

Lewis County Approach to Selecting and Allocating Population Projections

Updated February 2, 2023

A. Introduction

The county is responsible for allocating future urban growth to each city and the unincorporated areas of Lewis County. The Office of Financial Management (OFM) provides a high, medium and low population projection for the next 20-years. The medium population forecast is considered to be the mostly likely, the high and low are statistical deviations. Lewis County, in consultation with the cities, must pick the population forecast from the OFM projections or petition for a revisions to the projections. Lewis County then must allocate how much of the 20-year population growth is likely to occur in each jurisdiction.

This memo provides the methodology that Lewis County proposes to allocate population to each jurisdiction. Each city may accept the allocated populations provided in this memo or they may propose changes to the methodology to account for conditions specific to their jurisdiction, such as land capacity or market factors.

B. OFM Population Forecast

The medium 2045 population forecast for Lewis County, all jurisdictions, is 91,055 persons. This is the mostly likely prediction according to OFM. They also provided a low and high forecast, which are statistical deviations from the medium. Low is 81,192 persons; high is 105,122 persons. The County is allowed to choose between the low and high; however, if the medium is not chosen then the rationale as to why a different number is chosen must be included.

C. Relationship between City Limits and Urban Growth Areas.

As required by the Growth Management Act, the city limits plus the city's UGA should be established to provide sufficient land to accommodate 20 years of population growth. Over the subsequent 20 years the city should be annexing the UGA to bring it into the city limits, such that by 2045 what was the UGA today is fully in the city limits.

Because OFM provides a new 20-year forecast every 5 years, the county updates the allocations and cities are then allowed to continue to grow their UGAs. This is how each jurisdiction plans for population growth. It is an iterative process with constant adjustments.

This is further complicated because the density of people living in the existing city limits + UGA is assumed to increase. Particularly in the UGA, because when land is brought in to the UGA is has a rural density. As urban services are extended (e.g., sewer, water) development can occur at urban density, allowing more people to live there. (Note, the Growth Management Act generally prohibits extending urban services outside of UGAs.)

It is also assumed that the population will increase within the city limits because it is often more affordable to allow higher housing densities within areas where urban services already exist. Examples include infill development, upzoning to allow multifamily housing where it previously was not allowed, allowing repurposing single family residential into duplex/triplex within the existing structure, etc.

D. Population Allocation Methodology

The source for all data is OFM <https://ofm.wa.gov/washington-data-research/population-demographics/population-estimates/small-area-estimates-program>

The basic methodology to estimate the 2045 population for each city is:

(Existing city limits + Existing UGA) * 20-year Population Growth Rate = 2045 Population Allocation

Table 1 is each city's 20 year growth rate, including both the existing city limits and existing UGA. Growth rate is the current year's population minus the population 20 years ago divided by the previous population. Multiply that by 100 to get the percentage.

Table 1: City 20-Year Growth Rate

City	2002 OFM Estimated Population			2022 OFM Estimated Population			Growth Rate
	City Limits	UGA	Total	City Limits	UGA	Total	
Centralia	15,040	3,581	18,621	18,360	4,016	22,376	20.17%
Chehalis	7,055	1,531	8,586	7,365	2,480	9,845	14.66%
Morton	1,050	205	1,255	1,070	232	1,302	3.75%
Mossyrock	490	312	802	780	80	860	7.23%
Napavine	1,360	307	1,667	1,955	14	1,969	18.12%
Pe Ell	660	28	688	650	8	658	-4.36%
Toledo	685	16	701	685	62	747	6.56%
Vader	605	224	829	655	244	899	8.44%
Winlock	1,335	207	1,542	1,695	420	2,115	37.16%
Total	28,280	6,411	34,691	33,215	7,556	40,771	17.53%

Using the basic methodology described above, Table 2 presents the estimated 2045 population allocations for each city.

Table 2: City 2045 Population Allocations

City	2022 Total Population	20-year Growth Rate	2045 Population Estimate	Population Growth
Centralia	22,376	20.17%	26,888	4,512
Chehalis	9,845	14.66%	11,289	1,444
Morton	1,302	3.75%	1,351	49
Mossyrock	860	7.23%	922	62
Napavine	1,969	18.12%	2,326	357
Pe Ell	658	-4.36%	629	-29
Toledo	747	6.56%	796	49
Vader	899	8.44%	975	76
Winlock	2,115	37.16%	2,901	786
Total	40,771	17.53%	48,077	7,306

Over time, cities grow. Land that was unincorporated becomes incorporated through annexation. Once incorporated, the land is expected to develop at urban densities. Therefore, it is assumed that more growth will occur within cities and UGAs than within the land outside of UGAs. But it is assumed that land outside of UGAs will experience some population growth. Indeed, the development permit trends in rural Lewis County support that growth is occurring in rural areas. The assumed 20-year growth rate for land outside of UGAs is 10%. Using that figure, Table 3 provides the full 2045 population allocations for Lewis County.

Table 3: Lewis County Total 2045 Population

City	2022 Total Population	2045 Population Estimate	Change in Population	Share of Population Growth
Centralia	22,376	26,888	4,512	36.61%
Chehalis	9,845	11,289	1,444	11.71%
Morton	1,302	1,351	49	0.40%
Mossyrock	860	922	62	0.50%
Napavine	1,969	2,326	357	2.89%
Pe Ell	658	629	-29	-0.23%
Toledo	747	796	49	0.40%
Vader	899	975	76	0.62%
Winlock	2,115	2,901	786	6.38%
Total City	40,771	48,077	7,306	59.28%
Unincorporated	50,185	55,204	5,019	40.72%
Total Lewis County	90,956	103,281	12,325	100.00%

Also included in Table 3 is the share of population growth that will occur in each city. It is calculated by dividing each city's change in population by the total change in population. For example, of the 12,325 new people living Lewis County by 2045, 36.61% of them will likely be living in Centralia and 11.71% of them will likely be living in Chehalis.