

Notes from Special study session on Okanogan County Comprehensive Plan August 1, 2018

(No information available regarding who was present at this meeting)

Notes are impressions and interpretations of the note taker. Every attempt is made to assure accuracy. Specific comments by the note taker are in italics and not part of the official record or intended in any way to be other than the impressions of the note taker. For officially approved minutes of Board of Commissioner meetings, normally published at a later date, see www.okanogancounty.org.

Alternatives:

Four alternative population projections were discussed. These projections were provided by the Office of Financial Management (OFM).

Andy Hover and Chris Branch repeatedly expressed their concerns that the population projections did not reflect actual increases in population, buildings and exempt wells. The projections are supposedly based on census information, but as Andy pointed out, the population of Winthrop can double over the weekend).

(Note: The population projections by OFM were made in 2007. So much has changed since then. The projections in the draft comp plan, pg. 10 only go to 2030, It was not clear how the 4 alternatives are projections to 2040, which would be the 20-year outlook.)

The projections by OFM suggest that the rate of increase in population will decrease between now and 2030.

Based upon these figures, the 4 Alternatives are:

- #1. The "No Action Alternative- Leave the 2014 Comp Plan in place.
- #2. Low- range population projections
- #3. Medium Range population projections
- #4. High -Range population projections

City Expansion Areas These would direct future population growth to occur close to transportation and existing infrastructure, the big three criteria being Roads, Water and Sewer. The cities would propose where the line would be drawn to define the CEA, but the County would be involved in the designation as well.

Zoning outside of the CEA would be Rural, except for those lands designated as Resource.

Public lands will not be designated as Resource Lands, as in the 2014 Comp Plan. Instead only private lands will be designated as Resource Lands (note: Perry expressed his frustration with this but said that was “his direction” from the BOCC).

Unincorporated towns are listed as “Neighborhood Commercial”. These would also have the potential to create “CEA’s” to absorb population increases. Mallott was brought up on the map as an example. Chris Branch asked if these towns had municipal water or sewers and the implications for CEAs, growth and higher densities. Perry said Mallot probably has irrigation water.(?).

CEA's: In alternatives #2 and #3, low and moderate population projections, expanded CEA’s probably not necessary, relying instead on “in-fill”. For alternative #4, there would be some need to expand CEA. Whether cities expand CEA or rely on “in -fill” is up to cities.

Remote Areas: Some superficial discussion by PH on subject of a proposal to do a development in a remote area: the zoning would have to be amended and go through “greater review”.Some discussion of “density bonuses” and clustering

PH: “years ago” there was an draft ordinance that would have provided for clustering and density bonuses but it was never adopted. *(Note: there is language in the draft comp plan about clustering but it was not mentioned or discussed in this meeting.)*

PH gave an example of a Variance that was granted in Monse to “accomodate reduced lot size...”

Traffic corridors: CB and AH: Concern that too much density along traffic corridors/ major highways could be problematic. Ellisforde given as an example of a town with a 60 mph highway running through it .

Rural Lands: AH recommends non-numerical language in Comp Plan that would designate less intense rural land designations as function of distance from cities.

RESOURCE LANDS: Map was projected of AG and Timber designations (with DOR?? codes). Agreed to designate Tunk Valley as Timber and Agricultural Resource Land.

Affordable Housing: AH and CB question where the issue of transient population growth is addressed in the comp plan.

CB mentions the possibility of increased pressure on land by 2nd home-owners could make land unaffordable to locals.

Scheduling:

AH Wants to be getting closer to Scoping and finding out what the public thinks about the maps and the Comp Plan.

CB Also identifies need to get public input to fine tune Comp Plan goals vs maps.

PH: Public comments under environmental review need to be responded to by BOCC (?).

PH: Some discussion about the steps remaining before adoption of Comp Plan. (

Note Taker Comment: (I didn't get all this straight: but it sure sounds like more than can be done before the end of the year)

*BOCC has to identify a preferred alternative. Public hearings before BOCC . Then goes to Planning Commission. There will be a draft EIS. This and draft comp plan will be up for public testimony/comment. Then back to BOCC which may make changes. Some changes can be accommodated in addendums.

Some discussion about exempt segregations (?)

The BOCC will meet again to continue discussion on Comp Plan at 3:00 on Tuesday, August 21st.

Perry will provide a map that shows Resource Designations, AG and Timber, with a Mineral Overlay. These will not change with Alternatives in population projections.

He will also provide maps with varying rural designations according to the different Alternatives based on the population projections .

PH also said he will also provide an environmental checklist.

Whatcom-Hirst: AH: comment about Whatcom-Hirst: People responded as if Whatcom-Hirst was the end of development, but actually it was a call for counties to do what was already required in the Planning Enabling Act: to protect quantity and quality of water.