

# **Benton County, WA 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update Work Plan**

## **Purpose**

A Work Plan is a communication and project management document to help ensure project objectives and timelines are met. This work plan has been developed for the Benton County 2026 Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update and outlines the:

- Background and framework for the project
- High-level project approach, outcomes, and deliverables
- Project schedule and key milestones
- Roles and responsibilities
- Keys to project success
- Potential project risks and strategies to address those risks

## **Project Background and Framework**

Jurisdictions fully planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) are required to update their Comprehensive Plans and related development regulations every ten years. For the current cycle, Benton County's next major periodic update is due by June 30, 2026.

Comprehensive Plans are 20-year policy documents that guide and plan for growth (population and employment), housing, transportation, capital facilities and utilities, parks, recreation and open space, rural areas and protections of natural resource lands (RCW 36.70A.070). Further amendments to the Plan are necessary to comply with new regulations and to respond to changing conditions and needs of the County. The updated Comprehensive Plan will address diversity, equity and inclusion throughout the Plan and incorporate required changes for several topics including housing and climate change. GMA is designed as a bottom-up approach which will incorporate the County's vision for the next 20 years and local circumstances.

## **Approach, Outcomes, and Deliverables**

Defining the project approach along with outcomes and deliverables ensures the County and the consulting team hired to assist the County are on the same page throughout the project about the overall project goals. How the project is viewed, what must be accomplished, and the steps and timeframes to get the project completed on time are all important factors that will help define

project success.

### **Project Approach**

The GMA requires that "Each comprehensive land use plan and development regulations shall be subject to continuing review and evaluation by the county or city that adopted them." (RCW 36.70A.130{1}(a)). Plan updates are not intended to be a wholesale re-write of the existing Plan. It is an update to extend the planning horizon and recognize changes to:

- State laws/case law since the last update
- Best Available Science (BAS) for incorporation into critical areas regulations

It is also intended to incorporate a new Climate Change Element and Climate Resilience Sub Element (reference Consultant Work Team in Roles and Responsibilities) and reflect efforts by the County to address housing needs and population growth through a housing needs assessment and housing study. The Plan update is also focused on achieving consistency with Countywide Planning Policies (CWPPs). The CWPPs will be updated to implement changes to the GMA as part of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update process, in coordination with the cities.

In addition to the updated CWPPs, the County and cities will develop preliminary population projections which will be utilized as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. A gap analysis will be completed to review all these requirements. Identified gaps between the existing 2018 comprehensive plan (as amended) and updates to state laws along with the CWPPs will help inform the approach for this project.

The following represents some of the state law changes which occurred during the 2021-2022, 2022-2023 Legislative Sessions that are pertinent to the 2026 Periodic Update. Each of these are identified within the Department of Commerce periodic update checklist, which is discussed below.

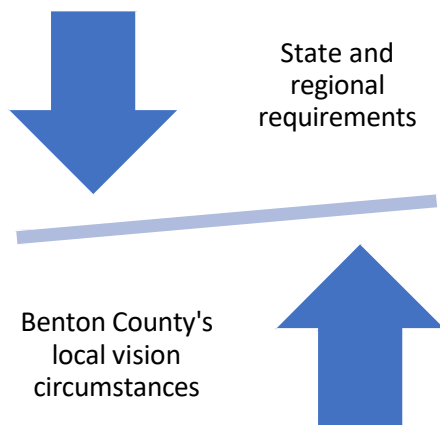
- HB 1220 substantially amends housing-related provisions of the GMA, RCW 36.70A.070. Requires the County and cities within the County to 1) plan for housing by income band, 2) provide housing capacity for emergency housing, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing, and 3) implement policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans and actions. Please refer to the following Commerce housing webpages for further information about the new requirements.
- HB 2296 changes the periodic update cycle described in RCW 36.70A.130. Jurisdictions required to complete their periodic update process in 2026 now have until December 31, 2026 to finalize their review and submit to Commerce. Additionally, jurisdictions that meet

the new criteria will be required to submit an implementation progress report five years after the review and revision of their comprehensive plan.

- [HB 1717](#) – adds new requirements to RCW 36.70A.040 regarding tribal participation in planning efforts with location and regional jurisdictions.
- [HB 1110](#) adds new requirements for making provisions for housing densities and development types for communities meeting certain population thresholds.

Outside of state, regional and County plans and policies which will guide the comprehensive plan update process, the GMA was created as a bottom-up planning process. Requirements are balanced by the vision of the County and local circumstances and conditions. Therefore, in addition to the above, the County will do the following:

- Public outreach using multiple methods including virtual and in-person engagement
- Coordination with regional tribes



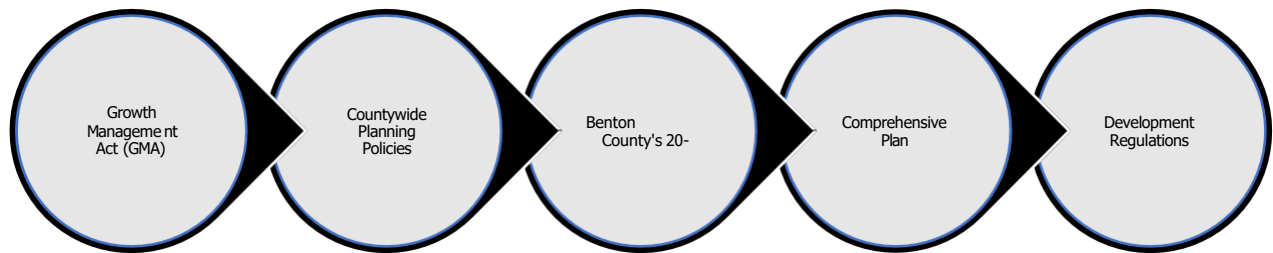
### **Project Outcomes**

Desired project outcomes will be further refined as we engage with Tribes, the communities in the County, elected officials, local organizations, and federal, state and local agencies. A separate Public Participation Plan is being developed for this project. As the update process progresses, outcome refinements are expected.

This project is important. The outcomes of this project direct how the County will grow out to 2045. The Comprehensive Plan sets the policies for how growth (population and employment), housing, transportation, the environment, historic preservation, capital facilities and utilities,

parks, recreation, and open space, climate adaptation and climate resiliency will occur. The policies are then implemented into development regulations or other plans or programs.

The desired project outcomes which will drive this project include both meeting state and regional requirements while ensuring the updated plan reflects local circumstances and the vision of our community. They include:



State and regional outcomes:

- Meet Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for the Plan update as outlined in [RCW 36.70A.130](#), [WAC 365-196](#) and the Department of Commerce Periodic Update Checklist for Fully-Planning jurisdictions
- Consistency with the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies
- Update the County's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) consistent with updated Best Available Science (BAS)
- Update development regulations to ensure consistency with updated policies

Local outcomes:

- Additional graphics and user-friendly features as needed
- A robust public engagement program that uses multiple virtual and in-person methods
- Policies that are easy to navigate
- Policies that meet state and regional requirements through the lens of local circumstances and emergent issues (e.g. housing affordability)
- Adopted growth targets which reflect planned growth during the planning period
- Goals and plans that are aspirational yet rooted in fiscal responsibility
- Protection of the environment and taking reasonable steps to address climate change
- Housing for all community income levels
- Develop strategies or action items that guide County initiatives, programs, and development regulations
- Update (if determined by the County) a vision that guides and leverages public and private investment

**Project Team Workplan Objectives/High Level Schedule**

A summary project schedule is provided as part of this Work Plan. However, we want to remain flexible to adjust as the project moves forward. The following are high-level work plan objectives the project team will work to adhere to as the project moves forward. The goal is to accept that there may be changes to the schedule but outline upfront how we will work through them together so they can be mitigated. The following is agreed to:

- The project team will work together to ensure the project is to be completed no later than December 31, 2026
- Modifications to the project scope, especially those which could impact the project schedule, may only be approved by the County Project Manager
- Those leading tasks will review the project work plan and agree to the project schedule. Schedule changes should be made upfront for issues that we should be able to anticipate now
- Personnel changes for task assignments will be communicated to the County Project Manager
- Discussion and decisions on important project tasks and deliverables will be made at designated project meetings. Those responsible for project tasks agree that prioritizing project meetings is important and that if attendance does not occur, decisions on agenda items will be made in their absence
- Project risks and mitigation for those risks have been identified. When unanticipated issues arise that could impact the project schedule, they will be brought forward to the County Project Manager immediately

### **Project Organization/Internal Communication**

Successful projects are often built on a strong communication plan. The primary contacts for the County and consultant team are identified in the tables on pages 8 and 9. These individuals will be primarily responsible for communication and coordination on behalf of the County, and consultant team. It is important to identify the way work will be completed by team, checked for quality assurance, and shared with others.

The following methods will be utilized for coordination between the County and consulting team to ensure coordination between deliverables.

- **Project update meetings** - Update meeting will be held every two weeks (unless deemed unnecessary). It will include designees from the County and consultant team. Other members of the project team will join depending on the meeting topic. These will be held by video conference.

- **Internal Review Team meetings** - The Project Manager, relevant consultant team members, and deliverable leads from the County will meet monthly. The meetings will focus on:
  - Reviewing the project schedule
  - Receiving updates as necessary on project tasks
  - Reviewing project deliverables, where appropriate
  - Discussing upcoming deliverable and project tasks
- **Individual coordination** - County and consultant team members will meet individually on tasks as needed to coordinate on deliverable development. The primary contacts for each deliverable are identified in the tables on pages 8 and 9.
- **Draft document sharing**- Documents between the consultant team and the County will be sent via email. An FTP link may be used for larger files. Shared files may also be used so groups can work jointly on deliverables.
- **Project Task Tracker**- A short task tracker will be developed and updated bi-weekly by the project leads so that the Project Manager is continually updated on the status of each deliverable. This will provide status updates on current tasks.

## Project Schedule

A summary project schedule is provided below. A more detailed scope of work is attached to this work plan.

Actions	General Timeframe	Deliverables
Periodic Update Work Plan	January 2025– Feb 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prepare Draft and Final Periodic Update Work Plan</li> </ul>
Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan	January 2025– March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prepare Draft and Final Public Participation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan</li> <li>✓ Memo summarizing public participation and stakeholder engagement activities</li> </ul>
Audit of Existing Comprehensive Plan	Nov 2024 – May 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Legislative review of adopted comprehensive plan</li> <li>✓ Draft and final Commerce Checklist</li> <li>✓ Memo outlining required legislative and desired County changes</li> </ul>
Critical Areas Analysis	Dec 2024 – Mar 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Legislative review of existing Critical Areas Ordinance</li> <li>✓ Draft and final CAO Checklist</li> <li>✓ Gap analysis memo</li> </ul>
Draft Comprehensive Plan Amendment	May 2025 – March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Draft and final comp plan amendments per findings of checklist and engagement</li> </ul>
Housing Needs Analysis, Gap Analysis, and Housing Element Update	Nov 2024 – July 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Draft and final Housing Needs Assessment</li> <li>✓ Housing allocation gap analysis and adequate provisions memo</li> <li>✓ Update Housing Element per Commerce Checklist and Housing Needs Assessment</li> <li>✓ Public engagement on housing</li> </ul>

Actions	General Timeframe	Deliverables
Development Regulation Analysis	May 2025 – November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Review/identify updates to Benton County Code as necessary</li> <li>✓ Draft and final development regulations checklist</li> </ul>
Draft Development Regulations Ord.-Amendment of BCC sections	October 2025 – March 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Draft development regulations ordinance, including integration of climate change element-prompted amendments</li> <li>✓ Notification email from Commerce</li> </ul>
Draft Development Reg’s Ord. – Housing	March 2026 – June 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Incorporation of middle housing code changes to draft Chapter 16 amendments</li> </ul>
Draft/Final SEPA EIS	April 2025 – May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Draft and Final SEPA EIS</li> <li>✓ Final SEPA determination</li> </ul>

## Roles and Responsibilities

Clear expectations about project roles and responsibilities are a key component for project success. This is especially important for a large project team where each step in the project is dependent on other tasks being completed. There are also tasks being done by the County or jointly between the County and project consultants.

The following tables outline key project personnel, contact information, and high-level roles and responsibilities. The responsibilities listed relate to the project schedule.

The project schedule in Appendix A goes further into due dates for each task. The schedule also provides key information so project team members can easily understand who is responsible for the task. Project team members can then come back to the tables below for contact information. This will help ensure coordination is strong. This is especially important where the County and consultant team are working together on key tasks, such as the Housing Element update.

### County Team

Name	Department	Contact Information	High Level Roles & Responsibilities
Greg Wendt	Benton County Community Development	Director <a href="mailto:Greg.Wendt@co.benton.wa.us">Greg.Wendt@co.benton.wa.us</a>	Staff support Review of draft and final documents
Michelle Mercer	Benton County Community Development	Planning Manager <a href="mailto:Michelle.Mercer@co.benton.wa.us">Michelle.Mercer@co.benton.wa.us</a>	Project Manager (County and consultant team) Updates to Land Use, Housing, Historic Preservation and Community Design, Economic Stability, Natural Systems, Economic Elements
Robert Blain	Facilities and Capital Assets	<a href="mailto:Robert.Blain@co.benton.wa.us">Robert.Blain@co.benton.wa.us</a>	Updates capital and transportation improvement plans

### Consultant Team

Name	Group	Contact Information	High Level Roles & Responsibilities
Ben Floyd	White Bluffs Consulting	Consultant Team Project Manager <a href="mailto:ben@whitebluffsconsulting.com">ben@whitebluffsconsulting.com</a>	Project coordination, meeting facilitator, prepare plan elements
Lara Floyd	White Bluffs Consulting	Project Coordinator <a href="mailto:lara@whitebluffsconsulting.com">lara@whitebluffsconsulting.com</a>	Communications Specialist, Public Outreach
Ferdouse Oneza	Berk Consulting	Associate Principal <a href="mailto:foneza@berkconsulting.com">foneza@berkconsulting.com</a>	Housing Element, SEPA Environmental Review/Initial Tasks
Kevin Gifford	Berk Consulting	Associate Principal <a href="mailto:kevin@berkconsulting.com">kevin@berkconsulting.com</a>	Housing Element SEPA Environmental Review/Initial Tasks
Kevin Ramsey	Berk Consulting	Associate Principal <a href="mailto:kevinr@berkconsulting.com">kevinr@berkconsulting.com</a>	Housing Element, SEPA Environmental Review/Initial Tasks
Spencer Montgomery	JUB Engineering	Transportation Planner, Project Manager <a href="mailto:smontgomery@jub.com">smontgomery@jub.com</a>	Transportation Element
Kelsi Potterf	Benton/Franklin CD	<a href="mailto:kelsi-potterf@bentoncd.org">kelsi-potterf@bentoncd.org</a>	Current Context and Needs Scenarios and Plans, Programs and Reg. Updates
Kara Kaelber	Benton/Franklin CD	<a href="mailto:kara-kaelber@franklincd.org">kara-kaelber@franklincd.org</a>	Current Context and Needs Scenarios and Plans, Programs and Reg. Updates
Adam/Cara Cares	AC Geo	<a href="mailto:acares.geo@gmail.com">acares.geo@gmail.com</a>	GIS Mapping, land use scenarios, document editing and other planning support

**Climate Work Team**

Name	Group	Contact Information	High Level Roles & Responsibilities
Gretchen Muller	Cascadia Consulting	gretchen@cascadiaconsulting.com	Main point of contact; lead project management activities; delegate work to task leads; lead policy audit and coordinate policy development across sub-elements.
Casey Bradfield	Berk Consulting	casey@berkconsulting.com	Secondary point of contact; support project management activities; lead development and execution of public and tribal
Mary Ann Rozance	Cascadia Consulting	foneza@berkconsulting.com	Lead climate impacts summary, vulnerability and risk assessment, and climate resilience goals and policies.
Andrea Martin	Cascadia Consulting	andream@cascadiaconsulting.com	Lead regional emissions inventory, GHG forecasting and wedge analysis, and GHG reduction measures.
Stefanie Herzstein	Transpo	stefanie.herzstein@transpogroup.com	Lead VMT study and transportation modeling partnership; lead VMT reduction measures.
Morgan Garner	PlanIT Geo	morgangarner@planitgeo.com	Lead tree canopy analysis
Lisa Grueter	BERK	lisa@berkconsulting.com	Advise policy development, coordinate integration with other parts of comprehensive plans.
Ferdouse Oneza	BERK	foneza@berkconsulting.com	Lead coordination with each jurisdiction; track individual jurisdiction deliverables; support engagement activities
Abigail Lambert	Cascadia Consulting	abigail@cascadiaconsulting.com	Support policy audit, support development of mitigation and resilience policies, support sub-element writing.
Brent Turley	Transpo	brent.turley@transpogroup.com	Support VMT analysis and VMT reduction
Josh Linden	BERK	josh@berkconsulting.com	Support data analysis for vulnerability and risk assessment, GHG emissions inventory, VMT study, policy modeling, and spatial analysis

### **Project Coordination/Decision Making Process**

It is anticipated that the leads for individual deliverables will be responsible for coordination on their tasks. This includes coordination between the Community Development and Public Works Departments and between the County and consultant teams.

A project task tracker will be developed and updated bi-weekly by the project leads so that the Project Manager is continually update on the statue of each deliverable.

Internal Review Team (IRT) meetings will be scheduled monthly. These meetings will be utilized for:

- Reviewing the project schedule
- Receiving updates as necessary on project tasks
- Reviewing project deliverables, where appropriate
- Discussing upcoming deliverable and projects tasks

All draft deliverables must be reviewed and approved by the Project Manager, or the designee assigned by the Project Manager before being finalized. Draft stamps should remain on all documents until reviewed. The IRT meetings will be an appropriate venue to review draft documents and deliverables, especially where there are multiple groups involved. However, it is anticipated that individual meetings will be set up by the deliverable lead and include those working on the deliverable and the Project Manager to ensure work is reviewed and approved.

### **Expectations and Keys to Success**

In addition to being on the same page regarding the workflow process, there are other factors that will be necessary to ensure project success:

1. Build trust between the consultant group and County staff
2. Foster meetings that promote open dialogue and sharing of ideas
3. Come prepared to meetings so that we can accomplish meeting goals
4. Provide clear, concise, and consistent project messaging
5. Do not linger on issues previously decided unless new details or issues emerge.
6. Provide documents and analysis that are easy to understand and provide options for decision makers

# **Attachment 1 Detailed Scope of Work/Budget**

## **SCOPE OF WORK TO UPDATE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NOVEMBER 2024 THROUGH JUNE 2026 PERIOD**

### **Introduction**

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Benton County is updating its Comprehensive Plan. The plan update is due to be completed by June 2026 consistent with the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) grant agreement, and no later than December 2026 per state law. There are several new State requirements that have recently been put in place that the County will comply with during the update process. Additionally, the County has determined that an updated programmatic EIS is needed to evaluate potential environmental effects anticipated during plan implementation. Tasks related to these needs are included along with other more typical activities required as part of the update process.

The work in this work plan has been divided up over two state biennium budget cycles, with tasks covering work between November 1, 2024 and June 13, 2025 and then a second set of tasks for work between July 1, 2025 to June 13, 2026.

### **PLANNING PERIOD 1: November 1, 2024 and June 13, 2025**

#### **Task 1 – Project Management**

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This task is provided by the County and is ongoing phase throughout the life of the project starting with a Kick off meeting with consultant to update scope of work and milestone schedule in order to finalize Periodic Update work plan in conjunction with Project Management Plan.

**Schedule:** Through June 2025.

**Deliverables:** Providing deliverables to Commerce, Periodic Update Work Plan preparing pay requests, processing consultant invoices and other related work.

**Budget:** \$15,000

#### **Task 2 – Public Engagement: Develop County Public Participation Plan and Support Outreach Efforts**

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The consultant team will lead the development of an updated Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the Comprehensive Plan update, addressing how tribal participation will occur and identifying opportunities for public input, key stakeholders/interested parties email list to receive communications (e.g., tribes, FutureWise, and others), website location and expected content, and major steps and timelines to guide the plan update process. The County will review and comment on the draft PPP before it is finalized and approved by the County for use to support the planning effort.

The County will establish and maintain a Comprehensive Plan website which will include a project library of draft and final documents, public meeting notices and announcements, opportunity for input via a dedicated email address, and an

interested parties sign-up link. Other engagement activities may include, but are not limited to, the following: orientation interviews, website postings, questionnaires, interdepartmental and interagency coordination meetings, etc.

The Consultant team will support the County in holding a few public meetings/Planning Commission/stakeholder workshops (2-3 are planned), including preparing draft and final presentations and summaries. The County will review and comment on draft deliverables.

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Schedule:** Meetings will be held by May 2025 and PPP provided to the County by May 31, 2025.

**Deliverables:** Draft and final PPP. Materials for public meetings, workshops and facilitated meetings with meeting summaries (up to 3).

**Budget:** \$30,000

### **Task 3.1 – Current Context and Needs, and Draft Comprehensive Plan Checklist**

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The team will support the County in preparing updated demographic information, compiling GIS data, reviewing the existing Comprehensive Plan and any other relevant plans, information and data sources. The consultant team will also prepare an annotated draft Comprehensive Plan checklist with status, assignments, and follow up items to guide the update process.

The Consultant team will also prepare draft outlines that address the following topics:

- Land use future needs analysis – to determine if any land use designations need to be modified to meet expected growth
- Industrial lands inventory – summarize existing industrial lands, identify trends from recent development activity both in Benton County (including cities) and the Benton/Franklin County area. Evaluate the current industrial lands and determine if additional designated industrial area is needed to meet future growth needs and opportunities
- Renewable energy resource lands inventory and future development strategy – summarize recent trends for renewable energy projects, identify potential areas where planned and potential future projects might locate, and provide recommendations for where and how to address these projects in the future, including suggested updates in the plan and County development regulations.
- Shrub-steppe land inventory and preservation/mitigation bank strategy – summarize existing shrub-steppe lands, identified biodiversity corridors and potential land acquisition/conservation easement opportunities. This work will be coordinated with the Benton Conservation District (CD), using GIS information developed through the CD's agreements with other jurisdictions and the agreement being worked on with Benton County.

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Deliverables:** Updated County GIS resource layers, outlines for the following:

- Land use future needs analysis
- Industrial lands inventory and analysis
- Renewable energy resource lands inventory and future development strategy
- Shrub-steppe land inventory and preservation/mitigation bank strategy
- Draft Comprehensive Plan checklist

**Schedule:** Work expected to be completed by June 13, 2025.

Budget: \$20,000

## **Task 3.2 – Review Population Projection and Allocation, Including Housing**

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### **3.2.1 Housing Needs Allocation Process**

The County will take the lead on this work and develop the updated population projection and allocation in coordination with the cities. The consultant team is available to provide input and guidance to the County during this process, as desired, and provide review comments.

**Deliverables:** Comments on County population projection and allocation

### **3.2.2 Housing Needs Allocation Process**

The consultant team will support a process by which Benton County and its incorporated jurisdictions will select a preferred allocation of countywide housing needs by affordability level, consistent with new GMA requirements. This work will include designing and participating two meetings with representatives from all jurisdictions, and preparing a draft and final technical report.

Meeting 1: Intro to GMA requirements and countywide population projections

- Prepare a presentation explaining the new GMA requirements for Comprehensive Plan housing elements, with an emphasis on the requirement to plan for and accommodate all housing needs.
- Summarize Commerce guidance for how to comply with this requirement and briefly demonstrate the Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) published by Commerce for supporting the housing needs allocation process.
- Support decision on selected population projection.
- Share analysis of Benton County population growth trends compared to OFM projections.
- Describe importance of population projection to housing needs.
- Share analysis of ADU and manufactured homes permitting trends to determine the upper bound of 80-120% AMI allocation for rural Benton County.
- Present typical options for allocating shares between jurisdictions.
- Discuss pros/cons of each option given local context and data limitations.
- Get feedback on options to consider in preliminary allocation analysis.

Meeting 2: Review and discuss revised allocations results

- Conduct analysis and develop two allocation alternatives.
- Share the draft technical report (see Task 2.3) to support jurisdiction review.
- Present findings and support discussion to select and approve an allocation alternative.

Prepare draft and final technical report

Prepare a draft and final technical report describing the allocation process, selected allocation by jurisdiction, and recommendations for documenting these allocations in countywide planning policies.

**Deliverables (Tasks 3.2.1 and 3.2.2):**

- Comments on County population projection and allocations

- Presentation slide decks for Meetings 1, and 2.
- Draft and final technical report.

**Schedule:** Work expected to be completed by May 31, 2025

**Budget:** \$25,000

## **Task 4.1 – Scenarios and Plans, and Programs and Regulation Updates**

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The consultant team will work with County staff and the Planning Commission to start developing two alternative land use scenarios, addressing potential land use and policy changes, as informed by Tasks 3.1 and 3.2., and updating certain draft plan sections. This will also include establishing a preferred growth alternative which will inform Countywide Planning Policies.

- a. Land Use – The WBC team will add into the plan population projections prepared by the County, land capacity analysis and findings.
- b. Economic - The WBC team will review this element, incorporate recent updated plans and make other appropriate updates/additions.
- c. Parks and Recreation - The WBC team will review this element, incorporate recent updated plans and make other appropriate updates/additions.
- d. Resource lands – The WBC team will review this element, incorporate recent updated plans and make other appropriate updates/additions.
- e. Utilities - The WBC team will review this element, incorporate recent updated plans and make other appropriate updates/additions.
- f. Essential public facilities – the WBC team will update this element, verify it meets the latest requirements and make other appropriate updates.
- g. Figures – Prepared draft plan figures

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Deliverables:** The team will provide the following deliverables:

- Draft Plan Maps
- Updated draft land use element
- Two alternative descriptions including preferred growth alternative
- Draft Critical Areas checklist
- Draft Open Space Protection and Shrub-steppe mitigation program elements outline

**Schedule:** Work to be completed by May 31, 2025

**Budget:** \$85,000

## **Task 4.2 – Review Countywide Planning Policies**

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The County will take the lead on this work. The consultant team will review the updated draft CWPP and provide a tracked changes version with comments to the County.

**Deliverables:** Comments on draft County-wide Planning Policies.

**Schedule:** Work expected to be completed by end of April 2025.

**Budget:** \$5,000

## **Task 4.3 – Transportation Element Update**

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The Consultant team will take the lead on this work. Generally, the team will prepare an update to the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan that is consistent with the Land Use Element, with applicable appendices, to include required sub-elements as described in RCW 36.70A.070(6).

The team will update the roads inventory (or use what is provided by County if up to date) and describe multimodal LOS standards for all locally owned arterials, locally and regionally operated transit routes that serve urban growth areas, and state highways. The updated inventory and standards will be incorporated with Draft Transportation Element

The team will also identify specific actions to achieve multimodal LOS standards, as applicable. This would include preparing a list of projects or actions necessary to bring facilities and services to established LOS standards, using the traffic forecasts analysis and other available multi-modal plans. It is assumed many of the projects necessary to meet LOS standards are already identified in the Benton County Transportation Improvement Program with current valid cost estimates.

Level of Service forecasts will be prepared for State highways and local functionally classified streets. The team will develop a 10-year forecast of multimodal travel including a discussion of land use assumptions to estimate travel. This will start with traffic forecasts in Appendix H of the existing County plan and include coordination with WSDOT and BFCG in the detailed evaluation of the traffic impacts of projected growth on state owned facilities and the facility and service needs stemming from future population demands on state owned facilities. Traffic count data from 2024 collected by the BFCOG is expected to be available from which to evaluate existing conditions and no new traffic counts will be required for this study effort. This work will also include a discussion of any equity concerns in the analysis of the transportation system based on demographic data used to support other plan elements.

The team will use the information described above to prepare a draft of the Transportation Element, including applicable Appendices of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan, including appropriate maps and tables for incorporation into the full Comprehensive Plan Update. The County will review and comment on draft deliverables.

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Deliverables:** Draft roads inventory, 10-year level of service forecasts, and equity characterization to be included in the updated Transportation element and associated appendices.

**Schedule:** Work will be completed by May 31, 2025.

**Budget:** \$45,000

## **Task 4.4 - Housing Element**

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The WBC team will update the Housing Element consistent with recent changes to State law that require planning for and accommodating housing affordable to all income levels (HB 1220) and local priorities. This work will be consistent with RCW 36.70A.070 and Commerce guidance, and organized into the following five subtasks. We assume that no UGA analysis will be required for the Housing Element.

#### 4.4.1 Housing Need Assessment

The team will assess and summarize the latest available data about housing needs and housing market conditions countywide, inclusive of both cities and unincorporated areas. When possible, we will provide additional information about conditions in unincorporated Benton County, subject to data availability. This assessment will include, at minimum:

- Current and projected population
- Current household characteristics, including size, tenure, income levels, and cost burden.
- Housing supply by type and number of bedrooms
- Balance of jobs and housing
- Housing cost and affordability
- Housing production trends including moderate income homes, ADUs and manufactured home
- Inventory of subsidized affordable housing
- Group quarters
- Inventory of housing needs (allocation) by income level, including permanent supportive and emergency housing.

#### 4.4.2 Racially Disparate Impacts (RDI) Exclusion, and Displacement Risk

The team will prepare a racially disparate impacts (RDI) analysis consistent with HB 1220 requirements and Commerce guidance. The consultant team will use information from the public participation for RDI analysis from the overall Comprehensive Plan update public participation led by WBC.

The analysis will:

- Consider housing and household characteristics by racial and ethnicity groups with a focus on comparing White (not Hispanic) and Hispanic or Latinx households. This may include rates of homeownership, cost-burden, and overcrowding, housing costs in relation to median household income, and whether there are concentrations of racial groups in certain areas of the county with increased exposure to environmental health hazards or with limited access to transit, parks, or other services.
- Use Commerce's Draft Displacement Risk Map to evaluate relative risks of displacement within the County.
- Establish and implement a framework to systematically assess whether existing goals and policies in the Housing Element contribute to identified impacts.
- Consider results of early engagement to better understand contributing factors to racially disparate impacts, displacement, exclusions in housing, and future displacement risk.

#### 4.4.3 Land capacity analysis

Based on our understanding that all UGAs in Benton County are associated with cities, no analysis of land capacity in urban unincorporated county will be required. Our approach is also based on the findings in Tasks 2 and 3 described below:

- In Task 2, if the County does not allocate any housing need below 80% AMI to rural areas, development of a land capacity model will not be necessary, and allocations above 120% AMI in the rural county will not require detailed capacity analysis. Capacity for allocations at 80-120% AMI can be demonstrated through analysis of ADU and manufactured homes permitting trends, consistent with guidance approved by Commerce. (See Task 2)
- If additional support related to land capacity is required, we can provide support as a separate task order, as follows:

- **Facilitation and Guidance:** If the county intends to consider potential land capacity analysis during the regional housing allocation meetings, we can provide qualitative guidance to keep all the jurisdictions on the same page. This would be a relatively small additional cost added to our scope for the allocation process.
- **Technical Support:** If there is a need for quantitative analysis of land capacity, either countywide or for a specific subarea, we can support that as a separate task based on the need.

#### 4.4.4 Draft Housing Goals and Policies

The consultant team will update Housing goals and policies for consistency with new GMA requirements and the County's vision for accommodating all housing needs. This work will include addressing policies that may have racially disparate impacts or that can result in exclusion, or displacement. The team will also identify anti-displacement policies appropriate to the local context, and update the goals and policies addressing the racially disparate impacts based on Commerce guidelines.

#### 4.4.5 Implementation Code and Adequate Provisions

The consultant team will review Benton County's development regulations for consistency with the current legislative and local policy as required by the GMA periodic update checklist. Based on our review, the consultant team will provide a summary memo identifying necessary requirements for code updates.

Work on some of these subtasks will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

#### Deliverables (for Tasks 4.4.1 to 4.4.5)

- Housing needs assessment memo
- RDI memo
- Draft and final housing goals and policies
- Implementation Code memo

**Schedule:** Work will be completed by May 31, 2025

**Budget:** \$55,000

### Task 4.5 - Capital Facilities Planning

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Based on the growth projections and future land use pattern (Task 4), minor adjustments will be needed to address the demand for capital facilities. The team will work with the County to review the existing capital facilities plan and assess how well this plan will serve future growth areas. Supplemental information will be collected and summarized as an addendum to the County CIP for water, sewer, storm water, transportation (roads), school, fire, parks, police and power improvements planned by utility service providers. The information will be summarized/updated in the Capital Facilities element. The County will review and comment on draft deliverables.

**Deliverables:** Updated draft Capital Facilities element.

**Schedule:** Work to be completed by May 31, 2025.

**Budget:** \$10,000

## Task 4.6 – Development Regulations Update

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The County’s development regulations will be reviewed against Commerce’s Growth Management Service “Expanded Checklist for Development Regulations,” and then suggested regulation updates provided, as appropriate, to ensure the County can comply with these requirements. The WBC team will research and provide suggested language changes to County development regulations.

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Deliverables:** Comments and edits on applicable draft development regulations (e.g., Critical areas code, zoning, etc.) There will be two versions: (1) a draft copy for staff and public review and comment and (2) a final draft of development code amendments.

**Schedule:** Support to be provided through June 13, 2025.

**Budget:** \$15,000

## Task 5.1 - SEPA/Environmental Review – Initial Tasks

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The County has determined a State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. The consultant team will prepare a non-project programmatic EIS identifying potential impacts of the updated plan and regulations, and associated mitigation measures. For this first planning period, the WBC team will conduct SEPA scoping, review information sources and summarize a draft affected environment description for ten elements of the environment, including: Earth; Surface Water; Plants and Animals; Land Use; Shoreline Use; Population, Housing, and Employment; Parks and Recreation; Transportation; Public Services and Utilities; and Heritage Conservation. Preliminary draft SEPA alternatives will also be formulated.

The proposed level of detail for environmental analysis will be programmatic for those areas of future development. Research and data collection will be based on readily available secondary sources of information, including previous environmental documents, reports, inventories, maps, and other similar literature from local governments and other sources.

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Deliverables:** Notice of Intent, scoping summary and draft affected environment descriptions, and two draft alternative outlines

**Schedule:** Work to be completed by May 31, 2025.

**Budget:** \$30,000

## Task 5.2 – Consultant Team Project Management, and County and Planning Commission Meetings

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We will provide project management services including monthly invoicing, summary of work completed, and coordination of work with the County and subconsultants. Additionally, this task includes budget for monthly coordination meetings and up to 5 Planning Commission meetings for developing the plan, where WBC team members will facilitate meetings in person, with other team members participating by phone, as appropriate.

Work on this task will continue into the July 2025 to June 2026 project period, and additional scope and budget will be added to this task as part of a future contract amendment.

**Deliverables:** Monthly invoices, facilitated Planning Commission meetings, monthly coordination meetings, and meeting materials

**Schedule:** Support to be provided through May 31, 2025.

**Budget:** \$15,000

**Budget – November 2024 to June 2025 Period**

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Commerce Grant Label/Budget Allocation</b>
Task 1 Project Management	\$15,000	D1.1
Task 2 PPP/Website/Outreach	\$30,000	D2.1
Task 3.1A Current Context and Needs (Comp Plan checklist and Energy Ag Lands Memo)	\$20,000	D3.1 (\$10K) D7.1 (\$10K)
Task 3.2 County population projection, facility needs and housing allocation	\$25,000	D3.1 (\$10K) D4.1 (\$5K) D7.1 (\$5K) D10.1 (\$5K)
Task 4.1 Scenarios and Plans, Programs and Regulation Updates, Draft Plan elements (includes Critical Areas Checklist and Open Space Protection and Shrub-steppe Mitigation)	\$85,000	D4.1 (\$20K) D9.1 (\$38.75K) D11.1 (\$26.25)
Task 4.2 Review Countywide Planning Policies	\$5,000	D10.1 (\$5K)
Task 4.3 Transportation Element Update	\$45,000	D5.1 (\$42.5K) D9.1 (\$2.5K)
Task 4.4 Housing Element	\$55,000	D6.1 (\$42.5K) D8.1 (\$12.5K)
Task 4.5 Capital Facilities Planning	\$10,000	D10.1 (\$10K)
Task 4.6.1 Development Regulations update (Primarily Critical Areas Ordinance)	\$15,000	D8.1 (\$15K)
Task 5.1 SEPA Environmental Review/Initial Tasks	\$30,000	D12.1 D12.2
Task 5.2 PM and County and PC meetings	\$15,000	D3.1 (\$5K) D7.1 (\$5K) D9.1 (\$5K)
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$350,000</b>	<b>\$350,000</b>

## **PLANNING PERIOD 2: July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026**

### **Task 1 – Project Management**

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This task is provided by the County and is ongoing phase throughout the life of the project and includes oversight of work consistent with the project management plan, regular coordination with the Consultant team and other project management activities. It also includes.

**Schedule:** Through June 2026.

**Deliverables:** Providing deliverables to Commerce, preparing pay requests, processing consultant invoices and other related work.

**Budget:** \$15,000

### **Task 2 – Implement County Public Participation Plan through Public Engagement and Outreach**

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The consultant team will continue to implement the Public Participation Plan (PPP) for the Comprehensive Plan update, including tribal coordination, communications to key stakeholders/interested parties identified in the PPP, maintain project website by posting draft documents and meeting notices, and public workshops and Planning Commission meetings.

The Consultant team will support the County in holding public meetings/Planning Commission/stakeholder workshops (up to 5 are planned), including preparing draft and final presentations and summaries. The County will review and comment on draft deliverables.

**Schedule:** Meetings will be held between the fall 2025 and May 2026.

**Deliverables:** Materials for public meetings, workshops and facilitated meetings with meeting summaries (up to 5).

**Budget:** \$20,000

### **Task 3.1 – Current Context and Needs/Additional Refinement and Final Documentation**

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The County will work with the Consultant team to prepare draft and final demographic information, GIS data summarizing key information for the County and incorporating relevant plans, information and data sources in the draft and final Comprehensive Plan.

The Consultant team will also prepare draft and final work produces for:

- Updated land use designation and zoning map adjustments
- Industrial lands inventory – Develop draft and final industrial lands designation, based on analysis completed in the prior fiscal year, to meet future growth needs and opportunities
- Renewable energy resource lands and overlay – based on findings from technical memorandum, prepare overlay map and criteria for permitting new energy projects in the County, including updates in the plan and County development regulations (zoning).
- Shrub-steppe land inventory and preservation/mitigation bank strategy – summarize existing shrub-steppe lands, identified biodiversity corridors and potential land acquisition/conservation easement opportunities. This work will be

coordinated with the Benton Conservation District (CD), using GIS information developed through the CD's agreements with other jurisdictions and the agreement being worked on with Benton County. Identify next steps for implementation of the strategy.

**Deliverables:** Updated County GIS resource layers, outlines for the following:

- Land use future needs analysis
- Industrial lands inventory and analysis
- Renewable energy resource lands inventory and future development strategy
- Shrub-steppe land inventory and preservation/mitigation bank strategy

**Schedule:** Work expected to be completed by May 2026.

**Budget:** \$20,000

## **Task 4.1 – Scenarios and Plans, and Programs and Regulation Updates**

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The consultant team will work with County staff and the Planning Commission to finalize all draft elements developed in the 2025 grant period, update all remaining draft plan elements and final draft development regulations, incorporate the Climate Change/Resiliency element into the plan, and prepare final draft plans and regulations

**Deliverables:** The team will provide the following deliverables:

- Complete Draft, Final Draft and Final Comprehensive Plan with map folio set and all appendices (\$100K)
- Final Critical Areas Ordinance (\$15k)
- Final Open Space and Shrub-steppe Mitigation Program (\$15k)
- Final Draft Development Regulations (\$30K)

**Schedule:** Work to be completed by June 15, 2026

**Budget:** \$140,000

## **Task 5.1 - Complete Environmental Review**

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The consultant team will prepare a non-project programmatic draft, final draft and final EIS identifying potential impacts of the updated Comprehensive plan and regulations, and associated mitigation measures addressing Earth; Surface Water; Plants and Animals; Land Use; Shoreline Use; Population, Housing, and Employment; Parks and Recreation; Transportation; Public Services and Utilities; Climate, Air Quality/GHG, and Heritage Conservation.

**Deliverables:** Draft, Final Draft and Final EIS

**Schedule:** Work to be completed by June 20, 2026.

**Budget:** \$125,000

## **Task 5.2 – Tracking Comments/Responses and Updates to SEPA EIS, Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations**

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The County will work with its consultant team to develop a matrix of comments and responses to the draft documents as part of the public, state agency and SEPA review processes. All comments received and associated responses will be tracked in a comment/response matrix. Edits and other updates will be made to the plan based upon these responses. Changes in the

documents will be tracked and shared with the County's Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners in preparation for public hearings and the adoption process.

**Deliverables:** Comment/response matrix and tracked edits to the Comprehensive plan documents and development regulations.

**Budget:** \$15,000

## **Task 5.3 – Final Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations Adoption**

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The County and its consultant team will support the adoption process by preparing staff reports, preparing review documents, and presentations, and providing other supporting information to the County's Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners to support workshops, public hearings and the adoption process. This task also includes participating in these meetings, which may be held virtually and/or in person. Hearings are expected by both the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners.

**Deliverables:** Workshop and hearing packets, and adopted, final versions of the documents, along with supporting notices and documentation for the administrative record.

**Schedule:** Work to be completed by June 20, 2026.

**Budget:** \$15,000

**Budget – July 2025 to June 2026 Period**

<b>Tasks</b>	<b>Budget (\$)</b>
Task 1 County Project Management	\$15,000
Task 2 PPP/Website/Outreach	\$20,000
Task 3.1 Current Context and Needs/Additional Refinement and Documentation	\$20,000
Task 4.1 Scenarios and Plans, Programs and Regulation Updates	\$140,000
Task 5.1 Complete Environmental Review	\$125,000
Task 5.2 Tracking Comments/Responses and Updates	\$15,000
Task 5.3 Final Adoption	\$15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$350,000</b>