

May 30, 2025

Clark County Council  
Clark County Community Development  
P.O.Box 5000  
Vancouver, Washington 98666

FOR THE PUBLIC RECORD AND THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

**Re: Clark County growth planning numbers don't support historical growth and housing**

Dear Councilors and Community Development,

Clark County Citizens United, Inc. is in the process of researching statistics data to determine if what Clark County is planning for growth to the year 2035 will be adequate. CCCU has determined via the research data so far, that it is not.

**Issue Paper 5** states the county is planning for the middle allocation number of **698,416**, which is a **1.26% growth rate**. It states that the urban/rural split is 95/5. Staff states that the county needs to allocate **181,216 people into the UGAs by 2045**.

The total **population growth** for that time span is **190,754** divided by **20 years** equals **9,537.7 persons per year**. Rural will be allocated **9,538 over a 20 year time span**, to equal **476.9 persons per year**. The UGA is being allocated 181,216 persons to equal 9,060.8 persons per year.

The report states that in **three (3) years, 12,000 housing units were built**. This equals **4,000 units per year**. At this rate, **80,000 new housing units are needed in 20 years**.

In the Rural area, **4,000 housing units** would be needed at the **5% ratio for 20 years and 200 housing units per year**. This equals **2.38 persons per unit per year**. 80,000 total units times 2.38 persons equals **190,400 total population growth**. This shows there would be NO increased population in the rural area, using the stated total county population growth of 190,754 persons.

## Clark County, Washington Population 2025

This report states that at no time was the population growth less than 1.70%, from 1960 to 2020. The **average percentage growth was 2.84%**. The county is planning for a **1.26% growth rate**, which is not enough.

This report states the estimate population for 2025 is 529,976 and the county is planning for a future population of 698,416 for the next 20 years. The difference is 168,440. Yet staff is claiming they are planning for 190,754. These numbers don't match.

## United State Census

The U.S Census states the estimated population for Clark County 2024 is 527,269.

## Public Records Search

As of December 17, 2024 the population was 521,150 persons. **The County population between rural and urban was 86% urban and 14% rural**. That amounts to **72,961 persons** in the rural area.

Yet in the **Rural and Natural Resources Element of the 2016 Clark County Comprehensive Plan**, it states that **62,205 persons** reside in the rural and (resource) areas. That is a **10,756 person** difference.

**It is clear that the county staff is profoundly underestimating the population in the rural area, when allowing only 5% growth. The Growth Management Act mandates a county must allow for rural development, but at this rate, over time, there will be no rural development.**

**This report states in 2023 there were 1976 building permits issues for single family homes. That is the lowest number since 2014.** It is clear, the county is not creating affordable homes at this rate. In **1997 there were 3512 building permits** issued for single family homes. It is also clear the county does not want the county population to own a home, which severely decreases the tax base.

**There are 15,495 current college students.** 34% of those students receive a Bachelors Degree. They are not going to want to live in an apartment long term, and will want to own a home. They will not qualify for any of these subsidized housing units that has taken over the housing market. It's not likely they will live in tiny homes, either. They will likely go to "greener pastures" where they can compliment the economy of the area, while owning a home of their own. Clark County is dramatically losing the talent they will need to grow economically.

The deaths are very close to the births, with more children being born. Where are they going to live? In 2020 there were 11,433 houses built in Clark County. That is lower than houses built in the 1960s. There were 43,551 homes built between 1990 and 1999. These number are shocking. When the population increased dramatically since the 1990s, why didn't the housing keep up with the pace? Something is very wrong with that picture.

## American Community Survey - US Census Bureau

This report states in 2021 there were **184,173 households** in Clark County, with an average size of **2.67 people per household**. This equals **491,742 total persons**. **At 10% rural allocation, the rural area would have 49,174 persons.** Yet, the **2016 Clark County Comprehensive Plan** claims there are **62,205 persons** residing in the rural area. That is a whopping difference of **13,031 persons**. CCCU questions where Clark County staff gets their numbers, as they don't even come close to matching the population research data from legitimate federal and state housing and population reports. It is clear one can see that something is wrong and it is doubtful it is the federal agencies.

The average commute time for employment is **26.6 minutes**, or one half hour. **Only 47,910 persons** commute for 15 minutes. The rest of the **154,755 workers** must commute for a much longer timeframe.

These statistics clearly show that Clark County does not have enough jobs near where the people live. It forces them to commute long distances for work. County planning for jobs is almost non-existent. They are not planning for this population of **202,665 workers** to benefit from a job close to home. Nor are they planning for future employees. Yet, climate change dictates that commute distances must to short. None of this computes. Clark County has a long way to serve their working community, which is the backbone of Clark County's economy.

## Rural and Natural Resources Element

In the 2016 Comprehensive Plan the county reduced the number of residents in the rural area. At that time, staff proposed that 12,859 persons, at 10%, would be new. That number is down from 19,263,

which was crossed out. One doubts that any of the county population and housing numbers are correct. The Rural area consists of 420,000 acres. This amounts to 32.66 acres per person. Who can afford that size parcel at today's prices? There was plenty of land to accomodate additional population in the rural areas with the 10% allocation, but staff claims it only grew 1%. Why did that happen? So why did staff decide to reduce it to 5% when statistics show the 10% is necessary? An educated guess tells CCCU that the county is trying to stop ALL GROWTH in the Rural area, and that is not allowed under the Growth Management Act. The county numbers have to change to reflect real growth in Clark County.

Sincerely,

Carol Levanen, Exec. Secretary

Clark County Citizens United, Inc.  
P.O. Box 2188  
Battle Ground, Washington 98604

**ATTACHMENTS: Eight pages include information from these resources:**

1. United States Census
2. Public Records Request
3. Washington Counties by Population (2025)
4. Rural and Natural Resources Element
5. Clark County Washington Population 2025
6. Clark County Comprehesive Plan 2025 Update Planning for growth 2025 - 2045 - 2025  
Populations, Housing and employment Allocation - Issue Paper 5
- 7.. American Community Survey - US Census Bureau

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**The projected population for Clark County, Washington, in 2025 is approximately 530,051, with a growth rate of about 0.9% per year. By 2035, the county is planning for a population of around 562,000 residents.**

## Clark County, Washington Population 2025

**Clark County's estimated 2025 population is 529,976 with a growth rate of 0.84% in the past year according to the most recent United States census data**

### **Historical Growth over Ten Year Intervals**

#### **Year Total Population for Clark County Population Increase over Ten Years Average Annual Population Growth Rate**

1960	93,809			
1970		128,454		
1960 to 1970		34,645	3.19%	
1980	192,227	1970 to 1980	63,773	4.11%
1990	238,053	1980 to 1990	45,826	2.161%
2000	345,238	1990 to 2000	107,185	3.79%
2010	425,363	2000 to 2010	80,125	2.11%
2020	503,311	2010 to 2020	77,948	1.70%

## **Clark County Comprehensive Plan 2025 Update Planning for growth 2025 – 2045 2025 Population, Housing and Employment Allocation – Issue Paper 5**

**Clark County's 2045 population projections are:**

High = 791,809 (1.51%)

Middle = 698,416 (1.26%)

Low = 576,151 (0.60%)

Percentages represent average annual growth rates. They use the starting population estimate from 2025 and were calculated using the formula for Compounded Annual Rate of Growth (CAGR)

- VBLM update to run based on zoning and updates to zoning capacity based on middle housing updates to increase capacity in low density residential zones, zoning estimates provided by local jurisdictions and documentation of model overrides.
- **The urban/rural growth percentage split is updated to 95%/5% based on recent growth trends.**
  - Population allocation will be a key input into the housing allocation using the Housing Analysis Planning Tool (HAPT) created by WA State Department of Commerce.

**The allocation assumes a 95% urban / 5% rural split.**

The result in the middle column shows the need to allocate **181,216 people in the UGAs by 2045.**

Table 1. County Population 2023-2045 Source: Clark County, Geographic Information System and Community Planning, The Office of Financial Management (OFM)

**Note: Based on 95/5 urban/rural split planning assumption**

Table 2 below shows the 2045 population allocation to UGAs based on the percentage of total housing unit capacity by UGA that can be accommodated by the 2023 Vacant Lands Model.

The percentage of each UGA's housing capacity is multiplied by the expected urban population growth to derive the 2023- 2045 growth by UGA. Table 2:

Population Estimates and Allocation by UGA. Source: Clark County, Geographic information System and Community Planning Note: ^

10% based on 95/5 urban/rural planning assumption Countywide Housing Allocation

HB 1220 directed the Department of Commerce to project future housing needs for jurisdictions by income bracket and significantly altered how jurisdictions are to plan for housing in the housing element of their comprehensive plans. The Department of Commerce has created a Housing Analysis Planning Tool (HAPT) <https://deptofcommerce.box.com/s/48o8fzedzxnh63xth6aofi2jc2npcjoa> 2023 Population 2023-2045 Growth 2045

Population County Total 527,400 190,754 718,154

Rural 69,284 9,538 78,822

UGA Total 458,116 181,216 639,332

#### **Rural**

**69,284 - 2023 Estimate**

**9,538 - 2023 Allocation**

**78,822 - 2045 Estimate**

**There were 12,000 housing units added countywide between 2020 and 2023.**

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## United State Census -



An official website of the United States government

**Population estimates, July 1, 2024, (V2024) 527,269**

□ 527,269

## Washington Counties by Population (2025)

by Kristen Carney 

Updated: December 17, 2024

The **most populous counties in Washington** are [King County](#) with 2,271,380, [Pierce County](#) at 928,696, [Snohomish County](#) with 844,761, [Spokane County](#) at 551,455, and [Clark County](#) with 521,150. You can get the most current Census population data for all [39 Washington counties](#), sorted from the **most populous counties in Washington** to the least, according to the 2023 Population Estimates

## Public Records Search

*"To Inform, Connect, and Protect."*

### Clark County, Washington (WA)

County population in 2023: **521,150 (86% urban, 14% rural)**; it was 345,238 in 2000  
County owner-occupied with a mortgage or a loan houses and condos in 2010: 81,860  
County owner-occupied free and clear houses and condos in 2010: 22,143  
County owner-occupied houses and condos in 2000: 85,551  
Renter-occupied apartments: 54,096 (it was 41,657 in 2000) % of renters here: 33%  
State: 36% Land area: 628 sq. mi.  
Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

## Single-family new house construction building permits:

2023: 1976 buildings, average cost: \$487,600  
2022: 2079 buildings, average cost: \$510,600  
2021: 3101 buildings, average cost: \$296,300  
2020: 3220 buildings, average cost: \$278,000  
2019: 2929 buildings, average cost: \$290,200  
2018: 2793 buildings, average cost: \$279,600  
2017: 2080 buildings, average cost: \$304,600  
2016: 2645 buildings, average cost: \$272,700  
2015: 2220 buildings, average cost: \$253,200  
2014: 1588 buildings, average cost: \$289,600  
2013: 1699 buildings, average cost: \$261,200  
2012: 1190 buildings, average cost: \$240,800  
2011: 688 buildings, average cost: \$294,800  
2010: 963 buildings, average cost: \$253,900  
2009: 690 buildings, average cost: \$211,500  
2008: 1053 buildings, average cost: \$190,400  
2007: 1803 buildings, average cost: \$174,400  
2006: 2379 buildings, average cost: \$187,300  
2005: 3495 buildings, average cost: \$162,300  
2004: 3276 buildings, average cost: \$146,600  
2003: 3298 buildings, average cost: \$141,400  
2002: 3111 buildings, average cost: \$142,600  
2001: 3294 buildings, average cost: \$134,600

2000: 2643 buildings, average cost: \$131,100

1999: 3023 buildings, average cost: \$113,100

1998: 3328 buildings, average cost: \$102,400

1997: 3512 buildings, average cost: \$104,200

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

Current college students: 15,495

People 25 years of age or older with a high school degree or higher: 92.2%

People 25 years of age or older with a bachelor's degree or higher: 34.4%

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

One, detached: 137,509

One, attached: 13,203

Two: 4,804

3 or 4: 4,833

5 to 9: 10,474

10 to 19: 5,228

20 to 49: 7,051

50 or more: 19,219

Mobile homes: 8,066

Boats, RVs, vans, etc.: 242

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

Drove a car alone: 147,350 (66.5%)

: 16,613 (7.5%)

Bus: 1,767 (0.8%)

Ferryboat: 92 (0.0%)

Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means: 1,196 (0.5%)

Bicycle: 1,455 (0.7%)

Walked: 4,778 (2.2%)

Worked at home: 48,427 (21.8%)

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

Deaths per 1000 population from 2010 to 2020: 7.3

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

Births per 1000 population from 2010 to 2022: 10.1

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

### Year house built in Clark County, Washington

11,433	2020 or later
29,313	2010 to 2019
39,762	2000 to 2009
43,551	1990 to 1999
20,813	1980 to 1989
32,862	1970 to 1979
13,811	1960 to 1969
7,223	1950 to 1959

7.223

Read more: [https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark\\_County-WA.html](https://www.city-data.com/county/Clark_County-WA.html)

## 3 Rural and Natural Resource Element

Rural Population Growth The Rural Area is not expected to accommodate large amounts of growth, but allows for low-density residential development and other traditional rural uses. The GMA requires that rural development be contained and controlled to ensure the protection of rural character, assure the visual compatibility of rural development with the surrounding rural area, protect environmentally sensitive areas and habitat and protect against conflicts with natural resource uses such as farming, forestry and mining.

As of January 2015, April 2002, approximately **64,536 62,205** people resided within the rural and resource lands, or those areas outside of the urban growth areas. It is anticipated that **12,859 49,263** people or 10 percent of the new

growth will be accommodated in the rural area. The total county population projection (including urban and rural areas) over the next 20 years is approximately **577,431 ~~584,310~~ persons**.

Rural Land Distribution Clark County is approximately **420,000 acres in size**, of which approximately 320,000 acres are outside the Urban Growth Area. The predominate land uses outside the Urban Growth Area include forest, agriculture and single family residential development. Table 3.1 illustrates the distribution of land uses based on 1994, and 2004 and 2016 zoning categories throughout the rural and resource lands.

<https://2016compplan.clark.wa.gov/Files%20With%20Bates%20Number/030953-030982.pdf>

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2.62

2.62

We are using the latest American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year survey data from the US Census Bureau, which is accurate up to 2021.

**Households and Family Size** A household defined by the US Census Bureau is a group of people who occupy a housing unit. A housing unit is a house, apartment, mobile home, group of rooms, or single room occupied as separate living quarters.

**There are currently 184,173 households in Clark County, with an average household size of 2.67 people.**

A family is defined as a group of two or more people related by birth, marriage, or adoption who live together in the same household.

**There are 127,133 families in Clark County with an average family size of 3.15 people.**

**Commuting to Work** In this section, we can also look at how people in Clark County get to work. The chart below shows the number of people in Clark County that commute to work in a particular way.

**26.6 minutes is the average travel time to work for people in Clark County.**

These commute times can be compared to other data like income and educational levels to see how they relate to each other and if there are any trends in the data that might suggest a correlation.

Less than 5 minutes

4,134

5 to 9 minutes

17,738

10 to 14 minutes

26,038

15 to 19 minutes

32,711

20 to 24 minutes

31,902

25 to 29 minutes

16,086

30 to 34 minutes

28,251

35 to 39 minutes

6,772

40 to 44 minutes

7,440

45 to 59 minutes

15,784

60 to 89 minutes

10,319

90 or more minutes

5,490



QuickFacts  
Clark County, Washington

Population

Population estimates, July 1, 2024, (V2024) ☐ ☐ 527,269

Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2024) ☐ ☐ 503,308

Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2024, (V2024) ☐ 4.8%

Population, Census, April 1, 2020 503,311

Population, Census, April 1, 2010 425,363

QuickFacts provides statistics for all states and counties. Also for cities and towns with a population of 5,00

Households, 2019-2023	193,387	193,387
Persons per household, 2019-2023	2.63	2.62
Housing Units, July 1, 2024, (V2024)		212,833
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2019-2023		66.2%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2019-2023		\$487,900
Median selected monthly owner costs - with a mortgage, 2019-2023		\$2,186
Median selected monthly owner costs -without a mortgage, 2019-2023		\$683
Median gross rent, 2019-2023		\$1,668
Building Permits, 2024		3,594

Population estimates, July 1, 2024, (V2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	527,269
Population estimates base, April 1, 2020, (V2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	503,308
Population, percent change - April 1, 2020 (estimates base) to July 1, 2024, (V2024)	<input type="checkbox"/>	4.8%
Population, Census, April 1, 2020		503,311
Population, Census, April 1, 2010		

Census.gov | U.S. Census Bureau Homepage

US Census Bureau  
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425,36