



MEMORANDUM

MEMBERS:

- City of Lacey
- City of Olympia
- City of Rainier
- City of Tenino
- City of Tumwater
- City of Yelm
- Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Town of Bucoda
- Thurston County
- North Thurston Public Schools
- Olympia School District
- Tumwater School District
- Intercity Transit
- LOTT Clean Water Alliance
- Port of Olympia
- PUD No. 1 of Thurston County

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS:

- Lacey Fire District #3
- Puget Sound Regional Council
- The Evergreen State College
- Thurston Conservation District
- Thurston Economic Development Council
- Timberland Regional Library

TO: Technical Advisory Committee

FROM: Michael Ambrogi, Senior Planner
Veena Tabbutt, Deputy Director

DATE: September 10, 2021

SUBJECT: 2020 Census Update

PURPOSE

To provide the Board with an update on recently released 2020 Census data and implications for Thurston Regional Planning Council.

Summary:

- In August 2021 the U.S. Census Bureau released the first population counts for cities, counties, and tribal reservations from the 2020 Census.
- Thurston County’s official 2020 population count was 294,793.
- Thurston County is becoming more diverse, with the percent of the population identifying as a person of color increasing from 21 percent to 29 percent between 2010 and 2020.
- The Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) provides annual population estimates that now need to be adjusted. It is expected OFM’s 2022 populations estimates, which will be released on July 1, 2022, will be adjusted based on the most recent Census data available. In the meantime, TRPC will continue to use OFM’s 2021 estimates for the 2022 budget.
- 2020 Census data will be used by the U.S. Census Bureau to update urban area boundaries, anticipated in 2022. Urban area boundaries are used by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation to identify Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Transportation Management Areas (TMAs).
- Based on recently released 2020 Census data, TRPC staff anticipate that the population of Thurston County’s urbanized area will exceed the threshold for establishing a TMA. However, new criteria on how the urbanized area will be delineated may reduce its size and drop us under the necessary population threshold.



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REQUESTED ACTION

This is for information only.

ma:bl

EQUITY CONSIDERATIONS

1. What are the equity impacts of this particular decision?

This is not a decision, however the data show that our region is becoming more diverse.

2. Who will benefit from or be burdened by the particular decision?

N/A.

3. Are there strategies to mitigate the unintended consequences?

N/A

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

2020 Census Counts

On August 13, 2021, the U.S. Census Bureau released the first population counts for counties, cities, and tribal reservations from the 2020 Census. The release of these counts was delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. These data — known as the Public Law 94-171 Redistricting Summary Files — are intended for redrawing federal, state, and local legislative districts. They include counts of population, race/ethnicity, voting-age population, and group quarters population down to the Census block (the smallest geography for which Census data are available). Additional 2020 Census counts — including data on housing, occupancy, and household types — will be released over the coming months.

Thurston County's 2020 population was 294,793, up 16.9 percent from 2010. Amongst Thurston County's cities and towns, Lacey added the most people (11,133) followed by Olympia (9,127) and Tumwater (7,979). Population growth was due to natural increase (birth minus death), migration, and — in some jurisdictions — annexation.

Table 1: Decennial Census Population Counts for Thurston County Jurisdictions

Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2010–2020	% Change
Bucoda	562	600	38	6.8%
Lacey	42,393	53,526	11,133	26.3%
Olympia	46,478	55,605	9,127	19.6%
Rainier	1,794	2,369	575	32.1%
Tenino	1,695	1,870	175	10.3%
Tumwater	17,371	25,350	7,979	45.9%
Yelm	6,848	10,617	3,769	55.0%
Unincorporated	135,123	144,856	9,733	7.2%
Thurston County	252,264	294,793	42,529	16.9%
Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation*	649	767	118	18.2%
Nisqually Indian Reservation*	575	639	64	11.1%

*Note *Includes the population on off-reservation trust lands and lands outside of Thurston County.*

Thurston County continues to become more racially and ethnically diverse. The number of people identifying as a person of color — Hispanic, Latino, or a race other than white — increased 63 percent — from 21.1 percent of the population to 29.4 percent. The number of people identifying as white/non-Hispanic increased five percent, decreasing from 78.9 percent of the population to 70.6 percent.

Of Thurston County’s jurisdictions, the Nisqually Indian Reservation and Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation have the highest proportion of their population identifying as a person of color — 79.0 percent and 75.5 percent, respectively — followed by Lacey (39.6 percent) and Yelm (32.7 percent).

Table 2: Thurston County Population by Race/Ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	2010		2020	
	#	%	#	%
Persons of Color	53,245	21.1%	86,808	29.4%
... Black or African American*	6,752	2.7%	9,403	3.2%
... American Indian and Alaska Native*	3,515	1.4%	4,458	1.5%
... Asian*	13,037	5.2%	17,268	5.9%
... Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander*	1,961	0.8%	3,347	1.1%
... Some Other Race*	5,648	2.2%	10,359	3.5%
... Multiracial*	13,495	5.3%	34,160	11.6%
... Hispanic or Latino, of any race*	17,787	7.1%	29,024	9.8%
White/Non-Hispanic	199,019	78.9%	207,985	70.6%
Total Population	252,264	100.0%	294,793	100.0%

Note: *Includes persons identifying as Hispanic or Latino.

Table 3: Percent of Population Identifying as a Person of Color

Jurisdiction	2010		2020	
	#	%	#	%
Bucoda	63	11.2%	102	17.0%
Lacey	12,904	30.4%	21,204	39.6%
Olympia	9,150	19.7%	15,983	28.7%
Rainier	223	12.4%	487	20.6%
Tenino	228	13.5%	385	20.6%
Tumwater	3,176	18.3%	6,797	26.8%
Yelm	1,595	23.3%	3,476	32.7%
Unincorporated	25,906	19.2%	38,374	26.5%
Thurston County	53,245	21.1%	86,808	29.4%
Confederated Tribes of the Chehalis Reservation*	385	59.3%	579	75.5%
Nisqually Indian Reservation*	434	75.5%	505	79.0%

Note *Includes the population on off-reservation trust lands and lands outside of Thurston County. “Person of Color” here includes persons identifying as Hispanic, Latino, or a race other than white.

Comparison to OFM Estimates

OFM produces annual population estimates for cities, towns, and counties for use in state program administration and in the allocation of selected state revenues (RCW 43.62.020). TRPC also uses OFM's population estimates for calculating member assessments.

Because the release of 2020 Census data has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic, OFM has not been able to update their models since the 2010 Census. While the latest release of Census data indicates that OFM has undercounted the populations of Bucoda, Olympia, Rainier, and Yelm, TRPC will continue to use OFM's population estimates to calculate some members' 2022 assessments as specified in the Council's bylaws. It is expected OFM's 2022 populations estimates — which will be released on July 1, 2022 — will be adjusted based on the most recent Census data available.

Table 4: Comparison of OFM and Census Population

Jurisdiction	2020 Census Count	2020 OFM Estimate	2021 OFM Estimate
Bucoda	600	580	580
Lacey	53,526	52,910	54,780
Olympia	55,605	54,150	55,010
Rainier	2,369	2,210	2,295
Tenino	1,870	1,850	1,985
Tumwater	25,350	24,600	25,360
Yelm	10,617	9,400	9,470
Unincorporated	144,856	145,300	145,820
Thurston County	294,793	291,000	295,300

Urbanized Area Boundary

The U.S. Census Bureau delineates urban and rural areas after each decennial census. Urbanized areas represent densely developed territory, and encompass residential, commercial, and other non-residential urban land uses, with all other areas considered rural. The same criteria are applied across the country. The U.S. Census Bureau periodically revises the criteria for delineating urban areas; with some significant changes have been proposed for delineating the 2020 urbanized areas (<https://www.federalregister.gov/d/2021-03412>).

Urbanized area boundaries are used by the U.S. Dept. of Transportation to identify new Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Transportation Management Areas (TMAs). Urbanized areas with a population greater than 50,000 are required to form an MPO; those with a population greater than 200,000 are designated TMAs.

TRPC staff estimate that Thurston County's current urbanized area — Figure 1, delineated after the 2010 Census — has a population of about 204,000 people based on the recently released Census data. Barring a reduction in the urbanized area boundary due to proposed criteria for delineating the 2020 boundary, TRPC will likely exceed the TMA population threshold. If the current timeline continues, we will know if we become a TMA by spring/summer of 2022. This will trigger some changes, including:

- a) New planning requirements such as the Congestion Management Process (due in winter 2023)
- b) MPO certification (which is a comprehensive process)
- c) Direct funding allocations

Given the likelihood of becoming a TMA, staff will begin to work formally with our state and federal partners to better understand and prepare for the new requirement.

Figure 1: 2010 Thurston County Urbanized Area

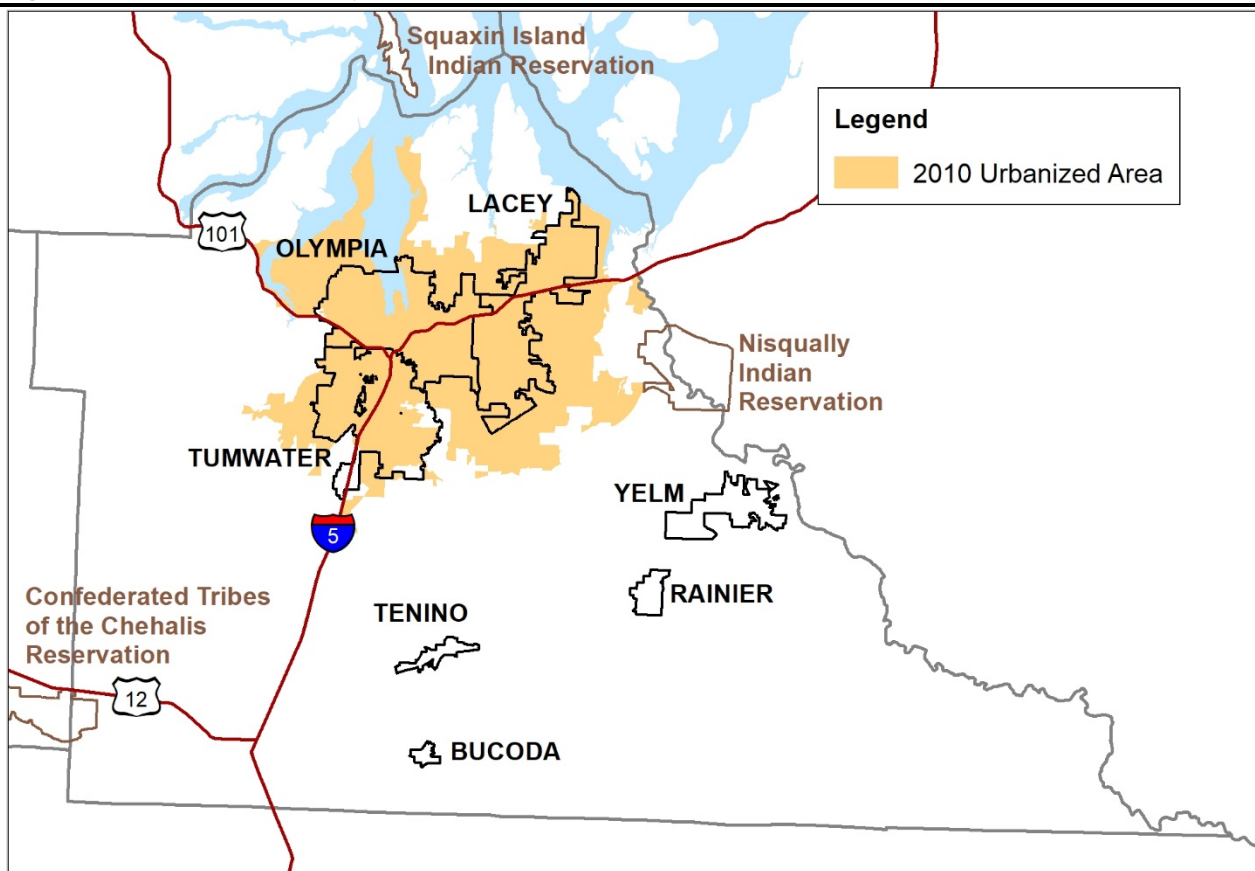


Table 5: Urbanized Area Update Schedule (as of July 2020)

Late Summer 2021	U.S. Census Bureau will publish the final criteria for the defining of urbanized areas in the Federal Register.
Spring 2022	The Census Bureau will publish the new list of urbanized areas based on the 2020 Census in the Federal Register and release TIGER/Line geographic Shapefiles for the 2020 urbanized areas on their website.
Summer 2022	USDOT (FHWA/FTA) will publish the new list of Transportation Management Areas (TMAs, pop. > 200k) in the Federal Register.
Before October 2022	States should revisit their intra-State formulas for metropolitan planning (PL) funds allocations to MPOs to ensure that the new Census 2020 population figures are being used and that any new MPOs are part of the calculation.
Winter 2023	New TMAs must have a Congestion Management Process (CMP)
