

Appendix O

Comment Response Matrix

Benton County Comprehensive Plan Update Comment/Response Summary

Planning Commission Comments Received

September 12, 2017 to November 21, 2017

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
1	Population	Bilskis	Page 48, Section 3.7 – update text Population growth in Benton County from 2011 to 2016 grew at a rate reflective of the slow growth in the nation’s economy, the improved national economy of 2017 has provided a rebound in growth reminiscent of the growth in 2009.	Revise as noted
2	Guiding Principles	Bilskis	Page 61, Section 4.5.4.1 - update text 7. Develop county regulations and policies in full consultation with local governments that support federal and state regulations where they meet the needs of the local population and municipalities.	Revise as noted
3	Public Lands	JM	Page 43 Section 3.3.4 Public Land Designation The Public Lands (PR) – PR should be “PL” or just “P”	Revise as noted
4	Transportation	Debi Freudenthal (WSDOT)	We would like more information about the proposed comp. plan updates, specifically the traffic impact analysis supporting the EIS Addendum that details potential transportation impacts to SR 240 by the potential increased density (and how that relates to the mitigation measures, table Pg 19). How does this relate to existing facilities, currently proposed improvements by WSDOT, and LOS? Can we get additional information about where /how much increased density would occur, including traffic peak hour numbers? Let me know if I should contact someone in Public Works for this info instead.	The statements in the EIS addendum were general and qualitative based on Planning staff’s current experience with these areas, and without detailed supporting traffic analysis. As densities continue to increase in urban areas and as capacities remain unchanged on the high use routes identified, then peak hour issues will continue to be a problem until addressed. Traffic analysis information available from the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments and WSDOT, along with supporting analyses from city comprehensive plans will be reviewed and incorporated into findings for the final comprehensive plan and appendices.

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4	Continued: Transportation	Debi Freudenthal (WSDOT)		Applicable mitigation measures will also be identified, including measures the County could take, noting the County often has limited opportunity to mitigate effects, and the mitigation measures that the County would expect others to be responsible for.
5	Best available science	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	Draft Plan fails to use, consider, and appropriately incorporate best available science and information (a) regarding the identification and protection of critical areas (b) regarding the identification and protection of cultural resources, (c) to ensure that adequate water supplies are legally and physically available for development, and (d) to acknowledgement and planning for climate change. Further, YN DNR is concerned that the probable environmental impacts of the Draft Plan cannot be adequately assessed as required under the State Environmental Policy Act ("SEPA") in the absence of such information.	<p>The Comprehensive Plan is designed to set goals, policies, and actions for addressing the four areas identified. The level of detail noted for two areas will be developed as part of plan implementation: a) The critical areas information noted as missing is information that is developed through the County's critical areas code update currently underway, and b) the water supply information – this is currently determined at time of application, and this process will be further supported by the actions proposed in the plan to verify and mitigate for potential water resource impacts.</p> <p>For identification and protection of cultural resources, additional goals, policies, and actions are being added to the plan to further strengthen the County's efforts to identify and protect cultural and historic resources (see Comment #7 below).</p> <p>The EIS review is completed at a programmatic level, with more detailed environmental review occurring at the time of application or through subsequent environmental review that will tier off the comprehensive plan environmental review.</p>

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6	Critical Areas	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	YN DNR recommends a more robust set of Comprehensive Plan goals and policies to designate and protect critical areas. YN DNR submitted a separate letter addressing the concerns specific to Benton County's Draft Critical Areas Ordinance on October 16, 2017.	<p>The County is proposing to designate shrub-steppe habitat as an area of local importance in the draft Critical Areas Ordinance in response to the Yakama Nation's comment letter dated 10/16/17.</p> <p>Also add suggested new Policy under CA Goal 3 (Ch. 2.5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and designate habitats of local importance to protect locally important habitats and species under the County Critical Areas Ordinance.
7	Cultural Resources	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	YN DNR recommends a more robust set of Comprehensive Plan goals and policies and other regulations to identify and protect cultural resources. [Potential risk factors to consider include amount of proposed ground disturbance, the development site's risk rating and others.]	<p>Add new suggested language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR Goal 5: Identify, preserve, and protect historic, cultural, and archaeological resources found to be significant by recognized local, state, tribal or federal processes. <p>Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify known, recorded archaeological, cultural, and historic resources. Update and refine the local process for evaluating the significance of historic, cultural, and archaeological resources. Preserve areas that contain valuable historical or archaeological sites of federal, state, tribal, or local significance including those maintained in the DAHP database, areas known only to tribes and areas of higher risk potential. Maintain and enforce development code provisions that require conditioning of project approval on findings made by a professional archaeologist for development activities on sites of known cultural, historical, or archaeological significance.

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7	Continued: Cultural Resources	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prior to demolition, moving, or alteration to any designated historic, cultural, and archaeological landmark, ensure that due consideration is given to its preservation or, at a minimum, documentation of its historic, cultural, or archaeological value.
8	Cultural Resources	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	In order to protect cultural resources, Benton County should enter into a data-sharing agreement with DAHP so they will know where cultural resources are located or likely to be located.	The County will take steps to follow up with DAHP on this suggestion.
9	Cultural Resources	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	YN DNR recommends that the draft comp plan be revised to better protect cultural resources. including those which are known to Tribes but not identified on the DAHP database, and undiscovered cultural resources in areas that have been identified as ' high risk' or 'very high risk' by the DAHP predictive model.	See response to Comments #7 and #8.
10	Cultural Resources	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	For high-risk projects, professional cultural resources investigations or surveys may be warranted. Cultural resource surveys are specifically requested by the Yakama Nation for projects proposed within ¼ mile of a known site. Notification and the opportunity to comment on all professional cultural resource surveys completed should also be provided to both the Yakama Nation and DAHP to ensure professional survey and reporting guidelines are followed. YN DNR encourages Benton County to work with the Yakama Nation's cultural resources staff to develop specific revised language to the Comprehensive Plan, and associated regulations.	These suggestions will be considered as part of implementation of the goals and policies update as outlined in response to Comment #7. The County will follow up with the YN cultural resources staff for implementation input, as suggested. Additionally, the County's recently approved updated Shoreline Master Program goals, policies and regulations also provide additional protections for cultural resources in higher risk areas along the Columbia and Yakima rivers in the County.

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11	Water availability	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	<p>The Draft Plan fails to adequately address the County's obligations under the Growth Management Act and associated state law to ensure adequate water supplies are legally and physically available before approving new development.</p> <p>If implementing regulations are not yet developed, then interim regulations must be included in the County code to require that all new land use and development applications be required to show that water is both legally and physically available prior to any license approval.</p>	<p>The county follows current procedures established in state law and County code to verify water supply is legally and physically available for new development proposals. The County follows a procedure in accordance with RCW 58.17.110 and other applicable state laws and regulations, to ensure that appropriate provisions have been made for potable water supplies prior to the approval of any applicable development proposal that will rely on groundwater. The County reviews well logs and supplemental written record materials, verifying that potable water supplies are both legally and physically/factually available for the proposed development.</p> <p>Goals, policies, and actions in the draft Comprehensive plan have been updated to further emphasize steps the County will be taking to strengthen the process and technical foundation for verifying water availability. Implementation of the groundwater actions for addressing rural exempt water supply availability and mitigation plans for the Yakima basin portion of the County will begin in December 2017, even prior to the Comprehensive Plan adoption. The County has secured a consultant and will be establishing a coordination group with invitations extended to the Yakama Nation, Washington State Department of Ecology, the US Bureau of Reclamation, irrigation districts and others to participate on the group and provide technical input on the information the county will use to refine its rural exempt well water supply program. The first phase of this work is expected to be completed in 2018, and the County will also include in this phase an evaluation of an interim regulation that could be put in place for ongoing rural development that require exempt wells, while the longer-term program is being developed.</p>

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11	Continued: Water availability	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources		Once the science information is developed and a strategy formulated for addressing mitigation of groundwater withdrawals on the Yakima River in Benton County, then the County expects to also update development regulations consistent with the rural water supply strategy. This update is expected to occur in 2019 or 2020, as part of implementing the strategy.
12	Climate Change	Yakama Nation Department of Natural Resources	The Draft Plan fails to address climate change and its potential to contribute to or exacerbate the environmental impacts of proposed development. YN DNR suggests that Benton County review and incorporate within the Draft Plan either text from or a reference to the Yakama Nation's Climate Adaptation Plan. (Attached).	<p>Add this sentence in Section 4.5.2.1, after list of bullets near end of section: "Pressures on salmon and other aquatic species may be further exacerbated as increased variation in both ocean and freshwater hydrologic conditions occurs from changes in climactic conditions."</p> <p>Add these sentences to the end of the first paragraph in section 4.5.3.1: "Efforts continue both for the Columbia and Yakima River basins to address water management to meet in and out of stream needs, and manage hydropower and other river operations. The Columbia River Treaty renegotiations may further modify operations on the Columbia and this could impact river uses and how flow is managed for fisheries and out of stream water uses. Additionally, climatic variation could affect the levels of snowpack in the upper Columbia and in particular in the lower elevation mountains of the Yakima River, and the associated timing of runoff, further potentially impacting the amount of water available for fish, farms and cities in the spring and summer months, and existing and future drought resiliency,"</p>

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13	Water Rights	Mark Nielson (FCD)	<p>Page 61, Section 4.5.5.1 - update text</p> <p>In September 2011, the U. S. Geological Survey released the final report of a 12-year, multi-million-dollar study confirming that <u>some</u> groundwater and surface water are directly connected, which means <u>some</u> groundwater withdrawals <u>have the potential to can</u> impair senior surface water rights.</p> <p>Ecology, in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the Yakama Nation, has determined that groundwater management <u>in some areas may will</u> need to occur in order to protect senior water rights, flows for fish, and economic development.</p>	Revise as noted
14	Water Rights	Mark Nielson (FCD)	<p>Page 62, Section 4.5.5.3 - update text</p> <p>It is understood that Yakima River Basin <u>some</u> surface and ground water <u>in the Yakima Basin</u> are hydrologically connected.</p>	Revise as noted
15	Water Rights	Mark Nielson (FCD)	<p>Page 63, Section 4.5.5.3.1 - update text</p> <p>...use. <u>The permit well exemption also allows pumping of 5,000 gallons per day for industrial use, 5,000 gallons per day for irrigation up to ½ acre, and an unlimited amount for stock water purposes.</u> Permit...</p>	Revise as noted
16	Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas	Mark Nielson (FCD)	<p>Page 66, Section 4.6.2.2 - update text</p> <p>Nitrate contaminations occur principally in upper aquifer wells drilled in the lower lying areas of the County. The spatial correlation between elevated concentrations of nitrates in groundwater and irrigated lands <u>croplands</u> indicates that the major source of contamination is applied fertilizers for on irrigated <u>lands including crops, lawns, golf courses, parks, etc.</u> crops.</p>	Revise as noted

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17	Positive Feedback	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	<p>We especially liked the following aspects of Benton County's Comprehensive Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User friendly design • Supporting technical documentation • Strong polices regarding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Economic development and recognition of the importance of the agricultural economy ○ Encouraging the assessment of suitability for future development and the underlying capability of the land ○ Future demand for alternative energy vehicles and specific policies in support of anticipated changes in the transportation sector ○ Principles designed to make wise use of water resources • Recognition of the importance of land use compatibility with military training routes and installations • Future considerations in the Land Use Element • Detailed assessment of agricultural resource lands of long-term commercial significance 	Comment noted
18	City of Prosser UGA	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	<p>We would like to express support for the City of Prosser's request to amend their urban growth boundary, which is discussed in the Land Use Element. The City's underlying analysis and decision to retract portions of the urban growth area is based on revised growth figures and a careful consideration of the cost of providing urban services. The City provided an analysis and request that is in the overall public interest of the community, and reflects the goals and recommendations of the GMA.</p>	Comment noted

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19	Housing	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	Suggestion for strengthening the plan: The County should consider expanding the allowances for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) to provide additional options for affordable housing, and to expand the types of housing available in Benton County. The current allowances appear to be limited to attached ADUs for individuals with a disability or infirmity. ADUs can serve an important role in ensuring a variety of housing options at different price points, in addition to providing opportunities for residents to age in place.	Under HE Goal 1, add policy 7 to read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider accessory dwelling units as an affordable housing option and look for flexible and innovative ways of integrating ADU's into single family residential zones. Under Housing Element, subsection 6.4.2 Housing Types, Accessory Dwelling Units, add language as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The County plans to review its zoning code for provisions to allow accessory dwelling units in its single family residential zones in addition to its current code provision of allowing accessory dwelling units for disabled, infirm, or elderly residents.
20	Physical Activity	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	Suggestion for strengthening the plan: The County's Land Use Element should include more specific language regarding planning approaches that increase physical activity consistent with RCW 36.70A.070(1). The County might consider making specific references to how multimodal options in the Transportation and Parks and Recreation Element encourage physical activity, and how that relates to the Land Use Element.	Active lifestyle is addressed in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TE Goal 2, which states: Provide an integrated network of trails and paths for non-motorized circulation throughout rural areas connecting to urban trails and paths to promote active lifestyles. PR Goal 1, Policy 2, which states: Encourage the development of a system of bicycling, hiking, recreational, and equestrian trails. Under LU Goal 1, add new policy 5 to read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage multi-modal connectivity between land uses that enhances community access, and promotes healthier and more active lifestyle for residents.
21	Population	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	Suggestion for strengthening the plan: Benton County adopted the high Office of Financial Management (OFM) population projection. We encourage close monitoring of growth trends considering the medium series is OFM's most likely projection.	Add suggested language in Section 3.7: Population Projections for Benton County, end of the second paragraph to read: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> County will review the future growth trends and adjust population projections if necessary.

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22	LAMIRDs	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	<p>Concern that should be addressed: The County should review the original designation of limited areas of more intensive rural development (LAMIRD) in the previous comprehensive plan and maintain the designation of Type I, Type II, or Type III LAMIRDs as originally established. The description of areas as "equivalent" to LAMIRDs in the Land Use Element (Section 3.3.2.2) does not appear to meet the requirements in WAC 365-196-425. We recommend that you amend the section to clarify that rural community centers are LAMIRDs and that RL-1 lands are not, but may develop at an intensity similar to a LAMIRD based on historical development patterns and plats approved prior to the GMA.</p>	Revise as suggested
23	Fully Contained Communities	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	<p>Concern that should be addressed: The Land Use Element contains a new goal and underlying policies to allow fully contained communities in agricultural or industrial areas. We recommend removing LU Goal 5, the underlying policies, and any amendments to the development regulations that allow fully contained communities in agricultural or industrial areas. The requirements for fully contained communities are expressed in RCW 36.70A.350, and include features such as new infrastructure, impact fees, transit-oriented site planning, affordable housing, and provisions to mitigate impacts to designated resource lands.</p> <p>A fully contained community requires a significant investment in new infrastructure and other services. Allowing fully contained communities in industrial or agricultural zones would likely undermine County goals for economic development, and result in compatibility issues with adjacent industrial or agricultural operations.</p>	Update per comment

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24	Population	William Simpson (Department of Commerce)	Concern that should be addressed: Section 6.3 in the Housing Element states that the “high” series estimates indicate that Benton County can expect a population increase of 91,519 by the year 2037. The figure 91,519 is inconsistent with the projection identified in the Land Use Element, which is 86,609. You should review and correct these figures prior to final adoption and make any necessary adjustments to the calculations in the Housing Element.	Update to 6.3 Current Trends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benton County can expect a population increase of 91,519 <u>86,609</u> by the year 2037. The unincorporated County’s 19 percent allocation of the countywide 2037 Population projection is estimated to be 19,090 <u>18,135</u> additional people. At an estimated unincorporated ratio of 2.7 residents per household, this increase in population would require up to 7,070 <u>6,716</u> new homes in the next 20 years
25	Maps	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	It would be very useful to have major roads, streams, and the Yakima river on the map to help get a better feel of where the land classifications are located in relation to traffic and sensitive wetlands.	Maps will be updated to reflect this suggested change.
26	Rural Lands	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	I like the rural transition designations and would like to see Benton County employ more if possible along the Dallas Road, Badger Canyon, and 1-84 corridors as these seem to be a great potential for Benton County to capitalize on future growth. I believe there are lots of people who are tired of living in fish aquariums and want a little space and one acre lots are perfect. See if you can get it up to 2%. You probably have a better feel of where the hot beds are for development in and around the County.	County has identified areas that meet criteria based on current conditions. Future designation updates will be considered based on future conditions.
27	Rural Lands	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	The Rural Resource lands are a great opportunity to put lands that are generally too steep for agriculture into a class that allows individuals who are determined to be able to have an opportunity at private small farms. I would like to see if this could be more inclusive to match topo maps to include lands that are 10% grade or more into these areas, realizing that places like Badger Mountain, and tops of others may be best served in reserves.	Rural resource lands were reviewed subsequent to comment, and areas around Finley were reevaluated. Additional areas near Finley were added while others were removed to better meet criteria. Rural resource lands are designed to protect steeper slopes and ridgetop areas among others.

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28	Agricultural Lands	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	GMA Ag Lands that are small parcels less than or equal to 50 acres should probably be in a different land use class. Either Rural Resource or Rural Remote and let the topos dictate which would be the best designation. This is where roads and access are important. If adjacent to a County road, I would opt for Rural Remote designation particularly if there is higher use in the immediate areas.	Some parcels equal to or less than 50 acres with agricultural activity are included in Rural Resource or Rural remote. However, parcels larger than 10 acres with agricultural activities that are of long-term commercial significance have been designated as GMA Agriculture consistent with the RCW and WAC requirements.
29	Subdivision	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	Other comments which are not Comprehensive Plan Update, but I would like to address are: I would like to see a renewal option for expired or expiring plats and subdivisions in the County. (I know the State hates this.) There would be a fee for this option and could be a source of income to the County.	Comment noted – further discussion on this topic can be scheduled with the Planning Commission.
30	Transportation	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	Other comments which are not Comprehensive Plan Update, but I would like to address are: Private road traffic ratings. I would like to see a revisit of this and look at having a road distinction of paved verses County minimum standards traffic ratings, so that if a developer or individual wishes to pave than there is a benefit to their cost ratio. In 2011 the private roads in the County changed from no limit to a limit of 12 residences. I supported this decision at the time, but also said during the meeting that I thought if the roads were paved that I would not have a problem with it increased to 50 residences. At the time, Mike Shuttleworth was referring to a private road in Prosser that was gravel which had almost 100 residences on it and it was a source of great contention for the County Roads Department. It is my opinion that in trying to correct this problem that the County's Road Policy pendulum has swung too far the other way and now is greatly and adversely affecting future land developments in the County on paved private roads.	Comment noted – further discussion on this topic can be scheduled with the Planning Commission and in coordination with the County Roads Department. Comment will be shared with County Roads Department and the Planning Department will continue to work with them to evaluate private roads.

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31	Water Rights	Martin J. Sheeran (Benton County Planning Commission Chairman)	<p>Other comments which are not Comprehensive Plan Update, but I would like to address are:</p> <p>The Thurston County decision commonly referred to as the Hirst Decision is a judicial decision that will have great problematic ramifications for Benton County and the other Counties in the State. I believe this decision was a judicial shot at the heart of the Eastside Counties that the State intends to control our growth whether we agree or not. The fact that most municipalities are flush with water rights and the State views the municipalities in a different light than County government is obvious. My recommendation would be to talk with the DOE Yakima Office and see if the County can get additional water rights. Also, perhaps talk with Rick Simon (Richland) and see if the City is willing to turn loose of some of their hundreds of thousands of gallons of water rights for the County. I can talk with you further on how I know this is so.</p>	<p>Additional goals, policies, and actions have been included in the plan addressing water rights and rural exempt wells to support future development in the unincorporated area of the County. The County expects to begin implementing actions as soon as the comprehensive plan is approved.</p>
32	Critical Areas (wetlands)	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Page 65, Section 4.6.1 Wetlands:</p> <p>This section refers to the July 2010 "Focus on Irrigation-Irrigation Influenced Wetlands" sheet issued by Ecology and largely repeats statements directly from that sheet. This Ecology publication does not constitute best-available science and should not be referenced as authoritative regulatory guidance in the Comprehensive Plan.</p> <p><i>This comment provides additional detail on why the above sheet is not an applicable reference.</i></p>	<p>The County has found this to be a helpful resource document in providing regulatory guidance for conditioning development activity. For irrigation water that results in the creation of riparian habitat and wetlands, the County protects the associated riparian habitat and wetlands from adjacent development, regardless of whether the source is from an irrigation district or individual water user.</p> <p>See also response to Comment #34.</p>

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33	Critical Areas (streams)	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Page 70, Section 4.6.5, Fish and Wildlife Conservation Areas: This section acknowledges that many "streams" in Benton County are dry washes that do not contain aquatic species habitat since natural flows only occur during large runoff events. This section also brings up the argument developed during the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) process that 3rd order streams in irrigated areas are likely to carry ephemeral flows. A number of dry washes in Benton County are used as irrigation drains by irrigation districts such as KID (see Appendix A: Map Folio, Figure 13 - Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas), and only contain seasonal or even perennial water due to their status as an important component of the irrigation conveyance system. Regardless of stream order or flows found in dry washes and swales, RCW 36.70A.030(5) excludes certain irrigation features from designation as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, and this section of the draft comprehensive plan could be worded better to acknowledge this statutory exemption.</p>	<p>Clarifications will be made to the text. See also response to Comment #34.</p>
34	Critical Areas (streams)	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Appendix A, Map Folio; Figure 9, Wetlands, Rivers, and Streams, and Figure 13, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas: These maps depict KID irrigation drains as streams, including Zintel Canyon Drain in Kennewick, the AP Lateral Drain, and portions of the Amon Wasteway. As mentioned above, RCW 36.70A.030(5) excludes "artificial features or constructs as irrigation delivery systems, irrigation infrastructure, irrigation canals, or drainage ditches that lie within the boundaries of and are maintained by a port district or an irrigation district or company" from designation as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. These features, including KID irrigation drains, should be removed from the maps.</p>	<p>For irrigation drains that follow natural topographic lows and result in the creation of riparian habitat and wetlands, or other irrigation water management that results in the creation of riparian habitat and wetlands, the County protects the associated riparian habitat and wetlands from adjacent development. The County's Voluntary Stewardship Program, once approved (in 2018) is expected to protect these areas from agricultural activities.</p> <p>The County does not regulate irrigation district construction or operational activities associated with drains, wasteways, canals or other water</p>

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34	Continued: Critical Areas (streams)	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)		<p>management facilities, although the County does encourage irrigation districts to avoid impacts to wetlands and riparian areas when possible. The County acknowledges that when these facilities are lined or piped and associated hydrology changes occur that reduce riparian or wetland habitat then the critical area functions also change, typically through reduced or in some cases eliminated function.</p> <p>The County has added the following note to the critical area maps per KID's comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • R.C.W. 36.70A.030 (5) states that Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas do not include such artificial features or constructs as irrigation delivery systems, irrigation infrastructure, irrigation canals, or drainage ditches that lie within the boundaries of, and are maintained by, a port district or an irrigation district or company. Any mapped streams or habitat areas associated irrigation systems consistent with this provision are not considered designated Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.
35	Reservoirs	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Page 58, Section 4.5.2.1.2, Yakima River: While the Yakima Project does technically have six reservoirs, really only five of them are major. Clear Creek Reservoir is quite small (5,300 acre-feet) and is used primarily for recreation. During the 2015 drought, Clear Creek Reservoir was not drawn down as a source of irrigation water, even though supplies for pro-ratable irrigators were curtailed to 47 percent. In addition, as noted, the reservoirs can also contribute to higher summer flows in the Yakima River compared to historical conditions, especially in the upper river below the reservoirs. However, the opposite may be true in some reaches below diversions, such as the reach between Prosser Dam and Chandler Power and Pumping Plant.</p>	Clarifications will be made to update this discussion.

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36	Water Temperature	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Page 59, Section 4.5.2.1.2, Yakima River:</p> <p>Higher temperatures in the lower Yakima River may not be caused by lower flows, as the water is already warm by the time it enters Benton County. Studies have shown that adding flow to the lower river does not significantly lower the temperature of the water, which is correlated instead to ambient air temperatures.</p>	<p>Revise the discussion in this section to read:</p> <p>The current condition of the Yakima River, especially in its lower reaches in Benton County, is degraded and poor due to high ambient air temperatures, lower summer flows, non-point source pollution, and areas of high water temperatures, all of which are functionally related.</p>
37	Water Rights	Set Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Page 61, Section 4.5.5, Focus on the Yakima River Basin:</p> <p>The first paragraph mentions that Kennewick and Roza irrigation districts get large portions of their water under a 1905 Yakima River water right. To expand on this, Roza gets 100% and KID gets 84% of their respective water supplies from a Yakima River water right with a priority date of May 10, 1905. This water right is "pro-ratable," which means that in years of drought these supplies are curtailed to an amount that is based upon total water supply available. In 2015, Roza received only 47% of their water supply; KID received more overall due to the ability to take all waters above the flow target at Prosser Dam, but still experienced substantial shortages during the hot summer months due to significant swings in river levels. KID is currently working with the Bureau of Reclamation and other stakeholders to electrify the hydraulic pumps at Chandler that supply most of the KID. This project will eliminate significant shortages for KID water users, and will also provide some water security for other pro-ratable water users by eliminating the need for KID to call upon storage water in the future. Electrification of the pumps will also provide an opportunity to provide more instream flow in the Yakima River between Prosser Dam and Chandler.</p>	<p>Revise paragraph 4.5.5.1 to read:</p> <p>A large portion of the Benton County irrigated agriculture within the Yakima River Basin, including both the Kennewick (KID) and Roza (Roza) irrigation districts, receives irrigation surface water through the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation's Yakima Project. Roza and KID have 1905 water rights that are junior and subject to pro-rationing in droughts and other low water years. In years of drought these supplies are curtailed to an amount that is based upon total water supply available. Roza only received 47 percent of its supply in the 2015 drought, and KID also had a reduced supply. These reduced supplies can have significant impacts on crops and the regional economy.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
38	Water Rights	Seth Defoe (Kennewick Irrigation District)	<p>Pages 63 & 64, Section 4.5.5.4, Developing a Yakima River Basin Rural Water Supply Program:</p> <p>KID appreciates the County's recognition of groundwater development issues in the Yakima basin, and the potential impacts of groundwater withdrawals on instream flows and on other more senior water users. As you are aware, KID claims ownership of the artificially stored groundwater found in Badger Coulee and other areas within the district where it can be shown that seepage from KID canals and return flows from applied KID irrigation have contributed water that is stored in the shallow aquifers. KID requests that the County work in coordination with KID and other stakeholders on developing the program to address rural water supplies.</p>	The County acknowledges KID's ownership assertion for stored groundwater in Badger Coulee and other areas, and considers this assertion in the evaluation of development proposals when determining if water is physically and/or legally available.
39	Development	Ron C. Cowin (Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District)	<p>Buildings, permanent structures, trees, etc. will not be allowed within SVID easement or right-of-way.</p> <p>Non-permanent improvements such as fences, pipelines, landscaping, etc. will not be allowed within SVID easement or right-of-way unless prior approval is obtained through the permitting process.</p> <p>Runoff and/or crossings into or across any SVID facility will not be allowed unless prior approval is obtained through the permitting process.</p>	Comment noted
40	Critical Areas (streams)	Lori Brady (Sunnyside Valley Irrigation District)	<p>Appendix A, Map Folio, Figure 9 it appears SVID's Joint Drain Facilities have been designated as wetlands, rivers, and streams. In addition, on Figure 13 they have been identified as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. Under the current Critical Area Ordinance all irrigation district distribution facilities, waterways and drains are exempt from the definition of a wetlands because they are non-natural water courses. It is also stated in the current Critical Area Ordinance that Fish and wildlife conservation areas do not include such artificial features or constructs as irrigation delivery systems, irrigation infrastructure, irrigation canals, or drainage ditches that lie within the boundaries of and are maintained by a port district or an irrigation district or company. It should be clear that those non-natural water courses are categorically exempt and should be removed from both maps.</p>	See response to Comment #34.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
41	Transportation	Paul Gonseth (WSDOT)	The Draft Comprehensive plan states that peak hour congestion occurs in the urban areas, including SR 240. However, no additional information, data or modeling is provided about state transportation facilities in the draft plan or appendices.	See response to Comment #4. Updated projections for LOS for County roads were provided as part of this update.
42	Transportation	Paul Gonseth (WSDOT)	<p>The EIS Addendum, Transportation/Circulation element identifies some potential impacts of the Proposed Action in Appendix B. However, there are no specifics. What are the transportation demand management approaches to address the congestion? Where and on how much will SR 240 be affected? Where are the areas of increased density and how much of an increase is estimated?</p> <p>Specific comments on the EIS Addendum, Table Page 19 are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 1st bullet - clarify what is intended in this mitigation measure. Is it impact fees? 2. 2nd/ 4th bullets - Clarify if active transportation projects become funding priorities over other projects. 3. 3rd bullet - Clarify how cooperating on levels of service will mitigate impacts. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. What is the resulting Level of Service on state facilities by the proposed land use changes? b. How is the minimum level of service of D for urban areas and C for rural areas maintained by the changed land use designations? 	<p>See response to Comments #4 and #41.</p> <p>Additionally, the following responses are provided to the specific comments:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The County does not plan to implement impact fees at this time. Mitigation measures will reference proposed county improvements, as applicable, and other improvements referenced in WSDOT, BFCG, and city plans. 2. Transportation projects are typically funded by County sources that do not compete with other capital projects funding in the County. Active projects are typically given higher priority. 3. Cooperating on levels of service - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. State facilities LOS will be evaluated based on expected changes from the County's plan. LOS and associated evaluation results will be included in Appendix H-2. b. LOS is maintained through the excess capacity that exists on these county roads. Overall densities are not substantially changing, except in a few localized areas, and these are areas where it has been determined by County staff that excess capacity also exists.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
42	Continued: Transportation	Paul Gonseth (WSDOT)	<p>c. How are improvements that are needed to maintain LOS to be financed?</p> <p>d. How are improvements identified in regional plans having a beneficial impact?</p> <p>We request that the effects of the proposed Comprehensive Plan update on state facilities are evaluated and included in the draft Plan update and EIS Addendum.</p>	<p>c. County road funding and other transportation improvements help to maintain LOS.</p> <p>d. The improvements identified in regional plans have a beneficial impact by providing an integrated transportation network that the County will continue to support.</p> <p>The County does not plan to conduct additional traffic analysis at this time but will qualitatively describe potential effects on state facilities from the comprehensive plan.</p> <p>Additionally, BFCG concurrency/consistency review will be sought as part of completing the final plan, and this review will also be coordinated with WSDOT.</p>
43	Transportation	Paul Gonseth (WSDOT)	Finally, we support the endorsement and promotion of multi-modal and active transportation policies and actions for bicycle and pedestrian facilities that are included in the proposal.	Comment noted
44	Compact Development	Futurewise (page 4 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Add a policy encouraging compact development in urban growth areas under LU Goal 1. Compact development conserves water, reduces costs for taxpayers and ratepayers, and is more affordable because the land per housing unit is less. So, we recommend that a policy encouraging well designed, compact development in urban areas be included under LU Goal 3. We recommend adoption of the following new policy:</p> <p>Policy 2: Encourage well-designed, compact development in urban growth areas to save taxpayers and ratepayers money, conserve water, reduce water pollution, and support transit use.</p>	<p><u>Revise as noted.</u></p> <p>2.2 Land Use – LU Goal 1 – add a new Policy 6: Encourage compact development within urban growth areas.</p> <p>2.2.1 Urban Growth – LU Goal 3 – add a new Policy 2: Encourage well-designed, compact development in urban growth areas to save taxpayers and ratepayers money, conserve water, reduce water pollution, and support transit use.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
45	Population Projection	Futurewise (page 4-5 of 11/20/17 letter)	Benton County has chosen a 20-year population projection at the high end of the State of Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM) population projection range to size its urban growth areas (UGAs). ¹¹ But Benton County is growing slightly under the OFM Medium Projection. ¹² So, Benton County will not need new communities outside the existing UGAs to accommodate its growth over the next 20-years. ... the demand for water is forecast to exceed the supply in two of the three basins in Benton County by 2035, which is within the 20-year horizon of this comprehensive plan update. Establishing new communities outside UGAs will likely require the diversion of water from agriculture to those new communities, harming the county economy. ¹³ So we recommend that LU Goal 5 and Policies 1 and 2 be deleted.	<p><u>Revise as noted.</u> Consistent with Dept. of Commerce Comment #23, remove LU Goal 5 and Policies 1 and 2 on page 14.</p> <p>The County will review the future growth trends and adjust population projections if necessary.</p> <p>New communities outside the UGA are not expected.</p> <p>Also, the State referenced water demand forecast does not include Groundwater - "Groundwater supplies were not modeled or quantified in the 2016 forecast." The County expects that the combination of surface and groundwater supplies will be adequate to meet growth needs through 2038, and beyond, but the County is also committed to developing technical studies that verify and confirm this understanding or indicate otherwise and then will develop and implement strategies that consider interim measures, mitigation, and other measures to address study findings. These additional water management strategies will be pursued during plan implementation with the aim of improving water supply reliability for existing and future demands.</p> <p>Further, the County will be addressing specifically rural exempt water supply through the water management program outlined in Section 4.5 of the Comprehensive Plan.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
45	Continued: Population Projection	Futurewise (page 4-5 of 11/20/17 letter)		Additionally, Benton County supports access and use of the water reservation out of the McNary and John Day pools for future agricultural and municipal water needs (WAC 173-531A-040 and 050), and the County will work with the State to access this reservation of water to support growth along with other water supply strategies that are being or will be pursued as described in Section 4.5.
46	Rural Lands	Futurewise (pages 6-8 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>We are concerned that the goal and policies in 2.2.3 Rural Lands do not protect rural character. Water resources for new uses is very limited to non-existent in Benton County and new water uses typically require mitigation. The WRIA 37 forecast shows that by 2035, demand will exceed supply during parts of high, middle, and low flow years.¹⁸ The forecasts show that the frequency of pro rating water, reducing water available to junior water rights holders, will increase.¹⁹ In WRIA 40, demand will exceed supply in low water years as occurs now. One challenge Benton County faces regarding the wildfire hazard is from the increasing number of houses being built on the urban/rural fringe compared to 20 years ago. Wildfires are a frequent occurrence in Benton County.</p>	<p>2.2.3 Rural Lands – Land Use Goal 7</p> <p><u>Revise as noted.</u> LU Goal 7: Preserve rural lifestyles outside UGAs and incorporated areas while accommodating new population growth <u>consistent with the protection of rural character.</u></p> <p><u>Revise as noted.</u> LU Goal 7, Policy 1: Maintain overall residential densities within rural residential areas that reflect rural character as defined by the GMA and are low enough to perpetuate rural lifestyles, which are typically characterized locally by a predominantly open landscape inhabited by households engaged in diverse and recreational land use activities related to livestock and crop production; <u>protect surface and ground water; and that can be supported by available public services</u></p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
46	Continued: Rural Lands	Futurewise (pages 6-8 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Benton County Wildfire Protection Plan Steering Group concluded that the population and housing growth anticipated in rural Benton County “will certainly stretch the current firefighting resources of each fire district in the county. Firefighting infrastructure will have to also expand.”</p> <p>We recommend that LU Goal 7 & and Policy 1 be modified to better protect rural character including water availability. We also recommend adoption a of new policy to protect people and property from wildfires and other natural hazards. Our additions are underlined and our deletions are struck through.</p> <p>LU Goal 7: Preserve rural lifestyles outside UGAs and incorporated areas while accommodating new population growth <u>consistent with the protection of rural character.</u></p> <p><u>Policy 1:</u> Maintain overall residential densities within rural residential areas that reflect rural character as defined by the GMA and are low enough to perpetuate rural lifestyles, which are typically characterized locally by a predominantly open landscape inhabited by households engaged in diverse and recreational land use activities related to livestock and crop production; <u>protect surface and ground water; and that can be supported by available public services.</u></p> <p><u>Policy 4: Direct rural development away from urban/wildland interface, areas without adequate emergency services, and other areas subject to natural hazards.</u></p>	<p><u>Add new policy.</u> LU Goal 7, Policy 4: Encourage the reduction of fire risk and urban/wildland interface through fire-wise principles, prevention measures, and other programs.</p> <p>Also, as noted in response to Comment #45, the County has water supplies and strategies identified to support the projected growth.</p>
47	Water Resources	Futurewise (page 8 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Modify Policy 2, on page 18 under “2.4.3 Rural Domestic Water Policies” to reflect that all ground water pumping affects instream flows and to protect industries that rely on water supplies and senior water right holders.</p>	<p>We believe our findings our consistent with the existing science, and that this science indicates that all groundwater pumping does NOT affect instream flows.</p> <p>The USGS model for the Yakima River does document that groundwater pumping affects flows, and that some affect occurs from basalt pumping but only a small percentage of basalt pumping affects flows, a 1% change at Richland or a 19% mean annual pumpage amount, suggesting much of the basalt pumping has no effect on the Yakima River flows.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
47	Continued: Water Resources	Futurewise (page 8 of 11/20/17 letter)	The ground water model developed by the U.S. Geological Survey documents that ground water pumping in the Yakima basin affects stream and river flows, including ground water pumping from basalt hydrogeologic units. ²⁵ Permit-exempt wells alone affected instream flows. ²⁶ We recommend that Policy 2 on page 18 under "2.4.3 Rural Domestic Water Policies" be modified to reflect these scientific findings.	<p>The report states that "basalt pumpage was not as important... to simulated effects on surface water resources." It only accounted for about 16 to 17 percent of the effect on flows, even though significant basalt aquifers pumpage occurs.</p> <p>Additionally, the cumulative effect from rural exempt wells on surface water was minimal, even when considering the entire basin. It was noted that during model calibration the effects from exempt well pumping combined with septic system returns were so small that calibration with variations in flows made it difficult at times to even see an effect. Benton County represents only a small portion of the basin and likely even a smaller portion of rural exempt well pumping, and with many rural exempt wells completed in the basalt aquifers. The water management planning, studies and strategies outlined in Section 4.5 are designed to address effect on instream flows from rural exempt well usage as applicable.</p> <p>See response to Comment #48 for edits to the referenced Policy 2.</p>
48	Water Resources	Futurewise (page 8 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>...we also recommend that the policy be modified reflect the high priority of maintaining water for agriculture, other industries, and municipal water right holders. Our recommended additions are underlined and our recommended deletions are struck through.</p> <p>Policy 2: Recognize that new rural water right permit exempt wells in the unconfined aquifer adjacent to the Yakima River basin are junior to senior surface water rights <u>including instream flows, and may have the potential to impair these water rights for impairment. Support implementing</u> Implement mitigation strategies to offset impacts from exempt wells that allow for continued growth and development <u>if sufficient water supplies will be available for the agricultural industry, other industries, and municipal water rights holders.</u></p>	<p>See response to Comment #47. Additionally, instream flows are not established on the Yakima River but do exist on the Columbia River as measured at McNary and John Day dams (WAC 173-563)</p> <p>Policy 2 will be revised to read:</p> <p>Recognize that new rural water right permit exempt wells are junior to senior surface and ground water rights, and may have the potential to impair these water rights. Support the implementation of water management and mitigation strategies to avoid or offset impacts from exempt wells, as applicable, that allow for continued growth and development consistent with the land use plan.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
49	Water Resources	Futurewise (page 9 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>... water resources are limited in Benton County and the demand for water is forecast to exceed the supply in two of three Benton County basins by 2035.²⁹ Water conservation and focusing growth into existing cities and towns can stretch water supplies and accommodate growth and it is important to reserve water for agriculture and value-added agricultural processing and manufacturing to maintain and enhance the county economy. So, we recommend that a policy be added to 2.4.5 Agriculture Policies to reserve sufficient water for agriculture and its related industries. We recommend a new policy like the following:</p> <p>Policy 5: Reserve sufficient water to maintain the agricultural industry and agricultural processing and value-added manufacturing.</p>	See response to Comment #45.
50	Transportation	Futurewise (page 10 of 11/20/17 letter)	While the comprehensive plan includes many good transportation policies, we recommend that a complete streets policy be included too.	Add a new complete streets policy to 2.8 Transportation Element – TE Goal 1 – Policy 12: Support the development of a complete streets policy that would make accommodations for pedestrian, bicycle, and transit users on appropriate roadways.
51	Low Impact Development	Futurewise (page 10 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Low impact development (LID) requirements can reduce the adverse storm water impacts of new development and redevelopment. The benefits of LID include reduced flooding, improved water quality, and increased ground water recharge replenishing drinking and irrigation water supplies.³¹ Low impact techniques can reduce costs for developers by reducing storm water facilities sizes and the land needed for those facilities.³² We recommend that the comprehensive plan include policy requiring new development to comply with the with low- impact development (LID) requirements from the <i>Eastern Washington Low Impact Development Guidance Manual</i>.³³</p>	Add a new low impact development policy to 2.5 Critical Areas – CA Goal 1 – Policy 2: Encourage new development and redevelopment in urban growth areas and large developments outside of urban growth areas to comply with low impact development standards as applicable.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
52	Agricultural Lands	Futurewise (page 11 of 11/20/17 letter)	We recommend that the <i>Benton County Comprehensive Plan</i> explicitly set out the County’s criteria for agricultural lands of long-term significance. Section 3.32.5 would be a good location for the criteria, but they could be elsewhere. Section 4.3.1, Agricultural Soils, on page 54 includes some criteria, but as will be documented below seems to indicate that agricultural lands designations are done on a case-by-case basis, which is not the case. ³⁴	Criteria used for conducting the comprehensive, county-wide update of designated agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance will be included in Section 4.3.1. The language describing this analysis was conducted on a case by case basis will be struck from the plan, as this description is inaccurate.
53	Water Quality	Futurewise (page 11 of 11/20/17 letter)	While Chapter 4 does review some flooding issues, the land use element does not. Both chapters lack adequate policies or other measures to protect water quality. We recommend the following improvements: Include a policy or other provision requiring “green infrastructure” in new developments and redevelopments to address flooding and storm water runoff. ³⁶ Green infrastructure refers to using storm water infiltration, retaining native vegetation, and similar measures to manage storm water.	Add a new “green infrastructure” policy to 2.2 Land Use – LU Goal 1 – Policy 7: Encourage “green infrastructure” in new developments and redevelopments to address flooding and storm water runoff.
54	Low Impact Development	Futurewise (page 12 of 11/20/17 letter)	Low impact development should be required for new development and redevelopment in urban growth areas and encouraged for large developments outside urban growth areas. ³⁷ Low impact development retains native vegetation, reduces impervious surfaces, and uses infiltration and transpiration to manage storm water.	See response to Comment #51 above - Add a new low impact development policy to 2.5 Critical Areas – CA Goal 1 – Policy 2: Encourage new development and redevelopment in urban growth areas and large developments outside of urban growth areas to comply with low impact development standards as applicable.
55	Water Quality	Futurewise (page 12 of 11/20/17 letter)	Incorporate the other applicable water quality management recommendations from <i>Land Use Planning for Salmon, Steelhead and Trout</i> . ³⁸	The County’s Critical Areas Ordinance update, along with the recently approved and updated Shoreline Master Program, which is incorporated into this Comprehensive Plan update by reference, includes goals and policies applicable to water quality management standards for salmonids. Add a new water quality policy to 2.4 Water Resources – WR Goal 4 – Policy 4: Protect and enhance water quality to improve habitat conditions for salmonids.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
56	Rural Element Densities	Futurewise (page 12 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>We were unable to identify measures in either Chapters 3 or 4 that meet these [RCW 36.70A.070(5)(c)] requirements with exception of the 150-foot-wide setback adjunct to agricultural lands, which we strongly support. We recommend including the following measures in the Chapter 3's rural element:</p> <p>Rural comprehensive plan designations with 40- and 80-acre minimum lot sizes and allowed densities. These densities will help better match rural growth with available water supplies, protect water quality and quantity, and better protect fish and wildlife habitats.</p>	<p><u>Rural Element:</u> Benton County's GMA Agricultural District incorporates a 20-acre minimum lot size. Rural land lot sizes range in size up to 20 acres. This plan proposes moving 7,130 acres from Rural Remote, a 5 acre density designation to Rural Resource, a 20 acre density designation. Additionally, the plan proposes a net increase of 1,400 acres moving from rural land designations to GMA Agriculture. These changes assist the county with densities that better protect agriculture, hillsides, landslide/steep slope areas, water supplies and fish and wildlife habitats/corridors.</p>
57	Rural Element Impervious Surfaces	Futurewise (page 12 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Limit impervious surfaces and retain native vegetation and native soils.³⁹ These measures will protect water quality and quantity, and better protect fish and wildlife habitats, and help assuring visual compatibility of rural development.</p>	<p><u>Rural Element:</u> Add a new impervious surface policy to 2.2 Land Use – LU Goal 7 – Policy 4: Limit impervious surface in rural lands by implementing maximum lot coverage in the development regulations.</p>
58	Rural Element Floodplain	Futurewise (page 13 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Direct new development away from the 100-year floodplain.⁴⁰ This will protect fish and wildlife habitat and people and property.</p>	<p><u>Rural Element:</u> Add a new floodplain policy to 2.2 Land Use – LU Goal 7 – Policy 5: Encourage new rural development away from the 100-year floodplain, and as guided in the County's Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance, Critical Area Ordinance, and Shoreline Master Program.</p>
59	Rural Element CMZ's	Futurewise (page 13 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>"Discourage new dwelling units or expansion of existing structures within the [channel migration zone] CMZ."⁴¹ "Allow no development in CMZ plus 50 feet."⁴² Exceptions must be mitigated and not adversely affect water quality, water quantity, flood volumes, flood velocities, spawning substrate, and/or floodplain refugia for listed salmonids. Like directing development away from floodplains, this measure will protect fish and wildlife habitat and people and property.</p>	<p><u>Rural Element:</u> Add a new CMZ policy to 2.5 Critical Areas – CA Goal 3 – Policy 6: Any developments, uses, and/or activities in the CMZ should be consistent with the standards in the Shoreline Master Program.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
60	Landslide Hazard Areas Streams/Rivers	Futurewise (page 13 of 11/20/17 letter)	"Give special protection to landslide hazard areas that can damage rivers and streams during mass wasting events." ⁴³ This measure will protect fish and wildlife habitat and people and property.	<u>Rural Element:</u> Add a new landslide areas policy to 2.5 Critical Areas – CA Goal 3 – Policy 7: Protections associated with landslide areas should be maintained according to the standards in the County Critical Area Ordinance and Shoreline Master Program.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
61	Rural Areas	Futurewise (page 15 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>... the <i>Benton County Comprehensive Plan Update</i> plans for 1,142 people in the Rural Transition comprehensive plan designation and 5,652 people in the Rural Remote designation over the next 20 years.⁵⁷ This level of growth in the rural areas is unsustainable. We recommend lower densities and higher minimum lots sizes in the rural areas and directing more growth into existing cities and towns. This is necessary to save taxpayers money, protect people and property, and reserve water resources for uses that bring a greater economic payoff to Benton County and its residents and businesses.</p>	<p>Our evaluation of the projected growth is that existing water supplies and planned water management strategies, roads and other infrastructure and standards are in place to sustainably accommodate this and additional growth that would occur beyond the next 20 years. Additionally, technical studies are planned in 2018 to further evaluate and refine this understanding, and develop a long-term program for accommodating projected growth, including interim measures, mitigation and other strategies as described further in response to Comments #11, #45, #47, #48 and others.</p> <p>The Rural Element of the comprehensive plan, provides for those rural areas not designated urban, agricultural, or mineral resource, and maintains the variety of densities that are consistent with the county's rural character. While accommodating the County's rural population growth rate, the county is continuing to protect its agricultural lands, mineral resources, rural character and encouraging growth in areas and ways that protects the County's water supplies, hillsides and fish and wildlife areas. See response to Comment #62 for information regarding the County's plan to move approximately 7,130 acres from a rural remote designation with a 5 AC/DU classification, to a rural resource designation of 20 AC/DU. Additionally, the plan proposes a net increase of 1,400 acres moving from rural land designations to GMA Agriculture. This will assist in preserving lands for rangeland, agricultural uses, protecting hillsides, protecting property from landslides/steep slope areas, water supplies and fish and wildlife habitats/corridors.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
62	Wildland/Urban Interface	Futurewise (page 15 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Increased residential development in the urban/rural fringe has “produced a significant increase in threats to life and property from wildfires.”⁵⁸ To reduce future fire hazards and development that is beyond the capability of the fire protection systems, we recommend that the following provisions be added the comprehensive plan.</p> <p>First, the areas identified as being within the wildland-urban interface should be designated and zoned for rural densities of one dwelling unit per 20, 40, or 80 acres or as GMA Agriculture.</p> <p>Second, new developments should meet Firewise Communities Program standards or the equivalent.</p> <p>Third, the Firewise Principles recommend “‘two ways out’ of the neighborhood for safe evacuation during a wildfire emergency.”⁶² So does the U.S. Fire Administration.⁶³ Two ways out is important to protect the safety of property owners, residents, and firefighters. All new subdivisions and other significantly sized developments should have two ways out.</p>	<p>The comprehensive plan proposes adding 7,130 acres of land, previously designated Rural Remote (5 AC/DU), to the Rural Resource designation (20 AC/DU). Additionally, the plan proposes a net increase of 1,400 acres moving from rural land designations to GMA Agriculture. This change provides the county with larger lot sizes to assist in preserving lands for rangeland, agricultural uses, protecting hillsides, protecting property from landslides/steep slope areas, water supplies and fish and wildlife habitats/corridors.</p> <p>Add a new transportation policy to 2.8 Transportation Element – TE Goal 1 – Policy 12: Maintain location and alignment of all proposed streets within a subdivision compatible with existing and planned streets, topographical conditions, public convenience and safety, and the proposed uses of the land to be served by such streets. Limit dead-end street to 600 feet in maximum length as a means of protection to property owners, residents, and emergency personnel.</p> <p>Will review and address access requirements with the Fire Marshal as it relates to new development and access standards.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
63	Water Resources	Futurewise (page 16 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>The second sentence in Guiding Principle 3 is not accurate. As we have documented previously, water is limited in all of the county's geographical areas, not some. We do however agree, that if managed well, including focusing growth in areas where water use is reduced such as existing cities and towns, that water resources do exist to meet current and future needs, although perhaps not in low water years as was also documented above. So, we recommend that the second sentence in Guiding Principle 3 be modified to read as follows with our deletion struck through and our addition underlined.</p> <p>3. Focus on improving water resource management at all jurisdictional levels by supporting the efforts of municipal and special purpose governments within Benton County and a legislative agenda at the federal and state level. Though limited in some geographical areas, water resources physically exist within Benton County to meet current and future needs <u>if used wisely</u> and innovative strategies are required to allow beneficial use of these water resources.</p>	<p>Our understanding is that physical limitations exist in some areas of the County, but many areas have plentiful water supplies. Studies, strategies, and actions identified in Section 4.5 will help to verify and update the technical understanding of water availability in the County, as applicable, starting first with the Yakima basin portion of the County as discussed in several other responses to comments.</p> <p>Revise Guiding Principle 3 to read:</p> <p>3. Focus on improving water resource management at all jurisdictional levels by supporting the efforts of municipal and special purpose governments within Benton County and a legislative agenda at the federal and state level. Though limited in some geographical areas, water resources physically exist within most areas in Benton County to meet current and future needs. Effective water management and innovative strategies are required to allow beneficial use of these water resources.</p>
64	Water Resources	Futurewise (pages 16-17 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>Guiding Principle 8 could be read as being inconsistent with RCW 36.70A.070 because it does not recognize that the plan must be consistent with available water resources. We recommend that Guiding Principle 8 be modified to read as follows with our additions underlined.</p> <p>8. <u>The land uses and intensities provided for in the comprehensive plan shall be consistent with available long-term water supplies and the protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies.</u> Support securing long-term, sustainable water supplies sufficient to realize the build out of the land uses designated in the Comprehensive Plan <u>that are consistent with this principle</u> as well as the Hanford Comprehensive Land Use Plan.</p>	<p>See response to Comments #45, #47, #48, #61, and #63.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
65	Agricultural Lands	Futurewise (page 17 of 11/20/17 letter)	... under the discussion of agricultural soils, the <i>Comprehensive Plan Update</i> appears to indicate that agricultural resource land of long-term commercial significance “are determined on a case-by-case basis by assessing a variety of factors including, but not limited to, classification of prime and unique farmland soils, proximity to urban areas, proximity to markets, and other factors.” ⁷⁰ We recommend that this language be deleted. Agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance must be designated and dedesignated through a comprehensive review, not a case-by-case review. We also recommend that the comprehensive plan clearly spell out the criteria for designating agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance and mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance.	Revise as noted. See also response to Comment #52.
66	Agricultural Lands	Futurewise (page 18 of 11/20/17 letter)	The County’s 20-acre minimum lot size GMA Agriculture (GMA AG) designation is not sufficient to conserve agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance. “Lot sizing for agriculture at up to 40 acre densities merely causes rural sprawl.” ⁷³ So we recommend that the minimum lot size and density for the GMA Agriculture designation be changed to one dwelling unit per 40 acres to conserve agricultural land. As required by the Washington State Supreme Court’s <i>Soccer Fields</i> , ⁷⁴ <i>Lewis County</i> , ⁷⁵ and <i>Kittitas County</i> ⁷⁶ decisions, nonagricultural uses should not be allowed in the GMA Agriculture zone. Value added agricultural uses should be allowed.	A 20 acre density in the GMA Agriculture designation has historically been and continues to be an appropriate minimum lot size density to conserve and protect agricultural lands of long term commercial significance in Benton County. Since the County’s first GMA compliant Comprehensive Plan was adopted nearly 20 years ago (1998), there have been less than 3 short plats per year (approx. 2.6), of an agricultural nature and complying with the required agricultural density, within the GMA Agriculture designation in all of Benton County.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
67	Capital Facilities Element	Futurewise (page 18 of 11/20/17 letter)	RCW 36.70A.070(3)(e) provides in relevant part that the capital facilities element shall include "a requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs" We were unable to find where this requirement is addressed in the capital facilities element. Proposed 9.3.2 discusses what will happen if local funding referendums are not held or not successful, but reassessing the land use element is not one of the options. ⁷⁷ We recommend that proposed 9.3.2 be deleted and the requirement to reassess the land use element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs be substituted.	<p>Revise 9.3.2 to read:</p> <p>When funding is unavailable to meet existing needs and support plan implementation or as County priorities evolve, the CFP will be revised at the next annual amendment in one or more of the following ways, as applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the LOS for one or more public facilities • Increase the use of other sources of revenue • Decrease the cost, and therefore the quality of some types of public facilities while retaining the quantity of the facilities that is inherent in the standard for LOS • Decrease the demand for and subsequent use of public facilities • Reassess the land use element
68	Capital Facility Plan	Futurewise (page 19 of 11/20/17 letter)	We recommend that the project "Adair Road from the end of County Road to Christensen (1.1 Miles)" be deleted from the Capital Facility Plan. ⁷⁸ This project is justified based on the industrial development of the area, but the area is currently designated GMA Agriculture and is proposed to be designated as Rural Remote. So, industrial development of this area is, at least, premature. RCW 36.70A.120 provides that "[e]ach county and city that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall perform its activities and make capital budget decisions in conformity with its comprehensive plan." Building an industrial road in an agricultural or rural area is not consistent with the County Comprehensive Plan.	The County's Capital Facilities Plan will be revised at the next annual amendment to more accurately reflect the Adair Road project being built as a rural roadway.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
69	Agricultural Long-Term Economic Significance Criteria	Futurewise (page 19 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>In Benton County, the application of certain pesticides is restricted countywide including the aerial application of certain herbicides.⁷⁹ The term pesticides includes herbicides and insecticides.⁸⁰ In North Horse Heaven Hills the aerial application of certain pesticides is prohibited, certain formations are prohibited during certain times of the year, and the application of certain herbicides is limited to certain hours.⁸¹ Similar restrictions apply to two other areas.⁸² These limitations apply to very large areas.⁸³ Other counties also have restrictions and some restrictions apply to all of eastern Washington.⁸⁴</p> <p>... we do not believe that pesticides or herbicide restrictions affect long-term economic significance. So, this criterion should be dropped.</p>	<p>These criteria, while perhaps less important than some of the other considerations in the comprehensive review and update of the agricultural lands designations for the County, are still applicable in certain conditions and areas in the County. It is one additional factor that can contribute to whether lands meet the definition of agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance. For example, marginal dryland ground with low precipitation, required higher inputs (with associated increased production costs) and with aerial chemical application restrictions can result in a cumulative effect that can make ground uneconomical to farm.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
70	Agricultural Lands	Futurewise (page 20 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>We do not support the removal the current GMA Agriculture lands southwest of Kennewick and west of Richland. These areas are separated from the urban growth areas and cities by I-84, a divided four lane interstate highway.⁸⁸ So they are not proximate to cities or urban growth areas. These areas have high quality Non-Irrigated Land Capability Class soils and, in large part, receive more than six inches of rain a year.⁸⁹ Only 2.3 inches of available water is needed before wheat development begins.⁹⁰ Dryland wheat is grown in areas with six or more inches of average annual precipitation.⁹¹ Grazing, which requires less water, is also an agricultural use under the GMA.⁹² So these areas have water suitable for agriculture. They are not needed for other uses and if reclassified as rural will increase the fire danger and contribute to increased water demands in two overallocated basins.⁹³ We recommend they retain their GMA Agriculture designation.</p>	<p>Comments are noted.</p> <p>The County engaged in a county-wide, comprehensive assessment of all potential agricultural lands using relevant criteria in the WAC and relevant case law. Based on our analysis and application of these criteria we have concluded that the referenced lands are proximate to cities and UGAs and no longer meet the definition of agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance.</p> <p>Dryland agriculture even with higher quality soils when located in lower rainfall areas will produce less yield. The ideal time to plant dryland wheat in Benton County is late August through September, and in the areas with higher precipitation there is typically sufficient moisture stored deeper in the soil to support germination and plant growth prior to winter. For lower precipitation areas, planting is often delayed into October or even early November based upon precipitation events that occur in the fall, and the lack of stored moisture in the soil column. This delayed planting and reduced growing time typically results in reduced yields as plants are not able to mature prior to winter, and are more prone to winter kill.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
70	Continued: Agricultural Lands	Futurewise (page 20 of 11/20/17 letter)		<p>These conditions and the associated reduced yields on lands with lower precipitation affect the long term commercial significance of these lands, was one of the finds along with other findings consistent with our criteria that led to the de-designation of the referenced areas.</p> <p>Regarding grazing, grazing on land with lower precipitation typically produces less forage density. Grazing in Benton County primarily occurs on irrigated ground (pasture) or irrigated ground after row crop production (e.g., corn) is complete, or on larger tracts of dryland ground (typically thousands of acres) with higher elevation and higher precipitation dryland areas in the County (that produces adequate forage). Even with these conditions the dryland can only sustain grazing for a few weeks before the forage is consumed. The short periods of time that this ground can be grazed in a year makes it commercially less viable for long term use of the land for agricultural grazing. Accordingly, this limited grazing potential was not considered as a valid criterion for determining long-term commercial significance of dryland agriculture.</p>

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
71	Positive Feedback	Futurewise (page 20 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>While we cannot list all of the well done goals, polices, and provisions, we do want to identify the following provisions as particularly well done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The water resources policies in Section 2.4 of Chapter 2. • The critical areas policies in Section 2.5 of Chapter 2. • PR Goal 2 of Chapter 2 which calls for working with cities and agencies to protect greenways and open spaces along the riverine corridor of the lower Yakima River. The Yakima River Greenway is an important Benton County asset. • Proposed PR Goal 5 and the associated historic, cultural, and archaeological resources policies from page 2 of the <i>Benton County Comprehensive Plan Update Comment/Response Summary Washington State Department of Commerce and SEPA Comment Period Sept. 12, 2017 to Nov. 13, 2017</i>. We also recommend that the policies call for the identification and protection of areas likely to contain cultural, and archaeological resources. The Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation has developed an archaeological predictive model that can predict where archaeological resources are likely to be located and where the department recommends archaeological surveys should be completed before earth disturbing activities and other uses and activities that can damage archaeological sites are undertaken. <p>1 Significant areas in Benton County are rated “survey recommended moderate risk,” “survey highly advised high risk,” and “survey highly advised very high risk.”</p>	

71	Continued: Positive Feedback	Futurewise (page 20 of 11/20/17 letter)	<p>2 Addressing archaeological resources upfront before projects begin can save money. For example, the Jefferson County Public Utility District's (PUD) contractor building a community septic system at Becket Point in Jefferson County encountered human bones and Native American artifacts.</p> <p>3 The contractor had to stop construction. An archaeologist was called in and conducted an investigation that allowed the project to be redesigned and to be completed. However, PUD staff "estimated the delays and additional engineering incurred because of the artifacts added about \$90,000 to the project's cost."</p> <p>4 That money could have been saved by an upfront archeological investigation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Futurewise supports the proposed Yakima River Basin Rural Water Supply Program and a similar program for the Columbia River basin. Requiring new subdivisions and new building permits to have physically and legally available water is just basic consumer protection. Without physically and legally available water lot and home buyers are at risk of not being able to use their water sources during times of high water demand. Requiring new subdivisions and new building permits to have physically and legally available water also protects senior water rights holders. Throughout Washington State, overdevelopment has caused wells used by farmers and homeowners to have lower yields or run dry. These proposed programs will protect current water rights holders, lot buyers, and home buyers. See <i>Benton County Comprehensive Plan Update</i> page 18, Requiring 2.4.3 Rural Domestic Water Policies, and pages 62 through 64, 4.5.5.3 Addressing Exempt Wells to Meet Long-term Growth Needs and 4.5.6 Columbia River. • PR Goal 3 of Chapter 2 calling for the conservation of visually prominent naturally vegetated steep slopes and elevated ridges that define the Columbia Basin landscape and are uniquely a product of the ice age floods and the associated policies. These areas are important visual assets for the community and attract visitors to the community, contributing to the economy. 	Comments noted
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No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Rural Resource comprehensive plan designation which will better protect rural character, the county's very limited water resources, and adjacent natural resource lands. • Chapter 4's recognition that the Voluntary Stewardship Program, along with other management measures, can help to prevent further degradation of ground water quality and potentially improve conditions. • Including Chapter 5, the Economics Element, in the comprehensive plan. • Including Chapter 8, the Parks and Recreation Element, in the comprehensive plan. 	
72	Private Road Standards	Wayne Schmelzer 198811 E. 73 rd Kennewick	During his testimony at 11/21/17 PC meeting, he stated that he was just here to ask for an increase on the private road ingress-egress that is limited to twelve right now. He would like to see an increase in the amount of lots allowed on a graveled private road and also on a paved private road to possibly 24 or 50.	Private road standards may be addressed during implementation- specifically during the review and adoption of the subdivision code standards.
73	Summarized Comments	Alison Cable, Futurewise	During her testimony at 11/21/17 PC meeting, she summarized their comments for the record (Exhibit PCH 1.3).	See Futurewise comments in this Matrix.
74	Prosser UGAB	Kay Simon, 835 Main Street Prosser	During her testimony at 11/21/17 PC meeting, she stated that she owned property with a winery in the area proposed for expansion of the Prosser UGA. She stated that she had attended a Prosser Planning Commission meeting and that the City of Prosser has noted discrepancies within their Industrial designation which is what they wanting to designate this area. Within the Industrial designations the City has several different zoning options which are called Agri-Tourism and Agri-business. These options have discrepancies between them and the Industrial designation and what they permit within these sub designations. The City needs to come up with a way to address these discrepancies before the UGA is defined.	This Urban Growth Area Boundary request was heard by the Planning Commission in the Spring of 2017 and the Planning Commission forwarded a positive recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners and is included by reference as part of this Comprehensive Plan periodic update.

No.	Comment Topic	Commenter	Comment	Local Government Response and Rationale
75	Prosser UGAB	Jason Gilbert, 2521 Sales Yard Road, Prosser	During his testimony at 11/21/17 PC mtg, he stated that he was speaking on behalf of Bill Thompson, a land owner within the proposed UGA area for Prosser. This is about the annexed area outside of Prosser. Three out of four owners, eighty percent of the land do not want to be included in the UGA. When the City ran water and sewer services outside of their city limits they created an area of urban sprawl or leapfrog effect. This is clearly one of the reasons why the GMA was adopted. The land owners have been caught between two city lines for 30+ years. This is the second attempt to put this area within the UGA. This issue needs to be viewed more closely, we are asking the County for their help and would like a heads up on where they stand on this issue. The UGA boundary at face seems harmless until you take into account that it opens the door for potential annexation along with a sleuth of other land use issues. Coupled with the fact that the City has a total disregard for the potential impact and personal lives of the people in this area gives even more reason for the County to look into this issue and its proposed UGA.	See response to Comment #74 above.
76	Agricultural Lands	John Christensen, 3802 W. 43 rd Avenue, Kennewick	During his testimony at 11/21/17 PC meeting he stated that he wished to confirm the approval of the update. He noted that the area that he owned and had historically farmed was no longer being farmed. He stated that most of it was in CRP and a large portion of the CRP area has expired and cannot go back into the CRP program. He would like to see the land go from GMA Ag into a Rural Lands designation.	Comments noted
77	Commercial Development Standards	Jesse Greenough, 4209 S. Cascade St., Kennewick	During his testimony at 11/21/17 PC meeting, he stated that he owned property in Plymouth along Hwy 14 and Plymouth Road and that it was zoned Interstate Commercial and that he would like to see the availability of having living units above the commercial units within that zoning designation.	Currently, the County Zoning Ordinance, specifically Interstate Commercial Zoning District BCC 11.27, does allow outright a dwelling unit within the 2 nd level of a structure that is also used for commercial purposes.