

# **HOUSING ELEMENT** [Not updated in 2000]

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **1. Growth Management Act Requirements**

The Growth Management Act states that the housing element of the comprehensive plan must include the following features:

- 1.) An inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs.
- 2.) A statement of goals, policies and objectives for the preservation, improvement and development of housing;
- 3.) Identification of sufficient land for housing, including but not limited to, government-assisted housing, housing for low-income families, manufactured housing, multifamily housing, and group homes and foster care facilities.
- 4.) Adequate provisions for existing and projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community.

### **2. Purpose of Housing Element**

The Housing Element considers the inventory and condition of existing housing stock and future housing needs. It addresses the provision of housing types to accommodate the lifestyles and economic needs of the community. The City's housing policies and development regulations (zoning, building codes, etc.) notify the private sector as to how the development and construction of housing will take place in the community. However, unlike the other elements of the comprehensive plan, the City does not directly provide this service. The Housing Element will set the conditions under which the private housing industry will operate, and establishes goals and policies to meet the community's housing needs and to achieve the community's goals.

## **II. EXISTING CONDITIONS**

### **1. Historic Background**

The following information on housing in Brier is taken from the 1986 Draft Comprehensive Plan prepared by R.W. Thorpe & Associates. It provides background material and information on historic trends. There was no Housing Element prepared in the 1989 Comprehensive Plan.

Housing in the Brier study/interest area is almost exclusively single family residential. No significant number, if any multi-family units were found in field survey of Brier. The City of Brier has no other form of housing other than single family. The Hilltop Condominiums located at 216th Street S.W. and 4th Avenue North are the only multi-family units in the planning area. Mobile home parks are also confined to areas outside of Brier, with only three locations having this type of housing.

In 1985, the study/interest area had approximately 6,817 housing units (PSCOG, 1986). The same year, Brier had about 1,413 housing units (OFM, 1985). Of these units, 1,389 were one unit structures and 24 were mobile homes or trailers. The vacancy rate of the housing units for the study/interest area was about five percent in 1985. Table 1 lists the housing units for Snohomish County, the Brier study/interest area, and the City of Brier, between the years 1980-1985.

The trend in recent years in housing developments has been towards the curvilinear street layout, versus the grid system, which predominates in Brier south of 228th Street.

**TABLE 1**  
**Housing Units**  
**Snohomish County, Brier Study/Interest Area, City of Brier**  
**(1980 - 1985)**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Snohomish County</u>	<u>Study/ Interest Area</u>	<u>City of Brier</u>
1980	131,206	6,001	946
1981	136,168	6,063	1,016
1982	140,397	6,177	1,042
1983	142,849	6,284	1,073
1984	146,576	6,619	1,208
1985	150,968	6,817	1,413
1986	--	--	1,489

Sources: PSCOG, March 1984, OFM, August 1985.

## **2. 1990 Census Information**

The 1990 Census provides the following profile data information on population, demographic, household, and housing unit characteristics for the City of Brier:

- Profile 1 - Characteristics of the Population
- Profile 2 - Persons by Age, Race, Sex and Hispanic Origin
- Profile 3 - Household and Family Characteristics
- Profile 4 - Household Characteristics
- Profile 5 - Housing Unit Characteristics and Tenure
- Profile 6 - Housing Unit Characteristics - Persons, Rooms and Tenure
- Profile 7 - Financial, Characteristics of Housing Units
- Profile 8 - Housing Unit Structural Characteristics

Copies of the 1990 Census profiles are included in Appendix A of the Housing Element.

The following information provides a basic summary of housing-related data for the City of Brier, as derived from the 1990 Census.

Households and Family Characteristics (Profile 3 - P1/2/3/15/17/17A)

Total Persons	5,633	
Total Households	1,804	
Persons Per Household	3.12	

Housing Unit Characteristics and Tenure (Profile 5 - H1/H2/H3/H5)

Total Housing Units	1,822	
Occupied Units	1,804	(99.0%)
Vacant Units	18	(1.0%)
Total Occupied Units	1,804	
Owner Occupied Units	1,646	(90.3%)
Renter Occupied Units	158	(8.7%)

Housing Unit Structural Characteristics (Profile 8 - H41/42/43)

Total Housing Units	1,822	
Single Family	1,793	(98.4%)
Multi Family	2	(.1%)
Mobile Home or Trailer	23	(1.3%)
Other	4	(.2%)

**III. AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

**1. Introduction**

This section provides background and analysis information for the City to address GMA requirements for affordable housing. The GMA requires jurisdictions to consider provisions for affordable housing, though it does not specify implementation measures. The Snohomish County Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) Housing Subcommittee has developed a methodology to guide the jurisdictions in evaluating affordable housing needs in the preparation of their comprehensive plan housing elements.

This section includes housing and household data from the 1990 census and follows the PAC Housing Subcommittee methodology to provide City officials with the necessary background to address affordable housing needs in the Comprehensive Plan.

## **2. Policy Context**

The Growth Management Act requires jurisdictions to prepare a housing element that:

*"...makes adequate provisions for existing and projected needs of all economic segments of the community..."*

*"...Includes an inventory and analysis of existing and projected housing needs..."*

The GMA requires the adoption of county-wide planning policies that:

*"...consider the need for affordable housing, such as housing for all economic segments of the population and parameters for its distribution..."*

As part of the collaborative county-wide planning process adopted to implement the GMA, on March 19, 1992 the Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) adopted the following county-wide planning policy recommendation regarding parameters for the distribution of housing for all economic segments of the population:

Create safe, well-designed neighborhoods and communities by:

*"...adopting and implementing fair share parameters for the distribution of low-income and special needs housing so as to prevent further concentration of such into only a few neighborhoods and communities;"*

To ensure that local jurisdictions adopt and implement fair share housing distribution parameters in a consistent manner, the PAC Housing Subcommittee has developed the following fair share housing allocation methodology to guide the jurisdictions in the preparation of their comprehensive plan housing elements.

The objective of the housing allocation methodology is to apportion a share of the county-wide housing need to each jurisdiction on a fair and proportionate basis.

## **3. Definition of "Housing Need"**

"Housing need" is defined by the PAC as, a household whose income is less than 95% of County median household income and pays more than 30% of its gross income for gross household costs.

This definition assumes that households living on limited incomes can only pay up to 30% of their income on housing before having to sacrifice on other necessities, such as food or medical care. The definition pertains to housing affordability and does not include other types of housing problems, such as those living in overcrowded conditions or dwellings that lack complete kitchen or bathroom accommodations.

The median household income in Snohomish County is approximately \$35,000/year. Therefore, the definition of housing need applies to those households which earn less than \$33,250/year and pay at least 30% or \$9,975 in rent or housing payments.

A jurisdiction's existing housing need provides the initial, unadjusted basis for computing each jurisdiction's fair share of the county-wide existing housing need.

#### **4. Brier's Existing Housing Need**

According to the 1990 census, there are 1,811 households in the City of Brier. A total of 230 households or 12.7% met the definition of "housing need" as defined above. Of the 230 households, 56 were renter-occupied housing units and 157 were owner-occupied, and 17 are non-specified households (households living in mobile homes, trailers, condominiums, or townhouses).

For comparison purposes, in Snohomish County overall there were a total of 171,713 households according to the 1990 census. 36,888 households or 21.5% met the definition of housing need.

The PAC methodology adjusts a jurisdiction's existing housing need for cities with a large share of lower income jobs or with few lower income jobs. County Planning staff has identified the percentage of lower income jobs in the Brier "job shed," which includes an area approximately 1 mile around the City. The Brier "job shed" has 31% lower income jobs compared to a countywide total of 25%. Therefore, according to the PAC methodology, Brier's existing housing need is adjusted upwards by a factor of 1.25. However, Brier City Officials have indicated that it is unacceptable to attribute lower income jobs to Brier from the surrounding area and to not also account for the supply of affordable housing contributed by the same "job shed" area.

#### **5. Brier's Existing Low and Moderate Income Housing Stock**

The supply of low and moderate income housing stock is determined by the rent and home values that are considered affordable to households whose income is not greater than 95% of the county household median income. According to the methodology provided by the county PAC, this is equivalent to a maximum gross rent in 1990 of \$875 per month (for renter-occupied housing stock), or a maximum sale value of \$99,999 (for owner-occupied housing stock).

According to the 1990 census data for Brier, 195 owner-occupied housing units out of 1,653 were valued at \$99,999 or less. This is equivalent to 11.8% of the owner-occupied housing units. 101 renter-occupied housing units out of 158 were rented at the maximum gross rent level of \$875 per month or less. Therefore, a total of 16.4% of the existing housing stock in Brier is considered affordable to low-moderate income households.

For comparison with Snohomish County overall, approximately 23% of owner-occupied housing stock is defined as affordable to low and moderate income households, while 88% of renter-occupied housing units are considered affordable. A total of 54.5% of the existing housing stock in Snohomish County is considered to be affordable to low-moderate income households.

The PAC methodology adjusts Brier's existing affordable housing needs by a proportion to equate with the County average, or by a factor of 3.32 (54.5%/16.4%).



**6. Comparison of Existing Housing Need and Supply of Affordable Housing Stock**

According to the assumptions and methodology described above, Brier had a total of 230 households that met the definition of "housing need" and a stock of 297 low to moderate income housing units. Of this total, 157 of the households with housing needs were owner occupied compared to a stock of 195 owner-occupied low to moderate housing units. 56 renter-occupied households qualified for the definition of housing need, while there was a stock of 110 affordable housing units. This analysis indicates that the existing supply of affordable housing stock in the city is adequate to meet housing needs.

**TABLE 2  
Comparison Of Existing Housing Need And Supply Of Affordable Housing Stock**

	<b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>HOUSEHOLDS W/ HOUSING NEEDS</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>
<b>CITY OF BRIER</b>			
Owner-Occupied	1,653 (91.3%)	157	9.5%
Renter-Occupied	158 (8.7%)	56	35.4%
Non-Specified HH		17	
Total	1,811	230	12.7%
<b>SNOHOMISH CO.</b>			
Owner-Occupied	113,775 (66.3%)	10,799	9.5%
Renter-Occupied	57,938 (33.7%)	20,305	35.0%
Non-Specified HH		5,784	
Total	171,713	36,888	21.5%
	<b>HOUSEHOLDS</b>	<b>HOUSEHOLDS W/ HOUSING NEEDS</b>	<b>% OF TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS</b>
<b>CITY OF BRIER</b>			
Owner-Occupied	1,653 (91.3%)	195	11.8%
Renter-Occupied	158 (8.7%)	101	63.9%
Non-Specified HH		1	
Total	1,811	297	16.4%
<b>SNOHOMISH CO.</b>			
Owner-Occupied	113,775 (66.3%)	26,124	23.0%
Renter-Occupied	57,938 (33.7%)	50,983	88.0%
Non-Specified HH		16,490	
Total	171,713	93,597	54.5%

Source: 1990 U.S. Census

## **7. Brier's Projected Housing Need**

A jurisdiction's projected housing need provides the initial, unadjusted basis for computing its fair share of county-wide projected housing need. It is based on the estimated number of low and moderate income households that the jurisdiction will plan for that have unmet housing needs.

Because it is difficult to predict how housing needs could change over the 20 year planning period, this analysis assumes the same proportion of households with housing needs as reported in the 1990 census.

According to the 1990 census, approximately 12.7% of the total households in Brier had limited incomes that met the definition of housing need. The population of Brier is projected to grow by 1,440 people over the 20 year planning period. This projection is based on forecasts by the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC) and the State Office of Financial Management (OFM). Assuming an average household size in Brier of 3.0 people per household (3.12 in 1990 Census), Brier may expect 480 additional households. Therefore, Brier may anticipate an additional 61 households with housing needs ( $480 \times 12.7\% = 61$ ) over the 20 year planning period.

## **8. Snohomish County Tomorrow PAC Fair Share Housing Allocation Methodology**

The PAC fair share methodology includes adjustments for a jurisdiction's existing share of lower income jobs and for a jurisdiction's share of low and moderate income housing stock. These adjustments are intended to comparatively proportion a jurisdiction's fair share with countywide affordable housing needs.

As described above, the PAC has adjusted Brier's existing housing needs according to the following factors:

$$\begin{array}{r} 230 \quad \text{households meeting definition of housing need} \\ \times 1.25 \quad \text{share of lower income jobs} \\ \times 3.32 \quad \text{share of low and moderate income housing stock} \\ \hline =954.5 \end{array}$$

The PAC adjusted the above equation to reach an existing fair share housing allocation of 598 for the City of Brier.

In projecting the fair share housing allocation over the 20 year planning period, the PAC has projected Brier's share at 124 additional households with housing needs.

**TABLE 3**  
**City of Brier Fair Share Housing Allocation Summary**

1990 Households with Housing Needs	Existing Fair Share (with adjustments)	Projected Fair Share	Total Fair Share Housing Allocation (For 20 Year Planning Period)
230	598	124	722

**9. Strategies to Achieve Affordable Housing Objectives**

The GMA requires jurisdictions to share in the responsibility for achieving a reasonable and equitable distribution of affordable housing. However, it does not prescribe specific implementation strategies for achieving affordable housing objectives. Generally, attention should be given to removing regulatory barriers to affordable housing. Strategies for the City to consider may include a combination of:

1. Appropriately zoned land;
2. Regulatory incentives;
3. Financial subsidies; and
4. Innovative planning techniques.

## **IV. HOUSING ELEMENT GOALS AND POLICIES**

### **Goal H-1**

Ensure adequate housing for all current and future residents of Brier by achieving and maintaining a high quality residential housing stock.

Policy H-1.1- Conserve the city's existing housing through code enforcement, and participation in rehabilitation programs.

### **Goal H-2**

Encourage the preservation of existing housing stock.

Policy H-2.1- Encourage individual homeowners to reinvest in their homes by providing information, technical assistance, and referrals to other appropriate agencies.

### **Goal H-3**

Promote strong residential neighborhoods through public investments in physical improvements and through public policy decisions intended to protect and preserve existing neighborhoods.

Policy H-3.1- Maintain infrastructure in residential areas to preserve the character and vitality of existing neighborhoods.

### **Goal H-4**

Encourage the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments of the population of the City.

Policy H-4.1- Endorse private sector efforts to secure federal and/or state funds to provide housing for elderly and disabled citizens.

Policy H-4.2- Encourage local participation in state programs, such as the Housing Assistance Program and the State Housing Finance Commission's homeownership loan program, that facilitate home ownership by low and moderate income families.

Policy H-4.3- Explore strategies to promote the development of non-assisted housing by the private sector.

Policy H-4.4- Evaluate local development standards and regulations for effects on housing costs. Modify development regulations which may unnecessarily add to the cost of housing.

### **Goal H-5**

To promote fair and equal access to housing for all persons regardless of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, age, national origin, family status, source of income or disability.

Policy H-5.1- Participate in efforts to equitably distribute and provide for a fair share of housing for special populations including the mentally ill, people with developmental disabilities, alcohol and substance abusers, domestic violence victims, people with AIDS, and runaway youth.

Policy H-5.2- Implement non-discriminatory zoning regulations for group homes, consistent with the Federal Fair Housing Act.

R-9 Consider the development of policies to address the needs of the elderly housing in the community (e.g. housing for persons over 55 years old, handicapped, etc.)

SF-5 Consider the need in the community for elderly housing (i.e. Handicapped and Elderly) and their provision by Conditional Use permit in the Zoning Code.

# APPENDIX A

## 1990 CENSUS INFORMATION

**Insert 8 pages of census information**