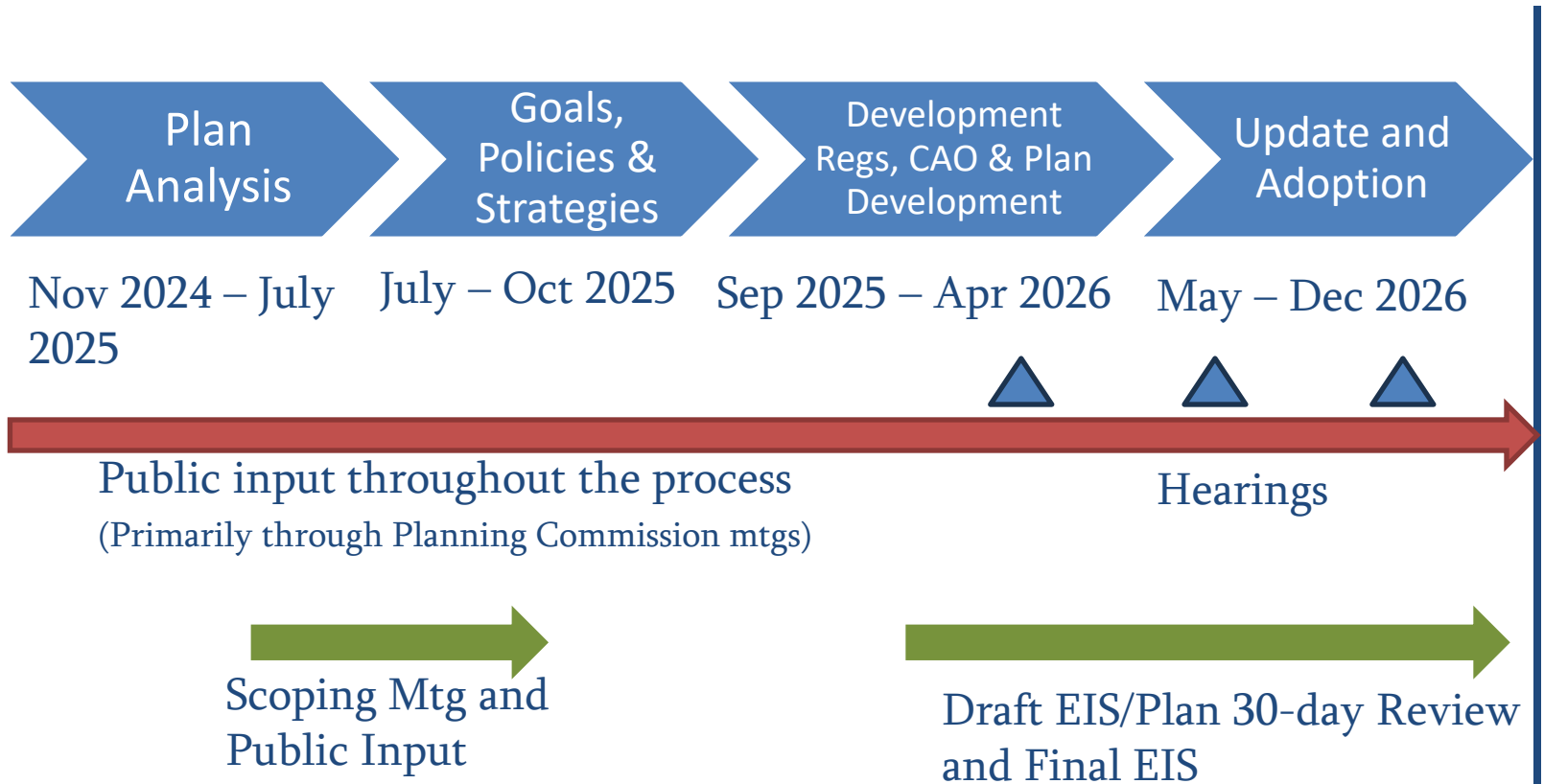


# Benton County Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan 2026 Update



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# Timeline



# Presentation Overview

- Goals and Policies
- Land Use Element
- Climate Element
- Open Space Taxation and Public Benefit Rating System

# Climate Element - NEW

- Required by RCW 36.70A and House Bill 1181
- Ensure that comprehensive plans, development regulations, and regional policies, plans, and strategies adapt to and mitigate the effects of a changing climate;
- support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and per capita vehicle miles traveled;
- prepare for climate impact
- scenarios;
- foster resiliency to climate impacts and natural hazards;
- protect and enhance environmental, economic, and human health and safety;
- and advance environmental justice. (RCW 36.70A.070(9)).



# Goals and Policies Updates

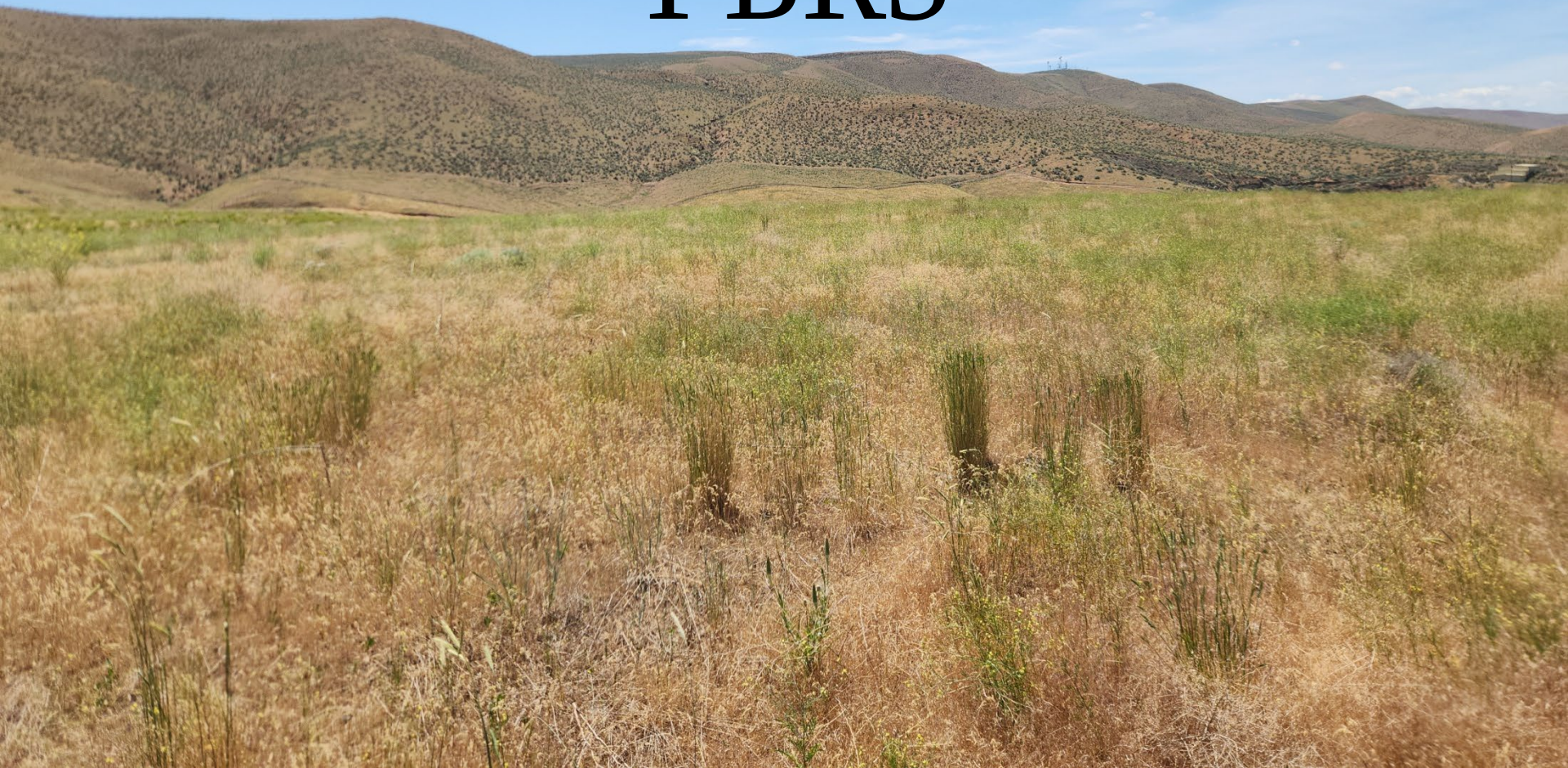
- Environmental justice/avoid overburdened community impacts
- Climate resiliency updates (water, drought, fire risk, flood risk, etc.) and new Section 2.12
- Housing type varieties – many new policies added
- Reorganization/reduce duplication
- Minor updates to Transportation, Capital Facilities, Utilities

# Land Use Element Updates

- Industrial and commercial development (Plymouth)
- Agricultural land designation updates – 1248 acres changed to other uses based on analysis
- Suggesting Public Lands designation vs Open Space Conservation
- Expanded discussion of Open Space corridors and ways to provide for more lands preserved
- Energy overlay
- Pending – Richland UGA and Benton City UGA changes



# Draft Open Space Taxation Program and PBRS

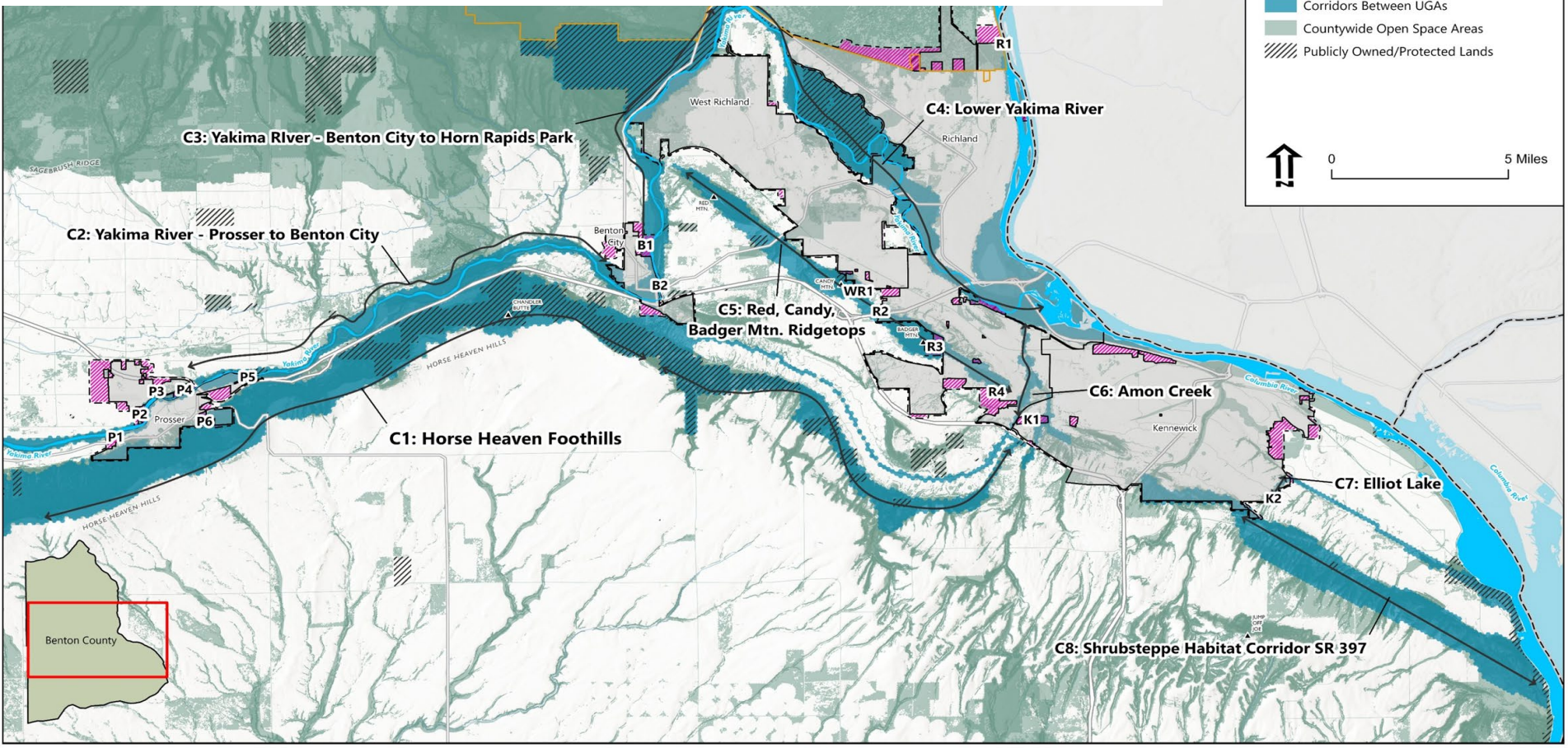


# Legal Basis/Purpose

- RCW Chapter 84.34 – Landowners can apply for reduction in property taxes if they can demonstrate benefit to County open space priorities
- GMA (RCW 37.70A) requires Counties to address protecting and preserving open space, and identify corridors within and between UGAs
- Open Space Taxation program can provide landowners incentive to help meet open space priorities.



# Review of Open Space Corridors within & between UGAs for Comp Plan update



**Figure 4**  
Open Space Corridors Map



# Next Steps

- Additional PC Workshops
- Addressing remaining items
  - Agri-tourism
  - Wildlands Urban Interface
  - Updates to County development regulations
  - Shrubsteppe mitigation bank
- SEPA EIS Review and Public Meetings
- State agencies 60-day review
- Address public and agency comments
- Planning Commission Hearing and recommendation
- Board of County Commission action

Additional Questions/Comments?



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