

HOT TOPICS

CLARK COUNTY MULTIFAMILY MARKET ROUNDUP

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Welcome to the September 2025 apartment market update. This report includes data from economic forecasts, rental rates, area population growth, units needed, completed rental units, sales, and financing.



VACANCY

- The latest estimated vacancy rate for 5+ units in the city of Vancouver is pegged at 7.4%.¹
- The Q2 Clark County market average vacancy was 4.3%, according to CoStar.¹
- Estimated vacancies for 5+ units in the Portland metro area stood at 7% at the start of September, with average US vacancies at 8.1% and nationwide average vacancies in 4- and 5-star properties at 10.9%.¹

ECONOMIC FORECAST

- In July, the State of Washington Office of Financial Management projected revenue collections through 2029 decreased by \$845 million.² The budget for 2025–27 was increased through tax hikes to \$77.9 billion.³ The Washington State Employment Department reported that nonfarm jobs increased by 4,800 in July compared to the same period a year earlier.⁴
- The US Unemployment Rate for July was 4.2%⁵, while the latest Washington State data indicated July's Washington State unemployment rate was 4.5% while Clark County's was 4.7%, down from 4.9% in July of 2024.⁶
- As reported on August 12, the US CPI for July was 2.7%.⁷

RENT RATES

- According to CoStar, nationwide 12-month asking rent growth was 0.9% as of September 3.¹ CoStar's data conflicts with Apartmentlist.com reports that national year-over-year median rent growth was (-0.9%) through August.⁸
- CoStar forecasts US rent growth reaching 2.8% by the end of 2027.
- A Q2 2025 University of Washington survey⁹ of 10,510 one-bedroom units in Clark County reported Q2 average rents of \$1,474 (\$2.11 PSF), an increase of 2.93% from the previous year. Additionally, 19,713 two-bedroom units were surveyed, with rents averaging \$1.72 PSF, a 2.38% increase from a year earlier.⁹
- Costar reports rents grew 0.9% on average in unincorporated Clark County from September 2024 to September 2025.¹
- In the City of Vancouver, CoStar reports rents increased 1.5% from September 2024 to September 2025. Monthly submarket effective rents currently stand at \$1,720.¹
- Vancouver is now the Portland metro area's largest submarket by unit count due to the recent construction boom there, which expanded its inventory by 53.7% over the last 10 years.

Rent Forecast for the Portland MSA

- CoStar reports that rents year-over-year in March 2025 were up 0.4% despite a 4- and 5-star vacancy rate of 10.2%. CoStar now forecasts positive rent growth through 2028, with rents increasing about 2% in 2025 and between 3–4% annually from 2026 through 2028.¹
- CoStar states that the City of Vancouver submarket has reached a floor and should continue a correction to long-run averages by year end.

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AREA POPULATION GROWTH

- Population forecasts indicate Clark County is projected to reach 718,154 by 2045 compared to the current population of 527,400, reflecting a 1.4% growth rate model adopted by the county council on May 2, 2023.¹⁰ Similarly, the Metro Planning organization forecasts Multnomah County will reach 970,485 by 2045, up from 831,459 in 2020, an overall growth rate of 16.7% over 25 years.¹¹

Units Needed

Clark County must update its 2025 Comprehensive Plan by December 31, 2025.¹² This work will include climate change planning and a plan for housing growth.¹³ Washington is forcing cities and counties to work together to meet the needs of all income brackets using an online “Housing for All Planning Tool.”¹⁴ The state has determined that at a medium population growth level, Clark County faces a housing need of 103,698 additional units by 2045.¹⁵

New Construction

Here are recently completed and forecast multifamily units (5+ units, excluding condos) according to data provided by CoStar¹:

- Clark County past 8 qtrs:** 216 units
- Clark County forecast for the next 8 qtrs:** 0 units
- Clark County proposed next 8 qtrs:** 186
- City of Vancouver Past 8 qtrs:** 3,678
- City of Vancouver forecast for the next 8 qtrs:** 623 units

The City of Vancouver is behind its goal to build 2,000 units annually in the city. On August 18, the City Council learned from staff that 408 permits for multifamily units have been issued in 2025 with only 484 completed—less than 25% of the city’s goal. As a result, Council voted to delay payments on system development fees until full occupancy.¹⁶

Aaron Kirk Douglas is HFO’s Director of Market Intelligence. Todd Tully is a multifamily broker focusing on Vancouver and Clark County. Follow Aaron’s HFO industry trend posts at <https://www.linkedin.com/company/hfo-investment-real-estate> and subscribe to his Washington owner newsletter on [LinkedIn](#).

Todd’s Tips

for Navigating Today’s Market

- Insurance costs are rising** ⇒ Regularly shop policies to stay competitive.
- Rent control and new legislation** ⇒ Partner with a skilled real estate attorney to stay compliant.
- Tenant retention pressures** ⇒ With new supply entering the market, boost retention through unit upgrades (flooring, fixtures, paint, cabinets) and property amenities (dog parks, wash stations, bike storage).
- If you use third-party management** ⇒ Sit down with them to review rent control laws, ensure compliance, and adjust strategies to minimize revenue impacts.

*Give Todd a call if you would like more detailed information about the **Vancouver market** or tips on what owners are doing to save money and reduce operating expenses. He can be reached at 503-241-5541.*

Sources:

¹ CoStar, accessible to subscribers.

² Washington State Office of Financial Management: [Projected state revenue through 2029 down by \\$845 million](#).

³ Tri-City Regional Chamber of Commerce: [Washington’s 2025–27 “Band-Aid Budget”: New Taxes, Cuts, and Future Fiscal Risks](#)

⁴ Washington State Office of Financial Management: [Washington Monthly Economic Report \(August 2025\)](#).

⁵ The US Bureau of Labor Statistics: [The Employment Situation \(September 2025\)](#).

⁶ Washington Employment Security Department: [Monthly Employment Report](#).

⁷ US Bureau of Labor Statistics: [Consumer Price Index Summary](#).

⁸ Apartmentlist.com: [National Rent Report September 2025](#).

⁹ University of Washington Center for Real Estate: [Washington State Apartment Market Report \(2nd Qtr 2025\)](#).

¹⁰ *The Columbian*: [“Clark County Council rejects state’s population estimates, use figures from Building Industry Association of Clark County.”](#)

¹¹ Metro: [Portland Area Population and Housing Forecast](#).

¹² Municipal Research and Services Center: [Comprehensive Planning](#).

¹³ Municipal Research and Services Center: [Climate Report](#).

¹⁴ State of Washington Commerce Department Housing Planning Tool (HAPT): [Updating GMA Housing Elements](#).

¹⁵ Clark County: [Clark County Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update](#).

¹⁶ City of Vancouver: [City Council Meeting August 18, 2025](#). ♦