



City of Bothell™

2024 Bothell Needs Assessment and Strategic Plan

Prepared by Koné Consulting for the City of Bothell
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Executive Summary

The City of Bothell partnered with Koné Consulting to prepare a needs assessment to better understand the community's diverse human service needs and develop a strategic plan to address those needs. The report's purpose is to provide new data on the current state of services, identify services needs and gaps, provide actionable recommendations, and set goals for a three-year strategy. The key findings in this report are based on an analysis of publicly available data and original data gathered through interviews with providers, lived experience focus groups, and an online community survey.

Key Themes

Several themes emerged from the survey, interviews, and focus groups with key stakeholders. The findings outline human service needs, gaps, and enhancement opportunities identified through data collection.

Human Service Priorities – Opportunities to Enhance Services

- Improve **mental health support**, especially for youth and older adults.
- Improve **substance use disorder treatment and support**.
- Expand services for survivors of **domestic violence**.
- Improve **support for older adults**, especially for low income & aging in place population.
- Improve **support for immigrants and refugees**.
- Increase **community education opportunities** and **cultural events**.
- Improve access to services by increasing **transportation** options.

Housing Needs

- Increase **affordable housing** options.
- Improve **rental assistance** and **tenant protections**.
- Increase access to **low barrier** and **emergency shelter services**.

Awareness and Outreach Needs

- Improve **awareness and outreach** services for human services in Bothell.
- Improve the method of **information distribution**.
- Develop a **centralized source of information**, such as an enhanced online resource guide or a community resource hub.

In addition to sharing the current human service needs in the community, stakeholders also shared positive experiences and success stories. Food assistance was one service area that is working well for the community; many



community members noted that the local food pantry has been a helpful service that should continue receiving support. There was also support for continuing current regional collaboration efforts, such as the RCR and NUHSA. Finally, many stakeholders commented on the importance of the human services coordinator position in supporting grant recipients and enhancing collaboration efforts.

Recommendations

Staffing Recommendations

1. Continue funding the human services coordinator position
2. Additional staff support for outreach and communications

Funding Recommendations

1. Continue current services that are working well
2. Pursue community development block grant (CDBG) funding now that Bothell is eligible for the entitlement program

Strategic Goals

1. Invest in community awareness and education so that Bothell residents understand the human services landscape and how to access needed services.
2. Enrich collaboration between community-based organizations (CBO)/service providers and the City so they can better contribute to the safety and health of the entire community.
3. Ensure children and parents in Bothell have services that meet their needs.
4. Increase City support for more shelter services and supportive housing options for communities who need them.
5. Improve low-barrier access to behavioral health services.
6. Increase City-supported affordable and accessible transportation services, including for community members with disabilities and older adults, to various human services in Bothell.
7. Support for older adults to remain in their homes and take care of their basic needs.

Project Overview

The City of Bothell partnered with Koné Consulting to prepare a needs assessment to better understand the community's diverse human service needs and develop a strategic plan to address those needs. The assessment provides a picture – drawn from data and lived experience – of a broad spectrum of city human service needs and analyzes service gaps. The findings are based on an analysis of publicly available data and original data gathered through interviews with local community-based organizations (CBOs), lived experience focus groups, and an online community survey. The qualitative and quantitative data gathered through data collection efforts were analyzed to evaluate existing conditions for human service programs for the City of Bothell and identify community priorities, needs and gaps. The strategic plan provides actionable recommendations, sets goals for a three-year strategy, and establishes indicators to monitor progress toward each goal. Koné Consulting collaborated with the City of Bothell to develop the strategic plan, based on data collection findings and the results of two facilitated strategic planning workshops with local human service providers.

Koné Consulting developed this report by working with critical stakeholders, historically underserved communities, and individuals who have lived experience accessing human services in Bothell.

Strategic Plan

Strategic Goals and Priorities

Koné Consulting and The City of Bothell developed the strategic plan with Bothell nonprofits and community-based organizations (CBOs). It includes seven strategic goals developed by providers in strategic planning workshops and informed by data collected in the needs assessment. Proposed actions and performance measures accompany each goal.

GOAL #1: Invest in community awareness and education so that Bothell residents understand the human services landscape and how to access needed services.

Shorter-term Actions

- Improve **awareness** of (and combat misinformation about) **existing community events and available services** through an online Bothell information hub that is updated regularly.
- Establish a **small, temporary physical resource hub** where providers and residents can meet each other.
- Improve **resource navigation support** for community members, focusing on prevention and supplementary supports.
- **Share neighbors' stories** to increase awareness of the needs of community members that must be addressed.

Longer-term Actions

- Create an **outreach advisory committee** of community leaders that represent Bothell's diverse residents to be **navigators** to increase trust and engagement with all subpopulations.
- Publish an **annually updated** online and printable (PDF) **human services guide**.
- Design, fund and build a permanent Bothell **community resource hub** for community members and providers to meet each other.
- Create an **ad campaign** describing Bothell's vision and shared community goals related to human services.
- Hold **City-sponsored, community-engaged conversations** to help community members talk to each other (intergenerational, multicultural, differently abled, different lived experiences) to make civic engagement more accessible for community members of all ages and abilities.



Performance Measures

1. **Communicate quarterly** to the public about human services through multiple, inclusive channels (digital, paper, multiple languages, 508 compliant).
2. Host at least **one annual resource event** for the public to learn about available services, with at least 100 attendees.
3. Increase the **number and diversity of residents reached** through communication channels (such as the Bothell newsletter).
4. Increase in the percentage of Bothell residents that report **information about human services is easy to find**.

GOAL #2: Enrich collaboration between community-based organizations (CBO)/service providers and the City so they can better contribute to the safety and health of the entire community.

Shorter-term Actions

- Host **recurring convenings** for CBOs/service providers to connect with each other and the City.
- **Collect feedback** from CBOs who applied for funding to gather feedback about strengths and gaps in the process.
- Continue to identify **Snohomish and King County-specific human service gaps**, and find service equivalents to bridge the gaps.

Longer-term Actions

- Create a **mini-grant program** for service providers, especially new / smaller CBOs, to support collaboration (meeting time, travel costs, etc.).
- Build connections with human service providers who serve surrounding Cities to **explore service expansion**.

Performance Measures

1. At least **quarterly convenings** with service providers, with a **60% attendance rate**.
2. Increase in the percentage of Bothell CBOs and providers that report **information about human services is easy to find**.
3. Increase in the percentage of Bothell service providers reporting the **funding process was easy**.



GOAL #3: Ensure children and parents in Bothell have services that meet their needs.

Shorter-term Actions

- **Partner** with the **Northshore School District** and identify opportunities to collaborate on behalf of children and families in Bothell.
- Support **summer meals programs** by providing locations in Bothell, if needed, and promoting through City communication channels.
- Support state and county low-income **childcare subsidy programs** by promoting through City communication channels and including state and county childcare subsidy programs in community resource events.
- Support **local childcare providers** by hosting convenings where they can share information with each other and their needs with the City.

Longer-term Actions

- Conduct a **needs assessment** of what informal and formal **childcare options** currently exist in the city to identify the needs.
- In partnership with the Northshore School District, **develop a classroom evaluation survey** incorporating measures of belonging and social emotional well-being (in different languages).
- Create a childcare assistance subsidy for families with incomes above the 60% median income limit for a state subsidy, but still experiencing financial hardship.

Performance Measures

1. Host at least **two convenings per year** with childcare providers to gather and share information.
2. **Publish weekly communications** about availability of the summer meals program **during summer months**.
3. Childcare subsidy agency representatives participate in **at least one community outreach event** annually.

GOAL #4: Increase City support for more shelter services and supportive housing options for communities who need them.

Shorter-term Actions

- Increase **temporary rental assistance** funding.
- Create **extreme weather shelters** (cold, heat, smoke) within the City of Bothell.



Longer-term Actions

- Adopt more **tenant protections** like minimum notice of rent increase and caps on fees.
- Create **more low-barrier, inclusive temporary and transitional shelters** for families, youth and seniors.
- Expand **transitional** and **permanent supportive housing** programs in Bothell.
- Encourage use of new state tax exemption for limited equity cooperative housing to support more affordable housing solutions.

Performance Measures

1. **50 % increase in days** an extreme weather shelter is available during cold, heat, or smoke events.

GOAL #5: Improve low-barrier access to behavioral health services.

Shorter-term Actions

- Improve **language access** for behavioral health services.

Longer-term Actions

- Improve **integration** of behavioral health services with other wrap-around supports in a **one-stop model**.

Performance Measures

1. Behavioral health services available for Bothell residents in **two additional languages** besides English and Spanish.

GOAL #6: Increase City-supported affordable and accessible transportation services, including for community members with disabilities and older adults, to various human services in Bothell.

Shorter-term Actions

- Improve transportation assistance **outreach and application assistance** for community members.

Longer-term Actions

- Partner with organizations / companies to increase **innovative transportation options** in Bothell.

Performance Measures



1. **10% increase in transportation assistance** received by eligible Bothell residents.

GOAL #7: Support for older adults to remain in their homes and take care of their basic needs.

Shorter-term Actions

- Coordinate **deliveries of essentials to homebound** Bothell residents.
- Provide opportunities for **community connection** to decrease isolation for older adults.
- Increase **care navigation support** for older adults who need to access / apply for public benefits and human services.

Longer-term Actions

- Create more opportunities for older adults to **maintain** their own **independent living spaces**.
- Improve **nutritional support** for older adults.
- Work with community organizations to provide **in-home volunteer services** (minor repairs, yard work, etc.).

Performance Measures

1. **10 % increase in “service dispatches”** to Bothell residents who are homebound.
2. **10% increase** in older adults **participating in community events** and programs.
3. **10% increase** in eligible older adults **receiving public assistance benefits**.

Needs Assessment

Introduction

The City of Bothell defines human services as programs and services to help community members meet their basic needs, survive, and thrive. Current areas of assistance include housing and shelter, food insecurity, youth services, mental health services, legal support and shelter for domestic violence victims, education and childcare, and programs for older adults. The city funds community-based organizations and develops policy and program responses to build a healthy and safe community. The City defines its role in human services as funding service providers, connecting providers and those in need of services, and planning for major policy decisions.

The purpose of this needs assessment is to provide a clear picture of human services needs within the community and identify barriers that exist for community members in accessing services.

Methodology

To understand the current state of human services in Bothell and assess the current needs, the consultant team used four data-gathering techniques: analysis of publicly available data and reports, key stakeholder interviews, lived experience focus groups, and an online community survey.

Review of Existing Data

Koné Consulting reviewed the following data sources to comprehensively understand human services needs and priority areas in Bothell, King and Snohomish Counties.

- Snohomish County Community Health Needs Assessment (2022)
- King County Community Health Needs Assessment (2021/2022)
- Imagine Bothell Comprehensive Plan (2024)
- City of Bothell 2040 Vision and Strategic Priorities
- Hopelink Community Needs Assessment (2022)
- City of Bothell – American Community Survey data (2022)
- City of Bothell Census data (2020)

The consultant team also reviewed needs assessments from similar municipalities to identify key human services issues in the region and identify common approaches and best practices from cities similar to Bothell. Criteria for similar municipalities included population size, demographics, and location. The following municipalities were selected: Shoreline, Washington;



Redmond, Washington; Monroe / Sky Valley, Washington; and Issaquah, Washington.

Key Stakeholder Interviews

The consultant team interviewed local community-based organizations to develop a comprehensive understanding of Bothell's human services landscape. The team conducted 13 virtual interviews with human service providers serving Bothell residents. The interviews gathered a variety of perspectives on the current state of services, identified unmet needs and barriers to accessing services, and collected insights into trends and priority areas for the city.

Organizations Interviewed

- Northshore Senior Center
- Healthpoint
- Domestic Violence Services of Snohomish County
- Center for Human Services
- Northshore School District
- Kinderling
- Pride Across the Bridge
- Hopelink
- Indian American Community Services (IACS)
- City of Shoreline Community Services
- Bothell United Methodist Church
- City of Kenmore Human Services
- North Urban Human Services Alliance (NUHSA)

A lead interviewer and notetaker conducted all interviews. Interviews followed a semi-structured format to allow for flexibility to explore emergent topics. The interview protocol included 12 questions and several follow-up questions. Notetakers recorded detailed, written notes during each interview. The team used the information obtained during the interviews to inform the selection of target populations for focus groups and the design of the survey instrument.

Interview Questions

1. Please tell us a little more about what your organization does, and your role. Do you serve the entire Bothell geographic area? Or King / Snohomish Counties? Are there specific community groups that you focus services on?
2. Have you been awarded grant funds from the City of Bothell in the past? If yes, what has your experience been with the process? What should the city do differently?
3. What do you think of the current human services priorities for Bothell residents? As a reminder, they are housing and shelter, food insecurity, youth services, mental health services, legal support and shelter for



domestic violence victims, education and childcare, and programs for seniors.

4. As you think about your services in Bothell or for Bothell residents, are you seeing any unmet needs or a crisis? How do you believe these gaps could be addressed or resolved?
5. To what extent do you believe city grant funding for human services is effective in meeting these goals? For reference, in 2023-2024, \$360,000 was awarded to community services, about \$8 per capita.
6. The city currently defines their role in human services as funder (give grants to providers), connecting providers and those in need, and planning for large policy decisions. What do you think about these roles? Should they be adjusted?
7. We are seeking existing data about the Bothell community. Do you have, or are you aware of, existing reports or data sources that could help us better understand human services in Bothell?
8. Which social identity groups would you recommend be a focus in this assessment?
9. Do you know the extent to which eligible people in Bothell are *aware of* the services they need? What suggestions do you have?
10. Do you know the extent to which eligible people in Bothell *receive* the services they need? What suggestions do you have?
11. Whom else would you recommend we interview as an important stakeholder?
12. Anything else you'd like us to know about the human services needs in the community?

Community Focus Groups

The consultant team held five focus groups to learn from community members' lived experiences accessing human services. The groups were centered around underserved populations in the community. Target populations included: older adults, mobile home park residents, low-income and immigrant / refugee families, and Spanish-speaking families.

In addition to the above social identity groups, the team held a fifth focus group with community outreach leads from NUHSA to learn about ongoing outreach efforts and challenges.

The team developed a set of focus group questions to learn from participants' lived expertise, identify the current needs, and identify potential areas for service improvements. The full list of focus group questions are listed below.

Focus Group Questions

1. The City of Bothell defines human services as programs to help community members meet their basic needs, survive, and thrive. How aware are you of the human services available in the City of Bothell?
2. What types of services have you accessed in the past? What was your experience accessing human services in Bothell? Have you ever been unable to access services?
3. Have you received clear communication regarding the services provided / the services you are eligible for? How do you currently get information about human services available in Bothell? How would you and your family or neighbors prefer to receive information about these services?
4. Which human services are the most important for Bothell to continue or expand?
5. What are some services or programs that would help better meet the human service needs in the Bothell community?
6. Do you have any suggestions for how the City of Bothell can help to improve the human services currently available in the community?
7. Is there anything else you'd like us to know about human services in Bothell?

Online Community Survey

The City Staff and the consultant team distributed an online survey to all who live, work, or receive services in the City of Bothell. The survey's goal was to gather community input to understand the challenges and opportunities Bothell faces. The consultant team developed a survey instrument through Survey Monkey, which the team promoted through the City of Bothell's newsletter and social media channels. The survey included Likert scale questions, multiple choice questions, and open-ended questions to allow for quantitative and qualitative data collection. The consultant team developed the survey in both English and Spanish.

The survey received 301 responses. After removing 59 incomplete cases, we were left with 242 complete responses. Although this number is lower than anticipated, it still provides a substantial amount of data to understand the needs and wants of Bothell residents.

Bothell Community Profile

ACS Demographics

Population Size

According to the latest ACS 5-year data for 2022, Bothell has experienced consistent population growth over the past decade. In 2011, the population was roughly 33,700 and by 2022 it had increased by approximately 14,300 to around 48,000. The overall change is presented in Figure 1 below. There was a pronounced increase in population in the mid-2010s, particularly between 2014 and 2015. This sharp rise likely reflects the annexation of 1,000 acres of land¹. Reports at the time suggested 6,000 people would be added to the city, although census data shows an increase of 2,000. Over the last five years, Bothell has seen an average of 770 additional residents each year.

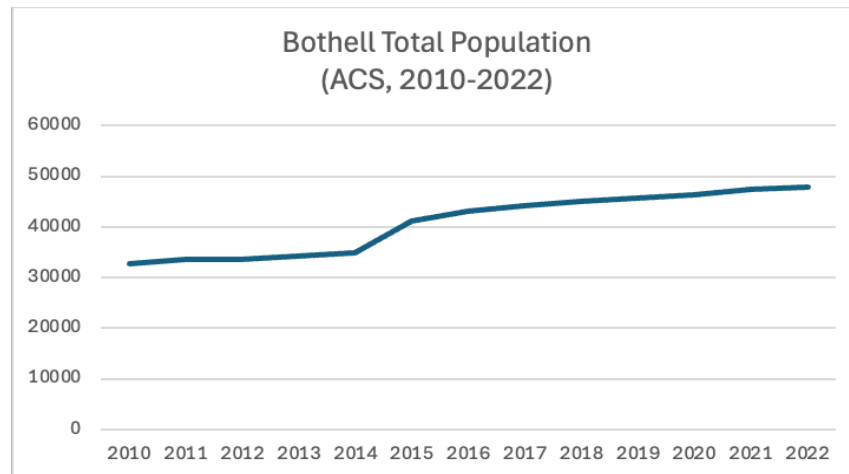


Figure 1

Households & Families

The average household size has stayed very consistent over the last ten years, with a low of 2.42 and a high of 2.61. Over the last five years, there has been a slight increase in the number of households compared to the overall population increase, and an increase in the number of households with a child under 18, suggesting more families are starting to call Bothell home.

¹ (2013, November 26). "Bothell City Council passes ordinance completing the annexation of 6,000 residents" <https://www.bothell-reporter.com/news/bothell-city-council-passes-ordinance-completing-the-annexation-of-6000-residents/>

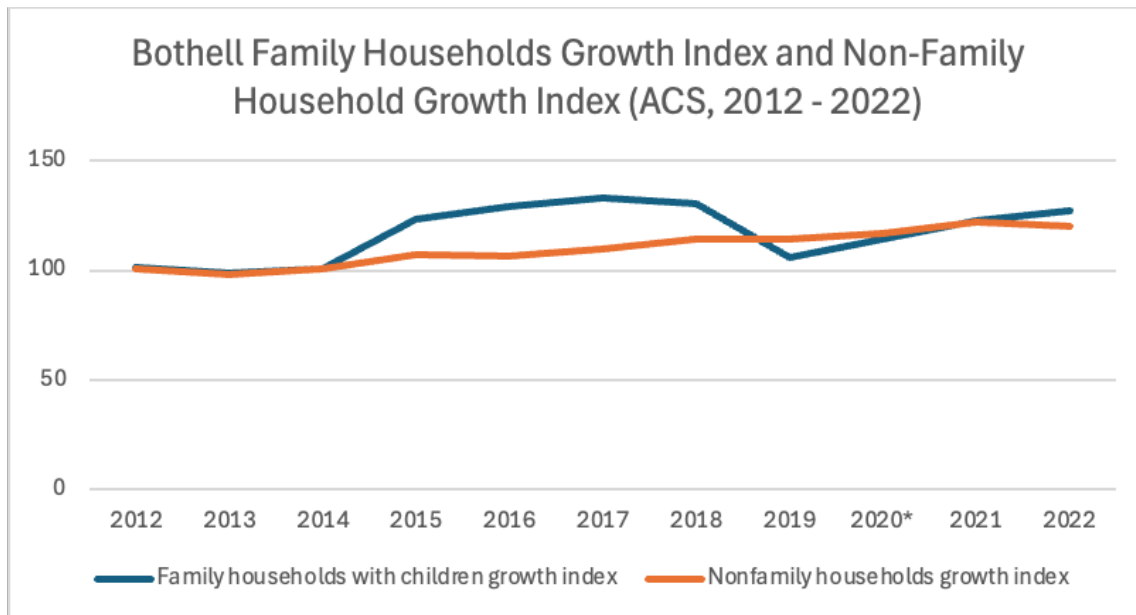


Figure 2

Immigration

Bothell has seen a steady increase over the last 7 since the annexation, with an average of 450² additional foreign-born residents each year, including a high of 960 and a low of 2. The

Between 2015 and 2022, Bothell's foreign-born population experienced many demographic shifts. The percentage of white³ foreign-born residents decreased from 37% to 29%, while the Asian

foreign-born population increased from 48% to 54%. The percentage of Black or African American foreign-born residents remained relatively stable, peaking at 4% in 2016 and 2017, before declining to 1% by 2022. The proportions of American Indian and Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander remained very low. Additionally, the percentage of foreign-born individuals identifying as "Some other race" decreased from 11% to 7%. These changes highlight the increasing diversity within Bothell's foreign-born population.

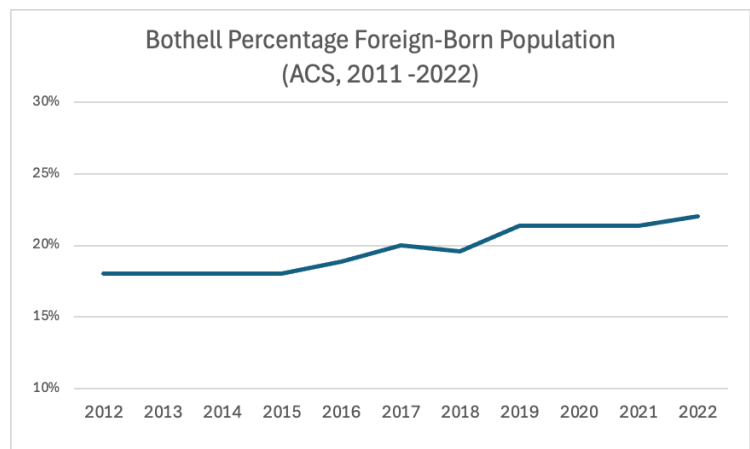


Figure 3

² The median number of foreign-born residents is 440.

³ The Census Bureau during this time considered Hispanic and Latino individuals as "white".

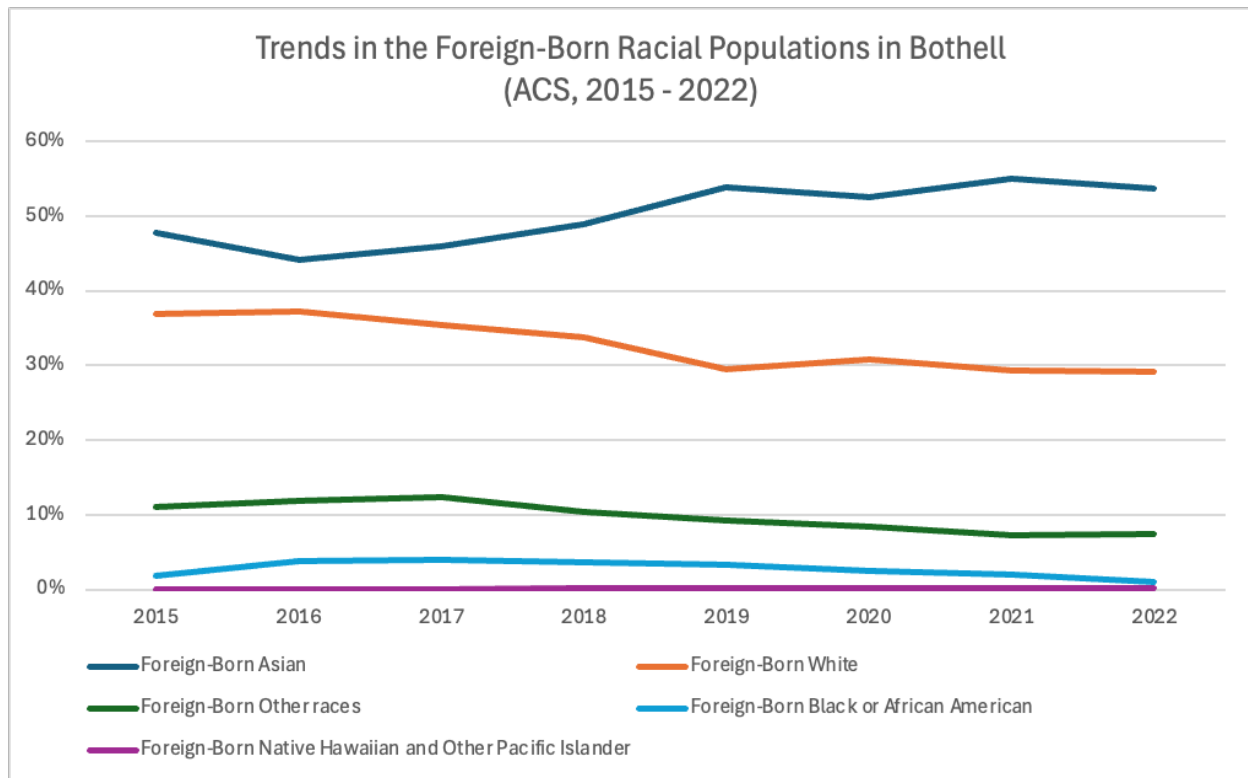


Figure 4

In 2022, 44% of foreign-born residents in Bothell were naturalized citizens, while 56% were not. The non-citizens could include individuals on work or student visas, green card holders, asylum seekers, and recent immigrants. Bothell's proximity to Seattle, a hub for international students and tech workers, likely contributes to this diversity. The majority (85%) of foreign-born residents are of working age (25-64 years), and 83% are in married-couple families. Like most Bothell residents, foreign-born residents primarily work in management, business, science, and arts occupations at 83%. Foreign-born residents also tend to be high-income with an average household earnings of \$201,000 and median household income of \$174,000. This amount has risen over time, suggesting that Bothell is attracting many high-earning immigrants.

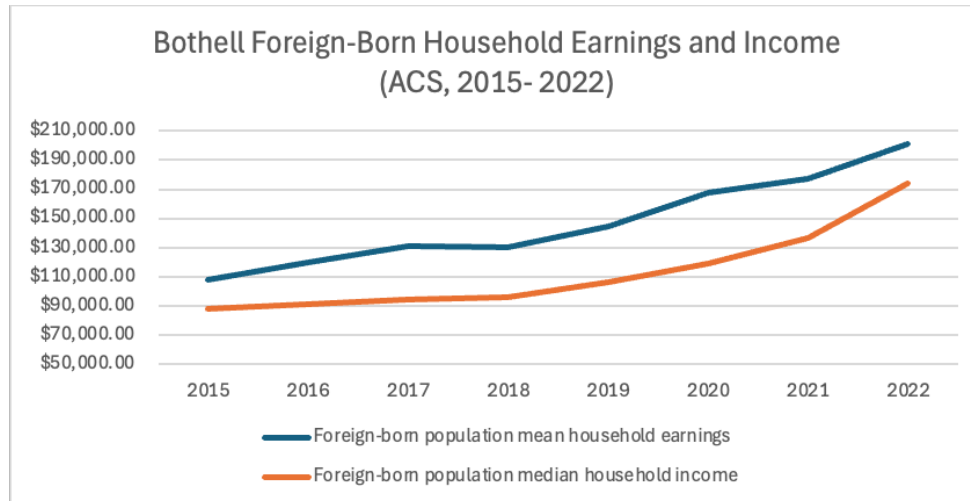


Figure 5

Approximately 1,070 residents who were born in another country are currently attending school in Bothell. Most (51%) are pursuing higher education, 41% are in preschool or elementary school, and 8% are in high school. This indicates that many foreign-born families in Bothell are young and may plan to settle there. Additionally, about 34% of foreign-born individuals who speak a language other than English at home have difficulty speaking English, accounting for around 3,200 residents or 6% of Bothell's total population in 2022.

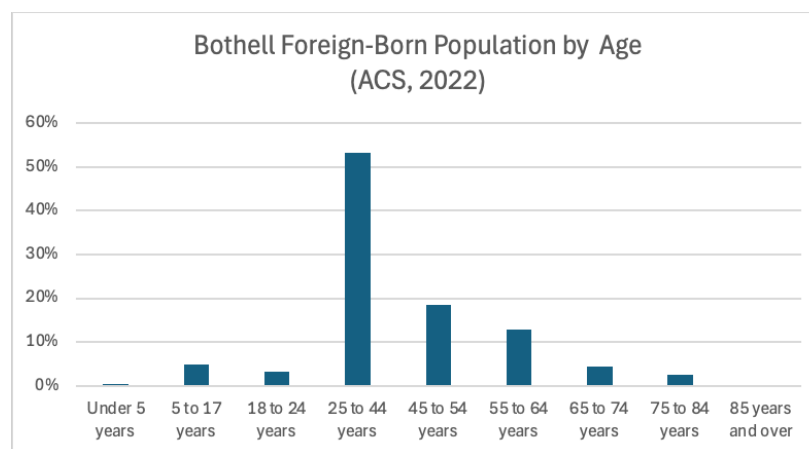


Figure 6

Age

Age is an area where we see significant differences with respect to King and Snohomish counties. Bothell's old-age dependency is lower than the state average, suggesting a relatively younger population. In contrast, the child dependency ratio is higher, indicating a significant proportion of young dependents. Bothell is more stable than many areas with a higher proportion



of older individuals needing support, such as Snohomish County, and it has a lower child dependency ratio than King County.

	City of Bothell	Washington State	King County	Snohomish County
Age dependency ratio	58	61	59	58
Old-age dependency ratio	21	27	17	24
Child dependency ratio	37	34	43	35

Race and Ethnicity

According to the 2020 census, Bothell's largest racial groups are white (65%), Asian (18%), and multiracial (11%). The next largest is "other race" (4%) and all other racial categories were 2% or less, including Black or African Americans (2%), American Indian and Alaska Native (1%), Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islanders (0%).

According to ACS 2022 data, most Asian residents are Asian Indian (8%), Chinese (5%). Longitudinal data shows that the percentage of Asian Indian residents has been steadily increasing and has doubled between 2015 (4%) and 2022 (8%). Meanwhile, the population of Chinese residents appears to be leveling out with only a 1% increase between 2015 and 2022. Pared with the data on immigrant residents, Bothell can likely expect to see a continued increase in Asian Indian residents who have immigrated for work or school.

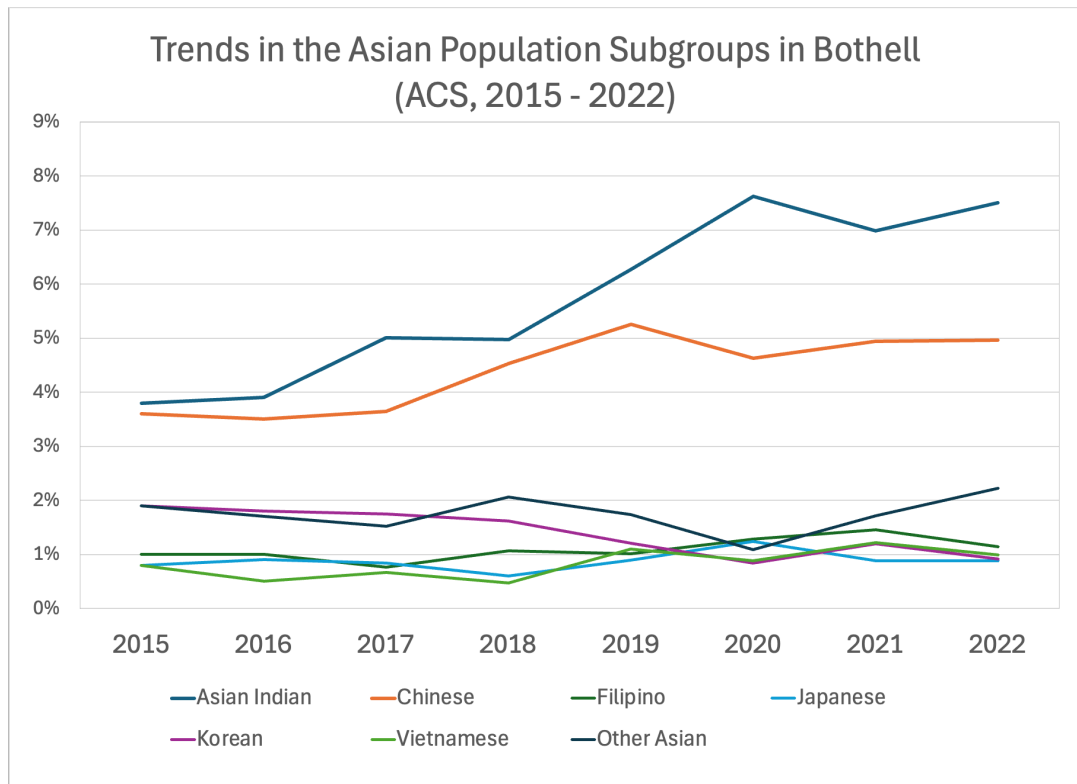


Figure 7

About 9% of Bothell residents identified as Hispanic or Latino on the 2020 census, which is slightly lower than in Snohomish (12%) and King (10%) counties. Over the past seven years, the percentage of Hispanic and Latino residents in Bothell has fluctuated between 9% (3,500 residents) and 11% (5,300 residents). This variability stands out compared to the more consistent statistics of other populations.

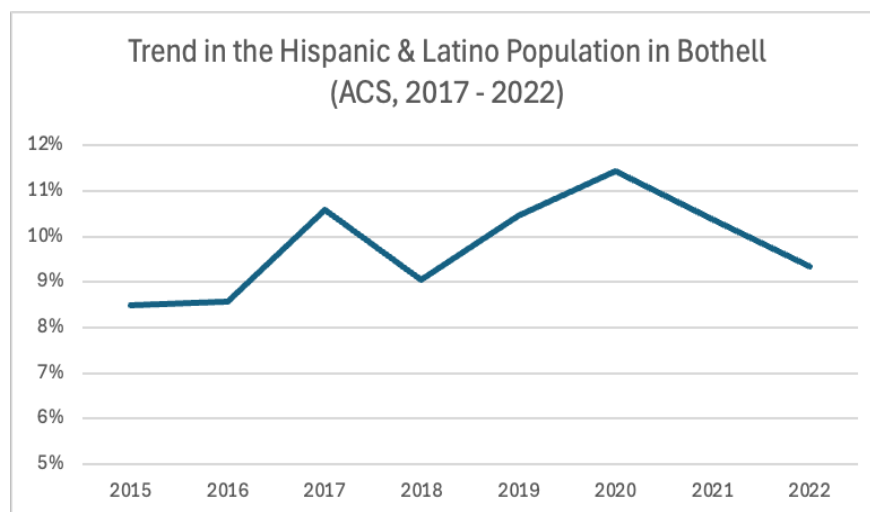


Figure 8

Employment

Bothell's unemployment rate is 3.9%, which is lower than the state average of 4.1%. However, it remains slightly higher than the county averages for Snohomish (3.8%) and King (3.6%). This relatively low unemployment rate indicates a healthy job market within the city, reflecting a favorable economic environment for its residents.

In terms of labor force participation, Bothell has a notably lower percentage of individuals not in the labor force at 28.5%. This is significantly lower compared to the rest of the state (35%), Snohomish County (32%), and King County (30%). This suggests that a higher proportion of Bothell's population is engaged in the workforce, contributing to the city's economic activity and productivity.

An interesting trend in Bothell is the higher percentage of individuals working from home, which stands at 26%, compared to the state average of 21%. This data suggests a notable difference within the city based on county lines, as there is a nearly 10% discrepancy between the number of people working from home in King County (31%) and Snohomish County (22%). This indicates that remote work is more prevalent among Bothell residents, particularly those residing in the King County portion of the city.

The mean commute time in Bothell is 30 minutes, likely reflecting the number of individuals who work in Seattle while residing in Bothell. Most individuals choose to drive alone to work (57%), which is higher than King County (51%) but lower than Snohomish County (63%). This commuting pattern is partly explained by a higher percentage of individuals taking public transportation to work (6%) in Bothell, matching the rate in King County (6%) and doubling the rate for Snohomish County (3%) and the state average (3%). This suggests a significant interest in public transportation for commuting among Bothell residents.

Income

Bothell is economically strong with a median income of approximately \$128,000, significantly higher than the Washington state median income of around \$91,000. This affluence is further highlighted by the fact that 46% of Bothell residents earn over \$100,000 annually. Despite this wealth, a portion of the population still faces economic challenges, as 12% of residents make less than \$25,000. These income statistics reflect a diverse economic landscape within Bothell, with a substantial number of high earners and a smaller, yet significant, group of lower-income residents.

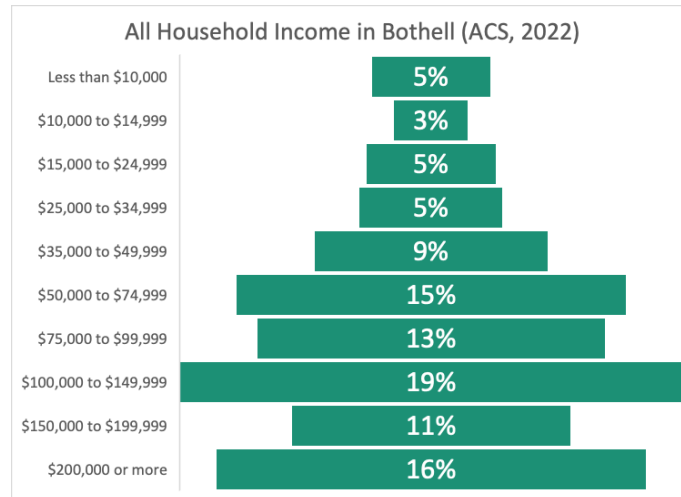


Figure 9

There is also a large disparity between family and non-family households. Because non-family households are single-income households it is expected that they would make less than a family household. However, the difference suggests that single-income households would be a group in need of additional outreach efforts, particularly considering the risk for non-family households to be socially isolated.

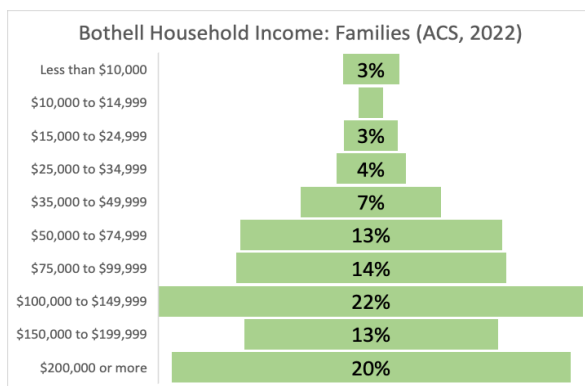


Figure 10

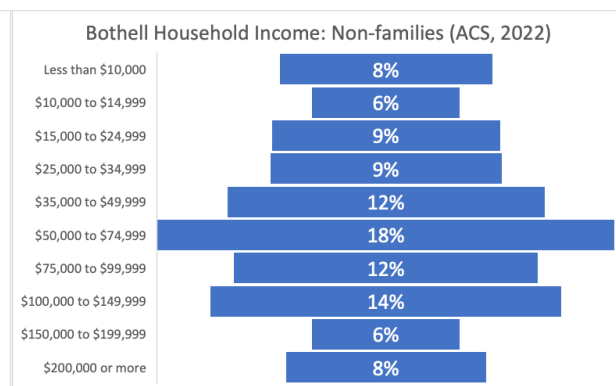


Figure 11

Housing

There has been a decrease in mobile homes in Bothell and an increase in large apartment complexes. In 2015 there were roughly 1,500 mobile homes in 2015, which has decreased by 36% down to 1,100 in 2022. At the same time there has been a 41% increase in the number of large apartment complexes housing 20 or more units going from 1,600 in 2015 to 2,800 units in 2022.

	Percent Change 2015 to 2022
Total housing units	+14%
1-unit, detached	+14%
1-unit, attached	+13%
2 units	+25%
3 or 4 units	+34%
5 to 9 units	+15%
10 to 19 units	-11%
20 or more units	+41%
Mobile home	-36%

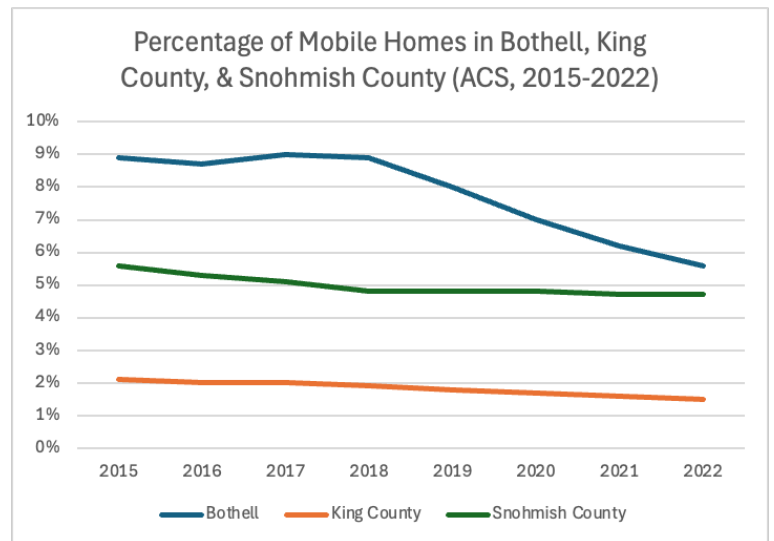


Figure 12

Rent Prices

Rent prices have steadily increased in Bothell and the surrounding counties. The median gross rent⁴ for Bothell apartments was \$1,400 in 2015 and increased to \$2,200 in 2022. This difference means renters in 2022 are paying \$9,300 more a year than they did seven years ago in 2015, making it likely that many have been priced out of Bothell's rental market. While Bothell's rent is higher, we see a similar rate of increase for King and Snohomish County.

⁴ Gross rent refers to rent plus utilities and other fees

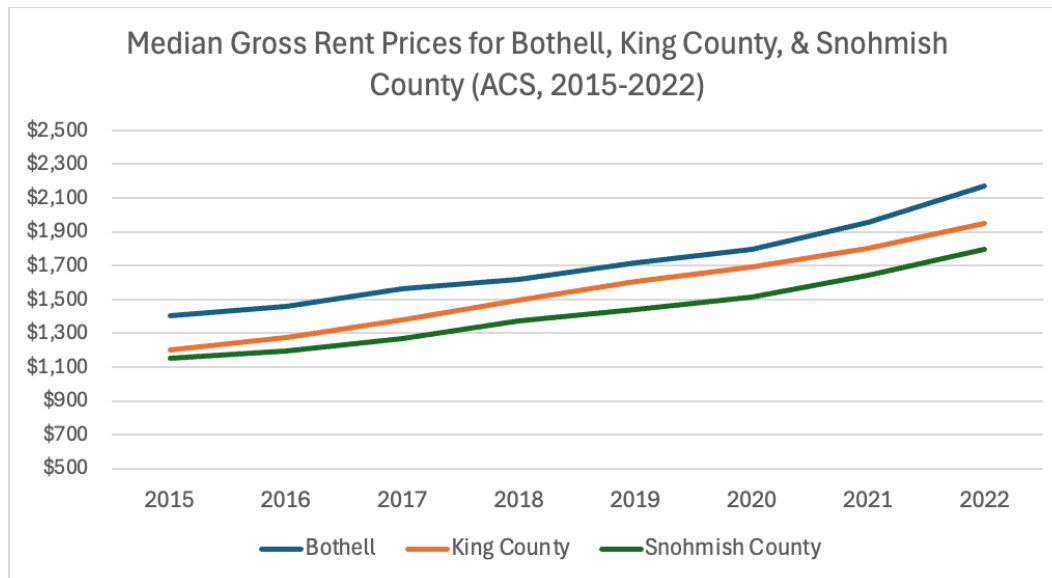


Figure 13

It's expected for a major metropolitan area to see some changes in rent, but the year-to-year percent increase in gross rent in Bothell is concerning. The smallest increase was from 2017 to 2018, with a \$53 rise, while the largest was from 2021 to 2022, with a significant \$218 jump, representing an annual increase of \$2,600. From 2021 to 2022, rent in Bothell went up by \$218, compared to \$150 in King and Snohomish counties (See Figure 15). If this trend continues, many residents may soon find themselves priced out of the rental market in Bothell.

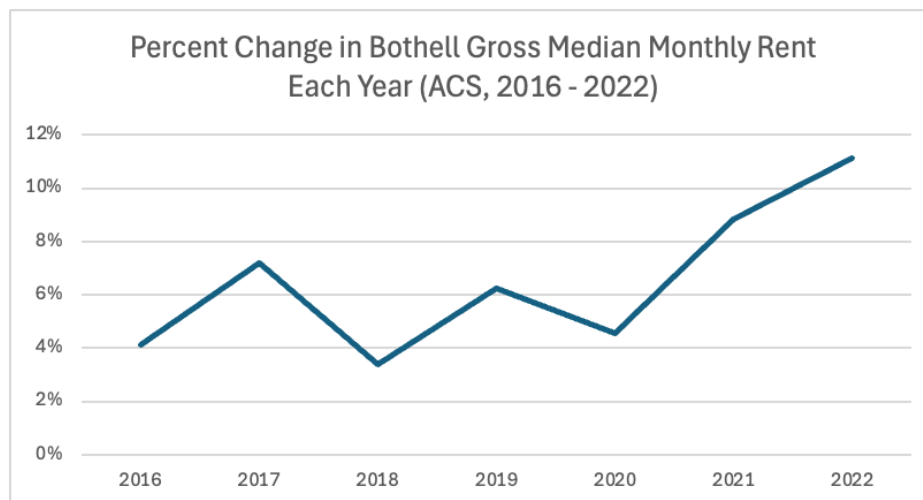


Figure 14

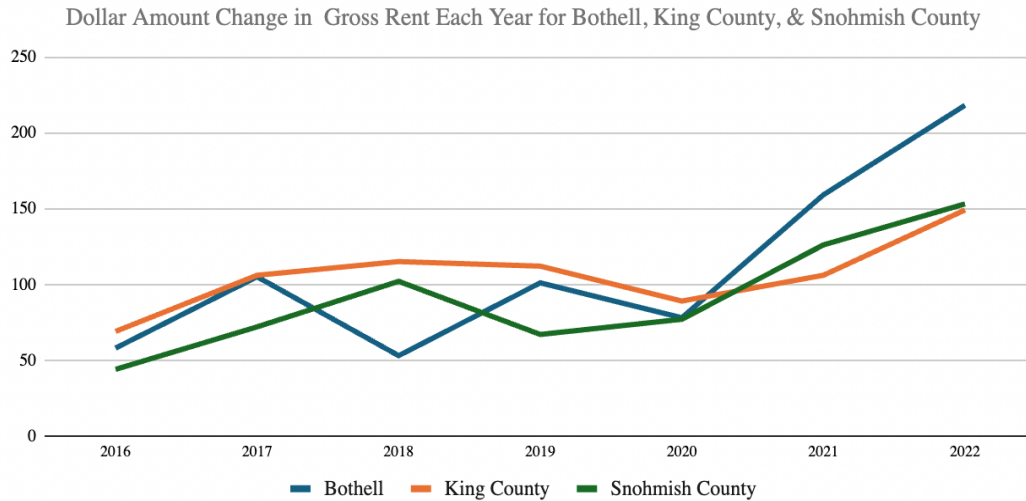


Figure 15

Mortgages

Mortgage prices have increased significantly over the past seven years. In 2015, the median mortgage was \$2,080, a little less than the median mortgage for King County at \$2,200. However, around 2020 mortgages in Bothell became slightly more expensive than in King County. In 2022, the median mortgage was \$3,120, a little more than the median mortgage for King County at \$3,000. While it is too soon to know if this trend will continue, the past three years the difference between Bothell and King County at least doubled each year.

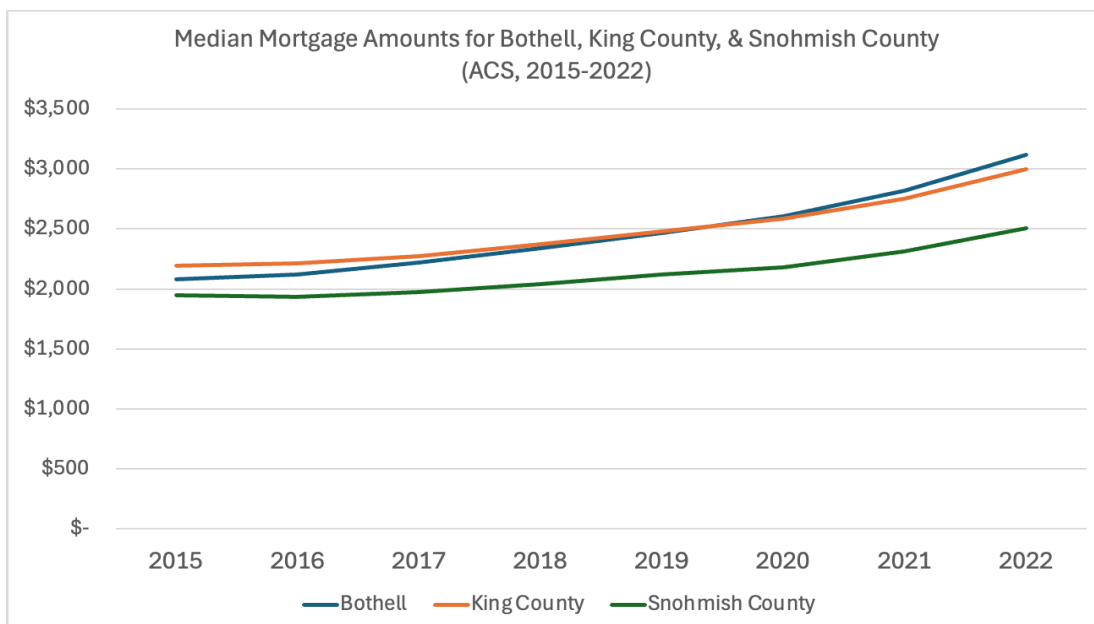


Figure 16

While rent increase amounts have varied, the increase in Bothell mortgages each year has increased consistently. From 2015 to 2016, the median mortgage rose \$41 while in 2022, it rose by \$300, a \$3,600 annual difference. This steady rise in mortgage prices reflects the increasing cost of homeownership in Bothell, likely due to rising property values and interest rates, which could make it more challenging for new buyers to enter the housing market.

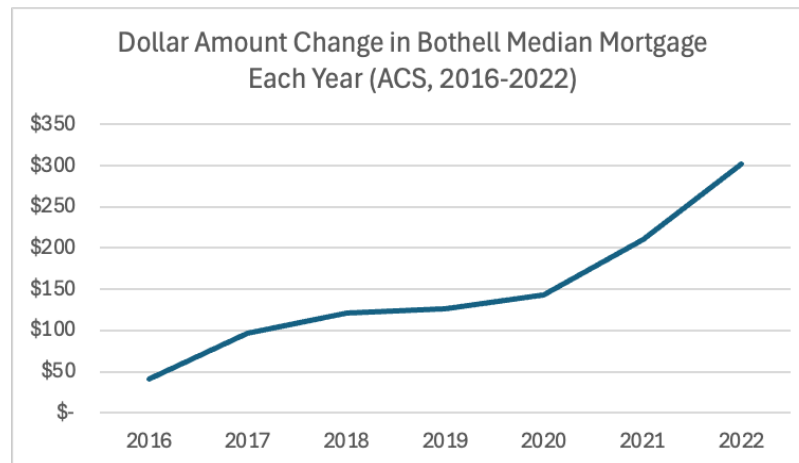


Figure 17

Poverty

In Bothell, about 5% of the city is in poverty, according to ACS data. The poverty threshold varies by year and type of household. For example, in 2022, a one-person household with an individual under 65 has a threshold of \$15,230 annual earnings whereas for a family of three it was \$23,280⁵. For 5% of Bothell residents, they are living under their determined threshold. However, this is a federal number which does not consider the higher cost of living in the Seattle area. Therefore, these numbers represent those with the most need in the city, but many others are likely facing financial hardship while still making more than the poverty line.

The racial group with the highest percentage in poverty is Black and African American residents. Roughly 17% of all Black and African American Bothell residents live in poverty. For comparison, 4% of white and 5% of Asian residents are living in poverty. It is particularly concerning that they are the sub-population experiencing the most financial hardship because they make up only 1% of Bothell's population (roughly 424 individuals in 2022). The next population experiencing the most poverty are Hispanic and Latino residents

⁵ "Poverty Thresholds" <https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-poverty-thresholds.html>



at 11% which represents a substantial number of individuals as they make up 11% of the Bothell population.

Among those who are unemployed, 16% are living in poverty. There is also significant gender discrepancy within that group with 22% of unemployed males in poverty compared to 9% of unemployed females.

Roughly 3.5% of households receive assistance through Washington's Basic Food program, commonly referred to as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP. Likely due to the high cost of living in the area, 58.4% of households receiving SNAP are at or above the poverty line. The median income of Bothell households receiving SNAP is \$39,400. Despite only 3.5% of households receiving SNAP, 18% of households make less than \$35,000, suggesting that many of those who may qualify for SNAP do not receive it.

Despite 17% of Black and African American residents in Bothell being below the poverty line, the ACS data reports that no Black and African American receive SNAP. About 40% of households receiving SNAP include one or more people with a disability. About 25% of households receiving SNAP are non-family households.

Data Collection Results

Extant Data Findings

The consultant team reviewed existing data and reports to identify current human service trends and priority areas at the county and state levels. This included a review of other needs assessments with findings that are applicable to Bothell, including the Snohomish County Community Health Assessment (2022), King County Community Health Assessment (2021/2022), and the Hopelink Community Needs Assessment (2022).

The Snohomish County Community Health Assessment (2022) identified the following needs in Snohomish County:

- Mental health support and the need for social connection;
- Substance use disorder treatment and support;
- Housing and health care affordability and quality of care;
- Food assistance;
- Transportation; and,
- Addressing disparities and focusing on diverse and equitable community outreach methods.

The Snohomish County assessment also highlighted the need for affordable and competent healthcare. The report also highlighted the need for more coordination and communication between service providers and local government.

King County Community Health Assessment (2021/2022) identified the following health needs in King County:

- Housing access and quality;
- Access to healthcare and other services, such as transportation and food;
- Support for youth and families, including mental health; and,
- Community growth and development.
- Food assistance and other basic needs; the number of local families experiencing food insecurity has increased throughout 2020. There was a large increase in food insecurity among Black residents even before the onset of the pandemic.
- Worsening racial / ethnic disparities in life expectancy, even though the overall life expectancy of King County residents has not changed significantly.

Hopelink, a designated Community Action agency that serves a diverse range of community types within North and East King Counties, identified four themes in their 2022 Community Needs Assessment:

- Community members are challenged to meet their basic needs;
- Lack of affordable housing is undermining household security and leading to displacement;
- There are insufficient transit and transportation options for people with low incomes, particularly outside of urban centers; and,
- There is persistent evidence of food insecurity and hunger.

Peer Municipality Best Practices

In addition to reviewing extant data, the consultant team analyzed needs assessments from peer municipalities to identify common trends, approaches, and human service priority areas. Two best practices emerged from this analysis: regional and interagency collaboration, and person-centered approaches to housing and homelessness.

Regional and Interagency Collaboration

Regional and interagency collaboration is a priority for communities across Northwestern Washington, with many recognizing the need to establish partnerships with neighboring municipalities and regional service providers.



Many high priority issues bleed over between communities, necessitating a collaborative, regional response. For example, when a community does not have the resources to meet the needs of the unhoused, residents travel to neighboring cities to seek services. An influx of new clients places strain on these services, leading to long wait times and service shortages. As a result, unhoused individuals look for services in other communities, and the cycle continues.

Municipalities across the region must work together to meet these needs and stop the cycle. Multiple communities have proposed or implemented collaborative solutions to these problems. The City of Redmond's Human Services Needs Assessment finds that service providers in the city actively seek out partnerships with regional organizations, particularly for securing physical space to provide services and virtual service programming. The City of Shoreline also recognizes this need and has developed partnerships with regional service providers including the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA), North Urban Human Services Alliance (NUHSA), and Human Services Funding Collaborative (HSFC). The City of Bothell has also recognized this need and has partnered with NUHSA to address regional human service needs in North King County. Bothell is also part of the Regional Crisis Response Agency (RCR), which works with municipal emergency services to respond to mental and behavioral health crises. The RCR's mental health professionals use a person-centered approach of de-escalation, resource referral, and follow-up for individuals experiencing mental and behavioral health crises. The RCR is supplemented by a new, regional behavioral health crisis response center located in Kirkland.

The City of Issaquah has also developed partnerships with regional organizations to increase service capacity in the city. Regional service providers travel to Issaquah and set up temporary, pop-up service centers. This approach, when coordinated with other municipalities in the region, can act as a stop-gap measure when municipalities face increasing demand for services.

Finally, the City of Bellevue has developed a service delivery model for multi-agency collaboration in order to address homelessness. The Bellevue CARES (Citizen Advocates for Referral and Education Services) is an internal referral program that allows EMTs and police officers to submit a referral for follow-up by practicum students serving as CARES Advocates. The CARES Advocates perform an in-home assessment to identify the root problem for each referral to determine the best course of action. The goal of the program is to connect



vulnerable populations with community resources that will better meet their needs than a call to 911.⁶

Person-Centered Approaches to Housing and Homelessness

Multiple municipalities in Northwestern Washington are pursuing person-centered approaches to housing and homelessness to provide respectful care that is responsive to an individual's needs. The City of Issaquah established a Behavioral Health and Homeless Outreach Program, which collaborates with the police department to provide unhoused community members with resources including shelters, housing, rental assistance, mental healthcare, and substance use disorder treatment. Since its launch, the program has made 1,177 service connections and permanently housed 38 residents.

Another approach is to establish a Community Court as an alternative to the traditional criminal justice system. The City of Issaquah and the City of Bothell have established a Community Court to connect low-level offenders to local human service providers and reduce future criminal offenses. This is similar to the "Homeless Court" approach recommended by the American Bar Association (ABA).⁷ Homeless Courts connect unhoused defendants to human services and employ progressive plea bargaining to address crime without further marginalizing unhoused community members. Over 45 communities have established homeless courts, and the ABA provides technical assistance to communities seeking to establish their own homeless court system.

The City of Bellevue is implementing a Safe Parking Pilot Program to serve unhoused individuals living out of their vehicles. The program establishes a safe parking lot for individuals to park their vehicles, live, and sleep in. The program also includes access to a day center with wireless internet, kitchen, laundry, and bathroom facilities as well as case management services for assistance finding long term housing. The program is run by a local human service provider, 4 Tomorrow, which developed the program's code of conduct and safety plan and provides staffing. Families living in vehicles are given priority, and clients are barred from using drugs or alcohol on Safe Parking premises.

The full review of peer municipalities' human service priorities, approaches, and best practices can be found in the Appendix, beginning on page 55.

⁶ <https://bellevuewa.gov/city-government/departments/fire/medical/fire-cares>

⁷ [American Bar Association \(ABA\)](#)

Interview Findings

Throughout the interviews with key stakeholders, common topics included barriers to accessing services, current human service needs in the community, and potential solutions to address needs in the community. Findings are divided into two key themes: Bothell's human service needs and opportunities for improvement, and communication and awareness of services.

Bothell's Human Service Needs

Affordable Housing and Rental Assistance

A major theme across all interviews was the need for more affordable housing options, rental assistance, and tenant protections. Providers noted that housing is quickly becoming less affordable in Bothell; multigenerational households and long-term residents who grew up in the area are being priced out of the city. Additionally, there is a lack of affordable housing and limited availability of units that accept the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Providers also reported that many of their clients are struggling to keep their housing due to significant increases in rent within the last year, with many facing eviction.

Services for People Who are Unhoused or Housing Insecure

Providers mentioned that there are currently limited options for emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing in Bothell, noting an opportunity to expand these services. Providers reported a need for an overnight shelter and an emergency shelter with low barriers to access. Service providers for unhoused residents noted that they have to refer clients to shelters outside of Bothell since no emergency shelters are available within the city. This finding matches county level data: according to the Housing Authority of Snohomish County, there are currently no emergency shelters in the Snohomish County portion of Bothell.⁸

There are a few shelter services available in nearby cities. The closest shelter for single women is in Kirkland through Helen's Place. There is also an extended stay shelter in Bellevue, which is a six-month shelter program that focuses on moving women into transitional, supportive, or permanent supportive housing.⁹ However, long wait lists and eligibility rules limit their accessibility. Additionally, transportation barriers make accessing these shelters difficult for Bothell residents. Shelter services for men, families, and youth in the region are even more limited. Providers noted that the nearest overnight men's shelters are in Everett and Bellevue.

⁸ Housing Authority of Snohomish County [Community Supports & Homeless Resources](#)

⁹ [211 Washington - Overnight Shelters in Bothell](#)

In addition to the lack of emergency shelter services, there are also limited rapid rehousing and permanent supportive housing programs available in Bothell. According to the King County Regional Homelessness Authority (KCRHA)'s housing services database, there are two facilities in the King County side of Bothell that offer transitional and permanent supportive housing for people experiencing homelessness. Friends of Youth at New Ground Bothell offers 37 beds for young adults, with a stay limit of 18 months. There are also 45 beds of permanent supportive housing for families with children under 18 and Area Median Income (AMI) of 30% or less that is provided by Hopelink at Heritage Park.¹⁰ There are no permanent supportive housing options in the Snohomish County portion of Bothell.

Mental Health Services and Substance Use Disorder Treatment

The need for improved support for mental health and substance use disorder treatment emerged as a key theme throughout the interview process. Providers mentioned mental health and substance use disorders have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has placed increased demand on an already limited substance use and mental health workforce. Since there are limited substance use and mental health service programs provided in Bothell, providers often must refer people to services outside of Bothell, which creates a transportation barrier to those locations. Additionally, the waiting list for mental health counseling is long and remains cost prohibitive for uninsured patients. Providers noted that mental health is a particular concern for youth and older adults in Bothell. Providers mentioned that the aging in place population is at an increased risk for co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders. Additionally, providers have seen an uptick in youth behavioral disorders.

Providers also identified substance use as an increasing concern in the community. Providers noted that there is limited substance use treatment and behavioral health programs provided within Bothell. Because of this, local CBOs must refer clients to other cities.

Improve Support Services for Older Adults, Immigrants and Refugees, and Domestic Violence Victims

Many providers reported that older adults, immigrants and refugees, and domestic violence victims are in most need of improved support services. Older adults that are low income and aging in place are particularly in need in Bothell. Providers noted that they have seen an increase in social isolation in older adults in the community, and many don't have a support network.

¹⁰ [Imagine Bothell Comprehensive Plan, 2024](#)



These feelings of social disconnection are furthered by limited awareness of community resources and events.

Communication, Awareness, and Accessibility

Improve Awareness and Outreach

Providers noted an opportunity to improve awareness and outreach regarding human services in the community. Residents often have limited awareness of local services they are eligible for and do not know where to go to learn more about available programs. Many residents are also unaware of the newly established human services coordinator position.

Increase Collaboration and Communication Efforts

Providers noted a need for improved collaboration and communication efforts between CBOs, residents, and city staff. First, there is a need for improved interorganizational collaboration among Bothell CBOs. Many providers noted that they do not feel well-connected or informed regarding what other organizations are offering. Providers expressed a desire for more opportunities to connect with other organizations to share resources and information and collaborate on human service outreach efforts.

There is also a need for improved cross-collaboration efforts between the City of Bothell and local community partners. Many providers noted that there is a lack of communication from the city about funding opportunities, how funding is allocated, and current human services initiatives. Additionally, city staff can take a leadership role in communication and collaboration efforts with community partners.

Providers also noted that a closer relationship between city staff, the community, and CBOs is needed to improve communication and outreach efforts. To achieve this, multiple providers suggested developing a centralized source of information about human services in Bothell; a community resource hub or enhanced resource guide, for example, would help to improve communication and information sharing.

Focus Group Findings

In addition to interviews with key stakeholders, the consultant team conducted focus groups with underserved populations to better understand the current needs of the community. Common topics included: communication and outreach; barriers to accessing services; and areas for improvement. The section below synthesizes the results of the thematic analysis.

Communication and Outreach

Focus group participants noted that there is a lack of a clear, centralized source of information on human services. Many participants struggled to know where to go to learn more about available services in the community. This is compounded by language barriers, as most communication materials are only available in English.

Participants noted that only a select few services are advertised currently, such as services through Hopelink. However, other services are not communicated clearly. Multiple participants mentioned that it feels like a full-time job to call and identify the services by themselves, due to the lack of communication and outreach from the city.

"I've heard of so many new services from folks through this focus group today that I've never heard of before. Why isn't this info more readily available through the Bothell website?"

Barriers to Accessing Services

Transportation and Infrastructure

Multiple focus group participants mentioned that inaccessible infrastructure impedes their ability to access services, local parks, and other public spaces. Many participants mentioned that low lighting and limited sidewalks is a safety concern for pedestrians in Bothell. One participant mentioned that there aren't wheelchair accessible paths at parks in Bothell, which has prevented her from accessing the more affordable storage units in the park.

Focus group participants also cited transportation as a significant barrier to accessing services. Participants noted that there are limited transportation options to and from services. Multiple participants mentioned that public transportation options in Bothell are limited, and not all services are accessible along bus routes. There is a need to expand bus routes in the neighborhood and expand the reach of existing shuttle services to improve access to local human service programs.

Application Process and Waitlists

Many participants expressed frustration with the application processes to apply to services. Applications are often confusing and overwhelming, involving multiple pages of paperwork to determine eligibility. One participant noted that they were required to fill out multiple pages of paperwork to get reimbursed for gas to get to a healthcare appointment, while another recalled a similar experience when applying for a shuttle ride. Additionally, participants reported long wait times to hear back about their



applications, noting that there is no guarantee that the application will be accepted.

Many participants noted that they have experienced long wait times for all services, especially mental health providers. Multiple participants mentioned that they were referred to mental health services outside of Bothell; they found it difficult to access these services within the city. One participant reported that a family member had difficulties getting treatment for co-occurring mental health and substance use disorder: “He could never get a follow-up visit. No one would take him.”

Language barriers emerged as another key service gap. Many communication and outreach materials are only provided in English. One participant shared that there is only one health clinic in Bothell that provides services in Spanish, and there is a long waitlist for it. As a result, they have had to travel to Monroe, Bellevue, and Burien for simple care, such as treatment for an ear infection.

County-Level Differences in Support Services

Another barrier to services that is unique to Bothell is the differences in support provided in Snohomish County and King County. Many participants who live in the Snohomish County side of Bothell reported more difficulties accessing human service assistance, while participants in King County did not. One example is with weatherization assistance services. A focus group participant in Snohomish County had been struggling to receive weatherization assistance for her mobile home; another participant, who lived on the King County side, reported their request for weatherization was approved. Participants in other focus groups shared similar experiences, noting that eligibility for services such as food assistance and utility support varied by county. Even if the service is advertised as for Bothell residents, it may not apply to residents who live on the Snohomish County side. This makes it difficult for residents to understand what services are available and if they are eligible for them.

Areas for Improvement

Focus group participants had multiple suggestions for how human services in Bothell could be improved to better meet the needs of the community.

Community Education and Information Sharing

One key suggestion that emerged during each conversation was to create a community resource center or hub that residents can access information on all human service programs available in Bothell. Similarly, many



participants mentioned that a resource guide with a comprehensive, up-to-date list of services is needed. A common theme centered around participants feeling disconnected about current human service programs and events, and a desire for this information to be easily accessible. Many participants also mentioned that a guide specific to Bothell that outlines what services are available based on which county you are in would be helpful.

Participants also expressed a desire for more community education and cultural events hosted by the city.

Housing

Another theme was to expand and increase services for the unhoused. Outreach coordinators noted that safe parking spots, more storage options, and services for unhoused youth are also needed. One participant mentioned that a client had no place to store their perishable groceries, leaving them with no other option but to dispose of the items. Another participant shared that she was on a hotel voucher program and had difficulty getting into permanent housing due to long waiting lists, restrictive fees for background checks, and requirements around providing first and last month's deposit.

The need for more affordable housing and tenant protections was another key topic of discussion. Many participants noted that rent prices have increased significantly within the last few years. Mobile home park residents noted that leases have increased as well, and that there are no limits on lease increases. Many participants shared that they are getting priced out of the city and can no longer afford to live here.

Youth

Many participants noted that more group activities and programs for youth would be a helpful support for Bothell families. The need to improve access to childcare was also mentioned. One participant mentioned that there isn't a drop-in youth center in the city; the city needs more services that are geared toward unhoused youth.

Survey Findings

Response rate

An online survey was distributed to all who live, work, or receive services in the City of Bothell. The survey received a low response rate. This is likely due to a few reasons. First, individuals are experiencing survey burnout, receiving numerous requests to participate in surveys, leading to people 'tuning out' other survey opportunities. This is particularly true in a presidential election year. Second, a similar survey was recently conducted by another department within the Bothell city government, possibly leading many to believe that this was the same survey they had already taken. Third, the timing of the survey distribution may have coincided with a busy period for many residents, such as the end of the fiscal year or the start of the school year, reducing their availability and willingness to participate.

The survey received a total of 301 responses. After removing 59 incomplete cases, we were left with 242 complete responses. Although this number is lower than anticipated, it still provides a substantial amount of data to better understand the needs and wants of Bothell residents.

Demographics

Age

Like many surveys of this kind, the age of survey participants is skewed towards older participants. Of the participants 4% were under the age of 30, 36% between 30 and 49, 35% between 50 and 69, and 24% were over the age of 70.

Income

Considering the incomes of Bothell residents, there was a fair distribution of income ranges among survey participants. Specifically, 6% of participants had incomes below \$20,000, 17% had incomes between \$20,000 and \$60,000, 28% had incomes between \$60,000 and \$100,000, another 28% had incomes between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and 21% had incomes of \$200,000 or more.

Race

Overall, 79% of the survey sample identified as white. The largest non-white group was Hispanic and Latino at 9%, followed by Asian at 7%, American Indian or Alaskan Native at 3%, Black or African American at 2%, and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander at 1%. This indicates an undersampling of Asian residents, who make up 18% of Bothell's population but only 7% of the



survey participants, while there was an oversampling of American Indian or Alaskan Native and Black or African American residents.

Gender

The sample consisted of 74% women, 22% men, 3% non-binary individuals, and 1% transgender participants.

Housing Status

The sample consisted of 66% homeowners, 30% renters, 3% living with family or friends, and 1% unhoused individuals.

Children at Home

68% of participants had no children under 18 living with them, 10% had one child, 15% had two children, and 7% had three or more children.

Employment

42% of participants were employed full-time, 13% part-time, 32% were retired, 9% were unemployed, 2% were students, and 2% were unable to work.

Other Survey Demographics

- 7% of participants were veterans
- 19% had a disability
- 10% considered themselves part of the LGBTQ+ community
- 4% were Spanish speakers

Survey Findings

Key Findings

- Participants ranked “people with disabilities” as the top underserved population, but ranked disability services as 9th most important among Bothell’s current priorities.
- 24% of participants who had sought out services in the past report feeling discomfort or embarrassment about doing so.
- 84% of participants agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “The cost of rent and/or homeownership is causing people to leave Bothell”.



- 89% would like to learn more about the human services that Bothell offers.
- 19% reported that they or their family members had at some point reduced the size of their meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food.
- Overall, there is strong support for more behavioral health services for both youth and adults in Bothell

Bothell Priorities

Current Bothell Priorities

1	Food insecurity	104
2	Access to mental health or therapy services	101
3	Utility payments or help with bills or rent	80
4	Services for the unhoused, including sheltering	73
5	Programs for seniors	72
6	Youth services	61
7	Substance use disorders and addiction services	50
8	Early childhood services and care	48
9	Disability services	38
10	Legal support and shelter for domestic violence victims	35
11	Dental and medical care	20
12	Community Court	14

When asked to identify the most important human services for Bothell, respondents prioritized addressing food insecurity and improving access to mental health or therapy services. Utility assistance, including support with bills or rent, followed as a significant concern. Although youth and disability services did not rank as highly, they were still rated more important than dental and medical services, as well as community court services, which were considered the least important according to the survey results.

Additional Desired Priorities

1	Cultural and recreational services	125
2	Environmental justice and sustainability	99
3	Employment and job training	93
4	Veterans' services	84
5	None of the above need to be added	23

In addition to ranking the City's current priorities, participants were asked to suggest other human needs services for consideration. Among the five suggestions provided, "cultural and recreational services" emerged as the most desired additional priority. Following closely were "environmental justice and sustainability" and "employment and job training," which also received strong support. Although "veterans' services" was suggested as an additional service for the City to consider, it received the lowest ranking among the options provided.

Underserved Social Identity Groups

Underserved Social Identity Groups

1	People with disabilities	91
2	Older Adults (Over age 65)	86
3	Youth (Under age 18)	67
4	Immigrants	67
5	People with substance use disorders	66
6	People who identify as Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC)	63
7	Refugees	52
8	Families with young children	47
9	People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA+)	41
1	None of the above	23



Participants were asked which social identity groups they believed were the most underserved. 'People with disabilities' was identified as the most underserved group. The second highest-ranked group was older adults, likely influenced by the fact that 24% of the sample consisted of participants over the age of 70. Youth, immigrants, and people with substance use disorders were all roughly tied for the third most chosen. BIPOC and refugees were in the middle of the list, while families with young children and LGBTQIA+ individuals were ranked lowest. Despite being last, these groups still received a significant number of votes, with 47 and 41 respectively.

Issues with accessing services or finding help

Participants were asked if they ever needed human services or assistance in Bothell, to which 51 participants answered yes. Those participants were then given a series of additional questions about their experiences. When asked if they knew where to go to find assistance, 33% reported knowing where to find services in Washington State, and 29% knew where to find services in Bothell, suggesting that many individuals did not know where to find the services they needed. When asked if they knew how to access services, 84% said they did not.

Issues with accessing services or finding help

1	Care was too expensive/lack of insurance	21
2	Wait time was too long or no open appointments	21
3	Lack of transportation	17
4	Lack of providers who take my insurance	15
5	Discomfort or embarrassment about seeking care	12
6	Lack of culturally appropriate support, or support for my social identity	10
7	Service was too far away	7
8	Lack of reliable internet	4
9	Lack of care for someone my age	4
10	Providers did not have info in my language or couldn't speak my language	3
11	None, I was able to receive the help I needed	12



Those 51 participants were also asked about various issues they may have encountered when trying to access services. The top answers were expensive care/lack of insurance, long wait times, and no open appointments. Close behind were lack of transportation and lack of providers who accepted their insurance. Additionally, 24% of participants reported feeling discomfort or embarrassment about seeking care, suggesting that stigma may play a role in the lack of eligible individuals accessing services. The lowest number of responses was for providers who did not speak their language. Despite the survey being available in Spanish, a very low percentage of participants reported speaking Spanish at home, suggesting that this number may not accurately represent this particular issue. Only 24% of participants reported they were able to receive the services they needed without issue.

Likert Scale Questions

Participants were given three statements and asked for their level agreement from four options: Strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

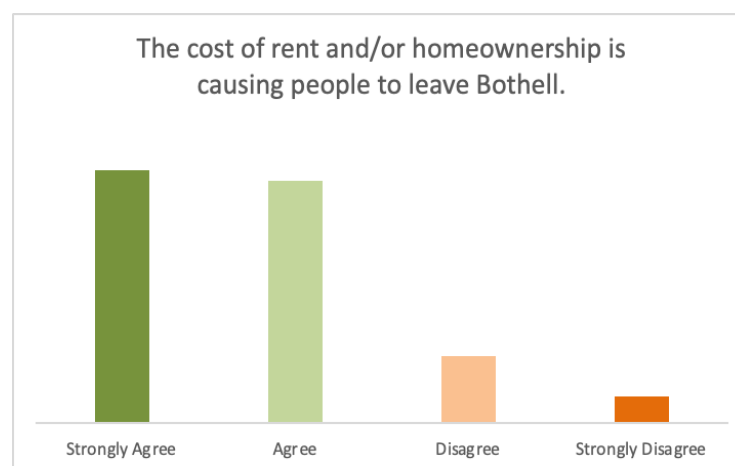


Figure 18

When asked about the statement 'The cost of rent and/or homeownership is causing people to leave Bothell,' 84% of participants either agreed (41%) or strongly agreed (43%). Conversely, 16% of participants disagreed (11%) or strongly disagreed (5%). Data presented in the community profile section of this report suggests that the growing cost of rent and mortgages in Bothell may indeed be causing people to leave. The overwhelming agreement with this statement indicates that residents are feeling the effects of these high prices, which are forcing people to leave the city.

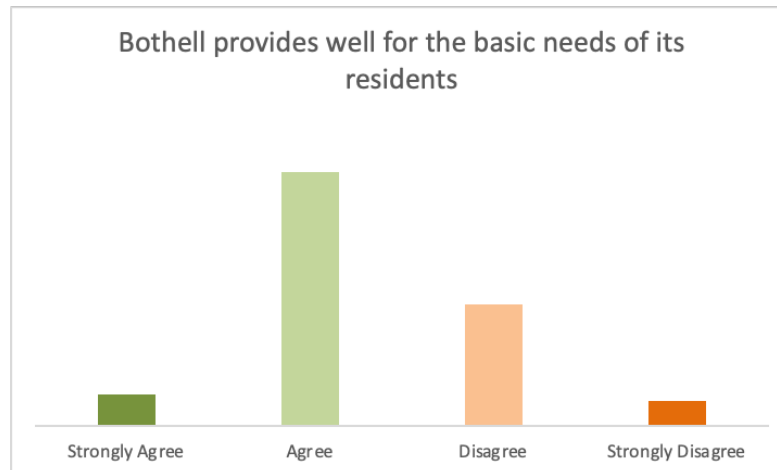


Figure 19

When asked about the statement ‘Bothell provides well for the basic needs of its residents,’ responses predominantly fell among the two weaker options. Compared to responses to the other two statements, this may suggest participants are unsure how well Bothell provides for its residents. Only 7% strongly agreed with the statement, 59% agreed, 28% disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed.

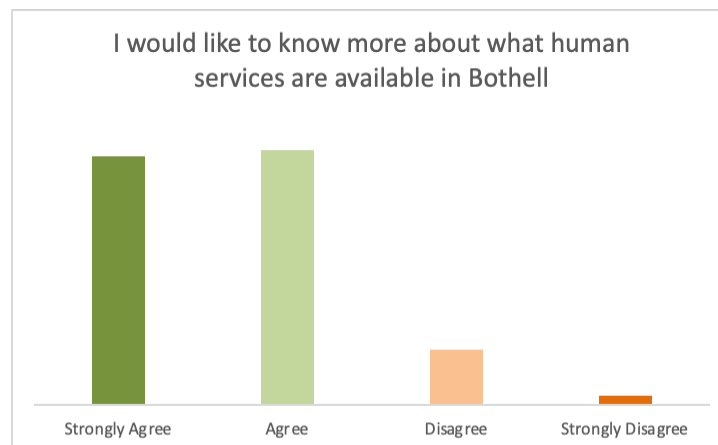


Figure 20

There was overwhelming agreement with the statement, ‘I would like to know more about what human services are available in Bothell.’ A total of 89% of participants agreed or strongly agreed, while 10% disagreed and 6% strongly disagreed. This indicates a clear interest in being more informed about human services in the city. This is particularly interesting considering that 49% of survey participants make \$100,000 or more, suggesting they may need services or have an interest in better understanding their community overall.

Renter Assistance

Renter Assistance		
1	Longer notice for rent increases	34
2	Caps on move-in fees and security deposits	34
3	More community education on renter's rights	30
4	Disclosure of additional fees beyond rent	29
5	Rent due date adjustments based on primary source of income	20
6	Late fee caps	12

When asked what types of rental assistance participants supported, many participants skipped this question. This is most likely because many participants were homeowners who may not have felt the question was applicable to them, although it was offered to all participants. Overall, there was the most support for longer notice for rent increases, and cap on move-in fees and security deposits, more community education on renter's rights, and disclosure of additional fees beyond rent. There was less support for rent due date adjustments and late fee caps. This suggests that a primary concern for renters is being informed about what they are expected to pay and what their rights are.

Homeowner Assistance

Homeowner Assistance		
1	Property tax relief or assistance programs	65
2	Home repair and improvement grants	62
3	Neighborhood beautification initiatives	59
4	Utility bill assistance programs	38
5	Chore services	43



Participants were given a list of suggestions for ways to assist homeowners. Property tax relief or assistance programs received the highest support with 65 participants advocating for it, indicating a significant concern about the burden of property taxes. Following closely, home repair and improvement grants were supported by 62 participants, suggesting a strong need for financial help with maintaining and upgrading homes. Neighborhood beautification initiatives garnered support from 59 participants, reflecting a community interest in improving the aesthetic and environmental quality of their neighborhoods. Utility bill assistance programs were supported by 38 participants, pointing to the financial strain of utility costs on homeowners. Lastly, chore services, such as help with household tasks, were supported by 43 participants, indicating a need for assistance in managing day-to-day home maintenance. Overall, the findings suggest that financial assistance and community improvement programs are highly valued among homeowners in Bothell.

Services for Youth

Lacking Services for Youth in Bothell

1	Mental health services	107
2	Community activities, such as sports and art classes	100
3	Drug addiction services	67
4	Not sure	59
5	Homework tutoring	39
6	College entrance exam tutoring	28
7	No additional services need to be added for youth	7

The highest support was for mental health services, with 107 participants indicating a significant need for more resources in this area. Community activities, such as sports and art classes, were the second most supported, with 100 participants highlighting the importance of providing youth with engaging extracurricular activities. Drug addiction services were identified by 67 participants, reflecting concerns about substance abuse among youth. Additionally, 59 participants were unsure about which services were lacking, suggesting a need for better information dissemination about existing services. Homework tutoring and college entrance exam tutoring were noted



by 39 and 28 participants, respectively, indicating areas where academic support is perceived to be insufficient. Interestingly, only 7 participants felt that no additional services were needed for youth, showing a broad recognition of gaps in the current support system. Overall, the data underscores a strong demand for mental health support, community activities, and drug addiction services for the youth in Bothell.

Services for Parents and Caregivers

Lacking Services for Parents/Caregivers

1	Affordable childcare services	128
2	Financial assistance programs for families	79
3	Youth community activities, such as sports and art classes	79
4	Parenting education and support programs	58
5	Transportation services for families	57
6	No additional services need to be added for parents/caregivers of youth	6

Hunger and Food Insecurity

Despite the high household incomes of many participants, 19% reported that they or their family members had at some point reduced the size of their meals or skipped meals because there was not enough money for food. Additionally, 4% said they or their family member had gone without food for a day due to a lack of money. Notably, only 17% of participants' households made less than \$40,000 a year, suggesting that even those with higher incomes are experiencing food insecurity.

Measures to Prevent Hunger and Food Insecurity

1	Support for local food pantries and food banks	166
2	Expanded free and reduced-price school meals	118
3	Community gardens or urban farming initiatives	105
4	Expanded senior nutrition programs	104

5	Additional outreach for the state Basic Food assistance program	91
6	Education on budgeting and meal planning and preparation	40
7	Breastfeeding and nutrition support for mothers and infants	38

Participants were asked which human service would be most effective at preventing hunger and food insecurity in Bothell. The highest level of support was for local food pantries and food banks, with 166 participants indicating the importance of these resources. Expanded free and reduced-price school meals were also highly supported, with 118 participants recognizing the need to ensure that children have access to nutritious meals. Community gardens or urban farming initiatives garnered support from 105 participants, reflecting a community interest in sustainable food sources and local agriculture. Expanded senior nutrition programs were supported by 104 participants, emphasizing the importance of addressing food security for the elderly population. Additional outreach for the state Basic Food assistance program received support from 91 participants, suggesting a need for greater awareness and access to existing food assistance resources. Education on budgeting and meal planning and preparation was supported by 40 participants, indicating some recognition of the importance of financial and nutritional education. Lastly, breastfeeding and nutrition support for mothers and infants received support from 38 participants. Overall, the data underscores a strong community demand for food assistance programs, particularly those that support food pantries, school meals, and senior nutrition.

Mental Health and Substance Abuse

When asked if they believed that people in Bothell with behavior (mental health and substance use disorders) have access to the services they need, many participants were honest about not really knowing whether they did or not. 10% said they did believe services were meeting this need, 35% said they did not believe the need was being met, and 55% answered that they were unsure. Despite being largely unsure, when asked about what kind of behavioral health needs were most urgent, the vast majority were supportive of the need for behavioral health services.

Issues with accessing services or finding help

1	More support for individuals in crisis	127
2	More funding for mental health services	107
3	Advocating for policies that improve access to behavioral health services	105
4	Increased public awareness of and reduced stigma around mental illness	85
5	More funding for substance-use disorder services	81
6	N/A. I do not think the local government should address this issue	13
7	None of the above	3

The most urgent need identified was more support for individuals in crisis, with 127 participants emphasizing its importance. More funding for mental health services followed closely, with 107 participants recognizing the necessity for increased financial resources in this area. Advocating for policies that improve access to behavioral health services was supported by 105 participants, indicating a strong desire for systemic change to enhance service accessibility. Increased public awareness of and reduced stigma around mental illness was identified by 85 participants, highlighting the need for societal change and education. More funding for substance-use disorder services was supported by 81 participants, reflecting concerns about addressing addiction issues. A small number of participants, 13, indicated that they do not believe the local government should address behavioral health issues, while only 3 participants selected "None of the above." Overall, the data underscores a significant community demand for increased support, funding, and advocacy for behavioral health services in Bothell.

Older Adults and Caregivers

Lacking Services for Older Adults in Bothell

1	In-home services (chore, home health, personal care)	107
2	Accessible transportation	77
3	Counseling/mental health services	65

4	Assisted living facilities	40
5	Adult daycare	40
6	Case management and assessment	38
7	Adult family homes	32
8	Nursing/rehab facilities	31
9	Adult family homes	34
10	N/A. No additional services need to be added for older adults	7

The highest level of support was for in-home services (such as chore assistance, home health, and personal care), with 107 participants indicating a strong demand for these services. Accessible transportation was the second most supported need, with 77 participants highlighting the importance of mobility for older adults. Counseling and mental health services were identified by 65 participants, reflecting a significant concern for the mental well-being of the elderly. Assisted living facilities and adult daycare were each supported by 40 participants, showing a demand for supportive living environments and daytime care options. Case management and assessment were noted by 38 participants, indicating a need for coordinated care and evaluation services. Adult family homes were supported by 34 participants, while nursing/rehab facilities were highlighted by 31 participants, demonstrating a need for varied residential care options. Interestingly, only 7 participants felt that no additional services were needed for older adults, suggesting a broad recognition of service gaps. Overall, the data suggests that there is a strong community demand for enhanced in-home services, accessible transportation, and mental health support for older adults in Bothell.

Lacking Services for Caregivers of Older Adults in Bothell

1	In-home services (chore, home health, personal care)	85
2	Resource and referral services	69
3	Respite care	55
4	Counseling/mental health services	53

5	Care navigator services	51
6	Case management and assessment	42
7	N/A. No additional services need to be added for caregivers of older adults	6

The most supported service was in-home assistance (including chore help, home health, and personal care), with 85 participants expressing a significant need for these services. Resource and referral services were the second most popular, with 69 participants emphasizing the necessity of access to information and service connections. Respite care was highlighted by 55 participants, indicating the demand for temporary relief for caregivers. Counseling and mental health services were noted by 53 participants, underscoring the importance of mental health support for those caring for older adults. Care navigator services, which assist in coordinating care, were supported by 51 participants. Case management and assessment were identified by 42 participants, showing a need for detailed care planning and evaluation. Notably, only 6 participants felt that no additional services were needed for caregivers of older adults, pointing to a broad acknowledgment of existing service gaps. Overall, the data highlights a strong community demand for improved in-home services, resource and referral services, and mental health support for caregivers of older adults in Bothell.

Preferred Method of Contact

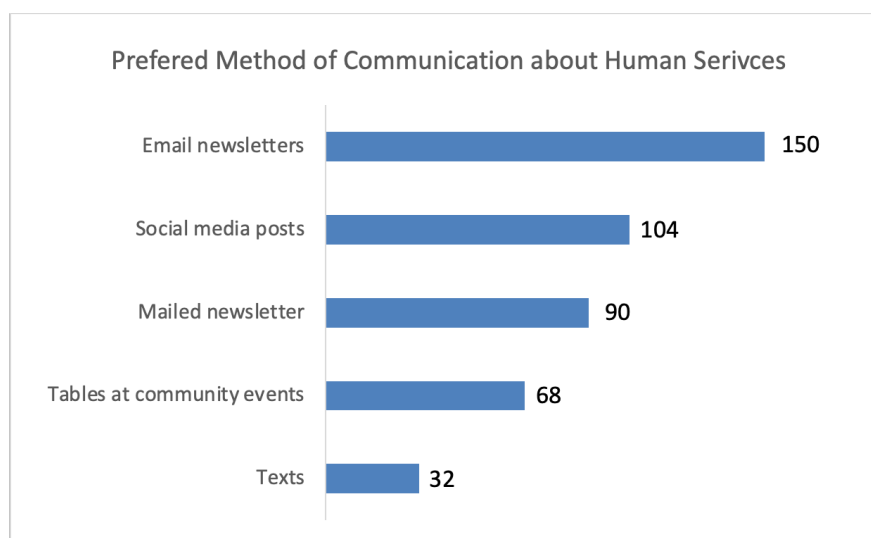


Figure 21

Effective communication about the human services available in the City of Bothell is crucial for ensuring that residents are aware of the resources and



services offered to them. According to the survey, five preferred methods of communication were identified, with email newsletters emerging as the most favored option. While the difference in preference between social media posts and mailed newsletters was minimal, four out of the five communication methods received significantly higher responses compared to text messaging. This indicates a clear preference for more detailed and potentially more mainstream methods of communication over text messaging.

Common Themes: Synthesizing Interviews, Focus Groups, Survey, and Extant Data

The following section synthesizes key themes and findings from the interviews, focus groups, survey, and extant data review.

Human Service Priorities – Opportunities to Enhance Services

- Improve mental health support, especially for youth and older adults
- Improve substance use disorder treatment and support
- More services for victims of domestic violence
- Improve support for older adults, especially for low income & aging in place population
- Improve support for immigrants and refugees
- Increase community education opportunities and cultural events
- Improve access to services by increasing transportation options

Housing Needs

- Increase affordable housing
- Improve rental assistance and tenant protections
- Increase access to low barrier and emergency shelter services

Awareness and Outreach Needs

- Across all data collection methods, participants noted a need to improve awareness and outreach services for human services in Bothell.
- Many participants suggested improvements to the method of information distribution. Some suggested the city take a leadership role in conducting outreach, such as developing flyers or by creating an enhanced online resource guide.
- The need for a centralized source of information was a recurring theme.

Services to Continue

- There is an opportunity to continue to enhance current services that are working well. Providers and focus group participants noted that the



local food pantry through the Northshore Senior Center and Hopelink's mobile market have been helpful services that should continue to receive support. Food insecurity was listed as a top priority among survey respondents.

- There is an opportunity to continue and expand current regional collaboration efforts, including NUHSA and RCR.
- Community stakeholders noted the importance of the human services coordinator position in supporting grant recipients and enhancing the city's human service collaboration efforts.

Regional Needs:

- Affordable housing
- Mental health support
- Substance use disorder treatment and support

Bothell-Specific Needs:

- Impact of split counties on eligibility and availability of support services
- Lack of visual income disparity
- Lack of a severe weather shelter
- Information distribution about human services

Staffing and Funding Recommendations

Staffing Recommendations

The City of Bothell recently enhanced staff support for human services by creating and filling a Human Services Coordinator position. The position was filled in 2023 and has focused on facilitating the grant-making process for community organizations, community outreach and referral, and service coordination. The position was also responsible for managing the contract for this assessment and planning project.

Continue Funding Human Services Coordinator Position

Bothell community stakeholders and providers, especially, reported high levels of satisfaction with the current Human Services Coordinator and a



desire for the city to continue to fund the position. The coordinator's presence at regional coordination meetings, enhanced ability to participate in outreach events, and enhanced support for the city's human services grant recipients were all seen as evidence of the effectiveness of the position and reasons to continue to fund the role.

Additional Staff Support for Outreach and Communications

Community members and stakeholders reported a need for more outreach to certain subpopulations within Bothell, like immigrants and refugees, and to residents on the Snohomish County side of the city where the impression is the services are harder to find. Specifically, participants in the Spanish-speaking focus groups asked for more Spanish-language flyers in businesses that cater to Latino residents, and more posts on Facebook about resources available to residents. Also, providers would like the city to have the staffing capacity to participate in monthly in-person outreach events, at a minimum.

Funding Recommendations

In addition to funding the Human Services Coordinator position, the city currently makes annual grants to community service organizations from General Funds for human services. In 2023-24, approximately \$386,000 in grants were made to community organizations to provide a range of services to Bothell residents in need. An overwhelming majority of the community members and leaders we collected data from for this assessment believe Bothell's commitment to human services should continue, and believe funding should be enhanced.

Continue Current Services That are Working Well

While food assistance services were not identified specifically in the strategic goals developed by Bothell providers, they noted the importance of continuing support for anti-hunger work in the community, including outreach for the Basic Food program, and support for local food banks and congregate meal providers.

There was also near- unanimous support for continuing regional collaboration efforts, such as the RCR and NUHSA, and expanding Bothell's role even further as a hub of information and service referrals for its residents.

Pursue Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding Now That Bothell is Eligible for the Entitlement Program

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Entitlement Program provides grants to entitled cities and counties to develop viable urban communities for low- and moderate-income persons. The amount of entitlement funding is determined based on a formula set forth in federal law



related to the population size and community need (extent of poverty, housing overcrowding; population growth; and, age of housing). Funding can be used for the development of housing and for community services. Bothell is newly eligible for the Entitlement Program now that the city's population exceeds 50,000 residents, and should vigorously pursue the funding opportunity to enhance the services already available.

For example, the cities of Everett and Bellevue receive CDBG Entitlement Program funding. In the program year 2022, Bellevue received approximately \$853,000 in funding; 71% was used for housing; 17% for public services; and 11.5% for planning and administration. Everett received \$1.28 million in CDBG funding in 2022; 72% was spent on housing; almost 15% on planning and administration; 11% on public services, and about 2% on improvement to facilities. In addition to paying for enhanced services, the grant could help to cover the cost of the Human Services Coordinator position through the administrative funding available in the grant.

If Bothell were to pursue CDBG Entitlement Program funding, the kinds of activities the funding allows are in alignment with the community priorities identified by this assessment. Funding can be used for some types of housing development, including purchasing of real property, relocation and demolition expenses, rehabilitation of current residential and non-residential structures, construction of public facilities including infrastructure like water and sewer, streets, sidewalks, neighborhood centers, and repurposing public school buildings. This is in alignment with the needs expressed to help older adults age in place well, to maintain the affordable housing stock already available in the community, and to enhance the walkability of the city to help service access. Note that CDBG grant funding *cannot* be used to construct *new* housing. Funding can also be used for some kinds of public services like programs for youth or older adults, activities related to energy conservation, and small business assistance. Some of the community service priorities identified in the strategic plan may be funded with CDBG Entitlement funds, including a community hub for culturally appropriate service coordination and referral.

Appendix

Needs Assessments from Peer Municipalities and Best Practices

Shoreline, WA

Shoreline, Washington is a city of just over 60,000 residents located in Northern King County. Located just nine miles north of Seattle, over 90% of residents are employed outside of the city. On average, Shoreline residents have a lower mean income, are older, and have a higher incidence of disability compared to King County. Over a quarter of residents speak a language other than English, and the population has seen significant increases in Black, Asian, and multiracial residents.

The City of Shoreline recently adopted its 2024 Human Services Strategic Plan, with the bulk of community engagement taking place in 2023. Community engagement was achieved through key informant interviews with service providers and aligned public service systems, interviews with peer jurisdictions (such as Bothell, Issaquah, and Redmond), a focus group with city staff, and collaboration with service providers to collect input directly from clients.

The strategic plan identifies housing and homelessness, medical and behavioral healthcare, and nutrition assistance as the city's highest priority human services needs. Housing affordability is a problem for a large number of residents, who face a high housing cost burden. Families especially struggle to find housing large enough to accommodate all of their family members. The plan highlights the need for more rental assistance and eviction protection and shelter and services for unhoused residents. Residents also expressed concern that a recent light rail addition will raise housing prices. The city's existing behavioral health resources are overwhelmed by increased demand, which has created a shortage of care and equity issues. The majority of existing service providers are at capacity with residents who have private insurance, whereas the uninsured and Medicare / Medicaid recipients struggle to find providers that have capacity and are affordable.

The strategic plan also identified several barriers to existing services that exacerbate these issues. Service provider clients cited limited information on programs as a major barrier, with many unaware of what services are available, where to access them, and how to navigate the service system. This was especially true for non-English speaking residents and immigrants, who



described a lack of linguistically inclusive and culturally competent resources and outreach. Clients also cited administrative processes as an additional barrier to accessing services. Many are unable to access services due to eligibility requirements, long wait times, and complex application processes.

Redmond, WA

Redmond is part of the Seattle metropolitan area in King County. The City has a population of 73,000 and has seen significant population growth in recent years. Redmond is a very affluent community, with a median income of \$132,188, which is significantly higher than the county, state, and U.S. Redmond is an increasingly diverse community, with almost 50% of community members identifying as non-white. In addition to this, 45% of community members speak a language other than English.

The City of Redmond commissioned its Human Services Needs Assessment in 2022. Consultants hired by the city conducted both primary and secondary research on the city's human services needs. Primary research included one-on-one and group interviews with service providers throughout the city, focus groups with community members, and a community survey. The strategic plan highlights two separate and disparate communities in Redmond: one is the affluent community that is traditionally associated with the city's booming tech industry, and the second is a disadvantaged community living at the margins. This second group struggles to make ends meet and has critical human services needs.

Survey respondents identified affordable childcare, mental health counseling, and rent or utility assistance as the highest priority human services needs. Twenty-nine percent of renters in Redmond are cost burdened. When asked how Redmond could be made a better place to live, an overwhelming majority of respondents pointed to housing affordability and homelessness as a top priority for improving the community. Overall affordability was the second highest priority for the future of Redmond, after Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging. Community members identified both an increased need for behavioral health services and barriers to receiving these services. Providers being booked or overwhelmed, affordability, and the administrative burdens of receiving care were identified as primary barriers.

Community awareness is an additional barrier to service in Redmond. Forty-five percent of survey respondents stated that they did not know where to go for human services, with a larger proportion of non-English speakers not knowing where to go for services. Service providers identified several internal barriers and gaps to functioning including limited staff and low wages,



institutional burnout, diminished empathy and belonging in the community, and limited and restricted grant funding.

Monroe / Sky Valley, WA

Sky Valley is a collection of predominantly rural communities in South Snohomish County that includes Monroe, Sultan, Gold Bar, Index, and the City of Snohomish. The Sky Valley region has a population of 58,000, which is growing at a faster rate than Snohomish County and Washington State. The region's median income (\$81,000/year) is higher than the state average, but lower than Snohomish County (\$86,000/year). The region is less diverse, with only 18% of the population being Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) compared to the 25-28% in the county, state, and the U.S. Approximately 9.8% of residents have limited English proficiency.

The City of Monroe (the most populous community in Sky Valley) commissioned a regional human services needs assessment in 2021. The assessment covers the entirety of the Sky Valley region, including communities outside Monroe. Consultants hired by the city conducted both primary and secondary research on the region's human services needs. Primary research took the form of 45 key informant interviews, five focus groups, and resident and provider surveys.

Interviewees, focus group participants, and survey respondents all pointed to housing as a priority need in the region. Thirty-two percent of Sky Valley residents are housing cost burdened.¹¹ Community members expressed a need for housing that is affordable, stable, and safe, with different segments of the community identifying different key need areas. Participants from the Hispanic / Latino community faced barriers to affordability, including large down payments and hidden fees. These community members also cited additional issues such as poor quality housing and landlords that take advantage of their migrant status. Seniors were primarily concerned with the affordability of housing options later in life, with many fearing that they will be unable to downsize or find affordable assisted living options when the time comes. Unhoused community members also identified housing as their highest priority need, specifically citing a lack of stable housing as a barrier to employment.

Other high priority needs include medical and behavioral health and transportation needs. Survey respondents cited physical health as their most used and most needed human service. Interviewees stated that they frequently travel outside of the Sky Valley region to seek care due to lack of

¹¹ Housing cost burdened is defined as spending more than 30% of household income on rent and utilities.



resources in the region. Survey participants identified behavioral health as the number one human services gap and barrier. There are few resources for the uninsured and Medicare / Medicaid beneficiaries, and residents frequently travel to Everett or Kirkland for care. There is a particular lack of integrated homelessness, mental health, and substance abuse services, with all providers exiting the region in 2020. Homeless, disabled, senior, and parent participants in focus groups identified transportation as both a high priority need and gap in service. Transportation costs pose a high burden on these residents, and public transportation is often unavailable, unreliable, and slow. These gaps often lead to missed doctor's appointments, school, job interviews and other disruptions.

Issaquah, WA

Issaquah is located in the Seattle metropolitan area of King County. The city has a population of 40,060 and has seen significant population growth over the past decade. The city has a poverty rate of 7.8%, which is equal to King County's overall poverty rate. Issaquah is fairly diverse, with a large Asian population (23.2% of residents) and a sizable Hispanic / Latino population (9% of residents). Thirty-percent of residents speak a language other than English, and 26% are foreign-born.

The City of Issaquah developed a Human Services Strategic Plan in 2022. This plan collected data on the city's human services needs through several community engagement activities, including 51 interviews with community partners, 13 interviews with residents experiencing homelessness, 25 interviews with non-English speaking residents, 11 focus groups with residents, a community survey, and six workshops with community members, service providers, and city staff.

These community engagement activities identified four primary human services needs: physical and behavioral health, housing and homelessness, cultural competency and language inclusion, and community resources. Interview and focus group participants reported high levels of mental distress in the community, with low income (< \$15,000/year) and Black residents reporting higher levels of distress. The strategic plan identified several barriers to behavioral health services, including workforce shortages, difficulties navigating the system, and a lack of culturally competent care. There is only one mental health service provider in Issaquah that accepts Medicaid, and this provider only offers services for youth (up to age 24). There are no behavioral health services for low-income adults. Residents face similar issues accessing medical health care, as well as high cost barriers and a lack of preventative care.



Community members also identified housing affordability and homelessness as major needs. One third of the Issaquah community is housing cost-burdened, and many residents fear that rising housing costs will push them out of the area. These concerns are elevated for seniors, as there are few resources to help aging community members stay in their homes comfortably, safely, and independently. Issaquah also has few services for individuals experiencing homelessness: there are no services besides daily meals and a local food and clothing bank, many unhoused residents have to travel outside the community to seek services. Even then, these individuals cite lack of transportation, lack of identification, and feeling unsafe as major barriers to receiving services.

The strategic plan identifies service barriers facing Issaquah residents. Awareness and outreach is an issue, with 20% of survey respondents overall being unaware of services, including 30% of Spanish and Chinese speakers. Families in Issaquah believe there are too few childcare resources available, and that rising inflation has made the cost of raising a family prohibitive. The cancellation of bus routes has made it very difficult for seniors and the unhoused to access services due to lack of transportation. In engagement forums, community members also expressed the need for a community center that serves as a one-stop-shop for human services needs to assist with navigating and applying for assistance.

Common Themes

Demographics are shifting in Western Washington. All the municipalities in this review have experienced significant population growth over the past decade. Population growth has increased diversity throughout the region, leading to greater proportions of residents being foreign born and speaking languages other than English.

Housing affordability is a priority need across all municipalities in this review. Communities in Washington State and the U.S. are struggling with rising housing costs, which have increased 36% since 2020.¹² In four of the six communities, at least 30% of the community is cost burdened, paying more than 30% of their income on housing (Shoreline did not provide this data, but noted an 'extreme' cost burden). In two communities (Shoreline and Monroe / Sky Valley), community members cited the size and quality of housing as a significant housing issue, highlighting this as an area for further investigation.

¹² <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/CPIHOSNS#0>



Behavioral and mental health care is also a priority need in all municipalities. Community members express that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated mental and behavioral health issues, and have created a high demand for treatment. Intersecting issues of social isolation, digital disconnectedness, and racism / discrimination further exacerbate this issue. Despite the high level of need, all communities are facing barriers to providing this care. Mental and behavioral health care remain cost prohibitive for uninsured residents and Medicare / Medicaid beneficiaries, and increased demand burdens an already limited supply of behavioral health professionals. In addition to this, there are few community resources and programs that address mental and behavioral health needs.

Homelessness is linked to the issue of housing, with affordability and lack of stable housing driving the issue. However, the assessments in this survey had comparably little data on the specific needs of the homeless community. Municipalities did provide data on gaps in homeless services and barriers to receiving services. In many communities, there are few local resources for shelter and other basic needs for the unhoused. Furthermore, inadequate transportation prevents unhoused community members from accessing these services in neighboring communities.

Awareness of services was a major barrier in all municipalities. Community members lack knowledge about human services in key areas such as:

- What services are available and how they can help;
- Where to access these services and how to access them; and,
- Eligibility for these services.

In addition to awareness barriers, community members experienced administrative burdens. These include lengthy or complicated applications, lack of guidance during the process of applying to or receiving services, frequent eligibility certifications and other activities that require additional effort of service recipients. These administrative burdens either discourage or directly prevent potential clients from seeking or receiving services.

Language inclusion and cultural responsiveness created barriers to the increasingly diverse communities throughout Washington state. Community members indicate that this issue primarily impacted outreach and awareness related to services, though there was little data about the availability of services in languages other than English and its impact on communities. Community members did note a lack of culturally responsive services, particularly in regard to behavioral and mental health services.