



Yakima County 2046 Population Projections and Allocations



Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	3
STATE REQUIREMENTS.....	3
2015 METHODOLOGY.....	3
2025 METHODOLOGY.....	7
1. Collect OFM's April 1, 2022, Estimates.	7
2. Calculate the "Annual Growth Rate % Changes" and AAGRs for Yakima County, its cities, and towns using OFM's April estimates.	9
3. Project the county's population from 2020 to 2046 using the County's AAGR.....	13
4. Compare the latest OFM 2022 "GMA Low, Medium, and High" population projections for Yakima County.	14
5. Comparative Analysis of the County's AAGR projection, OFM's 2022 projections, and the County's 2015 Allocations.	15
6. Yakima County's Preferred Alternative and Allocations.....	15
7. Calculate each city and town's projected populations using their AAGRs to determine the Unincorporated Adjusted Total area population of the county.....	17
8. Summary of cities and town's review of county's draft preferred alternative and allocations.	19
9. County's finalization of the preferred alternative and allocations.....	19
10. CONCLUSION	22



INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to establish a 20-year population projection¹ for Yakima County, to be allocated to its cities and towns, for the 2026 Growth Management Act (GMA) periodic update cycle scheduled under RCW 36.70A130(5)(c). The selected population projection and allocations are shown in Table 7 (“Cities & County Consensus Population Projections and Allocations, 2025-2046”) and will be used for comprehensive planning updates and Urban Growth Area (UGA) reviews.

To reach consensus on the population numbers in Table 7, the County shared draft projections and allocations with Yakima County cities and towns on April 15, 2024. After consultation and discussions, the numbers were revised after consensus was reached. These consensus figures may be used by each jurisdiction for their 20-year planning purposes.

The Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) “April 1, 2022” 10-year estimates and “GMA 2022 projections” (low, medium, and high) were used in the development of the county’s preferred alternative, in selecting a projected population within OFM’s projection range. This report will show the methodology of steps taken in identifying the preferred alternative and draft allocations to the cities and towns.

This report is “Report 1” of a two-step analysis. “Report 2” will consist of individual Land Capacity Analyses (LCA) for the UGAs of each city and town. These analyses will be conducted during UGA reviews and use the consensus 2046 population allocations to analyze UGA amendment proposals to determine whether there is sufficient land within each UGA to accommodate the 20-year projected growth.

STATE REQUIREMENTS

As mandated by GMA, Yakima County is required to update its Comprehensive Plan – ***Horizon 2040***, development regulations, and if necessary, conduct UGA reviews to be completed by the June 30, 2026, deadline. RCW 36.70A.115 states in part that Yakima County and its cities and towns shall ensure that their comprehensive plans and development regulations provide sufficient capacity of land suitable for development within their jurisdictions to accommodate their projected and allocated housing and employment growth consistent with the 20-year population forecast from OFM.

2015 METHODOLOGY

Neither OFM nor GMA prescribe how counties should conduct their projections using OFM’s data. They do, however, state that the local officials shall select a 20-year target between OFM’s latest projection range.

OFM suggests the:

“...medium series is considered the most likely because it represents a future based on assumptions that have been validated with past and current information. The highs and lows series reflect general uncertainty bands for growth over the next 30 years. These assumptions are based on the historical high and low migration patterns for each county and current factors affecting the economic base and attractiveness of specific areas in the state. The alternative series represents the fundamental unpredictability of long-range projections. They should be considered for planning purposes if the social and economic environment impact on demographic trends predicted in the middle series does not hold.”

¹ The U.S. Census Bureau defines population projections as “estimates of the population for future dates.”

“As indicated in RCW 36.70A.110 and RCW 36.70A.115, local officials are responsible for selecting a 20-year GMA planning target that is within the high- and low-growth projections prepared by OFM.” (2017 Projections – County Growth Management Population Projections by Age and Sex: 2010-40, pg. 1)

The County’s previous population projections were finalized on July 14, 2015, for the 2017 GMA periodic update cycle. The report is referred to as the “County 2015 Allocations.” OFM’s April 1, 2014, estimates and their 2012 population projections data were used in that report. OFM’s 2012 medium projection series was selected as the county’s preferred alternative or 20-year population projection baseline. According to OFM, the medium projection is the “more likely” series. The report provides a review of the county’s “Annual Average Growth Rates” (AAGRs) calculated from OFM’s 2012 medium projection (5-year periods), from 2015 to 2040, which showed a declining growth rate from 1.08% in 2015 to 0.77% by 2040. For this reason, Yakima County applied a declining growth rate of -0.01% to each city and town’s AAGRs each year.

Unlike the county’s AAGR, each city and town’s AAGRs were calculated from OFM’s 2014 Estimates. Three options were applied in choosing a jurisdiction’s AAGR, including: (1) Use the local jurisdiction’s AAGR if it was higher than the county’s, and (2) Use the average between the local jurisdiction’s and county’s AAGRs, if the local jurisdiction’s AAGR was lower. Or, (3) Use the AAGRs recommended by a jurisdiction as requested by Naches, Selah, and Zillah in the 2015 projection.

Table 1 and Figure 1 below were created to conduct a preliminary review of OFM’s current population data in comparison to the County’s 2015 Allocations. As shown in Table 1, the 2014 and 2022 population estimates show minimal changes in population sizes. The major differences can be seen between OFM’s 2012 and 2022 medium projections where the 2022 medium projection shows a decline of -18,495 people in 2025 and -35,143 people in 2040. These differences have significant impacts on Yakima County’s upcoming UGA reviews since they are already oversized.

A linear trendline² was created in Figure 1 to analyze the relationship between OFM’s 2014 and 2022 population estimates and OFM’s current medium projection (the “more likely” series). OFM is now providing a medium projection that is more in-line with its historical estimates and not skewed as were the 2012 projections.

The R2 value of 0.9969 from OFM’s population estimate trendline in Figure 3 is a strong fit in its reliability and consistent with OFM’s current medium projected growth. This initial review of OFM’s current data will prove useful in establishing a realistic approach to projecting a future county population and supports selecting the preferred alternative.

² According to Microsoft, “*a linear trendline is a best-fit straight line that is used with simple linear data sets. Your data is linear if the pattern in its data points resembles a line. A linear trendline usually shows that something is increasing or decreasing at a steady rate.*” A “*trendline equation is a formula that finds a line that best fits the data points.*” The “*R²* value measures the trendline reliability – the nearer *R²* is to 1, the better the trendline fits the data”

(<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/choosing-the-best-trendline-for-your-data-1bb3c9e7-0280-45b5-9ab0-d0c93161daa8>)

Table 1. OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Population Projection Comparison														
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
OFM April 1, 2014, Estimate	243,231	244,700	246,000	247,250	248,800									
OFM April 1, 2022, Estimate	243,231	244,553	245,605	246,825	248,229	249,314	251,046	252,692	253,814	254,770	256,728	258,100	259,950	
County 2015 Allocations (OFM 2012 Medium)						256,341	258,730	261,462	264,150	266,780	269,347	271,956	274,512	277,037
OFM 2022 Low														
OFM 2022 Medium														
OFM 2022 High														
Difference Between OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Projections														

Table 1 cont. OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Population Projection Comparison														
	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037
OFM April 1, 2014, Estimate														
OFM April 1, 2022, Estimate														
County 2015 Allocations (OFM 2012 Medium)	279,530	282,057	284,652	287,148	289,615	292,046	294,445	297,036	299,485	301,896	304,276	306,636	309,052	311,443
OFM 2022 Low		247,748	248,586	249,300	249,989	250,650	251,278	251,871	252,418	252,925	253,393	253,825	254,246	254,632
OFM 2022 Medium		263,562	265,214	266,734	268,228	269,691	271,120	272,512	273,854	275,154	276,413	277,633	278,842	280,013
OFM 2022 High		284,647	287,811	290,833	293,826	296,786	299,710	302,593	305,422	308,206	310,946	313,644	316,329	318,974
Difference Between OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Projections		-18,495	-19,438	-20,414	-21,387	-22,355	-23,325	-24,524	-25,631	-26,742	-27,863	-29,003	-30,210	-31,430

Table 1 cont. OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Population Projection Comparison													
	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050
OFM April 1, 2014, Estimate													
OFM April 1, 2022, Estimate													
County 2015 Allocations (OFM 2012 Medium)	313,811	316,161	318,494										
OFM 2022 Low	254,988	255,319	255,625	255,951	256,226	256,475	256,704	256,911	257,133	257,332	257,508	257,666	257,807
OFM 2022 Medium	281,152	282,265	283,351	284,459	285,512	286,537	287,541	288,522	289,519	290,491	291,439	292,368	293,279
OFM 2022 High	321,584	324,166	326,719	329,296	331,813	334,300	336,764	339,204	341,661	344,090	346,494	348,877	351,241
Difference Between OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Projections	-32,659	-33,896	-35,143										

Source: OFM/County 2015 Allocations. Calculations of “Difference Between OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Projections” were conducted by Yakima County.

Figure 1. OFM 2012 and 2022 Medium Projections Comparison



Based on the preliminary review of this data, one alternative is to declare the County's 2015 Allocations as the valid source, since they fall within OFM's current projection range. The result would keep Yakima County's oversized UGAs at their current number of years of growth and not make them any larger. One opposing argument to continue using OFM's 2012 medium projection is that it is skewed and does not reflect a realistic future population consistent with historical growth.

Based on the above review, conducting a new population projection and selecting the preferred alternative within OFM's new range will be more accurate and reliable for the county and its local jurisdictions.

2025 METHODOLOGY

The county's methodology is outlined in the following section and summarized here:

1. Collect OFM's April 1, 2022, Estimates.
2. Calculate the "Annual Growth Rate % Changes" and AAGRs for Yakima County, its cities, and towns using OFM's April 1, 2022, estimates.
3. Project the county's population from 2020 to 2046 using the County's AAGR.
4. Collect the latest OFM 2022 "GMA Low, Medium, and High" population projections for Yakima County.
5. Compare Analysis of the County's AAGR projections, OFM's 2022 projections, and the County's 2015 Allocations.
6. Calculate Yakima County's Preferred Alternative and Allocations.
7. Express each city and town's projected populations using their AAGRs and determine the Unincorporated area population of the county.
8. Summarize each city and town's review of the county's draft preferred alternative and allocations.
9. Report impacts of the current population projections on future Land Capacity Analyses (LCAs).
10. Report the County's finalization of the preferred alternative and allocations.

1. Collect OFM's April 1, 2022, Estimates.

Based on the analysis in the above section, two conclusions emerge: (1) OFM's Estimates provide a good starting point to be used as a population projection baseline; and, (2) population projections using AAGRs are consistent with historical growth. OFM's 2022 Estimates provide annual population figures from 2010-2022 using the 2010 and 2020 decennial censuses as anchor points and using numerous population indicators to estimate the population for the other years. In addition to countywide Estimates, OFM also provides population Estimates for Yakima County's cities and towns in which individual AAGRs can be calculated for each of these jurisdictions.

OFM provides the following descriptions of how population Estimates are developed for counties and cities.

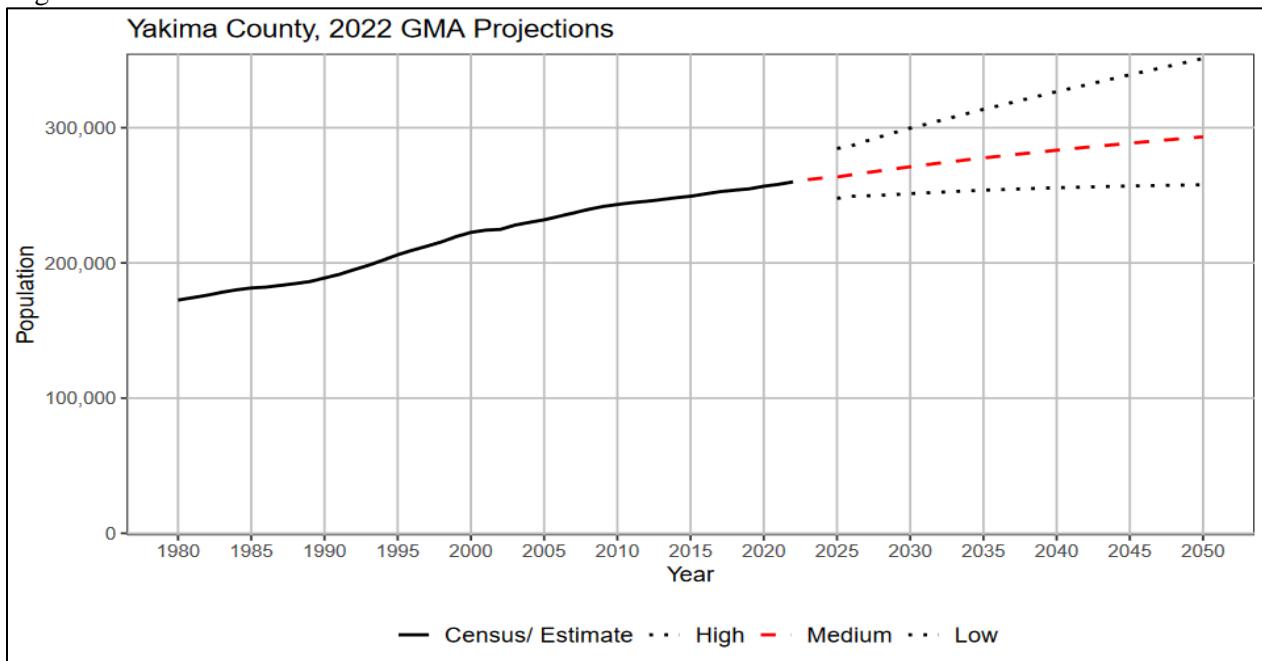
"County populations are developed by three methods: the component method, ratio correlation and the housing unit method. Ratio correlation relates change in the county's share of the state population over a specific 10-year period to changes in the county's share of a set of symptomatic data over the same time period. The current equation contains school enrollment, voter registrations, auto registrations, housing, births and deaths to persons age 65 or over. Changes in the symptomatic data are then tracked annually through the current decade to estimate population."

The housing unit method estimates population on the basis of housing change and assumptions about occupancy rates and average household size.”

“City/town populations include both estimates and actual counts. A small number of cities/towns census their entire population each year. The housing unit method is used by OFM to prepare population estimates for the remaining cities. City population estimates are determined based on changes in the housing stock and counts of persons residing in group quarters facilities. The household population is estimated based on knowledge of housing unit change since the last census, occupancy rates and average household size. The population residing in group quarters facilities and from recent annexations is subsequently added to the estimate of household population to derive the final estimate. The reliability of the housing unit estimation method depends on accurately determining changes to the housing stock, the occupancy rate and average household size.” (State of Washington 2022 Population Trends, November 2022, pgs. 47-48)

Note: Figure 2 is provided by OFM to display the County’s historical estimates and decennial census data points from 1980 through 2022. This graph also shows a linear trendline projection of OFM’s historical estimates with its current medium projection. The low and high projections begin in the year 2025 and end in the year 2050. A display of historical estimates in relation to the current projections is important to demonstrate the reliability of the data and validate the selection of a future population projection for planning.

Figure 2:



Source: OFM Forecasting & Research Division I December 2022.

2. Calculate the “Annual Growth Rate % Changes” and AAGRs for Yakima County, its cities, and towns using OFM’s April estimates.

Table 2. OFM “estimates”.

Table 2. OFM April 1, 2022 - Population Estimates													
	2010 Census	2011 Estimate	2012 Estimate	2013 Estimate	2014 Estimate	2015 Estimate	2016 Estimate	2017 Estimate	2018 Estimate	2019 Estimate	2020 Census	2021 Estimate	2022 Estimate
Yakima County	243,231	244,553	245,605	246,825	248,229	249,314	251,046	252,692	253,814	254,770	256,728	258,100	259,950
Unincorporated	83,755	84,061	84,380	84,526	84,898	85,618	86,376	87,115	87,583	87,766	88,147	88,240	88,955
Incorporated	159,476	160,492	161,225	162,299	163,331	163,696	164,670	165,577	166,231	167,004	168,581	169,860	170,995
Grandview	10,862	10,929	11,006	11,021	11,205	11,108	11,046	10,995	10,918	10,904	10,910	10,960	11,020
Granger	3,246	3,227	3,191	3,175	3,296	3,377	3,623	3,598	3,573	3,614	3,624	3,690	3,740
Harrah	630	621	630	614	605	603	594	595	596	587	585	580	580
Mabton	2,286	2,253	2,217	2,188	2,157	2,120	2,088	2,053	2,017	1,987	1,959	1,975	1,975
Moxee	3,308	3,413	3,502	3,666	3,731	3,830	3,974	3,997	4,011	4,136	4,326	4,405	4,665
Naches	795	825	844	861	893	927	964	988	1,012	1,053	1,084	1,110	1,125
Selah	7,147	7,226	7,341	7,412	7,490	7,638	7,660	7,774	7,987	8,131	8,153	8,235	8,365
Sunnyside	15,858	15,934	15,969	15,960	15,902	15,856	16,029	16,046	16,161	16,289	16,375	16,400	16,500
Tieton	1,191	1,202	1,207	1,259	1,290	1,295	1,338	1,360	1,375	1,380	1,389	1,430	1,505
Toppenish	8,949	8,919	8,892	8,863	8,837	8,814	8,901	8,916	8,884	8,868	8,854	8,870	8,870
Union Gap	6,047	6,071	6,133	6,164	6,218	6,254	6,329	6,369	6,408	6,466	6,568	6,595	6,640
Wapato	4,997	4,985	4,941	4,901	4,859	4,811	4,768	4,722	4,678	4,651	4,607	4,610	4,615
Yakima	91,196	91,892	92,317	93,093	93,706	93,927	94,217	95,020	95,455	95,771	96,968	97,810	98,200
Zillah	2,964	2,995	3,035	3,122	3,142	3,136	3,139	3,144	3,156	3,167	3,179	3,190	3,195

Source: OFM.

Note: Table 3 depicts Annual Growth Rate % Changes between the corresponding years. Over half of Yakima County's local jurisdictions including Grandview, Granger, Harrah, Mabton, Sunnyside, Toppenish, Wapato, and Zillah were estimated to have experienced several years of negative growth. Harrah, Mabton, Tieton, and Wapato all showed negative growth under the 2019-2020 Annual Growth Rate % Change after the 2020 Census, which resulted in negative AAGRs for the 12-year period.

Table 3. OFM April 1, 2022 - Population Estimates AAGRs

	2010 Census	2011 Estimate	2010-2011 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2012 Estimate	2011-2012 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2013 Estimate	2012-2013 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2014 Estimate	2013-2014 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2015 Estimate	2014-2015 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2016 Estimate	2015-2016 Annual Growth Rate % Change
Yakima County	243,231	244,553	0.54%	245,605	0.43%	246,825	0.50%	248,229	0.57%	249,314	0.44%	251,046	0.69%
Unincorporated	83,755	84,061	0.37%	84,380	0.38%	84,526	0.17%	84,898	0.44%	85,618	0.85%	86,376	0.89%
Incorporated	159,476	160,492	0.64%	161,225	0.46%	162,299	0.67%	163,331	0.64%	163,696	0.22%	164,670	0.60%
Grandview	10,862	10,929	0.62%	11,006	0.70%	11,021	0.14%	11,205	1.67%	11,108	-0.87%	11,046	-0.56%
Granger	3,246	3,227	-0.59%	3,191	-1.12%	3,175	-0.50%	3,296	3.81%	3,377	2.46%	3,623	7.28%
Harrah	630	621	-1.43%	630	1.45%	614	-2.54%	605	-1.47%	603	-0.33%	594	-1.49%
Mabton	2,286	2,253	-1.44%	2,217	-1.60%	2,188	-1.31%	2,157	-1.42%	2,120	-1.72%	2,088	-1.51%
Moxee	3,308	3,413	3.17%	3,502	2.61%	3,666	4.68%	3,731	1.77%	3,830	2.65%	3,974	3.76%
Naches	795	825	3.77%	844	2.30%	861	2.01%	893	3.72%	927	3.81%	964	3.99%
Selah	7,147	7,226	1.11%	7,341	1.59%	7,412	0.97%	7,490	1.05%	7,638	1.98%	7,660	0.29%
Sunnyside	15,858	15,934	0.48%	15,969	0.22%	15,960	-0.06%	15,902	-0.36%	15,856	-0.29%	16,029	1.09%
Tieton	1,191	1,202	0.92%	1,207	0.42%	1,259	4.31%	1,290	2.46%	1,295	0.39%	1,338	3.32%
Toppenish	8,949	8,919	-0.34%	8,892	-0.30%	8,863	-0.33%	8,837	-0.29%	8,814	-0.26%	8,901	0.99%
Union Gap	6,047	6,071	0.40%	6,133	1.02%	6,164	0.51%	6,218	0.88%	6,254	0.58%	6,329	1.20%
Wapato	4,997	4,985	-0.24%	4,941	-0.88%	4,901	-0.81%	4,859	-0.86%	4,811	-0.99%	4,768	-0.89%
Yakima	91,196	91,892	0.76%	92,317	0.46%	93,093	0.84%	93,706	0.66%	93,927	0.24%	94,217	0.31%
Zillah	2,964	2,995	1.05%	3,035	1.34%	3,122	2.87%	3,142	0.64%	3,136	-0.19%	3,139	0.10%

Source: OFM. Calculations of "Annual Growth Rate % Changes" and "AAGRs" were conducted by Yakima County.

Table 3 cont. OFM April 1, 2022 - Population Estimates AAGRs													
	2017 Estimate	2016-2017 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2018 Estimate	2017-2018 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2019 Estimate	2018-2019 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2020 Census	2019-2020 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2021 Estimate	2020-2021 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2022 Estimate	2021-2022 Annual Growth Rate % Change	Annual Average Growth Rate 2010-2022
Yakima County	252,692	0.66%	253,814	0.44%	254,770	0.38%	256,728	0.77%	258,100	0.53%	259,950	0.72%	0.56%
Unincorporated	87,115	0.86%	87,583	0.54%	87,766	0.21%	88,147	0.43%	88,240	0.11%	88,955	0.81%	0.50%
Incorporated	165,577	0.55%	166,231	0.39%	167,004	0.47%	168,581	0.94%	169,860	0.76%	170,995	0.67%	0.58%
Grandview	10,995	-0.46%	10,918	-0.70%	10,904	-0.13%	10,910	0.06%	10,960	0.46%	11,020	0.55%	0.12%
Granger	3,598	-0.69%	3,573	-0.69%	3,614	1.15%	3,624	0.28%	3,690	1.82%	3,740	1.36%	1.21%
Harrah	595	0.17%	596	0.17%	587	-1.51%	585	-0.34%	580	-0.85%	580	0.00%	-0.68%
Mabton	2,053	-1.68%	2,017	-1.75%	1,987	-1.49%	1,959	-1.41%	1,975	0.82%	1,975	0.00%	-1.21%
Moxee	3,997	0.58%	4,011	0.35%	4,136	3.12%	4,326	4.59%	4,405	1.83%	4,665	5.90%	2.92%
Naches	988	2.49%	1,012	2.43%	1,053	4.05%	1,084	2.94%	1,110	2.40%	1,125	1.35%	2.94%
Selah	7,774	1.49%	7,987	2.74%	8,131	1.80%	8,153	0.27%	8,235	1.01%	8,365	1.58%	1.32%
Sunnyside	16,046	0.11%	16,161	0.72%	16,289	0.79%	16,375	0.53%	16,400	0.15%	16,500	0.61%	0.33%
Tieton	1,360	1.64%	1,375	1.10%	1,380	0.36%	1,389	0.65%	1,430	2.95%	1,505	5.24%	1.98%
Toppenish	8,916	0.17%	8,884	-0.36%	8,868	-0.18%	8,854	-0.16%	8,870	0.18%	8,870	0.00%	-0.07%
Union Gap	6,369	0.63%	6,408	0.61%	6,466	0.91%	6,568	1.58%	6,595	0.41%	6,640	0.68%	0.78%
Wapato	4,722	-0.96%	4,678	-0.93%	4,651	-0.58%	4,607	-0.95%	4,610	0.07%	4,615	0.11%	-0.66%
Yakima	95,020	0.85%	95,455	0.46%	95,771	0.33%	96,968	1.25%	97,810	0.87%	98,200	0.40%	0.62%
Zillah	3,144	0.16%	3,156	0.38%	3,167	0.35%	3,179	0.38%	3,190	0.35%	3,195	0.16%	0.63%

Source: OFM. Calculations of “Annual Growth Rate % Changes” and “AAGRs” were conducted by Yakima County.

Note: Table 4 is a summary of the Annual Growth Rate % Changes and AAGRs. The final column shows AAGRs for the 12-year period.

Table 4. OFM April 1, 2022 - Population Estimates AAGRs													
	2010-2011 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2011-2012 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2012-2013 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2013-2014 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2014-2015 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2015-2016 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2016-2017 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2017-2018 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2018-2019 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2019-2020 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2020-2021 Annual Growth Rate % Change	2021-2022 Annual Growth Rate % Change	Annual Average Growth Rate 2010-2022
Yakima County	0.54%	0.43%	0.50%	0.57%	0.44%	0.69%	0.66%	0.44%	0.38%	0.77%	0.53%	0.72%	0.56%
Unincorporated	0.37%	0.38%	0.17%	0.44%	0.85%	0.89%	0.86%	0.54%	0.21%	0.43%	0.11%	0.81%	0.50%
Incorporated	0.64%	0.46%	0.67%	0.64%	0.22%	0.60%	0.55%	0.39%	0.47%	0.94%	0.76%	0.67%	0.58%
Grandview	0.62%	0.70%	0.14%	1.67%	-0.87%	-0.56%	-0.46%	-0.70%	-0.13%	0.06%	0.46%	0.55%	0.12%
Granger	-0.59%	-1.12%	-0.50%	3.81%	2.46%	7.28%	-0.69%	-0.69%	1.15%	0.28%	1.82%	1.36%	1.21%
Harrah	-1.43%	1.45%	-2.54%	-1.47%	-0.33%	-1.49%	0.17%	0.17%	-1.51%	-0.34%	-0.85%	0.00%	-0.68%
Mabton	-1.44%	-1.60%	-1.31%	-1.42%	-1.72%	-1.51%	-1.68%	-1.75%	-1.49%	-1.41%	0.82%	0.00%	-1.21%
Moxee	3.17%	2.61%	4.68%	1.77%	2.65%	3.76%	0.58%	0.35%	3.12%	4.59%	1.83%	5.90%	2.92%
Naches	3.77%	2.30%	2.01%	3.72%	3.81%	3.99%	2.49%	2.43%	4.05%	2.94%	2.40%	1.35%	2.94%
Selah	1.11%	1.59%	0.97%	1.05%	1.98%	0.29%	1.49%	2.74%	1.80%	0.27%	1.01%	1.58%	1.32%
Sunnyside	0.48%	0.22%	-0.06%	-0.36%	-0.29%	1.09%	0.11%	0.72%	0.79%	0.53%	0.15%	0.61%	0.33%
Tieton	0.92%	0.42%	4.31%	2.46%	0.39%	3.32%	1.64%	1.10%	0.36%	0.65%	2.95%	5.24%	1.98%
Toppenish	-0.34%	-0.30%	-0.33%	-0.29%	-0.26%	0.99%	0.17%	-0.36%	-0.18%	-0.16%	0.18%	0.00%	-0.07%
Union Gap	0.40%	1.02%	0.51%	0.88%	0.58%	1.20%	0.63%	0.61%	0.91%	1.58%	0.41%	0.68%	0.78%
Wapato	-0.24%	-0.88%	-0.81%	-0.86%	-0.99%	-0.89%	-0.96%	-0.93%	-0.58%	-0.95%	0.07%	0.11%	-0.66%
Yakima	0.76%	0.46%	0.84%	0.66%	0.24%	0.31%	0.85%	0.46%	0.33%	1.25%	0.87%	0.40%	0.62%
Zillah	1.05%	1.34%	2.87%	0.64%	-0.19%	0.10%	0.16%	0.38%	0.35%	0.38%	0.35%	0.16%	0.63%

Source: Calculations of “Annual Growth Rate % Changes” and “AAGRs” were conducted by Yakima County.

3. Project the county's population from 2020 to 2046 using the County's AAGR.

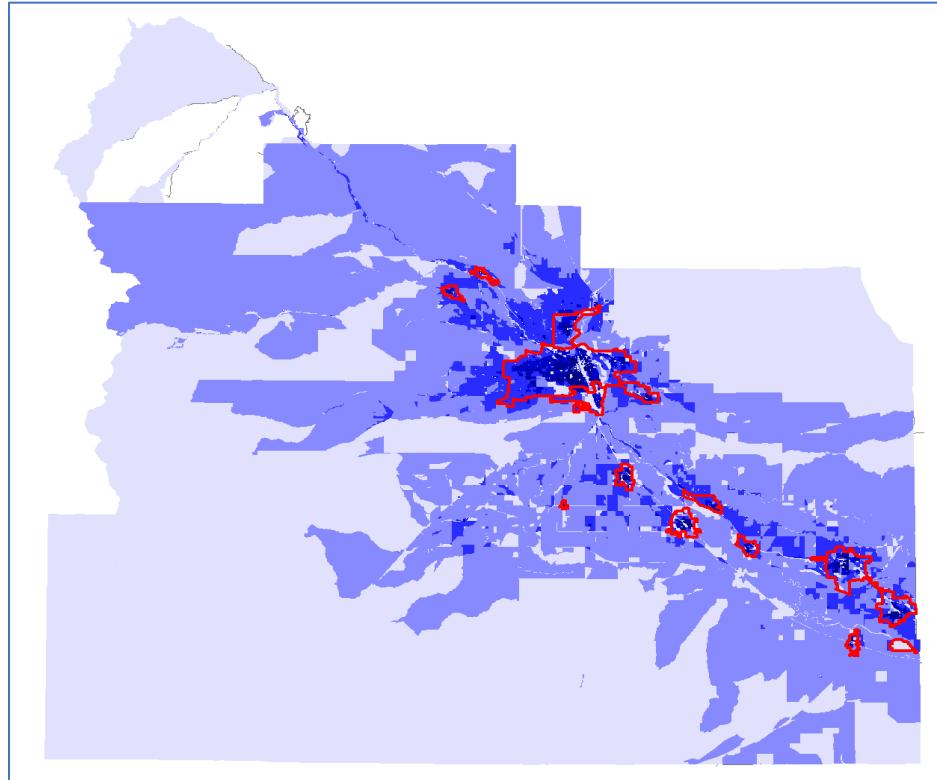
The county's AAGR of 0.56% was applied annually to the projected yearly populations from 2026 to 2046 to cover the 20-year planning horizon. The county's population projection (County AAGR) in Table 5 will be added to Table 6 with OFM's 2022 projections and the County's 2015 Allocations to be visually displayed and compared in Figure 3.

Table 5. Yakima County's AAGR Population Projection										
	2020 Census	Annual Average Growth Rate ³	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028
Yakima County	256,728	0.56%	258,154	259,589	261,031	262,481	263,939	265,406	266,880	268,363

Table 5 cont. Yakima County's AAGR Population Projection										
	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038
Yakima County	269,854	271,354	272,861	274,377	275,902	277,434	278,976	280,526	282,084	283,652

Table 5 cont. Yakima County's AAGR Population Projection								
	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046
Yakima County	285,228	286,812	288,406	290,008	291,619	293,240	294,869	296,507

Source: OFM. Calculations of the county's AAGR and 20-year projection were conducted by Yakima County.



³ OFM 2010-2022 Estimates

4. Compare the latest OFM 2022 “GMA Low, Medium, and High” population projections for Yakima County.

OFM releases their GMA population projections every five years. The latest was provided in 2022, projecting Yakima County’s population 2025-2050. OFM is mandated by state law to provide a reasonable range of high and low growth for each county (RCW 43.62.035) to be used for reviewing their UGAs (RCW 36.70A.110) and providing sufficient land capacity for development through its comprehensive plan and development regulations (RCW 36.70A.115). The consolidated population projections in Table 6 have been visually displayed in Figure 3 for a comparative analysis.

Table 6. Yakima County Population Projections Comparison

	2010 Census	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020 Census	2021	2022	2023
OFM April 1, 2022 Estimate	243,231	244,553	245,605	246,825	248,229	249,314	251,046	252,692	253,814	254,770	256,728	258,100	259,950	
County AAGR											256,728	258,154	259,589	261,031
OFM 2022 Low														
OFM 2022 Medium														
OFM 2022 High														
County 2015 Allocations (OFM 2012 Medium)						256,341	258,730	261,462	264,150	266,780	269,347	271,956	274,512	277,037

Table 6 cont. Yakima County Population Projections Comparison

	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037
OFM April 1, 2022 Estimate														
County AAGR	262,481	263,939	265,406	266,880	268,363	269,854	271,354	272,861	274,377	275,902	277,434	278,976	280,526	282,084
OFM 2022 Low		247,748	248,586	249,300	249,989	250,650	251,278	251,871	252,418	252,925	253,393	253,825	254,246	254,632
OFM 2022 Medium		263,562	265,214	266,734	268,228	269,691	271,120	272,512	273,854	275,154	276,413	277,633	278,842	280,013
OFM 2022 High		284,647	287,811	290,833	293,826	296,786	299,710	302,593	305,422	308,206	310,946	313,644	316,329	318,974
County 2015 Allocations (OFM 2012 Medium)	279,530	282,057	284,652	287,148	289,615	292,046	294,445	297,036	299,485	301,896	304,276	306,636	309,052	311,443

Table 6 cont. Yakima County Population Projections Comparison

	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046	2047	2048	2049	2050
OFM April 1, 2022 Estimate													
County AAGR	283,652	285,228	286,812	288,406	290,008	291,619	293,240	294,869	296,507				
OFM 2022 Low	254,988	255,319	255,625	255,951	256,226	256,475	256,704	256,911	257,133	257,332	257,508	257,666	257,807
OFM 2022 Medium	281,152	282,265	283,351	284,459	285,512	286,537	287,541	288,522	289,519	290,491	291,439	292,368	293,279
OFM 2022 High	321,584	324,166	326,719	329,296	331,813	334,300	336,764	339,204	341,661	344,090	346,494	348,877	351,241
County 2015 Allocations (OFM 2012 Medium)	313,811	316,161	318,494										

Source: OFM/County 2015 Allocations. County’s AAGR population projection was conducted by Yakima County.

5. Comparative Analysis of the County's AAGR projection, OFM's 2022 projections, and the County's 2015 Allocations.

In this section, a comparative analysis of all projections will determine a preferred alternative, which is a selected county population projection baseline to be used for the 2026 GMA periodic update cycle and a projected population to be allocated among its cities and towns.

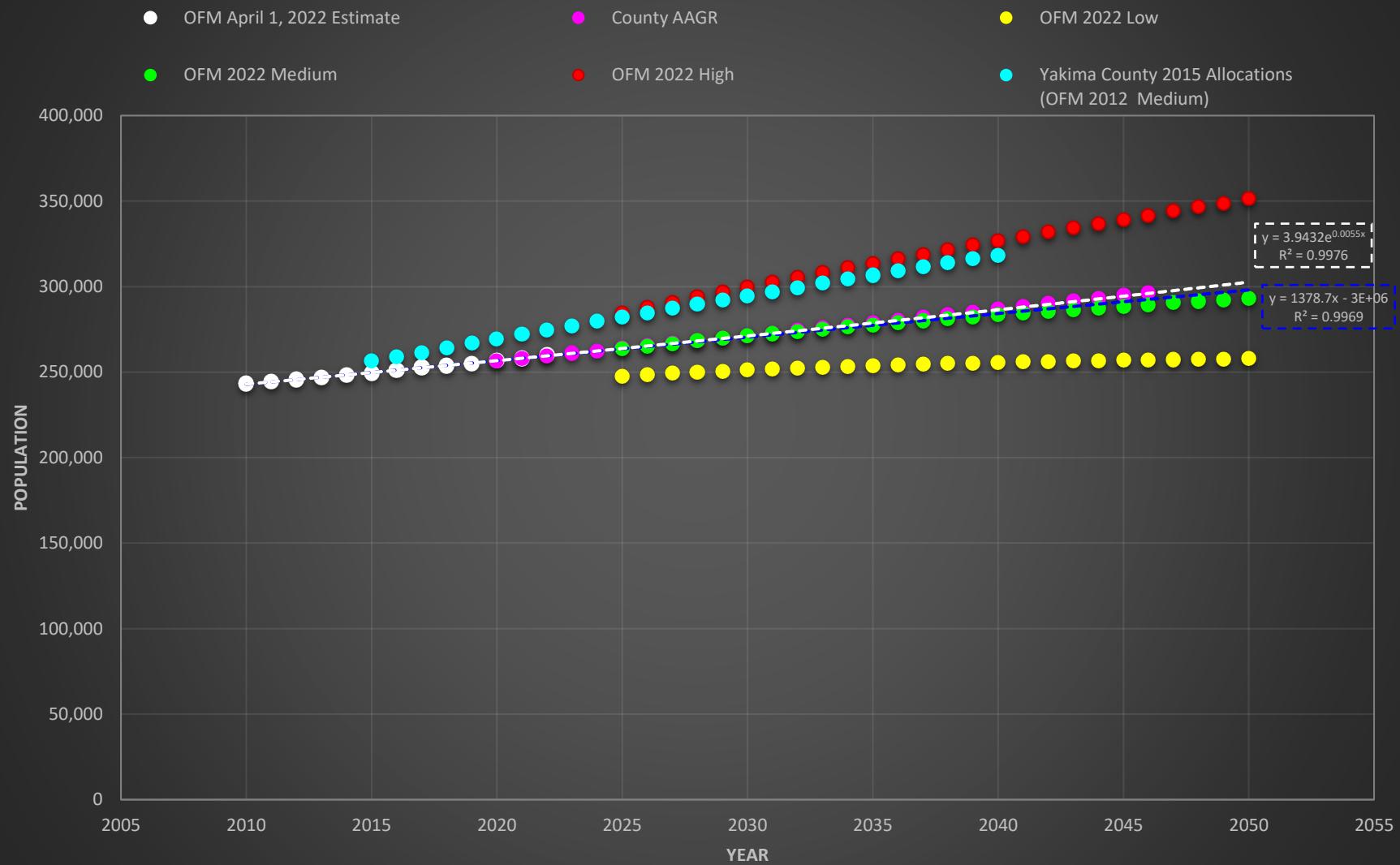
Figure 3 below is similar to Figure 1, except that the County's AAGR projection was added to show its relation to OFM's 2022 medium projection. As shown in Figure 3, the County's AAGR projection is somewhat in-line with OFM's medium projection, slightly higher, and not regressive. The linear trendline of the OFM's 2022 estimates lie somewhere in between OFM's medium projection and the County's AAGR.

An exponential growth trendline of OFM's 2022 estimates was generated to show its relation to the County's AAGR projected growth. As shown in Figure 3, it follows the County's AAGR growth pattern and R^2 value of the exponential trendline (0.9976) and is slightly closer to 1 than the linear trendline (0.9969), which means the data fits better.

6. Yakima County's Preferred Alternative and Allocations.

Based on the information above and aiming to keep the population selection process straightforward, Yakima County selected the County's AAGR as the preferred alternative for the upcoming GMA periodic review. This rate is lower than the 2015 County Allocations but slightly higher than OFM's medium projection and sufficient to continue the UGA review.

Figure 3. Yakima County Population Projections Comparison



7. Calculate each city and town's projected populations using their AAGRs to determine the Unincorporated Adjusted Total area population of the county.

Note: Table 7 is a starting point for discussion in the allocation of each jurisdiction's 2046 populations. Each jurisdiction's AAGRs were applied annually. The sums of each jurisdiction's yearly population ("Incorporated AAGR Total") were slightly higher than the yearly Incorporated figures. This resulted in a new "Unincorporated Adjusted" line showing the difference between the Yakima County AAGR and Incorporated AAGR Total.

Table 7. Yakima County's Preferred Alternative and Allocations

	2020 Census	Annual Average Growth Rate (OFM 2010-2022 Estimates)	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Yakima County (Preferred Alt.)	256,728	0.56%	258,154	259,589	261,031	262,481	263,939	265,406	266,880	268,363	269,854	271,354	272,861	274,377
Unincorporated	88,147	0.50%	88,591	89,037	89,485	89,936	90,389	90,844	91,302	91,761	92,223	92,688	93,155	93,624
Incorporated	168,581	0.58%	169,564	170,552	171,547	172,547	173,553	174,565	175,583	176,606	177,636	178,672	179,713	180,761
Grandview	10,910	0.12%	10,923	10,937	10,950	10,964	10,977	10,991	11,004	11,018	11,031	11,045	11,058	11,072
Granger	3,624	1.21%	3,668	3,713	3,758	3,803	3,849	3,896	3,943	3,991	4,040	4,089	4,138	4,189
Harrah	585	-0.68%	581	577	573	569	565	561	558	554	550	546	543	539
Mabton	1,959	-1.21%	1,935	1,912	1,889	1,866	1,843	1,821	1,799	1,777	1,756	1,735	1,714	1,693
Moxee	4,326	2.92%	4,452	4,582	4,716	4,854	4,995	5,141	5,291	5,445	5,604	5,768	5,936	6,109
Naches	1,084	2.94%	1,116	1,149	1,182	1,217	1,253	1,290	1,328	1,367	1,407	1,448	1,491	1,535
Selah	8,153	1.32%	8,261	8,370	8,481	8,593	8,706	8,822	8,938	9,056	9,176	9,297	9,420	9,545
Sunnyside	16,375	0.33%	16,429	16,484	16,539	16,594	16,649	16,704	16,760	16,815	16,871	16,927	16,983	17,040
Tieton	1,389	1.98%	1,417	1,445	1,473	1,502	1,532	1,563	1,593	1,625	1,657	1,690	1,724	1,758
Toppenish	8,854	-0.07%	8,848	8,841	8,835	8,828	8,822	8,815	8,809	8,802	8,796	8,789	8,783	8,777
Union Gap	6,568	0.78%	6,619	6,671	6,724	6,776	6,829	6,883	6,937	6,991	7,046	7,101	7,157	7,213
Wapato	4,607	-0.66%	4,577	4,546	4,516	4,487	4,457	4,428	4,398	4,369	4,341	4,312	4,283	4,255
Yakima	96,968	0.62%	97,568	98,172	98,780	99,391	100,006	100,625	101,248	101,875	102,505	103,140	103,778	104,421
Zillah	3,179	0.63%	3,199	3,219	3,239	3,260	3,280	3,301	3,322	3,343	3,364	3,385	3,407	3,428
Incorporated AAGR Total	168,581		169,593	170,618	171,654	172,704	173,765	174,840	175,928	177,029	178,144	179,272	180,415	181,572
Unincorporated Adjusted Total	88,147		88,561	88,971	89,376	89,778	90,174	90,566	90,952	91,334	91,710	92,081	92,446	92,805

Source: OFM. Calculations of AAGRs and population projections were conducted by Yakima County.

Table 7 (cont.). Yakima County's Preferred Alternative and Allocations

	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046
Yakima County (Preferred Alt.)	275,902	277,434	278,976	280,526	282,084	283,652	285,228	286,812	288,406	290,008	291,619	293,240	294,869	296,507
Unincorporated	94,095	94,569	95,045	95,524	96,005	96,488	96,974	97,463	97,954	98,447	98,943	99,441	99,942	100,445
Incorporated	181,815	182,875	183,941	185,014	186,092	187,177	188,268	189,366	190,470	191,581	192,698	193,821	194,951	196,088
Grandview	11,085	11,099	11,113	11,126	11,140	11,154	11,167	11,181	11,195	11,209	11,222	11,236	11,250	11,264
Granger	4,239	4,291	4,343	4,396	4,449	4,503	4,558	4,613	4,669	4,726	4,783	4,841	4,900	4,959
Harrah	535	532	528	524	521	517	514	510	507	503	500	496	493	490
Mabton	1,673	1,652	1,632	1,613	1,593	1,574	1,555	1,536	1,518	1,499	1,481	1,463	1,446	1,428
Moxee	6,288	6,471	6,660	6,854	7,054	7,260	7,472	7,690	7,915	8,146	8,383	8,628	8,880	9,139
Naches	1,580	1,626	1,674	1,723	1,774	1,826	1,880	1,935	1,992	2,050	2,111	2,173	2,236	2,302
Selah	9,671	9,799	9,929	10,060	10,193	10,328	10,464	10,603	10,743	10,885	11,029	11,174	11,322	11,472
Sunnyside	17,096	17,153	17,210	17,267	17,325	17,382	17,440	17,498	17,556	17,614	17,673	17,732	17,790	17,850
Tieton	1,793	1,828	1,864	1,901	1,939	1,977	2,017	2,056	2,097	2,139	2,181	2,224	2,268	2,313
Toppenish	8,770	8,764	8,757	8,751	8,744	8,738	8,732	8,725	8,719	8,713	8,706	8,700	8,693	8,687
Union Gap	7,269	7,326	7,383	7,441	7,499	7,558	7,617	7,677	7,737	7,798	7,859	7,920	7,982	8,045
Wapato	4,227	4,199	4,172	4,144	4,117	4,090	4,063	4,036	4,009	3,983	3,956	3,930	3,904	3,879
Yakima	105,067	105,717	106,371	107,030	107,692	108,359	109,030	109,704	110,383	111,067	111,754	112,446	113,142	113,842
Zillah	3,450	3,471	3,493	3,515	3,537	3,560	3,582	3,605	3,627	3,650	3,673	3,696	3,720	3,743
Incorporated AAGR Total	182,743	183,929	185,130	186,346	187,578	188,826	190,090	191,370	192,667	193,980	195,312	196,661	198,027	199,413
Unincorporated Adjusted Total	93,159	93,506	93,846	94,180	94,506	94,826	95,138	95,443	95,739	96,028	96,308	96,579	96,841	97,094

Source: OFM. Calculations of AAGRs and population projections were conducted by Yakima County.

8. Summary of cities and town's review of county's draft preferred alternative and allocations.

On April 15, 2024, Yakima County's planning division transmitted a draft of this report (dated February 10, 2023) to each of Yakima County's cities and towns. During May-July 2024 staff of the planning division met with 13 of the County's 14 cities and towns to review the report and to request consideration of, and feedback on, the draft allocations in Table 7. Only telephone conversations with Mabton were held. Subsequent discussions between the County's planning division and the cities and towns resulted in revisions to the AAGRs of some of the cities and towns. The resulting AAGRs and allocations are termed "Cities, Towns, and County Consensus Population Projections and Allocations, 2025-2046" and are presented in Table 8.

9. County's finalization of the preferred alternative and allocations.

Having reached consensus with the cities and towns on each jurisdiction's population allocations through 2046, the Yakima County Planning Division is issuing this report for all jurisdictions to use during their 2026 GMA Periodic Updates and UGA Reviews. These population allocations are shown below in Table 8 (Cities, Towns, & County Consensus Population Projections and Allocations, 2025-2046).

Table 8. Cities, Towns, & County Consensus Population Projections and Allocations, 2025-2046														
	2020 Census	Cities, Towns, & County Consensus Annual Growth Rates (2025-2046) ⁴	2021 OFM April 1 Estimate	2022 OFM April 1 Estimate	2023 OFM April 1 Estimate	2024 OFM April 1 Estimate	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032
Yakima County (Preferred Alt.)	256,728	0.56%	258,100	259,950	261,200	263,200	264,662	266,133	267,611	269,098	270,593	272,097	273,608	275,129
Unincorporated	88,147		88,240	88,955	89,155	89,635	89,742	89,840	89,931	90,013	90,087	90,153	90,209	90,257
Incorporated	168,581		169,860	170,995	172,045	173,565	174,921	176,293	177,680	179,085	180,506	181,944	183,399	184,872
Grandview	10,910	1.00%	10,960	11,020	11,250	11,680	11,797	11,915	12,034	12,154	12,276	12,399	12,523	12,648
Granger	3,624	1.21%	3,690	3,740	3,775	3,815	3,861	3,908	3,956	4,004	4,052	4,101	4,151	4,202
Harrah	585	0.25%	580	580	580	585	586	588	589	591	592	594	595	597
Mabton	1,959	-1.21%	1,975	1,975	1,965	1,965	1,941	1,918	1,895	1,872	1,849	1,827	1,805	1,783
Moxee	4,326	2.92%	4,405	4,665	4,785	4,820	4,961	5,105	5,254	5,408	5,566	5,728	5,895	6,067
Naches	1,084	1.98%	1,110	1,125	1,120	1,125	1,147	1,170	1,193	1,217	1,241	1,265	1,290	1,316
Selah	8,153	1.75%	8,235	8,365	8,450	8,620	8,771	8,924	9,081	9,239	9,401	9,566	9,733	9,903
Sunnyside	16,375	0.80%	16,400	16,500	16,530	16,570	16,703	16,836	16,971	17,107	17,243	17,381	17,520	17,661
Tieton	1,389	2.50%	1,430	1,505	1,545	1,600	1,640	1,681	1,723	1,766	1,810	1,856	1,902	1,949
Toppenish	8,854	0.17%	8,870	8,870	8,900	8,915	8,930	8,945	8,961	8,976	8,991	9,006	9,022	9,037
Union Gap	6,568	1.00%	6,595	6,640	6,660	6,660	6,727	6,794	6,862	6,930	7,000	7,070	7,140	7,212
Wapato	4,607	0.25%	4,610	4,615	4,620	4,625	4,637	4,648	4,660	4,671	4,683	4,695	4,707	4,718
Yakima	96,968	0.62%	97,810	98,200	98,650	99,370	99,985	100,604	101,227	101,853	102,484	103,118	103,756	104,398
Zillah	3,179	0.63%	3,190	3,195	3,215	3,215	3,235	3,256	3,276	3,297	3,318	3,339	3,360	3,381

⁴ These annual growth rates are applied to the 2024 population figures and to each subsequent year.

Table 8 (cont.). Cities, Towns, & County Consensus Population Projections and Allocations, 2025-2046														
	2033	2034	2035	2036	2037	2038	2039	2040	2041	2042	2043	2044	2045	2046
Yakima County (Preferred Alt.)	276,657	278,194	279,740	281,294	282,857	284,428	286,009	287,598	289,196	290,802	292,418	294,043	295,676	297,319
Unincorporated	90,295	90,323	90,341	90,350	90,348	90,335	90,311	90,276	90,229	90,171	90,100	90,017	89,921	89,812
Incorporated	186,363	187,871	189,398	190,944	192,509	194,094	195,698	197,322	198,966	200,632	202,318	204,026	205,756	207,508
Grandview	12,774	12,902	13,031	13,161	13,293	13,426	13,560	13,696	13,833	13,971	14,111	14,252	14,394	14,538
Granger	4,253	4,304	4,356	4,409	4,463	4,517	4,572	4,627	4,684	4,740	4,798	4,856	4,915	4,975
Harrah	598	600	601	603	604	606	607	609	610	612	613	615	616	618
Mabton	1,761	1,740	1,719	1,698	1,678	1,657	1,637	1,618	1,598	1,579	1,560	1,541	1,522	1,504
Moxee	6,244	6,426	6,614	6,807	7,006	7,210	7,420	7,637	7,860	8,089	8,325	8,568	8,818	9,076
Naches	1,342	1,369	1,396	1,423	1,452	1,480	1,510	1,540	1,570	1,601	1,633	1,665	1,698	1,732
Selah	10,077	10,253	10,432	10,615	10,801	10,990	11,182	11,378	11,577	11,779	11,986	12,195	12,409	12,626
Sunnyside	17,802	17,944	18,088	18,233	18,378	18,526	18,674	18,823	18,974	19,125	19,278	19,433	19,588	19,745
Tieton	1,998	2,048	2,099	2,152	2,206	2,261	2,317	2,375	2,435	2,495	2,558	2,622	2,687	2,755
Toppenish	9,052	9,068	9,083	9,099	9,114	9,130	9,145	9,161	9,176	9,192	9,207	9,223	9,239	9,254
Union Gap	7,284	7,357	7,430	7,505	7,580	7,655	7,732	7,809	7,887	7,966	8,046	8,126	8,208	8,290
Wapato	4,730	4,742	4,754	4,766	4,778	4,790	4,802	4,814	4,826	4,838	4,850	4,862	4,874	4,886
Yakima	105,044	105,695	106,349	107,007	107,669	108,336	109,006	109,681	110,360	111,043	111,730	112,422	113,118	113,818
Zillah	3,402	3,424	3,445	3,467	3,489	3,511	3,533	3,555	3,577	3,600	3,623	3,646	3,669	3,692

10. CONCLUSION

According to RCW 43.62.035, OFM is required to provide population estimates and a projection range to counties to be used for their comprehensive planning and UGA update purposes. OFM's latest population data used in this report for Yakima County's 2026 GMA periodic update cycle consisted of their April 1, 2024, estimates and their 2022 GMA (low, medium, and high) projections. The previous population projections and allocations conducted by Yakima County were finalized in 2015 for the 2017 GMA periodic update cycle. A preliminary review and comparison of the last projection with the current population data showed a substantial decrease in the projected population (see Table 1). A linear trendline of OFM's estimates followed OFM's current medium projection, except that the medium projection becomes regressive over time (see Figure 1).

Yakima County calculated a 0.56% AAGR from OFM's 2022 estimates and projected a countywide population (County AAGR) using this growth rate from the 2020 decennial census county population through the year 2046; a 20-year period from the June 30, 2026, GMA update deadline. An exponential trendline generated from OFM's 2022 estimates showed that it was almost in perfect alignment with the County's AAGR (see Figure 3). The R^2 value of the exponential trendline was also 0.0007 higher in its reliability than the linear trendline. Yakima County chose the County's AAGR projection as the preferred alternative due to these reasons and also because it wasn't regressive, providing minimal positive benefits to Yakima County's population allocations.

Choosing either the County's AAGR population projection or OFM's medium projection, the "more likely" series, provides a sound foundation for future OFM projections. There are minimal differences between these two projections. OFM's current medium series seems to have followed a similar linear growth projection methodology, unlike the 2012 medium projection. Unless substantial future population growth causes spikes in the future, the County's AAGR is a more realistic approach that is predictable and manageable.

While calculating AAGRs for Yakima County cities and towns, Tables 3 and 4 showed that Grandview, Granger, Harrah, Mabton, Sunnyside, Toppenish, Wapato, and Zillah experienced negative growth rate percentage changes within the 2010 to 2022 estimate period. Harrah, Mabton, Toppenish, and Wapato resulted in negative AAGRs for the 12-year period, resulting in a projected decrease in their populations over the 20-year period ending in 2046 (see Table 7).

Yakima County and its cities and towns collaborated in reviewing the draft projections and allocations shown in Table 7. Some of the cities and towns recommended that higher growth rates be used to project their populations. Further analysis, particularly growth rates during 2020-2024, showed that these cities were growing faster than indicated in the analysis, including Harrah, Toppenish, and Wapato (the cities and towns with negative AAGRs). Accordingly, revised growth rates were calculated and the revised population projects and allocations, now shown in Table 8, were agreed to.

