

Understanding the West Central Mountains Economic Development Council: Our Purpose, Our People, Our Projects

Presenter: *Lindsey Harris, Executive Director*

April 16, 2025



WEST CENTRAL MOUNTAINS
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Valley County • Cascade • Donnelly • McCall • Meadows Valley



TODAY

- ▶ Who we are
- ▶ Projects
- ▶ Housing Needs Assessment
- ▶ Thank you





Who is the WCMEDC?

- ▶ General Information
- ▶ Board
- ▶ Partners
- ▶ Annual Summit
- ▶ MCAR's partnership

“fulfilling our commitment to a dynamic, sustainable, regional economy”

Project Examples

- ▶ Regional Housing Needs Assessment
- ▶ City of Cascade Geothermal
- ▶ Small Business Panel Event Series
- ▶ Chamber Partnerships
- ▶ Young Adults
- ▶ Early Childhood Education
- ▶ HWY95 Disaster Relief
- ▶ Boise State University Resilience Assessment
- ▶ Grant & Technical Assistance
- ▶ WCM Creative District

2024 HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- ▶ Completed End of 2024
- ▶ Participants & Stakeholders

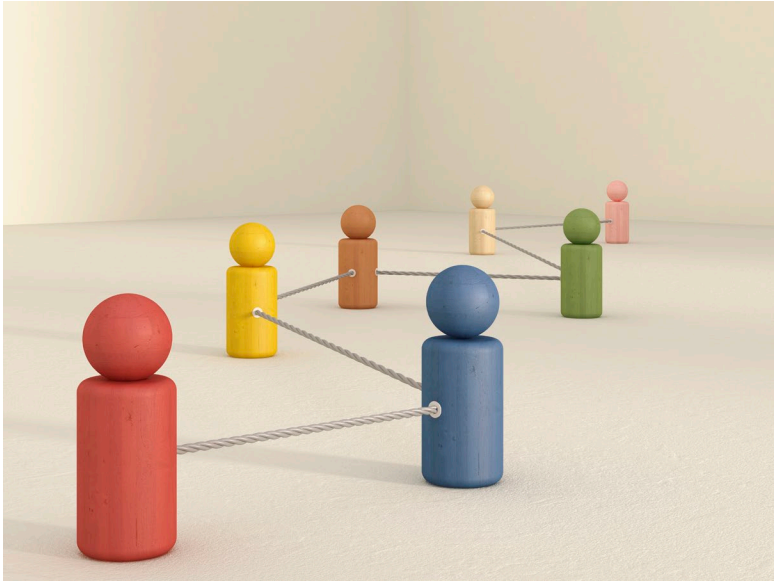
Housing Action Team

- Dylan Martin, Idaho Power (Donnelly)
- Michelle Groenevelt, City of McCall (McCall)
- Cynda Herrick, Valley County (Cascade)
- Belinda Provancher, Perpetua Resources (Donnelly)
- Sherry Maupin, Valley County (McCall)
- Vonna Torrey, Shore Lodge (McCall)
- Kelly Hill, DoneRight Management (McCall)
- Lindsey Harris, WCMEDC (Lake Fork)

Consultants: Agnew::Beck

- Ellen Campfield Nelson
- Michelle Bowlds
- Aaron Mondada





Others involved in the process

Regional Advisory Group: leaders, local governments, and housing nonprofits

Sector Groups: Construction, Real Estate/Property Managers, Developers, Small Businesses

Our Funders

- Laura Moore Cunningham Foundation
- Valley County
- Perpetua Resources
- Idaho Department of Commerce - Gem Grant
- City of Donnelly Local Option Tax
- Mountain Central Association of Realtors
- WCM Community Foundation



What is a housing needs assessment?



A tool used by communities, housing providers and developers to identify housing issues and solutions that can be used to make strategic decisions related to housing, including where to invest, which types of housing programs to develop and which funding programs to target.



Often also includes a market analysis, which is the process of gathering information about a specific market or community and identifying trends or patterns to inform future housing development projects.

Housing Data Considerations

- Population projections and quantified pent-up demand
- Housing and household characteristics
- Affordability and market conditions
- Labor markets and regional employment trends
- Development environment, land uses, geographic constraints and policy

Housing Impacts:

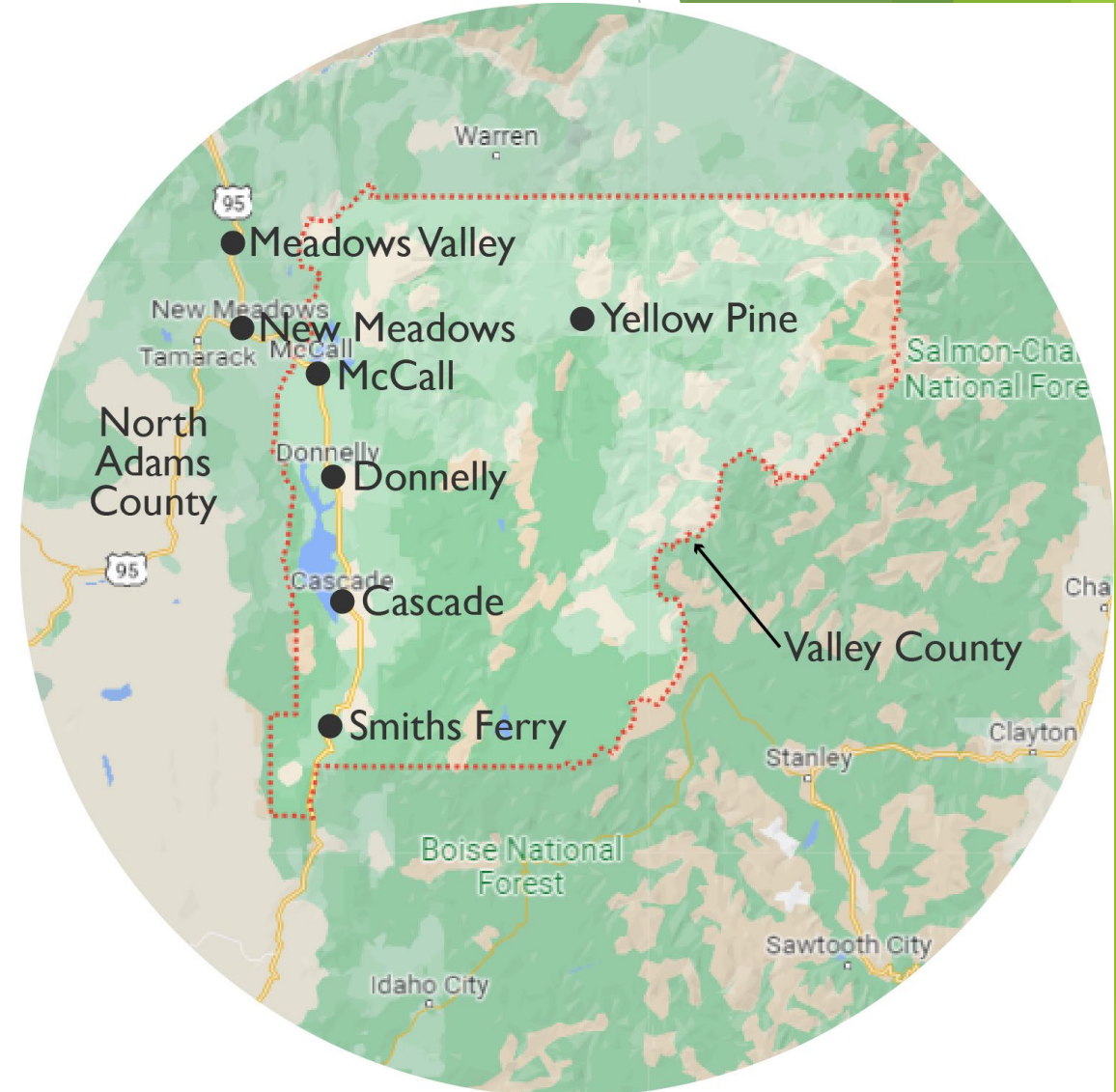
The strength and condition of our housing environment impacts nearly every other factor of community wellbeing.



Assessment Geography

Regional Assessment Approach that included:

- Valley County
 - Cascade
 - Donnelly
 - McCall
 - All other unincorporated areas
- North Adams County
 - New Meadows
 - 2 Census Tracts of unincorporated Adams County



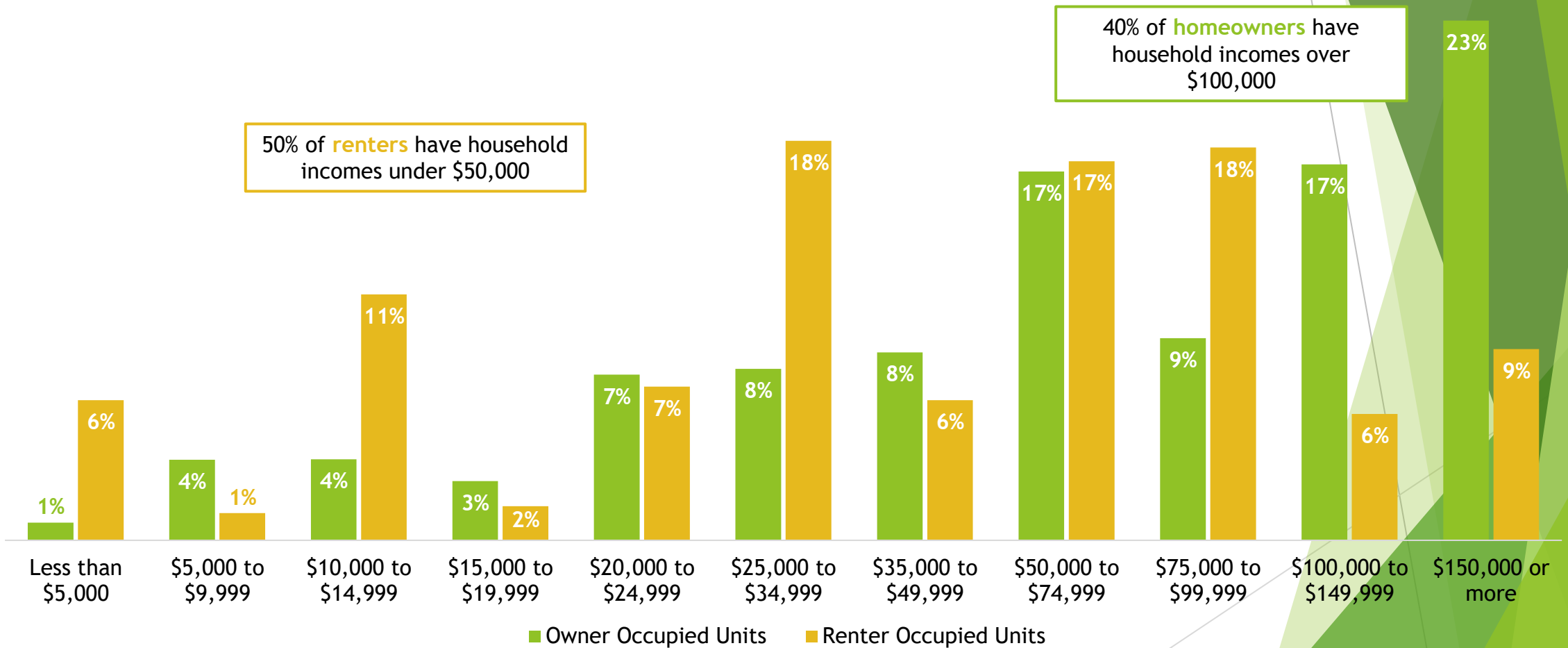
Key Findings 1: Lack of Affordability

Our housing market (for sale and for rental units) for residents and local employees is expensive, scarce and is causing some individuals to leave the region.

- ▶ Wages are not keeping up with the increasing costs of housing
- ▶ more than half (52%) of all renter households are cost burdened (meaning that they spend over 30% of their monthly income on housing) and 38% of owner-occupied households are cost burdened in the West Central Mountains.
- ▶ Need for additional housing, but more specifically affordable rental housing

Housing Tenure By Household Income

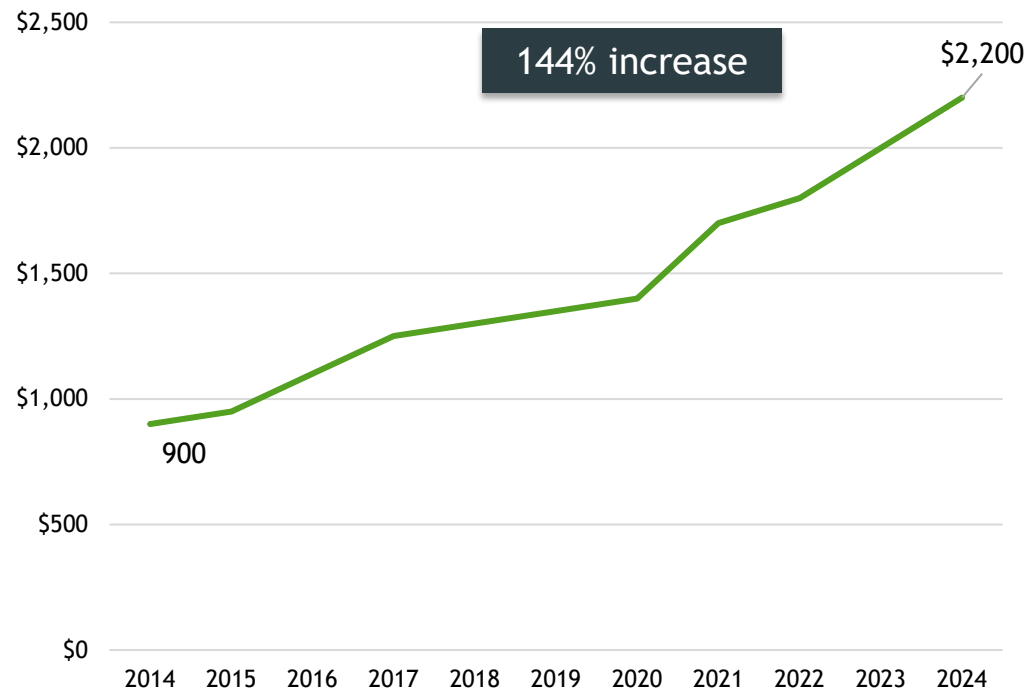
Homeowners are more likely to have higher household incomes



Average Sold Price and Rent

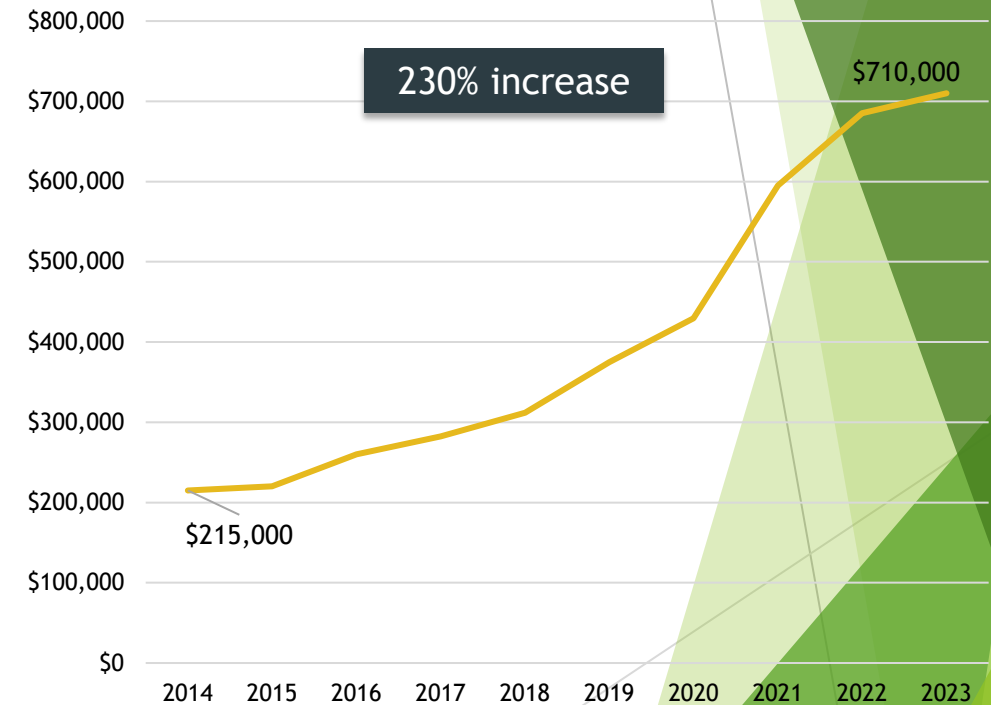
Housing prices (rent and for sale units) have increased substantially

Average Monthly Rent for a 3-Bedroom unit 2014-2024



Source: Combined Market Data Provided by McCall Cabins, Done Right Property Management, and Zillow Listings for a 3-bedroom/2-Bathroom housing unit.

Median Home Sale Price 2014-2023



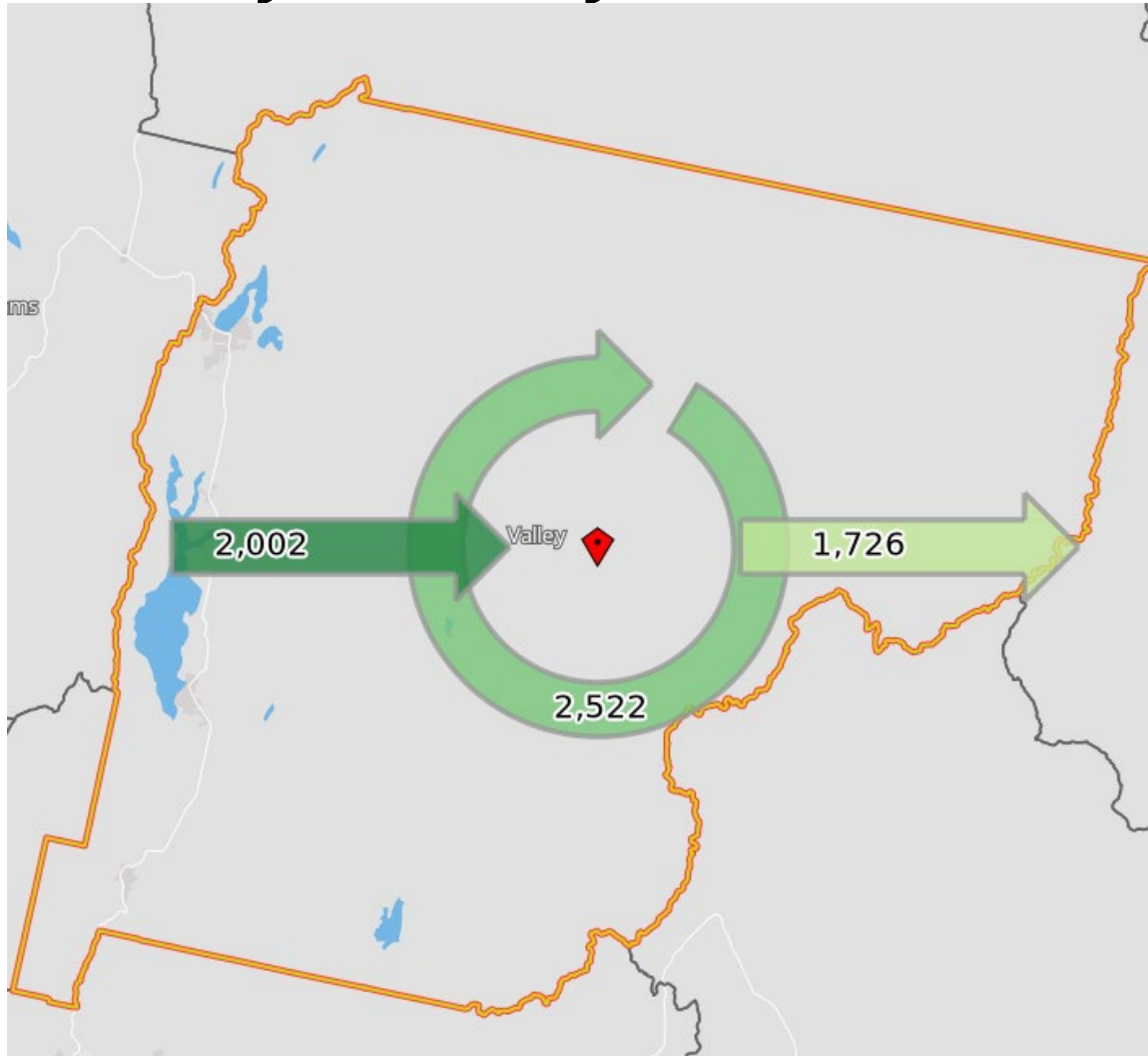
Source: Market Data Provided by Mountain Central Association of Realtors (MCAR)

Key Findings 2: Workforce

The local workforce has largely been priced out of the housing market for homeownership opportunities.

- ▶ The for-sale housing stock available in this region is too expensive for most households who make their living working in the WCM. This includes all housing types.
- ▶ Average final sale price for homes in this region has more than tripled over the last 10 years and average rental prices have more than doubled during that same period.

Daily Inflow and Outflow Analysis - Valley County 2021



Inflow/Outflow Job Counts (All Jobs)

	2021	
	Count	Share
Employed in the Selection Area	4,524	100.0%
Employed in the Selection Area but Living Outside	2,002	44.3%
Employed and Living in the Selection Area	2,522	55.7%
Living in the Selection Area	4,248	100.0%
Living in the Selection Area but Employed Outside	1,726	40.6%
Living and Employed in the Selection Area	2,522	59.4%

Jobs Counts by Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.) Where Workers Live - All Jobs

	2021	
	Count	Share
All Places (Cities, CDPs, etc.)	4,524	100.0%
McCall city, ID	766	16.9%
Boise City city, ID	271	6.0%
Cascade city, ID	200	4.4%
Meridian city, ID	139	3.1%
Nampa city, ID	110	2.4%
Donnelly city, ID	68	1.5%
Caldwell city, ID	65	1.4%
Eagle city, ID	47	1.0%
New Meadows city, ID	44	1.0%
Kuna city, ID	31	0.7%
All Other Locations	2,783	61.5%

At least 15% of Valley County jobs are held by individuals living in the Treasure Valley area.

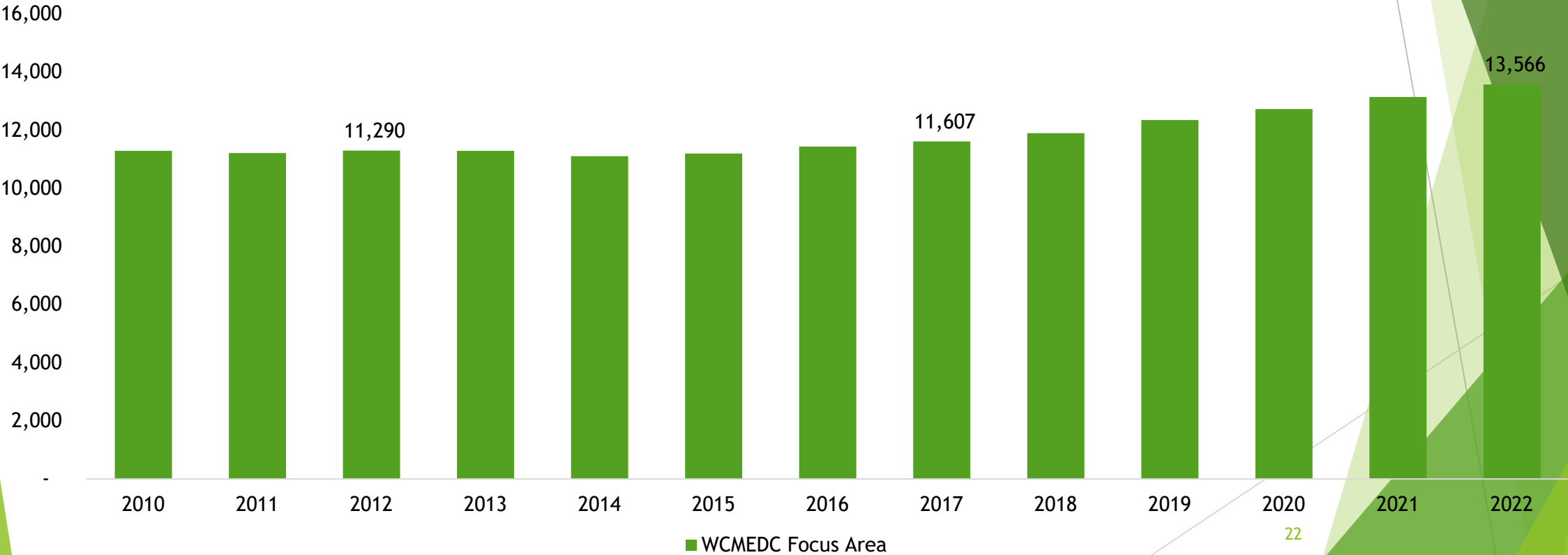
Living Wages for Valley County

	1 Adult				2 Adults (Both Working)			
	0 Children	1 Children	2 Children	3 Children	0 Children	1 Children	2 Children	3 Children
Food	\$4,630	\$6,825	\$10,238	\$13,607	\$8,489	\$10,567	\$13,609	\$16,592
Childcare	\$0	\$10,365	\$19,607	\$27,496	\$0	\$10,365	\$19,607	\$27,496
Medical	\$2,563	\$8,971	\$8,859	\$9,322	\$5,999	\$8,859	\$9,322	\$8,917
Housing	\$9,481	\$12,918	\$12,918	\$17,767	\$11,507	\$12,918	\$12,918	\$17,767
Transportation	\$13,387	\$15,493	\$19,516	\$22,456	\$15,493	\$19,516	\$22,456	\$22,430
Civic	\$3,032	\$5,335	\$6,715	\$7,776	\$5,335	\$6,715	\$7,776	\$7,269
Internet + Mobile	\$2,018	\$2,018	\$2,018	\$2,018	\$2,613	\$2,613	\$2,613	\$2,613
Other	\$4,739	\$8,459	\$8,994	\$12,431	\$8,459	\$8,994	\$12,431	\$11,950
Required Annual Income After Taxes	\$39,850	\$70,385	\$88,865	\$112,874	\$57,895	\$80,546	\$100,732	\$115,034
Annual Taxes	\$7,288	\$10,479	\$13,376	\$19,779	\$8,857	\$11,628	\$13,755	\$15,536
Required Annual income Before Taxes	\$47,138	\$80,864	\$102,241	\$132,653	\$66,752	\$92,175	\$114,486	\$130,570
Living Wage	\$22.66	\$38.88	\$49.15	\$63.78	\$16.05	\$22.16	\$27.52	\$31.39

Source: Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator
[\(https://livingwage.mit.edu/\)](https://livingwage.mit.edu/)

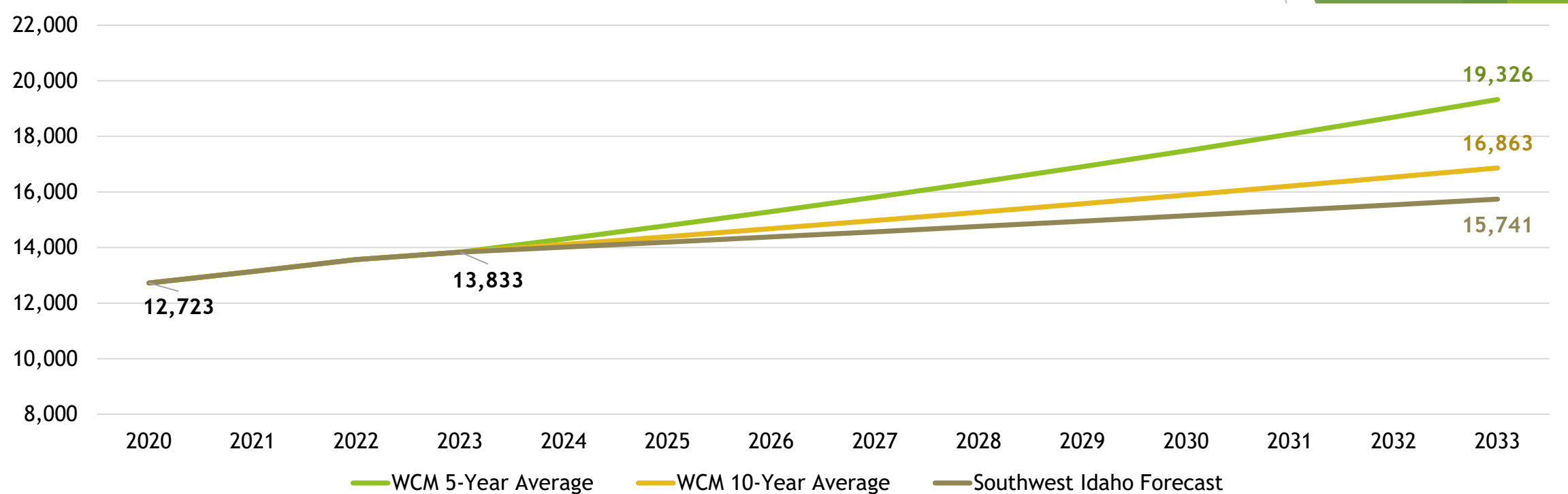
West Central Mountains Population Trends (2010-2022)

The population of the West Central Mountains has experienced steady growth since 2014 with an average **annual growth rate of 3.4%** over the past 5 years. During that same time-period, the state of Idaho had an average annual growth rate of 2.9%.



Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates
WCMEDC Focus Area includes all of Valley County and Census Tract 9501 of Adams County

Regional Population Forecast (2023-2033)



Population forecasts are based on average historical population growth rates and published Idaho Department of Labor population projections for the Southwest Region

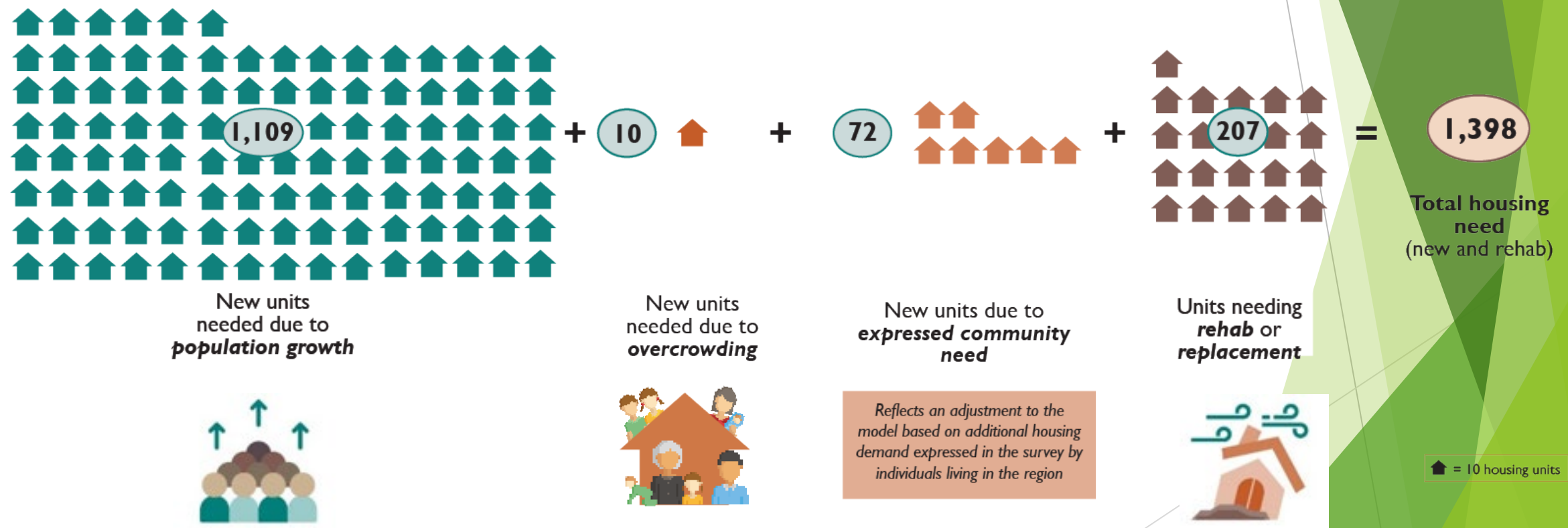
	Years	Average Annual Growth Rate
WCMEDC 5-year [1]	2017-2022	3.4%
WCMEDC 10-year [1]	2012-2022	2.0%
Southwest Region [2]	2019-2029	1.3%
Assumed Average Annual Forecasted	2023-2033	2.0%

Source: [1] US Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates [2] Idaho Department of Labor Regional Population Projections, 2019-2029

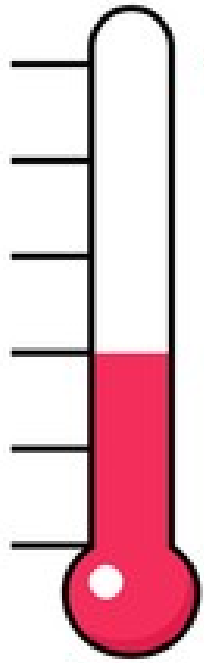
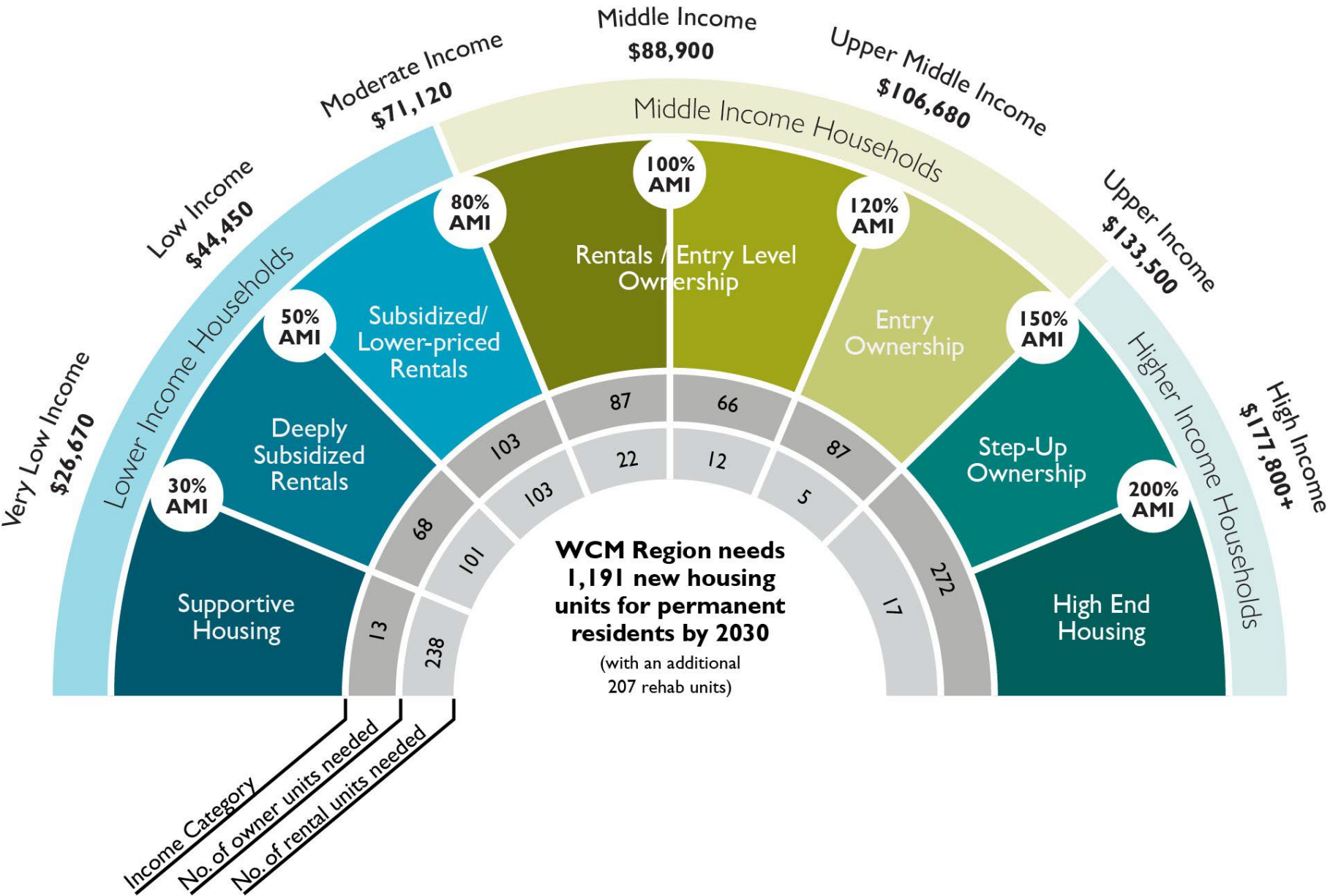
Key Findings 3: Needed Housing Stock

- ▶ To address current housing demand and to keep up with future population growth the West Central Mountains needs to add 1,191 NEW housing units for full-time residents.
 - ▶ These housing units can enter the market through new construction, conversion of existing vacant or seasonal units to full-time rental or for sale units, and through the conversion of large single-family homes into multifamily or condo style units.
 - ▶ Approximately two-thirds of the forecasted housing need should be affordable to individuals earning 100 percent or less of the area median income.
 - ▶ There is encouraging news in the region - the upcoming development pipeline includes a substantial amount of proposed housing projects (including large multi-family projects)
 - ▶ Since 2018, we have seen an increase in multifamily development that was not there before
 - ▶ 14% of our current housing stock are 50+ years old. Thinking of rehabilitating homes.

10-Year Housing Need for the West Central Mountains

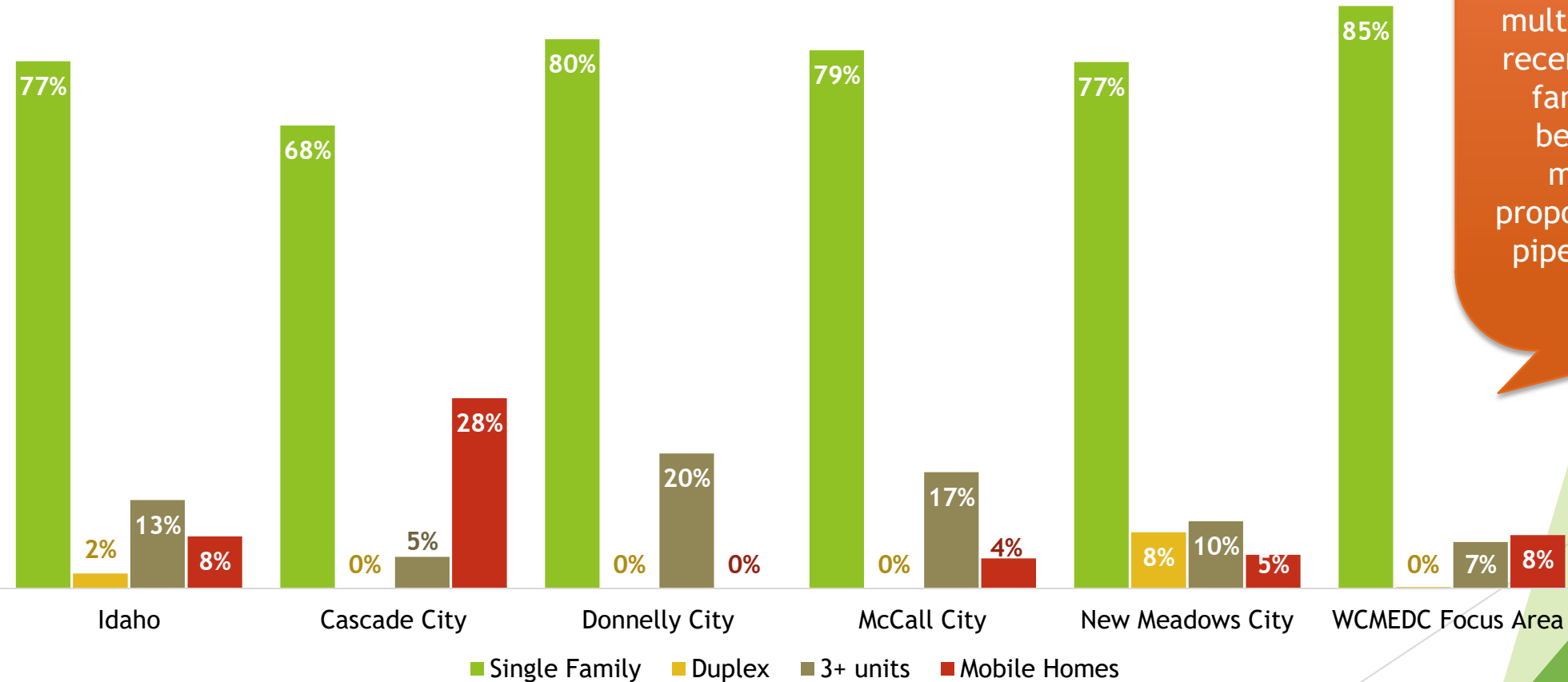


Housing Bridge - Measuring Success



Unit Type

The majority of housing units in the West Central Mountains are single family homes at the time of the assessment - we recognize this has changed in recent months.

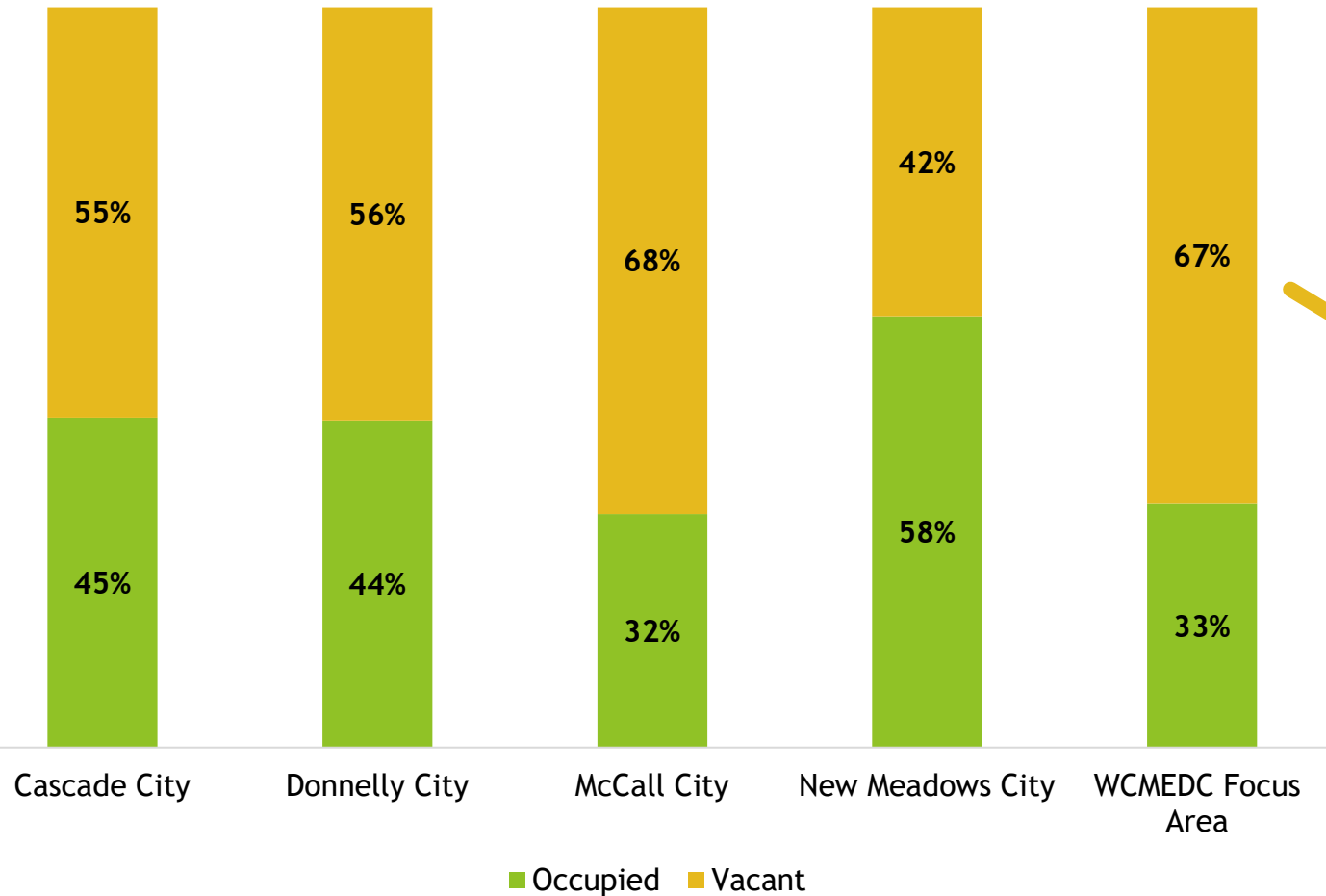


The region has seen a significant investment into multi-family development in recent years with 217 multi-family units constructed between 2018-2022 and more than 1,200 units proposed in the development pipeline at the time of this assessment.

Source: 2022 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Selected Housing Characteristics (Table DP04)

Housing Occupancy

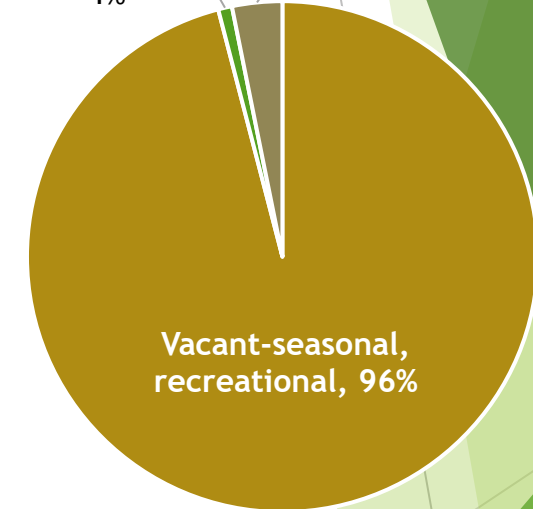
67% of housing units in the WCMEDC focus area fall under the Census Definition of “vacant”. Most housing units in this category are used for seasonal, recreational or occasional use.



WCMEDC Vacancy Details

Vacant - for sale, for rent, 1%

Other, 3%



For this housing needs assessment, we will talk about year-round residents and occupied housing.

“Occupied” housing units represent housing for current year-round residents in the West Central Mountains. Year-round housing units can be occupied by renters or owners but must be the occupant’s primary residence.

Key Findings 5: It takes a village

- ▶ **New housing alone is not enough to solve the housing crisis facing the West Central Mountains.**
 - ▶ Local coordination and housing support is necessary for the long-term health and stability of the housing market in the West Central Mountains. Housing policy and updated land use ordinances should be put into place to ensure the long-term attainability for individuals who wish to live and work in the area.
 - ▶ Regional Housing Coalition
 - ▶ Regional Housing Action Plan
 - ▶ Public & Private Partnerships

2024 Housing Survey Highlights

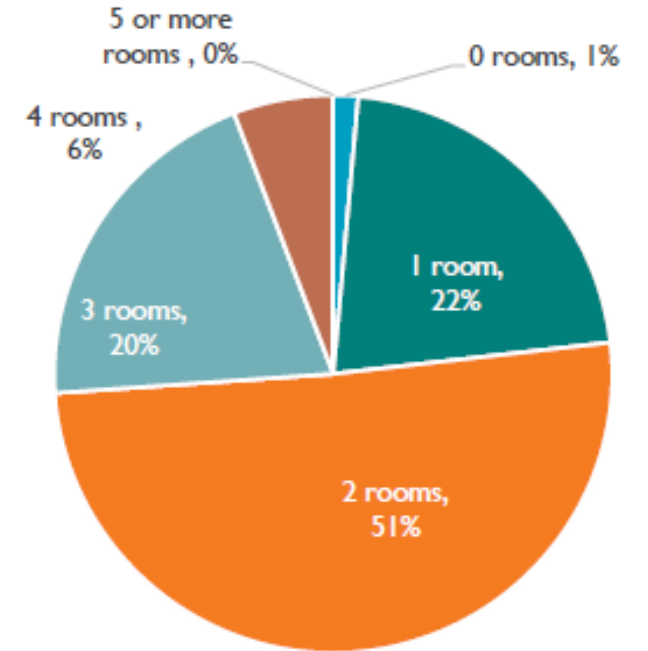
Only 10% of respondents live with a roommate.

24% of renters are paying more than they can comfortably pay compared to just 8% of homeowners

"We need forward thinking planners who will prepare for our growth rather than reacting to it. Single family housing is a lovely luxury. Not everyone can afford that luxury. We need more family friendly high-density housing for working class citizens."

-survey respondent

How many bedrooms would your rental unit need?



56% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their current living arrangements

35% of respondents indicated a high level of stress related to housing within the last three months.

Approximately 25 percent of respondents are interested in buying a home and 45 percent of respondents interested in renting a home were open to options other than single-family homes.

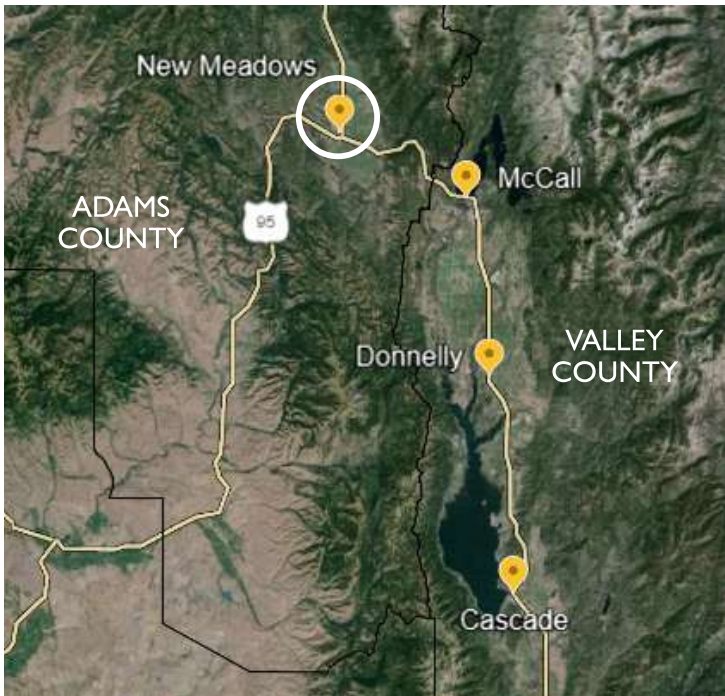
Community Housing Profile: New Meadows, Idaho

West Central Mountains Economic Development Council 2024 Housing Needs Assessment

A housing needs assessment is a data informed process through which a community or region identifies housing inventory and market conditions as well as challenges and potential solutions specific to the study area. These assessments help provide the foundation for meaningful investments, policy development and program implementation to achieve current and future housing goals. The West Central Mountains Economic Development Council (WCMEDC) partnered with Agnew::Beck Consulting to conduct a housing needs assessment for four communities it serves as well as the surrounding unincorporated areas.

The following community profile pulls together data from a community survey and secondary data sources, such as the U.S. Census. It is meant to communicate some of the findings of the housing needs assessment and generate community discussion to shape the future of housing in the West Central Mountains. Data reported for each of the communities in the study area only represents the housing stock and population contained within each jurisdiction. We acknowledge that nearly half of the study area population lives outside of these formal jurisdictional boundaries in unincorporated areas of Valley and Adams County.

The West Central Mountains represents all of Valley County and northern Adams County and includes the following communities: Cascade, Donnelly, McCall and New Meadows.



City of New Meadows, Idaho

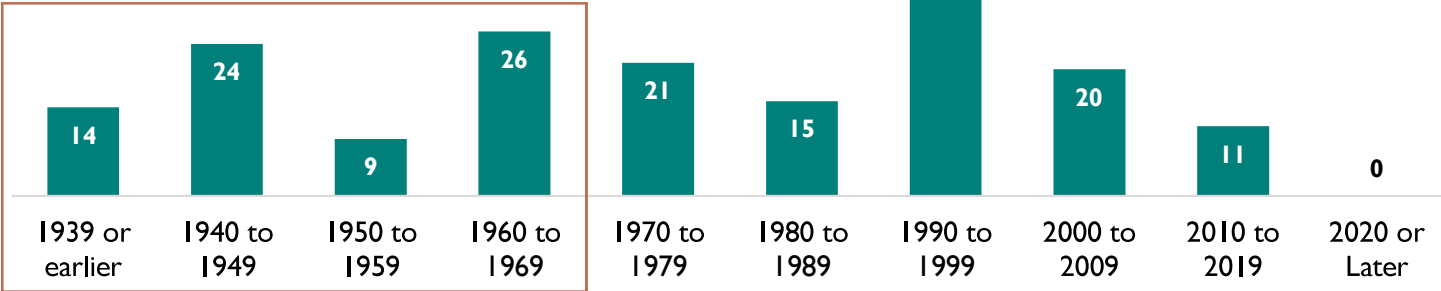
- 293 people lived in New Meadows in 2022.
- The population of New Meadows has experienced slight decline over the past 10 years, but has seen some growth in more recent years.
- New Meadows is home to 182 housing units and roughly 58% (106 housing units) are occupied by year-round residents.
- New Meadows has a higher rate of local/year round occupancy compared to the regional average.
- Housing units in New Meadows that are not occupied by year-round residents are largely for seasonal or recreational use.
- Over 40% of the housing stock in New Meadows was built before 1970.
- 17% of New Meadows households spend more than 30% of their total household income on housing and are considered cost burdened.



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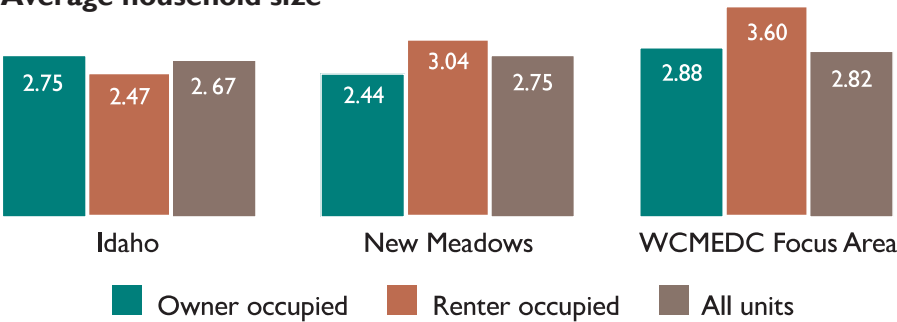
Housing Characteristics

Year housing structures were built in New Meadows



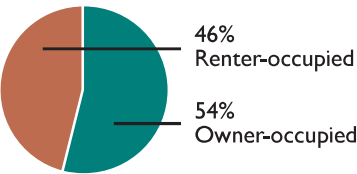
40% of housing units were built before 1970.

Average household size

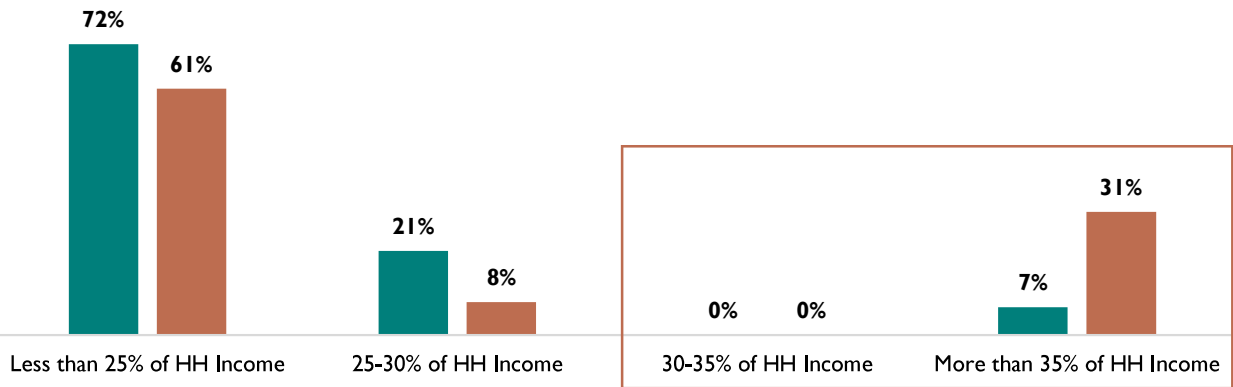


Average household sizes in New Meadows are slightly smaller than regional averages but still higher than statewide average household sizes. Renter occupied households tend to be larger than owner occupied housing units.

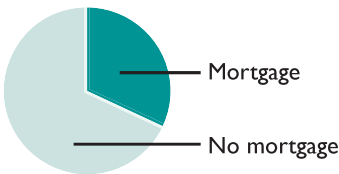
Owner occupied vs. renter occupied housing in New Meadows



Housing cost as a percentage of household income in New Meadows



Renter occupied households are more likely to be “cost burdened,” spending more than 30% of their total household income on housing, than owner occupied households.



Of the owner occupied units in New Meadows:

- 32% have a mortgage
- 68% do not have a mortgage

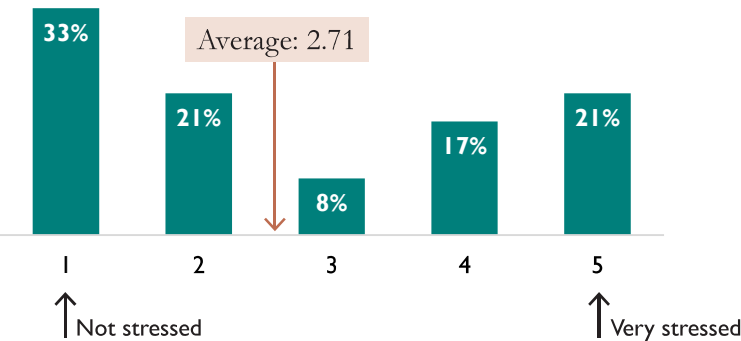
Housing Preferences

A regional wide survey collected a total of 31 survey responses from residents of New Meadows. The following section summarizes some of the information collected by the survey around housing preferences and considerations of New Meadows residents.

Would you, or other people in your household, like to be living in a different housing situation if they could?

	Unsure	Yes	No
New Meadows	4	12	14
WCMEDC Total	66	241	315

Within the last three months, how stressed have you been about your current housing situation?

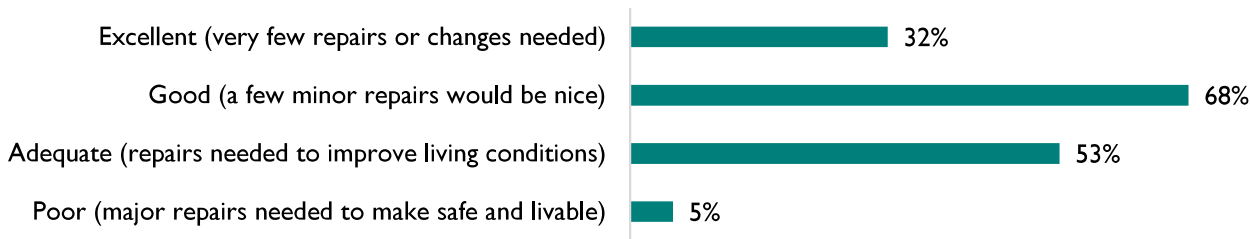


On a scale of 1 to 5, please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

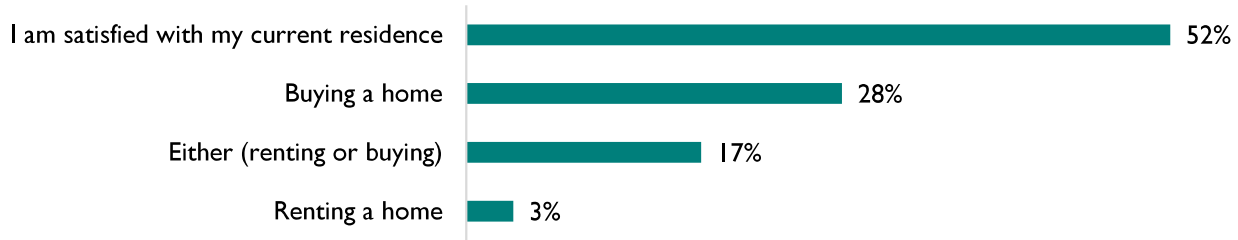
	Strongly disagree					Strongly agree					
	1	2	3	4	5	Weighted average					
Finding ways to provide community housing is very important for the future of the West Central Mountains.	3	1	0	5	21	4.33					
Homelessness in the West Central Mountains region is a large problem.	3	5	16	2	4	2.97					
My community has all the services and amenities that I need.	9	9	7	3	2	2.33					
There is enough housing for everyone who wants to live in the area.	15	8	3	2	2	1.93					
My community is an affordable place to live.	16	6	5	1	2	1.90					
Regional wages are adequate for the cost of living in the area.	19	5	1	1	4	1.87					

The closer a weighted average is to 5, the greater level of agreement with the statement from survey respondents.

How would you rate the overall condition of your home?



Currently and in the future (within the next 3-5 years)
which of the following options are you interested in?



New Meadows residents are interested variety of different housing types including in single family homes (33%), apartment style housing (13%), townhomes/condos (20%) and tiny homes (13%).

What is the maximum monthly mortgage (excluding utilities) you would be willing to pay for your needed bedroom size?

Housing Cost	Desired number of bedrooms			
	1	2	3	4
\$600 to \$699	1			
\$700 to \$799		1	1	
\$1,250 to \$1,499		1		
\$1,750 to \$1,999		1		
\$2,000 to \$2,499				1

How important are the following home features when you are looking for a place to live?

	Not very important					Very important	
	1	2	3	4	5	Weighted average	
In-unit washer/dryer	0	1	3	5	17	4.46	
Energy efficiency	0	0	3	13	10	4.27	
Garage/carport	0	2	3	10	11	4.15	
Extra storage	0	0	6	13	7	4.04	
Allows pets	6	0	0	4	16	3.92	
Age of home	3	3	11	8	1	3.04	
Common outdoor area/playground	9	6	6	5	0	2.27	

The closer a weighted average is to 5, the greater level of importance with the statement from survey respondents.

How important are the following location considerations when you are looking for a place to live?

	Not very important					Very important	
	1	2	3	4	5	Weighted average	
Access to outdoor recreation	0	1	2	7	16	4.46	
Distance to services (medical, grocery, etc.)	0	2	7	9	8	3.88	
Distance to my place of work	4	2	6	5	9	3.50	
Quality of nearby schools	6	3	6	2	9	3.19	
Distance to work for others in my household	5	4	5	5	7	3.19	
Distance to bus services/public transportation	10	5	8	2	1	2.19	
Distance to childcare facilities	13	6	2	1	4	2.12	

The closer a weighted average is to 5, the greater level of importance with the statement from survey respondents.

Regional Housing Challenges



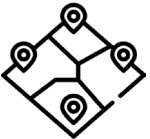
- ▶ Cost of construction and development



- ▶ Development and Permitting Processes



- ▶ Infrastructure Availability and Needed Upgrades



- ▶ Availability of land for housing development



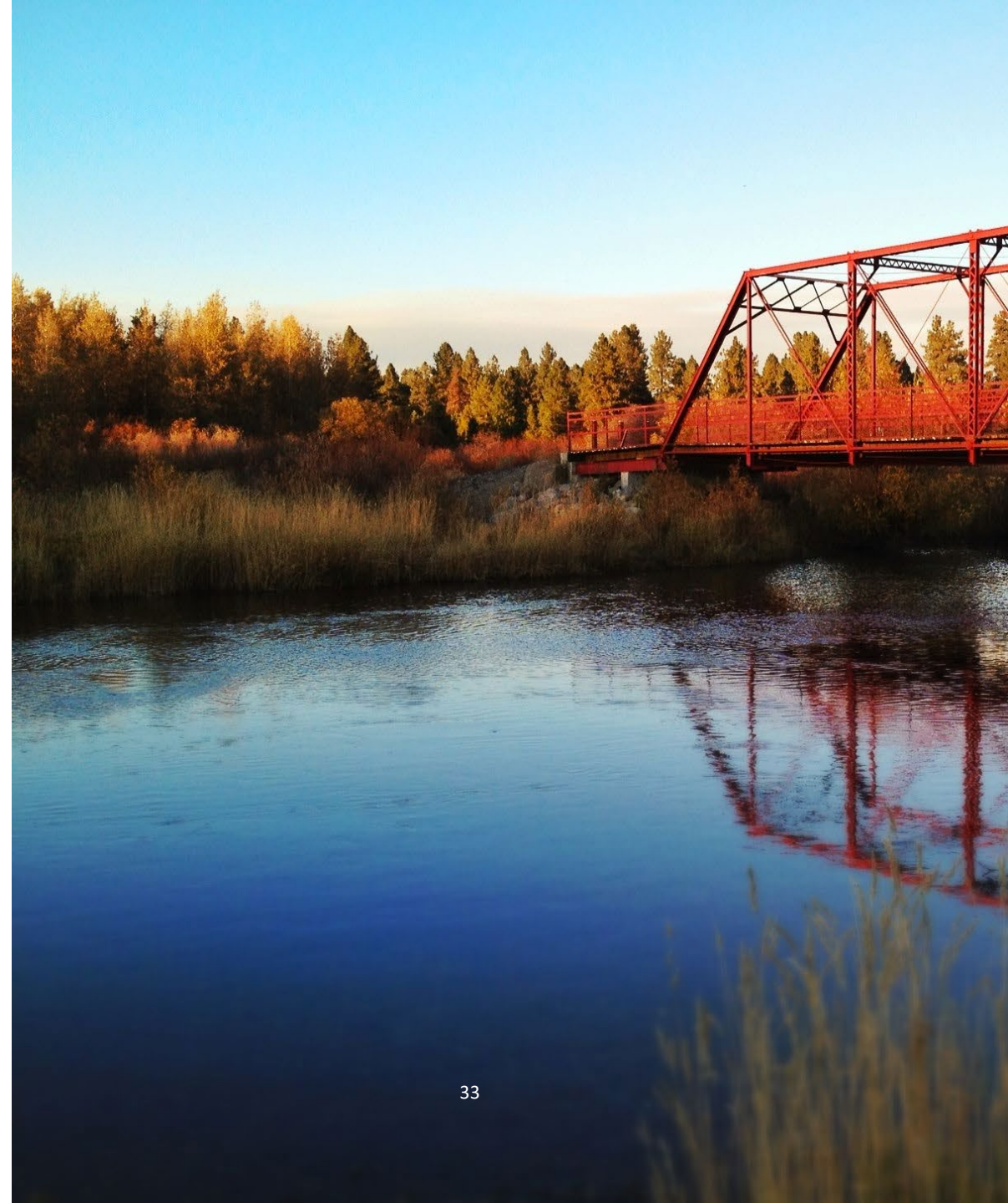
- ▶ Regional collaboration and disjointed decision making



- ▶ Community attitudes and opinions

What Happens Next?

- Regional Housing Action Planning
- Housing Coalition Formation
- Project Partnerships
- WCM Housing Trust



What Can Communities Do?

- Conduct a Regional Housing Action Plan
- Code revisions
- Parking exemptions
- Density and height bonuses
- ADU allowances
- Flexible design review and variance approval
- Reduced or waived connection, impact and permitting fees
- Reimbursement incentives
- Expedited permitting
- Public Site improvements in right of way
- Deed restriction purchase programs
- Public donation or long-term land leases to reduce development costs
- Development of publicly owned land with deed restrictions tied to employment or income qualifications.
- Fund and utilize land trusts



Final Thoughts, Observations,
Questions? Where do you think
we go from here?

Thank you for your time today. We
appreciate your vested interest in our
organization and community housing. You
can access the full needs assessment on
our website:

WCMEDC.ORG

