# Table of Contents

(Revised 7/17/09)

## Chapter One: The Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan

- Executive Statement 1
- Authority 2
- Vision Statement 2
- Description of Process 3
  - Neighborhood Groups 4
  - Technical Committees 4
- Adoption Process 5
- Amendment Process 6
  - Docketing 6
  - Five Year Review 7
- County Wide Planning Policies 8
  - County Wide Planning Policy 1 - 20 8
- Private Property and Water Rights 11
  - Citations 11
  - Property Rights 11
  - Water Rights 12

## Chapter Two: Existing Conditions

- Current Land Use 13

## Chapter Three: Resource Lands

- History 16
  - Agriculture 16
  - Forestry 16
  - Minerals 16
  - Purpose 16
  - Authority 17
  - Classifications 17
  - Criteria 17
- Agricultural Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance 17
- Forest Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance 18
- Mineral Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance 18
- Urban Resource 19
  - Density in Urban Resource Lands 19
- Mapping 20
  - Agriculture Lands Map 20
  - Forest Lands Map 20
  - Mineral Lands Map 20
Chapter Six: LAMIRDS (Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development)

- Purpose 34
- Designation of Criteria 34
- General Planning Objectives GPO– 6.1 – 6.6 35

Chapter Seven: Overlays

- Purpose 36
- Wildfire Protection Overlay
  - Purpose 36
- Airport Protection Overlay
  - Purpose 37

Chapter Eight: Transportation

- Adoption by Reference 38
- Future Study and Review 38
- General Planning Objectives GPO– 8.1 38

Chapter Nine: Affordable Housing

- Introduction 39
- Housing Conditions and Needs 39
- Tenure and Occupancy 40
- Cost of Housing 41
- Alternative Housing 42
- Worker Housing 43
- Goals, Policies and Objectives 43
- Housing Strategies
  - Strategy 1.1 – 16.1 45

Chapter Ten: Capital Facilities

- Adoption by Reference 48
- Amendments 48

Chapter Eleven: Economic Development

- Overview 49
- Vision 50
- Mission 50
- General Economic and Income Profile 51
- Employment Trends 57
- Work Force Development 59
- Median Household Income 60
### More To Come in This Area

- **Strengths**
- **Weaknesses of Local Economy**
- **Land Use, Transportation, Utilities, Work Force, Housing and Natural/Cultural Resources**

### Goals and Policies

- **Goal ED-1**
- **Goal ED-2**
- **Goal ED-3**
- **Goal ED-4**
- **Goal ED-5**
- **Goal ED-6**
- **Goal ED-7**
- **Goal ED-8**

### Annual Analysis and Review

- **Recreation Plan**

### Chapter Twelve: Hazard Vulnerability Assessment and Mitigation

- **Hazard Mitigation Plan**
- **General Planning Objectives – GPO 2.1**

### Chapter Thirteen: Environmental Protection

- **Shoreline Master Program**
  - **General Planning Objectives – GPO 13.1**
- **Critical Areas**

### Chapter 14: Coordination

- **Federal Agencies**
  - **Authority**
- **State Agencies**
  - **Citations**
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 successfully complete a review of the then existing Comprehensive Plan. The current plan was adopted in 1995 and has been subject to little review or change since that time. Previous attempts to review and revise the plan on a comprehensive basis had not been completed. The Board of County Commissioners believed the existing plan, in conjunction with the zone code and subdivision regulation which implements the plan, was not adequate to insure a high level of local control and defensible local decisions. The existing plan did not provide the policy level guidance, specific land use regulation, or the necessary land use permitting tools to properly preserve the property rights of private property owners while at the same time protecting our land and environmental resources for future generations.

The Board of County Commissioners also anticipated the day when Okanogan County would be required to plan under RCW 36.70A, the Growth Management Act (GMA). The existing comprehensive plan, created under the authority of RCW 35.70, the Planning Enabling Act, was not consistent in terms of terminology or structure with GMA. The Board of County Commissioners believed it was desirable to review the outdated comprehensive plan and to convert it to GMA compatible terms and structure. By accomplishing this it was believed Okanogan County would be in the best position to defend the local plans should they come under the requirements of RCW 36.70A, review by the Growth Management Hearings Board at some future date.

Under the direction of the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners, this Comprehensive Plan, along with accompanying maps and enabling regulation has been prepared by the Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development, and Community Development Department working in conjunction with other county departments, contracted planning professionals, and most importantly many volunteers from the ranks of the citizens of Okanogan County.

This comprehensive plan recognizes the rights of our citizens to own and utilize private property. This comprehensive plan, along with implementing regulation, strives to provide the effective land use tools to enable the property owner to realize the full enjoyment of their property while preserving the ability of future generations to enjoy all that the land provides.
Authority

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

VISION STATEMENT

Okanogan County is the largest county in the State of Washington, with borders from Canada to the Methow Valley. There are tremendous extremes in terms of geography and four seasons which have led to great diversity in occupation and lifestyle. What is consistent is the independent spirit of our citizens and the universal belief in our Constitutional Rights. The Citizens of Okanogan County share a love of the rural lifestyle and independence that is established upon the customs and cultures that are the foundation of our values and moral obligations to become the best stewards of our land and communities. We further believe in the multi-use of our natural resources while assuring that the land will provide for future generations.

Okanogan County was one of the last frontiers to be settled. People came here seeking the wealth that could be obtained from the minerals, timber, grazing, agriculture, and other natural resources. With the farmers and cattleman came a greater stewardship of the land and appreciation of the need to look ahead with a vision to ensure that future generations could prosper and enjoy this economic vitality.

The residents of Okanogan County understand the accountability that those who use the land today will accept the commitment to insure that renewable resources are replenished and consumable resources are used wisely. As Okanogan County has grown with discovery, abounding with rivers, lakes and wildlife recreation, hunting and fishing has also become an economic generator to our local businesses. The roadway ahead must be paved with the knowledge we have gained from the past.

Just as the Constitution guarantees our right to own and use the land it requires us to respect the rights and freedoms of others. This Comprehensive Plan was created by people of many backgrounds and viewpoints but is the plan for the
County as a whole. This plan is driven by the common belief that to preserve the
future we must act wisely today.

DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS

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

A revised draft was presented for review under SEPA in January of 2009. It is
anticipated that SEPA review will be completed by June of 2009. It is anticipated
the highly The SEPA review is ongoing as the plan is reviewed and revised. A
refined draft emerged emerging from the initial SEPA process and was will be
scheduled for hearings in front of the Planning Commission in March of 2009 and
followed by hearings before the Board of County Commissioners in late summer
June of 2009. Adoption is anticipated by December 31, June 30, 2009.

Information provided by the neighborhood groups and technical committees was
is being used in a concurrent process to update the zone code and subdivision
regulations. These code sections were are scheduled to track with the review
and adoption process of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition, the Shorelines
Master Program, and Critical Areas Ordinance is under review for update and
scheduled for completion by December 31, 2009. A Wildfire-Urban interface
area is in draft form and is scheduled for review and adoption concurrent with the
Comprehensive Plan. The Flood Management Plans for the Methow and
Okanogan Rivers are completed. The work of the watershed councils is on-
going. These plans will be referenced in the Comprehensive Plan to insure
review for consistency. They will be adopted by ordinance in concurrent but
separate processes.
Neighborhood Groups

The neighborhood groups formed to facilitate this process are:

- Middle Methow
- Lower Methow
- Brewster
- Okanogan-Omak
- Riverside
- Tunk
- Conconully
- Wauconda/Aeneas Valley
- Loomis
- Chesaw
- Tonasket
- Oroville
- Mazama Advisory Committee (already created)

Technical Committees

- Resource Lands
- Urban Growth Area (Cities)
- Economic Development (Economic Alliance)
- Affordable Housing (Okanogan County Community Action Council)

Vision Statements: Goals and Policies (new section added Feb 22, 2009)

Where the neighborhood groups created vision statements or goals and policies, they appear as presented in appendix A of this plan. Where the neighborhood groups did not adopt statements, the planning staff drafted statements based on the critical issues expressed by the groups. When more than one version was created or when the neighborhood groups divided into smaller regions or groups with different issues, every effort was made to capture every perspective.

These statements appear in this plan to provide information regarding the perspective and important issues of the people attending the neighborhood groups meetings. The statements carry no regulatory weight but serve to give the body of regulation contained in this comprehensive plan. It is not suggested that these statements capture the perspective and important issues of every person living in a neighborhood group area. These statements represent the vision and important issues of those who participated in the neighborhood planning process.
ADOPITION PROCESS

The Comprehensive Plan is adopted under the legislative powers of the Board of County Commissioners as defined in RCW 36.70, the Planning Enabling Act.

The Comprehensive Plan and Comprehensive Land Use Designation Map identify resource areas, compatible land uses, and densities in all unincorporated areas, including public lands. The Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan identifies existing incorporated boundaries of the Cities and Towns but has no authority within those boundaries.

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

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

As a land use control, the Comprehensive plan is adopted by ordinance by the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners. The Board of County Commissioners is required to conduct an open record public hearing. After hearing all testimony and examining submitted information, including the complete record of the Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners may adopt by ordinance, amend and adopt by ordinance, or remand the Comprehensive Plan back to staff for additional review. If amended or remanded, the Board of County Commissioners will determine if a new hearing is required before the Planning Commission. In the event of remand or amendment, the Board of County Commissioners, after consulting with the designated SEPA responsible official, will determine if additional review under SEPA is required.

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

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

Docking

The period for docking proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan or Comprehensive Land Use Designation map will begin January 31 and end on June 1 of each calendar year. The proposed amendments will be submitted on forms provided by the Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development. The Director of Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development or others as designated by the Board of County Commissioners shall review each proposal for completeness and for consistency with the County Wide Planning Policies and all applicable State Laws and Okanogan County Code. The determination of complete application will be made by June 30 of each year.

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

Proposed amendments to the Urban Growth Area of any City or Town must be docketed with the affected City or Town in accordance with the UGA section of the Comprehensive Plan. The Board of County Commissioners will consult with the affected City or Town before determining if an amendment to the UGA will be forwarded for review.

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

The Board of County Commissioners shall, before December 31 of each year, conduct an open record public hearing to consider the recommendation of the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission, testimony, and other information submitted. The Board of County Commissioners shall adopt by ordinance any amendment to be approved or denied. The Board of County Commissioners shall adopt Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law to support their decision.
The final decision of the Board of County Commissioners shall be considered valid on its face. The final decision of the Board of County Commissioners is appealable, by those with standing, in accordance with RCW 36.70C (Land Use Petitions Act)

Five Year Review

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

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

COUNTY WIDE PLANNING POLICIES

The process of updating the Comprehensive Plan will be guided by a series of Countywide Planning Policies. The Countywide Planning Policies identify key planning principles and provide a framework for actively involving local residents, business and property owners, the cities and towns, local service providers, and the Colville Confederated Tribes. These policies have been developed and refined through a series of intergovernmental coordination meetings, as well as several opportunities for public review. There will be additional opportunities to review and comment on the following Countywide Planning Policies throughout the comprehensive planning process.

County Wide Planning Policy 1

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

County Wide Planning Policy 2

It is the intent of Okanogan County to promote the coordination of all local planning initiatives and to integrate as appropriate other plans and priorities into the County Comprehensive Plan including, but not limited to: approved Watershed Plans, Economic Development Strategies, approved Salmon Recovery Plans, Recreation Trail Plans, Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plans, Shoreline Master Programs, Community Wild Fire Protection Plans, and Transportation Plans.
County Wide Planning Policy 3

Although Okanogan County is not required to fully comply with the provisions of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), it is the intent of the County to be proactive in the use and interpretation of GMA planning principles and practices to guide the process of updating the County Comprehensive Plan.

County Wide Planning Policy 4

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

County Wide Planning Policy 5

The updated Comprehensive Plan will include County-wide Goals and Policies that address land use, natural resource lands, environmentally sensitive areas, natural hazards, community safety, economic development, transportation, housing, parks and recreation, utilities, essential public facilities, and capital facilities needs and priorities.

County Wide Planning Policy 6

It is the intent of the County to ensure that the updated County Comprehensive Plan be sensitive to the diversity of unique landscapes and demography within the County. To allow for resident and geographic specific planning, the County will be divided into the following planning areas:

- Upper Okanogan Valley
- Mid-Okanogan Valley
- Tonasket
- Riverside
- Loomis
- Methow Valley (Mazama, Middle, Lower)
- Brewster/Pateros Area

The planning area boundaries were created to reflect different local conditions and to recognize historical service areas and transportation corridors.

County Wide Planning Policy 7

Each of the identified planning areas will develop Comprehensive Plan Designations that will address unique local circumstances and priorities and be consistent with the County wide and the Comprehensive plan element Policies.
County Wide Planning Policy 8

The County will consult with the incorporated cities, adjacent counties, the Colville Confederated Tribes, and State and Federal organizations with interests within the county throughout the County Comprehensive Planning Process as necessary and appropriate and applicable.

County Wide Planning Policy 7

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

County Wide Planning Policy 8

It is the intent of Okanogan County to actively involve and coordinate with the incorporated cities and towns throughout the County Comprehensive Planning process.

County Wide Planning Policy 9

In partnership with the incorporated cities and towns, the County will establish criteria for the allocation of projected population growth in order to identify and map parcel-specific Urban Growth Areas (UGA) that will provide adequate land to meet the projected needs of the City or Town population allocations at urban densities. Additionally, the UGA will reflect a realistic assessment of the logical outer boundaries for the cost-effective provision of urban services. These UGAs shall remain interim until adopted by the cities and towns.

County Wide Planning Policy 10

The County will actively consult with the Colville Confederated Tribes in updating the County Comprehensive Plan and will establish a protocol for integrating the updated plan with the Comprehensive Plan prepared by the Tribes for the Colville Reservation and Trust Lands as necessary and appropriate and applicable.

County Wide Planning Policy 11

Okanogan County will establish criteria to identify and map environmentally sensitive areas and will prepare regulations to preserve and protect these areas utilizing the provisions of Best Available Science.
County Wide Planning Policy 12

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

County Wide Planning Policy 13

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

County Wide Planning Policy 14

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

County Wide Planning Policy 15

Okanogan County will evaluate current and anticipated transportation opportunities to ensure the development of a transportation system that is efficient, safe, environmentally sensitive, serves a diverse population, and improves facilities concurrent with new land development.

County Wide Planning Policy 16

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

County Wide Planning Policy 17

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

County Wide Planning Policy 18

It is the intent of Okanogan County to establish policies, which address the protection of people and property from wildfires, identifies facilities and services needed for safe and coordinated land management in case of wildfire and guides future development in a direction which is proactive in the attempt to reduce the adverse effects of wildfire.
County Wide Planning Policy 19

It is the intent of the County to provide a streamlined and predictable planning and permitting process. Okanogan County will define the interrelationships between the multiple policies and regulations as well as develop a mechanism to provide for intra-County and intergovernmental coordination.

County Wide Planning Policy 22

To the greatest extent possible, Okanogan County will recognize and integrate existing plans during the development of planning area and sub-area plans.

County Wide Planning Policy 20

It is the intent of Okanogan County to establish protocols to identify and protect cultural resources throughout the county.

PRIVATE PROPERTY AND WATER RIGHTS

Citations:
- United States Constitution, Fifth Amendment
- Washington State Constitution, Article 1, Section 16
- RCW Chapter 8.08 Eminent Domain by Counties
- RCW Chapter 8.25 Eminent Domain Proceedings
- RCW 36.70A.370 Protection of Property Rights

Property Rights

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

The actions of government constitute a "taking" when:
- The property is physically appropriated; or
- By regulating or limiting the use of property under the governments police power authority in such a way as to destroy one or more of the fundamental attributes of ownership which are: the right to possess, the right to exclude others, and the right to dispose of property; or
- Deny all reasonable economic use of the property; or
- Requiring property owners to provide a public benefit rather than mitigating an impact caused by the proposed use of the land.
Water Rights

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

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

- Water banking.
- Density Bonuses as adopted in a Performance Based Density Bonus Public Benefit Rating System that promotes the use of water in the County or promotes the transfer of water for use in the County.
- Seeking funding for the acquisition of water rights for use in the County.
- Promote the re-issuance of water rights lost through relinquishment within Okanogan County.
- Promote the mitigation of impacts caused by the use of water transferred outside of the County by the end user of the water. This statement should not be construed in any manner that implies any interference with an owner's right to sell their water right to any buyer.
Chapter Two: EXISTING CONDITIONS

CURRENT LAND USE

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

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use Description</th>
<th>Acreage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Minimum Requirement District (includes reservation &amp; zone designation often within unclassified designation on the comprehensive plan map)</td>
<td>2,234,562.916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colville Reservation (Not a zone designation)</td>
<td>1,556,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Use</td>
<td>14,224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural-Residential Designation</td>
<td>491,050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airport Development District</td>
<td>176,645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barnholt Loop</td>
<td>642,670</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton Agriculture</td>
<td>66,753</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carlton Commercial</td>
<td>16,796</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>223,291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>7,479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Density Residential</td>
<td>4,605,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molson Overlay</td>
<td>68,725,526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRD1</td>
<td>601,612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MRD 12,500</td>
<td>27,531</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planned Development</td>
<td>61,412</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Residential</td>
<td>17,430,977</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School District 350</td>
<td>1,043,944,462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Review Commercial</td>
<td>36,069</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suburban Residential</td>
<td>296,384</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urban Residential</td>
<td>32,415</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valley Floor</td>
<td>27,488,096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporated Cities/Towns</td>
<td>7,877.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1: Historical Population Data 1960-2000

![Graph showing historical population data for Okanogan County from 1955 to 2005. The data shows a steady increase in population over the years.](image)

**Table 1:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Okanogan</td>
<td>25,520</td>
<td>25,100</td>
<td>25,867</td>
<td>26,800</td>
<td>30,663</td>
<td>32,687</td>
<td>33,350</td>
<td>38,943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Census</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Projections</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>5,894,12</td>
<td>6,256,400</td>
<td>6,792,318</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okanogan</td>
<td>39,564</td>
<td>39,600</td>
<td>42,739</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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/Foercasting | October 2007
Chapter Three: LAND USE - RESOURCE LANDS

History

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

Agriculture

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

Forestry

- 1,721 jobs in forestry and related

Minerals

- 76 jobs are directly tied to mining activities

Purpose

The residents of Okanogan County recognize the land as a valuable and irreplaceable resource. The purpose of the Resource Land Designation is to recognize the value of these lands to the economic and cultural well being of the residents of Okanogan County. Through the use of innovative planning tools the critical mass of land necessary to achieve sustainability for the future can be preserved without dismissing the immediate needs of both the individual landowner and the residents as a whole.

Through the use of a wide variety of incentive based and regulatory approaches, it is the purpose of this Plan to achieve the preservation of the amount of land necessary to allow sustainable levels of resource based activities. The land is the basis for most human activities. It is understood that a balance amongst all the necessary land use objectives must be realized. In addition to resource based activities, the land must provide housing, wildlife habitat, water storage and purification, transportation corridors, recreation, and many other critical necessities. Recognizing these needs, this plan attempts to designate the lands best suited for resource based activities as Resource Lands.
Authority

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

Classifications
- Agricultural Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance
- Mineral Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance
- Forest Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance
- Urban Resource

Criteria

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

AGRICULTURAL LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Availability of public facilities
- Tax status
- Availability of public services
- Relationship or proximity to Urban Growth Areas
- Parcel size
- Land use settlement patterns and their compatibility with agricultural
  practices
- Intensity of nearby land uses
- History of land development permits issued nearby
- Land values under alternative uses
- Proximity of markets
- Soil types
- Climate of area
- Topography and altitude
- Changing markets influence on possible crop types
FOREST LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Availability of public facilities
- Tax status
- Availability of public services
- Relationship or proximity to Urban Growth Areas
- Parcel size
- Land use settlement patterns and their compatibility with forest practices
- Intensity of nearby land uses
- History of land development permits issued nearby
- Land values under alternative uses
- Proximity of markets
- Soil types
- Climate of area
- Topography and altitude

MINERAL LANDS OF LONG TERM COMMERCIAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Presence of known and potential deposits of sand, gravel, and valuable metallic substances and other minerals as appropriate.
- Geologic Factors
- Environmental Factors
- Economic Factors
- Depth of the resource
- Depth of the overburden
- Physical properties of the resource including quality and type
- Life of the resource
- Resource availability in the region
- Accessibility and proximity to the point of use or market

In classifying mineral lands, the County shall consider the effects of proximity to population areas and the possibility of more intense uses of the land as indicated by:

- General land use patterns in the area
- Availability of utilities
- Availability and adequacy of water supply
- Surrounding parcel size and surrounding uses
- Subdivision or zoning for urban or small lots
- Availability of public roads and other public services
URBAN RESOURCE

The Urban Resource Designation is used to designate lands currently in active agricultural production within Urban Growth Areas or in proximity to urban centers.

As stated previously Okanogan County protects and promotes agriculture as not only an important foundation block of our local economy but as an integral part of our heritage. Okanogan County further recognizes that many of our agricultural operations fall in or near urban centers. As more pressure mounts on the transportation grid and the cost of transporting food and materials grows, it is important that local policies recognize a need to preserve the capacity to provide a local independent food supply. For future generations to thrive, it is imperative a local dependable food supply is possible.

The Urban Resource designation recognizes the existence of viable agricultural lands within or adjacent to urban growth centers. Because these lands are proximate to urban densities, the potential for conflict from incompatible uses is increased. Development adjacent to or within Urban Resource areas must be reviewed for suitable buffers. Plat notes must disclose to the potential buyer of land within these developments the potential for inconvenience brought about by the proximity of agricultural operations.

Lands bearing the urban resource designation are so designated to recognize the critical contribution they make to the food supply and agricultural economy. As population centers grow eventually this land might be utilized in a different manner to provide the greatest public benefit. Lands designated as Urban Resource are located in such a manner that they are automatically planned as transition areas as well. The re-designation of these lands will be part of an annual review process of the Comprehensive Plan and such proposals must be reviewed in coordination with the adjacent city where appropriate. The de-designation of Urban Resource Lands located in or adjacent to LAMIRD’s must be reviewed in conjunction with the sub-area plan, if any, for the LAMIRD.

Density in Urban Resource Lands

Lands currently in use for agricultural use that are in or adjacent to designated Urban Growth Areas are eligible for designation as Urban Resource Lands. The proposed density for Urban Resource Lands is two acres. Lands adjacent to Urban Resource Lands may develop to higher densities but only through the long plat or cluster platting processes. Lands developed to higher densities bear the burden of providing buffers from adjacent agricultural operations and the plat will...
bear a note disclosing the potential for inconvenience as a result of residing
adjacent to these lands.

MAPPING

The Okanogan County Comprehensive Land Use Map will identify those areas
designated as Resource Lands. The map designations will be directed by the
chosen criteria but will be reconciled to parcel boundary lines.

Agriculture Lands Map

Rename current intensive agriculture designation to Resource Lands. Review all
areas currently in resource tax classification for Resource Lands designation.
Use existing USDA agricultural activities map to consider designation of areas
not in current use tax classification.

Forest Lands Map

Review lands currently in resource tax classification designated as Resource
Lands. Use of USDA forest maps to identify lands with timber stands in excess
of twenty acres for designation as Resource lands.

Mineral Lands Map

Rename existing mineral extraction sites as Resource Lands. Map geologic
features that identify the potential presence of minerals and designate them as
Resource Lands. Mineral extraction with a commercial nexus will be regulated
through zoning.

RESOURCE LANDS -
Agricultural Land of Long Term Commercial Significance

History

Okanogan County has a rich history of agriculture ranging from family truck
farms, orchards, and cattle raising operations to large enterprises situated on
thousands of acres. This mix of agricultural activities has contributed much to
not only the economics of Okanogan County but forms an important part of our
identity as well. Agriculture, whether as a first time venture or family operation
that has spanned generations, has been an integral part of life for thousands of
Okanogan residents. The stewardship of the land that has been a cornerstone
for this lifestyle is a cornerstone of this comprehensive plan.
Purpose

Okanogan County currently has (acre?) in agriculture according to (?). The total value of all farm products is estimated at (?) according to (?) figures. Agriculture creates in excess of (?) jobs. The purpose of the Resource Lands designation is to recognize the importance of these lands to the future well-being of Okanogan County residents. Those charged with preparing this Plan are mindful of the tremendous investment many have placed in their land with an eye towards creating the financial security necessary as one approaches retirement or, through ever changing circumstances, find they can no longer live the life they have known. Through a variety of innovative planning tools such as Cluster Development, Okanogan County strives to realize the balance necessary to avoid stripping a generation of their wealth yet at the same time preserving the critical mass of land necessary to have a viable economic base for agricultural. These tools include, but are not limited to, cluster development, transfer of development rights, and conservation easements. By utilizing these tools and others, Through effective planning, we hope to make possible leave intact the possibility of building future generations of residents who derive their livelihood from agriculture and identify themselves as agriculturists.

Compatible Uses

The history of the economics of agriculture is a series of highs and lows. To avoid the necessity of converting the land to other uses during low points, it is important a wide variety of planning tools be available. Many of these tools are listed previously. In addition to these tools, a wide variety of activities should be considered compatible or capable of being made compatible with agriculture. These activities are listed as follows:

- All agricultural operations including raising food or fiber, livestock, feedlots, or the processing of same. (Conditional use reviews for slaughterhouse, other higher impact processing or activities)
- Sale of agricultural products.
- Tourism activities with a nexus to agriculture or compatible with off-season periods.
- Residential activities including all single family, extended family, and farm worker housing. (Residential development will be required to buffer and protect itself from legitimate agriculture operations. The Farming Operations Disclosure will be required on plats creating new lots and site evaluations for existing lots.)
- Manufacturing activities that are resource based or require proximity to agricultural operations or are compatible with agricultural operations.
- Mineral extraction
- Timber management and harvest.
Home occupations

Neighborhood commercial centers (encouraged in existing Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development)

Density

This option would increase the underlying density to in most Resource Designated areas. The density in the Resource Lands designation will be to twenty acres. Densities could be increased by using a cluster subdivision process which gives bonuses consistent with a Performance Based Density Bonus (PBDB) Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS). The PBDB PBRS would emphasize the voluntary assignment of future development restrictions in exchange for density bonuses. Conservation easements, both public and privately financed and a program supporting the Transfer of Development Rights would be encouraged in Resource Designated Areas. Minimum lotsizes created through the cluster process would be determined by public health requirements.

General Planning Objectives

GPO-3.1

Okanogan County recognizes the constitutional protection of private property rights and the role the value of land plays in the retirement security for a generation of residents. Okanogan County will not take land for the public use without compensation to the landowner. Okanogan County will implement an effective array of land use tools, to include but not be limited to, cluster subdivisions, transfer of development rights, conservation easements, and effective, suffereing to provide value to the landowner from reasonable development opportunities without creating incompatible uses that creates legal or physical challenges to on-going agricultural operations.

GPO-3.2

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

GPO-3.3

Okanogan County recognizes the importance of an effective transportation system to agricultural operations in the movement of equipment, materiel, stock, and agricultural products. Okanogan County will consider the needs of
agriculture in all future transportation planning efforts. Traffic control regulation
allowing for the safe and effective use of the County road system by agriculture
in areas bearing a resource designation will be implemented. Areas designated
as Agricultural Resource Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance will also
be considered designated as for open range designation where livestock
operations are prevalent.

GPO-3.4

An adequate inventory of affordable housing is of critical importance to
maintaining a viable agricultural economic base. Farmworker housing will be a
permitted use in all agricultural and other compatible zones. Density for farm
worker housing will be determined by the ability of the site to sustain acceptable
public health standards.

RESOURCE LANDS

Forest Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance.

History

Okanogan County has a long history of resource based forest activities.
Logging, grazing, hunting, fishing, and a variety of recreational activities employs
people in Okanogan County and is an important part of our history. Value of
forest products produced in Okanogan County exceeds $xxx. The contribution of
forest land to the quality of life in Okanogan County is immeasurable.

Purpose

The Resource Lands Designation for Forest Lands of Long Term Commercial
Significance achieves the same goals as the agricultural land designation.
Preserving the ability of these lands to provide the timber resources necessary to
sustain the responsible harvest and processing of timber products is critical to
the economic base and culture of Okanogan County. Timber products, wildlife
habitat, recreational opportunities, watershed protection and storage, and
livestock grazing are but a few of the critical functions of our forest land. Our
forest land also provides opportunities for a residential housing that serves a
lifestyle embraced by many. All of these critical functions must be balanced to
ensure a sustained ability of the forests to provide them and to enable them to
exist as compatible activities.
Compatible Uses

Because of the period of time necessary to bring a forest from seedling to harvest, it is important that the ebb and flow of market trends are weighed against the decades needed for the forest to mature. Land use tools such as conservation easements, transfer of development rights, and clustering should be used to create legitimate levels of development opportunity without eroding the critical mass of forest lands necessary to maintain the forest-based activities previously listed. As well, the permitted and conditional uses allowed in the forest designation should create the ability to ensure economic sustainability for the landowner by giving them the ability to respond to market trends without taking the critical mass of land out of forest production.

The following shall be permitted uses:

- Harvest and processing of forest products
- Agricultural activities including raising and processing of food and fiber as well as livestock grazing.
- Single family residential uses. (Residential development is responsible for buffering from the impacts of surrounding permitted resource based activities)
- Commercial tourism (Hunting, fishing, trail systems, lodges, transient accommodations i.e. retreat centers, etc.)
- Mineral extraction
- Manufacturing that requires proximity to forest products
- Home Occupations

Density

This option would increase the underlying density in the Forest most Resource designation areas to is twenty acres. Densities could be increased by using a cluster subdivision process which gives bonuses consistent with a Performance Based Density Bonus (PBDB). Public Benefit Rating System (PBRS). The PBDB PBRS would emphasize the voluntary assignment of future development restrictions in exchange for density bonuses. Conservation easements, both public and privately financed and a program supporting the Transfer of Development Rights would be encouraged in Resource Designated Areas. Minimum lot sizes created through the cluster process would be determined by the requirements of public health,
General Planning Objectives

GPO < 3.5

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

RESOURCE LANDS

Mineral Lands of Long Term Commercial Significance.

History

Okanogan County has a history of mining activity. Many of the first settlers were miners. Mining has, and still does, play an important role in our cultural heritage and economic base. The extraction of precious metals, stone, sand, and gravel generate $xxx annually in Okanogan County and employs xx people according to the figure generated by Washington State University. There are currently xx permitted mines with many more used on a personal or otherwise limited basis. Mining is an important part of our cultural heritage and economic base.

Purpose

Mineral extraction is an important component of many other activities in Okanogan County. Precious metal extraction provides employment. Rock, sand, and gravel extraction provide employment but in addition provide material for road building and construction activity. Winter time road maintenance is a critical element in enhancing public safety.

Compatible Uses

The Mineral Lands designation appears as an overlay to the underlying zone. The overlay is created based on the criteria listed earlier. Proposals for mining operations are reviewed in these areas as conditional uses in all zones in the overlay to identify and mitigate impacts to surrounding uses. Small scale operations for personal use are permitted in all zones in the designation.
Density

The Mineral Lands designation does not alter the densities in underlying zones. To ensure compatibility between the underlying zones and the Mineral Lands designation, the criteria listed earlier must be applied and an analysis of the best land use made. Consideration should be given to the zoning of lands that lend themselves to mineral extraction and to prevent zoning that would allow incompatibility uses in those areas.

**URBAN RESOURCE DESIGNATION**

**History**

The Urban Resource designation is created to recognize the **preserve** historical practice in Okanogan County of working orchards and other farming activities near or even in urban areas. The citizens of Okanogan County recognize that these agricultural operations contribute measurably to the production of food and fiber and are an **important** part of the base of the agricultural economy. The designation also takes into account that as populations grow, the proximity of food production to the people it feeds becomes more critical. This designation also anticipates the time ahead when the land may be needed for housing, commercial activity, and other uses that are best located in urban centers.

**Purpose**

The Urban Resource designation acts as a transition designation that preserves the agricultural activity currently in place but recognizes the land might be needed for more intense uses as population grows and is encouraged in the urban centers. The Urban Resource designation **requires** serves to generate the need for the Farm Activities Disclosure Statement as well as placing the responsibility for buffering from the impacts of legitimate agricultural activities on the surrounding residential or commercial development.

**Compatible Uses**

Permitted uses on lands in the Urban Resource designation shall be consistent with those enumerated for the surrounding urban growth areas or lands in the Rural High Density designation.

**Density**

Underlying densities on land in the Urban Resource designation will be two acres.
Chapter Four: LAND USE - RURAL LANDS

History

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 permitting processes 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, tourist, and recreational opportunities.

Purpose

Through the course of comprehensive planning, the County actively identifies and designates Urban Growth 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.

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. These activities must be sited only when the review processes have identified adequate water supplies and the proximity of essential services. A mix of densities should be maintained to provide an adequate inventory of housing stock and to create an efficient settlement pattern while recognizing the demand for a variety of lifestyles.

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, smaller scale 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, and migration routes, aquifer recharge areas, shorelines of state and local importance, wetlands, and other important features of the land and environment. It is critical that the Comprehensive Plan and the Zone Code and permitting processes it generates achieve a successful balance of these important considerations.
Permitted Uses

- Residential uses
- Agricultural activities
- Home occupations
- Recreational activities and infrastructure

Conditional Uses

- Processing of agricultural products
- Sale of agricultural products
- Neighborhood commercial/service centers
- Light manufacturing
- Resource based heavy manufacturing
- Commercial Tourism

General Planning Objectives

GPO - 4.1

Land use proposals must be effectively reviewed to ensure residential and other uses do not create an incompatible mix of densities and activities.

GPO - 4.2

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

GPO - 4.3

Okanogan County shall provide innovative land use tools such as clustering and focused transfer of development rights and conservation easement programs; to enable property owners the opportunity to preserve open space and other critical environmental features such as habitat, wetlands, and migration corridors concurrent with development proposals.

GPO - 4.5

Okanogan County shall periodically review this Comprehensive Plan to insure the designations contained herein are consistent with designations found in the Critical Areas Ordinance, Shorelines Master Program, Flood Management Programs, and Hazard Mitigation Plan.
GPO - 4.6

Agricultural activities shall be recognized and promoted in the rural designation to insure the opportunity for small scale operations. Development proposals shall be reviewed for impacts to existing agricultural operations.

GPO - 4.7

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

Designations

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

RURAL HIGH DENSITY

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

Review Elements:

- Proximity to urban areas
- Proximity to major transportation routes
- Availability of potable water and/or water service providers
- Proximity to already existing higher density areas
- Availability of fire protection, emergency services, and other vital services
RURAL MEDIUM DENSITY

Areas currently designated for minimum lot sizes in excess of three acre but less than twenty will be designated Rural Medium Density. Other areas will be designated Rural Medium Density moving away from urban areas but still having proximity to transportation corridors, potable water supply, and ability to deliver vital services. Smaller lot sizes may be obtained through a cluster subdivision or planned development in accordance with a Performance Based Density Bonus public benefit rating system. The minimum lot size created through the cluster process will be determined by public health requirements.

RURAL LOW DENSITY

Those areas currently designated for lot size in excess of twenty acres shall be designated as Rural Low Density. Other areas will be designated Rural Low Density moving away from transportation corridors or in areas where ingress/egress or the location of safe building sites is restricted due to topography. Areas with a demonstrated inability to provide adequate water resources or in those areas that are designated as critical habitat for threatened or endangered species shall be designated Rural Low Density. Smaller lot sizes may be obtained through a cluster subdivision or planned development in accordance with a public benefit rating system.
Chapter Five – Urban Lands

URBAN GROWTH AREAS

History

The GMA requires an Urban Growth Area element for all Counties planning under RCW 36.70A. While not a required element, Okanogan County and the Cities and Towns therein, recognize that a cooperative effort between local governments is needed to effectively and efficiently serve the needs of the citizens. The Urban Growth Area designation is used to identify those lands into which the City or Town intends to grow through a twenty year planning window. The policies and procedures contained in this Comprehensive Plan, supplemented by Intergovernmental Agreements as needed, are designed to give clear direction for the process to designate, review, and amend Urban Growth Areas. Subsequent project review and land use decisions, while under the sole authority of the County until such times as the lands annex, are carried out in accordance with the agreed upon processes.

Purpose

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

Designation

The process for designation of Urban Growth Areas begins with a proposal from the municipality. Only the municipalities shall propose UGA boundaries. In reviewing proposals for UGA designation, the municipality should consider the following factors:
Current inventory of developable land in the incorporated boundaries.

Inventory of land necessary to provide for projected growth including affordable housing.

Inventory of land necessary to implement an economic development strategy.

Inventory of land necessary to implement a capital facilities plan.

Inventory of land necessary to implement a parks and recreation plan.

Analysis of ability to provide services to designated UGA.

The County shall review and adopt Urban Growth Areas. In the event of dispute over a proposed UGA boundary, the County shall remand the proposal to the affected Municipality with specific suggestions for change. The Municipality shall consider the suggested changes and return the proposal for further consideration. In the event the dispute is not resolved, the City or Town may bring an appeal under the Land Use Petitions Act under RCW 36.70C. County shall stipulate to standing for the Municipality to bring an appeal of the final decision in accordance with RCW 36.70A.

Amendment

The designated Urban Growth Areas are eligible for amendment review on an annual basis in keeping with the amendment process for the County Comprehensive Plan. Only the affected municipality may propose amendments to the designated Urban Growth Area. Landowners in or adjoining the Urban Growth Area must petition the affected municipality to present their request for amendment. Review of proposed amendments shall consider the criteria used in designating Urban Growth Areas.

Five Year Review

Urban Growth Areas shall be reviewed, along with all other elements of the County Comprehensive Plan after five years from the date of adoption but within six years and every five years thereafter. The review shall consist of any docketed amendments and an internal review for consistency of the Comprehensive Plan, Zone Code, Subdivision Regulation, and in the case of UGA’s, any adopted Intergovernmental Agreements. Any proposed amendments or identified inconsistencies must be reviewed by the affected municipality and endorsed for consideration by the County.
Zoning and Project Review

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

- Compatibility with any sub-designations by the municipality within the UGA
- Impact of the project or proposal on municipal services
- Compatibility with surrounding uses
- Impact of the project or proposal on the municipal transportation structure

The County and affected municipality shall consider a co-lead status on projects or proposals requiring SEPA review. To insure that County Zones provide sufficient control over projects or proposals to assure compatibility with sub-designations within a UGA; to create continuity in terms of implementing conditions of approval; and to create certainty in terms of conditions of approval and vesting for the project or proposal a development agreement will be required between the County, the proponent, and the affected municipality for all projects or proposals within the UGA.
Chapter 6 - LAMIRDS (Limited Areas of More Intense Rural Development)

RCW 36.70A.070 5(d) of the Growth Management Act recognizes the existence of areas outside of incorporated towns and cities and their urban growth areas that exhibit the characteristics of urban areas. The RCW authorizes the designations of these limited areas of more intense rural development in the rural element of a comprehensive plan and provides planning and future development within those areas.

**Purpose**

LAMIRDS are the rural villages and service centers located in Okanogan County that are not incorporated. By designating those areas, the County recognizes the important role they play as a service center and focuspoint for the surrounding neighborhood. The area within the designation should provide sufficient land for the logical expansion of the LAMIRD based upon the vision of the County and the ability of the area to provide services.

The Comprehensive Plan for Okanogan County designates the following LAMIRDs and establishes these policies for planning and development within these designated areas:

- Methow
- Carlton
- Malott
- Loomis
- Wauconda
- Chesaw
- Molson
- Ellesporde
- Mazama
- Monse
- Nighthawk
- Havillah

**Designation Criteria**

LAMIRDs will be designated based on the following criteria:

- Existence of services such as neighborhood retail, tourist retail and government services.
- Existence of urban density.
- Historical value as past settlement with existing tourist activities.
• Ability to support more intense development.

General Planning Objectives

**GPO – 6.1**

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

**GPO – 6.2**

Existing LAMIRDs should not develop in such a manner that regional retail opportunities are drawn away from the incorporated towns and cities and their UGA’S.

**GPO – 6.3**

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

**GPO – 6.4**

Existing LAMIRDs should develop in such a manner that the impacts to the transportation system brought about by the increased users of the services provided are avoided or mitigated to avoid an erosion of the level of service provided.

**GPO – 6.5**

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

**GPO – 6.6**

Designated LAMIRDs shall retain their existing zoning. Rezoning to compatible zones will be on an elective basis by the landowners.
Chapter Seven: OVERLAYS

Purpose

Overlays are used to create land use designations on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map for areas that require special considerations that do not change the underlying zone. A common example of the use of overlays is an Airport Protection Area. The overlay identifies special review processes or regulations that work in concert with the underlying zone. In the event there is conflict between the regulations in an underlying zone and an overlay designation, the requirements of the overlay will over-ride the zone.

Dark Sky Overlay

Purpose:

The purpose of the Dark Sky designation is to identify areas where light pollution from over bright or improperly screened lighting degrades the view of the night sky. By regulating outdoor lighting, the amount of light directed skyward or onto neighboring properties can be reduced or eliminated.

Education and incentive programs will be created to reduce the use of unnecessary or unscreened outdoor or visible residential lighting.

Ridgeline Protection Overlay

Purpose

The purpose of the ridgeline protection overlay is to identify areas where the construction of residential and other structures negatively impacts the view of the ridges by creating obtrusive colors and shapes or reflective surfaces.

Education and incentive programs will be created to encourage the use of color neutral materials and non-reflective surfaces above identified contour lines.

WILDFIRE PROTECTION OVERLAY

Purpose

The purpose of the Wildfire Protection Overlay is to identify those areas prone to a higher risk of wildfire. The Wildfire Protection Overlay can impose restrictions on types of building materials, creation and maintenance of open space, installation of sprinkler systems, and increase water storage/delivery.
requirements at time of new construction or remodel. The Wildfire Protection Overlay can impose greater requirements for road surface for ingress/egress to buildable lots as well as design requirements for turning radius, grade, and turn-a-rounds. The intent of the overlay is to reduce the risk of fire and, in the event of fire, minimize the threat to people, property, and the natural environment.

The Wildfire committee has created criteria for the designation of high risk areas. The wildfire protection is adopted into the Comprehensive Plan by reference.

Education and incentive programs will be created to encourage the use of construction techniques and fire prevention measures and to increase the capacity for fire suppression on an individual landowner and developer basis. The education and incentive programs will be county wide in their approach.

**AIRPORT PROTECTION OVERLAY**

**Purpose**

The Airport Protection Overlay imposes safety regulations required by the FAA without replacing underlying zones. The additional regulations include but are not limited to height of structures, flammable liquid and material storage, meeting halls, multi-family or transient accommodations, density, lighting, and open water areas. The overlay areas will be specific to each airport and will be configured in accordance with FAA requirements.

While the Airport Protection Overlay does not rezone lands within its boundaries, it does impose additional restrictions. Lands within Airport Protection Overlays should be zoned to take into account the impacts of airport operations on the permitted uses within the zones. Disclosure of the possibility of noise and other impacts caused by airport operations to permitted uses in these zones should be recorded against the titles of parcels in the Airport Protection Overlays.
Chapter Eight - TRANSPORTATION

Adoption by Reference

The Comprehensive Transportation plan for Okanogan County adopted on May 7, 1996 is adopted by reference, with all attachments, into this Comprehensive Plan.

Future Study and Review

Okanogan County intends to review and update the Transportation Plan in 2009-2010 if resources can be obtained to do so.

General Planning Objectives

GPO - 8.1

Okanogan County finds that a reliable road system contributes to the economic well being of the county. Future development should be reviewed for impacts to the transportation grid and reasonable mitigations should be required to maintain an acceptable level of service.
Chapter Nine: - AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Introduction

The Housing Chapter describes existing housing conditions and needs in Okanogan County, and projected housing needs for the period 2008—.

To the extent possible, information is included for plans, goals, and specified housing needs of the incorporated cities, towns and sub area plans within the County. The purpose of this is to identify County goals, policies, and strategies for the preservation, improvement, and development of housing and the systems that will lead to affordable housing choices for all economic segments of the population.

This chapter is divided into four main sections: Housing Conditions and Needs; Local Assessments; Goals Policies and Objectives; and Housing Strategies.

Housing Conditions and Needs includes data derived from a recent county-wide Housing Needs Assessment conducted on behalf of the Okanogan Housing Coalition as well as data from the Washington Center for Real Estate Research at WSU. Local Assessments serves as a place holder for local comment and further development of goals and policies in the incorporated communities of Okanogan County. Goals Policies and Objectives presents a general set of comprehensive goals and policies to guide the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The final section, Housing Strategies consists of a set of strategies related to implementation of the housing element, and to address any future issue that may arise.

Housing Conditions and Needs

Basic background on the current conditions in Okanogan County as well as educated projections of need are necessary in order to effectively plan for the housing infrastructure that will be needed as well as factors such as location, density, and affordability.

Much of the information in this section has been gleaned from the Housing Needs Assessment developed in 2005 by the Okanogan Housing Coalition under a grant from Washington State Community Trade and Economic Development Community Development Block Grant program. Additionally, Washington Center for Real Estate Research (WCRER) at WSU, Census data and Washington State Housing Finance commission data is cited.

The 2000 Census indicates there are 19,085 units of housing. Of this number, 12,973 were detached single family homes. Mobile homes constituted 3,949 units. Of the total, 883 did not have telephone service, 322 did not have kitchen facilities, and 415 did not have complete plumbing facilities. In 2000 only 22.5%
of homes ranged between $100,000 and $150,000 in value. The WCRER indicates median resale values in 2007 at $159,900 and in 2008 at $170,000—a 21.4% increase in median sales price since 2007.

The housing unit breakdown per sub planning area found in the Housing Needs Assessment follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDICATOR/PLANNING SUBAREA</th>
<th>COUNTY TOTAL</th>
<th>METHOW VALLEY</th>
<th>OROVILLE</th>
<th>TONASKET</th>
<th>OKANogan</th>
<th>BREWSTER PATEROS</th>
<th>COLVILLE NEJPELEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS, ALL AGES, 2005/2010</td>
<td>14978/14902</td>
<td>2218/2327</td>
<td>1702/1697</td>
<td>2311/2360</td>
<td>4953/411</td>
<td>1406/1360</td>
<td>1,991/1,944</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This chart shows 2005 households and projected households by 2010. It should be noted that the term households may include families who are doubled up as indicated by the Homelessness Point in Time count conducted annually. These projections indicate a down turn in most communities. New building permits and construction however, would indicate that housing units will most likely grow rather than decrease. Based upon the experience of low income housing rehabilitation needs, it is reasonable to project that housing units will be lost in low income units—particularly mobile homes and units which have degraded beyond the point of cost effective repair. New units which would balance the count would come from new construction. Although units of permanent supportive housing and assisted living are currently in the planning stage, it is reasonable to project that single family unit growth will not be in affordable housing if current trends continue.

**Tenure and Occupancy**

Of the 19,085 units found county-wide in the census, only 15,027 were occupied. This is most likely a reflection of second home owner/vacation home impact as well a vacant farm worker housing during winter months.

Tenure in units was expressed in a range of "move in" dates. The highest percentage of households (28.6 - 4299) had moved in between 1995 and 1998. The most recent move in dates 1999-2000 accounted for 18.8% or 2,820 households. Only 7.6% or 1,143, had moved in during 1969 or before.

Of the 15,027 occupied units, 5,745 were owner occupied and 4,292 were "specified" renter occupied. The differential would be accounted for in those individuals who did not indicate either owner or renter status. Of the 4,292 self
identified renters, 27% (1,158) were spending 35% or more of their income on the gross rent. The data above indicates a homeownership rate of close to 30% as of 2000. HUD fair market rents have increased 10% for a two bedroom unit between 2007 and 2008 to $525 per month.

In addition to classification of owner and renter, persons living in assisted living, group homes (for developmental and other disability), or extended care facilities constitute segments of the population which are not currently represented in census housing figures. More data needs to be gathered to assess the county wide need in these populations. Although groups such as the Housing Authority of Okanogan County are currently developing assisted living facilities, growth of this segment of the population points to more need over the next 20 years.

Permanent housing infrastructure for the homeless does not currently exist with the exception of the domestic violence emergency shelter.

Cost of Housing

Housing costs in most urban markets are impacted by three basic factors: replacement cost; comparable sales; and demand vs. supply.

In Okanogan County, several other factors have impacted the market values. For many years, land costs were a small fraction of the prices paid outside the county even in neighboring Chelan County. Additionally, the economy was depressed and subsequently, the housing market was depressed by lack of qualified buyers and a large inventory of homes for sale.

In the early 90’s second home owners began discovering, buying in, and building in the Methow Valley. Land and home prices escalated out of reach of people earning the median wage. In early 2003, the development of Lake Osoyoos began and interest in investment in the North County put pressure on real estate availability, and prices again escalated in the north end of the County. At the same time, real estate speculation was at an all time high and Okanogan County was seen as one of the remaining areas where “bargains” could still be had. This fueled sales to investors as well as second home owners and retirees.

Investors knew that home prices were comparative bargains, but did not recognize the demographic of most renters within the County. Rents escalated and many more individuals either became homeless or were forced to double up in order to maintain housing even though doubling up created danger of eviction for the lessee if the landlord discovered how many people were actually residing in the home. Gentrification began to occur throughout the county and more and more low income individuals were either without housing or forced to live further from work in order to find affordable housing.

7/17/2009
From 2003 to 2007, the increase in median home sales price was over 200% according to WCRER. The County Assessor’s record of sales, from January 2007 to May 2008 shows that there were 1396 residential sale transactions. Over 24 of these transactions involved new homes ranging in value from a low of $116,000 to a high of $495,000. With median sale prices of $170,000, affordable housing for median income earners is generally out of reach.

Increased cost of housing is a larger pressure on affordability than population growth. Over the last ten years, population has varied within a 10% increase /decrease, generally hovering close to 40,000. The largest pressure comes from the decrease in housing available to families earning a living from service industries.

Even with two minimum wage earners in a household, the possibility of having disposable income to save toward eventual homeownership is extremely unlikely. A few homeownership programs offered through USDA and the Housing Finance Commission can provide subsidy in interest payments and closing costs.

Maintenance and repairs that are deferred due to lack of funds however, can lead to loss of equity for low income homeowners who may have purchased a home that was affordable in payment terms but not in terms of condition (needed repairs or deferred maintenance). For at least the last five years, Community Action has been repairing and rehabilitating low income housing stock with no reduction in demand and a waiting list of 200 units at any one time. Pilot programs offering replacement of mobile homes rather than repair offer promise to solve construction issues common in older mobile homes and thus extend the life expectancy of mobile home housing units.

 Truly affordable housing includes conservation features such as sufficient insulation in ceilings and walls, sources of heat which are adequate and within Energy Star guidelines, and construction materials with life expectancy and maintenance requirements that meet current efficiency standards.

Alternative Housing

Since the 1970’s alternative construction methodology including the Buckminster Fuller Geodesic Dôme, Straw Bale, Super Adobe, Rammed Earth, and underground homes have appeared on the County landscape. While purporting to “cost less” than traditional stick built homes, most of the savings appears to come from donated and owner/builder labor during the construction phase and in energy savings over the life of the home. Many architecturally reviewed plans and buildings have been constructed in the County, while others have been do-it yourself/permit and utility deficient projects begun by individuals simply needing basic shelter who believed they could achieve affordability without possessing the construction skills necessary. This has led to homes that in some cases pose health and safety concerns for the occupants.
Alternative construction which addresses energy conservation and utilizes recycling as well as other “green” methodology offers great promise for dwellings that are appropriate to the countryside as well as the neighborhoods found in towns. The primary promise is livability from less toxic building materials, affordability over the long term in reduced maintenance costs, and reduction of energy consumption during extreme temperatures typical in winter and summer.

Worker Housing

Projections for worker housing break into two primary groups in Okanogan County – farm worker and service workers. Farm worker housing further breaks into the needs of year round workers employed in agriculture who are members of the community and migrant workers who typically reside in County between May and mid October. Service workers include those provided with employment during the height of tourism activity such as those employed by Methow Valley resorts, and other workers who typically earn the minimum wage. While some employers provide overnight lodging for remote resort employees, the typical employee does not receive housing for a family nor can they support family housing with minimum wages.

Assistance is available to orchardists and farmers for construction and improvement of agricultural housing through state CTED programs and for workers who qualify through the Housing Authority of Okanogan County Section 8 program which typically has a year long wait list. In the last twelve months, homes that pass Housing Quality Standards required by HUD and meet Fair Market Rents criteria have become very difficult to find for persons who have a Section 8 voucher. This affordable housing shortage has increased the number of homeless families.

Potential solutions have been proposed in the form of community supported permanently affordable rental projects, Land Trust developments and self help housing. These solutions also require community wide support and investment.

LOCAL ASSESSMENTS

This section will be completed separately through local municipality meetings between officials, planners, and stakeholders.

GOALS, POLICIES, AND OBJECTIVES

Okanogan County has historically supported many of the goals and policies found below. Utilizing best practices and goals from other rural communities and housing professionals, the following goals policies and objectives have been developed.
• Provide sufficient number of housing units for future populations in developing municipalities as well as rural areas of Okanogan County.
• Encourage higher density residential land use in municipal areas.
• Encourage homeownership county wide.
• Encourage housing development that preserves the local character and environment
• Encourage development of housing that utilizes technology as well as Green, Evergreen, and utilizing energy efficient technology.
• Encourage residential development close to employment opportunities and needed services to reduce impacts of traffic and costs of transportation.
• Respect individual property rights while planning and providing for future populations
• Encourage mixed use development in retail areas to encourage dynamic downtown economies.
• Encourage mixed income developments to prevent segregation and promote inclusive community participation
• Encourage adequate development of temporary housing for migrant farm workers
• Provide housing which complements and supports economic development opportunities
• Provide basic infrastructure to end homelessness such as permanent supportive housing and transitional housing
• Provide special needs housing for persons living with disabilities.
• Provide for a wide range of building styles.
• Encourage development of affordable housing through Land Trust organizations to ensure affordability of housing for low income individuals over time.
• Encourage housing development for all income levels in all areas of the County.
• Allow for development of additional housing units on existing properties (such as mother-in law apartments) in order to provide immediate relief to affordable housing needs.
• Okanogan County will continue to support policies that increase and maintain the availability of affordable housing throughout the County. Affordable housing definitions shall be consistent with the definition in state law
• Okanogan County shall employ a variety of strategies to increase and maintain the availability of affordable housing.

Housing Strategies

The following strategies are numbered in response to the Goals, Policies and Objectives of this chapter:
Strategy 1.1 Work with county wide municipalities and public advocacy groups to identify lands with existing infrastructure such as sewer, power, and water which are suitable for multi family and/or single family development and designate these areas for higher density residential use including planned unit developments and clustered housing.

Strategy 1.2 Work with county wide municipalities and public advocacy groups to identify lands without existing infrastructure (water, sewer, fire protection, parks, and streets) which would otherwise be suitable for higher density development and provide official encouragement for and investment in development of infrastructure through collaboration with developers as well as affordable housing entities.

Strategy 1.3 mitigate the impacts of expensive developments (homes priced 20% above the median sales price in the county) by requiring developer contribution to the Affordable Housing for All Fund at the time of permitting or identification of units with permanently affordable character dedicated or deeded to a member of the Housing Coalition.

Strategy 2.1 Review the siting of all proposed development (economic, community, public, and housing) to ensure compatibility with future higher density land use designations,

Strategy 3.1 Provide access to information on homeownership education opportunities through the County website and planning office information.

Strategy 4.1 Engage developers in crafting home designs that are in keeping with historical traditions and are environmentally appropriate. Just as Western Washington has "Northwest Contemporary" The Okanogan may have Highlands Traditional, or Omak Classic or Tonasket Alternative. The goal of these styles would be emphasis on quality, affordability, and sustainability.

Strategy 4.2 Use development regulations guidelines to assure quality in housing development and maintenance

Strategy 5.1 Promote the Allow credits for development of water conservation, rain and storm water recycling as well as retention systems

Strategy 5.2 Eliminate requirements which discourage use of innovative technology in residential development.

Strategy 6.1 Work with employers to assure adequate housing stock investment when capital investment is made in centers of employment.
Strategy 6.2 Provide access to walking and bike trails that provide alternative transportation to centers of employment. Provide park and ride lots to encourage affordable transportation between employers and housing developments.

Strategy 6.3 Include Multi Family units in Commercial Zones

Strategy 7.1 Provide adequate publication, outreach, and input regarding changes in zoning and development

Strategy 7.2 Provide access to Owner/Builder construction education opportunities

Strategy 7.3 Enforce Building and Zoning codes in residential neighborhoods

Strategy 8.1 Research and formulate guidelines based on best practices in Community Development as it relates to Mixed Use in redevelopment.

Strategy 9.1 Support small development siting of low income units in established neighborhoods as well as new development of mixed values of units. Eliminate zoning barriers to this type of infill which might be pre-existing.

Strategy 10.1 Support development efforts by the agricultural community to provide temporary housing for migrant farm workers.

Strategy 11.1 Support increased development of a wide range of home values in order to support economic development strategies. In addition to low income worker housing, the availability of acceptable higher end housing for managers and owners is minimal and can restrict a company's ability to rapidly transition upper management for a smooth relocation of business. This problem also applies when recruiting professionals such as doctors and attorneys into the community.

Strategy 12.1 Utilize County homelessness funding to end homelessness to leverage investment in basic infrastructure to end homelessness such as permanent supportive housing for families and transitional housing for people who are homeless and suffering from co-occurring disorders. Utilize County homelessness funding to continue data collection, point in time count, and fund development in support of these efforts.

Strategy 13.1 Support the efforts and applications of agencies working to develop special needs housing.

Strategy 14.1 As a part of achieving best practices in community development and revitalization, recognize the value of unique architecture as long as it meets health and safety standards.
Strategy 14.2 Permit historic structure applications for federal and state funds to preserve them.

Strategy 15.1 Assure classification of taxation for Land Trusts under non-profit status whether single or scattered sites.

Strategy 16.1 Encourage the development of new and maintenance of existing affordable housing stock dispersed throughout the County by a variety of strategies including but not limited to:

.1a Approval of accessory dwelling units, cooperative housing, boarding houses, and mixed use developments

.1b Support the use of density bonuses for housing development and re-development that includes at least 20% affordable housing units.

.1c Support the use of subsidies and grants such as block grants (form a HUD Community Development Block Grant Program), HOPEVI (promoting development of run down structures as mixed income developments), home buyer and renter assistance and home buyer counseling, housing trust fund, HGAP, and low income housing tax credits.

.1d Support the use of non profit community housing land trusts that will own and lease land and or structures to homeowners and guarantee permanent affordability of the homes in the event of resale.

.1e Support the use of non-profit community development efforts to rehabilitate existing affordable housing stock through the use of grants, block grants, and community supported housing funds.
Chapter Ten - CAPITAL FACILITIES

Adoption by Reference

The Capital Facilities Plan adopted by Okanogan County on May 10, 2004, including all attachments, is adopted by reference in this Comprehensive Plan.

The Okanogan County Capital Facilities Plan serves to identify new capital facilities projects and major enhancements to existing facilities through a twenty year planning window. Focus on funding proposals and critical timelines are focused on the first six years of the plan. The Capital Facilities Plan is reviewed on an annual basis and is adopted by reference into the Comprehensive Plan. The Capital Facilities Plan will be adopted by Resolution of the Board of County Commissioners following a comment period of not less than 30 days and a public hearing, notice of which is published in the official county newspaper.

Amendments

Amendments to the Capital Facilities Plan will be docketed, concurrent with proposed amendments to the Comprehensive Plan from Jan 31 to June 1 of each year. Proposed amendments to the Capital Facilities Plan will be reviewed following the docketing period but not later than November 1 of each year.

Five Year Review

The Capital facilities Plan will be reviewed and adopted not less than 5 years from date of adoption and every five years thereafter concurrent with the required 5 year review of the comprehensive Plan. Review of the Capital facilities Plan will be consistent with the amendment process in this section.
Chapter Eleven - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

OVERVIEW:

In 1999 the economic development organization (Okanogan County Council for Economic Development) asked the County Commissioners to form a task force to begin the development of a functional strategic plan for Okanogan County. This task force group was made up of interested people from all over Okanogan County, primarily business people. Early on the group wanted to focus on measurable, attainable objectives, not another "study" that would gather dust. The task force also was given the task of developing a process to award Infrastructure Grants made possible by a recently authorized sales tax rebate coming to "economically distressed counties. In May of 1999, task force members attended a three-day Rural Symposium in Ellensburg that provided experts to assist rural communities in their economic development planning efforts. During the Symposium the name Partnership 2005 was chosen to reflect the underlying theme of strong partnerships and commitment of a minimum of five years to achieve a more stable, diversified economic base for the county. In August of that same year, the Commissioners endorsed the draft Strategic Plan and appointed an interim Board. During the next twelve months the Partnership set out to work towards implementation of its five-year strategic plan, goals, and objectives. The most immediate challenge of the Partnership was to create an organization that was both efficient and effective.

The Partnership 2005 and the Okanogan County Council for Economic Development (OCCED) decided to work together to create a new entity, which would combine the roles and responsibilities of OCCED with the new ideas and high creative energy of the new Partnership 2005 thus, in 2000 the combined group - Alliance 2005 was created.

The Alliance 2005 was established as a 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization. The goal of this organizational structure was to create an effective partnership between private enterprises, county and tribal governments, and other local governments to implement the strategies laid out in the new five-year plan. In October 2000 the first round of Infrastructure Projects were approved for funding. In 2001 Okanogan County was selected as one of five rural communities to
benefit from participation in the WSU Rural Telework aka Rural e-work aka Rural Bridges program. The Alliance facilitated development of a technology skills profile and available commercial space profile which has been utilized many times since then. From 2002-2006 the project also included two hosting events with prospective employers and one “mock” hosting used to instruct local leaders in the “how to” of hosting. Because of the technology infrastructure of the county, this new industry offers promise for further development in years to come without tremendous impact on the natural environment. In 2003, 2004, and 2005 Infrastructure projects were awarded to eligible communities totaling over $1.5 million.

Economic Alliance continued to grow and mature in Okanogan County. In 2005 Okanogan County saw continued growth in technology business clusters in the Methow Valley and the Central Valley continued to develop into the retail hub serving the whole region. With the advent of the Veranda Beach development in Oroville the tourism, hospitality and recreation and construction sectors of the economy is doing well around the county.

VISION

The Economic Alliance envisions the citizens and communities of Okanogan County working together to bring prosperity to all.

MISSION

Form partnerships with Private, Government and Tribal entities that will create an environment to nurture and support business and industry through:

- Gradual and controlled growth with proper planning, which protects the environment and rural atmosphere.
- Families and communities built on strong values and positive self-image of the individual.
- High quality public services provided at a reasonable cost.
- Respect for diversity of cultural and recreational opportunities that abound in our region.
GENERAL ECONOMIC AND INCOME PROFILE:

Population: The Office of Financial Management conducts a population survey that has been an important source of information about the health and welfare of Washington families including Okanogan County for the last ten years. The survey focuses primarily on issues of employment, family poverty, in-migration, health, and health insurance coverage. The 2008 survey data is of particular importance as state policymakers work to improve the economic conditions in the state and work with local economic development associations such as the Economic Alliance of Okanogan County and county and city government to identify the needs in rural Washington and to address growth management concerns and strategies. Okanogan County has had a steady growth in population as noted in Table 1 and is projected to hit 49,239 by the year 2030 as noted in Table 2.

Figure 1: Historical Population Data 1960-2000

Historical Population Data For Okanogan County

- Historical Population For Okanogan County
Table 1:

HISTORICAL POPULATION FOR GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND OTHER PURPOSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>2,853,214</td>
<td>3,065,000</td>
<td>3,413,250</td>
<td>3,567,890</td>
<td>4,132,353</td>
<td>4,415,785</td>
<td>4,868,663</td>
<td>5,407,014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okanogan</td>
<td>25,520</td>
<td>25,100</td>
<td>25,867</td>
<td>26,800</td>
<td>30,663</td>
<td>32,687</td>
<td>33,350</td>
<td>38,943</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

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

![Total Resident Population Projection for Okanogan County](image-url)
Table 2:
Final Projections of the Total Resident Population for Growth Management
Medium Series: 2000 to 2030

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>5,894,121</td>
<td>6,256,400</td>
<td>6,792,318</td>
<td>7,255,672</td>
<td>7,698,939</td>
<td>8,120,510</td>
<td>8,509,161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okanogan</td>
<td>39,564</td>
<td>39,600</td>
<td>42,739</td>
<td>44,923</td>
<td>46,526</td>
<td>48,016</td>
<td>49,239</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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
Table 1: Total non-farm employment across the county grew 6.4 percent from 2001 to 2006, by generating 750 new jobs (see Table 2). This was just a speck faster than the 6.0-percent job growth pace across Washington State, during this five-year period. Four local industries accounted for 680 of these 750 new jobs: Health Services and Social Assistance; Natural Resources, Mining, and Construction; Retail Trade; and Leisure and Hospitality.
Table 2:
Nonfarm Employment Changes in Okanogan County
From 2001-2006 (Ranked By Number of Jobs Gained/Lost)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Industry</th>
<th>An Avg Employment in 2001</th>
<th>An Avg Employment in 2006</th>
<th>Job Change</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Nonfarm</td>
<td>11,750</td>
<td>12,500</td>
<td>750</td>
<td>6.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Services and Social</td>
<td>1,030</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>19.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources, Mining, and</td>
<td>660</td>
<td>840</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail Trade</td>
<td>1,580</td>
<td>1,760</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leisure and Hospitality</td>
<td>1,230</td>
<td>1,350</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Information and Financial Activities</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Business Services</td>
<td>370</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>23.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale Trade</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation, Warehousing, and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Utilities</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal Government</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-4.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State Government</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-14.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>4,610</td>
<td>4,490</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Shows that the Total Non Ag/Farm jobs in a 5 year span from 2001-2006 have seen a total gain of 750 jobs. Compared to a loss in Federal, State and Local government where we seen a loss of a total of 190 jobs.
Figure 1: Although Okanogan County's growth has generally been in the one to two-percent range during the past twelve months, it has consistently lagged the two- to three-percent statewide job growth pace.
Figure 2: The number of unemployed residents in Okanogan County area fell by 60 over the year, from 1,030 in October 2006 to 970 in October 2007 (see Figure 2). Further, the current 4.1 percent reading is the lowest unemployment rate on record for the local labor market for the month of October in recent economic history (i.e., all the way back to 1990). Thus, this October’s 4.1 percent reading indicates that the local labor force is faring quite well. Okanogan County historically has been an economically distressed area, but due to a recent turn in recreation, tourism, and the construction trades our labor force is thriving.

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS:

Historically government has been the largest employer within Okanogan County. This is partially due to the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservations designation as a sovereign nation which allows its business enterprises data being counted as government jobs. Over a period of time Okanogan County has had to adapt to the changes within the agricultural and timber industries as they
have evolved. Recently the University of Washington conducted an Economic Study of North Central Washington and Okanogan County. The report identified as a key to rural development: the economic future and wellbeing of most rural people now depends on the availability and quality of jobs in the rural services and manufacturing sectors and the entrepreneurial opportunities in those sectors.

Health services and social assistance has been the lead industry in creating jobs over the last five years. This trend has not shown any signs of decreasing at this time as we are still seeing many retirees relocate to Okanogan County as well as a large amount of baby boomers who will be retiring in the very near future who will need these services.

Natural resources, Mining and Construction are the second leading industry in our area. The Colville Tribal Enterprise Corporation owns two lumber mills in Okanogan County, Colville Indian Precision Pine and Colville Indian Plywood and Veneer. These two businesses employ roughly 400 residents combined. Two other long term lumber companies, Zoesel Lumber and Oroville Reman and Reload, both in the North County area, are eager to expand their operations due to the passing of the Heavy Freight Corridor bill which allows for heavy freight to cross at the Canadian Border in Oroville to travel to the Railhead 6 miles south. The passing of this bill also supports the viability of the Cascade and Columbia River Railroad which is a very important resource for our County.

With Kinross Gold Corporation entering into an agreement with conservation groups the mine will now be able to provide jobs to the area. The agreement will ensure that the mine will not be detrimental to the environment and the land will be restored when the mining is complete.

Construction has continued to grow as stated above, we are seeing many individuals from the I-5 corridor and Western Canada who are purchasing property in Okanogan County to build vacation and retirement homes. People from high density urban locations view our land in the Okanogan as affordable and are eager to purchase property and build here. This has had a beneficial impact for our all building trades and local lumber supply companies.

The Value Added Food Processing Industry has continued to expand with Pink Creek Pack, Bear Fruits, American Produce, LLC and Kettle Valley/Sunopta having a presence in our County. These businesses purchase local fruit from generational orchardists in our communities they manufacture their products and
sell it to corporations such as Clif Bars, Gerber, General Foods, etc. This industry employs approximately 300 residents and supports the local economy.

Retail Trade, also tied in the five year study as the second leading industry in our area. This is due to the expansion of the Wal Mart Supercenter, the opening of Home Depot, Game Stop, The Dollar Store, Starbucks, as well as many of our local retail businesses diversifying their products to make them unique to the counties retail market.

Leisure and Hospitality ranked third in the terms of industry that has added the most jobs to Okanogan County from 2001-2007. Tourism is a driving force as many individuals travel to our area to experience the natural surroundings, fishing, hiking, skiing, as well as the draw of our areas arts, entertainment, and cultural events. Okanogan County has been identified as a top tourist hot spot. Sun Mountain Lodge and other lodging in the Twisp and Omak areas have brought in many dollars to our county. Okanogan County Tourism Council is the lead agency and has made it a priority to draw as many people to the communities within our county by partnering with the Cities and chambers to coordinate advertising and market events.

Technology related industries including internet service providers, computer sales and repair, and businesses whose primary functions are performed over the internet have grown significantly in the last eight years. Okanogan County is the site of the largest earth satellite farm in the United States and this site provides the Boeing Sea Launch for satellites transmitting everything from air traffic control to news and television transmission on a global basis. Wireless infrastructure allows "off the grid" internet development and technology businesses to flourish while enjoying a rural setting. The PUD invested in fiber optic capacity the entire length of Hwy 97 in order to meet the demand which existed and encourage continued development of this "light footprint" enterprise which has traditionally provided better than median wage incomes. A further example of this is the development of technology businesses in the county such as Home Movie.com and North Cascades Internet which led the infrastructure investment in the county with wireless connections based initially in radio towers.

WORK FORCE DEVELOPMENT

Okanogan County continues to have a strong demand for skilled employees in some manufacturing industries and in the health care field. Employers also continue to seek employees who will show up every day and they will train them.
There is competition for skilled workers in the construction and manufacturing industry, as well as the fact that Kinross will be opening the Chesaw Gold Mine in the next few months.

Barriers for underemployed job seekers continue to be low education levels, criminal history and poor work history. The April unemployment rate for the County was 6.9%. Seasonal work has an impact on other employers as well. Many employees wait to return to the job they normally have and are satisfied with the cycle of employment and unemployment. Their employers also need these skilled workers back to make them successful.

Many programs exist to assist clients with any of these barriers. WorkSource Okanogan County has workshops and training programs available to assist underemployed individuals. Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation has a strong Employment and Training Unit that seeks employment for Native Americans. Wenatchee Valley College Omak has training programs at the college and is willing to provide specialized training when it is needed. The Community College system also has special grants available to assist new and existing businesses. The key is to identify the skills required and find the right curriculum. All of these partners work together to serve the employers of the county and to assist the job seekers to be good strong employees.

**MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

Okanogan County household median income falls significantly below the state average. The median household income measures the point at which half of all households have more income and half have less. The U.S. Census Bureau tracks income by family, household, and per capita. A household is an occupied housing unit. Family income includes only those households that are considered families (householder and one or more other persons related to the householder by birth, marriage or adoption.) Since not all households contain families, the household income is more representative of the actual community income.

According to the Washington State Office of Financial Management, the preliminary estimate for the median household income for Okanogan County in 1999 is $29,726. This is significantly less than the Census report of the state median household income in 1999 of $47,776 but is similar to Douglas County's 1999 median household income estimate of $34,146.
December 2007

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Prelim.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1999</td>
<td>2000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>45,776</td>
<td>48,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Okanogan</td>
<td>29,726</td>
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Note: 1999 median income number is derived from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census of Population and Housing, respectively. Estimates of median household money income for 1990 through 1998 are based on 1989 and 1999 federal census money income data and 1989 through 1999 Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA) county level per capita income.

*Preliminary estimates for 2006 are based on the payroll data compiled by the state Employment Security Department and the state personal income data published by BEA.

**Projection for the year 2007 is based on the 2007 Q1 and Q2 payroll data and the Forecast Council’s November 2007 forecast of the state personal income.

Money income, as defined by the Bureau of the Census, includes wage or salary income, self-employment income, interest, dividends, rental income, social security, public assistance income, retirement and disability income, etc. It excludes some of the income components of personal income defined by the BEA. For example, employer-paid pension and medical benefits are included in personal income but not in money income. The median measures the point at which half of all households have more income and half have less.

Source: Office of Financial Management
The table below indicates that within the next five years the household income distribution in Okanogan County will change drastically. At this time we see a higher distribution within the $<10K$-$40K$-$50K$. If the projections are accurate, we will see a decline in the amount of households whose income falls below 30K, and an increase in the household incomes above $60K$.

### Okanogan County

#### Household Income Distribution 2007 Actual vs. 2012 projection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007 Total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>2012 Projection</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$&lt;10K$</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>12.1</td>
<td>1856</td>
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<tr>
<td>$10-$20K</td>
<td>2434</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>2326</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>-1.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>$20-$30K</td>
<td>2480</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>2150</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>$30-$40K</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>2073</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<tr>
<td>$40-$50K</td>
<td>1792</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>1807</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>-0.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>$50-$60K</td>
<td>1444</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1483</td>
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<tr>
<td>$60-$75K</td>
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<td>8.1</td>
<td>1618</td>
<td>9.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>$75-$100K</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>1445</td>
<td>8.7</td>
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<td>1272</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1833</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Applied Geographic Solutions, Thousand Oaks, CA

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**MORE TO COME IN THIS AREA**

**Strengths**

- Natural Resources, recreation and tourism, Diversity/Culture, Infrastructure
- Supporting and Accessible Technology (residential/commercial), suitability of siting as a redundant or backup location for businesses based in communities
- Where disasters such as earthquake or other events would interrupt operations, Colville Tribe, BC Border, Diversified Economic Strategic Plan, Partnerships with Schools/Colleges
- Development of targeted workforce, railroad, Highway 97 corridor

**Weaknesses of Local Economy**

- Decline in global market of timber/wood products, agriculture industry,
- Infrastructure needs to recruit outside enterprises, regional HS dropout rates,
- Distance to air transportation, increase in gas prices may negatively impact tourism/recreation, leisure & hospitality etc.
Land Use, Transportation, Utilities, Work Force, Housing, and Natural/Cultural Resources

Identify policies and programs, and projects to foster economic growth and development to foster economic growth and development to address future needs.

GOALS AND POLICIES

The following identified goals and policies are in line with the shared vision for sustaining and improving our quality of life in Okanogan County. Okanogan County has historically supported many of the goals and policies found below. Utilizing best practices and goals from other rural communities and economic development professionals, the following goals, policies, and objectives have been developed. Included are recommended action steps to pursue each of these economic development goals:

Goal ED-1: Encourage diverse employment opportunities that satisfy the socioeconomic needs of Okanogan County residents.

Policies

ED-1.1: Facilitate the creation and retention of family wage jobs that meet the needs and demands of Okanogan County residents.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1. Streamline zoning, subdivision and other planning and permitting regulations.
2. Maintain an operational computerized database (in GIS format) of industrial properties for planning purposes.
3. Expedite planning and permitting actions to take advantage of appropriate industrial development opportunities.
4. Seek high level of cooperation with other local governments, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and federal and state agencies in areas that affect issues of mutual concern and that could impact continued countywide economic development.
5. Support local and regional economic development agencies, including those of the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and industry groups in market research efforts.
6. Seek ways to enhance utility and transportation infrastructure needed by industry within county.
7.7 Seek ways to promote flexibility and deregulation of markets for products sold by or used by industries in county.

ED-1.2: Encourage business investment as a means to provide job opportunities for Okanogan County residents.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1.1 Make necessary public infrastructure investments in transportation, water & sewer, telecommunications, and other utilities to leverage private investments that ultimately create jobs.

2.2 Provide adequate, serviced and environmentally acceptable sites that would meet the full range of industrial and business needs and opportunities.

3.3 Identify and organize financial capital resources to assist in attracting new businesses.

4.4 Encourage the development of a Port District to provide immediate facilities for expanding and relocating businesses.

ED-1.3: Encourage diverse job options and entrepreneurial opportunities for persons interested in full-time or part-time employment or desiring to own their own businesses.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1.1 Participate in job fairs, information outreach sponsored by local development agencies, job training centers, and industry.

2.2 Encourage entrepreneurship by removing barriers to new business development and promoting efficiency in government.

3.3 Identify local and non-local financial capital sources to assist new business formation.

4.4 Establish a mentoring program for first-time entrepreneurs by matching individuals with business ideas with those able and willing to help develop their ideas.

5.5 Conduct local area studies of market potential for new retail, wholesale, service or industry input-providing businesses to identify opportunities for new local establishments.

6.6 Assess the feasibility of providing a small business incubator to nurture new local businesses.

7.7 Identify local county businesses that are in need of a succession plan and match them with interested entrepreneurs.
ED-1.4: Encourage educational opportunities for residents of all ages to develop and upgrade skills required for employment, advancement and entrepreneurship.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1.1 Support job training programs and skill enrichment programs.
1.2 Encourage local school districts to establish entrepreneurial and vocational education programs for students.

ED-1.5: Work cooperatively with the Okanogan County Economic Alliance, Wenatchee Valley College at Omak, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Employment and Training, WorkSource Okanogan and other local jurisdictions to address employment needs consistent with county-wide regional policies.

ED-1.6: Cooperate with education providers and employers in developing facilities and programs meeting a continuum of educational needs at the K-12, college, and continuing education levels.

Goal ED-2: Encourage economic growth through planning and development of the region’s public services and facilities’ capacity.

Policies

ED-2.1: Public service providers in Okanogan County should provide those services and facilities necessary to support a high quality of life and attract business investment.

ED-2.2: Review land use and permitting procedures to assure that regulatory processes are understandable, predictable, and can be accomplished within reasonable time periods in a manner that meets or exceeds state statutory requirements.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1.1 Undertake comprehensive utility and other public service planning in order to take advantage of development opportunities, while addressing potential capacity shortfalls in given industrially-zoned locations within the county.
1.2 Provide planning flexibility that will be responsive to unforeseen or changing economic conditions and community desires.
3.3 Encourage long-term programs that effectively build local capacity for sustained economic development.

4.4 Support the development of transportation, and public water, sewer and utility systems that enhance economic growth.

5.5 Seek ways of cooperating with local governments and federal and state agencies to expedite land use and permitting procedures.

6.6 Evaluate issues that impinge upon permitting of natural resources and land uses.

Goal ED-3: Ensure an adequate supply of commercial and industrial sites to provide opportunity for new and expanding businesses to locate or remain in Okanogan County.

Policies

ED-3.1: Encourage a range of commercial retail and service businesses to meet local resident needs and serve visitors to Okanogan County.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1.1 In cooperation with local jurisdictions, identify an inventory of suitable commercial sites adequate to meet anticipated demand during the planning period.

2.2 Coordinate with local commercial and service businesses to identify what the county can do to meet the needs of the residents and visitors.

ED-3.2: Plan for a diversity of ready-to-build sites with sufficient support infrastructure and services needed to meet the demand for industrial land for the duration of the planning period.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1.1. Undertake periodic studies of industrial growth in order to set planning targets for industrial sites and adjust long-term forecasts accordingly.

2.2. Undertake evaluations of industrial siting in regard to land use requirements and infrastructure needs.

3.3. Encourage the re-use and redevelopment of existing industrial sites that are no longer viable for their original or previous use.
ED-3.4: Facilitate the retention and expansion of existing local businesses and
start-up of new businesses particularly those that provide family wage
job opportunities and operate in compliance with applicable regulatory
requirements.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this
policy:

1. 1 Undertake prospective (and periodic) analyses of market
    conditions and land use needs of existing key industries.
2. 2. Establish policies and programs in cooperation with local
governments and state agencies to ensure business retention within the
    county.
3. 3 Continue to support the Washington State Small Business
    Resource Center and the Economic Alliance in their goal of working with
    the business community to expand and retain existing businesses,
    recruit start up businesses and in the planning of continue certain
    businesses with assistance in succession planning.

ED-3.6: Jurisdictions in Okanogan County shall regularly update inventories of
land utilization, land demand, and suitable available properties for
residential, industrial, commercial, public facility, and agricultural uses.

Goal ED-4: Preserve the strength of the existing agricultural industry while
diversifying the local economy by strengthening manufacturing and
promoting producer services and other basic industries.

Policies:

ED-4.1: Focus business recruitment and development on firms that will diversify
the local economy and can effectively serve state, national, Pacific Rim
and other global markets from an Okanogan County location.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this
policy:

1. 1. Develop target industry profiles and analysis screens.
2. 2. Conduct detailed analyses of prospective needs of candidate
    industries.
3. 3. Conduct formal pro forma, market and regulatory analyses, and
    siting studies as needed.

ED-4.2: Encourage high value-added resource based products and businesses.
ED-4.3 Encourage the establishment of industrial parks and other light manufacturing facilities and provide zoning of facilities engaged in producer services, including computer, health services, and telecommunications.

Goal ED-5: Maximize the positive economic impact of tourism and recreational development.

Policies

ED-5.1: Promote visitor opportunities that are compatible with or complement the character and existing uses of natural resource lands and critical areas or the rural lifestyles of Okanogan County.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1. 1. Encourage lodging, retail and transportation services to accommodate enhanced visitor opportunities.
2. 2. Support efforts to develop, refurbish and maintain scenic open space, cultural and heritage resources that are attractive to both local residents and visitors.

ED-5.2: Support local jurisdiction efforts to improve and market visitor services.

1.1 Work with Okanogan County Tourism Council to coordinate marketing Okanogan Country, and distribution on materials to local chambers, visitor information centers, and online tourism resources.

ED-5.3: Visitor facilities should be sited at locations that can be served with necessary public infrastructure and that are compatible with neighboring uses.

ED-5.4: Provide for siting and development of Master Planned Resorts.

Goal ED-6: Improve Okanogan County’s economy by supporting efforts to improve human and social services.

Policies

ED-6.1: Encourage development of human and social service facilities that create job opportunities, meet community needs, and maintain Okanogan County’s quality of life.
Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1. Cooperate with other private, public and tribal agencies to promote the establishment of adequate housing and health care to low- and moderate-income workers and their families.
2. Promote alternative financing and development initiatives for permanent housing for low- and moderate-income workers and their families.

ED-6.2: Support development and maintenance of human and social service facilities including, but not limited to, health care, education, transportation and other services for persons with special needs.

Goal ED-7: Promote economic growth that conserves natural resources and open spaces, maintains environmental quality and rural character, and enhances the overall quality of life.

Policies

ED-7.1: Encourage commercial and industrial developments that incorporate innovative and/or experimental applications and demonstrate an ability to conserve natural resources and/or protect or enhance environmental quality.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1. Establish incentive programs oriented to developments using best-practice technologies (e.g., use of renewable natural resources, recycling).
2. Establish program that rewards developers through expedited processes and site capacity incentives for siting or relocating facilities to areas that are compatible with surrounding land uses or critical natural resource areas.

ED-7.2: Long-term commercially significant natural resource lands or lands in urban settlements shall be protected from encroachment from conflicting uses.

Goal ED-8: Coordinate economic development efforts so that a clear and consistent economic policy is followed.
Policies

ED-8.1: Work cooperatively with the Economic Alliance of Okanogan County, Wenatchee Valley Community College at Omak, North Central Washington Economic Development District, and other local jurisdictions to address economic development issues and make policies that are consistent with this Plan.

Actions: The County may consider implementing the following actions under this policy:

1. 1. Build support for this economic development element by presenting its recommended policies and actions from the County's public and private partners.

2. 2. Assign the Economic Alliance of Okanogan County and Okanogan County planning with joint responsibility for the implementation of this element.

ANNUAL ANALYSIS AND REVIEW

Working in cooperation with the Economic Alliance, Okanogan County Department of Community Development will prepare an annual report for submittal to the Board of County Commissioners. The report will contain an analysis of economic activity in Okanogan County and any proposed revisions to the economic development element of the Comprehensive Plan.

RECREATION PLAN

The Recreation Plan adopted by Okanogan County on April 20, 2004, along with all attachments, is adopted by reference into this Comprehensive Plan.

The Okanogan County Department of Community Development will prepare an annual report for submittal to the Board of County Commissioners. The report will contain an analysis of recreational activity and infrastructure in Okanogan County and any proposed revisions to the Recreation Plan. Okanogan County intends to do a complete review of the Recreation Plan in 2009-2010 if resources are available to do so.
HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

The Hazard Mitigation Plan adopted by Okanogan County on January 13, 2009, including all attachments, is adopted by reference in this Comprehensive Plan.

The Fire Protection plan will be applied county wide using an educational and incentive based approach to minimize the danger of wild land fire.

General Planning Objectives

GPO – 12.1

Road requirements for development will assure escape routes for residents and safe access for emergency equipment in the event of wild land fire.

The flood management program for Okanogan County will be merged into the critical areas ordinance.
Chapter Thirteen - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM

Okanogan County adopted a Shorelines Master Program as required in RCW 90. The Shorelines Master Program is currently under review. The public review of the Shorelines Master Program began with the review of this Comprehensive Plan. 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.

The Shorelines Master Program will be adopted by ordinance by the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners. The Shorelines Master Program will be adopted by reference into this Comprehensive Plan.

General Planning Objectives

GPO - 13.1

To facilitate the creation of local processes, 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.

CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE

Okanogan County adopted a Critical Areas Ordinance as required in RCW on XXXXX. The public review of the Critical Areas Ordinance began with the review of this Comprehensive Plan. The review of the Critical Areas Ordinance will continue on an independent schedule with the exception of a final consistency review and review for impact to the buildable lands analysis.

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.

The Critical Areas Ordinance will be adopted by ordinance by the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners. The Critical Areas Ordinance will be adopted by reference into this Comprehensive Plan.
Chapter 14 – COORDINATION

FEDERAL AGENCIES

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

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

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

Authority:

- United States Code (USC)
- (BLM)
- 43 C.F.R. 1601, Planning
- 16 U.S.C. 1604, National Forest Management Act (NFMA)
- 16 U.S.C. 1533, Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- 16 U.S.C. 1271, Wild and Scenic River Act
- 42 U.S.C. 7401, Clean Air Act
- 33 U.S.C. 1251, Clean Water Act
- 42 U.S.C. 4331, National Environmental Policy Act

STATE AGENCIES

Upon adoption of the Growth Management Act (RCW36.70A) the legislature recognized the need for State Agencies to make sure their management...
The State Environmental Policy Act RCW 43.21C sets forth a consistent process for review of probable, significant, and adverse impacts brought about by land use decisions, both project specific and on a program level. The actions of State Agencies, with few specifically enumerated exemptions, are subject to review under SEPA. The actions of the Legislature are categorically exempt from SEPA review.

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

Citations
- RCW 36.70A.103
- RCW 36.70A.210
- RCW 36.70A.370
- WAC 365-195-785