



March 19, 2021

Franklin County Planning Department  
502 W. Boeing Street  
Pasco, WA 99301

Attention: Derrick Braaten, Planning and Building Director

Subject: 2020 Franklin County Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update –  
CPA 2018-01 through 04; SEPA 2020-15

We have reviewed the Franklin County Comprehensive Plan update draft provided to the Franklin County Planning Commission in January 2021 that includes applications by the cities of Pasco and Connell to amend their respective Urban Growth Area (UGA).

We commend your efforts in producing clear and concise explanation of the processes undertaken for this update and proposed amendments, which involved complicated and lengthy city urban growth area actions that required coordination and consistency with the county update.

We encourage Franklin County to plan for the future development and growth of the Tri-Cities Regional Airport. The demand for commercial passenger air service as well as air cargo are forecast to increase as time goes on. Airports with existing commercial service will play a vital role in trying to meet the demand for air service. SeaTac International Airport is reaching the limits of its capacity and existing commercial service airports will be needed to help meet the demand. The Tri-Cities Regional Airport in Pasco is critical to the region's transportation system providing air passenger and cargo service to southeast Washington. It is Washington's fourth largest airport. Passenger traffic grew over 25% between 2015 and 2019. The Airport Master Plan shows future plans to potentially extend runway 12 – running southeast to northwest – 1,850 feet to the northwest. In order for the Tri-Cities Regional Airport to continue its regional function, it is important to preserve the ability to expand. We believe it is important for Franklin County to work with the Tri-Cities Regional Airport sponsors and management, aviation businesses, general aviation pilots, ports, and the Aviation Division of WSDOT, and convene formal consultation between the stakeholders to discuss the potential impacts to the Airport.

WSDOT is concerned with the safety and compatibility of the rezoning of Parcel #114250016 northwest of the airport and adjacent to Road 52 and Roberta Road from airport reserve land to low density residential. Portions of this parcel are located within the WSDOT Airport and Compatible Land Use Guidebook Compatibility Zones 2, 3, 4, and 6 near the northwest end of Runway 14 with the planned 1,850-foot expansion project. Within Zones 2, 3, and 4, the guidebook strongly recommends any single-family dwellings up to 12 dwelling unit/acre should be "Prohibited." If the residential

development were to be located in zone 6, low density residential could be compatible depending on the location, size, bulk, height, density, and intensity of use.

Also identified in the Tri-Cities Airport Master Plan, the Port of Pasco adopted similar zones and the development falls into Airport Safety and Compatibility Zones (ASCZ) 2, 3, and 4. Zones 2 and 3 state no residential development and Zone 4 recommends avoiding residential development. We ask that you add a policy stating that Franklin County will ensure compatibility of land uses in the vicinity of the Tri-Cities Airport.

We recommend adding an impact fee ordinance to help facilitate effective, orderly and equitable processes to implement transportation system improvements so that future developments contribute and pay proportionate shares of improvement costs based on transportation impacts to the systems, including state facilities. This is especially important in transition areas within new urban growth area boundaries that are subject to both city and county regulations until incorporated.

We noticed several minor, out of date or incorrect references to adopted state or regional Transportation Plans or WACs that we assume will be corrected in the final plan.

We support efforts to include a policy that references the Washington State's Target Zero 2030 program to help improve multi-modal transportation system safety within Franklin County.

We want to thank you for adding WSDOT to the County-wide Planning Policy I(1)(C) to promote coordination on transportation regional priorities in addition to the cities and Franklin County.

We support your efforts and look forward to continued discussions. Thank you again for the opportunity to participate and provide comments. If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact John Gruber at (509) 577-1636.

Sincerely,



Paul Gonseth, P.E.  
Planning Engineer

PG:jg/df

cc: Max Platts, WSDOT Aviation  
Celeste Gilman, WSDOT Multimodal Planning  
Will Simpson, WA Department of Commerce