



Various housing opportunities on the Reservation

CHAPTER 5: HOUSING

Background

The Tulalip Indian Reservation was reserved for the use and benefit of Indian tribes and bands signatory to the Treaty of Point Elliot of January 22, 1855. On that date, the Reservation was established making it the permanent homeland for the Snohomish, Snoqualmie, Skagit, Suiattle, Samish, Skykomish, and Stillaguamish tribes as well as allied bands living in the region. The way that the people of the Reservation have been housed has changed considerably since 1855.

Historically, Tulalip Tribal members resided in longhouses within village settlements – a communal dwelling lifestyle. Traditional dwellings included both gable roof and lean-to roof houses. The gable roof house is represented in the current longhouse at Tulalip Bay. Today, the use of the longhouse is limited to various ceremonies.

During spring and summer seasons, Tulalip ancestors followed the game and fish runs, building temporary encampments that could be moved quickly. These seasonal dwellings were typically constructed of cattail or tulle mats.

Over the years, legislative acts of Congress and Federal Indian policies have effectively disbanded the communal dwellings over the past century resulting in a transition to single-family dwellings. These single-family dwellings are now the most common form of Reservation housing, but the future will require a diversification of housing types to support a variety of age groups and lifestyles that do not fit within the pattern of single-family development.

Housing Challenges

The following challenges impede the development of current and future Reservation housing stock:

- Identification, development, and administration of additional water sources for both residential and commercial development to meet current and future needs
- Lack of sufficient high density designations within residential zones
- Availability of funds and financial resources to develop and manage adequate infrastructure for water, sewer, transportation corridors, and sidewalks
- Loss of limited Reservation land-base out of Tribal ownership
- Environmental, natural resource, and cultural constraints protecting Reservation resources
- Maintaining the rural character of the Reservation Community while balancing development densities, infrastructure resources, and limited Reservation land base
- Providing housing that meets Reservation needs at various income levels, ages, and lifestyles
- Lack of mortgage financing opportunities

This Plan addresses these challenges with the ultimate goal of increasing opportunity and access to housing.

Tribal Housing Demographics

Over 50% of Tribal members living on the Reservation are less than 20 years of age. Having this large a demographic group provides a unique challenge for the Reservation and having places for all these young people to live is part of that challenge.

Fifteen percent of Tribal homes on the Reservation are housing elders. The senior center reports that the number of seniors has increased from 300 to 500 in five years.

Of all Tribal members 16 years of age and older, there is a home ownership rate of 54% according to the Tribal Housing Needs Analysis Survey of 2006. Since the survey was of Tribal members living on and off the Reservation, this home ownership rate is not indicative of only the rate of Tribal home ownership on the Reservation. The survey also indicated that 35% of Tribal members live in poor or substandard conditions which need to be addressed, either by housing upgrade, or by redevelopment.

Reservation Housing Conditions

Though over seven years old, the 2000 Census provides the best available housing data for the entire Reservation – including Tribal members and non-Tribal members. **Table 10** shows the total households on the Reservation, average persons per household, and comparison between owner occupied and renter occupied housing.

Table 10 : Tulalip Reservation Housing Data in 2000

Total Reservation Population	8,989	
Total Households*	3,207	
Persons per Household (Population/Households)	2.80	
Owner Occupied Housing	2,632	82%
Renter Occupied Housing	575	18%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census

*Total Households is the total amount of dwelling units minus vacant dwelling units.

Table 10 shows that 82% of the housing on the Reservation is owner occupied, with the remaining 18% occupied by renters. This percentage of owner-occupied housing is high when compared with the Washington state home owner-occupied housing rate of 65% and the U.S. average of 66%.

Persons per household rates are higher on the Reservation than in the state of Washington with rates of 2.80 and 2.53, respectively. (Calculating person per household rates for Tribal versus non-Tribal members is difficult given that data collection is limited to Reservation totals via the U.S. Census. For this reason, this differentiation has not been quantified within this Comprehensive Plan.)

The 2000 Census shows the distribution of housing on the Reservation with 3% of the total Reservation housing units multifamily, 24% mobile homes, and the remaining 73% single-family dwellings.

Housing Opportunities

The greatest concentration of housing is in the Port Susan Camping Club area. Originally Port Susan was developed as vacation destination housing. Each lot is not designated for full-time use due to the limited capacity of the on-site septic systems at Port Susan. However, Port Susan is used as a permanent residence by many people that own more than one lot and switch lots during the course of the year, residing for a portion of the year on one lot and the rest of the year on another. This phenomenon ensures that these people are considered temporary residents, yet effectively become full-time residents of the Port Susan Camping Club. This 798 acre area has 2,499 lots and is on a 75-year lease from the Tribe. It will be returned to the Tribe when the lease expires in 2052. All of the lots are located to the east of Marine Drive Northwest on 654 of the 798 total acres. The remaining 144 acres are used by Port Susan Camping Club members as access from their campsites to Possession Sound. The Port Susan Camping Club cannot currently be considered a solution for housing, but the site will be available upon the expiration of the lease for land uses other than recreational camping.

Tulalip Bay is a medium to high density residential area, characterized by moderately sized homes with some - but not all - being connected to municipal sewer systems. Homes located on and near Tulalip Bay were built on lots owned by the Tribe under long term residential leases. Over time these leases will expire, and the Tribe is faced with competing pressures in deciding whether to renew them. Due to concerns over water quality and the safety of residents in landslide prone areas, some leases will not be renewed, while others will be extended for only a finite period. These actions will have a varied effect on localized land uses. Housing stocks will be depleted in the short term, but access to the water and aquatic resources by the Tribe and its members will be enhanced.

Due to the limited land availability of the Reservation, and its approximately 22,500 upland acres, significant tradeoffs need to be made between development and conservation. The more that land is dedicated to housing development, the less land will be available to other types of uses including land uses that support jobs, education, recreation, and preservation. Recognizing and enumerating these tradeoffs is a major purpose of the Comprehensive Plan.

The capacity of the Reservation to make room for the future population growth will depend on the following factors:

- The availability of developable land
- The density at which residential units are developed
- The availability and capacity of water and sewer service
- Tribal policies relating to housing development

Location of Future Tribal Residential Areas

Historically, the Tribe's development patterns were linked to transportation corridors. The waterways and water bodies of the Salish Sea Eco Region served as water highways for Coast Salish tribes since time immemorial. The Point Elliot Treaty allowed for counties to construct roads through Indian reservations and the development pattern within the Tulalip Reservation is a reflection of historic and current development within close proximity of transportation corridors.

The Comprehensive Plan does not purport to determine the precise location of all future housing developments. However, it does articulate the context in which residential development should occur.

Upon review of current Tulalip housing plans, a number of desirable areas for housing development have been identified as depicted in **Map 5-1**. Future housing development activities, whether Tribal or non-Tribal shall be consistent with the subdivision regulations contained within Ordinance #80, the Tulalip Tribes Zoning Ordinance. At a minimum, the following guidance should apply for future housing developments:

- Future residential development should be encouraged around existing residential areas where adequate infrastructure is already in place
- High density housing clusters should be buffered by open space
- Forest cover and interior resources should be preserved
- Residential developments containing or creating five lots should be considered as long-plats and regulated as major subdivisions requiring public improvements such as extension of water and sewer systems, paved streets and connectivity, sidewalks, parks and recreational areas, and electrical transformers
- Underground service of electrical transmission lines should be encouraged
- Housing developments should be encouraged to establish Housing Associations with Covenants, Conditions, and Restrictions (CC&Rs) approved by the Tulalip Tribes
- Maintenance of parks and recreational areas should be the responsibility of the housing associations through their CC&Rs
- The Tribe should focus on purchasing Fee Simple lands in the area designated for residential use to provide more housing opportunities and create a continuous residential community for Tribal members

Housing Affordability

Families and individuals have different economic circumstances and differ in their ability to afford housing. With an increasing number of Tribal members desiring to live on the Reservation, there will be a need for a variety of housing units to accommodate them. Although home ownership rates are high on the Reservation, rapid rises in housing prices in recent years have put affordable home ownership opportunities out of reach for many. The Tribe should work to address socio-economic needs in reference to housing in the future.

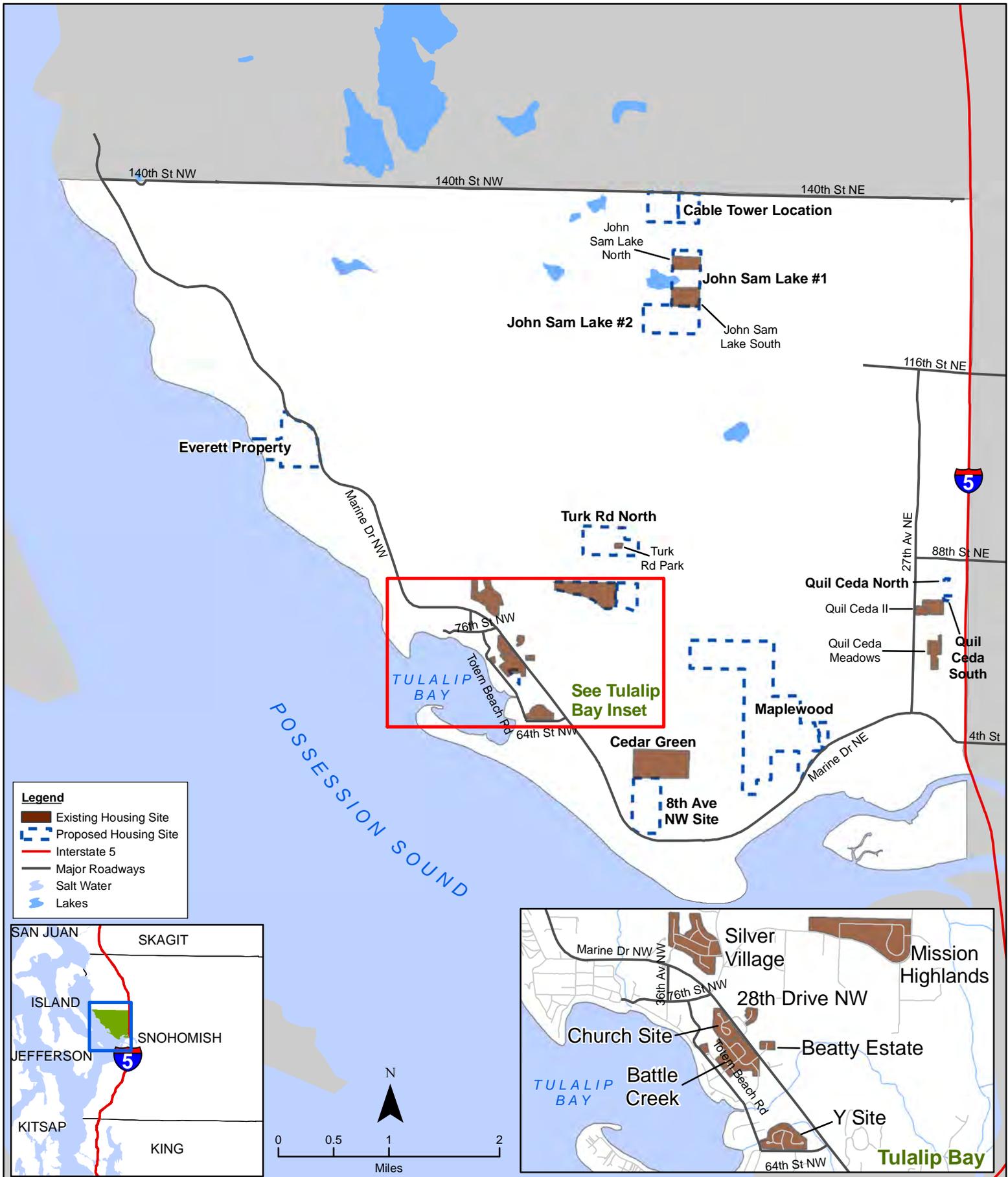
Higher density housing patterns will keep housing and its associated expenses more affordable. Over the long run, both residents and the Tribe will benefit financially through higher-density housing development.

Identified Tribal housing needs include shelter for the homeless and transitional housing for Tribal members in treatment, as well as a need for subsidized housing for economically-distressed Tribal members.

Tulalip Tribal Housing Programs

The two primary governmental agencies responsible for addressing Tribal housing needs are the Tulalip Tribes Housing Assistance Program (TTHAP), and the Tulalip Housing Department.

There are numerous Tribal programs that provide housing for Tribal members and their families. These programs assist those who qualify to purchase stick-built or modular homes or who wish to make major improvements to their existing houses. These programs are aimed at helping Tribal members with adequate resources purchase their first home or construct their own homes on Trust and Fee Simple land on the Reservation.



Map 5-1 Existing and Proposed Housing Sites



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Housing Goals and Policies

GOAL HG 1: **Preserve the Reservation as the permanent homeland for Tulalip Tribal members and provide appropriate housing to meet Tribal housing needs.**

Policy HG 1-1: Seek and use all funding sources and various assistance programs available to help meet the housing needs of all Tribal members.

Policy HG 1-2: Ensure there is an adequate capacity of land to provide for Tribal housing.

Policy HG 1-3: Pursue Tribal governmental acquisition of Fee Simple lands on the Reservation to provide homesites for Tribal member occupancy and ownership opportunities.

GOAL HG 2: **Provide adequate utility and transportation infrastructure for Tribal and non-Tribal housing and locate future housing near infrastructure that can serve it.**

Policy HG 2-1: Promote paved streets, sidewalks, community water and sewer, stormwater management systems, and transportation corridor-connectivity for all major subdivisions and subdivisions of land into lots less than one-half acre in size.

Policy HG 2-2: Locate future housing development near existing residences to make more efficient use of existing infrastructure investments, including redevelopment when applicable.

Policy HG 2-3: Promote higher density residential development in areas that have water and sewer service or are in close proximity to existing infrastructure to lower the per-lot cost of developing housing and make efficient use of infrastructure.

Policy HG 2-4: Encourage the retirement of septic systems and wells when public sewer and water service is available to their property.

GOAL HG 3: **Provide a range of housing opportunities and options including type, design, affordability, and location.**

Policy HG 3-1: Balance the needs for housing choices with the environmental constraints present on the Reservation.

Policy HG 3-2: Provide a range of housing types and densities to meet the needs of various incomes and age groups to create diverse communities and enhance neighborhood character.

- Policy HG 3-3: Encourage higher residential densities where feasible to preserve rural and resource areas and use infrastructure in an efficient manner.
- Policy HG 3-4: Ensure that housing is of high quality and is affordable to all economic segments of the Reservation Community.
- Policy HG 3-5: Promote design elements such as front porches, street lighting, garages accessed from alleyways, and landscaping that provides character, warmth, and safety to neighborhoods.
- GOAL HG 4: Promote Tribal mixed-use housing developments as vibrant neighborhoods with desirable living conditions and high quality housing.**
- Policy HG 4-1: Locate Tribal mixed-use housing developments at suitable sites on the Reservation designated by the Tribal government.
- Policy HG 4-2: Develop housing stock for Tribal mixed-use housing developments on the most suitable land within close proximity to infrastructure in order to preserve ecological functions and to minimize development costs.
- Policy HG 4-3: Encourage an innovative variety of housing types, building layout and design, and living arrangements in Tribal mixed-use housing developments to provide high quality housing and varying levels of affordability for Tribal members and Tribal families.
- Policy HG 4-4: Encourage Tribal mixed-use housing developments that are complete neighborhoods offering not only housing, but opportunities to shop, work, and play in safe and welcoming environments.
- Policy HG 4-5: Promote design principles in Tribal mixed-use housing developments that lead to crime prevention through environmental design, pedestrian and transit orientation, and provide a strong sense of place.
- Policy HG 4-6: Create open space and recreational areas within Tribal mixed-use housing developments that remain undeveloped in perpetuity and provides opportunities for neighborhood-scaled recreation.