

DRAFT PRELIMINARY KITTITAS COUNTY POPULATION ALLOCATION SCENARIOS

1.0 OVERVIEW

Kittitas County, in consultation with its cities is responsible for making three key policy choices with regards to planning for population growth in the 20-Year Comprehensive Plan Update:

- Select a county-wide population projection
- Determine how that population growth will be split between urban and rural areas
- Allocate future urban growth among UGAs

County-wide population projections are discussed in detail in a separate memo entitled *Kittitas County Population Growth Projection Review and Analysis*. The development and definition of study areas for growth allocation is discussed in the memo entitled *Kittitas County Population Growth Allocation and Land Capacity Analysis: Draft Study Area Boundaries*. A map of study area boundaries is provided in Appendix A. This memo presents analysis that contributes to the development of three alternative scenarios for allocating growth to study areas. These scenarios can be tested to explore the potential outcomes of a range of possible futures.

BERK will be calculating of land capacity for each study area. Once complete, BERK will test up to two selected allocation scenarios with regards to available land capacity and other factors which may constrain the viability of a study area for accommodating growth. The County may use this information to inform the development of a Preferred Alternative.

This memo is organized in five sections:

1. Overview
2. Baseline Study Area Characteristics and Historic Trends
3. Population Projections
4. Study Area Allocation Scenarios
5. Next Steps

2.0 BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS AND HISTORIC TRENDS

2.1 Baseline Study Area Population and Housing

Exhibit 1 shows baseline population, housing, and housing occupancy characteristics for each of the study areas.¹ Several study areas are characterized by relatively a large percentage of housing units in seasonal usage. These housing units are not occupied full time and instead are used as vacation rentals

¹ For this baseline analysis, UGA Study Area boundaries were defined as inclusive of cities and existing UGAs. UGA expansion areas identified by the County are counted as rural in this baseline analysis because any existing development in these areas is presumably rural in nature and qualitatively different than development within cities and UGAs. Expansion areas will be considered during the land capacity analysis (Task 3)

or seasonal residences. For planning purposes it can be useful to estimate seasonal peak population. To do this, BERK simply augmented the full time resident population by the number of seasonal units multiplied by the average persons per household.

When conducting the land capacity analysis BERK will need to make assumptions regarding future housing occupancy rates in order to estimate capacity for new full time population growth.

Exhibit 1. Baseline Population, Housing, and Occupancy Characteristics by Study Area

	Resident Population 2015				Seasonal Peak Population (estimated)	Housing Units 2015				Housing Occupancy Characteristics			
	Total	Group Quarter*	Household	% Share of total		Total	Occupied	Seasonal	Vacant	% Full Time	% Seasonal	% Vacant	Persons per household
Kittitas County	42,670	2,052	40,618	100%		23,084	17,405	4,016	1,663	75%	17%	7%	2.32
UGA Study Areas													
Cle Elum	1,875	0	1,875	4.4%	2,027	1,103	855	65	183	78%	6%	17%	2.19
Ellensburg	20,783	2,052	18,731	48.7%	20,851	9,053	8,403	29	621	93%	0%	7%	2.17
Kittitas	1,481	0	1,481	3.5%	1,504	631	576	10	45	91%	2%	7%	2.58
Roslyn	896	0	896	2.1%	1,290	631	426	170	36	67%	27%	6%	2.04
South Cle Elum	592	0	592	1.4%	613	298	258	9	30	87%	3%	10%	2.27
Non-UGA Study Areas													
Easton	474	0	474	1.1%	866	375	144	169	62	38%	45%	17%	2.73
Ronald	363	0	363	0.9%	866	296	79	217	0	27%	73%	0%	2.32
Snoqualmie Pass	368	0	368	0.9%	1,254	561	156	382	23	28%	68%	4%	2.32
Thorp	244	0	244	0.6%	244	114	104	0	10	91%	0%	9%	2.76
Vantage	74	0	74	0.2%	92	39	7	7	25	17%	19%	64%	2.32
Nelson Siding Rd/Westside Rd**	661	0	661	1.5%	934	430	282	118	30	66%	27%	7%	2.33
Ranch on Swauk Creek**	150	0	150	0.4%	232	87	46	35	6	53%	40%	7%	2.41
Salmon La Sac Rd**	452	0	452	1.1%	1,550	700	177	474	49	25%	68%	7%	2.18
Suncadia**	89	0	89	0.2%	1,755	827	51	718	58	6%	87%	7%	2.00
Rural lands outside of study areas	14,167	0	14,167	33.2%		7,940	5,842	1,613	484	74%	20%	6%	2.42

* Group quarter population reside in group quarter housing such as college dormitories, assisted living facilities, or jails.

** 2015 population estimated using average annual growth rates from 2000 – 2010. Occupied housing units counts based on share in 2010 Census. Assumed countywide average for % of units that are vacant. Remaining units assumed to be seasonal occupancy.

Source: OFM 2015; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, 2009 – 2013;

2.2 Population Growth by Study Area

BERK analyzed population growth trends between 2000 and 2015 in each study area as well as other rural lands in the upper and lower basins in order to estimate average annual growth rates and relative shares of countywide population growth during the same period. The results of this analysis are shown in Exhibit 2 and

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Exhibit 3. The vast majority of population growth has occurred in Ellensburg and rural lands outside of study areas. Some study areas have experienced population loss during the past 15 years.

Exhibit 2. Average Annual Population Growth Rates by Study Area, 2000 - 2015

	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2015	2000 - 2015
Kittitas County	2.06%	0.84%	1.65%
UGA Study Areas			
Cle Elum	0.65%	-0.08%	0.41%
Ellensburg	1.98%	0.55%	1.50%
Kittitas	2.12%	1.02%	1.75%
Roslyn	-1.26%	-0.07%	-0.87%
South Cle Elum	0.91%	-0.08%	0.58%
Non-UGA Study Areas			
Easton	0.63%	-0.17%	0.36%
Ronald	1.25%	3.34%	1.94%
Snoqualmie Pass	4.46%	3.41%	4.11%
Thorp	-1.28%	0.36%	-0.74%
Vantage	0.56%	0.12%	0.41%
Nelson Siding Rd/Westside Rd	0.49%	<i>Population growth rates for 2010 – 2015 not available. Assumed growth rates from 2000 – 2010 continued for analysis.</i>	
Ranch on Swauk Creek	8.70%		
Salmon La Sac Rd	4.75%		
Suncadia	4.99%		
Rural lands outside of study areas			
Upper Basin	3.74%		
Lower Basin	2.56%		

Exhibit 3. Share of Countywide Population Growth by Study Area, 2000 – 2015

	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2015	2000 - 2015
Kittitas County	100%	100%	100%
UGA Study Areas			
Cle Elum	1.6%	-0.4%	1.2%
Ellensburg	47.8%	32.1%	44.8%
Kittitas	3.5%	4.2%	3.6%
Roslyn	-1.6%	-0.2%	-1.3%
South Cle Elum	0.7%	-0.1%	0.5%
Non-UGA Study Areas			
Easton	0.4%	-0.2%	0.3%
Ronald	0.5%	3.1%	1.0%
Snoqualmie Pass	1.5%	3.2%	1.8%
Thorp	-0.4%	0.3%	-0.3%
Vantage	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Nelson Siding Rd/Westside Rd*	0.4%	0.9%	0.5%
Ranch on Swauk Creek*	0.7%	2.9%	1.2%
Salmon La Sac Rd*	1.8%	5.3%	2.4%
Suncadia*	0.4%	1.1%	0.5%
Rural lands outside of study areas	42.9%	47.9%	43.8%

* Assumed population growth rates between 2000 and 2010 continued to estimated 2015 population and shared of total countywide population growth.

Exhibit 4 shows historic trends with regards to the shares of growth to urban areas (cities and UGAs), resort communities (including Suncadia and Snoqualmie Pass), and remaining rural areas. It shows that the share of growth to both resorts and rural areas has increased significantly during the last five years.

Exhibit 4. Population Growth by Urban, Resort, and Rural Shares, 2000 - 2015

	2000 - 2010	2010 - 2015	2000 - 2015
Kittitas County	100%	100%	100%
Urban (cities and UGAs)	51.9%	35.5%	48.8%
Resort communities	1.8%	4.3%	2.3%
Rural (non-resort)	46.3%	60.2%	48.9%

3.0 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

BERK analyzed historic population growth trends and factors which may impact future population growth. The results of this analysis are described in a separate report entitled *Kittitas County Population Growth Projection Review and Analysis*. Based on the level of uncertainty regarding future growth in Kittitas County, BERK recommends that the County analyze two different county-wide growth projections. One projection assumes a moderate rate of growth equal to the Medium, or “most likely”, Kittitas County population growth projection from Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM). The second projection takes the OFM High projection for county-wide growth. A third projection (Trend Growth) is provided for comparison. This shows projected population using the average annual growth rate between 1990 and 2015. All three population projections and growth rates are shown in Exhibit 5.

Exhibit 5. Population Growth Projections

	Population Growth 2015 - 2037	Total Population 2037	Average Annual Growth Rate 2015 - 2037
Moderate Growth (OFM Medium)	11,331	54,001	1.08%
<i>Trend Growth</i>	21,738	64,408	1.89%
Higher Growth (OFM High)	25,116	67,786	2.13%

These population growth scenarios only consider full-time population. Future peak season population can be estimated when testing scenarios at a later stage in this study.

4.0 POPULATION ALLOCATION ALTERNATIVES

BERK recommends that the County consider three different scenarios for allocating county-wide population growth to study areas within the county. The first assumes that growth will follow historic trends. The second allocates growth according to current shares of population. The third targets a greater share of growth to UGAs and resort communities and a lesser share to rural areas. Exhibit 6 shows population growth by study area for the first two scenarios. For each scenario, population growth allocations are provided for both countywide population projections. The third scenario will be fleshed out at a later date and is discussed in more detail below.

Exhibit 6. Population Growth Allocation Scenarios 1 and 2

	Scenario 1: Historic Trends			Scenario 2: Current Shares		
	Share of growth	Scenario 1a (OFM Medium)	Scenario 1b (OFM High)	Share of growth	Scenario 2a (OFM Medium)	Scenario 3b (OFM High)
Kittitas County	100%	11,331	25,116	100%	11,331	25,116
UGA Study Areas						
Cle Elum	1.1%	129	286	4.4%	498	1,104
Ellensburg	42.8%	4,855	10,761	48.7%	5,519	12,233
Kittitas	3.5%	395	876	3.5%	393	872
Roslyn	0.0%	0	0	2.1%	238	527
South Cle Elum	0.5%	57	127	1.4%	157	348
All UGAs (combined)	48.0%	5,436	12,049	60.1%	6,805	15,084
Non-UGA Study Areas						
Easton	0.3%	29	64	1.1%	126	279
Ronald	0.9%	106	234	0.9%	96	214
Snoqualmie Pass	1.7%	194	430	0.9%	98	216
Thorp	0.0%	0	0	0.6%	65	144
Vantage	0.0%	5	11	0.2%	20	44
Nelson Siding Rd/Westside Rd	0.5%	55	121	1.5%	176	389
Ranch on Swauk Creek	1.1%	125	277	0.4%	40	88
Salmon La Sac Rd	2.3%	264	585	1.1%	120	266
Suncadia	0.5%	54	119	0.2%	24	53
Rural lands outside of study areas	44.7%	5,064	11,225	33.2%	3,762	8,339

For the most part, Scenario 1 (Historic Trends) allocates growth according to each study area's historic share of countywide growth as measured between 2000 and 2015. The only exceptions to this rule are study areas that saw population loss between 2000 and 2015. In these cases the scenarios simply assume zero future population growth. The percentage shares for remaining study areas are adjusted from historic trends so that total shares sum to 100%. Scenario 2 (Current Shares) allocates growth based solely on each study area's estimated share of total population in 2015.

Scenario 3 (UGA and Resort Focused) would prioritize growth allocation to study areas by accounting for the following factors:

- UGA / Non-UGA status
- Resort status
- Current population
- Land capacity
- Water availability and plans for system expansion
- Sewer capacity and plans for system expansion

5.0 NEXT STEPS

The County and cities are invited to provide feedback on the preliminary allocation scenarios presented in this memo, including the selection and weighting of prioritizing factors identified for Scenario 3. Next BERK will be calculating land capacity for accommodating new population and employment growth by study area. Much of this work will be conducted during the month of January. Cities will be consulted regarding local data and assumptions to include in this analysis. Once this land capacity analysis is complete, selected allocation scenarios can be tested against available capacity and other factors that may shape future growth.

