

Housing Futures Center

Advancing a Future with Housing for All

Our Vision

The Housing Futures Center (HFC) at the University of Washington is a bold, forward-looking initiative designed to address Washington's most pressing housing challenges—today and in the years ahead. With a mission to build capacity and advance informed decision-making, the Center integrates education, research, and community engagement to support policymakers, advocates, developers, housing providers, tenants, and homeowners in shaping a future where every Washingtonian has access to affordable and stable housing.

Motivation

Housing in Washington is increasingly out of reach. We don't have enough homes—and the homes we do have are among the most expensive in the country. Over the next two decades, Washington will need more than 1.1 million new housing units, two-thirds of which must be affordable to households earning less than 80% of the area median income.

Washington and the millions of people who call it home can't risk leaving this crisis unaddressed. The consequences of unattainable housing are severe, including increased financial instability, eviction, displacement, and homelessness. These consequences disproportionately affect low-income families, households of color, and, increasingly, older adults. At a broader level, for our state, counties, and cities, unaffordable housing can limit economic growth and place significant burdens on governments.

Approach

Solving the scale and complexity of Washington's housing challenges requires coordinated, informed, and sustained action. The Housing Futures Center meets this need by advancing three strategies:

Research

Addressing our complex housing needs necessitates informed decision-making. The HFC conducts applied, locally-relevant research and maintains accessible data resources that policymakers, community advocates, developers and agencies can use to support their housing-related decision-making. This includes generating insights into housing supply, affordability, displacement, and systemic barriers—equipping stakeholders with the evidence needed to design effective programs, policies, and interventions.

Education

Building the future of housing requires a new generation of housing practitioners. The HFC develops the next generation of policymakers, advocates, financiers, providers, and developers, through a range of educational offerings. These include:

- ▶ Coursework rooted in housing systems, policies, and production
- ▶ Real-world learning and experience via case competitions and applied research projects
- ▶ Financial support for housing-related internships and fellowships
- ▶ Access to mentors and industry leaders through lectures and community gatherings

Engagement

Complex problems require diverse perspectives. The Center convenes policymakers, developers, advocates, residents, and civic leaders in communities across the state in solution-focused conversations across sectors. Through structured dialogue and design sessions, the HFC creates conditions for shared problem-solving by fostering mutual understanding, highlighting promising practices, and supporting collaborative action across conventional divides toward shared housing goals.



Yesler Terrace Multi-Family Housing in Seattle.



Rolling farm landscape in the Palouse region of Washington State.



Row of new townhouses in downtown Spokane, Washington.

Shared Goals

Aligned with state and local priorities, the Housing Futures Center does not construct housing or establish housing policy. It works to support and inform those who do. Our work is designed to advance the following shared goals:

- ▶ Housing attainability, affordability, & stability
- ▶ Thriving communities
- ▶ Informed decision-making
- ▶ Shared prosperity

Our Values

HFC operates with intention and integrity, guided by values ensuring our work is responsive, rigorous, and rooted in community. We are:

- ▶ **Pragmatic**—We focus on real-world impact, helping partners navigate systems and shape implementable solutions.
- ▶ **Conscientious**—We approach every project with integrity, rigor, and a commitment to equity.
- ▶ **Humble**—We recognize that no single approach will solve Washington's housing crisis. We center community voices and value diverse perspectives, essential to scaling effective, inclusive solutions.

The University of Washington as a Partner

As a leading public research university committed to serving the people of Washington, the University of Washington brings deep interdisciplinary expertise, robust legislative and industry partnerships, and a longstanding commitment to community engagement.

The HFC leverages interdisciplinary partnerships—especially across the College of Built Environments and the Evans School of Public Policy & Governance—alongside our legislative, industry, and nonprofit networks. Together, we're building a hub where knowledge and connection produce action.

How to Engage

- ▶ **Share Your Expertise**—Partner with the HFC as a mentor, guest lecturer, or case competition advisor.
- ▶ **Advance Student Learning**—Host student interns or fellows within your organization.
- ▶ **Invest in the Center**—Make a philanthropic contribution to support research, student opportunities, and statewide engagement.
- ▶ **Promote Research & Collaboration**—Suggest areas for research, support targeted projects, or share data that can inform statewide solutions.
- ▶ **Engage in Solution Seeking**—Attend a community dialogue and design session.



Newport Shores neighborhood along Lake Washington in Bellevue.

Contact

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