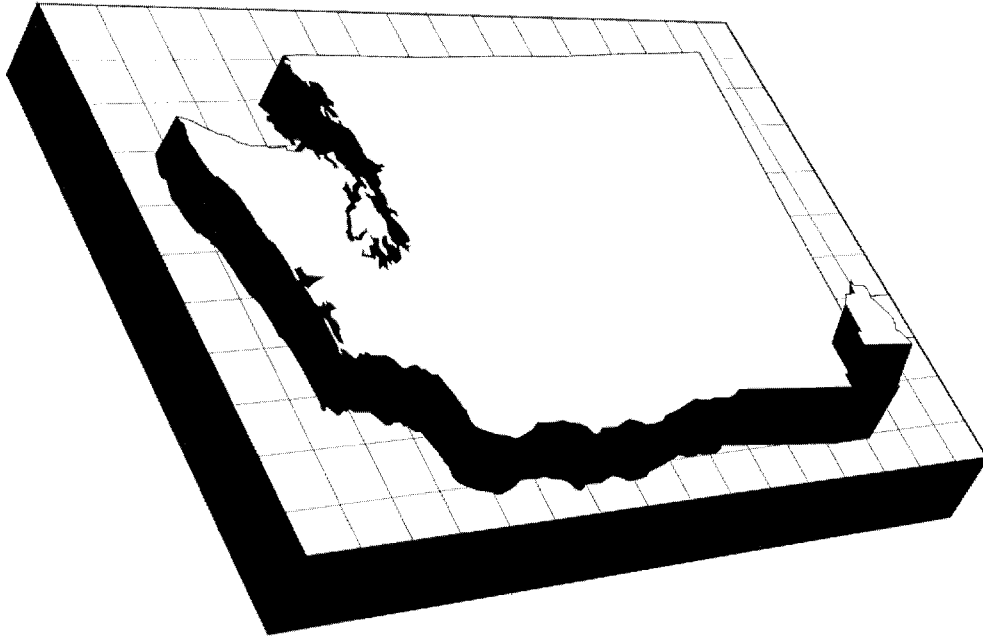

ASOTIN COUNTY PROFILE



September 2000
Labor Market and
Economic Analysis Branch
Greg Weeks, *Director*

**ASOTIN COUNTY PROFILE
SEPTEMBER 2000**

Labor Market and Economic Analysis Branch
Employment Security Department

This report has been prepared in accordance with
RCW 50.38.050.

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INTRODUCTION

This report profiles the labor market and economic characteristics of Asotin County. It was prepared by the Labor Market and Economic Analysis (LMEA) Branch of the Washington State Employment Security Department and is one in a series that profiles labor market and economic conditions in Washington's 39 counties.

The profile is designed to assist state and local planners in developing local economic strategies. It is also an effective tool for answering labor market and economic questions frequently asked about the county. Readers with specific information needs should refer to the *Table of Contents* or to the *data appendix* to more quickly access those sections of particular interest to them.

The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive labor market and economic analysis of Asotin County. Characteristics profiled include the following:

- physical geography, economic history, and demographics
- labor force composition and trends
- industries, employment, income, and earnings
- skills and occupations
- economic development and employment services

LMEA has a homepage on the Internet, which can be accessed by area or by type of information. The site address is:

<http://www.wa.gov/esd/lmea>

Much of the information included in this report is regularly updated in an LMEA database made available to the public online at the Internet address provided above. For further details, contact LMEA at (360) 438-4800.

Any inquiries or comments about information in this profile should be directed to the Economic and Policy Analysis Unit within LMEA.

GEOGRAPHY

Asotin County is situated in the southeastern most corner of Washington. The county comprises a total land mass of 635.9 square miles or 1 percent of the state's total land mass, which ranks it 34th among Washington's 39 counties.

Asotin County is bounded to the east by the state of Idaho (which is demarcated by the Snake River). To its south lies the state of Oregon. The county's entire western border and part of its northern border is shared with Garfield County. The balance of its northern border is shared with Whitman County (which is also demarcated by the Snake River).

The county's topography is primarily that of valleys and deltas in the north county and mountainous terrain in the south county.

In the river valleys, the elevation is around 750 feet above sea level. The rich and fertile hills and plateaus that constitute the agricultural farmlands emerge at roughly 1,500 feet above sea level. These plateaus are sliced into several fingers by tributaries that flow out of the Blue Mountains to the Snake River.

The south county is increasingly rugged and more elevated as the land segues into mountainous foothills and ultimately the Blue Mountains and Umatilla National Forest. Saddle Butte (5,873 feet above sea level)—part of the Blue Mountains—is the highest point in Asotin County.

The Grande Ronde River and Asotin Creek are the principal tributaries in Asotin County. Like numerous other tributaries formed in the Blue Mountains, they cut a path through the county's plateaus and valleys before emptying into the Snake River.

ECONOMIC HISTORY

The following was largely gathered from *Historic Glimpses of Asotin County*, by E.V. Kuykendall, with additional material from Bob Weatherley of the *Asotin County American*.

Before the advent of white exploration and settlement, the Nez Perce inhabited what is now Asotin County. Though indigenous to the region, the Nez Perce lived a semi-nomadic life that included seasonal treks across the Rockies to the Great Plains to hunt buffalo by way of the Nez Perce Trail.

The Nez Perce Trail extended east from the Columbia River at the present-day town of Wallula in Walla Walla County through Garfield and Asotin counties and then across the Rockies to the Great Plains. More than a path to buffalo country, the trail was used by tribes on both sides to engage in commerce. A lasting testament to the trail was its strategic importance to the development of the region. It was used by white explorers Lewis and Clark and B.L.E. Bonneville as well as by fur trappers, prospectors, the military, missionaries, and homesteaders. Even today, highways largely parallel the old trail.

The Lewis and Clark Expedition marked the advent of white exploration in what would become Asotin County. The expedition camped at the Nez Perce village of Alpowa (near present-day Chief Timothy State Park) on October 11, 1805 and again on May 4, 1806 on its return trip.

The fur industry was most drawn by reports from the Lewis and Clark Expedition. In 1810, the Reed-McClellan-McKenzie expedition, financed by American fur magnate John Jacob Astor, headed down the Snake River to the Grande Ronde River, making it the second group of whites to traverse the county. After that came John Work of the Hudson's Bay Company who followed the Nez Perce Trail in 1812.

Captain B.L.E. Bonneville crossed present-day Asotin County in 1833 while surveying the territory. The missionary period began shortly thereafter in 1836 as Marcus Whitman and Henry Spalding arrived to spread Christianity. Though Whitman was more well known, Spalding's impact on Asotin County was more lasting for his having established one mission at Lapwai (12 miles north of Lewiston, Idaho) and another near Alpowa.

Spalding and his Native American converts are credited with introducing organized commerce to the region. By the late 1830s, they had established a grain field, apple

orchard, and gristmill at Alpowa, all of which prospered in the ensuing decade.

Then came the Whitman Massacre in 1847. Hostilities following the incident culminated in the Indian Wars. Though the Nez Perce sided with the Americans, they were forced to relocate to a reservation after signing the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1855. They fought back and, in retreat, attempted an unsuccessful escape to Canada. Their defeat ended the third and final Indian War.

Washington Territory was established in 1853 before the Medicine Creek Treaty was signed. Present-day Asotin County was originally part of Walla Walla County, one of 16 original counties. At that time, Walla Walla County encompassed all of present-day eastern Washington, Idaho, and the western quarter of Montana.

Establishment of the territory—but more importantly the end of the Indian Wars—brought renewed white settlement of the region. The first permanent white settler in Asotin County was Sam Smith. He arrived on June 10, 1861 and established a general store and hotel near Alpowa that catered mostly to prospectors headed to Idaho.

Newcomers also began settling near Asotin, which was yet another former Nez Perce village. By 1868, locals were producing cattle, fruit, and vegetables for mining camps in Idaho. Indeed, most economic development in Asotin, and for that matter other towns in the county, was tied to mining activity in Idaho. Gold, silver, quartz, marble, granite, magnesium, and coal were present in Asotin County, too, but the deposits were not sufficient to warrant commercial extraction.

Population growth pressures caused by prospecting activity prompted locals to call for a new county. As a result, the County of Asotin was established in October 1883 by an act of the Territorial Legislature and Territorial Governor W.A. Newell. Asotin County was created by partitioning what was then Garfield County (which was created only two years earlier by partitioning Walla Walla County).

Incorporation, however, spurred yet another wave of immigration. With immigration came increased economic development. In 1883, for example, the county got its first newspaper, *The Asotin Spirit*. Besides the paper, new stores and mills were popping up in the town

of Asotin. By 1888, the town had hotels, a drug store, saloons, a laundry, livery stables, and blacksmiths.

In 1878, the town of Anatone was platted by Charles Isecke. The town became the trading center for Grande Ronde Valley farmers, most of who supplied Idaho mining camps. It was there that the county's first post office was established. The Grande Ronde Valley also saw the town of Rogersburg platted in 1904 by G.A. Rogers. He envisioned the town, with its river access, as a center of the land and mine interests he had staked in the area. Much of this interest focused on marble that was discovered nearby in 1891. Granite was also found in the Grande Ronde Valley. Similarly, the town of Cloverland emerged when coal was discovered at the turn of the century.

In March 1896, the Lewiston Water & Power Company (later known as the Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company) began work on the Vineland irrigation canal. The completed canal pumped water from the Snake to nearby fields. The town of Vineland was platted a month later.

Lewiston, Washington was platted on August 10, 1896 and was seen as an extension of the existing town of Lewiston, Idaho. This became a reality in 1899 when a steel bridge was erected connecting the two towns. In 1901, however, the Washington State Legislature changed the town's name to Clarkston to honor both expedition leaders. Lewiston-Clarkston was born.

Agriculture—particularly berry production—proved to be the principal economic pursuit in the Clarkston-Vineland area. In the early 1900s, the area was known for its strawberries, raspberries, blackberries, cherries, and peaches. The area was also fast becoming the economic center of the county. Though the town of Asotin retained the county seat despite challenges from Clarkston, the latter quickly outpaced the former in population. The 1900 Census showed Clarkston's population at more than 2,000 compared to Asotin's 500.

By the 1950s, agriculture dominated Asotin County's economy. Wheat, barley, oats, alfalfa, clover, and grass fueled the feed industry. Peas were a major vegetable crop. To its already established fruit crops, the county had added pears, apricots, apples, and nuts. These activities were mainly concentrated near the river for irrigation purposes. Livestock for meat and dairies also continued to be a major industry, giving rise to a food

processing industry. These activities also located near the river for easy waste disposal.

Around this time, lumber and wood products was also a growth industry, driven by proximity to the Blue Mountains and its dense stands of fir. The Blue Mountains were also becoming increasingly popular among deer, elk, and duck hunters and outdoor recreationalists.

In 1975, work was completed on the Lower Granite Dam (near Almota in Garfield County), the last dam built as part of the Lower Snake River Project. The dam did two things to alter Asotin County's economy. On one hand, it shut down orchard and beef processing activities along the river as land was submerged. On the other hand, it paved the way for the Columbia-Snake River system that runs 460 miles between Lewiston and the Pacific, making it the furthest inland water route in the U.S. Neighboring Clarkston became the furthest inland port in Washington and the second furthest inland port in the nation. The first barge made port at Clarkston in 1975. Agriculture (namely grain) remained important, but now shared top billing with port activity at Clarkston-Lewiston and the federal U.S. Army Corps of Engineers which operated the dam.

Port activity at both Clarkston and Lewiston brought population growth and the emergence of healthy trade and service sectors catering to the needs of the new arrivals. Today, local economic development organizations are expanding the county's trade and service industries into the areas of tourism, outdoor recreation, and retirement living. In addition to more traditional hunting and fishing, the area has added river rafting, jet boating, and windsurfing. Mild winters and generally favorable year-round weather complement these activities.

With the county very much sustained by river transport, a major economic issue is endangered fish runs, particularly if it involves dam breaching on the Lower Snake River or even the less drastic draw-down of water behind the dams. The perception that this might happen alone has hampered efforts to attract new industry to the area.

Any discussion of the local economy must address the substantial impact that Lewiston, Idaho has on Asotin County, particularly the Clarkston-Asotin area. Many Clarkston and Asotin residents actually work in Lewiston. Therefore, issues and events that affect Lewiston also affect Asotin County.

POPULATION

As a general rule, population changes are seen as an important economic indicator. A growing population can signify economic health while a waning one can signal the opposite. According to the Office of Financial Management, Asotin County's 1999 population was 20,000

with a population density of 31.5 residents per square mile. Those residents accounted for 0.3 percent of Washington's total population, ranking the county 29th among the state's 39 counties. It ranked 20th in terms of population density.

Trend

Asotin County's resident population grew 6,200 or 45 percent from 1970-99 (see *Figure 1*) compared to 69 percent for Washington as a whole. On an annual basis, that translated into 1.3 percent for Asotin County and 1.8 percent for Washington over the period. During this stretch, the county's population changed at annual rates that ranged from -1.2 percent to +4.0 percent. The most sustained period of population growth took place during the late 1970s. Indeed, nearly half of the county's net population gains came during that period. Conversely, the 1980s saw minimal gains in county population with fewer than 500 residents added during that period. In fact, the county witnessed population decline three separate years during this decade. The 1990s, particularly the middling years, saw healthy growth with roughly 40 percent of the county's net population growth during the 1970-99 period coming in this decade. The most recent 1998-99 period, however, saw no change.

Two components define population change (see *Figure 2*). One is natural change or births and deaths. Only

major socioeconomic occurrences alter the pattern of natural change (both the Great Depression and the aftermath of World War II, for example, resulted in sig-

Figure 1
Population Trend
Asotin County, 1970-1999
Source: Office of Financial Management

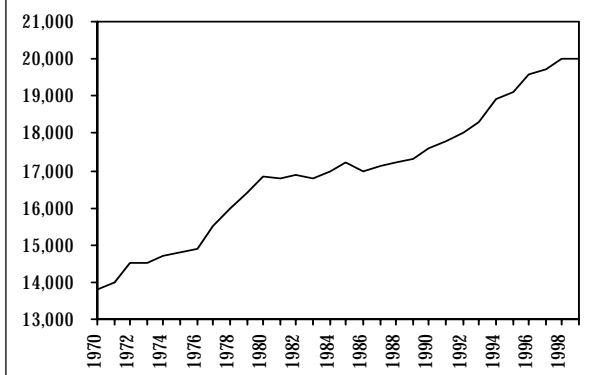


Figure 2
Components of Population Change
Asotin County, 1970-1999
Source: Office of Financial Management

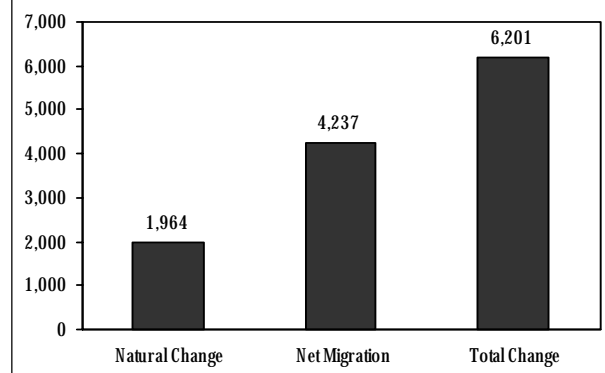
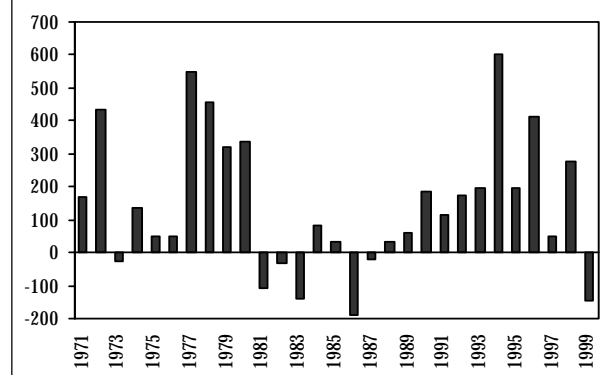


Figure 3
Net Migration
Asotin County, 1971-1999
Source: Office of Financial Management



nificant changes in the nation's birth rate). The other is migration, which provides insight into an area's economic trends. The migration trend is quite revealing in Asotin County. From 1971-99, roughly two-thirds of Asotin County's population increase came from net migration. The migratory element has alternated between positive and negative over the years. During the 1980s, for ex-

ample, out-migration dominated with 1981, 1983, and 1986 revealing sharp out-migration spikes. Since 1990, though, in-migration has accounted for more than 2,000 residents, though the 1999 period showed out-migration of nearly 150. *Figure 3* shows this component of Asotin County's population.

Towns and Cities

Of Asotin County's 20,000 residents in 1999, 40 percent lived in the cities of Asotin and Clarkston, the county's only municipalities. Of that number, 86 percent (or 35 percent of the county's total population) lived in the city of Clarkston. The majority of the county's residents (60 percent) lived in unincorporated Asotin County in towns like Anatone, Cloverland, Rogersburg, and Grahams Landing or on the outskirts of either Clarkston or Asotin.

The unincorporated areas of Asotin County grew considerably faster than the incorporated areas over the 1990-99 period at 21.5 percent and 3.5 percent, respectively. The trend was just the opposite statewide with growth in unincorporated areas climbing 3.7 percent compared to 31.9 percent in incorporated areas. *Figure 4* shows the specific data for Asotin County between 1990 and 1999.

Figure 4
Population of Cities, Towns, and County
April 1, 1990 - April 1, 1999
Source: Office of Financial Management

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	%Chg 90-99
Asotin	17,605	17,800	18,000	18,300	18,900	19,100	19,600	19,700	20,000	20,000	13.6%
Unincorporated	9,871	10,011	10,202	10,529	11,042	11,210	11,615	11,724	12,015	11,995	21.5%
Incorporated	7,734	7,789	7,798	7,771	7,858	7,890	7,985	7,976	7,985	8,005	3.5%
Asotin	981	1,039	1,048	1,046	1,108	1,080	1,125	1,106	1,095	1,090	11.1%
Clarkston	6,753	6,750	6,750	6,725	6,750	6,810	6,860	6,870	6,890	6,915	2.4%

Age Groups

The distribution of population by age group as well as changes in this distribution over time shows aspects of the population not revealed by the overall numbers. *Figure 5* shows the populations of Asotin County and Washington by age group. These age groups are significant if one makes the following assumptions:

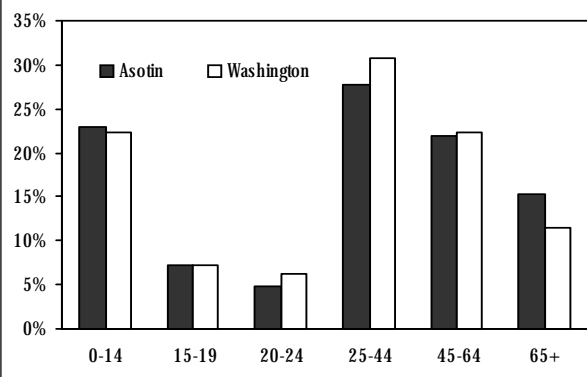
- 0-14 = Infants or adolescents a decade or two removed from the labor force
- 15-19 = Prospective new entrants into the labor force, except college students
- 20-24 = New entrants into the labor force
- 25-44 = Young workers in their prime years of productivity

- 45-64 = Mature workers with years of accumulated skills and experience
- 65+ = Retirees

In Asotin County and Washington, the population is aging. From 1980-99, the county's median age (the age at which there is an equal number above and below) rose from 31.1 to 36.9 years. The state's increased from 29.8 to 35.4 years. The driving factor overall is the aging of that large cohort known as the Baby Boomers (born between 1946 and 1964).

In 1999, Asotin County had a notably higher share of retirees than did Washington as well as a notably lower share of young workers compared to the state. Beyond

Figure 5
Population by Age Groups
Asotin County and Washington, 1999
Source: Office of Financial Management



that, the shares of total population held by the other age cohorts appeared to be relatively similar.

The overall trends in regard to the changing shares of total population held by various age groups were the same for Asotin County and Washington. The 25-44 cohort, for example, saw its population share climb at both the county and state levels. Conversely, the 20-24 cohort saw its population share fall locally and statewide. However, there were differences. Asotin County had a smaller share of younger workers relative to the state and a considerably larger group of seniors. The population share held by the other age cohorts remained relatively constant at both the county and state levels.

Demographics

Asotin County's male to female population share has not changed appreciably for the past two decades. In 1980, males and females accounted for 48 percent and 52 percent of the population, respectively. That relationship remained relatively unchanged in 1990 and 1999.

The racial composition of Asotin County's population shifted slightly more appreciably. In 1980, Whites constituted 99 percent of the county's population. By 1990

their share was 97.6 percent and by 1999 it was 96.6 percent. To be sure, though their population share declined, their numbers increased 12 percent. *Figure 6* shows the estimated numbers of each race in 1999. Statewide, whites comprised 88.8 percent of the population in 1999.

Whites were the largest race group in Asotin County, but they were not the fastest growing. Nonwhites had a

Figure 6
Population Estimates by Race and Hispanic Origin
Asotin County and Washington State, 1990 and 1999
Source: Office of Financial Management

	1990 Census		1999 Estimates		1990-99 % Change
Asotin					
Total	17,605	100.0%	20,000	100.0%	13.6%
White	17,190	97.6%	19,310	96.6%	12.3%
Black	38	0.2%	72	0.4%	89.5%
Indian/Aleutian	269	1.5%	402	2.0%	49.4%
Asian/Pac Islander	108	0.6%	215	1.1%	99.1%
Hispanic *	278	1.6%	516	2.6%	85.6%
Washington					
Total	4,866,692	100.0%	5,757,400	100.0%	18.3%
White	4,411,407	90.6%	5,107,571	88.8%	15.8%
Black	152,572	3.1%	198,670	3.4%	30.2%
Indian/Aleutian	87,259	1.8%	109,509	1.9%	25.5%
Asian/Pac Islander	215,454	4.4%	341,650	5.9%	58.6%
Hispanic *	214,570	4.4%	356,464	6.0%	66.1%

* Hispanics may be of any race.

much higher growth rate of 66 percent from 1990-99. However, as the data show, the actual numbers were very small. Native Americans and Asians were the largest racial minority groups in 1999. Blacks constituted less than one-half of 1 percent of the population in 1999. Those of Hispanic origin (who can be of any race) were 2.6 percent of the county population in 1999 and were also fast growing in relative terms.

CIVILIAN LABOR FORCE

The resident civilian labor force is defined as all persons 16 years of age and older within a specified geographic area who are either working or actively seeking work. This excludes those serving in the armed forces. Like the general population, the labor force can be seen as a key economic indicator. Since gross domestic product and gross state product are not gathered at the county level, labor force changes, as well as other measures, serve as substitutes. In 1999, Asotin County's labor force was 11,970.

Figures 7 and 8 show the county's labor force pattern from 1970-99. It grew at a 2.7 percent annual rate over the period, same as that statewide. Growth in the county was modest through the early and mid-1970s. However, in 1977 it soared 19.3 percent to 8,090 as completion of the Lower Granite Dam and subsequent work on a dike to contain the slackwater fueled port and related activities and additional U.S. Army Corps of Engineer activity in the Clarkston-Lewiston area.

By the early 1980s, recessions caused Asotin County's labor force to pull back nearly 15 percent from 8,640 in 1980 to 7,390 by 1984. It reestablished itself in the latter half of the 1980s, however, posting exceptionally strong 8 percent growth in 1988. The county's labor force increased nearly 30 percent after the early 1990s recession, going from 9,430 in 1991 to 12,200 by 1997 (statewide growth was 18 percent). The county's labor force peaked in 1997, and has since fallen 2 percent while the statewide labor force expanded 3 percent.

Figure 7
Resident Civilian Labor Force
Asotin County, 1970-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

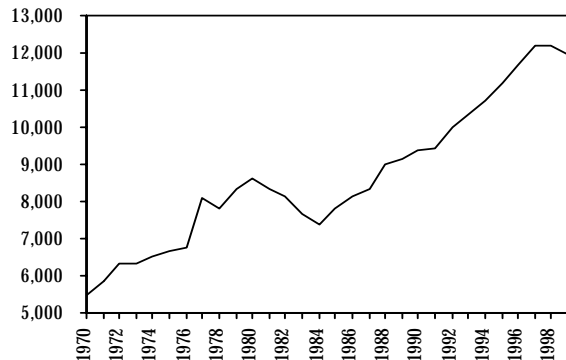
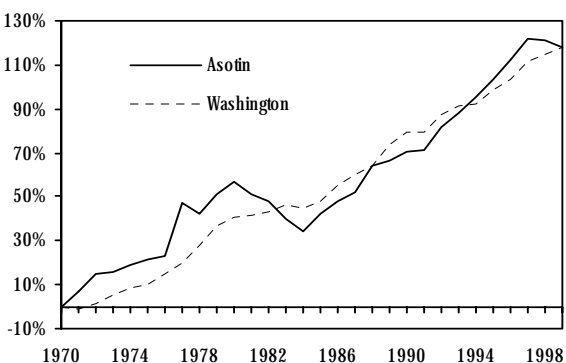


Figure 8
Resident Civilian Labor Force Growth
Asotin County and Washington, 1970-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



Commuting

In 1998, there were more than twice as many Asotin County residents employed than there were jobs within the county. Clearly, the bulk of the labor force works outside the county. The 1990 Census provided information on commuting patterns and showed that in that year, 3,700 residents of Asotin County worked outside the county (the number will clearly be higher in the

2000 Census). The greatest number, not surprisingly, worked in Idaho (3,384), namely in Nez Perce County (3,285). Over 300 Asotin residents worked in other Washington counties, most going to Whitman County (105). In the decade that has passed, that pattern is believed to have continued.

Demographics

Ethnically, the labor force composition of Asotin County mirrors its general population (see *Figure 9*). According to the Census, slightly less than 99 percent of the county's labor force was white in 1990—amounting to 7,645 participants. The next largest racial group was Native Americans, with only 59 labor force participants. Native Americans and the three remaining racial groups—African American, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and Other Races—summed to 116 persons or slightly more than 1 percent of the total. Individuals of Hispanic origin (who can be of any race) made up less than 1 percent of the total labor force.

As mentioned earlier, Asotin County's population was roughly 48 percent male and 52 percent female. This did not, however, translate as readily to the labor force, which was 55 percent male and 45 percent female. State-wide, the male to female labor force share is also 55 percent to 45 percent.

Comparisons of the 1980 and 1990 Censuses show that the county is part of a nationwide trend of increased female participation in the work force. Even though males still outnumber females, there was significant change during that decade. In Asotin County, the number of males that worked essentially did not change while the number of females increased by 13 percent. The type of employment was also changing. Women took full-time jobs

Figure 9
Resident Civilian Labor Force
by Sex and Minority Status
Asotin County, 1999
Source: Employment Security Department

	Labor Force	Share
Both Sexes Total	12,020	100.0
White	11,650	96.9
Black	40	0.3
Native American	120	1.0
Asian & Pacific Islander	40	0.3
Hispanic	170	1.1
Female Total	5,470	100.0
White	5,290	96.7
Black	10	0.2
Native American	60	1.1
Asian & Pacific Islander	20	0.4
Hispanic	90	1.6
Female Percent of Total	45.5	- -

at a higher rate than did men. The number of women working full time in Asotin County increased by 5 percent while the number of men working full time decreased 3 percent.

UNEMPLOYMENT

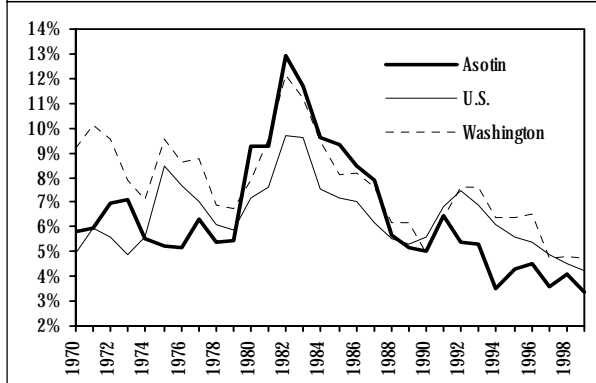
The unemployment rate reflects the share of the resident civilian labor force that is not working but which is actively looking for work. The unemployed do not include retirees, persons in institutions (including students), or discouraged workers (i.e., persons who would like to work but who are not actively searching for a job because they do not believe they can find one). Nation-

ally, the unemployment rate is calculated from a monthly survey of households. Regionally, the state's portion of this household survey is integrated with other information (e.g., unemployment insurance claims and surveys of business establishments) to produce unemployment rates at the state and county level.

Trend

In 1999, Asotin County's unemployment rate was 3.4 percent—more than a full percentage point below the 4.7 percent state average. In fact, that is the lowest jobless rate in the nearly 30 years. *Figure 10* shows the unemployment rate for Asotin County, Washington, and the U.S. since 1970. The most striking aspect of the chart is the huge bulge in unemployment that occurred during the early 1980s. Historically, Asotin County has had lower unemployment than Washington; however, during and after what has come to be called the “double dip” recessions of the early 1980s, the county's jobless rate exceeded the state rate. In 1982, almost 13 percent of the county's labor force was idled. Following that, the unemployment rate started falling in conjunction with the national recovery from the recessions, but at a lesser rate than that statewide. That changed in 1988 when, for the first time since 1981, the percentage of the county's unemployed fell below the state's rate. It has remained there since. Indeed, the second most striking observa-

Figure 10
Unemployment Rates
Asotin, Washington, & U.S., 1970-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



tion is the low levels to which unemployment rates have fallen in the 1990s. These rates represent what may be the lowest recorded since World War II.

Industrial Typology

A number of industries within Washington have been defined as seasonal, cyclical, or structurally mature. These labels relate to the variability in employment, particularly on the downside. Because all three categories reflect employment instability or change, the degree to which a county's economic base depends upon these industries reveals a tendency toward or away from unemployment. Only private industries were included when producing the figures below, so the impact of government employment is excluded.

Industries with seasonal employment patterns are characterized by large employment increases and decreases in particular months of the year. These varia-

tions occur during the same months each year and are caused by factors that repeat each year. Weather-related activities and holiday seasons are examples of such factors. A seasonal industry is one in which the variation between the highest and lowest monthly employment is 18.9 percent or more of the industry's annual average employment.

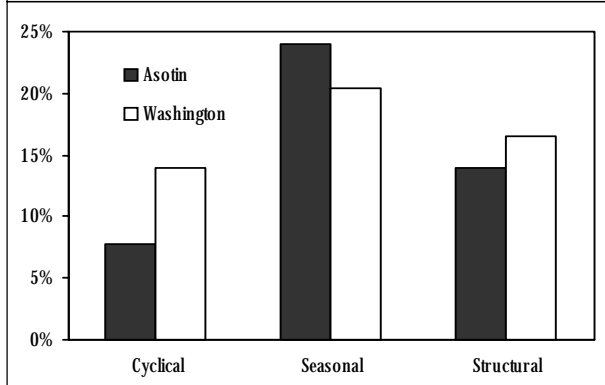
Industries with *cyclical* employment patterns are characterized by sharp increases and decreases in employment during periods of general economic growth and contraction. The employment patterns are generally related to upswings and downturns in overall economic activity. Interest rate sensitive sectors like manufactur-

ing, construction, and finance are examples. A cyclical industry is one in which the total employment variation over a seven-year period is very high when compared to a straight-line trend projection for the same period.

Structurally mature industries are characterized by long-term declines in total employment. These declines may be the result of increased productivity, automation, technological change, exhaustion of natural resources, or other factors. The structurally mature designation is determined by comparing an industry's current employment against its employment at the peak of the last business cycle.

The number of workers employed in each of these types of industries in Asotin County is shown in *Figure 11*. In 1998, 995 jobs or 24.0 percent of all private covered employment in Asotin County were in seasonal industries. That same year, 579 jobs or 14.0 percent of all private covered employment in the county were in structurally mature industries. Only 319 jobs or 7.7 percent of all private covered employment in the county were in cyclical industries. As the chart shows, this differed somewhat from the statewide industrial typology, which was 20.4 percent seasonal, 16.5 percent structurally mature, and 14.0 percent cyclical. Basically, Asotin County had a higher than average share of sea-

Figure 11
Industrial Typology
Asotin County and Washington, 1998
Source: Employment Security Department



sonal employment, not surprising given the agricultural base. It also had a higher than average share of structural employment. On the other hand, it had a much lower than average share of cyclical employment. It is important to note that an industry can be recognized in more than one typology. Construction, for example, is very dependent upon weather and is also highly sensitive to fluctuations in the business cycle, which means it is both seasonal and cyclical.

Occupational Unemployment

Unemployment rates are not calculated by occupation. However, unemployment insurance claims do include occupational information. *Figure 12* lists unemployment insurance (UI) claimants by occupational group for both Asotin County and Washington. During fiscal year 1998-99, 634 UI claims were filed by Asotin County residents.

The percentage of claims from each group, ranked by size, shows some sharp differences between the county and the state. While structural work, primarily construction occupations, is the largest group in both, the percentage in the county is twice that of the state (41 percent compared to 19 percent). The large share of UI claims in this category reflects the seasonal nature of the work as well as the tendency to file a claim for the often short time-periods between construction projects. The fact that the county's share was twice that of the state average can be attributed to its larger-than-average construction industry. The county's also had a much higher share of UI claims in motor freight and transportation occupations, which is most likely a result of the seasonal nature of grain transportation. Some might see the county's lower

than average share of UI claims in agricultural occupations as odd. However, it is important to remember that agriculture in Asotin County is largely tied to wheat and other grains which do not require the same labor intensity as, say, hand-harvested fruits in central Washington.

Other differences of note among the larger groupings include that in professional occupations, where Asotin County had, proportionally, only two-thirds as many claims as the state. The county also had fewer in clerical occupations.

In general, there is a substantial difference between claims stemming from "white-collar" and "blue-collar" occupations. If the occupations in *Figure 12* are loosely classified as either white-collar or blue-collar, Asotin County had 32 percent of its UI claims come from white-collar jobs and 68 percent come from blue-collar jobs. UI claims from white-collar occupations were much more prevalent statewide, generating 45 percent of all claims while blue-collar jobs generated 55 percent. This is not surprising given the influence of larger, more urban metropolitan areas (particularly the central Puget Sound region) on the statewide picture.

Figure 12
Unemployment Insurance Claimants
Asotin County and Washington, July 1, 1998 - June 30, 1999
Source: Employment Security Department

	Asotin County		Washington	
	Claimants	Percentage	Claimants	Percentage
Professional, technical and managerial	71	11.2%	65,042	17.6%
Clerical	46	7.3%	39,843	10.8%
Sales	28	4.4%	19,259	5.2%
Service	58	9.1%	38,823	10.5%
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	26	4.1%	29,550	8.0%
Processing	8	1.3%	19,673	5.3%
Machine trades	50	7.9%	22,377	6.1%
Benchwork	8	1.3%	12,538	3.4%
Structural work	260	41.0%	69,552	18.8%
Motor freight and transportation	56	8.8%	18,242	4.9%
Packaging and materials handling	22	3.5%	32,096	8.7%
Miscellaneous, NEC	1	0.2%	2,336	0.6%
Total	634	100.0%	369,331	100.0%
White-Collar*	203	32.1%	162,967	44.4%
Blue-Collar*	430	67.9%	204,028	55.2%

**Miscellaneous/NEC occupations excluded*

INDUSTRIES, EMPLOYMENT, AND WAGES

Data in this section are derived from two different Bureau of Labor Statistics programs which are conducted in Washington by the Employment Security Department. The Current Employment Statistics (CES) program generates monthly nonagricultural wage and salary employment figures based on an employer survey. The quarterly

Covered Employment and Wage program (ES-202) generates agricultural and nonagricultural employment data based on tax records submitted by employers covered by the Unemployment Insurance program. All wage data and agricultural employment data in this section stem from the ES-202 program; other employment information comes from the CES program.

Employment Trend

Asotin County has a rather unusual situation regarding its labor force and its industry employment base. As mentioned earlier, the labor force statistics (based on place of residence) showed an employment level of 11,560 in 1999. Nonfarm employment (based on place of work) showed an employment level of 4,930 in 1999. Some of the difference is accounted for by agriculture but the bulk attests to the fact that there are basically twice as many people living in Asotin County who are employed than there are jobs in Asotin County.

Right across the river from Clarkston is Lewiston, the third largest city in Idaho. Its largest employer, the Potlatch Corporation, produces pulp, paper, and lumber products and employs about 2,800 workers, about one-third of who live in Asotin County. Blount Inc., also in Lewiston, a manufacturer of ammunition, employs another 700 workers, about one-quarter of who reside in Asotin County. This daily migration across the river, prompted by employment opportunities in Idaho and the absence of a state income tax in Washington, largely explains the difference between Asotin County's labor force and nonfarm employment numbers.

Figures 13 and 14 show nonfarm employment in Asotin County from 1975-99. Except for a sharp contraction from 1981-83 during a national economic recession and a flat period from 1993-94, growth has been constant. In fact, it outpaced growth statewide. While statewide employment grew a healthy 88 percent, Asotin County saw its nonfarm jobs more than double. In 1975 there were a total of 2,153 workers; by 1999 there were 4,930. Furthermore, the 1990-91 recession did not affect Asotin County employment growth at all. However, Asotin County's nonfarm base fell nearly 1 percent in 1999 due to softness in the retail sector and completion of two major transportation projects.

Figure 13
Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

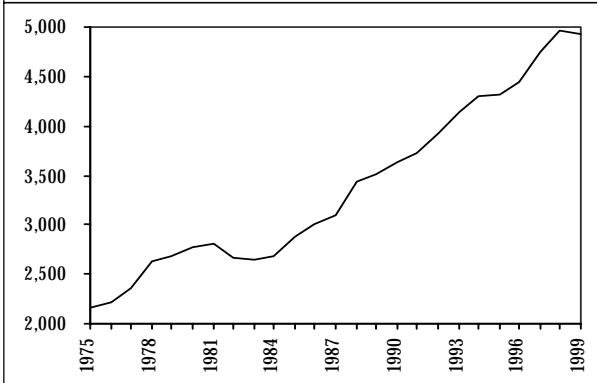
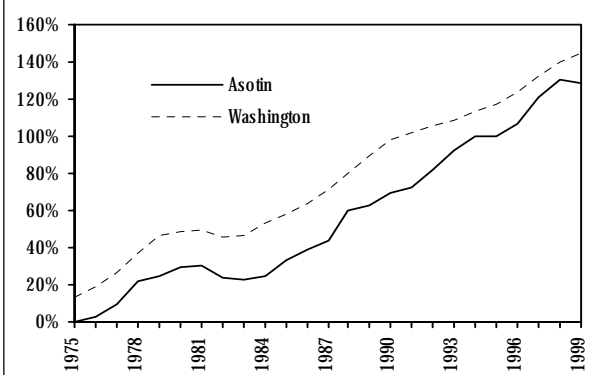


Figure 14
Nonagricultural Wage & Salary Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



Location Quotients

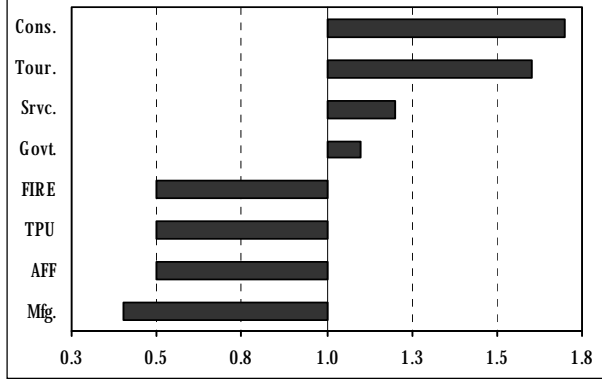
One way to determine how an area's economy is shaped is to compare it to another area. The following section shows fairly specifically, by major industry sector, how Asotin County's employment patterns both differ from and coincide with those for Washington as a whole. When comparing an industry's share of all employment at the county level to the same industry's share statewide, it becomes apparent that some county employment is distributed differently than statewide employment. The *location quotient* compares the share of total employment in a particular industry division in the county with the share it represents in Washington.

The quotient is determined by dividing the statewide industry employment share into the county industry share. A quotient of 1.0 denotes an industry in which the county is typical to the same industry statewide. A value above 1.0 suggests a local industry with a higher concentration of employment than that statewide. A value below 1.0 marks a local industry with a lesser concentration of employment than in the same industry statewide.

A quotient above 1.0 suggests that the good or service produced by an industry is exported from the area; a quotient below 1.0 is a sign that, hypothetically, goods or services must be imported into an area to provide the same consumption patterns found at the state level. The greater the value above or below 1.0, the stronger the suggestion of exporting or importing becomes.

Figure 15 shows the location quotients of the major industry sectors in Asotin County. The county's largest quotient is in construction (1.7). Construction in Asotin County is an "exporter" because of the higher than average share of employment concentrated in heavy construction, most of which relates to road and highway paving done across the county and surrounding areas. A simi-

Figure 15
Location Quotients
Asotin County, 1998
Source: Employment Security Department



larly large quotient is reflected in tourism (a category based on employment in hotels and motels, eating and drinking places, and amusement and recreation services) at 1.6. In this case, the "product" exported is not a tangible one; rather, it is the memories and experiences that a tourist takes away from the area.

Trade, services, and government also have quotients higher than 1.0, but not to the degree to suggest serious exporting. Trade and services support tourism and local residents, including those who work across the river and whose employment is not counted in these calculations.

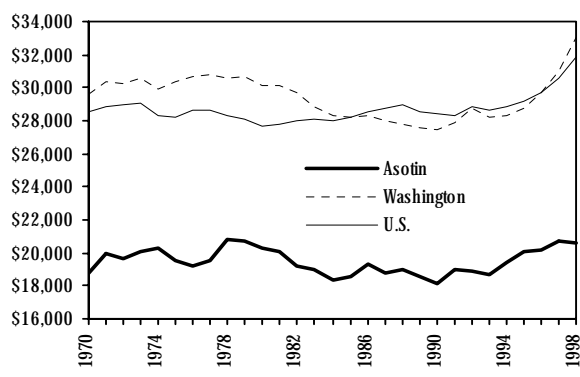
Manufacturing, finance, insurance, and real estate; and transportation and public utilities all have quotients significantly less than 1.0, denoting importation of the goods and services offered by these industries. It is likely that the goods and services derived from these sectors are largely imported into the county from Lewiston, Idaho.

Average Covered Wage

The average covered wage is derived by dividing an area's total covered wages paid by its average covered employment. Jobs not covered by the Unemployment Insurance program are excluded. However, approximately 90 percent of all employment in the state is covered under the UI program. (*Note: The data have been inflation adjusted to constant 1998 dollars using the Implicit Price Deflator for Personal Consumption Expenditures.*) The average covered wage does not include benefits (e.g., insurance or retirement plans).

In looking at Figure 16 on the next page, it appears that Asotin County's average covered wage generally ran in tandem with Washington's over the 1970-98 period, albeit at a significantly lower level. There has always been a sizable difference between the average covered wage in Asotin County versus that in Washington. There were also times during the observation period, though, when the county's average covered wage made considerable strides in narrowing that gap, namely in the late 1970s and late 1980s. Furthermore, the county was making

Figure 16
Average Covered Wage
Asotin, Washington, & U.S., 1970-1998
Source: Employment Security Department



strides toward narrowing the gap as recently as the mid-1990s. However, the gap widened again in the latter half of the 1990s as Asotin County took a hit in the wheat market while the state skyrocketed on the strength of high tech. By 1998, Asotin County's average covered wage was \$20,576 compared to \$33,062 statewide with the difference widening yet again to \$12,485 or 39 percent, ranking Asotin as one of the lowest among the state's 39 counties. All this having been said, it should be noted that wages earned by Asotin County residents who work in Idaho are not figured into these averages.

The trend of wages has been one of diminution in both the county and the state. Since 1970, the county's wage has fallen by 2 percent while the state's average fell by 7 percent. This overall decline of the average wage has been a subject of considerable discussion for it is a

Figure 17
Average Covered Wages
Asotin County and Washington State, 1998
Source: Employment Security Department

	Asotin		Washington	
	Employ	Avg	Employ	Avg
Total	5,085	\$20,533	2,593,426	\$33,071
Agriculture, Forestry, & Fishing	115	\$10,829	94,726	\$15,613
01 Agricultural production crops	58	\$8,870	59,798	\$12,841
02 Agricultural production livestock	13	\$11,885	5,677	\$19,614
07 Agricultural services	44	\$13,099	24,165	\$17,267
Construction	415	\$32,827	133,803	\$33,653
15 General building contractors	81	\$12,749	37,433	\$32,162
16 Heavy construction, ex. building	173	\$43,020	18,264	\$42,032
17 Special trade contractors	161	\$31,975	78,106	\$32,409
Manufacturing	298	\$28,611	373,802	\$42,247
20 Food and kindred products	*	*	40,006	\$30,618
23 Apparel and other textile products	*	*	7,790	\$20,411
24 Lumber and wood products	184	\$32,014	33,428	\$34,955
25 Furniture and fixtures	*	*		
26 Paper and allied products	*	*	15,989	\$50,085
27 Printing and publishing	*	*	23,550	\$31,316
30 Rubber and misc. plastics products	*	*	9,202	\$30,601
32 Stone, clay, and glass products	*	*	9,365	\$34,809
34 Fabricated metal products	*	*	14,250	\$32,607
35 Industrial machinery and equipment	12	\$29,405	25,436	\$43,916
37 Transportation equipment	61	\$24,954	127,417	\$51,925
38 Instruments and related products	*	*	14,683	\$55,477
Other industries	41	*		
Transportation & Public Utilities	121	\$39,260	129,585	\$40,299
42 Trucking and warehousing	50	\$25,204	31,031	\$29,910
44 Water transportation	*	*	9,163	\$51,116
45 Transportation by air	*	*	24,920	\$38,034
47 Transportation services	*	*	12,966	\$29,577

*Employment and wages not shown to avoid disclosure of data for individual employers.

national trend. Some of the explanations proffered are listed below; undoubtedly, each is a contributing factor.

- Pay declines within industries caused by international competition, restructuring, the decreased power of unions to set wages, and other factors.

- An overall decline in high paying goods-producing jobs accompanied by a large increase in lower paying trade and services jobs.
- The substitution of employee benefits for direct pay increases.
- Increase in part-time and temporary workers.

Figure 17 (continued)

Average Covered Wages

Asotin County and Washington State, 1998

Source: Employment Security Department

	Asotin		Washington	
	Employ	Avg	Employ	Avg
48 Communication	*	*	29,797	\$52,578
49 Electric, gas, and sanitary services	*	*	15,360	\$52,168
Other industries	71	\$49,158		
Wholesale Trade	233	\$20,215	148,159	\$39,140
50 Wholesale trade durable goods	83	\$25,000	84,523	\$42,402
51 Wholesale trade nondurable goods	150	\$17,568	63,636	\$34,807
Retail Trade	1,211	\$14,455	460,669	\$17,908
52 Building materials & garden supplies	91	\$19,375	21,324	\$24,227
53 General merchandise stores	*	*	47,269	\$20,388
54 Food stores	226	\$15,403	68,893	\$20,024
55 Automotive dealers & service stations	98	\$17,561	47,424	\$28,500
56 Apparel and accessory stores	*	*	25,517	\$20,023
57 Furniture and homefurnishings stores	*	*	21,468	\$24,809
58 Eating and drinking places	481	\$8,700	171,771	\$11,442
59 Miscellaneous retail	123	\$13,081	57,003	\$18,055
Other industries	192	\$24,722		
Services	1,631	\$15,662	676,209	\$35,887
70 Hotels and other lodging places	154	\$10,228	28,001	\$15,890
72 Personal services	37	\$19,182	22,083	\$16,326
73 Business services	100	\$13,862	151,132	\$69,522
75 Auto repair, services, and parking	39	\$17,307	25,106	\$23,985
76 Miscellaneous repair services	30	\$23,296	7,608	\$28,378
78 Motion pictures	*	*	9,224	\$14,096
79 Amusement & recreation services	131	\$10,778	38,332	\$19,267
80 Health services	621	\$21,318	180,251	\$30,514
81 Legal services	22	\$14,536	16,746	\$41,273
82 Educational services	*	*	21,553	\$25,793
83 Social services	211	\$10,751	58,944	\$16,052
86 Membership organizations	59	\$16,308	24,053	\$20,830
87 Engineering & management services	38	\$19,871	60,580	\$44,707
88 Private households	164	\$7,869	29,402	\$8,811
Other industries	25	\$10,156		
Government	940	\$27,561	441,415	\$33,872
Federal Government	68	\$38,571	67,236	\$42,806
State Government	140	\$24,652	113,871	\$33,635
Local Government	732	\$27,095	260,308	\$31,668
Not Elsewhere Classified	121	\$21,465		

**Employment and wages not shown to avoid disclosure of data for individual employers.*

Figure 17 on the previous page shows the average wage for all the industry sectors and for some particular industries in Asotin County and for the same sectors and industries statewide. As mentioned earlier, the overall

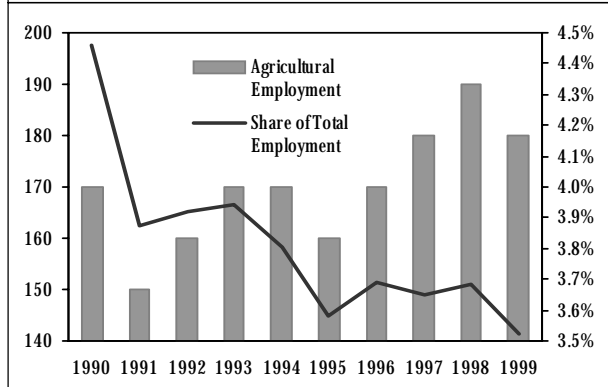
average wage in Asotin County is less than that statewide. Also, the wage in all the major sectors and industries shown is less than for the same ones statewide.

Agriculture

Agriculture is a major industry in Asotin County. According to the 1997 Census of Agriculture, Asotin County had 140 farms that encompassed a total land area of 304,471 acres and whose combined value of land and buildings was approximately \$1 million. Of those farms, more than half (73) were 1,000 acres or more, with the average farm size being 2,175 acres. Of the county's total agricultural acreage, 87,282 or nearly 30 percent was cropland and 36,126 or just over 40 percent of that cropland was harvested. The total market value of agricultural products in Asotin County was \$9.7 million, two-thirds of which was crops (mostly wheat and barley) and one-third of which was livestock (mostly cattle and calves).

Asotin County has seen its agricultural employment increase over the decade even while that sector's share of total employment has dipped slightly (see Figure 18). From roughly the 150-160 range in the first half of the 1990s, agricultural employment rose into the 180-190 range by the late 1990s. Over that same period, though, its share of total employment fell one percentage point to 3.5 percent. Agriculture being a seasonal activity, the county's agricultural employment averaged 180 for the twelve months of 1999, but peaked at 250 in June and

Figure 18
Agricultural Employment
Asotin County, 1990-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



bottomed out at 130 in January. The county's primary crops remain wheat, oats, barley, and hay. Indeed, it is the dominance of this highly mechanized aspect of agriculture that accounts for the county's relatively low farm employment count. Cattle and calves, hogs and pigs, and sheep and lambs are also a major part of the county's agricultural output.

Construction and Mining

As Figure 19 shows, construction is quite sensitive to fluctuations in the business cycle. The greatest downward spikes in employment occurred during the "double-dip" national recessions of the early 1980s and during the 1990-91 national recession. Construction employment remained low even after 1983 when the national recovery and expansion began. In general, eastern Washington did not benefit from the huge economic expansion to the same degree or as early as western Washington and the nation.

In 1985, at its lowest point, construction employment comprised 4 percent of nonfarm employment. Following the early 1990s recession, the sector rebounded to represent as much as 9 percent of total nonfarm employment. However, it was as low as 6 percent in 1999.

Figure 19
Construction and Mining Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

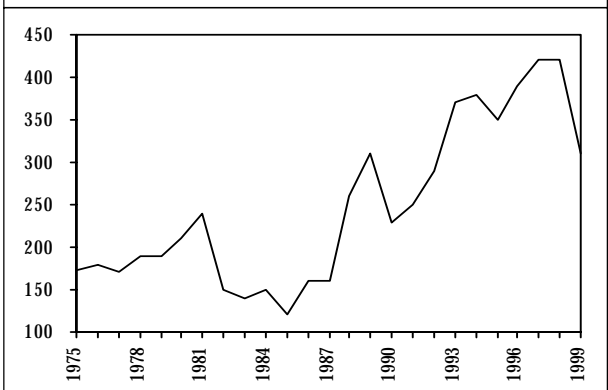
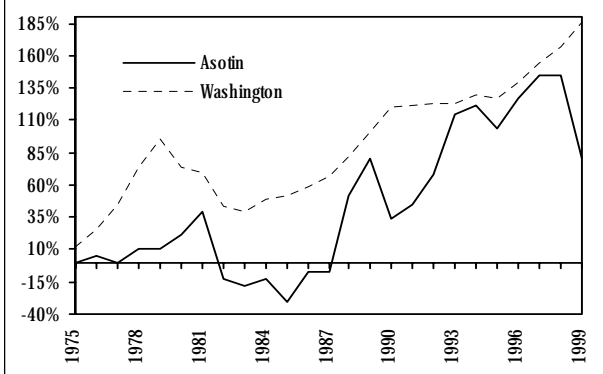


Figure 20
Construction and Mining Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



Employment grew from 172 in 1975 to as much as 420 in 1997-98, an annual growth rate of 2.5 percent before falling off sharply to the tune of 26 percent from 1998-99 due to completion of two major road and bridge projects between Lewiston and Clarkston and to overbuilding of multi-family residences (*see Figure 20*).

Construction is divided into three categories: general building (residential and commercial buildings), heavy construction, and special trades (plumbers, electricians, carpenters, etc.). It is heavy construction that gives the county's construction sector such a large share of total employment. Heavy construction in Asotin County amounts to 42 percent of all construction employment whereas the statewide average is 14 percent. For the most part, the county's heavy construction is involved with paving roads and highways. Special trades employment was greater than heavy construction. It accounted for about 39 percent of construction jobs compared to 58 percent statewide.

Manufacturing

One of the drawbacks of Asotin County's economy is the lack of a strong manufacturing base. Manufacturing jobs generally pay well and have good benefits. When people speak of "good, family-wage jobs," they are often referring to manufacturing jobs. *Figure 21* shows that manufacturing employment in the county more than doubled from 130 in 1975 to 320 in 1999. Additionally, the sector's annual growth rate of 3.8 percent was more than twice the 1.7 percent state average for the same sector. Still, it only comprised 6 percent of total non-

farm employment in 1999 compared to 14 percent statewide (*see Figure 22*).

There are a number of firms in the manufacturing sector but most employ only a handful of workers at best. The largest of the industries is lumber and wood products, where the bulk of the workers are employed in sawmills. The second largest industry is transportation equipment, with most of the workers in this industry involved in the manufacture of small aluminum boats.

Figure 21
Manufacturing Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

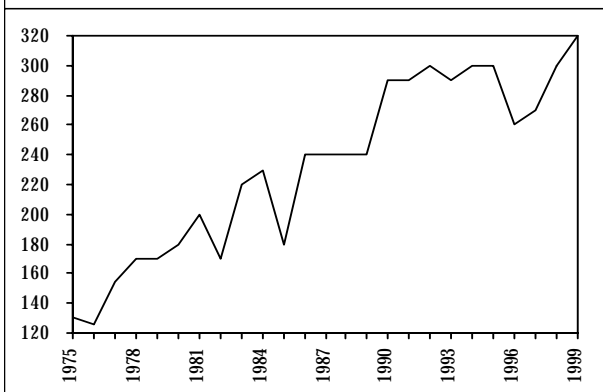
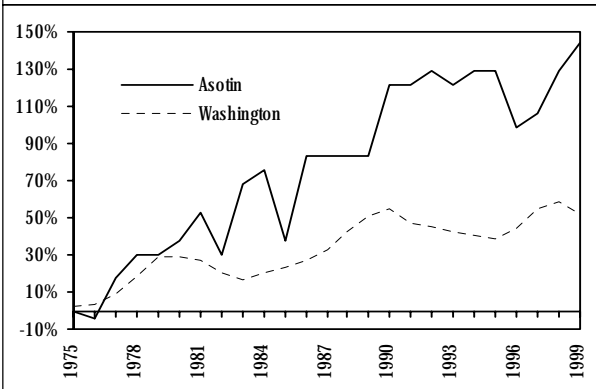


Figure 22
Manufacturing Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



Transportation and Public Utilities (TPU)

This sector encompasses industries involved with land, sea, and air transportation, all forms of communications, and utilities that provide services such as electric, gas, and refuse disposal. *Figures 23 and 24* depict the employment trends in Asotin County's transportation and public utilities sector from 1975-99. From roughly 60 in 1975, the sector fell to as low as 50 in 1988. It pro-

ceeded to rebound to 120 by 1996 after three major trucking firms made the Port of Lewiston their corporate headquarters. It has been relatively flat since then. However, the levels of the past several years match the one-year peak established in 1982. The sector is small with its employment accounting for only 2 percent of employment compared to 5 percent statewide.

Figure 23
TPU Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

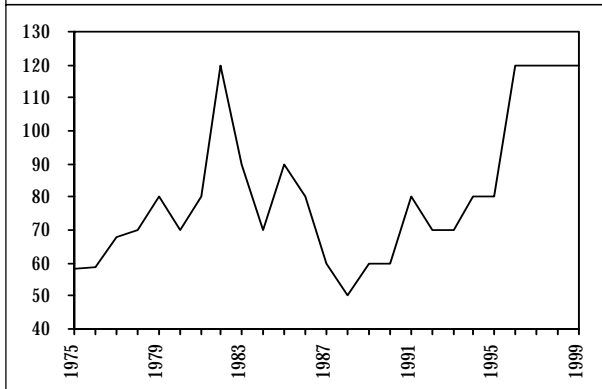
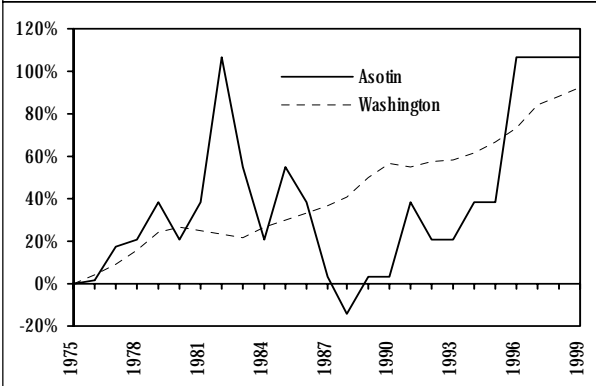


Figure 24
TPU Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



Trade

The trade sector in Asotin County is quite large relative to the size of the sector throughout the state for two reasons: the county attracts many tourists, a factor that does not necessarily occur in other counties, and many more workers reside in the county (but commute to Lewiston) than the nonfarm employment numbers suggest.

Trade employment (wholesale and retail) expanded at a hearty annual rate of 4.8 percent from 1975-99 (*see Figures 25 and 26*) and now commands a 29 percent share of all nonfarm employment in the county. During the same time, the state as a whole saw its trade sector grow a respectable 3.4 percent on an annualized basis, giving it a 24 percent share of employment in 1999. The statewide growth, however significant, still did not match that of the county.

Trade fell off slightly in 1999. This is because Lewiston/Clarkston is a shopping hub for surrounding rural areas, which are resource-based (primarily timber). Temporary layoffs at sawmills due to soft wood markets meant locals had less money to shop.

By far the largest industry in retail trade is eating and drinking places. The industry includes restaurants, fast food establishments, bars, taverns, delis, etc., and probably has the highest ratio of part-time workers of all industries. Employment in this sector represented 40 percent of all retail trade employment in 1999. The next largest sector was food stores. In Asotin County, grocery stores, meat markets, fish markets, and the like employed nearly 20 percent of all retail trade workers in 1999.

Other retail sectors with fairly sizable employment (8 percent to 10 percent) were auto dealers and service stations, building materials and garden supply stores, and miscellaneous retail stores.

Coupled together, Lewiston and Clarkston have become a retail hub for an area with a radius of about 100 miles, drawing in shoppers from Washington, Idaho, and even Oregon. Such retailing giants as Costco and Wal Mart have located there, and retailing has become a centerpiece of the local economy.

Figure 25
Trade Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

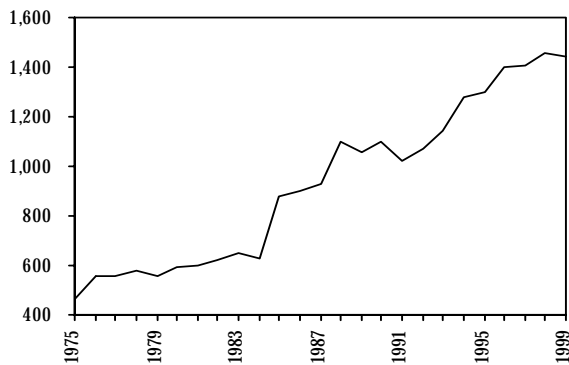
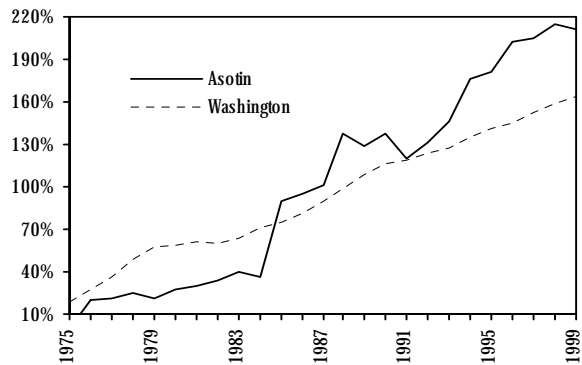


Figure 26
Trade Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE)

The FIRE sector is a small one in Asotin County with its 150 workers in 1999 amounting to only 3 percent of the county's total nonfarm employment (the figure is 5 percent statewide). *Figures 27 and 28* show that the

sector has experienced a number of cyclical swings since 1975, something to be expected in a sector like FIRE. Although there have been peaks and troughs, employment has generally remained between 90 and 150.

Figure 27
FIRE Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

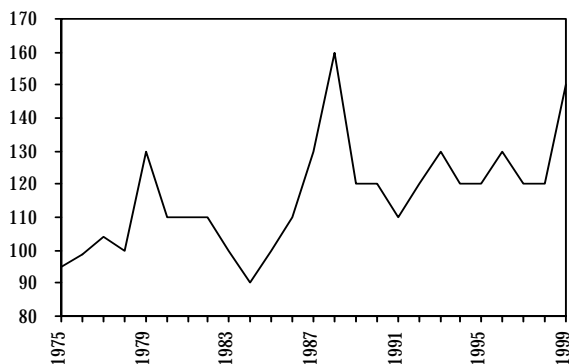
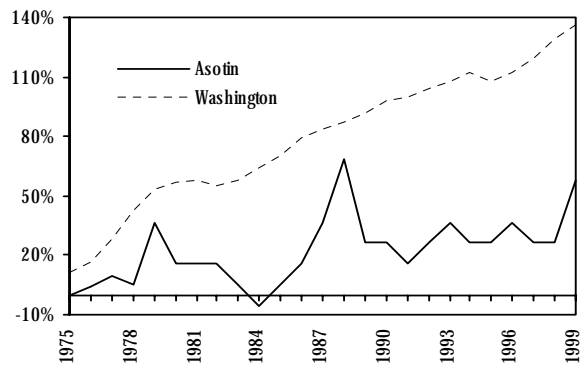


Figure 28
FIRE Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

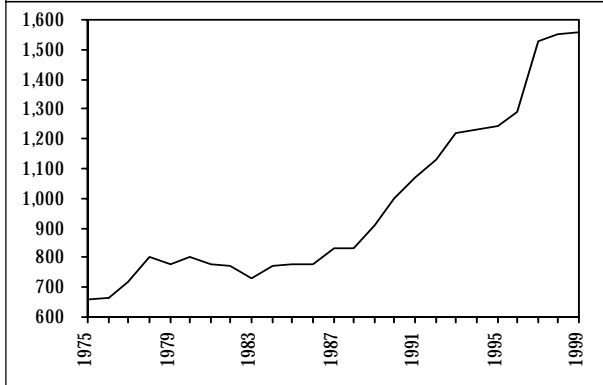


Services

Services was the largest employment sector in Asotin County in 1999 with 1,560 workers. It did this through growth of 3.7 percent annually from 1975-99 on the way to acquiring a 30 percent share of nonfarm employment. The bulk of that growth, however, has come during the past decade (*see Figures 29 and 30 on the next page*).

Statewide, services grew at a 5.2 percent annual rate to reach 28 percent of total nonfarm employment by 1999. Expansions in health services, social services, hotels and lodging places, and amusement and recreation services have been the force behind the overall services growth.

Figure 29
Services Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

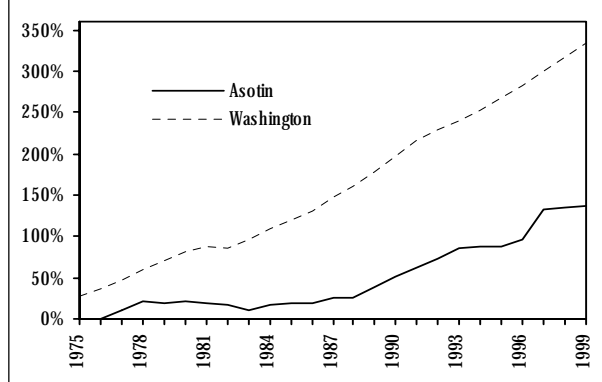


As in trade, the Clarkston and Lewiston area has become a hub, only in this case for medical services instead of retailing. Both cities have hospitals and are magnets for people from the surrounding area requiring health care services. Tourism is also playing a greater and greater role, with many visitors to the area requiring overnight accommodations, which fuels employment in recreational services.

The largest industry in the sector, health services, employed roughly 620 workers or 38 percent of all services employees in 1999. The bulk of that employment centered around two nursing care facilities and the hospital in Clarkston. The rest of the workers are scattered among a number of private practices that include the offices of physicians, dentists, chiropractors, optometrists, etc.

Within the services sector, social services was the second largest industry in terms of employment. Social services include individual and family services, job training services, day care, and residential care. The number of providers of these various services has escalated tremendously in recent years to where they collectively made up 13 percent of all services employment in the county in 1999.

Figure 30
Services Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



The county has a greater need for these type services than does the state as a whole. Social services typically target those in need, and the county has one of the highest public assistance ratios in Washington.

The largest component, services to individuals and families, includes a host of different services. Among them are counseling centers, intervention centers, child guidance agencies, alcoholism counseling, hotlines, marriage counseling, offender rehabilitation services, outreach programs, youth centers, etc. Workers providing these type services are more numerous in the county than state-wide; they account for one-half of social services employment in Asotin County whereas one-third is the figure throughout the state.

Hotels and other lodging places is another large industry in the county. In 1999, about 150 people worked in hotels and motels. Hotels and motels are, of course, related to the burgeoning level of tourism in Asotin County. Fishing, hunting, camping, rafting, windsurfing, and very scenic areas (e.g., Hells Canyon) have combined to lure travelers into the county. A 1993 study on travel impacts in Washington done by Dean Runyan Associates for the state's Department of Community, Trade, and Economic Development showed that travelers spent \$21 million in Asotin County. Further, 420 jobs with a payroll of \$3.5 million were directly related to tourism.

Government

Public employment grew at a 2.5 percent annual rate in Asotin County from 577 in 1975 to 1,040 in 1999 (see Figures 31 and 32). Recessions in the mid-1970s, early 1980s, and early 1990s caused notable drops in employment, but the overall trend has been net positive. Still, the growth has been moderate enough that the sector's share of total nonfarm employment in Asotin County has declined from 30 percent in the late 1970s to 20 percent in 1999.

The above figures were for all levels of government combined. When employment in federal, state, and local government is disaggregated, it is apparent that lo-

cal government is by far the largest component. In 1999, the proportions were local government, 78 percent; state government, 15 percent; and federal government, 7 percent.

The bulk of federal employment is related to the postal service and to civil engineering while state government workers are mainly represented in educational services (the branch campus of Walla Walla Community College) and social services. Local government employed K-12 education workers with traditional governmental tasks in local and county jurisdictions making up the balance.

Figure 31
Government Employment
Asotin County, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department

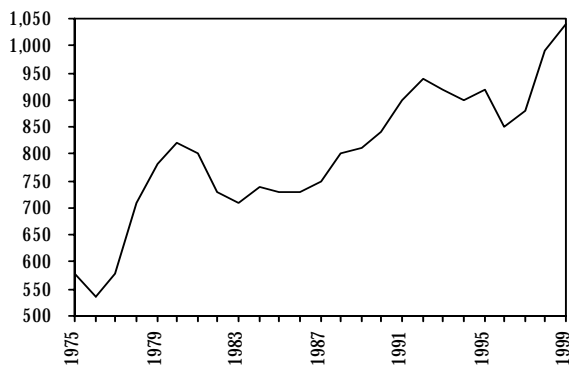
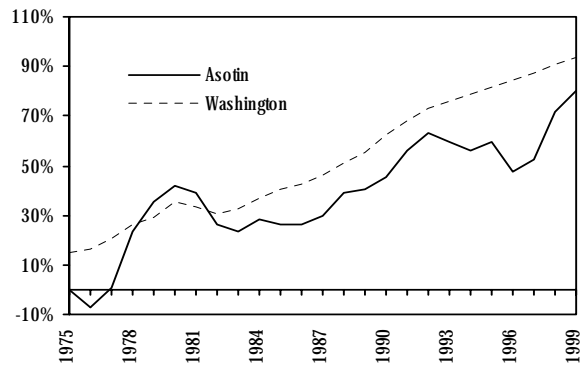


Figure 32
Government Employment
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1975-1999
Source: Employment Security Department



OCCUPATIONAL PROFILE

A different but informative way to view an area's work force is in terms of occupational divisions rather than industrial divisions. *Figure 33* shows employment in the major occupational divisions as well as the share of each grouping for the combined counties of Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Walla Walla as well as Washington. The data are based on Occupational Employment Surveys (OES) conducted in the four-county area by the Employment Security Department in 1998. Unfortunately, data are not available for Asotin County by itself.

The four-county region's occupational make-up reveals only a modest departure from the state's occupational structure in 1998. The most visible disparity between the counties and Washington was in agricultural and related occupations, where the region's 9.3

percent outpaced the state's 3.9 percent. The region also had a notably higher share of services occupations, which was tied to agricultural services. These differences were offset by the region's lesser shares of professional and technical, clerical and administrative support, and marketing and sales occupations—in the 2 to 3 percentage point range—which was tied to the relative absence of larger service corporations that concentrate in larger urban metropolitan areas (e.g., central Puget Sound and Spokane regions). Dividing the occupational mix into blue-collar and white-collar occupations, the region has a higher share of blue-collar occupations and a lower share of white-collar occupations compared to the state as a whole. This again is tied to its strong agricultural base and less developed base of services-producing activities compared to the state's larger urban areas.

Figure 33

Occupational Employment and Projections

Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Walla Walla Counties, and Washington State, 1998 and 2008

Source: Employment Security Department

	Asotin, Columbia, Garfield & Walla Walla Counties					
	1998		2008		% Chg	Jobs
Total	40,565	100.0%	46,531	100.0%	14.7%	5,966
Managerial & Administrative	2,867	7.1%	3,339	7.2%	16.5%	472
Professional, Paraprof., & Tech	7,954	19.6%	9,501	20.4%	19.5%	1,547
Marketing & Sales	3,768	9.3%	4,350	9.4%	15.5%	582
Clerical & Admin. Support	5,260	13.0%	5,833	12.5%	10.9%	573
Services	7,296	18.0%	8,729	18.8%	19.6%	1,433
Ag., Forestry, Fishing & Related	3,782	9.3%	3,857	8.3%	2.0%	75
Prec. Production, Craft, & Repair	4,357	10.7%	4,965	10.7%	14.0%	608
Operators, Fabricators, & Laborers	5,281	13.0%	5,957	12.8%	12.8%	676
White-Collar	27,145	66.9%	31,752	68.2%	17.0%	4,607
Blue-Collar	13,420	33.1%	14,779	31.8%	10.1%	1,359
			Washington State			
Total	3,042,950	100.0%	3,583,190	100.0%	17.8%	540,240
Managerial & Administrative	236,687	7.8%	288,456	8.1%	21.9%	51,769
Professional, Paraprof., & Tech	689,989	22.7%	869,794	24.3%	26.1%	179,805
Marketing & Sales	345,850	11.4%	406,194	11.3%	17.4%	60,344
Clerical & Admin. Support	474,747	15.6%	519,647	14.5%	9.5%	44,900
Services	469,185	15.4%	574,817	16.0%	22.5%	105,632
Ag., Forestry, Fishing & Related	119,106	3.9%	122,271	3.4%	2.7%	3,165
Prec. Production, Craft, & Repair	336,198	11.0%	374,422	10.4%	11.4%	38,224
Operators, Fabricators, & Laborers	371,188	12.2%	427,589	11.9%	15.2%	56,401
White-Collar	2,216,458	72.8%	2,658,908	74.2%	20.0%	442,450
Blue-Collar	826,492	27.2%	924,282	25.8%	11.8%	97,790

Occupational employment projections for the four-county region are also shown in *Figure 33*. The table outlines the change in occupational composition over the 1998-2008 period. Though the data project growth in all categories over the forecast period, the strongest

gains are expected in services occupations and professional and technical occupations. Conversely, the most modest gains are expected in blue-collar occupations, including agricultural and related occupations and operators, fabricators, and laborers. Overall, this is con-

Figure 34
Occupational Wages
Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Walla Walla Counties, 1998
Source: Employment Security Department

Occupational Title	Wage*	Rank**	Occupational Title	Wage*	Rank**
Managerial and Administrative			Technical Assistant, Library		
Financial Manager	\$23.10	59	Vocational & Educational, Counselor	\$11.66	162
Personnel, Train & Labor Relation Mgr	\$20.98	179	Teacher Aide, Paraprofessional	\$19.23	112
Purchasing Manager	\$18.82	141	Physician & Surgeon	\$9.66	30
Marketing, Advertising, Public Rel Mgr	\$21.94	118	Dentist	\$54.72	96
Administrative Service Manager	\$20.61	130	Chiropractor	\$34.93	175
Engineering, Math, Natrl Science Mgr	\$32.07	186	Veterinarian, Veterinary Inspector	\$31.12 /s	194
Education Administrator	\$29.27	50	All Other Hlth Diagnosing Practitioner	\$26.26	178
Medicine & Health Service Manager	\$26.00	89	Respiratory Therapist	\$23.25	168
Property & Real Estate Manager	\$10.62	107	Registered Nurse	\$17.91	146
Construction Manager	\$20.17	135	Licensed Practical Nurse	\$20.81	10
Food Service & Lodging Manager	\$11.87	32	Pharmacist	\$12.96	58
General Manager & Top Executive	\$24.09	7	Medical & Clinic Laboratory Technologist	\$30.50	110
All Other Manager & Administrator	\$21.87	5	Medical Records Technician	\$18.85	155
Professional, Paraprof, & Technical			Medical & Clinic Laboratory Technologist		
Loan Officer & Counselor	\$21.23	166	Medical Records Technician	\$10.90	188
Accountant & Auditor	\$18.35	39	Radiologic Technologist	\$17.30	169
All Other Financial Specialist	\$16.37	123	All Other Health Prof, Paraprof, Tech	\$15.73	97
Wholesale, Retail Buyer, except Farm	\$14.46	167	Writer & Editor	\$14.31	111
Purchase Agent, exc Whlsl, Retail, Farm	\$17.82	153	Artist & Related	\$11.26	101
Personnel, Train & Labor Relation Spec	\$17.12	136	Designer, except Interior Design	\$11.75	68
Management Analyst	\$20.86	105	Musician, Instrumental	\$44,370.00 /s	138
Comply Officer & Inspector, exc Const	\$15.72	174	All Other Professional, Paraprof, Tech	\$17.56	62
All Other Management Support Worker	\$17.53	95	Marketing & Sales		
Civil Engineer, including Traffic	\$23.48	93	First Line Supervisor, Sales & Related	\$14.67	4
Mechanical Engineer	\$25.27	124	Insurance Sales Worker	\$17.03	85
Electrical & Electronic Technician	\$18.18	164	Broker, Real Estate	\$35.81	103
Drafter	\$15.86	187	Sales Agent, Advertising	\$13.79	189
Biological Scientist	\$21.08	125	Sales Rep, Science & Related, exc Retail	\$24.59	99
Biologic, Agri, Food Tech, exc Health	\$10.74	176	Sales Rep, exc Retail, Sci, Related	\$16.81	80
Computer System Analyst, EDP	\$20.97	154	Salesperson, Retail	\$9.31	2
Computer Programmer	\$20.11	161	Salesperson, Parts	\$11.08	120
Psychologist	\$21.70	144	Counter & Rental Clerk	\$7.78	82
Social Work, Medical & Psychiatric	\$14.83	75	Stock Clerk, Sales Floor	\$8.37	35
Social Work, exc Medical & Psychiatric	\$15.67	48	Cashier	\$8.17	6
Residential Counselor	\$9.68	137	All Other Sales & Related Occupation	\$12.57	114
Human Service Worker	\$11.52	177	Clerical & Administrative Support		
Recreation Worker	\$8.90	180	First Line Supervisor, Clerical	\$15.34	29
Clergy	\$16.99	192	Bank Teller	\$8.86	46
Lawyer	\$30.81	57	Bill & Account Collector	\$10.89	165
Art, Drama & Music Teacher, Postsec	\$40,860.00	113	Court Clerk	\$11.69	181
All Other Postsecondary Teacher	\$32,530.00	44	Library Assistant & Bookmobile Driver	\$10.01	87
Teacher, Elementary	\$37,420.00	22	Teacher Aide & Educational Asst, Clerk	\$8.72	49
Teacher, Secondary School	\$37,570.00	24	Legal Secretary	\$11.30	170
Teacher, Special Education	\$36,400.00	94	Medical Secretary	\$10.24	190
Teacher, Vocational Education	\$16.44	102	Secretary, except Legal & Medical	\$11.49	15
Instructor, Nonvocational Education	\$13.26	47	Receptionist, Information Clerk	\$8.92	34
Instructor & Coach, Sport	\$13.70	73	Typist, including Word Processing	\$9.87	78
All Other Teacher, Instructor	\$26,640.00	193	Bookkeeping, Accounting & Auditing Clerk	\$11.20	3
Librarian, Professional	\$19.20	109	Payroll & Timekeeping Clerk	\$13.08	182
			Billing, Cost & Rate Clerk	\$11.05	115
			General Office Clerk	\$9.69	11
			Computer Operator, exc Peripheral Eq	\$10.97	159

*Wages are either hourly or annual

**Ranking is by amount of employment per occupation, from highest (1) to lowest (194)

/s = State data, no county data available

sistent with the statewide (not to mention national) trends that suggest that economies will become more services-producing in nature.

Figure 34 is also based on occupational surveys conducted in the four-county region by the Employment Se-

curity Department in 1998. Even though these surveys are dated, the list of occupations and wages gives a good idea of what the various nonfarm jobs are in the area as well as the levels of pay. Wages are categorized by hourly or monthly rates.

Figure 34 (continued)

Occupational Wages

Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Walla Walla Counties, 1998

Source: Employment Security Department

Occupational Title	Wage*	Rank**	Occupational Title	Wage*	Rank**
Data Entry Keyer, except Composing	\$9.93	183	All Other Agricultural, Forestry, Fish	\$12.19	69
Switchboard Operator	\$10.08	184	Precision Production, Craft & Repair		
Postal Mail Carrier	\$16.04	104	First Line Supervisor, Mechanic & Repair	\$20.32	74
Messenger	\$6.66	156	First Line Supervisor, Constr & Extract	\$21.53	134
Dispatcher, Police, Fire & Ambulance	\$14.49	157	First Line Supervisor, Production	\$19.76	43
Stock Clerk, Stockroom or Warehouse	\$9.85	64	Production Inspector, Grade, Sort, Test	\$11.04	116
Order Filler, Sales	\$10.23	191	Machinery Maint Mechanic, Water & Power	\$21.49	150
Traffic, Shipping & Receiving Clerk	\$11.97	63	All Other Machinery Mechanic	\$21.52	98
All Other Clerical & Admin Support	\$9.93	28	Maintenance Repairer, General Utility	\$13.59	19
Services			Automotive Mechanic	\$14.19	37
All Other Service Supervisor	\$12.80	18	Automotive Body, Related Repairer	\$13.09	84
Fire Fighter	\$13.56	70	Bus & Truck Mechanic & Diesel Specialist	\$15.85	126
Police Patrol Officer	\$18.89	83	Farm Equipment Mechanic	\$12.03	61
Correction Officer & Jailer	\$16.91 /s	14	Heat, A/C, Refrigeration Mech & Install	\$14.30	92
Guard & Watch Guard	\$9.27	142	Carpenter	\$16.75	13
Bartender	\$7.23	66	Electrician	\$19.14	45
Waiter & Waitress	\$5.85	26	Concrete & Terrazzo Finisher	\$14.86	139
Dining Room, Cafeteria & Bartender Help	\$6.63	119	Painter & Paperhanger, Constr & Maint	\$16.09	56
Counter Attendant, Lunchroom, Cafeteria	\$6.51	90	Plumber, Pipefitter, Steamfitter	\$19.42	100
Baker, Bread & Pastry	\$9.84	131	Carpet Installer	\$15.62	127
Cook, Restaurant	\$8.21	52	Paving, Surfacing, Tamping Equipment Opr	\$17.36	172
Cook, Institution or Cafeteria	\$9.57	53	Highway Maintenance Worker	\$16.52 /s	88
Cook, Fast Food	\$6.36	67	Roofer	\$14.29	129
Food Preparation Worker	\$7.12	25	Machinist	\$16.39	147
Combined Food Preparation & Service	\$6.22	17	Cabinetmaker & Bench Carpenter	\$13.04	140
All Other Food Service Worker	\$7.64	108	Slaughterer & Butcher	\$9.68 /s	40
Dental Assistant	\$12.29	117	Operators, Fabricators & Laborers		
Medical Assistant	\$10.54	152	Woodworking Mach Op/Tender, exc Sawing	\$11.53	79
Nursing Aide, Orderly & Attendant	\$7.67	20	Laund, Dry-clean Mach Op/Tend, exc Pres	\$7.58	133
Home Health Aide	\$7.26	38	Packaging & Filling Machine Op/Tend	\$11.69	54
All Other Health Service Worker	\$10.39	106	Welder & Cutter	\$15.33	55
Maid & Housekeeping Cleaner	\$7.20	33	Cannery Worker	\$8.52	21
Janitor & Cleaner, except Maid	\$8.99	9	Meat, Poultry, Fish Cut, Trim, Hand	\$8.96 /s	8
All Other Cleaning & Building Service	\$8.12	86	Assemble, Fabricate, ex Mach, Elec, Prec	\$10.05	71
Hairdresser & Cosmetologist	\$7.22	42	All Other Hand Worker	\$9.29	151
Amusement & Recreation Attendant	\$7.47	143	Truck Driver, Heavy or Tractor-Trailer	\$14.32	12
Personal Home Care Aide	\$7.69	145	Truck Driver, Light, incl Delivery & Rel	\$10.57	36
Child Care Worker	\$7.54	16	Bus Driver, except School	\$11.61	160
All Other Service Worker	\$8.07	132	Bus Driver, School	\$12.09	77
Ag., Forestry, Fishing & Related			Driver/Sales Worker	\$11.21	72
First Line Supervisor, Agr, Forest, Fish	\$20.10	91	Service Station Attendant	\$7.57	122
Faller & Bucker	\$22.85	185	Excavating & Loading Machine Operator	\$16.18	173
Log-Handling Equipment Operator	\$17.38	171	Grader, Bulldozer & Scraper Operator	\$18.56	158
Forest & Conservation Worker	\$14.91	128	Industrial Truck & Tractor Operator	\$11.80	65
Grader & Sorter, Agricultural Product	\$7.23	41	Operating Engineer	\$18.00	149
Animal Caretaker, except Farm	\$8.48	121	Helper, Carpenter & Related Worker	\$11.76	163
Farm Equipment Operator	\$8.17	23	Machine Feeder & Offbearer	\$11.60	76
Laborer, Landscaping & Groundskeeping	\$9.41	27	All Other Freight, Stock, Mat Move, Hand	\$9.18	60
Farmworkers, Food/Fiber Crops	\$6.79	1	Hand Packer & Packager	\$7.93	51
Farmworkers, Farm/Ranch Animals	\$9.27	81	Vehicle Washer & Equipment Cleaner	\$7.80	148
			All Other Help, Labor, Matl Move, Hand	\$10.63	31

**Wages are either hourly or annual*
***Ranking is by amount of employment per occupation, from highest (1) to lowest (194)*
/s = State data, no county data available

PERSONAL INCOME

This section deals with income rather than wages, which were discussed earlier and which are only one aspect of income. Data in this section are derived from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic

Analysis. All income data have been adjusted to constant 1998 dollars using the Implicit Price Deflator for Personal Consumption Expenditures (also known as the PCE deflator).

Total Personal Income

Personal income is generally viewed as a key indicator of a region's economic vitality. Conceptually, personal income captures all types of income. Wages, salaries, government transfer payments, retirement income, farm income, self-employed income, proprietors' income, and interest, dividends, and rent are all included in this measure. Business and corporate incomes, of course, are not included.

In 1998, total personal income in Asotin County was \$443.4 million. This figure has been adjusted for residence to include the earnings of those who work outside the county; otherwise, the figure would be \$335.5 million. This is significant. The share of personal income earned by Asotin County residents from sources outside the county has climbed over the years to nearly 25 percent, most of that attributable to Asotin County residents who work in Lewiston, Idaho.

From 1970-98, total personal income in Asotin County grew at an annual rate of 3.2 percent compared to 4.0 percent statewide. The trend line was not, however, uniform (see Figure 35). Rather, the county's personal income grew at a healthy pace throughout the 1970s, only

to be followed by relative flatness during the 1980s (as noted earlier, the nation's economic expansion during the 1980s bypassed eastern Washington to a degree). Growth picked up nicely again in the 1990s, though it has been increasing at a decreasing rate since 1994. The county's personal income grew 3.6 percent in 1998.

The total amount of income in an area is only a sensible concept if there is some relationship to the number of people in an area. Per capita personal income captures that. By dividing total personal income by population, one arrives at a figure that can be used as a common denominator between different time periods or different areas.

Figure 36 shows per capita income for Asotin County, Washington, and the U.S. from 1970-98. Over that period, the county's per capita income rose at an annual rate of 1.6 percent compared to 2.1 percent and 2.0 percent for the state and nation, respectively. Specifically in 1998, the county's per capita income was \$20,829, only 73 percent of the state average and ranked 20th among the state's 39 counties. Once again, it was the 1980s that slowed this income in relationship to the state

Figure 35
Personal Income, Cumulative % Change
Asotin County & Washington, 1970-1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

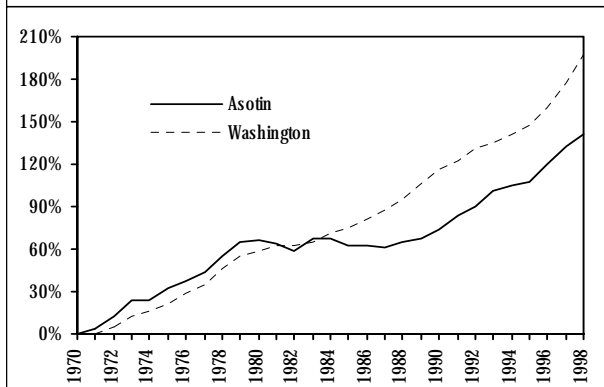
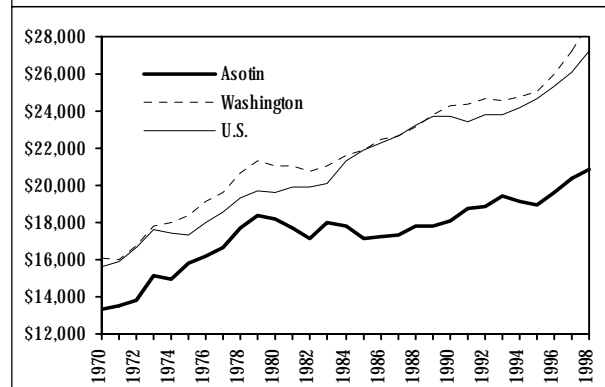


Figure 36
Per Capita Income
Asotin, Washington, & U.S., 1970-1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



and nation. As their economies expanded, Asotin County's was sputtering and the gap between the county and state per capita income expanded. The \$7,890 gap favoring Washington over Asotin County in 1998 is the widest it has ever been over the 1970-98 period.

Per capita personal income is a good measure of how personal income is growing relative to the population. However, it gives no indication of how income is distributed among the population. To a degree, *median household income* does that. It indicates the point at which

half of all households have a higher income, half have a lower income.

Asotin County's median household income in 1999 was \$31,261 or two-thirds of the \$47,897 state average and ranked 25th among Washington's counties. That the county's median household income was much lower than the state's was reflected in the annual growth rate over the decade, which was 3.2 percent for the county compared to 4.4 percent for the state.

Components of Personal Income

As mentioned earlier, personal income encompasses many different types of income. All the various types, however, can be subsumed under the three broad categories of earnings, transfer payments, and investment income. Earnings include wages, salaries, and proprietors' income; transfer payments include income maintenance, unemployment insurance, and retirement payments; and investment income consists of interest, dividends, and rent. *Figures 37 and 38* show how these components of personal income have changed over time in Asotin County.

The most striking aspects of the chart are the decline in earnings and the increase in transfer payments and investment income. In 1970, earnings accounted for roughly 40 percent of personal income. By 1998, they accounted for only 34 percent. Investment income increased from 15 percent to 16 percent in the early 1970s to 23 percent in 1998. Transfer payments grew dramatically, from 14 percent to 21 percent. This is a dramatic shift in that the sources of income are changing from earnings to either government payments or investments. The shift is not unique to Asotin County; it is occurring throughout the state and nation.

Figure 37
Personal Income Components
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County, 1970-1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

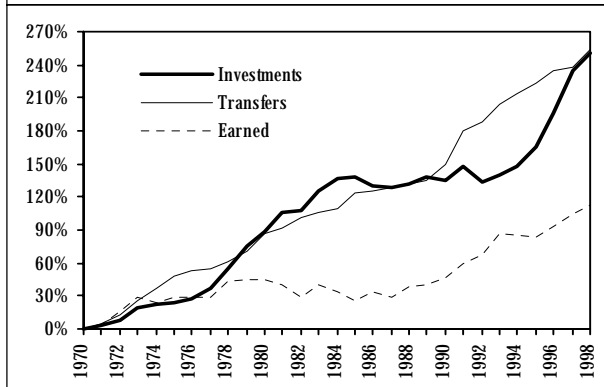
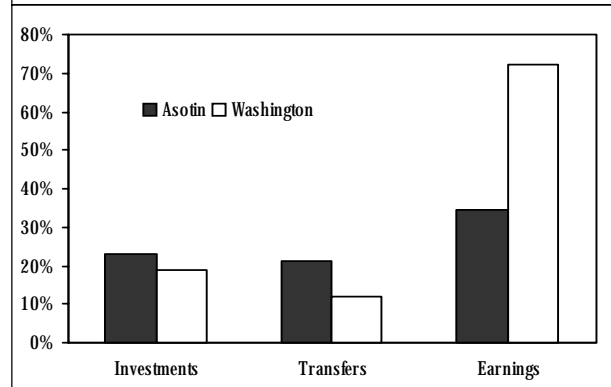


Figure 38
Personal Income Components
as Share of Total Personal Income
Asotin County and Washington, 1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



Earned Income

Earned income includes wages and salaries, proprietors' income, and what is called other labor income. Other labor income covers an assortment of payments but primarily consists of employer contributions to employee pension and health care plans.

The largest portion of personal income is earned income. Though its share of the total has diminished over nearly three decades, it nevertheless comprises the largest share of all income. This component of personal income is an important reflection of an area's economy

because it shows how much income people derive directly from their jobs. Still, because of the tremendous commuter pattern between Clarkston and Lewiston, Asotin County's earned income has been augmented by the residence adjustment so as to capture the earnings of commuters who work outside of the county.

Asotin County's earned income rose from \$71 million in 1970 to \$152 million in 1998 with particularly strong growth coming in the early 1970s and early 1990s (see Figure 39). This translated into a 2.7 percent annual rate of increase from 1970-98. This pales in comparison to the 3.7 percent posted statewide. However, when combined with the residency adjustment, the annual rate of growth climbed significantly to 4.0 percent, thanks to the 7.1 percent annual growth in residence adjustment. Indeed, the combined earned income and residency adjustment grew from \$87 million in 1970 to \$260 million in 1998. Also, excluding the residence adjustment, earned income fell as a share of the county's total personal income from 40 percent in the early 1970s to 34 percent in the latter half of the 1990s. However,

once the residence adjustment was factored in, the combined share went from 47 percent in 1970 to 59 percent in the latter half of the 1990s. This was still low compared to the state as a whole, however, with the latter's earned income represented 72 percent of total personal income in 1998.

Of the various components of earnings, the most growth was seen in other labor income, which grew at an annual rate of 6.4 percent. This is because more and more compensation is being channeled through benefits rather than direct pay. Other labor income, however, is the smallest part of earnings with its \$13.4 million in 1998 representing 9 percent of earned income. The largest is wages and salaries, which grew at an annual rate of 3.8 percent from 1970-98. In 1998, it was \$114.3 million or 75 percent of earned income. Proprietors' income fell at an annual rate of 0.6 percent from 1970-98. In 1998, its \$24.3 million amounted to 16 percent of earned income. Figure 40 shows the shares of the various components of earnings in 1998.

Figure 39
Earned Income
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County, 1970-1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis

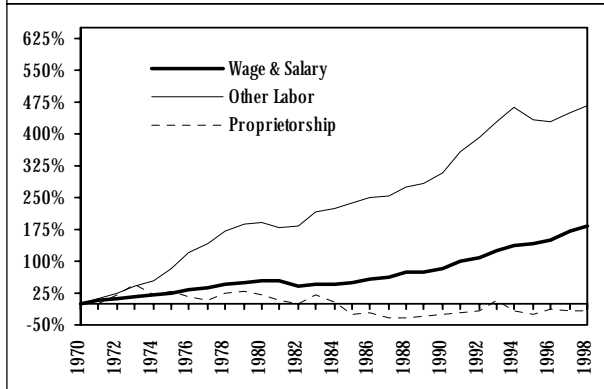
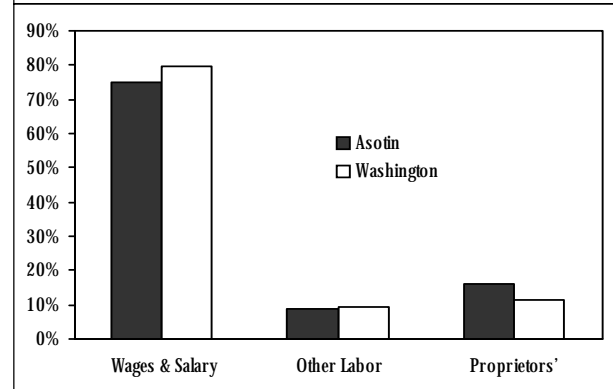


Figure 40
Earned Income Components
as Share of Total Earned Income
Asotin County and Washington, 1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



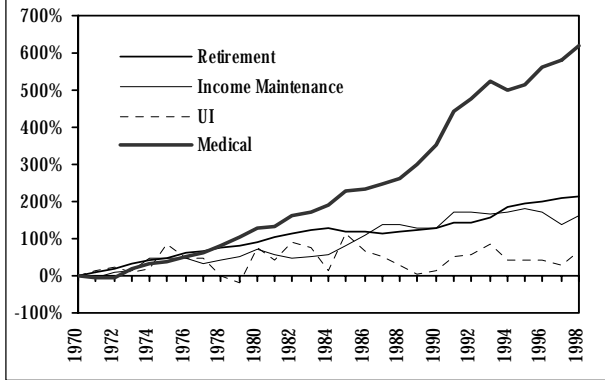
Transfer Payments

A transfer payment is a payment generally made by the government to an individual from whom no service is rendered. Transfer payments are second in size after earnings in the composition of personal income and have grown strongly over the 1970-98 observation period. As illustrated earlier in Figure 38, transfer payments have garnered an increasing share of personal income in Asotin County. In 1970, they were \$26.2 million. By 1998, they had risen at an annual rate of

4.6 percent to \$92.8 million. Statewide, transfer payments also grew at a 4.6 percent annual rate. As a share of total personal income in 1998, however, the county's transfer payments were 21 percent, much higher than the 12 percent recorded statewide.

The largest portion of transfer payments was retirement-related, which includes social security, federal government civilian and military retirement, and state and local government retirement. Figure 41 shows the main

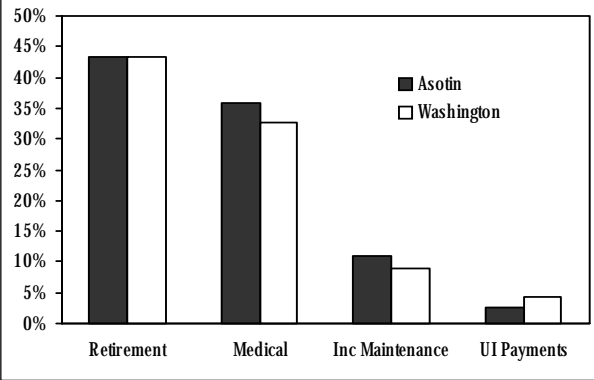
Figure 41
Transfer Payments
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County, 1970-1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



components of transfer payments and their growth since 1970. *Figure 42* shows the major components and their respective shares of total transfer payments in Asotin County in 1998. Retirement and related payments increased at an annual rate of 4.2 percent from 1970-98, giving this component a 43 percent share of all transfer payments in 1998. Medical payments, which grew at a tremendous annual rate of 7.3 percent, rose to 36 percent of all transfer payments in 1998.

Income maintenance includes Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF), general assistance, food stamps, and other transfers generally thought of as welfare. From \$3.9 million in 1970, income maintenance grew at a 3.5 percent annual rate to \$10.2 million in 1998. It actually peaked at \$10.9 million in 1995 and has been falling since. In 1998, this amounted to 11 per-

Figure 42
Transfer Payments Components
as Share of Total Earned Income
Asotin County and Washington, 1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



cent of all transfer payments and 2 percent of total personal income. Statewide, the respective figures are 9 percent and 1 percent.

Unemployment insurance is the last significant component of transfer payments. It went from \$1.5 million in 1970 to \$2.5 million in 1998, which translated into a 1.8 percent annual rate of increase. These dollars, though, are particularly sensitive to business cycles. As such, the share of all transfer payments and total personal income has varied over time. It was around 1 percent of total personal income in recessionary periods and half that in expansion periods. In 1998, it stood at 2.7 percent of transfer payments and 0.6 percent of total personal income. Statewide, the shares are 4.5 percent and 0.5 percent.

Dividends, Interest, and Rent

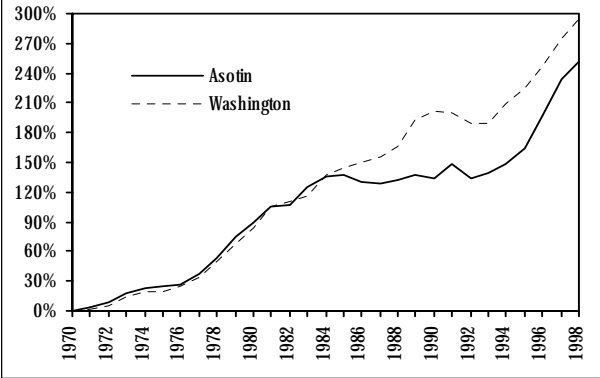
Dividends, interest, and rent (collectively called investment income) are the prime examples of making money with money. Money that has been used to purchase stocks and bonds, that resides in bank accounts, that has been loaned, or that was used to purchase rental properties, can return a profit. No service or work is performed, yet income is derived from the investment.

In Asotin County, investment income grew from \$28.8 million in 1970 to \$101.1 million by 1998. *Figure 43* depicts the pattern of this component of the county's personal income base compared to the state trend. This represents an annual growth rate of 4.6 percent over that period compared to 5.0 percent statewide. Over the same period, its share of the county's total personal in-

come rose from 16 percent to 23 percent. This was greater than the state's 19 percent share in 1998 (see *Figure 38*).

The importance of investment income to an economy has become increasingly clear as the population ages. From 1970-99, Asotin County's population has grown at a 1.3 percent annual rate compared to 1.7 percent for the 65 and older cohort. The picture was even more dramatic statewide (1.8 percent vs. 2.4 percent). Carrying on the theme, the county's 65 and older cohort climbed from 14.0 percent of the population in 1970 to 16.2 percent in 1999. Statewide, the cohort's share grew from 10 percent to 14 percent.

Figure 43
Investment Income
Cumulative Percent Change
Asotin County, 1970-1998
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis



One national study found that the elderly population receives about 35 percent of all investment income, much of it from retirement plans. Further, that portion of transfer payments that is directly related to retirement generally goes to the elderly. The economic presence of the elderly is clearly becoming more and more important—and its economic significance should not go unnoticed.

JOB TRAINING, EMPLOYMENT SERVICES, AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Workforce Development

The *Workforce Investment Act (WIA)* of 1998 replaced the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) of 1982 on July 1, 2000. The purpose of WIA is to provide training, education, and other services that prepare all individuals, not just youth and unskilled adults, for current and future jobs. It is guided by several principles: universal access, individual empowerment, streamlined services, state and local flexibility, strong local role, increased accountability, and improved youth programs. It is upon this legislation that the Employment Security Department and other providers base their training and employment service programs.

Eastern Washington Partnership Workforce Development Council. Washington is divided into areas that provide services related to employment. These regions, called Workforce Development Areas, are administered by Workforce Development Councils (WDCs). For Asotin County the WDC is the Eastern Washington Partnership. It has designated Northeast Washington Rural Resources as its fiscal agent and administrative entity. A nonprofit corporation, Rural Resources receives the WIA grants from the Employment Security Department. These grants are used to train and place unskilled or unemployed workers. The WDC has jurisdiction over Workforce Development Area X which includes Asotin as well as Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties. Administrative responsibilities (e.g., record-keeping, data collection, program planning, employer contact, etc.) and executive oversight are handled by Rural Resources on behalf of the council. The Director for the WDC is Tom O'Brien. His phone number is (509) 684-8421. His address is c/o Rural Resources, N. 320 Main, Colville Washington 99114.

Pullman WorkSource Affiliate. The Pullman WorkSource Affiliate operates on a smaller scale than a WorkSource Center and is expected to be run by service

providers who focus their efforts on specific populations or services. They will be able to provide linkages to core services to anyone entering the system at that site or through Internet linkage. Affiliated sites might include community-based organizations, local offices of state agencies, and education and training institutions. In terms of service, the affiliated sites must:

- Provide all the required core services either through staff or through a linkage on Internet or other electronic linkages;
- Provide at least one of the required programs directly on site;
- Provide all of the self-service activities and some of the group and individual activities offered at a Center;
- Provide access to WorkSource services offered elsewhere in the system; and
- Provide referrals for services not provided through the One-Stop or WorkSource System.

The core services, which are available onsite or through electronic access to all customers (no eligibility required), include:

- Initial assessment to evaluate job readiness based on job skills, experience, aptitudes, interests, and abilities.
- Job counseling to help customers determine what services are available and best use of the information.
- Job referral and placement providing access to available jobs and posting of resumes.
- Employer services that provide access to labor market information, recruitment, screening, and referral of qualified applicants.
- Information and referral to services such as housing, food, and medical assistance.
- Information on training and retraining programs such as basic skills, literacy, occupational skills training, and apprenticeships.
- Labor market information on current occupational supply and demand and occupational wages.
- Computers with Internet access.

- Access to a telephone to file for Unemployment Insurance benefits.
- Translation services to customers in their first language using AT&T services or the Internet.

The programs (eligibility determination must be onsite for the following programs) include:

- Claimant Placement Program
- Worker Profiling
- WorkFirst (employment services only)

Note: The Walla Walla WorkSource Center administers the Dislocated Worker program for the Asotin and Garfield County area.

The Pullman WorkSource Affiliate is located 34 miles and 38 miles from Clarkston and Asotin, respectively, at 350 SE Fairmount Road, Suite 2, Pullman, Washington 99163-5500. The hours of operation are 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Staff can be contacted by phone at (509) 332-6549, by fax at (509) 338-4206, and by email at mharing@esd.wa.gov.

The Pullman WorkSource Center is technically the official service provider for residents of Asotin County. However, for geographic reasons, the Washington State Employment Security Department and the Idaho Department of Employment have worked out an agreement that allows Asotin County residents to receive job services through the Lewiston Job Service office in Idaho.

Northeast Washington Rural Resources. Rural Resources is a private, nonprofit organization that serves the seven counties (*sans* Spokane County) that constitute the southeast and northeast parts of Washington State. Rural Resources manages a wide range of social service programs including WIA, Welfare-to-Work, and WorkFirst. It provides these workforce development programs in Asotin County. Its office in Clarkston is located at 733 Fifth Street. The office phone number is (509) 758-5461. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Educational Institutions. Asotin County is not home to any two- or four-year institutions of higher education. However, Walla Walla Community College does operate a satellite facility known as Clarkston Center. Furthermore, Lewis-Clark State College is just across the river in Lewiston, Idaho (though Asotin County residents must pay out-of-state tuition). Approximately 40 miles to the north is Washington State University in Pullman. Approximately 50 miles north is the University of Idaho's Moscow campus. Colleges and universities within 100 miles of Clarkston and Asotin include Whitman College (private, four-year), Walla Walla College (private, four-year), and Walla Walla Community College (public, two-year).

Economic Development

Palouse Economic Development Council. The major provider of economic development information and assistance in Asotin County is the *Palouse Economic Development Council (PEDC)*. The PEDC is a nonprofit corporation organized as a public-private partnership. It serves Asotin, Columbia, Garfield, and Whitman counties. Its membership is primarily comprised of representatives from local governments and private businesses. The PEDC has three principal goals:

- To provide assistance and support for business retention and expansion in the region,
- To promote and pursue new business development in the region, and
- To develop and promote tourism and recreation opportunities as a major industry in the district.

The PEDC has a branch office located in the Port of Clarkston office building at 849 Port Way, Clarkston, Washington 99403. The PEDC has a half-time economic development staff person working out of this office. The PEDC can be reached by telephone at (509) 751-9144, by FAX at (509) 758-12746, or by e-mail at

janpike@clarkston.com. Their website address is www.palouse.org. The PEDC main office is located at Washington State University Research and Technology Park in Pullman, Washington.

Port of Clarkston. A major economic development partner in Asotin County is the Port of Clarkston. The port was created by Asotin County voters in 1958, making it the oldest port on the Upper Snake River. Located 460 river miles upstream from Portland, Oregon, the port was established to create jobs and enhance the local revenue base in Asotin County by converting previously idle property to productive commercial and industrial uses. The Port's land holdings amount to 120 acres.

The Port of Clarkston's key attributes are its barge facilities, grain terminal, convention center, asphalt plant, RV park, and tour boat docks. The barge facility is one of the busiest on the Snake River with grain and logs trucked in from the surrounding region—including Montana and Oregon—for loading onto barges at Clarkston and transport to Portland and points beyond.

The port also plans to handle some containers in the future. The grain terminal is a major component of the port's livelihood since grain is stored there before subsequent transfer to river barges.

A key advantage of the Port of Clarkston's barge slips is their recognition as an *open port*. In other words, the Port can service any barge line while most others can serve only those with whom they are affiliated.

The Port of Clarkston has earned yet another market niche in the crane business, particularly as it applies to lifting very large pleasure boats from trucks and placing them in the water. Since trucks bearing large pleasure craft are largely prohibited from traveling on state highways, the port has increasingly become the point at which large pleasure craft from the East Coast and Texas, are off-loaded from trucks and put into the water. The port has acquired this market niche as a result of its 140-ton crane, something other ports in the region do not have.

Three cruise boat lines dock at the Port of Clarkston. Two arrive each week full of passengers that end up touring the Hell's Canyon area and/or the Nez Perce Indian Museum. The other cruise line arrives in the spring and fall months. Together, the cruise lines bring in over 14,000 passengers each year, which has become a boom to the economy. The port constructed a new 500-foot dock to accommodate the cruise boats.

Port of Clarkston business offices are located at 849 Port Way, Clarkston, Washington 99403. Port staff can be contacted by telephone at (509) 758-5272, by FAX at (509) 758-1746, or by e-mail at rickport@clarkston.com. Their website address is www.portofclarkston.com.

The Hell's Canyon Visitors Bureau. The visitors' bureau was formed to promote Hell's Canyon tourism. Thousands of tourists flock to Clarkston each year to tour the Hell's Canyon area, mostly by jet boat. The business offices of the Hell's Canyon Visitors Association are located at 800 Port Drive, Clarkston, Washington 99403. The visitor's bureau may be reached by telephone at (509) 758-7489, by FAX at (509) 758-1309, or by e-mail at hcvvisitor@clarkston.com. Their website address is www.hellscanyonvisitor.com.

Chambers of Commerce. Asotin County has two strong, active Chambers of Commerce in the cities of Clarkston and Asotin that are continually striving to in-

crease retail trade in the area. The business offices of both chambers are located in the Clarkston Chamber of Commerce, 502 Bridge Street, Clarkston, Washington 99403. Staff can be reached by telephone at (509) 758-7712, by FAX at (509) 751-8767, or by e-mail at clkcoc@valint.net. Their website address is www.clarkstonchamber.org.

Infrastructure. An area's infrastructure is an integral part of economic development. The following are primary infrastructural elements currently in place in Asotin County.

Roads and Highways. The principal highway in and out of Asotin County is State Route 12. SR 12 is an east/west thoroughfare that connects the city of Clarkston (and most of the county populace) with major commercial centers outside the area. From Clarkston, SR 129 travels south to Asotin and then continues on across the Washington-Oregon border. Access to the Blue Mountains and Umatilla National Forest is possible by a number of local roads that branch from SR 129 near the town of Asotin. SR 128 travels east from Clarkston in the north county and provides easy access to the Blue Mountains.

Air Transportation. Asotin County does not have a public or private airport. The nearest airport is Lewiston-Nez Perce County Airport in neighboring Lewiston, Idaho. Its longest runway is 6,512. Passenger service is provided by Horizon Airlines. Air freight service is provided by Airborne, Federal Express, Horizon, United Parcel Service, and Pony Express.

Ports and Rail Service. A series of locks and dams constructed in the 1960s and 70s made viable a commercial waterway that extends from the Pacific Ocean to the Snake River and the Ports of Clarkston and Lewiston. In fact, the Port of Lewiston is the terminus of the furthest inland ocean-going transportation route in the United States. The Port of Clarkston has two barge slips located on the Snake River. Both handle grain, logs, lumber, containers, and other commodities (see section on *Port of Clarkston* for additional detail). Barge services have largely taken the place of rail service in Asotin County.

SUMMARY

Asotin County's economy has evolved over the course of this century from predominantly agricultural to one with a strong trade and services component. In 1975, in what was the death knoll for much of the county's fruit orchards, work was completed on the Lower Granite Dam, whose slackwater submerged local orchards. However, the project simultaneously created the Columbia-Snake River transportation system that runs 460 miles between the ports of Clarkston and Lewiston and the Pacific Ocean. In other words, the demise of one industry gave rise to another.

Over the long run, economic growth in the county has been moderate, lagging the state averages but not dramatically. It is fair to say, however, that most of eastern Washington, including Asotin County, did not fully participate in the economic boom of the 1980s. While both the nation and western Washington were expanded strongly, much of eastern Washington, including Asotin County, languished.

Times have changed, however. The economy east of the Cascades has been growing rapidly, in some cases very rapidly, since the late 1980s. The county's labor force and nonfarm employment levels have grown at healthy paces while unemployment, another key economic indicator, continued to hold below the state and national averages—something the county has traditionally done.

A peculiar aspect of the work force figures in Asotin is the vast difference between the number of people employed in the labor force and the number of jobs in

the county. It is more than a two-to-one difference. The labor force counts are based on place of residence while nonfarm employment is based on place of work. A very large number of Asotin County residents commute across the Washington-Idaho State line every day to jobs in Lewiston, Idaho. There are probably more Asotin County residents working in Idaho than in Washington. The absence of a state income tax in Washington may have something to do with this commuting pattern.

This odd situation can create some ambiguity in interpreting data. Per capita income, which is adjusted for residence, was \$17,503 in 1993 and ranked 25th among Washington's counties. The average annual wage, which is based on place of work and does not capture wages earned in Idaho, was \$17,090 and ranked 35th in the state.

All things considered, the economy in Asotin County was performing relatively well until 1999. While there is a paucity of manufacturing jobs in the county, there are large manufacturing concerns in Lewiston that provide good, family-wage jobs to Asotin residents. The other major sectors have been growing rapidly and tourism, too, is playing a healthy role. The services and trade sectors are large and continue to expand and the construction sector is quite a bit larger, proportionally, than it is statewide. While per capita income is relatively low, its recent growth has outpaced growth in both the state and the nation.