

**RECOMMENDATION OF THE
BENTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

RE: In the Matter of County Planning: relating to
the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to the
Open Space Conservation Land Use Designation.

File No. CPA 2024-001
RECOMMENDATION, FINDINGS OF FACT AND
CONCLUSIONS

RECOMMENDATION

CPA 2024-001; A Comprehensive Plan Amendment to clarify and amend two (2) sections of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan related to the Open Space Conservation Land Use Designation is hereby recommended to be **APPROVED**. This action is based upon the following findings pursuant to RCW 58.17.110.

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the legal notification pursuant to RCW 36.70A.130 was given on March 27, 2024, in the Prosser Record Bulletin; and,

WHEREAS, the open record public hearing was held on April 9, 2022, at 6:00 p.m., in the Planning Hearing Room, First Floor, Courthouse, 620 Market St., Prosser, WA 99350; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission was available to receive public testimony, exhibits, and answer questions in the public portion of the hearing with the public being able to attend and comment through video and telephonic access to the meeting. The meeting was also broadcast through streaming video to allow the public to view the meeting; and,

WHEREAS, the following members attended the meeting Martin Sheeran, Brian Skeels, Robert Mendez, Kelly Hanson and Lloyd Coughlin; and,

WHEREAS, all those who testified and those public hearing exhibits that were received into evidence are identified in the minutes for the hearing on April 9, 2024; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission considered all testimony and, after questions to those giving testimony, closed the public hearing; and,

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission at the open record public hearing considered the evidence submitted and voted to recommend approval with the findings of fact as outlined in the staff memo dated March 27, 2024; and,


WHEREAS, the Planning Commission is entering its written findings, conclusions and recommendations concerning this matter, and is forwarding the same to the Board of County Commissioners.

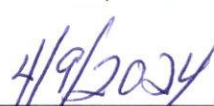
FINDINGS OF FACT

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment application 2024-001 proposes an amendment to Section 3.3.5 to clarify the description of what constitutes the open space conservation land use designation and in Table 3.4, the application amends the zoning classification that implements the open space conservation designation.
2. The intent of the changes in Section 3.3.5 is to clarify that the Open Space land use designation may apply to land with either public and private ownership, the properties must be held in a conservation easement or land trust, and to further to make sure the public is aware that this designation is completely voluntary.
3. The intent of the changes to Table 3.4 is to clarify the zoning classification that implements the open space conservation designation by changing the implementing zoning classification from Rural Lands 5 Zoning District to Open Space Conservation Zoning District which ensures consistency between both the land use and zoning designation.
4. Public notice and application requirements have been completed for the Comprehensive Plan Amendment request as follows:
 - A. Legal notification for the 2024 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Docket was published in the Prosser Record Bulletin on January 17, 2024.
 - B. The application for CPA 2024-001 was submitted to the Benton County Planning Division October 6, 2023.
 - C. The application was declared complete for processing on October 7, 2023.
 - D. An Environmental Checklist (EA 2024-001) was submitted on October 6, 2023, and a Determination of Non-Significance was issued on February 21, 2024, with a 14-day comment period.
 - E. The application documents were distributed to reviewing agencies on February 22, 2024.
 - F. The application documents were provided to the Washington State Department of Commerce on February 22, 2024, through their on-line submittal system, initiating their 60-day review. (WA Dept. of Commerce: Submittal ID: 2024-S-6892)
 - G. Legal notification for the Planning Commission public hearing was published on March 27, 2024, in the Prosser Record Bulletin.
 - H. Notice of the Planning Commission public hearing was emailed/mailed to property owner of record within 300 feet of the proposal on March 22, 2024.
 - I. The Planning Commission public hearing is scheduled for April 9, 2024.

5. The application for CPA 2024-001 is consistent with RCW 36.70A, the Growth Management Act.
6. The application for CPA 2024-001 is consistent with the goals and policies of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan.
7. The application further implements Benton County Comprehensive Plan, Section 2, PL Goal 3, Policy 2 to encourage the public and/or private acquisition of the prominent ridges within unincorporated Benton County as Open Space Conservation, in order to preserve views, protect native habitat, and provide for public access and recreation associated with these landscapes.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE BENTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION, through its chairman, adopts these findings and conclusions with respect to File No. CPA 2024-001, and hereby recommends APPROVAL to the Board of County Commissioners for amendments to the Benton County Comprehensive Plan, including two (2) sections of the Benton County Comprehensive Plan related to the Open Space Conservation Land Use Designation, specifically, Section 3.3.5 to clarify the description of what constitutes the Open Space Conservation land use designation, and in Table 3.4, the application amends the zoning classification that implements the open space conservation designation.


MARTIN SHEERAN, Chairman


DATE

BENTON COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION