

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

**Description of proposal:** The 2011 Comprehensive Plan Amendment proposals are:

1. To change the land use designation on approximately 2,044 acres from Rural Lands Five to Open Space conservation for an area known as Barker Ranch.
2. Amendments to the Transportation Maps in Chapter Eight to show two proposed future road extensions, and a project amendment to the Capital Facilities Element in Table 9.0 adding a proposed restroom facility serving the Wine Country Bike Trail, that are proposed in the Benton County Six-year Road Plan.
3. Staff proposed amendments include the following: Chapter three Goals and Policies add new policies regarding electric vehicle support infrastructure required by state code; Chapter Four, Land Use Element; corrections to Land Use Maps, revision of the Urban Growth Area Preferred Land Use Maps; include Sub-Area Plan language; Chapter Four Appendix, revise Essential Public Facilities Siting Process Matrix; Chapter Five Rural Element, amend language to include definition of Rural Character required by state code; Chapter Nine, Capital Facilities Element, add reference and link to the Capital Facilities Plans adopted by the County during the UGA adoption process; other minor edits as necessary to clarify and improve the accuracy of the information contained in the Plan.

**Proponent** Benton County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 910, Prosser WA 99350

File No. **EA 11-18**

**Location of proposal, including street address, if any:** The amendment proposals are not site specific "to be built projects" that will result in a specific location, but are amendments to the Comprehensive Plan needed to ensure that the plan and regulations comply with the requirements of RCW 36.70A.

**Lead agency** BENTON COUNTY

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that it does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request.

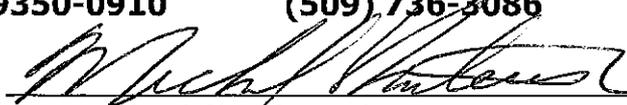
This DNS is issued under 197-11-340(2); the lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from the date below. Comments must be submitted by **June 24, 2011**.

Responsible Official

**Michael Shuttleworth, Planning Manager**  
**Benton County Planning Dept.**  
**Post Office Box 910      PHONE: (509) 786-5612**  
**Prosser, WA 99350-0910      (509) 736-3086**

Date **June 10, 2011**

Signature

  
Michael Shuttleworth

**THERE IS NO AGENCY APPEAL.**

**DISTRIBUTION:**

Applicant  
News Media (Encl. map or plot plan)  
Benton County Building Office  
Department of Natural Resources-Olympia  
Dept. of Natural Resources -Ellensburg  
Benton Clean Air Authority  
Bureau of Reclamation  
Benton County Public Works  
City of Kennewick  
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Fire District 2  
Fire District 3  
Fire District 4  
Fire District 5  
Fire District 6  
Fire Marshal  
Prosser School District No. 116  
Bureau of Land Management  
Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Office of Archaeology & Historic Preservation  
Futurewise  
CTED

**ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST**

*EA 11-18*

**A. BACKGROUND**

- 1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:  
2011 Proposed Amendments to the Benton County Comprehensive Plan.
- 2. Name of applicant: Benton County
- 3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:  
Susan M. Walker, Senior Planner  
Benton County Planning Department  
P.O. Box 910  
Prosser, WA 99350  
(509) 786-5612 or (509) 736-3086
- 4. Date checklist prepared: May 12, 2011
- 5. Agency requesting checklist: Benton County
- 6. Proposed timing or schedule (including phasing, if applicable):  
Approximately 3 months with Adoption by September 1, 2011
- 7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal?  
No.
- 8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.  
An environmental impact statement and addendum was prepared for the adoption of the Benton County GMA Comprehensive Plan in 1998. The amendments
- 9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.  
None known
- 10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.  
Board of County Commissioner's approval of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendments.
- 11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

**RECEIVED**

**MAY 12 2011**

**Benton County  
Planning Department**

The 2011 Amendment proposals are as follows:

- 1) A proposed amendment of the Land Use Map to change the designation on approximately 2,044 acres from Rural Lands Five to Open Space Conservation for an area known as Barker Ranch north of the Yakima River and west of the City of Richland.
- 2) Amendments to the Transportation Maps in Chapter Eight to show two proposed future roads extensions, and a project amendment to the Capital Facilities Element in Table 9.0 adding a proposed restroom facility serving the Wine Country Bike Trail, that are proposed in the Benton County Six-Year Road Plan.
- 3) Staff proposed amendments include the following: Chapter Three Goals and Policies, add new policies regarding electric vehicle support infrastructure required by state code; Chapter Four, Land Use Element; corrections to Land Use Maps, revision of the Urban Growth Area Preferred Land Use Maps; include Sub-Area Plan language; Chapter Four Appendix, revise Essential Public Facilities Siting Process Matrix; Chapter Five Rural Element, amend language to include definition of Rural Character required by state code; Chapter Nine, Capital Facilities Element, add reference and link to the Capital Facility Plans adopted by the County during the UGA adoption process; other minor edits as necessary to clarify and improve the accuracy of the information contained in the Plan.

**NOTE:** The amendment proposals are not site specific "to be built project" that will result in a location specific and currently definable modifications to natural or man made environments. Rather, they are amendments to the Comprehensive Plan needed to ensure that the plan and regulations comply with the requirements of RCW 36.70A. As amendments the proposals are "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b). "Non-project actions" such as Comprehensive Plan amendments are by their nature and large area of applicability not amenable to site specific and detailed environmental impact analysis. Accordingly, any future site specific projects that may be proposed on lands that are subject to the proposed amendments will be reviewed for environmental impacts under the County's SEPA procedures, and where applicable its Critical Resources Protection ordinance, and Shorelines Plan.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known, if a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

Proposal 1) The amendment is proposed on land in Sections 13, 23, 24, of T. 10N., Range 27 EWM., and Sections 19, 29, 30, and 31 in T. 10 Range 28 E.W.M., consisting of approximately 2,044 acres, known as Barker Ranch, located north of the Yakmia River and west of the City of Richland.

Proposal 2) The two proposed roads extensions are located in the Horseheaven Planning

Region include: Locust Grove Road in the area of T.8N., R.28E.W.M., between Clodfelter and Edwards Roads; and Coffin Road in the area of T.8N., R.30E.W.M. between Nine Canyon and Meals Roads; a restroom facility will be added to the Capital Facilities Element to be located between King Tull Road and CR 12 to serve the Wine Country Bike Trail. Proposal 3), are proposed staff amendment proposals to the Plan and apply variously to all lands within the unincorporated Benton County.

## **B. ENVIRONMENTAL ELEMENTS**

### **1. Earth**

- a. General description of the site (circle one): Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:  
General topographic characteristics vary greatly within unincorporated Benton County. All manner of terrain and slopes characteristic of the Mid-Columbia Basin are present.
- b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)? Vertical or near vertical slopes exist in Benton County.
- c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them and note any prime farmland.  
Within unincorporated Benton County soils range from sandy to sandy loam, to sandy loam and clay, and coarser soils, as well as saturated and hydric or near hydric soils in areas subject to persistent inundation.
- d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe. Within unincorporated Benton County there are areas of unstable soils or geology.
- e. Describe the purpose, type, and approximate quantities of any filling or grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- f. Could erosion occur as a result of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any: Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this checklist is not a specific project, it

is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

2. Air

- a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal (i.e., dust, automobile, odors, industrial, wood smoke) during construction and when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if know. Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe. Same as a., above.
- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any: Same as a., above.

3. **Water**

a. Surface:

- 1) Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- 2) Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.  
Same as 1), above.
- 3) Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water, or wetlands, and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of ill material.  
Same as 1), above.
- 4) Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if know. Same as 1), above.
- 5) Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.  
Same as 1), above. Some Zoning Districts apply to lands that are within 100 year floodplain, as well as to lands that are not within 100-year floodplain.
- 6) Does the proposal involve any discharge of waste materials to surface waters?

If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge. Same as 1), above.

b. Ground:

1) Will ground water be withdrawn, or will water be discharge to ground water? Give general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if know.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b). .

2) Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (for example: Domestic sewage, industrial, containing the following chemicals, agricultural, etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.  
Same as 1).

c. Water Runoff (including storm water):

1) Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? if so, generally describe.  
Same as 1), Above.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water impacts, if any:  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

4. **Plants**

a. Circle types of vegetation found on the site: deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other; evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other; shrubs; grass; pasture' crop or grain; wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bulrush, skunk cabbage, other; water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other; other types of vegetation.  
Within unincorporated Benton County all the above vegetative types listed above are likely found on the mass of land that includes developed and undeveloped areas.

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a

"non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- c. List threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b). However, within unincorporated Benton County there are numerous plant species listed by State and Federal agencies as either endangered or threatened. Some of these species may be on lands that are designated for one or another of the Zoning Districts in proposed ordinance amendments.
- d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any:  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

## 5. **Animals**

- a. Circle any birds and animals which have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site: Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:  
Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:  
Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, shellfish, other:  
Within unincorporated Benton County all of the above mentioned birds, mammals and fish (except herring) are likely found.
- b. List any threatened or endangered species known to be on or near the site.  
Within unincorporated Benton County there are numerous species designated by State or Federal agencies as threatened or endangered. Some of these species may have a casual or primary relationship with lands that are designated for one or another of the Districts in the proposed ordinance amendments.
- c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.  
Various areas of the lands and waters within Benton County are migration routes for mammals (e.g., elk and deer) fish (e.g. salmon) and birds (e.g., Canadian geese).
- d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any:  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).. However, within any of the Districts of the proposed amendments to Title 11 , environmental evaluations (per SEPA) for future site specific projects will need to be conducted at the time a project is proposed, and per the State Growth Management Act, the County's Title 15 requires protection of Critical Resources and listed species.

## 6. **Energy and Natural Resources**

- a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b). However, anyway that the proposed amendments to Title 11 would effect solar energy is not now obvious.

- c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any:

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

## 7. **Environmental Health**

- a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur as a result of this proposal? If so, describe.

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- 1) Describe special emergency services that might be required.  
Same as a., above.
- 2) Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any:  
Same as a., above

## b. **Noise**

- 1) What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- 2) What types and levels of noise would be created by or associate with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site. Same as 1), above.

- 3) Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any: Same as 1) above.

## 8. Land and Shoreline Use

- a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties?  
Within unincorporated Benton County land uses include rural residential, agricultural, commercial, mineral extraction, recreation, industrial, rangelands, open space and public lands.
- b. Has the site been used for agriculture? If so, describe.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- c. Describe any structures on the site. Same as b., above.
- d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what? Same as b., above.
- e. What is the current zoning classification of the site? Various current Zoning Districts apply throughout the unincorporated County.
- f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation for the site?  
Various Comprehensive Plan land use designations apply throughout the unincorporated County.
- g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?  
Various shoreline designations of the County's Shoreline Plan apply along the shorelines of the Columbia and Yakima rivers in unincorporated Benton County.
- h. Has any part of the site been classified as an "environmentally sensitive" area? If so, specify.  
Various locations (e.g., wetlands, rivers and streams, wildlife conservation areas), are designated for protection under the County's Critical Resources Ordinance (Title 15). These areas are considered "environmentally sensitive". These areas may be designated with one or another of the Zoning Districts in the proposed amendments.
- I. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace? Same as I., above.
- k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any:  
Same as I., above.

Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any:

Per GMA, the proposed amendments must be, and are consistent with, and implement the Comprehensive Plan.

9. **Housing**

- a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing. Same as a., above.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any: Same as a., above.

10. **Aesthetics**

- a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structures(s) not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed? Same as a., above.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any: Same as a., above.

11. **Lights and Glare**

- a. What type of light or glare will be the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views? Same as a., above.

- c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal? Same as a., above.

- d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any: Same as a., above.

12. **Recreation**

- a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

The "vicinity" is all of unincorporated Benton County, within which there are numerous public parks and informal recreation areas.

- b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.  
No, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts or recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any: Same as b., above.

13. **Historic and Cultural Preservation**

- a. Are there any places or objects listed on, or proposed for, national, state, or local preservation registers known to be on or next to the site? If so, generally describe.

Within all of unincorporated Benton County there may be such sites, but not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- b. Generally describe any landmarks or evidence of historic, archeological, scientific, or cultural importance known to be on or next to the site. Same as a., above.

- c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts, if any: Same as a., above.

14. **Transportation**

- a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site, and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plan, if any.

Within unincorporated Benton County the roadway circulation system consists of interconnected Interstate and State Highways connected to local arterial roads and collector streets.

- b. Is the site currently served by public transit? If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Public Transit is available within the Transit District boundaries that extend to unincorporated Benton County. The unincorporated areas outside of the Transit District boundaries are not served.

- c. How many parking spaces would the completed project have? How many would the project eliminate?

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a

"non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- d. Will the proposal require any new roads or streets, or improvements to existing roads or streets, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).  
Same as c., above.
- e. Will the project use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe. Same as c., above.
- f. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project? If know, indicate when peak volumes would occur. Same as c., above.
- g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:  
Same as c., above.

15. **Public Services**

- a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example, fire protection, police protection, health care, schools, etc.)? If so, generally describe.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).
- b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any. Same as a., above.

16. **Utilities**

- a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other.  
Within unincorporated Benton County the above utilities and services are available, depending upon location.
- b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

C. **SIGNATURE**

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

Signature: Susan M. Walker

Print Name: Susan M. Walker, Senior Planner  
Benton County Planning Department

Date Submitted: 5/12/2011

D. SUPPLEMENTAL SHEET FOR **NON PROJECT** ACTIONS  
(do not use this sheet for project actions)

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

Not applicable, this is not a site specific project, the amendments in and of themselves, do not directly increase discharges or emissions to air or water, or create impacts on other natural resources. Comprehensive Plan, for which a SEPA environmental review has been completed., other provisions of Benton County's official controls (e.g., SEPA review, Critical Areas Ordinance, Shoreline plan, subdivision review regulations) are applied to address such consequences and impacts to public health and safety by either avoidance or mitigation.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are: Same as 1., above

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish or marine life?  
See D. 1., above.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish or marine life are:  
See D. 1., above

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

It would not.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

None needed.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection; such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, flood plains, or prime farmlands?

It would not. Also see D. 1., above.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

See D. 1., above.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

See D. 1., above.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

See D. 1., above.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

It would not. The proposed ordinances implement a Comprehensive Plan that has land uses of less intensity, individually and cumulatively, than the previous Comprehensive Plan.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demands(s) are:

None needed. Also GMA requires Level of Service (LOS) standards for transportation systems to be identified in the Comprehensive Plan. The standard must keep pace with traffic demands coming from the development of lands that are subject to the various Zoning Districts of the proposed amendments to Title 11.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment. No conflicts are known at present.

### **ESA LISTED SALMONIDS CHECKLIST**

The Listed Salmonids Checklist is provided in order that the county may initially identify a project's potential impacts (if any) on salmonids that have been listed as "threatened" or "endangered" under the Federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). A salmonid is any fish species that spends part of its life cycle in the ocean and returns to fresh water. Potential

project impacts that may result in a "taking" of listed salmonids must be avoided, or mitigated to insignificant levels. Generally, under ESA, a "taking" is broadly defined as any action that causes the death of, or harm to, the listed species. such actions include those that affect the environmental in ways that interfere with or reduce the level of reproduction of the species.

**If ESA listed species are present or ever were present in the watershed where your project will be located, your project has the potential for affecting them, and you need to comply with the ESA. The questions in this section will help determine if the ESA listing will impact your project. The Fish Program Manager at the appropriate Department of Fish and Wildlife (DFW) regional office can provide information for the following two questions. Please contact the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife at 1701 S. 24th, Yakima WA 98902-5720, Phone No. 509-575-2740.**

1. Are ESA listed salmonids currently present in the watershed in which your project will be? YES X NO  
Please Describe.

Within the portions of the Columbia and Yakima Rivers, that traverse Benton County unincorporated lands subject to proposed amendments to Title 11, Mid-Columbia Steelhead are listed under ESA as endangered.

2. Has there ever been an ESA listed salmonid stock present in this watershed?  
YES X NO Please Describe.  
See 1., above.

If you answered "yes" to either of the above questions, you should complete the remainder of this checklist.

**PROJECT SPECIFIC:** The questions in this section are specific to the project and

vicinity. A1. Name of watershed: Yakima Basin Watershed

A2. Name of nearest waterbody: Yakima and Columbia Rivers

A3. What is the distance from this project to the nearest body of water? Some of the lands subject to proposed amendments to Title 11 are shoreline to these rivers. Often a buffer between the project and a stream can reduce the chance of a negative impact to fish.

A4. What is the current land use between the project and the potentially affected water body (parking lots, farmland, etc.)  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project. it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

A5. Is the project above a:  
Natural permanent barrier (waterfall) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_

Natural temporary barrier (beaver pond) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 Man-made barrier (culvert, dam) YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_  
 Other (explain) Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

A6. If yes, are there any resident salmonid populations above the blockage?  
 YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Don't Know \_\_\_\_\_  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project; it is a "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

A7. What percentage of the project will be impervious surface (including pavement & roof area)?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

**FISH MIGRATION:** The following questions will help determine if this project could interfere with migration of adult and juvenile fish. Both increases and decreases in water flows can affect fish migration.

B1. Does the project require the withdrawal of:  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- a. Surface water? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 Amount \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name of surface water body \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Ground water? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
 Amount \_\_\_\_\_  
 From Where \_\_\_\_\_  
 Depth of well \_\_\_\_\_

B2. Will any water be rerouted? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_  
 If yes, will this require a channel change?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

B3. Will there be retention ponds? YES \_\_\_ NO \_\_\_ If yes, will this be an infiltration pond or a surface discharge to either a municipal storm water system or a surface water body?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a

"non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

If to a surface water discharge, please give the name of the waterbody.

- B4. Will this project require the building of new roads? Increased road mileage may affect the timing of water reaching a stream and may, thus, impact fish habitat.

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- B5. Are culverts proposed as part of this project?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

- B6. Will topography changes affect the duration/direction of runoff flows?  
Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

If yes describe the changes. Will the project involve any reduction of the floodway or floodplain by filling or other partial blockage of flows? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

If yes, how will the loss of flood storage be mitigated by your project?

**WATER QUALITY:** The following questions will help determine if this project could adversely impact water quality. Such impacts can cause problems for listed species. Water quality can be made worse by runoff from impervious surfaces, altering water temperature, discharging contaminants, etc.

- C1. Do you know of any problems with water quality in any of the streams within this watershed? YES X NO \_\_\_

If yes please describe.

The Yakima River is water quality impaired in its mid and lower reaches

- C2. Will your project either reduce or increase shade along or over a water body?  
YES \_\_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_\_ Removal of shading vegetation or the building of structures such as docks or floats often result in a change in shade.

Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

C3. Will the project increase nutrient loading or have the potential to increase nutrient loading or contaminants (fertilizers, other waste discharges, or runoff) to the waterbody? YES\_\_\_NO\_\_\_  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

C4. Will turbidity be increased because of construction of the project or during operation of the project? In-water or near water work will often increase turbidity. YES\_\_\_NO\_\_\_  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

C5. Will your project require long term maintenance, i.e., bridge cleaning, highway salting, chemical sprays for vegetation management, clearing of parking lots? YES\_\_\_NO\_\_\_  
Please Describe.  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non project action per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

**Vegetation:** The following questions are designed to determine if the project will affect riparian vegetation, thereby, adversely impacting salmon.

D1. Will the project involve the removal of any vegetation from the stream banks? YES\_\_\_NO\_\_\_  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

If yes, please describe the existing conditions and the amount and type of vegetation to be removed.

D2. If any vegetation is removed, do you plan to re-plant? YES\_\_\_NO\_\_\_ If yes, what types of plants will you use?  
Not applicable, the action that is the subject of this Checklist is not a specific project, it is a "non-project action" per WAC 197-11-704 (b).

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT (CPA) 11-01  
CHANGE OF LAND USE DESIGNATION FROM RL-5 TO OPEN SPACE  
CONSERVATION**

**PROPOSAL REQUEST:** at the request of the property owners of Barker Ranch LTD., the Planning Administrator has submitted a proposal to change the land use designation from Rural Lands 5 Acre (RL-5) to Open Space Conservation (OS) to promote conservation and protection of the property and the activities that occur on site. The Barker Ranch consists of approximately 2,044 acres, and is recognized as having significant wildlife habitat, with abundant natural wetlands used as game feeding, nesting, rearing, resting and recreational activity. Natural amenities including topography, unique soils, plants, and geology existing on the site, and the associated benefits to the environment, wildlife, and the public, makes the Barker Ranch site a prime candidate for conservation and protection provided by the open space land use designation.

**PROPOSED PROPERTY LOCATION:**

The property proposed for amendment is located in Sections 23, 24, 25, & 43, of Township 10N., Range 27 E.W.M. and Sections 19, 29, 30, & 31 of Township 10N., Range 28 E.W.M., west of the City of Richland, and North of Yakima River extending further north to the Horn Rapids Ditch. The area contains two parcels that straddle Snively Rd and Twin Bridges Rd. (ATTACHMENT 01-2, Aerial Site Map)

**SITE CHARACTERISTICS:**

Activities and use of the site is controlled by Federal Wetland Reserve easements that limit its use for development and serves to further the efforts to restore, protect, manage, maintain, and enhance functions and values of wetlands and other critical areas, including fish & wildlife habitat, water quality improvements, flood water retention, ground water recharge, open space, aesthetic, values, and environmental education. Under the terms of the easements, Barker Ranch is prohibited from building or placing buildings or structures; planting or harvesting crop; and grazing or allowing livestock on the easement area. The U.S. government may authorize the use of the easement area for compatible economic uses to include timber harvesting, managed haying or grazing. A compatible use authorization is possible only if the use is consistent with the long-term protection and enhancement of the wetland and other natural values within easement area. All rights, title, and interest in the lands within the easements have been granted to the U.S. government forever and reserve the landowner to hold record title with right to convey, transfer; the right to quiet enjoyment of the reserved rights; the right to control access by the general public; the right to undeveloped recreational use including fishing and hunting; subsurface resources, provided that any drilling is located outside the easements.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
AMENDMENT  
CPA 11-1

AERIAL MAP OF  
BARKER RANCH AREA

Dated: 5/17/2011

Legend



CITY LIMITS

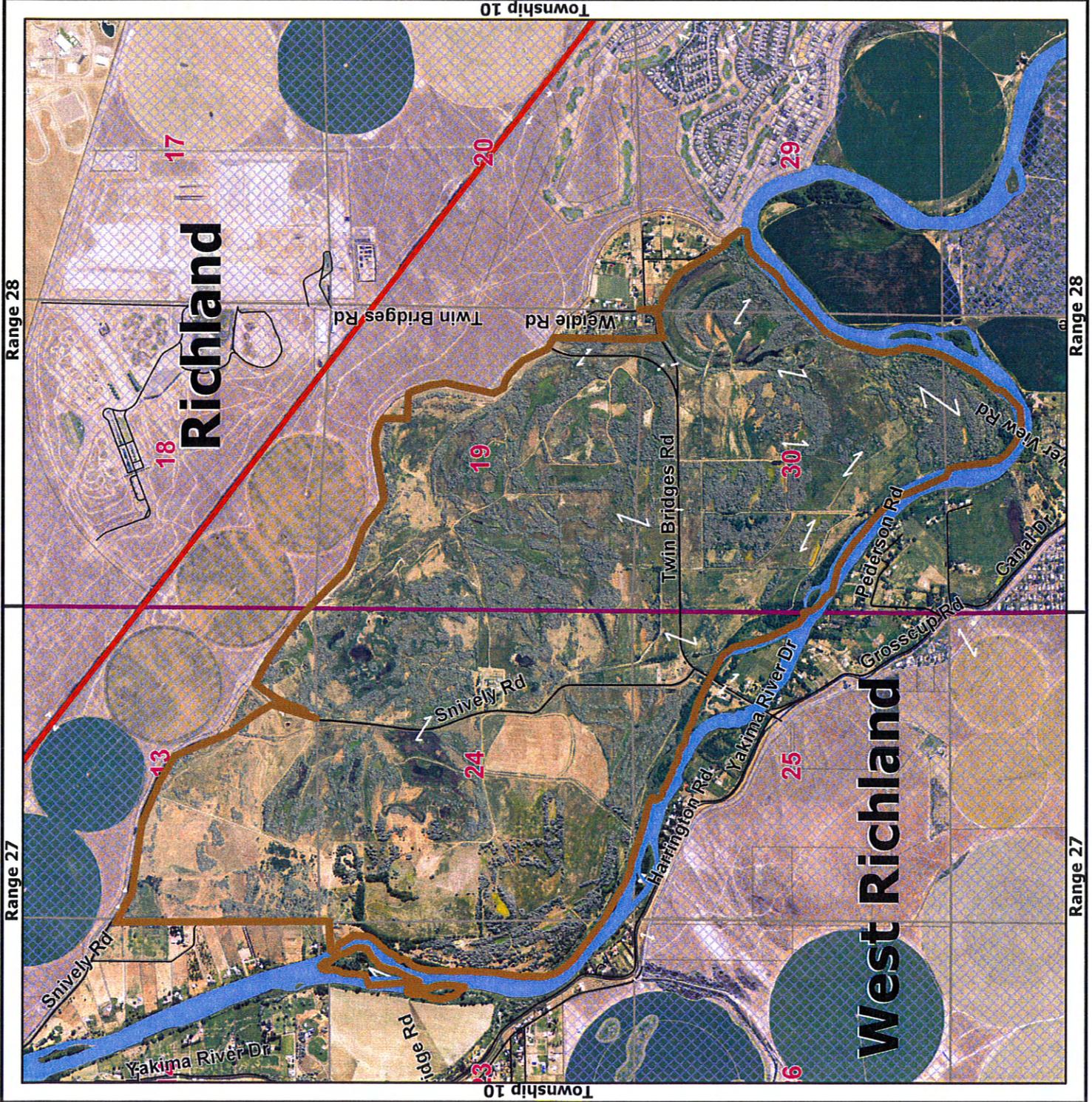
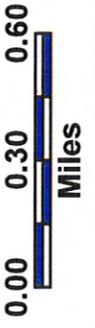
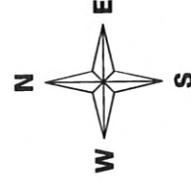


OPEN SPACE  
CONSERVATION  
CPA 11-1



YAKIMA RIVER

ATTACHMENT 01-a



BENTON COUNTY DEPARTMENT  
APPLICATION FOR CAPITAL FACILITIES ELEMENT AMENDMENT

CPA 11-02

FILE NO. CPA-11-2

RECEIVED

NAME OF APPLICANT: BENTON COUNTY PUBLIC WORKS DEPT.

NOV 24 2010

MAILING ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 1001, PROSSER, WA 99350

TELEPHONE: 509-786-5611

Benton County  
Planning Department

*Please answer the following questions, if more space is needed please use attachments.*

**1. Describe the proposed amendment:**

Proposed road projects to be included in the Capital Facilities Element of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan.

**2. Location of Proposed Facility, new project, or maintenance.**

Proposed Projects 1) Locust Grove Road (Clodfelter to Edwards Rd)  
2) Coffin Road (Nine Canyon to Meals Rd.)  
3) Wine Country Bike Path Enhancement

**3. Description of facility being proposed?(include building size/or acres of development)**

N/A

**4. When will project/maintenance begin and end? Include the proposed cost.**

As shown in 2011-2016 Road Program, see Attachment A.

**5. State the requested text amendment language or proposed plan designation for the property:**

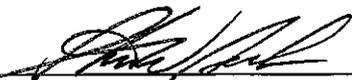
The Comprehensive Plan should be amended to include these County Road Projects in the Capital Facilities Element, Chapter 9 Tables 9.0 or 9.1 as applicable. Associated maps should also be amended to include the proposed projects shown in the adopted Six Year Road Program.

**6. If the amendment requires a map plan change, prepare and attach a site map showing the area in which a plan change is being sought, please show clearly the following: the proposed plan change boundaries, map scale, north arrow, date of preparation, major physical boundaries; both natural and man-made, lying within or adjacent to the affected area (I. e., including but not limited to highways, railroads, rivers, streams, power lines, schools, and other public outbuildings, etc.), section, township and range lines are to be shown and identified if in a shoreline area, define existing shorelines area as shown in existing shorelines master plan and indicate the existing environment designation.**

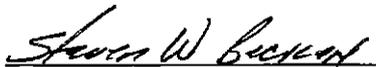
See Attachment A & Attached Maps.

**7. What are the reasons for the requested amendment and include substantial information why the provisions, map designations, etc., of the adopted plan are not sufficient to satisfy the concern that gives rise to the amendment request:**

Proposed county roads are adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, in the Six Year Road Program. These projects must be added to the Comprehensive Plan in the Transportation Element maps in Chapter 9 Tables 9.0 or 9.1 as applicable.



Department Heads Signature



Printed Name

# Attachment A

## 2011 - 2016 ROAD PROGRAM

PRIOR ITY	PROJECT	LENGTH (mi)	COST EST	COUNTY			STATE			FEDERAL			UNKNOWN FUNDING SOURCE	CONSTRUCTION			
				PT & MVFT	ROAD FUND	CONTRIBUTIONS	TIB	CRAB	BFCOG	WSDOT	FWHA	2011		2012	2013	2014 to 2016	
				AMT	AMT	AMT	UCP	RAP	ST/PR&U	ST/PI&H	APP		2011	2012	2013	2014 to 2016	
	<b>POTENTIAL NEW ROADS</b>																
1	PIERT RD: SR 397 to Bowles	1.8	3,504	791	600	342	1,771						1,500	2,004		1,500	
2	CRID: ANTINORI RD: Sunset to Col Soane Winery	0.9	1,500			1,500										1,500	
3	RED MOUNTAIN VISIONARY PLAN										294					294	
4	COFFIN RD: Nine Canyon to Meals	4.5	4,500													4,500	
5	HILDEBRAND: Kennewick City Limits to 10th Avenue	0.3	419	791	0	0	1,771	0	0	0	294		1,500	2,004	0	419	
	<b>RURAL ARTERIAL PROGRAM</b>																
6	HANKS RD: Crosby to Aller	3.0	3,000	50				200					2,750			2,750	
7	CLODFELTER RD: Benilly to C. Williams	2.8	2,155	780	100			1,275					0	2,155			
8	LOCUST GROVE RD: Clodfelter to Edwards	1.5	1,345	195	300			850					0	1,345			
9	NINE CANYON RD: Mills to SR 397	3.3	3,045	4	300			2,741					0	1545	1500		
10	NINE CANYON RD: Beck to Mills	2.6	2,826	33	250			2,543					0		1426	1,400	
11	NINE CANYON RD: Coffin to Beck	3.0	3,260		300								2,960			3,260	
12	MEALS RD: Beginning of Pavement to Ayres	2.5	2,717		300								2,417			2,717	
13	FINLEY RD: End of Pavement to SR 397	2.5	2,718		300								2,418			2,718	
14	KNOX RD: District Line to Truhlicka	2.3	2,500		300								1,983			2,500	
15	KNOX RD: Truhlicka to OIEH	2.1	2,283		300								2,200			2,283	
16	CASE RD: OIEH to Hanks	2.3	2,500		300								2,200			2,500	
	<b>PAVED ROAD UPGRADES</b>																
	<b>Subtotal</b>		29,349	1,062	0	2,750	0	7,600	0	0	0	0	16,928	3,750	1,545	2,925	20,128
17	TRAVIS RD: Sallards to Henson	3.2	1,500	50					450				1,000			1,500	
18	SELLARDS RD: SR 221 to Travis	7.0	4,650	50					300				4,300			4,650	
19	BERT JAMES RD: Sallards to SR 221	4.0	4,150	50									4,100			4,150	
20	OLYMPIA STREET: SR-397 to Kennewick City Limits	0.5	118	118									0	118			
21	QUEENSGATE OVERLAY: Columbia Park Trail to Richland City Limits	0.1	118	118									0	118			
	<b>Subtotal</b>		10,536	386	0	0	0	0	750	0	0	0	9,409	296	0	10,300	
	<b>ENHANCEMENT &amp; SAFETY PROJECTS</b>																
22	JOHNSON RD/GRIFFIN RD: Intersection Improvements	0.5	1,000										1,000			1,000	
23	BADGER RD/WISER PARKWAY: Deceleration Lane	0.1	300										300			300	
24	WINE COUNTRY BIKE PATH ENHANCEMENT: King Tull to CR12	0.0	268										268			268	
	<b>Subtotal</b>		1,568	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,300	268	0	1,300	
	<b>ANNUAL PROGRAMS &amp; MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS</b>																
25	PAVED ROAD UPGRADE PROJECTS		60	60									0	10	10	30	
26	GRAVEL ROAD PAVING PROJECTS		60	60									0	10	10	30	
27	PATHS & TRAILS		60	60									0	10	10	30	
28	SAFETY PROGRAM		1,300	300									175	217	217	649	
29	RAILROAD CROSSINGS		60	0						825			0	10	10	30	
30	MISCELLANEOUS PROJECTS		1,200	1,200						60			0	200	200	600	
31	PLAT ROADS		120	12									0	20	20	60	
32	SR 397 (I-82 to SR 397 Interlie): PWTF Loan Repayment		1,257	1,257									0	210	210	627	
	<b>Subtotal</b>		4,117	2,889	60	0	108	0	0	895			175	897	897	2,059	
	<b>TOTALS</b>		54,787	5,128	60	3,350	1,950	0	1,771	7,609	750	1,153	32,722	6,173	4,504	3,813	40,497

(All \$'s x 1000)

4/07/2010

# BENTON COUNTY

STATE OF WASHINGTON

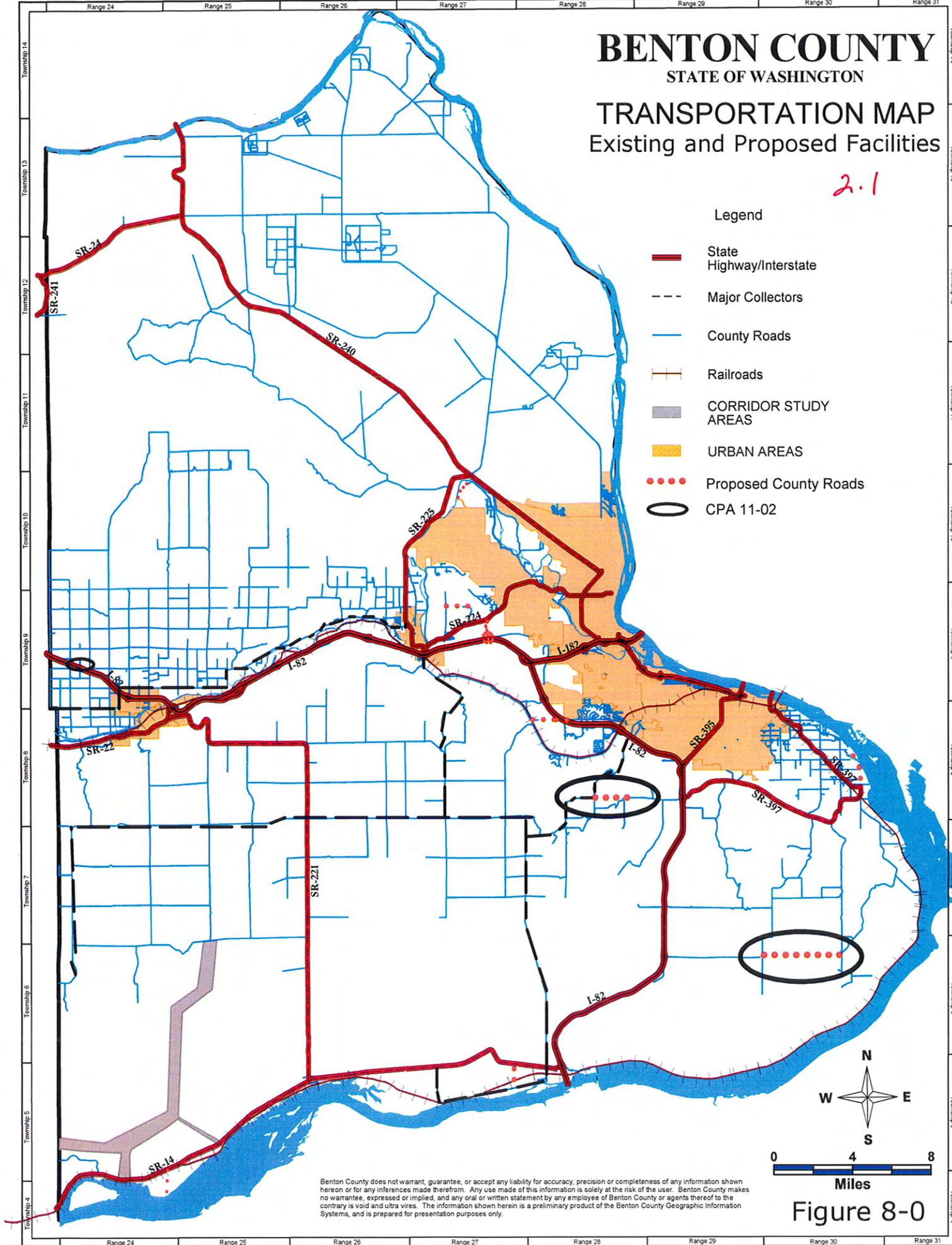
## TRANSPORTATION MAP

Existing and Proposed Facilities

2.1

### Legend

-  State Highway/Interstate
-  Major Collectors
-  County Roads
-  Railroads
-  CORRIDOR STUDY AREAS
-  URBAN AREAS
-  Proposed County Roads
-  CPA 11-02



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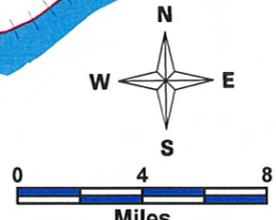


Figure 8-0

# BENTON COUNTY

STATE OF WASHINGTON

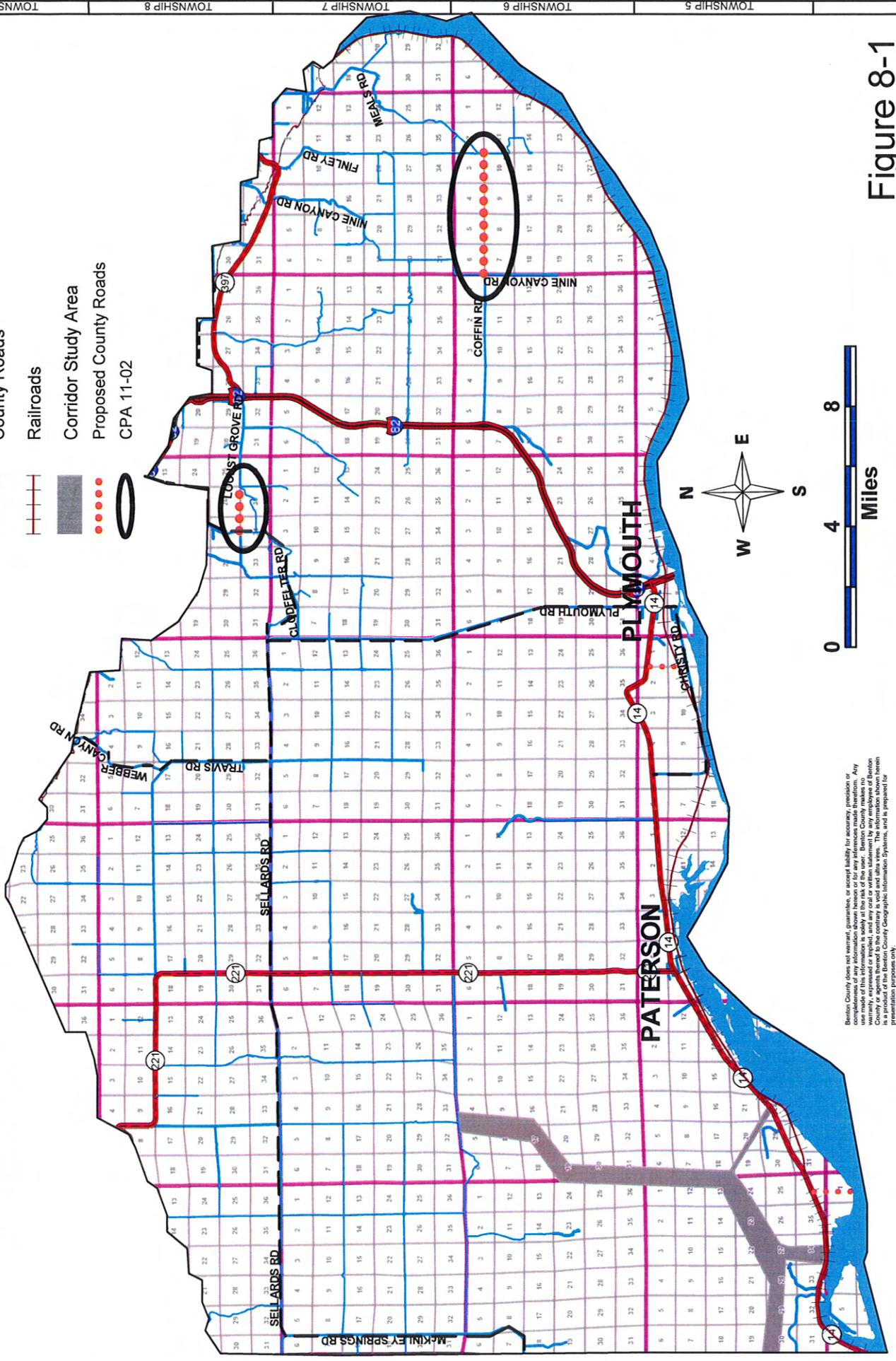
## HORSEHEAVEN PLANNING REGION

### TRANSPORTATION MAP

#### Legend

- State Highway/Interstate
- Major Collectors
- County Roads
- Railroads
- Corridor Study Area
- Proposed County Roads
- CPA 11-02

2.2



Benton County does not warrant, guarantee, or accept liability for accuracy, precision or completeness of any information shown herein or for any inferences made therefrom. Any use made of this information is solely at the risk of the user. Benton County makes no representation or warranty, expressed or implied, for the use of this information. The information shown herein is a product of the Benton County Geographic Information Systems, and is prepared for presentation purposes only.

Figure 8-1

TABLE 9.0 CAPITAL FACILITIES: RECREATION - INVENTORY, PROJECTS AND PROJECT SCHEDULES (10 Yr)

Park Facility	location	owned or leased	Size ac/dev	Current Uses	Existing Facilities	bldg. sq. ft.	Park Plan	Curr. Projects	Scheduled Projects	Project Complete (date)	Est.\$ (mil)	Funding Source
Fairgrd Maint. Projects Approved in Annual Budget	"	owned	NA	Fairgrounds	Various	NA	NA	See CIP	See CIP Appendix Attachment A	Current YR CIP	676K	REET
Trails	Prosser to Yakima co. line	Owned	4 mi.	Bike & walking path	Paved asphalt	NA	Yes	Yes	Restrooms	2012	268K	Federal
County-wide	All	All	NA	All	All	NA	NA	Yes	Parks System Master Plan Parks Programs Reclamation Projects to combat weeds & restore native habitat	2010-2011 2010-2015 2008	38,500 \$180K 20K	Park Develop Fund " "

1. Tapteal's participation as a funding source is always contingent upon the approval of the Tapteal Board of Directors for any specific project. Tapteal is shown as a possible resource only within the geographic area covered by the Tapteal Greenway.

## COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT (CPA) 11-04 STAFF AMENDMENT PROPOSALS

**PROPOSAL REQUEST:** These amendment proposals are housekeeping items proposed by staff: that are necessary to improve the accuracy or update text in the Comprehensive Plan; revisions to reflect current conditions or provide consistency with other plans; changes imposed by new legislation; response to hearings board decisions; etc.

### **SECTION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO BE AMENDED:**

Chapter Three, Goals and Policies, add goals and policies, see item 1; Chapter Four, Land Use Element, update of the Urban Growth Area Preferred Land Use Maps, see item 2; Corrections to Land Use Maps, see items 3A, 3B & 3C; include Sub-Area Plan language and Open Space Land Use designation, see items 4A & 4B; Chapter Five Rural Element, add rural character definition and rural density language proposed in item 5; Chapter Nine, Capital Facilities Element, add reference and link to the Capital Facility Plans created for UGA application process, see item 6, Chapter Four Appendix, amend the Essential Public Facilities Siting Process Matrix, see Item 7; and Housekeeping Item 8, text edits in various chapters of the Plan proposed to update Plan information.

### **STAFF ITEM 1:**

#### **Electric Vehicles and Electric Vehicle Charging Stations.**

Electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations are coming to Washington State. In 2009, the Washington State Legislature recognized this as both an economic and environmental priority and with the support of the Governor, enacted a new law designed to encourage electric vehicles and assist in a quicker transition to electric vehicle use. The State's electric vehicle law known as HB 1481, requires that all local governments in Washington State allow electric vehicle charging stations in most of their zoning categories (except those zoned for residential, resource or critical areas). RCW 36.70A.695, requires that all Counties provide development regulations that allow battery charging stations by July, 2011.

There are three levels of charging stations. Level I is a slow speed charging station mostly for home use and usually privately owned. Level II is a medium speed charging station used for home use and some are publicly owned and available to the general public. A Level III is considered a fast or "rapid" charging station with industrial grade outlets used primarily for commercial use and public applications, i.e., taxi fleets, transits, and charging along highways. Battery charging stations are considered similar to other building and street infrastructure (e.g. parking meters) and do not function as a separate land use. Allowing charging stations may create the need to address a number of issues beyond zoning such as: on-street and off-street signage, charging station design standards, parking enforcement, accessibility for all users, SEPA exemptions, and others.

To support, and in preparation for the eventual roll-out of electric vehicles and electric vehicle charging stations in Benton County, planning staff proposes the following Comprehensive Plan goals and policies be added in Chapter Three, as new Goal 57, under Utility Policies, page 3-19:

- ***NEW Goal 57 Develop and adopt provisions as necessary that streamline and support an efficient and effective transition to electric vehicles.***
- ***Policy A. An electric vehicle charging station equipped with Level I, or Level II charging equipment, shall be permitted outright as an accessory or ancillary use to any principal use in all zoning districts.***
- ***Policy B. Electric vehicle "rapid charging stations" shall be an allowed use in all commercial, industrial, and agricultural zones with limitations, and excluded in areas identified as critical areas.***

#### **STAFF ITEM 2**

##### Cities Preferred Land Use Maps for Urban Growth Areas

Maps figures 4-8 through 4-12, on pages 4-63 through 4-67 in Chapter Four of the Land Use Element, contain the City's preferred land use designations for areas included within their respective Urban Growth Areas (UGA's). Each map shows the city's adopted land use designation for residential, commercial, and industrial uses; etc., and are the basis for the zoning and future development within the UGA's. These maps are updated periodically to reflect the comprehensive plan amendments recently adopted by the cities, annexations, or new UGA's adopted during the most recent UGA cycle. Proposed for amendment are updated Preferred Land Use Maps for each city as adopted in each City's Comprehensive Plan:

Preferred Land Use Map 4-8, City of Prosser UGA  
 Preferred Land Use Map 4-9, City of Benton City UGA  
 Preferred Land Use Map 4-10, City of West Richland UGA  
 Preferred Land Use Map 4-11, City of Richland UGA  
 Preferred Land Use Map 4-12, City of Kennewick UGA

#### **STAFF ITEM 3**

##### Chapter Four, Land Use Element: Corrections to Land Use Map

The maps shown as Exhibit 3A & 3B, detail the location of two minor edits to the County Land Use Maps 4.0, 4.1 & 4.4 in Chapter Four.

The proposed amendment to Map 4.1, shown in Exhibit 3A, is to change the land use designation from Rural Lands Five to GMA Agricultural on approximately 25 acres. The amendment is proposed to correct the omission of an antennae farm located on Horseheaven Hills south of Prosser from the intended GMA Agricultural Designation.

The proposed amendment to Map 4.4 shown in Exhibit 3B, is to change the land use designation on five lots in the Plymouth area (approx 5 acres) from light industrial to Community Center Residential. A change is being proposed because the current use on the already platted parcels is residential with existing homes on site preempting use of the parcels for light industrial use and making the existing residential use the most appropriate use for the land. The area for amendment is adjacent to the community center residential land use designation.

Both of these corrections will be applied to the County-wide Land Use Map 4.0.

#### **STAFF ITEM 4**

Chapter Four, Land Use Element, amend to include a discussion of sub-area plans on page 4-4, shown in the attached Exhibit 4A, and the inclusion of the Open Space-Conservation land use designation language on page 4-47, shown in attached Exhibit 4B.

#### **STAFF ITEM 5**

##### **Rural Character**

In the development of their comprehensive plans, counties are required to develop a Rural Element that meets the goals and requirements of Growth Management Act for lands not designated for urban growth or agriculture (RCW 36.70A). A basic component of the rural element is to define and protect "rural character," another is to provide for a "variety of rural densities."

In the Final Decision and Order (FDO) of the Eastern Washington Growth Management Hearings Board in case 09-1-0010c, (Wiser Appeal), it is acknowledged by the Board that "it is difficult to find in the Rural Element a clear explanation of the County's provision for a "variety of rural densities," and the statute contemplates that a definition of "rural character" be established in the County's Rural Element." The board could take no action on the Rural Element of the Plan because was not being appealed in that case. Staff believes that the lack of these required provisions leaves the Plan susceptible to future appeal.

The citizen's that live and work in the rural areas of the County through their participation in the Rural Planning Area Committees, developed visions, goals, and directives regarding the unique and valued characteristics of each rural area. In formulating the proposed definition of rural character, the input received during the committee process and adopted in the Comprehensive Plan was utilized, along with the definition criteria in RCW 36.70A.030(15), and related Rural Element guidelines provided in RCW36.70A.070(5)(c). Staff proposed edits and amendment text in Chapter Five include the County's preferred rural densities and a definition of the term "Rural Character," as shown in Exhibit 5.

**STAFF ITEM 6**

Proposed language to amend Chapter Nine, the Capital Facilities Element, on pages 9-10 and 9-11, explaining the relationship and link between a City's Capital Facility Plan (CFP) and the County's Comprehensive Plan. CFP's are required by RCW 36.70A.110 and the Benton County Code 16.14 and must accompany a city's Urban Growth Area (UGA) application proposal. They include an inventory and analysis of the existing levels of capital infrastructure and levels of service in the expansion area, a needs assessment for a twenty-year development build-out, and identification of the costs of services and funding sources available to accomplish the improvements. See Exhibit 6.

**STAFF ITEM 7**Essential Public Facilities Siting Process Matrix

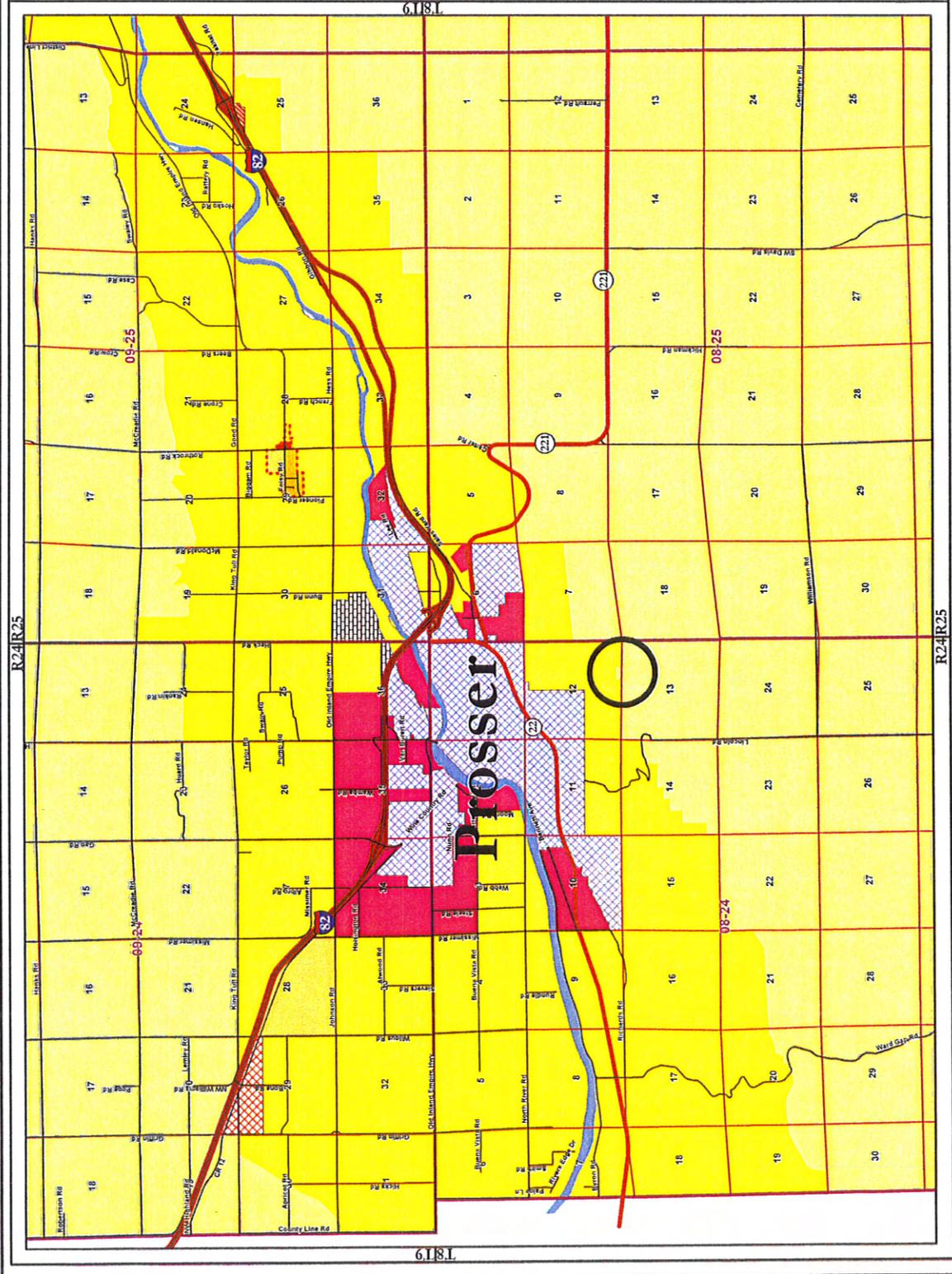
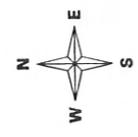
Amendments to the Matrix shown in Chapter Four Appendix, on page 40-A, are proposed to update the information contained within the matrix to list the newly adopted zoning districts and where specific essential public facilities are permitted and what permits and processes are required for each facility's development. See Exhibit 7

**STAFF ITEM 8**

Minor edits as necessary to correct, clarify and improve the accuracy of the information contained in various chapters of the Plan.

**BENTON COUNTY**  
 State of Washington  
**LAND USE MAP 4.1**  
**PROSSER-WHITSTRAN**  
**PLANNING AREA**  
 Comprehensive Plan Amendment  
 CFA 11-4  
 Dated June 14th, 2011

- Legend**
- CITY LIMITS
  - URBAN GROWTH AREA
  - COMMUNITY CENTER
  - RURAL LANDS 1
  - RURAL LANDS 5
  - COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
  - INTERCHANGE COMMERCIAL
  - GENERAL COMMERCIAL
  - LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
  - HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
  - GMA AG



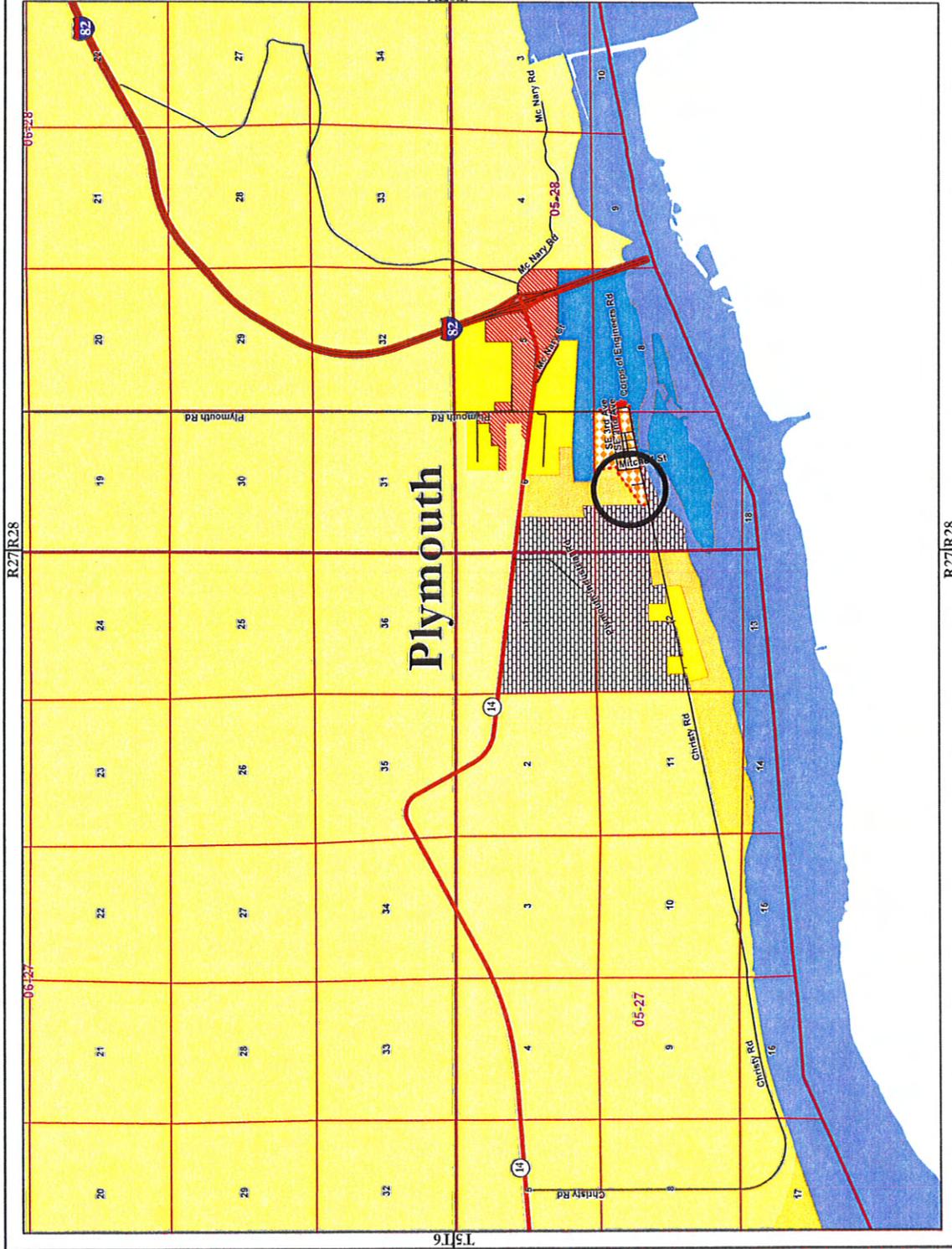
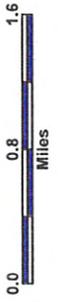
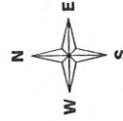
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**BENTON COUNTY**  
 State of Washington  
**LAND USE MAP 4.4**  
**PLYMOUTH**  
**PLANNING AREA**

Comprehensive Plan Amendment  
 CPA 11-4  
 Dated June 14, 2011

**Legend**

-  COMMUNITY CENTER
-  RURAL LANDS 1-3
-  RURAL LANDS 5
-  COMMUNITY COMMERCIAL
-  INTERCHANGE COMMERCIAL
-  LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
-  HEAVY INDUSTRIAL
-  GMA AG
-  PUBLIC



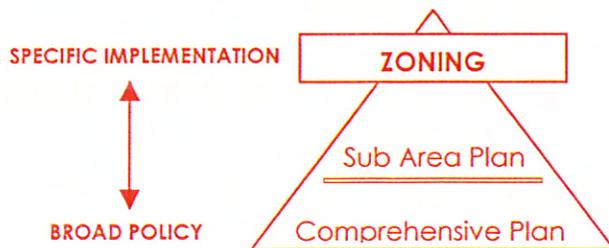
This information was prepared by the Benton County Planning staff for presentation and planning purposes only. Benton County does not accept the liability for the accuracy of any information shown herein. Any use made of this information is solely at the risk of the user.

**SUB AREA PLANS**

The purpose of a sub area plan is to provide a framework for future decision making for select and unique geographical areas within Benton County. These plans may regard areas with special features such as: shorelines providing important functions and values, lands with exceptional soils and climate characteristics making them suitable for prime agricultural production requiring protection, or have other characteristics regarded by residents as valuable or unique for preservation or protection. Sub area plans contain statements of guiding principals to be followed, recommendations for strategies to achieve desired goals and objectives, and a plan of action to guide future land use development decisions in the area. Sub area plans are not regulations, ordinances, or laws of any nature. Sub area plans are prepared with substantial public involvement and represent the consensus of the residents.

**Hierarchy of a Sub-Area Plan Document**

The sub-area plan document fits between the broad policies of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan and the Benton County Zoning Ordinance specific implementation tools as shown in the illustration below:



**OVERVIEW: THE ECONOMY AND LAND USE WITHIN BENTON COUNTY**

**Economic History of Benton County**

The economic history of this region is one of use, production, and trade of natural resources, and the commerce associated with the means of transporting resource commodities. The resources are, in the chronological order of human use and enterprise: fish and native flora and fauna, fur, livestock, irrigated agriculture, hydroelectric power and agricultural products and technology. Means of commerce have been boat, horse, river transport and barge, rail and road. A brief history is presented below.

Native American Culture And Trade (10,000 BC to the Present)

Native Americans were the first inhabitants of the Tri-Cities area and some archaeological findings have established evidence of occupancy dating back perhaps as much as 9,000 years. From the quality and variety of artifacts found, a picture of a stable culture emerges, one with leisure time, comprehensive religious beliefs, and extensive trade and communications. Articles made from Olivella shells from the Pacific coast (beads), jade from British Columbia (adz chisels), and obsidian from Glass Butte, Oregon (arrow and spearheads and knives) have been found in the Tri-Cities, attesting to the extensiveness of trade.

The principal source of food for the Columbia River tribes was salmon,

by assuring existing and prospective farmers that their investment will not be jeopardized by the encroachment of land uses which would increase production cost and decrease productivity (e.g. increased taxes, increased liability, altered production methods to limit liability).

In the interests of providing non-farm income to owners of lands within this designation, uses also include recreational and visitor facilities such as resorts, recreational vehicle parks, golf courses, dude ranches, hunting clubs, etc. Agriculturally related industry and clustered non-farm housing are also included.

### **Open Space-Conservation**

#### Location

This designation is found on the Land Use Map on the north side of the Yakima River west of the City of Richland extending up and down the river from Twin Bridges and the intersection of Snivley and Grosscup Roads and north to the Horn Rapids Ditch. The area is known as Barker Ranch.

#### Definition and Purpose

Lands with this designation are those recognized as areas having critical resources and ecosystems with unique characteristics that support: significant habitats for migratory birds, fish and wildlife; natural riverine functions and aquatic environments; botanical inventory; water quality and flood retention. The areas designated Open Space Conservation areas

provide significant natural functions and benefits to natural resources and the public and should be protected from destruction, conversion, and encroachment by incompatible uses. These areas may also provide limited recreational and educational opportunities for the public.

Candidate lands for designation should include one or more of the following:

1. Areas identified in the County's Comprehensive Plan or within the "Ecologically Sensitive Areas of Benton County" document described as having critical or sensitive areas that should be protected from incompatible uses;
2. Areas held under conservation easements with state or federal agencies that are deemed valuable for their unique ecosystems, plant or wildlife communities, or aesthetic significance;
3. Significant wildlife ecosystems in the County which are highly productive and support significant numbers of breeding or migratory species, or have been otherwise noted as significant habitat due to their high value or scarcity; and,
4. Sensitive areas containing significant examples of representative natural plant and animal communities in the County.

# RURAL ELEMENT CHAPTER 5

## INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

### Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act requires counties to include a Rural Element in their Comprehensive Plans.

**"Counties shall include a Rural Element including lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest or mineral resources. The rural element shall permit appropriate land uses that are compatible with the rural character of such lands and provide for a variety of rural densities..." {R.C.W. 36.70A.070 (5)}**

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-195-330 {2}) recommends that certain steps be followed in preparing the Rural Element, many of the recommended steps are listed below:

- The identification of rural lands;
- The amount of population growth within the twenty-year planning period which will live or work on rural lands;
- Adoption of policies for the development of such lands;
- Uses permitted, including a variety of densities for rural, commercial, and industrial use, consistent with the rural character of the area;
- P.U.D's, cluster housing, and innovative techniques for managing development within the overall parameters of rural density;
- Establishment of a definition of rural governmental services which identifies the limited public services provided to persons living or working in rural areas;
- Provisions to regulate the orderly inclusion of urban growth areas for future development;

**BENTON COUNTY-WIDE  
Top 4 Planning Issues**  
**Road Improvements**  
**Control/limit growth**  
**Ordinance to cleanup trash**  
**More sheriff protection**  
**1993 Rural Survey Respondents**

- The adoption of policies for the development and preservation of the rural character of such lands, including: the preservation of critical areas (e.g., fish and wildlife habitats, water quality etc.) consistent with private property rights; continuation of agricultural use; excavation of mineral resources;
- Encouragement of the use of rural lands for recreational pursuits which preserve open space and are environmentally benign;
- Adoption of strategies for the acquisition of natural areas of high scenic value;
- Establishment of criteria for environmental protection, including programs to control non-point sources of water pollution and to preserve and enhance habitat for fish and wildlife.

### What Is Rural and Rural Character?

~~The language of the legislature provides little guidance as to the meaning of "rural" lands except to state that they are something other than lands in urban growth areas, or lands suitable for commercial agriculture, mineral extraction, or forestry. The implication is that agricultural lands are not rural, though they are certainly a part of the rural landscape, character and lifestyle.~~

~~In seeking to comply with this GMA requirement, a definition of "rural" was debated by county planners across the state in the early through middle phases of the GMA Comprehensive Planning program. Surely characteristics such as density, lot size, housing type, lifestyle etc., could be identified with some specificity so that planning jurisdictions could move forward in creating their Rural Elements.~~

~~As it turns out however, there is not a single definition of "Rural." Though there are some common characteristics of lifestyle preference, it seems ultimately that "Rural" is what it is - where it is. In other words,~~

The rural areas of Benton County are places where open space, the natural environment and vegetation predominate over the built environment. They are discrete areas, with each having a built environment and social texture uniquely created by factors such as origin, history, period of settlement, use capability of the land, and employment base of the residents. The rural area is a place where you can find wildlife habitats, and a historic heritage shown by minimal non-native uses of land that includes small farms or scattered homesteads.

The rural areas or communities within Benton County attest to the observation that each rural area is different. For example, though there are common physical characteristics and resident preferences throughout the rural communities in the four

Planning Regions of the county (Hanford Region excluded), there are also very distinct differences in the custom and culture, community outlook and living environments.

Rural Character embodies a quality of life based upon traditional rural landscapes, activities, lifestyles, and aesthetic values. The residents that live and work in the rural areas of the County, through their participation in the Rural Planning Area Committees prepared visions, goals, and listed unique and valued characteristics for each rural planning area. The following descriptive text defines "Rural Character" using those visions, goals, and perceptions of the County residents, and described as: large open landscapes where the setting is quiet, peaceful, and natural. The residents enjoy a slower pace lifestyle, a closeness with nature and access to recreational opportunities. There is a strong sense of family and community and a separation from government and city.

In the rural area there is elbowroom, less traffic, access to wildlife and where the natural beauty of the rural landform is valued and enjoyed. The rural residents value property rights, and feel a sense of "freedom" in the rural area that provides opportunities to farm, raise children and keep animals.

Homes are buffered from neighbors in a very low-density setting that include five and twenty acre minimum parcel sizes. There are limited areas of more intense rural development, where

community infill may occur.

Rural is not the center or traditional hub of commerce and administration, with markets, theaters and shopping with mixed housing. It is not a densely built environment or a sprawling landscape of homes and cul-de-sacs.

In an urban setting there are higher levels of public services, controlled traffic and lower speed limits. They experience short commutes from home to office, school, or library, and are close to urban governmental services, i.e., police, fire and emergency facilities.

**Rural Survey**

Commonalities and distinctions among rural areas within the county are evident in the Rural Visions For Benton County 1993-2013, and the "pie charts" and graphs of the 1993 Rural Visioning Survey Report. These documents are products of a public participation program conducted in each Rural Area by Benton County planning staff, with the assistance of a consultant, as part of its GMA planning process. Within these documents are the "**Vision**" citizens used to form the base for their Rural Area Plan.

**Common Rural Preferences**

Notwithstanding differences between rural areas, the Survey and work of the individual Rural Planning Advisory Committees identified preferences common to all rural areas within the county. The most common preferences include the following:

**Top 5 Issues/Desired Improvements**

- Ordinance to cleanup trash
- More sheriff protection
- Animal control
- Road improvements
- A church

**Paterson-Plymouth Survey Respondents**

- the ability to keep livestock and animals;
- location of open space or farming in the proximity of living environments;
- near unanimous support for wildlife and habitat protection;
- desire for the expansion of public open spaces for outdoor recreation;
- no urban encroachment;
- desire to preserve open space and low densities;
- a desire and expressed need for good to excellent county roads;
- freedom from government regulation, except for enforcement of ordinances that prohibit the accumulation of junk and trash on properties, and prevent residential sprawl or unmanaged growth;
- peace and quiet.

The Benton County Rural Visioning Survey Report Spring 1993 is cited frequently in the Comprehensive Plan document, and is incorporated into this element by reference.

**THE RURAL PLANNING AREAS OF BENTON COUNTY**

Four of the five Planning Regions of Benton County have "Rural Planning Areas" within them (the Hanford

expanded. The Planning Department, Cooperative Extension, District court and clerk, sheriffs department and Health District will occupy the addition.

**In Kennewick**, new construction will add a maintenance/supply building and a coroner's office and morgue east of the existing Justice Center building. The parking will be moved to an at-grade lot on the recently purchased Vista Field acreage. County administrative services currently housed at the Kennewick Annex on Canal Ave will be consolidated at the expanded Justice Center facility, thereby enabling the Juvenile Justice functions currently at the Canal Avenue location to expand into the vacated space.

Except for road and transportation infrastructure, regional park and County Fair amenities, and the physical plant housing County administrative services, the County does not provide capital facilities infrastructure that delivers utilities, water, sewer, power, schools, communication, etc., services for on site development of private lands.

#### **Financing Capital Improvements For Administrative/Support Facilities**

Existing and potential sources of funding currently available to the county include the following:

- **General Obligation Bonds** approved by the voters for the funding

of specific capital projects;

- **County General Funds** may be budgeted by the Board of Commissioners to specific projects;

- **Real Estate Excise Tax**, under GMA, a real-estate excise tax of 1/2 of 1% may be levied by the county for the construction of capital facilities projects included in the adopted Capital Facilities Element;

- **PILT**, federal (Payments In Lieu of Taxes) for lands within the Hanford Site.

#### **Capital Facility Plans (CFPs) for development of Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).**

City's within Benton County are required to prepare Capital Facilities Plans (CFP's) for areas they propose for inclusion within their UGAs. These CFP's are required by RCW 36.70A.110 and Benton County Code 16.14. The capital facilities plans must include an inventory of existing facilities as defined by RCW 36.70A.030 and their capacities; a forecast of the needs for the next twenty years of such public facilities; and a six-year financial plan for the provision of these services. These CFP's do not appear within the Comprehensive Plan but are incorporated in the Plan by reference.

The inventories and provisions for these services within UGA's are found in each respective City's CFP adopted by the County during the UGA amendment process.

Item 4-1

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES SITING PROCESS - Benton County

USE	SEPA		PUBLIC UTILITIES			REVIEWING BOARD		Responsible Jurisdiction <sup>1</sup>	BENTON COUNTY PERMITS	SPECIAL SITING CRITERIA
	ZONE	YES	WATER	SEWER	PC/BOCC	BOA <sup>2</sup>	LOCAL/ FED/STATE			
ESSENTIAL STATE-WIDE FACILITY Airport <sup>3</sup>	RL 5, GMA-AG	YES	X	X	A/H Overlay	X	RTPO/FAA/DOH/DOE	BC-Building	Transportation access public services	
State Education	UGAR, RL 5, GMA-AG	YES	X	X		X	DOE/DOH	BC-Building	Transportation access public services	
State & Regional Transportation	ALL ZONES	YES					DOE/DOH/RTPO	BC-Building Structures only	public services structures only	
State Correctional	HI GMA-AG	YES	X	X		X	DOE/DOH	BC-Building	Transportation access public services	
Solid Waste Handling	HI LI GMA-AG	YES	X			X	DOE	BC-Building	Transportation access public services	
In-patient Health <sup>4</sup>	UGAR RL 5	DOS <sup>5</sup>	X	X		X	DOE/DOH/DSHS	BC-Building	Transportation access public services	
Group Homes <sup>6</sup>	ALL ZONES	DOS	X	X			DOE/DOH/DSHS	BC-Building	Transportation access public services	
Secure Community Transition <sup>7</sup>	HI	DOS <sup>8</sup>	X	X		X	DOE/DOH/DSHS	BC-Building	SCTF's- land and cell access, not in close proximity to risk potential activities	
Others as listed by OFM <sup>9</sup>	TBD <sup>10</sup>	DOS	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD	

<sup>1</sup> DOE-Dept of Ecology, DOH-Dept of Health, RTPO-Regional Transportation Planning Organization, FAA-Federal Aviation Administration, DOT-Dept of Transportation  
<sup>2</sup> Conditional Use Permit  
<sup>3</sup> Airport/Heliports are subject to the provisions of 11A.86.  
<sup>4</sup> Substance abuse, and mental health  
<sup>5</sup> Depending on size of facility  
<sup>6</sup> Adult Family Home, Child Day Care, or Crisis Residential Facility  
<sup>7</sup> SCTF's as required by RCW 36.70A.200 & RCW 71.09 (civilly committed sex offender housing)  
<sup>8</sup> Depending on size of facility  
<sup>9</sup> Facilities listed by the Office of Financial Management required or likely to be built within the next six years (RCW36.70A.200).  
<sup>10</sup> To be determined by Benton County Planning Department as projects are identified.

C. An emergency is a declaration by the Board of County Commissioners, based upon circumstances and facts at hand, that there is an eminent or expectant threat to one or more of: life, property, public health and safety, air or water resources, or the realization of regional economic policy objectives identified in the County Comprehensive Plan, and for which immediate action is necessary to end the threat.

**CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT**

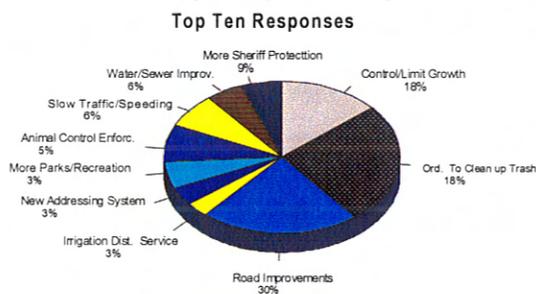
**GOAL 4**

To continue a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for full citizen participation in public decision-making.

**POLICIES:**

- A. That opportunity shall be provided for citizen involvement and input on issues in advance of making land use decisions.
- B. That citizens shall be provided with information through the news media to allow a maximum of citizen involvement during the land use decision-making process.

What Improvements or changes would you like to see in your Rural Community?



Benton County Rural Visioning Survey 1992

**LAND USE**

**GOAL 5**

To provide, consistent with the adopted goals and objectives of each rural community relative to quality of life and lifestyle, a diversity of land uses and an appropriate level of essential public and private sector services, while minimizing conflicts between different land uses to ensure the highest degree of public health, safety, and general welfare, without unduly jeopardizing the rights of the individual.

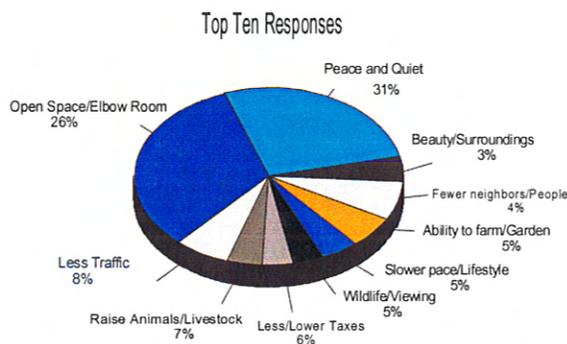
**GOAL 5-1**

To avoid, in the application of the County's land use controls, a reasonable assertion by any land owner that the County is "taking" property, and a court ruling that the County has taken private property without adequate compensation.

**POLICIES:**

- A. That all land uses in the county shall be classified with a land use designation and shown on the comprehensive plan map and that all implementing ordinances shall be in conformance with such map and Plan policies.
- B. That compatible mixed uses of urban intensity are appropriate in Urban Growth Areas where community sewer and water are available or provided, and outside of Urban Growth Areas within designated Rural Community Center areas and Commercial zones, and Planned **Unit** Developments (PUD's) when rural densities are clustered under Ordinance provisions.

What things do you feel make rural living most enjoyable?



**Benton County Rural Visioning Survey 1992**

and adjacent to existing urban areas.

**POLICIES:**

- A. That the urban growth area boundary line and existing incorporated areas is where urban services are available or are anticipated to be provided within the foreseeable future.
- B. That new urban development take place within adopted Urban Growth Areas.

**RURAL LANDS**

**GOAL 8**

To preserve rural lifestyles while accommodating new population growth.

**POLICIES:**

- A. That overall residential densities within areas designated as Rural Residential shall be low enough to insure the perpetuation of rural lifestyles, which are typically characterized locally by a predominantly open landscape inhabited by households engaged in diverse, second income, and recreational land

use activities related to livestock and crop production.

- B. Densities, when viewed in connection with a specific parcel, may be greater than that reflected in the rural Lands and Agricultural designations when a land owner wishes to decrease the size of his or her private residential parcel by transferring a portion of his or her property to an abutting land owner. This policy is consistent with the goal of preserving rural lifestyles because it does not allow an increase in the overall density of the area involved.

**Actions:**

1. Adopt, administer, and refine a Rural Lands Ordinance which responds to the life style preferences of rural residents as expressed in the Benton County Rural Visioning Survey Report (Spring 1993). The ordinance would respond to the expressed vision(s) of "rural character" through a combination of standards and options relating to density, site design, and development patterns (i.e., plat or clustering **and within** planned **unit** developments).
2. Adopt new or enforce existing ordinance provisions where necessary to accomplish legitimate objectives identified in the Benton County Rural Visioning Survey Report (Spring 1993).

**QUALITY OF LIFE**

**GOAL 9**

Preserve Benton County's rural lifestyle which is characterized by:

- Open-space and elbow room

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## Chapter Four - Land Use Element

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miners. With the discovery of gold in northeastern Washington and Canada, prospectors from California and Oregon headed north, frequently through the Tri-Cities region. A fairly substantial number of prospectors also worked the sandbars of the Columbia although no great quantities of the metal were ever found.

### Railroads (1870s to the Present)

After steamship transportation became firmly established, the railroads arrived. Beginning in the late 1870s, railway construction became an almost feverish activity in the region. The town of Ainsworth was laid-out and built in 1879 to house railroad construction crews. Located at the mouth of the Snake River, it was designated the county seat when Franklin County was established in 1883 by the Washington Territorial Government. Soon after, though, when construction in the Ainsworth area was completed, the town was vacated. By 1885 nothing was left - even the wood had been evacuated to build Pasco, another railroad town, which soon became the [Franklin](#) County seat. Northern Pacific's rail link from Spokane to Minnesota was completed in 1883, and local and regional links and spurs were built thereafter throughout the Tri-Cities. Significant railroad construction activity continued until the automobile began to supplant the railroads after WWII.

### Irrigated Agriculture (1890s to the Present)

During the heyday of the railroads, farming began to increase in importance in the region. The major drawback to agriculture, though, was lack of water. The early farmers, who had purchased land with the belief that the railroads would bring prosperity to the area, had a tough go of it. In the 1890s, first attempts were made to irrigate land by constructing canals and pumping water to farming areas. These efforts, mainly by private concerns, continued for several decades but never proved to be profitable. Even the establishment of publicly controlled irrigation districts did little to provide water at a practical cost. The price of water usually offset the profits made from crops. As late as 1900, travelers passing through by rail would mainly see vistas of sagebrush and open-range grazing of cattle and horses. The increase in settlement, though, was recognized when Benton County was established in 1905 from eastern portions of Yakima and Klickitat counties. Named after the Missouri senator, Thomas H. Benton, the county's 1910 population was 7,937.

### Federal Dam and Reclamation Projects (1930s to the present)

Lack of water still remained the major obstacle to agricultural and economic development. During the 1930s, though, the federal government assumed a major role in land reclamation with the construction of, among others, the Grand Coulee Dam. The Columbia Basin Irrigation Project of the 1950s

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 Chapter Four - Land Use Element
 

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processing, and sales of chemicals and equipment.

Commercial agriculture, undertaken at a scale directed at the export market, is an intensive land use requiring:

- vast acreages of land (especially for dryland crops);
- dependable and large supplies of water (for irrigated crops);
- an absence of adjacent incompatible uses;
- major storage, processing and transportation infrastructure at strategic locations;
- a supply of employees.

The agricultural industry in the Pacific Northwest generally, and in eastern Washington specifically, has these resources as well as direct rail and water transportation routes to major saltwater ports. As a result it is ideally situated to serve the huge populations of the Pacific Rim countries. The last ~~ten~~ twenty years has seen a steady growth in the area's agricultural economy.

Major crops in Benton County are wheat, corn, potatoes, apples, cherries, hops, mint, alfalfa hay, wine grapes and beef cattle. The industry is supported technically by an Agricultural Research and Experiment Station in the west county just north of Prosser. The employment base for this industry generally lives in the outlying rural areas of the county, in small cities such as Prosser and Benton City, and

in unincorporated rural communities such as Finley, Paterson, Plymouth, and Whitstran.

The agricultural leg of the local economy is at present the smaller of the two legs, though it is also the more stable: it is market driven with an ever expanding customer base; its resource base (soil and water) is renewable; at the regional level it is an integrated cluster of economic components.

Since around the start of the new millennium, vigorous retail commercial, tourism, and retirement sectors of the economy have become significant growth factors, with the growing wine industry regionally, and in Benton County specifically adding a boost to the tourism sector.

#### Hanford

The Hanford leg of the area's economy is the federally funded program activity that occurs principally on the Hanford Site. The Site contains large industrial areas supported by billions of dollars of federal investment in infrastructure related to both the past and current missions. Of note are:

- rail and road transportation systems;
- massive water pumping and distribution systems;
- reactor number 2 of the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS);
- the Fast Flux Test Facility (FFTF), the worlds only sodium cooled nuclear

## Chapter Four - Land Use Element

within UGAs is essential if the UGA is to function as intended, i.e., as a tool to achieve cost effective provision of urban services, and to protect agricultural lands and the rural community outside of the UGAs. To achieve this, densities within the UGAs should be high enough (e.g. average 6 dwelling units/acre) and encourage infill of existing urban growth areas.

Low densities within UGA's will influence developers and land speculators to continuously seek out large tracts of lower cost and unencumbered acreage, preferably in single (or uncomplicated) ownership, in order to achieve the economies of scale they seek in response to market demand. Consequently, unless UGAs require at least an average minimum density within them, or there is a minimum average urban density "city-wide" wherein less than 5Du/acre density in the UGA is offset by higher densities, in the urban core for example, the paradox of looking beyond the Urban Growth Area for new "urban" land will continue. The issue between the County and Cities of identifying minimum required average densities for within cities is an emerging one, simply because UGAs cannot expand perpetually over the landscape without limitation. Relative to long term stability and sustainability, the GMA gives to natural resource lands, and rural lands and communities, a status equal to that of urban cities, and requires their protection.

### 3. Objective Criteria For Determining When, and How Much To Expand UGAs

**Policies 3 & 4** of the Countywide Planning Policies (CWPP's) sets forth uniform criteria and methodology for calculating the amounts of land necessary in a UGA to accommodate projected population growth. The policies reflect methodologies identified in current planning literature (as well as recent GMA Regional Hearings Board decisions) for identifying the appropriate size of Urban Growth Areas relative to population projections. Other CWPPs direct how locations of new urban growth areas are to be selected to avoid rural communities and agricultural lands.

### 4. ~~Densities and~~ Site Designs That Reserve Rural Lands Outside of UGAs For Future Urbanization

The Land Use Map of the county Comprehensive Plan designates rural densities outside UGAs. Densities are "average" rather than based on a "minimum lot" size. Implementing ordinances will encourage Planned Unit Developments (PUDs) that allow and "clustered" housing with reserved open space upon which urban densities can be constructed, when such lands are ultimately included with a UGA.

### 5. Joint Development Standards Within Urban Growth Areas

If UGA's are to function as the land resource for urban growth, then

impediments to development within them must be minimized and incentives maximized; development must occur almost fluidly. For this to occur, the following conditions are needed:

- densities must be high enough to attract builders who would otherwise look elsewhere;
- planning, design and aesthetics must assure marketability;
- transportation planning and construction must be timely, with adequate rights-of way and efficiency in moving traffic;
- interim developments under county standards must not prejudice cost effective realization of designated urban densities;
- infrastructure must provide adequate service levels; and,
- the landowners and residents within the UGA must support, not resist annexation and urbanization.

"Joint Development Standards", (JDS) for development within Urban Growth Areas developed and approved by consensus will be adopted by the county in cooperation with the cities will. ~~These should~~ enable Urban Growth Areas to urbanize fluidly, and in so doing; reduce the pressure to locate urban developments in rural and agricultural areas prematurely.

#### **Population Projections For Benton County**

The latest population projections from OFM, using the "high" series estimates, indicate that Benton County can expect a population increase of 67,008 over the next 20 years. This will result in a year 2025 population of

225,108 which is an increase of 33 percent over the current population of 158,100.<sup>2</sup>

#### **Estimated Lands Needed To Accommodate Rural Population Growth**

Approximately 23 percent of the total county population, or 36,075 people (2005 OFM), reside in the unincorporated area of Benton County. The number of rural residents in 2005 shows an increase of 8 percent since 2000.

#### Projected Growth of New Residents in the Rural Areas

Based upon historical growth rates within the unincorporated area, it is estimated that 18,606 additional people, will seek housing in unincorporated areas of the county between now and the year 2025. This growth represents a 52 percent increase over the current rural population. Should this growth materialize the rural population would be 54,681 people, roughly equal to the City of Kennewick in 2000. A rural population of 54,681 people in year 2025 would closely maintain the current rural population as 24 percent of the projected countywide total.

#### **New Housing Units Needed for Projected Rural Population Growth**

At an estimated 2.68 persons per household, an increase of 18,606 people in rural Benton County would require up to 6,943 new homes in the next 20 years.

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<sup>2</sup> 2005 OFM Estimate

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Richland Rural Planning Area consists of 23,220 acres (outside of lands designated for urban and agricultural use.) This represents approximately 32 percent of the Planning Region.

The random annexation patterns of the adjacent cities in combination with the high geologic relief of the landform have created a rural area which is characterized by disconnected rural enclaves, each with its own character. Areas such as Riverview, Willamette Heights, Candy Mountain, Valley View, Rancho Reata and Badger Canyon reflect a diversity of rural lifestyles.

Predominant land uses within the Richland-West Richland Rural Planning Area are low-density rural residential and commercial agriculture, with the significant remaining acreages of agriculture located principally in Badger Canyon. Badger Canyon is the largest remaining unincorporated acreage within the Planning Region. Its landscape is currently a mixture of large and small-scale commercial agriculture interspersed with **clusters of rural housing interspersed**. Above the canyon floor, on the slopes of Badger and Candy Mountains, orchard and vineyard plantings are a recent occurrence.

A full description of the Richland-West Richland Rural Planning Area is presented in Chapter 5, the Rural Element.

### **Finley Planning Region**

#### **Boundaries, Natural Characteristics and Size**

The Finley Planning Region contains approximately 29,268 acres, or 46 square miles. It represents three percent of the county's total landmass. It lies within the most easterly portion of the county between the Columbia River and the crest-line of the Horse Heaven Hills. Southeasterly it extends to Hover Park on the River. It includes most of the City of Kennewick which occupies its northwest corner.

#### **Predominant Land Uses**

The Finley Planning Region is the most diverse, intense, heavily populated and active of all the regions in the county. As a result of the City of Kennewick's aggressive pursuit of annexations in the past, the line between rural, urban, and agriculture in the west portion of the Planning Region is convoluted and difficult to administer. Along the river corridor in south Finley lies the greatest concentration of industrial uses and industrially zoned land in the county outside of the Hanford Site. The industries are primarily agriculture or energy related. This industrial complex generates heavy truck and rail traffic along a narrow and inadequately designed travel corridor, shared by daily resident traffic. It is anticipated that industrial transport along this corridor will increase significantly in the future.

As the landform within this Region rises away from the river, where there is

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currently 3,929 acres of industrially designated land within unincorporated Benton County, approximately 14 percent of which is developed. Though a broad range of industrial uses is appropriate for these lands, the principle current use is for agriculturally related industries such as chemicals processing and shipping, cold storage, fruit and vegetable processing and shipping (refer to Map 4.0, and individual Planning Area Maps 4.1 thru 4.6 for industrial designations).

On the Hanford Site there are

approximately 73,050 acres designated as suitable for industrial development. A percentage of this land will be developed to federally "programmed" industrial uses which either support the current cleanup mission or were part of the terminated Cold War Plutonium Production Mission. With some small exceptions, the lands and infra-structure on Hanford suitable for non-federal industrial uses are not yet available to the private sector, but are a major potential resource for the future.

**TABLE 4.3 CURRENT LAND USE BENTON COUNTY<sup>3</sup>**  
(2006, City annexations updated 2006)

<u>Land Use Type</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Square Miles</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Cities and Urban Growth Areas	71,235	111	6
Hanford Site	266,220	416	24
<b>Unincorporated Area</b>			
Irrigated Agriculture	251,406	393	23
Dryland Agriculture	309,373	484	7
Rangeland & Undeveloped	183,973	288	16
Residential (rural)	22,342	35	2
Public	5,945	9	1
Commercial	3,035	.5	0
Industrial	1,526	2.3	0
Aggregate	367	.57	0
Unbuildable	251	.39	0
Total Unincorporated Area	778,218	1,235	
Total County Area	1,115,673	1,782	99

<sup>3</sup> Using County Assessor's current land use categories and computer generated calculations (accuracy within 1%).

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agricultural uses while maintaining the economic potential of all economic sectors;

- properly locating sites and providing basic services for agricultural related industries;
- provision and maintenance of "farm to market" roads;
- facilitating the growth of the "agri-tourism" and "value-added" processing sectors;
- reduction of nitrate loading of potable groundwater supplies;
- provision of farm worker housing; and,
- assurance of adequate water supplies.

#### LAND USE MAP DESIGNATIONS

#### The Rural Lands Designation (RL-20) (RL-5) & (RL-1)

##### Location

Lands designated as Rural Lands on the land use map are those lands designated for "residential" as the principal use and which are located outside of Urban Growth Areas and the GMA Agricultural designation. (see Map 4.0).

The Rural designation is the second largest use category on the Land Use Map, agriculture being the largest. Rural Residential is expansive and countywide, generally it surrounds other discrete areas designated as Industrial, Commercial, and Agriculture.

##### Definition and Purpose

The intent of the Rural Lands is to

enable rural residential living, consistent with the historic custom and culture of that lifestyle within the county. Generally these are areas within which the predominant land use is not large-scale commercial agriculture, though isolated commercial farms may exist within rural residential areas and almost always abuts them and serves as an employment base.

Actual use is a leading indicator of where lands are suitable and desirable for small acreage residential parcels, farms, ranchettes, and other uses that can be developed in harmony with rural character. "Rural Character," is further defined in the Rural Element, Chapter Five of this Plan.

"Rural character", as the residents living it perceive it, is different among the various rural communities across the county. For example, rural residents in the West Richland/Richland area have distinctly different preferences than those in Finley or Paterson-Plymouth. There are also fundamental commonalities shared by residents in all of the rural areas; they are:

- low density;
- the ability to keep large animals;
- open spaces for recreation and wildlife;
- peace and quiet;
- no city;
- control growth;

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- good roads;
- more police security/presence; and,
- A clean up of trash and junk".  
(see Rural Element, Chapter 5)

Aside from meeting the requirements of GMA, the primary purposes of the Rural Lands use category are:

- to accommodate demands of non-farm families and hobby farmers for rural living;
- to provide buffers between urban and agricultural uses; and where there are appropriate land forms, e.g., ridges, mountains, and rivers and floodplains, between urban areas;
- to conserve lands potentially suitable for future inclusion into Urban Growth Areas (in those areas so identified) in close proximity to urban areas and services.

Within this category, allowable densities per the Land Use Map range from one dwelling unit per twenty acres (1DU/20ac) to one dwelling unit per 5 acres (1 Du/5ac.) Within limited areas of more intense rural development, densities are generally 1 Du/ac., but may be up to 3 Du/ac.

The lower density (1Du/20 acre) is designated on lands immediately adjacent to the new Finley Interie route. ~~This RL-20 designation allows a density of 1DU/10 acres if that density is clustered on 15% or less of the total acreage of the parcel.~~ The highest

densities, (1-3 Du/acre) are within Community Centers. When existing outside of Community Centers the 1 Du/acre applies in areas already platted to smaller rural lots with developed streets or adjacent to Urban Growth Areas. These areas are considered equivalent to limited areas of more intensive rural development enabled by RCW36.70A.070 (5)(d). For all other Rural Lands, the density is 1Du/5.

~~To accommodate rural activities and lifestyles and to assure that rural development is consistent with the rural character as defined by the visions and goals of the County and its residents, Densities are "average," i.e., within the~~ Rural Lands designations ~~there is not~~ are based upon a required "minimum" lot size. A larger than minimum lot size may be required other than what is when necessary to satisfy Health Department requirements for water and domestic waste disposal, and code requirements related to setbacks, easements etc.

~~Accordingly, an owner of a 50 acre parcel on lands designated 1Du/5 ac. may elect to "cookie cutter" the acreage into ten five acre lots (50 divided by 5=10), or to cluster the ten units in a planned development on 7.5 acres, thereby leaving 42.5 acres of the 50 acres to be farmed, or for another open space use.~~

~~Any combination of site plans and parcel sizes is possible under the~~

~~"average" density provision. The "averaging" provision originates with the perception of rural residents involved in the planning process, that it is the amount of "open space" and low "overall densities" which are the basis of rural character, not lot sizes per se.~~

### **Light Industrial Designation (LI)**

#### Location

Light Industrial designations on the Land Use Map are applied to suitable lands wherever they have, or are in reach of attributes essential to industrial activities, and where they will not present unmanageable conflicts with other land uses. Essential site characteristics include:

- large undeveloped or underdeveloped acreages in uncomplicated ownerships;
- relatively flat terrain;
- direct access to multi-modal transportation facilities;
- access to power/utilities;
- a suitable labor force within relatively close proximity;
- within the region, other industries and businesses which are traditionally linked; and,
- relatively free of environmental and other (e.g., citizen opposition) constraints.

Lands included within the Light Industrial classification in unincorporated county are:

- in the vicinities of Paterson and

Plymouth;

- west of the city of Richland in the SW corner of the Badger Road and I-82 Interchange;
- east of the City of Prosser on County Route 12;
- within the Community Center of Whitstran;
- in the SW of Benton City;
- west of the city of West Richland along SR-224; and,
- on the Hanford site.

The county's supply of Industrial designated lands is augmented by similar designations within cities in the county. For example, the City of Richland has in excess of 7000 acres within and adjacent to south border of the Hanford Reservation so designated; the City of Prosser, in excess of 200 acres; the City of Benton City 30 acres; the City of Kennewick, approximately 100 acres.

#### Definition and Purpose

Lands designated Light Industrial are intended for use by a wide range of land uses within the category of industrial, but the designation is not intended for heavy, hazardous or obnoxious activity (i.e., unsightly, emissions of noise, smoke, fumes, pollutants, odor, glare). Light industry includes uses such as computer component manufacture, storage and warehousing, finished product assembly, etc.

The primary purposes of this designation are to:

- provide employment and a payroll;

alternatives suitable to low-income and moderate-income groups as well as the senior citizen. Factory assembled structures are designed, made off-site and assembled on-site. This process helps to reduce building material and construction costs. Quality FAS's can be placed on a parcel for approximately 70 percent of the cost of a comparable sized site built structure. As technology improves, factory assembled structures can be designed to closely resemble site-built homes. FAS's offer reduced building and construction costs, and when placed in mobile home parks or subdivisions, reduced land and infrastructure costs.

FAS's are a major source of affordable housing in Benton County. They meet Housing and Urban Development (HUD) standards, which make it possible for buyers to get loans to purchase with little or no down payment. This is a very attractive option for those with little savings to buy site built homes.

### **Accessory Dwelling Units**

Accessory dwelling units help meet the needs of the disabled, infirm, or elderly in need of assisted care, by opening up surplus space in single family homes. The secondary purpose is to provide accessory unit housing in a single family dwelling for a person related to the occupant. Income received from accessory units may help homeowners with limited income pay for their housing expenses. Accessory units are currently allowed by ordinance in all Residential Zones

and the agricultural zoning district of Benton County.

### **Farm Labor Housing**

Provisions for farm worker housing is provided in the GMA Agricultural District. Housing for farm laborers may include apartments, cabins, factory assembled structures, bunkhouses, tents, or recreational vehicles maintained or temporarily located in connection with farm work, providing for the annual or seasonal housing of farm employees.

### **Clustering**

One technique available for reducing housing development costs is clustering. By clustering units **together in Planned Developments (PD's)**, instead of dispersing them throughout the site reduces costs for roads, water, sewer, and building. Clustering is also used to preserve open space, protect sensitive and natural resource areas.

### **Planned Unit Development**

Planned **Unit** Developments (PUD's) offer developers flexibility in project design and site planning which can allow for a higher quality development and improved affordability. PUDs are generally characterized by flexible site requirements which focus on overall project design rather than lot by lot design, efficiency in the provision of utilities, and common open space.

### **Multiple Detached Dwellings**

Under the current Benton County