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Chapter One - THE OKANOGAN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

In June of 2007 the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners directed that a process be initiated to complete a review of the existing Comprehensive Plan. The current plan was adopted in 1965 and has been subject to little review or change since that time. The Board of County Commissioners believed the existing plan, the zone code, and subdivision regulation was not adequate to insure a high level of local control and defensible local decisions.

The process began using neighborhood and technical groups to generate a range of options in each of the several land use designations. In each advisory group and during the hearing process articulate citizens with diametrically opposing viewpoints vigorously debated the plan. Some opposed any regulatory approach to land use while others opposed any relaxing of land use regulation. The County Commissioners, elected to represent the interests of all of Okanogan County, believe that by affording a platform for all viewpoints to be considered a stronger comprehensive plan will be crafted. By considering all viewpoints and then creating a carefully crafted plan the health, safety, and welfare of future generations is best protected.

The Okanogan Regional Planning Commission conducted a series of public meetings and hearings to gather information and refine the draft plan from proposed options to specific language. The Planning Commission believed the final decisions regarding the language of the plan should rest with the Board of County Commissioners. In October of 2009 the Planning Commission referred a much refined draft of the Comprehensive Plan, Zone Code, and Subdivision Regulation to the Board of Commissioners for further refinement and adoption.

The Board of County Commissioners finds that over 57% of the land in Okanogan County is owned by Federal and State Agencies. Over 20% of Okanogan County is within the boundaries of the Colville Indian Reservation and therefore outside of the direct planning and permitting authority of the County. Of the remaining less than 23% of the land mass it is estimated that 5% is not suitable for development due to topography and other critical area features. The remaining land mass must provide the inventory of land necessary to provide for residential, industrial, and commercial needs both in and out of the incorporated cities and towns. This land also supports the agricultural and natural resource based activities that are important to the local economy. The Land Use

37 Designations required in the Comprehensive Plan must recognize the need for
38 flexibility while avoiding incompatible uses.

39 The Board of County Commissioners issued a revised draft of the
40 comprehensive plan and the comprehensive plan land use designation map in
41 November of 2010. Public hearings are scheduled for the first quarter of 2010
42 with projected adoption of the comprehensive plan and land use designation map
43 by March 31, 2011. Review and adoption of the zone code, zone designation
44 map, subdivision regulation, shorelines master program, and critical areas
45 ordinance will follow adoption of the comprehensive plan.

46 **Authority**

- 47 • RCW 36.70 Planning Enabling Act
- 48 • RCW 36.70A.170 Counties must designate Agricultural lands, Forest
49 lands, Mineral lands, and Critical Areas
- 50 • RCW 36.70A.050 Guidelines for classifying Agricultural, Forest, and
51 Mineral lands and Critical Areas
- 52 • RCW 43.21C State Environmental Policy Act
- 53 • WAC 197-11 SEPA Rules
- 54 • RCW 90.58 Shorelines Master Program

55 **VISION STATEMENT**

56 Okanogan County is the largest county in the State of Washington with borders
57 from Canada to the Columbia River. The tremendous extremes in geography
58 and weather patterns have led to great diversity in occupation and lifestyle. What
59 is consistent is the independent spirit of our citizens and a universal belief in our
60 Constitutional Rights. We further belief in the wise use of our land and natural
61 resources so they will provide for future generations.

62 Okanogan County will continue to be a place where people can be free to pursue
63 their dreams. When government respects the rights of the people and works with
64 them to strengthen the local economy and to maintain a clean, healthy
65 environment it provides families with a place to prosper and grow. Okanogan
66 County will provide for the health, safety, and welfare of the citizens by wise use
67 of all the resources available to them.

68 This plan is driven by the common belief that to preserve the future for our
69 children we must act wisely today.

70 **Neighborhood Groups**

71 The neighborhood groups formed to facilitate this process are:

- 72 • Middle Methow
- 73 • Lower Methow
- 74 • Brewster
- 75 • Okanogan-Omak
- 76 • Riverside
- 77 • Tunk
- 78 • Conconully
- 79 • Wauconda/Aeneas Valley
- 80 • Loomis
- 81 • Chesaw
- 82 • Tonasket
- 83 • Oroville
- 84 • Mazama Advisory Committee (already created)

85 **Technical Committees**

- 86 • Resource Lands
- 87 • Urban Growth Area (Cities)
- 88 • Economic Development (Economic Alliance)
- 89 • Affordable Housing (Okanogan County Community Action Council)

90 **DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS**

91 Okanogan County used a neighborhood planning process along with a mix of
92 technical committees to create the first draft of the revised Comprehensive Plan.
93 The neighborhood groups began work in June of 2007 with an official kick-off at
94 Growth Summit I in August of 2007. The groups, supported by County Planning
95 Staff, contracted planning professionals, and citizen volunteers discussed
96 densities, compatible uses, affordable housing, along with additional elements
97 within a geographic boundary they identified as their area of interest. The
98 information generated informed the first draft of the Comprehensive Plan. The
99 first draft was officially distributed at Growth Summit II in June of 2008. The first
100 draft was sent back to the neighborhood groups, technical committees, and other
101 interested parties for additional review and drafting. The first draft was prepared
102 with a tier of options to facilitate a comparative analysis of the pros and cons of
103 each potential policy decision.

104 A revised draft was presented for review under SEPA in January of 2009. The
105 SEPA review is ongoing as the plan is reviewed and revised. A refined draft
106 emerged from the initial SEPA process and was scheduled for hearings in front

107 of the Planning Commission in March of 2009 and followed by hearings before
108 the Board of County Commissioners in late fall of 2010. Adoption is anticipated
109 by March 31, 2011.

110 Information provided by the neighborhood groups and technical committees was
111 used in a concurrent process to update the zone code and subdivision
112 regulations. These code sections were scheduled to track with the review and
113 adoption process of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the Shorelines Master
114 Program and Critical Areas Ordinance is under review for update and scheduled
115 for completion by December 31, 2010. A Wildfire-Urban interface area is in draft
116 form and is scheduled for review and adoption concurrent with the
117 Comprehensive Plan. The Flood Management Plans for the Methow and
118 Okanogan Rivers are completed. The work of the watershed councils is on-
119 going. These plans will be referenced in the Comprehensive Plan to insure
120 review for consistency. They will be adopted by ordinance in concurrent but
121 separate processes.

122 **ADOPTION PROCESS**

123 The Comprehensive Plan is adopted under the legislative powers of the Board of
124 County Commissioners as defined in RCW 36.70, the Planning Enabling Act.
125 The Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Designation Map
126 identify resource areas, compatible land uses, and densities in all unincorporated
127 areas, including public lands. The Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan
128 identifies existing incorporated boundaries of the Cities and Towns but has no
129 authority within those boundaries.

130 The Comprehensive Plan, as a land use control, must comply with RCW 43.21C
131 (SEPA) and WAC 197-11 (SEPA Rules). The SEPA Final Determination is
132 appealable, under current Okanogan County Code, to the Board of County
133 Commissioners.

134 An open record public hearing is required, under current Okanogan County
135 Code, before the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission. The
136 Planning Commission, after hearing testimony and examining submitted
137 information, adopts a recommendation of approval, approval with recommended
138 amendments, or denial to the Board of County Commissioners. The Planning
139 Commission is required to adopt Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law to
140 support their recommendation.

141 The Comprehensive Plan is adopted by ordinance by the Okanogan County
142 Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners is
143 required to conduct an open record public hearing. After hearing all testimony

144 and examining submitted information, including the complete record of the
145 Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners may adopt by ordinance,
146 amend and adopt by ordinance, or remand the Comprehensive Plan back to staff
147 for additional review. If amended or remanded, the Board of County
148 Commissioners will determine if a new hearing is required before the Planning
149 Commission. In the event of remand or amendment, the Board of County
150 Commissioners, after consulting with the designated SEPA responsible official,
151 will determine if additional review under SEPA is required.

152 The Board of County Commissioners will adopt by ordinance the Comprehensive
153 Plan and the Comprehensive Land Use Designation Map. The Final Decision
154 made by the Board of County Commissioners will be considered valid on its face.
155 The final decision made by the Board of County Commissioners is appealable,
156 by those with standing, in accordance with RCW 36.70C (Land Use Petitions
157 Act).

158 **AMENDMENT PROCESS**

159 Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan will be considered on an annual basis.
160 Proposed amendments will be reviewed in accordance to the requirements in this
161 section and all applicable State Law.

162 **Docketing**

163 The period for docketing proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or
164 Comprehensive Land Use Designation Map will begin January 31 and end on
165 June 1 of each calendar year. The proposed amendments will be submitted on
166 forms provided by the Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development.
167 The Director of Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development or others
168 as designated by the Board of County Commissioners shall review each proposal
169 for completeness and all applicable State Laws and Okanogan County Code.
170 The determination of complete application will be made by June 30 of each year.

171 A list of all complete applications, along with a statement of consistency or non-
172 consistency, will be submitted to the Board of County Commissioners by July 7 of
173 each year. The Board of County Commissioners will determine which proposals
174 to docket for further review by July 31. The proposals selected for docketing will
175 be returned to the Director of Okanogan County Office of Planning and
176 Development for further review.

177 Proposed amendments to the Urban Growth Area of any City or Town must be
178 docketed with the affected City or Town in accordance with the city expansion
179 area section of the Comprehensive Plan. The Board of County Commissioners

180 will consult with the affected City or Town before determining if an amendment to
181 the city expansion area will be forwarded for review.

182 The proposed amendments selected for further review will be scheduled for
183 public hearing in front of the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission
184 no later than October 1 of each year. No later than November 20 of each year,
185 the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission will forward to the Board
186 of County Commissioners a recommendation of approval or denial for each
187 proposal including Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law supporting their
188 decision.

189 The Board of County Commissioners shall, before December 31 of each year,
190 conduct an open record public hearing to consider the recommendation of the
191 Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission, testimony, and other
192 information submitted. The Board of County Commissioners shall adopt by
193 ordinance any amendment to be approved or denied. The Board of County
194 Commissioners shall adopt Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law to support
195 their decision.

196 The final decision of the Board of County Commissioners shall be considered
197 valid on its face. The final decision of the Board of County Commissioners is
198 appealable, by those with standing, in accordance with RCW 36.70C (Land Use
199 Petitions Act)

200 **Five Year Review**

201 The Board of County Commissioners shall order the review of the
202 Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Designation Map five years
203 from the date of the first approval and every five years thereafter. The Board of
204 County Commissioners will adopt by Resolution a Scope of Work describing the
205 process for the five year review, including a public participation plan.

206 *Nothing in this section shall be construed to require any future Board of County*
207 *Commissioners to review and revise every section of the Comprehensive Plan.*
208 *The level and areas of review will be identified in the Scope of Work adopted by*
209 *the Board of County Commissioners. The public participation plan shall be*
210 *consistent with the adopted Scope of Work.*

211 **COUNTY WIDE PLANNING POLICIES**

212 The process of updating the Comprehensive Plan will be guided by a series of
213 Countywide Planning Policies. The Countywide Planning Policies identify key
214 planning principles and provide a framework for actively involving local residents,

215 business and property owners, the cities and towns, local service providers, and
216 the Colville Confederated Tribes. These policies have been developed and
217 refined through a series of intergovernmental coordination meetings, as well as
218 several opportunities for public review. There will be additional opportunities to
219 review and comment on the following Countywide Planning Policies throughout
220 the comprehensive planning process.

221 **County Wide Planning Policy 1**

222 The revised Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan will be based on a Vision
223 Statement approved by the Board of County Commissioners

224 **County Wide Planning Policy 2**

225 It is the intent of Okanogan County to create a comprehensive plan that contains
226 the required elements in accordance with RCW 36.70 Planning Enabling Act.
227 The comprehensive plan will be used as a tool to protect the customs and
228 cultures of Okanogan County and as a guide to promote consistency amongst
229 other adopted regulation whether mandated or elective.

230 **County Wide Planning Policy 3**

231 The County will develop and implement a public involvement strategy to ensure
232 the opportunity for early and continuous citizen participation throughout the
233 Comprehensive Plan Update process.

234 **County Wide Planning Policy 4**

235 It is the expectation of Okanogan County that State, Federal, and Regional
236 agencies will prepare, implement, and update plans and regulations consistent
237 with the County's Vision Statement and Comprehensive Plan.

238 **County Wide Planning Policy 5**

239 In partnership with the incorporated cities and towns, the County will establish
240 city expansion areas that will provide adequate land to meet the projected needs
241 of the City or Town.

242 **County Wide Planning Policy 6**

243 The County will actively consult with the Colville Confederated Tribes in updating
244 the County Comprehensive Plan and will establish a protocol for integrating the

245 updated plan with the Comprehensive Plan prepared by the Tribes for the
246 Colville Reservation and Trust Lands as necessary and appropriate.

247 **County Wide Planning Policy 7**

248 Okanogan County will establish criteria to identify and designate natural resource
249 areas including mining, timber, and agricultural lands and will provide
250 opportunities within County policy to sustain the traditional natural resource
251 industries in the County.

252 **County Wide Planning Policy 8**

253 Okanogan County, in partnership with incorporated cities and towns, will
254 establish housing goals and policies that encourage a range of housing stock to
255 meet housing demand for all economic segments of the County's population.

256 **County Wide Planning Policy 9**

257 Okanogan County will establish diverse and sustainable economic development
258 goals and policies, which support economic prosperity, enhance the quality of life
259 for County residents, and promote employment and economic opportunity for all
260 citizens.

261 **County Wide Planning Policy 10**

262 Okanogan County will adopt a transportation element that ensures the
263 development and maintenance of a transportation system that is safe and
264 efficient. Every effort will be made to make needed improvements to the
265 transportation system concurrent with new land development.

266 **County Wide Planning Policy 11**

267 Okanogan County will identify capital facilities necessary to support planned
268 levels of growth and will identify funding sources and strategies that make
269 effective use of limited County resources.

270 **County Wide Planning Policy 12**

271 Okanogan County will inventory essential public facilities in the County, and shall
272 establish criteria for the citing of essential public facilities of regional and
273 statewide significance.

274 **County Wide Planning Policy 13**

275 It is the intent of Okanogan County to establish policies, which address the
276 protection of people and property from wildfires, Okanogan County will support
277 and promote amongst the federal agencies and private landowners an
278 aggressive program of forest management that reduces fuel loads and restores
279 forest health.

280 **County Wide Planning Policy 14**

281 It is the intent of the County to provide a streamlined and predictable planning
282 and permitting process.

283 **PRIVATE PROPERTY AND WATER RIGHTS**

284 **Citations:**

- 285 • United States Constitution, Fifth Amendment
- 286 • Washington State Constitution, Article 1, Section 16
- 287 • RCW Chapter 8.08 Eminent Domain by Counties
- 288 • RCW Chapter 8.25 Eminent Domain Proceedings
- 289 • RCW 36.70A.370 Protection of Property Rights

290 **Property Rights**

291 Okanogan County believes in the protection of a private citizen's right to the use
292 of the land they own. Land owners rights must be protected from the conversion
293 of their land to public use without due process and just compensation. In
294 addition, a land owners rights must be protected from regulation that deprives the
295 land owner of all reasonable use and value or places a burden on them
296 disproportionate to the impacts the activities on their land causes.

297 The actions of government constitute a "taking" when:

- 298 • The property is physically appropriated; or
- 299 • By regulating or limiting the use of property under the governments police
300 power authority in such a way as to destroy one or more of the
301 fundamental attributes of ownership which are: the right to possess, the
302 right to exclude others, and the right to dispose of property; or
- 303 • Deny all reasonable economic use of the property; or
- 304 • Requiring property owners to provide a public benefit rather than
305 mitigating an impact caused by the proposed use of the land

306 **Water Rights**

307 Okanogan County recognizes a water right as private property and affords it the
308 same protection. Okanogan County adheres to the premise of “first in time, first
309 in right” that is a foundation block of Western water law. A water right put to a
310 beneficial use, including a temporary dedication to in-stream flow, should be
311 protected from relinquishment to the State.

312 Okanogan County further recognizes that keeping the right to use water within
313 Okanogan County is critical to the economic health of the county. To this end
314 Okanogan County encourages water right holders to consider all other options to
315 protect their water right or to realize profit from its use before offering it for sale
316 outside of the County. Okanogan County will attempt to create incentive based
317 programs to encourage the owner of water rights to keep them in the County.
318 Such programs might include:

- 319 • Water banking.
- 320 • Density Bonuses as adopted in a Performance Based Density Bonus that
321 promotes the use of water in the County or promotes the transfer of water
322 for use in the County.
- 323 • Seeking funding for the acquisition of water rights for use in the County.
- 324 • Promote the re-issuance of water rights lost through relinquishment within
325 Okanogan County.
- 326 • Promote the mitigation of impacts caused by the use of water transferred
327 outside of the County by the end user of the water. This statement should
328 not be construed in any manner that implies any interference with an
329 owner’s right to sell their water right to any buyer.

330 **Chapter Two - EXISTING CONDITIONS**

331 **CURRENT LAND USE**

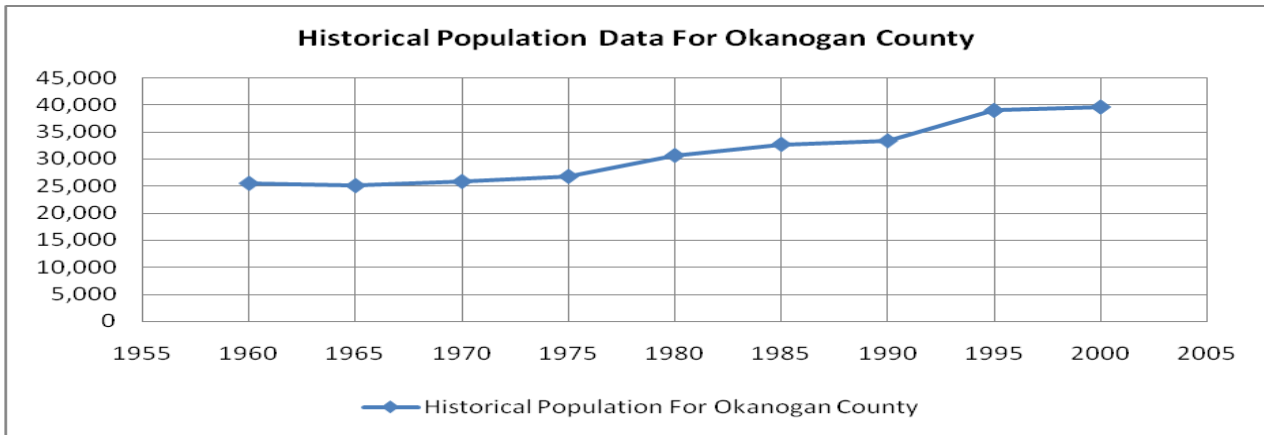
332 The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1965 and has existed with little
 333 change since adoption. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted under the
 334 authority of RCW 36.70, the Planning Enabling Act.

335 The following section explains the total acreage in each of the land use
 336 designations contained in the current Comprehensive Plan and existing zone
 337 designation map or is identified in the current use of the land:

• Minimum Requirement District (includes reservation & zone designation often within unclassified designation on the comprehensive plan map)	2,234,562.916
• Colville Reservation (Not a zone designation)	1,556,134
• Neighborhood Use	14.224
• Agricultural-Residential Designation	491.050
• Airport Development District	176.645
• Barnholt Loop	642.670
• Carlton Agriculture	66.753
• Carlton Commercial	16.796
• Commercial	223.291
• Industrial	7.479
• Low Density Residential	4,605.097
• Molson Overlay	68,725.526
• MRD1	601.612
• MRD 12,500	27.531
• Planned Development	61.412
• Rural Residential	17,430.977
• School District 350	1,043,944.462
• Special Review Commercial	36.069
• Suburban Residential	296.384
• Urban Residential	32.415
• Valley Floor	27,488.096
• Incorporated Cities/Towns	7,877.00

338

Figure 1: Historical Population Data 1960-2000



339

Table 1: HISTORICAL POPULATION FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND OTHER PURPOSES									
MEDIUM SERIES: HISTORY 1960 TO 2000									
	1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Washington	2,853,214	3,065,000	3,413,250	3,567,890	4,132,353	4,415,785	4,866,663	5,4070,104	5,894,121
Okanogan	25,520	25,100	25,867	26,800	30,663	32,687	33,350	38.943	39,564

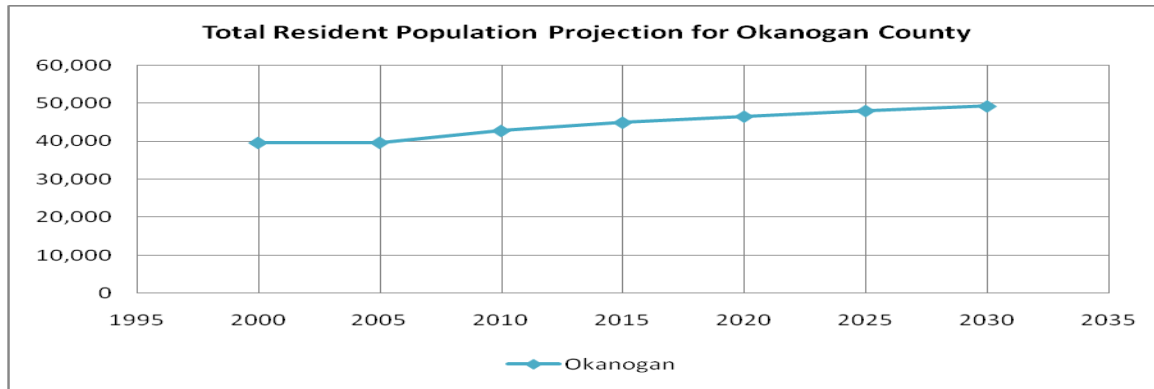
Note: Census totals may differ slightly from other publications due to use of corrected or uncorrected counts.
 Unrounded numbers not meant to imply accuracy
 OFM/Forecasting/ October 2007

340

341

342

Figure 2: Total Projected Population for Okanogan County 2000-2030



343

Table 2: Final Projections of the Total Resident Population for Growth Management Medium Series: 2000 to 2030							
	Census	Estimate	Projections				
	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
State	5,894,121	6,256,400	6,792,318	7,255,672	7,698,939	8,120,510	8,509,161
Okanogan	39,564	39,600	42,739	44,923	46,526	48,016	49,239

Note: Differences in 2000 figures compared to other tables due to census corrections.
Data may not add due to rounding; unrounded figures are not meant to imply precision.
OFM/Forecasting | October 2007

344

345 **Chapter Three: LAND USE – RESOURCE LANDS**

346 **History**

347 Okanogan County was one of the last areas in the Washington Territory that was
348 settled. These settlers were miners, ranchers, farmers, trappers, hunters, fishermen,
349 and loggers. The fierce independence and courage that allowed the first residents to
350 succeed is an integral part of the heritage of Okanogan County today. As of 2006, the
351 following facts support the importance of resource based activities in Okanogan
352 County.

353 **Agriculture**

- 354 • 4,531 jobs are generated by farming and farm related activities (2006)
- 355 • 1,205,229 acres in agriculture (2007)
- 356 • \$208,758,000 value of agricultural products produced (2007)

357 **Forestry**

- 358 • 1,721 jobs in forestry and related

359 **Minerals**

- 360 • 76 jobs are directly tied to mining activities

361 **Purpose**

362 The residents of Okanogan County recognize the land as a valuable and irreplaceable
363 resource. The purpose of the Resource Land Designation is to recognize the value of
364 these lands to the economic and cultural well being of the residents of Okanogan
365 County. Through the use of innovative planning tools the critical mass of land needed
366 by the industry can be left available without dismissing the immediate needs of both
367 the individual landowner and the residents as a whole.

368 Through the use of a wide variety of incentive based approaches, this Plan attempts to
369 identify the amount of land that is needed to sustain agriculture, forestry, and mining.

370 **Authority**

- 371 • Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 36.70 Planning Enabling Act
- 372 • RCW 36.70A.170 Resource Lands
- 373 • RCW 36.70A.050 Guidelines for classifying Agricultural, Forest, and Mineral
374 Lands
- 375 • RCW 36.70A.177 Innovative Zoning Tools and Accessory Uses
- 376 • RCW 36.70A.370 Protection of Private Property
- 377 • Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 365-190 Minimum Guidelines to
378 Classify Agricultural, Forest, and Mineral Lands

379 **Classifications**

- 380 • Agricultural Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance
- 381 • Mineral Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance
- 382 • Forest Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance

383 **Criteria**

384 Okanogan County, as the largest county in the State of Washington, offers challenges
385 in the review of these lands created by the unique characteristics of each area. The
386 criteria shall be afforded different weight as they are considered in light of the unique
387 conditions each area presents. In considering whether to designate lands as Resource
388 Lands the following criteria shall be used.

389 **AGRICULTURAL LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

- 390 • Availability of public facilities
- 391 • Tax status
- 392 • Availability of public services
- 393 • Relationship or proximity to city expansion area
- 394 • Parcel size
- 395 • Land use settlement patterns and their compatibility with agricultural practices
- 396 • Intensity of nearby land uses
- 397 • History of land development permits issued nearby
- 398 • Land values under alternative uses
- 399 • Proximity of markets
- 400 • Soil types
- 401 • Climate of area
- 402 • Topography and altitude
- 403 • Changing markets influence on possible crop types

404 **FOREST LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

- 405 • Availability of public facilities
- 406 • Tax status
- 407 • Availability of public services
- 408 • Relationship or proximity to Urban Growth Areas
- 409 • Parcel size
- 410 • Land use settlement patterns and their compatibility with forest practices
- 411 • Intensity of nearby land uses
- 412 • History of land development permits issued nearby
- 413 • Land values under alternative uses
- 414 • Proximity of markets
- 415 • Soil types
- 416 • Climate of area
- 417 • Topography and altitude

418 **MINERAL LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

- 419 • Presence of known and potential deposits of sand, gravel, and valuable metallic
- 420 substances and other minerals as appropriate.
- 421 • Geologic Factors
- 422 • Environmental Factors
- 423 • Economic Factors
- 424 • Depth of the resource
- 425 • Depth of the overburden
- 426 • Physical properties of the resource including quality and type
- 427 • Life of the resource
- 428 • Resource availability in the region
- 429 • Accessibility and proximity to the point of use or market
- 430 • In classifying mineral lands, the County shall consider the effects of proximity to
- 431 population areas and the possibility of more intense uses of the land as
- 432 indicated by:
 - 433 ○ General land use patterns in the area
 - 434 ○ Availability of utilities
 - 435 ○ Availability and adequacy of water supply
 - 436 ○ Surrounding parcel size and surrounding uses
 - 437 ○ Subdivision or zoning for urban or small lots
 - 438 ○ Availability of public roads and other public services

439 **MAPPING**

440 The Okanogan County Comprehensive Land Use Map will identify those areas
441 designated as Resource Lands. The map designations will be directed by the chosen
442 criteria but will be reconciled to parcel boundary lines. It may occur that lands that
443 meet the criteria for resource designation but are in excess of the needs of the
444 industry will not be designated resource lands. These lands will be designated as
445 necessary to satisfy other land inventory needs.

446 **RESOURCE LANDS -**
447 **AGRICULTURAL LAND OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

448 **History**

449 Okanogan County has a rich history of agriculture ranging from family truck farms,
450 orchards, and cattle raising operations to large enterprises situated on thousands of
451 acres. This mix of agricultural activities has contributed much to not only the
452 economics of Okanogan County but forms an important part of our identity as well.
453 Agriculture, whether as a first time venture or family operation that has spanned
454 generations, has been an integral part of life for thousands of Okanogan residents

455 **Purpose**

456 The purpose of the Resource Lands designation is to recognize the importance of
457 these lands to the future well-being of Okanogan County residents. Those charged
458 with preparing this Plan are mindful of the tremendous investment many have placed
459 in their land with an eye towards creating the financial security necessary as one
460 approaches retirement or, through ever changing circumstances, find they can no
461 longer live the life they have known. Through a variety of innovative planning tools
462 such as Cluster Development, Okanogan County strives to realize the balance
463 necessary to avoid stripping a generation of their wealth yet at the same time
464 preserving the critical mass of land necessary to have a viable economic base for
465 agricultural. Through effective planning, we hope to make possible future generations
466 of residents who derive their livelihood from agriculture and identify themselves as
467 agriculturalists.

468 **Needs of the Industry**

469 The purpose of the Resource Designation-Agriculture is to identify and designate
470 sufficient suitable land to support the on-going needs of the agriculture industry. This
471 section provides information regarding the minimum amount of resource land
472 necessary to maintain a viable economic base for agriculture. The figures were
473 submitted by advocate groups for agriculture.

474 It is calculated that there is currently 23,624 acres in tree fruit production.
475 Approximately 50 acres are in vine fruit production. It is estimated that at least 27,600
476 acres is required to maintain a viable base for agriculture in Okanogan County.

477 It is calculated that 30,000 cow/calf pairs is required to maintain a stable economic
478 base for the cattle industry in Okanogan County. Based on these figures
479 approximately 420,000 acres of graze land is necessary to maintain a viable base for
480 the cattle industry in Okanogan County.

481 **Compatible Uses**

482 To provide the greatest flexibility for the agricultural industry it is important a wide
483 variety of planning tools be available. In addition to these tools, a wide variety of
484 activities should be considered compatible or capable of being made compatible with
485 agriculture. These activities are listed as follows:

- 486 • All agricultural operations including raising food or fiber, livestock, feedlots, or
487 the processing of same. (Conditional use reviews for slaughterhouse, other
488 higher impact processing or activities)
- 489 • Sale of agricultural products.
- 490 • Commercial Tourism activities with a nexus to agriculture or compatible with
491 off-season periods.

- 492 • Residential activities including all single family, extended family, and farm
493 worker housing. The Farming Operations Disclosure will be required on plats
494 creating new lots and site evaluations for existing lots.)
- 495 • Manufacturing activities that are resource based or require proximity to
496 agricultural operations or are compatible with agricultural operations.
- 497 • Mineral extraction
- 498 • Timber management and harvest.
- 499 • Home occupations
- 500 • Neighborhood commercial alternative energy facilities

501 **Density**

502 The density in the Resource Lands designation will be to twenty acres. Densities could
503 be increased by using a cluster subdivision process which gives bonuses consistent
504 with a Performance Based Density Bonus (PBDB). The PBDB would emphasize the
505 voluntary assignment of future development restrictions in exchange for density
506 bonuses. Conservation easements and a program supporting the Transfer of
507 Development Rights would be encouraged in Resource Designated Areas. Minimum
508 lot sizes created through the cluster process would be determined by public health
509 requirements.

510 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

511 **GPO-3.1**

512 Okanogan County recognizes the constitutional protection of private property rights
513 and the role the value of land plays in the retirement security for a generation of
514 residents. Okanogan County will not take land for the public use without
515 compensation to the landowner. Okanogan County will implement an effective array
516 of land use tools, such as, cluster subdivisions, and effective buffering to provide value
517 to the landowner from reasonable development opportunities without creating
518 incompatible uses that creates legal or physical challenges to on-going agricultural
519 operations.

520 **GPO-3.2**

521 Okanogan County supports agricultural activity as a vital component of our economic
522 base, as the foundation of a local food supply, and an integral part of our heritage.
523 Okanogan County will protect agriculture from the impact of incompatible uses by
524 utilizing appropriate land use designations and effective review processes.

525 **GPO-3.3**

526 Okanogan County recognizes the importance of an effective transportation system to
527 agricultural operations in the movement of equipment, materiel, stock, and agricultural
528 products. Okanogan County will consider the needs of agriculture in all future

529 transportation planning efforts. Traffic control regulation allowing for the safe and
530 effective use of the County road system by agriculture in areas bearing a resource
531 designation will be implemented.

532 **GPO-3.4**

533 An adequate inventory of affordable housing is of critical importance to maintaining a
534 viable agricultural economic base. Farm worker housing will be a permitted use in all
535 agricultural and other compatible zones. Density for farm worker housing will be
536 determined by the ability of the site to comply with public health standards.”

537 **RESOURCE LANDS -**
538 **FOREST LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE**

539 **History**

540 Okanogan County has a long history of resource based forest activities. Logging,
541 grazing, hunting, fishing, and a variety of recreational activities is an important part of
542 our history. The contribution of forest land to the customs and cultures of life in
543 Okanogan County is immeasurable.

544 **Purpose**

545 The Resource Lands Designation for Forest Lands of Long Term Commercial
546 Significance achieves the same goals as the agricultural land designation. The ability
547 of these lands to provide the timber resources necessary to sustain the responsible
548 harvest and processing of timber products is critical to the economic base and culture
549 of Okanogan County. Timber products, wildlife habitat, recreational opportunities,
550 watershed protection and storage, and livestock grazing are but a few of the critical
551 functions of our forest land. Our forest land also provides opportunities for a
552 residential lifestyle embraced by many

553 **Compatible Uses**

554 Because of the period of time necessary to bring a forest from seedling to harvest, it is
555 important that the ebb and flow of market trends are weighed against the decades
556 needed for the forest to mature. Land use tools such as clustering should be used to
557 create development opportunities without eroding the critical mass of forest lands
558 necessary to maintain the forest based activities previously listed. As well, the
559 permitted and conditional uses allowed in the forest designation should ensure
560 economic diversity for the landowner by giving them the ability to respond to market
561 trends without taking the critical mass of land out of forest production.

562 The following shall be compatible uses:

- 563 • Harvest and processing of forest products
- 564 • Agricultural activities including raising and processing food, including livestock,
565 fiber as well as livestock grazing.
- 566 • Single family residential uses.
- 567 • Commercial tourism (Hunting, fishing, trail systems, lodges, transient
568 accommodations i.e. retreat centers, etc.)
- 569 • Mineral extraction
- 570 • Manufacturing that requires proximity to forest products
- 571 • Home Occupations

572 **Density**

573 The underlying density in the Forest Resource designation is twenty acres. Densities
574 could be increased by using a cluster subdivision process which gives bonuses
575 consistent with a Performance Based Density Bonus (PBDB). The PBDB would
576 emphasize the voluntary assignment of future development restrictions in exchange
577 for density bonuses. Minimum lot sizes created through the cluster process would be
578 determined by the requirements of public health.

579 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

580 **GPO – 3.5**

581 Okanogan County recognizes the important role forest land plays in our economy,
582 recreational pursuits, and cultural heritage. Okanogan County will promote the
583 responsible harvest of forest products and the protection of these lands from
584 incompatible uses. Okanogan County will require coordination from the public land
585 managers (USFS, BLM, DNR, etc) to create appropriate land use designations and
586 effective management practices to further these goals.

587 **RESOURCE LANDS -** 588 **MINERAL LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE.**

589 **History**

590 Okanogan County has a history of mining activity. Many of the first settlers were
591 miners. Mining has, and still does, play an important role in our cultural heritage and
592 economic base.

593 **Purpose**

594 Mineral extraction is an important component of many other activities in Okanogan
595 County. Precious metal extraction provides employment. Rock, sand, and gravel
596 extraction provide employment but in addition provide material for road building and

597 other construction activity. Winter time road maintenance is a critical element in
598 enhancing public safety.

599 **Compatible Uses**

600 The Mineral Lands designation appears as an overlay to the underlying zone. The
601 overlay is created based on the criteria listed earlier. Proposals for commercial mining
602 operations are reviewed in these areas as permitted. Small scale operations for
603 personal use are permitted in all zones in the designation.

604 **Density**

605 The Mineral Lands designation does not alter the densities in underlying zones.

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Chapter Four : LAND USE - RURAL LANDS

607

History

608

Lands in the Rural designation will contain the greatest mix of existing and proposed uses because of the tremendous diversity of these lands. A wide range of compatible uses should be identified with reliance on the underlying zone to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses and the historical characteristics of the neighboring area. Comprehensive review of land use proposals for generated impacts and to insure compatibility will be necessary to prevent conflicts. It is the objective of zoning in the Rural designation to provide an effective mix of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, tourist, and recreational opportunities.

617

Purpose

618

Through the course of comprehensive planning, the County actively identifies and designates city expansion areas and Resource Lands. Incorporated City Limits are established by law and are under the jurisdiction of the legislative bodies of those Cities and Towns. All other lands are designated as Rural.

622

The objective of the Rural designation and its sub-designations is to provide an effective inventory of land for residential and other uses without creating unnecessary conflicts. Neighborhood commercial/service centers will become more necessary and must be appropriately sited. The existing mix of agriculture, resource based activities, recreation, and tourism should be maintained to provide diversity to our economic base. A mix of densities should be maintained to provide an adequate inventory of housing stock.

629

The Rural designation has the potential for the greatest variety of residential densities and permitted and conditional uses. Okanogan County is large in size and varied in topography and climate so that lands in the Rural designation have the potential to exhibit great differences in terms of capacity for settlement patterns and different uses and activities. It is important that Rural Lands are used effectively to generate home sites, agriculture activities, home occupations, neighborhood service areas, recreational activities and a variety of other potential uses necessary to preserve our culture and lifestyle. At the same time, lands in the Rural designation often contain areas of critical habitat, aquifer recharge areas, shorelines of state and local importance, wetlands, and other important features of the land and environment.

640

641 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

642 **GPO – 4.1**

643 Land use designations within the rural lands must provide sufficient land for
644 housing and business activities suited to the rural areas. These designations
645 and the projects they anticipate must be compatible with available water
646 supplies, capacity of the area for on-site septic, and the ability to provide
647 adequate levels of public services.

648 **GPO – 4.2**

649 Okanogan County shall periodically review this Comprehensive Plan to insure
650 the designations contained herein are consistent with designations found in the
651 Critical Areas Ordinance, Shorelines Master Program, Flood Management
652 Programs, and Hazard Mitigation Plan.

653 **GPO – 4.3**

654 Agricultural activities shall be recognized and promoted in the rural designation.

655 **GPO – 4.4**

656 Development proposals shall be reviewed for impacts to the transportation
657 system and conditions of approval will be identified to mitigate adverse impacts
658 to current and future levels of service. Improvements will be required based on a
659 proportionate share nexus to prevent onerous requirements on new development
660 while at the same time avoiding unreasonable impacts to the existing tax base

661 **Designations**

662 To recognize and effectively manage the great diversity of the landscape in
663 Okanogan County, the Rural designation is divided into two sub-designations.
664 These designations are Rural High Density, and Rural Low Density.

665 **RURAL HIGH DENSITY**

666 Rural High Density designations will be located adjacent to urban areas and
667 areas that demonstrate an enhanced ability to provide services. Rural High
668 Density will allow lot sizes of one acre or larger. Smaller lots may be obtained
669 through a cluster subdivision or planned development in accordance with an
670 adopted Performance Based Density Bonus. An areas ability to sustain higher
671 levels of density and a greater array of permitted uses will be assessed on the
672 basis of the following criteria:

673 **Review Elements:**

- 674 • Proximity to urban areas
- 675 • Proximity to major transportation routes
- 676 • Availability of potable water and/or water service providers
- 677 • Proximity to already existing higher density areas
- 678 • Availability of fire protection, emergency services, and other vital services

679 **Compatible Permitted Uses**

- 680 • Residential uses
- 681 • Agricultural activities
- 682 • Home occupations
- 683 • Recreational activities and infrastructure

684 **Compatible Conditional Uses**

- 685 • Processing of agricultural products
- 686 • Sale of agricultural products
- 687 • Neighborhood commercial/service centers
- 688 • Light manufacturing
- 689 • Resource based heavy manufacturing
- 690 • Commercial Tourism
- 691 • Alternative Energy Facilities
- 692 • Mineral Extraction

693 **RURAL LOW DENSITY**

694 Lot sizes in areas designated rural low density will be 5 acres or greater in size.
695 Areas moving away from transportation corridors, in areas where ingress/egress
696 or the location of safe building sites is restricted due to topography, or areas with
697 a demonstrated inability to provide adequate water resources will be designated
698 rural low density. Small lot sizes may be obtained through a cluster subdivision
699 or planned development in accordance with the performance based rating
700 system. The minimum lot sizes created through these processes will be
701 determined by public health requirements.

702 **Compatible Permitted Uses**

- 703 • Residential uses
- 704 • Agricultural activities
- 705 • Home occupations
- 706 • Recreational activities and infrastructure
- 707 • Processing and Sale of Agricultural Products
- 708 • Neighborhood Commercial Serice Centers

- 709 • Mineral Extraction and Processing
- 710 • Forest product Processing

711 **Compatible Conditional Uses**

- 712 • Non-resource Based Heavy Industrial Activitie

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713 **Chapter Five –Urban Lands**

714 **CITY EXPANSION AREAS**

715 **History**

716 Okanogan County and the Cities and Towns therein, recognize that a
717 cooperative effort between local governments is needed to effectively and
718 efficiently serve the needs of the citizens. The City Expansion Area designation
719 is used to identify those lands into which the City or Town intends to grow
720 through a twenty year planning window. The policies and procedures contained
721 in this Comprehensive Plan, supplemented by Intergovernmental Agreements as
722 needed, are designed to give clear direction for the process to designate, review,
723 and amend City Expansion Areas. Subsequent project review and land use
724 decisions, while under the sole authority of the County until such times as the
725 lands annex, are carried out in accordance with the agreed upon processes.

726 **Purpose**

727 As stated above, a clear and cooperative approach to land use planning and
728 decision making between the County and its Cities and Towns, is necessary to
729 successfully conduct the business of the people. The adoption of agreed upon
730 City Expansion Areas into the County Comprehensive Plan accomplishes two
731 specific goals. Cities and Towns have the ability to plan infrastructure and
732 service requirements for a specific growth area. The City or Town can propose
733 pre-annexation designations to promote a predictable growth pattern and efficient
734 extension of infrastructure and to insure sufficient inventory of land for residential,
735 commercial, and other development. The County in turn can incorporate into
736 their Plan the City or Town proposed use of the CEA. This allows the County to
737 accurately analyze the inventory of land available for uses best suited to urban
738 areas and to coordinate uses in the rural areas accordingly.

739 **Designation**

740 The process for designation of City Expansion Areas begins with a proposal from
741 the municipality. Only the municipalities shall propose CEA boundaries. In
742 reviewing proposals for CEA designation, the municipality should consider the
743 following factors:

744

- 745 Current inventory of developable land in the incorporated boundaries.
746 • Inventory of land necessary to provide for projected growth including
747 affordable housing.
748 • Inventory of land necessary to implement an economic development
749 strategy.
750 • Inventory of land necessary to implement a capital facilities plan.
751 • Inventory of land necessary to implement a parks and recreation plan.
752 • Analysis of ability to provide services to designated CEA.

753 The County shall review and adopt City Expansion Areas. In the event of dispute
754 over a proposed CEA boundary, the County shall remand the proposal to the
755 affected Municipality with specific suggestions for change. The Municipality shall
756 consider the suggested changes and return the proposal for further
757 consideration. In the event the dispute is not resolved, the City or Town may
758 bring an appeal under the Land Use Petitions Act under RCW 36.70C.

759 **Amendment**

760 The designated City Expansion Areas are eligible for amendment on an annual
761 basis in keeping with the amendment process for the County Comprehensive
762 Plan. Only the affected municipality may propose amendments to the designated
763 City Expansion Area. Land owners in or adjoining the City Expansion Area must
764 petition the affected municipality to present their request for amendment. Review
765 of proposed amendments shall consider the criteria used in designating City
766 Expansion Areas.

767 **Five Year Review**

768 City Expansion Areas shall be reviewed, along with all other elements of the
769 County Comprehensive Plan after five years from the date of adoption but within
770 six years and every five years thereafter. The review shall consist of any
771 docketed amendments and an internal review for consistency of the
772 Comprehensive Plan, Zone Code, Subdivision Regulation and in the case of
773 CEA's, any adopted Intergovernmental Agreements. Any proposed amendments
774 or identified inconsistencies must be reviewed by the affected municipality and
775 endorsed for consideration by the County.

776 **Zoning and Project Review**

777 The County has the sole authority for land use and project review on lands within
778 the CEA but outside the incorporated boundary. The County, in considering an
779 application for land use/project in the CEA, shall consider the following:

- 780 • Compatibility with any sub-designations by the municipality within the CEA
- 781 • Impact of the project or proposal on municipal services
- 782 • Compatibility with surrounding uses
- 783 • Impact of the project or proposal on the municipal transportation structure

784 The County and affected municipality shall consider a co-lead status on projects
785 or proposals requiring SEPA review. To insure that County Zones provide
786 sufficient control over projects or proposals to insure compatibility with sub-
787 designations within a CEA; to create continuity in terms of implementing
788 conditions of approval; and to create certainty in terms of conditions of approval
789 and vesting for the project or proposal a development agreement will be required
790 between the County, the proponent, and the affected municipality for all projects
791 or proposals within the CEA.

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Chapter Six - Unincorporated Towns

793

Purpose

794

Unincorporated Towns are the rural villages and service centers located in Okanogan County that are not incorporated. The County recognizes the important role they play as a service center and focus point for the surrounding neighborhood. The area within the designation should provide sufficient land for the expansion of the Unincorporated Towns based upon the needs of the residents and the ability of the area to provide services.

795

796

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800

The Comprehensive Plan for Okanogan County recognizes the following Unincorporated Towns and establishes these policies for future planning and development of them.

801

802

803

- Methow

804

- Carlton

805

- Malott

806

- Loomis

807

- Wauconda

808

- Chesaw

809

- Molson

810

- Ellisforde

811

- Mazama

812

- Monse

813

- Nighthawk

814

- Havillah

815

Designation Criteria

816

Unincorporated Towns will be developed based on the following criteria:

817

- Existence of services such as neighborhood retail, tourist retail and government services.

818

819

- Existence of urban density.

820

- Historical value as past settlement with existing tourist activities.

821

- Ability to support more intense development.

822

Future Unincorporated Towns

823

Due to the vast size of Okanogan County, it is important to locate necessary services in proximity to the residents. Settlement patterns will be driven by expansion of agriculture, forestry, and mining on the rural areas as well as an

824

825

826

827 expansion of tourism. New service centers should be considered to minimize
828 impacts to the transportation system brought about by longer trips to obtain basic
829 services.

830 The Unincorporated Towns also serve as a focal point for area residents
831 providing for a sense of community. The demand for new Unincorporated Towns
832 will be created by the needs of the area residents and land owners.

833 Proposals for new Unincorporated towns should be reviewed in accordance with
834 the designation criteria and general planning objectives found in this section.

835 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

836 **GPO – 6.1**

837 Existing Unincorporated Towns act as neighborhood service centers that
838 contribute positively to the social and economic well being of the citizens of the
839 County. Effective planning within the existing boundaries of the Unincorporated
840 Towns and expansion areas provides benefit to the public by increasing the
841 proximity of our citizens to necessary supplies and services.

842 **GPO – 6.2**

843 Existing Unincorporated Towns should develop in such a manner that adequate
844 water supplies are available and on-site septic systems are sufficient to provide
845 for the users of the services provided within them.

846 **GPO – 6.3**

847 Existing Unincorporated Towns should develop in such a manner that the
848 impacts to the transportation system brought about by the increased users of the
849 services provided are mitigated to avoid an erosion of the level of service
850 provided.

851 **GPO -6.4**

852 Underlying zoning within Unincorporated Towns and their expansion areas must
853 provide an effective mix of permitted and conditional uses that provide the
854 services appropriate to a neighborhood service center without impacting the
855 ability of the towns and cities to develop regional services within their existing
856 boundaries or urban growth areas.

857 **GPO – 6.5**

858 Unincorporated Towns shall retain their existing zoning. Rezoning to compatible
859 zones will be on an elective basis by the landowners.

860

Chapter Seven – SUB-AREAS

861 Purpose

862 It is the intent of the County to ensure that the updated County Comprehensive
863 Plan is responsive to the wide range of landscapes and demography within the
864 County borders. These differences may create the need for zoning driven by
865 policies that respond to the unique conditions of the area.

866 The County may designate sub-areas within this comprehensive plan. Zoning
867 may be assigned that resolves the specific issues of the area. While the zoning in
868 any sub-area may be different the zones will be adopted within the County Zone
869 Code and will be generally applicable throughout the County. All zones within a
870 sub-area will be consistent in their application as is required by law.

871 ADOPTED SUB-AREAS

872 Methow Sub-Area

873 The Methow sub-area is a region with a dynamic river system and challenging
874 topography. These circumstances have created the need for a different mix of
875 zoning to resolve these local issues. Recognizing these issues, the Methow
876 Valley residents have over the years initiated amendments to the 1964
877 comprehensive plan. The existing Methow Review District is adopted as a sub-
878 unit into this comprehensive plan and is included as appendix B.

879 The documents that comprise the existing Methow Review District are:

- 880 a) Methow Valley Plan April 5, 1976
- 881 b) Community Master Plan, Methow Valley Planning Area sub-unit A
- 882 June 26, 1989
- 883 c) Upper Methow Valley Comprehensive Plan March 6, 2000

884

Chapter Eight – CIRCULATION ELEMENT

885

Introduction

886 Okanogan County has experienced modest growth activity in the past which is
887 expected to continue in coming years. To effectively and efficiently accommodate
888 this growth in an orderly fashion, Okanogan County, the Confederated Tribes of
889 the Colville Reservation, and the cities and towns in the county have recognized
890 the need for a transportation plan that describes the transportation system as it
891 exists today and addresses the transportation needs for the next 20 years. This
892 Transportation Element is the first to be prepared for Okanogan County and is an
893 important milestone in achieving a coordinated transportation system which
894 integrates the needs of each of the County's jurisdictions and the unincorporated
895 rural areas, within the context of the larger North Central Washington Region.

896

Purpose of the Transportation Element

897 As the first countywide transportation element, this document serves several
898 purposes. It serves as an investigation into how the County's transportation
899 system and transportation usage is structured, and is an important resource for
900 the County, its jurisdictions, its citizens, and the North Central Regional
901 Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO). It examines the need to provide
902 for different types and levels of transportation services, particularly in regard to
903 the needs of urban versus rural areas.

904 The countywide transportation element is a critical component of the County's
905 overall comprehensive plan. The transportation element is intended to guide an
906 ongoing planning and decision making process that shapes the transportation
907 system, ensures that needs are addressed within the available resources, and
908 between the public and private sectors.

909

The Planning Process

910 The process of developing the Okanogan County Transportation Element took
911 place over a period of approximately 12 months and involved numerous citizens,
912 staff from each of the cities within the County, County Staff, the Confederated
913 Tribes of the Colville Reservation and Washington State Department of
914 Transportation (WSDOT). The transportation planning process began with an
915 assessment of existing conditions. This was followed by a discussion of future
916 conditions through goal setting and forecasting. Anticipated future transportation
917 system needs were analyzed and this culminated in an implementation plan.

918 Outlined below are the steps that were taken in the development of the
919 Transportation Element.

- 920 • **Early and Continuous Public Participation** -Public Participation was
921 central to development of the Transportation Element. Opportunities for
922 community involvement were provided in the form of Regional
923 Transportation Advisory Group (RTAG) meetings which were open to the
924 public, as well as formal public hearings.
- 925 • **Determine the Characteristics of the Current Transportation System** -
926 An inventory and description of the current transportation system was
927 prepared to serve as the foundation of the element. This information is
928 supplemented with an inventory of the existing demographic and land use
929 conditions as well as recent development trends.
- 930 • **Identify Issues: Constraints and Opportunities** -A series of community
931 workshops were held throughout Okanogan County to identify both real
932 and perceived constraints affecting the transportation system, and
933 opportunities for transportation system improvements.
- 934 • **Establish Countywide Level Of Service Standards** -The Transportation
935 Element establishes countywide Level of Service standards, as well as
936 energy conservation and air quality guidelines.
- 937 • **Establish Transportation Goals, Objectives and Policies** -The Element
938 contains transportation goals, objectives and policies resulting from
939 discussions with each city in the County, each planning region in the
940 County and the County as a whole.
- 941 • **Forecast Future Transportation/Travel Demand** -Six-year and 20-year
942 traffic forecasts were completed based upon forecasted growth;
943 anticipated land use patterns were also provided.
- 944 • **Identify Future Deficiencies** -Based upon the forecasted travel demand,
945 potential system deficiencies were analyzed and alternative methods to
946 address them identified.
- 947 • **Identify Environmental Impacts** -The Transportation Element
948 considered the environmental impacts of proposed system improvements,
949 as well as appropriate mitigation measures (under separate document).
- 950 • **Establish a Six-Year Financial Plan and Implementation Program** -
951 The Transportation Element contains a references the county's six year
952 transportation improvement plan which identifies the necessary tasks and
953 their priority, considers the County's funding capacity and identifies the
954 agency(s) responsible for implementation.

955 **Transportation Planning In Washington**

956 In 1990, the Washington State Legislature enacted the Growth Management Act
957 (GMA) which set a new course for the development of transportation plans.
958 Traditionally, Washington communities have planned for land use and
959 transportation independent of one another. Most transportation system

960 improvements were planned for in reaction to congestion or safety concerns. The
961 GMA asserts that land use and transportation system planning must be
962 coordinated. Further, the GMA requires that land use planning and development
963 approvals be linked with the provision of transportation facilities through the
964 concurrency requirement.

965 Although Okanogan County is not currently subject to the requirements of the
966 GMA, these requirements have served as basic guidelines in the preparation of
967 the Transportation Element.

968 As part of the Growth Management Program, the State Legislature authorized
969 the formation of Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) whose
970 purpose is to plan for the development and use of regional transportation
971 facilities and services. Okanogan County is one of three counties located within
972 the North Central RTPO. Douglas and Chelan are the other counties within the
973 region. The North Central RTPO is one of the newer organizations to be
974 designated in Washington State (June of 1993) and has not yet completed its
975 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) -a key function of the RTPO. According to
976 the 1992-1993 annual report prepared by WSDOT, North Central's RTP is due in
977 June of 1997

978 This Transportation Element, along with those prepared/being prepared by
979 Chelan and Douglas Counties together will serve as important groundwork for
980 the development of the North Central RTP.

981 **THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

982 The Okanogan County Transportation Element will be incorporated within the
983 overall countywide comprehensive plan. Even though the County is not subject to
984 the requirements of the GMA and is preparing its Transportation Element
985 independent of its Land Use Element, land use characteristics -current and
986 projected -have been carefully considered in the preparation of this document.

987 **Land Use and Transportation**

988 The Transportation Element establishes a vital link between land use and the
989 transportation facilities and services needed to meet current system deficiencies
990 and to support growth. The anticipated types, intensity and timing of land
991 development in the County will largely determine the mode of transportation,
992 provided its effectiveness in moving people, and the travel behavior of people
993 using the land. In addition, land use decisions outside of the County impact the
994 transportation system, and attention must be paid to the anticipated trends in
995 these peripheral areas.

996 The County's resources are limited, therefore the County must achieve a balance
997 among the needs within each of the four regions, rural versus urban areas and

998 various modes of travel to maximize person carrying capacity instead of vehicle-
999 moving capacity. With large expanses of sparsely populated land, most travel in
1000 Okanogan County tends to be by private vehicle. However, even in a largely rural
1001 county, there are opportunities to accommodate travel alternatives to the single
1002 occupant vehicle. A clear understanding of land use development patterns will
1003 enable the County to effectively provide for these alternatives.

1004 In the preparation of this element, the available existing land use information and
1005 future land use plans for the cities and towns, as well as the County and the
1006 Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation have been examined. Based on
1007 this information, land use alternatives have been developed and analyzed in
1008 terms of the implications for meeting future transportation needs.

1009 **Okanogan County Planning Regions**

1010 Okanogan County is divided into four (4) planning regions: North, Central, South,
1011 and Methow. By dividing the County into four regions, the specific needs of local
1012 jurisdictions and surrounding development in rural areas can be better
1013 addressed. Figure 1-1 identifies the boundaries of the planning regions. The
1014 transportation study for the Central Region was completed in May of 1994. The
1015 results of that study are incorporated into this element.

1016 **Functional Classification System**

1017 Classification of streets and highways in the State of Washington is based upon
1018 guidelines prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Streets are
1019 classified based on the degree to which they provide through movement and land
1020 access functions. Specific criteria defining streets include the following:

- 1021 • The character and relative length of trips;
- 1022 • Anticipated or projected traffic volume; and
- 1023 • The relationship of a street to the land use it serves.

1024 Each local jurisdiction is responsible for defining its transportation system into the
1025 following functional classifications:

1026 **Principal Arterial:** (01 -Rural/Interstate) -Streets and highways which
1027 contain the greatest portion of through or long-distance travel. Such
1028 facilities serve the high-volume travel corridors that connect the major
1029 generators of traffic. The selected routes provide an integrated system for
1030 complete circulation of traffic, including ties to the major rural highways
1031 entering the urban area. Generally, major arterials include high traffic
1032 volume streets.

1033 **Minor Arterial:** (06 -Rural/ Minor) -Streets and highways which connect
1034 with remaining arterial and collector roads that extend into the urban area.

1035 Minor arterial streets and highways serve less concentrated traffic-
1036 generating areas such as neighborhood shopping centers and schools.
1037 Minor arterial streets serve as boundaries to neighborhoods and collect
1038 traffic from collector streets. Although the predominant function of minor
1039 arterial streets is the movement of through traffic, they also provide for
1040 considerable local traffic that originates or is destined to points along the
1041 corridor.

1042 **Major Collector: (07 -Rural Major Collector)** -These routes should provide
1043 service to the county seat if not on an arterial route, to larger towns not
1044 directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of
1045 equivalent inter-county importance, such as consolidated schools,
1046 shipping points, county parks, important agricultural areas, etc. In addition,
1047 these routes should link larger towns and/or cities with routes of higher
1048 classification, and should serve the more important inter-county travel
1049 corridors.

1050 **Minor Collector: (08 -Rural Minor Collector)** -These routes should be
1051 spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, collect traffic from
1052 local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of
1053 a collector road. In addition, these routes should provide service to the
1054 remaining smaller communities, and link the locally important traffic
1055 generators with their rural hinterland.

1056 **Local Access: (09 -Rural Unclassified)** -Streets not selected for inclusion
1057 in the arterial or collector classes. They allow access to individual homes,
1058 shops, and similar traffic destinations. Direct access to abutting land is
1059 essential, for all traffic originates from or is destined to abutting land.
1060 Through traffic should be discouraged by appropriate geometric design
1061 and/or traffic control devices.

1062 Functional classification of major roads and State Routes in Okanogan County
1063 are shown on Figure 1-2, and detailed in Appendix A-1 and A-2..

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Chapter Nine - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM

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Okanogan County adopted a Shorelines Master Program as required in RCW 90.58. The Shorelines Master Program is currently under review. The review of the Shorelines Master Program will continue on an independent schedule with the exception of a final consistency review and review for impact to the buildable lands analysis.

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The Shorelines Master Program will be adopted by ordinance by the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners. To provide the maximum possible local control the Shorelines Master Program will be implemented under the minimum jurisdiction required by statute. The Critical Areas Ordinance will provide necessary regulation in those areas outside of the jurisdiction of the Shoreline Master Program.

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CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE

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Okanogan County adopted a Critical Areas Ordinance as required in RCW 36.70A. The review of the Critical Areas Ordinance will be on an independent schedule with the exception of a final consistency review and review for impact to the buildable lands analysis.

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The Critical Areas Ordinance provides regulation relating to sensitive areas such as wetlands, critical habitat, and geologic hazards and will contain the flood management program for Okanogan County.

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The Critical Areas Ordinance will be adopted by ordinance by the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners.

1087 **Chapter Ten – COORDINATION**

1088 **FEDERAL AGENCIES**

1089 Local government has the responsibility to protect the local tax base, value of
1090 private property, economic stability, and, in general the well being of the local
1091 community. These critical functions are closely entangled with federal and state
1092 management decisions.

1093 Congress has long recognized the importance of local governance to the
1094 effective management of the nation’s resources. It has provided for the
1095 involvement of local authority in every federal land use statute passed over the
1096 past 35 years. In many of these statutes, Congress has mandated that the
1097 federal land use agencies “coordinate” their policies and management activities
1098 with local government.

1099 Coordination means the federal agencies shall give prior notice to the local
1100 government of agency plans and management activities and, among other
1101 criteria, requires that the agencies make their policies and management activities
1102 consistent with local plans. Congress has directed the federal agencies to
1103 coordinate with local government because they recognize that local authority
1104 must be consulted and involved in the decision making process above and
1105 before the public input process.

1106 **Authority:**

- 1107 • United States Code (USC)
- 1108 • 43 U.S.C. 1712 Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA)
- 1109 (BLM)
- 1110 • 43 C.F.R. 1601 Planning
- 1111 • 16 U.S.C. 1604 National Forest Management Act (NFMA)
- 1112 • 16 U.S.C. 1533 Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- 1113 • 16 U.S.C. 1271 Wild and Scenic River Act
- 1114 • 42 U.S.C. 7401 Clean Air Act
- 1115 • 33 U.S.C. 1251 Clean Water Act
- 1116 • 16 U.S.C. 2003 Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act
- 1117 • 42 U.S.C. 4331 National Environmental Policy Act

1118 **STATE AGENCIES**

1119 The State Environmental Policy Act RCW 43.21C sets forth a consistent process
1120 for review of probable, significant, and adverse impacts brought about by land
1121 use decisions, both project specific and on a program level. The actions of State

1122 Agencies, with few specifically enumerated exemptions, are subject to review
1123 under SEPA. The actions of the Legislature are categorically exempt from SEPA
1124 review.

1125 It is clear the intent of the Legislature was for State Agencies to coordinate
1126 closely with local government to ensure Agency decisions are consistent with
1127 local plans. As local government is charged with the responsibility for delivery of
1128 a wide array of critical services it is critical that State Agencies interact with
1129 counties in an effective and open manner. Okanogan County has adopted OCC
1130 Section 18, Coordination, to identify clear protocols to inform Federal and State
1131 Agencies in their efforts to meet coordination and consistency requirements.

1132 **Citations**

- 1133 • RCW 36.70A.103
- 1134 • RCW 36.70A.210
- 1135 • RCW 36.70A.370
- 1136 • WAC 365-195-765

DRAFT