

Snohomish County Tomorrow

A GROWTH MANAGEMENT ADVISORY COUNCIL



SNOHOMISH COUNTY TOMORROW

1999 GROWTH MONITORING REPORT

**Presented to the Snohomish County Tomorrow
Steering Committee on December 15, 1999**

*Administration Building M/S 604
3000 Rockefeller Avenue
Everett, WA 98201-4046
(425) 388-3311*

Report Highlights

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

POPULATION

- The county's population has grown by nearly 118,000 residents (or 25%) since 1990, to reach an estimated total population of 583,300 as of 1999.
- This absolute increase in the county's population since 1990 is second largest among all counties in Washington State (after King County), and the 25th largest among all counties in the nation.
- Net migration to Snohomish County since 1990 is estimated to have exceeded that experienced by King County during the same time period.
- Snohomish County accommodated 35% of the total regional population growth estimated during the past year – a percentage that exceeded the share recorded by each of the 5 other counties in the region (King, Pierce, Kitsap, Skagit and Island).
- Since 1998, a slight majority of the county's population has resided within cities, reversing a pattern where unincorporated area residents have exceeded incorporated area residents for every year since 1978.
- Snohomish County's 20-year GMA population forecast is thus far on track, with estimated 1999 countywide population differing from 1999 forecasted population by less than ½ percent.
- Slightly over one-half of the 20-year population growth forecasted for cities has been accommodated by cities during the first 7 years of the 1992-2012 GMA planning period.
- Rural population growth is slightly higher (by 3.2%) than targeted for 1999, but considerably less than pre-GMA trend forecasts once showed.

EMPLOYMENT

- Snohomish County has gained a total of 50,900 non-agricultural jobs since 1990 (amounting to a 30% increase), to reach a countywide total of 220,100 as of September 1999.
- Service sector employment has risen to 21% of total county non-agricultural employment by 1999 (up from 14% in 1980), while manufacturing employment has dropped to 26% from 33% over the same time period.
- Snohomish County's unemployment rate has remained below 5% since 1997.
- Employment growth within Snohomish County is proceeding at a faster pace than originally forecasted -- as of 1998, 54% of the county's projected 1990-2012 employment growth has been attained.

ANNEXATIONS

- Seven years into the 20-year GMA planning period, cities have only annexed 11% of their UGAs.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

- New residential lots in recorded formal plat subdivisions countywide this year reached the highest level since reporting of this measure began in 1992.
- Newly recorded lots in the unincorporated portions of UGAs account for the majority of lots in formal plat subdivisions recorded countywide in 1998 (54%) and 1999 (52%).
- The number of residential lots in currently proposed formal and short plat subdivision applications that are located outside the UGA rose to 25% of the countywide total – up from 17% of the countywide total as reported last year, due to a resurgence in rural cluster subdivision applications this past year.
- Both gross and net residential densities observed within recorded single family formal plat subdivisions since 1995 are increasing within the UGA, almost exclusively due to the density gains occurring in the unincorporated portions of UGAs since 1995.
- In 1998, housing units permitted countywide reached 9,046 – the largest number of housing units permitted in a single year so far this decade.
- Housing units permitted in rural areas of the county dropped to 14% of the countywide total in 1998.

HOUSING MARKET

- In Fall 1999, the annual percentage change in apartment rents increased to 6.3% (resulting in an average apartment rent countywide of \$729), even while the county apartment vacancy rate rose to 5.9%.
- The number of multi-family units permitted countywide was 4,220 in 1998, more than double the amount permitted in 1997.
- 1999 apartment rent prices in Snohomish County have increased faster in all subareas than median household income.
- The 1998 countywide median housing sales price was \$166,000, up 7.1% from the 1997 median price of \$155,000.
- In contrast, median household income increased by only 2.1% between 1997 and 1998.
- At \$180,000, 1998 median home prices in rural Snohomish County exceeded the median sales prices recorded in all UGAs, and rural housing sales prices also increased faster between 1997 and 1998 than both the countywide and overall UGA rates of increase.