



COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS

Abbreviated / Amended Report for CITY OF DAYTON



POMEGRANATE CENTER

*If you want to go fast, go alone.
If you want to go far, go together.*

-African proverb

The purpose of Community Conversations is to identify priorities that can help improve the quality of life in our region, which includes Columbia and Walla Walla counties and northeastern Umatilla County. Community Council is leading this project in collaboration with United Way of Walla Walla County, Sherwood Trust, Blue Mountain Community Foundation, and Pomegranate Center.

This report is a compilation of the results from many different community workshops and gatherings, and some existing visions and initiatives.

Our goal was to engage as many residents of our region as possible. In an attempt to be as inclusive as possible, the workshops were held across the region, mostly in the evening, with one held during the day. Refreshments, childcare, and simultaneous Spanish translation were offered at all of the workshops. In addition to the large workshops, United Way of Walla Walla County conducted many smaller roundtable discussions at business offices, service club meetings, and youth centers. In all, over 800 participants offered their ideas for the future.

A. Community Conversations Workshops:

... The facilitator asked each attendee to come up with an answer to this question:

What ideas do you have for this region's future? Then they asked participants to share their top idea. Everyone had a chance to speak, presenting their best idea in a few key words. Pomegranate Center uses this sharing strategy because they believe that it is as important to express ideas as to hear them from others. When it comes to community, together we know more and through witnessing everyone else's proposals, we begin to see larger patterns and themes. At the end of the meetings, the facilitator asked attendees to identify common themes as the first step in linking their ideas with those of others.

B. Current Visioning Documents

In order to recognize additional recent visioning activities that took place outside of these workshops and roundtable discussions, we have included ideas from visions and initiatives that were submitted to us. These include *(Abbreviated for Dayton)*:

- *Blue Mountain Action Council Community Needs Assessment 2015*
- *Columbia County Coalition for Youth and Families Strategic Plan 2016*
- *Columbia Country Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies List 2016*

GENERAL TOPIC AREAS *(5 Top Topics identified at the Dayton workshop in September are underlined and in **BOLD BLUE**)*

Ideas from all of the workshops, roundtable discussions, and visioning documents, have been grouped into thirteen general topic areas, which are described below. Following the list of general topic areas is the list of specific ideas under the general topic area heading.

1. **ACCESS TO EDUCATION** - *The region will be renowned for excellence in education that embraces the entire population from birth through retirement.*
2. **ARTS AND CULTURE** - *The region will become a thriving arts community for all ages, and arts education will flourish.*
3. **CARE FOR NATURE** - *The region's abundant natural treasures and environmental resources will be sustainably managed, protected and celebrated.*
4. **CIVIC ENGAGEMENT** - *The region's government will reflect its diverse community and planning efforts will be socially inclusive. This will be a community with a culture of civic engagement that provides multiple opportunities for civic involvement, particularly among youth.*
5. **COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY** - *The region will celebrate its rich social and cultural diversity by being inclusive and respectful of, and caring for, people from all backgrounds.*
6. **HEALTH** - *People of all ages will be able to access a full range of health services. Healthy lifestyles will be supported by access to healthy food, regional trail networks and recreational facilities.*
7. **LOCAL AGRICULTURE** - *The region will preserve farmlands and will support a robust local food system that will contribute to the population's health and the region's vitality.*
8. **RECREATION** - *Bike/walking paths will provide greater access to the region's natural and cultural amenities, and will increase regional connectivity. Sport complexes and recreational facilities, especially for youth, will be expanded.*
9. **REGIONAL COLLABORATION** - *The region will foster collaboration among governments, businesses and non-profits at the neighborhood, local, regional and state levels. Infrastructure will enhance connectivity within the region and to destinations outside the region.*
10. **SAFETY** - *Community members and law enforcement will work together to cultivate safe environments for everyone, particularly in public spaces, on roadways, and in the region's schools.*
11. **STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY** - *The region will have a strong economy that supports a large base of family-wage jobs in multiple sectors. The region will foster business creation and innovation, and will provide more employment opportunities for teens and youth. New opportunities to connect food production to tourism will build on the existing rich agricultural base.*

12. VIBRANT CENTERS - *Cities and towns will be places where people can live, work and play. Housing will be affordable and a vibrant mix of commercial establishments will serve a diverse population. Building on existing historical fabric, cities and towns will become more environmentally sustainable, with greater emphasis on walkability, public transit, green energy, and public spaces.*

13. WELLBEING FOR ALL

The region will provide services and opportunities for all, creating a place that is attractive to young families and retirees alike. A broad array of recreational and cultural activities along with affordable childcare, year-round opportunities for youth, and a support system for seniors and the disabled will serve the whole population and create a high quality of life for everyone.

LIST OF IDEAS *(Abbreviated and formatted for Dayton)*

Ideas presented in Dayton on May 25 are marked **D** and ■

Ideas presented in Waitsburg on August 18 are marked **WB** ■

Ideas presented marked **O** and ■ follow these identifiers:

- (BMAC) *BMAC Community Needs Assessment 2015*
- (CCYF) *Columbia County Coalition for Youth and Families Strategic Plan 2016*
- (CCED) *Columbia Country Comprehensive Economic Development Strategies List 2016*

1. ACCESS TO EDUCATION

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|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| D | <p>More support for school districts (2X)</p> <p>Increase birth-5 years childcare education</p> <p>Provide Parent education for low-income families</p> <p>Improve Local affordable adult education</p> |
| WB | <p>Link youth employment & education</p> <p>Add Residential workshop learning centers (2x)</p> |
| O | <p>Increase coordination with downtown businesses and the school. (CCED)</p> <p>Continue to improve stability of local school district (CCED)</p> <p>Improve relationships with high schools and colleges. (CCED)</p> <p>WWCC (and/or WSU) to open branch or satellite office. (CCED)</p> <p>Continue to expand programs at Dayton High School/Skill Center with WWCC. (CCED)</p> <p>Encourage active participation in regional workforce training. (CCED)</p> <p>Research community workforce need, then develop programs to meet established needs. (CCED)</p> <p>Provide incumbent worker training (CCED)</p> <p>Development of STEM programs (CCED)</p> <p>Seek funding under the Safe Routes to Schools program (CCED)</p> <p>Facilitate youth internship/entrepreneurial program in school (CCED)</p> <p>Revitalize the Internship Program (CCYF)</p> <p>Implement a College and Career Day (CCYF)</p> <p>Support an Alternative Learning Environment (CCYF)</p> <p>Continue Support for Students Helping Each Other (CCYF)</p> <p>Provide a Teacher Appreciation Event (CCYF)</p> <p>Create a Staff Focus Campaign (CCYF)</p> <p>Integrate ACEs & Resiliency Training (CCYF)</p> <p>Communicate and promote school activities to the community (CCYF)</p> <p>Support the After School Program (CCYF)</p> |

2. ARTS AND CULTURE

- D** | Art education for all
Amphitheater for large events (2X)
Incubator for demonstrative arts
- WB** | Oral history/Preserving and sharing history

3. CARE FOR NATURE

- WB** | Healthy creeks (see river drainage)
- O** | Install car charging station (CCED)
Obtain funding for maintenance on dike (CCED)

4. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

- D** | **Cultivate** Youth engagement
Enhance culture of volunteerism
Cultivate Community advocates among communities
Provide Information hub for those in need
Develop Plans to create the next generation of leaders
- WB** | Continue exchange of citizen/govt. communication
Use community resources to make our children better
- O** | Install a digital community information board (CCED) *Completed*
Encourage the community to adopt a leadership development program (CCED)

5. COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

- D** | **Foster** Rich and diverse culture (2X)
- WB** | Integration of empathy and compassion in planning
Community cooperation- respect for diverse opinions and culture
Proactive land use planning- not reactive
- O** | Build relationships across socio-economic levels (CCYF)
Explore establishing a Friends Program in Dayton (CCYF)

6. HEALTH *(Combined with Well-Being Dec. 2016)*

- D** | Preserve and foster healthcare facilities (4X)
Youth community center
Information hub for those in needs
Adult day-care
- O** | Nutrition education/healthy eating (BMAC)
Mental health services(BMAC)
Dental services(BMAC)
Drug and alcohol abuse services(BMAC)
Food(BMAC)
Clothing(BMAC)
Rehab community housing (possibly with CDBG funds) (CCED)

- Promote Healthy Choices (CCYF)
- Support the work of Columbia Cares (CCYF)
- Provide trainings, speakers and other community outreach (CCYF)
- Engage attendees of activities such as Turkey bingo, Ham Bingo, Etc. (CCYF)

7. LOCAL AGRICULTURE

- WB** Support and development of our local food system
- Sustainable agriculture (no chemicals)

8. RECREATION

- D**
 - Connect bike/walking trails throughout the region (4X)
 - Make Bluewood a year-round destination
 - More outdoor recreational opportunities
 - Athletic complex
 - Beautify access to Touchet River
 - Regional rest stops
 - Bowling alley
 - Swimming pool
- WB**
 - Recreational activities in the mountains/outdoor recreation (2x)
 - Recreational fishing opportunities
 - Walking path /trail in Waitsburg- target older adults
 - Free organized recreational activities for all ages
- O**
 - Long and short range plans for Fairgrounds, Golf Course, and Seneca property the county is acquiring (CCED)
 - Create and improve walking & biking paths throughout the community, connecting Downtown, BMS, Fairgrounds, School, etc., and potentially between Dayton and Waitsburg. Bike Bridge over Touchet River (CCED)
 - Develop additional opportunities for ag tourism and seasonal recreation (hunting/fishing, biking, camping, horseback riding, outfitting, skiing, snowmobiling, zip lines, etc.) (CCED)
 - Encourage the establishment of cabin rentals (CCED)
 - Develop Community Center (CCED)
 - Encourage development of Sports Complex for events and tournaments (CCED)

9. REGIONAL COLLABORATION

- D**
 - Information hub for regional activities
 - A non-profit network
 - Stronger regional identity
 - State support for regional projects and planning
 - Comprehensive regulation
 - Centralized regional historical hub
- WB** Be open to outside thinking- extra regional resources
- O**
 - Infrastructure (Roads, river, rail, air, water, sewer, energy, telecom, solid waste, transportation, utilities, etc.) (CCED)

Improve City street and County road infrastructure, including Hwy. 261 improvements.
City & County (CCED)
Seek funding to maintain short line railroad (CCED)
Improve railroad tracks to include passenger service (CCED)
Partner with Columbia County Transportation for additional van pools to Starbuck and the Dam (CCED)

10. SAFETY

D Drug-free community
WB Safe area free of homelessness
O Improve safety, access, and ADA accessibility for pedestrians on Hwy. 12 viaduct on E. Main Street (CCED)
Jail/Law & Justice facility (CCED)

11. STRONG AND DIVERSE ECONOMY

D Economic diversity (3X)
Value-added agriculture
Living-wage jobs (2X)
Keep small businesses viable
Professional and technical jobs
Survivability and sustainability
Sustainable community businesses
Buy local – support local products
Support for local diverse farmers
WB Resource sustaining/non-depleting jobs
Embrace regional support for small businesses
Economic development in scale/style (balance) of community (adaptive)
A larger base of primary employers
O Employment opportunities, Job search assistance (BMAC)
Employment opportunities (BMAC)
Continue to improve stability of local hospital district, including workforce training (CCED)
Facilitate small business technical assistance and workshops (CCED)
Create targeted marketing strategy for downtown business recruitment (CCED)
Encourage biomass energy production. (CCED)
Building capacity of local contractors to get on small works rosters, Sustainable Living Center list, etc. Chamber (CCED)
List resources and contractors on its website (CCED)
Implement Choose Columbia County shop local/recruitment campaign (CCED)
Improve tourism web sites (CCED)
Develop a Youth Entrepreneur Program (CCYF)

12. VIBRANT CENTERS

D Make towns irresistible (so people will move in)
Faster communication networks and outreach

- Preservation of regional history – preserve the past while look forward
- Best place to retire and stay independent
- Electrical vehicles and charging stations
- Improve streets and roads
- Competitive technology access
- Fiber optics
- Faster communication networks and outreach
- Vital downtowns (2X)
- Decent and affordable housing for low and fixed income
- Enhance public transportation
- Simple, user-friendly codes and regulations
- More laundromats
- Make towns irresistible (so people will move in)
- WB** Build laundromats in smaller communities- inclusive of multiple services e.g. tutoring
- Housing developments to enhance and contribute to the local environment
- Adequate affordable housing
- Develop urban forestry
- O** Affordable housing (BMAC)
- Permanent supportive housing (BMAC)
- Permanent housing (BMAC)
- Asset: Our small town – rural, quiet, unincorporated (Burbank)
- Implement the Commercial Street Corridor plan – Caboose Park Phase (CCED)
- Improve the water and sewer system infrastructure of the City of Dayton (CCED)
- Make Transfer Station improvements and upgrades (CCED)
- Construct new speculative building at Rock Hill Industrial park(CCED)
- Achieve funding for regional Way Finding program (CCED)
- Encourage and improve West entrance to Dayton (CCED)
- Maintain and enhance existing railroad depot. DHDS
- Install east end Welcome to Dayton sign (CCED)
- Conduct Tourism Survey to guide marketing decisions (CCED)
- Build a bandstand on the courthouse lawn (CCED)
- Improve courthouse grounds (CCED)
- Address and encourage affordable housing needs in Dayton (CCED)
- Fund and construct ADA pathways (CCED)
- Continue Implementation of the B&O Main Street Tax Incentive Program (CCED)
- Plan for the highest use for all industrial lands (CCED)

13. WELLBEING FOR ALL (combined with Health Dec. 2016 as a Region-wide Important Topic)

- D** Better year-round programs for youth
- Senior-friendly communities
- Best place to retire and stay independent
- Adult day-care
- Activities for all ages
- WB** Quality affordable childcare for working families
- O** Emergency shelter (BMAC)

Transitional housing (BMAC)
Housing for special needs (BMAC)
Utility bill assistance (BMAC)
Rental assistance (BMAC)
Housing repair assistance (BMAC)
Energy efficiency assistance (BMAC)
Affordable clothing resources (BMAC)
Develop adequate senior and retirement housing (CCED)
Temporary/emergency housing assistance (CCED)
Develop a sequential housing environment (CCED)
Develop assisted living facility (CCED)
Encourage youth activities (CCED)

NOTE: Region-Wide Five Important Topics Identified in Sept.. 2016

1. Access To Education
2. Strong And Diverse Economy
3. Health And Well-Being
4. Care For Nature
5. Safety