

Housing Programs Update

Ann Beck, Manager

Chris D'Onofrio, Supervisor

3.7.23

Whatcom County Council Committee of the Whole



WHATCOM COUNTY
**HEALTH AND
COMMUNITY
SERVICES**



The Team



Current Housing Staff

Housing Program Supervisor, Chris D'Onofrio

Barbara Johnson-Vinna (Program Specialist)

Ashley Geleynse (Community Health Specialist)

Affordable Housing Specialist- (Vacant)

Washington State of Homelessness

***2020 Point in Time Count
22,923 individuals***

***2022 Point in Time Count
25,452 individuals***



Whatcom County Homelessness

***2020 PIT Count 707
individuals***

***2022 PIT Count 832
individuals***



Affordability is Key

- In the past 10 years, housing prices have nearly doubled.
- Prospective homeowners would need to work 96 hours/wk to “afford” their mortgage at median county wage.



Affordability & Availability

- More than ½ of Whatcom County renters pay at least 30% of income on housing.
- 11% of American households report being unable to pay an unexpected \$400 expense.
- Availability also plays a major factor...Whatcom's vacancy rate is 1.9% (Q4 2022)



What Have We Been Doing?

1. Eviction Prevention Services

- ARPA and CARES \$
- Eviction Prevention Mediation Services

2. Emergency Sheltering

- Motel Stays for Families
- Severe Weather Sheltering



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What Have We Been Doing? (Con't)

3. Affordable Housing Opportunities

- New Funding Sources
- Investments in Properties
- Rental Assistance for Households

4. Supportive Services

- Outreach Work
- Case Management
- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

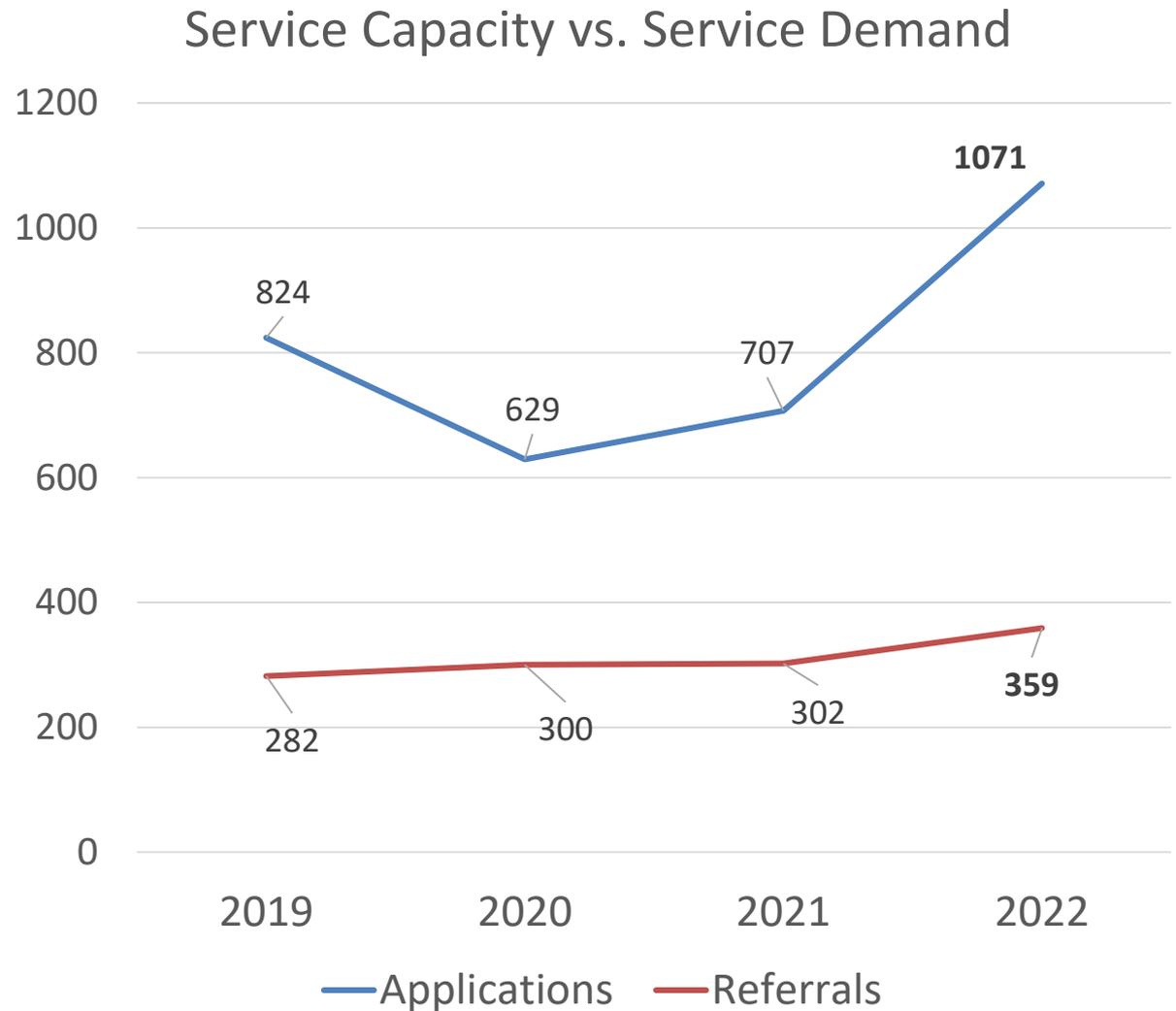


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Needs and Capacity

Gap between
community
need and
services
available is
growing.

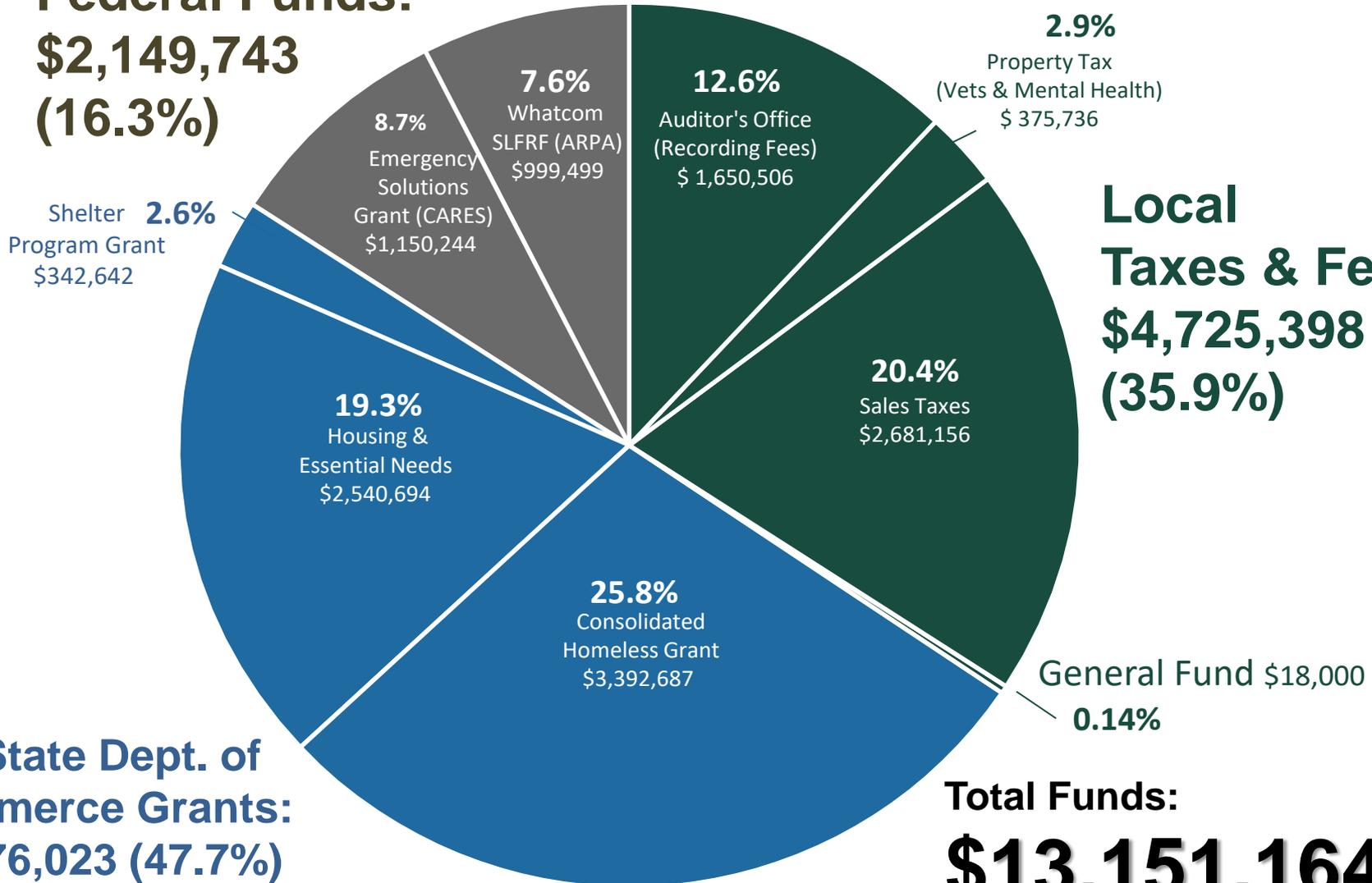


Anticipated 2023 Expenditures

Federal Funds:

\$2,149,743

(16.3%)



Local Taxes & Fees:

\$4,725,398

(35.9%)

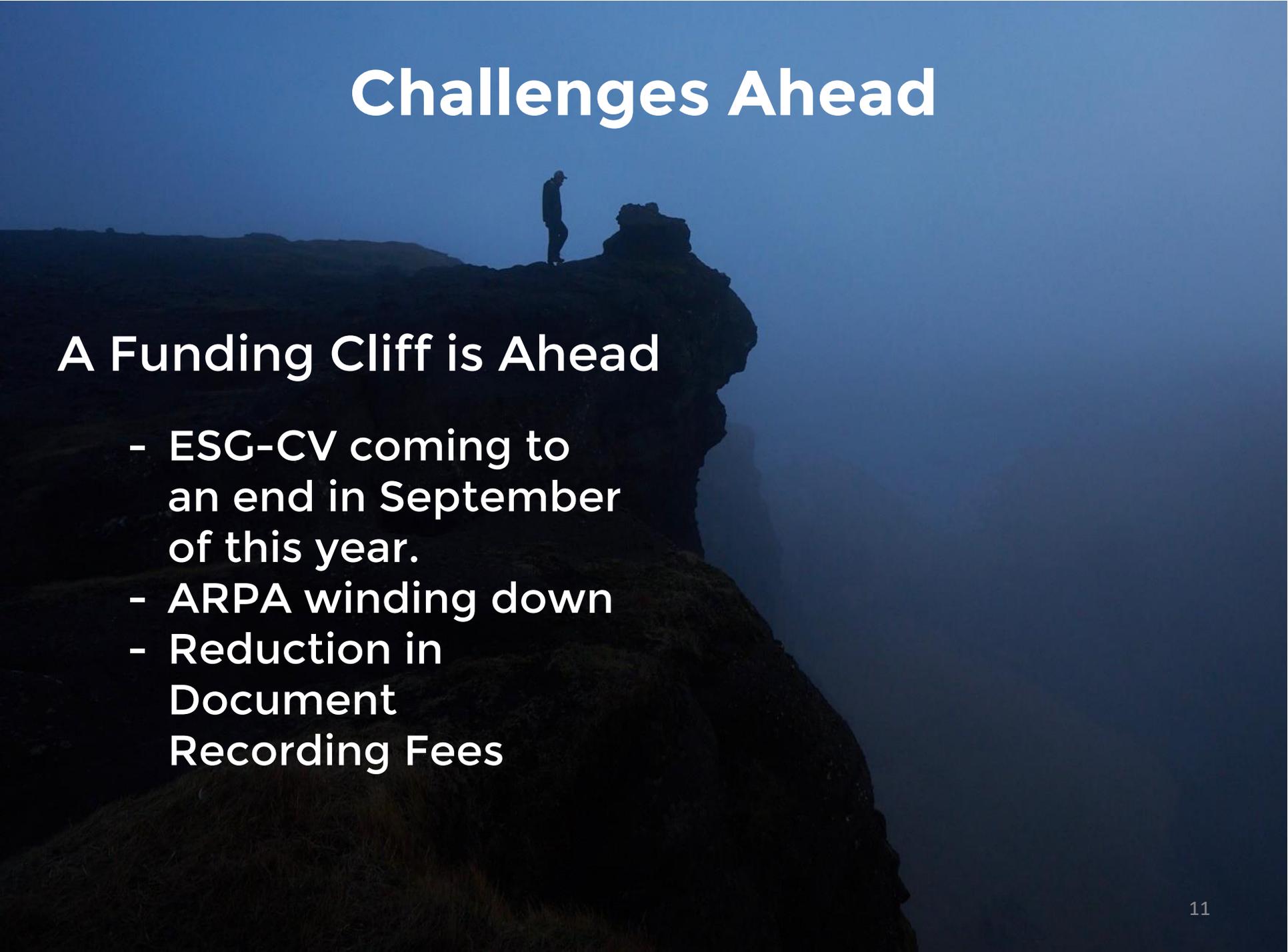
WA State Dept. of Commerce Grants:

\$6,276,023 (47.7%)

Total Funds:

\$13,151,164

Challenges Ahead

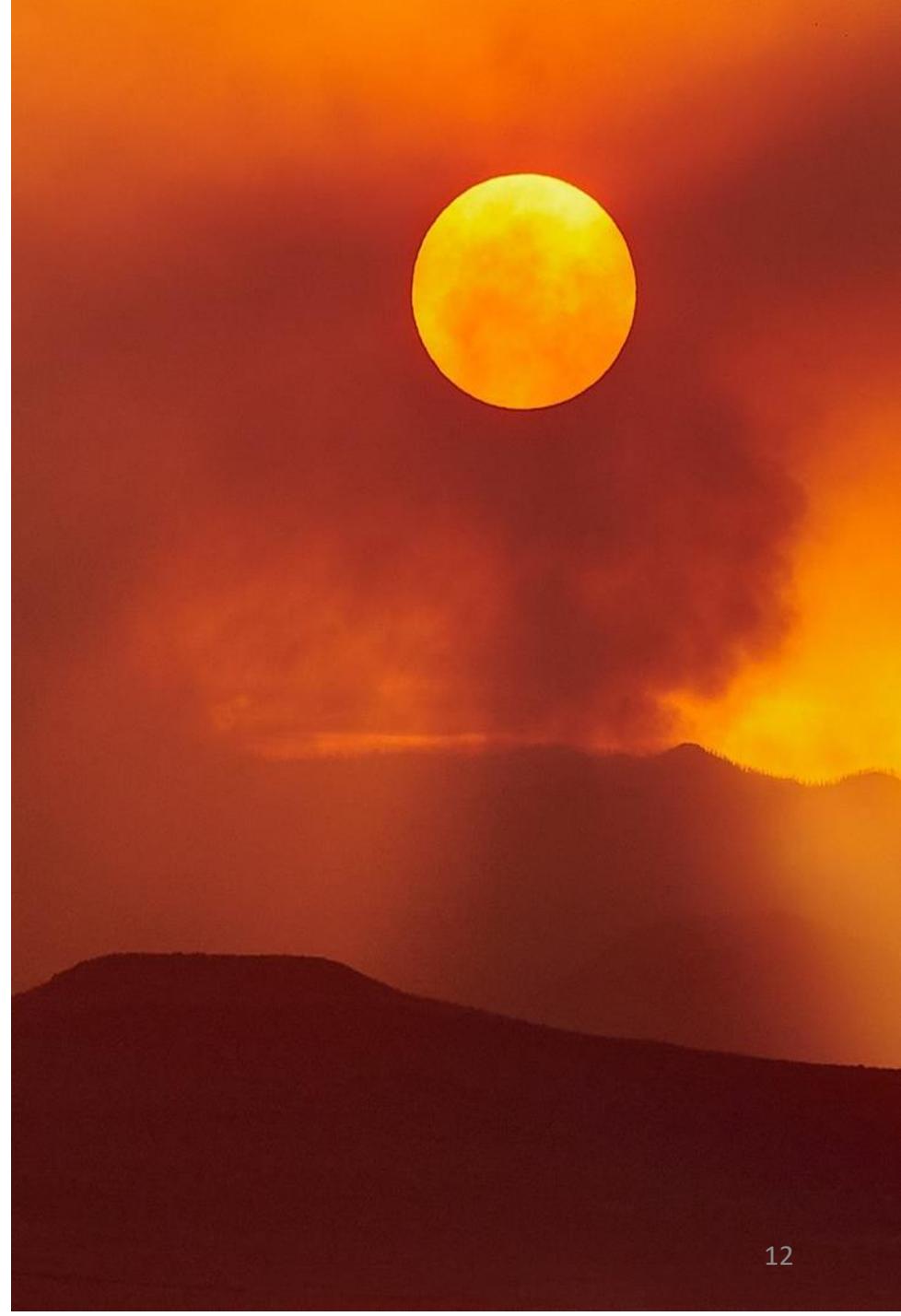
A silhouette of a person standing on the edge of a cliff against a blue sky. The person is looking out over a vast, hazy landscape. The cliff is dark and jagged, with the person standing on the very edge. The sky is a gradient of blue, from a darker blue at the top to a lighter blue near the horizon.

A Funding Cliff is Ahead

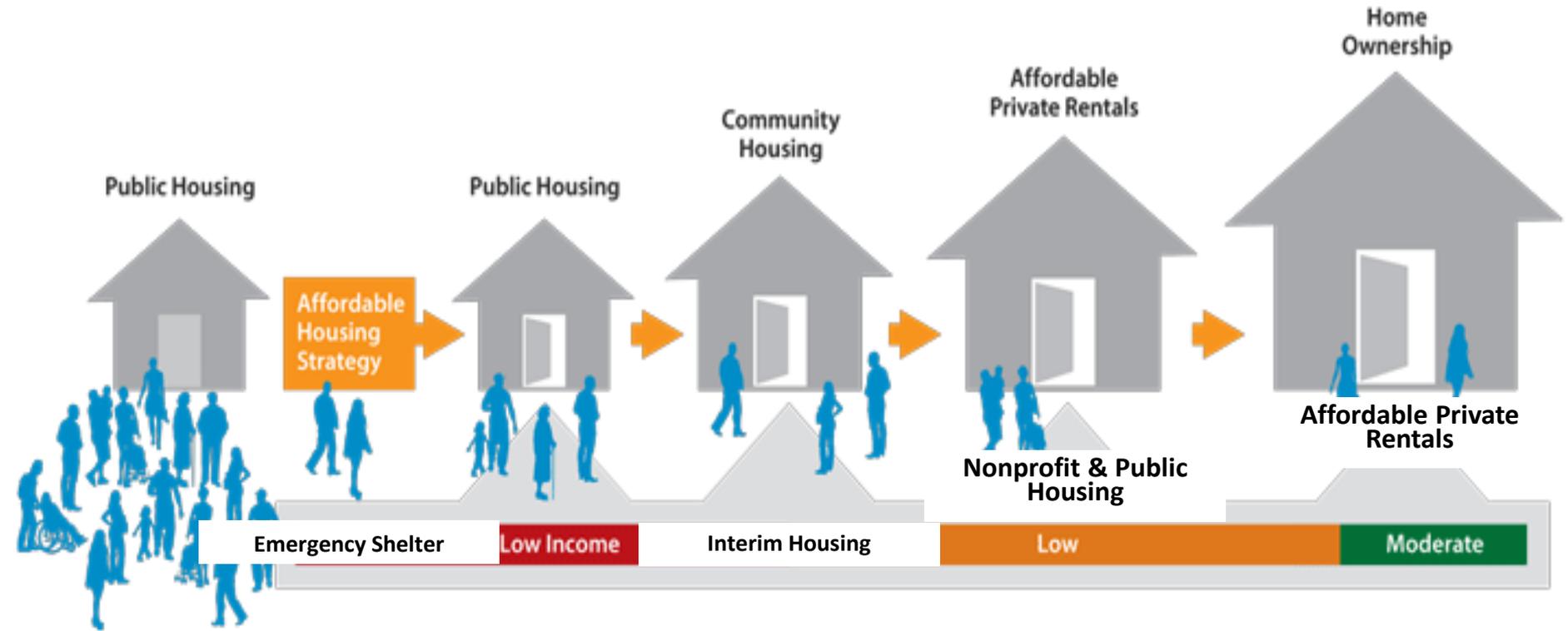
- ESG-CV coming to an end in September of this year.
- ARPA winding down
- Reduction in Document Recording Fees

Climate Change Impacts on Vulnerable Populations

- Severe weather shelters in the winter
- Smoke season response
- Extreme heat cooling centers



The Housing Spectrum





Questions?

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Citations

Point-in-Time Count (WA State)

<https://deptofcommerce.app.box.com/s/ek9pu2w07oz8d77gq6c1rlpxuwcw0515/file/992821877661>

Pont-in-Time Count (Whatcom County)

<https://www.whatcomcounty.us/DocumentCenter/View/68374/PIT-2022-Final-Point-in-Time-Count-Report>

Home Values

<https://www.zillow.com/research/data/>

Monthly Mortgage Estimate

<https://www.freddiemac.com/pmms>

<https://www.mortgagecalculator.org/>

Median wage in Washington State

<https://media.esd.wa.gov/esdwa/Default/ESDWAGOV/labor-market-info/Libraries/Economic-reports/Median-and-ave-wages/County-median-hourly-wage-2021.xlsx>

Citations (Con't)

Cost burden of Whatcom renters

<https://data.census.gov/table?q=B25070&g=310XX00US13380,42660,34580,30300,31020,36500,28420,48300,49420,14740,38900,47460,44060>

Economic Well-Being of U.S. Households (Federal Reserve)

<https://www.federalreserve.gov/publications/2022-economic-well-being-of-us-households-in-2021-dealing-with-unexpected-expenses.htm>

Rental Vacancy Rate (Washington Center for Real Estate Research)

<https://wcrer.be.uw.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/60/2023/01/Washington-Apartment-Market-Report-4th-Quarter-2022.pdf>