



Agenda

Planning Commission Workshop

Wednesday, September 9, 2026

Richland City Hall ~ Council Chambers

625 Swift Boulevard

Regular Workshop - 6:00 p.m.

Call to Order/Attendance

Agenda Items

- I. Comprehensive Plan Update - Draft Land Use Element Discussion
 - Nicole Stickney, AHBL Associate Principal, Land Use Planner

Communication

2. GMA Conversations for Policymakers resource
 - Jennifer Ballard, Senior Planner
3. Upcoming Meetings in September
 - Jennifer Ballard, Senior Planner

Adjournment

Richland City Hall is ADA accessible. Any individual who has difficulty attending the meeting in-person may request to provide comments remotely. (RCW Ch. 42.30) Requests for sign interpreters, audio equipment, and/or other special services must be received 48 hours prior to the meeting by calling the City Clerk's Office at 509-942-7389.



PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 9/9/2026

Agenda Category: Agenda Items

Prepared By: Nicole Stickney, AHBL Associate Principal, Land Use Planner

Subject

Comprehensive Plan Update - Draft Land Use Element Discussion

Department/Office

Document Type

Development Services

Planning Commission Item

Summary

Nicole Stickney, Associate Principal with AHBL, will present the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update Draft Land Use Element for review and discussion.

Attachments

1. Land Use Memo
2. Draft Land Use Element
3. Land Use Element Presentation

TO:	Mike Rizzitiello, Development Services Director, City of Richland	DATE:	August 31, 2026
FROM:	Nicole Stickney Tri-Cities - (509) 380-5883	PROJECT NO.:	2240885.30
		PROJECT NAME:	Richland Comprehensive Plan 2026 Periodic Update
SUBJECT:	Land Use Element Staff Report		

INTRODUCTION

AHBL planners have prepared a draft Land Use Element for the Comprehensive Plan update in accordance with guidance and requirements from the Growth Management Act and the Department of Commerce.

To update the Element, we considered the city's unique history, goals, and recent developments and consulted adopted materials and state requirements such as new GMA requirements and the newly assigned growth targets for cities and counties (using the "Housing for all Planning Tool" or HAPT as described in the Housing Element).

We also reviewed the Land Use Element of the City's existing Comprehensive Plan, dated 2017, with subsequent amendments.

We recommend that you include this memo with the draft in the Planning Commission's meeting packet for their workshop scheduled for September 9, 2026. The Planning Commission previously reviewed an earlier draft set of Land Use Element Goals and Policies (during the summer).

The Land Use Element in the 2017 Comprehensive Plan included discussion about Richland's natural environment, with subsections detailing Critical Areas, Open Space, Shoreline, and Mineral Resources. However, for this update this information was relocated to the new Natural Environment and Climate Elements. The Land Use Element still includes some natural environment related topics that relate directly to land use including Wildland Urban Interface (in terms of development standards and mitigation), the City's Community Wildfire Protection Plan, and measures of environmental health (i.e. exposure to pollution and other health outcomes).

Overall, we have endeavored to improve the context and framework behind the Land Use Element and aimed to present more useful discussion and detail as compared to the current Plan.

When reviewing this Element it is helpful to keep in mind that the Comprehensive Plan includes other related elements: Housing, Transportation, Economic Development, Utilities, Capital Facilities, Parks and Recreation, Climate, and Natural Environment.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES & UPDATES

The following list generally summarizes the updates that we have proposed in the Land Use Element draft:

- Added a background information section which describes the purpose of the Land Use Element and describes the many documents and regulations that help to shape the Element, such as the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies and the requirements of the Growth Management Act (GMA).
- Generally reformatted the Element; there are four parts and the goals and policies are moved to the end.
- Included information about the UGA expansion application to Benton County (the request is still pending, and there will be a public hearing on the Benton County Plan, which will include the UGA request, in October that we will continue to monitor).

- Added information about property rights (constitutional principles and the like).
- Updated and moved portions of the population projection and growth targets discussion to the **Housing** and **Economic Development** Elements.
- Moved most of the information in the current plan's *Natural Environment* section (critical areas, mineral resources) to the new **Natural Environment** Element. Likewise, the goals and policies that were formerly listed in the Land Use Element have already been relocated to the Natural Environment element, with proposed changes, which was reviewed a few months ago by the Planning Commission.

Part I Existing Conditions

- Added information broadly describing the physical layout of the city's land use patterns, major transportation facilities, and supply of lands controlled by the government.
- Updated the Cultural and Historic Resources section to include details on the history of the area that the City of Richland now encompasses, including the Village of Chemna. This section has also been revised to note that the City of Richland has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Umatilla Nation.
- Added information on historical properties and public art.
- Added information on environmental health, healthy living, and health disparities and their connections to land use. This information could be helpful for future grant applications and funding strategies.

Part II Concepts for Land Development and the Built Environment

- The concept of Land Use Compatibility is introduced and discussed. This supports the efforts of the city to regulate land uses and activities through zoning and other development regulations and sets the stage for how mitigation can be required.
- An Airport Zoning Overlay District is proposed to be added to the Zoning Code; we have added a short introduction to the concept which is appropriate for placement in the Land Use Element. There will also be map(s) added to indicate the affected area.
- New sections cover the topics: infill development, lands for public purposes, circulation and connectivity (with discussion about the function of the Duportail bridge and emphasis on multi-modal connections); urban design is a section that has been retained and updated.
- The section previously called "the public realm" has been renamed to "community spaces" and is updated, together with the section on Open Space.
- There is a new topic which is required: the Wildland Urban Interface.

Part III Neighborhoods and Districts

In this part of the Comprehensive Plan, we describe different parts of the city, characterizing the development and then presenting key concepts and, in some cases, describing properties for future development opportunities.

- This includes details added to the Central Business District subsection regarding the proposed Downtown Loop project which will create a one-way loop to improve traffic flow in the Downtown and will provide pedestrian amenities.

- In these sections we also address instances where a sub-area plan is in place, was previously used (but has since run its course and is to be “retired”), or where a sub-area plan could be developed in the future.

Part IV Land Use Designations and the Land Use Map

This part of the Land use Element is generally self-explanatory but we want to emphasize:

1. A new designation for **Manufactured Home Parks** is proposed. This new designation (and a corresponding zoning district) could be applied to limit opportunities for redevelopment. By attempting to limit market pressures which could result in displacement of park residents, Richland can help achieve preservation of existing manufactured home parks, providing stable neighborhoods and retaining “naturally affordable” (not subsidized) housing stock.
2. The land use designation “Urban Reserve” is proposed to be discontinued. The urban reserve designation was previously given to the DNR-owned land near Queensgate but that was changed during the last periodic update. There were few lands remaining in the “Urban Reserve” designation and it is logical to instead assign the “Low Density Residential” land use (or more intensive land use designations, where applicable) instead.
3. The former land use designation “Agriculture” is proposed to be discontinued, together with the zoning districts that implemented the designation: “Agriculture (AG)” and “Suburban Agriculture (SAG).” A new zoning district called “Residential – Limited Agriculture (RLA)” would instead emphasize the primary use of housing while continuing to allow agricultural activities.

c: Jennifer Ballard – City of Richland
Emily Weimer, MillieAnne VanDevender - AHBL

LAND USE

Introduction

As the central foundation and cornerstone of the Comprehensive Plan (the Plan), the Land Use Element provides the framework for future development, infrastructure investment, and growth management. It identifies the location and distribution of residential, commercial, industrial, public, recreational, and open space land uses needed to support the community's long-term vision and growth targets. Its policies influence and support all other plan elements, helping ensure coordinated and sustainable community development. Because land use decisions influence nearly every aspect of development, this element is closely coordinated with all other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, particularly the Transportation and Housing Elements. The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires all elements of the Comprehensive Plan to be internally consistent with the Land Use Element.

It is intended to support responsible land management decisions, protect valued community assets, and ensure that future development is consistent with local priorities and regional planning requirements. The element provides an assessment of existing conditions, evaluates opportunities and constraints for future growth, and establishes the goals and policies that will guide land use decisions over the planning horizon.

HOW THIS ELEMENT IS ORGANIZED

The chapter begins with background information that establishes the regulatory context for land use planning. This includes a discussion of applicable federal, state, and local regulations, as well as the planning requirements that influence land use decisions. Particular attention is given to the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies (2025), which provide the regional framework for coordinating growth management, land use, and development among jurisdictions throughout the county.

Part I: Existing Conditions examines the current characteristics of the community and the factors that influence future land use decisions. This section provides an overview of existing land use patterns and development trends, highlighting the relationship between residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, and public lands. It also evaluates cultural, educational, and historic resources that contribute to community identity and quality of life. Environmental health disparities are reviewed to better understand how land use decisions may affect different populations and to identify opportunities to promote equitable community outcomes. The section concludes with the land capacity analysis findings.

Part II: Concepts for Land Development and the Built Environment establishes the community's vision for future growth and development. This section describes some of the key planning principles and development concepts to shape the character, function, and appearance of the built environment.

Part III: Neighborhoods and Districts focuses on the unique areas that collectively form the community. Recognizing that different neighborhoods and districts possess distinct characteristics, opportunities, and challenges, this section features a high-level description of the presented areas. The discussion considers residential neighborhoods, commercial nodes and centers, employment districts, and other special areas that contribute to the community's overall character and economic vitality. Key development concepts (and in some cases, development sites) are also reviewed.

Part IV: Land Use Designation and the Land Use Map presents the future land use pattern envisioned for the community. **Land use designations** are categories which describe the intended distribution, intensity, and character of future development across the planning area. The accompanying Land Use Map (**Figure LU-14**) shows these designations. Richland implements its various land uses through zoning designations as shown in **Table LU-3**.

Land Use Goals and Policies are provided at the end of the Element.

Background Information

The goals, policies, and strategies in this Element are intended to support and guide land use and zoning decisions in Richland over the next 20 years, helping direct growth to appropriate locations and support the community's desired development patterns.

The Land Use Element applies to all lands within the City of Richland, as well as properties located outside the incorporation limits but still within the Urban Growth Area (UGA). While Benton County retains zoning and authority permitting duties over unincorporated areas of the UGA, the Land Use Map and policies of this Element establish the City's vision and preferred development pattern for these areas as they urbanize and potentially annex into Richland.

REGULATORY SETTING

Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA) was adopted in 1990 to promote coordinated and orderly growth (Chapter 36.70A RCW). The GMA was created to address and prevent uncoordinated and unplanned growth, by requiring cities and counties to engage in long-range planning that guides future development and infrastructure investments. Through comprehensive planning, communities establish policies that balance environmental stewardship, economic development, and the protection of public health, safety, and welfare. The result is a coordinated approach to growth to ensure a high quality of life for residents while managing growth in a thoughtful and organized way.

Washington's GMA mandates that comprehensive plans include a Land Use Element to shape future growth (RCW 36.70A.070(1)). A key component is the plan's **Land Use Map** which outlines the planned spatial distribution and intensity of various land uses—such as lands classified for residential, commercial, industrial, civic, and recreational purposes. This map is a document which sets out policy, primarily implemented through the official zoning map, a regulatory tool that ensures land use consistency. Consequently, any proposed zoning changes must align with the Land Use Map.

The City must evaluate its financial capacity to provide public facilities and services that support planned urban development and existing urban densities. At the same time, it must maintain an adequate supply of land designated for future growth and development. The desired result is to provide a broad range of development opportunities while ensuring that the costs of serving both existing and planned urban areas remain financially sustainable. The City's six-year **Capital Improvement Plan** (CIP) serves as a tool for prioritizing infrastructure investments and reassessing projects if it is found that available funding is insufficient to meet identified needs. Accordingly, the City periodically reviews and adjusts its land use goals and policies to reflect changing circumstances such as financial conditions, growth patterns, and community priorities.

Urban Growth Areas

In Washington State, the GMA dictates that communities are limited to growth within designated Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) and cities are expected to develop in a compact, efficient manner within their incorporated boundaries, supported by urban-level services. UGAs include everything within city limits and certain unincorporated areas and are designated to accommodate a city's future expansion and the extension of urban services through annexation. The Richland UGA includes all land within the City, plus the areas beyond current city limits where urban growth is planned to occur over time (**Figure LU-1**). Areas outside UGAs are essentially lands which are set aside from development (and prioritized for farming, mineral extraction or forestry) or which are rural in nature as defined in RCW 36.70A.030.

During the 2026 Periodic Update cycle, the City applied to Benton County to expand the UGA in a few specific areas and identified an area that will not be developed that could be removed from the UGA. Benton County commissioners **approved /disapproved** the expansion request for an increase of 403 acres and **included / did not include** the proposed removal of 140 acres at the top of Badger Mountain from the City's UGA, for a net increase of around 263 acres.

In the near-term future, the only expected expansion of the UGA is limited to the two places where land is surrounded by UGA and to lands north of the City where the federal government may deed additional land being transferred out of federal control associated with the Hanford Site¹.



*Drone footage of proposed UGA expansion site.
Photo credit Candy Mountain LLC*

Property Rights

This Plan sets out general guidance and a policy framework without prescribing specific outcomes. This approach respects private property rights and allows for adaptability to changing circumstances.

Per RCW 36.70A.020, the GMA mandates that:

- Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made;
- The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions; and
- Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability.

Moreover, federal and state constitutional doctrines - relating to "regulatory takings" and also "substantive due process" relate to private property rights in Washington.

¹ This is a placeholder to describe a resolution (to be) passed that shows the city has identified potential lands for 40 to 50 years into the future.

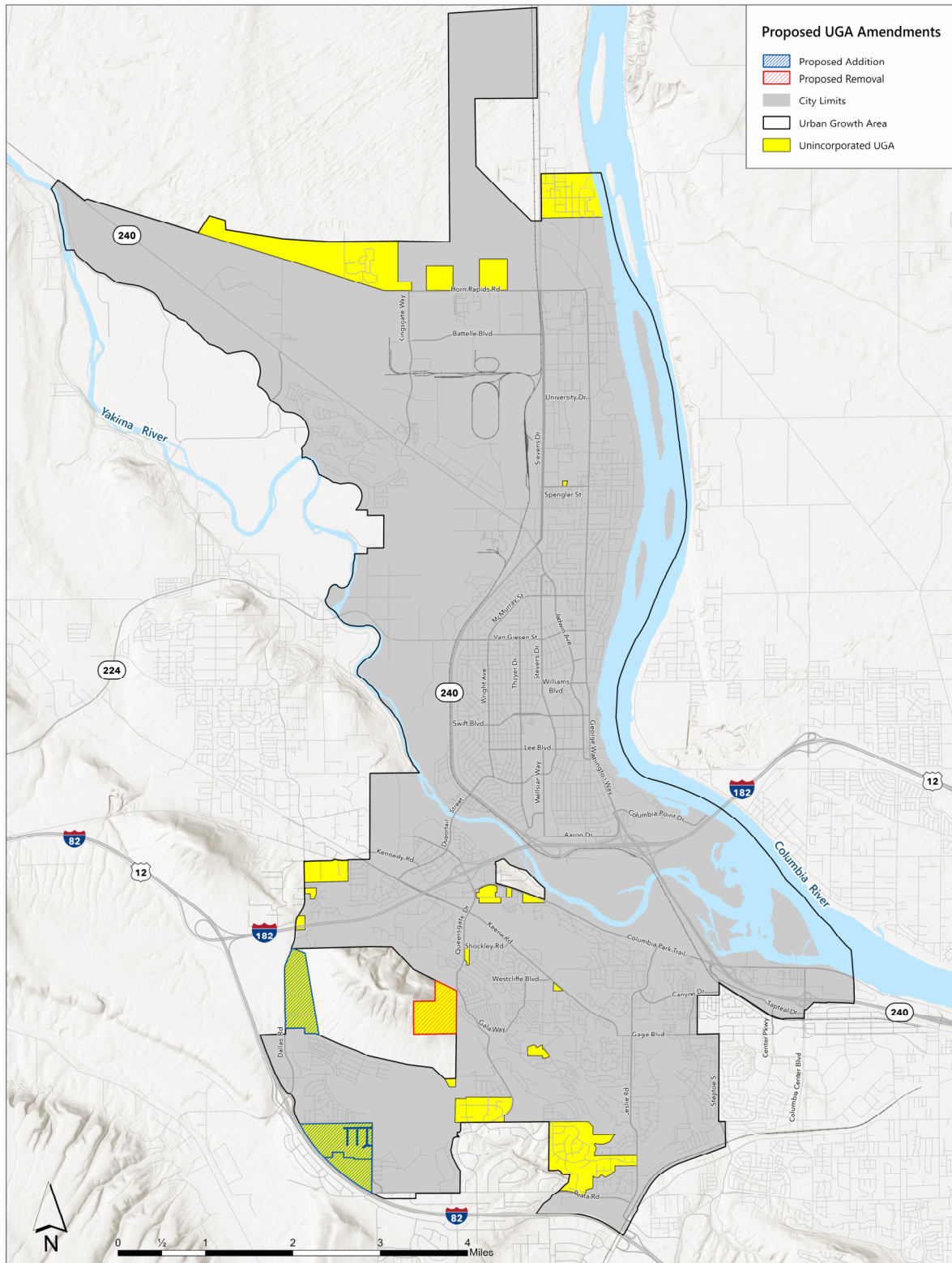


Figure LU-1: Richland City Limits and UGAs

BENTON COUNTY COUNTYWIDE PLANNING POLICIES

Countywide Planning Policies (CWPPs) are developed by individual counties and serve as guidelines and principles used by all cities within a county to ensure regional coordination and smart growth. The policies are developed to avoid inconsistencies or incompatible strategies, particularly with regard to transportation networks, public services, and provisions for affordable housing. Under the GMA, the State requires Richland to update the Plan in accordance with Benton County's CWPPs. (See **Appendix B**)

One of the biggest effects that CWPPs have on the City's Land Use Element is the allocation of housing and employment growth targets, which estimate how quickly Richland is expected to grow over the next 20 years.

Growth Targets

In 2025 (with the passage of the Countywide Planning Policies), Richland was allocated a growth target of 14,155 new housing units by 2046, to increase the existing housing supply (calculated from 2020 baseline levels) to accommodate a growing population. The growth target figure is consistent with the GMA population projections promulgated by the state Office of Financial Management for Benton County per RCW 43.62.035, in the "mid series" scenario.

The City's new growth targets must be considered and accounted for according to the requirements set out by House Bill 1220 (2021) legislation regarding Housing Elements for Comprehensive Plans, which specifies that the city must:

- Plan for sufficient land capacity for housing needs, including all economic segments of the population (moderate, low, very low and extremely low income, as well as emergency housing and permanent supportive housing).
- Provide for moderate density housing options within UGAs, including but not limited to duplexes, triplexes and townhomes.
- Make adequate provisions for housing that accommodates all economic segments of the community, including documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability according to projected needs.
- Identify potentially racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing policies and regulations, and begin to undo such impacts; and identify areas at higher risk of displacement and establish anti-displacement policies.

By the year 2046, the City is expected to have 39,770 total housing units, including permanent housing units and emergency housing, which would be distributed as shown in Figure H-2 of the Housing Element. The method for determining target numbers for specific housing needs according to income level as required by the State using the "Housing for All Planning Tool" (HAPT) is further described in the **Housing Element** and the **Land Capacity Analysis (Appendix A)**.

Employment growth will also occur, relative to population growth and driven by new businesses and expansions in the economy (such as anticipated industrial sector development and Clean Energy projects). Growth is also expected to be bolstered by a vibrant and growing Central Business District with restaurants, shopping, and entertainment options. Richland is planning for a specific employment growth target (number of jobs) to increase from 2020 levels for the planning period of 2026-2046. Further information is in the **Economic Development Element**.



Part I: Existing Conditions

This section reviews current development patterns and activities within the City, accompanied by historical context, providing a foundation for understanding how Richland has changed over time, and how its distinctive character developed.

Richland's physical setting has played a defining role in its growth and development. Located in eastern Benton County, the city is situated at the confluence of the Columbia and Yakima Rivers; the Columbia River forms much of Richland's eastern boundary, while the Yakima River defines portions of its western edge.

LAND USE PATTERNS: AN OVERVIEW

Land use patterns define individual neighborhoods, businesses, amenities, and public facilities, and the types and locations of future development and redevelopment. Land use patterns also impact traffic patterns, the demand for trips, and trip origins/destination, and mode of travel. This relationship highlights the importance of planning across these different domains.

Geographic Arrangement of Core Functions

HOUSING:



Housing is generally concentrated in three major areas: the central area between the Columbia River and State Route (SR) 240, areas south of the Yakima River, and the Horn Rapids area. Likewise, churches and other places of worship, schools, and childcare options are commonly intermingled in the neighborhoods.

COMMERCIAL:



Lands with commercial uses (retail, wholesale, offices, restaurants, etc.) are largely distributed throughout the City, with major centers found in the Central Business District (CBD), at Queensgate, South Richland (particularly along the Keene Road and Gage Boulevard corridors) and the Island View area.

INDUSTRIAL:



Industrial activities are focused in the area around the Richland Airport, the Wellsian Way corridor and sites south of Aaron drive. The northern part of the City starting from Richland Airport on the south side to the north City limits have the most intensive uses.

OPEN SPACE / RECREATION:



Open space and areas for passive and active recreation extend across the city. River corridors and ridgelines are some key locations.

AGRICULTURE:



Richland (and its surrounding area) has a long history of agricultural production, and that legacy continues through the present day. Land is still in production as orchards, vineyards, crop-raising and limited livestock farming, although the overall amount is diminishing as intended within city limits in accordance with the GMA.

Richland's city limits (2026) cover approximately 31,146 acres, (with approximately 10 percent covered in water), while the UGA accounts for an additional 1,539 acres.²

The Yakima River delta and associated open spaces form a significant natural corridor through the city. Further information about Richland's Natural Environment including drainage, flooding, and stormwater runoff is discussed in the **Natural Environment Element**.

Major Transportation Facilities

Some of the transportation facilities, which in one respect connect areas of the city and facilitate movement between different areas, also effectively divide the city.

Interstate 182 runs concurrently with US Highway 12 (US-12)) east-west through the City north of the Yakima River delta, creating a significant transportation corridor that also serves as a physical divider between portions of the community, and bifurcating the City.

I-182/US-12 freeway access via interchanges are located at Queensgate Drive, SR-240 near Aaron Drive, and at George Washington Way/SR-240. To the west of the city, I-182/US-12 connects with Interstate 82 (I-82) at Dallas Road and from there the I-82 freeway and U.S. Route 395 wraps around the southern part of the Tri-Cities resembling a loop configuration .

Rail facilities for commercial and industrial uses generally run parallel to SR-240 with at-grade crossings at Van Giesen Street and the intersection of Stevens Road and Jadwin; from that point the railroad continues north running parallel to Stevens Drive but separated by a few hundred feet, with an at-grade crossing near the Lamb Weston plant crossing SR-240 and then the spur continues to a rail loop in north Richland. Further information about Richland's transportation network including circulation, access, and mobility topics are in the **Transportation Element**.



Government Lands

Since incorporation, land use within and surrounding the City has been largely influenced by the prevalence of public land ownership; both federal and state-owned. After all, for a period of time the city was entirely government-owned. As the City has grown, it has interfaced with public lands in differing ways whether through acquisition and development or preservation. **Figure LU-2** shows the government owned land located within the City of Richland.

- The Bureau of Land Management and Army Corps of Engineers currently own and control much of the land fronting on the Yakima River. This is due in part to the regional impact that the health of the Yakima River has on downstream communities, as well as hydroelectric generation that this river contributes to, as well as flood control and other purposes. The vast majority of this land falls within a critical floodplain.
- The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) owns and manages vast amounts of land across Washington state, generating revenue for public schools and other

public purposes. DNR owns several hundred acres of land between Kennedy Road and the Yakima River, which comprise large parcels within general Queensgate area; the land was previously in agricultural production (orchard leases) and now a portion is held in their Trust Land Transfer Program. Through this program, the DNR transfers properties that have been held in trust out of that status to a receiving agency and then the revenues to purchase replacement land elsewhere to earn ongoing, sustainable revenue.

- Parts of the City lying south of the Yakima River feature canals controlled by the Columbia Irrigation District or Kennewick Irrigation District. These canals are publicly owned rights-of-way². In many cases, these canals divide neighborhoods, much the same way that highways and railroads do. Due to the thriving agricultural economy of the surrounding countryside, it is not likely that these canals will be removed; instead, the City must plan carefully so as to better connect neighborhoods along the canal systems, without impacting the systems themselves.
- Various state and federal government offices are located within Richland including the Federal Building (which includes a US District Court, a former post office facility and Department of Energy - affiliated offices). Nearby, the Richland Post Office is located at 639 Cullum Ave.
- The Department of Ecology (regulatory agency for Hanford site) and additional state agencies have offices located within Richland.
- The Volpentest Hazardous Materials Management and Emergency Response (HAMMER) Federal Training Center is a safety and emergency response training center, located at 2890 Horn Rapids Road. The site is owned by the Department of Energy. The site is outside of incorporation limits but within the UGA.
- In 2022 a readiness training center was constructed in the Horn Rapids Business Park for the Washington National Guard. The facility houses the Washington Army National Guard's Stryker Infantry Unit, the National Guard's 81st Brigade Combat team.
- In addition, the Army Corps of Engineers has facilities and land holdings in the city. These holdings are largely along the Yakima River. For example, the REACH museum is located on land owned by the Corps.

² Public access to canals is not typically allowed due to their utilitarian nature, except that future public access may be facilitated in specific locations in the future, pending interlocal agreements

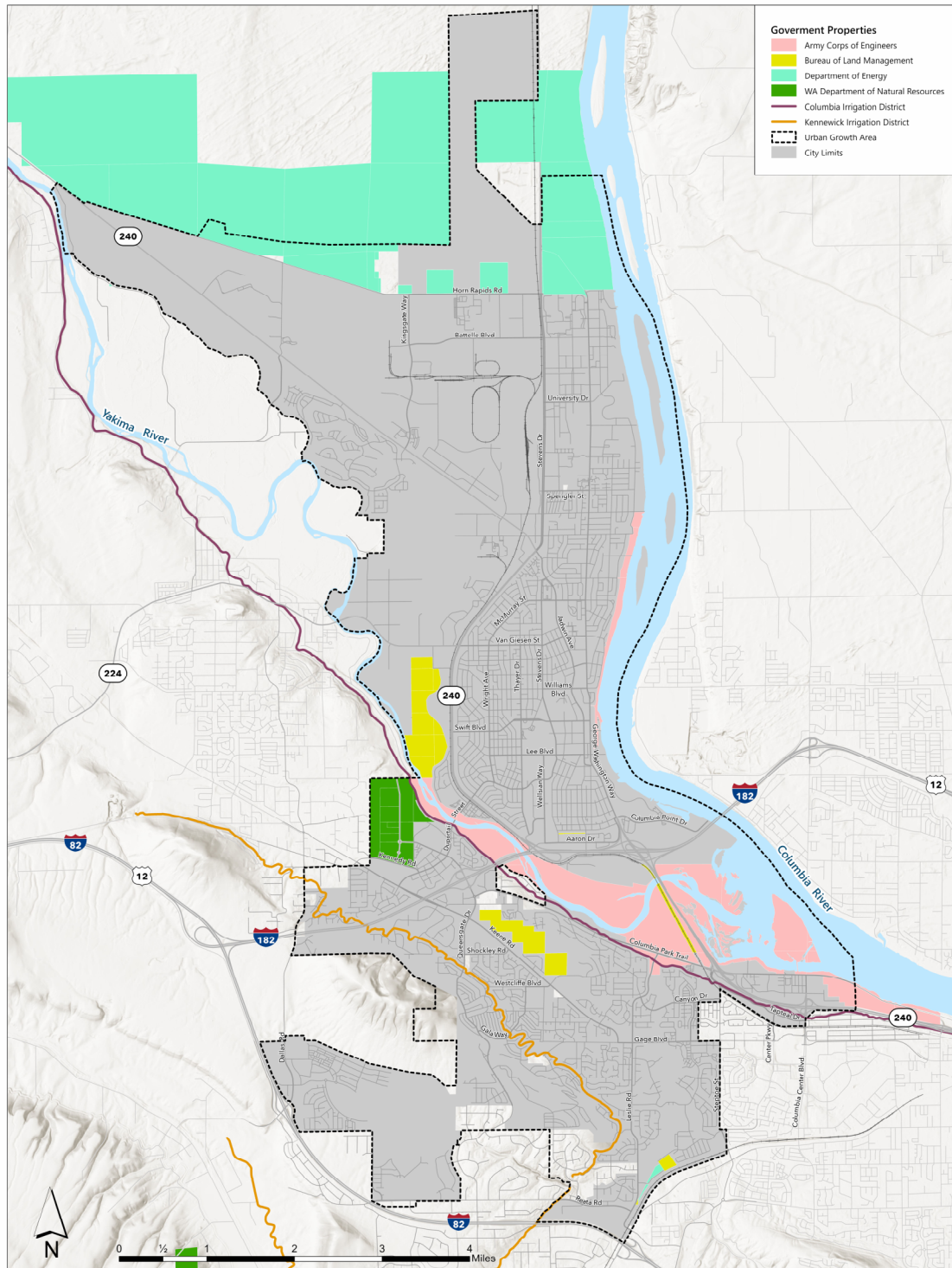


Figure LU-2: Government Owned Properties

FUTURE LAND CAPACITY

The Land Capacity Analysis is included at Appendix A. Key findings:

TO BE ADDED

CULTURAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

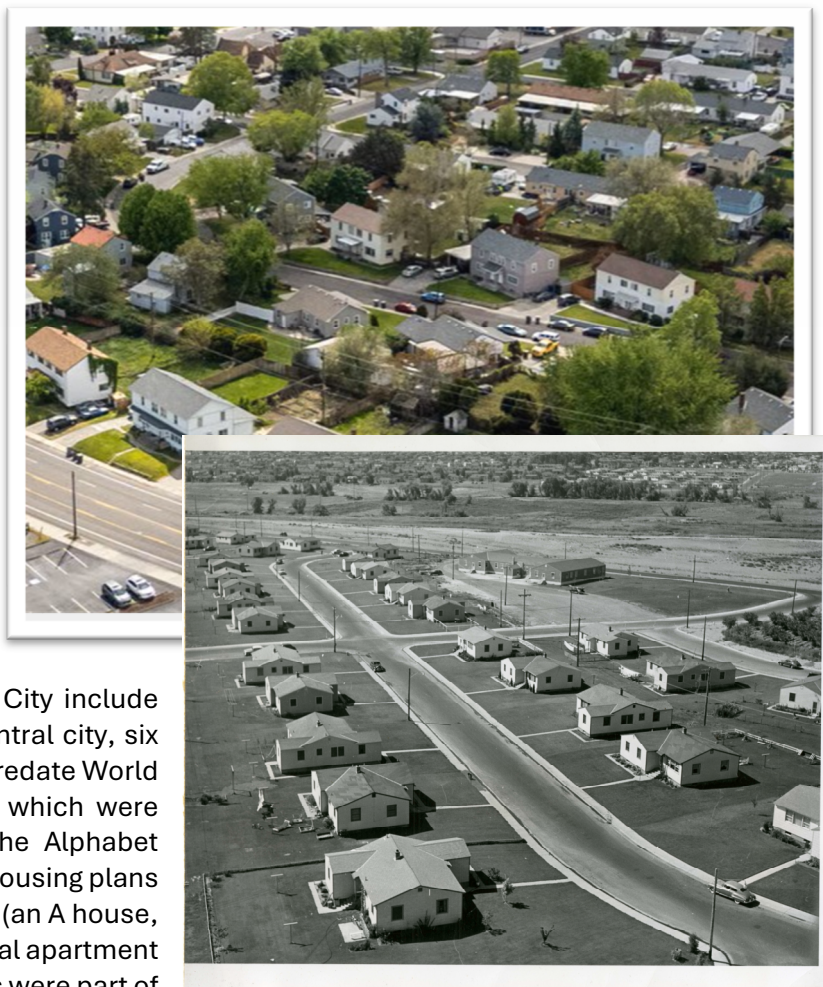
For more than 11,000 years, people have occupied a portion of the area that Richland now encompasses. For centuries, the Village of Chemna stood at the mouth of the Tapetett River, a Sahaptin name for the Yakima River, also called Tapteal. At Chemna, Sahaptin-speaking Wanapum, Walla Walla and Yakama Indians fished for seasonal runs of salmon and hunted small game, deer and antelope. They gathered berries, greens and root vegetables along the water and on the nearby hills.

The City of Richland has a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) which memorializes coordination between the City and the Umatillas on shoreline projects that may have an impact on cultural resources.

Historical Structures

Richland's historic resources differ from those found in many Eastern Washington communities, owing to its settlement history. While other towns may feature Victorian-era downtown areas spanning many blocks, have former regionally-important railroad depots, and other amenities, Richland generally lacks this pattern. However, Richland has a compelling and fascinating story to tell, largely centered on the 1940s United States Government Manhattan Project which forever changed the trajectory of the formerly quiet farming community.

Historic structures unique to the City include twelve tract farmhouses in the central city, six buildings in or near the CBD that predate World War II, and the Alphabet Homes which were built between 1943 and 1951. The Alphabet Homes were based on a series of housing plans denoted by a letter in the alphabet (an A house, an F house, etc.). In addition, several apartment buildings and prefabricated homes were part of



this development scheme. These houses have historical significance in that they were built as part of the federal city created for the Hanford project.

Historic structures formally recognized on the National Register of Historic Places include the “Gold Coast” District, a central Richland neighborhood comprised of many Alphabet Homes that have largely retained their original character. The Bateman Island Site and the Tri-Cities Archaeological District are also included in the National Register of Historic Places³.

Cultural resources are typically discovered during excavation and site preparation for development proposals. While it is difficult to know where every cultural resource site exists, the Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation has records of previous investigations in the region.

Several properties and structures or districts within the City (or at the nearby Hanford Site) are either listed on the National Register of Historic Places (as shown in **Table LU-1**) or the Washington Heritage Register (the [Central United Protestant Church](#) (1124 Stevens Drive), the Wahluke Archaeological District, and the Gable Mountain Archaeological District).

Table LU-1: Listed Historic Properties – National Register

Property	Area of Significance
Gold Coast Historic District (Roughly bounded by Willis St., Davison Ave., Hunt Ave., Davison Ave., and George Washington Way)	Community Planning and Development; Military
Hanford B Reactor *	Military; Engineering; Science; Politics / Government
Hanford Island Archeological Site	Prehistoric; Historic - Aboriginal
Hanford North Archeological District	Prehistoric; Historic - Aboriginal
Locke Island Archeological District	Prehistoric; Historic - Aboriginal
Post Office and Federal Office Building (825 Jadwin Avenue)	Politics / Government; Community Planning and Development; Architecture (Style is Considered Modernist/ New Formalism)
Rattlesnake Springs Sites (also known as Rattlesnake Springs Archaeological District)	Prehistoric; Historic - Aboriginal
Ryegrass Archeological District	Prehistoric
Savage Island Archeological District	Prehistoric; Historic – non-aboriginal
Snively Canyon Archeological District	Prehistoric
Wooded Island Archeological District	Prehistoric; Historic - Aboriginal

* Also listed as a National Historic Landmark

³ Shoreline Inventory and Characterization Report

Funding opportunities are available for the continued preservation of historic structures. Benton County operates a Historic Preservation Grant program and awards funding to projects throughout the County using funds collected from the recording fees that are deposited into the Benton County Historical Preservation fund. Non-profit organizations and government entities can apply for funding annually and awards typically range from around \$1,000 to \$10,000; the REACH museum is among past grant recipients.

Additionally, the City of Richland will review the feasibility of establishing a Historic Preservation Program through the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program⁴. The CLG is a federal-state-local partnership created through the National Historic Preservation Act (1980) providing funding for a variety of purposes including historic district development, surveys, and signage. A program could provide benefits to Richland property owners including special property tax valuation, access to federal historic tax credits, eligibility for CLG grant opportunities administered through the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation, and for the adaptive reuse of historic structures through the Washington State Historic Building Code.

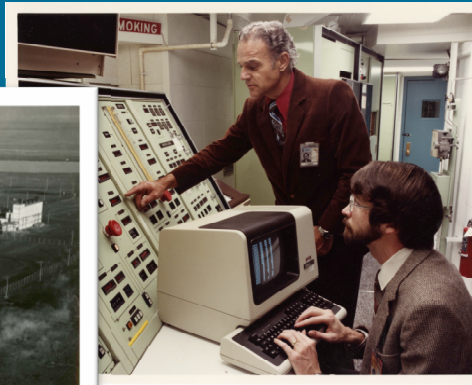
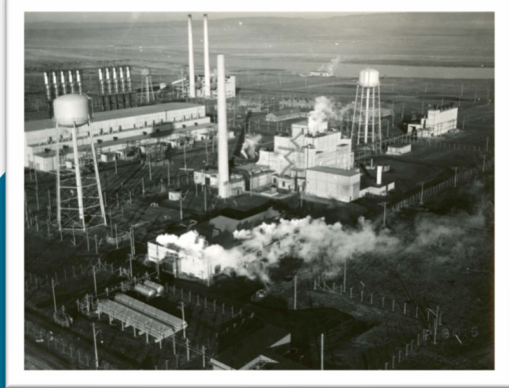
This Historic Preservation Program aligns with the City of Richland's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan and Comprehensive Plan goals related to housing preservation, historic resources, and supporting a vibrant downtown.

Goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan provide a framework for reviewing and permitting future development proposals. Coordination with the State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation and implementation of policies relating to the preservation of cultural and historic resources will help to ensure resources are protected.



Alphabet house. Photo credit Laila Krowiak.

⁴ City of Richland May 26, 2026 Council Meeting.



SNAPSHOTS FROM THE PAST

RICHLAND REMAINS FOREVER LINKED TO OUR NATION'S HISTORY

Richland's identity is strongly influenced by its legacy of scientific discovery, technological innovation, and industrial achievement. The community's growth has been shaped by the Hanford Site and its nationally significant role in scientific and environmental research, as well as by the presence of the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, energy production facilities, and strong educational partnerships. Together, these institutions and industries have attracted generations of scientists, engineers, researchers, skilled tradespeople, and other technical professionals.

Research and innovation related to energy, environmental remediation and stewardship, national security, and advanced technologies are integral to the community's character and economy.

This foundation fosters a local culture that values education, problem-solving, and innovation, and has established Richland as a center for scientific and technical expertise within the region and beyond.

The community's experience addressing complex challenges, from scientific advancement to environmental remediation, continues to shape its outlook and aspirations. This spirit of innovation supports economic resilience, encourages entrepreneurship, and reinforces Richland's reputation as a community where knowledge, creativity, and expertise are applied to improve lives locally and profoundly contribute to solutions with national - and global - impact.

Public Art

Public art is an important component to the overall quality of life and “sense of place” in Richland. Public art can contribute to revitalization efforts and support economic development-related objectives including tourism promotion. Public Art is also addressed in the City’s **Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan** (2026).

The city conducted a Public Art survey in 2020 and 83 percent of those who participated in the survey indicated they want to see public art in City parks. They also indicated they want to see public art in unexpected places (73% selected this option), followed by pedestrian walkways and trails (72%) as well as along the river (69%) and at public buildings (65%). Respondents were also asked to indicate a favorite example (or examples) of public art in Richland; six choices were provided and people taking the survey could make multiple selections. The responses in rank order (highest rate of selection, 1, to the lowest, 6, were:

- 1) Murals / sculptures on the side of buildings;
- 2) Artistic design incorporated into infrastructure (ex: benches, bridges, fences, etc.);
- 3) Sculptures placed in parks, along trails or at City facilities;
- 4) Performance Art / Special Events supporting Art;
- 5) Art placed in roundabouts; and
- 6) Vinyl Art Wraps on Traffic Utility Cabinets.

The City’s Arts Commission, an advisory body that provides expertise on visual, performing, and literary arts, typically holds a monthly meeting and develops a workplan that is updated periodically.

Additionally, there has continued interest in establishing a performing arts facility to serve the Tri-Cities, and the Richland Public Facilities district has explored the topic.



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES

Environmental health disparities occur when a combination of environmental, social and historical factors compound over time. In particular, a disproportionate exposure to air pollution or poor healthcare access has been shown to further exacerbate challenges faced among impoverished communities. Key concepts that the State of Washington requires jurisdictions to consider when planning includes cumulative risk faced by overburdened communities, lack of environmental justice, and unequal access to resources and participation in policy decision-making.

A Community's health status is determined by factors such as obesity, insurance coverage, diseases, mortality rates, physical activity, and health habits. The Washington Department of Health's **Environmental Health Disparities Map** provides rankings for various health disparities, with one being low and ten being high, as a relative ranking for state-wide attributes (Figure LU-3). This means that if a particular item has a score of "3" for example, the local impact is relatively low as compared to other locations of the state.

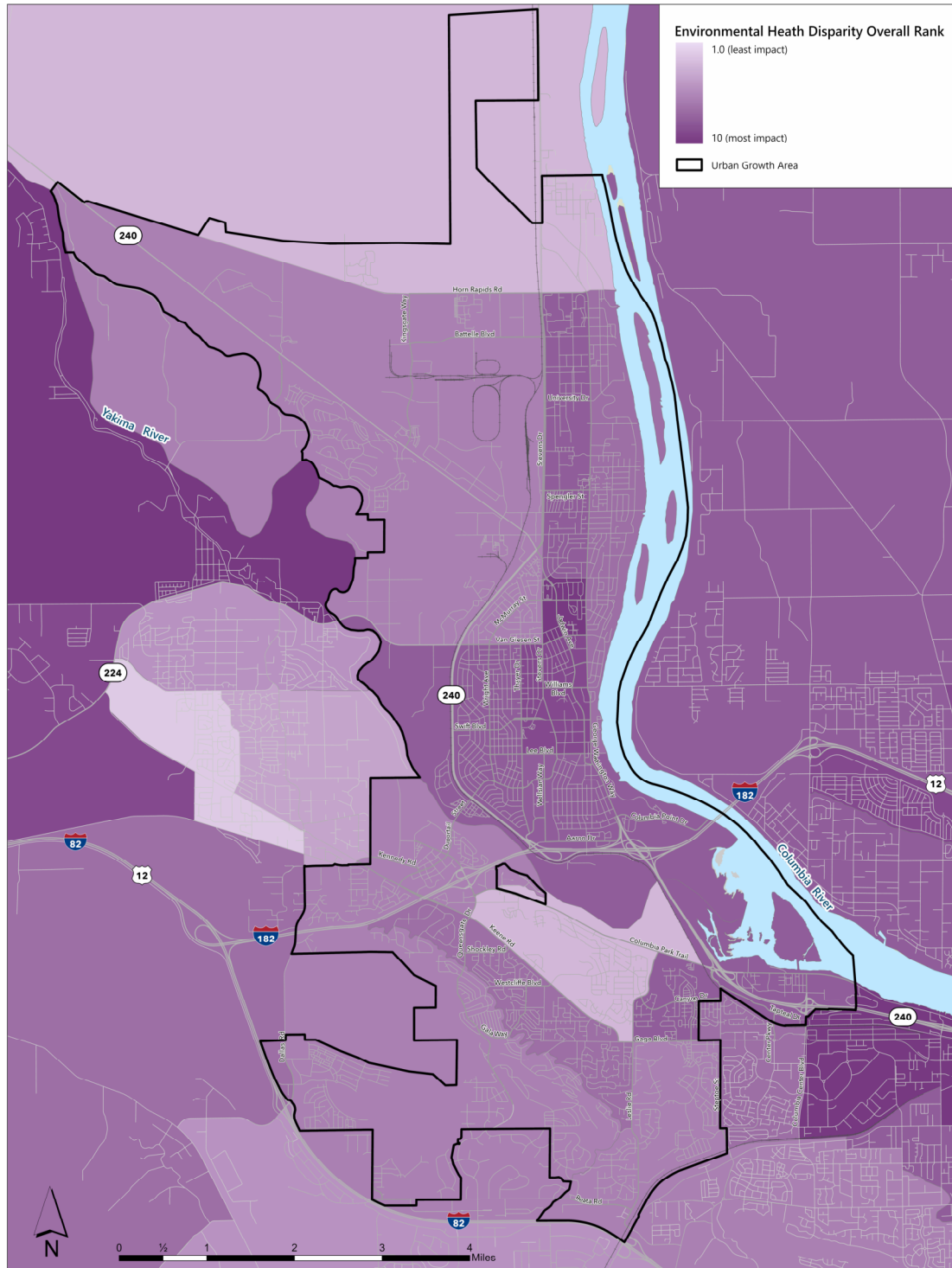


Figure LU-3: Environmental Health Disparities Map

Source: The Washington Department of Health Environmental Health Disparities Map



All census tracts within the City of Richland rank 10 for ozone concentration, the highest ranking relative to other areas of Washington State. Per State of Washington Department of Health literature: *Ozone is a gas created by car exhaust, burning wood, gasoline pumps, and other air pollution sources. High levels of ozone can cause asthma and heart disease. Outdoor workers and young children are most impacted.*

Indeed, for decades the Tri-Cities region has been monitored closely for high ozone levels and Ecology has identified Benton County has been highly impacted by air pollution (ozone and particle pollution). According to the Benton Franklin Council of Governments, ground-level ozone harm is worse during the hot summer months of May through September. While the region as experienced ozone exceedances in recent years, the region is currently in “attainment” meaning it meets all federal air quality standards⁵.

Figure LU-4 shows the ranking of the following selected health indicators from the Environmental Health Disparities Statewide Map V 2.0⁶ (and descriptions below are from the mapping tool, as provided by the State). The map shows the census tracts in the city and any of the selected indicators having a rank of 6 or above is identified:

Low Birth Weight: Low birth weight means a baby born at less than 5.5 pounds. Underweight babies are more likely to have health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, and asthma. Disparities in maternal health and prenatal care cause Black mothers to face the highest rates of low birth weight.

Death from Cardiovascular Disease: Cardiovascular diseases (CVDs) like aortic disease and coronary heart disease are caused by problems with the heart muscles and vessels. People with CVD are more likely to experience a heart attack or stroke when they are exposed to pollution. Historically minoritized populations have higher rates of CVDs due to the impacts of racism, including less access to quality medical care and lack of access to nutritious foods.

Lead risk from housing: Lead poisoning is a serious but preventable public health issue. Lead is a naturally occurring toxic heavy metal. However, much of the lead found in human environments is due to use of lead in products such as gasoline and house paint. Lead exposure can cause learning disabilities, behavior problems, stunted physical growth and delayed mental development (AAP, 2005).

Proximity to Heavy Traffic Roadways: Living near busy roads can expose people to more air pollution, leading to health issues like asthma. Due to historical racism, those with less

⁵ For more information see [A Resource Guide to Air Quality in the Tri-Cities Region](https://www.bfcog.us/DocumentCenter/View/763), Benton Franklin Council of Governments, 2025 [available at <https://www.bfcog.us/DocumentCenter/View/763>]

⁶ University of Washington Department of Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences and Washington State Department of Health. Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map: Cumulative Impacts of Environmental Health Risk Factors Across Communities of Washington State: Technical Report Version 2.0. 2022.

financial opportunity and minoritized communities are often closer to these roads, putting them at greater risk for developing cardiovascular disease and cancers.

PM 2.5 Concentration: PM 2.5 are small particles created by the process of burning something (combustion), wildfires, industry, and motor vehicles. High levels of PM 2.5 (particulate matter 2.5 micrometers (μm) or smaller in diameter) can damage the lungs. This can cause difficulty breathing and higher death rates, especially in people with a history of lung or heart disease.

Population Living in Poverty ($\leq 185\%$ of Federal Poverty Level): People with less income may experience more health impacts from pollution because they have less access to nutritious foods, safe housing, and health care. Groups already facing oppression and racism are the most impacted by these health risks.

Reviewing this selected set of health indicators, data indicate that the central Richland neighborhoods north of the Yakima River appear to have higher concentrations of people with potentially poor outcomes or with higher rates of environmental risks present. These factors should be considered when identifying potentially disenfranchised or vulnerable populations to consult with on projects, and for evaluating environmental justice outcomes or issues.

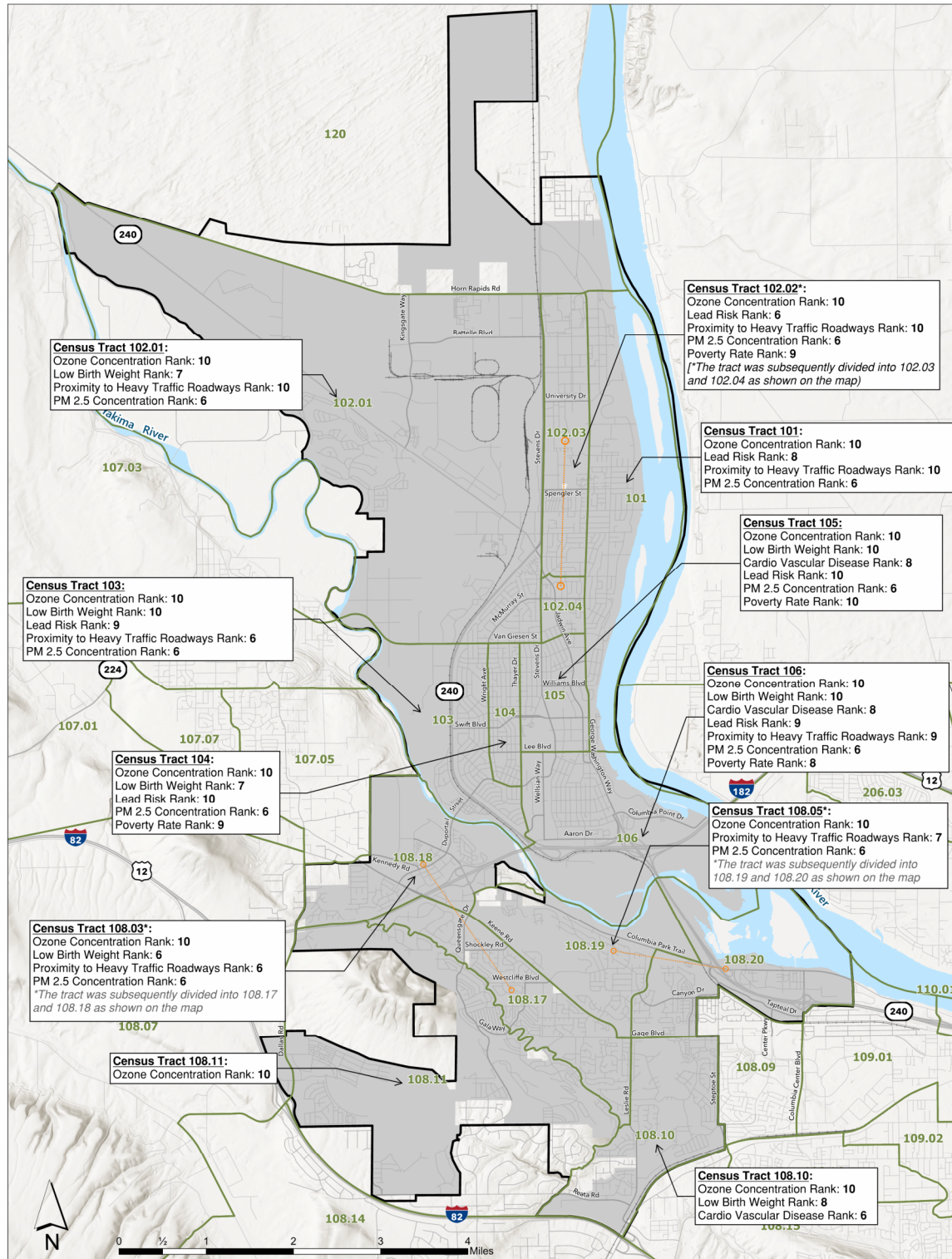


Figure LU-4: Community Health Status Rankings in Richland

Source: The Washington Department of Health Environmental Health Disparities Map

Part II: Concepts for Land Development and the Built Environment

This section discusses key concepts related to how land is developed and redeveloped to create functional, attractive, and sustainable parts of the City. Topics within this section include urban design, the public realm, open space, landscaping, infill development, and other elements that influence community character, livability, connectivity, and the overall quality of the built environment. These topics apply city-wide.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY

Richland guides growth and development through land use designations and zoning regulations, in order to promote and protect the public health, safety and welfare. These tools help ensure that future development occurs in appropriate locations and that neighboring land uses are generally compatible with one another.

Land use compatibility is largely based on the intensity of activities occurring on a site. Industrial uses are often among the most intensive land uses due to potential operational impacts (noise, lighting or glare, traffic including shipping trucks, odors, dust, and vibrations). Conversely natural open spaces generally have the lowest level of impact. Locating incompatible uses adjacent to one another, such as low-density residential and heavy industrial development, can create conflicts and negatively affect community livability.

To promote compatibility, the City encourages the use of buffers, landscaping, screening, and transition areas between differing land uses. Development regulations, including standards for building height, scale, setbacks, and site design, help ensure that new development is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and contributes positively to community character. For example, regulations may require property owners to buffer the visual impact of development on adjacent uses through vegetative screening or other techniques.



Other regulatory tools may include setback distances, shielded lighting, minimum requirements for

open space, recreational space, fencing, and even design and architectural requirements.

For example, a city may establish design standards that provide transitions in building height, massing, and scale between multifamily development and adjacent single-family neighborhoods.

Airport Overlay District

The Richland Airport, operated by the Port of Benton, is an important transportation and economic asset. To support the airport's continued operation and safety, care must be taken to ensure that planning and development of lands within the Port of Benton's control, together with lands adjacent to and in proximity to the airport (and the aircraft flight patterns) are consistent with the airport's long-term viability and operational needs⁷. Where appropriate and to the extent practical, mitigation measures may include land use restrictions, site design standards, buffering, aviation easements, aviation notices, and disclosure requirements to ensure public awareness of airport operations and to maintain compatibility between surrounding land uses and airport activities. **Figure LU-5** depicts the proposed Airport Overlay Zone surrounding the Richland Airport.

The City will continue to lead coordination with the Port of Benton and other responsible agencies to protect airport operations in order to be a good steward of this asset, while accommodating appropriate development in surrounding areas.

⁷ The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Aviation Division's "Airports and Compatible Land Use" publication prepared pursuant to RCW 36.70.547 and RCW 36.70A.510; Building height restrictions and noise impacts and mitigation are per FAA regulations (14 CFR Part 77 and 150).

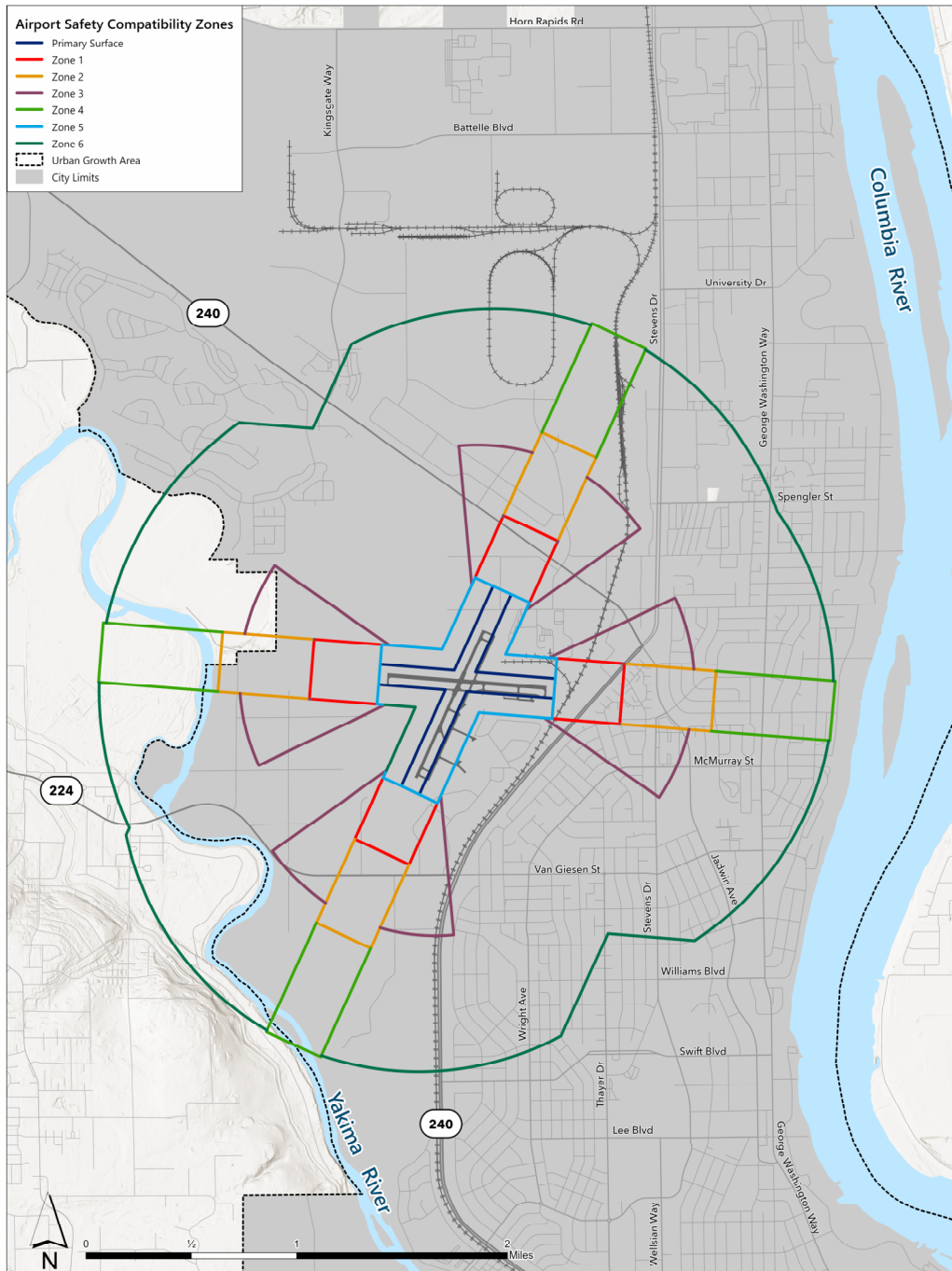


Figure LU-5: Richland Airport Overlay Map

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Undeveloped and underused parcels throughout the community create opportunities for infill development. Developing vacant or underutilized land within existing urban areas can reduce sprawl by focusing growth in centrally located and already accessible sites rather than areas farther from Richland's core. Infill strategies also support transportation efficiency, higher residential densities,

stronger connectivity, and a broader mix of housing options.

One specific category of infill development is called “brownfield” development, where formerly developed and abandoned properties are cleared, rehabilitated, and prepared for future development, where actual or perceived environmental contamination may complicate reuse and redevelopment.

Successful infill development can be one approach used to help achieve the residential densities that Richland seeks to attain in the forthcoming 20-year planning period. Infill development can support improved alternative transportation options and a wider variety of neighborhood amenities. Infill projects can also help to increase the variety of housing types available by promoting small to medium scale housing. This effort helps to situate residences closer to employment centers, which reduces the need to drive long distances and at the same time, promotes smaller scale and active transportation, which can reduce automobile dependence, vehicle miles traveled, and carbon emissions. Thus, encouraging infill development can reap economic, transportation, and environmental benefits.

To be effective and welcomed, infill development should be approached in ways that respect neighborhood character and address infrastructure capacity while providing compatibility with adjacent development.

LANDS FOR PUBLIC PURPOSES

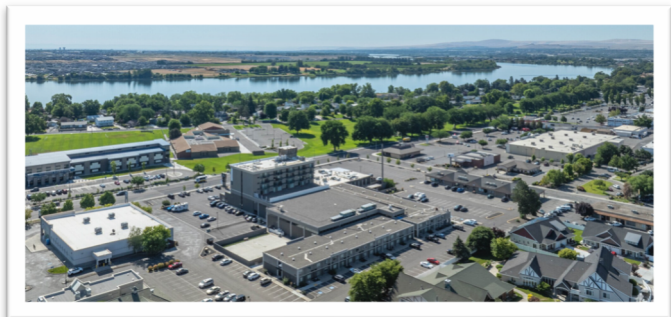
According to the GMA, the City is required to identify the needs for public facilities, including lands for public purposes. Current City-owned public facilities include parks and open spaces, transportation, water, sewer, storm water, solid waste, energy, and municipal facilities. Further, counties and the jurisdictions within it are required to work together to identify the needs for public facilities, including lands for public purposes pursuant to RCW 36.70A.150.

Additional information regarding City utilities can be found in the **Utilities Element**.

CIRCULATION AND CONNECTIVITY

Connectivity between major destinations and neighborhoods is a key priority for Richland. The City’s transportation system is designed to support a variety of travel options, including driving, walking, bicycling, and public transit. Richland’s network of multi-use trails connects parks, natural areas, and important destinations throughout the community. The City also partners with public agencies and private developers to improve transportation connections and create an efficient circulation system within residential and commercial areas.

One of Richland’s most significant recent transportation investments was improving access across the Yakima River between South Richland and Central Richland. Following several years of planning, funding, and engineering work, the Duportail Bridge opened in late 2020. The bridge provides a new connection between northern and southern Richland, enhancing mobility, reducing travel times across the city, increasing access to commercial businesses, and expanding opportunities for



economic investment in Richland

Richland places a strong emphasis on creating vibrant, livable neighborhoods through thoughtful planning and community investment. A key part of this effort is promoting a pedestrian-friendly environment. Policies and development standards support walkability by encouraging mixed-use development, higher-density housing and commercial areas, improved access to public transit, safe sidewalks, attractive streetscapes, and connected networks of paths and trails.

The City has also prioritized making Richland's Central Business District more welcoming for pedestrians and bicyclists. The Swift Boulevard corridor was re-designed to improve connections between downtown businesses and surrounding residential neighborhoods for people walking and biking. Other areas, including The Parkway, the Central Business District, and the Kadlec campus, have also been developed with pedestrian-oriented design features that support a more accessible and active community. For further details and information relating to these topics, please see the **Transportation Element**.



URBAN DESIGN

Urban design applies to the three-dimensional aspects of the built environment such as buildings, streets, sidewalks, open spaces, and plazas. Urban design also influences how people experience circulation systems, public spaces, neighborhoods, and districts.

The City aims to achieve quality design in citywide civic projects such as public buildings and plazas, streetscape and corridor development, public art, parks, and open spaces. Context-sensitive design in public projects will set standards for the City and may encourage further quality developments by the private sector.

Richland's City Hall, Public Library, Community Center, and the REACH Museum Center all exhibit



unique and thoughtful design. The City promotes quality design in commercial and residential developments through its development standards. The City is also planning to add gateway features in the CBD area that will enhance the identity of the community.

The visual character across Richland UGA varies. Centrally located areas such as the CBD (in particular, the portion in the Uptown) and

surrounding residential areas date to the Second World War and retain modest and functional, mid-century design. Newer, more peripheral areas have been designed with ecological protection and the preservation of views towards natural features in mind, such as Badger Mountain and the Columbia River. Throughout the City, urban design differs across relatively new commercial areas such as Queensgate and City View and master planned economic hubs like Columbia Point and Horn Rapids.

One area that is quite distinctive in its design is the Uptown Shopping Center. As one of the first shopping malls constructed in the United States with a very car-oriented layout, the center serves as an important hub in Richland with a unique mix of locally-grown restaurants, services, and activities. The center is enhanced with many colorful, and sometimes “retro” styled murals and other public art installations. The architecture and facility amenities reflect the mid-century style corresponding to the time period that the site was first established⁸, reflecting architectural themes common during the late 1940s and early Cold War period, with an emphasis on the atomic-age aesthetic. Not far from the Uptown Shopping Center, the Holiday Inn on George Washington Way also shows the same aesthetic.



⁸ The year was 1949, which was at the time when the Cold War era kept Richland’s Manhattan Project viable with sustained plutonium production for weapons production

From older alphabet housing neighborhoods in central Richland to the newest residential neighborhoods within Badger Mountain South, each distinct area exhibits a different design approach. In older areas, an emphasis on neighborhood revitalization and maintenance is frequently requested of the City. In newly developing areas, the emphasis shifts to focus on the quality of building design and the cohesiveness of newly built neighborhoods. The City recognizes that it needs to take a targeted approach with different urban design standards and strategies to reflect the differing needs of each area within the City.



Richland emphasizes flexibility rather than detailed architectural controls, using a limited and sensible approach to regulations regarding design. There is a wide range of how different communities address these topics, and some jurisdictions opt to adopt and enforce detailed and sometimes narrow standards or controls on matters of aesthetics or design, many times to perpetuate a certain historical character or appearance for older neighborhoods. The city has not adopted any such controls for architectural details such as recessed garages, requirements for porches, trimmed windows, roof pitch and overhang, and so forth. However, the city does have overlay districts that apply varying site development requirements for three subdistricts in the CBD (titled Medical, The Parkway, and Uptown). Figure LU-6 depicts the boundaries of these three subdistricts.

Nonetheless, there are many residential and non-residential properties in the city where *Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions* have been recorded with the County Assessor for the property, or which are otherwise contained in other privately-initiated documents⁹. Specific design element standards, color palettes, minimum building size, or controls and requirements for landscaping and lighting are the typical way these controls are introduced. In residential settings these are typically enforced by Homeowners' Associations.

COMMUNITY SPACES

Richland's public realm includes plazas, parks, playgrounds, sidewalks, and open spaces. Each public space serves a different purpose in its formal, semi-formal, or natural setting. They offer places for gathering, interaction, and recreation. Public places are further enhanced by artwork and pedestrian amenities. The John Dam Plaza is home to the HAPO Community Stage, a local landmark that features concerts, movie nights and food vendors, while the Parkway area offers an array of local

⁹ For example, development at the "Vintner's Square" commercial center at Queensgate is required to abide by privately-enforced standards for signage, building materials, and other design features. Likewise, the subdivisions in the Horn Rapids Planned Development have certain requirements that are not under the purview of the city but instead are a civil matter handled by homeowners' associations.

and national businesses in a walkable urban setting that encourages community members and visitors to visit the CBD for shopping, events, social interaction and community activities or exploration.

Public and semi-public places are enriched with pedestrian-oriented amenities such as landscaping, seating, kiosks, walkways, pavilions, canopies, awnings, and public art. These elements create welcoming environments that can better connect residential and commercial areas with nearby parks and natural areas. In turn, these connections support both active and passive recreation while enhancing Richland's natural beauty and engaging people.



Open spaces are a central part of the community's character and help define the local sense of identity. The trails, parks and riverfront shape the visual character and everyday experience of Richland, reinforcing a strong relationship with the outdoors.

These public places are also enhanced by ease of access through varying means of transportation. Accessibility is important – well-designed, safe, and easily-understood connections encourage movement and enjoyment between destinations. For example, a visitor enjoying the riverfront should feel drawn to the shops and activity centers in the CBD, and vice versa.

Thoughtfully placed amenities such as bike racks, benches, shelters, and transit features further enhance usability. When these elements are coordinated and easy to access, they strengthen the overall experience, making public spaces more vibrant, connected, and inviting for everyone.

OPEN SPACE

Richland's extensive network of open spaces contributes to recreation, environmental stewardship, and the preservation of natural landscapes, while also offsetting areas of intensive development. These open spaces play a vital role in maintaining the community's character and quality of life.

Open space comprises a significant portion of the land base. There is a network and mix of natural areas, public facilities, and developed parks and trail systems. The City's abundant natural open space system is anchored by the Yakima and Columbia River shorelines, as well as greenways and designated open spaces within residential developments. It also encompasses some critical areas where development is constrained, including floodplains, wetlands, and areas that are steeply sloped. These areas provide important ecological functions while helping to guide growth away from sensitive environments.

Open space corridors further strengthen this system by linking developed and natural areas. These corridors provide opportunities for recreation, wildlife habitat, and trail connections, while also supporting the continuity of critical ecological features across the landscape.

In addition to natural areas, Richland's park system offers a wide range of developed open spaces. These parks provide accessible, community-oriented spaces for recreation, gathering, and everyday use, complementing the broader open space network.

The City's developed open space requirement for parks facilities is determined by the parks level of service. The existing parklands are adequate to meet the demand. However, areas with new residential land use discussed in the next section will require an additional community park. The natural open space is largely defined by the existence of critical and natural areas, and other priority conservation areas within the City. As the City grows, natural open spaces will be identified based on the GMA criteria and the Best Available Science (BAS). Existing data and findings from similar communities indicate Richland has adequate open space to meet the future demand.

Additional information regarding the City parklands and open space can be found in the **Capital Facilities Element** under "Parks, Recreation and Open Space" in this Plan, and in the supporting analysis in Appendix A.



LANDSCAPING AND LIGHTING

Landscaping is important for maintaining Richland's attractive physical appearance. When implemented properly, landscaping can highlight an area's features, add aesthetic value and benefit the surrounding environment. Landscaping standards apply to both public and private developments, and are usually required whenever off-street parking is provided in a development.

Given the hot-arid climate in the Tri-Cities area, native landscapes and environmentally appropriate plants are more desirable. Using xeriscape principles such as drought-tolerant plants can make a water-efficient landscape and reflect the area's native climate and geology.

In addition, a thriving and lush tree canopy offering shade on hot summer days is important for this area, contributing to comfort and appeal and potentially mitigate the heat-island effect of development and impervious surfaces. Trees additionally offer significant contributions in enhancing the community's character and providing visual appeal. Functionally, a mature, urban forest additionally provides practical and important benefits to moderate climate conditions (offering cooling shade during hot summer periods and providing wind protection in the winter, and solar access in the case of deciduous species) – which present a cost-effective strategy for improving comfort in Richland's public and private spaces. It is well-recognized that trees and landscaping have a major role in supporting the community's economic vitality (enhancing local property values) and contributing to environmental quality by improving water and air conditions. Moreover, vegetation absorbs pollutants, takes in carbon dioxide and produces oxygen, and

moderates excessive noise.

A robust landscape also contributes to alleviating the effects of development by reducing stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces, stabilizing soils, and minimizing sedimentation in the rivers and other waterways. Finally, these natural systems provide critical habitat (cover, food sources, movement corridors, and nesting sites) for a wide range of wildlife.

Outdoor lighting also plays a key role in shaping the community's comfort, safety, and overall character. When thoughtfully designed and properly installed, lighting enhances visibility and security while reinforcing the identity of public and private spaces.

Effective lighting practices balance functionality and security or safety needs with environmental stewardship and enjoyment of the night skies. Well-designed systems minimize glare and light trespass onto adjacent properties and public spaces, direct illumination only where it is needed, and reduce unnecessary brightness. These strategies improve nighttime visibility and safety while conserving energy.



Design can be an effective tool to encourage safety in Richland. Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) comprises a set of three design principles meant to deter criminal activity by enhancing visibility and encouraging ownership of a site for the public. CPTED advocates for increased natural surveillance of a site, meaning that site design should encourage greater visibility through effective lighting, landscaping, and the use of transparent materials. Creating defined, visible, and well-lit entrances that can be viewed from inside buildings, or better natural access control, is another key concept of CPTED. Finally, site design should include areas that foster strong feelings of ownership among users of the site, or territorial reinforcement. The key ideas underlying CPTED are that criminals will be deterred from engaging in criminal activities, and people will feel safer if it is easy to look into a site and if site design makes people feel welcome. Currently, the Richland Police Services Crime Prevention Unit offers free CPTED surveys for Richland residents and business owners.

Preserving the quality of the nighttime environment is equally important. Limiting light pollution - *including misdirected, excessive, or unnecessary lighting* - protects the region's dark skies and reduces visual clutter. Applying standards that require fixtures to be directed downward and shielded helps ensure light remains focused on the intended area, with minimal spillover or upward illumination. Accent lighting for buildings and landscaping can effectively highlight and enhance key features, but should be carefully targeted to minimize glare, spillover, and upward illumination; relying primarily on reflected light can be a beneficial.

In addition, lighting (including the lighting of signage) must be designed to avoid visual distractions and hazards. Fixtures that produce glare or reflections visible from public rights-of-way can compromise safety and should be regulated. By establishing clear, consistent standards for outdoor lighting, the City can create an environment that is safe, energy-efficient, and respectful of both community character and natural nighttime conditions.

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AND HEALTHY LIVING

The City of Richland can continue to support public health through land use decisions, community investments, and development practices that encourage healthy lifestyles.

In 2021, the state legislature signed into law a landmark environmental justice bill, the Health Environment for All (HEAL) Act. The HEAL Act defines Environmental Justice as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, rules, and policies. Environmental justice includes addressing disproportionate environmental and health impacts in all laws, rules, and policies by prioritizing vulnerable populations and overburdened communities, striving for the equitable distribution of resources and benefits, and eliminating harm."

The HEAL Act created requirements for state agencies to assess and address potential Environmental Justice. Although the HEAL Act does not impose specific requirements on the City of Richland, the City could nonetheless use the framework and tools that resulted from the HEAL Act as a model. Additionally, these tools can help to ensure appropriate consideration is given to environmental health disparities that exist among the local population.

Equity and environmental justice themes were important considerations during development of the [2025 Regional Climate Element](#) (Benton-Franklin Council of Governments) and additional discussion of these topics can be found in that document or in the city's **Climate Element**.

ENVIRONMENTALLY CRITICAL AREAS AND SHORELINES

Environmentally critical (or "sensitive") areas include wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. Under the GMA, cities must regulate development activities and land alterations within critical areas and their associated buffers. The presence of critical areas can constrain or, in some cases, prevent land development; further information is provided in the **Natural Environment Element**.

Shoreline areas are regulated according to the state's Shoreline Management Act (Chapter 90.58 RCW); for further information see the **Natural Environment Element** and the City's **Shoreline Master Program**.

WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE

Over the past decade, Richland and many other communities throughout the Pacific Northwest and western North America have experienced increasing wildfire activity and associated impacts. Wildfire smoke has become more common during summer and fall months, at times resulting in reduced air quality, cancelled outdoor activities, and disruptions to daily life. Extended periods of drought and changing climatic conditions have further increased wildfire risk, and the duration of wildfire season has generally expanded in recent years.

These trends highlight the importance of preparing for and adapting to wildfire hazards, particularly in areas where urban development interfaces with undeveloped lands¹⁰. The Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) refers to areas where homes, businesses, and infrastructure are located within or

¹⁰ The August 2026 fires in Spokane were devastating, further highlighting the local need to prepare for and adapt to wildfires that reach into urban areas.

adjacent to natural vegetation – areas on the “fringe” – having increased exposure to wildfire risks. In Richland, portions of Badger Mountain South, Horn Rapids, hillside development areas, and other locations along the city's developing edges could be particularly susceptible to these risks.

There are many factors that have contributed to wildfire risk throughout Washington’s development history. To reduce the risk of future wildfires, cities can eliminate hazards, mitigate hazards, mitigate susceptibility, adopt plans and regulations, and respond to active fires. Plans include State, City, and Benton County plans including the Benton County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan (2026). Codes and regulations include the building code, fire code, subdivision regulations, and zoning regulations.

As mandated Senate Bill 6120 (2024), Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) led the development of a Wildfire Hazard and Risk Mapping initiative. The resulting map categorizes wildfire hazard levels (low, moderate, high, very high) across Washington. Wildfire risk is calculated using three factors: wildfire hazard, exposure, and vulnerability. The purpose of the mapping effort is to enhance wildfire preparedness by identifying areas at risk (**Figure LU-7**).

This Element includes policies intended to reduce wildfire vulnerability, improve community resilience, and support safe development within the Wildland-Urban Interface. Additional discussion of wildfire risks, adaptation strategies, and related environmental considerations is provided in the **Natural Environment** and **Climate Elements**.

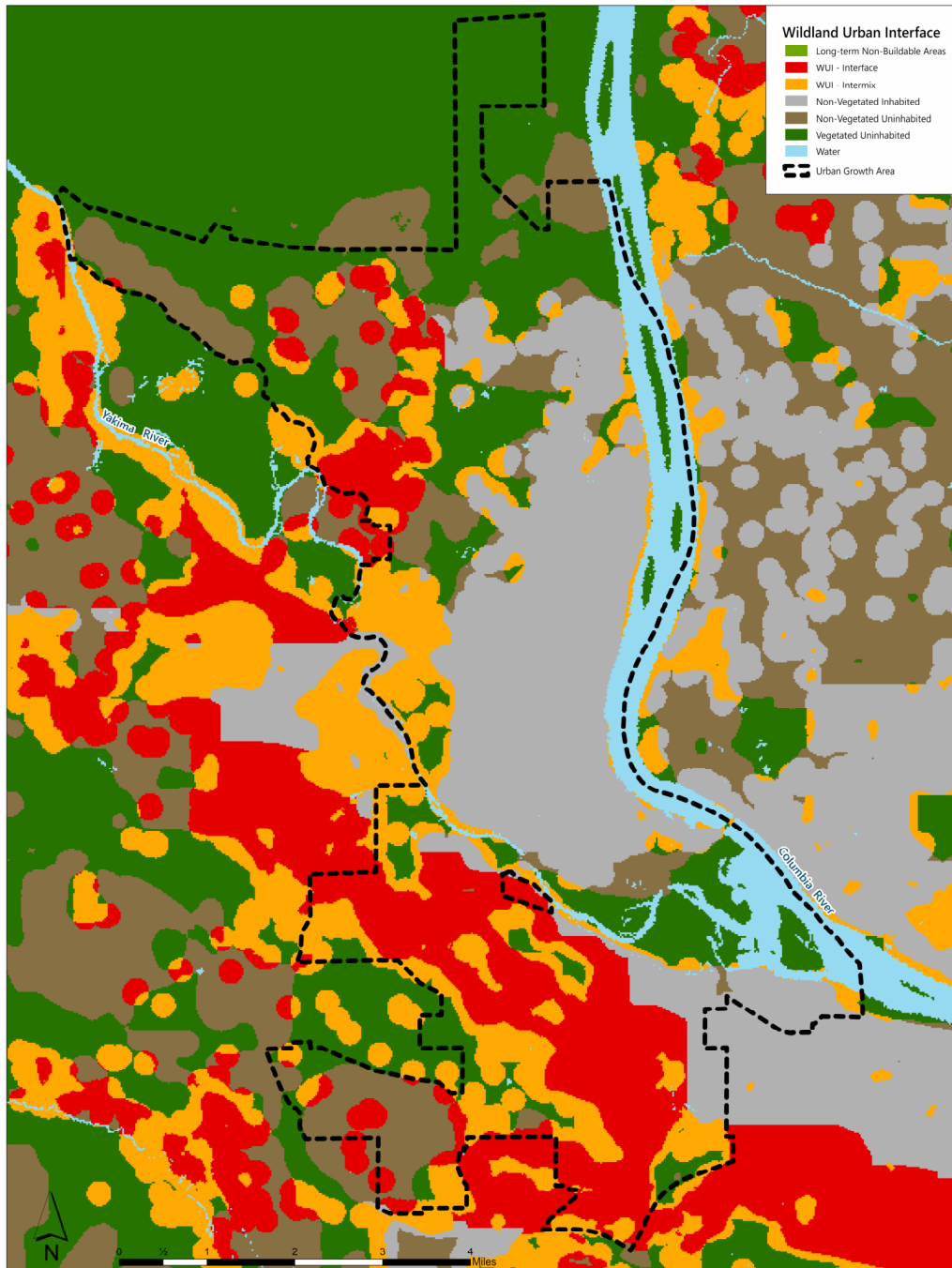


Figure LU-7: Wildlife-Urban Interface Map

Part III: Neighborhoods and Districts

This section focuses on shaping the City's physical environment through thoughtful planning, design, and development practices. The section describes a framework for creating or sustaining high-quality districts and neighborhoods by promoting the concepts identified in Part II to the various areas in the City, strengthening identity, livability, and long-term sustainability.

Richland has a wide variety of neighborhoods and districts that each have their own planning priorities, as well as a unique sense of place. Some of these areas have (or had) their own sub-area plans designated by the City, while others are distinguishable by common ownership, business agreements or other means. While land use is planned for on a city-wide basis, great care has been taken in respect to providing for the unique land use contexts of these areas.

Several legacy subarea plans (such as the Island View Subareas Plan from 2009) are now retired because their policies have been incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan or are no longer consistent with current requirements. The City may, however, prepare new subarea plans where needed to address emerging growth areas or major development opportunities. A full list of retired plans is provided in Appendix L.

For instance, following the 2026 periodic update of this plan, the City is expected to perform planning studies and adopt planning documents, potentially sub-area plans, for the Richland Innovation Center and for the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy park, as well as for the Horn Rapids Industrial park.

Figure LU-8 provides a basic and very generalized map with several, but not all, of the primary neighborhood and employment centers labeled.

In the following sections, we describe several neighborhood areas in the city with some maps to identify the area discussed. These are largely not intended to be considered fixed or official districts or areas, but are presented for purposes of description and discussion.

NORTH RICHLAND

The northern area of the City contains a mixture of uses, many of which are unique and distinctive. **Figure LU-9** outlines the large business and industrial centers in North Richland. The Columbia River (SR-240) form the edges of this area. Saint Street is a familiar east to west passage way that could potentially be considered a transition point from Central to North Richland. George Washington Way, Stevens Drive, Battelle Blvd and Horn Rapids Road are some of the familiar passageways.

The Washington State University-Tri Cities (WSU-TC) campus is about 200 acres in size and is one of the six campuses in the state that make up WSU system (the main campus of the land-grant university is in Pullman, Washington). Lying immediately north of the Hanford High School campus, the WSU-TC campus is designated with a university (UNIV) zoning district in order to meet the broad and unique needs of the campus, with research, housing, athletics, agriculture, etc. A variety of baccalaureate and post-graduate programs are offered at the site, and enrollment in Fall 2025 was

about 1,600 students. Cooperation between the city and Washington State University in planning the physical development of the community is a high priority.

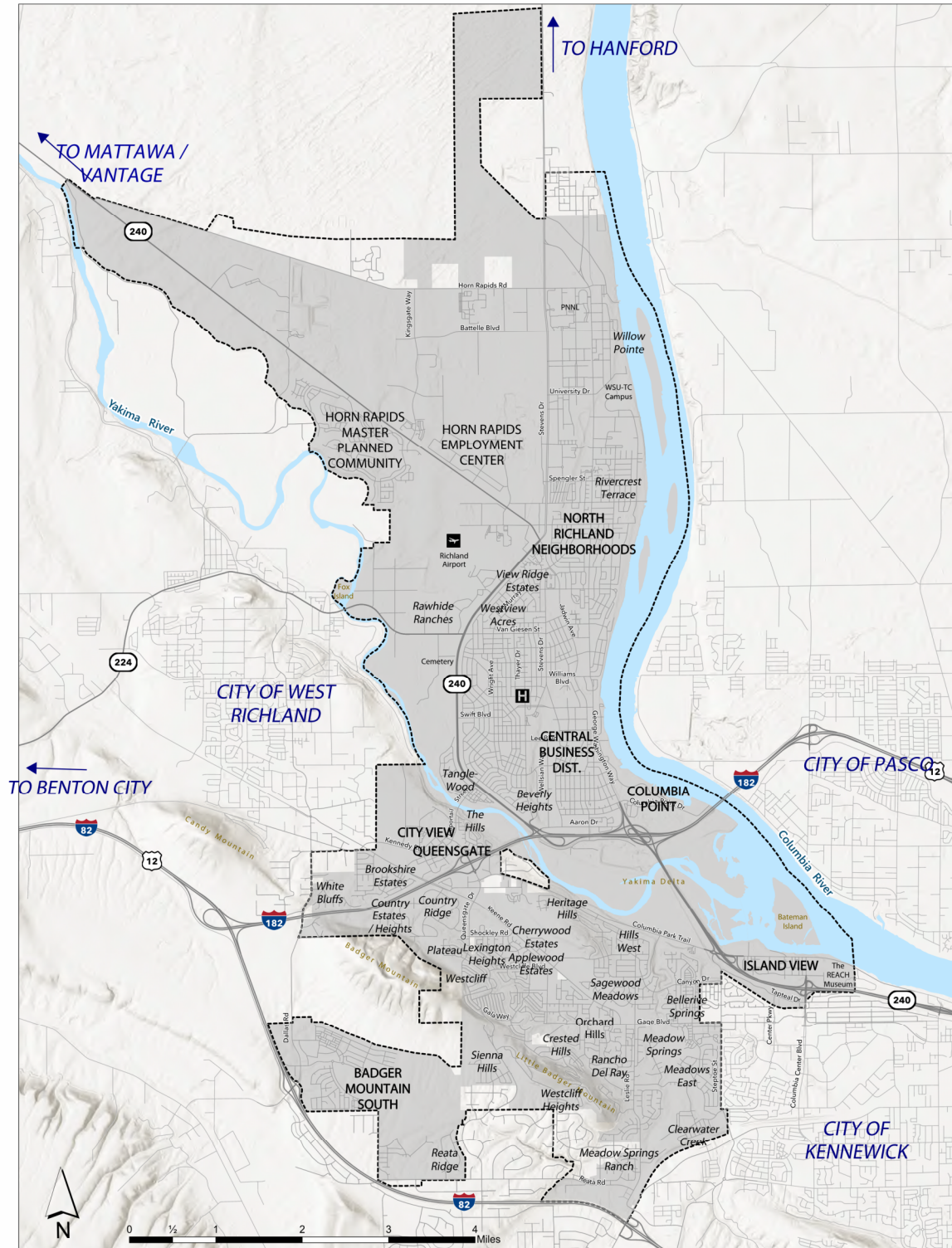


Figure LU-8: Commercial Districts and Primary Neighborhood Names

The Port of Benton holds economic development land in North Richland, including an inland port and public tourism amenities.

In 2024 the Port of Benton and the City of Richland exchanged land ownership for the mutual benefit of both entities. The City received approximately 280 acres located within the areas now known as the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park (NACEP) as well as the Richland Innovation Center and the Port of Benton received approximately 260 acres in the Horn Rapids Industrial Park, where the Port has proposed a new intermodal facility.

For further discussion about the Port of Benton (and industries supported by the Port of Benton) as well as the corridor of business / industrial functions leading to the Hanford and LIGO sites (which lie north of the City) together with a discussion about the Pacific Northwest National Lab (PNNL) campus see the **Economic Development Element**.

Housing in North Richland and south of Hanford High School features homes predominately built in phases during the 1960s – 1980s, including many ranch-style houses on culs-de-sac, moderately sized lots, and featuring conventional suburban forms. Several of the housing developments are ideal for those wanting access to many amenities and lying within easy reach of PNNL and other employment centers nearby. A handful of homes boast Columbia Riverfront locations, but views are generally limited due to land berms or levee segments that impose visual screening.

Higher-density residential uses in the form of apartments and other rental options exist along major corridors including George Washington Way, Van Giesen Street, and Jadwin Avenue, as well as spots with less visibility such as the group of apartment buildings fronting Turner Street (west of Wright Avenue) and the La Verde apartment complex tucked behind the Green Belt Trail, north of Catskill Street.

New, multi-family housing built north of Hanford High School, caters to smaller households, WSU-Tri Cities students, and for people seeking housing proximate to PNNL and other employment sites in the stretches further north.



Key concepts and properties for future development:

- A federally-funded project will improve the Southern Connection industrial rail line between Columbia Center Boulevard and Horn Rapids Road.
- The Port of Benton now holds land around the existing rail loop track in the Horn Rapids Industrial park and will work to create an **inland port**.
- The City owns the land within the **Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park** for future private investment by businesses or industries and the plans to facilitate redevelopment of the **Richland Innovation Center** which is envisioned as a mixed use center for housing and other neighborhood uses, targeted industries, and other compatible uses.

The Horn Rapids area is located on the north side of the City and is comprised of several planning areas:

- The Horn Rapids Industrial Park, a triangular area bounded by Horn Rapids Road to the north and SR 240 to the south,

- The Port of Benton Richland Business Park, a linear area west of Stevens Drive that hosts a number of long-term tenants, and
- The 1,641 acres at the north end, lying north of Horn Rapids Road known as the Northwest Advanced Clean Energy Park (NACEP).

The Horn Rapids Industrial Park is served by Union Pacific and BNSF railroads. There is also a loop track. The site is excellent for manufacturing and fabrication, research and development operations, cold storage warehousing and more. Large businesses operating out of this area including Framatome (A French company that leads in nuclear energy), Ferguson Enterprises (plumbing equipment supply and distribution), Lamb Weston (frozen potato products) and ATI (metals), as well as Preferred Freezer (Lineage Logistics) which operates the largest automated cold storage plant in the US.

The Richland Business Park hosts a number of businesses across its site of over 700 acres, many of which operating around the themes of agriculture processing, packaging, and distribution and benefit from the multi-modal logistical options available at the site. The Port of Benton owns the site and leases space to a wide variety of businesses including American Rock, Atkins, Veolia, and Total Energy Management. The Business Park is not fully built-out.

The NACEP is currently vacant, and supplies land reserved for future companies requiring large sites (generally 50 acres or more) which will be dedicated to clean energy production and related technologies and production. The NACEP is envisioned to be an economic center and major employment hub in the future¹¹. The land was transferred from the US Department of Energy to TRIDEC as mandated by the *National Defense Authorization Act of FY 2015* (Public Law 113-291) and then TRIDEC subsequently transferred the land to the City¹². After the transfer occurred, the City and Port worked together to develop a Capital Facilities Plan which was required for a UGA expansion request to Benton County; the land was added to the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA) in 2017 and subsequently annexed in 2023¹³. The State of Washington has designated the site as an industrial and technological development area.

Key concepts and properties for future development:

The Port of Benton has identified several projects for future investment and development over the years and documents and plans produced by the Port should reflect their priorities and objectives for the coming years. In particular, the Port of Benton will be funding, and leveraging grant funding, for major infrastructure improvements including the White Bluffs Rail crossings and Intermodal Facility project, improvements at the Barge Complex (shore power, port fencing and lighting), and creating a facility to support USS Triton and the Manhattan National Park visitors center¹⁴.

¹¹ City of Richland / Port of Benton North Horn Rapids Area Master Plan (2017) and CEDS

¹² Additional future land transfers could potentially occur but are beyond the scope of this Comprehensive Plan

¹³ City of Richland Ordinance 2023-21

¹⁴ Benton-Franklin Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), 2026-2030

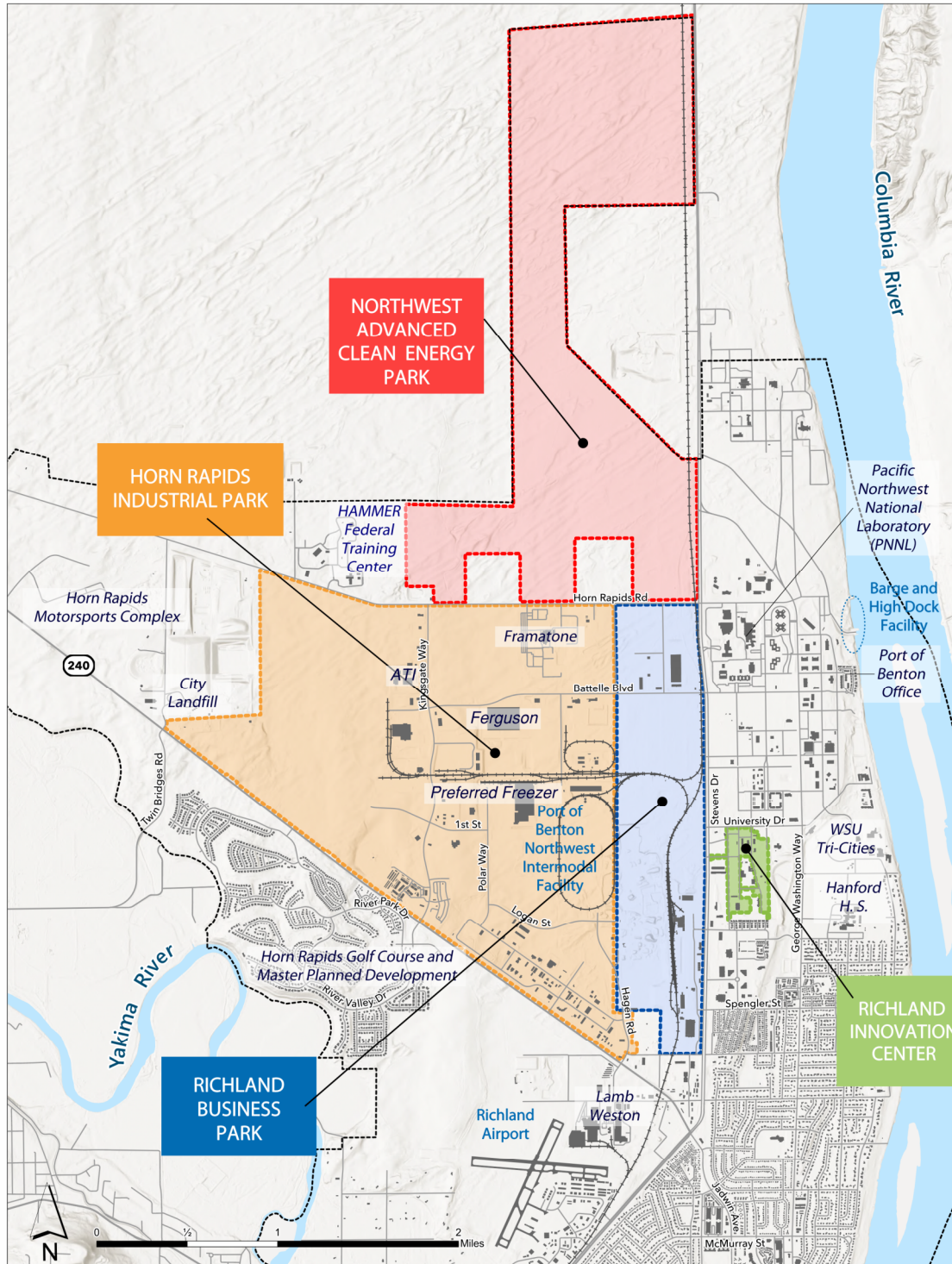


Figure LU-9: Business and Industrial Centers (North Richland)

HORN RAPIDS GOLF COURSE AND MASTER PLANNED DEVELOPMENT

NEIGHBORHOOD

The Horn Rapids Master HOA Community is a master-planned, mixed-use golf course development offering residential housing and some business functions. Located in the northwestern part of Richland, the community currently includes more than 1,500 homes. Amenities such as tree-lined streets, neighborhood parks, community swimming pools, and open spaces with trails serve the community.

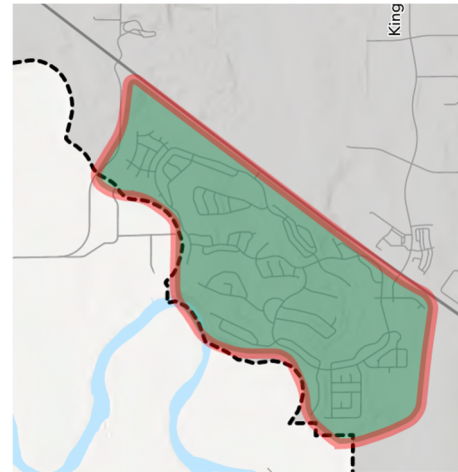
The 18-hole Horn Rapids Golf Course (which is privately owned and open to the public) is present, enhancing the unique setting and integrated through many portions of the neighborhood.

Key concepts and properties for future development:

More homes are added every year with additional phased construction. At full build-out the neighborhood is expected to reach around 2,000 units.

The primary entrance to the community and access to the golf course is at the signalized intersection at Highway 240 and Kingsgate Way. Upon entry to the neighborhood a roundabout controls traffic movement at the intersection with Clubhouse Lane; the city owns several parcels in a Commercial Plaza at that spot, which are available for sale with full utilities available to each site and should develop in the coming years to feature businesses supporting the neighborhood and contributing to the growing economic output of the Horn Rapids area.

The secondary entrance to the Horn Rapids neighborhood is at Village Parkway and the City holds two acres of land there which may be developed as a future fire station. Moreover, planned development within the future phase is planned to connect to Twin Bridges Road to minimize future traffic impacts and ensure continued easy access to the Horn Rapids community.



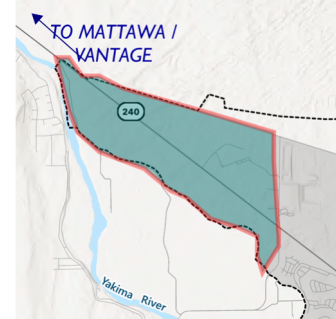
NORTHWEST (PAST TWIN BRIDGES ROAD)

Northwest of the spot where Highway 240 crosses Twin Bridges Road, there are many portions of the city which will be developed or transitioned into other uses in the future. The 2026 Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan aligns the planned vision with the City's Land Use map.

Once this area begins to develop and take on a special character a name for this community will likely emerge.

Key concepts and properties for future development:

The Washington State Department of Veterans Affairs intends to establish a new veterans cemetery on a 140-acre parcel presently owned by the City of Richland near Snively Road (which is the extent of the city limits), identified with a Public Facilities classification on the Land Use map. The veteran's cemetery, once completed, will be the third such site in Washington State and further has the potential to become an important place to serve the local community and broader region (the other veterans' cemeteries are in Western Washington in Kent and in Medical Lake near Spokane).



Next, homes are planned to eventually replace the city-owned undeveloped lands (some of which are leased for farming use where irrigation pivot circles are in place) between the veterans' cemetery site and the developed areas, as sewer and other infrastructure is extended. Low density residential is primary planned on the south side of SR-240, and on the north side there would be medium density residential as well as some commercial land to support the area.

CENTRAL BUSINESS DISTRICT

Richland's Central Business District (CBD) spans approximately 320 acres (inclusive of roads and open spaces) and includes three sub-districts: the Uptown, the Medical sub-district (anchored by the hospital), and the Parkway area (see **Figure LU-10**).



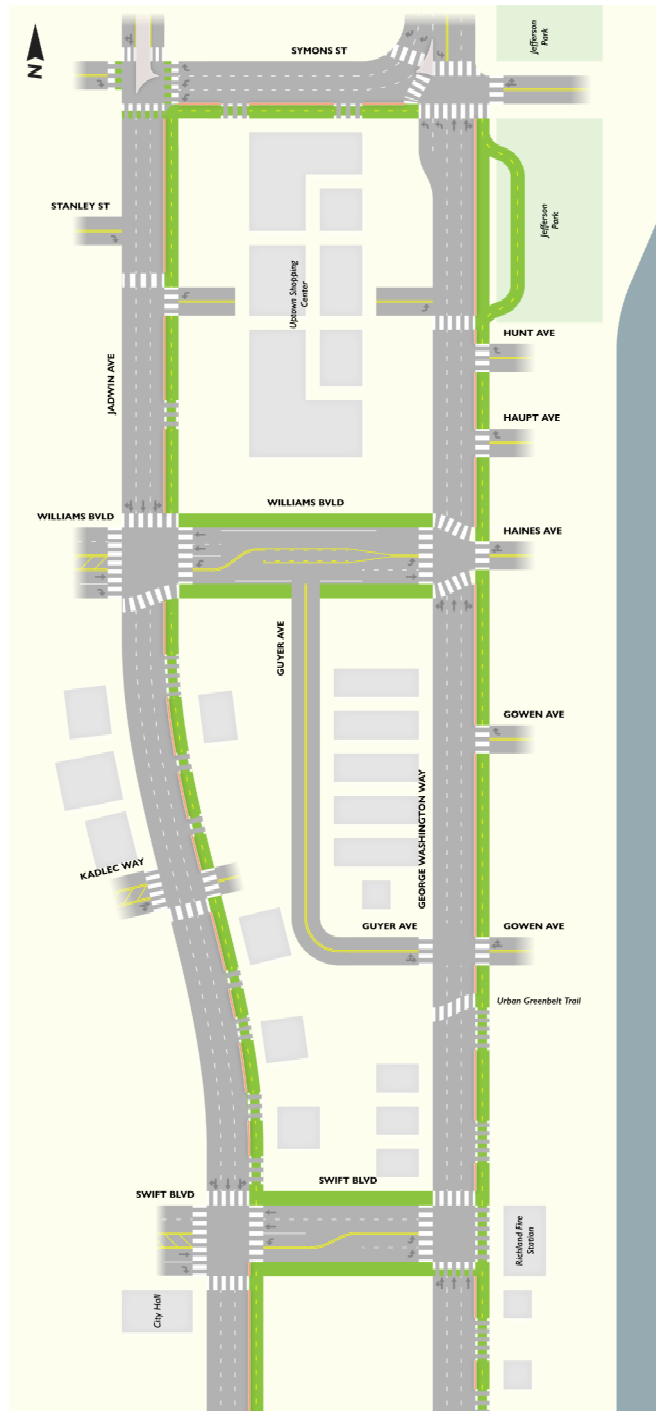
Presently, the area is characterized by its close proximity to the Columbia River and Howard Amon Park, concentration of pedestrian-oriented businesses, and the presence of medical, educational, and public institutions.

A project that will transform the CBD is the “Downtown Loop.” This project will redirect traffic patterns, creating a one-way loop to improve traffic flow in the area, from Symons Street to the Jadwin Avenue intersection with George Washington Way. Upon completion, this segment of George Washington Way will only accommodate northbound travel for vehicles and Jadwin Avenue will complete the loop for vehicles traveling southbound. This project will allow more amenities for pedestrians (including signalized mid-block crossings) and a two-lane cycle track for bicycles. This 23.5-million-dollar project is scheduled to be completed in 2028 and is described in further detail in the **Transportation Element**.

The loop will flank the United States Courthouse and Federal Building as well as the Richland City Hall to the south. The loop will surround the Parkway, John Dam Plaza, and the Uptown Shopping Center. The sites having frontage to the south of the loop on George Washington Way will include Jefferson Park, the Richland Fire Station, and the Parkview Plaza near Lee Boulevard.

The project will produce numerous opportunities and benefits, accommodating twenty years of traffic growth, improving pedestrian safety and enhancing multi-modal transportation and walkability. Barrier-protected bike lanes will be established to maximize safety while reducing potential conflicts with vehicle movements.

The project is intended to help create a comfortable and inviting setting for those visiting and living in Richland’s Central Business District and create a more friendly



atmosphere to benefit businesses.

Next, the Urban Greenbelt Trail wraps around (and among) sites in the area. The trail is 3.25 miles round-trip and is a unique asset to the Central Business District (together with North Richland).

The Parkway is an important pedestrian-oriented center featuring a variety of retail and service offerings, with restaurants. The Parkway bustles with activity on Fridays during the warmer months, when the Richland Farmers' Market is open, drawing crowds of visitors and vendors.

To the north, the Uptown Shopping Center (framed by George Washington Way, Jadwin Avenue, as well as Symons Street to the north and Williams Boulevard to the south) has its own unique events including the annual Chalk Art Festival and an "Art Walk" vendor fair occurring several times from May through October on the weekends. The mural art, on the sides of buildings and in the alleyway ways, together with other street art installations and amenities welcome visitors who are also provided with a unique collection of shops, services, restaurants and specialty stores. The Uptown Shopping center was established in 1949.

Both the Parkway and the Uptown fill an important role in sustaining the cultural life and character of the community, featuring small local businesses.

Along Swift are the Kadlec Regional Medical Center campus and Columbia Basin College's Health Science Center which anchor a node of medical clinics and offices in that area.

Currently there is structured parking at the Kadlec Hospital (on Swift) and on a property next to Howard Amon park (on Amon Park Drive); however, it is anticipated that additional structured parking (and more compact and intensive development) could be introduced in the future.

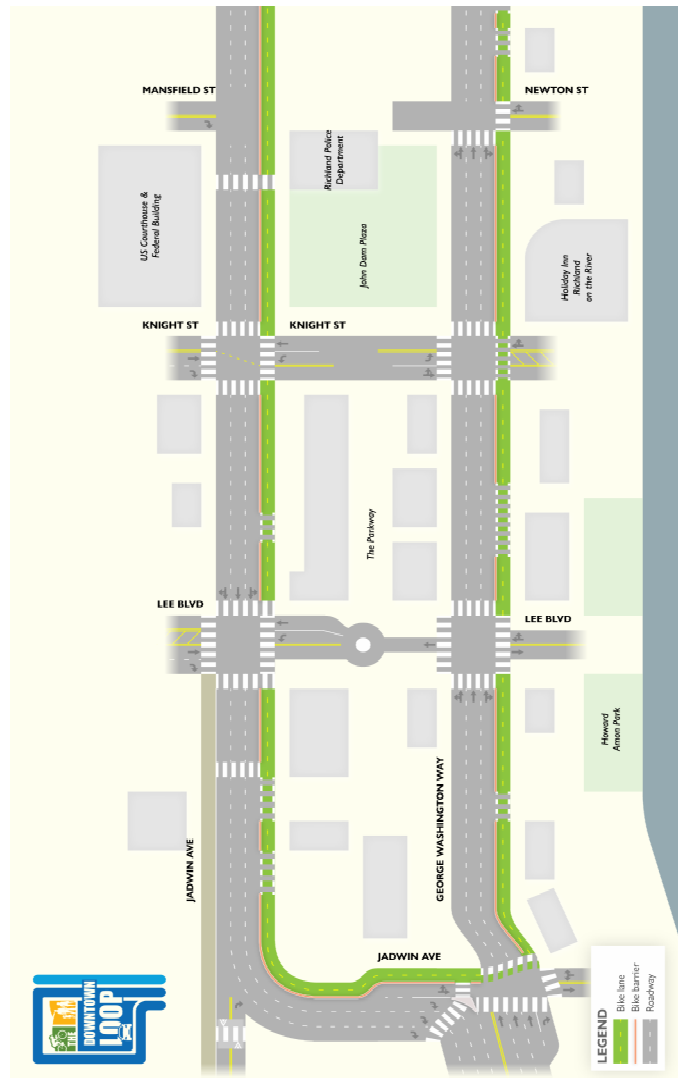




Figure LU-10: Central Business District and Sub-Districts

The City bought the shuttered former Economy Inn on George Washington Way for \$1.2 million in 2022 and plans to turn the footprint of an unused property with a net negative or neutral impact on the community into housing, community resources and/or businesses that become a net positive for the community.

In 2026 the City Council approved an ordinance that removed minimum parking requirements in the CBD. This de-regulation effort may become a successful catalyst for new development and

redevelopment in the coming decade, producing a more vibrant downtown area with more housing, businesses, services and amenities, replacing parking lots and low-scale development.



Notably, with the maximum building height of 110 feet in most areas of the CBD (and an even taller maximum height of 140 feet in the medical sub-district) there is great potential to “grow vertical” in the CBD.

Key concepts and properties for future development:

The CBD has extensive potential for redevelopment and infill development.

Multiple planning studies and efforts have been conducted in the past decades, many of which have been or are being implemented in this area including public investments in infrastructure, streetscape improvements, and code revisions to attract private investment.

Looking forward, the City encourages transformation, converting the area from principally a strip commercial auto-oriented neighborhood to a more cohesive and compact development pattern.

Aerial views of this portion of the city and the building footprint details shown on Figure LU-

11 demonstrate the extent to which parking lots and underutilized spaces are present, presenting numerous development opportunities that can better optimize the use of the land, while better activating the city’s core spaces for increased activity through hospitality, entertainment and service options.

There are some properties owned by the city that may be offered for development, likely through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process in the future. For example, in a few years when the police station is relocated to its new planned home on 1200 Jadwin Avenue, Richland’s city council may determine how to explore options and opportunities for the site’s re-use, re-purposing, or full-scale redevelopment. Opportunities for redevelopment via a “brownfields” processes, which can sometimes include remediation, should also be explored where feasible or needed.

Ultimately, vertical mixed use projects should be explored and fostered, and rooftop uses such as patios and community pools could be contemplated.



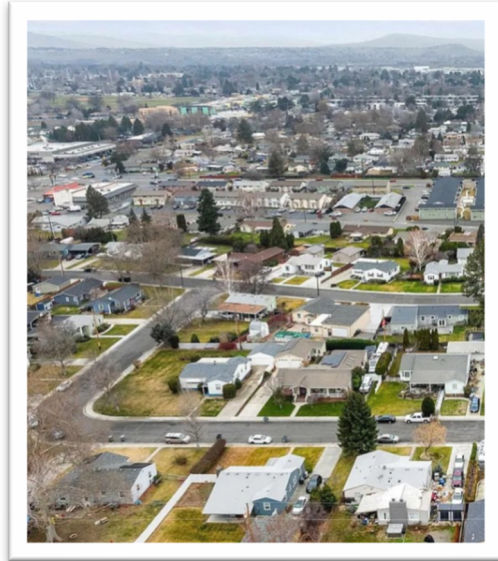
Figure LU-12: Central Richland Aerial

CENTRAL RICHLAND NEIGHBORHOODS

Central Richland hosts the city's earliest residential areas, many of which were developed to support the federal government's Manhattan Project activities at Hanford in the 1940s. Saint Street is a east-west street that generally forms the northern boundary of central Richland while the Yakima Delta serves as the area's southern boundary. The is bounded to the west by Horn Rapids and the Yakima River and to the east by the Columbia River, though the area does not include Columbia Point.

These areas are often characterized by grid-like, walkable, and rather compact single family and low intensity multi-family development. These areas contain the largest concentrations of Alphabet Homes (the housing stock constructed by the Federal Government for the WWII Manhattan Project), the Gold Coast Historic District, and housing flanking the CBD, and uptown.

These neighborhoods, many with distinctive mature vegetation and grand shade trees, are anchored by community landmarks surrounding the CBD including the Fran Rish Stadium, and the campuses of Richland and River's Edge High School, Carmicheal and Chief Joseph Middle Schools and the campuses of Marcus Whitman, Jefferson, Lewis & Clark, and Sacajawea Elementary Schools. Central Richland has several private schools that cater to a variety of age groups, including Liberty Christian School for students in preschool through high school; Christ the King School for students in preschool through eighth grade, and Sagebrush Montessori for children aged three to twelve. Compared to "newer" parts of Richland, these vibrant neighborhoods at the core tend to have a higher concentration of churches and other places of worship, feature smaller parks, and a larger presence of unique housing types including manufactured homes, apartment housing clusters, and assisted living centers.



Many of these neighborhoods were more "traditionally" developed and feature high levels of convenience due to their proximity to amenities, central location, and better transit / biking access.

Key properties for future development:

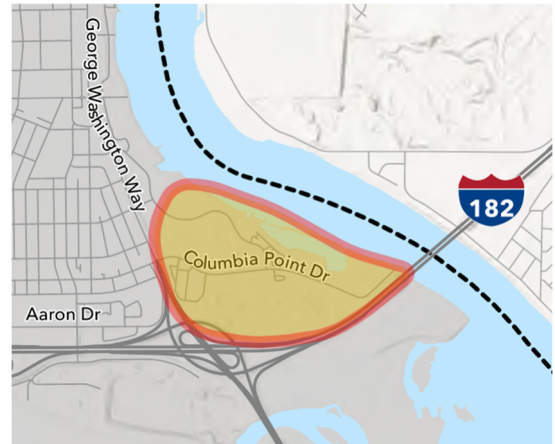
Several of the schools in central Richland are going to need replacement facilities, and the Richland School District is exploring options.

The City's 2026 development regulations updates¹⁵ will boost options for landowners interested in adding additional housing units and will introduce expanded ownership opportunities. These changes will apply city-wide and have a particularly good potential to result in meaningful benefits to the Central Richland neighborhoods, owing to the age of the housing stock and the configuration of buildings on residential lots. Improvements result in the remodeling of homes, addition of new ADUs, and the creation of additional infill lots.

¹⁵ Provisions for Unit Lot Subdivisions, Residential Lot Splitting; Fewer provisions for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and options for "middle housing," etc.

COLUMBIA POINT

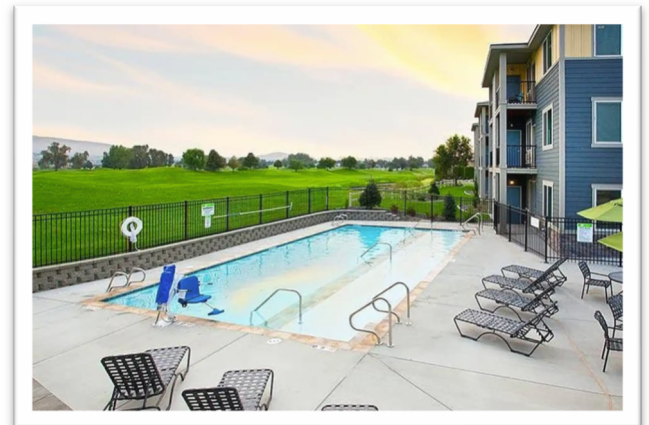
Columbia Point is located along the Columbia River riverfront with I-182 to the south and George Washington Way to the west. The area is developed with a large grocery store, a mix of shops, hotels, restaurants, offices, condominiums, apartments, and recreational amenities that includes a golf course, park, marina, and waterfront trail. A collection of hotels including a boutique hotel and several popular local restaurants, together with the beautiful waterfront setting make this a regional destination. The residential development includes areas oriented toward the Columbia River, marinas, and trail systems. Howard Amon Park lies to the north of Columbia Point, providing a popular gathering place and popular activity center.



The Columbia Point Master Association¹⁶ was created when the city developed the master-planned area and has worked toward build out since it was established in the 1990s.

The “Master Plan and Design Guidelines” document (August 1999; Design Guidelines updated in January 2021) for development at Columbia Point carries forth the vision and direction established through multiple planning efforts, with the goal to create a “sense of place,” protect the environment, accommodate activities that complements the public and private investment made at the site, ensure high quality design and amenities to create a place to showcase Richland’s assets, and provide opportunities for public access, use and enjoyment of the Columbia River shoreline.

The City of Richland has worked with developers over the years to improve the area¹⁷, and now it is very close to complete “build-out,” with only a few properties remaining, owned by the City of Richland.



¹⁶ Amended & Restated Declaration of Covenants, Conditions & Restrictions and Easements for Columbia Point is recorded at AFN 2021-006950 (February 2021)

¹⁷ The City holds several sites as which are leased to various operators, for instance the Richland Riverfront Hotel (formerly the Shilo Inn), is leased through the year 2059.



Key properties for future development:

The City owns vacant land generally between the Richland Riverfront Hotel and Conference Center and the Columbia Point Golf Course, situated within the Columbia Point North District as established in the City's zoning code, which can accommodate buildings up to 100 feet in height.

ISLAND VIEW (THE RICHLAND WYE)

The Island View area, formerly known as the Richland Wye, is located in southeastern Richland between the Columbia River to the north and SR 240 to the south. The area lies north of the Columbia Center Mall in Kennewick, with Columbia Park West to the east and Bateman Island to the north. Island View demonstrates the success of partnerships among local governments, public agencies, and private-sector investors in transforming underutilized land into a mixed-use district.

The City adopted the Island View Subarea Plan in 2008 to guide future development and establish a long-term vision for the area. Since then, substantial public and private investment has occurred, advancing many of the plan's objectives. Key developments include:

- Construction of the REACH Museum (Hanford Reach Interpretive Center) in 2014 by the Richland Public Facilities District. Located along the Columbia Park Trail, the museum serves as an educational and cultural destination, featuring rotating exhibits, school programs, and public and private events. The museum is located on land administered by the US Army Corps of Engineers.
- Creation of the Spaulding Business Park, supported by approximately \$2.8 million in infrastructure investment by the Port of Kennewick in partnership with the City of Richland. The 30-acre business park has attracted significant private investment and created hundreds of jobs in the professional offices, and medical / healthcare facilities.
- Development of additional multi-family residential units, including several apartment complexes, expanding residential opportunities within the area.

These investments have helped transform Island View into an improved employment, residential, recreational, and visitor destination. Ongoing revitalization efforts continue to introduce new housing choices, employment opportunities, and commercial services while enhancing public

access to the Columbia River.

The 2008 Subarea Plan focused primarily on identifying amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and zoning regulations needed to support the area's redevelopment. These recommendations included land use and zoning changes, policy direction, and establishment of a phased Single-Family Overlay District intended to facilitate future transition of certain properties. The recommended land use and zoning amendments were subsequently incorporated into the City's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, and many of the plan's objectives have since been realized.



Because the plan's major implementation actions have been completed and its guidance has been integrated into current City policies and regulations, the Island View Subarea Plan is being retired as part of this Comprehensive Plan update. The associated Single-Family Overlay is no longer needed and does not align with the City's current housing and land use objectives. Future development and redevelopment within Island View will instead be guided by the goals, policies, land use designations, and development regulations contained within this Comprehensive Plan.

Today, the area contains a mix of land uses. General commercial and retail development is concentrated along the southern portion of the subarea, and business commercial, office, medical, and multifamily residential uses occupy the central areas. Development and public open spaces fronting the Columbia River to the north have visual access to the river. In addition, public access is maintained along this entire stretch of Columbia River shoreline, providing recreational opportunities and connections to the regional trail system.

Key concepts and properties for future development:

Island View remains a key area for continued investment and redevelopment. Its mix of residential, commercial, employment, and waterfront amenities positions it to accommodate additional housing, including middle housing and multifamily development, while continuing to support economic development and public access to the Columbia River.

The City's 2026 development regulations updates (described in the Central Richland Neighborhoods part) could also help to stimulate reinvestment and additional housing production.



QUEENSGATE AND CITY VIEW

The development at Queensgate started in the late 1990s with a single gas station and a Walmart store and has since expanded and grown into a bustling commercial node with multiple retailers and service offerings including the businesses at Vintner's Square (anchored by a Target), a hotel, a movie theater, many banks / financial institutions and a Costco warehouse store (which was opened in 2025), attracting shoppers and visitors throughout the Tri-Cities and from surrounding communities.

Beyond its retail significance, Queensgate is a major contributor to the City's economic vitality. The area contains a high concentration of jobs and some of the City's highest-value commercial properties, generating substantial property tax revenues that support public services and infrastructure. As one of Richland's primary retail centers, Queensgate also serves as an important source of local sales tax revenue.

Immediately north of Queensgate is the City View area, which serves as an important center for municipal services and operations. City facilities in this area include a fire station, city maintenance shops, and other public service functions that support the community's day-to-day needs. The Southeast Communications Center (SECOMM) is located in this area, serving as the region's emergency dispatch center. **Figure LU-13** illustrates the boundaries of the Queensgate and City View commercial areas.



Duportail Street and Queensgate Drive serve as the primary access corridors, and transportation improvements to intersections are planned to ensure convenient and safe circulation. Additionally, through the City View Drive Construction Project the City plans to construct City View Drive and Truman Avenue with utilities, curb, gutter, sidewalk, and lighting improvements.

The shopping / employment destination has excellent freeway access and a convenient connection to northern and central Richland via the Duportail Bridge, which connects to the Bypass Highway.

While commercial development remains a defining characteristic of the area, Queensgate also offers a range of housing options. Existing residential development includes manufactured home communities, garden-style multifamily apartment complexes, and townhouse developments. As the area continues to grow, additional single-family and multifamily housing is planned, particularly on lands surrounding the Costco development and other undeveloped properties. These residential opportunities help support a balanced mix of uses and provide housing close to employment, services, and amenities.

Figure LU-13 depicts the boundaries of the Queensgate and City View areas.

Key properties for future development:

Despite its extensive development, Queensgate retains significant opportunities for additional future growth. Several parcels remain available for commercial and mixed-use development, including a large assembly of properties (about 40 acres in total) owned by the Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) located between Keene Road and Kennedy Road. These remaining undeveloped lands provide opportunities to expand employment, commercial services, and housing options while enhancing connectivity and extending the area's pattern of high-quality development.

Approximately 24 of the 304.62 acres owned by DNR were recently developed into a 182,000 square-foot Costco Warehouse and Fuel Station (the land is leased from DNR) with 29 additional acres ready for commercial development in the short term. The balance of the DNR holdings are expected to be sold or leased in the upcoming 20 year planning period with a mixture of housing, reserved land for a school site, and other compatible uses.



Figure LU-13: Queensgate / City View Map

SOUTH RICHLAND

Homes and businesses south of the Yakima River are situated in “south Richland.” Developed largely after the 1980s, this part of the city has experienced sustained residential growth and continues to accommodate new development today. Compared with the Central Business District and North Richland, the housing stock is mostly newer and reflects contemporary development



patterns. While hillside neighborhoods with expansive views are a defining feature of some areas, the character of South Richland varies considerably, ranging from established suburban neighborhoods to newer master-planned communities.

Housing in South Richland includes a broad range of types and densities. Established single-family neighborhoods typically feature lot sizes ranging from approximately 8,000 to 12,000 square feet, while newer planned communities offer a variety of lot sizes, housing styles, and price points. Prominent neighborhoods such as Meadow Springs, Westcliffe, and Hills West incorporate curvilinear street

networks, neighborhood parks, trail connections, and access to open space. Multifamily housing, townhomes, and other higher-density residential developments are also present, particularly near commercial centers and along major transportation corridors.

A defining feature of South Richland is its network of neighborhood and community commercial centers that provide convenient access to daily goods, services, and employment opportunities. These commercial areas are strategically located along major corridors and serve both local residents and the broader community.

There is a small commercial node at Keene and Westcliffe Blvd. /Englewood with a grocery store, restaurant, and an assortment of small businesses supporting the local neighborhood. A larger commercial center at Keene and Gage stretches to the intersection at Gage and Leslie Rd featuring a grocery store a hardware store, a pharmacy, an assortment of medical offices and clinics, restaurants and various buildings with a variety of good and serve offerings. Continuing east on Gage Blvd and past the Amon Creek area, there is a more concentrated pattern of development with a mix of commercial uses including banking and finance services, other offices, restaurants including those with drive-throughs, and other retail; this is one location where Richland seems to blend right into Kennewick, as only small signs signal the change from one city to the next at Gage and Steptoe.

An additional assortment of properties lying immediately north of I-82 (and the city limits) and south of Reata Road are near the City's Leslie road electrical substation contain "flex" buildings for a variety of businesses needing a mix of office and space for storage / logistical operations, contractor lay-down yards, equipment storage and storage facilities. The area is primarily characterized by flex-industrial and service-commercial uses rather than traditional retail development.

Key properties for future development:

As Richland continues to grow, South Richland is expected to remain one of the city's primary growth areas with new housing construction. Its mix of established neighborhoods, new housing opportunities, neighborhood commercial centers, parks, open space amenities, and convenient access to employment and services contributes to a high quality of life and helps support a balanced pattern of growth throughout the community.

Development will continue to occur over the south side of "Little Badger Mountain" and on both sides of Bermuda Road, stretching to and across with the further alignment of Gage Blvd. Generally the steeper-sloped areas will have larger lots and thus be low density (and will include areas where the lots will be sharply banked or terraced and supported with retaining walls) while the flatter areas will be smaller lots as zoning, natural contours, and development limitations may dictate. Views into the canyon and of the hills rising south of Kennewick are abundant. Multi-family development or commercial development may flank some areas along Bermuda Road. There is also nearly 80 acres of land owned by the city planned to remain as Natural Open Space, which will feature a parking lot at a trailhead¹⁸.

The Kennewick School District serves some of the properties in the Badger Mountain South area and lands nearby (the school district boundaries and city boundaries are independent of one another) and the Kennewick School District hold property for a future school site south of the Badger Mountain South neighborhood, along and north of the I-82 right-of-way.

BADGER MOUNTAIN SOUTH

Badger Mountain South is a master-planned community comprising 1,480 acres located in the southwest side of the City. At its completion the area is intended to be developed with 5,000 residential units, a mix of businesses, and other community assets including parks, schools, and places of worship. As of 2026, the area is about half-way developed with neighborhoods having a range of housing types – senior housing, apartments, townhomes, duplexes and single family homes - to accommodate a population of diverse ages and incomes, and additional development continues to be added. The plan promotes pedestrian-friendly and mixed-use neighborhoods with areas for parks, trails, and open space in a connected network, as well as civic, commercial, and recreational uses.

The Badger Mountain South Land Use Development Regulations ("LUDR") applies to the master planned community, which was adopted in 2010 with revisions intermittently made in subsequent years and most recently in Spring 2025.

Key properties for future development:

The LUDR provides a helpful description of potential future development.

¹⁸ Appendix A, City of Richland Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Comprehensive Plan Public Draft, MIG Consultants (June 2026)

Notably, the Richland School District owns 52 acres along Trowbridge Blvd., immediately east of the city's complex which includes the West Village Community Park and the fire station.

Part IV: Land Use Designations and the Land Use Map

The Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map identifies land use categories within city limits and the UGA. The City of Richland classifies land in the city and the Urban Growth Area on the Land Use Map¹⁹ according to specific “Land Use” designations.

A mix of uses are encouraged in Richland where they are allowed. Such uses are generally mutually supportive of each other. Locating residences, offices, neighborhood shops, cafes, and similar uses in the same building or same site can promote walkability and reduce the vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

Table LU-2 indicates the land use distribution within the City and in the UGA.

Table LU-2: Land Use Designations Summary

Land Use Designation	Acreage	Percentage
Low Density Residential (LDR)	6,121	20.2%
Manufactured Home Park (MHP)	111	0.4%
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	2,049	6.6%
High Density Residential (HDR)	472	1.6%
Badger Mountain South (BMS)	1,323	4.3%
Central Business District (CBD)	231	0.7%
Commercial (COM)	2,639	8.5%
Waterfront (WF)	159	0.5%
Commercial Recreation (CR)	431	1.9%
Industrial (IND)	6,122	19.7%
Natural Open Space (NOS)	4,160	13.4%
Public Facility (PBF)	1,001	3.5%
Land Use Subtotal	25,245	81.0%
Other (Roads/Infrastructure)	2,907	9.3%
Water	2,995	9.6%
Grand Total	31,146	100%

Table LU-3 lists the various Land Use Designations that are shown on the Land Use Map, and

¹⁹ With the 2026 Periodic Update, the categories of “Agriculture” and “Urban Reserve” were eliminated and “Clean Industrial” and “Manufactured Home Park” were added.

identifies which City's zoning districts implement each classification²⁰. The table does not list overlay districts (such as an Airport Overlay) or other land use controls such as floodways which may be present in various zones and are separately mapped or determined.

²⁰ It is important to note, especially with residential lands, that other controls may be in place such as provisions of an approved Planned Use Development (PUD) or Development Agreement that can impact permitting and uses. Further, Covenants, Conditions and Restrictions may be recorded against properties (though are typically not enforced by the City).

Table LU-3: Land Use Implementation by Zoning

Land Use Designation	Implementing Zoning Districts in RMC Title 24 ^(A)
Low Density Residential (LDR)	Residential -Limited Agriculture (R-LA) Low Density Residential (R-1)
Medium Density Residential (MDR)	Medium Density Residential (R-2)
High Density Residential (HDR)	High Density Residential (R-3) Commercial – Limited Business (C-LB)
Manufactured Home Park (MHP)	Manufactured Home Park (R-MHP)
Central Business District (CBD)	Central Business District (CBD)
Commercial (COM)	Neighborhood Retail Business (C-1) Retail Business (C-2) General Business (C-3) Commercial – Limited Business (C-LB)
Waterfront (WF)	Waterfront (WF)
Commercial Recreation (CR)	Commercial Recreation (CR)
Natural Open Space (NOS)	Natural Open Space (NOS)
Public Facilities (PF)	Parks and Public Facilities (PPF) University (UNIV) Developed Open Space (DOS)
Clean Industrial	B-RP I-C
Industrial (IND)	I-M I-M-2 I-G I-H
Badger Mountain South (BMS)	BMS
(All)	PUD

^A – Planned Unit Developments are an option as well

Low Density Residential (LDR)

The LDR category includes single family residential uses with an intended average density of **XX primary dwelling units²¹ per acre**. This designation is additionally applied to areas that are not well suited for typical urban development due to environmental constraints such as floodplains or steep slopes. Residential densities up to one dwelling unit per five acres are allowed, together with

²¹ Does not include or count ADUs

agricultural-related activities such as hobby farms, raising animals and livestock that are compatible with surrounding areas, horticulture, and related commercial and industrial activities²². This designation is also used for the four golf courses in the city.

In 2025 approximately 780 acres centered along Van Giesen Street between SR-240 and the Yakima River were used for agricultural purposes. The vast majority of the city's remaining land in agricultural use falls within the Yakima River floodplain. The floodplain area needs to continue to be protected with limited development to protect its function, making agriculture a suitable use.

Medium Density Residential (MDR)

The MDR category includes single family residential uses with an intended average density of **XX primary dwelling units** per acre.

High Density Residential (HDR)

The HDR category includes multi-family residential uses with an average density of **XX primary dwelling units per acre**. In transitional areas between more intensive commercial uses and lower density residential uses, limited office / institutional uses may also be located within the HDR designated areas.

Manufactured Home Park (MHP)

The MHP designation is intended preserve and maintain the existing affordable housing stock located within existing manufactured home parks, while also aiming to curb potential housing displacement and gentrification pressures.

Badger Mountain South (BMS)

This includes land uses set forth in the [Land Use Development Regulations \(LUDR\) document](#). Badger Mountain South is a master-planned community of 1,480 acres which is intended to develop with 5,000 homes, together with retail and service-based businesses, places of workshop, parks, schools, and other community amenities.

Central Business District (CBD)

This classification includes a mix of residential, retail, service, and business activities that provide for the daily convenience needs of onsite and nearby employees and residents. The purpose is to provide for pedestrian-oriented high-density employment and cultural uses, together with complementary retail and higher-density residential and other compatible uses that enhance the Central Business District. Amenities for transit service, multi-modal transportation and vibrancy are also important in this area.

Commercial (COM)

The commercial land use category includes a variety of retail, wholesale, and office uses. Within this category are professional business offices, hotels, motels, and related uses. It also includes a variety of retail and service uses oriented to serving residential neighborhoods, such as grocery stores, hardware supply, and garden supply. Other commercial uses include automobile-related uses. In transitional areas between more intensive commercial uses and lower density residential uses, high-density residential development may also be located within the Commercial designated areas.

²² With the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, the city eliminated the "Agriculture" Land Use and repealed the implementing zoning districts of "AG Agricultural District" and "SAG Suburban Agricultural District," but other zoning districts, such as "Residential- Limited Agriculture" address agriculture related activities

Waterfront (WF)

The Waterfront category includes a variety of water-oriented uses such as marinas, boat docks, resorts, mixed commercial / residential developments, hotels, motels, and offices along the Columbia River shoreline. The intent is to bring significant development to the Columbia riverfront that is consistent with the City's vision and that incorporates public recreational features and attractive and high-quality development.

Commercial Recreation (CR)

This designation typically applies to properties under the ownership of the local, state, or federal government. These properties are often used to site regional recreational, educational, water-oriented facilities, and associated uses. This designation also includes uses that are intended to provide the public with places to gather for public events as well as provide some limited urban amenities, passive recreation opportunities and open space uses. Some lands developed with the CR land use designation should have a disbursed pattern of development that recognizes and protects both culturally and environmentally sensitive areas.

Natural Open Space (NOS)

The Natural Open Space category includes public lands intended to remain as long-term undeveloped open space with appropriate public access. This category primarily includes, for example, lands associated with the Yakima River floodplain, islands in the Columbia River, steeply sloped areas, and sensitive areas along the Howard Amon Basin. Natural Open Space lands are managed as natural areas and may include riparian corridors along creeks and rivers, wetlands, shrub-steppe, open ridges, and hillsides.

Public Facility (PF)

This category includes a variety of public and institutional uses including facilities operated by federal, state, county, municipal, or other government agencies; public educational institutions; public libraries; hospitals; cemeteries; and some developed parks. This category also includes federal power transmission and irrigation wasteway easements, private open space, riverfront parks, undeveloped parks, and parks intended for long-term open space. The university district is a public use classification that provides an area for the development of public university campuses for institutions of higher education. This zoning district recognizes that university campuses exhibit a unique identity that can have a variety of uses that support the overall mission of the university but extend beyond traditional education-oriented facilities like classrooms, libraries and cafeterias.

Industrial (IND)

This category includes a variety of light to heavy manufacturing, assembly, warehousing, and distribution uses. It also includes uses devoted to the sale of retail and wholesale products manufactured on-site, and a variety of research and development uses for science-related activities.

Clean Industrial (I-C)

The Clean Industrial designation provides for a variety of office and research and development facilities in a planned business park setting. Permitted uses include science-related research and development and testing facilities including clean energy; administrative offices for those uses; and other general office uses, and accommodating limited commercial uses which are supportive and compatible with other uses in the district.

Land Use Map

The Growth Management Act (GMA) mandates that comprehensive plans include a Land Use Element (RCW 36.70A.070(1)) that guides future growth and development. This includes a

requirement for a Land Use Map, which outlines the anticipated spatial distribution, character, and intensity of land uses throughout the community, including residential, commercial, industrial, public, and recreational uses.

Richland's Land Use Map (see **Figure LU-14**) serves as a long-range policy guide, shaping how land is may be developed over time. Strictly speaking, the Land Use Map is a guide but does not “regulate” land use; rather, the Land Use Map acts as a template based on what city leaders, planning professionals and community members wish to see in the City. Any changes to the city’s official Zoning Map – which does apply the regulations governing land use in the City – must be consistent with the Land Use map.

Implementation of the Land Use Map occurs primarily through the City's official Zoning Map and development regulations. Unlike the FLUM, zoning is a regulatory tool that establishes the standards governing land use, density, building form, and development. To ensure consistency between the City's vision and its regulatory framework, any proposed amendments to the Zoning Map must be consistent with the Future Land Use Map and the goals and policies of this Comprehensive Plan.

Together, the Future Land Use Map and Zoning Map provide a coordinated framework for managing growth, guiding public and private investment, and ensuring that future development supports the community's long-term vision for Richland.

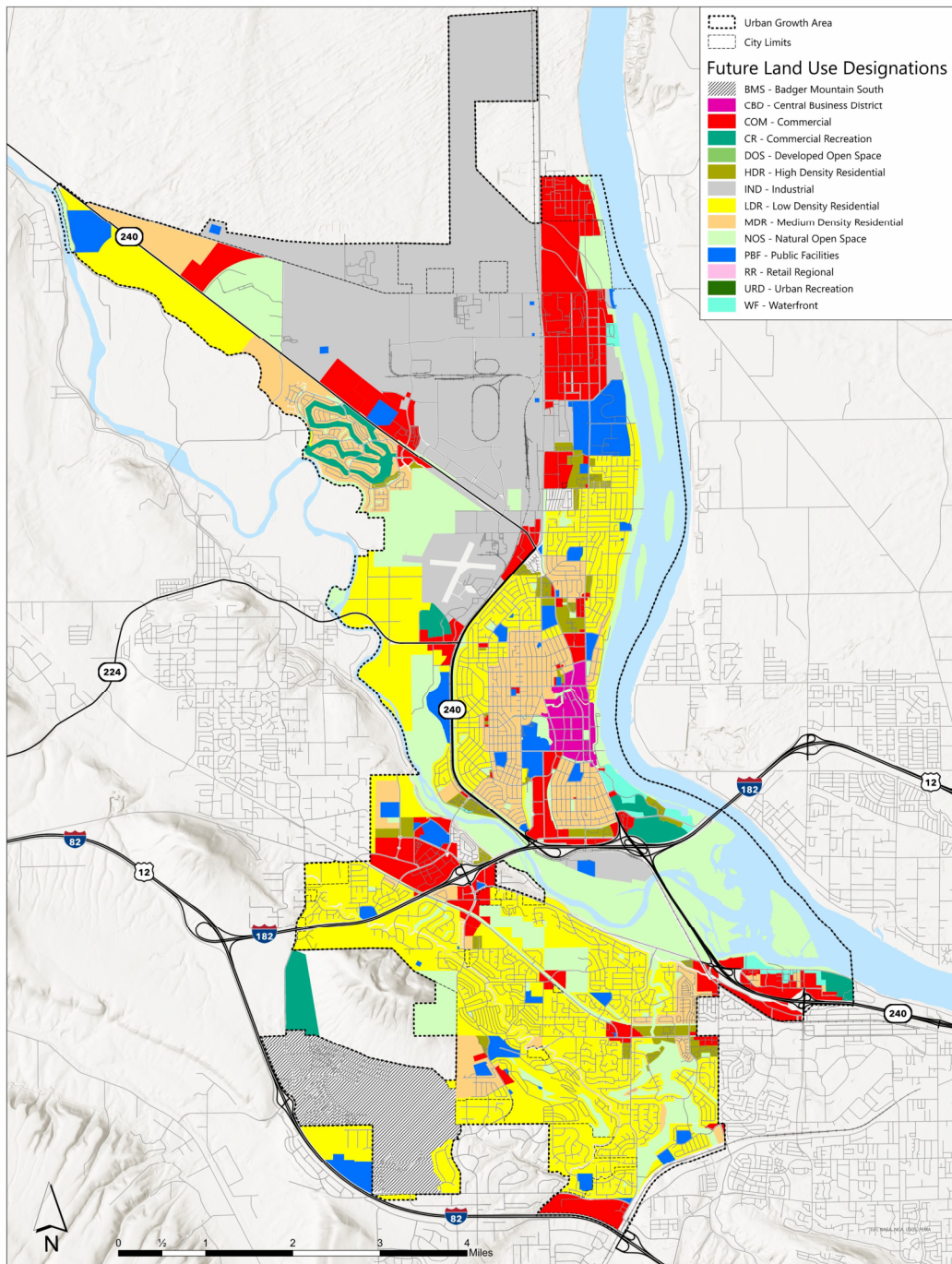


Figure LU-14: Future Land Use Map

LAND USE GOALS AND POLICIES

Goal LU.1: Plan for growth within the urban growth area and promote land uses and activities that are compatible with existing land uses and the established character of neighborhoods and districts compatible land use and supporting a progressive, and physically, socially, economically, and culturally diverse community.

- LU1.a: Focus revitalization efforts in targeted areas throughout ~~Revitalize areas that are already within~~ the City, especially ~~areas~~ within the Central Business District ~~areas~~, such as the Parkway and Uptown, and the Island View ~~areas~~ area.
- LU1.b: Facilitate planned growth and infill developments within the City, particularly where nodes of complementary development may be established, resulting in community benefits.
- LU1.c: Coordinate with other jurisdictions, the school districts, and service agencies to harmonize cross-jurisdictional activities and services across boundaries.
- LU1.d: Maintain regular communication with major landowners in and adjacent to the City, including farmers, State of Washington Department of Natural Resources, the Port of Benton, the Department of Energy and other federal agencies regarding the future plans for lands.
- LU1.e: Ensure the preservation of an open-space network which protects and preserves natural areas, provides scenic spaces, accommodates recreation or provides respite from the built environment.
- LU1.f: Administer the City's Zoning map to implement the Future Land Use map directives in the Comprehensive Plan, ensuring compatibility among uses and adequate buffers or transitions between zones. Establish Development Agreements under RCW 36.70B.170(4) for alternative development standards.

Goal LU.2: Establish land uses that are sustainable and create a livable and vibrant community.

- LU.2a: Maintain a variety of land use designations to accommodate appropriate residential, commercial, industrial, healthcare, educational, recreational, and open space uses that will ~~take advantage of~~ be supported by the existing infrastructure network. The city should endeavor to make land use decisions that support a variety of job, housing, and recreational choices and opportunities.
- LU.2b: ~~Ensure~~ Assure that adequate public services are provided ~~in a reasonable time frame for concurrent with~~ new developments.
- LU.2c: Ensure that the intent of the land use and districts are maintained, advancing the City's identity and sense of place.
- LU.2d: Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of the City's open

Commented [NS80]: STAFF: I have highlighted the new stuff added since your previous review.

If you've decided that the tracked changes aren't necessary for our drafts to PC / CC please let me know and I'll accept all the changes which will be less cluttered. When we started this process I was of the mindset that showing the proposed changes (compared to the current / 2017 plan as amended) would be helpful but at this stage I think it could be skipped, given the extent of changes.

space and natural areas to maintain habitat, provide opportunities for residents to connect with nature, and meet educational, health, and outdoor recreational needs with associated economic opportunities to the community.

LU.2e: Implement the provisions of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) code as adopted by the Washington State Legislature to reduce and mitigate the risk to lives and property posed by wildfires.

LU.2f: Inform the public of the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) mapping products produced by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

LU.2g: Continue to designate and protect critical areas based on best available science.

Goal LU.3: Maintain a ~~broad~~ range of residential land use designations to accommodate a variety of lifestyles, and housing types, and opportunities.

LU.3a: Distribute residential uses and densities throughout the urban growth area consistent with the City's vision.

LU.3b: Encourage higher residential densities especially in and near the Central Business District, including co-living and live-work arrangements area.

LU.3c: Foster innovative and non-traditional residential developments to meet local needs can occur through the use of planned unit developments, density bonuses, new types of housing, and multi-use or mixed-use developments.

LU.3d: Encourage a variety of housing types, including "middle housing," at a scale that is compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and uses.

Goal LU.4: Promote commercial and industrial growth that supports the City's economic development goals, achieving a diversified mix of private industry and commerce, job creation and supporting a strong and robust economy.

LU.4a: Accommodate a variety of commercial land uses including retail and wholesale sales and services, and research and professional services.

LU.4b: Promote developments such as business and research parks, office parks, technology centers, manufacturing and processing facilities, and other types ~~for of~~ high-tech uses.

LU.4c: Locate neighborhood-oriented commercial land uses in Neighborhood Retail Business areas.

LU.4d: Encourage the use of buffers or transition zones between non-compatible land uses and where necessary to mitigate the impact of more-intensive uses and activities on less-intensively developed areas or natural areas.

Commented [RM81]: Would also consider policies around like WW LU 3.2 - Allow live/workspaces and mixed uses to encourage entrepreneurial opportunities for residents. Also, something around LU 3.6 "Allow commercial development that provides daily goods and services adjacent to residential neighborhoods."

Commented [RM82]: Allow live-work and higher densities with mixed-use near CBD and Riverfront. For walkable area hemmed in with SR 240 Bypass I think a generalized zoning typology that accommodates a lot like the City of Walla Walla Residential-Neighborhood Zoning is intriguing: <https://www.theurbanist.org/walla-walla-a-washington-city-without-single-family-only-zoning/>

Commented [NS82R2]: OK - See proposed change to LU.3b - this will also be talked about in the Housing Element.

Commented [WA83]: a few places the document talks about the central business district and other times the document says downtown, I think this should be consistent with either option.

Commented [NS83R2]: Thank you for the catch, we have updated (throughout)

Commented [WA84]: this is an older form of development, we have seen it difficult to build new neighborhood retail nodes.

Commented [NS84R2]: Agree - do you recommend we remove the policy or continue to permit it even if the market is not delivering these types of solutions?

LU.4e: ~~In areas where residential uses are in close proximity to industrial or commercial lands, adequate development standards should be used in industrial or commercial developments to mitigate the impacts on residential uses.~~

LU.4ef: Support industrial developments, particularly when tied to research, innovation and clean energy, on lands previously owned by the US Department of Energy and transferred to the City and the Port of Benton.

Seems one more about industrial industrial specifically and the diversification of such: including target industries belongs in this section?

Goal LU.5: ~~Ensure orderly development featuring connectivity, that which enhances community access and promotes physical, social, and overall well-being so residents can live healthier and more active lives be healthy and active.~~

LU.5a: Locate commercial uses so that they conveniently serve the needs of residential neighborhoods and workplaces; and are easily accessible via non-motorized modes of transport.

LU.5b: Promote pedestrian and bicycle circulation throughout the community, providing additional connections within by connecting with the infrastructure and the City's existing network of parks and trails, expanding the pedestrian and bicycling infrastructure system, and reducing vehicle miles traveled.

Add something about the health-oriented uses?

LU.5c: Implement land use decisions and support development patterns that promote public health and address environmentally disparate health outcomes.

Add policy to address EJ considerations and efforts to avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities (RCW 36.70A.070 (1) Commerce Checklist LU item 'o')

Central Business District Goals and Policies

Goal LU.6: ~~Develop an attractive and vibrant Central Business District that showcases displays the unique character of Richland's unique features and assets.~~

LU.6a: Revitalize declining commercial areas by promoting clean, and safe, and pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environments that are inviting, walkable, and bicycle-friendly.

LU.6b: Designate land use and zoning for Permit higher-density residential uses, mixed-use, and business uses within and adjacent to the Central Business District.

LU.6c: Encourage infill development and redevelopment in the Central Business District.

LU.6d: Explore opportunities for partnerships and collaborations encouraging different

Commented [RM85]: Some sort of mentioning about supporting industrial developments that also support economic diversification. We will always support things tied to Hanford, PNNL, and ancillary industries but for our region to remain resilient we need to examine other tangential things to enrich our economy and land use framework.

Commented [RM86]: Just thinking out loud might want to have goal in this section around public engagement. Like Walla Walla's LU Goal 6: Provide inclusive public engagement practices LU 6.1 Consider targeted outreach methods to include lower-income households and historically marginalized communities in local legislation related to planning and development. Also, LU 6.2 Consider community input received during planning and land use projects to help inform decisions.

Commented [NR87]: Should we add language or a new goal talking about public transit opportunities in the CBD? As the CBD is home to the Knight Street Transit Center and is the central hub for most Richland and Intercity fixed route buses.

types of catalyzing projects, such as pop-up business opportunities, co-working spaces, community kitchens, and events that bring people to the City.

Public Facilities

Goal LU.7: Encourage and facilitate efficient use and location of infrastructure, the transportation system, and public facilities to serve in the community's best interest such as transit centers, utility facilities, schools, parks, and other public uses.

- LU.7a: Locate municipal and public facilities (such as transit centers, utility facilities, schools, parks) within their service areas and ensure the grouping of facilities within neighborhoods, whenever feasible.
- LU.7b: Ensure that the scale, and location of public facilities are compatible with existing and planned uses in surrounding areas or sufficiently buffered from incompatible uses or buffered from existing and planned surrounding areas.
- LU.7c: Provide and support an efficient, varied, and well-maintained transportation network.
- LU.7d: ~~Wherever possible, the City will~~ Strive to locate park and school facilities together for efficient use of public facilities.
- LU.7e: Prioritize projects which improve community access to early learning opportunities, to health care facilities, and other resources for optimal mental, physical and environment health outcomes, particularly in low-resource neighborhoods.
- LU.7f: Cultivate coalitions and community engagement to collaborate on and advance projects and initiatives which increase positive health outcomes through Land Use planning. Seek to eliminate barriers to opportunities which can increase the local capacity to connect people with services to manage chronic conditions, including mental health conditions and substance abuse, and increasing coordination among services.
- LU.7g: Support policy, systems, and environmental changes that support increased access to healthy foods and beverages and opportunities for physical activity, with an emphasis on school-age children.
- LU.7h: Encourage the development of private and public regional sports and recreational facilities of a size and quality to attract significant numbers of users and spectators.
- LU.7i: Ensure that the City's sewer plan, water plan, stormwater master plan, Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), Capital Facilities Plan (CFP), Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, Economic Development Plan, and other functional plans are supportive of the land use patterns outlined in this Element. Reassess the Land Use Element if probable funding falls short of meeting existing needs.

Commented [RM88]: Maybe also have language that ties back to the Benton-Franklin Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Commented [NS88R2]: The CEDS will be discussed in the ED Element. Many times projects put into the CEDS document are aspirational / lofty in nature and included in order to establish potential eligibility for EDA funding. For that reason, I would not suggest we include it here where we are talking about GMA requirements (city functional plans need to include projects which are financially feasible)

~~Land Use in Specific Areas~~ Land Uses

Goal LU.8: Address unique land use situations in the ~~urban area~~ **Urban Growth Area** with policies to sufficiently address specific to those situations and that ensure compatibility between land uses without infringing on private property rights.

LU.8a: ~~[Placeholder for policy about Shrubsteppe areas within the UGA]~~

~~Ensure that lands designated Urban Reserve remain in this holding category to serve future demand for land.~~

LU.8b: Apply the ~~Agricultural Low Density Residential~~ designation in the Yakima River floodplain and allow agricultural uses in those locations.

LU.8c: At designated Waterfront land use locations, encourage an active mix of commercial, residential, and marine-oriented uses as allowed in the ~~SMP~~ City's Shoreline Master Program.

~~LU.8d: Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical or archaeological significance.~~

LU.8de: Define and identify mineral resource lands located within ~~its~~ Richland's boundaries that are not already compromised by on-site, immediate, or adjacent urban growth and that have long-term significance for the extraction of minerals on a commercially-viable basis.

LU.8df: Property and/or mineral rights owners should work with the City and appropriate agencies for protection of these sites. Designate mineral resource lands located in the City of Richland that meet the Criteria for Classification of Mineral Resources (WAC 365-190-070).

LU.8fg: ~~Ensure that Regulate~~ land uses surrounding the Port of Benton's Richland Airport to ensure development is are compatible with existing and potential future airport operations and ~~do does~~ not restrict or impair the airport's ability to maintain or expand ~~its existing and future aviation demands~~ safe and effective aviation activities and services. ~~Coordinate with the Port of Benton to restrict land uses in airport areas that would create conflict or negatively impact the safe and effective airport operations.~~

LU.8g: Promote the redevelopment of vacant, formerly industrial or commercial land for the maximum benefit of both public welfare and private property rights.

Commented [RM89]: I also thinking having language around Shrubsteppe. We recognize impacts have to be mitigated but with urban growth areas in effect we need to do all we can to thread the needle and allow housing development inside the city limits.

Commented [NS89R2]: OK - I don't have any proposed language yet but I have indicated a "placeholder" I also have now proposed removal of the Urban Reserve land use reference since that classification will not be on the Land Use Map anymore (I missed that before).

Commented [NS90]: *Question for staff:* The previous plan said there have been none identified. Delete this entire policy?

Commented [RM91]: I would have language about implementing whatever comes from Northwest Clean Energy Park Master Plan (RIC, Horn Rapids, 1341, Hanford areas).

Goal LU.9: Within Island View, the City will continue to implement a Single Family Overlay land use designation for clusters of property that are currently used as single family residences which have high probability of being redeveloped with non-residential land uses.

LU.9a: ~~The city will use the~~ Apply the Single Family Overlay concept only in those instances where the majority of property owners have expressed a preference for its use and maintain R-2 Medium Density Residential zoning.

~~LU.9b: Areas designated as Single Family Overlay will be zoned for single family residential uses, as identified in the city's R-2 Medium Density Residential zoning district.~~

LU.9c: Areas designated as Single Family Overlay will remain as such until property owner(s) bring forward a request to remove the overlay and change the zoning to the designation contained in the Island View Subarea Plan. In such cases, an amendment to the comprehensive plan is not necessary.

LU.9d: Applicants bringing forward a request to change the zoning of property designated Single Family Overlay should demonstrate that the land proposed for amendment is:

- a) large enough to support redevelopment for non-single family residential land uses; and
- b) will have sufficient access to City streets and utility systems to support redevelopment.

LU.9e: Whenever properties designated with the Single Family Overlay are rezoned for non-single family residential uses in accordance with Policy LU.9d, the Single Family Overlay designation ~~should be~~ is automatically removed from the subject property.

Private Property Rights

Goal LU.10: ~~Follow controlling law and constitutional requirements, both state and federal, to~~ Ensure the appropriate protection of private property rights, adhering to all prevailing state and federal laws and constitutional requirements.

LU.10a: Monitor evolving state and federal statutory amendments and judicial precedent so that ~~timely~~ amendments to the City's development regulations and or changes can be made in the process of implementing the comprehensive plan and its goals and policies can be implemented in a timely manner and development regulations.

Commented [NS92]: Staff. To be discussed. If this practice is continued it will be important to determine if and how the middle housing changes would apply. The middle housing requirements could be a good way to investigate a change to this long-standing approach.

Commented [WA92R2]: this needs to be addressed as the area is prime for redevelopment of multi-family and middle housing.

Commented [NS92R3]: Ryan Nelson noted support for Amanda's comment

Commented [RM92R4]: Agreed with Mandy. I also think we have to be cognizant of encouraged provision of livability services along Columbia Park Trail. Restaurants like Fable. The Island View grocery store. Things like that so it is self sustaining.

Commented [RM93]: Need some language about the whole shrubsteppe issue.

Commented [NS93R2]: That is (will be) addressed in the Natural Environment Element

- LU.10b: Process comprehensive plan amendments and development regulations ~~amendments~~ using a fair and open hearing process, ~~providing with~~ adequate public notice and ~~furnishing the public with~~ opportunities to participate ~~to~~ ensure the protection of all ~~due process~~ rights ~~to due process~~.
- LU.10c: Process ~~and review land use development permits in a~~ timely, fair, and predictable ~~manner, processing and review of land use permit applications in conformance conforming~~ with applicable federal and state legal and regulatory requirements.
- LU.10d: ~~Encourage inclusive community involvement and volunteerism (regarding land use decisions and other city functions) to ensure marginalized communities do not disproportionately bear negative impacts.~~

Historic and Cultural Resources Goals and Policies

Goal HP.1: Preserve significant historic structures, districts, and cultural resources that are unique to Richland.

- HP.1a: Encourage preservation and promotion of adaptive reuse of historic “Alphabet Homes” of Richland.
- HP.1b: Coordinate with local tribes, federal, state and local agencies to protect historic and cultural resources.
- HP.1c: ~~Encourage designation to the Richland Local Register of Historic Places.~~
- HP.1d: ~~Provide assistance and education to developers, landowners, and interested citizens in obtaining grants and tax incentives for the reuse and the rehabilitation of designated cultural resources.~~
- HP.1e: ~~Encourage alternatives to demolishing cultural resources.~~

Urban Design Goals and Policies

Goal UD.1: Create ~~a physically an~~ attractive and culturally vibrant, pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly environment ~~in throughout~~ the City.

- UD.1a: Establish and enhance the positive attributes of residential, commercial, central business, and other districts with appropriate transitions ~~between them~~.
- UD.1b: Encourage redevelopment and upgrade of suitable commercial areas.
- UD.1c: Improve streetscape and connectivity for safe and pedestrian- friendly environments.
- UD.1d: ~~Integrate health and safety considerations into the urban form of new development.~~
- UD.1e: ~~Consider ways to protect views and visual access to the hillsides and rivers.~~
- UD.1f: Promote public arts, museums, and interpretive centers ~~in coordination~~ with public plazas and community ~~gathering~~ spaces that reflect the unique history and culture of Richland.

UD1.g: [Encourage design of buildings and open areas which optimizes building design and orientation and landscaping to maximize the use of shadows and solar gain / loss.](#)

Goal UD.2: Revitalize commercial areas, such as areas in the Central Business District including the Uptown retail area and the Island View area.

- UD.2a: Enhance the appearance, image, and design character of the Central Business District.
- UD.2b: Ensure adequate public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access in the commercial centers along with parking and landscaping.
- UD.2c: Enhance the welcoming experience into the community through well- designed gateway features in prominent locations.
- UD.2d: Design the public realm, including streetscapes, parks, plazas, and civic amenities for the community to gather and interact.
- UD.2e: Provide continuity among adjacent uses [by using through](#) cohesive landscaping, decorative paving, street furniture, public art, and integrated infrastructure elements.

Goal UD.3: Development through appropriate design, should protect natural features such as rivers, shorelines, ridgelines, steep slopes, and archaeological and historical resources.

- UD.3a: Development should [be sensitive be planned and designed to account for the existing topography and landscape, and should minimize minimizing environmental impacts.](#)
- UD.3b: Hillside development should, as much as practical, blend with the natural shape and texture of the land.
- UD.3c: Lighting should be designed so as to promote public safety as well as promote "Dark Sky" [principalsprinciples.](#)

Goal UD.4: Promote community beautification by enhancing public spaces and thoroughfares, [and encouraging private property beautification, and regulating light pollution.](#)

- UD.4a: Improve the [aesthetic](#) appearance of all city- owned space and major thoroughfares.
- UD.4b: Promote programs to improve landscaping. Encourage xeriscaping and use of native [and drought-tolerant](#) plants, [that are tolerant of the local climate conditions.](#)

Commented [NS94]: For Discussion/ follow up: This goal (together with Goal UD.1) relate somewhat to Community Goal 6 which was: "Implement programs for the improvement of the built environment and its aesthetic quality to maintain a clean, safe, and attractive community" [What programs do we suppose the intent of Code Enforcement or example? Anything that would like to see added?](#)

UD.4.c Promote a wayfinding system and more attractive signage throughout the City, especially in commercial districts.

UD.4d: Encourage major private and public buildings to have design features presenting distinctive reference points in the community.

UD.4e: Permit reasonable amounts of exterior lighting for night-time safety, utility, security, productivity, enjoyment and commerce; minimize adverse off-site impacts including light trespass, glare, and night glow; conserve energy and resources to the greatest extent possible; and curtail light pollution and preserve the night-time environment.

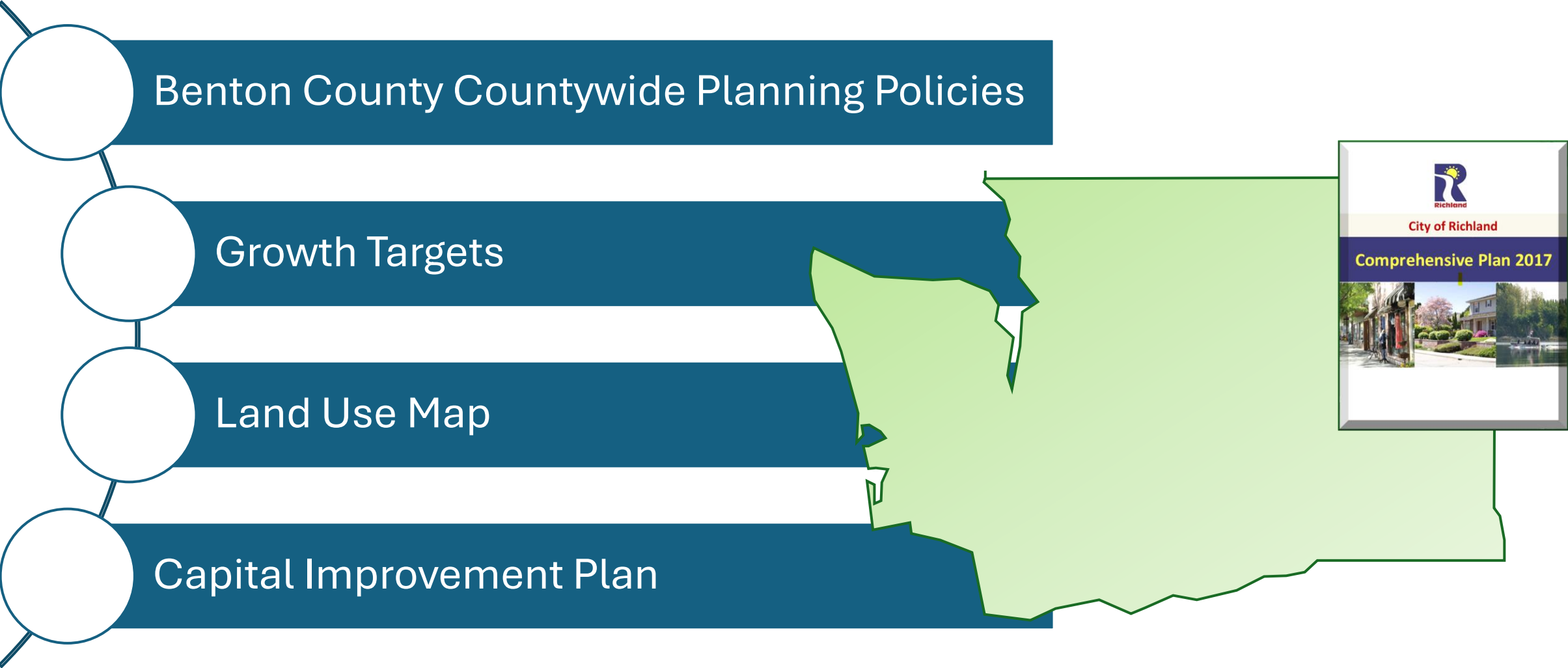
Commented [NS95]: Ryan Nelson noted: Sounds similar to UD.3c but with more detail.



Richland Comprehensive Plan Update

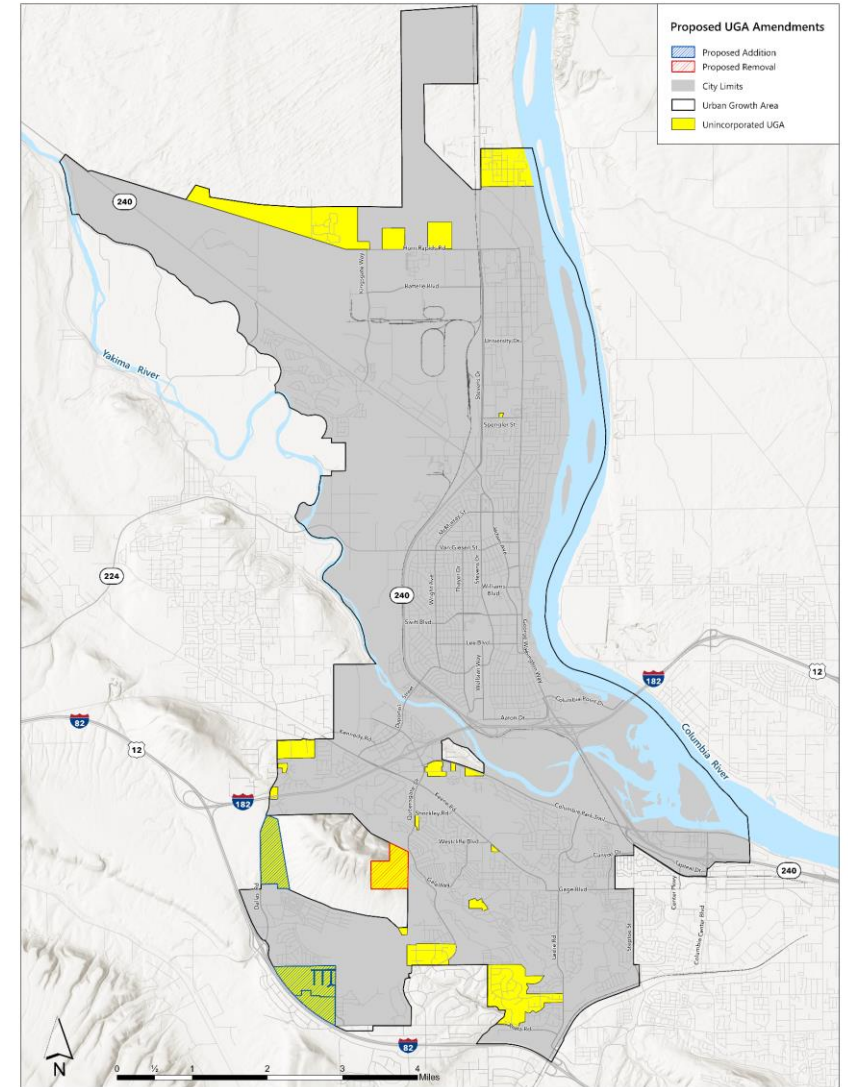
PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP
September 9, 2026

REGULATORY FRAMEWORK



URBAN GROWTH AREAS (UGAs)

- Includes everything in City limits, plus areas that are eligible for future annexation
- Sized to allow for future expansion (for ONLY a 20-year planning period)
- The request to Benton County to adjust the UGA is still pending
 - Benton County's Public Hearing is scheduled for October 6
 - We will continue to monitor and adjust maps / discussion in the comp plan appropriately



CITY OF RICHLAND
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

Prepared by AHBL, Inc. on 8/31/2026 for Project No. 2240885
Sources: ESRI, Washington Department of Ecology, WSDOT,
Benton County GIS, City of Richland, Franklin County GIS

PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

- The Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.020) mandates:
 - Private property shall not be taken for public use without just compensation having been made
 - The property rights of landowners shall be protected from arbitrary and discriminatory actions
 - Applications for both state and local government permits should be processed in a timely and fair manner to ensure predictability



Federal and state constitutional doctrines also relate to private property rights in Washington:

- **Regulatory takings**
- **Substantive Due Process**

Part I: Existing Conditions

- Overview of:
Land Use Patterns,
Major Transportation Corridors,
Government Lands
- Historical Context
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Public Art
- Environmental Health Disparities

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH INDICATORS:

Ozone

Low Birth Weight

Death from Cardiovascular Disease

Lead risk from housing

Proximity to Heavy Traffic Roadways

PM 2.5 Concentration

Population Living in Poverty

Part II: Concepts for Land Development and the Built Environment

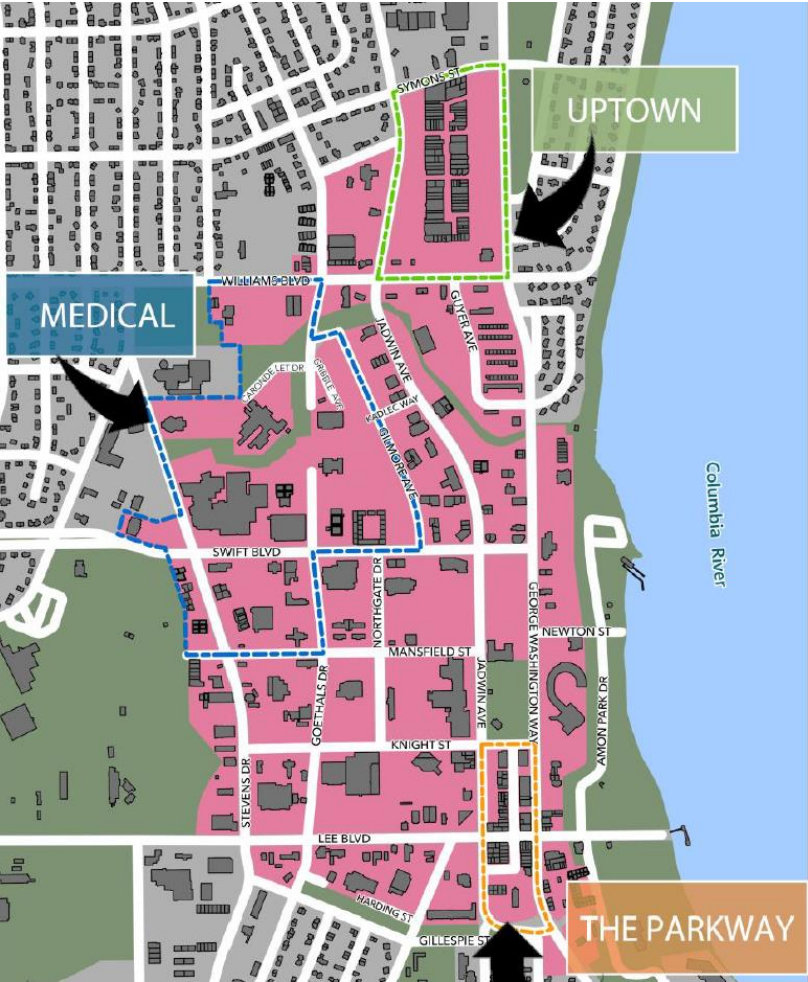
- Land Use Compatibility
 - Sets the stage for regulation through the zoning code
 - Mitigation requirements / performance standards
- Airport Zoning Overlay
- Infill development
- Lands for Public Purposes
- Circulation and Connectivity
- Urban Design
- Community Spaces (previously titled “the public realm”)
- Open Space
- Wildland Urban Interface

Part III: Neighborhoods and Districts

- Different parts of the city are described
 - Existing development / activities
 - Presenting key concepts for future development and growth
- *For example:* details are included about the proposed Downtown Loop project which will create a one-way loop to improve traffic flow in the Downtown and will provide active transportation amenities
- Sub-area plans



Part III: Neighborhoods and Districts



Part IV: Land Use Designations and the Land Use Map

NEW DESIGNATION: MANUFACTURED HOME PARK

- Intended to preserve affordable housing
- Limit redevelopment pressure
- Prevent displacement

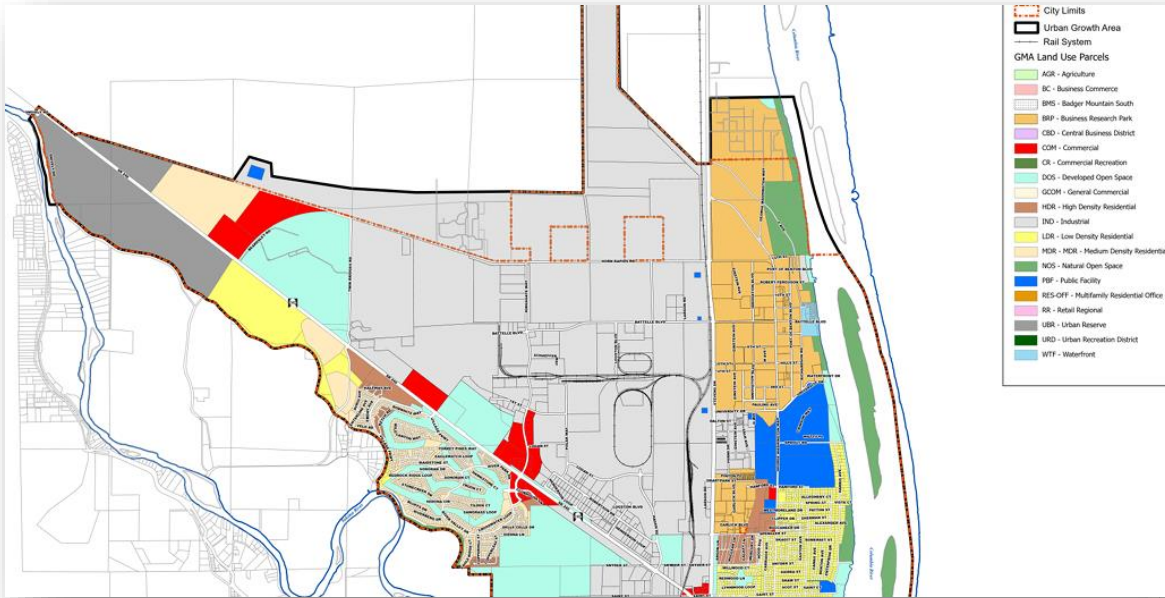
REMOVE: URBAN RESERVE

- Few lands have this designation
- Can be eliminated
- Use the other Land Use Designations instead

REMOVE: AGRICULTURE

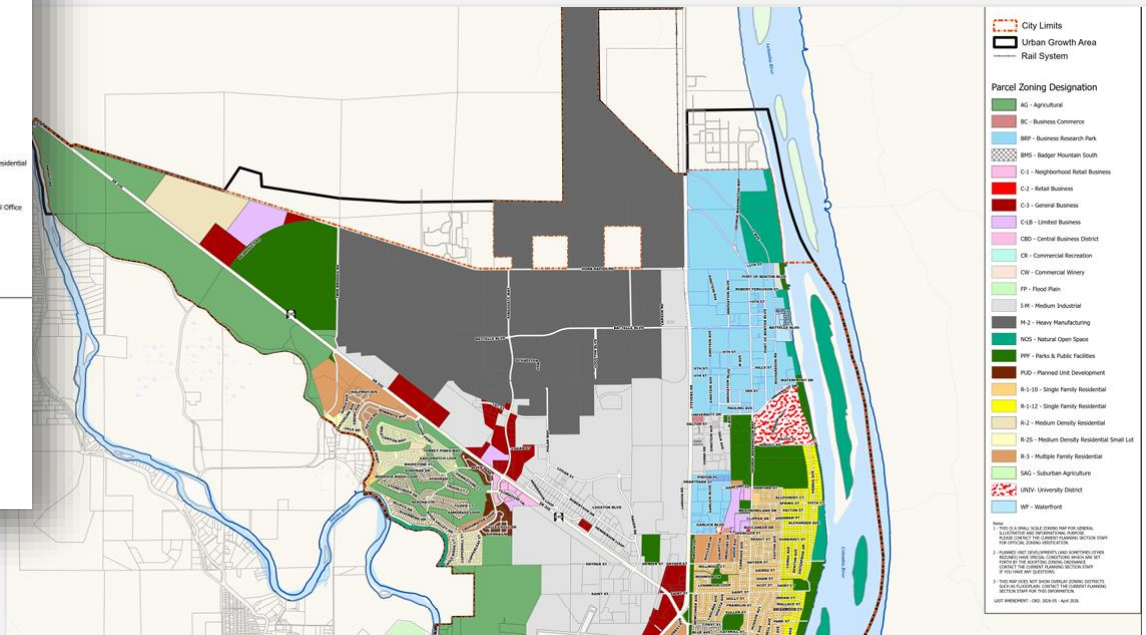
- Also remove the AG and SAG districts
- Introduce a new zoning district: Residential – Limited Ag

LAND USE MAP VS ZONING MAP



LAND USE MAP

- * Policy Document
- * Fewer Categories
- * Changes are done through Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update or Amendment processes



ZONING MAP

- * Regulatory Document
- * Many Zoning Districts / May include Overlays
- * Changes are done in relation to a Comprehensive Plan change (legislative) or from an application, known as a Site-Specific rezone (quasi-judicial)

Thank you!



PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date: 9/9/2026

Agenda Category: Communication

Prepared By: Jennifer Ballard, Senior Planner

Subject

GMA Conversations for Policymakers resource

Department/Office

Document Type

Development Services

Planning Commission Item

Summary

The Association of Washington Cities created a video series, GMA Conversations for Policymakers, prior to the 2015-2018 comprehensive plan updates across the state. This 12-video series covers government roles and responsibilities, budget, economic development, implementation, and community engagement and are titled as follows:

- Why your comp plan matters
- GMA and budget decisions
- GMA and economic development
- Form based code: Is it a good fit?
- How do council, staff and commission work together
- Your GMA choices: What's mandatory, what's optional?
- Strategies to implement your comprehensive plan
- Minimizing legal risks 1: Takings and due process
- Minimizing legal risks 2: Sunshine and fishbowls
- GMA, SEPA and the environmental landscape
- Public engagement
- Impact fees made easier

Though the videos themselves are dated, the concepts discussed are not. Staff believes that this video series is a useful tool for the Planning Commission (PC) in preparation for the PC's review of the completed drafts of the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations and public hearing held a public hearing anticipated to occur in October 2026.

GMA Conversations for Policymakers can be accessed via the Association for Washington Cities Data & Resources webpage at <https://wacities.org/data-resources/gma-comp-plan-conversation-starters>.

Attachments



**PLANNING COMMISSION WORKSHOP AGENDA ITEM STAFF
REPORT**

Meeting Date: 9/9/2026 Agenda Category: Communication
Prepared By: Jennifer Ballard, Senior Planner

Subject
Upcoming Meetings in September

Department/Office	Document Type
Development Services	Planning Commission Item

Summary
Staff would like to review the public meetings regarding the Comprehensive Plan Update that are occurring in September 2026.

September 21: Economic Development Committee (EDC) Meeting
Topic: Economic Development Element
When/Where: 4pm, City Council Chambers at Richland City Hall, 625 Swift Blvd
If Planning Commissioners attend to hear the discussion by the EDC, as the EDC meetings are not broadcast, you will have to have three or less you to avoid a quorum.

September 23: Planning Commission Regular Meeting
Topic: Economic Development Element

September 24: Planning Commission Special Meeting
Topic: RMC Title 23 - Zoning and SEPA exemption threshold changes
When/Where: 6pm, City Council Chambers at Richland City Hall, 625 Swift Blvd

Attachments