

Whitman County Comprehensive Plan Update

Virtual Public Meeting



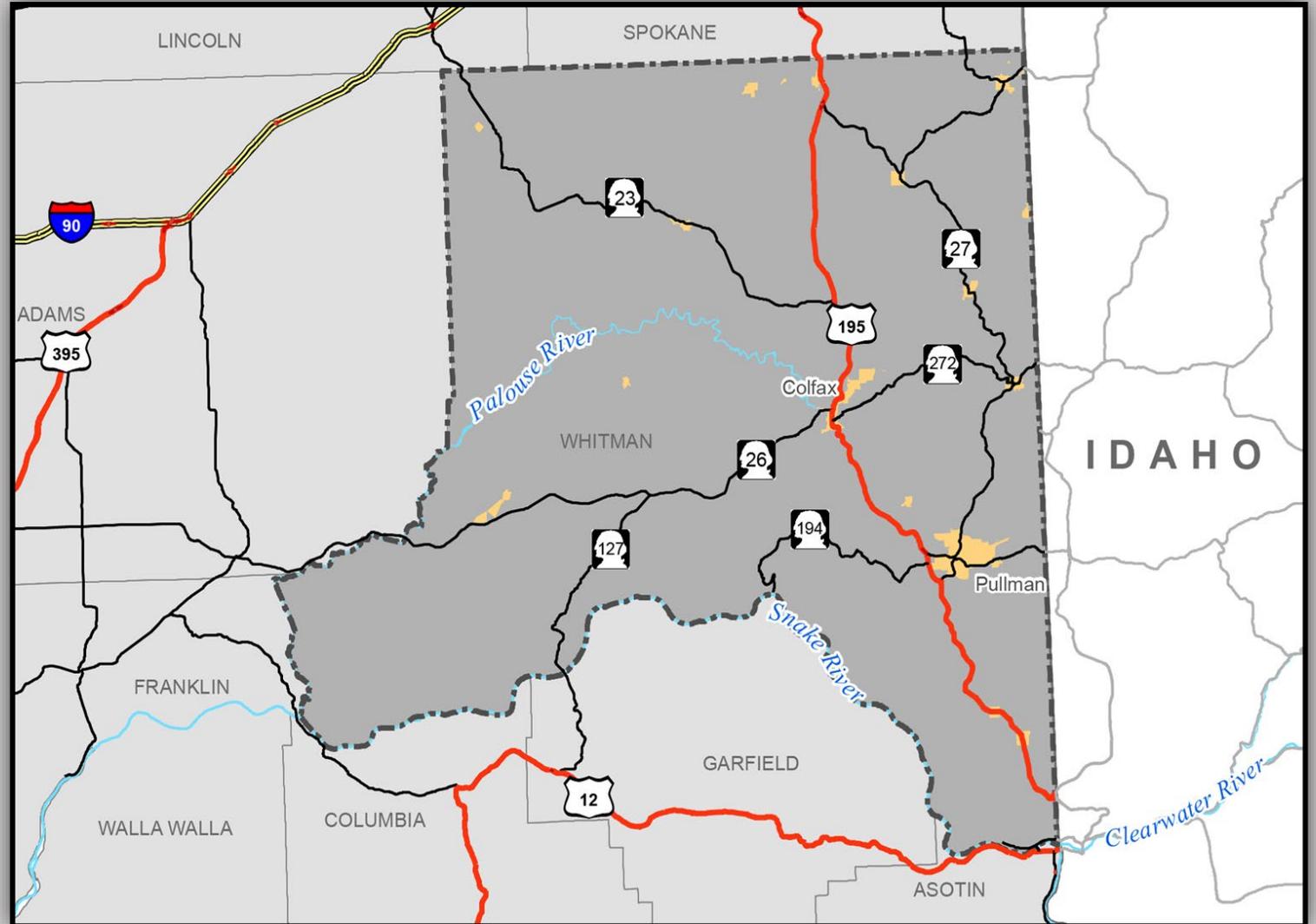
June 2, 2021



Welcome!

Introductions:

- Todd Hall, Planning Manager, LDC, Inc.
- Alan Thomson, County Planner
- Mark Storey, County Public Works Director



LDC

Surveying
Engineering
Planning



Why does Whitman County need a Comprehensive Plan?

- Washington State Growth Management Act (1990) (RCW 36.70A) – management of land and resources
- Whitman County is **NOT** a fully planning county under the GMA. Only **required** plan topics are **Critical Areas and Natural Resource Lands**.
- Critical Areas (Environmental Quality) = Wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife conservation areas, climate change, etc.
- Natural Resource and Agricultural Conservation = forestry, agriculture, fisheries, and mining

- By choice, Whitman County is also planning for the following elements:
 - Land Use
 - Transportation
 - Economic Development
 - Public Services
 - Facilities & Utilities (including renewable energy)
 - Parks, Trails, & Recreation



Washington State
Department of
Commerce

Comprehensive Plan Elements

LDC staff have begun drafting elements based on existing plans and general research of Whitman County. The existing goals and policies are being reviewed for remaining applicability and relevancy. These will be further developed with the community later this summer.

Introduction ★

Land Use

Transportation ★

Parks, Recreation & Trails

Economic Development ★

Natural Resources & Agricultural Conservation

Environmental Protection & Climate Change

Public Services, Facilities & Utilities

CHAPTER 3: TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Purpose

As required by Washington statutes, the Transportation Element's purpose is to document and analyze existing conditions and planned locations, functions, capacity, levels of service, environmental impacts, and mobility levels for both motorized and non-motorized travel throughout Whitman County. An additional purpose is to provide standards for reviewing the compatibility of State and local transportation investments of any kind with the Comprehensive Plan. This is done in coordination with the Washington State Department of Transportation as well as other regional planning partners and stakeholders. Lastly, this Element is the guiding document for the Board of County Commissioners linking the County's Six-Year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), priority array, 10-year Unmet Needs Study and other similar long range transportation planning programs supporting roads, bridges, and other county transportation projects.

Introduction

The transportation infrastructure within Whitman County is a key element to providing safe and efficient travel for residents and commerce. It is essential that the County's network of roads, bridges, rails and waterways remain accessible. Ongoing maintenance and safety of these facilities remains a priority so that goods

and services can be provided freely with minimal impacts.

The transportation network within the county should ensure:

- Year-round road access on primary county roads serving connecting business centers within and outside of Whitman County
- Roads with wide rights-of-way to allow for farming vehicles to travel safely amongst typical vehicular traffic
- Maintain connections to freight transportation systems such as rail lines and the Snake River
- Reliable cost-effective solutions to support public transportation

Findings

Highways/Roads

U.S. Route 195

U.S. Route 195 (U.S. 195) is the primary north-south transportation route in Whitman County and serves as the backbone of the movement of goods and people throughout the county and the Palouse region. The highway, considered to be the busiest in southeastern Washington, is classified as a Highway of Statewide Significance (HSS) as identified by Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT). U.S. 195 part of the Palouse Scenic Byway (further described below) and is also classified as a major arterial by Whitman County. The |

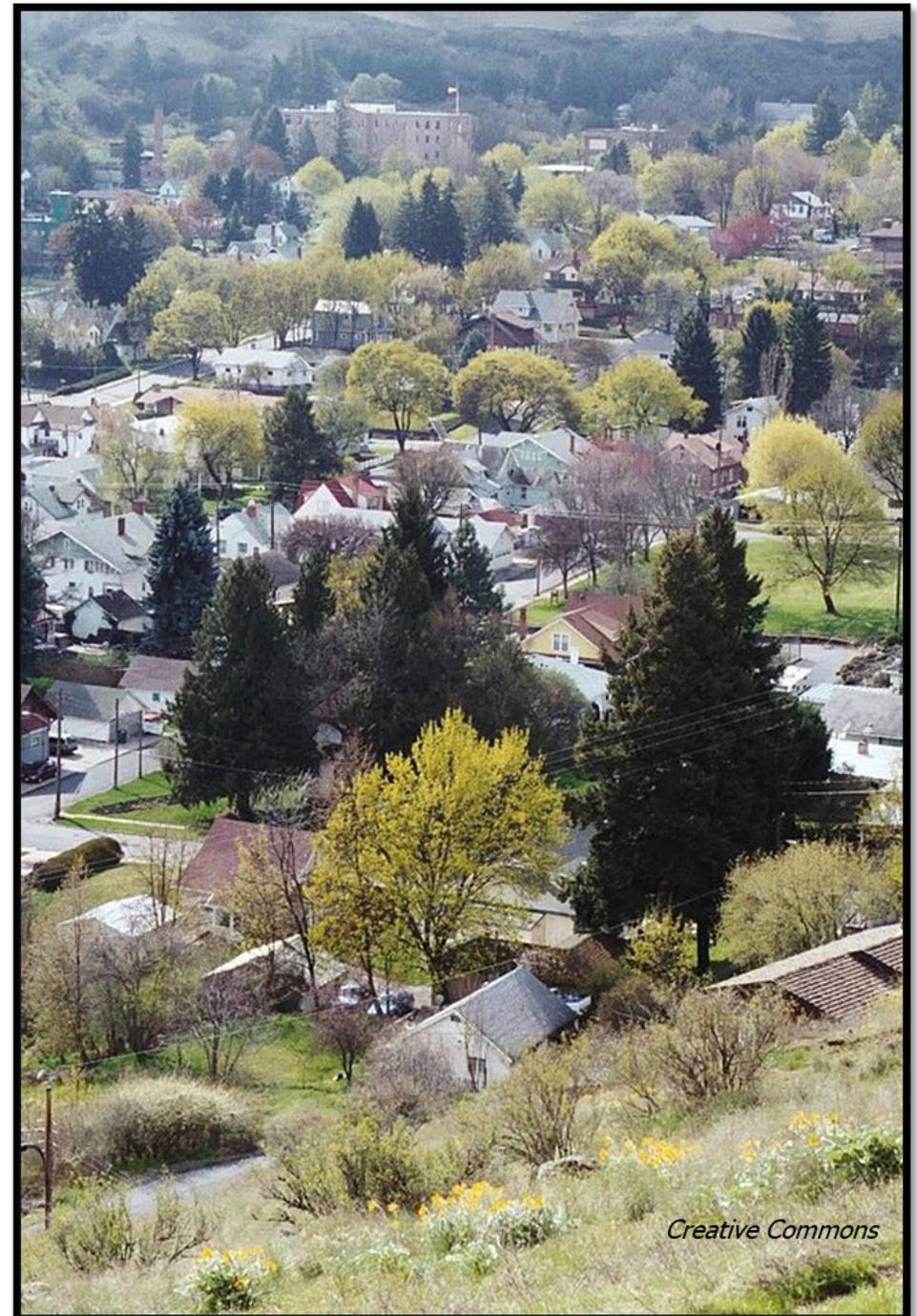
Element Breakdown

Purpose → Introduction → Findings

Goals → Policies → Maps

Each element in the Comprehensive Plan follows the outline above. Much of the updated content will be informed, and influenced by, the existing Plan's purpose, goals and policies.

The findings and maps will have significant changes because they are based on new data. Goals and policies will be a mix of old and new, written and updated to be implementable and relevant for the next 20 years.



Creative Commons

Introduction – Population and Demographics

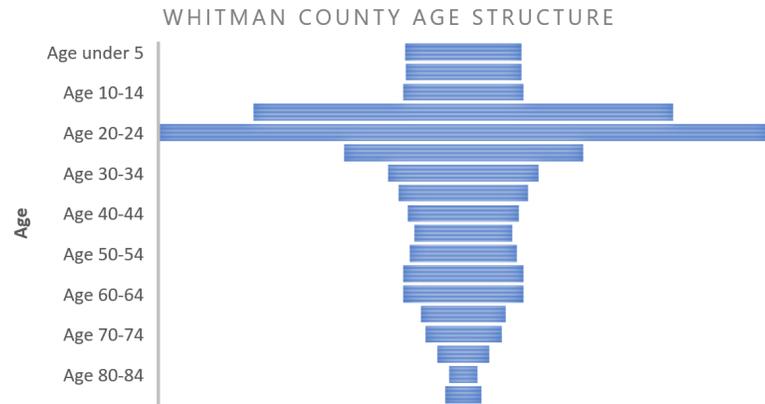


Figure 3. Whitman County Age Pyramid. Source: 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table S0101

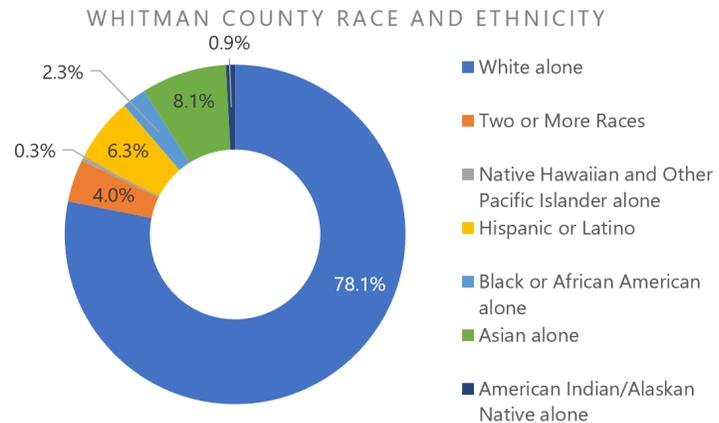


Figure 4. Whitman County Race and Ethnicity. Source: 2015-2019 ACS 5-Year Estimates, Table B03002

² US Census Bureau QuickFacts – Whitman County, WA

Whitman County

Population & Demographics

- As of 2020, OFM estimated approximately 50,480 residents
- Approximately 13 percent increase from 2010
- 89 percent of this growth occurred in City of Pullman
- Majority of residents fall in the 20-24 age cohort (WSU effect). Outside the City limits, this certainly changes.

Introduction – Framework Goals

Framework Goals represent the shared vision and values behind each of the Comprehensive Plan Elements. These goals have been crafted through initial public meetings and the County's long-term objectives as identified by staff.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 1 – PRESERVE RURAL CHARACTER AND FAMILY FARMS

Preserve and protect the county's rural character, which includes productive agricultural lands, large open spaces, and sweeping views of the Palouse hills. The preservation of rural character and family farms shall not only include the county's scenic beauty but also the protection and sustainability of the rural way of life, providing opportunities for employment, income and a tax base while also limiting growth to rural activity centers and near urban centers.

Introduction – Framework Goals

FRAMEWORK GOAL 2 – PRESERVE AND PROTECT EXISTING NATURAL RESOURCES

In cooperation with State and Federal partners, preserve and protect natural resources, which will reduce soil erosion, enhance water supplies, improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat, and reduce flooding and other natural disasters.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 3 – ENHANCE COUNTYWIDE SERVICES

Through innovative approaches, interagency coordination and responsible fiscal policy, provide for effective, supportive and well-planned services to citizens across the county.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 4 – SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESS AND COUNTYWIDE ECONOMIC GROWTH

Develop an approach that supports local business while also supporting countywide economic growth through partnerships and collaboration with business, civic and government leaders.

Introduction – Framework Goals

FRAMEWORK GOAL 5 – PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY AND RESPOND TO CLIMATE CHANGE

Anticipate and respond to impacts related to climate change by exploring and adopting land use strategies that foster the protection of clean air and water, fish and wildlife habitats, and healthy and productive ecosystems.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 6 – PROMOTE AND IMPROVE MOBILITY OPTIONS

Provide for a safe and reliable transportation network that enables residents, workers, commerce, and tourists to efficiently travel through and across Whitman County. Continue to explore and improve upon a variety of mobility options, whether via a car, transit, bike or foot.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 7 – EFFECTIVE LAND USE PLANNING

Develop countywide goals and policies that promote effective and consistent land use decisions that are responsive to local growth but also protect the unique character of Whitman County.

Introduction – Framework Goals

FRAMEWORK GOAL 8 – ONGOING PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Whitman County residents and property owners shall be continually informed and provided ongoing opportunities for public involvement.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 9 – SUPPORT RECREATION AND ACCESS TO NATURAL AREAS

Support county residents in their ability to access outdoor recreation and natural areas throughout Whitman County through collaboration and partnerships, while recognizing the need to protect natural, scenic and environmentally sensitive areas.

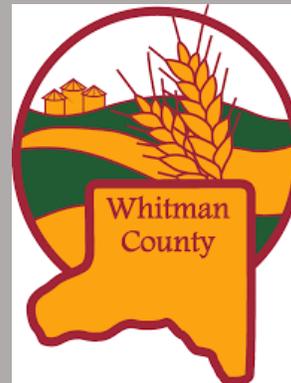
FRAMEWORK GOAL 10 – PRESERVE CULTURAL HERITAGE OF WHITMAN COUNTY

Recognize the value and importance of Whitman County's heritage, protecting important cultural and historical buildings and sites.

Economic Development



Source: Port of Whitman County



Economic activity - creates jobs & supports County government

- Business environment is influenced by government activities as well as availability and condition of local infrastructure (road, air, water)
- Collaboration between County, Port of Whitman County, SEWEDA and other local chambers of commerce is key
- Develop policies that focus on:
 - Supply of suitable lands
 - Job creation and retention
 - Identification/funding for key infrastructure improvements
 - Identification/execute partnerships
 - Economic development programs (education/funding)

Economic Development

GOAL ED 1

IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR DIVERSIFICATION OF THE AREA'S ECONOMIC BASE AND ENHANCEMENT OF LONG-TERM ECONOMIC STABILITY FOR CITIES, TOWNS AND THE COUNTY

Policy ED 1.1 - Coordinate with SEWEDA, incorporated cities and towns, Port of Whitman, local chambers of commerce, private business, and other economic development partners and citizen groups to explore and prepare strategies that promote economic growth and development in Whitman County.

Policy ED 1.2 – Support the Port of Whitman with their efforts to diversify, expand, and support existing trade, manufacturing and services within and beyond the county's borders.

Policy ED 1.3 – Pursue grant funding, technical assistance, or other available options from federal, state and local agencies that help support the County and local agencies to coordinate and plan for long-term sustainable economic development.



Land and Farm.com



HistoryLink.org

Economic Development

GOAL ED-2

RETAIN WHITMAN COUNTY'S EXISTING BUSINESSES AND INDUSTRIES

Policy ED 2.1 – Support the retention of businesses and industries that are critical to the future economic health and prosperity of Whitman County.

Policy ED 2.2 – Identify any and all local, regional and state resources that support business and job retention programs.

Policy ED 2.3 – Identify and resolve any County impediments to the retention/expansion of existing business in Whitman County.



Land and Farm.com



HistoryLink.org

Economic Development

GOAL ED-3

SUPPORT BUSINESS SECTORS THAT HELP CREATE A HEALTHY AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY IN WHITMAN COUNTY

Policy ED 3.1 – Support the wide variety of business sectors and leverage on their strengths and advantages in promoting strong local economies (Agriculture, Education, Technology/Manufacturing, Health Care, Natural Resources, Port-related economic development, Tourism).

Policy ED 3.2 – Home-based businesses, with appropriate zoning controls, should be permitted within the county as a way to promote innovative, low-cost, low-impact and sustainable economic development.

Policy ED 3.3 – Support local tourism and recreation industries by promoting the natural, historic, recreational, and cultural amenities that Whitman County and the Palouse region has to offer.



Agtradegroup.com



Gonorthwest.com

Economic Development

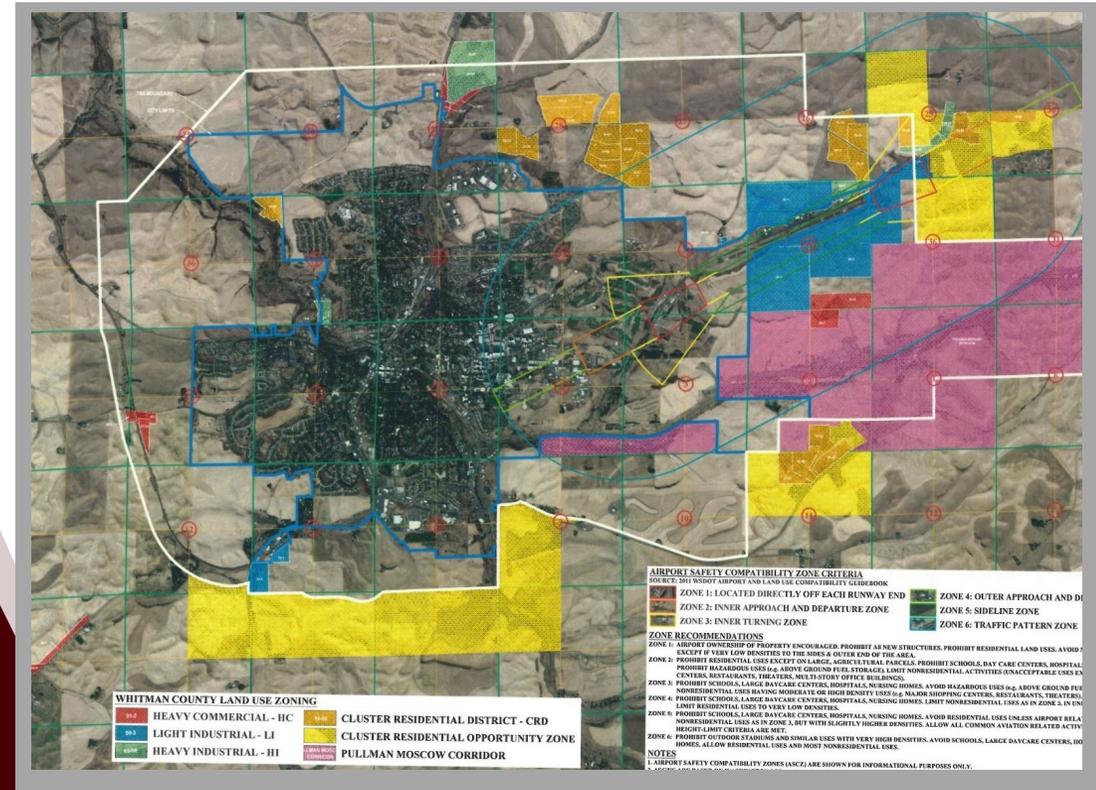
GOAL ED-4

PROMOTE THE NUMBER AND DIVERSITY OF BUSINESSES ALONG THE PULLMAN-MOSCOW CORRIDOR

Policy ED 4.1 – Expand retail and wholesale business opportunities along the corridor that provide consistent and predictable tax revenue for the County.

Policy ED 4.2 – Explore business growth and expansion opportunities that limit impacts to adjacent agricultural uses along the corridor.

Policy ED 4.3 – In order to facilitate future growth and expansion of the Pullman-Moscow Corridor, consider mixed-use development that encourages more intensive and compact development, incorporating housing and commercial uses, specifically along the north side of the corridor where water is available.



Economic Development

GOAL ED-5

DEVELOPMENT OF RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITIES TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE ECONOMIC HEALTH OF THE COUNTY

Policy ED 5.1 – Support the development and growth of renewable energy facilities (wind power, hydroelectric, solar, geothermal) that fosters economic prosperity (living wage jobs, revenue sources for rural landowners, increased tax base, while also increasing the economic diversity of Whitman County.

Policy ED 5.2 – In partnership with other local and regional business partners, including City of Pullman, Washington State University, and Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories, help promote renewable energy technology and manufacturing opportunities in Whitman County.



Robert Ashworth



Spokesmanreview.com

Economic Development

GOAL ED-6

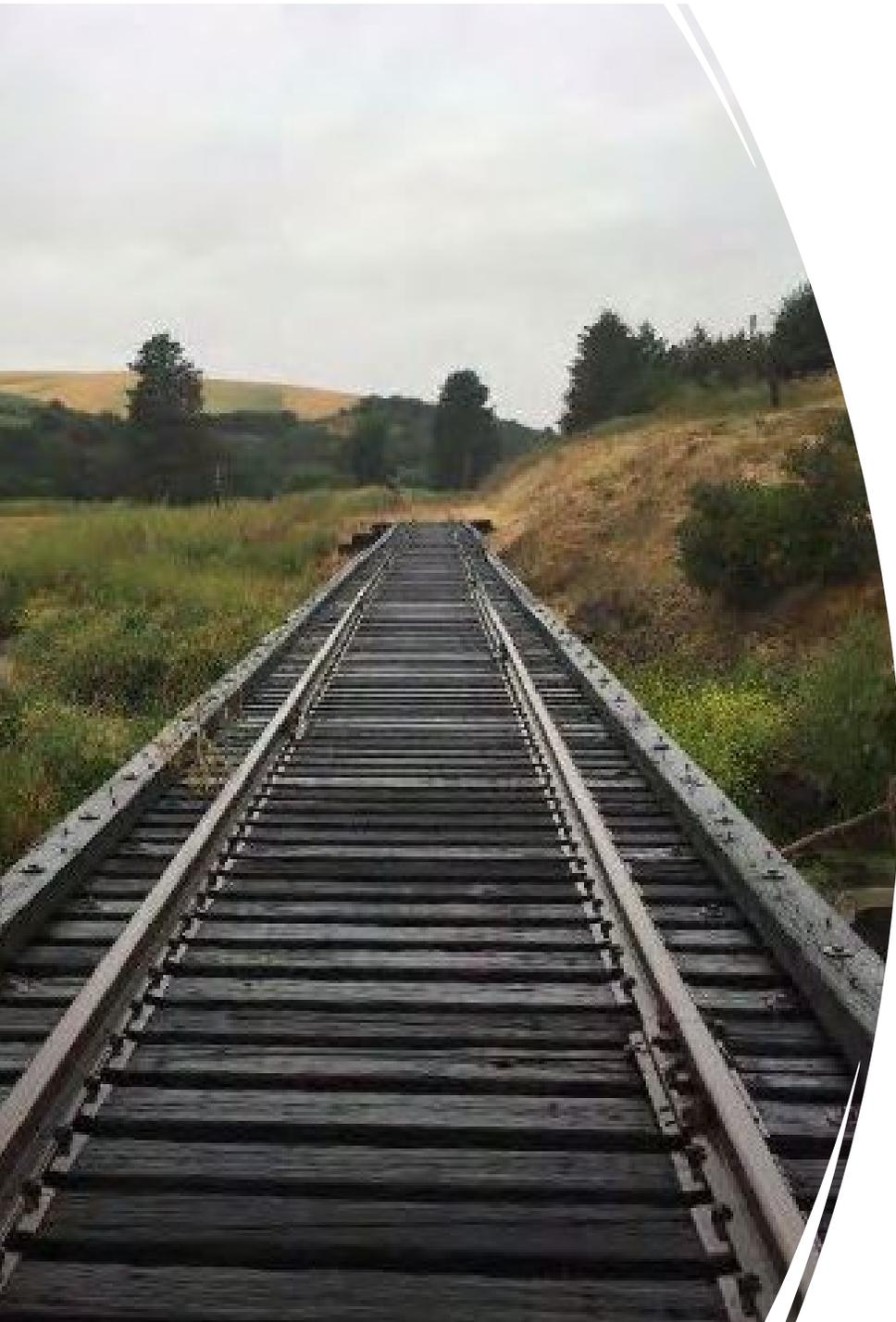
ALLOW AND ENCOURAGE DEVELOPMENT OF COMPATIBLE BUSINESSES IN AGRICULTURAL AREAS TO SERVE FARMERS AS WELL AS TO DIVERSIFY EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES IN THE REGION

Policy ED 6.1 – Encourage and identify creative, compatible and beneficial use of resource lands other than agriculture to supplement income of farm families. Such uses may include tourism, mining, quarrying, boating, hunting/fishing, recreation nursery, and renewable energy development.

Policy ED 6.2 – Limit commercial growth in unincorporated rural communities to agriculturally-supportive and tourist/traveler supporting businesses, while focusing more intensive industrial manufacturing uses within urban areas and along the Pullman-Moscow corridor.



PhotoHound.com (Joe Becker)



Transportation

Goals, objectives, policies, and actions supporting multimodal and effective transportation methods geared towards the needs of Whitman County.

Analysis of existing transportation methods:

- County Road Systems
- City Road Systems
- Rural Road System
- Freight
- Airports
- Ports
- Bicycle Routes
- Trails

Analysis of future development and uses:

- Maintain and improve road system.
- Consider transportation consistency with Comprehensive Planning needs, policies and goals.
- Support alternative transportation methods.

Transportation

FRAMEWORK GOAL 3 – ENHANCE COUNTYWIDE SERVICES

Through innovative approaches, interagency coordination, and responsible fiscal policy, provide for effective, supportive, and well-planned services to residents across the county.

FRAMEWORK GOAL 6 – PROMOTE AND IMPROVE MOBILITY OPTIONS

Provide for a safe and reliable transportation network that enables residents, workers, commerce, and tourists to efficiently travel through and across Whitman County. Continue to explore and improve upon a variety of mobility options, whether via a car, transit, bike or foot.



Photohound.co (Joe Becker)

Transportation

GOAL T-1

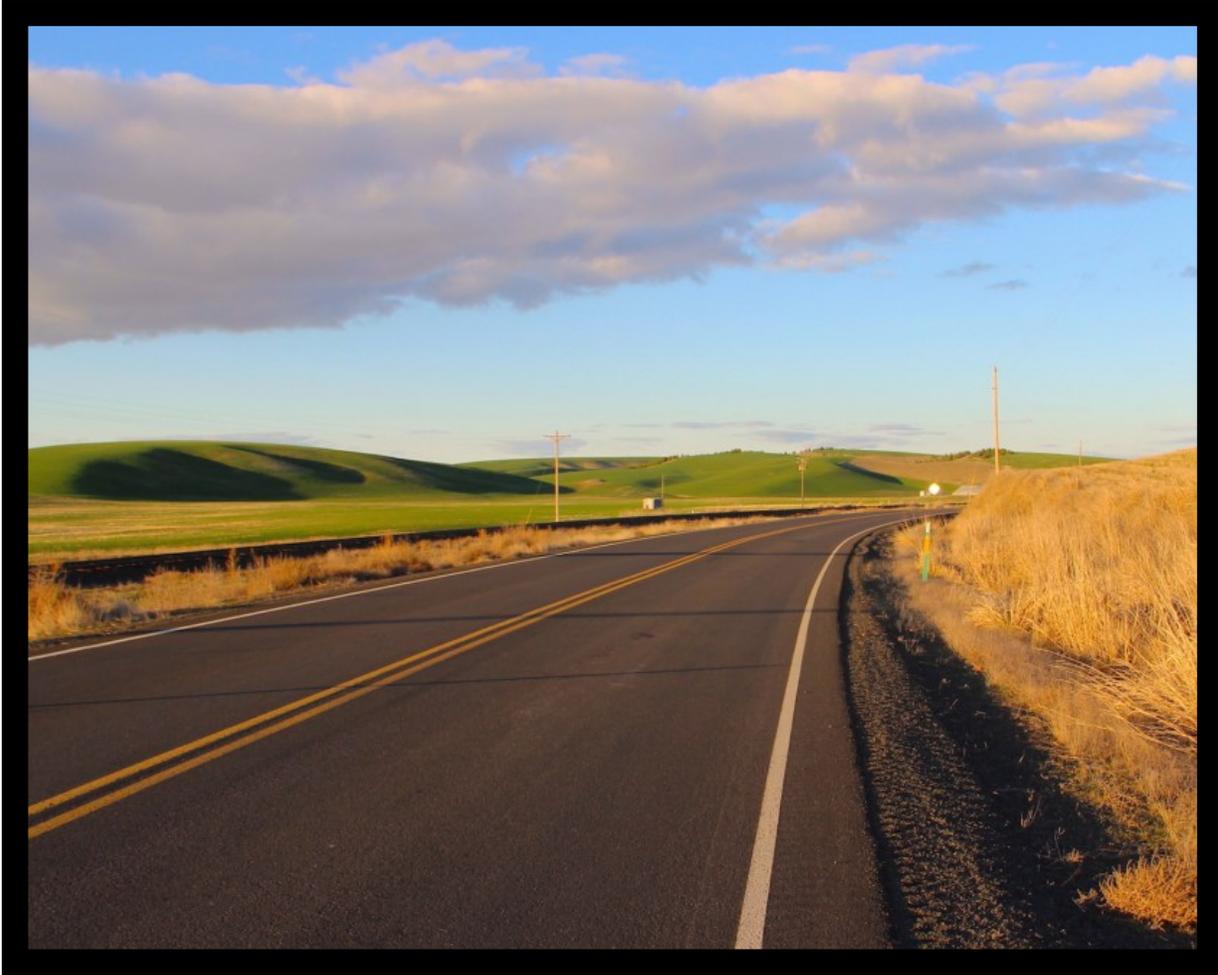
SAFE AND RELIABLE MULTI-MODAL HIGHWAY AND COUNTY ROAD NETWORK

Policy T 1.1 – Recognize the needs of all transportation system users in the county, including motor and freight, bicyclists, pedestrians, and public transportation.

Policy T 1.2 – Ensure the transportation needs of all types of rural users, including farming vehicles and other heavy equipment are met through ongoing maintenance and access to all County rights-of-way.

Policy T 1.3 – Continually coordinate with WSDOT and other agencies to monitor and improve traffic safety of highways and intersections at county facilities.





Transportation

GOAL T-2

MAINTAIN COUNTY ROAD FACILITIES TO ENSURE CONTINUED FUNCTION AND MOBILITY OF GOODS AND SERVICES

Policy T 2.1 – Maintain and improve the County’s extensive state highway and county road system at a level adequate to the serve the needs of each area of the county, including movement of agricultural and other products, access to county parks and port district facilities, industrial and commercial sites, Washington State University, and existing communities.

Policy T 2.2 – Prioritize cost-effective maintenance and preservation of County road facilities to ensure long-term life span.

Policy T 2.3 – Maintain access to all major County road facilities in all weather conditions to ensure emergency service, public transportation and the movement of goods, services and people.



Saferoutespartnership.org

Transportation

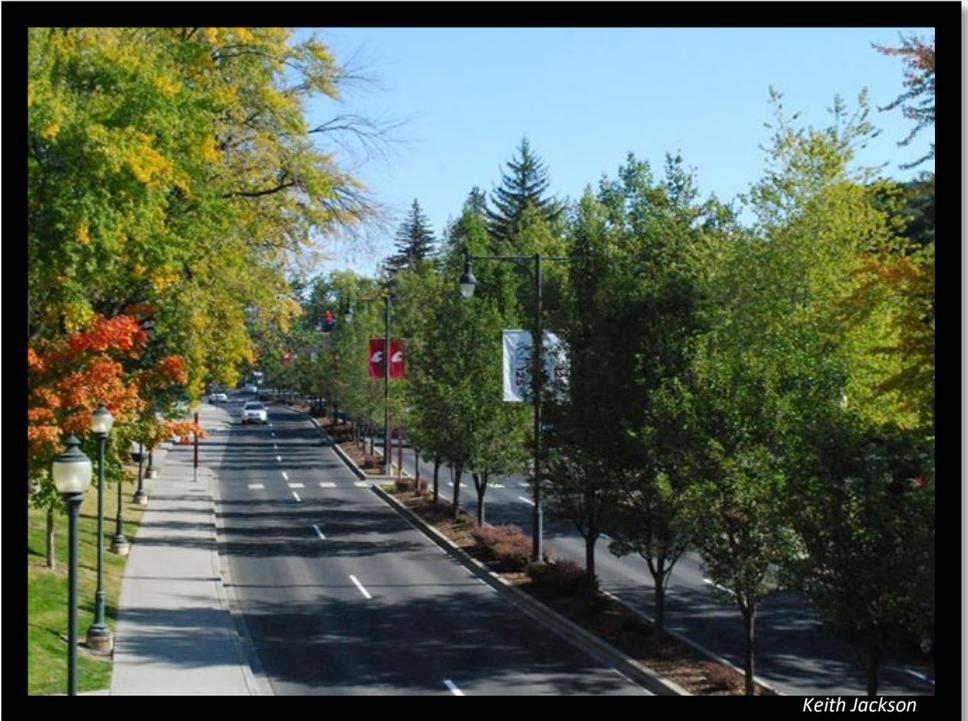
GOAL T-3

PROVIDE SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE NON-MOTORIZED ROUTES SUCH AS BICYCLE PATHS AND TRAILS

Policy T 3.1 – Multi-modal facilities should be designed to reduce conflicts and hazards where bicycle, equestrian, and pedestrians use major state and county roadways.

Policy T 3.2 – Priority should be given for improvements to routes where significant bicycle and other usage already exist and continue to exist. Support and encourage construction and/or non-motorized paths between communities and economic centers to provide alternative transportation routes.

Policy T 3.3 – Designs for road improvements shall be evaluated for their ability to decrease conflicts between all transportation modes and hazards to travelers.



Keith Jackson

Transportation

GOAL T- 4

DEVELOP AND MAINTAIN A MULTI-MODAL REGIONAL FREIGHT TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM TO SERVE AGRICULTURAL AND INDUSTRIAL USES IN THE COUNTY

Policy T 4.1 – Encourage and support rail or barge systems wherever possible. Encourage businesses that generate a significant amount of freight to locate near railroad lines or barge transportation services.

Policy T 4.2 – Develop an identification and inventory system to evaluate and analyze truck traffic data. Identify roadway condition deterioration rates and locations caused from heavy vehicle traffic. This system should be incorporated into budget and roadway improvement programs to assist in prioritizing construction projects.

Policy T 4.3 – Through education, public involvement, law enforcement and signage, consolidate heavy vehicle traffic onto designated Haul Routes.



Policy T 4.4 – Use designated Haul Routes to develop priorities for road improvements that are financially feasible and cost effective. Whitman County will endeavor, when feasible, to design, construct, and maintain these routes to handle heavy truck traffic.

Policy T 4.5 – Emphasize and implement design standards for all-season roads to access industrial and commercial areas on designated Freights and Good Transportation System (FGTS) and Haul Routes.

Transportation

GOAL T-5

MAINTAIN A SAFE PULLMAN-MOSCOW HIGHWAY (SR 270) CORRIDOR

Policy T 5.1 – Promote safe traffic conditions along the Pullman-Moscow Highway (SR 270) between Pullman and the Idaho state line.

Policy T 5.2 – Coordinate with County Engineer, Parks Director, Planning staff and other agencies, organizations and interested parties in reviewing capacity and safety needs and improvements along the corridor as development continues.

Policy T 5.3 – Modify development standards, as necessary, to minimize and/or prevent increased access directly to and from SR 270. Where appropriate, consider alternative access points to the highway, such as frontage roads.



Transportation

GOAL T-6

ENCOURAGE LAND USE TYPES, MIXES, AND DENSITIES THAT PROMOTE EFFICIENT MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Policy T 6.1 – Encourage efficient and orderly development by identifying and evaluating properties that are conducive to mutual planning through reciprocal cooperative agreements. This includes those areas around Pullman that are identified as residential cluster areas.

Policy T 6.2 – Encourage development that is consistent with the Land Use Element which reduces conflicts, minimizes the need for expansion of the County's road system, and maintains the same level of service for road facilities.

Policy T 6.3 – Review all proposed land use development for consistency with the transportation system. Encourage placement of residential, commercial, and industrial uses in areas with existing access to appropriate infrastructure to support such uses.



adventures.experiencewa.com



Transportation

GOAL T-7

PROTECT AND SUPPORT EXISTING AIR TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES IN WHITMAN COUNTY

Policy T 7.1 – Existing airports, specifically Port of Whitman Business Air Center and Pullman-Moscow Regional Airport, shall be protected from encroachment by incompatible development. In order to ensure this, encourage the development of long-range master plans for airport facilities and implementation of the Airport Land Zoning Overlay.

Policy T 7.2 – Sites for new airstrips and airports shall be evaluated for safety and impacts on existing land uses as defined in the development standards section of the Zoning Ordinance.

Policy T 7.3 – Commercial and industrial uses near or adjacent to airport facilities should not conflict with aircraft operations.





Washingtonnonprofits.org

Transportation

GOAL T-8

SUPPORT PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS THAT ARE AVAILABLE TO POPULATIONS IN NEED

Policy T 8.1 – Support organizations and programs (i.e., COAST) which provide transportation options for groups in Whitman County, such as the elderly, who may not have the same access to transportation as the general population.

Policy T 8.2 – Collaborate with other rural counties, cities, towns and the State of Idaho to seek and develop solutions to the transportation needs of the elderly and disabled.





**PALOUSE REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION
PLANNING ORGANIZATION (PRTPO)**

www.palousertpo.org

Transportation

GOAL T-9

PARTICIPATE IN STATE AND REGIONAL PLANNING FOR TRANSPORTATION FACILITY NEEDS AND FUNDING WITHIN WHITMAN COUNTY.

Policy T 9.1 – State highway planning should reflect the priorities and constraints identified in local planning and public works programming. Primary state highways running through Whitman County (i.e., SR 26, SR 270, US 195) should remain top funding priorities for safety and mobility improvements.

Policy T 9.2 – Continue active coordination and communications with State transportation and local agencies including: WSDOT, Whitman County Public Works Department, Port of Whitman County, unincorporated rural communities, incorporated cities and towns, adjacent counties, towns, cities, state agencies and Washington State University.

Policy T 9.3 – Where appropriate, collaborate with Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization (PRTPO) to help promote and improve local and regional, transportation needs and projects in Whitman County.

Thank you!

Next Virtual
Public Meeting:
June 16, 2021

Review of Parks & Rec, Natural Resources, Public Facilities/Utilities

