

# UPPER METHOW VALLEY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

An update of the:

## **Community Master Plan Methow Valley Planning Area Sub Unit A**

Prepared by:  
Mazama Advisory Committee

Assisted by:  
Highlands Associates  
&  
Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development

Recommended for  
conditional approval by:  
Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission

Adopted by Resolution No. 25-2000  
by the:  
Okanogan County Board of Commission  
**March 6, 2000**

## **Upper Methow Valley Comprehensive Plan**

An update of the:

Community Master Plan  
Methow Valley Planning Area  
Sub Unit A

This plan is an amendment to the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan and the Methow Valley Addendum. It covers an area previously described as Sub Unit A in the Methow Valley Addendum to Okanogan County's Comprehensive Plan, an area of approximately 22,100 acres and applies to the non-federal lands within the unincorporated area of Okanogan County. It contains elements that address the goals, objectives, policies, and future directions for land use (including, residential, commercial, and industrial development, resource lands, and critical and shoreline areas); housing; parks and recreation; transportation/circulation; public facilities and utilities; and, community image.

The text reflects the concerns, desires and needs of area residents and provides means to achieve their goals. It seeks to provide environmental and life style protection while answering social and economic needs. While this document is to be used by county officials as a basis for land use decisions in the study area, it is implicit that provisions in the county's Comprehensive Plan also apply here.

### **Acknowledgements**

The following individuals are members of the Mazama Advisory Committee are acknowledged and thanked for their tireless work on this plan over the course of two years through many community meetings, Planning Commission workshops, and public hearings:

Jim Gregg, Chairperson  
Dick Roberts  
Doug Devin

John Sunderland  
Karen Reneau

Special thanks to Kurt Danison, Highlands Associates for his extensive work with the Mazama Advisory Committee—coordinating meetings with County staff, drafting text, and generally guiding the MAC through this planning process.

# **A VISION FOR THE MAZAMA COMMUNITY**

**Mazama Advisory Committee July 7, 1993**

**MAZAMA** is both a community and a place. It is a unique combination of valley and mountain environments. The community includes residents and visitors who value the rural lifestyle and quality of life in Mazama.

The Mazama community will be a model for people living in harmony with their environment, a community where people's needs for services, social interaction, agriculture, business, housing, recreation, and education are in balance with the ecosystem we inhabit. Wild creatures that also rely on that ecosystem will continue to thrive. Cultural opportunities and social interaction will complement the physical setting and further enrich our lives.

By carefully blending the natural, human and economic environments, we will pass on to future generations a landscape as rich and beautiful as the one we now enjoy.

## **The Vision**

It is important to Mazama residents to live by sound ecological principles and preserve the quality of the natural environment. The Mazama area has a carrying capacity for humans that is limited by its natural characteristics in the same way wildlife populations are limited by the carrying capacity of their habitat.

### **SCENERY**

The Methow River meandering through a valley of open ranch lands framed by forested slopes and majestic mountain peaks forms a scenic treasure that will be preserved in our developments and activities.

### **AIR**

We will maintain a high standard of air quality to sustain life and to provide clear views of the surrounding scenery.

### **WATER**

Water and sewer systems will be planned and managed to maintain the level and high quality of the aquifer; to assure adequate high quality stream flows or fisheries and to assure the quantity and quality of downstream user's water supplies within the limits of natural stream flows.

### **SOUND**

The sounds of nature - the wind in the trees, the rush of the river, the hoot of an owl, the howl of a coyote, the croak of a frog, the chirp of a songbird, chipmunk, squirrel or marmot - are an important element of our environment and will continue to be the dominant sounds.

### **VEGETATION**

Natural vegetation is preserved, and surrounding forests are managed by sound ecological principles to assure their continuing health.

### **WILDLIFE**

Adequate habitat will be provided to support a rich abundance of indigenous species, and they will be managed to maintain a natural balance among species. It is important to maintain a human environment that is in tune with the natural environment, where people respect the past and work together for their common interests in the future.

### **HISTORICAL**

Sites and buildings of historical value will be preserved and information signs will be encouraged.

### **RURAL LIFESTYLE**

A rural lifestyle represented by people living on and caring for the land is an important value, and a pastoral setting is a significant element of that lifestyle.

### **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

Buildings and transportation facilities will be located, designed and constructed to conserve energy.

### **PLANNING**

Local residents are in control of planning that is based on sound ecological, social, and economic principles, and is flexible and adaptable to change.

### **SOCIAL - CULTURAL**

To help enrich the lives of Mazama community members, there will be adequate spaces for a variety of social interactions and for enjoyment of the performing and visual arts.

### **RECREATION**

Outdoor recreation is highly valued by residents and visitors. There should be a full spectrum of high quality, year-round outdoor recreation opportunities available to people of all ages within the capabilities of the landscape.

### **TRANSPORTATION**

The transportation system will assure ready access to facilities and services with a minimum impact on the environment and people.

### **FIRE**

Effective planning emphasizes fire prevention and provides for efficient suppression of facility and undesirable wild land fires while allowing for fire to play its natural role.

### **ECONOMICS**

Economic activities are necessary for people to support themselves; those that capitalize on and complement the natural environment or have no impact are most appropriate for the area.

### **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

Economic activities based on outdoor recreation and tourism are desirable.

### **AGRICULTURE**

Ranching, hobby farming and other agricultural activities that use and maintain the open fields should be encouraged.

### **FORESTRY**

Forest management based on sound ecological principles and necessary to maintain forest health will be supported.

### **COTTAGE INDUSTRIES**

Economic activities that can happen in homes and workshops with no impact on the environment will be encouraged.

### **SERVICES**

Goods and services to meet local needs shall be provided.

## **Specifics**

### **VISUALS**

- ❖ The pastoral setting of the valley should be reflected in the architecture, layout, and operation of developments.
- ❖ Meadow areas should be devoted to ranching, equestrian or other activities that will maintain the meadows in a near-natural condition.
- ❖ Homes and other developments should be clustered and not exceed the height of surrounding trees.
- ❖ Architectural design should be on a human scale and utilize native materials and natural colors that complement the landscape. Roofs should be of non-reflective material. Buildings will be subservient to the landscape and be sized to conserve space and natural resources.
- ❖ Developments along roads and trails should be screened, landscaped and designed to maintain a high quality scenic corridor.

- ❖ Electrical and other utilities should be underground.
- ❖ Signing and outdoor lighting should not detract from or dominate the natural surroundings. Security and driveway lighting will be directed to the immediate area of need and be shielded so as to limit the impact to neighbors and to preserve the naturalness of night skies.

#### **AIR**

- ❖ Transportation planning should provide for maximum use of human powered modes of travel and mass transportation to prevent air pollution.
- ❖ Wood stoves and fireplaces should be limited. The use of gas fireplaces and pellet stoves as substitutes should be encouraged.

#### **WILDLIFE**

- ❖ Adequate corridors for wildlife migration between hiding cover, food and water will be provided.

#### **WATER**

- ❖ Flood plains should remain free of substantial structures, sewage disposal, and impervious surfaces. This is to provide a filter for surface water entering a stream, maximum water absorption, and unobstructed stream flow and to prevent pollution of surface water.
- ❖ Snowmobiles, other motorized vehicles and domestic livestock should be excluded from streams, except for transitory crossings, to prevent pollution.
- ❖ Sewage treatment systems will meet all state and county requirements to assure that ground and surface water remains unpolluted.
- ❖ Water conservation should be considered in building and landscape design.
- ❖ Due to a high water table and porous soils, it is essential that care be used in disposing of household chemicals.

#### **SOUND**

- ❖ Development, including transportation facilities, should be designed and managed to prevent adverse affects on the ambient sounds of nature.
- ❖ Road and trail surfaces should keep the sound of vehicles traveling on them to a minimum. Hot roll surfacing should be used on Highway 20.
- ❖ Terrain features, vegetation, earth berms and other barriers should be used to mute the sound of motorized equipment that may create unacceptable noise levels.

#### **VEGETATION**

- ❖ Construction of buildings and other facilities should be planned and conducted to keep the impact on natural vegetation to a minimum.

- ❖ Native vegetation should be used as much as possible in landscaping of homes and other buildings.
- ❖ Control of weeds in fields is important for maintaining natural vegetation.
- ❖ Riparian vegetation is important to the maintenance of waterways and wetlands and should not be disturbed during development.

#### **HISTORICAL**

- ❖ There are a number of old ranch buildings, structures and other equipment that are important to the character of the valley and should be retained and incorporated in the design of planned developments.

#### **RURAL LIFESTYLE**

- ❖ Encourage the continued use of open fields for ranching or similar activities.

#### **ENERGY CONSERVATION**

- ❖ Solar heating, active or passive, should be utilized where it's feasible.
- ❖ Solar (photovoltaic) panels for electrical generation should be used where feasible.
- ❖ The size of buildings should be limited.
- ❖ Human powered transportation, busing and car pooling should be encouraged.

#### **SOCIAL-CULTURAL**

- ❖ Town squares and other public spaces should be available for social gatherings and meeting rooms available for social clubs, educational and community functions.
- ❖ There should be an arts center to attract artists and provide learning opportunities in the arts.
- ❖ There should be opportunities to learn more about the environment and to understand our natural ecosystem, including naturalist classes, nature trails and environmental camps for children and adults.
- ❖ A center for environmental studies should be considered.

#### **OUTDOOR RECREATION**

- ❖ Recreational amenities that should be available include: additional nordic trails, additional biking and hiking trails skating rink, swimming pool, golf course, equestrian trails and arenas, tennis courts and alpine ski opportunities.

**TRANSPORTATION**

- ❖ Human powered modes of transportation should be emphasized. Major points of interest in the Early Winters - Mazama area should be connected by appropriately surfaced walking, biking and horse trails.
- ❖ Hiking, biking, horse and ski trails should follow the river but bend away occasionally to provide areas by the river with no trail access.
- ❖ Transportation plans should provide a complementary system of roads and trails.
- ❖ Easy access to trailheads with adequate parking should provided where feasible. A community transit system should be encouraged.

**FIRE**

- ❖ There should be adequate year-round access to buildings and water sources for fire suppression.
- ❖ Vegetation cleared for development should be disposed of promptly, and adequate clearing maintained around buildings.
- ❖ Encourage use of non - flammable materials on roofs and in building-to-ground transition zones.

...we will pass on to future generations a landscape as rich and beautiful as the one we now enjoy.

This vision statement is in the nature of a dream; a vivid, imaginative conception of the kind of place we as a community want to live.

The statement evolved from meeting called by the Mazama Advisory Committee to gather thoughts and opinions about development in the Mazama area from those who live there.

We believe this statement reflects a fair consensus of those who voiced their feelings at these meetings. While everyone might not agree on the details, they would support the general theme and major points necessary to maintain our way of life. That is a hallmark of the Mazama community.

This vision statement is meant to guide our actions and communicate our vision to visitors, landowners who don't live here, new residents, developers, and county, state and federal officials. It will be used to develop more specific measures to maintain our way of life and to assure that Mazama will be passed on to future generations as a good example of how to live in harmony with the natural environment.

Dick Roberts	Doug Devin	Dalton Dulac
Jim Gregg	Tina Heath	Karen Reneau
Chrystal Perrow	John Sunderland	

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## **1.0 PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

### **1.1 PURPOSE:**

This Comprehensive Plan amendment will guide development within Methow Valley Sub-Unit A planning area in accordance with the community's vision by addressing planning issues in greater depth than in earlier plans.

This update of the "Community Master Plan for Methow Valley Planning Area Sub-Unit A" is intended to refine previous planning efforts in light of changing conditions. Current planning documents, the 1976 Methow Valley Addendum and 1988 plan for Sub-Unit A, were prepared in anticipation of a large destination resort and under less restrictive state and federal planning and environmental protection requirements. Once adopted the Board of County Commissioners, the adopted plan will serve as the "template" for all development and constructions projects subject to County review. Those persons, organizations and companies developing lands should respect the community values and interests expressed in this plan when planning and designing their projects.

### **1.2 SCOPE: UPPER METHOW BIO-REGION (SUB-UNIT A)**

Figure 1-1 shows the Upper Methow Bio-Region, identified as Sub-Unit A in the Methow Valley Addendum to the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan. This area comprises the geographic extent of the planning area considered in this plan. In general, the Bio-Region encompasses the private lands in Upper Methow River Valley upstream from the corporate limits of the town of Winthrop, east to the watershed divide in the Rendezvous, west to the watershed divide that runs along Patterson Mountain and up the south side of the Wolf Creek drainage, and north to the Methow's confluence with the Lost River. Lands administered by the Okanogan National Forest on the east, north and west generally surround the planning area.

Further refinement and expansion of this Plan's goals and policies are expected as changing conditions warrant.

**Figure 1.1 - Planning Area**

## 2.0 BACKGROUND

### 2.1 SUB-UNIT A PLANNING HISTORY:

In 1976, Okanogan County officials adopted the Methow Valley Addendum to the County's Comprehensive Plan. The Addendum addresses land use in all of School District 350 and includes Sub-Unit A as one of four planning areas. Its goals are implemented primarily by the County Zoning Ordinance.

The Methow Valley Addendum recognizes the Mazama area as one of the "prime targets of development" and identifies Sub-Unit A as "the unit closest in proximity to potential future development" and "most environmentally fragile". Additional advisory committees were suggested to continue evaluation of land uses in the Methow Valley. In 1981, Mazama area residents sensed a need to develop more specific guidelines for growth in the Sub-Unit A planning area and particularly in the Mazama/Early Winters area. They requested and received from county officials permission to develop additional planning guidelines for Sub-Unit A. The Sub-Unit A Land Use Advisory Committee (MAC) was officially appointed by the Okanogan County Commissioners on February 14, 1984 to develop additional planning recommendations for areas within Sub-Unit A. One of the major objectives of MAC was to provide recommendations for an area master plan to be made a part of the Methow Valley Addendum to the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan.

In 1986, MAC incorporated and became the Mazama Planning Committee (MPC). The MPC was formed to provide a framework for financing the planning effort. Cash and time donations from area landowners and residents were, in turn, matched with a grant (Local Development Matching Fund Grant) from the State of Washington. These combined efforts resulted in a total planning budget of \$20,000.

The MPC utilized suggestions from the citizens and landowners within the planning area in developing their recommendations. They also included input from the proponents of the proposed Early Winters Resort in order to assure that land uses and plans were coordinated between the Mazama community and the resort area.

In December 1986 a planning consultant was retained and efforts began on preparation of a master plan for the Upper Methow Valley. The MPC completed the draft master plan in May 1987 and made its recommendations to the Okanogan County Regional Planning Commission on September 28, 1987. The county adopted the plan on June 26, 1989.

A by-product of the master plan, the Handbook of Suggested Development Guidelines for Methow Valley Sub-Unit A Planning Area was completed in September 1987 (revised 4/88). This booklet defines the planning goals and gives general and specific guidelines for Sub-Unit A.

"A Vision for the Mazama Community" was published in July 1993. The statement evolved from meetings called by the Mazama Planning Committee to gather thoughts and opinions about development in the Mazama area from those who live there. The Vision Statement is general in nature, an illustrative composition of the Mazama community. The Vision Statement is meant to guide community member's actions and communicate to visitors, absentee landowners, new

residents, developers and government officials the vision for the community. The complete text of the vision is included as a preamble to this plan.

This update of the master plan, which continues the strong tradition of grassroots planning, began in 1997 after several years of discussion and attempts to amend zoning regulations. Efforts to revise the plan are focused on refining the vision contained in the 1989 document to meet current conditions. Early Winters is no longer on the planning horizon having been replaced by the Arrowleaf Planned Destination Resort and several smaller resort projects. These change and limited opportunities for further large-scale development results in a climate ripe for refining the community's vision of its future.

## **2.2 AUTHORIZATION**

This Comprehensive Plan is prepared in accordance with RCW Chapter 36.70A, B and C and 36.70.010, 050,060.

### **3.0 RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER PLANS**

#### **3.1 PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLANS:**

This Plan updates and amends the "Community Master Plan for Methow Valley Planning Area Sub-Unit A" which itself was an amendment to the Methow Valley Addendum to the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan and the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan. Such amendments are provided for in RCW Chapter 36.70.320 and RCW Chapter 36.70.410. Its contents augment, further define, and add to the policies and goals contained in the previous comprehensive plans. Where conflicts occur, this Comprehensive Plan prevails.

#### **3.2 OTHER PLANS**

Okanogan County plans, as they exist, or are hereafter amended, are listed below. Okanogan County has adopted the documents, as part of the County's Comprehensive Plan and are considered as part of this Plan.

- The Okanogan County Shorelines Master Program
- The Mazama/Early Winters Update to the Okanogan County Sewer General Plan
- The Methow Valley Transportation Plan (pending adoption)
- Okanogan County Trails Plan
- The Handbook of Suggested Develop Guidelines for Methow Valley Sub-Unit A Planning Area.
- The Arrowleaf Planned Destination Resort Environmental Impact Statement  
Technical Appendices — Volume I and II.
- A Vision for the Mazama Community
- Okanogan County Growth Management Compliance documentation

## 4.0 PLANNING EXPECTATIONS & ASSUMPTIONS

Environmental protection and visual management are key to recreation and hospitality industries which are the major economic generators of the upper Methow Valley. Careful management is needed to keep the two in balance. Visual and environmental quality must be preserved to attract users, and development of amenities must be provided to generate an adequate income and have an economically healthy community.

The goals, policies and recommendations included in this Plan are intended to provide sufficient direction to assure that opportunities for an attractive and livable community are maximized. A specific community image designed to maintain current values and build upon desirable development patterns is contemplated. At the same time, the intent is to remain flexible in matters of community design to foster creativity and diversity in the community. The plan was prepared with the following expectations and assumptions in mind:

- The "Vision" Statement is an accurate reflection of community desires.
- Area residents desire quality development that is aesthetically pleasing, sensitive to the environment and located to limit the impact on rural views and area wildlife.
- Design standards must be adopted for utilities and other types of construction. Such standards are essential to assure that the cost of utility construction and maintenance are kept to a minimum and that development is aesthetically compatible with community desires.
- Successful implementation of planning goals must rely on more than governmental regulation. Private cooperation and support is viewed as a fundamental component of plan implementation.
- Land use patterns and density designations will generally remain unchanged.
- The focus of most concentrated development activity will be in the two commercially designated areas at the Mazama Junction. Commercial activities west of the Methow River will generally be oriented towards the traveling public while east of the river commercial uses will be more neighborhood or destination oriented.
- The Methow Community Trail will provide an important and sustainable recreation based economy for the planning area.
- The community favors compact development that focuses on the natural beauty of the Methow River and takes advantage of scenic views while at the same time preserves views from SR-20 and minimizes impacts to the shoreline area.
- A four season planned destination resort will be developed near Early Winters Creek on the West Side of the Methow River. Other smaller resorts and lodging facilities will also be built throughout the planning area along the Methow Community Trail.
- If a high-density residential zone becomes necessary, it will develop around the commercial core east of the Methow River in Mazama and will depend on public sewer and water

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systems. Other areas of higher density development will be constrained due to limits on availability of water and high cost of providing high quality wastewater treatment.

- All other areas within Sub-Unit A will continue to be primarily rural and residential in character, which is a very important attribute that the community wants to preserve.
- Individual elements of this plan must be coordinated and the community involved at the earliest time in order to effect the desires of residents.
- Community livability, quality of life and a greater sense of place for area residents and visitors rely on development that is appropriate in scale, sited on the land with sensitivity to views and designed to blend in with the surroundings. Guidelines to ensure that development has minimal impact (e.g. anti-castle ordinance) on these items must be expressed in terms of regulations with tangible strategies and actions.
- The Plan sets forth specific goals designed to provide an action-oriented framework to assure that community focus is not lost. It is hoped that this focus will start the community along the desired route without letting ambiguous actions and decisions divert intent and direction of this planning process.
- In time, a "sense of community" will be developed through an informed and active citizenry that is able to make its desires known and structured into community development and activities. If community goals are to be reached, continuing formation of public policy must be credible and timely.

Tempering the planning expectations and assumptions are environmental concerns that include:

- All of Sub-Unit A lies within identified Critical Areas; within this region lies smaller areas which are more sensitive still.
- Water quality.
- Air quality.
- Noise.
- Light and glare.
- The listing and potential listing of Methow River steelhead and salmon as endangered
- All U.S. Forest Service lands adjoining the planning area have been classified as Late Successional Reserve.
- Threat of wildfire.
- Threat of flood

Most of these concerns are further described in the following section.

## 5.0 EXISTING CONDITIONS

This section focuses upon the present natural and human characteristics of the planning area. Emphasis is placed upon those attributes that most directly affect development of community planning goals. The discussion below relies on information from studies conducted for other planning efforts. Those wishing more detail than presented below are referred to the Appendix.

### 5.1 UPPER VALLEY LANDSCAPE

The mountain valley landscape of the planning area is of unusual beauty. Important contributing factors to this landscape include the natural landform, vegetation and the land use patterns resulting from human settlement and its associated architectural qualities and agricultural activities. The interrelationship of these elements makes the area's visual attributes vulnerable to changes in land use.

The natural landform and ownership broadly define Land use patterns. Farms and residences typically occupy the valley floor. The forested valley walls and uplands are public lands. This mix contributes to the area's beauty. Since development of public lands is unlikely, except for dispersed recreational uses, the natural character of the valley walls seems preserved. This means that the valley floor is most vulnerable to changes.

While development will be limited to the valley floor, visual impacts will not. Development will have a three-fold effect on the visual integrity of the planning area. These are:

- Views of the characteristic features of the valley floor as seen from residences, roads and trails will be altered.
- Nearby and distant views from the valley floor will be altered.
- Views of the valley from adjacent foothills will be altered.

Both surface and ground waters have received considerable attention in past planning efforts. The quality and quantity of each will affect land use in the planning area. A 1985 report prepared for Okanogan County entitled Upper Methow River Basin Ground and Surface Water Quality Monitoring Program best summarizes the character of each. The discussion below includes information from that report.

### 5.2 SENSITIVE ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Much of the information in this section was updated using data from the Arrowleaf Planned Destination Resort Environmental Impact Statement Technical Appendices Volumes I and II. Readers desiring more detailed information are encouraged to review the 1998 Mazama Area Wastewater Facilities Plan Update, prepared by Hammond, Collier, Wade-Livingstone Associates, Inc. or the numerous other studies and plans prepared on the Upper Methow Valley

**Geophysical Character:**

The approximately 20 mile by up to 1.5 mile planning area is part of a narrow glacial valley. It is bounded on each side by steep slopes of the Cascade Mountains. The Methow River runs the entire length of the planning area. Several tributaries add to its flow. Elevations of the valley floor range from 2,300 feet near Lost River to 1,670 feet mean sea level near Winthrop.

Adjacent mountains reach to over 8,000 feet. Surface geology of the region is the result of glacial erosion and deposition. Deposit of glacial debris (boulders, gravel and sand) creates a pervious layer of up to an estimated 1,000 feet.

Several distinct areas exist that will influence land use allocations and planning goals within the planning area. These include proximity and accessibility to Winthrop and S.R. 20, existing subdivisions and characteristic landforms.

**Climatic Conditions:**

The Cascade Range influences the climate of the planning area to a large degree. The mountains significantly affect the precipitation amounts within the study area. Mazama, for example, receives an annual average amount of about 24 inches while Winthrop receives only about 15 inches per year. This variance has an obvious effect upon vegetation and snow accumulation. Eighty percent of the precipitation falls between October and March.

Typical temperatures in the planning area range from a summer time average of 71 degrees Fahrenheit to a winter time average of 9 degrees. Extremes can reach -30 and 100 degrees. Snow depths at Mazama usually exceed four feet during most winters. Total annual snowfall at this elevation ranges between ten and fifteen feet.

**Vegetation:**

Vegetation typical of the planning area includes mixed coniferous stands, predominately of fir, pine and cedar, and deciduous groves bordering streams and rivers. Understory and groundcover include a wide variety of grasses, shrubs and forbs.

- Due largely to the effects of fire suppression, the forest type of the valley floor has been converted in the last century from widely spaced, open-canopied stands of predominately fire-resistant Ponderosa Pine to crowded, multi-canopied stands of Douglas fir. The current forest conditions pose a serious threat of catastrophic wildfire;
- Wildfire: Fire is inevitable in the Upper Methow Valley forest. Tree scar analysis indicates that before the advent of fire suppression early in the twentieth century, low intensity fires cleared out understory fuels about every six to nine years. With the now dangerously overstocked forest conditions, a wildfire in the Upper Methow Valley could be catastrophic, burning many homes while destroying the green forest so many residents and visitors cherish. Thinning of dense stands of trees should be encouraged and all homes should be designed and built with surviving wildfires in mind.

**Wildlife/Fish/Endangered Species/etc.:**

The Methow Valley boasts the largest migratory mule deer herd in the state. Efforts are currently being made to consider the herd's habitat needs. While studies are not complete, it has become apparent that a portion of the herd utilizes lands within the planning area. Of primary importance are winter range, fawning areas, staging areas and migration routes. These areas have been

defined, and it is agreed that riparian areas, dense forested areas and steeper southern exposures are important habitat.

Okanogan County's efforts to comply with the Growth Management Act has resulted in the classification, designation and regulation of development with areas identified as critical fish and wildlife habitat in the planning area. The impacts of these efforts on the planning area are described in greater detail in the Land Use Element.

**Air Quality:**

Air quality for the most part is high with current quality better than National Ambient Air Quality Standards. Seasonal degradation occurs from inversions that trap wood smoke from area wood stoves, forest fires and slash burning conducted on nearby federal lands. See the Arrowleaf Planned Destination Resort Environmental Impact Statement Technical Appendices Volume I, Section C. Air Quality Analysis.

The Okanogan County Board of Health adopted an air quality maintenance regulation in 1986 which restricts wood stoves to those able to meet current certification; limits total numbers; and once allowed for curtailment of burning during episodes when meteorological conditions could cause degradation. In 1994 the provision that provided for curtailment of burning was removed.

**Surface Water:**

The Methow River is the main surface water drainage in the planning area. Major tributaries in approximate order of volume are Lost River, Early Winters and Cedar Creek, Goat Creek, and Wolf Creek. Lesser tributaries include McGee, Gate, Goat Wall and Little Boulder Creeks.

The Methow River is a relatively flat alluvial river throughout the valley with an average slope of .001 to .015. The River is seasonally discharging and recharging the ground water. Three to five miles of the upper reach (above Mazama) may be dry from early fall to late winter. The Methow becomes perennial between the Mazama and Weeman Bridges.

**Ground Water:**

Ground water is found in the glacial and recent alluvial deposits of the upper Methow Valley in a large unconfined aquifer. The approximate depth to the water table is commonly considered to be 20 to 25 feet below valley floor elevations. However, significant variations with respect to both location and time of the year are common throughout the valley. In general, the water table is flat throughout the valley and does not follow the terrace topography. Increased elevations occur in proximity to the Methow River and are associated with the alluvial outwash fans of the major tributaries, in particular: Lost River and Early Winters and Goat Creeks.

Seasonally, winter and spring, the Methow River is a gaining stream, i.e., receiving ground water discharge. At other times it is a losing stream, i.e., recharging ground water. Average seasonal changes in water table elevation are estimated at 15 feet, changes during drought conditions being in excess of 35 feet.

Pumping test analyses indicate the aquifer has an excellent potential yield. Transmissivities are calculated in excess of 1,000,000 gallons per day per foot. Storage capacity of the glacial debris is on the order of 40-acre feet per acre of the surface. The permeability is estimated at 8,000 gallons per day per square foot. Ground water seepage velocities range from 20 to 40 feet per

day in the most poorly graded alluvial gravels, and wells with discharge up to 550 gallons per minute per day without measurable drawdown have been reported. In less technical terms, it is estimated this aquifer has the capability of yielding large amounts of water from a single well with little or no impact upon total supply.

**Geologic Hazards and Flood Plain:**

Seasonal flooding is the primary geological hazard. Few others exist. The 100-year flood plain of the Methow River has been formally identified and designated for all private land within the planning area. Additional studies have been conducted for Early Winters Creek and the southern bank of the upper Methow River.

The River's gradient and soil types are conducive to continuing erosion and accretion within the riparian zones. This has made placement of structures problematic. Current zoning restricts placement of dwellings to areas outside the designated 100-year flood plain.

The earthquake potential is classified as moderate. This classification is fairly constant throughout most of the region.

**Soils:**

Unstable soils are limited and localized. Project evaluation has been an effective means of identifying these areas. No major areas of slumping or land subsidence are known to exist.

Most soils are extremely porous and well drained. This is significant, in that, threat of groundwater contamination from sewage effluents exists where aquifers are shallow. Alternative design of septic systems may be required where potential problems exist. The 1998 Mazama Area Wastewater Facilities Plan Update, prepared by Hammond, Collier, Wade-Livingstone Associates, Inc, contains more complete data on soils and related conditions in the planning area.

**Water Quality:**

Both ground and surface waters within the planning area are of exceptional quality. The Department of Ecology has designated the Methow River, in the planning area, Class AA, the highest classification of the State. Ground waters are considered generally good to excellent and, for the most part, easily meet current drinking water standards.

Past planning efforts such as the Mazama/Early Winters Update to the Comprehensive Sewer Plan and the current update to that plan address the overwhelming need to protect water and produce specific management strategies that consider potential impacts upon the entire basin. Land use decisions have and will continue to be greatly influenced by these concerns, high standards and resulting strategies. Protecting water quality is a priority.

**Light and Glare:**

As more people make the upper valley home, the potential for increasing light and glare exists. The color of roofing materials, placement of dwellings, installation of yard lights and construction of additional roads will all add to the light and glare experienced by area citizens.

**Noise:**

At present noise in the planning area is limited to sounds related to vehicular traffic, construction and occasional heavy equipment.

### **5.3 HUMAN ENVIRONMENT**

Because of the rural setting and seasonality of the population little demographic information exists specifically for the planning area. Most of the following information is from work done in support of various development projects including Early Winters, Arrowleaf and various water, sewer and transportation studies.

#### **Population:**

Based upon the 1990 census information the planning area is estimated to contain less than 119 full time permanent residents. However, studies conducted by the Okanogan County Electrical Co-op and Highlands Associates estimated 550 total residents, with 330 permanent residents and 220 seasonal. The later figures are used in the current update to the Mazama Sewer Plan and will be used in this plan.

#### **Commerce:**

Farmers, ranchers and miners originally settled the valley at the end of the 1800's. Their activities constituted the main economic sectors until the late 1960's. With the opening of the North Cascade Highway (SR-20) in 1972, the valley's economy began to change. Trail-based recreation, retail trade, real estate and other services have expanded rapidly during the last decade.

Since 1990, there has been an expansion of retail activities in the Mazama area. The Mazama Store was re-built increasing the services and goods offered and next door, a small house was remodeled for retail and food service. The Mazama Ranch House lodging facility was completed and the mixed use Mazama Mountaineering building constructed. Wilson Ranch, part of the Arrowleaf PDR, has been developed with lodging, food service and recreation facilities.

Housing starts are increasing. Since 1990 Okanogan County has issued 136 building permits for residences within the planning area. Many of the new homes are for vacation and retirement residences.

**Public Services and Facilities:**

Public services and facilities within the planning area currently are limited to power, telephone, school bus service, solid waste collection and public safety. Table 5.3.1 summarizes relevant characteristics of each.

<b>Service</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Location of Service</b>
<b>Utilities:</b>		
- electrical	Okanogan Electric Coop	Service area Methow Valley north of Twisp. Office in Winthrop
- telephone	PTI	Methow Valley. Office in Twisp
- solid waste	Okanogan County	Service area entire county. Transfer station located in Twisp
- internet access	Frostbyte Computer Services – Methow.com	Service area entire valley
- cable television	Summit Cable	Areas close to Winthrop
<b>Facilities:</b>		
- schools	Methow Valley School District #350	Central campus with K to 12 located between Winthrop and Twisp
- medical	Private Practice	Twisp
<b>Public Safety:</b>		
- fire protection	Fire District #6	Local fire hall on SR-20 at Mazama Junction. Fire halls also located in Winthrop and Twisp
- emergency medical	Aero Methow Rescue Service	Winthrop and Twisp
- law enforcement	Okanogan County Sheriff, Washington State Patrol, Winthrop Marshall	Okanogan, Winthrop
<b>Transportation:</b>		
- air	Washington State Department of Transportation/USFS, Private	Methow Valley State Airport (NCSB), Winthrop and the Lost River Airport
- highways	Washington State Department of Transportation and Okanogan County	Twisp and Winthrop

The current levels of service provided by public and private parties are adequate to meet present needs, however the main electrical transmission line that serves the Methow Valley is nearing capacity. A new K through 12 school campus was built in 1996 to serve all of School District #350. Television and radio reception are accessible with small satellite dishes or by cable where available. Reception of basic TV channels via repeaters and radio reception is not adequate without such assistance. Telephone service has been improved with upgrading and use of fiber optic lines, which enables most services to be offered. Internet service has been added to the entire Methow Valley.

**Land Uses:**

The planning area contains approximately 22,101 acres (including public lands). Land uses are mostly permanent and seasonal residential areas, small farms, and limited commercial. Most properties are undeveloped. A significant amount of land is being held for speculative purposes, but is less than in years past. Some owners wish to develop their properties into residential or tourist oriented commercial uses, but there is a growing trend in seasonal single family residence

development. Figure 5.3.1 shows the current zoning designations within the planning area. Table 5.3.2 shows the land ownership and parcel size by acreage and numbers of parcels in the planning area.

**Table 5.3.2 - Characteristics of Land in Planning Area - 1997<sup>1</sup>**

	<b>Number of Parcels</b>	<b>Percent Of Total</b>	<b>Number Of Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Agricultural Open Space	98	3.81%	4,450.59	20.14%
Agricultural Use	26	1.01%	222.33	1.01%
Homestead Entry Surveys	169	6.58%	2,450.91	11.09%
Open Acreage	445	17.32%	12,652.13	57.25%
Long Plats/PUD's	1,162	45.21%	1,117.73	5.06%
Short Plats	291	11.32%	3,676.24	16.63%
0 - 2.5 acres	1,457	56.69%	913.74	4.13%
2.6 - 5 acres	252	9.81%	949.77	4.30%
5 — 10 acres	189	7.35%	1,359.05	6.15%
10 — 20 acres	190	7.39%	2,989.70	13.53%
20 — 40 acres	112	4.36%	3,443.73	15.58%
40+ acres	110	3.89%	10,360.56	46.88%
National Forest, State, other public	270	10.51%	2,084.51	9.43%
<b>Total Acres</b>	<b>2,570</b>		<b>22,101.06</b>	

### **Transportation:**

Traffic in the planning areas is and will continue to be influenced chiefly by State Route 20, the North Cascade Highway. Visitors from April through November heavily travel SR-20, a state and federally designated scenic highway. During winter months the highway is closed. The presence and use SR-20 has influenced the development of this plan. Other public rights of way include Lost River Road, Goat Creek Road and Mazama Road. These roads serve as alternate routes for access to SR-20 and local traffic.

No public transportation serves the area. The closest bus stop is located in Chelan some 70 miles to the south. SR-20 is designated as a state bicycle route.

A non-motorized trail system operated by the Methow Valley Sports Trails Association exists throughout the planning area. Trails traverse private lands with no permanent easements. Landowners give written revocable license or right of way deeds for the trail to cross their properties.

<sup>1</sup> - Data from Okanogan County Office of Planning and Development GIS. Adopted March 6, 2000; Resolution No. 25-2000

**Figure 5.3.1 – Current Zoning**

**Area Architecture:**

The community of Mazama is now more a locale than a definable town. There are a growing number of commercial buildings and related developments and, Mazama has begun to develop its identity as a "town." There are a few historical buildings within the community planning area, such as the Mazama Community Center, a former one-room school that should be preserved. The most important factor of the community architecture is local farm and ranch structures. A 1987 publication prepared by the Mazama Planning Committee titled Handbook of Suggested Development Guidelines for Methow Valley Sub-Unit A Planning Area provides an excellent source of information regarding desirable architectural style for the planning area.

Two kinds of architecture predominate: older clapboard structures dating from the early 1900's; and recently built single family homes and tourist lodges. The local structures are typical western farm or ranch structures, one and two stories, with steep gabled rooflines and shed roofed additions. Windows are vertical, double hung and wood framed. Roofs are commonly metal. Exterior walls are either vertical clapboard or horizontal beveled siding usually painted in traditional colors while the farm and ranch buildings are naturally weathered woods. Simplicity of materials and form typical of northwestern architecture characterizes most buildings in the planning area.

Structures built in the last twenty years were often designed with elements of this style while embodying contemporary notions of open views, natural materials and finishes, and energy conservation. In most cases, the new structures in the area are well designed for the climate and natural surroundings and do not significantly impact views.

More significant than the architectural style of the area is the placement of housing and outbuildings on early homesteads. Structures were often located adjacent to the then quiet country roadways while the acreage stretched out behind the farmstead. At that time, farms were well separated, assuring privacy from neighbors and the roadways. This tradition of site development follows the conventions of typical western farm communities and enhances the authenticity of the area.

In recent years, site planning of recreational and residential subdivisions has moved away from this tradition of siting buildings off roadways and in open meadows and fields. Houses are now often built in forested areas affording more privacy for residents. This is in direct response to increased land subdivision, highway traffic, and regulations concerning protection of deer habitat. Such site planning suits the contemporary notion of clustering development in order to avoid visual impacts.

As the community grows, pressures will increase to develop visually sensitive lands. It is the purpose of this plan, through the establishment of community goals and policies, to provide the frame of reference necessary for the implementation of ordinances to insure that future developments blend and conform to the established character of this area.

## 6.0 FORECASTS

Locating land uses and the process of planning for community growth rely in part upon projected needs. The goals of creating a cohesive community image and efficiently utilizing lands will not be achieved if community design results in either over or under utilization.

Growth in the Upper Methow Valley planning area will be influenced by the development of a four season destination resort near Early Winters Creek. Environmental concerns and additional laws and regulations will affect growth in the area. Federal and State planning requirements and environmental protection regulations will most certainly change the way the current community looks at the environment. Regional desires to participate in an environmentally conscientious community could influence future life style patterns as well.

### 6.1 POPULATION:

The 1998 Mazama Area Wastewater Facilities Plan Update (Hammond, Collier, Wade-Livingstone Associates Inc) contains population projections for the planning area. These projections are summarized below.

Population growth rates for the Methow Valley have been estimated to range from .72% (Office of Financial Management) to 1.70 (Ferris/Social Impact Research for Early Winters) with an average of growth rate of 1.13% without the development of Arrowleaf. Estimating population growth with the development of the four season planned destination resort is difficult. The Arrowleaf Draft EIS (Technical Appendices -Volume II) provides three different development scenarios, each estimating population growth. Table 6.1.1 summarizes current population projections.

**Table 6.1.1 - Population Projections**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Without Arrowleaf</b>	<b>Minimal Arrowleaf Development</b>	<b>Modified Arrowleaf Development</b>	<b>Full Arrowleaf Development</b>
1998	550	550	550	550
2000	562	580	645	670
2002	575	610	740	791
2004	588	640	835	911
2006	601	670	931	1,032
2008	615	700	1,026	1,153
2010	629	731	1,122	1,274
2012	643	746	1,177	1,338
2014	658	762	1,232	1,402
2016	673	777	1,287	1,466
2018	688	792	1,342	1,530

## 6.2 HOUSING:

As with the population projections, Off-Site and Secondary Growth forecasts for Methow Valley were also made during the evaluation of the Arrowleaf project. These figures, which include the entire valley, are shown in Table 6.2 .1 and are based on the following assumptions:

### Construction Employment

- The local area for construction labor is defined to be Omak, Okanogan, Brewster, Pateros, Mazama, Methow, Winthrop, Twisp and Carlton.
- Over the period 1996 - 2009, 60 percent of direct construction labor was assumed to be local and 40 percent was assumed to be in-migrant. As development progressed, it was assumed that a greater percentage of construction labor would move to the Methow Valley and is available from the local labor force. Over the period 2010 - 2019, 80 percent of direct construction labor was assumed to be local and 20 percent in-migrant.
- Of the in-migrant construction labor force, 33 percent would move to the area with families and 67 percent would move to the area without families.
- For households with families, household size was assumed to be 2.25 people. For households without families, it was assumed that workers could share housing units at an average of 3 workers per unit.

### Operation Employment:

- The local area for operation labor is defined to be Mazama, Methow, Winthrop, Twisp and Carlton.
- Over the period 1996 - 2010, 60 percent of direct operation labor was assumed to be local and 40 percent was assumed to be in-migrant. As development progressed, it was assumed that a greater percentage of operation labor would move to the Methow Valley and is available from the local labor force. Over the period 2011 - 2019, 80 percent of direct operation labor was assumed to be local and 20 percent in-migrant.
- Of the in-migrant labor force, 60 percent would move to the area with families and 40 percent would move to the area without families.
- Of the total in-migrant operation labor force, 10 percent were assumed to earn incomes sufficient to live on-site in primary residences. Therefore, the amount of off-site housing required for the in-migrant labor force is reduced 10 percent.
- For households with families, household size was assumed to be 2.25 people. For households without families, it was assumed that workers could share housing units at an average of 2 workers per unit.

The number of units needed off-site to house employees for the years 2010 and 2019 was determined by comparing the percentage of on-site employee housing available for resort employees in 2010 and 2019 with the estimated need for in-migrant housing (based on the assumptions above). The analysis indicates that additional 14 off-site housing units would be needed by year 2010 and 2019 would need no additional units. It should also be noted that on-site employee housing units do not include trailers that could be brought to the site by a private contractor. The following table summarizes the results of the labor analysis.

**Table 6.2.1 - Summary of Primary/Direct Labor and Off-Site Housing Needs 2010 and 2019**

<b>Primary/Direct Labor</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Construction:</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>0</b>
Local	117	0
In-Migrant	29	0
w/families	10	0
w/o families	19	0
In-Migrant Population	42	0
In-Migrant Housing Units	16	0
<b>Operation:</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>193</b>
Local	116	154
In-Migrant (1)	35	
w/families	41	21
w/o families	28	14
In-Migrant Population	120	61
In-Migrant Housing Units	56	28
<b>Total In-Migrant Housing Units</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Available On-Site Employee Housing (2)</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Off Site Housing Need</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>

- (1) Assumes 10 percent of in-migrant operation labor force earns incomes sufficient to live on-site primary residences.
- (2) Based on the Arrowleaf PDR employee housing program, 80 percent of Village Apartments 70 percent of Community Homesites, and 75 percent of Caretaker units would be available for employees of the resort. In 2010, a total of 76 employee housing units would be available; 58 were assumed to be occupied by resort employees. In 2019, 104 employee housing units would be available; 78 were assumed to be occupied by resort employees.

Projections for commercial uses have not been included as these types of land use will typically respond to market forces and are thus hard to predict. Given the lack of certainty in population forecasts and inability to accurately project the location of new housing units, this plan focuses on providing the goals, policies and guidelines needed to ensure that the community's Vision is achieved, no matter what growth scenario takes place. Furthermore, the land base in the planning area is sufficient to accommodate projected growth providing issues regarding water supply and regulations on wastewater disposal are addressed.

## 7.0 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS

As noted in the background section this plan is an amendment to the Methow Valley Plan which is an addendum to the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan. This means that the various layers of plans must be consistent. This plan for the Upper Methow Valley has been developed for Sub Unit A, an identified planning unit within Okanogan County. The goals, policies, land use designations, implementation recommendations and other aspects of this plan supersede other plans for Sub-Unit A unless otherwise noted.

### 7.1 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOALS AND POLICIES

The comprehensive plan goals and policies support and refine the community's "Vision". The goals establish the policy framework for planning and development in Sub-Unit A and as such guide development of the Land Use, Transportation/Circulation, Public Utilities, Facilities and Services, Recreation, Community Design, Public Facilities and Implementation Elements of the plan.

Goals represent strongly held community values and policies provide direction for attainment of the goals. Each subsequent plan element may contain further goals and policies for specific types of development, e.g. residential or commercial, which must be consistent with the overall goals and policies that follow:

**GOAL: To protect the environmental quality and rural character of the planning area.**

- POLICY: Retain and enhance the vitality and viability of agricultural businesses in the planning area.
- POLICY: Promote and explore options for reducing the cost of consolidating lots and parcels which are below current minimum lot sizes.
- POLICY: Establish design criteria and special construction standards for all types of development/construction (e.g. structures, roads, signs, landscaping, etc.) so that projects will complement the rural character and/or desired community image as suggested in this Plan.
- POLICY: Provide incentives, including density bonuses, to encourage developers to meet planning goals and policies.
- POLICY: Limit commercial development, except for home-based businesses, bed and breakfasts and low intensity planned resorts, inns, lodges, and guest ranches, to areas within the Mazama and Early Winters Sub-areas and near Winthrop.
- POLICY: Establish reasonable standards to control light, glare and noise and protect air quality in the planning area.
- POLICY: Prohibit residential and commercial development and the placement of septic systems in areas subject to inundation by the 100-year flood.
- POLICY: Require provision of adequate year-round access to buildings and water sources for fire suppression.

POLICY: Vegetation cleared for development should be disposed of promptly, and adequate clearing maintained around buildings.

POLICY: Encourage use of non-flammable materials on roofs and in building-to-ground transition zones.

POLICY: Homes and other structures should be clustered and not exceed the height of surrounding trees.

**GOAL: To direct land use changes in a manner that enhances community vitality, cohesiveness, efficiency and economy.**

POLICY: Define specific boundaries for community and regional services, such as water and sewer, to encourage development consistent with locations recommended in this plan and by current studies. Extension of such services to a larger area is not consistent with the intent to confine higher intensity land uses to the *Winthrop*, *Mazama* and *Early Winters* Areas.

POLICY: To assure adequate utility financing, concentrate more intense residential and commercial development in areas where community services exist or are planned.

POLICY: Require comprehensive review of each project to ensure land use changes are consistent with this plan and existing regulations.

POLICY: Minimize the impacts of changes in land use, such as highway construction, utility upgrades, etc. on agricultural operations.

POLICY: Assure that land is available for future public buildings, parks, facilities and utilities by defining future needs and identifying desired locations.

**GOAL: To foster diversified residential, commercial and community development that adequately serves residents and visitors.**

POLICY: Provide opportunities throughout the entire planning area for home-based businesses, guest ranches, bed & breakfasts and small inns.

POLICY: Ensure that development of a four-season resort in the Early Winters Area provides a full range of services to visitors. Such a resort should be based upon a quality design, which is not hindered by traditional rigid zoning and platting standards. The desired result is construction and placement of community services and facilities that are coordinated with other parts of the planning area and do not expand into adjacent rural areas, except for open space and trail connections.

**GOAL: To establish a variety of means for implementation of this comprehensive plan in a manner consistent with the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan.**

POLICY: Encourage local, state and federal agencies to make land use and management decisions that are consistent with the elements of this Plan.

POLICY: Maintain and utilize the Mazama Advisory Committee as an important part of implementing planning area goals through the review and comment on development projects.

POLICY: Encourage developers to include project covenant declarations or other title encumbrances that include design standards, including building size limitations, that will assure future owners are responsive to community planning goals and policies.

POLICY: Where appropriate, overlay land use designations and zoning districts should be used to implement of the goals and policies of this plan.

**GOAL: To reduce the threat of wildfire to life and property.**

POLICY: Minimum standards for wildfire safety shall be implemented.

## 8.0 COMMUNITY IMAGE

One of the primary reasons this update to comprehensive plan for the Upper Methow Valley was initiated is related to community image. Whether the topic is protection of open spaces and views, the need for sign and/or landscaping regulations, limitations on “mega-houses”, or appropriate architecture, all relate to the strong community desire to maintain a community image. The purpose of this element is to define that image and provide guidance for landowners as they develop their property. This element offers an opportunity to plan for and design future infrastructure; to provide for sound environmental management; and to increase cost efficiencies of future development. Clustering uses and densities in and around Mazama is vital for developing the desired community image.

The community image for the Mazama Sub-Area and the Upper Methow Valley incorporates goals for land use, transportation and circulation, and community systems. The recommended template for community design needs to include streets, parking areas, utilities and other improvements that will eventually be needed on a community-wide basis. Specific design and location guidelines should then be followed to assure development is done in a cohesive manner. The *Handbook of Suggested Development Guidelines for Methow Valley Sub-Unit A Planning Area* and the *Wilson Ranch Planned Development Design Guidelines* are the main tools currently available for implementing design review and community image standards. Appropriate portions of these documents should be required as part of a design review and approval process.

Residents and property owners throughout Sub-Unit A have rejected the notion of a strict architectural theme. However, projects in the Mazama Sub-Area and along the SR-20 corridor, due to visible nature of such development, are encouraged to follow more stringent design standards than other sub-areas within Sub-Unit A. This element encourages use of materials that reflect the character of the Methow Valley and blend with the natural surroundings. New structures have the greatest potential for impacting the visual character of the valley. For this reason, certain construction materials are considered most desirable. Native materials such as wood, stone, logs, or traditional beveled siding that is finished in earth tones are recommended. Riverfront orientation on both sides of the Methow River should be encouraged to enhance the scenic values that attract visitors.

Visitor accommodation must be integrated into any land use or design scheme for the Mazama Sub-Area to take full advantage of the economic potential in the Upper Valley. Human powered recreational activities that blend into and make use of the Valley's topography, flora and fauna should be emphasized, supported and integrated into any land use or design scheme.

Creating an environmental awareness among residents and visitors is important in maintaining a community image that is closely tied to the natural surroundings. Tourism and development demands cannot be allowed to detract from the natural beauty and rural character that attract visitors to the area. In this vein, the community has an important role to play in promoting energy and water efficiency, recycling, and other measures to reduce environmental impacts. Education is an important tool for addressing the environmental concerns of our community in an acceptable manner. The Upper Methow Valley's success as a viable visitor-oriented community will be measured both by the community's ability to preserve its natural amenities, especially the Methow River corridor, and its functionality as a visitor destination.

The character of the planning area must be protected while allowing development to continue. Certain opportunities and constraints have been identified that will allow this to occur if they are incorporated in decisions effecting land use changes. The list that follows is not inclusive but will serve to identify some of the important factors affecting site development as they may relate to community design.

It is recommended that subdivision developments adopt conditions, covenants, and restrictions (CC&Rs) that describe appropriate building envelopes and maximum square footage to facilitate buildings that fit the land, are of a human scale and appropriate for the surroundings. The building of compact, energy and resource efficient homes better fit the character in this area where the natural and rural setting is the focus of the community. Construction on ridge tops should be discouraged with low profile buildings with a variety in massing and roof lines preferred. Large expansive areas of unbroken roof planes and ridges lines are undesirable.

#### Constraints of Site Development:

- Visually sensitive features exist throughout the planning area.
- Environmental and topographical features pose constraints upon land use changes.
- Critical Habitat Areas
- Shorelines
- View Corridors

#### Opportunities:

- Protection of the amenities that make the area attractive to visitors encourages the use of design standards that would not ordinarily be needed in urban settings.
- Certain areas exist for development that, if properly designed, will blend with the character of the planning area.
- Although a substantial portion of lands are subdivided and have been developed in accordance with the Vision Statement, there is further opportunity to influence design and location of future projects.
- Opportunities exist for economic vitality through cohesive and quality community design such as implementing a sign ordinance.

The following goals and policies are based upon the above opportunities and constraints and are intended to further the desired community image.

## 8.1 GOALS AND POLICIES:

### **GOAL: To protect the natural amenities, cultural resources, and rural character of the planning area.**

- POLICY: Specific yet flexible design guidelines with review and regulatory overlays for projects throughout Sub-Unit A should be developed. Such guidelines should include limits pertaining to size and scale of buildings.
- POLICY: Higher density residential areas and commercial use should be confined to specifically zoned lands in the Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas.
- POLICY: Sub-Unit A should provide management guidelines and protective measures for key environmental features.
- POLICY: Open meadows and fields should be maintained as much as possible.
- POLICY: Views of the Methow River corridor, especially at road crossings and trailheads where views of the river are most accessible should be maintained. Projects reviewed and permitted under the Okanogan County Shoreline Master Program should be conditioned to provide and protect views.
- POLICY: Mountains and valley walls such as Lucky Jim Bluff, Goat Wall, Goat Peak, Last Chance Peak, Grizzly Peak and Spokane Gulch should be managed by the Forest Service in a visually sensitive way.
- POLICY: The Forest Service and Okanogan County should cooperatively manage the interface of public and private lands.
- POLICY: Standards for development that protect the Methow River corridor from overuse similar to those in the Multi-Objective River Corridor Study should be considered.
- POLICY: The Mazama community should strive towards sustainability through measures that encourage energy and water efficiency, recycling, and reduced consumption.
- POLICY: Significant cultural resources, including archaeological site, historic properties, landscapes, and traditional cultural places, should be identified and protected.

### **GOAL: Encourage the use of a community design that includes the development of a Town Center, streets, parking areas, utilities, and other necessary improvements.**

- POLICY: A community design template that features development outward from a town center should be applied to the Mazama Area.
- POLICY: Locations for streets, parking areas, and utilities should be identified in the design.
- POLICY: Encourage commercial development in the Mazama Sub-Area to take advantage of river views and recreational opportunities provided by the river corridor.
- POLICY: Development plans should allow sufficient right of way for pedestrian access and landscape plantings along streets and roads.

**GOAL: Combine and Update the *Handbook of Suggested Development Guidelines for Methow Valley Sub-Unit A Planning Area and the Wilson Ranch Planned Development Guidelines* as tools for implementing community image standards.**

POLICY: Utilize site analysis and design review to ensure that development and home construction fit the desired community image.

POLICY: Site designs should preserve, to the greatest extent possible, the natural and historic character of the area, including vegetation, topography, and drainage, archaeological sites, and historic properties

POLICY: Use of native materials for building, such as wood, logs, and stone or traditional beveled siding in earth tones should be encouraged.

POLICY: Use of low intensity lighting and building materials that reduce glare is encouraged.

POLICY: Wildfire and snow management should be taken into account with each development plan and site design.

POLICY: Habitat needs of native wildlife should be considered in site designs.

POLICY: Building orientation and dimension, architectural design, and landscaping guidelines in the Wilson Ranch and Sub-Unit A design handbooks should be applied to commercial and residential development within the Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas as well as the SR-20 Corridor.

POLICY: An ordinance that addresses size and style of signs in Mazama and throughout Sub-Unit A should be adopted.

POLICY: Developers should be encouraged to adopt CC&Rs that address building size and bulk, ridge top development, building location and open space preservation.

## **8.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:**

The impact of this plan element on the community depends upon how well implementation of the Land Use and other elements of this plan are accomplished. Also, consistent enforcement and use existing and proposed regulations and review processes will be necessary for the realization of the goals of this element. Furthermore, establishment of avenues for public/private partnerships to achieve the desired community image can also influence a developer's decision, project design and execution.

Certain design standards have been identified as furthering the community image of the planning area. Most standards will focus on changes in land use that are expected to occur in Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas. Additionally, implementation of the desired land use regulations and design criteria will not occur if costs of development in relation to marketability do not allow profits.

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The following pages illustrate the types of design considerations that are encouraged throughout the planning area.

Specific strategies for implementation of this element include:

- Develop design review overlays that detail a process and standards for development, signage and landscaping within the Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas and the SR-20 Corridor. The *Handbook of Suggested Development Guidelines for Methow Valley Sub-Unit A Planning Area* and *Wilson Ranch Planned Development Guidelines* should be reviewed, refined and updated and be used as a source for the standards.

## 9.0 LAND USE ELEMENT

The purpose of the land use element is to deal with community land use issues and design in a comprehensive way. This element's focus is to encourage land use patterns in harmony with the Comprehensive Planning Goals and Policies (see pages 21-23). Decisions on land use issues made in a piecemeal fashion without a larger vision in mind will not foster a well functioning and cohesive community. The Land Use Element is intended to supply the land use vision for the planning area through balancing the needs and desires of planning area land owners and residents with the constraints presented by the physical setting and limitations of the planning area.

The environment today is a key factor in establishing future land use patterns. Recognition of shoreline areas, flood plains, geologic hazards, aquifer recharge areas, wetlands, view corridors, wildlife habitat and migration routes, air quality, water quality and quantity, noise issues and light and glare are all a part of land use. In addition, consideration must be given to existing and planned land uses, current zoning and access. All of these factors were considered in developing the land use element.

The Land Use Element contains the following sections:

- Sub-Areas
- Housing and Residential Development
- Commercial Development
- Industrial Development
- Resource Lands and Critical Areas
- Shoreline Areas
- Open Space
- Strategies for Implementation

## 9.1 SUBAREAS

In order to implement the comprehensive plan goals and policies and meet the diverse needs in Sub-Unit A, the area has been divided into five sub-areas:

- **Sub-Area I - *Mazama***
- **Sub-Area II – *Early Winters***
- **Sub-Area III - *Mazama Rural***
- **Sub-Area IV - *Rockview/Big Valley***
- **Sub-Area V - *Wolf Creek***

The sub-areas were initially identified in the late 1980's, as work was underway on the first Sub-Unit A plan. In many cases the sub-area identification has become synonymous with a comprehensive plan designation, which was not the intent of the plan. However, treatment of each sub-area as a unique part of the overall planning area continues to be a sound concept. Each of the sub-areas offers some unique attributes, which sets it apart from the others. A description of each sub-area follows. A map of the sub-areas is found on page 31.

**Sub-Area I - Mazama-Commercial**

The Mazama Area includes lands to be served by community sewer in the 1984 Mazama Early Winters Update to the Okanogan County Comprehensive Sewer Plan. The area presently includes residential and commercial uses, several approved planned developments and has been zoned Special Review Highway Commercial since 1979. This Plan focuses on the Mazama Area by including specific design and location criteria for future residential and commercial uses.

The community desires commercial development that is sensitive to the physical setting. Attention to views and viewsheds, inclusion of open space and landscaping, architectural style that reflects local materials and pedestrian friendly design are the hallmarks of desirable commercial uses. Larger developments should include a thorough mix of uses typical of tourist and recreation oriented communities. In order to maintain the cohesive appearance and function of a town, commercial buildings should be located initially in a tightly clustered area and allowed to "expand" from the river outward as growth occurs.

The plan provides an area of high density residential around the commercial core of Mazama that supports the concept of clustering development around commercial areas and is adequate to financially support infrastructure costs.

**Sub-Area II - Early Winters**

The Early Winters Area is comprised of properties being developed into the Arrowleaf Resort. The resort concept and its location are consistent with this plan. Arrowleaf is intended to be a self-contained community that provides full services to those who visit. Services and facilities include lodging, restaurants, conference center, a variety of retail shops, and a variety of recreational activities including golf, tennis, Nordic skiing, equestrian trails and more. Areas of single and multi-family housing are also planned.

**Sub-Area III - Mazama Rural**

The Mazama Rural Area includes all privately owned lands above Weeman Bridge not included in the Mazama and Early Winters Areas. The predominate land use in this area has and will continue to be low density residential, small recreation oriented tourist accommodations and scattered agricultural use. Buildout rates within existing subdivisions and planned developments will slowly increase over time as planned resorts are completed in the Valley. New subdivision and planned development activity may be limited into the foreseeable future due to concerns over water, wildlife and anadromous fish.

Builders should be encouraged to design homes in a manner that addresses environmental, visual and community needs. Protection and mitigation of environmentally and visually sensitive areas should be accomplished through good design, landscaping, site planning, and where required, acquisition.

**Sub-Area IV - Rockview/Big Valley**

Current land uses within the Rockview/Big Valley Area include low-density residential and agricultural uses. Present trends, ownership patterns and the physical limitations of this area suggest a continuance of this character throughout much of the sub-area.

In 1991 the State of Washington acquired the 845.89 acre Big Valley Ranch to preserve the open space for wildlife purposes. Of particular concern are the fields and benches that remain in private ownership. Care should be taken to protect visually sensitive areas as owners opt for residential development.

A mixture of rural residential and agricultural land uses should remain in this sub-area with a new conservancy designation for those lands protected via acquisition or conservation easement. Increased densities and some mixed commercial may be appropriate in the vicinity of Winthrop if consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and ability to provide water and sewer service. As development occurs, attention should be given to environmental, visual, and community needs.

**Sub-Area V - Wolf Creek**

The Wolf Creek Area is the most removed from SR-20 and the development pressures along the highway corridor. However, the town of Winthrop has been studying the possibility of a new Methow River Bridge near Wolf Creek and a "locals" alternate route as a means of relieving congestion in Town.

Land use in this sub-area will primarily be low to medium density residential with areas of higher density or mixed uses permitted in the vicinity of Winthrop if consistent with the Town's Comprehensive Plan and ability to provide water and sewer service.

**Figure 9.1.1 – Sub-Areas**

## 9.2 HOUSING AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Residential uses, both permanent and seasonal, and agricultural uses are the dominant land use throughout most of Sub-Unit A. This is a trend that will continue into the foreseeable future. Demand for a significant increase in housing stock is very much dependent on the development of destination tourism facilities in the planning area. Without these generators, it is likely current trends will continue. Housing needs that may result from an influx of people who come as a result of major employers should be anticipated both within and outside the planning area. A complete mix of housing types is desirable in all Methow Valley communities. Efforts should be made to provide housing that is both adequate and affordable by lower to moderate-income persons.

The type, size and density of housing and residential uses will depend on location with 56% of the parcels in the area already subdivided or otherwise developed for residential purposes.

### 9.2.1 Goals and Policies for Housing and Residential Development

The goals and policies stated below are designed to both achieve a housing strategy that is responsive to demand and of a nature that is compatible with other community planning goals.

**GOAL: Provide a range of density options to ensure that a variety of housing types may be developed as appropriate in each sub-area and land use designation.**

POLICY: Maximum densities shall only be obtained through the planned development process.

POLICY: Allow a variety of housing types within the planning area.

POLICY: Allow housing in commercial areas that is complimentary to commercial activities, for example, second floor apartments, except where increased building height restricts views.

**GOAL: Assure adequate public utilities and transportation systems are provided to support higher density residential developments.**

POLICY: Encourage a strong pedestrian orientation in the Mazama, Early Winters and Mazama Rural Sub-Areas by requiring pedestrian circulation provisions as a part of project review.

POLICY: Locate high density residential uses in areas where community sewer and water systems are feasible.

POLICY: Encourage the use of public transportation between areas of concentrated residential development and commercial areas.

**GOAL: Assure that design and location of both temporary and permanent housing projects conform to goals contained in this Plan.**

POLICY: Develop standards that keep temporary housing from becoming permanent or from conflicting with the goals of this Plan.

**POLICY:** Develop design standards and require planned development review for temporary and permanent manufactured home and recreational vehicle parks.

**GOAL: Assure employee housing in larger developments is adequate and affordable.**

**POLICY:** Encourage dispersion of employee housing by allowing it to occur in all residential land use designations within the planning area.

**POLICY:** Require proponents of large development projects (including high-density housing and commercial/resort planned developments) to provide for employee housing as part of their development plans. Such housing may be dispersed throughout the planning area as a means to encourage diversity in the planning area.

**GOAL: Protect existing residential areas by preventing encroachment of incompatible uses.**

**POLICY:** Allow only residential and agricultural development, with the exception of home-based businesses, as defined on page 38, in areas designated for residential purposes.

**GOAL: Provide for safe, healthful and aesthetically pleasing residential uses**

**POLICY:** Require off-street parking for all residential uses.

**POLICY:** Regulate building setbacks, structure size and height, and maximum lot coverage to protect public health, safety and welfare.

**POLICY:** Encourage residential project design that places building sites in non-sensitive environmental and visual areas and that considers wildlife, fire and insect disease and weed control.

## 9.2.2 Residential Land Use Designations

The plan contemplates three residential land use designations consistent with present and planned land use patterns and current land use regulations:

- Urban Residential
- Rural Residential
- Low Density Residential

### Urban Residential

The intent of the Urban Residential Designation is to provide an area for *high density* (limited only by bulk, height and setback regulations and ability to provide water and sewer service) single and multi-family residential uses adjoining planned commercial areas. The designation is limited to those areas planned for community services (e.g. sewer & water) within the Mazama Sub-Area.

**Rural Residential**

The intent of the Rural Residential Designation is to provide for areas of lower density residential uses (1 dwelling unit per five net residential acres) and agriculture. This designation is consistent with the Methow Review District Valley Floor zoning district. Small inns, guest ranches and other recreation oriented tourist accommodations and home-based businesses are permitted in this designation.

**Low Density Residential**

The intent of the Low Density Residential Designation is to provide for areas of low-density residential uses (1 dwelling unit or less per 20 acres) and agriculture. This designation is consistent with the Methow Review District Uplands zoning district. Areas with this designation lie within identified critical mule deer winter range thus development is limited to low-density residential and agricultural uses and home-based businesses as defined on page 38.

The map on page 35 illustrates the land use plan for residential development

**Figure 9.2.1 – Residential Land Use Designations**

### 9.3 COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

It is recognized that businesses have a direct and interdependent relationship with community planning. The need to protect the aesthetic character and environment of the Methow Valley is evident and viewed as necessary by business interests. Business success depends on protecting, not harming or commercializing, this unique character. Most new commercial development will be in response to tourism needs. Overnight lodging, service, retail, home-based businesses and resort opportunities are appropriate commercial activities for the planning area. The goals and implementing policies listed below are intended to establish the principles as to how and where these uses should occur.

#### 9.3.1 Goals and Policies for Commercial Development

**GOAL: To foster stable, diverse and competitive year around economic activities within the planning area.**

POLICY: Permit a variety of commercial facilities and activities to support the needs of visitors and residents that are consistent with goals of this plan.

POLICY: Encourage business sector involvement in planning and implementing capital projects in commercially designated areas.

POLICY: Permit development of “second story” residential uses in commercial areas, except where building height restrict views.

POLICY: Assure that developers are responsible for providing adequate infrastructure in Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas to support new commercial development.

**GOAL: To encourage quality commercial development that compliments, not detracts from, the image of the planning area.**

POLICY: Promote the development of a public space in the Mazama Sub-Area to act as the focal point of commercial and community activities and to serve as a community gathering place and “trailhead” for recreational pursuits in the Upper Methow Valley.

POLICY: Encourage expansion of the existing commercial development in the Mazama Sub-Area.

POLICY: Develop, implement and enforce design guidelines for commercial uses in the Planning Area. The guidelines should be tailored for each planning sub-area.

POLICY: Encourage location of most commercial uses in Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas and in appropriate areas near Winthrop.

POLICY: Confine commercial uses outside of the planned commercial areas to planned resorts, inns, lodges, bed and breakfasts, guest ranches and home-based businesses.

**POLICY:** Develop common guidelines and standards for location, design and construction of utilities, streets, parking areas, trails and other improvements necessary to serve projects on an interim basis in order to assure they may eventually be combined into larger community-wide systems.

### **9.3.2 Commercial Land Use Designations**

The land use element contains three commercial land use designations:

- Special Review Commercial
- Neighborhood Commercial
- Planned Destination Resort

#### **Special Review Commercial**

The Special Review Commercial Designation is intended to provide for a mixture of commercial and residential uses west of the Methow River within the Mazama Sub-Area. This designation includes community and tourist oriented commerce with an emphasis on pedestrian access, clustered development, cohesive design and small town feel. Development of lands with this designation will most likely require the construction of community sewer and water systems. The boundaries of this area are intended to be flexible and may be expanded or contracted to fit development plans contained within single ownership properties.

#### **Neighborhood Commercial**

The Neighborhood Commercial is intended to provide for areas with neighborhood oriented retail service outlets and professional offices in the Mazama Sub-Area east of the Methow River along the County road. The designation may also be applied as appropriate to lands near Winthrop. Depending on the scope and type of development, community sewer and water systems may be required.

#### **Planned Destination Resort**

This designation is reserved for lands that have undergone the rigorous process contained in Okanogan County regulation. Land designated as planned destination resort is only limited by the approved plans. A mixture of commercial, residential and recreational uses are typical of this designation.

The map on page 39 illustrates the land use plan for commercial development

### **9.3.3 General Commercial Development Definitions**

The Upper Methow Valley has a long history of accommodating low-intensity commercial activities in residential areas. This is partly due to the sparsely populated nature of the planning area. However, as the population grows the potential for conflicts will increase. For this reason the plan offers some general definitions for the types of low-intensity commercial uses permitted in areas designated for residential use.

- **Planned Resorts** – These uses, which vary in scope and intensity, are subject to the planned development process. In general planned resorts must be located on a minimum of 20 acres, include a mixture of uses, are typically self-contained and are located adjoining the Methow Community Trail or spur.
- **Inns, Lodges and Guest Ranches** – These uses in low density residential and rural residential areas are limited to small-scale (fewer than 12 rooms for rent on a nightly basis) establishments. In general, inns, lodges and guest ranches will provide lodging with meals limited to guests only. Such establishments are typically located on parcels over 20 acres in size and adjoining the Methow Community Trail or spur.
- **Bed & Breakfasts** – These uses are not considered commercial establishments.
- **Home-Based Businesses** – These uses are limited to activities, which do not generate noise, dust, odors, light, glare, solid waste or traffic greater than a typical single family residence. In general, home-based businesses occur in owner-occupied dwellings, do not require more than 2,000 square feet, do not employ more than two persons outside of the immediate family, and comply with all pertinent local, state and federal regulations.

**Figure 9.3.1 – Commercial Land Use Designations**

## **9.4 INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

This plan does not contemplate nor plan for industrial development within the planning area. Past and present thinking is that the Upper Methow Valley will develop with residential, commercial, agricultural and recreational uses. Industrial uses, if any, will be limited to home-based businesses as defined on page 38. In the event a home occupation outgrows the definition contained herein, the plan encourages the re-location of the growing enterprise to an appropriately zoned area.

## 9.5 RESOURCE LANDS AND CRITICAL AREAS

Growth Management is a planning process by which development is encouraged and administered for the benefit of all the citizens in the county. While Okanogan County is not required to plan fully under GMA and the County did not "opt in", the Act requires all cities and counties to do a minimum of planning with regard to Natural Resource Lands and Critical Areas.

Identification, mapping and regulation according to the Growth Management Act affects private lands, state lands, fee lands within the reservation, county land, and city land. The Act will not affect federally owned land or trust lands in or outside the reservation.

The County has five requirements under the Growth Management Act:

- To classify and designate (identify and map) resource lands and critical areas in the county, and to develop regulations to protect the critical areas.
- To ensure that the County Comprehensive Plan and development regulations are consistent.
- To develop findings of fact for public use and interest and ensure appropriate and adequate potable water supplies, parks and recreation facilities, etc. are provided for during the subdivision approval process.
- To require the availability of adequate potable water at the time of Building Permit issuance.
- To participate in a Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO).

The County addressed its GMA obligations in several ways. The requirements for findings of fact, potable water, participation in the RTPO were handled through amendments to existing regulations, preparation of new regulations or passage of resolutions of cooperation. A citizens advisory committee was formed to classify and designate (identify and map) Resource Lands and Critical Areas and to develop recommended regulations for Critical Areas.

The result was a regional strategy that was agreed to by a majority of the jurisdictions within the County. The strategy included a work program that described the steps needed to adopt regulations for critical areas, as well as a description of how smaller cities or those without full-time planning staff would receive assistance sufficient to meet the growth management requirements. The Board of County Commissioners adopted this strategy, which is the County's official policy for GMA compliance, by Resolution 13-94. This background information, as well as the following goals, policies and other information, originate from Resolution 13-94. All appropriate sections of Resolution 13-94 are incorporated by reference into this amendment to the County's Comprehensive Plan.

In addition to the goals and policies adopted by Resolution 13-94, this plan for Sub-Unit A includes the following goals and policies related to resource land and critical area protection.

### 9.5.1 Goals and Policies for Critical Areas

**GOAL: Ranching, hobby farming and other agricultural activities that use and maintain the open fields should be encouraged.**

**GOAL: Forest management based on sound ecological principles and necessary to maintain forest health will be supported.**

**GOAL: Water and sewer systems shall be planned and managed to maintain the level and high quality of the aquifer; to assure adequate high quality stream flows for fisheries and to ensure the quantity and quality of downstream user's water supplies are within the limits of natural stream flows.**

POLICY: Flood plains should remain free of substantial structures, sewage disposal, and impervious surfaces. This is to provide a filter for surface water entering a stream, maximum water absorption, and unobstructed stream flow and to prevent pollution of surface water.

POLICY: Snowmobiles, other motorized vehicles and domestic livestock should be excluded from streams, except for transitory crossings, to prevent pollution.

POLICY: Sewage treatment systems will meet all state and county requirements to assure that ground and surface water remains unpolluted.

POLICY: Water conservation should be considered in building and landscape design.

POLICY: Due to a high water table and porous soils, it is essential that care be used in disposing of household chemicals.

**GOAL: Natural vegetation should be preserved, and surrounding forests managed by sound ecological principles to assure their continuing health.**

**GOAL: Adequate habitat should be maintained to support a rich abundance of indigenous species, and managed to maintain a natural balance among species. It is important to maintain a human environment that is in tune with the natural environment, where people respect the past and work together for their common interests in the future.**

POLICY: Adequate corridors for wildlife migration between hiding cover, food and water shall be provided.

### 9.5.2 Critical Areas Designations

Designation of critical areas within the Upper Methow Valley follow the methodology adopted by Okanogan County. Maps are not available for each type of critical area. The maps on the following pages illustrate critical fish and wildlife habitat, frequently flooded areas and wetlands. At present there has been no mapping of geologically hazardous lands.

**Figure 9.5.1 – Level 1 Critical Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

**Figure 9.5.2 – Level 2 Critical Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

**Figure 9.5.3 – Level 3 Critical Fish and Wildlife Habitat**

**Figure 9.5.4 – Frequently Flooded Areas**

**Figure 9.5.5 – Wetlands**

## **9.6 SHORELINE AREAS**

The shoreline areas of the Methow River provide a significant benefit to humans and the fish and wildlife that inhabit and travel through Sub-Unit A. Okanogan County has adopted a Shoreline Master Program consistent with the requirements of the Shoreline Management Act passed by the state of Washington. The Shoreline Master Program not only contains the goals, policies and other comprehensive plan level information, but detailed regulations governing land use and activities within shoreline areas. The Okanogan County Shoreline Master Program is hereby incorporated by reference, as it now exists and hereafter amended. The map on page 49 shows existing shoreline designations within the planning area.

**Figure 9.6.1 – Shoreline Designations**

## 9.7 OPEN SPACE

Maintenance of the rural landscape with its open vistas, views of agricultural activities and corridors for wildlife travel as the planning area grows will be the true test of the Land Use Element. How humans use the land for development, recreation and business can be constrained in a variety of ways to protect, enhance or restore the open space resource. This section of the Land Use Element is intended to provide guidance for the identification and protection of valuable open space areas.

At present, Sub-Unit A is blessed with an abundance of open space. These open spaces, which provide views, agricultural uses, wildlife corridors and separation of human activities, are primarily held by private landowners. Fortunately many community members had the foresight to begin protection measures before significant areas were lost.

One of the tools used to involve the public in the planning process was an adaptation of “Viewer Employed Photography”<sup>2</sup>. The process, which involved a random distribution of twelve disposable cameras and a workbook to document the pictures, yielded 106 images. Eighty-four of the images were of things people liked about Sub-Unit A, thirty-three percent of these photos emphasized open space, views and rural feel. Many of the remaining photos, whether of structures, the shoreline or the highway, also keyed on the open views in the planning area.

### 9.7.1 Goal and Policies for Open Space

**GOAL: Encourage preservation, protection, enhancement and restoration of open space and view corridors within the planning area.**

**POLICY:** Project design, including architecture, layout, and operation of developments, shall consider the pastoral setting of the valley.

**POLICY:** Meadow areas shall, to the greatest extent possible, be devoted to ranching, equestrian or other activities in open spaces that will maintain the meadows in traditional condition.

**POLICY:** Homes and other developments shall be clustered, whenever feasible, and not exceed the height of surrounding trees.

**POLICY:** Architectural design shall be on a human scale and utilize native materials and natural colors that complement the landscape. Roofs shall be of non-reflective material. Buildings will be subservient to the landscape and be sized to conserve space and natural resources.

**POLICY:** Development along roads and trails shall be screened, landscaped and designed to maintain a high quality scenic corridor.

**POLICY:** Electrical and other utilities should be underground.

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<sup>2</sup> - developed by Curt Miller of Jones and Jones, a Seattle architectural and planning firm. Adopted March 6, 2000; Resolution No. 25-2000

POLICY: Establish a program to identify, prioritize and protect valuable open space areas and view corridors.

### **9.7.2 Designation of Open Space**

This plan does not contain a specific designation for open space but rather presents the notion that desirable open space areas be identified, prioritized and protected as appropriate.

### **9.7.3 General Definitions for Open Space**

Open space is defined in a number of ways. The two most common are related to taxation and conditions of approval for a development.

The first type of open space is created for tax purposes and is governed by local and state statute. Land designated as open space for tax purposes is not required to remain as open space in perpetuity. Every seven years the owner of the property must re-enroll the subject land in the county's open space tax program.

The second type of open space is the result of a development that required open space as a condition of approval. This type of open space may be held in common by the lot owners in the development, may be vested with the original landowner or held by a lot owners group. Regardless of ownership, this type of open space is intended to remain open in perpetuity. Okanogan County defines several different kinds of this type of open space.

Other types of open space include: lands acquired by the state, federal or local governments for the purpose of protecting the land from development to benefit fish and wildlife resources; and, lands subject to conservation easements or other restrictions that prevent most types of development.

## 9.8 STRATEGIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF LAND USE ELEMENT

Effective implementation of this element is the key to realization of the community's vision. It is important to understand that creation of the desired village with a town square and some form of park in the Mazama Sub-Area will rely heavily on investment by private property owners, cooperation of government agencies and support from the community.

Implementation of the Land Use Element will rely on traditional means such as zoning and subdivision regulations as well as more specific requirements for shoreline development, construction in critical areas, common covenant for private development, sign regulations, landscape requirements and project design guidelines. The goals and policies of this element shall be relied upon for direction as implementing measures are drafted.

The following strategies should be undertaken in order to implement this element. The strategies are grouped according to priority. Priority One strategies should be drafted, reviewed and adopted concurrent to this plan. Priority Two strategies are to be developed over time as resources become available.

### Priority One Strategies

- Review existing land use regulations to ensure consistency with this plan.
- Amend the Zoning Map and Text to:
  - require pre-application consultation with the Mazama Advisory Committee (MAC) on commercial and high density residential projects. Said consultation shall result in written comments from the MAC with their input on the proposal.
  - create zoning districts tailored to the "Rural Residential" and "Low Density Residential" land use designations within Sub-Unit A. Allowed uses in these zoning districts should reflect the desires of the community expressed in this plan.
  - eliminate the "Town Commercial" and "Auto Commercial" zones and replace with "Special Review Commercial". The allowed uses in this zoning district should reflect the desires of the community expressed in this plan through combination of the uses presently allowed in the "Town Commercial" and "Auto Commercial" zones.
  - refine permissible commercial activities throughout the planning area. It is important that small-scale tourism based commercial enterprises be well-defined and appropriate controls developed to ensure their compatibility with other land uses.
  - incorporate overlay districts for migration corridors, special design review, critical areas, signage and lighting. The overlays should provide a review process for considering the impact of development and may contain specific regulations intended to implement the community's vision. Such regulations may include: structure height and bulk limits; design guidelines for residential and commercial uses; landscaping standards; sign regulations; light and glare; and clearing and grading regulations.
- Amend the Shoreline Master Program to change the shoreline designation within the Mazama Core Area from "Rural" to "Suburban" with a parallel designation of

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“Conservancy” for the first 50’ from the OHWM. The plan’s vision for commercial and high-density residential development in the Mazama core area near the Methow River is not consistent with the present shoreline designation of “Rural”. This amendment is needed to reflect the commercial and urban residential land use designations in the Mazama Sub-Area.

- Prepare a common set of Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions (CC&R’s) for properties within commercial and high-density areas. This effort includes working with property owners and developers to obtain their approval of the CC&R’s and assisting with the implementation.
- Require conditions on all new planned developments and subdivisions that the following standards for wildfire safety be implemented:
  - Use fire rated roofing materials such as metal, tile or rated asphalt shingles;
  - All chimneys should be equipped with non-flammable ½” mesh screen spark arrestors;
  - Within 30 feet of a structure, clear most trees, and brush to maintain a “defensible space”. Within the defensible space, plant only deciduous trees and bushes—no pine, fir, spruce, cedar, or other conifers—and prune all branches to a minimum of 10 feet from roof lines. Any conifers retained with the defensible space should be limbed to 12 feet above the ground and they should be separated from other tree crowns by a minimum of 20 feet.
  - Within 100 feet of a structure, limb trees to six feet above the ground and thin dense stands of trees to reduce the spread of wildfire between tree crowns;
  - Store firewood and locate fuel tanks at least 30 feet from structures;
  - Address privacy and screening concerns with strategically placed plantings at property margins.

#### Priority Two Strategies:

- Amend the Zoning Map and Text to:
  - incorporate overlay districts for open space and view areas. The overlays should provide a review process for considering the impact of development and may contain specific regulations intended to implement the community’s vision. Such regulations may include: structure height, bulk and placement limits; design guidelines for residential and commercial uses; landscaping standards; and, sign regulations.
- Establish an Open Space Committee that actively works with landowners on the identification, protection and restoration of open spaces. Throughout the planning process, the community made it clear that the open spaces, rural vistas, and mountain views were in integral part of the quality of life for valley residents and a chief attraction for visitors. The Open Space Committee would be charged with identifying and prioritizing key open space areas, view and migration corridors and other visually sensitive lands, then working with the community and County to develop plans and strategies for protection and/or restoration of these areas. One result of the committee’s work is intended to be an “Open Space Overlay” map to provide landowners with

guidance for the protection of priority open space areas and a “View Corridor Map” which is intended to illustrate priority view opportunities in the planning area.

- Amend the Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan to include the goals and policies for Resource Lands and Critical Areas.
- Form advisory groups to refine land use planning and implementation efforts within each Sub-area.

## 10.0 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

The transportation and circulation element of this Plan is based upon certain strongly stated community strategies. It is recognized that traffic flow, if not managed, will be disruptive, especially in the Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas. Key considerations for mitigating the effects of traffic include:

- discouraging unnecessary auto trips into residential areas;
- encouraging through traffic to remain on or near SR-20;
- assuring clean air and minimum noise are driving forces of developing and maintaining transportation/circulation systems. The atmosphere that is created in an area is initiated by the road style and type that serves the community;
- emphasizing a pedestrian orientation for both residential and commercial areas; encouraging the use of unpaved trails and the development of interconnecting loops for biking and cross country skiing.;
- assuring road design will compliment community planning goals; and,
- providing for alternate transportation modes, such as bicycles, nordic skiing, and equestrian.

The motorized transportation/circulation system in Sub-Unit A is dominated by SR-20, which forms the backbone of the vehicular transportation system. This designated scenic highway is the major east-west route through the entire planning area. The Goat Creek Road, a county arterial, provides the primary access on the eastside of Methow River north of the Weeman Bridge while the Wolf Creek road provides access on the west side of the river. Nearly all other roads within the planning area are private or provide access to the Okanogan National Forest. The map on page 56 shows the existing transportation network with roadway classifications as defined by Okanogan County in the transportation element of the county's comprehensive plan.

**Figure 10.1 – Motorized Transportation Network and Classification**

Numerous studies and plans have been prepared that contain projections of traffic volumes over time within the planning area. The most consistent theme is that traffic counts will increase over the coming years, the rate of increase will depend on the amount, type and location of development within the planning area. Along with the increase will come a decline in level of service.

The most significant development in the transportation/circulation system within Sub-Unit A over the past decade has been the construction of the Methow Community Trail. This trail, while primarily recreational in nature, is also considered an important part of the existing and future transportation system. The plan suggests that the community trail, along with a series of park and ride/ski/hike lots, will provide a human powered alternate means of transportation for those commuting to jobs in Winthrop or elsewhere in the Upper Methow Valley. This trail will provide the same type of backbone transportation corridor for human powered transportation that SR-20 provides for motorized conveyances. Details on the trail are contained in the Recreation Element.

## 10.1 TRANSPORTATION/CIRCULATION GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies are essential to meeting the planning strategies and are designed to complement those contained in the Okanogan County Comprehensive Transportation Study for the Methow Valley and the Okanogan County Transportation Element. Where conflicts exist, this Plan shall prevail. The overall intent of the Transportation/Circulation Element is to develop a transportation system that will assure ready access to facilities and services with a minimum impact on the environment and people.

**GOAL: Assure transportation systems will not be unnecessarily disruptive to area residents.**

POLICY: Provide adequate parking, traffic control devices and signing in order to reduce congestion and unnecessary intrusions into either residential or commercial areas.

POLICY: Ensure that trails for the use of off highway motorized vehicles are compatible with existing residential development.

**GOAL: To provide for efficient, adequate, safe and economical transportation systems and services that meet the needs of the community and compliment the proposed land uses of this Plan.**

POLICY: Assure that development proposals conform with the transportation location and design guidelines of this plan, the Okanogan County Transportation Plan and those of the Washington State Department of Transportation, or other recognized traffic engineering standards or practices.

POLICY: Determine approximate locations of future streets, trails and park/ride/bike/hike lots so developers and residents may plan and develop a long-term community circulation system.

POLICY: Require adequate planning and space within developments and public rights-of-way for snow storage and removal, such as boulevards median strips or planting strips adjacent to sidewalks.

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POLICY: Implement a transportation system for commercial areas that uniformly distributes traffic flow and provides for parking areas within easy walking distance of businesses.

POLICY: Provide adequate access for high volume auto oriented commercial uses.

**GOAL: Identify and provide opportunities for both motorized and non-motorized trails and public and/or private conveyance systems, such as public transit, which will provide opportunities for recreation and an alternative means of commuting, where appropriate, throughout the planning area.**

POLICY: Specify trail types, locations and standards for future non-motorized and motorized uses including pedestrian, bicycle, equestrian , nordic skiing and snowmobiling.

POLICY: Encourage, through project review, designation of open spaces in a manner that provides continuity for non-motorized travel between and to points of interest and the different community centers.

POLICY: Identify areas for motorized recreation vehicles (snowmobiles) that are compatible with established uses.

POLICY: Encourage appropriate access to public lands.

POLICY: Actively coordinate trails planning with Okanogan County, the Okanogan National Forest, the town of Winthrop, the Methow Valley Sports Trails Association, Methow Valley and Okanogan County snowmobile organizations and the Washington State Department of Transportation.

POLICY: Encourage the development of public and/or private transit systems and facilities.

POLICY: Emphasize human powered modes of transportation. Connect major points of interest in the Early Winters and Mazama Sub-Areas by appropriately surfaced walking, biking, equestrian and nordic skiing trails.

POLICY: Ensure hiking, biking, horse and ski trails generally follow the river but occasionally bend away to provide areas by the river with no trail access.

POLICY: Ensure transportation plans provide a complementary system of roads and trails.

POLICY: Provide easy access to trailheads with adequate parking where feasible. Encourage a public or private transit system.

**GOAL: To assure that transportation systems will have a minimal impact upon the environment and aesthetics of the planning area.**

POLICY: Encourage buffering and screening of residential developments adjacent to high traffic volume areas in order to reduce noise, glare and visual impacts of major traffic routes and parking.

POLICY: Provide for maximum use of human powered modes of travel and public transit, in order to prevent air pollution.

- POLICY: Discourage construction of roadways in environmentally and visually sensitive areas.
- POLICY: Allow deviation from standardized design requirements when it can be demonstrated that such deviation furthers the intent of this Plan and does not jeopardize safety.
- POLICY: Encourage curvilinear, branched road design in residential projects.
- POLICY: Encourage transportation and wildlife agencies to cooperatively develop a plan to reduce wildlife encounters on roads, i.e. speed limits, signs, underpasses, drift fences.
- POLICY: Encourage road design, construction and maintenance standards and practices that reduce noise (e.g. asphalt overlay vs. chip seal), dust and glare.
- POLICY: Ensure road and trail surfaces keep the sound of vehicles traveling on them to a minimum. Hot mix asphalt surfacing should be used on SR-20 and other arterials in the planning area.
- POLICY: Use terrain features, vegetation, earth berms and other barriers to mute the sound of motorized equipment that may create unacceptable noise levels.

## 10.2 DESIGN STANDARDS

Okanogan County has an adopted set of roadway design standards. However, in many instances the existing standards require higher design speeds and thus more clearing and grading than desired in the planning area. In addition, current standards do not address pedestrian/non-motorized circulation.

Another critical feature of this element is the identification of planned transportation improvements. The following pages illustrate desired transportation/circulation improvements in and near the planning area and preferred design schematics.

## 10.3 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

Successful implementation of the Transportation/Circulation will result in an expanded network of non-motorized trails, the identification of appropriate areas for motorized trail use, quieter roadway surfaces, and refined road design standards that are sensitive to the unique environment of the planning area.

Strategies for implementation of this plan element include:

- Continue development of the Methow Community Trail and various spurs to link all areas of Sub-Unit A together.
- Complete development of year around park and ride/bike/hike/ski lots to compliment the trail system. Lots as key points in the network should include restrooms and other facilities.
- Review existing roadway design standards and recommend modifications consistent with this plan.

## 11.0 PUBLIC UTILITIES, FACILITIES, AND SERVICES

Public utilities, facilities and services not only consist of the standard water, sewer, telephone, electricity, solid waste, fire protection, law enforcement and emergency medical services but also public transit, trails, parking areas with restrooms, and internet access. The costs associated with the construction and operation of community-wide facilities, utilities and services can be reduced and efficiency increased by planning for the future and identifying and prioritizing needs.

The preceding elements of this plan provide important guidance for the location and sizing of utilities, facilities and services. Early identification of and provision for needs and capacities allows those interested in development the assurances and information needed to accurately deal with one of the most significant costs of project development. Further, capital costs associated with providing utilities, facilities, and services can be anticipated in a timely manner so revenue sources can be identified and necessary funds raised

The type of growth that creates greater demands on public utilities, facilities, and services will occur over time in response to market demands. In addition to the Arrowleaf PDR, it is anticipated that development in the planning area will primarily be construction of single family residences with scattered inns, lodges, guest ranches and planned resorts. For this reason, construction and operation of water and sewer utilities will largely be on a individual project basis while telephone and electric utilities will respond to market demand. It is important to note that the demand for electrical power generated by growth in the Methow Valley will exceed the system's capacity early in the next century.

The draft *Mazama Area Wastewater Facilities Plan Update*, completed in August of 1998, represents an effort to develop a contemporary plan for wastewater facilities. The plan looks at the pattern of decentralized development that currently exists in the planning area, and recommends appropriate treatment systems, including both on-site systems and central sewer facilities. Recommendations predominantly address onsite technology that can be permitted to achieve the 1 milligram/liter planning goal for nitrogen pollution in the groundwater, which has been adopted by County resolution. The plan update proposes a wastewater management system for the Mazama Sub-Area (depending on intensity/density of development), and a monthly sewer service fee to cover the associated costs. Permitting requirements for biosolids handling, septage disposal, and water reuse are also addressed in the plan.

The Methow Valley Community Trail and its branches in the planning area constitute a public facility of growing importance. The trail provides a thread that runs through all elements of this plan. As a land use, the trail impacts the location and type of development and provides open space and habitat along its length. As part of the transportation system, it provides a link from the north end of the planning area to Winthrop. As a community facility, it provides the public with access to lands within the planning area that are shielded visually from the road network. As a recreation facility, it offers the chance to bike, hike or Nordic ski. Finally, the trail is a focus of the community image, which is based largely on non-motorized outdoor recreation. Since the recreation connection is strongest, most comprehensive planning information for this important community facility is contained in the Recreation Element.

Because little concentrated development has occurred, the community has a unique opportunity to maximize efficiencies by establishing specific strategies to deal with the anticipated public

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utility, facility and service needs that are in support of community planning goals. Anticipated needs are summarized in Table 11.1.

**Table 11.1 - Needed Public Services and Facilities**

Future Need	Recommended Service Area*
Community Water Supply Facilities Well site(s) Reservoir site(s) Easement for distribution system wells and pumping facilities distribution system (water mains)	Mazama & Early Winters Sub-Areas
Community Wastewater Disposal Facilities treatment plant site Disposal site(if needed for land application) Easements for collection system Collection system (lift stations and sewers) treatment plant	Mazama & Early Winters Sub-Areas
Solid Waste System	Transfer station in Twisp
Recycling Sites	All Areas
Electrical Power Distribution System Easements	All Areas
Gas Distribution System Easements	PDR's and PD's where desired
Communication System & Sites Easements	All Areas
Maintenance Building Site Building	Mazama, Early Winters or Mazama Rural Sub-Areas
Fire Protection Services site(s) & Staging Areas building(s) Water suppliers - Tanker fill points	Mazama and Early Winters Sub-Areas along Lost River Mazama Roads
Cemetery	Mazama

\*See Figure 1.1 for map of planning area.

## 11.1 PUBLIC UTILITIES, FACILITIES AND SERVICES GOALS AND POLICIES

The following goals and policies are intended to guide the development of public utilities, facilities and services in the planning area. The goals and policies are intended to compliment, build upon and refine the goals and policies from planning documents such as the “Okanogan County Comprehensive Sewer Plan - Mazama Update”. The overall intent of this element is to ensure that these crucial facilities and services are included in the planning and development process.

### **GOAL: Identify and provide specific utility and service needs well in advance of demand.**

POLICY: Utilize engineering reports and implement standards for the design and siting of individual and group wastewater treatment systems detailed in the *Mazama Area Wastewater Facilities Plan Update*.

POLICY: Study and accept innovative sewage systems if they meet the adopted standards for wastewater disposal in the planning area.

POLICY: Complete water planning efforts in order to identify appropriate and responsible means for allocating ground and surface water resources.

POLICY: Require that larger community water systems provide adequate fire supply with compatible connections.

POLICY: Establish the entities needed for utility construction, operation, and maintenance when the demand is adequate to justify and support them.

POLICY: Require water conservation measures, such as those adopted by the Department of Health.

### **GOAL: Assure that construction, operation and maintenance of utility systems is as economical as possible.**

POLICY: Allow interim individual and small community on-site wastewater treatment systems and water supply systems until it can be shown that community-wide systems can be supported financially

POLICY: Assure that densities established by zoning are adequate to support costs of utilities and services that are provided on a community-wide basis.

POLICY: Assure consistency of construction standards, so that interim utility improvements can be coordinated and, when necessary, combined with the community-wide systems if constructed.

POLICY: Locate and secure easements, sites, and other lands needed for public services and facilities.

**GOAL: Assure that provision of utilities will not be detrimental to the environment nor foster land use patterns inconsistent with the recommendations of this Plan.**

**POLICY:** Assure that utility extensions are in accordance with the land use elements of this Plan by avoiding extensions into areas that are not compatible with planning goals.

## 11.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

One of the most significant departures from the previous plan for Sub-Unit A is that this document no longer envisions large community water or sewer systems. In their place the plan calls for smaller “package” sewer systems built by landowners/developers as commercial and high-density residential uses become feasible. Even without the large community systems, water and sewer remain difficult and sometimes contentious issues and require a concerted strategy to resolve. Fortunately, improvement and expansion of the public utilities, facilities and services needed to implement this plan element is generally well underway:

- Fire District #6 has constructed a fire hall with room to grow at the Mazama Junction;
- School District #350 has completed the construction of a new central campus for all grades with room for projected growth;
- PUD #1 is planning to construct a new main transmission line from Pateros to Twisp which will add the capacity required to service future demand;
- Local phone company continues to improve telephone service and respond to demand;
- Internet access is available to anyone with a telephone;
- Aero Methow recently received the financing to purchase new ambulances;
- solid waste disposal and recycling opportunities, while not always convenient, are available; and,
- donations of right-of-way, easements and property for the trail system and park and ride/bike/hike lots continue.

Planning for water and sewer systems, whether individual or community, should be consistent with this plan. The approval and implementation of the 1998 *Mazama Area Wastewater Facilities Plan Update* is encouraged. Furthermore, an effort should be undertaken to provide educational information and materials on the benefits of reduced interior and exterior water use. Community water systems of four or more connections should be required to include at least a fire hydrant capable of delivering flows that meet fire district standards.

## 12.0 RECREATION

Recreation is one the chief reasons for new residential and commercial growth in the Methow Valley and particularly within Sub-Unit A. Understandably, recreation will continue to provide this stimulus as long as the very attributes that presently attract people to the area are not degraded. Decisions concerning land use must provide for the needs of the recreation industry. Placement and design of development must be done in a manner that does not significantly detract from the area.

The Methow Valley Ranger district has produced maps for the Upper Methow Valley Watershed Analysis that display summer and winter recreation possibilities in parts of the planning area. The analysis includes management strategies to address recreational impacts on the adjacent Late Successional Reserves and Wilderness as well as critical habitat areas on private land.

Demands for recreation are constantly changing. The purpose of this plan element is to:

- identify features that attract visitors and provide opportunities for existing residents;
- identify needed facilities and services such as restrooms, etc., and encourage private investment in these facilities;
- encourage private investment in providing quality recreation facilities and services for visitors and local residents; and
- ensure a proper balance of uses on surrounding National Forest lands.

Most recreation in the Upper Methow Valley involves outdoor summer and winter activities. Hiking, hunting, fishing, cross country skiing, mountain biking, horseback riding, boating, ice, rock and mountain climbing, para-sailing and hang gliding and snowmobiling are common dispersed recreational pursuits. The opportunities for developed recreation occur in conjunction with guest ranches and resorts in the planning area. Developed activities, such as a golf course, campgrounds and ice rinks, are advantageous for the community because such activities are more easily controlled and serviced, thereby causing minimal impact upon the community and its environment. In addition, environmental education opportunities will help recreational visitors minimize the environmental impact of their recreational activity in the valley.

There is an opportunity to build on the area's reputation for diverse recreation. Low cost and low impact civic development of roadside and/or trailhead facilities will encourage private development of guiding, instructional and training facilities as well as stores providing recreational equipment and supplies which, if coupled with careful zoning and dispersed use, would benefit both visitors and local residents.

People have many different recreation preferences, some of which don't necessarily include sports or physical activities. For many a peaceful environment that is free of noise and pollution is essential to a good recreation experience. Opportunities for learning natural history are increasingly desired by the type of vacationers attracted to the Methow Valley. Enjoying the ambiance of a community is an experience that must be available in a successful recreation

economy. In addition, cultural events, educational opportunities and conventions are appropriate non-dispersed activities for the area.

Specific recreation attributes of the planning area include its proximity to the North Cascades Scenic Corridor, the Okanogan National Forest, and Pasayten and Sawtooth Wilderness areas; as well as current and future opportunities for developed recreation at Wilson Ranch, Mazama Country Inn, and other area resort facilities. The extensive trail system in the planning area is also an attractive amenity for visitors. A trails map on the planning area is included on page 66.

The goals and policies below emphasize the relationship between community decisions and recreation activities within the planning area.

## **12.1 GOALS AND POLICIES:**

### **GOAL: To encourage development of diverse recreation opportunities.**

- POLICY: Assure land use regulations allow for well-planned recreation oriented developments that are located in areas consistent with this Plan.
- POLICY: Provide appropriately zoned areas for both dispersed and developed recreation development.
- POLICY: Coordinate recreational planning and development with other federal, state and local agencies to assure recreation activities on privately owned lands complement that planned for public lands and vice versa.
- POLICY: Encourage designation and construction of paths and multi-purpose trails throughout the planning area and adjacent public lands.
- POLICY: Encourage recreational development that preserves and protects open space.
- POLICY: Develop recreation plans that meet funding standards of the Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation and other funding sources.
- POLICY: Encourage human powered recreation and develop a network of trails to meet the needs of residents and visitors.

### **GOAL: To provide the recreational facilities needed to support private investment.**

- POLICY: Develop long range capital improvement programs for needed recreation facilities and services.
- POLICY: Assure community facilities can meet peak recreational demands.
- POLICY: Identify locations for, prioritize and develop park and ride/bike/hike lots as appropriate throughout the planning area.

**Figure 12.1 – Trails**

## 12.2 IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY:

Meeting the goals for recreation will require ongoing meaningful participation between both private and public sectors to assure coordination of land use planning decisions and investment in needed community facilities. An update to Okanogan County's Park and Recreation Plan would be an excellent start in focusing efforts to implement this plan element.

In addition, specific recreation plans, such as an update to the Okanogan County Trails Plan, should be developed so that both public and private entities can develop recreation-oriented activities in a systematic and coordinated way.

Implementation of this element will also rely on significant private investment. Opportunities to improve and expand recreation offerings for private interests as well as public/private partnerships include:

- Trailhead information and parking within the Mazama Sub-Area.
- Stream access and restoration throughout the planning area.
- Parking lot and information at Fun Rock
- Summer mountain bike trails (single track) based out of Rendezvous Hut FR 100 loop area.
- Van support of mountain biking and skiing itineraries.
- Low cost camping/dormitory lodging opportunities.
- Continued development of the Methow Community Trail and spurs for all season use.
- Development of park/ride/bike/hike lots at strategic locations along the Methow Community Trail, including restrooms as appropriate.
- Development of community park and recreational facilities, including public restrooms, adjacent to Mazama Community Building.

In addition to the preceding opportunities, it is important that the other elements of this plan be implemented. Land Use, Transportation, Public Facilities and Community Image are all critical to the long-term sustainability of the economy, environment and community of the Upper Methow Valley.