

May 17, 2018

Nicole Stickney  
Franklin County Planning Department  
502 Boeing Street  
Pasco, WA 99301

Re: Franklin County Comprehensive Plan Update

Dear Ms. Stickney:

The Benton-Franklin Health District staff have completed a review of the proposed comprehensive plan amendments. Thank you for the opportunity to provide input on the updates to the Franklin County's Comprehensive Plan. Planning for the future is important in our changing world and the Health District has the following comments regarding the scope of your review:

1. In 2016 a Community Health Needs Assessment was completed for Benton and Franklin Counties one of the needs identified as being most critical to the wellness of our area was obesity. In evaluating the impacts of your comprehensive plan it is appropriate to look at items that may improve access and participation in physical fitness activities. Studies have shown that inclusion or even consideration of the following list may improve our health:
  - a. **Mixed-use development:** supports a combination of land uses (e.g. residential, commercial, and recreational) in development initiatives, often through zoning regulations (shown to increase physical activity, active transportation, improve health outcomes, reduce vehicle miles traveled).
  - b. **Streetscapes design/complete streets:** enhance streetscapes with greater sidewalk coverage and walkway connectivity, street crossing safety features, traffic calming measures, and other design elements (shown to increase physical activity, improve pedestrian and cyclist safety, increase active transportation, improved sense of community, improved neighborhood safety, reduced stress, reduced vehicle miles traveled).
  - c. **Zoning regulations for land use policy:** use zoning regulations to address aesthetics and safety of the physical environment, street continuity and connectivity, residential density and proximity to businesses, schools, and recreation

- d. **Green space and parks:** increase recreational green space through new parks or open spaces, renovation or enhancement of under-used recreation areas, rehabilitation of vacant lots, brownfields, etc. (shown to increase physical activity/reduce obesity, improved mental health, reduce crime, reduce stress, improve health outcomes) (also likely to decrease disparities).
  - e. **Places for physical activity:** through modification of local environments to support physical activity, increase access to new or existing facilities for physical activity, or build new facilities (also likely to decrease disparities).
  - f. **Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS):** promotes walking and biking to school through education, incentives, and environmental changes. This nationally recognized and supported by Washington State as well as a regular topic of discussion in regional planning for transportation.
2. It also important when looking at your plan to include provisions to address existing developed areas within urban growth boundaries of the cities of Pasco, Connell and Mesa to improve infrastructure and maintain and even increase opportunities for healthy living commensurate with newly developed areas.
    - a. Walking paths and/or sidewalks commensurate with city requirements for new subdivisions.
    - b. Transportation planning that allows and support multi-modal mean of travel including bike and provisions for transit stops.
    - c. Available access to parks and recreational activities within or near housing developments.
    - d. Areas available for retail development support access to healthy foods.
  3. Urban growth will bring an increased number of vehicles, combustion by products from heating and an increase in waste materials as the population grows. Identifying these impacts will be important. Mitigation measures including providing pathways for freight traffic that bypass the city may be necessary to reduce the impacts to air quality.

It is important to begin revising our scope when planning for development to discover not only the direct impacts to the environment, but also holistically plan to provide a healthy environment for our community to thrive.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at 509-460-4313.

Sincerely,



James R. Dawson  
Senior Manager – Surveillance & Investigation