

# Snohomish County 2024 Comprehensive Plan Update

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August 15, 2023

*County Council Briefing*  
*Rural Growth*

## Purpose of Briefing

- History of Snohomish County's Rural Growth Target
- Current State of Rural Growth

## Vision 2050

- Vision 2050, adopted October 2020, establishes the regional growth strategy for allocating growth across the four counties.
- Members of the PSRC Executive Board negotiated a rural growth share for Snohomish County of 4.5% of the County's total population growth between 2017 and 2050.
- PSRC Guidance provided to implement Vision 2050 acknowledges that achievement of a level of annual growth necessary to meet a growth target may not happen immediately (referred to as “front-loaded” or “back-loaded” growth).

## Regional Level Policy Framework for Rural Growth Targets

- **MPP-RGS-1** Implement the Regional Growth Strategy through regional policies and programs, countywide planning policies and growth targets, local plans, and development regulations.
- **MPP-RGS-2** Use consistent countywide targeting processes for allocating population and employment growth consistent with the regional vision, including establishing: (a) local employment targets, (b) local housing targets based on population projections, and (c) local growth targets for each designated regional growth center and manufacturing/industrial center.
- **MPP-RGS-3** Provide flexibility in establishing and modifying growth targets within countywide planning policies, provided growth targets support the Regional Growth Strategy

Multi-County  
Planning  
Policies



Countywide  
Planning  
Policies



Comprehensive  
Plan Policies



## Countywide Level Policy Framework for Rural Growth Targets

- **GF-4** The Countywide Planning Policies shall be consistent with VISION 2050 and the Regional Growth Strategy. To be consistent means that they shall be absent of conflicts or contradictions with the regional planning or transportation objectives. The policy response to the growth strategy focuses on issues of interest to Snohomish County jurisdictions and some flexibility in detail is possible while retaining overall consistency per RCW 36.70A.100 and WAC 365-196-510.

Multi-County  
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## County Level Policy Framework for Rural Growth Targets

- **LU 6.A.1** To help ensure that the rural population target is not exceeded, rural growth trends shall be monitored using the process and criteria established under Objective PE 2.B. If rural growth trends indicate that the rural population target may be exceeded, the county shall evaluate whether incentive programs or adjustments to planned densities or land uses are necessary to bring rural growth trends back into alignment with the adopted target.
- **Objective PE 2.B** Maintain and support a long term target monitoring process through Snohomish County Tomorrow to review annually and, if necessary, adjust the growth targets subsequent to target reconciliation.

Multi-County  
Planning  
Policies

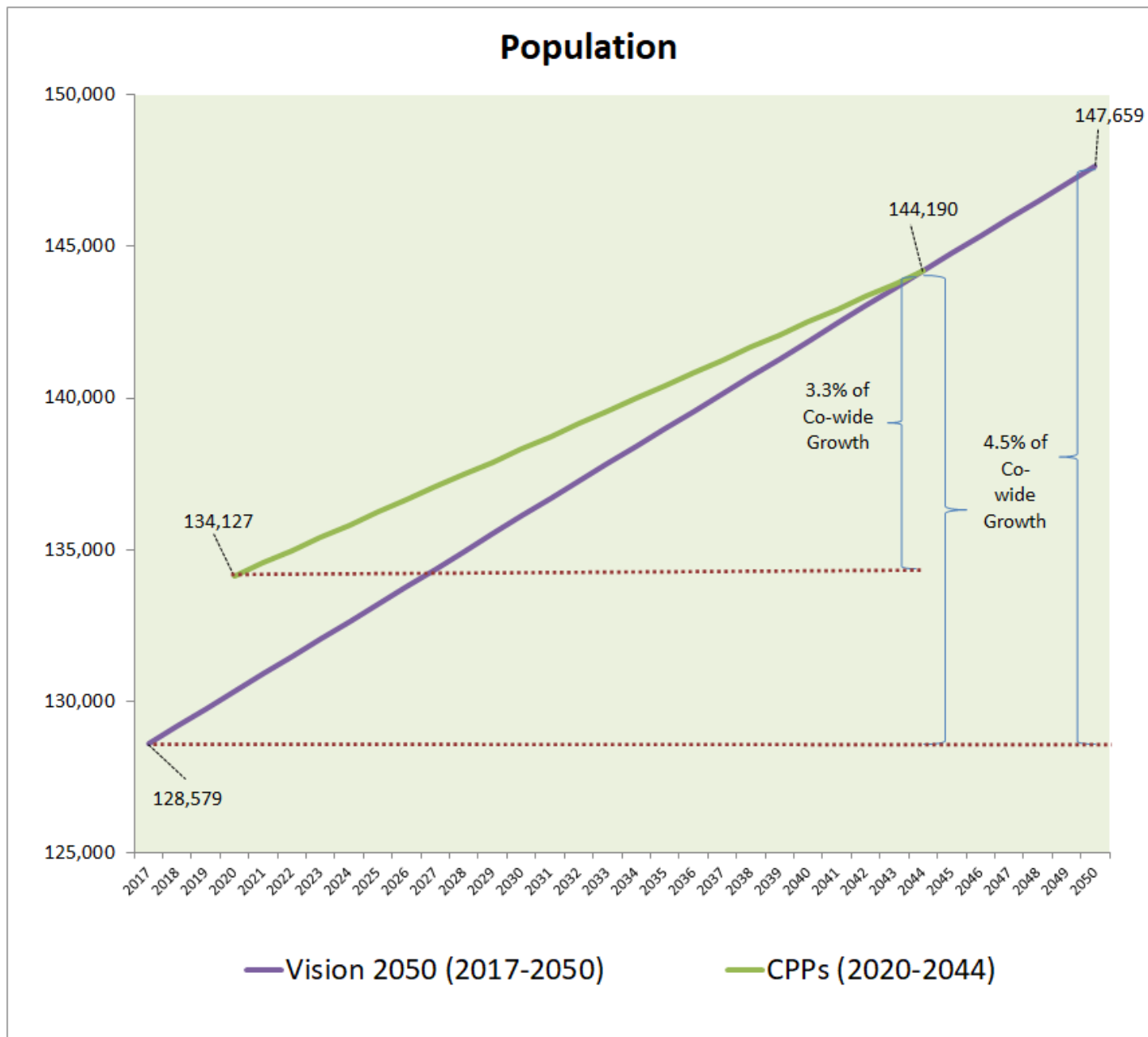


Countywide  
Planning  
Policies



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## Unincorporated Non-UGA (Rural/Resource Areas)



## Rural Population Growth Target

- VISION 2050 established that the share of Snohomish County's total population growth outside the UGA from 2017-2050 should not exceed 4.5%:

	2017	2050	Change	% of Total
Non-UGA	128,579	147,659	19,080	4.5%
Total County	789,400	1,213,400	424,000	100%

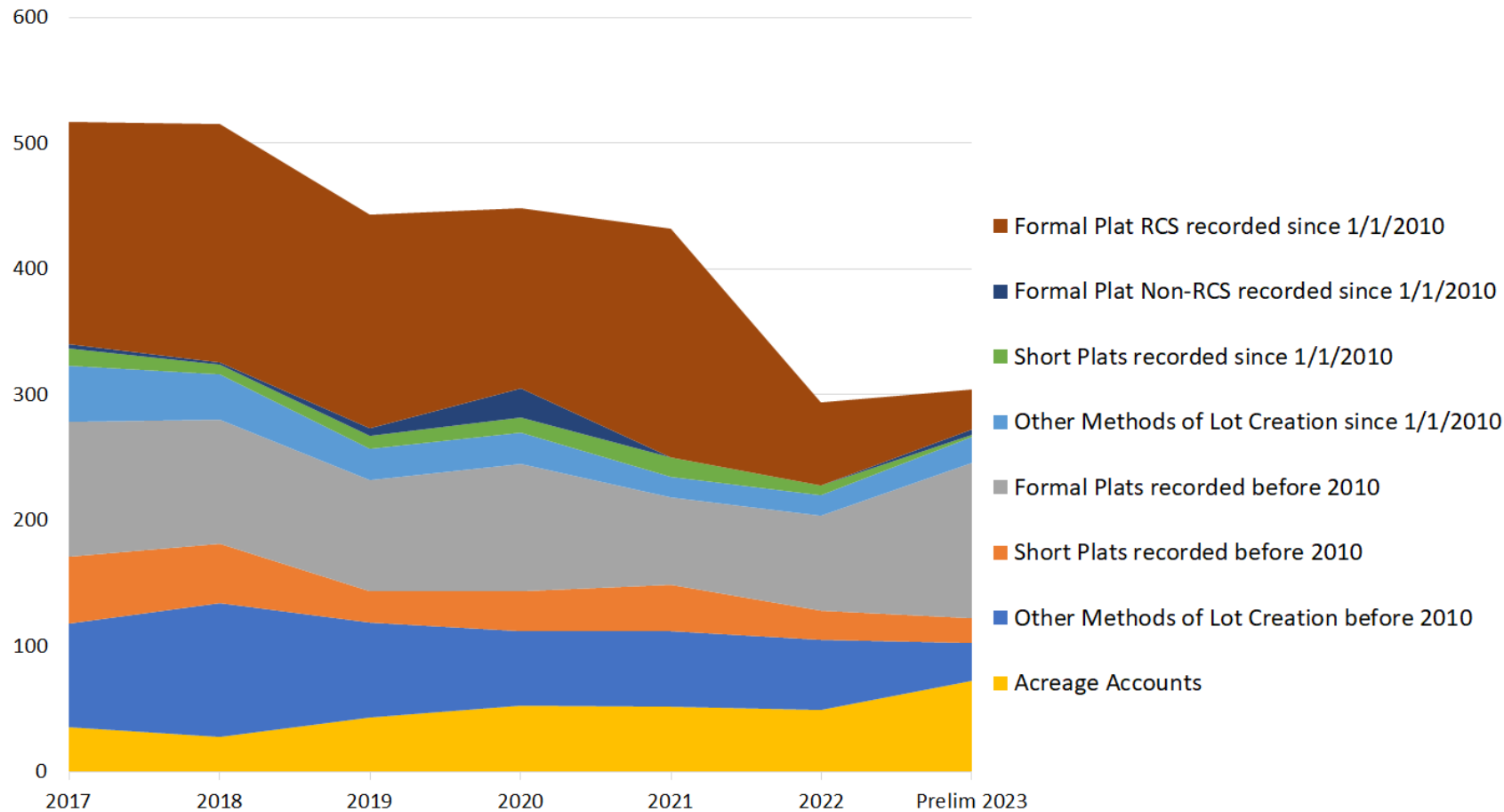
- Because rural growth from 2017 to 2020 exceeded the amount of growth called for in VISION 2050, the CPPs establish that to be consistent with VISION 2050, the share of the County's total population growth from 2020-2044 that could occur outside the UGA was now 3.3%:

	2020	2044	Change	% of Total
Non-UGA	134,127	144,190	10,063	3.3%
Total County	827,957	1,136,309	308,352	100%

# 2024 Comprehensive Plan *Update*

## Rural Housing Unit Permitting Trends

Source of Lot Supply for Residential Units Permitted Outside the UGA, 2017 - Prelim 2023



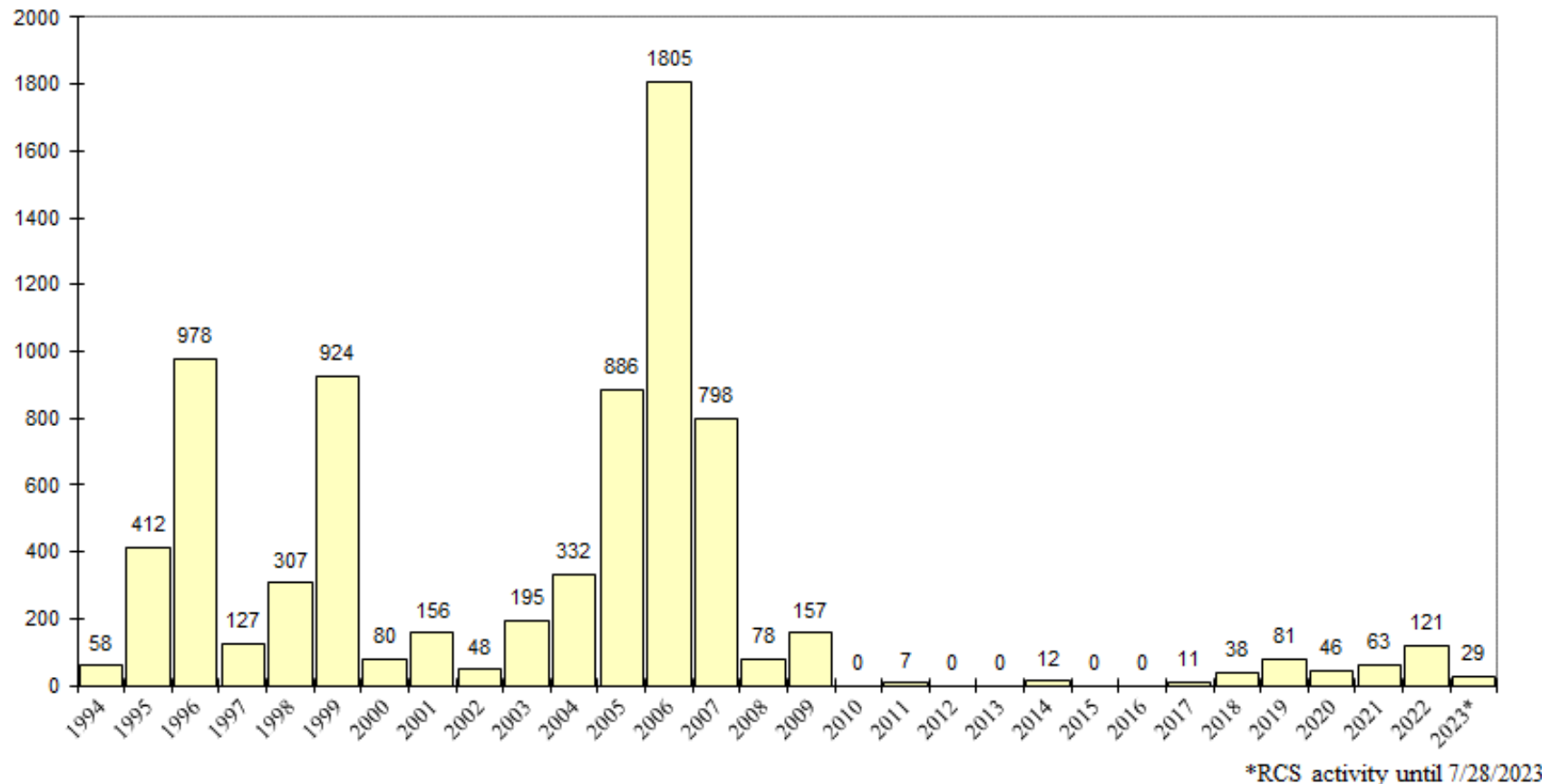
Note that preliminary total year 2023 figures were derived by doubling permit counts observed from January through June 2023.

- Total housing units permitted in rural areas has trended downwards over the past 7 years, from roughly 500 units per year in 2017-18, to 300 per year over the past 2 years
- 440 units were permitted per year on average from 2017-2022
- Biggest drop has been in units permitted on lots in formal plat rural cluster subdivisions recorded since 2010, as lot inventory is drawn down



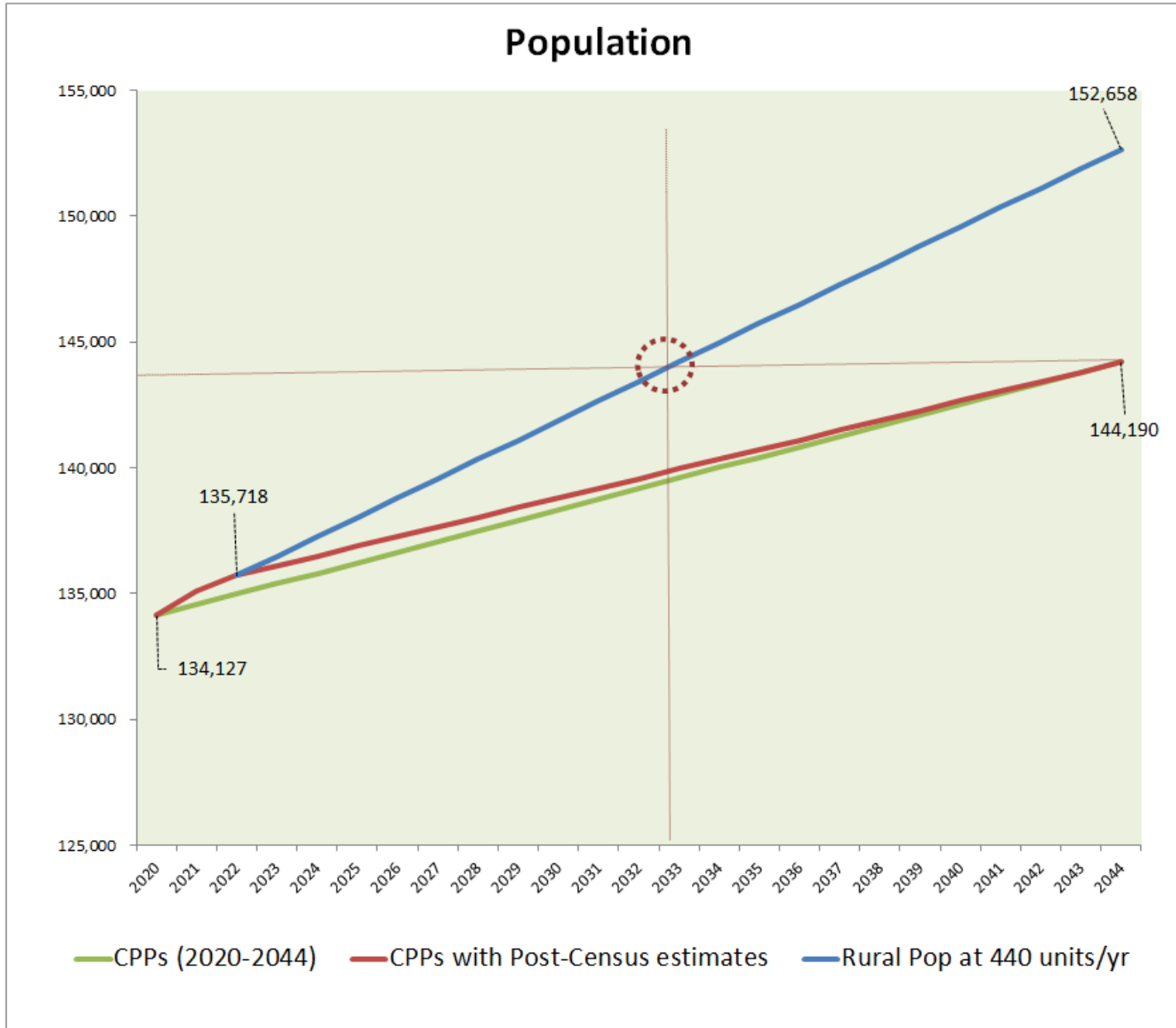
## Rural Cluster Subdivision Application Trends

Lots Applied for in Formal Plat Rural Cluster Subdivisions, January 1994 - July 28, 2023



- The annual volume of lots applied for in formal plat rural cluster subdivisions has remained low since 2010, with only 408 lots applied for during this 14-year period (averaging 29 lots per year)
- This trend has led directly to the recent drop-off in housing units permitted in formal plat rural clusters recorded since 2010, as lot inventory is drawn down

## Unincorporated Non-UGA (Rural/Resource Areas)



## Future Rural Housing Unit Production

- The number of housing units permitted outside the UGA must drop to 220 per year in order to avoid exceeding the 2044 rural population target (by following the red growth line)
- Should permitting of housing units outside the UGA continue at the same levels observed from 2017 to 2022 (440 units per year on average), rural population growth will occur at nearly twice the rate called for in VISION 2050 and will reach the 2044 rural population target by 2033 (following the blue line)

# Where do we go from here?



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