

EPHRATA, WASHINGTON

Community Profile

Location

Established in 1909, the City of Ephrata is located in Grant County, within the Columbia Basin in Eastern Washington. The second largest city in the county, Ephrata serves as the county seat named after President Ulysses S. Grant. Ephrata came to its name by an unknown traveler who climbed Beasley Hill and from there was able to note the similarities in the land to that of Bethlehem and therefore called it the ancient biblical name for Bethlehem.

Located at an elevation of 1,300 feet, with over 300 days of sunshine per year, the arid continental climate, with cold winters and hot, dry sunny summers leads to many outdoor recreational opportunities including world-class fishing, hunting, and water sports. Known for its varied landscapes of high desert plateaus with coulees, lakes, reservoirs, sand dunes, canals, rivers, creeks, and other waterways, Grant County is home to more than 140 bodies of water, as well as waters from the Columbia River creating 2,300 miles of canals and laterals from the Grand Coulee Dam irrigating over 671,000 acres of farmland in the Columbia Basin.

Grant County has eleven cities and is home to over 100,000 residents. With over 1,800 farms, the county expands roughly 2,681 square miles. Listed as the number one county in the state for agricultural products, with over 80 different crops grown, it ranks it in the top numbers of agricultural statistics for the nation. Major crops include potatoes, apples, wheat, barley, carrots, corn, onions, peaches, cherries, mint, and beans.

The City of Ephrata has a land area of 10.4 square miles with a population of 8,477. The average age of Ephrata residents is 34.4 years of age. While English is the dominant language, 16.7% of the population are Spanish speaking. Ephrata has a large number of government employers representing 28% of the workforce, 63.6% are employed by private companies, many of which revolve around the agricultural industry; and 4.7% are self-employed. The average commute time from home to work is less than 10 minutes. But with the Washington Post claiming that Ephrata has the fastest broadband in America and 80.4% of the households in Ephrata have high speed broadband internet, Ephrata is a great environment for working remotely.

Ephrata as a Home

The median household income is \$54,587 which is below the state average of \$78,687 however, Ephrata has a lower cost of living. The cost of living in Ephrata is 16.3% lower than the national average and 35% lower than the state average. Utility rates are 26.2% below the national average with the Grant County Public Utility District supporting one of the lowest electrical rates in the state.

Homes in the Ephrata area have appreciated 8.8% over the last 10 years, but are still below the national average by 22.8%. The median selling price for homes in Ephrata is \$294,000. The housing market is very active, in the last two years the median days a home is on the market has dropped from 28 to 15 days. Currently, there are 3 new housing developments in Ephrata with lots available for new construction.

The Ephrata community has a long history of valuing and supporting education. The Ephrata School District has an excellent educational program serving approximately 2500 students in two grade schools (K-4), one intermediate school (5-6), a middle school (7-8), and high school (9-12). Ephrata High School students are able to attend college classes at Big Bend Community College in Moses Lake through the Running Start program. Ephrata consistently has one of the highest graduation rates in the state of Washington, typically over 90% with a 100% graduation rate in 2021. Currently the District is constructing eight new elementary classrooms, three new regulation gyms, and expanding the current performing arts center to create a state of the art facility at the high school for District and community use. With 86.3 % of the population over 25, holding a high school diploma, 18.9% have a bachelor or higher degree. Ephrata also has a private Christian school and a Catholic school.

Additionally, Ephrata Schools cover an area of 80 acres, many of which are playgrounds and sports facilities. The Ephrata community values sports and has a long history of high school league and state championships and has hosted the Babe Ruth World Series several times. The City of Ephrata maintains a soccer sports complex, a popular aquatics center, recreational programs, and six parks. Beasley Hill, on the west side of town, has over 25 miles of popular hiking and mountain biking trails.

The community is supportive of their police force which employs twelve full time officers for 24-hour coverage and has one of the lowest crime rates in the county. Ephrata is home to the Columbia Basin Hospital, Columbia Basin Family Medicine, Confluence Health Clinic, and Garden Oasis Assisted Living Facility. Additional medical facilities are available in Moses Lake (20 miles) and Wenatchee (50 miles), with major medical facilities located in Spokane (125 miles), Seattle (178 miles), and Portland, Oregon (280 miles). There are also numerous dental practices and vision clinics in Ephrata and the surrounding communities.

Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau
Grant County Tourism Commission
Grant County Economic Development Council
Grant County Trends (grantcountytrends.org)

Best Places to Live (bestplaces.net)
Grant County Housing Market Trends- Redfin
Realtor.com
Washington Post