

Wednesday, April 21, 2021
College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting

4:00 PM
Youth Advisory Commission

Zoom Attendee Link: <https://zoom.us/j/96989696132>

Meeting may be viewed at: Live Stream on City of College Place, Washington YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbx3qrqzLDL_05NusReSI-g/featured

Or you may call this number to listen: 1-669-900-9128 ID# 969 8969 6132

1. OPENING ITEMS

Subject :	1.01 Call To Order
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	1. OPENING ITEMS
Access :	Public
Type :	Procedural
Subject :	1.02 Roll Call
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	1. OPENING ITEMS
Access :	Public
Type :	Information, Procedural

Public Content

Members:

Walla Walla University Representatives:

- Savannah-Rose Walker
- Joshua Peinado

College Place High School Representatives:

- Audrey Reeves
- Mayra Campa

Walla Walla Valley Academy Representatives:

- Eli Stanciu Jr.
- Carsten Wallace-Bailey

Staff:

Mike Rizzitiello - Administrator

2. CONSENT AGENDA

Subject :	2.01 Approve Agenda for April 21, 2021
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	2. CONSENT AGENDA
Access :	Public
Type :	Action (Consent)

Consent

Our adopted rules of Parliamentary Procedure, The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis, 4th Edition, provide for a consent agenda listing several items for approval of the Board by a single motion. Most of the items listed under the consent agenda have gone through Board subcommittee review and recommendation. Documentation concerning these items has been provided to all board members and the public in advance to assure an extensive and thorough review. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member.

Subject :	2.02 Approve Minutes from February 17, 2021
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	2. CONSENT AGENDA
Access :	Public
Type :	Action (Consent), Minutes

File Attachments

[YAC_minutes_02-17-2021.pdf \(146 KB\)](#)

Consent

Our adopted rules of Parliamentary Procedure, The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis, 4th Edition, provide for a consent agenda listing several items for approval of the Board by a single motion. Most of the items listed under the consent agenda have gone through Board subcommittee review and recommendation. Documentation concerning these items has been provided to all board members and the public in advance to assure an extensive and thorough review. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member.

Subject :	2.03 Acknowledge Adjournment of Meeting Minutes from March 17, 2021
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	2. CONSENT AGENDA
Access :	Public
Type :	Action (Consent), Minutes

File Attachments

[YAC_minutes_03-17-2021.pdf \(891 KB\)](#)

Consent

Our adopted rules of Parliamentary Procedure, The Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure by Alice Sturgis, 4th Edition, provide for a consent agenda listing several items for approval of the Board by a single motion. Most of the items listed under the consent agenda have gone through Board subcommittee review and recommendation. Documentation concerning these items has been provided to all board members and the public in advance to assure an extensive and thorough review. Items may be removed from the consent agenda at the request of any board member.

3. PRESENTATIONS-None.

4. ACTION ITEMS

Subject :	4.01 Draft Guiding Principles Document - Mr. Rizzitiello
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	4. ACTION ITEMS
Access :	Public
Type :	Action
Recommended Action :	Motion to support recommendation of this document to the Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board and City Council.

Public Content

Attached is a draft guiding principles for the board to consider that would help frame conversations around diversity. This document is something that the City's Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board is working on framing. The Diversity & Inclusion Board asked staff to circulate this to other city advisory boards and commissions for input.

File Attachments

[GuidingPrinciplesDocument.pdf \(128 KB\)](#)

Subject :	4.02 Lions Park Sports Field Decision - Mr. Rizzitiello
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	4. ACTION ITEMS
Access :	Public
Type :	Action
Recommended Action :	Motion to recommend one of the following: -A replacement baseball field. or -Conversion to a multiuse field that can accommodate baseball, soccer, and other sports.

Public Content

Decision Point about Lions Park

The City has been successful in obtaining three grants for the Lions Park renovation. Final engineering is going on now with construction slated for very late 2021 into 2022. A key decision point to be made is regarding the baseball field located to the northeast corner of the park at the end of SE 8th Street. The grant to improve this part of the park originally we didn't believe would be funded due to how it scored. The State funded all Youth Athletic Facility projects. The field could either be renovated as a baseball field or a multiuse grass field with a backstop. The Pacific Little League uses it as a practice field. They have indicated practices could be held in either format. Having it as a multiuse field will also allow the City to accommodate other sports including soccer. Should it be renovated as a baseball field or a multiuse field? Costs are about the same per engineer estimate.

File Attachments

[SitePlan_MockUps.pdf \(3,282 KB\)](#)

[IMG_0666.JPG \(4,718 KB\)](#)

[IMG_0668.JPG \(4,902 KB\)](#)

[IMG_0670.JPG \(4,243 KB\)](#)

[IMG_0673.JPG \(5,246 KB\)](#)

5. REPORTS

Subject :	5.01 Blue Zones Report
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	5. REPORTS
Access :	Public
Type :	Discussion, Information

File Attachments

[WWV_Discovery Report_FINAL \(1\).pdf \(15,805 KB\)](#)

[Blueprint WWV Draft for Workshop.pdf \(438 KB\)](#)

[BZP Measurement Overview 2020 Updated.pdf \(225 KB\)](#)

Subject :	5.02 Strategic Plan Update
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	5. REPORTS
Access :	Public
Type :	Discussion, Information

File Attachments

[Ordinance No. 19-005.pdf \(7,215 KB\)](#)

[Questions.pdf \(58 KB\)](#)

Subject :	5.03 Youth Recreation Program 2021
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	5. REPORTS
Access :	Public

Type :

Discussion, Information

Public Content

Rhonda Gould from the Walla Walla County Rural Library District to speak.

File Attachments

[SSCP 2021 Reg Flyer.pdf \(316 KB\)](#)

Subject :

5.04 Community Events / Farmers and Artisan Market Update

Meeting :

Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting

Category :

5. REPORTS

Access :

Public

Type :

Discussion, Information

Public Content

College Place Farmers and Artisan Market is preparing for opening day on Thursday, May 27th in Lions Park.

The layout will be similar to last year with an entrance at the South end of the Lions Park Clubhouse and vendors in a parallel row along the back of the clubhouse and turning East along 8th Street. The exit will be onto 8th Street at the location of the last vendor. We have the ability to expand as necessary based upon the number of vendors signed up.

There will be live entertainment this year. We are required to maintain a space of 20' separation between the entertainment and spectators, so the stage area will be near the ball field. In addition, the Blue Zones Project will be managing some additional activities such as outdoor yoga and some cooking demonstrations.

Freedom Festival and College Place 75th Anniversary will be held on Sunday, June 27th at the College Place High School.

We are in the process of finalizing details on this event. This year we will combine our annual festival with the 75th Anniversary celebration for the City of College Place.

Currently, the phase three guidance allows up to 600 people in an outdoor venue that has over 100,000 square feet. We do have this amount at the school grounds. However, the plans have not been completed and approved by the local health department yet.

We have secured a fireworks show to be put on by Pyro Spectaculars who have done the past several Freedom Festival displays. We can now announce that the local band Whiskey Creek will be performing from the hours of 7 to 10 PM, and we are working with the Blue Zones Project to set up a COVID friendly Kid Zone.

We will soon have the layout solidified and be able to determine how many vendors we will be able to have.

File Attachments

[2021_DRAFT_Layout_Master_with_entertainment.pdf \(845 KB\)](#)

6. CLOSING ITEMS

Subject :	6.01 Adjourn
Meeting :	Apr 21, 2021 - College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting
Category :	6. CLOSING ITEMS
Access :	Public
Type :	Procedural

College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting (Wednesday, February 17, 2021)

Generated by Carolyn Holm on Wednesday, February 17, 2021

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.01 Call To Order

Chair Stanciu called the meeting to order at 4:01 PM.

1.02 Roll Call

PRESENT:

Commission
Members

Eli Stanciu Jr. – Chair, Walla Walla Valley Academy representative;
Carsten Wallace-Bailey, Walla Walla Valley Academy representative;
Audrey Reeves – College Place High School representative;
Mayra Campa – College Place High School representative;
Savannah Rose Walker – Walla Walla University representative;
Joshua Penado – Walla Walla University representative

Staff

City Administrator, Mike Rizzitiello
Deputy City Clerk, Carolyn Holm;
Paul Hartwig, Public Works Director

Also Present:

MEMBERS ABSENT:

2. CONSENT AGENDA

2.01 Approve Agenda for 2/17/2021

2.02 Approve Minutes from 1/20/2021

Member Reeves made a motion to approve the consent agenda. Second by Member Wallace-Bailey and the motion passed 5-0.

3. PRESENTATIONS

None

4. ACTION ITEMS

None

5. REPORTS

5.01 Snow removal information

Mr. Rizzitiello introduced Paul Hartwig, Public Works Director for the City who provided an update on the snow removal efforts during the most recent snow storm that occurred. Mr. Hartwig gave a report regarding the snow removal activities during this recent snow event. He noted the significant difficulties staff had keeping up with the lack of equipment on top of the large amount of snowfall during a very condensed time frame. Discussion ensued.

5.02 City Events report

Mrs. Holm informed she is focusing on working on the Farmers Market logistics and updating the COVID plan for the market. The market applications have been sent out, and we are seeking entertainers. Freedom Festival and the 75th Anniversary logistics is ongoing. Movies in the Park is in preparation; movie selection, COVID plan, and park choice. She informed light displays are being reviewed to purchase for Light Up the Avenue.

5.03 Capital Project Webpages

Mr. Rizzitiello reviewed the project pages on the city website for the following capital projects:

- 4 Bikes
- Central College Place sidewalks
- Lions Park
- Meadowbrook Blvd
- SW Wastewater Trunk
- Well 6
- Wastewater Treatment Plant

5.04 Guiding Principles

Draft guiding principles for the Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board were provided in the meeting packet for review.

5.05 Healthy Washington Plan

Mr. Rizzitiello reviewed the Healthy Washington Roadmap to Recovery document and memo. The county has moved to Phase 2.

5.06 Mercy Corps Northwest

Mr. Rizzitiello informed the Walla Walla Valley Microbusiness Assistance Program is now open. The City pursued and received a \$120,000 State Community Development Block Grant to pay for an additional 12 seats into this program for College Place residents. The application due date is February 16th, 2021 at 5 PM. Discussion ensued.

6. CLOSING ITEMS

6.01 Adjourn

Member Stanciu made a motion to adjourn at 4:39 PM. Second by Member Peinado.

Approved:

Eli Stanciu Jr.- Chair

Attest:

Carolyn Holm – Deputy City
Clerk

The foregoing minutes are the official record of the Youth Advisory Commission meeting that occurred February 17, 2021. Further detail may be obtained by reviewing the actual audio recording made during this session.

DRAFT

College Place Youth Advisory Commission - Electronic Meeting (Wednesday, March 17, 2021)
Generated by Carolyn Holm on Wednesday, March 17, 2021

1. OPENING ITEMS

1.01 Call To Order

Member Stanciu Jr. called the meeting to order at 4:08 PM. As there was not a quorum present, Mr. Rizzitiello spoke for a few minutes to those members who were there and the meeting was ajdourned by the Deputy Clerk at 4:28 PM.

1.02 Roll Call

PRESENT:

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| Commission Members | Eli Stanciu Jr. – Chair, Walla Walla Valley Academy representative;
Carsten Wallace-Bailey, Walla Walla Valley Academy representative;
Audrey Reeves – College Place High School representative; |
| Staff | City Administrator, Mike Rizzitiello
Deputy City Clerk, Carolyn Holm;
Mayra Campa – College Place High School representative;
Savannah Rose Walker – Walla Walla University representative; |

MEMBERS EXCUSED:
MEMBERS ABSENT:

Joshua Penado – Walla Walla University representative

Diversity & Inclusion Advisory Board

Guiding Principles

STEP IN, STEP OUT

BE INCLUSIVE AND EMPOWERING

ENCOURAGE OTHER VOICES AT THE
TABLE

DON'T BE AFRAID TO SHARE. THIS IS A
JUDGEMENT-FREE SPACE.

LISTEN ACTIVELY

SPEAK FROM YOUR EXPERIENCE

CHALLENGE EACH OTHER RESPECTFULLY

RESPECT EACH OTHERS' VALUES

BE OPEN TO NEW IDEAS AND LEARNING
FROM ONE ANOTHER



RECREATION PATHWAY
WITH EXERCISE
EQUIPMENT

NORTH PARKING LOT

PARK SIGN

CENTRAL ENTRANCE
WITH SCULPTURE

GARRISON CREEK

PLAY AREA ENTRANCE

SPLASH PAD

NATURE PLAY AREA

RESTROOM

PICNIC SHELTER

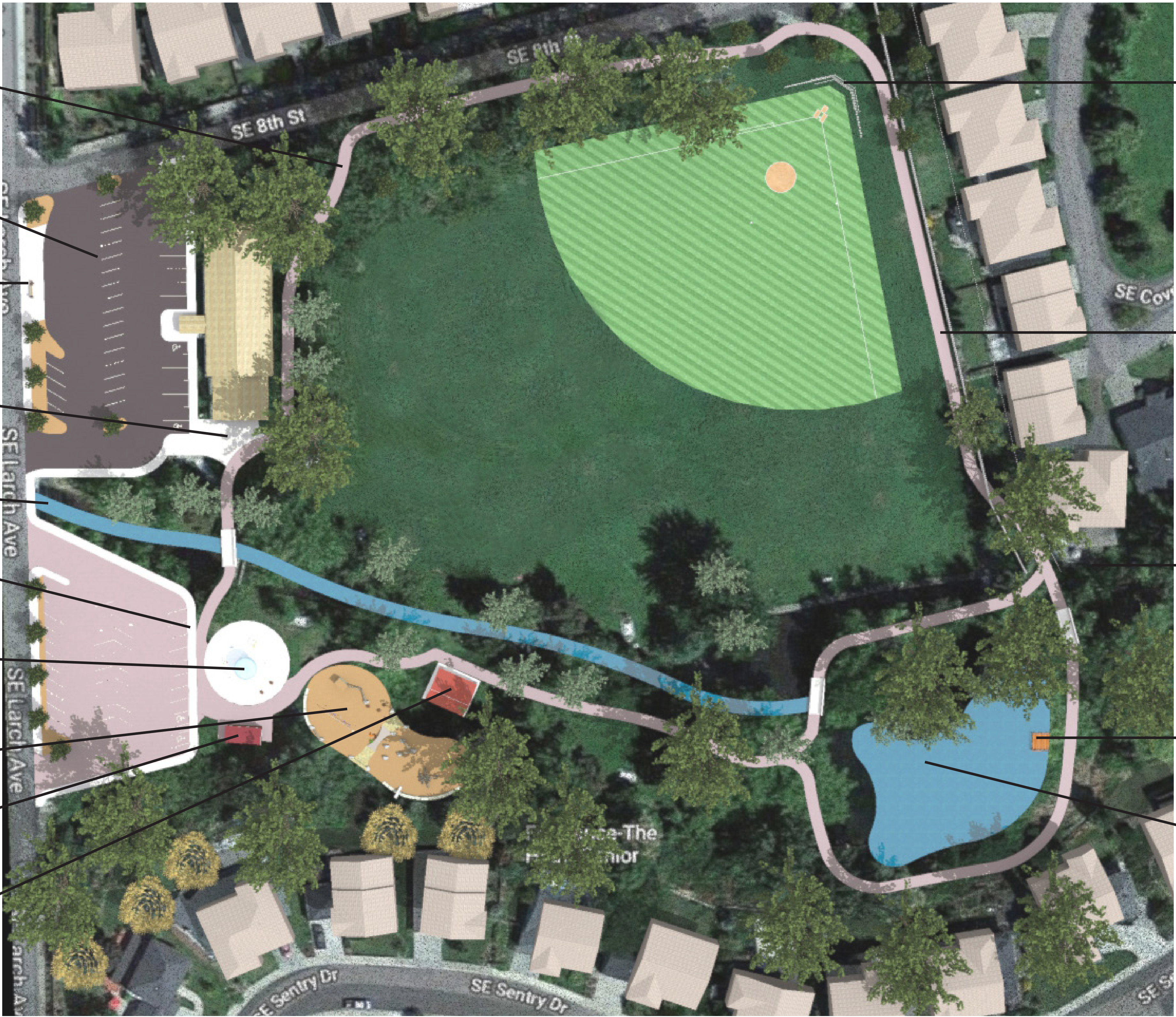
BASEBALL BACKSTOP

RECREATION PATHWAY
WITH EXERCISE
EQUIPMENT

FUTURE TRAIL
CONNECTION

FISHING DOCK
WITH ADA ACCESS

FISHING POND



NORTH

*NOT TO SCALE

LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - PLAN VIEW





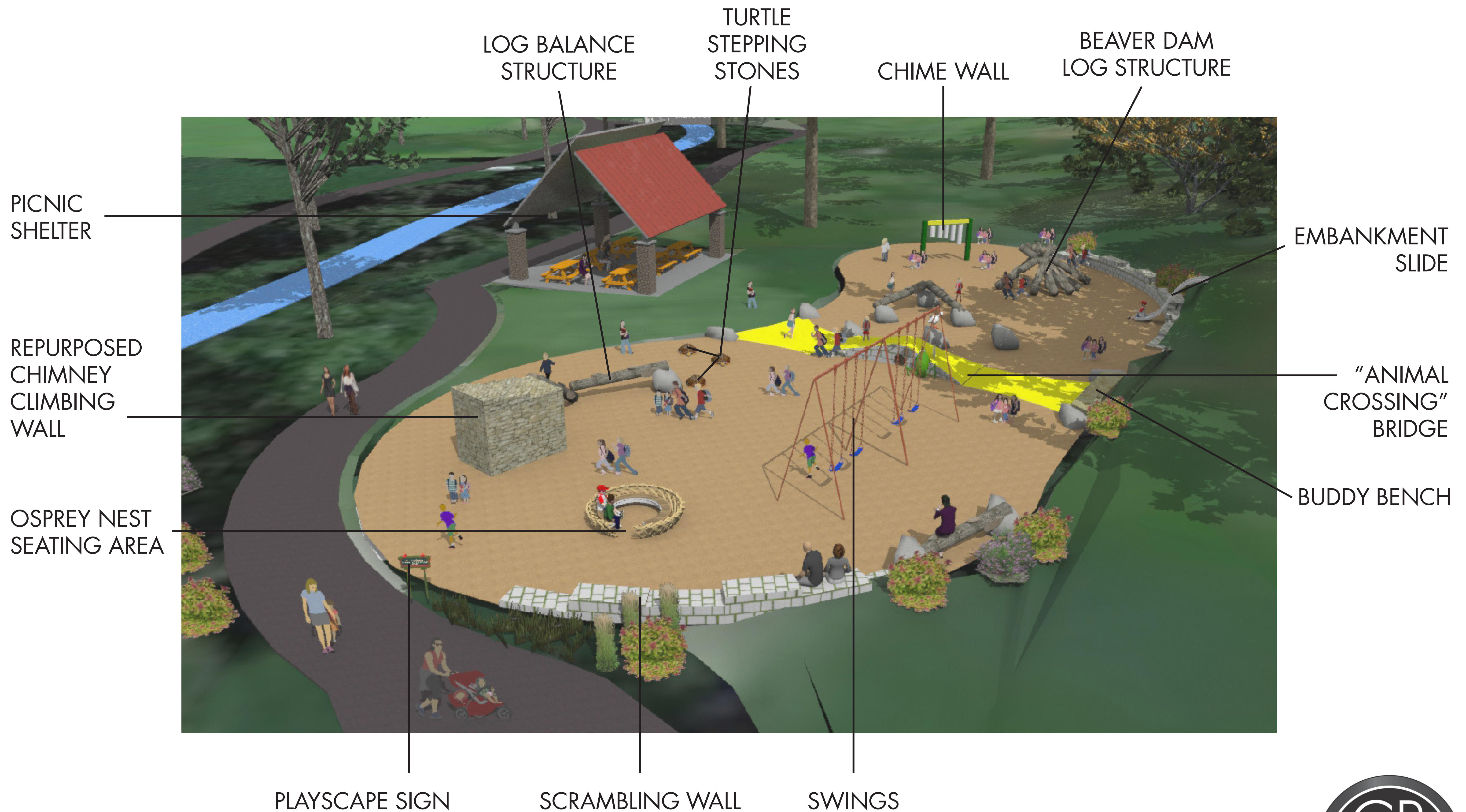
RECREATION PATHWAY

FISHING PLATFORM

FISHING POND

LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - FISH POND





LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - PLAYGROUND





LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - PLAYGROUND



EMBANKMENT
SLIDE

BEAVER DAM
LOG STRUCTURE

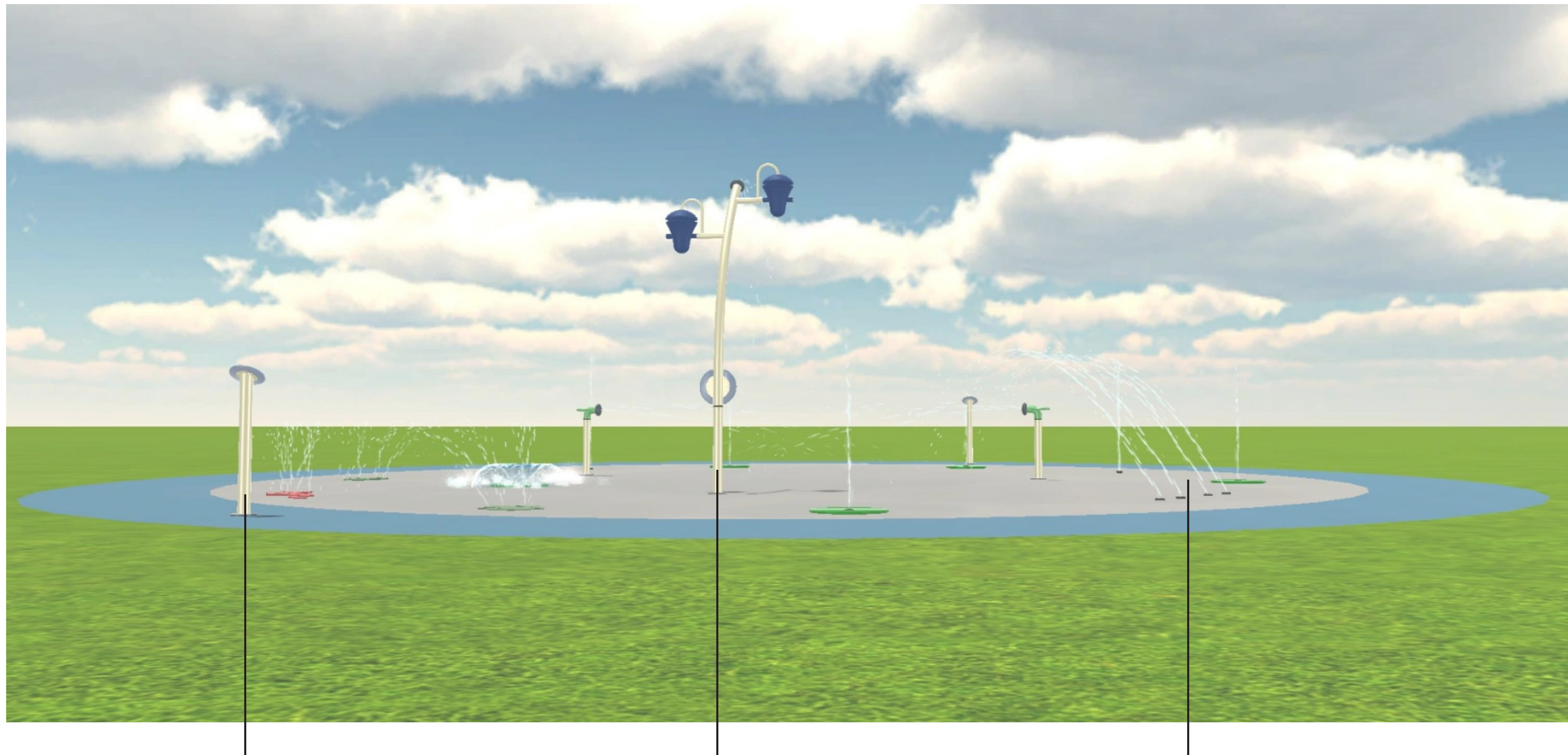
CHIME WALL



SCRAMBLING WALL

LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - PLAYGROUND





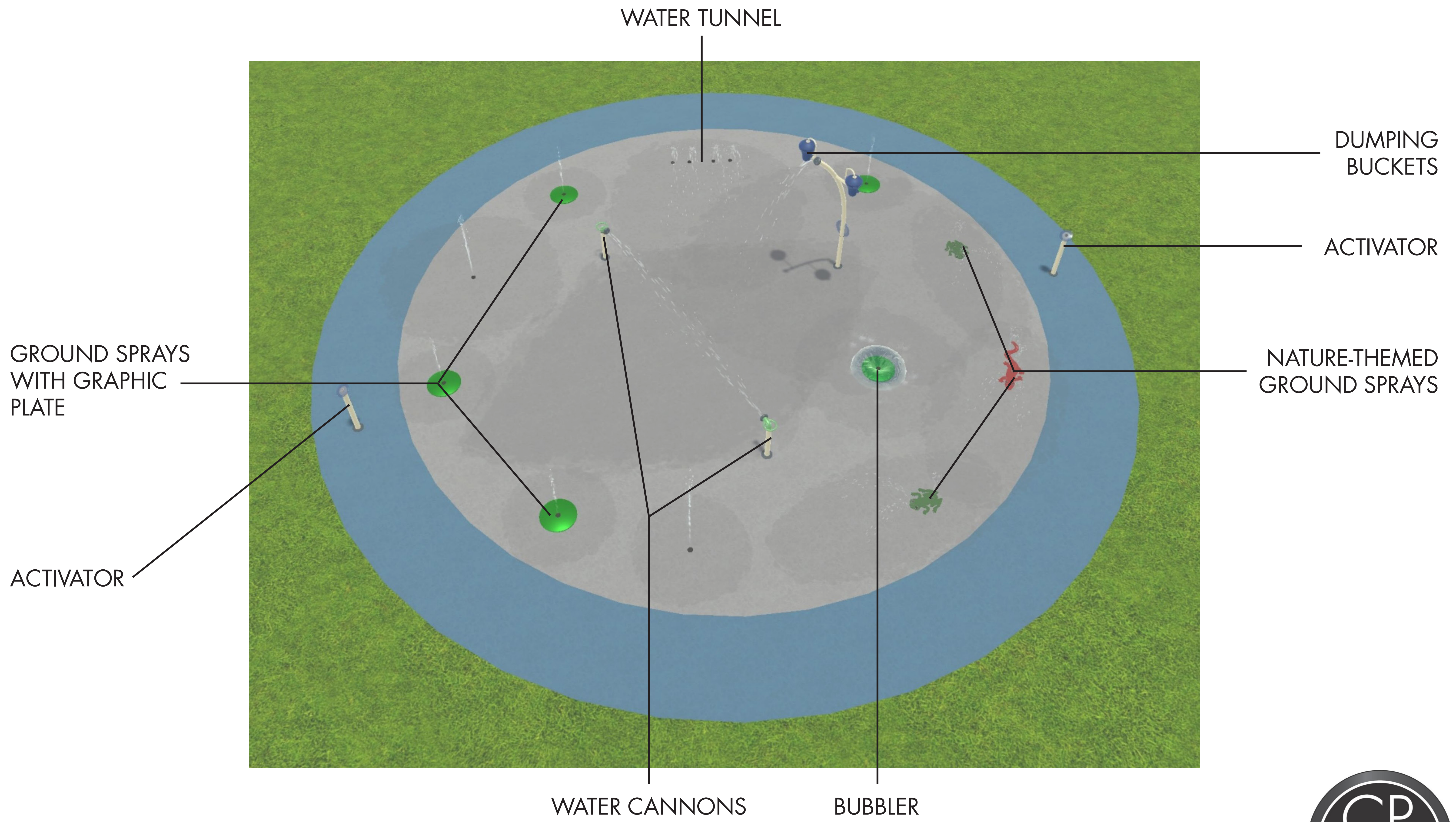
HAND CONTROLS

MAIN TOWER

ANGLED JETS

LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - SPLASH PAD





LION'S PARK RENOVATIONS - SPLASH PAD











BLUE ZONES PROJECT WALLA WALLA VALLEY **DISCOVERY REPORT**

March 2021



BLUE ZONES PROJECT

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Executive Summary

Walla Walla Valley as a Viable Blue Zones Community

During early 2018, residents of the Walla Walla Valley invited Blue Zones Project® to their community to showcase the interest, readiness, and opportunities for success in undertaking a Blue Zones Project community-transformation initiative. The results were outstanding. During the seven on-site focus groups, the Blue Zones Project team heard overwhelming support from more than 150 key community leaders and groups that support Blue Zones Project in the Walla Walla Valley.

Community members who met with Blue Zones Project team members expressed a desire to make the Walla Walla Valley a better place to live, work, and play. More importantly, they are ready to commit to the work needed to create community-wide improvements for the many generations of families living in the Walla Walla Valley. The spirit of collaboration and determination among Walla Walla Valley community members, combined with commitments from leaders in the school system, policy arena, business community, food-retail environment, and faith-based and civic communities demonstrated a community primed for transformation and improved well-being.

Blue Zones Project Partners

After the 2016 closure of Walla Walla General Hospital, owned and operated by Adventist Health, the system committed to reinvesting in overall community well-being. Without knowing when or what this investment may look like, the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health partnered with Providence St. Mary Medical Center, the cities of Walla Walla and College Place, and Walla Walla University to engage Blue Zones Project in the Community Discovery process from 2017 into 2018. Adventist Health showed excitement about Blue Zones Project, and in 2020, Adventist Health partnered with the Project to help improve the well-being of its service areas and the Walla Walla Valley was selected as the first demonstration site. The Blue Zones Project approach engages the business community—including employers, grocery stores, and restaurants—schools, government, faith-based and non-profit groups, media, and individuals in a unifying campaign that drives permanent changes to encourage individuals to choose healthy options.

Current State of Health

According to the 2018 Walla Walla County Community Health Needs Assessment¹, indicators affecting diverse populations within the community or which have a high impact on health include substance use; mental health; weight status; communicable disease and environmental factors, such as neighborhood safety; transportation; and access to recreation opportunities. Community members also identified the need for senior community health programs as the elderly population continues to grow and experiences more longevity.

The Sharecare Community Well-Being Index™ (CWBI) data for the Walla Walla Valley shows low-range percentages of people who eat healthfully and are physically active each day, resulting in community members who are overweight and obese. Community members also struggle with financial security, hope, and purpose. CWBI data reflects the following:

- **1 in 2 do not exercise at appropriate levels.**
- **2 in 5 do not eat sufficient amounts of fruits and vegetables.**
- **7 in 10 are obese or overweight.**
- **2 in 3 struggle with hope and purpose.**
- **1 in 3 have worried about money in the last week.**
- **1 in 7 have been diagnosed with depression.**
- **3 in 10 are not proud of their community.**

Housing affordability has historically been one of the biggest complaints from residents in the Walla Walla Valley, along with access to affordable childcare and healthcare services. According to the Walla Walla Housing Authority and a report by Community Council that was completed in 2018, the median gross income for households in Walla Walla is \$41,750 a year, or \$3,479 a month. The median rent for the city is \$756 a month. Households that pay more than 30 percent of their gross income are considered to be Rent Overburdened. In Walla Walla, a household making less than \$2,520 a month would be considered overburdened when renting an apartment at or above the median rent. Of households that rent in Walla Walla, 55.47 percent are overburdened.

Community members find it challenging to prioritize physical activity, volunteering, and healthy cooking in their daily schedules when they are struggling to earn enough money to pay bills. There is also limited time available to spend with friends and family after working hours. Blue Zones Project provides solutions to some of these challenges by working directly with communities to impact well-being, and community members recognize the need for the many programs and solutions Blue Zones Project offers. These include more active-transportation options, physical-activity programs, and community gardens, fewer sugary snacks and beverages at worksites and schools, and more healthy social opportunities close to home.

Blue Zones Project approaches community-wide transformation by creating a community environment where increased physical activity becomes easier and people have access to healthy foods and are provided education on the importance of health, well-being, and longevity. Blue Zones Projects engages people and impacts places and policy to provide a strong foundation for community change and improved health and well-being.



Measuring our Impact on Well-Being

Blue Zones Project utilizes a measurement framework to inform strategies and track impact throughout the life of the Project to ensure the work to transform a community is occurring and the anticipated outcomes are achieved. These include population-level metrics, community-level metrics, policy metrics, organization outcomes, and awareness, engagement, and media metrics.

The Sharecare Community Well-Being Index is the official measurement tool for collecting population well-being and social-determinants-of-health data. The CWBI brings together more than 600 proven health-risk factors into a single measure. By combining both individual and social factors, the index uniquely measures well-being across people and places.

The CWBI is based on decades of clinical research, healthcare leadership, and health economics. Individual self-reported well-being data within the CWBI is collected through Sharecare's RealAge™ Test. The RealAge Test is a scientific assessment that has been taken by more than 45 million people over the past 20 years. The test gathers information on health conditions, health behaviors, biometrics, emotional health, healthcare history, and more. It helps identify an individual's mortality risk and provides custom insights to the individual about what actions they can take to live healthier and longer.

The CWBI also includes more than 600 social-determinants-of-health measures collected from numerous national data sources and is updated as new data becomes available. Bringing together individual self-reported data with social-determinants-of-health data, the CWBI produces a composite score for each community.

A baseline measurement utilizing the CWBI will be conducted in the Walla Walla Valley during the Foundation and Planning Phase, January–March 2021, with results ready by April 2021. Further surveying will be conducted in subsequent years to track changes over time.

Community-Wide Measures

In addition to the CWBI, the Walla Walla Valley steering committee and leadership team will identify several community-level metrics to track over the life of the Project. A community must see measurable improvements in at least six community-level measures to become a Certified Blue Zones Community®. Community-level metrics should be meaningful to the community and represent areas of greatest interest and need from community leaders. These metrics will be selected during the Blueprint Workshop and be updated annually.

Examples of community-level metrics include:

- Child BMI/obesity
- Number of traffic fatalities
- Use of public transportation, including pedestrian or bike commuting
- Changes in property values or tax base
- Number of new businesses
- Quality-of-life measures or healthcare claims

Other measures collected throughout the life of the Project include policy metrics for the built environment, food policy, and tobacco policy (include alcohol policy if that is a focus area); organization outcomes from schools, worksites, restaurants, and grocery stores; and engagement and media metrics.

Next Steps

The Foundation and Planning Phase of Blue Zones Project in the Walla Walla Valley is the first step in working closely with community members to create sustainable well-being transformation within the community. Blue Zones Project has hired local community members to be full-time staff of the Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley team. Influential community leaders have been recruited to support the Project through positions on the steering committee, leadership team, and sector committees.

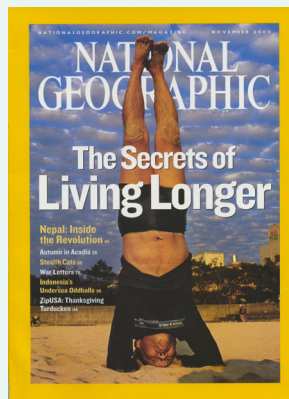
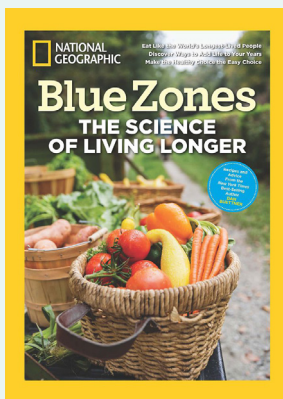
Blue Zones Project committees will finalize the Blueprint, or strategic plan, and begin developing action plans to implement the community-identified strategies for improving well-being in the Walla Walla Valley during the spring of 2021. This phase will culminate in a community kickoff event at which all community members will be invited to participate in Blue Zones Project.





OVERVIEW

Blue Zones Project Overview



What are Blue Zones?

Blue Zones® areas are places where people live measurably longer, happier lives with lower rates of chronic diseases and a higher quality of life. Scientists discovered five blue zones areas in different parts of the world; Dan Buettner documented those findings in the *New York Times* best-selling book, *The Blue Zones: Lessons for Living Longer from the People Who Have Lived the Longest* (Buettner, 2010). This research, coupled with a 15-year worldwide longevity study, has been used to develop lifestyle management tools and programs that help people live longer, healthier, and happier lives by optimizing their surroundings. Central to Blue Zones Project are the Power 9® principles, identified as shared lifestyle traits across all the five blue zones areas.

The Power 9[®] principles can be grouped into four categories.

MOVE NATURALLY

Homes, communities, schools and workplaces are designed to nudge people into physical activity. Focus should be given to favorite activities, as individuals are more likely to practice them regularly.

RIGHT OUTLOOK

Individuals know and can articulate their sense of purpose. They also take time to downshift, ensuring their day is punctuated with periods of calm.



EAT WISELY

In most cases, fad diets do not provide sustainable results. Individuals and families can use time-honored strategies for healthier eating habits, including: Using verbal reminders or smaller plates to eat less at meals; Eating a predominantly plant-based diet; Schedule social time with friends while enjoying a healthy drink and snack.

BELONG

Research indicates it is exceedingly important that people surround themselves with the “right” people—those who make them happy and support healthy behaviors. Put loved ones first by spending quality time with family and participating in a faith-based community.



How Blue Zones Project Works

Blue Zones Project takes a unique approach to improving health and well-being in communities. Individual involvement and commitment are central to personal growth and improvement, but healthy habits are more likely to be sustained when your environment supports you. So rather than focus on quick fixes, diets, or other temporary programs, Blue Zones Project focuses on the “life radius,” or, the places you learn, work, play, and pray. Individuals spend most of their time within 5–10 miles of where they live and work, which is their life radius. If the places in your life radius support healthy habits, you are more likely to succeed in improving and maintaining your well-being.

PEOPLE

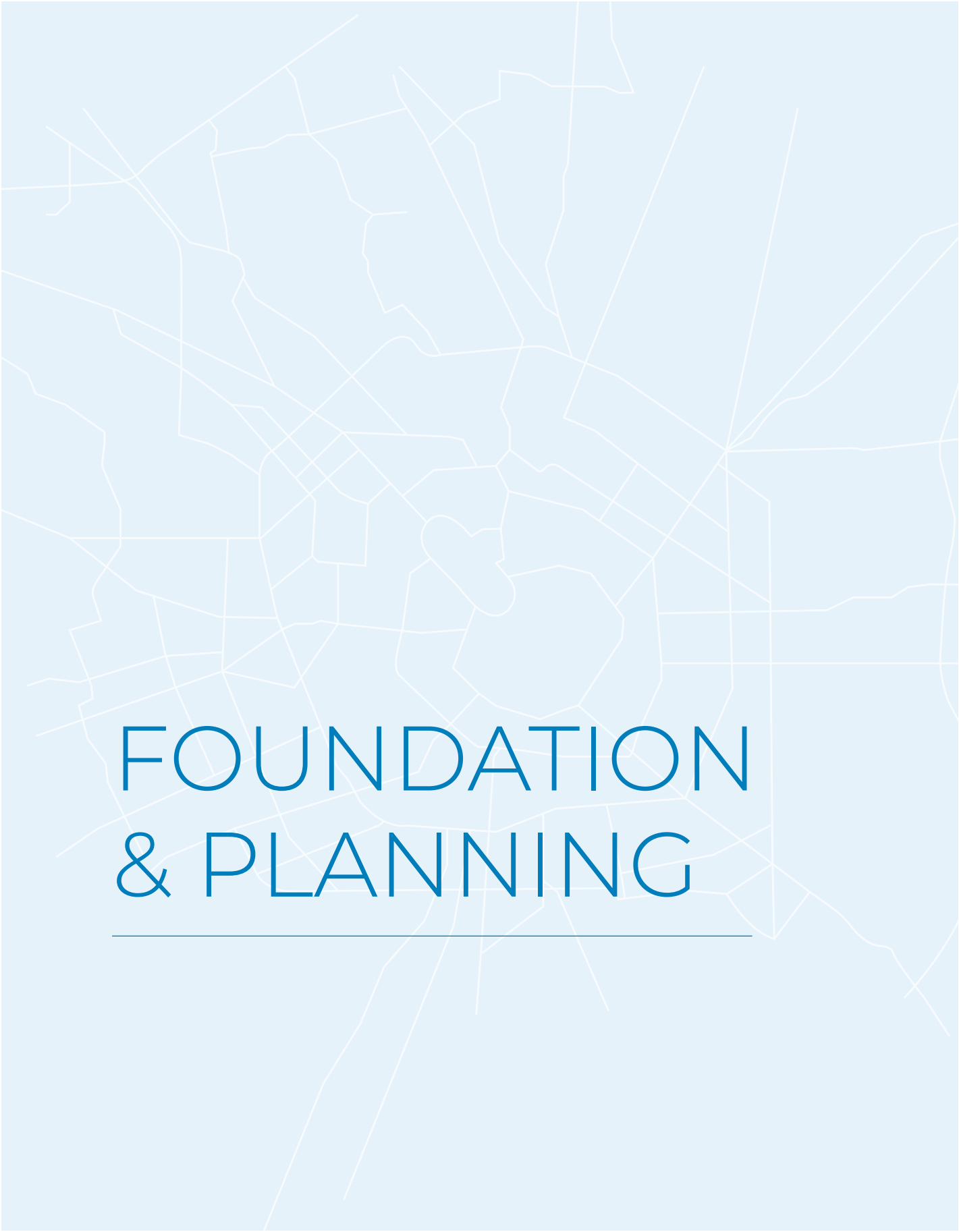
Blue Zones Project provides opportunities for individuals to connect with one another. Borrowing an idea from the Okinawan culture, people are encouraged to form Moais®, groups that meet for a common purpose. Blue Zones Project facilitates connections through the formation of Walking Moais, Potluck Moais, and Purpose Moais. Blue Zones Project also encourages individuals to attend cooking demonstrations, garden, tour farms, and participate in Purpose Workshops to learn how to make healthier choices in many areas of their lives.

PLACES

The places outside of our own home, where we spend most of our time, have a dramatic impact on our well-being. Blue Zones Project works with schools, worksites, restaurants, grocery stores, civic organizations, and faith-based communities to make the healthy choice the easy choice. These places select evidence-based practices that improve well-being to become Blue Zones Project Approved™. This status signals to individuals that a place within their life radius supports a healthy lifestyle.

POLICY

Blue Zones Project works closely with community policy makers to adopt policies that are right for individual communities and will help citizens and visitors alike improve well-being. Experts in the fields of built environment, tobacco, and food policy work with communities to highlight assets and discover opportunities for improvement. An example of policy improvements includes adopting a Complete Streets policy to improve accessibility for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists.



FOUNDATION & PLANNING

Foundation & Planning Phase

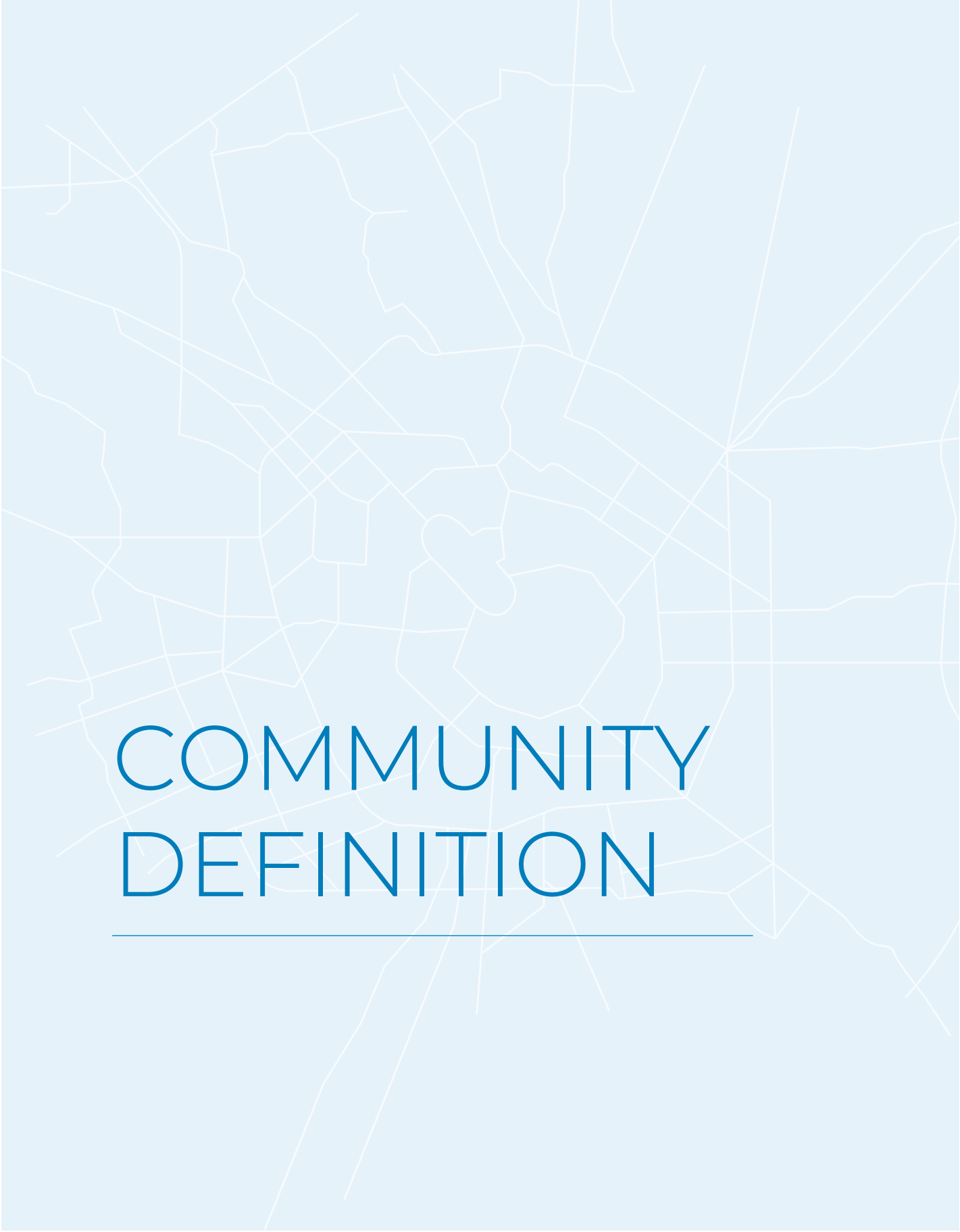
During the Foundation and Planning Phase, Blue Zones Project team members conducted background research, focus groups, and individual meetings with community members to assess the current state of well-being and readiness for change in the Walla Walla Valley. A key component of this phase included engaging community leaders and residents to identify and understand existing initiatives, strengths, challenges, and opportunities that will help design the strategy for well-being transformation in the Valley.

During a review of background research, it became apparent that most reports on health and well-being consists of data for all of Walla Walla County instead of specifically the cities of Walla Walla and College Place. For example, while the Community Health Needs Assessment is for all of Walla Walla County and there is Healthy Youth Survey data for Walla Walla Public Schools, there is only countywide data for College Place. This information provided a good starting point for the Blue Zones Project team, and the focus groups and one-on-one meetings provided invaluable information specific to the Valley.

The following report summarizes what the Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley team learned about the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improving health and well-being in the cities of Walla Walla and College Place. It highlights key areas where permanent changes to environments and policies would significantly improve well-being for all community members. This report will be used to inform the Blue Zones Project Community Blueprint, which will become the roadmap for change over the next three years.

A few highlights:

- ✓ High attendance at Policy, Discovery, and Summit meetings
- ✓ Strong cross-sector collaboration and representation
- ✓ Overall excitement and demonstration of strong community pride about the Walla Walla Valley being the first Blue Zones Project in Washington state
- ✓ Strong engagement in creating a vision for a healthier future for the community
- ✓ Strong support of partners across sectors



COMMUNITY DEFINITION

Walla Walla Valley

The Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley area consists of the communities, businesses, and organizations within the cities of College Place and Walla Walla, WA. Walla Walla is a growing community with a population of 32,793, according to the U.S. Census Bureau 2019 Report. College Place is right next to Walla Walla with a population of 9,182. The average age is 35 years old, and both cities are composed of young families, college students, retirees, and a sizable Hispanic population, mainly from Mexico. In addition, there is a large Seventh Day Adventist community, which helped the area receive sponsorship for Blue Zones Project from Adventist Health.



One of the major themes of development in the cities of Walla Walla and College Place has been their downtown areas. Downtown revitalization encourages locals and tourists to get outside and visit parks and businesses. The cities also continue to develop projects for busy streets.

Reconstruction makes it easier for cyclists and pedestrians to get around by creating accessible sidewalks and implementing bike paths. The bike paths have been created for convenient access between homes, schools, and jobs and the larger sidewalks, with accessible entry points, make it easier for more people to go for walks safely.

The main industries in the Walla Walla Valley are agriculture, healthcare, government, and education. The Valley grows wheat, asparagus, apples, pears, grapes, and the famous Walla Walla onions. It is also home to three colleges. In addition, the Valley has become a burgeoning tourist industry that is bolstered by the more than 200 wineries. These wineries have also increased hospitality businesses like restaurants and hotels.



SECTORS

Sector Overview

This section of the report summarizes the findings from focus groups and one-on-one meetings, which were organized by sector: schools, worksites, community policy, restaurants, grocery stores, faith-based, civic groups, and individual engagement. The purpose of the focus groups and stakeholder meetings was two-fold. First, they served as an avenue to learn about the unique strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improving well-being within each sector. Second, they allowed the Blue Zones Project team to assess the level of participation from key leaders in each sector and their readiness to implement evidence-based best practices to improve well-being.

The sections that follow summarize what the Blue Zones Project team learned about the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for sustainable changes to environments and policies to significantly improve well-being. The opportunity areas will be used as a starting point for creating a blueprint for community transformation in Walla Walla.



Schools

Schools play a key role in Blue Zones Project by creating an environment in which children learn about well-being and begin to make healthy choices.

School leaders are in a powerful position to dramatically improve student well-being, resulting in students who are more engaged and perform better in the classroom. The Walla Walla Valley is currently composed of two school districts, Walla Walla Public Schools and College Place Public Schools, which include six elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools. Walla Walla Valley also offers four independent schools, including the Catholic Schools of Walla Walla (K–12), Roger’s Adventist School (K–8), Walla Walla Valley Adventist Academy (9–12), and Liberty Christian School (K–8). While most students attend public schools in the Valley, the independent schools have expressed interest in working with Blue Zones Project.

The following is school data from the 2018 Community Health Needs Assessment² for Walla Walla County and the 2019 Healthy Youth Survey:

Nutrition:

- 5 percent of 8th graders, 13 percent of 10th graders, and 12 percent of 12th graders are overweight
- 81 percent of 8th graders report eating fewer than five fruits or veggies daily
- 81 percent of 8th graders drank sugar-sweetened drinks in past week, 3 percent of 8th graders drink sweetened drinks daily at school

Physical Activity:

- 70 percent of 6th graders did not meet recommended daily physical-activity levels; 67 percent of 8th graders did not meet recommended daily physical-activity levels; and 8 percent did not participate in PE classes daily

Social and Emotional Well-being:

- 23 percent of 10th graders and 13 percent of 12th graders reported being bullied in the last month
- 14 percent of 10th graders and 13 percent of 12th graders reported not feeling safe at school

A successful school strategy will combine top-down and bottom-up approaches. With substantial support from both districts, schools will be encouraged to establish or enhance existing wellness policies and programs to make individual school change easier. Concurrently, Blue Zones Project team members will work with individual schools to explore options specific to their buildings and student populations. The work with individual schools will engage teachers, administration, parents, and students.

Blue Zones Project team members met with the following individuals and organizations:

- Wade Smith, Walla Walla Public Schools Superintendent
- Christy Kurtulis, Assistant Superintendent and Executive Director of Teaching and Learning
- Jim Fry, College Place Public Schools Superintendent
- Pamela Milesen, Walla Walla Public School Director of School Nutrition
- Holley Bryant, Roger's Adventist School Principal
- Father Curtis Siedel, President, Catholic Schools of Walla Walla

- Maria Garcia, Principal, Sharpstein Elementary School
- Becca O'Connor, 21st CCLC Site Coordinator, Green Park Elementary School
- Robert Aguilar, Principal, College Place High School
- Ron Higgins, Principal, Walla Walla High School
- Stacy Estes, Assistant Principal, Walla Walla High School
- Jeremy Gradwohl, 21st CCLC Site Coordinator, Lincoln High School
- Samantha Bowen, Director, Walla Walla Public Schools Center for Children and Families
- Rey Cooley, Director, Farm to School Program
- Peggy Needham, Walla Walla County Behavioral Health Prevention Coordinator, contracts with Walla Walla Public Schools
- Jen Mallo, Parent and PTA representative
- Pam Clayton, Parent Engagement Coordinator, Walla Walla Public Schools
- Tommie Barfield Elementary SchoolBig Cypress Elementary

Strengths

✓ **Strong support from district superintendents for implementing Blue Zones Project principles in the region.**

The Blue Zones Project team had the opportunity to meet with the superintendents of Walla Walla and College Place School Districts and have received overwhelming support for the implementation of Blue Zones Project principles and activities in all schools. Both superintendents expressed a desire for Blue Zones Project to be implemented district-wide with a unified message regarding the introduction and connections with the Blue Zones Project team. The team also met with the assistant superintendent, the executive director for teaching and learning from Walla Walla Public Schools, and principals from both districts. The reception in all instances was extremely positive.

✓ **Established a farm-to-school program, including school-garden initiatives.**

The farm-to-school program in the Walla Walla Valley has been in existence for nearly 20 years and is established as a vital partner with public and independent schools throughout the Valley. Highly respected by school leaders, parents, and the community, the program is composed of three pillars:

1. Support meaningful use and sustainability of school gardens.
2. Provide education about agriculture and food through farm field trips, Food Focus events, cooking experiences, and Harvest of the Month tasting tables.
3. Facilitate connections that result in schools purchasing locally grown foods to serve in cafeterias.

The program manager has been actively engaged with Blue Zones Project and looks forward to enhancing its partnership with the schools.

✓ **College Place and Walla Walla School District have wellness committees and programs that support multiple elements of student well-being.**

These programs include:

- Physical Health: most area schools have adopted healthy programs like garden and walking clubs that promote moving more and eating healthier.
- Mental Health: Walla Walla schools have adopted a robust strategic plan for mental health. Schools in the area have been nationally recognized for adopting trauma-informed care practices that support students who are impacted by trauma.

✓ **The newly established Center for Children and Families will expand engagement even earlier with students and families.**

In the past year, the Walla Walla Public Schools Center for Children and Families was established in Walla Walla. During the first year the center served 230 students, and it looks forward to serving as many as 400 students and families at full capacity. The center offers transitional kindergarten and Head Start programs for students and families in the Valley and provides an opportunity to familiarize them with Blue Zones Project before they enter elementary school. The center is also an access point to engage with lower-income families in the Valley and partner with local organizations.

✓ **Technical-skills program for high school juniors and seniors available throughout the Valley.**

Both districts participate in a program called SEATech, a technical-skills program located at the Walla Walla Community College for high school juniors and seniors. SEATech provides access to comprehensive, industry-defined career and technical programs of study that prepare students for careers, employment, apprenticeships, and/or post-secondary education.

✓ **Adventist schools in the Valley practice many Blue Zones Project principles.**

During one-on-one conversations in the Foundation and Planning Phase, Rogers Elementary School and Walla Walla Valley Adventist Academy shared they are already practicing several of Power 9 principles in their schools. Many of the principles align with the Adventist religion that is prevalent in the community. The food programs at the schools are vegetarian and focus on plant-based diets. School gardens are maintained by students and teachers. Programs like MindUP help children practice mindfulness, and the schools offer a healthy snack cart and fruit as dessert. These schools also have a robust recess and physical-education program to make sure students are moving every day, multiple times a day.

✓ **Hundreds of students from local colleges and universities volunteer at K–12 schools each year.**

Students from the universities and colleges in the Walla Walla Valley have volunteered at local schools for decades. Through programs such as America Reads, America Counts, the Friends of Children of Walla Walla, and the Center for Humanitarian Engagement, local college students are volunteering each week in K–12 schools. The concentration of colleges in the community offers a great opportunity to leverage college student support for health and wellness programming in secondary schools.

Challenges

❑ **Mental health and social-emotional learning concerns are growing.**

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, mental health and social-emotional learning were top priorities for the school districts, with each focused on resilience and connection. During the pandemic, these concerns have become even more substantial with the added challenge of COVID-19 precautions. Suicidal thoughts were also a serious concern among youth, as 23 percent of 10th graders and 17 percent of 12th graders reported seriously considering suicide in the past year.

❑ **Food insecurity and poverty rates.**

Fifty percent of students in public schools qualify for free or reduced lunch³. Schools provide two and sometimes three meals a day for students. While this program is an opportunity to provide healthy meals and educate students and family members on the

value and origin of fruits and vegetables, there is less of a chance that they will have these principles reinforced at home. Food insecurity is a challenge throughout the Walla Walla Valley.

❑ Increasing rates of substance use among teens.

⁴Like all districts across the state, the Walla Walla Valley has seen continued use of tobacco and the rise of vaping among middle and high school students. According to the 2016 Healthy Youth Survey, 12 percent of 10th graders and 17 percent of 12th graders in the county smoked cigarettes. These rates have increased since 2014 and were higher than the overall state rate. E-cigarette use has decreased slightly to 17 percent amongst 10th graders and 16 percent amongst 12th graders but remained slightly higher than the Washington State rate. Results from the 2016 Healthy Youth Survey revealed that 28 percent of 10th graders and 35 percent of 12th graders reported having consumed alcohol in the past 30 days. Fifteen percent of 10th graders and 21 percent of 12th graders reported binge drinking over the past 30 days. Alcohol use among teenagers is a particular concern as it places them at risk for emotional and social problems, lower academic performance, and abnormal changes in brain development. Youth who begin drinking at an early age are also more likely to develop alcohol dependence later in life than those who begin drinking at age 21 or later. Data also shows that 29 percent of 10th graders and 28 percent of 12th graders reported having used marijuana in the past 30 days. This rate was higher than the Washington State rate of 17 percent.

❑ Lack of representation of the Hispanic community on school boards.

Walla Walla Public Schools and College Place Public Schools have seen a lack of representation from the Hispanic community on school boards. While both districts have thriving PTA/PTO programs, they could be more creative in how they engage parents of Hispanic students.

Opportunities

❑ Expansion of SHAC committee and development of wellness plans for each school.

The SHAC (Student Health Advisory Committee) at Walla Walla Public Schools works to develop a wellness plan for students, faculty, and staff across the district and achieve continuity from level to level across school lines. The creation of wellness plans, facilitated by the SHAC and individual schools, will prioritize well-being initiatives and create environments where schools can meet and exceed federal guidelines. The Blue Zones Project school pledge offers a framework for schools to meet wellness guidelines.

❑ Improve the food environment for students, teachers, staff and families.

- Create healthy fundraiser policies to promote non-food items or activities. Unhealthy fundraisers such as candy sales have a direct impact on students and families because they encourage a higher intake of calories and sugar, which contribute to obesity.
- Expand the farm-to-school program. Farm-to-school programs include farm tours and healthy cooking demonstrations, provide education, and connect students to local farmers.
- Enhance school gardens and incorporate gardening education into curriculum through the partnership with the farm-to-school program. This initiative provides students with the opportunity to eat healthier, learn how to grow their own food, and develop better connections to the community.
- Partner with Blue Zones Project Approved grocery stores to offer field trips to help students identify and taste healthy foods.
- Educate teachers, staff, parents, and students about the value of healthy food, healthy lifestyle choices, and increased physical activity. Education plays a huge role in the decisions people make every day about their health and well-being.
- Encourage schools to adopt on-site policies that promote healthy habits. Examples of policies that successfully impact student food decisions include eliminating the sale of sugary beverages at all school events, disallowing students to eat in classrooms or hallways, reducing prices for healthy options like water and fruit, increasing prices of sodas and junk food, and discontinuing the use of unhealthy foods as rewards or for celebrations.

❑ Increase student commitment to the community by providing meaningful volunteer opportunities.

Encourage Blue Zones Project volunteerism through service-hour requirements. Connect school districts with senior living centers for service opportunities. Actively recruit more senior citizens as volunteers to develop intergenerational programming and bring in more support for teachers and parents.

❑ Establish walk- and roll-to-school programs.

Many students attend school in close proximity to their homes in the Walla Walla Valley. A walk- or roll-to-school program could thrive. Walking or rolling to school provides students with natural movement to start and end their days. For families who bus or drive to school, drop-off points around the perimeter of the school campus could be established.

❑ Incorporate Blue Zones Project Purpose Workshops into high school curriculum.

Studies show that people who have a strong sense of purpose can live up to seven good years longer than those who don't. As students approach graduation, Purpose Workshops can help them identify what next steps make the most sense based on their gifts, talents, and values.



Worksites

Employers play a key role in Blue Zones Project because they shape the workplace environment to support health and, in turn, improve productivity, decrease turnover, and reduce healthcare costs.

In short, healthy people cost less to employ and are more productive. By supporting employee well-being, employers help the community because healthy employees can become advocates for powerful change in other community organizations like schools, restaurants, grocery stores, and civic groups. A healthy workforce also draws economic investment because new businesses and talented individuals are attracted to the community and existing businesses can expand as they save money on healthcare costs.

Blue Zones Project team members met with the following individuals and organizations:

- Levi Waggoner, Director of Human Resources, Baker Boyer Bank
- Amanda Anderson, Human Resources, Baker Boyer Bank
- Adam Ketts, Vice President for Commercial Banking, Banner Bank
- Pam Taylor, Director of Human Resources, The City of Walla Walla
- Shawn Doering, Director of Human Resources, The City of College Place
- Kyle Tabert, Executive Director, The Walla Walla Chamber of Commerce
- Kathryn Witherington, Executive Director, The Downtown Walla Walla Foundation
- John McVay, President, Walla Walla University
- David Lopez, Director of the Center for Humanitarian Engagement, Walla Walla University
- Keri Self, Director of Human Resources, Walla Walla University
- Kathleen Murray, President, Whitman College
- Telara McCullough, Director of Human Resources, Whitman College
- Nancy Riggle, Executive Director, Valley Residential Services
- Susan Blackburn, CEO/President of Health Systems, Providence St. Mary's Medical Center
- Chris Gardena, Assistant Superintendent, Walla Walla Public Schools
- Pat Ray, Executive Director, The Port of Walla Walla
- Family Medical Center
- Kathy Covery, Executive Director, Blue Mountain Action Council
- Steve Barker, Assistant Superintendent, The Washington State Penitentiary

Employers report that wellness programs have evolved from focusing entirely on physical health to incorporating whole-person wellness, including mental-health support, reducing stress, and supporting financial wellness. To improve well-being for the greatest number of individuals in the Walla Walla Valley, the Blue Zones Project team will initially focus on engaging the largest and most influential employers who are eager to innovate and improve employee well-being, workplace engagement, and productivity. After these employers gain traction and record successes, the Blue Zones Project team will leverage their stories to inspire others to participate.

Strengths

✓ **Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation are very active and community focused.**

In addition to being active in the community, the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce and the Downtown Walla Walla Foundation are engaged with Blue Zones Project and have been supportive partners from the beginning. They will be crucial connectors between Blue Zones Project and the worksites around the region. The Chamber of Commerce has a membership of more than 450 businesses and organizations. The Downtown Walla Walla Foundation runs the weekly farmers market and looks forward to Blue Zones Project having a consistent presence there.

✓ **Providence St. Mary's Medical Center, Walla Walla Valley's largest employer, has been engaged and supportive of Blue Zones Project from the beginning.**

The team at Providence was part of the original campaign to bring Blue Zones Project to the Walla Walla Valley and continues to be supportive of the Project. As one of the largest employers in the Valley, with nearly 1,200 employees, Providence is excited to partner with Blue Zones Project to enhance their wellness program, especially coming out of the COVID-19 pandemic, where they see a greater need for employees to focus on individual wellness. They look forward to participating in programs such as Walking and Potluck Moais, Purpose Workshops, and community volunteering.

✓ **Walla Walla University, the Project's community partner, plans to partner as a worksite and engage students in volunteer opportunities.**

As an Adventist university, Blue Zones Project principles are a significant part of many community practices at Walla Walla University for faculty, staff, and students. They look forward to enhancing their robust wellness program with Blue Zones Project's support.

✓ **Community giving and support is a cornerstone of many of the largest employers in the Walla Walla Valley.**

Many of the Valley's largest employers value giving—financially and of time—to the community. They support community initiatives and charity work financially and provide opportunities for employees to serve the community, either as a group or on an individual level. For example, Baker Boyer Bank devotes a portion of its budget

each year—more than \$100,000—to support non-profit and charity work in the Valley. Organizations are invited to apply for grants and sponsorships. Whitman College employees raise money annually for United Way and participate in numerous volunteer opportunities provided by the school.

Challenges

☐ **Lack of regular engagement in worksite wellness programs.**

While many of the worksites in the Walla Walla Valley offer worksite wellness programs, some including incentives such as lowered healthcare premiums, employees participation is low. Many see wellness programs as something that could help lower medical costs but not as a resource for improving health.

☐ **The pandemic will impact worksites and creating connections post COVID-19.**

Walla Walla Valley's worksites were split fairly evenly between sites that were essential during the pandemic and those that could work from home. A challenge they will all encounter is how to provide opportunities to connect colleagues, either in person or virtually.

☐ **Work-life balance culture changes at large employers.**

While all worksites involved with the one-on-one meetings and focus groups were supportive of partnering with Blue Zones Project and enhancing wellness programs, there was a consistent theme around the need for work-life balance and support of healthy daily habits from worksite leadership.

Opportunities

☐ **Many large worksites with existing wellness programs and committees are looking to increase participation.**

While many of the worksites in the Walla Walla Valley have wellness programs and, in some cases, wellness committees, there is enthusiasm for enhancing the programs with Blue Zones Project principles and support. There is also enthusiasm for increasing engagement and participation. Worksites believe that there will be additional interest in individual health post pandemic.

❑ Interest in collaboration among worksites to share best practices and resources.

The largest employers in the Walla Walla Valley are a diverse group of 21 worksites. While many belong to industry-specific organizations that provide resources and support, there was considerable enthusiasm for a committee, facilitated and supported by Blue Zones Project and the Chamber of Commerce, that would provide a place for sharing of ideas, resources, and challenges specific to the Valley.

❑ Greater emphasis on creating a worksite culture of wellness and health coming out of COVID-19 pandemic.

A consistent comment heard during the one-on-one meetings and focus groups was that post-pandemic worksites and individuals are putting a greater emphasis on their health. This provides an excellent opportunity for Blue Zones Project to be the model for this new emphasis. Worksites are willing to take on this added project knowing that Blue Zones Project offers support.

❑ Expand mental-wellness program options beyond contracted EAP programs.

While many worksites have an EAP (Employee Assistance Program), most are digital programs offered off-site. While this option can be the most comfortable for some employees and does not place additional work on human resources staff, it is often not the best fit for large-scale engagement. There is opportunity to explore options for workshops on topics such as gratitude, acceptance, and purpose.

❑ Host an annual community health fair that is sponsored by worksites and Blue Zones Project.

Hosting a community-wide annual health fair, sponsored by Blue Zones Project and Blue Zones Project Approved worksites, would not only serve the community but would provide a recruitment opportunity for worksites and a to extend their wellness practices to the greater community.



Grocery Stores & Restaurants

Grocery stores and restaurants are primed to play a key role in Blue Zones Project because more customers are seeking healthy options, and stores and restaurants want to meet this growing demand.

By following best practices from around the country, grocery stores and restaurants can increase revenue while improving customer health. Blue Zones Project provides access to staff support, resources, and marketing collateral to help grocery stores and restaurants implement best practices that will make the environment healthier in a revenue-neutral or revenue-positive way. Many are already pointing customers toward healthier choices, but there are opportunities to expand what is being done.

Blue Zones Project team members met with the following individuals and organizations:

- Steve Wenzel, Store Manager, Safeway Grocery Store on Rose Street
- Vicki Zanes, Owner, Andy's Market and the Market at Andy's
- Kyle Tabert, Executive Director, The Chamber of Commerce
- Kathryn Witherington, Executive Director, The Downtown Walla Walla Foundation
- Rebecca Lastoskie, Graze Restaurant
- Island Ainsworth, Owner, Saffron Mediterranean Kitchen

Grocery Store Strengths

- ✓ **The Walla Walla Valley hosts a balance of independently owned grocery stores and corporate chains, providing a diverse shopping experience in all areas of the Valley.**

There are eight grocery stores in the Walla Walla Valley. Five are large chain stores and three are locally owned markets. The grocery stores are well spaced geographically and tend to serve the communities living nearest to them. The furthest large neighborhood is roughly 1.2 miles from its closest store, while most neighborhoods are within walking distance of a grocery store.

- ✓ **Many of the grocery stores in the Walla Walla Valley source their produce from local farms.**

Support of local farmers in grocery stores is a common occurrence in Walla Walla Valley. Whether a large chain or locally owned store, local farmers are featured year round and especially in the summer when local produce is plentiful. While a trip to a local farm is a great experience, having local produce accessible in grocery stores provides greater exposure to more of the community.

Grocery Store Challenges

- ❑ **Community members choose the grocery store they believe offers lower prices in exchange for a lower quality product.**

While grocery stores in the Walla Walla Valley are located in neighborhoods, many community members chose to shop at Walmart because they perceive that prices are lower. In reality, neighborhood grocery stores offer competitive prices and a wider array of produce, including many from local farmers.

Grocery Store Opportunities

- ❑ **Leverage the corporate structure of Albertsons to partner with three of the eight grocery stores in the Walla Walla Valley.**

Walla Walla Valley has three Albertsons grocery stores, evenly distributed throughout the community. Because Albertsons is a chain, a commitment from the corporate office would translate to partnerships in all three stores, which would touch most of the Valley community.

- ❑ **Partner with schools and community organizations to conduct grocery store tours that highlight Blue Zones Project foods and best practices.**

Many stores offer tours for schools, but rarely do these tours highlight healthy foods and what can be made with them. Given school participation in Blue Zones Project, Blue Zones Project Approved grocery stores can offer tours that teach kids about Blue Zones longevity foods and offer tastings of healthy recipes featuring those foods. Tours can be offered during and after school so that students and families can participate. Partnering with local dietitians and nutritionists provides another opportunity to connect individuals in the community around food.

Restaurant Strengths

- ✓ **Most of the restaurants in the Walla Walla Valley are small and locally owned.**

While the Valley does have some chain restaurants, the majority is small and locally owned, giving them far more control over what they choose to serve. Given the vibrant farming community, many restaurants can source nearly all of their supplies from their own community.

- ✓ **The tourism economy and local community in the Walla Walla Valley support a strong foodie scene with an emphasis on farm-to-table cuisine and non-chain restaurants.**

The thriving tourism industry in the Walla Walla Valley, largely due to the wine industry, has brought with it a strong foodie scene. The foodie scene is sustained by locals and tourists who appreciate restaurants that follow a farm-to-table approach and source from local farmers. Even during the pandemic, local restaurants have stayed open due to the support of the community and farmers. Many new restaurants have already opened in 2021.

Restaurant Challenges

- ❑ **Consumer confusion over the expense of healthy food options.**

While many restaurants in the Walla Walla Valley offer healthy options, there can be a perception that either those options are more expensive or will not taste as good as unhealthy options. The Walla Walla Valley has some high-end restaurants practicing a farm-to-table approach, but those locations are perceived as for tourists or wealthier community members.

- ❑ **There is an abundance of unhealthy fast-food and food-truck options.**

While most of the restaurants in the Valley are not chains, the chain restaurants tend to be fast food. The Walla Walla Valley also has a strong community of food trucks, nearly 35 and growing, which typically do not offer a lot of healthy options. These businesses are independently owned and may partner with Blue Zones Project to incorporate healthier Blue Zones-approved options.

Restaurant Opportunities

☐ **Engage new restaurants prior to opening.**

Many new restaurants are opening in the Walla Walla Valley. Engaging restaurant owners prior to opening provides an opportunity to promote health and well-being from the beginning. Blue Zones Project could have the opportunity to influence restaurant design and menu descriptions prior to print and opening. Blue Zones Project could also drive traffic to new restaurants by promoting their healthy options.

☐ **Encourage restaurants to provide healthy kids meals on menus.**

Many restaurants include kids meals that do not have any healthy options. Adding healthy options to children's menus helps parents provide quick, nutritious meals for their kids.

☐ **For restaurants that already offer healthy foods, start by optimizing the menu.**

Restaurants that offer healthy options may not highlight or even list them, relying on customers to ask for alternatives first. Restaurants can increase sales of these items by using Blue Zones Project evidence-based best practices for optimizing a menu.

☐ **Offer a smaller portion size on popular menu items.**

By offering a smaller portion option for popular menu items, restaurants can cut down on food costs while increasing profit margin. Research has shown that if servers offer customers the option to downsize unhealthy side dishes, they typically say “yes”—even without a discount. Also, by charging more than 50 percent of the full-size price for half-size portions, they are more profitable than full-size portions.



Faith-Based Organizations

The Walla Walla Valley has a strong and diverse group of faith-based organizations that are passionate about serving the community.

Faith-based organizations are important partners for Blue Zones Project as they are rooted in the foundation of purpose. In other Blue Zones Communities, faith-based groups have had success engaging a diverse swath of residents, including ethnic minorities and low-income individuals who may not be participating in other aspects of the Project.

Blue Zones Project team members met with the following individuals and organizations:

- Rev. Nathaniel Malberg, Pastor, First Congregational Church
- Rev. David Sibley, Pastor, St. Paul's Episcopal Church
- Fr. Matthew Nicks, Pastor, Walla Walla Catholic Parishes
- Rev. Jeff Kinne, Pastor, College Place Village Church

- Rev. Andreas Beccai, Lead Pastor, Walla Walla University Church
- Dr. Tim Gillespie, Faith, health, and well-being consultant, Adventist Health/Blue Zones LLC
- Rebecca Lastoskie, Graze Restaurant
- Island Ainsworth, Owner, Saffron Mediterranean Kitchen

Strengths

- ✓ **Many of the Blue Zones Project Power 9 principles resonate with faith-based organizations.**

Power 9 principles like Right Tribe and Purpose are already a part of the faith-based community and could continue to grow with Blue Zones Project promotion and support.

- ✓ **Strong communication channels exist in faith-based organizations.**

Many faith-based organizations have strong channels of communication within their community, including social media pages, email blasts, texting and phone tree chains, and weekly bulletins. These channels provide an opportunity to communicate Blue Zones Project messaging and community events.

- ✓ **Local communities of faith have been active during COVID-19 in initiating and supporting outreach to meet needs.**

Many churches have initiated or continued programs to help individuals in the local community, including providing lunches and other meals for people who are homeless or food insecure, raising more than \$2 million to help pay medical debt, supporting the work of SonBridge, and helping families without legal papers sign up for and access relief funding.

Challenges

☐ **Lack of coordination between local congregations.**

Although congregations have come together at times to address specific community needs, there has no strong coalition of support and community of practice among faith-based leaders and congregations. Focus-group members said that while there is interest in a coalition, no one has had time or resources to take charge of logistics.

☐ **Smaller congregations lack capacity for wellness programming.**

Many faith-based leaders expressed an interest in wellness programming but lack capacity and expertise to design and implement content, events, and programs. Leaders expressed the strain felt by many in their congregations with regard to mental and emotional health due to past trauma, financial stressors, inequity, and the pandemic.

☐ **Lack of participation by communities of faith outside of the Christian tradition.**

During the discovery process there was no participation from communities of faith outside of the Christian tradition. The local team invited other faith traditions to participate in the conversation, but they did not respond.

☐ **Some aging congregations do not reflect the diversity of the Walla Walla Valley.**

The demographics of some congregations tend toward an older population that is mostly white. Leaders expressed a desire for their congregations to reflect the diversity of the Walla Walla Valley with regard to age and ethnicity.

☐ **COVID-19 pandemic has limited the ability of some communities of faith to connect with members of their congregations, amplifying feelings of isolation and stress.**

The pandemic has strained the ability of congregations to connect with some members who may lack access to reliable internet or who do not have the technological skills to utilize virtual platforms. Some congregation members report feeling isolated, with increased strain on mental and emotional health.

Opportunities

- ❑ **Blue Zones Project programming can support the capacity of faith-based communities to meet wellness needs and help some congregations connect with an intergenerational audience.**

Some communities of faith in the Walla Walla Valley expressed an interest in well-being programming but shared that there was a lack staff capacity to create and implement. Providing programming, including well-being content for use in newsletters and bulletins, would help support the desire to offer whole-person care and scale staff capacity. Forming a wellness council to lead well-being improvements at an organization, with the support of Blue Zones Project, could drive higher levels of member ownership and participation. The chair of the wellness council could sit on the larger coalition that brings together all faith-based groups working on community well-being. Diverse wellness programming will appeal to an intergenerational audience and increase the ability of communities of faith to reach younger families.

- ❑ **Offer programming that helps congregations and the community reconnect and feel safe post vaccine.**

Helping communities of faith offer wellness programming and events that feel “safe” as the vaccine rolls out will counter the isolation experienced by many during COVID-19. Blue Zones Project programs might include Purpose or Walking Moais and cooking demonstrations for plant-based meals.

- ❑ **Facilitate the creation of an inter-faith coalition around well-being that meets regularly.**

Facilitating a coalition of faith-based organizations would allow these communities to find language to talk about well-being in their congregations, share best practices for content and programming, and elicit support from the local Blue Zones Project team. Bringing together all faith-based groups that provide services to the community could reduce duplicative efforts, increase community participation by including all denominations and populations, and allow for a more holistic and strategic view of how efficiently to use church resources to improve congregational and community well-being.

■ Partner with local faith-based communities to utilize campus facilities for Blue Zones Project events and activities.

Partnering with local faith communities to utilize existing facilities to create positive wellness experiences for the Walla Walla Valley community could support the desire of faith-based leaders to utilize their facilities for successful community events and support Blue Zones Project goals. Many faith-based communities have facilities in neighborhoods that may choose to participate in Blue Zones Project initiatives. Such support could include kitchen facilities for cooking demonstrations or providing meals connected with events or programs in at-risk neighborhoods. Child-focused spaces could be utilized for offering childcare during programs or events and land on church properties could be used for neighborhood community garden programs.



Community Policy

Municipal governments play an important role in Blue Zones Project by shaping policies and building infrastructure in a way that lifts well-being for everyone in the community, not just those engaged through participating organizations.

Blue Zones Project focuses on three policy areas that have a profound impact on enhancing quality of life and well-being for citizens: food, tobacco, and built environment (which includes infrastructure, transportation, housing, and recreation opportunities). Blue Zones Communities that have adopted best practices in these areas have seen a more vibrant local economy where businesses and individuals want to locate and have been more competitive when applying for grants for community-improvement projects.

Blue Zones Project experts in the built environment, food policy, and tobacco policy completed detailed assessments of these areas during the months of January and February 2021. Detailed reports summarizing their findings are valuable resources for identifying priority policies and projects to pursue in the Walla Walla Valley over the next three years. Input highlighted in the summaries below and in the full reports included in the appendices

was gathered during focus groups and interviews with more than 120 stakeholders in the community.

Recognizing historical disparities in access to resources and opportunities, the Blue Zones Project team was intentional about ensuring the voices of traditionally marginalized populations were influential in the discovery process.

Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley focuses specifically on the communities of Walla Walla and College Place. Walla Walla and College Place are located within the traditional lands of the Walla Walla, Umatilla, and Cayuse Nations.

Noted as a challenge across all three policy areas, poverty is an issue in both Walla Walla and College Place, with many people struggling to meet basic needs. The Walla Walla County Community Health Need Assessment (2017) notes, “There is a strong and consistent link between poverty and poor health outcomes both globally and within Walla Walla County. Due to cultural and social barriers, the cost of treatment, fewer education opportunities, poor living conditions, and many other factors, those living in poverty often have significantly worse health outcomes and shorter lifespans.”⁵

There are also significant wealth disparities in Walla Walla and College Place. Census data from 2017 show median annual income ranges widely, from \$36,979 in the western downtown area of Walla Walla (substantially lower than the US median annual income of \$60,336) to \$81,961 in the eastern part of Walla Walla. College Place reports a median income of \$47,512, also below the US average. This discrepancy exacerbates health disparities and gaps in access to opportunity.



Built Environment

Blue Zones Project works with community leaders to advocate for policies, principles, and best practices that bring back natural movement and choice in how people access places within their community.

Community infrastructure like trails, roads, sidewalks, housing, bike lanes, parks, and other public places affect our ability to move naturally, connect socially, and access daily doings. Municipal governments shape policies and build infrastructure in a way that supports healthy and active living, resulting in an enhanced quality of life and well-being for citizens, a vibrant local economy, and an attractive place for businesses to locate and individuals to live. The built environment of a community is also tied to the social determinants of health. The quality of the environments in which people live, work, learn, play, and pray directly impact their health, opportunity, and quality-of-life outcomes.

During January and February 2021, the built environment discovery process featured 10 focus groups and eight interviews with stakeholders representing a diverse array of

organizations throughout the Walla Walla Valley. The process was led by three Blue Zones Project built environment experts:

[Dan Burden](#) is a nationally recognized authority on active transportation, livable and sustainable communities, Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities and programs, and he has helped more than 3,800 communities around the world become more walkable and bikeable.

[Mark Fenton](#) is a public health, land use, and transportation consultant who began his work in the field through rigorous study of the science of health and fitness. Mark has consulted with schools on student health, fitness, and walk-to-school programs; worksites on employee wellness programs; and community health and well-being initiatives. He is now an adjunct associate professor at Tufts University's Friedman School of Nutrition Science & Policy.

[Danielle Schaeffner](#) has led and supported a range of active transportation efforts, including work in comprehensive and mode-specific planning, Health Impact Assessment (HIA), Complete Streets, and built environment policy guidance. Danielle is passionate about working with partners across sectors to promote policy, systems, and environmental changes that increase access to multimodal options for all ages, races, incomes, and abilities and has contributed to equity and built environment reports and guidance documents.

Strengths

✓ **Walla Walla and College Place have strong foundational policy frameworks.**

While Walla Walla and College Place are unique in their multimodal infrastructure and needs, both communities have foundational policy frameworks to encourage walkable, bikeable, and multi-modal transport and land uses. Both communities have good Complete Streets policies in place, are governed by the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization plan, and are included in a regional trails plan. Both communities have comprehensive capital-improvement project plans through at least 2023 that call out accommodating all modes and users and include projects such as intersection improvements, sidewalk replacement, and park redevelopment.

✓ **Leaders and community members are knowledgeable, committed, and passionate.**

The discovery process included conversations with an array of agencies, organizations,

and individuals who are passionate about working towards a healthier Walla Walla Valley. There is great local knowledge about designing livable, safe, and accessible environments for those on bike, foot, and transit. Leadership throughout the community is on board and community advocates work tirelessly to improve the lives and well-being of residents.

✓ **Strong partnerships foster a collaborative approach to community planning and development.**

There are existing and potential partnerships in the community with government and non-government entities. The Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan is a wonderful example of this community-level collaboration. There are also tremendous community-based organizations with committed leadership that support these communities and provide examples of engagement and partnerships helping projects get successfully passed and funded, such as the Isaacs Street road diet.

Challenges

❑ **Diverse, affordable housing is not readily available.**

Efforts like the encouragement of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and density have created the policy landscape for more diversity within both Walla Walla and College Place. However, there are fears about height and increasing density to the detriment of community character and existing home values. Greater engagement and technical training on context-sensitive density are required. Placement of housing must also provide diversity in housing types, fit within the character of its context, honor existing homes, and be location efficient.

❑ **Cross-jurisdictional collaboration can be challenging.**

Numerous stakeholders spoke to the need for greater cross-jurisdictional collaboration, region-wide coordination, and engagement with other disciplines to advance common goals. There is a great need for thoughtful land-use planning, intentional housing construction, and development coordination between the cities and county, especially as land is annexed and requires city services.

❑ **Funding available for maintenance and new infrastructure projects does not meet need.**

All entities engaged in the discovery process noted that the local jurisdictions lack

sufficient funding to complete planned built environment projects. Cities often rely on competitive state and/or federal funding, which can make it difficult to plan ahead for infrastructure projects. Additionally, the City of Walla Walla relies on funding from a Transportation Benefit District which will be voted on again in November 2021. If renewal is not endorsed by the community, there will be significant challenges associated with funding. This lack of funding leads to a reactionary rather than proactive approaches to maintaining and investing in the built environment.

❑ Many schools lack surrounding infrastructure or activities that would ensure Safe Routes to School (SRTS).

Some model Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects have been completed, but many parents fear letting children walk and bike to school. Some schools lack sidewalks and safe crossing facilities directly adjacent to the school building.

Opportunities

Opportunities to improve the built environment in order to positively impact the health and well-being of community members are broken into three categories.

I. Advance Complete Streets and Multi-modal Planning

❑ Facilitate a ‘Performance Measures’ Workshop with local, regional, and state stakeholders.

At a local and regional level, there may be opportunities to utilize performance measures that evaluate and account for walking, biking, transit modes, placemaking, tree cover, health equity, sound levels, and other livability factors, to be included in the metrics of success for local projects.

❑ Support Active Transportation Plan efforts in partnership with the Walla Walla Valley metropolitan planning organization.

The region’s first Active Transportation Plan is slated to be completed by 2024. The next few years offer tremendous opportunity for the Blue Zones Project team and its partners to assist with and support efforts of the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization.

❑ Advocate for the renewal of the Transportation Benefit District Fund.

Both Walla Walla and College Place would benefit from the renewal of this funding source.

❑ Implement tactical-urbanism pop-up demonstration projects throughout the Valley.

Demonstration projects can include parklets, outdoor dining, intersection art, curb extensions, passageways, safe and accessible street crossings, human-scaled lighting, and street greening. These projects will provide opportunities for public engagement before, during, and after Project implementation around value sharing, visioning, and celebrating the uniqueness of the region's downtowns and neighborhoods.

❑ Engage the community to advance infrastructure to support active transportation.

There is a stated need throughout the Valley for equitable community engagement, and the Blue Zones Project team can help facilitate this process.

II. Advance Healthy Land Uses and Access to Recreation Opportunities

❑ Develop a public engagement and technical training program on context-sensitive density.

There is an opportunity to provide Walla Walla and College Place with guidance and training on context-sensitive density. There is an opportunity to advance a diversity of housing types, including townhomes, duplexes, quadraplexes, row houses, accessory dwelling units, and multi-family units that are sensitive to the area.

❑ Support efforts to expand access to diverse and affordable housing with strategies like updating residential codes to encourage development of “missing middle” housing.

There has been a robust local effort to explore housing needs in the Walla Walla Valley. Community Council completed an Affordable Housing Study and Report⁶ in 2018, which, along with the Walla Walla County Council on Housing's Plan, also completed in 2018, identifies several priority areas that Blue Zone Project can support, such as the creation of a community housing trust called Common Roots.

❑ Amend the zoning codes to address parking requirements.

A key step in developing a community that is friendly to active transportation modes is to disconnect parking minimums from development requirements.

❑ Support implementation of the Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan.

Given the robust engagement for this plan, implementation should be coordinated to deliver easy wins and leverage regional investments.

III. Ensure Safer Routes and Support Transit Integration

❑ Facilitate input into and advance Valley Transit’s comprehensive operational-analysis update.

Valley Transit is updating its multi-year plan, and the Blue Zones Project team could assist with engagement and feedback, including input on current routes and frequencies, bus stop assessments, and partnership development.

❑ Coordinate transportation planning, including transit, with higher-education institutions.

Students travel from College Place to Walla Walla and to shopping and eating venues. Linkages between higher-education institutions and other destinations in the Valley are critically important.

❑ Perform accessibility audits at transit stops.

This is a critical component for developing an equitable transportation system.

❑ Prioritize traffic calming around schools.

It is challenging for children to walk or cycle to school in Walla Walla and College Place due to wide, impassable roads with sidewalk gaps on key streets and a lack of safe crossing supports. There is a clear need to enhance some routes and crossings to schools with infrastructure improvements and program enhancements.

❑ Provide sheltered, secure bike parking at destinations throughout the Valley, including at high schools.

This will encourage residents to engage in active transportation more frequently.

❑ Offer a bike maintenance program at elementary schools.

Elementary schools can incorporate bicycle skills and safety training in physical-education curriculum, recognizing these as foundational skills for a lifetime of physical activity.

Conclusion

With a strong downtown focus, great family-centered neighborhoods, well-located educational institutions, a care for preserving agricultural and nearby wooded lands, and an awareness of the challenges associated with growth, the Walla Walla Valley is in a good position to advance a healthier future for its residents. The region would benefit from training and funding supports to coordinate efforts, ensure suitable development within urban growth boundaries, orient staff, and draw together elected leaders, partners, and residents around good built environment practices.

The community can build upon the historic town center of Walla Walla, build a missing town center in College Place, maximize the gifts of population growth, quality healthcare, and learning centers, and become a model for livability, great governance, partnership, and responsible urban growth. The Blue Zones Project team is well positioned to support the community as it focuses on Complete Streets projects, healthy land-use practices, and multimodal planning to ensure safe routes for all, ultimately advancing the community's stated values.

A detailed built environment report highlighting the findings of the discovery process is included in the appendix. See full report for citations.



Food Policy

Food policy change with Blue Zones Project is a community led transformation program bringing residents, business leaders, advocates, and community leaders focused on the food environment together to collaborate on projects and programs that improve health and well-being.

The Walla Walla Valley food policy discovery process was supported by three Blue Zones Project national policy experts:

[Maggi Adamek, PhD](#), is nationally recognized for her unique impact-oriented approach in helping people and partnerships create healthy communities. She is an expert in food systems change—from production to consumption—helping communities launch initiatives to improve local economies, public health, and agricultural systems. Maggi will host the food policy summit and assisted with the assessment of challenges and opportunities for the Walla Walla Valley food environment.

Nadja Berneche is the lead consultant and director of healthy communities projects with Terra Soma. With nearly fifteen years of experience in the field, she is a content expert at the intersection of local food policy and community planning, providing technical assistance to local governments, non-profits, and community members working to increase healthy food access. She uses local community planning as a tool to strategically identify and implement initiatives to increase access to healthy food, physical activity, and health equity. Nadja played a lead role in all food policy focus groups and interviews.

Miles Gordon is a recognized leader in food systems development, community engagement, and multi-stakeholder and bilingual (Spanish/English) facilitation. Miles has most recently served as food systems director for North Coast Opportunities (NCO), located in Mendocino and Lake Counties, California.

Strength

✓ **The local hunger-relief sector is well developed and uses best practices.**

Although food insecurity is an issue in the Walla Walla Valley (11 percent of the population and 18 percent of children experience food insecurity), there are many robust organizations that provide food to those in need throughout the community. The Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC) supplies food to 40,000 clients in five counties through 18 partner organizations annually, including the eight food banks serving Walla Walla and College Place.

✓ **There are many diverse options for purchasing food in Walla Walla and College Place.**

Walla Walla and College Place offer 44 full-service dining opportunities in the community. There are also 32 fast food restaurants, many food trucks, eight grocery stores, and several small grocery retailers and specialty grocery stores. Walla Walla and College Place each have a seasonal farmers market as well.

✓ **Existing community gardens enable individuals to grow their own food and offer opportunity for expansion.**

There are three community gardens in Walla Walla and College Place, including the Walla Walla University Church Community Garden, Assumption Community Garden, and the Rees and Sumach Community Garden. College Place has taken recent steps to support community gardening space.

✓ **The Valley supports a strong agricultural economy and locally grown products.**

According to the US Census of Agriculture, Walla Walla County is home to 903 farms (93 percent of which are family owned) and 181 wineries. Ten percent of area farms sell directly to consumers. The organizations Walla Walla Grown and the Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition are active and foster partnerships across many area producers. A robust feasibility study completed in March 2020 focuses on creating a local food hub, which would create a central location for producers to process their products.

✓ **Restaurants are generous to the community.**

Restaurant owners, staff, and chefs are incredibly generous to the Walla Walla community. They contribute substantial donations to hunger-related causes and support farmworkers and food-service workers.

✓ **Food-skills programs and nutrition education are available to many in the community.**

WSU Extension, Walla Walla County, and Walla Walla Valley Farm-to-School, part of the Sustainable Living Center, all offer various nutrition education and food-skills programs to the community. Walla Walla Community College and Walla Walla High School also offer culinary and food-skills programs.

Challenges

❑ **Food insecurity is an issue in the Walla Walla Valley.**

While hunger-relief efforts are robust, food insecurity remains a concern and is rooted in access. In 2017, Walla Walla County experienced an overall food insecurity rate of 11 percent of the population. Households with children experience even higher rates: 17.7 percent of children experience food insecurity and 56 percent of children are eligible for free or reduced school meals, compared to 46 percent statewide. Stakeholders in the hunger-relief sector report demand has at least quadrupled during COVID-19. Undocumented farmworkers and other immigrants are not served well by the current hunger-relief system for a variety of reasons, including lack of transportation and existing practices that require identification to receive assistance. Lower-income neighborhoods in the Valley often lack full-service grocery stores and farmers markets, and residents may have a more difficult time accessing healthy food options.

❑ Local, small-scale producers lack the resources, assistance, or capacity to scale up production and/or sell to local institutions.

Many small-scale producers are interested in scaling up production to sell to schools and other institutions, but they need technical assistance with GAP certification and other USDA requirements. They also have identified the lack of a central processing facility to develop value-added products as a barrier to expanding business operations. There is a tension between the need for affordable housing, rising land values due to tourist and retiree growth, and agriculture land values, which make land access for agricultural enterprise very expensive. Many small-scale growers must rent the land they farm on, which is another barrier to expansion.

❑ Many residents lack resources and skills to grow, preserve, and/or cook their own food.

There is growing community interest in gardening, but many households lack the yard space, resources, time, and skills to garden, cook, and preserve their own food.

❑ High cost of housing leaves many households financially burdened with little disposable income for basic necessities like food.

The lack of affordable housing in the Valley is well documented and the subject of several ongoing initiatives. High cost of living, low wages, a housing shortage, and rising land values leave many households in the Walla Walla Valley with little money for basic necessities like food and medical care. This is even more severe for farmworkers and their families.

❑ A lack of consistent, reliable transportation is also a challenge for many households.

In Walla Walla, people primarily commute by car or carpool (80 percent), and only 1 percent of workers use public transportation. Those interviewed reported that, without a personal vehicle, getting to the grocery store or to food pantries is a challenge. Many residents without vehicles depend on friends or family to take them to get groceries because it is challenging to travel on public transportation with bags of groceries. With the pandemic, people are shopping less to minimize exposure, but they are purchasing more in a single trip. This makes those without vehicles even more reliant on family and friends and is especially relevant for farmworkers who often live outside of cities.

❑ Cultural norms perpetuate availability of unhealthy food and beverage options throughout the community.

Cultural norms and ease of access to sugar-sweetened beverages negatively impact diet-related chronic-disease risk factors in the community. Some restaurant menus offer few, if any, healthy options, and convenience stores lack fresh produce and other healthy foods. Many youth sports and public pool concessions are also unhealthy. Senior citizens and youth eat far fewer than the recommended number of fruit and vegetable servings per day.

❑ There is no permanent mechanism for advancing food policy in the Valley.

While there has been extensive exploratory work, there is no permanent mechanism to development and advance community-wide food policy. This includes implementation of the Food Hub Feasibility Study, completed in March 2020.

Opportunities

❑ Implement recommendations in Food Hub Feasibility Study.

A food hub would provide a central location for small, local producers to process their products. This could be pursued in partnership with Walla Walla Grown and the Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition, among other partners.

❑ Protect high-value farmland in the Valley.

Incorporating or enhancing elements that support farmland preservation in local plans can help protect farmland in the Valley. This can also preserve the region's agricultural character, protect food supply, and ensure an affordable land base for farmers.

❑ Increase access to technical assistance support for local growers.

Through a partnership with WSU Extension and/or Washington Tilth, comprehensive technical assistance can help develop and expand wholesale production and connect growers with institutional markets.

❑ Support local gardening efforts.

Local governments can implement policies that foster gardening and urban agriculture either within individual lots or in shared spaces like community gardens. These programs could specifically target underserved areas. These programs may be accompanied by educational efforts related to gardening, cooking, and preserving food. Work in this area began in 2020 with the City of College Place approving the use of land adjacent to City Hall for a community garden.

❑ Establish or update and enforce institutional guidelines related to healthy vending and/or sugar-sweetened beverage sales.

These guidelines should target workplaces, schools, after-school programs, recreation sites, and college campuses. Policies and funding can support hydration stations in all schools, parks, and recreation facilities.

❑ Incentivize restaurants, food trucks, or convenience stores to offer healthier food and beverage options.

This policy should establish standards for encouraging food trucks and restaurants to offer at least one Blue Zones-approved menu item. Guidelines and incentives can help support a healthy convenience store effort, ensuring that neighborhoods without access to a grocery store may still be able to purchase healthy food items nearby.

❑ Eliminate barriers to healthy-food access and food assistance.

Requiring identification for participants to access food from food pantries can act as a barrier that keeps people from accessing the food they need. Additionally, bringing food assistance to community members in need (where they live or work) rather than offering it only in one location can increase access. Universal SNAP screening for seniors at area healthcare providers and a Veggie Rx or CSA program for seniors and people with chronic health issues might also help increase access.

❑ Build on past successes of local school nutrition efforts.

Strengthen the existing farm-to-school programming by increasing the percent of food procured from local producers and developing healthy food procurement policies. This will help eliminate some barriers school nutrition staff face in providing healthier, local options. School nutrition guidelines for Walla Walla and College Place may need to be revisited and updated.

Establish a food policy council.

Establish a multi-sector food policy council affiliated with city or county government to develop and implement food policy on an ongoing basis.

Conclusion

The food policy discovery process revealed wide-ranging support for Blue Zones Project as well as enthusiasm for a diverse array of food systems initiatives and opportunities. The emerging food policy agenda for Walla Walla and College Place should find ways to foster constructive, effective relationships and efforts that leverage the numerous assets available to cultivate healthy food environments, foster food skills, and enhance healthy food infrastructure, all grounded in the heritage and culture of the region's food system.

A detailed food policy report highlighting the findings of the discovery process is included in the appendix. See full report for citations.



Tobacco Policy

Each year cigarette smoking kills about 8,300 adults in Washington. In Walla Walla County, 13 percent of adults and eight percent of youth smoke cigarettes. The rate of youth usage is even higher for vaping and e-cigarettes: 13 percent of youth in the county use e-cigarettes.

The information summarized below is from interviews and information obtained from key stakeholders related to existing tobacco-prevention and control efforts. Based on these interviews and a review of the existing data and other information, there appears to be high interest in supporting tobacco-free efforts in the Walla Walla Valley in partnership with Blue Zones Project. The Walla Walla Valley tobacco policy discovery process was supported by a Blue Zones Project national policy expert:

[Richard Killingsworth](#), M.P.H., is a senior advisor for tobacco policy to Blue Zones Project. He also serves as the director of the Center for Public Private Partnerships in Health at the University of Delaware, where he is also an Associate Professor in the College of Health

Sciences, Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition. Rich led all of the interviews during the discovery process. Rich conducted interviews with key stakeholders between January and February of 2021.

Strengths

✓ **The cities of Walla Walla and College Place prohibit smoking in public spaces.**

Smoking is prohibited in public places, the definition of which includes schools and educational facilities and specifies a presumptively reasonable minimum distance of 25 feet from entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited. Walla Walla has 15 public parks, all of which are supported by a clean-air ordinance that prohibits smoking and vaping.

✓ **State, regional, and county health departments are valuable partners.**

The state and local health departments have exceptional staff that are trained to address tobacco prevention and control initiatives; however, both the state and county agencies have limited funding, staffing, and other resources. The Benton-Franklin Health District supports tobacco prevention and cessation in Walla Walla County, while the Walla Walla County staff focus on marijuana prevention and cessation. In addition, the State of Washington was an early adopter of raising the legal purchasing age to 21 (in February 2019), with implementation of Tobacco and Vapor 21 starting January 1, 2020.

✓ **Public and private schools are moving toward national best practices in the way they address substance use among youth.**

Local public and private schools support tobacco-free policies, and cessation efforts seem to be shifting to less punitive approaches. Additionally, local elected officials in both Walla Walla and College Place have a good reputation among community residents for being supportive of activities and policies related to community health and well-being.

✓ **Local leaders and private and non-profit partners are supportive of efforts to improve health and well-being.**

Local businesses are supportive of local efforts to improve the health and well-being of the community. Additionally, health-focused non-profits seem invested in supporting a culture of health.

Challenges

☐ **The Washington State preemption law will limit local tobacco prevention efforts.**

The preemption law in Washington is restrictive and could constrain local innovation of tobacco prevention efforts.

☐ **Enforcement of smoke-free policies is limited.**

Most smokers seem to adhere to “no smoking” policies and signage, but general tobacco-free enforcement appears limited.

☐ **There is a lack of a specific, comprehensive, and collaborative approach to addressing youth tobacco use.**

Initiatives that focus specifically on youth tobacco prevention in the county or school districts appear limited and are focused broadly on all substances, which dilute the risk of tobacco use. Additionally, it does not appear that schools, youth-serving, and faith-based organizations are working jointly to implement prevention efforts.

☐ **Local capacity and funding are limited.**

There is no known locally operated tobacco-cessation program other than what is offered through Quitline. Locally, there are a limited number of trained professionals who can provide assistance to implement comprehensive tobacco prevention and control initiatives, especially policy-related efforts. All interviewees identified lack of funding and staffing as limitations, especially because so many local public-health resources have been dedicated to the COVID-19 response. Additionally, compared to other states, Washington dedicates a very small percentage of the Tobacco Settlement funding to tobacco cessation and prevention.

☐ **There has been a rise in vaping among youth.**

Most of the stakeholders interviewed commented that it appears youth are vaping more openly without any constraint. Additionally, there are many misconceptions about the health benefits of switching from cigarettes to vaping.

Opportunities

☐ **Work with local higher-education campuses to promote and expand smoke-free campus programming.**

Work closely with higher-education campuses in the enhancement of current campus-wide policy, including options for enforcement and alignment with the Tobacco-free College Campus initiative.

☐ **Implement voluntary tobacco-free zones in the central business districts.**

Voluntary tobacco-free zones or corridors in the central business district could create healthier destinations. While this would significantly increase smoke-free spaces, it could face pushback from some local businesses and community members.

☐ **Develop a smoke-free event-permitting policy.**

A smoke-free event-permitting policy would require events within either city to be promoted and enforced as smoke-free by the sponsoring organization.

☐ **Enhance the wellness policies for both school districts.**

An enhanced school district wellness policy in both Walla Walla and College Place could explicitly identify tobacco-prevention strategies, including youth-led activities and enhanced tobacco education and cessation efforts. It is important to ensure that policies addressing youth substance use adhere to national best practices and avoid punitive responses.

☐ **Involve local non-profit, for-profit, and faith-based organizations.**

The Walla Walla Valley has many influential organizations that could provide support through either prevention or cessation services and could formalize tobacco policies specific to their settings.

☐ **Restaurants and bars could offer smoke-free outdoor seating.**

Local restaurants and bars could expand smoke-free spaces and include outdoor patio areas and other adjacent spaces.

■ Collaborate with local healthcare partners.

While local healthcare systems' campuses are tobacco free, they could implement and/or promote tobacco-free campuses and support improved staff and patient education and referral.

■ Support youth-led initiatives.

The communities can implement youth-driven initiatives and partner with youth-serving organizations to engage youth in peer-to-peer education and advocacy.

Conclusion

Although the state-level preemption complicates and limits the ability of local governments in the Walla Walla Valley to address tobacco use throughout the community, Walla Walla and College Place are eager partners and are prepared to come together to prioritize a comprehensive tobacco-free initiative. The level of partnership between organizations in the Valley along with a shift toward comprehensive behavioral health approaches toward youth tobacco use are promising opportunities that will strengthen the Valley's ability to support smoke-free environments.

A detailed tobacco policy report highlighting the findings of the discovery process is included in the appendix. See full report for citations.



Individual Engagement

By making changes to personal habits and surroundings, individuals can improve their well-being, make healthier choices more accessible, and thereby enjoy an increased quality of life.

Through Blue Zones Project, there are a variety of actions individuals can take, ranging from independent activities like the Blue Zones Project Personal Pledge and the Power 9 principles to group activities like Walking or Potluck Moais and Purpose Workshops.

Research suggests that for an organization or community to change, at least 15 percent of the population must be actively practicing and promoting an idea. This is known as “tipping point” theory. Blue Zones Project will strive to engage at least 15 percent of Walla Walla Valley residents to actively improve their well-being, but we will not stop there. We hope to reach the entire community with communication strategies. In some Blue Zones Communities more than 90 percent of residents are actively participating in or aware of Blue Zones Project. Success is highly dependent on engaging the community at large, including individuals of all ethnicities and socioeconomic backgrounds.

During the Foundation and Planning Phase, the Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley team had the opportunity to meet with community members representing civic and non-profit groups, the business community, restaurant industry, wine industry, healthcare providers, city government, and media outlets. Through individual meetings, we identified the following strengths, challenges, and opportunities for individual engagement. Appendix B has a list of all individuals and organizations engaged.

Strengths

✓ **A rich heritage of non-profits, civic organizations, and local foundations exists.**

The Walla Walla Valley benefits from a network of non-profit and civic organizations as well as local foundations focused on initiatives and service. There are 150 or more organizations in Walla Walla and College Place working on positive community change, many of which align with Blue Zones Project goals. Creating stronger social connections is an emphasis of neighborhood-engagement programs led by Commitment to Community of the Blue Mountain Action Council and the City of Walla Walla, as well as the Walla Walla Valley Disability Network. Healthy eating is a focus of The Star Project's work with clients and at the after-school and summer program at Valle Lindo run by the Children's Home Society. Volunteering is an emphasis at various organizations, including Blue Mountain Humane Society, Exchange Club of Walla Walla, and the Walla Walla Sunrise and Noon Rotary Clubs. Many organizations have well-developed networks of communication with residents and volunteers. Blue Zones Project will benefit from partnering with local non-profits and civic organizations to ensure the Project's individual engagement activities are made available to everyone in the community.

✓ **Strong support from community leaders and key influencers.**

Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley has strong support from College Place and Walla Walla city staff, civic leadership, and local school districts. Many of these individuals were involved in the initial site visit and maintained momentum until the Project was officially announced. Key leaders are also serving on the steering and leadership committees and as influencers.

✓ **Multiple local activities and events create opportunities to engage the community in Blue Zones Project.**

Aside from the pandemic, a full calendar of local events and activities provides opportunities for connection to individuals and families in the Walla Walla Valley. These include youth and adult sports leagues, fitness programs run by the YMCA, outdoor seating areas provided by the city, and online lectures offered by our colleges and local library. The Valley is home to multiple events that appeal to a diverse population, including farmers markets, parades, rodeos, national night out, movie nights, seasonal wine tasting weekends, Walla Walla Sweets baseball, sports tournaments, Dios de los Muertos Festival, Sweet Onion Festival, 4th of July in the Park, and a Renaissance Faire. Much of the population lives within 10 minutes of the downtown centers of Walla Walla and College Place, fostering participation at community events at parks and other natural gathering spaces within the cities.

✓ **Strong support for Blue Zones Project from local universities and the community college.**

Local colleges, including Whitman College, Walla Walla University (WWU), and Walla Walla Community College, bring thousands of students to Walla Walla Valley each year. These schools strive to connect their student communities with meaningful learning experiences that encourage students to volunteer, share talents, explore interests, respond to community needs, and become active citizens. Whitman College⁷ partners with over 100 non-profit agencies in Walla Walla. One of the core themes at WWU is, Generosity in Service. This theme is lived out through WWU's Center for Humanitarian Engagement (CHE), which works to build long-term relationships within the community and connects students with specific skills with the needs of local and global organizations. CHE⁸ offers numerous events that promote a culture of volunteering and giving back. For example, every weekend throughout the academic year, the university hosts Community Action and Relief Experience (C.A.R.E) weekends, which are 1–2-hour service opportunities. Further, twice a year, an entire day is dedicated to bring students, faculty, and staff together to complete service projects for local organizations and private residents in need. There is great opportunity for Blue Zones Project to partner and build on the work already being done at local colleges.

✓ **Walla Walla Valley residents take pride in the community and helping each other.**

When called to action, residents and agencies respond to help. The community is known for coming together to get things done. This sense of pride and giving back is evidenced

by the large number of aligned community initiatives that support well-being, such as the Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan, the Community Health Improvement Plan, and the Mill Creek Coalition. Another example of civic engagement are the COVID-19 vaccination events that are run in partnership with the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health, Providence St. Mary Medical Center, and Walla Walla University. Each event is staffed by 300 volunteers, with a 600-person volunteer waiting list.

Challenges

❑ Significant portions of the community experience barriers to participation in wellness programming or events because of language barriers, disability, food and housing insecurity, transportation, stigmatization, and trust.

To ensure equitable access to Blue Zones Project programs, initiatives, and events, the local team will need to address barriers. Some barriers include language access, scheduling programming at trusted locations supported by public transportation or within at-risk neighborhoods, and offering childcare and a meal to support financially stressed families. Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley also needs to build trust with historically marginalized population groups by partnering with trusted organizations and tailoring programs to meet needs. Blue Zones Project will need to create welcoming spaces that overcome stigmatization felt by families with individuals who have disabilities, lack legal papers, or have an incarceration history.

❑ Local communications channels are limited.

The online newspaper and local radio stations are only offered in English. Non-English-speaking residents resort to regional resources that may not have local information. Also, there is not a comprehensive community calendar where residents can learn about community events or volunteer opportunities. There are many senior residential-living or assisted-living facilities in Walla Walla and College Place, but there are not many programs that support intergenerational socialization or volunteering.

❑ People are suffering emotional and psychological effects of being isolated and disengaged due to COVID-19.

Isolation is amplified among community members who lack access to reliable internet or the technological sophistication to engage on virtual platforms. Blue Zones Project implementation during the pandemic may limit participation in activities and events. Creativity will be needed to engage the breadth of the population in the Valley.

❑ Busy schedules leave little space for Blue Zones Project values like downshifting and creating healthy meals.

Many people are too engaged and are trapped in the culture of doing more and being the best. Individuals and families are so busy, they don't have time to downshift or make and eat a healthy meal together. The challenge will be to make slowing down and taking care of yourself and your family a priority. Blue Zones Project will have to create opportunities to educate about the health value of downshifting and reassure this group that less may really be more.

Opportunities

❑ Front load health equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Walla Walla Valley Project Blueprint.

At a time when some communities within the Walla Walla Valley are disproportionately feeling the impact of the pandemic, Blue Zones Project has the opportunity to facilitate well-being for all by prioritizing access to programming among at-risk populations. This includes providing translation, childcare, meals, and access to public transportation for Blue Zones Project events or committee meetings. The local team can also create targeted programming schedules mindful of seasonal earning patterns and events where people who have historically experienced discrimination feel wanted and are able to participate.

❑ Partner with trusted non-profits to provide support for existing well-being programs and initiatives.

Trusted community partners who offer programs that support wellness could benefit from Blue Zones Project support and expertise. Partnering to enhance existing programs and initiatives could scale capacity and build bridges in communities. For example, STAR annually works with 100 recently incarcerated individuals and their families during the reentry process. These individuals often suffer from a protracted period of a sedentary lifestyle and poor nutrition while incarcerated and would benefit from education and support in creating healthy habits and learning to cook in a healthy way while on food assistance. During focus groups and meetings with individuals, the local team explored numerous ways Blue Zones Project can partner with local organizations to scale existing efforts by offering programming support, including cooking demos, Walking and Potluck Moais, and other educational wellness programming.

❑ Communicate in English and Spanish to engage everyone in the community, and partner with trusted neighborhood engagement programs.

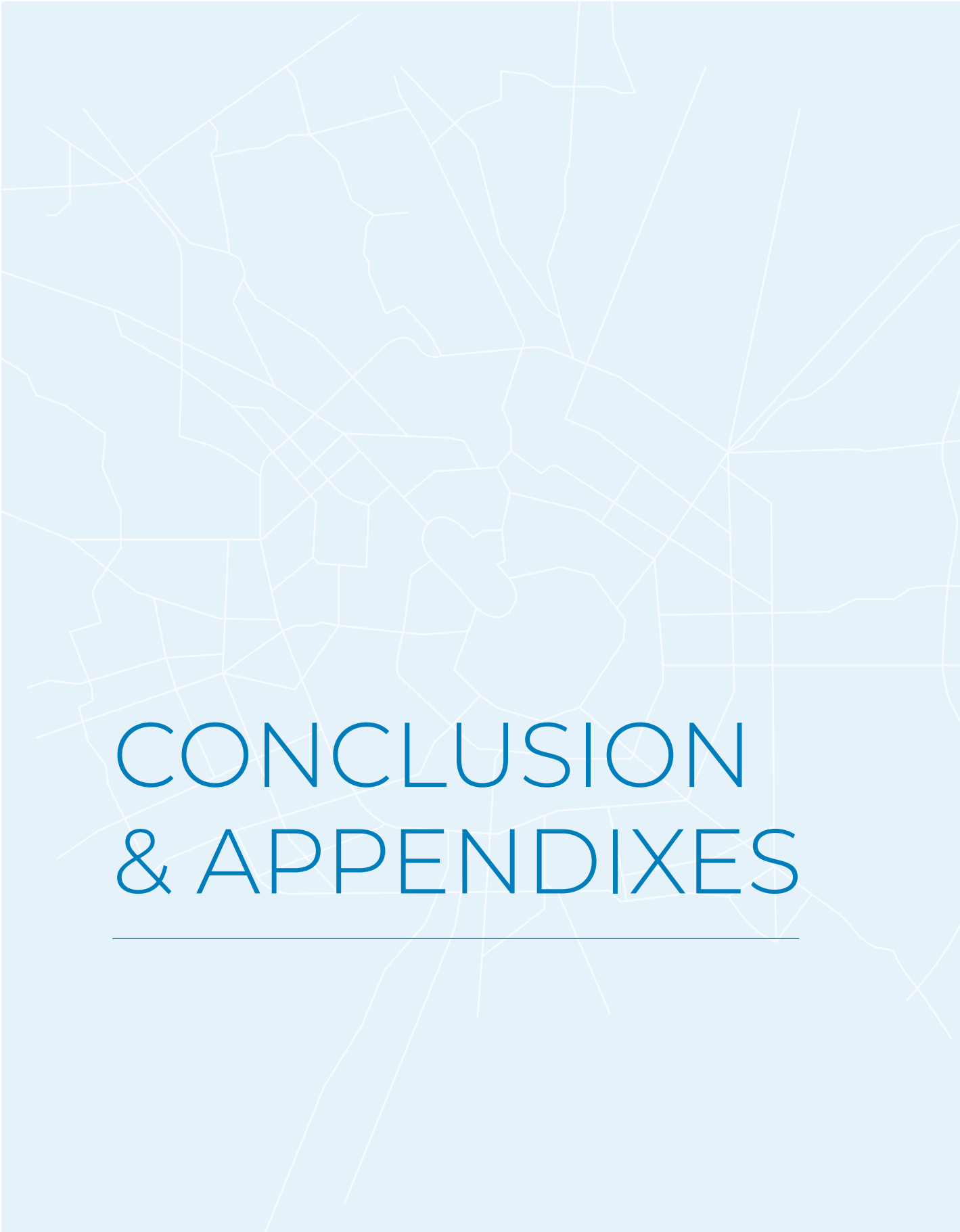
With 22.27 percent of the population reporting as Hispanic or Latino (per U.S. Census Bureau Data, 2019), communicating in English and Spanish in a multi-channel approach is paramount to successfully informing all community members about Blue Zones Project. Fortunately for the Walla Walla Valley, dual programming is becoming the norm. Partnering with organizations such as Commitment to Community and Community Council, who offer programming and events in English and Spanish, will help the Project scale engagement. Additionally, identifying and providing compensation to strategic trusted voices who help build bridges in local Spanish-language communities will be key to the Project's success. Prioritizing intern(s) of color who speak Spanish will help the local team connect all members of the community to Blue Zones Project engagement opportunities.

❑ Create events that feel safe and provide points of connection for individuals as the community emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

Community leaders expressed an increased desire to have wellness programming that feels safe and helps people connect. Blue Zones Project can help engage people through thoughtful wellness programs and events. The timeliness of these events will meet felt needs and counter the isolation experienced by many during COVID-19.

❑ Create community gardens.

Creating community gardens, including targeting at-risk neighborhoods, could build points of community connection, increase food access and security, and provide opportunities to downshift and move naturally. Community gardens also create opportunities for other well-being programming, including cooking demos, sharing plant-based recipes, and Moais. Local churches in neighborhoods might be willing to provide the land and host programming, and the Walla Walla Public Library offers a seed bank, educational materials, and space for programming. Further, the City of College Place recently donated land to establish a community garden in the City of College Place adjacent to City Hall.



CONCLUSION & APPENDIXES

Conclusion

The Walla Walla Valley began its journey to becoming a Blue Zones Project demonstration community in the fall of 2017 through a competitive selection process. Since that time, the community has been committed to spreading awareness of the Project and gaining leadership support. Organizations such as the cities of Walla Walla and College Place, Walla Walla University, Walla Walla and College Place Public Schools, Blue Mountain Action Council, Whitman College, and the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health have been instrumental in identifying strengths, challenges, and opportunities to well-being improvement throughout the Walla Walla Valley.

During the Foundation and Planning Phase, the Blue Zones Project team was impressed with current initiatives in the Walla Walla Valley that are focused on improving the health and well-being of residents and ensuring equity is at the forefront of all planning and implementation efforts. There is much community pride and commitment to making the Walla Walla Valley a healthier, happier community.



Appendix A:

Community Demographics

Population and Demographics

ZIP CODE	COMMUNITY	POPULATION
99362	Walla Walla, WA	32,793
99324	College Place, WA	9,182

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American FactFinder¹³

Population Distribution for Walla Walla

	Population Walla Walla (99362)	Percent	Population College Place (99324)	Percent
Total population	32,793	100.0	9,182	100.0
One race	31,098		8,772	95.5
White	26,962	82.2	7,723	84.1
Black or African American	658	2.0	139	1.5
American Indian and Alaska Native	212	.6	98	1.1
Asian	755	2.3	195	2.1
Asian Indian	38	0.1	0	0.0
Chinese	291	0.9	16	0.2
Filipino	180	0.5	75	0.8
Japanese	48	0.1	0	0.0
Korean	117	0.4	0	0.0
Vietnamese	45	0.1	9	0.1
Other Asian	36	0.1	95	1.0
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	52	0.2	47	0.5
Native Hawaiian	36	0.1	16	0.2
Other Pacific Islander	16	0.0	30	0.3
Some other race	2,459	7.5	570	6.2
Two or More Races	1,695	5.2	410	4.5
White and Black or African American	165	0.5	180	2.0

	Population Walla Walla (99362)	Percent	Population College Place (99324)	Percent
White and American Indian and Alaska Native	728	2.2	62	0.7
White and Asian	275	0.8	105	1.1
Black or African American and American Indian and Alaska Native	75	0.2	6	0.1
Hispanic or Latino (of any race)	7,606	23.2	1,742	19.0
Mexican	6,832	20.8	1,182	12.9
Puerto Rican	87	0.3	31	0.3
Cuban	101	0.3	79	0.9
Other Hispanic or Latino	586	1.8	450	4.9

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American FactFinder, 2019 Demographic Profile Data

Population Age and Gender for Population

	Population Walla Walla (99362)	Percent	Population College Place (99324)	Percent
Male	16,928	51.6	4,490	48.9
Female	15,865	48.4	4,692	51.1
Under 5 years	1,789	5.5	449	4.9
5 to 9 years	1,843	5.6	493	5.4
10 to 14 years	1,805	5.5	618	6.7
15 to 19 years	2,785	8.5	791	8.6
20 to 24 years	3,140	9.36	1,208	13.2
25 to 34 years	4,702	14.3	1,033	11.3
35 to 54 years	3,937	12.0	1,036	11.3
55 to 59 years	2,048	6.2	981	10.7
60 to 64 years	1,529	4.7	471	5.1
65 to 74 years	2,914	8.9	844	9.2
75 to 84 years	1,559	4.8	456	5.0
85 years and over	1,076	3.3	322	3.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American FactFinder, 2019 Demographic Profile Data

Median Age

The median age for 99362 is **35.7**, 99324 is **35.0**.

	Population Walla Walla (99362)	Percent	Population College Place (99324)	Percent
16 years and older	26,901	82.0	14,325	36.9
18 years and older	26,2387	80.0	13,614	35.1
21 years and older	23,752	72.4	12,730	32.8
62 years and older	6,509	19.8	1,768	4.6
65 years and older	5,549	16.9	1,333	3.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau. (2019). American FactFinder, 2019 Demographic Profile Data

Appendix B: Foundation and Planning Phase Participants

Focus Group Attendees:

- Community Policy: 104 (includes built environment and food policy; tobacco discovery was conducted through one-on-one meetings)
- Schools: 36
- Worksites: 24
- Restaurant/Grocery Stores: 0 (all conducted through one-on-one meetings)
- Individual Engagement (Faith-based, Civic, and Non-Profit): 66
- Hispanic Leadership Individuals: 8

One-on-One Meetings:

- Pat Ray, CEO, Port of Walla Walla
- Dr. John McVay, President, Walla Walla University
- Dr. Wade Smith, Superintendent, Walla Walla Public Schools
- James Fry, Superintendent, College Place Public Schools
- Kyle Tarbet, Executive Director, Chamber of Commerce
- Katherine Witherington, Executive Director, Downtown Foundation
- Adam Keats, Vice President, Banner Bank; Chair, Chamber of Commerce
- Kathy Covy, CEO, Blue Mountain Action Council
- Norman Thiel, Executive Director, SonBridge Community Center
- Susan Blackburn, CEO, Providence St. Mary Medical Center
- Gabriela Trevino, Administrator, Family Medical Center
- Kathy Murray, President, Whitman College
- Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer, Executive Director, Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Ki Bealey, Public Works Director, City of Walla Walla
- Nabil Shawa, City Manager, City of Walla Walla
- Elizabeth Chamberlain, Deputy City Manager, City of Walla Walla
- Mike Rizzitiello, City Administrator, City of College Place

- Tony Garcia, Public Works Director, Walla Walla County
- Angie Peters, General Manager, Valley Transit
- Nadine Steckline, Director of Student Life, Walla Walla Community College; Chair, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Board for City of College Place
- Jeff Mathias, Food Bank Director, Blue Mountain Action Council
- Rey Cooley, Farm to School Program Manager, Sustainable Living Center
- Pamela Milleson, Director, Walla Walla Public Schools Nutrition Services
- Jennifer Kleffner, Owner, Miles Away Farm / Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition
- Mary Campbell, Executive Director, Walla Walla Community Council
- Andy Coleman, Parks and Recreation Director, City of Walla Walla
- Amy Osterman, Epidemiologist, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
- Krista Timm, Behavior Health Program Specialist/Regional Youth Marijuana Prevention Program, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
- Stacia Wasmundt, Youth Tobacco Prevention Coordinator/Commercial Tobacco Prevention Program (CTPP) & Marijuana Prevention and Education Program (MPEP), Washington State Department of Health
- Malia Lewis, Campus Sexual Assault Victims Advocate, YWCA Walla Walla, previous Recovery Support Ally & Advocate for Trilogy Recovery Community
- Vanessa McCollum, Public Health Educator, Benton-Franklin Health District

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Endnotes

- 1 Walla Walla County. (2018). Walla Walla County Community Health Report. Retrieved February 17, 2021 from https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/Health/Assessment/Walla%20Walla%202018%20CHNA.pdf
- 2 https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/Health/Assessment/Walla%20Walla%202018%20CHNA.pdf
- 3 https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/Health/Assessment/Walla%20Walla%202018%20CHNA.pdf
- 4 https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/Health/Assessment/Walla%20Walla%202018%20CHNA.pdf
- 5 Walla Walla County Community Health Needs Assessment. (2018). Retrieved at https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/bmrchp/chna_and_chip.php
- 6 https://res.cloudinary.com/dpmykpsih/image/upload/ww-community-council-site-354/media/1125/affordable-housing-study-report_2019.pdf
- 7 <https://www.whitman.edu/after-whitman/student-engagement-center>
- 8 <https://www.wallawalla.edu/campus-life/center-for-humanitarian-engagement/>

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BLUE ZONES PROJECT®

**WALLA WALLA VALLEY WASHINGTON
FOOD POLICY
DISCOVERY REPORT
MARCH 2021**

Nadja Berneche, MPP, MSW

Margaret Adamek, PhD

BLUE ZONES FOOD POLICY

WHAT IS BLUE ZONES FOOD POLICY WORK?

Only 20% of our health is related to genetics; at least 70% can be managed through behaviors and the design of our community's environment.¹ A local food environment is the most important determinant of whether or not a resident will be overweight or face diet-related chronic diseases. By designing community environments that facilitate healthy eating, we can meaningfully improve the health of residents. Policy and systems changes, as well as shifts to community infrastructure, are proven ways to move the dial on health outcomes.

For Blue Zones Project communities, food policy offers an evidence-based means to make changes in their anchor institutions (such as schools, hospitals, parks, etc.) and/or in their local units of government. These policy changes are designed to ensure that residents have reliable access to affordable, healthy food in the places they spend time.

WHAT'S INVOLVED IN A BLUE ZONES FOOD POLICY DISCOVERY PROCESS?

For Blue Zones Project communities to select the right portfolio of food policy and systems changes that best suits them and meets their needs, the Food Policy Discovery process provides important data and insights to guide community decision-making. This Food Policy Discovery Report is based on multi-method research, which includes:

- **Hear from People** – Key informant interviews and focus groups with leaders collaboratively identified by the Blue Zones National Food Policy Expert and Food Policy Research team, in partnership with local Blue Zones staff
- **Explore the Community** – Virtual meetings with local leadership, as well as discussions with relevant organizations and groups across multiple sectors (such as public health, hunger relief, institutional foodservice, restaurants and food retail, elected and appointed local officials, Extension, agriculture, and more)
- **Review What's Known** – Background research, including review of federal, state and local datasets and relevant reports (such as Community Health Needs Assessment, local food systems publications, etc.)

The Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley *Food Policy Discovery* assessment focused on four domains:

Food Skills – To what extent and how does the community acquire the skills they need to prepare healthy food?

¹ Herskind AM, McGue M, Holm NV, Sørensen TI, Harvald B, Vaupel JW. The heritability of human longevity: a population-based study of 2872 Danish twin pairs born 1870-1900. *Hum Genet.* 1996 Mar;97(3):319-23. doi: 10.1007/BF02185763. PMID: 8786073.

Food Environments – To what extent are healthy and unhealthy options available in the places where people spend most of their time (work, schools, community settings, etc.)?

Food Culture – To what extent does the community have a robust local food culture and identity?

Food Infrastructure – How extensive and sustainable is the community’s infrastructure for gardening; farmers markets; local food production, aggregation, and distribution; and hunger relief?

Data and insights about these four domains generated through the Discovery process form the basis for describing the community’s food system, as well as related issues and opportunities. This report conveys these findings, accompanied by a series of potential policy and systems change options for the community to consider as part of its “Design” process.

DISCOVERY FINDINGS

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

In the Southeastern region of Washington state only six miles north of the Oregon border, the city of Walla Walla is the county seat and largest town in Walla Walla County, with a population of 32,793.¹ College Place, WA, the town next door and second largest town in the county, has a population of 9,317.² The entire county, including the rural outlying areas, has a population of 60,922.³ The Walla Walla Valley has become a noted tourism, agricultural and cultural center in the southeastern part of the state. A moderate climate, environmental beauty and cultural activities attract tourists to the area.

How can it be that the Walla Walla Valley grows more fresh fruits and vegetables than almost any other place in the United States⁴, yet its population struggles with chronic diet-related disease at the same or higher rates than the rest of Washington? The answer, it turns out, is complicated. In order to identify a path toward health and well-being for Walla Walla and College Place, we must have a robust understanding the current context and issues.

The basic story we are going to tell is one that is well known to Walla Walla Valley residents and stakeholders and plays out in agricultural communities around the country. The agriculturally productive area of the Walla Walla Valley attracts a base of hard-working people who come to make a living in the fields. The fruits of agricultural labor have produced a rich food and wine culture and robust agricultural economy, drawing tourists and new residents attracted by all the region has to offer.

Several national “best of” lists have consistently ranked Walla Walla and the surrounding area among top places to retire and to visit.^{5,6} Along with other small communities which have received national notoriety, changes brought by heavy tourism and population growth present a double-edged sword. Local businesses benefit from increased economic revenue but increases in costs of living and the variability of a tourism economy can affect the quality of life for which the community became noteworthy.

Walla Walla and College Place offer a variety of amenities and economic assets for the entire region. Hip downtown Walla Walla is full of local shops, wine tasting rooms and popular chef-run, farm-to-table restaurants. The community also features a vibrant local music and arts

² United States Census. Retrieved at <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/wallawallacountywashington/PST045219>.

³ United States Census. Retrieved at <https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/data/summary-file.html>.

⁴ Statista. Top 10 U.S. states based on production of principal fresh and processing market vegetables in 2020 (in 1,000 cwt). Retrieved at <https://www.statista.com/statistics/192727/top-10-us-states-by-production-of-fresh-market-vegetables/>.

⁵ CNN. (2006). The Best Places to Retire. 2006. Retrieved at https://money.cnn.com/popups/2006/moneymag/bpretire_2006/frame1.exclude.html.

⁶ Forbes. (2016). The Best Places to Retire in 2016. Retrieved at <https://www.forbes.com/places/wa/walla-walla/?sh=2699ce4d2f9e>.

community, and the area has year-round outdoor recreation activities. People come to Walla Walla because it is down-to-earth with amenities they enjoy.⁷ Whitman College, a four-year liberal arts institution with nationally recognized programs, is located in the heart of Walla Walla.

The region is accustomed to strategic, productive collaboration among organizations and leaders to advance important initiatives for the well-being of the community. Supportive collaboration and collegial interaction among local public health, WSU Extension and other programs provide a solid foundation for a Blue Zones Project in Walla Walla Valley.

The Discovery process has yielded great examples from around Walla Walla and College Place that help the community stay healthy and connected to food, including community gardens, farmers markets, grocery stores and restaurants serving up healthy options. Many residents still grow, preserve and cook their own food. At the same time, stakeholders recognize that to succeed in improving the health and well-being for all residents, they will need to use all the mechanisms available from public policy, investment, other funding sources, agricultural technology, business strategy, nonprofits, community engagement and education.

Walla Walla Valley Context

Walla Walla and College Place residents are primarily white (75%), with a sizeable Latinx community (21%). There is a small African American community (2%), with a similarly sized multiracial population (2%). Roughly 20% of the population speak a language other than English at home, and 16% of that is Spanish. Of the total residents, 16% have some sort of disability, about 4% higher than the national average. Walla Walla County's population of residents 65 years and older comprise 18% of the total, compared to 15% for the state.⁸ The homeownership rate is approximately 64%.⁹

In the United States, the vast majority of agricultural workers are of Central or South American descent. In the Walla Walla Valley, most (90%) of the 19,000 farmworkers¹⁰ were born and raised in Mexico. Many of these workers have legal immigration status, though some do not. Despite the image of the transient single farmworkers, interviews confirm that, in this region, three-quarters of farmworkers have been in the United States for 15 years or more, many are married with US-born children living in the household and fewer than a quarter leave the tri-county area (Benton, Franklin, and Walla Walla Counties) to work elsewhere each year. Increasingly, farmworkers and their families are longtime residents, not visitors.¹¹

⁷ Isle, R. (2019). Travel and Leisure. Why wine lovers should visit this tiny rural Washington town. Retrieved at <https://www.travelandleisure.com/food-drink/wine/walla-walla-washington-wine-region>.

⁸ United States Census. 2017. Retrieved at <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/profile?g=0600000US5307193664>.

⁹ Data USA. Accessed Nov. 30, 2020. Retrieved at <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/walla-walla-county-wa>.

¹⁰ Migration Policy Institute. Unauthorized Immigrant Population. Retrieved at <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/unauthorized-immigrant-population/county/53900>.

¹¹ Washington Farmworker Housing Trust. (2011). Walla Walla County farmworker housing report. Retrieved at https://static1.squarespace.com/static/58178a6cbe659444e1f37890/t/588d404cd1758e87f05d97b4/1485652048585/WW_HousingReport.pdf.

The Walla Walla Immigrant Rights Coalition reminds us that these workers and their families often live in the shadows due to a combination of factors, such as their low income, real or perceived immigration status and workplace conditions and rights.¹² As such, in intensive agricultural regions like the Walla Walla Valley, this significant portion of the population has not traditionally been engaged, prioritized or considered in the policy making and planning processes, and they live in cautious balance with the institutions that surround them.

The entire community faces a number of circumstances, which public health calls the ‘social determinants of health,’ that shape—or sometimes hinder—their opportunity to achieve optimal health and well-being. Just a few include a high cost of living, low wages, a housing shortage, overcrowding, immigration status, access to healthcare, and social and government services. One of the most significant social determinants is housing. The high cost of housing places enormous pressure on families to make decisions with limited time, money, energy and forethought. More often than not, these decisions meet immediate needs but do not support long-term health.

Given these various pressures and the prevailing U.S. American cultural norms that perpetuate a preference for food that is convenient, cheap and fast, a particular type of food environment takes shape. As communities around the country are learning, this food environment and food culture do not support health. Convenient, affordable foods tend to be calorie-dense and nutritionally poor. Healthful options tend to be more available to some people than others, with poor access to healthy food often resulting from these social determinants. Sadly, many people in the Walla Walla Valley may grow, cook or serve healthy food for a living, but they can’t access it themselves.

ECONOMIC SNAPSHOT

What Is the Economy Like? – Considering its size and isolation, the Walla Walla area economy has a diverse industrial makeup. The five largest sectors are agriculture, healthcare, manufacturing, retail trade and government services, which constitute over 71% of total employment.

With over 181 wineries located in the valley, the Walla Walla Valley has become a wine destination and important viticulture area. Though the economy works for many, the tourism and agriculture sectors provide many challenges. Those jobs are often seasonal, low-wage and without benefits or other employment protections. Local agriculture is the fourth largest industry, growing by nearly 1% each year and representing 13% of all employment. It is, however, highly seasonal and volatile from year to year. The average annual wage in agriculture was \$31,496, mainly due to the seasonality of agricultural activities.¹³

¹² Stakeholder interview.

¹³ Washington State Employment Security Department. Quick Facts. Retrieved at <https://esd.wa.gov/labormarketinfo/county-profiles/walla-walla>.

According to the [US Census of Agriculture](#), there are 903 farms in Walla Walla County. There are 1567 producers (1531 are white), with 432 who are new or beginning farmers. Ninety-three percent of these operations are family-owned farms. The majority of crops grown by market value are fruits, tree nuts and berries; grains, oilseeds, dried peas and beans; and vegetables. Cattle, hogs, sheep and hen operations are also a feature of the agricultural economy. Ten percent of area farms sell directly to consumers; only 1% of farms produce organically grown items.¹⁴

Poverty - Poverty is an issue in the Walla Walla Valley, with many people struggling to meet basic needs including young, single mothers, farmworkers, seniors and those residing in remote rural areas who may access food or services in Walla Walla. The Walla Walla County Community Health Need Assessment (2017) notes, “there is a strong and consistent link between poverty and poor health outcomes both globally and within Walla Walla County. Due to cultural and social barriers, the cost of treatment, fewer education opportunities, poor living conditions, and many other factors, those living in poverty often have significantly worse health outcomes and shorter lifespans.”¹⁵

There are significant wealth disparities in Walla Walla and College Place. Census data (2017) show median annual income ranges widely, from \$36,979 in the western downtown area of Walla Walla (substantially lower than the US median annual income of \$60,336) to \$81,961 in the eastern part of Walla Walla. College Place reports a median income of \$47,512, also below the US average.

Women fare worse in the economy in Walla Walla and College Place than men do, earning a median income of \$40,872. This is \$3,000 lower than the national average for women and \$16,000 lower than men in Walla Walla and College Place.⁵ Nearly 14% of families and 22% of children live below the poverty line.¹⁶ Eight percent lack health coverage of any kind.⁶

The extent of the housing cost burden in Walla Walla County leaves 15% of all families with little money for other basic necessities such as food and medical care.¹⁷ A tri-county report reveals that nearly 40% of farmworkers in Walla Walla and neighboring Benton and Franklin Counties are cost-burdened, and 20% are severely cost-burdened, paying more than 50% of their income for housing. These cost-burdened families are 23% more likely than those paying proportionately less of their income for housing to encounter difficulties purchasing food.¹⁸ The children of low-income renter families who live in unaffordable housing are also more likely to

¹⁴ USDA Agriculture Census of Walla Walla County. 2017. Retrieved at

https://www.nass.usda.gov/Publications/AgCensus/2017/Online_Resources/County_Profiles/Washington/cp53071.pdf.

¹⁵ Walla Walla County Department of Community Health. (2017). Walla Walla County Community Health Needs Assessment.

Retrieved at https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/Health/Assessment/Walla%20Walla%202018%20CHNA.pdf.

¹⁶ County Health Rankings. (2017). Healthy Lifestyles in Walla Walla County, Washington. Retrieved at

www.countyhealthrankings.org.

¹⁷ County Health Rankings. (2017) Retrieved at

<https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/washington/2020/measure/factors/154/data>.

¹⁸ Barbara J. Lipman, Something's Gotta Give: Working Families and the Cost of Housing (2005), p.8.

experience malnutrition and underdevelopment than those of comparable families receiving housing assistance.¹⁹

A lack of consistent, reliable transportation is also a challenge for many households. In Walla Walla, people commute only an average of 15 minutes from their home, primarily by car or carpool (80%). Only 1% of workers use public transportation to travel to work.²⁰ Those interviewed report that, without a personal vehicle, getting to the grocery store or to food pantries is a challenge. Many residents without vehicles depend on friends or family to take them to get groceries as it is challenging to travel on public transportation with bags of groceries. Because of the current COVID-19 pandemic, people are shopping less to minimize exposure, but they are purchasing more in a single trip. This makes those without vehicles even more reliant on family and friends who offer rides.²¹

Like the rest of the country, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant effect on the economy and the health and well-being of Walla Walla County. As of early February, 2021, approximately 4,686 positive cases had been confirmed in Walla Walla County.²² Unemployment in the county began rising from 4.5% in March 2020, peaking at 12.2% the following month when stay-at-home orders were in place, and falling to 6.5% in December 2020.²³ Economic hardships resulting from the pandemic, compounded by isolation and lack of access to services, have made healthy eating even more difficult during this period, particularly for those who were already under-resourced.

¹⁹ Alan Meyers, et al, Subsidized Housing and Children's Nutritional Status (2005),p.1.

²⁰ Data USA. Accessed Nov. 30, 2020. Retrieved at <https://datausa.io/profile/geo/walla-walla-county-wa>.

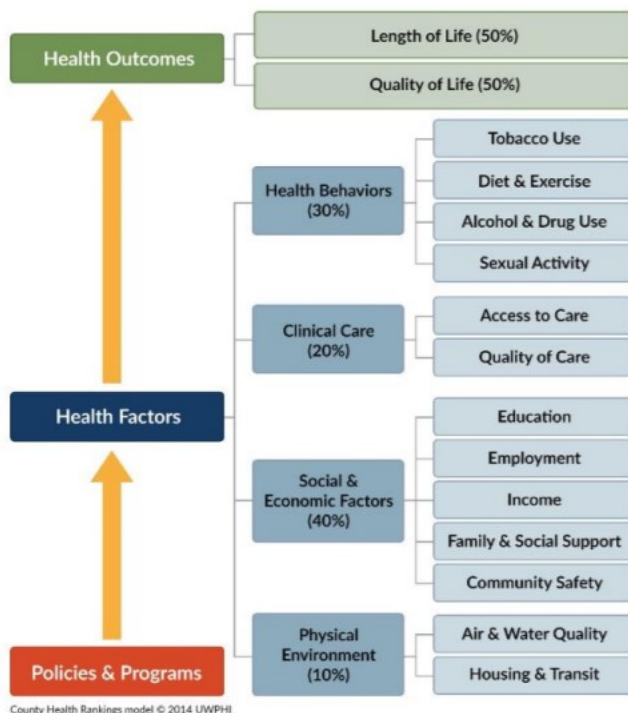
²¹ Stakeholder interview.

²² State of Washington. Retrieved at <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2021/us/walla-walla-washington-covid-cases.html>.

²³ Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Economic Research. Retrieved at <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/graph/?id=WAWALL1URN>.

HEALTH, FOOD INSECURITY, AND HUNGER RELIEF IN WALLA WALLA

Health – Walla Walla County is healthier overall than other Washington counties, according to the County Health Rankings program. The County Health Rankings program “lifts up actionable data, evidence, guidance, and stories for communities to make it easier for people to be healthy in their neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces,” measuring the health of nearly every county in the nation (based on the model below).²⁴



Walla Walla County ranks 18th of all 39 counties in *Health Outcomes* (which measure length and quality of life) and 10th in *Health Factors* (which includes the four domains of health behaviors, clinical care, social and economic factors, and physical environment). It ranks fifth in *Health Behaviors*. Notably, Walla Walla County ranks 33rd in physical environment, which includes the nutrition environment.¹⁰

There are additional troubling data that merit closer attention. Overweight and obesity rates pose significant health concerns for both children and adults. Based on self-reported heights and weights, Walla Walla County mirrors regional, state and national self-reported estimates, where roughly one in three children and two in three adults are overweight or obese. While

Key Finding | Numbers Don't Lie

Walla Walla Should Be Healthier Than It Is

A review of the health data around hunger, health and healthy eating, as well as interviews in the community, converge to produce a mixed picture. Economic factors, accessibility and convenience mean people are more likely to obtain and consume unhealthy options, from sweetened beverages to fast foods to lower rates of fruit and vegetable consumption.

Despite lower food insecurity rates than the statewide average, risk factors for diet-related chronic disease are higher than the statewide average.

Simply put, food policies that support a systemic way to foster healthy eating behaviors, such as fruit and vegetable consumption, and inhibit access to unhealthy, convenient foods and sweetened beverages are a recipe for better health in Walla Walla Valley.

The Blue Zones Project in Walla Walla Valley offers an unprecedented opportunity to redesign the food environments in the places people spend their time – at work, school and in the community.

²⁴ County Health Rankings and Roadmaps. Retrieved at https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/sites/default/files/media/document/CHR2020_WA_0.pdf.

Walla Walla County has a lower prevalence of obesity rates than the region, state and country, 12.8% of low-income preschoolers²⁵ and 37% of adults are obese, increasing slightly over the last five years.²⁶ Additionally, 11% of Walla Walla County residents have type II diabetes, compared with 9.8% for Washington as a whole.

Healthy Eating Behaviors

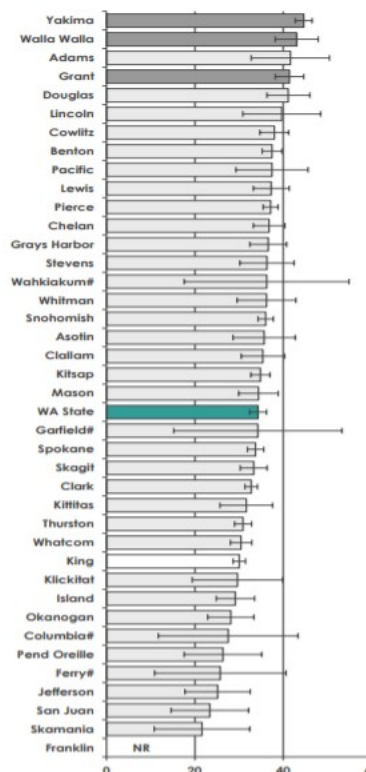
Fruit and vegetable consumption among Walla Walla County youth is lower than the rest of the state. Among tenth graders, the county ranks the second worst in vegetable consumption and thirteenth worst in fruit consumption in Washington state. Walla Walla County is also lower than state average for adults (and even worse for seniors) in daily fruit and vegetable consumption.²⁷

Sugar-sweetened beverages, including energy drinks and chocolate milk, are also a problem, particularly for youth and farmworkers, according to site visit interviewees.

Hunger – Food insecurity is an issue in the Walla Walla Valley, which research shows puts residents at greater risk for poor nutrition, obesity and diet-related health outcomes. This issue is not just about healthy habits; hunger is complicated. Lack of reliable access to nearby grocery; lack of access to reliable, affordable transportation; cost and quality of healthy items in low-income areas; overabundance of cheap, processed food options; a greater exposure to junk food marketing; and competing financial priorities of other basic needs such as housing and transportation are all factors that impact hunger.²⁸ Furthermore, unpredictable availability of food can lead to cycles of deprivation and overeating, accompanied by higher levels of stress, anxiety and depression that can induce metabolic changes.²⁴

Washington experiences an overall food insecurity rate of 11.5% for adults. Fortunately, Walla Walla County fares slightly better. In 2017, the county experienced an overall food insecurity

**Low Vegetable Consumption (<1 x/day),
10th Graders
Washington Counties
HYS, 2014 & 2016**



²⁵ Walla Walla County Community Health Needs Assessment. (2018). Retrieved at <http://WallaWallahealth.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/CHA-one-pager-for-BOH.pdf>.

²⁶ Walla Walla County Community Health Needs Assessment. (2018). Retrieved at https://www.co.walla-walla.wa.us/document_center/Health/Assessment/Walla%20Walla%202018%20CHNA.pdf.

²⁷ Washington Department of Health. (2018). Fruit and Vegetable Intake. Retrieved at <https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/1000/SHA-FruitandVegetableIntake.pdf>.

²⁸ Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), *Why Low Income and Food Insecure People are Vulnerable to Poor Nutrition and Obesity*. Retrieved at <http://frac.org/obesity-health/low-income-food-insecure-people-vulnerable-poor-nutrition-obesity>.

rate of 11.1% of the population.²⁹ Children fare more poorly, with 17.7 % of children experiencing food insecurity and 56% of children eligible for free or reduced school meals, compared to 46% statewide.³⁰ Stakeholders in the hunger relief sector report demand has at least quadrupled during COVID-19.³¹

Hunger Relief Resources – For the size of the region, the hunger relief sector is well-developed and uses best practices. The regional [Walla Walla Community Council](#), a nonpartisan, nongovernmental, diverse and inclusive organization, undertakes an annual study driven by community priorities using a specialized method. They focused their 2014 study process on hunger relief, which resulted in the publication of the [Improving Food Security Full Study Report](#) (2014)³² and included identification of key issues and associated recommended solutions for public transportation, social isolation, food deserts, lack of food skills and programmatic restrictions on frequency of hunger relief resource usage. The Community Council’s [Improving Food Security Implementation Report](#) (2017)³³ provided an extensive status review of the study’s goals and strategies (for a detailed summary of issues and solutions, see Appendix A).

A Feeding America affiliated entity, the *Blue Mountain Action Council (BMAC)* has played a key role in supporting the Community Council recommendations. BMAC supplies food to 40,000 clients in five counties through 18 partner organizations annually, including the eight food banks serving Walla Walla and College Place. BMAC distributes food obtained through multiple community food donation drives, gleaning projects, grocery rescue efforts (yielding 300,000 pounds of food per year) and multiple USDA hunger relief programs. Volunteers help SNAP-eligible residents across the county enroll in the SNAP program. BMAC has been advocating that hunger in the community be understood as a chronic problem rather than one requiring only short-term, emergency intervention.

Leaders in the hunger relief sector have removed many identified barriers to access, meeting greater specific dietary needs, adding client choice and establishing a system of congregational sites serving prepared breakfast, lunch and/or dinner several days each week. They have made efforts to create workforce opportunities in the food chain industry with food pantry clients, providing other wrap-around services designed to train for living wage jobs and lift people out of poverty. BMAC also offers an exemplary mobile food pantry program as a result of transportation gaps highlighted in the Community Council report. The organization has recently added a Gleaning Coordinator position and Food Systems VISTA volunteer, hoping that the added staff time will lead to further improvements.

²⁹ Live Stories. (2020). Retrieved at <https://www.livestories.com/statistics/hunger-in-washington/washington/walla-walla-county-food-insecurity>.

³⁰ Healthy Lifestyles in Walla Walla County, Washington. (2020). Retrieved at <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/washington/2020/rankings/walla-walla-county/factors/overall/snapshot>.

³¹ Stakeholder Interview.

³² Walla Walla Community Council (2014). Improving Food Insecurity Study Report. Retrieved at <https://res.cloudinary.com/dpmykpsih/image/upload/ww-community-council-site-354/media/1131/improving-food-security-study-report.pdf>.

³³ Walla Walla Community Council (2017). Food Insecurity Implementation Report, Retrieved at https://res.cloudinary.com/dpmykpsih/image/upload/ww-community-council-site-354/media/1027/food_insecurity_itf_final_report.pdf.

Yet, BMAC and its partner food pantries still find themselves stretched, especially with increased need from the COVID-19 pandemic. Food pantry directors report demand has quadrupled as a result of the pandemic. With tight budgets, food pantries cannot purchase all the healthy items they would like to distribute to their program participants. Cold storage and adequate equipment present additional challenges for some programs, which lack space and infrastructure needed to provide healthy options at the scale they would like to. BMAC is in the midst of a major renovation that expand their size and cold storage capacity by six times, but they still could use more room, even with the new facility.

Staff note other areas for improvement. Weekend or evening hours are not available at most food pantries. Transportation gaps continue to present challenges for clients. In one instance, an organization was successful in meeting the needs of 160 farmworker families who lacked transportation by delivering emergency food boxes directly to their housing. These deliveries have ended, and the families now find it difficult or impossible to access this source of food assistance.

At food pantries in general, food that requires preparation and cooking is less likely to be selected than food that does not require much preparation. Community Council surveys of food pantry staff (prior to the pandemic) report demographic trends regarding which foods will be selected when choice is offered: older clients and Latinx households are more likely to select whole foods (rice, grains, beans, etc.), while young white adults tend to choose processed foods (such as Hamburger Helper, macaroni and cheese, etc.). Staff attribute this trend to a cultural value of scratch cooking among Latinx families and a lack of cooking knowledge with younger, white clients. Parents, in particular, seem to lack knowledge about what to feed their children and often choose high-sugar foods because their children like to eat them.³⁴

Though the hunger relief sector has responded to a desire for cooking classes by program participants in partnership with several community organizations, they note more nutrition and healthy cooking classes could be useful.

³⁴ Stakeholder Interview.

WALLA WALLA'S FOOD ENVIRONMENT

Walla Walla and College Place residents obtain food in a variety of places, depending on where they live, what they're looking for and how much they want to spend. There is no shortage of grocery, restaurant or convenience options. Walla Walla is also fortunately the home to several world-class chefs. Like so many of the "newer" locals, they pursued a dream of quality of life no big city could provide. Their love of place is reflected in the fantastic creations they offer.

Restaurants - Truly, people visit Walla Walla to eat and drink.³⁵ The 44 full-service dining options offer locally sourced and from scratch food – popular options for tourist diners. There is a strong culture of good food, though it clearly is not accessible to those in lower income brackets. Restaurants—their owners, staff and chefs—are incredibly generous to the Walla Walla community. They contribute substantial donations to hunger-related causes and especially support farmworkers and food service workers. There are also numerous food trucks that serve the area.

There are also 32 fast food restaurants³⁶ across both communities, mostly located along transportation thoroughfares.

Grocery Stores – The eight grocery stores in Walla Walla and College Place include many national and regional retailers, including two Safeways, a Walmart and one Albertson's.³⁵ There are also several smaller grocery retailers such as the West End Community Market, the natural and local food retailer Andy's, and Harvest Foods. Several smaller specialty grocery stores are also located across the community. There are also two Dollar General stores and several smaller convenience store options, though these do not outnumber regular grocers. Most of the options at these locations are not healthy and very limited in fresh fruits and vegetables. Most of these grocers are located on main thoroughfares throughout both cities, which can make access challenging for those without transportation or living on the edges of the cities.

Farmers Markets – The Walla Walla Downtown Foundation hosts a large farmers market at

According to the United States Centers for Disease Control, a food environment is:

- The physical presence of food that affects a person's diet,
- A person's proximity to food store locations,
- The distribution of food stores, food service and any physical entity by which food may be obtained, or
- A connected system that allows access to food.

The food environment is also known as the community food environment, nutritional food environment or local food environment. The retail food environment includes the community level (e.g., presence and locations of food stores, markets or both) and the consumer level (e.g., healthful, affordable foods in stores, in markets or in both).

(Centers for Disease Control,

<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/general.htm>)

³⁵ Walla Walla Uncovered. Best restaurants in Walla Walla. Retrieved at <https://www.wallawallauncovered.com/eat-drink/walla-walla-restaurants/>.

³⁶ US Census Data. Census County Business Patterns. Retrieved at https://data.census.gov/cedsci/table?q=business%20patterns&g=0500000US53071_1600000US5375775&n=N0600.00&tid=ECNBASIC2017.EC1700BASIC&hidePreview=true.

Crawford Park every Saturday from June through October. College Place also features a farmers market on Thursday in the late afternoon. However, focus group participants report that the markets cater more to tourists rather than regular Walla Walla/College Place residents. Both markets accept WIC and SNAP to be more accessible to low-income customers, but interviewees indicate these programs are underutilized, with the exception of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, which has more demand than available slots.

With the ongoing pandemic, both farmers markets have changed substantially. Currently, only vendors selling items considered “essential” are allowed at the market. The number of vendors is greatly reduced without the artisans, flowers or other sellers. Many producers interviewed have moved to an online platform and have had such success they doubt they will return to the in-person markets. Hayshaker Farm started [an online platform](#) that collaborates with over 20 other vendors to create an online marketplace.

Community Gardens – There are three community gardens across Walla Walla and College Place, including at Walla Walla University Church Community Garden, Assumption, and the Rees and Sumach Garden. [The Rees and Sumach Gardens](#) are sited on land donated by Whitman College. Though some gardeners may donate produce, these gardens primarily serve individuals.

Other Community Assets

Local Fruit and Vegetable Producers

Notably, partners in the region (collectively the Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition) have completed an extensive [food hub feasibility study](#), with support from a USDA Local Food Promotion Program grant. The [study](#) evaluates several options for creating a food hub, a “flexible concept that includes one or more functions that enable food producers and processors to reach new and more customers.”³⁷ Main types of services provided by food hubs include aggregation, storage, processing, marketing, sales and distribution. Those involved in the study report that the main barriers at this point are site location and start-up funds. The partnering organizations are willing to secure grants and continue to actively review space. The Veterans Affairs Hospital is one site that originally held promise and may be worth revisiting.

In the meantime, producers are seeking a smaller commercial kitchen space that can serve their immediate needs. The Salvation Army Kitchen in Walla Walla and Sonbridge Center for Better Living located in College Place also have kitchens that they would like to better utilize.

Food Skills Opportunities – There is a Walla Walla County Extension staff person dedicated to nutrition education for the entire county. She offers popular Cooking Matters classes to income-eligible participants and also provides nutrition education in local elementary schools. As is the case with so many schools, Farm to School works to teach students about food, often

³⁷ Walla Walla Valley Grown Food Hub Feasibility Study. (2020). Retrieved at <https://wwwvfsc.files.wordpress.com/2021/01/wwwvfhs-full-report.pdf>.

in combination with the six elementary and middle school community gardens. Farm to School in Walla Walla Valley works in schools in three ways:³⁸

1. Supporting meaningful use and sustainability of school gardens
2. Providing education about agriculture and food through farm field trips, Food Focus events, cooking experiences and Harvest of the Month tasting tables
3. Facilitating connections that result in schools purchasing locally grown foods to serve in cafeterias

They hope to expand to other schools and increase the percentage of local food the schools are procuring in the coming years.

A retooled culinary program at the community college attracts students who use the ProSmart curriculum and a commercially designed kitchen to gain technical skills and culinary knowledge for workforce preparation and life skills. Walla Walla High Schools will also soon offer an expanded culinary arts facility and related courses.

COVID-19 Pandemic and the Food Environment

At the beginning of the pandemic, farms in the Walla Walla Valley donated a tremendous amount of produce, as their orders with restaurants and institutions collapsed. Throughout the pandemic, the farms in the valley have continued generous supply of whatever fresh produce they can provide. BMAC has been able to purchase many tons of produce, in addition to donations.

Food purchasing, procurement and consumption behaviors have shifted as a result of the pandemic. Dietitians and food pantry staff report that people are grocery shopping less frequently and purchasing more canned or frozen goods. As is the case pre-COVID-19, those without transportation rely on family members for large grocery runs. Mental health is also suffering during the pandemic, which can lead to less nutritious food choices. Dietitians report more binge eating and consumption of high-sugar and highly processed snack foods as coping mechanisms. Some people fear touching fresh produce or preparing their food, based on concerns about disease transmission.³⁹ On the other hand, many more homeowners have created new gardens in their yards. Some community members have learned food preservation and cooking skills. The pandemic may lead to an increased interest in scratch cooking and gardening.

Hunger relief providers have also shifted their practices, which has, in turn, affected consumption behaviors. For congregate meals, clients get a bag lunch rather than a hot meal. Fruit is whole rather than cut, as a precautionary measure. However, those with oral health challenges may not be able to eat whole, un-cut fruits or vegetables, like carrots, commonly available in bagged meals.⁴⁰

³⁸ Walla Walla Valley Farm to School. Retrieved at <https://www.slcww.org/wwvf2s>.

³⁹ Stakeholder interview.

⁴⁰ Stakeholder interview.

Institutional Food Environments

Hospital – At Providence Saint Mary’s hospital, all meals are prepared under the supervision of a registered dietitian. [Thomas Cuisine](#) is the meal partner, making from-scratch meals to order. They provide patient choice, with plant-focused options, that satisfy one-third of the day's nutritional requirements and meet standards for cardiac and diabetic nutrition or any other special dietary needs. However, there is “continued community controversy” over the existence of the hospital’s soda vending machine, which speaks to the challenge in changing cultural norms, even when health is a clear value.⁴¹ There are several small, short-term health-care system sponsored pilot programs designed to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables people can afford through grocery store coupons. There is interest in a formal Veggie Rx program, but a funding source has not yet been identified.

Colleges – There are three higher education institutions in Walla Walla County, including Whitman College, Walla Walla University and Walla Walla Community College. Whitman College is a small, liberal arts college with 1,500 students. [Bon Appetit](#) serves Whitman College with a menu emphasizing fresh fruits and vegetables and plant-based entrees. They are committed to sourcing from local farms, thanks to shared leadership across administration, faculty, staff and foodservice.

Walla Walla University has a student population of approximately 1,600 students. In keeping with its affiliation with the Seventh Day Adventist Church, they place high value on health and nutrition. Their food service is managed by [Sodexo](#), with a menu including fresh fruit, yogurts, and house-made granola, specialty salads, an extensive fresh salad bar, home-style entrées and vegan options available at every meal.

Walla Walla Community College has about 2,000 students, though only 500 attend in-person, with the rest taking online classes. The College offers Basic Food Employment & Training, which provides access and services to SNAP recipients in Washington State. Services include education and job skills training, support services such as Working Connection Child Care subsidy, as well as job search assistance. The College also has a food pantry serving its students for emergency, short-term needs.

Walla Walla and College Place Public Schools – Walla Walla’s schools serve 5,689 students⁴²; College Place’s schools serve 1,465 students.⁴³ Food service staff believe early-age adoption of healthy eating practices has long-term benefits for individual eaters, in terms of health, openness to trying new things and general interest in food. Staff in food and nutrition services from both districts prepare most food in school kitchens; all but one school across both districts have their own kitchens. Walla Walla’s school district is introducing more foods cooked from scratch, including a Farm to School effort that offers a variety of foods to early grade students. School nutrition staff report challenges as they transition to more scratch cooking and farm-to-

⁴¹ Stakeholder Interview.

⁴² Walla Walla Public School District. Retrieved at <https://www.wwps.org/district/information/about-us>.

⁴³ National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved at https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/districtsearch/district_detail.asp?ID2=5301470.

school efforts, including adaptation of kitchen facilities, food ordering logistics, staff training, adequate time and budget, and marketing.

Other important aspects of school nutrition are worth mentioning. From a sweetened beverages standpoint, chocolate milk is served every day in elementary schools, and sugary drinks and unhealthy snacks can be found in high school vending machines in both districts. High school students in both districts have the option to leave their campus for lunch.

Together, the districts play an instrumental role in feeding the majority of the community's children throughout the day, including breakfast, lunch, snacks and, for some students, suppers at school and out-of-school programs. Foodservice directors from both districts are passionate about ensuring children facing food insecurity have the food they need at school and at home to meet their basic needs throughout the year. The Friday Backpack program, which is supported by BMAC, United Way of Walla Walla, Walla Walla Public Schools and the Public Schools Employee Union, served 492 households (or 20%) of the elementary school students who qualify for free/reduced school meals in 2017-18.⁴⁴

When it comes to hunger and high school students, things look different than they do for elementary age children. Many high school students choose to go without food rather than having their parents apply for free and reduced-price meals, either because they are concerned about a stigma of receiving free and reduced-price meals or because they prefer to eat off-campus. Because high school students may not be eating school breakfasts or are skipping lunches, they may be at greater risk for not having their nutritional needs met.

Multiple organizations either support or provide classes for people to acquire a range of food skills at a young age.

Out of School Programs – There are currently eight after-school 21st Century Learning Program sites (640 children) in Walla Walla, offering academic enrichment and meeting social and emotional development needs of the community's youth. These programs use the snack, dinner and summer meals program offered by the school district, providing access to free meals for eligible children and their families.

In College Place, the YWCA and Campfire organizations also have small after-school programs. The after-school program at Valle Lindo homes serves 76 K-4 students every day, providing academic enrichment designed to improve educational outcomes. They have a small garden and offer a free snacks and dinner program cooked from scratch by the director in a kitchen the Housing Authority allows her to use. However, she has no dedicated space in this kitchen, so she moves all of her supplies with her each day, including pots, pans, utensils and ingredients, in and out of the space for each and every meal she prepares. Staff expressed great appreciation for the food provided for the after school and summer meals program. They also

⁴⁴ Union Bulletin. Retrieved at https://www.union-bulletin.com/local_columnists/etcetera/weekend-backpack-program-reaches-funding-goal/article_068bffd8-06b4-11e8-abcc-670c61e069c4.html

noted that some of the processed snack foods do not meet nutritional needs of the children and they would appreciate the addition of more healthy, fresh options.

There is further room for improvement in programs that serve children and youth out of school, including sports leagues and concessions at municipal parks and recreation sites. Parents report youth sport concessions generate revenue to support leagues but offer exclusively unhealthy options. Concession stands feature, “candy, lots of soda, hamburgers, chicken fingers, nachos, and hotdogs.”⁴⁵ Public pool concessions are similar to those available through youth sport leagues.

CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND POTENTIAL POLICY PRIORITIES

Blue Zones Project communities identify a portfolio of evidence-based food policy priorities designed to move the dial on community health outcomes and leave a lasting, visible impact on the community. Walla Walla Valley’s Blue Zones Project Discovery process yielded several promising opportunities designed to address key challenges, promote economic prosperity, support the economic and cultural aspects of the valley’s agricultural character, and foster healthier food environments in the community.

The table below describes challenges surfaced through the Discovery process, accompanied by strategic opportunities and related policy strategies for consideration at the 2021 Blue Zones Walla Walla Valley Food Policy Summit.

⁴⁵ Stakeholder Interview.

PROPOSED FOOD POLICY PRIORITIES FOR WALLA WALLA VALLEY

Goal #1 Increase Capacity of Local Agriculture for Local Eaters

Challenges	Opportunities	Policy Strategies	Notes
There is no central processing facility that supports farm-to-institution aggregation or value-added products; the closest facility is more than an hour away. Many producers in the area could benefit from a local processing facility.	Small producers are actively collaborating in the search for a suitable space; a food hub feasibility study has been completed. The largest regional hunger relief partner is on board. All involved share the common goal of getting more fresh produce into the community. BMAC would also be a beneficiary of produce and products for clients. Reframing the value of local food infrastructure in light of the economic development value that it provides the Valley could help further this effort.	Implement recommendations in food hub feasibility study and utilize the collaborative potential of Walla Walla Grown and the Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition.	This could be a Marquee project.
Tension between the need for affordable housing, rising land value due to tourist and retiree growth, and agriculture land value makes land access for agricultural enterprise very expensive.	Long-term planning and preservation of farmland can preserve the region's agricultural character, protect the local food supply and ensure an affordable land base for farmers.	Work with community planners to review statewide and local farmland preservation standards and examine, identify and establish local policy solutions.	
Many small-scale producers are interested in scaling up their production to sell to schools and other institutions, but they need technical assistance with GAP certification and other USDA requirements for larger farms.	A strong Farm to School program is ready to expand into welcoming schools and institutions, and increase the percentage of locally procured food. Nearby farms and orchards provide opportunities for more locally grown procurement. Farm to School grants can work with schools to pay up to \$10K per farm or supplier without getting any bids.	Increase access to comprehensive technical assistance support in partnership with Washington Tilth and Washington State University Extension to develop viable wholesale production and institutional markets. Develop healthy food procurement policy and retool school foodservice to offer healthier and more diverse options.	
There is growing community interest in gardening, but many lack the gardening space and accompanying	Local units of government can enact policies that foster gardening and urban	Establish policies to support and expand existing community gardens and front and backyard gardens,	

Challenges	Opportunities	Policy Strategies	Notes
cooking and food preservation skills.	agriculture by community members. Organizations in the community that provide food skills education are ideal candidates to expand their reach, with adequate resources and support. Existing community gardens can serve as models for replication or expansion.	with an emphasis on under-served areas of the community. Pair with educational and promotional campaign about existing and new garden resources.	

Goal #2: Improve Access to Nutritious Food and Beverage Options Across Settings

Cultural norms that promote a preference for unhealthy foods and ease of access to sugar sweetened beverages negatively impact diet-related chronic disease risk factors across the community.	An interest in local agriculture, food culture and the connection between healthy eating and well-being is inspiring change across the community. Water bottles and water drinking are welcomed in school settings and are identified as a cultural norm across the community. Community members are receptive to nutritional education. There is opportunity to expand cooking and healthy eating education, as existing resources are at capacity.	Establish/update and enforce institutional wellness policies that eliminate sugar sweetened beverages in schools, after-school programs, parks and recreation sites and programs, and the college campuses. Establish/update and enforce institutional guidelines for healthy vending at schools and recreation facilities. Seek policy support and funding for hydration stations in all schools, parks and recreation facilities	
Many restaurants and food trucks do not serve healthy options.	Restaurants and food trucks serve a large portion of the community.	Develop policy that establishes standards and incentivizes restaurants and food trucks to serve at least one healthy option, compliant with Blue Zones nutritional guidelines. Establish guidelines for healthy beverages that are included in value-meals.	
Gas stations, convenience stores and fast-food outlets abound, primarily offering unhealthy options.	Some SNAP recipients don't use their full benefits because fresh fruits and vegetables are not available where they shop.	Implement Blue Zones Healthy Convenience Store Guidelines and incentives.	

Undocumented farmworkers and other immigrants are not served well by the current hunger relief system due to restrictions on federal funding, lack of community trust and lack of transportation. Existing policies and practices may require identification that inhibits access to food for eligible program participants.		Eliminate barriers that require identification for program participants to access food. Target emergency food distributions where workers live or work. Support on-site youth programs with ongoing kitchen access or a larger kitchen remodel to accommodate more programs.	
Seniors eat well below the recommended fruit and vegetable servings per day. Numerous low-income seniors in Walla Walla are eligible for SNAP but not enrolled. Seniors often lack transportation to food sources.	The hunger relief system has an experienced coalition capable of addressing this and deep experience in SNAP enrollment. Walla Walla Valley produces many fruit and vegetable crops	Implement universal SNAP screening for seniors at area healthcare providers. Establish a Veggie Rx program or CSA program for seniors and people with chronic diseases, in partnership with existing food delivery program such as Meals on Wheels or Valley Transit.	
Many youth sports concessions and public pool concessions are very unhealthy.	Some parents would prefer healthier options.	Establish and implement nutrition standards for parks and recreation youth sports programs and facilities.	

Goal #3: Enhance the Current Opportunities in School Nutrition

Teens in Walla Walla and College Place consume well below the recommended daily amount of fruits and vegetables.	Schools provide an opportunity for young people to try new foods, learn about their health benefits and incorporate them into their regular diets.	Revisit and update school nutrition guidelines to reflect Blue Zones nutritional values for College Place and Walla Walla public schools. Institutionalize support for school gardens; establish curriculum for school garden-based learning.	Early childhood program has robust food program with scratch cooking that could serve as a model.
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Goal #4: Build Capacity with a Regional Food Policy Council

Though there have been time or issue-specific groups, there is no permanent mechanism to develop and advance community-wide food policy.	There is significant interest in advancing county-wide and community-specific food policy.	Establish a multi-sector food policy council affiliated with city or county government to develop and implement food policy on an ongoing basis.	Including wide representation from the different food system sectors will be most beneficial for collaboration.
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CONCLUSION

The virtual interviews and focus groups for the Walla Walla Valley Food Policy Discovery process surfaced wide-ranging support for the Blue Zones Project effort, as well as enthusiasm for a diverse array of food systems-related initiatives and opportunities. The community is open to change, working strategically across sectors, organizations and anchor institutions to effectively accomplish important work on behalf of the community.

Local organizations are committed to and focused on healthy eating and local agriculture production. The Walla Walla County Health Department has identified healthy eating as a core strategic priority. There is solid partnership between the public health, hunger relief and local agriculture sectors, WSU Extension and other key players in the community.

In coming years, the long tail of COVID-19 will continue to be a driving factor for the economy, public health, food access and models for food-related work in coming years. The hunger relief system will experience ongoing high demand, continuing to generate innovative responses. The healthcare systems will face unrelenting consequences of the pandemic, which will impact delivery of care, budgets and priorities. The agricultural and hospitality industries will contend with the aftermath of the pandemic. Higher rates of unemployment will continue. Uncertainty, flexibility and strain on systems, infrastructure and people are sure to persist.

The emerging food policy agenda for the Walla Walla Valley should strategically engage these issues, finding ways to foster constructive, effective relationships and efforts that leverage the numerous assets available to cultivate healthy food environments, foster food skills and enhance healthy food infrastructure—grounded in the heritage and culture of the region's food system.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley extends appreciation to all the local and statewide leaders who contributed their insights and time to helping make this report possible:

Interviews:

- Jeff Mathias, Food Bank Director, Blue Mountain Action Council
- Rey Cooley, Farm to School Program Manager, Walla Walla Valley Sustainable Living Center
- Pamela Milleson, Director, Walla Walla Public Schools Nutrition Services
- Jennifer Kleffner, Owner, Miles Away Farm / Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition
- Mary Campbell, Executive Director, Walla Walla Community Council

Focus Groups:

1. Food Retail Environment
 - a. Carolyn Holme, small business owner/ Deputy Clerk and Events Coordinator for City of College Place (oversees Farmers Market)
 - b. Vicki Zanes, Manager, The Market by Andy's
 - c. Becca Lastoskie, Owner, Graze Catering and Events
2. Local Food & Urban Agriculture
 - a. Jennifer Kleffner, Owner, Miles Away Farm / Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition
 - b. Lydia Caudill, previous facilitator of Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition
 - c. Barbara Clark, Chair, Rees Sumach Community Garden, previous Mayor of Walla Walla
 - d. Noah Dibdall, Farm Manager, Frog Hollow Farm
 - e. Amy Dietrich, Owner, Frog Hollow Farm
 - f. Chandler Briggs, Owner, Hayshaker Farm
 - g. Elissa Brown, Sustainability Coordinator, Whitman College
3. Hunger Relief
 - a. Ron Gibbs, community advocate
 - b. Rey Cooley, Farm to School Program Manager, Walla Walla Valley Sustainable Living Center
 - c. Norman Thiel, Executive Director, SonBridge Center for Better Living
 - d. Jonathon Simons, Walla Walla University Center for Humanitarian Engagement; Eden's Pantry
 - e. Liz McDevitt, Director, Helpline
 - f. Debra Erikson, Assistant Dean of Student Success, Walla Walla Community College
4. Food Education, Food Access & Public Health
 - a. Meike Johnson-VanDonge, Food \$ense Program Manager, WSU Extension

- b. Jessalyn Waring Bruce, Health Educator, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
 - c. Alyssa Auvinen, Project Director and previous Healthy Eating Coordinator, Washington State Department of Health
 - d. Becky Hermesen, Public Health Nutritionist, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
- 5. Youth/School Food Environment
 - a. Jen Mallo, parent and former President, PTA
 - b. Rey Cooley, Farm to School Program Manager, Walla Walla Valley Sustainable Living Center
- 6. Healthcare and Nutrition
 - a. Katy Anderson, Outpatient Dietitian, Providence St. Mary's Medical Center
 - b. Nick Vegick, Dietitian, Providence St. Mary's Medical Center
 - c. Pamela Dawes, Registered Dietitian, Family Medical Center
 - d. Laura Dean, Primary Care Dietitian, Family Medical Center
- 7. Farmworkers and Food Access
 - a. Mariela Rosas, Children's Home Society/ Director of the Academic After School Club and the Summer Recreational Program at the Valle Lindo Community
 - b. Allison Carney, Allison Carney Consulting / Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network / Central Washington Justice for our Neighbors
 - c. Sandy Garcia, Staff Attorney, Northwest Justice Project

Report prepared by:

- Margaret Adamek, PhD, *Blue Zones LLC National Food Policy Expert*
- Nadja Berneche, MSW, MPP, *Blue Zones LLC National Food Policy Researcher*

APPENDIX A | WALLA WALLA COMMUNITY COUNCIL IMPROVING FOOD SECURITY STUDY PROBLEMS + SOLUTIONS

Major Problems	Recommended Solutions
PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION issues present food access difficulties. Limited bus schedules and lack of routes that go directly by food pantries limit access.	Provide ways for food-pantry clients to conveniently access food pantries and transport food home. This includes aligning bus route stops and pantry locations.
ISOLATION: Isolated individuals are more likely to be food insecure. Both formal and informal support networks are important in addressing issues of isolation.	Establish, promote and fund programs that help strengthen community and neighborhood networks, including cooking and food education classes, meal sharing, community gardening, and gatherings.
FOOD DESERTS: There are many food deserts in the Community Council's region, especially in the more rural areas, where there are limited choices, higher prices and fewer nutritious options.	Improve rural and remote areas' ability to access nutritious food by supporting healthy retail points, expanded options, mobile retail food trucks and mobile food pantries.
LACK OF KNOWLEDGE about how to budget and shop for, prepare, preserve, and store food is an obstacle to achieving food security. Food education classes in schools and the community that teach skills such as budgeting, shopping, cooking, preserving and gardening convey essential information.	Expand food education classes for pantry clients, including life-skill classes and information to improve the strategies clients use to plan for, procure, use and store food.
RESTRICTIONS: Clients have noted difficulties in being required to access three different food pantries, once per month, each with different times, days and practices. Limited hours of operation also present a challenge for some clients.	Assess and coordinate policies, hours, locations and food resource information that best meet client needs.



BLUE ZONES PROJECT

WALLA WALLA VALLEY DISCOVERY REPORT BUILT ENVIRONMENT

MARCH 2021



Photo: Walla Walla Valley NACDD/CDC Walkability Virtual Academy team

**DEVELOPED BY
THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT TEAM AT BLUE ZONES**

THE DISCOVERY PROCESS: OVERVIEW

*Walla Walla Valley is the first Blue Zones Project in Washington State.
Walla Walla Valley is receiving support from national experts to
implement a comprehensive, evidence-informed plan for improving
community health and well-being.*

The Discovery process in Walla Walla Valley builds upon the initial 2019 Readiness Assessment, through a series of virtual focus group sessions, which engaged community leaders and partners in identifying built environment strengths, opportunities, and challenges. The Discovery process involves learning from, validating and equipping local stakeholders to prepare for critical next steps in creating a healthier built environment in Walla Walla Valley. This process included:

- Interviews with key stakeholders from multiple sectors including city, county, industry, local planning, parks and recreation teams, the business community, schools, higher education institutions, and nongovernmental organizations.
- Background research, including data and information focused on the local and regional economy, demographics, social determinants of health, current transportation and land use planning efforts, and policy groundwork in Walla Walla Valley.

This report summarizes key findings, observations and next-step recommendations. It is intended to inform stakeholders and leadership, as they prepare for the Built Environment Summit, with the goal of advancing informed and strategic decisions about community-built environment priorities over the multi-year Blue Zones Project – Walla Walla Valley effort.

Image: Engagement with key stakeholders in Walla Walla County during the 2019 Readiness Assessment Site Visit and online during the Discovery Phase of activities



INTRODUCTION

Routine, daily movement and social connection are central tenets of the Blue Zones principles of a healthy, engaged lifestyle. This does not necessarily mean structured exercise or scheduled interactions, rather, through a built environment that is supportive of walking, bicycling, and social connectedness. Four essential elements of healthy community design support livability, neighborliness, routine physical activity, and social connections. Residents and visitors appreciate the care given to placemaking, context and distinctive features of places they occupy, travel through, and honor. Through individual and community care in carrying out the following four points in urban design and blending with nature, people take pride and ownership in building, operating and maintaining the place they call home:

MIXED LAND USE PATTERNS AND URBAN INFILL: Compact, mixed development, infill development with different land uses, and varied destinations are intermingled, providing a diversity of housing types and affordability that are within walking and cycling distances of daily needs, while preserving view sheds, open space, and agricultural lands. Housing types are not just mixed, they are well-placed, providing locational efficiency. Additionally, increases in density and housing diversity are achieved through context-sensitive designs. Connectivity among uses is achieved with an open space system of streetscapes and parks. Parks are well located and watched over by residential and commercial buildings. Neighborhoods are complete and benefit from well-constructed, appropriately sized and connected pathways, with green edges, compact intersections, and well-designed public gathering spaces. Minimal off-street space is devoted to parking, and off-street parking uses a variety of treatments, such as landscaping, to better demark and integrate features.

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION FACILITIES: A comprehensive and connected network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities, such as sidewalks and crossings, bicycle lanes, and non-motorized pathways are available to all residents. Major roads are designed to fully accommodate those walking and bicycling to their destinations. Streets are compact, green, and inviting, serving low-speed movement of all. Traditional well-connected street patterns favor walking over speed. Block perimeters are kept compact, increasing the directness of walking, and naturally holding down speed. Full-service transit becomes an enhancement and extension of walking and cycling and is given full consideration.

FUNCTIONAL SITE DESIGNS: Destinations and routes are designed to reward, not punish, those who arrive on foot or bike. This means buildings and main entrances are set to the sidewalk, with parking on-street or behind, and elements such as street trees and landscaping provide beauty. Benches, shade structures, planters, awnings, water fountains, human scaled lighting, way-finding elements, sheltered transit stops, and well-placed quality bicycle parking offer safe, welcoming, comfortable, and appealing surroundings. Buildings provide security by placement near the street and through window coverage that ensures “eyes on the street” and a level of transparency that assures pedestrians.



Image: Downtowns should naturally favor people and place over vehicular speed. Generally, asking pedestrians to ask permission to cross the street favors the car over the person. As Blue Zones further explores downtown, opportunities are identified.

The principles of biophilic design (blending nature with urban form) help reduce stress, improve cognitive function and creativity, improve well-being, and expedite healing. All portions of the community provide streetscapes, view-sheds, waterways, terrain, or other natural features that promote wellness.

SAFETY, SECURITY AND ACCESS FOR PEOPLE OF ALL AGES, INCOMES AND ABILITIES: This includes well-located, quality street crossings—with components such as highly visible markings and automated countdown timers on pedestrian signals—as well as *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) compliant design, street lamps, and appropriately applied traffic calming elements, such as short block lengths, curb extensions, median islands, roundabouts and mini-circles, lane narrowing and reductions to minimize conflict points. An application of these elements through planning, engineering, community engagement, and decision-making leads to building places where people create and maintain connection to one another, feel safe and comfortable, are instinctively active, cultivate pride in their community, and feel connected to nature.

“In every walk with nature one receives far more than he seeks. For going out... is really going in.”
–John Muir

Understanding the impact that the environment, both natural and built, has on our wellbeing - that transportation access is a social determinant of health¹ - means that the above can't be addressed without recognizing the health and wellbeing disparities that exist. Creating authentic, community-centered space and opportunity to engage around and inform solutions, and prioritize equitable approaches, is essential to the success of Blue Zones Project - Walla Walla Valley.

Image: The goal is to improve the built environment so that it is more supportive of routine physical activity. Natural features, such as this waterway, should celebrate and apply each of the above elements.



¹ Healthy People 2020, Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-of-health>

OPPORTUNITIES

The Blue Zones Built Environment team's recommended approach for moving Walla Walla Valley towards a healthier, more equitable built environment includes three opportunity areas, reflecting the core built environment categories designated in the Blue Zones Built Environment Menu. They are summarized here, and more information is provided beginning on Page 7 of this document.

I. ADVANCE COMPLETE STREETS & MULTI-MODAL PLANNING

- a. Facilitate a performance measures workshop with local, regional, and state stakeholders
- b. Support Active Transportation Plan efforts in partnership with the Walla Walla Valley MPO
- c. Advocate for a Transportation Benefit District fund
- d. Advance downtown placemaking efforts in College Place
- e. Engage the community to advance on the ground projects that support active transportation

II. ADVANCE HEALTHY LAND USES, AFFORDABLE HOUSING & ACCESS TO RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & OPEN SPACE

- a. Develop training on context-sensitive density and form based code
- b. Update residential codes and support land trust strategies to further the development of 'missing middle' housing.
- c. Amend the Zoning Code to reduce parking requirements
- d. Advance an Implementation Plan for the *Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan*
- e. Implement placemaking demonstration projects

III. ENSURE SAFER ROUTES & SUPPORT TRANSIT INTEGRATION

- a. Advance Valley Transit's Comprehensive Operational Analysis Update
- b. Increase transit coordination with an emphasis on campus users
- c. Perform accessibility audits at transit stops
- d. Develop a Safe Routes to School Toolkit
 - i. Prioritize traffic calming infrastructure around schools
 - ii. Provide sheltered, secure bike parking at the high school
 - iii. Offer a bike maintenance program at area primary schools

These recommendations are offered as suggestions for the community to consider and are not exclusive or dictating in nature. For each strategy selected by the community, Blue Zones Project will act as a convener of interdisciplinary teams, providing resources, training, and technical assistance to facilitate implementation. It is the community leaders, city and county staff, business and property owners, tribal leaders, university community, and residents of Walla Walla Valley who will choose the specific goals and actions, employing evidence-informed strategies for creating a resilient, financially viable, healthy, sustainable community.



Image: Kiwanis Park is an exceptional model of a great place to play, socialize, be in touch with nature, and be watched over by well-designed housing that puts "eyes on the park." Great models like this park can influence the design or redesign of other parks and open spaces.

THE CONTEXT: WALLA WALLA VALLEY, WASHINGTON

As part of the Discovery process, the Blue Zones Built Environment team collects relevant information to complement stakeholder engagement findings and inform recommended next steps. Sources include the latest U.S. Census Bureau data, along with transportation and land use plans, and community health assessments and are referenced in preparation of the summations and recommendations that follow.

Located in southeastern Washington State, Walla Walla and College Place are surrounded by agricultural lands, and home to two hospitals and three colleges. The Walla Walla Valley has the opportunity to become even more focused on quality of life and active transportation. Fortunately, home buyers and investors are increasingly moving away from focusing entirely on an automobile-based transportation system, to demanding settings that value people and place. Many recognize that this is the only way to build wellness, support a robust economy, and sustainably preserve precious agricultural and open land, the valued triad of people, prosperity, and planet. Based on the Washington State Department of Health's Information by Location tool, Walla Walla and College Place tend to have a higher prevalence of households without access to a private vehicle, higher transportation costs, and more limited public transit to work than other communities in the state.² As of 2016, 27 percent of Walla Walla County adults were obese, compared to 28 percent of adults in the state. Additionally, 17 percent of adults were physically inactive (the same as the state).³

It is important to note that an important role for the Blue Zones Project team in support of these communities and their values, will be to create opportunities for authentic, inclusive community engagement, and to work with a diverse group of stakeholders to incorporate community leadership and feedback into systems and practices at the city and regional levels. Like many communities, the Walla Walla Valley region experiences and struggles with racial and economic disparity; the difference in wealth, opportunity and resource is notable. When assessing environment versus income, it is clear that those with less resource are being provided with less healthy design supports, and that those that have the time and resource, more.

WALLA WALLA COUNTY KEY DATA

U.S. Census Bureau Data, 2019

Population	60,760
Density	46.3 / square mile
Growth Rate	3.4%
Median Household Income	\$57,858
Median Home Value	\$224,800
Percent Below Poverty Level	12.7%
Percent Without Health Insurance	8.7%
Demographic Data	White: 71.3% Hispanic or Latino: 21.7% Black: 2.2% Asian: 1.7% American Indian: 1.4%
Walk Score (out of 100)	42
Bike Score (out of 100)	38

² Washington State Department of Health, Information by Location:

<https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/WashingtonTrackingNetworkWTN/InformationbyLocation>

³ County Health Rankings: <https://www.countyhealthrankings.org/app/washington/2020/rankings/walla-walla/county/outcomes/overall/snapshot>

STRENGTHS

POLICIES & PLANNING: While Walla Walla and College Place are unique in their multimodal infrastructure and needs, both communities have foundational policy frameworks to encourage walkable, bikeable, and multi-modal transport and land uses. Both communities have good Complete Streets policies in place, and are governed by a shared Comprehensive Plan, the Metropolitan planning Organization's *2040 Plan, Parks and Recreation Plan, Community Health Improvement Plan (2019-2023)*, and regional trails plan. Both communities have comprehensive capital improvement project plans through at least 2023 that call out accommodating all modes and users and include projects such as intersection improvements, sidewalk replacement, and park redevelopment. The County also has a *Regional Bike Pedestrian Plan* that was developed in 2010 for Benton, Franklin and Walla Walla counties.

PEOPLE. The Blue Zones Built Environment team had the opportunity to meet with an array of agencies, organizations, and individuals who are passionate about working towards a healthier Walla Walla Valley. There is great local knowledge about designing livable, safe, and accessible environments for those on bike, foot, and taking transit, with department leadership on board, and community advocates working tirelessly to improve the lives and wellbeing of residents. It is important to note that currently the Walla Walla Valley region has a team involved in the nation-wide Virtual Walkability Action Institute, a stellar team that is furthering the active transportation policies and efforts of the region. See the Acknowledgement Section for the list of key stakeholders engaged in this Discovery Phase assessment.

CULTURE. Walla Walla Valley is a diverse place, and while there is challenge on the path to equitable access and enjoyment, the community embraces its rich mix of cultures and people. The Walla Walla Valley has a distinct culture of outdoor recreation, enjoyment of the natural spaces surrounding it, and engagement in the many activities of the area. The region draws visitors year-round with a host of outdoor happenings (skiing, wine tasting, hot air balloons, and BMX tracks), mirroring residents' values and love of the natural place.

PARTNERSHIPS: There are existing and potential partnerships in the community, with government and non-government entities supporting one another in their goals. The *Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan* is a wonderful example of this community-level collaboration. Additionally, there are tremendous community-based organizations with committed leadership that support these communities and provide examples of community engagement and partnerships helping projects get successfully passed and funded, such as the Isaacs Street road diet.

College Place has designed and placed a model protected bike lane, slowed traffic, and made walking to and from school more comfortable and safer. Each community can learn from one another, and work collaboratively on the best planning, programs, policies, and practices to make all neighborhoods more vital, healthy, and uniquely appealing.



CHALLENGES

Walla Walla Valley has good community connections, passionate people, and foundational partnerships required for success, yet there are challenges for the community. While the historical form of development focused on walkable patterns, the region continues to be focused on the efficient movement of cars, with sprawling developments, areas of inadequate bike and pedestrian infrastructure and deficient accessibility considerations, a lack of housing diversity, and limited transit options with low ridership. Additionally, there are clear distinctions between the neighborhoods that get invested in and those that do not, with strong correlation between affluence and environment. The following highlights the key challenges seen in the Walla Walla Valley built environment assessment.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND DIVERSITY: Affordable and diverse housing are not readily available in either Walla Walla or College Place, creating an issue for the community and more specifically those in the service industry and essential workers, who already face challenges of affordability and further displacement. Encouragement of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and density have created the policy landscape for more diversity yet there continues to be reservation around height and increasing density to the detriment of community character and existing home values. Recognizing the studies and assessments that have been done, both by the Walla Walla Community Council and the countywide housing needs assessment by the State, efforts addressing the affordability gap and mitigating development costs need to continue, including having the right conversations with developers and powerful local and regional landowners. Engagement and technical training on context-sensitive design and density should be provided to stakeholders and the community, with placement, diversity, character, existing homes, and location-efficiency considered.

CROSS JURISDICTIONAL COLLABORATION: Numerous stakeholders spoke to the need for greater cross-jurisdictional collaboration, region-wide coordination, and engagement with other disciplines to advance common goals (e.g. public health, economic development, tourism, open space protection). There is a great need for thoughtful land use planning, intentional housing construction, and development coordination between the cities and County, especially as land is annexed and requires city services.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT. A lack of effective community engagement with immigrant, Latinx and other marginalized, non-English speaking community members, is a real challenge. The team received thoughtful insights on the readiness of these members to engage, share, and contribute to their communities, as well as examples of both unintentional negative consequences brought on by inauthentic and lacking engagement as well as outright disregard for these communities' needs and priorities.

MAINTENANCE BUDGETS: Goat head thorn, *Tribulus terrestris*, is ubiquitous in the dry climate, so bicyclists receive punctures and flat tires. This deters both bicycle tourism and active transportation, and will be an ongoing issue for the region. In recent years, 25 percent of the available snow removal budget was utilized, and so there may be an opportunity reallocate maintenance funds to support unique active transportation challenges in the region. A lack of funding leads to a reactionary rather than proactive approach to maintaining and investing in our built environment.

TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT DISTRICT RENEWAL: The renewal of the Transportation Benefit District will be voted on in November 2021 and given the economic hardships many are feeling due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this may be at risk. It will likely be necessary to very consciously engage the community in the successes to date and notable investments, and to identify future opportunities in need of support. Demonstration projects and pop-ups could be used in support of this transportation funding mechanism. If renewal is not endorsed by the community, there will be significant challenges associated with funding.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS): Some model Safe Routes to School infrastructure projects have been completed, but many parents fear letting children walk and bike to school. This suggests a need for a full array of supporting activities, such as making all streets within a ¼ mile of a school 20 mph zones (e.g. “20 is plenty” campaign); identifying satellite drop-off and pick-up locations to reduce congestion at schools; providing easier access to school grounds for walkers and bikers; and routine improvements such as wider sidewalks and better street crossings.



Image: An opportunity for advancing community recreation

WALLA WALLA VALLEY: BLUE ZONES PROJECT OPPORTUNITIES

Blue Zones Project is eager to engage Walla Walla Valley in its efforts to become a healthier built environment. The following opportunities will be presented during the Built Environment Summit for consideration by the community:

1. ADVANCE COMPLETE STREETS & MULTI-MODAL PLANNING

FACILITATE A ‘PERFORMANCE MEASURES’ WORKSHOP WITH LOCAL, REGIONAL, AND STATE STAKEHOLDERS. At a local and regional level, there are opportunities to employ updated performance measures to incorporate assessment of walkability, safety, connectivity, placemaking, tree cover, equity, access, mobility, sound levels and other livability factors, to be included in the metrics of success for transportation and, especially, when it comes to land uses. A workshop for staff, leadership, elected officials, and advocates is a good first step in framing these concepts. State DOT partners are well equipped to support and co-lead this workshop, and FHWA resources such as the *Guidebook for Developing Pedestrian and Bicycle Performance Measures* (2016) can help frame this work.

SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN EFFORTS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE WALLA WALLA VALLEY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION. With the region’s first *Active Transportation Plan* slated to be completed by 2024, the next few years offer tremendous opportunity for the Blue Zones Project team and its partners to assist with data collection, infrastructure needs determination and synthesis, and community assessment components, all of which would center existing disparities, require inclusive engagement practices, and model a structured approach to prioritizing equity. This effort would be in support of the Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization. This

plan development will also open up funding and collaboration opportunities for the region and its jurisdictions.

ADVOCATE FOR A TRANSPORTATION BENEFIT DISTRICT FUND. For Walla Walla, this opportunity is about renewing the fund in place, and re-securing a resource all the more critical to infrastructure as the community is unable to leverage the additional percent of the Real Estate Excise Tax (REET), which changed to a graduated state rate structure as of January 2020⁴. For College Place, this is a new opportunity that would allow the city to better fund elements like sidewalk completion and maintenance. While College Place has a *Community Development Block Grant* (CDBG) for some sidewalk construction and maintenance, it is not sufficient for all the community's pedestrian infrastructure needs. This fund would give significant lift for College Place, as nearly 70 percent of the core area does not have contiguous sidewalk network.



ADVANCE DOWNTOWN PLACEMAKING EFFORTS IN COLLEGE PLACE. Implementing on-the-ground projects in downtown College Place could provide new opportunities for where people can eat, walk, cycle, be entertained, interact and play. Demonstration projects can include parklets, outdoor dining, intersection art, curb extensions, passageways, safe and accessible street crossings, human-scaled lighting, and street greening. These projects will provide opportunities for public engagement before, during and after project implementation around value sharing, visioning, and celebrating the uniqueness of the region's downtowns by working as communities for communities.

Photo: Walla Walla Valley NACDD/CDC Walkability Virtual Academy team.

ENGAGE THE COMMUNITY TO ADVANCE INFRASTRUCTURE TO SUPPORT ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION. Walla Walla stakeholders spoke to the Rose Street road diet as a potential demonstration project, given previous efforts to implement Complete Street features, which failed. This is an opportunity to reflect on past engagement efforts and ensure broader, authentic community participation into the future. Additionally, the extension of Mill Creek Trail was mentioned, along with a need to improve the Mill Creek and Tausick Way crosswalk. Local ambition also included a linkage between Walla Walla and the airport through a rail-with-trail feature. In all of these cases, the focus was on engaging the community effectively to support municipal and county-wide efforts. There is a stated need for equitable community engagement, for example, during corridor planning



Image: Walla Walla and College Place have opportunities to fill the gaps, addressing connectivity and maintenance issues to encourage walking and cycling, while scheduling projects to leverage investments.

⁴ Expect changes to real estate excise taxes in coming year, Dennis Gisi. Tri-Cities Area Journal of Business: <https://www.tricitiesbusinessnews.com/2019/12/excise-taxes/>

processes. For College Place, there are opportunities along College Avenue to allow for shared parking, redistributed streetscape space, and integrate green infrastructure. Additionally, there is opportunity along Whitman Drive to address a sidewalk and a multi-use path gap, centering community engagement and multimodal connectivity with support from City leadership.

2. ADVANCE HEALTHY LAND USES, AFFORDABLE HOUSING & ACCESS TO RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES & OPEN SPACE

DEVELOP TRAINING ON CONTEXT-SENSITIVE DENSITY & FORM BASED CODE. With a supportive policy landscape, there is an opportunity to provide guidance to both community members and technical staff on context-sensitive density, including approaches to form based code, a specific priority of College Place. There is a significant need for affordable housing specifically, and more housing diversity (e.g. the “missing middle”) generally. Currently, there are too many large-lot single family homes, and higher density multi-family rental units. There is an opportunity to advance a diversity of housing types, including townhomes, duplexes, quadraplexes, row houses, accessory dwelling units, and multi-family units that are sensitive to the area.

UPDATE RESIDENTIAL CODES & SUPPORT LAND TRUST STRATEGIES TO FURTHER THE DEVELOPMENT OF ‘MISSING MIDDLE’ HOUSING. With housing affordability and diversity on both communities’ priority lists, these will be important components for Blue Zones Project to support. Updating residential codes has seen success in Walla Walla and is one best next step for College Place. Walla Walla recently set a target minimum housing density of four units per acre, an outstanding step toward increasing compact neighborhood (re)development and moving toward densities that will support walkability, transit, and small neighborhood retail nodes. It may be necessary to go further in encouraging a variety of housing types (for rent and ownership) and styles across a range of affordability levels that can be encouraged through additional requirements such as floor-to-area ratios, target densities, and/or with bonus incentives built into the code. With College Place looking to adjust code requirements there could be opportunity for process sharing and collaboration between the jurisdictions.

The Community Council study on housing affordability from 2019 created nearly 30 recommendations around affordable housing, including the creation of a community trust. As of early 2021, the housing trust is a reality, and in its beginning stages. This new agency offers opportunity for supportive energies from Blue Zones Project in advocacy, engagement and education. Additionally, the Walla Walla-initiated housing study offers opportunity for College Place and other communities in the region to look to the recommendations for guidance.

AMEND THE ZONING CODES TO ADDRESS PARKING REQUIREMENTS. While this will look different for the two communities, a key step in furthering their active transportation environment will be to disconnect parking minimums from development requirements. Ideally parking costs should not be subsidized by municipalities or businesses but should be market rate so that consumers can make their decisions to walk, bike, take transit, or drive based on the true costs. By removing parking minimums, and setting maximums allowed in zoning ordinances, the region can help reduce the negative environmental and land use impacts of large surface parking lots and reallocate that land over time to far more productive and valuable uses. This goes hand-in-hand with providing more housing density and variety in mixed walkable districts so that more households can choose to be “car-lite” and even car-free.

ADVANCE AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN FOR THE *BLUE MOUNTAIN REGION TRAILS PLAN*.

Spanning all local jurisdictions, the goal of the *Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan* was to inventory existing bicycle, pedestrian, and other non-motorized trails and transportation infrastructure across the region. Through community engagement, connections and destinations were identified along with a complementary network of non-motorized trails and transportation connections to be implemented as funding allows. Given the robust engagement to deliver this Plan, implementation could be coordinated to deliver both easy wins and leverage regional investments.

IMPLEMENT PLACEMAKING DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS. There are a number of placemaking solutions that can readily be tested through tactical demonstration projects. This includes simple traffic calming and safety measures such as curb extensions, median islands, and mini-circles, and facilities such as buffered and protected bike lanes. One approach that may be particularly relevant and well received, given the success of streetscape demonstrations in Walla Walla during the pandemic, would be the creation of parklets. These are small public parks, often placed in one or two parking spaces, empty lots, or under-utilized urban space. They can provide space for seating, play structures for children, bike parking, food vendors or street performers, and in fact are only limited by the community's imagination.



Image: Walla Walla County offers many examples of creative placemaking. By demonstrating interventions to encourage walking, cycling, and transit use, the community can become engaged in delivering solutions to built environment challenges, like missing sidewalks on overly wide, speed-inducing streets. This is an opportunity to reverse an era of over-building streets that encouraged speed and failed pedestrians and bicyclists.

3. ENSURE SAFER ROUTES & SUPPORT TRANSIT INTEGRATION

ADVANCE VALLEY TRANSIT'S COMPREHENSIVE OPERATIONAL ANALYSIS UPDATE.

Valley Transit is currently updating its operational multi-year horizon plan, and with that comes the opportunity for the Blue Zones Project team to assist with gathering feedback and supporting authentic, inclusive engagement strategies. This should include input on current routes and frequencies, challenges and needs, bus stop assessments, and partnership development. Some of these plan elements are described further in the opportunities below. Blue Zones is ready to help support the synthesis and framing of this updated operational analysis, including a focus on, and systematic prioritization of, serving those most reliant on transit as a means to access services, employment and resources.

INCREASE TRANSIT COORDINATION WITH AN EMPHASIS ON CAMPUS USERS. With students traveling from the local higher education campuses into the downtowns for services, work, goods and entertainment, the ability for multimodal transportation to, from, and between is critical, including transit. These student bodies are a perfect audience for a model transportation demand management (TDM) initiative. This could include, but is certainly not limited to, creating a transit pass inclusion program for students (and ideally faculty and staff) through which a fixed fee is paid to Valley Transit, and all IDs then act as transit passes. This, then, provides resources to Valley Transit to extend service, improve timing and headways, infrastructure and equipment, provide special event service, and in general be more responsive to user demand. This model of TDM can then be expanded to include large employers, healthcare organizations, and city and county governments.

PERFORM ACCESSIBILITY AUDITS AT TRANSIT STOPS. This is a critical component for developing an equitable transportation system. The ideal transit stop is much more than a sign on a post. Ideally it includes a shelter, seating, possibly a trash can and bike parking, and a current schedule and map. People using transit in winter cities need special consideration for climate, as well as comfort, connectivity and fully accessible routes to and from transit stops (often referred to first mile-last mile support). Assessing and improving these seemingly simple elements can have a tremendous positive impact on transit use. Eugene, Oregon, provides excellent models for the design, operations, and maintenance of transit facilities.

DEVELOP A SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL TOOLKIT. With aligned plans and practices in place, an additional support in the efforts around safe multimodal access to schools in the Walla Walla Valley could be the development of a guidance document that includes the following approaches.

PRIORITIZE TRAFFIC CALMING AROUND SCHOOLS.

SCHOOLS. It is challenging for children to walk or cycle to school in Walla Walla and College Place, due to wide, impassable roads with sidewalk gaps on key streets and a lack of safe crossing supports. There is a clear need to enhance some



Photo: Walla Walla Valley NACDD/CDC Walkability Virtual Academy team.

routes and crossings to schools with both infrastructure improvements (e.g. with high visibility crosswalks, signs, and warning lights) and program enhancements, such as walking school bus groups, safety patrol, and crossing guards. Rogers School and many examples in College Place provide both good and “we can do better” models.

PROVIDE SHELTERED, SECURE BIKE PARKING AT SCHOOLS. Areas to be explored include sheltered bike corrals near the front of the school entry, or possibly an interior school lobby parking area to recognize and celebrate those bicycling to school. Bike parking can even be designed to be open at arrival and dismissal times, but locked during the day to assure the security of bikes.

OFFER A BIKE MAINTENANCE PROGRAM AT AREA ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. Increasingly, elementary schools are incorporating bicycle skills and safety training in their physical education curriculum, recognizing these as foundational skills for a lifetime of physical activity. Even better are programs which also make available training on bicycle maintenance and repair; this could be provided by adult cyclists in the area, or select high school students who earn community service hours or simply volunteer to service and repair bikes and mentor elementary and middle school bike riders. The most powerful programs even provide opportunities for young riders to earn a bike through their attendance in the program; these bikes can be donated and/or constructed from abandoned and donated bikes and parts.



Image: Leaving the historic centers of Walla Walla and College Place, streets become wide and encourage speeding, despite posted speed limits. This creates an uncomfortable experience that discourages active transportation.

CONCLUSION

With a strong downtown focus, great family-centered neighborhoods, well-located educational institutions, a care for preserving agricultural and nearby wooded lands, and an awareness of the challenges associated with growth, Walla Walla Valley is in a good position to advance a healthier future for its residents. The region would benefit from training and funding supports to coordinate efforts, ensure suitable development within urban growth boundaries and to orient staff and draw together elected leaders, partners, and residents around good built environment practices.

These communities can build upon the historic town center of Walla Walla, build a missing town center in College Place, maximize the gifts of population growth, quality health care, and learning centers, and become a model for livability, great governance, partnering, and responsible urban growth.

The Blue Zones team is well positioned to support the community as it focuses on Complete Streets projects, healthy land use practices, and multimodal planning to ensure safe routes for all, ultimately advancing the community's stated values.



Images: Encouraging healthy behaviors requires a built environment supportive of these choices. With so much already underway, it makes total sense to apply Blue Zones' principles, policies and programs to become the model for all small to medium size towns in America. Let's make the healthy choice the easy choice in Walla Walla Valley.

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TOBACCO POLICY & ENVIRONMENT DISCOVERY REPORT

Walla Walla Valley, Washington

March 9, 2021

**Author:
Richard Killingsworth
Senior Advisor, Tobacco Policy
Blue Zones Project**

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DISCOVERY ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

An assessment of the readiness of Walla Walla Valley, Washington (the cities of Walla Walla and College Place) to implement, support and sustain tobacco policy and environmental changes was conducted during January-February 2021. Several key local community stakeholders participated in telephone interviews and information sharing that informed this report.

Strikingly, even during the COVID-19 pandemic, tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke remains a leading public health threat. In addition to tobacco-related death and disease, smoking also increases the risk of the most severe impacts of COVID-19, making ending tobacco use more important than ever.¹ The nation's leading public health institutions remain vigilant and continue to call on federal and state governments to enact meaningful policies that will prevent and reduce tobacco use.

Not surprisingly, the tobacco industry spends about \$90 million annually marketing their products in Washington state.² While the tobacco industry continues to spend Washington State's funding for Tobacco Prevention Program (TPP) continues to drop significantly³. This has limited the program's ability to support statewide and community-based activities, help tobacco users quit, monitor changes in tobacco use, and combat emerging and persistent challenges, such as youth use of e-cigarettes and tobacco-related disparities.

In 2019, nearly \$550 million in state revenue was generated through Master Settlement Agreement payments and state taxes on tobacco products. The TPP received \$2.1 million in state funding in FY2020—approximately three percent of the minimum funding level recommended by CDC.⁴ Countering this financial disadvantage requires strategic approaches by all tobacco prevention stakeholders if impact is to be expected statewide and this is especially true for the current initiative in the Walla Walla Valley.

Additionally, the greatest single challenge to implementing policy-based efforts in the Walla Walla Valley continues to be the existing preemption law limiting local governments' ability to enact local policies to protect the health of their residents. Washington State currently preempts most local government action to prevent and control use of tobacco and e-cigarette products. As a result, it is more likely that initial policy-based activities might be focused on voluntary adoption and enforcement.

Based on the information obtained through stakeholder interviews and information obtained from state and local organizations related to existing tobacco prevention and control efforts, there appears to be high interest and support to initiate more comprehensive tobacco-free related efforts in the Walla Walla Valley.

¹ (American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control, 2021)

² (Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2020)

³ (Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2020)

⁴ (Washington State Health Care Authority Employee Health Benefits, 2021)

The conclusions of the Discovery process reveal that the existing strategies and goals of the on-going state and local tobacco prevention and control efforts are aligned with the current evidence-base and complement the Blue Zone Project Smoke-Free and Tobacco-Free Policy Menu, and there appears to be a significant opportunity to advance tobacco-free policy efforts in the Walla Walla Valley through and in partnership with the Blue Zones Project.

This current Blue Zones Project in the Walla Walla Valley will enhance existing tobacco policy and programming efforts supported by the Washington State Department of Health, Benton Franklin Health District and Walla Walla County Department of Community Health among many others who are focused on tobacco and other substance abuse prevention and control (see Resource Section for respective state, district and county strategic plans and needs assessments). Nonetheless, to adopt additional best practice policies and programs, it is evident that public health and the local Blue Zones Project team will need to recruit and train additional partners to achieve a significant impact.

Recognizing the varied efforts currently being implemented and promoted throughout the Walla Walla Valley it will be critical that high level communication and collaboration be prioritized so these initiatives can be integrated to build synergy resulting in greater success and improved health outcomes for the community. This will also ensure the likelihood of sustainability.

Furthermore, it is important to recognize that as the initial Blue Zone Project policy efforts are adopted, there will be a need to implement the initiative at a much larger geographic scope beyond municipal and county level. To sustain long-term behavior change it will be important to expand efforts to have the greatest sustainable impact.

Additionally, all partners should bring resources to the effort, whether in funding or personnel as partnerships need resources to develop long-term capacity to execute the strategic priorities and sustain them. Capacity determines the ability to perform and without proper attention to development and alignment of resources, the efforts may not fully deploy or be successful.

In conclusion, based on the information obtained during the Discovery process, it appears that there is adequate readiness to support tobacco prevention and control policy efforts related to the Blue Zones Project in the Walla Walla Valley.

TOBACCO USE OVERVIEW

Each year, cigarette smoking kills about 8,300 adults in Washington state. Health care costs directly caused by cigarette smoking are estimated to be \$2.8 billion annually.⁵ Cigarette smoking also leads to other costs such as workplace productivity losses. Additionally, there are costs related to non-cigarette commercial tobacco product use, exposure to secondhand smoke, and smoking-caused fires.

Sadly, the health burden of tobacco remains significant:⁶

- 1 in 5 deaths are caused by cigarettes, including secondhand smoke.
- 6 of the 10 leading causes of death are caused by tobacco.
- 8,300 residents die from smoking each year.
- 27.4 percent of cancer deaths are caused by smoking.
- 1,800 youth start smoking daily each year.
- 104,000 youth alive today will die prematurely from smoking.

And the economic costs of tobacco use are alarming:

- \$2.8 billion in state health care costs are caused by smoking annually.
- \$2.2 billion is lost by employers each year from lost productivity.
- \$720 per household is the state and federal tax burden from smoking-caused government expenditures.

⁵ (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017)

⁶ (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017)

TOBACCO USE TRENDS

Youth

Youth	Nation⁷	State⁸	County⁹
<i>Smoking</i>	4.6%	Grade 8: 3% Grade 10: 5% Grade 12: 8%	Grade 6: 1% Grade 8: 6%
<i>E-cigarette</i>	19.6%	Grade 8: 10% Grade 10: 21% Grade 12: 30%	Grade 6: 5% Grade 8: 13%
<i>Marijuana</i>	18.5%	Grade 8: 7% Grade 10: 18% Grade 12: 26%	Grade 6: 2% Grade 8: 11%

Adults

Adult	Nation¹⁰	State¹¹	County
<i>Smoking</i>	12.7%	13.5%	13% ¹²
<i>E-cigarette</i>	19.6%	4.3%	8% ¹³
<i>Marijuana</i>	18.5%	14%	6%

⁷ (National Youth Tobacco Survey, 2020)

⁸ (Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, 2018)

⁹ (Washington State Healthy Youth Survey, 2018)

¹⁰ (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2019)

¹¹ (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2017)

¹² (Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2019)

¹³ (Washington Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2015)

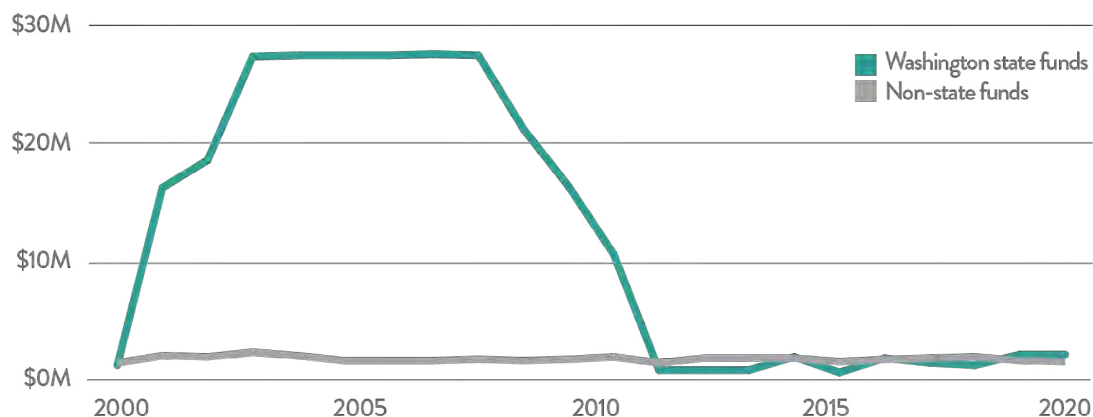
TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CONTROL FUNDING – WASHINGTON

Tobacco prevention and cessation programs are very cost effective. A 2011 study showed that Washington's program saved the state \$5 in just tobacco-related hospitalization costs for every \$1 spent from 2000 to 2009.¹⁴ State funding for Washington's tobacco control program comes from the state tobacco product retailer licensing fees.¹⁵

Nationally, Washington state ranks 41st among all states in commercial tobacco prevention and control funding. Additionally, the National American Lung Association has given Washington state an “F” for FY20 spending on tobacco prevention and control and cessation services.¹⁶

- **FY2021 State Funding for Tobacco Control Programs:** \$2,132,506
- **FY2021 Federal Funding for State Tobacco Control Programs:** \$1,757,311
- **FY2021 Total Funding for State Tobacco Control Programs:** \$3,889,817
- **CDC Best Practices State Spending Recommendation:** \$63,600,000
- **Percentage of CDC Recommended Level:** 6.1%
- **State Tobacco-Related Revenue:** \$521,600,000

Washington State Tobacco Prevention and Control Program Funding 2000-2020¹⁷



¹⁴ (American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control, 2021)

¹⁵ (American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control, 2021)

¹⁶ (Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2020)

¹⁷ (Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2020)

TOBACCO CESSATION COVERAGE

State Medicaid Program:¹⁸

The Affordable Care Act requires all Medicaid programs cover all tobacco cessation medications beginning January 1, 2014. All 7 FDA-approved medications are covered by all plans. Coverage of individual and phone counseling varies by plan. Coverage of treatment is subject to annual limits, duration limits and stepped therapy.

- **Medications:** All seven medications are covered
- **Counseling:** Minimal counseling is covered
- **Barriers to Coverage:** Minimal barriers exist to access care
- **Medicaid Expansion:** Yes

State Employee Health Plan(s):¹⁹

The Washington State Public Employees Benefits Board covers NRT gum, patch, bupropion and varenicline in all plans. Group counseling is covered. Coverage of individual and phone counseling varies by plan. Prior authorization varies by plan.

- **Medications:** Some medications are covered
- **Counseling:** Most counseling is covered
- **Barriers to Coverage:** Some barriers exist to access care

State Quitline:²⁰

The Washington State Quitline has been available since 2000 and it provides free, confidential, one-on-one counseling from a Quit Coach, and participants may be eligible for free medication to help quit smoking, vaping, or other tobacco use. There is also an app service called “2Morrow Health” which provides an anonymous, self-guided cessation program. Furthermore, the North American Quitline Consortium ranked Washington state second in the nation on participant quit rate, third-to-last in the nation on treatment reach, and last in the nation on Quitline spending, at \$0.35 per adult who smokes in the state.

- **Quitline Investment Per Smoker:** \$0.35; median investment per smoker \$2.28
- **Private Insurance Mandate:** No provision
- **Tobacco Surcharge:** No prohibition or limitation on tobacco surcharges

¹⁸ (CDC State System Medicaid Coverage of Tobacco Cessation Treatments Fact Sheet, 2021)

¹⁹ (Washington State Health Care Authority Employee Health Benefits, 2021)

²⁰ (Washington State Quitline, 2021)

TOBACCO CONTROL POLICY – WASHINGTON

The recent decline in national adult cigarette smoking rates stopped in 2019 remaining essentially flat compared to the previous year at 14%. Overall adult tobacco use registered an increase nationally from 19.7% in 2018 to 20.8% in 2019. This means 50.6 million Americans currently use tobacco products.²¹

The adult tobacco use rate also masks significant disparities among races/ethnicities and due to socio-economic factors. Use of tobacco products remains particularly high among Native Americans and Alaskan Natives at 29.3% and Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual adults at 29.9%.²² Adults with mental illness and substance abuse also endure significantly higher rates of smoking. According to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health tobacco use remains the leading cause of preventable death and disease in the United States and in Washington.

The tobacco industry continues to spend enormous amounts of money to market their products - \$90 million annually in Washington, and that is more than 50 times what the state tobacco prevention and control program receive in state funding to prevent tobacco use.²³

Since the implementation of the original Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP) in 1999, Washington state has seen significant overall declines in cigarette smoking and increasing public awareness of the harmful effects of commercial tobacco use. The table below details the social determinants of health (SDOH) and corresponding tobacco control policies that - in the absence of statewide preemption- could address them, and resulting health outcomes.

Washington State Department of Health – Strategic Plan 2020²⁴

Social Determinants of Health	Economic stability • employment • income + debt • expenses • medical bills • support	Physical environment • housing • transportation • safety • parks/playgrounds • walkability • zip code	Education • literacy • language • early childhood education • vocational training • higher education	Food • hunger • access to healthy options	Community context • social integration • support systems • community engagement • discrimination • stress	Health care system • health coverage • provider availability • provider linguistic/cultural competency • quality of care
Preempted tobacco control policy	Closing the loophole of trade discount/coupon tactics that undercut public health interventions	Restrict commercial tobacco retailers from operating near schools and/or high-risk areas.	Permit the adoption of retailer licensing by localities, with license fees to fund community-led prevention programming	Ban commercial tobacco sales in retailers where low-cost food is sold (e.g., dollar stores)	Ban menthol commercial tobacco product sales	Prohibit commercial tobacco sales in pharmacies, as tobacco is antithetical to promoting health
Health outcomes: mortality, morbidity, life expectancy, health care expenditures, health status, functional limitation						

²¹ (American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control, 2021)

²² (2021-2025 Washington Department of Health Strategic Plan)

²³ (2021-2025 Washington Department of Health Strategic Plan)

²⁴ (Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2020)

Washington's tobacco prevention and control program is working to eliminate barriers to help smokers quit for good. Most smokers try several times to quit successfully, so eliminating barriers to quitting is a critical way to help smokers quit. Nonetheless, the American Lung Association's *State of Tobacco Control – 2020 report*²⁵ graded Washington with a "F" because of weak or no policies in several categories, and calls for the following actions to be taken by Washington's elected officials to help reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke:

1. Prohibit the sale of all flavored tobacco products;
2. Establish tax parity with all tobacco products; and
3. Defend clean indoor air laws.

Statewide Policy Priorities

The Washington State Tobacco Prevention and Control program has four statewide policy priorities it will support to reduce the harmful effects of tobacco use and they are identified below.

1. Demonstrate the importance of restoring funding for an evidence-based, statewide tobacco prevention and control program at the CDC-recommended annual investment of \$44-63 million annually.
2. Educate policymakers and stakeholders on the value of local control to allow for local regulation of tobacco products.
3. Establish partnerships to address health insurance regulations so that all licensed health care providers can be reimbursed for providing tobacco dependence treatment.
4. Extend restrictions on flavored commercial tobacco products, including flavored e-cigarettes, menthol cigarettes, and flavored cigars.

Statewide Goals

The Washington State Tobacco Prevention and Control program has four statewide goals, and they are identified below.

1. Reduce tobacco-related disparities among priority populations.
2. Prevent tobacco use among youth and young adults.
3. Leverage resources for promoting and supporting tobacco dependence treatment.
4. Eliminate exposure to secondhand smoke and electronic cigarette emissions.

²⁵ (American Lung Association's *State of Tobacco Control – 2020 report*)

Local Strategy and Needs

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) provides funding to nine geographic regions across the state. Walla Walla County is part of the Greater Columbia Region and Benton-Franklin Health District (BFHD) is the lead agency for funding and contract deliverables. BFHD then contracts with agencies in each county, including the Walla Walla County Department of Community of Health, to provide local implementation of the previously mentioned state priorities and goals.

Walla Walla County conducted a Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA) in 2018 that provides an excellent snapshot of the health and well-being of Walla Walla County residents. The CHNA identified several opportunities to consider in aligning efforts through the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP).²⁶ Among many issues identified, the CHIP mentions the need for additional data, including health behavior data, data on children and on specific health issues. Furthermore, the CHNA will inform the updated version of the CHIP

The local plan was developed with input from local community service providers, health care agencies, business partners, non-profit organizations, government agencies and community members, and this collective voice provides key insight into the community needs well beyond tobacco. These strategic plans and needs assessments from state to local agencies provide a truly collaborative opportunity to inform the current Blue Zones Project in the Walla Walla Valley. Tobacco prevention and control was not explicitly identified as a community need; however, local leaders consider tobacco to be included with the substance use priority and tobacco prevention and control efforts will be supported under behavioral health initiatives. As a result, it will be important to consult these documents as key resources in the conversations with key stakeholders in the planning process because they provide specific guidance from local agencies and partners to improve the health and well-being for all residents in the Walla Walla Valley and county.

²⁶ (Walla Walla County Community Health Improvement Plan 2019-2023, 2019)

PREEMPTION

Preemption limits local governments' ability to enact local policies to protect the health of their residents.²⁷ Washington state currently preempts most local government action to

prevent and control use of tobacco and e-cigarette products including constraints on implementing place-based policy options that could restrict the total number of retailers based on city or county population or prohibit new retailers from setting up shop near existing retailers.²⁸

Nonetheless, despite the constraints of preemption, smoking is prohibited in virtually all public places, including restaurants, bars, and non-tribal casinos. A "public place" is defined as that portion of any building or vehicle used by and open to the public, regardless of whether the building or vehicle is owned in whole or in part by private persons or entities. This includes a presumptively reasonable minimum distance of 25 feet from entrances, exits, windows that open and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited. Vapor products are prohibited in select public places, including schools and childcare facilities.

Stronger Local Laws on Smoking

Stronger local laws/ordinances further restricting smoking are not allowed and are limited in scope for vapor products (e-cigarettes and related products). Localities in Washington are preempted from enacting clean indoor air ordinances stronger than state law. No political subdivision may regulate the use of vapor products in outdoor public places, unless the public place is an area where children congregate, such as schools, playgrounds, and parks. Political subdivisions may regulate the use of vapor products in indoor public places.

Exceptions to the Law

A public place does not include a private residence unless the private residence is used to provide licensed childcare, foster care, adult care, or other similar social service care on the premises. It is also not intended to restrict smoking in private facilities which are occasionally open to the public except upon the occasions when the facility is open to the public. Vapor product (e-cigarette and related product) use is allowed under state law in public places and workplaces with a few exceptions.

²⁷ (American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control, 2021)

²⁸ (Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan, 2020)

SMOKING RESTRICTIONS²⁹

- **Government Workplaces:** Prohibited
- **Private Workplaces:** Prohibited
- **Schools:** Prohibited
- **Childcare Facilities:** Prohibited
- **Restaurants:** Prohibited
- **Bars:** Prohibited
- **Casinos/Gaming Establishments:** Prohibited (tribal establishments exempt)
- **Retail Stores:** Prohibited
- **Recreational/Cultural Facilities:** Prohibited
- **E-Cigarettes Included:** No

TOBACCO FUNDING RESOURCES & TAXES

CDC National Tobacco Control Program Funding (Washington)³⁰

- Total NTCP Funding: \$1,437,159
- Total Quitline Funding: \$320,152
- Total FY 2020 Funding: \$1,757,311

Excise Tax Rate on Packs of Cigarettes in Washington (2020)³¹

- Excise Tax Range Summary: \$2.00 to \$3.99
- Excise Tax Rate: 3.025 (National average tax is \$1.88 per pack)
- Washington is ranked 10th for Average State Cigarette Tax³²
- All revenue from the cigarette tax is deposited into the state general fund.

Other Tobacco Product Taxes

- Tax on little cigars: Equalized: Yes; Weight-Based: No
- Tax on large cigars: Equalized: No; Weight-Based: No
- Tax on smokeless tobacco: Equalized: No; Weight-Based: Yes
- Tax on pipe/RYO tobacco: Equalized: Yes; Weight-Based: No
- Tax on Dissolvable Tobacco Products: Equalized: No; Weight-Based: Yes

Use of Tobacco Settlement Dollars

Annual Master Settlement Agreement payments received by Washington are deposited in the tobacco settlement account and may only be transferred to the state general fund or Tobacco Prevention and Control Account.

Tobacco Settlement Payments Received by the States (2019)³³

- Washington- \$118 million

²⁹ (American Lung Association State of Tobacco Control, 2021)

³⁰ (CDC National Tobacco Control Program Funding, 2020)

³¹ (CDC Map of Funding, 2020)

³² (CDC STATE System Excise Tax Fact Sheet, 2020)

³³ (Tobacco Free Kids, 2019)

ASSESSMENT OF STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES & OPPORTUNITIES

This section provides a summary of community strengths, opportunities and challenges related to tobacco prevention and control policy and environment efforts in the Walla Walla Valley. This summary was informed by the Discovery Process and is not exhaustive of all the activities and issues that may be occurring in the Walla Walla Valley. This section is intended to serve as a catalyst in the discussion of how to engage what is most important to prioritize in subsequent tobacco prevention and control efforts. It provides a high-level summary of relevant points that could affect the initiative (positive or negative) and further enables community stakeholders to provide feedback to this list and expand upon it.

Strengths

1. It is important to recognize that smoking is prohibited in "public places". This definition includes schools and educational facilities, and a reasonable minimum distance of 25 feet from entrances, exits, windows that open and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited.
2. The local elected officials have a good reputation among community residents for being supportive of activities and policies related to community health and well-being.
3. Local businesses have been good partners in efforts to improve the health and well-being of the community through local policies and programs.
4. The community has a strong culture of health supported by local partners including the following: College Place Prevention Coalition, Reach Out Walla Walla, Washington State Health Department, Benton-Franklin Health District, and the Walla Walla County Department of Community Health.
5. The outdoor greenspace, especially the parks and trails system, is an exceptional amenity that needs to be protected and sustained. Walla Walla has 15 public parks and College Place has three public parks, all of which are supported by a clean air ordinance that prohibits smoking and vaping.
6. The small geographic area of Walla Walla and College Place lends itself to easily deploying and supporting key policy strategies.
7. The state and local health departments have exceptional staff who are trained to address tobacco prevention and control initiatives.
8. The local public and private schools support tobacco-free policies and cessation efforts seem to be shifting to less punitive approaches.
9. There are three local higher education institutions that can provide support to the efforts and inform tobacco-free campus efforts for implementation and enforcement.

Challenges

1. The preemption law in Washington is restrictive and could possibly constrain local innovation of tobacco prevention efforts.
2. The COVID-19 pandemic has constrained resources to focus on many health-related efforts, especially tobacco prevention and control. This was evident in trying to identify stakeholders who were able to secure sufficient time to participate in the Discovery Process.
3. Washington was provided an overall grade of “F” on the 2020 American Lung Association State of Tobacco Report, an annual report that evaluates states on the proven-effective tobacco control laws and policies. It serves as a blueprint for what state and federal leaders need to do to eliminate tobacco use. The 2020 report focuses on the importance of ending tobacco use amid the pandemic, as smoking is a risk factor for the most severe COVID symptoms. Washington State’s failing grade of “F” was given because Washington needs to do more in prohibiting the sale of all flavored tobacco products; establishing tax parity with all tobacco products; and increasing funding for tobacco prevention and control.
4. There are several vaping shops and marijuana dispensaries in and around Walla Walla and while College Place does not have any marijuana dispensaries there are many ways to obtain tobacco and marijuana from local retailers.
5. Most smokers seem to adhere to “no smoking” policies and signage, but enforcement of tobacco-free outdoor environments is challenging.
6. It is unclear to what extent tobacco prevention programs are available in schools beyond the typical curriculum instruction. Tobacco cessation efforts appear to be addressed through Walla Walla Public Schools Reach Out efforts.
7. Locally, there are a limited number of trained professionals who can provide assistance to implement a comprehensive tobacco prevention and control initiative, especially policy-related efforts.
8. Most of the stakeholders interviewed commented that it appears youth are vaping more openly without any constraint.
9. It does not appear that schools, youth-serving, or faith-based organizations are working formally and jointly to implement tobacco prevention and control efforts.
10. There is no known locally operated tobacco cessation program other than what is offered through the Quitline.
11. The Community Health Needs Assessment documents identified that public perception is that the legalization of marijuana may make it difficult to effectively dissuade youth to prevent initiation of tobacco use or to implement tobacco prevention and control programs.
12. Behavioral Health Initiatives are comprehensive but may not have a sufficient focus on youth tobacco prevention initiatives in the county or school district except for the minimal requirement of what is to be instructed per the approved school curriculum.

Opportunities

1. **Tobacco-Free Messaging & Marketing:** Implement a community-wide tobacco-free marketing and message initiative that focuses principally on a youth prevention and cessation component.
2. **Tobacco-Free Public Spaces:** Develop a Walla Walla Valley-wide public space initiative that focuses on supporting all public spaces (greenspaces, trails, parks, recreation facilities, golf courses, etc..) as tobacco-free spaces.
3. **Higher Education Tobacco Free Campuses:** Develop a more formalized Tobacco-free College Campus initiative. Work closely with higher education campuses in the enhancement of current campus-wide tobacco-free policy efforts and include options for enforcement and cessation.
4. **Tobacco-Free Zones:** Implement voluntary tobacco-free zones or corridors in the central business districts to create healthier destinations. While this would significantly increase smoke-free spaces, it could face pushback from some local businesses and community members.
5. **Smoke-Free Events:** Creating a smoke-free event permitting policy that requires events to be promoted as a smoke-free event by the sponsoring organization and enforced by them.
6. **School District(s) Prevention and Cessation Efforts:** Enhance school district wellness policies to explicitly identify tobacco prevention strategies including youth-led activities focused on enhanced tobacco education and cessation efforts that include non-punitive options.
7. **Intersectoral Tobacco-free Collaboration:** Identify specific sectors such as faith-based, youth-serving, business and others. The local community has many organizations that could provide support either through prevention or cessation and these organizational platforms provide an opportunity to formalize tobacco policy specific to their setting or populations they serve.
8. **Outdoor Patios:** Work with local restaurants and bars to expand smoke-free spaces and include outdoor patio areas and other adjacent spaces.
9. **Health Care System:** Work with local health care providers to implement and/or support tobacco-free campuses, and improved patient education and referral.
10. **Youth-Led Initiatives:** Implement youth-driven initiatives and partner with youth-serving organizations to engage youth in peer-to-peer education and advocacy. Align with local initiative and partners.

CONCLUSION

The Discovery Process revealed that the community has an excellent complement of partners, leaders, experience, and a strong desire to make tobacco-free policy a priority. Walla Walla Valley appears to be well positioned to affect change toward a tobacco-free community. The existing health promotion initiatives provide an excellent foundation for successful tobacco-free efforts to be deployed and sustain.

In conclusion, the Blue Zones Project in Walla Walla Valley will enhance current health promotion initiatives underway and strengthen the opportunity to reinforce community norms that Walla Walla Valley is a place that values health. The tobacco-free efforts that will be supported will undoubtedly strengthen and reinforce all the other Blue Zones Project activities supporting Walla Walla Valley as a community that supports healthier places and people through policy and environmental change.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Discovery Report assessment included an extensive review of several reports, publicly available data, and outreach to key stakeholders via phone and email including but not limited to the following individuals:

- Amy Osterman, Epidemiologist, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
- Andy Coleman, Parks and Recreation Director, City of Walla Walla
- Krista Timm, Behavior Health Program Specialist/Regional Youth Marijuana Prevention Program, Walla Walla County Department of Community Health
- Malia Lewis, Campus Sexual Assault Victims Advocate, YWCA Walla Walla (previously Recovery Support Ally & Advocate for Trilogy Recovery Community)
- Mike Rizzitiello, City Administrator, City of College Place
- Stacia Wasmundt, Youth Tobacco Prevention Coordinator/Commercial Tobacco Prevention Program (CTPP) & Marijuana Prevention and Education Program (MPEP), Washington State Department of Health
- Vanessa McCollum, Public Health Educator, Benton-Franklin Health District

AUTHOR

Richard Killingsworth, M.P.H. is a senior advisor for tobacco policy to the Blue Zones Project. He also serves as the Director of the Center for Public Private Partnerships in Health at the University of Delaware where he is also an Associate Professor in the College of Health Sciences – Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition.

Katie Palmiere, B.S. is a graduate research assistant in the College of Health Sciences, Department of Behavioral Health and Nutrition at the University of Delaware.

RESOURCES

National Resources

- American Lung Association: State Legislated Actions on Tobacco Issues (SLATI) provides extensively researched sources of information on tobacco control laws and policy and is the only comprehensive summary of state tobacco control laws.
- American Lung Association: State of Tobacco Control provides an assessment of how states are performing in tobacco control laws and policies.
- Americans for Non-Smokers' Rights is dedicated to reducing exposure to secondhand smoke. Their site features regularly updated maps of smoke-free communities and a great deal of information on secondhand smoke.
- BRFSS Survey Results: The NC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System is a comprehensive telephone survey of adults ages 18 and older. Every year a core set of tobacco questions are asked. In addition, tobacco modules on topics such as secondhand smoke and other tobacco products may be included.
- Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids is a major advocacy organization aimed at reducing tobacco use among kids and adults. The site has statistics, reports, and news on tobacco control issues.
- CDC's State Tobacco Activities Tracking and Evaluation (STATE) System is an interactive application that presents current and historical state-level data on tobacco use prevention and control.
- CDC's Office on Smoking and Health offers statistics, a link to the Surgeon General's Reports on smoking issues, and information on quitting and making your place of business smoke-free.
- County Health Rankings and Roadmaps provides a revealing snapshot of how health is influenced by where we live, learn, work, and play. They provide a starting point for change in communities.
- FDA Center for Tobacco Products is responsible for carrying out the Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which Congress passed in 2009. This law—commonly called the Tobacco Control Act—gives the FDA broad authority to regulate the manufacturing, distribution, and marketing of tobacco products.
- Kaiser Family Foundation State Health Facts provides the Actual Tobacco Settlement payments received by the states in 2019.
- Public Health Law Center supports commercial tobacco control policy change and the commercial tobacco control movement throughout the United States, developing resources on the most effective legal and policy measures that health leaders and policymakers can use to control the epidemic of commercial tobacco use in the United States and abroad.
- Tobacco Control Network: TCN is dedicated to preventing and reducing harms related to tobacco use through idea sharing across U.S. state and territorial health agencies. The organization hosts meetings and webinars, along with “As Your Peer,” which allows tobacco control programs to gather ideas from across the U.S. and its territories.

- Tobacco Education Clearinghouse: A non-profit organization, with a mandate from the State of California to make tobacco education materials available at very low cost or, sometimes, free, to other agencies throughout the United States. The information presented in their material is developed by public health and education professionals.
- Truth Initiative is dedicated to building a tobacco-free generation. Funded by Tobacco Master Settlement Agreement Funds they sponsor the truth campaign and other tobacco prevention and cessation programs and campaigns.

State Resources

- Educational Service District 123 provides a network of support for schools and increases access to care for students.
- Healthy Youth Survey, Walla Walla (2014) provides important data about the health of adolescents in Washington, including coverage of the individual counties.
- Healthy Youth Survey, Walla Walla (2018) provides important data about the health of adolescents in Washington, including coverage of the individual counties.
- Local control provides a summary of local control and preemption in the state of Washington.
- Programs in Washington provides a resource page for several smoking cessation programs in the state of Washington.
- Strategic Plan The 2021–2025 Washington State Commercial Tobacco Prevention and Control 5-Year Strategic Plan provides goals, strategies, and tactics that will guide commercial tobacco prevention and control throughout Washington state.
- Tobacco and Vapor Product Resources and Tools: Washington State Department of Health is provided by the Washington State Department of Health to ensure individuals have adequate access to necessary resources.
- Tobacco and Vapor Products Data and Reports is provided by the Washington State Department of Health aimed to display the latest data available on tobacco and vapor product use rates in Washington, including its health and economic burden.
- Tobacco Use and Behavioral Health represents the connection between tobacco use and behavioral health among the state of Washington.
- Washington Healthy Youth Survey (2018) provides important data about the health of adolescents in Washington. County prevention coordinators, community mobilization coalitions, community public health and safety networks, and others use this information to guide policy and programs that serve youth.
- Washington Laws and Regulations is provided by the Washington State Department of Health aimed to display the latest data available on tobacco and vapor product use rates in Washington, including its health and economic burden.

- Washington State Healthcare Authority purchases health care for more than 2.5 million Washington residents through Apple Health (Medicaid), the Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB) Program, the School Employees Benefits Board (SEBB) Program, and the COFA Islander Health Care Program.
- Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board provides information and resources regarding the tobacco and vapor laws in Washington
- Washington State Public Health Association's 2021 Legislative Priorities provides information from the WSPHA and the Public Health Roundtable's funding and policy priorities for the 2021 Legislative Session
- Washington State Statistical Analysis Center covers the impacts of recreational marijuana legalization in the 2019 update report.

Local Resources

- 2018 Walla Walla County Community Health Report provides an overall picture of the health and well-being of Walla Walla County residents.
- Benton- Franklin 2019 Community Health Needs Assessment identifies and analyzes community needs and assets throughout Benton and Franklin counties
- Benton- Franklin Health District 2018 Annual Report outlines a brief overview of the Health District's programs and services that work to protect and promote the health of the residents and visitors of Benton and Franklin counties.
- Benton-Franklin 2020 Community Health Improvement Plan outlines the Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP), a community level plan of action informed by the months of data collection and analysis that went into the Community Health Needs Assessment
- Benton-Franklin Strategic 2018-2020 Plan provides focus and direction for the next three years and position the district for growth, maximizing all available resources for the greatest public health impact possible.
- Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative (CPWI) provides substance abuse prevention services and strategies through local coalitions in high-need communities.
- Illegal tobacco sales risk federal funding represents Washington's high number of retailers selling to minors, with Walla Walla County among the top.
- Risk and Protection Profile for Substance Abuse Prevention in Walla Walla County provides a comprehensive update of data on the risks of substance abuse among youth in Walla Walla County.
- Sales of Tobacco to Minors Walla Walla County and Washington State (2018) presents a table with both county and state tobacco sale violations.
- Tobacco Retail and Vending Machines is the risk protection profile for substance abuse prevention in Walla Walla County.
- W2 for Drug Free Youth Coalition was created by the Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery aimed to provide substance abuse prevention services and strategies through local coalitions in high-need communities.

- Walla Walla Community College Tobacco Guidelines provides the tobacco guidelines for Walla Walla Community College.
- Walla Walla VA Medical Center Cessation Program is provided through the US Department of Veteran Affairs and offers information regarding the Walla Walla VA Medical Center Cessation Program.
- Youth Marijuana Prevention and Education Program (YMPEP) provides information and resources to reduce use and access to marijuana by youth ages 12-20. Below are resources for youth, parents, and community members to support informed decisions about marijuana use.
- Youth Now provides a collection of research-based materials to use as tools to educate and connect individuals with youth and teens about vaping.

COVER PAGE

Walla Walla Valley Blueprint

Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley

Date

Cover Photo, Logos – BZP, Sponsor

Commented [MD1]: Hello Steering and Leadership Committee Members! Thank you fro taking time to review our Blueprint! We know that the formating is not perfect right now, however it will go to a copy writer for all of the beautification work once we fine tune our Goals, Strategies, and Objectives during the Blueprint Workshop.

Enjoy!

Contents



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ABOUT BLUE ZONES PROJECT

Across the globe lie blue zones areas—places where people reach age 100 at an astonishing rate. People in places like Sardinia, Italy; Okinawa, Japan; and Loma Linda, California, are living vibrant, active lives well into their hundreds—and with a lower rate of chronic disease. National Geographic explorer Dan Buettner documented findings of this eight-year longevity study in his New York Times best-selling book *The Blue Zones—Lessons for Living Longer From the People Who’ve Lived the Longest*. He identified nine shared traits—dubbed the Power 9®—of these longevity hot spots.

Leveraging these secrets discovered in blue zones around the world, Blue Zones Project® delivers proven tools and resources to transform communities across the U.S., helping generations of people live longer, healthier, happier lives by making changes to their environments, policy, and social networks so healthy choices become the easiest to make.

You see, people spend 80 percent of their time in the same places, and those environments dictate how easy it is to make healthy choices, or how difficult. By using the Power 9 to improve where we live, work, learn, and play, we make it easier to get up and move, eat healthy, make new friends, find a reason for being—and live longer, better.

THE POWER 9

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Blue Zones Project® came to the Walla Walla Valley in October 2020 at the invitation of Adventist Health to support their vision to make the Walla Walla Valley an even healthier, happier, and more vibrant place to live. Sharecare and Adventist Health share a commitment to improving the well-being of the Walla Walla Valley, thereby lowering healthcare costs, increasing productivity, and improving the economy and quality of life for all residents.

From December 2020 through March 2021, the Blue Zones Project team assessed the valley's readiness to undertake this community-wide initiative. The Blue Zones Project team conducted a comprehensive analysis of the current state of well-being and met with local leaders and stakeholders across all sectors to learn about the strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improving well-being in the valley. The team's findings are summarized in the Blue Zones Project Discovery Report (available upon request to Blue Zones Project team). The findings in that report were coupled with expert-led discovery meetings in the policy areas of built environment, tobacco, and food policy to inform this Blueprint for Blue Zones Project implementation in the Walla Walla Valley.

Blue Zones Project Community Leadership

Blue Zones Project's success is dependent on the leadership of community influencers across all of the sectors Blue Zones Project engages, including community planners and decision makers, schools, worksites, restaurants, grocery stores, faith-based organizations, civic and non-profit groups, and media. The committee structure for Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley is below:

LEADERSHIP and COMMITTEE GRAPHIC

A Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley steering committee was formed in December 2020. The individuals on this committee as well as committee co-chairs collectively informed the creation of this Blueprint, drawing upon Blue Zones Project's Discovery Phase findings

In March 2021, sector committees—comprised of community members focused on each of the sector areas of schools, worksites, community policy, restaurants & grocery stores, faith-based organizations, and individual engagement—will create an implementation plan for achieving the strategies outlined in this Blueprint. These sector committees—led by committee co-chairs who together compose the leadership team—will play an important role in improving community well-being by engaging organizations and individuals, advocating for policy change, and increasing community awareness and engagement.

Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley Steering Committee and Leadership Team Members:

Steering Committee

- Susan Blackburn, CEO, Providence St. Mary's Healthcare
- Alex Bryan, Chief Mission Officer, Adventist Health
- Elizabeth Chamberlain, Deputy City Manager, City of Walla Walla
- Susie Colombo, Community Advocate/Baker Boyer Bank
- Tim Copland, Executive Director, Blue Mountain Land Trust
- Kathy Covey, CEO, Blue Mountain Community Council
- Roger Esparza, Relator, Latino Engagement

Commented [MD2]: @Briana Fountain are we talking about the Discovery and Planning phase? Or the original Site Visit?

Commented [BF3R2]: Let's leave it as is.

Commented [MD4]: @Briana Fountain do you have this? Or is it the Committee Placemat?

Commented [BF5R4]: The design team will add this graphic into the document.

Commented [MD6]: Question for Briana - we will use the Blueprint to create an implementation plan with the committees?

Commented [BF7R6]: Correct!

Commented [RT8]: @Meghan DeBolt I entered all of the committee members that we have so far.

- Danielle Garbe Reser, Community Advocate
- Mike Fredrickson, Appraiser/Commissioner, Port of Walla Walla
- Noah Leavitt, Community Advocate
- David Lopez, Director, Center for Humanitarian Engagement, Walla Walla University
- Mike Rizzitiello, Administrator, City of College Place
- Wade Smith, Superintendent, Walla Walla Public Schools
- Heather Schermann, Councilmember, City of College Place
- Norman Thiel, Executive Director, Sonbridge Community Center
- Amanda Trejo-Perez, Neighborhood Organizer, Commitment to Community

Leadership Committee

Built Environment

- Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer, Executive Director, Walla Walla Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
- Seth Walker, Deputy Engineer, Walla Walla County

Food Policy

- Vicki Zanes, Owner, Andy's Market
- Erendira Cruz, Executive Director, Sustainable Living Center

Tobacco Policy

- Krista Timm, Behavioral Health Program Specialist, Walla Walla County

Worksites

- Kyle Tabert, CEO, Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Pam Taylor, Human Resources Director, City of Walla Walla

Schools

- Maria Garcia, Principal, Sharpstein Elementary
- Robert Aguilar, Principal, College Place High School

Grocery Stores & Restaurants (TBD)

Faith-Based & Community Organizations (TBD)

Engagement

- Jonathan Simons, Assistant Director, Center for Humanitarian Engagement, Walla Walla University
- Amanda Trejo-Perez, Neighborhood Organizer, Commitment to Community
- Delia Gutierrez, Neighborhood Organizer, Commitment to Community

CERTIFICATION CRITERIA

To become a Blue Zones Community®, Walla Walla Valley will implement well-being improvement strategies in thirteen pillar areas focused on people, places, and policy. Achieving these targets will allow the community to reach a tipping point so that positive environmental changes become ingrained in the community and the healthy choice becomes the easy choice for all residents.

	Pillar	Goal	COMMUNITY Targets
1	Built Environment		For each community (Walla Walla and College Place): adopt three local policies or plans, complete three capacity building initiatives, and complete three demonstration projects, inclusive of one marquee project.
2	Food Policy		For each community (Walla Walla and College Place): adopt at least three local policies, plans or sustainable programs, two capacity building initiatives and one food marquee project.
3	Tobacco Policy		For each community (Walla Walla and College Place): adopt at least two local policies and one capacity building initiative.
4A	Schools		At least 50 percent (#) of public schools become Blue Zones Project Approved™.
4B	Walking School Bus/Safe Routes to School		At least 25 percent (#) of participating elementary schools implement one of the following: • Walking School Bus • Complete a new Safe Routes to School program (Four safe routes to school per participating school) • Bus-to-Walk Program
5	Restaurants		At least 10 percent (#) of all restaurants become Blue Zones Project Approved.
6	Grocery Stores		At least 25 percent (#) of grocery stores become Blue Zones Project Approved.
7	Worksites		At least 10 of the 20 largest employers become Blue Zones Project Approved.

Commented [MD9]: To be completed AFTER goals are finalized through the Blueprint Workshop

9-12	Engagement – Individual, Pledges, Moai® Participation, Purpose, Volunteering		At least 15 percent of the population 15 years or older (#) participates in one of the following: • Receives the Blue Zones Story and signs a Personal Pledge • Participates in a Moai • Attends a Purpose Workshop • Volunteers through Blue Zones Project
13	Public Awareness/ Media		Achieve one of the following: • 10 media stories in the highest exposure channels (TV, print, and/or radio) throughout the duration of the Project • Signed partnership agreement for Public Service Announcements throughout the duration of the project

Measures of Success

Attaining optimal well-being means that our physical, emotional, and social health is thriving. Blue Zones Project is committed to measurably improving the well-being of Walla Walla Valley residents and utilizes rigorous metrics to inform strategies and track progress throughout the life of the project. These include certification criteria targets, well-being-data, community-wide metrics, sector-level progress and outcome metrics, and organization-level metrics to ensure that the work to transform community well-being is occurring and the anticipated outcomes are achieved.

Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley is utilizing the RealAge™ Test to collect community well-being data. The RealAge Test is an on-line survey that allows respondents to learn their “real age” based on questions related to their overall well-being. The RealAge test is a scientifically-based assessment that has been taken by more than 45 million people over the past 20 years. The test gathers information on health conditions, health behaviors, biometrics, emotional health, healthcare history, and more to identify an individual’s mortality risk and to provide custom insights to the individual about what actions they can take to live healthier and longer.

We deployed the RealAge Test survey to Walla Walla Valley residents on February 1 to establish a well-being baseline before Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley implementation begins. We will survey the community in subsequent years to track progress over time. The results will be shared with the Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley committee members and sponsors once they are compiled. The table below highlights the key WBI metrics that the Project tracks as they are most related to Blue Zones Project people, places, and policy strategies.

Commented [MD10]: @Katherine DePoncy do you remeber the date?

Commented [KD11R10]: @Meghan DeBolt I think we can say Feb. 1

Well-Being Index – Measures Most Impacted by Blue Zones Project
Overall
Life evaluation (% Thriving)
Purpose Well-Being Score
You like what you do every day. (% Agree)
You learn or do something interesting every day. (% Agree)
Social Well-Being Score
Your friends and family give you positive energy every day. (% Agree)
Someone in your life always encourages you to be healthy. (% Agree)
Community Well-Being Score
The city or area where you live is a perfect place for you. (% Agree)
In the last 12 months, you have received recognition for helping to improve the city or area where you live. (% Agree)
Physical Well-Being Score
% with high blood pressure
% with high cholesterol
In the last seven days, you have felt active and productive every day. (% Agree)
% Who smoke
% who exercised for 30+ minutes 3+ days in last week
% who had 5+ servings of fruits and vegetables 4+ days in last week
% Obese
% Normal Weight

Community-Wide Measures

The steering committee and leadership team identified the following additional measures that will be tracked to demonstrate community-wide economic impact and well-being improvement.

Selected Measure	Status	Source

Commented [MD12]: For this section we will use this document: BZP Measurement Overview 2020 Updated

Sector-Level Progress and Outcome Measures

This Blueprint contains progress and outcome metrics for each sector. Progress metrics track progress on the strategies outlined for that sector while outcome metrics track well-being or organizational changes occurring in that sector.

Organization-Level Measures

Each organization that participates in Blue Zones Project will identify metrics to track within their organization to measure changes in well-being that occur as they implement Blue Zones Project best practices.

COMMUNITY BLUEPRINT

Our Purpose: To lead a community well-being transformation initiative where the healthy choice becomes the easy choice through permanent changes in environment, policy, and social networks.

Our Results:

- Improved health and well-being with lower associated healthcare costs
- Improved economic and social vitality
- Increased public awareness about health and well-being

POLICY

Walla Walla Valley Policy Certification Criteria

Built Environment	Tobacco	Food
• Select, design, secure funding for two demonstration projects and a marquee project (each community could do a similar demo project like a pop up traffic circle/parklet so there is efficiencies/synergy). • Adopt/update, at minimum, three local policies or plans (i.e. could select synergistic policies or plans to work on like CS Policy adopted in each city or Pedestrian Plan that includes both WW and CP) • Implement three capacity building initiatives (both communities can be part of one initiative)	• Adopt at minimum two local policies • Implement one capacity building initiative (can include more than one community in an initiative)	• Implement one food marquee project • Adopt at minimum three local policies, plans or sustainable programs • Implement two capacity building initiatives (can include more than one community in an initiative)

Important Definitions

Food Marquee Project – A way to move policy into practice by creating lasting changes to a community’s food environment that fosters healthy eating and minimizes access to unhealthy food. A marquee project should reflect the power and potential of community collaboration to dictate the design of the community’s future food system and to chart a healthy future for all.

Built Environment Marquee Project – A way to move policy into practice by creating lasting change to the built environment that encourages active transportation and living. The marquee project should

apply several best practices for creating vibrant, livable communities and inspire people to collectively reimagine public spaces.

Policy/Plan – A rule or plan of action adopted by government or an organization to guide decisions and achieve outcomes.

Capacity Building Initiative – A non-infrastructure project that focuses on education and encouragement activities intended to change community behavior, attitude and social norms.

BUILT ENVIRONMENT

In the works - To be added at a later date

FOOD

Goal: Create an environment in the Walla Walla Valley where healthy foods and beverages are embraced and universally accessible.

Food Policy Certification Targets:

1. Implement one food marquee project per community (Walla Walla and College Place);
2. Adopt at minimum three local policies, plans or sustainable programs per community; and
3. Implement two capacity building initiatives per community (can include more than one community in an initiative).

Year One Target:

- To be determined by Food Policy Committee co-chairs and steering committee

Potential Marquee Projects:

- Institutionalize support for **school gardens** and pair gardens with curriculum for school garden-based learning; establish one new school garden.
- Pass policies and seek funding to support the installation of **hydration stations** in public spaces like parks, schools and recreation facilities.
- Support the development of a **food hub** serving the Walla Walla and College Place communities through fundraising and location identification.

Objective #1: Enhance youth access to healthy food and beverage options.

Strategies:

1. **Policy:** Develop/enhance healthy food **procurement** policy for area school districts.
2. **Policy:** Establish/update and enforce institutional **wellness policies** that eliminate sugar sweetened beverages in schools, after-school programs, parks and recreation sites and programs.

3. **Policy:** Support efforts to revisit and update food and beverage related school **wellness policies** for public and private schools in College Place and Walla Walla to align with Blue Zones Project nutritional guidelines and offer healthy, diverse options.
4. **Capacity Building/Potential Marquee Project:** Institutionalize support for **school gardens** and pair gardens with curriculum for school garden-based learning.

Objective #2: Increase healthy food and beverage access with an emphasis on underserved community members.

Strategies:

1. **Program:** Explore and expand existing **Produce Rx program** and prioritize individuals with barriers to food access including seniors, low-income households, and individuals who experience chronic disease or transportation challenges.
2. **Program/Potential Marquee Project:** Pass policies and seek funding to support the installation of **hydration stations** in public spaces like parks, schools and recreation facilities.
3. **Policy/Program: Identify barriers** for individuals seeking to access hunger relief services and work to remove key barriers.
4. **Capacity Building:** Target food distribution where people experiencing food insecurity **work or live**, and work with emergency food providers to institutionalize this practice to ensure sustainability.

Objective #3: Expand access to locally grown food across varied environments in Walla Walla and College Place.

Strategies:

1. **Policy:** Adopt policies that protect and **support community gardens** (specifically in underserved neighborhoods) and zoning for urban agriculture.
2. **Capacity Building/Potential Marquee Project:** Support the development of a **food hub** serving the Walla Walla and College Place communities through fundraising and location identification. This could serve as the food marquee project for both Walla Walla and College Place.

Objective #4: Invest in long-term, sustainable support for food-related health and wellness in the Walla Walla Valley while promoting cross-organizational collaboration.

Strategies:

1. **Capacity Building:** Add capacity to the **Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition** and support its function as a regional food policy council.

Food Policy Measures of Success

Progress Measures

- Walla Walla Valley Food System Coalition is revitalized and acting as a regional food policy council
- Number of priority policies or programs adopted or implemented in both College Place and Walla Walla
- Funding acquired and location identified for regional food hub
- Hydration stations added to public facilities and spaces with a budget and support for ongoing maintenance

Outcome Measures

- More individuals receiving healthy food through local programs or services
- Increase in amount of fruits and vegetables eaten by high school students each week
- Increase in number of plots at community gardens
- More area schools have active, sustainable school garden programs
- % food insecure (total population, adult, children, unemployed)
- % access to healthy food (i.e. people living within 1/2 mile of supermarket, grocery store)
- Number of community gardens
- Food-related grants won with BZP support

TOBACCO

Goal: Create an environment that discourages tobacco and nicotine use, provides healthy tobacco-free spaces and places, and supports prevention, cessation, and control efforts.

Tobacco Policy Certification Targets:

1. Adopt at least two local policies each for Walla Walla and College Place
2. Implement one capacity building initiative per community (can be one shared capacity building initiative)

Year One Targets:

1. **Capacity Building:** Update and/or increase **signage and messaging in schools** related to tobacco- and nicotine-free campuses.
2. **Capacity Building:** Conduct an **inventory of providers** currently screening for age-appropriate substance use during primary care visits and services.
3. **Policy:** Assess and enhance current tobacco-free policy efforts on area college campuses.
4. **Capacity Building/Program:** Update and enhance messaging around tobacco-free spaces in targeted areas throughout Walla Walla and College Place.
5. **Capacity Building:** Promote **tools and resources for cessation** in the community through partnerships.

Objective #1: Increase educational programming in youth facing environments, through policy and messaging, to reduce youth smoking, vaping and tobacco.

Strategies:

1. **Capacity Building:** Update and/or increase **signage and messaging in schools** related to tobacco- and nicotine-free campuses.
2. **Capacity Building:** Conduct an **inventory of providers** currently screening for age-appropriate substance use during primary care visits and services.
3. **Capacity Building:** Promote **tools and resources for cessation** in the community through partnerships.
4. **Capacity Building:** Partner with local **youth-serving organizations** to integrate tobacco-free work and advocacy into their programming.
5. **Policy: Enhance school district wellness policies** for public and private schools to include national best practice tobacco prevention strategies, specifically including youth-led activities and emphasizing non-punitive options to addressing tobacco and substance use.
6. **Capacity Building:** Work with pediatric care providers to expand or incorporate age-appropriate **substance use screening** and prevention and/or cessation efforts into primary care visits and services.

Objective #2: Increase the number of designated tobacco- and nicotine-free spaces throughout Walla Walla and College Place.

Strategies:

1. **Policy:** Assess and enhance current tobacco-free policy efforts on area college campuses.
2. **Capacity Building:** Update and enhance messaging around tobacco-free spaces in targeted areas throughout Walla Walla and College Place.
3. **Capacity Building:** Build a partnership with local businesses to support and encourage voluntary nicotine- and tobacco-free central business corridors.
4. **Capacity Building:** Develop a formalized tobacco-free **College Campus Initiative**, in partnership with Whitman College, Walla Walla University and the Walla Walla Community College, that includes options for enforcement and cessation.
5. **Policy:** Work with the Cities of Walla Walla and College Place to build voluntary tobacco-free guidelines into the permitting process of **outdoor eating and/or drinking spaces**.
6. **Policy:** Develop tobacco-free policies in health care settings to prohibit or limit employee tobacco use during work hours in order to limit the impact of **third-hand smoke** on vulnerable populations.

Objective #3: Increase the number of tobacco- and nicotine-free city- and county-sponsored and partnered events.

Strategies:

1. **Policy:** Adopt a **tobacco-free event permitting policy** that requires events to be advertised and promoted through signage as a tobacco-free event by the sponsoring organization.

Tobacco Policy Measures of Success

Progress Measures

- Number of policies adopted or updated/enhanced
- Language added to event permit applications for Walla Walla and College Place to include smoke- and tobacco-free event regulations
- Implementation of key capacity building initiatives
- Increase in signage and messaging in schools and public spaces related to tobacco-free spaces.
- Number of youth-serving organizations that adopt programming related to tobacco prevention

Outcome Measures

- Number of restaurants that voluntarily add messaging related to tobacco- and smoke-free space policies for outdoor dining
- Increase in number of public spaces that are enforced or messaged as smoke- and tobacco-free
- Decrease in youth e-cigarette and tobacco use
- Increase in use of cessation and/or prevention programs and services.
 - Smoking rate (adult)
- Grade from American Lung Association (only if available locally)

PLACES

SCHOOLS

Goals: Adopting proven best practices to support well-being fosters student readiness and can improve academic performance.

Certification Target: Minimum of six schools (50 percent) in the Walla Walla Valley achieves Blue Zones Project Approved school status.

Year One: Two of the six public schools needed for certification becomes Blue Zones Project Approved.

Objective #1: Expand School Health Advisory Committee to College Place Schools and develop wellness plans for each school in the two districts.

Strategies:

- Identify best practices around health and wellness that easily can be implemented across the school district.
- Work with College Place School district to establish a Student Health Advisory Committee

Commented [BF13]: @Katherine DePonty What happened to the end of this goal?

Commented [KD14R13]: @Briana Fountain not sure but I added the last part back in.

Commented [EB15]: The tobacco policy section includes 1-2 strategies on updating wellness policies with reference to tobacco/substance and signage/messaging in schools. Do we want to add that in here as well?

Commented [MD16R15]: @Katherine DePonty @Briana Fountain what do you think about this?

Commented [KD17R15]: @Meghan DeBolt looks good!

Commented [BF18]: This objective is a strategy.

Commented [BF19]: Create student leadership/ownership in improving school well-being

Commented [BF20R19]: @Katherine DePonty what do you think about something like this?

Commented [KD21R19]: @Briana Fountain looks great!

Commented [BF22]: These are a lot of strategies.

Commented [BF23]: Best practices around what?

- Work with school principals to establish or enhance wellness plans at their schools in partnership with Blue Zones Project policy work.
- Establish walk and roll to school programs that encourage natural movement.
- Identify well-being champions in each building to serve as ambassadors.
- Expand number of active learning and movement breaks during the school day.

Commented [EB24]: Align with food policy strategy

Objective #2: Improve the food environment for students, teachers, staff and families.

Strategies:

- Create healthy fundraiser policies within the schools to promote non-food items or activities.
- Expand the farm to school program. Farm to school programs include farm tours and healthy cooking demonstrations, provide education and connect students to local farmers.
- In partnership with Blue Zone Project policy work, enhance school gardens and incorporate gardening education into school curriculum through the partnership with Farm to School.
- Partner with Blue Zones Project approved grocery stores to offer field trips to help students identify and taste healthy foods.
- Educate teachers, staff, parents and students about the value of healthy food, healthy lifestyle choices and increased physical activity.
- Encourage schools to adopt on-site policies that promote healthy habits such as eliminating the sale of sugary beverages at all school events, disallowing students to eat in the hallways and reducing prices for healthy options like water and fruit.

Commented [EB25]: Align with food policy strategy related to farm to school

Commented [EB26]: will want to cross-reference this with the school related food objectives and strategies

Objective #3: Increase student commitment to the community through meaningful volunteer work.

Strategies:

- In partnership with Blue Zones Project Engagement strategies, encourage Blue Zones Project volunteerism through service-hour requirements.
- Connect the school districts with senior living centers to partner on service opportunities.
- Recruit senior citizens as volunteers to develop intergenerational programming and bring in more support for teachers and parents.
- Incorporate Blue Zones Project Purpose Workshops into high school curriculum.

School Measures of Success

PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Number of Blue Zones Project Approved Schools
- Number of policies or guidelines implemented
- Number of Walking School Bus routes or Safe Routes to School implemented

OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Increase in students participating in active transportation (walking, biking)
- Decrease in student absenteeism
- Decrease in childhood obesity
- Increase participation in healthy school-lunch programs
- Increase in volunteer hours completed by high school students
- Increase in the number of minutes of physical activity by grade level

Commented [BF27]: Whittle down...do you have beta on everyone of these measures? I would suggest working with your committee to ensure where we already have measurements.

RESTAURANTS

Goals: Increase healthy, accessible, and affordable food choices for all community members.

Certification Target: Minimum of six (10 percent) independently owned restaurants in the Walla Walla Valley achieve Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant status.

Year One: A minimum of two restaurants in the Walla Walla Valley achieve Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant status.

Commented [BF28]: A couple other strategies to consider:

- Host a Blue Zones Project restaurant summit to showcase the benefits of participating as a restaurant and what restaurants can do to become Blue Zones Project Approved.
- Train restaurant staff on adopted best practices and encourage employees to learn about Blue Zones Project and take the Blue Zones Project* Personal Pledge.
- Work with the restaurant committee to assist restaurants in finding recipes for plant-based menu options, including for children's menus.

Objective#1: Minimum of two restaurants become Blue Zones Project Approved.

Strategies:

- Work with restaurants that are early supporters of Blues Zones Project to create a catering menu that meets Blue Zones Project criteria and promote this to worksites and event planners.
- Work with restaurants to offer menu items that meet Blue Zones Project criteria
- Encourage restaurants to promote healthy menu items by offering price incentives
- Train restaurant staff on adopted best practices and encourage them to learn about Blue Zones Project and take the personal pledge
- Promote Blue Zones Project Approved restaurants through marketing, tourism and social media channels – including across sectors and in local organizations – to drive traffic and sales
- Utilize early adopters' success stories to present Blue Zones Project to additional Walla Walla Valley restaurants
- Engage with restaurateurs prior to opening to educate them on Blue Zones Project and the benefits of becoming a Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant.
- Host a Blue Zones Project restaurant summit to showcase the benefits of participating as a restaurant and what restaurants can do to become Blue Zones Project Approved.

Commented [BF29]: We may want to frontload a bit to try to get more early on

Commented [BF30]: You could also add a strategy like the following since it was called out in your discovery report:

- Engage with restaurateurs prior to opening to educate them on Blue Zones Project and the benefits of becoming a Blue Zones Project Approved restaurant.

Objective #2: Increase plant-based menu options in restaurants.

Strategies:

- Work with restaurants to develop a demonstration project that offers a plant-based menu item as a running special for a significant amount of time.
- Utilize the Blue Zones Project restaurant committee to leverage local relationship to encourage restaurants to take the Blue Zones Project Pledge and/or offer plant-based menu options.
- Provide a referral program to drive customer traffic to restaurants offering Blue Zones-inspired menu options
- Encourage restaurants to host cooking demonstrations and taste tests of plant-based foods
- Promote Blue Zones Project menu items not just as delicious options for dine-in but also as convenient take-out options for busy individuals and families.
- Promote Blue Zones-inspired menu options as catering opportunities for business meetings, sporting banquets, holiday gatherings and community events, in accordance with the Blue Zones Project Catering Guidelines.
- Train restaurant staff on adopted best practices and encourage employees to learn about Blue Zones Project and take the Blue Zones Project® Personal Pledge.

Commented [BF31]: Of plant based foods?

Commented [BF32]: Promote Blue Zones Project Approved restaurants as catering options for business meetings, sporting banquets, holiday gatherings and community events, in accordance with the Blue Zones Project Catering Guidelines.

Objective #3: Support local restaurant businesses and their efforts to increase healthy food options in the Valley.

Strategies:

- Recruit local restaurant owners to create a Walla Walla Valley Restaurant Association.
- Partner with the Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Foundation to reach out to restaurant owners to gauge interest in the formation of the Association
- Invite members of the Blue Zones steering and or restaurant committee to join the association
- Utilize the Blue Zones Project restaurant committee and owners of approved restaurants to recruit members
- Utilize periodic meetings to share the results Blue Zones Approved restaurants are seeing to gain interest from additional restaurants
- Utilize Blue Zones Project restaurant committee members to help facilitate discussions among restaurants and grocery stores to see if there is opportunity to cross-promote with each other.

Restaurants Measures of Success

PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Number of restaurants completing the Blue Zones Project Restaurant Pledge
- Increase in sales of Blue Zones-inspired dishes

- Number of restaurants that offer Blue Zones-inspired dishes
- Number of Blue Zones-inspired menu options available community wide
- Number of healthy cooking demonstrations and/or taste tests hosted by restaurants
- Increase in sales of half-sized portions
- Increase in sales of non-sugary beverages
- Increase the number of restaurants sourcing produce from local farms.

OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Number of Blue Zones Project Approved restaurants
- Sales of Blue Zones-inspired dishes: dollars or percentage
- Number of restaurants offering half-sized menu options
- Number of restaurants utilizing Blue Zones Project Restaurant Pledge best practices
- Number of restaurants utilizing locally sourced vegetables

GROCERY STORES

Goals: Offer and promote affordable, healthy foods and beverages, thereby supporting community well-being.

Certification Target: Minimum of two grocery stores (25 percent) in the Walla Walla Valley achieved the status of Blue Zones Project Approved grocery store

Year One: Minimum of one grocery store in the Walla Walla Valley completes the Blue Zones Project Grocery Store Pledge and becomes approved

Objective#1: Minimum of one grocery store in the Walla Walla Valley completes the Blue Zones Project Grocery Store Pledge and becomes approved.

Strategies:

- Engage Andy's Market to take the pledge
- Utilize Blue Zones Project marketing and display materials to promote and highlight healthy grab and go items
- Create videos with grocery stores to educate customers on how to choose fresh or ripe fruits and vegetables
- Engage youth with an interactive scavenger hunt in participating stores

Objective #2: Increase the sales and consumption of fruits and vegetables

Strategies:

- **Bundle** vegetables and fruit to provide a total price unit instead of price per lbs.

- Provide shelf talkers that educate consumers on the benefits of consuming vegetables and fruits
- Work with grocery stores to conduct taste tests of raw and cooked vegetables
- Provide recipe cards that increase the utilization of vegetables for simple meals
- Present cooking classes that show case how to cook healthy meals
- Promote the purchase of healthy foods and beverages by offering price incentives.

Objective #3: Increase the availability of healthy convenience foods.

Strategies:

- Work with local grocery stores to offer tasting opportunities to determine what recipes customers like
- Increase the number of healthy grab and go meals and dinner kits.
- Provide marketing to showcase dinner kits available at participating grocery stores along with nutrition information.
- Include recipe cards with dinner kits so customers can purchase ingredients and create similar meals at home
- Partner grocery stores with convenience stores to sell healthy grab and go meals at convenience stores
- Partner grocery stores with worksites to facilitate orders of healthy grab and go lunches and dinner kits that would be delivered directly to worksites.

Grocery Stores Measures of Success

PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Number of grocery stores completing the Blue Zones Project Grocery Store Pledge
- Customer and employee feedback
- Number of taste tests hosted by grocery stores
- Number of individuals who participate in cooking demonstrations
- Number of healthy meal kits available
- Number of meal-kit promotions

OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Number of Blue Zones Project Grocery Store Pledge best practices implemented
- Sales of fruits and vegetables: dollars or percentage
- Increase in sales of fruits and vegetables by government-assisted food-program participants
- Sales of Blue Zones-inspired dinner kits: dollars or units
- Sales of Blue Zones-inspired grab and go meals: dollars or units

WORKSITES

Goals: Create a workplace culture and environment that supports employee well-being and retention

Certification Target: At least 10 of the top 21 Walla Walla Valley employers become Blue Zones Project Approved worksites.

Year One: Minimum of three of the top 21 employers achieve Blue Zones Project Approved worksite status

Objective#1: Three worksites achieve Blue Zones Project Approved status

Strategies:

- Work with early adopters to take the Blue Zones Project Worksite Pledge
- Host a worksite summit to provide an overview of the benefits and approval process to worksites
- Partner with the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary and other professional organizations to present Blue Zones Project information at board meetings
- Utilize early adopters' success stories to present Blue Zones Project to additional worksites in the Walla Walla Valley
- Work with worksites to do onsite and virtual health and well-being presentations

Objective #2: Create a healthier food environment in worksites in the Walla Walla Valley

Strategies:

- Offer CSA (community supported agriculture) and produce boxes at participating worksites
- Work with Blue Zones Project Approved worksites to implement pledge best practices during employee new-hire orientations
- Set up informational displays highlighting healthy food options at worksites and nearby restaurants
- Offer healthy food taste tests at onsite cafeterias and healthy vending options
- Encourage eater consumption by increasing accessibility
- Establish worksite well-being committees
- Work with committees to create monthly well-being challenges
- Partner worksites with restaurants that offer healthy menu options to pre-order meals for next-day delivery

Objective #3: Support employee well-being by offering education and awareness about mental health through adopted policies and programs

Strategies:

- Develop policies and programs that allow physical and mental breaks throughout the day
- Encourage the adoption of best practices such as walking meetings, ergonomic desk spaces and mental microbreaks
- Develop employee-led health and well-being advisory committees
- Partner with local healthcare providers to host worksite lunch and learns on health topics
- Partner with local financial advisors to host worksite lunch and learns on financial well-being topics
- Coordinate with employer HR or well-being committee to promote Purpose Workshops and volunteer opportunities

Worksites Measures of Success

PROGRESS MEASURES:

- Number of grocery stores completing the Blue Zones Project Grocery Store Pledge
- Number of employees engaged in a Blue Zones Project activity
- Number of employees who take the RealAge™ Test
- Increase in the number of healthy vending and cafeteria options at worksites
- Increase in the number of worksites engaged in the promotion of onsite well-being breaks
- Increase in scores on employee satisfaction surveys associated with well-being.
- Number of employees who participate in healthy food and beverage challenges (ex: hydration challenges, weight-loss challenges)

OUTCOME MEASURES:

- Increase in the number of Blue Zones Project Approved worksites
- Increase in the number of worksites that complete the Worksite Pledge
- Increase in the number of worksites offering healthy food education and/or programs
- Increase in the number of worksites offering vending, meeting Blue Zones Project guidelines.
- Increase in the number of worksites offering rooms or space for downshifting
- Increase in the number of worksites promoting daily physical and mental breaks
- Increase in the number of worksites that incentivize volunteerism in the community

Commented [BF33]: Let's revisit this objective.

Commented [KD34R33]: @Briana Fountain @Meghan DeBolt do you have a recommendation for an objective that is overarching? Or would this be something as simple as 10 worksites achieving approved status?

Commented [MD35R33]: @Katherine DePonty I am not sure... what have other communities Done? I feel this is an intermediate steps to being Approved, right @Briana Fountain

Commented [BF36R33]: Yes. Essentially it feels more like a tactical step to accomplish objective one. A couple things you can do:

Support employee well-being by offering education and awareness about mental wellness.

Commented [KD37R33]: @Briana Fountain let me know if my edit to the object works for you. I think the strategies do a good job of supporting the more targeted objective.

PEOPLE

INDIVIDUAL ENGAGEMENT

Goal: Inspire, engage, support, inform and connect individuals living in the Walla Walla Valley to Blue Zones Project principles to improve overall health and well-being.

Certification Target: At least 15 percent of the population, 15 years or older, participates in at least one of the following Blue Zones Project engagement activities: receives the Blue Zones Project Story and signs a Personal Pledge, participates in a Moai, attends a Purpose Workshop, volunteers through Blue Zones Project, or takes part in a virtual Challenge on the Sharecare platform.

Year One: Five percent of the population 15 years or older in the cities of Walla Walla and College Place participate in a Blue Zones Project activity or take the personal pledge.

Commitment to Health Equity, Inclusion and Diversity: The local team will create targeted programming that mitigate barriers including providing translation, meals and access to public transportation, a schedule that is mindful of seasonal earning patterns, and events where people who have historically experienced discrimination specifically feel wanted and are able to participate.

Objective 1 – Ensure Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion are at the forefront of all Blue Zones Project planning and execution of programs and events to support engagement with policy, engagement, and programs/events.

Commented [PL38]: Love the foundational work this represents.

Strategies

- Ensure a co-chair for the Engagement Committee is a HEDI leader in the Walla Walla Valley with active work in the community.
- Ensure Engagement Committee members represent the diversity of the Walla Walla Valley and include leaders from organizations that serve historically underserved populations.
- Partner with neighborhood serving organizations, as with organizations serving vulnerable populations, on engagement activities.
- Partner with Family Medical Center, Providence St. Mary Medical Center, and Walla Walla Clinic on targeted communications.
- Prioritize the distribution of print and digital program materials, as well as other marketing assets, in Spanish and English.
- Create targeted programming that mitigate barriers including providing translation, meals and access to public transportation, a schedule that is mindful of seasonal earning patterns, and events where people who have historically experienced discrimination specifically feel wanted and are able to participate.
- Create a Spanish language intern program.

- Establish grassroots network of bilingual Well-being and Equity Ambassadors who can engage all segments of the population, provide workshops, demonstrations, and lead moais. Offer this group ambassador training and engagement presentation to civic, professional, and community organizations.
- Create a formal Commitment to Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Agreement and post on the Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley website.

Objective 2 – Engage 3% of community members in Blue Zones Project activities.

Strategies

- Host a series of kickoff events to increase awareness and engagement of BZP, as well as take the Personal Pledge.
- Continue to raise awareness and build momentum for the project by implementing regular marketing campaigns to promote involvement in BZP events/activities.
- Develop a Blue Zones Project presence at key community events to increase awareness and invite attendees to participate in Blue Zones Project activities.
- Build strong social support networks through engagement at worksites, schools, and faith-based and community organizations.
 - Launch Moais at Blue Zones Project participating and approved organizations.
 - Establish a grassroots network to regularly identify and train leaders in English and Spanish to host Moais.
 - Identify partners to host plant-based cooking classes and demonstrations.
 - Partner with organizations to provide opportunities for residents to come together for healthy activities – (for example the annual Veterans Stand Down, neighborhood organization events, and other events that represent the breadth of our community.
- Partner with Whitman College, Walla Walla University, and Walla Walla Community College to provide workshops and create programs that engage students in lifelong health and well-being habits.
- Partner with local schools and after school programs to create programs that engage students in lifelong health and well-being habits, such as cooking classes for students and parents.

Commented [PL39]: campaigns may stretch for 6-12 months so I wouldn't want to commit to quarterly.

Objective 3 – Strengthen and unite our community's sense of belonging and connectedness by creating opportunities for all residents to link their sense of purpose to a local volunteering opportunity.

Strategies:

- Use the kickoff event to identify individuals interested in participating in Purpose Workshops held in Q2-Q4 2021.

- Offer Purpose Workshops throughout the community in partnership with our Equity and Well-being Ambassadors.
- Partner with local colleges to provide Purpose Workshops to student groups/clubs and at student orientations.
- Identify community organizations to provide Purpose Workshops and offer volunteer opportunities.
- Work with community partners to:
 - Evaluate current volunteer opportunities, existing databases, and the potential for creating a coordinated database or 'clearinghouse' system of community-wide volunteer opportunities where individuals can put their purpose to work. Ex: Partner with Walla Walla Emergency Management, Walla Walla Volunteer Corps, etc.
 - Host volunteer fairs to help match individual's purpose and personal goals with volunteer opportunities.
 - Share volunteer needs and opportunities via BZP social media outlets and newsletters.
 - Develop specialized engagement plans to reach underserved populations.

Individual Engagement Measures of Success

Progress Measures

- Number of individuals who take the Personal Pledge
- Number of individuals who participate in a Purpose Workshop, then volunteer with community organizations
- Number of Blue Zones Project Story presentations
- Number of individuals who participate in a Moai

Outcome Measures

- Number of Moais created
- Number of people engaged in BZP activities
- Increased number of followers on social media
- Increased number of contacts in email data base

MEDIA

Goals: increase awareness of the BZP by utilizing local media channels to help build awareness of the benefits of the Project to the overall health and wellbeing of the Walla Walla Valley.

Certification Target: 10 major media stories published over the duration of the project. .

Year One: Have 4 of 10 media stories and continue to build transparent relationships with local media partners representing newspaper and radio.

Objective – Earn 4 major media news stories published by local media partners, promoting the BZP and benefits to overall health and well-being.

Strategies:

- Build a relationship with local media outlets, gaining coverage of BZP with a minimum of 2 major news stories by the start of our transformation phase.
- Work with local radio to highlight the personal success stories of at least 2 individuals participating in BZP activities.
- Share sector success stories with local media, highlighting worksites, schools, restaurants and grocery stores.
- Gain support from local media partners through coverage of the BZP with minimum of 2 additional major news stories by the end of the project's first transformation year.

Media Measures of Success

Progress Measures

- Number of media stories about Blue Zones Project
- Number of media stories about personal transformations and success stories
- Number of earned interviews on radio

STEERING COMMITTEE AND LEADERSHIP TEAM APPROVAL

By signing below, the Steering Committee members approve the above Blueprint, which will be reviewed annually for progress and updates.

Commented [MD40]: I will complete this in the coming month and we will have a celebration to sign in June!

[illegible]

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Available Upon Request

- Blue Zones Project Walla Walla Valley Discovery Report
- Food Policy Discovery Report
- Tobacco Policy Discovery Report
- Built Environment Policy Discovery Report

Measuring Success for Blue Zones Project

Blue Zones Project is committed to measurably improving the health and well-being of a community's residents. We track our impact on community well-being throughout the life of the project through a number of population and sector-level measures.

Population Measures	RealAge Test – Blue Zones Project tracks key measures from the RealAge Test survey that most closely correlate to Blue Zones Project interventions and best practices.	Measured annually beginning with baseline prior to implementation phase
	Community-Wide Measures (Table 1) – Community leaders select which community-wide measures they want to track in addition to data from the RealAge Test survey. At least six community-wide measures must improve for communities to become a certified Blue Zones Community.	Selected during foundation phase and updated annually with most current data available
Sector/Org Measures	Sector Progress Metrics (Table 2) – Progress metrics track completion of key sector-specific strategies for improving well-being.	Identified during foundation phase and updated annually
	Sector Outcome Metrics (Table 2) – Outcome metrics track changes in well-being at an organizational and individual level as a result of implementing best practice strategies. We collect a set of core metrics for all policy areas and organizations and have additional optional metrics organizations may choose to track in addition.	Policy metrics collected at baseline and updated as data becomes available. Organizational metrics identified as organizations engage and updated on specified cadence.

Table 1

Community-Wide Measures Measurable improvements in at least <u>six</u> community-wide measures is required for Community Certification. Communities must report on core community-wide measures as data is available. In addition to the core measures, communities should select additional measures of interest to the community. It is recommended that communities select more than six additional measures to track as not all are likely to improve over the life of the Project.	
Core Community-Wide Metrics	Common Sources
Smoking rate (adult)	BRFSS
Smoking rate, cigarettes (youth)	YBRS (if available). If YBRS is not available, other local data source on youth smoking rates.
Smoking rate, e-cigarettes (youth)	YBRS (if available). If YBRS is not available, other local data source on youth e-cig smoking rates.
Obesity rate (adult)	BRFSS
Obesity rate (high school youth)	YBRS (if available). If YBRS is not available, next best local data source on youth obesity rate.
Binge drinking (adult)	BRFSS
Binge drinking (adolescent, high school)	YBRS (if available). If YBRS is not available, next best local data source on youth drinking.
% high blood pressure (current)	BRFSS
% high cholesterol (current)	BRFSS
% Adults meeting recommended physical activity guidelines	BRFSS
% Youth meeting recommended physical activity guidelines	YBRS (if available). If YBRS is not available, next best local data source on youth exercise
% adults with depression (lifetime & current if available)	BRFSS
Cancer incidence rate	Surveillance, Epidemiology, and End Results Program (SEER)
Cancer mortality rate	County Vital Records/Death Dataset
% adults with diabetes (current)	BRFSS
Diabetes mortality rate	County Vital Records/Death Dataset
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease mortality	County Vital Records/Death Dataset
Chronic lower respiratory disease mortality	County Vital Records/Death Dataset
Heart failure mortality	County Vital Records/Death Dataset
Stroke mortality	County Vital Records/Death Dataset

Additional Community-Wide Metrics	Common Sources
Childhood obesity (elementary/middle)	School District; County Department of Health, Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)
Student absenteeism and graduation rates	School District
Use of public transportation, pedestrian or bike commuting	City Public Works Department Counts, County Department of Transportation, U.S. Census, school-based walk and bike counts
Community walkability, bikeability, and public transit availability and access	Walkscore.com has scores for walkability, bikeability, and public transit availability and access; local transit organization data on utilization, number of routes, etc
Use of parks and participation in activities at parks	City Parks and Recreation department
Property values and tax base	City staff/property accessor; Zillow Median Sale Price by Zip Code
Number of new businesses, retention of existing businesses	City staff: business licenses and permits; Chamber of Commerce; Economic Development agency
Healthcare claims, emergency room utilization, primary care utilization	Insurer or health system
WIC utilization (% of eligible mothers receiving benefits)	State WIC Program
SNAP utilization at farmers markets (% of total farmers market sales from SNAP)	Local farmers markets
Healthy food access by seniors (% of eligible seniors enrolled in senior supplemental nutrition program)	State Senior Supplemental Nutrition Program
Produce consumption by underserved (i.e. avg # pounds picked up per visit)	Local food pantries
Volunteer rates	Local volunteer database
Federal, state or other source grants city has received for Blue Zones Project policies or infrastructure projects	City staff and Blue Zones Project team

Table 2

Progress & Outcomes Measures by Sector			
Sector	Progress Measures	Core Outcome Measures	Optional Outcome Measures
Built Environment	Number of policies, projects, or programs adopted or implemented	- Number miles of pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure - Marquee project: As applicable, ADT (average daily traffic), ped count, bike count, crash rate before and after project, business vacancy rate/increase in new businesses along corridor project implemented on - CIP funding allocated to ped/bike projects for that budget year (actual \$ investments and ped/bike \$ investments as % of total CIP \$s) # Vehicle, ped, and bike fatalities that year - Built environment-related grants won with BZP support	- Walkscore - Pedestrian and bicycle commute rates - Public transit use - Park use - Current perception of ease of walking, biking, public transit use - Perception of change over time in ease of walking, biking, public transit use
Food Environment	Number of policies, projects, or programs adopted or implemented	- Number of farmers markets - Number of farmers markets accepting SNAP and SNAP utilization % food insecure (total population, adult, children, unemployed) - SNAP use % access to healthy food (i.e. people living within 1/2 mile of supermarket, grocery store) - Number of community gardens - Food-related grants won with BZP support	- Perception of community support for healthy foods and access to healthy foods - Attendance at farmers markets # lbs of produce sold or total sales at farmers markets # lbs of produce grown at community gardens # lbs of produce distributed at food pantries/food banks annually # healthy donation policies at food pantries/food banks
Smoke-Free Environment	Number of policies, projects, or programs adopted or implemented	- Smoking rate (adult) - Smoking rate, cigarettes (youth) - Smoking rate, e-cigarettes (youth) - Grade from American Lung Association	- Perception of community support for clean, smoke-free air # infractions for selling to minors - Use of different types of tobacco products

Progress & Outcomes Measures by Sector			
Sector	Progress Measures	Core Outcome Measures	Optional Outcome Measures
Worksites	- Number of Blue Zones Project Approved™ worksites - Number/percent of employees engaged - Improvement to the work environment (ex. workstation ergonomics, cafeteria set-up and offerings)	- RealAge test scores - Total healthcare claims # worker's compensation claims - Absenteeism rate - Employee turnover rate # Employees engaged in BZP activities	- costs from workers compensation claims # employees that smoke # employees that volunteer % employees that actively commute via bike, public transit, walking - overall business revenue or gross profit
Schools	- Number of Blue Zones Project Approved™ Schools - Number of walking school bus routes (elementary only) - Number of elementary schools participating in the Blue Zones Challenge - Junior & High School Student Engagement - Policy changes	- Number of kids walking/biking vs. taking bus - Student breakfast consumption - Student lunch consumption - Number of student disciplinary actions - Student absenteeism - Test scores	- Obesity (elementary/middle school) - Blue Zones Challenge aggregate data (4th-8th grade only) - Minutes of physical activity by grade level (recess, PE, in-classroom PA) weekly - Infrastructure improvements around schools - Sales of fruits and vegetables in school cafeteria - Sales from healthy snack cart program - Student soda and non-SSB consumption via vending machine sales (high school only) - Sales of Smart Snacks in vending machines - Pounds of food waste - Student self-reported soda consumption - Student self-reported breakfast consumption (high and middle school) - Student self-reported physical activity (high and middle school) - Student self-reported fruit and vegetable consumption (high school) - Graduation rate

Progress & Outcomes Measures by Sector			
Sector	Progress Measures	Core Outcome Measures	Optional Outcome Measures
Grocery Stores	- Number of Blue Zones Project Approved™ Grocery Stores - Number of Blue Zones checkout lanes	- Weekly sales (if seasonal, share average off-season and average in-season) - Sales of BZ labeled items - Sales of items in healthy check-out lane	- Inventory spoilage - Customer feedback - Yelp rating # Yelp reviews mentioning BZP or healthy options
Restaurants	Number of Blue Zones Project Approved™ Restaurants	- Weekly sales (if seasonal, share average off-season and average in-season) - Sales of BZP labeled items - Top three menu items by sales, in units	- Average ticket amount - Average sales per customer - Plate waste - Inventory spoilage - Customer feedback - Yelp rating # Yelp reviews mentioning BZP or healthy options - Top three Blue Zones Inspired items by sales, in units
Individual Engagement – Personal Pledge, Moais, Purpose Workshops, Volunteering, Media	- Number of individuals who attend engagement presentation and complete personal pledge - Number of moais and participants - Number of purpose workshops and participants - Number of volunteers and ambassadors - Number of organizations completing the Blue Zones Organization Checklist	- Blue Zones Project awareness and participation - Success stories & personal transformations - Number and value of positive media stories featuring Blue Zones Project	- Miles walked by walking moais - Health outcomes from walking and potluck moai participants - Self-reported increase in sense of purpose - Volunteer hours

City of College Place, Washington

ORDINANCE NO. 19-005

AN ORDINANCE AUTHORIZING THE ADOPTION OF UPDATES TO THE COLLEGE PLACE STRATEGIC PLAN (2017 TO 2026).

WHEREAS, the City of College Place is a non-charter code city entitled to the privileges and provisions of RCW 35A; and

WHEREAS, Strategic Plans need to be periodically reviewed so it remains fresh and is useful to city staff in day –to-day operations of the City; and

WHEREAS, the plan was reviewed by city staff and various advisory boards and commissions to ensure content remains pertinent to city operations; and

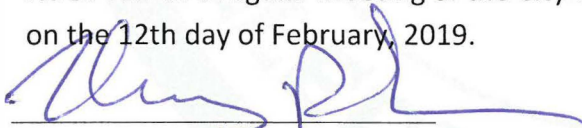
NOW THEREFORE, THE CITY OF COLLEGE PLACE ORDAINS AS FOLLOWS

Section 1 – Update the hyperlink to the updated Strategic Plan attached as Exhibit 2 of this packet in College Place Municipal Code 2.01.010 – Strategic Plan Adoption.

Section 2: That if any section, subsection, clause, or phrase of this legislation is, for any reason held to be unconstitutional, such decision shall not affect the validity of the remaining portion of this ordinance. The City of College Place, Washington hereby declares that it would have passed this law, and each section, subsection, clause or phrase thereof, irrespective of the fact that any one more sections, subsections, sentences, clauses, and phrases be declared unconstitutional.

Section 3. That this law and the rules, regulations, provisions, requirements, orders, and matters established and adopted hereby shall take effect and be in full force and effect five (5) days from and after date of its final passage and adoption.

ADOPTED at a regular meeting of the City Council of the City of College Place, Washington held on the 12th day of February, 2019.


Harvey R. Crowder, Mayor

Attest:


Lisa R. Neissl, City Clerk

Approved as to form:


Rea Culwell, City Attorney

City of College Place Strategic Plan, 2017-2026



Where small-town living and learning meet

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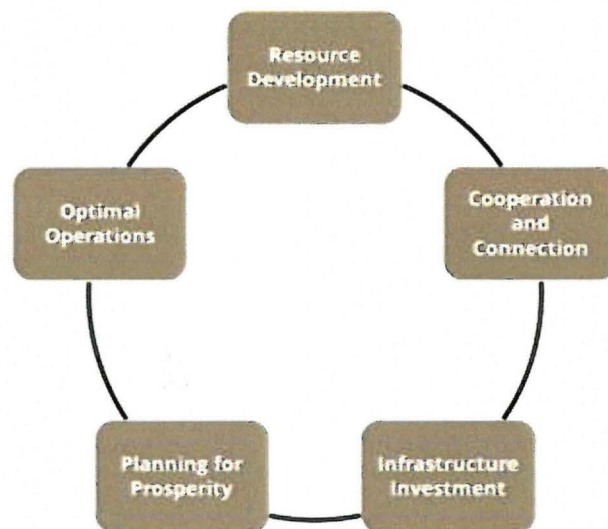
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Introduction

The College Place Strategic Plan was developed in 2017 by listening to the community about its aspirations. Through surveys, focus groups and one-on-one conversations a picture developed for the City's current position and where it wants to be. What emerges is a picture beyond annual budgeting processes to a vision for what the City could be in 2027.

This vision together with the City's core values provide a compass. The Strategic Plan provides a foundation for prioritizing the use of resources and identifies how the City makes progress toward achieving the community's goals and objectives.

Following vision and values are key areas of activities, called Core Themes. Under each of these themes are goals and objectives laid out over the next decade which set out the work of City Council and Staff.



Objectives are supported by outcomes, the key measure of progress and milestones by year. The Strategic Plan is designed to be updated annually to reflect changing priorities and resources.

Vision

By 2027, College Place is noted for its vibrant downtown with a mix of small businesses and housing that interfaces with Walla Walla University that give residents and a growing tourist trade the feeling of a small town. The City has attracted large-scale commercial development along its most trafficked roads, thus growing its tax base.

Resourceful in the use of finance tools and grant opportunities, the City gets extra value from every dollar of local taxes. Resources support a staff of dedicated, competent employees adequate to provide safety and responsiveness. Deferred maintenance is a thing of the past as depreciation is funded and cash reserves prepare the city to pursue opportunities without excess risk.

Mutual respect is shared between the City Council, residents, and staff. Residents, retirees, students, professionals, and young families feel safe; they know their neighbors and many of the city employees by name. Citizens are engaged and knowledgeable of the affairs of the City due to the character of staff and the quality, timeliness, and context through which information is shared; cooperation is a community norm. Volunteerism is high across the commissions of the City.

People circulate easily irrespective of mode, whether car, foot or bike; a system of sidewalks and trails make foot traffic a preferred method to get around town. The community turns out regularly for the events calendared throughout the year, co-hosted in partnership with the municipality and institutions such as: businesses, volunteer organizations, College Place Public Schools, Rogers School, Walla Walla Valley Academy, and Walla Walla University.

Values

In its expression of civic leadership and service, Council and staff hold these core values.

Open and Honest

The City is transparent and fair in its dealings. It is plain spoken in its communication. The City is engaged with its citizens in two-way communication and desires an aware and informed citizenry. The municipality is accountable for its actions and choices.

Cooperation

College Place works well with others and values mutually-beneficial outcomes for the City and its partners.

Respect

The City fosters respect between its Council and staff, Citizens, neighbors, its natural resources and built environment, its resident businesses to bind College Place into a sustainable and prosperous community. The City honors its heritage.

Service

The City exists to provide services to its constituents. It is an organized, learning organization that makes data-driven decisions. It's employees and Council are empathetic and humble.

Diversity

The City recognizes differences between people and values these differences as an asset. College Place fosters an environment where individuals find safety, dignity, and acceptance.

Resource Development

To maintain its comparative advantage as a municipal government, College Place pursues new revenue streams not from increasing property tax rates, but from increasing local valuation through new commercial and residential development, while supporting not impeding development.

Goals and Objectives

1. The City develops and deploys a written Economic Development strategy to guide expansion of the commercial tax base.
 - a. Land is identified for commercial and residential development. (Planning)
 - b. Lodging development is pursued including the feasibility of meeting space. (Administrator)
 - c. A diversity of housing options is pursued including single-family, apartments, duplexes, condos, manufactured homes, accessory dwelling units and mixed-use. (Planning)
 - d. The City pursues a big box/chain retail development. (Administrator)
2. Downtown develops as a mixed-use zone with design standards that offer the developer a menu of possibilities rooted in a “main street” character.
 - a. Business opportunities are developed with a focus on local residents so that the local economy and indigenous wealth grows. (Economic Development Commission)
 - b. The inventory of mixed-use buildings in the downtown core increases. (Economic Development Commission)
 - c. Parking lots are developed in the downtown core close to College Avenue. (Planning)
3. The City develops a venture with the Port of Walla Walla to develop incubator properties in the community, ideally near and in association with Walla Walla University. (Mayor)
4. The City pursues urban growth expansion and an infill strategy. (Planning)
5. The City develops tourism opportunities with its partners including Visit Walla Walla, Walla Walla University, Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce, and local service businesses.

Timeline and Outcomes

Year	Activity	Result
2018	1-a. 1-c. 2-a. 2-b. 4.	The land inventory is updated. Housing chapter adopted in Comprehensive Plan. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. Urban Growth Area is redefined with an incorporated infill strategy that includes adding County property to the City Limits.
2019	1-a. 1-b. 1-c. 2-a. 2-b.	The land inventory is updated. Ground breaks on a lodging property development Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually.
2020	1-a. 1-c. 1-d. 2-a. 2-b.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. Signed commitment from a new big-box store. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually.
2021	1-a. 1-c. 2-a. 2-b.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually.
2022	1-a. 1-c. 2-a. 2-b.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually.
2023	1-a. 1-c. 1-d. 2-a. 2-b.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. Commercial big box development opens. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually.
2024	1-a. 1-c. 1-d. 2-a. 2-b.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. Big-box store opens. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually.

2025	1-a. 1-c. 2-a. 2-b. 3.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. A facility with flexible space is planned with sustainable funding.
2026	1-a. 1-c. 2-a. 2-b. 2.c.	The land inventory is updated. Housing Chapter action plan is reviewed. The number of business starts on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. The number of mixed-use properties on and near College Ave. are tracked and reported to Council at least annually. A plan for parking lot development is complete.

Cooperation and Connection

The City values connection with its residents and to its heritage. The City strives for win-win outcomes in relationships and partnerships internally and externally. The City's residents value connection to each other, which the City fosters and grows.

Goals and Objectives

1. Create annual community events
 - a. Identify opportunity for specific College Place events that are tied to Walla Walla University, Adventist Schools, or College Place Public Schools activities like Alumni Weekend and graduations. (Economic Development Commission)
 - b. Create events which draw visitors from neighboring communities and regions. (Economic Development Commission)
2. The City's outreach program effectively reaches all of its population.
 - a. Develop a City Brand guidelines (Administrator)
 - b. Students are actively involved in College Place City Council meetings and Council is involved at schools. (Council)
 - c. The City increases the use and effectiveness of social media channels that are used by stakeholders. (Departmental Social Media Managers)
 - d. The City maintains an active release of news to local media outlets for regularly occurring items and crisis communication. (Administrator)
 - e. School events are promoted to the Community. (Finance)
3. The City explores the feasibility of a multi-use community center. (Parks, Arbor & Recreation Commission)

-
4. The City shares leadership with its residents through volunteer service on Commissions, as follows. (Human Resources)
 - a. Planning Commission
 - b. Historic Preservation Commission
 - c. Civil Service Commission
 - d. Economic Development, Tourism, and Events Commission
 - e. Parks, Arbor, and Recreation Board
 5. Walla Walla University and City of College Place staff and administration participate on each other's boards and commissions in order to mutually aid their missions. (Mayor)
 6. College Place builds and fosters interlocal partnerships in the following areas. (Mayor and Administrator)
 - a. Utilities
 - b. Bidding on joint construction projects
 - c. Library
 - d. Court
 - e. Information Technology
 - f. Emergency Management
 - g. School security
 - h. Park and Recreation programs

Timeline and Outcomes

Year	Activity	Result
2018	1. 2-a. 2-e. 4. 6.	One College Place event is calendared in association with a key partner. Brand guidelines are adopted by Council including logo, seal, fonts, etc. Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2019	1-b. 3-b. 2-e. 4.	Lead sponsor is secured for community event. Youth attend at least half of the Council's meetings. Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings.

	5. 6.	Representatives from each entity sits on the others boards and commissions The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2020	2-e. 3. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. City has a designated community center. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2021	2-e. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2022	2-e. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2023	2-e. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2024	2-e. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2025	2-e. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.
2026	2-e. 4. 6.	Staff provides social media report to Council highlighting channels, number of followers and number of posts. Administrator presents annual report of news coverage and reporting. School event information is included in utility statement mailings. All Commissions are fully appointed with local residents by Council who also monitor calendaring of commission meetings. The number of interlocal agreements increases.

Infrastructure Investment

A healthy and vital College Place requires new and renewing investments above and below ground. Residents expect and receive reliable and safe services from these investments.

Goals and Objectives

1. The City develops a fully-funded storm water utility. (Engineer)
2. The City Council provides adequate budget to allow the staff to supply water to all residents within the City limits. (Public Works)
 - a. Water treatment infrastructure is replaced in the next ten years (Public Works)
 - b. Water rights and water availability are secured. (Public Works)
3. The City has a fully-funded wastewater utility. (Public Works)
 - a. The City has a plan to replace aging collection system. (Public Works)
 - b. The aquifer is recharging. (Public Works)
4. All local streets are refurbished and/or rebuilt.
 - a. The Transportation Benefit District has a funding mechanism that begins to fund renewal. (Administrator)
 - b. There are sidewalks, bike lanes and sharrows where practicable, preserving character of historic neighborhoods. (Planning)
 - c. Fully-controlled intersections are constructed at important crossings. (Engineering)
 - d. LED Street lights expands LED Street lights throughout the City. (Engineering)
5. Working with partners, the City promotes sustainability and conservation in the use of renewable resources, such as facilitating solar array installation on roofs and walls. (Planning)
6. Development regulations integrate smart-growth and form-based zoning. (Planning)
7. The City provides internet access as key infrastructure. (Mayor and Administrator)
 - a. Community-wide Wi-Fi improves access to internet.
 - b. Fiber cable is installed wherever development occurs.

Timeline and Outcomes

Year	Activity	Result
2018	5.	The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced is reported to Council (Add to each year) Comprehensive Plan has chapter on sustainability.
2019	3-b. 5. 5. 5.	Water rights are secured sufficient to meet projected demand beyond 2034. A new right and two new wells are online. The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council.
2020	4. 5. 5. 5. 6.	A street and sidewalk condition assessment is completed that includes criteria for prioritizing projects. The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. Development regulations revisions include smart-growth and form-based zoning.
2021	1. 5. 5. 5.	Storm water utility is fully funded, developed and staffed. The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council.
2022	3-c. 5. 5. 5.	LED lights power all City street lights The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council.
2023	5. 5. 5. 7.	The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. Integration strategy with Green Tank Irrigation District.
2024	4-a. 5. 5. 5.	Transportation Benefit District is monetized and collects tax revenue. The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council.
2025	2. 3. 5. 5. 5.	All residents have access to municipal water supply. The wastewater utility meets WA Department of Ecology requirements. The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council.
2026	2-a. 7. 5. 5. 5. 8.	Water treatment facilities are current and adequate to future demand. The number and percentage of households with internet access along with top speed are reported to Council. The linear feet of wastewater pipe replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of water lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. The linear feet of stormwater lines replaced or relined is reported to Council. Aquifer retention.

Planning for Prosperity

The City uses transparent and accountable planning processes so residents understand how College Place grows and changes. Planning documents are clear with a vision for how to sustainably fund services while maintaining high levels of citizen satisfaction and add to the local population as well as the Urban Growth Area (UGA).

Goals and Objectives

1. The City produces and adopts a Comprehensive Plan
 - a. There is a written redevelopment strategy for the College Avenue corridor.
(Planning)
 - b. An historic preservation strategy is developed. (Historic preservation commission)
 - c. The City develops, maintains and funds a sustainable infrastructure replacement plan. (Finance)

The City has a Parks master plan that meets RCO standards and integrates the Blue Mountain Regional Trail Network (Parks, Arbor and Recreation Board)
 - d. The Walla Walla University Master Plan is integrated. (Mayor and Administrator)
2. City government is flexible enough to permit innovation.
 - a. Lean methodologies are applied to continuously improve the City's development processes. (Mayor and Administrator)
 - b. Municipal code is simplified to improve usability. (City Clerk)
3. By 2027, the City will complete its third Comprehensive plan.

Timeline and Outcomes

Year	Activity	Result
2018	1.	Comprehensive Plan includes a chapter on Downtown development.
2019	2. 2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed. Number of code revision ordinances passed per year
2020	2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed.
2021	2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed.
2022	2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed.

		Urban Growth Area reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council.
2023	2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed.
2024	2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed.
2025	2.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed.
2026	2. 3.	Report to Council on the number of process improvement groups formed. Comprehensive Plan development commences.

Optimal Operations

People of high character and capability power successful City operations. The City Council values its staff and sees Human Resources as its greatest asset. Integrating infrastructure and people are systems and tools that are current and people know how to use.

Goals and Objectives

1. The City is staffed to reflect nationally-recognized human resource levels.
 - a. The City Police department is staffed to State governing agency criteria and sustainably funded. (Council)
 - b. The City Fire department is staffed State governing agency criteria and sustainably funded. (Council)
 - c. The City Public Works, Planning, Building, and Engineering departments are adequately staffed and sustainably funded. (Council)
2. The City constructs new and modifies existing City facilities based on nationally-recognized standards. (Engineering)
3. The City has a robust Human Resource function.
 - a. Staff have opportunities for professional development and training. (Human resources)
 - b. The City is prepared for succession in key leadership positions. (Human Resources)
 - c. A learning culture is fostered. (Mayor and administrator)
4. GIS is used for comparative advantage and municipal leadership. (Administrator)

Timeline and Outcomes

Year	Activity	Result
2018	3-a. 4.	Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2019	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2020	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2021	1. 2. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Capital facility plan recognizes changing space and use requirements for City services. Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2022	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2023	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2024	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2025	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.
2026	1. 3-a. 4.	Incremental changes in staffing levels Number of professional training classes conducted and attended are reported annually. Total number of GIS uses reported.

Summary

Resource Development

1. The City develops and deploys a written Economic Development strategy to guide expansion of the commercial tax base.
 - a. Land is identified for commercial and residential development. (Planning)
 - b. Lodging development is pursued including the feasibility of meeting space. (Administrator)
 - c. A diversity of housing options is pursued including single-family, apartments, duplexes, condos, manufactured homes, accessory dwelling units and mixed-use. (Planning)
 - d. The City pursues a big box/chain retail development. (Administrator)

-
2. Downtown develops as a mixed-use zone with design standards that offer the developer a menu of possibilities rooted in a “main street” character.
 - a. Business opportunities are developed with a focus on local residents so that the local economy and indigenous wealth grows. (Economic Development Commission)
 - b. The inventory of mixed-use buildings in the downtown core increases. (Economic Development Commission)
 - c. Parking lots are developed in the downtown core close to College Avenue. (Planning)
 3. The City develops a venture with the Port of Walla Walla to develop incubator properties in the community, ideally near and in association with Walla Walla University. (Mayor)
 4. The City pursues urban growth expansion and an infill strategy. (Planning)
 5. The City develops tourism opportunities with its partners including Visit Walla Walla, Walla Walla University, Walla Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce, and local service businesses. (Administrator)

Cooperation and Connection

1. Create annual community events
 - a. Identify opportunity for specific College Place events that are tied to Walla Walla University, Adventist Schools, or College Place Public Schools activities like Alumni Weekend and graduations. (Economic Development Commission)
 - b. Create events which draw visitors from neighboring communities and regions. (Economic Development Commission)
2. The City’s outreach program effectively reaches all of its population.
 - a. Develop a City Brand guidelines (Administrator)
 - b. Students are actively involved in College Place City Council meetings and Council is involved at schools. (Council)
 - c. The City increases the use and effectiveness of social media channels that are used by stakeholders. (Departmental Social Media Managers)
 - d. The City maintains an active release of news to local media outlets for regularly occurring items and crisis communication. (Administrator)
 - e. School events are promoted to the Community. (Finance)
3. The City explores the feasibility of a multi-use community center. (Parks, Arbor & Recreation Commission)
4. The City shares leadership with its residents through volunteer service on Commissions, as follows. (Human Resources)
 - a. Planning Commission
 - b. Historic Preservation Commission
 - c. Civil Service Commission
 - d. Economic Development, Tourism, and Events Commission
 - e. Parks, Arbor, and Recreation Board
5. Walla Walla University and City of College Place staff and administration participate on each other’s boards and commissions in order to mutually aid their missions. (Mayor)
6. College Place builds and fosters interlocal partnerships in the following areas. (Mayor and Administrator)

-
- a. Utilities
 - b. Bidding on joint construction projects
 - c. Library
 - d. Court
 - e. Information Technology
 - f. Emergency Management
 - g. School security
 - h. Park and Recreation programs

Infrastructure Investment

1. The City develops a fully-funded storm water utility. (Engineer)
2. The City Council provides adequate budget to allow the staff to supply water to all residents within the City limits. (Public Works)
 - a. Water treatment infrastructure is replaced in the next ten years (Public Works)
 - b. Water rights and water availability are secured. (Public Works)
3. The City has a fully-funded wastewater utility. (Public Works)
 - a. The City has a plan to replace aging collection system. (Public Works)
 - b. The aquifer is recharging. (Public Works)
4. All local streets are refurbished and/or rebuilt.
 - a. The Transportation Benefit District has a funding mechanism that begins to fund renewal. (Administrator)
 - b. There are sidewalks, bike lanes and sharrows where practicable, preserving character of historic neighborhoods. (Planning)
 - c. Fully-controlled intersections are constructed at important crossings. (Engineering)
 - d. LED Street lights expands LED Street lights throughout the City. (Engineering)
5. Working with partners, the City promotes sustainability and conservation in the use of renewable resources, such as facilitating solar array installation on roofs and walls. (Planning)
6. Development regulations integrate smart-growth and form-based zoning. (Planning)
7. The City provides internet access as key infrastructure. (Mayor and Administrator)
 - a. Community-wide Wi-Fi improves access to internet.
 - b. Fiber cable is installed wherever development occurs.

Planning for Prosperity

1. The City produces and adopts a Comprehensive Plan
 - a. There is a written redevelopment strategy for the College Avenue corridor. (Planning)
 - b. An historic preservation strategy is developed. (Historic preservation commission)
 - c. The City develops, maintains and funds a sustainable infrastructure replacement plan. (Finance)

The City has a Parks master plan that meets RCO standards and integrates the Blue Mountain Regional Trail Network (Parks, Arbor and Recreation Board)

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- d. The Walla Walla University Master Plan is integrated. (Mayor and Administrator)
 2. City government is flexible enough to permit innovation.
 - a. Lean methodologies are applied to continuously improve the City's development processes. (Mayor and Administrator)
 - b. Municipal code is simplified to improve usability. (City Clerk)
 3. By 2027, the City will complete its third Comprehensive plan.

Optimal Operations

1. The City is staffed to reflect nationally-recognized human resource levels.
 - a. The City Police department is staffed to State governing agency criteria and sustainably funded. (Council)
 - b. The City Fire department is staffed State governing agency criteria and sustainably funded. (Council)
 - c. The City Public Works, Planning, Building, and Engineering departments are adequately staffed and sustainably funded. (Council)
2. The City constructs new and modifies existing City facilities based on nationally-recognized standards. (Engineering)
3. The City has a robust Human Resource function.
 - a. Staff have opportunities for professional development and training. (Human resources)
 - b. The City is prepared for succession in key leadership positions. (Human Resources)
 - c. A learning culture is fostered. (Mayor and administrator)
4. GIS is used for comparative advantage and municipal leadership. (Administrator)

Revising the Plan

The plan will be reviewed and updated annually. Recommendations for any interim changes to the plan should address the following questions:

- Why should the changes be made?
- What specific changes should be made, including to areas, goals, objectives, strategies timelines and responsibilities?

Questions to ask about Strategic Plan.

- 1) Is the mission statement relevant?**
- 2) Are the values relevant?**
- 3) What are your greatest concerns for the future of the City?**
- 4) What should the City be doing more of?**
- 5) What does the City do well?**
- 6) What things does the City need to improve on?**
- 7) If you could change one thing about the City, what would it be?**



Super Summer in College Place!



United Way
of the Blue Mountains

Registration opens April 21!

Camp Fire provides a nurturing, constructive and fun environment for young people to discover their sparks—unique skills, passions and interests—and adopt a growth mindset.

Registration Fee: \$25 or \$35 family rate

Cost: \$35/week per child.

SSCP is a 10 week program starting June 21 and ending August 27
Drop off @ 7:30am / Pick up @ 5:30pm

****Breakfast and lunch is provided by the Summer Food Service Program and afternoon snack provided by Camp Fire****

Age requirements are 5-12
(Finished Kindergarten - Finished 5th grade)

To register go to wwcampfire.org OR contact Keaton for more information:

keaton@wwcampfire.org

509-525-3180



Super Verana en College Place!



El Registro comienza April 21!

United Way
of the Blue Mountains

Camp Fire ofrece un entorno enriquecedor, constructivo y divertido para que los jóvenes descubran sus chispas: habilidades, pasiones y intereses y adoptar una mentalidad de crecimiento.

Cuota de inscripcion: \$25 o \$35 tarifa familiar

Costo: \$35/ por semana por niño.

SSCP es un programa de 10 semanas que comienza Junio 21 y
termina Agosto 27

Dias y horarios: lunes -Viernes de 7:30am / 5:30pm

****El desayuno y almuerzo seran proporcionados por el servicio de
alimentos de verano y la merienda sera proporcionada por
Camp Fire****

Los requisitos de edad son 5-12
(jardín de infancia terminado - terminó el quinto grado)

**Para registrarse visite wwcampfire.org O contacte a Keaton
para mas informacion:**

keaton@wwcampfire.org

509-525-3180



RESERVED
VENDOR, STAFF AND
ENTERTAINER PARKING

STAGE

Entertainment Stage
Will be moved closer to market
depending on vendor count
20 FT SEPARATION BETWEEN
ENTERTAINER AND CROWD

CUSTOMER PARKING
No Vendor Parking Here

MARKET ENTRANCE

City
Enter
SNAP

MINIMUM 6 FT. SEPARATION
BETWEEN BOOTHS

-  SANDWICH BOARDS
-  HANDWASH STATION
-  SANITIZING STATION