
WASHINGTON COMMUNITY FORUM ON HOUSING

WHY ARE WE DEVELOPING A TOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN?



How Can We Attract Young People & Families?

How Can We Meet the Housing Needs of Our Seniors?

ZOOM MEETING REMINDERS

- Meeting is being recorded
- Please raise your hand if you have a question or comment
- You will have to be unmuted by the host
- If the meeting is disrupted and ended abruptly, please wait 2 minutes and rejoin with the same Zoom link.



TOPICS & SPEAKERS

TOPICS

- Why are we developing a town affordable housing plan?
- What types of housing does Washington need?
- What do Washington residents and workers say about their housing needs?
- Who builds, owns, and manages the affordable housing we have now?
- What's next? How can I provide feedback on this plan?

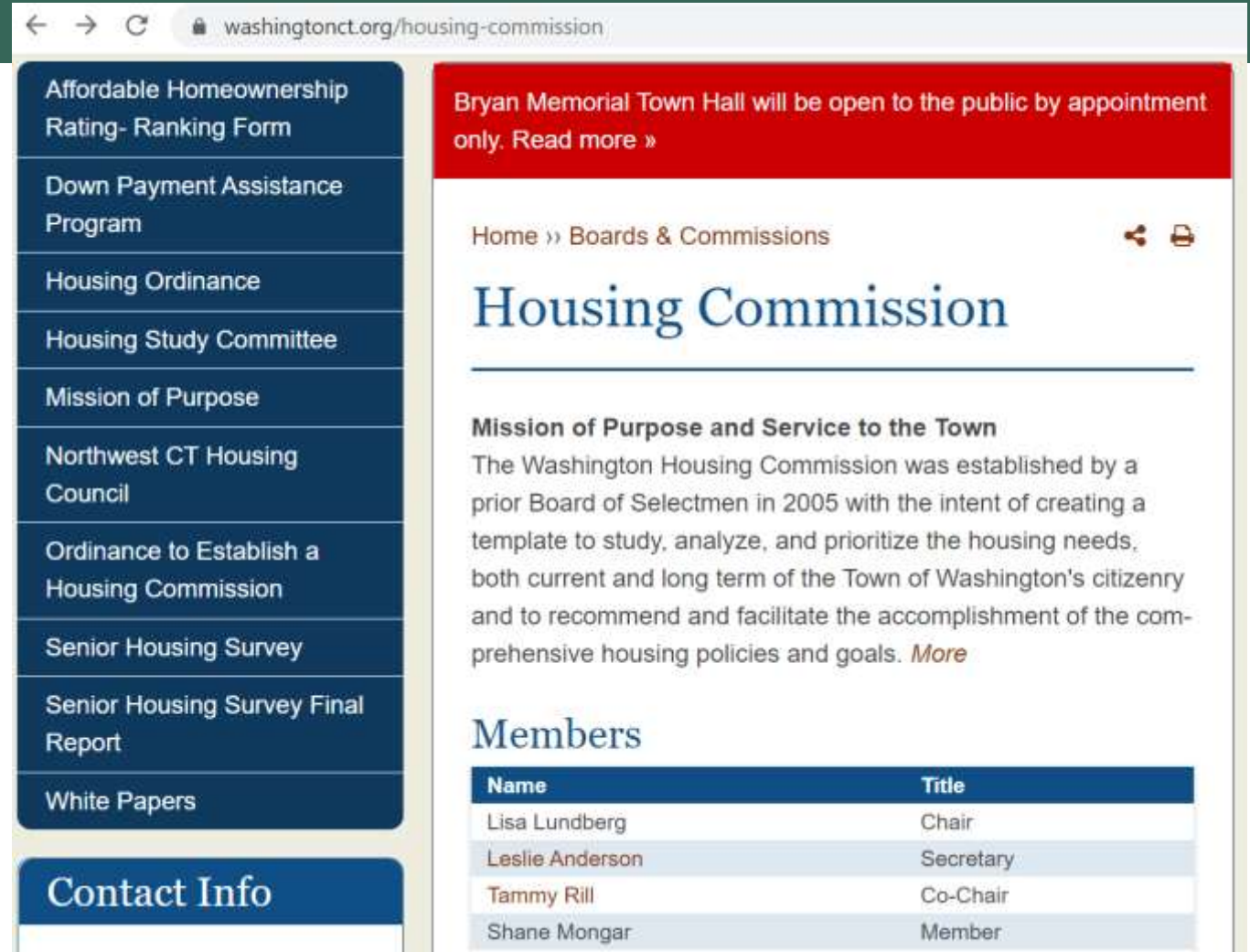
SPEAKERS include:

- **Jim Brinton**, First Selectman
- **Michelle Gorra**, Economic and Community Development Coordinator
- **Megan Bennett**, Superintendent of Schools
- **Fran Normann**, Housatonic Habitat for Humanity
- **Ann Marie Ovitt**, Property Manager for Washington Community Housing Trust
- **Jocelyn Ayer**, Community & Economic Development Director, Northwest Hills Council of Governments

WASHINGTON HOUSING COMMISSION

SHANE MONGAR

- Established by Board of Selectmen in 2005
- To recommend and facilitate the accomplishment of the comprehensive housing policies and goals.
- Monthly meetings open to the public
- Members:
 - Lisa Lundberg
 - Leslie Anderson
 - Tammy Rill
 - Shane Mongar



The screenshot shows the website for the Washington Housing Commission at washingtonct.org/housing-commission. The page features a dark blue sidebar with a list of links: Affordable Homeownership Rating- Ranking Form, Down Payment Assistance Program, Housing Ordinance, Housing Study Committee, Mission of Purpose, Northwest CT Housing Council, Ordinance to Establish a Housing Commission, Senior Housing Survey, Senior Housing Survey Final Report, and White Papers. Below these links is a 'Contact Info' button. The main content area has a red banner at the top with the text 'Bryan Memorial Town Hall will be open to the public by appointment only. Read more »'. Below the banner, the breadcrumb 'Home » Boards & Commissions' is shown. The title 'Housing Commission' is displayed in a large, blue, serif font. Underneath, the 'Mission of Purpose and Service to the Town' is detailed, stating the commission was established in 2005 to study, analyze, and prioritize housing needs. A 'More' link is provided at the end of the paragraph. The 'Members' section follows, featuring a table with two columns: 'Name' and 'Title'.

Name	Title
Lisa Lundberg	Chair
Leslie Anderson	Secretary
Tammy Rill	Co-Chair
Shane Mongar	Member

WHY ARE WE DEVELOPING A TOWN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PLAN?

MICHELLE GORRA, ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR

8-30j Legislation: Effective July 2017, with compliance by July 2022:

- At least once **every 5 years** every municipality must prepare or amend & adopt an affordable housing plan
- **GOAL:** The goal of this process is “to **undertake a proactive Planning process and lay out a strategy for meeting the housing needs of existing and future residents and workers**” as required by Section 8-30j
- The plan must **specify how the municipality intends to increase the number of affordable housing developments** in the municipality
- Following adoption, the municipality **must regularly review and maintain** their affordable housing plan

Washington Housing Plan Task Team includes:

- **All 4 Housing Commission members**
- **Dean Sarjeant** (Board of Selectman)
- **Janet Hill** (Zoning Commission)
- **Wayne Hileman** (Planning Commission)
- **Ralph Averill** (Housing Trust, Zoning)
- **Michelle Gorra** (Economic & Community Development)
- **Lindsay Larson** (Community)

Meetings 2nd Tuesdays, all open to public

- **Jocelyn Ayer-** consultant assisting with planning process

WHAT IS AFFORDABLE HOUSING?

JOCELYN AYER, NHCOC

Definition of affordable housing:

Costs less than 30% of the income of a household earning 80% or less of the area median income (AMI).

Incomes adjusted annually and by household size.

What qualifies for State's Affordable Housing Appeals list?

Meets the criteria above + is being "assisted" by a state or federal program which assures the affordability remains in place

	Household Size				
	1 person	2 people	3 people	4 people	5 people
80% of AMI (2020)	\$ 57,456	\$ 65,664	\$ 73,872	\$ 82,080	\$88,646

Example rent:

- between \$500 and \$900 for a one-bedroom apartment or
- \$1,100 to \$1,800 for a 3-bedroom apartment.

Washington Housing Needs Assessment

February 2021

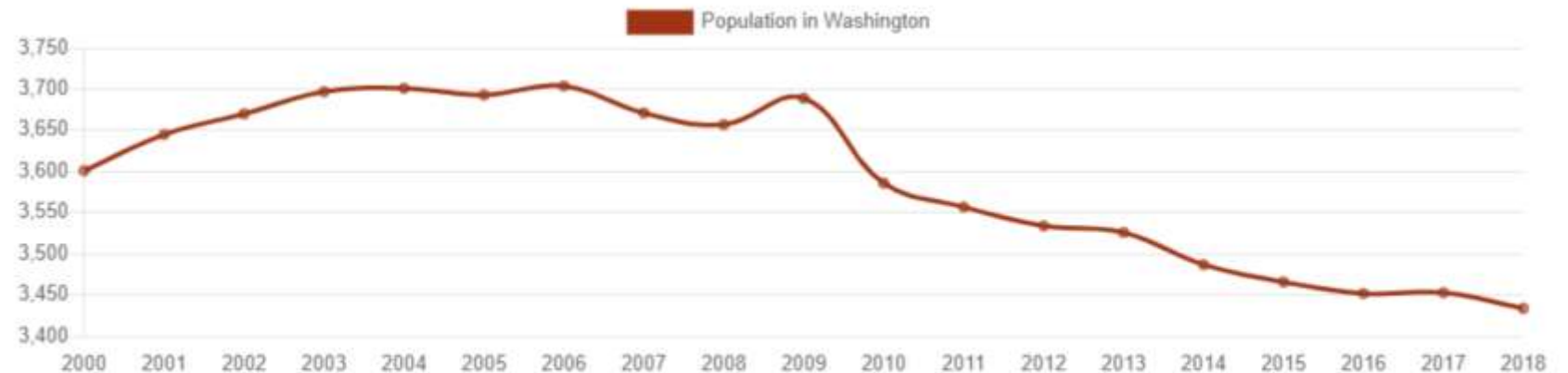
Prepared by: Jocelyn Ayer, Northwest Hills Council of Governments

*What types
of housing
does
Washington
need?*

Demographic Trends

Washington's population has been in steady decline since 2009; including households with children

- Washington has approx. **3,400 residents** living in **1,400 households**.
- The Town's overall **population declined** by 150 net residents between 2010-2019.
- There has also been a decline in the number of households with children.
 - From 334 households with children (2010 ACS) to 245 households (2018 ACS)



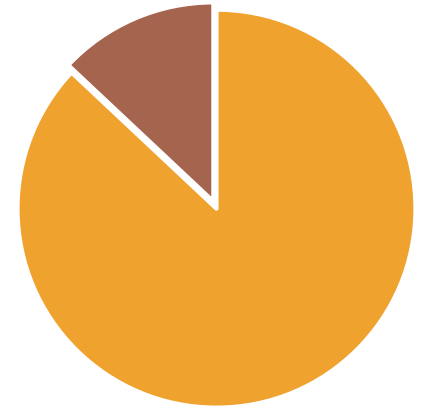
Source: [CT Department of Public Health, annual population estimates](#)
Visualization created by [CTData Collaborative](#)

Range of housing options

Washington does not have a diverse range of housing options available for its residents.

- **87% of Washington's housing stock is single family detached homes** (compared to 73% in Litchfield County and 59% statewide)
 - Single family detached housing is the most expensive type of housing to build, own, and maintain.
 - 11% of the town's housing stock has 2 or more units in one structure vs. 22% in Litchfield County

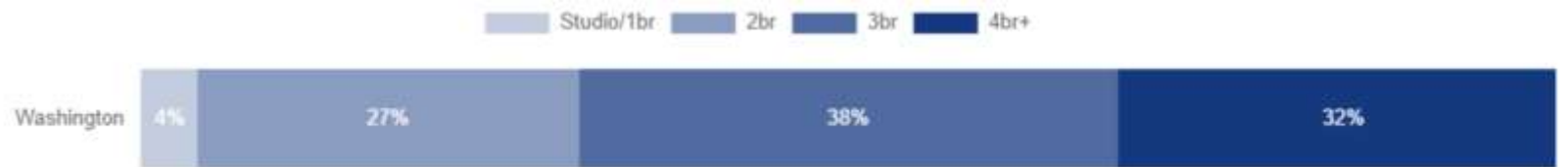
■ Single family ■ Other



Range of housing options

70% of Washington's housing stock has 3 or more bedrooms

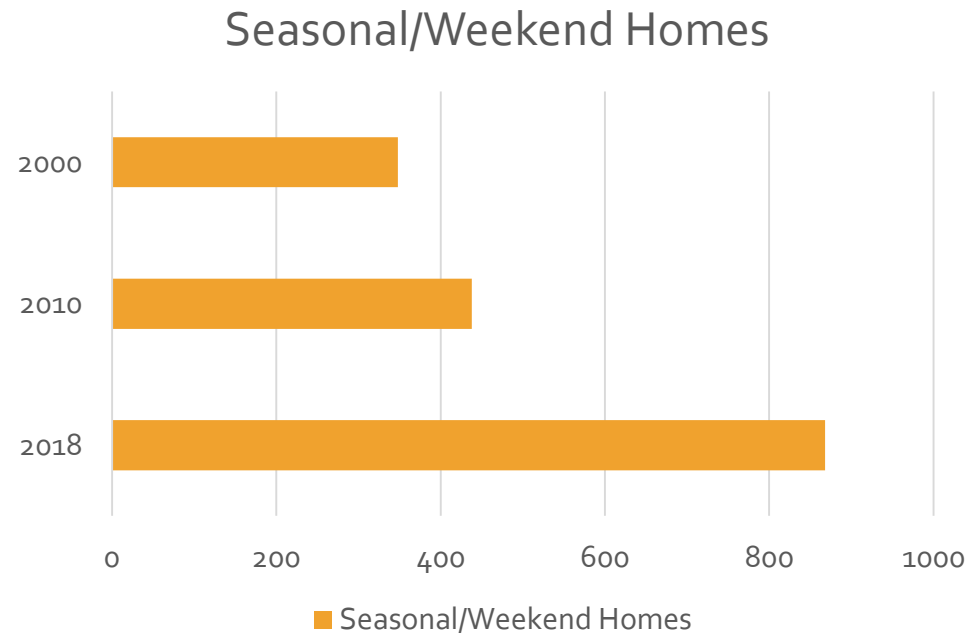
- **18% of Washington's households have children and yet 70% of the housing stock has 3+ bedrooms.**
- Majority of housing available may not fit the needs/desires of young adults, young families, or seniors that do not want to pay for or maintain a single family home with 3+ bedrooms.



Seasonal/ weekend homes

Almost 40% of Washington's housing stock has been used "seasonally or occasionally", not year-round

- **38% of Washington's housing stock** (868 homes) are considered "vacant for **seasonal, occasional, or recreational use**".
- The number of "seasonal/weekend" homes has **doubled** over the last 8 year period for which we have data.
- The COVID 19 pandemic has brought more year round residents to homes previously used seasonally or occasionally.



Housing Production Trends

Approx. 8 new units per year are being built; houses being built are getting larger and being built on larger lots

- Over a 9-yr period (2009-2018) a total of 77 new housing units were created;
 - 51 were single family (median lot size = 7 acres),
 - 24 were accessory apartments,
 - 2 were apartments
- New single-family homes in Washington are becoming ever larger and are being located on ever larger lots.

[Source: Land Use office via: Wayne Hileman]

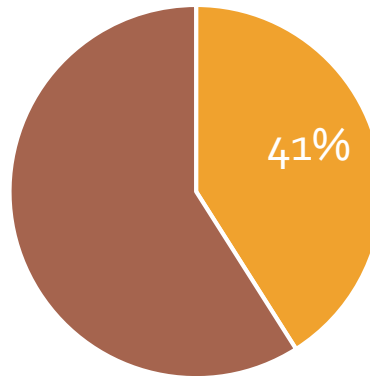


Housing Cost Burdened Households

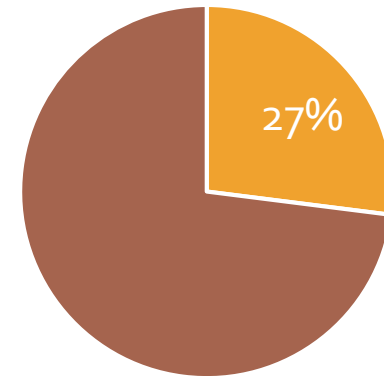
479 Washington's households are housing cost burdened

- Households are considered “housing cost burdened” if they spend more than 30% of their income on housing.
- 479 households in Washington are housing cost burdened including:
 - 41% of Washington's **owner households** with a mortgage; and
 - 27% (72) of the town's **renter households**

Cost Burdened Owners



Cost Burdened Renters



Rental Housing Availability

There is limited rental housing available in Washington; the homes available for rent are very expensive.

- 12% of Washington's housing stock is renter occupied (268 units)
 - compared to 19% in Litchfield County and 30% statewide.
- Current search (2/4/21) on Realtor.com showed 11 listings
 - 2 least expensive homes were for rent at \$2,200/mo
 - 6 were over \$20,000/mo

Brokered by William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty



House for rent
\$35,000 /month

8 bed 5.5 bath 6,945 sqft 3.13 acres lot

51A Ferry Bridge Rd,
Washington, CT 06793

[Listing 1](#) | [Listing 2](#)

[Contact property](#)

Brokered by William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty



House for rent
\$2,200 /month

1 bed 1 bath 800 sqft 3 acres lot

40 Shearer Rd,
Washington, CT 06793

[Contact property](#)

Brokered by William Pitt Sotheby's International Realty



House for rent
\$20,000 /month

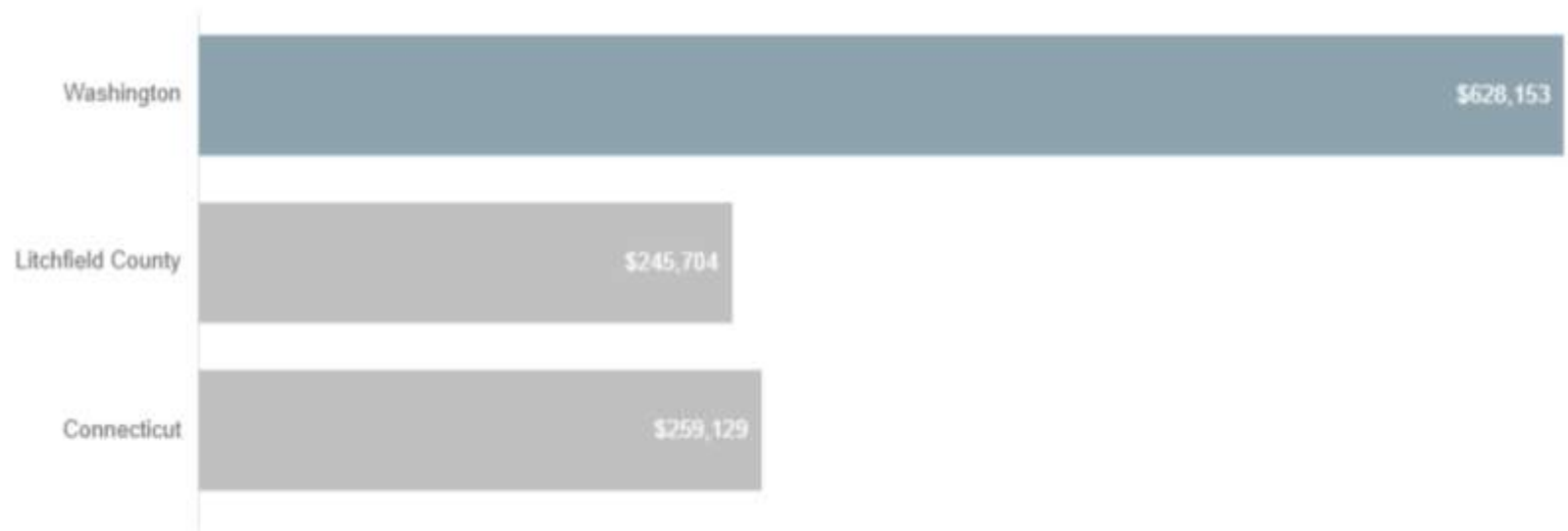
5 bed 4 bath 1,743 sqft 0.72 acres lot

10 Loomarwick Rd,
Washington, CT 06777

[Contact property](#)

High Average Home Values

- The average home value in Washington is 2 ½ times more than the average home value county-wide.



Source: [2019 Zillow Home Value Index \(average for 12 months\)](#)
Visualization created by [CTData Collaborative](#)

Access to Ownership

New homeownership is often delayed by *high housing costs*, *limited diversity in housing type* (too many big houses), and *student loan debt*.

- As of December 2020 SmartMLS reported 112 home sales in town for the year with an average sales price of **\$1,181,772**.
- If your household earned \$83,000 (the median income of a renter household in Washington) you could afford a home priced at **\$265,000**.


Median Home Prices Washington (2016-2020)

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Washington	\$460,000	\$390,000	\$388,000	\$528,500	\$840,000

Source: Smart MLS (2020 report)

Single Family	December			Year to Date		
Key Metrics	2019	2020	% Change	Thru 12-2019	Thru 12-2020	% Change
New Listings	2	2	0.0%	121	110	- 9.1%
Pending Sales	5	9	+ 80.0%	64	117	+ 82.8%
Closed Sales	5	11	+ 120.0%	59	112	+ 89.8%
Days on Market Until Sale	200	118	- 41.0%	186	183	- 1.6%
Median Sales Price*	\$1,050,000	\$900,000	- 14.3%	\$550,200	\$845,000	+ 53.6%
Average Sales Price*	\$980,600	\$1,358,182	+ 38.5%	\$1,076,025	\$1,181,772	+ 9.8%
Percent of List Price Received*	86.8%	94.9%	+ 9.3%	89.9%	93.8%	+ 4.3%
Inventory of Homes for Sale	79	33	- 58.2%	—	—	—
Months Supply of Inventory	14.8	3.4	- 77.0%	—	—	—

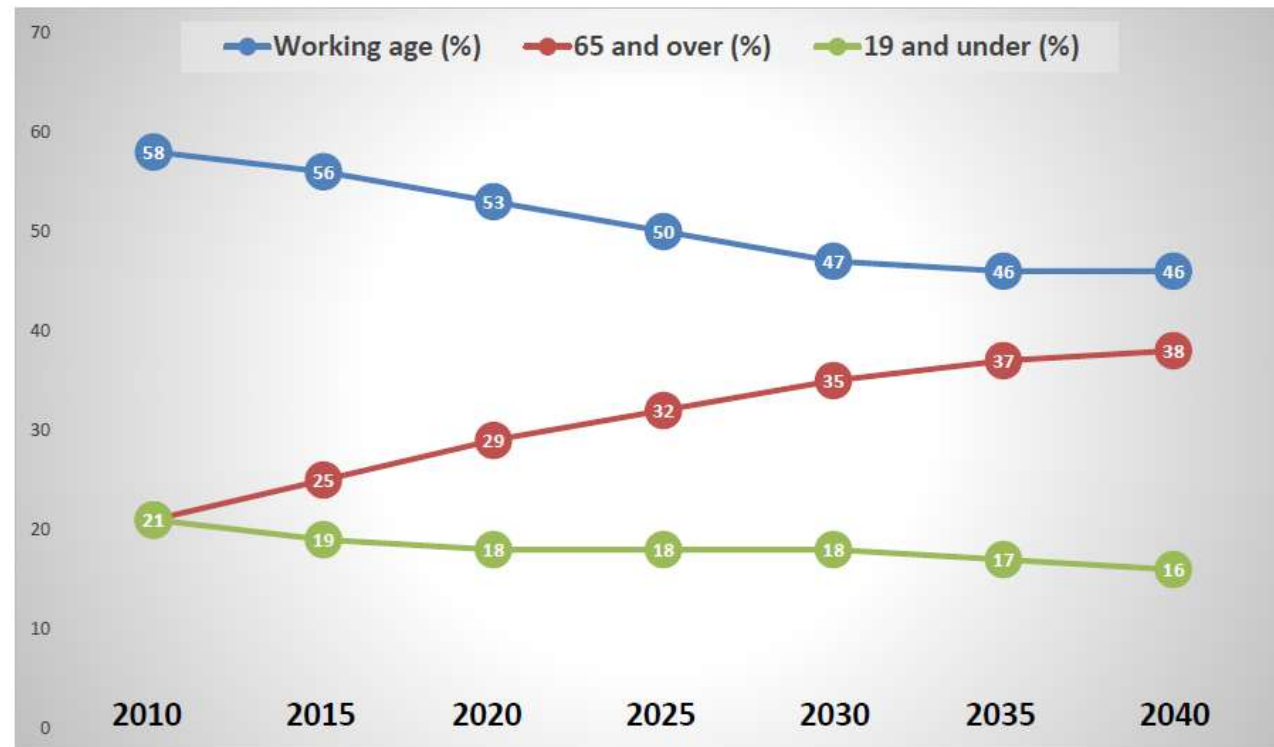
Limited housing options for those who work in Washington

- According to the CT Dept. of Labor (2017) Washington had 218 employers that employed 1,559 workers with an **average annual wage of \$47,750**.
 - Region 12 School District
 - Step one Teacher with BA = **\$49,630**
 - Step one Para - \$18.49/hour = **\$19,987.69**
 - Step one Custodian \$21.39/hour = **\$44,491.20**
 - The Market starts their new employees between **\$13-\$15** per hour.
- 
- A worker who earned \$47,750 **could afford a home priced at \$159,000 or a rental cost of \$925/mo.** There are very limited options at this cost.

Senior/ downsizing housing needs

- Washington has 673 residents over 70 years old.
- 70% of Washington's housing stock has 3+ bedrooms.
- Washington has 12 units of affordable senior rental housing.
 - There are 4 handicapped accessible units in the town's other affordable housing developments.

Washington CT: Projected Percent Change in Cohort



Current stock of affordable housing

*As defined by the CT Affordable
Housing Appeals Act (8-30g)*

TOWN	Total Housing Units 2010 Census	Govern ment Assisted	Tenant Rental Assistan -ce	Single Family CHFA/ USDA Mortgage	Deed Restrict -ed Units	Total Assisted Units	Percent Affordable
Morris	1,314	20	4	7	0	31	2.36%
Litchfield	3,975	140	2	25	19	186	4.68%
Washington	2,124	14 *	3	4	23**	44	2.07%
Warren	811	0	0	1	0	1	0.12%
Bethlehem	1,575	24	1	9	0	34	2.16%
Roxbury	1,167	19	0	5	0	24	2.06%

*Dodge Farm

**Riverwoods + Church Street

Summary of Housing Data Analysis

Key Findings

- **Washington's housing stock is not diverse**- 87% of Washington's housing is single family detached homes.
- Washington's homes are **large**- 70% of homes have 3+ bedrooms.
- There is a **lack of rental housing** options in Washington. Only 12% of Washington's homes are occupied by renters vs. 19% county-wide and 30% statewide. Most of the single family home rentals are **very expensive**.
- There are very **limited housing options that are affordable** for many people who **work in town**.
- There is limited **senior rental housing** in Washington and very limited "downsizing" options (homes with 2 or less bedrooms, condos, townhomes, senior living).
- Washington has **44 affordable homes** currently, 2% of its housing stock, leaving it open to 8-30g appeals.
- **479 Washington households are housing cost burdened.**

WHAT DO RESIDENTS SAY ABOUT HOUSING NEEDS?

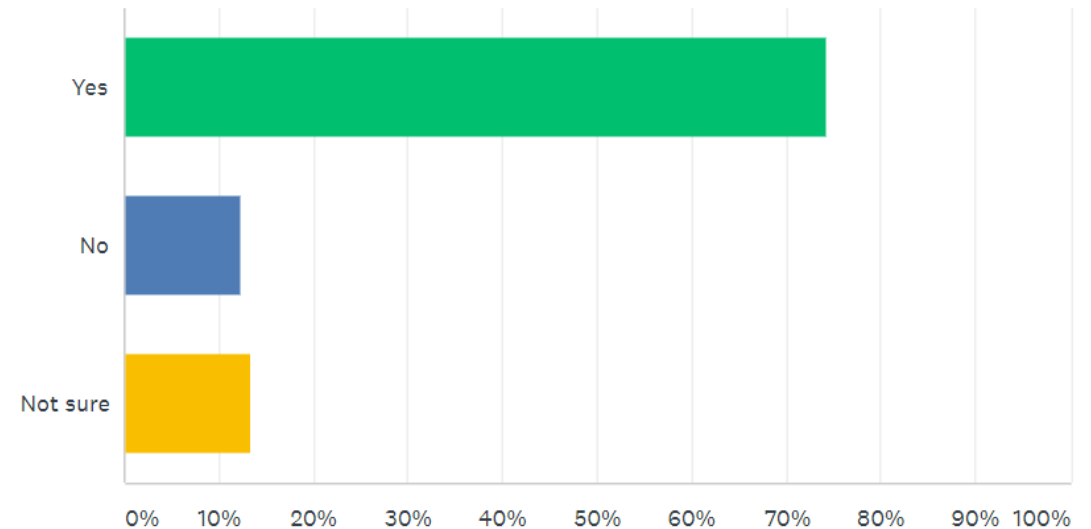
SURVEY RESULTS- SHANE MONGAR

Resident Housing Needs Survey

- **277 responses to date**
- Summary responses- highlights:
 - 36% have experienced barriers to finding the type of housing they would like to have in town
 - 28% report limited supply of homes in their price range
 - 40% (110) anticipate having to move out of town
 - 65% think town needs “downsize” options
 - 60% think town needs rental housing options
 - 74% think the cost of housing affects town’s ability to retain/attract young people/families
 - 75% think the cost of housing affects the ability of people who work here to live here

Do you think the cost of housing in Washington affects the town's ability to attract/retain younger people or young families?

Answered: 275 Skipped: 2



WHAT DO WORKERS SAY ABOUT HOUSING NEEDS?

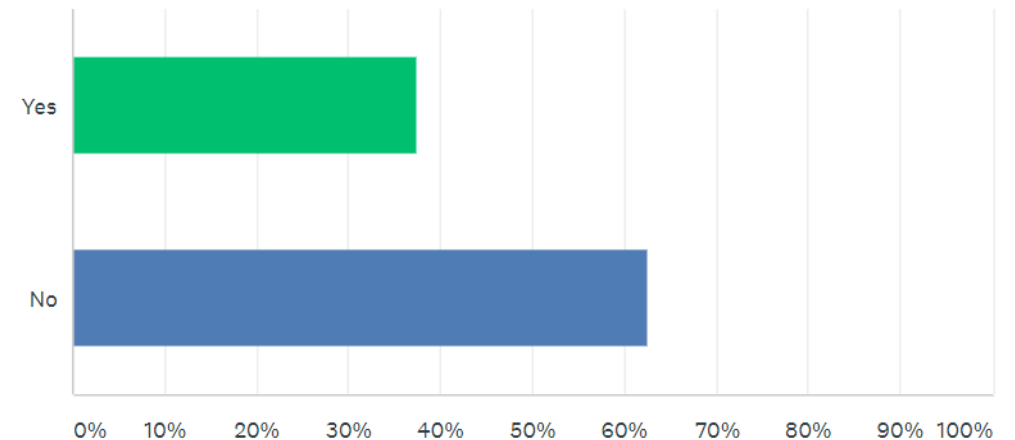
SURVEY RESULTS- LINDSAY LARSON

Worker Housing Needs Survey

- **96 responses to date**
- Summary responses- highlights:
 - 40% of respondents in education
 - 47% would like to live in town now or in the future
 - 41% say there are a limited # of homes for sale in their price range
 - 14% say there are a limited # of rental options in their price range
 - 37% interested in first time homebuyer options
 - 26% interested in “downsizing” options

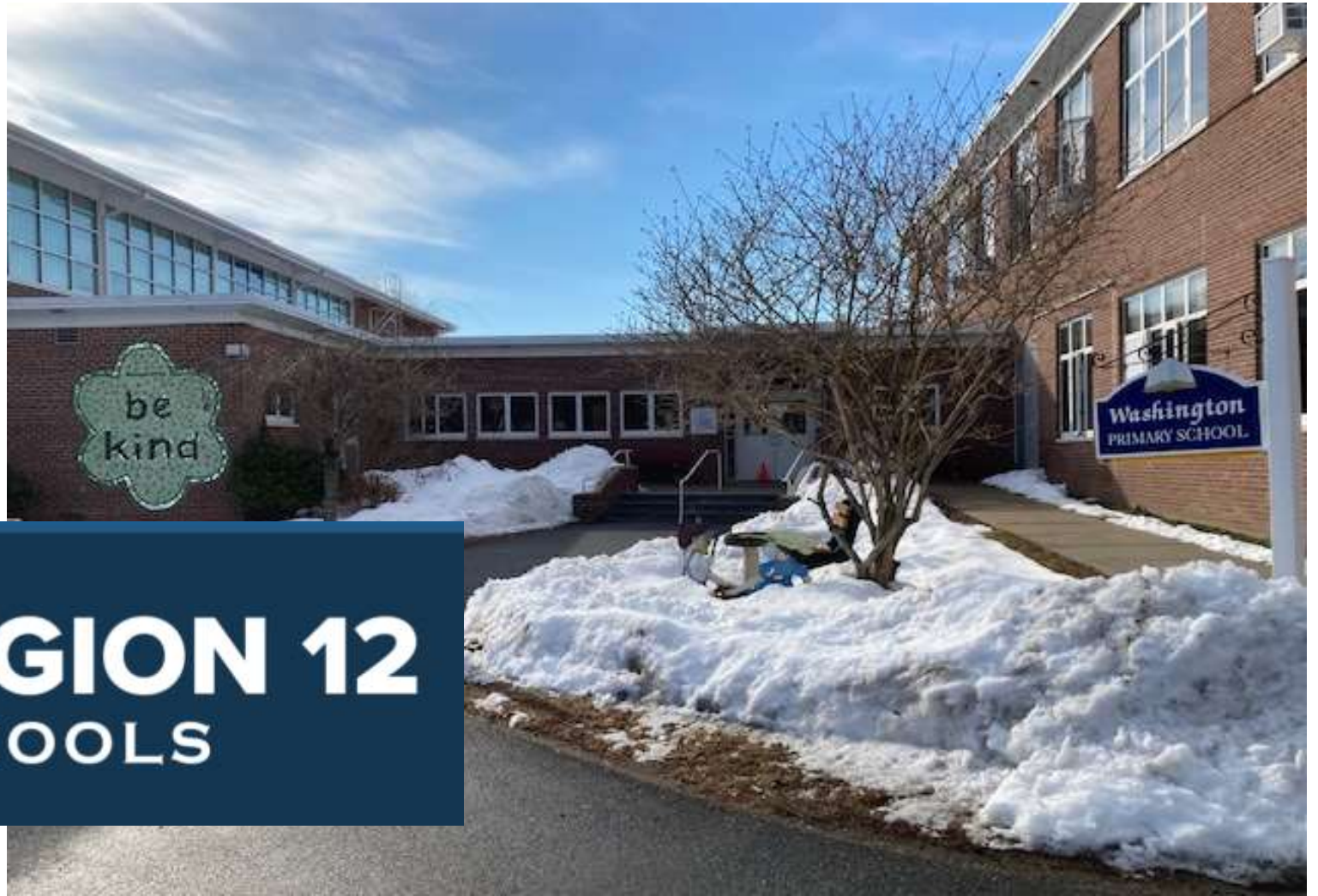
Do you currently live in the Town of Washington?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 0



HOUSING CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY WORKERS AND PARENTS

MEGAN BENNETT, SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS



WHO BUILDS, OWNS, AND MANAGES THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING WE HAVE NOW?

Washington Community Housing Trust
Ann Marie Ovitt, Property Manager

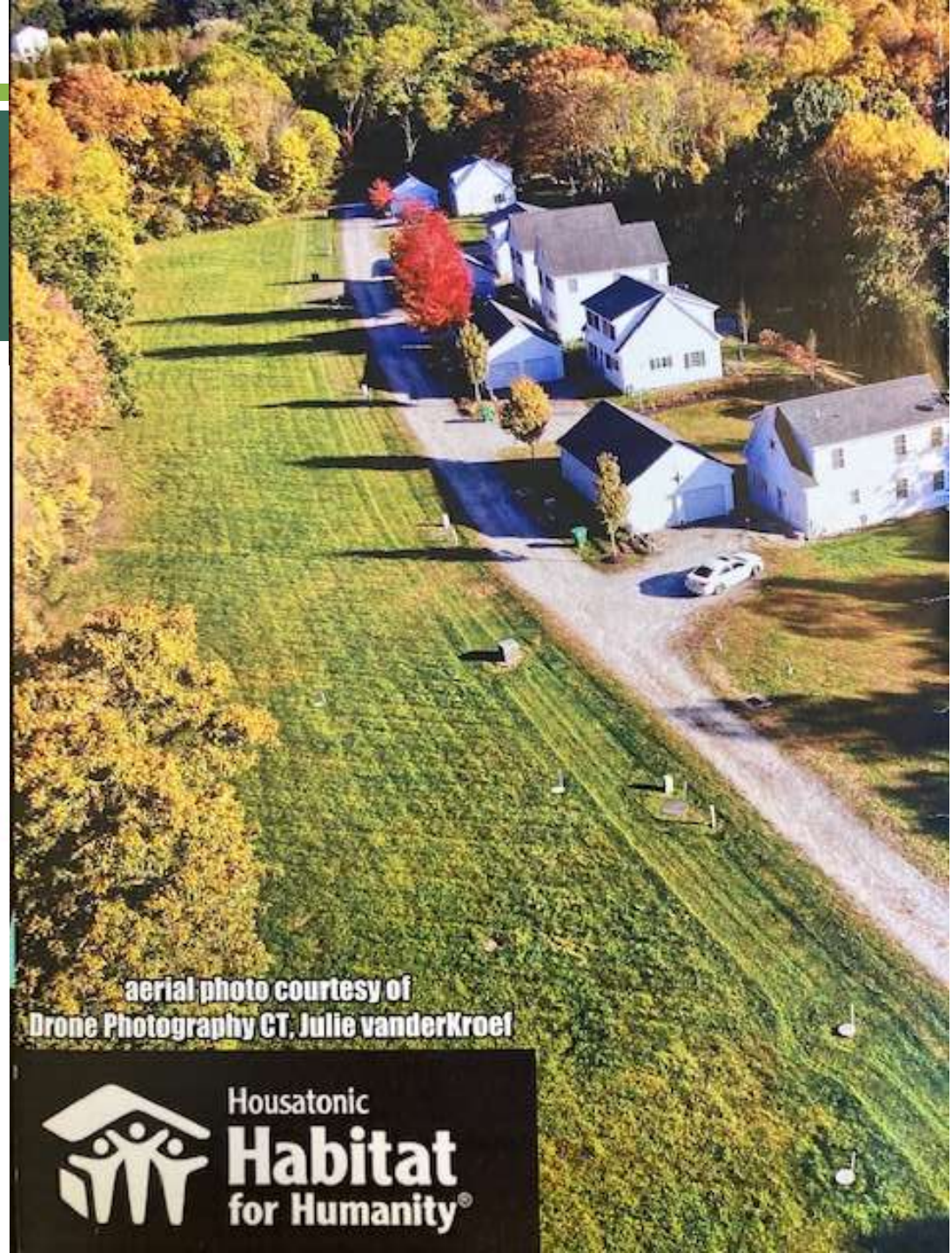
- Dodge Farm
- Riverwoods
- Church Street
- Vincent property



HOUSATONIC HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

FRAN NORMANN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

- Myfield Lane in Washington
 - 6 homes built to date
 - 7 more homes to be built
- www.housatonichabitat.org
 - serve families who earn less than 66% of area median income (\$45,000 - \$70,000 household income) and can also pay our affordable mortgage.



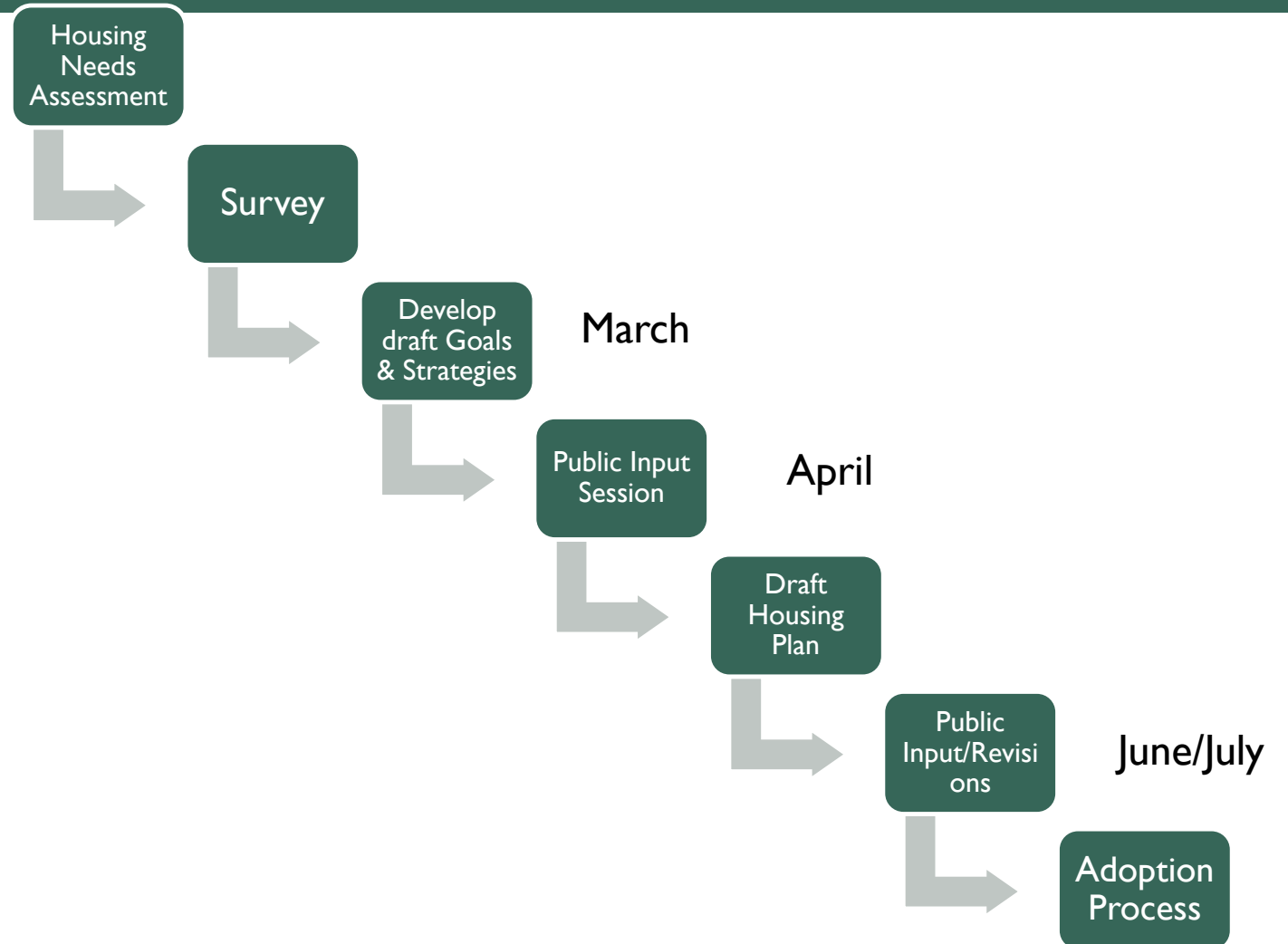
aerial photo courtesy of
Drone Photography CT, Julie vanderKroef



Housatonic
Habitat
for Humanity®

NEXT STEPS IN WASHINGTON HOUSING PLAN PROCESS

- Plan to hold **two more public forums** prior to presenting the Housing Plan for adoption.
- Monthly Housing Plan Steering Committee meetings are **open to the public** and noticed on the town website.



THANK YOU!

WHERE TO GO FOR MORE INFORMATION

- Town of Washington website
 - www.washingtonct.org/housing-commission
 - Agendas, minutes, etc.
- Make sure you get the town's email notices
- www.northwesthillscog.org/housing
 - List of **frequently asked questions** about town housing plans and affordable housing
 - Link to NWCT Regional Housing Council website
 - Housing data links



QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, FEEDBACK

DEAN SARJEANT

- Please **raise your hand** or type your question into the **chat** box!
- Do you have any **questions** about the Housing Plan, the planning process, or affordable housing?
- **Ideas** for how Washington can meet its housing needs?

