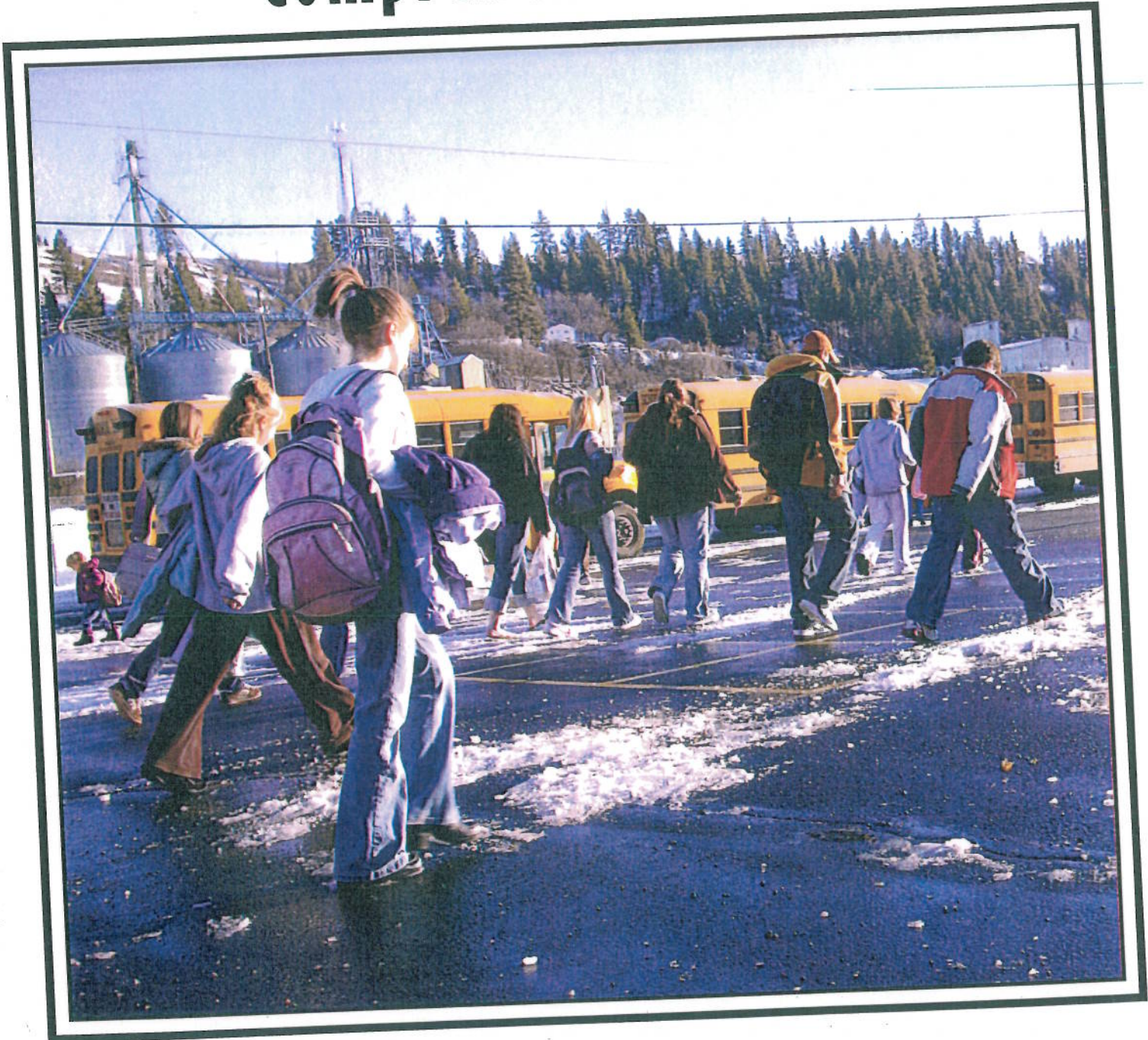


• 2007 •

COLFAX, WASHINGTON Comprehensive Plan



THE FUTURE OF COLFAX

City of Colfax

Comprehensive Plan

January 2007

Acknowledgements:

----- Colfax City Council -----

Norma Becker, Mayor
Earl Leland Jeannette Solimine
John Brabb Don Henderson
Shannon Hall Robert Ingalls
David Nails

----- Planning Commission -----

John Henry, Chairman
Tom Kammerzell Rayanna DeFord
Jim Kackman

----- City Staff -----

Carl Thompson, City Administrator
Andy Burgard, Building Inspector/ Planning Assistant
Lynda Kramlich, City Clerk

Planning Consultant: Don Brigham, Jr.
Don Brigham Plus Associates

*Historic cover picture furnished by Andy Burgard
Present day cover photo by John Henry*

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Colfax Comprehensive Plan is to nurture a harmonious environment that will enhance the quality of life for all citizens. It provides for efficient municipal services, promotes the business community and establishes balanced economic growth. Proudly recognizing our heritage, we will cultivate a community that is attractive now and in the future.

Written by the Colfax Planning Commission, Year 2001

Table of Contents

History and Demographics	4
Land Use	7
Future Land Use Map.....	7
Housing	13
Public Capital Facilities	21
Economic Development	29
Transportation	31
Environment	34
Map Section.....	36

HISTORY AND DEMOGRAPHICS



Location

Colfax is located in southeastern Washington about 60 miles due south of Spokane. Sixteen miles to the east is the City of Pullman, the home of Washington State University and PAC-10 sports. Colfax is the county seat of Whitman County.

Colfax is in the heart of the Palouse region, a several-thousand-square-mile area of high planes (2,300) feet above sea level in the form of rolling hills. Volcanic loess, a fertile soil, makes up these hills. The Palouse attracted settlers for its excellent growing potential for small grains and for raising cattle.

History

The first settlers to what is now known as Colfax were James A. Perkins and Thomas J. Smith. They arrived at the forks of the North and South Palouse Rivers in July of 1870. Smith soon moved on to Union Flat where there was already a settlement. H. S. Hollingsworth of Dayton then joined the Perkins settlement. The line dividing their properties is now Last Street, with Perkins to the north and Hollingsworth to the south.

Colfax was named for Schuyler Colfax, Vice President to Ulysses S. Grant. In February 1872, the Colfax post office opened. In August of 1872 the first school opened at the location of Spring and Mill Streets. By 1880 the population had grown to 450 and in 1882 Colfax was the fifth largest town in the state with a population of 570. Ten years later, Colfax had more than doubled in size to 1,616 residents.

The city was incorporated in 1873 with W. H. James as the first mayor. For reasons that are unclear, the town had to be reincorporated in 1881. However, the city still holds to the original date as its initial founding.

Colfax was nearly destroyed in 1879, 1881 and 1882. One major flood and two fires did not daunt the early inhabitants. The town was rebuilt after each disaster. Flood again inflicted serious damage in 1901, 1910 and 1948. A floodworks plan was begun after the 1948 flood and in 1963 the US Army Corps of Engineers constructed a concrete flood control project, which has mostly eliminated the flooding problem for the downtown area.

Demographics:

Subject	Number	Percent
Total Population	2,844	100.0
Median Age	41.3	N.A.
Household Composition		
Total Households	1,191	100.0
Families	741	62.2
Non-family or living alone	450	37.8
Average household size	2.24	N.A.
Average family size	2.90	N.A.
Housing Occupancy		
Total housing units	1,357	100.0
Occupied housing units	1,191	87.8
Vacant housing units	166	12.2
Homeowner vacancy rate		4.3
Renter vacancy rate		15.4
Owner-occupied housing	739	62.0
Renter-occupied housing	452	38.0
Vacancy Status		
Vacant housing units	166	100.0
Housing for rent	82	49.4
Housing for sale	33	19.9
Ages of Housing Occupants		
15-24	44	3.7
25-34	171	14.4
35-44	229	19.2
45-54	197	16.5
55-64	163	13.7
Over 65	387	32.5

The 2000 census shows a population increase of 131 since the census was taken in 1990. The number of households has increased from 1,119 in 1990 to 1,191 in 2000.

Elevation: Elevation in the City ranges from about 1,955 feet on the flood plain to 2,420 feet for some of the surrounding hills.

Precipitation: Average precipitation in the city is from 18 to 22 inches annually.

Climate: The average annual temperature is about 50 degrees Fahrenheit with the minimum average temperatures occurring in January (from 20 to 25 degrees) and the maximum summer temperatures being 80 to 90 degrees. In general, the summers are warm, dry and sunny and the winters are not. Severe storms are infrequent, but do occur. The city is not recognized as being within an earthquake or tsunami hazard zone.



LAND USE ELEMENT

ELEMENTS OF COLFAX LAND USE

The City of Colfax has 994 acres of property in 1993, 603 of which was zoned residential in the four city residential zoning designations. The remainder was in the Business, Commercial, Manufacturing or Service zones, with the exception of 90 acres in public use and 82 acres which was not zoned.



In 2006, the City of Colfax annexed 1,140 acres situated to the northeast of the city which more than doubled the land area of the city. This area is composed of three land types, the valley bottom through which the North Fork of the Palouse River runs, the steep canyon walls, and the gently rolling hills of the upper plateau lands. This greatly surpasses the annexations of 22-acre McDonald Park in 1995; the 17.5-acre Hauser Addition in 1994; and the 43.5 acres annexed in 1994 on the west hill above the hospital.

The land uses in the city are now designated into three Residential zones. The newly-annexed lands to the northeast are classified as Rural Residential which will primarily provide for single-family residential uses with characteristics of a rural or agricultural environment. This zone is intended to represent a long-term commitment to rural uses and furthermore, it is intended to protect areas with unique environmental values or constraints from more dense levels of development. The Rural Residential zone contains 1,140 acres.

The R-1 Residential zone is intended for low-density single and duplex dwellings. With its 640 acres, it comprises the next largest residential category in the city. This zone represents the combination of the former R-1 and R-2 zones. The new R-2 zone is intended for medium to higher density residential uses. It is a combination of the former R-3 and R-4 zones and contains 121 acres. This consolidation of zones was enacted in 2006 as the previous zones were quite similar in purpose and intent.

The annexation above the hospital was originally annexed by Whitman County and intended for residential development by a private developer. This plan did not materialize and the property was subsequently sold to Whitman Hospital. The hospital has expressed the intent to develop the property over several years, beginning in the near future with assisted living units.

Hauser Addition, zoned R-2, has been developed into 48 building lots served by utilities. Eight houses and two "town houses" have been built in the development. Entry to the development is by way of the Palouse Highway, SR272.

McDonald Park, north of the golf course on Cedar Street, has been completed in 2001 and includes four ball fields, a soccer field and a walking/jogging path. Cedar Street was annexed to the north limit of McDonald Park to allow improvements to the street and to extend the walking/jogging path from the schools to the park.

Current Land Use Patterns

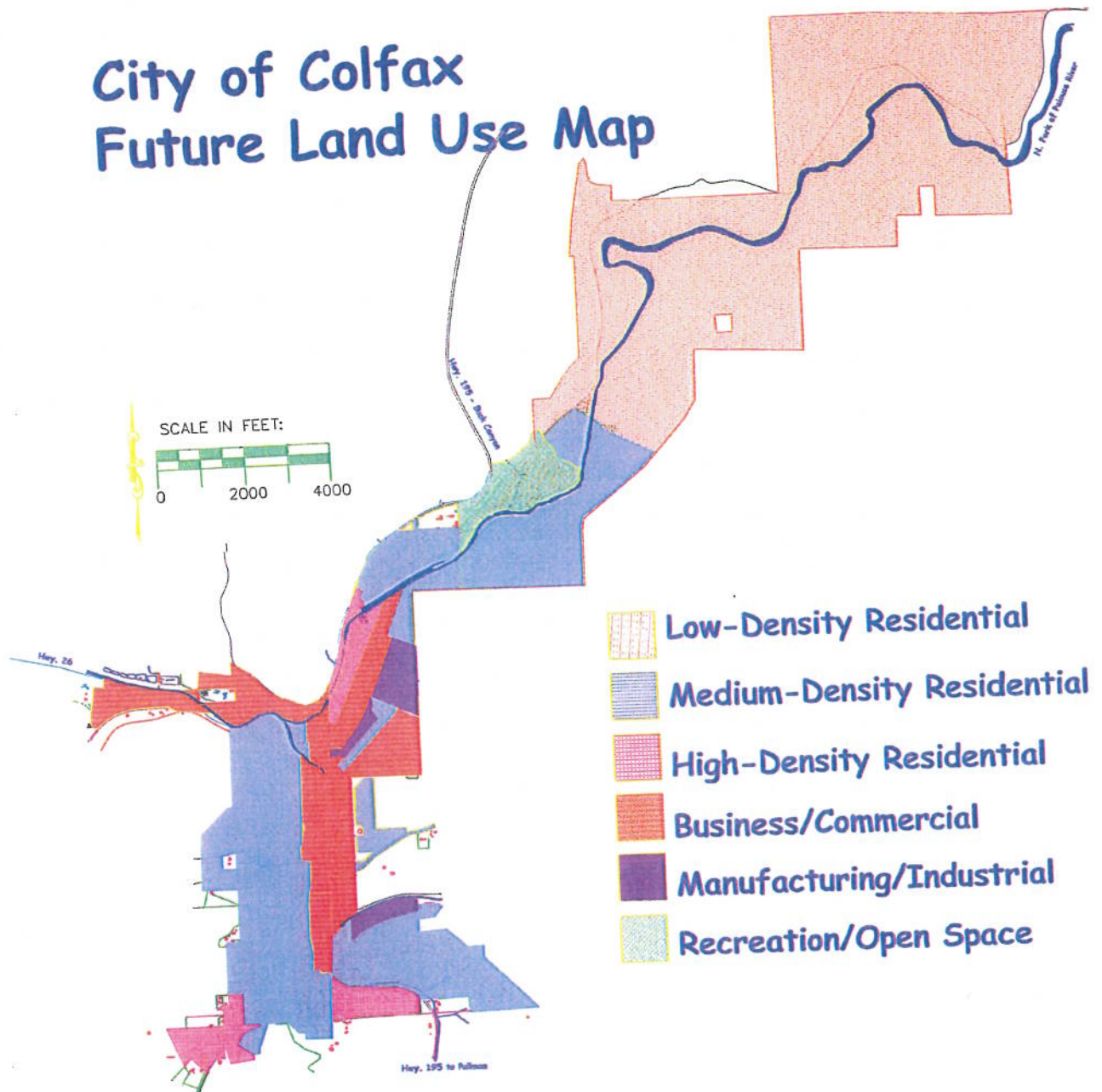
After the 2006 annexation, the Planning Commission undertook a study of the land use patterns in the City and the Zoning Code. Several alternatives were examined for the newly-annexed lands. At the same time, the current zoning districts were examined for their applicability into the future. The result of this study was a revision to the various zoning designations within the City and the designation of the newly-annexed lands into a new district entitled the Rural Residential Zone.

The map on the next page shows the future land use patterns for the City of Colfax. These patterns lay the groundwork for the districts found in the Zoning Ordinance. Each is discussed below.

- 1) Rural Residential Zone – This zone is comprised of the land annexed into the city in 2006. It lays generally northeast of the traditional area of the city and flanks the North Fork of the Palouse River from the golf course upstream to Glenwood Bridge. The current land use in this zone is predominately agricultural with cattle grazing in the flood plain along the river and dryland field crops on the rolling topography of the upper elevation lands. The residential development is extremely low-density, although several residential developments are being discussed.

The Rural Residential Zone will allow for the orderly development of residential areas with a continuance of the open space feel which is currently enjoyed. As the infrastructure for public provision of water and sewer does not currently exist, the provision for such will rest with private accommodations. The over-riding regulations which govern these areas necessitates a low-density pattern of development. In the future, this large zone may see proposals for planned developments with more intense development patterns if accommodations for public water and sewer are provided.

City of Colfax Future Land Use Map



- 2) R-1 Zone – This zone is the urban low-density zone, intended primarily for single and duplex residential dwellings. Other land uses are allowed in this zone on a conditional use basis when deemed appropriate by the Board of Adjustment.
- 3) R-2 Zone – Medium and higher density residential uses dominate this zone. This included multi-family dwellings, condominiums, and mobile home parks. Other land uses are allowed in this zone on a conditional use basis when deemed appropriate by the Board of Adjustment.
- 4) The Commercial Zone is intended for "heavy retail" such as equipment and automobiles. A list of itemized uses lists everything from feed stores to blacksmithing.

In 2001, citizens who owned residential property on Park Street, Clay and Harrison, and Sumner petitioned for a rezone to "residential" This was to allow them to rebuild a house in the commercial district if their homes should be destroyed by fire or by another event. In response to the number of requests, the City Council rewrote part of the Commercial Zone description, allowing a home owner three years during which to replace a home. If the home was not replaced in that time, the property would revert to Commercial. This satisfied the homeowners on Sumner and they withdrew their request for rezone.

- 5) Business Zone – The Business zone covers the central downtown business area along Main Street. The emphasis on land use is upon retail establishments, with a wide variety of businesses ranging from shoe repair, tailoring, to frozen food lockers.
- 6) Manufacturing Zone - The function of this zone is to provide for an area for low-contamination manufacturing and industrial use. The zone description lists several specific industries, such as hot forges, screw machines and stamping machines, none of which exist today. It allows manufacturing and industry that meets certain criteria.

Of the three areas within the Manufacturing Zone, the area along the Walla Walla highway is the most accessible and the least intrusive. It, however, lacks full city services. Access to the zone on A Street is narrow and congested and visibility for trucks to enter Main Street is poor. It is also adjacent to a R-1 residential area. The manufacturing area at the north end of Clay Street has moderately convenient access and is somewhat removed from residential properties, but has the disadvantage of being located near schools. The present use of the Clay Street area by Spokane Seed Company is not particularly hazardous to the school

grounds, but another industry which may use hazardous chemicals, could be a major problem.

Planned Development:

The city enacted a Planned Development ordinance in May, 1993 to allow a developer an alternative to the city's Subdivision and Short Plat ordinances. This ordinance applies to areas fully within the city limits and consisting of 10,000 square feet or more. A Planned Development falls *outside* the zoning code and may be placed in any zone. The Planning Commission reviews all planned developments to assure they are compatible with the Comprehensive Plan. The City Council, following a public hearing, must approve all Planned Developments.

Since 1993, three Planned Developments have been approved and constructed: two quad-plex apartments (one on Meadow and one on Cedar) and Mill Street Condominiums on north Mill Street.

Because of Colfax's topography, commercial development has been constricted to a long narrow river valley. A major state highway, SR195, passes through the City center. As a result, the business area has expanded lengthwise along the highway and is somewhat scattered from one end of town to the other. The central business district is surrounded by residential development. This and the topography results in a lack of off-street parking in the downtown area.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects –

- 1) The Planning Commission should continue to review and discuss the appropriate land development patterns in the city, particularly in the Rural Residential zone. If and when the provision of public utilities are available for properties in this zone, there may be increased pressure to develop at densities higher than one dwelling per two acres. This has the potential to adversely impact the land and to create conflicts between existing historical land uses and the new or proposed development.
- 2) Additional parking should be developed in the downtown business district.
- 3) The city should promote annexations the bulk of which are contiguous to the present city limits. The city should avoid "strip annexations," for instance a roadway, that would provide a small contiguous border to qualify a larger area far removed from the city limits to annex. It would be difficult and costly to provide services to an annexation the bulk of which is distant from the city limits.
- 4) Annexation proposals should meet certain criteria: whether it is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; whether it is compatible with existing land uses; compliance with state and local law and policies; and whether the annexation will

promote development close to the city to protect the surrounding farm area.

5) The city should continue to support the efforts by all entities to bring to the area small industries that are compatible with and appropriate to our area.

Housing Element

Purpose of the Housing Element

This Housing Element has been developed in accordance with the Growth Management Act to address the housing needs of the City of Colfax. It represents the community's policy plan for the next ten years.



The Housing Element has been integrated with all other planning elements to ensure consistency throughout the comprehensive plan. The Housing Element considers the condition of the existing housing stock; the nature of any housing problems; and the provision of a variety of housing types to match the lifestyle and economic needs of the community. This element examines special housing needs, such as low and moderate income family housing, foster care facilities, group homes, manufactured homes, historically significant housing. The Housing Element includes:

- Introduction
- Inventory and Analysis
- Future Needs and Alternatives
- Goals and Policies

Major Housing Considerations and Goals

The City's development regulations (zoning, building codes, etc.) notify the private sector in how the development and construction of housing will take place. However, unlike the other elements of the comprehensive plan, the City does not provide this service directly. The Housing Element should set the conditions under which the private housing industry should operate, and establishes both long term and short-term policies to meet the community's housing needs and achieve the community goals. The Housing Plan in this element should guide decision making to achieve the community goals as articulated in the Vision Statement.

INVENTORY AND ANALYSIS

This section puts forth selected items which are the most relevant. Much of this information was drawn from Census data and personal knowledge.

EXISTING HOUSING

According to the 2000 Population Census, the City of Colfax has 1,385 total units of which 869 are one-unit structures, 82 are two-unit structures, 119 are three- and four-unit structures, and 116 are five or more unit structures. There are 74 mobile homes in the City. There are 739 owner-occupied houses and 452 renter-occupied units. The vacancy rate for owner homes is 4.3% and for rental units it is 15.4%.

AFFORDABILITY

Housing within the City of Colfax is relatively affordable. According to the Washington Center for Real Estate Research, the median home price in Whitman County in 2006 was \$192,600. In Colfax, the median price was \$101,400.

Housing is considered to be "affordable" if the total of all housing costs, including taxes, insurance, and utilities (including heat) does not exceed 30% of a household's gross income. The affordability index measures the ability of a typical family to make payments on a median price resale home assuming a 20% down-payment. For Whitman County, that index factor is 109 which indicates that housing is slightly more affordable than un-affordable. The situation for first time homebuyers is not as good as their index factor is 49. This indicates that more than half of those families would find the housing too expensive to purchase on their incomes. While the median home price may be lower in Colfax than in the county, the median household income is also lower, so these indices should remain comparable.

A. SUMMARY

Existing housing in the City of Colfax is in good condition for the most part, and is currently affordable. However, there is an expressed need from the citizens for additional housing lots that are relatively flat, for housing on larger lots, and single family residences on larger lots with animal rights.

The condition of housing has remained good. However, there is valid reason to be concerned about housing condition. First, over 42% of all housing is over 65 years old, which indicates the upcoming need for renovation or updating. In addition, landlords of trashed units don't have money readily available (or desire) to repair units after they are vacated; so some units sit vacant and in need of repair. In general, though, most housing appears to be in fine condition.

The cost to purchase and rent housing has increased slightly in the past ten years. Housing costs are affordable in the City of Colfax. A portion of the people have difficulty affording the median rent or median priced homes.

FUTURE NEEDS AND ALTERNATIVES

This section of the Housing Element explains expected development trends and identifies potential development problems and opportunities. The plan for rehabilitation and development will be based on the following analyses:

- Projected Housing Needs by Type and Cost
- Needed Public Facilities and Services
- Land Availability
- Private Sector Housing Supply and Affordability

Analysis of Land Availability

This analysis examines all of the land that is available for residential land uses under the current zoning and development ordinances. This provides an initial estimate of the community's ability to meet its housing needs. It also clarifies the ability under the current regulations to develop a pattern with a sense of community, safety, and access to commercial and employment centers. The policies developed in the Land Use Element and this Housing Element should transform the location and density of housing. Adjustment of this analysis to reflect new policies and revisions to the zoning ordinance clarified the implications of various policy decisions.

Available Residential Land: As of 2006, the City has 1,270 acres of vacant land, with the bulk of this area in the newly annexed lands to the northeast. (See Map on page 9). Given the constraints of topography and flood plains, approximately 35% of this area would be considered un-developable, leaving a balance of 825 acres which can be developed for housing. Approximately 740 acres of this available land is within the newly-annexed lands.

Build Out Potential of Residential Land: Most of the vacant land in the "old" area of the City and in the newly-annexed area is zoned for low-density use. If developed at currently permitted densities, the vacant residential land will accommodate 4,130 new housing units, of which 425 units would be in the "old" area. If the recently annexed lands were zoned with a minimum 2-acre lot size, the potential new housing units would be reduced to approximately 370 units. With its potential build-out capacity, it is obvious that there is more than adequate available land for housing.

There is additional potential to provide for new residential development within the "old" area of city by the conversion of under-utilized properties to residential units.

and by the encouragement of “loft” dwellings on the upper floors of downtown buildings.

Analysis of Private Sector Housing Supply and Affordability

Based on the increase in house sales in the City of Colfax over the last few years, the demand for all types of housing is higher than it has been in the past, and it can be expected to remain up for at least the next few years. However, contractors are still hesitant to build speculative housing because the job market is uncertain, current values are low, and construction costs are high.

Additionally, although City housing values are increasing, they are still substantially lower than the cost to build a new comparable structure. Existing property values reduce the value of the new structure so that the cost of construction may be greater than the appraised value. This not only reduces the opportunity for the contractor to make a profit, but also makes financing the full cost more difficult, if not impossible.

Another contributing factor in the cost/value/sales price is the consistently increasing cost of building materials. Lumber prices have increased dramatically and can be expected to continue increasing slowly. The cost of other building materials has increased rapidly as well.

A third obstacle relates to land use complications resulting primarily from the flood plain and difficult topography.

Summary

The capacity for new housing in the City of Colfax appears to be adequate for the near future. In addition, schools and roads are more than adequate to accommodate increasing populations.

However, the capacity of the City of Colfax's infrastructure could be limited, though perhaps not in the near future. Water capacity and sewer capacity could be reached with the addition of many new houses requiring these services. With the addition of needed housing and also the hopes for attracting new businesses to the area, a good infrastructure needs to be in place. This means that the capacity of the water system in particular must be evaluated to determine the exact potential for supporting further development. In addition, plans for expansion and upgrading of both water and sewer systems should begin soon. Funding for these types of work may be pursued through the State's Public Works Trust Fund.

New construction is limited to some degree by the tentative job (and therefore housing) market and the low property values. However, contractors currently building are positive about the custom construction market and are supported by local lender and the building department.

The market for all types of housing in the City of Colfax is strong. Since the market history has frequently fluctuated in the area, it would be wisest to develop the area slowly. This would not only test the market, but would also check the capacity of existing systems to support more people.

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES

This section discusses the plan for future housing in the City of Colfax. The timing of development and provision of services are key components of this planning process. In addition to the discussion below, a Future Land Use Map has been developed to illustrate the various land uses and growth management strategies.

The analysis of existing conditions and projected needs in the previous section highlighted the areas of concern and opportunities for the Community. The Mission Statement for the City was used, along with the inventory and analysis contained in this element to create a plan. The plan contains a strategy for achievement of the community's goals in light of the existing conditions in the Community. The goals and policies within the plan provide guidelines and positive actions. The plan and policies for housing issues in the Community are organized as follows:

- Vision Statement Goals. These goals are essential to the quality of life in the City of Colfax should remain unchanged for long term planning.
- Housing Goals. These goals describe concepts to be used in decision-making. These goals are based on the existing conditions and projected changes in the City, and should be revised as the City changes.
- Plan Concept. A discussion relating the findings of the inventory and analysis to the goals and vision of the community. This should outline the strategies that should guide future growth and development in the community.
- Policies. The policies specify what should be accomplished to reach the goals. These policies either provide clear guidance for decision making when a situation arises, or provide clear responsibilities that should be implemented. The accomplishments under these policies can be used to measure progress toward the goals.

GOAL 1: The City recognizes the need for a variety of housing types and densities, and the need for a range of affordable housing. They should strive to set the conditions to encourage such development, to provide public facilities that should encourage such development, and to explore public mechanisms to address the shortfalls of the market.

Objective A: New residential development in the form of single family homes, multi-family dwellings, condominiums, and townhouses should continue to occur in the designated residential areas of the City.

Policy 1. The City should revise its zoning ordinance to ensure that these various types and densities of housing are permitted.

Policy 2. The City should encourage the conversion or development of "loft" spaces in the upper floors of downtown building for residential use.

Policy 3. The City should encourage the development of large-size or small-acreage residential lots to provide opportunities for families seeking a more rural living environment.

Policy 4. The City should seek to work cooperatively with organizations within the community, such as the Chamber of Commerce, to promote the positive qualities of the community and the development opportunities that exist.

Objective B: The City of Colfax should undertake actions to promote some residential development at a density that will allow pedestrian access to commercial areas, employment, schools, and park or recreational areas.

Policy 1. The City should revise its zoning ordinance to assure that high-density residential areas are allowable and are well located. The City considers the following densities comfortable: single family dwellings at a density of 6 units per acre and semi-detached dwelling units at a density of 8-10 units per acre.

Objective B: The City of Colfax should encourage the new development of multi-family housing and small single-family units, and should take steps to ensure that these new developments are incorporated with the existing commercial and community structures within the City.

Policy 1. The City should revise its zoning ordinance to ensure that these various types and densities of housing are permitted.

Policy 2. The City should encourage the provision of for auxiliary apartments in residential zones for low to moderate income, small-family, single person, or seasonal occupant, as long as the unit maintains the appropriate residential character and quality living environment.

Policy 3. The City should encourage the distribution of various housing types equitably throughout the City to provide for a wide variety of neighborhood settings, and to avoid undue concentration in single neighborhoods.

Objective C: The City should increase the opportunities for residents with special housing needs. While the community cannot meet these needs immediately, clarifying the responsibilities of various public and private agents is an important step towards meeting these needs. The City should also carefully examine the needs of the current residents, in order to direct new housing development, rehabilitated housing, and assisted housing to where it is most needed.

Policy 1. The City should review, and amend as necessary, the zoning code so that different classes of group homes are permitted in appropriate residential neighborhoods, and that no residential neighborhoods be closed to such facilities.

Objective D: To address the needs of the elderly, an increasing proportion of the residential land use will be zoned for high densities. The City should encourage the provision of smaller units (with one or two bedrooms) and more compact housing types (cluster, townhouse, apartment, or condominiums). In siting development for the elderly the City should also review the proximity to shopping, hospitals, public transportation routes, retail and service centers, and parks.

Policy 1. The City should actively promote and/or pursue the development of additional housing for the elderly.

Policy 2. The City of Colfax should ensure that all residential areas are supplied with appropriate public facilities and services. The City should continue to evaluate public facilities and services in rehabilitated and redeveloped areas.

Policy 3. The City of Colfax should allow for the provision of private or non-public services and facilities where appropriate within private developments.

GOAL II: The City should strive to provide housing with pedestrian orientation and that maintains a development pattern, in order to promote a sense of community and safety. The City should also strive to provide housing in good condition, with high quality designs, and adequate buffers from noise, odors and other environmental stresses.

Objective A: Maintain and implement the Building Code Improvements and Design Standards ordinances to ensure a conscientious vision for the community to promote both the mission statement and to prevent unwanted development.

Policy 1. The City should continue its primary role in the conservation of housing through public investment in the infrastructure servicing the area (storm drainage,

street paving, recreation) and zoning to prevent incompatible land uses and depreciation of property values.

Objective B: The City should encourage residential area housing programs which focus on the preservation and conservation of existing standard housing, the rehabilitation of substandard housing, and the redevelopment of deteriorated housing.

Policy 1. The City should encourage the conservation of the existing housing stock in standard condition, recognizing that it should be achieved through private investment in maintenance and repair and the enforcement of the City's housing code.



Public Capital Facilities

ELEMENTS OF COLFAX PUBLIC CAPITAL FACILITIES

A. City Hall. Fire and Police Stations

Colfax City Hall is located at N. 400 Mill Street. It houses most of the administrative personnel and the fire and police departments. Administrative staff now includes a City Clerk, Treasurer, Court Clerk/Deputy Clerk, Building Inspector and City Administrator. The city hall also includes an office for the Mayor.



The police department currently includes one police chief and five officers. The department has six vehicles. The fire department has one fire chief and two firefighters with three fire-fighting vehicles, two pumpers and one combination 100-foot ladder/pumper. The fire station facilities are shared by Volunteer Firemen Inc., who have one full time EMT with an office in city hall and two ambulances which are stored in one bay. One fire bay is owned by Rural Fire District 11 which houses a tender and two engines. A rescue truck and one ambulance are stored in other bays. Approximately 35 volunteer firefighters aid in fire and rescue. Since a destructive fire in July 2000, the fire bays have been replaced and upgraded and a second building which has three bays for added storage was added during the remodeling.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. With changes in technology and services, and the personnel to provide those services, the city will have to address a need to expand city hall facilities and provide the furnishings and utilities to support the office equipment and staff.
2. The police department presently has minimal facilities to store evidence and records. This need for expansion will have to be addressed.
3. The fire department office, living and records storage space is limited and will need renovation in the future.

B. Public Works Maintenance Facilities

Two maintenance facilities are located on Clay Street-a street department and a water department storage facility. Both have adequate space available but the water facility is antiquated (circa 1918) and the street facility which had lacked permanent flooring was completed in 2005. Two buildings are located on the grounds of the Wastewater Treatment Plant. Offices for all public works staff, a meeting/break room and the plant laboratory are located in one building. The mechanical shop, blower room and generator room are located in the other. At this time, the spaces at the treatment plant are adequate.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. Total renovation or replacement of the very antiquated, poorly lit and poorly arranged water building must be considered.
2. The newer metal street shop building should be finished with permanent concrete flooring. This has been done

C. City Parks

The City of Colfax has 11 public parks:

1. Codger Park
2. Daniel W. Henry Little League Park
3. Ells Park
4. Good Park
5. Hamilton Park
6. Maggie Cain Park
7. McDonald Park
8. Niehenke Park
9. Schmuck Park
10. Sixth Street Bridge Park
11. Stan McClintock Park
12. Skateboard Park at Schmuck Park

Ells, Good, Hamilton and Stan McClintock Parks serve neighborhoods in residential areas. Maggie Cain, Sixth Street Bridge and Codger Parks are for visual or tourism purposes more than for traditional park use. The upper part of Fairview (Hillcrest and Crestview) does not presently have a neighborhood park. Niehenke Park is located in the business district and is primarily used by business people for a place to rest or eat lunch.

The "destination" parks are McDonald Park, 20 acres that include four baseball/softball fields, a soccer field and concession/storage building along the Palouse River at the north city limits of Colfax; Schmuck Park, the location of the city's aging swimming pool and tennis courts and the largest covered picnic area in the city; and the Henry Little League Park in the "north flat" portion of Colfax which furnishes one ball field and a soccer field. Schmuck Park also includes the school district's track, football and baseball fields. The school district and city

have a cooperative agreement for use of the Schmuck Park property. The city and school district also have a cooperative agreement for the maintenance, improvement and use of McDonald Park.

The Colfax Golf Club leases city property for a nine-hole golf course and club house, also at the north end of the city. A walking/jogging path runs from the high school to and around McDonald Park. Another pedestrian pathway extends down the south side of Fairview.

The parks are well maintained but play equipment is old and minimal in Schmuck Park. New equipment has been installed at Schmuck and Hamilton Park and the neighborhood parks. The swimming pool is also old and beginning to show problems both structurally and in the pumping and piping infrastructure. The city does not presently have an indoor meeting/play area in the park system.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. As the upper Fairview area develops the city should look ahead at reserving some property in the area for a neighborhood city park
2. The swimming pool must be repaired and updated in order to maintain viability. The city should look toward replacement of the pool in long term planning. The formation of a park district should also be considered to help in the financing of the pool.
3. For adult cyclers, a BMX bicycle track for un-motorized bikes should be considered.
4. Because the parks are presently seasonal, a Community Center-type indoor facility should be considered for off-season recreation, community meetings and possibly a stage setting for various kinds of meetings, presentations and theater performance.
5. McDonald Park and its scheduled games and tournaments and concession area add a new maintenance and operation requirement to the park system. In consideration of this and other facilities proposed, the city should consider the need for additional paid park staff.
6. Playground equipment must be updated and improved and additional equipment installed at the neighborhood parks and Schmuck Park. The city might consider a rotation schedule for park equipment purchase/replacement. This has been done.
7. Consider purchasing property in the downtown (for instance the parking lot next to US Bank) for a "shoppers park" where shoppers could sit and rest and such community events as the Christmas lighting program, summer festival

activities and other downtown events could be staged.

D. Public Utilities

Water System

The City of Colfax has three dependable sources of high quality potable water. The water from all three sources is used for domestic, fire and commercial purposes. The city's total water rights for pumping of groundwater is 1,384 acre-feet per year. As of 1992, the city was pumping 1,192 acre-feet per year. Usage has been increasing over the years even though the population has not increased dramatically. Usage per capita is well above average.

The water system serves approximately 20 miles of main line and 1,130 connections for 2,713 people. Five reservoirs provide storage for 2.4 million gallons of water.

The primary source of water is the artesian wells at Glenwood Springs located 6.5 miles northeast of the city. The wells are located on leased land and their water reaches the city through a 12-inch cast iron pipe built in 1916. The integrity of the pipe is sound in many areas but questionable in others. The 6-mile water line is put together with lead joints and, in places, has inadequate earth cover. This source provides between 60 and 80 percent of the water for the city and chlorination is the only treatment required. Glenwood water flows into the city at 600 gallons per minute by gravity and requires no pumping. When it reaches the city at north Clay street, the water is boosted into a 1.5 million gallon reservoir, Rockpoint Reservoir, on the east side of Colfax.

A second source is a 600- foot well known as the Clay Street Well. This well is a secondary source for the east hill reservoir and is used only when demand is so high that the reservoir level drops more than 10 feet. This well has a capacity of 580 gallons per minute.

A third water source is the Fairview well on the southwest side of the city. The well has a capacity of 620 gallons per minute and is used to fill a 600,000 gallon reservoir, the Fairview Reservoir, in the same area. The wellhead is housed in an antiquated building. This well/reservoir serves the upper west portion of the city, including the hospital. This was done already, we have a new concrete block building .

A booster station on Deanway was completed in the year 2000 which is capable of moving water from Rockpoint Reservoir on the east side to the Fairview Reservoir on the west, thus providing a second source for the west side and increased water pressure for the higher elevations on the west side.

Colfax is a city of significant elevation differences (1,960 feet to 2,300 feet) which means widely varying water pressures and the need to pump water uphill. The southeast portion of the city, Thorn and Southview, may be considered the weakest area in the water system. It uses water from Rockpoint Reservoir, but the water must be boosted by a booster station on Thorn Street to two higher storage tanks in order to serve the residents. This area suffers from low water pressure during peak use. The upper reservoir provides the majority of water to the area and a lower tank, which can come on line during peak use, serves mainly to provide fire flow. The lower reservoir is presently in need of maintenance, particularly painting of the interior and exterior.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects –

1. In the newly-annexed area of the city (the Rural Residential area), land development densities that are under five acres per dwelling will need to be connected to the city's water supply lines. An engineering study will need to be undertaken to determine the size of the pipes and related infrastructure requirements. The infrastructure costs within each development should be borne by the private developer, not the city.
2. The city should plan to provide an emergency generator to all well and booster sites and/or a portable generator to be used at these facilities.
3. A larger, higher reservoir should be erected at the top of Southview to provide volume and increase water pressure.
4. The lease of the Glenwood wells must be addressed in the near future and the city must weigh the advantages of the wells-plentiful water that does not need to be pumped from the ground-against the disadvantages-an antiquated, 6-mile long water line that will no doubt have to be replaced in the future due to leaks that could cause us to overrun our water rights and the lack of ownership of the property from which we exercise our rights. Efforts should be continued to integrate our water rights in the Done event we choose to drill a new well inside the city limits and to explore the procedure for changing the "point of withdrawal" on our water rights.
5. Promotion of conservation will be necessary to stay within our water rights and to meet DOE standards. A major water user is the city parks and installation of watering systems that are set to water for shorter periods at night would be a first step to conserving. In most of the parks this has been done. Efforts should also made to encourage conservation by other high water users and by residents.
6. The city should continue to upgrade water service lines and mains as street projects are accomplished.
7. Water service to the manufacturing area, and an adjacent residential area, on the north side of the Walla Walla highway west of the Palouse River, should be improved and extended to serve the entire area and any development that might occur there.
8. Water service needs to be provided to the area closest to Schmuck Park.

9. Water service adequate for fire hydrants and fire suppression needs to be provided for all under-served areas of the city.

Sanitary Sewer System

WASTEWATER TREATMENT: The city's wastewater treatment plant was refurbished in 2004 and is located in the northwest portion of the city between SR26 and the Palouse River. The plant occupies 6.5 acres. The treatment system consists of two aerated facultative cells, four exfiltration basins and a pre-treatment chamber. After chlorination, effluent is discharged from the exfiltration basins to the Palouse River.

The Department of Ecology is currently determining if the city will be required to de-chlorinate before treated effluent is released to the river.

The treatment facility does presently have telemetry (electronic monitoring) except at the effluent meter on A Avenue.

The plant is designed to serve a population of about 5,000 with an average daily flow of .52 million gallons per day (mgd). However, with the current population of about 2,844 we often exceed average flows, partly because of inflow or infiltration (I & I) of ground and storm water into the sanitary sewer system and partly because of the high average usage of water.

The system includes a full-system laboratory in which to perform required tests for the city.

COLLECTION SYSTEM: Most of the collection system was installed at the turn of the century. The weakest point of the collection system is in the southwest part of the city where the main line from upper Fairview flattens out at Middle, Residence, Lake and Meadow. A system of single siphons carries sewage under the river to move it down the mains to the treatment plant. Considerable inflow and infiltration of ground and surface water into the collection system has been noted. Some of these I & I locations have been repaired. The volume of water going through the treatment plant indicates the amount of I & I in the collection system.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects –

1. Consideration should be given for a de-chlorination system in the event such a system is required by the DOE in the future.
2. Continue upgrading the collection system as funds become available

to decrease the I & I.

3. In the newly-annexed area of the city (the Rural Residential area), land development densities that are under five acres per dwelling will need to be connected to the city's sanitary sewer lines. An engineering study will need to be undertaken to determine the size of the pipes and related infrastructure requirements. The infrastructure costs within each development should be borne by the private developer, not the city.
4. Newer sewer systems have double siphons. Colfax has only single siphons and must consider the requirement to either double the siphon barrels under the river or explore other means of moving sewage across the river-such as hanging pipes beneath bridges.
5. Increasing the size and capacity of the sewer lines in the southwest part of the city (Middle, Residence, Lake and Meadow) should be top priorities.
6. Explore less expensive methods of sewage treatment.
7. Continue vigilance in possible new or upcoming requirements by the Department of Ecology. In the process of testing for NH₃ before being asked to by DOH
8. Extend sewer service to the manufacturing and adjacent residential area on the north side of the Walla Walla highway and west of the Palouse river to provide for both current and future needs.

Storm Drainage System- The State of Washington is implementing requirements for treatment of storm water runoff. If or when these requirements are implemented in the rural area, it will mean a considerable expense in upgrading the storm system and in providing treatment facilities.

The storm drainage system has been upgraded as part of the street projects over the past several years. There continue to be areas where no system exists or where the existing system is inadequate, such as the Clay, Morton and Harrison street areas. The flood/storm drainage system includes the Corps of Engineers flood control project through the city which must be maintained by the city.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. The city must closely watch and begin planning for any new regulation of storm water that may affect our handling of storm and flood water.
2. Storm drainage systems should be expanded to areas in the city that have

no systems or inadequate systems.

3. Regular maintenance of the flood control channel should be considered at each budgeting time and a maintenance program established that will adequately keep the flood control channel free of rock and silt buildup.

Economic Development

ELEMENTS OF COLFAX ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Historically, fees and taxes from residential land uses do not entirely meet the cost of providing the services needed. To meet this deficit, three options are available to local governments:

- 1) Cut services
- 2) Increase taxes and fees
- 3) Strengthen the economic base



Of these options, the third is the more acceptable. The economic base is strengthened by the location of new businesses or the expansion of existing businesses to bring money from outside the community or increase local job opportunities. An increase of population will also strengthen the economic base by providing the critical mass of local residents to support businesses.

Other attractions can also bring people into the community. Colfax is well on its way to being a center for youth recreational facilities. The addition of the McDonald Park playing fields brings an opportunity to host regional tournaments. The swimming pool presently hosts the regional swim meets. All of these events bring children and their parents and other relatives to Colfax for the day. The golf course hosts adults and youth in the area.

Colfax is also a retirement center with a condominium complex, convalescent/nursing home facilities and assisted living. The availability of the hospital and medical center enhance these facilities.

In the past eight years, a Main Street project has been completed which makes the downtown more attractive and more traffic-friendly. Colfax possesses many desirable attributes which may be attractive to business or industry: life style, low traffic, weather, low wages, low taxes, good schools and access to universities.

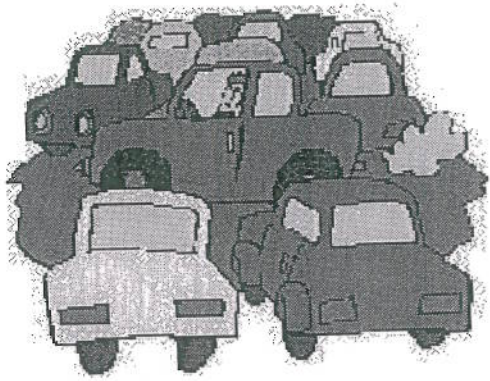
Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. Promote Colfax as a great place to live and retire in order to increase the population enough to support local businesses and strengthen the tax base.
2. Promote Colfax as a great place to locate a small business or industry.
3. Promote a friendly downtown attitude that leaves a positive feeling with those who visit here.
4. Work with the Chamber of Commerce on exploring innovative business practices such as:
 - a) Change or expand business hours to accommodate working people;
 - b) Advertise gasoline prices here;
 - c) Coordinate downtown hours and specials with events at the fairgrounds, sports and other events at the local schools, at WSU, or in the park facilities; and
 - d) Take advantage of the influx of hunters during hunting season.
5. Continue the promotion of our recreational facilities for regional use and enhance this by installing R V areas with hookups appropriate to the areas selected.
6. Promote the historic buildings and sites in the city to appeal to tourists.
7. Continue maintaining and upgrading the city's infrastructure to provide for the needs of residential or business development.

Transportation Element

ELEMENTS OF COLFAX TRANSPORTATION:

The transportation network is one of the most important infrastructure issues in a community. The street system provides a chief means of communication, movement of goods from outside markets to the city and the movement of goods raised and produced in this area to other markets. Internally, the street system provides access to businesses and services and to residential areas. It is key to the safety of the community.



Land use decisions should not be made without consideration of transportation needs and impacts since land use and transportation are interrelated and co-dependent.

The city has completed a number of major street projects over the past several years, including improvements to Browne's Addition, Park Street, Thorn Street, upper Fairview and Main Street.

The city is proactive in trying to upgrade the existing local streets with overlays, patching and oiling as funds allow. The city maintains a Six-Year Street Plan to prioritize local streets and includes this prioritization in the budget process.

Several areas in the city lack a second street access, which is both a safety and traffic-flow issue. Main Street is the single north/south through street in Colfax and the only through access or connection to all three of the other state highways that converge in Colfax-SR195, SR272 and SR26. The two streets that run parallel to Main Street are Lake on the west and Mill on the east. Neither of these are through streets. A and B Avenues and First Street in Browne's Addition all come to dead ends, making the addition a culdesac. Hauser Avenue dead ends in Hauser Addition and Pines dead ends in Pines Addition. Thorn Street/Valleyview/Southview provide the single access to that major residential area. "A" Street is a single access loop.

A. GROWTH AND TRANSPORTATION- Where and when growth will occur is difficult to anticipate. Areas that seem most likely for growth and development are the southwest area above the hospital; the area southwest of Hill-Ray Plaza; the area southeast of and possibly connecting to Southview; expansion of the Hauser Addition area; and the west hill off Cherry and Orchard. The west hill lacks adequate utility hookups, so it may be less attractive than the other four areas for major development.

Development of any of these areas would have a major impact on streets and traffic flow-South Main/Fairview, Thorn/Southview, Canyon, and Deanway/Cromwell/Cherry/Orchard respectively. Of these accesses, Thorn Street and lower Southview are in the best condition for drainage, pavement, sidewalk and configuration. The top of Southview, however, is unpaved and has no sidewalk or drainage. The upper part of Fairview has recently been reconstructed and sidewalk has been built on the south side. Lower Fairview and South Main are in moderate condition. South Main, due to topography, is steep and makes a sharp turn onto Fairview. Canyon (SR272) is narrow with no shoulders and the steep grade is up to a 10 percent grade on the east hill. Deanway and Cromwell are narrow (one-way traffic in many areas of Deanway) and the accesses at both ends are steep and require a sharp turn. Cherry and Orchard are unpaved and have no drainage system or sidewalk. Transportation routes in the newly-annexed lands to the northeast of the golf course will require attention and upgrades. The North Palouse River Road will, over time, need to have appropriate surfacing and may require re-alignment of some vertical and horizontal curves.

B. RAILROAD - The railroad presently operating in Colfax is the Palouse River and Coulee City Railroad Company. Every effort is and should continue to be made to maintain rail service in the city, county and wider community for transport of local products to market.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. A goal is to have two access routes to all new subdivisions for both safety and traffic flow.
2. Existing subdivisions/additions should, if and when possible, be provided a second access.
3. The city should keep in mind in the future a connection between Mill Street and Morton Street at the north end of Mill. This would create a second direct link between the business district and the schools and surrounding residential and commercial areas at the north end of the city.
3. All effort should be made to pave or chip seal gravel streets in the city limits. The city should promote city/community joint projects to pave streets, allowing residents to financially participate in the improvement of

their streets without going through the LID process. This could either bolster the street budget or serve as a match for grants.

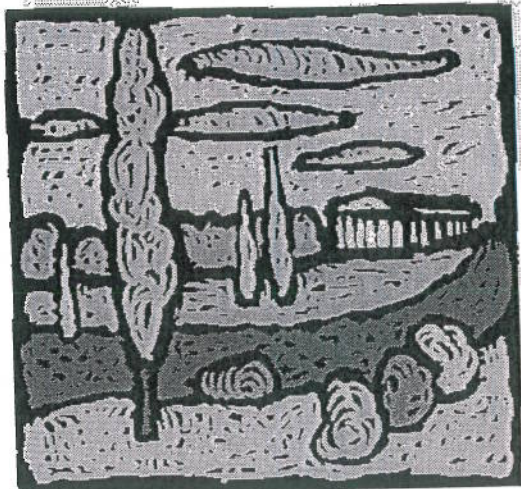
5. In more "visionary" planning, the city should consider the need for a second north/south through street that would give direct access to SR195. While this seems unlikely and unworkable at this time, changes could occur in the future that would allow for such a street.

6. The city should investigate the possibility of making improvements to the road which parallels the North Fork of the Palouse River through the newly-annexed area. These improvements could include providing a BST or asphalt surface and the additions of some new exits. This could entail the construction of a bridge or a connection to Hilty Road on the southeast side or constructing a road across from the school grounds on the northwest side.

Environment Element

ELEMENTS OF COLFAX ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Maintaining and improving the quality of the physical environment is a necessary factor in protecting the quality of life for future generations. The city has completed a Critical Areas study and ordinance with an update in 2002 as required by the Growth Management Act. The city has also completed a Wellhead Protection Plan as required by the Department of Health with an update in 2001/2002. Such studies and plans will be kept current.



The city complies with and observes all requirements of the Department of Health and Department of Ecology in handling the public water and sewer systems. Regulations in the Building, Plumbing and Fire Codes for fire protection, fill, grading, construction and other activities that may alter or impact the environment are also adhered to by the city building department and fire department. The city code includes land use regulations for plats and development that include critical area and wellhead protection.

Issues of particular importance in Colfax are erosion, run-off and river flooding, preservation of agricultural land, pollution (such as dust and the storage and application of agricultural chemicals), and energy.

The quality and quantity of ground water used for public water supplies must be protected. The city participates in regional meetings concerning ground water and specifically concerning the Grand Rhonde aquifer from which the city's water system is supplied. The level of this aquifer is a matter of concern in the region.

Different land uses each possess different levels of noise, odor and traffic. Where these differences in environmental factors are profound, there is a need to protect one use from another in order to maintain a comfortable living environment. Some normally incompatible uses, which can benefit the community as a whole, can be and are made more compatible by various methods, such as landscaping, screening and buffering.

Issues for Future Planning and Projects-

1. The city must continue vigilance in matters regarding the local aquifer, its viability and integrity, its recharge capabilities and protection against contamination.
2. Wellhead and critical areas should be reviewed and updated regularly and requirements for their protection should be enforced.
3. The city should strongly encourage conservation of natural resources.
4. All unnecessary soil erosion should be prevented.
5. Any structure permitted in a flood area should be subject to strict flood-proofing regulations.
6. As slope increases, residential density should decrease in order to avoid the problems of drainage, siltation, flood control and accessibility.
7. Particular care should be taken to monitor the location and storage of chemicals in the city.



Map Section

The maps on the following pages illustrate other important components of the Comprehensive Plan. The Critical Areas maps are intended to serve as general indicators of potentially critical areas. They are for general reference only as a guide to indicate the potential of a listed critical area. Specific regulations can be found in the Critical Areas ordinance.

