INTRODUCTION & OVERVIEW

Growth Management Act
The Growth Management Act requires counties to include a Rural Element in their Comprehensive Plans.

"Counties shall include a Rural Element including lands that are not designated for urban growth, agriculture, forest or mineral resources. The rural element shall permit appropriate land uses that are compatible with the rural character of such lands and provide for a variety of rural densities..." {R.C.W. 36.70A.070 (5)}

The Washington Administrative Code (WAC 365-195-330 (2)) recommends that certain steps be followed in preparing the Rural Element, many of the recommended steps are listed below:
- The identification of rural lands;
- The amount of population growth within the twenty-year planning period which will live or work on rural lands;
- Adoption of policies for the development of such lands;
- Uses permitted, including a variety of densities for rural, commercial, and industrial use, consistent with the rural character of the area;
- P.U.D’s, cluster housing, and innovative techniques for managing development within the overall parameters of rural density;
- Establishment of a definition of rural governmental services which identifies the limited public services provided to persons living or working in rural areas;
- Provisions to regulate the orderly inclusion of urban growth areas for future development;
- The adoption of policies for the development and preservation of the rural character of such lands, including: the preservation of critical areas (e.g., fish and wildlife habitats, water quality etc..) consistent with private property rights; continuation of agricultural use; excavation of mineral resources;
- Encouragement of the use of rural lands for recreational pursuits which preserve open space and are environmentally benign;
- Adoption of strategies for the acquisition of natural areas of high scenic value;
- Establishment of criteria for environmental protection, including programs to control non-point sources of water pollution and to preserve and enhance habitat for fish and wildlife.

What Is Rural and Rural Character?
The rural areas of Benton County are places where open space, the natural environment and vegetation predominate over the built environment. They are discrete areas, each having a built environment and social texture uniquely created by factors such as origin, history, period of settlement, use capability of the land, and employment base of the residents. The rural area is a place...
where you can find wildlife habitats, and a historic heritage shown by minimal non-native uses of land that includes small farms or scattered homesteads.

The rural areas or communities within Benton County attest to the observation that each rural area is different. For example, though there are common physical characteristics and resident preferences throughout the rural communities in the four Planning Regions of the county (Hanford Region excluded), there are also very distinct differences in the custom and culture, community outlook and living environments.

Rural Character embodies a quality of life based upon traditional rural landscapes, activities, lifestyles, and aesthetic values. The residents that live and work in the rural areas of the County, through their participation in the Rural Planning Area Committees prepared visions, goals, and listed unique and valued characteristics for each rural planning area. The following descriptive text defines “Rural Character” using those visions, goals, and perceptions of the County residents, and described as: large open landscapes where the setting is quiet, peaceful, and natural. The residents enjoy a slower pace lifestyle, closeness with nature and access to recreational opportunities. There is a strong sense of family and community and a separation from government and city.

In the rural area there is elbowroom, less traffic, access to wildlife and where the natural beauty of the rural landform is valued and enjoyed. The rural residents value property rights, and feel a sense of “freedom” in the rural area that provides opportunities to farm, raise children and keep animals.

Homes are buffered from neighbors in a very low-density setting that include five and twenty acre minimum parcel sizes. There are limited areas of more intense rural development, where community infill may occur.

Rural is not the center or traditional hub of commerce and administration, with markets, theaters and shopping with mixed housing. It is not a densely built environment or a sprawling landscape of homes.

In an urban setting there are higher levels of public services, controlled traffic and lower speed limits. They experience short commutes from home to office, school, or library, and are close to urban governmental services, i.e., police, fire and emergency facilities.

Rural Survey
Commonalities and distinctions among rural areas within the county are evident in the Rural Visions For Benton County 1993-2013, and the "pie charts" and graphs of the 1993 Rural Visioning Survey Report. These documents are products of a public participation program conducted in each Rural Area by Benton County planning staff, with the assistance of a consultant, as part of its GMA planning process. Within these
documents are the “Vision” citizens used to form the base for their Rural Area Plan.

Common Rural Preferences
Notwithstanding differences between rural areas, the Survey and work of the individual Rural Planning Advisory Committees identified preferences common to all rural areas within the county. The most common preferences include the following:

- the ability to keep livestock and animals;
- location of open space or farming in the proximity of living environments;
- near unanimous support for wildlife and habitat protection;
- desire for the expansion of public open spaces for outdoor recreation;
- no urban encroachment;
- desire to preserve open space and low densities;
- a desire and expressed need for good to excellent county roads;
- freedom from government regulation, except for enforcement of ordinances that prohibit the accumulation of junk and trash on properties, and prevent residential sprawl or unmanaged growth;
- peace and quiet.

The Benton County Rural Visioning Survey Report Spring 1993 is cited frequently in the Comprehensive Plan document, and is incorporated into this element by reference.

THE RURAL PLANNING AREAS OF BENTON COUNTY
Four of the five Planning Regions of Benton County have “Rural Planning Areas” within them (the Hanford Planning Region does not).

The Rural Planning areas within each Planning Region comprise those lands outside of both the Growth Management Act (GMA) Agricultural designation, and Urban Growth Areas. It is the aggregate of these rural areas that comprise the Rural Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

PATERSON-PLYMOUTH RURAL PLANNING AREA

Location & Geographical Setting
The rural communities of the Paterson-Plymouth Planning Area reside in the south of Benton County, on the downward sloping terrace of the Horse Heaven Hills Planning Region. Both communities overlook the Columbia River. The rising landform to the north of the communities is predominantly in large-scale agricultural production.

The setting of each community is afforded panoramic views of the river and the Oregon shore on the river’s south side. The river-shore below and to the east and west of each community is largely owned by the federal government who purchased lands along the river to accommodate the rise and fall of river waters pooled by hydroelectric dams. The shoreline and near-shore areas, characterized by sloughs, riparian
areas, islands and rocky shoals, is administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is a valuable recreational resource to the community.

Plymouth is the most "up-river" of the two rural communities. It lies less than one mile west of the I-82 interchange and bridge crossing at McNary Dam. Paterson is approximately 12 miles downstream of Plymouth, along SR-14.

History
Today, the rural communities of Paterson and Plymouth lie on the high ground above portions of their historic settlements, which were inundated by the backwater pool of the John Day Dam in the late 1960's. Few physical artifacts from the pre-dam era exist above water. Some of the larger houses and buildings were moved to higher ground in advance of the rising waters, they were large and made of wood construction on a landscape open to seasonally thunderous skies and electric storms and were gradually consumed by fires.

Paterson's original name was "Scott." Plymouth, a few miles upriver was originally called "Crimea," then "Expansion." In 1906 it became Plymouth.

Through the latter part of the 19th and the early 20th century, white settlers and Indians jointly occupied and lived on the land and islands along the river. The Indians fished and kept ponies, and the settlers farmed.

The original settlements pre-dated Benton County. They were established by Klickitat County stockmen and farmers some time in the 1870s or 80's. One of the early stockman was Harry Paterson Sr., whose son became the postmaster at Scott. The town of Paterson is named for his father.

The railroad along the river was constructed around the turn of the century. Over time, the Paterson landscape has been occupied by a ferry landing, school houses, a hotel south of the tracks (converted from the original Paterson family home), a cafe (still there), and the fore-runner of the present day Paterson Store. The original store had two stories with a dance hall and was destroyed by fire and replaced with the present structure in the 1920s.

Custom & Culture
The custom and culture of Paterson and Plymouth residents is rooted in commercial agriculture, with ancillary forays into tourism in the late 1800's when services were provided to travelers and Indian artifact hunters who came to exploit rich caches of arrowheads and other artifacts along

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1 Based on information from “Benton County a Glimpse of the Past”, Benton County Historical and Pioneer Association, 1967.
Early agriculture was livestock, including horse round-ups in the Horse Heaven Hills. Frank Mathews planted an orchard along the river after the flood of 1894, he also planted currants and hay. Beyond Devil’s Bend upriver of Paterson, George McNeilly raised turkeys and grew cherries which ripened ten days before even the early cherries in the upper county. Dr. E.A. Bryan, former President of Washington State University, partnered with Dr. Sharples in the Paterson Land Company. Dr. Sharples grew large pear crops and shipped asparagus plants to Walla Walla in 1908.

Annual picnics at host farms were major events where homegrown foods were served under open skies on long trestle tables, games and dances enjoyed, and crops and politics were discussed.

Contemporary life in the Paterson and Plymouth communities continues to be based upon agriculture, though the rich social fabric which characteristically revolved around the mutual aid practiced earlier by small family farming operations has been thinned by the evolution of today’s agriculture to economies of scale.

The Paterson-Plymouth landscape today is tilled by private or corporate agri-businesses that farm thousands of acres. Much of the area dryland wheat and rangeland areas of only 10 to 15 years ago have been put under irrigation. Corn, apples, potatoes, wheat, and wine grapes are major crops. Processing and storage facilities and wineries are recent arrivals.

These agri-businesses as well as other agricultural support industries employ residents in a variety of agri-related occupations. The Paterson Store, fire station and school survive as centers of community activity.

**Demographics**
The Planning Areas have a current population of approximately 391 residents who occupy 146 residential dwelling units. Population density is one person per 144 acres, or 4.4 persons/sq. mile. The population of Plymouth is approximately 265 residents, while Paterson has approximately 126 residents.

**Infrastructure**
Though each is different, Paterson and Plymouth are rural communities, who have in common, isolation from public services, low population density, and minimal service infrastructure.

**Plymouth** has a public water district with an established service boundary and capacity greatly in excess of current demands. Well capacity is 1,186,000 gpd with a single reservoir storage capacity of 250,000 gallons. Domestic waste disposal is accomplished through individual (private) systems. Principal transportation infrastructure consists of SR-14 which runs east and west across the top of the community, and I-82 which runs north and south, and provides a full interchange approximately one mile to the east of Plymouth. SR-14 connects to I-82 at the McNary crossing, and provides a river crossing again 80 miles down river at Biggs, Oregon. Interior collectors
for Plymouth are Christy Road, which parallels the river south of Plymouth, and Plymouth Road which runs north from the river intersecting Christy Road and SR-82. The Plymouth residential community is between the river and SR-14.

The Plymouth School houses students in grades K through five. There are currently 30 students enrolled. The Plymouth School operates out of the Kennewick School District.

**Paterson** has limited public water supply capability. The Paterson Heights Water District has a 525-foot well with a capacity of 140 gpm, and a 50,000-gallon reservoir. Official records indicate that it serves 23 households currently. Paterson School District has its own public water supply. Waste disposal in the community is via individual systems. Principal transportation infrastructure is SR-14 (east/west) and SR-221, which runs north from SR-14 across the Horse Heaven Hills to SR-22 at Prosser in the Yakima Valley. The main residential community in Paterson is away from the river on high ground north of SR-14.

The Paterson Elementary School is a modern facility housing grades K thru 6. It currently has 111 students with a staff of seven. The facility includes a library and gymnasium.

**Existing Land Use**
The largest category of land use in the Paterson-Plymouth Planning Area is public (Port of Kennewick and federal shoreline ownerships). The next largest designation is industrial with approximately 1,712 acres.

As indicated below, land use changes within the planning region surrounding the Paterson and Plymouth rural communities over the past decade show a major trend to convert dryland and rangeland to irrigated agriculture. Currently there are approximately 131,800 acres of irrigated agriculture along the Paterson plateau.

The increase in irrigated crop acreage has influenced construction of new agricultural storage and processing facilities for onions, corn, and potatoes. Vineyards, wineries, and apple orchards are recent significant trends.

The Rural Planning Area of Paterson-Plymouth encompasses approximately 7,564 acres, or two percent of the Horse Heaven Hills Planning Region. The Paterson area contains roughly 4,639 acres and Plymouth 2,925 acres. Within their boundaries, these rural communities are sparsely developed at present, but have the potential for growth. They have river, rail, and state or federal highway access, undeveloped industrial acreage, and adjacency to significant accessible public shorelands.

Plymouth’s industrially designated acreage (Port of Kennewick and Agri-Northwest) on its west side, equals 55 percent of its land area. A natural gas supply line traverses the community. Paterson has industrial designations equaling four percent of its acreage.

**Preferred Land Use Plans**
The Preferred Land Use Plan Maps drafted by the Paterson-Plymouth Rural Planning Advisory Committees in
1996 were updated in 2006. The following are allocations of principal land uses:

**PATERSON PREFERRED LAND USE**

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**PLYMOUTH PREFERRED LAND USE**

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</thead>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>594</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Land Use Maps for Paterson and Plymouth are shown in the Land Use Element, Chapter 4, Maps 4.3 and 4.4.

**Paterson-Plymouth Rural Area Vision, Goals, and Actions.**

The Paterson-Plymouth Citizen’s Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following "Vision":

"The Paterson-Plymouth rural area is...an area that preserves "an endangered species" (rural folks and rural living). Our future is our kids. We are involved with our parks and wildlife habitat. We dream of less government intervention, wish for more transportation and housing opportunities, and water and sewer systems within our established communities."

- Paterson-Plymouth Rural Committee

The Citizen’s Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following Planning Goals and Actions:

**Note:** Where an asterisk*appears, the action should be driven by the citizens committee.

**PARKS AND WILDLIFE HABITAT**

**GOAL:** Improve road access into sloughs for fire and safety equipment, fishing and hunting.

*Action:* Approach appropriate agencies to discuss and pursue better access.*

**GOAL:** Preserve, enhance and add to riverfront recreational opportunities.

*Action:* Keep Crow Butte State Park*

*Action:* Expand Plymouth Park to include the whole island.*

*Action:* Construct park and boat launch at Paterson.*

**GOAL:** Protect the river in order to preserve wildlife habitats, the desert, wetlands, and to provide clean air, water, sky.

*Action:* Keep neighboring land uses compatible.

*Action:* Encourage projects that enhance the fish and wildlife in and around the river.*

**MORE PUBLIC SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES**

**GOAL:** More protection provided by the Sheriffs Department for the Plymouth/Paterson area.

*Action:* Slow traffic and speeding.

**LESS GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION**

**GOAL:** Preserve rural freedom, opportunity, and property rights and values.

*Action:* To support public relations training for the various departments at the county level.

**GOAL:** To continue a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for full citizen participation.
in public decision-making.
Action: Encourage the use of mailing lists to keep County residents informed of new projects, ordinances and changes in policy.

RURAL FOLKS AND RURAL LIVING
GOAL: To identify areas for a variety of agricultural uses in an effort to preserve and maintain productive farmlands to the maximum extent possible.
Action: That only compatible land uses should be established adjacent to agriculture to minimize potential problems caused by incompatible land use activity.

PROVIDE HOUSING IN OUR ESTABLISHED COMMUNITIES
GOAL: Plan for a diversity of living and working situations that will provide residents with an opportunity to make economic and lifestyle choices.
Action: Create a stable, balanced community economic situation by promoting industries that are diverse, agriculturally based and that process what we produce.

GOAL: Expand employment opportunities.
Action: In 1998, with the Port of Kennewick, Plymouth residents, and the U.S. Army Corps, define uses, and develop a Specific Plan for the island at Plymouth.

OUR FUTURE (Our kids)
GOAL: Create a “whole life” living area that allows peace and quiet, preserves the farm heritage and rural character and accommodates children, wage earning families and retired people.

GOAL: Keep Paterson like it is with little growth.

GOAL: Grow slowly and in a manner that preserves the existing rural community and lifestyle.
Action: Maintain Paterson as a great place for kids to grow and keep it safe for them.*

A WATER AND SEWER SYSTEM IN OUR ESTABLISHED COMMUNITIES
GOAL: Achieve a household water
and sewer system that is affordable yet is not based on densities which change the rural character.

Action: Complete a water and sewer study.*

RURAL PLANNING AREA
PROSSER-WHITSTRAN

Location and Geographic Setting
The Prosser-Whitstran Rural Planning Area lies within the southwestern corner of the Rattlesnake Planning Region.

Outstanding geographic features of the Prosser-Whitstran Rural Planning Area are: the Yakima River, as it cuts through the lower valley; the elevated slope of irrigated croplands on the "Roza" as it rises up the southern flank of Rattlesnake Mountain to the north; and the textured slumps and hummocks of the north face of the Horse Heaven Hills, which rise abruptly from the south bank of the river.

History
The early Indian inhabitants of the Prosser-Whitstran area lived along the Yakima River. In the early spring they camped along both sides of the river near “The Falls” awaiting the salmon run. Prosser's first citizen, Colonel Prosser, staked a claim along its banks in 1882.

It was in 1881 when James Kinney camped overnight below Prosser. Upon awakening the next morning he found his horses had strayed and followed their tracks which led up the hillside and over into an upland plain. There he found his runaway horses cropping the succulent bunch grass. “Surely this is Horse Heaven,” he said to himself. Others tried to call the district “Columbia Plains”, but Mr. Kinney’s name stuck, and that is how the name Horse Heaven came to be.

In 1884, “Prosser Falls” as Prosser was originally called, boasted a general store, two saloons, one restaurant, and a livery barn. At the same time one-mile west of Prosser Falls other settlers were venturing to start a town. They called it Kinneyville, which had a hotel, several saloons, two restaurants, and one residence. This area was eventually absorbed by Prosser. Prosser Falls was given a Post Office that spring, but because there were so many “falls” in the state, “Falls” was dropped to prevent further confusion.

In the winter of 1884-85 the original townsite of Prosser was platted. Nelson Rich (who was the namesake for the City of Richland) ran the first store. His residence, which was a mansion in its day, was sited on what is now the Benton County Courthouse Square. Mr. Rich was a contractor and builder, and was an honored citizen who served the community as school director, postmaster, and state representative for the district. Mr. Rich made the first addition to the original townsite of Prosser. He platted the section of Court, Market, and Main

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2 Based on information from “Benton County, a Glimpse of the Past”, Benton County Historical and Pioneer Association 1967, and “Prosser the Hometown”, by Pearl Mahoney, 1950.
Streets by compass and not by the railroad (as many cities did at the time), so the streets run north and south and the avenues east and west. Construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad did not get underway until the mid 1870's. The track between Spokane and Ainsworth (Pasco) was completed in 1880, and during the summer and fall of 1884, the railroad made its way through Prosser and the Yakima Valley. During the early 80's many pioneer families filed claims along the route of the Northern Pacific Railroad line up the valley, sheltering themselves in tents, shacks, and covered wagons.

Development of the railroad construction camps was soon followed by new schools. The Prosser School District, established on February 2, 1884, has the distinction of being the oldest school district in what is now Benton County.

In the late 1880's, Lewis Heinzerling arrived in what was then Prosser Falls. Impressed with the opportunities the area offered, especially the river, the falls, and the potential water power it could produce, he envisioned a flour mill at a particular spot on the river bank and spoke of his aspirations to Colonel Prosser. On Heinzerling’s behalf, Prosser negotiated with the chief of the Indian tribe then camped along the river for permission to build the mill. Mr. Heinzerling brought his family and a number of neighbors from Missouri in the spring of 1887 to assist in building the mill.

Mr. Heinzerling was also a bridge builder. The original bridge across the Yakima River leading to the Rattlesnake Hills was his creation, as well as the original Sixth Street Bridge also over the Yakima, built in 1906.

The first of two public roads in what is today Benton County was authorized by the Territorial Legislature in 1882. The first was a short stretch of road on the north bank of the Yakima River across from Prosser. The second started at the ferry landing opposite Wallula, running through the Hover-Finley area, then west past Coyote Springs, then up and across the Horse Heaven plateau and down to Prosser. Five miles of this road falls within the present State Route 221 and the County Well Road, and a short expanse remains as the Locust Grove Road.

Shortly after Washington became a state in 1889, people in southeastern Yakima County began to complain about the distance they had to travel to Yakima City to transact business. It was in 1901 when talk began of the formation of a new county, naming Prosser as the county seat. Then State Representative Nelson Rich was instrumental in passing a measure in the state legislature in 1905 that created the new unit of government that is Benton County.

Prosser’s roots are deeply embedded in agriculture. Much of the success in agriculture is due to the harnessing of water and applying it to the fertile soil: “irrigation”. As early as 1889, Northern
Pacific Railroad completed a study in connection with the Sunnyside canal. In 1908, the government began to show interest in the project, and in 1916, the Northern Pacific Railroad made another survey on the present location, but due to WWI nothing came of the activity.

Then in 1919, landowners formed a district and immediately entered into a contract with the government for canal surveys, and contracting for water in 1921. Six years later, a joint economic study was prepared at a cost of $10,000 which was shared equally by the landowners and the government. The study justified the project, and the storage dam at Cle Elem was promoted. Actual work was finally underway in 1936 for 99 miles of canal, serving 46,000 gravity acres called the Roza Canal. Today the Roza District is one of the most productive farming areas in the State of Washington.

**Custom & Culture**

The custom and culture within the Prosser-Whitstran Rural Area is predominantly agricultural based. It revolves around the agricultural products grown on the "Horseheaven Hills" to the south and the "Roza" to the north.

Upon a base of agricultural land and a water supply from the Yakima River, the residents of the Prosser-Whitstran Rural Area, and those of the City of Prosser itself have historically nurtured an economy primarily associated with agriculture related industry, a public and private service sector, and a retail sector. A relatively new opportunity established upon agriculture is the cultivation of tourism related to the growing local and regional wine making and specialty crop industries. Another opportunity, unrelated to agriculture, is the City's expansion of the highway service industry at the Gap Road, interchange with I-82.

The **Roza** is among the most productive irrigated areas in the 600,000 acre Yakima Valley irrigation project. Crop production is diverse and focused on the specialty markets. Farmed holdings range from those with thousands of acres to those of less than a hundred. Farmers target a global market with products including wine grapes, wine, juice grapes, mint, numerous types of apples, hops, cherries, currants, apricots, pears, some forage crops, livestock, and dairy products.

The **Horse Heaven Hills** contain approximately 500,000 acres. It is almost entirely put to cultivated agricultural use, with steep and marginal soils in rangeland. Dryland wheat is the predominant crop, with some barley production. On its southern slope, above the Columbia River, production of irrigated crops is expanding by virtue of access to the river as a water source. Crops include: wine grapes, corn, potatoes, carrots, onions, apples, and irrigated wheat.

Area residents are employed in local agricultural industries which store, process, package and market
products such as wine, juices, corn, potatoes, and orchard fruits.

Also serving the agricultural industry are the WSU Cooperative Extension, the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Natural Resources Conservation Service, and Agricultural Service Center, all located within Prosser. Five miles north of Prosser, on the Roza, is the Washington State University’s Irrigated Agriculture Research and Extension Service (IAREC), where state and federal agencies and local farmers jointly research problems associated with irrigated agriculture.

A significant number of residents residing in the Prosser-Whitstran rural community are engaged in public service employment and activities. Many of these employees are from local families who either own or have spouses working in agriculture. The City of Prosser, County government, IAREC, the Prosser School District’s Elementary, Middle and High Schools, Prosser Library, Benton County Historical Museum, and the Prosser Memorial Hospital provide employment, public service and support.

The City of Prosser, which is the County Seat, has a population of approximately 5,000. It has a defined business and retail center anchored by banking, insurance and real estate services, and city and county administrative centers. Within the city is a range of retail/service enterprises including law offices, pharmaceuticals, auto re-upholstery, printing, barbershop, child care, veterinary services, computer sales, auto dealerships and parts stores, groceries, restaurants, plant nursery, feed and grain, farm supplies, and arts and crafts stores. The City has a full interchange with I-82, and through the 1980s to the present, a complex of highway service businesses providing an expanding range of fast food, lodging, recreation and truck services.

Major and minor centers of farmer interaction within the Planning Area are at meetings such as those of the Cattleman’s Association, Association of Wheat Growers, and the Farm Bureau. On a more routine basis, local meeting places at Prosser locations include the Buena-Vista and Horse Heaven Granges, the Barn Restaurant on Wine Country Road, and Northwoods Restaurant at the I-82 Interchange.

### Top 4 Issues/Desired Improvements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue/Improvement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Road improvements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More sheriff protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ordinance to cleanup trash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control/Restrict growth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prosser-Whitstran Survey Respondents

### Demographics

The Prosser-Whitstran Rural Planning Area has a current population in the unincorporated area of approximately 4,216, who occupy 1,573 residential dwelling units. The average residential density is one dwelling unit per 16.5 acres.

### Infrastructure

The principal infrastructure within the
Prosser-Whitstran Rural Planning Area is found within the City of Prosser, which has the full range of municipal services and infrastructure for a municipality of its size.

The Prosser School District provides facilities for students K-12. The school facilities include a high school, middle school, and three elementary schools (one of which is located in Whitstran for students K-5). The student enrollment for the 2004-05 school year was 2,836.

Outside of the city, infrastructure consists primarily of the county road network, which serves the rural and agricultural community, the irrigation facilities of the Roza and Sunnyside Valley Irrigation Districts, and the IAREC facility.

**Existing Land Use**
The predominating land uses within this rural planning area are:

- the rich and diversified irrigated crop cover on the Roza and river terraces overlooking the Yakima River;
- areas of low density rural residential development and small farmed lots located generally to the west and north of Prosser on lands having soils which range from rich and deep to marginal or poor relative to agricultural purposes;
- the City of Prosser, which is the Benton County Seat located adjacent the Yakima River;
- the complex of agricultural related storage, processing and value added industries within and adjacent to the city;
- the regional transportation corridor, which parallels the river and contains I-82 and the Burlington Northern Railroad; and,
- the small community of Whitstran with a cluster of homes, the Whitstran Elementary School, and a small store are located several miles to the north and east of Prosser.

Outside of the City of Prosser, the land uses within the Prosser-Whitstran rural community are either commercial agriculture, or low density rural residential, depending upon any given area’s suitability for commercially viable farming. Areas with poor or marginal agricultural suitability are either used for livestock grazing and/or housing. There is pressure in the Prosser-Whitstran Rural Area to convert suitable farming ground to residential housing. In some measure this is because a significant amount of acreage has constraints to both agriculture and housing use due to poor soil drainage characteristics.

The Rural Planning Area of Prosser-Whitstran encompasses approximately 23,357 acres, or thirteen percent of the Rattlesnake Planning Region. There is roughly 22,577 acres designated for rural residential land use.

**Preferred Land Use Plan**
The Preferred Land Use Plan Maps drafted by the Prosser-Whitstran Rural Planning Advisory Committee was
adopted in 1996, and updated in 2006. The following are allocations of the principal land uses:

<table>
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<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>Industrial</td>
<td>587</td>
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The Land Use Map for Prosser-Whitstran is shown in the Land Use Element, Chapter 4, Map 4.1.

The Prosser-Whitstran Citizen’s Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following "Vision":

"The Prosser-Whitstran area is an area of balanced employment opportunity, with a full spectrum of housing, offering rural freedom and opportunity, with good neighbors and good living while containing rural growth to preserve natural spaces for use and enjoyment."

Prosser-Whitstran Rural Committee

The Committee has identified the following The Citizen's Rural Planning Advisory Planning Goals and Actions:

**Note:** Where an asterisk* appears, the action should be driven by the citizens committee.

**RURAL FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY**

**GOAL:** Preserve rural freedom, opportunity and property rights and values.

**Action:** Control trespassing on private property.*

**CONTAINED RURAL GROWTH**

**GOAL:** Contain rural growth in order to preserve farmland.

**Action:** Enlarge existing city limits to accommodate growth.

**Action:** Include a provision in the development regulations that allows cluster development as a tool to preserve farmlands.

**GOAL:** Preserve and improve the existing visual/auditory character of the area.

**Action:** Support a county ordinance to clean up trash and junk.*

**Action:** Lower nuisance noise.

**Action:** Enlarge the existing ordinance’s dog control zone to include the Prosser-Whitstran Planning area.

**GOAL:** To provide adequate, convenient roads that safely handle anticipated traffic.

**Action:** Provide adequate road maintenance.

**Action:** Control traffic and speeding.

**FULL SPECTRUM HOUSING**

**GOAL:** Plan for a diversity of living and working situations that will provide residents with an opportunity to make economic and lifestyle choices.

**Action:** Allow 50, 20, 10, 5, acre lots in rural areas.

**Action:** Improve housing standards.

**BALANCED EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

**GOAL:** Create a stable, balanced community economic situation by promoting industries that are diverse, agriculturally based and that process
what we produce.
Action: Agricultural related industry permitted in lands designated for agriculture.

**GOAL:** Promote and protect winery tourism.
Action: Farmlands and commercial areas to include wineries.

**GOOD NEIGHBORS/GOOD LIVING**

**GOAL:** Create a “whole life” living area that allows peace and quiet, preserves the farm heritage and rural character and accommodates children, wage earning families and retired people.
Action: Maintain the Prosser rural areas character and lifestyle by allowing 2-5 acre rural densities.

**In 2007, the Board of County Commissioners generally rejected designations of less than the RL 5 as inconsistent with the GMA.**

**NATURAL SPACES USE AND RECREATION**

**GOAL:** Preserve open spaces in order to protect wildlife habitats, the river, the desert, wetlands, wildlife and to provide clean air, water, sky.
Action: Provide access to public natural areas.

**GOAL:** Plan for a system of recreational opportunities (trails, parks, boating, hot air balloons, etc.) that connect communities and allow public access yet provide protection for the environment.
Action: Establish a low maintenance bike and walking path with resting areas, with a horse trail alongside, using the abandoned railroad line.

Action: Designate public recreational facilities and identify source of public and private funds for their acquisition, construction, and maintenance.

**THE BENTON CITY-KIONA RURAL PLANNING AREA**

**Location And Geographical Setting**
The Benton City-Kiona Rural Planning Area lies within the eastern portion of the Rattlesnake Planning Region. The Planning Area includes the rural area surrounding the City of Benton City.

The lands within the Planning Area form a remarkable landscape, the principal features of which are basaltic uplifts rising from a point where the Yakima River makes a “hair-pin” turn to the north from its 200 miles long downstream direction of southeasterly.

To the east and south of the Yakima's hair pin turn rise Goose Hill, Badger and Candy mountains; to the southwest rise the escarpments of the Horse Heaven Hills; and to the northeast, Red Mountain rises sharply. To the northwest the long flank of Rattlesnake Mountain reaches across the Roza down to the Yakima River; the City of Benton City rests on this flank. Across the River from the city to the south is the small residential cluster of Kiona. Kiona lies below the Horse Heaven Hills escarpments at the point where they turn south down Badger Canyon. In prehistoric times the Yakima River flowed through the canyon on its way to the Columbia River.
History

In 1882, an early pioneer, Billy Kelso, filed a claim on land in the Horse Heaven Hills above Kiona, and initiated an operation that grew into a large wheat ranch. In 1883 a small railroad camp sprung-up where Kiona is today. People were filing claims as fast as they could along the route of the Northern Pacific's line up the valley and also on the Horse Heaven Hills plateau. Many of these “homesteaders” were men working in the railroad construction camps.

The town of Kiona was the original settlement on lands overlooking the bend in the Yakima River.

In 1885, a school was opened in Kiona for the four children of William Neil, the rail line section foreman. The first teacher was Miss Libbie Ketcham, who with her sister Olive began a grocery store. About that time, a townsite was laid out by Billy Kelso and his brother Clint. The Kelso brothers later married the Ketcham sisters and the grocery store was expanded into the Kelso Brothers General Merchandise Store. At that time a post office and a large wooden hotel were built in Kiona.

Land speculation schemes triggered by representatives of rival railroads are recorded in Benton City history. Kiona, a Northern Pacific (NP) town, had been the civic center since 1884, but the N.P. also owned a township of land in the plateau north of the river that had never been put on the market. The name of “Benton Highlands” became attached to this township. Sometime in the early 1890s, the N.P. constructed a canal and a pumping plant on the river to pump water to apple and pear orchards in the highlands. This later became a part of a 2,000-acre tract acquired by Calhoun, Denny, and Ewing of Seattle. The land was divided into 10-acre lots and sold to people of all walks of life from Seattle, the Bremerton Shipyards, and other West Coast cities.

A glowing picture of rural life was painted to the prospective buyers by these real estate operators, “Retire for life to watch the apples grow”. The new purchasers, many from the city, soon learned that there was a lot more to fruit growing than simply “watching the apples grow,” and it was harder work than many had ever done.

In 1909, a 48-room Benton City Hotel was erected at a cost of $35,000. In the spring of 1910, there were persistent rumors of a town being built; orders for nursery stock were pouring in, and the new townsite set to fruit. In 1911, W.A. Dudley became the owner and publisher of the Benton City News at Benton City.

Mr. Robert Strahorn, a promoter of the North Coast Railway, arrived in the hopes of developing a rail route that would bring Spokane and Walla Walla closer to Portland, Tacoma and Seattle. The North Coast Railway Depot was built (at a location just south of the present day US Bank in Benton City), and a large turntable was built about a quarter of a mile east of the depot. By the time Benton City came into being, the Harriman Lines in the Northwest and the North Coast Railway was consolidated as...
the Oregon-Washington Railroad and Navigation Company; but the link from Benton City to Spokane was never built. The train depot was later dismantled with its pieces stored, and then lost track of. All that remained was the track through town, which ceased being used in 1994, and was removed entirely in 1995.

**Custom and Culture**

The custom and culture of the Benton City-Kiona Rural Planning Area, though historically rooted in agriculture, has been also influenced by non-farm characteristics in recent decades. This is largely as a result of the close proximity of the Planning Area to Hanford Site and the Tri-Cities metropolitan area.

Prior to the establishment of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, the custom and culture of the Planning Area was orchard, forage crops, asparagus, concord grapes and livestock production.

However, for the last 50 years, employment and the use of land and resources within the Planning Area have been influenced strongly by Hanford Site programs. Employment statistics for the City of Benton City indicate that on a per capita basis, the population within the Planning Area has the highest percentage of Hanford dependent employment countywide.

During the Hanford era, the Planning Area has been populated by many non-farming households seeking quick housing to meet transitory labor opportunities, or seeking to support a "rural lifestyle" through employment at Hanford.

With the economic cycles driven by Hanford, platting and breaking down of acreage for sale as smaller residential lots has in itself become a means of livelihood for individuals living both within and outside of the Planning Area. These speculative actions were most prevalent during the 1970s, 80s and early 90s, and were driven by Hanford Site projects such as the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS) nuclear power plant constructions, then the federally sponsored Basalt Waste Isolation Project (BWIP), and most recently, the Hanford Clean-up Project.

Successive years of these activities have influenced a contemporary custom and culture which deviates from the traditional one of long term reliance on commercial farms as the principal means of financial support.

Within the last half decade however, as the certainty of sustained Hanford program levels ebbs and flows, the custom and culture of the Planning Area may be reinvigorating its agricultural roots. Landowners and users within the Planning Area appear to be thinking and acting "agriculture." In large measure the focus is on specialty crops such as cherries, apples, and wine grapes. Urban encroachment on agricultural land is being opposed by some orchardists.

New plantings for agricultural production are evident on the landscape. Prime soils and microclimates to the west and north of Benton City early provide cherry crops for the affluent California and Japan markets. Soil, slope, and rainfall
conditions on Red Mountain across the Yakima River to the east of the city are favorable for the growing of red wine grapes of sufficient quality that an application for designation as a special wine growing "Appellation" has been made to the federal government as new vineyards are planted. There are new orchard plantings on Goose Hill lands leased from the Department of Natural Resources. Orchard plantings and circle irrigation is expanding from the north end of Badger Canyon southerly to the Badger Interchange.

The City of Benton City within its means, is the nucleus of the Planning Area. It has approximately 2,840 residents within its corporate limits. Many of the rural residents utilize the services available within the city.

The Kiona-Benton (Ki-Be) Elementary and High Schools, along with the many churches in the city, are the major centers of social and cultural inter-action. There are two restaurants which serve as informal meeting places for area farmers and rural residents. Commercial, retail and other private sector services in the city which include: banking, grocery, restaurants, child care, farm supply, two gasoline-convenience stations, auto repair, beauty salon, mercantile store, tannery, hardware, and a U.S. Post Office.

Just outside the city, to the north, is the Benton Junior Fair & Rodeo grounds, owned by a private non-profit association which hosts numerous events through the year, including a family rodeo event in August as part of the City's annual Benton City Daze celebration.

Top 5 Issues/Desired Improvements
- Road improvements
- Enforce zoning restrictions
- Ordinance to cleanup trash
- Protect right to farm
- More police protection

Benton City-Kiona Survey Respondents

Kiona is a residential cluster overlooking the City of Benton City from the high ground on the south terrace of the river. All physical signs of its origin as the first town at the bend in the River have vanished to the casual observer. The population is less than 100. There are no commercial, private sector service or retail amenities, nor are there public services located within Kiona. Residents rely on services in Benton City for their routine needs, or those within the Tri-Cities. Kiona is within the City of Benton City's Urban Growth Area.

Demographics
The population on unincorporated lands designated as "Rural" (i.e., does not include lands zoned Agriculture), within the Planning Area is currently estimated at 4,261 persons, residing in 1,590 households, at a density of one dwelling unit per 15 acres. This density is low, evidencing the fact that the predominant land use within the rural designation is agriculture. A significant portion of this acreage has development constraints related to topography, flood areas, or availability of potable water resources. The single family housing type is predominantly mobile or manufactured home (58%).
Infrastructure
With the exception of county roads serving the rural and farming areas, principal infrastructure within the Planning Area is provided by the City of Benton City, the Ki-Be School District, and the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT).

Municipal Services The city provides municipal water and sewer services, a city street network, and has two small public parks; one with tennis courts across from the elementary school, and one behind City Hall with benches, tables and a concession stand.

School Facilities There are approximately 1,653 students within the Ki-Be School District, which has Elementary, Middle and High School facilities located within the city limits. The Ki-Be School District provides the aforementioned grades in facilities off of Horn Road (SR 225). The elementary and middle schools are at a location separate from the high school.

Major Transportation WSDOT provides and maintains a Park-and-Ride lot at the full interchange of State Highway 225 and I-82. This interchange serves as the main entrance to the city. A bridge on SR-225, adjacent to the interchange, carries traffic over the Yakima and north through the city. North of the city, SR-225 converges with, and parallels the river on its west bank, all the way to SR-240 on the Hanford Reservation’s southern boundary. Horn Rapids Park is a county park located on the river. The Park extends along approximately seven miles of river frontage to the intersection of SR-225 and SR-240. The park does not have infrastructure or facilities at this time.

Principal county roads in the Planning Area are: Lower River Road, which extends through the city’s north boundary and parallels the west side of the Yakima River to converge with SR-225 just upstream of the Horn Rapids County Park; Old Inland Empire Highway, which parallels the north side of the Yakima River extending westerly from SR-225 in Benton City to Whitstran and Prosser; SR-224 a western route from the I-82 Interchange with SR-225 to West Richland, and Badger Canyon Road, which extends south from I-82 through Kiona and Badger Canyon to the cities of Richland and Kennewick.

Existing Land Use
The Benton City-Kiona Rural Planning Area has a total of 23,708 acres (37 sq. mi,) which represents twelve percent of the land use in the Rattlesnake Planning Region. The predominate land use is agriculture (68%). However, within that category approximately 55% is rangeland or undeveloped and only about 20% is irrigated agriculture.

Within the Planning Area, lands currently designated for unincorporated rural residential use total 18,451 acres, and range in density from one dwelling unit per acre to one per five acres. Acreage within the City of Benton City and its Urban Growth Area total 1,949 acres. Land use within the city is characterized by low-density residential development located around a defined urban center.
The Preferred Land Use Plan

The Preferred Land Use Plan Map drafted for the Rural Area by the Benton City-Kiona Rural Planning Advisory Committee was adopted in 1996 and updated in 2006. The following are allocations of the principal land uses:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>Residential</td>
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<td>Commercial</td>
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<td>Industrial (light)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>5,233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Land Use Map for Benton City-Kiona is shown in the Land Use Element, Chapter 4, Map 4.2.

BENTON CITY-KIONA RURAL AREA VISION, GOALS, AND ACTIONS

The Benton City-Kiona Citizens Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following “Vision”:

"The Benton City-Kiona Rural Planning Area is a friendly, cooperative rural living area with green fields surrounded by preserved pristine environments, spare time recreation areas and a community of involved citizens with civic pride."

Benton City-Kiona Rural Committee

The Citizens Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following Planning Goals and Actions:

Note: Where an asterisk* appears, the action should be driven by the citizens committee.

GREEN FIELDS

GOAL: Preserve rural and agricultural living.
Action: Maintain rural residential densities.

GOAL: That the rural and agricultural character of the Benton City-Kiona rural planning area be maintained and protected.
Action: That non-agricultural related industry be located on sites unsuitable for food production and in areas where access problems will be at a minimum.
Action: In the event of a conflict between residential uses and the normal agricultural activities of a preexisting agricultural use, county support should be in favor of the agricultural use to the extent practicable.

GOAL: Expand employment opportunities.
Action: Create a stable, balanced community economic situation by promoting non-polluting industries that are diverse, agriculturally based, and that process what we produce.

GOAL: Preserve the natural beauty and character of the Benton City-Kiona rural area.
Action: Designate low density living areas (2, 2.5, 5, & 10 acres) which provide for small scale agricultural use**.
Action: Include a provision in the Rural Lands Element of the Comprehensive Plan that encourages cluster development and provides
open space.
Action: The inclusion of landscaping techniques into the County’s Administrative Design Manual that includes various low maintenance desert landscaping and lists trees and vegetation which is adaptable to the County’s arid climate.

**In 2007, the Board of County Commissioners generally rejected designations of less than the RL 5 as inconsistent with the GMA.

**SPARE TIME RECREATION**

**GOAL:** Preserve and enhance the area’s regional parks and natural areas that provide a variety of outdoor recreational activities.
Action: That excess county land should be traded or sold to acquire additional parklands or to provide necessary maintenance or improvements to the county's existing parks.
Action: That state park enhancement programs and grants be utilized to leverage private donations to support and maintain park projects.
Action: Enforce litter laws and keep parks clean.

**GOAL:** Plan for a system of recreational opportunities (trails, parks, boating, etc.), that connect communities and allow public access yet provide protection for the environment.
Action: That county parks and recreation programs be coordinated with those of the city to avoid duplication of services.
Action: Acquire the abandoned Union Pacific Railroad Property for use as a pedestrian, equestrian and bike path.

**CIVIC PRIDE**

**GOAL:** To assure residents will live in areas that are clean, quiet, and non-polluted.
Action: County Commissioners enact and enforce an ordinance to clean-up trash and hulk vehicles and equipment.
Action: Prohibit the burning of household garbage.
Action: Designate a county dump (landfill) and recycling center.
Action: Yard lights should be shielded or directed in a way as not to cause a nuisance.

**FRIENDLY, COOPERATIVE RURAL LIVING**

**GOAL:** Create a “whole life” living area that allows peace and quiet, preserves the farm heritage and rural character and nurtures children, families and retired people.

**IN VolvEMENT**

**GOAL:** Preserve rural freedom, opportunity, property rights, and values.

**GOAL:** To continue a citizen involvement program that insures the opportunity for full citizen participation in public decision-making.
Action: That citizens be provided with information through mailing lists and the news media to allow maximum
citizen involvement during the land use decision-making process.

**PRESERVE PRISTINE ENVIRONMENT**

**GOAL:** Recognize and protect the Yakima River as a wonderful and important resource.

- **Action:** Protect the banks and undergrowth of the river.
- **Action:** Stop industrial and agricultural pollution of the river.
- **Action:** Keep cattle off the river, except for designated water sources.
- **Action:** Conserve water, use new techniques to irrigate.
- **Action:** Keep density to rural standards.

**GOAL:** Preserve the river in order to protect wildlife habitats, the river, the desert, wetlands, wildlife and to provide clean air, water, sky.

- **Action:** Protect and enhance riparian corridors.

**GOAL:** Protect the desert environment.

- **Action:** Keep off-road recreational vehicles off shrub steppe habitats.
- **Action:** Designate significant shrub steppe areas and protect them by performance standards.

The Planning Area contains the cities of West Richland, Richland and areas of southwest Kennewick. Due to the size of the urban boundaries in this Planning Area, and their less than coherent configuration, the rural lands are scattered enclaves of unincorporated lands whose residents live in relative geographic isolation from those in other unincorporated areas.

The lands and terrain within the Richland-West Richland Rural Planning Area are varied and rich in natural features, wildlife, and beauty. The Yakima River is a primary feature which flows through the Planning Area. Visually, the river is a green ribbon starkly contrasted against a horizon of golden desert, textured by plays of light and sky. The river lays below a pattern of basaltic uplifts known as Rattlesnake, Badger, Candy and Red Mountains, Thompson and Goose Hills, and the north face of the Horse Heaven Hills as it slumps and fans downward to the ancient river bed of Badger Canyon.

At Horn Rapids on the Yakima River, the relatively thin riparian corridor characteristic of the river's upper reaches within Benton County gives a last concession to the encroaching desert sage and bunch grass, then expands into a wide complex of floodways and floodplains overlain by a weave of remnant meanders, wetlands, and riparian thickets. These characteristics remain and expand in width through the Barker Ranch and West Richland area, thinning.
somewhat at the Van Giesen Bridge in West Richland, but persist all the way downstream to enlarge again before spreading massively as an alluvial delta into the Columbia River. The delta is a complex of channels, islands, wetland/riparian areas and open waters periodically turned to mud flats by the rise and fall of the McNary Dam pool. This complex extends all the way downriver to the area known as "The Wye."

**History**

The early Indian inhabitants of the Richland-West Richland area lived along the Yakima River known by the Indians as "Tapteil", meaning narrow river. The first white men of record to visit this area were those of the Lewis and Clark Expedition. They mapped this great western branch of the Columbia River for which they adopted the Indians' name "Tapteil".

Early fur traders ferried across to the west bank of the Columbia River to cut hay on the lowland meadows and to graze horses on the lush bunch grass. They followed a trail on the west bank northward along the "Indian road". Today the north Hanford Highway (SR-240) follows this route north from the Horn of the Yakima River. The trail lies in the valley of Cold Creek which crossed through what the pioneers called Pleasant Valley and led to the Selah Valley and the upper Yakima River.

Cattlemen began arriving in the fall of 1860. In what we know today as the Richland area they grazed their cattle in "Grants Meadows". By 1861 the area was producing the hay for a freight and stage line that ran through what today is Franklin County.

In 1875, Smith Barnums Place at the mouth of the Yakima was made a station on the mail route running from Wallulla up the Yakima Valley. In anticipation of the Northern Pacific branch, Ben J. Rosencrance brought his bride Mary to his homestead near the Richland "Wye" in 1880. There they developed a stagecoach station. Ben began accumulating the horses to be used on the "scrapers" that turned dirt in the railroad construction. He was one of the first to raise horses on a large scale. The railroad also was selling land from its grant at 50 cents per acre and Ben bought up a sizeable chunk of that where the City of Richland stands today.

The early settlers along the river conceived the beginnings of irrigation by putting in water wheels with ditches leading from them that carried water from the river to gardens and orchards. Landowners on the north side of the Yakima between its mouth and the Horn worked out a cooperative plan to build a canal that would serve them all. Among the sponsors were the McNeills, the Souths, the Lockwoods, Joe Baxter, and Dr. Charles Cantonwine.

Two new school districts were formed in 1889, the Richland district and the White Bluffs district (the town of White Bluffs being on what is now the Hanford Reservation and not a part of this Planning Region).

Richland was known at the time as Grants Meadows and was a point on the riverboat schedule where they picked up bailed hay for downriver markets. In 1892 Nelson Rich of Prosser and Howard Amon of Richland

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4 Based on information from "Benton County a Glimpse of the Past", Benton County Historical and Pioneer Association 1967.
formed a “Benton Land and Water Company”.

June 7, 1905, a plat for the town of “Benton” was filed, and the following October the first post office was started, with William R. Lamb as postmaster. Records show the name “Benton” was changed January 3rd 1906, to Richland, after a civic leader and stalwartly gentleman from Prosser, Nelson Rich. In 1906, T. E. McClosky started The Richland Advocate, a newspaper that stayed in business until the original town of Richland was absorbed in the Hanford Project in 1943.

Custom and Culture
The custom and culture within the Richland-West Richland Rural Area is as diverse as the landscape over which it exists. Though historically its roots were in agriculture like the rest of the county, today it is distinctly different than that of the other four Rural Planning Areas of the county: commercial agriculture is not a foundation stone; to a large extent the employment base is non-farm; average income is relatively high; and the percentage of site built versus manufactured or mobile homes is higher than in other rural planning areas. Because the rural areas within the Planning Area are widely dispersed and isolated from each other by the pattern and size of three intervening cities, there is not a coherent "sense of community", such as within the Paterson-Plymouth, or Prosser-Whitstran Areas. Instead, there are numerous and distinct rural enclaves or neighborhoods, often with homeowners associations to collectively look after the neighborhood interests.

However, there are a few seemingly common cultural characteristics throughout this rural area. For example, there seems to be an unequivocal insistence upon a low density rural development pattern and lifestyle; there is also a recognition that residential property values are in large measure dependent upon the maintenance of visual and aesthetic quality; and there is a desire to enjoy a rural lifestyle, but within a relatively close proximity to urban services and employment centers.

El Rancho Reata, on the south limit of the City of Richland, overlooking the Badger Rd./I-82 Interchange, is a discrete residential enclave of approximately 200 site built homes on 1.25 to 2 acre lots laid out over a landscape of small canyons and hilltops within a broken pattern of orchards and vineyards. In large measure the employment base here is Hanford or WPPSS. Though marginally of urban character relative to lot size, encroaching urban proximity, and its public water supply, Rancho Reata on balance is a rural rather than urban lifestyle. Rural characteristics are: the adjacent agriculture, along with the lack of domestic waste disposal systems, lack of sidewalks and gutters, and the number of horse pastures, outbuildings, and hay stacks.

Directly south of Rancho Reata, across the I-82 corridor lies the south end of Badger Canyon. The canyon extends roughly ten miles to the west. Though there are concentrated pockets of smaller lots within the canyon, it is sparsely developed with large rural residential lots (e.g. 5 acres) amidst much larger acreages of forage and row crop production under irrigation circles or wheel lines.
Approximately two miles north of Rancho Reata, on the north side of the interchange of I-182 and I-82, within the lee of the north slope of Candy Mountain, lies another large rural enclave just south of the City of West Richland. Here, open slopes and specialty crop agriculture on 5, 10 and 15 acre parcels is a rural characteristic which has only recently emerged; its fulfillment being hindered by the slow pace of gaining irrigation water well permits from the state.

A bit further to the northeast, across Kennedy Road and surrounded on three sides by the City of West Richland, lies the partially developed Willamette Heights; a rural residential neighborhood of site built housing on unimproved roads. The Willamette Heights extends to the bluff overlooking the river, where below lies the rural community of Riverside Drive. This is a built-out area of more established homes on one and two acre lots in a narrow strip of land “backstopped” by the Willamette Heights bluff and fronted by the Yakima River. Water and sewer is provided by individual wells and septic systems. Access can only be gained through West Richland to the north, as the Willamette Heights bluff is a formidable obstacle to road construction, though there is an irrigation district canal right-of-way which traverses the base of the bluff upslope of Riverside Drive. The right-of-way could eventually be converted to a road and/or non-motorized trail, should the irrigation district ever eliminate the canal.

The Valley View residential community is an established residential area lying on a bench of land overlooking the Yakima River Delta. The bench lies down slope of Columbia Drive just downstream of the Queensgate Road Interchange with I-82. The bench is isolated from its larger surroundings by a steep slope rising to its west, and by the publicly owned lands that constitute the undeveloped riparian and wetland environment of the river delta to the east, southeast and northeast. Two small wineries with vineyards are to the west. The community is approximately 80 acres in size, and currently contains 35-40 homes on parcel sizes ranging from 2 acre (right at the edge of the bench), to over 4 acres. The lifestyle is rural: livestock pasture and outbuildings, small orchards, gardening, and wildlife watching. The roads into Valley View dead-end within the community.

The Grosscup/Snively Road, Twin Bridges unincorporated area lies upstream of the West Richland Municipal Golf Course. Much of this area is characterized by older homes and dispersed forage or livestock production on river bottomlands or terraces. Overall density is relatively low due to the size and configuration of the Yakima River floodway and floodplain, which extend considerably upland of the normal high water line of the river, especially on the north side of the river where the old Barker Ranch of 2,400 undeveloped acres is predominantly in the floodway. Throughout this area (outside of the Barker Ranch) there are scattered areas of high ground upon which residences are typically located. Water and sewage disposal is private. This is an area of frequent flooding brought about by spring thaw in the Cascades, or when Chinook winds melt the Cascade snow pack under conditions of freeze in the lower
Yakima Valley.

The **Horn Rapids** rural area lies generally on the south bank of the Yakima between the river and the city limits of West Richland. Access is via Yakima River Drive and Harrington Road. Water and sewer service is provided on individual lots. Density varies from 1.25 acres to 5 and 10 acres.

The **Ruppert Road/Red Mountain** area lies on the north slope of Red Mountain. A few subdivisions of one acre plus lots has occurred within the Ridgecrest area, however water availability and poor soil conditions have limited rural densities to larger lot sizes.

**Demographics**

The population on lands designated as "Rural" (i.e., does not include lands zoned GMA Agriculture, or lands within the city or its UGA), within the Richland-West Richland Planning Area is currently estimated at 4,291 persons, residing in 1,601 households, at a density of one dwelling unit per 15.8 acres. This household per acre density is low, evidencing the fact that significant acreage within the rural designation has development constraints related to topography, flood areas, or availability of potable water resources. Some lands are also in productive agriculture.

**Top 5 Issues/Desired Improvements**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road Improvements</th>
<th>Plan/organize growth</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slow/enforce speeds</td>
<td>More police protection</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water/sewer services</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Richland-West Richland Survey Respondents**

The single family housing type is predominantly site built (75%), which is the largest percentage of site built homes in the unincorporated county.

**Infrastructure**

With the exception of county roads serving the rural and farming areas, principal infrastructure (municipal services) within the Planning Area is provided by the cities of West Richland, Richland, and Kennewick. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) provides regional infrastructure (182, I-82, State Routes 224, 225 and 240). Burlington Northern Railroad provides track through Badger Canyon. There are private water companies serving Rancho Reata and the Ruppert-Ridgecrest Road residential areas. Kennewick, Badger Mountain and Columbia Irrigation Districts serve the irrigation needs of the area.

The Richland School District is the primary provider of school services. The district provides K-12 facilities at numerous venues: Tapteal Elementary school in West Richland, Jason Lee, Chief Joseph, Sacajewea, Carmichael and Badger Mountain Elementary, and Hanford and Richland High schools in Richland.

**Existing Land Use**

The Red Mountain Planning Region contains 72,368 acres (113-sq. mi.). Of this, approximately 23,220 acres, 36-sq.
mi., or 32% of the region are considered "rural" (i.e., lands outside of incorporated areas or Urban Growth Areas). The predominate rural land use is rural residential dispersed with agriculture and open space; some of the latter is used for livestock grazing.

Preferred Land Use Plans
The Preferred Land Use Plan Map drafted for the Rural Area by the Richland-West Richland Rural Planning Advisory Committee was adopted in 1996 and updated in 2006. The following are allocations of the principal land uses:

RICHLAND-WEST RICHLAND PREFERRED LAND USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Acres</th>
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<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>22,504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>113</td>
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<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>175</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>428</td>
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The Land Use Map for Richland-West Richland is shown in the Land Use Element, Chapter 4, Map 4.5.

Richland-West Richland's Citizens Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following Vision:

"The Richland-West Richland Rural Planning Area is a place with a sense of community that preserves the rural setting and lifestyle. It is environmentally sensitive and preserves natural habitat, including the desert. The citizens here ask: how aesthetically pleasing is my community? -and are proud of the quality of life and variety of recreational opportunities geared for rural life. They proclaim "no additional bridges over the river," realizing that there will be growth in the cities, they plan for the pressures of future development".  

Richland-West Richland Rural Committee

RICHLAND-WEST RICHLAND RURAL AREA VISION, GOALS, AND ACTIONS

The Citizens Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following Planning Goals and Actions:

Note: Where an asterisk* appears, the action should be driven by the citizens committee.

QUALITY OF LIFE
GOAL: Promote high quality rural life by preserving the rural character.
Action: County to respond to problems, identify violators in publications.
Action: County enjoins cities to restrict industrial or industrial areas to urban growth areas.

QUALITY OF LIFE
GOAL: To assure residents will live within areas that are clean, quiet and non-polluted.
Action: County Commissioners to
enact an ordinance restricting nuisance noise, visual and light pollution.

Action: Control dust and noise.*

Action: Require development standards which recognize and protect the visual prominent geographical features, i.e., Candy Mountain, Red Mountain, Horseheaven Hills, Badger Mountain.

Action: Require underground utilities where feasible.

Action: Require yard light shields or deflectors in new developments that address light pollution.

Action: Require ordinance procedures where residents filing complaints shall be noticed by mail of the progress and results of enforcement actions.

**GOAL:** Efficient use of groundwater to maintain quality and quantity.

Action: Seek state assistance and technical resources to facilitate a groundwater study.

**GOAL:** Maintenance and development of areas similar in appearance and in land use.

Action: Encourage area property owner associations by including information on how to form them in the County’s Administrative Design Manual to be referenced by developers and interested parties.

Action: Upgrade the existing mobile home standards.

Action: Encourage developers to use creative site design planning which yields open space.

Action: Provide consistency in location, quality, type of homes, outbuildings and grounds within specific locations.

**GOAL:** Develop a comprehensive plan that implements state planning law, has stakeholder involvement, and includes development regulations.

Action: Low density

Action: Space/buffer zones between agricultural land, urban growth zones and city; preservation of open space, wildlife and vegetation in critical areas; types of industry.

Action: Address regional infrastructure needs (roads, sewage, power, water, etc.)

**RECREATION**

**GOAL:** Develop and improve Benton County parks for the daily enjoyment of county residents and visitors.

Action: County take action now to improve existing parks including shade trees, large grassy areas, improved roads, designated parking areas, toilets and garbage collection sites.

Action: Develop large parks (Horn Rapids etc..,) for camping, with play areas, fishing docks, nature trails for walking, jogging, biking or horseback riding.

**GOAL:** To have country roads wide enough or provide off-roads for
walking, jogging, horseback riding, from one area to another safely.
Action: County to assure that new roads or road rebuilding/repaving include 10 ft. wide shoulder on each side. Project bids to include these design parameters.
Action: Require that all new development be required to add such shoulder widths to the plat layout and development costs.

THE ENVIRONMENT
GOAL: Reserve wildlife and vegetation by maintaining carrying capacities of the floodway and floodplain.
Action: Establish database for critical areas.
Action: Maintain the diversity of habitat types: desert, river, wetlands, wildlife.
Action: Preserve shrub steppe habitat of significant resource value both biological and visual.
Action: Incorporate all development standards into the Comprehensive Plan.

GOAL: Transition of the Yakima to a Class B river with greenbelts.
Action: Identify problems and potential solutions.
Action: Identify polluters and work with them to control runoff (divert to holding ponds, more efficient irrigation methods, proper application of pesticides and herbicides, and planting greenbelts with plants that will filter waste products).
Action: Enforce regulations concerning earth moving and farming practices along the river.
Action: Budget manpower and money.

TRANSPORTATION
GOAL: New construction and improvements to the Transportation Element and other county public works projects be designed to be compatible with the rural character.
Action: County to develop a use agreement with Ben Franklin Transit and school district bus service for the use of transit on scheduled routes with service funded by user fees (passbook coupon system recommended).
Action: Ordinances and procedures which require adequate space for roadway widths, paths, buffers for noise, visual screening, shelter belts, and pedestrian crossings that protect wildlife habitats and mitigates significant impacts.

GOAL: No more bridge consideration until Benton County circulation plan for Richland-West Richland is fully funded.
Action: Use tax dollars for maintaining and improving current roads instead of new construction.

KENNEWICK-FINLEY RURAL PLANNING AREA

Location and Geographical Setting
The Kennewick-Finley Rural Planning
Area lies within the Finley/Hover Planning Region, which covers southeast Benton County below the Horse Heaven Hills from Columbia Center Boulevard in the north to Hover Park on the Columbia River in the south.

The geographic setting of the Kennewick-Finley Rural Planning Area is spectacular, having been sculptured by the massive glaciation, repeated flooding and tectonic uplifting which formed the landscape of the entire Central Basin.

Straddling the river just to the south of Finley stand the sentinel promontories of the Wallula Gap. The regulated flows of today's Columbia River languidly pass between them without hint that for prehistoric ages the Wallula Gap was the floodgate which alternately backed and released glacial waters of the cataclysmic Missoula floods.

Directly across the Columbia to the east is Lake Wallula and the delta of the Snake River, whose forceful merging with the Columbia created a miasma of backwaters, gravel bars and sediment mounds which underlies today's lowland scape of the Finley shore and near-shore areas.

History
Early history of the Finley Area records the meeting of Yelleppit, "The Great Chief" of the Walla Wallas, and the Lewis and Clark Expedition, in October 1805. They declined Chief Yelleppit's invitation for a celebration, but promised to do so on their return journey in the spring. Upon their return in April, Yelleppit met the party and renewed his invitation. He brought with him gifts of roast "mullets" and wood. The expedition stayed two nights at Yelleppit's village on the banks of the Columbia opposite the mouth of the Walla Walla River.

Two Rivers was a lively community in 1910-1922. It had two post offices (one for the Snake and one for the Columbia River traffic) which were closed in 1937. The streams provided irrigation for the Two Rivers and its neighbors, Burbank and Attalia. Peaches, grapes and alfalfa were produced abundantly.

Finley was named in 1906 after its first settler, George Finley. Finley was one of the first assigned poll tax collectors for Benton County, and did much of the grading for the Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railroad. The line followed the Columbia River in the area southeast from Kennewick. Its passenger and freight stops lined the horseshoe around Benton County via Hover, Yelleppit, Tomar, Mottinger, Berrian, Plymouth, Longview, Coolidge, Paterson, Sage, Whitcomb, and Carley. Finley was a community of twenty-five families who bought their land from the Washington Realty Company. At that time a four-room schoolhouse was built and a stagecoach ran through Finley with a route running from Kennewick to Hover.

The railroad arrived in Finley in 1907,
and shortly after a hotel, store, barbershop, and lumberyard were opened. In 1908 the train depot was built and a new two-story brick school, which was destroyed by fire in 1917.

Hover was another thriving town along the west bank of the Columbia River. The first ferry at Hover began operation in 1880. Wheat wagons from the Horse Heaven Hills made the long dusty trip to Hover to deliver their cargo to the “Harvest Queen” for markets downstream on the Columbia River.

Hover was platted in 1907, and named after Herbert Hover, a pioneer businessman who lived in Kennewick. It reached a population of 600. The town boasted a 32 room hotel (Hover Hotel), an opera house, which burned in 1916, a meat market, grocery store, three saloons and a school. The Hover townsite is submerged under the McNary Dam pool.

One of the first granges established in Benton County was the Finley Grange, in 1910.

**Custom And Culture**

The custom and culture of Finley is varied and difficult to characterize as of one characteristic or another. This is because Finley residents pursue a variety of occupations throughout the county and beyond. Relative to other areas of the county, the number of Finley residents employed at Hanford appears small.

Agriculture is a predominant land use, especially orchards on the sloping elevations rising to the Horseheaven crest. Cold storage facilities as well as industries that manufacture, sell and transport agricultural chemicals are located in south Finley. Accordingly, a significant element, though not the major portion of the custom and culture of the area is related to farm production and industry. Many Finley residents however, have non-farm jobs within the Tri-cities and at Hanford, and seek the country residential environment as a lifestyle choice separate from circumstances of employment.

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**Top 4 Issues/Desired Improvements**

- road improvements
- ordinance to clean up trash
- control/limit growth
- water/sewer improvements

Kennewick-Finley Survey Respondents

There are several centers in Finley where farmer and resident interaction can be found. One such area is the community center area found in the heart of Finley at the intersection of Game Farm Road and SR-397. The several block area includes the Riverview High and Middle schools, a small store, the Finley Grange Hall and several churches. There is also a commercial area at the intersection of Bowles Road and SR-397.

**Demographics**

The current population within the Kennewick-Finley Rural Planning Area is approximately 7,578 people. Finley is a stable community, with a surprisingly high percentage (76%) of residents having lived in the community more than 10 years. The housing supply numbers 2,526 units and is a mixture of old and new.

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6 Benton County Rural Survey 1993
manufactured and site built homes, with manufactured homes predominating\(^7\). The average density is one dwelling unit per 5.7 acres. The average household size is 3.0 persons.

**Infrastructure**

**School Facilities**

Sixty-five percent of the Kennewick-Finley Planning area reside in the Finley School District #52. The current population in the district is 4,925 residents in 1,641 households. The Finley School District operates three schools serving 1,030 students. The Riverview High School located on Lemon Drive, serves grades 9-12. Finley Middle School accommodates grades 7 and 8, and is located on Game Farm Road. The Finley Elementary School houses the Kindergarten through sixth grade, and is located on Cougar Road, off Nine Canyon Road. To further ease crowding, the district has plans to build an additional 14,000 square feet at the Middle School site.

**Transportation Facilities**

Major transportation infrastructure within the Kennewick-Finley Rural Planning Area consists principally of the Highway SR-397 and the Burlington Northern (B.N.) railroad line, which parallel each other in a narrow corridor extending from the Kennewick City limits in the northwest through the Finley rural area. South of Finley Road the railroad line trends south and west to follow the Columbia River shoreline to the coast. The SR-397/B.N. corridor is intersected at various points by east-west aligned arterial roads including 10th Street, and Haney, Finley, and Bowles Roads, which serve the collectors and neighborhood streets to and within the interior of Finley. The SR-397/B.N. corridor is the only direct ingress and egress to rural Finley. It is virtually the only truck route.

Due to the recent and projected increased industrial activity in South Finley, and the overall increase in regional rail traffic, to which B.N. has responded to by adding an additional line parallel to the existing track in Finley, both truck and rail traffic along the SR-397/B.N. corridor are expected to increase significantly within the next decade.

The close proximity of the railroad line to SR-397, and the intersection of the corridor by a narrow arterial at less than perpendicular angles on sharply elevated railroad crossings, restricts “sight” distances, and leaves little room for crossing vehicles to “queue” up outside of the traffic lanes. These factors, coupled with the fact that much of the truck and rail transport is carrying toxic chemicals and by-products, makes the corridor inadequate and potentially problematic relative to safety. The safety problems inherent to the existing roadway geometry of the SR-397/B.N. corridor must be addressed by Washington State Department of Transportation.

A recently constructed road development serving the Finley area extends SR 397 west and connects to I-82 at the Locust Grove Exit. At a cost of $21 million, the “Interiie” stretches 11 miles through the remote areas of Benton County connecting to the

\(^7\) 1,540 units/or 61%
several businesses along the river in Finley. The road is constructed to WSDOT standards with two 12 foot lanes and six foot shoulders. In the more urban area of Finley, a center turn lane has been added and an overpass constructed at the Burlington Northern railroad crossing at Riek and Piert Roads. 

This new route, SR 397, provides an alternate truck route for industrial and farm-to-market truck traffic to the Finley and south Kennewick industrial and agricultural areas, relieves traffic congestion in Kennewick by bypassing the populated Tri-Cities area, and also serves as a secondary access/emergency route for the residents of Finley. In 2009, the road extension was assumed by the state highway system.

The Citizen's Rural Advisory Committee requested that several road links in north and west Finley area be completed for routine circulation and emergency access purposes. These, and the newly constructed access route SR 397 are shown on the “Transportation Map” for the Finley Planning Region, Figure Map 8-3.

Barge facilities for waterborne transportation exist in south Finley as part of the existing infrastructure serving industry.

Existing Land Use
The Kennewick-Finley Rural Planning Area encompasses approximately 15,506 acres, or 53% percent of the Finley Planning Region.

Land uses consist of irrigated agriculture; including livestock, rural residential use, minor acreages of commercial lands, significant acreage of publicly owned shoreline (US Army Corps), and the largest resource of industrial uses and industrially designated acreage (1,432 acres), in the unincorporated county outside of the Hanford Reservation. The rural residential land use is the largest land designation in the planning area with 13,354 acres.

A rail corridor servicing the industrial uses is also an important land use within the Planning Area.

PREFERRED LAND USE PLANS
The Preferred Land Use Plan Map drafted for the Rural Area by the Kennewick-Finley Rural Planning Advisory Committee was adopted in 1996 and updated in 2006. The following are allocations of principal land uses:

KENNEWICK-FINLEY PREFERRED LAND USE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Land Use</th>
<th>Acres</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Residential</td>
<td>13,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial</td>
<td>1,432</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public</td>
<td>685</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Land Use Map for Kennewick-Finley is shown in the Land Use Element Chapter 4, Map 4.6.
KENNEWICK-FINLEY RURAL AREA
VISION, GOALS, AND ACTIONS

The Kennewick-Finley Citizens Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following Vision:

"The Kennewick-Finley rural area is a healthy community that wisely manages its assets and resources and preserves its rural character and country living."

Kennewick-Finley Rural Committee

The Kennewick-Finley Citizens Rural Planning Advisory Committee has identified the following Goals and Actions:

Note: Where an asterisk* appears, the action should be driven by the citizens committee.

QUALITY OF LIFE

GOAL: Preserve and improve the visual character and quality of our community lands.
Action: Educate and encourage awareness of sound land use practices;*
Action: County Commissioners enact and enforce an ordinance to clean-up trash and hulk vehicles and equipment;
Action: Organize and hold public seminars on good land use practices;*
Action: Promote media sponsorship of articles and commentaries on land use laws and practices;*
Action: Encourage adult education classes on land use laws and practices;*
Action: Enforce existing land use plan and ordinances.

GOAL: Create a land use plan with map, policies, and objectives which defines and facilitates the Finley rural area vision.

GOAL: Preserve surface and groundwater for the beneficial use of the rural area’s citizens and wildlife.
Action: Determine the capacity of the local groundwater basin and develop a plan for living within its limits.

GOAL: Enhance and protect our natural assets.
Action: Recognize and encourage the growing diversity of our flora and fauna.*
Action: Set aside and/or preserve our wetlands.
Action: Encourage the preservation of habitat.
Action: Mitigate conflicts between lands of contrasting uses by the use of buffers or other suitable methods
Action: Allow for “naturalization” of habitat (in addition to native species, habitat can consist of species not indigenous to the area, but which produce food and cover for birds, animals, reptiles, etc.).*

GOAL: Preserve rural character.
Action: Consider the feasibility of replacing the Board of Adjustment and use a professional hearing examiner to enforce zoning laws;*
Action: Develop a base rural residential density of 2.5 to 5 acres with specific areas designated one acre;**
Action: No annexation to Kennewick; stay a rural
**In 2007, the Board of County Commissioners generally rejected designations of less than the RL 5 as inconsistent with the GMA.**

**GOAL:** Healthy sense of community.

**Action:** Community bulletin board (at stores) and also community newsletter.*

**Action:** Create a map of historic events.*

**Action:** Establish incentives for community clean-up.

**Action:** Ease of disposal/free disposal days.

**Action:** Fences or trees for storage yards.

**GOAL:** Comfortable transportation with urban/rural linkage.

**Action:** Study feasibility of a taxi feeder service;

**Action:** Roads constructed, or reconstructed wide enough to include paths for jogging, biking, and horse back riding;

**Action:** Park and ride lot;

**Action:** Keep SR-397 (Chemical Drive) a rural community road);

**Action:** Reconfigure Chemical Drive (SR-397) to improve safety.