



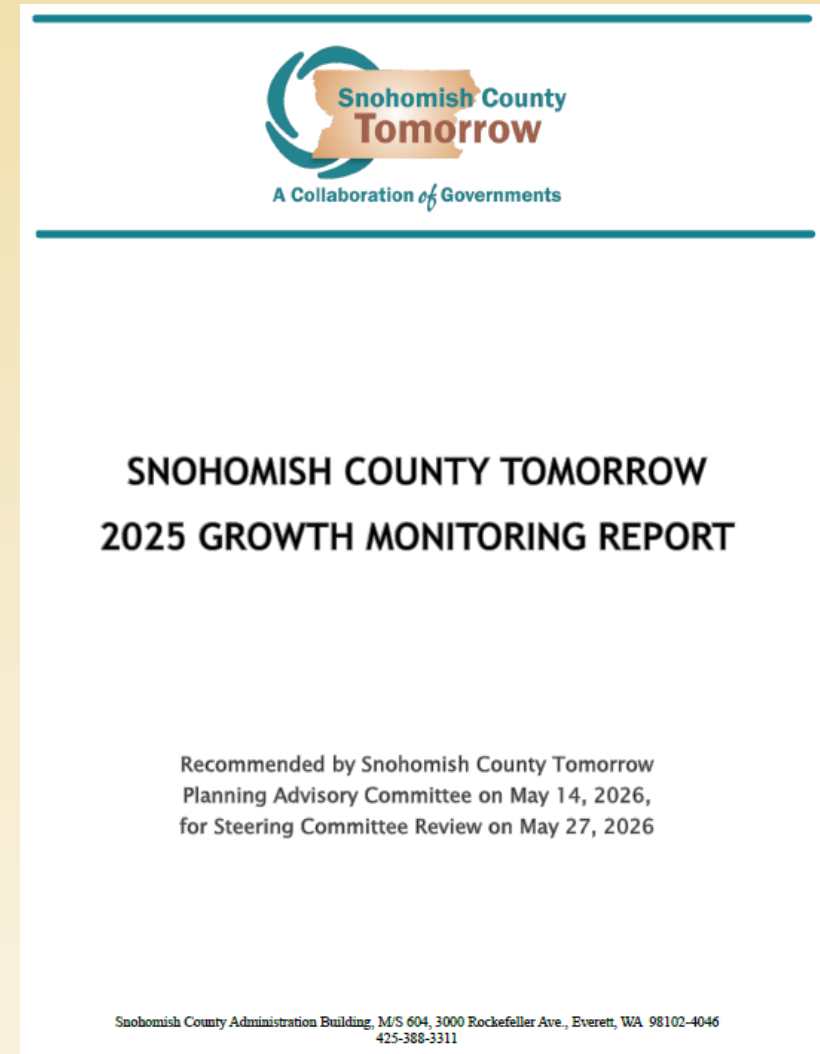
SNOHOMISH COUNTY TOMORROW 2025 GROWTH MONITORING REPORT

Snohomish County Council
Planning and Community Development Committee
July 21, 2026

Background

SCT Growth Monitoring Report (GMR) is called for by Snohomish County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) GF-5 & Appendix C (Long Term Monitoring)

SCT Planning Advisory Committee approved the 2025 GMR for transmittal as an information item to the Steering Committee for review and discussion on May 27, 2026



Background

- ❑ Report covers growth and development trends through 2025
 - ❑ Assesses early progress towards 2044 initial population, housing and employment growth targets in the Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs)
 - ❑ Contains information on annexations and residential development trends
 - ❑ Urban growth areas (UGAs and MUGAs), cities, and the rural area
- ❑ Available at: <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/1360/Growth-Monitoring-Reports>
- ❑ Follows publication of 2024 GMR by SCT PAC in May 2025

Population Growth Trends

- Snohomish County continues to gain population in recent years (nearly 46,000 new residents, or 4.7% growth, since 2020), but at a slower rate than in previous decades
- The county's share of statewide population growth has also been dropping (from 17.4% in the 1980's to 11.2% so far in the 2020's)
- While King County's share has been increasing: Beginning in 2008, well over half of the region's annual population growth went to King County (with the exception of four years) - in marked contrast to the entire 1990-2008 period during which a 50% share was never reached by King County

Population Growth Trends

- Components of Population Change:
 - Net-migration to the county continues to drive population gains in Snohomish County this decade, accounting for 63% of the county's growth since 2020
 - However, the volume of in-migration has been dropping this decade, along with a reduced level of natural increase (births minus deaths) compared with previous decades, resulting in less county population growth
- Cities are increasingly the locations of most of Snohomish County's population growth in recent years: since 2019, a majority of the county's population growth each year has occurred within cities (a pattern rarely seen in Snohomish County before 2019)

Population Growth Trends

- 2044 Targets - Assessment of Early Progress:
- As of 2025, Snohomish County's total population estimate of 873,800 is 18,397 residents (or 2.1 %) lower than the GMA 2020-2044 population projection for this year
- Has 2020-2025 population growth within major county subareas been in line with the 2020-2044 targeted growth share expectations?
 - Share of population growth in UGAs is slightly behind expectations, while rural population growth is ahead: continuation of 2020-2025 population growth trends observed outside the UGA indicates that the 2044 rural population target of 144,190 would be reached by 2033, with county plan policy LU 6.A.1 requiring actions to avoid this outcome by 2031.
 - Share of growth in cities overall is close to long-term expectations. Share of growth in Non-SWUGAs is ahead of long-term expectations, SWUGA is behind.

Employment Growth Trends

- Wage and salary employment in Snohomish County dropped by nearly 20,000 jobs during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 and had not yet regained pre-pandemic levels by 2025
- Total employment excluding construction/resource jobs countywide in 2024 was over 33,000 jobs (10%) below the 2019-2044 countywide employment projection to reach the adopted growth target
- Many subareas of the county were still below 2019 total employment levels in 2024, particularly in the Southwest UGA

Annexation Trends

- After 2010, when over 8 square miles of unincorporated area was annexed by the cities of Marysville and Lake Stevens, annexation activity in Snohomish been at historically low levels, with the exception of 2021 when 2.5 square miles were annexed

Residential Development Trends

- From 2018 through 2025 (with the exception of 2024), the number of recorded lots each year in formal plats, segregated lot condominiums, and townhouse unit lot subdivisions in cities exceeded those in unincorporated areas
- Between 2000 and 2025, most of the lots created through the short plat process have been within cities (55%)
- Beginning in 2008, rural cluster subdivision application activity has been minimal, with the exception of a one-year spike in new lots proposed in 2024

Residential Development Trends

- During the past eight years, the share of new countywide units permitted within cities increased substantially to account for a majority of units permitted countywide each year from 2018 through 2025. Prior to that, the majority of units permitted since 1990 were in unincorporated areas every year except 1996.
- Increased multi-family housing and townhouse production since 2010 countywide has resulted in these two types of housing combined accounting for a majority of residential units permitted countywide for six of the past seven years, ranging from 53% in 2019 and 2024 to 61% in 2021 – the highest multi-family/townhouse shares observed during the entire 1990-2025 period
- Higher shares of multi-family/townhouse construction have been observed in both cities and especially the unincorporated UGAs

Key Takeaways

- Shift to city growth
 - population, housing permits, recorded lots in plats and unit lot subdivisions
- Emergence of middle housing
- Rural growth

Questions?



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