

Chapter 2. Chelan Community



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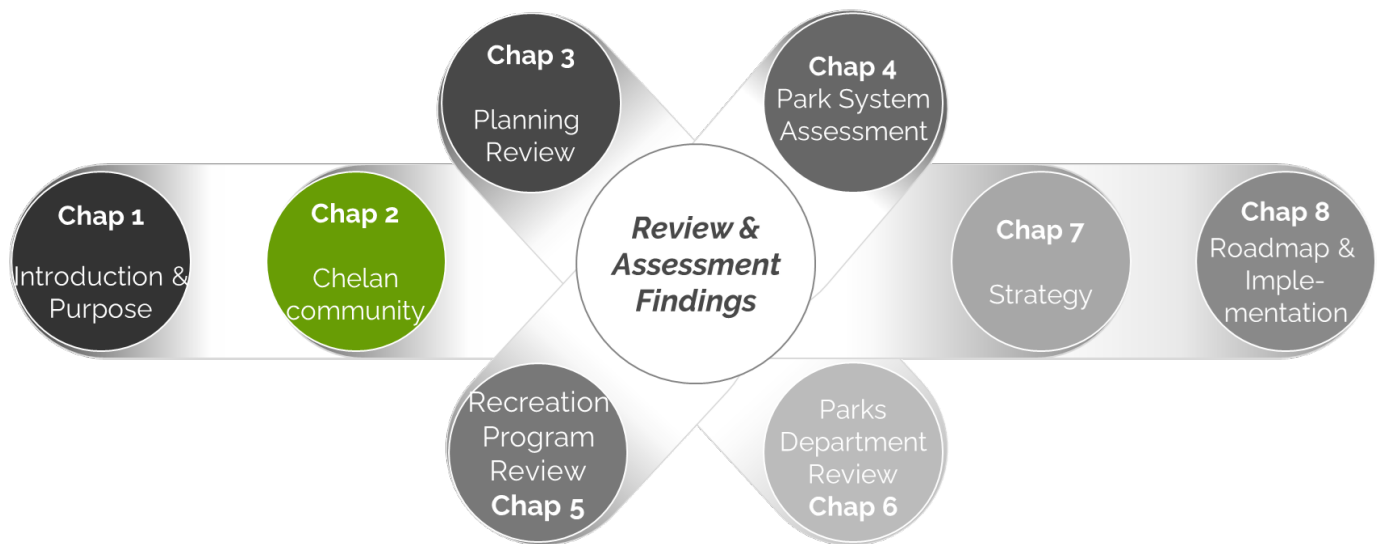
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Introduction

The purpose of the Chelan Community chapter is to base our work on the unique characteristics of this town so we can create the best park system to serve it.

We will briefly revisit Chelan's history, where the Native American roots and the pioneer spirit are still right under the surface.

We will cover the physical context (geology, topography, hydrology, climate, transport access), that create the spectacular landscape that draws millions of visitors.

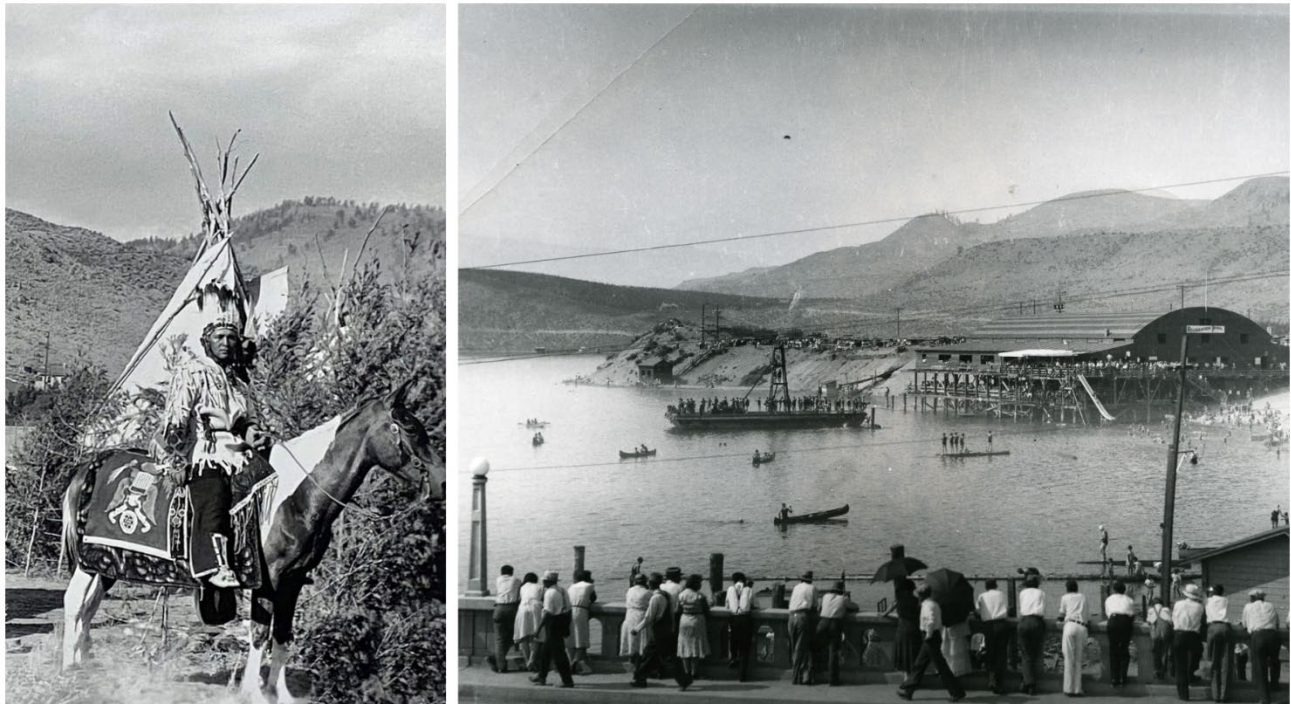
Next, we discuss Chelan's demographic and social trends (population, age & gender, race & ethnicity, income & poverty, housing, education, health, disability) so as to understand the profile of the community our Parks serve.

Finally, we provide a brief overview of Chelan's tourism and agriculture driven economy.

2.1 Early History

Human habitation in the Lake Chelan region began around 10,000 years ago when the Chelan tribe settled around the lake, speaking the Wenatchi dialect of the interior Salishan language and relying on fishing, hunting, gathering, and trade for sustenance. In the early 1800s, explorers from the Pacific Fur Company, notably Alexander Ross, made contact, naming the Chelan River "Tsill-ane." Non-native settlement didn't occur until the late 1800s, marked by disputes over land ownership and conflicting claims, eventually resolved by an 1892 Act of Congress. Lakeside, first settled in the late 1880s, merged with Chelan in 1956, while the Chelan townsite grew and was incorporated in 1902. The city's evolution was closely tied to transportation routes, regional growth, and the lure of wealth from resources like gold, silver, copper, and timber, transitioning into the recreational destination it is today.¹

Figure 2-1 Native Americans in Chelan & 1930's recreation complex - Courtesy of the Chelan Museum



2.1.1. Don Morse Park

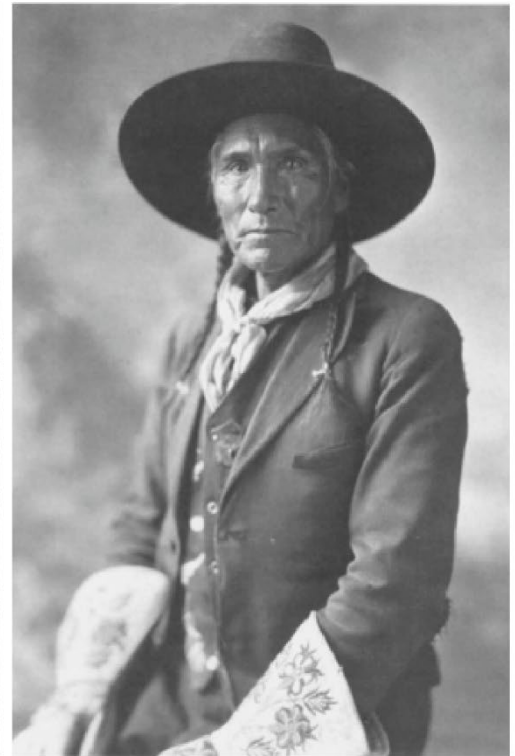
The initial iteration of Don Morse Park was situated adjacent to the residence of Don Morse, who acquired a parcel of land in 1946 and developed a ballfield to provide local children with a recreational space in Chelan. Don Morse, a devoted Boy Scout Leader for 37 years, profoundly influenced the lives of over 1,000 young individuals and received numerous accolades for his civic contributions to Chelan's youth, including the highest honor in scouting in 1950. He dedicated his life to mentoring youth and fostering positive character development.

¹ Caldbick, J. (2012, August 6). *Chelan, city of -- Thumbnail history*. The Free Online Encyclopedia of Washington State History - HistoryLink.org. <https://www.historylink.org/file/10160>

Figure 2-2 Don Morse with Chelan Youth courtesy of Chelan Museum



Figure 2-3 Racetrack at current Don Morse Park & Long Jim, prior owner of land which now encompasses Don Morse Park and Spader Bay – Courtesy of the Chelan Museum.



2.1.2. Lakeside Park

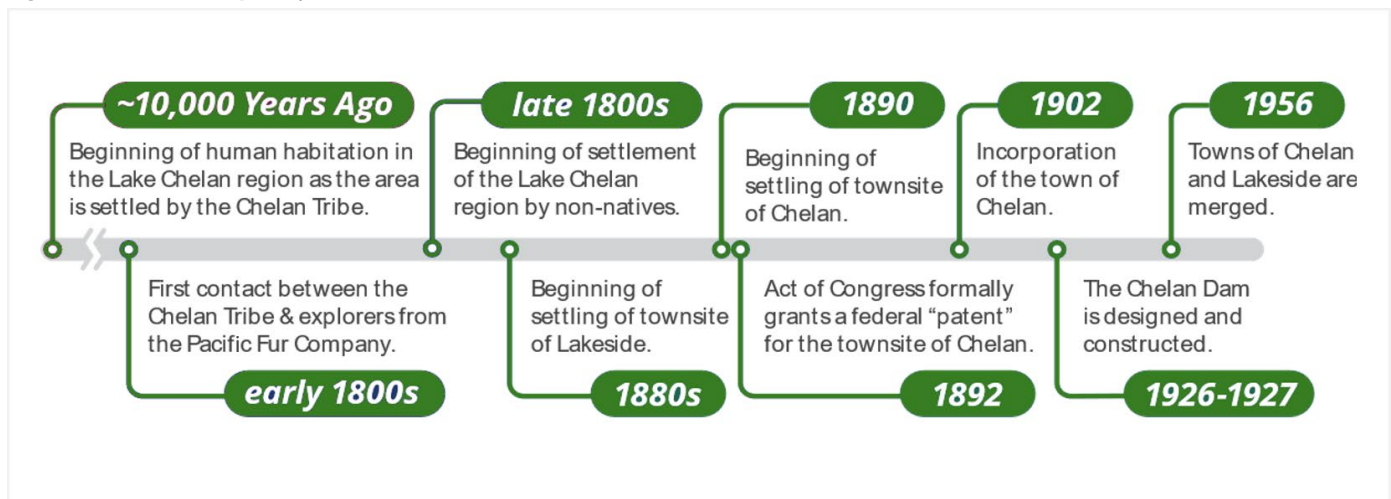
The area now known as the City of Lakeside was originally laid out as Lake Park in 1891, but upon discovering a preexisting Lake Park in Washington upon the establishment of a post office, the name was changed to Lakeside in 1892. Lakeside and Chelan engaged in economic competition, with Lakeside possessing an

advantage in accommodating larger ships. The construction of a dam in 1927 resulted in a significant rise in the lake's water level, causing substantial flooding in Lakeside's business district.

Lakeside Park, once the homestead of Charles Johnson in 1892, encompassed an orchard extending to the lake's shoreline. The dam's construction flooded much of the orchard, and the remaining portion was generously donated to the public by the Kingman family, who initially arrived in the area as prospectors and later operated a wood mill. In 1927, the Chelan Electric Company bestowed three acres of waterfront land at Johnson's Point to the City of Lakeside for use as a park. Officially designated a public park in 1928, a 1927 map illustrating lands affected by the dam identifies the entire point as Lakeside Park.

The consolidation of Lakeside and Chelan into a single city occurred in 1956. The expansive nature of the park struggled to accommodate the influx of recreational visitors. Recognizing the value of such public space, the installation of the first permanent facilities took place in 1967 to meet the needs of the growing population.

Figure 2-4 Timeline of Early Chelan



2.2 Geography

2.2.1. Geology and Topography

The City of Chelan is at the southeast end of Lake Chelan. Lake Chelan was carved out by multiple cycles of glaciation. Huge sheets of ice from Canada came down into Washington and scraped and carved the land. These glaciers ran from the crest of the Cascades, extending to the Columbia River Basin, carving out u-shaped valleys and forming Lake Chelan. Much of the lake is bordered by steep, mostly inaccessible terrain, but the southeastern end of the lake is characterized by a gentler, rolling topography.

The ice from the glaciers kept carving, depositing, and melting. Gneiss and granite were shaped by these processes. This created a long, winding valley trending to the northwest with two main parts. The Lucerne Basin, formed from softer granite, is much deeper, with its deepest point being hundreds of feet below sea level. It has the typical geology of the North Cascades. The Wapato Basin, on the harder gneiss rock, is shallower and sits several hundred feet above the elevation of the Columbia River to the east.

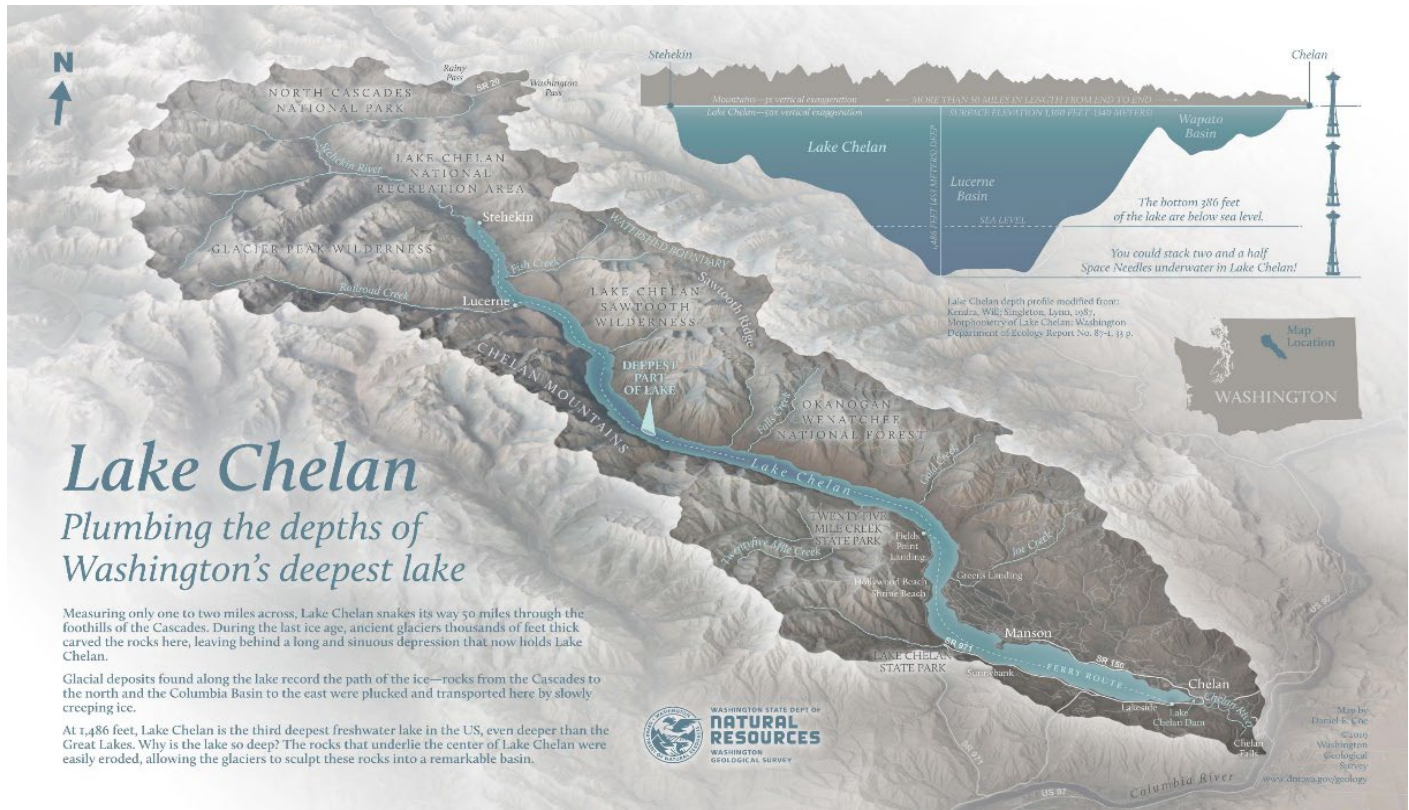
The City of Chelan is at an elevation of approximately 1,100 feet above sea level, surrounded by the Sawtooth and Chelan Mountains, which are a sub-range of the Cascades.

2.2.2. Hydrology

Lake Chelan, at the heart of the Chelan Basin watershed, spans an average width of 1.5 miles and varies in depth, reaching around 1,500 feet at its deepest point and about 100 feet at both ends. Stretching over 50 miles,

it stands as Washington's longest and deepest lake, ranking third deepest in the United States, surpassed only by Crater Lake in Oregon and Lake Tahoe in California and Nevada. Fed by major tributaries like the Stehekin River, Railroad Creek, and Twenty-Five Mile Creek, along with numerous smaller streams originating from glaciers and snowmelt, Lake Chelan drains through the Chelan River, Washington's shortest river, flowing east for four miles until it meets the Columbia River. A flood control hydroelectric dam and penstock system, constructed in 1927 at the lake's southeastern tip, effectively manages water flow into the Columbia River, situated several miles east of the city.

Figure 2-5 Lake Chelan²



2.2.3. Climate

Chelan is known for its 300-plus days of sunshine each year, making it an escape from cloudier western Washington and a popular year-round destination. Chelan benefits from a high desert arid climate, with average summer temperatures in the high 80's, with cooling lake breezes to help moderate the temperature. The average winter temperature ranges from the high 30's to low 40's. The average temperature of the lake is 60.5 degrees Fahrenheit.

The City of Chelan typically receives 12 inches of rain and 39 inches of snowfall each year. Chelan experiences four distinct seasons, each offering its own unique recreational opportunities, from swimming and boating in the summer to snowshoeing and cross-country skiing in the winter.

The combination of Lake Chelan and mountain range coupled with the warmer weather, offers many outdoor opportunities: hiking, camping, horseback riding, sight-seeing, mountain biking, hunting, dirt bike riding. In the winter, because of the cold weather and deep, dry snow conditions, there are excellent opportunities for all types of skiing. The thermals that blow up Chelan Butte have hosted many world and national hang gliding and parasailing events. The clear, warm weather from March through October, coupled with sandy loam soil,

² Coe, D. E. (n.d.). *Lake chelan, plumbing the depths of washington's deepest lake*. WA - DNR. https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/ger_presentations/coe_lake_chelan.pdf?po2iic

abundant water and spectacular views, host excellent golf opportunities in the lower valley. The weather conditions, excellent soils, and abundant water also provide ideal orchard growing conditions. (City of Chelan, 2011)

2.3 Social and Demography

In order to create effective planning recommendations for Chelan, it is crucial to have a comprehensive understanding of the community's demographics, including population, income, housing, education, employment, transportation, and more. Each of these aspects provides unique insights into how the residents of Chelan utilize the parks and recreation system. Equipped with this social and demographic data, the City of Chelan can ensure that parks, trails, and open spaces adequately meet the needs of Chelan's residents.

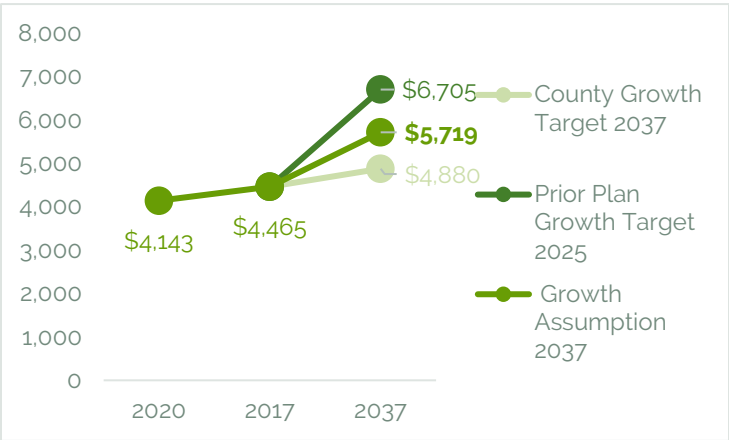
2.3.1. Population

The city's current population is **4,470 people in 2023** and is projected to increase to **5,346 by nearly 20% (876 people) by 2050**.

Chelan has experienced steady growth over the last 30 years and is projected to continue to grow. Chelan has grown by 51% since 1990, which is comparable to the growth seen in Chelan County (56%) and Washington State (63%).

Since 2020, the City of Chelan's growth rate has exceeded both Chelan County and Washington State.³

Figure 2-6 Projected Permanent Population Growth 2000-2037



The Chelan 2017 Comprehensive Plan lists three scenarios for population growth.

Population projection is key to anchor our level of service targets.

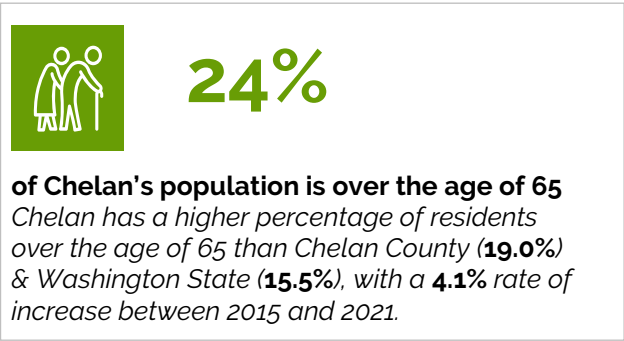
However, given that Chelan's is a large tourist destination (5.1m visits in 2023 as per Chamber of Commerce number), the year-round resident population number needs to be augmented by (a) summer residents and (b) visitors "load" on parks. The 2017 Comprehensive plan estimates Chelan's summer population to 25,000. In Chapter 6, we develop a logic to estimate visitors load in summer months.

2.3.2. Age & Gender

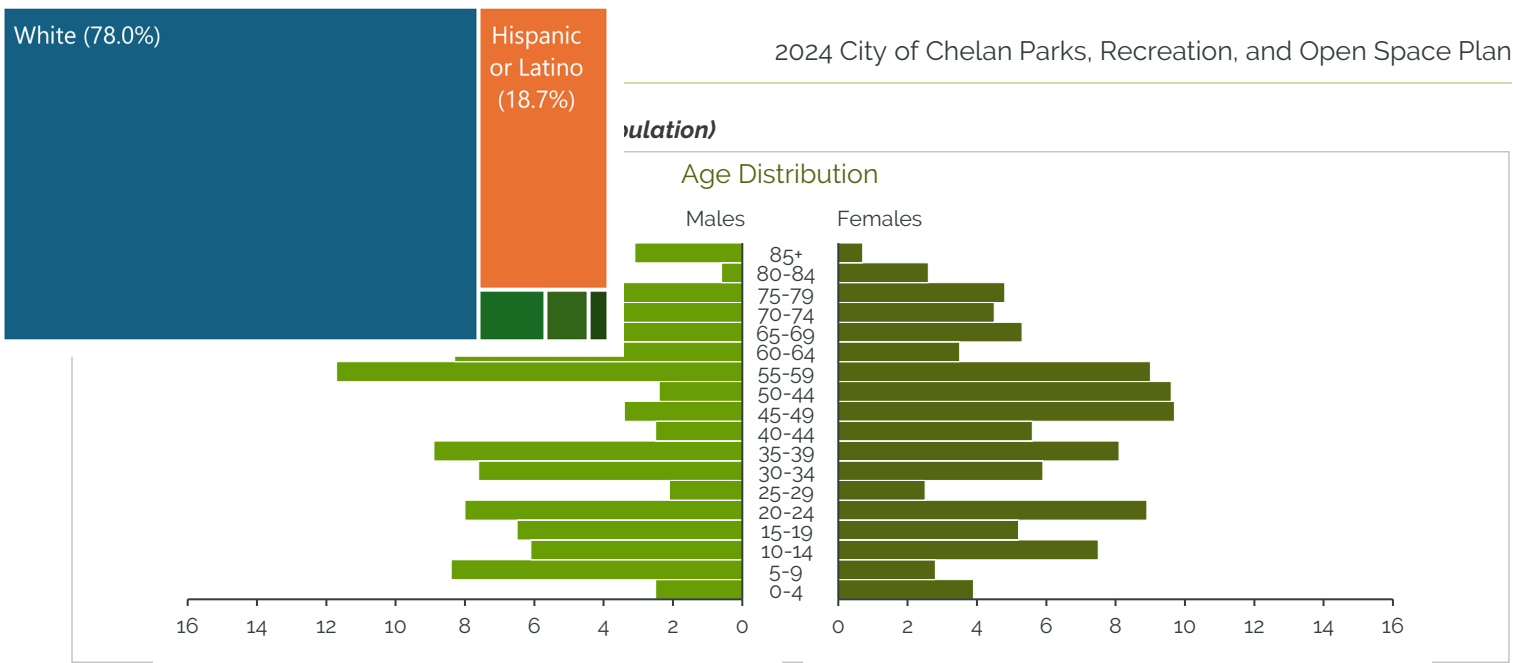
Chelan is 51% female and 49% male. Chelan's median age is 44.3 years. This is older than of Chelan County (39.9) and Washington State (37.9). With 24% of the population over 65, this is much higher than the Washington State average of 15.5%. Between 2015 to 2021, the percentage of residents age 65 and older has increased by 4.1%.

If these trends continue, it is important to develop a parks system that accommodates the retirement-age population. For those 14 and younger, Chelan is 15.7% compared to the Washington State average of 18.4%.

Figure 2-7 Chelan's age pyramid (% of gender population)



³ Population of Cities, Towns and Counties Used for Allocation of Selected State Revenues State of Washington. Retrieved from https://ofm.wa.gov/sites/default/files/public/dataresearch/pop/april1/ofm_april1_population_final.pdf.



2.3.3. Race, Ethnicity, and Language

Figure 2.6 portrays the racial demographics of Chelan. 79% of the population is Caucasian, with the next largest racial group being Hispanic or Latino at 18.7%. Asians represent only 1.7% of the population and are nearly exclusively from the Philippines (or 72 people). As reflected in the Census data, two major racial groups are absent in this population make-up: Black or African Americans and Native, Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islanders.

The language data is consistent with this population mix: 79% of Chelan residents speak only one language, English, while 20.6% of the population speaks a language other than English at home, the majority of which is Spanish (84.3% vs 15.7% another foreign language) and roughly evenly split between English-second language residents who declare speaking English "very well" (11.4%) and those who speak it less than "very well" (9.2%). Since Census data poorly captures information on undocumented people in the community, we can expect both the minority of non-White people, and the proportion of community members with English as foreign language to be higher than reported.

As a result of this demographic and language mix, it is important that our parks and infrastructures be accessible to non-English native minorities, particularly those of Hispanic/Latino origin.

Figure 2-9 Race and Ethnicity Percentages for Chelan

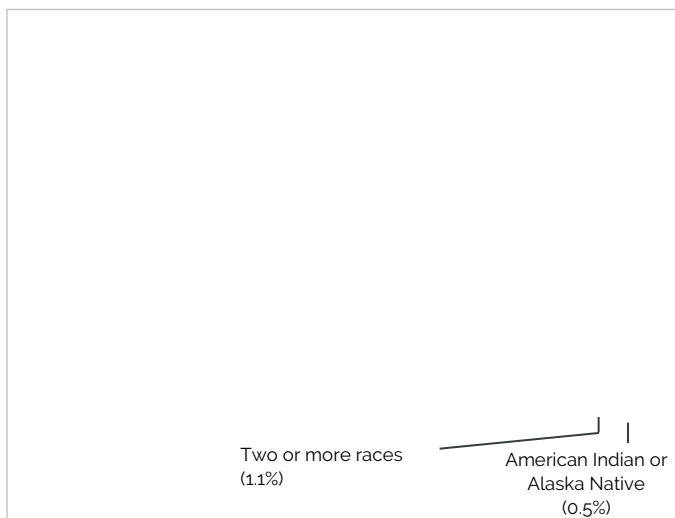
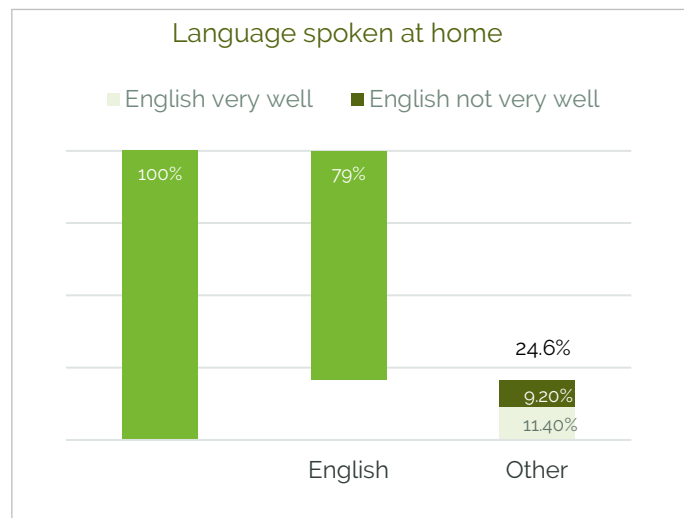


Figure 2-10 Chelan Highlighted Language at Home

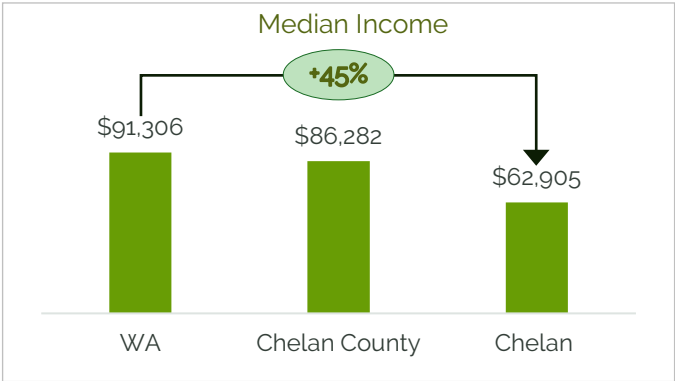


2.3.4. Income & Poverty

The median household income in Chelan per 2021 ACS estimates was approximately \$62,905, compared with Chelan County at \$86,282 and Washington State at \$91,306

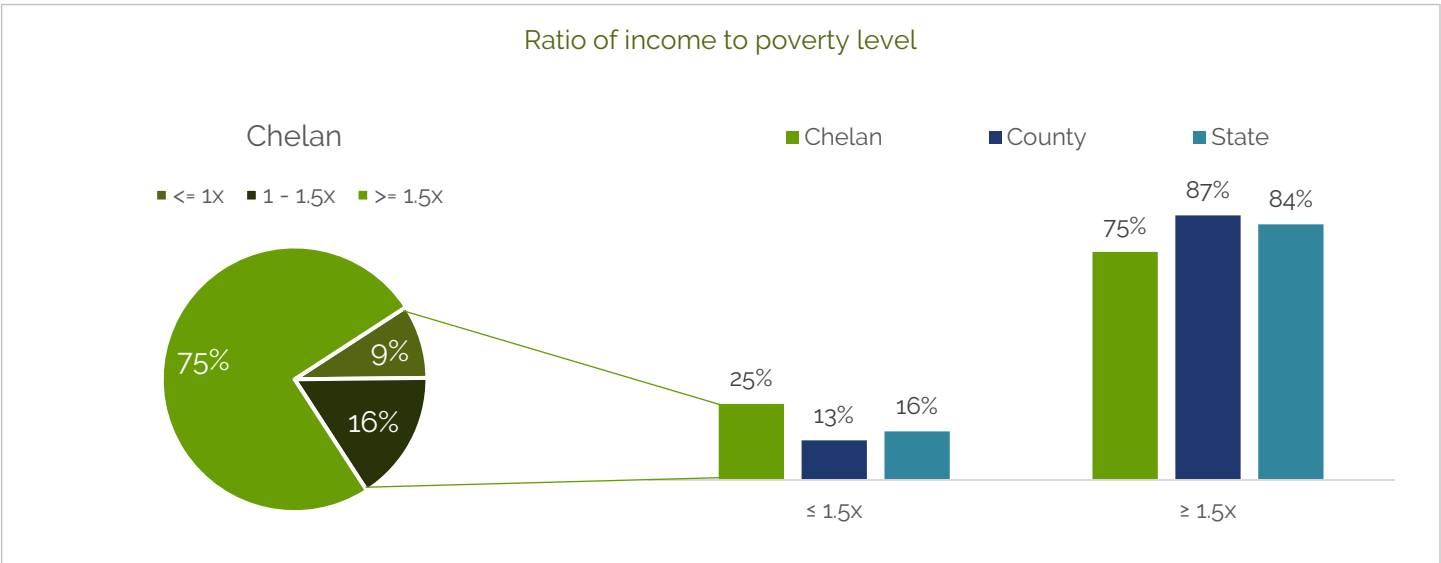
According to the 2021 Federal Poverty Guidelines, being below the poverty level for a one-person household would be earning less than \$12,880 or for a four-person household it would be \$26,500. Households at 150% of the poverty level would earn \$19,320 for a one-person household and \$39,750 for a four-person household. Figure 2.9 shows the breakdown of how Chelan households at or below the Federal poverty level.

Figure 2-11 Median Income



With 9% of Chelan residents living below the poverty line, and 16% between 1 and 1.5 times the poverty line, that is a total of 25%, one fourth of the population, that lives with limited disposable income.

Figure 2-12 1 in 4 of Chelan residents live at or below 1.5x federal poverty line



As such, Chelan Parks represent an important affordable recreational activity critical for broad accessibility.

2.3.5. Housing

Housing units in Chelan, outside the 2020 COVID period (and 2021 correction) hover around 2700 units. In terms of housing type, Chelan distinguishes itself from Chelan County and Washington State in two key aspects with, on one side, a lower proportion of single unit housing at 60% vs. 69% and 67% respectively, and, on the other side, a larger proportion of 10 and above units housing at 24% vs. 11% and 18% respectively. As a result, Chelan has a lower proportion of homes likely to enjoy their private yard and green space, and a denser housing stock, for which having access to public parks and green space in close proximity to their lodging is very important.

Table 2.1 Housing Unit Type Overview

	Chelan		Chelan county	WA
	Units	%	%	%
Single	1597	60%	69%	67%
2-5	167	6%	3%	5%
>10	645	24%	11%	18%
Mobile home	99	4%	12%	6%
Total	2682	100%	100%	100%

In the 2022 Census data, slightly above 40% of housing in Chelan was renter occupied vs. nearly 60% owner-occupied, placing Chelan at a rate of house ownership below that of Chelan county (64.7%) and Washington State (64.2%), which is consistent with a higher rate of poverty.

Table 2.2 Homeownership Rate Overview

	Chelan		Chelan county	WA
	Units	%	%	%
Owner-occupied	967	59.4%	64.7%	64.2%
Renter-occupied	661	40.6%	35.3%	35.8%

While poverty rate is higher, median rent, and median house prices are higher than in Chelan county (\$1,455 vs \$1,313 and \$633,333 vs. \$593,500 respectively), reflecting the high pressure on affordable housing experienced in Chelan.

Table 2.3 2022 Median Gross Rent (Census B25064)

	Gross Rent	% Chelan Cost
Chelan	\$1,455	
Chelan County	\$1,313	90%
WA State	\$1,630	112%

Table 2.4 Q4 2023 Median House Resale Price

	Resale Price	%
Chelan ^(*)	\$633,333	
Chelan County ^(**)	\$593,700	94%
WA State ^(**)	\$583,200	

Median home value in Chelan is \$409,000 vs. \$492,700 for Chelan county and \$569,500 for Washington State, partly due to the higher proportion of older buildings in the housing stock (28% housing structures built before 1950, vs. 23% for Chelan county and 21% for WA State)

Table 2.5 2022 Median Home Value

2022 Median Home Value (Census B25077)		
Chelan	\$409,000	
Chelan County	\$492,700	83%
WA State	\$569,500	72%

^(*) Realtor.com - numbers skewed by Chelan smaller sample size of house sold in a quarter

^(**) Housing Market Reports available on the WCRER website: <https://wcrer.be.uw.edu>

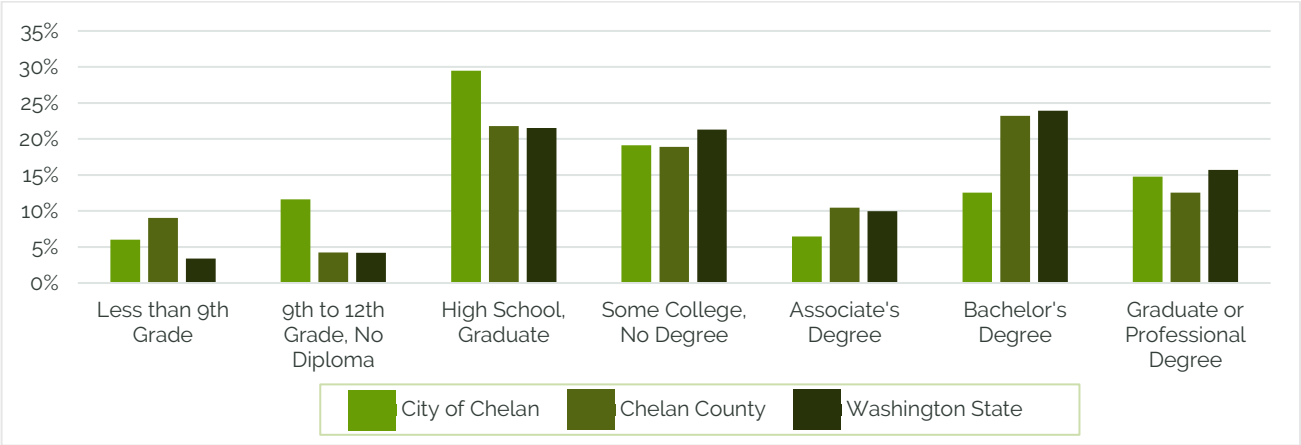
Table 2.6 Q4 2023 Median House Resale Price

	Resale Price	
Chelan ^(*)	\$633,333	
Chelan County ^(**)	\$593,700	94%
WA State ^(**)	\$583,200	92%

2.3.6. Education

Figure 2.12 highlights the educational attainment for those over 25 years of age in Chelan, compared with Chelan County and Washington state. Of the population that received a Bachelor's degree or higher, the most common fields to receive a Bachelor's degree in were science and engineering, business, education, or arts and humanities.

Figure 2-13 Educational Attainment for Population 25 Years and Older



2.3.7. Disability

20.9% of Chelan residents have a disability which is higher than Chelan County (14.7%) and Washington State (13.5%), and is consistent with an age pyramid skewing older. Vision (8.8%), hearing (7.8%) and difficulty walking (6.2%) are the top three reported disability categories, which are important to consider in planning public spaces in Chelan. Disability impacts most people at some point in their lives, whether it is as people age or having a loved one experience disability. The more accessible communities are built to be, the more they will serve the entire population in different phases of life.

2.3.8. Health

Understanding the status of a community's health can help inform policies related to recreation and fitness. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings and Roadmaps provided annual insight on the general health of national, state, and county populations Chelan County is ranked in the highest range among counties in Washington, in 2020, it ranked 9th out of 38 Washington Counties for Health Outcomes. Figure 2-12 below provides additional information regarding the County's health data as it may relate to parks, recreation, and community services. "The strengths indicated below are those areas where Chelan County ranked higher than top US performers or the State of Washington. The areas to explore are those where the County ranked lower than the State or top US performers.

Ranked 9th
for health
outcomes.

Source: Robert
Wood Johnson
Foundation

^(*) Realtor.com - numbers skewed by Chelan smaller sample size of house sold in a quarter
^(**) Housing Market Reports available on the WCRER website: <https://wcrer.be.uw.edu>

Source: American Community Survey 2021 5-year estimates, Table S1501

Food insecurity is a useful indicator of health in a community, as lacking consistent access to sufficient, nutritious, and balanced food is correlated to negative health outcomes such as weight gain and premature mortality. In both Chelan County and Washington State, 10% of all residents are identified as food insecure, with even higher rates of 1 in 6 (17%) amongst children.



57%

of Chelan's school children receive a free or reduced-price lunch according to the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction

Figure 2-14 Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Chelan County Health Report



In 2021, a Healthy Youth Survey was completed 45% of all 10th grade students in Chelan County. A positive health indicator in this report showed that overall, Chelan County high school sophomores had higher rates of days per week that they spent being physically active for at least 60 minutes, with 20.1% doing so 7 days per week. Only 8.5% were physically active zero days per week. Additionally, 16.6% do not watch tv or movies on an average school day, compared to 8.8% statewide. These results together point toward students spending more time being active, rather than using technology and screens. The Chelan parks system has an opportunity to increase outdoor recreational opportunities and promote this health trend for young people in the community.

2.3.9. Transportation & Mobility

The table below shows the means of transportation for the populations of Chelan, Chelan County, and Washington.

Table 2.7 2022 Means of Transportation to Work by Age (Census b08101)

	Chelan		County		State	
Car, truck, van – alone	1,463	71%	28,092	76%	2,415,775	63%
Car, truck, van - carpool	66	3%	2,913	8%	334,984	9%
Public transportation	N/A	N/A	258	1%	120,911	3%
Walked	236	11%	1,458	4%	120,519	3%
Other	48	2%	1,123	3%	65,280	2%
WFH	241	12%	2,980	8%	786,120	20%
Total	2,054	100%	36,824	100%	3,843,589	100%

Chelan distinguishes itself both from Chelan County and Washington State in that there are 11% of residents walking to work compared to 4% and 3% respectively.

In Chelan county, that difference is roughly made up by the excess workers commuting by car (84% vs. 74%), while the same difference with Washington State seems to be made up by the excess of adults working from home (20% vs 12%).

While bicycle commuting numbers are low in Chelan (2%), they are similar to rates from varied cities prone to promote bicycling as a means of transportation (e.g., Redmond – 2%, Seattle – 3%, Edmonds – 2%). By not including bicycling for leisure and by minors, the rate of people commuting to work on 2-wheelers may not be reflective of the total propensity to bike in the Chelan community. That said, increasing trail connections in Chelan could raise the amount of people using trails for active transportation commutes, whether bicycling or walking.

Furthermore, in the formerly mentioned Healthy Youth Survey from 2021, which surveyed high school sophomores in Chelan County, 25% of 10th graders (which may be reflective of high schoolers in general) walk and bike more frequently than statewide rates of 15%. 25.1% of Chelan County sophomores walk to school every day, compared with 15.4% statewide and 2.8% bike to school every day, compared with 1.7% statewide.*

Table 2.8 Two-Wheelers Usage Comparison (Census b08101)

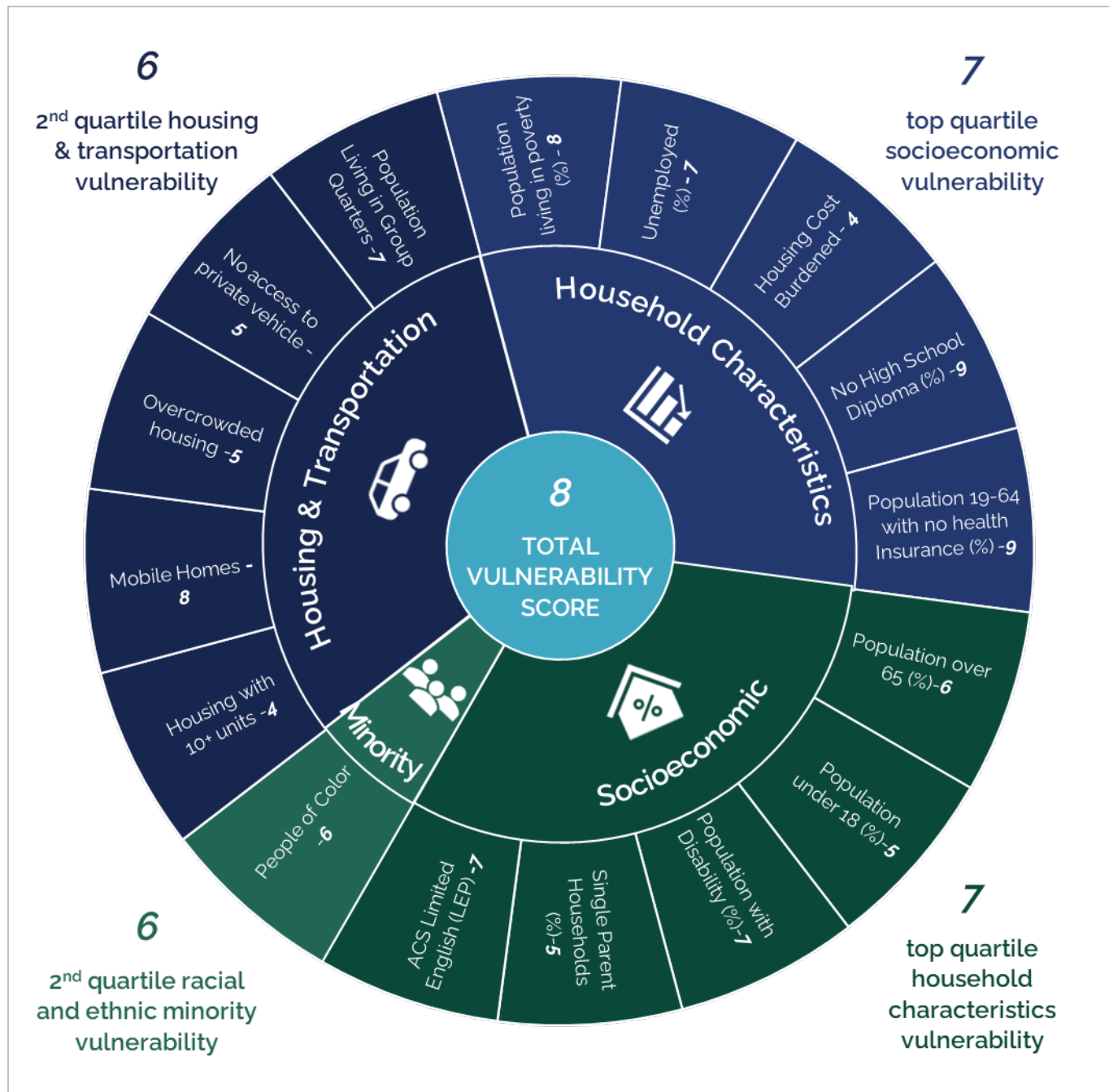
	Chelan		Redmond		Seattle		Edmonds	
Total	2,054		38,785		458,681		21,991	
Two-wheelers	48	2%	789	2%	15,781	3%	376	2%

2.3.10. Social Vulnerability Index

The Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) is a measure developed by the Center for Disease Control (CDC) that compiles US Census data to determine overall social vulnerability of individual census tracts and counties, focusing on four different areas of vulnerability. Figure 2.10 shows the CDC Social Vulnerability Ratings for the City of Chelan. Compared to the rest of Washington census tracts, Chelan has a high social vulnerability index overall, in particular in terms of socioeconomics and household characteristics.

* Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, County Health Rankings 2024, <http://www.Countyhealthrankings.org>

Figure 2-15 Chelan's Social Vulnerability Index (2020 data)



Methodology

Chelan captures three census tracts (9603.01, 9603.02, 9603.03). The Washington state database was used that ranks Census tracts within the state to enable mapping and analysis of relative vulnerability within peer census tracts of WA State. Percentiles were obtained by census tract by dimension, then weighted averaged with respective population to obtain Chelan's percentile scores for each of the 16 dimensions

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/ Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry/ Geospatial Research, Analysis, and Services Program. CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020 Database Washington

2.4 Economy

2.4.1. Employment and occupations

From 2020 to 2021, employment in Chelan, WA grew at a rate of 1.53%, from 2.16k employees to 2.2k employees.

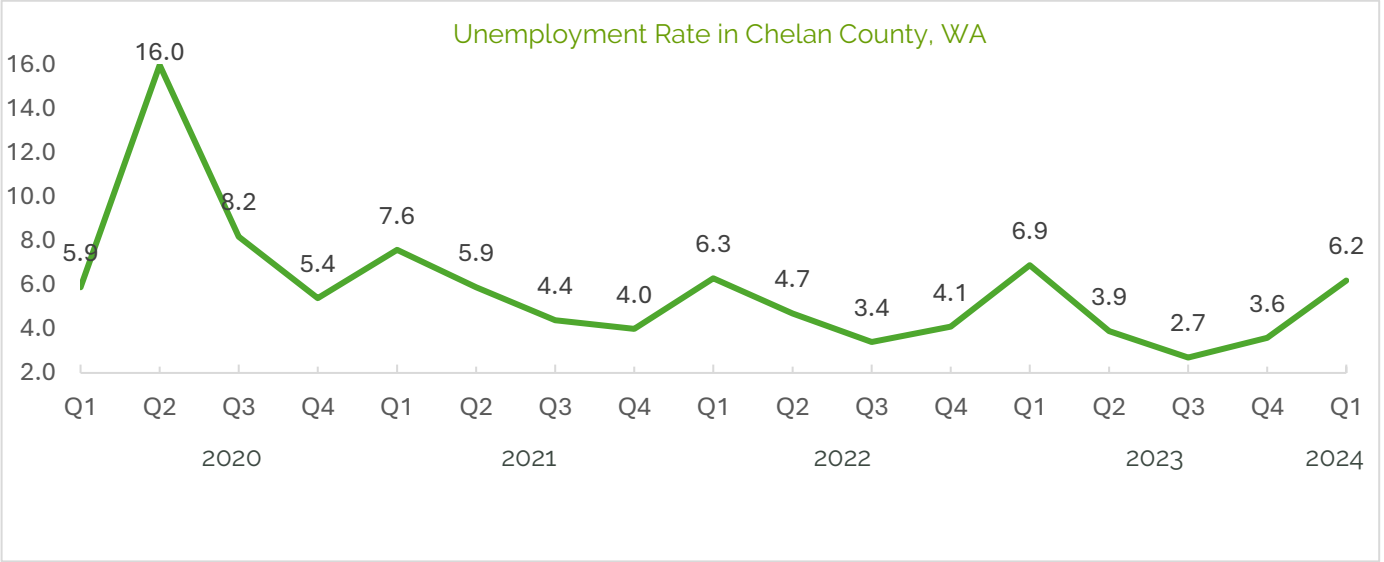
Approximately 57% of the population was employed in white collar positions, which encompass jobs where employees typically perform managerial, technical, administrative, and/or professional capacities. Another 29% of the City's population were employed in blue collar positions, such as construction, maintenance, etc. Finally, 14% Chelan's residents were employed in the service industry. An estimated 78.1% of working residents drive alone to work, while 15% of residents spent seven plus hours a week commuting to and from work.

In 2021, an estimated 9.4% of the City of Chelan's population was unemployed, higher than the State of Washington (5.4%) and the United States (6.2%).

.Chelan, and Chelan County at large, have a significant seasonal employment driven by its tourism and agriculture economy peaking in the summer. Outside of the abnormal Covid recession year of 2020, unemployment tends to rise to 6-7% in winters, to go down in spring and summer to 2-3%, level representing full employment. So much so, that Chelan is a net importer of labor during the peak season.

The Parks department falls squarely in this trend going from 12 full time employees year-round to adding more than 40 seasonal employees in the summer.

Figure 2-16 Unemployment Rate in Chelan County, WA



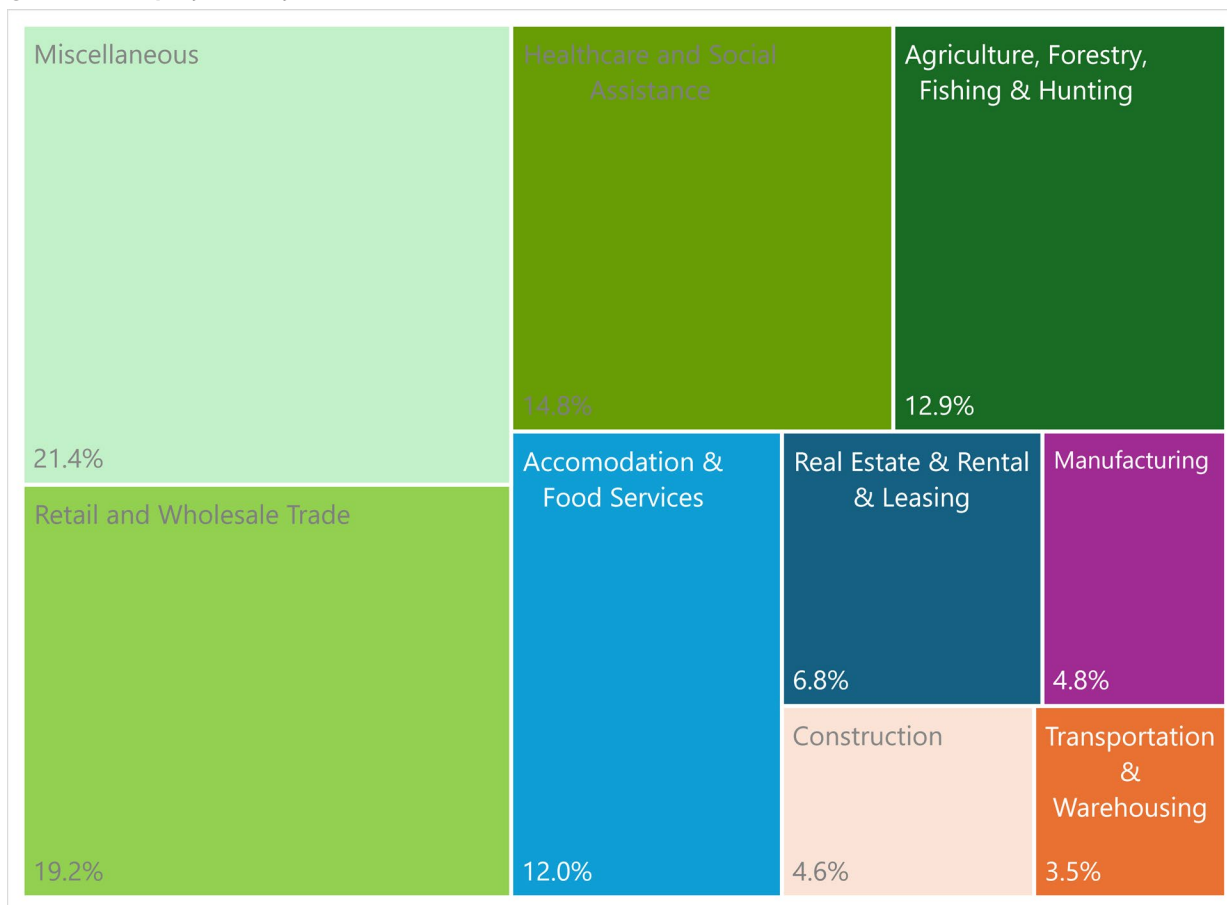
2.4.2. Employment by industries

"Lake Chelan is fortunate to be a major destination resort in Washington State. The valley plays host to over 4 million visitors a year. The total economic impact tourism creates in total spending is over \$417 million. This industry employs over 5,000 people in our county. Tourism is Lake Chelan's second largest industry cluster in the valley, second only to our world impacting agricultural industry.³"

From 2020 to 2021, employment in Chelan, WA grew at a rate of 1.53%, from 2.16k employees to 2.2k employees.

The most common employment sectors for those who live in Chelan, WA, are Health Care & Social Assistance (325 people), Retail Trade (306 people), and Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing & Hunting (284 people). This chart shows the share breakdown of the primary industries for residents of Chelan, WA, though some of these residents may live in Chelan, WA and work somewhere else. Census data is tagged to a residential address, not a work address.

Figure 2-17 Employment by Industries



³ Lake Chelan Chamber of Commerce. (n.d.). *Economy & business*. <https://www.lakechelan.com/area/economy-business/>
 Census Bureau ACS 5-year Estimate, retrieved from dataUSA, https://datausa.io/profile/geo/chelan-wa?race-income-income_geo=incomeRace1#employment, April 24, 2024

2.4.3. Regional Transport Access

The City of Chelan is served by two primary highway systems. U.S. Route 97 predominantly traverses in a north-south direction following the Columbia River, along with its bypass, U.S. 97A, following the west side of the Columbia up through Chelan. This helps the flow of traffic through the central regions of the state, connecting Oregon to British Columbia. These highways closely follow the path of the Columbia River as they approach the Chelan area. U.S. 97 connects with U.S. Highway 2 in Wenatchee, and along with its other bypass State Route (SR) 970, which connects to Interstate-90. Traveling to Chelan from the Seattle/ Everett region takes approximately three and a half hours. It is an approximately three-hour drive from Spokane and the Tri-Cities.

Link Transit (Route 21) also serves the City of Chelan with approximately hourly service throughout the day.

Lake Chelan Airport is nearby and jointly owned by the City of Chelan and Port of Chelan County. It is a general aviation public-use airport with no commercial service. The largest commercial airport nearby is Pangborn Memorial Airport, 44 miles to the south in East Wenatchee, which has a daily shuttle service to SeaTac

Figure 2-18 Chelan Transport Access Map⁴



⁴ Washington State roads map with highway freeway large scale free. (n.d.). Road atlas US detailed map highway state province cities towns free use. <https://us-canad.com/washington-road-map.html>

2.4.4. Agriculture

Figure 2-19 Chelan's Apple Orchards



Lake Chelan is agriculturally recognized worldwide for having some of the best soil that grows up to 10,000 acres worth of pumpkins, apples, cherries, pears, apricots, peaches, and wine grapes, just to name a few!

The Chelan region is known for producing hearty apples of exquisite quality, flavor, texture, color, and shape. Such beautiful fruit is a product of a unique temperate microclimate. Orchards line the shores of the 50-mile long lake, whose deep waters cool hot summer days and warm the air temperature in winter. Wine vineyards are the other most well-known crop grown in Lake Chelan Valley boasting steep terrains, breathtaking views, and crops of top quality.

Figure 2-20 Chelan Wine Valley



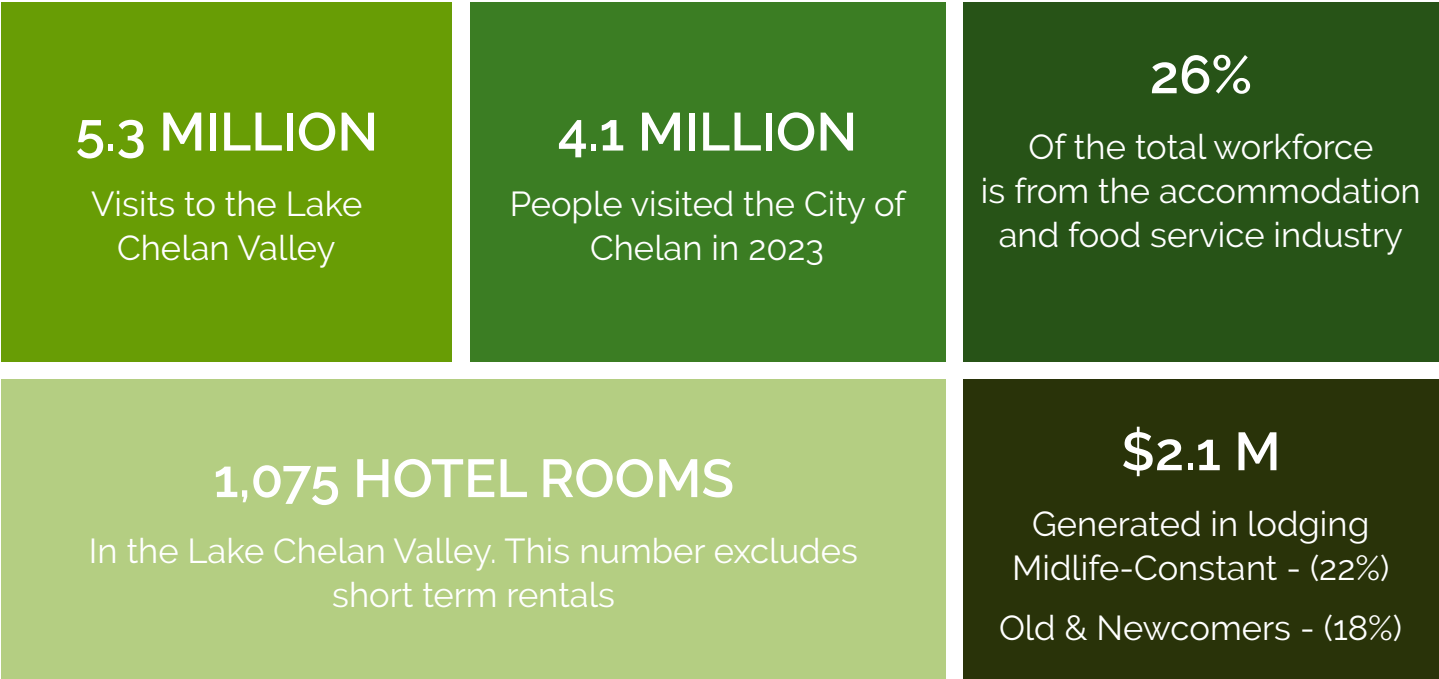
The local wineries spearhead a vibrant agri-tourism industry. Along with wine tasting, many wineries also offer a full experience of touring their vineyards, showing a behind the scenes look at how the grapes are harvested, processed, and turned into wine, and even offering food and wine pairing sittings.

2.4.5. Tourism

Tourism is a key part of Chelan's economy, with the lake, adjacent parks, trails, and a vibrant agri-tourism industry serving a prime attraction for visitors.

Tourism provides employment to roughly a fourth of the Chelan workforce.

Figure 2-21 Chelan's Tourism Key Numbers



Covid was a massive air pocket for the tourism economy in Chelan as everywhere in 2020 and 2021. The RV Park closed down for a period with revenues plummeting as a result. The Golf course was under a special legislation that allowed it to re-open earlier than most other activities, leading to very high traffic (so few options were open).

However, by 2023 the tourism economy in Chelan had rebounded. According to the Chelan Chamber of Commerce, Chelan saw 4.1m visits in 2023 and the lodging revenue reached \$27m in 2022 vs \$16m in 2017, a 71% growth, double the lodging revenue growth rate from Chelan County over the same period.

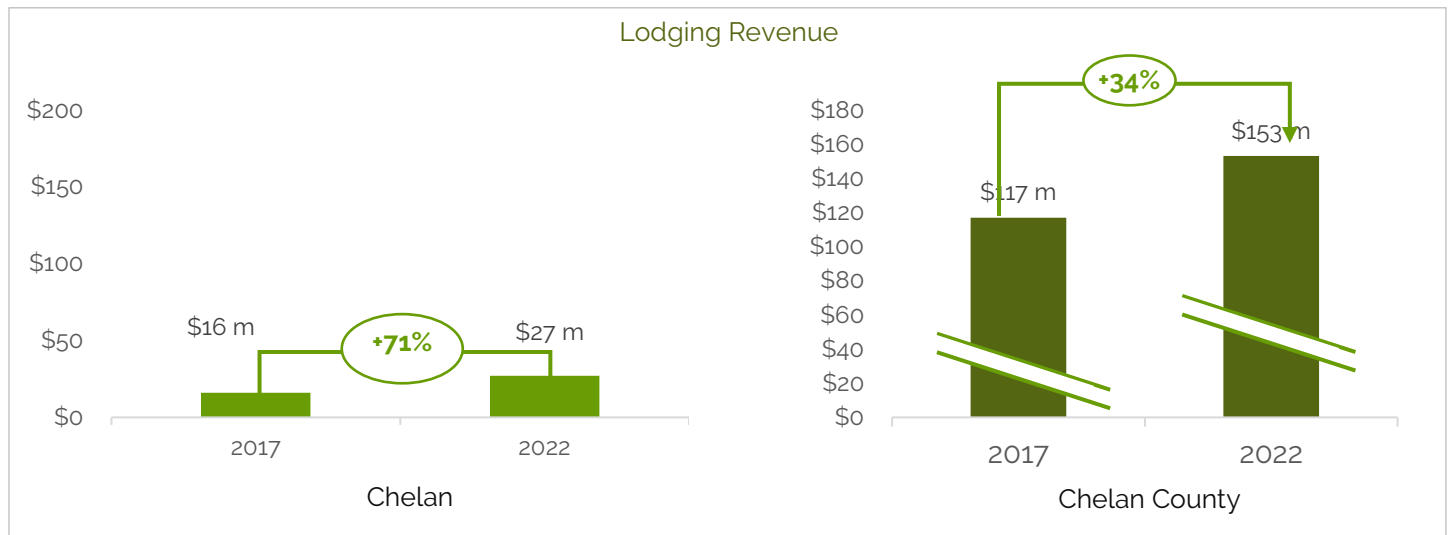
After "Accommodation and Food Service", visitors to Chelan County spend most on "Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation."⁵ Chelan Parks offers accommodations, recreation, and our concessionaires offer food service.

"Increasingly, the amenities of life are becoming the essentials. The ability of a community to offer a high quality of life outside of the workplace is critical in attracting knowledgeable workers. As the Inland Northwest transitions from a resource-based economy, highly educated and creative people will become our biggest asset. Quality of life takes many forms and this category covers several of these measures, from arts and leisure activities to recreation and tourism."⁶ Thus the same amenities that attract tourists help to make Chelan an attractive place to live, work, and play.

⁵ Dean Runyan Associates. (2014). *WA state county travel impacts and visitor volume 1991-2014*.

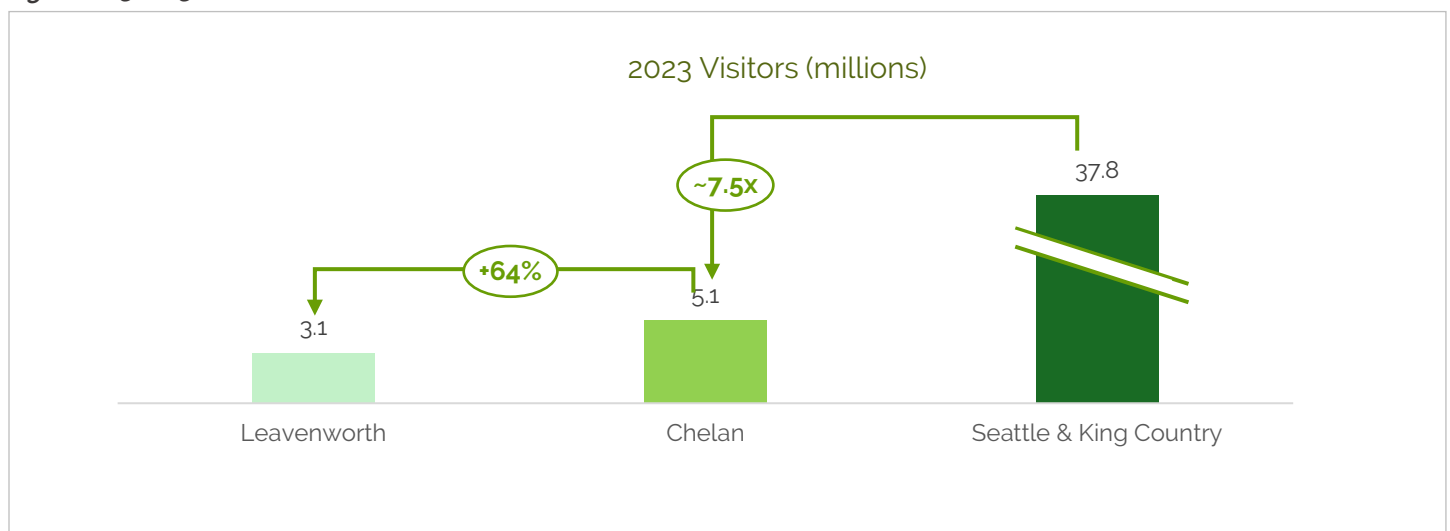
⁶ Chelan Douglas Trends. (n.d.). *Chelan-Douglas trends*. Chelan-Douglas Trends. <https://chelandouglastrends.com/category.cfm?id=1>

Figure 2-22 Lodging Revenue



To put this in perspective, Seattle and King County received a total of 37.8 million visitors came in 2023, a 9% increase from 2022 reaching 90.2% of 2019 levels

Figure 2-23 2023 Visitors (millions)



Source: NAICS 721 Accommodation

Table 2.9 Lodging Comparisons

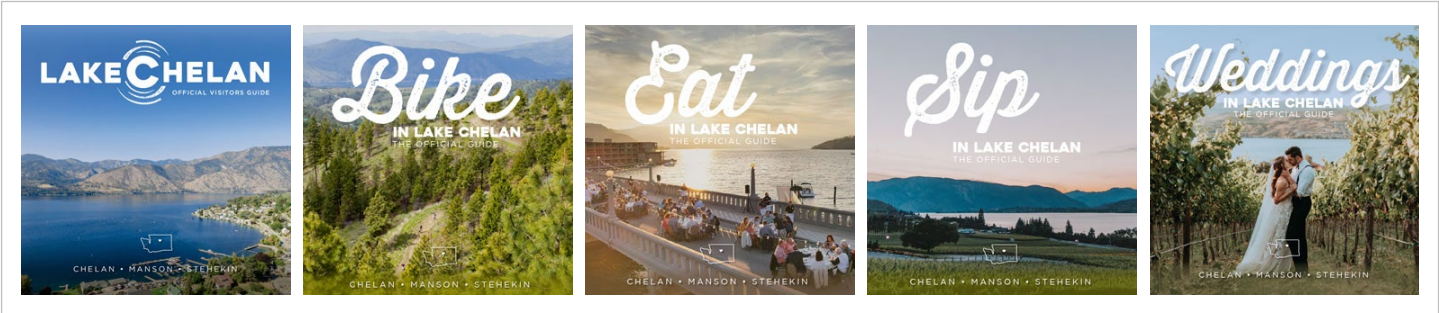
	Leavenworth ⁽¹⁾	Chelan	Seattle & King County ⁽²⁾
Resident	2,000	4,470	2,267m
Hotel Rooms	1,238	1,075	
Occupancy (000s)	4,288	3,672	
Lodging Tax (\$m)	\$3.717m	\$2.117m (city limit)	

Under state law, the Hotel- Motel Lodging Tax is in two parts. The first is the basic 2% levy, and is taken as a credit against the state sales tax of 6.5%. The second part of the Hotel – Motel Lodging tax in Chelan is 3%, and is in addition to the prevailing sales tax rate. In 2023, the City of Chelan collected \$2.1M in lodging taxes. By law, the lodging tax is distributed to activities promoting tourism and to operations and capital expenditures of tourism related facilities owned or operated by a municipality or non-profit organizations.

The Chelan Chamber of Commerce is the execution arm for the tourism promotion. Among other things, the Chamber of Commerce operates the <https://www.lakechelan.com/> website as well as events through the year and web marketing campaigns. The Chamber of Commerce gets a large portion of the Lodging Tax for these services.

Parks department gets the other large portion of the Lodging Tax mostly for funding capital investment projects and debt service on past capital investment projects, thus recognizing that the Chelan Parks are highly related to tourism visits.

Figure 2.1: Tourist Guides offered by the Chamber of Commerce



⁽¹⁾ Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce, [2024 Economic, Visitor & Area Profile](#)

⁽²⁾ [Visit Seattle Press Release, retrieved at https://visitseattle.org/press/press-releases/visit-seattle-celebrates-record-setting-8-2-billion-in-visitor-spending-at-annual-meeting](#)

Strong synergies exist between Parks and the Tourism economy, as most tourists typically visit one or several of the Parks during their stay and spend recreational time there. Whether it's the public beaches of Lakeside Park and Don Morse Park or the water vessel mooring in the Marina Park, many tourists begin their day's recreational activities at one of the City of Chelan's public parks.

Figure 2.2: Parks and Tourism Flywheel (the virtuous cycle of park investments)



As one would expect, the economic benefits of Chelan's Parks are commensurate with the touristic visits that Chelan's exquisite location and landscape attract.

It is common now for Park Systems to conduct studies quantifying the economic windfall of their parks system. The Parks department commissioned such a study in 2022 from the boutique consulting firm Earth Economics which, as a starting point for such analyses, focused on the economic impact of the Golf Course.



Figure 2-24 Lake Chelan Golf Course (LCGC)-Economic-Impact-in-2020



Case study: Lake Tahoe has a People Problem



The article delves into the mounting challenges facing Lake Tahoe, a once-idyllic resort town now grappling with a housing crisis that threatens its livability. Fueled by a pandemic influx of remote workers and second-home buyers, the region has witnessed skyrocketing real estate prices, pushing locals out of their communities. With rents on the rise and a severe housing shortage, residents are forced to seek refuge in more affordable cities, leaving behind a struggling workforce and businesses grappling with staffing shortages.



Despite its scenic beauty and allure as a tourist destination, Lake Tahoe's future hangs in the balance as it grapples with a fundamental question: who is Tahoe for? The article highlights the need for concerted efforts to address the housing crisis, with developers working on projects aimed at providing affordable housing options for local workers. However, officials caution that meaningful change will take time and a multi-faceted approach, emphasizing the importance of balancing environmental preservation with community needs to ensure the long-term sustainability of the region.

2.4.6. Tapestry Segmentation

We will conclude this 360 degree historic, geographic, social and economic deep-dive into the Chelan community by the Tapestry Segmentation.

The 2021 ESRI-Business Analyst offers a deeper understanding of the community through a tool called Tapestry. Market-Segmentation. This analysis provides an accurate, comprehensive profile of US consumers based on socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. There are typically several dominant tapestry. Segments in each community. In Chelan, this group is known as the "Southern Satellites" – which makes up 27% of the population. There are two other groups that make up a large segment of the population - Midlife Constants (22%)-and-Old & Newcomers (18%).

Anguiano, D. (2023, February 12). "Lake Tahoe has a people problem": How a resort town became unlivable. The Guardian. <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2023/feb/12/lake-tahoe-resort-housing-crisis>

Southern-Satellites - (27%)

“

This market features singles Southern Satellites is the second largest market found in rural settlements but within metropolitan areas located primarily in the South. This market is typically slightly older, settled married-couple families, who own their homes. Two-thirds of the homes are single-family structures, almost a third are mobile homes. Median household income and home value are below average. Workers are employed in a variety of industries, such as manufacturing, health care, retail trade, and construction, with higher proportions in mining and agriculture than the US. Residents enjoy country living, preferring outdoor activities and DIY home

Midlife-Constant - (22%)

“

Midlife Constants residents are seniors, at or approaching retirement, with below average labor force participation and above average net worth. Although located in predominantly metropolitan areas, they live outside the central cities, in smaller communities. Their lifestyle is more country than urban. They are generous, but not spendthrifts.

Old & Newcomers - (18%)

“

This market features singles' lifestyles, on a budget. The focus is more on convenience than consumerism, economy over acquisition. Old and Newcomers is composed of neighborhoods in transition, populated by renters who are just beginning their careers or retiring. Some are still in college; some are taking adult education classes. They support charity causes and are environmentally conscious. Age is not always obvious from their choices.



Source: 2021 Esri Business Analyst