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(Revised 12/26/10)

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# Chapter One - THE OKANOGAN COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## EXECUTIVE STATEMENT

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

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

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

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

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

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

46 **Authority**

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

55 **VISION STATEMENT**

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

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

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

70 **Neighborhood Groups**

71 The neighborhood groups formed to facilitate this process are:

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

85 **Technical Committees**

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

90 **DESCRIPTION OF PROCESS**

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

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

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

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

## 122 **ADOPTION PROCESS**

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 158 **AMENDMENT PROCESS**

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

### 162 **Docketing**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## 200 **Five Year Review**

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

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

## 211 **COUNTY WIDE PLANNING POLICIES**

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

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

221 **County Wide Planning Policy 1**

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

224 **County Wide Planning Policy 2**

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

230 **County Wide Planning Policy 3**

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

234 **County Wide Planning Policy 4**

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

238 **County Wide Planning Policy 5**

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

242 **County Wide Planning Policy 6**

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

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

247 **County Wide Planning Policy 7**

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

252 **County Wide Planning Policy 8**

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

256 **County Wide Planning Policy 9**

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

261 **County Wide Planning Policy 10**

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

266 **County Wide Planning Policy 11**

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

270 **County Wide Planning Policy 12**

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

274 **County Wide Planning Policy 13**

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

280 **County Wide Planning Policy 14**

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

283 **PRIVATE PROPERTY AND WATER RIGHTS**

284 **Citations:**

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

290 **Property Rights**

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

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

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

306 **Water Rights**

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

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

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

330 **Chapter Two - EXISTING CONDITIONS**

331 **CURRENT LAND USE**

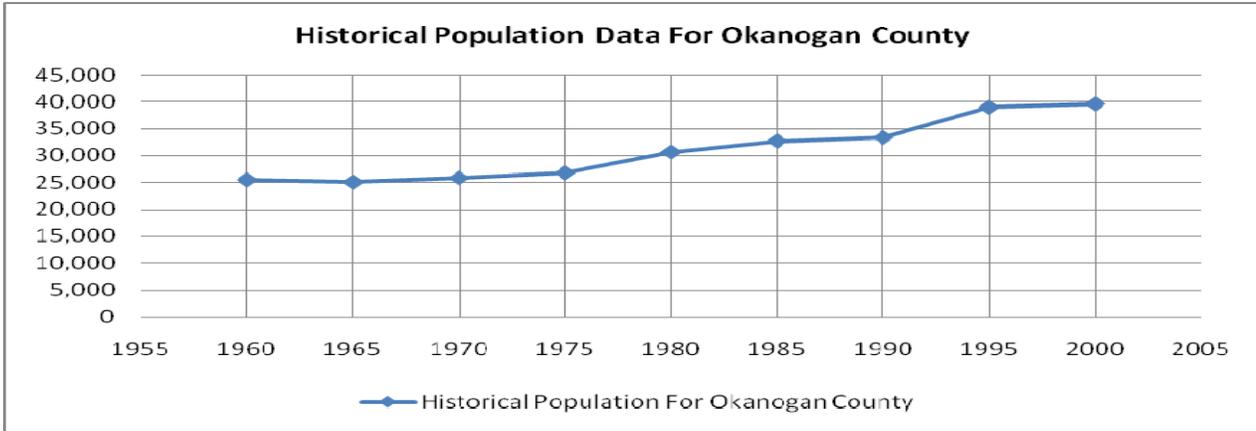
332 The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted in 1965 and has existed with little  
 333 change since adoption. The current Comprehensive Plan was adopted under the  
 334 authority of RCW 36.70, the Planning Enabling Act.

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

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

338

Figure 1: Historical Population Data 1960-2000



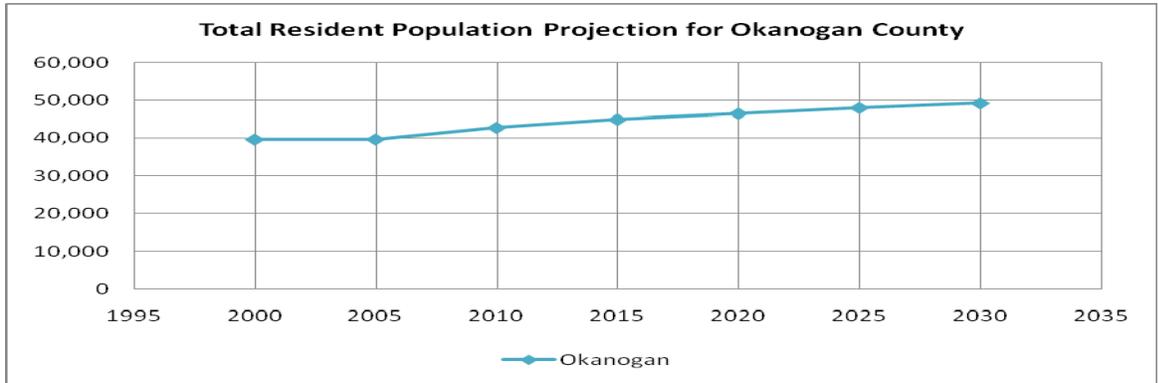
339

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

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

340

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



342

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

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

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

345 **History**

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

352 **Agriculture**

- 353 • 4,531 jobs are generated by farming and farm related activities (2006)
- 354 • 1,205,229 acres in agriculture (2007)
- 355 • \$208,758,000 value of agricultural products produced (2007)

356 **Forestry**

- 357 • 1,721 jobs in forestry and related

358 **Minerals**

- 359 • 76 jobs are directly tied to mining activities

360 **Purpose**

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

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

369 **Authority**

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

378 **Classifications**

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

382 **Criteria**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

438 **MAPPING**

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

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

447 **History**

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

454 **Purpose**

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

467 **Needs of the Industry**

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

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

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

480 **Compatible Uses**

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

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

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

500 **Density**

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

509 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

510 **GPO-3.1**

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

519 **GPO-3.2**

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

524 **GPO-3.3**

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

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

531 **GPO-3.4**

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

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

538 **History**

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

543 **Purpose**

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

552 **Compatible Uses**

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

561 The following shall be compatible uses:

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

571 **Density**

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

578 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

579 **GPO – 3.5**

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

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

588 **History**

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

592 **Purpose**

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

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

598 **Compatible Uses**

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

603 **Density**

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

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## Chapter Four : LAND USE - RURAL LANDS

606

### History

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

616

### Purpose

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

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

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

639 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

640 **GPO – 4.1**

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

646 **GPO – 4.2**

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

651 **GPO – 4.3**

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

653 **GPO – 4.4**

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

659 **Designations**

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

663 **RURAL HIGH DENSITY**

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

671 **Review Elements:**

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

677 **Compatible Permitted Uses**

- 678 • Residential uses
- 679 • Agricultural activities
- 680 • Home occupations
- 681 • Recreational activities and infrastructure

682 **Compatible Conditional Uses**

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

691 **RURAL LOW DENSITY**

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

700 **Compatible Permitted Uses**

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

- 707 • Mineral Extraction and Processing
- 708 • Forest product Processing

709 **Compatible Conditional Uses**

- 710 • Non-resource Based Heavy Industrial Activitie

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711 **Chapter Five –Urban Lands**

712 **CITY EXPANSION AREAS**

713 **History**

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

724 **Purpose**

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

737 **Designation**

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

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

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

756 **Amendment**

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

764 **Five Year Review**

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

773 **Zoning and Project Review**

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

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

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

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## Chapter Six - Unincorporated Towns

### 790 Purpose

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

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

- 800 • Methow
- 801 • Carlton
- 802 • Malott
- 803 • Loomis
- 804 • Wauconda
- 805 • Chesaw
- 806 • Molson
- 807 • Ellisforde
- 808 • Mazama
- 809 • Monse
- 810 • Nighthawk
- 811 • Havillah

### 812 Designation Criteria

813 Unincorporated Towns will be developed based on the following criteria:

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

### 819 Future Unincorporated Towns

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

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

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

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

### 831 **GENERAL PLANNING OBJECTIVES**

#### 832 **GPO – 6.1**

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

#### 838 **GPO – 6.2**

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

#### 842 **GPO – 6.3**

843 Existing Unincorporated Towns should develop in such a manner that the  
844 impacts to the transportation system brought about by the increased users of the  
845 services provided are mitigated to avoid an erosion of the level of service  
846 provided.

#### 847 **GPO -6.4**

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

#### 853 **GPO – 6.5**

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

856 **Chapter Seven – SUB-AREAS**

857 **Purpose**

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

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

867 **ADOPTED SUB-AREAS**

868 **Methow Sub-Area**

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

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

- 876 a) Methow Valley Plan April 5, 1976
- 877 b) Community Master Plan, Methow Valley Planning Area sub-unit A
- 878 June 26, 1989
- 879 c) Upper Methow Valley Comprehensive Plan March 6, 2000

880 **Chapter Eight – CIRCULATION ELEMENT**

881 **Introduction**

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

892 **Purpose of the Transportation Element**

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

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

905 **The Planning Process**

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

914 Outlined below are the steps that were taken in the development of the  
915 Transportation Element.

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

## 951 **Transportation Planning In Washington**

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

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

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

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

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

## 977 **THE TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT**

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

### 983 **Land Use and Transportation**

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

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

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

1000 In the preparation of this element, the available existing land use information and  
1001 future land use plans for the cities and towns, as well as the County and the  
1002 Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation have been examined. Based on  
1003 this information, land use alternatives have been developed and analyzed in  
1004 terms of the implications for meeting future transportation needs.

### 1005 **Okanogan County Planning Regions**

1006 Okanogan County is divided into four (4) planning regions: North, Central, South,  
1007 and Methow. By dividing the County into four regions, the specific needs of local  
1008 jurisdictions and surrounding development in rural areas can be better  
1009 addressed. Figure 1-1 identifies the boundaries of the planning regions. The  
1010 transportation study for the Central Region was completed in May of 1994. The  
1011 results of that study are incorporated into this element.

### 1012 **Functional Classification System**

1013 Classification of streets and highways in the State of Washington is based upon  
1014 guidelines prepared by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Streets are  
1015 classified based on the degree to which they provide through movement and land  
1016 access functions. Specific criteria defining streets include the following:

- 1017 • The character and relative length of trips;
- 1018 • Anticipated or projected traffic volume; and
- 1019 • The relationship of a street to the land use it serves.

1020 Each local jurisdiction is responsible for defining its transportation system into the  
1021 following functional classifications:

1022 **Principal Arterial:** (01 -Rural/Interstate) -Streets and highways which  
1023 contain the greatest portion of through or long-distance travel. Such  
1024 facilities serve the high-volume travel corridors that connect the major  
1025 generators of traffic. The selected routes provide an integrated system for  
1026 complete circulation of traffic, including ties to the major rural highways  
1027 entering the urban area. Generally, major arterials include high traffic  
1028 volume streets.

1029 **Minor Arterial:** (06 -Rural/ Minor) -Streets and highways which connect  
1030 with remaining arterial and collector roads that extend into the urban area.

1031 Minor arterial streets and highways serve less concentrated traffic-  
1032 generating areas such as neighborhood shopping centers and schools.  
1033 Minor arterial streets serve as boundaries to neighborhoods and collect  
1034 traffic from collector streets. Although the predominant function of minor  
1035 arterial streets is the movement of through traffic, they also provide for  
1036 considerable local traffic that originates or is destined to points along the  
1037 corridor.

1038 **Major Collector: (07 -Rural Major Collector)** -These routes should provide  
1039 service to the county seat if not on an arterial route, to larger towns not  
1040 directly served by the higher systems, and to other traffic generators of  
1041 equivalent inter-county importance, such as consolidated schools,  
1042 shipping points, county parks, important agricultural areas, etc. In addition,  
1043 these routes should link larger towns and/or cities with routes of higher  
1044 classification, and should serve the more important inter-county travel  
1045 corridors.

1046 **Minor Collector: (08 -Rural Minor Collector)** -These routes should be  
1047 spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, collect traffic from  
1048 local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of  
1049 a collector road. In addition, these routes should provide service to the  
1050 remaining smaller communities, and link the locally important traffic  
1051 generators with their rural hinterland.

1052 **Local Access: (09 -Rural Unclassified)** -Streets not selected for inclusion  
1053 in the arterial or collector classes. They allow access to individual homes,  
1054 shops, and similar traffic destinations. Direct access to abutting land is  
1055 essential, for all traffic originates from or is destined to abutting land.  
1056 Through traffic should be discouraged by appropriate geometric design  
1057 and/or traffic control devices.

1058 Functional classification of major roads and State Routes in Okanogan County  
1059 are shown on Figure 1-2, and detailed in Appendix A-1 and A-2..

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**Chapter Nine - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

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**SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM**

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

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

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**CRITICAL AREAS ORDINANCE**

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

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

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

1083 **Chapter Ten – COORDINATION**

1084 **FEDERAL AGENCIES**

1085 Local government has the responsibility to protect the local tax base, value of  
1086 private property, economic stability, and, in general the well being of the local  
1087 community. These critical functions are closely entangled with federal and state  
1088 management decisions.

1089 Congress has long recognized the importance of local governance to the  
1090 effective management of the nation’s resources. It has provided for the  
1091 involvement of local authority in every federal land use statute passed over the  
1092 past 35 years. In many of these statutes, Congress has mandated that the  
1093 federal land use agencies “coordinate” their policies and management activities  
1094 with local government.

1095 Coordination means the federal agencies shall give prior notice to the local  
1096 government of agency plans and management activities and, among other  
1097 criteria, requires that the agencies make their policies and management activities  
1098 consistent with local plans. Congress has directed the federal agencies to  
1099 coordinate with local government because they recognize that local authority  
1100 must be consulted and involved in the decision making process above and  
1101 before the public input process.

1102 **Authority:**

- 1103 • United States Code (USC)
- 1104 • 43 U.S.C. 1712 Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA)
- 1105 (BLM)
- 1106 • 43 C.F.R. 1601 Planning
- 1107 • 16 U.S.C. 1604 National Forest Management Act (NFMA)
- 1108 • 16 U.S.C. 1533 Endangered Species Act (ESA)
- 1109 • 16 U.S.C. 1271 Wild and Scenic River Act
- 1110 • 42 U.S.C. 7401 Clean Air Act
- 1111 • 33 U.S.C. 1251 Clean Water Act
- 1112 • 16 U.S.C. 2003 Soil and Water Resources Conservation Act
- 1113 • 42 U.S.C. 4331 National Environmental Policy Act

1114 **STATE AGENCIES**

1115 The State Environmental Policy Act RCW 43.21C sets forth a consistent process  
1116 for review of probable, significant, and adverse impacts brought about by land  
1117 use decisions, both project specific and on a program level. The actions of State

1118 Agencies, with few specifically enumerated exemptions, are subject to review  
1119 under SEPA. The actions of the Legislature are categorically exempt from SEPA  
1120 review.

1121 It is clear the intent of the Legislature was for State Agencies to coordinate  
1122 closely with local government to ensure Agency decisions are consistent with  
1123 local plans. As local government is charged with the responsibility for delivery of  
1124 a wide array of critical services it is critical that State Agencies interact with  
1125 counties in an effective and open manner. Okanogan County has adopted OCC  
1126 Section 18, Coordination, to identify clear protocols to inform Federal and State  
1127 Agencies in their efforts to meet coordination and consistency requirements.

1128 **Citations**

- 1129 • RCW 36.70A.103
- 1130 • RCW 36.70A.210
- 1131 • RCW 36.70A.370
- 1132 • WAC 365-195-765

DRAFT