

The Population Element is all about people. The element looks at existing conditions like who is living in Blaine, where they are living, the types of housing they live in and other demographic information. Based on population trends, the element details growth predictions for the City and facilities needed to serve the population.

Over the next twenty years, Blaine expects to see an eighty five percent increase in the number of residents within its City limits. This equates to about an additional 4,414 moving to Blaine, and a total population of about 9,500 by 2036.

Over the past two decades Blaine has experienced rapid growth. From 1990 to 2000 Blaine saw a fifty percent increase in the number of residents. Growth continued from 2000 to 2010 with a twenty-five percent increase in population over the decade.

There are several factors related to the experienced and expected increase in population. A major factor is the development of Semiahmoo, which features not only single and multi-family development but also a hotel and spa, golf course, and Country Club. The creation of luxury amenities and homes resulted in an increase of older affluent residents, some international, who can afford the higher living costs within the resort area.

In addition, more Canadian businesses expanded into Blaine due to the 1989 Free Trade Agreement, which helped eliminate trade barriers between the United States and Canada, and the 1991 Canadian Goods and Services Tax.

Blaine School District enrollment is projected to increase only one percent by 2019. This is in part due to the growing demographic of residents aged 55 and older, and seasonal and part time Canadian residents locating within Semiahmoo. This is reflected in the increase of the median age of Blaine residents. In 2000 the median age was 38.6 years old. In 2010 the median age had increased to 44.3 years of age.

The total number of housing units within Blaine city limit has increased thirty five percent from 2000 to 2010. Due to the increase in residents and housing units, the average household size in Blaine decreased from 2.48 in 2000 to 2.32 in 2010. This pattern is expected to continue. Due to further development of Semiahmoo, the City expects an increase in owner-occupied housing units.

In 2012 the median household income within Blaine was \$51,463. This is a forty percent increase from 2000 when the median income was \$36,900. This is comparable to Whatcom County whose median household income was \$51,639 in 2012, but below Washington State where the overall median income was \$59,374.

Several factors, including the development of Semiahmoo, decreased barriers in trade, and expected annexation of Blaine's Urban Growth Area (UGA), suggest a significant increase in the number of Blaine residents within the next twenty years. An increase in the number of international and older residents locating within City limits will affect the type of growth and services required to serve this population.

ACRONYMS USED IN THIS CHAPTER

GMA Growth Management Act
GST Goods and Services Tax
UGA Urban Growth Area

CHAPTER 1 - POPULATION

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires Cities and Counties planning under the Act to project anticipated growth for a 20-year planning period, and plan how that growth will be distributed. The projected population growth is to be used to review and revise Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).

This chapter provides historical and projected population data for the City of Blaine, the Blaine UGA, and Whatcom County; demographic, housing, and economic data; and school enrollment projections.

POPULATION INDICATORS

Population Trends

Current and historical population data for the City of Blaine proper, the Blaine UGA, and Whatcom County are provided in Table 1.1 below. The City of Blaine has experienced rapid growth over the past two decades, growing by more than 50% in the 1990s and approximately 24% in the 2000s, in both cases outpacing the growth rate for Whatcom County as a whole.

This growth trend can be attributed to several causes. The development of The Resort Semiahmoo beginning in 1987, the increase in retail and service businesses resulting from the 1989 Free Trade Agreement between the United States and Canada and the 1991 Canadian Goods and Services Tax (GST), and the annexation of a 1,182-acre parcel east of the City (with an estimated population of 297) in February 1996, all contributed to rapid growth in the 1990s. In the 2000s to present, the influence of Canadian growth, trade, and migration continues to support rapid growth in Blaine. Growth within the City of Blaine from 1990 to 2013 is depicted in Figure 1.1.

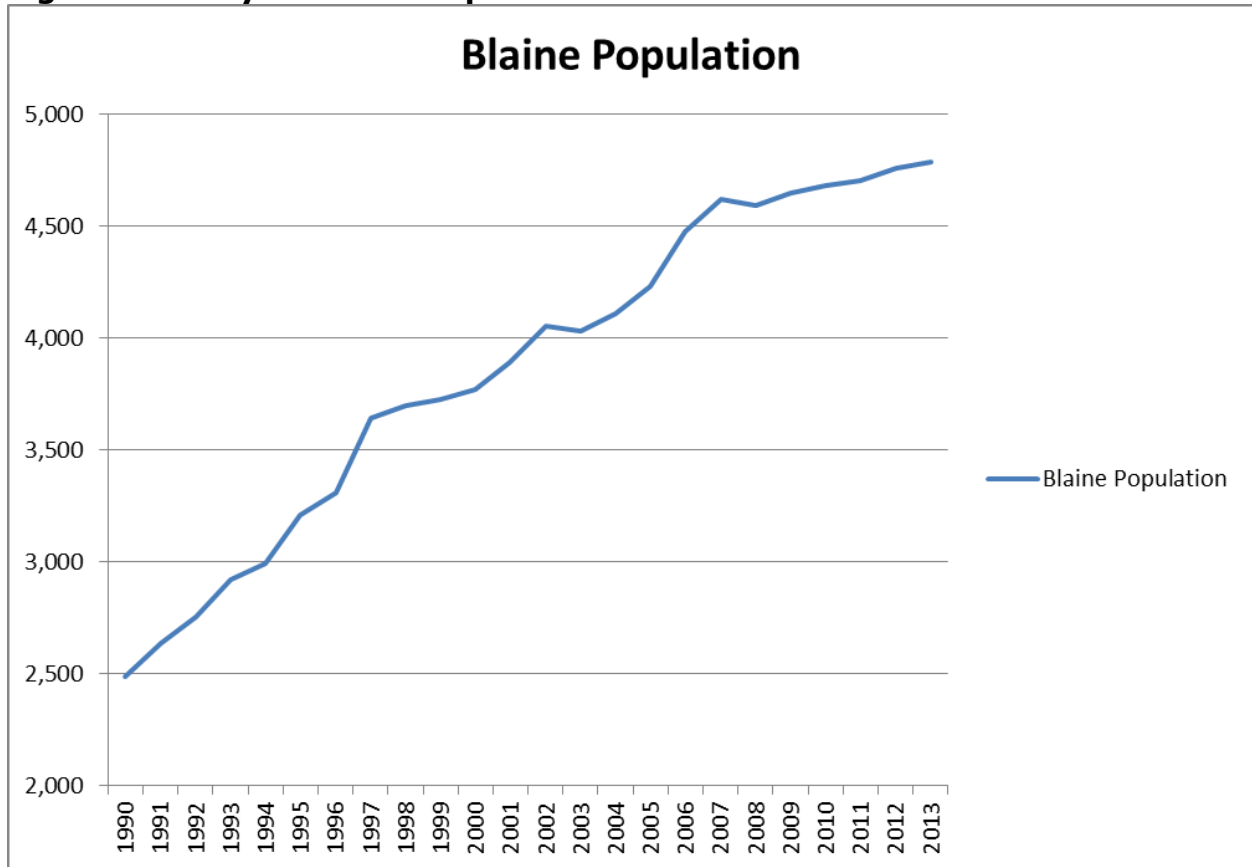
Table 1.1. Population Trends.

Year	Blaine City Limits		Blaine UGA		Whatcom County	
	Population ^A	% Change	Population ^B	% Change	Population ^A	% Change
1950	1,693	-	-	-	66,733	-
1960	1,735	2.4	-	-	70,319	5.4
1970	1,955	12.7	-	-	81,963	16.6
1980	2,363	20.9	-	-	106,701	30.2
1990	2,489*	5.3	3,023	-	127,780	19.8
2000	3,770	51.5	3,700	22.4	166,814	30.5
2010	4,684	24.2	5,058	36.7	201,140	20.6
2013	4,785 ^C	2.2	5,177	2.4	205,800 ^C	2.3

Notes:

- A 1950-2010 City and County population data from U.S. Decennial Census.
- B Estimates for Blaine UGA population from WHATCOM COUNTY POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS AND URBAN GROWTH AREA ALLOCATIONS, prepared by Berk, July 22, 2013. Population estimates based on 2013 UGA boundaries.
- C 2013 City and County estimates based on Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) population estimates.
- * Questioned by the City of Blaine. The City counted 2,649 residents in 1991, which was accepted by OFM.

Figure 1.1. City of Blaine Population 1990-2013.



Source: Washington State OFM

School Enrollment Projections

Table 1.2 shows the actual and projected Blaine School District enrollment in 2013, 2016, and 2019. The school district boundaries are considerably larger than the Blaine City Limits, and provide a more regional picture of growth in the surrounding area. The projections show a moderate overall increase in enrollment, based largely on growth in grades K-8.

Table 1.2. Blaine School District Actual and Projected Enrollment.

Grade	2013 (Actual)	2016 (Projected)	2019 (Projected)
K-6	1,117	1,170	1,209
7-8	331	283	338
9-12	672	657	596
District K-12 Total	2,120	2,110	2,143

Source: State of Washington Superintendent of Public Instruction, Report 1049 – Determination of Projected Enrollments, School Year 2013-2014.

Demographics

Sex and age composition of Blaine’s population is summarized in Table 1.3. These statistics are useful in determining the need for schools and housing or social programs directed toward senior citizens or families with children. The median age has increased to 44.3 in 2010 from 38.6 in 2000. This continues an aging trend that goes back at least to 1980, when the median age was 31.7. Increases in the population of residents aged 55 and up, and decreases in those aged 5 to 19 are the primary drivers of the aging trend.

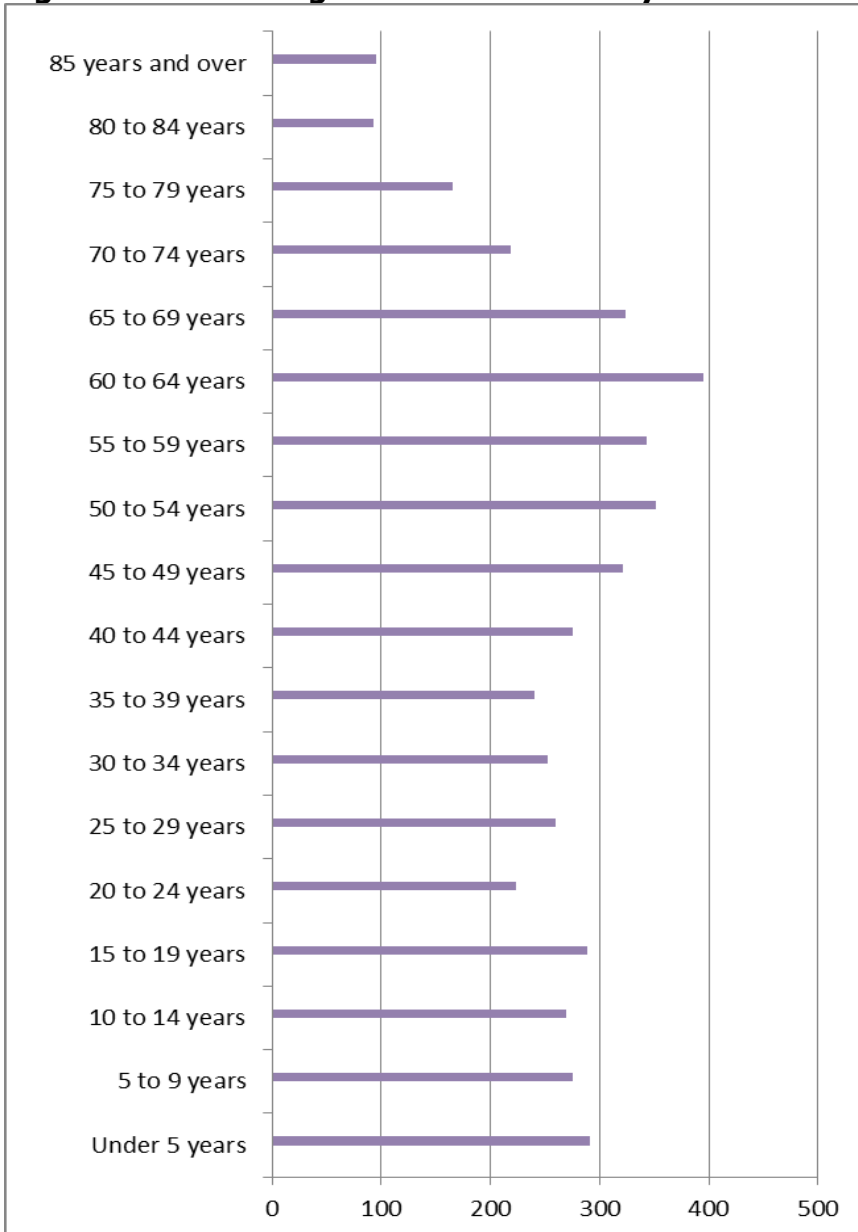
Table 1.3. Age Distribution – City of Blaine.

	2000		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%
Male	1,832	48.6	2,302	49.1
Female	1,938	51.4	2,382	50.9
Under 5	238	6.3	291	6.2
5-9	289	7.7	276	5.9
10-14	305	8.1	269	5.7
15-19	266	7.1	289	6.2
20-24	164	4.4	224	4.8
25-34	440	11.7	513	11.0
35-44	556	14.7	516	11.0
45-54	550	14.6	672	14.3
55-59	235	6.2	343	7.3
60-64	183	4.9	395	8.4
65-74	312	8.3	543	11.6
75-84	170	4.5	258	5.5
85 and older	62	1.6	95	2.0
Median age	38.6	-	44.3	-

Source: U.S. Census

The 2010 age distribution data is graphically summarized in Figure 1.2 below, clearly showing the high proportion of older residents. The Baby Boomer generation, shown in the 45-69 age categories in 2010, will continue to have a substantial effect on Blaine’s population as they age. The attractiveness of the northwest also plays a factor; many retirees may continue to move to Blaine over the next decades.

Figure 1.2. 2010 Age Distribution – City of Blaine.



Source: U.S. Census

Blaine continues to be predominantly white, with those identifying as Asian, two or more races, or Hispanic or Latino of any race, comprising a modest proportion of the population, as shown in Table 1.4. A substantial number of Blaine

residents are Canadians who may be seasonal or part-time residents retaining Canadian citizenship. The majority of these residents are not counted in the U.S. Census. It is difficult to project and plan housing, utilities, and public services for this fluctuating segment of the population.

Table 1.4. Race – City of Blaine.

	2000		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%
White	3,307	87.7	4,051	86.5
Black or African American	45	1.2	64	1.4
American Indian and Alaska Native	43	1.1	41	0.9
Asian	158	4.2	240	5.1
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	25	0.7	59	1.3
Some other race	50	1.3	33	0.7
Two or more races	142	3.8	196	4.2
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	164	4.4	235	5.0

Source: U.S. Census

Housing

Data related to housing are shown in Table 1.5. The total number of housing units in the city has increased by approximately 35% from 2000-2010, outpacing population growth. As a result, the average household size in Blaine has decreased from 2.48 in 2000 to 2.32 in 2010. This decrease in household size reflects in large part the increase in households with older residents, living alone or without children. This also mirrors the national trend, although the Blaine average is below the national average of 2.58. The national trend is expected to continue to decrease as the overall population ages as a result of the aging Baby Boomer generation.

It is projected that average household size in Blaine will continue to decrease as the Semiahmoo area continues to develop as a resort area with a high percentage of retired residents in addition to external factors associated with national trends. The data also show an increase in the proportion of owner-occupied housing units in Blaine. These trends will have important ramifications when evaluating the housing capacity of the Blaine UGA.

Table 1.5. Households and Housing Units – City of Blaine.

	2000		2010	
	Number	%	Number	%
Total households	1,496	100	1,994	100
Average household size	2.48	-	2.32	-
Total housing units	1,737	100	2,346	100
Households with individuals under 18 years	516	34.5	540	27.1
Households with individuals over 65 years	375	25.1	626	31.4
Householder 65 and over living alone	151	10.1	240	12.0
Occupied housing units	1,496	86.1	1,994	85.0
Vacant housing units	241	13.9	352	15.0
Owner-occupied housing units	853	57.0	1,184	59.4
Renter-occupied housing units	643	43.0	810	40.6

Source: U.S. Census

Employment

The U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey estimates that, as of 2012, the City of Blaine had a civilian labor force of 2,196, of which 2,096 were employed, resulting in an unemployment rate of 4.6%. Median household income in Blaine was \$51,463. This represents a significant increase from 2000, when the median household income was \$36,900. This is reflective of the increase in more affluent, older, or retired residents moving to the the City and mirrors the trend in Whatcom County. Blaine’s median income is now comparable to the Whatcom County median of \$51,639, though below the Washington state median of \$59,374. The Whatcom County median was \$40,005 in 2000, while Washington’s median was \$45,776.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The Washington State GMA directs counties and cities to project population over a 20-year planning period and allocate this projected growth among UGAs within the county. County and city comprehensive plans and county-wide planning policies require coordination among the county and all of its cities to accurately allocate projected growth and assess future UGAs. The Blaine City Council passed a non-binding multi-jurisdictional resolution (Resolution No. 1639-14) that sets forth agreed-upon preliminary population and employment growth

allocations. The resolution is intended to establish preliminary allocations that can be utilized by the county and cities for initial review of UGAs and to coordinate transportation modeling, capital facility planning, and environmental review. These population growth allocations are shown in Table 1.6.

The Blaine UGA is projected to be the most rapidly growing UGA within Whatcom County over the 20-year planning period, with a more than 85% increase in population by 2036.

Table 1.6. Population Growth Allocations by UGA.

Area/UGA	2013 Population ^A	2036 Growth Allocation ^B	2036 Population	% Change (2013-2036)
Blaine	5,177	4,414	9,591	85.3
Bellingham	93,107	35,918	129,025	38.6
Birch Bay	7,737	5,500	13,237	71.1
Cherry Point	45	0	45	0.0
Columbia Valley	3,204	1,345	4,549	42.0
Everson	2,670	1,242	3,912	46.5
Ferndale	12,778	6,833	19,611	53.5
Lynden	12,879	6,403	19,282	49.7
Nooksack	1,436	1,035	2,471	72.1
Sumas	1,449	874	2,323	60.3
Non-UGA	65,318	11,217	76,535	17.2
Whatcom County Total	205,800	74,781	280,581	36.3

Notes:

A 2013 UGA and County population estimates from WHATCOM COUNTY POPULATION AND EMPLOYMENT PROJECTIONS AND URBAN GROWTH AREA ALLOCATIONS, prepared by Berk, July 22, 2013. Population estimates based on 2013 UGA boundaries.

B 2036 growth allocations from City of Blaine Resolution No. 1639-14.

Figure 1.3. depicts the overall projected growth trend for the Blaine UGA through 2036.

Figure 1.3. Projected Population Growth in the Blaine UGA

