

Snohomish County

Tomorrow

A GROWTH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL



SNOHOMISH COUNTY TOMORROW 2004 GROWTH MONITORING REPORT

**Prepared for Snohomish County Tomorrow
Steering Committee Discussion on July 27, 2005**

Report Highlights

Highlights of the growth and development trends described in this year's Snohomish County Tomorrow Growth Monitoring Report include the following:

POPULATION:

- With 38,776 new residents added during the past four years, Snohomish County continues to exhibit the fastest rate of population growth among the four central Puget Sound counties since 2000.
- Most of Snohomish County's population growth since 2000 is attributable to net migration. However, at 54%, this percentage is considerably less than what was observed between 1990 and 2000 (66%).
- Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) have accommodated 87% of countywide population growth since 1992.
- Only 13% of the County's population growth since 1992 has occurred outside the UGA – considerably less than pre-GMA trend forecasts once anticipated (28%).
- Population growth in Snohomish County since 2001 is slightly lower (1.6%) than the new 2002-2025 initial GMA population forecast would indicate.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT:

- Recorded formal plat activity countywide reached a thirteen-year high in 2004 with over 4,000 single family lots created.
- Both net and gross single family residential densities in urban areas are higher in recent years when compared to those observed during the latter half of the 1990's.
- 18.4% of the County's total permitted housing units since 1990 have been located outside the UGA in rural/resource areas. This rural/resource share has been dropping in recent years: starting in 1996, it has stayed well below the 14-year average of 18.4%.

EMPLOYMENT:

- Between 1990 and 2004, a total of 47,400 non-agricultural jobs were added to the Snohomish County economy, amounting to a 28% increase in employment (compared with a 38% increase in total population during this same time period).
- After four years of annual declines in total non-agricultural employment within Snohomish County after 1998, Snohomish County has begun to experience modest job growth conditions once again, beginning in 2002. Countywide employment increased by nearly 2% between 2003 and 2004.
- Snohomish County's unemployment rate has also improved, with the average annual unemployment rate dropping from 8.0% in 2003 to 5.6% in 2004.

ANNEXATIONS:

- Annexation activity in Snohomish County since 2001 through the end of 2004 has been at historically low levels, largely due to the legal uncertainty in annexation methods caused by the Washington State Supreme Court in early 2002.
- Twelve years into the initial 20-year GMA planning period, cities have annexed only 20% of their UGAs.