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## **COMMUNITY PROFILE**

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### **INTRODUCTION**

A Comprehensive Plan is a document that represents community goals and policies for future development and growth. This document is the second revision of the Ocean Shores Comprehensive Plan since the previous Comprehensive Plan adoption on February 11, 1991.

At the time of incorporation, in 1970, Ocean Shores had a population of only 768 full-time residents. Since that time, the City's population has increased by 3837 residents, and is currently six times the size of the original 1970 population. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is to respond to not only the rate of growth, but also to the type and location of growth, to plan for the City's future goals. The purpose of the Community Profile section of the Comprehensive Plan is to look at the history and location of the City, as well as certain characteristics such as demographic composition, past demographic trends, employment, and certain housing issues. From this the City will gain an understanding of the character of the community, and how this may influence future growth.

While the population has grown, the physical area of the City has not. This is largely due to the City's beginnings as a speculative real estate venture. The City was created in the 1960's as both a tourist and residential community. By the time of incorporation in 1970, the city was almost totally platted, streets were laid out and built throughout, and included more than 12,000 lots, almost all of which had been sold to individual lot owners, in 9.3 square miles of land. All of the lot owners expect to be able to access and, when they are ready, develop their lots as they or their predecessors were promised. Because of this fact the population is spread throughout the City and the City has an extensive infrastructure that must be maintained, even though just over one-fourth of these parcels are now developed. Thereby, the City's population density is low, 495 persons per square mile which ranks 255 out of 281 cities in the state while based on total population, the City ranks 116th. (State of Washington OFM, 2006) Within the City's corporate boundaries, infrastructure necessary to serve the community includes more than 120 miles of roads, 245 miles of ditches, 110 miles of water mains, and 110 miles of sewer lines. The City upgraded its wastewater treatment plant in the late 90's and has the capacity to provide services to the entire existing incorporated area and as far north as Hogan's Corner.

### **GEOGRAPHIC SETTING**

The City of Ocean Shores is located in the southwestern region of the State of Washington along the Pacific Coast. The City is situated at the northern side of the mouth of Grays Harbor and covers an area of 9.3 square miles. This area extends from north to south along a peninsula that is bordered on the west and south side by the Pacific Ocean and on the east by the Grays Harbor Estuary. Grays Harbor lies approximately 45 miles north of the mouth of the Columbia River and 110 miles south of the Strait of Juan de Fuca. It is one of the largest enclosed harbors along the northwest Pacific Coast and

thus serves and important role in regional maritime activity. Another important regional geographic feature, the Olympic Mountain Range, lies northwest of the City of Ocean Shores. The Olympic Mountains stretch across Washington's Olympic Peninsula, and with mountains approaching nearly 10,000 feet in elevation, play a major role in influencing regional climate and precipitation patterns.

Located east of the City of Ocean Shores, are the cities of Aberdeen and Hoquiam, the two largest cities within Grays Harbor County. Aberdeen, the largest city within the county with a population of 16,470, lies just 23 miles east of Ocean Shores. Hoquiam, which has a population of 8,845, is the second largest city within the county and is just 17 miles east of Ocean Shores. Vehicular circulation to and from the City of Ocean Shores is provided by State Route 109 that connects with U.S. Highway 101 in Hoquiam. A two-mile spur, S.R. 115, connects with S.R. 109 at the Hogan's Corner area and provides direct access to the City.

The City of Ocean Shores is also in close proximity to other major population centers within the State. Distances between the City and other major cities in the Puget Sound area are: 132 miles to Seattle, 102 miles to Tacoma, and 72 miles to Olympia. Because of the City's close proximity to these major urban centers, tourists from these areas are able to travel to Ocean Shores by car in less than three hours. And since the Grays Harbor region provides the nearest access for these major Puget Sound cities to the beaches of the Pacific Ocean, the City of Ocean Shores has become a popular tourist destination.

### **HISTORY OF OCEAN SHORES**

Although this history deals primarily with the settlement of Grays Harbor by the early pioneers, it should also be remembered that this area was already inhabited by groups of people who had developed sophisticated cultures. The original inhabitants of the area were the Chehalis or Tsihalis people. They had several villages in the area, five on the Chehalis River as well as seven on the bay. Other tribes that once lived in Grays Harbor County were the Hookium, Humptulips, Wynoochee, Satsop, and Quinault. All were part of the Salish linguistic group, and as such, shared cultures, social organization and religious systems with the other coastal people. These Native Americans prospered from the abundant riches of the sea and land of the Pacific Coast, the very riches that attracted the early pioneers.

On the morning of May 7, 1792, Captain Robert Gray, sent as a representative of the Boston Fur Company, sailed his ship, the Columbia, into that Bay which now bears his name. His log tells little of his findings but he did give the name of Bulfinch to this region in honor of Charles Bulfinch of Boston. However, when George Vancouver came at a later date, he logged on his charts the name of Grays Harbor.

Those that came by water had heard reports of the many sea otter to be found here and as this news spread, various groups came to see for themselves and liked what they saw. The fur trade developed into a thriving business and as early as 1788, the first trading took place between the Boston Fur Company and the northwest. As time went on, small

groups of people began to come from inland for brief visits by way of the Chehalis River or Willapa Bay. Because of the density of growth in this northwest region, Grays Harbor was one of the last areas in the northwest to be settled.

Matthew McGee was the original homesteader of the peninsula in the 1860's. A.O. Damon acquired the southern tip of the peninsula from McGee and settled here in 1878. A pier was built nearby and another later was located on the bay side of Oyehut Road. Supplies and mail came by boat from Hoquiam, and transported on land to the Taholah and Quinault areas.

In 1929, Ralph Minard, his wife and sister continued operation of their grandfather's (Damon) cattle ranch and also purchased additional parcels of land on the peninsula. During the depression days of the 1930's several families of "squatters" built shanties and plank roads in an area near the middle of present day Ocean Shores. These shanty developments became known as "Big Root Camp" and "Jetty Camp." The residents of these camps survived by digging clams, fishing, and poaching animals. In 1956, Ralph Minard, concerned with the poaching of his beef by the squatters, purchased over 1,200 acres of accreted State land that encompassed the camps and removed the squatter settlements. Minard continued to operate the cattle ranch until 1960 when a group of investors purchased Minard's property for one million dollars and formed Ocean Shores Estates Incorporated. The first lots sold for as little as \$595 with prospective buyers waiting in lines to purchase lots "sight unseen" from the first plat maps. Eventually, roads were graded and lots were staked. By 1968 all of the plats within the development had been approved and roads and utilities installed.

In August 1969, the first incorporation attempt was proposed; however, the attempt was defeated in the November election. One year later, area residents voted in favor (2 to 1) of incorporation. Ocean Shores began cityhood with 768 full-time residents.

## **COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS**

### **A Note on Data**

The latest possible data has been incorporated in this update. However, only the US Census collects the extensive data on the various characteristics of the population and the education and economic data. Because we are six years beyond the collection of this data it may not accurately reflect current circumstances. It is however the best currently available and comparison of the 1990 data to the 2000 data is informative for planning purposes. Where other known data sources give a more recent indication of trends, that data has been referenced also.

### **Population**

Recent population trends have demonstrated a continuing pattern of consistent growth of the City. Between 1990 and 2006, the population of Ocean Shores grew at an average of approximately 144 new persons per year. The population trends from 1990 to 2006 are shown in Table 4.1. Expressed as a percent of the total Grays Harbor County Population, the City's population has increased from 1.29 percent in 1970 to over 6.5 percent in 2006. When compared to other communities within the county, Ocean Shores has demonstrated the steadiest and strongest increases of all the cities within Grays Harbor County.

**Table 4.1**

**Full-Time Residential Population, 1990-2006**

Year	Population	Increase from Previous Year
2006	4,605	220
2005	4,385	145
2004	4,240	175
2003	4,065	135
2002	3,930	0
2001	3,930	94
2000	3,836*	566**
1999	3,270	50
1998	3,220	40
1997	3,180	125
1996	3,055	125
1995	2,930	100
1994	2,830	210
1993	2,620	127
1992	2,493	93
1991	2,400	99
1990	2,301	-

Based on Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) data.

\*Year 2000 population data from United States Census 2000.

\*\*The 566 population increase in the year 2000 is a catch-up figure, correcting OFM's underestimate throughout the decade with Census data.

**Table 4.2**  
**Percent of Grays Harbor County Population within Each City**

City	1970	1980	1990	2000	2006
<i>Ocean Shores</i>	1.3	2.7	3.6	5.71%	6.54%
Aberdeen	31.0	28.2	25.8	24.50%	23.39%
Cosmopolis	2.7	2.4	2.1	2.37%	2.32%

Final Planning Commission Draft

2/13/07

Elma	3.7	4.1	4.7	4.54%	4.40%
Hoquiam	17.6	14.6	14.0	13.54%	12.56%
McCleary	2.1	2.1	2.3	2.21%	2.19%
Montesano	4.8	4.9	4.8	4.93%	5.04%
Oakville	0.8	0.8	0.8	1.00%	1.01%
Westport	2.3	2.9	2.9	3.18%	3.30%

**Population Characteristics**

**Age and Sex.** The age distribution for the population of Ocean Shores plays a major role in determining many of the characteristics of the City. As of the 2000 Census, approximately 28 percent of the City's population was 65 years of age or older as compared to 16% for Grays Harbor County and 11.4% for the State of Washington . , In 2000 60 percent of the City's population is over the age of 44 versus 55 percent in 1990 and as compared to Grays Harbor County overall where 40.4 percent is over 44 years of age and the State where 34 percent of the population is over 44. The

**Table 4.3  
Age Distribution**

Age Group	1990 Census		2000 Census	
	Persons	Percent of Total	Persons	Percent of Total
<4	119	5.2%	170	4.4%
5 to 9	122	5.4%	171	4.5%
10 to 14	113	5.0%	175	4.6%
15 to 20	91	4.0%	190	5.0%
20 to 24	87	3.8%	114	3.0%
25 to 34	200	8.8%	312	8.1%
35 to 44	286	12.6%	414	10.8%
45 to 54	225	9.9%	599	15.6%
55 to 59	162	7.1%	297	7.7%
60 to 64	241	10.6%	321	8.4%
65+	626	27.6%	1073	28.0%
Total	2,272	100%	3,836	100%

**Racial Distribution.** The racial distribution for the City of Ocean Shores remains dominated largely by the white race classification though some diversification has occurred. In 1990 nearly 98 percent of the City's population was white while in 2000 92% were identified as white. All other race categories showed both numeric and percentage increases over the period between census.

**Table 4.4  
Racial Distribution 1990 & 2000**

Race	1990 Census		2000 Census	
	# of Persons	Percent	# of Persons	Percent

White	2,223	97.8	3546	92.44
Black	2	0.1	23	0.60
American Indian	23	1	84	2.19
Filipino	12	0.5	13	0.34
Japanese	8	0.4	8	0.21
Korean	2	0.1	16	0.42
Other Race	2	0.1	146	3.81

**Education**

**School Enrollment.** Between 1990 and 2000 school enrollment grew substantially however enrollment grew less rapidly than population and thereby the percentage of the total population was reduced.

**Table 4.5  
School Enrollment 1990 & 2000**

Type of School	1990		2000		1990 to 2000	
	Enrollment	%	Enrollment	%	Change	%
Pre School & Kindergarten	34	9%	59	11%	25	74%
Elementary or High School	286	73%	404	78%	118	41%
College	70	18%	53	10%	-17	-24%
Total Enrolled	390		516		126	
Percent of Total Population		17%		13%		

**Educational Attainment.** As of the 1990 Census, approximately 84 percent of the City's population had achieved a level of educational attainment of at least receiving a high school diploma and by 2000 that number had increased to 89%. This is slightly higher than the State as a whole, which is 87%, or Grays Harbor County, which is 81%. While the number of people with a Bachelors or higher degree increased substantially, it did not keep pace with overall population growth and thereby the percentage declined from 19% in 1990 to 17% in 2000. This compares with a Washington State number of 27.7 percent and a Grays Harbor County number of 12.7 percent in 2000. **Table 4.6**

**Educational Attainment 1990 & 2000**

Educational Attainment	1990		2000	
	Persons	Percent	Persons	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	64	3%	47	2%
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	235	13%	277	9%
High School Graduate	604	33%	1004	34%
Some College, No Degree	501	27%	881	30%
Associate Degree	105	6%	258	9%
Bachelor's Degree	222	12%	276	9%
Graduate or Professional Degree	121	7%	232	8%

Population 25 yrs & over	1852		2975	
Percent High School Grad. or higher		84%		89%
Percent Bachelor's Degree or higher		19%		17%

## Employment

**Employment Classifications.** The largest employment classification for the City of Ocean Shores remains the private for profit wage and salary workers employment category. This category showed substantial growth of 57%, which is comparable to the population growth for the same period of 59%. The self-employed worker category indicates growth of over 175%. Together the private wage and salary group and the self-employed group comprise 82% of employed persons in 2000 versus 84% in 1990.

**Table 4.7**  
**Employment Classifications 1990 & 2000**

Class of Worker	1990		2000	
	Employees	Percent	Employees	Percent
Private wage and salary workers	642	75%	1015	68%
Government workers	136	16%	254	17%
Self-employed workers	78	9%	215	14%
Unpaid family workers	0	0%	16	1%
Total	856		1500	
Increase 1990 to 2000			644	57%

**Industry of Employed Persons.** The Arts, entertainment, recreation, etc. category shows very strong growth between 1990 and 2000 and emerges as the single largest category eclipsing retail trade. Construction also shows very strong growth.

**Table 4.8**  
**Industry of Employed Persons 1990 & 2000**

Industry	1990		2000	
	Employees	%	Employees	%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries & Mining	22	3%	0	0%
Construction	93	11%	241	16%
Manufacturing	75	9%	73	5%
Wholesale Trade	6	1%	0	0%
Retail Trade	197	23%	122	8%
Transportation and Utilities	40	5%	48	3%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	71	8%	107	7%
Professional, scientific, management and administrative services	64	7%	46	3%
Education and Health Services	70	8%	231	15%

Arts, Entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	134	16%	391	26%
Information and Other Services	27	3%	151	10%
Public Administration	57	7%	90	6%

**Table 4.9  
Occupation of Employed Persons 1990 and 2000**

Occupation	1990		2000	
	Employees	%	Employees	%
Management, Professional and related occupations	215	25%	368	25%
Sales and Office Occupations	260	30%	324	22%
Service occupations	204	24%	369	25%
Farming, forestry, and fishing occupations	27	3%	0	0%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	95	11%	274	18%
Production, transportation, and material moving	55	6%	165	11%
Total	856		1500	

**Income**

Income of families and households in Ocean Shores is substantially similar to data for the State as a whole. While median household income is lower than the state as a whole this is likely due to the number of retired persons residing in the City and the median household income rose faster between 1989 and 1999 than the same data for the state as a whole.

**Table 4.10  
Percentage of Families in Each Income Category 1990 and 2000**

Range of Income	City of Ocean Shores		State of Washington	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
	%	%	%	%
<10,000	13.3	9.5	12.9	7.6
10,000 to 14,999	12.7	2.9	8.5	5.5
15,000 to 24,999	23	14.8	17.9	11.7
25,000 to 34,999	16.8	17.6	16.8	12.5
35,000 to 49,999	19.6	19.2	19.6	17.1
50,000 to 74,999	9.6	21.6	15.8	21.4
75,000 to 99,999	3.9	6.4	4.8	11.6
100,000 to 149,999	0.9	5	2.4	8.3
>150,000	0.2	3	1.3	4.3

**Table 4.11**  
**Median Household Income 1980, 1990 and 2000**

	1979	1989	%	1999	%
			Change		Change
Ocean Shores	\$20,250	\$25,490	25.9	\$34,643	74%
Washington State	\$18,367	\$31,183	69.8	\$45,776	68%

**Description of Housing Stock**

**Housing Number and Type.** According to the Office of Financial Management, in 2005, there were 3,705 total housing units within the City of Ocean Shores. Of these housing units, 78 percent were single-family units, 11 percent were multi-family, and 10.2 percent were mobile homes or trailers. This indicates that the number of single family homes is increasing more rapidly than other types of dwellings because the overall percentage of single family is increasing in comparison to earlier years while the percentage of multifamily and mobile/trailer homes is decreasing. The total number of units has increased at an average rate of 95 units per year since 1980. Single family homes have averaged 80 new units per year or 84% of new construction.

**Table 4.12**  
**Number and Type of Housing Units**

Year	Total Units	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home/Trailer
2005	3,705	2,917	410	378
2000	3,170	2,423	399	348
1996	2,801	2,040	375	386
1990	2,101	1,544	270	287
1980	1,308	911	209	188

**Occupancy Status** The 2000 Census shows a modest shift toward a greater percentage of full time homes in Ocean Shores compared to 1990 as indicated by the vacancy rate, which declined from 50 % to 43.5%. The 2000 census separated seasonal and occasional use homes and identified 1053 homes in that category. If the Occupied and Seasonal, Occasional are added together, this yields an "actual" vacancy rate of approximately 10%. This relatively high vacancy rate may be, in part, indicative of the difficulty of discerning a truly vacant home from an unoccupied seasonal home but also may indicate a relatively high number of properties for sale at the time of the census.

**Table 4.13**  
**Housing Unit Occupancy Status 1990 and 2000**

Final Planning Commission Draft  
2/13/07

	1990		2000	
	Persons	Percentage	Persons	Percentage
Occupied	1,051	50.02%	1789	56.44%
Vacant, Seasonal and Occasional Use	1,050	49.98%	1381	43.56%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,101</b>		<b>3170</b>	

**Immigration**

Comparison of the 1990 to 2000 census indicates little change in the overall character of the migration to the City. The 2000 figures are also comparable to the data for Washington State that indicates 48% of the State's residents are living in the same house as in 1995. However the comparison with state figures indicates that a significantly lower number are moving within Grays Harbor County (including from a different house in Ocean Shores) and a significantly higher percentage are moving to Ocean Shores from within the state than are otherwise moving between counties within the State.

**Table 4.14  
Ocean Shores Residents in 1990**

	Persons	Percentage
Total Population 5 years and older	2153	
Same house in 1985	889	41.3%
Different House in U.S. in 1985	1264	58.7%
Same County	361	16.8%
Different County		
Same State	561	26.1%
Different State		
Northeast	7	0.3%
Midwest	58	2.7%
South	20	0.9%
West	234	10.9%
Foreign Country	23	1.1%

**Ocean Shores Residents in 2000 With Washington State Percentages**

	Ocean Shores		State
	Persons	%	%
Residence in 1995			
Total Population 5 years and older	3594		
Same house in 1995	1604	44.6%	48.6%
Different House in U.S. in 1995	1990	55.4%	51.4%
Same County	564	15.7%	27.5%
Different County			
Same State	976	27.2%	9.5%
Different State			
Northeast	0	0.0%	0.8%
Midwest	65	1.8%	1.4%
South	32	0.9%	2.1%
West	324	9.0%	7.0%

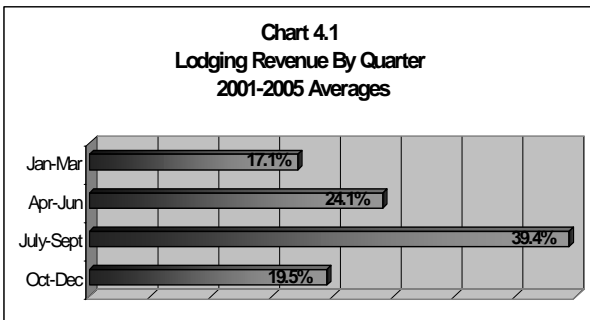
Foreign Country	29	0.8%	3.1%
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**Tourism**

As previously noted, tourism is the economic mainstay of the Ocean Shores economy which necessarily means that a large number of people visit the City. This is important to the planning process of the City, particularly in the provision of public services. At times when the tourist populations is high, public services such as police, fire, water, and sewer must provide services for a far greater number of people than simply the City’s population. Traffic issues also become important. On a winter day when the tourist numbers are low, the streets may seem more than adequate to serve the City’s population. Those same streets on a holiday weekend in the summertime, however, may experience significant congestion. Since both residents and non-residents (owners and visitors) use and pay for City services, the community’s plans must take into account this expanded population base.

The number of tourists varies with seasonal changes, sunny weather, weekends, holidays and scheduled events. The summer months attract the greatest number of visitors with July and August being the major tourism months. Holidays such as Memorial Day, 4th of July, and Labor Day are typically the times at which the greatest population of tourists is present.

As a community serving tourists as well as residents, the City of Ocean Shores must plan and provide community services for numbers significantly larger than its full-time residential population. Based on data derived from the City’s traffic count stations, the City now attracts more than 4 million visitors annually and estimates as many as 60,000 a



day on busy summer weekends. The raw data from these counters is processed based on Washington State Department of Transportation formulae to provide this estimate.

The data in Table 4.2 indicates that Ocean Shore's has an annualized daily average population of residents and visitors of approximately 7000 to 8000 people.<sup>1</sup>As indicated earlier, community, visitor population varies daily and seasonally. On a monthly basis the average daily population ranges from 5500 in the January to almost 9000 in August. These numbers do not reflect the daily variations within the month. However the data clearly indicates that on a yearly basis the City serves a population substantially in excess of the resident population.

**Table 4.15**  
**Wastewater Treatment Plant**  
**Average Daily Influent Flow in Gallons**  
**By Month 1999-2001, by Year 2002-2005**

	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2001</b>
<b>January</b>	271,800	270,100	369,500
<b>February</b>	384,100	316,000	398,200
<b>March</b>	284,700	345,900	404,500
<b>April</b>	240,700	409,000	437,100
<b>May</b>	252,800	381,600	425,000
<b>June</b>	220,200	415,100	422,000
<b>July</b>	320,700	427,700	506,000
<b>August</b>	337,200	470,300	527,600
<b>September</b>	280,800	396,700	439,700
<b>October</b>	284,800	384,200	402,600
<b>November</b>	303,700	382,300	463,300
<b>December</b>	293,300	354,600	486,500
<b>Yearly Average</b>	<b>289,600</b>	<b>379,500</b>	<b>440,200</b>
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	<b>2002</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>
<b>Yearly Average</b>	<b>456,200</b>	<b>467,700</b>	<b>454,300</b>
		<b>2005</b>	<b>459,700</b>

*Prepared from Wastewater Treatment Plant data.*

#### **Population projections**

The above data provides a picture of the where the City is today and gives some idea of where we might be going. However as a planning document, a look at data that projects where we might be going is necessary and useful. The city did extensive projections of future population and visitation as a part of the Sewer Plant Upgrade in 1996.

<sup>1</sup> The City uses a figure of 65 gallons per person per day. This figure is derived from state guidelines and local data.

**Table 4.16**  
**Population Projections, 1995-2030**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Wintertime</b>	<b>Summertime</b>
1995	4,516	12,678
2000	5,574	15,916
2005	6,631	19,155
2010	7,807	22,289
2015	8,748	25,630
2020	9,804	28,870
2025	10,862	31,410
2030	11,922	31,410

Population projections are based on contributions to the sewage system in wintertime and summertime. Projections prepared for 1996 City of Ocean Shores Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade by URS Consultants, Inc., p. 3-4.

Based on estimates of full-time residents, part-time residents, hotel/motel guests, and services outside the City, these projections give a broader picture of the population using public services in Ocean Shores than estimates of resident population. The projections were used in planning for capacity to provide services throughout the City when fully built out.

More recent analysis of influent flow at the wastewater treatment plant suggests that the City's population and visitation is keeping pace with or exceeding these projections. See Table 4.16

The Washington State Office of Financial Management prepares populations projections for the State as a whole and by County but does not do so for Cities. Using the statewide data suggests that a full time resident population of between 6500 and 7500 can be expected in 2025. Projections of past growth trends for the city itself also yield a similar number. State and national demographic factors such as the rapid increase in the number of retirement age individuals, together with the availability of buildable land and other factors may mean that Ocean Shores would grow at a faster rate than state as a whole or than past experience indicates.

#### Summary Analysis

Taken together these data indicate a City with strong but manageable growth that is likely to continue and may increase in overall rate. The population characteristics are changing in relatively subtle ways to be more diverse and have greater economic security. While the data is somewhat old, it does not indicate any dramatic changes in the community character and the more recent data supports this though it is relatively sparse. While data on part-time and visitor growth is more sparse, assuming it roughly tracks Washington State population and economic data would indicate continued growth for those areas as well. The aging of the State's population may indicate a continuation of the trend toward a greater percentage of full time residents.