For the rest of the stories, please see **Page 23**.

- My husband and I have been married almost five years now. We have been working hard to save as much as we can for a down payment for a home, while trying to pay off student loans. We finally have enough for a down payment but there aren't any homes in our price range. We have been beat out on every offer we have submitted by a non-local, all-cash buyer. It's been a very defeating experience so far. We want to expand our family, but we can't in our 700-square-foot rental. Hopefully, we will find a house soon, but the market has got to give.
 - I earn a decent salary but cannot afford to rent on my own in Wenatchee. I could, but the majority of my income would go to basic subsistence. This is the case for many people here. When we have to put all of our money towards basic subsistence, we aren't supporting any local businesses. It's great for property managers, but not so great for other local businesses.
 - If you sell your house now, you can no longer afford to buy another. The cost of housing in the valley is no longer affordable for people that actually live here.
 - I have lived in Leavenworth for 3 years and have had to move about every six months because I cannot find a stable, long-term rental that I can afford. The places I've lived have sometimes lacked basic amenities. I am currently putting a third of my take-home income towards housing, but I don't even have a kitchen or bathroom in my living space.
 - My fiancé and I were homeless for almost two-and-a-half years. The cost of housing is so bad, and the constant of being turned away because of poor credit was devastating. We lost our dog, our home, and most everything we had. We were blessed with assistance from Catholic Charities to cover last month's rent and the deposit for our current apartment. I haven't been unemployed for even a minute during all this time, but living paycheck to paycheck makes things impossible to get better.
 - I moved to Wenatchee for a new job just prior to the pandemic. I managed to find a very modest rental I could afford and hoped to find a home in the near future. Unfortunately, the housing and rental market both have experienced nothing but rate increases that far outpace wage rates. It's unsustainable and I find myself and my wife stuck in a neighborhood surrounded by barking dogs and abandoned vehicles in the street. I've also watched homelessness increase, car prowls become more prevalent, and have seen the desperation in the eyes of the homeless in the valley. Where is our valley's promise of a future for them, and all of us?
- =
- I'm a Realtor so it directly affects me trying to help families get creative within their budget. Honestly if I hadn't built four years ago a small home under 1,000 square

feet, there is no way I would be able to afford to live here with how expensive everything is now. We are now seeing middle-class families and people with very good local careers not being able to afford homes due to the significant price increases. We have a demand versus supply issue and we haven't addressed infrastructure or how to grow our communities in a smart manner. Large homes on tiny lots are not the solution. Smaller homes that effectively use space and homes under \$450,000 are definitely needed.

- My landlord just raised my rent. Utility costs are going up as well. I am the only person in my household with a job. If my rent goes up even \$50 more, I will be forced to move into a home with another family.
- I recently purchased a home outside of Wenatchee, creating a one-hour commute. I did so because there is no affordable housing in Wenatchee. Homes priced in my range (approximately \$240,000) need to be remodeled or torn down. A \$200,000 home cannot be lived in.
- Our grandchildren who are in their late 20s and 30s cannot find rentals nor adequately save enough for the purchase as housing costs outpace wages. They are forced to crowd in homes with too few bedrooms and baths, revamp garden sheds into bedrooms, or sleep in trailers.
- I am retired and wish to sell my house, which has more square feet than I need. I cannot afford to purchase a smaller sized house as the costs are too high. There are few or no condos available for purchase in this valley. Therefore I am stuck in a large house that I no longer want to live in. I have no options.
- I work in social services. Many of my clients have had rent increases that have priced them out of their homes. Sometimes these increases are \$200 to \$300 or more at a time. This is very hard for seniors or disabled people on a fixed income.

Question No. 24: What is your age?

Results:

- 18 to 24: 5.0 percent
- 25 to 34: 25.4 percent
- 35 to 44: 24.7 percent
- 45 to 54: 17.7 percent
- 55 to 64: 15.4 percent
- 65 to 74: 8.5 percent
- 75 or older: 1.9 percent
- Prefer not to say: 1.4 percent

Question No. 25: What is your race or ethnicity?

Results:

- White: 61.5 percent
- Latino, Hispanic or Spanish origin: 24.7 percent
- American Indian/Alaska Native: 4.0 percent
- African-American or Black: 1.9 percent
- Asian: 0.7 percent
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander: 0.9 percent
- Other: 1.1 percent
- Prefer not to say: 5.2 percent

Question No. 26: How long have you lived in Our Valley?

Results:

- 0-2 years: 6.6 percent
- 3-5 years: 16.9 percent
- 5-10 years: 18.5 percent
- 10-15 years: 12.7 percent
- 15-20 years: 8.3 percent
- 20-30 years: 17.6 percent
- 30-50 years: 14.7 percent
- More than 50 years: 4.7 percent

Question No. 27: In what part of the Our Valley do you live or stay?

Results:

- Cashmere: 6.2 percent
- Chelan: 5.2 percent
- Dryden: 2.1 percent
- East Wenatchee: 25.5 percent
- Entiat: 4.2 percent
- Lake Wenatchee: 2.7 percent
- Leavenworth: 7.1 percent
- Malaga: 3.6 percent
- Manson: 2.2 percent
- Monitor: 0.9 percent
- Orondo: 2.9 percent
- Peshastin: 1.4 percent
- Plain: 0.7 percent
- Quincy: 0.3 percent
- Rock Island: 1.7 percent

- Waterville: 1.4 percent
- Wenatchee: 29.8 percent
- Unincorporated area in Chelan County: 0.9 percent
- Unincorporated area in Douglas County: 0.9 percent
- Other (please specify): 0.4 percent

Question No. 28: In what community do you work?

Results:

- Cashmere: 3.6 percent
- Chelan: 6.2 percent
- Dryden: 3.8 percent
- East Wenatchee: 12.1 percent
- Entiat: 3.9 percent
- Lake Wenatchee: 2.3 percent
- Leavenworth: 8.4 percent
- Malaga: 1.5 percent
- Manson: 3.2 percent
- Monitor: 1.0 percent
- Orondo: 1.4 percent
- Peshastin: 0.8 percent
- Plain: 0.5 percent
- Quincy: 0.7 percent
- Rock Island: 0.4 percent
- Waterville: 0.5 percent
- Wenatchee: 35.7 percent
- Unincorporated area in Chelan County: 0.5 percent
- Unincorporated area in Douglas County: 0.3 percent
- Other (such as "retired" or "unemployed" or a city outside of Chelan and Douglas counties): 13.0 percent

Question No. 29: What is your approximate average household income?

Results:

- \$0 to \$9,999: 1.0 percent
- \$10,000 to \$24,999: 6.7 percent
- \$25,000 to \$49,999: 23.1 percent
- \$50,000 to \$74,999: 20.0 percent
- \$75,000 to \$99,999: 17.3 percent
- \$100,000 to \$124,999: 10.9 percent
- \$125,000 to \$149,999: 5.8 percent
- \$150,000 to \$174,999: 4.1 percent
- \$175,000 to \$199,999: 2.4 percent
- \$200,000 and up: 2.8 percent
- Prefer not to say: 5.7 percent

Comparison: Chelan County vs. Douglas County

The 2022 Regional Housing Survey asked respondents where they live, which allowed OVOF to take a look at any differences in how Chelan County and Douglas County respondents answered questions. For the most part, the results from the individual counties match up well with the results overall. For example, similarly large majorities of respondents in both counties see housing availability and affordability as a major issue facing the region. More than 90 percent of respondents in both counties believe the large spike in median home sale prices since 2017 is a problem today. And more than 85 percent in both counties favor more diverse housing types becoming available.

But cross-tabulating the results also revealed a few distinctions between how people in each county perceives housing challenges and solutions. Those include:

- Forty-three percent of Douglas County survey respondents say they are spending more than 30 percent of their household income on housing vs. 27 percent of Chelan County survey respondents.
- Fewer survey respondents in Douglas County say they are willing to financially support new affordable housing and new infrastructure than those in Chelan County — 39 percent to 49 percent. When responses from people who answered “Maybe” to the question are factored in, the differences between the two counties is less — 71 percent among Douglas County respondents vs. 76 percent among Chelan County respondents.
- A tax on the highest earners in the community as a way to pay for new affordable housing and new infrastructure is the most popular choice among both Douglas County respondents (64 percent) and Chelan County respondents (57 percent).
- When asked what steps to improve housing affordability and availability they support, the top choice among Chelan County respondents is building more non-traditional housing (such as ADUs, container homes, courtyard housing), while increasing housing subsidies for low- and moderate-income residents is the top choice for Douglas County residents.
- There was more interest among Chelan County survey respondents in building an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) than among Douglas County survey respondents. About 52 percent of Chelan County respondents say they are either extremely interested, very interested or moderately interested in building an ADU vs. 41 percent of Douglas County residents.

Comparison: Communities and Subgroups in the Region

The following results were generated by comparing how people who are residing in different communities and are part of different subgroups (for example: younger adults, Latinos, renters) answered survey questions.

Question No. 9: As a taxpayer, would you be willing to financially support new affordable housing in your community along with new infrastructure (roads, utilities) for housing?

Results: About 35 percent of people living in single family homes say they are willing to financially support steps to add more affordable housing in the region, and 32 percent said “maybe,” while 56 people of living in apartments say they are willing to financially support steps to add more affordable housing in the region, and 23 percent of apartment dwellers said “maybe.”

Question No. 10: If you answered ‘yes’ or ‘maybe’ in the above Question, which of the following actions would you support that would generate funding to address Our Valley’s affordable housing needs?

Results: Just 23 percent of those living in single-family homes support an increase in the property tax, while 58 percent back a tax on the highest earners in the community. Of those renting an apartment, 49 percent support a tax on the highest earners, 47 percent support an increase in the property tax, and 43 percent support an increase in the sales tax.

Question No. 13: What percentage of your total annual household income would you estimate is spent on housing (either rent or mortgage)?

Results: 44 percent of the survey respondents who self-identify as Latino say they are spending more than 30 percent of their household income on housing. Below is a breakdown for other subgroups and communities.

- All survey respondents: 32.8 percent
- Chelan County: 27.1 percent
- Douglas County: 42.7 percent
- Cashmere: 31.6 percent
- Chelan-Manson: 22.1 percent
- Entiat: 21.9 percent
- East Wenatchee: 42.6 percent
- Leavenworth: 27.6 percent
- Malaga: 24.6 percent
- Rock Island: 42.9 percent
- Wenatchee: 33.5 percent
- Latinos: 43.7 percent
- Ages 18 to 34: 31.5 percent

- Ages 64 and up: 15.1 percent

Question No. 21: What kinds of services and amenities located close to where you live are most important to you?

Results: Survey respondents between the ages of 18 and 34 ranked these services and amenities as the ones they most want close to where they live:

- Employment / jobs — 62.5 percent
- Grocery stores — 61.8 percent
- Shops & restaurants — 52.2 percent
- Parks & Recreation facilities — 37.7 percent
- Entertainment — 37.2 percent

Results: Survey respondents between the ages of 64 on up ranked these services and amenities as the ones they most want close to where they live:

- Grocery stores — 89.8 percent
- Medical facilities — 76.6 percent
- Parks & Recreation facilities — 51.1 percent
- Shops & restaurants — 48.9 percent
- Trails— 38.7 percent

Question No. 22: Given the cost and availability of housing in Our Valley, have you considered relocating to another city (inside or outside our region) at any time within the past two years?

Results: Of survey respondents between the ages of 18 and 34, 73 percent say they have considered relocating. A similar percentage — 70 percent — of Latino respondents say the same. That compares with 62 percent of overall survey respondents.

- All survey respondents: 61.7 percent
- Chelan County: 58.8 percent
- Douglas County: 66.1 percent
- Cashmere: 72.3 percent
- Chelan-Manson: 44.2 percent
- East Wenatchee: 66.4 percent
- Entiat: 56.1 percent
- Leavenworth: 43.8 percent
- Malaga: 65.6 percent
- Rock Island: 85.6 percent
- Wenatchee: 51.6 percent
- Latinos: 69.9 percent
- Ages 18 to 34: 72.5 percent
- Ages 64 and up: 28.6 percent

Comparison: 2017 vs. 2022 Surveys

In 2017, Our Valley Our Future conducted a similar housing survey, which was completed by 1,690 people residing in Chelan and Douglas counties. Some of the same questions from 2017 were asked in the 2022 surveys. Here is a comparison of how residents answered those questions in each of those years:

Importance of Housing Issues

In 2017, 71.1 percent of survey respondents said the issue of housing availability and affordability is “extremely important” for the community. Another 23.4 percent labeled it as “important.”

In 2022, 69 percent of survey respondents said the issue of housing availability and affordability is “extremely important” for the community. Another 21 percent labeled it as “important.”

Relocating to Another Place

In 2017, 45.2 percent of the respondents said they had recently considered relocating to another city or town, while 49.1 percent said they had not. 5.7 percent said they weren’t sure or had no opinion.

In 2022, 62 percent of the respondents said they have recently considered relocating to another city or town, while 33 percent said they had not. Five percent said they weren’t sure or had no opinion.

Income Devoted to Housing

In 2017, 46 percent of respondents indicated they were spending more than 30 percent of their household income on housing (either mortgage or rent) — including 23.4 percent spending more than 40 percent.

In 2022, 33 percent of respondents indicated they were spending more than 30 percent of their household income on housing (either mortgage or rent) — including 14 percent spending more than 40 percent.

Paying for Housing

In 2017, 45 percent of respondents said they would be willing to help finance new infrastructure (roads, utilities) so that more land could be opened up for housing. A total of 22.7 percent answered “No” to that question and 21.7 percent said they were not sure or had no opinion.

In 2022, 43 percent of respondents said they would be willing to help finance new infrastructure and affordable housing. Thirty-one percent answered “Maybe” to the question. Eighteen percent answered “No” to that question and 5 percent said they were not sure or had no opinion.



Personal Housing Stories

Question No. 23: How have you, your family or your business or organization been affected by the challenge of housing affordability and availability in Our Valley?

Results: More than 350 residents wrote their own personal housing stories — some short in length, some longer — in response to this question. Here is what they wrote:

- We are a two working parent family with three children. We have been searching for a home for the past two years while prices and rent continue to climb at a crazy rate. We love this valley but are now forced to look outside the community we know and love. We grew up in our current community and now are being forced out by unrealistic rental and purchase prices.
- My husband obtained an excellent position in Wenatchee but is living in our motorhome. It was nearly impossible to find anything in or near Wenatchee. It felt like fate was smiling upon us when we found a place to park with amenities. We have a house in another county but cannot find a comparable home that is affordable. We are currently living separately and commuting to visit with each other and our child on weekends. We'd love to make Wenatchee our permanent home and plan for all of us to move up there but when and how are now questions that feel unanswerable.
- Too many homes are investor-owned for maximum return on investment. We should encourage owner-occupied homes that enable people to live and be a part of a neighborhood, engaged in their church, school, civic group, or sporting group.

- We live in a home built by Upper Valley MEND in 2006. Otherwise we couldn't afford to be here.
- I am a single mom trying to find an affordable apartment all while working, going to college and being a single parent. It is incredibly hard to get into income-based apartments. I have been trying for well over a year.
- My parents are having to sell their home as it is too expensive to continue to live in their neighborhood in Leavenworth, but they can't find anything affordable on a fixed income anywhere else in the valley now.
- Currently living with my parents, trying to save up money to afford a house. The price of a house is way out of my budget that I can afford.
- Our married adult kids couldn't find or afford a house so we all bought a house together. Living with three generations of family.
- I became homeless because rent is not affordable for a single parent.
- My husband and I relocated back to the valley in early 2021. We were living in Bellevue previously. When we knew COVID would be around for a while and I was able to work remotely we decided to start the process of moving back, to be close to our families. We were blessed enough to buy a house within our price range, but if we would've waited a year, we would have been priced out. My husband works for a company in town where they do not pay him enough for the cost of living in this area. We are lucky that my wage covers more than half of our bills. I'm currently expecting a baby and have fears we may not be able to pay all of our bills when the baby comes because I will be on leave. This housing issue is also an employer issue. Employers need to be pay their employees a living wage.
- It is hard to find staff for the hospital. No one can afford rents.
- My employer provides my housing. I'd like to move off site to have more work and life balance. I have been unable to find a home to buy or rent that I can afford. I make approximately \$64,000 a year and still cannot afford the rents folks are asking for. The cost of owning a house seems too far out of reach for me.
- My son shares a dwelling that is owned by a slumlord and the rent is too high. Housing should feel safe and be compatible with life and health. During the pandemic, I met two brothers who were commuting from Brewster to work at the mass vaccination site. They could not find affordable housing to move to Wenatchee. What a shame, wasting all that time and fuel while they were providing a service to our community and our valley.
- I can only afford to live in employer-provided housing. Vail in the winter leases homes in Leavenworth. River Rider provides RV and camping space in summer. When I retire in five years, these will not be available.

- My husband and I just purchased our first home last week. Because of the current market, our monthly mortgage will be higher than we were hoping. Although it's within our budget, our monthly credits and debits are about equal. This means it will be difficult to save money. The reason we wanted to purchase a home in the first place was because our previous rental situation was ridiculously expensive for such a small space, and we were basically throwing money away. At least now that we're homeowners, and we can begin building equity. Nevertheless, the current affordability and availability of Wenatchee Valley homes is abysmal. It's crazy to me that the house we purchased was literally half as expensive only four years ago. Now the house is not even brand new, and yet it's twice as pricy in the year 2022. It's quite discouraging that this is our reality, and I so wish action would be taken to alleviate the insanity of the housing market.
- I moved back to Wenatchee from college in December 2020 to accept a new job. I moved back in with my parents for what I thought would be a short period of time. That was until I could buy a house, duplex, or condo with the money I am saving. It has been 1.5 years now and the average cost of a single family home has gone up \$152,000 since December 2020, according to realtor.com. Even if I were to finance a house with a normal down payment of 20 percent, that means I would need to save \$30,400 per year just to keep up with the increasing prices. I am unable to do this, even with a gross income just shy of \$70,000 per year, due to other expenses such as food, rent, and car insurance. Even housing units that need complete remodels are selling for more than I can afford. After investigating who is buying them via the Chelan County parcel viewer, I see that corporations, generally outside of this valley, are buying them up to 30 percent more than asking value as an investment, and not as a home. The main way the pandemic has played a role in this increase, from my observations, is the greater amount of people with remote work jobs able to telecommute from their home. With the exceptional climate and the vast amount of amenities the Wenatchee Valley has to offer, I cannot blame more people from higher density, higher income areas, for moving here. The frustrating part is the massive influx of money from these higher income areas and corporations are pricing me out of my home town.
- When my retired father (excellent credit history, referral from prior landlords, and cash assets) moved to the area to be closer to his kids, it took three of us to be able to purchase a home for him to live in. While we looked for a purchase option, it took a miracle to find rental housing for him because his income mostly derives from Social Security. Even with me (full time employed with more than 20 years at current employer, excellent credit, no mortgage or rental obligations, and debt-free) as a co-signer, we could not find anyone who was willing to rent to him because the rents were more than one-third of his Social Security income. I don't know how anyone actually obtains housing here if that's not good enough.
- Our apartment building was bought by a Bellevue company and our rent was doubled and there were no improvements to our unit. Our rent was doubled and that money is going out of this town to make rich cities richer.

- Home and property valuations are increasing rapidly. While we can afford our mortgage, we are worried that rising property valuations are causing property taxes to rise rapidly as well. We are beginning to wonder if we will be able to continue to afford our home. On the other hand, we could not afford to rent in this valley either.
- I live in Wenatchee and I had to sell my house because of a divorce and now I have to move to Quincy or Ephrata because I can't afford to rent an apartment as I don't make three times the \$1,200 rent. As I also can't afford to buy a new home, I've been forced out of my own town. It stresses my kids out because they have to change schools. I'm afraid we will end up like Seattle with half the people living in squalor and the other half being well off. The middle class has been squeezed out.
- I work in social services. Many of my clients have had rent increases that have priced them out of their homes. Sometimes these increases are \$200 to \$300 or more at a time. This is very hard for seniors or disabled people on a fixed income.
- We moved here from Georgia and began looking for a home four years ago. There were eight homes on the market in our price range. We were lucky enough to contact an owner with a for-sale-by-owner property on the first morning they posted online, viewed the home, and had an agreement after two days only because the owner decided not to take the higher bid from a site-unseen offer from California. They wanted to sell to a family with kids and help build the neighborhood. The house required complete replumbing, HVAC, and major electrical just for livability, and the price was steep to begin with. It is a small home on a busy street, but given that we know other families who cannot even get an offer looked at and are raising multiple kids in 1 and 2 bedroom apartments, we feel lucky. The market here has similar dynamics to the market in downtown Atlanta, where we moved from. Except it's not Atlanta, but a rural town in central Washington.
- Local housing is not affordable for a single person working minimum wage, let alone families who may rely solely on one income, but even with a dual income it can be very challenging. The wait list for section 8 housing is years long.
- The housing crisis struck just as I had finally reached a place of financial stability, not necessarily conformable, but I had enough. I had my sights set on working toward buying a home — something I'd honestly never considered possible. The housing crisis struck, and I feel like that glimmer of hope is gone. Did you know that there's effectively one law firm in Seattle with hundreds of LLCs who are buying up tons of property here? Search through public records through the assessor's website. I see families in my apartment complex being forced out by repeated rent increases that they can't afford. A father shed tears on my doorstep while his son translated, expressing his fear in not knowing how to make rent. Please, please help the people of this valley. We have to do something.
- I live in a tiny crappy apartment that is 800 square feet for 3 people and costs over \$1,200 a month. I can't afford to move and even if I could houses and apartments are too expensive to have a good option. I have to work 3 jobs while going to school

full time to afford my tiny crappy apartment. More affordable housing is a necessity immediately.

- I am local teacher and 50 percent of my income goes to rent. I love my job and town but I am considering relocating across the country because I cannot afford to buy a house on my single income. I don't want to leave but I feel staying is financially impossible.
- We bought years ago before the housing market skyrocketed. However, I know many families that are not that fortunate. They are unable to rent, or even consider buying a home in today's market, The wealthy will be fine. I think this will play havoc in our communities. There will be an increase in crime and greater homeless encampments. We are already seeing this.
- Growing up in the Wenatchee Valley we have moved about 10 times. As we were a family of 7, as a young child I would constantly hear about the worries that my parents had when they were unable to pay the rent. My parents attempted to buy a home twice (as paying too much rent with 5 kids was not sustainable). Unfortunately, my parents speaking only Spanish buying a home in the early 2000s was not easy. My parents were not only misguided, but were given misinformation. The person that was helping them with the deal ended up scamming them and keeping the thousands of dollars my parents had trusted in them. After this failed, we moved to East Wenatchee where we continued to move around to 4 or 5 different homes. All with the issues of access to language, having little to no credit, and having to pay multiple application waivers just to be denied a request. My mother now, is in the process of finally, after almost 30 years of residing in Washington, is in the process of buying a home. The feeling that your parents won't be able to afford where you live, or the anxieties of getting evicted, are some feelings that community members seeking housing should never have to face.
- My friends have allowed me to park my camper on their land. I've lived in the valley for 10 years and all of my housing has been through the generosity of others. I work full time in a professional job and still can't afford to purchase a small home.
- We relocated here eight years ago. If I was offered a job now, I would likely either have to decline area due to affordable and available housing or live in area that was not safe or adequate.
- I am a working professional with full time employment and a higher education degree. In spite of this, I cannot afford to buy a home any time in the near future. Rent prices are absurd. With my income, I should be able to at least rent something affordable, but I have been unable to do so. The cost of rent prevents me from saving any additional money toward one day buying a house. I have started sacrificing other needs in my life to set aside small savings just so that I can afford to move out of the Wenatchee Valley area to a more affordable region.
- I'm 65 years old, have lived in the Wenatchee area since 1974, and live in a travel trailer in an RV Park because it's the only thing I can afford on my income.

- The private home and property appraisal sector, along with realtors, have too much influence over market values. That's a big contributor to why we see such a drastic increase in home costs. They are supported quietly by local governments for increased property tax revenues. I believe that it's government's job to control greed and gouging where it can, like housing, energy and basic commodities costs. I fully support free markets and private ownership along with government oversight and involvement.
- I was unable to purchase a home because I made too little. Then I got a degree and a new good-paying job and I still can't afford to buy a house because they are now too expensive even after everyone said to go to college to get a good paying job so you can afford a house.
- My granddaughter and I are basically homeless. We stay with family or friends due to the high cost of rent. We are on the Section 8 low income apartment waiting list. We have been for 9 months. We are not looking for handouts or a free ride. We just someplace to call home and our own beds to sleep in. For a reasonable price. Why is that too much to ask for?
- We are elderly landlords and own 10 units (SFR and duplexes). We have been seriously affected by rules and regulations regarding how landlords can operate their properties. We are considering selling the properties if regulations upon landlords continue to become more onerous.
- The biggest issue is childcare. It is really hard to find child care and it is really expensive.
- Despite earning over six figures with perfect credit, we feel priced out of Wenatchee. We currently rent and would need to majorly downgrade to purchase a home here that would fit our family and how we dream of using our first home. We feel uncertain, not knowing if now is the time to buy or wait and hope things level out. We feel frustrated by the market being driven up by people from outside the community buying up homes as investments when we had hoped to live here for many more years. The state of the housing market here has made other states look very attractive and we are considering moving closer to family out of state because of it.
- Our son and daughter-in-law are paying an incredible amount in rent. There should be a cap on what landlords can charge. They are unable to purchase due to the astronomical amount houses are selling for in our area! They both work full-time, and can't afford to buy. Heartbreaking.
- I moved to the valley for a job in 2018, and rented for \$300 per month. Since then my rent has gone up to \$700. I would like to buy but the supply is limited and the prices are too high. I commute to Entiat via bike and bus.
- I've been waiting for 8 months to find affordable housing. I'm in the rapid rehousing

program, HEN eligible, but no affordable housing or private landlords will utilize the program. Help your homeless. Don't just complain they are sleeping on your street and try to run them off to another county. Stop allowing short term rentals or vacation homes. Real people need real housing.

- Fortunately I have been able to afford a manufactured home in a nicer area. Before that I was renting apartments and I had to move twice due to extreme rent increases.
- In order to live in this area, a person has to bring a skill set that enables them to make a wage commensurate with what the economy demands. There's many high paying jobs going unfulfilled. It's really unfortunate but unskilled jobs don't bring a living wage to this community and welfare won't solve it. I worked two jobs and my wife worked one in order for us to buy a home.
- I continue to work hard every day so I can try some day to buy a house
- Short term rentals are disturbing the peace and must be stopped. Our neighbor rents his house for \$6,000 a week and we have to suffer through the noise of partying vacationers.
- The lack of affordable housing prompted us to buy raw land and build. It's been over two years and our home has still not been completed. It took over 18 months for the county to issue a permit for our non-custom kit home.
- My partner and I were homeless. We had previously lived in a one-bedroom garage apartment and paid the entirety of the property tax for a luxury five-bedroom log cabin to the owner who lived full time in the main house. We couldn't afford the housing on VRBOs housekeeping wages and couldn't find an alternative in Leavenworth because nobody wanted to rent long term because they made more on renting short term. We could not afford the commute out to Lake Wenatchee. Our lives were destroyed. We were able to get back on our feet due to the Community Action Council.
- Real estate market is consolidating to larger and fewer companies, reducing market competition. Money from the west side is coming over and driving up prices and driving development, while the locals who actually live here have no say and are "along for the ride" — as long as we can continue to afford it. The minute we can't, we are forced to move, and if lucky, stay in the area. Those disinterested in community are those who own the houses (often empty) and decide the direction of development and change in the community.
- Some of our friends would love to move here but cannot afford to.
- It took me five months to find an apartment that I could afford and my rent is extremely expensive (\$1,400 a month) and I am still surrounded by homelessness and loud cars. This has caused me stress and uneasiness.

- The pressure of renting makes me feel that my standard of living has decreased.
- I am currently living at a family's shed/cottage. Since I moved here, I've been searching for a home but have not had much luck finding anything livable in my budget. I also can't compete against people who offer cash. Finding someone to rent is just as bad and nearly impossible, especially due to the fact I have multiple pets.
- Before COVID-19, our income as a couple could afford the rent without pressure. However, after the decrease of our income in the following two years, the rent is a big problem for us now.
- We had to buy a larger house so that my mother could live with us as she was having trouble finding affordable housing on a retired teacher's income.
- The stress of renting is really causing anxiety, and with COVID-19, it feels like life is a mess.
- My husband and I are expecting a new baby this fall. We have two dogs and a cat. I finished with my bachelor's degree in 2020 and relocated here in 2021 since my husband was born and raised in Wenatchee. It took us over a year to find a place within our budget. We now rent a small house and are looking for a home of our own. Our rent is increasing starting in June and although I would say our combined income is reasonable, we still can't afford to live anywhere else or buy a home.
- I know the Wenatchee Valley Humane Society is overwhelmed with dogs right now and I wonder if it's because of Wenatchee's current housing situation.
- I am a Realtor. My clients have been adversely affected as they have had to make offers on many homes before finally winning a home, and by that point they are always having to settle for a home that is sub-par for their needs. The only thing that would help this is to have more people putting their homes up for sale (new homes are too expensive for most). But this place has been discovered and few want to give up their lifestyle here.
- I live with my parents at 45 years old because I can't find affordable housing or even an affordable piece of land to build on. Any land that I have found in the area is too expensive with the included costs for utility hookups. I would love to find a rural piece of land and be able to legally put a tiny home on it.
- We were lucky to find a big enough house for our family before COVID seemed to jack up the prices.
- We just moved to the community and found finding a decent home to buy below \$500,000 — that was not a fixer upper — frustrating. We ended up with a new construction.
- We work hard and purchased a home within our means. The only challenge we have

now is that our valley is being destroyed by so many houses being built. We loved our rural community and wish it would stay that way.

- We have been looking for a rental big enough for our family or a house to buy for 3 years and it just gets worse and worse. The greed is disgusting and we will likely be forced out of the valley away from family because we have no chance of affording rental housing or a mortgage at these prices.
- We have lived in Leavenworth for 11 years together and 8 years before. We have lived in two different rentals and now have to leave this one due to the rental being sold. No one takes pets, and things are way too expensive for the working class that keep Leavenworth running.
- After finally saving to purchase a new built home, going thru our lender, our builder upped the price \$40,000 before we could sign. The house had already been built and on market for awhile.
- The price of housing makes it unaffordable for my parents to purchase any home due to insufficient credit scores or the lack of having enough money for a huge house down payment. There doesn't seem to be enough affordable housing for low-medium income housing.
- My rent is going up by \$400 a month in August. I have two kids and two cats and I require three bedrooms. Unfortunately most apartments are 2 bedrooms for a minimum of \$1,500 a month and that's more than I can afford.
- Housing has killed my young adult life. I've tried to move away from my parents' home time and time again, but rental prices are twice that of mortgage payments
- I work at Stevens Pass in the winter and East Wenatchee in the summer. I live in a "shanty" of a cabin as far up the valley as you can get in Merritt. I have been looking to move or purchase a home in the valley for years but cost and inventory just aren't making it a possibility.
- I have been lucky to not have a personal housing crisis, though I moved to a much more costly unit two years ago to avoid regular violence at a previous building (drug related fighting and stabbing amongst neighbors). Now I pay double but I do feel safe.
- My husband and I moved to Wenatchee in 2015 and had to sign a year lease, sight unseen because the rental market at our budget price point was very limited. We were both fortunate enough to secure jobs with good pay and saved enough for a down payment in 2017. Since then, our home value has more than doubled. If we had waited to buy or been unable to get into the market, there's no way we'd be able to afford a down payment now because of the elevated cost of the housing market and day care. We're now a family of 3 with another on the way. As it is, we'll be spending more on day care than housing in the near future. We refinanced to take advantage of better interest rates and our mortgage is about \$1,650 a month.

Day care with 2 kids will be \$2,300 a month. We're fortunate. I have no idea how single-parent families can afford to live here.

- I am remodeling. The cost of permits and lumber is very high. The previous owner did not follow codes and I am paying extremely high costs to redo everything correctly.
- I would love to be a homeowner some day. I work a very good job and get good pay but it still isn't enough in this market. I continue to look at houses and they cost way too much. I am unable to rent because that means I would never be able to save up enough money to pay for a down payment. I'm very thankful to have the privilege to be able to stay at home and hopefully save enough money to buy my first home. This isn't how it should be, though. I should be able to be pay rent and be able to save money to eventually buy a home. There just is not affordable housing and rentals in our valley
- It seems that it's a free market to anyone with money to continue to outbid community members who want to actually live and work in this area, not just get rich. How can an apartment building that was just built in 2021 get sold for \$2 million? All I see is greed in this community. I really hate what it's turning into. You can build "affordable" housing, but do the hardest workers of our community deserve ugly housing when we profit off the labor of their hard work? No, they deserve to be land owners, home owners that live inside not on the outskirts in some ugly housing development.
- I was born and raised in Wenatchee. My grandparents have hosted a revolving stream of family members who can't afford anywhere else to live. These are family members with college degrees and jobs that provide value to our community, and yet they still can't afford to rent or purchase suitable housing.
- My family bought a single family home in 2004. We cannot afford to move anywhere else in the valley even with the equity we have in the current house. Our best move would be to leave the Wenatchee Valley if we want to improve our housing. Salaries in the Wenatchee Valley have not kept up with the changes in housing cost or the most recent increase in costs for food and fuel.
- I am a disabled, single mother of two. I cannot afford to live on my own with my current fixed income. My father had to move in with me in order for me to cover rental costs. If we were to have to move right now we wouldn't be able to afford another rental at the costs currently. We are stuck where we are with zero affordable homes to purchase in our budget.
- I am a nurse at Central Washington Hospital. Nurses who come to Wenatchee like the area. But they have a hard time finding adequate places to rent or buy, which is a deterrent from moving here and becoming a permanent resident.
- I commute 35 minutes every day to East Wenatchee for work. I cannot find housing I can afford here.

- We made an offer on our property in November 2020. We didn't close until March because it was incredibly difficult to find a lender. Our property has an ADU (where my parents live) and a manufactured home (where I live). We had to take a really terrible five-year loan to close and we're worried about finding another lender in the next few years.
- Because the value of our home has increased dramatically in the past year, our property taxes have increased significantly. If they continue to increase, which they are most certain to do as house value increases, we may be forced to sell and relocate. We are retired and cannot increase our income as we are in our 80s.
- I see houses on the MLS that are pending. Then a month later they are for rent. So frustrating that companies are buying the few available single family homes and turning them into rentals. It's impossible for first-time home buyers to get in the market.
- It is truly tough to find a nice apartment for a decent price. All housing here is too pricey.
- From the moment I bought a house here in 2015, I watched the market closely because we were unable to get the fourth bedroom we need. The real estate company I bought my home from has clearly worked to create higher housing prices. It was like I was watching a rigging system. As a community we need to work to prevent realtors from pushing high prices.
- I can't rent the house I like, which makes me want to change my place to live.
- I've been back in the Wenatchee Valley for five years. I was at Eastmont during part of my high school years. I came back years later to a place I loved only to find that it is no longer like I remember. No longer could I find a place to live within a reasonable rate. Until finally I found a private owner that would take a chance on us. This state has so much it could do but chooses not to because it can't decide which way is up!
- COVID-19 is causing us a lot of trouble and making our economic situation worse.
- I've had to move back with family because I can't afford to live on my own or buy a house.
- I commute for work more than 2,400 miles a month on average. My biggest struggle is wanting to live where my personal activities are ending in my day. The hardest problem with that is constantly being in a tight budget and now with cost of goods going up, both housing and groceries and gas are a big chunk of my wages that I earn. So in order for me to sustain my well-being and happiness, I make a financial sacrifice by paying 40 percent of my income to rent because purchasing a house is near impossible. I couldn't imagine having a family to provide for, because I could not find a place to live if I had dependents. This housing market needs to change for our community as a whole to live a better, more fulfilled life.

- Not being able to rent the right place makes life feel bad.
- I can't buy a home in the valley. My landlord is selling the home I'm in for double what its value is. They gave me first right of refusal but the house isn't worth what they're asking. Nothing on the market that is available is pet friendly, and I have been literally rendered homeless. I have a great job in the valley and grew up in the area. The values of the homes here is disgusting. Seeing people from Seattle come in here and jack the price more and have bidding wars is disheartening. Thankful I have a family member to live with otherwise I would be living in my car with my dogs. I am a teacher who's technically homeless because of greed and politics.
- My rent costs are too high and my standard of living is falling.
- We were very very lucky. Through no design or preparation on our part, we were able to sell our home in the Puget Sound region and move home to Wenatchee where we now live within easy access to the places and people we love, and the services we use. This was a quirk of fate and the market — and the very same characteristics of the market that brought us our lucky circumstances — have left so many others, especially young people and working people, almost without hope of ever having stable, affordable housing. Decent, affordable housing shouldn't be a privilege or based on a twist of fate. It should be something all have access to. That's better for all of us!
- We lived with my mom for years in order to save up enough for a down payment. Luckily we bought our house pre-COVID because the price of housing now is even worse.
- I bought my house in East Wenatchee in 2014 when things were still semi-affordable. I started working in Winthrop two years ago with hopes of relocating there. However, even with the equity in my house there is nothing in the Methow I can afford so I have been commuting. I would not be able to afford my house in East Wenatchee if I had to buy it today.
- I cannot afford to rent on my own, no one can on a regular income. I also have wanted to purchase a home but prices are comical. My friend moved to Utah recently and she is paying the same for a 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom house with utilities for what she paid here for a 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom house.
- Our millennial-aged son cannot afford to purchase or rent in our community of Chelan. COVID-19 set him back further because he could not work a significant period. He lives with us because he cannot afford not to and because housing costs are increasing faster than his savings.
- I hire young people for seasonal work. Many cannot find a place to stay and end up living in trailers without water hookups or out of their trucks. I think our community needs a better option for young people who are working full time and cannot afford even to rent a bedroom. It could be a campground for residents only (not tourists)

or some other non-traditional arrangement. It's not just farm workers that need this help.

- I'm a single parent of two kids. I was only able to get into a 2-bedroom apartment at a price that I can barely afford after searching and waiting for four months.
- With the ridiculous rise in housing, we pray we can afford the taxes on our house when we retire in 10 years.
- I have become surrounded by short term rentals and they have ruined our neighborhood. I'm sick of seeing homes purchased in residential zones and used as mini-hotels, while people who actually live and work here and support our community can't find any housing, let alone affordable housing.
- We both work for a school district and can't afford to buy a home with our student loans and having to pay child care.
- I was born and raised in this valley and am due for a child to come into this world. I would like our child to be born and raised in the very valley I was. I have a county job and my wife works for a local grocery store and we can barely make our rent, much less save for a house. Even if we could, we couldn't afford one in this valley. I am deeply saddened by what my valley has become. It has turned into a vacation town instead of a peaceful family town. Don't get me wrong, I welcome all visitors to my beautiful valley. But I can't understand the people who have built and spent the lives here being priced out. Either wages need to come up to a living standard or the housing market needs to come down to standard. If I could afford to leave I would, as I cannot afford to stay, either. That is what hurts me the most.
- Our rent has gone up by more than 20 percent in the last year. If it's raised again, we may not be able to afford it, and we definitely can't afford to move.
- We have been trying to buy for over five years and each year the price of homes have gone up too much to afford anything and now our landlord where we have lived for 4 years said our rent is \$700 below market value and is going to raise our rent. Now we can't even afford to rent here anymore.
- I grew up in this valley. I went to Seattle for college, but wanted to return to the valley. I am a professional, single person and cannot afford to buy a house on my own. I have to live close to the hospital for call response but can't afford to buy something in town. It's a deterrent to hiring much needed medical staff.
- There are no low-income apartments available and new affordable apartments are at Western Washington rates.
- Even though we are mortgage-free, the rising costs of property taxes make it difficult to live on a fixed income
- I live above an automotive shop. The city rebuilt the road into a five-lane road and

crushed my sewage line. Now I have to rent a porta-potty.

- Housing costs are so out of control in the valley. My 25-year-old can't afford to move out. The entire area is becoming gentrified, and driving out those of us who have lived and worked in this community our entire lives.
- I am a single mother that currently rents and lives on the same property as my father with my two boys. Seven years ago I went back to school and rebuilt our life from the ground up. I became a massage therapist, started my own practice and had a seven-year goal. At that time all of my numbers and P&LS showed that I could in seven years purchase a home for my young boys and myself. COVID hit, prices skyrocketed and my hard work and goals went out the window. The exorbitant prices in homes and the large percentage of vacation homes are eating up the availability of reasonable housing for our residents. I was born and raised here, in the orchards, my blood and bones live here. Yet the push for our land is destroying our beautiful community and the ones who made it beautiful can no longer afford to live here.
- Because there is no suitable house to rent here, I have to rent far away. But the daily commute is too long, which makes people feel tired.
- We were unable to evict poor renters due to the COVID eviction moratorium. It wasn't a non-payment issue, but bad behavior and we had no recourse. We considered not putting our rental back on the market afterwards because landlords have lost so many rights. The renters have more rights than the homeowners. Very frustrating.
- I can't find a "traditional" house so I am living in a trailer.
- My son had to move to Texas because he could not get a decent paying job that would allow him to afford the cost of housing here.
- The cost of housing is causing us to look outside of the community and/or relocate to a community where housing costs are affordable.
- My mother-in-law is 85 and has lived in Wenatchee most of her life. Her apartment was bought out and her rent was significantly increased. We could not get any financial assistance for her and we're very concerned as to what she was going to do. She finally found an apartment that was for seniors only and was affordable for her. If she had not found this place, I'm not sure what she would have done. She was recently widowed and I found it impossible that our community would let people like her just end up on the streets. We were told if she went without paying rent, that she might get help. We should not wait until people are in crisis to get them the help they need. She didn't need free rent, just a little financial support would have made a difference.
- As the urban growth boundary continues to change, infrastructure needs to accommodate these massive housing developments. Sidewalks need to be put in to

cover the entire street with adequate lighting. Not just the development. The roads are hilly with poor visibility and people speed through these long streets. Developers need to respect the type of housing around and blend the new construction accordingly to keep peace with existing house owners. We need more quality homes not just small lots and small structures. Change it up with a larger lot and smaller home and larger home with smaller lot.

- I live with a disabled family member. Trying to find affordable rentals that worked for him (ground level, washer and dryer, etc.) was horrendous. I work 40 to 45 hours a week, he has SSI, and still finding any place in Wenatchee that we could afford was nearly impossible.
- The rent prices are too high to save to put a down payment down on a home. With the minimum wage you can't afford a house unless both parents are working in the household. That's difficult if you have to pay water, sewer, garbage, and electricity. Our rent prices are getting higher than Seattle housing prices. That's not right for a small city. We are not as big as Seattle. This is getting ridiculous and I have thought about moving from my home town.
- We were renting a house and our landlord wanted to sell when the market was hot. So we were forced to move into a rental we cannot afford.
- We live in a studio. (I hardly would even call it a studio). There are three of us and we have all been dying to have at least a one-bedroom apartment, but only one of us works, the other stays with the child. We make barely two times the rent. Around here you need 3 or 4 times the rent.
- I consider myself highly privileged to have bought my house before prices exploded. Access to quality housing should not be a privilege, it should be a right.
- Our daughter would like to buy something. Everything she can even begin to afford is sold before you even have a chance to see it. I think she would qualify for a loan if her payments didn't exceed what she is currently paying for rent.
- Government mismanagement of COVID only made housing more difficult to find, more expensive, and hard to get into. The influx of tech employees buying real estate (2nd homes, summer homes, etc.) have driven up home values disproportionately to local incomes and further decreased available homes.
- We originally moved to Wenatchee because of its affordability. We rented a home at first while waiting for the perfect home to buy. We really missed our window of opportunity. Single family homes are extremely overpriced and it's impossible for first-time homeowners who don't have a huge cash down payment to get offers accepted. We are always outbid by investors or people who have huge cash down payments. If there were more government programs to help with down payments, maybe we could get an offer accepted.
- My 30-year-old son who earns a good wage can't afford to live on his own.

- I have to pay rent in excess of what I can live on, and other bills have to be paid by credit card. For a single mom, trying to recover from debt after a divorce, this is impossible. \$300,000 for a dilapidated shack is absolute robbery. There is no house in that price range that is in a safe neighborhood and doesn't require a massive amount of work to make livable. I am angry, frustrated and depressed that the Wenatchee Valley caters pricing to outsiders with large pocket books and does not provide quality housing for residents who have lived here for 30 years.
- Rent went up \$300 when a new company bought the apartment building I live in. They do not have adequate parking for tenants and they threaten towing daily. I am on Social Security and my rent was raised to over what I get on Social Security. I cannot afford to move and am stressed as to how I can afford to stay where I live.
- If my son cannot find a decent place to buy and he moves out of state, I will sell and go with him.
- My husband is a disabled vet. We do not receive any income for his disability. I am self-employed. We live in a studio apartment with my husband's therapy dog. It is hard to find suitable housing with self-employment income. Also the three times the rent rule at most facilities is hard to meet as self-employment income fluctuates. COVID caused this to be a larger problem. I am paying \$85 a month for storage to store part of our belongings because they do not fit in our studio apartment. It took us 46 days to find the current apartment that we have now. Our rent has increased since we moved in. We have a good rental references.
- I can barely afford a place paying child support and rent. I don't get to go out and just buy things, let alone a solid viable car. We need more better paying jobs in the valley.
- Landlords are pricing way to high relative to job market salaries.
- Rent has gone up again and as of the first of the month I will in a camper, my stuff in storage. There are no affordable rentals available even with excellent credit and a full-time job.
- There are too many nightly rentals in the Upper Wenatchee Valley/Leavenworth/Lake Wenatchee area. They are taking away houses that we need for rentals or to sell to our teachers, nurses, and workers in the tourist industry.
- We are right at retirement age. We live in a very small house, but have paid off the mortgage. Taxes are too high. I am afraid to retire because of the high cost of living.
- My boyfriend bought his house in 2018 when the market was more reasonable. I left my three-bedroom apartment that was \$1,600 a month at the end of 2019 to move into my boyfriend's house. I have a dog and know that I have been fortunate in my situation. I also know that if I were to still be renting at market value, I would

be trying to save to buy a house. Looking at the market now I know it would be very difficult. I know that having a dog would make it very challenging to find a place to rent if I needed to.

- In 2019 we tried to find a house to rent for us and our 4 children. There was nothing available. So we purchased a house from my parents because that was the only somewhat affordable way we could purchase a home. I know many people who have struggled to find a rental or tried to find an affordable place to buy, but nothing is affordable and as soon as something hits the market, they are gone! The valley needs more affordable housing!
- We need more middle class homes in the valley at prices we can afford in order to live a happy and healthy life. The homes that are for sale are not worth the price they are at. The housing market is ridiculously high. Wenatchee is a great place to raise a family but not worth having to over pay for either an older home that is not worth the price or over pay for a new home that you won't be able to afford.
- I work full time at a store. I still can't afford even a studio with that.
- We were fortunate to get in at a reasonable level to a home that is just big enough. We could sell at an excellent profit. We have looked into an addition on our home but no one will take on the work because of the abundance of new construction.
- I'd like to live in a more vibrant and social 55+ condominium community, but there aren't many and the ones that look appealing are way above my income. I'm not ready for assisted living. So being that Wenatchee is supposedly a destination for retirees, I'd welcome more active 55+ communities, either apartments or condominiums.
- We are affected greatly by the housing costs here. My spouse and both work good, full-time jobs and can barely afford the housing here. I worry constantly about the rent going up to the point we can't afford it anymore. There needs to be rent increase limitations. The rent/mortgage prices of the housing in this valley is unsustainable. Our income is around the average income here. The housing costs here are only sustainable for those with a high income. People of all incomes should be able to afford housing. This is a serious issue that needs to be addressed.
- I am on a limited income and am no longer able to afford an apartment in the valley. I am one month from being homeless. I can't manage paying over half of my income to rent.
- Rent is about the same as a monthly mortgage payment, which gives no affordable options, especially if you're on one income. Normally rent was already about half of income but continued to increase while wages didn't increase enough.
- As someone with a high paying job for my age, I cannot even afford a run-down apartment. No one can afford to live in the valley because it is so overpriced. Homes are too expensive and rentals are super expensive.

- My family moved here when my husband accepted a job. I consider us extremely lucky because we were able to find a home within our price range but we did have to forgo some things on our wish list such as a master bathroom and a reasonable size yard.
- My kids cannot afford to buy a home at the current market cost.
- I make fairly good money. If we weren't blessed with what we currently pay for rent, I don't think we would remain in the area.
- Me being taxed on my property because my neighbors sell their houses and make money is simply theft. Increasing property taxes based on other people's income is theft.
- My partner and I can't get married because we can't afford to live together.
- The home we bought in 2010. The value of our home has about doubled from the price we paid. We see that as a good thing, but as our children have left, our home is bigger than our needs. Downsizing is not a reasonable option with prices the way they are. I expect the market to cool considerably over the next year or two, so maybe opportunities will arise then.
- My husband grew up in Leavenworth (Blewett Pass) and I moved here in 2018. We were fortunate enough to have family and friends that we could rent rooms from for a few years, and then we bought land and built our own tiny house. We make good money and have stable full time jobs, but found options in the valley for buying land or a home extremely cost prohibitive. We felt very lucky to be able to make something work for the time being, but growing our family here feels impossible. We would ideally want a small two-bedroom home on communal or our own land and we are interested in staying up valley in the Leavenworth/Plain/Blewett Pass area as long as we can.
- My two adult children have moved back into my home because they couldn't find or afford housing here. Another adult child found a place but has moved twice because rent increased too much.
- We have actually taken advantage of our situation and have pulled equity out of our home to acquire a rental property that we plan to lease at market rate once it is remodeled.
- I am unable to find good housing at an affordable price. I would like to own and contribute to the community but might leave if rent gets to much higher.
- Business is slower so with inflation it is a double whammy. Things are tight and insurance costs are nuts.
- I ended up moving here from Seattle because I thought the cost of living would be less. As a single mom, this housing market is a joke. It is just as expensive if not

more expensive than Seattle, and with absolutely none of the amenities of a city.

- Having a Section 8 housing voucher does nothing if you cannot find housing within the Fair Market Rent. If you have a pet, plus bad credit, it's close to impossible to find housing.
- I own rental property. COVID-19 and associated government interference in private property rights has been a nightmare.
- Landlord are selling their rental homes because of the excessive regulation by HUD and city/county requirements. Landlords are forced to rent to people who they know will destroy their property and will not be a good credit risk.
- My family bought old run down houses and provides affordable housing. I'd like to increase my rents to "keep up" with the market but feel an obligation to provide some affordability. I guess it would be nice to know when I'm meeting that threshold. COVID had no impact on whether my tenants paid rent. They all paid and on time.
- I am homeless still. I will be moving to a tiny cabin off grid in a couple months.
- Developers who do not live in the valley and have no sense of community at all are creating an undesirable atmosphere via big, impersonal apartment complexes, condos, and cookie cutter housing developments. The people I've met do not want to live in those places with the huge rents. If they must pay huge rents, they want a more personal and scenic surrounding.
- We lived for a few years with a friend because we couldn't find housing. In 2018, we were finally able to get Section 8 and have been living in an apartment that is really too small for our family of five. We continue to stay in the apartment because if we move with the prices of rent, Section 8 will not cover it.
- I got into \$6,000 of credit card debt living at my last apartment because my rent for a one-bedroom, 500-square-foot apartment was \$1,050 with utilities. I only make \$1,100 every paycheck. I had to use my credit card in order to eat every two weeks.
- As 80-year-olds we bought our "perfect" home 5 years ago at a good price and are so far able to keep it up as we watch the crazy market make our investment grow.
- Costs of building a home or buying a home have soared in a very short time period. I am continually grateful that we chose to build our home in 2017. We could not afford it if we had waited until late 2020.
- I have to live in a house with too many people and pay for a small area to live in. But it is all we can find to live because everything is so over-priced.
- I'm 11 years in on a 30-year mortgage. The assessed values have climbed so high so quickly my insurance and property taxes have increased my housing cost beyond 30

percent of my income. The rate has exceeded my income growth and compounding it with inflation I don't see how anybody can afford to buy now.

- We started in tax credit housing, working our way up to saving until we were able to buy our first home, thanks to FHA. It has doubled in value in the last seven years, which is amazing and terrifying, especially since our house payment has gone up \$300 a month due to property tax increases alone and we're seeing the strain on everyone.
- Because we cannot afford to live in the community in which we work, we live in a fifth-wheel trailer on a rental spot. We are blessed to have car pool opportunities and look forward to expanded express Link service between the upper valley and Central Washington Hospital.
- I am retired, own my home, and need to downsize, but there is nothing available that I can afford.
- Our rent has risen more than 10 percent in the last year and I worry it will go even higher. Meanwhile we make less money due to inflation. It's a bad situation.
- Businesses can help by adopting market and policy solutions that improve housing affordability, supporting employees to increase access to affordable housing, and partnering with local housing groups to support their work.
- Our family is in a financial crisis.
- I am a widow, over 60. I luckily qualified for a senior property tax freeze when prices were lower. I would like to downsize but there is nothing (condo/townhouse) in my price range even though my 3-bedroom manufactured home is appraised at \$389,000.
- Out of pure luck I was able to purchase a home at a reasonable price last year but it was a struggle to find something and to get an offer accepted with so many.
- With the high cost of rent in the valley, it has not allowed me to truly start my own life. I still live with family. One-bedroom apartments or even 500-square-foot studios are over \$1,000.00 a month. Then on top of that these rental companies require that all tenants show proof that their monthly income is 3 times the amount of rent, which limits nearly everyone.
- We purchased our home in 2009 when we had a family of four. We would like to downsize but will not pay the current price for a smaller home.
- I know there is not another place I can afford on a Social Security check of under \$900.
- My husband and I lived in an apartment with high monthly rent. We spent about 10 months looking to buy a house that would equal the amount of rent we were

already paying. We were not able to find housing due to the competitive market, specifically for first-time home buyers. My husband and I then made a decision to purchase property in Malaga and eventually built our home.

- Can't afford the taxes and would move, but no houses to buy and prices are way too high.
- We wanted our family to move to the area so we could be near each other. There was no affordable housing, so they decided not to do it.
- My husband and I saved money and sold a number of homes in order to afford where we currently live in Leavenworth. We purchased our home five years ago at the top of our mortgage budget. There is no way we could afford the home we have now based on current home prices. It is the free market that is driving up prices. When westside monies can come in and purchase million dollar homes with cash, there is something wrong with our system. When rental units disappear because there is more money to be made in short term renting rather than monthly long term rentals, there is something wrong with our system. When cities like Leavenworth want to pack in and stack in homes in order to make housing affordable, there is something wrong with the system. Chelan County is becoming a "suburb" of the westside. It is time to stop the growth.
- Living near nightly rentals has soured many of our friends and employees on the area. Nightly rentals are a significant problem if you are the one dealing with their noise, trespass, junk, and vehicles parking where they should not be.
- We have a nearby house we rent out, and during the pandemic we cut the rent in half for a year-and-a-half because the renters weren't able to work very much.
- We have a very large house for our family and I would love to downsize. The issue is there is nothing smaller at a lower price.
- It would be nice if there were options for elderly parents to move here.
- We have owned our home since 2006. We always assumed we would move and purchase a new home again. However, we got comfortable here and stayed longer than we thought. Now if we want to sell our home, we would make a great profit but we would also be buying high. With the aggressive market we could end up without a place to go due to lack of housing for a family of our size with pets. We would love to own acres of land and have even started looking up north of Wenatchee where land is cheaper.
- I have lived in the valley for over 20 years. It has never been affordable to rent or buy here. The costs far exceed the income most people make. We are moving out of state and have many houses to choose from at one-third the cost of the type of house here.
- It has been hard enough to find a place to live. My husband and I have been trying

to buy a house but with the market being so crazy and competitive we have been forced to rent, which is taking the money we have planned to save to purchase a home.

- I have lived in Chelan County most of my life. I would not own a house if it weren't for my parents willing me a house. I am not able to live in it as I work in another town. Even with a competitive wage full time job, as a single person I break even and have no savings. I have low bills and my landlords do not overcharge.
- We cannot attract decent medical field employees due to the high cost of housing here.
- I bought a mobile home (double-wide) because I couldn't afford homes in our area.
- Luckily I rent from my parents so my rent is super low compared to others for the house I rent. I am not able to afford to buy my own home because of the high rise in prices. If I had to rent on my own from someone else, I would probably be struggling.
- Making the mortgage payments have restricted my ability to save money for mechanical/medical emergencies. I cannot risk spending on outdoor recreation or hobbies at this time.
- I can't buy a house because I don't make enough money for current market.
- How about making big developers pay for roads.
- I am trying to start over on my own after a divorce. Finding an affordable apartment is hard enough. I have a decent income and significant down payment, but home prices are too high. You have to have cash up front or be willing to pay up to \$30,000 over list price. The average middle class person cannot compete in this market.
- I've been lucky. A friend introduced me to my current landlord otherwise I would be homeless or in much worse shape. When I was looking I couldn't find anything in my price range to rent for me and my cat.
- We had to use a large chunk of our 401k to pay our mortgage off. Otherwise we would not have been able to make it financially.
- I moved to this area in late 2019 from Spokane. The apartment I rented in Spokane was in a highly desirable neighborhood and had many amenities. I doubled the amount in rent paid when moving here, and I now live on the outskirts of town in a slightly smaller unit with much less access to amenities. Purchasing a home is so far outside of my budget reach, that it feels impossible.
- I currently work in Chelan County, but live in Quincy. The valley has grown rapidly, and even though I have a good job, I cannot afford to live my lifestyle here (I have

horses and cattle). There is not enough elbow room, and it is difficult to get through town pulling a trailer. We left and put roots down in Quincy to get away from the crowds. Housing there is expensive, too. We are currently renting a place, and then pay a separate board/pasture fee for the livestock, and a storage unit. Our monthly costs to park all of our farm are over \$2,000 but at least we can have the best of both worlds that way. I would never pay that much to be crammed in a subdivision in this valley again. I grew up here, and it is just getting too big and closed in for me.

- Housing availability is very limited and prices are too costly compared to most people's monthly income. Also, there needs to be more community supportive services to help people find affordable housing.
- I am separated from my spouse and currently living in an apartment. We bought our home in 2005 for \$179,000 and it is now worth \$420,000. Our mortgage is \$990 a month, while the rent for the apartment is \$2,165. I know many young people who are paying these prices for apartments, can afford a mortgage, but can't get a loan. And before the separation, we couldn't "upgrade" our home (that we have grown out of) because the housing market is so high now. We are college educated with good jobs, and still cannot compete with \$500,000+ homes with cash offers. Our home value has increased 134 percent but our salaries have not. It will soon be impossible for those that work here to live here. I plan on moving in the next few years.
- I am so grateful that we bought a home in our valley over 20 years ago and aren't looking in this current market. Our young adult children moved home during COVID and aren't able to find a place to live here now that they can afford on their early professional salaries. We are enjoying our family home again, needing so much more of the space than we have in the five years before COVID. Our perspective has completely changed as home values have increased and we recognize that our home is now a multi-generational asset that will be necessary for stability for the next generation when they have families. Building generational wealth has become a requirement for us, which was not much of a concern before as each of the past five generations in our family has done better than the one before. This will no longer be the case as real estate investments are not in their future.
- I am fortunate to live in a condo with no mortgage and my utilities/taxes have been very stable throughout the pandemic. I have talked to many folks, however, who literally cannot afford to live and work in the valley. The business loss in the pandemic made housing even more dangerous — rents continue whether a person has work or not.
- I have lived here more than 20 years, my children are grown and gone. The house is big enough and OK for frequent visitors. I am putting aside \$450 a month to pay for the year-end taxes and insurance. House maintenance is expensive and lots need to be done. Utilities keep escalating. My income is pretty fixed and I save for many months to complete a project. I feel bad for those with \$1,200+ rents — no way could I ever afford that. Thank goodness my house is paid for.

- Rental costs are unacceptable in the area especially for the elderly and disabled living on disability.
- Due to the cost of housing in our valley and associated property taxes, I no longer plan to retire in this community. I have lived and worked here for 21 years and always thought I would retire here. I have already purchased a second home outside of this area and will sell the home I have here upon retirement.
- My husband and I bought our house a little over a year ago. The only way we were able to afford it was because of additional COVID funding I was receiving through my employer. We own a 3 bedroom, 2 bathroom house and love it. Without our combined income we would not have been able to do it on our own.
- Both my fiancé and I sold houses in 2017 (due to divorces). We have money saved for a down payment and have been pre-approved to purchase. We both have middle-income jobs in the Wenatchee Valley and I have a bachelor's degree. We cannot buy a "decent" home here. When I say decent home, I mean, you can't buy a home that isn't falling apart, run down, or isn't located in a high-crime area. We refuse to pay current housing prices and have stopped looking. This economy and corporate greed is pushing good, hardworking families out of the Wenatchee Valley because they can't afford to live here. We are getting fed up with paying inflated rental prices, too.
- We have lived in the same home for 45 years and have adapted and added as needed. Property tax increases have been a challenge. We are now retired.
- If we were a young couple starting out on a first time home, there is no way on the average wage here to afford a home, or win on a cash bidding war if we were only able to do bank financing.
- I moved to the area three years ago. The cost of housing continues to go up every year. The homes in the valley are not worth what they are being sold for. With the rising interest rates and high cost of homes on the market, I cannot afford to purchase a home at this time. Homes are being sold for thousands of dollars over asking, many with cash offers.
- I was renting at \$1,395 and suddenly it went up to \$1,595.
- I have owned my current home since early 2000s. Property taxes have risen way too much. Concern is for my children and them finding a "starter" home.
- Our organization has a harder time hiring and retaining employees. Leavenworth became a Zoom town during the pandemic and has stayed that way, which makes the problem worse, but affordability was already a major problem before 2020.
- I've lived in Chelan my entire life, working two to three jobs to stay afloat in rentals with shared housing. When I wanted to start my own life with a partner and consider a family, I had two options: continue living in shared housing situations

(with roommates to afford rent) or to purchase outside the Valley. I chose to move and now feel disconnected from my community.

- Housing availability and affordability has impacted how effectively I am able to do my job as a housing case manager.
- I purchased my home in 2012 after the housing crash and was able to buy a short-sale. We paid under market value at the time and the house was still at the top of our price range and slightly too small for our family of five. Our mortgage is affordable, but we are trying to find creative ways to make our small space meet our family needs as the kids are now in their teens. Even though our home has gained a lot of equity, if we try to sell and upgrade, a larger home would be more expensive than we can afford.
- As a single mom, it is extremely challenging to find a rental that fits my needs, that I can afford. When I have my children, I share a home with their father and when I do not have my children, I have an apartment with a roommate. This living situation is extremely challenging logistically and dramatically affects our quality of life for both myself and my children and their father.
- My family has outgrown our single family home we purchased in 2014 at a reasonable price. We have outgrown our home, yet if we were to purchase a house with one more bedroom without losing what we currently have (1/3 acre lot and a large garage), our mortgage would at least double. We just can't justify that and have discussed moving out of the area in order to find a home that fits our needs and family.
- I make \$34, 000 a year and can barely afford the \$850 I pay in rent. I have an eviction on my record, plus bad credit, so it is extremely difficult to find housing in Wenatchee.
- My husband and I are currently living at my parents' house. We hope to one day purchase our own home.
- In 2018 and 2019, I noticed apartments and all housing prices increase. In 2020 and 2021, they kept increasing. The moratorium to not pay rent affected things in a negative way. I struggled but paid my rent every month. A lot of people took advantage of the situation and refused to pay rent or vacate when the landlord told them to. I know several landlords that have tenants that have not paid rent in over two years and can't get them out of the rental. There are several who never paid rent and refuse to leave. Yes, COVID has been a problem. However, right after things started getting better and people returned to work, the price of everything shot up. People realized that the price for apartments was too high so they started buying houses and then the price of housing went way up, too. Now things are totally outrageous.
- I'm concerned about the huge number of developments that are going in the valley, how much agricultural and previously undeveloped land is going to housing. All of

which is increasing the amount of noise, traffic, and urban spread. In the city, I'm seeing large apartment and condo developments that seem to be approved without adequate provision for parking.

- I have been trying to buy a house, found one next to my sisters in the neighborhood I grew up in and the price was five times as much as when my mom bought her house and didn't qualify. I have been trying to find a place for rent, but nobody accepts pets, and if they do, the prices are insane and also pet deposit is crazy. I can't afford to buy or rent a house and right now I am living in a small studio with no bedroom. It is less than 300 square feet. Very small.
- Due to life circumstances, I was looking for housing in late 2020. I could not rent due to pets, specifically the breed of my dog. I chose to buy a house. I looked for six months, viewed over 40 houses, and put in offers on seven houses. I ended up purchasing a house that was "for sale by owner." I put in an offer on the house without even seeing the inside due to the competitiveness of the market.
- I have seen and experienced both sides of this coin. I recently purchased a house in April 2022. It was expensive, yes. But I also work in real estate, and our business has been very successful in the past three years, even with the decline of inventory. Me and my family have personally benefitted from the rise in housing costs.
- We cannot find a reasonable home for my brother with a disability to rent. He remains in low income (subsidized) housing with substandard maintenance and upkeep, rodent issues, etc. We want to move him into a rental or purchase a home for him but it's too expensive.
- I am retired, but am very concerned with the housing crisis in Chelan County. We mostly need to provide decent affordable housing for families working here. And we also need to do more for the homeless.
- We would consider moving to a newer home but cannot afford to purchase a new house of similar size and options for what we could make from selling out house. So we stay and spend money or remodels that take forever because all the contractors want to do new builds because that's "where the money is."
- A friend and I both grew up in this town. His mother is aging and he is currently located in Spokane with a desire to relocate and work in Wenatchee to be close to her. He works a good job with good pay and has been looking to try and find affordable property in the valley for the last year or so with no luck. This should not be an issue for people wanting to work and live in this community.
- Without proper housing, many people will not be able to find their desired jobs.
- They raised our rent at the beginning of this year. I'm unsure if it was because of the pandemic, or because of the rise in the housing market. I was struggling to pay bills with my partner before, and now we live paycheck to paycheck again, barely scraping by. But we can't afford to move because the cost to get into another place

with the first, last, and deposit costing thousands of dollars. But you can't save money because rent is so expensive. The groceries have also increased in the town. I don't know how we'll survive if they raise rent again.

- With the economic downturn caused by COVID-19, housing rent has become the biggest burden of living.
- Increasing property and other taxes have tempted us to relocate. Our son and several friends would like to live here, but the cost of available housing (rent or purchase) prevents that.
- I am a single parent with two kids. I make too much to qualify for affordable housing but not near enough to afford a place for my family. The prices are so high right now I don't know what one-income families are supposed to do.
- Our son has been looking to purchase his first home for over eight months. It's nearly impossible to find a quality home for under \$550,000.
- Affordable housing for entry level employees is just not there.
- Short term rentals have negatively affected our neighborhood by replacing potential housing for neighbors with businesses and an influx of transient people. People who want second homes have to rent them out to afford them while other people can't afford first homes. This is not OK. It ruins community culture and workforce housing.
- We are very lucky to have purchased land and built a house in 2015. We added an ADU in 2018, paid for by my parents as a guest house for them. At this time, I don't think we could afford to buy our house if it was for sale. I'm an architect and it is striking how many other people, like myself, bought four to 10 years ago and could no longer afford to purchase any house, much less the one they own, today. Many clients are asking to do remodels and additions on homes they thought would be a starter home, but there is nothing else available, much less in their price range, so whatever home they have has become their forever home.
- My husband and I are currently renting a one-bedroom basement unit, and we would like to have our first child this year. Our dream would be to have a house where they could grow up, but with the current house prices that's out of the question. The thing that is the most frustrating, though, is that even though we are two people who are employed full time with one of the largest employers in the valley, we can't even afford to rent a two-bedroom apartment, so there is no hope of a nursery for our future child.
- We moved to East Wenatchee from Lynnwood in October 2021 when we retired. Affordable housing and good cost of living were important in our decision. Housing is much more affordable here than in metropolitan Puget Sound. So transplants will continue to find our community attractive. Where does that leave us with options for future generations and for our own lower income residents?

- We're looking to downsize and move closer to the loop trail, but can't find affordable (even at our more-than-comfortable income) or modern housing options for aging in place. Our home is perfect for a younger family and we'd like to get it in the market pool, but we can't find a reasonable replacement.
- I am fortunate to own my home and my place of business. Others are not so fortunate. We need to solve this, but not at the expense of the larger problem of environmental impact.
- We would like to downsize our home, but know we will not be able to find something that we can afford after we sell our home. We have four children living in the valley that can't afford the apartments they are in as the rent keeps going up and definitely can't afford or find anywhere else to live even with two incomes.
- How can anyone afford to buy a half-million dollar manufactured home that still needs a ton of work, I will never understand. We'd be house poor just to buy a home. Not worth it. We would love to stay, but maybe if the market crashes so we can afford something.
- I have to rent and am fortunate that I found a place, but had to look for two years and am constantly worried my rent will increase because I don't think I can find another place. I had to live 25 miles from work before finding this.
- I started looking for a house in fall 2018, when we still had several months to go on our apartment lease. I was motivated by the recent jump in housing prices and knew that we couldn't be part of a bidding war. The price on our 100-year-old house dropped twice before we put an offer on it. I think we were only able to afford it because it only has one bathroom and a shared driveway.
- Our daughter, a college graduate, cannot afford rent. She is currently living with us.
- Housing prices are crazy and there is very limited single home availability for rentals that allow pets. Prior to purchasing a home, my husband and I were paying \$2,200 a month in rent versus our now \$2,300 a month mortgage. it was difficult to find a home reasonably priced.
- We have wanted to sell our house and buy a house more suited to our current needs but the lack of affordable housing or affordable land and building supplies have made it difficult to realize that dream.
- We are lucky that we bought a house in this valley over 20 years ago. We would not be able to afford what we have if we were buying now.
- We bought our house years ago for a fraction of what houses are going for now. My brother got divorced during the pandemic and has to buy a house this year for himself and his two kids. The house he bought is above what he can afford, in poor condition, and not in his ideal area. He is struggling financially because of it, like so many others.

- In 2020, I had to move from a rental due to health issues that stemmed from mold. I looked at over 20 rentals before I ended up where I'm currently renting. During that process, potential landlords told me they had mold in their unit or wanted me to sign a mold disclosure form.
- When I rented an apartment after a divorce almost eight years ago in a brand new property, rent was reasonable. Fast forward to now, rent has increased to double what I paid for back then.
- We were renting in the area for a year-and-a-half. So few houses were on the market when we were looking we ultimately bought the first thing we could find that fit our needs. It's not our dream house, but we realized that if we waited, we may never find something that fit our needs.
- I would like to down size but the cost of a smaller new home (about 1,600 square feet) is about what my 2,400 square foot home might sell for.
- I have been watching Leavenworth being bought up by Seattle money whom don't work here. They just play here and party and nightly rent out the rest of the time. No community involvement or sense of place. Party and leave. Fireworks year around along with fire pits, loud music and crowded parking.
- The biggest challenge as a small landlord is the quality of renters. I'd estimate less than 10 percent of past renters leave the rental undamaged and/or clean. Most cost money. If they treated the place as their own, that would be rare. Perhaps there needs to be a class on how to be a good renters.
- When I returned to the community I had to move in with my parents because I couldn't afford to rent or buy housing. Even after two pay raises I still cannot find a house I can purchase. I'd much rather own than rent but the down payment required to have a reasonable mortgage is way too high when I am already saddled with \$100,000 student loan debt and little savings because all my income goes toward paying bills, rent and student loans.
- Too many people from the west side have secondary homes.
- My fiance and I are well off and in our early 30s but all the houses we've looked at since 2020 have been way out of our price range and of very poor quality for the cost. We are now considering moving to Colorado in the next year or two because homes in the \$300,000 to \$400,000 price range are much nicer, and they have better restaurants, holistic healthcare solutions, and shopping.
- We remodeled two houses and made money. We were able to put a big down payment in order to afford our current home.
- My ex-husband and I divorced months after we finished building our home. To make ends meet, I've been renting to other people for over 15 years, mostly seasonal

workers. I got lucky in that the land was not adequately advertised as for sale and below market value, and that I owe my mom more money than I do the bank. My folks also lent me money to afford the down payment on my first home 25 minutes from where I work. I would still be living there if not for the financial assistance of my family.

- I graduated from Cascade High School in 2018 and moved out to Bozeman for school. In between there, Fort Collins, and moving back, housing has become unreasonably unaffordable to the point where my fiancé and I are spending over half of our income on rent and utilities alone, not including medical bills and the income that is being eaten up by inflation.
- We are two married people, one with an advanced degree and one with a specialized degree working for one of the largest employers in NCW. Our combined income is above the median for the area. The only reason we were able to afford to buy our house was because we canceled our wedding due to COVID and used our remaining budget as a down payment, plus assistance from our parents (we acknowledge our privilege of having families in stable financial situations). Had we not had this privilege, we would not have been able to afford our house. We ended up paying several \$10,000s over the asking price and beat out seven other offers on the house. The house was on the market for five days. The house itself is not in disrepair, but it definitely needs additional investments, meaning we paid way more than the house should have been worth based on the structure we purchased.
- It was very hard to find a rental in my price range here. I would love to buy a home in the next three to five years but as the market is now I don't see that happening with how expensive homes have become and how few homes are available.
- We made several reasonable offers that were outbid. We wound up buying a substandard house with issues because we had to waive inspections to be the successful offer.
- We moved to town to work at Confluence and had a very difficult time finding a place to rent (we weren't financially ready to buy). It took a few weeks of scouring ads for rental options and a multiple-meeting interview process to secure an old rundown apartment for rent. Now, I live in a house that could very easily have a garage with an ADU above, but don't have the funds to convert it.
- It is hard to recruit employees to the area as they cannot find affordable housing and so they have rejected offers for less pay in areas they can find housing.
- I have been increasingly unable to find anything for purchase or rent due to rising costs of both, and my partner and I are increasingly motivated to leave the valley as our wages do not cover rent anymore.
- House hunting is nearly impossible for middle- or lower-class people because everything is extremely expensive and anything affordable gets multiple bids and sells for way over list price. It's completely discouraging knowing that people are

moving here from Seattle ever more since the pandemic and are buying houses in cash for sometimes \$100,000 over list price. Being able to earn a Seattle living but live in the valley is really hurting people working in the valley at much lower wages.

- The cost of housing has increased exponentially as has the cost of living. With less jobs offering livable wages that don't reflect the ever rising cost of living in our community, more and more locals will be forced to move away while the big city slickers that can afford the high property taxes and exorbitantly expensive houses, push the rest of us out. The cost to rent has increased dramatically. What you would once pay for a modest home, is now what you pay for a studio apartment. There are certainly plenty of low-wage job openings, but families are now having to work two and three jobs to hang on to the ever ascending housing market.
- I am a mortgage lender for the past 30 years. Mortgage rates and the economy kept the last two years the busiest ones in my career. Things have slowed down drastically due to the shortage of homes for sale, interest rates increasing over 2 percent in three months, and house prices at their highest, freezing out a lot of first-time buyers. This will most definitely impact mortgage lenders like me this year.
- I moved to Wenatchee in 2019. Being new to the area, we wanted to rent a home while we decided if we would stay permanently, and if so, what neighborhood we'd like to be in. At the time it was my husband and I and one cat and one dog. It was impossible to find a rental that allowed pets. There were so few options we ultimately decided to buy a house so we could live somewhere that would meet our needs and wants. Looking back it was the best decision we could have made, given the increase in housing cost and demand since then. We would not be able to afford our current home if we were moving here today.
- My daughter and I are living with family at this time because we cannot afford to get our own place on a single mother's income
- I am an older single female. I would like a small home (tiny home preferred) on a decent sized lot for gardening and fruit trees. Most homes on the market are cost prohibitive to me because they are old and in need of repairs that I cannot do myself. I would have to hire someone to do the work and it is not always easy to find reliable affordable help. It would be great to have a community of people helping each other, similar to Habitat for Humanity, for people like me who can afford to buy a fixer upper but cannot afford to totally remodel the home.
- We have considered downsizing our home for a smaller home on a bigger lot, but all new housing developments are building on tiny lots and selling at high cost. Now that home interest rates are climbing, the buyer's market will be slowing down. I have a family member who rents and her rent went up over 40 percent in one year. People on fixed incomes and who are renters are really struggling right now. There are very limited affordable rentals in our valley.
- We moved here recently because I had to relocate to the valley for my work. We own a small condo where we lived before so we will need to sell that to buy a home

in the area. Houses that are in our budget get sold so quickly that we never have the time to put together an offer that would allow for us to have an extended closing. Houses in our budget go pending with a day or two of being listed. Even though we're two people who live and work in the valley with good income and great credit and a large down payment from a condo we will have to sell first, we can't compete with people moving here who work remotely and have non eastside incomes. We are from Cle Elum originally and that area is facing similar challenges. It's hard knowing that if we live in the communities we are from or where we work, we can't afford or compete with westside salaries, despite having good jobs/good credit/sizable down payment.

- My family is a multi-generation family of five in a 3 bedroom home. We would love to buy a house but the outrageous prices have kept us where we are.
- As a married couple, we live in a two-bedroom apartment with a roommate. This shouldn't be our reality. We make (my husband and I) about \$5,000 a month but still cannot afford down payment for a house.
- Too many mega-mansions and no reasonable-sized homes for families.
- Trying to buy a home as a first-time homebuyer and single parent with 3 children in this valley is impossible. Local wages do not afford a lower- or middle-class family to be able to afford living here. Even the dilapidated, substandard homes in the high crime areas of the valley are out of price range for most families, and especially for single-income families. The market seems to be geared to bringing in west siders without regard to helping those who already call the valley their home.
- We are fortunate to have a home large enough that our adult children could move back in with us. Young adults and people on fixed income have little opportunity for entry level housing.
- The main issue with affordability is that the government applies too many costs to building, which are passed along to the consumer.
- I have the money to buy a home and have been looking for three years, but I can't compete with out of town money paying cash, waving inspections, or bidding wars.
- I'm 27, almost 28, and live with my father because I cannot afford a house on my own. Houses are either too expensive, or require too much down to secure it, including land loans.
- I've been disabled since 2008 and because of problems with the local health care facility, I had to sell my only vehicle to pay the bill. I've been homeless for the last 5 years. I've been to Uruguay, Argentina, Peru, Ecuador and Mexico after that looking for a new affordable home, but I decided that Latin America wasn't for me for a number of reasons and drove all the way back east to look at houses in West Virginia, Illinois, Missouri and Arkansas but got freaked out about tornadoes and almost lost a windshield. Finally my USDA rural home loan came though after

waiting over two years, but then they told me there was nothing in my price range in Washington state anymore, and I asked to be transferred to Montana. I'm now in the process of closing on buying a house in a dying town of just over 3,000 people that also has uranium in the water.

- It took me a long time to perfect my rental, which is very important, and the impact of COVID-19 on me is very big.
- No, but short-term rentals has ruined housing affordability and availability in Chelan County's urban growth areas. Many families cannot find or afford housing in and/or around the county.
- We have worked hard, lived frugally and are net savers. This has allowed us to comfortably own our home mortgage-free. One significant cost of housing I don't see mentioned in this survey is the high and rapidly increasing property taxes.