

City of Lakewood Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Choice

April 2020

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Introduction

Lakewood was fairly recently incorporated (1996), having grown around numerous lakes which have historically been a draw for recreation as well as residential development for military personnel and retirees and people commuting to jobs elsewhere in Puget Sound. The City has focused on transformation from its start as a bedroom community to a city that is diversified and self-contained economically. Essential infrastructure to encourage both commercial and residential development includes basic and expensive elements – extending sewers and building roads and pedestrian improvements into areas not previously serviced. Major investments have been made in Tillicum and Woodbrook, and along transportation corridors. Essential to both economic development and increasing opportunities for residents is removal or redevelopment of blighted or underutilized properties. Revitalization and redevelopment in the near future will focus on the Central Business District, the South Tacoma Way and Pacific Highway Corridors; Springbrook; Tillicum/Woodbrook; Lakeview (Lakewood Station District); and, Lake City.

Updated Methodology

This report is an update of the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing conducted in 2015, incorporating more recent information on actions taken on previously identified impediments as well as current policies, and demographic, economic and housing data to ascertain any new impediments. The City of Lakewood, as part of the HOME Consortium with the City of Tacoma, is also conducting an updated Consolidated Plan to be completed in 2020.

The updated Analysis of Impediments will include feedback from various stakeholder groups who can lend insight into the data, trends, as well as potential barriers to fair housing. These stakeholders include but are not limited to: housing providers and advocates, human service providers and consumers, City staff, and the public. Similarly, discussions with neighborhood groups, housing authorities, and advocates for persons in protected classes under the Fair Housing Act will help to inform the analysis and recommendations.

Summary of Approach

This report updates the 2010 *Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing Report (as updated in 2015)* and draws on the 2014 Regional Fair Housing Equity Assessment, incorporating updated information on:

- Actions taken on previously identified impediments
- Current policies
- Demographic, economic and housing data
- New impediments
- Recommendations for future action.

Stakeholder Engagement

This updated *Analysis of Impediments* includes feedback from various stakeholder groups who provided insight into the data, trends, and potential barriers to fair housing. These stakeholders include but are not limited to housing providers and advocates; human service providers and consumers; City staff; and, other members of the public. Similarly, discussions with neighborhood groups, housing authorities, and, advocates for persons in protected classes under the Fair Housing Act, helped inform the analysis and recommendations.

The City of Lakewood conducted outreach and engagement activities to agencies, groups, and organizations in line with the City of Lakewood Community Development Block Grant and HOME Investment Partnership ACT Citizen Participation Plan (2019). Below details the planned outreach conducted to these groups:

- Lakewood Planning Advisory Board: Created by City ordinance, with members appointed by the City Council, will review and make recommendations on the Con Plan. This group is planned to be engaged in late April 2020 with the objective to review the draft plan and public comments in order to provide final feedback and decisions to finalize Consolidated Plan to send to Lakewood City Council for approval.
- Lakewood Community Service Advisory Board: This is a citizens' advisory board, which recommends CDBG and HOME allocations and the Con Plan to the City Council. To the extent possible, the board includes low- and moderate-income persons, representatives of community groups, and members of minority groups. This group is planned to be engaged in late April 2020 with the objectives to review the draft plan and public comments in order to provide final feedback/decisions to finalize Consolidated Plan to send to the Lakewood City Council for approval.
- Lakewood City Council: City of Lakewood staff presented the draft Consolidated Plan at the March 23, 2020 City Council meeting and plans to adopt the final Consolidated Plan at Council's meeting on May 4, 2020.

Analysis

The analysis is a comprehensive overview of policies, procedures, data, and input from stakeholders that includes:

- Summary of Lakewood demographics and trends
- Analysis of segregation patterns and trends
- Analysis of racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty
- Analysis of disproportionate housing needs
- Analysis of disparities in access to opportunity along the following factors:
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Transportation
 - Environmentally Healthy Areas

- Analysis of publicly supported housing
- Analysis of housing access for vulnerable populations
- Analysis of fair housing discrimination testing and housing mortgage disclosure data

Recommendations

Recommendations are based on the analysis, best practices, legal requirements and the status of current impediments.

Overview of the Legal Requirements of Analysis of Impediments

Jurisdictions receiving grant funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) are required to certify to the federal government that they are affirmatively furthering fair housing. The jurisdiction must:

- Conduct an Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing
- Take appropriate action to overcome the effects of impediments identified through that analysis
- Maintain records reflecting the analysis and actions

Under the Consolidated Plan, HUD-funded recipients are required to:

- Examine and attempt to alleviate housing discrimination within their jurisdiction
- Promote fair housing choice for all persons
- Provide opportunities for all persons to reside in any given housing development, regardless of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin
- Promote housing that is accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities
- Comply with non-discrimination requirements of the Fair Housing Act

HUD defines impediments to fair housing choice as:

- Any actions, omissions, or decisions taken because of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin which restrict housing choices or the availability of housing choice, or
- Any actions, omissions, or decisions which have the effect of restricting housing choices or the availability of housing choice on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, disability, familial status, or national origin.

Affordable Housing and Fair Housing Overlapping Sectors

The availability of affordable, good quality, appropriate housing in all neighborhoods, for all residents is a critical underlayment in any community. Absence of appropriate affordable housing choices puts the most vulnerable populations – many of whom are among the classes protected by fair housing laws – at risk. They face reduced housing choice and reduced access to opportunities.

Housing policies, including those contained in zoning and land use plans, impact the availability and location of housing and, therefore, equal access to opportunities, including quality schools, employment, services, recreation, shopping, cultural outlets, safety and stability, transportation, walkable neighborhoods – all the things valued in communities. Increasing affordable housing choices and access to opportunities in all neighborhoods and eliminating discrimination in housing go hand in hand.

Fair Housing Laws

Federal Laws

Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968, as amended (Fair Housing Act), prohibits discrimination in the sale, rental and financing of dwellings, and in other housing-related transactions, based on:

- Race or color
- National origin
- Religion
- Sex
- Familial status (including children under the age of 18 living with parents of legal custodians, pregnant women, and people securing custody of children under age 18)
- Handicap (disability)

The Fair Housing Act covers most housing. In some circumstances, the Act exempts owner-occupied buildings with no more than four units, single-family housing sold or rented without the use of a broker and housing operated by organizations and private clubs that limit occupancy to members.

In the **sale and rental of housing**: No one may take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap (disability):

- Refuse to rent or sell housing
- Refuse to negotiate for housing

- Make housing unavailable
- Deny a dwelling
- Set different terms, conditions or privileges for sale or rental of a dwelling
- Provide different housing services or facilities
- Falsely deny that housing is available for inspection, sale or rental
- For profit, persuade owners to sell or rent (blockbusting), or
- Deny anyone access to or membership in a facility or service (such as a multiple listing service) related to the sale or rental of housing.

In **mortgage lending**: No one may take any of the following actions based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status or handicap (disability):

- Refuse to make a mortgage loan
- Refuse to provide information regarding loans
- Impose different terms or conditions on a loan, such as different interest rates, points, or fees
- Discriminate in appraising property
- Refuse to purchase a loan, or
- Set different terms or conditions for purchasing a loan.

In addition, it is illegal for anyone to:

- Threaten, coerce, intimidate or interfere with anyone exercising a fair housing right or assisting others who exercise that right.
- Advertise or make any statement that indicates a limitation or preference based on race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or handicap. This prohibition against discriminatory advertising applies to single-family and owner-occupied housing that is otherwise exempt from the Fair Housing Act.

Additional protections for **persons with disabilities**: The landlord may not refuse to allow:

- Reasonable modifications to the dwelling or common use areas, at the tenant's expense and where the unit can be restored to the original condition, or
- Reasonable accommodations in rules, policies, practices or services, if necessary for the disabled person to use the property.

Buildings constructed after March 1991 are subject to accommodation requirements, depending on the number of units and presence of an elevator.

Familial status is protected unless the building or community qualifies as housing for older persons, that is:

- It is specifically designed for and occupied by elderly persons under a federal, state or local government program
- It is occupied solely by persons who are 62 or older, or
- It houses at least one person who is 55 or older in at least 80 percent of the occupied units, and adheres to a policy that demonstrates intent to house persons who are 55 or older.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has been given the authority and responsibility for administering this law. This authority includes handling of complaints, engaging in conciliation, monitoring conciliation, protecting individual’s rights regarding public disclosure of information, authorizing prompt judicial action when necessary, and referring to the State or local proceedings whenever a complaint alleges a discriminatory housing practice.

Exemptions

The Fair Housing Act covers most housing. In some circumstances, the Act exempts owner-occupied buildings with no more than four units, single-family housing sold or rented without the use of a broker and housing operated by organizations and private clubs that limit occupancy to members.

<p>Single-family dwellings:</p> <p><u>Owner-occupied, single family dwellings are EXEMPT, if all of the following applies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The owner does not own or have economic interest in 3 or more eligible properties • The owner does not use a 3rd party to rent or manage their unit(s) • The owner does not advertise in a discriminatory manner 	<p>Multi-family dwellings:</p> <p><u>Multi-family buildings (i.e., townhomes) are EXEMPT if both of the following applies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no more than 4 separate units • The owner lives in one of the units and meets requirements of single-family dwelling exemption.
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The “Housing for Older Persons” Exemption: The Fair Housing Act specifically exempts some senior housing facilities and communities from liability for familial status discrimination. Exempt senior housing facilities or communities can lawfully refuse to sell or rent dwellings to families with minor children.

In order to qualify for the “housing for older persons” exemption, a facility or community must prove:

<p>55+ Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20% of units may be occupied without at least one person 55 years or older 	<p>62+ Communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intended for and solely occupied by persons over the age of 61
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living in the home	
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Conciliation

Under the Fair Housing Act, complaints may be conciliated prior to a determination of whether reasonable cause exists to believe that a housing provider (or respondent) has violated the Act. Through conciliation, each party may achieve its objectives in a relatively simple and expeditious manner, and HUD advances the public interest in preventing current and future discriminatory housing practices. The period during which conciliation must be attempted commences with the filing of the complaint and concludes with the issuance of a charge on behalf of the complainant, or upon dismissal of the complaint. The Fair Housing Act establishes a process for a HUD administrative law judge to review complaints in cases that cannot be resolved by an agreement between the parties and sets financial penalties where a charge of discrimination is substantiated.

Cases may be administratively closed when the complainant cannot be located, refuses to cooperate or withdraws their complaint with or without resolution.

Complainants can also choose to litigate their allegations of housing discrimination in federal or state court.

State Law

Washington State has adopted a fair housing law, which is substantially equivalent to federal law and extends protection to the same populations. In addition it extends protection on the basis of marital status, sexual orientation (2006 addition), and military or veteran status (honorable discharge) (2007 addition).

Chapter 49.60 RCW is a state law that prohibits discriminatory practices in the areas of employment, places of public resort, accommodation, or amusement, in real estate transactions, and credit and insurance transactions on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, families with children, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, age, honorably discharged veteran or military status, or the presence of any sensory mental, or physical disability or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability; and prohibits retaliation against persons who oppose a discriminatory practice, and those who file health care and state employee whistleblower complaints. (www.hum.wa.gov)

The Washington State Human Rights Commission has a cooperative agreement with the Department of Housing and Urban Development to process and investigate dual-filed housing complaints for which the Commission receives funding under the Fair Housing Assistance

Program (FHAP). Most of the Commission’s housing cases are dual-filed with HUD – the exceptions are cases covered under State but not covered under federal law.

In addition to the Washington State Human Rights Commission, other jurisdictions in King and Pierce County have protections in law mirroring federal protections and some, going beyond, including the Tacoma Human Right Commission. Table 1 draws on information presented in the Fair Housing Equity Assessment for the Central Puget Sound Region prepared by the Fair Housing Center of Washington for the Puget Sound Regional Council under a federal grant to promote Sustainable Communities. This represents a coming together of federal agencies (HUD, the U.S. Department of Transportation, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency) to integrate planning policies and actions to increase opportunities (economic, transportation, and housing) and sustain and improve communities.

Table 1¹: Protected Classes in the Puget Sound Region by Jurisdiction/Enforcement Agency

Basis	Federal	State	Tacoma	King County	Seattle
	HUD	WSHRC	THRC	KCOCR	SOCR
Race	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Color	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Religion	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
National Origin	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Sex	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Gender identity	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Sexual orientation	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Familial status/parental status	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Handicap/disability	◆	◆	◆	◆	◆
Creed		◆			◆
Marital status		◆	◆	◆	◆
Veteran or military status		◆	◆		◆
Age			◆	◆	◆
Section 8 recipient				◆	◆
Ancestry			◆	◆	
Political ideology					◆

¹ Sexual orientation and gender identity are not specifically stated in federal law, but are included in HUD policy as of 2010. Agencies referenced are Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Washington State Human Rights Commission (WSHRC), Tacoma Human Rights Commission (THRC), King County Office of Civil Rights (KCOCR), and the Seattle Office of Civil Rights (SOCR).

Source: Fair Housing Equity Assessment for the Central Puget Sound Region prepared by the Fair Housing Center of Washington for the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC).

Community Profile

Population

The population in Lakewood has increased by roughly 4% since 2010; experiencing a boost alongside Tacoma at 9%, while population growth throughout Pierce County and the state has grown by 12% over the same period.

Table 2: Population 2000-2018

Location	Year			Change 2010-2018
	2000	2010	2018	
Lakewood	58,211	58,163	60,538	4%
Tacoma	193,556	198,397	216,279	9%
Pierce County	700,820	795,225	891,299	12%
Washington	5,894,121	6,724,540	7,535,591	12%

Source: US Census; 2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The median age of the population in the United States is increasing, a trend mirrored in Washington and in Pierce County. The observed increase in age over the last two decades is in part due to the aging of the baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) and a longer life expectancy now generally enjoyed. The median age in Lakewood was notably lower than in Washington –36 in Lakewood compared to 37.6 in Washington, a disparity that has widened since 2010.

Table 3: Median Age 2000-2017

Location	Year		
	2000	2010	2017
Lakewood	35.0	36.6	36
Tacoma	33.9	35.1	35.9
Pierce County	34.1	35.9	36
Washington	35.3	37.2	37.6
United States	35.3	37.2	37.8

Source: US Census; 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

As of 2018², 14.4% of Lakewood’s population was age 65 or older, which is not unexpected given that Lakewood has been a retirement location choice for many, including military retirees. By 2040, Washington OFM forecasts place the percentage of people age 65 and older in both Pierce County and Washington at 21% of the population.

A growing elderly population requires planning for housing, transportation and services. Older residents are more likely to be isolated or homebound and in need of additional support to live safely in their homes whether in homes they own or rent. Planning for the needs of an aging population is consistent with planning benefitting the whole community – diverse housing types and locations, transportation alternatives, and ready availability of goods and services.

Life expectancy has not historically been equal for men and women. Looking at 2017 ACS data, the median age for males was lower (34.2 years) than for women (37.7 years). Of the population 65 and older in 2017, 56.8% was female. Reflecting an unequal survival by gender, 66% of the population age 85 and above was female, an increase from 2010 when 63% of the population age 85 and above was female.

The elderly are vulnerable on several fronts. Many have reduced income with retirement – surviving spouses even more so. Isolation is a concern and often undetected. Access to amenities and services is more difficult and made more so because many seniors should not or cannot drive. There is an increased burden on the system of services, on family and on friends for caregiving. Many seniors live alone (8.1%), and below the poverty line (8.7%). They are also more likely to experience housing cost burden as 67.4% of seniors 65 and older have a gross rent that is 30% or more of their household income versus those age 64 and younger (54.3%). Single, elderly households are even more likely to experience housing cost burden as 94% of single elderly renter households across Lakewood and Tacoma experience cost burden and earn less than 80% AMI.

Race and Ethnicity

Lakewood and Tacoma are diverse cities, substantially more so than Pierce County and Washington. The largest racial minority (single race) according to 2017 ACS data was Black or African American in both cities, followed by Asian. In terms of ethnicity, 16.1% of the population in Lakewood identified themselves as Hispanic. Combining race and ethnicity so that “racial and ethnic minority” is defined as Hispanic and/or a race other than white alone (single race), 49.2% of the population in Lakewood (as of the 2017 ACS) was minority. This definition was used in determining disproportionate concentrations of minority populations.

² OFM 2018 Population Postcensal estimates

Table 4: Race and Ethnicity 2017

Race/Ethnicity Classification	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Race*				
White	67.3%	73.1%	80.5%	81.6%
Black/African American	16.1%	14.6%	9.9%	5.3%
AK Native/American Indian	4.8%	3.3%	3.2%	3.0%
Asian	13%	11.7%	9.3%	10.3%
Other race alone**	10.5%	6.9	2.3	5.9
Two or more races	10.3%	8.5%	7.7%	5.5%
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	16.1%	11.6%	9%	12.3%
Non-Hispanic	83.9%	88.4%	89.6%	87.7%
Race/ethnicity combined				
Minority****	49.2%	39.7%	32%	30.2%
Non-Hispanic white alone	50.8%	60.3%	68%	69.8%

*Race alone; may be Hispanic, **Includes 'Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander' and 'some other race'
 May be of any race *Hispanic and/or race other than white alone

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Disproportionate Concentrations of Minority Populations (NA30)

Defining “minority” as Hispanic and/or race other than white alone, 49.2% of the population in Lakewood and 39.7% of the population in Tacoma in 2017 was minority. Areas of disproportionate concentration are those in which there is a greater than 10% difference than the jurisdiction as a whole. Block groups in Lakewood in which 57% or more of the population was minority were considered to have disproportionate concentrations. That was the case in ten block groups³. Most block groups with disproportionate concentrations of minority populations in Lakewood were found along the Pacific Highway. This included most of the Pacific Neighborhood, a portion of the Lakeview Neighborhood between Lakeview Avenue and Bridgeport Way SW, and sections of the Northeast Lakewood Neighborhood. In relation to the total population of Lakewood, 21% live in block groups that have a disproportionate share of minority population.

³ Census.

Households

Lakewood is uniquely positioned in that while it has the smallest percentage of male householders (4%) it also has the largest percentage of female householders (13.6%) and the largest percentage of householders living alone (34.8%) when compared to Tacoma, Pierce County and the state as a whole.

Table 5: Households 2017

Type of Household	Lakewood		Tacoma		County		Washington	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Total households	24,129		82,016		312,839		2,755,697	
Family households	14,198	58.8%	46,158	56.6%	208,065	66.5%	1,782,539	64.7%
Male householder*	1,015	4%	4,389	5.4%	15,085	4.8%	125,165	4.5%
Female householder*	3283	13.6%	10,172	12.4%	36,421	11.6%	275,455	10%
Nonfamily households	9,931	41.2%	35,588	43.4%	104,774	33.5%	973,158	35.3%
Householder living alone	8394	34.8%	28,034	34.2%	82,727	26.4%	745,842	27.1%
Average household size**	2.59		2.66		2.73		2.64	

Notes: All percentages shown are of total households including owner and renter occupied. Same sex couples without related children or other related family members are included in non-family households.

*No spouse present **owner occupied units

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Populations with Special Needs

Persons with Mental or Physical Disabilities

The 2017 ACS estimated that 17% of Lakewood's population between the ages of 18 and 64 had a disability, as did 6% of those under the age of 18.

Table 6: Populations with Disabilities

Age Group	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Under 18	6%	4%	4%	4%
18 to 64	17%	14%	12%	11%
65 or older	39%	42%	38%	36%

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

The 2014 Analysis of Impediments report identified the needs for persons with disabilities as including but not limited to: family support, caregiver support, accessibility and affordable housing. This continues to be the case as the population ages and self-sufficiency becomes more

challenging. In addition, the 2019 Washington State Social and Health Services Client Survey reveals that while many clients say it is easier to get services than in years past (83%), there continue to be low ratings when it comes to knowing what services are available. Many clients express a desire for shorter wait times, a faster application process to access services and more individualized services.

When it comes to psychological disabilities, in a 2019 study by Mental Health America, Washington State was rated among the highest in prevalence of mental illness (48) and in the middle (25) when it came to access to care, a slight improvement over 2014 data. Washington achieved an overall ranking of 46 (out of 51) for adults and 43 out of 51 for youth. The state also ranked 45th when it came to the percentage of adults (5.06%) with serious thoughts of suicide; a disturbing figure that parallels increases in adult and youth suicidal ideation at the national level⁴.

Pierce County is designated as an Accountable Community of Health (ACH), a health system that takes a regional approach to integrating community services, social services and public health and is one of nine in the state. Their 2018 annual participant survey⁵ reveals that while the ACH has a strong organizational function and governance, areas of improvement include public participation and effective communication with the broader community. Overall, survey respondents felt the ACH was making a positive impact on health transformation. The intended impact of the ACH is to have health improvements that are measurable and scaled, and to improve health care cost, quality and access.

Domestic Violence

Data on the actual occurrence of domestic violence are remarkably limited. Certainly violence in the home and in relationships cuts across societal measures – income, occupation, race, and ethnicity. Statistics are limited to some extent by the sources of data. National crime databases show reported incidences, those to which police respond – both men and women can be charged in a single incidence.

The National Network to End Domestic Violence reports on violence from another perspective – those seeking help from agencies. This is a snapshot of the more vulnerable – those who experience barriers in escaping violence such as lack of income, lack of personal esteem, immigrant status, absence of family or peer support.

In 2018, the National Domestic Violence Hotline documented 5,977 contacts from Washington, ranking the state 8th for contact volume. The largest percentage of callers were between the ages of 25 and 36 (40.7%), White (61.7%) and experiencing emotional and/or verbal abuse (95%) and physical abuse (65%). Callers to the hotline most frequently requested legal advocacy (32.2%)

⁴ The State of Mental Health in America 2019 Report.

⁵ ACH Participant Survey 2018. Center for Community Health and Evaluation January 2019.

and DV shelter (24.5%). Lakewood was not in the top 10 cities for contact volume; however, nearby Tacoma, ranked 2nd, accounting for 7.9% of calls received from the state.

The Crystal Judson Center, which connects survivors of domestic violence to appropriate resources, recorded 2,319 survivor visits in 2017 and answered another 6,850 calls to the hotline. In addition, the Pierce County Sheriff's Domestic Violence Unit provided investigation and follow-up on 3,643 domestic violence reports. The Prosecuting Attorney Victim Witness Advocates provided support and education to 868 victims in criminal proceedings.⁶

The City of Tacoma Community Needs Assessment reported Twenty-eight percent (28%) of homeless individuals included in the Pierce County PIT experienced domestic violence.

Gaps in services interfere with victims making successful safe transitions from violence. That successful transition is met with multiple barriers – lack of affordable housing, lack of legal representation (including with family law), finding suitable employment, and recovering from abuse. While victims of domestic violence are protected from discrimination, the presence of protective orders alone can persuade landlords against renting. Many victims have mental health and/or substance abuse problems, lack basic training for jobs, cannot find childcare, and cannot afford transportation. Some victims who are immigrants are further victimized because documentation is tied to the abuser. LGBT victims are better served, but not perfectly. The system is designed for the mainstream population and transgender clients may have problems.

The Domestic Violence Housing First Approach⁷ is one of many strategies intended to help - by focusing on getting domestic violence survivors into stable housing, and then providing them with the resources necessary to rebuild their lives. Key components of the national model include financial flexibility, mobile, trauma-informed and survivor-driven care and community engagement.⁸ Lakewood could benefit from adopting a similar model in the future.

Economy and Employment

Over the past two decades, the economic base in Pierce County has shifted along with that in the Puget Sound region. Manufacturing jobs, once the mainstay of good paying positions, have declined and are in line to be replaced with a stronger service and retail economy. Lakewood is looking for opportunities to expand local economic opportunities, including manufacturing. Industries employing the most civilians include education, services, and health care, followed by retail trade.

Joint Base Lewis-McChord is the single largest employer in Pierce County. Many of the jobs on base, however, are occupied by military dependents and not held by persons without a military

⁶ Crystal Judson Center 2017 Annual Report.

⁷ What We Are Learning: Domestic Violence Housing First Extended Report.

attachment. There is concern about reduction in troops and, if that should occur, the effect on local employment is as yet unknown. Education, government and health care are clearly major employers in the County.

Commuting to Work

Puget Sound is a regional economy. People make choices about where to live and work based on several factors including jobs, the cost of housing, and the reasonableness of commuting. The average worker in Washington commutes about a half hour between home and work, which is true in Lakewood. Most of Lakewood residents who work commute to jobs outside of Lakewood – roughly 78% work outside of the City. This is not surprising given Lakewood’s history as a largely residential community.

Table 7: Work Location

	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Mean travel time (in minutes)	28.1	28.1	31.2	27.1
Work in place of residence*	21.8%	44.2%	21.8%	30.8%
Work outside place of residence	78.2%	55.8%	73.4%	53.6%
Not living in a place			4.8%	15.6%

*Place refers to an incorporated city or town or otherwise census-designated place.

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

According to the Center for Neighborhood Technology, which looks at housing and transportation costs at the neighborhood level, the average combined housing and transportation cost as a percentage of income is lower in Lakewood at 39% (21% housing/18% transportation), compared to 41% for Tacoma (23% housing/18% transportation), and 45% for Pierce County⁹ (25% housing/20% transportation).

Measures of Income

Median household and median family income in Lakewood were lower than in Pierce County and Washington. Median earnings for males working full-time, year-around was about 16% higher than that for female workers working full-time, year-around in Lakewood. This may be the result of occupations selected by or available to women based on training or preference. Median income from earnings for all workers in Lakewood was \$28,944 – well below the median for full-time workers. This suggests that a substantial share of workers were employed part-time or for part of the year.

Table 8: Measures of Income Past 12 Months

⁹ Center for Neighborhood Technology. H&T Affordability Index

Income Measures*	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Median household	\$47,636	\$55,506	\$63,881	\$66,174
Median family	\$58,266	\$68,820	\$76,671	\$80,233
Median earnings male**	\$42,160	\$50,179	\$53,604	\$58,374
Median earnings female**	\$36,333	\$42,418	\$43,063	\$45,206
Median earnings workers	\$28,944	\$33,931	\$36,342	\$36,286
Per capita	\$26,982	\$29,420	\$31,157	\$34,869

*Income in the last 12 months; 2013 inflation-adjusted dollars

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Median household income was not the same for all households. Considering household income by race and ethnicity of the head of household, there are clear differences, even allowing for margins of error associated with sampling for the American Community Survey.

Table 9: Median Household Income by Race/Ethnicity of Householder*

Race/Ethnicity	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
White, non-Hispanic	\$50,789	\$59,017	\$62,457	\$67,533
Black/African American	\$36,282	\$43,278	\$51,746	\$47,057
Hispanic	\$38,353	\$47,778	\$51,341	\$49,521

*Income in the last 12 months; 2017 inflation-adjusted dollars; race is a single race; Hispanic may be of any race.

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Table 10: Range of Household Income Past 12 Months

Range*	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Less than \$15,000	14.1%	13.6%	9.3%	9.3%
\$15,000 to \$24,999	12.4%	9.6%	7.6%	7.9%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	26.2%	22.1%	21.2%	20.5%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	19%	19.5%	20%	18.1%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	11.1%	13.8%	16.5%	16.4%
\$100,000 or more	17.2%	22%	27.5%	30.80%

*Income in the last 12 months; 2017 inflation-adjusted dollars

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Low-Moderate Income Areas

Low-moderate income block groups are those in which 51% or more of the population lives in households with incomes below 80% of Area Median Income (AMI). The latest HUD

tabulations (2014 using 2006-2010 ACS data) showed 27 qualifying block groups in Lakewood. In Lakewood the qualifying areas are found primarily in Tillicum/Woodbrook, and north and south along I-5 in East Lakewood¹⁰.

Poverty

Poverty is a measure of extremely low income and does not suggest that people living above poverty have enough money to meet their needs. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the poverty threshold in 2018¹¹ for a family of three with two related children under the age of 18 was \$20,231. For a single person under 65 years of age the threshold was \$13,064 and for a single person 65 and older \$12,043.

In Lakewood, 19.3% of the population lived in poverty, a significantly higher percentage than in the County or state (both at 12.2%). A greater share of children under the age of 18 lived in poverty than was true of the general population – 31.7% in Lakewood. Female householders (with no husband present) with children were often living in poverty (46.3% in Lakewood were). However, these numbers have improved since 2010.

Table 11: Percent of Population Living in Poverty in Past 12 Months

Population/Household	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Individuals (all)	19.3%	17%	12.2%	12.2%
Under 18	31.7%	21.7%	16.1%	15.8%
18 and older	16%	15.7%	11%	11.2%
65 and older	8.7%	12.6%	7.1%	7.9%
Families	15%	12.2%	8.3%	8%
With related children <18	27.7%	18.8%	13.3%	12.8%
With related children <5	27.3%	17.4%	12.8%	12.3%
Owner Occupied	6.7	3.7	3.5	3.6
Renter Occupied	24.2	25.5	18.6	19.1
Female householder (family)*	36.4%	30.8%	25.7%	25.6%
With related children <18	46.3%	42%	33.6%	34.4%
With related children <5	43.2%	57.4%	39%	37.4%
Owner Occupied	16.8	11.7	12.8	12.4
Renter Occupied	44.8	44.4	36.1	36.8

*No husband present

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

¹⁰ US Census.

¹¹ US Census: Poverty Thresholds for 2018 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years

Housing

Number and Types of Housing Units

In Lakewood, 47.8% of housing consists of single family detached units. Small multifamily units (from two to 19 units) accounted for about 32% of housing as of the 2017 ACS. In terms of land use in Lakewood, areas of highest population density are located along I-5 and in north Lakewood in areas containing multifamily housing. Least populated areas are residential areas around the lakes in central Lakewood, which also correspond to the more affluent neighborhoods. Lakewood is the 20th most populated city in Washington (2019 OFM estimates) and is ranked 49th in terms of density (~2,983 persons per square mile).

According to American Community Survey estimates (2017) about 5% of housing in Lakewood was mobile homes. Mobile homes can be an affordable housing option for low income households; however, older poorly maintained units remain a problem. The deteriorating condition of mobile homes in Lakewood remains a concern. Several of the parks are in areas zoned commercial, such as those along Pacific Highway Southwest. As property values increase, there will be corresponding pressure to consolidate properties and redevelop. The antiquated condition of many mobile homes will prevent relocation.

Table 12: Residential Properties

Property Type	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Total units	26,453	89,453	339,302	
1-unit detached structure	47.8%	62.2%	65.1%	63.4%
1-unit attached structure	6%	3.2%	4.7%	3.8%
2-4 units	11.1%	7.7%	6.8%	6.1%
5-19 units	21.2%	13.2%	10.7%	9.7%
20 or more units	8.9%	13.3%	6.7%	10.2%
Mobile home, boat, RV, etc.*	5%	0.4%	5.9%	6.6%

Source: OFM estimated total units (April 2019); 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates (types of units)

As of December 2019, there were 305 units of multifamily housing and 209 single family units of planned development in Lakewood. The City is working with developers and builders to take advantage of land in Lakewood to provide infill throughout the City as well as developing in new areas where zoning allows. Toward this end, the City has identified unused or underutilized land in all neighborhoods. Not only does this provide needed housing but it is consistent with the policy of raising housing quality. There are several areas in Lakewood with rundown properties and with vacant or abandoned units. Where they exist, these conditions make the neighborhood unsafe and depress property values. Encouraging new development, including higher end development, can revitalize neighborhoods and contribute to the tax base and the overall economy as well as increasing opportunities.

Tenure

More than half (51.6%) of housing units in Lakewood were occupied by renters, significantly higher than that of Pierce County or Washington. While the majority of single-family units were owner-occupied and the majority of multifamily units were renter-occupied, a large share of single family units were renter occupied. That was true of 28.5% of single family houses in Lakewood.

Table 13: Percent of Population in Occupied Units by Tenure

Property Type	Lakewood		Tacoma		County		Washington	
	Owners	Renters	Owners	Renters	Owners	Renters	Owners	Renters
All units	48.4%	51.6%	54.6%	45.4%	63.3%	36.7%	64.8%	35.2%
Single family*	90%	28.5%	97%	49.4%	91.8%	48.6%	90.0%	43.3%
2-4 units	.5%	19.3%	.6%	12.5%	.5%	14.9%	0.9%	14.1%
5 or more units	1.4%	47.2%	1.9%	37.5%	.9%	66.5%	2.1%	37.4%
Mobile homes, other	8.1%	4.9%	.3%	.5%	6.7%	27.9%	6.9%	5.2%

*Detached and attached

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

Another factor that has a direct bearing on housing type and cost in Lakewood is the presence of the neighboring military base. While regional housing market fluctuations impact housing rent levels and sales prices in Lakewood, the large adjacent military base plays an important role in defining the City's unique housing market. Some housing stock is oriented to accommodate the relatively transient needs of military families. The private sector has responded to the significant demand for off-base housing by building numerous apartments.

Housing Costs and Affordability

Table 14: Cost of Housing

Owner/Renter	Lakewood	Tacoma	County	Washington
Median home value*	\$232,600	\$227,200	\$255,800	\$286,800
Median monthly owner cost with mortgage	\$1,674	\$1,639	\$1,748	\$1,763
Median monthly owner cost without mortgage	\$578	\$605	\$574	\$539
Median gross rent	\$926	\$1,015	\$1,116	\$1,112

*Owner estimates

Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

While home values and rent continue to increase, they remain lower in Lakewood, when compared to Tacoma, Pierce County and the state. Disturbing however, is the percentage of households with a mortgage¹² that have a gross rent that is more than 35% of their income. In Lakewood, this is the case for 46.4% of households which is more than double the percentage of households in the county (23.1%) and state (22.5%) and higher than Tacoma (42.5%).

Housing costs are out of reach for many households in Pierce County (and Lakewood). For example, a household with a single wage earner at \$15 an hour would not be able to afford a unit priced at \$820 (the median rent in Lakewood) – housing would be affordable to that individual at \$780. Without (and even with) a subsidy, many households with lowest incomes must compete for housing in their price range, settle for units in poor condition, live in overcrowded circumstances, or live in areas with less access to opportunities (employment, education and amenities).

The 2015 State of Washington Housing Needs Assessment points to rising costs of housing in Washington between 2000 and 2012 (in constant dollars)¹³. The median gross rent between 2000 and 2012 rose from \$663 to \$951. The increase, if due to inflation alone, would have resulted in a median gross rent of \$884 in 2012 and \$943 in 2017. However, in 2017 the median gross rent for Washington was \$1,120¹⁴.

Puget Sound continues to experience rapid rent increases across the region. Not only have rents increased overall, the percent of units in lower ranges have dropped in proportion to higher costing units. For example, in 2000 about 15% of units had a gross rent of \$1,000 or more and by 2012 45% of units had a gross rent of \$1,000 or more. In 2017, roughly 60% of units in Pierce County had a gross rent of \$1,000 or more compared to Lakewood which had nearly 42%.

Similarly the median owner-estimated values of owner-occupied units in Washington rose from \$168,300 in 2000 to \$272,900 in 2012 which was an inflation adjusted increase of about 22%. However, from 2012 to 2017, that rate slowed. With inflation, the 2012 price would have been \$291,190 in 2017 yet it was \$286,800.

The gap in affordability is particularly severe among lowest income households. The gap is determined by comparing levels of household income with available housing affordable at that income range, which includes vacant units and housing actually occupied by households with incomes in the matching range. Housing is not allocated by need, unless housing is held specifically for qualifying households (both in terms of ability to pay and household composition), such as most subsidized housing. Instead, many lower cost units (owned or rented) are occupied by households with higher incomes, better credit, and fewer needs. Many of the

¹² 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

¹³ Mullin & Lonergan Associates. (2015). State of Washington Housing Needs Assessment, January 2015. Affordable Housing Advisory Board.

¹⁴ 2013-2017 ACS 5-Year Estimates

lowest income households have barriers that limit choices, such as poor credit histories and criminal histories.

Barriers to Affordable Housing

The Growth Management Act in Washington requires making affordable housing available to all residents. Regional policies included in Vision 2040 call for provision and preservation of a range of housing options, including both rental and purchase; a particular focus on lower-income households and households with special needs; and, equitable and rational distribution of housing throughout the community. Policies recognize that there is jobs-housing balance so workers have opportunities to live in proximity to work. Planning around regional growth centers promotes increased density and coordinated support for multimodal transportation, infrastructure and services.

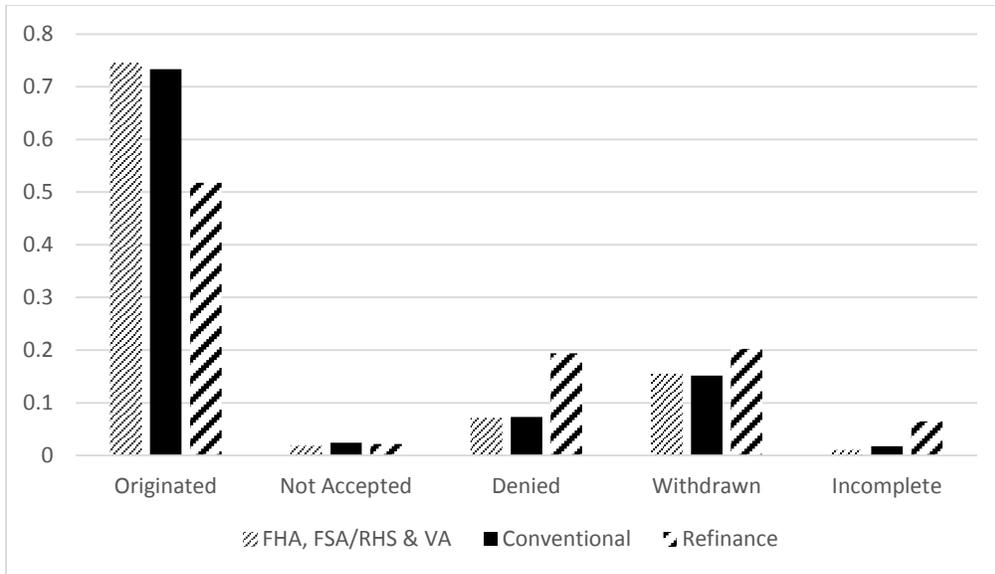
Lack of affordable housing is a pressing problem in Lakewood. The barriers to providing new affordable housing and retaining existing units in Lakewood, as in other substantially developed cities, are the results of a combination of factors: low household income relative to rising housing costs (particularly for homeownership); housing demand fluctuating with the economy in the Puget Sound region including changes in troop levels at nearby JBLM; lack of sufficient stable, living wage jobs in Tacoma and Lakewood; lack of vacant land with infrastructure in place for development; high cost of labor and materials; and, lack of economic incentives for private market investment in redevelopment or new development.

Market perception also prevents development in some neighborhoods because potential investors and even residents perceive a neighborhood as dangerous due to crime, poor investment for short-term profit, and/or continued deterioration. Lakewood has focused on crime-free neighborhoods, code enforcement and removal of blight in troubled neighborhoods. Lakewood is committed to investing in infrastructure and public facilities to invigorate neighborhoods and create incentives for housing and other development. The City is also committed to creating vibrant and healthy neighborhoods with housing choices for all residents.

Housing Sales and Financing

Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA)

Figure 1: Disposition of Applications 2018, Tacoma Lakewood MSA/MD

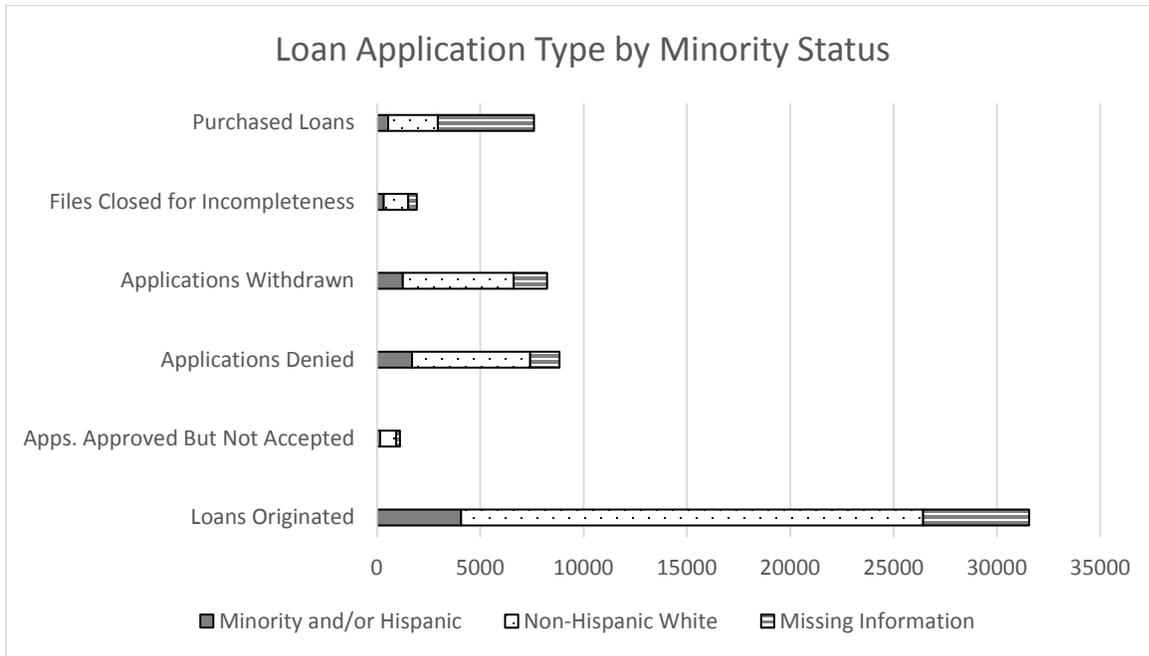


Source: FFIEC. 2018 Home Mortgage Disclosure Report, Aggregate Report. (www.ffiec.gov)

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) prepares and distributes aggregate reports on behalf of the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, Federal Reserve Board, National Credit Union Administration, Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, Office of Thrift Supervision, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development. Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) data cover home purchases and home improvement loans, including information on race, ethnicity, gender and income of applicants, which allows an analysis of lending nationally and at the local level. Disposition of loan applications is shown in Figure 1. In addition to applications resulting in a loan origination or denial, they can be refused or withdrawn by the applicant, or left uncompleted.

Figure 2 shows applications by loan type by minority status. Note that missing information is significant in the data. Keeping in mind that limitation, however, it is useful to examine applications by minority status. Applications from minority and/or Hispanic applicants were not proportionate to the share of racial minorities and/or Hispanics found in the population (2017 ACS). There are more applications from minority and/or Hispanic applicants for FHA, VA, FSA/RHS loans than for conventional and refinance loans which suggests more support in these avenues for home financing with lower down payment and closing requirements, along with guarantees with government-backed loans.

Figure 2: Loan Applications by Minority Status 2018, Tacoma Lakewood MSA/MD



Source: FFIEC. 2018 Home Mortgage Disclosure Report, Aggregate Report. (www.ffiec.gov)

Table 16 shows applications that resulted in loan originations and the percent denied by type of institution and race, ethnicity, gender and income of applicants. These were aggregated for the Tacoma Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA) (including Lakewood) by FFIEC and include data from 203 financial institutions with a home or branch office in the Tacoma MSA and 252 financial institutions that do not have a home or branch office in the Tacoma MSA.

Table 16¹⁵: 2018 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) Aggregate Report

Disposition of Applications by Race/Ethnicity, Income and Gender of Applicant, Tacoma-Lakewood MSA/MD

Applicant Demographic	N*	Originations	Denied
By Ethnicity			
Hispanic or Latino	2162	70%	27%
Not Hispanic or Latino	33156	76%	21%
<i>Missing Information</i>	6964		
By Race			

¹⁵ Source: FFIEC. 2018 Home Mortgage Disclosure Report, Aggregate Report. (www.ffiec.gov)

American Indian or Alaska Native	372	70%	27%
Asian	2516	71%	27%
Black or African American	2266	67%	30%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	463	64%	34%
White	28307	78%	20%
2 or more minority races	195	72%	28%
Joint	1938	79%	19%
<i>Missing Information</i>	6236		
By Gender			
Male	11676	74%	26%
Female	7468	75%	25%
<i>Missing Information</i>	3756		
By Income			
Under 50% of MSA/MD Median	2643	48%	37%
50%-79% of MSA/MD Median	6927	71%	21%
80%-99% of MSA/MD Median	3497	76%	17%
100%-119% of MSA/MD Median	9215	78%	15%
120% plus of MSA/MD Median	20020	81%	13%
Total Applications	42302	76%	28%

Notes: Applications for home-purchase loans 1-4 family and manufactured homes.

*Includes applications originated, approved but not accepted and denied. Does not include applications withdrawn or incomplete.

As with previous years, The HMDA information on loan originations and denials in the table did not capture the information on race or ethnicity with the same exactness the census strives to achieve. In fact, data on race was missing altogether on almost 17,000 loan applications included in these tables. Furthermore, for 2018, less information was available across types of loan applications for Race, Gender and Income so it is unclear if lending patterns exist depending on the type of loan (FHA, conventional, refinance, etc.) While there have been improvements, drawing conclusions one way or another with substantial missing data is not recommended.

The HMDA data are useful in identifying possible discrepancies in loans. Review of 2018 Home Mortgage Disclosure Act (HMDA) aggregate reports for the Tacoma MSA does demonstrate that Black/African American, Hispanic and other minority applicants are relatively less successful than white applicants in obtaining certain types of mortgage financing. Non-Hispanic or Latino applicants were more likely (76%) than Hispanic or Latino applicants (70%) to have their loan application approved and/or result in an origination. White applicants were the most likely to have their loan approved (78%) whereas Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (64%) were the least likely to be approved. The information did not provide enough data to determine if this was due to a consistent pattern of discrimination or if there are other factors affecting decisions. Lenders consider many factors in rating loans, such as debt to income ratio, employment history, credit history, collateral and cash on hand. Additional research is required to determine the real cause of differences observed in these tables.

Unlike the previous Analysis of Impediments HMDA data analysis, Table 16 in this report does not aggregate smaller racial categories, so as to better understand the barriers facing specific populations to ensure a more tailored public policy approach. There is continued opportunity to work with lenders, consumers, and consumer advocates about discrimination in lending and about reducing disparities that might be found. There are programs and advocates in Lakewood and Tacoma working with households to repair credit, adopt healthier financial habits and prepare for homeownership with education and financial assistance.

Predatory Lending

Access to loans is not the only consideration in a review of lending practices. Unscrupulous practices by predatory lenders, appraisers, mortgage brokers and home improvement contractors can be very damaging. Low-income households and those with limited previous access to loans are particularly at risk.

Examples of predatory lending include¹⁶:

- Falsification of appraisals to sell properties for more than they are worth.
- Encouraging borrowers to lie about income or assets to get a loan.
- Knowingly lending more money than borrowers can pay.
- Charging higher interest than is warranted by credit history.
- Charging unnecessary fees.
- Pressuring borrowers to accept higher-risk loans such as balloon loans, interest-only payments and steep pre-payment penalties.
- Targeting vulnerable people for cash-out refinancing.
- Convincing people to refinance over and over again when there is no benefit to the borrower.

¹⁶ HUD publication “Don’t Be A Victim of Loan Fraud: Protect Yourself from Predatory Lenders.”

In addition, rent-a-bank schemes allow out of state banks to rent the charter of an in-state bank and bypass state protections for consumers. According to the Center for Responsible Lending, FinWise Bank, for example, is renting its charter to enable OppLoans¹⁷, who offers interests rates of 160% APR, whereas the state cap is 35% on installment loans.

Community Reinvestment Act

The Community Reinvestment Act (CRA) was enacted by Congress in 1977 to encourage depository institutions to help meet the credit needs of the communities in which they operate, including low and moderate income neighborhoods. The CRA requires supervisory agencies to assess performance periodically. The four federal bank supervisory agencies are: the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System (FRB), Office of Thrift Supervision (OTS), and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC). Performance is evaluated in terms of the institution (capacity, constraints and business strategies), the community (demographic and economic data, lending, investment, and service opportunities), and competitors and peers. Ratings assigned are: outstanding, satisfactory, needs to improve, and substantial noncompliance.

Table 17: FFIEC Interagency Community Reinvestment Act Recent Ratings (as of 2019)

Bank Name	City	Date	Agency	Rating	Assets (x1,000)	Exam Method
Northwest Commercial	Lakewood	2010	FDIC	Satisfactory	\$83,047	Small bank

*Not reported.

Source: Interagency CRA ratings, www.ffiec.gov.

Table 17 shows banks rated between 2005 and 2019 in Lakewood. The Northwest Commercial Bank received a satisfactory rating in 2010. To the extent that the City of Lakewood requires competition for the deposit of public funds, CRA performance merits consideration as a variable in which banks are selected for the deposit of municipal funds.

Fair Housing Complaints

The Department of Housing and Urban Development has the responsibility to enforce the Fair Housing Act. Complaints that are filed may be investigated directly by HUD or may be investigated and processed by the Washington State Human Rights Commission, which receives reimbursement from HUD under the Fair Housing Assistance Program (FHAP). The Washington State Human Rights Commission has separate jurisdiction over claims of discrimination covered under State law, but not covered under federal law.

¹⁷ <https://www.opploans.com/rates-and-terms/#washington>

The Fair Housing Center of Washington is a private fair housing agency that receives funding under the Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) to provide education at the local level to the housing industry and potential victims of housing discrimination. Private fair housing organizations, including the Fair Housing Center of Washington, may also assist complainants in preparing and filing complaints.

After a complaint is filed, it is normally investigated to determine whether there is reasonable cause to believe the Fair Housing Act has been violated. HUD will also try to help conciliate the complaint and resolve the issue before taking it further. If conciliation is not reached and there is reasonable cause, the complaint goes before an Administrative Law Judge to be heard. The Administrative Law Judge can order relief, and award damages, attorney's fees, and costs. Either the respondent or complainant may choose to have the case decided in Federal District Court.

National Trends

In the annual report on fair housing (Defending against unprecedented attacks on fair housing: 2019 Fair Housing Trends Report) prepared by the National Fair Housing Alliance (NFHA), it is evident that alleged fair housing violations are on the rise, and up eight percent, from 2017 to 2018, the highest increase reported by NFHA since 1995. As a result, private Fair Housing agencies across the nation, like the Washington State Human Rights Commission and Fair Housing Center of Washington, continue to process more complaints than all government agencies combined.

There were a total of 31,202 complaints reported in 2018, up from 27,528 complaints in 2014. More than half of all complaints nationally were on the basis of disability (51%), followed by race (17%) and familial status (8%). Disability is the most easily detected basis of discrimination and, therefore, most often reported. Other forms may be harder to detect. Complicating detection is reluctance on the part of many to risk disclosure fearing retaliation or other consequences. Hate crimes were also up 14.7% from 2017 – 2018. The majority of complaints were from rental transactions (83.4%). The report notes that sexual harassment has also increased as a result of landlords using the limited supply of housing as leverage to sexually intimidate and harass tenants.

Lakewood Fair Housing Complaints

Complaints Filed with the Washington State Human Rights Commission

As noted in the previous Analysis of Impediments (2014) The Commission reported that there were no complaints filed between 2009 and the end of 2014 pertaining to Lakewood. However, between 2015 and 2018, the Commission reported nine cases from Lakewood, alleging:

- Failure to Grant Reasonable Accommodation (1 case)
- Refusal to rent (6 cases)
- Terms & Conditions (7 cases)
- Harassment (1 case)

Of the nine cases: five were closed with no reasonable cause, two reached a pre-finding settlement, one was conciliated and one was withdrawn.

Cases from the Fair Housing Center of Washington

The Fair Housing Center of Washington, which often facilitates the complaint filing process, received a total of 113 allegations of fair housing discrimination taking place in Lakewood between 2014 and 2018. The number of allegations by protected classes are as follows:

- Disability (77)
- Race (9)
- Sex (6)
- National Origin (4)
- Familial Status (5)
- More than 1 protected class (12)

When an allegation has substantial evidence and previous attempts to resolve the situation have been unsuccessful, the client may choose to file a complaint. Between 2014 and 2018 the Fair Housing Center of Washington filed 11 complaints on behalf of clients¹⁸ in Lakewood. Of these, seven (7) were settled, three (3) were reasonable cause, and one (1) was administratively closed.

Housing Rentals

Reported incidents of discrimination most frequently occur in housing rentals. Lack of awareness on the part of renters, along with reluctance to report problems, adds to problems. As noted in the Tacoma Lakewood Consortium Consolidated Plan 2015-2019, households with lowest incomes, without subsidy or other support, have fewer choices in housing, may live in over-crowded or substandard conditions, and are likely cost-burdened. Many households are paying more than half of their income for housing.

Noted in the previous Analysis of Impediments, and repeated in outreach for the recent Consolidated Plan, there are vulnerabilities in addition to income. Persons with barriers resulting from poor rental histories, poor credit, past involvement with the criminal justice system, disabilities such as mental health problems, and past substance use or abuse may be at a disadvantage in securing housing. To the extent that any of these individuals are members of protected classes, they may be more likely to experience discrimination and less likely to raise the issue. Several stakeholders contributing to the 2015-2019 Consolidated Plan noted that minority tenants were vulnerable to rental discrimination. This was especially the case with illegal immigrants and legal immigrants with limited English. Housing uncertainty (not wanting to be evicted and having little available funding to secure another unit) can be a disincentive to filing a complaint or even raising an issue about health and safety concerns in a rental unit. Some

¹⁸ More than 20 allegations had substantial evidence but may have not resulted in a complaint if the client chose not to file or did not follow through with paperwork.

renters may be reluctant to speak up for fear of retaliation, including retaliatory eviction, or because of fear of legal recriminations (particularly true of people without proper immigration or citizenship documents).

Rising housing costs and lower average incomes associated with job expansion in the service sector in recent years can increase the burden on low-income renters, who are disproportionately minority households. Loss of federal support for housing assistance, including Housing Choice Vouchers, adds to this pressure and can potentially silence complaints.

Testing

Evidence of discrimination and impediments can be obtained from testing results. The Fair Housing Center of Washington conducts both audit and complaint-based testing. Generally a test consists of two people visiting the same location, one a member of a legally protected class and the other a non-protected class. Examples of the types of behavior that might indicate discrimination include:

- Presenting different information to two prospective tenants, one representing a protected class. For example, telling the protected class tester that the rent or deposit was higher than the information provided to the non-protected class tester.
- Providing differential treatment, such as offering more services or help to the non-protected class tester.
- Showing different units, including showing a disabled tester an inaccessible unit and offering the non-disabled tester more than one unit, including an accessible unit.
- Imposing different fees and background checks, including criminal history check on the protected class tester and not imposing the requirement on the non-protected class tester.

Between 2014 and 2018 the Fair Housing Center of Washington conducted 31 tests within the city of Lakewood. Of these tests, which were conducted on-site, via phone and by email, 17 (56%) were positive for elements of discrimination. The number of positive tests broken down by protected classes are as follows:

- Disability (9 – 1 site/ 8 phone)
- Race (6 – site)
- Familial Status (2 – site)
- National Origin (1 - site)

As part of the testing settlement with SHAG (a property management company with multiple properties throughout the state, including Lakewood), the Fair Housing Center of Washington received \$80,000. In addition, the defendants were ordered to attend Fair Housing training, provide public fair housing presentations, and undergo a policy review and follow up testing for 2 years.

Public Policies and Administrative Actions

Statewide

At the state level, a number of bills were passed in 2019¹⁹, many of which provide additional protections for those facing barriers to housing, including but not limited to:

- **Improving criminal & civil responses to domestic violence ([HB 1517](#))** Passed legislature **4/12/2019** – *This bill makes a number of reforms to WA’s criminal and civil justice responses to domestic violence (DV), drawn in large part from recommendations of the work group created by HB 1163 (2017) including: ordering evaluation of new regulations (WACs) on DV perpetrator treatment; directs Washington State University to develop a DV risk assessment tool; expands the availability of sentencing alternatives and deferred prosecution in DV cases; and, reconvenes the DV work group created by HB 1163 to evaluate current mandatory arrest law and possible alternatives.*
- **Legal services for address confidentiality property acquisition ([HB 1643](#))** Passed legislature **4/10/2019** – *This bill requires the Secretary of State, which runs the state Address Confidentiality Program (ACP), to contract with a legal services provider to assist ACP participants including survivors of domestic violence with real property acquisitions in a manner that does not disclose their address as public record. Privacy and confidentiality are critical issues for survivors of domestic violence, when privacy is compromised safety is also compromised, and this can lead to re-victimization. Currently, the ACP program is unable to protect the addresses of survivors who acquire real estate, such as new homes.*
- **Emergency assistance for those in the sex trade ([HB 1382](#))** Passed legislature **4/12/2019** – *This bill provides immunity from prosecution for the crime of Prostitution, if the evidence for the charge was obtained as a result of a person seeking emergency assistance in certain circumstances. This bill is substantially similar to HB 2361 (2018).*

Lakewood

The Six-Year Comprehensive Transportation Program (2015-2020) contains projects totaling \$120 million over the next five years. Included are roads and sidewalks connecting neighborhoods and linking them to amenities and services, many of which are poorly or not at all connected. Additionally, the City is reviewing land use plans and maps to identify developable parcels and lots that are appropriate for infill housing. The City has long supported projects that improve housing and allow residents to remain safely in their homes while supporting neighborhood revitalization.

In August 2016, the Lakewood City Council enacted Ordinance 644, creating a rental housing safety program to “protect the public health, safety, and welfare of Lakewood residents by

¹⁹ Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence 2019 Legislative session summary.

encouraging the proper maintenance of residential rental housing, by identifying and requiring correction of substandard housing conditions, and by preventing conditions of deterioration and blight that could adversely impact the quality of life in Lakewood.” As minority, elderly and low-income households disproportionately inhabit housing suffering substandard or unsafe conditions, it is the intent of the rental housing safety program to ensure equal access to safe and decent rental properties for all Lakewood residents.

The City of Lakewood’s goal is to achieve for Lakewood residents, regardless of their age, sex, national origin, race or color, religion, marital status, familial status or disability, the opportunity to live in safe, healthful and affordable housing within a suitable environment.

Previously Identified Barriers

Two areas of impediments to fair housing were identified in the previous AI, with recommendations for actions the City can take toward reducing impediments and increasing opportunities.

	Recommendation	Action	Result
Impediment I:			
Lack of awareness of rights and responsibilities concerning fair housing may contribute to unfair or unequal treatment.			
Expand Current Education and Outreach Efforts.	The City should continue to take a strong position on bringing the discussion of fair housing forward on many fronts, making the expectation of fair housing the rule on the part of all partners – the public, housing providers, realtors, lenders, government departments and policy makers. The City should continue to work with regional partners to strengthen the system of support for vulnerable populations, including persons with disabilities, and other protected classes. The City should participate in regional efforts to publicize investigations and	1) Information on fair housing and landlord/tenant rights is made available to Lakewood citizens on the city’s rental housing safety website, and at libraries, Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA, community centers, senior centers, and public places. 2) Lakewood code enforcement and police provide tenant resource guides to tenants as appropriate. The guide provides landlord tenant information, how to contact and schedule a property inspection, legal remedies, and access to related services and agencies. The guide is available on the city’s rental	1) Improved public access to landlord tenant law and rights, and fair housing information. 2) Improved public access to landlord tenant law and rights, and fair housing information.

	<p>enforcement activities that promote and advance fair housing knowledge and compliance.</p>	<p>housing website, the city and other public places.</p> <p>3) Prospective low/moderate income homebuyers receive home ownership counseling when receiving assistance with homebuyer activities and down payment assistance through the City of Lakewood. Classes are offered by realtors, lenders and City staff who have been certified to deliver the training. The counseling includes education on fair housing.</p> <p>4) The City of Lakewood participates in the Fair Housing Conference promoting fair housing and providing information to the general public, community members, grass-root organizations, housing advocates, realtors, property managers, landlords and other members of the housing industry.</p> <p>5) The City of Lakewood Police Department administers the Crime-Free Rental Housing Program.</p>	<p>3) Lenders and non-profit providers (i.e. Habitat for Humanity and the Homeownership Center of Tacoma) provide housing counseling and fair housing training to all prospective homebuyers.</p> <p>4) Improved public access to fair housing information.</p> <p>5) Program provides information and education on fair housing and landlord/tenant rights. Program requires property managers to complete trainings and correct security problems to have property certified as "crime free" and be listed in a national</p>
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		<p>6) The rental housing safety program inspects all rental properties and provides landlords and tenants alike with information regarding the Landlord-Tenant Act and fair housing.</p> <p>7) The city Human Services Department convenes monthly Community Collaboration Meetings bringing together human services providers and local non-profits providing services throughout the community.</p>	<p>database of properties.</p> <p>6) Provide landlords and tenants with improved access to fair housing information.</p> <p>7) Community Collaboration Meetings bring together services providers, community organizations, and local agencies to discuss the delivery of services and housing opportunities, including delivery of services to the underprivileged, hard-to-serve, and vulnerable populations, including the elderly, homeless, minorities, persons with disabilities, and other protected classes.</p>
<p>Impediment II: There is insufficient choice of suitably located safe, affordable, quality housing for Lakewood residents.</p>			
<p>Expand</p>	<p>The City should continue to expand the supply of safe, affordable housing suitably located throughout neighborhoods</p>	<p>1) The City partnered with Living Access Support Alliance (LASA), the Tacoma Housing Authority, Pierce County Housing Authority, and Pierce County to fund and construct Prairie Oaks, a 15-unit, permanent affordable housing project for homeless families and individuals. The Center also provides much needed homeless and homeless prevention services.</p>	<p>1) Created 15 units of permanent affordable rental housing as well as a home for LASA to continue providing case management, housing counseling, utility assistance, clothing and food closet, personal hygiene closet, and access to phones and computers.</p>

		<p>2) Provided in excess of \$502,000 to Tacoma-Pierce County Habitat for Humanity to construct 12 new homes for low income households.</p> <p>3) Provided \$250,000 to Homeownership Center of Tacoma to construct 4 new homes for low income households.</p> <p>4) Initiated a city-wide rental housing safety program requiring inspection of all rental housing to ensure all units meet specific construction, maintenance, and life-safety standards.</p> <p>5) As part of the city's Comprehensive Plan update, housing policies and zoning practices are reviewed to ensure affordable housing options are encouraged.</p> <p>6) Offered assistance to low income homeowners through the Major Home Repair and HOME Housing Rehabilitation programs.</p>	<p>2) Expanded homeownership opportunities for low income households.</p> <p>3) Expanded homeownership opportunities for low income households.</p> <p>4) Ensure all rental units (53% of Lakewood's housing stock) meet a specific standard of quality in order to create safe and decent living conditions for all citizens.</p> <p>5) Plan updates and amendments include a cottage housing ordinance, multifamily tax exemption program, density bonuses for affordable housing, planned development district zonings, a new downtown subarea plan, and other related policies encouraging infill housing and accessory dwelling units.</p> <p>6) Provided 38 low or zero interest loans to assist low income households. Programs ensure continued affordability by completing delayed maintenance activities,</p>
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		7) Provide emergency relocation assistance to households displaced through no fault of their own, including building closure, fire or health department actions, or redevelopment activities.	making necessary upgrades, accessibility improvements, updates to meet current building codes, energy upgrades, and other general improvements. 7) Ensured 40 low income households were not displaced and made homeless without the means to afford safe, decent housing.
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Current Fair Housing Actions

- Prospective low/moderate income homebuyers receive home ownership counseling when receiving down payment assistance through the City of Lakewood. Classes are offered by realtors, lenders and City staff who have been certified to deliver the training. The counseling includes education on fair housing.
- The down payment assistance program increases access to homeownership for minority and low-income households who may not have had the opportunity or encouragement to so without the program.
- The City offers emergency relocation assistance for persons displaced through no fault of their own due to building and code enforcement closures, fires, drug closures, and other incidences that create homelessness.
- Through the City’s rental housing safety program, all rental housing is inspected to ensure it meets a specific construction, maintenance, and life-safety standard in order to create safe decent living conditions for all of Lakewood’s citizens.
- The City of Lakewood Police Department administers the Crime-Free Rental Housing Program. Education on fair housing and landlord/tenant rights are taught as part of the program curriculum. When property managers complete the training and correct security problems, the property is certified as “crime free” and is listed in a national database of properties for relocation.

- Information on fair housing and landlord/tenant rights, along with information on the down payment assistance program, is made available to Lakewood citizens on the City's rental housing safety website, and at libraries, Chamber of Commerce, the YMCA, community centers, senior centers, and public places.
- City staff participates at fair housing events and fairs as part of outreach and education efforts on fair housing. Local trainings are being provided to landlords, property managers, relators, and tenants in connection with the City's rental housing safety program, and related CDBG/HOME community and housing development efforts.
- The City will continue to update the rental housing safety program website to provide additional and updated information on landlord/tenant rights, fair housing, and reasonable accommodation.
- The City will continue current 1% human services funding strategies focusing on emotional supports and youth programs; access to food; access to health and behavioral health; housing assistance & homeless prevention; and crisis stabilization and advocacy. Continue monthly Community Collaboration Meetings to expand the delivery of services and housing opportunities to the most vulnerable populations, including the elderly, homeless, minorities, persons with disabilities, and other protected classes.
- The City's Comprehensive Plan is analyzed to ensure housing policies and zoning practices are encouraging the expansion of affordable housing options throughout the city, including those which incorporate innovative and special construction practices and features, increased density, the conservation of energy and the efficient utilization of open space, and connectivity to public transportation and community infrastructure.
- Housing accessibility and affordability remain a priority for Lakewood. Program funding for affordable housing opportunities for low income homebuyers and homeowner rehabilitation programs will continue to expand the supply of safe, decent, affordable housing.

Conclusions and Recommendations

While the City of Lakewood continues to make progress in affirmatively furthering fair housing, the following have been identified as current impediments:

Impediments to Fair Housing	Recommended Actions
I. Regulatory barriers to fair housing choice limit or prevent increasing the supply of affordable housing	
	A. Explore changing the City of Lakewood’s land-use provisions to make it easier to build less-costly, small scale homes such as accessory dwelling or duplexes
	B. Increase the supply of affordable rentals and single family houses in a range of sizes
	C. Incentivize the development of higher density multi-family affordable housing by private developers
	D. Ensure code violations are equally enforced and properties are systemically inspected
	E. Ensure new and rehabbed construction projects meet accessibility requirement as set forth in the Fair Housing Act
II. Lack of knowledge of fair housing laws and inequitable representation among housing-related decision-making bodies	
	A. Ensure diversity on boards and commissions on housing
	B. Require bi-annual fair housing training for government housing staff and housing policymakers
III. Lack of consumer access to fair housing education and enforcement resources	

	A. Report unusual lending practices, including predatory lending and financial institution charter rentals to appropriate authorities for investigation
	B. Increase fair housing and tenant education for the public
IV. Non-compliance with the Fair Housing Act among landlords and housing providers	
	A. Propose for inclusion in the local ordinance a Reasonable Accommodation provision
	B. Increase knowledge of fair housing protections among housing providers and social service providers to proactively mitigate impediments to fair housing choice
	C. Ensure the Continuum of Care addresses prevention for those at risk of experiencing homelessness
V. Lack of regional collaboration to affirmatively further fair housing	
	A. Encourage development of new affordable housing in areas of higher opportunity
	B. Participate in regional planning bodies to combat regional impediments to fair housing