Planning Commission Workshop Agenda

August 3, 2026 at 6:30 PM

City Hall Council Chambers - 210 W. 6th Ave - Virtual

The City of Kennewick broadcasts meetings on the City's website and Zoom. You can watch the broadcast or register to participate via Zoom on the Planning Commissions webpage at www.go2kennewick.com/PlanningCommission.

The public can also submit comments by either filling out an online form at www.go2kennewick.com/PCPublicComment, via e-mail to cedinfo@ci.kennewick.wa.us, or submitting written comments to Kennewick Planning Commission, P.O. Box 6108, Kennewick, WA 99336. Comments must be received no later than 4:00 p.m. on the day before the meeting.

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1. **CALL TO ORDER**
   Roll Call/Pledge of Allegiance
2. **NEW BUSINESS**
   a. 2026 Comprehensive Plan
3. **REPORTS, COMMENTS, OR DISCUSSION OF COMMISSIONERS AND STAFF**
4. **ADJOURNMENT**



Kennewick Comprehensive Plan
Planning Commission Briefing

August 3, 2026

Agenda

- Comprehensive Plan project status
- Public engagement to-date
- Element-by-element overview
- Housing Action Plan and proposed zoning updates
- Next steps

Project Team

Planning Staff
Anthony Muai
Matt Halitsky

MAKERS
architecture · planning · urban design
Prime & Project Management
Land Use and Housing Policy
Public Engagement

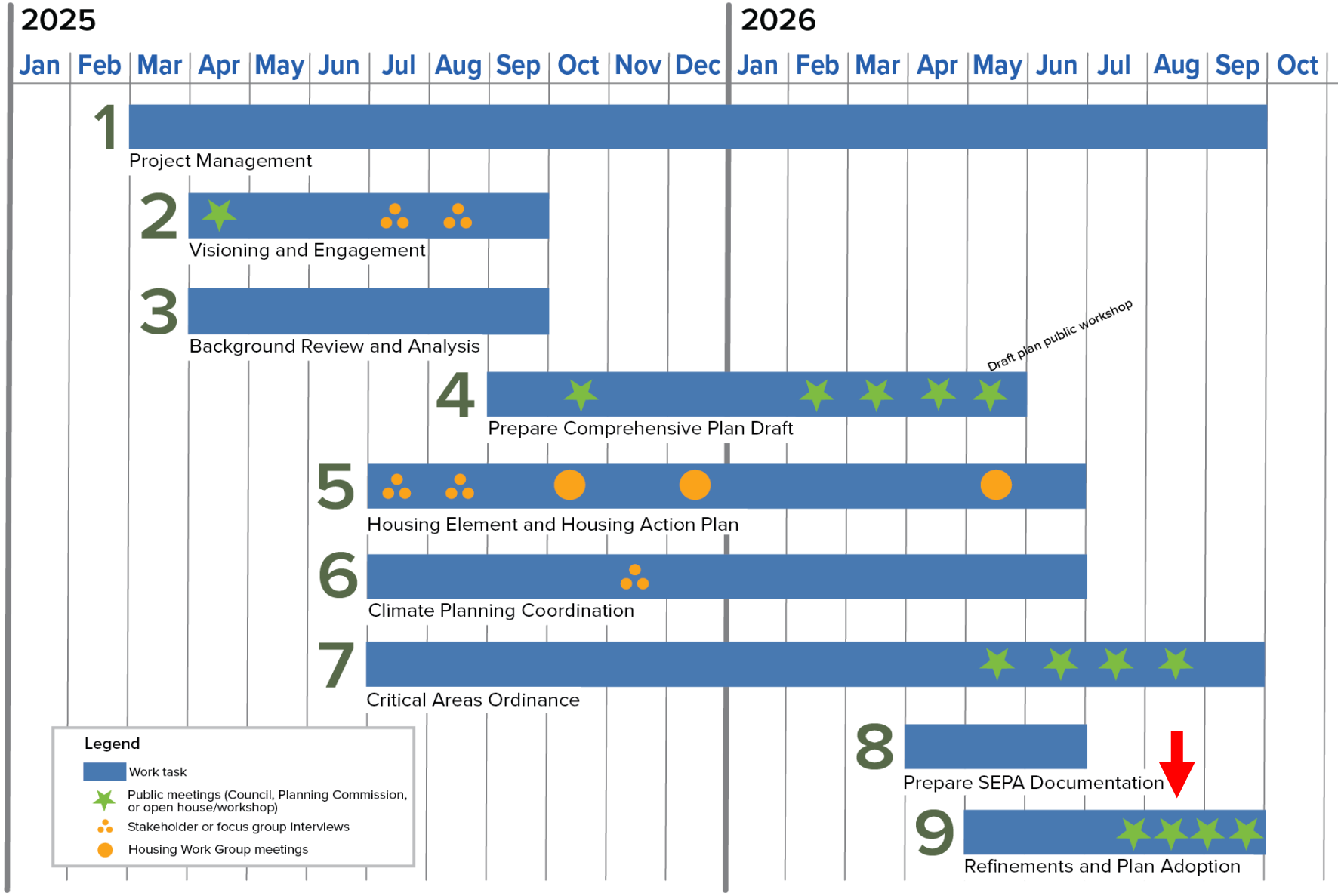
BERK
Land Use and Housing Analyses
Economic Development
Capital Facilities

Parametrix
Utilities
Critical Areas

transpogroup
Transportation

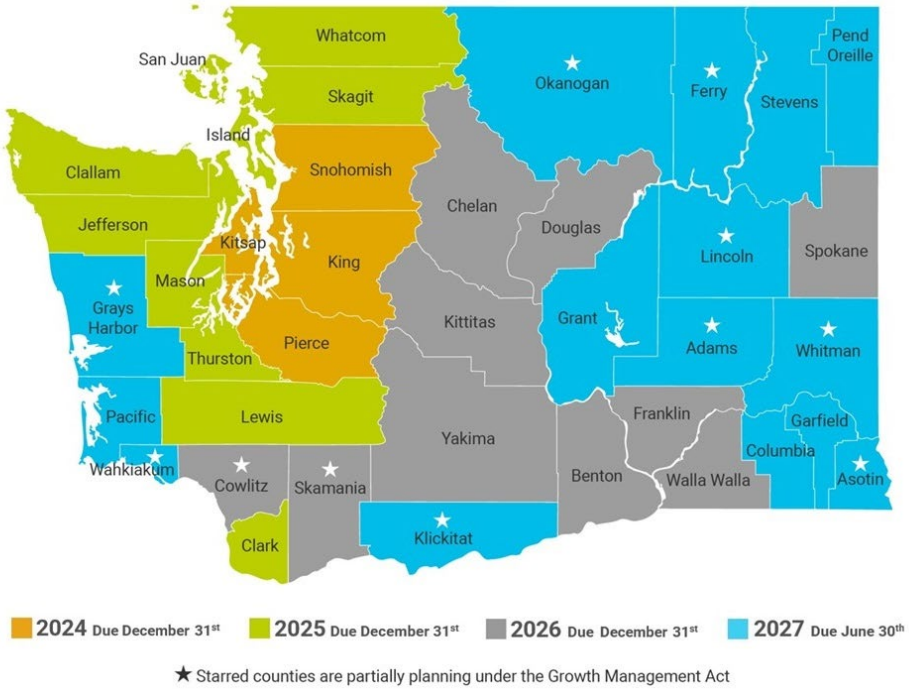
CASCADIA CONSULTING GROUP
Climate

Project Schedule



Planning in Washington State

- The Growth Management Act (GMA) of 1990 provides minimum requirements for what plans must address
- The Legislature has been amending the GMA annually, with a recent emphasis on housing supply and community resiliency
- The state Office of Financial Management (OFM) develops county-level population projections that must be accommodated in land use and infrastructure policies
- To remain useful for decision-making, plans are regularly updated to reflect changing conditions



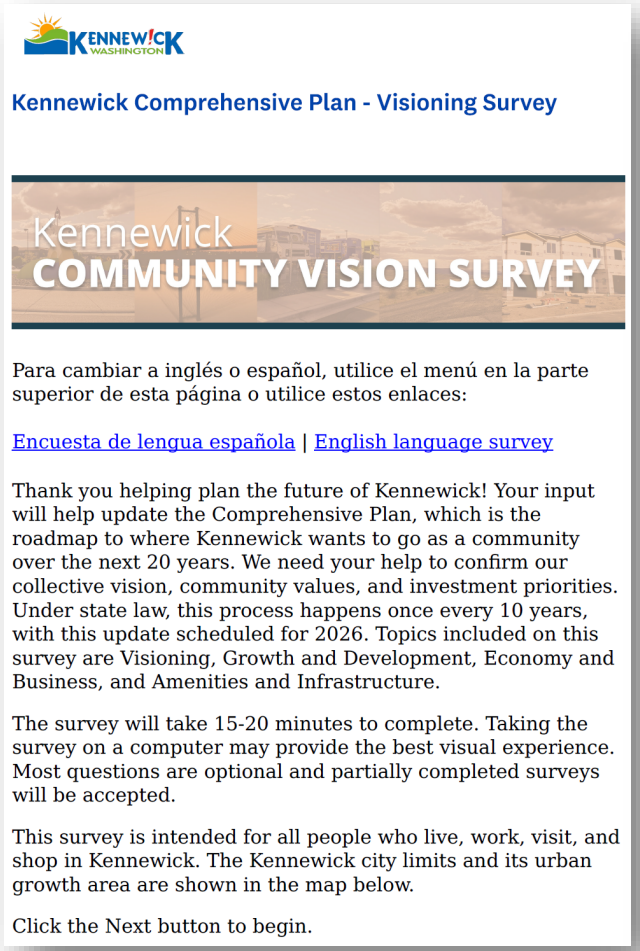
Kennewick Growth Projections

	2020	2026[3]	2046 Projection[4]	2020-2046 Change
Population	83,921[1]	89,220	108,989	+25,068 increase
Housing Units	32,242[1]	34,889	44,868	+12,626 increase
Jobs	46,920[2]	n/a	59,814	+12,894 increase

Notes and sources:

1. 2020 Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau, Tables P1 and H1
2. 2023 BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
3. April 1, 2026 estimates, Washington State Office of Financial Management
4. 2025 Kennewick Land Capacity Analysis, BERK Consulting

Public Engagement So Far



KENNEWICK WASHINGTON

Kennewick Comprehensive Plan - Visioning Survey

Kennewick
COMMUNITY VISION SURVEY

Para cambiar a inglés o español, utilice el menú en la parte superior de esta página o utilice estos enlaces:

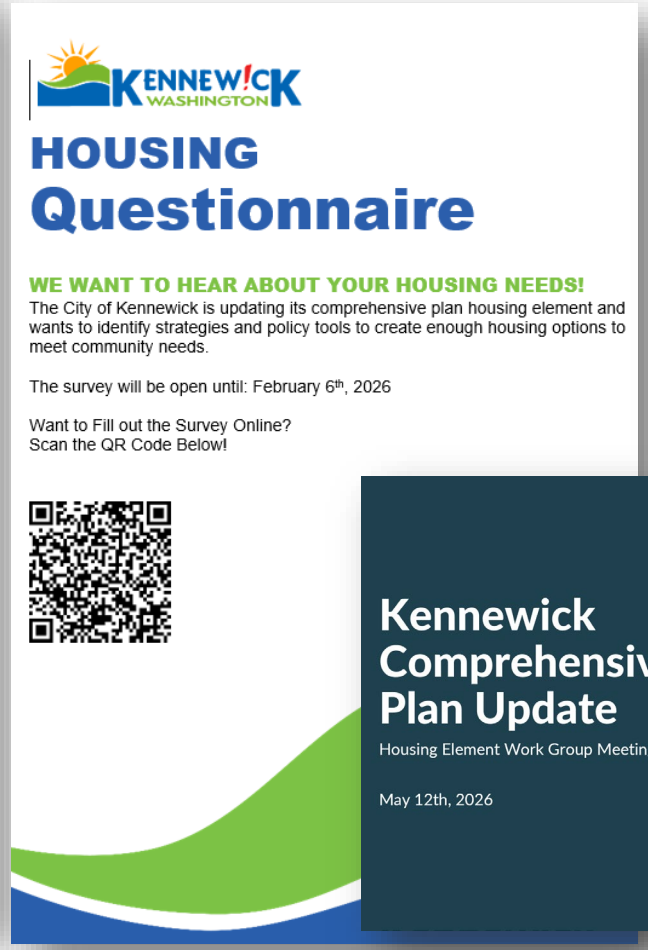
Encuesta de lengua española | English language survey

Thank you helping plan the future of Kennewick! Your input will help update the Comprehensive Plan, which is the roadmap to where Kennewick wants to go as a community over the next 20 years. We need your help to confirm our collective vision, community values, and investment priorities. Under state law, this process happens once every 10 years, with this update scheduled for 2026. Topics included on this survey are Visioning, Growth and Development, Economy and Business, and Amenities and Infrastructure.

The survey will take 15-20 minutes to complete. Taking the survey on a computer may provide the best visual experience. Most questions are optional and partially completed surveys will be accepted.

This survey is intended for all people who live, work, visit, and shop in Kennewick. The Kennewick city limits and its urban growth area are shown in the map below.

Click the Next button to begin.



KENNEWICK WASHINGTON

HOUSING
Questionnaire

WE WANT TO HEAR ABOUT YOUR HOUSING NEEDS!

The City of Kennewick is updating its comprehensive plan housing element and wants to identify strategies and policy tools to create enough housing options to meet community needs.

The survey will be open until: February 6th, 2026

Want to Fill out the Survey Online?
Scan the QR Code Below!



Stakeholder Organizations

A range of people provided a variety of perspectives on challenges and opportunities in Kennewick. Interviews occurred in July and August of 2025. Represented organizations include:

- Kennewick Fire Department
- Kennewick Police Department
- Kennewick Parks & Recreation Department
- Kennewick Community Development Block Program
- Kennewick City Council
- Kennewick School District
- Kennewick Irrigation District
- Ben Franklin Transit
- Benton County Human Services
- Benton Franklin Health District
- Kennewick Housing Authority
- Habitat for Humanity
- Port of Kennewick
- Visit Tri-Cities
- Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership
- Benton Public Utilities District
- Pacific Northwest National Laboratory
- Home Builders Association
- Tridec
- Stricker CRE
- Retter & Co.
- Kiemle Hagood
- Canyon Lakes Golf Course

Stakeholders were placed into six focus groups:

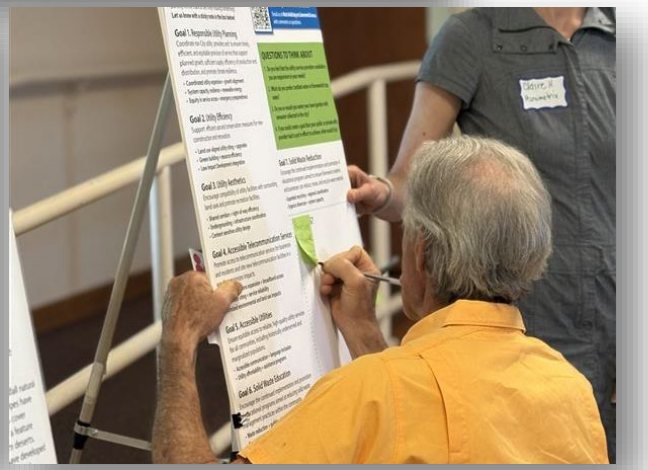
1. Urban Design & Development
2. Economic Development
3. Housing
4. Infrastructure
5. Public Health & Safety
6. Recreation



Kennewick Comprehensive Plan Update

Housing Element Work Group Meeting #3

May 12th, 2026



Plus 6 progress updates with Planning Commission and City Council since October 2025

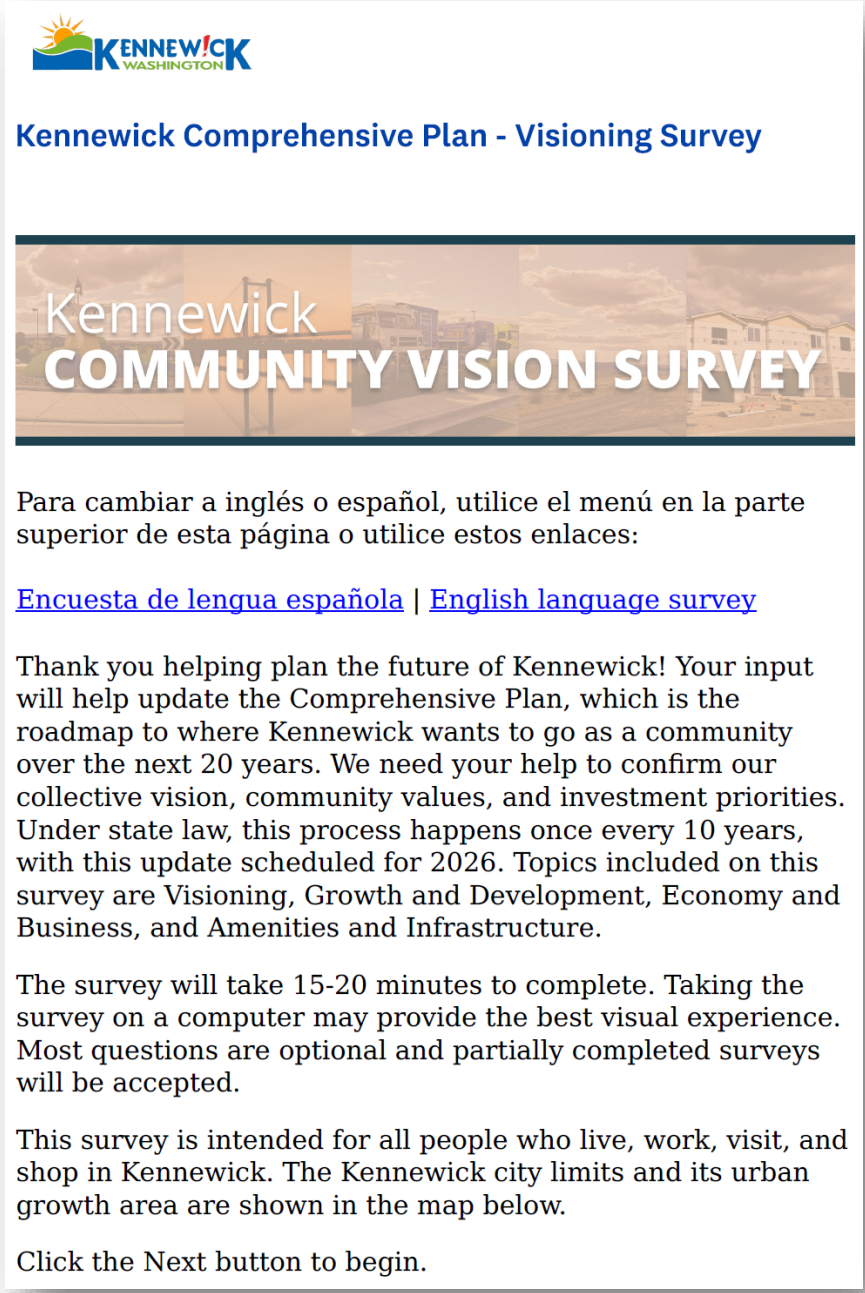
2025 Visioning Survey

Online Survey

- Open June to September (12 weeks)
- 802 entries recorded
- Distributed widely by City via newsletters and project website, and shared with stakeholder organizations

Survey outcomes

- Community loves about Kennewick, hopes for tomorrow, and concerns for today
- Helped guide plan drafting efforts to meet community development goals
- Supported revision of the City's Vision Statement



KENNEWICK WASHINGTON

Kennewick Comprehensive Plan - Visioning Survey

Kennewick
COMMUNITY VISION SURVEY

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Click the Next button to begin.

Stakeholder Organizations Interviews

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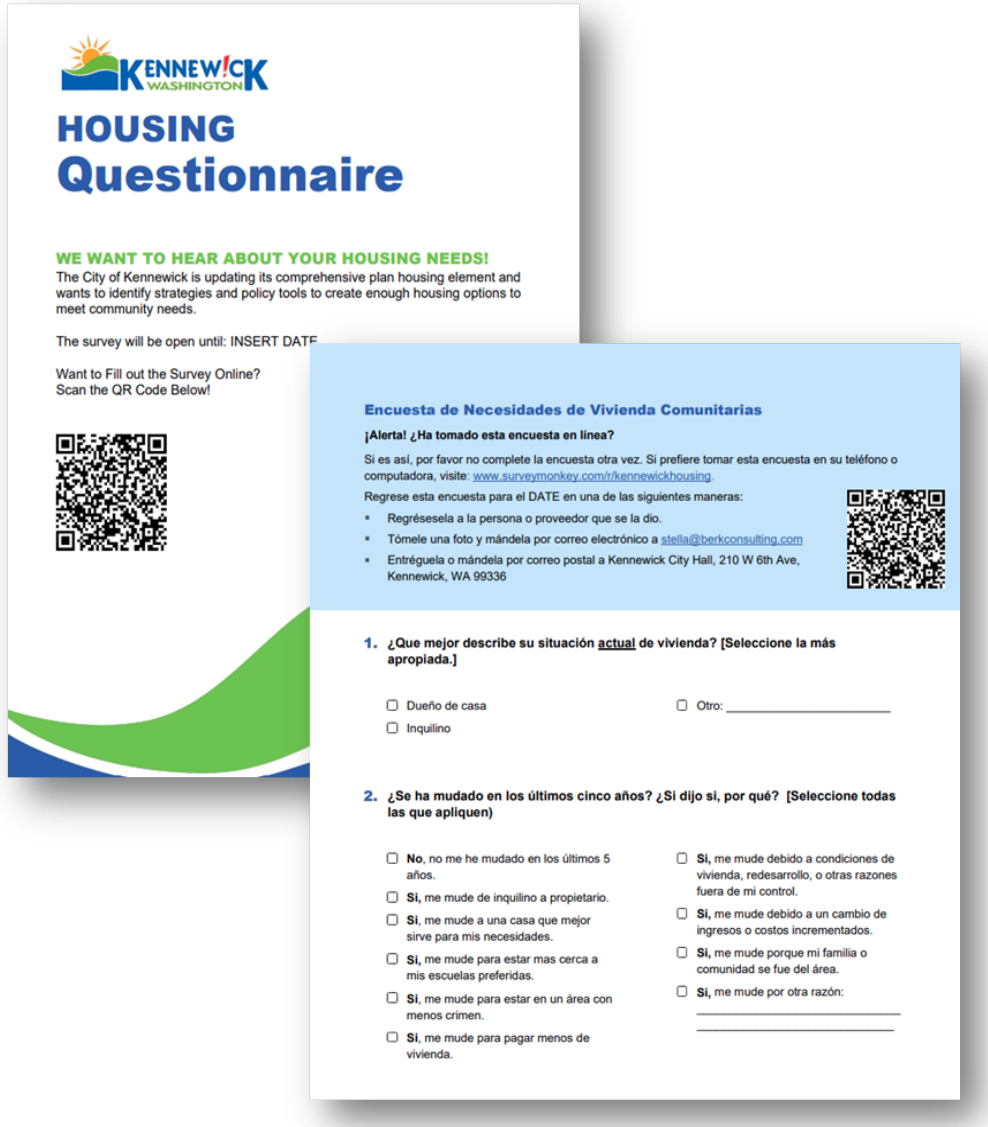
Kennewick Fire Department
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Kennewick City Council
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Ben Franklin Transit
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Canyon Lakes Golf Course

Stakeholders were placed into six focus groups:

1. Urban Design & Development
2. Economic Development
3. Housing
4. Infrastructure
5. Public Health & Safety
6. Recreation

2026 Housing Questionnaire

- Online and paper format
- Open December 1, 2025, through February 6, 2026 (10 weeks)
- Targeted to better understand the needs of renters and lower-income households
- Distributed by City via partnerships with community-based organizations
- 60 respondents
  - 40% homeowners
  - 60% renters or populations experiencing homelessness or living with family or friends



Housing Work Group

Met three times between October 2025 and May 2026

Objectives:

- Help identify housing barriers
- Provide input on strategies and policies to address impacts and begin to undo racially disparate impacts in housing
- Ensure the Housing Element reflects Kennewick's unique context and needs
- Provide feedback on Housing Action Plan

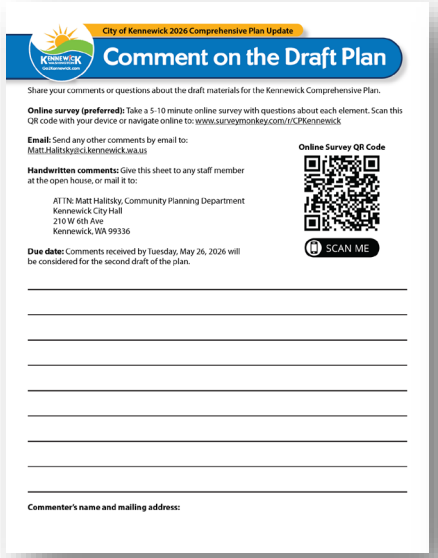
Member Organizations
Benton County Human Services
Benton Franklin Community Action Committee
City of Kennewick Community Development Dept
City of Kennewick Council
City of Kennewick Housing Authority
City of Kennewick Planning Commission (2)
City of Kennewick Planning Dept
Columbia Basin Veterans Center
Domestic Violence Services
Elijah Family Homes
Habitat for Humanity: Tri-County Partners
Home Builders Association
Numerica Credit Union
Seasons Housing
Senior Life Resources
Snipes H3
Tru-City Association of Realtors

Draft Plan Open House

- May 7, 2026 at Highlands Grange in Kennewick
- Around 20 community members, staff, or consultants in attendance
- Feedback was gathered in a few ways, including:



Comment cards


City of Kennewick 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update

Comment on the Draft Plan

Share your comments or questions about the draft materials for the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan.

Online survey (preferred): Take a 5-10 minute online survey with questions about each element. Scan this QR code with your device or navigate online to: www.surveymonkey.com/r/CPKennewick

Email: Send any other comments by email to: Matt.Halitsky@ci.kennewick.wa.us

Handwritten comments: Give this sheet to any staff member at the open house, or mail it to:

ATTN: Matt Halitsky, Community Planning Department
Kennewick City Hall
210 W 6th Ave
Kennewick, WA 99336

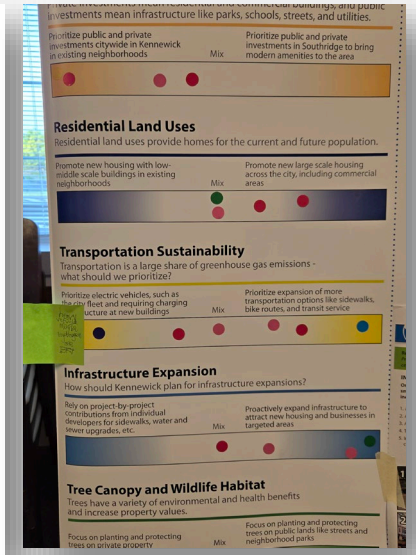
Due date: Comments received by Tuesday, May 26, 2026 will be considered for the second draft of the plan.

Online Survey QR Code

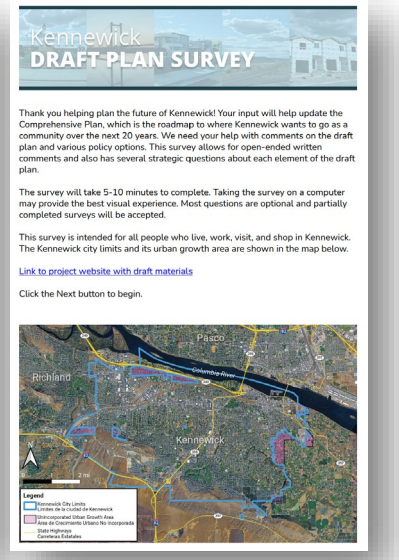
SCAN ME

Commenter's name and mailing address:

Poster engagement



Online survey


Kennewick
DRAFT PLAN SURVEY

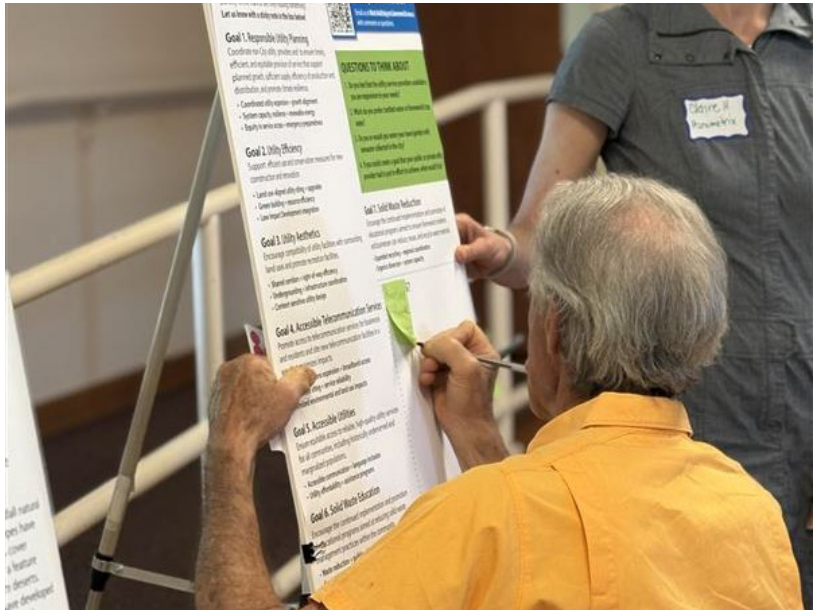
Thank you helping plan the future of Kennewick! Your input will help update the Comprehensive Plan, which is the roadmap to where Kennewick wants to go as a community over the next 20 years. We need your help with comments on the draft plan and various policy options. This survey allows for open-ended written comments and also has several strategic questions about each element of the draft plan.

The survey will take 5-10 minutes to complete. Taking the survey on a computer may provide the best visual experience. Most questions are optional and partially completed surveys will be accepted.

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Link to project website with draft materials

Click the Next button to begin.



Plan Elements



Land Use

Housing



Economic Development *



Climate (NEW)



Utilities & Public Services



Capital Facilities



Transportation

* Optional element that Kennewick has adopted

Plan Organization

Volume I – Elements *142 pages*

- Introduction and vision statement
- Summary of key background information for each element
- Primary maps
- Goals and policies for each element

Volume II – Appendices *536 pages*

- Extensive background information
- Detailed land and infrastructure inventories
- State-required reports and analyses

Land Use Element

- Establishes a framework for growth by aligning the Future Land Use Map, zoning, and infrastructure planning to support a variety of development types across the city
- Ensures adequate land supply for housing and jobs
- Supports housing diversity across all neighborhoods
- Policies to retain and strengthen commercial and industrial areas, and promote centers like Downtown
- The element also integrates environmental protection, climate resilience, parks, and open space access
- Policies for efficient governance

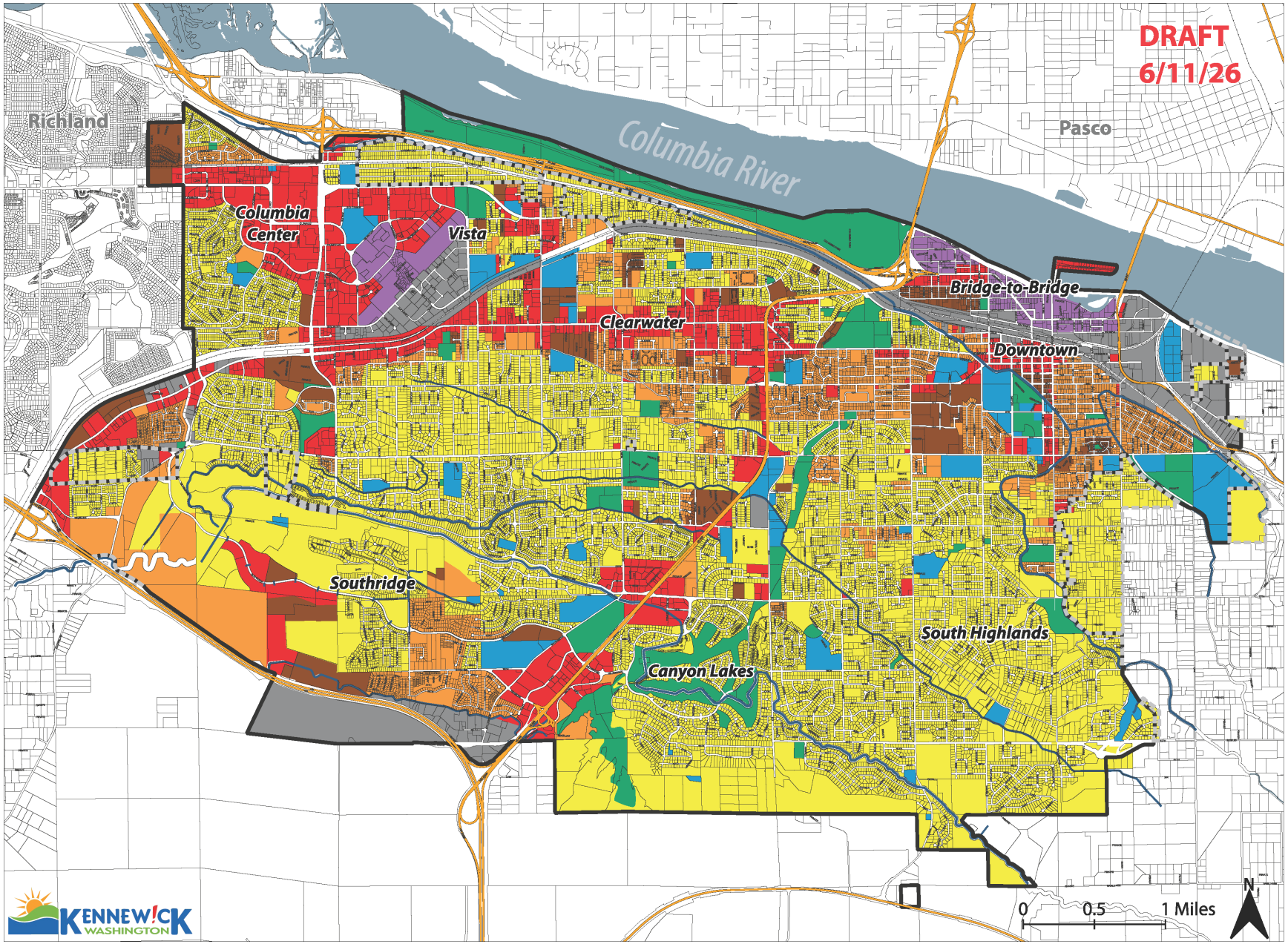


Check out this element for:

- Population and job growth projections
- Future land use map and policies
- Neighborhood/subarea planning
- Industrial lands and commercial districts
- Parks planning policies
- Property rights and administration

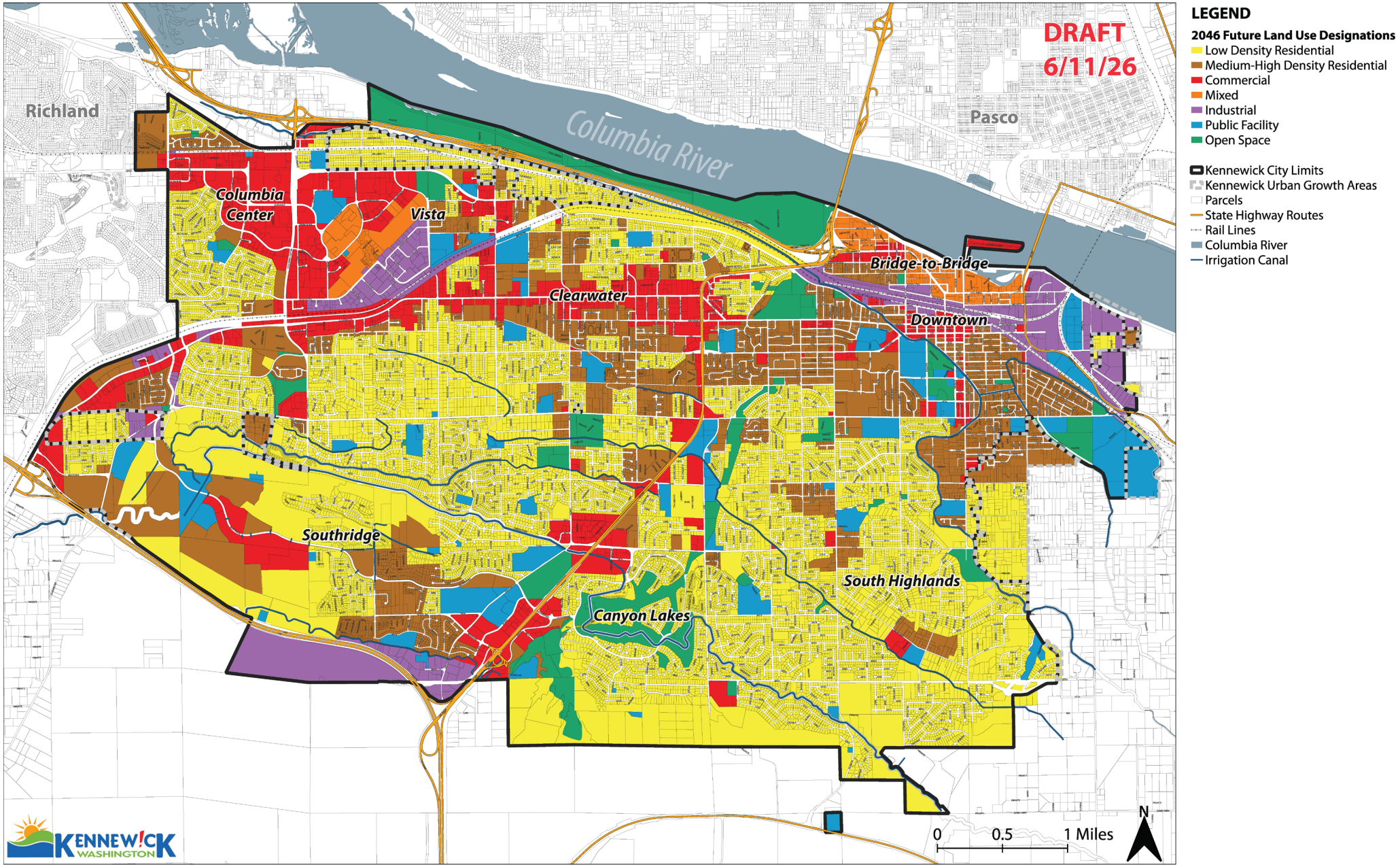
Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

Existing map



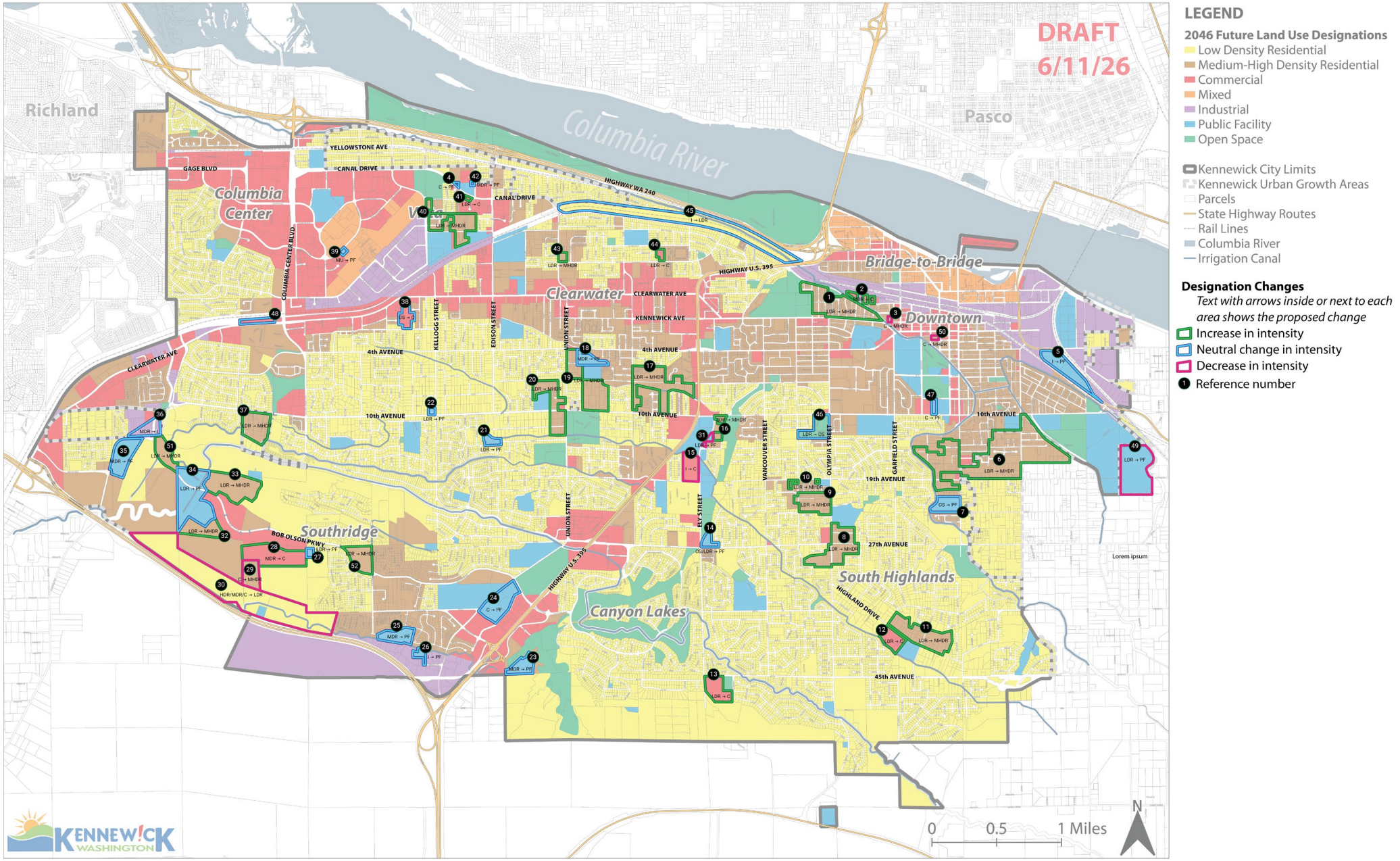
Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

Draft proposed map



Future Land Use Map (FLUM)

Changes between existing and proposed map



Southridge

- New policy promotes a distinctive neighborhood mixed-use center centered on Bob Olson Parkway
- New policies also promote grocery stores, parks, community centers, and other important features accessible to residential neighborhoods
- Plan includes a case study of a neighborhood center from Scottsdale, AZ



Vacant land in Southridge today





Example neighborhood center in Scottsdale, AZ

Critical Areas Ordinance

- Minor updates made to incorporate “best available science” for protecting and managing critical areas
- Added clarifications for mitigation sequencing in land use development
- Modified rating systems for streams and wetlands, and regulations for buffers
- Public draft to be shared in upcoming public hearing

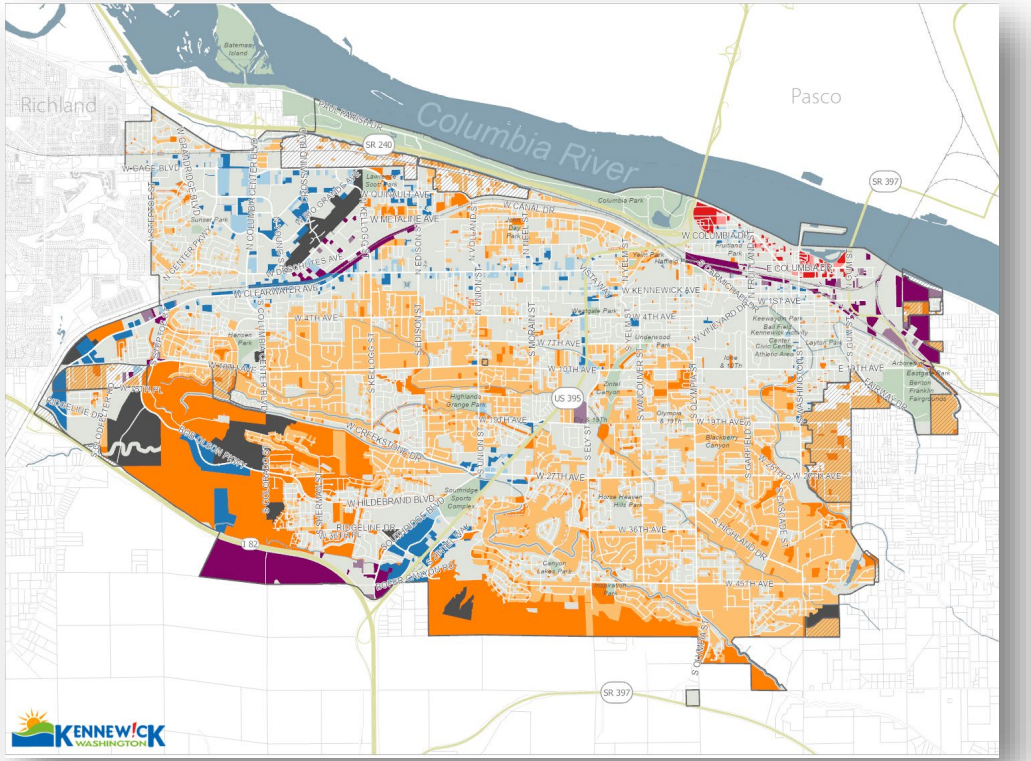


“Critical areas” in Washington state include:

a) Wetlands (permanent or seasonal)
b) Critical aquifer recharging areas (permeable soils that drain to ground water sources)
c) Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (including shrub steppe landscapes)
d) Frequently flooded areas
e) Geologically hazardous areas (steep slopes)

Land Capacity Analysis (LCA)

- **Sufficient UGA land capacity** to accommodate projected 2046 growth
- Overall housing capacity is adequate, but **affordability gaps remain**, especially below 80% AMI
- Proposed code updates significantly **expand multifamily and middle housing** capacity
- Added capacity comes from **expanded zoning, higher densities, and ADUs**
- Analysis shows a UGA surplus of approximately **1,456 buildable acres** after constraints



Housing Element

- Establishes a comprehensive strategy to increase housing supply, diversity, and affordability
- Policies for minimizing regulatory barriers
- Prioritizes affordable housing production, preservation, and anti-displacement measures
- Promotes equitable access to housing including for seniors and people with special needs
- Supported by the **Housing Action Plan,** which includes more detailed actions and recommendations



Check out this element for:

- Data on existing conditions of housing stock and city population
- Data on future housing needs
- Review of current and potential affordable housing tools
- Policies on housing supply, variety, and affordability

Kennewick 20-Year Housing Needs

Housing Need (% of AMI)	Zone Categories	2020–2046 Target	Aggregated Target	Capacity with Current Zoning	Surplus or (Deficit)	Units Requiring Subsidies / Incentives
0-30% PSH	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, ADUs	1,597	6,889	4,422	(2,467)	1,597
0-30% Non-PSH		1,007				1,007
>30 to ≤50%		2,513				2,513
>50 to ≤80%		1,772				0
>80 to ≤100%	Moderate Density	974	2,078	7,914	5,836	0
>100 to ≤120%		1,104				0
>120%	Low Density	3,659	3,659	13,206	9,547	0
Total		**12,626**	**12,626**	**25,542**	**12,916**	**5,117**

AMI = Area median income
PSH = Permanent supportive housing
ADU = Accessory dwelling unit

Multifamily Housing Supply

Much of Kennewick is built-out – so where can 2,467 extra multifamily homes (apartments) be located?

- Key opportunities are the remaining vacant land, rural-size lots, and underutilized commercial land
- The recent “middle housing” update increases choices, but established single-family neighborhoods are likely to see only limited incremental infill development over the next 20 years
- Land supply and market construction alone does not guarantee affordability – additional programs and funding are likely to be needed





Proposed Zoning Code Updates

Concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan in 2026:

- **Allow multifamily use in the Commercial Auto Row and Business Park zones** (RCW 36.70A.816)
- **Do not require mixed-use** in commercial zones with height limits lower than 85 feet (RCW 36.70A.816) or for co-living housing (RCW 36.70A.535)
- **Remove maximum density limits** in Medium- and High-Density Residential zones (let the market and other zoning tools control building size)
- **Reduce or remove parking requirements** (RCW 35A.21.445)
- **Clarify regulations and reduce code barriers for emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing** (RCW 36.70A.845)

Housing Action Plan (HAP)

High priority strategies for 2027 and beyond:

- Add height limit bonus in multifamily zones, potentially aligned with a Multifamily Tax Exemption for affordable housing or other incentive
- Raise environmental review (SEPA) thresholds for multifamily and middle housing development
- Tenant protections ordinance: Consider longer rent increase notice time, move-in and late fee caps, and rent increase bans when habitability repairs are needed.
- Staff capacity: Build staff capacity to help implement the Housing Action Plan
- Impact fee waivers: Implement impact fee waivers or reductions for income-restricted units to encourage the creation of affordable units.
- Proportional impact fees: Adjusts the parks and Southridge fire impact fee structure to comply with 2023 State legislative changes regarding proportional impact fees for residential development. Due by June 30, 2027.
- Affordable Housing Sales Tax: Adopt a sales tax of up to 0.1% as described to support affordable housing.

Strategy
Regulatory Strategies
1.1 Expand the allowed uses
1.2 Adjust form and intensity standards
1.3 Adjust other standards
1.4 Streamline the permitting process
Programmatic Strategies
2.1 Anti-displacement strategies
2.2 Homelessness strategies
2.3 Support staffing needs
Citywide Planning Strategies
3.1 Five-year implementation progress report
3.2 Public land for affordable housing
Funding Strategies
4.1 Adopt a multifamily tax exemption program
4.2 Adjust development fees
4.3 Local bank funding
4.4 Taxation strategies
4.5 City funding
4.6 State advocacy

Economic Development



- This is the City's long-term strategy to continuously improve Kennewick's economic well-being and quality of life
- Provides policy direction for maintaining, expanding, and attracting economic activity across Kennewick
- Benefit residents through both local job opportunities and access to a wider variety of goods, services, and entertainment
- Promotes a thriving, stable, diversified, and resilient local economy

Check out this element for:

- Kennewick's economic profile with job types and wages
- Quality-of-life information
- Summary of the 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan
- A variety of new policies to support Kennewick's current needs

Climate *(new)*

Objectives of this element:

- Prepare Kennewick for current climate hazards such as extreme heat, drought, and wildfire and reduce the impacts of hazards
- Protect people, animals, and ecosystems from climate hazards
- Meet state requirements to integrate Climate Resilience and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emission Reduction sub-elements into the plan

Many of the goals and policies of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element have been incorporated into the Kennewick Climate Element



Check out this element for:

- Summary of current and future climate impacts in Kennewick
- An inventory of greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, transportation, and other sources
- Policies for reducing greenhouse gas emissions over the next 20 years
- Policies for adapting to ongoing or future changes in weather patterns

Transportation

- This element identifies improvement projects, programs, and policies to guide the transportation system
- The long-range evaluation assists the City and neighboring communities to do network planning as development and capital investment opportunities arise
- Policies for an integrated and multimodal transportation system, maintaining service levels, and minimizing environmental impacts

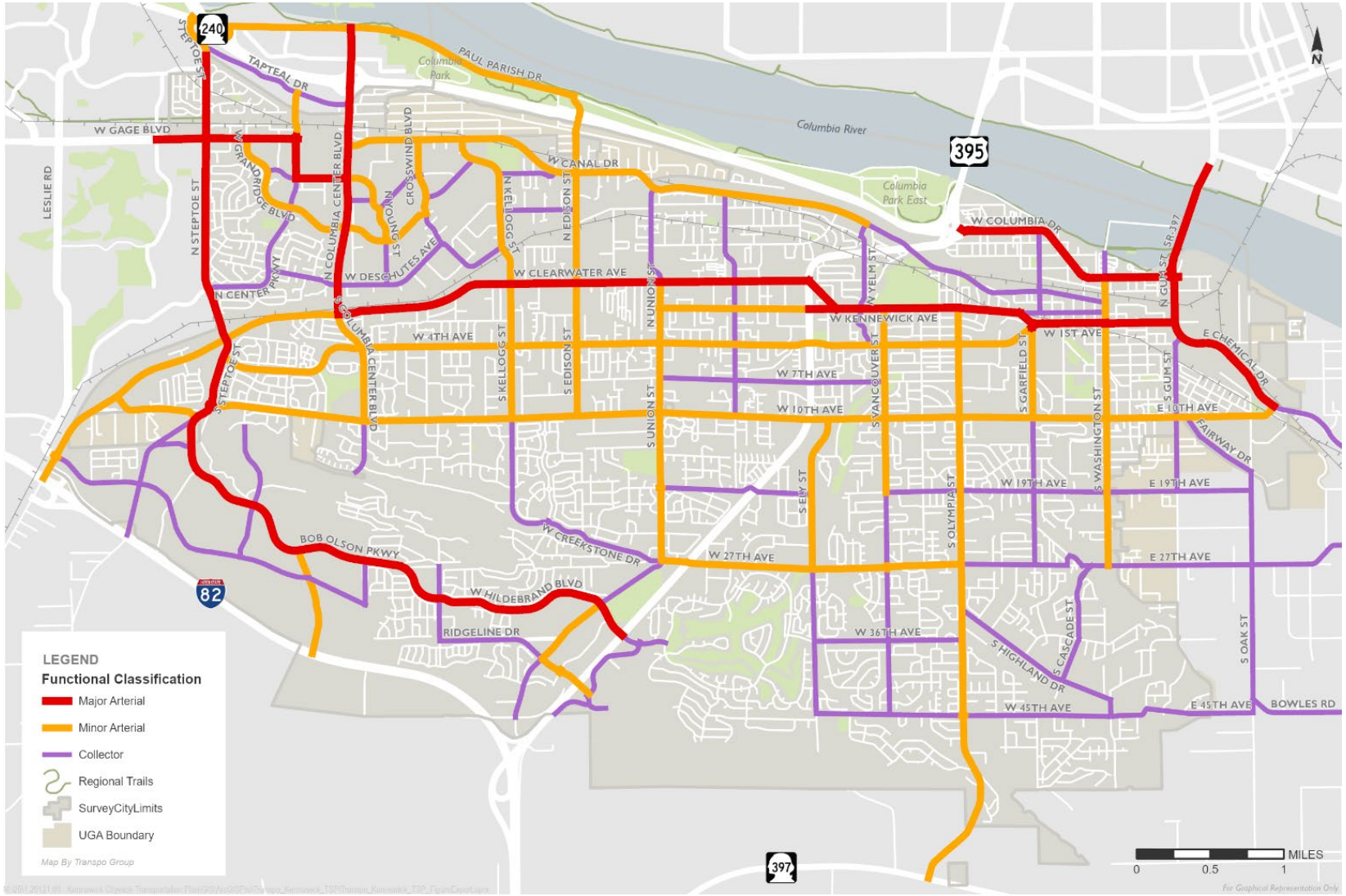


Check out this element for:

- Summary of the existing transportation systems in and around Kennewick and their future needs
- Maps of the transportation system for roads, bicycling, and pedestrians
- Maps and lists of future transportation projects
- Transportation level-of-service standards

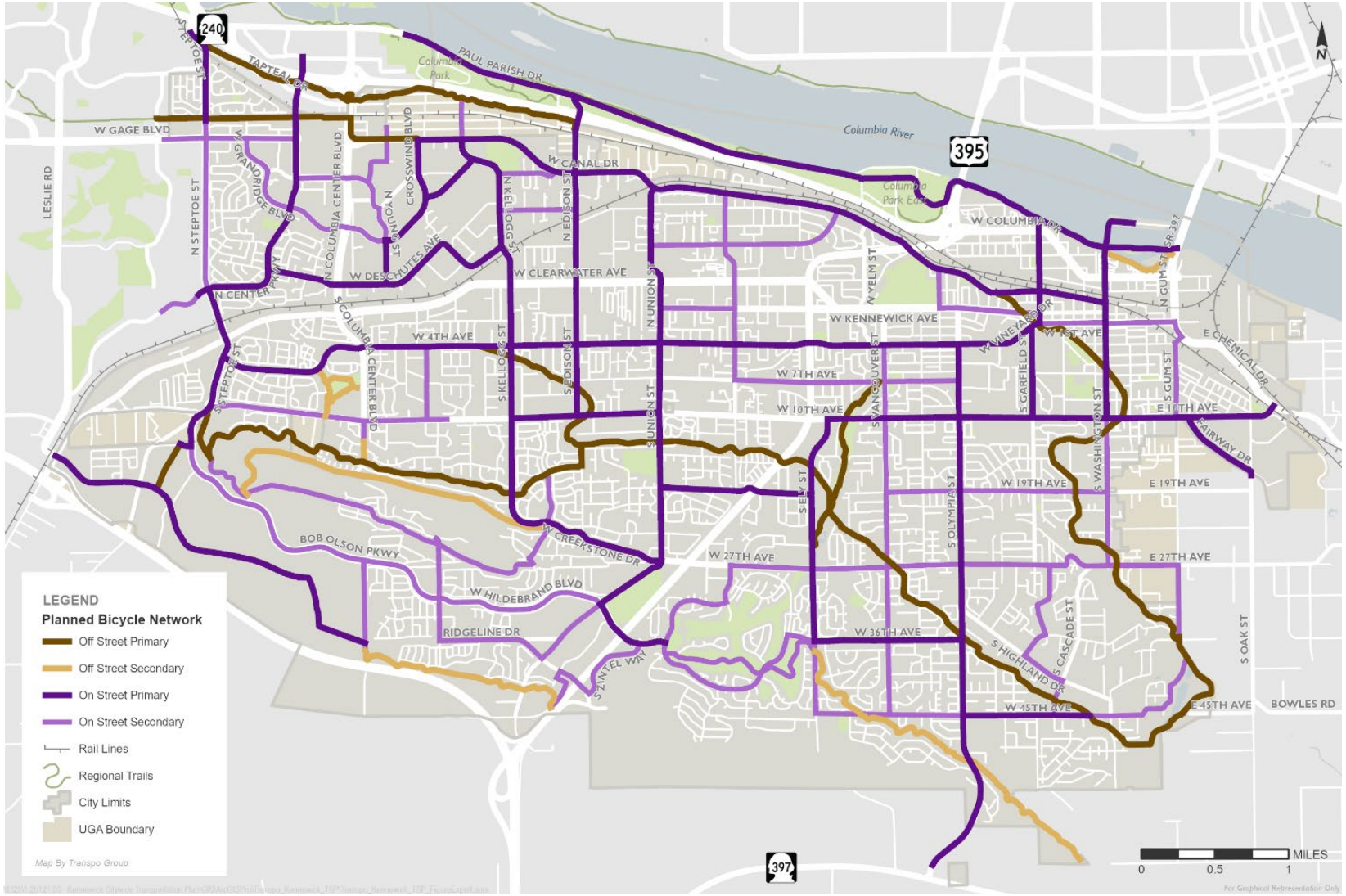
Transportation

Roadway Functional Classification



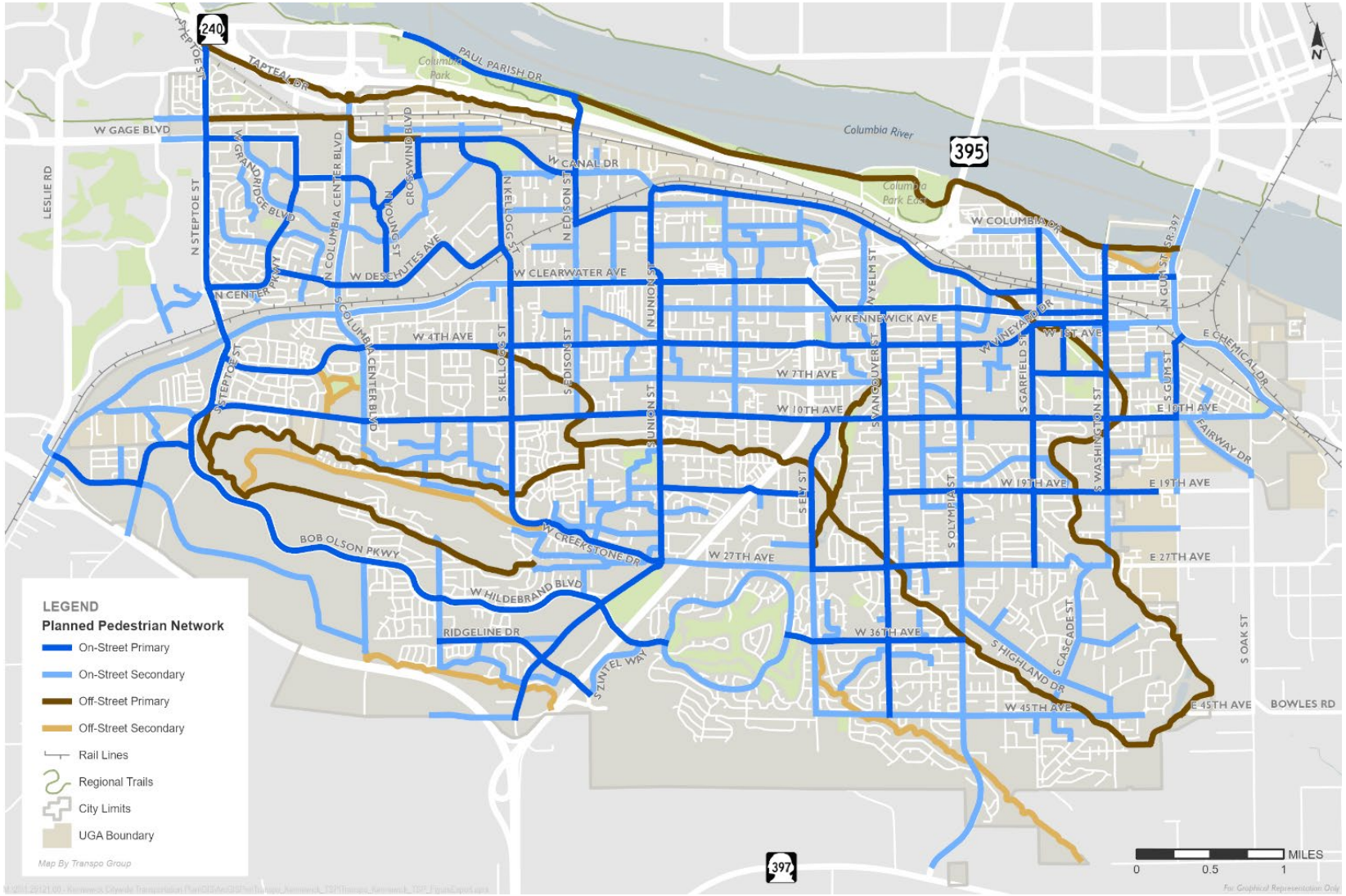
Transportation

Planned Bicycle Network



Transportation

Planned Pedestrian Network



Capital Facilities

- Addresses utilities owned by the City (water/irrigation, sewer, and stormwater), and facilities for parks and recreation, police, and fire. Also includes information for schools.
- Aligns infrastructure planning with land use so public facilities and services are delivered concurrently with growth
- Defines level of service standards
- Policies emphasize coordinated planning across agencies, and the integration of health, safety, and environmental considerations into capital investments



Check out this element for:

- Policies related to public safety services (fire, police, medical)
- Level-of-service standards for public infrastructure
- Policies for locations of new facilities and maintenance of existing facilities
- Information on how facilities are funded

Utilities Element

- Addresses utilities owned and operated by other public agencies and private companies, such as electricity, telecommunication, and natural gas
- Policies address responsible utility planning, cost-efficiency, aesthetics of utility infrastructure
- Special goals and policies on solid waste reduction



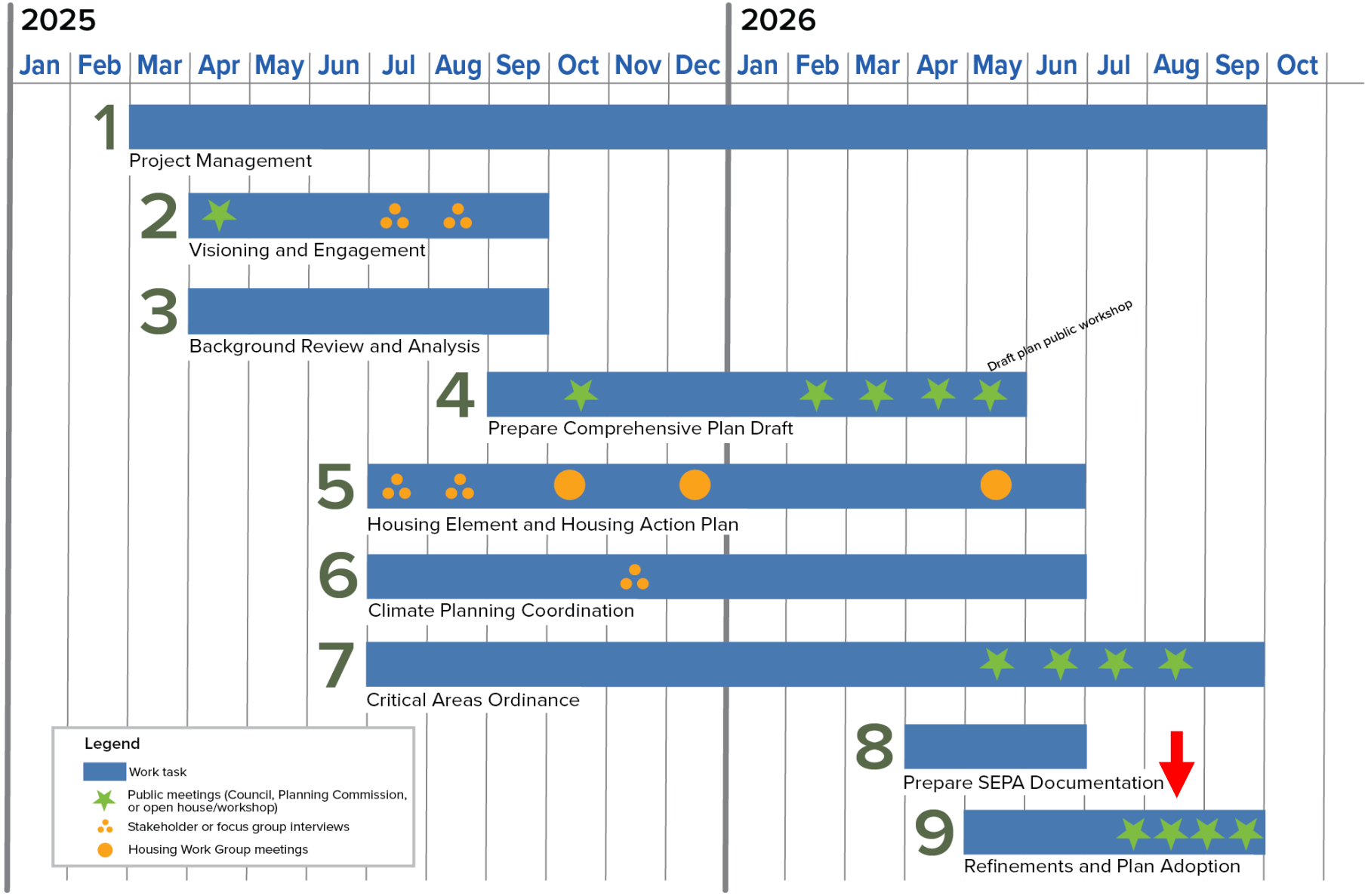
Check out this element for:

- List of non-City utility operators in Kennewick
- Maps of irrigation districts
- Inventories of current utility demand and future needs



Wrapping Up

Project Schedule



Next Steps

- ❑ Planning Commission public hearing on August 17
- ❑ City Council review and adoption by end of September

Thank You

Staff contact:

Matthew Halitsky, AICP
Senior Planner
(509) 585-4416
Matt.Halitsky@ci.kennewick.wa.us

Project website with draft:
https://www.go2kennewick.com/249/Comprehensive-Plan-Periodic-Update

City of Kennewick 2026-2046 Comprehensive Plan VOLUME I

THIRD DRAFT – July 17, 2026

This is a draft for public review of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan periodic update. The Plan is required by state law to be updated every ten years (due by December 31, 2026), and the plan's population and job growth targets cover a 20-year planning timeline through 2046.

Blue annotation boxes like these are temporary and provide more context and information about proposed changes.

More information please visit the project website: https://www.go2kennewick.com/249/Comprehensive-Plan-Periodic-Update

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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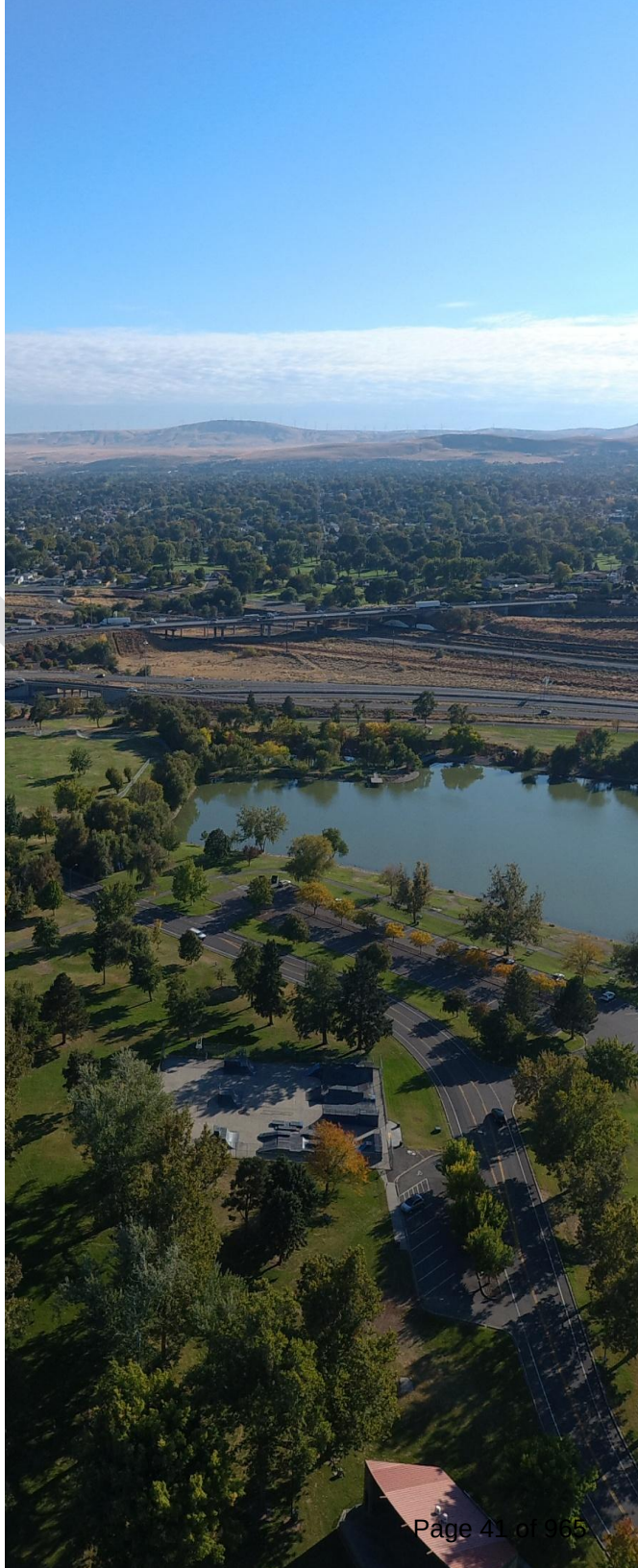


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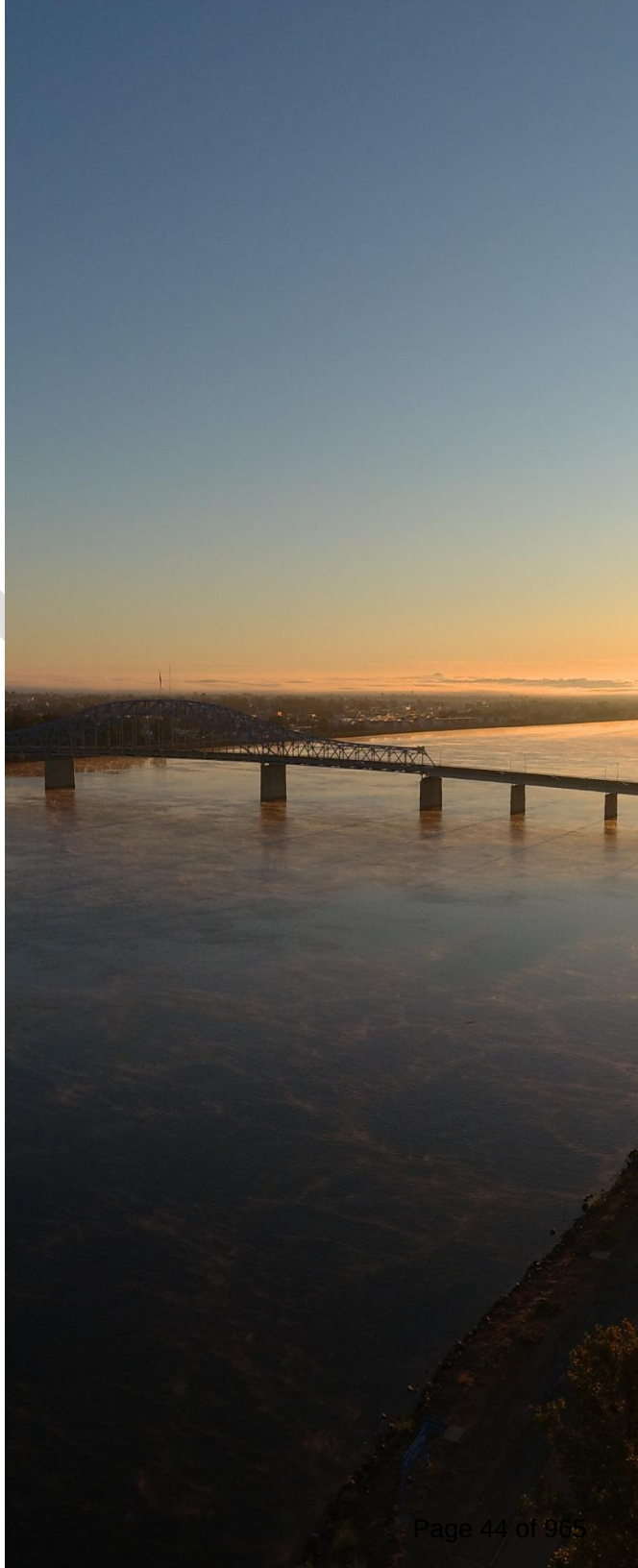
Introduction + Vision

VISION STATEMENT

Kennewick's vision statement briefly describes Kennewick's collective agreement of shared desires for the future. It is a compass that points the way to a common direction and values of the community. This was crafted with feedback from community members, City Council, the Planning Commission, and City staff.

The updated vision statement is developed from the 2025 Community Visioning Survey and feedback from the City Council and Planning Commission.

> In 2046 Kennewick is an attractive place to live and visit in a beautiful setting along the Columbia River and Horse Heaven Hills. Kennewick is the best place to do business and raise a family in the Tri-Cities thanks to its exceptional quality of life and resilient economy. The city provides a premier infrastructure system, quality public services, and great streets and public spaces that meet the needs of its diverse community. Neighborhoods have a mix of housing options, great schools, and are connected through trails, parks, and community centers. Downtown is the place to be and businesses citywide have the support they need to thrive and expand. The city embraces its arid climate with energy-efficient development and thoughtful water resource management.



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INTRODUCTION TO KENNEWICK

Physical Setting

Kennewick is situated in an area with notable views of the Horse Heaven Hills to the south, Rattle Snake Mountain to the west, the Columbia River to the north and the plains of the Columbia Basin and Blue Mountains to the east. These natural features define the region's physical and natural setting, along with the Yakima, Snake and Columbia Rivers, the agricultural industry, and the desert just outside Kennewick's boundaries. Kennewick's incorporated land area includes approximately 28.6 square miles (as of 2026).

Brief City History

Planning for the future requires a clear understanding of how Kennewick has grown and changed in the past.

The region is a desert split by three rivers, with a distinctive quality shaped by both its environmental conditions and a long history of human habitation and stewardship. Early Indigenous people have lived in and stewarded the Columbia Basin for millennia, with some of the earliest evidence of settlement dating to approximately 10,000 years B.C. These communities relied on the region's river systems and surrounding ecosystems for fishing, plant gathering, and other subsistence and seasonal resource-gathering activities.

Because of the area's climate, river access, and grazing resources, early Indigenous peoples gathered in the Kennewick area for seasonal winter encampment and as a site for the trading of goods and food. Their horse herds grazed on the surrounding hillsides, and fishing supported local economies and sustenance for communities in the region. Tribal land was ceded in 1855 at a meeting known as the Walla Walla Council, which resulted in the opening of the area to non-Native settlement and subsequent land changes.

In the early 1880's, the towns of Pasco and Kennewick were platted so that the Northern Pacific Railroad could construct the Snake and Columbia Rivers railroad bridge crossing. This enabled settlers and supporting irrigation companies and cooperatives to begin business. Kennewick was officially incorporated in 1904, and the 1910 Census recorded a population of 1,219 people. The adjacent Tri-Cities of Pasco and Richland were incorporated around 1891 and 1910.

In the early 1940's, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers selected the White Bluff and Hanford areas as home for the Manhattan Project. In a short time, Benton and Franklin Counties population boomed to nearly 70,000. Investments in industrial buildings, roadways, railroads, and electrical transmission lines formed a basis for the region's economy and continues to influence today's regional economy. Through the second half of the 20th century and into the 2020's Kennewick has continued to grow in population and experience growth in resident-serving retail, service, and healthcare sectors.

Population

Regional industries and service sector jobs have brought many to live in Kennewick, which is the most populous city in the Tri-Cities.

Since Kennewick remained primarily an agricultural area until the 1940's, population growth was steady and relatively slow, beginning from a small base. The 1940's brought significant growth associated with the influx of Hanford workers and their families. Kennewick population increased from approximately 1,900 in 1940 to 10,100 in 1950. Since then,

KENNEWICK'S NAME

The word Kennewick is believed to come from the Sahaptin language of tribal nations in central Washington, and means one or more of "grassy place, grassy slope, winter paradise, and winter haven."



Downtown Kennewick



Building Kennewick's railroads

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population growth has been uneven, often influenced by federal employment cycles and programs. Since 2000, Kennewick has grown at an average annual rate of approximately1.9 percent per year.

Kennewick, and the Tri Cities more broadly, have developed into a diverse community shaped in part by the original Hanford Project and the subsequent scientific and federal missions in the region.

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING

Summary

The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan guides future growth, character, and development in the City of Kennewick for the 2026-2046 planning period.

A comprehensive plan provides a coordinated framework for long-range community planning. The Plan addresses the community values, activities, and functions, and preferences related to growth and the environment. It provides key context on existing and future challenges and provides tools and actions to achieve Kennewick's goals, and functions as the City's statement of how it will meet the future challenges.

The Comprehensive Plan provides long-range perspective to inform administrative staff, boards, commissions and Council, and seeks to integrate public policy issues affecting the community. Through the goals and policies, the plan guides physical, social, and economic forces that guide the community in a defined direction. The Plan supports effective and efficient use of public resources to meet community needs and expectations, shaping how the community lives, works, and plays.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to guide growth and change in Kennewick over the next 20 years. Over the life of the Plan, growth will occur more slowly or more rapidly at times, and could occur in different patterns and sequences than is anticipated. The Plan is an informed vision to anticipate future needs and positions Kennewick to support changing population and conditions.

An effective comprehensive plan must be flexible within a range of conditions and adjust as those conditions are monitored and evaluated, while maintaining focus towards broader goals. The Plan is also not static and must be updated regularly to reflect changing city and regional conditions to remain a useful planning and decision-making tool.



Vista Field area



Downtown Kennewick

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Washington State Planning Framework

The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan meets the goals and periodic update requirements of the 1990 Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), which provides the planning framework for counties, cities, and towns in the state. Benton County and all the cities and towns within it are required to "fully plan" under the GMA. Fully planning means adopting the required elements (land use, housing, transportation, capital facilities, utilities, and climate) and regulating development in critical areas (sensitive environmental areas like wetlands, flood zones, steep hillsides, and priority wildlife habitat).

This Plan replaces the 2017 Kennewick Comprehensive Plan (most recently amended in 2021).

In addition to the elements required to be included by the GMA, Kennewick has chosen to include an **Economic Development Element.**

Implementation

As a policy document, the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan provides a source of reference and guidance for future regulatory and administrative actions. The Plan itself, however, does not directly regulate property rights, land uses, or other activities. Implementation happens with the follow-through from the development of regulations, budgeting and investments, and updates to the plan.

How The Plan Works

The goals and policies are the heart of the plan. A goal is a direction-setter: It is an ideal future end, condition, or statement related to the public health, safety or general welfare towards which planning and implementation measures are directed. A goal is a general expression of community values and, therefore, is typically more abstract in nature.

A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a clear commitment of the local legislative body. A policy is based upon a comprehensive plan's goals and the analysis of the data. A policy is put into effect through implementation measures such as the zoning code, staff hiring, or project funding commitments.

There are a number of tools used to implement the Comprehensive Plan. The main methods are through development regulations, such as zoning and critical areas ordinances, and through capital improvement plans, such as sewer, water, parks and transportation. These tools constantly weigh the City's financial ability to support development against its obligations for supporting population growth and protecting the environment. It is the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies that the development regulations and capital improvement plans are based upon.

Budgeting and Investing

Kennewick's budgets and investments play a key part in converting Comprehensive Plan policies into reality. The development of capital facilities, operation of public services, and the use of public funds and land should be consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. This occurs most directly through the **Capital Facilities Element** and the associated Capital Improvements Plan and capital budget, which are updated annually to plan for modification and expansion of infrastructure like roads, utilities, and parks.

The Capital Improvement Program correlates funding sources to pay for needed improvements. This budgeting process encourages long-range decision-making. It is guided by policies adopted by City Council to ensure consistency between



Dancing Field by CJ Wrench (2013) located at a Southridge roundabout

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the Capital Improvement Program, the Comprehensive Plan, and the biennial budget process. The operating budget also plays a role with regard to staff resources needed to support all elements. Many policies of this Comprehensive Plan support specific research or programs that require sufficient staff capacity, support for writing grant applications, or funding for outside professional services.

Comprehensive Plan Amendments

A comprehensive plan is a dynamic, living document requiring constant evaluation and revisions. Amendments to the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan are necessary from time to time to respond to changing conditions and needs of the community. Under GMA requirements, comprehensive plan amendments can be considered annually (except in certain special circumstances), and multiple amendments must be considered concurrently so that the cumulative effect of various proposals can be determined. Proposed amendments will be evaluated for intent and consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, and whether there has been a change in conditions or circumstances from initial adoption or new information is present, which was not available at the time of the initial adoption. The general public is invited to participate. City staff and the Planning Commission reviews proposed amendments to the Plan, takes public input, and forwards recommendations to the City Council.

In all instances, comprehensive plan amendments will be analyzed in relation to overall coordination with other applicable city programs and efforts, and overall benefits to the city and/or region at large. In all instances, comprehensive plan amendments will be evaluated for consistency with other applicable City programs and initiatives, as well as their overall benefit to the City and the broader region. Amendments will be transmitted to the Benton County Planning Department for review concurrently with the notice of application, and comments will be accepted through the public hearing process. Notice will also be provided to the Washington State Department of Commerce in accordance with state requirements.

Comprehensive Plan Periodic Updates

Starting with the next cycle, the Growth Management Act requires that Comprehensive Plans be reviewed and updated as necessary, at least every ten years, outside of the optional annual review process (RCW 36.70A.130). Consistent with Benton County's update schedule, this plan will undergo a major periodic update in 2036 and at least every ten years thereafter.

The Growth Management Act also requires an implementation progress report five years after each periodic update deadline. For Kennewick the first such report will be due in 2031.



9-11-01 memorial, located at the Southridge Sports & Events Complex

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PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A range of community engagement activities were conducted during the visioning process and development of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan. Community feedback on general priorities and specific components greatly improved the plan. Summary presentations and posters are on the plan website. Key community engagement activities were:

- Citywide Visioning Survey. This was conducted over the summer of 2025 and just over 800 responses were collected online. This asked broad questions about what people love, hope for, and are concerned for about the future of Kennewick and specific topical questions related to each element of the plan. One section collected over 300 "housing stories" about people's history, successes, or challenges with living in Kennewick. This survey was distributed by City staff through newsletters, and direct messages to stakeholder organizations.
- Housing Questionnaire. This was a supplemental survey in winter 2025-2026 that collected 60 responses online and on paper. It was targeted towards renters, people experiencing homelessness, and low-income households, all who can be more difficult to reach than the general population (this was achieved with 60 percent of respondents matching the target audience). The survey provided more detailed insight on housing challenges, cost of living, and desired neighborhood qualities. This survey was distributed by City staff in direct collaboration with community-based organizations that provide housing or social services.
- Stakeholder Interviews. These were one-on-one or focus group meetings with staff at public agencies or individuals representing different types of private interests. Major elements represented include urban design and development, economic development, housing, infrastructure, public health and safety, and recreation. The interviews were done early in the project to help the project team understand Kennewick's historic and future planning issues and lend expert perspective to the results of the Visioning Survey.
- Housing Work Group. This included three meetings of group of residents, developers, and community representatives that provided input on housing analyses, barriers and opportunities, and policy recommendations throughout the comprehensive plan process.
- Draft Plan Public Workshop. After the first full draft was published, this workshop in May 2026 provided information on the key updates to the plan and invited public feedback on each element.
- Planning Commission Meetings. Approximately X meetings between April 2024 and September 2026.
- City Council Meetings. Approximately X meetings between April 2024 and September 2026.



First Draft Open House

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CLIMATE POLICY GUIDING GOAL & CONNECTIONS

Goal **Climate Change.** Reduce greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation) and ameliorate the effects of climate change (adaptation) in order to foster the community's environmental, economic, and social resilience in the face of shifting conditions, such as sea level rise, more extreme weather events, and human response to climate change

Policy Mitigation. Participate with state, regional and local partners to reduce greenhouse gas emissions consistent with the 1990 benchmark and future year targets set forth in state law. Educate the public about climate change and incentivize activities that reduce greenhouse gas emissions

Policy Adaptation. Minimize or ameliorate the impacts of climate change on our community and its ecosystems through climate-informed policies, programs, and regulations.

Policy Implementation. Create goals and policies that increase community resilience to climate change by evaluating the implications of climate change on all elements areas and developing actions that incorporate those realities in order to achieve long term outcomes. Goals and policies should result in regulations and work plans for application. In all areas of local government oversight, by requiring the evaluation of the implication of climate change in all local decisions.

Climate change has the potential to affect all elements in this plan. Goals and policies with a link to the **Climate Element** are marked by this symbol:

1990 BENCHMARK

The 1990 benchmark is set in RCW 70A.45.020 as 95.5 million metric tons of greenhouse gasses per year. It establishes these targets for Washington State to reduce human-caused emissions:

- By 2030, reduce emission by 45% below 1990 levels
- By 2050, reduce emissions to 75% below 1990 levels
- The latest WA Department of Ecology inventory shows the state is not on track to meet these targets, with 96.1 million tons of emissions in 2022

More information at https://ecology.wa.gov/air-climate/reducing-greenhouse-gas-emissions/tracking-greenhouse-gases/ghg-inventories

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Land Use

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the Land Use Element is amended and reorganized. Most of the existing conditions data and qualitative information about Kennewick land use is moved into the Land Use Appendix. The introduction here provides a summary of some information but also focuses on legal requirements under state law.

The **Land Use Element** of the Comprehensive Plan sets policy for the general distribution of the diverse land uses within Kennewick and its urban growth area. The accompanying Future Land Use Map shows the existing and proposed land areas for residential, commercial, industrial, open space, and public facility use. It establishes policy regarding how land may be developed and used by people for a variety of activities and covers a variety of specific topics like community design, residential neighborhoods, parks and open space, critical areas, shorelines, property rights, and permitting.

Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities to show how they will be able to accommodate 20 years of growth through sufficient buildable land that is zoned appropriately.

Under the GMA – specifically RCW 36.70A.070(1) – the **Land Use Element** is required to:

- Designate the proposed distribution and general location of the uses of land, where appropriate, for agriculture, timber production, housing, commerce, industry, recreation, open spaces and green spaces, urban and community forests within the urban growth area, general aviation airports, public utilities, public facilities, and other land uses.
- List population densities, building intensities, and estimates of future population growth.
- Utilize urban planning approaches that promote:
    - Greater physical activity of residents, such as by walking and bicycling and having access to parks and nature.
    - Reducing the amount of driving that individuals need to do for their daily travel within the city.
    - Environmental justice, including efforts to avoid creating or worsening environmental health disparities.
- Consider goals and policies that achieve these environmental outcomes:
    - Protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies.
    - Mitigate and cleanse stormwater that discharges to waters of the state.



- Reduced risk of wildfire to life and property.

In addition to the incorporated city limits, Kennewick has several areas of unincorporated "urban growth areas" (UGA) that are in the jurisdiction of Benton County. These are areas currently beyond the City boundaries but within defined geographical areas in which the City is expected to grow. Services will need to be planned for these areas at an acceptable level and in a financially responsible manner.

The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is the document used to prioritize the needs of the City for infrastructure and other capital needs, both within the City and beyond. The City must walk a delicate line between the financial ability to provide services at an urban density level and providing an appropriate supply of land uses for new development. The desired result is to provide a greater market choice in lands for development while allowing for the maximum accountability for public funds needed to provide for existing and planned urban areas.

BRIDGE-TO-BRIDGE
The 2010 Bridge-to-Bridge / River-to-Rail Revitalization Plan attempted to catalyze public and private investment in the area. Successful efforts included city partnership with the Port of Kennewick on development of the Columbia Gardens Artisan Village, partnerships to improve the streetscape, bus shelter, and artwork, and a City contribution to a pre-treatment facility to accommodate boutique wineries, craft brewers, and craft distilleries.

Existing Conditions Summary

This section provides a summary of existing conditions on Kennewick land use and its various neighborhoods and districts. For more details, see the **Land Use Appendix** with the data and analysis that provides a foundation for the Land Use goals and policies.

Development Patterns

Kennewick contains a wide range of land uses. Most land is developed, with 46 percent remaining vacant or undeveloped as of 2025 (**Land Use Appendix**). One of the oldest areas of Kennewick is Downtown, located in the northeast sector of the city. Downtown and some surrounding older neighborhoods have a grid of streets and alleys, and most of the city is characterized by residential subdivisions with large lots and disconnected streets. The city has a grid of arterial streets that connect residential and commercial areas. Highways and railroads provide regional transportation access and also create some notable boundaries. The city is also laced with miles of open-water irrigation canals that deliver water and collect stormwater runoff. Key land use conditions in Kennewick include:

- Downtown is the traditional focus of the city's commercial and cultural development, but in recent decades it has competed with outlying commercial areas for retail and office jobs. It is south of a freight rail line, and part of the district includes light industrial uses. Kennewick City Hall is located south of Downtown on the other side of a canal and public park.
- Bridge-to-Bridge is between the U.S. 395 and Benton-Franklin Intercounty Bridges and located north of the freight rail line across from Downtown and reaches the Columbia River waterfront. It is one of Kennewick's most eclectic districts with a wide mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. The area is adjacent to Clover Island and other economic development properties owned by the Port of Kennewick.
- Columbia Park is a unique 4.5 mile-long, 400-acre shoreline park along Kennewick's riverfront west of U.S. 395. It is the largest park in the city and contains a variety of recreation features.
- Entertainment District is the informal name for the area of northwest Kennewick containing a regional mall, the Toyota Center (used for hockey and concerts), and the City-owned convention center. The area has a variety of other retail shopping centers and office parks, and it has the city's largest concentration of hotels.

- Vista Field is a 103-acre Port of Kennewick property that aims to be a dense and mixed-use town center adjacent to the Entertainment District. Formerly a general aviation airport that closed in 2013, the site remains mostly vacant as of 2026. The Port's 2017 master plan anticipates about 1,100 dwelling units and 750,000 square feet of non-residential development.
- Southridge is a growing area of residential and commercial development on the south edge of the city, and contains the only significant remaining vacant land within the city limits. Substantial infrastructure investments have been made over the past 20 years, including the roadway and utility network, parks, and the relocation of the city's main hospital.
- Other commercial districts or corridors are limited to a few locations, including the W. Clearwater Avenue corridor in central Kennewick, Gage Boulevard in west Kennewick, and the intersections of U.S. 395 at W. 27th Avenue and W. 10th Avenue.

Residential neighborhoods throughout the rest of the city are generally low-density with predominantly single-household dwellings. There are several pockets of rural-size lots that are still using on-site septic systems, and only a handful of parcels remain in agricultural use. While the majority of existing housing is detached single-family residences, Kennewick also has an increasing number of attached middle housing and multifamily buildings. The city also has 20 mobile home parks. Kennewick's public schools are mostly located in these residential areas.

Industrial areas are concentrated in a few locations along railroads and highways. One is a cluster of industrial businesses transitioning from the north side of Downtown towards the northeast, including parts of Bridge-to-Bridge, and this area includes the city's public works yard and wastewater treatment plant. There is another industrial cluster on the east side of Vista Field, along with a small cluster along the S. Steptoe Street corridor. The newest industrial area is in Southridge north of I-82, and the City is actively seeking to expand this area south of I-82 by extending utilities to new development sites.

DOWNTOWN PLANNING

As of 2026, a Downtown Area-Wide Planning initiative is underway to improve redevelopment opportunities. Recently, Heritage University located Downtown and the City is working with them to strengthen relationships, partner on projects and initiatives where feasible to promote revitalization and redevelopment in and around the downtown core.

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Housing Needs, Employment Projections, and Land Capacity

Numbers use April 1, 2025 data from the Washington Office of Financial Management but may be updated for 2026.

As of 2025, Kennewick has 87,790 residents and ranks as the 14th largest city in Washington. It comprises 40 percent of Benton County's total population. The city's population size and role as a regional hub underscore the importance of ensuring adequate land capacity for future housing and employment needs.

Looking to the future, key information about 20-year population, housing, and jobs within the city limits of Kennewick is summarized in the table below. The projected growth of population and housing are agreed-upon by Benton County and the cities within, based on Washington State's 2022 Medium projection.

Figure 1. Projected Growth

	2020	2026	2046 Projection[4]	2020-2046 Change
Population	83,921[1]	89,220[3]	108,989	25,068 increase
Housing Units	32,242[1]	34,889[3]	44,868	12,626 increase
Jobs	46,920[2]	n/a	59,814	12,894 increase

Notes and sources:

1. 2020 Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau, Tables P1 and H1
2. 2023 BLS Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages
3. April 1, 2026 estimates, Washington State Office of Financial Management
4. 2025 Kennewick Land Capacity Analysis, BERK Consulting

Kennewick needs to plan for a projected increase of 25,068 new residents, 12,626 new housing units, and 12,894 new jobs by 2046. New statewide requirements for comprehensive plans (see RCW 36.70A.070(2)) require jurisdictions to plan for housing units based on the income level those units can serve. Under Kennewick's current zoning, there is a deficit in capacity of 2,467 units to serve the projected number of low-income households for this planning period, meaning zoning needs to allow more areas where low-rise and mid-rise apartment and condominium buildings can be developed (some accessory dwelling units may also be considered to serve low-income households). Zoning updates that implement the 2026 Comprehensive Plan and its Future Land Use Map will correct this deficiency by generally expanding capacity for all housing types and household incomes citywide.

See the Land Capacity Analysis in the Land Use Appendix for more information.



Clover Island boat storage

LAND USE GOALS & POLICIES

This first new goal and its policy reflect the general purpose of the Land Use Element, which is to shape Kennewick's future growth patterns and to implement this first through a system of mapping land use designations for different parts of the city. The policies are a mix of aspirational and also some best practices for administering the Land Use Element.

Goal LU-1 **Land Use Patterns.** Establish and manage a land use pattern consistent with the community's vision and provide for variety of land uses that further the policies of this Plan. Guide development in a manner that balances certainty with flexibility to adapt to future challenges and opportunities.

Policy LU-1.1 Promote opportunities for a balanced mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, public services, recreational, and open space uses through the Future Land Use Map adopted with the Comprehensive Plan.

Policy LU-1.2 Provide a reasonable supply of development capacity through the Future Land Use Map and zoning standards to create a variety of opportunities for residential development, housing choice, housing affordability, commercial enterprise, jobs-housing balance, and general redevelopment and infill.

Policy LU-1.3 Use the Future Land Use Map, land use goals and policies, and other elements of the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for zoning decisions and development regulation amendments.

Policy LU-1.4 Manage and maintain the City's Official Zoning Map to ensure continued consistency with the Future Land Use Map.

Policy LU-1.5 Defer to Benton County development regulations for zoning within the unincorporated UGA, and upon annexation zone the newly incorporated areas consistent with the Kennewick Future Land Use Map

Policy LU-1.6 Focus new multifamily and mixed-use development in areas with key amenities and services like public parks, schools, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, and transit service.

Policy LU-1.7 Promote transit-oriented development (compact, mixed-use development with densities of at least 30 units per acre) in walking distance of existing and planned high-frequency transit routes and major transit centers.

Policy LU-1.7 Protect and preserve public lands needed for public facilities and services like parks and recreation, public safety, transportation, utilities, education, and administration (including local, county, state, and federal facilities). Designate public land appropriately on the Future Land Use Map and periodically review the inventory of public land to identify deficiencies or surpluses over a 20-year planning period.

SUBAREA PLANS
A subarea plan is an optional element of a comprehensive plan that can be adopted at any time. It provides more specific information and goals/policies for a portion of a city, like a residential neighborhood or commercial district. Through targeted outreach to stakeholders and site-specific analysis, a subarea plan can help guide decisions on regulations, infrastructure investments, or intergovernmental partnerships that benefit the residents and businesses in the subarea.



Aerial view of a single-family neighborhood under development



Mixed-use apartment development

Policy LU-1.8 Encourage or require properties using on-site septic systems to connect to public sewer as warranted by population growth, development capacity, or proposed development projects (RCW 36.70A.110(11)). Do not discount development capacity on lots served by on-site septic systems.

Policy LU-1.9 Rezone agricultural lands within the urban growth area to allow for urban development.

Policy LU-1.10 Create and implement subarea plans for residential neighborhoods, commercial districts, and industrial areas that have the highest growth opportunities. Coordinate for planned infrastructure upgrades with public agency partners such as Ben Franklin Transit and Benton PUD, such as utilities expansion, park additions, streetscape improvements, or transit infrastructure and service. Potential locations for new subarea plans include but are not limited to:

A. Entertainment District (Columbia Mall and Convention Center vicinity)
B. Clearwater Avenue corridor
C. East/Southeast Kennewick

Policy LU-1.11 Adopt and maintain user-friendly development regulations that facilitate Kennewick's preferred land use pattern.

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

In Washington state, development regulations are the full set of rules and codes that govern how land may be altered and how buildings may be constructed. Key topics of development regulations include:

- Zoning (including what land uses are allowed and building size)
- Signs, landscaping, parking, design standards, and other provisions that support zoning
- Subdivisions (how land may be divided into new lots)
- Critical areas and shoreline management (environmental protection of natural features)
- State Environmental Policy Act procedures
- Development review processes and procedures

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Figure 2. Kennewick Future Land Use Map

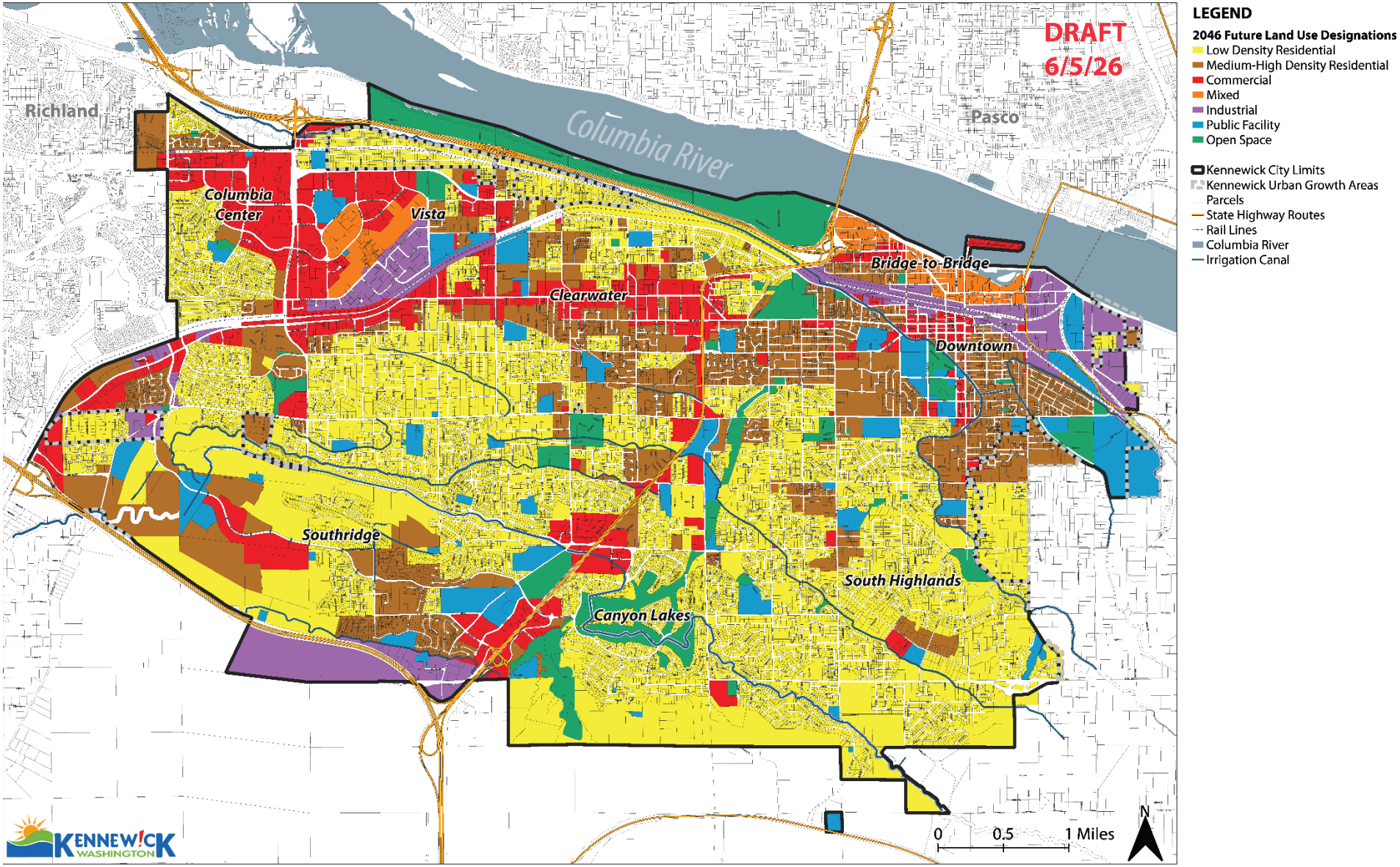


Figure 3. Kennewick Future Land Use Designations

Future Land Use Designation	Description	Zones
Low Density Residential	Purpose: This designation provides for low-density residential development on lands now characterized by single-family development, are constrained by sensitive areas, are distant from existing/planned commercial services, community facilities, public transit service, and/or provide a transition to rural areas. Expected uses and forms: A mixture of detached single-family residences and middle housing types. House-scaled neighborhood commercial uses are also permitted, provided they conform to special compatibility standards.	RS, RL, RTP
Medium-High Density Residential	Purpose: This designation provides for medium to high-density residential development on lands now characterized by multifamily development or within walking distance of existing/planned commercial services, community facilities, and public transit service. Expected uses and forms: All residential uses, including middle housing forms, walk-up/garden apartments, and low to mid-rise apartment buildings (multifamily uses are subject to site and building design standards). House-scaled commercial uses are also permitted, provided they conform to special compatibility standards.	RM, RH, HMU, RTP, RMH Note: RMH is planned to be consolidated with other zones with adoption of the comprehensive plan.
Commercial	Purpose: This designation provides for a variety of commercial and mixed-use districts that serve local and regional customers. These districts are centrally located along transportation and transit routes. Expected uses and forms: A wide variety of commercial, retail, professional office, residential, and mixed-use buildings (most development is subject to site and building design standards).	CN, CO, CBD, CC, CR, CG, CM, HMU, BP Note: Some commercial zones are planned to be consolidated with other zones with adoption of the comprehensive plan.
Mixed	Purpose: This designation provides for a variety of commercial and residential uses in districts with adopted subarea plans or master plans, including Bridge-to-Bridge and Vista Field. Expected uses and forms: A wide variety of commercial, retail, professional office, civic, residential, and mixed-use buildings (most development is subject to site and building design standards).	UMU

Future Land Use Designation	Description	Zones
Industrial	Purpose: This designation provides for a mix of industrial, service, and limited commercial uses that minimize unmitigated external visual, auditory, and physical impacts on adjacent properties and generally do not compete with uses in the Commercial designation. These districts are located on the periphery of the city and have access to highways or railroads. Expected uses and forms: Structures and sites that support industrial, light industrial, manufacturing, shipping, and research and development.	BP, IP, IL, IH Note: Some industrial zones are planned to be consolidated with other zones with adoption of the comprehensive plan.
Public Facility	Purpose: This designation provides for City-owned and non-City public facilities, including but not limited to administration, recreation, public safety, education, and utility buildings. Expected uses and forms: A wide variety of built public facilities.	PF, JF Note: JF is planned to be consolidated with other zones with adoption of the comprehensive plan.
Open Space	Purpose: This designation provides for public parks, golf courses, shorelines, ravines and canyons, and other open spaces that are restricted for development. Expected uses and forms: A wide variety of parks and open spaces.	OS, PF

DRAFT

This existing goal is retained, with some new policies to reinforce best practices in community design. In the 2025 visioning survey, nearly half of respondents were neutral or dissatisfied with the design and appearance of residential and commercial development in Kennewick in recent years. Top responses on the ways development could improve were trees/shade, sidewalk or trail connections, useable outdoor open spaces, adequate parking, and mix of housing types/sizes.

Goal LU-2 **Community Design.** Create an attractive, lively, pedestrian-friendly, and visually cohesive urban environment that reinforces Kennewick's unique identity.

Policy LU-2.1 Promote compact and connected development patterns in new and existing neighborhoods that encourage physical activity and a healthy community with housing and commercial uses located within walking/bicycling distance of each other.

Policy LU-2.2 Apply environmental and urban design principles to development projects to reduce impacts to Kennewick's scenic features and natural assets, including canyons, ridgelines, hilltops, waterfront, and view corridors that give the City its unique identity.

Policy LU-2.3 Update and administer objective design standards for commercial and multifamily development that emphasize these concepts:

A. Promote thoughtful pedestrian-oriented layout of buildings, parking, circulation, service, emergency access, and on-site amenity elements.
B. Integrate usable outdoor amenity space into new residential developments that is suitable for leisure or recreational activities.
C. Ensure that lighting contributes to the character of the streetscape and protects against light pollution. Encourage adequate lighting for nightlife in commercial districts.
D. Employ architectural elements that articulate large buildings into smaller identifiable pieces.
E. Place an emphasis on human-scaled design details that contribute to Kennewick's identity in Downtown and other pedestrian-oriented areas with storefronts.
F. Create welcoming and memorable community gateways and enhance mixed-use/business district identity.
G. Provide strategic, climate-appropriate landscaping standards that enhance the streetscape, mitigate the impacts of large parking areas, soften the appearance of buildings and screen visible blank walls, provide a visual buffer between residential and non-residential uses, and provide stormwater management benefits.

Policy LU-2.4 Leverage public projects as models of high-quality design through use of quality building materials, design character, and landscape materials.

Policy LU-2.5 Integrate public art into capital facilities, parks, streetscapes, and other public spaces. Promote other public art efforts through expanded programmatic support, education, and public-private partnerships.



On-site amenities, including a food truck, plaza, and community building a an apartment complex



Covered public seating in Kennewick



Call for public art submissions from students being advertised on public transit

Policy LU-2.6 Improve signage and wayfinding to strengthen community identity and support multi-modal transportation connectivity and accessibility.

Policy LU-2.7 Implement targeted street activation and urban design strategies, such as improved pedestrian amenities, active ground-floor uses, placemaking elements, and public realm enhancements, to catalyze reinvestment and revitalization in strategic commercial areas.

Policy LU-2.8 Enhance Downtown's appearance and design character by applying Main Street and historic preservation principles, while ensuring these do not unduly constrain new development..

Policy LU-2.9 Plan for street improvements and acquisition of rights-of-way to further a street grid pattern that facilitates ease of travel, efficient transit routing and utility design, and forms cohesive blocks of buildable lots. Coordinate with public agency partners wherever new streets are added or extended. Permit cul-de-sacs and curvilinear streets in outlying areas when designed in conjunction with the main street grid.

Policy LU-2.10 Require subdivisions and commercial developments to provide logical, interconnected street block patterns that support local and regional access.

Policy LU-2.11 Design streets to support and strengthen Kennewick's design character, public safety, community identity, and economic vitality. For example, consider pedestrianizing one or more streets in Downtown, narrowing streets where feasible, adopting "complete street" standards, enhancing pedestrian crossing safety on high-traffic streets, and integrating more trees and landscaping features into streets.

HISTORIC PRESERVATION PRINCIPLES

Core principles that guide Main Street vitality and historic preservation efforts:

- Preserve historic character
- Maintain active ground floors
- Support local businesses
- Encourage adaptive reuse
- Prioritize pedestrian experience
- Human-scale design
- Protect cultural heritage
- Use context-sensitive infill
- Activate public spaces
- Promote long-term stewardship

DRAFT

This new goal addresses the residential neighborhoods that make up the majority of Kennewick's land. It includes policies for quality-of-life issues that relate to the Housing Element, and also various administrative issues for zoning and infrastructure.

Goal LU-3 **Residential Neighborhoods.** Expand the quantity and diversity of housing options for all types of households while enhancing neighborhoods' quality of life.

Policy LU-3.1 Provide for a wide variety of housing types within the city, from single-family and middle housing to multifamily homes, to meet the full range of housing needs for Kennewick's evolving population and people of all income levels.

Policy LU-3.2 Allow for the conversion of existing single-family residences to middle housing (such as duplexes or triplexes) where the converted use is permitted.

Policy LU-3.3 Discourage or limit new detached single-family residences in high-density residential zones and key commercial zones to preserve limited available land for multifamily housing that can serve low-moderate income residents. Where zoning is updated, permit existing single-family residences to remain conforming (allowing for renovations and expansions) and add accessory dwelling units.

Below new policy acknowledges the approximately 20 mobile/manufactured home parks in Kennewick that provide an important stock of lower income housing. They are currently regulated under at least two different zones. This policy is related to several recommendations of the draft Housing Action Plan.

Policy LU-3.4 Provide consistent zoning and special development regulations for mobile/manufactured home parks (also known as trailer parks) to reduce displacement risk and address the unique ownership and design elements of these neighborhoods.

Policy LU-3.5 Use concurrency requirements to ensure new residential development can be adequately served by transportation, water and irrigation service, sewer, drainage, parks, schools, public safety, and other public services and infrastructure.

Policy LU-3.6 Permit compatible non-residential uses in residential zones with reasonable development regulations, including but not limited to schools, religious facilities, and small neighborhood commercial uses. Craft permissions based on the size and expected impact of the use.

Policy LU-3.7 Permit and promote house-scale neighborhood commercial uses in residential zones to encourage economic activity and social connections. Appropriate uses may include small grocery stores, taverns, restaurants, cafes, and personal services. Consider performance standards to manage potential impacts on residential uses, such as limitations on operating hours, sign and lighting standards, and design of service areas and utilities.

Policy LU-3.8 Clearly identify and map neighborhood boundaries based on social, physical, and environmental characteristics and use neighborhoods to organize land use planning and public engagement initiatives

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL USES

A mix of Washington, cities, towns, and counties are exploring the reintroduction of small-scale neighborhood commercial uses like cafes and neighborhood grocery stores into residential neighborhoods after decades of land use segregation. Neighborhood commercial uses are primarily neighborhood-serving businesses that provide limited retail goods and services for nearby residential customers and help provide a sense of place and community pride.



The Scoop (photo courtesy of City of Spokane)

MIDDLE HOUSING

This term refers to a range of compatible, scaled housing types that provide more units than single-detached housing and are intended to increase housing choice in single-family residential areas, consistent with Washington State law.

Middle housing types include duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard apartments, cottage housing, and accessory dwelling units.

This updated goal addresses the variety of commercial areas in Kennewick, which are important locations for jobs, shopping, and a variety of services. While the policies are for citywide use, there is a special focus on Downtown as the historic heart of Kennewick.

Goal LU-4 **Commercial and Mixed-Use Areas.** Cultivate a healthy and diverse economy with a wide variety of services, shopping, dining, entertainment, arts, culture, and housing opportunities in commercial and mixed-use areas.

Policy LU-4.1 Strengthen Downtown as the center for civic, retail, cultural, dining, and entertainment activity in Kennewick.

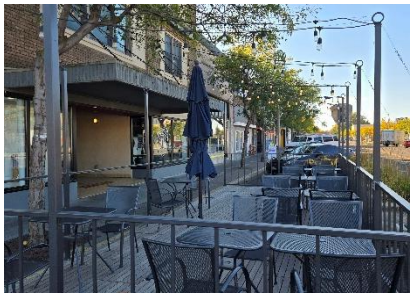
A. Promote development of new housing units in Downtown to increase the customer base for Downtown businesses.
B. Ensure that the physical environment in Downtown is amenable to visitors and residential use by minimizing traffic impacts, maintaining security and emergency service access, providing and maintaining public amenities, and continuing to enhance its visual character.

Policy LU-4.2 Promote the development of a distinctive new neighborhood mixed-use center in the Southridge Neighborhood centered on Bob Olson Parkway. Desired attributes and design guidance:

A. An emphasis on pedestrian-oriented design with a concentration of storefronts, comfortable sidewalks, and an integration of a central gathering space or spaces.
B. Vertical and/or horizontal mixing of multifamily residential uses within and around the center to support center businesses and help to create a walkable environment.
C. Take advantage of topography and natural features to create unique views and a strong sense of place.
D. Design the center to articulate gateways and highly visible corners and reinforce focal points.
E. Integrate parking areas to serve shops, gathering spaces, and housing, while minimizing potential negative impacts on the center's placemaking and provide attractive pedestrian connections to center uses.
F. Emphasize landscaping as a character-defining feature of the center, integrating shade trees with seasonal interest, distinctive native and climate appropriate plantings that add a sense of drama to the environment and soften the appearance of buildings and streetscapes.
G. Promote thoughtful building design with finely grained articulation features to add visual interest, reduce the perceived scale of large buildings, and contribute to the center's placemaking.



New multi-family building construction



Street patio in Downtown Kennewick



Public seating area with character-defining features

DRAFT

Figure 4. Neighborhood Mixed-**Use Center Case Study: Market Street in Scottsdale's (AZ) DC Ranch Neighborhood**

Originally designed as a rustic small-town center, Market Street includes a main street theme (1), a central plaza/common space (2), architecturally unique buildings (3), thoughtfully located parking (4), and inviting, comfortable pedestrian connections (5).



Policy LU-4.3 Encourage mixed-use development with a mixture of commercial, office, and residential uses within commercial centers to support day and evening activity.

Policy LU-4.4 Encourage the integration of plazas and other pedestrian oriented spaces in commercial and mixed-use zones to invite shoppers and enhance the setting for mixed-uses with housing.

Policy LU-4.5 Encourage and incentivize both the vertical (dwelling units above shops) and horizontal (shops and dwellings units in separate buildings on a site) integration of housing with commercial uses in most commercial zones. Consider excluding those "heavier" commercial zones (e.g., zones that allow for large outdoor storage areas and considerable truck traffic) that may conflict with residential uses. Incentivizes may include building height bonuses, expedited permitting, discounted permitting fees, and City-initiated improvements to utilities and other infrastructure.

Policy LU-4.6 Encourage mixed-use infill development and adaptive reuse of existing buildings to revitalize underutilized commercial areas. Promote the development of vacant lots and large underused surface parking lots.

Policy LU-4.7 Encourage compatible commercial uses to concentrate near each other to support walkability, shorten shopping trips, and strengthen the viability of business districts

Policy LU-4.8 Incentivize the development of additional grocery stores in underserved areas, particularly Southridge and southwestern Kennewick. Beyond general marketing and recruitment consider tools such as:

A. Height bonus or other development incentives for developments that include a grocery store.
B. Waived impact fees for developments include a grocery store.
C. Discounted or waived construction sales tax, and/or five to ten-year break on property or utility taxes for grocery stores.
D. City purchase of 10-15 acres in prime locations to landbank for re-sale to a grocery store developer, potentially at a discounted price.

Policy LU-4.9 Support the establishment and expansion of childcare facilities by removing zoning barriers and streamlining permitting processes (RCW 35A.21.460).

Policy LU-4.10 Enhance compatibility between commercial and residential areas by incorporating landscaping and screening elements.



Food truck outdoor food hall



Neighborhood corner store

DRAFT

This new goal addresses the important industrial activities that help diversify Kennewick's economy. These policies mainly address quality-of-life issues related to industrial jobs and ensuring industrial development has adequate land and minimizes conflict with other land uses.

Goal LU-5 **Industrial Areas.** Maintain and promote active use of industrial lands to maintain a diverse economy while stewarding the community's natural resources and desired development patterns.

Policy LU-5.1 Encourage growth in key industrial sectors, such as advanced manufacturing, processing, logistics, and clean energy, by supporting businesses that provide jobs paying a living wage to meet basic needs, including housing, food, healthcare, transportation, and other essential expenses.

Policy LU-5.2 Designate an adequate supply of industrial land for expected job and business growth.

Policy LU-5.3 Work with the Port of Kennewick to secure lands for industrial use consistent with the City's and Region's industrial land needs.

Policy LU-5.4 Target industrial lands that meet all industrial market sectors, including both flexible spaces for light industrial and larger spaces for heavy industry.

Policy LU-5.5 Prioritize industrial development in areas with adequate transportation, utilities, and public facilities by aligning the Capital Improvement Program to support infrastructure improvements that attract and retain industrial businesses and jobs, such as high-capacity utility lines and designated freight routes in the street network.

Policy LU-5.6 Limit industrial uses' adverse community and environmental impacts through the location of industrial zones, site design, operational standards, and mitigation measures that protect surrounding neighborhoods and natural resources.

Policy LU-5.7 Ensure regular compliance monitoring and best management practices for all industrial projects with the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and the Kennewick Municipal Code.

Policy LU-5.8 Encourage industrial development in the area south of Interstate 82 through zoning, utility investments, and marketing efforts.

Policy LU-5.9 Encourage the development of clean energy facilities (e.g., solar, wind, geothermal, battery storage) to increase the supply of renewable energy to the grid. Apply appropriate supplemental standards to minimize community impacts.

Policy LU-5.10 Evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of permitting data centers and similar uses with low employment density and high energy and water use.

LIVING WAGE
A living wage is defined as income sufficient for a worker and their family to meet basic needs.



Industrial use in Kennewick



Kennewick industrial rail area

DRAFT

Policy LU-5.11 Protect industrial lands from encroachment by incompatible land uses, particularly residential development, while addressing existing land use conflicts through targeted redesignation and zoning adjustments.

This existing goal is expanded to provide more emphasis on the Kennewick community's interest in access to active recreation and taking advantage of the great outdoor opportunities available in the area. Since parks and recreation facilities are primarily a Capital Facilities Element issue, these policies aim to focus on the other parks-planning considerations related to land use, housing, and transportation. The policies are intended to be complimentary to Kennewick's recently-published Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan (online here).

Goal LU-6 **Parks and Recreation.** Enhance parks, protect natural open space, and expand trails to support the recreational needs of a growing population.

Policy LU-6.1 Provide Kennewick residents, workers, and visitors with a diversity of open spaces, parks, trails, and recreation facilities and programs appropriately distributed throughout the city. Implement the Kennewick Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan and the **Capital Facilities Element**.

Policy LU-6.2 Balance the needs of residents and recreational tourists when planning and designing parks and recreation facilities. Ensure that facilities oriented towards visitors have tangible benefits and access for Kennewick residents, ranging from the convention center to athletic fields. Provide park facilities with a range of features for different user groups and activities, such as seating, playgrounds, exercise facilities, shade structures, sport courts and fields, water features, and nighttime lighting.

Policy LU-6.3 Identify neighborhoods underserved by access to parks and opportunities to increase parkland to meet level of service goals, such as through public land acquisition or park dedications by private development. Key locations for major new parks may include but are not limited to:

A. Southridge
B. Vista Field
C. Clearwater Avenue corridor
D. Bridge-to-Bridge
E. Southeast Kennewick

Policy LU-6.4 Increase housing capacity and housing options near major parks, trailheads, and indoor recreation facilities to increase the population that can access parks and recreation by walking and biking.

Policy LU-6.5 Enhance the trail system to promote recreational opportunities and physical activity and improve the residential setting. Implement the Kennewick Pathways and Trails Master Plan in coordination with irrigation districts, and consider requiring the integration of off-street trails in new large subdivisions to complement the existing and planned transportation system.

KENNEWICK'S PLANNED TRAILS
The Pathways and Trails Master Plan identifies a network of trails, including new trails and projects to connect existing trails.



Example of a shade structure (Bellingham, WA)

Policy LU-6.6 Improve visual and physical access to the riverfront, including enhanced or new connections to Columbia Park and supporting recreational improvements on Port of Kennewick properties.

Policy LU-6.7 Preserve, develop, and program inviting and distinctive public gathering spaces in Downtown and other commercial and mixed-use areas to improve social connections and promote economic activity.

Policy LU-6.8 Adapt parks and recreation facilities to reflect the risks of climate change, including extreme heat, extreme precipitation, and drought. Prioritize actions based on the critical nature of the facility and their status as emergency management resources.



Riverfront walking path

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This new goal addresses important environmental topics that relate to a variety of state law requirements, including the Climate Resiliency Element, the Shoreline Management Act, and requirements to regulate and protect critical areas like wetlands, wildlife habitat, and steep slopes. However, the topic provides an opportunity to address a variety of other quality-of-life issues that make Kennewick a livable and enjoyable place to reside and work.

Goal LU-7 Environment, Critical Areas, and Shorelines. Promote sustainable development that is compatible with Kennewick's natural environment.

Policy LU-7.1 Encourage green building design through energy efficient construction, renewable energy integration, xeriscape and native landscaping, low-impact stormwater management, utility conservation and other proven sustainability practices.

Policy LU-7.2 Focus development regulations for new tree planting in strategic locations where they are most likely to be healthy, visible, and provide public benefit, such as along streets and in parking lots. Existing trees should be retained whenever possible and maintained using best management practices as appropriate for each tree type.

Policy LU-7.3 Reduce the urban heat island effect by minimizing impervious surfaces in new development, such as by reducing parking requirements and promoting the de-paving of key areas of existing development or public streets to replant native vegetation. Large parking areas should be encouraged to be shaded with trees and solar panels.

Policy LU-7.4 Protect public safety and critical infrastructure from hazards such as landslides, steep slope failures, erosion and flooding by integrating hazard mitigations and resilient land use planning into development decisions. Direct development away from hazard areas.

Policy LU-7.5 Collaborate with the county, state, and other agencies and private stakeholders to balance the impacts of shrub-steppe habitat protection within the urban growth area. Explore options to streamline permitting processes, such as with state policy amendments or a local or regional shrub-steppe mitigation bank.

Policy LU-7.6 Protect critical habitat and native vegetation on private and public lands where feasible, such as by encouraging cluster development and managing city parks and open space to conserve habitat.

Policy LU-7.7 Prioritize the identification, classification, and period update of critical area mapping and regulations in the Critical Areas Ordinance, using Best Available Science (BAS) to protect their ecological functions and environmental values and preserve wildlife habitat and water quality

Policy LU-7.8 Preserve and protect anadromous fish, and threatened, endangered and candidate species as identified by federal and state agencies.

Policy LU-7.9 Conserve natural resources through regulatory and non-regulatory measures, such as shoreline development regulations, low-impact development techniques, cluster development, and habitat restoration programs that maintain ecological functions and environmental quality.



Water-efficient landscaping



Shrubsteppe habitat

DRAFT

Policy LU-7.10 Regulate or mitigate land use activities in or adjacent to critical areas and shorelines to prevent adverse environmental impacts and protect ecological functions, and preserve culturally significant features.

Policy LU-7.11 Ensure no net loss of ecological function of the shoreline and require restoration over time.

Policy LU-7.12 Coordinate with agencies responsible for critical areas and shorelines to streamline management and protection efforts, fostering consistent policies and effective conservation outcomes across jurisdictions.

Policy LU-7.13 Develop and maintain shoreline recreational and scenic viewing opportunities by providing trails, viewing platforms, and other facilities that balance public access with environmental protection.

Policy LU-7.14 Ensure new shoreline developments provide public access in accordance with Kennewick's Shoreline Master Program.

Policy LU-7.15 Protect surface and groundwater quality using tools such as zoning designations, critical areas regulations, stormwater management projects, and property owner education.

Policy LU-7.16 Adapt the community to wildfire risk using best practices for regulating new buildings, sites, and landscapes, and promote appropriate maintenance of existing development.



Riverfront shoreline

DRAFT

This new goal collects a variety of existing and new policies that relate to general administrative concerns related to land use and development procedures. The main issues are ensuring fairness in how development applications are treated and ensuring the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations stay updated with state law.

Goal LU-8 **Property Rights, Growth Management, and Administration.** Regulate development, manage growth, and annex land in a responsible manner that is beneficial to the community as a whole and is consistent with state law.

Policy LU-8.1 Craft all development regulations with due regard for private property rights in order to avoid regulatory takings or violation of due process and to protect property rights of landowners from arbitrary and discriminatory actions. Use existing Washington State case law as a guide for protection of private property rights.

Policy LU-8.2 Maintain predictability for property owners by ensuring nearby development is consistent with adopted plans and regulations, and by considering impacts on surrounding properties.

Policy LU-8.3 Ensure that development review and permit processes operate in a fair, timely, and predictable manner and update processes from time to time to incorporate best practices, changes in law, and align with community priorities and values.

Policy LU-8.4 Periodically review zoning regulations to ensure continued compliance with changes in state law, including but not limited to the Growth Management Act, Titles 35 and 35A RCW for code cities, the Shoreline Management Act, and the State Environmental Policy Act. Proactively implement state law updates when feasible to reduce legal risk, maintain local discretion, and provide more certainty for community members and developers.

Policy LU-8.5 The size and location of the Kennewick Urban Growth Area should be based on land use demand for residential and non-residential uses derived from Benton County's 20-year population forecast for the county and its sub-areas (provided the forecast is not below the most recent state projection) and the Kennewick **Land Use Element** and **Economic Development Element**.

Policy LU-8.6 Provide urban services, utilities, and capital facilities consistent with the **Capital Facilities Element**. Work with service providers to determine the appropriate levels of service.

Policy LU-8.7 Participate in the Benton Franklin Council of Governments to facilitate planning regional transportation facilities and infrastructure improvements.

Policy LU-8.8 Provide additional regulatory tools to accommodate unique circumstances that arise as the City grows, such as flexible development standards, infrastructure financing tools, and latecomers agreements.

Policy LU-8.9 Allow and site Essential Public Facilities in Kennewick consistent with the County Wide Planning Policies (CWPP) and do not preclude the siting of Essential Public Facilities.



Single-family housing in Kennewick



Southridge development

DRAFT

Policy LU-8.10 Evaluate social, environmental, and economic impacts of Essential Public Facilities and implement measures to mitigate effects of noise, odor, pollution, traffic, aesthetics, on public health and safety.

Policy LU-8.11 Support annexation where existing or planned development intensity requires basic urban infrastructure and services such as streets and public water and sewer. Facilitate annexation in a manner that will minimize financial impact to residents and businesses.

Policy LU-8.11 Annex islands of unincorporated land that are fully surrounded by incorporated city limits to provide for well-coordinated, consistent, and efficient service areas for capital facilities and public services.

DRAFT

Housing

INTRODUCTION

This introduction section for Housing is significantly amended and expanded to meet multiple new requirements of the Growth Management Act for the type of housing information, data analysis, and policies that must be included in the plan.

The **Housing Element** of the Comprehensive Plan focuses on ensuring access to safe and stable housing. Local government plays an important role in supporting and coordinating with private, public, and nonprofit housing providers to encourage the development and preservation of safe and affordable housing. The **Housing Element** balances multiple interests, including community objectives related to the quality, affordability, attainability, and availability of housing along with related goals such as economic development, neighborhood quality, and cost-effective development patterns..

To meet all current and future housing needs, Kennewick needs to add 12,626 housing units by 2046 as well as 57 emergency housing beds. This is an average need of 485 units per year 2020-2026. Approximately 55 percent of these new units will need to be affordable to households with incomes at or below 80 percent of area median income (AMI), which may require public subsidy. This **Housing Element** seeks to ensure that there will be enough housing to accommodate expected growth in the city, and along with the variety of housing necessary to accommodate a range of income levels, ages, preferences, and household needs.

Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities to show how they will be able to accommodate 20 years of demand for housing. Under the GMA – specifically RCW 36.70A.070(2) – the **Housing Element** is required to:

- Include statements of goals and policies for the preservation, improvement and development of housing
- Include an inventory and analysis of projected housing needs of all economic segments of the community
- Identify sufficient capacity of land for housing
- Identify local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing and how to undo those impacts

Since 2020, a variety of updates to the GMA and other state law for code cities have preempted local land use regulations, especially regarding housing. Examples of impactful law updates to Kennewick through 2026 have included:

- Middle housing with four to six units per lot must be allowed in residential zones (RCW 36.70A.635)



- Co-living housing, which consists of sleeping units with shared kitchens, must be allowed in some residential zones (RCW 36.70A.535)
- Two accessory dwelling units must be allowed on all residential lots (RCW 36.70A.681)
- No off-street parking can be required for dwelling units under 1,200 square feet in size (RCW 35A.21.445)
- Permanent supportive housing, emergency shelter, and similar housing cannot be regulated more restrictively than other housing (Senate Bill 6069 of 2026)
- Residential development must be allowed in commercial zones (Senate Bill 6026 of 2026)
- Impact fees must be proportional to the size of residential units (RCW 82.02.060)

Cities must adopt procedures for administrative approval of residential unit lot subdivisions and lot splits (RCW 58.17.060 and RCW 58.17.145). Most of the details below are covered elsewhere in the plan and don't need to be mentioned here with the big-picture introduction, or are older specific regulations that don't need a mention in the plan.



Townhomes in Kennewick

The housing inventory/analysis section below is almost introduction ored based on more current data. It also is slightly reorganized and has new types of data to help demonstrate compliance with new requirements of the Growth Management Act.

EXISTING CONDITIONS SUMMARY

This section provides a summary of existing conditions related to housing in Kennewick. For more details from the Housing Needs Assessment, see the **Housing Appendix** with data and analysis that provide a foundation for the **Housing Element** goals and policies.

Demographics and Households

The following data is mostly sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau 2023 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. For more information on demographics and households see the **Housing Appendix**

Age

The median age in Kennewick is 35.8 years, compared to 38.2 for Washington state as a whole.

The composition of Kennewick's population by age has changed over time. Compared to 2010, Kennewick now has higher concentrations of older adults 55 and over and lower concentrations of children, young adults, and middle-aged groups. As of 2023, about one-third of Kennewick's population is under the age of 25 (35 percent), slightly more than one-third is between the ages of 25 and 54 (38 percent), and slightly less than one-third is age 55 or older (27 percent). The overall patterns in age are similar for the city and county overall but the distribution of age in Kennewick varies by race and ethnicity.

Citywide, about one quarter (26 percent) of Kennewick's population is under age 18 and one third (33 percent) of households include one or more people under 18. This is about the same as the county as a whole but higher than statewide, which suggests that housing for families with children is particularly important in Kennewick and the

surrounding area. Family-size housing need is likely greater amongst Hispanic or Latino households given about half of students in the Kennewick School District are Hispanic or Latino (45 percent as of the 2024-25 school year).

Approximately 20 percent of the city's Hispanic or Latino population are 45 or older. In contrast, approximately 47 percent of the White, non-Hispanic population are 45 or older. This variation by race and ethnicity is even more pronounced amongst adults aged 65 or older (5 percent of the Hispanic or Latino population versus 22 percent of the White, non-Hispanic population). Demand for housing accessible to older adults or for smaller units is likely higher amongst White, non-Hispanic households.



Senior housing apartment complex

Race and Ethnicity

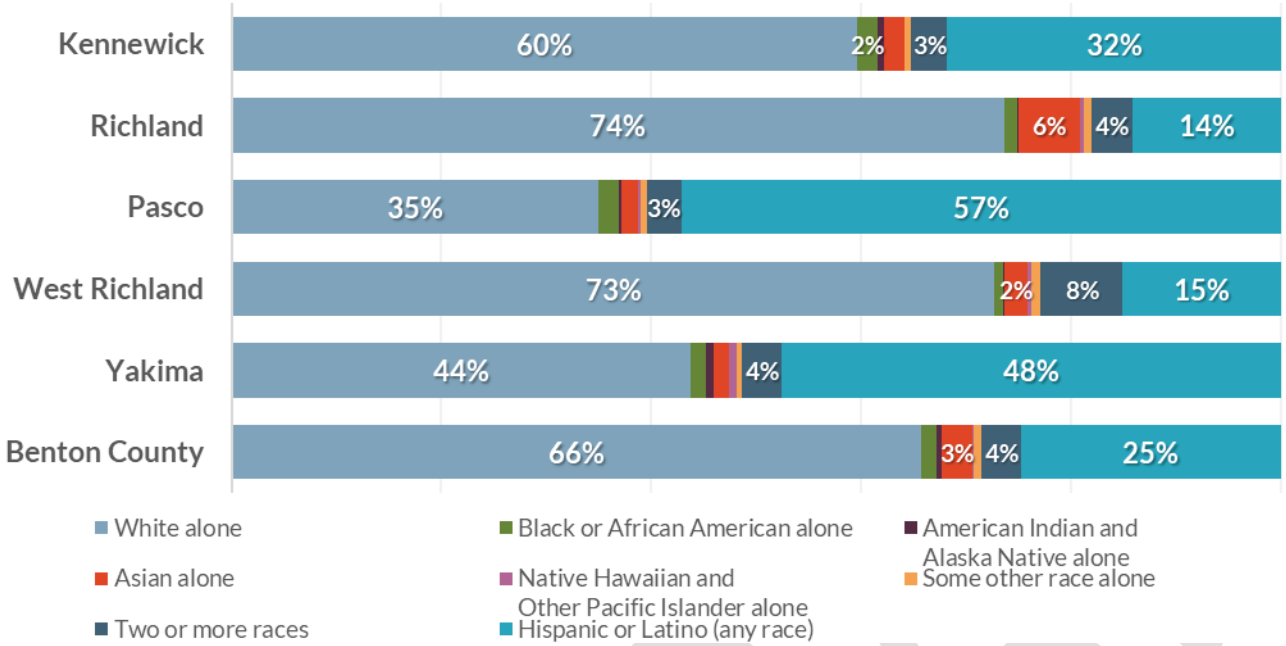
Kennewick's demographic makeup is evolving. Since 2018, the percentage of the population who identify as Hispanic or Latino grew from 26 to 32 percent, while the percentage of White, non-Hispanic persons declined from 65 to 60 percent. The chart below summarizes the 2023 demographic makeup of comparison jurisdictions. In comparison to these other jurisdictions, Kennewick's demographic makeup is more diverse than the cities of Richland and West Richland as well as Benton County and is less diverse than the cities of Pasco and Yakima.

Kennewick's demographic makeup is also moderately reflected in where people live. White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in the Columbia Center area and southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes), while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and around Downtown and Clearwater Avenue.

For more information see Racially Disparate Impacts section below and the **Housing Appendix**.

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Figure 5. Share of Population by Race and Ethnicity, Kennewick and Comparison Jurisdictions (2023)



Note: Except for Hispanic or Latino, all groups are exclusive of persons who identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP05); BERK, 2025.

Household Size

In 2023 the average household size in Kennewick 2.68 people, larger than the Washington state average of 2.51. By tenure, this breaks down to averages of 2.82 for owner-occupied units and 2.46 for renter-occupied units in Kennewick. That compares to average household sizes in Washington state of 2.65 (owner) and 2.27 (renter).

Overall, nearly two thirds (64 percent) of all households have only one or two members. One-person households are more likely to rent, while households with two to four members tend to own their homes. Larger households also lean owner-occupied, though many renter households have five or more members.

Household Income

Household income refers to the total combined income of all members of a household. A household's income determines what kinds of housing, and which locations are affordable to them. Within Kennewick, median household income is highest in southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) and lowest in and around Downtown.

As of 2023, the median household income in the City of Kennewick was nearly $73,000, which is lower than the countywide median of about $87,000 and state median of about $95,000.



Manufactured home park

Median household income varies significantly by tenure. In 2023, the median income of owner-occupied households was about $96,000 and the median income of renter-occupied households was about $44,000 (American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate, Table B25119). Although renter household types are often smaller on average than ownership households, which can account for part of this disparity, it demonstrates potential affordability concerns for rental households.

Median household income also varies by race and ethnicity—in 2023, the median income of White, non-Hispanic households was $78,473 versus $61,185 for Hispanic or Latino households (of any race).



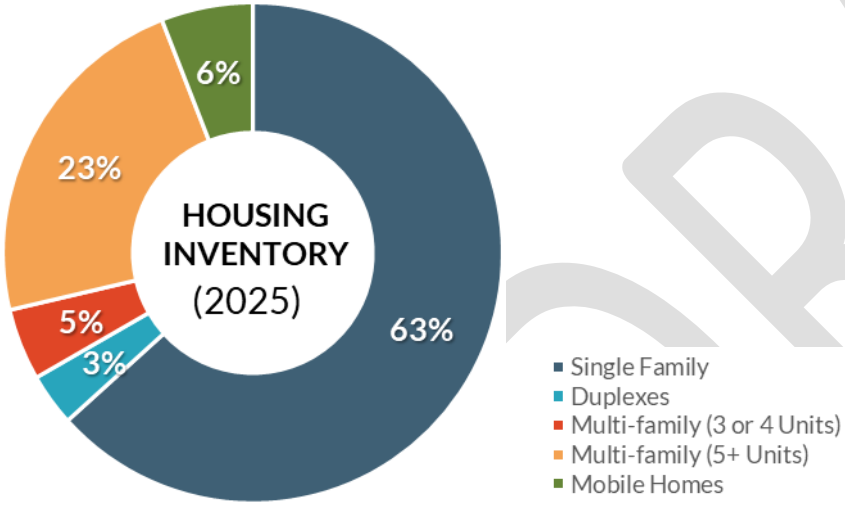
Duplex housing in Kennewick

Housing Stock

Types

As of 2025, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimated there were 34,287 units in Kennewick city limits. The chart below breaks down the housing inventory by housing type. Nearly two thirds of all units are detached single family residences. Larger multifamily buildings (typically apartments) with five or more units make up the next largest share at 23 percent.

Figure 6. Housing Inventory by Units in Structure (2025)



Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2026.



Single-family housing in Kennewick

About eight percent of all units are in small multifamily structures of two to four units. These kinds of units are often called "middle housing," as they can provide a housing option in between detached single-family homes and larger apartment buildings. Increasing the supply of middle housing is an important way to increase the diversity of housing options, particularly options that are affordable to moderate-income households.

As of 2025, OFM estimates there were 2,037 manufactured homes in city limits, about 6 percent of the total housing stock. About 71 percent of these are in manufactured home communities and 29 percent are on individual lots

dispersed throughout other residential areas. Homes in manufactured housing communities cost significantly less to buy than a traditional detached home on its own lot because the unit is sold separately from the land. As a result, homes in manufactured housing communities provide relatively affordable homeownership opportunities. However, residents of manufactured housing communities do not benefit from home value appreciation as the land value increases. They are also subject to the rules and regulations established in their lease agreement with the landlord/property owner and are vulnerable to displacement if the owner chooses to close the community or increase the rents and fees all residents must pay.

Age of Buildings

About half of the housing stock in the city was built prior to 1980 with another quarter (23 percent) built from 1980-1999. Another quarter (27 percent) of the stock has been built since the year 2000, reflecting a slightly faster rate of city growth in more recent years.

Housing Size

Housing units in the city include a range of bedrooms per unit (see chart below). The majority of owner-occupied units (85 percent) have three or more bedrooms while the majority of renter-occupied units (67 percent) have two to four bedrooms. Only three percent of rental units have four or more bedrooms despite approximately 21 percent or rental households having four or more members, suggesting that rental stock includes few detached homes for these larger households.

Approximately 32 percent of rental units have zero to one bedrooms while 40 percent of rental households are one-person households and 27 percent are two-person households. In contrast, approximately two percent of owner-occupied units have zero to one bedrooms (see chart below) while 19 percent of owner households consist of one person and 40 percent consist of two people.

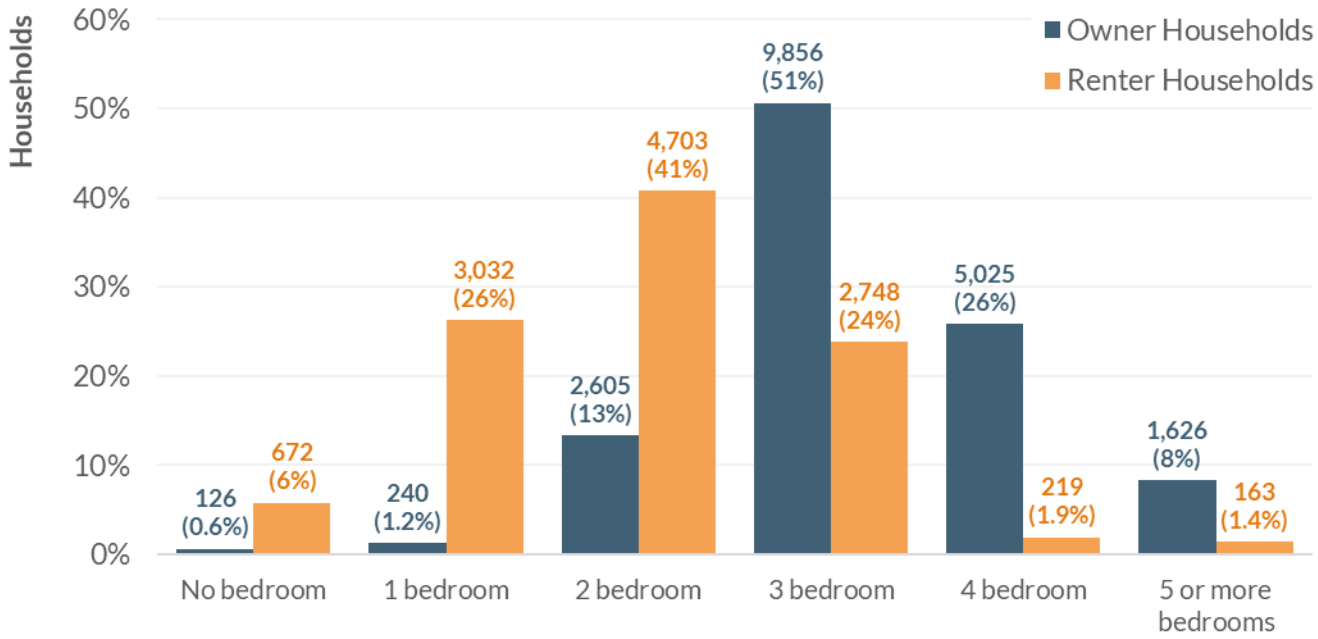
This data suggests a misalignment between the size of housing units available and the size of households for both renter and owner households, with an increased need for smaller ownership units and larger rental units.



Mid-sized apartment building in Kennewick

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Figure 7. Size of Housing Supply by Number of Bedrooms and Tenures (2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates (Table B25042), 2019-2023; BERK, 2025.

Housing Tenure

As of 2023, there were an estimated 31,015 households living in Kennewick. About 63 percent of all households owned their homes, about two thirds of which had a mortgage. About 37 percent of households were renters. The chart below shows this breakdown compared to other jurisdictions. Kennewick has a higher share (37 percent) of renters compared to the county as a whole (32 percent) as well as neighboring Richland (35 percent), Pasco (31 percent), and West Richland (16 percent). Yakima's share of renters (46 percent) is higher than Kennewick's.

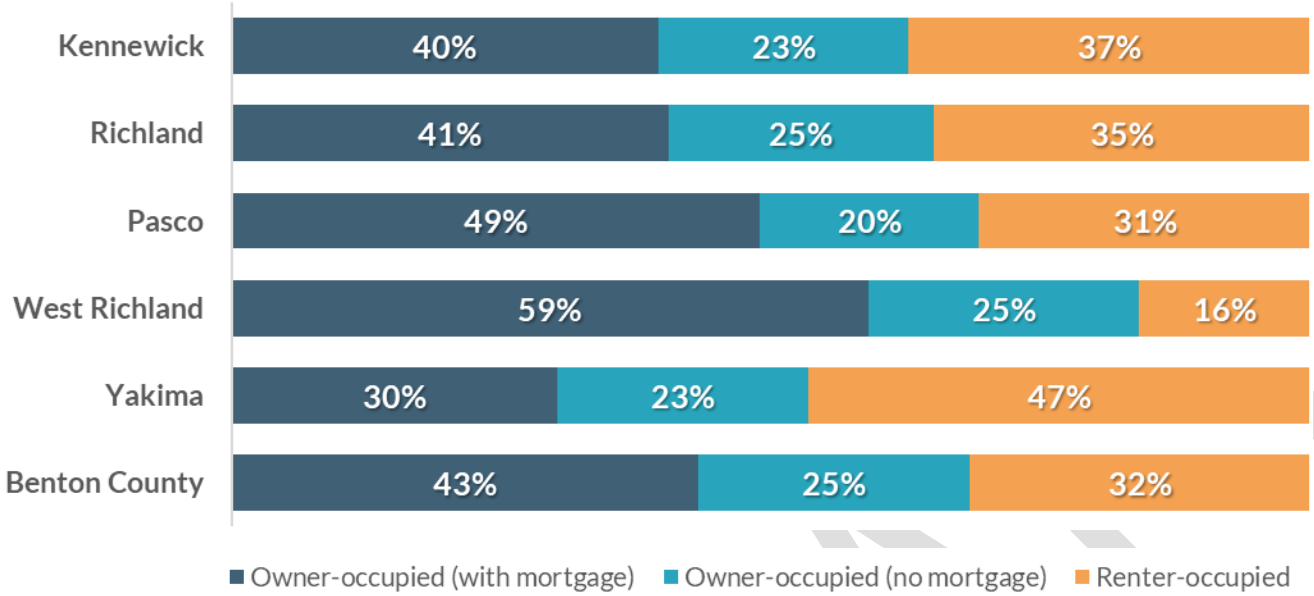
HOUSEHOLD INCOME: AMI VS. MFI

AMI: Area median income is calculated based on the incomes of all households, including one-person households. A household's income determines what kinds of housing and which locations are affordable to them. As of 2023, the median household income in the city was nearly $73,000 for all households, but this varies considerably based on tenure, household type, and race and ethnicity.

MFI: Affordable housing policies often classify all households by income level relative to the HUD-area median family income, or MFI. Benton County's MFI was $105,600 in 2025; this represents the median income of a 4-person household. When classifying households by income level, HUD adjusts for household size. So, for example, the threshold for determining 80% MFI is lower for a 2-person household than it is for a 4-person household. Note that MFI is a different measure than median household income. They are not comparable because median household income includes all households, not just family households.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S1901); HUD Income Limits.

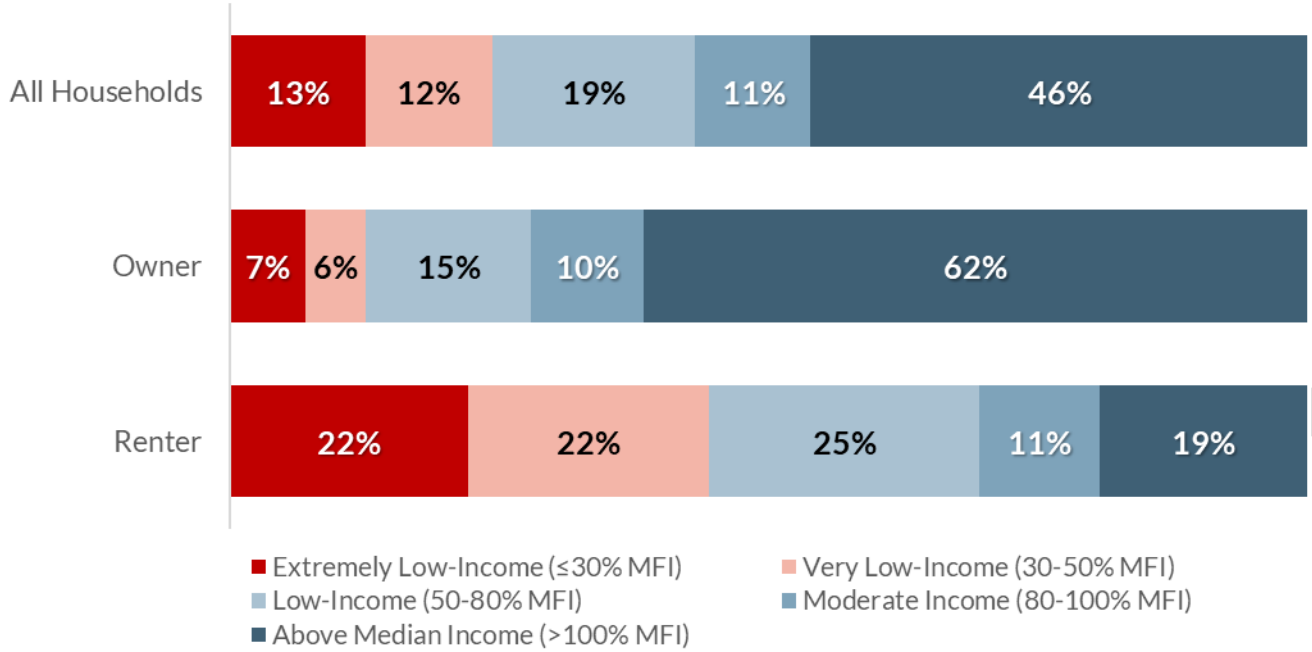
Figure 8. Households by Tenure in City of Kennewick and Comparison Areas (2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP04); BERK, 2025.

The chart below shows the breakdown of all households in Kennewick by income level relative to the Benton County median family income (MFI) as of 2021 when MFI was $78,100. It also includes a comparison of renter and owner households. Renters represent a significant share of Kennewick's household tenure and experience a higher risk of housing instability due to changes in rent, evictions, and other factors, as well as lower incomes and higher rates of cost burden.

Figure 9. Share of Households by Tenure and Income Level (2021)



Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8); BERK, 2025.

Housing Affordability

Changes in Household Income and Housing Prices

From 2010 to 2023, median household income increased 50 percent overall (39 percent increase for owner-occupied households and 57 percent increase for renter-occupied households). These have not kept up with the increase in cost of housing in the same time period, when the median for-sale housing price increased 61 percent and the median monthly rent price increased 213 percent.

Cost Burden

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a home as affordable if the household is spending less than 30 percent of their gross income on housing costs. By this standard, nearly a third (30 percent) of all households in Kennewick were cost-burdened in 2021, about 9,200 households in total. About 12 percent of all households in Kennewick are severely cost-burdened households and spend more than 50 percent of their incomes on housing costs. Renter households are much more commonly cost-burdened than owner households (53 percent versus 17 percent).

All these factors indicate a need for additional rental housing that residents can afford.



Affordable housing complex being developed in Kennewick

Displacement Risk

A displacement risk mapping tool from the Washington State Department of Commerce shows variation in displacement risk across the state, using data on social characteristics, demographic changes since 2010, and trends in housing costs. Areas of highest displacement risk in Kennewick are in the north, including the Vista, Clearwater Avenue, and Waterfront/Downtown areas.

The deficit of affordable and attainable housing for low- and moderate-income residents in Kennewick is a growing community concern. Community engagement and the Housing Needs Analysis convey an increasing tension between strong market interest in homeownership and single-family residences and the growing challenges in housing access, especially for renters, low-income residents, people with disabilities, and other disadvantaged populations. Despite challenging headwinds, the positive news is that in the 2020's construction market (rising costs of labor, materials, and financing), development of new housing stock in Kennewick is continuing. Since 2010, residential permit activity peaked in 2019 with 596 units but was still strong in 2024 with 440 units permitted.



Apartment complex in Kennewick

In the development of this Comprehensive Plan surveys, stakeholder interviews, and a housing work group collected input on housing challenges. Key themes from hundreds of responses include:

- Housing prices are indeed increasing, but this affected people in different ways depending on their income and occupation, household type, and long-term interest in remaining in the Tri-Cities
- The cost of utilities and insurance are a notable factor that also needs to be considered
- The idea of "affordable housing" has a social stigma that will need to be overcome to make progress on the issue
- Homelessness is increasing throughout the region, but shelter capacity remains too limited to reliably support these individuals
- Single-family homes remain a strong market preference, especially for young families, but most stakeholders acknowledged a wider variety of housing is needed to serve different incomes and populations
- Infill and redevelopment in existing, older neighborhoods is seen as a priority over developing new neighborhoods on empty land at the edge of urban growth boundaries. Infill has its challenges with the cost of land and upgrading aging infrastructure and warrants more support from the City.
- Some housing developer stakeholders expressed interest in building more vertical or mixed-use multifamily development but would need to see more incentives or support from the City to make such projects economical
- Kennewick is generally an easy place to build, and the city government is a good partner, but updates to development regulations and permitting practices could help with some cost pressures



Student housing for Columbia Basin College (CBC)

In response to these challenges, the City can deploy tools to improve the cost efficiency of construction and strengthen partnerships with affordable housing providers. Regulatory tweaks to the code and design standards, streamlined environmental review, and financial support are among the many solutions that could help Kennewick better achieve its housing needs.

Housing Tools, Incentives, and Barriers

In this section, "affordable housing" means housing reserved for people earning below a certain income and who cannot afford market-rate costs (other interrelated terms include low-income housing, subsidized housing, public housing, or rent-restricted housing).

The main affordable housing provider in Kennewick is the Kennewick Housing Authority (KHA), a government agency that provides housing assistance for families who need affordable alternatives to the private market. KHA took over the assets of the dissolved Richland Housing Authority in 2010. The Housing Authority of the City of Pasco and Franklin County (HACPFC) operates housing programs on the north side of the Columbia River. Together KHA and HACPFC provide over 1,900 lower income households in the region with affordable housing assistance, including project-based and tenant-based programs.

As of 2023, KHA and other non-profit and private affordable providers operate 2,716 subsidized, affordable rental units, making up about 8.1 percent of all housing units in city limits. Few such units have been constructed in recent years, with the last project opening in 2021. KHA operates six properties in the city and is currently building another, as noted below.



Live-work units in a Kennewick apartment complex

The City of Kennewick has several affordable housing initiatives, including:

- Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) funded programs:
- The Homeowner Down Payment Assistance programs provides a maximum $50,000 in assistance to prospective homebuyers earning up to 80 percent AMI, among other qualifying factors. Since 1999, the program has assisted 593 households with $4.64 million.
- The Owner Occupied Home Rehabilitation Program makes loans to low- and moderate income single-family homeowners (earning up to 80 percent AMI) for addressing building code, safety issues, and other emergency repairs. Since 1983, the program has assisted 80 funds with $1.1 million.
- Utility connection charges may be waived for KHA projects, but the charges must be later repaid by KHA. No waivers are available for other affordable housing providers.
- The "Bubble on Gum" project is a joint venture between the City and KHA to develop 58 units of affordable housing on four acres of a former City public works site. In addition to contributing the land, the City provided a $382,374 Community Development Block Grant and administers a $1.38 million pass-through CHIP grant from the Washington State Department of Commerce. Target households will earn 30–50 percent of area median income and Some units will also be reserved for families with children, veterans and persons with disabilities.

As of 2026, Kennewick has not adopted other potential affordable housing tools or incentives that are common in other Washington state cities and authorized by state law, including but not limited to:

- Direct grants to affordable projects (funded by a sales and use tax, property tax levy, or other locally approved sources)
- Reduced or waived permit fees and impact fees for affordable housing projects, or location-efficient infill and multifamily housing projects
- Predesigned and permit-ready plans for small housing projects such as accessory dwelling units and middle housing

- Environmental review exemptions for infill housing
- Time-limited multifamily property tax exemption (MFTE) to private developments in exchange for a commitment to providing on-site affordable housing units

For the private market, comparisons of incentives or development regulations may also be helpful. For example, between 2014 and 2024, 27 percent of completed new residential units in Kennewick were multifamily (in a building with five or more units), compared to 36% of new units in neighboring Richland. In West Richland, 19 percent of completed units between 2014 and 2024 were middle housing of two to four units, compared to three percent in Kennewick.

The Kennewick Housing Action Plan, adopted as a companion to the **Housing Element**, provides more detail on housing tools and incentives that Kennewick can adopt to support affordable housing.

Racially Disparate Impacts

The **Housing Element** includes a Racially Disparate Impacts Analysis, as required by RCW 36.70A.070(2)(e) and (f). Taking a proactive approach in shaping policy can help reduce historical patterns of segregation, displacement, and inequitable outcomes. As part of the 2026 periodic update, **Housing Element** goals and policies were evaluated and updated to reduce racially disparate impacts.

Key findings from the analysis are:

- Kennewick has a moderate level of geographic segregation within the city for Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American populations. White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in southern portions of the city (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and around Downtown and Clearwater Avenue.
- Rates of cost burden also vary by race and ethnicity, particularly for owner households. Hispanic or Latino owner households are more likely to be cost-burdened than White, non-Hispanic owner households (25 percent versus 15 percent). While renter households are much more commonly cost-burdened than owner households (53 percent versus 17 percent), there is minimal differences between race and ethnicity for renter households in overall cost burden status.
- Kennewick has a significant housing shortage at the low end of the market. Under Kennewick's current zoning, there is a deficit in capacity of 2,467 units to serve the projected number of low-income households (earning 0-80 percent AMI) for the 20-year planning period to 2046. The general implication is zoning needs to allow more areas where low-rise and mid-rise apartment and condominium buildings can be developed.
- Kennewick has environmental health disparities related to air pollution, traffic noise, the urban heat island effect, and other factors. Higher concentrations of air pollutants, for example, are present in the northeast portion of the city, including Downtown, where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live. North Kennewick in general has moderate exposure to heavy traffic roadways that can increase air pollutants and increase risk of pollution-related diseases such as asthma.
- While all of Kennewick is exposed during a heat event, certain areas are hotter than others, though this does not appear to be linked to the distribution of the population by race and ethnicity. Parts of the city with more paved



New mixed-use development with ground-floor commercial

MULTI-FAMILY HOUSING FIRE SAFETY

A 2025 analysis found that modern multifamily housing has the lowest fire death rate of any major residential building type in the United States.

Apartments built since 2000 significantly outperform both older apartment buildings and single-family homes due to updated building codes and fire safety features such as sprinkler systems, fire-resistant materials, compartmentalized units, and improved smoke alarm standards.

Sources: The Pew Charitable Trusts, "Modern Multifamily Buildings Provide the Most Fire Protection" (2025).

surfaces and less tree canopy and other vegetation tend to experience more heat, generally the more commercial and industrial areas of the city as well as those higher into the foothills.

Newer buildings are more likely to have modern air conditioning and cooling practices compared to older buildings, so encouraging the development of multifamily housing can help provide more access to safe indoor air temperatures. However, multifamily housing tends to have larger parking lots and be located in areas with higher impervious surfaces, so mitigating factors for cooling need to be considered. Refer to the Racially Disparate Impacts Analysis in the **Housing Appendix** for more information.

Housing Capacity by Income Band

House Bill 1220, passed in 2021, amended the Growth Management Act to require additional housing unit capacity analysis by what income bands can be served by future housing units, expressed as a percentage of area median income (AMI) published by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The adopted housing growth targets are shown in the table below.

Figure 10. City of Kennewick Adopted Housing Growth Targets (2020-2046)

Total Housing Need	Emergency Housing Beds	0-30% AMI: Non-PSH	0-30% AMI: PSH	>30 to ≤50% AMI	>50 to ≤80% AMI	>80 to ≤100% AMI	>100 to ≤50% AMI	>120% AMI
12,626	57	1,597	1,007	2,513	1,772	974	1,104	3,659

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.

Notes: While additional units have been built since 2020, the affordability level of those units is unknown at this time. These units have therefore not been deducted from the overall target to ensure the analysis doesn't imply less remaining need than actually exists. Emergency housing includes emergency housing and shelter and is in addition to permanent housing needs.

Sources: City of Kennewick 2025; Benton County, 2025.

A Land Capacity Analysis was conducted as part of this comprehensive planning process to evaluate Kennewick's ability to meet these targets under current zoning. This analysis considered vacant, redevelopable, and partially-used parcels based on County assessor data, allowed lot sizes, and real estate data. Critical area acreage and deductions for future infrastructure needs and market factors were then removed. The net remaining acreage was analyzed by zone based on potential future density of development in each zone, as outlined in Kennewick's current zoning code, and accounting for recent development densities in the city.

The results of this analysis were then aggregated by zone category based on the Department of Commerce methodology outlined in the 2023 guidebook "Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element." Following this framework, capacity for low-income households earning 0-80 percent AMI is provided in zones allowing for apartments and multifamily housing types. Additional capacity in ADUs is assumed to serve households earning 50-80 percent AMI. Capacity for middle-income households earning 80-120 percent AMI is provided through townhomes, duplexes, triplexes, and higher-end apartments. Capacity for high-income households earning 120 percent AMI and above is



Residential neighborhood in Kennewick



Residential neighborhood with mixed types and sizes

provided through zones allowing detached single-family homes. Note that housing that has been developed or permitted since 2020 is counted towards meeting these projections, the baseline year for these housing unit projections set by the Department of Commerce.

Overall, this analysis found Kennewick has sufficient zoned capacity to meet both its overall housing target as well as its housing targets for moderate and high-income households under current zoning. However, the city has a deficit of 2,467 units at the 0-80 percent AMI category for units serving low-income households, as shown in the table below.

Figure 11. Comparison of Existing Housing Capacity to Aggregated Housing Growth Targets

Housing Need (% of AMI)	Zone Categories	2020–2046 Aggregated Target	Capacity	Surplus / (Deficit)	Units Requiring Subsidies / Incentives
0-≤80% & PSH	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, ADUs	6,889	4,422[1]	**(2,467)**	5,117[3]
>80 to ≤120%	Moderate Density	2,078	7,914	5,836	0
>120%	Low Density	2,659	13,206[2]	9,547	0
Total		**12,626**	**25,542[2]**	**12,916**	**5,117[3]**

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.

1 Includes capacity for 279 ADUs on developed residential lots and 365 guaranteed affordable middle housing units.

2 Includes capacity of 812 units in the unincorporated UGA (low density housing for households with incomes >120 percent AMI).

3 Includes 1,597 non-PSH units and 1,007 PSH units serving households with incomes between 0 to ≤30% AMI and 2,513 units serving households with incomes >30 to ≤50% AMI.

Note: Housing targets are aggregated by zone category consistent with Commerce's Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026 (e.g., aggregated targets for households with incomes between 0 to ≤80% AMI and for households with incomes >80 to ≤120% AMI).

Sources: Benton County, 2025; City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026.

The lists of zoning amendments below may change as the Comprehensive Plan proceeds through the adoption process in summer 2026.

In order to address this deficit, several zoning amendments are proposed. Those priority amendments concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan periodic update will likely include the following:

- Remove density limits in the RM and RH residential zones (this is the main update that will address the deficit for 0-80% AMI household capacity)Allow multifamily residential use in the Commercial Auto Row and Business Park zones
- Revise, clarify, and add regulations for emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing Revise minimum parking standards



Residential neighborhood with mixed types and sizes

Other zoning code amendments may need be made within six months of the Comprehensive Plan period update deadline for consistency between the plan and the code, such as :

- Zoning map changes consistent with the Future Land Use Map in the Land Use Element
- Consolidating commercial and industrial zones
- Limitations for new detached single-family residential uses in the RM and RH zones and commercial zones
- Revisions to residential use standards, including how uses are permitted and supplemental criteria for approval
- Revised height limits in some residential zones, potentially paired with affordable housing incentives
- Modernizing the design standards
- Updating a variety of other development regulations

After review, the project team determined all of the zoning updates noted above will be adopted concurrently with the 2026 Comprehensive Plan to ensure Kennewick has sufficient capacity to meet its housing targets at all income levels, consistent with RCW 36.70A.115 which states that cities planning under the GMA "shall ensure that, taken collectively, adoption of and amendments to their comprehensive plans and/or development regulations provide sufficient capacity of land suitable for development within their jurisdictions to accommodate their allocated housing and employment growth." The table below summarizes the estimated total unit capacity over 20 years with these code changes included, with the exception of the Future Land Use Map and zoning map changes which are in progress.

Figure 12. Comparison of Housing Capacity to Housing Growth Targets With Updated Zoning Code

Housing Need (% of AMI)	Zone Categories	2020–2046 Aggregated Target	Capacity	Surplus / (Deficit)
0-≤80%	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, ADUs	6,889	6,968	79
>80 to ≤120%	Moderate Density	2,078	8,019	5,941
>120%	Low Density	2,659	13,206	9,547
Total		**12,626**	**28,193**	**15,567**

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.

IMPLEMENTATION

Special Needs Housing

- IBC – Chapter 11, Housing for Persons with Disabilities
- KMC 18.12.010 A.1 Group Living
- Tri-Cities Consolidated Plan 2025-2029
- Benton County Local Homeless Plan 2026-2030
- Tri-Cities Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing 2025-2029

Historic Preservation

- KMC 18.57 Historic Preservation

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HOUSING GOALS & POLICIES

This updated goal has a number of new policies to expand on how the City can use regulations and educational efforts to attract the private market and affordable housing builders to provide the variety of housing supply Kennewick needs today and in the future.

Goal H-1 **Housing Supply.** Support and develop an adequate supply and variety of housing types and densities to meet the diverse needs of the population.

Policy H-1.1 Ensure the Comprehensive Plan provides an adequate supply of residentially zoned land to accommodate Kennewick's housing growth targets, consistent with population projections, for households at all income levels, including extremely low, very low, low, and moderate incomes.

Policy H-1.2 Promote a variety of residential densities and housing types in all price ranges to meet a range of housing needs and respond to changing needs and preferences.

A. Different housing types include, but are not limited to, single-family residences, middle housing, multifamily dwellings, mixed-use buildings, co-living, live-work, workforce housing, and accessory dwelling units.
B. Allow a variety of housing types in residential zones and allow development flexibility such as by lowering or removing minimum lot sizes, increasing allowable building height, and reducing parking minimums.
C. Promote administrative tools like lot splits and unit lot subdivisions in residential neighborhoods (RCW 58.17.060 and 58.17.145).

Policy H-1.2 Promote the efficient use of residential land to maximize development potential and make the most use of municipal infrastructure. Encourage infill development with new housing units on vacant or under-utilized land throughout the city. Promote compact and walkable residential development where infrastructure is more readily available or can be improved.

Policy H-1.3 Allow accessory dwelling units in all residential zones, promoting flexible housing options in existing neighborhoods consistent with state law (RCW 36.70A.681). Consider tools to promote accessory dwelling units as affordable housing options, such as requiring rent-restrictions in exchange for City financial support to property owners or for use of pre-approved plans.

Policy H-1.4 Support the development of co-living and shared housing arrangements, ensuring they meet health, safety, and neighborhood compatibility standards while expanding affordable housing opportunities.

Policy H-1.5 Promote and increase the number of Downtown housing units in rehabilitated buildings, new buildings, and conversion of underutilized commercial space.



Single-family housing in Kennewick



Townhome complex in Kennewick

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Policy H-1.6 Expand homeownership opportunities by permitting and encouraging the development of smaller and lower-cost homes, such as middle housing, accessory dwelling units, and condominiums. Permit a variety of land ownership options such as unit lot subdivision, community land trusts, tenant opportunity to purchase programs, limited equity cooperatives, co-ops, and sweat equity.

Policy H-1.7 Ensure that City fees and permitting time are balanced between housing affordability considerations and the need for supporting City services.

Policy H-1.8 Periodically evaluate City development standards and regulations to ensure they reflect market trends and, where appropriate, modify development regulations that unnecessarily add to housing costs and may reduce the feasibility of building affordable housing. Periodically assess the amount of housing produced under these standards.



Alley-access carriage house ADU, West Seattle

DRAFT

This updated goal has a number of new and updated policies to provide more specific affordable housing direction.

Goal H-2 **Housing Affordability and Access.** Promote affordable housing for all economic segments of the community and reduce disparities in housing access.

Policy H-2.1 Promote the development and preservation of housing affordable to all income levels, including extremely low, very low, and low income households, through a combination of regulatory tools, funding programs, and land use incentives to expand housing opportunities across the community.

Policy H-2.2 Encourage infill development of affordable housing and middle housing through zoning reform, flexible design standards, and streamlined permitting. Promote affordable housing for low-income households in areas served by transit.

Policy H-2.3 Develop and implement regulatory and financial strategies to support a range of housing types, including affordable housing options, by building on and connecting tools such as density bonuses, parking reductions, pre-approved plans, fee waivers, and permit expediting to encourage the development of housing that is affordable at below market-rate.

Policy H-2.4 Consider adopting a local multifamily tax exemption program (MFTE) to incentivize the development of rent-restricted multifamily housing. Explore a full range of policy options, such as program duration, affordability levels, and eligible zones. Evaluate opportunities for development bonuses for projects that participate in MFTE, such as increased building height or density limits.

Policy H-2.5 Promote homeownership opportunities for households of all income levels by leveraging tools such as down payment assistance, low-interest loans, and credit repair programs, with a focus on advancing housing equity and supporting historically underserved communities.

Policy H-2.6 Adopt regulations to discourage redevelopment of existing manufactured/mobile home parks in order to preserve an existing form of affordable housing.

Policy H-2.7 Provide educational support for property owners on state law requirements for relocation assistance for low-income residents upon the demolition or substantial rehabilitation of housing, consistent with state law (including RCW 58.18.085, 59.18.440, and 59.21.021).

Policy H-2.8 Maintain and strengthen coordination with Benton County Human Services and local nonprofit providers to support homelessness outreach and services, and identify opportunities to improve service over time with a "housing first" approach.

Policy H-2.9 Permit and regulate emergency housing, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing (PSH), and transitional housing consistent with state law to help people experiencing disabilities, housing insecurity, and homelessness to transition to more stable and secure housing. Support the development of shelters and supportive housing near services and transit access.



Affordable housing development in Kennewick

DRAFT

Policy H-2.10 Address the lasting effects of past policies that contributed to unequal housing patterns and outcomes for people of color and low-income households. This can include regulations and policies that support a variety of new housing development throughout Kennewick, and prioritizing public investments (such as in parks, utilities, and transportation) in neighborhoods with higher concentrations of these communities.

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This updated goal focuses on existing buildings and how Kennewick can directly assist or educate property owners on keeping up maintenance or renovations to ensure homes are comfortable and safe.

Goal H-3 **Housing Quality.** Encourage housing stock to be maintained in good condition through design and construction standards and preservation of the public and private investments.

Policy H-3.1 Encourage the preservation, rehabilitation, and, where appropriate, redevelopment of existing housing stock through public and private investments, abatement of irreparable structures, use of HUD and other funding programs, support for the Historic Preservation Commission, and neighborhood-based improvement initiatives.

Policy H-3.2 Continue using funding and maintenance programs, such as use of Community Development Block Grants, to preserve or rehabilitate housing that is showing signs of deterioration due to lack of maintenance or abandonment.

Policy H-3.3 Permit and encourage the development of manufactured, prefabricated, and modular housing as affordable housing options. Recognize manufactured homes as an important component of the housing market and regulate them in the same way as site-built homes.

Policy H-3.4 Encourage the construction and upgrade of housing with increased standards for soundproofing and weatherproofing to mitigate aircraft and traffic noise, adapt to the effects of climate change and extreme weather, and improve energy efficiency.

Policy H-3.5 Provide educational resources and simple permitting processes that encourage owners of older residential buildings to convert from wood and fossil fuel heating sources to electric heating and heat pumps.

Policy H-3.6 Adequately and fairly enforce zoning and building codes to abate abandoned properties and ensure rental housing is safe, livable, and well-maintained.

Policy H-3.7 Ensure existing single-household residences are protected from issues of non-conformity in the event a home is substantially damaged and must be rebuilt.

Policy H-3.8 Promote healthy, livable, and functional forms of housing at all scales through code provisions that provide for usable open space and/or recreational facilities, pedestrian connectivity, and safe and welcoming development frontages.



Multi-family apartment complex in Kennewick

DRAFT

This new goal focuses directly on partnerships with other public agencies and nonprofit housing developers, acknowledging that the City does not directly build housing and needs the support of its neighbors and partner agencies.

Goal H-4 **Partnerships for Affordable Housing.** Partner with Benton County, Kennewick Housing Authority, and other entities and programs to increase the economic diversity of the housing supply.

Policy H-4.1 Collaborate with other jurisdictions and organizations, including the Kennewick Housing Authority and non-profit housing developers, to expand affordable housing for low and very low-income households, ensuring efforts align with state and regional housing strategies and equity goals.

Policy H-4.2 Invite the Kennewick Housing Authority to participate in a variety of affordable housing opportunities and continue to provide City representation to the Kennewick Housing Authority and non-profit housing organizations.

Updated policy H-4.3 merges a policy from the Capital Facilities plan that better fits in this location.

Policy H-4.3 Encourage the reuse or disposition of surplus City-owned public land in ways that support community priorities, including affordable housing, public amenities, or other uses consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. Cooperate with the county, state, Port, school district, and other local and regional agencies to identify surplus publicly-owned land managed by non-City agencies which could be used for low and moderate-income housing, emergency housing, emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing (PSH), and transitional housing.

Policy H-4.4 Cooperate with housing providers in advocating for state, federal, and philanthropic funding to support development of housing for low- and moderate-income households.

Policy H-4.5 Allow an increased density bonus for affordable housing located on property owned by a religious organization, consistent with state law (RCW 36.70A.545 and RCW 35A.63.300).

Policy H-4.6 Promote, and where possible, expand utility cost savings programs to support affordable housing by building on existing initiatives such as energy-saving home improvement rebates and low-income weatherization programs. Explore and implement new goals, such as energy efficiency incentives, discounted utility rates for qualifying households, and partnerships with utility providers to reduce costs for low-income residents.



Mid-size apartment building in Kennewick

DRAFT

This new goal provides a brief, special focus on seniors and people with special needs (such as people with disabilities) who may need extra support to find the housing that fits their unique needs.

Goal H-5 **Seniors and Special Needs Housing.** Support the development and maintenance of housing for seniors, people with disabilities, and other populations not well-served by the general housing market.

Policy H-5.1 Promote a sufficient supply of housing for populations with unique needs, including independent living for seniors, assisted living, memory care, rehabilitation facilities, and supportive housing.

Policy H-5.2 Allow senior housing, group living facilities, nursing homes, and other similar housing types to be integrated into residential neighborhoods.

Policy H-5.3 Promote development of senior housing near essential services such as healthcare, transit, shopping, and community facilities to support independent and accessible living for older adults. Promote awareness of Universal Design improvements to improve accessibility.

Policy H-5.4 Support multi-generational housing and the capacity for Kennewick residents to age-in-place, including consideration of housing's location and proximity to services, housing design and access (e.g. availability of single-level and elevator-served housing), and the overall cost of housing for people on fixed incomes.



Multi-family housing development in Kennewick

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Capital Facilities

See Volume II for updates to the inventory, planning, financing, implementation, and reference sections of this Element.

INTRODUCTION

The **Capital Facilities Element** is a key component for local government planning that addresses services that are essential to a community and its ability to accommodate growth. These services are vital to the health, safety, and general welfare of the community at large. Consistent with WAC 365-196-415, capital facilities in Kennewick include transportation, water systems, sewer systems, stormwater systems, irrigation water facilities, schools, parks and recreation facilities, and police and fire protection facilities. Transportation facilities are discussed in the **Transportation Element** and irrigation water facilities are discussed in the **Utilities Element**. The City of Kennewick directly provides and maintains the other capital facilities except for schools.

Capital facilities are significant projects for jurisdictions to fund, build, and maintain, and the sooner a jurisdiction plans for its needs the better they can do to meet their needs. Planning for these services enables Kennewick to ensure that adequate public facilities are available to serve existing residents and businesses and future growth consistent with the City's future land use plan, long-term vision, and adopted service levels. By evaluating the need for services in conjunction with the **Land Use Element**, Kennewick can make fiscally responsible decisions with the future in mind.

In its delivery of services to its residents and businesses, Kennewick seeks to:

- Maintain best management practices for all facilities at all levels of operations;
- Take necessary steps to accommodate demands of growth on capital facilities;
- Consider economic constraints of financing capital facilities;
- Offer equitable distribution of physical and financial resources; and
- Make environmentally conscious decisions.

Growth Management Act

Local governments planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA) must include a Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) in their comprehensive plan that is coordinated with the larger land use planning process. In addition to defining what



capital facilities must, at a minimum, be included in the inventory and analysis, the **Capital Facilities Element** must consist of (RCW 36.70A.070):

- An inventory of existing facilities;
- A forecast of future needs for at least 20-year planning period;
- The proposed locations and capacities of planned facilities;
- At least a six-year financing plan for needed facilities., and
- A requirement to reassess the land use plan or planned facilities if probable funding falls short.

Kennewick's Capital Facilities Plan (CFP) refers collectively to both this **Capital Facilities Element** and to the associated **Capital Facilities Appendix**. The first four GMA requirements are addressed in the **Capital Facilities Appendix**. The fifth requirement is addressed in **Policy CF-1.4**.



Capital Facilities Planning Cycle

Figure 13 summarizes the types of capital facilities in Kennewick, providers, applicable plans that further guide the agencies, and adopted level of service standards. In Kennewick, transportation, water, and sewer are defined as Category 1 capital facilities that must be in place at the time of development or have a financial commitment in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six years. This is referred to as "concurrency" in GMA. Category 2 capital facilities as defined by Kennewick are emergency medical services, fire protection services, parks, police services, and stormwater facilities. The City uses adopted LOS standards for these facilities to guide planning and funding decisions, but facilities and services are not required concurrent with development.

Figure 13. Kennewick Capital Facility Service Providers, Guiding Plans, and Service Standards

Facility/Service	Provider(s)	Description	Applicable Plans	Level of Service
Category 1				
Transportation	City of Kennewick; WSDOT; Benton County; Benton-Franklin Transit	Air, water, and land transportation facilities and services.	See the **Transportation Element**.	See the **Transportation Element**.
Water	City of Kennewick	Infrastructure for providing drinking water and water for fire suppression.	City of Kennewick Water Comprehensive Plan (2017)	Domestic Water: 170 gallons per capita per day Commercial or Industrial Water: Per Water Comprehensive Plan
Sanitary Sewer	City of Kennewick	Wastewater systems using a combination of municipal sewers and	City of Kennewick General Sewer Plan Update (2024); Wastewater	Domestic Sewer: 120 gallons per capita per day Commercial or Industrial Sewer: Per General Sewer Plan

Facility/Service	Provider(s)	Description	Applicable Plans	Level of Service
		onsite wastewater disposal (septic).	Treatment Plant Facility Plan (2014 and 2021 amendment)	
Category 2				
Irrigation Water	Kennewick Irrigation District; Columbia Irrigation District	Infrastructure (primarily canals) for providing irrigation water.	See the **Utilities Element**.	See the **Utilities Element**.
Stormwater Detention	City of Kennewick	Manages water quality and flood risks to reduce flooding, improve water quality, and preserve natural resources.	City of Kennewick Stormwater Comprehensive Plan (2020) & Annual Supplements/Reports Southridge Area Stormwater Master Plan (2019) & Addendum (2020)	25-year storm
Parks & Recreation	City of Kennewick	Provide parks, trails, recreation facilities, and open space.	City of Kennewick Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan (2024-2029) City of Kennewick Pathways & Trails Plan (2024)	8.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 population
Fire & EMS	City of Kennewick	Provide fire suppressions and EMS, including technical and special operations.	Resolution 24-01 Service Delivery Objectives (2024) Kennewick Fire Department Standards of Cover (2023) Kennewick Fire Department Strategic Plan (2022-2026)	Applies to 90% of events Fire Suppression; Technical Rescue; Hazardous Materials: 1:45 turnout time; 5:00 travel time; 6:45 response time Service Calls (All Types): 1:45 turnout time; 10:00 travel time; 11:45 response time EMS—Advanced Life Support (ALS, Med 3 & 4): 1:00 turnout time; 5:00 travel time; 6:00 response time EMS—Basic Life Support (BLS, Med 1 & 2): 1:00 turnout time; 8:30 travel time; 9:30 response time EMS—Peak Hour Unit (BLS, Med 1 & 2): 1:00 turnout time; 10:00 travel time; 11:00 response time

Facility/Service	Provider(s)	Description	Applicable Plans	Level of Service
Police & Law Enforcement	City of Kennewick	Provides facilities that support the provision of law enforcement services.	Kennewick Police Department Strategic Plan (2024-2025)	1.30 officers per 1,000 population
Schools	Kennewick School District	Provides facilities for instruction for Kennewick students.	Kennewick School District Capital Facilities Plan (2018-2028)	Elementary (K-3): 102 square feet/student; 20 students/class Elementary (4-5): 102 square feet/student; 25 students/class Middle School (6): 116 square feet/student; 28 students/class Middle School (7-8): 124 square feet/student; 28 students/class High School (9-12): 141 square feet/student; 28 students/class

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026.

In addition to the CFP, Kennewick uses various adopted functional plans, the Transportation Improvement Program, the Capital Improvement Program, and the **Transportation and Utilities Elements** of the Comprehensive Plan to meet the requirements of GMA as they relate to capital facilities. These plans listed in **Figure 13**, as amended, are incorporated by reference. The adoption by reference of other agencies' capital facilities plans is not intended to control or direct the City of Kennewick's land use planning—goals, policies, and implementing actions in the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan shall prevail, subject to the extent of the City's statutory authority, if the capital facility plans of other agencies addressed in **Figure 13** conflict.



Lawrence Scott Park Pickleball Comple›

Countywide Planning Policies

The GMA also requires consistency between Kennewick's **Capital Facilities Element** goals and policies and the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). More specifically, policies 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6 of the CPPs adopt state planning goals related to capital facilities and address capital facility planning and service levels in urban areas, Policy 11 addresses essential public facilities, and Policy 14 addresses transportation facilities and strategies.

Future Needs

Capital facilities are proposed to serve growth in the city over the 20-year planning period. Kennewick's **Land Use Element** contains goals and policies to plan for new housing and expected job growth. The City's six-year CIP identifies near term needs and projects the City reasonably expects to fund from 2025-2031. The financing plan in the **Capital Facilities Appendix** is consistent with the 2025-2031 CIP. The City's six-year project list is derived from the system plans identified in **Figure 13** above.

CAPITAL FACILITIES GOALS AND POLICIES

Combined Goal 1 and 2 with policies consolidated under the new combined Goal CF-1.

Goal CF-1 **Service Provision.** Provide Capital facilities and services necessary to serve adopted growth projections and planned land use patterns in the city and its unincorporated UGA.

Separated existing Policy CF-1.1 into two policies.

Policy CF-1.1 Plan capital facilities that have capacity and are located to serve existing development and future growth planned in the **Land Use Element**.

Policy CF-1.2 Locate and extend facilities and services within the UGA consistent with the **Land Use Element**.

Policy CF-1.3 Prioritize capital needs that are consistent with overall planning goals and community priorities.

Policy CF-1.4 Reassess and update the Land Use Element periodically to ensure that capital facility needs, financing, and service levels are consistent.

Policy CF-1.5 Adopt level of service (LOS) standards for individual services to measure performance and evaluate facility needs as defined in **Figure 13**.

Policy CF-1.6 Ensure LOS standards are being met within a reasonable amount of time and consistent with the City's concurrency standards to address impacts of development.

Policy CF-1.7 Ensure adequate public facilities are in place concurrent with development for Category 1 facilities.

Policy CF-1.8 Maintain and use updated departmental functional plans to guide development of capital properties and investment decisions within each functional area. Ensure functional plans are generally consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Policy CF-1.9 Acquire, reserve, and manage land necessary for present and future capital facilities in locations consistent with the **Land Use Element** and planned service areas.

Below policy is moved to the Housing Element, Goal H-4 in the Part 2 Second Draft.

Policy CF-1.10 Continuously manage and maintain public facilities and spaces to ensure safety, cleanliness, and long-term functionality through routine inspection and timely repair and maintenance.



Kennewick City Hall

CONCURRENT WITH DEVELOPMENT

"Concurrent with development" means the existence of adequate facilities, strategies, or services when developmen occurs or the existence of a financial commitment to provide adequate facilities, strategies, or services within six years of when development occurs.

FUNCTIONAL PLANS

The City maintains functional plans for many of Kennewick's capital facilities. These include the Water Comprehensive Plan, Comprehensive Stormwater Plan, General Sewer Plan, Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan, and the Pathways and Trails Plan. These plans are consistent with the **Capital Facilities Element** of the Comprehensive Plan anc contain more detailed analysis of many GMA required portions of the CFP (e.g., detailed inventories, service standards, analysis of future needs, financial feasibility, etc.) as well as any State or Federally required components. See Figure 11.

Goal CF-2 **Equitable Facility Siting.** Plan, design, and site capital facilities in a fair and equitable manner to ensure safe and efficient services are available for all residents, workers, and visitors.

Policy CF-2.1 Ensure that City-provided community facilities and services are appropriate for the size and composition of the populations they serve.

Policy CF-2.2 Add parkland, open space, green belt, trails and recreational facilities as growth occurs, consistent with the City's Parks and Recreation plan. Include consideration of neighborhood scale facilities to provide more local, convenient access to nearby residents. Prioritize addressing existing deficiencies where vulnerable communities are located.

Policy CF-2.3 Provide a diverse range of public recreation opportunities for all residents, workers, and visitors of the City of Kennewick.

Policy CF-2.4 Support the development and expansion of indoor recreation facilities, such as community centers, aquatic facilities, and gymnasiums, to provide year-round recreational opportunities that respond to community needs and support health and wellness for residents of all ages.

Policy CF-2.5 Coordinate planned capital investments across departments and with non-City-managed service providers, including Benton County (e.g., County administrative facilities, fairgrounds, etc.).

Policy CF-2.6 Coordinate with the local school district when planning for capital facilities to ensure alignment with school capacity, safety, and community needs.

Policy CF-2.7 Plan for the reinvestment, modernization, and potential expansion of City Hall and the broader municipal campus to ensure civic and administrative facilities continue to support efficient and equitable service delivery as the community grows.

Policy CF-2.8 Locate emergency service facilities to maximize ease of access and minimize response time. Consider physical barriers such as rail corridors and bridges when planning facility locations, including service coverage for areas north of the railroad tracks in the downtown area and central Kennewick. Pursue a borderless delivery model for emergency medical services in the Tri-Cities area.

Policy CF-2.9 Plan for the expansion and strategic siting of police facilities as needed to maintain effective citywide coverage, support public safety operations, and reduce response times.

Policy CF-2.10 Provide capital facilities and services that protect and minimize their impact on the natural environment, particularly to critical areas and cultural resources.

Policy CF-2.11 Incorporate consideration of physical health and well-being into decisions regarding the location, design, and operation of capital facilities. Site and design facilities to protect and promote public health, particularly in areas with vulnerable populations.



Southridge Sports & Events Complex



Kennewick public recreation spaces



Kennewick Police Department

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Policy CF-2.12 Encourage equitable public engagement and input, particularly from those most impacted, into large public capital facility projects to identify community needs and benefits.

Policy CF-2.13 Address stormwater management consistent with Ecology manuals for Eastern Washington.

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Goal CF-3 **Funding & Resilience.** Prioritize funding to maintain and invest in capital projects and ensure they are fiscally sustainable and designed for long-term resilience and resource conservation.

Policy CF-3.1 Maximize the use of existing facilities before investing in new facilities.

Policy CF-3.2 Use best management practices and best available technology in developing and managing all capital facilities and services.

Policy CF-3.3 Ensure new growth and development pay their proportionate share of the cost of new capital facilities needed to serve such growth and development.

Policy CF-3.4 Maximize the use of grants and other external resources and creative funding mechanisms (such as tax increment financing) to help increase the capacity of capital facilities that support the land use plan.

Policy CF-3.5 Consider subsequent operating and maintenance costs when planning for capital facilities.

Policy CF-3.6 Encourage and support public/private partnerships to provide and/or finance selected public facilities or amenities, such as parks and open spaces, or community centers, where appropriate.

Policy CF-3.7 Promote low-impact development techniques appropriate to site conditions and land use goals.

Policy CF-3.8 Encourage development in areas where new facilities can be provided or extended in an efficient manner.

Policy CF-3.9 Design capital facilities, particularly community and recreation centers, to be adaptable and flexible to expand or be converted to other uses as the community's needs change over time.

Policy CF-3.10 Design and build all capital facilities with a resiliency framework. Consider future climate conditions during siting and design to help ensure facilities can continue to exist and function as intended over their planned life cycle.

Policy CF-3.11 Enhance emergency services infrastructure and planning to prepare for climate-related risks, including extreme heat, wildfire, flooding, and other natural hazards. Consider opportunities to utilize irrigation service as a secondary resource for fire protection.

Policy CF-3.12 Consider citywide fire impact fees or school impact fees for system improvements that are reasonably related to or impacted by the new development. Ensure impact fees do not exceed a proportionate share of the costs of system improvements reasonably related to the new development.

Policy CF-3.13 Consider impact fee exemptions for affordable housing or other uses with public purposes as allowed by State law.



U.S. Postal Office in Kennewick



Kennewick fire station



City Hall

Policy CF-3.14 Ensure public works facilities—such as maintenance and operations yards, equipment storage, water and wastewater facilities, and vehicle/equipment garages—are adequately funded, maintained, and located to support timely, safe, and effective community services.

Policy CF-3.15 Ensure park and recreation facilities—such as parks, greenways, playgrounds, athletic facilities, pool and splash pads, community center, and maintenance and operation yards—are adequately funded, maintained, and located to support timely, safe, and effective park and recreation services.

New goals and policies below were developed using information/system deficiencies given on the drinking water system and sewer system in both the 2024 General Sewer Plan and 2022 Stormwater Comp Plan

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Goal CF-4 **Water & Sewer Access.** Manage water and sewer services sustainably, increase use efficiency, and in a manner that meets the needs of all communities in the City. Promote equitable access to quality drinking water and sewer service for all community members.

Policy CF-4.1 Support the protection of water resources from quality degradation due to drought, extreme heat, or other challenges posed by climate change. Limit the impact of capital facility and community development on the environment and local ecology.

Policy CF-4.2 Prioritize sufficient aquifer recharge for continued use as water sources by limiting the creation of impervious areas where feasible. Promote protection of aquifer water supplies from contamination by minimizing comingling with polluted irrigation or stormwater runoff.

Policy CF-4.3 Support education efforts and outreach to promote efficient water use in all communities.

Policy CF-4.4 Promote conversion from septic systems where sewer capacity is available or planned.

Policy and goals below were developed using information/system deficiencies given on the stormwater system in the 2022 Stormwater Comp Plan

Goal CF-5 **Stormwater Resilience.** Enhance the City's stormwater infrastructure and protection against storm-related flooding.

Policy CF-5.1 Prioritize replacing deteriorating or failing stormwater piping, drywells, and other infrastructure. Track and upsize piping that is too small to carry storm flows or properly maintain.

Policy CF-5.2 Promote maintenance of stormwater systems that mitigate or exacerbate flooding during seasonal storm or snowmelt events. Monitor and prepare for extreme shifts in storm severity due to climate change.

Policy CF-5.3 Encourage adequate protection from flooding or flood damage for all communities, including those that are historically underserved or marginalized.

Policy CF-5.4 Encourage the use of non-potable water for residential and commercial landscape management where it is available, such as captured stormwater, harvested stormwater, or reclaimed water.



Kennewick Civic Center signage



Tri-cities airport in Pasco



Kennewick Fire Station #3

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IMPLEMENTATION

City's Functional Plans

- City of Kennewick, Water Comprehensive Plan
- City of Kennewick, Comprehensive Stormwater Plan
- City of Kennewick, **Transportation Element**
- City of Kennewick, General Sewer Plan
- City of Kennewick, Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan
- City of Kennewick, Pathways and Trails Plan

Others

- Annual Budget – appropriation of Capital Projects
- KMC 4.12.055
- City of Kennewick Resolution No. 02-21 – establishing conditions for water and sewer extensions and connections in the County
- Park Fees – KMC 3.90 and KMC 17.100.010
- Fire Fees (Southridge) – KMC 3.95
- Interlocal Agreement – Water Intertie with City of Richland, March 5, 1975
- Benton County Countywide Planning Policies # 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 11, and 14
- Local Improvement Districts
- Latecomers Agreements

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Utilities

INTRODUCTION

This section addresses utilities owned and operated by entities other than the City, such as electricity, telecommunication, and natural gas. The City-owned utilities, such as water and sewer, are discussed in the **Capital Facilities Element** of the Comprehensive Plan.

Rather than each utility being planned independently, it is more efficient for a coordinated effort to provide such utilities. The Benton-Franklin Utility Coordinating Council works to address some of these issues. The Council is comprised of members from local jurisdictions and utility companies. The City and utility providers also participate in energy conservation measures through recycling, green power, and energy-efficient construction methods.

Statutory Requirements Under GMA

Utilities are mandated items for the Comprehensive Plans of the cities and counties in Washington State, according to the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA requires municipalities to address general location, proposed location and capacity of all existing and proposed utilities GMA suggests that cities and counties coordinate with non-municipal service providers to include an analysis of the capacity needs of various utilities over the 20-year planning period.

FACILITIES AND DISTRICT CHARACTERISTICS

Non-City owned utilities are those utilities privately owned or owned by public entities other than the municipality in which they provide services. Usually electric lines, telecommunication lines, and natural gas lines fall under this category. Non-City owned utilities that serve Kennewick are:

- The Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)
- Benton County Public Utility District (PUD)
- Cascade Natural Gas Company (CNG)
- Kennewick Irrigation District (KID)
- Columbia Irrigation District (CID)
- Charter Communications (Spectrum brand)
- Ziply Fiber, and
- Waste Management (WM)



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Unlike City utilities providing services mostly to City residents, non-City owned utilities are not necessarily restricted by City boundaries. They have the option of serving customers both in the City and in the surrounding areas. Service districts for these utilities are varied in size and boundaries, and are established in a myriad of ways. Generally, franchise agreements between the City and the utility provider determine the conditions and terms of the service.

Most of the boundaries of these service districts overlap, and some are identical with existing City boundaries. Charter Communications (Spectrum) provides cable television and broadband services within the City pursuant to franchise authority and may also serve adjacent unincorporated areas.

Public Utility District No. 1 of Benton County (Benton PUD) is the retail electric provider serving Kennewick. Benton PUD is a customer of the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) for wholesale power supply. BPA is a federal power marketing administration within the U.S. Department of Energy that markets power generated at federal hydroelectric projects in the Pacific Northwest and operates a regional high-voltage transmission system. Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) and Columbia Irrigation District (CID) are municipal corporations of the State of Washington formed under Title 87 RCW. They deliver irrigation water within defined service areas that include portions of Kennewick and surrounding communities.

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation (CNG) is an investor-owned natural gas distribution utility regulated by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) and operates within the City under a franchise agreement.

Ziply Fiber is the incumbent local exchange carrier in much of the former Frontier Northwest service territory and provides wireline voice and broadband services within Kennewick pursuant to applicable state authority and franchise agreements.

WM (Waste Management of Washington, Inc.) provides solid waste collection and related services within Kennewick under a franchise agreement with the City.

A Utility Coordinating Council, administered by the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments, coordinates trenching activities, utility mapping, capital project scheduling, and long-range infrastructure planning among participating jurisdictions and utility providers. The Council also coordinates underground utility locating in accordance with Washington's Underground Utilities and Damage Prevention law (RCW 19.122) and the statewide 811 one-call system. Membership includes representatives from cities within Benton and Franklin Counties, Benton PUD, Cascade Natural Gas, Kennewick Irrigation District, Columbia Irrigation District, and other regional utility providers.



Underground pipe



Benton PUD campus sign

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UTILITIES GOALS + POLICIES

Goal U-1 **Responsible Utility Planning.** Coordinate non-City utility providers and to ensure timely, efficient, and equitable provision of service that support planned growth, sufficient supply, efficiency of production and distribution, and promote climate resilience.

Policy U-1.1 Encourage coordinated service extensions of all utilities to new developments that align with growth areas, minimize service disruption to existing customers, promote equitable access to service, and support efficient infrastructure investment.

Policy U-1.2 Support the Benton-Franklin Utility Coordinating Council by sharing data, aligning permitting and planning processes, and helping to site regional utility facilities in a manner that is timely, consistent with local land use plans and equity principals, and minimizes harm to the local ecosystem.

Policy U-1.3 Support design of urban services for the buildout capacity where feasible, supporting phased infrastructure investment alignment with adopted LOS Standards of a given area as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

Policy U-1.4 Promote the expansion of the City's electrical capacity for industrial use, and encourage electrical system upgrades to further accommodate industrial customers.

Policy U-1.5 Coordinate with emergency response services and utility providers to ensure quick and effective responses to utility-related emergencies, improving community preparedness, resilience, and rapid restoration of services.

Policy U-1.6 Support the use of renewable energy technologies and climate-resilient infrastructure in new utility systems. Build resilience and capacity to prepare for increased energy demand by enhancing energy and resource efficiency and diversifying the grid.

Policy U-1.7 Encourage utility upgrades and extensions that address service gaps in underserved or disadvantaged neighborhoods.



Solar panels at Benton PUD

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Goal U-2 **Utility Efficiency.** Support efficient use and conservation measures for new construction and renovation.

Policy U-2.1 Siting of necessary new utility facilities shall be consistent with the growth indicated in the **Land Use Element**. Opportunities to renovate existing utilities before adding new facilities should be considered.

Policy U-2.2 Encourage green building principles in construction and renovation using alternative energy, energy efficient utility fixtures, and recycling.

Policy U-2.3 Low Impact Development (LID) practices into utility planning, infrastructure design, and capital projects. Partner with utility providers to support implementation in new construction to reduce system demand and enhance resource efficiency.

Goal U-3 **Utility Aesthetics.** Encourage aesthetic compatibility of utility facilities with surrounding land uses and promote opportunities to develop recreation facilities.

Policy U-3.1 Promote joint use of transportation rights-of-way, utility corridors, and utility structures where feasible. Coordinate with other utility providers to ensure that the use of rights-of-way and easements is consistent with City street design and landscape standards.

Policy U-3.2 Utilize franchise agreements and street reconstruction projects to accomplish undergrounding of new and existing utility facilities.

Policy U-3.3 Utilize street reconstruction projects to underground new and existing utility facilities.

Policy U-3.4 Encourage irrigation district rights-of-way to be used for connecting trails consistent with the City's Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan, coordinating with irrigation districts per the Pathways and Trails Master Plan.

Policy U-3.5 Plan, locate, and design public facilities and utilities in ways that align with the City's land-use designations and neighborhood character. Facility planning should reflect the intended scale and intensity of each area while maintaining the service levels outlined in the **Capital Facilities Element**.



Kennewick canal system

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Goal U-4 **Accessible Telecommunication Services.** Promote access to telecommunication services for businesses and residents and site new telecommunication facilities in a way that minimizes impacts.

Policy U-4.1 Promote the timely and orderly expansion of all forms of telecommunications service within the City and its planning area.

Policy U-4.2 Coordinate with communication utilities to ensure adequate telephone services and high-speed internet service in the community.

Policy U-4.3 Require the placement, siting, location, and design of wireless communication and telecommunications facilities in a manner that minimizes the adverse impacts on the environment and adjacent land uses.

Goal U-5 **Accessible Utilities.** Ensure equitable access to reliable, high-quality utility services for all communities, including historically underserved and marginalized populations.

Policy U-5.1 Provide utility-related information and communication materials in multiple languages and accessible formats to ensure all community members can understand and engage with utility services and programs.

Policy U-5.2 Develop and promote utility assistance programs that provide financial support for underserved or vulnerable populations, ensuring equitable access to utility services and helping to alleviate the burden of utility costs.

Goal U-6 **Solid Waste Reduction Through Education.** Encourage the continued implementation and promotion of educational programs aimed at reducing solid waste management practices within the community.



Policy U-6.1 Promote community-wide education campaigns that raise awareness about waste reduction, recycling, and composting, with a focus on reducing single-use plastics and other non-recyclable materials.



Policy U-6.2 Encourage the development and implementation of waste minimization strategies for construction and demolition projects to reduce landfill waste and promote recycling.



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Goal U-7 **Programmatic Solid Waste Reduction.** Encourage the continued implementation and promotion of educational programs aimed to ensure Kennewick residents and businesses can reduce, reuse, and recycle waste materials.

Policy U-7.1 Explore opportunities to expand waste reduction and recycling programs to divert recyclable waste from entering landfills. This could include proactively collaborating with neighboring jurisdictions to invest in new waste management options and provide recycling and composting services consistent with recent state laws, including RCW 70A.205 and RCW 70A.208.

Policy U-7.2 Consider increasing staff and facility capacity to accept additional yard waste and compostables to divert organic waste from entering landfills.

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IMPLEMENTATION

Utility Review

- KMC 5.56 – Public Works and Construction Standards
- KMC 9.04 – Garbage
- KMC 17.10.220 – Final Plat – Utility Companies
- KMC 17.20.010 – Design & Construction
- City of Kennewick Standard Specifications and Details for Municipal Public Works Construction – Standard drawing numbers 2-1 through 2-5 (KMC 5.56.030(7) and 5.56.040)
- DPW policies on street improvement

Underground Utilities

- KMC 5.56.260 and 5.56.270 – Installation of Underground Utilities
- KMC 17.20.020 – Underground Utilities and Street Lights
- Design Standards – Arterial and Residential Street Landscaping
- Franchise agreements with various utilities
- KAC 12.80 – Right-of-Way Procedure
- Recommended Guidelines from Benton Franklin Utility Coordination Council
- RCW 19.122 – Underground Utilities

Siting

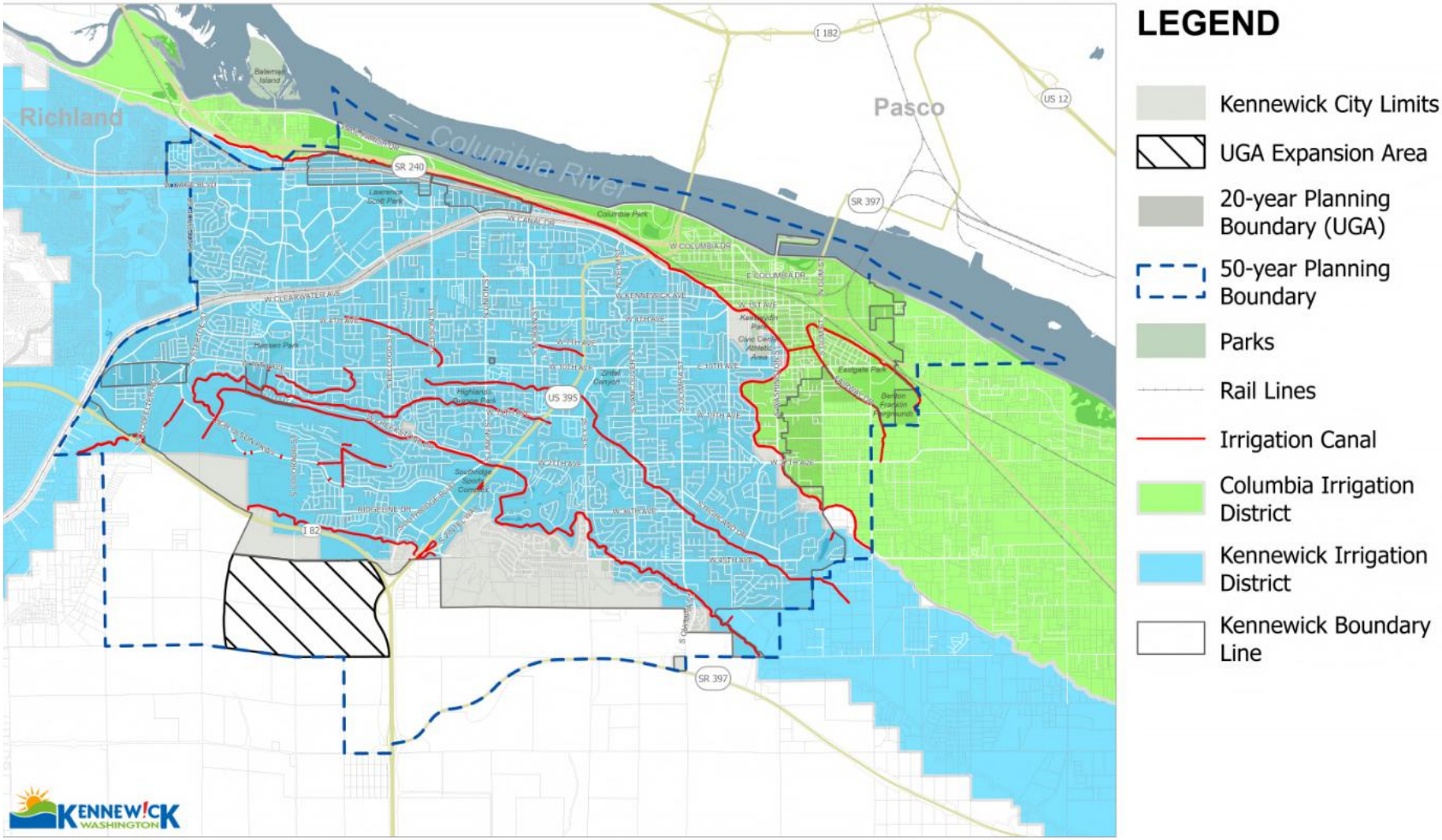
- Kennewick Comprehensive Plan – **Land Use Element** – Essential Public Facilities Section

Recycling and Green Building

- KMC 9.04.110 – Resource Recovery
- Washington State Energy Code – Chapter 51-11 WAC

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Figure 14. Irrigation Districts



Transportation

INTRODUCTION

The **Transportation Element** identifies improvement projects and programs, and policies to guide the development of an integrated multimodal transportation system. The **Transportation Element** builds off prior planning efforts for the City and its urban growth area (UGA). The current **Transportation Element** has a planning horizon of 2046 to provide a long-range assessment of facility needs. The long-range evaluation assists the City and neighboring communities to preserve needed rights-of-way and provide for forward-compatible network planning as development and capital investment opportunities arise.

The **Transportation Element** of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan is based on and complies with the objectives and requirements of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA). The **Transportation Element** also is consistent and compatible with State, regional, County, and adjacent local municipality transportation plans.

Statutory Requirements Under GMA

The **Transportation Element** of the Comprehensive Plan is a required element under GMA (RCW 36.70A.070). It is designed to implement and be consistent with the **Land Use Element**. Safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services is the primary purpose of transportation planning. To accomplish this, the system must be internally consistent, coordinated between modes, and link appropriately with neighboring jurisdictions and the region.

INVENTORY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

This section summarizes key components of the existing transportation system serving the City of Kennewick that represent the transportation system in its current condition.

Air Transportation

The closest commercial airport to Kennewick is the Tri-Cities Airport, located in the City of Pasco and operated by the Port of Pasco. It is located just north of the junction of US 395 and I-182. The region also has two other airports: the Richland Airport, and the Prosser Airport. Along with the Tri-Cities Airport in Pasco, these three airports are part of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) National Plan of Integrated Airport Systems (NPIAS). This inclusion enables these



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facilities to receive funding through the federal Airport Improvement Program (AIP). Within the City, the former Vista Field Airport has closed airport operations and is being redeveloped into other uses.

Water Transportation

The Kennewick urban growth boundaries contain eight miles of Columbia River shoreline on the northern side of the City. There is no public transportation on the Columbia River owned or operating from Kennewick. Private barge services have Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) authority to serve the area and are available for shipping bulk agricultural products, containerized storage, and liquid fuels & fertilizers from the area to the lower Columbia River.

Rail Transportation

The Burlington Northern Santa Fe and the Union Pacific Railroads both offer mainline rail service in Kennewick. Burlington Northern maintains approximately eight miles of mainline track and a complex of sidetracks within Kennewick. Each intersection of mainline track with a city street is signalized. The sidetracks are not signalized. The Union Pacific Railroad owns approximately eight miles of mainline track in Kennewick, with seven signalized crossings. They own no additional property within the City.

The Port of Kennewick owns one track section within the City. The Port maintains the track lines, ties, switches and crossings. The Port of Benton owns approximately 1-1/2 mile of industrial track within the City of Kennewick limits.

Amtrak provides intercity passenger rail service. The Amtrak station is located in Pasco and shares tracks with BNSF. The route between Pasco and Portland goes through the northeast portion of Kennewick.

Public Transit Transportation

Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) is a municipal corporation, which provides public transportation services in a 624-square mile area known as the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA), BFT's PTBA covers portions of Benton and Franklin Counties including the jurisdictions of West Richland, Prosser, Benton City, Richland, Kennewick, Finley, and Pasco. BFT is funded with six-tenths of one percent of all sales tax dollars generated within the PTBA. BFT funding is supplemented with fare box revenues, federal funding and state funding.

Fixed-route buses operate Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm, Saturday from 7:00am to 10:00pm, and Sunday from 8:00 am to 6:30 pm. Additionally, BFT offers two on-demand services: CONNECT, which allows riders to travel to fixed route stop locations within six zones, and General Demand Service, which connects riders in Benton City and Prosser to pre-designated fixed route stop locations. Dial-A-Ride (DAR) is specialized door-to-door transportation for people whose disabilities limit their ability to use the fixed-route bus system. BFT exceeds requirements set forth in the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) by providing Paratransit service within the PTBA. Service provided outside the ¾ mile of fixed routes requires a premium fare. Operating hours for Paratransit services are the same as fixed route.

BFT's Vanpool program is a ride share alternative for those with long commutes. Volunteer drivers and riders share the cost of fuel, maintenance, and insurance through a monthly fare to utilize BFT vans. Vanpool drivers are fellow commuters, responsible for collecting the monthly fee and fueling the vehicle. The monthly Vanpool fare is based upon miles traveled.



City of Kennewick from the air



Columbia River bridge

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Transit centers located in Kennewick are the Dayton Street Transit Center and the Three Rivers Transit Center on Okanogan Place. Kennewick has two "park and ride" facilities located at 27th Avenue & S. Union Street and at W Falls Avenue within the US 395 right-of-way.

Truck Corridors

The Washington State Freight and Goods Transportation System (FGTS) classifies highways, county roads, and city streets according to the average annual gross truck tonnage they carry. The FGTS uses five truck classifications, T-1 through T-5, depending on the annual gross tonnage the roadway carries. Corridors with the highest annual gross tonnage, T-1 and T-2 routes, are also identified as Strategic Freight Corridors. The I-82 and US 395 corridors are classified as T-1 corridors as is N Columbia Center Boulevard between W Clearwater Avenue and SR 240. Portions of SR 240, W Clearwater Avenue, N Edison Street, N Steptoe Street and Columbia Drive are classified as T-2 corridors.



I-82 corridor

Truck Routes for vehicles over 14,000 pounds of gross weight are restricted to these road segments:

- Columbia Drive from US 395 interchange to SR 397
- SR 397 from northern City limits to southern City limits
- US 395 from northern City limits to southern City limits.
- Steptoe Street from SR 240 to W Clearwater Avenue
- N Columbia Center Boulevard from SR 240 to W Clearwater Avenue
- N Edison Street from SR 240 to W Clearwater Avenue
- W Clearwater Avenue from Badger Road/I 82 to US 395

Street Network

Federal requirements determine that all public roads in the United States are to be uniformly classified by function. KMC 13.04 Classification of Public Streets identifies the four major types of public streets. They are classified and described in **Figure 15**. The City of Kennewick functional classification map is shown in **Figure 16**.



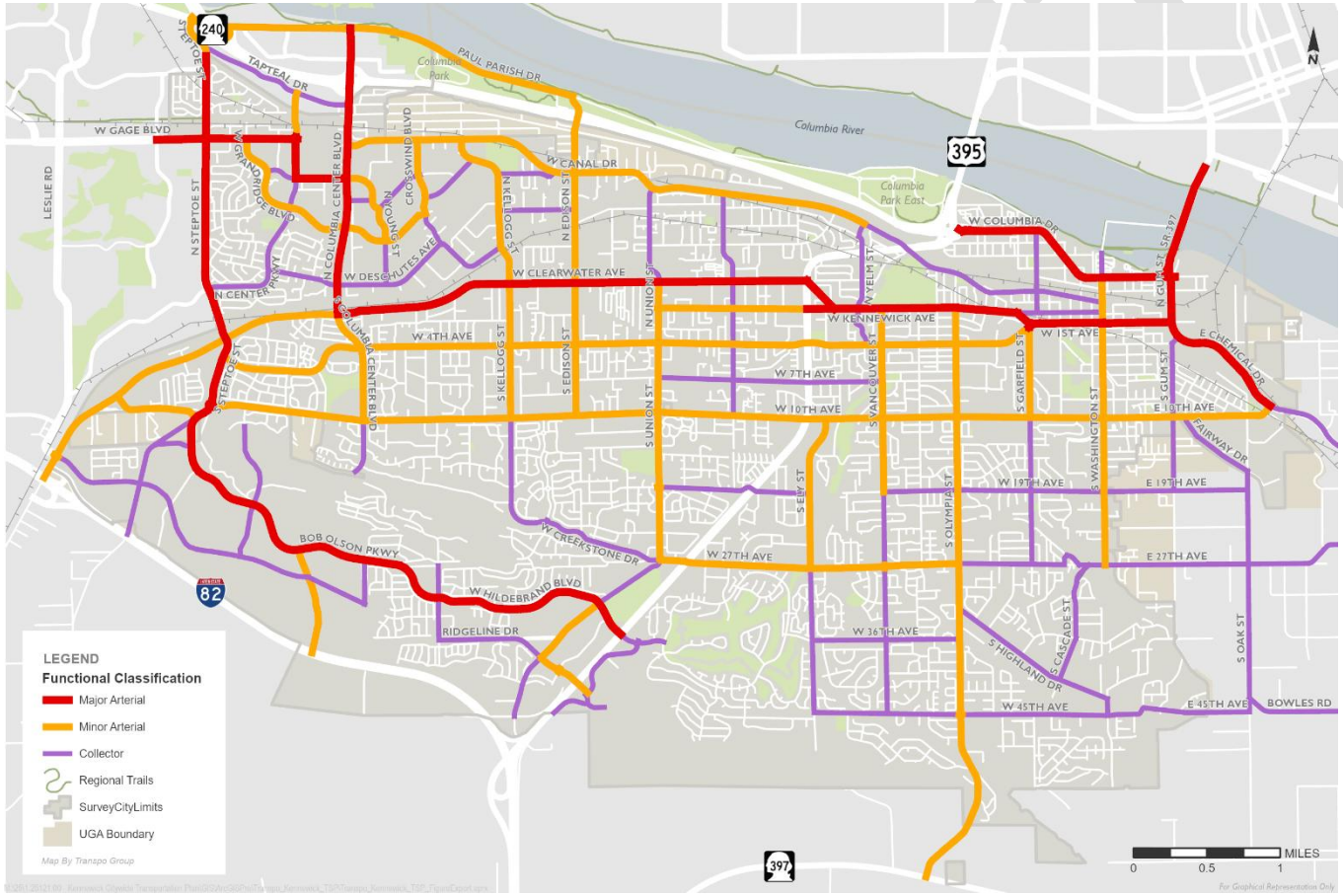
Streets in Kennewick

Figure 15. Functional Street Classification

Classification	Description
1. Principal Arterials	Intercommunity and intrametro area streets that are primarily used for traffic movement. Their general characteristics include moderate to high speeds that are generally thirty-five (35) mph to fifty-five (55) mph, high traffic generators, and no on street parking.
2. Minor Arterials	Intercommunity and intrametro area streets that provide primarily for traffic movement and secondarily for land access. Their general characteristics include moderate speeds (30 mph to 40 mph) and moderate to high traffic volumes (1,500 to 16,000 vehicles per day), some restriction on traffic movements, controlled driveway spacing and on street parking is generally prohibited.
3. Collectors	Collectors are streets that their primary function is to collect and distribute traffic between the local street system and the arterial street system. Collectors also provide for land access

Classification	Description
	and inter-neighborhood traffic movement. Their general characteristics include low speeds (25 mph to 30 mph), low to moderate traffic volumes (500 to 5,000 vehicles per day), limited regulation of access control, and limited on-street parking.
4. Local Access	Locals are streets that primarily serve direct land access with the secondary function of traffic movement. Their general characteristics include: Low speeds (25 mph), low traffic volumes (less than 1,500 vehicles per day), few access controls, and parking is generally permitted.

Figure 16. Kennewick Functional Classification



Bicycle Network

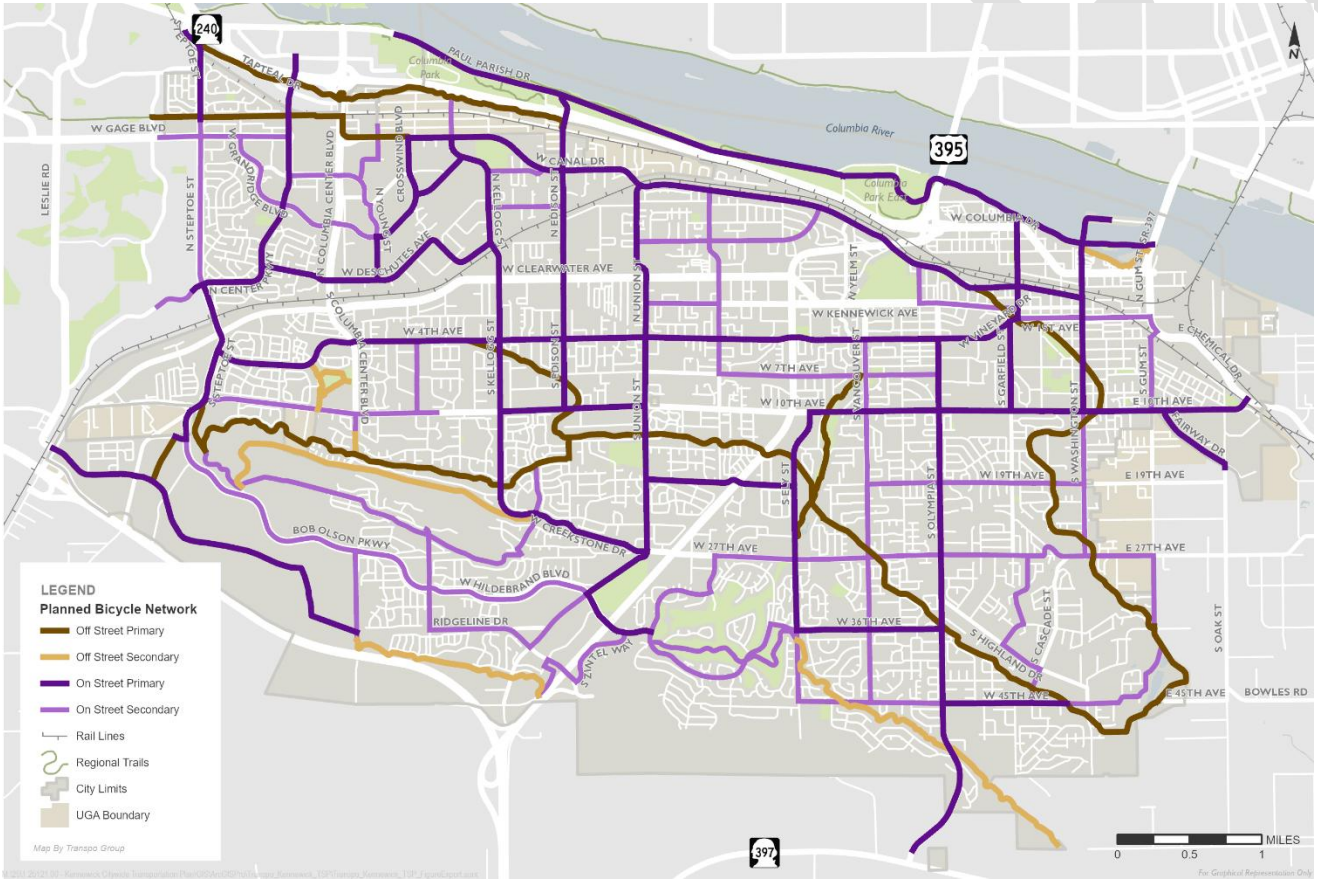
The city's bicycle network is small but growing, with a focus on creating multiuse pathways on former rail rights-of-way and existing canals, in cooperation with Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) and the Columbia Irrigation District (CID) through the Pathways and Trails Master Plan. Recently completed projects include the Keene Road Trail in the northwest corner of the city, with further plans to extend a multi-use trail via a former rail bed to Columbia Center Blvd and then along Canal Drive. Elsewhere in the city, the bicycle network consists of marked bike lanes and wide shoulders.

As part of the 2026 update to the Transportation Systems Plan, a network of roadways and off-street routes has been identified that will form the core of the bicycle facilities in Kennewick. These routes were developed along corridors identified in the 2017 Transportation Systems Plan, the Richland Active Transportation Plan, existing Kennewick Pathways and Trails, and BFCOG Bicycle master plans. Route priority was established based on alignment with local arterials and collectors, as well as the availability of rights-of-way in planning for needed improvements. Improvement projects are focused on bringing the primary connections into compliance with the city's bicycle level of service standards and creating new multiuse trails where none currently exist. **Figure 17** shows the planned bicycle network:



Public pathway for non-motorized transportation

Figure 17. Planned Bicycle Network



Pedestrian Network

Kennewick's sidewalk network is extensive and has been developed concurrently with the roadway network. Kennewick engineering design guidelines call for sidewalks on both sides of any new street, but with the actual construction of the sidewalks completed at time of property development. Improvements are needed in areas of the city where the sidewalk network is incomplete, where adjacent properties have not been developed yet, or where facility design and roadway conditions mean that the sidewalks do not meet the pedestrian level of stress standards established by the city.

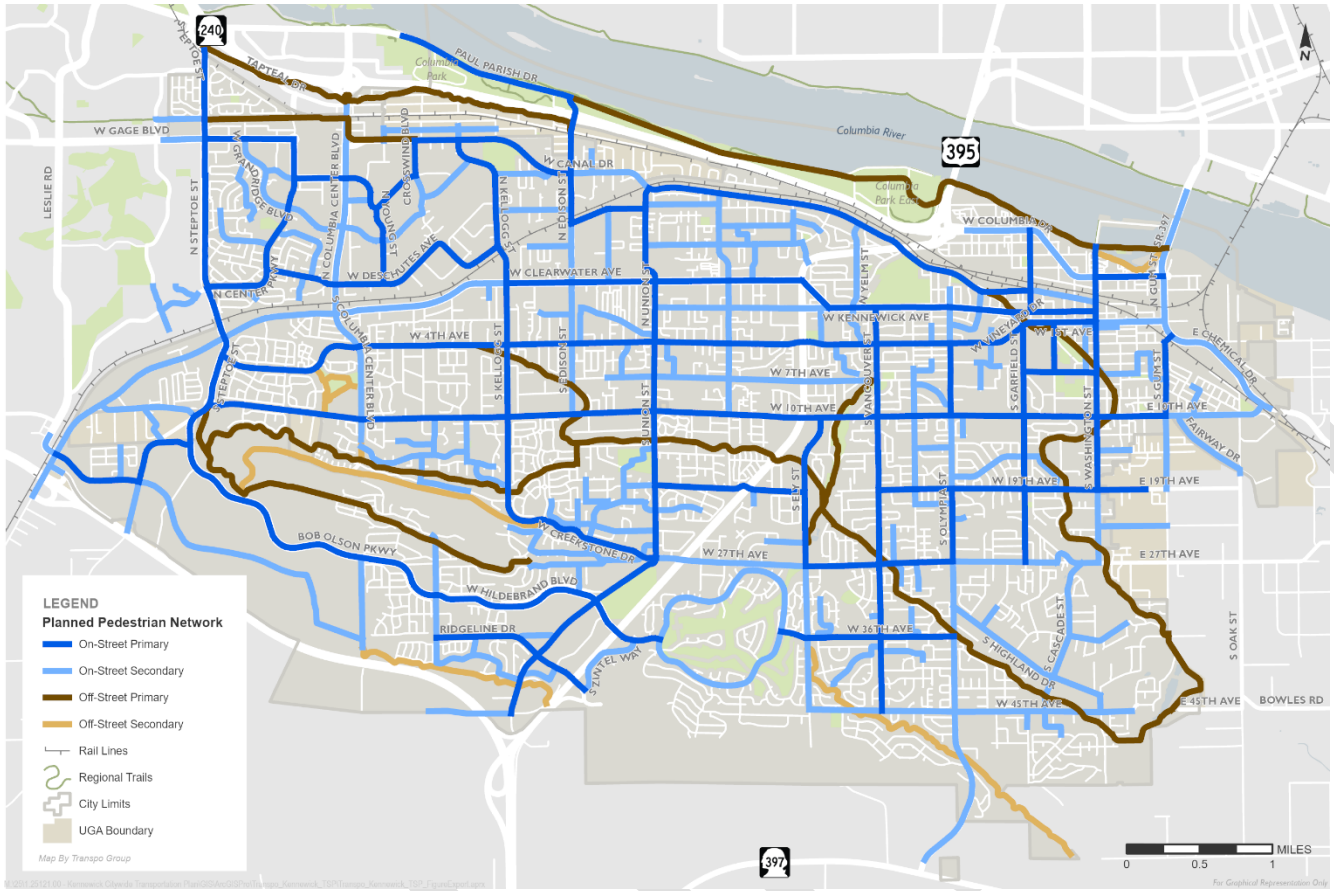
As part of the 2026 update to the Transportation Systems Plan, a network of priority routes for pedestrians was developed to guide future improvements. This network was developed with input from the Kennewick Pathways and Trails Master Plan, the BFCOG Safe Routes to School Plan and the modal priority network from the 2017 Transportation Systems Plan. Improvement projects will be focused on bringing the primary connections into compliance with the city's pedestrian level of service standards and creating new multi-use trails where none currently exist. The primary connections focus on improving first/last mile connections to high demand transit stops, improving connections between neighborhoods, as well as creating and connecting new regional, multi-use trails. **Figure 18** shows the planned pedestrian network:



Clover Island walking path

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Figure 18. Planned Pedestrian Network



LEVEL OF SERVICE STANDARDS

Vehicle Level of Service

Levels of service are qualitative measures established for various types of roadways using factors such as speed, freedom to maneuver, interruptions in the traffic flow, and convenience. Levels of service range from A to F and are defined by the Transportation Research Board. **Figure 19** identifies the general level of service classifications for area roads and streets. **Figure 20** contains the City of Kennewick vehicle levels of service standards for city streets:



Housing along main thoroughways

Figure 19. General LOS Definitions

Category	Definition
LOS A	Describes a condition of free flow with low volumes and higher speeds. Freedom to select desired speeds and to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely high. Stopped delay at intersections is minimal.
LOS B	Represents reasonably unimpeded traffic flow operations at average travel speeds. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is only slightly restricted and stopped delays are not bothersome. Drivers are not generally subjected to appreciable tensions.
LOS C	In the range of stable flow but speeds and maneuverability are more closely controlled by the higher volumes. The selection of speed is now significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream, and maneuvering within the traffic stream requires substantial vigilance on the part of the driver. The general level of comfort and convenience declines noticeably at this level.
LOS D	Represents high-density, but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted, and the driver or pedestrian experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level.
LOS E	Represents operating conditions at or near the maximum capacity level. Freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely difficult, and it is generally accomplished by forcing a vehicle or pedestrian to "give way" to accommodate such maneuvers. Comfort and convenience levels are extremely poor, and driver or pedestrian frustration is generally high. Operations at this level are usually unstable, because small increases in flow or minor disturbances within the traffic stream will cause breakdowns.

Figure 20. Vehicle Level of Service Standards

	LOS
Signalized or Roundabout Intersections	Level of Service F, for Steptoe Street/Gage Boulevard and Columbia Center Boulevard/Clearwater Avenue Level of Service D, all other intersections
Unsignalized Intersections or Driveways (Minor Street Approach)	Level of Service E
Unsignalized intersections or driveways when a second access point is within ¼ mile operating at LOS D or better and which is controlled by a traffic signal or roundabout.	Level of Service F

	LOS
Or situations where the side street volumes are low and no adverse impact on safety is expected.	

Kennewick's roadways and facilities for alternative modes of traffic interconnect with those of Richland, Benton County, Franklin County, and Washington State. Traffic, including vehicles, pedestrians, bicyclists and trains, must be able to transition smoothly from one jurisdiction to another without undue congestion or hazards. Coordination for levels of service is vital. This is accomplished through cooperation with all of the affected jurisdictions, the Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO), and the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG).



Ben Franklin Transit

Highways of Statewide Significance

Washington State Department of Transportation had identified Highways of Statewide Significance (HSS). HSS routes include National Highway System designations, rural highways serving statewide travel, urban routes linking rural HSS, principle arterial ferry routes, long haul freight routes, and connections to ports. Improvements to HSS routes are to be considered priority for funding by the Washington State Transportation Commission. Designated HSS routes through the city of Kennewick are:

- SR 240 from the northwest city limits to US 395
- US 395 from the southern city limits to the Franklin County line
- I-82 from its junction with US 395 to the western city limits

The Washington State Department of Transportation, in consultation with local agencies, is responsible for establishing level of service (LOS) standards for HSS. These highways are not subject to local concurrency requirements. The level of service established for the City segments of SR 240 and US 395 is D.

Active Transportation Level of Service

Level of traffic stress (LTS) evaluates the quality and degree of comfort for pedestrian and bicycle facilities to determine improvements needed to encourage active transportation travel. Rather than the modal priorities established in the previous Transportation Systems Plan, the 2026 TSP recommends adopting LTS as a measure of multimodal LOS for pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Due to the unique characteristics and data that may be available for these different facility types, a separate evaluation process is developed for pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the city

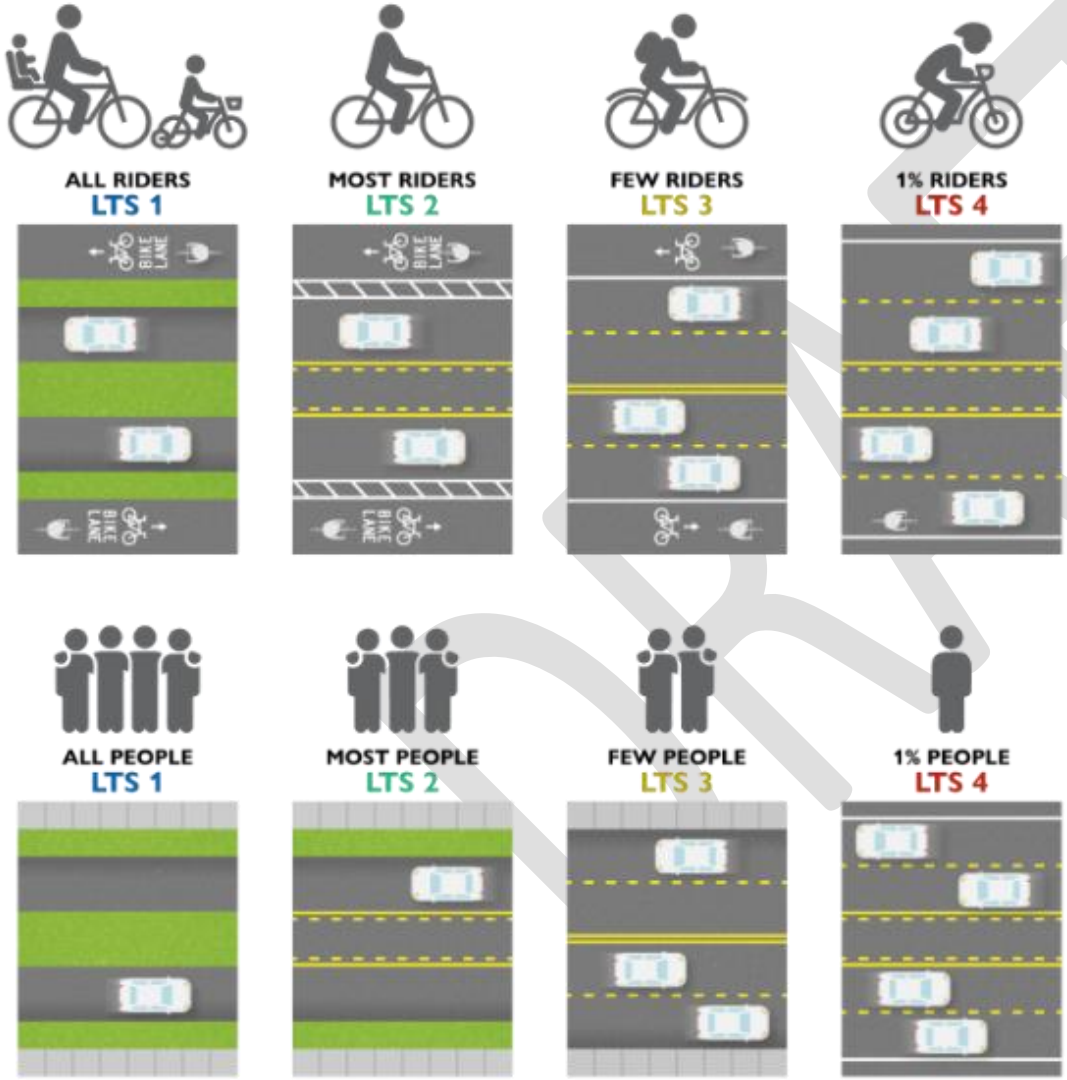
Definitions

LTS is both a qualitative and quantitative measure of comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists. LTS, as established by WSDOT and also adopted by BFCOG, uses a one to four scoring to define the user comfort level as follows:

- LTS 1 is best, being suitable for users of all ages and abilities
- LTS 2 accommodates most users but may not be comfortable for some
- LTS 3 is suitable for confident pedestrians and bicyclists
- LTS 4 is not suitable for most users and presents the highest stress level

Figure 21 illustrates the different LTS scores with roadway diagrams that represent an example of each score. Three factors, traffic volumes, vehicle speeds, and number of vehicle lanes, are generally reviewed to determine LTS. Having a high traffic volume, speed and number of lanes generally results in a higher LTS score and lower comfort for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Figure 21. Level of Stress (LTS) Scores Illustrated



Pedestrian LOS Standard

The 2026 TSP recommends adoption of a pedestrian LOS standard of LTS 3 or better for routes identified in the Primary Pedestrian Network (**Figure 18**).

Bicycle LOS Standard

The 2026 TSP recommends adoption of a bicycle LOS standard of LTS 3 or better for routes identified in the Primary Bicycle Network (**Figure 17**).

FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS

In addition to addressing existing transportation system issues, the City is planning a transportation system to accommodate forecast growth. The GMA requires that the transportation planning horizon be at least ten years in the future. For the 2026 update, the City chose a long-range horizon year of 2046 as the forecast year for the **Transportation Element**.

The future needs are based on forecasting future traffic volumes to understand operational demands on City roadways. In addition, the active transportation system was reviewed to understand gaps in the system that are not meeting Level of Stress standards.



Internal neighborhood street

Street System

The needs of the street system are based on land use forecasts, converted into future traffic volumes and assigned to the City roadways. The operational characteristics of the street system were then reviewed to identify needs.

Travel Forecast Model, Land Use, & Transportation Network Assumptions

The BFCOG travel demand forecasting model was used to assist in defining future transportation system needs. The model forecasts daily, weekday PM, and weekday AM peak hour traffic volumes based on the 2046 land use alternatives.

The model was calibrated to match existing base year traffic volumes and then used to develop a 2046 traffic forecast. City, County, and State transportation improvement projects included in the BFCOG travel demand model were also assumed in the baseline 2046 forecasts. The 2046 travel forecasts were used to identify additional future transportation needs.

The 2046 travel forecasts are largely derived based on changes in households and employment within the study area. As discussed in detail in the **Land Use Element**, about 12,600 new housing units and about 35,500 new jobs are assumed to be added to the City by 2046. This growth was added to the existing land use assumed in the BFCOG travel demand model to forecast future traffic volumes.

Traffic Forecasts

Future 2046 traffic forecasts were developed through the modeling process, which converts the land use estimates of housing and employment into daily person trips by trip purpose. The daily person trips are then converted into weekday PM peak hour vehicle trips based on factors in the BFCOG regional travel demand model. Based on the traffic forecasts,

daily volumes on arterial roadways are expected to have an annual growth rate of 1.3 to 2.8 percent for the next 20 years.

Traffic Operations

An LOS evaluation was performed for major intersections within the City to identify future vehicle LOS deficiencies. The LOS analysis was performed for the average weekday PM peak hour in the City of Kennewick. Deficiencies were determined based on the City's vehicle LOS standards.

During 2046 Baseline conditions 14 of the 30 study intersections would not meet standards. For many locations, projects that could address the deficiencies have been included in the long-range transportation improvement project list. The following is a list of city intersections with project identified:

- Clodfelter Road/Ridgeline Drive (add signal)
- Bob Olson Parkway/W 15th Avenue (add signal)
- Columbia Center Boulevard/Clearwater Avenue (intersection changes)
- Kellogg Street/Deschutes Avenue (add signal)
- N Edison Street/SR 240 Westbound Ramps (add roundabout)
- N Edison Street/W Metaline Avenue, north of railroad (add signal)
- N Edison Street/W Metaline Avenue, south of railroad (add signal)
- Union Street (Southridge Boulevard)/27th Avenue (expand roundabout)

Two intersections (Steptoe Street/Gage Boulevard and Columbia Center Boulevard/Clearwater Avenue) do not have projects identified that would reduce it below the City LOS standard. It is assumed that further widening of these intersections would be infeasible or not desirable from long-range multimodal system planning perspective. The City updated its LOS standard for these two intersections to LOS F.

Most of the US 395 intersections studied are expected to operate at LOS E or F in the future. These will be studied in a future corridor study (2026) to further refine improvements.

- US 395/Yelm Street (add westbound left-turn lane)
- US 395/Clearwater Avenue (turn-lane modifications)
- US 395/10th Avenue (improvements to be determined)
- US 395/27th Avenue (improvements to be determined)
- US 395/Hildebrand Boulevard (improvements to be determined)



Columbia Park riverfront

Active Transportation Facilities

The needs of the active transportation system are based on identifying gaps that do not meet Level of Stress standards for primary and secondary active transportation routes.

Pedestrian

Applying the standards described previously, the pedestrian LOS analysis was performed. The LOS is determined by comparing the 2046 future pedestrian network to the existing pedestrian network. The pedestrian LOS analysis shows

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most of the future pedestrian network would meet the proposed standard. Those corridors that are not meeting LOS would be addressed with new projects on the 20-year project list or through annual programs.

Bicycle

Applying the standards described previously, the bicycle LOS analysis was performed. The LOS is determined by comparing the 2046 future bicycle network to the bicycle pedestrian network. The bicycle LOS analysis shows only some of the future bicycle network would meet the proposed standard. Those corridors that are not meeting LOS would be addressed with new projects on the 20-year project list or through annual programs.

Transit

Transit riders need to be able to rely on buses arriving and departing from scheduled stops on time. Identifying opportunities for transit priority through congested areas would help BFT's buses remain a reliable option for riders.

KENNEWICK TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The City of Kennewick **Transportation Element** addresses both the existing deficiencies, and the future needs identified to complete the future transportation system envisioned by the City. This section includes details on the transportation policies, projects, and programs that are anticipated to address the land use growth identified in the **Land Use Element** as well as other desired elements of the transportation system.



Public bus and signalized pedestrian crossing

Incorporated Plan Features

This plan would implement **Transportation Element** policies that address street system classification and design, concurrency standards, transit coordination and improvements, active transportation facilities, financing including impact fees, and joint transportation planning, among other policies. This includes the update of LOS standards (multimodal) and other transportation policies consistent new state requirements.

The transportation plan also includes new and existing street improvements to enhance traffic flow, pedestrian mobility, and facilitate development consistent with the updated **Land Use Element**. A comprehensive list of improvement projects and programs are included to meet the existing forecast transportation needs of the city. The improvements address safety, capacity, trail connections, expanded active transportation facilities, and roadway preservation needs. They also cover upgrades to existing roads and construction of new roadways and interconnected street systems to support the forecast economic development and growth in the city and its UGA. The roadway and intersection projects incorporate needs for pedestrians and bicyclists that would use the same corridors.

Transportation Improvement Projects and Programs

Based on an evaluation of existing and forecast traffic volumes, traffic operations, safety, and circulation needs, a recommended list of transportation improvement projects and programs were defined. The project list is organized into the following categories:

- Intersection/Spot – upgrading intersections and spot locations through the addition of roundabouts, added turn lanes, or modifications to traffic controls, or other transportation facilities.

- Major/New Roadway -.adding major capacity improvements or completely new corridor alignments. Also includes reconstruction and upgrading roadways that includes active transportation and safety elements.
- Active Transportation – constructing new bicycle or pedestrian facilities consistent with the planned active transportation networks. This category focuses on projects were active transportation in the main purpose of the improvement, but active transportation improvements may also be present in the other project categories.
- Other Agency Improvements – improvements that would be led by other agencies such as WSDOT
- Citywide Programs – includes annual citywide programs.

Figures 22 and 23 provides two maps of the 20-year projects. **Figure 24** provides a table of the 20-year projects details, including a brief description of each project including the project limits. The table identifies projects that are currently part of the City's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This highlights the projects that are currently identified for planning, design, or construction as of 2026. The TIP list of projects is updated on a yearly basis and so future year TIP lists may not be reflected in this plan.



Internal neighborhood street

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Figure 22. Long-Term Project Map: Roadway Improvements

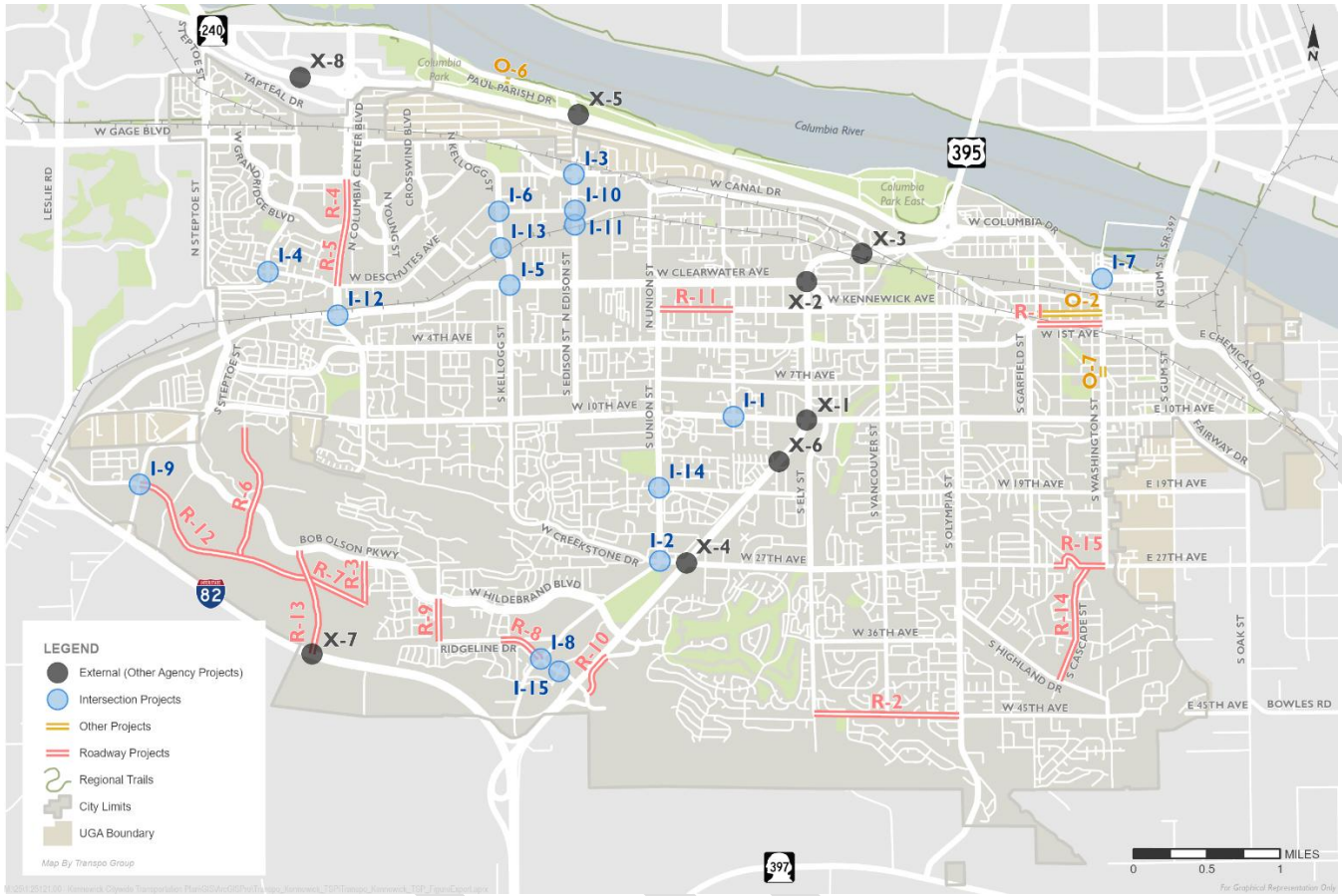


Figure 23. Long-Term Project Map: Active Transportation Improvements

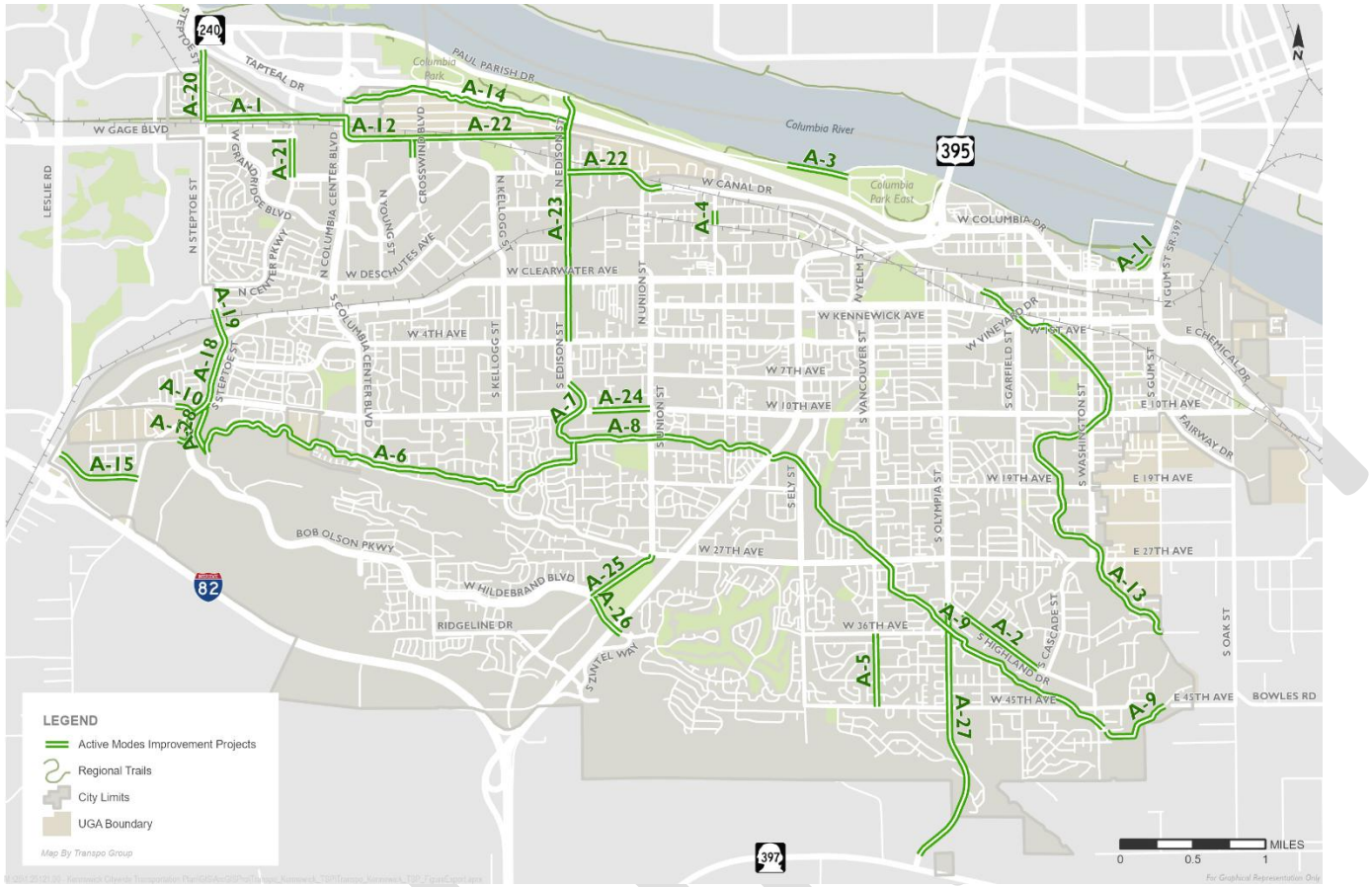


Figure 24. Long-Term Project List

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
I-1	2	10th Avenue/Morain Street	Intersection	Construct traffic signal
I-2	3	27th Avenue/Southridge Boulevard	Intersection	Construct northbound right turn slip lane at roundabout

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
I-3	5	Canal Drive/Edison Street Intersection	Intersection	Construct second eastbound left turn lane (widen both east and west legs), reconstruct accesses, sidewalks, frontage improvements, signal modification
I-4	6	Center Parkway/Deschutes Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Construct traffic signal
I-5	7	Clearwater Avenue/Kellogg Street Intersection	Intersection	Construct second southbound left turn lane, with signal modifications
I-6	12	Kellogg Street/Metaline Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Construct traffic signal
I-7	18	Washington Street/Columbia Drive Intersection	Intersection	Construct eastbound right turn lane
I-8	23	Southridge Boulevard/Ridgeline Drive Intersection	Intersection	Expand roundabout to a two-lane roundabout
I-9	29	Clodfelter Road/Ridgeline Drive Intersection	Intersection	Construct traffic signal (four leg intersection)
I-10	32	Edison Street/Metaline Avenue Intersection (North)	Intersection	Construct traffic signal
I-11	25	Edison Street/Metaline Avenue Intersection (South)	Intersection	Construct traffic signal
I-12	33	Clearwater Avenue/Columbia Center Boulevard Intersection	Intersection	Reconstruct Intersection to allow for non-split phasing
I-13	NA	Kellogg Street/Deschutes Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Construct traffic signal
I-14	NA	Union Street/19th Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Modify intersection to enhance safety (e.g. add chicanes)
I-15	NA	Ridgeline Drive/Plaza Way Intersection	Intersection	Reconfigure intersection to allow southbound US 395 traffic to travel east on Ridgeline Drive

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
R-1	1	1st Avenue Road Diet	Fruitland St to Washington St	Reduce lanes to one lane eastbound and one lane westbound with center two-way left turn lane. Includes signal upgrades at Dayton St, Benton St, and Auburn St (Economic development project)
R-2	4	45th Avenue Widening	Ely St to Olympia St	Reconstruct 2/3-lane road with curb, gutter, sidewalks, storm drainage, illumination, replace AC water lines
R-3	8	Colorado Street Construction	Bob Olson Pkwy to Ridgeline Dr	Developer driven project to construct new 3-lane collector road with curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm drainage, and illumination
R-4	9	Columbia Center Boulevard Widening (Phase 1)	Quinault Ave to Grandridge Blvd	Construct new 3rd northbound and southbound through lanes, curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm drainage, illumination, and signal modifications at Okanogan Pl intersection
R-5	10	Columbia Center Boulevard Widening (Phase 2)	Grandridge Blvd to Deschutes Ave	Construct new 3rd northbound and southbound through lanes, curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm drainage, illumination, and signal modifications at Grandridge Blvd intersection
R-6	13	Montana Street Extension	W 10th Ave to Ridgeline Dr	Developer driven project to construct new 3-lane collector road with curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm drainage, and illumination
R-7	14	Ridgeline Drive Extension (Phase 3)	Center Pkwy to Colorado St	Developer driven project to construct new 3-lane collector road with curb, gutter, sidewalk, storm drainage, and illumination
R-8	15	Ridgeline Drive Reconstruction	Sherman St to Nelson St	Construct a 3-lane road with curb, gutter, sidewalks, illumination, intersection control

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
R-9	16	Sherman Street Reconstruction	Bob Olson Pkwy to Ridgeline Dr	Project will construct a 3-lane road with curb, gutter, sidewalks, illumination, intersection control
R-10	21	Zintel Way Construction	Ridgeline Dr to Hildebrand Blvd	Developer driven project to construct remaining Zintel Way to 3-lane urban street. Right of Way by developer donation
R-11	24	Kennewick Avenue Widening	Union St to Morain St	Widen to three lanes
R-12	NA	Ridgeline Drive Construction	Clodfelter Rd to W 35th Ave	Construct new roadway that includes bicycle LTS 3 facility; Developer driven project.
R-13	NA	Florida Place Extension		Construct standard street (curb, gutter, sidewalk, illumination) and grade separation crossing at I-82. Include Bike LTS 3 facilities. Access to I-82 will be a separate project. Interchange justification report.
R-14	NA	Cascade Street	Highland Dr. to 27th Ave	Reconstruct to standard street (curb, gutter, sidewalk, illumination, storm drainage). Signal or roundabout at 27th Ave/Washington St.
R-15	NA	W 27th Ave	Washington St to Dayton St	Reconstruct to standard street (curb, gutter, sidewalks, illumination, and shy lanes).
A-1	34	Keene Trail	Steptoe St to Center Pkwy	Construct pathway along abandoned rail line. Project will also include purchasing ROW in addition to installing a pedestrian signal across Steptoe St and improved lighting
A-2	35	Cascade Elementary School Sidewalk	Highland Drive Walkway	Construct approximately 3,700 linear feet of shoulder, RFB, and pedestrian facilities, on the south side of the street from Lyle St to Cascade Str. Project includes a crossing of Highland Dr with a pedestrian activated RRFB

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
A-3	36	East Columbia Park Bicycle Improvements (Phase 2)	SR 240 Entrance to 1900 feet west (south side)	Construct pavement widening for dedicated bicycle lanes, including permanent pavement markings and signage from roundabout to golf course club house
A-4	37	Hawthorne Elementary School Crossing Improvements	John Day Ave to 400 feet north	Construct a new crossing at the intersection of Neel St/Jon Day Ave, construct a median refuge at the existing crossing at mid-block, extend the school zone on Neel St to encompass both crosswalks, install RRFB at both crossings
A-5	39	Vancouver Street Pedestrian Pathway	37th Ave to 45th Ave	Fill Sidewalk gaps on both sides of Vancouver St; Construct approx. 2,300 LF of paved pathway on the west side of Vancouver to serve as a safe route to school
A-6	40	KID ROW Highland Feed Canal Trail	Hildebrand Blvd to Edison St	Construct 10-foot wide trail on KID ROW. Old channel is slated to be enclosed. Includes section along Edison to connect to Highlift Canal Trail.
A-7	NA	Highlift Canal Trail (Phase 2)	Edison St (near 7th Ave) to Edison St (near 14th Ave)	Construct 10- to 12-foot paved pathway on the south side of the canal
A-8	NA	Highlift Canal Trail (Phase 3)	Edison St to US 395	Construct 10- to 12-foot paved pathway on the south side of the canal
A-9	NA	Highlift Canal Trail (Phase 4)	US 395 to Eastlake Dr	Construct 12- to 14-foot paved pathway with multiple connections to local streets and schools
A-10	42	10th Avenue Sidewalk	Yolo St to Bob Olson Pkwy	Construct approx. 800 LF of sidewalk

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
A-11	43	Duffy's Pond Trail	Duffy's Pond	Construct hard surface pathway along the southside of Duffy's Pond, providing a missing link to the trail system both east and west of this site
A-12	44	Island View to Vista Field Active Transportation Network	Center Pkwy to Vista Park	The system will include a separated pathway from Center Pkwy to Columbia Center Blvd, a bridge over Columbia Center Blvd, and continue on adjacent to Colorado St and Umatilla Ave as a separated pathway from the bridge to Crosswinds Blvd, the trail would travel southward to along Crosswinds Blvd
A-13	NA	Columbia Canal Regional Pathway (East)	Canal Dr to Gum St	Construct 12- to 14-foot paved regional pathway along the Columbia Canal
A-14	NA	Columbia Canal Regional Pathway (West)	Columbia Center Blvd to Edison St	Construct 12- to 14-foot paved pathway on the north side of the canal, providing pathway bridges across to avoid the spillway and maintain continuity
A-15	NA	Ridgeline Drive Bicycle Facilities	Clearwater Ave to Clodfelter Rd	Evaluate options to lower bicycle level of traffic stress. Further study to identify specific design.
A-16	NA	Clodfelter Road/15th Place Corridor Bicycle Facilities	Ridgeline Dr to Bob Olson Pkwy	Extend trail east of school to provide active transportation connectivity
A-17	NA	Bob Olsen Parkway Bicycle Facilities	10th Ave to 15th Ave	Evaluate options to lower bicycle level of traffic stress. Further study to identify specific design.
A-18	NA	Amon Wasteway or Bob Olson Parkway Bicycle Facilities	Clearwater Ave to 10th Avenue	Construct 12-to-14 foot paved pathway along the west side of the Amon Wasteway, provide crossing near Bob Olson Parkway Roundabout.
A-19	NA	Steptoe Street Multiuse Pathway (South)	BNSH RR Tracks to	Extend multiuse path along east side of Steptoe St

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
			Clearwater Ave	
A-20	NA	Steptoe Street Multiuse Pathway (North)	Victoria Ave to Tapteal Dr	Widen sidewalk to 10-12 feet along Steptoe St from Columbia Canal to the intersection with the Keene trail, provide mid-block multiuse trail crossing at Keene Trail and Steptoe St Intersection
A-21	NA	Center Parkway Bike Lanes	Gage Blvd to Quinault Ave	Restripe Center Pkwy to include 5-6 ft wide bike lanes on both sides, add on/off ramps so bikes can access sidewalk in the roundabout at Gage Blvd/Center Pwky
A-22	NA	Umatilla Avenue Multiuse Pathway and Bike Lanes	Crosswind Blvd to Edison St	Extend multiuse path along Umatilla Ave
A-23	NA	Edison Street Bike Facilities	Columbia Park Trail to 4th Ave	Evaluate options to lower bicycle level of traffic stress. Further study to identify specific design.
A-24	NA	W 10th Avenue Bicycle Facilities	Dawes St to Union St	Evaluate options to lower bicycle level of traffic stress. Further study to identify specific design.
A-25	NA	Southridge Boulevard Bicycle Facilities	27th Ave to Hildebrand Blvd	Lower speed limits along Southridge Blvd to 35 mph to lower stress on existing bike lanes, add on/off ramps to sidewalk at 27th Ave/Southridge Blvd to allow bikes access to the sidewalk. Alternatively, construct multiuse trail by widening sidewalks to 10-12ft on south side of Southridge Blvd, using bike lane ROW where necessary
A-26	NA	Hildebrand Boulevard Bicycle Facilities	Southridge Blvd to Zintel Way	Evaluate options to lower bicycle level of traffic stress. Further study to identify specific design.

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
A-27	NA	Olympia Street Bicycle Facilities	Highland Dr to US 397	Evaluate options to lower bicycle level of traffic stress. Further study to identify specific design.
A-28	NA	Hildebrand Boulevard Multiuse Path Connection	Bob Olson Pkwy to Highland Feeder Canal	Construct multi use path up to Highland Feeder Canal trail
O-1	17	Systemic Safety Street Light Project	Citywide	Conversion of collector and arterial streetlights to LED
O-2	11	Railway Grade Separation (Phase 1)	Study Downtown Kennewick and Western Kennewick	Study will analyze at-grade crossings within the downtown corridor and will develop a prioritized plan to implement. This may be accomplished by raising or lowering rail or roadway profiles
O-3	NA	Railway Grade Separation (Phase 2)	Downtown Kennewick	Implement findings of Study
O-4	NA	Railway Grade Separation (Phase 3)	Western Kennewick	Implement findings of Study
O-5	26	East Kennewick Freight Zone Infrastructure Improvements	East Kennewick	New street pavement, storm facilities, lighting, curb & gutter, sidewalk, and safety improvements at railroad crossings and intersections, including adequate signalization at all RR X-ings
O-6	31	Columbia Park Bridge Replacement	Bridge	Replace Bridge system along with improving roadway approaches
O-7	30	Washington West 6th CID Canal Bridge Replacement	Bridge	Replace Bridge system along with improving roadway approaches
X-1	19	US 395/10th Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Construct southbound dual left turn lanes

2026 Project No.	TIP "Map ID"	Project	Extents	Project Description
X-2	20	US 395/Clearwater Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Construct dual eastbound left-turn lanes, dual northbound left-turn lanes, eastbound and westbound right-turn lanes
X-3	NA	US 395/Yelm Street Intersection	Intersection	Add second WB left-turn lane; project would also restripe Yelm St from US 395 to Kennewick Ave
X-4	NA	US 395/27th Avenue Intersection	Intersection	Improvements TBD
X-5	NA	Edison St/SR 240 Westbound Ramp Intersection	Intersection	Construct roundabout
X-6	NA	Highlift Canal Trail (Phase 5)	US 395 Crossing	Provide overcrossing of US 395 to connect Highlift Canal Trail
X-7	NA	I-82/ Florida Place Interchange	I-82 and future Center Pkwy Extension	Construct on/off ramps to grade-separated crossing (separate project), traffic control devices, channelization, signage.
X-8	NA	Regional Pathway Crossing of SR 240	Fowler St to Tapteal Dr/Center Pkwy	Richland project; Build multi-use crossing over SR 240 connecting Center Pkwy to Fowler St
P-1	22	Pavement Preservation Program	Citywide	Pavement infrastructure preservation capital projects, for arterials, collectors, and local residential streets
P-2	38	Sidewalk Program (Renewal/Replacement/ADA)	Citywide	Repair/replace/construct sidewalk in areas of tripping hazards, damaged sidewalk, missing sidewalk, substandard or missing ADA ramps

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

TDM consists of strategies that seek to maximize the efficiency of the transportation system by reducing the number, length and need of private automobile trips. Typically, TDM measures include provision of park and ride lots, improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and promotion of ridesharing activities.

TDM strategies are typically most effective in denser and larger urban areas. However, strategies coordinated with Counties, WSDOT, BFT, and BFCOG can provide alternatives for City residents and employees. Potential TDM strategies the City could promote through policy or investment include but are not limited to the following:

- Transit Incentives – Work with BFT to provide incentives to use public transit.
- Ridesharing - Employers can develop and maintain a database of home addresses to facilitate carpool and vanpool matching between employees working on the same site. Employers can also provide financial incentives or reserved parking spaces for carpool and vanpool vehicles.
- Flexible Work Schedules – Flexible work hour schedules allow employees to adjust start/end times to accommodate carpools, vanpools, or transit options. Alternative work schedules can also be used to reduce the number of days an employee commutes during peak travel periods. These programs help reduce the need for adding capacity to highways and arterials and reduce the levels of peak hour congestion.
- Telecommuting – The use of telecommunications technology can allow some employees to work from home, reducing the need for travel to and from a work site for some workdays.
- Secured Bicycle Parking and Showers – Secured bicycle parking could be provided in the vicinity of major employment centers, preferably in a covered, weather-protected area. Shower facilities at work sites are also desirable to encourage commuting by bicycle.



Landscaped sidewalks in newly developed areas of Kennewick

Finance Program

Kennewick's Capital Improvement Program is updated biennially. It is intended to be a flexible, dynamic tool for the City. Its purpose is to correlate funding sources to needed improvements. There are six guiding policies to provide for consistency between the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan, the biennial budget, and the Capital Improvement Program.

- Ensure Kennewick's land use and infrastructure elements are internally consistent.
- Reassess Kennewick's land use plan periodically to ensure consistency between capital facility needs and financing.
- Use adopted level of service standards, operating criteria and/or performance standards to evaluate capital facility needs.
- Base capital facility needs on employment and population projections developed by the City in conjunction with County and State estimates.
- Update the CIP in conjunction with the annual Comprehensive Plan process.
- Ensure that necessary capital facilities are provided as required by the City's concurrency ordinance.

New projects are evaluated not only in terms of total cost, but what impact the project will have on current and future operating costs.

Revenue Sources

State and Federal Grants

Grants are an important funding source for transportation capital projects; however, these revenues are project-specific and competitive; as such, grant funding can exhibit large swings year-to-year. Revenue forecasts are based on the

historical five years of grant revenue received, then projected out to the 20-year horizon. Because fluctuations in grant funding are typical, and future revenues are projected on a constant trend, they are likely to overstate revenues in some years and understate them in others.

Sales Tax

The City of Kennewick has used sales tax primarily to fund street construction in the past, but as the revenue source has grown over time, the uses of the funds have broadened in response to increasingly diversified needs for other capital improvements. Sales tax is also used to pay for annual electrical costs for street lighting, debt service payments on a new police facility and the Toyota Center/Three Rivers Complex, economic development activities, and other infrastructure costs. Sales tax has not been used to fund transportation capital projects since 2015.

Although the City does not typically use sales tax revenues for transportation projects, this is a policy decision as part of those funds could be used for transportation projects.

REET

Cities and counties in Washington are authorized to levy two separate 0.25 percent real estate excise taxes on the sales of all real estate. The first quarter percent of the tax receipts must be used on capital projects included in the **Capital Facilities Element** of the City's Comprehensive Plan. This restriction is in place for cities with populations greater than 5,000 or planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA). The second 0.25 percent (REET II) must also be spent on capital projects. Currently, Kennewick levies the full 0.5 percent on all sales of real estate within the city limits, and uses REET II on transportation capital projects.

Transportation Impact Fees

Impact fees are a financing tool that provides a mechanism for new development to pay a portion of the costs associated with infrastructure improvements that are "reasonably related" to that development. The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) allows jurisdictions to develop and implement a transportation impact fee program to help fund some of the costs of transportation facilities needed to accommodate growth.

Legally, financing for improvements that will serve the new development must provide a balance between impact fees and other sources of public funds, and the fees must be structured in a manner that ensures that funds collected do not exceed a proportionate share of the costs of improvements reasonably related to new development.

The City has adopted a transportation impact fee (TIF) program defined in Chapter 13.16 (Transportation Impact Fees) of the City's Municipal Code. The TIF is based on the TSP projects and cost estimates, and anticipated land use growth. The actual TIF revenues will be directly tied to the level of growth that occurs each year. The TIF allows the City to match funding for growth-related improvements to the pace of growth.

The City will not actually collect all of the TIF funds because developers will be asked to construct some of the projects. Where a developer is conditioned to construct all or a portion of TIF project, the City will provide credits, consistent with GMA requirements.

Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax



Crossing the U.S. 395 bridge

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Gas tax funds are a large portion of the revenues that support the City of Kennewick's transportation maintenance program. Currently, the City uses all gas tax funds received from the State for maintenance. In keeping with this policy decision, future MVFT revenues are assumed to be used exclusively by the City for maintenance costs.

Counties and cities receive a portion of the State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax (MVFT) based on a reimbursement formula.

Motor vehicle fuel tax revenues are expected to decrease as vehicle fuel efficiency increases. Over the long-term, the Washington Department of Transportation is working on alternative approaches to funding roadway usage needs. These changes could change or replace the MVFT. Historically, MVFT funds used for maintenance have been fairly steady but are assumed to decrease annually.

Property Tax

Property tax is deposited into the City's General Fund, and is available for any municipal purpose, including transportation spending. Property tax revenues are used to make up for any funding shortfalls.

Since the passage of Initiative 747 in 2001, property tax increases on existing properties are restricted to 1.0 percent of the previous year's revenues. In inflation-adjusted terms, revenues from property tax are actually declining, since the 1.0 percent allowed increase does not keep pace with inflation, or population growth. Because of the cap, all Washington State jurisdictions that collect property tax are seeing declining purchasing power in their property tax revenues.

Transportation Benefit District

The City created a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) in 2025 to fund pavement preservation. TBDs are independent taxing districts that can impose an array of fees or taxes to fund transportation improvements. TBDs can be established in jurisdictions ranging from a city to multi-county area. Cities can authorize local TBDs that provide up to a 0.2 percent local sales and use tax with council approval. This can be increased another 0.1 percent, but only with voter approval. TBDs can levy up to a $100 fee for each vehicle weighing less than 6,000 pounds registered in its jurisdiction. $50 of this fee can be leveraged without a public vote.

The City has enacted a sales and use tax of .01 percent which became effective April 1, 2025, and will remain in effect for a period not to exceed ten (10) years. All TBD revenue is assumed to go towards maintenance and operations.

Revenue Summary

The six-year transportation projects have estimated costs and funding sources identified in the CIP program. The City relies on assistance from state and federal funding to implement the planned transportation improvements. If these sources of funding are not available for some reason, the City does have several options for making up the shortfalls:

- Use funds from another project that could be delayed without detriment
- Enact impact fees, special taxes, tools, assessments, or other revenue sources available to the City
- Develop a concurrency agreement stating that the necessary improvements will be provided within six years
- Change the land use pattern to lower the number of trips to meet the LOS standards
- Deny the land use proposal generating the need for the improvement



A new street in the Vista Field development



Example of a marked, unprotected bike lane

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The City's priority would be to make up any shortfalls with funds from another source. If this could not be done and the concurrency ordinance applies to the project, the City could either deny the proposed development or reassess the land uses in the area. This would be done to determine if changes to the land uses could be made that would result in a reduced LOS for the proposed project. If a project would have the potential to affect a neighboring transportation system, the proposal could be referred to the Metropolitan Planning Organization/Regional Transportation Planning Organization (MPO/RTPO) for intergovernmental consideration. The Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is prepared by the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments to meet state and federal guidelines. The TIP is required for applications for state and federal transportation funding. Proposed projects are prioritized based on available funding and the BFCG must certify that the TIP is in conformance with the Regional Transportation Plan.

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TRANSPORTATION GOALS + POLICIES

Goal T-1 **Integrated Transportation System.** Develop an integrated and balanced transportation system consistent with regional transportation objectives that supports the land use vision in the comprehensive plan and accommodates future travel demand.

Policy T-1.1 Update the Transportation System Plan at the same frequency as state requirements for comprehensive plans. The TSP should develop 20-year projections of travel demand, traffic volumes and arterial street capacities to provide information on the location, timing, and capacity needs to support future growth.

Policy T-1.2 Encourage the connection of streets when considering subdivision or street improvement proposals, unless topographic or environmental constraints would prevent it. Limit the use of cul-de-sacs, dead-end streets, loops and other designs that form barriers to walking, rolling, bicycling and transit route development.

Policy T-1.3 Review new roads and roadway improvement designs with Ben Franklin Transit to assess impacts to existing routes and find opportunities to gain efficiencies by identifying transit needs and incorporating transit amenities into construction projects.

Policy T-1.4 Plan for transit supportive infrastructure in growth areas and ensure transit access is considered as part of any new development.

Policy T-1.5 Support Benton County planning policies applicable to transportation.

Policy T-1.6 Coordinate the planning, implementation, and operation of a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system with stakeholders including WSDOT and other state agencies, Benton County, the Benton Franklin Council of Governments, Ben Franklin Transit, the cities of Richland, Pasco, and West Richland, as well as various community groups.



Sidewalks protected by landscaping

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Goal T-2 **Multimodal Transportation System.** Provide a multimodal transportation system that encourages, supports, and enhances the safe, efficient, and reliable movement of people, vehicles, and goods.

Policy T-2.1 Develop and implement active transportation systems, such as bicycle and pedestrian facilities and connections, which are consistent with the BFCOG Regional Bicycle Plan, Safe Routes to School Plan, Pedestrian Trails Plan, and the Pathways and Trails Master Plan. Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and the city parks department to ensure the interconnectedness of local trail systems.

Policy T-2.2  Prioritize projects that complete the active transportation system networks established in the Transportation Systems Plan with an emphasis on segments that provide connections to vulnerable populations and destinations such as schools, parks, transit stops, and other amenities.

Policy T-2.3 Design sidewalks, streets and streetscapes to be context sensitive, pedestrian-friendly and meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Policy T-2.4 Encourage separation of railroad and street infrastructure to support emergency response, provide system resiliency, and improved access to local businesses.

Policy T-2.5 Prioritize the maintenance and improvement of existing roads and streets above expansion of the city's roadway network

Policy T-2.6 Commit to eliminate preventable traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2050 by applying the Safe Systems Approach to ensure that human error does not result in severe harm.

Policy T-2.7 Protect parks, public spaces, public events, sidewalks, bike routes, storefronts, and other vulnerable spaces from vehicle intrusion. Consider requiring safety improvements like bollards, curbs, and planters in capital projects, street improvements, and design standards.

Policy T-2.8 Incorporate the principles of Complete Streets by planning and implementing improvements that provide facilities with all users in mind, including pedestrians, bicyclists and transit riders.

Policy T-2.9 Provide adequate transportation facilities and services to promote and support economic development and the movement of freight and goods safely and efficiently through the city.

Policy T-2.10 Encourage transportation projects costing in excess of $1 million on State Highways to comply with WSDOT's complete streets policies noted in RCW 47.04.035.

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Goal T-3 **Maintain Levels of Service.** Develop and operate a transportation system that maintains level of service standards for each travel mode

Policy T-3.1 Plan and implement updates to the active transportation network that meet or exceed the level of traffic stress standards set out in the Transportation Systems Plan.

Policy T-3.2 Support transit service by establishing LOS standards for bus stops in coordination with Ben Franklin Transit.

Policy T-3.3 Monitor and adjust LOS standards and concurrency management programs that promote the optimal movement of people across a multimodal transportation network in coordination with local and regional agencies.

Policy T-3.4 Periodically review long range transportation funding options and if sufficient funding is not available consider changes to 1) LOS standards 2) project selection or phasing or 3) the **Land Use Element**.

Policy T-3.5 Deny land use proposals that would not meet LOS or concurrency standards, or 1) establish a strategy to mitigate the transportation impacts, 2) modify level of service standards or 3) reassess the land use plan or timing of development.

Policy T-3.6 Assure adequate right-of-way is preserved and dedicated for existing and future planned transportation connections to accommodate growth and promote system resiliency.

Policy T-3.7 Assure that improvements be completed along existing and future planned corridors concurrent with development that abuts or encompasses corridors established in the Transportation System Plan.



Freight rail through Kennewick

Goal T-4 **Minimize Environmental Impacts.** Promote a transportation system that minimizes impacts to the natural environment

Policy T-4.1 Where relevant, apply the policies included in the **Climate Element** of the Comprehensive Plan to the planning, construction and maintenance of the transportation system. Design transportation projects to accommodate for future climate change.

Policy T-4.2 Minimize air pollution and noise impacts from the transportation system.

Policy T-4.3 Support transportation investments that are energy efficient and that improve system performance

Policy T-4.4 Work to prevent and reduce contamination of street and storm water runoff and improve fish passage. Account for more frequent extreme weather events when crossings of streams or rivers are required.

Policy T-4.5 Consider measures that encourage and support the use of transit, ridesharing, carpooling, transportation demand management, and non-motorized travel to reduce vehicle miles traveled and greenhouse gases.



Accessible Pedestrian Signal

Economic Development

See the Economic Development Appendix for updates to the context material supporting this element, including the Local Planning, Population, Labor Force, Quality of Life, Partnerships, Primary and Secondary Jobs, and Redevelopment and Revitalization sections from the 2021 Economic Development Element.

INTRODUCTION

The **Economic Development Element** is the City's long-term strategy to continuously improve the community's economic well-being and quality of life. It provides policy direction for maintaining, expanding, and attracting economic activity across Kennewick, which benefits residents through both local job opportunities and access to a wider variety of goods, services, and entertainment. A thriving, stable, diversified, and resilient local economy provides a high quality of life for Kennewick residents and the region.

The City's 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan identifies five key goals to help the community position itself as a vibrant place to live, work, and play in a dynamic economic context:

- Goal 1: Address gaps in talent development and wraparound services to more fully align education and training with regional target sectors, and give Kennewick residents access to greater opportunity.
- Goal 2: Become the destination of choice for entertainment between Seattle, Spokane and Portland.
- Goal 3: Pursue targeted investments to improve the quality of—and access to—recreation assets, downtown Kennewick, and other key areas.
- Goal 4: Proactively plan for and recruit tenants to fill catalytic development sites, while ensuring that broader planning and development policies make Kennewick the community of choice for businesses in the region.



- Goal 5: Pursue a comprehensive approach to maintaining and enhancing quality of life for Kennewick residents.

Goals and policies in this element build on the Economic Development Strategic Plan. Together, these documents align economic priorities with land use and infrastructure planning and inform budgeting, investments, and actions taken by the City and its partners to strengthen and diversify the local economy over the next 20 years. This element is also closely related to the plan's other elements as the City recognizes that effective economic development goals are part of a much larger picture for total community development.

Economic Profile

This section summarizes key takeaways from the economic development background materials and Community Profile portion of the **Housing Appendix**, including data on the city's jobs and industries, workforce and socioeconomic backgrounds, commute patterns, quality of life indicators, partnerships, and redevelopment and revitalization efforts. Primary data sources include the Washington State Employment Securities Department (ESD), Department of Revenue (DOR), and Office of Financial Management (OFM), the U.S. Census Bureau Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) data and American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates, and HUD, and the Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC),

Jobs & Employment Sectors

- There was an average of 46,920 jobs in Kennewick throughout 2023.[1] Employment has rebounded since the Covid-19 pandemic, but the unemployment rate in Benton County has remained slightly higher than the state unemployment rate since the pandemic.
- Geographically, employment is concentrated in the Columbia Center and Three Rivers area, in Downtown, and along major arterials including Clearwater Avenue and I-395.
- The top five largest employment sectors in Kennewick are retail trade, healthcare and social assistance, accommodations and food services, construction, and educational services. See **Figure 25**. Together, these sectors account for over half of local employment. Overall trends show retail trade jobs decreasing slightly since 2010 while jobs in the construction industry have increased since 2010. The share of jobs in the other three sectors have remained relatively stable.
- Small businesses play a significant role in Kennewick and Benton County. In 2024, there were about 5,000 established businesses throughout Benton County. More than half of these were small businesses with fewer than five employees and nearly three quarters of registered businesses had fewer than ten employees.

MAJOR EMPLOYERS

As of January 2026, the ten largest employers in the Tri-Cities area (in order) are Department of Energy's Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL), Kadlec Regional Medical Center, Lamb Weston, H2C, First Fruits Farms, Pasco School District, Kennewick School District, Bechtel National, Handford Mission Integration Solutions, and Amazon.

Source: TRIDEC Fact Sheet (Major Employers), January 2026.

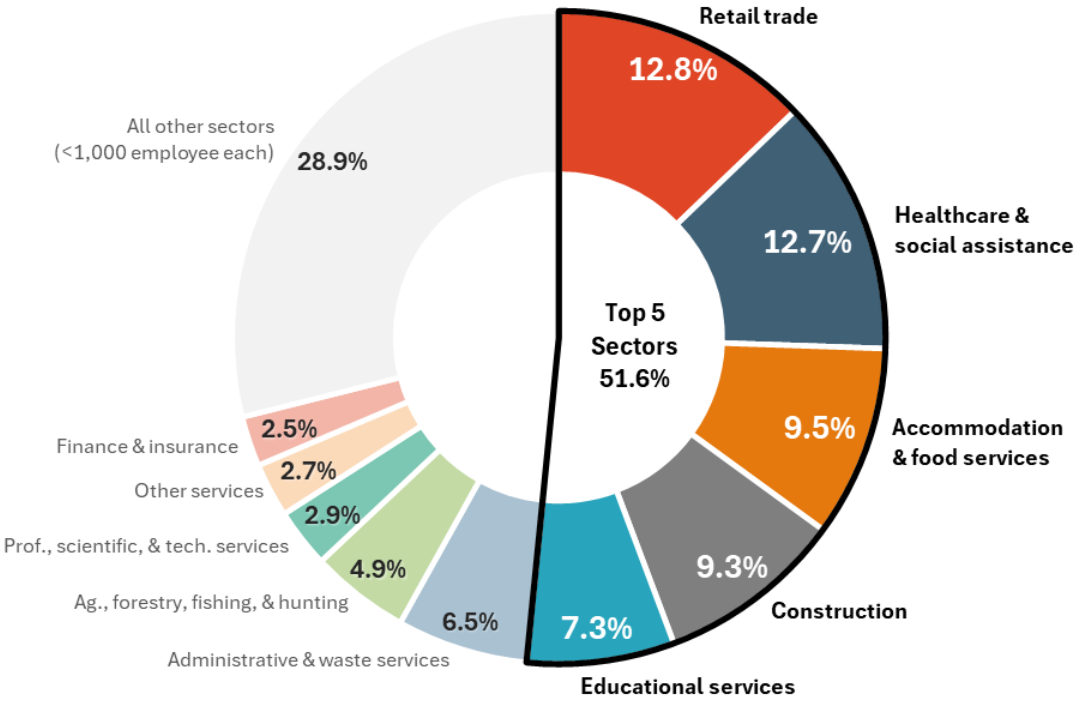


Downtown Kennewick

[1] "Covered employment" references all jobs that are covered under state unemployment insurance. This definition specifically excludes self-employed workers, proprietors, corporate officers, military personnel, and other non-insured workers. Because of this, these figures typically represent 85–90% of total local employment. This also includes part-time and temporary employment, meaning that multiple jobs held by a single person will all show up in the data. ESD Covered Employment Estimates, 2023.

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Figure 25. Annual Average Employment by Sector, Percent of Total (Kennewick)



Sources: ESD Covered Employment, 2023; BERK, 2026.

Wages, Household Income, & Revenue Sources

- The adjusted average annual average wage in Benton County was $79,622 in 2022. Healthcare and social assistance is one of Kennewick's top employment sectors, but average annual wage earnings were about $16,000 less than the countywide average. Other sectors representing a large share of Kennewick's 2023 workforce—including retail trade, educational services, and accommodation and food services—had some of the lowest average wages by sector. Industries with higher average wage earnings included professional, scientific, and technical services, utilities, administrative and waste services, management, finance and insurance, construction, and government.
- As of 2023, median household income in Kennewick was nearly $73,000, which is lower than the countywide median of about $87,000 and state median of about $95,000. Median family household income was about double that of non-family households, as was the median household income of owner-occupied versus renter-occupied households. The median household income of White, non-Hispanic households was $78,473 versus $61,185 for Hispanic or Latino households (of any race).
- Sales tax and property tax revenue are two major components of Kennewick's revenue. Kennewick relies on retail as well as construction and accommodations and food services as sources of sales tax revenue, and the City's sales tax revenue per capita is higher than most other jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region. In comparison,



Downtown Kennewick storefronts

despite the total value of property in the city more than doubling since 2015 and recent increases in home prices, Kennewick's property tax revenue per capita is slightly lower than most other jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region.

Housing & Quality of Life

- As of 2023, the jobs to housing ratio in Kennewick was 1.40 (46,920 jobs divided by 33,473 housing units), within the higher end of the balanced range of 0.75 – 1.5. This suggests there is an adequate supply of employment opportunities in the city, but that housing supply and affordability are growing concerns.
- Kennewick has a robust population and employment base to support existing and new businesses. A significant number of employees live in and near the city, with 63 percent of Kennewick residents and 66 percent of workers employed in Kennewick commuting less than ten miles. Residents who work elsewhere and workers who live elsewhere primarily commute to and from nearby cities such as Richland and Pasco.
- Average home prices in Kennewick are out of reach for single-**income households in the city's five main** job sectors. In fact, most single-income households would also be rent cost-burdened in the city (paying more than 30 percent of income towards rent and utilities). For two-income households, some combinations of employment sectors, such as construction and education, would generate enough income to purchase the average home in the city. Even with two incomes, households in some of the city's leading sectors—particularly in retail, accommodation, food service, and education-related jobs—would struggle to buy a house or afford average rents without being cost burdened.
- Kennewick's population has aged since 2010, with 16 percent of residents now age 65 and over and 27 percent of residents age 55 and over. Countywide, the overall number and proportion of adults 65 and older is expected to increase through 2045. A higher share of retired residents can affect workforce availability and increase demand for specific services, such as healthcare, and public services like community/recreation centers or paratransit.
- Kennewick's climate, quality of schools, access to medical care, and cultural opportunities all contribute to a high quality of life, and the cost of living in the Tri-Cities is lower-than-average when compared to other areas in the Pacific Northwest. These are desirable amenities in marketing the community to new businesses.
- Strong partnerships are a key component of economic development efforts in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities region. Numerous organizations provide direct business and economic development support, along with planning and policy related to economic development activities. Key partners include the Port of Kennewick, TRIDEC, the Tri-Regional Chamber of Commerce, Benton-Franklin Council of Governments, Visit Tri-Cities, Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership, and many other private and public agencies.



Covered patio at Kennewick restaurant

Future Needs

Kennewick is planning for 11,223 new jobs and an additional 21,869 new residents by 2046. Established businesses will add additional jobs, new business will bring jobs in existing and targeted industries, and entrepreneurial opportunities will help grow small businesses and contribute to economic vitality. Key opportunity areas per the City's 2025 Economic

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Development Update[2] include Columbia Center, Vista Field, the Entertainment District, West Clearwater, Southridge, and the Waterfront and Downtown, and large revitalization and redevelopment efforts are currently underway for Clover Island, Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods, and Vista Field. Increased population will also provide an influx to the workforce. However, population growth will likely increase pressure on the city's housing market and require additional capital investments to support both housing and job growth. The City's economic development program will continue to actively recruit and retain businesses, attract new development, promote the city to visitors, and work with local and regional partners in support of the best economic future and to increase quality of life for the whole community.

TARGET INDUSTRIES

Based on the 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan, community profile developed in the **Housing Appendix**, and TRIDEC regional priorities, target industries in Kennewick include:

- Agri-tourism/agri-business, emerging viticulture industry, specialty crop farming and retailing, and food processing.
- Supporting supply chain needs in Commodities, Trade, and Transport for e-commerce (e.g., logistics, warehouse, and distribution industries).
- Visitor-serving commercial and recreational activities.
- Education and education-supporting services (e.g., teachers, bus drivers, district administrative staff, etc.)
- Manufacturing (light industry), and energy.
- Medical and healthcare.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS + POLICIES

Goal ED-1 **Strong Local Economy.** Improve the business climate in Kennewick to foster a strong, diversified, and sustainable local economy that supports long-term economic resilience and enhances the community's quality of life.

Policy ED-1.1 Create incentives to attract target industries to Kennewick.

Policy ED-1.2 Maintain efficient, consistent, timely and transparent licensing and permitting practices and procedures.

Policy ED-1.3 Designate sufficient land across the city to attract businesses that create a diverse economic base, providing high-quality office, commercial, and industrial employment opportunities with living-wages and the goods and services desired by the community.

Policy ED-1.4 Promote the diversification of the community's economic base by encouraging the location, retention, and expansion of local small and medium-sized businesses.

Policy ED-1.5 Coordinate strategies to minimize the impacts of business displacement resulting from growth pressures, especially for potentially impacted businesses owned, operated, or serving Black, Indigenous, Hispanic/Latino, and other people of color and historically marginalized communities.

Policy ED-1.6 Encourage or develop programs to support minority-owned businesses or worker cooperatives.

Policy ED-1.7 Maintain ongoing collaboration with the local business community to identify strategies to retain, grow, and support thriving businesses in Kennewick.

Policy ED-1.8 Support the attraction of grocery retail in South Kennewick and the Southridge area through zoning, targeted outreach, and partnerships with property owners, developers, and grocers.

[2] City of Kennewick, "Economic Development Update – Donuts and Development – March 2025," 2025.

Goal ED-2 **Workforce Development.** Support education and workforce development to prepare residents and workers for jobs in target industries, and improve Kennewick's ability to attract workers who can fill in target industries.

Policy ED-2.1 Support the Tri-Cities Young Professionals Network in connecting residents to career development, networking, and workforce opportunities in target industries.

Policy ED-2.2 Partner with education and employment organizations and businesses to help ensure an adequate and trained labor pool.

Policy ED-2.3 Support efforts of businesses and institutions to train workers for today's and tomorrow's jobs and support continuing education in the region.

Policy ED-2.4 Encourage training and educational opportunities which strengthen and increase the variety of skills available in the local workforce and encourage entrepreneurship.

Policy ED-2.5 Encourage development of a green jobs training program to facilitate sustainable economic growth.

Policy ED-2.6 Support growth of the healthcare sector by expanding access, attracting diverse medical specialties, and encouraging facility development through partnerships, incentives, and strategic planning.

Policy ED-2.7 Promote the community's quality public school system as factors in attracting and retaining business and industry.

Policy ED-2.8 Encourage the development of childcare facilities across the city with a clear development and permit process to support community needs.



Southridge Hospital

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Goal ED-3 **Walkable Mixed-Use Districts.** Support the development and redevelopment of walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods as attractive locations for employment, tourism, arts and culture, entertainment, and residents.

Policy ED-3.1 Support Downtown Kennewick redevelopment efforts through regulatory incentives, infrastructure investments, urban design standards, and other tools.

Policy ED-3.2 Encourage redevelopment in appropriate areas on the Columbia River, primarily to the east of the Blue Bridge (SR-395) within the Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Rail Subarea and in industrial areas.

Policy ED-3.3 Continue to support the new entertainment district in the Vista Field/Three Rivers Convention Center area, through zoning, urban design, infrastructure investments, and other tools.

Policy ED-3.4 Continue to support the Port of Kennewick's goals of creating a new mixed-use neighborhood at Vista Field through infrastructure improvements; urban design tools, and other actions.

Policy ED-3.5 Encourage a mix of residential and commercial uses to promote vibrant retail districts.

Policy ED-3.6 Promote art, high-quality architecture, and cultural events as central to businesses and job retention, job creation, and quality of life.

Policy ED-3.7 Promote Kennewick's cultural communities through inclusive and diverse arts activities and events. Support different types of parks and activities in parks to meet the needs of the city's diverse and multi-generational community.

Policy ED-3.8 Support compact, pedestrian-oriented retail areas through effective planning for multimodal transportation access and efficient parking.

Policy ED-3.9 Ensure Kennewick has an adequate supply of hotel rooms to meet demand and to prevent economic leakage. Promote the development of hotels near tourism and business destinations.

Policy ED-3.10 Support and promote Kennewick as a regional recreation destination by encouraging development and maintenance of facilities for sports, water-based activities, and outdoor recreation, while integrating these amenities with tourism, economic development, and quality-of-life initiatives.

COLUMBIA RIVER REDEVELOPMENT

The 2010 Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Rail (BB/RR) Revitalization Subarea Plan details a long-term vision for the area between the Blue Bridge (SR-395) and the Cable Bridge and the Columbia River to the BNSF Railroad mainline tracks. In addition to zoning adjustments that allowed for more mixed commercial and residential development, the BB/RR Subarea Plan includes improvements like more recreational trails, tree plantings, better signs, and wider sidewalks.

Source: Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Rail Revitalization Plan (2010)

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Goal ED-4 **Infrastructure for Industry.** Maintain the city's infrastructure so that it meets the needs of existing employers and targeted industries.

Policy ED-4.1 Increase the number of "shovel ready" commercial and industrial sites by strategically identifying suitable properties, investing in infrastructure and utilities, streamlining permitting and site-preparation processes, and collaborating with property owners, developers, and regional partners to attract businesses and support economic growth.

Policy ED-4.2 Continue to provide high quality and cost-efficient city services and facilities consistent with the community's priorities and growth as encapsulated in the **Land Use Element**.

Policy ED-4.3 Continue to identify, construct, and maintain infrastructure systems and facilities required to promote and sustain a productive economic climate.

Policy ED-4.4 Support climate-resilient infrastructure, including reliable water supplies, sustainable irrigation, and increased renewable energy capacity, to help agricultural producers and Kennewick's residents, businesses, and industries adapt to changing conditions, balance regional resources, and sustain a vibrant economy and high quality of life.

Policy ED-4.5 Promote and maintain attractive, accessible, and well-designed parks and public spaces as a key component of economic development, supporting business attraction, workforce retention, and the overall well-being of residents and workers.

Policy ED-4.6 Explore opportunities to utilize tax increment financing for key infrastructure and redevelopment projects in coordination with future Capital Facilities Plan updates.



Columbia Center mall

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Goal ED-5 **Regional Economic Growth.** Support regional efforts to attract and retain target industries to market the Tri-City region.

Policy ED-5.1 Strengthen Kennewick's partnership with TRIDEC to support regional business attraction, workforce development, and strategic marketing efforts.

Policy ED-5.2 Focus recruitment efforts on target industries that provide living-wage jobs and raise the overall wage levels in Kennewick.

Policy ED-5.3 Support activities hosted by business and educational institutions to market the benefits of doing business in Kennewick.

Policy ED-5.4 Support public and private investment in catalytic projects that spur future economic growth.

Policy ED-5.5 Promote clean, sustainable, environmentally-friendly businesses and jobs. Incentivize green building, transit-oriented development, and low-impact development techniques.



Recreational assets present opportunities for regional economic growth and tourism

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IMPLEMENTATION

Economic Development Strategy

- Kennewick Economic Development Strategic Plan (August 2023)

Design Standards

- KMC 18.75 and 18.78 Design Standards

Sub-Area Plans and Master Plans

- Hansen Park Sub-Area Plan (2002)
- Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Rail Revitalization Plan (2010)
- Vista Field Redevelopment Master Plan (2017)
- Historic Waterfront District Master Plan (2021)

Capital Improvement Program

- Most current CIP

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Climate

This is a new element of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan, adapted for Kennewick from a regional Tri-Cities Climate Element model developed by multiple jurisdictions. See more information here: https://www.bfcog.us/180/Climate-Change

INTRODUCTION

The Washington Growth Management Act (GMA) requires fast-growing Washington cities and counties to develop comprehensive plans that respond to challenges associated with population growth. The GMA was amended in 2023 to include House Bill (HB) 1181 (RCW 36.70A), which requires cities and counties to integrate climate resilience and greenhouse gas emissions reductions into their comprehensive planning.

To fulfill this state requirement, the City of Kennewick collaborated with the neighboring jurisdictions of Benton County and the cities of Richland, West Richland, and Pasco to develop the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element in 2025. During the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element development process, Kennewick and the partner jurisdictions completed robust technical analyses and community and stakeholder engagement to assess how climate impacts and greenhouse gas emission sources are similar across the region and can be effectively addressed with regional alignment.

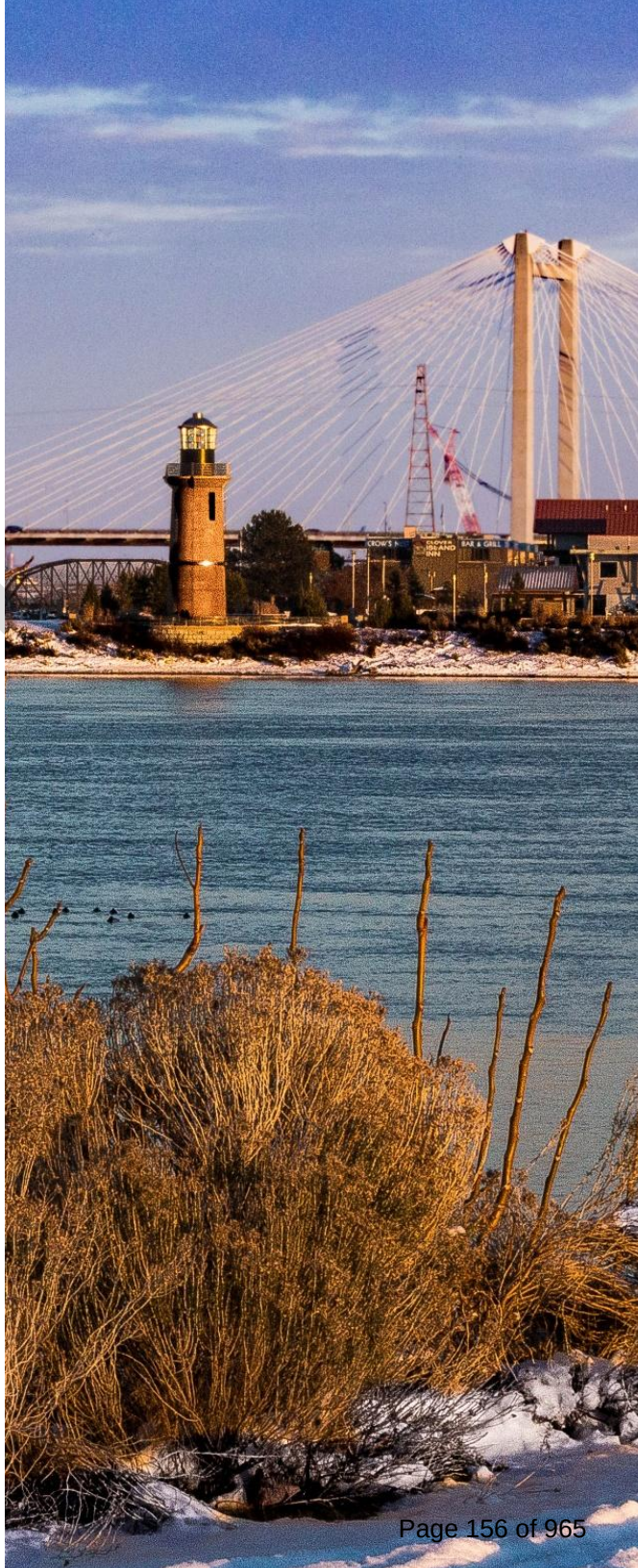
While maintaining its commitment to collaboration and support for regional climate planning efforts, the City of Kennewick adapted the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element to meet the City's needs, leading to the development of the Kennewick **Climate Element**. The **Climate Element** is a living document that should be updated based on new information and the best available science as well as new conditions affecting the City and region economically, politically, socially, and environmentally.

The Kennewick **Climate Element** will help the city prepare for and reduce the impacts of climate hazards that already affect the city and are expected to get worse. These include extreme heat, drought, and wildfire smoke that have implications for Kennewick's economy, water supply, and the health and safety of residents.

Climate Element Organization

The **Climate Element** is divided into two sub-elements, as required by RCW 36.70A for jurisdictions of this size:

- Climate Resilience Sub-Element
- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reduction Sub-Element



Each sub-element is divided into sectors to meet Commerce requirements.

- The Climate Resilience Sub-Element addresses key climate hazards facing Kennewick and provides a set of goals and policies to reduce the impacts of extreme heat, drought, wildfire, and flooding on the people, infrastructure, and ecosystems in Kennewick.
- The GHG Emissions Reduction Sub-Element summarizes the current and future state of GHG emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in Kennewick and presents goals and policies aimed at reducing these emissions and VMT while improving quality of life for residents and visitors.

> The Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element is available on the Benton-Franklin Council of Government's webpage: https://www.bfcog.us/180/Climate-Change.

POLICY AUDIT & ENGAGEMENT

While some assessments are specific to sub-elements, two areas of work, the policy audit and engagement, inform the entirety of the **Climate Element**. Below are findings from these areas of work.

Policy Audit

The policy audit entailed a review of current planning and policy documents in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities Region. This review was essential for understanding how existing local and regional plans and policies build climate resilience and reduce GHG emissions in Kennewick and surrounding jurisdictions. In addition, the policy audit helped to identify potential climate policy gaps, opportunities, and barriers.

Findings from the policy audit helped shape the development of **Climate Element** goals and policies. The goals and policies in the **Climate Element** are specific to Kennewick and reflect the shared mission established in the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element.

The policy audit revealed that most Kennewick policies prioritized resilience and some addressed GHG emissions reduction, but few policies addressed climate equity. The policy audit also revealed that existing Kennewick policies support promoting community wellbeing, increasing public transportation, and providing drought and wildfire education. The audit identified opportunities for Kennewick to strengthen its climate resilience and greenhouse gas reduction efforts through **Climate Element** policies, including policies focused on preparing for and mitigating extreme heat impacts, revising existing land use policies to increase density and active transportation, and supporting weatherization and energy efficiency programs.

See **Climate Appendix** for the full policy audit.



Aerial view of Columbia Park

Engagement, Partnership, and Collaboration

Participating jurisdictions conducted outreach to hear from residents in the Tri-Cities Region about what extreme weather and natural hazards they have experienced and how these have affected their families and communities.

Outreach and engagement activities included a Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT), public meetings, a public survey, a multi-jurisdiction project team, City Council and Planning Commission meetings, and a public webpage. Workshops with Kennewick staff provided insights on policy priorities.

Key engagement details are summarized below. See the **Climate Appendix** for the full engagement summary.

Project Team

City of Kennewick planning staff met bi-weekly with planning staff of the other jurisdictions during the tenth-month development process of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element. These bi-weekly meetings also served as an important checkpoint to share report findings, solicit feedback, and foster collaboration among the jurisdictions.

Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT)

The Washington State Department of Commerce requires a regional policy advisory committee to support and inform the Regional Climate Element development process. The Tri-Cities Regional CPAT included interdisciplinary representative who met four times during the development process to provide perspectives grounded in professional and lived experience.

Public Meetings

During the development of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, public meetings were held in Kennewick and throughout the region to seek feedback on community priorities and the draft goals and policies. Feedback from Kennewick residents, which shaped the Kennewick **Climate Element**, included:

- Key climate concerns included rising summer temperatures, wildfire smoke and air quality, and reduced snowpack that could diminish water supply.
- Proposed actions included landscaping and stormwater management strategies, such as xeriscaping, planting native and climate compatible trees, and allowing for stormwater infiltration through low-impact development techniques. Proposed actions also included improving building energy efficiency, expanding electric vehicle use and charging solutions, and increasing housing density.



Rooftop solar panels

Staff Listening Sessions

During the development of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, two staff listening sessions were held with key City of Kennewick department staff. Staff shared policy priorities, such as increasing resilience to key climate hazards including extreme heat, drought, and wildfire. Staff also shared that residents rely heavily on affordable home cooling, yet many, especially seniors and low-income households, struggle to access upgraded systems. Additional staff priorities included expanding composting and yard-waste programs and implementing the new paths and trails plan to improve community connectivity and encourage safer active transportation.

Public Surveys

An online public survey, available in both English and Spanish, collected feedback for eight weeks in spring 2025. The survey was conducted to understand community members' experiences with weather and climate impacts and their support levels for strategies to increase resilience and reduce the region's emissions.

A housing survey in winter 2026 provided additional feedback on Kennewick residents' experiences with extreme weather, including how it impacted their safety and security in their homes.



Natural landscape surrounding Kennewick and wind turbines

Public Comment, City Council, Planning Commission

During the development of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element process, the project team received feedback on the draft Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element through public comment and from the Kennewick City Council and Kennewick Planning Commission. Feedback included:

- Concerns related to water usage, irrigation, and drought, especially around efforts to increase the tree canopy to provide more shade in the city.
- Interest in keeping electricity costs low as demand for electrification and electric vehicles increases electricity consumption
- Suggestion to strengthen collaboration with community partners and state agencies to ensure relevant experts and community stakeholders are informing climate resilience and emission reduction work.

OVERARCHING GOALS AND POLICIES

Policies in this section apply to both the Climate Resilience and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reduction Sub-Elements. The Overarching Goals and Polices can be considered a beacon to guide the implementation of goals and policies in the Climate Resilience and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Sub-Elements.

Goal C-1 **Climate Planning, Tracking, and Funding.** Integrate climate resilience and GHG emissions reduction into local and regional planning, resource allocation, and overall strategy to ensure compliance with state guidelines and meaningful alignment with current and future priorities.

Policy C-1.1 Develop and maintain staff expertise, skills, and capacity to implement **Climate Element** policies equitably across the region.

Policy C-1.2 Strengthen and invest in regional capacity to track and report on climate resilience and GHG emissions reduction policy implementation across the Tri-Cities area. Develop and maintain shared progress reports, dashboards, and other tools to monitor and communicate progress on climate goals over time.

Policy C-1.3 Ensure comprehensive plan policies and development regulation implementation are consistent with best available science.

Policy C-1.4 Pursue state and other funding opportunities to support local implementation of policies supporting resilience to climate hazards and reduction of GHG emissions.

CLIMATE RESILIENCE SUB-ELEMENT REQUIREMENTS

Requirement 1: Address natural hazards created or aggravated by climate change, including flooding, drought, heat, smoke, wildfire, and other effects of changes to temperature and precipitation patterns;

Requirement 2: Identify, protect, and enhance natural areas to foster climate resilience, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe species migration; and,

Requirement 3: Identify, protect, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts, including social, economic, and built-environment factors, which support adaptation to climate impacts consistent with environmental justice.



Kennewick canal

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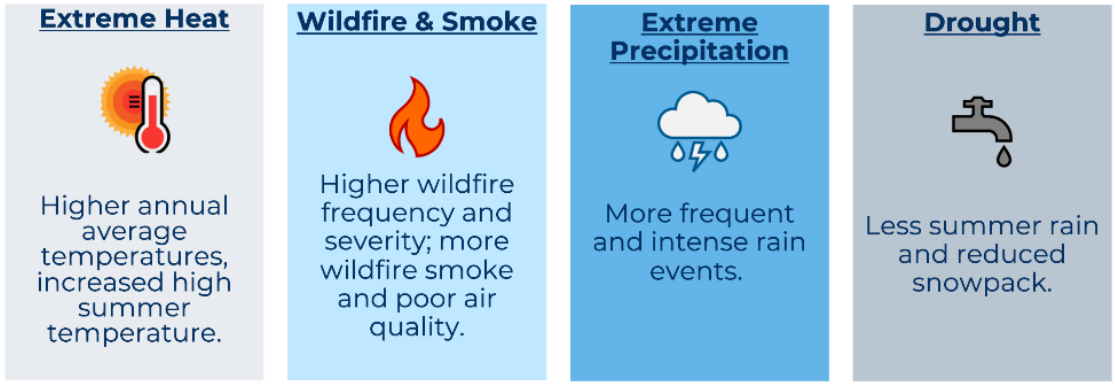
CLIMATE RESILIENCE SUB-ELEMENT

This Climate Resilience Sub-Element summarizes the current and future state of climate impacts, vulnerabilities, and adaptation strategies to increase the region's resilience to climate impacts for its residents, ecosystems, and infrastructure. The analyses conducted align with Commerce's guidance and build the foundation for creating goals and policies.

Existing Conditions: Climate Impacts and Vulnerability

The Climate Resilience Sub-Element was developed through an analysis of current and projected future climate vulnerabilities to identify local policy priorities for increasing climate resilience in Kennewick (**Climate Appendix**). Kennewick, like the Tri-Cities Region, is expected to experience the effects of a changing climate, including extreme heat, wildfire and smoke, extreme precipitation, and drought (**Figure 26**). These climate hazards, which are expected to become more frequent and severe due to climate change, are the foundation for the goals and policies in the **Climate Element**:

Figure 26. Key Climate Hazards in Kennewick



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Extreme Heat

Kennewick averaged three days per year with temperatures over 100°F between 1970 and 2000. By 2070, the city can expect up to 24 days per year with temperatures over 100°F (**Climate Appendix**). During the 2021 Heat Dome event, temperatures reached 109°F, killing four people in Benton County and one in Franklin County (Culverwell, 2024). Warmer temperatures may increase concentrations of ozone and worsen air quality, increase vector-borne illnesses such as West Nile virus, and increase toxic algae in water, affecting water quality and safety for residents. More extreme heat days will also increase the need for shade, air conditioning, and other cooling options.

Wildfire and Smoke



Shrubsteppe habitat

Wildfire is not unknown in and around the city. Historically, Kennewick experiences 54 high fire danger days per year. The August 11, 2018, Bofer Canyon Fire led to injuries for two Kennewick residents (Probert, 2018). By 2070, Kennewick can expect at least 64 days high fire danger days per year (**Climate Appendix**). An increase in wildfire risk will particularly affect vulnerable populations ecosystems and built infrastructure in Kennewick. Wildfire and wildfire smoke events may lead to more interruptions and closures of businesses and recreation areas and may impact human health through loss of life, injury, and impacted mental health from disruptions to routine or displacement.

Extreme Precipitation

Extreme precipitation events directly influence streamflows and flooding risks. Historically, Kennewick averages three inches of winter precipitation per year. By 2070, overall precipitation is expected to increase one-quarter inch more in the winter, with more precipitation falling as rain and in more intense rain events (**Climate Appendix**). Heavier precipitation events can intensify urban flooding and demands on storm water systems, affecting zoning and development in frequently flooded areas. Over $26 million in damages resulted from flooding in the region between January 30 and April 21, 2017. Heavy rains and warm temperatures caused snowmelt flooding across the region, leading to the fourth major disaster declaration in the region since 1956 (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018; Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).



Kennewick riverfront view

Drought

In the past two decades, the Tri-Cities Region has experienced extreme and exceptional drought conditions during late summer and fall (US Drought Monitor, 2025). From 1980 to 2009, Benton County received an average of one inch of rain from July to September and can expect eight-tenths of an inch of summer rain by 2070 (**Climate Appendix**). Decreases in late summer precipitation can compound drought risk during a time of year when temperatures are warmest and the demand for water is highest. Reduced snowpack upstream from Kennewick's water sources can contribute to drought conditions in the city.

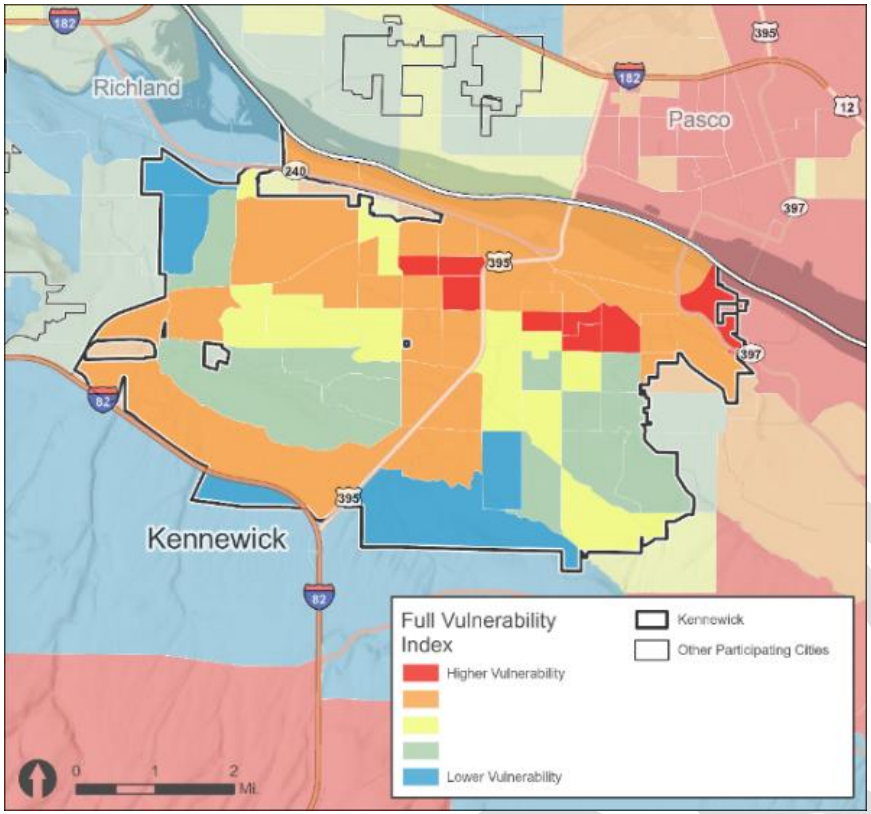
Social Vulnerability

Major exposures to key climate hazards for Kennewick residents include proximity to wildfire risk areas, ozone, and potential future precipitation. Current and future climate impacts effect all Kennewick residents, but some residents are more vulnerable than others. A quarter of Kennewick residents have a chronic health condition that can make them more susceptible to adverse health outcomes, especially during extreme heat or wildfire smoke events (**Climate Appendix**).

Residents' ability to prepare for and reduce the impacts of climate impacts can be impacted by other demographic factors. Residents with low median income, those experiencing poverty, and those with marginalized racial identities, are least able to reduce the impacts of climate hazards. Overall, half of Kennewick's residents are vulnerable to climate risks, the highest in the Tri-Cities Region. The orange and red areas of **Figure 27** show the areas of highest vulnerability in Kennewick.

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Figure 27. Climate Vulnerability in Kennewick



Residents who live in the orange and red areas are more vulnerable to climate impacts, while residents who live in blue, green, and yellow areas have lower vulnerability to climate impacts. The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Map by BERK Consulting, 2025.



Smoke-filled skies in south Kennewick during the Bofer Canyon Fire in 2018. (Probert, 2018)

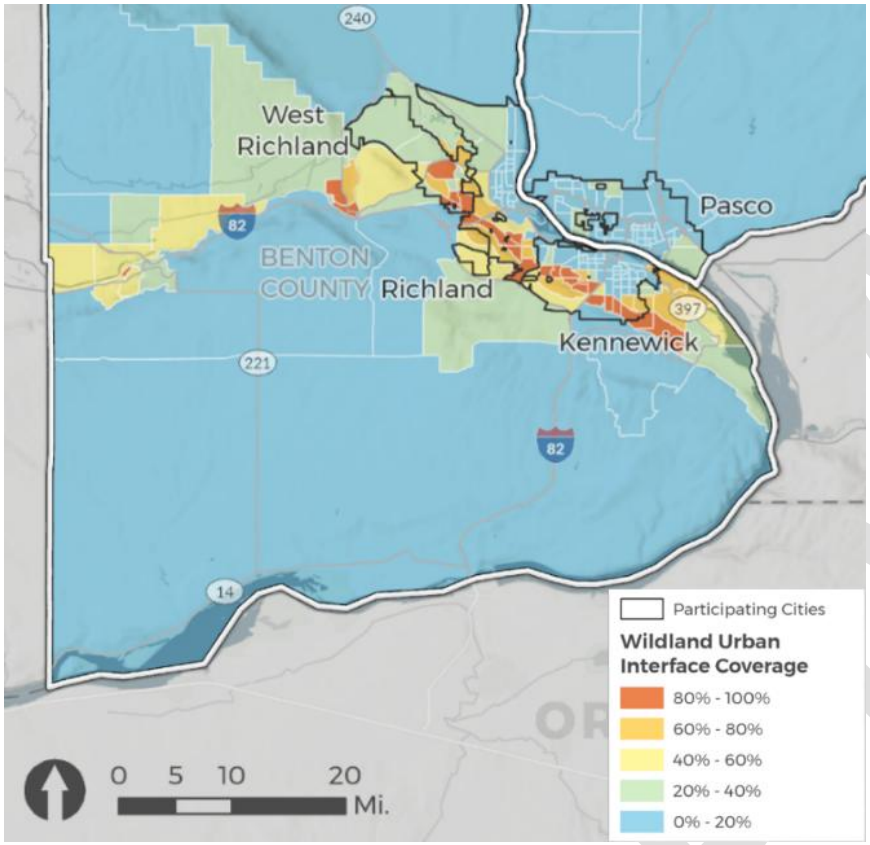
Community Health and Wellbeing

Community and emergency resources and public health can all be at risk of extreme heat, wildfire and smoke, extreme precipitation, and drought. More extreme heat days puts Kennewick residents at risk of heat-related illness and death. People who work outside are at heightened risk of health issues due to extreme heat and poor air quality. Wildfires can affect residents' mental and physical health and require mass evacuations, straining the capacity of community resources (**Figure 28**). Additionally, flood waters can carry diseases and damage infrastructure, leaving residents stranded or in unhealthy homes and communities. Finally, droughts can increase wildfire risk and increase the demand for emergency services (**Climate Appendix**).

Ecosystems and Water Resources

Cultural resources, water resources, ecosystems, and critical areas in Kennewick play an important role in the city's function and identity but are at risk from climate impacts including extreme heat, wildfire and smoke, extreme precipitation, and drought. Warming air temperatures will disrupt ecosystem function and wildlife habitat. Greater frequency and severity of heavy precipitation events increase the region's susceptibility to flooding, and the Columbia River Basin has historically experienced devastating floods that contaminated water resources. Wildfire damage to critical areas will reduce ecosystem functions such as water filtration and storage. Increasingly dry conditions reduce water availability and increase the region's susceptibility to wildfire (**Climate Appendix**).

Figure 28. Wildland Urban Interface in the Tri-Cities



Areas in red and orange are more at risk to wildfire impacts. The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Map by BERK Consulting, 2025.

Built Infrastructure

Kennewick's buildings, energy, and transportation infrastructure are at risk from extreme heat, wildfire and smoke, extreme precipitation, and drought. Wildfire, flooding, and extreme heat threaten to degrade structures, interrupt essential services, and disproportionately impact vulnerable communities. These risks are heightened by rapid population growth, aging infrastructure, and an auto-dependent regional transportation system. More frequent and severe extreme heat events increase cooling demands which can stress older buildings and air conditioning systems. Homes, buildings, and infrastructure located in the WUI (**Figure 28**) are at risk of damage from wildfire. Flooding can also damage homes and lead to road washouts and utility failures (**Climate Appendix**).

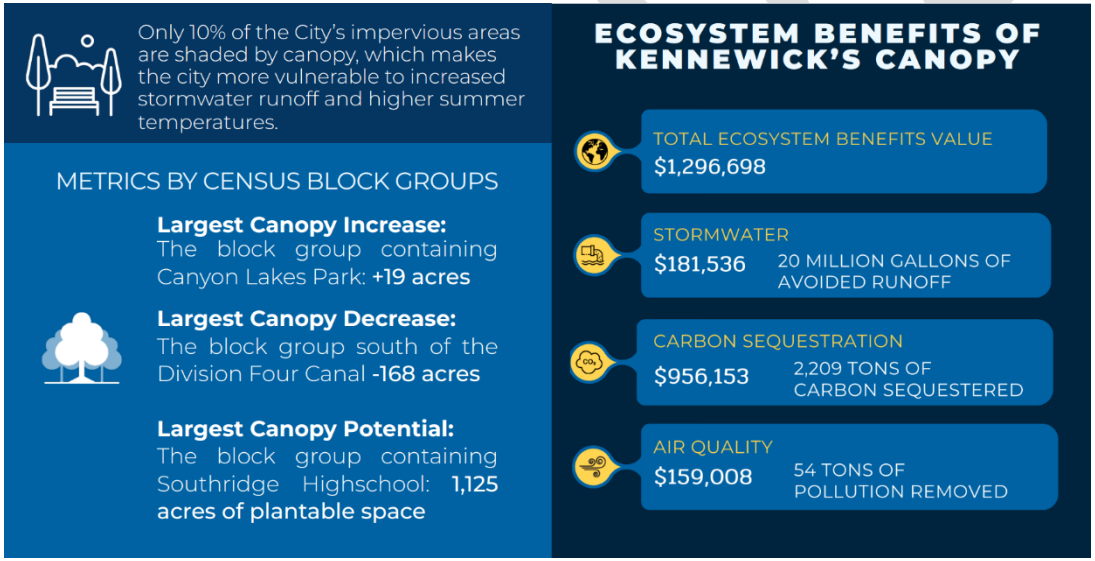
Land Use

Climate impacts can directly affect land uses in Kennewick including local industries and businesses and land use, zoning, and development. Flooding, wildfires, and wildfire smoke can damage or temporarily close local industries and businesses. Climate impacts can constrain development because of safety and property risks from flooding and wildfire. In addition, economic activity may be impacted as outdoor workers experience higher exposure to climate hazards like wildfire smoke and extreme heat (**Climate Appendix**).

Tree Canopy

A Tree City USA for 25 years, Kennewick has a robust Tree Management Program that maintains City-owned trees. Tree canopy and urban forests provide many ecosystem benefits, including surface cooling, stormwater management, air pollution reduction, and carbon sequestration. Tree canopy covers ten percent of Kennewick's area, about 1,900 acres (**Climate Appendix**).

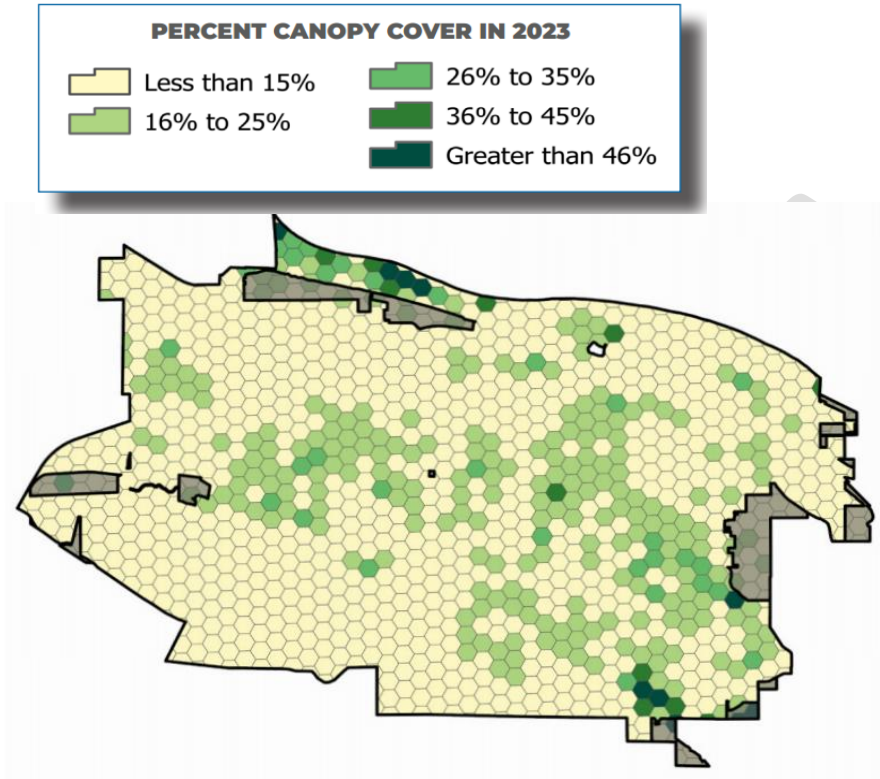
Figure 29. Tree Canopy in Kennewick



PlanIT Geo, 2025. Benefits of Kennewick's tree canopy and areas with the largest increase, decrease, and potential for growth.

Kennewick's tree canopy assessment determines the types of vegetation in the city and adjacent Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) and the amount of land with shrub or tree coverage, bare soil, and impervious surfaces. This reveals the amount of land available for tree planting, to guide land use and ecosystem policy decisions. For example, some areas of the city have seen more than a 15 percent reduction in canopy coverage (**Figure 30**). In **Figure 30**, the yellow marks areas with more than a fifteen-percent tree canopy loss, are primarily in the south and west of the city. Areas with the greatest loss of tree canopy could be prioritized for planting native and drought resistant vegetation to increase shade, reduce air pollution, and reduce stormwater runoff.

Figure 30. Amount of area with tree canopy coverage in Kennewick



PlanIT Geo, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Climate Resilience Goals and Policies

Climate Resilience Sub-Element policies must address each climate hazard impacting Kennewick for each of the following priority sectors, protect natural areas, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts. Goals and policies are organized into the following sections in alignment with Commerce priority sectors:

- Transportation, buildings, energy, and land use
- Water resources, ecosystems, agriculture, and food systems
- Economic development and cultural resources
- Health and wellbeing and emergency management

The Climate Resilience sub-element seeks to build a healthier and more resilient city by preparing for the impacts of climate change, protecting vulnerable communities and natural systems, supporting environmentally resilient economic development, and strengthening agriculture, infrastructure, and emergency response.

- Aquatic ecosystem protection should increase resilience to climate impacts to surface and groundwater quantity and quality, such as algal blooms and increased threat of invasive species.
- Water management plans should consider future hydropower generation in the Yakima River Basin and Columbia River Basin.

Goal C-2 **Resilient Development, Land Use, and Design.** Ensure policies and development regulations result in land use patterns and built environments that support resilience to extreme weather and climate-related impacts.

TRANSPORTATION, BUILDINGS, ENERGY, AND LAND USE

- This goal and its policies seek to Expand wildfire mitigation practices with utilities and fire departments.
- Expand multimodal and active transportation.
- Increase energy efficiency in homes, especially low-cost cooling solutions.

Policy C-2.1 Support increased energy resilience by retrofitting homes with low-cost cooling solutions that meet current building standards, for example by exploring partnership and funding opportunities for programs to provide heat pumps and installation to residents most vulnerable to extreme temperature events (e.g., low-income seniors, children).

Policy C-2.2 Monitor adoption of the state building code by the State Building Code Council and consider whether Kennewick should propose additional development standards to encourage the integration of exterior building features that reduce the impacts of extreme heat, precipitation, and wildfire.

Policy C-2.3 Encourage local utilities to implement wildfire mitigation best practices, such as undergrounding of utilities and vegetation management in wildfire-prone areas.

Policy C-2.4 Implement the BFCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Active Transportation Plan as well as multimodal transportation plans developed by the affiliated cities and counties to enhance resilience of the transportation network to climate hazards.

Policy C-2.5 Explore ways to protect transit-users from extreme heat, such as working with Benton Franklin Transit to install shade infrastructure and vegetation, reduce impervious surfaces, and improve connections to transit stops.

Policy C-2.6 Coordinate with utility providers and partners, such as TRIDEC Energy Forward Alliance, to encourage the expansion of nuclear and renewable infrastructure that provides reliable and affordable power, diversifying sources of energy.

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Policy C-2.7 Support use of low-impact development (LID) and green infrastructure to address stormwater runoff and flooding impacts.

Policy C-2.8 Update Kennewick development codes as needed to mitigate for impacts from changes in the floodplain over time and as new floodplain maps are developed.

Policy C-2.9 Ensure development regulations conserve water resources and support Kennewick's ability to support a high quality of life and vibrant economy in a semi-arid climate. This includes implementing, monitoring, and possibly updating development regulations for water-efficient buildings, landscaping, irrigation systems, water systems, and stormwater management.

Policy C-2.10 Consider developing an emergency response protocol to wildfire hazards to mitigate wildfire risks in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) consistent with regional multijurisdictional hazard mitigation plans for Benton County.

WATER RESOURCES, ECOSYSTEMS, AND FOOD SYSTEMS

This goal and its policies:

- Promote water storage and conservation practices with agriculture, new developments, and residents.
- Expand natural areas to increase shade and flood control.
- Protect ecosystems from extreme heat, drought, and wildfire.

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Goal C-3 **Water and Ecosystem Protection.** Promote resilience to extreme weather and climate-related hazards by protecting the viability of regional water needs and ecosystem health.

Policy C-3.1 Promote sustainable water storage, irrigation, and water practices that help Kennewick and its residential, commercial, and industrial users adapt to changing conditions while balancing regional water needs. Consider operational modernization and enhanced water conservation strategies, such as those in the Yakima Basin Integrated Plan, and coordinate with conservation and irrigation districts.

Policy C-3.2 Work with local partners such as utility districts and irrigation districts to provide outreach or incentive programs to promote voluntary water and energy conservation. This could include raising public awareness of best practices, such as switching from lawns to drought-tolerant landscaping, reducing water needs or identifying alternative water sources for golf courses, or exploring demand pricing structures that do not unfairly burden low-income households.

Policy C-3.4 Encourage conservation and expansion of open space land to improve wildlife habitat quality and climate resilience through new multijurisdictional tools such as conservation futures, transfers or purchase of development rights, or other strategies.

Policy C-3.5 Preserve or expand open spaces and fish and wildlife habitat to enhance resilience to climate impacts including drought, extreme heat, wildfire, and flooding--prioritizing projects for locations:

- That frequently flood,
- Have high heat conditions,
- Border the WUI,
- Have overburdened community groups that are lower income or more sensitive to high heat (e.g., children, seniors, people with chronic health conditions), or
- Support wildlife connectivity for terrestrial and aquatic species

Policy C-3.6 Coordinate with regional, state, federal, and Tribal partners to protect Kennewick's water quality and quantity from potential climate impacts such as extreme heat and drought to ensure healthy ecosystems and safe drinking water.

Policy C-3.7 Support and incentivize private water management practices that recycle water for uses that require less treatment than drinking water, in coordination with the Department of Ecology to ensure proper protocols are used. This could include:

- Reclaiming water used for food processing to irrigate crops,

> Greywater is used potable water from sources such as sinks. Greywater does not include toilet water.

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- Reclaiming greywater to irrigate landscaping or golf courses.

Policy C-3.8 Work with partners, such as Benton Conservation District and the Mid-Columbia Community Forestry Council, to:

- Develop acceptable targets and guidelines for planting drought-tolerant and low-flammability native plant species and mulching practices for new developments and restoration projects to increase resilience and reduce maintenance costs and demand for irrigation water,
- Educate property owners about the maintenance and value of plantings,
- Establish tree and vegetation management best practices to decrease risks from severe wildfires, preserving vegetation where possible and improving ecosystem health and habitat function.

Policy C-3.9 Work with regional, state, federal, and Tribal partners to develop a comprehensive, local drought resilience strategy that:

- Complements state and federal water basin plans,
- Considers projected climate impacts,
- Sets action levels for different drought stages,
- Promotes sustainable water storage, irrigation, and water practices that help Kennewick and its residential, commercial, and industrial users adapt to changing conditions while balancing regional water needs, and
- Includes all relevant stakeholders and water managers, including irrigation districts.

Goal C-4 **Green Economic Resilience.** Ensure that Kennewick's economy, cultural resources, and cultural traditions are resilient to extreme weather and climate-related impacts.

Policy C-4.1 Continue coordination with Tribal governments, including the Yakama Nation and Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, to support tribal efforts to protect cultural resources and build climate-adaptive systems related to food, health, and the economy.

Policy C-4.2 Collaborate with community partners to explore ways to expand entry level jobs and career development pathways in low-emission industries that align with the needs and strengths of Kennewick.

Policy C-4.3 Support workforce development programs for clean energy, green infrastructure, and other climate friendly technologies.

POTENTIAL COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Kennewick School District
- Labor unions
- Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC)
- Kennewick Chamber of Commerce
- Community-based organizations
- Business leaders in light industrial uses and nuclear, solar, and hydropower energy

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This goal and its policies:

- Expand entry level job opportunities in low-emission industries.
- Coordinate with Tribal governments to increase climate resilience and adaptation.

HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

This goal and its policies seek to:

- Expand programs providing cooling and warming centers and other emergency shelter.
- Expand public outreach and education on emergency preparedness.

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Goal C-5 **Extreme Weather Preparation and Recovery.** Protect community health and well-being and enhance emergency preparedness, response, and recovery from the impacts of climate-related hazards, focusing resources on the people and places most at risk to these hazards.

Policy C-5.1 Ensure the Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan considers opportunities to enhance the resilience of critical infrastructure to natural hazards, such as flooding and extreme heat.

Policy C-5.2 Work with the community and funding partners to raise awareness of and expand programs that provide cooling and warming centers and other types of emergency shelter and resource distribution during extreme weather, focusing on supporting the people who are most at risk.

Policy C-5.3 Continue to mitigate risk of wildfires in the WUI, including providing public education for private owners and residents developing a wildfire response protocol to wildfire hazards.

Policy C-5.4 Promote equitable access to parks, which provide public access to cool places such as water or shaded areas, provide public gathering places that create inclusive and connected recreational spaces, and support culturally responsive, community-driven park development that reflects local needs and values where community members can connect and support each other.

Policy C-5.5 Collaborate with community groups to:

- Strengthen communication with non-English-speaking communities to communicate climate hazards and preparation strategies,
- Explore the most effective methods for raising awareness of and engagement with climate issues,
- Expand community outreach and training programs focused on preparedness and response to floods, fire, poor air quality, extreme temperatures, and utility outages, including support for Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT) and Long-Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs),
- Ensure all residents have access to information about climate impacts and an opportunity to participate in public decision-making processes related to plans and the use of public resources to address those impacts,
- Integrate input from populations that are typically the most at risk to climate impacts, such as seniors, children, low-income households, and those with chronic health conditions into implementation actions. Also seek input from community service providers regarding unhoused people.

Policy C-5.6 Protect the health and well-being of agricultural, construction, recreation, first responders, and other outdoor workers exposed to extreme heat, poor air quality, and other weather-related hazards by coordinating with the Benton Franklin Health District, the State Department of Labor and Industries, and labor unions to consider:

- Strategies such as promoting awareness of worker protection laws (WAC 296-62-09530), and

> Critical Infrastructure Includes water treatment plants, power lines, sewer and stormwater, medical facilities, and more.

> **COOLING AND WARMING CENTERS**
> Temporary sites: churches, schools, libraries, city hall, fire station
> Permanent sites: Recreation centers, community centers.

- Best practices such as scheduling heavy routine outdoor work during cooler times of day and providing breaks and shelter during extreme weather events.

Policy C-5.7 Expand local food security and the food-related economy to address climate impacts and increase access to healthy, affordable, and climate-friendly foods by supporting urban agriculture and local food distribution infrastructure.

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GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS REDUCTION SUB-ELEMENT

This Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions Reduction Sub-Element summarizes the current and future state of GHG emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in Kennewick and the region and presents policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions and VMT while improving quality of life for residents and visitors. The analyses conducted align with Commerce's guidance and build the foundation for creating goals and policies. Goals and policies in the GHG Emissions Reduction Sub-Element must meet the following requirements to comply with RCW 36.70A:

> Requirement 1: Result in reductions in overall greenhouse gas emissions generated by transportation and land use within the jurisdiction but without increasing emissions elsewhere in Washington;
> Requirement 2: Result in reductions in per capita vehicle miles traveled within the jurisdiction but without increasing greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere in Washington; and,
> Requirement 3: Prioritize reductions that benefit overburdened communities in order to maximize the co-benefits of reduced air pollution and environmental justice.

Existing Conditions: GHG Analysis and VMT Study

The following analyses shaped the GHG emissions reduction goals and policies:

- Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Study
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) Analysis

> These GHG and VMT assessments meet Commerce requirements for setting emissions-reduction targets and developing the goals and policies needed to achieve them. The purposes of the GHG and VMT assessments are to:
> - Inform the **Climate Element** drafting process by identifying key GHG emissions sources and contributors to VMT.
> - Model future GHG and VMT and pathways to net zero emissions.
> - Ensure **Climate Element** policies support GHG and VMT reductions to meet state net zero requirements.

Vehicle Miles Traveled Study

VMT is a transportation metric that calculates the total travel distance of all vehicles in a specific geographic region over a given period. VMT is a key metric in transportation planning because it provides a measure of total travel that can be used to understand changes over time or differences amongst areas. The 2025 VMT Study included a travel market assessment, analysis, and overview of potential reduction strategies for the jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region (**Climate Appendix**).

In the Tri-Cities Region, without strategies to discourage auto travel, 95 percent of the travel in the region (drive alone + carpool) is expected to continue to be via car in 2045. Carpooling is expected to increase slightly, while commuting by bike, walking, and transit will stay mostly the same from 2025 to 2045.

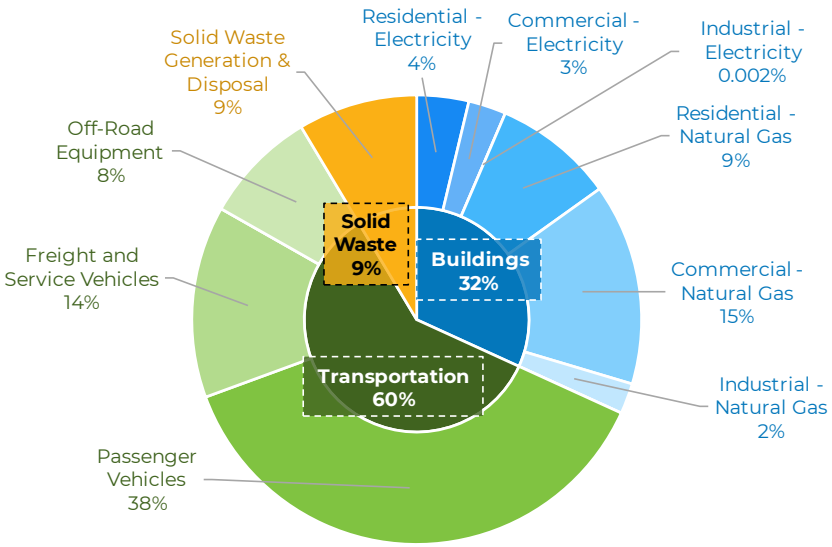
Key findings from the VMT study included:

- High Percentage of Short Drive-Alone Trips. About 95 percent of travel in the region is by car and about 72 percent of these are drive-alone trips, and 23 percent are carpool trips. Future travel modes are projected to be the same as current conditions for the region without implementing strategies to shift modes.
- Transit Service. The current transit service generally serves areas with higher density and employment, but transit service frequency is low. Future investment in transit will be needed to serve existing areas with dense housing and employment. Increasing frequency to 15 minutes or less in areas already served by transit may be a more cost-effective way to reduce VMT when compared to service expansions.
- Bike Network. As land use plans are developed with the comprehensive plan updates, bike network expansion will need to be considered in new development areas.
- Increase in Trips. Significant increases in daily trips that stay within Kennewick are anticipated, which provides an opportunity to use transit service and non-motorized facilities to reduce VMT.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis

The 2025 Tri-Cities Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis (GHG Analysis) inventoried current and forecasted future communitywide GHG emissions for Benton County, Kennewick, Richland, West Richland, Pasco, and the Benton-Franklin Region. Assessing emissions throughout the region is important given the rate of travel between different jurisdictions. **Figure 31** summarizes Kennewick's communitywide emissions.

Figure 31. Total communitywide GHG emissions (Kennewick, 2025)



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Results from the GHG emissions inventory show the largest sources of emissions from Kennewick in 2022 were transportation and building energy use (**Figure 31**). Specifically, on-road passenger vehicles were the largest source of emissions (38 percent of total emissions), followed by commercial natural gas consumption (15 percent of total emissions).

The GHG Analysis also forecasted future GHG emissions for Kennewick and the other jurisdictions in the region, incorporating the expected impact of federal and state policies and recommended local GHG reduction strategies on projected emissions.

GHG Emissions Reduction Goals and Policies

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Sub-Element policies must work toward an overall GHG emission reduction target of net-zero emissions by 2050 on both a total and per-capita basis. Goals and Policies in this sub-element are organized by the following sectors:

- Buildings and energy
- Transportation, zoning and development, and land use
- Waste management

> The Commerce's *Intermediate Planning Guidance for Climate Elements* includes the following requirements and recommendations related to target setting and progress tracking and reporting:
> The GMA requires cities, counties, and Commerce to report progress every five years toward implementing comprehensive plan commitments, including those in the **Climate Element**.
> Jurisdictions will need to set incremental targets toward achieving net zero emissions in 2050, consistent with Washington's statewide target.
> Reports to Commerce should show jurisdiction progress implementing policies to reduce emissions and per capita VMT to achieve local goals and targets.

This sub-element supports clean growth and climate-smart development in the region by reducing GHG emissions across all sectors, advancing clean energy, and integrating sustainable land use and transportation strategies.

Climate Element goals are intended to be broad, providing a framework for action to guide the implementation of policies throughout Kennewick. However, adoption of certain goals and policies included in the **Climate Element** is required for compliance with RCW 36.70A. Greenhouse gas emission reduction targets for the region were modeled with the assumption that certain policies are adopted by all jurisdictions. Failure to adopt one or all these policies risks the region's ability to meet required GHG and VMT reduction goals and meet state requirements.

These policies are indicated with this icon: 

Goal C-6 **Energy Consumption and Efficiency.** Improve building performance and energy reliability by reducing energy use, supporting cleaner energy choices, and making energy-saving upgrades more accessible and affordable.

Policy C-6.1 Educate and support building officials, developers, partners, and staff to integrate state energy and building codes for new and remodeled buildings that reduce energy use, expand EV charging infrastructure, and support a variety of energy sources, including renewable sources.



Policy C-6.2 Reduce energy consumption in existing buildings by:



- Supporting public programs that incentivize or encourage energy efficiency retrofits for commercial and residential buildings,
- Advancing energy efficiency initiatives across residential, commercial, and municipal sectors, such as weatherization,
- Prioritizing programs that serve low-income, senior, and historically marginalized communities.

Policy C-6.3 Promote the development of affordable, green buildings that use sustainable building materials (e.g., low-carbon concrete, locally sourced and recycled materials) to improve energy and environmental performance through:

- Incentivized green building certification,
- Building code requirements,
- Other development regulations, such as zoning incentives that encourage sustainable building practices.

Policy C-6.4 Support the creation of a regional resource hub website of federal, state, county, and local incentives available to residents interested in building electrification, insulation, and weatherization, to improve energy efficiency, resilience, and affordability. Prioritize low- and no-cost home retrofit packages for low-income and overburdened communities.

BUILDINGS AND ENERGY

This goal and its policies seek to:

- Reduce building energy consumption and improve energy efficiency.
- Align with state guidance for decarbonization and building codes for EV charging infrastructure.

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Goal C-7 **Density and Transit.** Reduce regional per-capita VMT below 2022 levels by 2050 by collaborating regionally to promote transportation and land use patterns that support reductions in emissions and VMT, such as dense, mixed-use, and multimodal development.

Policy C-7.1 Foster higher-density, mixed-use development in urban villages and transit corridors by supporting transit-oriented development and aligning zoning and permitting processes to facilitate compact growth near transit and amenities.

Policy C-7.2 Support shorter commutes and reduced reliance on driving for low-income community members by prioritizing the integration of income-restricted affordable housing near transit service, schools, jobs, and services.

Policy C-7.3 Create and maintain a safe, well-connected, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network with adequate shade shelters, snow removal, and other practices to encourage active transportation and improve street connectivity and walkability. Ensure improvements increase accessibility for people with disabilities and the elderly.



Policy C-7.4 Prioritize, develop, and maintain mobility hubs in transportation-efficient locations, especially in overburdened communities experiencing a scarcity of transportation alternatives. Incorporate mobility choices (including multimodal transportation and rideshares) for people with special transportation needs, including people with disabilities, the elderly, the young, and low-income populations.

Policy C-7.5 As feasible, identify and implement protections for tenants and low-income residents (such as anti-displacement measures and affordable housing requirements) to ensure that these investments do not lead to displacement or additional cost burdens.

Policy C-7.6 Implement and seek alignment with the following plans to support regional transportation options, increase multimodal transit, and reduce GHG emissions reductions, as required by the state: Kennewick Transportation System Plan, Kennewick Six-Year Transportation Improvement Plan, Kennewick Pathways and Trails Master Plan, BFCOG Regional Active Transportation Plan; BFCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Transition 2045); BFCOG Regional Bicycle Plan; BFCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; other Comprehensive Plan elements.

Policy C-7.7 Work with Benton Franklin Transit to support the improvement of transit speed, frequency, coverage, and reliability, such as by improving the number of desirable destinations reachable by transit.



TRANSPORTATION, ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT, AND LAND USE

This goal and its policies:

- Utilize mixed-use land uses to integrate housing, transit, and amenities.
- Reduce commute times with higher-density and infill developments.
- Increase bike and pedestrian transportation networks.

POLICY CE-7.7

The modeling for Policy CE-7.7 assumes an increase in bus frequency from two to four buses per hour, reducing headways from 30 minutes to 15 minutes or less in areas already served by transit. The modeling also assumes an expansion of Ben Franklin Transit service area from 616 to approximately 801 service miles. Together, these improvements are expected to support an overall 30% increase in transit trips.

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Policy C-7.8 Encourage the private sector and other partners to provide subsidies for low-income residents to purchase electric vehicles and EV charging infrastructure, especially in areas that serve low-income populations and renters.

Policy C-7.9 Phase out the use of gas-powered landscaping equipment and other off- or non-road vehicle and equipment types in City operations to encourage the community to do the same.

Policy C-7.10 Promote local government leadership by;

- Converting vehicle fleet vehicles to low-emissions vehicles, where cost and technology allow, and
- Developing and implementing programs that reduce staff commute VMT (e.g., provide free or subsidized transit passes, encourage ridesharing, explore options for telecommuting).

Policy C-7.11 Coordinate regionally to track trends in GHG emissions and VMT for 5-year Comprehensive Plan progress reporting, including coordinating on how to allocate data from unincorporated Urban Growth Areas (UGAs).

Policy C-7.12 Implement the City of Kennewick 2040 Transportation System Plan to advance multimodal transportation options and reduce per capita VMT.

FLEET TRANSITION PLANS

Electric vehicle fleet transition plans help agencies plan for phasing out most or all gas-powered vehicles and replacing them with electric vehicles. Realistic transition plans are based on the size and composition of the existing fleet, the state of the vehicle manufacturing market (especially for heavy vehicles like dump trucks), the capacity of the local electrical system, the funding available (including potential grants), and community objectives.

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GLOSSARY

Adaptation: The process of adjusting to new climate conditions to reduce risks to valued assets.[1]

Climate: The usual, long-term weather conditions expected in a region.[2]

Climate resilience: The ongoing process of anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changes in climate and minimizing negative impacts to natural systems, infrastructure, and communities.[3]

Climate hazards: An event related to climate, such as wildfire, heatwave, or flood, which can cause injury, illness, or death to people or damage to assets.

Exposure: The presence of people, assets, and ecosystems in places where they could be adversely affected by hazards.

Greenhouse gas (GHG): Gases, such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide, and certain synthetic chemicals, that trap some of the Earth's outgoing energy, thus retaining heat in the atmosphere.[4]

Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW): a series of state statutes, first adopted in 1990, that require fast-growing cities and counties to develop a comprehensive plan to manage their population growth.[5]

Hazard mitigation: Any sustainable action that reduces or eliminates long-term risk to people and property from future disasters.[6]

Overburdened community: A geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined by HB11 RCW 19.405.020.Error! Bookmark not defined.

Per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT): The number of miles traveled using cars and light trucks in a calendar year divided by the number of residents. The calculation of this value excludes vehicle miles driven conveying freight.Error! Bookmark not defined.

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[11] RCW 36.70A https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2023-24/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1181-S2.SL.pdf?q=20230912140957

[2] National Aeronautics and Space Administration https://www.nasa.gov/audience/forstudents/k-4/stories/nasa-knows/what-is-climate-change-k4.html

[3] RCW 70A.65.010 https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=70A.65.010

[4] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/what-green-infrastructure

[5] Municipal Research and Services Center https://mrsc.org/

[6] FEMA https://www.fema.gov/

Sensitivity: The degree to which a system, population, or resource is or might be affected by hazards.

Urban Growth Areas (UGA): Each county that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 designates areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. Each city in such a county shall be included within an urban growth area. An urban growth area may include more than a single city. An urban growth area may include territory that is located outside of a city only if such territory already is characterized by urban growth, whether the urban growth area includes a city, or is adjacent to territory already characterized by urban growth, or is a designated new fully contained community as defined by HB11 RCW 36.70A.350.Error! Bookmark not defined.

Vulnerable populations: Including but not limited to racial or ethnic minority populations, low-income populations, populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms, and populations of workers experiencing environmental harms as defined by RCW 70A.02.010 (14)(a)(b).Error! Bookmark not defined.

Weather: The changes we see and feel outside from day to day.Error! Bookmark not defined.

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI): The geographical area where structures and other human development meet or intermingles with wildland vegetative fuels.Error! Bookmark not defined.

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City of Kennewick 2026-2046 Comprehensive Plan VOLUME II Appendices

THIRD DRAFT – July 17, 2026

This is a draft for public review of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan periodic update. The Plan is required by state law to be updated every ten years (due by December 31, 2026), and the plan's population and job growth targets cover a 20-year planning timeline through 2046.

Blue annotation boxes like these are temporary and provide more context and information about proposed changes.

More information please visit the project website: https://www.go2kennewick.com/249/Comprehensive-Plan-Periodic-Update

Email any comments on this draft to Matt.Halitsky@ci.kennewick.wa.us.

Land Use

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INTRODUCTION

Statutory Requirements Under GMA

The Growth Management Act (GMA) establishes Land Use as a mandatory element of a comprehensive plan, per Chapter 36.70A.070(1) RCW, which must include the following primary components:

- Population densities;
- Building intensities; and
- Estimates of future population growth.

Additionally, GMA states that the Land Use Element should:

- Provide for protection of the quality and quantity of groundwater used for public water supplies;
- Consider utilizing urban planning approaches that promote physical activity;
- Identify lands useful for public purposes;
- Identify open space corridors within and between urban growth areas;
- Review drainage, flooding, and stormwater run-off in the area; and
- Include policies to designate and protect critical areas.

The Growth Management Act creates a mandatory framework for several other planning principles and techniques used in the Land Use Element, which include:

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- Establishment of a City of Kennewick Urban Growth Area;
- Consistency with the Countywide Planning Policies for Benton County;
- Consistency between the Land Use Element and the City's land use and development regulations.

These requirements are met in this Element within the background information, goals and policies, and/or the Land Use map. More specific policies for various topics are found in later chapters of the Comprehensive Plan.

GMA also contains 13 statewide planning goals in RCW 36.70A.020. Several of those goals relate to the City's Land Use Element and include the following:

(1) Urban growth. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner.

(2) Reduce sprawl. Reduce the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development.

(12) Public facilities and services. Ensure that those public facilities and services necessary to support development shall be adequate to serve the development at the time the development is available for occupancy and use without decreasing current service levels below locally established minimum standards.

(13) Historic preservation. Identify and encourage the preservation of lands, sites, and structures, that have historical or archaeological significance.

Countywide Planning Policies

Every county planning under GMA is required to work with cities to develop countywide planning policies (CPPs) to guide development within the county, both in urban growth areas (UGAs) and non-UGA areas. Benton County adopted updates to the CPPs in January 2017. These policies guide a number of aspects of development. For example, according to WAC 36.70A.150, the county and jurisdictions within it are required to work together to identify areas of shared needs for public facilities. This would also include lands for public purposes.

The Benton Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) contain several policies to promote continuous and orderly development. The provision of public services to development requires the use of future population estimates to determine the future facilities and land requirements needed. The City of Kennewick, working in cooperation with Benton County created a formula for identifying land area per capita for uses ranging from residential to industrial and commercial when sizing UGAs. A process to determine the projected population for the next 20 years is also contained in the CPPs. This follows the policy of Benton County – Planning Policy No. 2 - requiring that countywide projected populations shall be allocated among jurisdictions for purposes of land use planning.

URBAN AREAS

Introductory content moved to Vol II Appendix from Volume I

A major portion of the Comprehensive Plan and the Growth Management Act is the provision and designation of Urban Growth Areas. Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) are those areas beyond a city's jurisdictional boundaries that have been designated by the County, in consultation with the City, for future growth and eventual annexation into the City.

The function of an urban growth area is to allow the City to accommodate its 20-year population projection so that financial resources are spent in the most effective way as the city expands and services are provided. Population growth should occur in urban areas. Urban growth areas should be thought of as boundaries that regulate timing for City services.

UGAs require urban governmental services such as water, sewer, transportation, and other infrastructure to be available at the time of annexation or prior to development. The City of Kennewick has to walk a delicate line between the ability of its financial base to adequately serve certain urban densities with adequate services while providing an appropriate supply of land for new growth. Priorities for the extension and provision of utilities and capital improvements will be established based on the Capital Improvement Plan and the Capital Facilities Plan. Parkland, open space, trails, green belts, and schools are necessary ingredients for quality of life issues and need to be planned for and included as the City develops.

Several topics are pertinent to the entire urban area and are discussed in this section.

Land Use Inventory

Kennewick's land use inventory is based on the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) formula for determining urban growth area (UGA) sizes. The formula uses the following nine (9) different land use types:

- Residential land per capita; (or DU)
- Parks and Recreational area per capita;
- Public Facilities lands (fire stations, jails, etc.,) per capita;
- Schools lands per capita;
- Commercial lands per capita, or per employee;
- Industrial/Manufacturing lands per capita;
- Open Space (golf courses, etc.) per capita;
- Public Service lands required for transportation network, easements and R.O.W.s per DU;
- Undevelopable lands (critical areas including steep slopes, wetlands, habitat, etc.)

These land use types are further broken down into two basic categories: "developed lands" and "buildable lands". Kennewick defines these categories are defined in the following manner:

- **Developed lands**: Parcels with assessed improvement value greater than $10,000 not classified as underdeveloped or Public.
- **Buildable lands**: Parcels that are classified as "Vacant" or "Underdeveloped" with the market factor applied.
- **Vacant lands**: Parcels that have no structures or have improvement values under $10,000 (not including lands that are identified as having mobile homes).
- **Underdeveloped lands**: Parcels with structures and improvement value that could be further developed or redeveloped.
- Low Density Residential parcels – Parcels larger than four times the minimum lot size.
- Medium and High Density Residential/Commercial/Industrial/ Mixed Use – Parcels with an assessed improvement value to land value ratio (ILR) less than 0.5

Figure LU-1. Current Land Use Inventory (2025)

CPP Use Category	Total Acres	Developed Acres	Underdeveloped Buildable Acres	Vacant Buildable Acres
Residential	10,659	4,446	4,144	2,068

Parks and Recreational	719	719	—	—
Public Facilities	402	402	—	—
Schools	516	465	10	41
Commercial	1,603	976	191	436
Industrial	834	323	69	441
Open Space	435	435	—	—
Public Service ROW	390	390	—	—
Critical Areas	678	—	—	—
Subtotal	16,235	8,156	4,414	2,987

Natural Open Space, Trails, and Parks

Natural open space, trails, and parks add to the amenities of urban living. To offer varied recreational opportunities while providing additional parkland per capita, the City requests that all new developments address the issue of providing open space. This can be accomplished with parkland dedication, designation of lands for open space, or the availability of open space areas in commercial areas. Master-planned areas such as Hansen Park and Southridge have identified land for open space and parks as a method to protect critical areas and provide this necessary requirement.

Open Space Corridors

Kennewick's open space corridors connect with those of Richland in two locations: at the Columbia River shoreline at the western end of Columbia Park and at the Amon Wasteway on W. Clearwater Avenue. The open space corridors in Kennewick include lands that can be used for recreation, such as parks and golf courses, wildlife habitat areas, trails, lands that are unsuitable for development, and identified critical areas and the connections between them.

Inventory of Open Space Corridors

Open space corridors throughout Kennewick and the urban growth area include lands currently designated Open Space on the Comprehensive Plan land use map, irrigation district rights of way and facilities and critical areas such as wetlands, steep slopes, and fish and/or wildlife habitat conservation areas that are identified as residential, industrial, or commercial on the land use map. Various segments of the primary open space corridor, approximately 15 miles in length, are identified starting at the northwest corner of Kennewick:

- East in Columbia Park along the Columbia River from the Richland/Kennewick shared boundary to the Cable Bridge (Gum St/SR-397);
- South from Hwy 395 and Canal Drive through the Tri-City Country Club Golf Course to S. Vancouver Street;
- Southwest through the Zintel Canyon pathway starting at the southwest corner of S. Vancouver Street and W. 7th Avenue past W. 10th Avenue, W. 27th Avenue, and through Canyon Lakes Golf Course to Hwy. 395, south of W. 36th Avenue;
- West of Hwy 395 through the Southridge Subarea Planning region generally east-west on parallel paths of linear parkways connected by north-south linear parks aligned with the steep slopes;
- Northwest from Southridge through S. Clodfelter Road to Amon Wasteway; and

- North along Amon Wasteway across W. Clearwater Avenue to Richland's shared boundary with Kennewick located south of the Burlington Northern and Santa Fe railroad track.

Additionally, shorter branches of open space corridors lead away from the primary open space corridor identified above. Most of these branch corridors are composed of steep slopes south, southeast and southwest of the City.

Additional open space corridors will be added to the City inventory. The Kennewick Pathways and Trails Master Plan identifies open corridors that can be converted to public use trails.

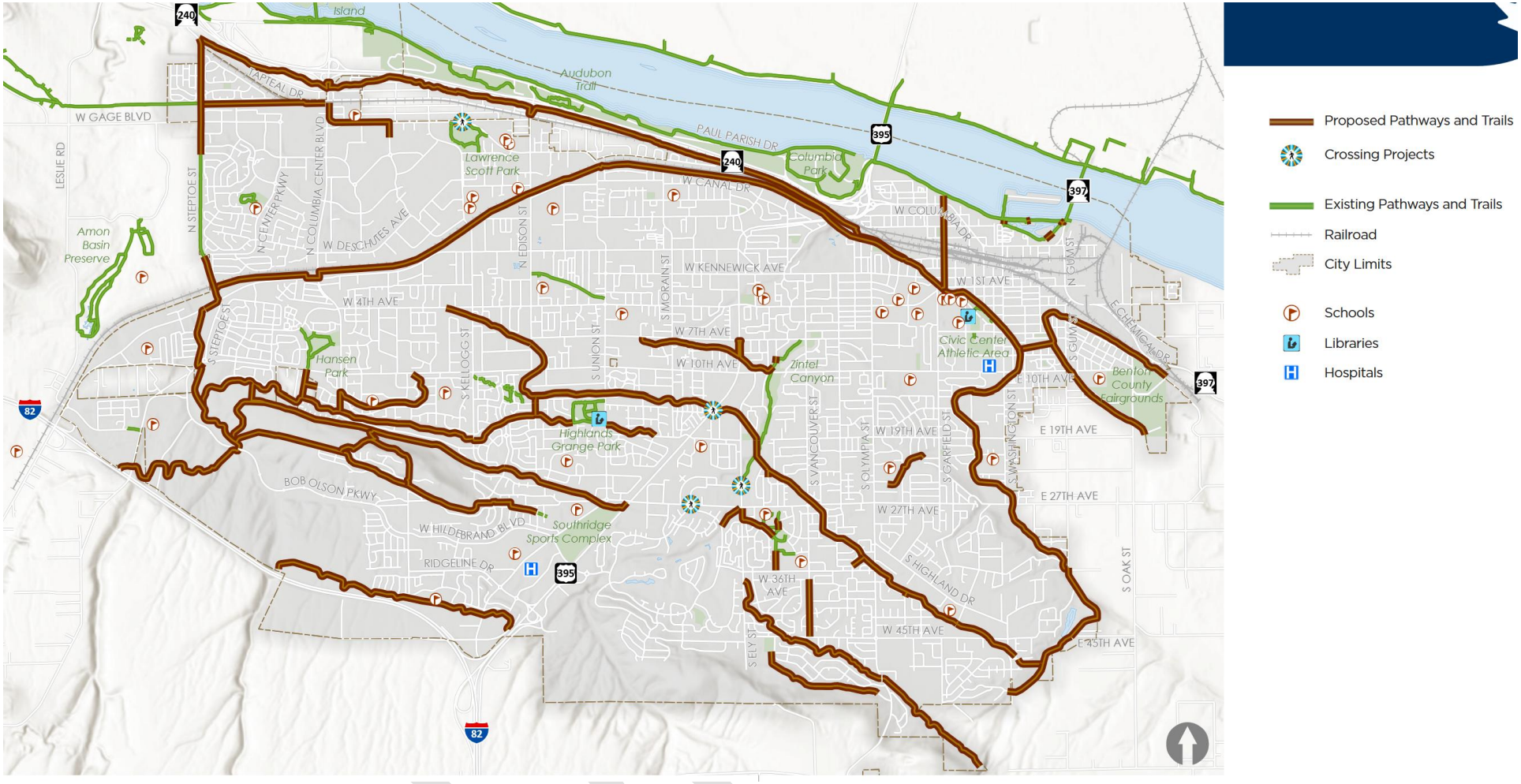
Maps of Open Space Corridors

An Open Space Corridors map has been prepared showing the corridors listed above in the inventory. It was prepared using the Comprehensive Plan land use map to identify areas presently designated as Open Space. The maps prepared for the Critical Area Ordinance, identifying the locations of wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, steep slopes, habitat conservation areas, and frequently flooded areas, were layered on the Comprehensive Plan map. It was expected that there would be a distinct correlation between those areas designated as Open Space on the land use map and one or more of the defined critical areas. Steep slopes correlated more precisely with the areas already identified as Open Space. The accompanying map shows the Open Space Corridors in green, highlighted with brown indicting areas with steep slopes.

The above text description of the open space corridors is from the old version of the Comprehensive Plan, but an actual map does not exist. The below map is a placeholder from the Kennewick Pathways & Trails Plan and will be replaced with a new map to complete this section.

DRAFT

Figure LU-2. Open Space Corridors (2025) [PLACEHOLDER MAP]



Lands for Public Purposes

Lands for public purposes are broadly defined as those lands needed to accommodate public facilities and to provide the public with government services. These government services may be funded by a government entity, such as a city or county, or provided by private companies with public service contracts or franchises. Lands for public purposes are specifically defined as utility corridors, transportation corridors, landfills, sewage treatment facilities, storm water management facilities, recreation, schools, and any other public uses.

Lands for public purposes also include lands defined for essential public facilities such as solid waste facilities, jails, state educational facilities, and transportation facilities. Separate guidelines are established for the provision of such facilities since they are often difficult to site and have unique siting requirements.

Statutory Requirements Under GMA

According to WAC 365-195-430, each city and county preparing a comprehensive land use plan under GMA is required to identify lands useful for public purposes. RCW 36.70A.150 requires a jurisdiction to establish a list of acquisitions that is needed with a timeframe and budget for acquiring such lands. The six-year Capital Improvement Program for the City of Kennewick is used to establish priorities and revenue sources and is updated on a biennial basis. All projects identified in the CIP are located within the adopted urban growth boundaries of the city. All projects are in conformance with land uses shown on the City's adopted land use planning map. Additional information regarding capital facilities can be found in the Capital Facilities Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

City and School Coordination

As the City grows and population increases, more school capacity will be needed. Land use applications for residential development are routinely sent to Kennewick School District #17 for their review and comments. This gives District #17 the opportunity to respond regarding anticipated future school enrollments, bussing, or other issues that will impact their operations. Early acquisition of school sites is desirable to both the School District and the City in order to identify concurrency with transportation and other infrastructure needs. New City parks and schools should be encouraged to locate adjacent to each other for more versatility with larger spaces and efficiency of maintenance.

Bussing has altered the perception that schools define a neighborhood. It still is desirable for school sites to be easily and safely accessible within a neighborhood. It is preferred that elementary schools serve a half-mile radius and middle schools serve a one-mile radius from the school site.

Projected Needs

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates Kennewick's 2020 population at 83,921. The 2046 population projection of 108,989 residents for Kennewick suggests that additional lands for public purposes are likely to be needed. According to Figure LU-2, Kennewick has 402 acres of land designated for Public Facilities such as parks, community centers, schools, public safety facilities, city administration, and maintenance and operations. The need for public land for capital facilities roughly scales with population, though land acquisition does not occur in a linear fashion due to the built-out nature of the city, the nature of the real estate market, and limitations of public funding. Assuming the current Public Facilities land supply is sufficient, Figure LU-2 below provides an exercise in estimating how much additional Public Facilities land may be needed for 2046.

Figure LU-3. Acres per Capita - Public Facilities

Year	City Population	Land Designated as Public Facilities (acres)	Per Capita Ratio for Public Facilities Land
2020	83,921	402	.0045

Year	Population Increase from 2020-2046	Per Capita Ratio for Public Facilities Land	Additional Public Facilities Land Needed (acres)
2046	25,068	.0045	112

Figure LU-2 indicates up to 112 acres may be needed. This is a significant amount of land that may not be feasible for public agencies to acquire over the next 20 years. A moderated need could be realized through the modernization, renovation, and/or expansion of existing public facilities, along with more efficient use of existing land holdings. For example, schools and administration facilities could be multi-story; parks could have multiple uses such as community and recreation centers; and operations facilities and utilities yards could be redesigned for more efficient storage and fleet parking. Public agencies could also explore joint use of land holdings where there are complementary uses or cost-sharing opportunities. Land acquisition, where feasible, could be targeted in areas primed for population and job growth that need accessible new facilities and public services, or where it is advantageous to build a new facility instead of renovating or rebuilding an existing facility.

Mineral Resource Lands

Statutory Requirement

Mineral resource lands are natural resource lands primarily devoted to the extraction of minerals or that have known or potential long-term commercial significance for the extraction of minerals.

Each city and county planning under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) is required to designate natural resource lands where appropriate, and adopt development regulations to assure the conservation of agricultural, forest, and mineral resource lands (RCW 36.70A.060, RCW 36.70A.170). Jurisdictions need to designate mineral resource lands that are not already characterized by urban growth and that have long-term significance for the extraction of minerals.

In order to classify mineral resource lands, cities and counties are required to consult with the Department of Natural Resources. Lands from which extraction of mineral occurs or can be anticipated shall be identified and classified as mineral resource lands (WAC 365-190-070).

Classification criteria shall be established according to the state guidelines in WAC 365-190-070. Areas shall be classified as mineral resource lands based on geologic, environmental, and economic factors, existing land uses, and land ownership. Cities and counties should classify lands with long-term commercial significance for extracting at least the following minerals: sand, gravel, and valuable metallic substances. Other minerals may be classified as appropriate. Classification should be based on the maps and information provided by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources and United States Bureau of Mines.

Inventory Analysis

Benton County Comprehensive Plan mineral resource map designates mineral resource lands within Benton County. Two locations within and near Kennewick's urban growth boundary identified in this map contain major high-grade sand and gravel deposits. These locations are:

- South of Kennewick, south of 27th stretched as far as south Finley area.
- East Kennewick, east of Oak St., at the Benton Franklin fairground.

The south Kennewick gravel pit is located beyond the City's urban growth boundary. The northern portion of the Oak Street gravel pit at the fairground site is owned by the City. Benton County owns the southern portion of the gravel pit. It has been closed for mining. No other site in Kennewick is known to have long-term commercial significance for mining.

The Washington State Geological Survey (USGS) and Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) index of Washington Mining Operations by County do not indicate any existence of mineral resource lands or mining operations within the City's urban growth boundary.

Based on this, the City determines not to allow mining within its UGA unless mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance are identified by the Department of Natural Resources.

Urban Area Implementation

Change of Zones and Pre-Zones

- KMC 18.51 Amendment and Appeal

Development Permits

- KMC 18.42 Land Use Permits
- KMC 17 – Subdivisions

Approval of Plat

- KMC 17.10.080(3) Land For Park Purposes
- KMC 17.13.130 / KMC 17.100.010 Dedication of Land for Park Purposes

Coordination of School & Park Sites

- KMC 17.100.040 School and Park Sites to Abut.
- Kennewick Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan

Open Space

- KMC 18.12.010 A.2 Table of Residential Site Development Standards.
- Kennewick Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Annexations

- Resolution No. 02-21
- RCW 35A.14.300 – Annexations for Municipal Purposes

Sewer & Water Extension

- Resolution No. 02-21

CRITICAL AREAS AND SHORELINES

The City's existing Critical Area Ordinance (CAO) and Shoreline Master Plan (SMP) serve to protect and enhance Kennewick's environmentally critical areas and shoreline. They are vital to the ecological functioning of our region and are protected under GMA. This section reflects the City's major CAO and SMP policies. The detailed development regulations consistent with this section are to be adopted as part of the KMC Title 18.

Development in, or near, critical areas may pose a threat to clean water, vital fish and wildlife habitat and the public health, safety, and general welfare. Kennewick has a responsibility to identify critical areas and to establish methods to protect their ecological functions using the Best Available Science.

The Columbia River is a natural resource shared not only by the Tri-Cities but the region, area, and adjacent states. It is the responsibility of the City to protect, restore, and preserve this valuable natural resource while enjoying the benefits of immediate proximity to the river. Public rights to navigation must be maintained, as well as two unique environmental objectives: no net loss of shoreline ecological functions, and restoration over time. To accomplish this, the Shoreline Master Plan is the primary resource and is supplemented with the Critical Areas Ordinance.

Critical Areas

Critical areas are defined as wetlands, areas of critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water (aquifer recharge areas), fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas. These critical areas represent a variety of ecosystems providing necessary biological and physical functions. At the same time, critical areas can present threats to human safety and to public and private property.

Some beneficial functions and values provided by critical areas include protection of water quality, protection of fish and wildlife habitat, ground water recharge, erosion control, support of nutritional relationships for fish and wildlife, flood management, protection from landslide hazards, aesthetic opportunities, and recreation.

Statutory Requirement Under GMA

According to RCW 36.70A.170, each city preparing a comprehensive land use plan under GMA is required to identify critical areas within their jurisdiction and adopt regulations for protection while accommodating reasonable use of private property.

Purpose Statement for Critical Areas Ordinance

The Critical Areas Ordinance is designed to implement the goals, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the City of Kennewick Comprehensive Plan and the Growth Management Act. The stated purpose is "to designate and classify ecologically sensitive and hazardous areas and to protect these areas and their functions and values, while also allowing for reasonable use of private property".

Best Available Science Used

Counties and cities in Washington planning under GMA are required to use the Best Available Science (BAS) when developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas (WAC 365-195). Determining what qualifies as the best available science is very often difficult. References for BAS are included in Appendix A of the Critical Areas Ordinance.

BAS involves adopting information from local, state, or federal natural resource agencies that are appropriate for local circumstances; consultation with a qualified scientific expert or team to assess applicability to the local critical area; and determination if a person is a qualified scientific expert. A qualified scientific expert has professional credentials or certifications, advanced degrees, years of experience in the specific field, and/or peer-reviewed publications or other professional publications.

A clearly defined process must be followed to determine if information meets the criteria of best available science. Following are characteristics of a valid scientific process:

- Peer review – Data is reviewed by people who are identified as qualified scientific experts in the specific field and have published in a refereed scientific journal.
- Methods – Methods to obtain information are clear, can be replicated, and are standard for that specific scientific field.
- Logical conclusions/reasonable inferences – Reasonable assumptions are used and supported by other studies, are logical, and support the data. Gaps have been adequately explained.

- Quantitative analysis – Statistical or other appropriate quantitative methods are used for analysis.
- Context – Assumptions, analytical techniques, data and conclusions are appropriately used in the correct context.
- References – Assumptions, techniques for analysis, and conclusions are referenced with citations to current, relevant, and credible literature in the specific scientific field.

Nonscientific information is sometimes presented as scientific. There are several sources of information that may be informative and applicable to a specific critical area but would not be considered scientific because they do not meet the above criteria. These sources are:

- Anecdotal information: Observations that are not part of a rigorous scientific process.
- Non-expert opinion: Opinion of a person who is not a qualified expert in the specific scientific field in question.
- Hearsay: Information repeated from others.

Review Process

Near critical areas in identified buffers

KMC 18.58.080 of the Critical Areas Ordinance establishes 200 feet from a critical area as the trip point for review by the City of Kennewick. This width is the maximum buffer size recommended for wetlands and shorelines by the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Specific buffer widths are established for other critical areas. Riparian habitat area buffers are recommended by the Washington State Department of Fish & Wildlife and are based on the stream type. Buffers for erosion or landslide hazard areas are established by the height of the adjacent slope, or 50 feet, whichever is greater. Recommended buffers for wetlands are based on the wetland category, the intensity of impacts, and the wetland functions.

The process for critical areas review is established in KMC 18.58.130(1). The Planning Director has the authority to waive the requirement for a report or other information when there are critical areas within or adjacent to the project area but will not be negatively affected by the project. This means that the functions or values of the critical area will not be disturbed. In order to receive the waiver, the proposal must comply with the requirements established in KMC 18.58.130(2). A summary of the decision by the Planning Director will be included in any staff report or decision made on the underlying permit for the proposed project.

Reasonable Use of Land to Avoid Takings

If application of the Critical Areas Ordinance would deny all reasonable use of property, the owner may apply for an exception pursuant to KMC 18.58.120 of the Critical Areas Ordinance. This section is designed to provide for the reasonable use of private property when impacted by a critical area. The applicant has the responsibility to submit evidence in support of their application and to provide sufficient information to aid in decision-making by the Planning Director.

Limited Exemptions

Eleven exemptions to the Critical Areas Ordinance are allowed if they are otherwise consistent with local, state, and federal laws.

Figure LU-4.Exempt Uses

USES	DEFINITION
Emergencies	Activities necessary to prevent immediate threat to public health, safety, or welfare, or pose immediate damage to private property

Operation, maintenance or repair	For existing structures, infrastructure improvements, utilities, public or private roads, dikes, levees, or drainage systems
Passive outdoor activities	Recreation, education, scientific research such as fishing, hiking, and viewing wildlife that does not degrade critical area
Permit requests with prior critical area review	Critical areas have been addressed in another approval, no changes in potential impact, no new information available, permit has not expired, & compliance with conditions on prior permit have been met
Modification to existing legal structures	Due to fire, flood, or act of nature within 6 months of such damage & issue of a building permit & do not extend further into critical area or buffer
Activities within improved right-of-way	Utility facilities, lines, piper, mains, equipment, etc. located within improved portion of public right-of-way or city authorized private roadway except those altering a wetland or watercourse such as culvert or bridge
Public & private pedestrian trails	Unless located in wetlands or fish & wildlife habitat conservation areas
Vegetation removal activities	Removing & controlling invasive plants or noxious weeds, removal of hazardous trees, or measures to control fire, halt disease or damaging insects
Chemical applications	Herbicides, pesticides, organic or mineral-derived fertilizers, or other hazardous substances in accordance with state & federal laws
Minor site investigative work	Necessary for land use submittals such as topographic surveys, soil work, percolation tests, etc.
Navigational aids and boundary markers	Construction or modification of navigational aids & boundary markers

Wetlands

Wetlands are land areas inundated or saturated with surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration to support vegetation adapted to life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands in Kennewick are designated in accord with the Washington State Wetland Identification and Delineation Manual.

Kennewick contains few wetlands and the most significant ones have been evaluated using the Ecology Rating System. A map showing wetlands is on file in the City of Kennewick Community Planning Department.

Figure LU-5. Wetland Rating Categories

Category	Definition	Criteria
Category I	Wetlands that meet one or more of the following criteria:	• Documented habitat for federal or state endangered or threatened fish, animal or plant species, • High quality native wetland communities, • Wetlands of exceptional local significance.

Category II	Wetlands not defined as Category I and meet one or more of the following criteria:	• Documented habitats for state sensitive plant, fish or animal species, • Wetlands containing plant, fish or animal species listed as priority species by Dept. of Fish and Wildlife, • Wetland types with significant functions that may not be replicated through creation or restoration, • Wetlands with significant habitat value of 22+ points on the habitat rating system, • Documented wetland of local significance.
Category III	Wetlands that do not satisfy Category I, II, or IV and show a moderate level of functions	• Vernal pools that are isolated, and wetlands with a moderate level of functions
Category IV	Wetlands with the lowest level of functions, are often heavily disturbed, and meet the following criteria:	• Hydrologically isolated wetlands less or equal to 1 acre in size, have only 1 wetland class, and are dominated (80% or more) by a single-non-native plant species, • Hydrologically isolated wetlands less or equal to 2 acres in size, have only 1 wetland class, and are covered (90% or more) by non-native plant species.
Category V	Wetlands found in ditches, ponds, canals, etc. intentionally constructed for agricultural uses; or wetlands accidentally created from irrigation water and meet all the following criteria:	• Located above the floodplain, • No primary association with rare, threatened, or endangered species, • Water only from irrigation runoff or leakage.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Areas

Conservation and management of priority habitats and species, including anadromous fisheries, is regulated through KMC 18.63 of the Critical Areas Ordinance. The priority habitats and species are identified by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. The priority habitats and species within the Kennewick area are listed in Appendix B of the Critical Areas Ordinance.



Frequently Flooded Areas

There are two types of flood areas in Kennewick. Floodways are defined as the channel of a stream and adjacent land areas which carry and discharge the floodwater or flood flows of any river or stream associated with a regulatory flood. Flood fringes are land outside the stream's floodway but subject to periodic inundation associated with a regulatory flood.

Regulatory floods have a peak discharge with a one percent (1%) probability of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, as calculated by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The regulatory flood shall include the "one-hundred-year flood" as shown on the flood insurance rate map prepared by FEMA.

The approximate locations of frequently flooded areas are shown on the Critical Areas Map, on file in the Community Planning Department of the City of Kennewick. This citywide map was prepared using the Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) prepared by FEMA.

Additional information regarding frequently flooded areas is found on community panel maps prepared by FEMA for the National Flood Insurance Program. These are available in the Community Planning Department and are used to identify flood zones. Zone A is an area of 100-year flood with base flood elevations and flood hazard factors undetermined. Zone B are areas between the 100-year flood and 500-year flood, or certain areas subject to 100-year flooding with average depths less than one foot, or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile, or areas protected by levees from the base flood.

KMC Chapter 18.66 Flood Damage Prevention is intended to prevent flood damage and maintain community eligibility in the National Flood Insurance Program. It is reviewed periodically by FEMA through the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas

Potable water for the City of Kennewick comes from the Columbia River and two aquifer collectors located in Columbia Park. Critical aquifer recharge areas supplying the collectors contain specific geologic conditions affecting infiltration rates. Potential contamination of ground water requires that the wellheads will be protected. In Kennewick, the wellhead protection area is the ten-year time of ground water travel to the wellheads.

The location and extent of critical aquifer recharge areas are shown on the Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Map on file in the Community Planning Department of the City of Kennewick. This map will be used as reference for the City, project applicants, and property owners.

General performance standards for aquifer recharge areas are included in the Critical Areas Ordinance. Activities may only be permitted if the proposed activity will not adversely affect recharging of the aquifer and contaminants will not enter. Proposed activities must comply with all water protection requirements and recommendations of Federal, State, and local agencies. Proposals must be designed and constructed for erosion control and surface and stormwater management requirements in the current City regulations.

Additional regulations for critical aquifer recharge areas are the City of Kennewick Construction Standards (KMC 5.56) and the City of Kennewick Wellhead Protection Plan.

Specific Performance Standards for critical aquifer recharge areas are also provided in the Critical Areas Ordinance. Storage tanks, vehicle repair and servicing, and water reuse projects must all conform to local building codes and specific requirements included in KMC Section 18.60.050.

Prohibited uses in the critical aquifer recharge areas are landfills and underground injection wells. Landfills include hazardous or dangerous waste, municipal solid waste, special waste, wood waste and inert and demolition waste landfills.

Geologically Hazardous Areas

Geologically hazardous areas are those areas that are susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquakes, or other geological events. These areas pose a threat to the health and safety of citizens, and possibly to adjacent lands. There are five specific types of geologically hazardous areas.

Figure LU-6. Geologically Hazardous Areas

Geologically Hazardous Areas	Identified or Mapped by Agency	Definition
Erosion hazards	U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources, Conservation Service (USDA - NRCS)	Moderate to very severe rill and inter-rill erosion, Slopes greater than 15%

Landslide hazards	U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources, Conservation Service (USDA – NRCS), Department of Ecology, Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Geological Survey	Subject to landslides due to a combination of geologic, topographic, and hydrologic factors such as bedrock, soil, slopes, structures, or hydrology
Seismic hazards		Subject to severe risk of damage from ground shaking, slope failure, settlement, soil liquefaction, lateral spreading, or surface faulting
Extreme slope hazards	Southridge Master Plan - JUB	Severe erosion potential and high probability of slope failure & landslide occurrence, Slopes greater than 25%
Other geological events		Mass wasting, debris flows, rock falls, differential settlement.

Mitigation Sequencing

Proposed development should avoid impacting critical areas. Mitigation sequencing identifies preferred options to use when the proposed activity cannot be avoided or minimized to cause the least amount of impact. Mitigation sequencing is listed in the order of preference.

- Avoiding the impact by not taking a certain action;
- Minimizing the impact by limiting the degree of the action, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts;
- Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;
- Minimizing or eliminating the hazard by restoring or stabilizing using approved engineering or other methods;
- Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the proposed action;
- Compensating for the impact by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; or
- Monitoring the impact and taking appropriate corrective measures.

Specific mitigation measures for wetlands and geologically hazardous areas are included in the Critical Areas Ordinance.

Shorelines

The Shoreline Master Program, contained in KMC 18.68 Shoreline Management, protects Shorelines of the State. The Shoreline Master Program was prepared with two guiding premises; no net loss of ecological function of the shoreline and restoration of the shoreline functions over time.

Statutory Requirements Under GMA

RCW 36.70A.480 requires that Shoreline Management Plan goals and policies are included in the Comprehensive Plan and that they are consistent with each other.

Purpose Statement for Shorelines Management Plan

Unlike the Critical Areas Ordinance, there are separate purpose statements for each of the three Environmental Designations in the Shoreline Management Plan.

The purpose of the Aquatic environment is to protect, restore, and manage the unique characteristics and resources of the areas waterward of the ordinary high water mark. The purpose of the Clover Island High-Intensity environment, only applicable to Clover Island, is to provide for high-intensity water-oriented

commercial, industrial, and transportation uses while at the same time, protecting and restoring existing ecological functions in degraded areas. The purpose of the Urban Conservancy environment is to protect and restore ecological functions of open space, flood plains and other sensitive lands when they exist in urban and developed settings, while allowing numerous compatible uses.

Special Policy Goals

Special policy goals for all Shorelines of the State have been established by the State and are applicable to the Kennewick shorelines. They are listed in the order of preference for implementing Kennewick's shoreline regulations.

- Recognize and protect state-wide interest over local interest;
- Preserve the natural character of the shoreline;
- Result in long-term over short-term benefit;
- Protect the resources and ecology of the shorelines;
- Increase public access to publicly-owned areas of the shorelines;
- Increase recreational opportunities for the public on the shorelines;
- Promote and enhance public interest;
- Protect public rights of navigation;
- Preserve and protect culturally significant features; and
- Provide, when feasible, all necessary accommodations to enhance the participation and enjoyment of persons with special needs.

Additional Goals to Guide Implementation

Goals specific to Kennewick's Shoreline Management Plan have also been developed. These are in addition to the special policy goals for all Shorelines of Statewide Significance. They will be used to guide implementation of KMC 18.68 Shoreline Management and are as follows:

Economic development

Economic development will be encouraged in the shoreline. There will be an emphasis on water-oriented commercial and recreational uses that provide orderly development on Clover Island and adjacent areas that will accentuate and enhance the Columbia River.

Public access

Public access will be improved on Clover Island to designated areas of the Columbia River for recreational purposes. New areas along the dike and Duffy's Pond will be provided to the public for fishing and viewing purposes. Whenever feasible, new development should provide access to the dike with pedestrian and bicycle bridges across the drainage canal.

Recreation

The recreational facilities of the shorelines will be enhanced. Recreational uses on Clover Island should be planned to complement existing and proposed developments. Develop recreational facilities along the dike areas to enhance the dike and provide recreational diversification.

Circulation

Circulation to the dike areas, Duffy's Pond, and to the Clover Island causeway should be improved for ease of access and should include adequate off-street parking facilities to serve the people who will be using these areas for recreational and commercial purposes.

Shoreline use

Assure that the various land uses are compatible and aimed toward maximum utilization of the shoreline without diminishing the quality of the environment. Shorelines abutting the dike area should take advantage of the Columbia River and should be oriented in a manner to coordinate waterfront uses.

Conservation

Enhance the aesthetic characteristics of the dike, Duffy's Pond, and Clover Island areas and take necessary steps to conserve the natural setting of these shoreline areas.

History, scientific, and cultural

Establish certain areas on Clover Island and dike that will have a cultural, educational, historical or scientific value and protect these areas in a proactive and substantive way.

Flood prevention

Assure that, whenever feasible, steps are taken to prevent and/or minimize the risk of flood and associated flood damages to property and land uses.

Policies for Environmental Designations

Parallel shoreline environments of aquatic, urban conservancy and high-intensity use divide the shorelines into different sections generally running parallel to the shoreline. Specific management policies that apply to these environmental designations are listed in the following table.

Figure LU-7. Environmental Designations

Environmental Designation	Management Policies
Aquatic	New over-water structures are allowed only for water-dependent uses, public access, or ecological restoration.
	The size of the new over-water structures should be limited to the minimum necessary to support the structure's intended use.
	In order to reduce the impacts of shoreline development & increase effective use of water resources, multiple uses of over-water facilities are encouraged.
	All developments & uses on navigable waters or their beds shall be located & designed to minimize interference with surface navigation, to consider impacts to public views, & to allow for the safe, unobstructed passage of fish and wildlife, particularly those species dependent on migration.
	Shoreline uses shall be designed & managed to prevent degradation of water quality & alteration of natural hydrographic conditions.
Urban conservancy	First priority in shorelines uses will be given to those uses that preserve the natural character of the area or promote preservation of open space, flood plain or sensitive lands either directly or over the long term. Uses that provide long-term benefit will be preferred over uses that provide short-term benefit. Uses that result in restoration of ecological functions will be allowed if the use is otherwise compatible with the purpose of the environment and the setting.
	No net loss of shoreline ecological functions as a result of new development shall be allowed. All new development shall comply with standards pertaining to shoreline modifications [KMC 18.68.120(3)], vegetation conservation [18.68.110(2)(f)(iii)] and water quality [18.68.110(2)(g)(iii)].

	All new development shall comply with all applicable standards set forth in KMC Chapters 15 (Buildings & Construction), Chapter 17 (Subdivisions) and Chapter 18 (Zoning) and all state and federal requirements.
	The location & design of new development should provide for public access and public recreation opportunities whenever feasible & when significant ecological impacts can be mitigated.
	Water-oriented uses shall be given priority over non water-oriented uses. For shoreline areas adjacent to commercially navigable waters, water-dependent uses shall be given highest priority.
High-intensity	First priority in shoreline uses shall be given to water-dependent uses. Second priority shall be given to water-related and water-enjoyment uses. Non water-oriented uses should not be allowed except as part of mixed-use developments. Non water-oriented uses may also be allowed in limited situations where they do not conflict with or limit opportunities for water-oriented uses or on sites where there is no direct access to the shoreline.
	Full utilization of existing urban areas should, whenever feasible, be achieved before further expansion of intensive development is allowed.
	Multi-family & multi-lot residential & recreational developments shall provide public access & joint use for community recreational facilities.
	Access, utilities, & public services shall be made available & adequate to serve existing needs &/or future residential development.
	No net loss of shoreline ecological functions as a result of new development shall be allowed. Where applicable, new development shall include environmental cleanup & restoration of the shoreline to comply in accordance with any relevant state & federal law.
	Whenever feasible, visual & physical public access to shorelines shall be required as provided for in WAC 173-26-221(4)(d). Wherever feasible, the location, design & construction of development impacting the shorelines will take into consideration aesthetic objectives such as location & size of signage, appropriate development siting, screening & architectural standards, & maintenance of natural vegetative buffers.
	All new development shall comply with all applicable standards set forth in KMC Chapters 15 (Buildings & Construction), Chapter 17 (Subdivisions) and Chapter 18 (Zoning) and all state and federal requirements.

Critical Areas and Shorelines Implementation

Critical Areas & Shoreline Protection

- RCW 36.70A.170 Natural Resource Lands and Critical Areas
- WAC 365-195-410 Critical Areas
- WAC 365-195-900 & 920 Best Available Science
- KMC 17.24 Techniques for Natural Resource Protection
- KMC 18.58 Critical Areas – General Provisions
- KMC 18.59 Critical Areas – Wetlands
- KMC 18.60 Critical Areas – Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas
- KMC 18.61 Critical Areas – Frequently Flooded Areas
- KMC 18.62 Critical Areas – Geologically Hazardous Areas
- KMC 18.63 Critical Areas – Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

- KMC 18.66 Flood Damage Prevention
- KMC 18.68 Shoreline Management

RESIDENTIAL



Residentially zoned areas in the city comprise approximately sixty-nine (69) percent of the total land use. These residential zoning districts include low density single-family residential zoning with minimum 7,500 square foot lots, medium density multi-family residential zones with a maximum of 13 units per acre, high density multi-family residential zones with a maximum of 27 units per acre, and manufactured homes on individual lots or in manufactured home parks. Standard planning practice is to use graduated residential densities in zoning and subdivisions to minimize conflicts associated with a wide range of densities and housing types.

Development standards are designed for individual zoning districts and establish parameters (maximum building height, building setbacks, and lot sizes) to be used in subdivisions.

Census information indicates that Kennewick is mirroring national trends in terms of family composition. Two parent, multiple children households comprise approximately one- third of our population, while single parent, single child households and households with no children comprise the other two-thirds. This has profound impacts on the types of residential homes and densities we seek to provide as we look towards providing needed housing for our future.

Statutory Requirement Under GMA

Development regulations are limits placed on land use activities by the City and include planning tools such as zoning ordinances, critical areas ordinances, shoreline master plans, subdivision ordinances and other requirements that are contained in the Kennewick Municipal Code. Development regulations are defined in WAC 36.70A.030(7) and must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan goals and policies.

RCW 36.70A.020 (1) and (2) requires that development should only be encouraged in urban growth areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or where they can be provided in an efficient manner; and that sprawl will be discouraged in undeveloped land. Sprawl is defined as low-density residential development spread over a large area.

RCW 58.17.110 says that a proposed subdivision will not be approved unless the jurisdiction makes written findings that appropriate provisions have been made for public health, safety, and general welfare. This also includes open spaces, drainage ways, streets or roads, alleys, transit stops, potable water supplies, sanitary wastes, parks and recreation, playgrounds, schools and school grounds and all other planning features that assure safe walking conditions. The public use and interest must be served by the platting.

WAC 365-195-825 (4) validates the requirement in RCW 58.17.110 for providing written findings for adequate services and levels of service.

Subdivision Codes Consistent with Comprehensive Plan

A GMA requirement for consistency requires that subdivision codes and regulations are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan. A GMA mandate for concurrency affects subdivision approval by requiring that water, sewer, and transportation facilities and appropriate service levels be provided at the time of development.

Consistency

GMA requires that the Comprehensive Plan must be internally consistent for objectives, goals, policies, text, and maps.

Consistency is both horizontal (external) and vertical (internal). Horizontal consistency applies to adjacent jurisdictions such as Benton County, through the County-wide Planning Policies (CWPP), the City of Richland, and the City of Pasco.

Vertical consistency means that all development regulations within the City of Kennewick are consistent with each other. These include the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning (Title 18), Subdivisions (Title 17), the Critical Areas Ordinance, the Shoreline Master Plan, and all other city regulations as contained in the Kennewick Municipal Code and other adopted plans such as the Transportation System Plan, the Park & Recreation Plan and the Wellhead Protection Plan. A complete listing of adopted plans is included in the bibliography of the Comprehensive Plan.

The following table illustrates consistency with zoning and the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. There are three residential density categories designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. The zoning districts used to implement these residential land use categories are shown in the following table.

Figure LU-8. Zoning to Implement Residential Land Use

Land Use Category – Comprehensive Plan	Zoning to Implement Land Use Category Title 18
Low Density Residential (minimum 7,500 square foot lots)	RS, RL, RMH
Medium Density Residential (up to 13 units per acre)	RM, HMU, RTP
High Density Residential (up to 27 units per acre)	RH

*Maximum density for commercial districts is 27 units per acre as part of mixed use developments.

Residential subdivisions are guided by the specific regulations for each of these zoning districts as contained in KMC, Title 18: Zoning. KMC, Title 17: Subdivisions, contains specific regulations for the design, submittal, and approval process of residential and other subdivisions. These specific regulations include general provisions, platting, design and construction, condominiums, and land dedications.

Adequate Public Facilities and Services

For cities planning under GMA, there are numerous planning concepts that must be met. Two concepts apply specifically to residential development:

- Development will be encouraged only in urban areas where adequate public facilities and services exist or can be provided in an efficient manner
- Inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development will be reduced.

These concepts are incorporated into the Benton County-wide Planning Policies under Policy #1 and goals in the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan.

Figure LU-9. Kennewick Goals & Countywide Planning Policies

Benton County Planning Policies #1	Kennewick Goals
1. Urban Growth. Encourage development in urban areas where adequate public facilities exist or can be provided in a cost efficient manner.	Land Use Residential Goal # 2: Provide appropriate public facilities supporting residential areas. Land Use Residential Goal # 4. Encourage residential development in urban areas where service can be provided.

2. Avoid sprawl. Avoid the inappropriate conversion of undeveloped land into low-density development, lacking adequate services, injurious to ground and surface water quality, destructive to the area's agricultural lands base, and less than cost effective relative to public service costs.	Land Use Residential Goal # 3. Provide a variety of residential densities with a minimum density target of 3 units per acre as averaged throughout the urban area.

Written Findings for Proposed Subdivisions

GMA and RCW require that findings of approval for subdivisions be specifically listed in writing as part of the record of the subdivision approval process. KMC Section 17.10.080, Provisions for Public Health, Safety and Welfare, requires that the City, through the City Council "will inquire into the public use and interest proposed to be served by the establishment of the subdivision and dedication".

Plats are reviewed to determine if they are in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, comprehensive water plan, utilities plan, Transportation System Plan and comprehensive Park & Recreation Plan, and any other issues necessary to determine if the plat should be approved. As stated in KMC Section 17.10.080, the subdivision application should address the following issues to the satisfaction of staff and the City Council:

- Public health, safety & general welfare,
- Open spaces,
- Drainage ways,
- Streets, alleys, and other public ways,
- Transit stops,
- Potable water supplies,
- Sanitary wastes,
- Parks & recreation,
- Playgrounds,
- Schools & school grounds, and
- Sidewalks.

Residential Implementation

Public Facilities

- KMC 17.10.080 Provisions for Public Health, Safety and Welfare
- KMC 17.20 Design and Construction
- KMC 17.100.010 Dedication of Land for Park Purposes

Design Standards

- KMC 5.56 Public Works Construction Standards
- KMC 13.08 Street Names
- KMC 18.75 Residential Design Standards

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Irrigation

- KMC 17.20.060 Provisions for Irrigation

Concurrency

- KMC 4.12.055 Permit Concurrency

Joint Development

- KMC 17.100.040 School and Park Sites to Abut

Residential Zoning

- KMC 18.12.010 A.1 Residential Use Table
- KMC 18.12.010 A.2 Table of Residential Site Development Standards

COMMERCIAL

A city needs a variety of commercial areas. In addition to large regional commercial areas, residential neighborhoods need to have an option of smaller, more convenient commercial areas available for everyday needs. These could be within a short driving distance or ideally, within walking distance.

Numerous commercial zones are provided in Kennewick. Commercial, Regional (CR) zoning districts are for commercial uses to serve the entire region. The allowed uses in a Commercial, General (CG) zoning district are to provide heavy commercial use with wholesaling and warehousing, while Commercial, Community (CC) districts are designed to provide a diverse selection of uses in new commercial areas. Commercial Business District (CBD) districts accommodate a wide variety of uses that compliment Historic Downtown Kennewick. Commercial, Neighborhood (CN) districts are planned to provide day-to-day shopping and services. Commercial, Office (CO) zoning districts are designed as ideal locations for professional and business offices, medical offices and clinics, with other uses such as research facilities and laboratories. The Commercial, Marina (CM) zoning district is designed for water-oriented commercial and recreational uses and applies only to Clover Island. The Historic, Mixed Use (HMU) zoning district, located west of Historic Downtown Kennewick, provides a stable living environment for residents and businesses choosing to locate in an historic area with small-scale commercial and non-retail uses. Business Park zoning districts (BP) are provided for technical or industrial parks with professional and technical offices, light industry, and other similar uses.

Commercial Land Inventory

Kennewick's commercial land is shown in red on the Comprehensive Plan land use map. The land use inventory is updated yearly. The land use inventory includes the entire urban area. Total acres for developed and undeveloped commercial lands are shown in the following table.

Figure LU-10. Commercial Land within the Urban Growth Area 2026

Developed Land in Acres	Vacant/Underdeveloped Land in Acres	Total by Acres
976 (61%)	627 (39%)	1,603 (100%)

Projected Commercial Needs

A general rule of thumb is to have 12 to 15 acres of commercial land for every 1,000 people in a community. Kennewick currently has roughly 11 acres of developed commercial land for every 1,000 people in the city limits. Using Kennewick's existing figure, an anticipated population increase to 108,989 in 2046 (from 87,120 in 2024) would require commercial land available for an additional 21,869 people, meaning 235 acres of undeveloped commercial land is needed.

In 2024 there are roughly 627 acres of undeveloped and underdeveloped commercial land within the current Urban Growth Area. Subtracting the 20-year estimated need of 235 additional commercial acres from the 627 undeveloped and underdeveloped commercial acres indicates that at the present rate there is adequate commercial land for new growth through the next twenty years with an anticipated surplus of 392 acres.

In addition, notably, Kennewick acts as a regional retail hub for close to 600,000 people reaching from southeast Washington (the counties of Benton, Franklin, Walla Walla, Grant, and Adams) to parts of northeast Oregon (Umatilla County).

Commercial Zoning to Implement Land Use Designation

There are eight commercial zoning designations available to implement the commercial land use category. Each parcel of commercial land has both a land use category as shown on the Comprehensive Plan land use map and a specific zoning designation for implementation.

Figure LU-11. Zoning to Implement Comprehensive Plan

Land Use Category	Zoning to Implement
Commercial	KMC 18.12.010 B.2: Table of Non-Residential Site Development Standards. (Commercial, Neighborhood; Commercial, Office; Central Business District; Commercial, Community; Commercial, Regional; Commercial, General; Commercial, Marina; Historic, Mixed Use; Business Park District)

Declining Commercial Areas

Commercially zoned districts often Figure a cycle of prosperity and then decline as competition for locations are developed. Contributing factors such as demographic changes, accessibility, and commercial competition are all factors that lead to declining commercial areas.

HUD financial assistance, administered through the Community Block Grant Fund, is an invaluable source for improvements in declining commercial areas. HUD establishes guidelines for assistance, and once those are met, a community is in a position to leverage additional private investments for the re-development area.

Merchant associations can be vital in revising commercial areas. A good example is the Historic Downtown Kennewick's inclusion in the Main Street program to enhance the prosperity of the downtown and preserve its history. The Main Street program, sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, has four major components of design, economic restructuring, organization, and promotion.

Strip Commercial Developments

Strip commercial developments are the consequence of America's dependence on the automobile. They cause a haphazard linear development pattern along major roads with increasing number of curb cuts. Numerous curb cuts cause conflicts between vehicles exiting and accessing from the businesses and vehicles running on the street. Research indicates a higher risk of pedestrian or bicycle crashes at curb cuts or intersections. These are not supportive of a good business environment for Kennewick.

With commercially zoned land lining many of the major arterials in Kennewick, it is difficult, but not impossible, to prevent the proliferation of strip malls. Kennewick's commercial land use policies are intended to promote good business environment by clustering businesses into commercial centers and reducing

automobile dependence. Appropriate zoning, shared access and parking, effective landscaping, and strategic location of buildings can all be techniques for developing clustered commercial centers rather than linear strip development. Kennewick Administrative Code traffic guidelines restrict curb cuts to one per site in most cases. Shared access and shared parking reduces costs to the developer while reducing the potential for accidents.

Commercial Design Standards

KMC 18.78 Commercial Design Standards provides design regulations for commercial areas in Kennewick. The standards aim to establish a quality environment for businesses. Objectives of the standards are to promote quality and creativity in design, promote economic vitality with a good business environment, provide simplicity and clarity of the regulations, and offer flexibility and options for the business community.

The design principles should focus on the safety and vitality of the community in order to create a livable pedestrian friendly environment. The design should also recognize that compatibility with the surrounding area, environmental sustainability, efficiency in the delivery of public infrastructure, and variety and creativity in design are important aspects to implement the design standards.

Commercial Implementation

Financial Support

- CDBG Funds

Kennewick Municipal Code

- KMC 18.12.010 B.2 – Table of Non-Residential Site Development Standards

Access and Parking

- KMC 18.36 Off-Street Parking

Design and Site Standards

- KMC 18.12 Zone Districts and Standards
- KMC 18.21 Landscaping
- KMC 18.24 Signs
- KMC 18.39 Outdoor Lighting
- KMC 18.78 Commercial Design Standards

INDUSTRIAL

It is important for Kennewick to have a supply of available and industrially zoned land in for immediate purchase or transfer. This land should be located in areas that include suitable transportation routes, utilities and public facilities. The Capital Improvement Program is the primary means to guide the provision of transportation and public facilities for this purpose.

The dominant economic player in the Tri-City area is Hanford, with its supporting industrial, commercial and service base. Kennewick, like the other cities in the area, has identified the need to diversify its industrial base in order to lessen reliance on this potent, but highly erratic resource. In order to accomplish this, there

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needs to be a focus on attracting, creating, and retaining industrial areas and activity in the City. It is generally true that expansion of the existing industrial base is more cost effective and simpler than actually recruiting new industry. However, both are necessary and desirable.

Statutory Requirements Under GMA

RCW 36.70A.070(1) requires that land for industrial use will be discussed in the categories of general distribution and location. There are no other statutory requirements.

Industrial Land Inventory

Kennewick's land use inventory is updated yearly. The land use inventory is prepared for the entire Urban Growth Area. The totals for industrial lands are shown in the following table.

Figure LU-12. Industrial Lands in Urban Growth Area

Developed Land by Acres	Undeveloped Land by Acres	Total Industrial Land by Acres
323 (39%)	510 (61%)	834 (100%)

Projected Industrial Needs

Kennewick's current industrial land makes up about 5% of the City's total land base in city limits. For comparison, the cities of Richland and Pasco respectively have about 20% and X% of their city limits designated for industrial use. Note that Richland's higher percentage is due to a unique relationship with the federal government, and it reflects areas of city limits within the Columbia River.

- Industrial areas in Kennewick are concentrated in four locations along railroads and highways: The east side of Vista Field. The S. Steptoe Street corridor. A cluster of industrial businesses transitioning from the north side of Downtown towards the northeast, including parts of Bridge-to-Bridge. This area includes the city's public works yard and wastewater treatment plant.. The newest industrial area is in Southridge north of I-82, and the City is actively seeking to expand this area south of I-82 by extending utilities to new development sites. This area has also been included in the City's Water and Sewer Comprehensive Plans for several years as part of the 50-year planning area.

Industrial Zoning to Implement Land Use Designation

There are four industrial zoning designations available to implement the industrial land use category. Each parcel of industrial land has a land use category, as shown on the Comprehensive Plan land use map, and specific zoning to implement it.

Figure LU-13. Zoning to Implement Comprehensive Plan

Land Use Category	Zoning to Implement
Industrial	KMC 18.12.010 B.2 Table of Non-Residential Site Development Standards. (Business Park District; Industrial Park District; Industrial, Light District; Industrial, Heavy District)

Industry and Transportation

Kennewick is located where air, water, and interstate transportation modes are all readily available. Since transportation costs directly affect the economic ability of industry to market and transport goods, these systems are necessary to a viable and financially stable industrial base.

Environmental Regulations

Industrial uses generally require manufacturing, rendering, or chemical processes in the creation of final products. These processes can create undesirable by-products or have adverse effects on the environmental quality of the city. Implementation of SEPA is site-specific and evaluates potential effects of proposals to air quality, water quality, and land. Specific SEPA regulations are contained in KMC 4.08 State Environmental Policy Act.

The negative effects of noise, odor, and lighting in industrial zoning districts are additional issues that must be addressed and regulated by the City. The Kennewick Municipal Code provides the legal and regulatory guidelines for protection using locally developed standards.

Industrial Implementation

Industrial Lands & Infrastructure

- Capital Improvement Program (CIP)
- Kennewick Economic Development Strategic Plan

Environmental Protection

- KMC 4.08 State Environmental Policy Act
- KMC 9.48 Nuisances
- KMC 9.52 Noise
- KMC 18.39 Outdoor Light

Zoning

- KMC 18.12.010 B.2 Table of Non- Residential Site Development Standards

Buffers

- KMC 18.12.010 B. 2 Table of Non- Residential Site Development Standards.
- KMC 18.21 Landscaping

PROPERTY RIGHTS

The protection of private property rights is a fundamental element of Washington State law. Numerous court cases have established a predictable path for municipalities to follow in the property rights issue. A further element of this discussion is the timely and fair processing of permits submitted for land use decisions. Kennewick currently enjoys a substantially reduced processing time relative to other communities within the State. The majority of land use applications are processed well within the time frames established in the Kennewick Administrative Code and in conformance with regulatory reform measures contained in ESHB 1724, adopted in 1995.

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RCW 36.70A.370 states that there will be an orderly, consistent process that enables state and local governments to evaluate proposed actions to guarantee that they do not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property. Governments that are required to plan under GMA are to follow the process that has been established.

WAC 365-195-725 deals with the constitutional provisions of the comprehensive plan adoption process.

Nexus and Rought Proportionality

The principles of Nexus and Rough Proportionality spawned from two landmark federal Supreme Court decisions. From the 1987 Nollan v. California Coastal Commission, requirements imposed on proposed development must bear a substantial relationship and connection or "nexus" to the impacts of the proposed development. From the 1994 Dolan v. City of Tigard, Oregon, requirements imposed on proposed development must be "roughly proportional" to the impacts of the proposed development.

The Revised Code of Washington authorizes cities to enact impact fees, which addresses direct impacts to public streets and roads, publicly owned park facilities, public school facilities and fire protection facilities. These fees may only be imposed for system improvements that are reasonably related to the new development. Impact fees cannot exceed a "proportionate" share of the cost of the system improvements necessary to accommodate the proposed development and may not be used to address existing system deficiencies.

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) provides wide-ranging authority to impose mitigating conditions related to a proposed project's environmental impacts. Local government's authority under SEPA allows the imposition of mitigation fees and other forms of direct mitigation of impacts on public facilities and services. Fees collected under SEPA must be rationally related to the impacts identified in the threshold determination for a project. Additionally, fees collected under SEPA may not duplicate fees collected under other sources of authority.

Goals and policies are established to assure that critical infrastructure, such as transportation corridors established by the long-range Transportation System Plan, are preserved for and constructed as part of growth spurred by development, and in accordance with the tenants of Nexus and Rough Proportionality.

Property Rights Implementation

Processing

- KMC 18.42 Land Use Permits
- KMC 18.51 Amendment and Appeal
- KMC 18.54 Administration and Enforcement

State Guidelines

- Attorney General's Recommended Process for Evaluation of Proposed Regulatory or Administrative Actions to Avoid Unconstitutional Takings of Private Property.
- WAC 365-195-725 Constitutional Provisions
- RCW 36.70A.370 Protection of Private Property

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URBAN DESIGN



Urban design is a key component for a community's livability. It guides the community's vision into a physical reality. Kennewick takes a holistic approach in urban design where elements of the Comprehensive Plan are consistent with urban design goals and policies, and every project is viewed with respect to the larger context of the community's vision. The Urban Design Element will apply to the three-dimensional aspects of the built environment such as buildings, streets, sidewalks, open spaces, and plazas. It also addresses other urban issues such as circulation and connectivity, sustainability, neighborhoods and districts.

Design

Kennewick strives to implement quality design through private and public projects. A quality design combines aspects of architecture, landscape architecture, and environmental design. It encourages creativity, safety, compatibility and sustainability in the design. Site and building design are the fundamental steps to create an attractive built environment. The city's adopted residential and commercial design standards provide basic guidelines for developers to achieve quality developments. In general, these standards offer direction in the following areas: building compatibility, location and orientation, access, parking, site landscaping, architectural features, environmental protection, safety and security, and streetscape design.

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. High quality design in public projects will set the standards for Kennewick and will generate further quality developments by the private sector.

Public art is an important component of a designed environment. Public art such as sculptures, reliefs, murals, and art pieces can transform the character of an area. Kennewick promotes artworks of local artists in public places. Public art in Kennewick can be reflective of local history and culture, and should be consistent with the character of the area where it is being placed.

Pedestrian Friendly Environment

With the growth in the Tri-City area, it is important for Kennewick to become a vibrant and livable community in the region in order to make it the prime destination. While vehicular mode of transportation is important for the City's growth, a pedestrian-friendly environment would increase the City's livability. Comfortable and safe pedestrian movements will make Kennewick a more attractive place for living and working.



All urban design goals and policies, and the commercial and residential design standards are geared towards creating a pedestrian friendly community. Mix of uses, smaller block size, mid-block connection, safe walkways between businesses and parking lots, safe pedestrian crossing, network of paths and trails throughout the City, good transit system, building orientation and design for human scale, usable open spaces and plazas – are all major considerations for promoting an attractive pedestrian friendly environment in Kennewick.

Streetscape is one of the most important aspects for creating a pedestrian friendly environment. Separation of sidewalks from streets, wider sidewalks, street trees and landscaping, sidewalk paving pattern, lighting, and safe cross-street connections will promote a safe and pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment. Traffic calming measures such as landscaped medians, pedestrian crossings, roundabouts, and speed bumps also enhance the safety of pedestrian movements.

Circulation and Connectivity

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Kennewick's circulation system is designed for vehicular, pedestrian, bike and transit traffic. It is composed of a network of streets, street-crossings, sidewalks, bike routes, pedestrian trails, and walkways. All of these are intended to connect with each other in order to create a continuous and cohesive circulation pattern throughout the city.

The goal for circulation and connectivity is aimed to increase accessibility to major destinations throughout the City for all sectors of people. It aims to offer more than a single choice of movement for people by including multi-modal connections of vehicular, bike, pedestrian, and transit system. Establishing connections between open spaces and parks through pedestrian and bike trails is also part of the City's connectivity goal.

One of the objectives for efficient circulation is to ensure that all arterial and collector streets run throughout the City without any discontinuity. It would also maintain the continuity of the sidewalks along with the roads. The City prioritizes the connectivity between the major destinations. This includes vehicular and pedestrian connections between neighborhoods and schools, between retail businesses, and between parks and other major public amenities. The City works closely with the private sector in order to create an efficient circulation pattern within the business and residential environment. This will be achieved by promoting transit, providing walkways, reducing block sizes, allowing through-block pedestrian connections for big blocks, and creating more thorough roads than cul-de-sacs and dead ends.

Public Places

Public places in Kennewick include parks, plazas, playgrounds, sidewalks, and open spaces. It also includes private spaces that are dedicated for public use. The character of public spaces can be different based on their types and uses. Public places can be formal in urban plazas, semi-formal in urban parks, and informal in open spaces and passive parks. Public places offer important civic nodes for Kennewick. They offer places for recreation and interaction, thereby promoting the sense of community.

Kennewick maintains safety, usability and easy accessibility for all public places. The City aims to implement Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles in public places to ensure safety. One way to implement the CPTED principles is to put more uses around the public places, and orient buildings towards public places in order to create an interactive, safe, "eyes on the street" environment. Paths and trails that connect with major streets should be designed to make them visible and easily identifiable. Access to the waterfront and other recreational areas will also be maintained and enhanced for public use.

Public plazas should be located near the major street intersections, gateways and business centers to serve as urban breathing spaces. In major locations, public places can be integrated with landmark structures, such as architecturally significant building design, sculpture, and art works. Public places should have amenities based on the types of usages. For instance, parks and plaza areas should have benches, lighting and similar amenities. Parks usually have additional amenities such as play areas, playgrounds, picnic areas, and public restrooms. Neighborhood parks are located near the residential neighborhoods and schools to meet the neighborhood demand for recreation.

Districts

Districts are generally created by peoples' perception which identifies the sense of being "inside of" an area, and where a person can associate him/herself with some common identifying features. Usually this perception is derived from some tangible features such as homogeneity of physical aspects, and non-tangible features such as ethnic mix or demographic patterns. Kennewick recognizes the importance of intangible features in the neighborhoods, and seeks to establish the tangible aspects, such as physical characteristics and boundaries for the neighborhoods.

Districts in Kennewick are predominantly residential, commercial, or a mix of both. Even each residential district can be broken down into neighborhoods with each having its own unique characteristics. It is important to identify this uniqueness for each district. Kennewick's urban design policies encourage mixed-use developments and neighborhood-based retail to serve the residential neighborhoods. A cohesive existence of different districts needs to be maintained by

creating appropriate transition between the districts. Transition from commercial to residential districts can be done by softening the district boundaries with adequate landscaping, open spaces and buffers.

Commercial districts in Kennewick are comprised of various retail and office activities. A vibrant, business-friendly commercial environment is important for Kennewick's economic vitality. This can be achieved by public and private investments and appropriate design. The City's Commercial Design Standards have been established to promote well-designed, pedestrian and business friendly commercial districts in Kennewick.

Preserving and establishing the characters of residential neighborhoods are given prime importance in Kennewick. The Residential Design Standards guide the general design criteria for both single and multi-family residential developments. Residential districts may be further enhanced and established through neighborhood planning processes.



Besides residential and commercial districts in Kennewick, others such as the Entertainment District and Downtown Historic District carry immense significance for Kennewick's economy. Kennewick works with other stakeholders to establish distinctive characteristics for each of these. The Convention Center, Coliseum and Ice arena in the Entertainment District have created a regional entertainment hub. Memorandum of Understanding between the City and Kennewick Irrigation District, the other major property holders in the area, has been adopted to identify the district's characteristics, design goals and objectives. The City is working with the Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership (HDKP) to revitalize the downtown area. The City also takes part in the Main Street program to revitalize the Downtown area. The Bridge-to-Bridge River-to-Railroad area has been established north of Downtown. Some conceptual design and visioning was done for this area by the Urban Design Assistance Team in conjunction with some of the property owners and stake-holders in 2003. This consists of the waterfront area between the Blue Bridge to Cable Bridge west to east, and the railroad to the south. This effort was aimed to reconnect the Columbia River with the Downtown, and to add more riverfront amenities for Kennewick's Downtown. The City recognizes the importance of this area and the efforts that have been made in the visioning process. The City plans to take a closer look at this area and aims to partner with all public and private stakeholders in order to develop a subarea plan for this area.

Landscaping

Landscaping is one of the most important features for creating a pleasant urban environment. It should positively enhance the built environment and urban spaces, and integrate the man-made environment with the natural environment. It is important for landscaping to be reflective of local features, climate and vegetation. Given the hot-arid climate in the Tri-City area, native landscaping and planting is recommended. Since water conservation is important, selection of native plants that require less water for healthy maintenance is preferred. Xeriscape is highly encouraged in Kennewick as a method of landscaping because it represents the dry climate of the area and it conserves water. City will implement these landscaping principles in the design of public parks and open spaces, and will use this leadership to encourage private property owners to implement similar landscaping principles. Note that legacy landscaping, especially on City-owned properties, was not constructed with these principles in mind, and will continue to need irrigation water and other water sources unless or until these plantings are converted to less water-intensive design.

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Selection of trees that offer shade in hot summer days is important for this area. The City plans to emphasize street corridor characteristics with appropriate street trees and streetscape options. The residential and commercial design standards establish the streetscape standards for commercial and residential streets. These design standards and the Kennewick Municipal Code have also established the landscaping guidelines for residential and commercial developments, parking lots, walkways and open spaces.



Environment and Sustainability

Kennewick is rich in natural resources, having mountains to the south and west, the Columbia River to the north, and located in a three-river (Yakima, Snake and Columbia) basin. These natural features emphasize Kennewick's identity. The City recognizes the value of natural resources as a tool for quality development.

Kennewick maintains a balance between built and natural environment. The balance is implemented through the conservation of energy and utility consumption, efficiency in the construction, and sensitivity to the ecology. The urban design policy recognizes that economic development should not occur at the cost of environmental debilitation. In order to utilize environmental resources for development, consideration will be given to preserving important view corridors, creating visual and physical access to the Columbia River, and preserving critical areas, shorelines and open spaces.

Preserving natural resources is one of the major goals of the City. Kennewick recognizes its unique natural setting as a resource for the community's well-being and aims to preserve its natural environment. Kennewick has developed a Sustainability Program to "Proactively make sustainability decisions as good stewards of the public and consider the long term effects of our business practices and how those decisions affect our citizens and the environment." (City of Kennewick Sustainability Program, Mission Statement)

Kennewick's Sustainability Program compiles policies and practices from various city plans into one document where Kennewick's sustainable practices can be viewed in whole.

Urban Design Implementation

Site, Building, and Streetscape Design

- KMC 18.75, 18.78 - Residential and Commercial Design Standards
- City of Kennewick Standard Specifications and Details for Municipal Public Works Construction - standard drawing numbers 2-1 through 2-5 (KMC 5.56.030(7) and 5.56.040)
- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design principles

Landscaping and Open Spaces

- KMC 18.21: Landscaping
- Shoreline Master Plan
- Xeriscape landscaping principles
- City's recommended tree listing
- Kennewick Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan
- Columbia Park Master Plan

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Districts and Neighborhoods

- Clover Island Master Plan
- Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Railroad Revitalization Plan
- Vista Field Master Plan
- Community Development Block Grant for downtown façade improvements
- Southridge Sub-Area Plan
- Hansen Park Sub-Area Plan

ESSENTIAL PUBLIC FACILITIES

Essential Public Facilities (EPF) offer important services to public and are essential for a community. Examples of EPF are, solid waste handling facilities, jails, airports, and other state and regional transportation facilities. Essential Public Facilities can be offered at local, regional, county or state government levels. It can also be operated by a private entity while offering services to the public. Each of these facilities has different types of difficulties in the siting process.

Difficulties in siting are associated with finding the suitable and appropriate location due to the perceived or real environmental, economic, or social impacts. Some common issues are the size of the facility, location, adverse impact such as noise, odor, pollution, traffic impact, aesthetics and health and safety concerns. Locating the facilities in areas consistent with the Comprehensive Plan would address many of the adverse impacts. For instance, some facilities would not be allowed to be located in the known hazardous areas such as in the flood plains, or environmentally sensitive areas. However, perceived impacts, if not substantiated by real facts, cannot be the sole reason for not locating a facility where it is most suitable.

In Kennewick, siting of such facilities will be based on careful review of the facility, its necessity, impact mitigation, regional fair share and consistency. If appropriate land use designations and zoning are not in place, Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Change of Zone processes will take place in order to review and address land use and zoning issues. Appropriate land use and zoning for each use type has been indicated in the facilities table. A strong public involvement and notification process will take place in conjunction with the location process of the Essential Public Facilities within a community.

Definitions

Essential Public Facility (EPF) can be defined as a public or privately operated facility providing public services or publicly funded services that is difficult to site due to, but not limited to its environmental, economic, or social impacts; and that meets the Growth Management Act definition of Essential Public Facility (EPF) at RCW 36.70A.200.

According to RCW 36.70A.200, Essential Public Facilities include those facilities that are typically difficult to site, such as airports, state education facilities and state or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140, state and local correctional facilities, solid waste handling facilities, and in-patient facilities including substance abuse facilities, mental health facilities, group homes, and secure community transition facilities as defined in RCW 71.09.020.

State or regional transportation facilities as defined in RCW 47.06.140 includes the interstate highway system, interregional state principal arterials including ferry connections that serve statewide travel, intercity passenger rail services, intercity high-speed ground transportation, major passenger intermodal terminals excluding all airport facilities and services, the freight railroad system, the Columbia/Snake navigable river system, marine port facilities and services that are related solely to marine activities affecting international and interstate trade, and high-capacity transportation systems serving regions as defined in RCW 81.104.015.

Difficulties in Siting

Difficulties in siting are associated with finding the suitable and appropriate location due to the "perceived" or real environmental, economic, or social impacts. Some common issues for the difficulties in siting are the size of the facility, location, and adverse impact such as noise, odor, pollution, traffic impact, aesthetics and health and safety concerns.

Most of the time, the perception of adverse impacts raises public opposition when service providers consider locating such type of facilities. However, in Department of Corrections v. City of Kennewick, 86 Wn. App. 521 (1997), court inferred that unsubstantiated fears are not relevant to the siting issues. No local comprehensive plan or development regulation may preclude the siting of Essential Public Facilities (RCW 36.70A.200(5)).

Identify Facilities

The City will identify Essential Public Facilities based on the definition mentioned in this document and the services these facilities provide to public. Services to the public provided by the government, substantially funded by the government, contracted for by the government, or provided by private entities subject to public service obligations will be considered for identifying Essential Public Facilities.

Cities can establish their own local criteria for the identification of Essential Public Facilities, focusing on the public need for the services involved. There are three sources Kennewick will consider to identify and update its list for Essential Public Facilities – the City, the County and the State.

(A) The City list. This is a list of local essential facilities, adopted by the City of Kennewick. According to the Revised Code of Washington, it is irrelevant to this listing that a facility may be funded by or operated by the state or another public or private entity other than the City. The critical concern is that the facility be needed locally. The local listing would include the following facilities:

- Substance abuse facilities
- Mental health facilities
- Group homes providing inpatient care
- Solid waste handling facilities

B) The Countywide list. This is a list of Essential Public Facilities of a countywide or regional nature, made part of or pursuant to the countywide planning policies adopted by counties in consultation with cities.

The county listing would include the following:

- Correctional facilities
- Solid waste management facilities of regional nature

Benton County comprehensive plan and County Wide Planning Policy (CWPP) does not indicate any new county Essential Public Facilities to be located within the Kennewick city limits.

(C) The State list. This is the list of essential state public facilities that are required or likely to be built within the next six years maintained by the Office of Financial Management (OFM).

The Office of Financial Management's list does not indicate any new Essential Public Facility planned within the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA). The only mention is the Kennewick Crime Laboratory operated under Forensic Laboratory Services Bureau (FLSB) of the Washington State Patrol. This is located outside the UGA, south of Kennewick near SR 395.

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In general, the following State essential facilities are identified in RCW 36.70A.200 and RCW 47.06.140:

- State education facilities
- State airports
- State or regional transportation facilities such as:
- Interstate highway system
- Interregional state principal arterials
- Intercity passenger rail services
- Freight railroad system
- Marine port facilities and services that are related solely to marine activities affecting international and interstate trade, and
- Columbia/Snake navigable river system.
- State correctional facilities
- Secure Community Transition Facilities (SCTF)

Inventory of Existing Essential Public Facilities

Based on the definition of Essential Public Facilities, following facilities are currently existing and operating within the city limits.

City Facilities

Solid Waste Management Facilities

Kennewick works jointly with Benton County and the Cities of Richland, West Richland, Prosser and Benton City to address solid waste issues. Solid waste issues are addressed in the 2006 Benton County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, which provides a long-term approach to solid waste management in the region. The Plan Update was prepared under the direction and guidance of the Benton County Solid Waste Advisory Committee (SWAC). The SWAC was formed in 1994. The SWAC draws its membership from elected county and city officials, other public and private entities within the Benton County area. The current plan was adopted in mid-2007.

City of Kennewick maintains its solid waste management system mainly through Waste Management Kennewick (WMK). Waste Management Kennewick provides solid waste and recycling services. Kennewick does not have any solid waste landfill within the City limits. The City's solid waste is transferred through Waste Management Kennewick to Columbia Ridge Landfill in Arlington, Oregon.

The WMK transfer station is located at 2627 S. Ely Street in Kennewick. The facility is open to the public Monday through Saturday. There is solid waste disposal at the transfer station as well as a recycle buyback center. Recyclables are also collected from residences and businesses, as well as debris from construction and demolition projects. All recyclables are taken to Clayton Ward Recycling in Kennewick. All other waste is taken to Columbia Ridge. No sorting is done.

Kennewick's household hazardous wastes have been disposed of at the Richland Landfill Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility near Highway 240 (Vantage Highway) through an inter-local agreement signed in 1993 between the cities of Kennewick and Richland, and Benton County. A fire at the Richland landfill on July 4, 2010 burned this facility which has ended acceptance of HHW at this facility. The facility does accept used motor oil and antifreeze. This shared permanent facility stored, sorted and properly disposed of household hazardous wastes. The household hazardous wastes received in this facility included paints, polishes, cleaning products, thinners, solvents, pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, household batteries, aerosols, used motor oil, antifreeze, drain openers, car batteries, brake fluid,

gasoline, car wax, transmission fluids and any product with a caution and warning label. The WMK transfer station also has a satellite household hazardous waste collection site that takes waste to the Richland Landfill, however, the satellite facility only accepts paint, used motor oil and antifreeze.

Inert-Landfill

The City of Kennewick operates a street and storm waste decontamination facility at S. Ely Street and West 19th Avenue and an inert landfill located at 1300 S. Yew, immediately east of the Benton-Franklin Fairgrounds. Both the decontamination facility and the inert landfill are operated through permits issued by the Department of Ecology and the Benton-Franklin Health Department.

The decontamination facility is where street sweeping and vactor waste from storm drain cleaning are taken. After the waste has been decontaminated and tested, the then inert waste is taken to the City's inert landfill. The waste is screened at that time to remove general litter, such as paper, plastic bags, etc., that would be collected during street sweeping and cleaning activities. The litter waste is taken to the Waste Management Transfer Station or the Richland Landfill for normal disposal. The remaining inert waste, which is mainly sand and gravel, is separated (with the screening process). Much of the sand material is recycled into road sanding product for the following winter weather. Excess materials are used to fill the inert landfill.

The City has an agreement with the Benton County Road Department and the Washington State Department of Transportation to let them use the facilities for their street waste programs (WSDOT - local highways only). The City has chosen not to offer the use of these facilities and services to any private parties or other activities to keep the source of materials coming into the site controlled. This greatly reduces the possibility of a serious contamination being introduced.

In-Patient Facilities

Mental health facilities - Kennewick General Hospital (KGH) does not provide inpatient facilities for mental health patients.

Department of Social Health Service's (DSHS) Mental Health Service Division offers mental health care facilities through their authorized community mental health agencies. For Greater Columbia region, the services are coordinated through the Greater Columbia Behavioral Health's regional office. The office is located on Edison Street at the intersection of Canal Drive (101 N. Edison).

In Kennewick, community mental health agencies authorized by DSHS are, Department of Human Services (7202 W Deschutes Ave.), Lutheran Community Services Northwest (3321 W. Kennewick Ave., Kennewick, WA) and Benton-Franklin Counties Crisis Response Unit (2635 W Deschutes Ave.). The Crisis Response Unit coordinates with Carondelet in Richland, Detox Center at Pasco, and KGH ER regarding transfer or medical evaluation of a person.

Substance abuse facilities – Kennewick General Hospital does not provide inpatient facilities for substance abuse. In Kennewick, they are usually offered in group-homes or are coordinated with facilities mentioned above.

Group homes offering inpatient facilities such as substance abuse facilities and mental health facilities are randomly distributed throughout the city. They are permitted as a residential use according to the Zoning Ordinance of KMC and state regulations.

County Facilities

Benton County already has the following county-wide facilities in Kennewick. No new facilities have been mentioned or determined to be located in Kennewick according to the planning policies of Benton County.

Justice Facilities (District Court and Jail) – 7320 W Quinault

Juvenile Justice Center – 5606 W. Canal Place

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State Facilities

Interstate Hwy, I-82 borders the southwest edge of the City.

Interregional State Principal Arterials SR 240, SR 395 and SR 397. SR 240 runs from the northwest city limits to SR 395, SR 395 runs from the southern city limits to the Franklin County line, and SR 397 runs on the northeast and the east sides of the City. These also fall under the category of Highways of Statewide Significance (HSS). Improvements to the HSS routes are to be considered priority for funding by the Washington State Transportation Commission.

Intercity Passenger Rail Service

The Amtrak station is located in Pasco. Amtrak shares the track with BNSF. The westbound route between Pasco and Portland goes through the northeast part of Kennewick on the Washington side of the Columbia River.

The Freight Railroad System (BNSF, Union Pacific).

Kennewick's mainline rail freight service is provided by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific railroads.

The BNSF railway maintains approximately eight miles of mainline track within Kennewick and a complex of side tracks. Each intersection of mainline track with a city street is either signalized or grade separated. Most side track intersections are not signalized. The BNSF currently has an average of six trains per day. With the improvement of the Stampede Pass and increased shipping at the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle the number of trains using this corridor could increase to as high as 20 trains per day. This impacts the six remaining at-grade crossings in Kennewick. Columbia Center Boulevard crossing was the one expected to have greater impact due to the existing heavy vehicular traffic. To reduce the impact, City of Kennewick worked with BNSF and raised funding from several state agencies in order to undertake a project to separate the grades between the railroad and the Columbia Center Boulevard. The project is known as "Columbia Center Boulevard BNSF Grade Separation Project" and was finished in 2005. The project creates a below grade track for the BNSF at this crossing. There are two other potential grade separation projects, one at Edison Street and the other one in the Downtown area.

BNSF owns two buildings in Kennewick. The old depot building (in the old Downtown Kennewick area) is used by railroad train crews, but has no public use. The other building is leased to a non-railroad related private business. BNSF also owns and maintains the Columbia River Railroad Bridge (between Pasco and Kennewick).

The Port of Kennewick owns one track segment in Kennewick. This segment, from Bruneau St. to the Harvest States property on Columbia Drive is a dual track segment located in the east side of the Cable Bridge. The port maintains the track lines and ties, along with switches and crossing. According to the Port of Kennewick, currently rail cars visiting the site supply their needs with barge potentials; Ash Grove Cement Company is one of the major users of this facility.

The Union Pacific Railroad has approximately eight miles of industrial track in the City, with seven signalized crossings. There are no maintenance shops or storage buildings inside the City.

The Port of Benton owns approximately 1-1/2 mile of industrial track and siding within the City of Kennewick limits. Rail cars are currently exchanged at the junction of the UPRR lead and the Port of Benton lead between Tri-City and Olympia Railway and BNSF and UPRR. The Port of Benton provides no rail service to customers in Kennewick.

The Columbia/Snake Navigable River System

The Columbia-Snake River System is an important inter-modal commercial transportation network for the state extending to the Pacific Ocean. The system includes eight dam and lock complexes allowing the numerous barge lines serving the river system to transport commodities to and from locations throughout the world.

Several barge companies currently offer service to the Tri-Cities area with specialized barges that handle a wide variety of cargo. A fully operational container-handling terminal is operated at the Port of Pasco. The terminal is also served by BNSF railroad.

There is a single (private) barge service within the city limits that is located to the southeast of the cable bridge near the Port of Kennewick track segment. This marine terminal accommodates grain shipments to Portland which are reloaded onto ocean bound vessels serving the Pacific Rim. This is served by Shavers Transportation. Tidewater Barge Lines does not own or operate facilities in Kennewick. Grain-grower and supplier, Harvest States Cooperatives is one of the main users of this barge facilities.

Marine Port Facilities and Services that are related solely to marine activities affecting international and interstate trade are integrated with the Columbia/Snake navigable river system. Clover Island, owned by the Port of Kennewick has US Coast Guard's Aids to Navigation station.

Irrigation Transmission Facilities (Canals)

The Kennewick Irrigation District and Columbia Irrigation District operate canals within the City of Kennewick providing irrigation water to properties within the City reducing the demand for potable water use for landscape features. Additional coordination with all proponents can expand the function of these areas to include trails and pathways.

Secure Community Transition Facilities (SCTF).

The Washington State Department of Correction's (DOC) Tri-Cities Work has a SCTF site located at 524 E Bruneau Ave. As of 2026 it is in a "warm closure" status and could be reopened in the future. It is a minimum-security facility with a capacity for 24 male and 6 female offenders. This was opened in June of 1999. It is the only state owned work release that is solely staffed by the Department of Corrections employees. It is a single level, 12,500 square foot building on 1.37 acres, located one block south of the Columbia River in east downtown Kennewick.

Benton County and its jurisdictions are currently not subject to state preemption requiring the siting of additional SCTF.

Below section is deleted because these provisions are being moved to the Kennewick Municipal Code.

Essential Public Facilities Implementation

Siting Consistency, Local, and Regional

- Benton County Countywide Planning Policy 11, 12, 13 And 14
- Benton-Franklin Council of Governments Regional Transportation Plan
- Kennewick Sewer System Plan
- Sewer & Water Extension – Kennewick Resolution No. 02-21
- Benton-Franklin Solid Waste Management Plan

SEPA and Environmental

- KMC 4.08: SEPA
- KMC 18.66: Flood Damage Prevention

Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Change of Zone

- Development Permits
- KMC 18.51: Amendment and Appeal
- KMC 4.12.110: Comprehensive Plan Amendment and Area-Wide Rezone Procedures

Permitting

- KMC 4.12.040: Permit Process – Scope Of Review
- KMC 4.12.050: Permit Process – Project Consistency
- KMC 18.12.010: Use and Standards Tables
- KMC 18.42: Land Use Permits
- KMC 18.66.060(2)(E): Critical Facilities

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Housing

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INTRODUCTION

Housing affordability is a significant challenge in Washington State, including in the City of Kennewick. To meet all current and future housing needs, the city needs to add 12,626 housing units by 2046 as well as 57 emergency housing beds. Approximately 55% of these new units will need to be affordable to households with incomes at or below 80% of area median income (AMI). This appendix considers existing housing conditions and needs in the city—including displacement risk and racially disparate impacts—and adopted targets in relation to historical production trends, capacity, barriers, and adequate provisions needed to address identified barriers.

This appendix is supplemented by the Land Capacity Analysis Memo and Commerce barrier checklists. Together, these documents serve as background, analysis, and documentation in support of the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, particularly the Land Use and Housing element updates. They are consistent with RCW 36.70A.070, including recent changes to the Growth Management Act (GMA) such as House Bills (HB) 1220, 1110, and 1337, and Commerce guidance for updating Comprehensive Plans. Key components of the combined documents include:

- An inventory including a community profile that describes characteristics of the existing population, households, and workforce as well as a review of current housing units, production trends, and affordability.
- Review of racially disparate impacts (RDI), displacement and displacement risk, and exclusion in housing consistent with the requirement of HB 1220 and Commerce guidance.
- Evaluation of land capacity to meet housing needs and adopted targets, including units for moderate, low, very low, and extremely low-income households as well as emergency and permanent supportive housing, under existing and proposed zoning—see the Land Capacity Analysis Memo and short summaries of existing and proposed capacity.
- Review of existing barriers to housing at the various affordability levels based on prior housing development trends, the Commerce barrier checklists, and community engagement.
- Adequate provisions for identified needs, removal of identified barriers, and measures to address and begin to undo RDI, displacement, and exclusion in housing.

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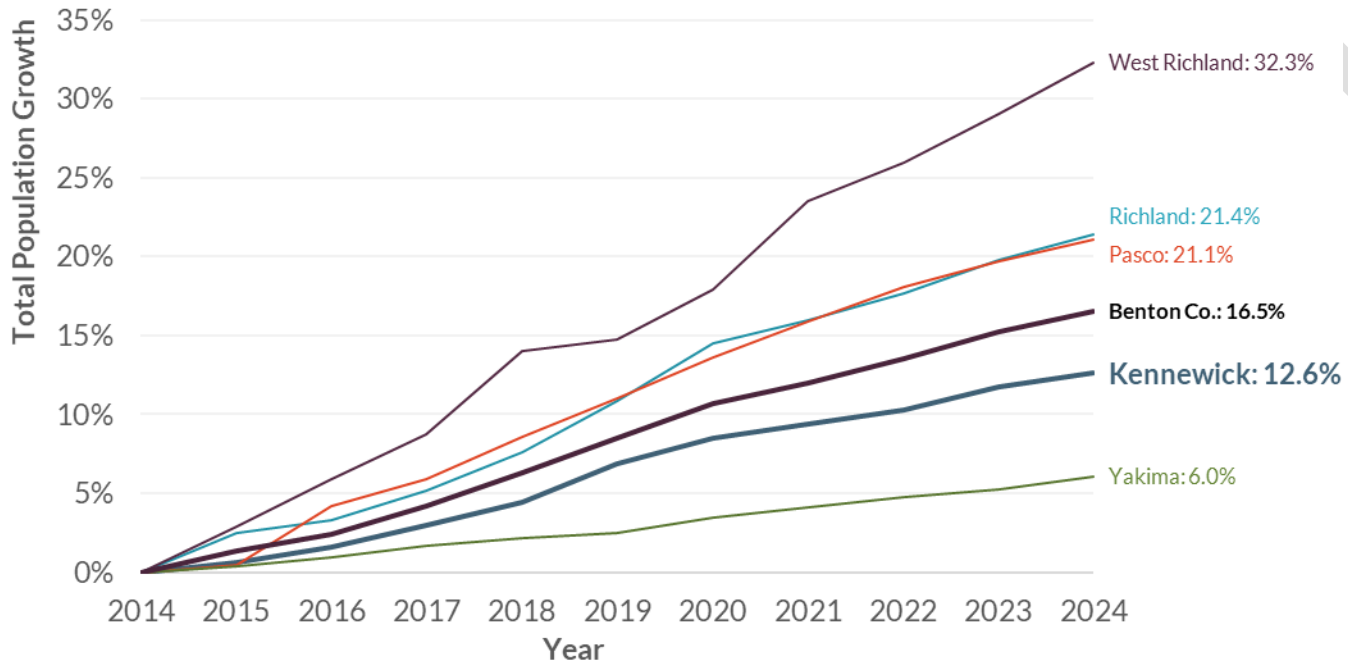
COMMUNITY PROFILE

Population Characteristics

Total Population

As of 2024, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimates there were 87,120 people living in the City of Kennewick and 90,754 people living in the Kennewick Urban Growth Area (UGA), which includes city limits and the unincorporated UGA. Since 2000, the city has grown at an average annual rate of 1.9%. **Figure H-1** compares more recent growth trends in the City of Kennewick to that of comparison jurisdictions. Since 2014, the city's population has increased by 12.6%. This is somewhat lower than Benton County as a whole (16.5%), as well as the neighboring cities of West Richland (32.3%), Richland (21.4%), and Pasco (21.1%). On the other hand, Kennewick has grown significantly faster than Yakima (6.0%).

Figure H-1. Population Growth in City of Kennewick and Comparison Jurisdictions (2014–2024)



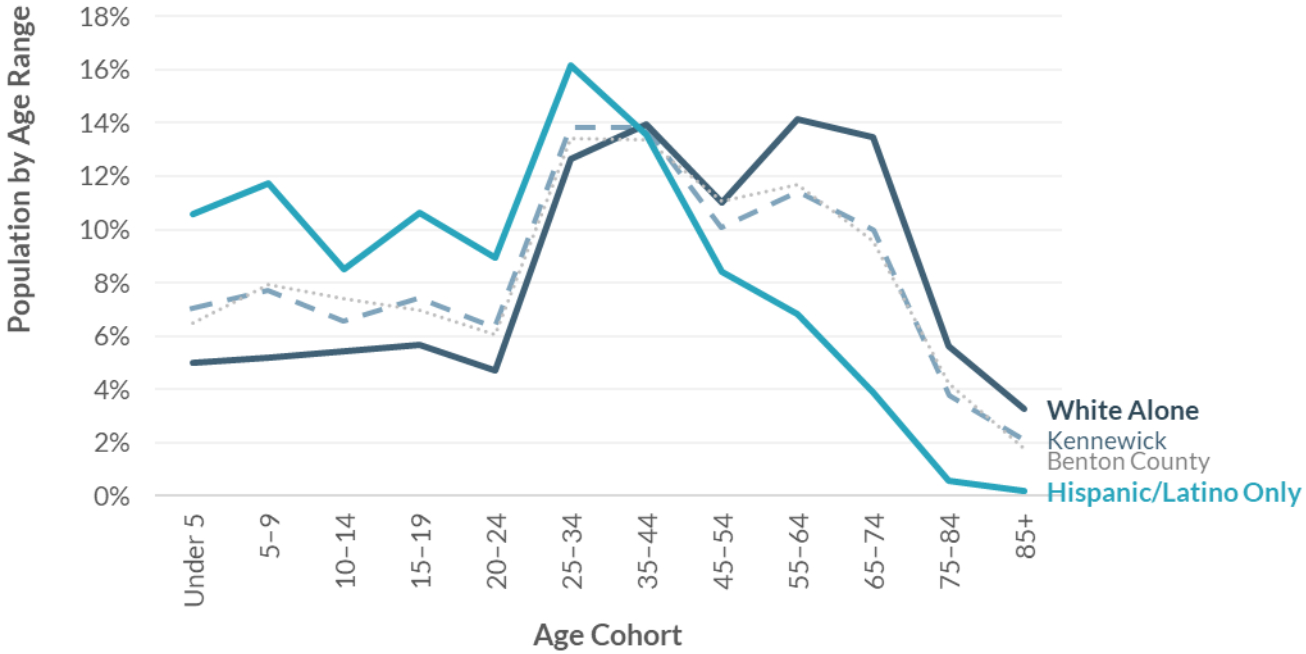
Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Age

Figure H-2 shows the distribution of population by age range for the city as a whole, the White only population in Kennewick, the Hispanic or Latino population in Kennewick, and Benton County as a whole. The overall patterns in age ranges are similar for the city and county overall but the distribution of age in Kennewick varies by race and ethnicity. A greater share of the Hispanic or Latino population are children and a lesser share are aged 45 and older compared to both the city and county overall. Conversely, a lower share of the White only population are children and a greater share are aged 45 and older compared to both the city and

county overall. This variation by race and ethnicity is also reflected in the composition of local public schools where about half of students in the Kennewick School District are Hispanic or Latino (45% as of the 2024-25 school year).[1] Approximately 41% of the city's Hispanic or Latino population are under 20 and 20% are 45 or older whereas approximately 21% of the White only population are under 20 and 47% are 45 or older—the variation by race and ethnicity is even more pronounced amongst adults aged 65 or older (5% of the Hispanic or Latino population versus 22% of the White only population).

Figure H-2. Population by Age Range and Race and Ethnicity (2023)



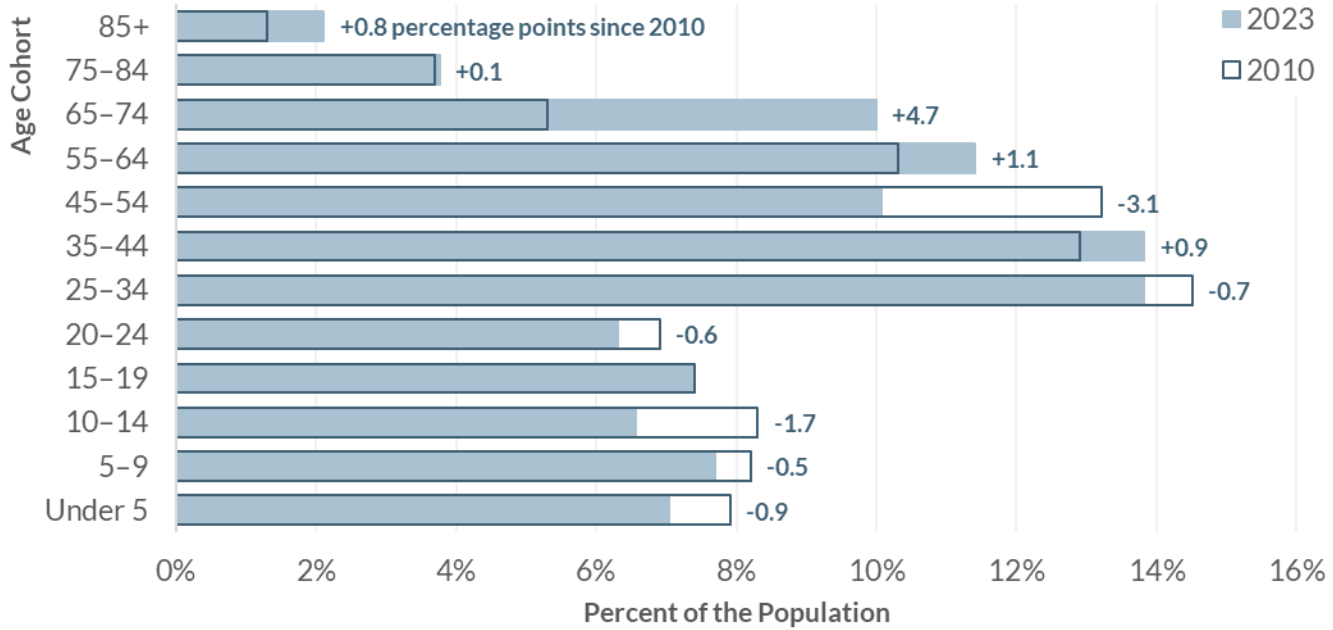
Note: While alone population is exclusive of persons who identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S0101, B01101H, and B01001I); BERK, 2025.

The composition of Kennewick's population by age has changed over time. Compared to 2010, Kennewick now has higher percentages of older adults 55 and over people and lower percentages of children, young adults, and several middle aged groups (**Figure H-3**). As of 2023, about one-third of Kennewick's population is under the age of 25 (35%), slightly more than one-third is between the ages of 25 and 54 (38%), and slightly less than one-third is age 55 or older (27%).

[1] OSPI Kennewick School District Report Card 2024-25 School Year, data last updated June 24, 2024.

Figure H-3. Population Cohorts (2010 and 2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates (Table B01001), 2006-2010 and 2019-2023; BERK, 2023.

Citywide, about one quarter (26%) of Kennewick's population is under age 18 and one third (33%) of households include one or more people under 18 (**Figure H-4**). This is about the same as the county as a whole but higher than statewide, which suggests that housing for families with children is particularly important in Kennewick and the surrounding area—the need is likely greater amongst Hispanic or Latino households given the variation in the distribution of age by race and ethnicity in **Figure H-2**. Another third of households citywide (30%) include one or more people aged 65 or over, although a smaller portion of the population overall is aged 65 or over (16%), which is similar to county and statewide trends. The share of households with an older adult aged 65 or older living alone (10%) is also about the same in Kennewick as the county or statewide. Demand for housing accessible to older adults or for smaller units is likely higher amongst White households given the variation in the distribution of age by race and ethnicity in **Figure H-2**. In addition, consistent with data in **Figure H-2**, block groups where White residents are more likely to live (**Figure H-9**, see discussion under Race, Ethnicity, & Language Spoken at Home below) also generally correspond to areas with more older adults (**Figure H-5**).

Figure H-4. Population Under 18 and Households with Children (2023)

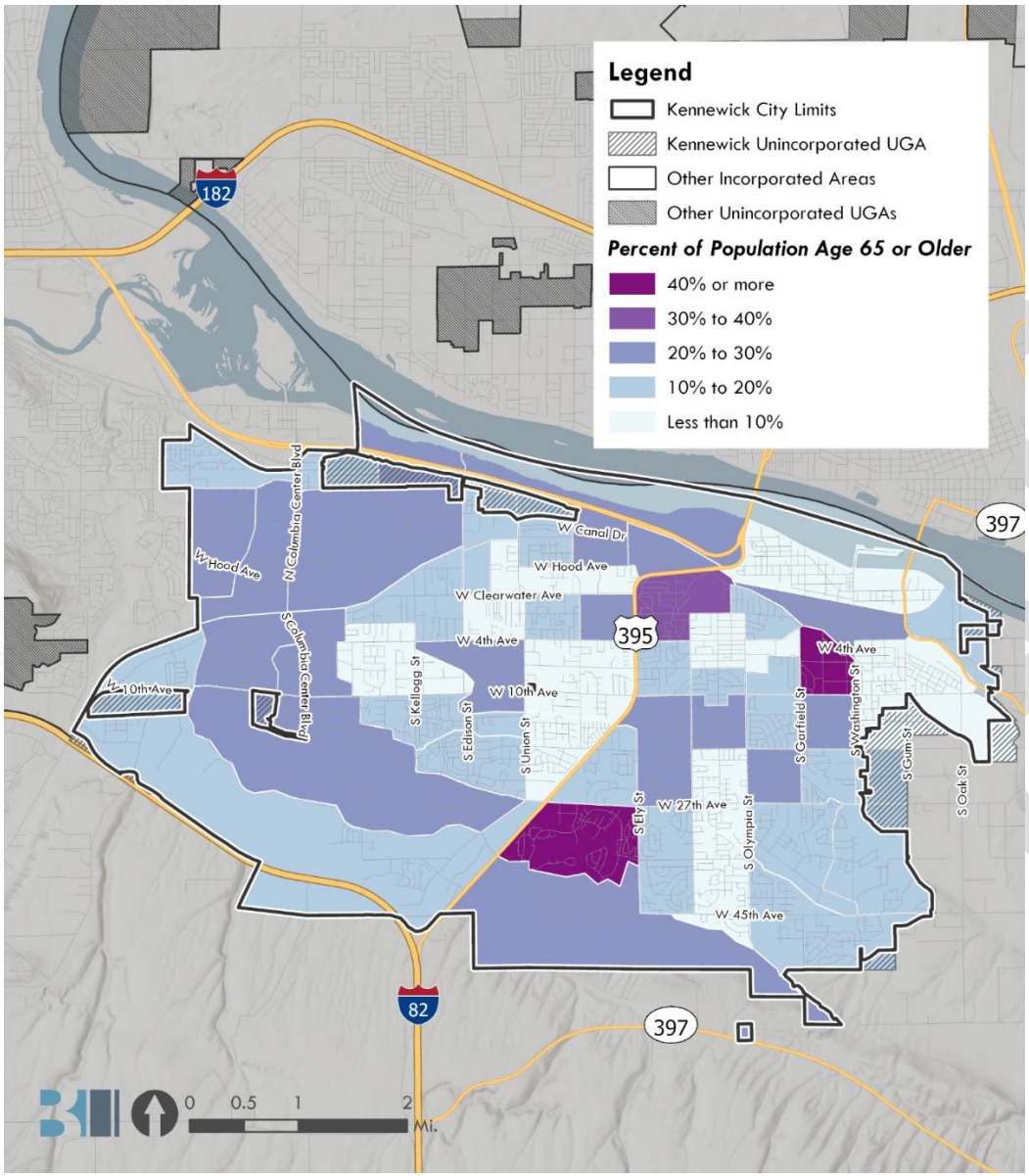
	Kennewick	Benton County	Statewide
Population under age 18	26.1%	26.4%	21.6%
Households w/one or more people under age 18	33.1%	34.0%	29.8%
Population 65 and over	15.9%	15.6%	16.3%

Households w/one or more people age 65+	29.5%	29.3%	29.4%
Households w/older adult (65+) living alone	9.9%	9.9%	10.6%

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S0101 and S1101); BERK, 2025.

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Figure H-5. Percent of Population Age 65 or Older by Census Block Group (2023)

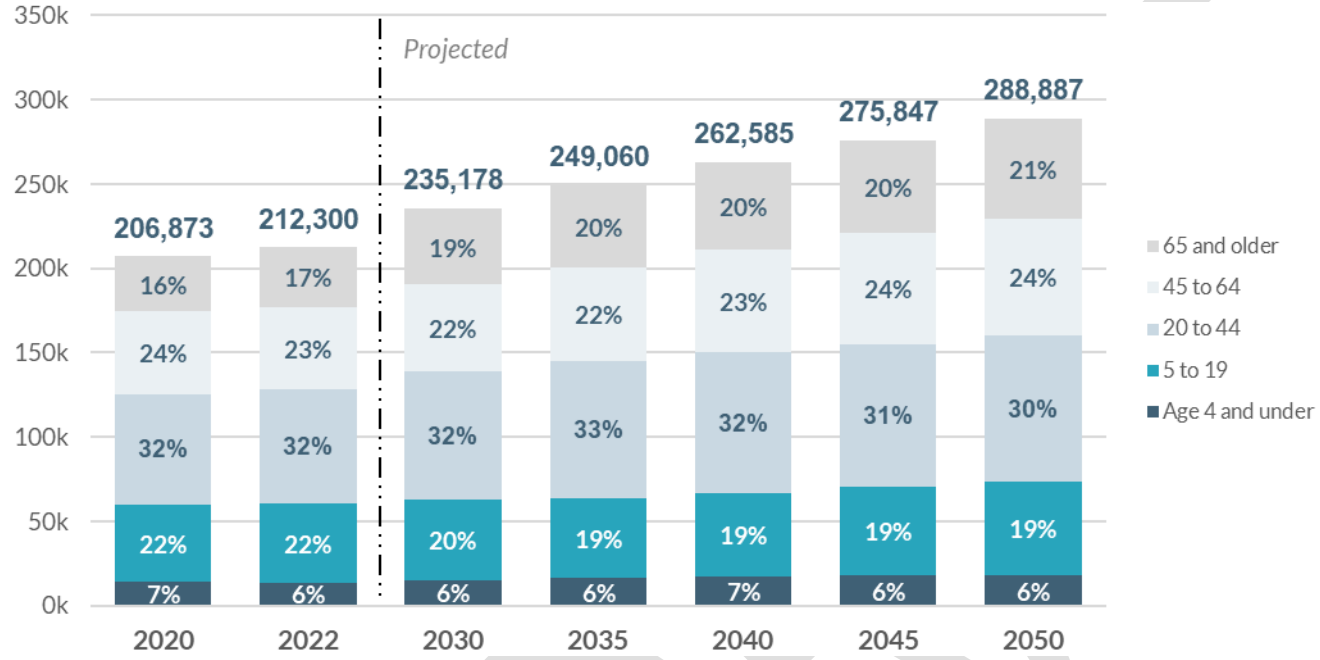


Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table B01001); BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

The age distribution of the population countywide is expected to change over time, with the proportion of adults 65 and older increasing slightly through 2045 (from 17% in 2022 to 20% in 2045 according to OFM projections; **Figure H-6**). The overall number of adults over 65 is expected to increase countywide from an estimated 35,239 in 2022 to 54,667 in 2045.[2] In Kennewick, there are an estimated 13,618 residents aged 50 to 64 as of 2023, many of whom will likely remain in the city or surrounding area as they age. Demand for accessible and affordable supportive housing and services will likely increase over time as the overall number of older adults increases. A higher share of retired residents can also affect workforce availability and increase demand for specific services, such as healthcare.

Figure H-6. Population by Age Cohort, Estimates and Projections (2020–2045)—Benton County



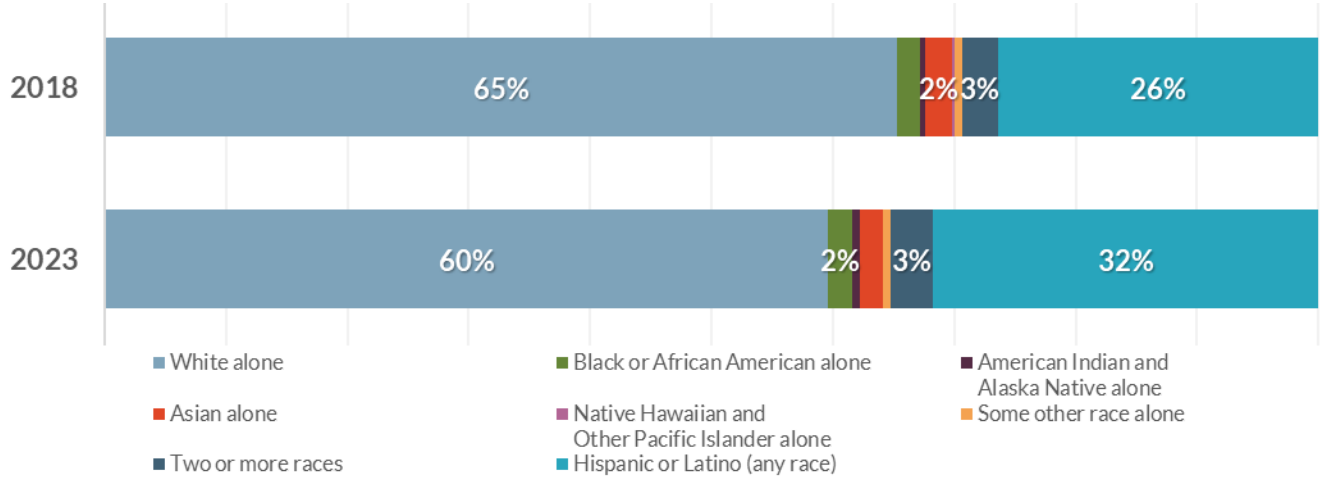
Sources: OFM, 2020; OFM GMA 2022 Medium Series Projections, 2022; BERK, 2024.

Race, Ethnicity, & Language Spoken at Home

Kennewick's demographic makeup is also evolving. Since 2018, the percentage of the population who identify as Hispanic or Latino grew while the percentage of White, non-Hispanic persons declined (**Figure H-7**). **Figure H-8** summarizes the demographic makeup of other jurisdictions in the area. In comparison to these other jurisdictions, Kennewick's demographic makeup is more diverse than the cities of Richland and West Richland as well as Benton County and is less diverse than the cities of Pasco and Yakima.

[2] OFM GMA 2022 Medium Series Projections, Population by Age and Sex (Five-year Age Groups), 2022.

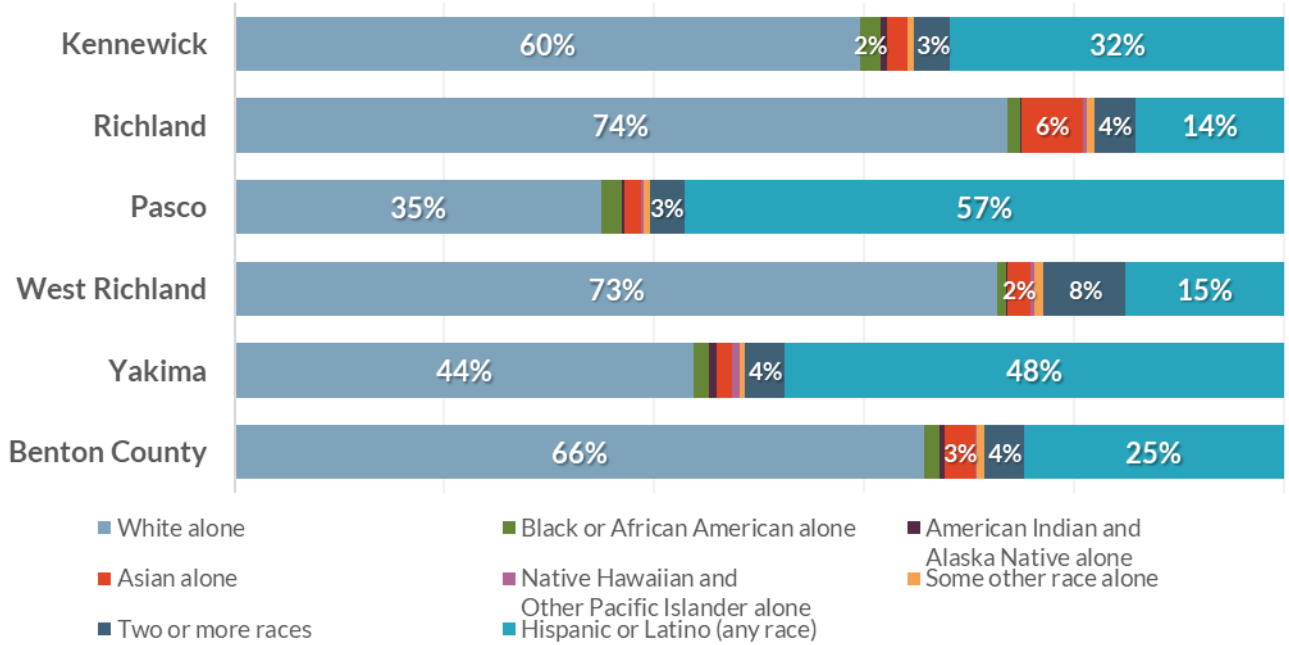
Figure H-7. Share of Population by Race and Ethnicity (2018 and 2023)



Note: Except for Hispanic or Latino, all groups are exclusive of persons who identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Sources: US Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 (Table DP05); BERK, 2025.

Figure H-8. Share of Population by Race and Ethnicity, Kennewick and Comparison Jurisdictions (2023)



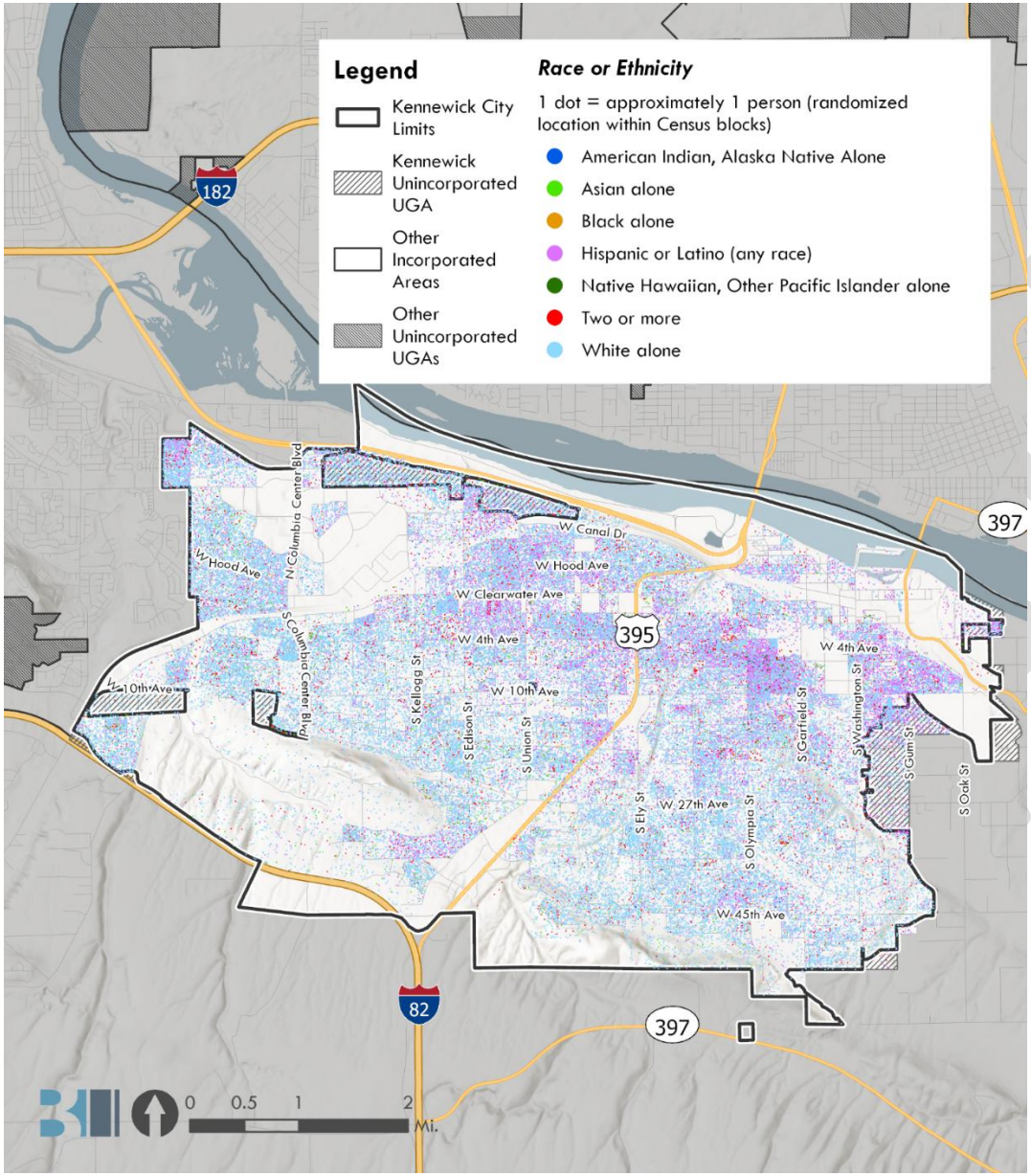
Note: Except for Hispanic or Latino, all groups are exclusive of persons who identify as Hispanic or Latino.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP05); BERK, 2025.

A map providing the distribution of population, including identification by race and ethnicity, is included in **Figure H-9**. The highest population densities in the Kennewick Area are generally in the northern portions of the city, including the Columbia Center area, West Highlands, and Waterfront/Downtown. White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in the Columbia Center area and southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes), while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and around Downtown and in the West Highlands.

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Figure H-9. Population Density by Race and Ethnicity (2020)



Sources: US Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Spanish is the most common language other than English spoken at home consistent with demographic trends—other languages spoken at home are primarily other Indo-European or Asian and Pacific Island languages. From 2018 to 2023, the share of the population that speaks Spanish at home increased slightly while the share of those in Kennewick who speak English less than "very well" remained relatively consistent. See **Figure H-10**.

Figure H-10. English Proficiency and Language Spoken at Home (2018 and 2023)

	Percentage of the population over 5 years old (2018)	Percentage of the population over 5 years old (2023)
Speak a language other than English at home	26.9%	28.8%
Speak English less than "very well"	11.0%	11.8%
Speak Spanish at home	20.6%	24.3%
Speak other languages at home	6.2%	4.5%

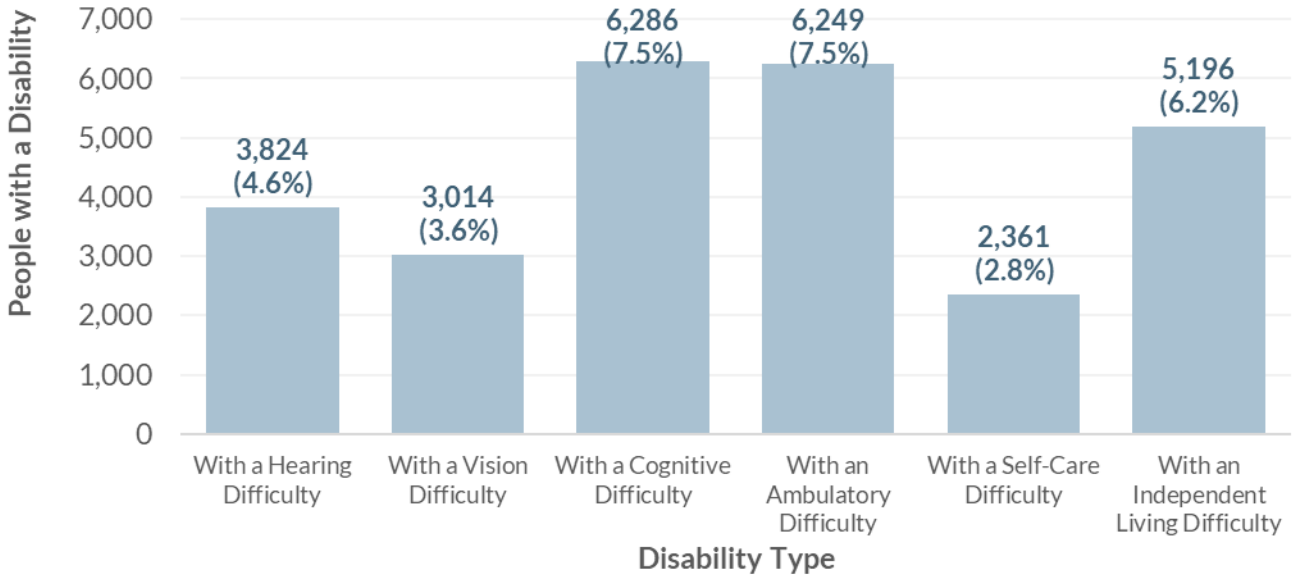
Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 (Table S1601); BERK, 2025.

Individuals with Special Housing Needs

Disability Status

Approximately 16% of individuals in Kennewick live with one or more disabilities. Disabilities can include sensory disabilities (such as vision and hearing impairments), physical disabilities, mental disabilities, self-care disabilities, go-outside home disabilities, and employment disabilities (difficulty working at a job or business due to physical, mental, or emotional condition). For the population with a disability, the most common disability types are a cognitive difficulty and ambulatory difficulty following by an independent living difficulty (**Figure H-11**).

Figure H-11. Percent of Population with a Disability by Type (2023)



Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive. People could have one or more disabilities.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S1810); BERK, 2025.

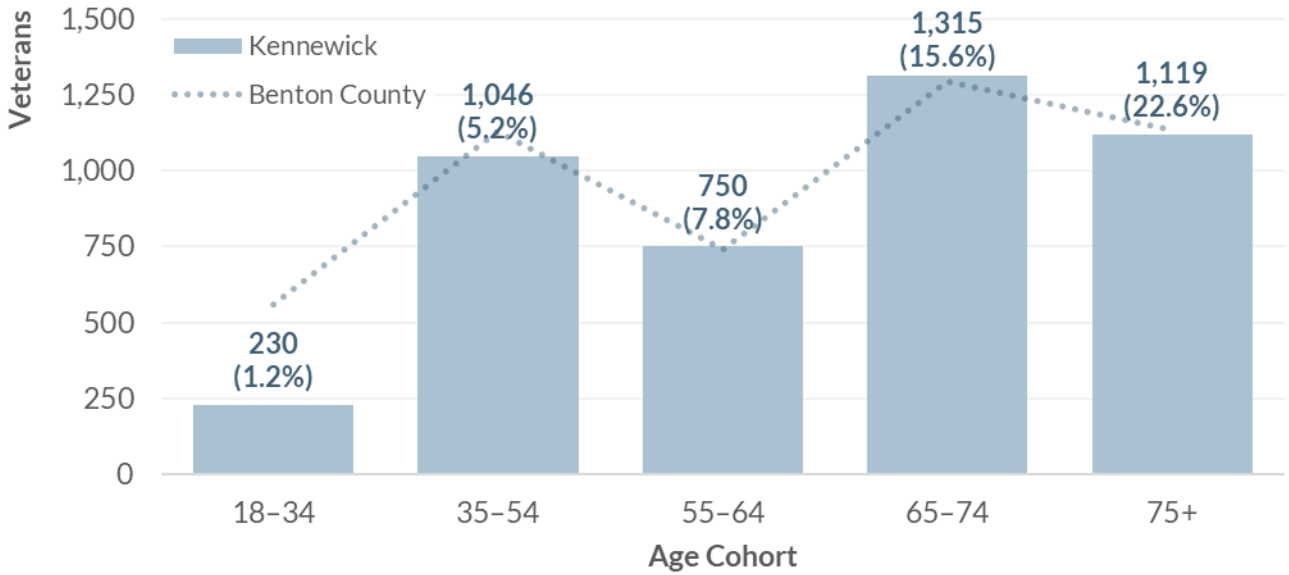
Note that these categories are not mutually exclusive as people may have more than one disability. While disabilities can be experienced by all age groups, populations with a higher proportion of older adults (over age 65) may correspond with higher disability rates, due to the sensory, physical, and mental effects of aging. In Kennewick, individuals aged 65 or older comprise the greatest share of those with a hearing or ambulatory difficulty while those aged 18-64 comprise the largest share of those with a vision, cognitive, or independent living difficulty. Roughly the same share of those with a self-care difficulty are comprised of those aged 18-64 and those aged 65 or older. The Kennewick School District also documented approximately 14.3% of students with a disability during the 2024-25 school year, slightly lower than the statewide percentage of 16.4%.[3] A higher share of the city's White alone, not Hispanic or Latino population than the city's Hispanic or Latino population of any race have one or more disability (19% and 11%, respectively).[4]

Veteran Status

Approximately 8% of Kennewick residents are veterans, including approximately 16% of the population between 65-74 and 23% of the population aged 75 or older. Most veterans in Kennewick identify as White alone, not Hispanic or Latino (90%) and approximately 5% identify as Hispanic or Latino of any race.[5] See **Figure H-12**. Columbia Basin Veterans Center operates two transitional homes for veterans in the Tri-Cities Region, the Wagenaar-Pfister House in Kennewick and the Alexander House in Richland, and a Rapid Re-housing/Homelessness prevention program for veterans called VESTRA.[6]

3 OSPI Kennewick School District Report Card 2024-25 School Year, data last updated June 24, 2024.
4 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S1810).
5 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S2101).
6 Columbia Basin Veterans Center Programs, 2025.

Figure H-12. Veteran Status in Civilian Population by Age (2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S2101); BERK, 2024.

Those Experiencing Homelessness

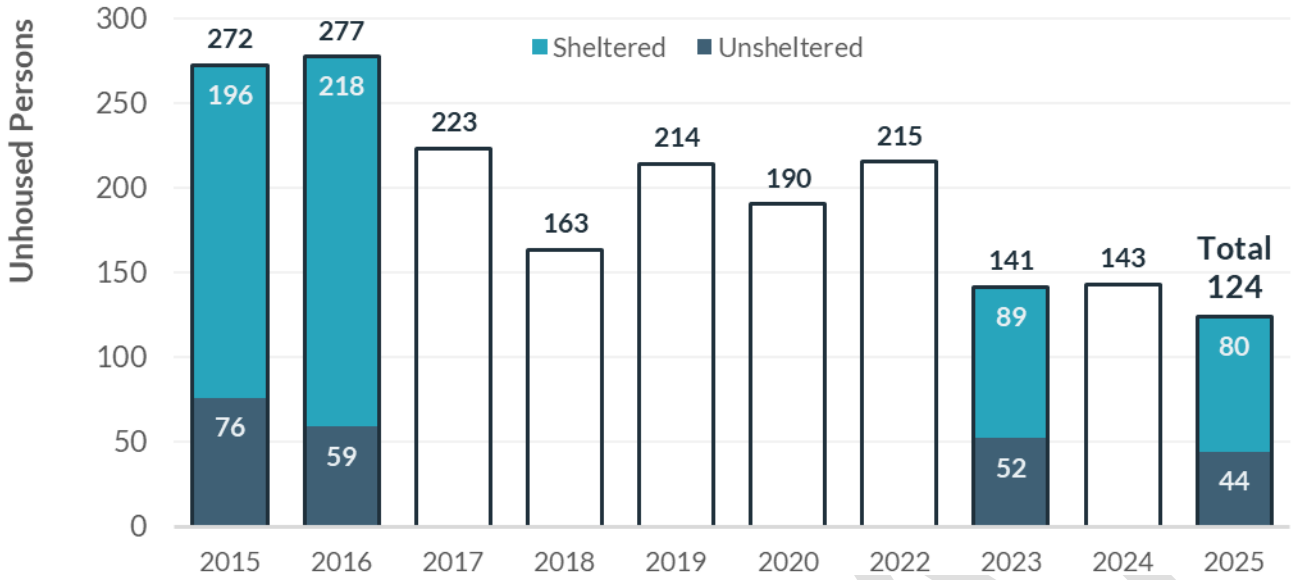
People experience homelessness in Kennewick as well as across the state. Homelessness in Kennewick is a very real problem not confined to any one sector of the city's population. Homelessness occurs in a variety of ways—some families or individuals experience job loss, reduced household income, domestic violence, increases in housing, living and medical costs and other displacing events; some people are suddenly unhoused while others may be chronically unhoused.

The unhoused population includes those that are accommodated in emergency shelters, stay temporarily with family or friends or other transitory housing, or are "unsheltered" living on the streets, in forested areas, in vehicles or other conditions that do not provide safe shelter. The Washington Department of Commerce summaries of Point In Time (PIT) Counts for Benton-Franklin Counties show the total unhoused population counted for years 2023, 2024, and 2025 as 141, 143, and 124 respectively (see **Figure H-13**).[7] Approximately 35% of unhoused individuals in the two counties were unsheltered in 2025 (44 of the 124 total) similar to approximately 33% of unhoused individuals statewide in 2025 (7,223 of 22,173 total). The Kennewick School District also documented approximately 2.7% of students experiencing homelessness during the 2024-25 school year, slightly lower than the statewide percentage of 3.9%.[8]

[7] The PIT Count is an annual count of people living in transitional housing, emergency shelters, safe havens, and places not meant for human habitation on one night in January. The totals in 2023, 2024, and 2025 include sheltered (emergency and transitional housing) and unsheltered individuals in Benton and Franklin Counties. Commerce Point in Time Count Results, 2025.

[8] Students experiencing homelessness include those who are doubled-up (e.g., sharing housing with other people or families due to loss of their own housing), sleeping in hotels/motels, sleeping in public or private shelters, or unsheltered. OSPI Kennewick School District Report Card 2024-25 School Year, data last updated June 24, 2024.

Figure H-13. Annual Point in Time Count—Benton-Franklin Counties (2015–2025)



Note: Commerce reported PIT counts for the two counties combined from 2015-2018 and separately by county in 2019-2020 and 2022-2025. For consistency, totals shown for 2019 and after include both counties. Some data in 2019 for Benton County and in 2023 for Franklin County was suppressed for confidentiality which means the total number of unhoused individuals counted in 2019 and 2023 was slightly higher than shown here. Only the total number of unhoused individuals in the two counties is available from Commerce for 2017-2022 and 2024. Data is not available for 2021.

Sources: Commerce Point in Time Count Results, 2025; BERK, 2025.

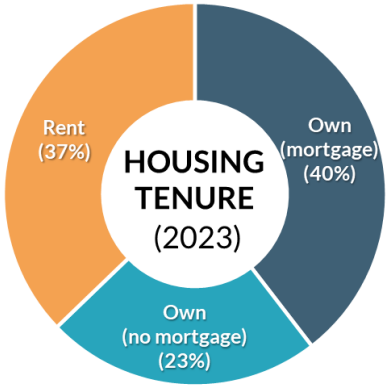
Household Characteristics

Household Count, Tenure, & Size

As of 2023, there were an estimated 31,015 households living in Kennewick.[9] **Figure 14** shows the breakdown of households in the city by tenure as of 2023. About 63% of all households owned their homes, about two thirds of which had a mortgage. About 37% of households were renters. **Figure H-17** compares this breakdown to other jurisdictions. Kennewick has a higher share (37%) of renters compared to the county as a whole (32%) as well as neighboring Richland (35%), Pasco (31%), and West Richland (16%). Yakima's share of renters (46%) is higher than Kennewick's.

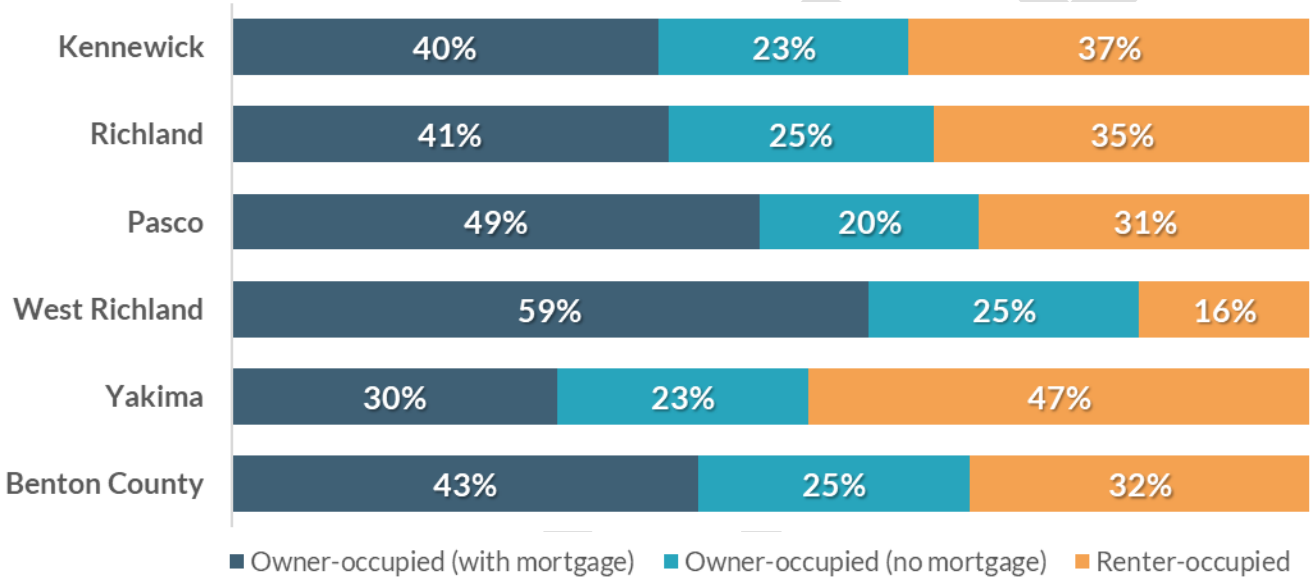
[9] ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP04).

Figure 14. Households by Tenure (2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP04); BERK, 2025.

Figure H-15. Households by Tenure in City of Kennewick and Comparison Areas (2023)



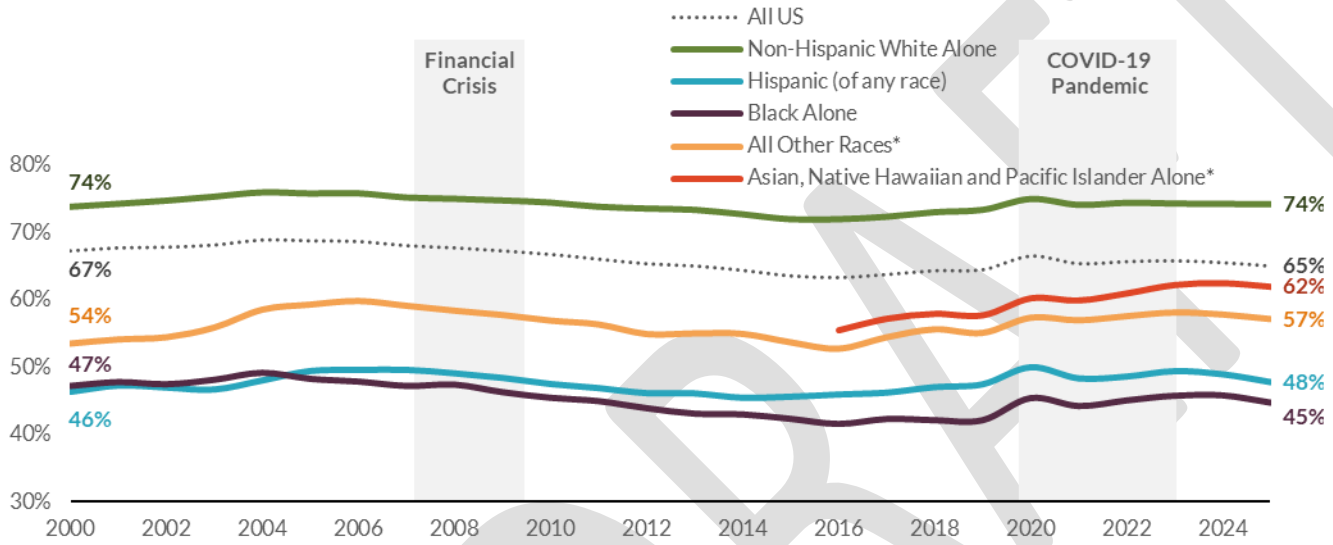
Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP04); BERK, 2025.

Home ownership bestows many benefits on households and communities and is one of the most common strategies for wealth building in the United States. Homeowners benefit from favorable tax policies, such as the Home Mortgage Interest Deduction. Additional advantages to homeownership include stable monthly housing costs over time, capturing increases in land value, and reduced risk of displacement when housing costs increase. Lower vulnerability to displacement leads to greater community stability and the benefits of stable social networks and cohesion. Historic and ongoing systemic discrimination

contributes to racial disparities in homeownership. Home ownership requires substantial savings for a down payment, along with a credit history and income source that lenders deem acceptable. Many BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) households (including Hispanic or Latino households) struggle with either or both of these criteria, restricting access to this wealth-building opportunity.[10]

Nationally, there is a wide gap in homeownership rates between White households and other racial groups. Progress to close this gap was documented in the early 2000s, but the shock of the 2008 financial crisis erased most of these gains. Nationally, from 2000–2025, White households have maintained home ownership rates around 74% while Hispanic or Latino households hovered at or below 50%. This pattern emphasizes ongoing concern that disparities will worsen as impacts settle in from more recent system shocks related to the COVID-19 pandemic and rising inflation. Nationwide home ownership trends since 2000 by race are shown in **Figure H-16**.

Figure H-16. Home Ownership Rates by Race and Ethnicity of Householder, United States (2000–2025)



Note: "All Other Races" includes people who reported Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander, or American Indian or Alaska Native regardless of whether they reported any other race, as well as all other combinations of two ore more races until 2016. In 2016, home ownership rates for Asian and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander households were tabulated separately from the "All Other Races" category."

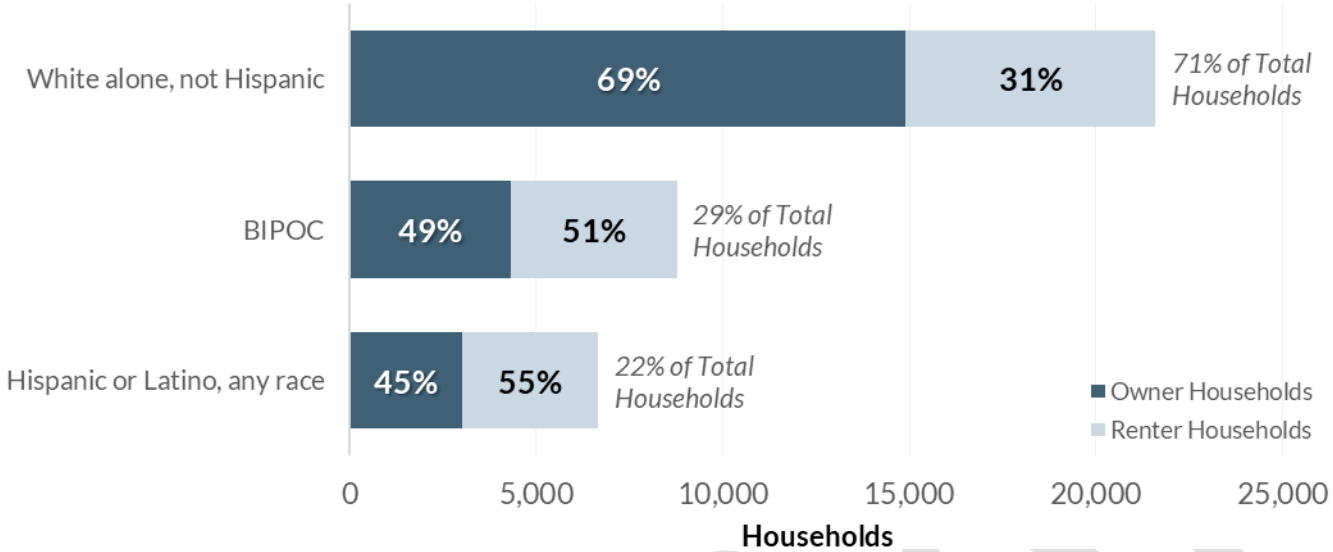
Sources: US Census Bureau, Current Population Survey/Housing Vacancy Survey (Table 16. Quarterly Homeownership Rates by Race and Ethnicity of Householder: 1994 to Present), 2025; BERK, 2025.

Some of these national patterns of home ownership disparities by race and ethnicity are reflected in Kennewick's data as well. As of 2021, home ownership rates among White households were higher than the citywide rate of 63% and lower among BIPOC and Hispanic/Latino households (**Figure H-17**). However, comparing 2021 home ownership rates with 2016, gaps in racial disparities within Kennewick have shrunk as the Hispanic or Latino share of population and households has grown. White households experienced no marked change in home ownership from 2016–2021 while Hispanic or Latino households experienced

10 Brookings, 2019; Urban Institute, 2018; Harvard Joint Studies for Housing Research, 2013; Center for Investigative Reporting, 2018.

an increase of about 7% (**Figure H-18**). Home ownership rates amongst Kennewick's Hispanic or Latino households are also now closer to the national rate in **Figure H-16**.

Figure H-17. Households by Tenure and Race and Ethnicity (2021)

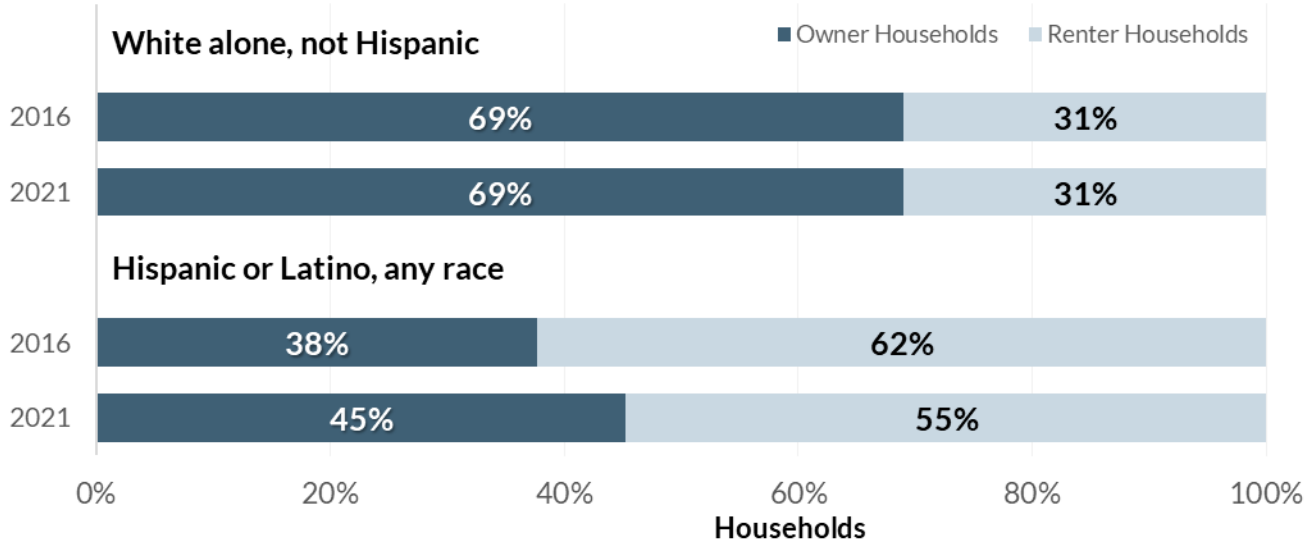


Note: BIPOC households are inclusive of Hispanic or Latino households.

Source: HUD CHAS, 2017–2021 (Table 9); BERK, 2025.

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Figure H-18. Households by Tenure and Race and Ethnicity (2016 and 2021)

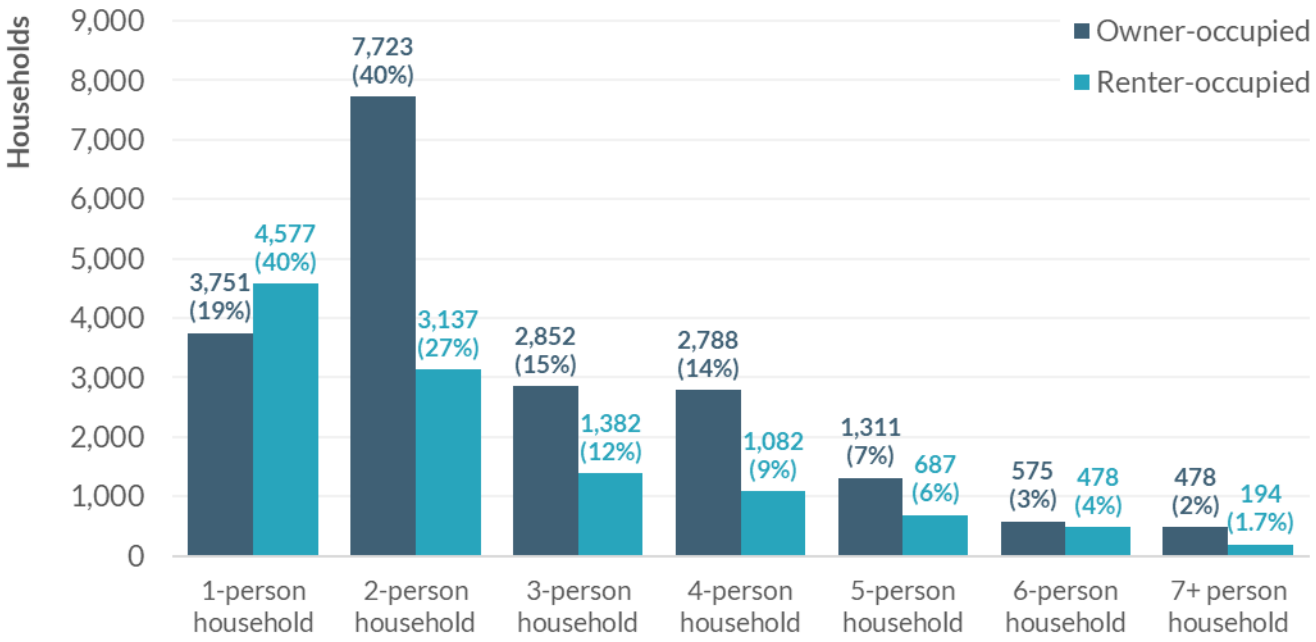


Source: HUD CHAS, 2012–2016 and 2017–2021 (Table 9); BERK, 2025.

Figure H-19 breaks down all households in Kennewick by both household size[11] and tenure. Overall, nearly two thirds (64%) of all households have only one or two members. One-person households are somewhat more commonly renters, while two-, three-, and four-person households are more commonly homeowners. Larger households are slightly more commonly owner-occupied, yet there are many renter households with five or more members.

11 Household size refers to the total count of persons living in a household. Household members may be adults or children. A household could be composed of a family of related persons, unrelated persons living together as housemates, or individuals living alone.

Figure H-19. Households by Tenure and Size (2023)

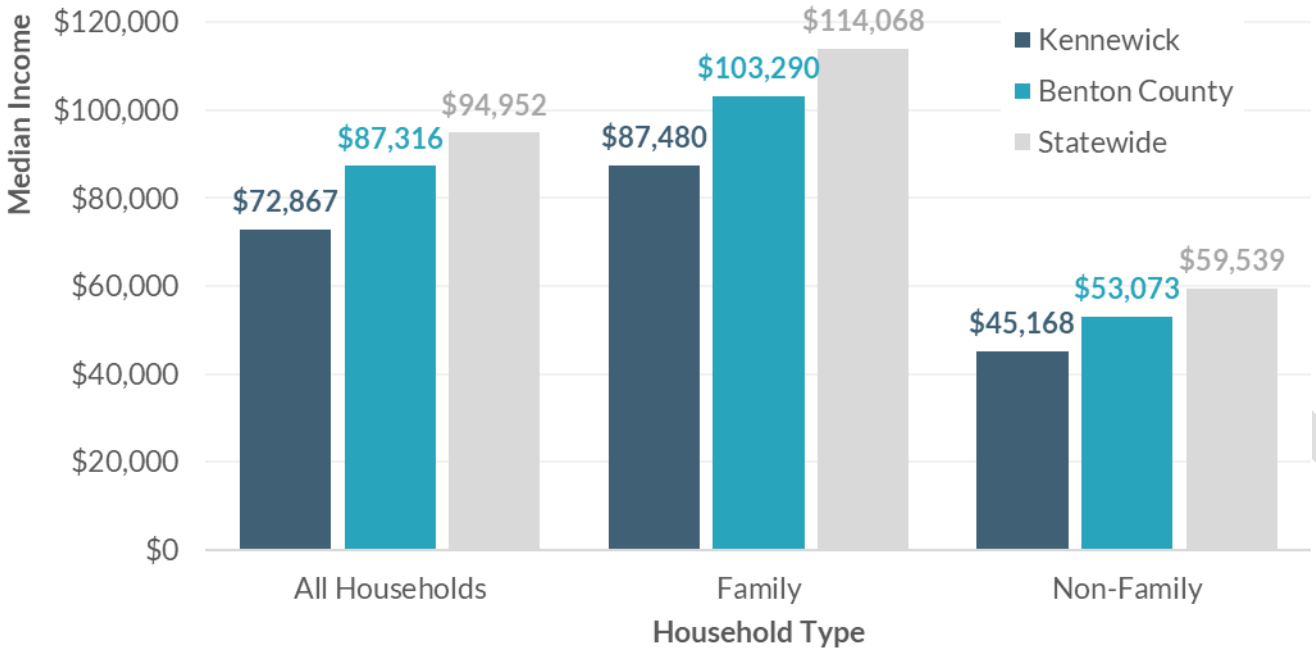


Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table B25009); BERK, 2025.

Household Income

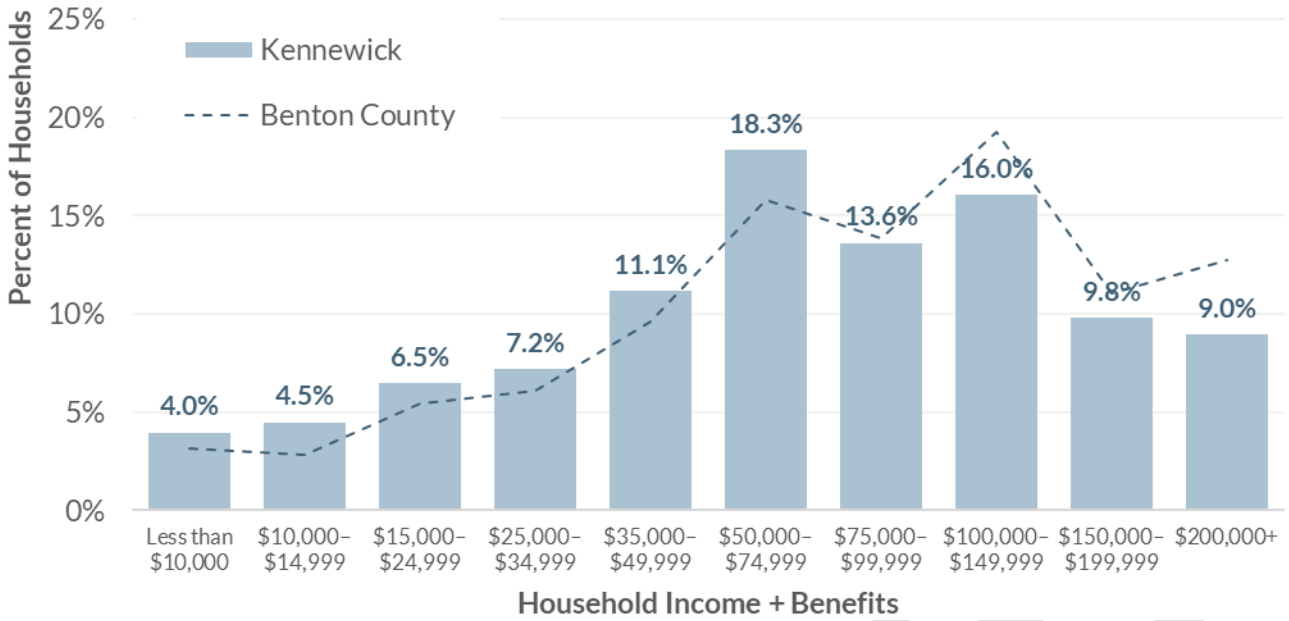
Household income refers to the total combined income of all members of a household. A household's income determines what kinds of housing and which locations are affordable to them. As of 2023, the median household income in the City of Kennewick was nearly $73,000, which is lower than the countywide median of about $87,000 and state median of about $95,000. Median family household income was nearly double that of non-family households in both the city and county overall, similar to trends statewide (**Figure H-20**). **Figure H-21** shows the distribution of households by income range in Kennewick, along with the countywide distribution represented as a dashed line—countywide, there is a slightly higher proportion of households at the highest income ranges and lower proportion of households with incomes less than $74,999. Within Kennewick, median household income is highest in southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) and lowest in and around Downtown (**Figure H-22**).

Figure H-20. Median Household Income, Family vs. Non-Family Households (2023)—Kennewick, Benton County, and Statewide



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S1901); BERK, 2025.

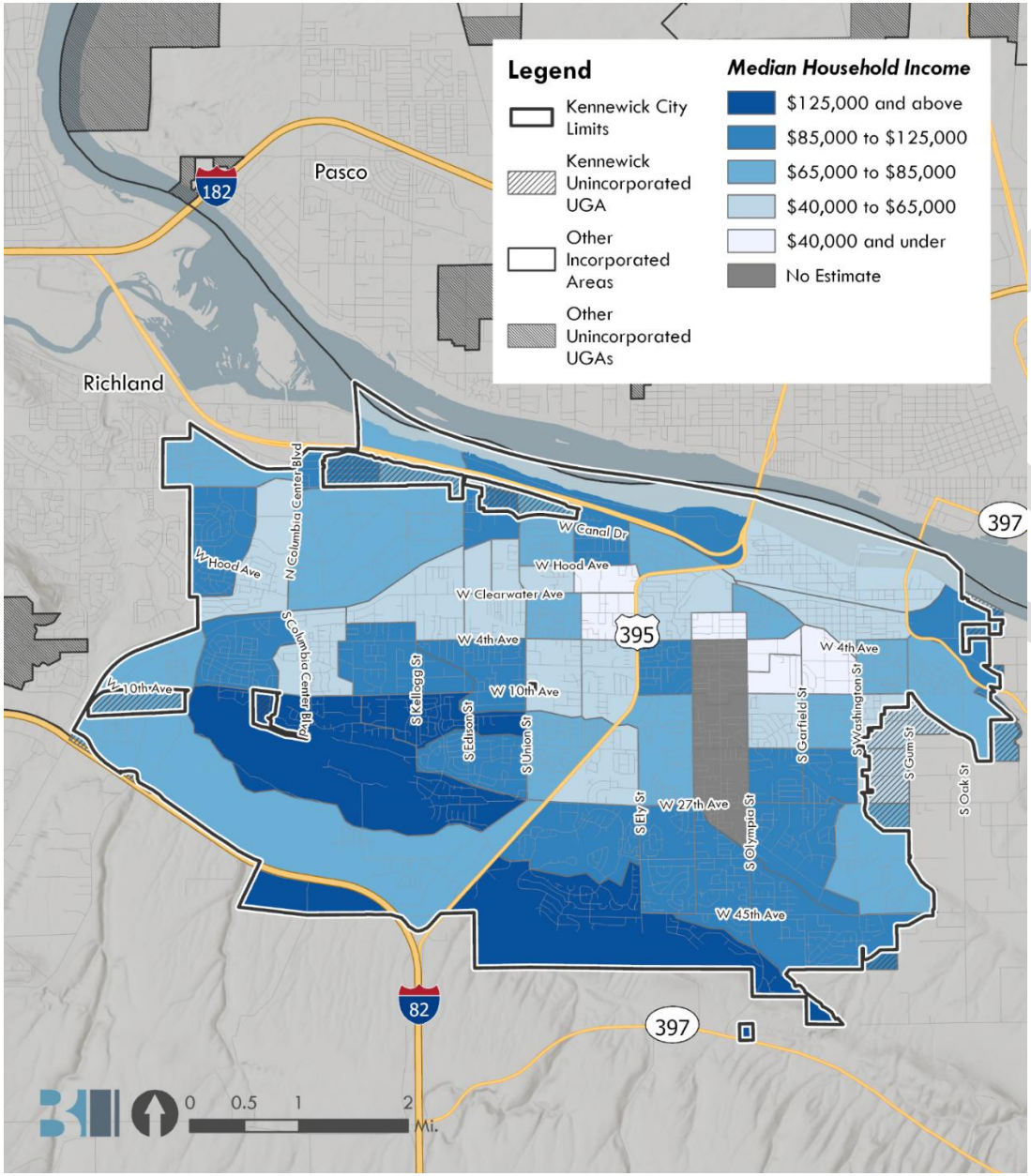
Figure H-21. Distribution of Household Income and Benefits (2023)—Kennewick vs. Benton County



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP03); BERK, 2025.

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Figure H-22. Median Household Income by Census Tract (2023)

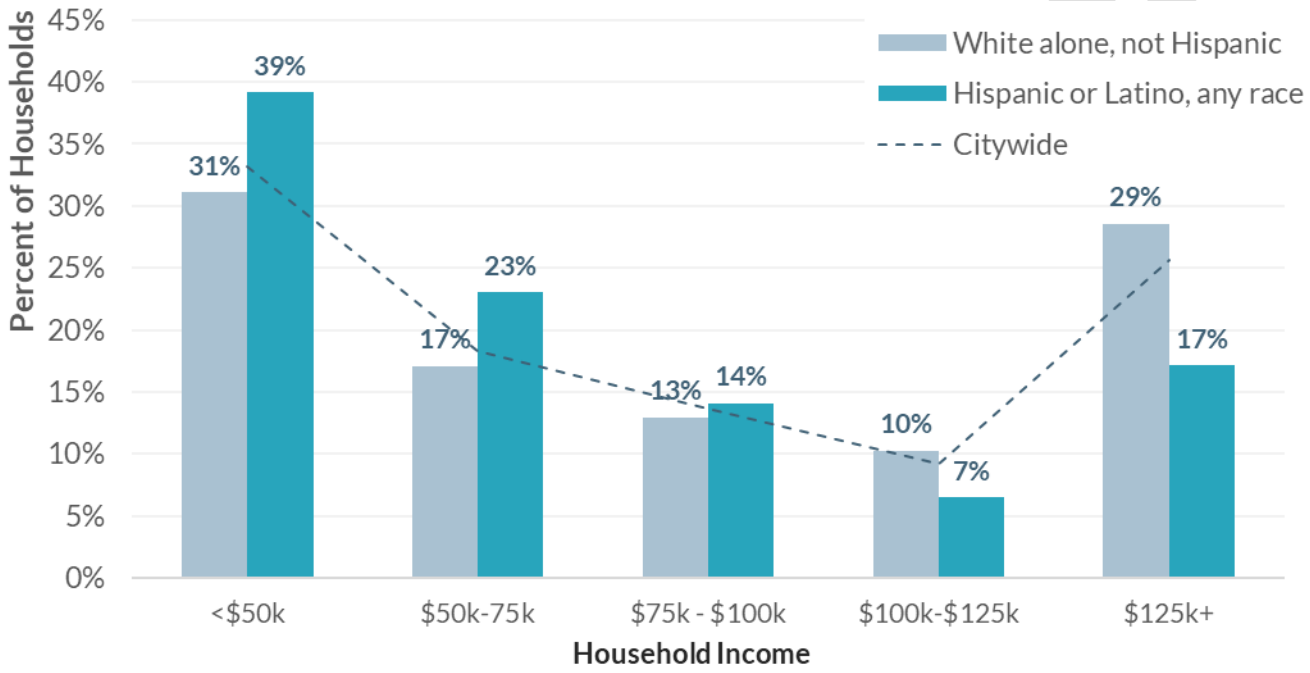


Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Median household income also varies by race and ethnicity—in 2023, the median income of White, non-Hispanic households was $78,473 versus $61,185 for Hispanic or Latino households (of any race).[12] **Figure H-23** shows the distribution of households by income range in the city by race and ethnicity, along with the total citywide distribution represented as a dashed line. This is consistent with the median household incomes mapped in **Figure H-22** and population distribution by race and ethnicity mapped in **Figure H-9**. Census block groups with median household incomes higher than the citywide median generally coincide with areas where White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live whereas Census block groups with median household incomes below the citywide median correspond with areas where Hispanic or Latino residents (of any race) are more likely to live.

Figure H-23. Distribution of Household Income by Race and Ethnicity (2023 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table B19001, Table B19001H, and Table B19001I); BERK, 2025.

Affordable housing policies often classify all households by income level relative to the HUD-area median family income, or MFI.[13] In 2025, Benton County's MFI was $105,600.[14] This represents the median income of a 4-person household. When classifying households by income level, HUD makes adjustments for household size. So, for example, the threshold for determining 80% MFI is lower for a two-person household than it is for a four-person household. The table in **Figure H-24** shows

12 ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table B19013H and Table B19013I).

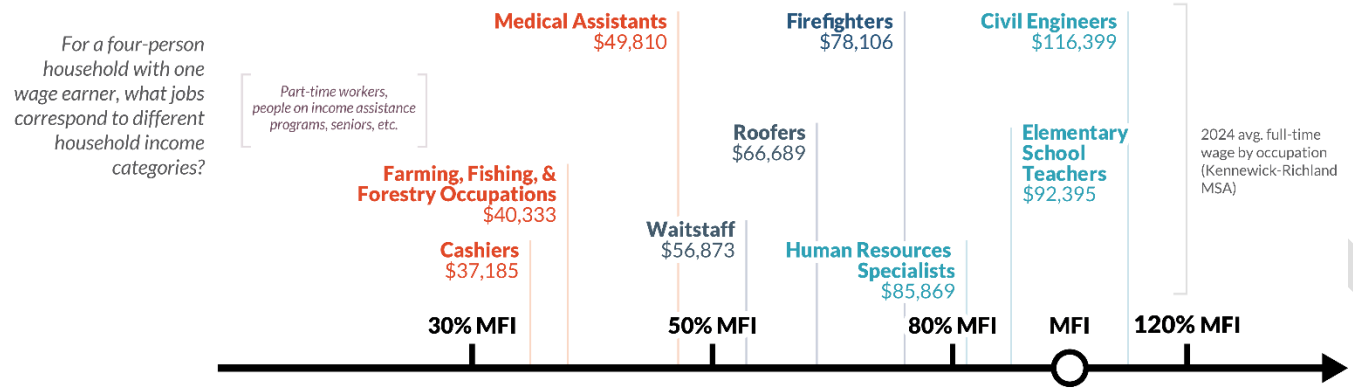
13 Note that MFI is a different measure than median household income, described in the prior paragraph. They are not comparable because median household income includes all households, not just family households.

14 HUD Income Limits, 2024 and 2025.

income limits for classifying households by income level relative to MFI. It also includes average wages in Benton County for representative job types to show where they fall in terms of income levels, assuming a single wage earner and a four-person household. Finally, **Figure H-24** shows the maximum monthly housing cost that is affordable for each income level.

Figure H-24. Income Limits and Affordable Housing Costs by Household Size (2025)—Benton County

2025 Benton County Median Family Income (MFI): $105,600



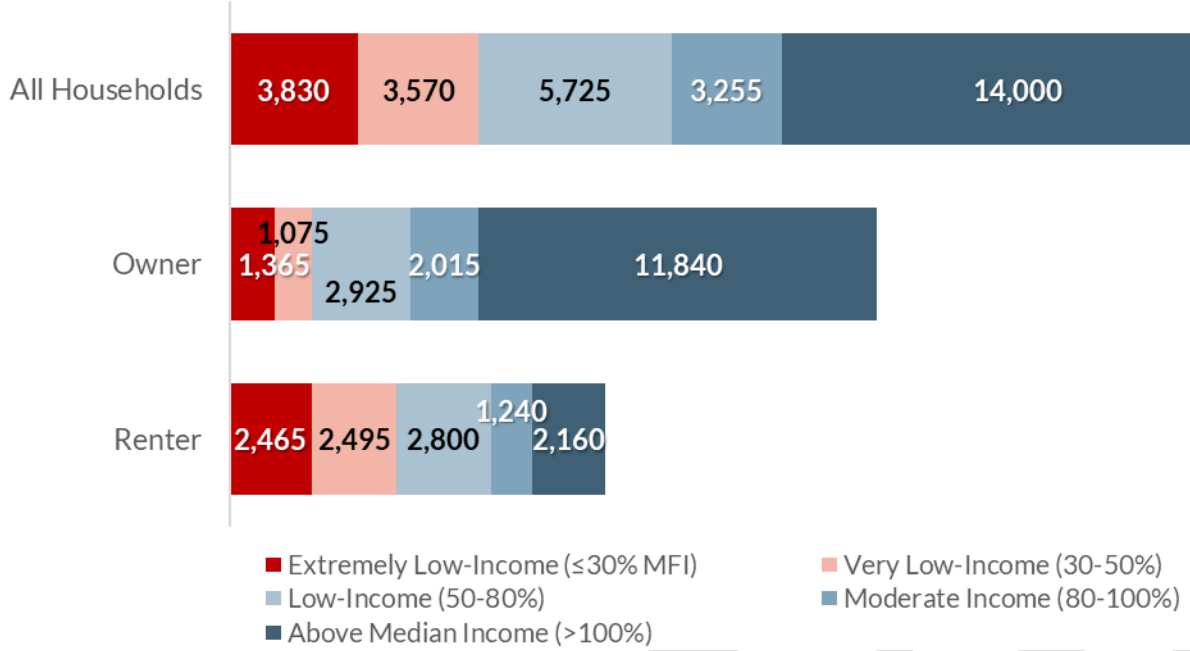
Household Size	0–30% MFI Extremely Low Income	30–50% MFI Very Low Income	50–80% MFI Low Income	80–120% MFI Moderate Income
1 person	$22,175 *$554*	$36,960 *$924*	$59,135 *$1,478*	$88,705 ← Maximum income *$2,218 ← Maximum housing costs (total incl. utilities)*
2 people	$25,345 *$634*	$42,240 *$1,056*	$67,585 *$1,690*	$101,375 *$2,534*
3 people	$28,510 *$713*	$47,520 *$1,188*	$76,030 *$1,901*	$114,050 *$2,851*
4 people	$31,680 *$792*	$52,800 *$1,320*	$84,480 *$2,112*	$126,720 *$3,168*

Note: Wage data reflects conditions in 2024.

Sources: HUD, 2024; Washington State Employment Security Department Occupational Employment and Wage Statistics, 2024; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-25 shows the breakdown of all households in Kennewick by income level relative to MFI as of 2021 when MFI was $78,100. It also includes a comparison of renter and owner households. It shows there are relatively few households falling in the 80-100% MFI category compared to other income levels. One reason is that HUD data doesn't provide breakdowns for the full range of moderate-income households as defined in Washington State planning, where the upper limit is either 115% or 120%, depending on context. However, having fewer households in the moderate-income category also represents a broader trend across Washington State of growing income disparity and a shrinking number of moderate-income households.

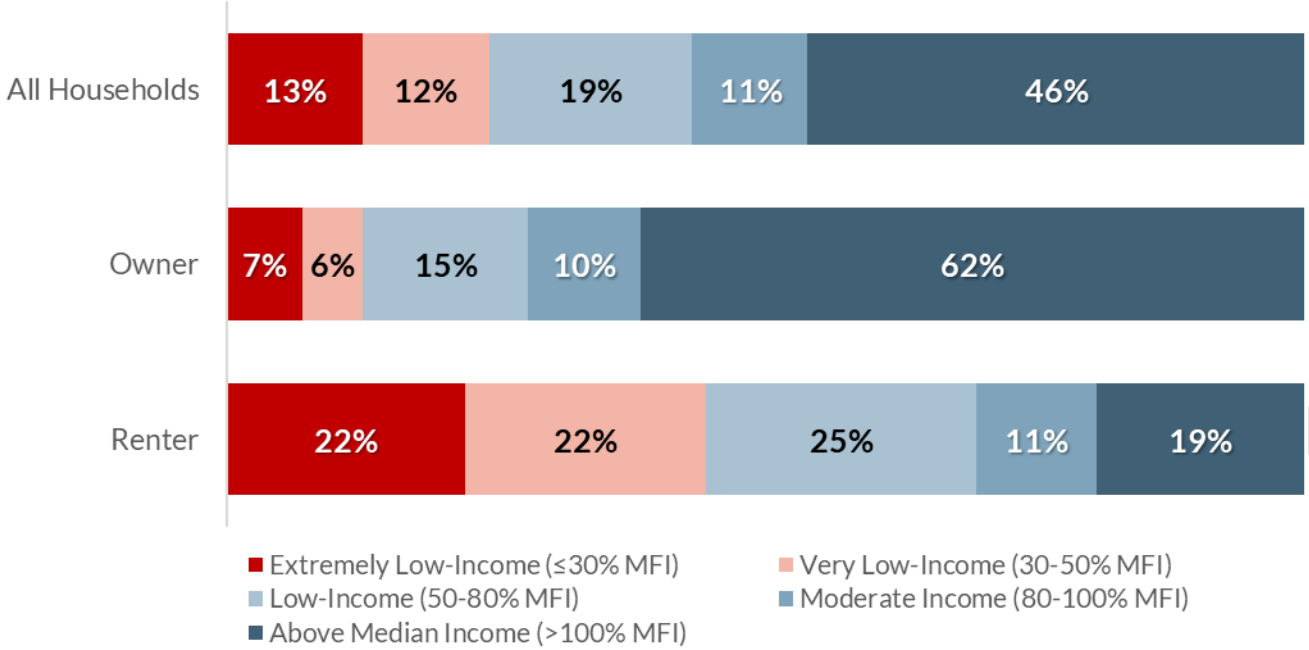
Figure H-25. All Households by Tenure and Income Level (2021)



Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8); BERK, 2025.

Figure H-26 shows the percentage breakdown of these same households by income level relative to MFI. Not surprisingly, renter households more commonly have lower incomes than owner households.

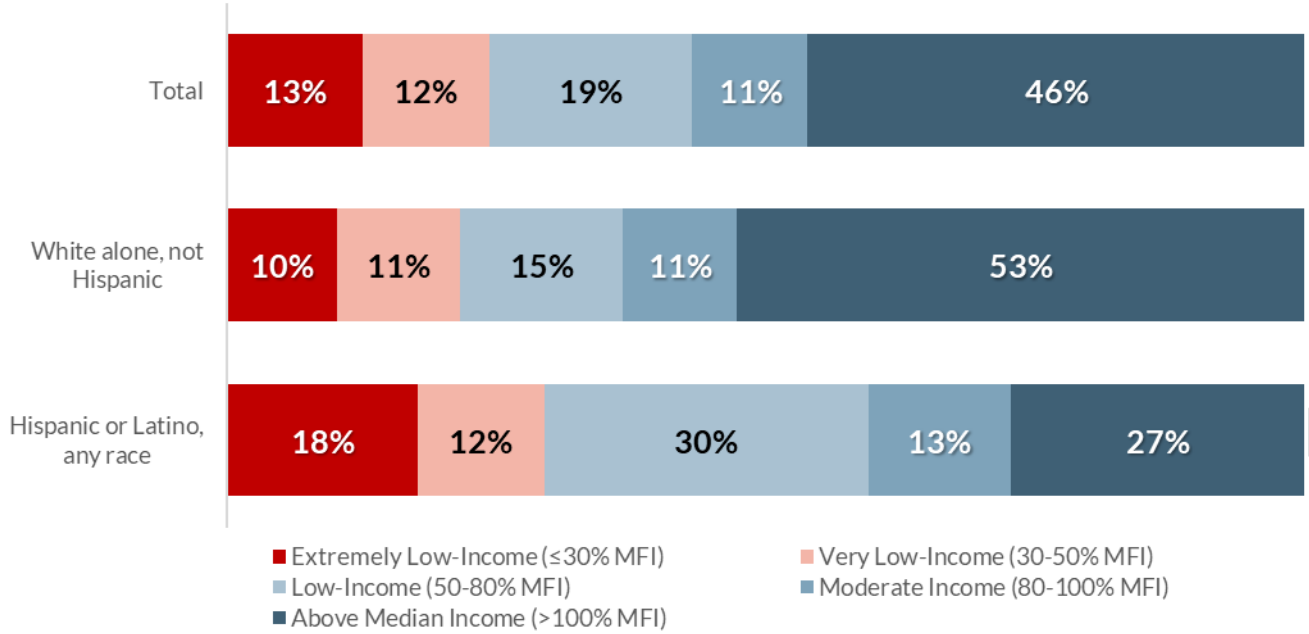
Figure H-26. Share of Households by Tenure and Income Level (2021)



Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8); BERK, 2025.

Figure H-27 shows the percentage breakdown of these same households by income level comparing White, non-Hispanic and Hispanic or Latino households. More Hispanic or Latino households have incomes below MFI compared to White households, which is consistent with the ACS median household income data in **Figure H-23.**

Figure H-27. Share of Households by Income Level and Race and Ethnicity (2021)



Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 1); BERK, 2025.

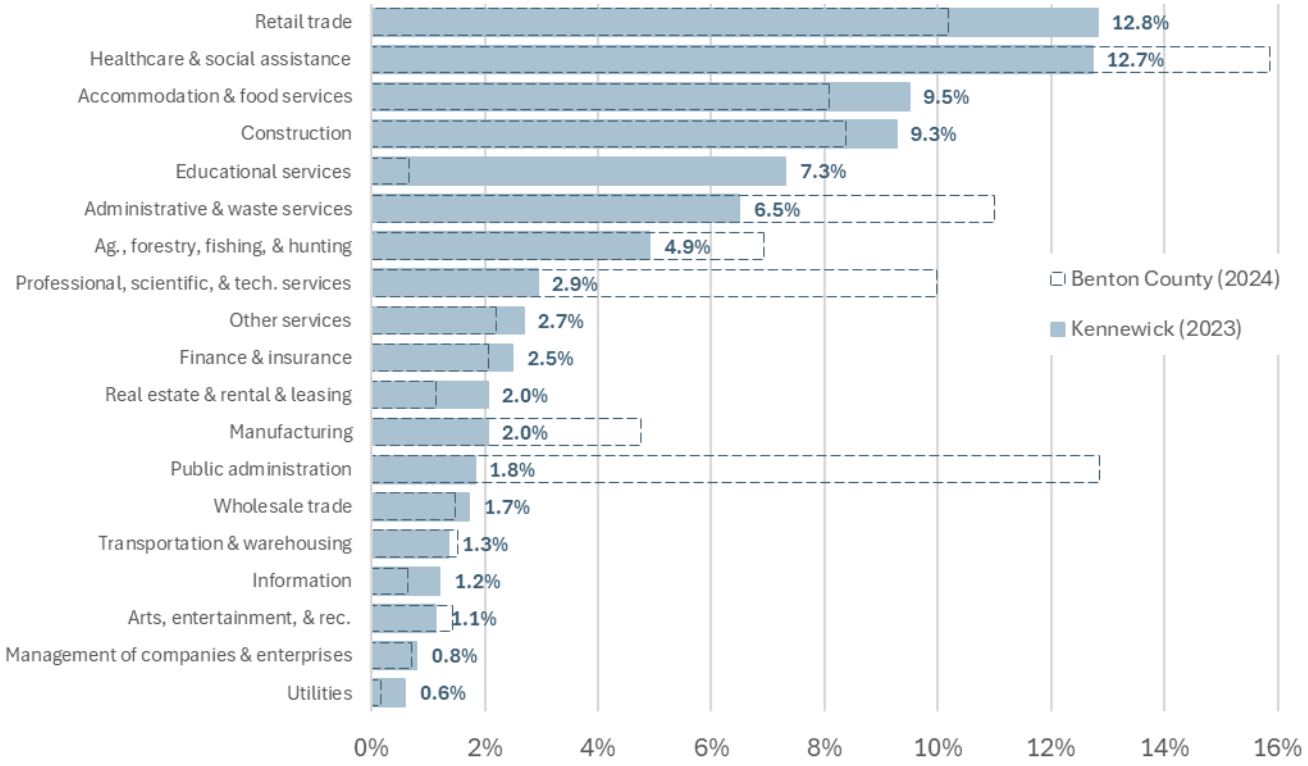
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Workforce Profile

Employment & Labor Force

The Washington State Employment Securities Department (ESD) estimates there were an average 46,920 covered jobs in Kennewick throughout 2023.[15] Local covered employment by major sector is shown in **Figure H-28**. The top five largest employers by sector in Kennewick are retail trade, healthcare and social assistance, accommodations and food services, construction, and educational services. Together, these sectors account for over half (55%) of local employment. Compared to Benton County, a higher percentage of employees in Kennewick work in retail trade and educational services, while a notably lower percentage work in healthcare and social assistance, administrative and waste services, professional, scientific, and technical services, manufacturing, and public administration.

Figure H-28. Annual Average Employment by Sector (Percent of Total)—Kennewick and Benton County



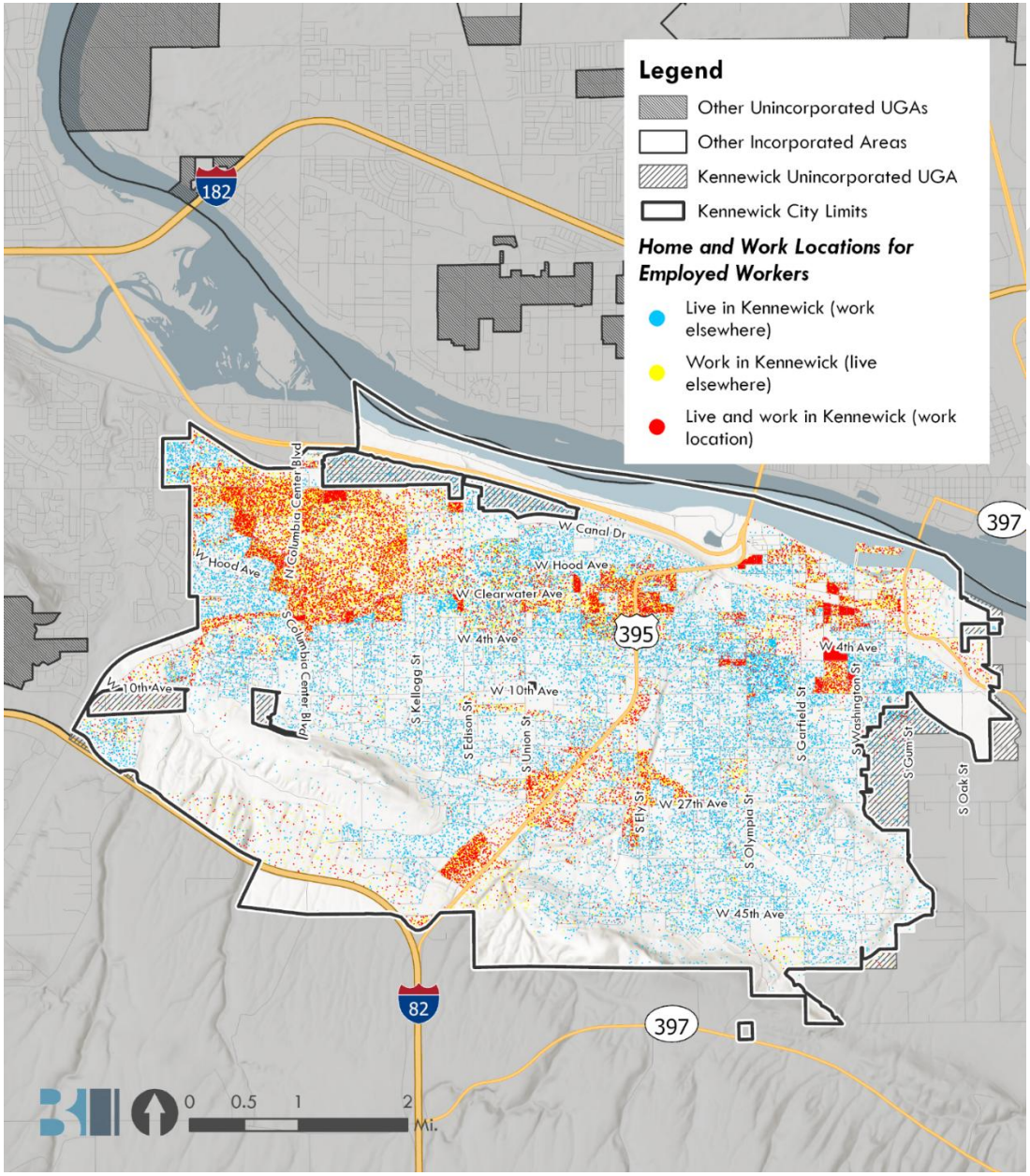
Sources: ESD Covered Employment, 2023 and 2024; BERK, 2025.

[15] "Covered employment" references all jobs that are covered under state unemployment insurance. This definition specifically excludes self-employed workers, proprietors, corporate officers, military personnel, and other non-insured workers. Because of this, these figures typically represent 85–90% of total local employment. This also includes part-time and temporary employment, meaning that multiple jobs held by a single person will all show up in the data. ESD Covered Employment Estimates, 2022 and 2023

Geographically, employment is concentrated in the Columbia Center and Three Rivers area (including the Three Rivers Campus and surrounding commercial development), in Downtown, and along major arterials including Clearwater Avenue and I-395. **Figure H-29** below shows where jobs are concentrated (the red and yellow dots) as well as the home location of those who live in Kennewick but work elsewhere (the blue dots).

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Figure H-29. Job and Worker Density in Kennewick



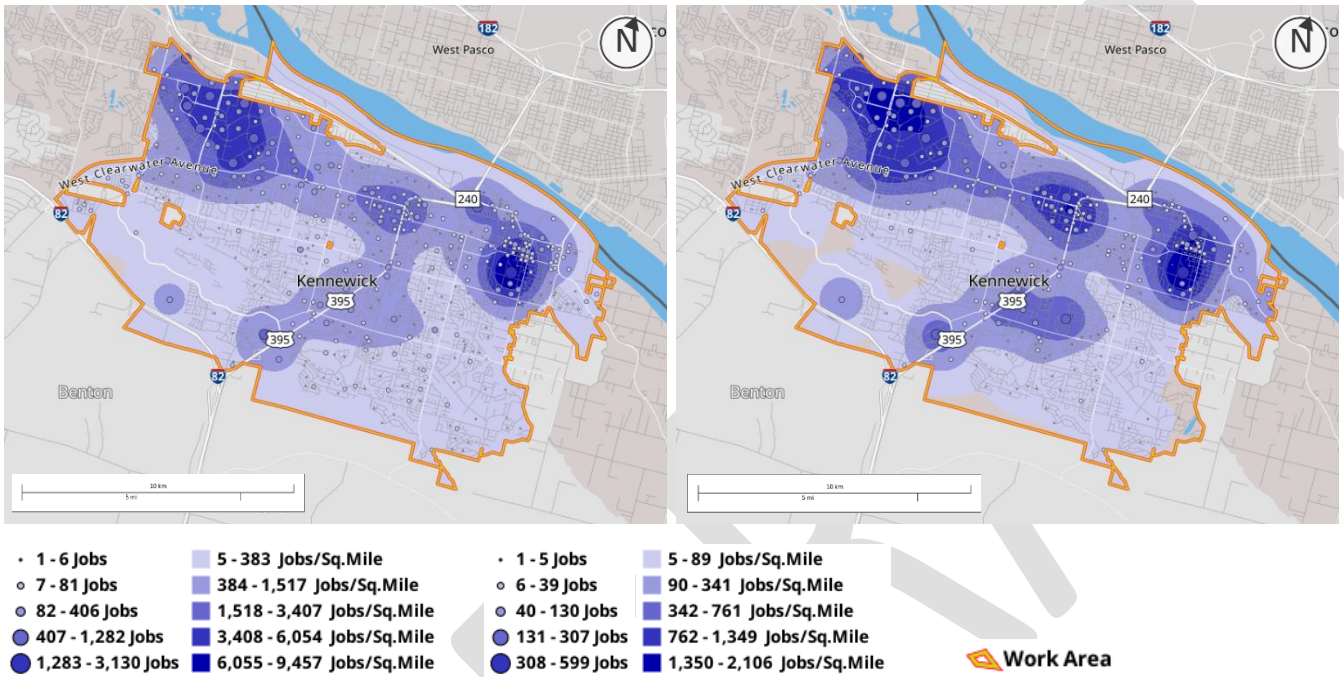
Sources: LEHD, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2022; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Hispanic or Latino workers represent a smaller percentage of the Kennewick workforce than of the city's population (26% of the workforce or 8,532 of 33,381 primary jobs but 32% of the city's population; see also **Figure H-7**).[16] Jobs for Hispanic and non-Hispanic workers are concentrated in generally the same areas of the city. However, jobs held by Hispanic or Latino individuals are slightly more spread out while jobs held by non-Hispanic or Latino individuals are slightly more likely to be located in the Three Rivers area (including the Three Rivers Campus and surrounding commercial development) and in Downtown (**Figure H-30**).

Figure H-30. Employment Concentration in Kennewick by Race and Ethnicity, All Jobs (2022)

Not Hispanic or Latino *Hispanic or Latino*



Note: All jobs include all private and public sector jobs and may include more than one job per worker.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

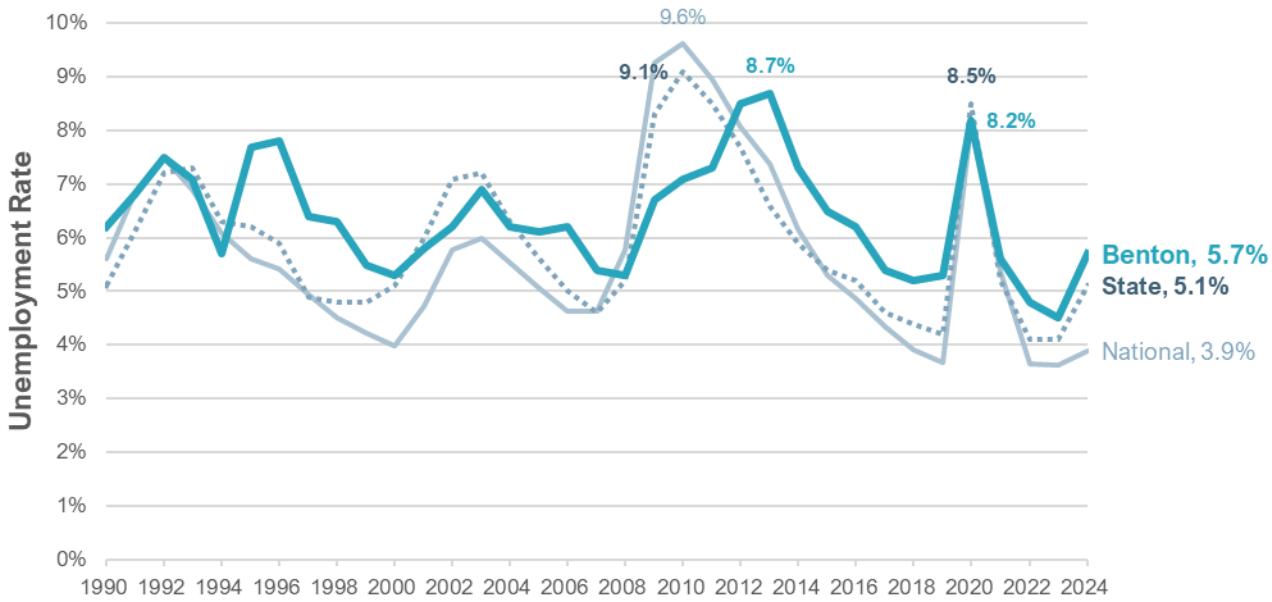
Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap (LEHD, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics), 2022.

Unemployment rates in the county have generally mirrored state figures since the early 2010s. Effects of the Great Recession of 2007-2009 were slightly delayed in the County, peaking at 8.7% unemployment in 2013. Recent peaks of unemployment coincided with the recession of 2007-2009 and then again during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. The unemployment rate in the county has declined since the pandemic, from a peak of 8.2% in 2020 to 5.7% in 2024. Benton County's

16 Primary jobs include private and public sector jobs but count only the highest paying job per individual worker (one job per worker). LEHD, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics, 2022; ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table DP05).

unemployment rate has remained slightly higher than the state unemployment rate since the pandemic, which went from 8.5% to 5.1% over the same period. See **Figure H-31**.

Figure H-31. Annual Average Unemployment Rate (1990–2024)—Benton County, State, and National



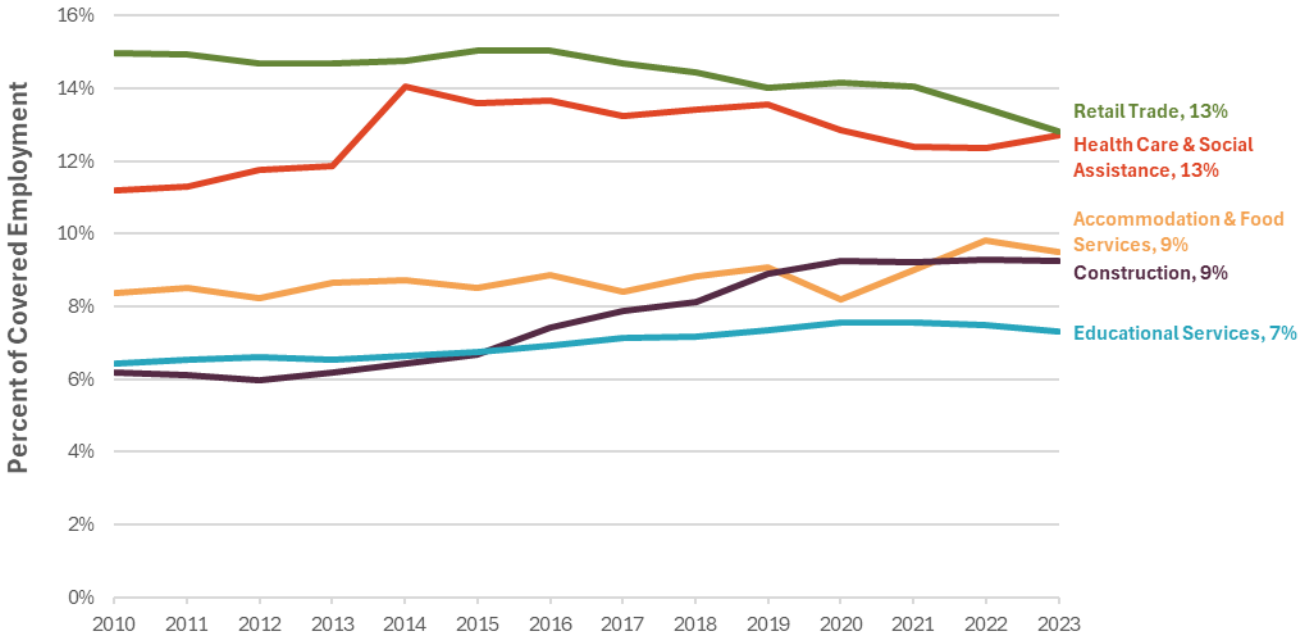
Note: Not seasonally adjusted. Data shown through 2024 as BLS has paused release of a portion of metropolitan data based on upcoming 2025 geographic changes.

Sources: ESD LAUS, Not Seasonally Adjusted Historical Estimates, 2024; BLS Unadjusted Unemployment Rate (Series LNU04000000), 2024; BERK, 2025.

Economic Sectors & Major Employers

As noted above, the top five largest employers by sector in Kennewick are retail trade, healthcare and social assistance, accommodations and food services, construction, and educational services (**Figure H-28**). Together, these sectors account for over half (55%) of local employment. Overall trends show retail trade jobs decreasing slightly since 2010 (**Figure H-32**). Retail trade jobs accounted for 15.0% of covered employment in the city in 2010, which has dropped slightly to 12.8% as of 2023. Meanwhile, jobs in the construction industry have increased since 2010. Construction jobs accounted for 6.2% of covered employment in the city in 2010 and have steadily risen to 9.3% as of 2023. The share of jobs in the health care and social assistance and educational service industries have remained relatively stable since 2014. The share of accommodations and food service jobs has also remained relatively stable with the exception of a decrease in 2020 coinciding with the Covid-19 pandemic that has since recovered and rebounded to a similar number of jobs as pre-pandemic.

Figure H-32. Covered Employment Share by Sector, Top 5 Sectors in Kennewick (2010–2023)



Source: ESD Covered Employment, 2023; BERK, 2025.

Major employers in the tri-cities area as of January 2026 are listed in **Figure H-33**. Of these, the Kennewick School District, Lamb Weston, and Trios Health have facilities or offices in Kennewick. Small businesses also play a significant role in Kennewick and Benton County. In 2024, there were about 5,000 established businesses throughout Benton County. More than half of these were small businesses with fewer than 5 employees (55%) and nearly three quarters (72%) of registered businesses had fewer than 10 employees. These are slightly lower than statewide counts which show 61% of businesses had less than 5 employees and 77% had fewer than 10 employees. See **Figure H-34**.

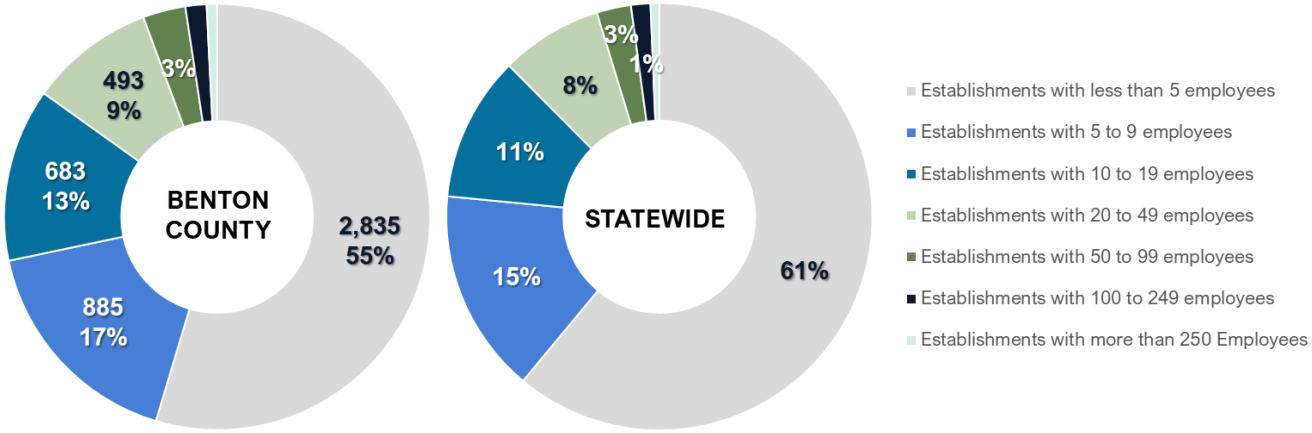
Figure H-33. Major Employers in the Tri-Cities Area (January 2026)

Company	Industry	Number of Employees
PNNL	Research & Development	6,437
Kadlec Regional Medical Center	Health Services	4,275
Lamb Weston	Food Processing	3,000
H2C	Environmental Remediation Services	2,500
First Fruits Farms	Food Processing	2,500

Pasco School District	Education	2,419
Kennewick School District	Education	2.400
Bechtel National	Engineering and Construction	2,000
Handford Mission Integration Solutions	Support Services (DOE Site)	2,000
Amazon	Distribution/Logistics	1,700
Richland School District	Education	1,500
Central Plateau Cleanup Company (CPCCo)	Environmental Remediation	1,560
Energy Northwest	Utilities	1,100
Trios Health	Health Services	955
Columbia Basin College (CBC)	Education	893

Source: TRIDEC Fact Sheet (Major Employers), January 2026.

Figure H-34. Number of Establishments and Size (2024)—Benton County and Statewide



Source: ESD Establishment Size, 2024.

Wages

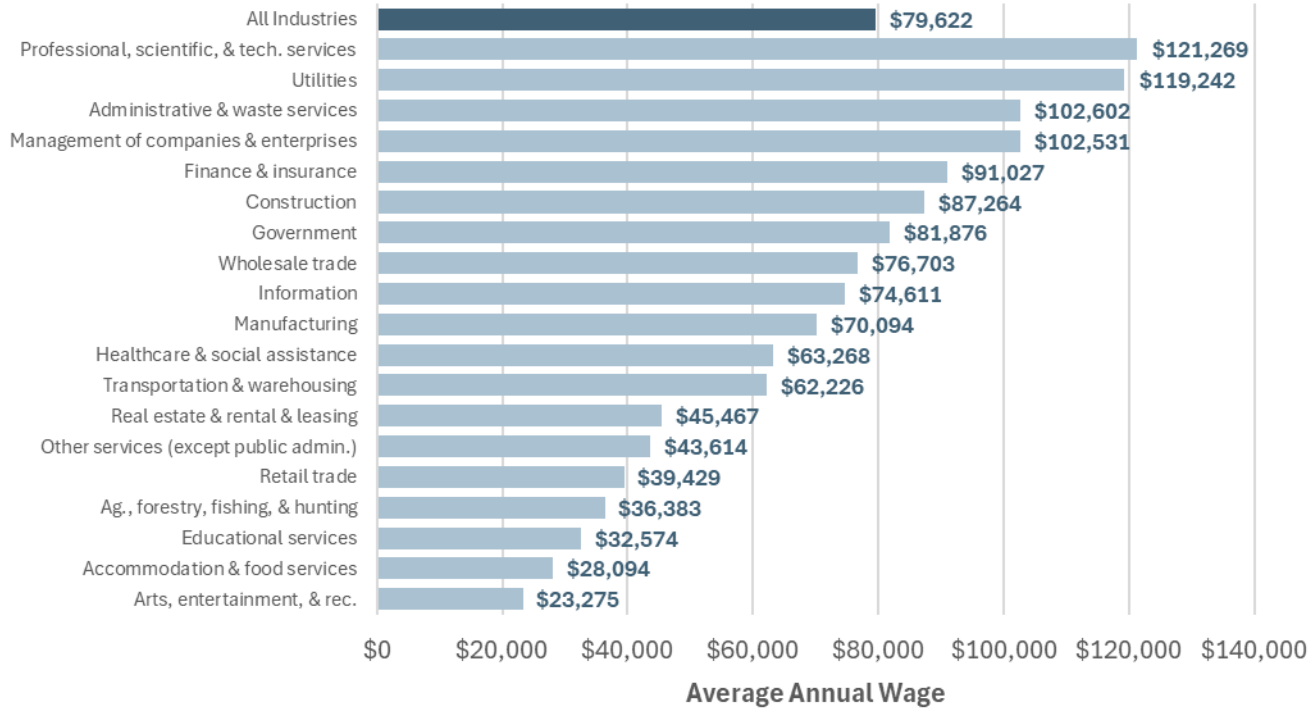
The inflation adjusted average annual average wage for jobs in Benton County was $79,622 in 2022. This was below the state's average annual wage of $102,378, but higher than the state average minus King County of $76,544. The inflation adjusted median hourly wage in 2022 was $28.56, less than that of the state's median hourly wage at $32.45 and slightly higher than for the state less King County at $27.63.[17] This translates to a median annual wage in Benton County of $59,405 in

[17] ESD Median Hourly Wage, 2022.

2022. Note that median annual wage is typically lower than average annual wage because wage distributions are skewed, meaning a relatively few higher-wage workers will lift the average above the median.

Industries with higher average wage earnings included professional, scientific, and technical services, utilities, administrative and waste services, management, finance and insurance, construction, and government (**Figure H-35**). Construction jobs represented about 9% of covered employment in Kennewick in 2023 (**Figure H-28**). Healthcare and social assistance jobs represented about 13% of covered employment in Kennewick in 2023 but average annual wage earnings were about $16,000 less than the countywide average. Other sectors representing a large share of Kennewick's 2023 workforce—including retail trade (13%), educational services (7%), and accommodation and food services (9%)—had some of the lowest average wages by sector (approximately $28,100, $32,600, and $39,400, respectively).

Figure H-35. Inflation Adjusted Average Annual Wage by Sector (2024)—Benton County



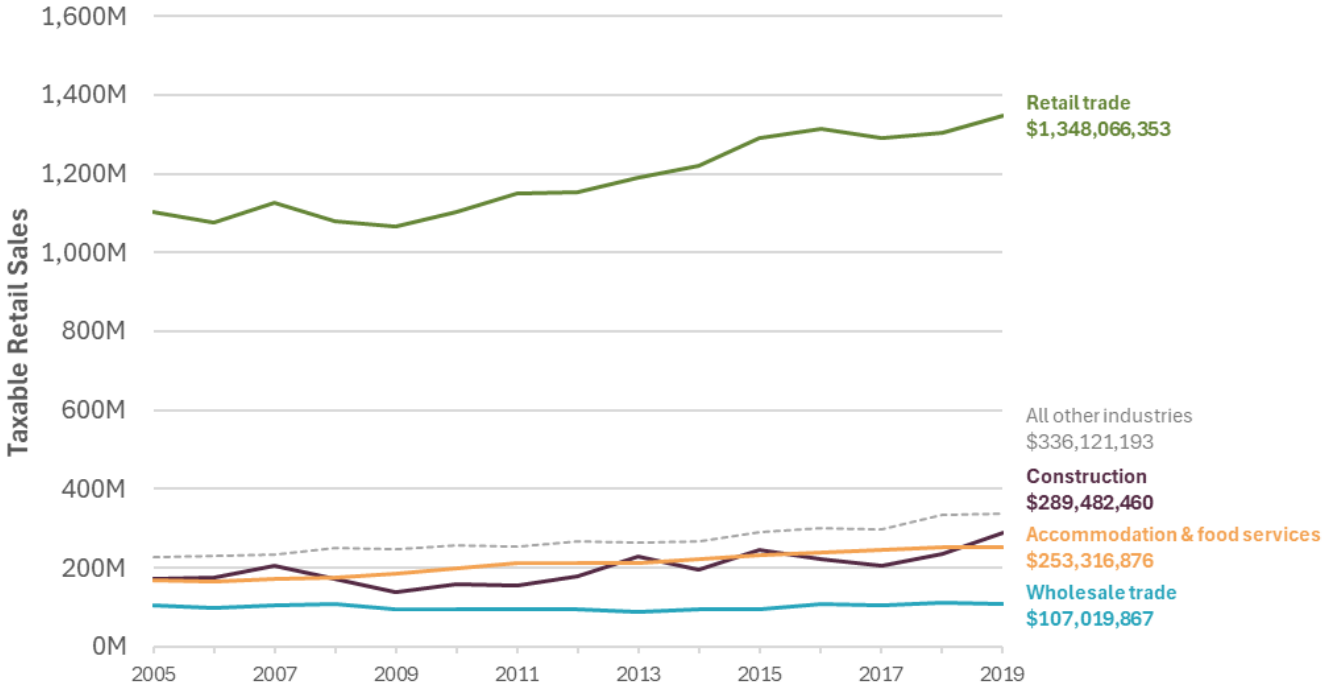
Note: Average annual wage for all industries is from ESD's countywide average annual wage figure for 2022 (the most recent year available), which is higher than the average annual wage listed in the covered employment data for 2024. This is because some wage information by sector is redacted in covered employment data to avoid disclosure of data for individual employers.

Sources: ESD Covered Employment and Average Annual Wage, 2022 and 2024; BERK, 2025.

Revenue and Taxable Sales Trends

Two major components of municipal revenue are sales tax and property tax revenue. This tax base can help fund infrastructure and public facilities necessary for employment growth in the city. Taxable retail sales also capture information about some types of economic activity. Inflation adjusted annual and quarterly taxable retail sales are shown for Kennewick in **Figure H-36** and **Figure H-37**. The data show both the variability of some sectors across time as well as the seasonal variation within sectors. It shows the reliance of the city on retail as well as construction and accommodations and food services as sources of sales tax revenue and the seasonal variation of these sectors (particularly retail trade and construction).

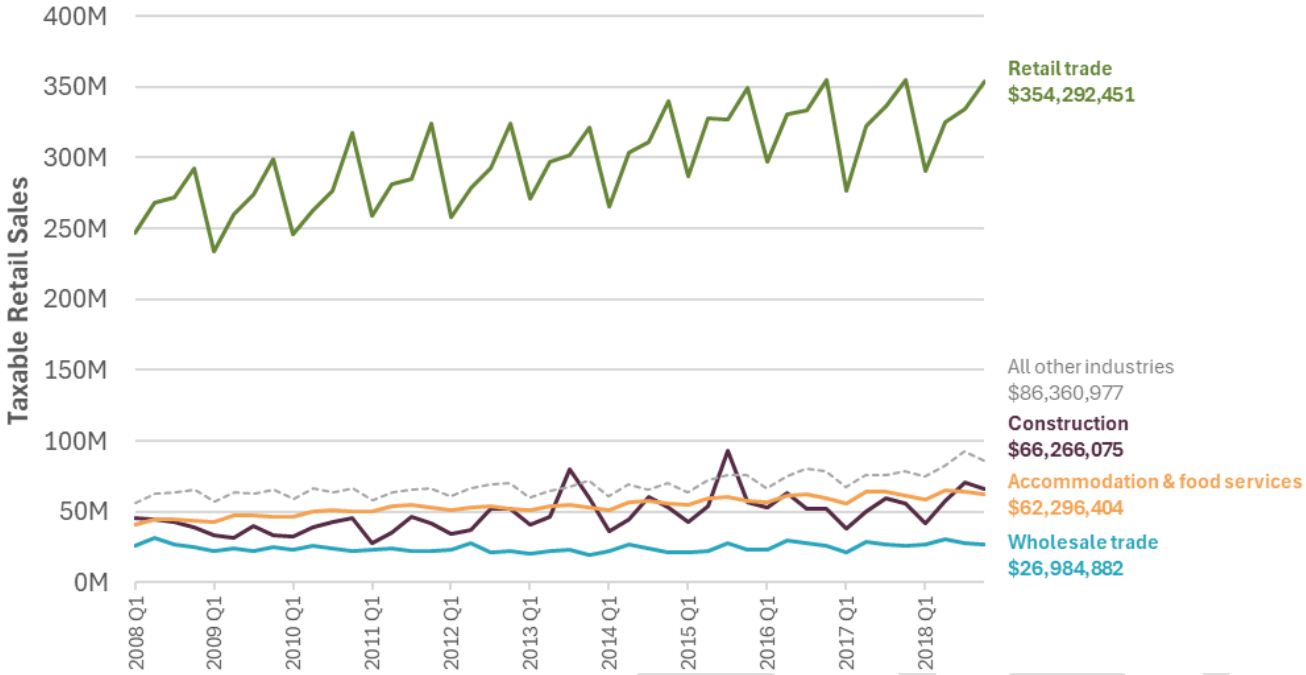
Figure H-36. Inflation Adjusted Annual Taxable Retail Sales (2005–2019)—City of Kennewick



Note: Inflation adjusted to 2019 dollars. Annual taxable retail sales information is only available through 2019 for the city.

Sources: Department of Revenue Taxable Retail Sales, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-37. Inflation Adjusted Quarterly Taxable Retail Sales* (2013–2019)— City of Kennewick



Note: Inflation adjusted to 2019 dollars. Quarterly taxable retail sales information is only available through the fourth quarter of 2018 for the city.

Sources: Department of Revenue Taxable Retail Sales, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Kennewick's sales tax revenue for 2024 is shown in **Figure H-38** below, along with comparisons jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region. These amounts represent the city's "basic" and optional" sales tax revenue,[18] and do not include state sales tax revenue. Kennewick's sales tax revenue has increased 51% since 2015,[19] less than other cities in the region but slightly more than Benton County overall. Per capita, Richland and Kennewick collect the most sales tax revenue in the Tri-Cities region.

Figure H-38. Regular and Optional Sales Tax Distributions, Kennewick and Comparison Jurisdictions (2015 and 2024)

	2015 Total Sales Tax	2015 Per Capita	2024 Total Sales Tax	2024 Per Capita	% Change 2015-2024
Kennewick	$16,849,028	$215	$25,412,284	$292	51%
Richland	$10,275,051	$194	$18,992,138	$296	85%

[18] These are also known as "first half" and "second half" sales taxes, which are unrestricted (general fund) taxes as authorized under RCW 82.14.030(1) and (2). MRSC Tax and Population Data, 2025

[19] Note that MRSC does not provide data earlier than 2015, thus the 9-year comparison.

Pasco	$10,267,944	$150	$22,794,285	$277	122%
West Richland	$773,690	$55	$1,981,374	$108	156%
Benton County	$11,080,015	$59	$15,974,423	$73	44%
Franklin County	3,626,413	$42	7,852,078	$77	117%

Source: MRSC Tax and Population Data, 2025.

Figure H-39 shows property tax valuation in Kennewick. The total value of property in the city has more than doubled since 2015, but lags behind Pasco and West Richland despite recent increases in home prices in Kennewick. Per capita, the city also has a lower property tax base than other jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region

Figure H-39. Assessed Value, Kennewick and Comparison Jurisdictions (2015 and 2024)

	2015 Total Assessed Value	2015 Per Capita	2024 Total Assessed Value	2024 Per Capita	% Change 2015-2024
Kennewick	$5,403,889,187	$69,024	$11,625,611,226	$133,444	115%
Richland	$5,534,363,683	$104,265	$11,675,343,501	$181,887	111%
Pasco	$3,679,413,343	$53,919	$12,331,147,293	$149,977	235%
West Richland	$1,008,958,750	$72,275	$2,631,760,825	$143,969	161%
Benton County	$16,379,293,799	$86,851	34,299,966,605	$157,448	109%
Franklin County	$6,077,967,248	$69,741	17,174,144,525	$167,880	183%

Source: MRSC Tax and Population Data, 2025.

Jobs to Housing & Travel to Work

The jobs to housing ratio is another measure used to understand whether there is an adequate supply of housing to support local employment in a community. The ratio is determined by dividing the total number of jobs by the number of housing units. A ratio of 0.75 – 1.5 is considered a balanced ratio and can indicate that a community has sufficient housing for its employees and that area commutes are of reasonable length. A ratio higher than 1.5 can indicate affordability challenges and/or a lack of housing supply. Communities with ratios below 0.75 may have shortages of employment opportunities and are often classified as "bedroom communities." Workers in these areas likely need to commute to work in surrounding areas.

As of 2023, the jobs to housing ratio in Kennewick was 1.40 (46,920 jobs divided by 33,473 housing units), within the higher end of the balanced range and similar to the ratios in 2022 of 1.39 (45,955 jobs divided by 33,132 units) and 2021 of 1.35 (44,022 jobs divided by 32,668 units).[20] This suggests there is an adequate supply of employment opportunities in the city, but that housing supply and affordability are growing concerns. These findings are consistent with employment travel patterns from the U.S. Census OnTheMap tool. As of 2022, a similar number of individuals travel into and out of the city for work (about 41% each), and a smaller percentage both live in and work in the city (**Figure H-40**). The most common destinations for those who live in Kennewick but work elsewhere are Richland

[20] ESD Covered Employment, 2021–2023; OFM Postcensal Estimates of Housing Units, April 1, 2021 to April 1, 2023.

(22%) and Pasco (13%). Likewise, the most common place of residence for those who work in Kennewick but live elsewhere are Pasco (16%) and Richland (13%). See **Figure H-41**.

Commute distances for Kennewick residents and workers reveal a similar pattern. About 63% of Kennewick residents commute less than 10 miles, 9% commute 10 to 24 miles, 8% commute 25 to 50 miles, and 20% commute greater than 50 miles. The 20% of Kennewick residents who commute greater than 50 miles are likely to include at least some workers employed at the Hanford Cleanup Site and remote workers employed at other companies outside the Tri-Cities area. However, this suggests that some residents who want to live in Kennewick are unable to find suitable employment in the city. Likewise, about 66% of workers employed in Kennewick commute less than 10 miles, 6% commute 10 to 24 miles, 5% commute 25 to 50 miles, and 23% commute greater than 50 miles. Again, the 23% of workers who commute greater than 50 miles likely include at least some individuals who work remote from outside the Tri-Cities area but are employed by a company in Kennewick.[21]

Figure H-40. Origin and Destination for People Who Live and/or Work in Kennewick, All Jobs (2022)

	Total People	Percent
Live in Kennewick, work elsewhere	26,041	41.7%
Work in Kennewick, live elsewhere	25,643	41.1%
Live and work in Kennewick	10,728	17.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap (LEHD, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics), 2022.

Figure H-41. Top Job Inflow/Outflow Locations, All Jobs (2022)

Home Location (Work in Kennewick)	Total People	Percent	Work Location (Live in Kennewick)	Total People	Percent
Kennewick	10,728	29.2%	Kennewick	10,728	29.5%
Richland	8,012	21.8%	Pasco	5,801	15.9%
Pasco	4,679	12.7%	Richland	4,774	13.1%
Seattle	768	2.1%	West Richland	1,115	3.1%
Yakima	609	1.7%	Finley CDP	623	1.7%
Walla Walla	410	1.1%	Seattle	418	1.1%
West Richland	397	1.1%	Yakima	416	1.1%
Prescott	380	1.0%	Spokane	399	1.1%
All Other Locations	10,786	29.3%	All Other Locations	12,097	33.3%

Note: CDP = Census Designated Place.

[21] US Census Bureau, OnTheMap (LEHD, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics), 2022.

Sources: US Census Bureau, OnTheMap (LEHD, Origin-Destination Employment Statistics), 2022; BERK, 2025.

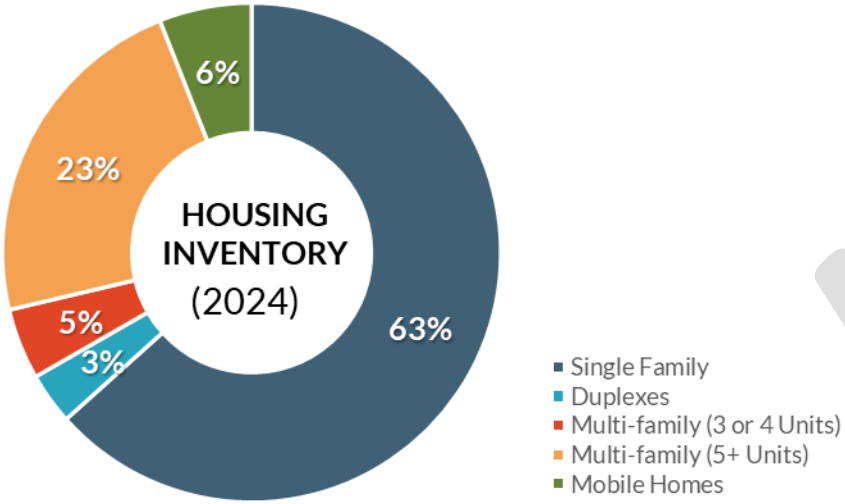
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HOUSING STOCK & PRODUCTION TRENDS

Housing Units by Type, Size, & Age

As of 2024, the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM) estimated there were 35,255 housing units in the Kennewick UGA, with 33,910 units in city limits. **Figure H-42** breaks down the housing inventory by housing type for the City of Kennewick alone. Nearly two thirds of all units are detached single family homes. Larger multifamily buildings (typically apartments) with five or more units make up the next largest share at 23%.

Figure H-42. Housing Inventory by Units in Structure (2024)



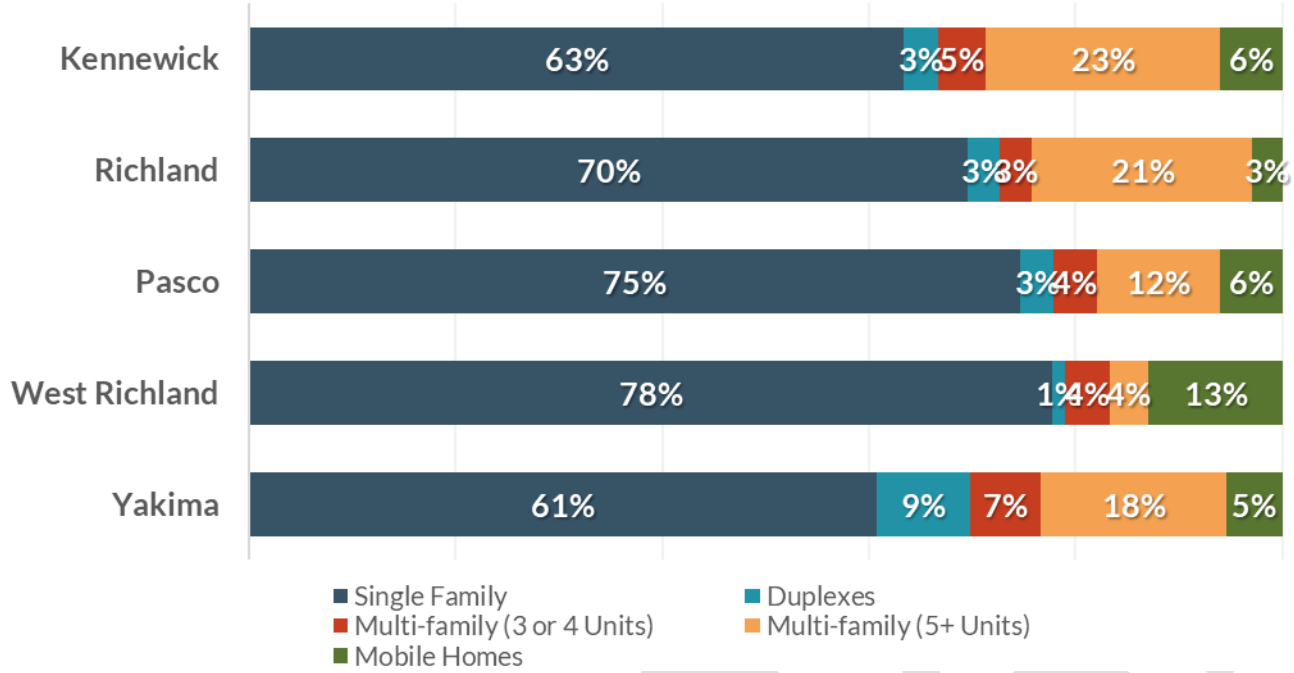
Note: OFM data often groups townhomes with single family and accessory dwelling units with multifamily (5+ unit structures).

Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-43 compares housing units by type in the City of Kennewick to four other cities. One notable difference is the share of single family homes is slightly lower and the share of larger multifamily buildings is slightly higher in Kennewick than neighboring Richland, Pasco, and West Richland. While the share of single family homes in Yakima is similar, the share of middle housing options (duplexes and three- to four-unit structures) in Kennewick is notably lower compared to Yakima.

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Figure H-43. Housing Inventory Compared to Peer Jurisdictions (2024)

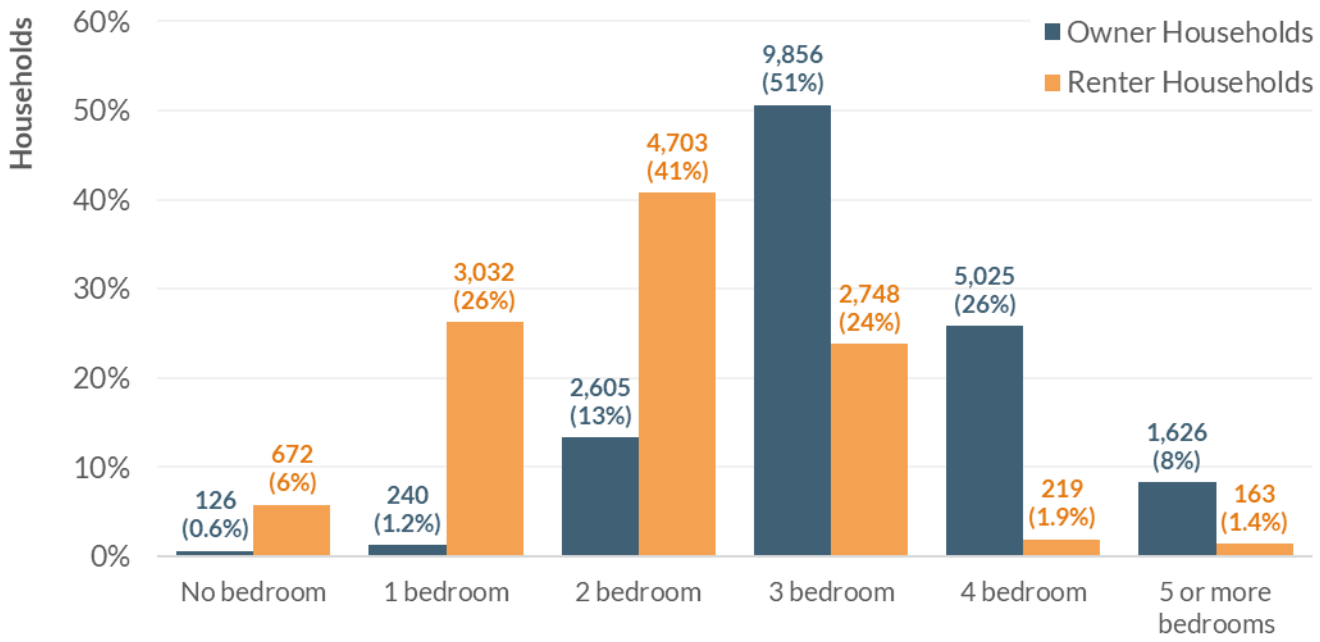


Note: OFM data often groups townhomes with single family and accessory dwelling units with multifamily (5+ unit structures).

Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Housing units in the city include a range of bedrooms per unit (**Figure H-44**). The majority of owner-occupied units (85%) have 3 or more bedrooms while the majority of renter-occupied units (91%) have 2 to 4 bedrooms. Only 3% of the rental units have 4 or more bedrooms, suggesting that rental stock includes few detached homes. In comparison, 21% of rental households have 4 or more members (**Figure H-19**). Approximately 32% of rental units have 0-1 bedrooms while 40% of rental households are 1-person households and 27% are 2-person households. In contrast, approximately 2% of owner-occupied units have 0-1 bedrooms (**Figure H-44**) while 19% of owner households consist of 1 person and 40% consist of 2 people (**Figure H-19**). This suggests a misalignment between the size of housing units available and the size of households for both renter and owner households, with an increased need for smaller ownership units and larger rental units.

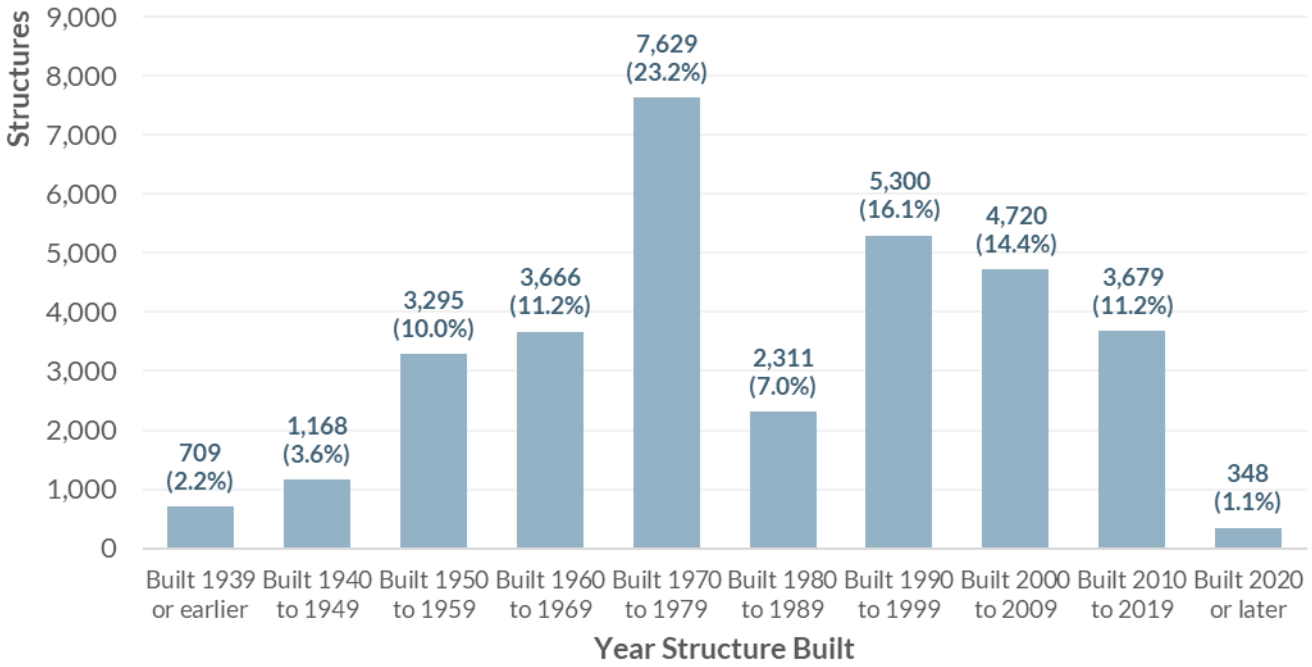
Figure H-44. Size of Housing Supply by Number of Bedrooms and Tenures (2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates (Table B25042), 2019-2023; BERK, 2025.

About half of the housing stock in the city was built prior to 1980 with another quarter (23%) built from 1980-1999. Another quarter (27%) of the stock has been built since the year 2000, reflecting a slightly faster rate of city growth in more recent years. See **Figure H-45**.

Figure H-45. Age of Structure (2023)



Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates (Table DP04), 2019-2023; BERK, 2025.

Middle Housing

Within the City of Kennewick, only about 8% of all units are in small multifamily structures of 2 to 4 units (see **Figure H-42**). These kinds of units are often called "middle housing," as they can provide a housing option in between detached single-family homes and larger apartment buildings. Increasing the supply of middle housing is an important way to increase the diversity of housing options, particularly options that are affordable to moderate-income households. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are another middle housing format. ADUs are attached or detached units that serve as a secondary housing unit on a single-family residential lot.

Manufactured Housing

This category of housing includes manufactured homes that are constructed in a factory and then assembled at the building site in modular sections, as well as recreational vehicles (RVs) and other vehicles such as vans that are used as housing. These homes are often much less expensive to produce than homes built on site and therefore have potential to be more affordable than traditional detached homes. Some manufactured homes in Kennewick are located on an individual parcel and function like a site-built home in that it can be either owned or rented by an individual household. However, as shown in **Figure H-46**, Kennewick also has a number of manufactured housing communities (AKA mobile home parks)[22] where the resident/homeowner owns the manufactured housing unit and rents

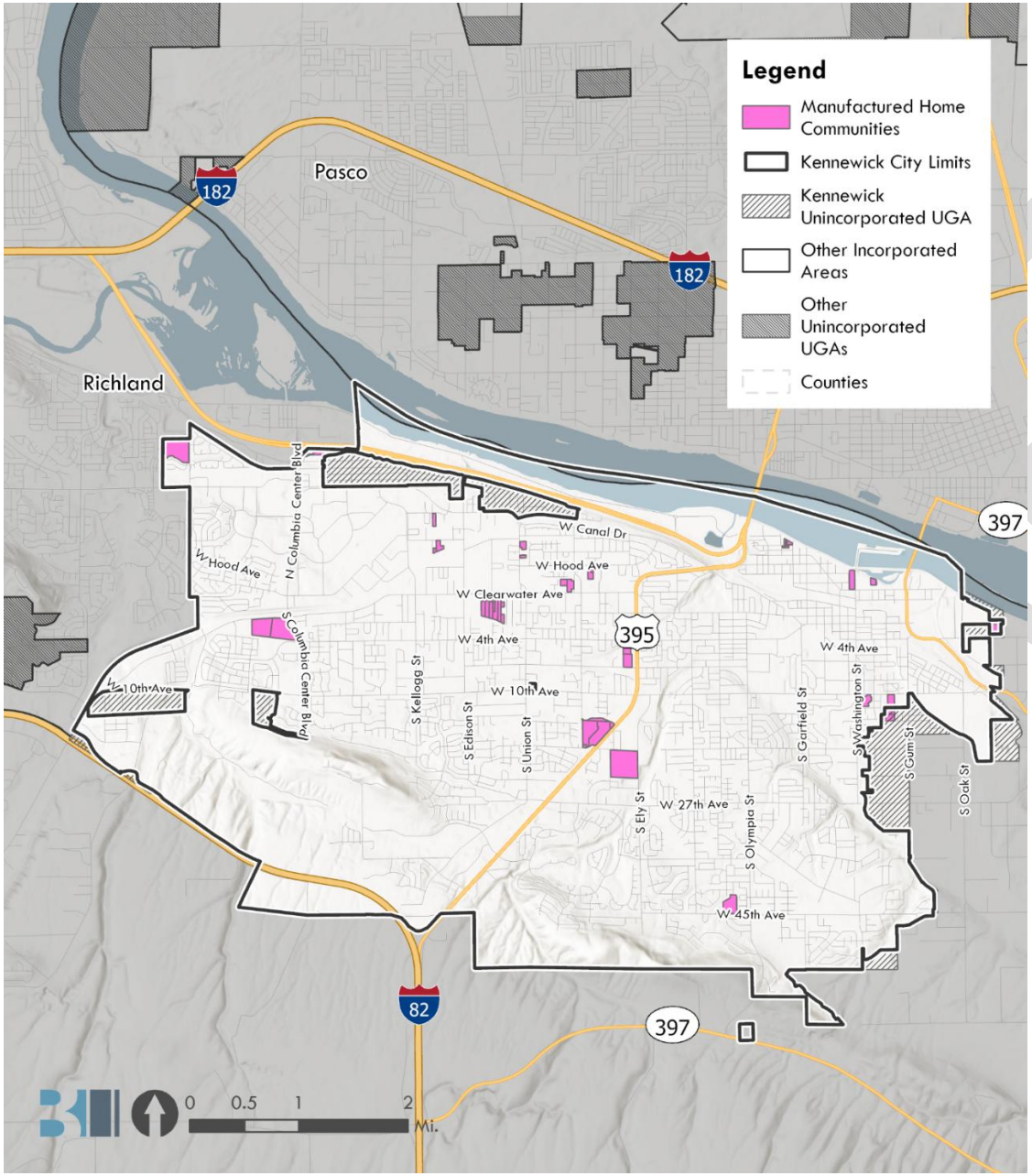
[22] These places are also known as "mobile home parks." However, many of the homes are no longer able to be moved, or they are exceedingly expensive to move. Therefore, the term "mobile home" is misleading.

the "lot" or "pad" that the home sits on from a landlord. Homes in manufactured housing communities cost significantly less to buy than a traditional detached home on its own lot because the unit is sold separately from the land. As a result, homes in manufactured housing communities provide relatively affordable homeownership opportunities. However, residents of manufactured home communities do not benefit from home value appreciation as the land value increases. They are also subject to the rules and regulations established in their lease agreement with the landlord/property owner and are vulnerable to displacement if the owner chooses to close the community or increase the rents and fees all residents must pay.

As of 2024, OFM estimates there were 2,036 manufactured homes in city limits, about 6% of the total housing stock. Manufactured and mobile home communities are spread throughout the city, with larger communities in the northwest (Santiago Sunset Estates), along Clearwater Avenue (Greenbrier Village, Desert Pines Mobile Home Park, and Sun City Center and Community LLC), and near I-395 (Whispering Winds Home Park, Sun Meadows Mobile Home Park, and Santiago Estates Cherry Hill). Two manufactured and mobile home communities are also located in the unincorporated UGA (Lewis Country River Estates and Metz Community & RV). Of the 2,036 manufactured homes in city limits, 1,445 (71%) are within the communities mapped in **Figure H-46** and 592 (29%) are on individual lots dispersed throughout other residential areas.

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Figure H-46. Manufactured Home Communities (2025)



Note: The Benton County Assessor indicates a use code of "15 Mobile home parks or courts." Manufactured homes on individual lots are located elsewhere in the Kennewick UGA, but there is no use code specific to these in the Assessor's data (e.g., they are likely categorized under the use code "11 Household, single family units" with no way to differentiate between these and traditional frame construction units) and thus not mapped here.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Source: Benton County Assessor, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Subsidized & Income-Restricted Housing

Subsidized and income-restricted affordable housing is an important component of the regional housing supply, because market rate units are not typically affordable to lower-income households. Units are reserved for households with lower incomes, and rents are set at rates affordable to a target income level relative to AMI. Rental vouchers are another form of housing subsidy which assist low-income households to live in market-rate units. Vouchers are funded by HUD and administered by local housing authorities (e.g., Kennewick Housing Authority). Low-income households use these vouchers to rent market rate housing, but their monthly payments are capped at 30% of their income. HUD funds cover the remainder of the payments.

As of 2023, non-profit and private housing properties in Kennewick offer an estimated 2,716 subsidized, affordable rental units, making up about 8.1% of units in city limits.[23] These include 12 studios, 395 1-bedroom units, 337 2-bedroom units, 228 3-bedroom units, 30 4+ bedroom units, and 1,714 units for which bedroom size is unknown. These data do not indicate what affordability levels are served by these units and some units may have other requirements (e.g., reserved for families or individuals exiting homelessness or victims of domestic violence).

The largest provider of subsidized or income-restricted housing in the city is Kennewick Housing Authority which manages a total of six properties in the city—these include two public housing properties (66 units for older adults and disabled households in Keewaydin Plaza and 124 units in Sunnyslope Homes), one HCV project based voucher program (four units in duplexes and two single family homes in Mitchell Manor), and three tax credit/affordable apartments (16 microhome units in Lilac Homes, 32 units in Nueva Vista I, and 28 units in Nueva Vista II). Kennewick Housing Authority is also currently constructing another subsidized multi-family housing development, Bubble on Gum, on land bought from the City at a reduced cost. Other agencies that operate or provide assistance with subsidized or income-restricted housing in Kennewick include Benton Franklin Community Action Committee, the Domestic Violence Services of Benton & Franklin Counties, Elijah Family Homes, Habitat for Humanity, Oxford Houses of WA, and the Columbia Basin Veterans Center. Units are reserved for households with lower incomes with some reserved for specific groups with special housing needs, including those exiting homelessness, veterans, and persons with disabilities. Catholic Charities also offers affordable rental and ownership opportunities in surrounding communities, though none are currently offered in Kennewick.[24]

Emergency Housing, Emergency Shelters, & Permanent Supportive Housing

There are currently limited options in Kennewick for emergency housing, emergency shelter, and permanent supportive housing. These housing types help people who are currently unhoused or at risk of experiencing homelessness or facing eviction. Emergency housing and emergency shelter both provide temporary services; the difference being that emergency housing provides overnight accommodations while emergency shelter may not. Permanent supportive housing is long-term housing targeted to people who need comprehensive support services to retain tenancy. These specific types of housing typically support individuals and families with extremely low income.

As of 2020, there were 168 emergency housing beds and 145 permanent supportive housing units in Benton County per Commerce's Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT). Within Kennewick, Safe Harbor operates My Friends Place, an overnight shelter for unhoused youth ages 16-20 (youth as young as 13 may also access drop-in services). My Friends Place also serves as a safe haven, providing secure heating and cooling amenities in times of inclement weather, and drop-in visitors gain

23 Per OFM, there were an estimated 33,473 housing units in Kennewick city limits as of 2023. UW Housing Market Data Toolkit, Subsidized Rental Housing Profile, 2023; OFM, 2025.
24 Catholic Charities Multi-Family Rental Properties and Single-Family Homes, 2025.

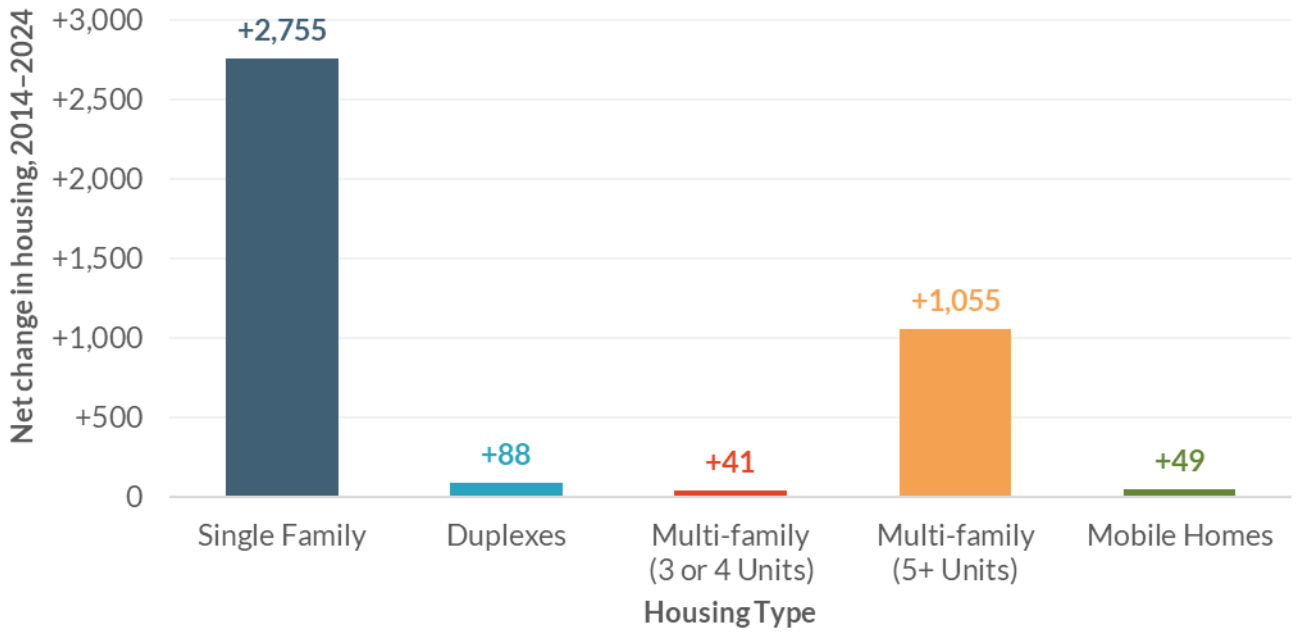
access to essential facilities such as showers, nutritious meals, hygiene items, school supplies, and other necessities. Snipes H3 also operates 12 transitional housing beds in Kennewick for homeless individuals, with a focus on young adults aged 18-24, and provides mentorship, education, and other supportive services. Columbia Basin Veterans Center also operates VESTRA, a Rapid Re-housing/Homelessness prevention program to assist veterans and their families from becoming homeless.[25] No other emergency beds are currently available in Kennewick, although several partners assist with temporary or rapid re-housing for individuals currently experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.[26]

Housing Production Trends

Figure H-47 shows the net change in housing stock by unit type between 2014 and 2024 in Kennewick. In recent years, single family homes have been built at the fastest rate among housing types, followed by larger multifamily buildings (five or more units). Middle housing (duplexes and three- to four-unit structures) and manufactured home production are relatively low in comparison.

Separate data is available for Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) production. According to OFM, between 2014 and 2024 there were only 18 units constructed in the City of Kennewick.[27] City permit data indicates a similar count of ADU permits in recent years: 14 units total between April 2023 and April 2025.

Figure H-47. Net Change in Housing Stock by Housing Type (2014–2024)



25 Columbia Basin Veterans Center Programs, 2025.

26 Benton County Homeless Shelters and Partner Agencies, 2025; Safe Harbor Support Center My Friends Place, 2025; Snipes H3 About and Programs & Services, 2025.

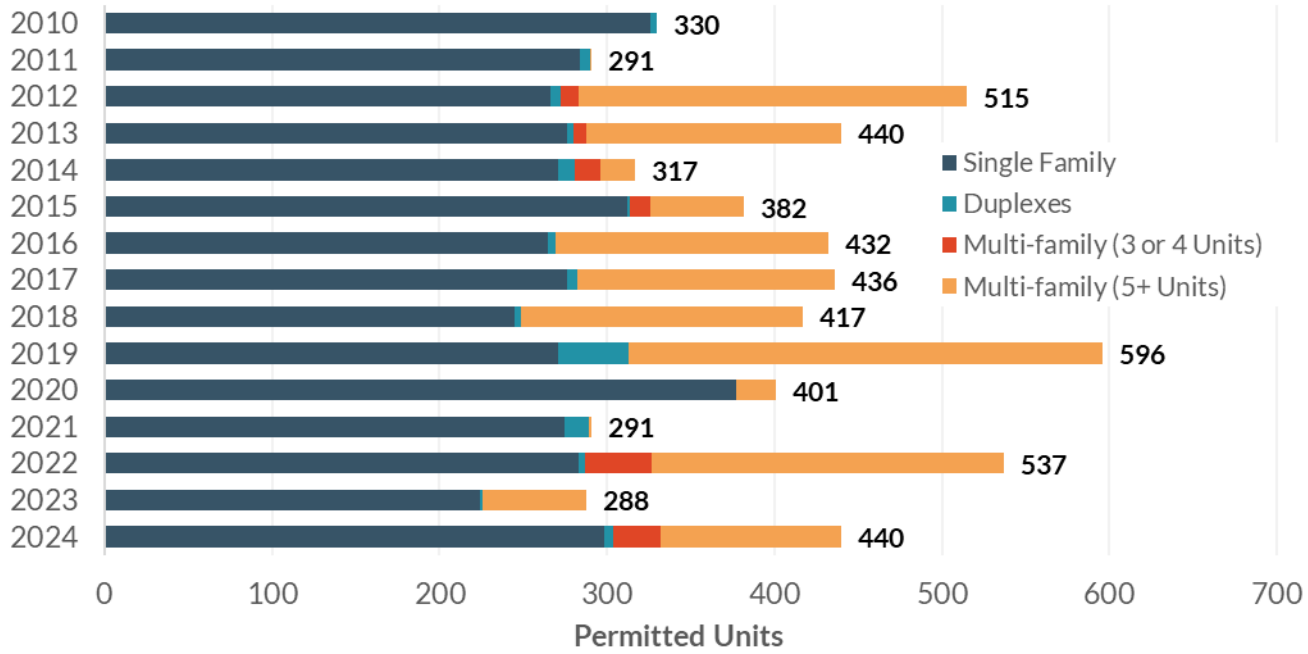
27 According to OFM, a total of 18 ADUs were constructed in Kennewick between 2010–2024, representing less than 1% of all residential units constructed during this time frame. However, nearly half (8) of these were constructed in the last three years (2022–2024) and 6 were permitted between April 2024 and March 2025, indicating a gradual increase in ADU production.

Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-48 shows the number of units permitted by type in Kennewick. It shows a relatively stable number of single-family unit permits over time, some diminishing share of larger multifamily (five or more units) permitting, and a slightly growing share of middle housing (three or four unit) permitting in recent years.

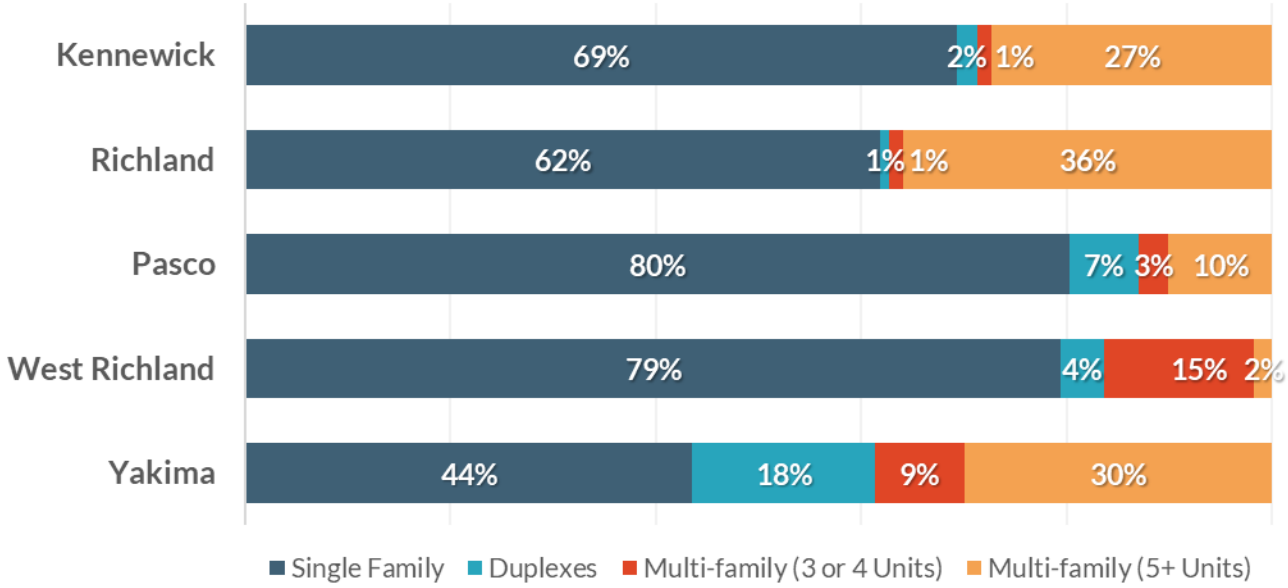
Figure H-49 compares the share of new units completed in Kennewick to peer jurisdictions between 2014 and 2024, broken down by housing type. Richland and Pasco completed slightly more units during this time than Kennewick (5,030 and 4,809, respectively, versus 4,395 in Kennewick). However, Richland saw a greater share of multifamily structures with five or more units completed (36% versus 27% in Kennewick) and Pasco saw a much greater share of single family units produced (80% versus 69% in Kennewick). West Richland and Yakima completed significantly fewer total units during this period (1,604 and 2,664, respectively, versus 4,395 in Kennewick) but saw a much greater share of middle housing production (19% and 26%, respectively, versus 3% in Kennewick).

Figure H-48. Frame Housing Units Permitted in City of Kennewick by Housing Type (2010–2024)



Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-49. Housing Units Completed in City of Kennewick Compared to Peer Jurisdictions, (2014–2024)

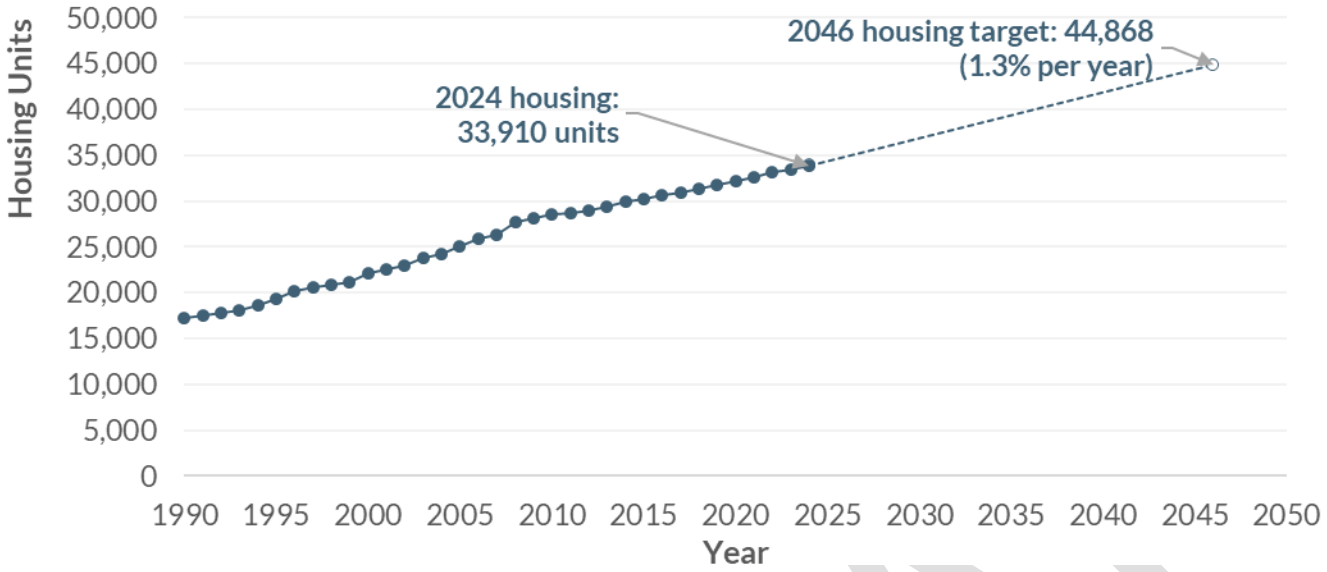


Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-50 shows historical housing unit growth in Kennewick from 1990 to 2024 and the 2046 adopted housing target set by Benton County. Per OFM, there were 33,910 housing units in Kennewick as of April 2024 (up from 33,473 in 2023, 33,132 in 2022, and 32,668 in 2021). From 2024 to 2046, the city will need to increase its housing stock by about 11,000 net new units, or a 1.3% rate of growth per year, to meet the 2046 targets (see Gap Analysis).[28] This would require a similar rate of growth as seen in Kennewick in recent years, although the city has grown at a slower rate than other nearby cities since 2014 (see **Figure H-51**).

[28] Note that the land capacity analysis (summarized in Section • Gap Analysis) considers 2020 housing units as the base, consistent with the adopted growth targets.

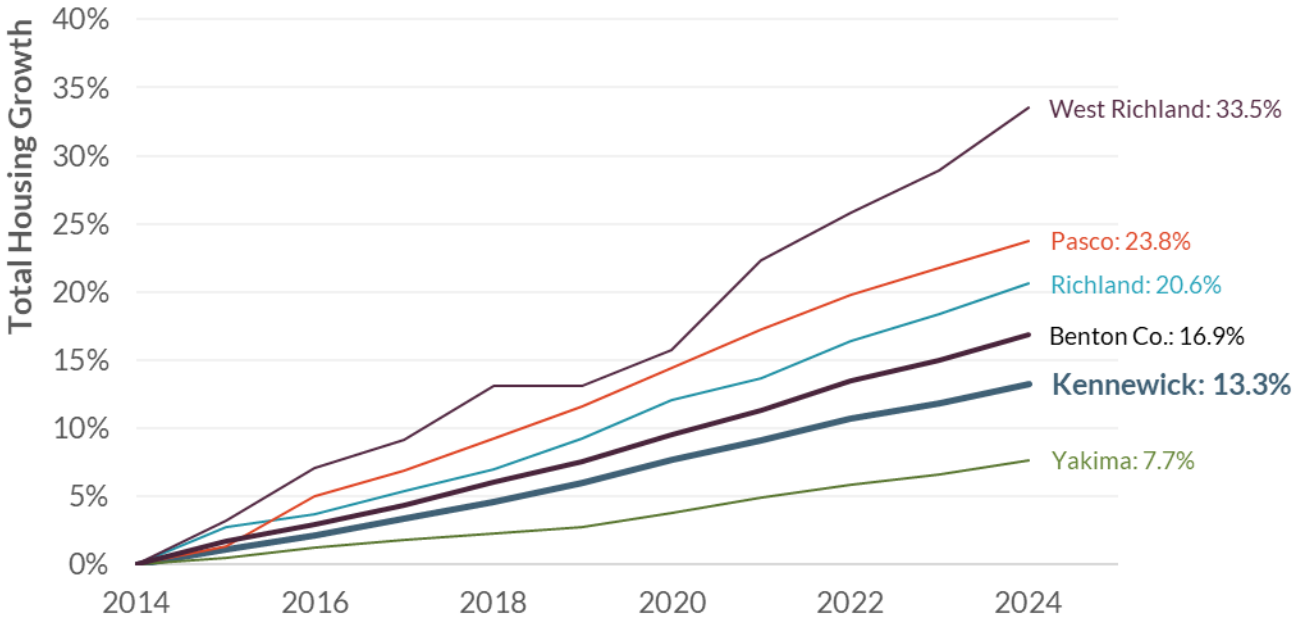
Figure H-50. Historic Housing Growth and 2046 Housing Target



Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

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Figure H-51. Regional Housing Growth Comparison (2014–2024)



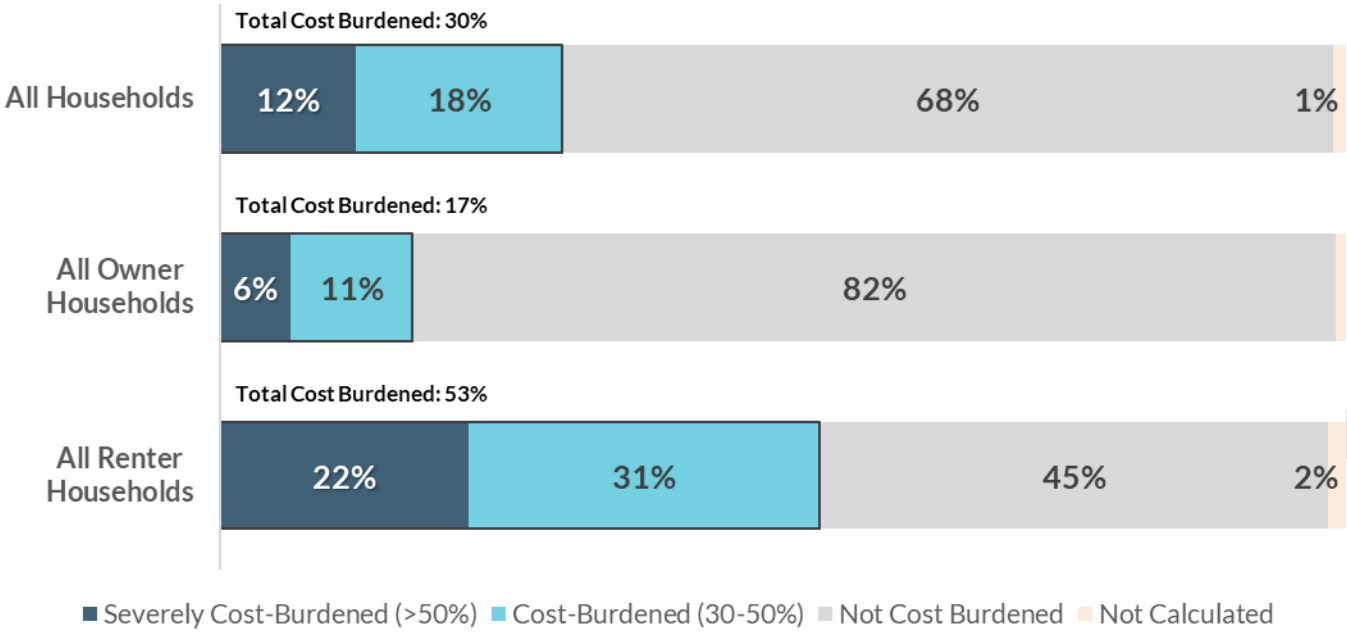
Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2025.

HOUSING AFFORDABILITY

Housing Cost Burden

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a home as affordable if the household is spending less than 30% of their gross income on housing costs. By this standard, nearly a third (30%) of all households in Kennewick were "cost-burdened" in 2021, about 9,200 households in total. **Figure H-52** shows the proportion of households by cost burden status in 2021. Severely cost-burdened households spend more than 50% of their incomes on housing costs whereas moderately cost-burdened spend between 30% and 50% of their incomes on housing. Renter households were much more commonly cost burdened than owner households (53% versus 17%).

Figure H-52. Proportion of All Households by Cost Burden and Tenure (2021)



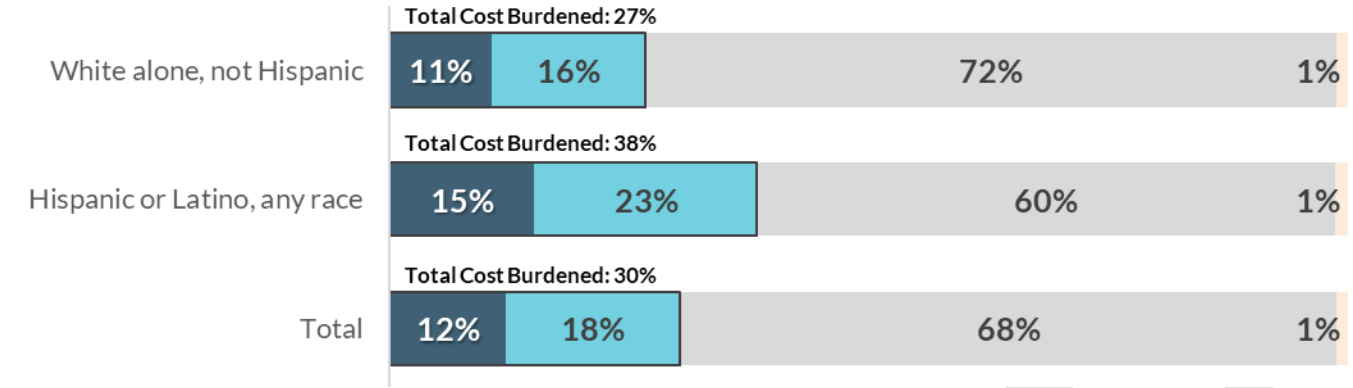
Note: HUD does not calculate cost burden status for households with zero or negative income. These are represented as "Not Calculated" in the chart.

Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8); BERK, 2025.

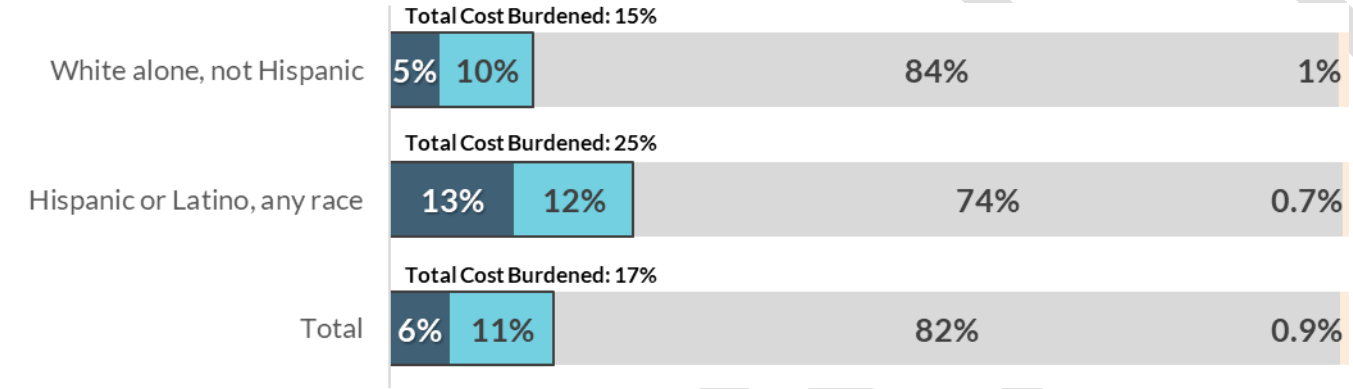
Rates of cost burden also vary by race and ethnicity, particularly for owner households. Hispanic or Latino owner households were more likely to be cost-burdened than White, non-Hispanic owner households (25% versus 15%). While renter households were much more commonly cost-burdened than owner households (53% versus 17%), there was minimal differences between race and ethnicity for renter households in overall cost burden status. White renter households are more likely to be severely cost-burdened and Hispanic or Latino renter households are more likely to be moderately cost-burdened. See **Figure H-53**.

Figure H-53. Cost Burden Status of Households by Tenure and Racial and Ethnic Group (2021)

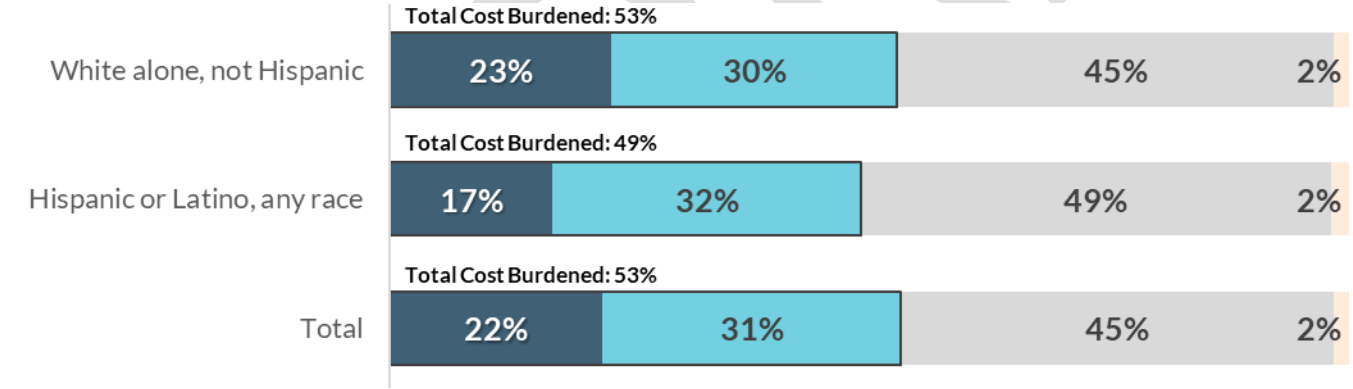
All Households



Owner Households



Renter Households





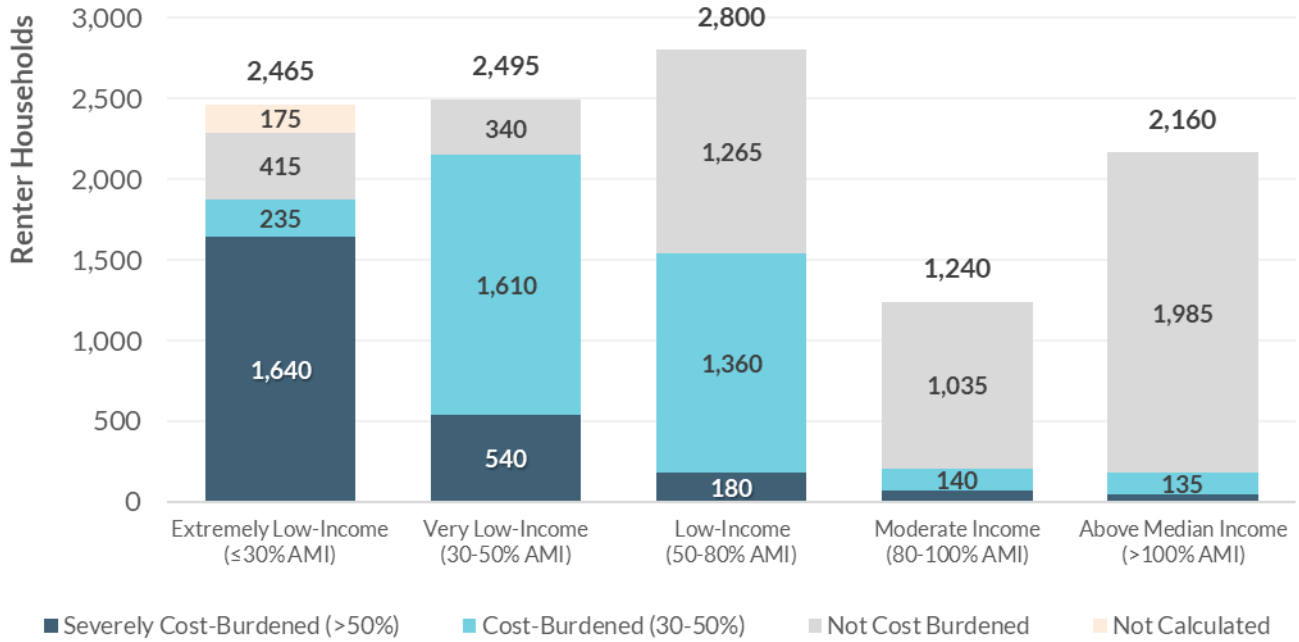
Note: HUD does not calculate cost burden status for households with zero or negative income. These are represented as "Not Calculated" in the chart.

Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 9); BERK, 2025.

Rental Housing Affordability

In 2021, there were 5,950 cost burdened renter households living in the City of Kennewick.[29] **Figure H-54** summarizes all renter households by cost burden status for Kennewick in 2021. It shows the total number of households living in unaffordable homes is highest at the 30% to 50% MFI level, followed by the 30% or less MFI level.

Figure H-54. Renter Households by Income Level and Cost Burden Status (2021)



Note: HUD does not calculate cost burden status for households with zero or negative income. These are represented as "Not Calculated" in the chart.

Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 9); BERK, 2025.

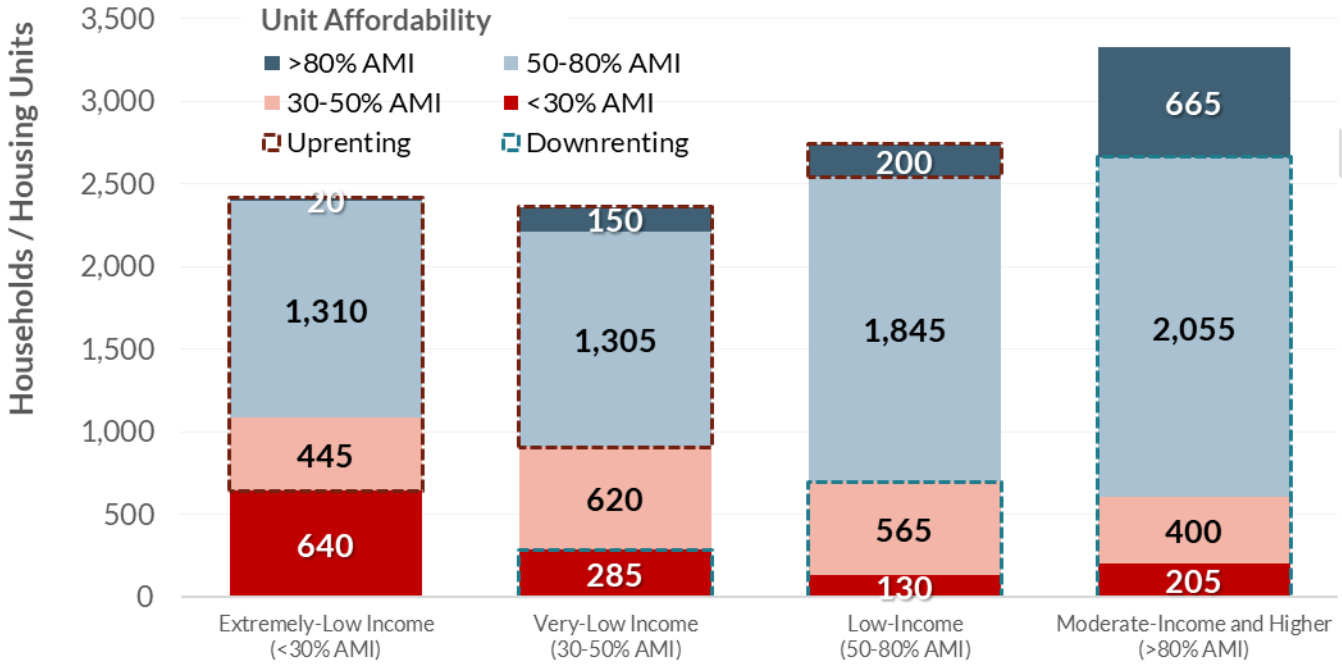
Subsidized affordable housing is typically only available to households that qualify based on their income. However, most low-cost housing units in Kennewick do not have subsidies or income restrictions. While many of these units are affordable to low-income households, they are not always available or occupied by a low-

[29] Note, this includes households with zero or negative income for which cost burden status cannot be calculated. Source: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8).

income household. **Figure H-55** shows the affordability level of units occupied by renter households in 2021. It shows, for example, that most extremely low-income households (≤30% MFI) are living in units that cost more than they can afford. This is represented by a red dotted line.

However, there are also households at higher income levels that are occupying units that would be affordable for lower income households. This is represented by a blue dotted line. These households are "down-renting," or occupying units that cost less than the amount they can afford based on their income. When households down-rent, it reduces the stock of housing that is both affordable and available for households at lower income levels. The majority of moderate-income and higher (>80% MFI) households in Kennewick were down-renting as of 2021. Increasing the production of newer rental units affordable for moderate income households can reduce competition for older and lower cost units, making more available to lower income households.

Figure H-55. Affordability Level of Units Occupied by Renter Households (2021)



Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 15C); BERK, 2025.

More recent data about rental market costs is available from the Washington Center for Real Estate Research (WCRER). As of the first quarter of 2025, an average apartment costs $1,349 per month in Kennewick according to the WCRER (**Figure H-56**).[30] To afford this average rent, a household needs an annual income of at least $53,960 (or more if utilities or other housing costs are not included in the rental price). Zillow also recently started publishing observed market rate rent in the

[30] WCRER Housing Market Data Toolkit: City Rental Dashboard, 2025.

city. As of June 2025, the Zillow Observed Rent Index (ZORI) for Kennewick was $1,677, notably higher than the WCRER report.[31] A household would need an annual income of at least $67,060 to afford this average rental rate.

Recent data about rents by apartment size are also available from the WCRER for all of Benton County (note that average rental rates in Kennewick are similar to the county overall and to most neighboring communities; see **Figure H-56**). As of the first quarter of 2025, an average 1-bedroom apartment cost $1,235 and an average 2-bedroom apartment cost $1,494 in the county per WCRER. Using HUD standards to calculate affordability, BERK estimates that a household needs to have an income equivalent to about 58% of MFI to afford the average 1- or 2-bedroom apartment.[32] However, more than 44% of renters in Kennewick have an income below this level.[33]

A review of recent rental listings on Zillow in Kennewick indicates rental rates in the city are similar to those reported countywide by WCRER. Based on data gathered in July 2025, the average rental rate in the city is likely around $1,469 for a market-rate unit.[34] This average is driven higher partly by some larger rentals (3+ bedrooms) as the average listed rental rates for a 1-bedroom ($1,138) or 2-bedroom ($1,463) are similar to those reported countywide by WCRER.

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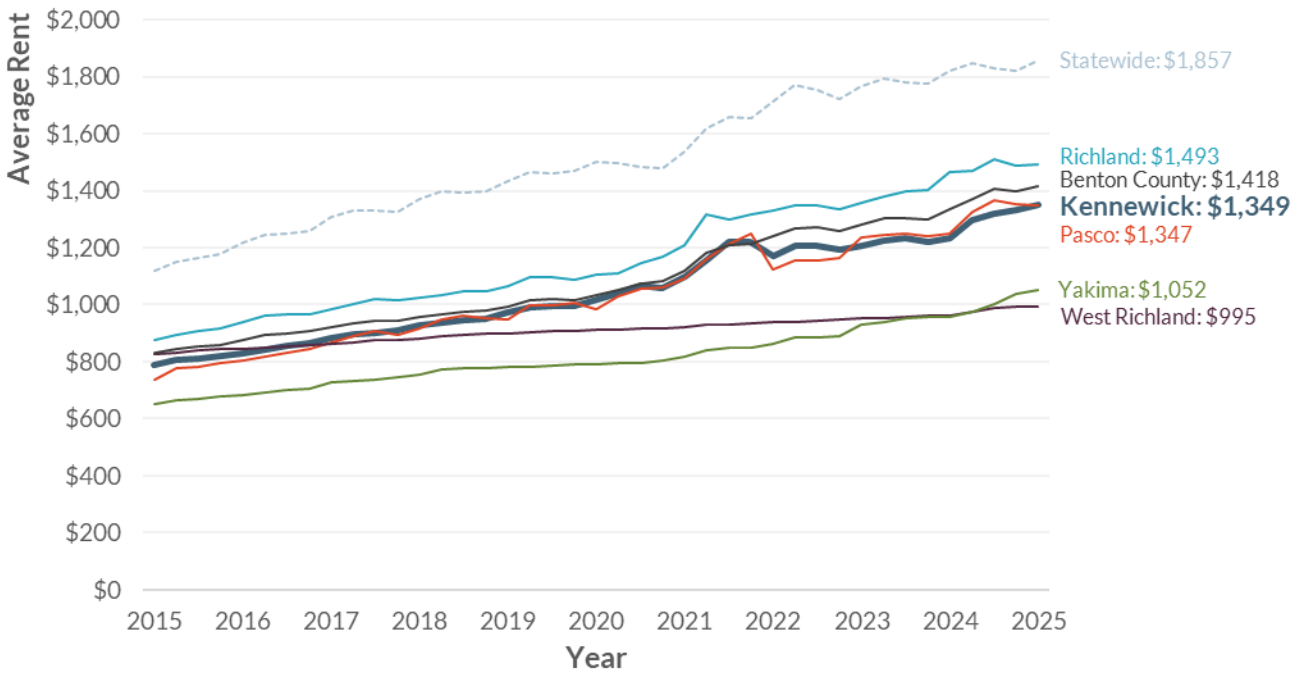
31 Zillow ZORI for City of Kennewick, June 2025.

32 HUD sets affordable rent standards by percent of MFI for all counties (published by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission [link]). These standards are adjusted to match the assumed household size that would occupy the unit.

33 Approximately 44% of renter households have incomes below 50% MFI (see **Figure H-26**). A portion of renter households in the 50-80% MFI range likely also have household incomes below the 58% MFI needed to afford an average 1- or 2-bedroom rental, but the exact amount is unknown. Source: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8).

34 Zillow, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-56. Average Monthly Apartment Rent in Kennewick and Comparison Communities (2015–2025)

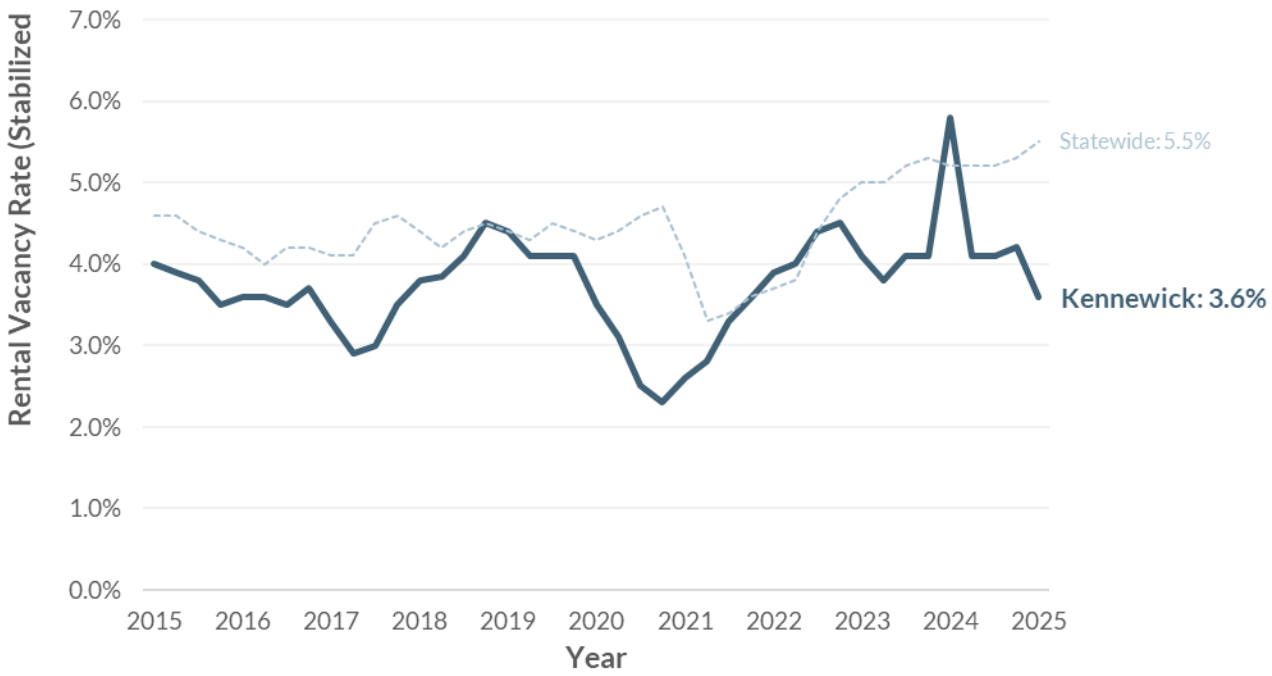


Sources: WCRER Housing Market Data Dashboards, 2025; BERK, 2025.

In more recent years, rents have increased significantly in Kennewick. Between the second quarter of 2020 (roughly the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic) and first quarter of 2025, average rents increased by about $300 (30%). However, much of that increase occurred by fall 2022 and rents have generally risen but fluctuated in the months since. This mirrors a similar trend in the broader housing market associated with the increase in federal interest rates in late 2022. One explanation for this rental market stability is vacancy rates. From early 2022 to early 2024, the apartment vacancy rate in Kennewick climbed significantly from 3.9% to 5.8% before dropping back down to 3.6% by early 2025 (see **Figure 57**).[35] A healthy rental market has at least a 6% vacancy rate to reduce competition for available units. If production of new apartments slows, the vacancy rate could continue to fall, resulting in additional upward pressure on market rents.

[35] WCRER Housing Market Data Dashboards, 2025. WCRER's methodology for calculating vacancy rates includes leaving out all apartment buildings built during the previous two years. The purpose is to remove the impact of large new building that are not yet filled with residents. But the fact that Kennewick may have added significant new apartment supply during this period could still impact the vacancy rate of older buildings given the greater number of options available for people seeking housing.

Figure 57. Stabilized Vacancy Rate in Kennewick and Statewide (2015–2025)

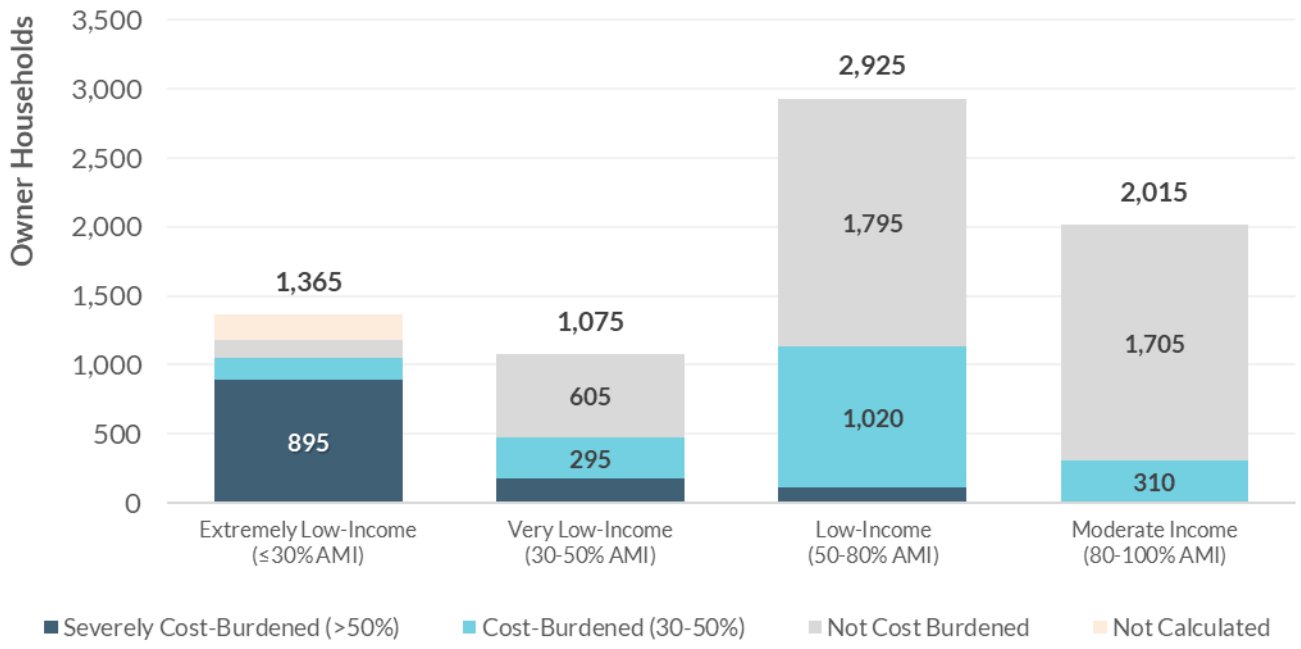


Sources: WCRER Housing Market Data Dashboards, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Ownership Housing Affordability

As of 2021, HUD estimates there were 3,290 cost burdened households who owned their home, or about 17% of all owner households in the city (see **Figure H-52**). **Figure H-58** summarizes owner households by cost burden status and income level for households with incomes at or below MFI in the city in 2021. The total number of households living in unaffordable homes is highest at the 50% to 80% MFI level, followed by the 0% to 30% MFI level. About two-thirds of owner households at or below 50% MFI were cost burdened, lower than the share of renter households at this income level (63% versus 81%, respectively).

Figure H-58. Owner Households by Cost Burden Status (2021)



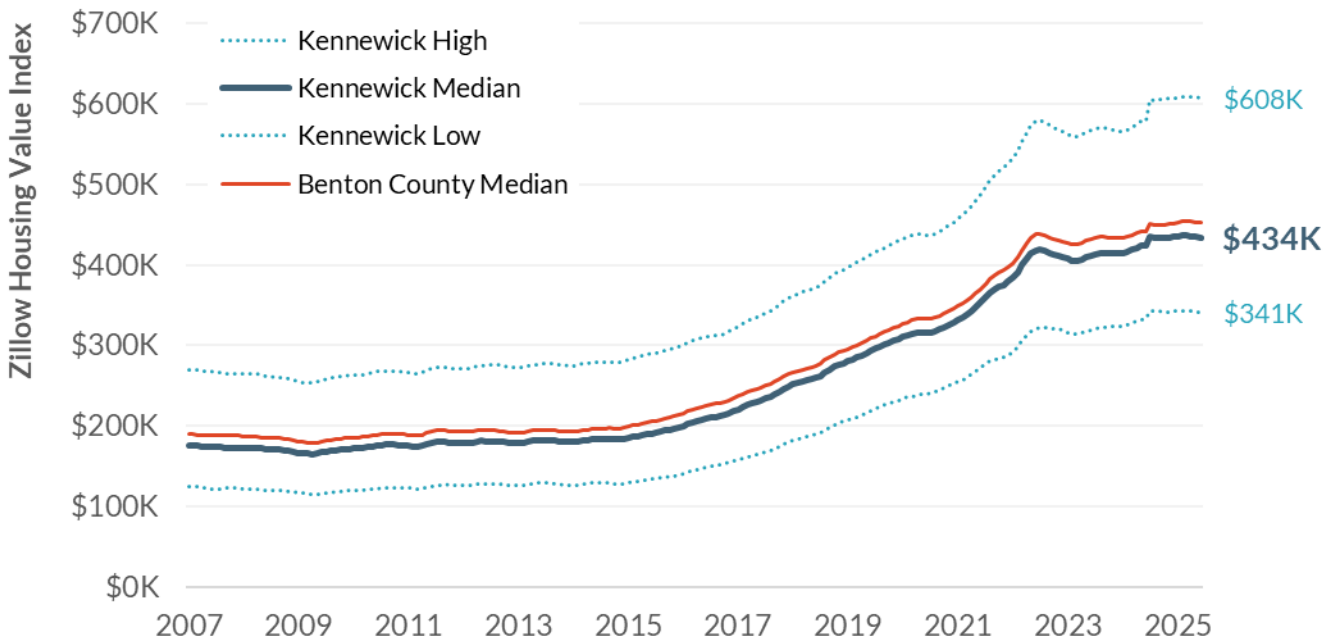
Note: HUD does not calculate cost burden status for households with zero or negative income. These are represented as "Not Calculated" in the chart.

Sources: HUD CHAS data (based on 2017-2021 ACS 5-year estimates); BERK, 2025.

The share of cost burdened owner households in Kennewick has declined slightly since 2016 when about 18% of owner households in the city were cost burdened.[36] However, this reduction most likely reflects changes in the employment status and income of owner households rather than reductions in housing costs. In fact, median home values citywide more than doubled during this period, from about $209,000 in June 2016 to $434,000 in June 2025, shown in **Figure H-59**. After federal interest rates increased in late 2022, home values in the city dipped slightly but have surpassed and stayed above the 2022 peak since April of 2024. The dotted lines show the range of home values in the city from "low" (median value of the bottom third of all homes) to "high" (median value of the top third of all homes). The red line represents median home values in Benton County, which have aligned closely with median home values in the city since 2007.

[36] HUD CHAS, 2012-2016 and 2017-2021 (Table 8).

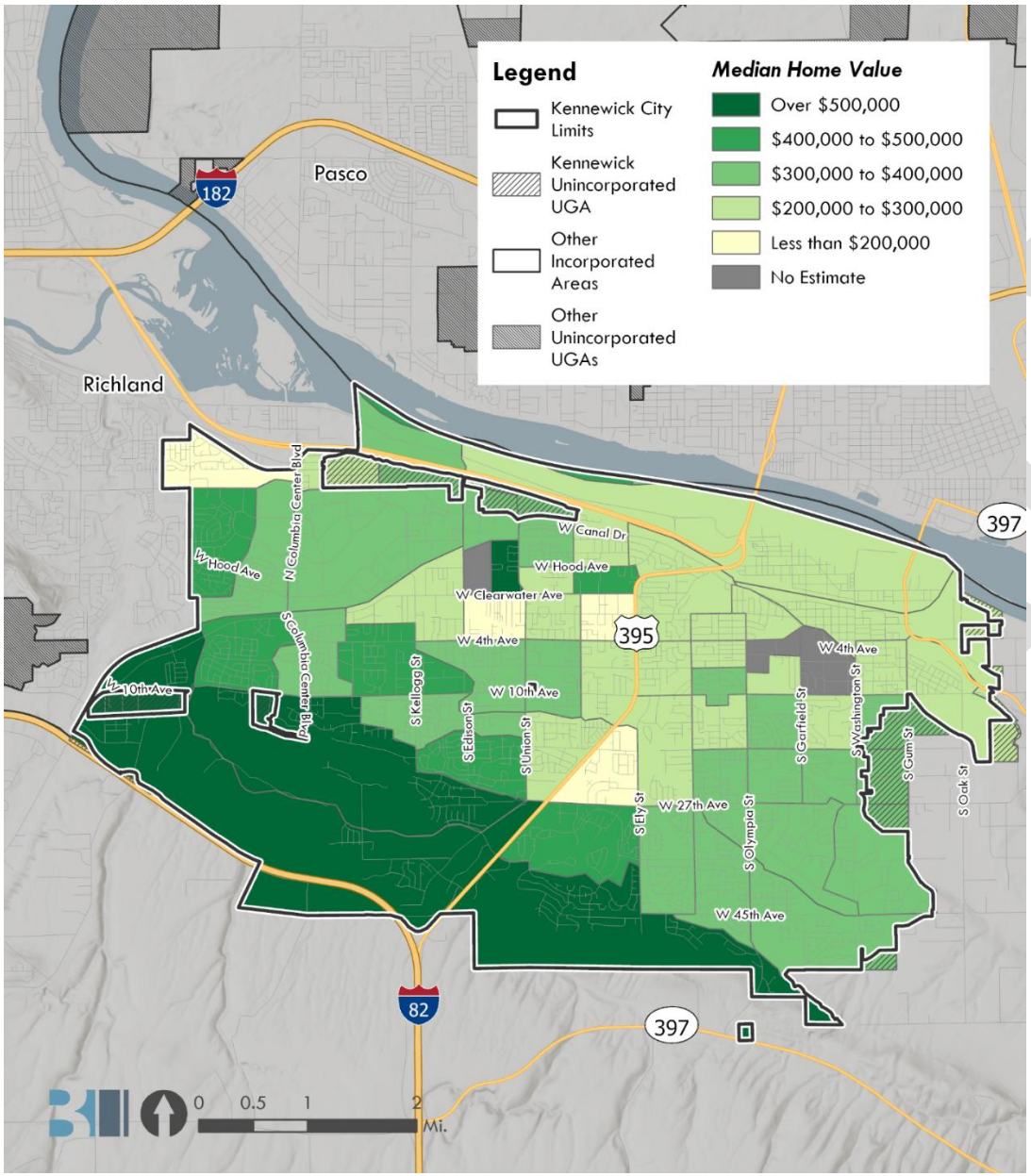
Figure H-59. Housing Value Index (2007–2025)—City of Kennewick and Benton County



Sources: Zillow, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-60 maps median home value by Census block group as of approximately 2023. Home values are the highest in southern Kennewick (e.g., Creekstone, Southridge, and Canyon Lakes), including a few block groups with high percentages of the population age 65 or over (**Figure H-5**).

Figure H-60. Median Home Value (2023)

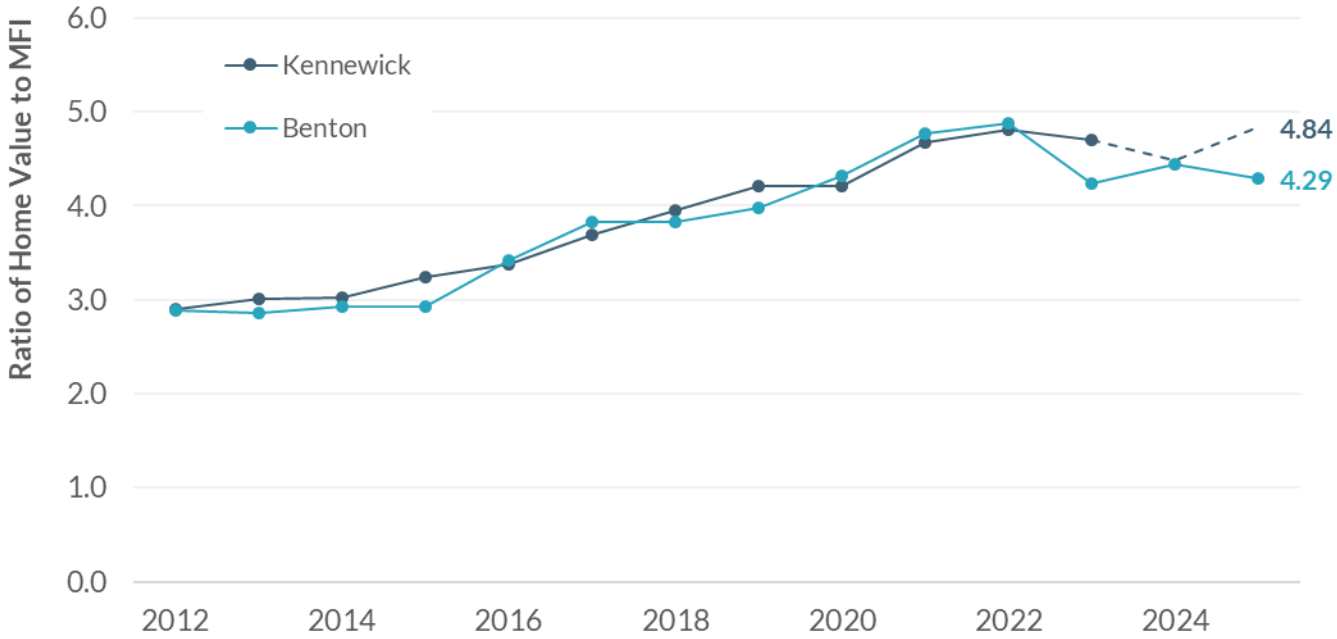


Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates (Table B25077), 2019-2023; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Housing values have been rising faster than incomes. **Figure H-61** shows the ratio of home value to the city median family income for Kennewick and county median family income for Benton County. In 2012, the median home value was just under three times the median family income in both the county and city. By 2023, the median home value was nearly five times as high as the median family income in the city.

Figure H-61. Ratio of Median Home Value to Median Family Income (2012–2025)—City of Kennewick and Benton County

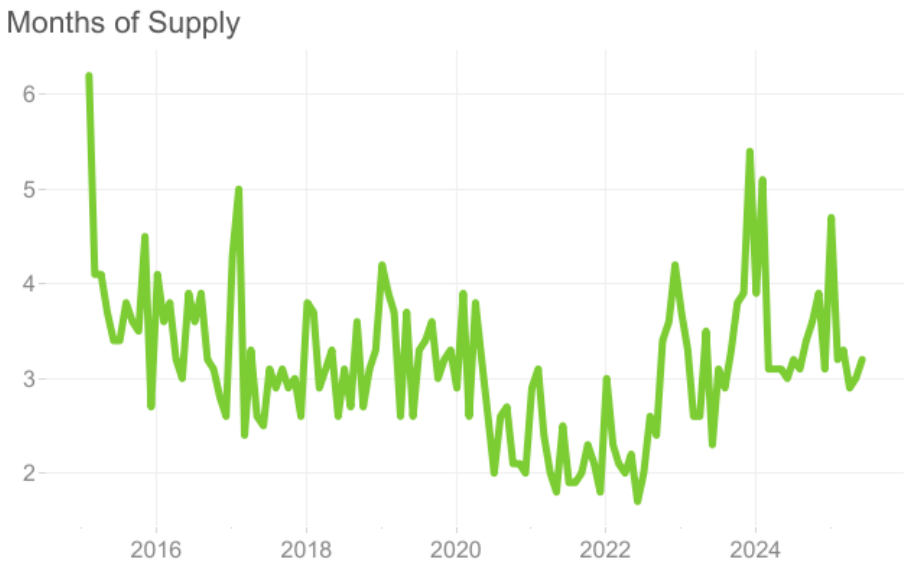


Note: Kennewick's 2024 and 2025 AMI are estimated based on the 2023 AMI as reported in the ACS and CPI inflation factors. MFI is available through 2025 for Benton County.

Sources: Zillow, 2025; ACS 5-year estimates, 2010 through 2023; BERK, 2025.

One reason housing prices have increased so rapidly is a lack of supply compared to demand. This increases competition for available units. **Figure H-62** shows the number of months of supply of homes for sale in Kennewick. This measure compares the number of homes listed for sale to the rate at which homes are purchased. A healthy housing market has at least four months of supply available for home buyers. Except for a few spikes, the long-term trend in Kennewick has been towards a tighter housing supply with some easing over the last year. By 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, the supply shrank to less than two months. Since then, the supply has increased slightly to about three months by mid-2025. It is likely that higher interest rates during this period reduced the number of potential homebuyers, reducing the number of homes for sale needed to keep up with demand.

Figure H-62. All Homes for Sale by Months of Supply—City of Kennewick



Source: Redfin, 2025.

As of June 2025, the median sales price for a detached single-family home in Kennewick was $428,000.[37] To afford to purchase a home of this value, a household would need an income of $136,790, assuming they can cover a 20% downpayment ($112,200).[38] This is about 170% of MFI for a four-person household. Townhomes are a bit more affordable at $376,000,[39] as detailed in the following section.

Affordability by Housing Type

Figure H-63 summarizes the affordability of market rate housing in Kennewick by housing type for both ownership and rental housing products as of summer 2025. For each housing product, we present the average cost, the annual income a household would need to afford that cost, and the affordability level as a percentage of MFI.[40] In general, apartments are significantly more affordable than townhouses or single-family homes in Kennewick. However, none of these housing types are typically affordable to a 50% MFI household or below.

37 Redfin Monthly Housing Market Data, 2025.
38 This estimate assumes a 6.88% interest rate.
39 Redfin Monthly Housing Market Data, 2025. Note that Redfin data indicates there are very few townhome sales in Kennewick (an average of about 5 townhome sales per month versus about 94 single family home sales per month from January 2020 – June 2025). As a result, the median sales price for this product is less reliable.
40 As mentioned earlier, HUD adjusts income thresholds used in affordability calculations based on assumed household size. For rental housing these assumptions are based on HUD standards for determining affordability of rentals, by number of bedrooms.

Figure H-63. Market Rate Housing Affordability in Kennewick (Summer 2025)

Housing Type	Average Cost	Annual Income Needed	Affordability Level	Notes
1 Bedroom Apartment	$1,235 monthly rent	$49,400	58% MFI	Assumes 1.5-person household
2 Bedroom Apartment	$1,494 monthly rent	$59,760	58% MFI	Assumes 3-person household
Townhome	$376,000 median sales prices	$91,434	96% MFI	Assumes 3-person household and availability of 20% downpayment (~$75,200)
Single family home	$428,000 median sales prices	$104,079	99% MFI	Assumes 4-person household and availability of 20% downpayment (~$85,600)

Note: Average rents by unit size are based on conditions across all of Benton County. Rents in Kennewick are similar on average. Assumes an interest rate of 6.88%, taxable value ratio of 0.958, and property tax rate of 0.82%.

Sources: Kennewick Housing Authority Utility Allowance Schedule, 2024; WCRER, 2025; Redfin Monthly Housing Market Data, 2025; Washington State Interest Rates, current 30-year fixed mortgage rate as of July 31, 2025; DOR Property Tax Ratios, 2025; Washington Property Tax Calculation, 2025; BERK, 2025.

DISPLACEMENT, DISPLACEMENT RISK, EXCLUSION, & RACIALLY DISPARATE IMPACTS

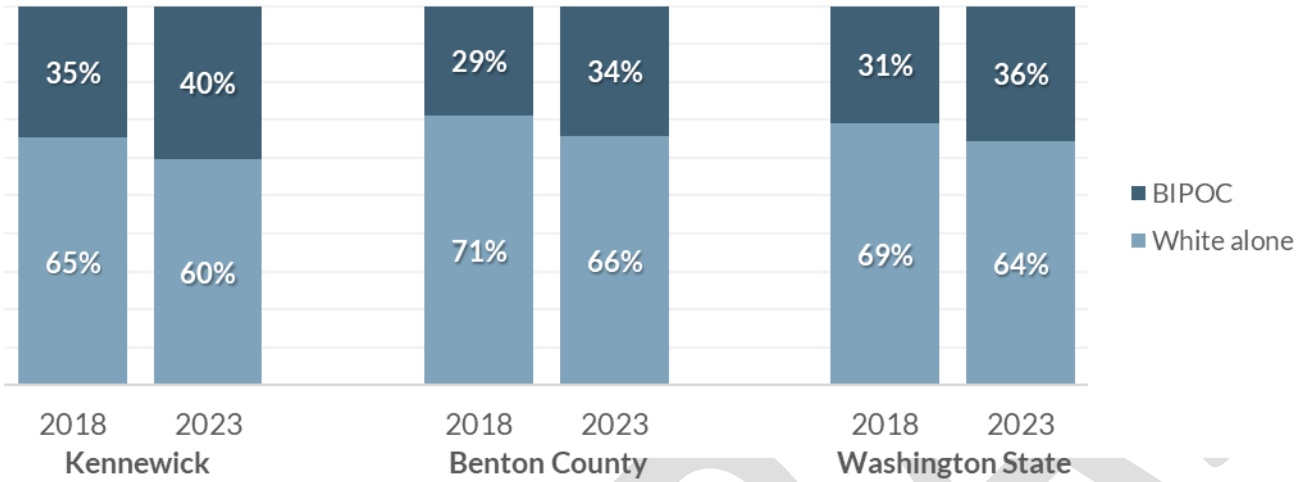
Displacement & Displacement Risk

Policy guidance from Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) calls for comprehensive plans to study displacement and establish anti-displacement policies. Displacement refers to instances when a household is forced or pressured to move from their home against their will. Displacement can be physical, economic, or cultural. Direct, physical displacement occurs in cases of eviction, the termination of a tenant's lease, or public land claims through eminent domain. Physical displacement can also occur when a property owner decides to renovate units to appeal to higher-income tenants or when buildings are sold for redevelopment. Another cause might be the expiration of an affordability covenant and resulting conversion of the unit to market rate housing. Economic displacement occurs when a household relocates due to the financial pressure of rising housing costs. Renters are more vulnerable to economic displacement, particularly those who are low-income, although some homeowners can experience this as well with significant increases to property tax bills. Cultural displacement is the result of fractured social fabrics. When physical and/or economic displacement affects community businesses, social institutions, and a concentration of racial or ethnic households, other households who affiliate with the affected cultural group may begin to feel increased pressure or desire to relocate.

While it is not possible to directly quantify the number of households displaced in a given year, we can analyze indicators of displacement to identify communities that may face displacement pressure. One indicator of potential displacement is a reduction in households of a particular racial or ethnic group over time. As

discussed above (**Figure H-7**), Kennewick lost population among White, non-Hispanic persons, while gaining persons who identify as Hispanic or Latino or non-Hispanic persons who identify as two or more races. This reflects trends countywide and statewide and does not provide enough evidences of displacement of BIPOC communities overall in Kennewick (specifically Hispanic or Latino communities; see **Figure H-64**). However, this finding does not tell us whether there is evidence of displacement at the neighborhood scale. Displacement risk and displacement that may have already occurred within Kennewick are discussed in more detail below.

Figure H-64. Race and Ethnicity in Kennewick vs. Benton County vs. Statewide (2016 and 2023)



Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2012-2016 and 2019-2023 (Table DP05); BERK, 2025.

Displacement Risk Mapping

Commerce provides a displacement risk mapping tool that identifies areas where residents are at greater risk of displacement. This tool evaluates relative displacement risk on a Census tract-level with a focus on three core categories: (1) social vulnerability; (2) demographic change; and (3) market trends.

- Social vulnerability: Calculates the share of BIPOC residents, the share of renter households, and median household income at a tract level. Each indicator is assigned a score (1-5) based on its level compared to the same measurement at the broader county level. Cumulative scores of 10 or more constitute higher social vulnerability.
- Demographic change: Calculates the change in the BIPOC population and lower income households between 2010 and 2020 (BIPOC) or 2021 (low-income households). Each characteristic is assigned a score based on its change relative to the countywide change, and the combination of these two indicators produces a demographic change score of "gentrification," "disinvestment," or "no change."
- Market trends: Calculates 2015 rent levels for each tract, relative to the broader county, and also evaluates rental appreciation rates from 2010 to 2021 relative to the county. The combination of these two indicators produces a market trend of "Appreciated," "Accelerating," or "Stable."

Figure H-65 shows the displacement risk assessment for every Census tract overlapping the city and **Figure H-66** maps the locations of those tracts. The tool shows variation in displacement risk throughout Kennewick, with areas of high displacement risk in the north (including the Vista, West Highlands, and Waterfront/Downtown areas). Census tracts 112.01, 112.02, 113, and 114.01 in and around Downtown are considered socially vulnerable (e.g., there is a higher

share of BIPOC residents, renter households, and median household income is ≤80% of AMI) and experienced demographic change between 2010–2020; housing costs are lower but market trends are also accelerating in two of these tracts. Census tracts 109.01, 109.02, and 110.01 east of I-395 are also considered socially vulnerable and gentrified between 2010–2020, but housing costs are lower and market trends are generally stable.

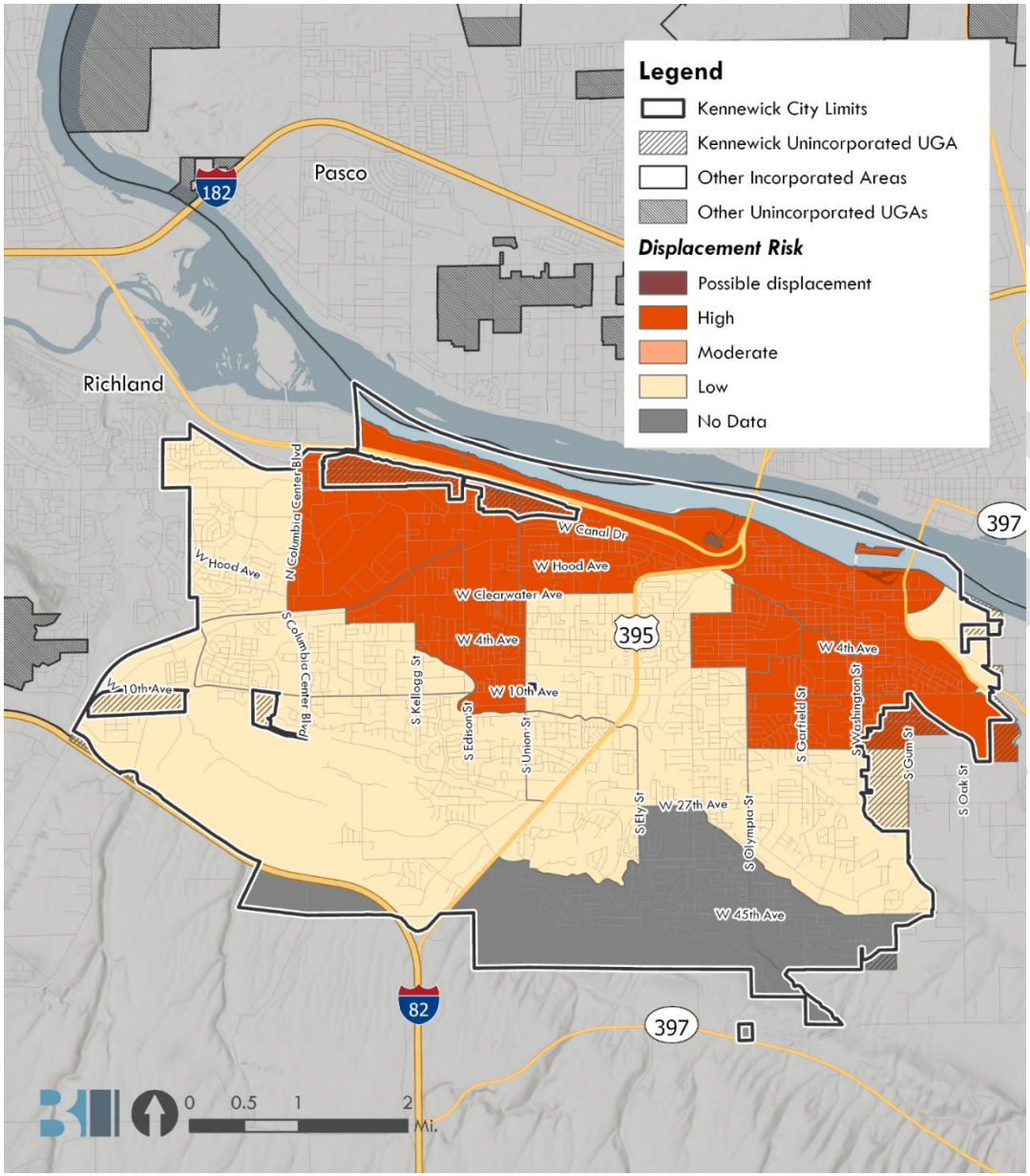
Note that many Census tracts overlapping Kennewick extend much further into Benton County and that Census tracts are often larger than neighborhoods experiencing gentrification and displacement. Additional community input may be necessary to identify areas within the Census tract and within Kennewick that have an elevated risk of displacement.

Figure H-65. Displacement Risk Index Score for Census Tracts in Kennewick UGA

	Social Vulnerability				Demographic Change			Market Prices			
Kennewick city Tracts	Renter Quintile	BIPOC Quintile	Median Income Score	Social Vulnerability Score	BIPOC Change Score	Under 80% AMI Change Score	Demographic Change Score	High or Low Rent Area - 2015	Appreciation Rate	Market Price Score	Final Displacement Risk
53005010809	4	3	2	**9**	Increasing BIPOC	Tracking county change	**No**	High rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Appreciated**	**Low**
53005010815	2	2	2	**6**	Increasing BIPOC	Increasing Low Income HHs	**Disinvestment**	High rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Appreciated**	**Low**
53005010816	3	2	2	**7**	Increasing BIPOC	Increasing Low Income HHs	**Disinvestment**	High rent area	High appreciation	**Appreciated**	**Low**
53005010901	5	4	4	**13**	Decreasing BIPOC	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**High**
53005010902	4	4	4	**12**	Decreasing BIPOC	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**High**
53005011001	4	4	4	**12**	Tracking county change	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**High**
53005011002	5	5	4	**14**	Increasing BIPOC	Increasing Low Income HHs	**Disinvestment**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**Low**
53005011100	2	4	3	**9**	Tracking county change	Tracking county change	**No**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**Low**
53005011201	5	5	5	**15**	Decreasing BIPOC	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	High appreciation	**Accelerating**	**High**
53005011202	5	5	5	**15**	Decreasing BIPOC	Tracking county change	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**High**
53005011300	4	5	4	**13**	Decreasing BIPOC	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	High appreciation	**Accelerating**	**High**
53005011401	5	5	4	**14**	Tracking county change	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**High**
53005011402	1	3	2	**6**	Increasing BIPOC	Tracking county change	**No**	High rent area	High appreciation	**Appreciated**	**Low**
53005011501	2	4	3	**9**	Tracking county change	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**Gentrification**	Low rent area	Low or mod appreciation	**Stable**	**Low**
53005011504	1	3	2	**6**	Increasing BIPOC	Increasing Low Income HHs	**Disinvestment**	*No Data*	*No Data*	*No Data*	*No Data*
53005011505	3	3	4	**10**	Increasing BIPOC	Increasing Low Income HHs	**Disinvestment**	High rent area	High appreciation	**Appreciated**	**Low**
53005011506	1	2	1	**4**	Increasing BIPOC	Decreasing Low Income HHs	**No**	*No Data*	*No Data*	*No Data*	*No Data*

Sources: Commerce, 2024; BERK, 2025.

Figure H-66. Map of Displacement Risk by Census Tracts in Kennewick UGA



Sources: Commerce, 2024; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Exclusion & Racially Disparate Impacts

New State requirements call for cities to assess whether racially disparate housing impacts are happening in their community, and to address them through policy and regulatory change. The requirements are not a charge against current communities in which there are racially disparate outcomes in housing, but an acknowledgement of the role land use policy has played in creating and institutionalizing race-based advantages and disadvantages.[41] The statute uses the term "racially disparate" but does not identify protected groups based on race. Racially disparate impacts occur when policies, practices, rules, or other systems result in a disproportionate effect on one or more racial groups. Disparities in housing measures among different racial and ethnic groups are evidence of racially disparate impacts.

A community's current housing situation is the product of many forces including historical factors, policy, regulations, macroeconomic changes, lending practices, cost of development, and individual preference. City governments cannot control all of these factors, but they can change local land use policies and regulations. Local land use policies and regulations have a significant impact on accessibility of housing for different households. As such, they are a key tool the City can use to address racially disparate impacts.

The City and consultant team used several measures to explore whether racially disparate impacts exist in Kennewick. Some of these measures were covered earlier in this document, such as rates of homeownership, household income, and cost-burdened status by racial and ethnic groups. Those measures show evidence of racially disparate impacts. Homeownership rates are lower among Hispanic or Latino households (**Figure H-17**) and Hispanic or Latino owner household are more likely to be cost-burdened compared to the city overall or White, non-Hispanic households (**Figure H-53**). Median household income is also lower for Hispanic or Latino households than it is for White, non-Hispanic households ($61,185 versus $78,473; **Figure H-23**) and Census block groups with median household incomes below the citywide median correspond with areas where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live (**Figure H-22** and **Figure H-9**).

The team also explored displacement risk with the mapping tool provided by Commerce, as discussed in the prior section. This tool maps areas of high displacement risk in the north (including the Vista, West Highlands, and Waterfront/Downtown areas). Additional measures the team used to explore exclusion and racially disparate impacts in Kennewick are described in the following section, including a dissimilarity index and location quotient. These show evidence of segregation impacts the City should consider as it updates its housing policies.

Segregation Measures

The team used two measures to help understand whether racial and ethnic segregation is happening in the City of Kennewick to assess possible exclusion in housing: a dissimilarity index and a location quotient. These measures explore whether certain populations are excluded from housing within a specified area, in a manner that may be intentional or unintentional, but which nevertheless leads to non-inclusive impacts. The dissimilarity index compares the City of Kennewick to itself and considers segregation citywide for various populations. The location quotient compares each Census block group in Kennewick to Benton County.

Dissimilarity Index

A dissimilarity index is a statistical method for measuring segregation based on the demographic composition of an area and smaller geographic units within that area. One way of understanding the index is that it indicates how evenly two demographic groups are distributed throughout an area: if the composition of both

[41] See Commerce's Racially Disparte Impacts guidance at https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/updating-gma-housing-elements/.

groups in each geographic unit (e.g., Census block group) is the same as in the area as a whole (e.g., countywide), then the dissimilarity index score for that count will be 0 (suggesting no segregation). By contrast if one population is clustered entirely within one Census block group, the dissimilarity index score for the county will be 1 (complete segregation). The higher the dissimilarity index value, the higher the level of segregation in an area.[42] Generally, areas with a dissimilarity index score above 0.4 are considered more highly segregated. Scores between 0.3 and 0.39 are associated with moderate segregation, and scores below 0.3 are considered to have a low level of segregation.[43]

This methodology, as applied here, evaluates each of the largest non-White groups relative to the White population in Kennewick. The scores therefore only represent the level of segregation between each group (Hispanic/Latino, Black or African American, Asian, and all BIPOC) and the non-Hispanic White alone population. A similar analysis could be done to compare non-White groups to each other (e.g., Hispanic/Latino to American Indian or Alaska Native alone) to understand other dynamics; however, given the history of exclusionary housing practices in many places along with current residential trends, using the White alone population as a point of comparison for understand relative segregation is often a useful starting point for evaluating disparate impacts related to housing.

Figure H-67 shows dissimilarity indexes for Kennewick as well as the cities of Richland, Pasco, West Richland, and Yakima and Benton and Franklin counties for comparisons. Based on this data, the City of Kennewick has a moderate level of segregation within the city for Hispanic/Latino and Black or African American residents (0.34 for each group). This suggests a moderate level of segregation within Kennewick, which is consistent with mapping presented earlier in this report showing White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in southern portions of the city (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and around Downtown and in the West Highlands (**Figure H-9**).

Figure H-67. Dissimilarity Index for Kennewick Compared to Nearby Cities and Benton and Franklin Counties as a Whole (2020)

	Hispanic or Latino	Black or African American	Asian	All BIPOC
Kennewick	0.34	0.34	0.25	0.27
Richland	0.22	0.24	0.28	0.13
Pasco	0.48	0.29	0.24	0.44
West Richland	0.21	0.17	0.24	0.14
Yakima	0.44	0.37	0.27	0.39
Benton County	0.33	0.26	0.26	0.24
Franklin County	0.43	0.36	0.23	0.38

Source: U.S. Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

Location Quotient

A location quotient is a helpful complement to other disparate impact measures and can reveal some trends that may otherwise be obscured. More specifically, it shows the concentration of communities in smaller areas within Kennewick (e.g., a Census block group) compared to Benton County as a whole. Unlike the above application of the dissimilarity index, which compares Kennewick to itself and considers segregation citywide for various populations, this use of the location

[42] U.S. Census, Housing Patterns: Appendix B: Measures of Residential Segregation, 2021.
[43] PSRC Dissimilarity Index and U.S. HUD guidelines, 2023.

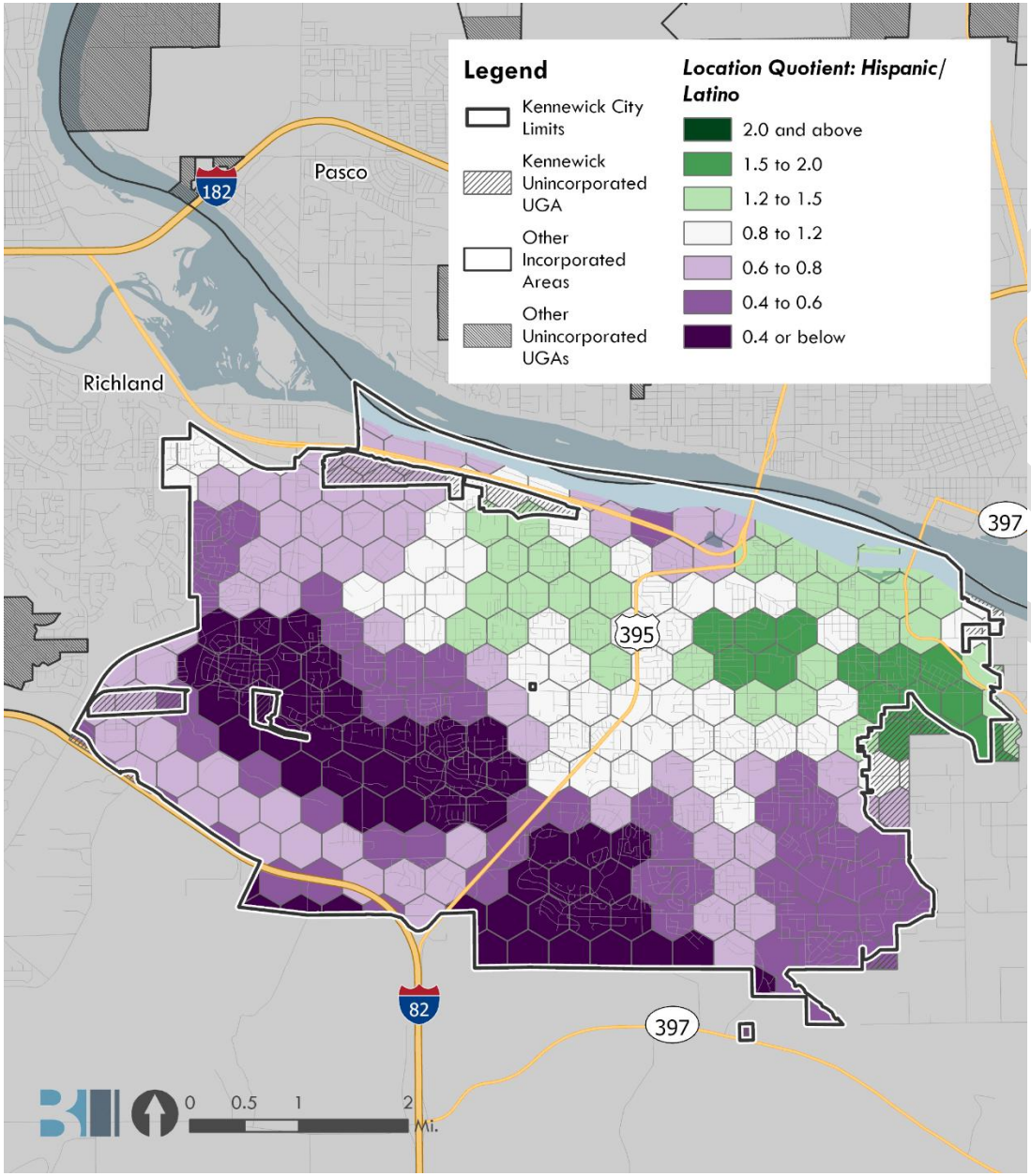
quotient provides a more granular view, helping to show whether there are specific areas within Kennewick that have disproportionately high or low populations of BIPOC communities relative to countywide trends.

The methodology assigns a block-group level score for each community. For example, if 7% of the county population is Black, and 7% of a particular block group population is Black, then the location quotient for the Black community within that block group is 1. A block group where 14% of residents are Black would have a location quotient of 2. And a block group where only 3.5% of residents are Black would have a location quotient of 0.5. In other words, block groups with high location quotient scores have a greater share of that population compared to the rest of the county.

Figure H-68, **Figure H-69**, **Figure H-70**, **Figure H-71**, and **Figure H-72** show the location quotient for five race or ethnicities in Kennewick: Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American alone, Asian alone, all BIPOC, and White alone populations, respectively. They are based on block group population calculations. All areas with location quotients above 1.0 (green block groups) have a higher share of that particular group than the county as a whole. Areas with scores below 1.0 (purple block groups) have a lower share than Benton County. Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live in and around Downtown and in the West Highlands area and White residents are more likely to live in the south and west portions of the city than Benton County overall. This is consistent with **earlier data showing a higher percentage of Kennewick's population is BIPOC than in Benton County** (40% versus 34%; **Figure H-8**) and similar to the population distribution within Kennewick (**Figure H-9**).

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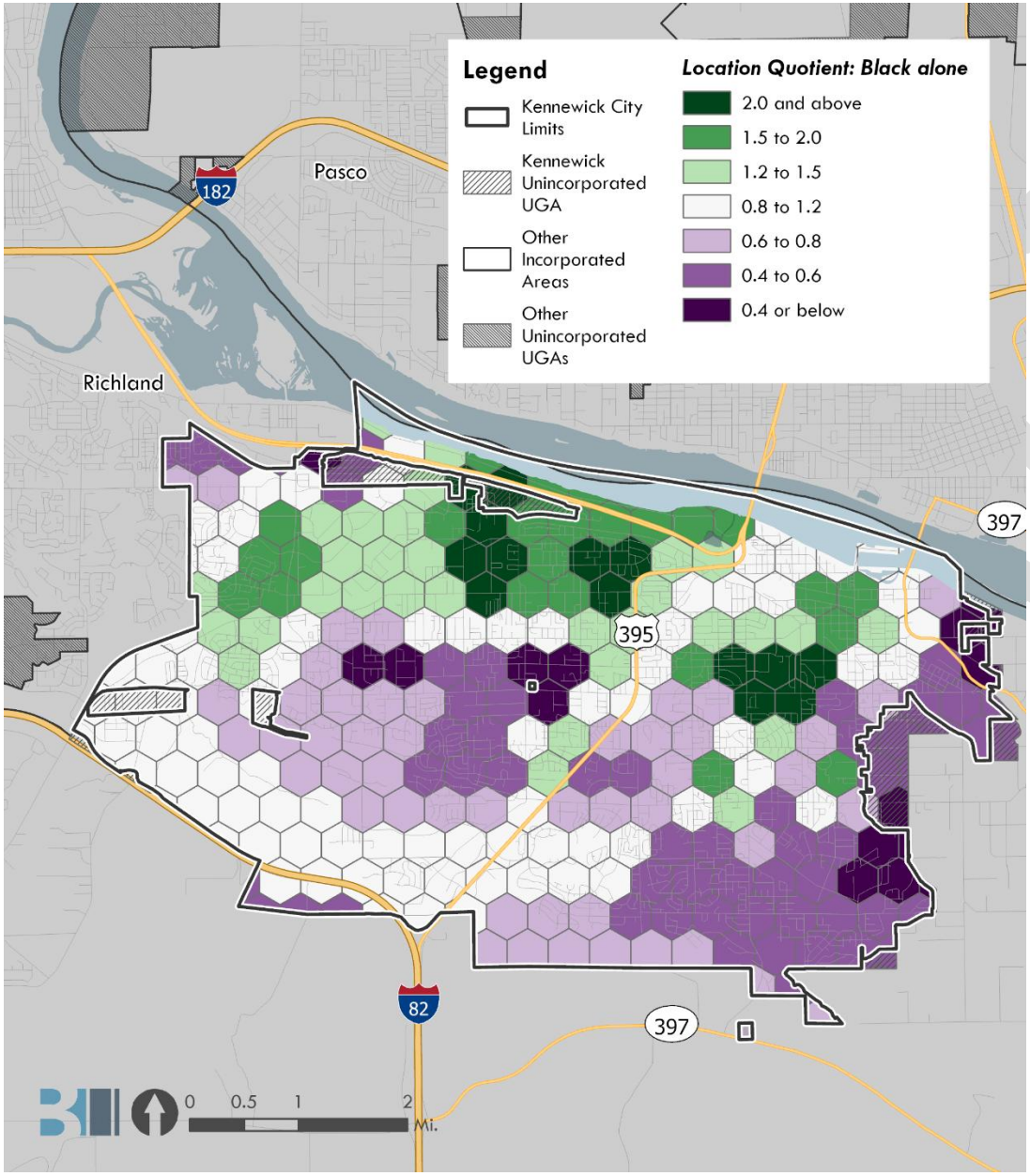
Figure H-68. Location Quotient for Hispanic/Latino Populations in Kennewick (2020)



Sources: U.S. Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure H-69. Location Quotient for Black or African American Populations in Kennewick (2020)

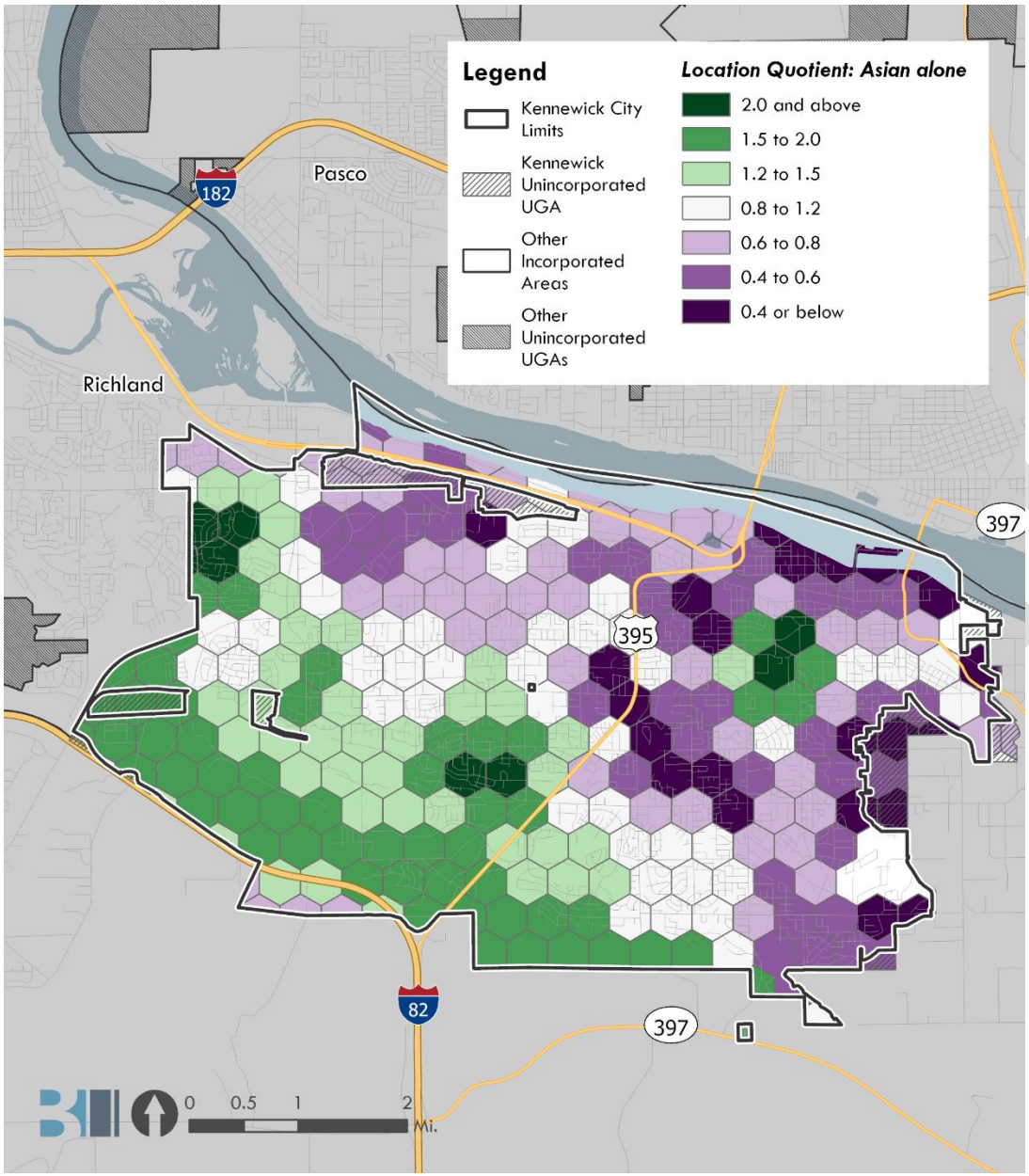


Sources: U.S. Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

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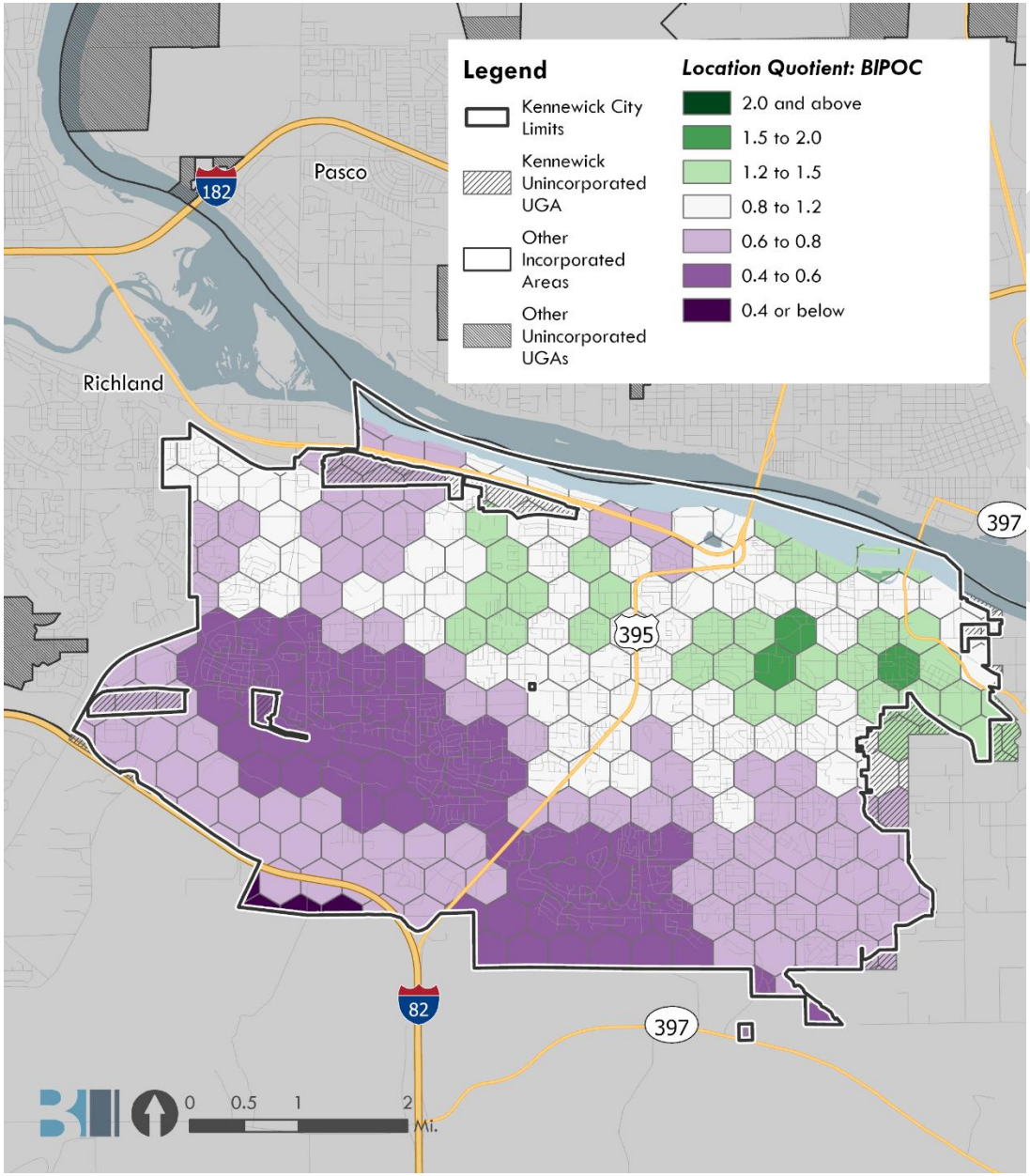
Figure H-70. Location Quotient for Asian Populations in Kennewick (2020)



Sources: U.S. Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure H-71. Location Quotient for All BIPOC Population in Kennewick (2020)

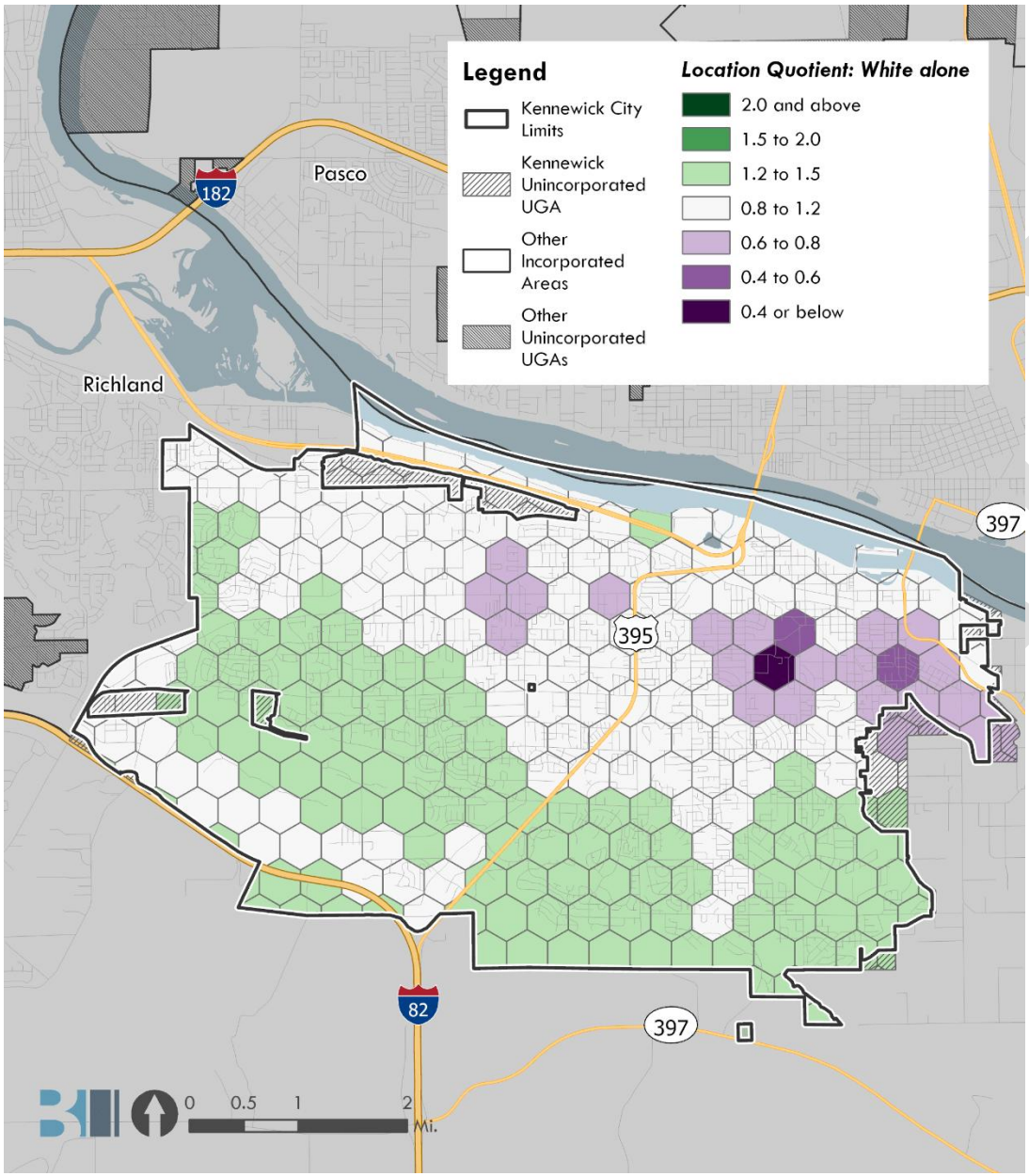


Sources: U.S. Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

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Figure H-72. Location Quotient for White Alone Population in Kennewick (2020)



Sources: U.S. Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2025.

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Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is concerned with the right of all people to enjoy a safe, clean, and healthy environment, and with fairness across racial, social, and economic groups in the siting and operation of infrastructure, facilities, or other large land uses. This section considers whether there are concentrations of racial groups in certain areas of the city with increased exposure to environmental health hazards or with limited access to transit, parks, or other services. Placing additional growth near high-volume roadways could expose future residents or workers to diminished air quality and heightened noise affecting quality of life and land use compatibility. It is particularly important to understand the health-related impacts of various land use patterns on spaces used by vulnerable populations, such as schools, daycares, elder care facilities, and medical centers.[44]

Roadway users and adjacent neighborhoods experience air pollution from vehicle exhaust and brake/tire/road wear. Pollutant particle size, topography, and wind patterns affect the geographic extent of concern, with the greatest impacts immediately adjacent to and downwind of major freeways. Roadway traffic, especially larger vehicles (i.e., trucks and buses) also produce noise, and urban heat is generally of greatest concern where most of the ground area is covered by pavement, buildings, and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat.

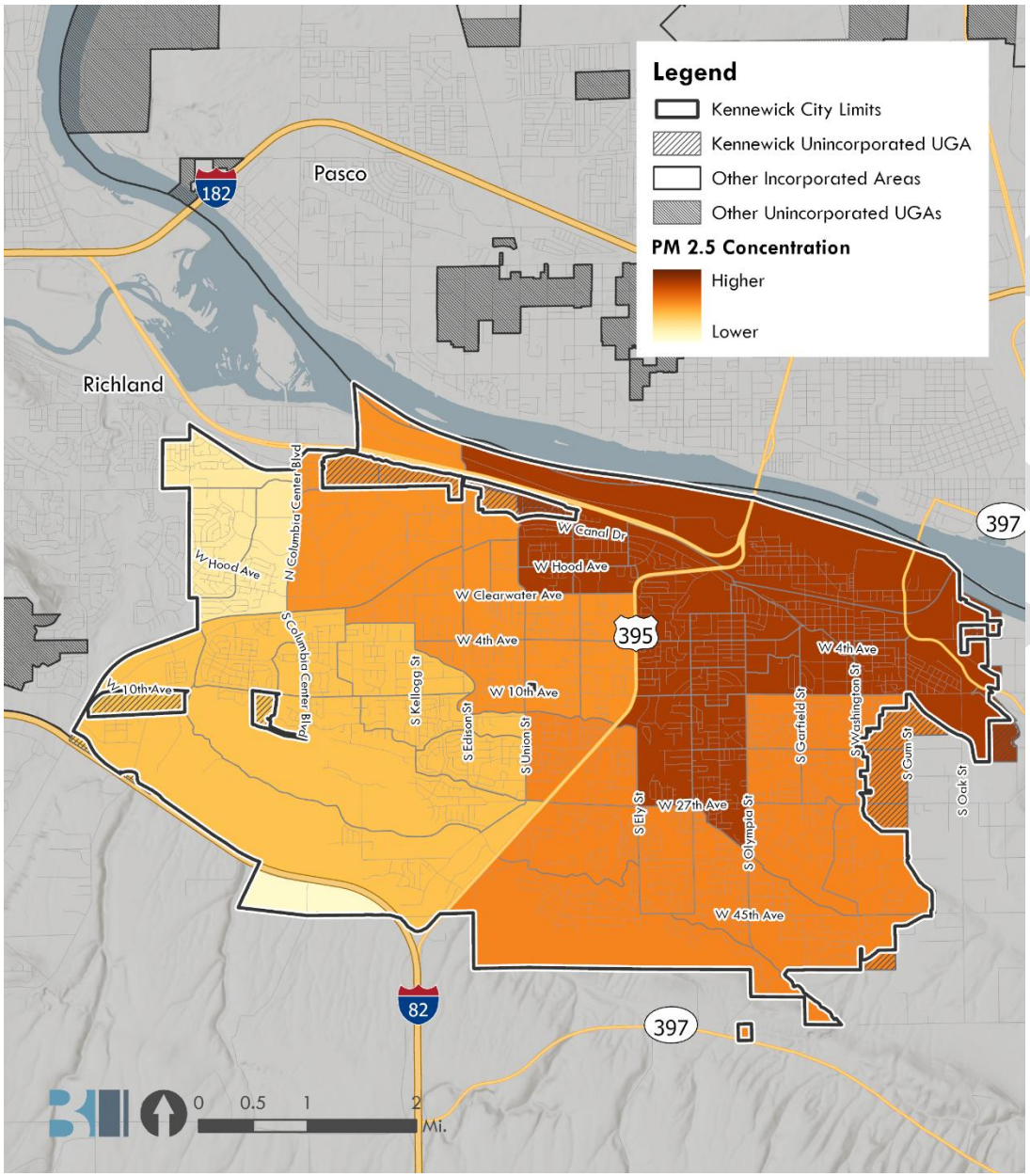
Environmental Health Disparities

Environmental exposure is affected by pollutants from both natural and manmade sources. Air quality and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are generally the greatest environmental exposure concerns in Kennewick. These are areawide issues that are often discussed at a regional or even state level but there can be distinct differences between urbanized, populated areas and rural and undeveloped areas. Vehicles and equipment that burn fossil fuels are typically among the largest contributors to transportation-related emissions and can contribute to regional and localized concentrations of state and federally regulated pollutants. High concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ and other air pollutants contribute to respiratory problems, long-term health challenges, and increased healthcare costs.[45] **Figure 73** maps $PM_{2.5}$ concentration levels in Kennewick as of 2022—concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ are highest in the northeast portion of the city, including Downtown, where many Hispanic or Latino residents live. North Kennewick has moderate exposure to heavy traffic roadways that can increase air pollutants and increase risk of pollution-related diseases such as asthma.[46]

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44 UW Mov-Up Report, 2019.
45 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p. 173), October 2025.
46 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p. 173), October 2025.

Figure 73. Kennewick PM 2.5 Concentration Levels, 2022



Sources: Washington Department of Health, (2022); BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Another major contributor to air quality concerns in the city is wildfire smoke. Wildfire smoke conditions are unique in the Tri-Cities region, as the mountains and prevailing winds can trap air at the surface. Increased occurrences and severity of wildfire smoke can increase risks of respiratory diseases, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Smoke exposure has also been connected to increases in some cancers, including lung cancer. Per the *Tri-Cities Climate Vulnerability Assessment* (Appendix C of the *Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element*), wildfire and smoke are hazards of high concern in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities Region, with much of the southern half of the city within the wildland urban interface (**Figure H-74**). By 2070, Benton and Franklin counties may expect 15 to 16 more days of high fire danger on average, totaling 68 to 69 days per year, as changes to weather patterns occur.[47] Most of Kennewick is expected to see 9 to 10 more days of high fire danger per year on average by 2050.[48] White residents are more likely to live within the mapped wildland urban interface areas, but wildfire smoke impacts are a city-wide concern.

The Washington State Department of Health (DOH) also produces an Environmental Health Disparities Map to evaluate environmental health risk factors in communities across Washington. The Environmental Health Disparities Map provides an index of environmental exposures (e.g., diesel emissions and proximity to traffic and hazardous waste sites) and socioeconomic and health factors (e.g., poverty and cardiovascular disease). Health disparities generally rank higher in the north portion of the city in and around Downtown and in the West Highlands area (closer to the river, SR 240, and the railroad) where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live. See **Figure H-75** and **Figure H-9** for a map of population by race and ethnicity).

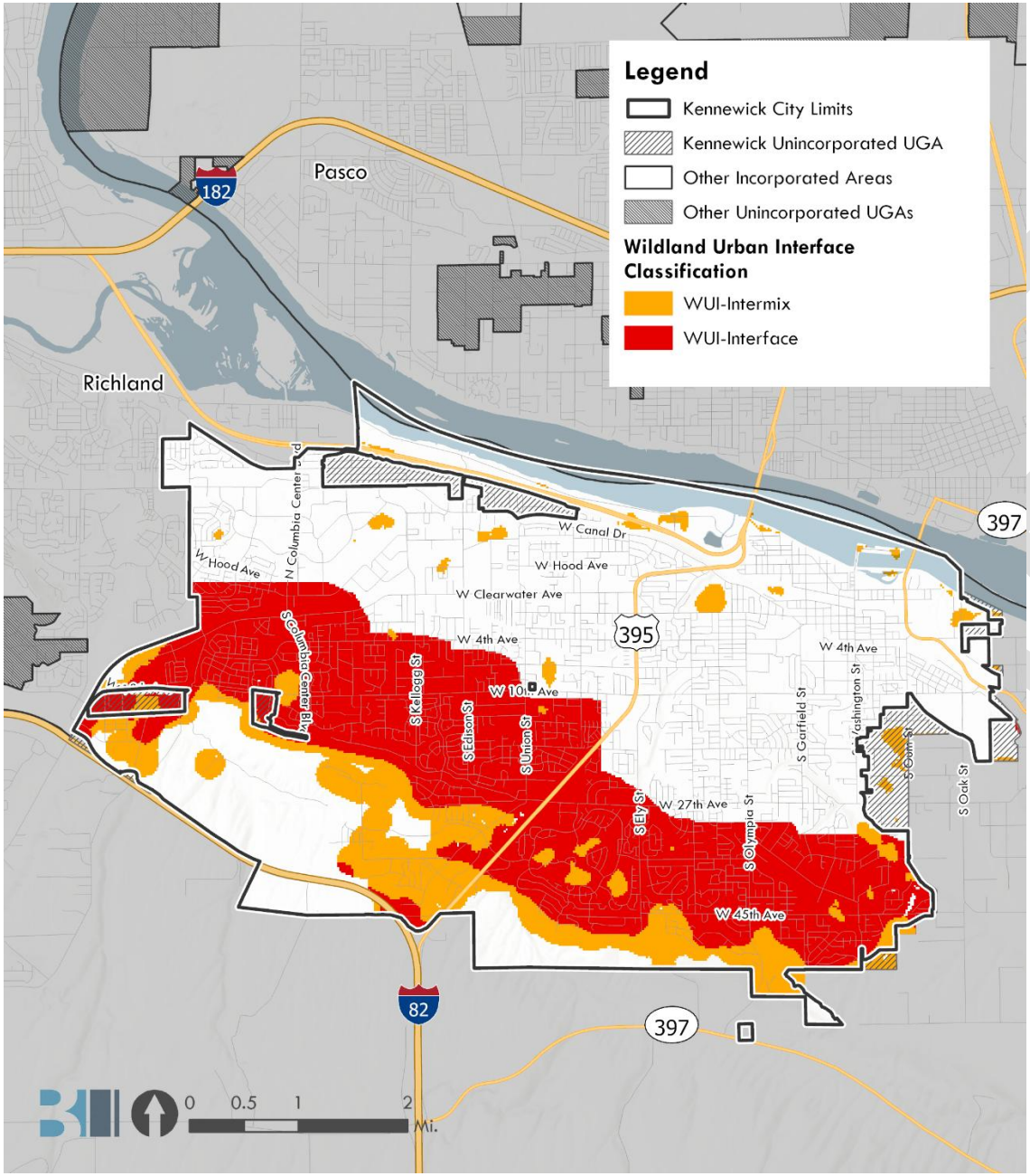
A higher health disparity ranking represents a higher "risk" or potential for harm from a combination of environmental and vulnerability factors. Prevailing socioeconomic characteristics and health factors—such as rates of poverty, chronic disease (like asthma) or low birthweight, limited English proficiency, race/ethnicity, or transportation expenses—can lead to worse health outcomes in some parts of the city than others despite varying levels of environmental exposures throughout the city (see **Figure H-75**). Environmental exposures include the levels of certain pollutants that residents and workers come into contact with, including airborne pollutants (e.g., diesel emissions, O_3, and $PM_{2.5}$) and proximity to traffic density or hazardous waste sites. Environmental exposure occurs when pollution sources get into the environment and affect individuals or populations. Prolonged exposure to pollutants may lead to poor health outcomes. Sensitive or vulnerable populations—including older adults, households living in poverty, disabled individuals, those without health insurance, households without access to a vehicle or other transportation options, and those experiencing homelessness—are at increased risk.

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47 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p. 150, 173), October2025.
48 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p. 195), October 2025.

Figure H-74. Wildland Urban Interface in Kennewick (2019)

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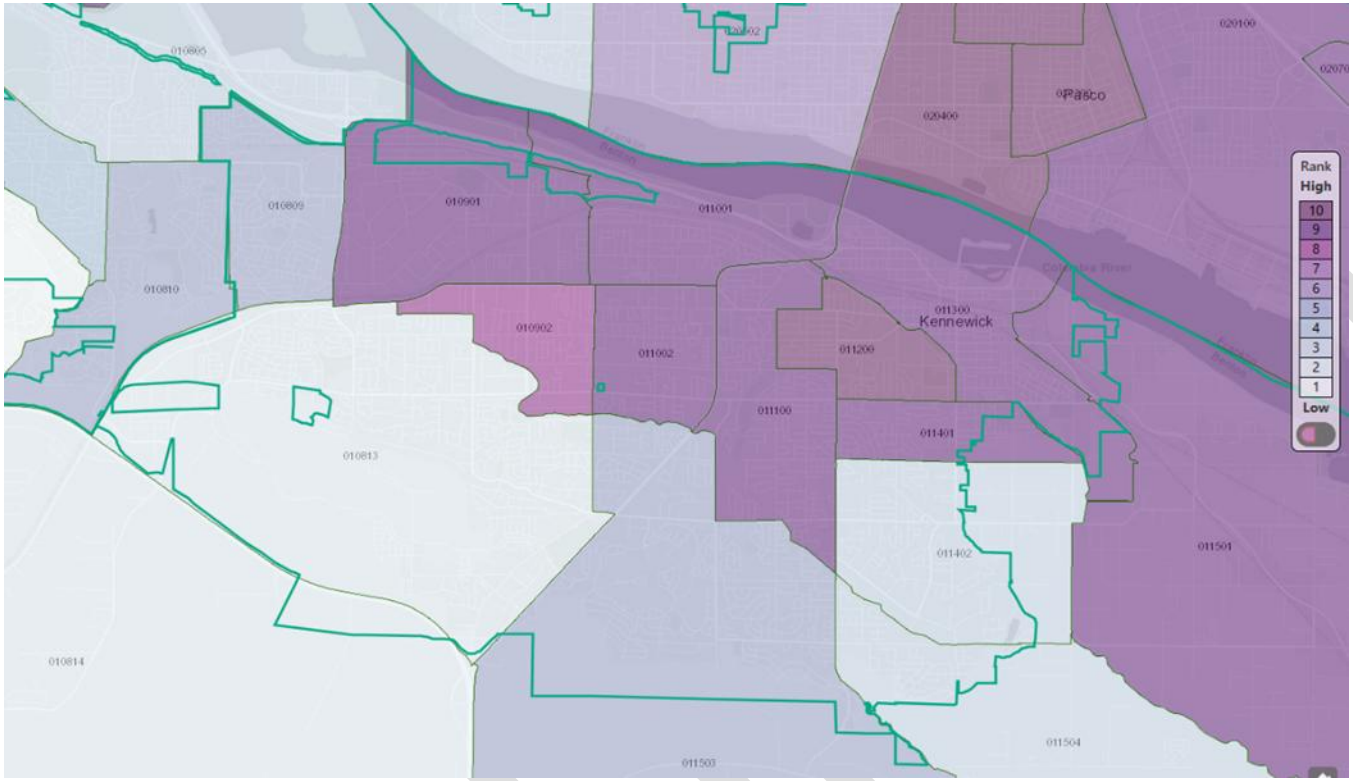

Legend
Kennewick City Limits
Kennewick Unincorporated UGA
Other Incorporated Areas
Other Unincorporated UGAs
Wildland Urban Interface Classification
WUI-Intermix
WUI-Interface
Pasco
Richland
182
82
395
397
W Canal Dr
W Hood Ave
W Clearwater Ave
W 4th Ave
W 10th Ave
W 27th Ave
W 45th Ave
S Columbia Center Blvd
S Kellogg St
S Edison St
S Union St
S Gaffield St
S Washington St
S Olympia St
S Oak St
0 0.5 1 2 Mi.

Sources: WA Department of Ecology, (2019); BERK, 2025.

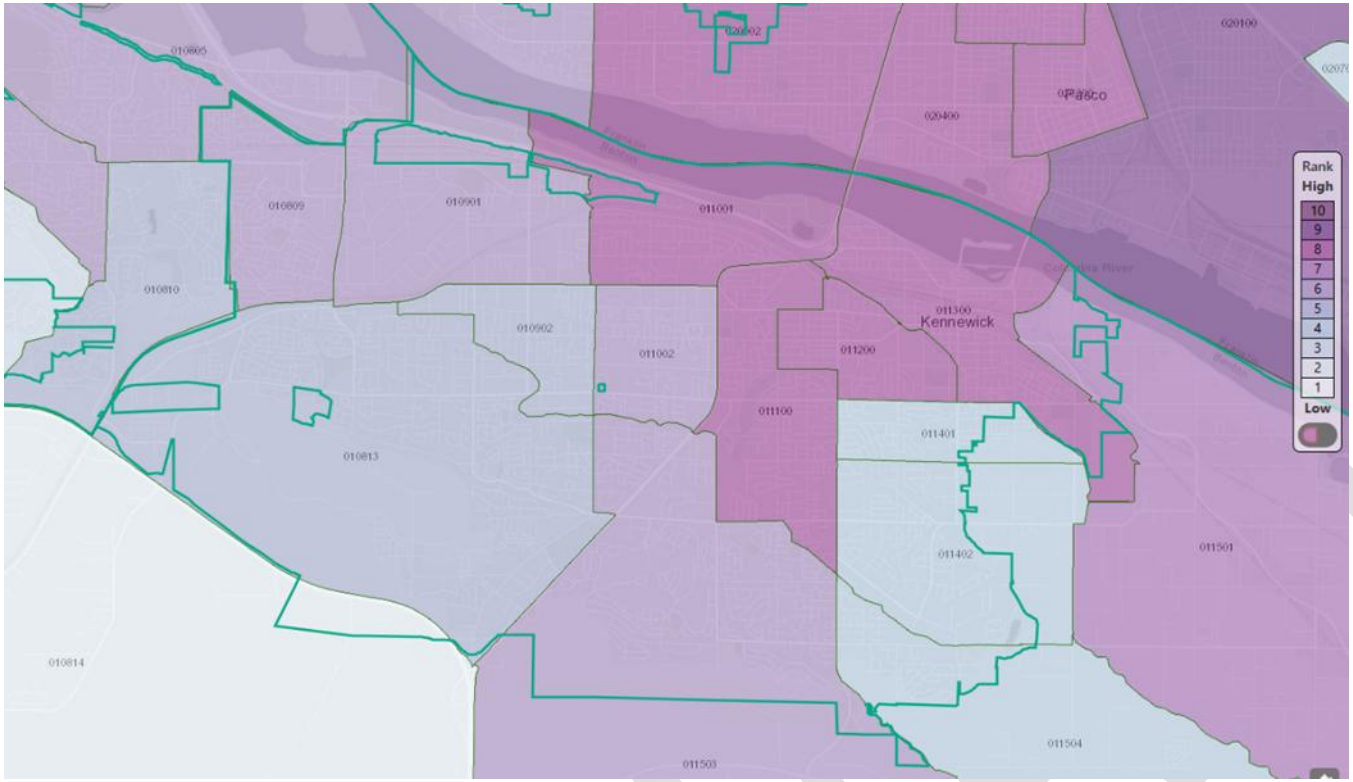
The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure H-75. Environmental Health Disparities and Exposures in Kennewick

Environmental Health Disparities



Environmental Exposures



Source: Washington Health Disparities Map, Version 2.0, July 2022.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Noise

Noise is defined as sound that is loud or unpleasant or that causes disturbance. There are several different ways to measure noise, depending on the source of the noise, the receiver, and the reason for the noise measurement. Noise levels are often reported as A-weighted decibels (dBA) which is a standard unit used to measure sound intensity while accounting for the human ear's sensitivity to different frequencies. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) considers noise levels below 65 dBA acceptable for residential development, between 65-75 dBA as normally unacceptable (e.g., additional mitigation would be required to reduce interior noise levels, and noise levels about 75 dBA as unacceptable for residential development. The 65 dBA noise level is important because it represents the exterior noise level which can be reduced to 45 dBA using standard construction techniques. An interior noise level of 45 dBA is the commonly accepted maximum interior noise level for residential uses.[49]

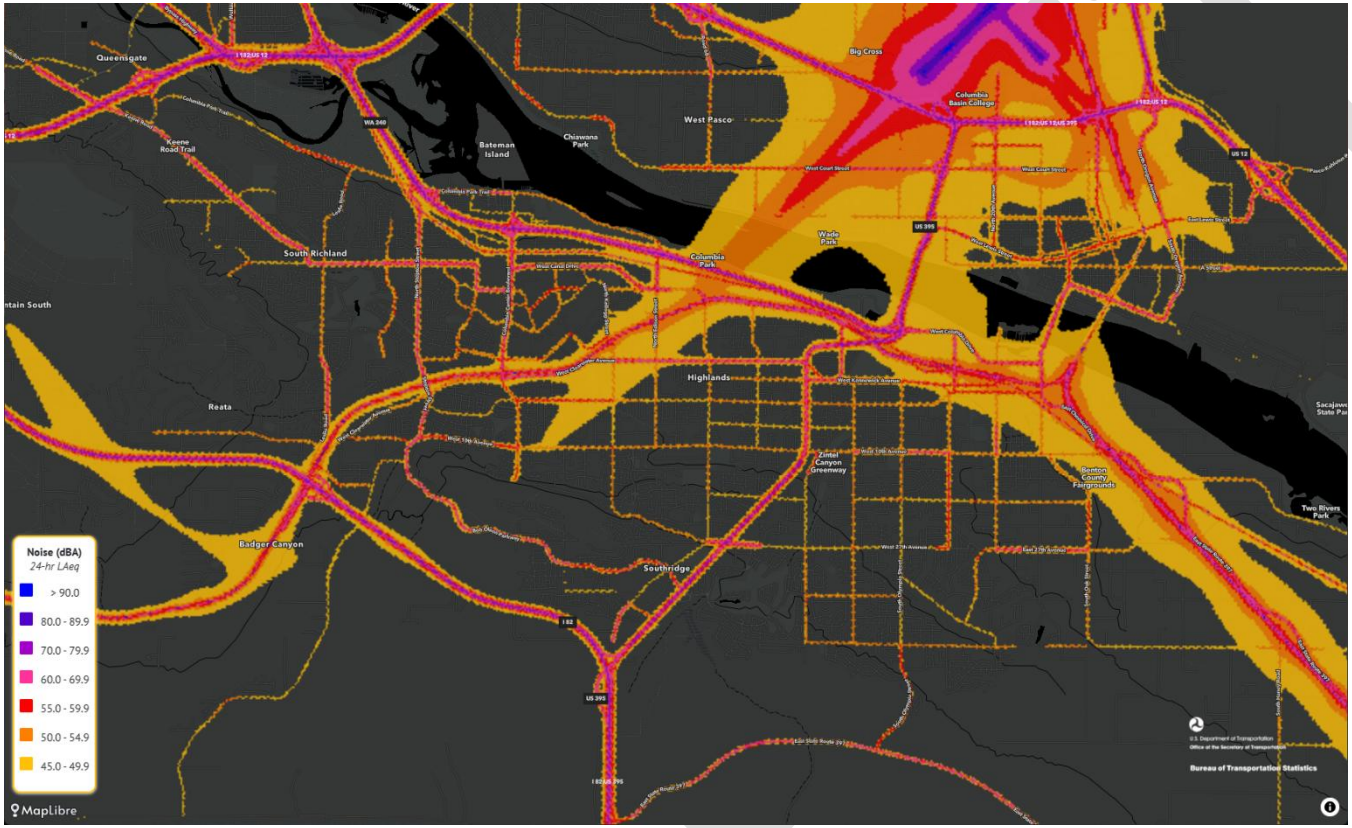
Health effects of noise in a community arise from interference with human activities, including sleep, speech, recreation, and tasks that demand concentration or coordination. Health impacts from noise include hypertension, heart disease, and likely poor school performance among children. Additionally, noise can affect

[49] HUD Noise Abatement and Control, 2026; HUD Noise Guidebook, 2023.

quality of life and cause vibrations that impact hospitals and health care facilities. Direct effects of noise that indirectly affect health include speech interference, sleep disturbance, task interference, impairment of classroom learning, non-auditory health effects, and aversive effects on emotion and tranquility.[50]

Noise levels in Kennewick are highest along major arterials, near the railway, and below the flight path of the Tri-Cities Airport . Most other areas within Kennewick are below the 45 dBA threshold measured by the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Noise Map. See **Figure H-76**. Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live in areas with more noise per **Figure H-9**. The City regulates noise levels between land uses in KMC Chapter 9.52, and interior and exterior noise limits and mitigation may apply if federal funds are used to develop housing (e.g., HUD noise abatement and control standards). Motor vehicle noise performance standards and maximum permissible noise levels on public highways (SR 240 and US 395 in Kennewick) are also regulated by the City in KMC 11.36.120 and by the State in WAC 173-62.

Figure H-76. Noise Levels in Kennewick and the Surrounding Area (2020)



Notes: dBA: A-weighted decibel, a unit of sound measurement corrected for how humans hear sounds; 24-hr lAeq: Average sound energy over a 24-hour period.

50 PHSKC, Community Health and Airport Operations Related Noise and Air Pollution: Report to the Legislature, 2020; PSRC Airport Compatible Land Use Plan, 2011, p 29; DOH, July 2023; Wyle, 2011, p 4.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Source: USDOT National Transportation Noise Map, 2023.

Urban Heat

Extreme heat is among the most pervasive weather-related hazards in the United States, and Washington's summers are becoming increasingly hotter and longer. The Tri-Cities Region and Kennewick UGA are expected to see warmer year-round temperatures, higher maximum summer temperatures, and more frequent and severe heat waves. Extreme heat is expected to be an increasingly prevalent hazard in Kennewick, with a projected increase of at least 10 additional days of extreme heat (over 100° F) by the end of the century in the Tri-Cities Region. Per the *Tri-Cities Climate Vulnerability Assessment* (Appendix C of the *Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element*), key risks associated with extreme heat include:

- More extreme heat days puts residents in the Tri-Cities Region at risk of heat-related illness and death. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures stresses the body and contributes to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Individuals with chronic health conditions and people without adequate shelter, such as unhoused individuals are more at risk of injury and death from extreme heat. In addition, older community members, youth, and people with pre-existing health conditions (e.g., diabetes or heart disease) are more susceptible to adverse health outcomes. People who work outside are also at heightened risk of health issues related to extreme heat and poor air quality. Extreme heat events that put residents at risk of heat-related illnesses can also increase the need for emergency responses, who are also vulnerable to heat-related illness and can face injury or death by working in extreme heat situations to respond to emergencies.[51]
- Warming air temperatures will disrupt the productivity of important ecosystems and critical areas through rising surface water temperatures, range shifts, and subsequent competition with invasive species. For example, warming air and water temperatures have contributed to algal blooms and allowed non-native invasive species in the Columbia River Basin to thrive, out-competing important native species like Chinook salmon. In the Tri-Cities Region, more than 75% of indigenous wildlife species within the central Columbia Basin are dependent on wetlands and other riverine corridors. Summer maximum temperatures are expected to increase significantly in most of Kennewick. Warming winter temperatures can also increase pest populations, especially for mosquitos.[52]
- Higher temperatures and more extreme heat days increase cooling demands and place additional stress on older buildings and HVAC systems. Increasing use of air conditioning depends on a stable, affordable electric supply. Rising electricity costs from climate-induced grid strain could further burden low-income households and rural communities. The region's growing population and aging infrastructure increase pressure on existing grid capacity. Prolonged periods of high temperatures can also cause roads to warp and buckle, damage bridge joints, and increase deterioration of pavement.[53]
- The employees, operations, and infrastructure of industries and businesses in the Tri-Cities Region are at risk of climate hazards including extreme heat. For example, warmer summers increase irrigation demands and put heat stress on certain agricultural crops and livestock. Climate risks can impact regional industries and businesses by destroying property, forcing business owners to temporarily close storefronts, and discouraging people from purchasing goods and services in-person due to unfavorable or dangerous conditions.[54]

"Urban heat islands" occur when natural land cover is replaced by large amounts of pavement, buildings, and other surfaces that absorb and retain heat. Structures such as buildings, roads, and other infrastructure absorb and re-emit the sun's heat more than natural landscapes such as forests and water bodies. Urban areas,

51 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p 171–192), October 2025.
52 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p 173, 193–214), October 2025.
53 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p 215–238), October 2025.
54 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p 239–255), October 2025

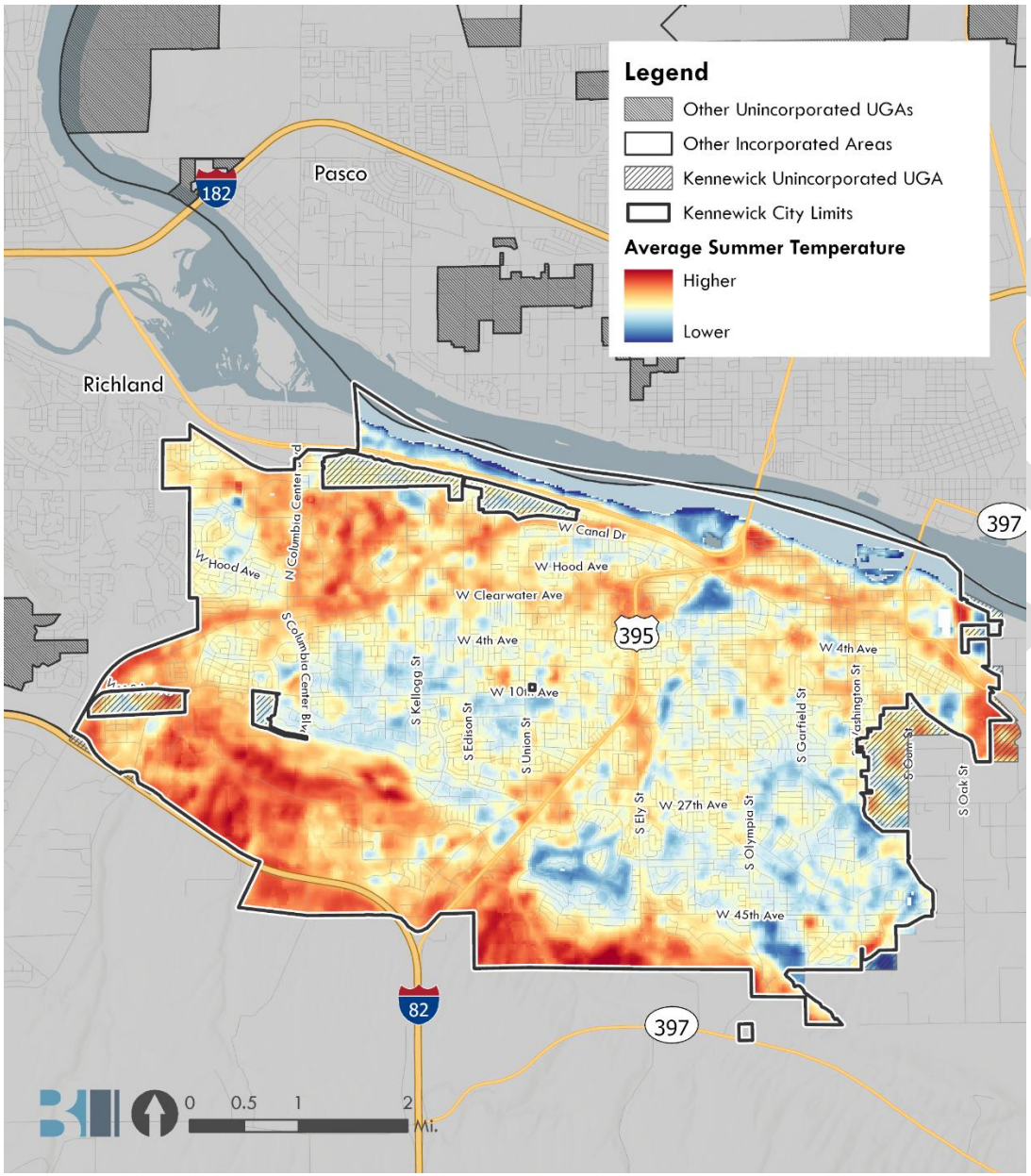
where greenery is limited, become "islands" of higher temperatures relative to outlying areas. This effect increases energy costs (e.g., for air conditioning), air pollution levels, and heat-related illness and mortality and can further exacerbate heat exposure from climate change and the impacts of naturally occurring heat waves. Heat islands are also riskier for sensitive populations, including older adults, young children, populations with low-income, outdoor workers, and people in poor health. High pavement and rooftop surface temperatures can also heat up stormwater runoff, which drains into storm sewers and raises water temperatures as it is released into streams, rivers, ponds, and lakes.[55]

Figure H-77 maps average daily maximum land surface temperature relative to mean summer land surface temperature of about 43°C in Kennewick from 2020 to 2024. Areas where the land surface temperature is above the mean are color coded, with yellow about 5°C above the mean and the darkest red approximately 12°C above the mean. Areas in light blue are about 5°C below the mean and areas in the darkest blue are about 20°C below the mean. While all of Kennewick is exposed during a heat event, certain areas are hotter than others, though this does not appear to be linked to the distribution of the population by race and ethnicity. Parts of the city with more paved surfaces and less tree canopy and other vegetation tend to experience more heat, generally the more commercial and industrial areas of the city as well as those higher into the foothills (tree canopy coverage is mapped in **Figure H-78**). South Kennewick and portions of the Three Rivers area experience much higher land surface temperatures than the citywide average. By 2050, Kennewick is expected to see a change in summer maximum temperature of about 6.6°F.[56] While there is limited agricultural land left within the Kennewick UGA, surrounding farmland is also vulnerable to drought and heatwaves as are farm and outdoor workers. The ability to keep cool as temperatures rise during the summer is important especially in areas where heat severity is higher and tree canopy coverage is lower. Keeping cool is a function of surrounding tree canopy as well as how well insulated the building structures are, the presence or capacity of mechanical and/or natural cooling systems, and the ability of the structure to reflect heat during the summer and absorb it during the winter.

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55 EPA Reduce Urban Heat Island Effect, 2023; EPA Heat Island Effect, 2023; EPA Heat Island Impacts, 2023.
56 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, Appendix C Vulnerability Assessment (p. 196), October2025.

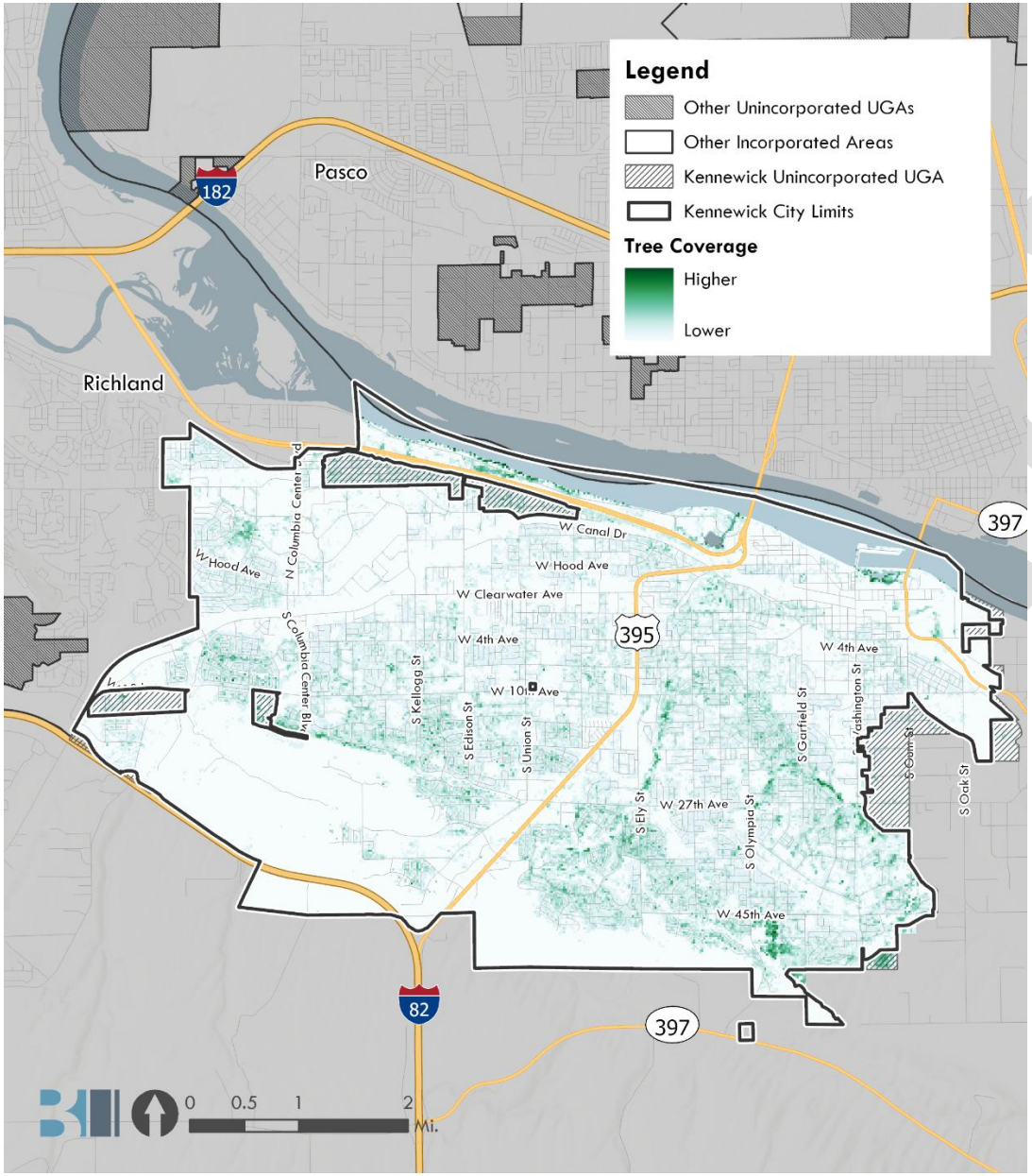
Figure H-77. Average Summer Surface Temperatures in Kennewick (2020 to 2024)



Sources: LANDSAT8, US Geological Survey, 2020 to 2024; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure H-78. Tree Coverage in Kennewick (2023)



Sources: National Land Cover Database, 2023; BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Engagement

Additional housing focused engagement was conducted as part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update to better understand contributing factors to racially disparate impacts, displacement, exclusions in housing, and future displacement risk. See **Housing Appendix** for a summary of housing focused engagement conducted to date, including the following key themes:

- People of color disproportionately face barriers to housing in Kennewick.
- The cultural desire to retain single-family housing is a barrier to build the types of homes many people need. Single-family houses remain a strong market preference, especially for young families, but most stakeholders agree a wider variety of housing is needed to serve different incomes and populations. There is also a Not-in-My-Backyard (NIMBY) response to reduced parking and walkable neighborhoods and a lack of public support.
- Infill development is viewed as a priority over expanding to the edge of urban growth boundaries, but infill can be more expensive with land costs and infrastructure upgrades.`
- Policies and strategies can take too long to be implemented and do not prevent short-term housing difficulties. It is important to bring short-term solutions as long-term sustainability is built.
- The number of people experiencing homelessness is increasing but shelter capacity remains limited. There is a need for measures that prevent people from losing stable housing in the first place. It is also important to highlight differences between affordable and permanent supportive housing as different populations have different housing needs.
- Need more affordable rental and ownership options. The high cost of developing rental and ownership housing is passed on to residents.
- There are not enough affordable housing developers to meet demand. Poor landlord protections are discouraging to providing affordable housing as there is a greater risk of damage, or lack of payment. It would be helpful to have additional supports for landlords to incentivize them to rent affordable housing.
- High income requirements for housing applications (e.g., 2-3x income of monthly cost) is a barrier for many households, and many working individuals are still financially unable to rent or own. The City should encourage both more affordable housing options and more living wage jobs.

Policy Review

Introduction

HB 1220 indicates cities and counties should identify and implement "policies and regulations to address and begin to undo racially disparate impacts (RDI), displacement, and exclusion in housing caused by local policies, plans, and actions." This section evaluates goals and policies in the current Comprehensive Plan for their capacity to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-displacement and undo impacts and reduce barriers identified in the rest of the Comprehensive Plan Draft Housing Technical Appendix.

Housing Element Review

To review the housing element of the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan, the team evaluated a series of questions designed to identify policies and regulations which could result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and housing exclusion. Key questions include:

- Is the policy effective in accommodating needed housing?
- Does this policy contribute to racially disparate impacts or exclusion in housing?
- Does the policy increase displacement risk?
- Does the policy provide vulnerable communities protection from displacement?
- Does the policy language include vague terms that could be used to marginalize vulnerable community members?
- Who benefits and who is burdened by the policy?
- Each policy in the Housing Element is reviewed using the criteria shown below. Policies evaluated as "C" or "A" are addressed in the Recommendations section.

The evaluation is organized around the following criteria:

- S, Supportive. The policy is valid and supports achieving the GMA goal for housing and meeting the identified housing needs. The policy is needed and addresses identified racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing.
- A, Approaching. The policy can help achieve the GMA goal for housing and support meeting the identified housing needs but may be insufficient or does not address racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing.
- C, Challenging. The policy may challenge the City's ability to achieve the GMA goal for housing and meet the identified housing needs. The policy's benefits and burdens should be reviewed to optimize the ability to meet the policy's objectives while improving the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens imposed by the policy.
- NA, Not Applicable. The policy does not impact the City's ability to achieve the GMA goal for housing and meet the identified housing needs and has no influence or impact on racially disparate impacts, displacement, or exclusion.

Figure H-79 applies the above evaluation framework across goals and policies in the existing Housing Element.

Figure H-79. Housing Element Goal and Policy Evaluation Findings

Goal or Policy	Initial Evaluation	Evaluation Notes
Goal 1: Support and develop a variety of housing types and densities to meet the diverse needs of the population.	S/A	This goal helps support neighborhood-level diversity of housing types. It could be improved by emphasizing how this diversity of housing types may impact who can afford to live in a given neighborhood and could be improved with language that ensures housing types are affordable for residents of all income levels.
Policy 1.1. Recognize manufactured homes as an important component of the single-family housing market and regulate them in the same way as site-built homes.	A	Depending on how this policy is implemented, it may lead to regulation of manufactured homes in a way that precludes them altogether and should be worded in a way that centers the fair treatment of manufactured homes and their residents in City policy.
Policy 1.2. Support special needs housing within a variety of residential environments.	A	Policy could be more specific and inclusive. Rather than "a variety of residential environments", wording such as "all residential environments" should be used.

Policy 1.3. Allow residential developments such as condominiums, zero lot lines, accessory apartments and other innovative housing techniques	S/A	Policy supports accommodating more housing but could be strengthened by including more examples or models of successful housing types.
Policy 1.4. Promote development of senior housing in proximity to needed services.	S	Policy supports the needs of a specific vulnerable population of residents. Could be improved by adding specificity to "proximity to needed services" – "within a short walk of senior-oriented services such as clinics, social centers … ", etc.
Policy 1.5. Provide for housing choices in designated mixed use centers where infrastructure is more readily available or can be improved with regional and local funds.	S/A	Policy supports the need for housing choices in highly desirable areas but is worded in a way that implies housing choices may not be available in locations where infrastructure is less readily available. Recommend revising to emphasize housing choice and deemphasize infrastructure availability.
Policy 1.6. Maintain Design Guidelines to ensure new residential development is consistent with the character of existing neighborhoods.	C	In neighborhoods that are already exclusive, the result of a policy that encourages development consistent with that exclusion is further exclusion. Recommend removing policy or clarifying what is meant by character.
Goal 2: Encourage preservation of the existing housing stock through public and private investments.	S/A	Goal supports and speaks to the need for preservation as an aspect of housing affordability but could be worded in a way that makes that link more explicit.
Policy 2.1. Pursue abatement of dilapidated residential structures that cannot be preserved.	NA	
Policy 2.2. Support the Historic Preservation Commission and private efforts to preserve local historic residential properties.	NA	
Policy 2.3. Rehabilitate qualified homes using HUD funds.	A	Update policy to be broader and to allow for more than just HUD as a source of housing rehabilitation funds.
Policy 2.4. Encourage preservation, rehabilitation and redevelopment of existing housing stock and support neighborhood based improvement efforts.	S/A	Policy supports the need for local efforts to be at the forefront of preservation, but could be improved with language about funding these efforts in communities that may have less access to capital funds required to do neighborhood-based improvement efforts
Goal 3: Promote affordable housing for all economic segments of the community.	S/A	Goal could be improved by expanding the promotion of affordable housing to more than just economic segments of the community, or by emphasizing the stronger need for affordable housing at the lower end of the income range.
Policy 3.1. Promote affordable infill residential construction through flexibility in development techniques.	A	This could be improved by expanding scope from flexibility in development techniques to a wider range of housing cost reduction strategies. These could include items such as those listed in policy 3.2

Policy 3.2. Explore the use of density bonuses, parking reductions, multi-family tax exemptions, and permit expediting to encourage the development of housing affordable at below market-rate.	S/A	Recommend updating policy to use "pursue", rather than "explore" to convey urgency with which more below-market affordable housing options are needed.
Policy 3.3. Promote homeownership opportunities for households of all incomes.	A	In the context of rising homeownership costs, this policy lacks the specificity required to have impacts as cost is such a significant barrier for most households. Recommend wording in a way that emphasizes this, and in a way that purposefully includes households that have previously been excluded from homeownership opportunities
Policy 3.4. Work with other jurisdictions and organizations, including the Kennewick Housing Authority and non-profit housing developers, to address the need for housing to be affordable to low and very low-income households.	S	Policy supports the need for collaboration and sharing resources to get affordable housing moving for lowest income households

Land Use Element Review

A similar set of criteria was used to evaluate relevant goals and policies in the Land Use Element for their capacity to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-displacement and undo identified impacts. The evaluation is organized around the following criteria:

- S, Supportive. The policy is valid and supports achieving the GMA goal for land use. The policy is needed and addresses identified racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing.
- A, Approaching. The policy can help achieve the GMA goal for land use but may be insufficient or does not address racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing.
- C, Challenging. The policy may challenge the City's ability to achieve the GMA goal for land use. The policy's benefits and burdens should be reviewed to optimize the ability to meet the policy's objectives while improving the equitable distribution of benefits and burdens imposed by the policy.
- N/A, Not Applicable. The policy does not impact the City's ability to achieve the GMA goal for land use and has no influence or impact on racially disparate impacts, displacement, or exclusion.

Figure H-80 applies the above evaluation framework across relevant goals and policies in the existing Land Use Element. It does not include all goals and policies under the element but rather the goals and policies that may affect and/or conflict with racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing. Within the comprehensive plan, the Land Use section is split up into relevant subsections, such as Residential or Urban Design. These subsections make up the first part of each goal or policy in the table below.

Figure H-80. Land Use Element Goal and Policy Evaluation Findings

Goal or Policy	Initial Evaluation	Evaluation Notes

Residential Goal 1: Provide for attractive, walkable, and well-designed residential neighborhoods, with differing densities and compatible with neighboring areas.	A	Removing wording related to "… compatible with neighboring areas", or more clearly define compatibility in a way that mitigates, rather than enhances, racially disparate impacts (e.g., compatible form, scale, etc.).
Residential Policy 1.1. Maintain residential zoning regulations that offer a similar graduation in building scale and bulk.	A	Policy may maintain existing inequalities. Recommend removing, or more clearly stating the purpose of maintaining building scale regulations.
Residential Policy 1.2. Require multi-family housing to incorporate architectural forms and features compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Features that promote compatibility include landscaping, setbacks, rooflines and building forms that reduce the appearance of bulk.	C	Adding additional burdens to the development of multifamily housing can add costs that may preclude development at more affordable prices. Additionally, with middle housing requirements, the term "multifamily housing" is somewhat vague, as forms of housing such as duplexes can house multiple households.
Residential Policy 1.4. Use natural and man-made features to separate different residential densities.	C	Conflicts directly with Residential Goal 1's purpose of well-designed neighborhoods with differing densities. Recommend removing.
Residential Policy 1.5. Encourage adequate pedestrian connections with nearby neighborhood and transit facilities in all residential site development.	S/A	This policy could be strengthened with "require" rather than "encourage".
Residential Goal 2: Provide appropriate public facilities supporting residential areas.	S	Adequate public facilities are a necessary component of the housing ecosystem. Could be improved by being more explicit about what those adequate public facilities are.
Residential Policy 2.2. Encourage irrigation service throughout residential areas, when available, to support and maintain healthy landscaping.	C	Recommend removing this policy or replacing with a policy regarding water-wise landscaping. Irrigation infrastructure is expensive, and residential irrigation can compete directly with industrial or agricultural uses. Additionally, it is a subjective landscaping choice to use plants that may not be well adapted to the climate of Kennewick.
Residential Goal 3: Promote a variety of residential densities with a minimum density target of 3 units per acre as averaged throughout the urban area.	S/A	Minimum density goals encourage more compact growth but should consider increasing the target to ensure adequate housing across all income levels. Goal could be improved by being more specific with what that minimum density metric would promote.
Residential Policy 3.1. Establish and **implement maximum densities in the City's** residential zoning categories.	C	Maximum densities established are far too low, especially for high density residential. Additionally, the maximum densities are low enough that a specific middle housing exception is made in the zoning code. Recommend revising or eliminating minimum density

		requirements, as 27 units per acre (the maximum standard) is well under a typical medium to large sized affordable housing development
Residential Policy 3.2. Residential Low Density: Place lands constrained by sensitive areas, those intended to provide transition to the rural area, or those appropriate for larger lot housing within the Residential Low Density land use designation to allow for a range of lifestyles.	A	Recommend clarifying or eliminating section worded "… appropriate for larger lot housing …" as it is unclear what that means in practice. Additionally, this policy should be revised to ensure that no development standard is being imposed on middle housing that is not imposed on single family housing.
Residential Policy 3.3. Residential Medium Density – Place areas that can support high-quality, compact, urban development with access to urban services, transit, and infrastructure, whether through new development or through infill.	A	Wording of policy seems to be missing context about what areas described should be zoned as. Additionally, this policy should be revised to ensure that no development standard is being imposed on middle housing that is not imposed on single family housing.
Residential Policy 3.4. Residential High Density – Designate land for Residential High Density (HD) where access, topography, and adjacent land uses create conditions appropriate for a variety of unit types, or where there is existing multi-family development.	C	Contradicts existing goals of differing densities and variety within neighborhoods. Explicitly clustering multifamily development to places with existing multifamily development is exclusionary. Wording around multifamily should be clarified in relation to middle housing.
Residential Goal 4: Provide more housing opportunities near commercial, transit and employment.	S	Could be strengthened by emphasizing why this is important – to reduce transportation costs, to reduce congestion, to facilitate more complete neighborhoods, etc.
Residential Policy 4.1. Locate the highest density residential areas close to shops and services and transportation hubs.	A	Policy should be clarified and defined to be in compliance with State law. If "higher density" includes middle housing, this policy could be imposing a development standard on middle housing development.

Review of Other Elements

A similar set of criteria was used to review goals and policies in other elements of the existing Comprehensive Plan for their capacity to support diversity, equity, inclusion, and anti-displacement and undo identified impacts. For example, the Economic Development Element addresses the development of walkable neighborhoods as attractive places for residents, while the Capital Facilities Element addresses how and where new development takes place. The evaluation is organized around the same framework as the Housing Element, and result are shared in **Figure H-81**, below.

Figure H-81. Goal and Policy Evaluation Findings for Other Elements

Goal or Policy	Initial Evaluation	Evaluation Notes
Capital Facilities Policy 4.6. Encourage development in areas where new facilities can be provided in an efficient manner.	A	Efficient provision of utilities and infrastructure is a key aspect of housing ecosystem, recommend revising this policy to clarify that some areas where facilities can be provided efficiently may not be suitable for development (residential development next to a landfill, etc.)
Economic Development Goal 3: Support the development and redevelopment of walkable, mixed-use neighborhoods as attractive locations for employment, tourism, arts and culture, entertainment and residents	S	Goal could be improved by adding verbiage around ensuring these desirable locations are accessible to residents of all income levels.

Housing Policy Recommendations

Each of the aspects of the Housing Policy Evaluation focused on the following questions:

- Does this goal/policy contribute to racially disparate impacts or exclusion in housing?
- Is the goal/policy effective in accommodating more housing?
- Does the goal/policy increase displacement risk?
- Does the goal/policy provide protection to communities of interest from displacement?
- Does the goal/policy language include vague terms that could be used to marginalize communities of color?

Key takeaways from the policy review and recommended adjustments are summarized below. Implementing these could help Kennewick to reduce disparate impacts and increase inclusion.

- Amend or otherwise remove vague language related to neighborhood character or compatibility that can be used as a way to exclude groups from specific neighborhoods. Ensure policies explicitly reflect specific constraints (e.g., reasons that higher residential densities are not feasible due to sensitive ecosystems or other environmental constraints) rather than using broad language about compatibility.
- Include language to ensure that housing in high-demand areas, such as mixed-use centers or other urban nodes, are provided for at all income levels. Providing more housing in key locations to reduce travel times and place residents closer to jobs is great, but care needs to be taken to ensure that this benefit is equitably distributed.
- Purposefully integrate language about middle housing form and scale within existing low density residential zones. Since this includes state provisions relating to moderate density housing such as townhomes and multiplexes, updating references to "multifamily housing" to not exclude these moderate density options should be undertaken.
- Review LOS standards and trip generation rates for infill and middle housing to ensure adequate facility planning and mitigation. Consider how service standards and mitigation impact what types of residential developments are financially feasible in Kennewick.
- Add language relating to anti-displacement measures where appropriate. When areas are revitalized, existing residents and businesses can be pushed out by rising prices, and having proactive policy in place to address this issue should be a priority.

Summary of Findings

Overall, the analysis shows evidence of displacement risk, racially disparate impacts, and exclusion in housing in Kennewick. These include:

Homeownership rates are lower among Hispanic or Latino households than White households (45% versus 69%; **Figure H-17**) and Hispanic or Latino owner household are more likely to be cost-burdened compared to the city overall or White, non-Hispanic households (25% versus 17% and 15%, respectively; **Figure H-53**).

Median household income is lower for Hispanic or Latino households than it is for White, non-Hispanic households ($61,185 versus $78,473; **Figure H-23**) and Census block groups with median household incomes below the citywide median correspond with areas where more Hispanic or Latino residents live (**Figure H-22** and **Figure H-9**). A higher percentage of Hispanic or Latino households are extremely low-or very low-income compared to White households (30% versus 21%; **Figure H-27**).

Displacement risk is high in the northern portions of the city (including the Vista, West Highlands, and Waterfront/Downtown areas). See **Figure H-65** and **Figure H-66.**

Hispanic or Latino population experience a moderate level of segregation within Kennewick and compared to Benton County overall. White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in the Columbia Center area and southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and around Downtown and in the West Highlands area (**Figure H-9**). Health disparities generally rank higher in the north portions of the city where more Hispanic or Latino residents live (**Figure H-74**). Noise levels in Kennewick are also highest along major arterials and near the railway where more Hispanic or Latino residents live (**Figure H-76**).

- Policy language in the existing Comprehensive Plan should be updated to support development of housing types that are generally more affordable than single family homes, and which could in turn help to reduce racial disparities in homeownership and cost-burden given racial income disparities in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities region.

DRAFT

GAP ANALYSIS

Current Housing Needs

The following is a summary of current housing needs in Kennewick, based on existing conditions and the analysis of displacement, displacement risk, exclusion, and racially disparate impacts.

Housing Affordability

More than 9,200 households are burdened with high housing costs.

Housing affordability is an urgent challenge for many households in Kennewick. In 2021, nearly one in every three Kennewick households were cost-burdened (**Figure H-52**), more than 9,200 households in total. About 3,700 of these were severely cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than half of their income on housing. Because housing costs have increased faster than incomes since 2020 (**Figure H-61**), the number of cost-burdened households has likely grown.

Housing affordability needs are disproportionate across tenure, income groups, and racial and ethnic groups.

Renter households are much more commonly cost burdened than owner households (**Figure H-52**), which indicates more vulnerability to displacement risk. Renter households with incomes at or below 50% MFI were most likely to experience cost burden—about four out of five of these households were cost burdened (**Figure H-54**). More than half (55%) of renter households with incomes between 50 – 80% MFI also experienced cost burden. There is minimal differences between race and ethnicity for renter households in overall cost burden status, although White renter households are more likely to be severely cost-burdened and Hispanic or Latino renter households are more likely to be moderately cost-burdened (**Figure H-53**).

Owner households with incomes at or below 30% MFI were most likely to experience cost burden but the total number of owner households experiencing cost burden is highest for households with incomes between 50 – 80% MFI (**Figure H-58**). Hispanic or Latino owner households are the most likely to be cost burdened with a notably higher percentage of Hispanic or Latino owner households spending more than 50% of their income on housing than White households (**Figure H-53**).

There is an adequate supply of employment opportunities in the city, but housing supply and affordability are growing concerns.

The jobs to housing ratio is another measure used to understand whether there is an adequate supply of housing to support local employment in a community. As of 2023, the jobs to housing ratio in Kennewick was 1.40 (46,920 jobs divided by 33,473 housing units), within the higher end of the balanced range of 0.75–1.5 and similar to the ratio in 2022 and 2021.[57] This suggests there is an adequate supply of employment opportunities in the city, but that housing supply and affordability are growing concerns.

Market-rate rental housing is not meeting the needs of many residents with low and moderate incomes and ownership housing costs are out of reach for all but households with high incomes.

One likely reason for the housing affordability needs in Kennewick is the challenging trend in rising housing costs (**Figure H-59**). As of summer 2025, a household needs to have an income equivalent to 58% of MFI to afford to rent the average 1- or 2-bedroom apartment and 99% MFI to afford to buy a median priced detached single-family home.[58] However, about 44% of renters have an income below 50% MFI and 38% of homeowners have an income below MFI (**Figure H-**

[57] ESD Covered Employment, 2021–2023; OFM Postcensal Estimates of Housing Units, April 1, 2021 to April 1, 2023.

[58] HUD sets affordable rent standards by percent of MFI for all counties (published by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission [link]). These standards are adjusted to match the assumed household size that would occupy the unit.

26). Housing values have also been rising faster than incomes (**Figure H-61**) and there is a lack of supply compared to demand (**Figure H-62**), resulting in increasingly limited home ownership opportunities. The existing housing inventory consists primarily of larger detached homes (**Figure H-42**) with minimal supply of smaller units. A limited supply of rental housing options in many neighborhoods combined with low apartment vacancy rates (**Figure 57**) has also resulted in additional upward pressure on market rents. Single-family and owned housing are typically more costly than rental housing, although none of these housing types are typically affordable to a 50% MFI household or below (**Figure H-63**).

Diversifying the city's housing stock consistent with changing demographic needs and desires could help lower housing costs overall.

There is an existing misalignment between the size of housing units available and the size of households for both renter and owner households, with an increased need for smaller ownership units and larger rental units. Approximately 32% of rental units have 0-1 bedrooms while 40% of rental households are 1-person households and 27% are 2-person households. In contrast, approximately 2% of owner-occupied units have 0-1 bedrooms (**Figure H-44**) while 19% of owner households consist of 1 person and 40% consist of 2 people (**Figure H-19**).

Diversifying the city's housing stock to include more smaller unit, multiunit, and rental housing could potentially lower housing costs overall. The real estate market in Kennewick is moving in this direction but likely not at the pace required to meet housing needs. Since 2010, a relatively stable number of single-family unit permits have been permitted annually while the share of larger multifamily (five or more units) has diminished somewhat (particularly since 2020). A slightly growing share of duplex and middle housing permits (two to four units) and ADUs have been issued in recent years. See **Figure H-48**.

Public action will be necessary to provide incentives and subsidies to support affordability for households with lower incomes.

For the lowest income households, often the market does not produce affordable housing even if a diverse range of housing types are built. In these cases, income-restricted or government supported affordable housing can be part of the solution. Currently, subsidized or income-restricted housing units make up about 8% of the existing housing stock in the city.[59] The data in **Figure H-54** and **Figure H-58** indicates there is demand for more income-restricted units across all groups earning below MFI. Special housing is also needed to support those experiencing homelessness. While the total number of people experiencing homelessness in Benton and Franklin counties appears to have declined slightly from 2015 to 2025, approximately 35% of unhoused individuals in the two counties were unsheltered in 2025 (see **Figure H-13**). The Kennewick School District also documented approximately 2.7% of students experiencing homelessness during the 2024-25 school year, slightly lower than the statewide percentage of 3.9%.[60] There is currently one overnight shelter available for unhoused youth ages 16-20. No other emergency beds are currently available in Kennewick, although several partners provide assistance with temporary or rapid re-housing for individuals currently or at risk of experiencing homelessness.[61] The City could consider working with or furthering existing relationships with partners to fill existing gaps in the availability of income-restricted, subsidized, emergency, and permanent supportive housing.

Housing Needs of People of Different Ages & Abilities

Meeting the housing needs of an aging population will be an increasingly important issue in the next 20 years.

About one third of households citywide (30%) include one or more people aged 65 or over and about 10% of households are older adults living alone (**Figure H-4**). Approximately 16% of individuals in Kennewick also live with one or more disabilities (**Figure H-11**). While disabilities can be experienced by all age groups,

59 UW Housing Market Data Toolkit, Subsidized Rental Housing Profile, 2023; OFM, 2025.

60 Students experiencing homelessness include those who are doubled-up (e.g., sharing housing with other people or families due to loss of their own housing), sleeping in hotels/motels, sleeping in public or private shelters, or unsheltered. OSPI Report Card Enrollment 2023-24 School Year.

61 Benton County Homeless Shelters and Partner Agencies, 2025; Safe Harbor Support Center My Friends Place, 2025

populations with a higher proportion of those over age 65 generally correspond with higher disability rates, due to the sensory, physical, and mental effects of aging.

Compared to 2010, Kennewick now has higher percentages of older adults 55 and over (**Figure H-3**). This trend is expected to continue countywide with the proportion of adults 65 and older expected to increase through 2045 (from 17% in 2022 to 20% in 2045 according to OFM projections; **Figure H-6**). In Kennewick, there are an estimated 9,626 residents aged 55 to 64 as of 2023, many of whom will likely remain in the area as they age. Demand for accessible supportive housing and services will likely increase over time as the overall number of older adults increases. Older adults may desire single-family homes at retirement age, but as their abilities and needs change, other forms of housing with smaller lots, townhomes, or assisted living may be attractive for maintenance, accessibility, and affordability purposes (particularly for older adults on fixed incomes). These forms of housing are denser and encouraged in Downtown and other mixed-use parts of the city where residents would also have more access to healthcare and other supportive services. Other household types, including individuals living alone or single parent households, may also prefer smaller housing types throughout other areas of the city for affordability as well.

Housing for families with children is important in Kennewick and the surrounding area.

Another quarter of Kennewick's population is under age 18 (26%) and one third of households include one or more people under 18 (**Figure H-4**). This is about the same as the county as a whole but higher than statewide, which suggests that housing for families with children is particularly important in Kennewick and the surrounding area. The need is likely greater amongst Hispanic or Latino households given the variation in the distribution of age by race and ethnicity (approximately 41% of the city's Hispanic or Latino population are under 20 whereas approximately 21% of the White only population are under 20; **Figure H-2**). The majority of existing owner-occupied units (85%) have 3 or more bedrooms (**Figure H-44**) but median housing costs are unaffordable for many households (**Figure H-63**). Hispanic or Latino households are also more likely to rent than White households (**Figure H-17**) yet only 3% of the rental units have 4 or more bedrooms(**Figure H-44**), suggesting that rental stock includes few detached homes and a limited supply of units for larger families.

Housing Needs Related to Racially Disparate Impacts & Displacement Risk

New state, regional, and county requirements call for cities to assess whether racially disparate housing impacts are happening in their community and whether there are areas at higher risk of displacement. If these things are found, they need to be addressed through policy and regulatory change.

There is evidence of displacement risk, racially disparate impacts, and exclusion in housing in Kennewick.

The analysis above shows evidence of displacement risk, racially disparate impacts, and exclusion in housing in Kennewick. These include lower rates of homeownership among Hispanic or Latino households (**Figure H-17**), higher rates of cost-burden for Hispanic or Latino households (with a particularly high discrepancy between Hispanic or Latino owner households and White owner households; Figure H-53), lower median household income for Hispanic or Latino households (**Figure H-23**). A higher percentage of Hispanic or Latino households are extremely low-or very low-income compared to White households (**Figure H-27**). Hispanic or Latino populations experience a moderate level of segregation within Kennewick and compared to Benton County overall. While there is not complete exclusion in neighborhoods, White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in the Columbia Center area and southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and around Downtown and in the West Highlands area (**Figure H-9**). Displacement risk is higher in the northern portions of the city where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live (including the West Highlands and Waterfront/Downtown areas; **Figure H-66**). Health disparities generally rank higher in the north portions of the city where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live (Figure H-74). Noise levels in Kennewick are also highest along major arterials, near the railway, and under the flight path of the Tri-Cities airport, where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live (**Figure H-76**). Diversifying housing options could be one way to help address these racially disparate impacts and reduce displacement risk.

City of Kennewick's GMA Growth Targets

Population and housing growth targets over the 20-year planning period in Benton County are developed by the County and cities within. In 2025, the County and cities developed population projections for the incorporated and unincorporated areas based on the State's 2022 Medium projection. The agreed upon population forecast is summarized in **Figure H-82**, including a projected population of 108,989 in the City of Kennewick by 2046 (or 21,869 new residents by 2046). The City's growth targets overall and by income band are summarized in **Figure 83** as set in the Benton County CPPs. The greatest need for new units is at the lowest end of the affordability spectrum (less than or equal to 80% AMI). A total of 2,604 units are needed for households earning 30% AMI or less, including 1,597 units of permanent supportive housing that include wrap-around services for people who need support to maintain residency. Emergency housing targets are in addition to permanent supportive housing.

Figure H-82. Benton County 20-Year Population Projection and Distribution (2024–2046)

Jurisdiction	2020 Population	2024 Population	Projected 2046 Population	Projected Growth (2020-2046)	Projected Growth (2024-2046)
Kennewick	83,921	87,120	108,989	25,068	21,869
Richland	60,560	64,190	82,448	21,888	18,258
County (unincorporated)	36,556	37,805	47,355	10,799	9,550
West Richland	16,295	18,280	26,387	10,092	8,107
Prosser	6,062	6,610	8,292	2,230	1,682
Benton City	3,479	3,845	4,985	1,506	1,140
Total	206,873	217,850	278,456	71,583	60,606

Sources: OFM, 2025; City of Kennewick, 2025; Benton County, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Figure 83. City of Kennewick Adopted Housing Growth Targets (2020–2046)

Total Housing Need	Emergency Housing Beds	0-30% AMI: Non-PSH	0-30% AMI: PSH	>30 to ≤50% AMI	>50 to ≤80% AMI	>80 to ≤100% AMI	>100 to ≤50% AMI	>120% AMI
12,626	57	1,597	1,007	2,513	1,772	974	1,104	3,659

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.

Notes: While additional units have been built since 2020, the affordability level of those units is unknown at this time. These units have therefore not been deducted from the overall target to ensure the analysis doesn't imply less remaining need than actually exists. Emergency housing includes emergency housing and shelter and is in addition to permanent housing needs.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2025; Benton County, 2025.

Land Capacity to Meet Projected Need

Current GMA guidance requires jurisdictions to ensure their comprehensive plan housing elements and related development regulations provide sufficient land capacity to accommodate their allocated housing growth targets at each income level. The project team conducted a land capacity analysis (LCA) under current zoning in 2025. The methodology is outlined in the Land Capacity Analysis Memo and was based on Commerce guidance.

Per the *Land Capacity Analysis Memo*, there is sufficient capacity under existing zoning to accommodate population growth targets, and to accommodate housing growth targets overall and for moderate and higher income households (>80% AMI) but there is a deficit of 2,467 units for households at the lowest income levels (≤80% AMI). An estimated 5,117 of the 6,889 units needed to serve households at the lowest income levels would also require subsidies or incentives. See **Figure H-84**. In addition, there is surplus buildable land in several zones that allow congregate care facilities by right that could be developed as emergency housing without jeopardizing the City's 2046 employment needs. However, other existing barriers to the provision of new emergency housing in Kennewick must be addressed to make adequate provisions for meeting emergency housing needs. Adequate Provisions are described in the section below.

Figure H-84. Comparison of Existing Housing Capacity to Aggregated Housing Growth Targets

Housing Need (% of AMI)	Zone Categories	2020–2046 Aggregated Target	Capacity	Surplus / (Deficit)	Units Requiring Subsidies / Incentives
0-≤80% & PSH	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, ADUs	6,889	4,422[1]	(2,467)	5,117[3]
>80 to ≤120%	Moderate Density	2,078	7,914	5,836	0
>120%	Low Density	2,659	13,206[2]	9,547	0
Total		12,626	25,542[2]	12,916	5,117[3]

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.

1 Includes capacity for 279 ADUs on developed residential lots and 365 guaranteed affordable middle housing units.

2 Includes capacity of 812 units in the unincorporated UGA (low density housing for households with incomes >120% AMI).

3 Includes 1,597 non-PSH units and 1,007 PSH units serving households with incomes between 0 to ≤30% AMI and 2,513 units serving households with incomes >30 to ≤50% AMI.

Note: Housing targets are aggregated by zone category consistent with Commerce's Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026 (e.g., aggregated targets for households with incomes between 0 to ≤80% AMI and for households with incomes >80 to ≤120% AMI).

Sources: Benton County, 2025; City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026; Commerce, Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026.

BARRIERS REVIEW

Jurisdictions are not required under GMA to construct housing or ensure housing is produced. They must, however, identify barriers to housing production and make adequate provisions within their power to accommodate all housing needs (see **Figure 83**). Commerce recommends a three-step process for this work:

- Step 1: Review housing production trends to determine if a barrier exists.
- Step 2: Gather information to determine what kind(s) of barriers exist.
- Step 3: Identify and document appropriate programs and actions to overcome each barrier identified.
- This section details production trends and documents existing barriers to housing production in Kennewick (Steps 1 and 2).

Programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability (Step 3) are discussed in Summary of Barriers.

Housing Production Trends Compared to Need

There are several types of barriers that can limit or effectively prohibit the production of housing needed to serve all economic segments. Typically, these barriers increase the cost of development, which makes some projects infeasible. The affordability of new housing depends in part on housing type due to differences in land and construction costs per unit. **Figure H-84** presents zone categories as well as the lowest level of income that can feasibly be served assuming new housing is either market-rate or a subsidized affordable housing project. These categories and resulting affordability assumptions used for the capacity analysis are consistent with Commerce's guidance for updating housing elements in moderate-cost communities and housing market conditions in Kennewick. **Figure H-84** shows that some housing types, and therefore zone categories that support those housing types, are more appropriate for meeting lower income housing needs than others.

Kennewick's total housing growth allocation is for 12,626 units to meet its share of countywide net new housing needs from 2020–2046. To meet this housing target, about 486 net new units must be built annually between 2020 and 2046.[62] Between 2014 and 2024, an average of 396 net new units were built in Kennewick, lower than the annualized total housing target per year. Furthermore, the types of housing produced did not necessarily align with the types of housing needed to meet the targets at each income level. **Figure H-85** presents an analysis of residential development trends by income level compared to housing needs in Kennewick to determine if there are barriers to production in any of the zone categories. Below is a guide to reading the table:

- **Columns A and B** show income level and housing types most appropriate for serving that income level. **Column C** aggregates the net new housing need by income level from Kennewick's growth targets by zone category. These columns all mirror the presentation of housing need by zone category in **Figure H-84** and **Exhibit 12** of the Land Capacity Analysis Memo
- Column D presents these same aggregated targets on an average annual basis.
- Column E presents the actual average annual units produced from 2014 to 2024 based on OFM permit data for the city. Low Density corresponds to net completed detached single-family permits. Moderate Density corresponds to units in structures with 2-4 units, such as duplexes, triplexes, and townhomes with 4 or less units in structure. The remainder of unit production is considered low-rise, mid-rise, or ADU.
- In cases where the historic average annual production (**Column E**) is lower than the average annual need (**Column D**), this indicates there was a production shortfall. This is evidence there are barriers to housing development that could prevent the City from meeting its growth targets. This finding would be noted as a "Yes" and red cell in **Column F**. **Figure H-85** shows a deficit of housing production for low-income (0-80%

[62] A total of 439, 360, and 426 housing units were completed in 2022, 2023, and 2024, respectively, in Kennewick. Between 60-80% of these were single family units each year with the remainder comprised almost entirely of large multifamily units (5+ units). A total of 16 duplexes and 28 units in buildings withs 2-4 units were constructed in 2022 and 2023 (none were built in 2024).

AMI) and moderate-income (80-120% AMI) households as well as emergency housing. This indicates that there are barriers to sufficient housing production among these housing types. There is a surplus of homes developed for higher-income (120%+ AMI) households, indicating no barriers to meeting those housing needs.

Figure H-85. Production Trends in Kennewick by Housing Type Compared to Need by Aggregated Income Level

A Housing Need (% of AMI)	B Housing Types with Potential to Serve These Needs	C Net Aggregated Housing Need 2020–2046	D Avg. Annual Need (2020–2046)	E Avg. Annual Production of Housing Types (2014–2024)	F Production Shortfall Compared to Need?
0 **to ≤80%** & PSH	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, ADUs	6,889	265	111	**Yes**
>80 to ≤120%	Moderate Density	2,078	80	13	**Yes**
>120%	Low Density	3,659	141	272	**No**
	Total Permanent Housing	**12,626**	**486**	**396**	
	Emergency Housing	57	2	0	Yes

Note: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing. While additional units of all housing types listed here have been built since 2020, the affordability level of those units is unknown at this time. These units have therefore not been deducted from the overall target to ensure the analysis doesn't imply less remaining need than actually exists.

Source: OFM, 2025; City of Kennewick, 2025; BERK, 2025.

Housing Barriers

City Staff and the consultant team conducted extensive outreach with stakeholders and elected officials to gather information about what kinds of barriers are hindering the types of housing production needed to meet all housing needs. See **Housing Appendix** for a summary of housing focused engagement.

The team also utilized five checklists provided by Commerce to review and summarize local development regulations and process obstacles related to the following housing types:

- Moderate density housing
- Low-rise and mid-rise housing
- Accessory dwelling units
- Permanent supportive housing and emergency housing

A fifth checklist covered local option tools for addressing affordable housing funding gaps, such as incentives to lower costs and taxes to generate revenue to support affordable housing development.[63]

[63] Blank checklists can be found in Appendix B of Commerce's Guidance for Updating your Housing Element.

The checklist review was informed by the stakeholder/developer interviews, workgroup findings, staff experience, and the assessment of housing market conditions in Kennewick. The checklists document barriers and programs and actions to achieve housing availability consistent with RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d) and are included in the Adequate Provisions Checklists section.

In addition, 5,117 of the 6,889 units needed to serve households at the lowest income levels would require subsidies or incentives (see **Figure H-84**). This would require approximately 255.9 units of affordable housing built per year across the 20-year planning period. However, 74 units of subsidized affordable housing intended to meet the needs of income-qualified low-income households were permitted in Kennewick from 2020 to 2025, or an average annual production rate of about 12.3 units per year.[64] This is approximately 244 units per year less than what is needed across the 20-year planning period. The average project cost per unit of low-income housing tax credit (LIHTC) projects in Benton County completed between 2015 and 2022 was $205,397. Consistent with guidance from Commerce, the City estimates there is a funding gap of about $50,000,000 per year to support affordable housing production in Kennewick over the 20-year planning period.[65]

Summary of Barriers

Based on the housing focused engagement and barriers checklists, the following barriers are hindering the types of housing production needed to meet all housing needs in Kennewick:

- Low density limits for multifamily development. The current density limit of 27 dwelling units per acre in the RH zone essentially prohibits elevator-based low-rise apartment buildings with tuck-under forms of parking in favor of walk-up garden apartments with surface parking lots. Consider removing the existing limit in favor of a form-based approach (e.g., rely on height, parking, setback, design guidelines, and other standards to guide development).
- Limited affordable land is available, particularly for multifamily and affordable housing. Appropriate parcels are scarce, prices are high, and assembling a development site from multiple adjoining parcels is challenging. The amount of land zoned for higher density residential development is limited (with most residential zoning devoted to low and moderate density residential). Developers also expressed that aging water infrastructure impacts the cost and feasibility of infill development in the city's older northern neighborhoods, and affordable housing developers highlighted the scarcity of developable land in Kennewick.
- The cost of housing production is high. Construction costs have increased over the past few years due to higher interest rates and inflated costs of building materials and labor. These costs are passed down to renters and owners and are making it harder for private developers to build projects with a sufficient rate of return.
- Parking requirements are high and inconsistent with SB 5184. This can increase the cost of housing development and reduce the effective yields. However, new State requirements and public perceptions do not necessarily align on parking needs in Kennewick. Public support for reduced parking is lacking, however, and developers feel that personal vehicles are essential for transportation in the city. Many feel that parking requirements and onsite parking for housing units were a must to keep congestion off the streets. At the same time, others emphasized the importance of walkability and felt some residents were increasingly open and interested in development and neighborhood design with walking access to neighborhood services such as groceries, daycare, and pharmacies, reducing the reliance of cars and the need for parking coupled with housing. Some interviewees also expressed frustration with electric vehicle parking requirements, noting that electric vehicle ownership remains low in their communities.
- **Landscaping standards do not align with Kennewick's climate and the realities of water conservation needs** and open space requirements for some multifamily development are high. Developers feel that mandatory intensive landscaping requirements are not

64 Includes 16 units at Lilac Homes in 2020 and 58 units at Bubble on Gum in 2025.
65 Commerce, Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026, pg. 44-45 and 64-65.

appropriate for their community, and should emphasize care for parks and open spaces rather than for individual yards. Many noted the contradicting demands needing to balance green space with the realities of water conservation in Kennewick's climate and feel the City should consider ways to incorporate standards for xeriscaping or desert landscaping appropriate for Kennewick's climate. Open space requirements for multifamily development with 7 or more units are also high (500 square feet per 2-bedroom unit and 700 square feet per 3-bedroom unit).

- State planning mandates and regulations, particularly those tied to the GMA and critical areas, are a point of tension for developers. Interviewees viewed many of these requirements, including clean energy standards, as costly and burdensome, and said these expenses are ultimately passed on to consumers. Developers also reported difficulties specifically when projects overlapped with shrub steppe mitigation under SEPA requirements, where they felt the City could play a stronger role in coordinating solutions or working with Ecology on behalf of the developer.
- **The City's permitting process is confusing for some and efficient for others, and developers experience inconsistent regulatory delays, processing times.** Developers shared mixed experiences with Kennewick's permitting process, clarity on fees, and partnership. Some felt that the City was responsive and helpful in its partnership, while others described challenges, including delays in permitting and a lack of overall helpfulness from the City when challenges arose in the development process. Delays in the development process add to costs and can make housing production infeasible.
- More affordable housing incentives and additional City support and/or investment are needed to help make affordable housing more feasible. There is a desire for flexible zoning standards, pre-approved plan permitting, fee waivers, and other incentives that speed up affordable housing development. Some developers suggested that less regulations overall from the City would incentivize additional affordable housing development. New opportunities to build affordable housing on public land (e.g., surplus lands or Department of Natural Resource Lands) are also viewed as promising but should be balanced with concerns about losing public open space and agricultural land.
- Emergency and permanent supportive housing are not addressed as separate use types in the code. Revisions are needed to ensure clarity and predictability, and to ensure any occupancy, spacing, and intensity requirements for indoor emergency housing and shelters are consistent with Commerce guidance (e.g., generally tied directly to public health and safety). Ancillary office uses and other support spaces should also be allowed within transitional or permanent supportive housing buildings.

Staff and the consultant team developed preliminary amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, zoning map, and KMC in accordance with these barriers which are incorporated the section below—specifically, **Figure H-86** summarizes the housing types impacted by these barrier and details proposed actions to address each barrier.

ADEQUATE PROVISIONS

Current GMA guidance also requires jurisdictions to make "adequate provisions" to accommodate housing production that meet housing needs at each income level. In other words, cities must do what is within their power to encourage the kinds of development that will meet housing growth targets. Per RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d), adequate provisions include:

> *(i) Incorporating consideration for low, very low, extremely low, and moderate-income households;*
> *(ii) Documenting programs and actions needed to achieve housing availability including gaps in local funding, barriers such as development regulations, and other limitations;*
> *(iii) Consideration of housing locations in relation to employment location; and*
> *(iv) Consideration of the role of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in meeting housing needs.*

Analysis to identify adequate provisions must be done as part of the Comprehensive Plan update. Actions taken to "make adequate provisions," however, may be taken after the Comprehensive Plan is adopted. Either way, Kennewick must provide the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) with a report detailing progress in implementing the Comprehensive plan five years after its adoption, in 2031. Requirements for the implementation report are outlined in RCW 36.70A.130, including status updates on housing element implementation and permitting timelines.

This section summarizes the analysis of adequate provisions conducted by the City and consultant team. Actions to be completed by the Comprehensive Plan deadline per the Gap Analysis and Land Capacity Analysis Memo are also summarized.

Considerations for All Income Levels

The GMA requires Kennewick to plan for and accommodate housing needs at all income levels. These needs are defined in housing growth targets by income level that were agreed upon by the County and cities within. Specific targets for Kennewick are presented in **Figure 83**. In its Comprehensive Plan, Kennewick must show it has adequate land capacity to accommodate housing appropriate for meeting needs at each affordability level. The City must also identify barriers to producing housing at each affordability level, identify adequate provisions to address those barriers in the Comprehensive Plan, identify potential funding sources and subsidy needs, and update their development regulations to ensure capacity for all housing needs and to address identified code-related housing barriers. Results from the Land Capacity Analysis Memo under current zoning are summarized above and under proposed code revisions below. The policy review also identifies specific policy recommendations to address current and project housing needs for all income levels.

Actions Needed to Achieve Housing Availability & Affordability

Figure H-86 lists recommended actions the City can take to overcome barriers to housing production and improve the likelihood that future development will meet the housing needs of all income levels over the next 20 years. This is a long list that would likely take multiple years to implement. The following two sections identify the short lists of actions that should be completed before or concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan deadline (those checked under the Proposed Actions column in **Figure H-86**) and those that should be highest priority for implementation following the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan.

Figure H-86. Barriers to Housing Production and Proposed Actions to Address

Barrier	Housing Impacted	Proposed Actions*
Restrictive Development Standards		
Low density limits for multifamily and mixed-use development	Low-rise Mid-rise	• Remove or revise maximum density limits in high-density residential and mixed-use zones in favor of a form-based approach (e.g., rely on height, parking, setback, design guidelines, and other standards to guide development). • Prohibit new single-family development in the RM, RH, UMU, and commercial zones to preserve land for higher-density housing options.
High off-street parking requirements	All	• Update parking requirements consistent with SB 5184.

Landscaping standards and open space requirements	All	• Adjust open space and landscaping requirements to ensure requirements are tailored to Kennewick's climate and appropriately balanced with other community needs (like water conservation). Consider ways to incorporate standards for xeriscaping or desert landscaping appropriate for Kennewick's climate. • Adjust open space requirements for multifamily development with 7 or more units. • Setbacks could be further revised to allow for 10' for lots with a unit density of three or more, 0" for rear alleys, and 3' for garage door accessed from the alley consistent with Commerce middle housing model code (Commerce, 2025).
Occupancy, spacing, and location requirements	Emergency Housing PSH	• Add emergency and permanent supportive housing as separate use types in the code. Allow emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing by right in all zones that allow hotels and permanent supportive housing by right in all zones that allow residential. •
Restrictions on support spaces, such as office space, within a transitional or PSH building in a residential zone	PSH	• Allow for ancillary office uses and other support spaces within transitional or permanent supportive housing buildings in residential zones.
Process Barriers		
Design review	All	• Review residential and mixed-use design standards for opportunities to improve flexibility and encourage housing production consistent with the community's updated vision, construction market trends, and State requirements.
Lack of clear and accessible information about process and fee	Moderate density Low-rise Mid-rise	• Review communication on process and fees and update the relevant webpages with accurate and clear estimates if needed.
Permit fees, impact fees and utility connection fees that are not proportionate to impact	Moderate density Low-rise Mid-rise PSH	• Consider including middle housing as separate unit type(s) for impact fee calculations or implementing proportional impact fees consistent with Commerce's current draft Residential Proportional Impact Fees and System Development Charges Guidebook. • Offer fee waivers for affordable housing. • Adjust the parks and Southridge fire impact fee structure to be based on square footage or number of bedrooms (rather than land use type) as required by SB 5258 regarding proportional impact fees for residential development.

Permit processing times and staffing challenges	All	• Monitor permit delivery times to identify any short-term issues and proactively manage staff workloads to ensure that any effects of temporary short staffing can be managed. • Consider additional express permit options and pre-approved plans.
SEPA process	All	• Consider adopting higher flexible exemption thresholds per WAC 197-11-800, up to 100 units for single family with the total square footage less than 1,500 square feet and 200 units for multifamily (KMC 4.08.110 already adopts the maximum flexible exemption threshold for single family residential of 30 units). • Consider new subarea plans and/or planned action ordinances to be completed in the next 5-10 years.
Limited Land Availability and Environmental Constraints		
Lack of large parcels for infill development	All	• Continue to coordinate amongst the City, school district, state and federal agencies, other jurisdictions, and religious organizations to identify surplus lands for affordable housing development or capital facility co-location opportunities. • Review growth plans against existing capital facility plans and, if needed, adjust planned growth or infrastructure improvements to ensure adequate and available services can support planned growth. • Encourage more housing in commercial zones and redevelopment of older commercial properties (e.g., more mixed-use residential and commercial development in the Clearwater Avenue corridor) via code revisions, zoning adjustments, and/or infrastructure improvements.
Environmental constraints	All	• Ensure all critical area regulations are consistent with State requirements and that other development regulations support achievement of growth targets. • Consider implementing additional mitigation options to support development while still providing protection for critical areas (e.g., a mitigation bank for shrub steppe) and continue coordinating with the State and neighboring jurisdictions to address these issues.
Funding Barriers		
Cost of housing production is high	All	• Update design standards to align with construction market trends and State requirements. • Focus new multifamily and mixed-use development in areas with key amenities and services like large public parks, public schools, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, and transit service.
Affordable housing funding gaps	Affordable housing (Income-restricted and subsidized)	• Identify and set up a program to donate surplus lands for affordable housing projects. • Provide permit or impact fee waivers and utility connection fee waivers for all affordable housing projects.

	Emergency housing PSH	• Adopt an MFTE program that authorizes 8-year exemptions to encourage the development of multifamily housing, and 12- and 20-year exemptions to encourage the development of affordable housing. Explore the use of MFTE in tandem with other affordable housing requirements to incentivize permanently affordable housing units. • Consider additional funding options, such as an affordable housing sales tax (RCW 82.14.530 and .540), affordable housing property tax levy (RCW 84.52.105), parking lot conversion sales tax (RCW 82.59), or tax increment financing (RCW 39.114).

* Checked actions should be implemented concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update to ensure capacity to meet all housing needs and for consistency with new State requirements.

Note: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026.

Actions to be Completed by Comprehensive Plan Deadline

Actions required to demonstrate capacity to meet all housing needs are required to be completed by the Comprehensive Plan deadline. Per the Land Capacity Analysis Memo and Gap Analysis, there is sufficient capacity to accommodate growth targets overall and for moderate and higher income households (>80% AMI) but there is a deficit of 2,467 units for households at the lowest income levels (≤80% AMI) under existing regulations.

Actions to be completed by the Comprehensive Plan deadline include removing or revising maximum density limits in high-density residential and mixed-use zones in favor of a form-based approach, updating parking and open space requirements, revising to allow for emergency and permanent supportive housing consistent with State law, and updates to ensure planning for capital facilities and infrastructure is aligned with the revised growth strategy (see those checked under the Proposed Actions column in **Figure H-86**). More specifically, the City is proposing the following:

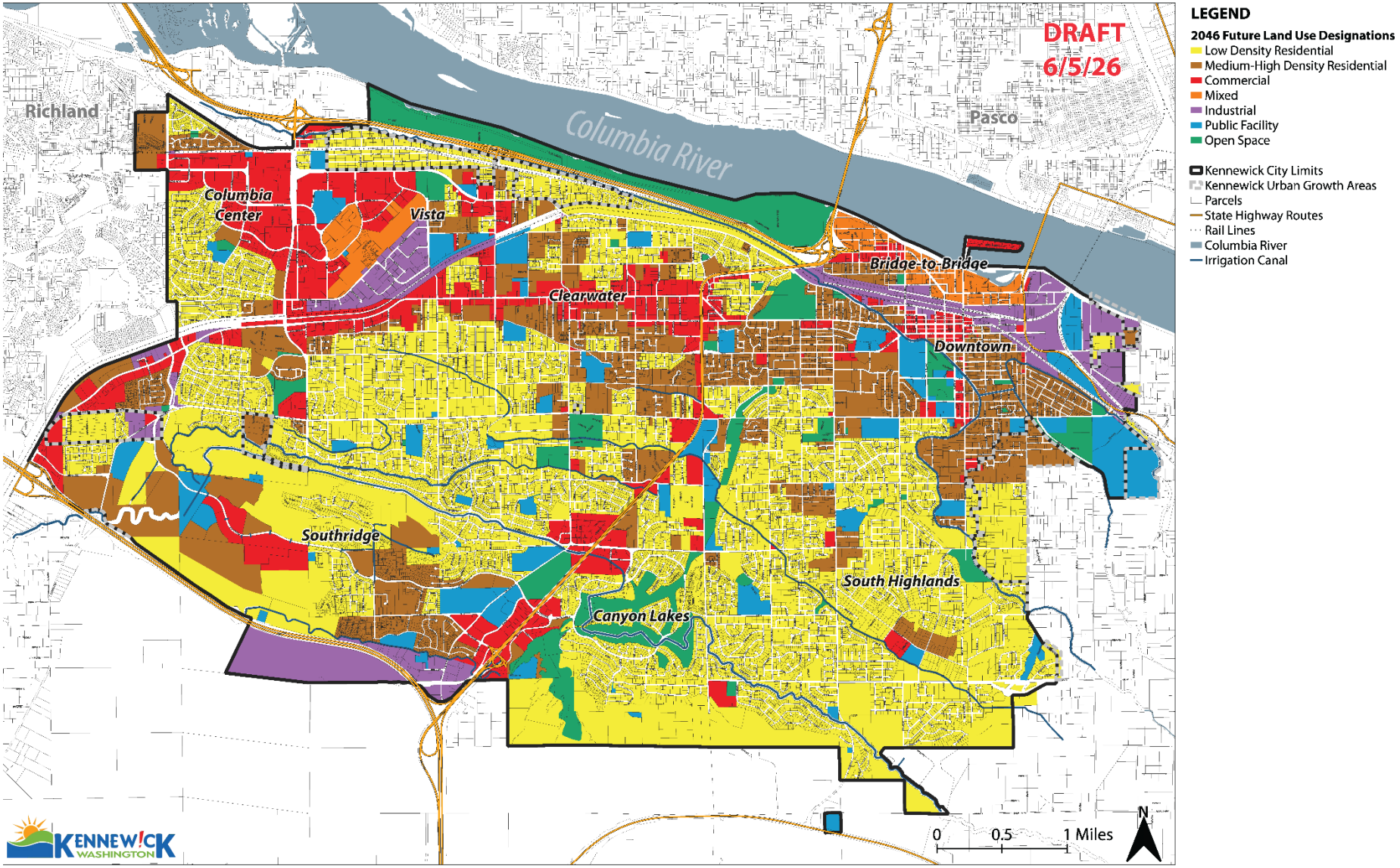
Revise zoning and development regulations to:

a) Update residential use standards to promote more housing types in more zones:
    a. Allow multifamily in the CAR and BP zones and ensuring new multifamily development in commercial zones with height limits less than 85 feet are not subject to the mixed-use requirements of the City's Commercial Design Standards.
    b. Ensure co-living housing development is not required to be mixed-use.
b) Remove maximum density limits in the RM and RH residential zones.
c) Reduce or remove parking requirements under new state law (RCW 35A.21.445).
d) Clarify regulations and reduce code barriers for emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing.
e) Encourage more housing in commercial zones and redevelopment of older commercial properties (e.g., more mixed-use residential and commercial development in the Clearwater Avenue corridor)
f) Remove density limits from residential future land use designations and consolidate the Medium Density Residential and High Density Residential designations into a new Medium-High Density Residential future land use designation (implemented by the RM, HMU, RTP, and RH zones).
g) Strategically redesignate areas to the new Medium-High Density Residential designation near existing transit, business districts, parks, schools, or other amenities or in underdeveloped areas with large lots and limited critical areas (e.g., parts of South Highlands, north and west of Downtown, south of Clearwater Ave, and Southridge).

h) Focus new multifamily and mixed-use development in areas with key amenities and services like large public parks, public schools, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, and transit service.
i) Reduce intensity in areas that are heavily encumbered by critical areas (e.g., parts of Southridge).
j) Changes to align with current land uses.

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Figure 87. Proposed Future Land Use Map



Source: MAKERS, 2026.

Capacity Analysis with Proposed Code Revisions

As discussed above, there is not enough capacity under existing zoning to meet the housing growth targets in **Figure H-88** households at the lowest income levels (≤80% AMI). Under the policy and code revisions listed above (with the exception of the Future Land Use Map and zoning map changes which are in progress), the City would have enough capacity to meet adopted population and housing growth targets overall and for all income levels as shown in **Figure H-88**. An estimated 5,117 of the 6,889 units needed to serve households at the lowest income levels would still require subsidies or incentives. See **the Land Capacity Analysis Memo** for more details.

Figure H-88. Comparison of Existing Housing Capacity to Aggregated Housing Growth Targets

Housing Need (% of AMI)	Zone Categories	2020–2046 Aggregated Target	Capacity	Surplus / (Deficit)	Units Requiring Subsidies / Incentives
0-≤80% & PSH	Low-Rise, Mid-Rise, ADUs	6,889	4,422[1]	(2,467)	5,117[3]
>80 to ≤120%	Moderate Density	2,078	7,914	5,836	0
>120%	Low Density	2,659	13,206[2]	9,547	0
Total		12,626	25,542[2]	12,916	5,117[3]

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.

1 Includes capacity for 279 ADUs on developed residential lots and 365 guaranteed affordable middle housing units.

2 Includes capacity of 812 units in the unincorporated UGA (low density housing for households with incomes >120% AMI).

3 Includes 1,597 non-PSH units and 1,007 PSH units serving households with incomes between 0 to ≤30% AMI and 2,513 units serving households with incomes >30 to ≤50% AMI.

Note: Housing targets are aggregated by zone category consistent with Commerce's Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026 (e.g., aggregated targets for households with incomes between 0 to ≤80% AMI and for households with incomes >80 to ≤120% AMI).

Sources: Benton County, 2025; City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026; Commerce, Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026.

Highest Priority Actions for Implementation After the Comprehensive Plan Deadline

Figure H-86 includes the complete list of recommended actions to make adequate provisions. The following actions are identified as top priority for the City to implement following adoption of the Comprehensive Plan. These actions are either required to comply with recent changes in state law or they have potential for the greatest impact on addressing the City's most pressing need, affordable housing. Some of these actions may also be completed before the Comprehensive Plan deadline.

- Adopt zoning map revisions consistent with the updated future land use map.
- Review options to consolidate commercial (and industrial) zones.
- Adjust other use and dimensional standards, including:

  - Make small revisions to height limits in lower-density residential zones and add height bonuses in medium- and high-density residential zones for developments providing a certain number of affordable units to encourage mid-rise projects and more affordable housing. This could be aligned with a new MFTE program (see below) or other bonus system.
  - Consider allowing up to 6 units/lot in the HMU zone similar to the recent middle housing code revisions.
  - Permit nursing homes and congregate care facilities in more zones (e.g., the UMU zone) and permit the uses outright instead of making them conditional (especially in the RM and RH zones).
  - Adjust setbacks in the RM and RH zones.
  - Adjust multifamily open space standards in some zones.
  - Prohibit new single-family development in the RM, RH, UMU, and commercial zones to preserve land for higher-density housing options.
  - Add a minimum density in the RL and RS zones.
  - Adopt discounted utility connection fees for affordable housing projects (not just those developed by the Kennewick Housing Authority).[66]
  - Adopt higher SEPA exemption thresholds for larger developments.
  - Consider the integration of State building code updates (3-6 unit middle housing buildings under the residential code, single-stair buildings, etc.).
  - Modernize design standards.
- Support more development of ADUs, which can count towards fulfilling low-income housing needs if evidence shows the market or regulations are serving such households. Regulatory options could include:
  - Permit tiny homes with permanent foundations.
  - Offer pre-approved building plans to homeowners to reduce design costs and permitting fees.
  - Reduce utility connection charges.
  - Consider City funding for a revolving construction loan fund, down payment assistance, and/or fee waivers, etc. (in exchange for a unit being income-restricted).
- Adopt an MFTE program to promote development by temporarily exempting the residential portion of property value from taxation for 8-12 years.
- Identify surplus property or capital facility co-location opportunities.
  - Publicly-owned land can be or leased to affordable housing providers at a discount to reduce their development costs. City-owned surplus land is rare and would need to be confirmed it is not needed for future public purposes (utilities, capital facilities, parks, etc.), but opportunities may also be found with other public agencies (e.g., the school district, port district, County, State, etc.).
  - Pursue opportunities to encourage affordable housing on property owned or developed by religious organizations.
  - Co-location builds housing above or adjacent to ground-level community facilities such as administrative offices, libraries, or recreation centers on the same property.
- Adjust the parks and Southridge fire impact fee structure to comply with 2023 State legislative changes regarding proportional impact fees for residential development.
- Formally adopt or informally map neighborhood names in the city (ensuring alignment with existing plans and processes underway) to help clarify future subarea planning efforts and consider new subarea plans and/or planned action ordinances to encourage additional development

[66] Kennewick currently offers water and sewer connection fee waivers if Kennewick Housing Authority is the developer but not for other private or nonprofit affordable housing developers.

and investment consistent with the citywide land use plan(e.g., Downtown, the civic campus vicinity, Columbia Mall/Convention Center area, Clearwater Avenue, or East Kennewick).

- Consider additional funding options, such as an affordable housing property tax levy (RCW 84.52.105), affordable housing sales tax (RCW 82.14.530 and .540), parking lot conversion sales tax (RCW 82.59), tax increment financing (RCW 39.114), or impact fees waivers for affordable housing projects (RCW 82.02.060).
- Consider additional programmatic anti-displacement tools, such as local tenant protections, mobile home park redevelopment protections, investing more in homelessness service partnerships, City staffing and strengthened service-provider relationships, or local transit service funding for improved connections between housing and jobs and social services.

Location of Housing & Employment

The third adequate provision required by RCW 36.70A.070(d) is the consideration of housing locations in relation to employment location. Commerce recommends jurisdictions analyze these issues and document their findings. The City did this work as part of updating the Economic Development Element and the Housing Element. Some key findings include:

- Jobs/Housing Balance. As of 2023, the jobs-to-housing ratio in the city was 1.40 (46,920 jobs divided by 33,473 housing units), within the higher end of the balanced range of 0.75 – 1.5 and similar to the ratios in 2021 and 2022. This suggests there is an adequate supply of employment opportunities in the city, but that housing supply and affordability are growing concerns. By 2046, the jobs-to-housing ratio is estimated to fall to 1.33 (59,814 jobs divided by 44,868 units).[67]
- Commute Patterns. A significant number of employees live in and near the city, with 63% of Kennewick residents and 66% of workers employed in Kennewick commuting less than 10 miles. Residents who work elsewhere and workers who live elsewhere primarily commute to and from nearby cities like Richland and Pasco. About 20% of Kennewick residents commute greater than 50 miles to work, although at least some of these are likely employed at the Hanford Cleanup Site or work remotely for other companies outside the Tri-Cities area. However, this suggests that some residents who want to live in Kennewick are unable to find suitable employment in the city. Likewise, about 23% of workers commute greater than 50 miles to a job in Kennewick. While some workers may prefer to live outside of Kennewick, this suggests that some are moving to other communities with lower housing costs or more available supply or variety. See **Figure H-40** and **Figure H-41**.
- Land Use Patterns. The City's current land use pattern is suburban with mixed use and employment areas. Geographically, employment is concentrated in the Columbia Center and Three Rivers area (including the Three Rivers Campus and surrounding commercial development), in Downtown, and along major arterials including Clearwater Avenue and I-395. See **Figure H-29**.

These findings were considered in the development of Kennewick's proposed future land use and growth patterns. Under the proposed land use pattern, more housing types and increased density would be allowed throughout many residential areas. Multifamily and mixed-use development would be focused in areas with key amenities and services (like large public parks, public schools, grocery stores, healthcare facilities, and transit service)—this includes areas already zoned commercial or mixed use as well as other areas where additional services are available or anticipated that would be redesignated to help meet housing goals. Dimensional standards would also be revised in some residential zones to encourage more multi-family and middle housing types.

Role of ADUs

[67] Includes an estimated 32,242 housing units as of 2020 (per OFM) and growth of 12,626 units from 2020–2046 consistent with the adopted target. Assumes the same estimated jobs growth from 2023–2046 as the two-county region (27.5%) for an estimated 59,814 jobs by 2046 (see also **Figure 3** in the Land Capacity Analysis Memo.

The fourth adequate provision required by RCW 36.70A.070(d) is to consider the role of ADUs in meeting housing needs. Given that a large proportion of land area in Kennewick is devoted to detached single family homes, there is potential to support housing needs by allowing and encouraging the production of attached and/or detached dwelling units on lots with single family homes. These types of housing have potential to be affordable to moderate and lower-income households.

In 2023, HB 1110 and HB 1337 directed all jurisdictions to make significant changes to ADU regulations, including allowing two ADUs per lot in all GMA urban growth areas, and reducing barriers to ADU development related to occupancy, sale, lot size, and parking. Kennewick updated its code in 2023 via Ordinance 6037 to comply with these provisions, including amendments to KMC 18.12.020 which lists development regulations for ADUs. The City could make additional revisions to ensure off-street parking requirements for ADUs are based on distance from transit should major transit stop be added in the future.[68] The City was required to complete the code updates within six months of the periodic update deadline.

It is difficult to predict what ADU production trends will be following the code updates made for compliance with HB 1110 and HB 1337. In recent years there has not been significant ADU development activity, but there is the potential for a significant increase in the future given recent code updates and the existing sizes of residential lots and homes. This is reflected in the residential land capacity analysis and considerations for whether the City can accommodate housing targets under current and proposed zoning.

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[68] There are currently no major transit stop in Kennewick per the definition in RCW 36.70A.696. but code could be added for clarity and to ensure consistency with HB 1337 if major transit stops are identified in the future. Only one off-street parking space is required per ADU regardless of lot size (KMC 18.12.020(6))

ADEQUATE PROVISIONS CHECKLISTS

This appendix provides checklists to use in documenting barriers and programs and actions to achieve housing availability (RCW 36.70A.070(2)(d)). These checklists include the following:

- **Figure H-89:** Moderate Density housing barrier review checklist
- **Figure H-90**: Low-Rise or Mid-Rise housing barrier review checklist
- **Figure H-91**: Supplemental barrier review checklist for PSH and emergency housing
- **Figure H-92:** Accessory dwelling unit barrier review checklist
- **Figure H-93**: Checklist for local option tools for addressing affordable housing funding gaps

Documentation of the barriers to housing availability and the programs or actions needed to overcome these barriers must be in a public document and typically should be included as an appendix to the comprehensive plan housing element.

Barrier Review Checklists

Figure H-89. Moderate Density housing barrier review checklist

Barrier	Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)	Why or why not? Provide evidence.	Actions needed to address barrier.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS			
Unclear development regulations	No. While there are ongoing concerns about maintaining clear language in development regulations, there are no immediate concerns.	Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3: Language around maximum density and unit density is confusing. In some cases, it includes manufactured homes together with single-family housing, but in others pars of the Code, they seem to be separate and different.	No action is necessary to address barriers, but the City will continue to monitor development regulations and address any issues with clarity that may arise.
Prohibiting some moderate density housing types, such as: Duplexes Triplexes Four/five/six-plexes Townhomes Cottage housing Live-work units Manufactured home parks	No. Most residential zones allow middle housing (including duplexes triplexes, fourplexes, townhouses, courtyard apartments, and cottage housing) and manufactures homes.	The City is required by the State to have a middle housing Ordinance in place, no later than 6 months after its Comprehensive Plan Update is due. However, the City was awarded a grant to speed up the implementation, and the City completed these updates in accordance with an updated grant deadline of June 2025 (City of Kennewick, 2025). Per Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3: Middle housing is allowed in the RMH, RS, RL, RM, and RH zones. Trailers, Boats, Camper Tops, Travel Trailers, and Recreational Vehicles are allowed in the RMH, RS, RL, RM, and RH zones.	No action needed.

		Manufactured homes are regulated as single family homes and allowed in most residential zones (see footnote 5 to KMC 18.12.010 A.2).	
High minimum lot sizes	No. Minimum lot sizes were decreased or established in several zones to accompany middle housing changes.	Minimum lot sizes were revised in recent middle housing ordinance (Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): RS: From 10,500 to 8,000 sqft RL: From 7,500 to 5,500 sqft RM: 4,000 sqft RH: From 4,000 to 3,500 sqft RMH: From 7,500 to 5,500 sqft Different minimum lot sizes apply for rowhouses and townhomes, ranging from 1,600 sqft to 1,800 sqft. This is also a reflection of recent updates, as previously there was no designated minimum for the RS, RL, and RMH zones.	No action needed.
Low maximum densities or low maximum FAR	No. Maximum densities were updated in several zones to accompany middle housing changes.	Per Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3: Maximum permitted number of lots/units in the RM and RH zone is determined by multiplying the gross parcel area by the allowed maximum density. If the unit density is greater than the maximum density, then unit density will be used to determine the maximum number of middle housing units permitted on the lot. Where maximum density exceeds unit density, maximum density will be used to determine the number of units permitted on a lot. Unit density for RS, RL, RMH, RM and RH zones is 4 middle housing units unless the lot is less than 1,000 square feet in size. 6 middle housing units per lot may be approved if at least two of those units are affordable housing.	No action needed.
Low maximum building heights	No. Maximum building heights in low- to moderate density areas are sufficient to allow for middle housing development.	The maximum building heights have been updated in recent middle housing ordinance (updates are underlined below) (Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): RS, RL: 35' or 2.5 stories, whichever is less RMH: From 30' to 35' or 2.5 stories, whichever is less RM: 35' RH: 45'	No action needed.
Large setback requirements	No.	Most residential zones have the same requirements, as follows (Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): Min. Front Yard/ Street Setback: 15' (RMH was updated from 20' to 15') Min. Garage Setback: 20' Min. Side Yard Setback: 5'	Setbacks could be further revised to allow for 10' for lots with a unit density of three or more, 0" for rear alleys, and 3' for garage door accessed from the alley consistent with

		Min. Rear Yard Setback: 15' Some interviewees noted that they appreciated the spacing requirements and offset requirements to maintain open spaces between housing and reduce density.	Commerce middle housing model code (Commerce, 2025).
High off-street parking requirements	Yes. Overall parking requirements are high and inconsistent with SB 5184. This can increase the cost of housing development and reduce the effective yields.	Current single-family requirement (Chapter 18.36; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): 2 per dwelling unit Recent updates regarding middle housing (Chapter 18.36; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): 1 parking spot per dwelling unit on lots no greater than 6,000 sqft before subdivisions or lot splits; and 2 per dwelling unit on lots greater than 6,000 sqft before subdivisions or lot splits. Middle housing parking requirements in portions of the city for which the Department of Commerce has certified a parking study in accordance with RCW 36.70A.635(7)(a), shall comply with the off-street parking requirement provided in the certification from the Department of Commerce. Manufactured (mobile) home park: 2 per dwelling unit plus 5% total for guest parking. Personal vehicles were viewed by interviewees as essential for transportation in Kennewick, and many felt that parking requirements and onsite parking for housing units were a must to keep congestion off the streets. Some interviewees also expressed frustration with electric vehicle parking requirements, noting that electric vehicle ownership remains low in their communities.	Update parking requirements consistent with SB 5184, including: No more than 0.5 off-street stalls required per multifamily unit. No more than 1 stall required per single-family unit. No parking may be required for residences under 1,200 square feet, affordable housing, or senior housing.
High impervious coverage limits	No.	Maximum impervious surface lot coverage in residential zones is based on minimum setbacks and other development regulations (KMC 18.12.010 A.2), adopted residential design guidelines, and, for multifamily structures with 6 or more dwelling units (inclusive of some middle housing types/developments), by landscaping requirements in KMC 18.21.060(5).	No action needed.
Lack of alignment between building codes and development codes	No.	City adopts the Washington State Building and Residential Codes per KMC 15.08.010. Developer interviews did not reveal any other specific issues with lack of alignment between building and development codes. Staff are also not aware of any specific inconsistencies.	No action is necessary to address barriers. Note HB 2071 (2024) has the State Building Council looking to update and include middle housing under the Washington State Residential Code, which would better align building codes and allowed residential uses. The City can adopt

			state building code changes or make changes themselves.
Other (for example: complex design standards, tree retention regulations, historic preservation requirements)	Yes (landscaping standards). While there may be some limited impacts from other development regulations, no other major obstacles have been identified as a concern for production.	Tree canopy: Within the UMU district (KMC 18.12), new developments with a lot area of more than 20,000 square feet shall provide a pedestrian-oriented space (plaza, courtyard or similar space) of at least one percent of the site area. At least 25 percent of the plaza or courtyard must be shaded by structure or tree canopy (at least ten years after planting). Landscaping and open space: Applications must show existing trees or significant plant groupings, those that are to remain, and illustrate the method of tree protection and protection of landscaped area. This Chapter excludes single-family and middle housing uses and structures. Interviewed developers felt that mandatory intensive landscaping requirements are not appropriate for their community, and should emphasize care for parks and open spaces rather than for individual yards. Many noted the contradicting demands needing to balance green space with the realities of water conservation in Kennewick's climate. Historic Preservation (KMC 18.03): The purpose of the HMU District is to provide for a stable living environment for residents and proprietors choosing to locate in a historic setting, which includes limited small-scale commercial retail and non-retail uses within walking distance of those residents. The impact of these commercial uses will be compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods in size and scale. Special design and parking requirements are used to ensure the area's unique attributes are not lost. Other: Some State planning mandates and regulations, particularly those tied to the GMA, are a point of tension for developers. Interviewees viewed many of these requirements, including clean energy standards, as costly and burdensome, and said these expenses are ultimately passed on to consumers.	Adjust open space requirements for middle housing types to ensure that open space requirements do not constrain development. Ensure landscaping requirements are appropriately balanced with other community needs (like water conservation) and consider ways to incorporate standards for xeriscaping or desert landscaping appropriate for Kennewick's climate. The City should also continue coordinating with the State and neighboring jurisdictions to address tensions between State requirements and local needs.
PROCESS OBSTACLES			
Conditional use permit process	No.	Not applicable for most single family and middle housing residences and their accessory structures in residential districts.	No action needed.

Design review	Possibly.	Residential and mixed use design standards are established in KMC 18.75 and KMC 18.80, respectively, and available online. All mandatory standards are to be followed throughout subdivision design and platting. Although a developer is not bound to follow the recommended standards, these allow more flexibility than the existing code, promote better aesthetics and design solutions and are often implemented through the site plan review process. However, some developers feel the design standards are outdated and too focused on a singular vision. Design review is also required for historic properties (KMC 18.57).	Review residential and mixed-use design standards for opportunities to improve flexibility and encourage housing production consistent with the community's updated vision.
Lack of clear and accessible information about process and fees[69]	Yes.	The City's website outlines steps for residential development, includes checklists for duplexes, townhomes, and multifamily with 3+ units, and applications can be submitted and tracked online. See also the Kennewick Master Fee Schedule, last updated August 2025. Housing developers shared mixed experiences with Kennewick's permitting process and partnership. Most felt that the City was responsive and helpful in its partnership, while some described project specific challenges. Discussions with councilmembers, community organizations, and City entities did not reveal any additional process and fee concerns.	Provide better communication on process and fees and update the relevant webpages with accurate and clear estimates.
Permit fees, impact fees and utility connection fees	Yes.	Land use permit fees are in accordance with the adopted fee schedule (KMC 18.42.020) which is based on improvement value. There is a single Planned Residential Development Land Use Permit fee in Kennewick, regardless of housing type. A lower fee is charged for ADUs. Additional Benton County fees may apply (City of Kennewick, 2025). Impact fees for parks, open space, and recreation facilities are lower for townhomes, multifamily, and mobile/manufactured home units than for single family housing (KMC 3.90). Other middle housing is not established as a separate unit type on the impact fee rate table. Fire impact fees in the Southridge Area (KMC 3.95) are higher per unit for multifamily than for detached residential. Transportation impact fees are less for townhomes, multifamily, mobile/manufactured, senior housing, and ADUs than for single family housing, but are higher for duplexes. Other middle housing is not established as a separate unit type on the	Provide better communication on fees and update the relevant webpages with accurate and clear estimates. Amendments to RCW 82.02 based on SB 5258 (2023) introduce proportionality requirements for impact fees, particularly in relation to residential unit size, to support a broader range of housing types, including duplexes, townhouses and other muti-unit housing. Consider including middle housing as separate unit type(s) for impact fee calculations or implementing proportional impact fees consistent with Commerce's

[69] For example: guidance resources are unclear or difficult to find, no digital permit tracking system, staff do not provide fee estimates or permitting time estimates are unavailable or inaccurate.

		impact fee rate table (Public Works establishes the transportation impact fee rate for all land uses not listed in the fee schedule per KMC 13.16.060. Interviewed developers felt the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing development by reducing permitting fees and offering additional incentives to encourage development (note some fee waivers are available per KMC 14.25).	current draft Residential Proportional Impact Fees and System Development Charges Guidebook.
Processing times and staffing challenges	Yes.	A short-staffed planning and building department have less capacity and can take longer to process permit applications. The City usually completes Building & Public Works Permit review within 10 business days, assuming a complete submittal with all the information necessary to complete the plan review in a timely manner. Kennewick currently offers an express permit program for all new single-family residential projects, which include detached single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes with 1-2 units, and detached structures (e.g., ADUs) per the express permit application form. Developers shared mixed experiences with Kennewick's permitting process. Some described challenges, including delays in permitting and a lack of overall helpfulness from the City with challenges in the development process. Interviewees felt the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing developers by streamlining permitting timelines. Developers also mentioned that tensions arose when attempting to purchase land within the UGA but with neighboring agricultural landowners and wished the City had been more of a supportive partner.	Provide better communication on permit timelines and update the permit website with accurate and clear estimates. The City should monitor permit delivery times to identify any short-term issues and proactively manage staff workloads to ensure that any effects of temporary short staffing can be managed.
SEPA process	Possibly. SEPA process could be reformed and streamlined but is not a major barrier to housing production.	SEPA process can add time and expense that may not be necessary with other strong development regulations in place. SEPA procedures are described in KMC 4.08, including flexible categorical exemption thresholds in KMC 4.08.110 (30 units or less for single family and 60 units or less for multifamily). Some developers reported difficulties when projects overlapped with specific SEPA requirements, such as shrub-steppe mitigation (see Environmental Constraints below).	No action is necessary to address barriers. Could adopt higher flexible exemption thresholds per WAC 197-11-800, up to 100 units for single family with the total square footage less than 1,500 square feet and 200 units for multifamily (KMC 4.08.110 already adopts the maximum flexible exemption threshold for single family residential of 30 units).
LIMITED LAND AVAILABILITY & ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS			

Lack of large parcels for infill development	Possibly.	Pipeline projects indicate availability of land for middle housing developments, including one project involving ~400 townhomes and another with ~150 townhomes. However, affordable housing developers highlighted the scarcity of developable land in Kennewick and felt that infill development should be prioritized over continued sprawl. The City has addressed changes in zoning to allow for more density and provide opportunities for strategic infill and redevelopment projects, as exemplified in Ordinance No. 25-6106. Interviewees also expressed that aging water infrastructure impacts the cost and feasibility of infill development in the city's older northern neighborhoods.	No action is necessary, but there should be continuous coordination of policies for any remaining government surplus lands, including the city, school district, state and federal agencies, and other jurisdictions. Review growth plans against existing capital facility plans and, if needed, adjust planned growth or infrastructure improvements to ensure adequate and available services can support planned growth.
Environmental constraints	Yes.	The Land Capacity Analysis did not find many critical areas in otherwise buildable parcels. The critical areas included in the analysis are as follows: Wetlands, Riparian Corridors, Floodways, 100 Year Floodplain, Steep Slopes, Landslide Hazards. Designated critical areas where development could still occur with appropriate mitigation were not removed from the land capacity analysis (e.g., shrub steppe, erosion hazard areas, etc.). However, developers and members of the Housing Focus Group have discussed critical area regulations (particularly shrub steppe) as a barrier to housing construction in Kennewick. Developers reported difficulties specifically when projects overlapped with shrub-steppe mitigation under SEPA requirements, where they felt the City could play a stronger role in coordinating solutions or working with Ecology on behalf of the developer.	Ensure all critical area regulations are consistent with State requirements and that other development regulations support achievement of growth targets. Consider implementing additional mitigation options to support development while still providing protection for critical areas (e.g., a mitigation bank for shrub steppe) and continue coordinating with the State and neighboring jurisdictions to address these issues.

Figure H-90. Low-Rise or Mid-Rise housing barrier review checklist

Barrier	Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)	Why or why not? Provide evidence.	Actions needed to address barrier.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS			
Unclear development regulations	No. While there are ongoing concerns about maintaining clear language in development regulations, there are no immediate concerns.	Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3: Multifamily residences are allowed in the RM, RH, and UMU zones. Multifamily is permitted in the HMC and CBD zones but subject to KMC 18.42 and KMC 18.78 which generally related to mixed-use development standards. The CN, CO, CC, CR, CG, and CM zones also allow multifamily development subject to KMC 18.42 and KMC 18.78, but the purpose of these zones is primarily commercial per KMC 18.03.040. In the PF zone, residential development is permitted when the finished product will be owned and/or operated by the Kennewick Housing Authority or other public.	No action is necessary to address barriers, but the City will continue to monitor development regulations and address any issues with clarity that may arise.
High minimum lot sizes	No. Minimum lot sizes were decreased or recently established in a few of the residential zones. Non-residential areas which currently allow low- to mid-rise development have no minimum lot sizes.	Minimum lot sizes were revised in recent middle housing ordinance (Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): RM: 4,000 sqft (1,800 sqft for rowhouse/townhouses) RH: 3,500 sqft (1,600 sqft for rowhouse/townhouses) UMU: N/A	No action is necessary at present, but revisions may be incorporated to meet adopted housing targets at all income levels.
Low maximum densities or low maximum FAR	No. Current maximum densities alone do not appear to be a strong limitation, but increases in housing capacity may require increases in building heights and flexibility with other standards (e.g., parking) that would warrant higher allowed densities (particularly in the RM and RH zones).	As per Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3: Maximum density is 13 du/acre for RM, or up to ~43.6 du/ac with 4 units/lot and a minimum lot size of 4,000 sqft. Maximum density is 27 du/acre for RH, or up to ~49.8 du/ac with 4 units/lot and a minimum lot size of 4,000 sqft. No maximum density for UMU. Unit density for RM and RH zones is 4 middle housing units unless the lot is less than 1,000 square feet in size (up to 6 if the 2 extra units are affordable). Max permitted number of lots/units in the RM and RH zone is determined by dividing the gross area of the parcel in square feet by 43,560 square feet, multiplied by the allowed maximum	No action is necessary to address barriers but revisions may be incorporated to meet adopted housing targets at all income levels.

		density under table KMC 18.12.010 A.2. The closest whole number is the permitted maximum number of lots/units. If the unit density is greater than the maximum density as calculated, then unit density will be used to determine the maximum number of middle housing units permitted on the lot. Where maximum density exceeds unit density, maximum density will be used to determine the number of units permitted on a lot.	
Low maximum building heights	No. Maximum building heights alone do not appear to be a strong limitation, but increases in housing capacity may require increases in building heights and flexibility with associated parking requirements	Maximum building heights (Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): RM: 35' (typically 2-3 stories) RH: 45' (typically 3-4 stores) UMU: N/A	Allow some flexibility with respect to achieving additional height without the need for parking within the structure, which may increase costs. Additional revisions to height in the RM and RH zones may be incorporated to meet adopted housing targets at all income levels
Large setback requirements	No.	RM and RH have the same requirements, as follows (Chapter 18.12; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): Min. Front Yard/ Street Setback: 15' Min. Garage Setback: 20' Min. Side Yard Setback: 5' Min. Rear Yard Setback: 15' For UMU, the requirements are: Min. Front Yard/ Street Setback: See KMC 18.80 Min. Garage Setback: N/A Min. Side Yard Setback: 0' Min. Rear Yard Setback: 5' Some interviewees noted that they appreciated the spacing requirements and offset requirements to maintain open spaces between housing and reduce density.	Setbacks could be further revised to allow for 10' for lots with a unit density of three or more, 0" for rear alleys, and 3' for garage door accessed from the alley consistent with Commerce MH model code (Commerce, 2025).
High off-street parking requirements	Yes. Overall parking requirements are high and inconsistent with SB 5184. This can increase the cost of housing development and reduce the effective yields.	Current parking requirements per Chapter 18.36; Supp. No. 16, Update 3): Studio and 1 bedroom: 1 per dwelling unit, plus 5% of total for guests Two or more bedrooms: 1.5 per dwelling unit, plus 5% of total for guests Single- and multi-family developments must conform to the applicable provisions of Chapter 18.75 KMC. Personal vehicles are viewed by interviewees as essential for transportation in Kennewick, and many felt that parking requirements and onsite parking for housing units were a must	Multifamily parking regulations should be examined to streamline these requirements, reduce parking requirements citywide, and for consistency with SB 5184, including: No more than 0.5 off-street stalls required per multifamily unit. No parking may be required for residences under 1,200 square feet, affordable housing, or senior housing.

		to keep congestion off the streets. Some interviewees also expressed frustration with electric vehicle parking requirements, noting that electric vehicle ownership remains low in their communities.	
High impervious coverage limits	No.	Maximum impervious surface lot coverage in residential zones is based on minimum setbacks and other development regulations (KMC 18.12.010 A.2), adopted residential design guidelines, and, for multifamily structures with 6 or more dwelling units, by landscaping requirements in KMC 18.21.060(5). Per KMC 18.12, the maximum lot coverage requirement is none for most relevant non-residential zones (including mixed use zones that allow residential such as UMU and HMU). For HMU, the floor area ratio (the amount of building surface expressed as a ratio to lot surface) is a maximum of 0.45.	No action needed.
Lack of alignment between building and development codes	No.	City adopts the Washington State Building and Residential Codes per KMC 15.08.010. Developer interviews did not reveal any other specific issues with lack of alignment between building and development codes. Staff are also not aware of any specific inconsistencies.	No action is necessary to address barriers. Note HB 2071 (2024) has the State Building Council looking to update and include middle housing under the Washington State Residential Code, which would better align building codes and allowed residential uses. The City can adopt state building code changes or make changes themselves.
Other (for example: ground floor retail requirements, open space requirements, complex design standards, tree retention regulations, historic preservation requirements)	Yes (landscaping standards). While there may be some limited impacts from other development regulations, no other major obstacles have been identified as a concern for production.	Tree canopy: Within the UMU district (KMC 18.12), new developments with a lot area of more than 20,000 square feet shall provide a pedestrian-oriented space (plaza, courtyard or similar space) of at least one percent of the site area. At least 25 percent of the plaza or courtyard must be shaded by structure or tree canopy (at least ten years after planting). Landscaping: Per Chapter 18.21, multi-family structures containing more than 6 dwelling units: (a) Parking, setback and open space areas must be landscaped meeting the minimum requirements (1.25 - 2 trees) for each four required parking spaces. (b) The design of the planted areas must be as specified in Section 18.21.060(1)(a). (c) Developments must be in conformance with applicable provisions of Chapters 18.75 and 18.78.	Adjust open space requirements for multifamily housing to ensure they do not constrain development and do not conflict with one another. Ensure landscaping requirements are appropriately balanced with other community needs (like water conservation) and consider ways to incorporate standards for xeriscaping or desert landscaping appropriate for Kennewick's climate. The City should also continue coordinating with the State and neighboring jurisdictions to address tensions between State requirements and local needs.

		Per Chapter 18.12, in multi-family developments, where the density exceeds seven units per acre and more than six units are proposed, the amount of required common open space shall equal or be greater than the minimum aggregate area of provided bedrooms based on a given formula. Interviewed developers felt that mandatory intensive landscaping requirements are not appropriate for their community, and should emphasize care for parks and open spaces, rather than for individual yards. Many noted the contradicting demands needing to balance green space with the realities of water conservation in Kennewick's climate. Other: Some State planning mandates and regulations, particularly those tied to the GMA, are a point of tension for developers. Interviewees viewed many of these requirements, including clean energy standards, as costly and burdensome, and said these expenses are ultimately passed on to consumers.	
PROCESS OBSTACLES			
Conditional use permit process	No.	Not applicable for most low- and mid-rise residential development and their accessory structures.	No action needed.
Design review	Possibly.	Residential and mixed use design standards are established in KMC 18.75 and KMC 18.80, respectively, and available online. All mandatory standards are to be followed throughout subdivision design and platting. Although a developer is not bound to follow the recommended standards, these allow more flexibility than the existing code, promote better aesthetics and design solutions and are often implemented through the site plan review process. However, some developers feel the design standards are outdated and too focused on a singular vision. Design review is also required for historic properties (KMC 18.57).	Review residential and mixed-use design standards for opportunities to improve flexibility and encourage housing production consistent with the community's updated vision.
Lack of clear and accessible information about process and fees	Yes.	The City's website outlines steps for residential development, includes a checklist for multifamily with 3+ units, and applications can be submitted and tracked online. See also the Kennewick Master Fee Schedule, last updated August 2025. Housing developers shared mixed experiences with Kennewick's permitting process and partnership. Most felt that the City was responsive and helpful in its partnership, while some described project specific challenges. Discussions with councilmembers, community organizations, and city entities did not reveal any additional issues.	Provide better communication on process and fees and update the relevant webpages with accurate and clear estimates.

Permit fees, impact fees and utility connection fees	Yes.	Land use permit fees are in accordance with the adopted fee schedule (KMC 18.42.020) which is based on improvement value. There is a single Planned Residential Development Land Use Permit fee in Kennewick, regardless of housing type, except for ADUs (City of Kennewick, 2025). Additional Benton County fees may apply. Impact fees for parks, open space, and recreation facilities are lower for multifamily units than for single family housing (KMC 3.90). Fire impact fees in the Southridge Area (KMC 3.95) are higher per unit for multifamily than for detached residential. Transportation impact fees are less for multifamily than for single family housing (not that Public Works establishes the transportation impact fee rate for all land uses not listed in the fee schedule per KMC 13.16.060). Interviewed developers felt the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing development by reducing permitting fees and offering additional incentives to encourage development (note some fee waivers are available per KMC 14.25).	Provide better communication on fees and update the relevant webpages with accurate and clear estimates, particularly for affordable housing.
Process times and staffing challenges	Yes.	A short-staffed planning and building department have less capacity and can take longer to process permit applications. The City usually completes Building & Public Works Permit review within 10 business days, assuming a complete submittal with all the information necessary to complete the plan review in a timely manner. Express permits are not currently allowed for low-rise or mid-rise multifamily residential construction (City of Kennewick, 2025). Kennewick currently offers an express permit program for all new single-family residential projects, which include detached single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes with 1-2 units, and detached structures (e.g., ADUs) per the express permit application form. Interviewees shared mixed experiences with Kennewick's permitting process. Some described challenges, including delays in permitting, restrictive zoning standards, and a lack of overall helpfulness from the City with challenges in the development process. Interviewees felt that the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing developers by streamlining permitting timelines.	Provide better communication on permit timelines and update the permit website with accurate and clear estimates. The City should monitor permit delivery times to identify any short-term issues and proactively manage staff workloads to ensure that any effects of temporary short staffing can be managed.

SEPA process	Possibly. SEPA process could be reformed and streamlined but is not a major barrier to housing production.	SEPA review processes can add time and expense that may not be necessary with other strong development regulations in place. SEPA procedures are described in KMC 4.08, including flexible categorical exemption thresholds in KMC 4.08.110 (30 units or less for single family and 60 units or less for multifamily). Some developers reported difficulties when projects overlapped with specific SEPA requirements, such as shrub-steppe mitigation (see Environmental Constraints below).	No action is necessary to address barriers. Could adopt higher flexible exemption thresholds per WAC 197-11-800, up to 100 units for single family with the total square footage less than 1,500 square feet and 200 units for multifamily (KMC 4.08.110 already adopts the maximum flexible exemption threshold for single family residential of 30 units).
LIMITED LAND AVAILABILITY AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS			
Lack of large parcels for infill development	Yes.	Pipeline projects indicate availability of land for multifamily development, including individual projects with up to ~300 multifamily units and totaling nearly 1,000 multifamily units across all pipeline projects. However, the amount of land zoned for higher density residential development is limited (with most residential zoning devoted to low and moderate density residential). Affordable housing developers also highlighted the scarcity of developable land in Kennewick and felt that infill development should be prioritized over continued sprawl. Interviewees also expressed that aging water infrastructure impacts the cost and feasibility of infill development in the city's older northern neighborhoods.	Ensure continuous coordination of policies for any remaining government surplus lands, including the city, school district, state and federal agencies, and other jurisdictions. The City should also consider areas that could be upzoned to allow for infill and higher density multifamily development in more areas. Review growth plans against existing capital facility plans and, if needed, adjust planned growth or infrastructure improvements to ensure adequate and available services can support planned growth.
Environmental constraints	Yes.	The Land Capacity Analysis did not find many critical areas in otherwise buildable parcels. The critical areas included in the analysis are as follows: Wetlands, Riparian Corridors, Floodways, 100 Year Floodplain, Steep Slopes, Landslide Hazards. Designated critical areas where development could still occur with appropriate mitigation were not removed from the land capacity analysis (e.g., shrub steppe, erosion hazard areas, etc.).	Ensure all critical area regulations are consistent with State requirements and that other development regulations support achievement of growth targets. Consider implementing additional mitigation options to support development while still providing

		However, developers and members of the Housing Focus Group have discussed critical area regulations (particularly shrub steppe) as a barrier to housing construction in Kennewick. Developers reported difficulties specifically when projects overlapped with shrub-steppe mitigation under SEPA requirements, where they felt the City could play a stronger role in coordinating solutions or working with DOE on behalf of the developer.	protection for critical areas (e.g., a mitigation bank for shrub steppe) and continue coordinating with the State and neighboring jurisdictions to address these issues.

Figure H-91. Supplementary barrier review checklist for PSH and emergency housing

Barrier	Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)	Why or why not? Provide evidence.	Actions needed to address barriers.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS			
Spacing requirements (for example, minimum distance from parks, schools or other emergency/PSH housing facilities)[70]	Yes.	Per KMC 18.12.255, simultaneous temporary homeless encampments may not be located within 1,000 feet of each other.	Code currently does not address emergency housing or permanent supportive housing as specific use types. Spacing/intensity requirements for temporary homeless encampments should be removed or revised and connected directly to public health and safety, consistent with Commerce guidance. See recommendations under other restrictions below.
Parking requirements	Yes.	Current requirements per Chapter 18.36: Assisted living facility: 1 per 4 residents plus 1 per staff on largest shift Church or other place of worship: 1 per 4 seats or 8 lineal feet of bench seating; plus additional required spaces for other uses Community residential facility: 2 plus 1 per employee on maximum shift Dwelling, congregate: 1 per sleeping room	Update parking requirements consistent with SB 5184, including: No more than 0.5 off-street stalls required per multifamily unit. No more than 1 stall required per single-family unit. No parking may be required for residences under 1,200 square feet, affordable housing, or senior housing.

[70] Note that RCW 35A.21.430 expressly states requirements on occupancy, spacing, and intensity of use may not prevent the siting of a sufficient number of permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, indoor emergency housing or indoor emergency shelters necessary to accommodate each code city's projected need for such housing and shelter under RCW 36.70A.070(2)(a)(ii). The restrictions on these uses must be to protect public health and safety.

		Hotel/motel: 1 per guest room; plus additional required spaces for other uses Manufactured (mobile) home park: 2 per dwelling unit plus 5% total for guest parking Recreational vehicle park/campground: 1 per RV park/campsite	
On-site recreation and open space requirements	Yes.	See open space discussion under Exhibit 2 above for low-rise and mid-rise development. Per KMC 18.12: Motels: If the motel is in an RH district, the motel must maintain a street frontage yard that is not used for parking and must be landscaped with at least a ten-foot wide strip across the entire front yard. Recreational Vehicle Park: No less than 10% of the total site area shall be provided as defined recreation space.	No action needed beyond those discussed under Exhibit 2 above for low-rise and mid-rise development. For consistency with other changes to residential landscaping standards, ensure requirements are appropriately balanced with other community needs (like water conservation) and consider ways to incorporate standards for xeriscaping or desert landscaping appropriate for Kennewick's climate.
Restrictions on support spaces, such as office space, within a transitional or PSH building in a residential zone	Yes.	Office uses are not specifically allowed in the CN, CAR, PF, OS, or any R districts under KMC 18.12.	Incorporate revisions to allow for ancillary office uses and other support spaces within transitional or PSH buildings.
Arbitrary limits on number of occupants (in conflict with RCW 35A.21.314)	Yes.	Per KMC 18.12, temporary homeless encampments are limited to a maximum of 100 adults 18 or older. Per KMC 18.12, congregate care facilities with up to 10 residents are allowed in more zones (RMH, RS, RL, RM, RH, UMU, CO, CC, CR, CG, HMU) than congregate care facilities for more than 10 residents (RM, RH, CO, CC, CR, CM).	Code currently does not address emergency housing or permanent supportive housing as specific use types. See recommendations under other restrictions below.
Requirements for PSH or emergency housing that are different than the requirements imposed on housing developments generally (in conflict with RCW 36.130.020)	Yes.	Per KMC 18.12, temporary homeless encampments must include a religious organization as a sponsor or managing agency and be on land owned by that organization. Per KMC 18.12, the minimum setbacks are required for recreational vehicle parks: 25 ft from a public street and 15 ft from the park boundary.	Code currently does not address emergency housing or permanent supportive housing as specific use types. See recommendations under other restrictions below.
Other restrictions specific to emergency shelters,	Yes.	The City of Kennewick's code currently does not address emergency housing or permanent supportive housing as specific	Add emergency and permanent supportive housing as separate use

emergency housing, transitional housing and permanent supportive housing		use types. However, congregate care facilities are allowed in several commercial zones by right and in some residential zones as a conditional use (particularly when the facility serves 10 or fewer residents). Transient RV parks (up to a 30-day stay) are also allowed by right in two zones. Temporary homeless encampments are also allowed in all zones with a specific temporary homeless encampment permit. Per KMC 18.12.255, homeless encampments may be approved for a maximum of 6 months, a 3 month separation is required between temporary homeless encampments at the same location, and simultaneous temporary homeless encampments may not be located within 1,000 feet of each other. Interviewees also felt that the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing developers by reducing permitting fees and offering additional incentives to encourage development (note some fee waivers are available per KMC 14.25).	types in the code for clarity and allow emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing by right in all zones that allow hotels and permanent supportive housing by right in all zones that allow residential. Ensure any occupancy, spacing, and intensity requirements for indoor emergency housing and shelters are consistent with Commerce guidance, including: Occupancy for emergency shelters and emergency housing should be established as required by the jurisdiction's adopted building, fire and safety codes. Connect any spacing requirement, if adopted, directly to public health and safety. Blanket intensity regulations for these use types are not recommended, but may be adopted to encourage a scattered approach to siting or siting near supportive resources like transit, employment, and social and health services.

Figure H-92. Accessory dwelling unit barrier review checklist

Barrier	Is this barrier likely to affect housing production? (yes or no)	Why or why not? Provide evidence.	Actions needed to address barriers.
DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS			
Consistent with HB 1337 (2023) Must allow two ADUs on each lot in urban growth areas;	No.	As per KMC 18.12.020, ADUs are allowed in all residential and mixed use zones: RMH, RS, RL, RM, RH, UMU, CBD, and HMU. ADUs are permitted in all residential zoning districts, must adhere to the appearance of	Development standards are consistent with HB 1337 but parking requirements should be clarified further for consistency with SB 5184 (specifically no parking may be

May not require the owner to occupy the property, and may not prohibit sale as independent units, but may restrict the use of ADUs as short term rentals; Must allow an ADU of at least 1,000 square feet; Must set parking requirements based on distance from transit and lot size; May not charge more than 50% of the impact fees charged for the principal unit; Must permit ADUs in structures detached from the principal unit; May not restrict roof heights of ADUs to less than 24 feet, unless that limitation applies to the principal unit; May not impose setback requirements, yard coverage limits, tree retention mandates, restrictions on entry door locations, aesthetic requirements, or requirements for design review for ADUs that are more restrictive than those for principal units; Must allow an ADUs on any lot that meets the minimum lot size required for the principal unit; Must allow detached ADUs to be sited at a lot line if the lot line abuts a public alley, unless the city or county routinely plows snow on the public alley; Must allow conversions from existing structures, even if they violate current code requirements for setbacks or lot coverage; and May not require public street improvements as a condition of permitting ADUs.		single-family residences, and are subject to the following development standards per KMC 18.12.020: Two ADUs are allowed in all residential zoning districts. ADUs are permitted on all lots meeting the minimum lot size for the zone in which they are proposed. Maximum height for a detached ADU is 24 feet. Maximum height for an attached ADU is the maximum height permitted in that zone for the primary unit. Total gross floor is limited to 1,100 sqft (not including uninhabited areas). Conversion of existing structures is allowed. Impact fees shall be 50% of the same impact fee applicable to the primary dwelling.	required for residences under 1,200 square feet, affordable housing, or senior housing). In addition, while there are currently no major transit stop in Kennewick per the definition in RCW 36.70A.696, code could be added for clarity and to ensure consistency with HB 1337 if major transit stops are identified in the future. Additional revisions could be made to help increase production of ADUs, such as increased allowed building heights or total gross floor area for ADUs, and code could be added to clarify that owner occupancy of the primary residence or ADU is not required.
Unclear development regulations	No	Kennewick Municipal Code provides clear directions on ADUs. Revisions as noted above should be reviewed to maintain clarity in requirements.	No action needed.
Large setback requirements	No.	Per KMC 18.12.020(3), detached accessory structures are subject to the provisions of KMC 18.27.030 with the exception of the maximum height. According to KMC 18.27.030, in all R and HMU districts, no detached accessory building may be within 5' of a side or rear property line but it may abut a	No action needed.

		rear property line adjacent to an alley, canal right-of-way or railroad right-of-way. In other residential zones, setbacks are generally 5' for side yards, 5-15' for rear yard, and 15' for front yard /street (KMC 18.12.010 A.2).	
Off-street parking requirements	Yes.	According to KMC 18.12.020(6), a minimum of one off-street parking space per ADU is required (for any lot size), in addition to the spaces required for the primary dwelling unit. If an attached garage is converted to an accessory dwelling unit, additional parking spaces must be improved elsewhere on the site to replace those lost. There are currently no major transit stops in Kennewick per the definition in RCW 36.70A.696.	Update parking requirements consistent with SB 5184 (specifically no parking may be required for residences under 1,200 square feet, affordable housing, or senior housing). Additional revisions could be made to eliminate parking requirements for ADUs near major transit stops (if identified in the future) or regional trails that provide connections to activity center and amenities. Consider adding ADUs to the parking table in KMC 18.36.060 and cross-referencing to KMC 18.12.020(6) for clarity.
Other (for example: burdensome design standards, tree retention regulations, historic preservation requirements, open space requirements, etc.)	No.	According to KMC 18.42, no building permit will be issued nor may any use or change in use be made of land without a site plan. This does not apply to single-family and middle housing residences and their accessory structures in R districts. Yard coverage limits, tree retention mandates, restrictions on entry door locations, aesthetic requirements, and requirements for design review for ADUs are not more restrictive than those for principal units.	No action needed.
PROCESS OBSTACLES			
Lack of clear and accessible information about process and fees	No.	Development steps for residential are outlined online, and applications can be submitted and tracked online. See also the Kennewick Master Fee Schedule, last updated August 2025. ADUs are included in a checklist for permitting residential structures (along with single family, duplex, and townhomes; City of Kennewick,	No action needed.

		2025) and the permit cost for ADUs is identified separately (City of Kennewick, 2025).	
Permit fees, impact fees and utility connection fees that are not proportionate to impact	No.	Land use permit fees are in accordance with the adopted fee schedule (KMC 18.42.020) which is based on improvement value. The 2025 land use permit fee for ADUs is $249 (City of Kennewick, 2025). Per KMC 18.12.020: Connection charges for ADUs shall be as specified by the applicable ordinances and resolutions. ADUs shall be assessed 50% of the same impact fees applicable to the primary dwelling.	No action needed.
Processing times and staffing challenges	Yes.	A short-staffed planning and building department have less capacity and can take longer to process permit applications. The City usually completes Building & Public Works Permit review within 10 business days, assuming a complete submittal with all the information necessary to complete the plan review in a timely manner. Kennewick currently offers an express permit program for all new single-family residential projects, which include detached single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes with 1-2 units, and detached structures (e.g., ADUs) per the express permit application form. Developers shared mixed experiences with Kennewick's permitting process. Some described challenges, including delays in permitting and a lack of overall helpfulness from the City with challenges in the development process. Interviewees felt that the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing developers by streamlining permitting timelines. Developers also mentioned that tensions arose when attempting to purchase land within the urban growth boundary but with neighboring agricultural landowners, and wished the City had been more of a supportive partner.	Provide better communication on permit timelines and update the permit website with accurate and clear estimates. The City should monitor permit delivery times to identify any short-term issues and proactively manage staff workloads to ensure that any effects of temporary short staffing can be managed.

Figure H-93. Checklist for local option tools for addressing affordable housing funding gaps

Local option tools for addressing affordable housing funding gaps*	Implementation status	Plans for implementation
Housing and related services sales tax (RCW 82.14.530)	*Not implemented.* (City of Kennewick, n.d.)	Considering as part of the Draft HAP.
Affordable housing property tax levy (RCW 84.52.105)	*Not implemented.*	Considering as part of the Draft HAP.
REET 2 (RCW 82.46.035) – GMA jurisdictions only and only available through 2025	REET Location Code: 0302; Local Rate: 0.50% (DOR, 2025) REET 2 is not implemented (Wallace, 2023).	*No immediate plans to implement REET 2. Note HB 2442 (2026) reenacted RCW 82.46.035 (effective July 1, 2026).*
Affordable Housing Sales Tax Credit (RCW 82.14.540) – was only available to jurisdictions through July 2020	*Not implemented.*	*No plans for implementation.*
Lodging Tax (RCW 67.28.150 and RCW 67.28.160) to repay general obligation bonds or revenue bonds	KMC 3.20 - Lodging Tax: The City imposes and levy a special excise tax of 4%. All taxes levied and collected under the provisions of this Chapter shall be credited to the Public Facilities Fund.	*No immediate plans for implementation to support affordable housing.*
Mental Illness and Drug Dependency Tax (RCW 82.14.460) – jurisdictions with a population over 30,000	Effective July 1, 2022, local sales and use tax within Benton County, increased one-tenth of one percent (.001). The tax will be used for chemical dependency or mental health purposes (DOR, 2022; Benton County, n.d.).	N/A, enacted by Benton County
Sales and Use Tax Deferral for Conversion of Underutilized Commercial Property to Affordable Housing (RCW 82.59)	*Not implemented.*	Considering as part of the Draft HAP.
Donating surplus public lands for affordable housing projects (RCW 39.33.015)	Proposed Affordable Housing: Repurposing City Property Under Consideration (City of Kennewick, n.d.)	Considering as part of the Draft HAP.
Impact fee waivers for affordable housing projects (RCW 82.02.060)	Not currently implementing. (KMC 3.95)	Considering as part of the Draft HAP.
Application fee waivers or other benefits for affordable housing projects (RCW 36.70A.540)	KMC 14.25 - Waiver: The Public Works Director, or his or her designee, may waive the new service connection charges required by KMC 14.13.010 and service tap, side sewer, and	Considering as part of the Draft HAP (e.g., permit fee waivers, expanding water and sewer connection fee waivers to all affordable housing developers, etc.).

	hookup charges required by KMC 14.24.010 for the Kennewick Housing Authority (KHA)'s affordable housing projects in the City of Kennewick, provided that KHA secure sufficient grant funds to fully reimburse the City for the waived charges.	
Multifamily Tax Exemption (MFTE) with affordable housing requirement (RCW 84.14)	Not currently implementing.	Considering as part of the Draft HAP. Consider adopting an MFTE program that authorizes 8-year exemptions to encourage the development of multifamily housing, and 12- and 20-year exemptions to encourage the development of affordable housing.
General funds (including levy lid lifts to increase funds available)	Benton County has made available through an Interlocal Agreement, funds to be utilized by Certified Non-Profits, Agencies/Providers of Affordable Housing, Cities, Towns, the County, and for-profit developers in accordance with SHB 2060 Affordable Housing Program (Benton County, 2023).	Considering as part of the Draft HAP.

* Some tools may be unavailable for certain jurisdictions. For example, only GMA jurisdictions can use REET 2, or the surrounding county may have already implemented the housing and related services sales tax. See MRSC's summary of Affordable Housing Funding Sources for more details and the Association of Washington Cities (AWC)/MRSC booklet on Homelessness & housing toolkit for cities (2022).

HOUSING WORK GROUP MEETING SUMMARIES

October – May 2025; Summaries Prepared by BERK Consulting

Participants and Meetings Attended

Figure H-94. Project Team

Name	Role/Organization	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3
Anthony Muai	City of Kennewick: Community Planning Director	X	X	X
Matt Halitsky	City of Kennewick: Senior Planner	X	X	X
Taskina Tareen	BERK: Project Manager	X	X	X
Jessie Hartmann	BERK: Housing Technical Lead	X	X	X
Stella Streufert	BERK: Engagement Lead	X	X	X
Ana Costa	BERK: Planning Support		X	
Juan Haeckermann-Godoy	BERK: Engagement Support	X		
Scott Bonjukian	MAKERS: Project Manager		X	X
Bob Bengford	MAKERS: Principal		X	X
Laurel Hicks	MAKERS: Engagement Support	X		

Figure H-95. Housing Work Group Members

Name	Role/Organization	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3
Alisha Piper	City of Kennewick	X	X	X
Andrew Magallanez	Tri-City Assoc. of Realtors	X	X	X
Angie Pacheco	Domestic Violence Services		X	X
Brian Kinner	Senior Life Resources		X	
Hermelinda Sierra	Kennewick Housing Authority	X	X	X
James Hempstead	Kennewick Planning Commissioner		X	
Jason Bliss	Seasons Housing	X	X	
Jeff Losey	Home Builders Association		X	X

Jessica Sagdal	Benton Franklin Community Action Committee – Housing Direction		X	X
Jet Richardson	Habitat for Humanity (Tri-County) & Community Action Connections	X	X	X
Jim Millbauer	Kennewick City Council Member		X	X
Karl Dye	TRIDEC – Homeownership Advocacy and Support	X	X	
Kristopher Dahir	Columbia Basin Veterans Center	X	X	X
Kylie Peel	City of Kennewick	X	X	X
Lisa Godwin	Elijah Family Homes – Addiction and Recovery Housing	X	X	
Michelle Morales	Numerica CU, Kennewick Planning Commissioner	X	X	
Niria Lucatero	Benton County Human Services – Homeless Support	X	X	X
Tim Artzen	Port of Kennewick			
Tobaski Snipes	SnipesH3 – Transitional Housing	X	X	X

Meeting #1 Summary

October 7, 2025 / 10 am to 12 pm / Virtual

Agenda

- Welcome and Introductions
- Project Overview
- Exploring Housing Needs & Barriers
- RDI and Displacement
- Small Group Discussion

Mid-presentation Q&A

Housing work group members were periodically asked to share their reflections on how the findings aligned with their own experiences or observations of housing in Kennewick. Below are some key takeaways:

- With a crisis in housing attainability in both renting and owning, effects of inflation do not accurately depict conditions for people earning 80% and 100% AMI levels.
- Jessie Hartmann noted that numbers apply to the next 20 years and do not put some current factors into consideration.
- A work group member asked about the survey results regarding the question "Which of the following ideas would you support?" and the responses for the "other" category answer.

- The "other" written responses included widespread concern over rising property taxes and government fees, with many expressing frustrations about the growing financial burden on homeowners, desire for reduced regulatory barriers in the housing process, including streamlining building codes, zoning standards, and energy-efficiency requirements that are perceived to drive up costs, support for lowering construction and permitting costs through incentives, fee reductions, and other measures that make housing development more financially feasible, and middle-income households reporting limited affordable options. There was concern that regulations protecting critical environmental areas may be creating barriers to adequate housing development in Kennewick.
- Critical areas were noted as a development barrier, specifically the shrub steppe regulations from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). Work group members suggested the City could work with WDFW on behalf of developers to find compromise with this development barrier.
- A work group member asked whether there is a possibility that fire response capacity and access is a barrier to increased housing stock, and how this could possibly be addressed.
- Most work group members agreed that a cultural need to retain single-family housing is a barrier to build the types of homes many people need.
- Someone thought it was worth investigating what strategies other Housing Authorities have to handle the housing crisis.
- A work group member wanted to ensure that people with disabilities seeking long-term permanent supportive housing (PSH) were included in housing analysis work.

Small Group Discussions

The Housing Group divided into two breakout sessions for a deeper discussion of these topics. Key takeaways and potential strategies from those conversations are summarized below.

Housing Barriers

- There is a need for proper zoning, pre-approved plan permitting, and other incentives that speed up affordable housing development.
- There is not enough housing variety.
- There are not enough affordable housing developers to meet supply needs.
- State critical area regulations, such as shrub steppe regulation and protection, prove too costly for developers. Members said that they have struggled with this barrier and want additional City support.
- Need to take advantage of the increased residential density opportunity to put up to 6 units per lot if 2 are affordable, rather than the standard 4 units per lot.
- Some members said that ADUs and Cottages are preferable to tiny homes, while others say they all need to continue to be supported.
- There is a Not-in-My-Backyard (NIMBY) response to reduced parking and walkable neighborhoods and a lack of public support.
- The County's Continuum of Care has started a program designed to reduce NIMBYism through social media posts and plans to host a public hearing to educate residents.
- Poor landlord protections are discouraging to providing affordable housing as there is a greater risk of damage, or lack of payment. It would be helpful to have additional supports for landlords to incentivize them to rent affordable housing.
- There are concerns with transportation opportunities and proper connection to affordable housing developments. There is a high cost of construction that is passed down to renters and owners.
- High cost of living contributes to the housing affordability crisis.

DRAFT

Racially Disparate Impacts and Displacement

- There is a need for measures that prevent people from losing housing in the first place.
- Policies and strategies take too long to be implemented, and do not prevent short-term housing difficulties.
- It is important to bring short-term solutions as long-term sustainability is built.
- Many who seek housing assistance and have barriers to housing are people of color.
- There are high costs for both renting and owning are passed down onto residents.
- It is important to highlight differences between affordable and supportive housing. Different populations need different housing.
- Working individuals are included in the grouping of populations financially unable to rent or own.
- The 2-3x income requirement for housing applications is a barrier and may not be necessary.

Preliminary Ideas

- Increase communication between WDFW and the City on behalf of developers to reduce the environmental mitigation barriers to housing.
- Improve marketing and outreach about the homeowner Fund Program with the City and the opportunity for upkeep of housing.
- Categorization of income brackets with a matching appropriate rent amount, as seen in Pasco.
- Implement pre-approved construction plans for smoother ADU permitting.
- Seek opportunities for Veteran or Senior home Village Type development.
- Evaluate if displacement is being identified correctly – Consider crime, cost, personal preference, etc.
- Reduce or waive connection fees for affordable housing developments, with different incentive levels or requirements at 60 and 80% AMI.
- Continue exploring municipal land transfers for affordable housing development.
- Ensure tiny and manufactured home communities continue to be supported.
- Investigate identified cost drivers for affordable housing developers, such as construction costs.
- Expand shelters and additional programs to help people exit homelessness.

Meeting #2 Summary

December 16, 2025 / 1 pm to 3 pm / Virtual

Agenda

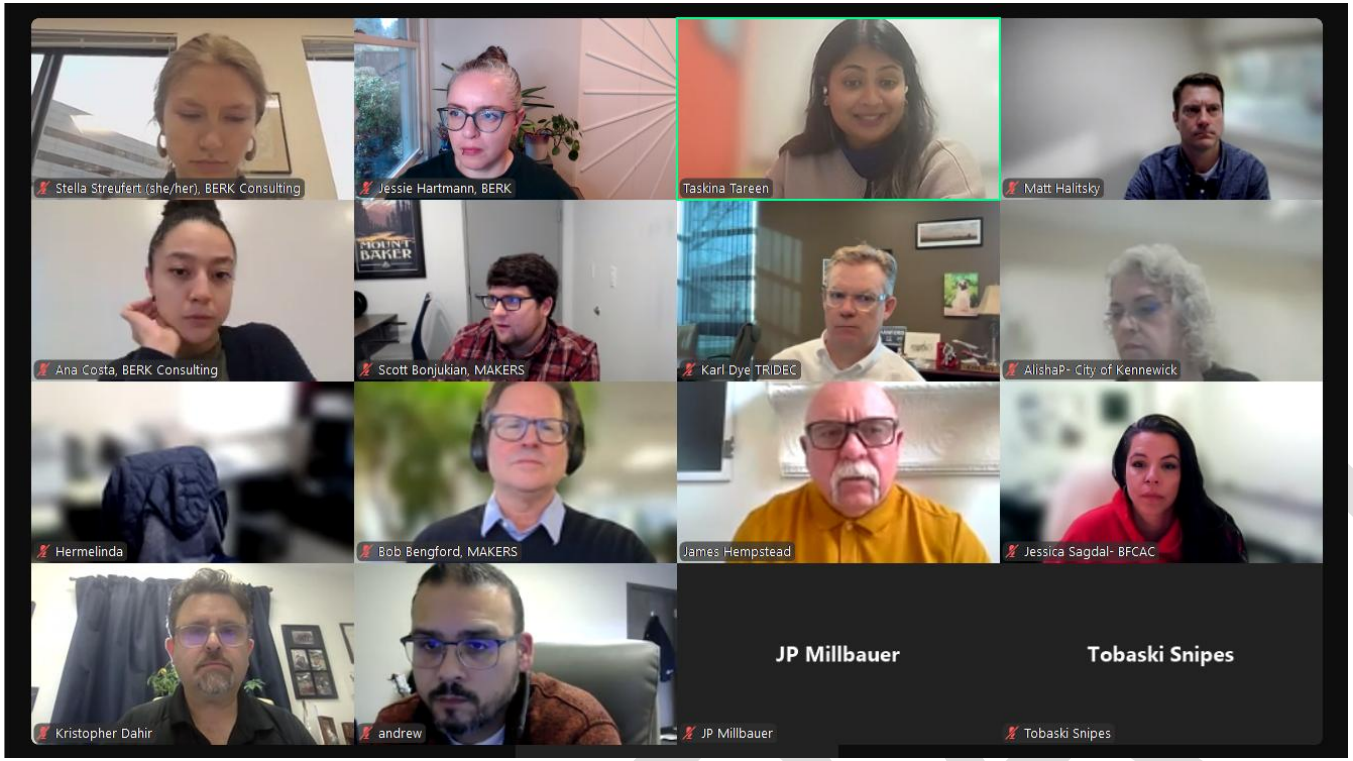
- Welcome and Introductions
- Project Refresher
- What We've Learned
- Adequate Provisions
- Group Discussion

Group Discussion

Housing Work Group members provided feedback during both the presentation and the facilitated discussion, which focused on reviewing the proposed adequate provisions actions and future land use maps. Overall, participants were supportive of the proposed actions to address housing barriers. Discussion primarily centered on clarifying specific items, particularly those related to potential modifications to Kennewick's development standards. Key discussion points are summarized below:

- Kennewick is facing similar housing challenges as other cities. The consultant team answered a question around comparison with other cities, noting that Kennewick is experiencing a similar deficit in lower income housing as other communities around the state.
- There was mixed feedback from developers around the permitting process. Consultant team clarified that some developers shared in interviews that working with the City is easier and faster than the other Tri-Cities, while others felt frustrated at the environmental mitigation regulations. Regardless, it is noted that delayed permitting is costly. Preapproved plans or a color-coded designation (red, yellow, green) could help indicate or classify expected timelines.
- It is important to coordinate efforts with the other Tri-Cities and county-wide organizations. While each city is required to have an individual comprehensive plan, there was discussion around the importance of increasing coordination among cities to ensure policies are complementary. The City should also consider becoming more involved with the Continuum of Care's strategic planning process.
- There may be pushback from community members with extreme changes. There was discussion of the tension between needing to address housing inventory and the expected community response to any extreme changes or clustering of affordable housing. Housing group members noted that there could be creative opportunities and approaches in revising maximum density limits or other stair stepping changes to effectively integrate density.
- Quality of life considerations should not be discounted. There was discussion around the need to meet housing need and development without sacrificing development code standards or design standards that could impact quality of life.
- Kennewick could explore covenant ownership grant programs. The Tri-Cities have an existing homeownership downpayment assistance program, but additional programs or more promotion of the existing programs would be beneficial.

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Screenshot of Housing Work Group Meeting #2

Meeting #3 Summary

December 16, 2025 / 2 pm to 4 pm / Virtual

Agenda

- Welcome back & Project Overview
- Project Refreshers
- Draft Goals & Policies
- Draft Housing Strategies & Concepts

Group Discussion

Housing Work Group members provided feedback during the online whiteboarding activity through both written comments and group discussion, which focused on reviewing the draft housing strategies. Key discussion points around strategies are summarized below followed by screenshots of written feedback from the online whiteboarding activity.

Regulatory Strategies

- Open space standards adjustments will need to be carefully considered and communicated to the public in a clear and accessible way, as open space is highly valued in Kennewick.

Programmatic Strategies

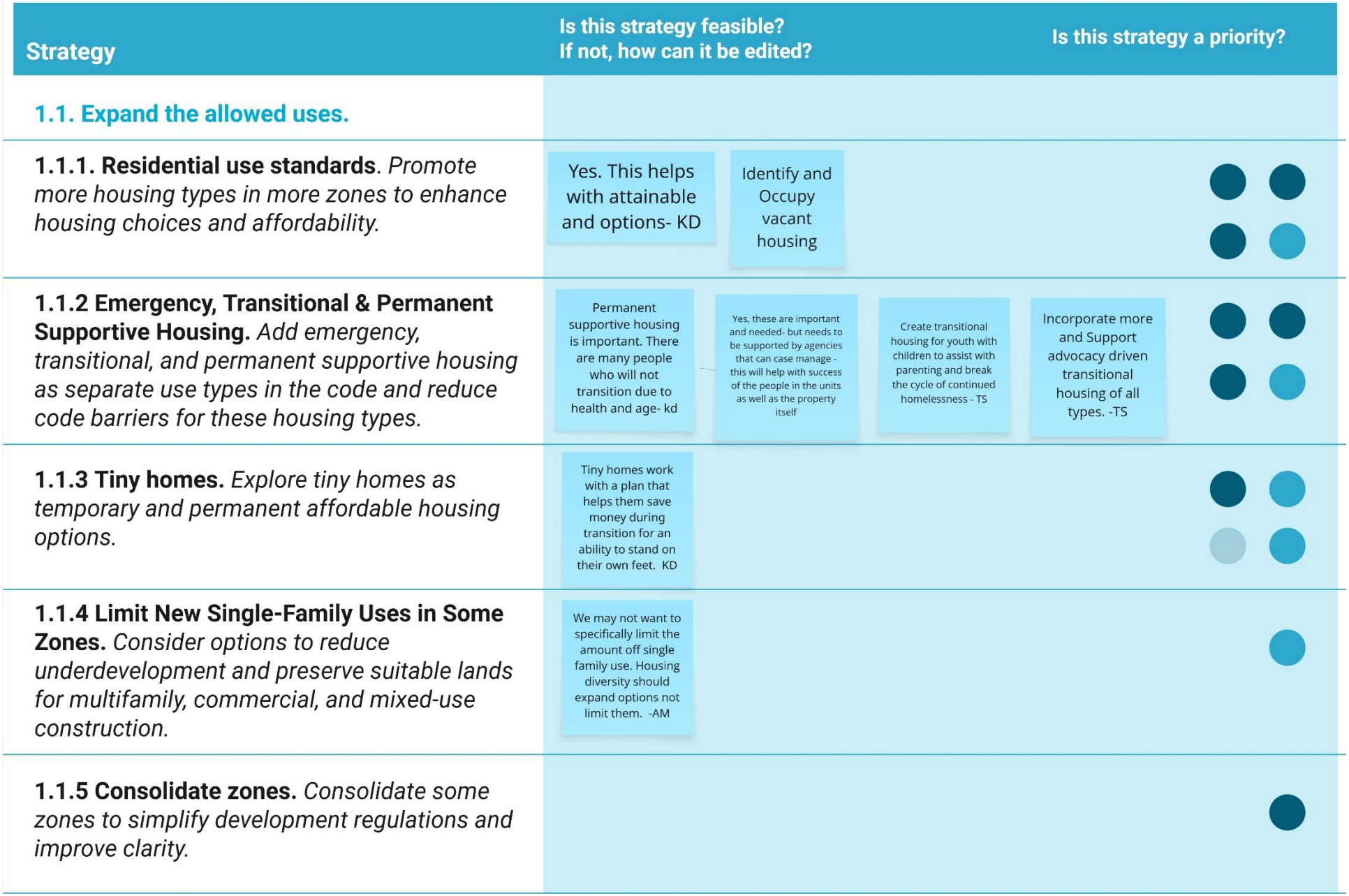
- Residents who may be ready to purchase a starter home are unable to do so, causing them to remain in the rental market and contributing to scarcity of rental housing. The City could consider strategies to encourage more starter home opportunities.
- The City could examine how short-term rentals are impacting housing availability and consider appropriate regulations in response.
- Down payment assistance and financing support should be prioritized to ensure housing strategies result in meaningful access to homeownership.
- The City could consider programs to connect property owners with vacant or underutilized units to lower-income renters, including incentives to offset rental costs, reduce landlord risk, and provide oversight support.
- Citywide Planning Strategies
- Small, unused parcels of city-owned land could be candidates for tiny home development.
- Strategies that support aging in place and allow residents to remain in their homes, such as critical home repair programs should be considered in order to protect populations who are at risk of housing instability or displacement.

Funding Strategies

- Another strategy that the City could pursue is a fee on building permits to dedicate to the development of affordable housing units. There was an example noted from Bend, Oregon.

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Figure H-96. Miro Board Feedback



1.2 Form & Intensity Standards

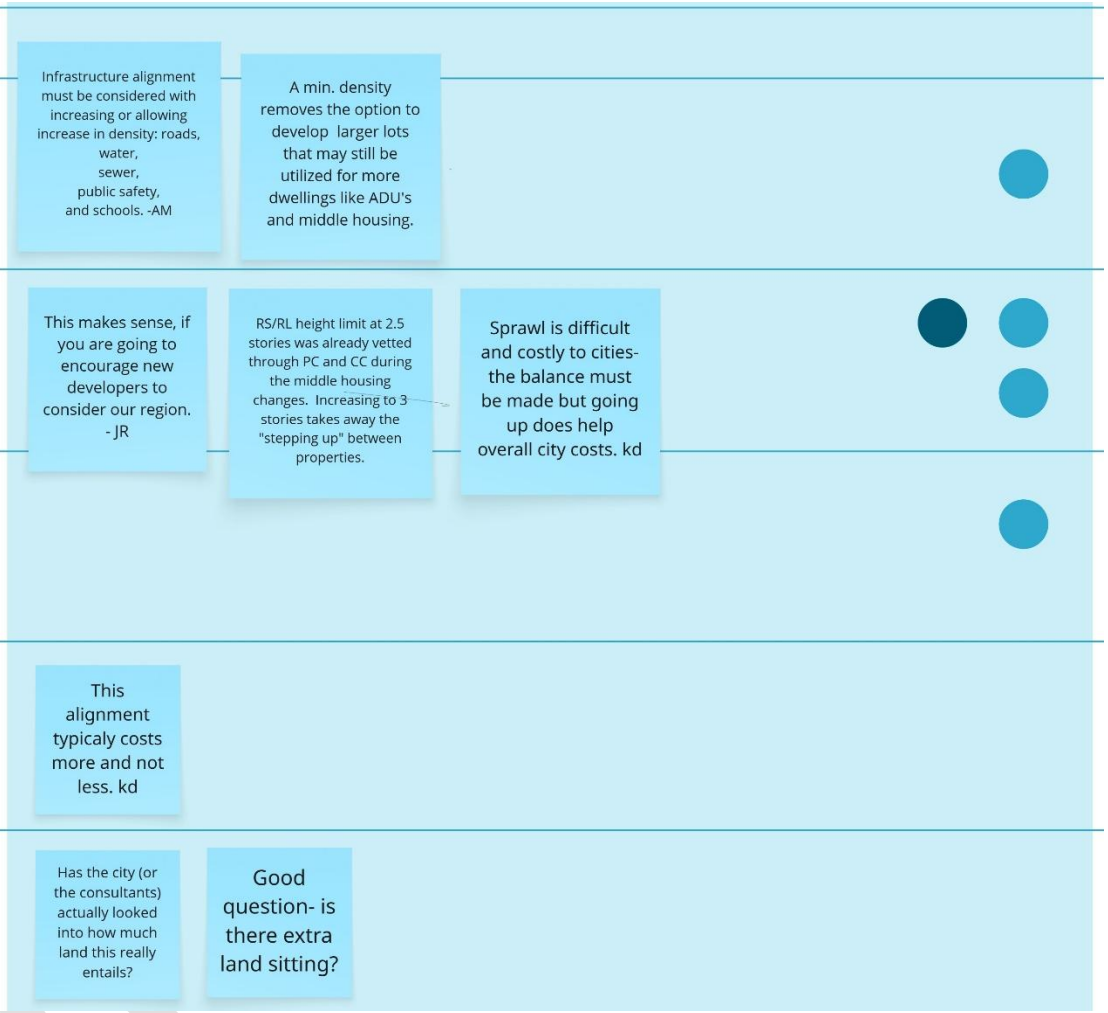
1.2.1 Density Limits. *Remove maximum density limits in residential zones in favor of a form-based approach to regulating development.*

1.2.2 Height Limits. *Revise height limits to encourage mid-rise projects and affordable housing.*

1.2.3 Residential Setbacks. *Reduce key setback standards to align with the Washington Middle Housing Model Ordinance.*

1.2.4 Design Standards. *Update the residential and commercial design standards to improve flexibility, align with construction market trends, and meet state requirements.*

1.2.5 Religiously Owned Land Density Bonus. *Implement a density bonus for low-income affordable housing on land owned by religious organizations.*



1.3 Adjust Other Standards

1.3.1 Parking. *Revise parking requirements to be consistent with new state law.*

I believe this is a mistake, if done carelessly and as a knee-jerk reaction to align with the state requirements. For some commercial areas this makes sense, but I feel needs to be better thought through in residential areas to avoid congestion. - JR

1.3.2 Multifamily Open Space Standards. *Adjust multifamily open space standards to improve feasibility for midrise development.*

This is where a strong educational approach is crucial or people will become angry. I have seen where cities take the time to protect enough lands that citizens feel comfortable with the idea. KD

JPM - community might have issues with this. KD: community values open space

JPM - Open space is needed and well used as quality for life

KD - Explain the tradeoffs with public messaging - maybe go higher density elsewhere and keep open space

1.3.3 Building Code Updates. *Evaluate potential building code amendments to support middle housing and small multifamily buildings.*

1.3.4 Lot Splits. *Integrate a residential lot split process.*

1.3.5 Planned Residential Developments. *Adjust Planned Residential Development (PRD) standards to support other community priorities.*

1.4 Streamline the Permitting Process

1.4.1 SEPA Categorical Exemption Thresholds. *Adopt higher SEPA exemption thresholds for multifamily developments and smaller single family units.*

1.4.2 Express Permits & Pre-Approved Plans. *Consider additional express permit options and pre-approved plans.*

Continuing express permitting and possible expansion of also using pre- approved plans could have a very big impact in building faster. The production builders use identical plans and one approval would really ease bottle necks.

1.4.3 Improve Feasibility for ADU Construction. *Explore the possibility of streamlining or partially financing ADU development and permitting processes, particularly for lower-income homeowners.*

If you think ADUs are going to be the solution for affordable housing this is a mistake. ADUs while fun to think about will be costly to build, and those owners (who will need to make money) will not be charging "affordable" rents. - JR

1.4.4 Improve Permitting Communication & Clarity. *Consider a uniform chapter for land use development application procedures and provide better communication to applicants about permitting processes, approval criteria, and fees.*

Clear and precise standards and appliation processes will help expedite all building.

1.4.5 Subarea Plans & Planned Actions. *Consider new subarea plans and/or planned action ordinances.*

New planned areas if paralleled with economic strategy can be positive- but still can create new costs for city. KD

Strategy	Is this strategy feasible? If not, how can it be edited?	Is this strategy a priority?
2.1 Anti-Displacement Strategies. *Adopt local tenant protections and consider other regulatory and programmatic anti-displacement actions to improve the stability of renter households.*	If you want to reduce displacement or gentrification then a focus on owner-occupied starter homes needs to be developed. Currently for those who could afford to buy can't find an affordable/attainable option to purchase, and so they stay as renters. Since they can afford a higher rent, the market adjusts and they drive up rents while occupying units that could be better utilized by other lower AMI renters. A plan that encourages "starter homes" will allow those that want to be first-time homeowners options to do so. Identify How short term rentals are affecting affordability homes. - TS - study on impacts of short term rentals? city does not control short term rentals right now. - other communities do regulate - Walla Walla, Wenatchee	
2.1.1 Local Tenant Protections	provide tenant protection voucher assistance will help rent affordability Identify protections for landlords that provide low-income housing - TS	
2.1.2 Other Anti-Displacement Strategies. • *Tenant legal services* • *Rental assistance programs* • *Housing rehabilitaton* • *Community control of land* • *Notice of intent to sell / sale ordinance* • *Foreclosure assistance* • *Living wage ordinance* • *Mobile home park redevelopment protections* • *Local transit service support*	Continue funding rental assistance and housing rehab programs through HOME/CDBG (Kylie) Idea: to have these services listed on a dedicated City webpage (Kylie) I do not believe a living wage would be supported by council or voters. AP Commerce relocation assistance program has limited funds and doesn't cover all costs. Over 55 parks, many cannot afford a loan or don't want a loan/debt in their retirement years. AP	
2.2 Homelessness Strategies		
2.2.1 Strengthen Relationships with Service Providers. *Strengthen coordination between the City and local homelessness support services.*	Staff to continue attending and building relationships w/ CoC group (Kylie) Yes, these are important and needed- but needs to be supported by agencies that can case manage - this will help with success of the people in the units as well as the property itself	
2.2.2 Adopt a "Housing First" approach. *Adopt a Housing First approach that couples housing with services.*		

2.3 Support Staffing Needs

2.3.1 Build Staff Capacity. *Build capacity amongst staff to help implement this Housing Action Plan, connect and collaborate with housing stakeholders, and promote more market-rate and affordable housing development in Kennewick.*

Continued efforts with semi annual meetings with builders and developers sharing opportunities could help with promoting opportunties or changes in what is availabile would be helpful. JL

Centralized housing hub (website) for everything housing

2.3.2 Continue Regional Housing Coordination Efforts. *Continue to coordinate with other Tri-Cities jurisdictions via the Tri-Cities Continuum of Care to promote more housing development in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities area (particularly affordable housing).*

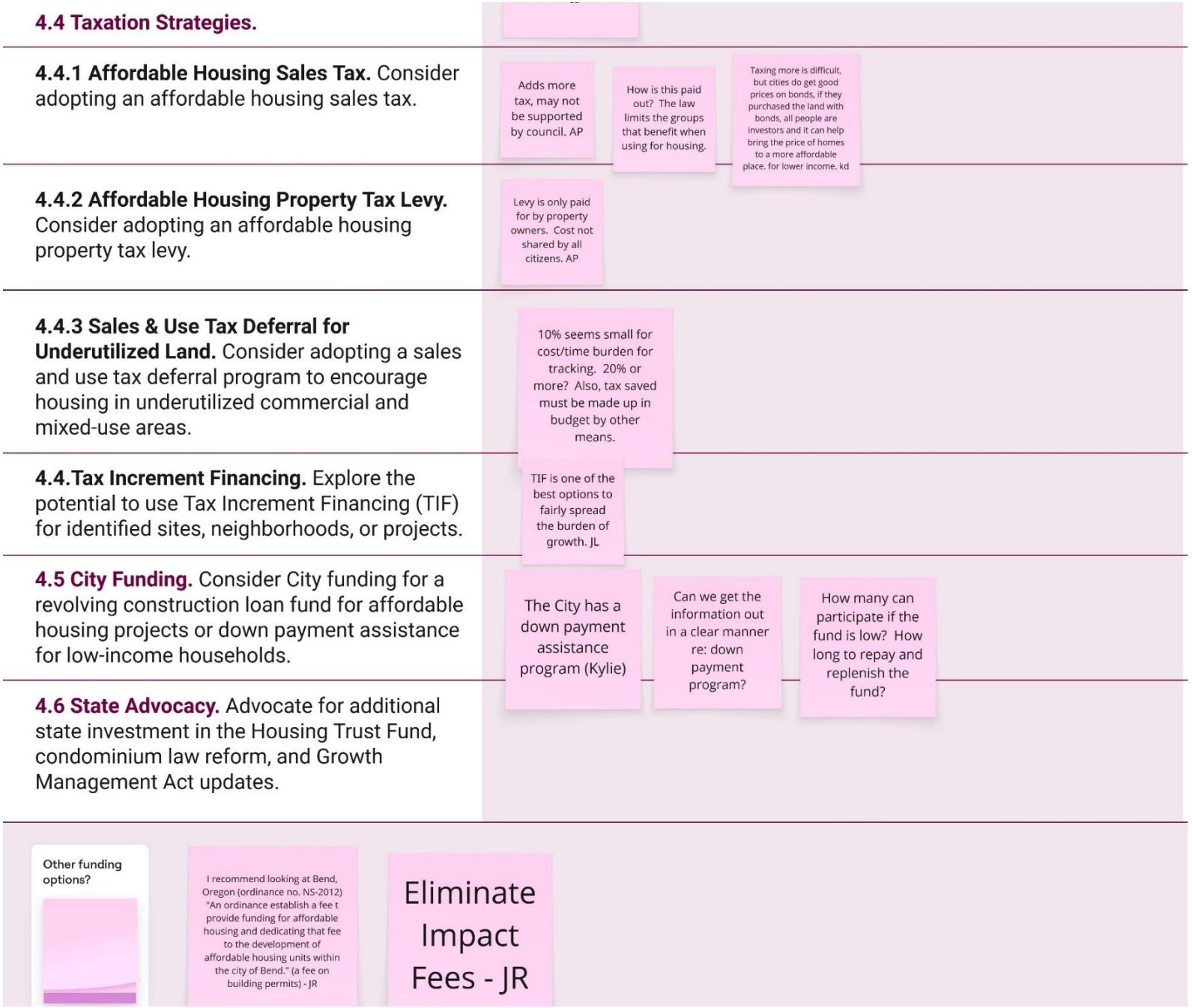
Other strategies?

Downpayment support for new owners. Building new homes will not help if those without means cannot get into a loan. KD

TS - Help connect people who have space (that they currently don't rent out) to be willing to provide to lower income populations, link them with programs to offset the rent, and maybe give them oversight

Strategy	Is this strategy feasible? If not, how can it be edited?	Is this strategy a priority?
3.1 Five-year implementation progress report. *Adjust housing strategies as needed to address any misalignments identified in the 2031 Five-Year Implementation Progress Report required by HB 1241.*	Ongoing strategies that look at 5 years is wise- things are changing too quickly KD	
3.2 Public land for affordable housing.		
3.2.1 Disposition Policy. *Adopt a surplus land disposition policy.*		
3.2.2 Land acquisition. *Consider land assembly and pre-development activities to promote use of surplus public land for affordable housing.*	This has worked in other cities and states but requires a strong investment and some risk. kd	
3.2.3 Surplus Lands & Co-Location. *Continue to coordinate amongst City departments and with other agencies and organizations to identify and promote use of surplus lands for affordable housing development or co-location opportunities.*		
Other strategies?	TS - city owned land for small areas of parcels unused - could fit tiny homes - encampments are already in these areas	

Option	Is this funding option feasible? If not, how can it be edited?	Should this funding option be pursued?
4.1 Multifamily Tax Exemption Program. study and adopt a MFTE program to help meet Kennewick's affordable housing targets.	Program reduction bonus gets transferred to other property owners. AP	I believe this should at a minimum be in place to incentivise density. JL
4.2 Development Fee Adjustments.		
4.2.1 Middle Housing Development Fees. Consider adjusting development fees for 2-4 unit buildings or specific middle housing types.	Managing "small" projects can create cost/time burden. Seems better served for larger, multi-family projects. AP	
4.2.2 Affordable Housing Impact or Permit Fee Waivers. Consider offering permit or impact fee waivers for all affordable housing projects.	Eliminating or reducing is impact fees will help drive activity. As long as the cost doesn't get pushed to market rate housing.	
4.2.3 Affordable Housing Utility Connection Fees. Consider adopting waived or discounted utility connection fees for all nonprofit and housing authorities building affordable housing.	JPM - staff time/resources to review applications should be a consideration	
4.2.4 Proportional Impact Fees. Adjust the impact fee structure to comply with 2023 State legislative changes regarding proportional impact fees for residential development.		
4.3 Local Bank Funding. Encourage local banks to create a fund for affordable housing finance.	Banks must be involved in the process as too many people cannot afford to by the house they are living in now. New home owners	


4.4 Taxation Strategies.
4.4.1 Affordable Housing Sales Tax. Consider adopting an affordable housing sales tax.
Adds more tax, may not be supported by council. AP
How is this paid out? The law limits the groups that benefit when using for housing.
Taxing more is difficult, but cities do get good prices on bonds, if they purchased the land with bonds, all people are investors and it can help bring the price of homes to a more affordable place. for lower income. kd
4.4.2 Affordable Housing Property Tax Levy. Consider adopting an affordable housing property tax levy.
Levy is only paid for by property owners. Cost not shared by all citizens. AP
4.4.3 Sales & Use Tax Deferral for Underutilized Land. Consider adopting a sales and use tax deferral program to encourage housing in underutilized commercial and mixed-use areas.
10% seems small for cost/time burden for tracking. 20% or more? Also, tax saved must be made up in budget by other means.
4.4.Tax Increment Financing. Explore the potential to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for identified sites, neighborhoods, or projects.
TIF is one of the best options to fairly spread the burden of growth. JL
4.5 City Funding. Consider City funding for a revolving construction loan fund for affordable housing projects or down payment assistance for low-income households.
The City has a down payment assistance program (Kylie)
Can we get the information out in a clear manner re: down payment program?
How many can participate if the fund is low? How long to repay and replenish the fund?
4.6 State Advocacy. Advocate for additional state investment in the Housing Trust Fund, condominium law reform, and Growth Management Act updates.
Other funding options?
I recommend looking at Bend, Oregon (ordinance no. NS-2012) "An ordinance establish a fee t provide funding for affordable housing and dedicating that fee to the development of affordable housing units within the city of Bend." (a fee on building permits) - JR
Eliminate Impact Fees - JR

Capital Facilities

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INTRODUCTION

Consistent with WAC 365-196-415, capital facilities in Kennewick include transportation, water systems, sewer systems, stormwater systems, reclaimed water facilities, schools, parks and recreation facilities, and police and fire protection facilities. Transportation facilities are discussed in the **Transportation Element** and reclaimed water facilities (irrigation water) are discussed in the **Utilities Element**. This section discusses the remaining capital facilities, all of which are provided by the City of Kennewick except for schools. Capital facilities provided by the City and Kennewick School District have their own specific comprehensive plans that examine the service in detail, including locations and inventories, capacities, and future improvements for the specific public facility. These plans, as amended, are incorporated by reference to meet capital facilities element requirements of GMA. The following is a summary of the capital facilities within the City's Comprehensive Plan with more specific information contained in each facility's associated functional plan.

> The adoption by reference of other agencies' capital facilities plans is not intended to control or direct the City of Kennewick's land use planning—goals, policies, and implementing actions in the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan shall prevail, subject to the extent of the City's statutory authority, if the capital facility plans of other agencies conflict.

CAPITAL FACILITIES INVENTORY

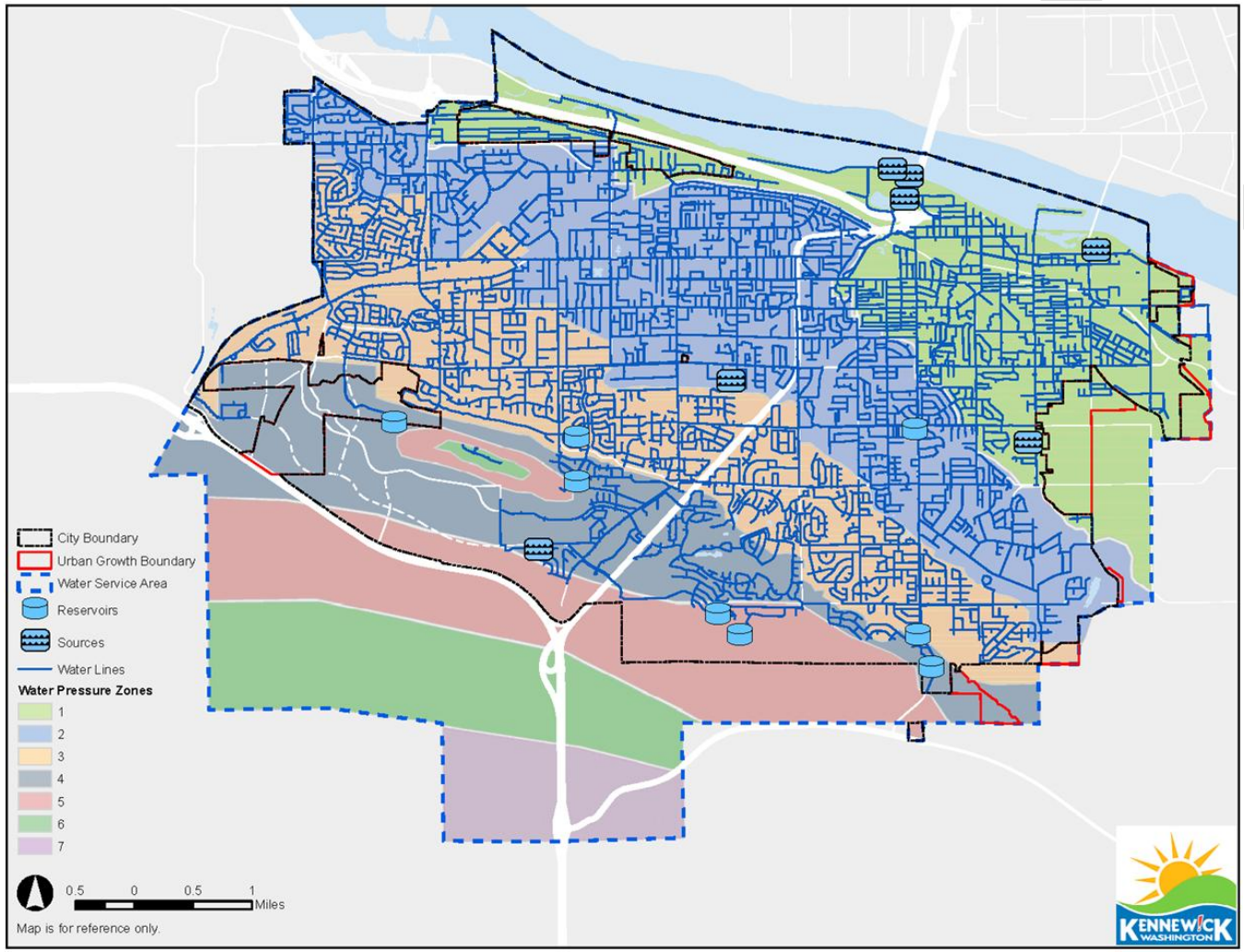
Water

Updated to align with 2023 General Sewer Plan

The City of Kennewick provides drinking water to approximately 90,000 residents within the city limits and unincorporated Urban Growth Area (UGA). Kennewick is the sole provider of drinking water except for some private and community wells. Drinking water comes from two (2) Ranney collectors that withdraw groundwater from an aquifer recharged primarily by the Columbia River. The Ranney Collectors currently supply approximately 8.7 MGD. The City's water supply is supplemented by one (1) Aquifer Storage and Recovery well, which has a pumping capacity of around 3 MGD. Potable water is treated at the City's Water Treatment Plant, which can also treat water sourced directly from the Columbia River. The City's Water Treatment Plant provides taste and odor control, pretreatment, and filtration via

submerged membrane microfiltration. Kennewick's water utility distributes water from these sources through a system including nine (9) reservoirs, 464 miles of water main, and eleven(11) booster pump stations serving six (6) water pressure zones with approximately 37,000 service connections to the system. See **Figure CF-1**. The pressure zones within the City receive water service between pressures of 40 and 100 psi. Water is chlorinated prior to distribution to customers. The City's water supply is not fluoridated. In 2024, the City produced 4.383 billion gallons of water on an annual basis, with a per capita water demand of 128 gallons per day.

Figure CF-1. Water System



Sources: City of Kennewick, 2025; MAKERS, 2026; Parametrix, 2026.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

The Cities of Kennewick, Richland, West Richland, and Pasco have engaged in efforts for a regional approach to water supply. These four cities developed a Regional Water Forecast and Conservation Plan to supplement their planning efforts and successfully acquired a regional water right permit.

The Cities of Kennewick and Richland jointly developed and maintained a 16-inch metered water main intertie between their respective water systems. This intertie is located at the southwest intersection of Gage Boulevard and Steptoe Street. The purpose is to assure availability of an emergency water supply from one system to the other should either system fail.

As the City grows and develops, it plans to minimize impacts to existing water treatment system capacity and water rights agreements by encouraging actions that lower the demand for treated water. This includes increasing the use of irrigation water in replacement of potable water where appropriate, and discouraging cross-connections between the distribution system and non-potable water sources.

The City's adopted Water System Plan, as amended, can be consulted for more detailed information about existing and planned facilities, service standards, and program operations.

Sanitary Sewer System

Updated to align with 2024 General Sewer Plan

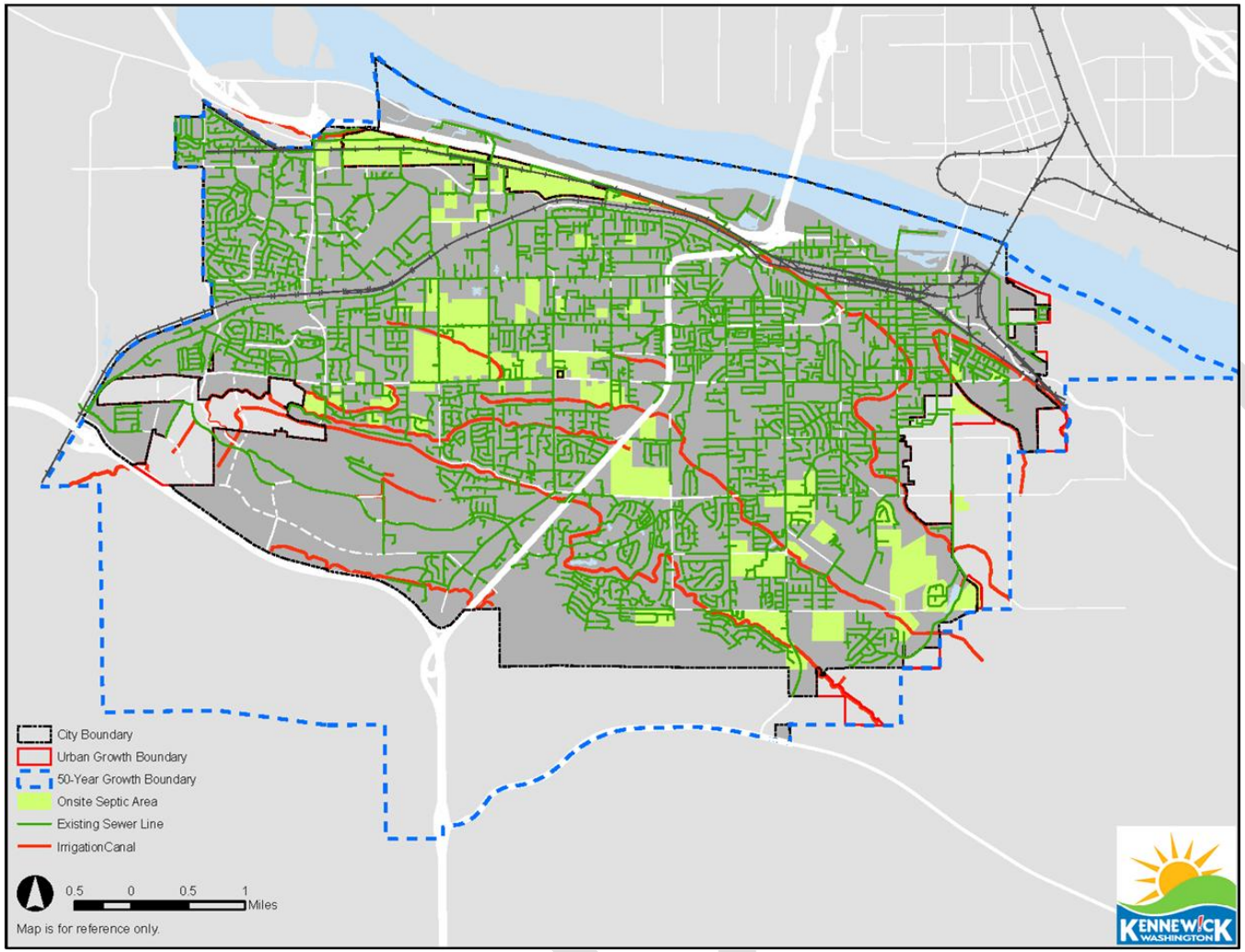
The City of Kennewick is the sole provider of sanitary sewer services within city limits and the unincorporated UGA. Approximately 76,220 residents are served by Kennewick's sanitary sewer system, which serves a retail service area of 8,178 acres or over 12 square miles. The system comprises over 300 miles of gravity pipelines and 15 pumping stations. Gravity pipelines range from six (6) inches in diameter to 36 inches in diameter. An estimated 10,600 people within the service area currently utilize on-site septic systems and drain fields to dispose of their wastewater. See **Figure CF-2**.

Kennewick's sewer and wastewater system is composed of two basic steps: collection, consisting of pipelines, manholes, and pump stations, and treatment, which occurs at the wastewater treatment plant. Wastewater flows from various sources into the gravity-fed sewer pipeline. Sewage pump stations, also called lift stations, are used to collect sewage from low elevation sewer drainage areas and pump the sewage up to the main sewer collection system, so the sewage can gravity flow to the wastewater treatment plant. The wastewater treatment plant provides primary and secondary treatment using anaerobic digestion and clarifiers, respectively. Following UV disinfection, the treated water is discharged into the Columbia River.

The City's adopted General Sewer Plan, as amended, can be consulted for more detailed information about existing and planned facilities, service standards, and program operations.

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Figure CF-2. Sewer System



Sources: City of Kennewick, 2025; MAKERS, 2026; Parametrix, 2026.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Surface and Storm Water Facilities

Updated to align with 2020 Stormwater Comprehensive Plan

Kennewick's stormwater management system includes both natural features and manmade structures. The city's storm water and drainage system is comprised of over 8,050 catch basins in a network of over 163 miles of piped storm sewers and open ditches, and three outfalls within the city to the Columbia River. The Columbia River and the aquifers beneath the City also receive the City's surface water runoff.

The city's drainage system is integrated, and surface water discharge is conditionally allowed. Within the City are multiple tiers of irrigation canals, owned and operated by Kennewick and Columbia Irrigation Districts. The City has around 38 miles of canals within its limits. These canals and drains provide regional detention during the high-intensity rainfall events that exceed the 100-year event, by collecting the excess surface water runoff when the capacity of local drywells is exceeded. This integrated operation helps prevent localized flooding throughout the city.

Incorporated with this Columbia region irrigation and drainage system, the city owns and operates an additional 2,800 public infiltration facilities (drywells), and associated inter-conveyance pipes, that accepts approximately 75% of the city's surface water discharges. The City's drainage system also contains one local detention pond, eight local retention facilities, and three storm water detention/water quality treatment facilities. The city-owned surface water facilities are complemented by numerous on-site infiltration facilities constructed by the landowners of commercial and residential developments, and private streets. See **Figure CF-3**.

In addition to the city-owned facilities, several major drainage facilities are owned and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers including:

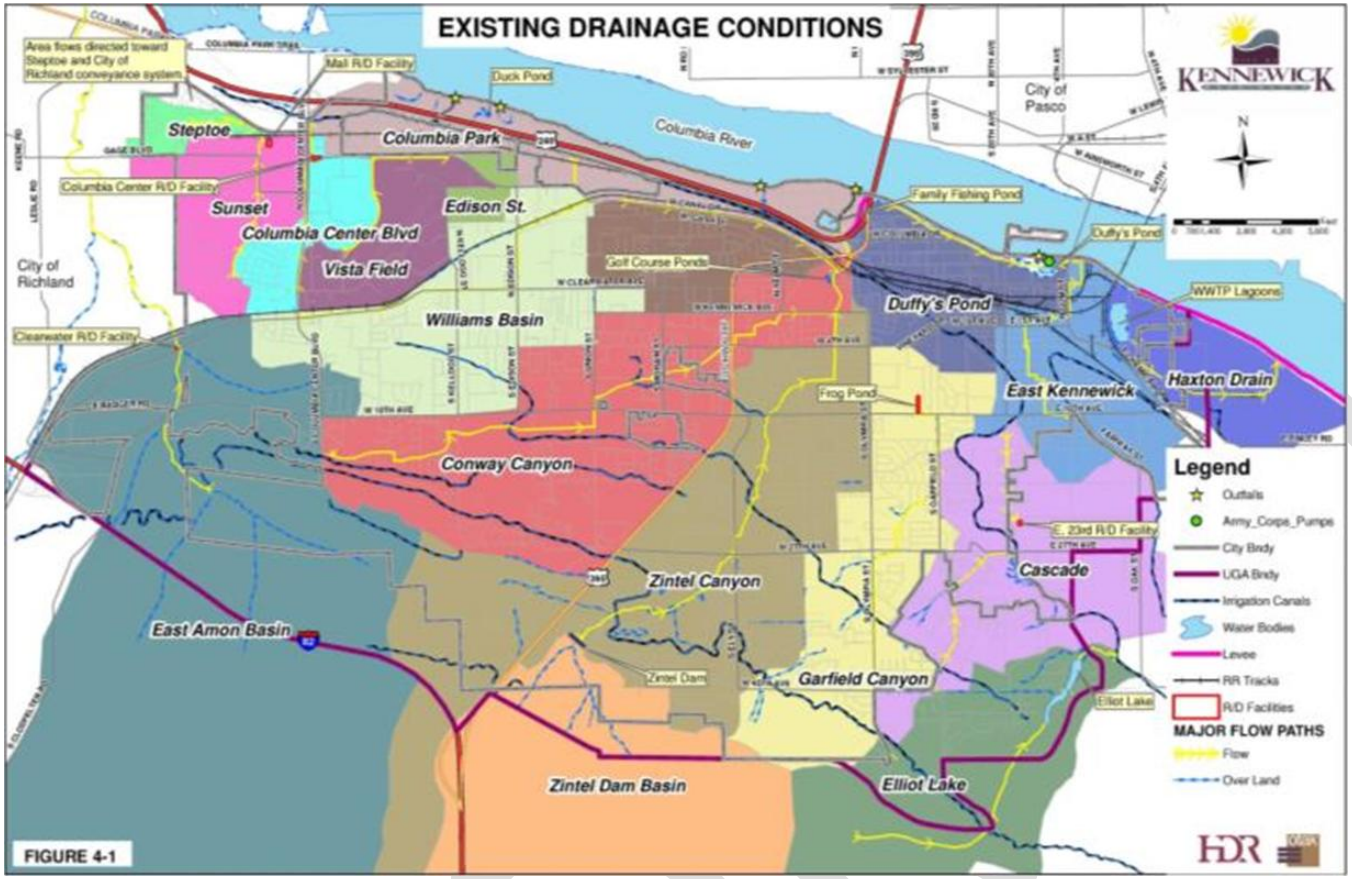
- Levees along the south shore of the Columbia River (Lake Wallula), Approximately 3 miles of these levees are within the City's limits.
- Stabilization of the level of Wallula Lake through operation of McNary Dam,
- The Zintel Dam, and
- A regional pump station at Duffy's Pond and at E 7th and Havana Street.

Kennewick Irrigation District owns and operates Blair Reservoir Dam at Elliot Lake, which stores irrigation water in the reservoir and detains some localized stormwater; Benton County operates the Elliot Lake detention facility located in southeast Kennewick.

The City's adopted Comprehensive Stormwater Plan, as amended, can be consulted for more detailed information about existing and planned facilities, service standards, and operation levels.

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Figure CF-3. Drainage Conditions



Sources: City of Kennewick, 2025; MAKERS, 2026; Parametrix, 2026.

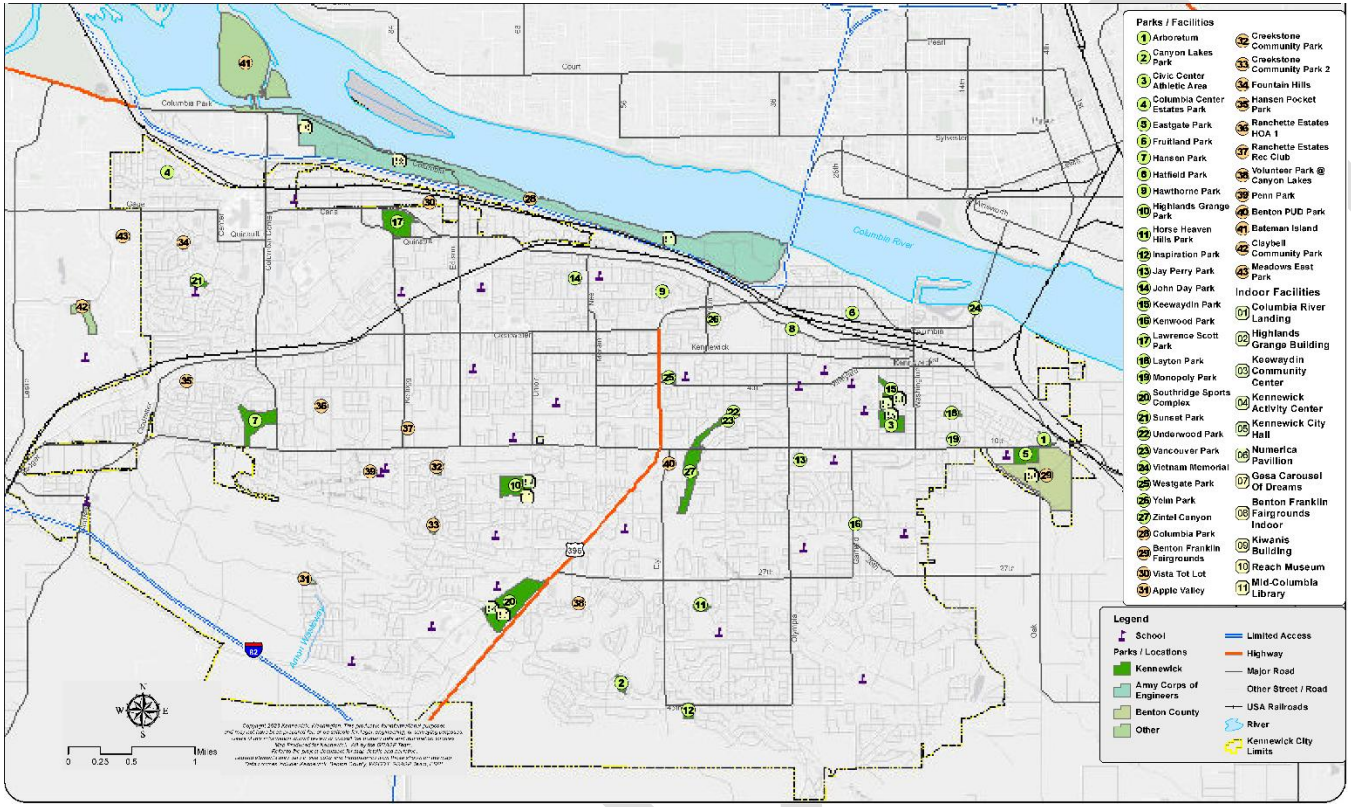
The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Parks

Updated to align with 2024-2029 Kennewick PROS Plan and the Kennewick Pathways & Trails Plan (2024)

Kennewick Parks and Recreation (KPR) maintains 28 park sites including 25 developed city parks and 3 undeveloped sites. These parks are of varying sizes and types, including neighborhood parks, community parks, premiere parks (also known as regional parks), special use parks, and natural parks. See **Figure CF-4.** The City also has nine miles of pathways and trails.

Figure CF-4. Parks and Recreation System Map



Sources: City of Kennewick Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan (Map 1: System Map), 2023.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

In total, KPR maintains 684 developed acres of parkland. The overall condition of the existing facilities is considered good, although some sites require some renovation and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). New construction and renovations are addressing this issue. The remainder of the improvements are identified and addressed in the adopted Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Some open spaces in Kennewick are currently not designated as parkland and were not included in the City's inventory; however, these spaces offer recreational value to the community and have been identified as critical areas in the Kennewick Comprehensive Plan and Critical Area Ordinance. Many of these areas are currently preserved as open space.

School sites owned by the Kennewick School District also offer open space and playfields for residents. However, KPR programs have not utilized non-city grounds for specific programs in the recent past. In several places, park sites are located adjacent to school sites.

The City also offers recreational programs on a year-round basis to meet the needs of the community. In addition to general recreation programs, KPR provides senior citizen programs and activities at the senior center located at the Keewaydin Park.

The City's adopted Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan, as amended, can be consulted for more detailed information about existing and planned facilities, service standards, and operation levels.

Fire & Emergency Medical Services

Updated to reflect updates on the KFD website and the 2023 KFD Standards of Cover.

The City-owned and operated Kennewick Fire Department (KFD) provides fire suppression services, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), and fire prevention, investigation, and code enforcement (inspection) services within city limits. KFD also provides Advanced Life Support (ALS) EMS services to a 300 square mile area of rural Benton County Fire District #1. Additionally, KFD provides mutual and automatic-aid assistance in support of community emergency response needs with other adjacent departments and fire districts including Richland Fire Department, Pasco Fire Department, Benton County Fire Protection District #1 (comprised of areas located between Finley and Badger Canyon), and Benton County Fire Protection District #6 (stretching roughly 30 miles south of Kennewick, near the Washington-Oregon border). In 2022, KFD responded to a total of 23,648 calls (15,846 EMS, 1,430 Fire, 2,303 Service, 2,874 Good Intent, and 1,195 Other) including 13,982 incidents. On average, from 2018 to 2022, more than 85% of KFD's calls for service were low-risk and 11% were moderate-risk; KFD saw an annual growth rate of 9.1% per year in incident calls for service over the same period.



KFD Fire Station #1 and Administration Building, remodeled in 2023.
Source: Tri-Cities Area Journal of Business, 2023

KFD currently employs about 100 personnel and operates out of five (5) fire stations located within city limits. See **Figure CF-5**. KFD also operates its Fire Prevention and Inspection Division out of City Hall and jointly owns and operates a central training facility with Benton County Fire District 1, located at 1811 S. Ely Street. The joint facility was constructed in 2001 and consists of an administration building with a large classroom and offices, a three-story fire training tower, and a two-story support building. KFD also recently built and renovated several fire stations, including Station 61 and Station 63. Stations 61 and 62 have fully staffed fire apparatus and EMS transport units due to historically higher call volumes.

Figure CF-5. Inventory of Fire Facilities

Facility Name	Year Built	Apparatus Bays	Equipment In Service	Normal Staffing
Station #61 & Administrative Offices	2023	3	2-Type 1 Engines, 2-ALS Medic Unit, 1-Utility Pick-up,	5
Station #62	1994	4	4-Command Vehicles, 1-Staff Vehicle	6

Facility Name	Year Built	Apparatus Bays	Equipment In Service	Normal Staffing
Station #63	2021	3	1-Type 1 Engine, 2–ALS Medic Units, 2-Command Vehicles	3
Station #64	1994	2	2-Type 1 Engines, 1-ALS Medic Unit, 1-Support Van (EV), 1-UTV	3
Station #65	2016	4	1-Type 1 Engine, 1-ALS Medic Unit	5
Fire Training Center	2001	None	1-Type 1 Ladder, 1-Type 3 Engine, 1-ALS Medic Unit	1
Fire Prevention / Inspection Division (City Hall)	1982	None	1- Command Vehicle	4

Source: Kennewick Fire Department Service Area and Fire Stations, 2026, and email from Kennewick Fire Chief, July 17, 2026.

The Department has several long-standing programs in place to help mitigate emergency incidents. These include mutual and automatic aid agreements between local jurisdictions and local communities, and the Pre-Hospital Mass Causality Incident (MCI) plan. The City also has joint purchase and equipment share agreements in place with the City of Richland and Benton County Fire District 1 and has an interagency agreement with DNR to provide personnel for wildfire or emergency response, cooperation for control, and suppression of forestland fire. The Benton County Community Wildfire Protection Plan was also developed in close cooperation with KFD and other providers,

Police and Law Enforcement

Updated to reflect updates from the 2024-2025 KPD Strategic Plan and 2024 Annual Report

The City-owned and operated Kennewick Police Department (KPD) provides police protection services within city limits with all areas beyond served by the Benton County Sheriff's Office. The three county "islands" within Kennewick city limits are also served by the Sheriff's office. KPD currently employs 110 commissioned officers, 18 civilian staff, and 6 cadet officers and operates out of the Police Department south of City Hall at 211 W 6th Ave. The building contains offices and meeting rooms only, with court services provided by the County facility.

Police calls for service increased from 89,971 in 2015 to 98,797 in 2024, an increase of 9.8% in calls. During the same time period, the City's population increased from 78,290 to 86,470, an increase of approximately 10.4% over nine years. The calls for service and population are increasing at approximately the same rate.

Schools

Updated to reflect KSD Capital Facilities Plan and most recent OPSI data.

The Kennewick School District (KSD) provides primary and secondary education services to the City of Kennewick. KSD boundaries cover over 299 square miles and serve not only Kennewick, but portions of Richland and unincorporated Benton County. KSD currently has three (3) pre-school programs, seventeen (17) elementary schools, five (5) middle schools, three (3) high schools, and five (5) alternative and choice schools serving residents of the district. The District's current permanent capacity is for 19,550 students—including capacity for 9,546 students elementary, 4,195 students at middle schools, and 5,809 students at high schools—per the 2018-2028 Capital Facilities Plan (updated May 2024). As of October 1, 2025, total enrollment was 18,609 students, similar to the 18,675 students projected in KSD's Capital Facilities Plan and below total permanent capacity. KSD currently owns 728 acres of land and actively pursues additional school sites. Schools are sited on over 80% of that land with the remainder designated for future schools along with land used for administration and support services.

The Kennewick School Districts Capital Facility Plan, as amended, can be consulted for more detailed information, including a detailed inventory of facilities, program standards, future facility needs and funding for new facilities.



Kennewick High School, remodeled in 2021.
Source: MMEC Architecture & Interiors

CAPITAL FACILITIES PLANNING

Context

Growth Projections

By 2046, the population of Kennewick's 20-year UGA is expected to reach 108,989, a 25% increase over the city's 2024 population of 87,120. It is important to ensure Kennewick can adequately accommodate and serve the additional 21,869 people in terms of both land use and infrastructure needs. Providing adequate infrastructure begins with public facilities and ensuring that they are in place at the time of development or there is a financial commitment in place to provide them, and that they provide adequate service to the new and existing residents and businesses. In GMA, this is referred to as "concurrency" and is based on locally defined "level of service" (LOS).

The Capital Facility Plan is updated annually with the Comprehensive Plan. The City's Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) implements the Capital Facility Plan, Comprehensive Plan, and other City plans and priorities and is updated biennially with the City's budget, though amendments to the CIP often occur throughout the biennium. This process ensures the City continues to prioritize funding for needed infrastructure projects to support growth as well as maintenance and upgrades to ensure the desired levels of service for existing residents and businesses.

Concurrency

Local governments are responsible for ensuring that adequate public facilities are in place to serve new growth. These public facilities must be able to provide an acceptable level of service to new growth without diminishing service to existing users below acceptable levels. This is referred to as "concurrency" in GMA. GMA requires concurrency for transportation facilities and encourages local governments to consider concurrency requirements for other public facilities. Two options are available to meet concurrency and LOS requirements; 1) facilities must be in place at the time of development; or 2) a financial commitment is in place to complete the improvements or strategies within six years.

The City of Kennewick has categorized capital facilities for concurrency and financing purposes in the following manner:

Category 1 Facilities

Definition. A public facility or service owned and operated by the City of Kennewick that is in place at the time when the impact occurs. For transportation, there is at least a financial commitment in place to provide the service within six (6) years. All category 1 capital facilities are subject to City of Kennewick GMA concurrency requirements.

Category 1 capital facilities in Kennewick are sewer, streets, and water.

Category 2 Facilities

Definition. A public facility or service, owned and operated by the City of Kennewick, which is not required to be either in place or have a financial commitment at the time of development, and for which goals and policies have been adopted, six-year capital facilities have been planned, and funding needs have been projected.

Category 2 capital facilities in Kennewick are emergency medical services, fire protection services, parks, police services, and stormwater facilities.

Other Services

Other non-city owned facilities such as irrigation water, telephone, cable, electricity, and natural gas services are discussed in the **Utilities Element** of the Comprehensive Plan. Although an important factor for growth, these utilities are not included in the capital facilities list for concurrency (consistent with GMA requirements) and no level of service standards are adopted for them. The City will continue to work with these service providers to ensure acceptable levels of service as growth occurs.

Schools

The Kennewick School District (KSD) operates under specific state guidelines for serving the community. Similar to the City, KSD maintains its own capital facilities plan that inventories existing facilities, projects future needs, and identifies funding to serve growth.

Level of Service (LOS)

Under GMA, each City establishes levels of service (LOS) standards for capital facilities to ensure adequate facilities are available at a consistent level. LOS describes the amount, type, or quality of facilities needed to meet the City's desired standard. LOS standards dictate the quality of the facilities that the community desires and can be raised or lowered periodically to meet the changing needs and priorities of the community. LOS standards are closely tied with concurrency requirements; in order to meet concurrency requirements, the projected impact of growth on existing facilities must be such that the LOS does not drop below the adopted standard. This means that new growth pays for its fair share of impacts by upgrading or installing facilities to keep the LOS at or above the adopted standard.

The City has established mandatory LOS for "category one" facilities. This includes transportation, water, and sewer. Transportation LOS is discussed in greater detail under the **Transportation Element**. The City's LOS standards for "category two" facilities serve as a tool to monitor existing service and forecast future needs. This includes fire response, EMS, law enforcement, parks, schools, and stormwater.

Figure CF-6 summarizes the City's adopted level of service standards for both category one and two capital facilities.

Figure CF-6. Adopted Level of Service Standards

Facility or Service	Level of Service
Category I Facilities	
Transportation	*See the Transportation Element*

Facility or Service	Level of Service
Domestic Water	170 gallons per capita per day
Domestic Sewer	120 gallons per capita per day
Commercial or Industrial Water & Sewer	Per Water Comprehensive Plan & General Sewer Plan
Reclaimed Water	See the Utilities Element
Category II Facilities	
Stormwater Detention	25-year storm
Parks	8.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 population
Fire Response	Applies to 90% of events Fire Suppression; Technical Rescue; Hazardous Materials: 1:45 turnout time; 5:00 travel time; 6:45 response time Service Calls (All Types): 1:45 turnout time; 10:00 travel time; 11:45 response time
Emergency Medical Response	Applies to 90% of events EMS—Advanced Life Support (ALS, Med 3 & 4): 1:00 turnout time; 5:00 travel time; 6:00 response time EMS—Basic Life Support (BLS, Med 1 & 2): 1:00 turnout time; 8:30 travel time; 9:30 response time EMS—Peak Hour Unit (BLS, Med 1 & 2): 1:00 turnout time; 10:00 travel time; 11:00 response time
Law Enforcement	1.30 officers per 1,000 population
Schools	As established by the Kennewick School District Capital Facilities Plan Elementary school (K-3): 102 square feet/student; 20 students/class Elementary school (4-5): 102 square feet/student; 25 students/class Middle school (6): 116 square feet/student; 28 students/class Middle school (7-8): 124 square feet/student; 28 students/class High school (9-12): 141 square feet/student; 28 students/class

Source: City of Kennewick, 2026.

Parks

Future Need

Information in this section is taken from the 2024 PROS Plan. The 2024 PROS Plan uses the current effective LOS of 8.1 acres of parkland per 1,000 population to calculate future need. The PROS Plan estimates need for an additional 24 developed acres of parkland (above the existing supply of 684 acres) to serve population growth in the near term.[1] By 2046, approximately 882.8 acres of parkland will be needed to serve Kennewick's 2046 population of 108,989, or approximately 199 net

[1] The PROS Plan assumes population growth of 2,970 people between 2022 and 2027 (p. 15). This results in an estimated 24.1 net acres of parkland needed to support growth assuming 8.1 acres per 1,000 population.

acres of parkland above the existing supply. The PROS Plan also includes a walkability analysis to understand the distribution and equity of service across the community and recommends a target one-mile service area. Nearly all residents currently live within a one-mile (20-minute walk) service area but about one third of existing residents are not within a half-mile (10-minute walk) service area. KPR staff have also identified a need for additional indoor programming to meet the community's growing demand, including arts and culture, fitness and wellness, hobbies, life skills, and new senior programs.

Proposed Facilities

The 2024 PROS Plan identifies projects over the next six years, as well as a long-range vision for future investment Identified projects focus on development and revitalization of existing park spaces and facilities for both the near-term (through 2030) and long-term. Near-term projects identified in the PROS Plan are focused on maintenance and replacement of existing facilities, including replacing splash pads at Columbia Center Estates Park and Highlands Grange Park, replacing the playground and surfaces at Horse Heave Hills Park, court hoops and resurfacing at Jay Perry Park and Kenwood Park, and adding synthetic turf fields and other renovations at Lawrence Scott Park. Long range projects focus on playground replacement, ADA accessibility improvements, and other improvements across KPR's park system. To meet service needs in the near- and long-term, the PROS Plan recommends KPR explore additional dedicated funding sources, including partnerships, a recreation revolving fund, a land dedication requirement, a Metropolitan Park District, and the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office.

The City's 2025–2030 Capital Improvement Program (CIP) includes several park and recreation projects, including extending the Keene Trail and swimming pool and splash pad improvements. See the Financing Plan section and **Figure CF-7** below.

Fire and Emergency Medical Services

Future Need

Demand for emergency services increases as population and land area served increase, resulting in more buildings, open undeveloped properties, and risks of all types. Additional factors that impact the supply and demand for quality services include legislative requirements, personnel, water supply, insurance ratings, public education, and equipment. Per the KFD Standards of Cover, the Department anticipates the highest amount of growth in the southwest portion of the city over the next few years, with projected population growth of 23-25% through 2031 in areas served by Stations 63 and 65.

Washington State Legislature requires all substantially career fire departments to set standards and specify performance measures relating to fire suppression operations, emergency medical operations, and special operations to ensure city fire departments are adequately keeping up with increasing demands. In abiding by these requirements, KFD has adopted measurable service-level objectives for each of the major service components provided by the department. When utilized in conjunction with population, transportation, and economic development data, this information can be essential in evaluating existing fire station locations, aiding in the planning of additional stations, and determining the locations where additional stations are most needed. KFD's adopted service standards for fire and EMS are summarized in **Figure CF-6** (adopted in 2024 via Resolution 24-01).

The distribution or spacing of fire stations involves geographically distributing first due resources for all risk initial intervention. These station locations are needed to assure rapid deployment to minimize and terminate routine emergencies. Distribution can be evaluated by the percentage of the jurisdiction covered by the first-due units within adopted public policy service level objectives. According to KFD's 2023 Standards of Cover, GIS analyses validates that approximately 90% of incidents could currently be responded to within 5:00 travel time and 97% of incidents could be responded to within 8:00 travel time given the Department's existing station configuration and assuming no workload issues.

The availability of an adequate water system is critical in determining a community's firefighting ability. If an uninterrupted supply of water cannot be maintained on a fire, complete structures may be lost, or the fire may extend beyond the capabilities of the emergency personnel to control it. Planning-level fire flow requirements are established by the City's Fire Marshal for different land use categories to provide a target level of service for planning and sizing future water

facilities. Improvements to increase the available fire flow to exceed the requirements are the responsibility of the developer. The City's Fire flow standards are discussed in more detail in the Water System Plan.[2] Notably, Kennewick's irrigation canals can be available as a secondary resource for firefighting.

Proposed Facilities

KFD anticipates new station facilities over the next six years to meet adopted response time standards and accommodate projected growth. The 2025-2030 CIP budgets $9,000,000 in 2028 to construct a future fire station (see the Financing Plan section and **Figure CF-7** below). Land was purchased at Colorado Street and Bob Olson Parkway[3] in preparation for the future Fire Station 66. Along with this new fire station, additional staffing and equipment will be needed to ensure the fire station is adequately resourced. The City will continue to regularly review response time against the LOS and KFD's adopted service standards and will consider future capital, staffing, and maintenance needs as demand changes.

Police and Law Enforcement

Future Need

As population increase, demands for all governmental services, including police services and protection naturally increase. Provision of police protection to any urban area is dictated by established standards at the federal, state, and local levels. The Kennewick Police Department Policies and Procedure Manual aims to conform to established standards of the Washington State Sheriff's and Chief's association.

There are several methods to determine the ideal number of commissioned personnel to most effectively service a community, but the ratio method is the most common. In 2024, the state-wide average was 1.53 officers per thousand. Currently, the ratio of commissioned law personnel in Kennewick is 1.26 per thousand population, slightly below the adopted standard of 1.30 commissioned officers per thousand population.[4] By 2046, approximately 142 officers will be needed to serve Kennewick's 2046 population of 108,989 at the adopted LOS (see **Figure CF-6**). In other words, thirty-two (32 additional officers will need to be hired to achieve the 1.30 per thousand population average through 2046.

There is a direct correlation between the number of patrol officers available and the percentage of time spent on "operational labor." The most recent evaluation of officers' time found that over 40% of our officers' time is spent on "operational labor." Each additional officer added to the force reduces this figure by about 2%.

Time needed to conduct follow-up investigations and detective activity is not as clearly defined and measured, since jurisdictional priorities and individual agency practices impact these activities. Nevertheless, the number of open cases and the average age of such cases can be used to determine the adequacy of detective workloads. Unlike fire responses, there are no established guidelines for police response times. Actual response times range from a few minutes to hours. Equipment must also be purchased and maintained in order to be constantly operational. Normally, patrol cars are replaced every three years.

Proposed Facilities

No significant expanded or new police facilities are planned in the City's 2025–2030 CIP. KPD will continue to prioritize public safety and police service and regularly review staffing and capital needs as demand and community priorities shift over time.

Schools

2 City of Kennewick Water System Plan (p. 3-2–p. 3-3), 2017.
3 City of Kennewick, Frequently Asked Questions, 2026.
4 KPD's rate is higher than Richland's rate of 1.03 officers per 1,000 population (64,190) and Pasco's rate of 1.17 per 1,000 population (82,220). WASPC 1980-2022 Full Time Law Enforcement Employees, 2023.

Future Need

The most recent LOS standards for KSD are established in the District's 2018-2028 CFP and summarized in **Figure CF-6.** The District's current permanent capacity is for 19,550 students. KSD projects enrollment will decline slightly to 18,166 students by the 2028/2029 school year, below permanent capacity. However, the School Board has identified a need for additional facilities to support full-day kindergarten and reduce class sizes (particularly K-3 class size). Portables are a key component of KSD's plan to meet class size needs until additional permanent classroom facilities are built.

Proposed Facilities

KSD has identified five future school sites that may support full-day kindergarten, reduce class sizes, and meet future school growth over time. Per the 2018-2028 KSD Capital Facilities Plan, KSD typically waits for enrollment numbers to fully support the addition of a new school facility in order to maximize state assistance dollars and carefully make appropriate school boundary adjustments. The District plans to construct a new elementary school once enough students are in portable classrooms. Funding for capital projects is usually provided through a combination of voter approved General Obligation Bonds and State Assistance Funds. The City will continue to coordinate with KSD on future capital planning efforts as growth occurs.

Sewer, Stormwater, Water

Sewer, stormwater, and drinking water facilities are critical to new growth. Because of their vital importance, the CIP is updated at least annually to reflect growth patterns in a timely manner. The City's 2025–2030 CIP includes numerous sewer, stormwater, and water projects (see the Financing Plan section and **Figure CF-7** below) with details about planned sewer, stormwater, and drinking water facilities contained in their respective functional plans.

FINANCING PLAN

This section describes the City's financing plan for City-provided capital facilities. Kennewick School District's Capital Facilities Plan details the District's funding plans for schools serving Kennewick.

Capital Facilities Budget

The City implements a "budgeting by priorities" model designed to better focus its limited resources on priority programs. Under this model, capital projects are prioritized in order to assure the resources are focused on achieving the community's vision and goals. The current Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for 2025–2030 was prepared in conjunction with the 2025/2026 Biennial Budget and is reflected in the budget document.

Sources of Revenue

Kennewick finances capital improvements using a variety of funding sources. The primary funding sources for capital projects can be categorized into two (2) categories: Unrestricted Revenue and Restricted Revenue.

Unrestricted Revenue

Unrestricted revenues are revenues that do not have state or federal restrictions on how they are spent. They comprise a portion of the revenues available for capital investments and are allocated during the biennial budget cycle as part of the Capital Improvement Plan.

Restricted Revenue

Restricted revenues are comprised of state and federal grants, user fees, impact fees, mitigation fees, and certain taxes. These revenues are primarily generated based on growth and are used to offset the impacts associated with growth. They help to ensure that the costs associated with growth are born equitably by new growth. Examples of restricted revenues are utility revenues, traffic impact fees, park mitigation fees, and Local Revitalization Financing revenues.

Local Revitalization Financing

The Local Revitalization Financing (LRF) program is a tax increment financing program that was established in 2009 through state legislation. The City created a revitalization area in its Southridge area and received a state award of $500,000 per year for up to 25 years to pay debt service on bonds issued to finance public improvements in Southridge. Under the program, the City was required to demonstrate that at least $500,000 in new tax increments were generated for the state in this area, which the City was successful in doing. In March of 2010, the City of Kennewick issued $13.665 million in limited tax general obligation bonds for its Southridge LRF project. This financing enabled the City to construct capital improvements, including streets, sewer, and water systems in the Southridge area. Some of the major projects included the construction of portions of Plaza Way, Ridgeline Dr, Hildebrand Blvd./Bob Olson Pkwy and Southridge Blvd It also included improvements at the Ridgeline Dr and US 395 intersection.

Major Facilities Proposed

Updated to align with the 2025/2026 Biennial Budget and 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program. The table below replaces Table 22 from the 2021 Comprehensive Plan which showed 2017-2022 capital projects. Information has been simplified to show major funding sources and projects by category with detail for individual revenue sources and projects available in the adopted CIP.

This section summarizes major sources of capital funding and capital projects needed to support growth by category from the adopted 2025-2030 CIP. See **Figure CF-7**. Projects primarily include those within the 6-year 2025 – 2030 planning horizon that are conducive of new developments, such as the availability of streets, water, sewer, parks and recreation, police, and fire facilities. Individual projects are detailed in the adopted CIP and street projects are discussed in greater detail in the **Transportation Element**.

Figure CF-7. Proposed Capital Facilities Funding and Expenditures ($)

	2021-2022 ACTUAL	2023/2024 ESTIMATE	2025 PROJECTION	2026 PROJECTION	2027 PROJECTION	2028 PROJECTION	2029 PROJECTION	2030 PROJECTION
Capital Funding Sources								
Beginning Fund Balance	39,899,808	55,207,484	22,986,821	22,273,766	27,764,289	50,441,920	32,994,576	36,173,671
Revenues	80,472,507	132,604,007	47,974,852	43,585,419	94,555,386	92,418,347	41,261,432	48,422,763
Taxes	27,712,908	26,288,000	14,866,246	16,670,346	17,465,148	18,159,844	18,729,650	19,620,815
Intergovernmental	3,871,458	14,846,603	8,315,295	7,818,299	5,550,522	7,746,100	2,144,000	2,155,000
Charges for Services	18,674,338	28,111,068	14,957,911	11,493,821	12,691,137	13,286,385	14,186,169	15,442,903
Miscellaneous	1,791,859	6,702,505	1,805,283	1,218,823	621,264	915,063	672,798	735,480
Interfund Transfers	13,588,244	25,579,046	8,030,117	6,384,130	9,727,315	7,810,955	4,528,815	10,468,565
Other Financing Sources	14,833,700	31,076,785	—	—	48,500,000	44,500,000	1,000,000	—
Total Capital Funding	120,372,315	187,811,491	70,961,673	65,859,185	122,319,675	142,860,267	74,256,008	84,596,434

	2021-2022 ACTUAL	2023/2024 ESTIMATE	2025 PROJECTION	2026 PROJECTION	2027 PROJECTION	2028 PROJECTION	2029 PROJECTION	2030 PROJECTION
Capital Expenditures								
Total Expenditures	65,164,831	164,824,670	48,687,907	38,094,896	71,877,755	109,865,691	38,082,337	42,280,733
Street Construction/ Reconstruction	1,882,872	12,168,987	1,427,071	6,115,600	8,955,200	10,066,000	720,000	7,000,000
Street Overlays	5,657,176	7,913,000	3,256,525	3,256,525	3,507,000	3,637,000	3,778,000	3,918,000
Storm Drainage	1,730,531	2,667,700	1,230,000	3,671,000	2,273,000	1,616,000	1,150,000	150,000
Street Lights/Signals	605,195	2,926,944	303,030	303,030	318,000	318,000	334,000	334,000
Sidewalks	640,863	824,850	2,347,000	899,720	354,000	354,000	362,000	362,000
Water/Sewer System Improvements	19,221,573	72,946,800	7,535,000	9,190,000	24,690,000	29,745,000	14,795,000	7,955,000
Land & Facilities	9,108,862	11,579,546	597,305	497,985	526,700	45,057,200	589,400	623,400
Other Improvements	2,730,840	6,821,898	2,858,717	1,010,600	13,706,630	751,130	1,164,190	795,190
Park Improvements	160,157	678,027	—	—	—	—	—	—
Debt Service	587,655	583,822	286,130	282,278	278,422	274,568	270,714	266,860
Miscellaneous	22,839,107	45,713,096	28,847,129	12,868,158	17,268,803	18,046,793	14,919,033	20,876,283
Ending Fund Balance	55,207,484	22,986,821	22,273,766	27,764,289	50,441,920	32,994,576	36,173,671	42,315,701
Total Capital Expenditures	120,372,315	187,811,491	70,961,673	65,859,185	122,319,675	142,860,267	74,256,008	84,596,434

Source: City of Kennewick 2025/2026 Biennial Budget and 2025-2030 Capital Improvement Program.

IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

Establishing Priorities and Phasing

In order to implement the CFP, Kennewick established priorities for capital projects based on the forecast of where major growth would occur in the next 20 years. The City's water, sewer, and transportation plans are currently geared towards priority areas. The selection and prioritization of capital improvement projects included in the capital facilities plan is ultimately based on City Council approval. The plan is recommended to the full City Council by the council infrastructure sub-committee, which consists of three council members and is led by City staff. The committee's recommendation represents a consensus of the committee and is based on a thorough review and prioritization of potential projects and the capital program as a whole. Appropriation of funding for capital projects during the biennial budget and CIP process is a major tool for capital facilities plan implementation. The major project list by category above in **Figure CF-7** indicates the priorities for some capital projects. Projects are phased based on the available funding, and degree of necessity which eventually establishes the priority list.

Reassessment

GMA requires the Land Use Element to be reassessed periodically to ensure that adequate facilities are available at the time any major land use changes are implemented. Kennewick's CFP will also be updated based on the reassessment of the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan. If anticipated funding for needed capital facilities falls short, reassessment of the Land Use Element will determine what changes are practical and need to be made.

Kennewick's Land Use Element and Zoning Code in the policy section establish the procedure and criteria for reviewing the Land Use Element and all other elements of the Comprehensive Plan. The City is currently consistent with the growth and facilities demand.

The following measures are used for monitoring and reassessment:

- Re-evaluate the land use plan in the annual comprehensive plan amendment process
- Periodic GMA comprehensive plan update every 10 years
- Biennial CIP and budget process
- Annual CIP budget monitoring reports with quarterly updates
- Annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Periodic water, sewer, and stormwater plan updates
- Concurrency requirement in the development review process
- Strategy for 20-year includes:
- Establishing the 20-year UGA
- Plan to serve the full UGA in the next 20 years (city limits and unincorporated UGA)
- Revisit the capital facilities plan every 10 years concurrent with the periodic update schedule

Capital Facilities Planning References

Functional plans guide the growth and planning of specific capital facilities. These plans are integral to ensuring that capital facilities are available and capacities are sufficient to accommodate growth as it occurs. The following plans, as amended, have been adopted by the City and are incorporated by reference. The most current version of these plans may be referred to for more detailed information about existing and planned facilities and levels of service standards.

- City of Kennewick, Water Comprehensive Plan
- City of Kennewick, Stormwater Comprehensive Plan

- City of Kennewick, Transportation Element
- City of Kennewick, General Sewer Plan
- City of Kennewick, Comprehensive Parks and Recreation Plan
- City of Kennewick, Pathways and Trails Plan

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Utilities

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GENERAL LOCATION AND CAPACITY

Electricity

Bonneville Power Administration does not directly provide electricity to the City of Kennewick. They have approximately 260 substations and 15,000 circuit miles of transmission lines, with some located in and around Kennewick. Both 115 kV and 230 kV transmission facilities cross Kennewick, requiring either ownership of the land on which these lines cross or more commonly, owning the rights to the land as rights-of-way. These are easements restricting encroachments on that land and are maintained by the BPA. Electricity for the City of Kennewick and various outlying areas is provided by Public Utility District No. 1 of Benton County, also known as Benton PUD, located at 2721 West 10th Avenue. Benton PUD receives the vast majority of its electricity from the Bonneville Power Administration, with some purchases from wholesale power markets to cover peak usage periods. To help meet state renewable portfolio standards, Benton PUD also purchases energy from Energy Northwest's Nine Canyon Windfarm, located just south of Kennewick, and the White Creek Windfarm located near Goldendale, Washington. They serve five subsystems in this region: Kennewick Urban, Benton City, Prosser, Columbia River irrigation projects, and Hanford/Cold Creek. Only the Kennewick Urban subsystem is discussed in this section.

The Kennewick Urban subsystem is supplied by ten miles of 115kV transmission line, eight substations located throughout the City and 54 electric distribution feeders. Each feeder is designed to supply the electrical current for several sub-regions, with the capacity to switch to other feeders if an equipment failure should occur. These feeders are the basic unit of electricity planning and are typically designed to carry a maximum load of 8,000 kW under normal system conditions and 12,000 kW under emergencies. For planning purposes, each new residential customer of the District can be assumed to contribute 10 kW to the distribution feeder load. Using this figure, every 800 new single residential dwelling units will require a new feeder line.

Natural Gas

Cascade Natural Gas Corporation is a natural gas distribution company with a local office located at 8113 W. Grandridge Blvd. in Kennewick. Cascade Natural Gas Corporation provides service to over 314,500 customers in 95 communities – 67 of which are in Washington and Oregon. Cascade provides natural gas service to residential and commercial customers in the Kennewick area. Cascade expands its services to businesses and neighborhoods based on the demand. The average therm usage per residential customer is 683 therms. Each therm of natural gas contains 100,000 British Thermal Units (BTU) of energy.

Irrigation Water

Irrigation water in Kennewick is provided by the Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) and the Columbia Irrigation District (CID). In areas where there is no irrigation water, City water is used to meet the minimum irrigation requirements. A map in the **Utilities Element** shows KID and CID's service area within the Urban Growth Boundary.

Kennewick Irrigation District

The Kennewick Irrigation District (KID) delivers irrigation water and promotes related water activities, as authorized by Washington State statutes and Federal laws. The District serves approximately 20,000 acres within an overall district boundary of roughly 55,000-acres.

Water is diverted into the main canal at Chandler, which is approximately 11.5 miles southeast of Prosser on the Yakima River and Hover is across the Columbia River from the Boise Cascade Pulp Mill.

KID delivers water around Badger Mountain via the Badger East Canal, which ends close to the Tri-City Raceway in West Richland. KID operates and maintains numerous pressurized service areas inside and outside the City limits of Kennewick It also provides service through Private Lines Areas (PLA). In Kennewick, KID delivers irrigation water to most of the City except for some areas to the north, east and southwest. The water delivered to KID customers is intended for mainly outdoor use, primarily landscaping; however, KID is planning to expand capabilities and provide water to municipal and industrial users as water becomes available.

Columbia Irrigation District

The Columbia Irrigation District system consists primarily of open canals, both lined and unlined, which total approximately 41 miles in length. The system begins at Wanawish Dam on the Yakima River, the primary point of diversion for CID, where water is diverted from the Yakima River into the main canal. The CID is one of the oldest irrigation entities on the Yakima River System. Its water rights date back to the end of the 19th century.

The CID is located along the Yakima and Columbia Rivers, stretching from West Richland to Finley and in between, serving portions of the City of West Richland, City of Kennewick, and rural Benton County. The district delivers water to around 8,000 land parcels across approximately 12,000 acres. In Kennewick, the Columbia Irrigation District serves the north and east sides of Kennewick. CID canals in Kennewick run along the eastern part of the City as well as the northern part parallel to Canal Drive and SR 240. It serves about 700 acres, in 2000 parcels within the City boundary.

Telecommunications

Basic and enhanced telecommunications services in Kennewick are provided by multiple public and private carriers. Wireline voice and broadband services are provided by Ziply Fiber. Cable television and broadband services are provided by Charter Communications (Spectrum brand). Additional broadband services may be available from fixed wireless and other competitive providers, subject to location and infrastructure availability. Provisioning of communication facilities to commercial and residential developments takes place concurrently with growth, typically underground.

Long-distance and interexchange services are available from multiple carriers operating under federal and state authority. Telecommunications providers operating in Washington are regulated, as applicable, by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (UTC) and the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

In addition to landlines, Kennewick is being served by various cellular phone companies. Such wireless services are provided through cell towers, and/or collocations. Cell tower sites are regulated through the Kennewick Municipal Code. Collocations in existing structures are strongly encouraged by Comprehensive Plan policies in order to minimize the adverse visual impacts of such facilities.

Cable Television

Charter Communications, (Spectrum), provides cable television and broadband services within the City by franchise agreement. Spectrum service offerings include digital video programming, high-speed broadband internet access, and related on-demand and streaming services. Charter's privacy policy does not allow the city to release the number of customers Charter serves. Service expansion is planned using the general figure of 15 residences per each quarter-mile of cable line.

Cable operators are regulated at the federal level under Title VI of the Communications Act and by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC).

Solid Waste Collection

Waste Management (WM) provides garbage collection services under a franchise agreement with the City. The present franchise agreement with Waste Management is due to expire in 2035. Solid waste collection service is mandatory within the City in accordance with local ordinance and state public health authority under Chapter 70A.205 RCW

Residential and commercial garbage collection is provided on a scheduled basis consistent with the terms of the franchise agreement. Curbside residential recycling is available at no extra cost to residents. There are five drop-box recycling centers placed within the community for business and multifamily recycling.

Waste Management also operates a transfer station at 2627 S. Ely Street. This facility is open six days a week, Monday through Saturday. Rate programs and self-haul disposal options are administered by WM and may change over time. Collected materials are managed through regional transfer, recycling, and disposal facilities consistent with contracted operations and applicable regulations.

Future Needs

Supply of these various utility services to customers is provided using established and tested guidelines. These guidelines are used as the basic determination of long-range planning for maintenance and expansion of the systems. For planning purposes, the guidelines are converted and defined on a per capita basis. Each utility has its own level of service calculations and capacity levels used for long-range planning.

Natural Gas

Cascade Natural Gas continues to expand its service to businesses and neighborhoods where there is a demand. For electricity planning purposes, each new customer house in the District is anticipated to draw 10 kW. Using this figure, every 800 new residential dwelling units will require a new feeder line.

Electricity

As Kennewick grows, both in population and size, these levels of service can be combined with the projected growth figures to determine the anticipated supply that must be made available in the future to adequately service the new areas. Benton PUD's forecast is based on its entire service area within Benton County. The 2025 Load Forecast (2025–2035), adopted by Commission of Public Utility No. 1 of Benton County resolution, predicts a five-year Average Annual Rate of Growth (AARG) of 0.19%. By the year 2035, this would result in an annual average power increase of 4 average megawatts (aMW) over the 2026 load of 213 aMW at the Bonneville Power Administration Points of Delivery (POD), which includes distribution system losses.

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Retail Load Forecast by Customer Class (aMW) (Effects of Conservation)			
(Medium Case)	2015 Actual	2025 Forecast *(with Conservation)*	2025 Forecast *(No Conservation)*
Residential	75.97	83.87	86.60
Small General Service	13.87	14.63	15.33
Medium General Service	20.85	21.75	22.76
Large General Service	25.82	24.61	25.92
Industrial	7.64	8.31	8.58
Small Irrigation	1.88	1.79	1.79
Large Irrigation	51.57	52.29	52.29
Street Lights	0.31	0.28	0.28
Security Lights	0.16	0.17	0.17
Unmetered	0.35	0.36	0.36
Total	**198.40**	**208.07**	**214.08**

The majority of Benton PUD's wholesale electricity is supplied by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) under what is referred to as a Slice/Block contract. BPA's power supply consists primarily of the electricity produced by federal Columbia and Snake River hydroelectric power plants along with Energy Northwest's Columbia Generating Station nuclear power plant located near Richland, Washington. Under the Slice portion of the BPA contract Benton PUD has rights to sell surplus hydroelectric power produced above their electricity demand but must make up the difference with purchases in the wholesale power markets when demand is above their BPA contract amount. The balance of Benton PUD's power supply portfolio consists of power from the Frederickson 1 Generating Station Combined Cycle Combustion Turbine, Nine Canyon and White Creek wind farms and the Packwood Lake Hydroelectric Project.

Telecommunications

Charter Communications provides services mainly within the City limits and expands according to demand. Ziply Fiber has already expanded its service to most of the Kennewick Urban Growth Area. Irrigation districts' (KID and CID) plans currently do not indicate any major expansion of the facilities. WM is serving the City based on demand and has no future plans for major facility expansion.

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Transportation

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INTRODUCTION

The following sections provide additional details that were used as part of the Transportation Element update.

REGULATORY SETTING

The Transportation Element satisfies the Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for long-range planning and to supplement information and implement goals and policies within the Transportation Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Under the GMA (RCW 36.70A.070), the Transportation Element is required to assess the needs of a community and determine how to provide appropriate transportation facilities for current and future residents, workers, and the traveling public. The Transportation Element must contain:

- Existing travel conditions and land use assumptions used in estimating future travel conditions
- Estimated travel impacts on state-owned transportation facilities
- Inventory of existing facilities
- Assessment of future facility needs to meet current and future demands
- Multi-year plan for financing proposed transportation improvements, and reassessment strategy to respond to potential funding shortfalls
- Forecasts of traffic for at least 10 years based on adopted land use plan
- Level of Service (LOS) standards for arterials, non-motorized facilities, and public transportation, including actions to bring deficient facilities into compliance
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies

- Identification of intergovernmental coordination efforts
- A pedestrian and bicycle component that includes collaborative efforts to identify and designate planned improvements for pedestrian and bicycle facilities and corridors that address and encourage enhanced community access and promote active transportation

Since 2011, Washington has passed several legislative amendments and policy mandates that require a focus on multimodal transportation, as listed below.

- 2011 RCW 47.04.320-.340 established a Complete Streets grant program (funded later), which requires local jurisdictions to adopt Complete Streets ordinances to be eligible to apply for state grant funding.
- 2016 Washington legislature approved funding for the Transportation Investment Board (TIB) Complete streets grant program.
- 2021 WSDOT adopted an Active Transportation Plan for state highways, which requires WSDOT to work with local jurisdictions to provide safe and well-connected pedestrian and bicycle network improvements along and across state highways.
- 2022 RCW 47.04.035 requires WSDOT to apply Complete Streets principles to all state highway projects with a total project cost of $500,000 or more.
- 2023 ESSHB 1181 Requires Multimodal LOS in Comprehensive Plans and encourages multimodal transportation systems that reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) and vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The bill also requires an agency to prepare an ADA Transition Plan to identify physical obstacles that limit accessibility to individuals with disabilities and identify methods to make the facilities fully accessible.
- 2023 SB 5452 Allows Transportation Impact Fee revenue to be used for pedestrian and bicycle projects as part of citywide transportation system improvements needed to accommodate growth and development.

DETAILED EXISTING INVENTORY OF THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The following sections provide more detailed information on the existing pedestrian, bicycle, and public transit systems. Traffic safety and operations are also discussed.

Existing Pedestrian Facilities

The Kennewick pedestrian system consists of sidewalks, crosswalks, curb ramps, and shared-use paths throughout the City. The City's roadways act as the primary facilities to accommodate pedestrians. Many of these roadways have sidewalks to accommodate pedestrians.

Sidewalks

Figure T- shows the existing sidewalk along arterial roadways. Included on the figure are locations of sidewalks on the collector and local street systems, as well as regional trails.

Non-arterial sidewalks generally exist along collector and local streets where new development has occurred, and where retail development is close by. An example of this is near Columbia Center Mall in the northwest portion of Kennewick. In addition, streets located near public facilities, such as schools or transit centers, often have sidewalks as they are utilized heavily by pedestrians.

In general, and over the past 20 years, the City of Kennewick has been ensuring that sidewalks on arterial streets are constructed on both sides of new streets. As a result, newer subdivisions have few missing sidewalks. A greater number of streets with missing sidewalks are located within older neighborhoods.

Curb Ramps

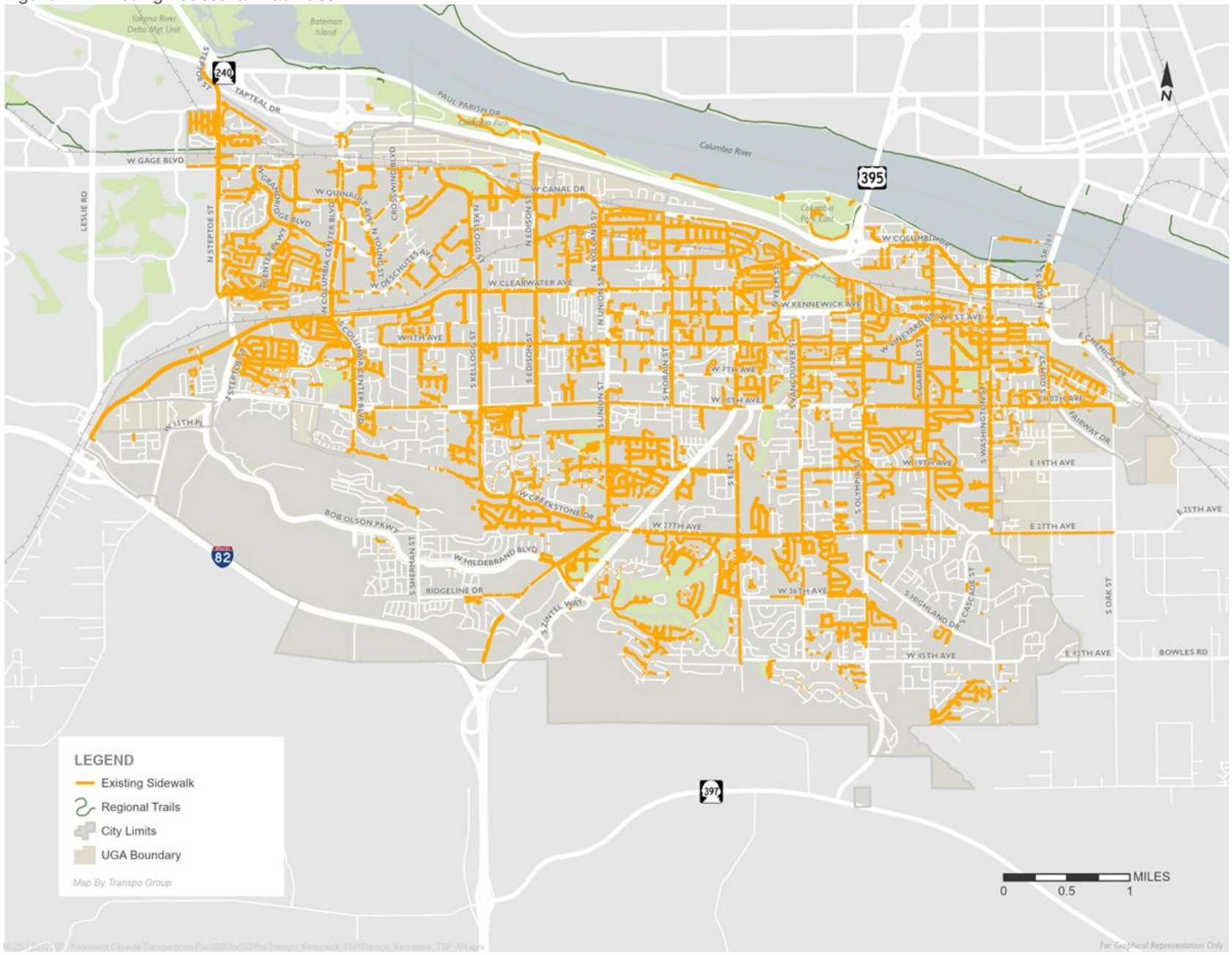
Over 90 percent of the City's arterial crosswalks have curb ramps. The majority of curb ramps constructed in the City of Kennewick study area are diagonal by design, with a single ramp oriented to the center of the street intersection. Perpendicular curb ramps are more often found in downtown Kennewick along the grid street network where sidewalks were constructed with sidewalk buffer strips. In recent growth areas, most new curb ramps have been constructed to standards with diagonal ramp designs.

Trails/Shared-Use Paths

Trails and shared-use paths are facilities which can be used not only by pedestrians, but also by other non-motorized vehicles, such as bicycles. There are several of these types of trails in the City of Kennewick, though the largest shared-use path is the Sacagawea Heritage Trail. This non-motorized route extends throughout the Tri-Cities area, including a section bordering the Columbia River in the northern section of Kennewick. Another major trail in Kennewick is the Audubon Nature Trail, which runs through Columbia Park, also located along the Columbia River.

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Figure T-1. Existing Pedestrian Facilities



Existing Bicycle Facilities

Bicycling is an important and growing mode of travel for people in cities across the country. When appropriately planned, bicycle routes have a role in reducing congestion, improving air quality, providing travel choices, encouraging exercise and recreation, and providing greater mobility for those without access to a vehicle.

Kennewick's bicycle system has many excellent features but still has gaps, making it a less cohesive and less connected system. Older arterial streets were originally constructed without bicycle lanes, but many arterial streets now have bicycle lanes.

Figure T-2 shows the bike lanes, pathways, and regional trails that make up the existing Kennewick bicycle system.

Bicycle Lanes

Bicycle lanes are striped roadway spaces dedicated for cyclists and are typically provided on the edge of the traveled way. Bicycle lanes may be included on both sides of the roadway or on one side of a sloped roadway where there is not sufficient space for bicycle lanes in both directions. They are typically 4 to 6 feet in width (not including vehicle buffers) and are marked with a wide white stripe or buffer area.

Bicycle lanes, or shy lanes, are often near transit centers, shopping malls, and public facilities, though may not be right next to the facility. These lanes also extend into other jurisdictions, particularly Richland to the west. Cyclists regularly use US 395 across the Columbia River between Kennewick and Pasco via the bike trail on the east side of the bridge, though bicycles are prohibited along the US 395 bridge in the roadway.

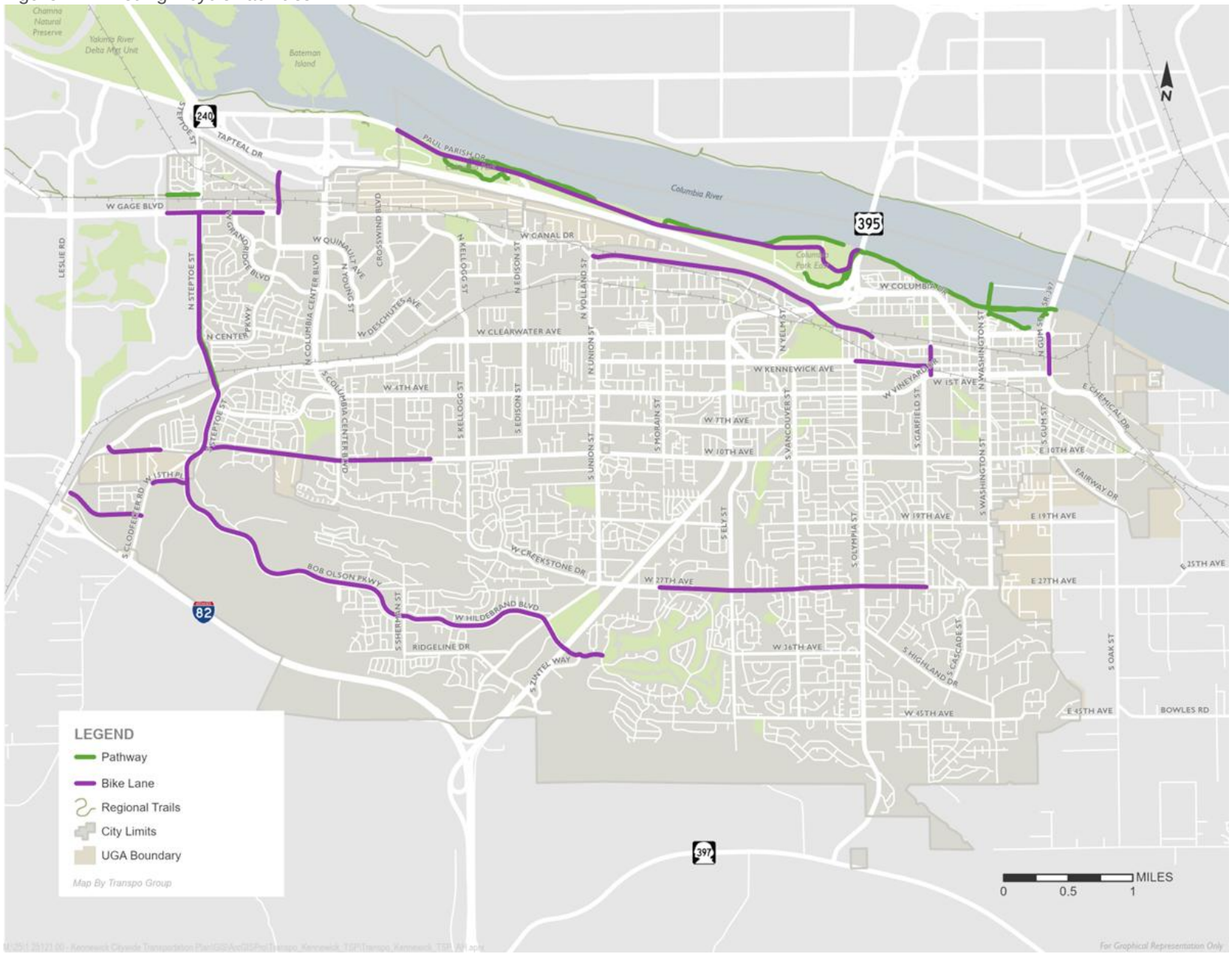
Trails/Shared-Use Paths

Trails and shared-use paths are facilities which can be used not only by pedestrians, but also by other active transportation modes, such as bicycles. Paved trails are preferred by many cyclists who also travel on streets, but finely crushed gravel surfaces may be suitable alternatives.

There are several of these types of trails in the City of Kennewick, though the largest shared-use path is the Sacagawea Heritage Trail. This non-motorized route extends throughout the Tri-Cities area, including a section bordering the Columbia River in the northern section of Kennewick. Another major trail in Kennewick is the Audubon Nature Trail, which runs through Columbia Park, also located along the Columbia River.

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Figure T-2. Existing Bicycle Facilities



Expanded Public Transit Transportation Information

This section describes current public transportation services and facilities affecting the City of Kennewick. Included in the description is a summary of current fixed routes and service levels, as of February 2026.

Transit and public transportation facilities in the Kennewick area are operated by Ben Franklin Transit (BFT). The transit services available include bus transit, vanpooling, park-and-rides lots, taxi feeder services, and dial-a-ride service. **Figure T-6** shows the bus routes within the City as well as transit stops. The infrastructure of the transit system is described below.

Bus Routes

The BFT route network is extensive, with service provided in all major areas of the City. There are nine bus routes that regularly run within the City of Kennewick. These include five routes that operate exclusively within Kennewick (Routes 40, 41, 42, 47 and 48), three routes that provide service between Kennewick and Richland (Routes 123, 240X, Metro Route 1) as well as two routes that run between Kennewick and Pasco (Metro Routes 1 and 3). Additional bus service is provided following route 123 during the school AM and PM peak hours.

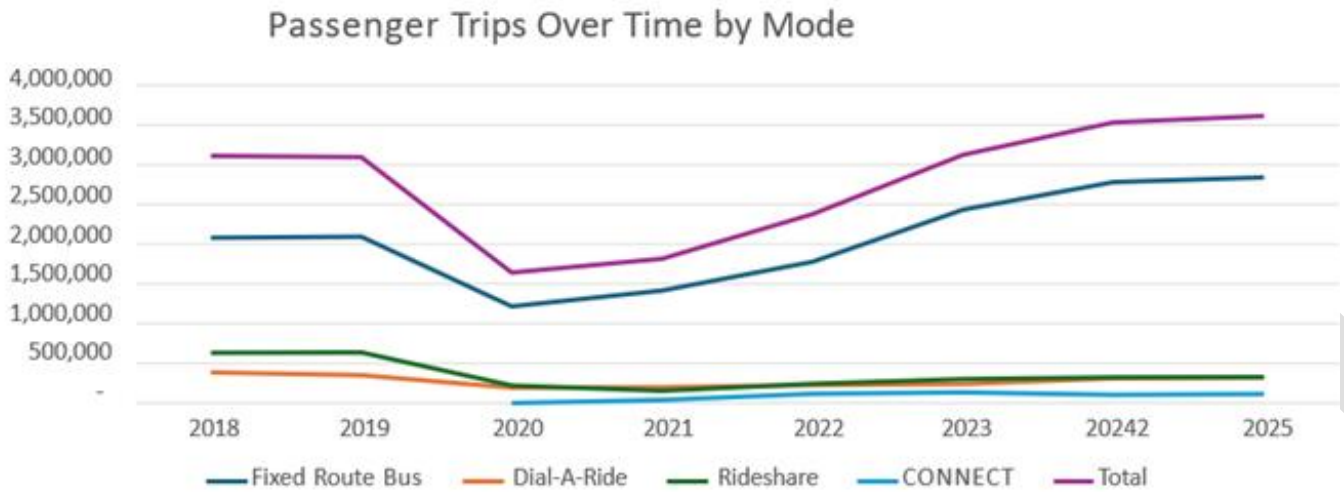
All routes operate with either 15 (Metro Routes 1 and 3), 30 (Routes 40, 41, 42, 47, 48, 50), or 60-minute headways (Routes 240X). The approximate operating hours of the different routes are summarized in **Figure T-3**.

Figure T-3. BFT Approximate Operating Hours

Route	Monday-Friday	Saturday	Sunday
40	6:15 AM-8:00 PM	7:15 AM-10:00 PM	8:00 AM-6:30 PM
41	6:00 AM-8:00 PM	-	-
42	6:00 AM-9:30 PM	7:00 AM-7:00 PM	-
48	6:00 AM-9:45 PM	7:00 AM-9:45 PM	8:00 AM-6:45 PM
50	6:00 AM-9:30 PM	7:00 AM-7:00 PM	-
123	6:00 AM-10:00 PM	7:00 AM-10:00 PM	8:00 AM-6:45 PM
240X	6:15 AM-8:00 PM	7:15 AM-8:00 PM	-
Metro1	6:00 AM-10:30 PM	7:00 AM-10:30 PM	8:00 AM-6:30 PM
Metro3	5:45 AM-10:00 PM	7:00 AM-10:00 PM	8:00 AM-6:30 PM

Source: Ben Franklin Transit, March 2026

Figure T-4. Annual Passenger Trips on Ben Franklin Transit



Source: Ben Franklin Transit, March 2026

As shown in **Figure T-4**, annual ridership was steady before 2020 and has been increasing every year since 2020. As highlighted in **Figure T-5**, approximately 79 percent of passengers using BFT are served by Fixed Route Transit, with the remaining 21 percent served by rideshare, dial-a-ride and Connect services. Additionally, Kennewick represents 38 percent of the overall 2025 Fixed Route ridership for BFT.

Figure T-5. BFT Passenger Trips by Service Mode

Route Mode	Annual Ridership	Percent
Fixed Route	2,800,000	79%
Dial-A-Ride	318,844	9%
Rideshare	328,141	9%
Connect	108,954	3%
Total	3,555,939	

Source: Ben Franklin Transit, March 2026

Park & Rides/Transit Centers

There is one dedicated transit center located in Kennewick: Three Rivers Transit Center off Okanogan Place, as well as the "Dayton Transfer Point" which serves as a transit hub. These centers function as points for riders to easily change routes within the transit system.

Three Rivers Transit Center is made up of a series of bus shelters where buses can layover, riders can transfer between buses, and where public restrooms are available. Three Rivers is not a park and ride location, as there is no dedicated public parking for transit riders. Seven transit routes serve Three Rivers Transit Center, making it the largest transit hub in Kennewick.

Also within the City is Dayton Transfer Point, which is located on Dayton Street between 1st Avenue and Keewaydin Drive. This point is for riders to transfer buses but does not have facilities typically associated with transit and is aesthetically more like a regular bus stop.

Based on a review of the WSDOT park & rides, Kennewick has three park & ride facilities and approximate number of parking stalls include:

- Three Rivers Transit Facility – 96 stalls
- Southwest corner of S Union St/W 27th Ave – 50 stalls
- Northwest corner of N Yelm St/W Falls Ave – 39 stalls

CONNECT Service

CONNECT is BFT's contracted microtransit service, providing first and last-mile connections 15 minutes before and after regular service hours. The service is divided into six zones, each designed to connect to transit centers and bus stops. The CONNECT service fills gaps in the existing network by offering flexible, on-demand transportation and is designed to complement fixed routes.

In 2024 a new BFT CONNECT app was introduced, streamlining the booking process and offering real-time ride updates. Additionally, the integration of various fare types simplified the user interface, allowing for a seamless experience across different transit passes.

Rideshare

The Rideshare service (formerly the Vanpool service) offers commuters an opportunity to share a ride in one of BFT's 6-,12-, or 15-passenger vans. Rideshare provides commuters with the flexibility to create new minivan groups with a minimum of three people. The Rideshare service covers routes to Pendleton, Boardman, Walla Walla, Connell, Patterson, and the Hanford Site.

Dial-A-Ride

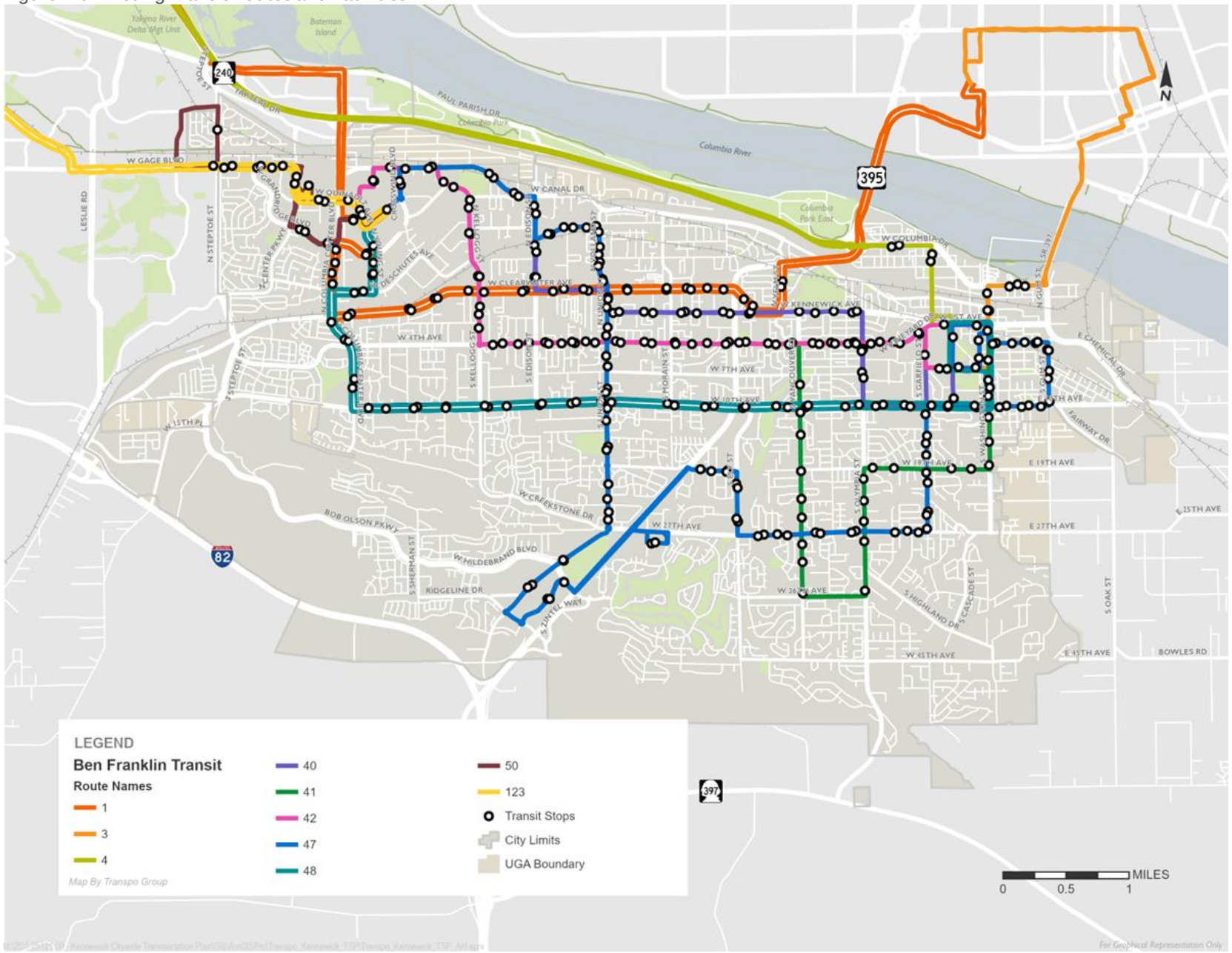
BFT also provides Dial-A-Ride service, which is a shared-ride, door-to-door transportation service for people with a disability that cannot use customary transit service. Customers call the Dial-A-Ride number between 8:00am and 5:00pm at least one day prior to their trip to request a pick-up time. For trips other than those to medical appointments, a return time must also be scheduled. The operation hours are consistent with BFT's regular routes: 6:00 am to 10:00 pm Monday through Friday, 7:00 am to 10:00 pm on Saturdays, or 8:00 am to 6:30 pm on Sundays.

Transit Fares

The different services provided by BFT have different costs associated with them. BFT offers the general public the option of purchasing monthly transit passes that enable the rider with unlimited amount of use of the system. Also offered are 10-day tickets for those that do not use transit frequently. Daily cash fares are collected for users without a prepaid ticket or pass.

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Figure T-6. Existing Transit Routes and Facilities



Existing Traffic Safety Analysis

Traffic safety is an important factor in determining priority projects for future project planning. For the City of Kennewick, traffic safety was evaluated for major roadways and intersections over a five-year period, from January 1, 2020 to December 31, 2024 within the City limits. An evaluation of the location and severity of reported collisions was completed to identify potential safety issues for vehicles, pedestrians, and cyclists. Data was obtained from City Staff and WSDOT and only contains information for those collisions reported to the City and State Highway Patrol. The following safety data are discussed in this section:

- Fatalities
- Intersection Safety Analysis
- Roadway Safety Analysis
- Pedestrian Safety
- Bicycle Safety

Fatalities

During the five-year period from 2020 and 2024, 24 fatalities occurred within the City. Twelve (12) occurred at intersections, two in 2020, four in 2022, and six in 2023. Eleven (10) fatalities occurred at non-intersection related locations, including one in 2021, three in 2022, five in 2023, and one in 2024. Four (4) of the 23 fatalities between 2020 and 2024 involved pedestrians and one involved a Cyclist. Collision locations, including fatalities, are illustrated on **Figure T-9**. Detailed Fatality locations are shown in **Figure T-7** and **Figure T-8**.

Figure T-7. Intersection Fatalities 2020-2024

Primary St	Secondary St	Year
W 10th Ave	S Steptoe St	2020
W Clearwater Ave	N Morain St	2020
Gage Blvd1	N Steptoe St	2022
W 10th Ave	S Sharron St	2022
W 4th Ave	S Olympia St	2022
S Vancouver St	W 7th Ave	2023
S Vancouver St	W 8TH PL	2023
W 4th Ave	S Ely St	2023
US 395	Kennewick Ave	2023
SR 397	S Gum St	2023
S Olympia St	W 14th Ave	2023

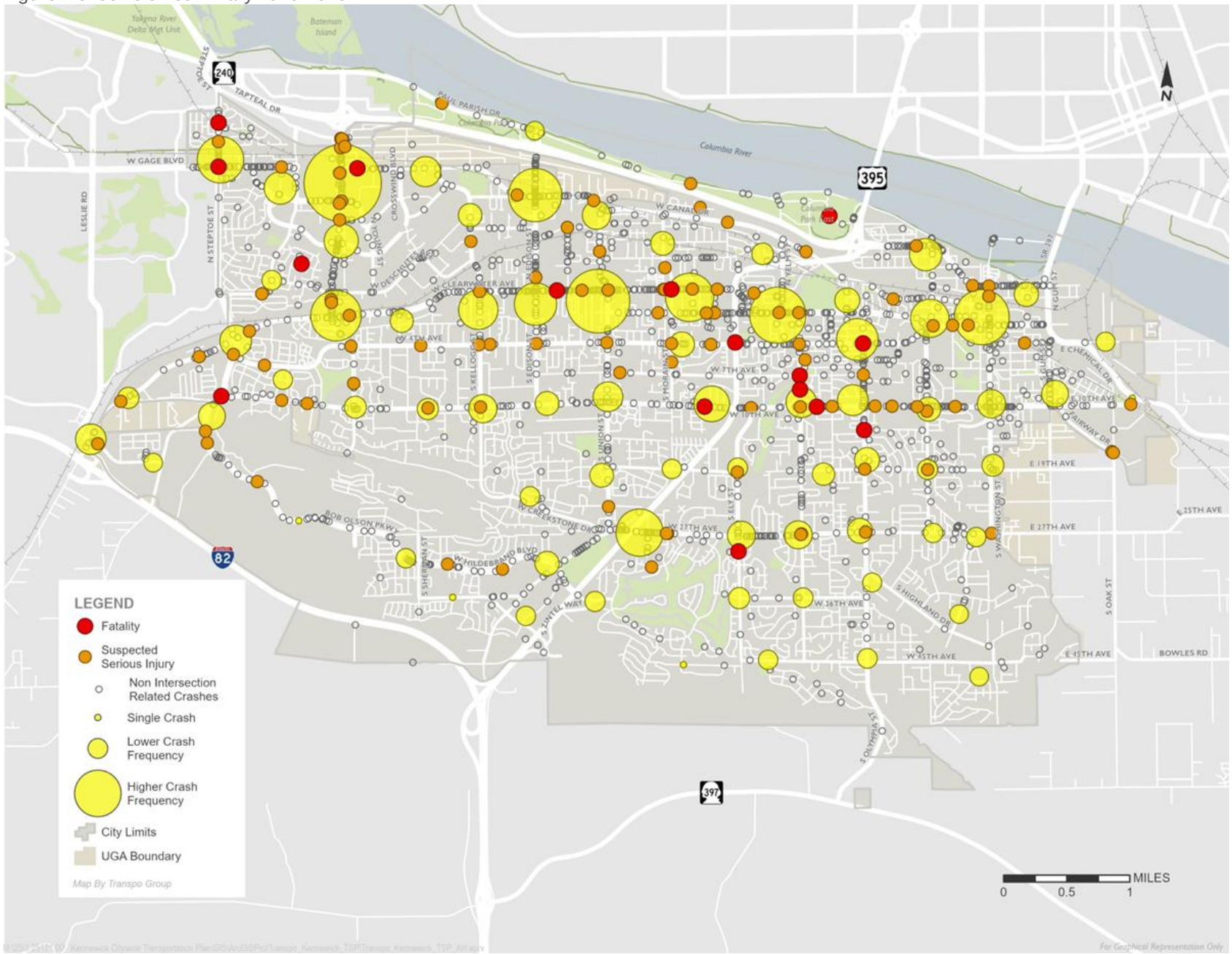
1. Two fatalities were reported in this collision

Figure T-8. Non-Intersection Fatalities 2012-2016

Primary St	Year
S Ely St	2021
W Clearwater Ave	2022
SR 240	2022 & 2023
US 395	2022
Columbia Park Trail	2023
N Steptoe St	2023
W Canal Dr	2023
W Grand Ronde Ave	2023
W 10th Ave	2024

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Figure T-9. Collision Summary 2020-2025



Intersection & Roadway Safety Summary

Intersection and roadway safety was reviewed for the five-year (2020 to 2024) crash data. Below in **Figure T-10**, all collisions are summarized by the type of crashes that occurred and the year in which they took place. Most collisions were rear end collisions (30.9 percent) followed by angle crashes (24.9 percent).

Figure T-10. All Crash Types

Crash Type	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Percent
Angle	249	355	392	392	388	24.9%
Rear end	350	478	439	467	469	30.9%
Other	105	134	119	135	127	8.7%
Approach Turn	121	174	163	178	170	11.3%
Fixed Object	125	197	177	162	178	11,8%
Sideswipe	86	137	158	165	171	10.1%
Ped/Bike	19	27	22	29	30	1.8%
Head on	10	6	11	4	5	0.5%
Total	1065	1508	1481	1532	1538	

Figure T-11 details the amount of fatal and severe collisions within Kennewick based on the year they occurred. Fatalities decreased between 2023 and 2024 with a drop from 11 fatal collisions in 2023 to just one in 2024. The only increases between 2023 and 2024 consisted of both property damage only and severe injury collisions, with minor injuries also decreasing.

Figure T-11. Fatal and Severe Collisions

Crash Severity	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Percent
Fatalities	2	1	6	11	1	0.3%
Severe Injury	22	21	25	25	30	1.7%
Minor Injury	232	343	393	335	314	22.7%
Property Damage Only	809	1143	1059	1161	1193	75.3%
Total	1065	1508	1483	1532	1538	

Throughout the 2020 to 2024 period there were 130 total collisions that involved a pedestrian or cyclist as shown in **Figure T-15** and **Figure T-12**. There were a larger number of pedestrian collisions than bicyclist collisions. As is typical for these types of collisions, most pedestrian and bicycle collisions had some type of injury or more severe.

Figure T-12. Pedestrian & Bicycle Collisions 2020-2024

	Fatal	Severe Injury	Minor Injury	Property Damage Only	Total
Pedestrian Involved	4	21	49	6	80
Bicyclist Involved	1	6	31	12	50
Total	5	27	80	18	130

Pedestrian Safety Conditions

Pedestrian conflicts with other transportation modes, particularly automobiles, are an important concern within the pedestrian system. This concern exists in Kennewick just as it does in other cities. **Figure T-13** shows pedestrian crash data within the City of Kennewick between 2020 and 2024. The total number of pedestrian-related collisions during this time period was 88 involving 103 pedestrians.

In order to enhance pedestrian safety, transportation modes should be separated as much as possible. For active transportation users of the transportation network, especially pedestrians, facilities that enforce modal separation are keys to safety. The pedestrian system inventory's focus on arterials enables the City to see where the addition of new pedestrian facilities or the improvement of existing pedestrian facilities could help improve pedestrian safety. The pedestrian system inventory also laid the groundwork for the project recommendations discussed in the next section.

Figure T-13. Pedestrian Collisions 2020-2024

Type	Number Of Pedestrians Involved
Fatalities	4
Injuries	89
No Injuries	10
Total	103

Bicycle Safety Conditions

Cyclist conflicts with other vehicles, or even with pedestrians, are a major issue in any urban transportation network. Busy arterials, sometimes not designed or constructed with active transportation users in mind, can be dangerous. In Kennewick between 2020 and 2024, there were a total of 44 automobile collisions involving bicycles (see **Figure T-14**). Of these collisions there was one reported fatality.

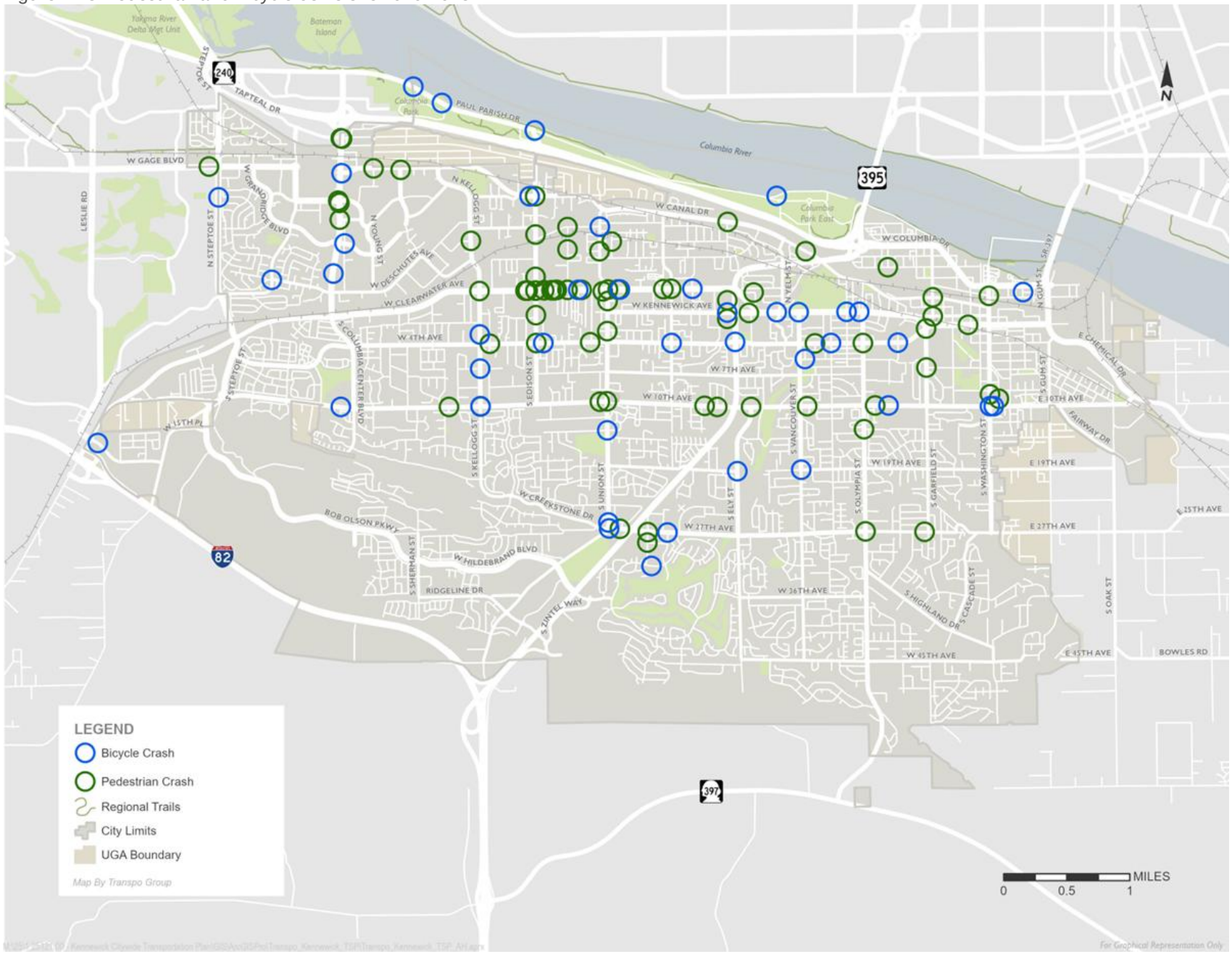
One way to improve safety conditions for cyclists is to ensure that the transportation network allows for the appropriate separation of modes. For cyclists, modal separation along high volume arterials could improve safety and increase the efficiency of the non-motorized transportation system. Some recommendations for these types of improvements are discussed in the later sections.

Figure T-14. Bicycle Collisions 2020-2024

Type	Number of Collisions
Fatalities	1
Injuries	37
No Injuries	6
Total	44

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Figure T-15. Pedestrian and Bicycle Collisions 2020-2025



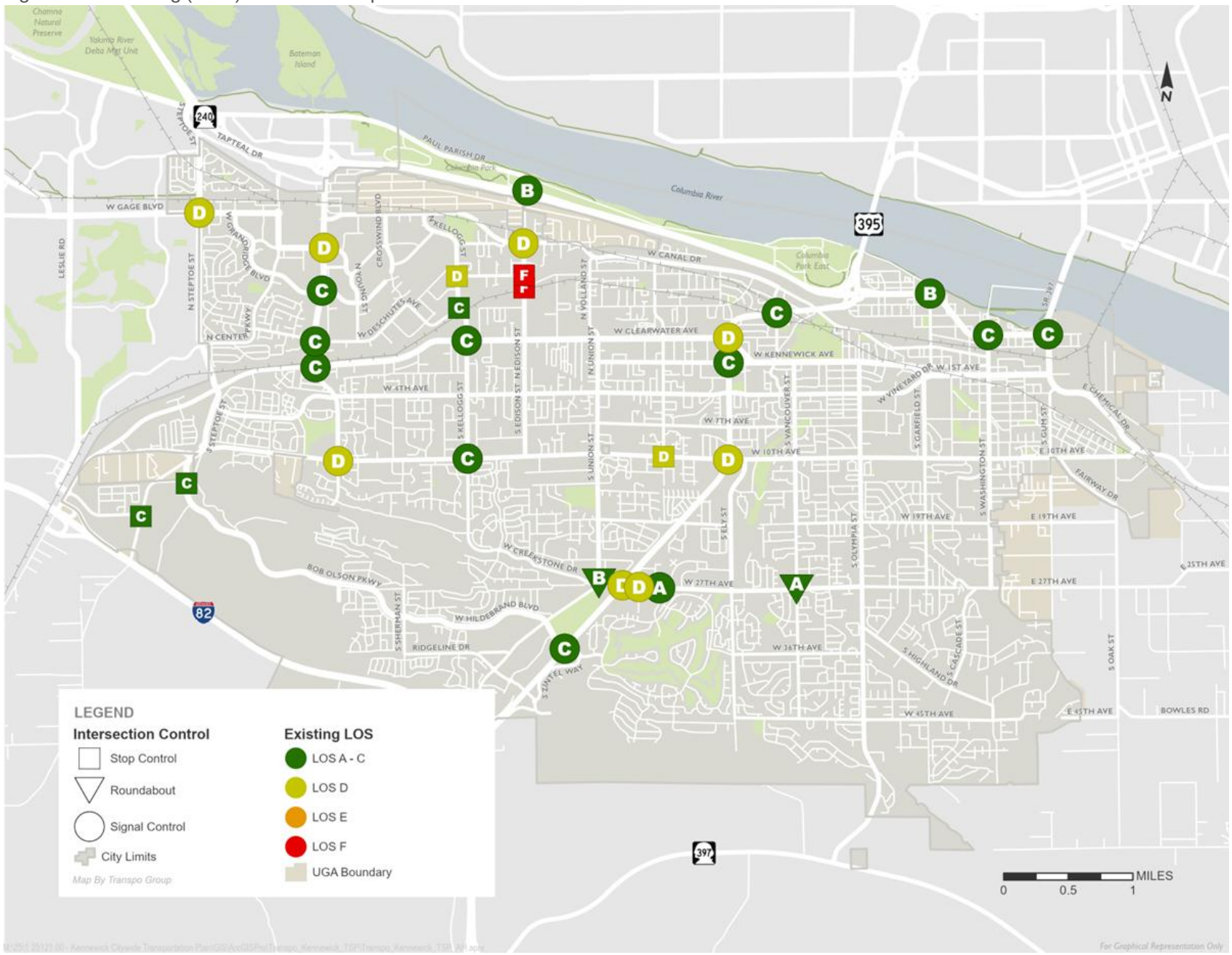
Existing Intersection Operations Analysis

Intersection traffic operations evaluate the performance of signalized, stop-controlled, and roundabout intersections according to the industry standards set forth in the HCM 7th Editon except where parameters such as signal timing prohibited the use of the 7th Edition, then HCM 2000 was utilized. PM peak hour traffic operations were evaluated at 30 study intersections using Synchro version 12 and Sidra 10. The PM peak hour intersection operations were selected due to the higher typical traffic volumes occurring during that time period for a single hour between 4 and 6 p.m.

Existing levels of service at key intersections in City of Kennewick are shown in **Figure T-16**. All study intersections are operating at LOS D or better except for the stop-controlled intersections at Edison Street and Metaline Avenue (on both sides of the railroad).

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Figure T-16. Existing (2025) Intersection Operations



LEVEL OF SERVICE UPDATE INFORMATION

Vehicle Level of Service

For the latest update of the Comprehensive Plan, the vehicle level of service standards were updated to consolidate conflicting standards from the previous Comprehensive Plan and Transportation System Plan documents. These previous documents had three different vehicle LOS standards as shown below. The updated LOS standard is also presented below (as well as in Volume I).

2021 Transportation Comprehensive Plan: General Level of Service

Citing general traffic flow level of service definitions for roadways and streets within the city of Kennewick, the previous Comprehensive Plan set forth the following LOS standards. It is not clear how on what type of facility that it would be evaluated (street segments and/or intersection).

- LOS E – Columbia Center Boulevard
- LOS D – All Arterials and Collectors
- LOS C – Local Streets.

2021 Transportation Comprehensive Plan: Level of Service For Concurrency

The Comprehensive Plan also included a section on transportation concurrency where level of service was defined for intersections along city streets that would be used for evaluating development proposals. The LOS standards were defined as:

- Signalized Intersections
  - LOS E – Columbia Center Boulevard Corridor
  - LOS D – All Other City Streets
- Unsignalized Intersections or Driveways: LOS E.
- Signalized or Unsignalized Intersection with Second Site Access Point within 1/3 mile with a LOS D or better: LOS F

2018 TSP Vehicle LOS Standard

The City typically applies the LOS standards to weekday PM peak hour conditions for its arterials and collectors within the City. However, evaluation of other time periods may be required based on the type and location of development and the existing conditions of the local transportation network. As areas are annexed, the City's standards are applied. The following summarizes the minimum LOS standards established by the City.

- LOS D - Major approaches at signalized intersections and roundabouts.
- LOS E - For all minor street approaches at unsignalized intersections or driveways.
- LOS F – May be acceptable at unsignalized intersections or driveways when a second access point is within ¼ mile operating at LOS D or better and which is controlled by a traffic signal or roundabout. An LOS F may also be acceptable in situations where the side street volumes are low and no adverse impact on safety is expected.

If expected funding for improvements to meet future transportation needs is found to be inadequate and the City will not be able to meet their adopted LOS standard, then the City may pursue one or more of the following options:

- Lower the LOS standard for the system or for portions of the system that cannot be improved without a significant expenditure;

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- Revise the City's current land use element to reduce density or intensity of development so that the LOS standard can be met; or;
- Phase or restrict development to allow more time for the necessary transportation improvements to be completed.

2026 Comprehensive Plan and 2026 TSP

The following is the proposed LOS standard for the 2026 updates.

The City typically applies the LOS standards to weekday PM peak hour conditions for its arterials and collectors within the City. However, evaluation of other time periods may be required based on the type and location of development and the existing conditions of the local transportation network. As areas are annexed, the City's standards are applied. The following summarizes the minimum LOS standards established by the City.

- Signalized intersections and roundabouts.
  - LOS D for other city intersections, except as noted below
  - LOS E for intersections along Columbia Center Boulevard
  - LOS F for Steptoe Street/Gage Boulevard intersection
- LOS E - For all minor street approaches at unsignalized intersections or driveways.
- LOS F – May be acceptable at unsignalized intersections or driveways when a second access point is within ¼ mile operating at LOS D or better and which is controlled by a traffic signal or roundabout. An LOS F may also be acceptable in situations where the side street volumes are low and no adverse impact on safety is expected.

Active Transportation Level of Service

As part of adding Multimodal LOS standards to the 2026 Comprehensive Plan, a new Active Transportation LOS was adopted for both Bicycle and Pedestrian facilities. Volume I identifies the primary and secondary routes within the City of Kennewick that the Active Transportation LOS applies. The LOS is based on evaluating the Level of Traffic Stress that was documented in the *BFCOG Regional Active Transportation Plan* (September 2020). **Figure T-17** shows the facility elements and facilities that determine the Bicycle LTS score, which is slightly more detailed than the BFCOG plan.

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Figure T-17. Criteria for Evaluating Bicycle Level of Traffic Stress

Lanes	ADT	Speed Limit ≤20	25	30	35	40	≥45
BIKE LANES - CLASS II-A (5-6 FT WIDE)							
2-3 lanes	0-3,000	1	1	2	2	3	3
	3,000-6,000	1	2	2	3	4	4
	6,000+	2	2	2	3	4	4
4-5 lanes	0-8,000	2	2	2	3	4	4
	,000-16,00	2	2	3	3	4	4
	16,000+	3	3	3	4	4	4
6+ Lanes	0-18,000	3	3	3	4	4	4
	18,000+	3	3	4	4	4	4
WIDE BIKE LANE - CLASS II-B (≥ 7 FEET WIDE)							
2-3 lanes	0-3,000	1	1	1	2	3	3
	3,000-6,000	1	1	2	3	3	3
	6,000+	1	2	2	3	3	4
4-5 lanes	0-8,000	1	2	2	3	4	4
	,000-16,00	2	2	3	3	4	4
	16,000+	3	3	3	3	4	4
6+ Lanes	0-18,000	3	3	3	4	4	4
	18,000+	3	3	4	4	4	4
SHARED ROAD - CLASS III							
2-3 lanes	0-3,000	1	1	2	3	3	4
	3,000-6,000	2	2	3	3	4	4
	6,000+	2	3	3	3	4	4
4-5 lanes	0-8,000	3	3	3	3	4	4
	,000-16,00	3	3	4	4	4	4
	16,000+	3	3	4	4	4	4
6+ Lanes	0-18,000	3	3	4	4	4	4
	18,000+	3	4	4	4	4	4
PROTECTED BIKE LANES - CLASS IV							
2-3 lanes	0-3,000	1	1	1	2	2	2
	3,000-6,000	1	1	1	2	2	2
	6,000+	2	2	2	2	2	2
4-5 lanes	0-8,000	1	1	1	2	2	2
	,000-16,00	2	2	2	2	2	2
	16,000+	2	2	2	2	2	2
6+ Lanes	0-18,000	2	2	2	2	2	2
	18,000+	2	2	2	2	2	2

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FUTURE TRANSPORTATION NEEDS ANALYSIS

Future Traffic Operations Analysis

An LOS evaluation was performed for major intersections within the City to identify future LOS deficiencies. The LOS analysis was performed for the average weekday PM peak hour in the City of Kennewick. Deficiencies were determined based on the City's vehicle LOS standards, which is LOS D at approaches to signalized intersections or roundabouts, and LOS E for stop-controlled intersections. State-owned intersections have a WSDOT LOS of LOS D for overall average operations.

Figure T-20 shows the LOS results at study intersections under future baseline conditions. During 2045 Baseline conditions 14 of the 30 study intersections would not meet standards. For many locations, projects that could address the deficiencies have been included in the long-range transportation improvement project list. The following is a list of city intersections with project identified:

- Clodfelter Road/Ridgeline Drive (add signal)
- Bob Olson Parkway/W 15th Avenue (add signal)
- Columbia Center Boulevard/Clearwater Avenue (intersection changes)
- Kellogg Street/Deschutes Avenue (add signal)
- N Edison Street/SR 240 Westbound Ramps (add roundabout)
- N Edison Street/W Metaline Avenue, north of railroad (add signal)
- N Edison Street/W Metaline Avenue, south of railroad (add signal)
- Union Street (Southridge Boulevard)/27th Avenue (expand roundabout)

The following intersection does not have a project identified. It assumed that further widening of the intersection would be infeasible or not desirable from long-range multimodal system planning perspective.

- Steptoe Street/Gage Boulevard (new LOS F standard)

The following US 395 intersections are expected to operate at LOS E or F in the future. These will be studied in a future corridor study (2026) to further refine improvements.

- US 395/Yelm Street (add westbound left-turn lane)
- US 395/Clearwater Avenue (turn-lane modifications)
- US 395/10th Avenue (improvements to be determined)
- US 395/27th Avenue (improvements to be determined)
- US 395/Hildebrand Boulevard (improvements to be determined)

Detailed Active Transportation Needs Analysis

Pedestrian level of traffic stress is a measure of how comfortable people feel walking near vehicle traffic, with increases in perceived comfort correlating with decreased risk of vehicle conflicts that may lead to injuries or fatalities. The pedestrian level of traffic stress was analyzed by BFCOG and factored in roadway speeds, number of roadway lanes, traffic volumes, and sidewalk presence. LTS ratings range from 1 (low stress) to 4 (high stress). The city's adopted level of traffic stress standards are LTS 3. **Figure T-18** shows the level of traffic stress for pedestrians along the proposed pedestrian network.

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Bicycle level of traffic stress measures the perceived comfort of bicyclists when traveling along city roadways and bike routes by analyzing a combination of factors including roadway speed limits, volumes, number of lanes, and available bike facilities. The bicycle level of traffic stress analysis for this study was performed by BFCOG using methods developed by the Mineta Transportation Institute and has ranges from 1 (low stress) to 4 (high stress). The city's adopted level of traffic stress standards are LTS 3. **Figure T-19** shows the level of traffic stress for bicyclists along the proposed bicycle network.

Any primary and secondary facilities that are shown at LTS 4 are candidates for projects and programs in the long-term project list.

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Figure T-18. Existing Level of Traffic Stress on the Pedestrian Network

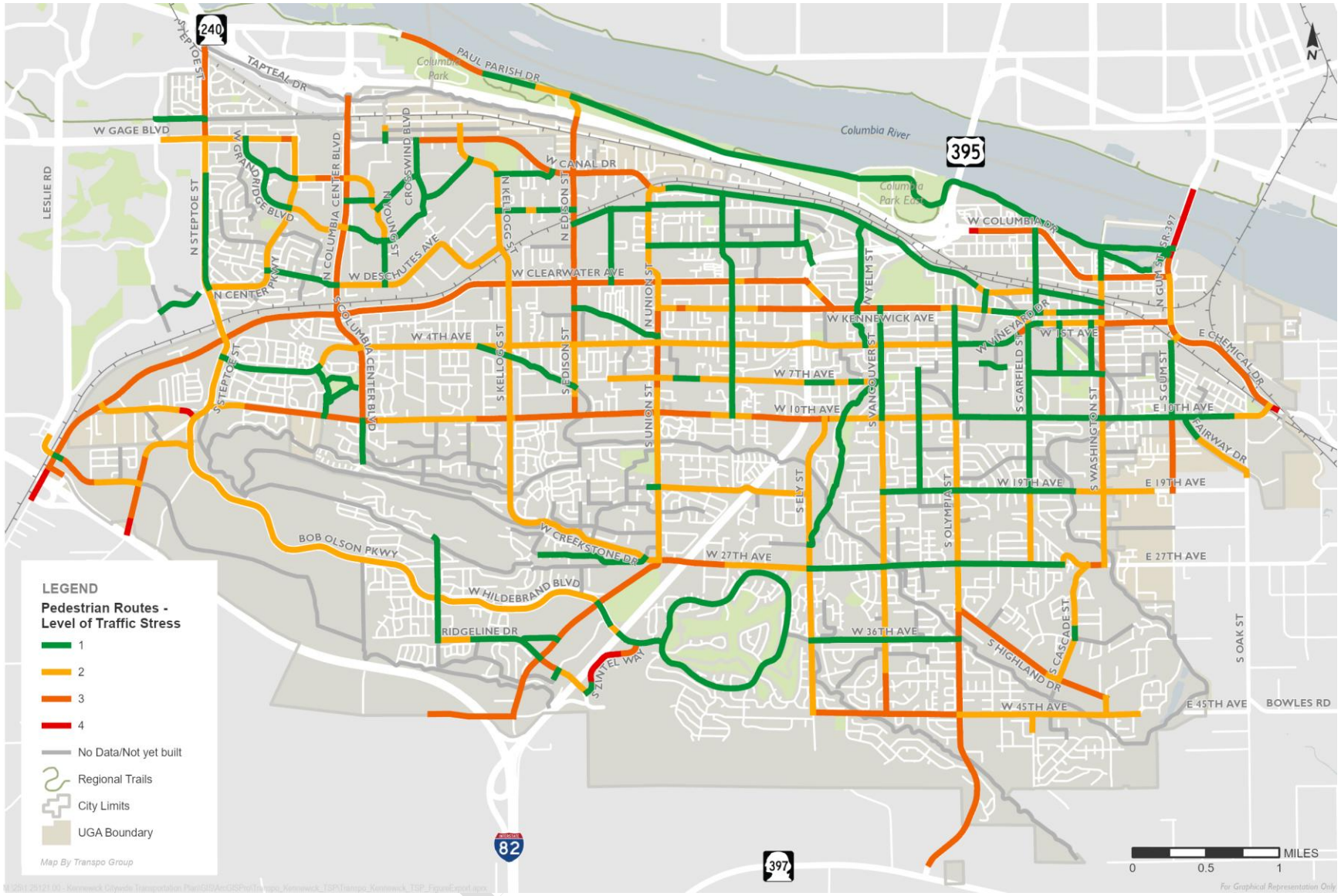


Figure T-19. Existing Level of Traffic Stress on the Bicycle Network

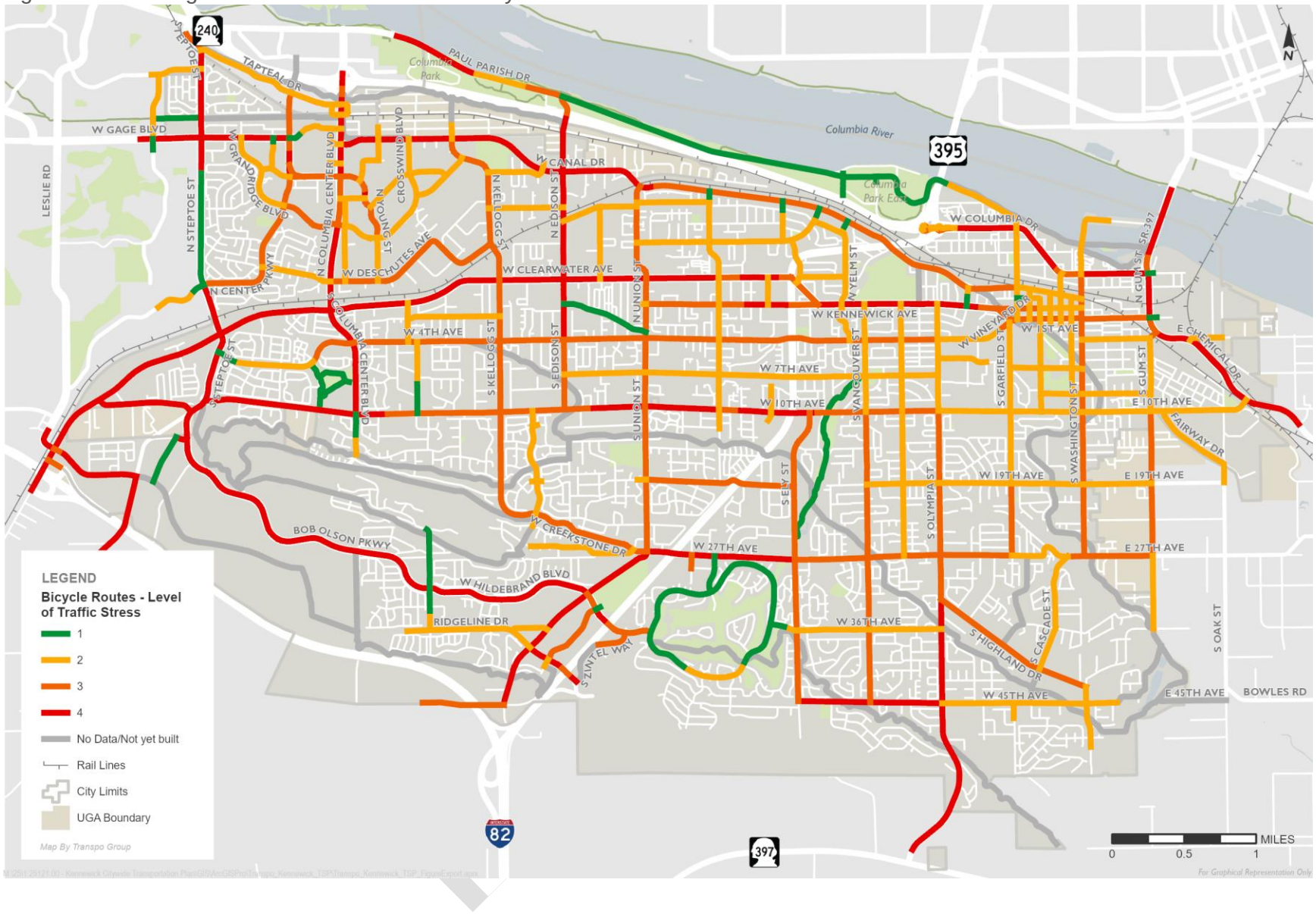
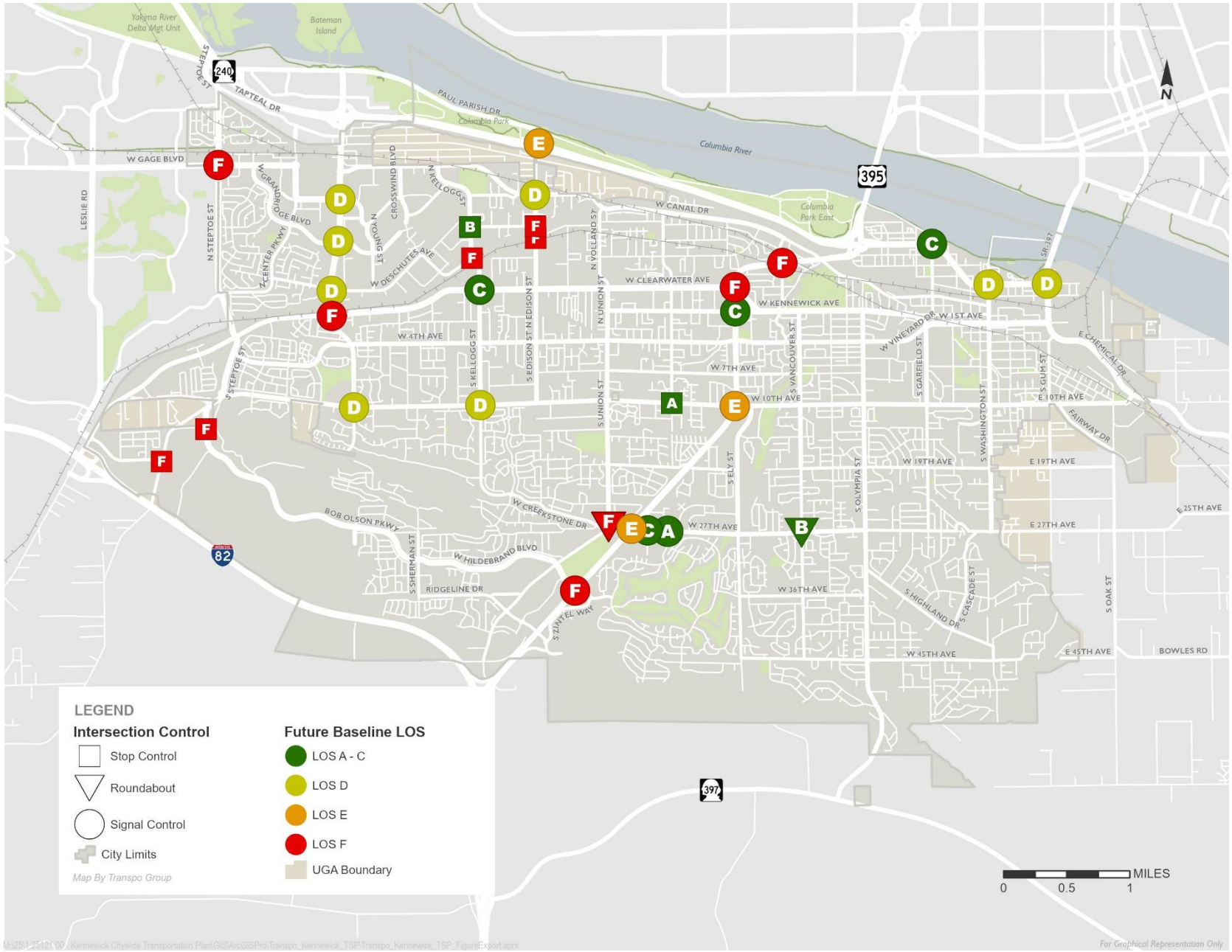


Figure T-20. Forecast (2045) Intersection Operations



Emerging Transportation Trends

In addition to formal transportation analysis and forecasting, long-range planning also includes anticipating emerging transportation trends that may change basic assumptions concerning transportation systems. Within the last two decades, technology has come closer to past futuristic visions, and it is likely that by the end of the planning period, some or all of these technologies will be deployed to realize some of these long-imagined ideas. This section describes some of these possible technologies and the impacts they may have on Wenatchee's transportation network.

Autonomous Vehicles (AVs)

A great deal of uncertainty faces us in planning for autonomous vehicles. Potential outcomes carry a wide range of possibilities. The next 15 years stand a chance to witness a significant portion of fleet of vehicles on our streets and highways operating without drivers. It is possible that 30 to 40 years from now all or nearly all vehicles will be driverless or will have driverless capabilities in certain situations. The implementation of some of these technologies may be within current long-range planning horizons, and thus the City should consider the ramifications of these technologies on its transportation network. A few key issues rise to the top of what local governments should contemplate while preparing long-range plans.

Street and Roadway Planning. Since AVs will be able to space themselves closer together, the capacity of streets and highways will likely increase significantly, as much as double. This implies that roadway capacity improvements to accommodate more vehicles may not be necessary in the long term as these technologies are implemented. This is especially true if AVs travel in narrower lanes with smaller vehicles.

Transit Planning. Over half of the cost of operating buses is related to the driver. In the future, replacing the driver with AV technology may enable transit operators to offer more service for the same cost. Technology that clears lanes when buses approach may allow them to avoid the same congestion they now face. This will also increase service as buses will be able to run their routes faster. Such technology may reduce the need for expenditures in rail transit infrastructure as buses may operate with close to the same freedom that trains do on dedicated rights-of-way.

Shared Ride Regulations. The demand for shared ride services such as Lyft and Uber may likely increase as the economics improve without drivers. Public agencies will need to develop policies to regulate the environment for these types of services, especially those that offer pooling options for two, three or more people to ride together.

Human Services Transportation. AV will reduce the cost for serving the needs of the disabled, of military families, and caregivers. With dramatic safety improvements walking and bicycling will likely become much more attractive. The need for wider sidewalks and more bike lanes may increase.

Parking Demand Shifts. It is likely that the economics of transportation will dramatically change with widespread use of AVs and other technologies. Car ownership in urban areas may further decrease if on-demand travel with or without driverless vehicles becomes a legitimate alternative. At present, most vehicles are parked 95 percent of the time, while AVs may operate much of the day picking up one passenger after another, potentially reducing the need for parking. With widespread adoption this could have a transformative effect on the need for parking stalls.

Land Use Planning. Reducing the need for parking could greatly change land use planning. Often today one-quarter to one-half of the cost of constructing new buildings is for parking. Architectural considerations will change and open new possibilities for more economical and more interesting and efficient buildings. Perhaps most important, the cost of building housing could drop dramatically. Further, land that is now taken up by parking facilities could be repurposed for more pressing needs, such as affordable housing.

Connected Vehicles

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Although it is not yet clear what the demand for vehicle-to-infrastructure may ultimately look like, cities might look ahead to providing reference points for lidar and radar to function more efficiently. Perhaps lampposts will become smart poles. Further, it will be possible as more vehicles are fully self-driving to optimize traffic flow with computer systems that talk to and moderate flow. Cities might want to watch to see what systems will be needed and prepare to offer such systems.

Teleworking

Advances in technology and communication infrastructure will facilitate the exponential growth of teleworking in the next decade and beyond. According to current Census data, "not traveling at all" accounts for more than two percent of the overall national mode split and is increasing at a greater rate than all other modes. Factors that are fueling this change include: improving communications and collaboration technologies, increased high-speed broadband availability, and the proliferation of web-based applications. The land use and transportation implications of this trend are wide ranging including: reduced VMT and roadway congestion, reduced greenhouse gas emissions, and greater number of employees choosing to live further from job sites.

Emerging Trends Takeaways

It is difficult to summarize the potential for future technologies, as by definition many of the technologies (and their adoption) remain theoretical. But some trends are emerging: the costs of commuting (both financial and in time lost) in some cases are overwhelming the benefits of being physically present in an office – and technology now exists that allows nearly identical productivity from a remote location.

Similarly, technology now exists to remove many of the responsibilities for driving from the driver themselves. Perhaps the most significant obstacle to increased automation will be the individual driver's desire to drive.

It remains unclear whether or not these new technologies (or others) will gradually be implemented by municipalities and vehicle manufacturers, if there will be a sudden shift towards these technologies, or some combination of the two. Regardless, the City should keep abreast of capital improvement alternatives that could be implemented to serve these existing technologies.

TRANSPORTATION FINANCING STRATEGY

Finance Program Overview

This section provides an overview of the financial assumptions driving the Kennewick Transportation Systems Plan (TSP). It identifies the estimated costs of the transportation system improvements and programs, and summarizes the existing and potential future financial resources to pay for the improvements. The financing program provides a general policy guideline for funding the transportation investments to support the City's adopted Comprehensive Plan.

Introduction

The Kennewick TSP financial analysis offers the City a better understanding of its fiscal constraints with regards to short- and long-range transportation revenues. Financial forecast estimates were developed to assist in TSP project prioritization and planning, but are not intended here to be precise forecasts. Exact funding levels are difficult to predict given the uncertainties of funding sources, predicted versus actual growth, and unforeseen needs such as emergencies. The revenue figures used in this chapter are intended to be used for planning purposes; as actual revenues are highly sensitive to local, state, and federal policy decisions; personal choices of residents; and other market forces.

Estimated future revenues have been projected for the Transportation Plan's 2026-2045 planning horizon, in current year (2026) dollars, in two categories:

- Existing Revenue Projections
- Other Possible Funding

Existing Revenue Projections

These revenue estimates are based on existing revenue sources. Estimates in this category rely on recent historical revenue trends and the current policy context of each revenue source. While based on past revenue collections and City's past policy decisions, this analysis uses conservative financial assumptions.

Many of the revenue sources presented in this section may be used for maintenance and operations of existing transportation capital facilities and construct new transportation capital facilities. In addition, several of the revenue sources can also be directed to other non-transportation capital facility expenses. However, as the cost of maintenance and operations of existing facilities increase faster than inflation, the City is confronted with difficult decisions regarding whether to fund maintenance and operations costs at the expense of building new capital, or to lower level of service standards.

Other Possible Funding

The revenues in this category may be available via policy changes. These are primarily changes in tax policy, some of which may require voter approval.

In reality, transportation funding may comprise any number of combinations of available funding or other funding due to policy changes. These possible funding sources are presented to show the options that the City has in creating the necessary funding mix to respond to the transportation needs of the community. In addition to making policy changes to increase revenues, this can involve putting more resources in pursuing grants, shifting funds from non-transportation uses, and spreading costs across time through financing and project phasing.

Section Structure

This section addresses estimated revenues from a variety of sources, and includes a detailed description of each revenue source and projections for future revenue dollars. Following the revenue projections, costs for capital projects are identified, along with expected maintenance and operations costs. As mentioned, in some cases revenues may only be used for capital purposes, and in other cases revenues may be used for capital or maintenance purposes. The decisions on where to allocate revenues is ultimately the responsibility of City staff and Council members.

Revenue Projections

State and Federal Grants

Grants are an important funding source for transportation capital projects; however, these funds are distributed in a competitive process making it difficult to determine future grant funding levels. For this analysis, recent historical grant revenue trends were reviewed.

Grant revenues are project-specific and competitive; as such, grant funding can exhibit large swings year-to-year. This analysis estimates revenues based on the historical 5 years of grant revenue received. The prior revenue is then projected out to the 20-year horizon and inflated each year by a constant 3% inflation factor. Because fluctuations in grant funding are typical, and future revenues are projected on a constant trend, they are likely to overstate revenues in some years and understate them in others.

Sales Tax

The City of Kennewick has used sales tax primarily to fund street construction in the past, but as the revenue source has grown over time, the uses of the funds have broadened in response to increasingly diversified needs for other capital improvements. Sales tax is also used to pay for annual electrical costs for street lighting, debt service payments on a new police facility and the Toyota Center/Three Rivers Complex, economic development activities, and other infrastructure costs. Sales tax has not been used to fund transportation capital projects since 2015.

Although the City does not typically use sales tax revenues for transportation projects, this is a policy decision as part of those funds could be used for transportation projects. Sales tax revenue available to the City is assumed to increase at an annual rate of 3%, in line with general inflationary trends.

REET

Cities and counties in Washington are authorized to levy two separate 0.25% real estate excise taxes on the sales of all real estate. The first quarter percent of the tax receipts must be used on capital projects included in the capital facilities element of the City's Comprehensive Plan. This restriction is in place for cities with populations greater than 5,000 or planning under the Growth Management Act (GMA). The second 0.25% (REET II) must also be spent on capital projects. Currently, Kennewick levies the full 0.5% on all sales of real estate within the city limits, and uses REET II on transportation capital projects.

Future REET revenue assumes a 2% annual increase. The 2% annual increase assumption was continued forward in the analysis for the years 2026 to 2045.

Transportation Impact Fees

Impact fees are a financing tool that provides a mechanism for new development to pay a portion of the costs associated with infrastructure improvements that are "reasonably related" to that development. The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) allows jurisdictions to develop and implement a transportation impact fee program to help fund some of the costs of transportation facilities needed to accommodate growth. State law (Chapter 82.02 RCW) requires that impact fees are:

- Related to improvements to serve new development and not existing deficiencies.
- Assessed proportional to the impacts of new development
- Allocated for improvements that reasonably benefit new development
- Spent on facilities identified in the Capital Facilities Plan (CFP)

Legally, financing for improvements that will serve the new development must provide a balance between impact fees and other sources of public funds, and the fees must be structured in a manner that ensures that funds collected do not exceed a proportionate share of the costs of improvements reasonably related to new development.

The statutes enacting the impact fee laws leave room for interpretation regarding the issue of improvements being "reasonably related to the new development." However, in the decision of The City of Olympia v. John Drebick et al., the Washington State Supreme Court supported the idea that an individual development does not need to be tied to a specific improvement project.

The City has adopted a transportation impact fee (TIF) program defined in Chapter 13.16 (Transportation Impact Fees) of the City's Municipal Code. The TIF is based on the TSP projects and cost estimates, and anticipated land use growth. The TIF is expected to generate just under $25 million in revenues between 2026 and 2045. The actual TIF revenues will be directly tied to the level of growth that occurs each year. The TIF will allow the City to match funding for growth-related improvements to the pace of growth.

The City will not actually collect all of the TIF funds because developers will be asked to construct some of the projects. Where a developer is conditioned to construct all or a portion of TIF project, the City will provide credits, consistent with GMA requirements.

Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax

Gas tax funds are a large portion of the revenues that support the City of Kennewick's transportation maintenance program. Currently, the City uses all gas tax funds received from the State for maintenance. In keeping with this policy decision, future MVFT revenues are assumed to be used exclusively by the City for maintenance costs.

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Counties and cities receive a portion of the State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax (MVFT) based on a reimbursement formula. Motor vehicle fuel tax revenues are expected to decrease as vehicle fuel efficiency increases. Over the long-term, the Washington Department of Transportation is working on alternative approaches to funding roadway usage needs. These changes could change or replace the MVFT, in which case the assumptions used here will need to be updated.

Historically, MVFT funds used for maintenance have been fairly steady but are assumed to decrease annually by one percent between 2026 and 2045 for purposes of estimating future revenue.

Property Tax

Property tax is deposited into the City's General Fund, and is available for any municipal purpose, including transportation spending. Property tax revenues are used to make up for any funding shortfalls.

Since the passage of Initiative 747 in 2001, property tax increases on existing properties are restricted to 1.0% of the previous year's revenues. In inflation-adjusted terms, revenues from property tax are actually declining, since the 1.0% allowed increase does not keep pace with inflation or population growth. Because of the cap, all Washington State jurisdictions that collect property tax are seeing declining purchasing power in their property tax revenues.

To be conservative and account for the expected continuing decline in ability to raise real property tax revenues, property tax revenues were assumed to increase by 1% each year in real dollars.

Transportation Benefit District

The City created a Transportation Benefit District (TBD) in 2025 to fund pavement preservation. TBDs are independent taxing districts that can impose an array of fees or taxes to fund transportation improvements. TBDs can be established in jurisdictions ranging from a city to multi-county area. Cities can authorize local TBDs that provide up to a 0.2% local sales and use tax with council approval. This can be increased another 0.1%, but only with voter approval. TBDs can levy up to a $100 fee for each vehicle weighing less than 6,000 pounds registered in its jurisdiction. $50 of this fee can be leveraged without a public vote.

The City has enacted a sales and use tax of .01% which became effective April 1, 2025, and will remain in effect for a period not to exceed ten (10) years. Future TBD revenue assumes a 3% annual increase over the $3 million collected during the first year of the program and that the program will be re-enacted for a subsequent 10-year period. All TBD revenue is assumed to go towards maintenance and operations.

Total Estimated Revenue

Figure T-21 shows the estimated revenue available for transportation projects for the planning time period of 2026 to 2045 in 2026 dollars. The revenue projections reflect methods that represent the City's experiences over the past five years.

The City does not utilize the optional capital funds toward transportation purposes except in specific situations that may arise on an infrequent basis. As a result, all of the optional capital funds are assumed to be utilized on other city operational and capital priorities that are non-transportation related.

Figure T-21. Total Estimated Available Funds (2026-2045)

Estimated Available Funds	(2026 $)
Capital Funds	
State and Federal Grants	$70,330,000
REET II (0.25%)	$46,030,000

Transportation Impact Fees	$24,470,000
Subtotal Capital Funds	$140,830,000
Estimated Debt Service (-)	($15,180,000)
Total Available Capital Funds	$125,650,000
Optional Capital Funds	
Sales Tax (optional)	$228,470,000
REET I (0.25%) (optional)	$46,030,000
Total Optional Capital Funds	$274,500,000
Maintenance and Operations Funds	
State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax	$28,360,000
Transportation Benefit District	$80,610,000
Property Tax	$17,710,000
Total Maintenance & Operations Funds	$126,680,000

Note: All values rounded to the nearest $1,000. Optional Capital Funds are currently used for different purposes by the City of Kennewick.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026.

Other Possible Funding

This section outlines additional funding sources that may apply to transportation spending but would require changes to current policy and, in some cases, voter approval. These changes include updates to existing tax policies.

For example, the City previously used a portion of collected sales tax to fund street construction, but since 2015, the City has used this revenue source for other needs. In addition, the City could use REET I funds for transportation projects as part of their capital improvement program.

Similarly, property tax revenue is deposited into the General Fund and is available for any municipal purpose, including transportation. The City has used property tax revenue for transportation maintenance on an as-needed basis, but the City has the option to dedicate more funds to transportation needs.

In addition to these policy changes, there are several other revenue sources available to the City of Kennewick. **Figure T-22** shows revenue sources available for cities in Washington State for transportation purposes.

Some revenue sources are not discussed. Specifically, the following revenue sources are available but unlikely to be used by the City for transportation:

- Franchise fees are entered into on an as-needed basis with utility providers and other jurisdictions;
- Property tax levy lid lifts require ballot measures;
- Short-term debt funding tools, such as anticipation notes, loans, and lines of credit that are meant to cover temporary liquidity issues; and
- Tolling on state highway portions which would require designation by the Washington State Legislature.

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Figure T-22. Other Possible Funding Sources

Funding Source	Funding Source and Description and *Applicable Restrictions*
General Obligation Bonds RCW 39.36.015 and Article 8, Section 6 of the Constitution of the State of Washington	Cities, Transportation Benefit Districts, and Local Improvement Districts may issue general obligation bonds, by special election or council decision, to finance projects of general benefit to the city or district. TBDs must use the revenue to finance projects specific to transportation. In addition to the principal and interest costs of issuing debt, there are usually costs associated with issuing bonds, including administrative time, legal and underwriting costs, and insurance costs. The Washington State Constitution limits the amount of debt municipalities can incur to 5.0% of the City's assessed value of taxable properties; the Washington State Legislature has statutorily limited the debt carrying capacity further to 2.5% of the assessed value.
Limited Tax General Obligation (LTGO) RCW 36.36	Limited tax general obligation bonds, sometimes referred to in Washington as "councilmanic" bonds, do not require voter approval and are payable from the issuer's general tax levy and other legally available revenue sources. LTGO bonds can be used for any purpose, but funding for debt service must be made available from existing revenue sources. There are constitutional and statutory limits on a municipality's authority to incur non-voted debt. Total debt is limited to 2.5% of the assessed value of taxable properties; maximum LTGO debt is then 2.5% minus unlimited tax general obligation bonds.
Unlimited Tax General Obligation (UTGO) RCW 84.52.056 and Article 7, Section 2 of the Constitution of the State of Washington	These bonds require 60% voter approval with a minimum voter turnout of 40% of voters who cast ballots in the last general election within the district. When voters of a jurisdiction vote for a bond issue, they are being asked to approve: (a) the issuance of a fixed amount of general obligation bonds and (b) the levy of an additional tax to repay the bonds, unlimited as to rate or amount. Once voter approval is obtained, a municipal corporation is still restricted by constitutional and statutory debt limits with these bonds. Councilmanic debt is limited to 1.5% of the assessed value of taxable properties.
Local Improvement District (LID) and Road Improvement District (RID) Formation RCW 35.43-35.56	Allows cities to carry out public improvements, including transportation improvements through mechanisms that assess those costs to benefitted property owners.

Funding Strategy for Capital Needs

The financial analysis performed for the Kennewick TSP is aimed at providing the City with information to help answer two main questions:

- What transportation improvement projects can the City reasonably afford to build in the next 20+ years?
- What would the City have to do to augment available revenue for transportation infrastructure in order to increase the number of projects it is able to build?

Notably, this section is not intended as the singular finance plan and does not require the City to commit to a specific funding plan. Instead, it is meant to provide information so that the City's policy-makers are able to make informed decisions regarding the balance between building necessary transportation infrastructure and the opportunities and efforts required in raising the revenue needed to pay for it.

Capital Project Costs

Figure 22, in **Volume I**, summarizes the list of transportation improvement projects. Planning level cost estimates are provided for each project. The cost estimates were developed based on typical unit costs from the City's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and recent construction costs in the region. However, the cost estimates should be refined and updated as each project moves into design and implementation.

Projects were combined into seven project type categories. **Figure T-23** summarizes the estimated costs of the projects in 2026 dollars. Costs are only shown for projects within the City of Kennewick's jurisdiction. The summary also includes estimated costs of projects along WSDOT maintained highways such as US 395. It is assumed costs will be shared between the City and WSDOT as improvements to state highways are completed in the future.

Figure T-23. Summary of Transportation Capital Project Costs (2026-2045)

Estimated Costs by Project Type	(2026 $)
Intersections/Spot Improvements	$20,507,000
Roadway Improvements	$62,609,000
Pedestrian/Bicycle Transportation	$47,245,000
Other Projects/Studies	$13,453,000
Annual Programs	$62,500,000
Total Project Costs	$206,314,000

Note: All values rounded to the nearest $1,000. Costs in 2026 dollars.

Sources: City of Kennewick and Transpo Group, 2018.

Capital Revenues

Figure T-24 summarizes the total revenues available to capital projects over the study period. The revenues are displayed in 2026 dollars. A total of approximately $126 million in revenue is projected. However, the "real" revenues decrease in value over time as project costs increase.

Figure T-24. Summary of Available Transportation Capital Revenues (2026-2045)

Estimated Available Revenues	(2026 $)
State and Federal Grants	$70,330,000
REET II (0.25%)	$46,030,000
Transportation Impact Fees	$24,470,000
Total Revenues	$140,830,000
Estimated Debt Service	$15,180,000
Total Capital Available Funds	$125,650,000

Note: All values rounded to the nearest $1,000.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026

Summary

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The funding analysis identifies approximately $204 million in capital improvement projects over the study period, and approximately $126 million in estimated available revenues. In order to fully fund the transportation capital projects, the City would need approximately $32 million in additional revenue (in 2017 dollars) between 2017 and 2040 to address the gap.

One way to address the gap between estimated revenues and costs is to work closely with WSDOT and local legislators to obtain a greater contribution from the State to fund improvements along the state highways within the City, such as US 395. If additional State funds are obtained for the purpose of implementing the capital projects along the state highways, the expected funding shortfall would be addressed.

If State funding is not able to be obtained, the City will need to make policy decisions regarding implementation of the capital projects in terms of utilizing other available revenue sources or evaluating new funding options, and decide which is most politically feasible. These decisions will affect the level of transportation capital improvements that can be funded. Decisions will need to be made regarding the balance of expected revenue and the timing of projects, including what projects get pushed beyond the study period to a future plan and what projects are foregone entirely.

Funding Strategy for Maintenance and Operations Needs

It is equally important to estimate the resources needed to maintain existing and newly created transportation infrastructure. Certainly, it is not sustainable to invest in new capital projects if the resources do not exist to maintain them properly, or if in doing so, it requires pulling revenues from other municipal priorities.

Transportation maintenance spending is directly related to level of service standards, which are typically set at the discretion of the jurisdiction. Therefore, jurisdictions must continually make decisions regarding available funds, desired level of service, and other financial priorities.

Maintenance Revenues

The City currently uses two primary funding sources for maintenance of transportation infrastructure; State motor vehicle fuel tax and property tax. The expected total revenues available for maintenance and operations from 2017 to 2040 can be found in **Figure T-25**.. The revenues are displayed in 2017 dollars. A total of approximately $65 million in revenue is projected.

Figure T-25. Summary of Available Maintenance and Operations Revenues (2026-2045)

Estimated Maintenance and Operations Funds	(2026 $)
State Motor Vehicle Fuel Tax	$28,360,000
Transportation Benefit District	$80,610,000
Property Tax	$17,710,000
Total Maintenance & Operations Funds	**$126,680,000**

Note: All values rounded to the nearest $1,000.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026.

Addressing Maintenance Needs

The funding analysis identifies approximately $127 million in estimated available revenues. It is not uncommon that this will not address all maintenance needs. The solution that will work best for the City to address a transportation maintenance financing gap will have to be determined by those in the position to make related policy decisions and may be some combination of the options discussed below.

- Lower Maintenance Standards. The City may choose to reduce the level of service to which they maintain the road system. This will thereby reduce the per-center-line-mile required maintenance funding.
- Increase Revenue. Raise additional revenue by either increasing the Transportation Benefit District by another 0.1% sales tax with Council approval or dedicate more General Funds to transportation maintenance. More funds may be transferred from the City's General Funds (including property tax) to the Street Fund for transportation maintenance. This clearly involves a tradeoff, reducing funds available for other City expenses.
- Construct fewer new projects. The new transportation capital projects will increase the necessary maintenance costs by adding center line miles within the City. Similarly, annexing new areas to the City will require the City to pay for maintenance on the added roads. Reducing or postponing new projects and annexations is one way to reduce maintenance costs.

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Economic Development

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INTRODUCTION AND PLANNING CONTEXT

This section provides background information on economic development overall and specific data on Kennewick's economy, workforce, key industries, and quality of life. This data was used to inform updates to the Economic Development goals and policies and can also be used as reference material for City staff, policymakers, stakeholders, and the public as the City works to implement the goals and policies of this plan.

Numerous factors contribute to a successful formula that achieves both economic stability and growth in Kennewick. Economic development is one of the City's long-term strategies to continuously improve the community's economic well-being and support a high quality of life that attracts people and makes them want to stay, work, and play in Kennewick. Key economic development goals—including an expanded tax base, business retention and diversification, attraction of new businesses, and an improved quality of life—are unlikely to occur in a manner that matches the community vision without a clear strategy in place.

Kennewick recognizes that effective economic development goals are part of a much larger picture for total community development. Attracting new business and industry is desirable for the new wealth and jobs that are made available. At the same time, existing employers provide the first opportunity for growth through redevelopment and expansion. Many tangible and intangible parts affecting economic development and involving the entire community are addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. Natural and physical features such as aesthetics and climate are important, as are necessities such as schools, government, services, and medical care. Additional factors are the cost of living, cultural opportunities, availability of higher education, population diversity, and the perception of personal safety.

All elements of the Comprehensive Plan play a critical role in successful economic development. The **Land Use Element** and accompanying land use map, for example, defines and identifies the primary desired development pattern, including areas for residential, industrial, commercial, public facility, and open space needs. Appropriately scaled infrastructure, guided by the **Capital Facilities** and **Utilities Elements**, can then be planned to support that development, while urban design considerations help ensure new projects enhance the community's aesthetics and quality of life, which is essential for attracting new businesses and investment.

Growth Management Act

One of the Growth Management Act's planning goals is for economic development (RCW 36.70A.020):

> *(5) Economic development. Encourage economic development throughout the state that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plans, promote economic opportunity for all citizens of this state, especially for unemployed and for disadvantaged persons, promote the retention and expansion of existing businesses and recruitment of new businesses, recognize regional differences impacting economic development opportunities, and encourage growth in areas experiencing insufficient economic growth, all within the capacities of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities.*

Economic Development is listed as a mandatory element of comprehensive plans but is actually optional as no state funds have been appropriated to help pay for preparing the element (see RCW 36.70A.070 (7) and (10)). Per RCW 36.70A.070(7), the element should establish local goals, policies, objectives, and provisions for economic growth and vitality and a high quality of life.

Countywide Planning Policies

The GMA requires consistency between Kennewick's economic development goals and policies and the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs). More specifically, policies 1, 4, 18, 19 of the CPPs adopt state planning goals related to economic development and encourage economic growth and opportunity for all residents, increasing living-wage job opportunities throughout the county, and continuing regional partnerships for economic development throughout the region.

Local Planning—City of Kennewick's Economic Development Strategic Plan

Updated to align with 2023 Economic Development Strategic Plan

Numerous factors in a community contribute to the effectiveness of a local economic development "vision" and accompanying overall strategic plan. These include the social aspects of the community: such as the perceived quality of life, the available workforce, and the business partnerships that have been established. Included as additional factors in successful economic development are the opportunities for redevelopment and revitalization of existing businesses, diversification, and the ability to recruit new businesses to the area.

Economic development is more easily described than it is defined. It's often a regional activity that's carried out through partnerships with other governments and development organizations and especially includes business groups as a partner. When describing Economic Development, it's common to think of job creation, retention and training programs; public and private capital investments; and capacity-building that allows the community to influence its economic future. Economic success is often represented by overall community development. This can include factors such as the presence of a strong medical sector, quality schools and educational services, thoughtful design that reflects local history and character, dedicated staff attention and resources to economic development efforts, a community-wide commitment to customer service, and a proactive marketing program.

In August 2023, the City adopted an updated Economic Development Strategic Plan to guide economic development over the next five to ten years, coordinating and informing budgeting, investments, and actions by the City and its partners. [1] The plan identified five primary goals, as follows:

- Goal 1: Address gaps in talent development and wraparound services to more fully align education and training with regional target sectors, and give Kennewick residents access to greater opportunity.

[1] City of Kennewick & Community Attributes Inc., "Economic Development Strategic Plan for the City of Kennewick, Washington," 2023.

- Goal 2: Become the destination of choice for entertainment between Seattle, Spokane and Portland.
- Goal 3: Pursue targeted investments to improve the quality of—and access to—recreation assets, downtown Kennewick, and other key areas.
- Goal 4: Proactively plan for and recruit tenants to fill catalytic development sites, while ensuring that broader planning and development policies make Kennewick the community of choice for businesses in the region.
- Goal 5: Pursue a comprehensive approach to maintaining and enhancing quality of life for Kennewick residents.

SUPPLEMENTARY WORKFORCE PROFILE

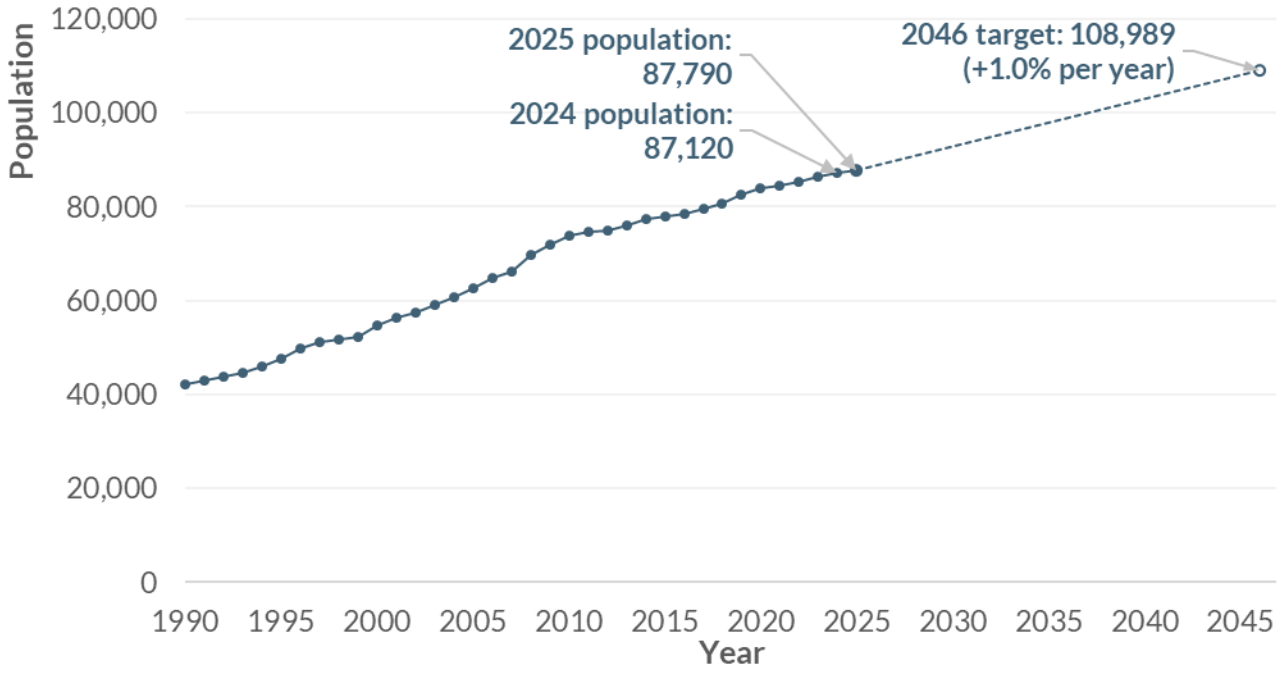
The Community Profile section **Housing Appendix** includes a detailed reviews of population and characteristic and workforce profile, including summaries of employment and labor force trends, economic sectors and major employers, wages, revenue and taxable sales trends, and jobs to housing ratios and commute patterns. The section below is intended to supplement information in the **Housing Appendix** and both were used to update the Economic Development Element.

Population

Growth in population can contribute to an increase in the available workforce depending on other demographic and economic factors. The population of Kennewick has increased significantly since its incorporation as a city in 1904. Kennewick's population was 1,219 people at the time of the 1910 census. The city's population has continued to grow since then and nearly doubled over the last 35 years, from 42,152 in 1990 to 87,790 in 2025. See **Figure ED-1**. Kennewick is planning for a population of 108,989 by 2046 consistent with the adopted target, an increase of nearly 21,869 residents over the next 20 years. This equates to an annual average increase of about 1% or 24% increase overall from 2025 to 2046.

Figure updated to show population growth and projection from 1990 – 2046.

Figure ED-1. Kennewick Population Trends (1970–2025) and Adopted Target (2046)



Sources: OFM, 2025; BERK, 2026.

Labor Force: Educational Attainment

Retaining a skilled labor force involves numerous components, including jobs that pay a livable wage, affordable and available housing, workforce programs for retraining workers for new opportunities, and an appealing community quality of life. Having a trained labor force is necessary for economic development, with a high school diploma typically serving as the minimum employment requirement. High school graduation rates affect both unemployment rates and the median weekly earnings of workers.[2] As of the 2024-25 school year, graduation rates at Kennewick's three primary high schools were similar to or higher than the state overall (see **Figure ED-2**).

Figure ED-2. High School Graduation Rates (2024-25 School Year)

School	Percent	Cohort Number of Students
Kamiakin High School	90.8%	437
Kennewick High School	86.9%	412

[2] Martha Ross, "Young Americans are struggling to gain economic ground. Building a better school-to-career pipeline can help," Brookings, 2023.

School	Percent	Cohort Number of Students
Southridge High School	89.8%	384
Total District	82.0%	1,426
State of Washington*	82.6%	90,315

Source: OSPI Report Card, 2026; BERK, 2026.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), unemployment rates in the United States are directly tied to educational levels. In 2025, the unemployment rate in the U.S. for those with less than a high school diploma was 5.2%; the rate for persons with high school diplomas was 4.5%, and 2.3% for those with a Bachelor's, Master's or Doctoral Degree.[3] **Figure ED-3** summarizes the 2024 employment status for those 16 or over in Kennewick. The estimated unemployment rate in Kennewick was 3.0% . In comparison, the unemployment rate was 5.7% in Benton County overall 5.1% in the statewide.[4]

Figure ED-3. Kennewick Employment Status (2024)

	Number	Percent of Workforce
Population 16 years and over	65,790	100.0
In labor force	39,268	59.7
Civilian labor force	39,069	59.4
Employed	37,091	56.4
Unemployed	1,978	3.0
Armed Forces	199	0.3
Not in labor force	26,522	40.3

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, ACS 5-Year Estimates (Table DP03), 2020-2024; BERK, 2026.

Educational levels also affect the income of the labor force. In the United States, those without a high school diploma or equivalency earned 30% less than those with some college, and 51% less than those with a Bachelor's Degree as of 2024. Between 2000-2024, the median usual weekly earnings of those with a Bachelor's degree or higher were consistently higher than the median earnings for all workers.[5] In 2024, Kennewick's median household income was $73,576.

Primary and Secondary Jobs

The "Primary and Secondary Jobs" section was moved from below (previously after "Partnerships") to improve cohesion and streamline the content.

Primary jobs are necessary for economic stability, development, and growth. They add value to goods and services by exporting those products out of the community in which they are manufactured. In the process, wealth is imported back into the community. They contribute more to the overall growth of the

3 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, "Unemployment 4.5 percent for high school grads with no college in January 2025," 2025.
4 BLS Unadjusted Unemployment Rate (Series LNU04000000), 2024.
5 U.S. BLS, "Median weekly earnings $946 for workers with high school diploma, $1,533 for bachelor's degree," 2024.

economy since they have a greater market that extends beyond the local community. Examples of export-based industries in the Kennewick area are manufacturing and agriculture. Primary job creation is foundational to economic development. Primary jobs are created by new businesses or industry moving into the community or residents starting new primary businesses.

Secondary based businesses are those that re-circulate existing wealth throughout the community in which they serve. These businesses are likely to grow if the community that is being served is growing. Examples are gas stations, grocery stores, restaurants, theaters, and other retail establishments.

Knowing what kinds of employment opportunities exist in an area is an important component of designing economic development strategies. Per the Washington State Employment Securities Department (ESD), the top five largest employers by sector in Kennewick as of 2023 are retail trade (12.8%), healthcare and social assistance (12.7%), accommodations and food services (9.5%), construction (9.3%), and educational services (7.3%). Together, these sectors account for over half (55%) of local employment.[6] This reflects broader trends in the job market areawide with some slight differences. **Figure ED-4** shows employment sectors with more than 2,000 employees as of 2022 for the Kennewick-Pasco-Richland Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) per the U.S. Census Bureau. Sectors are listed in descending order from highest to lowest based on numbers of employees. Secondary jobs dominate the region's job market in terms of both the number of establishments and total employees, while primary jobs tend to have fewer establishments and employees overall. Compared to the entire MSA, a notably higher percentage of jobs in Kennewick are in education services and a lower percentage are in administrative and waste services, professional, scientific, and technical services, manufacturing, and wholesale trade.

Figure ED-4. Top Employment Groups in the Tri-Cities Area (2022)

Description	Total Establishments	% of Total Establishments	Total Paid Employees	% of Total Employees
Health care & social assistance	864	13%	15,682	16%
Retail trade	817	12%	12,063	14%
Administrative, support, waste management & remediation service	386	6%	12,606	13%
Construction	1,104	16%	11,734	12%
Accommodation & food services	651	9%	10,247	10%
Professional, scientific, & technical services	580	8%	8,738	9%
Manufacturing	207	3%	7,839	8%
Wholesale trade	295	4%	4,181	4%
Other services (except public administration)	604	9%	3,738	4%
Transportation and Warehousing	301	4%	3,711	4%
Finance and insurance	298	4%	2,343	2%

6 ESD Covered Employment, 2023.

Note: The remaining employment categories of Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation; Real Estate and Rental and Leasing; Information; Educational Services; Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting; Utilities; and Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction have fewer than 2,000 employees each throughout the MSA. These are not shown on the above table but are included when calculating percentages.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Statistics of U.S. Businesses - Annual Data Tables, 2022; BERK, 2026.

Quality Of Life

Quality of life refers to those tangible and intangible features and characteristics that make people decide they want to live in a particular community, and make them commit to staying in that community. There are numerous components that can contribute to a quality of life, from the physical appearance of a community to the services and amenities that are available.

Aesthetics

The physical appearance of a town or city is often mentioned when defining quality of life. Aesthetically pleasing surroundings entice visitors and residents alike to public areas that are accessible and stimulating, and encourage them to feel they are a part of a unique community. The Downtown Kennewick Redevelopment Plan, emphasizing street and façade improvements, has resulted in numerous new businesses investing in the area.

Design standards for commercial development, single family, and multi-family dwellings have been adopted by Kennewick and are incorporated into KMC 18.78 Commercial Design Standards and KMC 18.75 Residential Design Standards. These standards provide guidance for quality developments while allowing for creativity and diversity by the developer.

Sub-area plans such as the Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Railroad Revitalization Plan and Vista Fields Master Plan also include considerations on design standards to protect and enhance the unique qualities of each area.

Cost of Living

Cost of living indexes are prepared by measuring prices for goods and services in various participating areas. The average for all participating areas is scaled to equal 100. Each participant's index is shown as a percentage of the average. A low relative cost of living is a desirable amenity in marketing the community to new business. Per **Figure ED-5**, the Tri-Cities has a lower-than-average cost of living when compared to other areas in the Pacific Northwest. Individual rates for Kennewick, Richland, and Pasco are not available.

Figure updated to show the 2024–2025 cost of living indices for Kennewick and comparison jurisdictions.

Figure ED-5. 2024-2025 Cost of Living Index, Kennewick and Comparison Areas in the Pacific Northwest

Geography	Composite Index
Kennewick-Richland-Pasco, WA	96.0
Spokane, WA	97.8
Yakima, WA	101.4
Seattle, WA	143.4
Boise, ID	102.7
Portland, OR	115.5

National Average	100.0

Source: Council for Community and Economic Research (C2ER) & Thurston Regional Planning Council, Cost of Living Survey Results, 2025.

Climate

Kennewick is known as having a mild climate with over 300 days of sunshine per year. The average maximum temperature is 65.8 degrees Fahrenheit. The average minimum temperature is 42.0 degrees Fahrenheit. Combining this with an average total precipitation of 7.5 inches provides an ideal environment for golf, water sports, and other outdoor recreation throughout most of the year.[7] Changing climate conditions may impact Kennewick's economic development opportunities in the future. For example, Kennewick is likely to experience more extreme heat and wildfire days and more variable precipitation by the end of this century. This may limit outdoor recreation during certain times of the year (particularly in the summer). Drought can also disrupt commerce through the closures of water-centered recreational businesses (such as swimming pools) and water shortages and water quality issues related to drought can impact recreation at parks, as well as swimming, boating, and fishing. In addition, extreme heat may result in temporary business closures if outdoor-based establishments are forced to close or reschedule events (e.g., food trucks, outdoor music events, outdoor farmers market, and wineries).[8]

Schools

The Kennewick School District (KSD) provides 2 preschool programs, 17 elementary schools, 5 middle schools, 3 comprehensive high schools, and 6 choice schools. As of September 2025, enrollment was 19,100.[9] In 2017, the four-year average expenditure per pupil was $13,270, compared with the state average of $14,009 per student during this same period.[10]

Medical Care

Four hospitals with a full range of medical care are located in the Tri-Cities region. Trios Health (formerly Kennewick General Hospital) operates an 111-bed hospital on its Southridge campus in Kennewick. Trios Medical Group serves a growing medical staff network of providers throughout the Tri-Cities and includes practices and services at 10 Care Centers and one Urgent Care Center.

Kennewick Public Hospital District is a public hospital district without an owned or operated hospital. However, it continues to serve the community through contractual arrangements with Trios Health, which was sold to RCCH Trios Health, LLC and is now operated under LifePoint Health. Nearby, Kadlec Regional Medical Center in Richland is a 270-bed hospital and Lourdes Health in Pasco, founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet and purchased in 2018 by RCCH, also provide care. Additional care is provided at numerous other medical, dental, and eye clinics.

Cultural Opportunities

The Tri-Cities offer various cultural venues such as the Mid-Columbia Symphony, the Mid-Columbia Ballet, the Richland Players Theatre, and numerous art galleries and exhibitions. The City of Kennewick has formed an Arts Commission that is responsible for reviewing proposed gifts or loans of art for aesthetic quality, site appropriateness, public safety and maintenance. Through the Arts Commission, the City supports providing artwork in public places. There are also five public libraries in the Tri-Cities area.

Personal Safety

7 Western Regional Climate Center, Period of Record Monthly Climate Summary, 1894-2016.
8 Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, 2025.
9 Kennewick School District, District Information, 2025.
10 Washington State School Districts, Charter and Tribal Schools, Per Pupil All Expenditures - Four-Year Average by County, 2016-2017.

Personal safety across age, abilities, and race and ethnicity is an important quality of life component for the whole community. In 2025, Safewise named Kennewick as the 63rd safest city in Washington out of 80 cities ranked.[11] This is lower than the other Tri-Cities (West Richland was ranked 8th, Richland ranked 42nd, and Pasco ranked 45th) as well as several other central and eastern Washington comparison cities (Wenatchee ranked 44th, Walla Walla ranked 51st, and Yakima ranked 61st). However, according to data compiled by the Benton-Franklin Trends website, Benton and Franklin Counties both have historically lower rates of property and violent crime than the state average.[12]

PARTNERSHIPS

Economic development cannot occur without the cooperation and support of various public and private agencies. In Kennewick, economic development will be stronger with partnerships composed of local economic enhancement groups, including the Port of Kennewick, TRIDEC, the Tri-Regional Chamber of Commerce, Benton-Franklin Council of Governments, Visit Tri-Cities, Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership, and many other private and public agencies. Further cooperation between various agencies, institutions, service providers, and businesses is often needed to stimulate commercial and industrial development in the form of infrastructure and recruitment concessions.

Tourism and diversity of businesses and industries are two areas that depend heavily on partnerships. Tourism is a visible and popular way to create primary jobs by bringing outside money into the community and distributing it into the local economy. This can have positive results on existing businesses and can result in new employment opportunities throughout the area. Partnerships can help create diversification of businesses and industry to foster an economic climate not dependent on any one industry and one that can withstand not only the ups and downs of the local economy, but also of the regional and national economy.

Numerous public and private agencies and organizations in the Tri-City area work to further economic development. They are involved in workforce training, recruitment, investments, tourism, and government. A partial listing of these local organizations, with their web sites, is provided in **Figure ED-6**.

Figure ED-6. Community Partner Agencies

ORGANIZATION	WEB SITE
City of Kennewick – Economic Development	https://www.go2kennewick.com/1493/Economic-Developmenthttp://www.go2kennewick.com/business
Benton – Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG)	http://bfcog.us/
City of Richland – Economic Development	https://www.richlandbusiness.com/home-econdev
Historic Downtown Kennewick Partnership	http://www.historickennewick.org
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory – Small Business Development Program	https://www.pnnl.gov/procurement/small-business-program
Port of Benton	http://portofbenton.com
Port of Kennewick	http://www.portofkennewick.org

11 Safewise, Safest Cities in Washington, 2025.
12 Benton-Franklin Trends, Public Safety, 200-2024.

ORGANIZATION	WEB SITE
Port of Pasco	http://portofpasco.org
Three Rivers Convention Center / Kennewick Public Facilities District	http://threeriversconventioncenter.com
HAPO Center	https://www.hapocenter.com/
Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce	https://www.tchispanicchamber.com/
Tri-City Area Chamber of Commerce	http://www.tricityregionalchamber.com/
Visit Tri-Cities	http://www.visittri-cities.com
TRIDEC (Tri-City Industrial Development Council)	http://www.tridec.org
WorkSource Columbia Basin	https://www.worksourcewa.com/

The "Primary and Secondary Jobs" section was moved above under "Supplementary Workforce Profile" to improve cohesion and streamline the content.

Redevelopment and Revitalization

i Updated to align with recent plans and initiatives.

One of the ways in which the City can play an active role in redevelopment and revitalization efforts is by supporting private groups through targeted infrastructure improvements or expanded commercial or industrial facilities. Local resources such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) could be used to assist in this effort.

The Port of Kennewick has been planning for decades for Clover Island. The original 2005 Clover Island Master Plan proposed a coordinated system of public amenities and island infrastructure, a mix of water-oriented land uses, and recreational uses supporting the existing waterfront and boating tradition. Though many improvements have been made, it has yet to yield the private mixed-use investment envisioned by the 2005 master plan. As a result, the Port recognized that integrating the surrounding area into a cohesive district will be critical to leverage their investments on Clover Island, improve the vitality and economic performance of the surrounding area, and better connect this unique waterfront district to downtown Kennewick. In response, the Port purchased and began improving properties along Columbia Drive, and initiated the Waterfront District Master Plan.[13] A partnership of local, state, and federal agencies has been collaborating to transform Kennewick's Historic Waterfront District by enhancing areas of Clover Island and taking a phased redevelopment approach to three project sites along Columbia Drive: Columbia Gardens Artisan Village, The Willows, and Cable Greens.[14] The Waterfront District Master Plan, Port Commissioners adopted the plan in 2021, prioritizes the next 15-20 years of investments to help realize the waterfront area's greater vision.

Recently, the City of Kennewick and BFCOG also embarked on an Area-Wide Planning (AWP) initiative to support revitalization and attract redevelopment/investment in Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods with emphasis on properties within the Downtown core. The AWP initiative will result in a series of recommendations that would improve Downtown's appearance, vitality, and economic conditions. U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant

13 Port of Kennewick, Historic Waterfront District Master Plan, 2021.
14 Port of Kennewick, "Reconnecting the Community to Its Riverfront," n.d.

money is being used to fund this planning endeavor. The initiative will identify brownfield sites, create an action plan for site cleanup, and define strategies for reuse and redevelopment of those sites and surrounding neighborhoods.[15]

Another community development endeavor, Vista Field, is a 103-acre master planned mixed use regional town center designed by the Port of Kennewick. Vista Field is at the commercial core of the Tri-Cities, accessible through a multimodal transportation network. The site is near the Columbia Center Mall and adjacent to the Vista Entertainment District, which includes the Three Rivers Convention Center and Toyota Center. Once the project is completed, there will be a mix of businesses, residences, waterways, pathways, a public plaza, and other gathering places. Redevelopment of this former airfield (which closed at the end of 2013) is projected to produce as many as 3,380 jobs, $460 million in private sector investment, $51 million in new infrastructure and $408 million in new buildings.[16]

The City's 2025 Economic Development Update[17] reports that in 2024, a total of 1,341 permits and 1,631 business licenses were issued. The document identifies the following key opportunity areas:

- Columbia Center
- Vista Field
- Entertainment District
- West Clearwater
- Southridge
- Waterfront & Downtown

15 AHBL, Downtown Kennewick Area-Wide Planning, n.d.
16 City of Kennewick, Vista Field Development Underway, n.d.; Duany Plater-Zyberk & Company, Vista Field Redevelopment Master Plan, 2017.
17 City of Kennewick, "Economic Development Update – Donuts and Development – March 2025," 2025.

Climate

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INTRODUCTION

This section contains the full summaries and analyses of work done to support the development of the Climate Resilience and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Sub-Elements.

POLICY AUDIT

Purpose

The five Tri-Cities jurisdictions of Benton County, Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, and West Richland and the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) are working together to plan for natural hazards related to climate such as wildfire smoke, drought, and extreme heat. Under a new state law that was adopted in 2023, each jurisdiction must do this work as part of updating its comprehensive plan. Comprehensive plans provide guidance for how each jurisdiction grows in the future. The five jurisdictions are all updating their comprehensive plans by 2026. This memorandum identifies climate policy trends, gaps, and opportunities to guide the development of the goals and policies for the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element (CE).

Intended Use

- Inform the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element drafting process by identifying trends, gaps, and opportunities.
- Ensure consistency with existing climate action initiatives.
- Ensure compliance with Washington Department of Commerce and Growth Management Act requirements.

DRAFT

Executive Summary

The memorandum is organized into the following sections:

- Executive Summary. Introduces WA comprehensive and climate planning context.
- Methodology. Describes the approach used for developing the plans, policies, and regulations database used to identify goals, objectives, and policies related to climate action.
- Policy Trends, Gaps, & Opportunities. Summarizes key findings from the policy assessment of the Tri-Cities' existing climate policies and goals. Following this overview, resilience and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction sections include:
    - Resilience Policy Assessment. Provides an overview of the climate impacts pertinent to the Tri-Cities, highlighting impacts and hazards of most concern, and the resilience sub-element requirements. Reviews trends, opportunities, and gaps in current climate resilience policy related to climate hazards.
    - GHG Emissions Reduction Policy Assessment. Provides an overview of the Tri-Cities' communitywide GHG inventory and the emission reduction sub-element requirements. Reviews policy trends, opportunities, and gaps related to GHG emissions reduction.

How To Navigate This Document

Within the "Policy Trends, Gaps, and Opportunities" section, the Resilience Policy Assessment is organized by *climate impact.* The GHG Emissions Reduction Assessment is organized by *emission sector*. Each impact and sector include an introduction and relevance to climate resilience and/or mitigation and a summary of trends, gaps, and opportunities. Each section also includes a key considerations section, which include policy considerations. Each section includes findings from planning documents evaluated during the regional climate element process.

Legislative Context & Background

Washington's Growth Management Act (GMA) requires quickly growing Washington cities and counties to develop comprehensive plan elements that respond to challenges associated with population growth. Amended in 2023 by House Bill 1181, the GMA requires integrating climate mitigation and resilience policies into comprehensive plan updates. To meet the new requirements, the Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) recommends jurisdictions develop a climate element that includes both resilience and GHG emissions mitigation goals and policies.

Commerce led a multiyear project to develop model element guidance, which provides steps and pathways to integrate both a climate resilience and mitigation sub-element into a comprehensive plan, either as a set of integrated policies or standalone element. Jurisdictions are encouraged to assess their climate impacts and risks, seek input from key stakeholders and communities, and pursue pathways that modify existing or create new policies to address GHG emissions and increase community resilience. The region's 2026 Comprehensive Plan updates will incorporate a Climate Element aligned with Commerce's guidance and their existing climate policies and foster sustainable and equitable planning against climate impacts.

WA State Policy

The Climate Element will identify climate resilience and GHG emission reduction measures that the Tri-Cities can specifically move the needle on. However, understanding key climate policy direction in Washington state will be essential to inform these local policies. The Climate Commitment Act (CCA) is central to Washington's efforts, targeting the state's largest polluters and aiming for a 95% reduction in climate pollution by 2050. The CCA creates a market-based system to hold emitters accountable, and reinvests the proceeds into communities, clean energy, and transportation projects. Other critical state climate policies address clean transportation through the Clean Fuel Standard and zero-emission vehicle mandates, as well as clean buildings through updated energy codes and performance standards. The Clean Energy Transformation Act further drives the transition to 100% zero-emission electricity by 2045, reinforcing the state's long-term climate goals and strategy.

Policy Audit Highlights

Jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region are currently updating many of their key long-term planning documents and policies. These updates present an opportunity to more effectively incorporate climate resilience and mitigation strategies. The Climate Element can serve as a valuable resource to support this effort and provide references to complementary plans that address climate impacts in the region.

Current Plans

Jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region have notable gaps in resilience policies that directly address climate hazards and support community resilience consistent with environmental justice. However, Tri-Cities jurisdictions do have polices that support community and ecosystem resilience through improvement of parks and natural spaces and habitat protection and enhancement. This effort will also comply with the GHG Emissions reduction sub-element requirements, and the region already has strong mitigation policies that seek to reduce overall GHG emissions generated by transportation and land use within the jurisdiction. However, policies that prioritize reductions that benefit overburdened communities can be incorporated.

In addition, the five jurisdictions represented have a range of plans and documents beyond their comprehensive plans that include additional mitigation and resilience policies. The Climate Element will align with and build on these climate related plans and policies already developed in the region, including but not limited to sustainability plans, adaptation plans, emissions reduction resolutions, and active transportation plans.

Methodology

As part of Cascadia Consulting Group (Cascadia) and BERK Consulting's (BERK) climate policy audit process, we created a policy database comprised of goals and policies from the Tri-Cities' relevant planning documents. The database was used to filter by climate focus area, Commerce-identified priority sectors, and climate impacts to assess trends, gaps, and opportunities for policy inclusion in the new Climate Element.

Cascadia and BERK worked with the five jurisdictions' staff to determine key documents to review for climate-related goals, regulations, and policies. This included 13 core documents and 21 supporting documents, reviewed to understand how well existing local and regional plans and policies build climate resilience and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.

Core Documents

Core documents serve as the core analysis for the gaps and opportunities assessment, as the Climate Element is intended to build on them and fill in any gaps from these documents.

Benton County Comprehensive Plan

Benton County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan

Benton County Shoreline Master Program

Kennewick Comprehensive Plan

Kennewick Parks and Rec Comprehensive Plan

Kennewick Shoreline Management

Kennewick Water Comprehensive Plan

Pasco Comprehensive Plan

Pasco Shoreline Master Program

Richland Comprehensive Plan

Richland Shoreline Master Program

West Richland Comprehensive Plan

West Richland Shoreline Master Program

Supporting Documents

Cascadia also reviewed documents besides the core planning documents to identify additional context for the gaps and opportunities assessment and recommendations for policy development at the next phase of the planning process. These supporting documents have different planning time horizons and/or focus areas than the core documents; the goal of the policy audit is to understand their goals and context, rather than specifically noting and addressing gaps within these documents.

Benton City Comprehensive Plan

BFCOG Active Transportation Plan

BFCOG Regional Bicycle Plan

BFCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

BFCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan

City of Kennewick Sustainability Program

City of Prosser Comprehensive Plan

Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation Climate Adaptation Plan

Yakama Nation Climate Adaptation Plan

Franklin County Comprehensive Plan

Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan

Kennewick General Sewer Plan

Kennewick Shoreline Master Program Appendices

Kennewick Transportation System Plan

Pasco Community Housing Survey

Pasco GHG Emissions Reduction Resolution

Pasco Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan

Pasco TSMP (Transportation System Master Plan)

Pasco TSMP Survey

Richland Clean Energy Implementation Plan

Richland Electric Wildfire Mitigation Plan

Policy Coding

The identified climate policies, plans, and reports were evaluated for the following to identify potential climate policy gaps, opportunities, and barriers:

- Focus area
- Priority sector
- Climate impacts
- Mitigation strategy

Addressing Identified Policy Gaps

Cascadia and BERK identified policy gaps and opportunities, following Commerce's Climate Element Planning Guidance to ensure each focus area and priority sector were well rounded and encompassed key strategies for increasing climate resilience, reducing GHG emissions, and ensuring climate equity.

The guidance document used to identify policy gaps and guide policy development for the draft CE included the WA Dept of Commerce's *Menu of Measures* and *Climate Element Guidance*.

Policy Trends, Gaps, & Opportunities

Climate Policy Findings: Summary

The following tables provide an overview of the findings across core planning documents. The number of policies by focus area and priority sector provides a high-level understanding of how the Tri-Cities current core planning documents address climate resiliency, mitigation, and/or climate equity. Green shows coding

categories with the most representation in policies, yellow shows categories with moderate representation in policies, and red shows categories with gaps in policy representation (fewest number of policies).

Focus Area

All policies were coded based on their relevance to up to three climate focus area(s) (see **Figure C-**). The analysis revealed that most policies prioritized resilience, followed by GHG emissions reduction, while policies addressing climate equity were the least frequent.

Figure C-1. Climate Focus Area

Focus Areas	Description	# Policies/Actions: Regional	# Policies/Actions: Kennewick
Climate Resilience	Policies aimed to address the impacts and risks of climate change by increasing regional resilience and/or decreasing regional vulnerability.	177	38
GHG Emissions Reduction	Policies aimed to reduce GHG emissions that cause climate change.	82	15
Climate Equity	Policies aimed to address the disproportionate impacts of climate change on certain communities due to existing and historic racial, social, environmental, and economic inequities.	26	7

Priority Sector

Policies were coded by which priority sector they most closely aligned (see **Figure C-2**). The following priority sectors were identified by Commerce as sectors most vulnerable to climate impacts. The analysis of planning documents highlights a strong prevalence of City policies in sectors such as zoning & development, ecosystems, water resources, and transportation. These areas reflect the region's primary focus on environmental and infrastructure-related resilience.

However, other sectors show varying levels of representation. Health & well-being, emergency management, buildings & energy, and cultural resources have moderate policy coverage, indicating emerging areas of focus for the Tri-Cities. Sectors such as waste management, agriculture & food systems, and economic development have fewer than 12 policies or actions, suggesting they are significantly underrepresented and may require additional attention to support a more comprehensive approach to climate resilience and/or GHG emission reduction.

Figure C-2. Priority Sector

Priority Sectors	Includes…	# Policies/Actions: Regional	# Policies/Actions: Kennewick
Zoning & Development	Site use, design, and other development facets	82	12
Water Resources	Water quality and quantity	56	17
Ecosystems	Land and water species and habitat	46	12

Transportation	Multimodal travel and infrastructure	42	6
Emergency Management	Preparedness, response, and recovery	31	2
Health and Well-being	Community well-being and engagement	25	6
Buildings & Energy	Generation, transmission, and consumption	20	3
Cultural Resources & Practices	Historic sites and cultural resources and practices	16	3
Economic Development	Business continuity, opportunities	12	4
Agriculture & Food Systems	Production and distribution	11	0
Waste Management	Materials recycling and disposal	3	2

Climate Impacts

Policies were coded by which climate impact they most closely aligned (see **Figure C-3**). The most focus was given to crosscutting impacts, variable precipitation (flooding, landslides) and community wellbeing. Impacts such as drought, wildfire smoke, reduced snowpack, and extreme heat showed minimal focus in existing policies.

Figure C-3. Climate Impacts

Climate Impacts	# Policies/Actions: Regional	# Policies/Actions: Kennewick
Impacts Crosscutting	52	14
Variable precipitation (flooding, landslides)	50	13
Community well-being	44	8
Variable precipitation (drought)	24	9
Wildfire & wildfire smoke	15	1
Reduced snowpack	13	0
Extreme heat	6	2

Mitigation Strategy

Policies were coded by which mitigation strategy they most closely aligned (see **Figure C-4**). The greatest emphasis was placed on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction and multimodal transportation/transit-oriented development (TOD). Efforts to promote crosscutting strategies and building decarbonization were also

notable. Areas like carbon sequestration received more limited attention, while waste reduction and electric vehicles had minimal focus in the core document review.

Figure C-4. Mitigation Strategy

Mitigation Strategy	# Policies/Actions: Regional	# Policies/Actions: Kennewick
VMT reduction	59	10
Multimodal transportation/TOD	42	5
GHG Emission Reduction Crosscutting	23	5
Building decarbonization	17	4
Carbon Sequestration	16	1
Waste reduction/diversion	3	1
Electric Vehicles	1	0

Resilience Policy Assessment

It is important to understand what climate impacts will affect the region to ensure the resilience policies within the CE address the unique climate vulnerabilities of the Tri-Cities communities, natural resources, and infrastructure. The Tri-Cities will conduct a climate vulnerability assessment (CVA) during the spring of 2025 to inform resilience measures included in the CE.

For the purpose of this policy audit, climate impacts for the Tri-Cities were identified from current planning documents, the Climate Impact Group's Mapping for a Resilient WA model (Climate Impacts Group, 2022), the PNW Climate Projection Tool (Rogers, M., Mauger, G. S., 2021), and the Washington State Climate Summary (Frankson, et al., 2022). The following sections encompass climate impacts that were identified to be most prevalent to the region, caused and/or projected to be exacerbated by climate change.

The policies included in the resilience sub-element must, at a minimum, identify the action the Tri-Cities will take to fulfill the following:

Focus	Requirement
Resilience	Requirement 1: Address natural hazards created or aggravated by climate change, including sea level rise, landslides, flooding, drought, heat, smoke, wildfire, and other effects of changes to temperature and precipitation patterns;
	Requirement 2: Identify, protect, and enhance natural areas to foster climate resilience, as well as areas of vital habitat for safe species migration; and,
	Requirement 3: Identify, protect, and enhance community resilience to climate impacts, including social, economic, and built-environment factors, which support adaptation to climate impacts consistent with environmental justice.

Climate Impacts

The Tri-Cities experiences many types of severe weather. Its positioning in a basin often leads to temperature inversions causing fog and poor air quality. Storms can also occur, and though rare, a tornado did hit the region in 2016. Summers in the Tri-Cities are hot with low humidity, more conducive to wildfires. In 2018, a wildfire on I-82 burned 5,000 acres and destroyed 5 homes near Kennewick. The frequency and duration of extreme weather is expected to increase in the coming decades due to climate change. The Tri-Cities region is expected to experience the following impacts:

- Extreme Heat: Warmer year-round temperatures, including higher maximum summer temperatures and more frequent severe heat waves.
- Drought: Slight decrease in summertime rainfall. Declining summer precipitation can lead to more frequent, longer, and severe regional droughts. This is accompanied by a projected decrease in snowpack and reduced summer streamflow.
- Wildfires and Smoke: Higher risks of wildfires and increased wildfire activity are expected due to extreme heat and heighted drought, resulting in increased smoke and poor air quality.
- Extreme Precipitation and Flooding: Winter rainfall is projected to increase in frequency and intensity. Increased flooding due to more frequent and intense extreme precipitation events.

Climate Equity

Climate impacts exacerbate social inequities, placing the greatest burdens on the Tri-Cities region most socially vulnerable groups. These groups, often referred to as "frontline communities," are likely to experience the first and worst effects of climate impacts. Climate impacts, such as extreme heat or shifting precipitation patterns, will affect existing housing, transportation, and energy infrastructure, especially in areas already vulnerable to flooding or landslides. Climate change also worsens existing risks, such as chronic health conditions, social and economic inequalities, and pollution exposure, disproportionately affecting frontline communities. These compounding risks highlight the need for policies that address cumulative environmental and health burdens across the Tri-Cities region.

Understanding which assets and populations are most at risk from climate and environmental burdens can inform policy focus areas and community priorities. The forthcoming Climate Vulnerability Assessment will guide policy by identifying areas, populations, and infrastructure most at risk from identified climate impacts. The assessment will also examine how socioeconomic stressors, such as poverty and inadequate housing, affect overburdened communities. These factors can exacerbate vulnerability when coupled with climate stressors, deepening societal inequities. Climate equity will be a key focus of the Climate Element policies.

Resilience Policy Trends, Gaps, & Opportunities

The Tri-Cities five jurisdictions' Comprehensive Plans identify high level policies that seek to build resilience to climate impacts caused or exacerbated by climate change, including, but not limited to, variable precipitation, variable temperatures, and wildfires. However, this memo identified several policy opportunities to strengthen resilience policy connection to climate and more specifically address priority climate hazards in the region. For the purposes of this memo, and to ensure compliance with HB1181, we will focus on climate impacts and resilience policies in this section and will address policies reducing GHG emissions reduction in the mitigation sub-element section.

The following section reviews trends, opportunities, and gaps in current climate resilience policy related to climate hazards the region is facing.

Community Well-Being

The community well-being sector emphasizes enhancing residents' quality of life through initiatives that promote health, equity, social cohesion, and access to essential services, ensuring a resilient and inclusive community for all.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities

Sector Nexus: Health & Wellbeing; Emergency Management; Economic Development

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
• Policies promote the creation and improvement of parks, trails, and recreational spaces to enhance public health, outdoor activity, and community engagement. • Policies call for prioritizing the conservation of natural spaces, wildlife habitats, and cultural resources, to maintain a healthy environment and contribute to the community's overall quality of life and sustainability. • Policies aim to provide affordable housing, improve existing homes, and ensure access for vulnerable populations. This includes supporting the development of diverse, inclusive neighborhoods, improving living conditions, and fostering a sense of belonging and safety for all residents. • Policies support community well-being by efficiently utilizing fiscal resources and fostering public/private partnerships for the development of public amenities like parks, while encouraging the preservation and rehabilitation of existing housing to improve living conditions and create healthier, affordable neighborhoods. • Policies also discuss accessible recreational opportunities, including trails and shoreline access, promoting safety and inclusivity through design and collaboration with cultural organizations.	• Policies do not include strong connections to climate impacts, such as lacking to emphasize affordable, climate-resilient housing or calling out specific climate impacts as it relates to community well-being. • Policies lack detailed definition of vulnerable populations, such as children, seniors, low-income individuals, people with disabilities, communities of color, and those who are linguistically isolated. These populations face heightened risks from climate hazards due to social, economic, and political factors, yet their unique vulnerabilities are not adequately addressed in existing policies. • There is a lack of focus on the health impacts of climate change, particularly heatwaves, air pollution, flooding, and other extreme events.	New or revised policies should... • Prioritize equitable access to green space, ensuring that disadvantaged neighborhoods are not left out of the benefits of parks, tree canopies, and green infrastructure, which help mitigate environmental stresses and improve quality of life. • Incorporate social equity and environmental justice into every phase of implementation. This includes ensuring vulnerable populations have access to green jobs, affordable housing, and resources to adapt to climate and environmental changes. • Encourage high-density, transit-oriented housing where appropriate, that incorporates green spaces, sustainable building practices, and addresses affordability gaps. • Integrate proactive measures for climate hazard response and preparedness for vulnerable populations.

<u>Key Considerations</u>

The Climate Element should align with and build from the following policies and plans:

- Franklin County HMP: The CE should integrate strategies that reduce vulnerability to natural hazards and strengthen disaster response systems, ensuring the health, safety, and welfare of the community.

- Franklin County Comprehensive Plan: The CE should support the development of neighborhoods that prioritize environmental sensitivity, enhance safety, provide parks and open spaces, and incorporate design features that improve overall quality of life for residents.
- CTUIR Climate Adaptation Plan: The CE should build upon efforts to protect the well-being of the Tribal community by promoting climate adaptation knowledge, expanding service access, and supporting sovereignty through information sharing and cultural preservation.
- Yakama Climate Adaptation Plan: The CE should build on efforts to promote that Tribal members have reliable access to health services and facilities for ongoing and emergency care to support their physical and mental well-being in the face of climate change impacts.
- BFCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan: The CE should contribute to enhancing the safety and security of the transportation system, ensuring both motorized and non-motorized users are supported in a sustainable and equitable transportation network.
- City of Kennewick Sustainability Program: The CE should align with this plan to enhance community well-being by promoting sustainable parks with green space and tree management, expanding recreational opportunities, and fostering public participation in climate planning. CE policies should also support physical and community health by providing essential public health services, promoting bicycling as a sustainable form of recreation, and engaging local residents in environmental initiatives like tree planting.
- Kennewick Parks & Recreation Plan: The CE should align with this plan to coordinate with Visit Tri-Cities, the Kennewick Irrigation District, and the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments on regional trail planning, wayfinding, and other projects related to access and nonmotorized transportation and connectivity. This plan also emphasizes improving safety measures, including adequate lighting, clear signage, and well-marked paths, to enhance user safety on trails and within park space.

Extreme Heat

The average annual temperature in the Northwest has increased by 2°F since the early 20th century (Chang, et al., Ch. 27. Northwest, 2023). Additionally, the coldest day of the year from 1986 to 2016 was 4.78°F warmer compared to 1901 to 1960 (Office of the Washington State Climatologist, 2023). By the end of the century, Benton County is expected to experience a minimum of 10 additional days of extreme heat, and upwards of 36 days under a high emissions scenario (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington).

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities

Sector Nexus: Health & Wellbeing; Ecosystems;

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
While jurisdictions have few policies specifically addressing extreme heat climate risks, policies indirectly supporting heat resilience include: • Policies prioritize open spaces, critical habitats, and green infrastructure (e.g., parks, trails, and natural areas) to provide cooling effects, improve air quality, and mitigate heat island impacts. • Policies encourage mixed-use, higher-density development with green building	• Extreme heat and warming temperatures are not directly mentioned in any jurisdictions' comprehensive plan policies. • Policies lack comprehensive cooling strategies beyond tree cover, such as cooling centers, permeable pavement, shaded transit infrastructure, and reflective surfaces. • Equity considerations are limited, with few measures ensuring vulnerable populations have access to cooling centers or in-home cooling solutions and assistance.	New or revised policies should… • Establish resilience hubs, expand cooling access for vulnerable populations, and enhance protections for outdoor workers. • Implement building codes, urban design standards, and land use policies that reduce heat islands and promote cooling strategies. • Strengthen public transit systems with shaded stops, heat-resistant infrastructure,

standards and landscaping to enhance resilience to extreme temperatures.

- Policies aim to enhance public access to parks and recreational areas with focus on trails and amenities, supporting active cooling spaces for communities during heat events.
- Extreme heat impacts on ecosystems and habitats, and urban forestry's role in climate adaptation specifically, are not adequately addressed.
- Policies lack discussion about protecting vulnerable populations, integrating heat mitigation into land use policies, and addressing public health risks like heat-related illnesses and service disruptions.

and measures to prevent heat-related disruptions.

- Integrate ecosystem and wildlife-friendly cooling strategies such as shaded water sources or habitat corridors.
- Promote educational campaigns on heat risks and safety measures.

Key Considerations

The Climate Element should align with and build from the following policies and plans:

- CTUIR Climate Adaptation Plan: Expand training, education, and resources to support Tribal youth, harvesters, and entrepreneurs in managing extreme heat impacts and accessing adaptive solutions.
- Franklin County HMP and Comprehensive Plan: Support extreme heat preparedness by prioritizing resilient infrastructure, including building retrofits, water and sewer system reliability, and emergency planning. Also emphasize sustainable urban growth, multi-modal transportation, and environmental protection to reduce heat risks and enhance community well-being.
- CE policies should align with the Kennewick Sustainability Program to encourage sustainable park development, tree management, and promoting community engagement with nature.

Extreme Precipitation and Flooding

Higher intensity rainfall can quickly oversaturate soils and overwhelm stormwater systems, leading to more significant flooding events and landslides. These hazards pose risks to life and property, and to water quality due to stormwater pollution that can be carried in floodwaters.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus:

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
• Consistent with the Washington State GMA, the jurisdictions' Comprehensive Plans generally call for protecting critical areas (such as floodplains) and limiting development in these areas. • The jurisdictions' Shoreline Master Programs (SMPs) provide policies applicable to designated shoreline areas that help mitigate for flood hazards. Consistent with the Washington State Shoreline Management Act, the	• There is inconsistent policy support across jurisdictions for use of low-impact development (LID) and green infrastructure to address stormwater runoff, especially for areas located outside of designated critical areas or shoreline areas. • There is inconsistent policy support across jurisdictions for protection of water quality.	New or revised CE policies should… • Support region-wide use of LID and green infrastructure to manage stormwater. • Support region-wide protection of water quality, including mitigating stormwater pollution when flooding occurs in both developed and undeveloped areas.

jurisdictions' SMP policies generally call for: preserving and enhancing ecological functions of shorelines (e.g., stormwater management), locating utilities outside of shorelines with certain exceptions, discouraging land uses that increase flood hazards, and protecting cultural sites.

- Locally specific policies relevant to flood hazards are included in jurisdictions' comprehensive plans and in regional hazard mitigation plans.
- The City's comprehensive plan calls for directing development away from flood hazard areas.
- The regional hazard mitigation plan includes an action for the City of Kennewick to work with the US Army Corps of Engineers to provide erosion protection to the riverbank along the Columbia Park Trailway. The riverbank and Columbia Park Trail are subject to erosion and undermining during flood flows.
- Information may be outdated in regional hazard mitigation plans regarding the likelihood of significant flooding events. Floodplain maps may also be out of date.
- The regional hazard mitigation plans recognize that heavy rainfall increases the risk of landslides, however few mitigation measures in the plans specifically address this.
- The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan does not include a policy supporting LID and green infrastructure, but the Kennewick Sustainability Program describes the City's commitment to LID.
- The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan has some policies that describe protecting water quality in specific locations or situations, but no overarching policy for protecting water quality citywide.
- Raise awareness about the increased risk of flood hazards and to strengthen applicable policy guidance as part of regional emergency management planning efforts.
- Collaborate at the regional, state, and federal level on updating floodplain maps to reflect best available information (in progress).
- Add policy guidance regarding the increased risk of landslides with extreme precipitation.
- The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan could be updated to provide policy support for using LID and green infrastructure to manage storm runoff.
- The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan could be updated to include a policy to protect water quality citywide.

Key Considerations

- Regional hazard mitigation plans for jurisdictions in both Benton Couty and Franklin County provide policy support for LID and public education on hazard mitigation.
- Regional hazard mitigation plans for jurisdictions in both Benton Couty and Franklin County call for designing and retrofitting essential water and sewer services to minimize the potential for disruption during a disaster.
- Comprehensive plans and SMPs of other jurisdictions in the region include similar support as those in the core documents for protection of floodplains and shorelines.
- The comprehensive plans of Prosser and Benton City call for more planning around stormwater management.
- Supporting documents such as the Kennewick Sustainability Program describe a robust network of local community groups working towards sustainability goals and community engagement and education.

Drought and Reduced Snowpack

The Tri-Cities region has experienced increasing frequency and severity of drought in recent decades (US Drought Monitor, n.d.). Reduced summer rainfall and warmer temperatures that reduce the region's snowpack contribute to lower streamflow and available water. Drought conditions are most significant in the late summer, which is when agriculture and recreation needs are highest.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus: Water Resources

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
• Water management via increased reservoir capacity, storage tanks, aquifer recharge and storage • Water management via behavior changes (reuse, conservation), infrastructure changes (efficient appliances), and systems changes (wastewater irrigation systems, xeriscaping) • Wildlife, ecosystem, and cultural resources protection • Utilize irrigation water for additional nonportable water needs in houses, buildings, and industry (Ie. golf courses) • Education programs for water use • Kennewick operates a Plumbing Retrofit Program distributing water conservation items such as low flow showerheads, kitchen and bathroom faucet aerators, and toilet dye kits for free • The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan includes a provision to plan for 20 years to ensure sufficient water resources • Comprehensive Plan seeks to protect critical areas, shorelines, and endangered species in collaboration with the Critical Areas Ordinance and the Shoreline Master Plan	• Policies address water conservation and storage but not explicitly in context of snowpack reductions (new reservoir construction could be positioned to maximally capture water from early snowmelt) • Addressing/ensuring water quality because of drought • Utilization of native and drought resistant species (and other green infrastructure) as means to reduce impacts of drought • Climate change and equity is not specifically addressed in resilience policies • Inclusion of policies addressing snowpack reductions as a contributor to drought • Drought management strategies or programs to address water usage during droughts	New or revised CE policies should... • Develop a comprehensive drought resilience strategy that factors in projected climate impacts and sets action levels for different drought stages • Choose native drought- and pest-resistant trees, shrubs, and grasses in restoration efforts to support climate resilience • Develop plans for electricity generation that may be impacted by lower water levels in major hydropower areas • Integrate climate change projections into comprehensive drought management plan and policies • Integrate equity considerations in management techniques, especially in distributing consumer infrastructure benefits and upgrades • Utilization of native species tolerant to drought and pests to support climate resilience and improve groundwater recharge

<u>Key Considerations</u>

The Climate Element should align with and build from the following policies and plans:

- Pasco GHG Emissions Reduction Resolution: Encourage water efficient landscaping, drought tolerant plant species and other methods to retain moisture

- Benton City Comprehensive Plan: Water conservation programs for residential and commercial uses
- Franklin County Comprehensive Plan: Utilize water banking as an efficient means to voluntarily transfer water rights to address unmet water needs
- No Kennewick supporting documents addressing water or drought

Wildfire & Wildfire Smoke

Wildfires and wildfire smoke pose a risk to Benton and Franklin Counties in terms of both infrastructure and property damage, but also the risks posed to human health and life. Risk is expected to increase but wildfire likelihood will remain low in the counties relative to wildfire likelihood in nearby areas based on the fuel conditions of Benton and Franklin Counties (UW CIG). While economic and infrastructure damage from wildfires pose a lower risk, wildfire smoke is a regional concern that is not contained to the jurisdiction where the fire originates. Particulate matter associated with these fires is expected to impact the respiratory health of large numbers of people in the northwest and contribute to co-impacts of worse respiratory health, strained medical systems from more hospitalizations or chronic illness (McDermot & Kadlec, 2022), and higher financial burden for impacted individuals. (Kochi, Et. Al. 2010)

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus: Emergency Management, Ecosystems, Zoning & Development

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
In general, core document policies directly support resilience to wildfires and lessening the impacts of wildfires on residents and infrastructure. This includes: • Policies encouraging land uses and landscaping practices which minimize interactions between wildlands at risk of fire and buildings/infrastructure. • Policies supporting education and outreach for private citizens on wildfire resilience and wildfire prevention. • Policies that aim to keep fire risk low in all jurisdictions and minimize preventable wildfires. • The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan does not include policies that directly address wildfire and the wildland urban interface. The City's policy guidance to mitigate wildfires is primarily contained in the Benton County regional hazard mitigation plan.	• None of the jurisdictions' comprehensive plan policies address the health impacts of wildfires and wildfire smoke. • No mention of racially and socioeconomically disparate respiratory health disparities. • Some of the jurisdictions' comprehensive plans do not include any policy language specifically around wildfire prevention. • The City's policy support for wildfire prevention could be strengthened by adding a policy to the Comprehensive Plan regarding the wildland urban interface.	• New or revised CE policies should… • Establish resilience hubs for clean air during poor air quality days. • Promote educational campaigns on wildfire prevention and the dangers of prolonged exposure to wildfire smoke and particulate matter. • Support more policies and programs for interjurisdictional coordination of wildfire preparedness and prevention.

- The Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan includes a mitigation action for the City of Kennewick to develop wildfire mitigation actions for the urban interface in concert with Benton County rural fire districts.

Key Considerations

- The Wildland Urban Interface of the Benton-Franklin region's urban areas is relatively small.
- While the overall number of fire danger days will increase in the jurisdictions, their fire risk will remain predominantly regional, and the negative impacts will be almost entirely related to proximity to fires and extremely poor air quality.
- Richland Electric Cooperative has an Electric Wildfire Mitigation Plan that documents best practices they follow to prevent fires. This includes coordinating with local fire agencies, jurisdictions, and other power providers.
- The Franklin County Comprehensive Plan has policies to address wildfire risk, such as ensuring all areas of the county have fire service, working with fire districts to review building setbacks, and conducting public education about "Firewise" principles.
- The Franklin County regional hazard mitigation plan includes actions for Franklin County and the cities therein (including Pasco) to mitigate fire risk, including wildfire-related regulations and public Firewise education.
- The Benton County regional hazard mitigation plan includes two multijurisdictional actions for Benton County and the cities therein (including Kennewick, Richland, and West Richland) to mitigate fire risk: develop a wildfire prevention education program and offer Firewise landscaping clinics through existing programs offered by community partners.

Economic Development & Cultural Resources

The Tri-Cities region is a major agricultural center with many food production and related opportunities. As the region grows, it is facing pressures for more resources and services while protecting its many important ecosystems and cultural resources. The changing economy and prominent industries provide the region opportunities to increase green sector jobs and integrate climate resilience strategies into existing jobs and industries.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus:

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
• Parks and green space growth, protection, and inclusion in new developments • Economic growth including support of ag-based economy and job training/ workforce development • Reduce environmental impact of industrial lands	• Policies do not have strong connections to climate change and equity related to economic development such as growth of green jobs or job training programs • Shoreline and cultural resource protection policies could integrate equity and climate change, for example to account for increased flooding risks to important Tribal sites	New or revised CE policies should… • Develop a green jobs training program to facilitate sustainable economic growth • Protect, enhance, and restore ecosystems in order to meet tribal treaty rights and conserve culturally important consumptive and non-consumptive resources including foods, medicinal plants, and materials that

- Protection of historic and cultural resources in collaboration with Tribes and relevant local, state, and federal agencies (US Army Corps of Engineers)
- Identification, preservation, protection, conservation of historical, archeological, or natural areas with scientific significance by public entities
- Shoreline protection, management, preservation of culturally important/ historical areas
- Kennewick Comprehensive Plan encourages public/private partnerships to provide and finance open spaces and parks
- Worker training and preparation programs to ensure employment pool is adequate and prepared for future job opportunities
- Redevelop the downtown and include infrastructure and facility opportunities for generally positive economic climate and promote cultural inclusivity
- Policies lack outreach and education programs informing the public of the importance of cultural sites and their potential risks to climate impacts
- Policies lack recognition of the threat climate impacts have to the local agricultural economy, including crop adaptation; resilient power and water utilities; and protections for outdoor workers to avoid heat/smoke impacts
- Ecosystem and cultural resource protections, particularly with tribal involvement

could be adversely impacted by climate change.

- Develop policies to include tribes in protection of ecosystems and cultural resources
- Integration of environmental and climate justice principles into programs and policies

Key Considerations

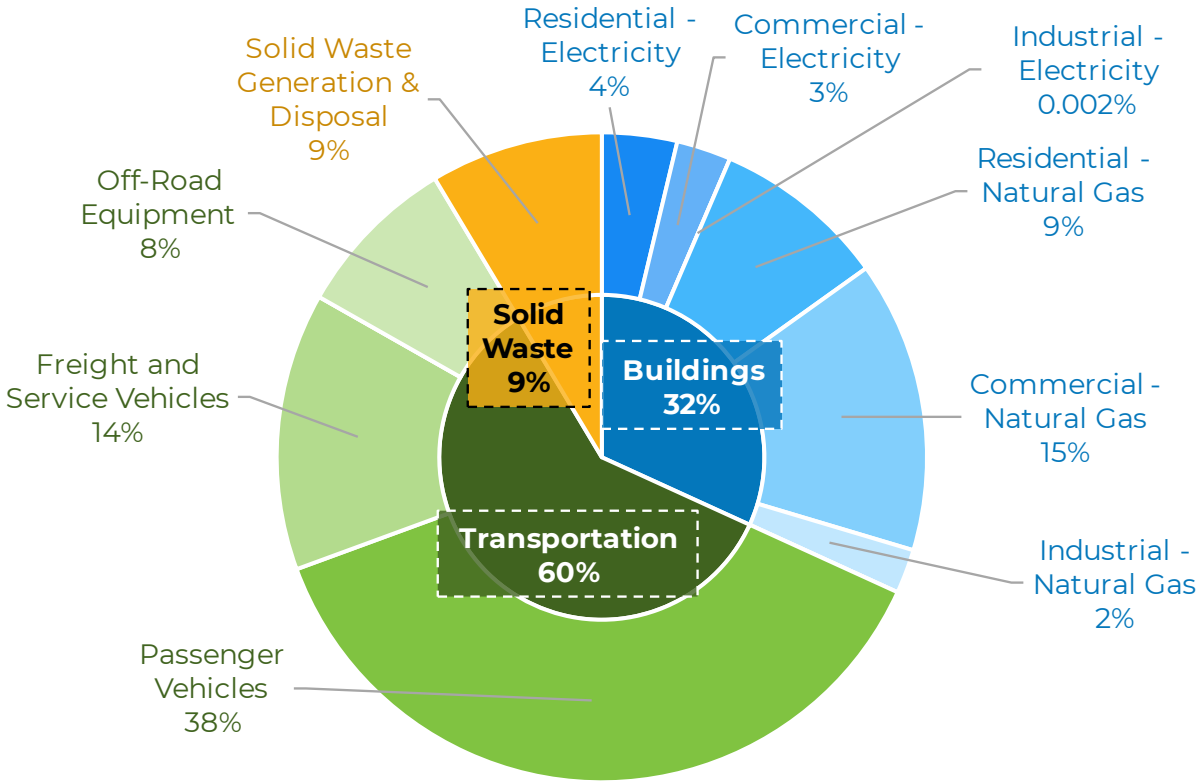
- The Tri-City Development Council (TRIDEC) has been a key driver in shifting the Tri-Cities from a Hanford-dependent economy to a more diversified and sustainable one. Through initiatives like "Clean Up to Clean Energy," TRIDEC has advanced both local economic growth and the promotion of nuclear energy as a clean, low-carbon solution for reducing carbon emissions.
- CTUIR Climate Adaptation Plan has several policies to protect Tribal governance, practices, living standards, information sharing, and more in consideration of the impacts of climate change
- Yakama Climate Adaptation Plan includes policies to preserve traditional ecologic knowledge and maintain active policy development, long-term planning, and appropriate enforcement of regulations to ensure effective adaptive management and Tribal sovereignty
- BFCOG has training programs and recruitment strategies to attract clean energy industry and other individuals who can work remotely from the Tri-Cities region
- The City of Kennewick has volunteer boards that promote volunteerism and community improvement, including advancing environmentally friendly businesses and practices.

GHG Emissions Reduction Policy Assessment

The Tri-Cities jurisdictions completed geographic communitywide GHG inventories for 2022. The geographic communitywide inventory results will help inform the identification of GHG emissions reduction policies and targets. In this inventory, the "Benton-Franklin Region" includes both Benton County and Franklin County, including the cities and unincorporated areas within those counties.

In the Benton-Franklin region, on-road vehicles (passenger vehicles) were the largest source of 2022 communitywide emissions (responsible for 36% of total emissions), followed by industrial natural gas (16% of total emissions). The next largest contributors to 2022 emissions were on-road freight and service vehicles (14%), commercial natural gas (6%), and off-road equipment (6%). **Figure C-5** shows the breakdown of the communitywide GHG emissions profile, by sector, emissions source, and sub-sector.

Figure C-5. Kennewick 2022 communitywide GHG emissions, by source (%)



The policies included in the GHG emissions reduction sub-element must, at a minimum, identify the action the Tri-Cities will take to fulfill the following:

Focus	Requirement
GHG Emissions Reduction	Requirement 1: Result in reductions in overall GHG emissions generated by transportation and land use within the jurisdiction but without increasing emissions elsewhere in Washington;
	Requirement 2: Result in reductions in per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) within the jurisdiction but without increasing greenhouse gas emissions elsewhere in Washington; and

Requirement 3: Prioritize reductions that benefit overburdened communities in order to maximize the co-benefits of reduced air pollution and environmental justice.

GHG Emissions Reduction Trends, Gaps, & Opportunities

The following section reviews policy trends, opportunities, and gaps related to GHG emissions reduction in key emission focus areas identified in the GHG inventory. For each focus area, the sector nexus representing the critical climate sectors identified by the Department of Commerce, has been identified.

Land Use

Growth and development patterns impact GHG emissions in a number of ways. Land use policies can work together with transportation and parks policies to create compact, mixed-use communities with a robust network of parks and trails. This land use pattern is associated with lower GHG emissions because it supports walking, biking, and transit use and helps to reduce trip distances between housing and destinations like jobs and commercial centers. Land use policies and codes regulate whether high-emitting uses are allowed in communities or if their locations can reduce exposure and health impacts to adjacent neighborhoods Land use policies and codes can also allow and incentivize uses that capture carbon and produce green energy.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus: Zoning & Development; Transportation; Ecosystems; Agriculture & Food Systems

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
• Many policies call for various forms of infill development and increased housing density to support growth near existing amenities and infrastructure. • Policies promote transit-oriented development and mixed-use development near arterials and transit lines. • Policies protect critical areas and natural resources. • Policies to provide housing in mixed use centers. • Policies to promote incentives and code changes to support affordable infill residential development. • Policies to support no net loss of ecological function of shorelines and require restoration. • Policies to conserve natural resources.	• Many policies use language like "explore," "encourage", and "allow" rather than stronger language regarding preferences, priorities, or incentives. • Lack of focus on policies that may disincentivize or constrain infill development, or on policies that may make middle housing less feasible than single family housing development. • Very few policies that address efficiently using available land by reducing code requirements for parking, setbacks, lot coverage, etc., which can help increase infill density potential and reduce per-unit costs. • Lack of policies to explicitly de-prioritize UGA expansion to prevent sprawl and GHG-intensive infrastructure expansion. This includes, among other things, planning to	• New or revised CE policies should… • Implement complimentary, mixed land uses and zoning – e.g., form-based zoning, versus traditional zoning – to help locate retail, business districts, parks and schools in areas currently zoned for residential to promote cycling and walking and reduce driving. • Reduce or minimize regulatory burdens for producing infill development and increasing density near transit and amenities. • Reduce (or eliminate where appropriate) parking minimums for residential and commercial uses. • Plan for capital infrastructure investments to support infill development. • Adequately plan for future growth within UGA boundaries – by increasing density minimums and maximums, allowing and incentivizing middle housing, and upzoning

accommodate all projected future growth within existing UGA boundaries.

near transit and commercial areas – to help reduce development pressure on rural and resource areas.

- Adjust fee schedule and code and permit requirements so that the process and public cost for diverse housing types are comparable or more favorable than single family structures.
- Manage natural lands to increase carbon sequestration and avoid elimination of carbon-rich ecosystems.
- Establish green belts of parks and trails to support connectivity and non-motorized travel between housing, schools, and businesses across a community.
- Consider agricultural policies that support carbon capture and soil health.
- Consider policies that allow for co-location of compatible agricultural uses and renewable energy infrastructure.

Key Considerations

- Overall, existing policy language could be strengthened to promote and incentivize land use strategies such as infill development, transit-oriented development, and diversity of housing types, and proximity of housing to commercial areas and transit corridors more directly
- Land use strategies could benefit from a stronger focus on managing existing natural areas to promote carbon sequestration and developing more carbon sequestration opportunities within existing and future parks and as part of future development projects.
- Supporting documents provide strong support and policy guidance for multimodal transportation and enabling land use patterns. This includes the BFCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan; BFCOG Active Transportation Plan; BFCOG Regional Bicycle Plan; BFCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; City of Kennewick Sustainability Program; Kennewick Transportation System Plan; Pasco GHG Emissions Reduction Resolution; Pasco Transportation System Master Plan; Franklin County Comprehensive Plan; Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan.

Transportation

Transportation was the largest source of 2022 communitywide emissions in the region, comprising 57% of total regional emissions. On-road transportation was responsible for 50% of total emissions, while off-road transportation and equipment was responsible for 7% of total emissions.

Transportation policies focus on reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) through the promotion of multi-modal transportation options, including transit-oriented development (TOD), while also facilitating the adoption of electric vehicles (EV). These policies aim to decrease greenhouse gas emissions while improving air quality, community wellbeing, and mobility.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus: Transportation

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
Policies address multi-modal transportation, including: • Improving and expanding trails and transportation systems (for pedestrians and bicycles) that connect employment, neighborhoods, park and recreation systems, schools, and other important community centers and amenities; implementing complete streets • Collaborating with transit agencies and improving public transportation • Policies encourage infill and dense, transit-oriented, and mixed-use development that promotes walkability and reduces VMT • Policies encourage transportation demand management (TDM) strategies • Policies encourage and support regional collaboration on transportation	• Policies do not focus on electric vehicle infrastructure, adoption, or education (with limited exceptions) • Some policies focus on promoting and improving transportation options and access for disadvantaged communities (e.g., people with disabilities, the elderly), but not all Comprehensive Plans contain these policies • Some policies explore parking reductions and management, but not all Comprehensive Plans contain these policies, and not all existing policies are strong • Policies do not address emissions from fossil fuel-powered off-road and non-road equipment • The Comprehensive Plan does not contain policies around EV charging infrastructure, adoption, or education. However, the City of Kennewick Sustainability Program does include EV-related policies.	New or revised policies should… • Incorporate electric vehicle infrastructure, adoption, and education • Specifically promote and improve transportation options and access for disadvantaged communities (e.g., people with disabilities, the elderly) • Explore adoption of Commerce's Climate Policy Explorer parking reductions and management policies, such as "eliminate parking minimum requirements and establish parking maximums" and "reduce parking requirements where there are multimodal options available" • Explore development of mobility hubs and centers • Coordinate regionally as much as possible; consider consolidating or combining related policies that could serve as overarching regional policies • Strengthen policies as appropriate (e.g., add specificity or enforcement mechanisms to "encourage" or "promote" policies) • Incorporate electrification of off-road and non-road equipment, such as Commerce's Climate Policy Explorer measure "phase out the use of use of gas-powered landscaping equipment" • The CE should reference and build on transportation strategies and policies in the City of Kennewick Sustainability Program and the City of Kennewick 2040 Transportation System Plan.

Key Considerations

- The region has extensive planning around VMT reduction and multi-modal transportation; the Climate Element should build on and incorporate transportation policies from the following existing plans: All jurisdictions' Comprehensive Plans; BFCOG Regional Active Transportation Plan; BFCOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan (Transition 2045); BFCOG Regional Bicycle Plan; BFCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; City of Kennewick Sustainability Program; City of Kennewick 2040 Transportation System Plan; City of Pasco GHG Emissions Reduction Resolution No. 3853; and City of Pasco Transportation System Master Plan.

Built Environment

The built environment accounted for 39% of the region's total communitywide emissions in 2022. Built environment policies focus on improving energy efficiency and promoting sustainable practices in the design, construction, and operation of buildings and infrastructure. These policies aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by promoting the use of renewable energy, sustainable building materials, and climate-resilient development, while encouraging compact, transit-oriented communities and thoughtful land use planning. Land use and transportation policies are covered earlier in this memo; this section focuses on buildings and energy and infrastructure other than transportation.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus: Buildings & Energy, Capital Facilities, Utilities, Transportation, Zoning & Development

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
Policies support sustainable development planning to reduce GHG emissions by: • Encouraging compact, transit-oriented, mixed-use development to enhance walkability and reduce VMT. • Supporting diverse housing types and densities. • Reducing environmental impacts of capital project siting, construction, and operations. • A few policies promote energy and water efficiency in both new and existing housing, encourage green building practices, and support the upkeep of city infrastructure and facilities to ensure ongoing resource conservation of energy and resources. • The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan, under Utilities Element, encourages green building principles in construction and renovation using alternative energy, energy efficient utility fixtures and recycling.	• Some jurisdictions have supportive plans and programs, but overall, the core documents lack detailed policies on energy efficiency and green building practices. • Policies lack stronger incentives for improving energy and environmental performance in new development. • Lack of specific policies promoting renewable energy sources, including solar. • Policies do not address adaptive reuse of existing buildings.	New or revised policies should… • Encourage and incentivize energy efficiency, conservation methods, and sustainable energy sources and practices to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in public and private developments: • Require additional net-zero greenhouse gas emission features of all new residential and commercial structures. • Retrofit buildings for energy efficiency. • Prioritize adaptive reuse to retain existing buildings and cut emissions, balancing with historic preservation goals. • Preserve and weatherize housing in overburdened, high-density communities to lower emissions and increase resilience. • Strengthen policies as appropriate (e.g., add specificity, prioritization, or enforcement mechanisms to "encourage" or "promote" policies).

- Consider providing incentives for businesses and households to supply alternative energy to the grid.
- The CE should reference and build from strategies and policies in the City of Kennewick Sustainability Program.

Key Considerations

- Although the core documents generally do not contain specific policies on energy efficiency or sustainable materials, jurisdictions have supporting plans, programs, and initiatives that promote clean energy sources, enhance energy efficiency in buildings and infrastructure, and increase public awareness, outreach and incentives on energy-saving practices. The Climate Element should align with and build from the following policies and plans: BFCOG CEDS 2021; City of Kennewick Sustainability Program; Pasco GHG Emissions Reduction Resolution; and Richland Clean Energy Implementation Plan.
- The City of Kennewick Sustainability Program promotes renewable energy, including solar projects and energy-efficient upgrades, while Benton PUD provides low-carbon power and drives energy conservation. The "Built Green" program supports sustainable building with eco-friendly materials and water-efficient landscaping to encourage responsible development.

Solid Waste

Solid waste was included as an emissions source in the 2022 communitywide emissions inventories, comprising 5% of total regional emissions.

Solid waste policies focus on reducing waste generation and improving waste disposal through implementing recycling and composting programs and providing waste reduction education and resources.

Trends, Gaps, And Opportunities For All Jurisdictions

Sector Nexus: Waste Management

Core Document Trends	Core Document Gaps	CE Policy Opportunities
• Comprehensive Plan policies related to solid waste are minimal across jurisdictions; see below in "Trends, Gaps, and Opportunities by Jurisdiction" for more details • The Comprehensive Plan includes one policy that mentions recycling ("Encourage green building principles in construction and renovation using alternative energy, energy efficient utility fixtures and recycling"). • The City of Kennewick Sustainability Program highlights existing solid waste	• Comprehensive Plan policies related to solid waste are minimal across jurisdictions; see below in "Trends, Gaps, and Opportunities by Jurisdiction" for more details • The Comprehensive Plan policy related to waste management lacks detail and is limited in scope.	New or revised policies should… • Aim to reduce landfilled waste and associated GHG emissions through waste diversion and education programs and policies (if solid waste reduction planning is not accounted for elsewhere in jurisdiction plans) • The CE could align with or reference the 2013 Benton County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management and Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan, if the plan is still current.

programs and efforts in the city, including voluntary curbside recycling; Kennewick Parks, Facilities and Recreation recycling and reuse programs; and household oil recycling.

Key Considerations

- Solid Waste Management Plans (including the 2013 Benton County Comprehensive Solid Waste Management and Moderate Risk Waste Management Plan) were not reviewed as part of this policy audit, so the trends noted above and below only reflect review of core and supporting documents reviewed.

Barriers to Climate Policy Implementation

To successfully implement climate policies that enhance climate resilience and reduce GHG emissions, the Tri-Cities jurisdictions must be aware of and work to address barriers to implementation. Potential barriers for the Tri-Cities jurisdictions and region, drawn from other jurisdictions' experience implementing climate policies, may include:

- Funding constraints for new climate projects, including state and federal budget constraints and shifting legislative priorities
- Limited staff capacity
- Lack of buy-in from community members and/or Council members

The table below includes these potential barriers alongside proposed next steps and considerations.

Barrier	Reason	Next Steps
Funding	Climate resilience and GHG emission reduction policies often require high upfront investments with long-term payback periods. City and County funding for new projects can be limited, and seeking external grant or loans requires significant staff time. The future climate priorities and associated funding of state and federal governments are uncertain.	Pursue public-private partnerships to leverage private funding for infrastructure projects like EV charging. Explore partnerships with local community-based organizations to support implementation of policies, especially related to community engagement, outreach, and education.
Staff capacity	Seeking external grant or loans to implement climate policies requires significant staff time. Staff experience varied and often competing priorities for their time, which reduces capacity to implement policies.	Pursue competitive and formula funding opportunities with partners to reduce burden on any individual jurisdiction's staff capacity. Consider grant-funded options for additional capacity such as the Washington Climate Corps Network.

ENGAGEMENT, PARTNERSHIP, AND COLLABORATION

Local knowledge and lived experiences are crucial to developing impactful plans. Participating jurisdictions conducted outreach to hear from residents in the Tri-Cities Region about what extreme weather and natural hazards they have experienced and how these have affected their families and communities. Community engagement also provided insight into residents' concerns for the future and ways they would like to see their communities improved. The overarching engagement objective for this project was to ensure the Climate Element is grounded in local experience and includes practical strategies the community can achieve to reduce risk.

Community outreach and engagement activities included a Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT), public meetings, a public survey, a project team, and a public webpage. Engagement with key jurisdiction staff and departments included jurisdiction-specific subcommittees, which provided insights on key project deliverables including policy drafting, and presentations about the draft regional climate element at Planning Commission or City Council public meetings held by the five jurisdictions in the summer and early fall of 2025. Through engagement efforts, many thoughtful ideas were shared and incorporated into the Climate Element. The total number of public participants in the process was lower than hoped and led to some lessons learned for effective modes of engagement. However, during this planning process there was a changing political climate around climate change and immigration, and this may have impacted community members' desire to engage.

Community feedback is summarized below and included in call-out boxes as it relates to certain policies.

The purposes of community engagement were to:

- Inform the Climate Element drafting process by identifying resident concerns and ideas for community improvements related to climate impacts and emission reductions.
- Ensure residents were aware of the Climate Element planning process and had opportunities to share their thoughts.
- Ensure compliance with Washington Department of Commerce and Growth Management Act requirements.

Staff Listening Sessions

During the development of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element, two staff listening sessions were held with key City department staff.

The first workshop in May 2025 discussed policy priorities. Feedback included the need to increase resiliency due to severe climate-related challenges faced in Kennewick including potential risks associated with being downwind of a nuclear facility to more immediate concerns like extreme heat, drought, and wildfire danger. Staff also shared that residents rely heavily on affordable home cooling, yet many, especially seniors and low-income households, struggle to access or permit upgraded systems. Staff also shared concerns that drought conditions and high landscape water highlight the need for better water-use education and development policies that reduce irrigation demands. Existing energy-efficiency programs through Benton PUD and Bonneville Power have helped the city save energy, but gaps remain in public understanding of water conservation, wildfire-risk enforcement, and support for vulnerable populations.

In August 2025, workshops included key staff and implementers who reviewed draft policy language. Feedback emphasized the need for stronger support to help residents, especially low-income households and seniors, access home cooling upgrades like heat pumps or mini-splits. Staff also highlighted the priority of water efficiency and suggested better public education on irrigation practices and development standards that reduce high-water landscaping. Additional opportunities include expanding composting/yard-waste programs, preparing alternatives to tumbleweed burning, and implementing the new paths and trails plan to improve community connectivity and encourage safer active transportation.

Staff also highlighted gaps in authority related to wildfire prevention, particularly the City's limited ability to enforce backyard burn restrictions, which currently fall under the Benton Clean Air Authority. There is also concern about how state laws may eventually restrict tumbleweed burning, suggesting a need for a proactive City-level policy. Broader jurisdictional challenges include funding constraints and limited transit service that influence the City's ability to implement emissions-reduction and climate-resilience goals effectively.

Public Comment, City Council, Planning Commission

Through the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element process, the draft regional climate element was open for public comment, presented to the Kennewick City Council, and the draft Kennewick Climate Element was presented to the Kennewick Planning Commission.

- Kennewick City Council: On September 9, the City Council had the opportunity to learn about the climate element process, the technical reports, and the goals and policies in the Regional Climate Element. Councilor's feedback included:
  - Concerns related to water usage, irrigation, and drought, especially related to efforts to increase the tree canopy to provide more shade in the city.
  - Interest in balancing electricity costs with increased demand from electrification and electric vehicles.
  - Desire to meet state requirements in a way that best serves the residents and interests of Kennewick.
- Public Comment: The draft Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element was available for public comment from September 9 to October 8, 2025. Residents from around the region shared comments online. Feedback from Kennewick residents included:
  - Clarification on water usage and water systems in Kennewick and their role in supporting climate resilience.
  - Recommendation to include drought tolerance as a consideration in vegetation and tree planting.
  - Suggestion to strengthen collaboration with community partners and state agencies to ensure relevant experts and community stakeholders are informing climate resilience and emission reduction work.
- Planning Commission: On February 2, 2026, the Planning Commission heard an introduction to the climate element process, technical reports, and draft goals and policy themes in the Kennewick Climate Element. Feedback included:
  - Support for the detailed work that has gone into the process.

Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT)

The Department of Commerce requires a regional policy advisory committee to support and inform the Climate Element development process. The Tri-Cities Regional CPAT consisted of a group of over thirty interdisciplinary representatives from across the region. The project team identified potential members based on a desire to have representatives living or working within all the Tri-City jurisdictions. The CPAT members were also selected to tap into the expertise from professionals in related fields and the lived experience of diverse community members.

CPAT members included representatives from the Yakama Nation, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), local and state agencies, special districts, farms, and community groups with expertise related to climate hazards. The Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce participated in the CPAT and helped represent local Spanish speakers.

The CPAT met four times to discuss the topics shown below. Members provided a significant amount of thoughtful feedback that informed the Climate Element.

- February 24, 2025: CPAT charter, project overview, and information gathering on climate impact findings, goals, and strategies.
- April 28. 2025: Greenhouse gas and vulnerability assessment findings, policy audit findings.
- July 31, 2025: Draft goals and policies review and feedback.
- September 25, 2025: Final climate element feedback.

Climate Policy Advisory Team Charter

Charter Purpose

This charter outlines the purpose, charge, roles and responsibilities, and guiding principles for engagement of the Regional Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT). The CPAT will support a unified regional approach to addressing climate challenges by advising Tri-Cities jurisdictions on strategies to mitigate climate hazards, reduce emissions, and enhance resilience.

Climate Policy Advisory Team Charge

Representing a diverse cross-section of the region, CPAT members will bring valuable perspectives that reflect community needs and interests. By providing insights and feedback through key phases of the process, the advisory team will help shape innovative strategies to reduce climate risks and emissions. The CPAT will be an important part of the public engagement process, ensuring that community voices inform future climate goals and policies.

Roles & Responsibilities

CPAT Members

- Attend four virtual meetings between February and June 2025.
- Identify locations or populations most vulnerable to wildfires, drought, extreme heat, poor air quality, flooding, and water quality issues.
- Provide input on practical strategies to reduce climate risks and lower emissions.
- Review materials before meetings and share feedback.
- Promote participation in this regional planning effort.

Members are expected to review meeting materials in advance and actively participate in discussions as they are able. CPAT meetings will not be open to the public.

Facilitators

County, Jurisdiction, and Consultant team staff will prepare for and facilitate all meetings of the CPAT, distribute meeting materials in advance of meetings, and support as needed to facilitate discussion. Facilitators will provide meeting summaries after each CPAT meeting.

Decision-Making

CPAT members will serve in an advisory capacity, supporting jurisdictions and the Benton Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) by sharing their perspectives and helping to prioritize climate-related goals, strategies, and actions. While the CPAT will not engage in formal decision-making, all members will have the opportunity to provide input and feedback. Once priorities are established, members are expected to uphold those decisions and avoid revisiting resolved matters.

Member Guiding Principles

CPAT members agree with the following guiding principles of participation and engagement during this process:

- Engage in Active Communication
  - Listen attentively with an open mind.
  - Allow others to speak and be heard.
  - Use "I" statements to express personal perspectives and avoid assumptions.
  - As meetings are virtual, turn on your camera if you can to participate.

- Maintain Constructive Dialogue
  - Respect diverse viewpoints and lived experiences.
  - Let others speak without interruption.
  - Use respectful language and tone with both participants and facilitators.
  - Identify areas of disagreement and work collaboratively toward resolution.
- Approach Discussions in Good Faith
  - Acknowledge that differing perspectives exist, while recognizing that everyone is engaging in good faith.
  - Foster a welcoming environment, ensuring that youth, BIPOC individuals, and members of underserved communities feel empowered and heard.
- Come Prepared
  - Review relevant materials in advance to contribute to an informed discussion.
  - Stay on point and mindful of time.

CPAT Member List

CPAT Member	Organization
Bill Barlow	Sustainable Tri-Cities
Carlo **D'Alessandro**	Richland PW
Cassie Hammond	Port of Benton
Chris Marks	CTUIR
Christopher Waite	Richland Community Center/Parks Department
Colleen Sanders	CTUIR
Curt Strifert	Columbia Irrigation District
Dave Beach	Bike Tri-Cities
Deanna Davis	Benton County Emergency Services
Dennis Wright	AgriNorthwest
Dr. Shelley Redinger	Richland School District
Evalena Dalsbo	WSU
Garrett Moon	Wheat farmers rep
Howard Jensen	Sunheaven Farms

CPAT Member	Organization
Jim Coleman	Benton Franklin Health District
JoDee Garretson	Support Advocacy, & Resource Center
Jodi Henderson	Benton PUD
Jordan Rodgers	
Kara Odegard	Prosser Climate Consultant
Karl Dye	Tri-DEC
Kevin Corliss	Wine growers community (Ste Michelle)
Kevin Sliger	Ben Franklin Transit
Larry Peterson	Port of Kennewick
Matt Mahoney	Benton County PW
Nathan Radach	Benton City Public Works
Nicole Stickney	Franklin County Contract Planner
Phil Nugent	WSDOT
Raul Contreras	Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Rob Rodger	Benton Clean Air Agency
Ron Mitchell	Benton REA

CPAT Member	Organization
Roscoe Slade	West Richland PW
Seth Defoe	Kennewick Irrigation District

CPAT Member	Organization
Steve Ghan	Citizens Climate Lobby
VJ Meadows	Tri-Cities Food Bank

Meeting Agendas

Meeting 1

Date: Monday, February 24th, 2025

Time: 3pm to 5pm

Attendees:

- CPAT Members
- Erin Braich, Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG)
- Michelle Mercer, Benton County
- Anthony Muai, City of Kennewick
- Mike Stevens, City of Richland
- Eric Mendenhall, City of West Richland
- Craig Raymond, City of Pasco
- Gretchen Muller, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Katherine Allison, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Casey Bradfield, BERK Consulting
- Taskina Tareen, BERK Consulting
- Ferdouse Oneza, BERK Consulting
- Stella Streufert, BERK Consulting

Meeting Objectives:

- Onboard Advisory Team Members
- Provide background on Regional Climate Change Approach
- Gather initial feedback on climate impact findings, goals, and strategies

Meeting Schedule:

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Welcome Introductions

	Discussion Etiquette Poll #1
3:20pm	CPAT Roles & Responsibilities Charge Roles & Responsibilities Guiding Principles
3:30pm	Project Overview & Process Regional Climate Change Approach State Climate Element Requirements Public Engagement & Project Timeline
3:40pm	Preliminary Findings & Information Climate Impact Assessment (draft) Poll #2
3:55pm	Climate Engagement: Break-out Sessions 3-4 Break-out Rooms (30mins) Guiding Questions: What weather and climate issues are you most concerned about? Where do you see the greatest gaps or needs in terms of infrastructure, policies, or public awareness? If you had to choose one or two priorities for addressing climate change in your area, what would they be? Is there anything else you would like to share about climate and weather-related impacts, and possible strategies for the Tri-Cities to address these impacts? Report out to full group (10mins)
4:35pm	Action Items/Next Meeting Discussion/Q&A (as needed)

Meeting 2

Date: Monday, April 28th, 2025

Time: 3pm to 5pm

Attendees:

- CPAT Members
- Erin Braich, Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG)
- Michelle Mercer, Benton County
- Anthony Muai, City of Kennewick
- Mike Stevens, City of Richland
- Eric Mendenhall, City of West Richland

- Craig Raymond, City of Pasco
- Gretchen Muller, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Katherine Allison, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Alicia Fennell, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Casey Bradfield, BERK Consulting
- Taskina Tareen, BERK Consulting
- Casey Price, BERK Consulting

Meeting Objectives:

- Present preliminary findings from the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) analysis and Climate Vulnerability Assessment (VA)
- Build an understanding of progress for Policy Audit of the Climate Element
- Discuss findings, initial policy gaps and opportunities, and gather feedback from CPAT on the GHG and VA analyses

Meeting Schedule:

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Welcome and Overview Progress to Date Project Timeline and CPAT Meetings CPAT Updates
3:05pm	Preliminary Assessment Findings Overview of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Analysis Pause for Group Q&A (12-15mins) Overview of Vulnerability Assessment (VA) Pause for Group Q&A (12-15mins)
4:00pm	Policy Audit Update Methodology and Approach Initial Trends, Gaps, and Opportunities
4:20pm	Small Group Discussions Breakout Sessions (2-3 groups, 25 minutes) Group Report-Out (5 minutes)
4:50pm	Next Steps and Action Items

Meeting 3

Date: Thursday, July 31st, 2025

Time: 10am to 12pm

Attendees:

- CPAT Members:
- Michelle Mercer, Benton County
- Anthony Muai, City of Kennewick
- Mike Stevens, City of Richland
- Jennifer Ballard, City of Richland
- Eric Mendenhall, City of West Richland
- Craig Raymond, City of Pasco
- Gretchen Muller, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Katherine Allison, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Casey Bradfield, BERK Consulting
- Taskina Tareen, BERK Consulting

Meeting Objectives:

Review the current draft policies and collect input from CPAT members to ensure they reflect community values, address key concerns, and are clear and actionable.

Meeting Schedule:

Time	Activity
10:00am	Welcome and Framing Progress to Date Discuss Policy Context Activities Today
10:10am	Small Group Breakout Sessions 1 (25mins) Two groups. Participants based on their preferred sectors, as indicated in pre-meeting poll. Full Group Report-Back (10mins)
10:45am	Small Group Breakout Session 2 (25mins) Two groups. Participants based on their preferred sectors, as indicated in pre-meeting poll. Full Group Report-Back (10mins)
11:20am	Full Group Discussion (35mins) Open Discussion and Q&A to flag key input on policies including sectors not discussed in small groups
11:55am	Next Steps and Action Items

Meeting 4

Date: Thursday, September 25th, 2025

Time: 3pm to 5pm

Attendees:

- CPAT Members
- Erin Braich, Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG)
- Michelle Mercer, Benton County
- Anthony Muai, City of Kennewick
- Matt Halitsky, City of Kennewick
- Mike Stevens, City of Richland
- Jennifer Ballard, City of Richland
- Eric Mendenhall, City of West Richland
- Craig Raymond, City of Pasco
- Gretchen Muller, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Katherine Allison, Cascadia Consulting Group
- Casey Bradfield, BERK Consulting
- Taskina Tareen, BERK Consulting

Meeting Objectives:

- Review the draft Climate Element together
- Discuss how it will be used in upcoming periodic updates
- Gather feedback on readability, coverage of key issues, and any additional comments

Meeting Schedule:

Time	Activity
3:00pm	Welcome & Summary Presentation (20 mins) Project Recap & State Requirements Climate Element Key Components High-level Findings Snapshot of Draft Goals & Policies
3:20pm	General Q&A – Full Group (10 mins)
3:30pm	Climate Element Document run-through, small groups (35 mins) Guiding Questions: Content Do you feel the draft covers the most important issues for the community? Is there anything you expected to see that isn't included? Did any part of the content surprise you, either positively or negatively? Clarity & Suitability

	Was the document easy to read and understand? Were there sections that felt confusing, too technical, or unclear? Do you have any final thoughts, suggestions, or concerns before it is finalized?
4:05pm	Report out to full group (15mins)
4:20pm	Closing & Gratitude Discussion/Q&A (as needed)

Project Team

City of Kennewick planning staff met bi-weekly for an hour with planning staff of the other jurisdictions during the development of the regional climate element. The project team consisted of at least one planning staff member from each of the jurisdictions. Planning staff from BFCOG also attended to support coordination and technical logistics. The project team met bi-weekly for an hour, from January 2025 to October 2025, with the consultant team to discuss project deliverables including project scope, data sources, and policy priorities. These bi-weekly meetings also served as an important checkpoint to share report findings, solicit feedback, and foster collaboration among the jurisdictions. City planning staff continued to meet to coordinate the integration of the climate element with other comprehensive plan elements.

The project team consisted of at least one planning staff member from each of the jurisdictions. Planning staff from BFCOG also attended to support coordination and technical logistics. The project team met bi-weekly for an hour with the consultant team to discuss project deliverables. Decisions regarding project scope, data sources, policy priorities, and more were discussed in these meetings. These bi-weekly meetings also served as an important checkpoint to share report findings, solicit feedback, and foster collaboration among the jurisdictions.

Members of the project team included:

Benton Franklin Council of Governments

Erin Braich – Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Director

Elizabeth Garcia – Assistant Regional Planner

Benton County

Michelle Mercer – Planning Manager

Maya MacDonald – Associate Planner

City of Pasco

Craig Raymond – Deputy Director, Community & Economic Development

Haylie Miller – Community & Economic Development Director

City of Kennewick

Anthony Muai – Community Planning Director

Matt Halitsky – Senior Planner

City of Richland

Mike Stevens – Planning Manager

Jennifer Ballard – Senior Planner

City of West Richland

Eric Mendenhall – Community Development Director

Public Surveys

Housing Questionnaire

I'll expand this as we get more from the housing survey summary.

A housing survey in winter 2026 provided additional feedback into Kennewick residents' experiences with extreme weather impacts that impact their safety and security in their homes. The City of Kennewick received 60 responses on its Comprehensive Plan Housing Questionnaire, which aimed to identify community needs and concerns related to housing in Kennewick. Findings from the housing survey include:

- Over one-third of survey respondents struggle to pay their utility bills.
- One-third of survey respondents cannot afford their housing.
- Sixty-eight percent of respondents identified safety as one of the three most important amenities or services when deciding where to live.
- Fifty percent of respondents identified access to food as one of the three most important amenities or services when deciding where to live.
- Around fifteen percent of survey respondents identified public transit, biking, or walking options as one of the three most important amenities or services when deciding where to live.
- Twenty-three percent of respondents would be willing to accept taller and/or larger residential buildings in neighborhoods to create more affordable homes in Kennewick.

Climate Resilience Survey

An online public survey, available in both English and Spanish, collected feedback for eight weeks from March 3 through April 29, 2025. The survey was conducted to understand community members' experiences with weather and climate impacts. During this time, 178 individuals submitted survey responses. Survey outreach channels included:

- BFCOG and cities websites and social media outlets
- Notice in Tu Decides Media
- Partnership with Tri-Cities Hispanic Chamber of Commerce to share survey with members and advertise via Telemundo
- Encouraging members of the CPAT to share the survey via their networks

Survey respondents shared weather- and climate-related impacts and concerns and support for strategies to increase resilience and reduce the region's emissions.

- Seventy-nine percent of respondents indicated they have experienced at least one impact of a recent weather event such as financial impacts, changes in hobbies and activities, and physical health impacts.
- Eighty-seven percent of respondents indicated concern with at least one weather and climate issue, including wildfires and wildfire smoke, increased temperatures and extreme heat, and drought.
- Ninety-four percent of respondents supported at least one preparedness and resilience strategy such as shade structures and tree canopy, preserving natural areas to help control flooding, and increased access to affordable heating and cooling systems.
- Eighty-seven percent of respondents supported emissions reduction strategies such as increased options to walk, bike, or take transit, and encouraging energy-efficient design.

Summary of Input

Survey respondents report a high level of weather- and climate-related impacts and concerns. There is a high level of general support for strategies to increase resilience and reduce the region's emissions. There are lower levels of consensus around specific strategies.

Nearly four in five respondents (79%) indicate they have experienced at least one impact of a recent weather event (see **Figure C-6**). The most common impacts include financial impacts, changes in hobbies and activities, and physical health impacts.

Nearly nine in ten respondents (87%) indicated concern with at least one weather and climate issue (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). Top concerns include wildfires and wildfire smoke, increased temperatures and extreme heat, and drought.

There is broad support for implementing preparedness and resilience strategies, with 94% of respondents supporting at least one strategy (see **Figure C-8**). Four strategies are supported by at least half of respondents:

- 67% support: Increasing shade structures and tree canopy.
- 57% support: Preserving or expanding natural areas that provide shade or help control flooding.
- 51% support: Increasing access to affordable heating and cooling systems.
- 50% support: Providing community education.

Support for implementing emissions reduction strategies (see **Figure C-9**) follows a similar pattern: nearly nine in ten respondents (87%) support at least one strategy. Two strategies are supported by at least half of respondents:

- 67% support: Increasing options for people to walk, bike, or take transit.
- 57% support: Encouraging energy-efficient design.

Detailed Findings

The following sections present an analysis of the four substantive questions from the survey. Those four questions were:

- How have recent weather events like heat, wildfires, smoke, drought, or flooding affected you?
- What weather and climate issues are you most concerned about?
- Which types of strategies do you support for increasing the Tri-Cities region's preparedness for weather and climate hazards, and ability to recover from them?
- What types of strategies do you support for reducing emissions in the Tri-Cities region?

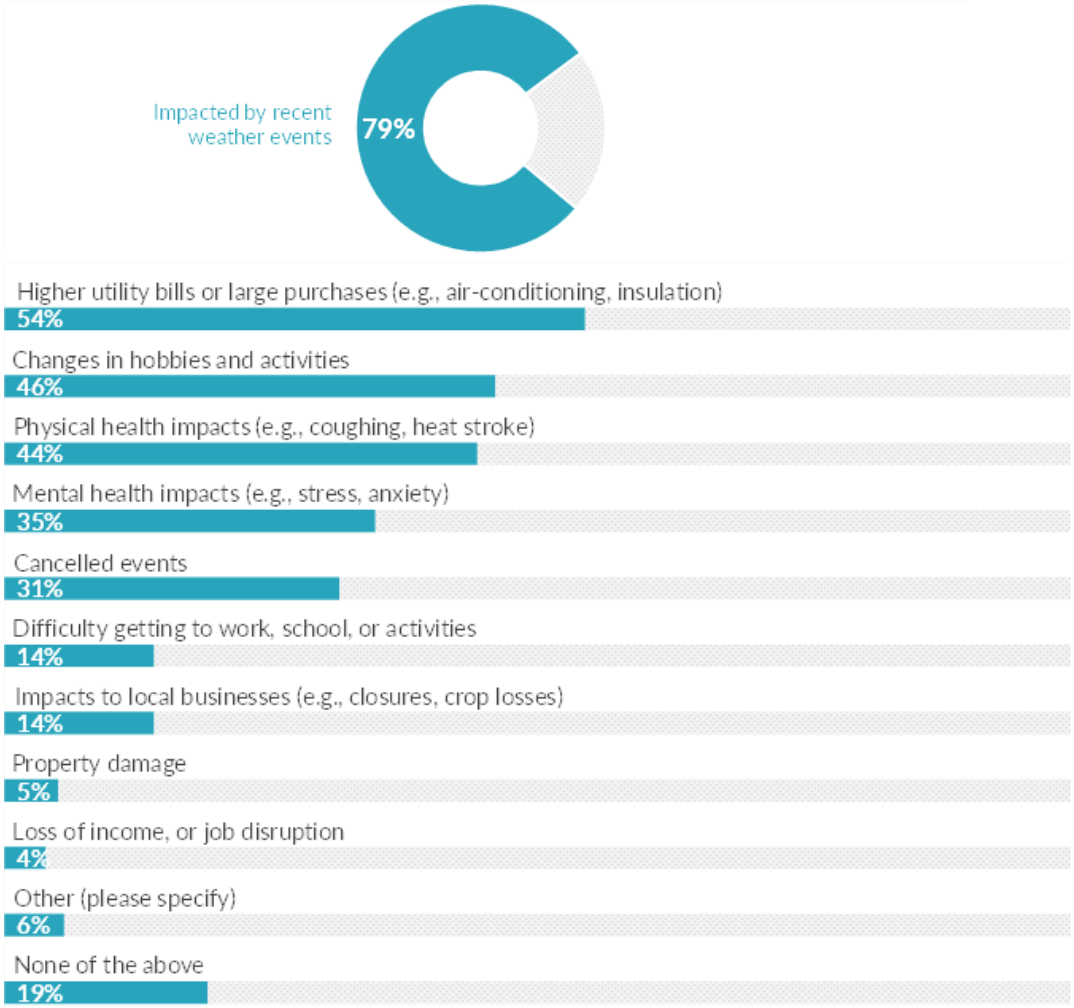
Where applicable, we note where respondents' incomes or ages are correlated with response patterns.

Impact of Recent Weather Events

Figure C-6 shows the impact of recent weather events on survey respondents. Respondents could select more than one option.

Figure C-6. Impact of Weather Events (n = 178)

Survey question: "How have recent **weather** events like heat, wildfires, smoke, drought, or flooding affected you? (check all that apply)"



Source: BERK, 2025.

Nearly four in five respondents (79%) indicate they have experienced at least one of the impacts the survey listed or an "other" impact.

More than half of survey respondents (54%) have experienced financial impacts, including higher utility bills or large purchases like air conditioning or insulation. Nearly half have experienced changes in hobbies and activities (46%) or physical health impacts (44%) such as coughing or heat stroke. Roughly one-third of respondents have experienced mental health impacts (35%) or cancelled events (31%).

Fewer respondents have experienced difficulty getting to work, school, or activities (14%); impacts to local businesses such as closures or crop losses (14%), property damage (5%), or loss of income or other job disruption (4%). Nearly one in five respondents (19%) indicate they have experienced none of the listed impacts.

Ten respondents provided additional comments in response to the "other" option of this question. Some comments expressed skepticism about climate change and others noted the discomfort of being outside during weather events. All full-length comments are listed in the Open-Ended Responses section at the end of this document. Disaggregation by Age and Income

In general, younger respondents and respondents with lower incomes report more impacts than respondents with higher incomes.

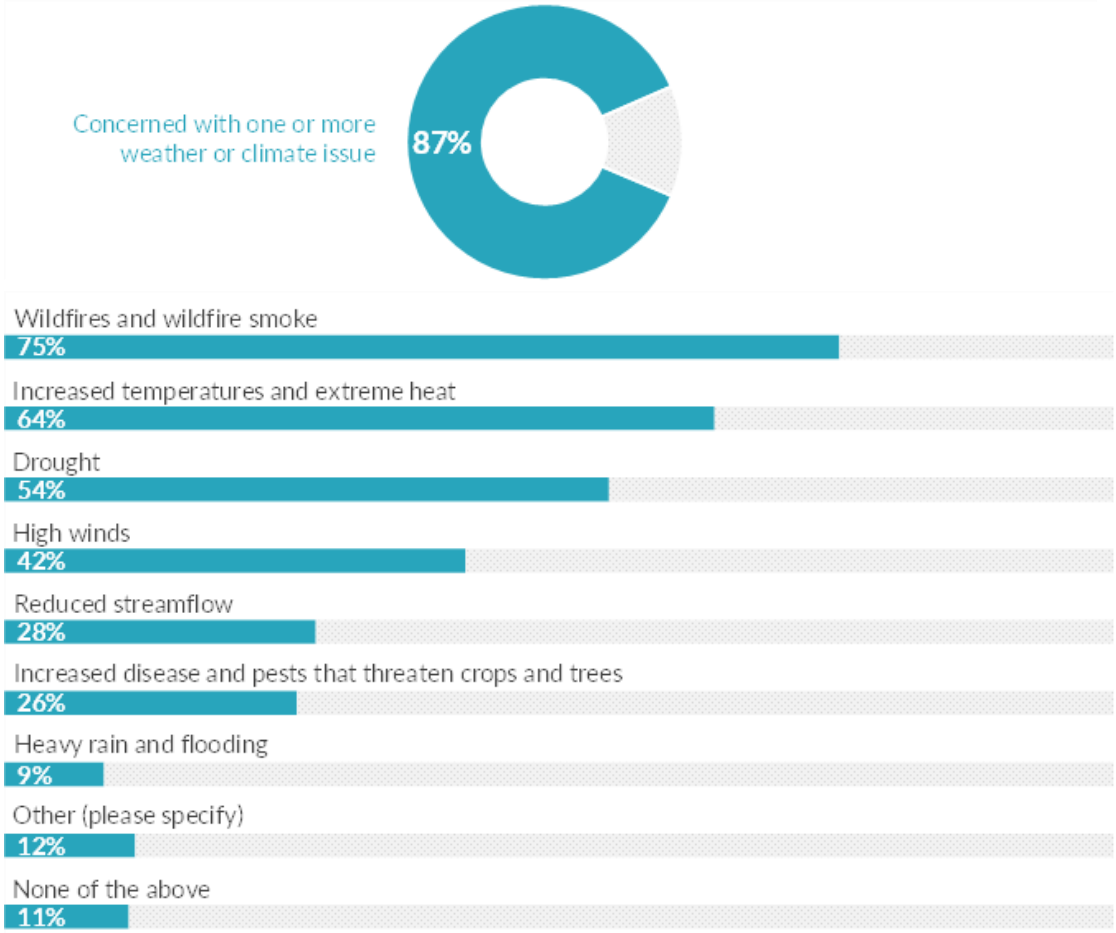
- Age: Only 5% of respondents under 35 report "none of the above," compared to 22% of respondents aged 35 and above.
- Younger respondents report physical health impacts at a higher rate than their older counterparts: 57% of respondents under age 35 report this impact, compared to 46% for respondents aged 35 to 49 and 34% for respondents aged 50 or older.
- Rates of mental health impacts and changes in hobbies and activities decrease as respondents' ages increase. For respondents under age 35, 57% report each impact. For respondents aged 65 or older, 29% report changes in hobbies and activities and 17% report mental health impacts.
- Older respondents report difficulty getting to work, school, or activities and job disruption at a lower rate than younger respondents.
- Income: Only 9% of respondents with incomes below $75,000 report "none of the above" compared to 18% of respondents with incomes of at least $75,000. Respondents with incomes below $75,000 have a higher rate of concern about physical health impacts, mental health impacts, and difficulty getting to work, school, or activities. Respondents with incomes above $150,000 have a higher rate of concern about property damage.

Weather and Climate Concerns

Figure C-7 shows the weather and climate issues that respondents are most concerned about. Respondents could select more than one option.

Figure C-7. Weather and Climate Concerns (n = 178)

Survey question: "What weather and climate issues are you most concerned about? (check all that apply)"



Source: BERK, 2025.

Nearly nine in ten respondents (87%) indicated concern with at least one of the weather and climate issues the survey listed or an "other" issue.

Three-quarters of respondents (75%) are concerned about wildfires and wildfire smoke; nearly two-thirds (64%) about increased temperatures and extreme heat; and over half (54%) about drought. Slightly less than half (42%) are concerned about high winds and roughly one-quarter are concerned about reduced streamflow (28%) and increased disease and pests that threaten crops and trees (26%).

Fewer respondents (9%) are concerned about heavy rain and flooding. Roughly one in ten respondents (11%) indicated they are not concerned with any of the listed weather and climate impacts.

20 respondents provided additional comments in response to the "other" option of this question. Some comments addressed ecological concerns; some addressed concerns with impacts to humans; and others noted other concerns. All full-length comments are listed in the Open-Ended Responses section at the end of this document.

Disaggregation by Age and Income

- Age: A higher proportion of respondents between the ages of 35 and 64 report "none of the above" concerns than their younger and older counterparts.
- Rate of concern with increased temperatures and extreme heat decreases as respondents' ages increase, ranging from 86% of respondents under 35 to 50% of respondents aged 65 or older.
- Respondents aged 65 or older express concerns with reduced streamflow at a higher rate (42%) than their younger counterparts (26%).
- Income: In general, respondents with lower incomes express more concerns with weather and climate issues than respondents with higher incomes. This is especially true for the following issues:

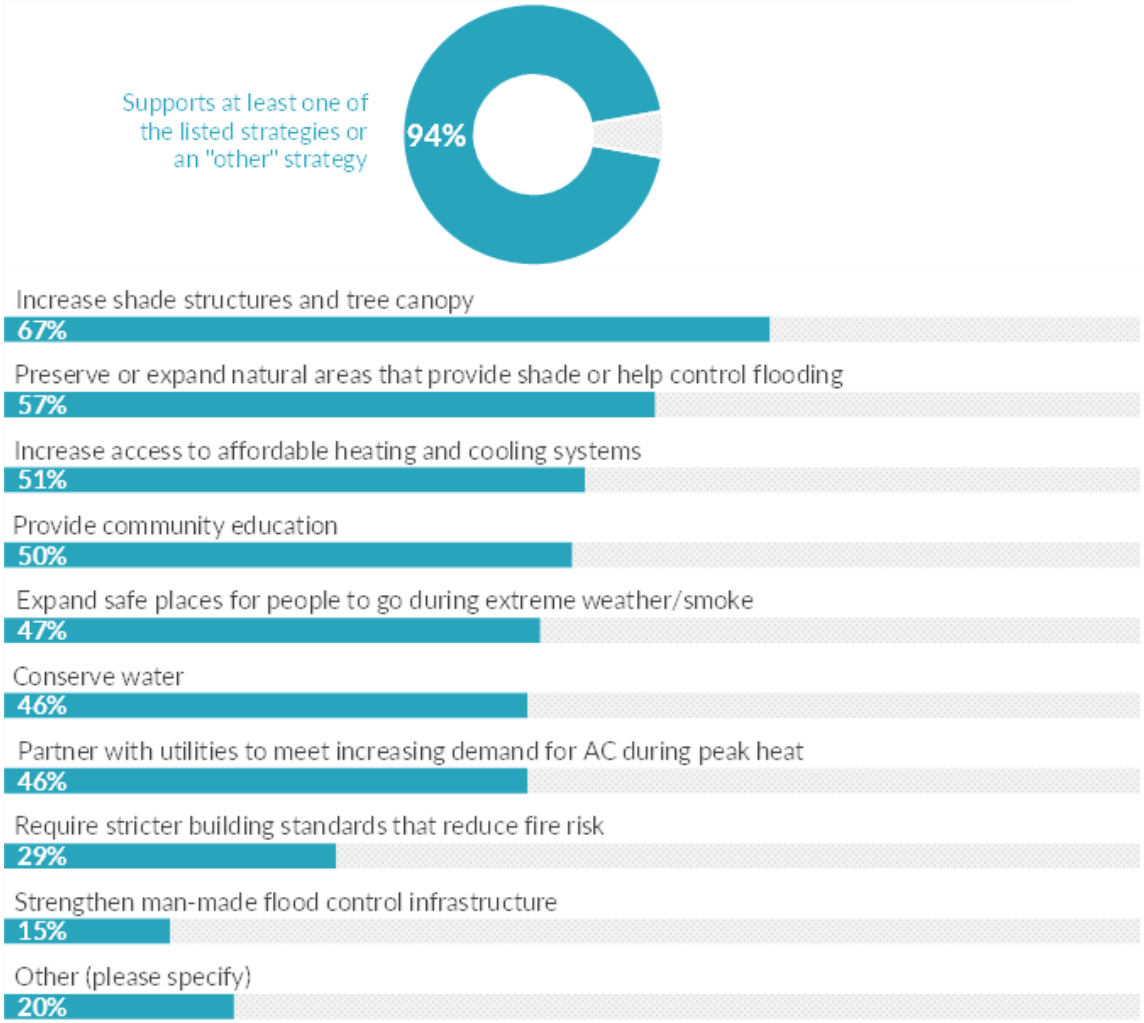
Issue	% of respondents with incomes <$75,000 that report concern	% of respondents with incomes >$150,000 that report concern
Increased temperatures and extreme heat	78%	63%
Reduced streamflow	47%	27%
High winds	50%	35%
Increased disease and pests that threaten crops and trees	41%	22%

Preparedness and Resilience Strategies

Figure C-8 shows respondents' preferred weather and climate preparedness and resilience strategies for the Tri-Cities region. Respondents could select more than one option.

Figure C-8. Preferred Weather and Climate Preparedness and Resilience Strategies for the Tri Cities Region (n = 178)

Survey question: "Which types of strategies do you support for increasing the Tri-Cities region's preparedness for weather and climate hazards, and ability to recover from them? (check all that apply)"



Source: BERK, 2025.

There is broad support for implementing such strategies, with 94% of respondents supporting at least one of the listed strategies or an "other" strategy. Two-thirds of respondents support at least three strategies.

The strategies with the most support include two shade-related strategies: increases to shade structures and tree canopy (67%) and expansion to natural areas that provide shade or help control flooding (57%).

Roughly half of respondents support each of three strategies focused on ensuring residents can withstand extreme heat events, including increased access to affordable heating and cooling systems (51%); expanded safe places for people to go during extreme weather or smoke (47%); and partnering with utilities to meet increasing demand for AC during peak heat (46%).

Roughly half of respondents also support community education (50%) and water conservation (46%) and slightly less than one-third (29%) support requiring stricter building standards that reduce fire risk.

Fewer respondents (15%) support strengthened man-made flood control infrastructure.

36 respondents provided additional comments in response to the "other" option of this question. Some comments suggested exploring cleaner energy sources; some noted that they don't support any strategies; and others suggested other ideas. All full-length comments are listed in the Open-Ended Responses section at the end of this document.

Disaggregation by Age and Income

In general, younger respondents and respondents with lower incomes have higher rates of support for preparedness and resilience strategies than respondents with higher incomes.

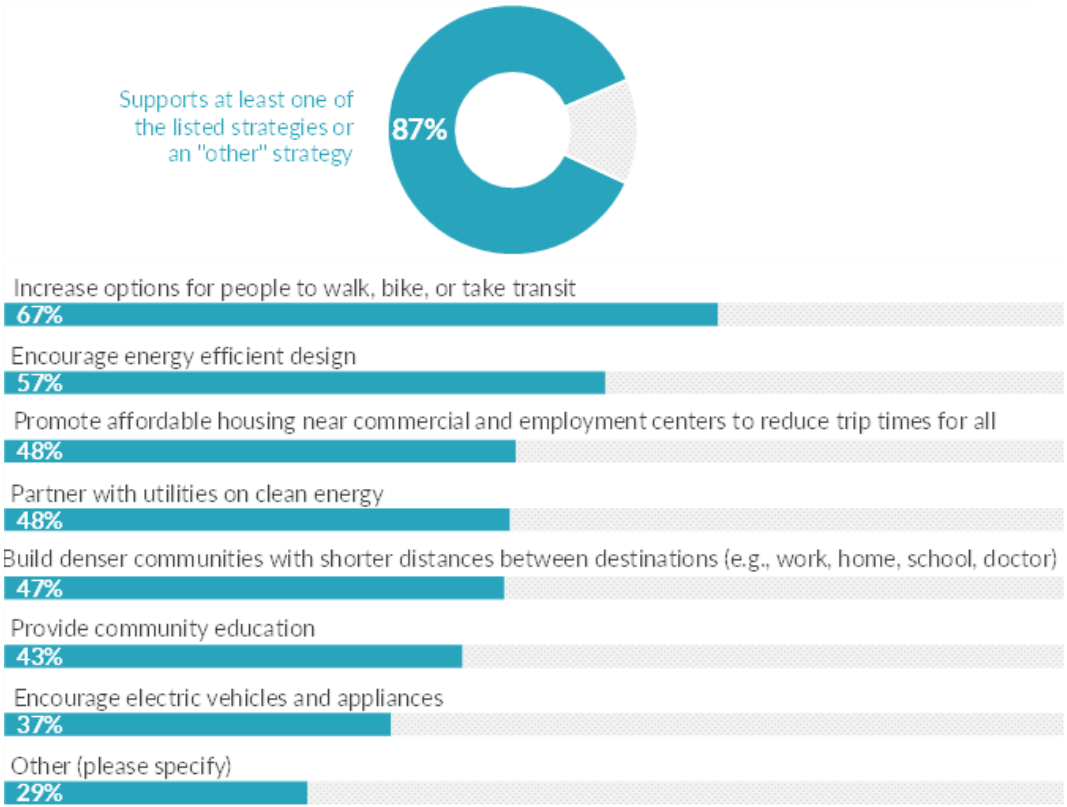
- Age: There is a generally higher rate of support for strategies among younger respondents, with some exceptions.
- Rate of support for increasing shade structures and tree canopy is higher among respondents under 35 (86% support) and lower among respondents between the ages of 50 and 64 (44% support). Rates of support for the other age brackets mirrors the rate for the overall population (roughly two-thirds)
- Rate of support for preserving or expanding natural areas that provide shade or help control flooding decreases as respondents' ages increase, ranging from 65% of respondents under 35 to 42% of respondents aged 65 or older.
- Rate of support for partnering with utilities to meet increasing demand for air conditioning during peak heat increases as respondents' ages increase, ranging from 41% of respondents under 35 to 58% of respondents aged 65 or older.
- Income: There is a higher rate of support for preparedness and resilience strategies among respondents with lower incomes for all strategies with two exceptions: the two shade-related strategies (i.e., increasing shade structures and tree canopy and preserving or expanding natural areas that provide shade or help control flooding), for which support is more consistent across income brackets.

Emissions Reduction Strategies

Figure C-9 shows respondents' preferred strategies for reducing emissions in the Tri-Cities region. Respondents could select more than one option.

Figure C-9. Preferred Strategies for Reducing Emissions in the Tri-Cities Region (n = 178)

Survey question: "What types of strategies do you support for reducing emissions in the Tri-Cities region? (Check all that apply)"



Source: BERK, 2025.

There is broad support for implementing such strategies, with nearly nine in ten respondents (87%) supporting at least one of the listed strategies or an "other" strategy. Between two-thirds and one-third of respondents supported each of the strategies listed.

Two-thirds of respondents (67%) support increasing options for people to walk, bike, or take transit, and more than half (57%) support encouraging energy-efficient design. Nearly half of respondents support two strategies focused on density, including promoting affordable housing near commercial and employment centers (48%) and building denser communities (47%). Nearly half of respondents (48%) also support partnering with utilities on clean energy. Roughly four in ten respondents support providing community education (43%) and encouraging electric vehicles and appliances (37%).

50 respondents provided additional comments in response to the "other" option of this question. Many of the responses provided ideas related to those listed in the multiple-choice options; some noted that they don't support any strategies; and others suggested other ideas. All full-length comments are listed in the Open-Ended Responses section at the end of this document.

Disaggregation by Age and Income

- Age: There is a generally higher rate of support for strategies among younger respondents, with some exceptions.

- Rate of support for encouraging energy-efficient design for respondents under 50 mirrors the rate of the overall population (between one-half and two-thirds) but is higher among respondents over the age of 65 (71% support) and lower among respondents between the ages of 50 and 64 (44% support).
- Rate of support for promoting affordable housing near commercial and employment centers is higher among respondents under 35 (65% support) and lower among respondents between the ages of 50 and 64 (31% support). Rates of support for the other age brackets mirrors the rate for the overall population (roughly one-half)
- Rate of support for building denser communities is substantially higher among respondents under the age of 35 (70% support) and somewhat higher among respondents between the ages of 35 and 49 (47% support) compared to their older counterparts (34% support).
- Rate of support for increasing options for people to walk, bike, or take transit decreases as respondents' ages increase, ranging from 76% of respondents under 35 to 54% of respondents aged 65 or older.
- Respondents aged 50 – 64 have a lower rate of support for encouraging electric vehicles and appliances (16% support) than their older and younger counterparts (41% support).
- Income:
- Respondents with incomes above $75,000 have a higher rate of support for encouraging electric vehicles and appliances (42% support) than their counterparts with lower incomes (28% support).
- Respondents with incomes below $150,000 have a higher rate of support for promoting affordable housing near commercial and employment centers (61% support) than their counterparts with higher incomes (39% support).
- Rate of support for providing community education decreases as respondents' ages increase, ranging from 63% of respondents under 35 to 35% of respondents aged 65 or older.

Open-Ended Responses

The survey asked the following question: "Is there anything else you would like to share about climate and weather-related impacts, and possible strategies for the Tri-Cities to address these impacts?" 63 respondents provided input.

The impacts that respondents described primarily centered on extreme heat and wildfire smoke.

Many of the strategies suggested reflected themes addressed throughout the survey, including:

- Land use planning. Several commenters suggested land use planning themes including more density, reduction of sprawl, and mixed-use neighborhoods. Multiple commenters noted concerns with the amount of asphalt in the community and its impact on heat.
- Trees, natural spaces, and shade. Several commenters suggested an interest in planting more trees. Other related strategies suggested included preserving natural spaces, promoting native vegetation, and constructing shade structures.
- Wildfire prevention and preparation. Multiple commenters discussed interest in wildfire prevention and preparation, including encouraging fire-resistant structures and plants, conducting forest maintenance and brush clearing, and preparing for wildfire smoke.
- Public education. Multiple commenters suggested increasing awareness and offering community education to increase community understanding about both the current state of the climate and opportunities to adapt.
- Transportation. Multiple commenters suggested transportation-related solutions, including improving public transit, sidewalks, bike lanes, and road infrastructure.

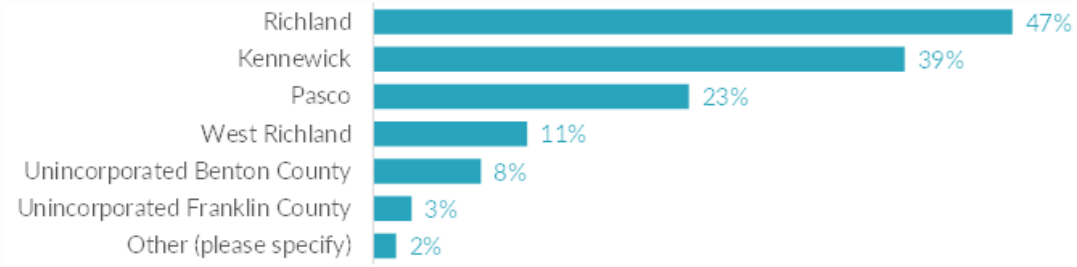
More than one-quarter of the responses expressed skepticism about climate change or opposition to strategies to address climate- and weather-related impacts. Full-length comments are listed in the Open-Ended Responses section at the end of this document.

Respondent Demographics

Figure C-10Error! Reference source not found. shows the areas in which respondents live and work. Respondents could select more than one option. Nearly half of respondents (47%) live or work in Richland, roughly four in ten (39%) live or work in Kennewick, and nearly one-quarter (23%) live or work in Pasco. Fewer respondents live or work in West Richland (11%) or unincorporated Benton or Franklin counties (8% and 3% respectively). Three respondents indicated they live or work in an "other" area.

Figure C-10. Where Respondents Live and Work (n = 177)

Survey question: "Which jurisdiction do you live or work in? (check all that apply)"



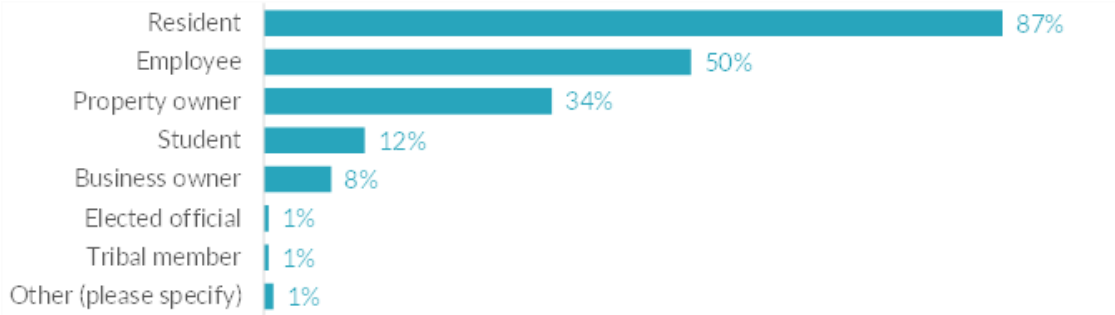
Source: BERK, 2025.

Figure C-11 shows respondents' affiliations and roles. Respondents could select more than one option. Most respondents (87%) identify as residents, half (50%) as employees, and one-third as property owners. Fewer respondents identify as a student (12%). One respondent identified as a tribal member.

The survey also gathered feedback from community leaders including business owners (8% of respondents) and one elected official. Two respondents identified "other" affiliations or roles.

Figure C-11. **Respondents'** Affiliations and Roles (n = 177)

Survey question: "Which of the following best defines you? (check all that apply)"

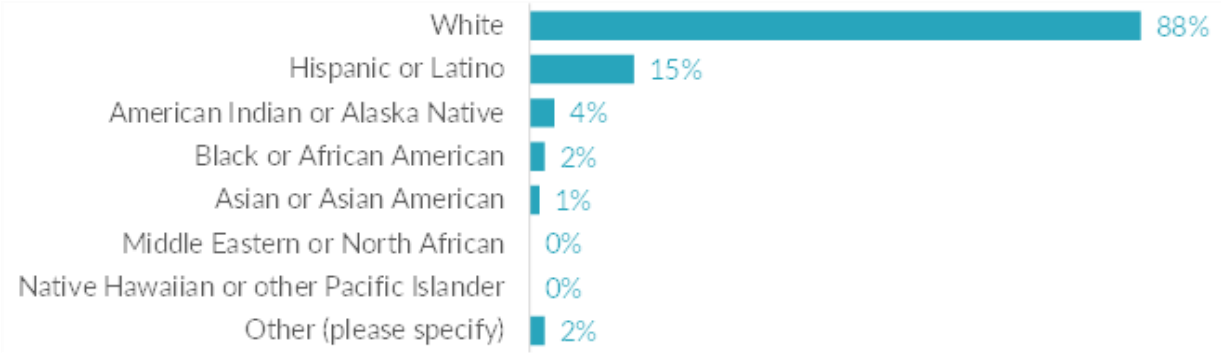


Source: BERK, 2025.

Survey respondents also identified their own race(s) and/or ethnicity(ies), shown in **Figure C-12**. Respondents could select more than one race or ethnicity to represent a more accurate view of their racial identity. Most respondents (88%) identified as White. Hispanic or Latino respondents comprised 15% of the total respondent pool. American Indian or Alaska Native respondents comprised 4%; Black or African American respondents comprised 2%; Asian or Asian American respondents comprised 1%; and 2% reported an "other" race or ethnicity. No respondents self-identified as Middle Eastern or North African or Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander.

Figure C-12. **Respondents'** Self-Identified Race(s) and Ethnicity(ies) (n = 139)

Survey question: "What is your race and/or ethnicity? (Choose all that apply)" Note: Totals do not sum to 100% because respondents could select multiple options.

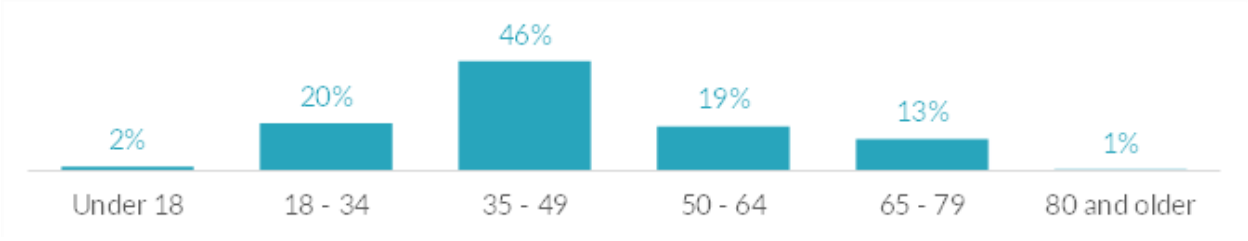


Source: BERK, 2025.

Figure C-13 shows respondents' ages. Nearly half of respondents are between the ages of 35 and 49, with relatively even distribution across the other three age brackets between the ages of 18 and 79.

Figure C-13. **Respondents'** Ages (n = 172)

Survey question: "What is your age?"

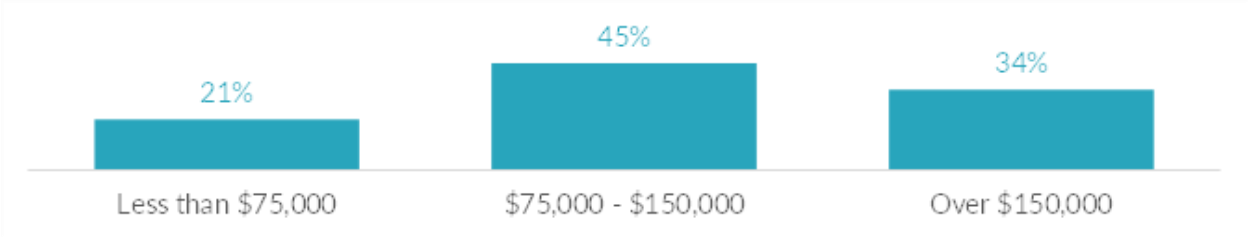


Source: BERK, 2025.

Figure C-14 shows respondents' household incomes. Nearly half of respondents are in the middle-income bracket between $75,000 and $150,000. Roughly one-third make more than this and roughly one in five make less than this.

Figure C-14. **Respondents'** Household Incomes (n = 151)

Survey question: "What is your household income?"



Source: BERK, 2025.

Open-Ended Responses

Comment responses for each question are presented in alphabetical order. Original comment content has not been modified,[1] so typos and other errors may exist. Comments in Spanish are accompanied by a translation.

Impact of Recent Weather Events

Survey question: "How have recent weather events like heat, wildfires, smoke, drought, or flooding affected you? (check all that apply)"

- Constant whining about climate change and typical [offensive adjective redacted] solution in Washington state.
- Disrupts fitness activities
- Expense for masks and staying indoors
- It's unpleasant to be outside when it's so hot so we don't patronize local businesses
- It's a hoax
- More job planning around the weather, and more suffering on the job.
- Over regulation creates higher prices. Windmills are not helping our community as most of the energy generated from them are sold out side of Washington. It causes more harm than good.
- Recently bought home on Zintel Canyon, wildfire concerns
- Stop lying to the public.

- This is a crock!

Weather and Climate Concerns

Survey question: "What weather and climate issues are you most concerned about? (check all that apply)"

- Algae blooms
- climate refugees; loss of species; increased human disease
- Extreme cold from weakened polar vortex, changing ocean currents
- God put CO2 on earth. It is necessary for human life.
- Hardship for outdoor workers
- Increased smog
- invasive species affecting waterways
- Man made climate manipulation. Washington needs to do better at clearing our forests of dead tree fuel.
- Raising taxes in the name of climate control is a hoax
- Reduced snowpack
- reduced water supply even with average precipitation because more falls as rain rather than snow
- River temp
- Temperature inversions that trap pollutants, Wildfires that cross into urban areas like in Paradise, Altadena, and Pacific Palisades, CA
- This is a crock!
- This would've been good to rank
- Trees on the east side of dike on hains ave
- UNMITIGATED BLOWING DUST/ENFORCEMENT ON CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS
- Unstable seasons (late frosts/ early spring)
- Wildlife impacts/habitat degradation
- Wildlife struggles

Preparedness and Resilience Strategies

Survey question: "Which types of strategies do you support for increasing the Tri-Cities region's preparedness for weather and climate hazards, and ability to recover from them? (check all that apply)"

- Ban grass lawns to conserve water
- Brush/deadfall maintenance Zintel Canyon
- Climate change is a hoax
- CODE ENFORCEMENT ON Request for enforcement of dust control regulations
- Create a home retrofit program to better insulate and install hvac systems for cleaner air.
- Create a recovery plan
- Cut government rules, restrictions & waste of tax dollars.

- Educate construction fields on clean energy alternatives to replace combustion generators as they are hardly regulated and contribute more ghg emissions than vehicles due to their inefficiency.
- Energy Independence including Natural Gas
- Find ways to get more air purifiers and better air conditioning to low-income residents. The heat and smoke are already asking them miserable in summer.
- Good with encouraging more tree planting but need to work with KID to keep the water flowing for irrigation, need to tap into the Columbia River not just the Yakima.
- Grid reliability; micro grids; provisions for reverse metering for solar homes; preservation and funded management of tree canopy.
- Help for people who don't have access to sufficient cooling. We had to move out of our home in 2021 and stay in a Hotel for 15 days until we found a friend to stay with....when our home was insufficiently cooked and I couldn't keep temp below 80 degrees and it impacted my husbands health. He had thermodysregulation of body temp and needed to be in a 70 degree environment. That summer it hit 117 degrees. I had lived in Tri-Cities for 60 years and never experienced that type of heat in my lifetime.
- increase access to public green spaces/parks and encouraging water smart landscaping
- Increase storage capacity of water for irrigation
- Increase use and technology of solar energy to support heating cooling and vehicle charging.
- It a hoax. Reduce taxes
- Live your life and stop looking for a handout!
- More cycling infrastructure
- No new taxes
- None
- None
- None of the above
- Not voting for or supporting political candidates or parties that deny climate change science
- Outlaw ALL private use of fireworks
- Pasco should require a tree for all new builds. Trees create shade, clean the air, and provide habitat for birds. In addition they beautify the community.
- Plant more trees. Provide the Fire departments with all they need to respond.
- [Translated] That there be a change in policies and that our legislators make laws so that factories and companies are responsible for protecting the environment. That they create regulations for land use.
- [Original] Que hay cambio en las politicas y que nuestros legisladores hagan leyes para que las fabricas y companias sea responsables de cuidar em medio habiente. Que creen regulaciones para el uso de la tierra.
- Reduce known flammable strutures and problematic flammable plants (10 foot tall long grass in pond areas, arugavaluas by school (the bushy things), replace wood fence with brick
- Reduce the surface area of asphalt to reduce urban heat islands -- narrower minimum street width standards, reduce lanes and turn them over to natural areas, turn lanes over to all-ages all-abilities active transportation networks, reduce minimum lot size and setback standards and allow missing middle housing, lot splitting, and denser urban forms, reduce VMT to reduce tailpipe emissions and greenhouse gas emissions

- Reduce waste, fraud and abuse.
- Shelter bike paths from the heat using trees, awnings, or other appealing covering techniques as seen in places like Seattle, India and Thailand
- Stop windmills and battery storage sites
- TreesTreesTreesYou can literally feel the temperature drop around massive amounts of trees. They are nature's heatsinks.
- Utilize hydroelectric power to the fullest extent possible
- Vegetation control

Emissions Reduction Strategies

Survey question: "What types of strategies do you support for reducing emissions in the Tri-Cities region? (Check all that apply)"

- "Clean" energy is a lie.
- Again, trees clean the air.
- All of those options sound dumb.
- allow mixed-use land use so that people live closer to services
- Climate change is a hoax
- Climate change is a myth.
- create/promote awareness in public schools, similar to D.A.R.E.
- Develop a new list of trees which flourish in our hotter climate. Determine attactive shade structures for meeting places where trees won't grow.
- Drop parking mandates, and increase mixed use zoning.
- ebike rebates and incentives, build bike parking so people can actually bike places and securely lock their bikes, transit shelters with solar-powered fans or AC so people aren't uncomfortable at a stop
- Education is important for drivers to watch out for and give right of way to pedestrians because they are out in the elements - drivers are careless and don't yield to pedestrians
- Energy Independence
- Enforce existing ordinances
- Expand the bus and park & ride systems. Better bike trails & bike lanes & continuous sidewalks.
- I don't believe there is a major emissions issue in the Tri Cities.
- incentives for heat pumps, eve charging infrastructure, especially in multifamily housing, and community solar; Vehicle and natural gas emissions testing; agricultural soil Nitrous Oxide monitoring. Ban fireworks.
- increased train commutes
- Increased used of Nuclear power.
- Just stop with the over regulations.
- Keep nat gas
- Maintaining Natural Gas not taking it away.
- Most of the alternatives above are the typical broken ideas designed to decrease quality of life. Denser housing, "affordable housing" - [profanity redacted] that.
- Non stay out of this area.

- None
- None
- None
- None
- None
- none
- None
- None of the above
- None of these!
- None.
- None. This is fearmongering BS.
- Not voting for or supporting political candidates or parties that deny climate change science
- Partner with utilities on clean energy; define hydroelectricity as clean energy; provide community education.
- Prudent siting of industry and rail- based uses
- [Translated] That there is a change at the state level so that our representatives create regulations to protect us from the large corporations that exploit the land.
- [Original] Que sea un cambio a nivel del estado que nuestros represetnates creen regulaciones para que nos protejan de las grandes corporacones que explotan la tierra.
- Reduse the number of houses in the community
- Safe alternative transportation options
- Shelter bike paths from the heat using trees, awnings, or other appealing covering techniques as seen in places like Seattle, India and Thailand
- Stop building or widening roads and invest in BRT, get the major employers to incentivize or force ride sharing. Put street parking OUTSIDE bike lanes so cyclists are protected from our horrible drivers and their killer machines
- stop destruction of shrub steppe habitat
- support Climate Commitment Act or other price on carbon economic measures,
- Support our dams and nuclear power sources. Get rid of the windmills that cause fires and pollution during the manufacturing process!
- Support Public Works/Arts that combine environmental benefits with public engagement/appreciation in collective solutions
- Tax incentives to use less energy
- This is the stupidest thing I've ever read.
- Utilize hydroelectric power to the fullest extent, favor it over other forms of renewable energy.
- Zoned and developed area with walkable areas that are popular.

Free-Form Input

Survey question: Is there anything else you would like to share about climate and weather-related impacts, and possible strategies for the Tri-Cities to address these impacts?"

- A small combustion generator running for 1 hour produces as much co2 as a passenger car driving 150 miles. Given the shear number of combustion generators and the fact they idle even when not drawing power leaves a large opportunity to reduce local emissions in the construction industry.
- Accept and promote renewable energy such as wind power and solar power.
- Allow proper forestry maintenance. Wildfires are due to mismanagement, as to scare to acquire more tax dollars that get funneled into Democrat election programs.
- Allowing expansion upwards rather than outwards would aid in building denser communities, would encourage walking, and would reduce heat by increasing shade.
- Avoid promoting electric cars. There are problems with adequate disposal sites for the huge batteries and having enough charging stations at rentals. Don't sacrifice not behaving enough power during extreme temperatures to pursue shutting down non-renewable energy sources. Don't want to become like California with brown outs during peak summer temperatures.
- Better and more public transportation systems will both lessen the amount of asphalt roads and increase the amount of area for shade. These 2 things will lessen the temperature making it a lot safer for people and animals alike
- Cities need to prepare for more snow and ice events and have clear strategies to get kids safely to school on CLEARED SIDEWALKS. We need a revenue source to build and maintain our active transportation network like Denver. https://www.denvergov.org/Government/Agencies-Departments-Offices/Agencies-Departments-Offices-Directory/Department-of-Transportation-and-Infrastructure/Programs-Services/Sidewalks
- Clean/cut overgrowth, keep trash picked up, fire barriers with sprinklers and excavated fire lines, access to water, strong fire departments including volunteer stations
- Climate change doesn't actually exist. And though our weather may be impactful it does not require drastic change. More shaded areas especially in large open parks and stuff would be beneficial for the hot summer days. And possibly a water system in the streets like Japan has to help with snow removal.
- Climate change is not a thing. The government needs to stop manipulating the weather.
- create/promote awareness in public schools, similar to D.A.R.E.
- Don't waste my tax money on the climate scam. Counsel member need to remember who votes for them.
- During droughts, for those that irrigate with City water, I would like the Cities to also restrict irrigation consumption when KID is. We should all be working together to preserve our natural resources.
- During my work career I lived in Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, Minnesota, Idaho, Wyoming, Texas, Alberta, Oklahoma, and now Washington. Every last one of them thought their weather was 'special'. Every one of them thought their weather changed quickly. Give it a rest - other than the readily available irrigation water their isn't anything unique or unprecedented with TriCities weather.
- Effect of wildfire smoke and recent research on long-term effects of extreme heat on newborns suggests we need some kind of program to help people protect their babies. Especially for those who live in substandard housing with leaky windows and ineffective air conditioners if any.
- Fire risk and dangerous heat waves are my biggest concerns right now. There's immediate risk of wildfires and extreme heat-related illnesses or death.
- Has a lifelong Tri-Cities resident, anthropogenic climate change is not real... if you want to spend a bunch of taxpayer money to fix a non-existent problem, move to Seattle or California.
- Heat gets redistributed easier through water and it takes a lot more energy to heat up sources of water than air.
- Trees and flowing water will do immensely well to disperse heat.

- With asphalt and concrete there is nothing to drag the heat away. It is trapped.
- I'm not saying be Venice or anything, the answer I think is; trees for shade, plants and flowing water to deal with temperature.
- I do not agree with the whole climate hysteria. I feel it is a way for government to raise taxes, to waste money, and to over regulate everything. They have been at this since the 1970's. First we were going to freeze to death in 10years. Then it was the ozone layer. We have more problems with man made weather manipulation, then from mother nature.
- I do NOT want more wind turbines or solar farms.
- I have seen many trees die from age and disease in the least few years with no programs to encourage their replacement. We are becoming a heat island of concrete and asphalt without them. An ideal would be programs to help purchase and plant low-maintenance, semi-mature or faster-growing trees. Doing so would help our communities become cooler and improve their appearance.
- I live in Kittitas county, so wind is typically more prevalent. Creation of quality windbreaks which are cost effective and attractive, as well as easy to install and maintain would be great for many residents in the Tri-Cities.
- I think focusing on this, especially in our area, is mostly a waste of time, money, and resources.
- I think that its important that Tri-Cities provides more electric car charging spots. There are only a select few slow charging areas in Kennewick but not in West Richland / Richland, Pasco, and areas like Benton City.
- I would be more than happy to buy a European style brick type condo, apartment or town home. But Tri cities only does venner brick and not really brick walls with plaster over it.
- I see a lot of potential development opportunities for a condo or town homes along the older vacan commercial parts of Richland.
- There's been wildfires in the US during a winter and eventually it will happen to us. We should probably start getting ahead of it. Encourage people what plants are more fire resistant. What plants are fire prone. Structures that can easily catch fire vs. those that do not.
- The cities should also examine their liabilities for existing plants, trees, shrubs, etc as well as structures that are very readily flammable.
- In general, the climate change narrative is a money grab, a grift. We need to be good stewards of the land and use common sense in conserving water, maintain vegetation, and not be wasteful of other resources. However, we are NOT going to change the weather and mother nature. Period.
- Increase awareness of Ben Franklin Transit and the tools available (website, Transit app) to make navigating the system easier. Also work towards understanding how each individual city can make BFT a better experience with stop locations, routes, and structures at stops to make users more visible and safer.
- Leave natural areas natural!
- More walkable neighborhoods
- My top concerns are unmitigated blowing dust and wildfire smoke, both of which severely impact air quality, public health, and daily life in the region.
- Unmitigated Blowing Dust – Urgent Need for Regional Enforcement
- Construction sites often fail to control dust, worsening air quality and respiratory risks. Stronger enforcement across all jurisdictions is needed, including:
- Consistent inspections and penalties for non-compliance.
- Mandatory dust control measures (watering, stabilization).
- Better coordination between cities and counties to ensure enforcement.
- Wildfire Smoke – Stronger Regional Preparedness

- Frequent smoke events disrupt businesses, schools, and health. The region should prioritize:
- Stricter land management to reduce fire risk.
- Public education and real-time air quality alerts.
- Expanding clean air shelters and tree canopy.
- Aligning enforcement efforts across jurisdictions is critical to protecting air quality and public health. Immediate action is needed to reduce dust pollution and strengthen wildfire smoke mitigation. Thank you for considering these priorities.
- No quite spending tax dollars on climate change hoax
- opening the pool earlier
- parks should include dense tree canopies to provide shade during heat waves
- Plant as many trees as you can. They use less water than grass and provide much needed shade.
- Please find a real job or a better way to contribute to our great improving country. This silliness will hopefully end soon.
- Please implement safe transportation alternatives that can be accessible by everyone. This includes wide side walks (more than enough for an wheelchair to pass), separated two way bicycle lanes (through and to destinations that people need to go, not just patches of bike lanes that are broken up without taking you anywhere), more transit routes, and traffic calming roadway infrastructure. If it becomes convenient to use the car, people will. If it is safe and convenient to use other options, people will use them. They already are, but with the lack of proper support they are punished for using them. There are a myriad of health issues that can be easily avoided with less of a dependency on car usage. We can use the money we would have used taking care of those health issues on proper climate prevention measures. We can do this. We just need to have the will to do so.
- provide annual updates on CO2 emissions to track progress in reducing emissions, using fuel sales via gas tax collections
- Public education and a big social media presence in getting information out is needed
- [Translated] Let there are meetings with our representatives so that there are laws and regulations to protect the environment for those of us who work outside. That large corporations are held accountable for climate change.
- [Original] Que ese hagan reuniones con nuestros representantes para que hayan leyes y regulaciones para proteger el medio ambiante a las personas que trabajamos afuera. Que las grandes cooporaciones sean responsables del cambio climatico.
- Sounds like a waste of time
- Stay out of our business, bring DOGE into WA state and the Tri cities and Drill baby drill!!!!
- Strategies to reduce emission do not require great sacrifice. In fact nearly all have multiple benefits most people are looking for in life. These include saving money, living an active lifestyle, and a experiencing a stronger sense of community.
- Community education could include forums where people could learn and ask questions about the scientific consensus that humans are causing climate change; local evidence of climate change; how to make decisions in one's personal life to help with, and adapt to, climate change; information on available resources; among other topics.
- Thank you for hosting this survey! I have conversations with my students, and they're eager for transportation innovations and increased use of native species/plantings. We also have conversations about Indigenous leadership and seeing high-density, low-status communities as valuable contributors at the ideation level. There's a lot of hunger for social-environmental win-wins.
- The blacktop in all the parking lots substantially heats up town in the summer, and it's almost impossible to find shaded parking in town or at most business. Additional parking needs should only be addressed through shaded parking structures such as adding parking garages, not more parking lots. Businesses should be encouraged to invest in shade structures for outdoor seating and for parking.

- the bus around here is horrible, especially if you work at night, outside of bus routes and/or need one on sunday (some areas). A lot of people who use the bus don't work a 9-5 mon - fri. We need better transportation (taxi or other after hours services are way over priced). I would love to see more trees planted in the area, more parks and areas safe for bicycles and walking pedestrians. Thanks
- The following is not an endorsement whatsoever of the LDS church. However outlandish, ridiculous, offensive or downright crazy it may seem, the Columbia River Temple located in Richland will be one of the few, if only, safeguard, safe location for any and all people who will come there. This statement is irrelevant to current LDS polices regarding temple attendance for active membership. By the time natural disasters may overwhelm emergency services, there will be a global announcement of initiations to all people, regardless of gender, income disparity, race/ethnicity, any other demographic measure etc. In any case, thank you for you attention to climate change as it is THEE existential threat of our lifetime. No matter who much it may inconvenience the public or go against their political leanings, I think the city conducting education, drills, and outreach will make a difference in the ensuing months and years. Thanks for all you do!
- The govt should stop trying to control the weather and causing these things. The climate naturally changes….deal with it!
- The lack of community PV is embarrassing. We should have solar shades on all large parking lots, schools and municipal buildings- at minimum. Microgrids could be lifesavers in the event of rolling blackouts from low water/decreased hydro, windstorms, etc.
- It is shameful that we have no emergency shelters for extreme weather.
- The recent lift of the ban on fireworks in Kennewick is a concern for my family. I would like to see the ban on fireworks sales/use put back in place as the risk of fires is high especially in July. Clearing thick brush and tumbleweeds in public areas is important. The city could reach out to local residents and community groups to help partner in this effort and help to educate the community about cleaning taking care of their own properties. It would be helpful to educate residents about irrigating their properties because so many still water extensively throughout the summer. Less irrigating could assist in drought concerns, that would include city parks and public spaces.
- The weather is cyclical, back at the 70s we wouldn't see a cloud for weeks and 105 temp was nothing. But mother nature handle the weather and maybe you should try to make Pasco a better place to live and Work in.
- There is a constant fear amongst Facebook and Reddit users that the "area is growing too populated." They say this because of the traffic, and the only reason the traffic exists is because we refuse to put a strong cap on the suburban sprawl. The sprawl forces people to drive.
- Encourage mid-rise condos and housing (not apartments) in the area and restrict sprawl. Work with BFT to provide early AM and late PM shuttles for the airport (flights leaving at 5AM or arriving at 10PM).
- Change is uncomfortable, but building more asphalt and concrete suburban sprawl structures will make things even more uncomfortable with impending climate impacts.
- This survey seems like a tool looking for offer subsidized items/welfare programs. Maybe these funds would be better spent on cleaning up the homeless people causing fires, etc.
- Training for our local elected officials and support for local school districts climate education.
- Vehicle Miles Travelled targets should be based on per capita population. Goals to reduce VMT totals are prohibitively restrictive and poorly thought out.
- Very concerning is homeless or people living in homes with window or in wall air conditioners that don't filter out the smoke or don't have air conditioning at all.
- We are blessed with sun, wind, and water (hydroelectric) energy sources. We also accept the development and use of nuclear energy. We should "lean in" on the development of these resources for our future energy needs in Benton and Franklin Counties!
- We are leaving Washington mostly brcause it is becoming too damed exoensive for retirees!

- We are not affected by climate change anymore now than ever before.
- We can't afford to have expensive solutions. We need to get back to forests management. Also our man-made Dykes have way too much vegetation on them.
- We need restrictions on development and urban sprawl. More conservation of wild areas and education and rules about planting native plants that conserve water.
- When I first moved to Tri-Cities from TN four years ago, I was told that if I love outdoor activities, I would love it here. That summer, there were weeks of record breaking heat and dangerous smoke. I wondered when I was supposed to go outside. Since then, I've often had to rearrange my travel plans due to wildfire or smoke, the analyzers in the healthcare lab where I work have almost shut down for days due to extreme heat, and my AC has broken down during a heat wave.
- We need to build a resilient community to not just survive, but thrive. Tri-Cities does a lot right, with the Riverwalk, decent amount of bike paths, and recent moves to build mixed use neighborhoods. It also is still heavily car dependent, which means it's heavily covered in concrete and prioritizes car travel (so many stroads!) We can make our community even better. We need to.
- You can offer options but ultimately the market will dictate what people choose. If say more affordable and energy efficient options for A/C are available people will choose those anyways. Driving up the cost of energy won't help. If it's reasonable and makes sense then great!
- You want to add taxes for the middle class so that lower class can capitalize on funds. NO NEW TAXES!

Public Meetings

This project included two rounds of public meetings in March and September 2025.

March Meeting

Three public meetings were held in March 2025 to raise awareness and gather early input for this project. The meetings were hosted by the cities of Kennewick, Richland, and West Richland on March 6, 11, and 13, respectively. The meetings on March 6 and March 13 were hybrid and participants had the option to join in-person or online. The meeting on March 11 was online-only. Participants provided comments verbally and through the chat function on Zoom for some of the public meetings.

Approximately 25 community members participated in the three meetings in total, with about five participants at the first meeting hosted by Kennewick and about ten participants each at the meetings hosted by Richland and West Richland. Attendance for the two hybrid meetings was roughly split between in-person and online. City representatives were also in attendance at the meetings including City staff, Planning Commissioners, and consultants.

The agenda for the public meetings consisted of a presentation and facilitated discussion. The presentation included a project overview and initial findings about climate and weather-related hazards facing the Tri-Cities. A copy of the meeting slides is included on the project webpage: https://www.bfcog.us/180/Climate-Change.

The hybrid public meeting in Kennewick was held on March 6th. About five individuals attended the Kennewick public meeting. City representatives also attended the meetings including City staff, Planning Commissioners, and consultants.

Key climate concerns included rising summer temperatures, wildfire smoke and air quality, and reduced snowpack that could diminish water supply. One commentor noted that one side of Kennewick generally has hotter temperatures and thus would be even hotter with projected temperature increases.

Proposed actions included landscaping and stormwater management strategies, such as xeriscaping, planting native and climate compatible trees, and allowing for stormwater infiltration through low-impact development techniques. Proposed actions also included improving building energy efficiency, expanding electric vehicle use and charging solutions, and increasing housing density.

Key regional takeaways from the March public meetings include.

- Top climate hazard concerns: extreme heat and impacts of rising summer temperatures, wildfires and smoke, drought and reduced snowpack, ecosystem impacts.
- People likely to be affected: outdoor workers, seniors, children, people with existing health conditions, homeless individuals, people without air conditioning, low-income individuals.
- Places likely to be affected: farms and ranches, schools, recreational swimming areas, City infrastructure, neighborhoods with limited tree canopy, stormwater infrastructure, and access to parks or cooling areas
- Possible actions to address climate hazards: conserve water in landscaping and water systems, increase building efficiency and electrification, diversify power sources and increase grid resilience, promote denser development and multimodal transportation, raise community awareness and collaborate on solutions.

Kennewick specific comments included:

- Key climate concerns included rising summer temperatures, wildfire smoke and air quality, and reduced snowpack that could diminish water supply.
- Proposed actions included landscaping and stormwater management strategies, such as xeriscaping, planting native and climate compatible trees, and allowing for stormwater infiltration through low-impact development techniques. Proposed actions also included improving building energy efficiency, expanding electric vehicle use and charging solutions, and increasing housing density.

September Meeting

In September 2025, two additional public meetings were held to seek feedback on the Climate Element. These meetings were open to residents across the region. Pasco hosted an in-person meeting on September 23. Richland hosted an online meeting on September 29. Nine community members attended the two meetings, with two participating in the in-person meeting and seven participating in the online meeting.

Key takeaways from the September public meetings are summarized below.

- Technical information: participants sought clarification about the technical information in the draft Climate Element. Topics raised included climate hazards data, planning timeframe, and natural gas data.
- Goals and policies: participants provided specific feedback on the goals and policies in the draft Climate Element, as well as general feedback for desired goals and policies. These comments covered a wide range of policy topics including: urban forestry, engineered shade, smoke, water storage, composting, light pollution, plug in solar, and heat pumps. Commentors shared different perspectives. In general, common themes included a desire for stronger policy language, ensuring that policies are financially and technically attainable, and setting realistic expectations for the jurisdictions' capacities.
- Implementation: there was strong interest in implementation and the details of how local jurisdictions will implement the goals and policies. Participants asked questions about funding, enforcement, reporting, and training.

- Continued Engagement: participants including representatives of the Mid-Columbia Community Forestry Council, Sustainable Tri-Cities, and Tri-Cities Citizens Climate Lobby asked to continue to be engaged as jurisdictions incorporate the Climate Element into their individual comprehensive plans and begin work on implementation actions.

Key Themes

The following is a summary of key themes and comments heard at all meetings. It is organized around the questions asked during the discussion portion of the public meetings.

Top Climate Hazard Concerns

Attendees' top concerns are listed below. Many attendees agreed that the climate hazards presented from the consulting team's research resonated with their lived experience.

- Extreme heat
- Attendees were concerned with rising summer temperatures and impacts. Many participants stressed that the heat is already inhibiting at times and were concerned that it was expected to worsen.
- Community members expressed concern over extreme heat exposure to outdoor workers, as well as the impacts on outdoor recreation.
- Community members also expressed concern about the increased energy demand on the system, particularly because the region has a growing population and current grid capacity challenges.
- Efforts to reduce emissions add parallel demands on the energy grid, with the adoption of electric vehicles and other electrification initiatives.
- Wildfire and smoke
- Attendees noted that wildfires now occur more frequently and were concerned with the presented information around increased fire risk to homes, as well as related smoke impacts.
- Smokey days have been increasing and getting worse in recent years. Poor air quality from smoke disrupts daily life, hindering outdoor recreation and reducing low-emission commuting options, such as biking or walking to work.
- Some attendees noted that fires in other distant regions, such as Canada can lead to significant smoke accumulation over the Columbia Basin.
- Drought
- Reduced snowpack was a significant point of discussion. Attendees are concerned about the resulting lack of water availability for agriculture and reduced hydropower generation, potentially forcing the purchase of more expensive electricity for the region.
- Attendees pointed out that many residents still have green watered lawns, highlighting a mismatch between current water use practices and the region's water limitations.
- The timing of water needs is shifting—agricultural water demand now occurs later in the summer when water is even scarcer, intensifying competition among sectors (residential, agricultural, ecological).
- Ecosystem Impacts
- Attendees noted that the warmer, shallower water contributes to algae blooms impacting the water sources near the Tri-cities used for recreation and cooling during the summer. This also harms aquatic life, a particular concern for tribal communities with cultural and economic ties to these resources. This also has the potential to impact local drinking water.
- Extreme precipitation

- While some attendees from West Richland considered river flooding and extreme precipitation a minor issue compared to other climate hazards, others from other jurisdictions were more concerned and recalled incidents such as flooding that forced detours around parts of Richland.

Other concerns mentioned that were not in the climate impacts presented by the consultant team included strong winds that can create additional hazards as they can spread wildfires more rapidly, generate dust storms, or physically move debris. A community member also mentioned the social and mental health implications of climate hazards, citing the emotional toll of constantly discussing climate challenges, anxiety, stress, or a sense of divisiveness present in their communities. Additionally, community members raised concerns about wildlife and how climate impacts will challenge plants and animals' ability to survive.

Additionally, some participants questioned the baseline emissions scenarios the consultant team used to analyze climate hazards and projected future impacts. The consultant team analyzed both RCP 8.5 and RCP 4.5 scenarios. Commentors stated RCP 4.5 is realistic, while RCP 8.5 is a worst-case scenario though still in the realm of possibility.

Affected Populations and Places

When asked what specific populations or places will be affected the most by the climate impacts discussed above, attendees mentioned the following, including outdoor workers, vulnerable populations, agriculture, recreational water areas, specific city infrastructure, and certain new development.

- Outdoor workers
- Many attendees voiced their concerns for outdoor workers, in fields such as agriculture, construction, and service sectors, regarding their exposure to climate impacts, such as extreme heat and poor air quality. Some also raised concerns around required breaks to mitigate this extreme heat, reducing productivity and potentially impacting wages and service delivery.
- Vulnerable populations
- Seniors and children are more susceptible to heat-related illnesses and respiratory issues from smoke and poor air quality.
- Those with existing health conditions have a harder time coping with climate hazards.
- Homeless individuals, or those without permanent shelter, are exposed to the elements year-round, leaving them especially vulnerable to climate hazards.
- People without air conditioning are at higher risk of heat and smoke impacts and may not have the option to add air conditioning to their homes.
- Higher cooling costs and the need for air filtration systems due to climate hazards will deepen financial burdens on low-income households or those already facing financial strain.
- Insurance rates are likely to increase nationwide due to climate-related disasters, and this will add financial strain for everyone.
- Agriculture
- Changing temperature and precipitation patterns, along with extreme climate hazards, will challenge existing farming practices.
- Reduced crop yields due to climate impacts, such as smoke or drought conditions, will lead to economic losses for farmers.
- Climate impacts can also increase operational costs, such as electricity for irrigations pumps, which can be compounding financial pressure, especially for smaller farms.
- Livestock are also threatened by climate impacts, such as heat stress, limited water availability, poor air quality, or toxic algae blooms in local water sources.
- Recreational water
- The recreational swimming and water access areas along rivers are at risk due to toxic algae blooms, which also threaten the health of pets and domestic animals that drink river water.

- City infrastructure
- Community members expressed concern that the West Richland wastewater treatment plant is located in a current floodplain.

Potential Actions

Community members brainstormed the following actions the region could take to address climate hazards, covering landscaping, building electrification, clean energy expansion, transportation and land use ideas, and community engagement. There was strong support for incentive-based approaches, as well as equity-focused solutions.

- Landscaping & water management
- Promote xeriscaping and native plants to encourage water-wise landscaping, including mulch and drought-resistant vegetation, while also balancing the need for tree planting to provide shade and decrease heat island effects.
- Improve stormwater management and rainwater storage by using permeable surfaces, infiltration pits, and encourage residents to collect rainwater.
- Support grey water reuse for irrigation by developing clear guidelines and best practices for homeowners and businesses.
- Increase agricultural water efficiency by shifting from spray irrigation to drip systems and improving water-use monitoring.
- Building efficiency & electrification
- Expand weatherization programs and heat pump adoption by increasing incentives for insulation, efficient HVAC systems, and heat pumps to enhance indoor air quality and reduce energy consumption.
- Provide financial support for home and multi-family retrofits by offering rebates for energy-efficient upgrades and addressing the unique needs of apartment complexes.
- Encourage the use of onsite renewable energy by promoting solar installations, electric vehicle charging stations, and electrification in new developments.
- Energy & grid resilience
- Diversify energy sources to improve resilience by supporting hydroelectric power, nuclear energy such as small modular reactors (SMRs), and solar energy where viable.
- Upgrade the electrical grid to handle increasing demand by strengthening infrastructure to support renewable energy integration, peak demand periods, and the expansion of electric vehicle charging.
- Address energy cost disparities by mitigating the disproportionate impact of peak-demand pricing on low-income and rural communities.
- Transportation & land use
- Expand electric vehicle infrastructure by increasing the availability of public Level 2 chargers, electrifying municipal and commercial fleets, and implementing charging solutions for apartment dwellers.
- Enhance public transit by improving transit coverage, schedules, and regional connections.
- Promote denser development by encouraging mixed-use, high-density housing, while also ensuring fire safety measures to compensate for reduced building buffers.
- Community engagement
- Increase public awareness and encouragement of individual climate resilience strategies on water conservation and preparing for extreme weather events.

- Use incentives rather than regulations to drive sustainable choices by implementing rebates, permit fee reductions, and recognition programs for climate-friendly actions, such as biking or using public transit.
- Strengthen regional collaboration on climate adaptation by aligning local policies, integrating hazard mitigation plans, and coordinating with research institutions such as Washington State University (WSU) Tri-Cities.

Goals and Policies

Overall Feedback

Participants expressed several overall desires for the goals and policies in the draft Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element. Some emphasized the need for more directive language, noting that many policies use the terms "encourage" or "support" rather than establishing clear or mandatory requirements. Participants also highlighted the importance of ensuring that all policies are both financially and technically attainable. They suggested setting realistic expectations for the jurisdictions' capacities.

Topic-Specific Feedback

The discussion also covered the following topics and policy suggestions.

- Urban forestry
- A participant representing Mid-Columbia Community Forestry Council (MCFC) encouraged preserving existing tree canopy and using a tree equity tool (TreeEquityScore.org) and offered their groups' expertise and assistance to the regional jurisdictions in implementing corresponding goals and policies.
- Another participant noted they had concerns about homeowners removing trees and the need for protective policies or education about how to care for trees so they remain healthy.
- There was discussion of the tension between trees' shade and aesthetic benefits and the fact that they require water which is limited in this arid region.
- Engineered shade
- A participant suggested including policies recommending engineered shade for bus stops and within building design as an alternative when water for trees is scarce.
- Smoke
- Smoke was highlighted as a primary hazard by a participant, who emphasized the need for goals and policies to address it.
- Water storage
- A participant suggested that there should be a greater emphasis on water storage and strategies regarding snowpack management with the faster melt.
- Composting
- Composting and green-waste access was identified as a gap in the policies by one participant, noting there are very limited practical options currently in the region.
- Light pollution
- A participant suggested addressing light pollution at night, citing the negative effects on wildlife and nearby residents exposed to bright lights.
- Patio plug-in solar systems

- There was interest in policies specifically supporting plug-in/patio solar systems designed for residential use.
- Heat pumps
- A participant suggested adding more explicit language around heat pumps under GHG mitigation policies.

Implementation

The following themes from the discussion centered around next steps and implementation of the draft goals and polices.

- Community Engagement
- Participants representing MCFC, Sustainable Tri-Cities, and Tri-Cities Citizens Climate Lobby asked to continue to be engaged as jurisdictions incorporate the Regional Climate Element into their individual comprehensive plans and begin work on implementation actions.
- Funding
- There was concern that funding for implementing these policies is missing and major jurisdiction planning initiatives, such as those focused on housing and climate, may compete for limited resources.
- Enforcement
- There were questions about whether there could be consequences for the jurisdictions if they were not compliant with state law.
- A participant had concerns there would not be equal contributions from jurisdictions in the region and wondered if enforcement or funding consequences could exist for underperforming jurisdictions.
- Reporting
- There were questions around reporting and tracking roles among jurisdictions.
- A participant called for clearer plans on long-term climate data tracking and maintenance, and more transparency about data sources.
- Training
- A participant had a suggestion for additional climate training and education for jurisdiction staff who will implement and enforce policies.

Project Website

BFCOG developed a project webpage to provide project background information, updates, key dates, and materials for review. The webpage address is: https://www.bfcog.us/180/Climate-Change. This website will continue to be a resource for regional climate efforts. The final Regional Tri-Cities Climate Element and related documents are on the website.

CLIMATE IMPACTS SUMMARY

A full revision of the Climate Impacts Summary was not scoped for this project. As a result, the Climate Impacts Summary has had minor edits, including removing jurisdiction-specific materials for all jurisdictions except Benton County and Kennewick. This includes the removal of maps and figures when a Kennewick-specific version already exists.

Executive Summary

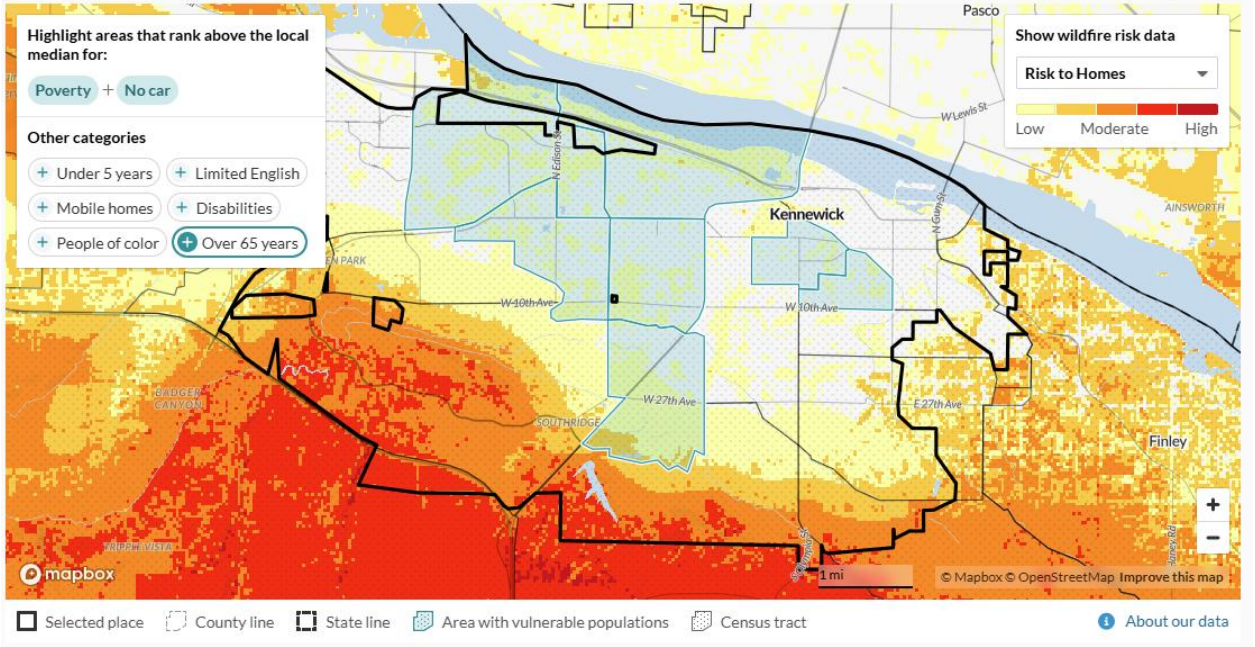
This section provides a summary of the key climate impact findings and their potential impacts on Benton County and Kennewick. The City of Kennewick is likely to experience more extreme heat and wildfire risk days and more variable precipitation by the end of this century (**Figure C-15**). An increase in wildfire risk will particularly affect vulnerable populations in Kennewick (**Figure C-16**).

- Extreme heat: Temperatures in Benton County have increased 2.9°F since 1895. Kennewick is predicted to experience 45 days over 100°F by 2099, compared to just three days over 100°F in 2000 (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012).
- Wildfire: Higher summer temperatures greatly increase the risk and severity of fire in Kennewick. Kennewick has very high fire danger expectations. By 2070, the city can expect 64 high fire danger days per year. Over two thirds (69 percent) of properties in Kennewick are at risk of wildfire damage in the next 30 years (First Street Risk Factor, 2025). Models cannot accurately predict wildfire risks beyond 2070, so they have been omitted from the summary table.
- Precipitation and Flood Events: Kennewick can expect a slight increase in annual precipitation. Historical winter precipitation is just under three inches. By 2100, annual winter precipitation is expected to increase by a quarter of an inch. As it increases, so does the potential for flooding that can occur due to sudden rain events and snowmelt. By the end of century, winter precipitation is predicted to be around 3.3 inches, an increase of nearly 10 percent (Abatzoglou, 2013).
- Drought: Kennewick can expect a decrease in summer precipitation of around 8.5 percent (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012). Additionally, summer streamflows in the region will decrease because of smaller snowpacks and earlier snowmelt, contributing to lower water availability during warm months. However, there is uncertainty, and some models predict increasing summer precipitation (Rogers & Mauger, 2021).

Figure C-15. Summary of key climate impacts in Kennewick. Data compiled from Climate Toolbox Future Climate Scenarios.

Impact	Indicator	Historical	RCP4.5	RCP8.5	RCP4.5	RCP8.5	RCP4.5	RCP8.5
		1970-2000	2010-2039	2010-2039	2040-2069	2040-2069	2070-2099	2070-2099
Extreme Heat	Days over 100°F	3	9	10	17	24	22	45
Wildfire	Number of High Fire Danger Days	54	58	60	62	64	N/A	N/A
Extreme Precipitation	Average Winter Precipitation in inches	2.97	3.14	3.14	3.26	3.3	3.25	3.26
Drought	Average Summer Precipitation in Inches	.95	.95	.94	.89	.88	.94	.87

Figure C-16. Kennewick wildfire risk map and vulnerable populations (population in poverty and population without car access).



wildfirerisk.org; accessed 16 January 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Introduction

The Kennewick Climate Impacts Summary (CIS) examines past trends and future projections to outline how climate change and associated hazards affect Kennewick. The Kennewick CIS is adapted from the regional CIS that was developed for the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Element. The Regional CIS included Benton County, Kennewick, Pasco, Richland, and West Richland. The Kennewick CIS is one piece of the Climate Element. This CIS is adapted from the Tri-Cities Regional CIS to focus on the climate hazards that impact the City of Kennewick while acknowledging that climate hazards impact the entire Tri-Cities Region similarly.

The CIS informs the next steps of this process, including a climate gaps and opportunities assessment of existing comprehensive plans in Kennewick, as well as a climate vulnerability assessment (CVA), which will assess climate risks to communities and infrastructure in the region. For more information on the regional climate planning effort, visit https://www.bfcog.us/180/Climate-Change.

Kennewick experiences climate impacts including drought, extreme heat, severe storms, wildfire smoke, and air and water quality issues. The CIS focuses on the following four key impacts (detailed in the Summary of Climate Impacts section):

- Extreme Heat: Warmer year-round temperatures, including higher maximum summer temperatures and more frequent and severe heat waves.
- Wildfires and Smoke: Higher risk of wildfires and increased wildfire activity are expected due to extreme heat and heightened drought, resulting in increased smoke and poor air quality.
- Extreme Precipitation and Flooding: Winter rainfall is projected to increase in frequency and intensity, leading to increased flooding.

- Drought: Slight decrease in summertime rainfall. Declining summer precipitation can lead to more frequent, longer, and severe regional droughts. This is accompanied by a projected decrease in snowpack and reduced summer streamflows.

Legislative Background

WA House Bill (HB) 1181

Washington House Bill (HB) 1181, a 2023 amendment to the Washington Growth Management Act (GMA), requires cities and counties to integrate climate policies into their comprehensive plan updates. Kennewick must adopt policy changes that lower GHG emissions and enhance resiliency to climate impacts across multiple sectors to align with this legislative requirement (Washington Department of Commerce, 2023).

Climate Planning Guidance in WA

Identifying the climate impacts most relevant to Kennewick is the first step in the Department of Commerce's ("Commerce") Climate Resilience Guidance framework that outlines the steps to develop a Climate Element. This framework integrates the US Climate Resilience Toolkit and best practices from organizations including the Association of Washington Cities, the Municipal Research and Services Center of Washington, and the American Planning Association. The CIS aligns with Step 3, Tasks 1.1–1.3 of Commerce's Climate Element Workbook step to explore how expected changes in the climate could exacerbate natural hazards (e.g., droughts, floods, etc.) and impact critical assets and sectors (e.g., ecosystems, infrastructure, public health, etc.).

Climate Impacts Assessment

Methodology

Cascadia used a variety of peer-reviewed resources to perform this climate impacts assessment and to show observed and projected climate trends relevant to the region (**Figure C-17**). Cascadia relied on county-scale climate impact data, as noted throughout the document, and included city-scale data when available.

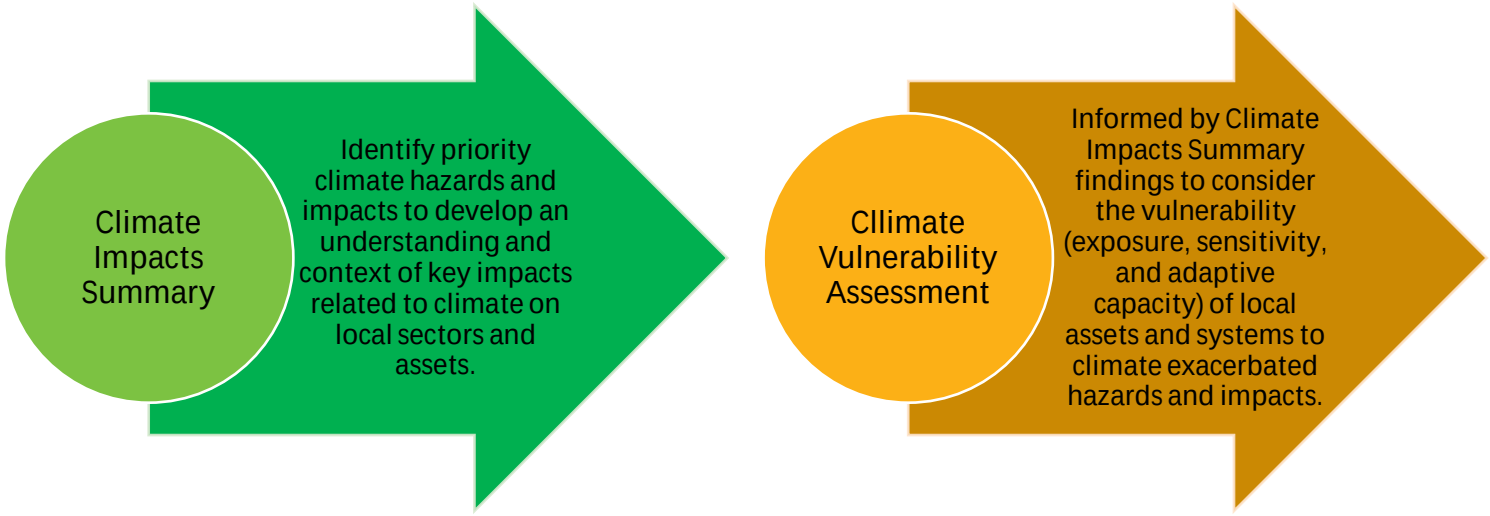
Figure C-17. Resources used for the Climate Impacts Summary.

Resource	Publisher/ Data Source	Scale	Impact Addressed
Climate Toolbox	National Centers for Environmental Information MACAv2-METDATA	City, County	Extreme Heat Wildfire Extreme Precipitation
Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington	Salathé et al. (Drought) Abatzoglou & Brown (Extreme Heat) Chegwidden et al. (Extreme Precipitation)	County	Extreme Heat Wildfire Drought Extreme Precipitation
Climate at-a-Glance Tool	NOAA	County	Extreme Heat

National Climate Assessment Interactive Atlas	Pierce et al. (Extreme Heat) Hayhoe et al. (Extreme Precipitation)	County	Extreme Heat Extreme Precipitation
Wildfire Risk to Communities	USDA US Forest Service	City	Wildfire & Wildfire Smoke
Washington Drought Monitor	US Drought Monitor	County	Drought
CDC ASTDR Social Vulnerability Index	Centers for Disease Control & Prevention/ Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry	County	Social Vulnerability
AirNow	EPA's Air Quality System (AQS) Data Mart.	County	Wildfire & Wildfire Smoke

This climate impacts assessment's description of current and future climate hazards will inform the climate vulnerability assessment, which will evaluate risks of those hazards to local assets and systems (**Figure C-18**).

Figure C-18. Overview of Climate Impacts and Vulnerability Assessment Processes.



Climate Drivers and Variability

Climate describes a region's typical weather patterns. Kennewick has a semi-arid climate characterized by its moderate temperatures and minimal rainfall. Climate change refers to long-term shifts in weather patterns and environmental conditions due to human activities such as the emission of greenhouse gases (GHGs) from fossil fuel use. Higher levels of atmospheric GHGs, notably due to carbon emissions, have driven the increase in land and ocean temperatures since the Industrial Revolution, leading to intensified heatwaves, wildfires, storms, droughts, and melting glaciers (Marvel, et al., 2023).

There are natural feedback processes like the El Niño-Southern Oscillation and the Pacific Decadal Oscillation that contribute to variations in air temperature, extreme weather events, and precipitation over multi-year and multi-decade periods. These cycles can strongly influence the annual climates of the counties. For

example, during an El Niño year, winters tend to be warmer and drier, while La Niña years typically bring cooler and wetter winters. However, the rate of climate change caused by human activities far exceeds any natural variability from these processes (Perlwitz, Knutson, Kossin, & LeGrande, 2017).

Understanding human-caused climate change within the context of these natural cycles is crucial. Year-to-year weather patterns can be unpredictable, influenced by both natural variability and human activities. Despite these natural fluctuations, there are clear signs that the Tri-Cities Region's climate is undergoing significant changes.

Climate Scenarios and Modeling

GHG emissions are driving climate changes, with future impacts dependent on the trajectory of emissions and other choices. This CIS uses climate change scenarios known as Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) to assess potential future climate conditions. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) developed RCPs, which depict a range of potential climate impacts.

Each RCP illustrates a possible level of carbon dioxide and other emissions in the atmosphere based on a range of possible human behaviors and climate processes. These pathways cover a broad spectrum of potential futures, influenced by factors such as land use, technological advancements, economic activities, energy sources, and human behaviors. These pathways allow researchers, policymakers, and communities to explore potential risks and plan for changes (IPCC, 2022).

This CIS uses both RCP4.5 and RCP8.5 to evaluate climate risks, in alignment with WA Department of Commerce's Climate Element planning guidance. RCP8.5 is a high emissions scenario that would occur without global policies to reduce emissions, if GHG emissions were to continue their current trajectory. RCP8.5 is often referred to as the 'business-as-usual' scenario that closely aligns with expected trends in GHG emissions. This high emissions scenario projects a global temperature warming of about 4.3˚C (approximately 7.7˚F) by 2100 compared to pre-industrial temperatures (IPCC, 2022). RCP4.5 is a lower emissions scenario that reflects a future where GHG emissions are significantly curbed due to global cooperation.

Utilizing both RCP8.5 and RCP4.5 provides a comprehensive understanding of the potential severity of climate impacts to the Tri-Cities Region. RCP8.5 ensures that informed adaptation and implementation policies will be robust enough to prepare for the severe potential impacts of climate change. RCP4.5 shows the potential impacts that may still occur in a reduced emissions scenario. There are many known and unknown factors influencing the impacts of climate change; we do not yet know which scenario will become reality. However, the observed increase in GHG emissions of the past 15 to 20 years aligns with the projected high emissions scenario (Hayhoe, et al., 2017). In addition, in many areas, climate impacts are more severe than anticipated (Teirstein, 2021).

This approach will help Kennewick effectively protect its communities, infrastructure, and natural resources against the most extreme climate risks. Moreover, the approach follows that of other assessments in Washington State and aligns with state guidance for climate resilience planning.

Summary of Climate Impacts

The following sections provide an overview of key climate change impacts and how they are expected to affect local sectors. This assessment aims to build a baseline awareness to guide the Kennewick resilience planning within the Climate Element.

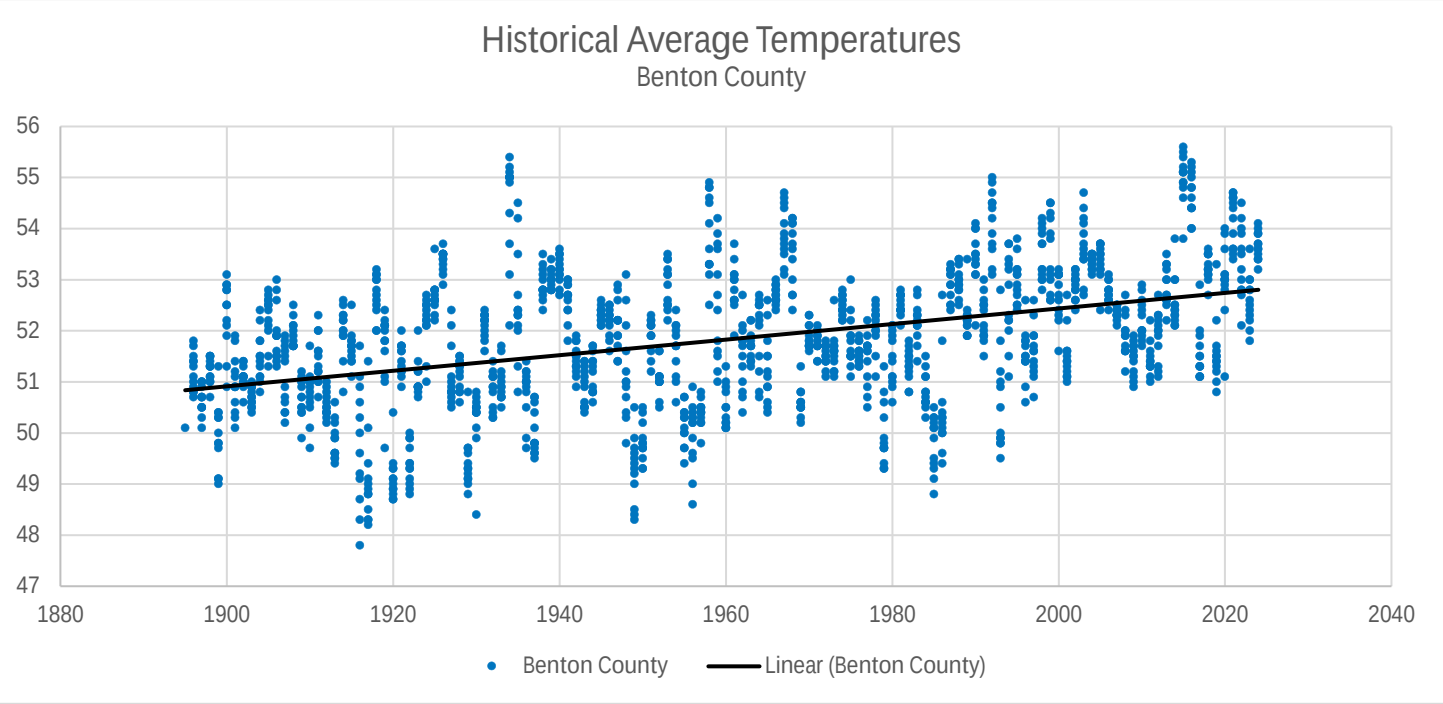
Kennewick experiences many types of severe weather. Its position in a basin often leads to temperature inversions that cause fog and poor air quality. Storms can also occur, and though rare, a tornado did hit the Tri-Cities region in 2016. Summers in Kennewick are hot with low humidity, which raises wildfire risk. In 2018, a wildfire on I-82 burned 5,000 acres and destroyed 5 homes in Kennewick. The frequency and duration of extreme weather is expected to increase in the coming decades due to climate change.

Extreme Heat

The average annual temperature in the U.S. northwest has increased by 2°F since the early 20th century (Chang, et al., Ch. 27. Northwest, 2023). Additionally, the coldest day of the year from 1986 to 2016 was 4.78°F warmer compared to 1901 to 1960 (Office of the Washington State Climatologist, 2023).

Temperatures in Benton and Franklin Counties have similarly been increasing. Since 1895, the average annual temperatures in Benton County have increased 2.9°F (**Figure C-19**) (NOAA, National Centers for Environmental Information., n.d.).

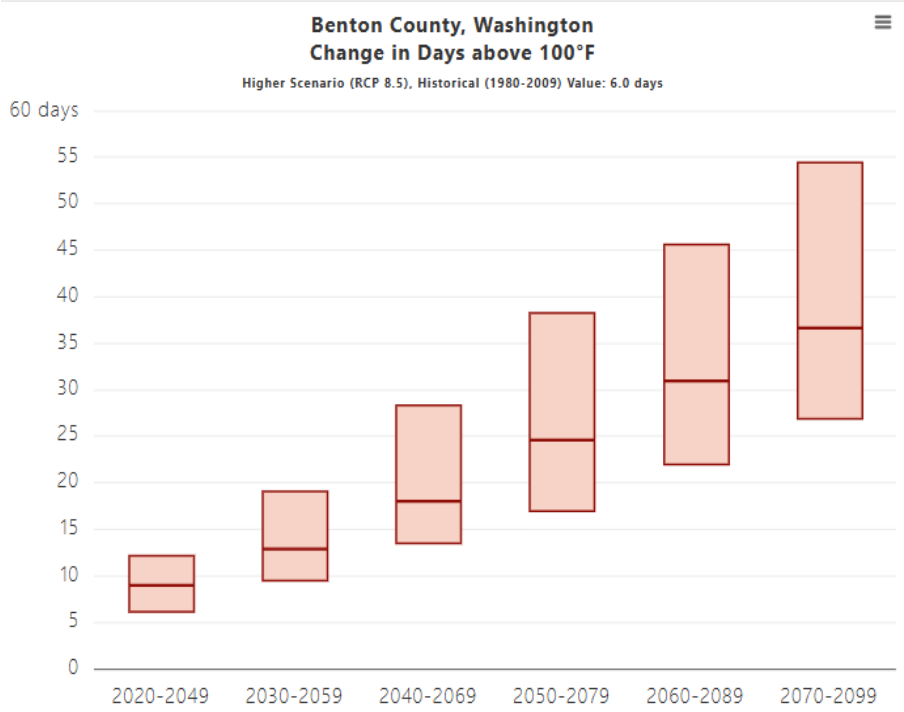
Figure C-19. Average historical annual temperatures in Benton and Franklin Counties.



(NOAA, 2024). Graph by Cascadia.

Between 1971 and 2000, Benton County experienced an average of one extreme heat day, or a day over 100°F per year, from April to October, while Kennewick experienced an average of three. The historical average high summer temperature was 86°F in Benton County. The number of high heat days is also expected to increase in Benton County (**Figure C-20**). By the end of the century, Benton County is expected to experience a minimum of 10 additional days of extreme heat, and upwards of 36 additional days of extreme heat in a high emissions scenario, while Kennewick may experience a minimum of twenty-two additional days of extreme heat, and as many as forty-five (**Figure C-21**). This number of extreme heat days will mark a significant increase in heat-related public health stress compared to historical averages. In a high emissions scenario, average high summer temperatures may reach 112°F in Benton County by the end of the century (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012).

Figure C-20. Change in number of days over 100°F in Benton County.



Climate Mapping for Resilient Washington; Accessed 4 March 2025.

Additionally, historical average summer (June, July, August) temperatures in Benton County, average summer temperatures increased 1.7°F between 1950 and 2004 (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012). Average summer temperatures in Franklin County may increase 10.8°F by end of century in high emissions projections (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025). In Benton County, the average summer temperatures may increase 11.9°F by end of century in high emissions projections (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025).

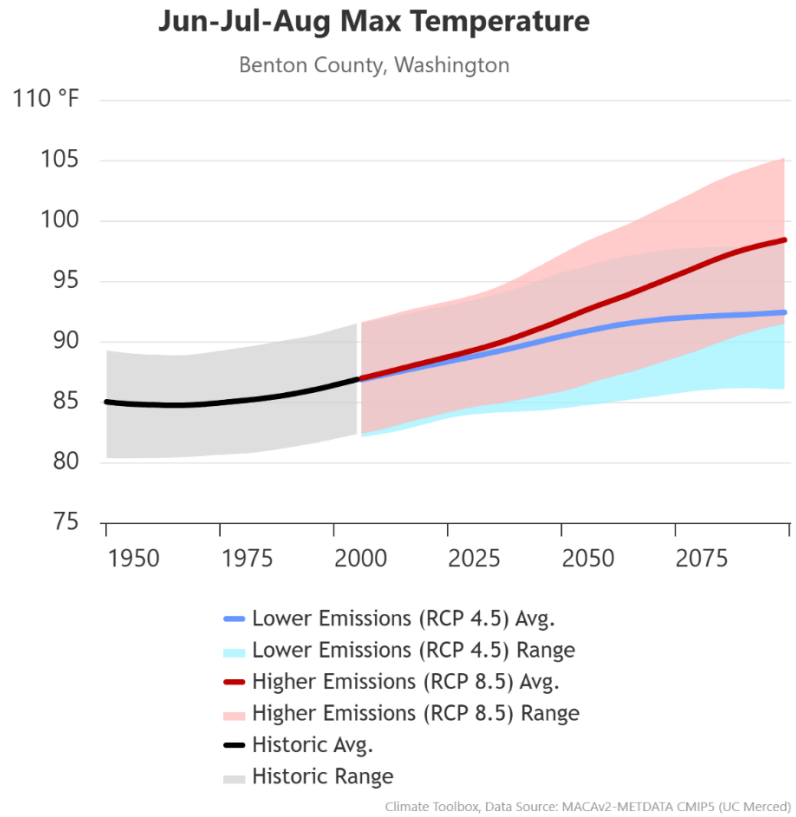
Figure C-21. Change in number of hot days. Hot days are defined as having a high temperature over 100°F.

Extreme Heat (April-October)	Benton County	Benton County	Kennewick	Kennewick
	2040-2069	2070-2099	2040-2069	2070-2099
Historical Baseline Number of Hot Days over 100°F (1971-2000)	1	1	3	3
Change Number of Hot Days over 100°F (RCP 8.5)	16	34	24	45

Change Number of Hot Days over 100°F (RCP 4.5)	10	14	17	22

Accessed via Future Climate Dashboard: Climate Impacts Toolbox (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025).

Figure C-22. Benton County and Franklin County average summer (June, July, August) high temperatures.



Data from Climate Toolbox Future Time Series. Accessed 2 February 2026.

Sector Impacts by Increased Likelihood of Extreme Heat

Many sectors in Kennewick, including ecosystems, economic development, and human health may be affected by extreme heat.

Sector Impacts
Buildings & Energy

- Warmer temperatures will reduce energy demand for heating. This may reduce energy costs for businesses and residents and decrease utility revenue to support infrastructure and operations.
- Extreme heat will increase energy demand for air conditioning and industrial cooling systems in summer when regional hydropower supply is expected to decrease. Demand for new air conditioning and infrastructure with cooling systems will increase.

Cultural Resources and Practices

- Warmer stream temperatures will reduce habitat quality for salmonids and other aquatic species that depend on cold water. This reduces the abundance of and access to these culturally important species for residents, particularly Northwest Tribes.

Ecosystems

- Warmer temperatures will reduce summer soil moisture and increase physiological stress for some plants and animals.
- Extreme heat can increase outbreaks of pests, such as mountain pine beetles.
- Warmer summer stream temperatures will decrease the quality of habitat for salmonids and other aquatic species that depend on cold water. Warmer stream temperatures can create barriers to salmonid migration and higher rates of mortality.
- Warmer water can increase toxic algae, affecting water health for fish and wildlife.

Economic Development

- Warmer temperatures may increase the variability in warm season recreation activity opportunities.

Emergency Management

- More frequent extreme daytime heat events are expected to increase the demand for emergency services to plan, prepare, and respond to human health impacts. Extreme heat may also affect emergency services due to transportation and travel disruptions such as warped and buckling pavement on roads.

Human Health

- Warmer temperatures may increase concentrations of air pollutants, such as ozone.
- Warmer temperatures may increase in vector-borne illnesses, such as West Nile virus.
- Warmer temperatures may increase heat-related deaths, illness, and hospitalizations.
- Warmer water can increase toxic algae, affecting water quality and safety for residents.

Transportation

- More extreme heat days may damage the surfaces of roads and bridges, leading to greater maintenance and repair costs and more frequent traffic and service disruptions.

Zoning & Development

- Warmer stream temperatures may reduce the ability to meet water quality standards and the effluent limits (amount discharge to the water body) set on existing wastewater treatment facilities.

While the historical county-wide average number of hot days over 100°F is just one day per year, due to factors including the urban heat island effect, all cities in Benton County were warmer and experienced two to three days hot days, or days over 100°F, per year. In the coming decades, the number of hot days is projected to increase.

Figure C-23. Change in number of hot days. Hot days are defined as temperatures over 100°F.

Extreme Heat	Kennewick	Kennewick
	2040-2069	2070-2099
Historical Baseline Average Annual Number of Hot Days over 100°F (1971-2000)	3	3
Annual Number of Hot Days over 100°F (RCP 8.5)	24	45
Annual Number of Hot Days over 100°F (RCP 4.5)	17	22

Accessed via Future Climate Dashboard: Climate Impacts Toolbox (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025).

Wildfire & Smoke

The Tri-Cities Region and Eastern Washington have a long history of wildfires. Fire suppression policies, in addition to climate impacts such as warmer temperatures and earlier snowmelt, contribute to increased risk of wildfire. Wildfires are expected to increase in frequency and severity due to climate change (USDA, US Forest Service, 2024).

Historically, Benton County experiences an average of 53 days per year of high fire danger days, which are days when conditions are such that fires can easily start and spread quickly. By 2070, Benton and Franklin County may expect 15 to 16 more days of high fire danger on average, totaling 68 to 69 days per year (**Figure C-24**).

Kennewick's location increases the likelihood of inversions, which are weather events that can trap air in the valley and contribute to poor air quality. During wildfire smoke events, inversions can worsen poor air quality, trapping smoke close to the surface.

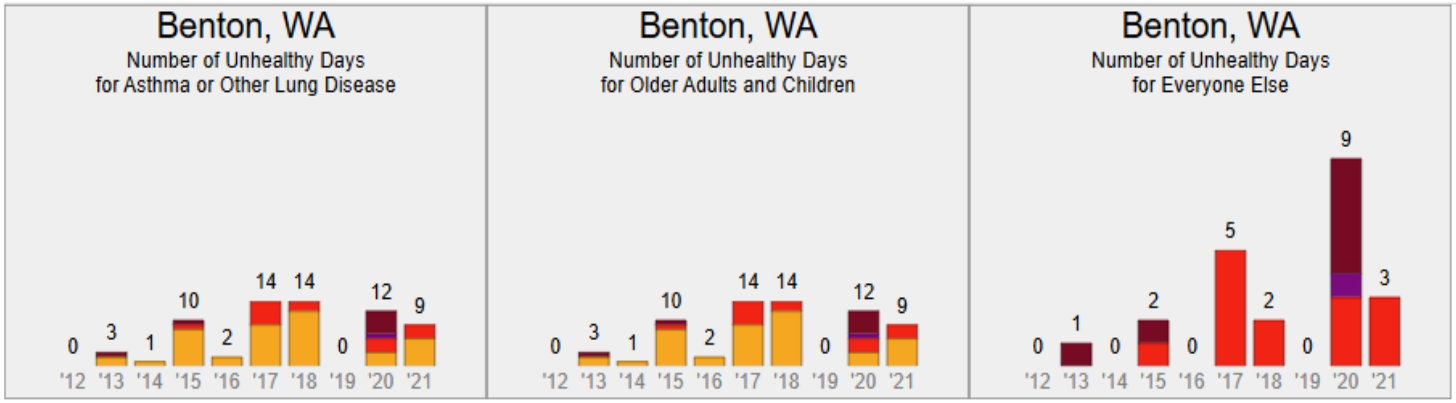
Figure C-24. Change in high fire danger days. Accessed via Future Climate Dashboard: Climate Impacts Toolbox (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025).

Wildfire	Benton County	Benton County	Kennewick	Kennewick
	2010-2039	2040-2069	2010-2039	2040-2069
Historical Baseline Number of High Fire Danger Days	54	54	54	54
Change in High Fire Danger Days (RCP 8.5)	8.98	16.01	5	9.5
Change in High Fire Danger Days (RCP 4.5)	5.88	12.75	3.7	7.3

In addition to direct wildfire exposure, wildfire smoke is the largest source of particle pollution in Washington and can pose a significant health risk (State of Washington Department of Ecology, 2024). Exposure to wildfire smoke is associated with increased hospital admissions and exacerbated respiratory and cardiac

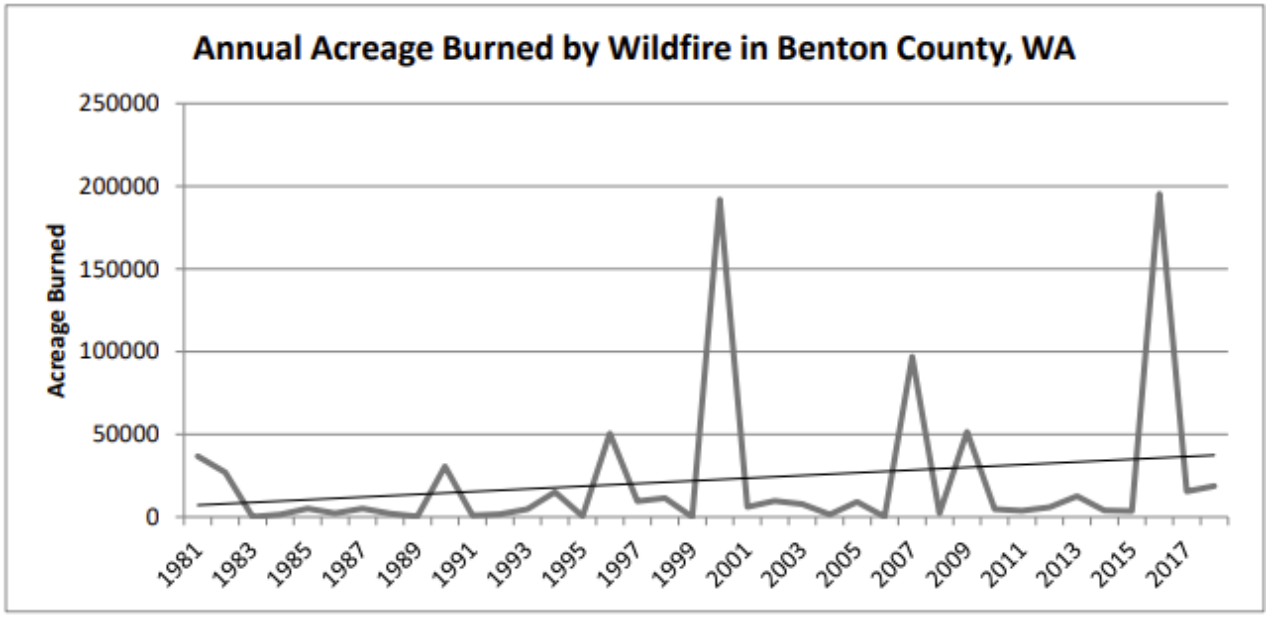
conditions (Wilgus & M. Merchant, 2024). As climate change drives more frequent wildfires across the region, associated health impacts of wildfire smoke exposure, such as cardiovascular and respiratory issues, are expected to rise (Clarke & Cirulis, 2023).

Figure C-25. Air quality for sensitive groups and the general population in Benton County



(Air Compare. EPA AirNow Tool).

Figure C-26. Annual acreage burned by wildfires in Benton County from 1981-2017.

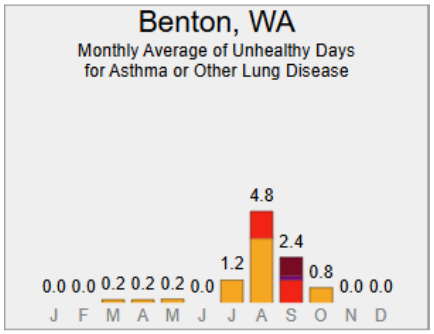


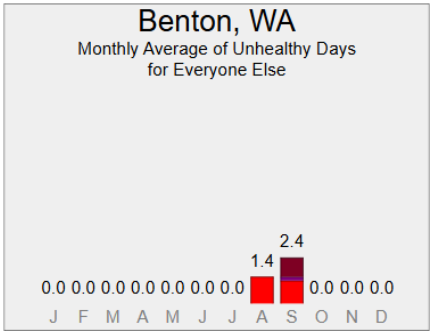
(Benton County Emergency Management, 2018)

While not the only cause of poor air quality in Kennewick, data demonstrates that August and September have worse air quality that can coincide with smoke from wildfire (**Figure C-27**). Years with worse air quality are often years with high wildfire activity (**Figure C-25** and **Figure C-26**).

The average August in Benton County has one and a half days of air quality rated as unhealthy (as defined in **Figure C-27**

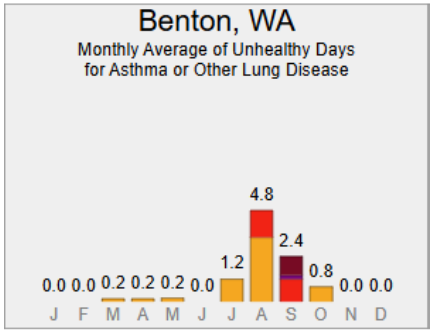
Index Value	Level of Health Concern	What it Means
301 - 500	Hazardous	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.
201 - 300	Very Unhealthy	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
151 - 200	Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.

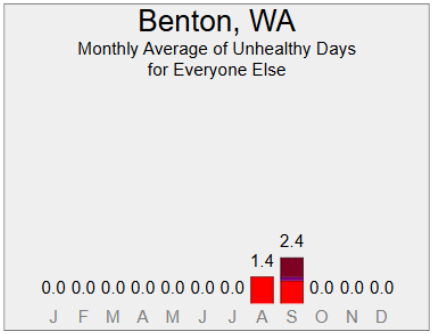




) for all groups, while Franklin County has almost one day of air quality rated as unhealthy. Benton and Franklin Counties experience Septembers with worse average air quality, with at least two days per month with unhealthy or hazardous air quality (**Figure C-27**

Index Value	Level of Health Concern	What it Means
301 - 500	Hazardous	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.
201 - 300	Very Unhealthy	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
151 - 200	Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.

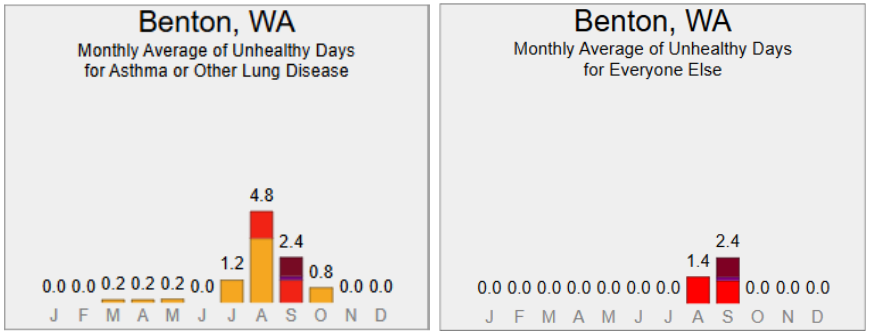




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Figure C-27. Air Quality Index (AQI) level of health concern definitions and implications (left). Average monthly air quality for sensitive groups and the general population in Benton County (right). Air is considered unhealthy when the AQI is over 200.

Index Value	Level of Health Concern	What it Means
301 - 500	Hazardous	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.
201 - 300	Very Unhealthy	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
151 - 200	Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.



(Air Compare. EPA AirNow Tool).

Sectors Impacted by Increased Likelihood of Wildfire and Smoke

Wildfire and wildfire smoke affects several sectors. For example, people working outside will have increased exposure, there may be a higher demand for emergency responders responding to fires, and construction projects can get delayed due to the inability to work due to poor air quality.

Sector Impacts
Buildings & Energy
• Wildfires may damage infrastructure, affecting energy transmission and distribution. • Poor air quality from wildfire smoke could increase demand for air filtration systems.
Cultural Resources and Practices
• Wildfire can damage cultural and historical sites, buildings, and cultural resources. • Wildfire can reduce access to culturally important sites and resources for Northwest Tribes.
Ecosystems
• Wildfire may reduce vegetation including timber, shrub steppe, and other vegetation, carbon storage, and habitat. • Wildfire may increase establishment of invasive species.

- Wildfire may increase runoff and sediment to streams, harming aquatic habitats.

Economic Development

- Wildfire and wildfire smoke events may lead to more interruptions and closures of businesses and recreation areas.
- Wildfire and wildfire risk may lead to higher insurance premiums or more difficulty insuring properties.

Emergency Management

- Wildfire and wildfire smoke events may increase the need for emergency management services, requiring more resources.

Human Health

- Wildfire and wildfire smoke may impact human health through loss of life, injury and reduced mental health associated with displacement.
- Poor air quality from wildfire smoke can cause adverse respiratory health effects.

Waste Management

- Wildfires may generate greater amounts of debris and waste that could strain municipal cleanup and landfill ability to transport and store waste.

Water Resources

- Wildfires may damage water distribution infrastructure.
- Wildfires may reduce water quality in reservoirs due to more runoff, erosion, and turbidity. Could increase the need for water treatment and filtration.

Transportation

- Wildfires may cause travel disruptions due to increases in road closures and delays of construction projects.
- Roadside brush fires can create safety hazards and disrupt transportation.

Zoning and Development

- Wildfires and smoke may damage homes and infrastructure.
- Wildfires may cause displacement of residents.

Wildfire risk encompasses the probability of a fire occurring and the weather, landscape, and topographical factors that contribute to the fire and its intensity. Homes and properties in or near wildland areas such as forests and plains are more at risk of wildfire. These areas are called the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). Building materials, land use decisions, evacuation and preparation including defensible space are all considered when assessing wildfire risk (USDA, US Forest Service, 2024). According to the US Forest Service, annual wildfire risk in Kennewick is very high compared with other cities in the United States (**Figure C-28**). Benton County and Kennewick historically experienced 53 high fire danger days per year (**Figure C-30**).

Figure C-28. Summary of Kennewick wildfire risks relative to communities in the US.

Risk Type	Risk level
Wildfire likelihood	Very High
Risk to Homes	Very High
Risk Reduction Zones	Medium
Vulnerable Populations	High

(USDA, US Forest Service, 2024).

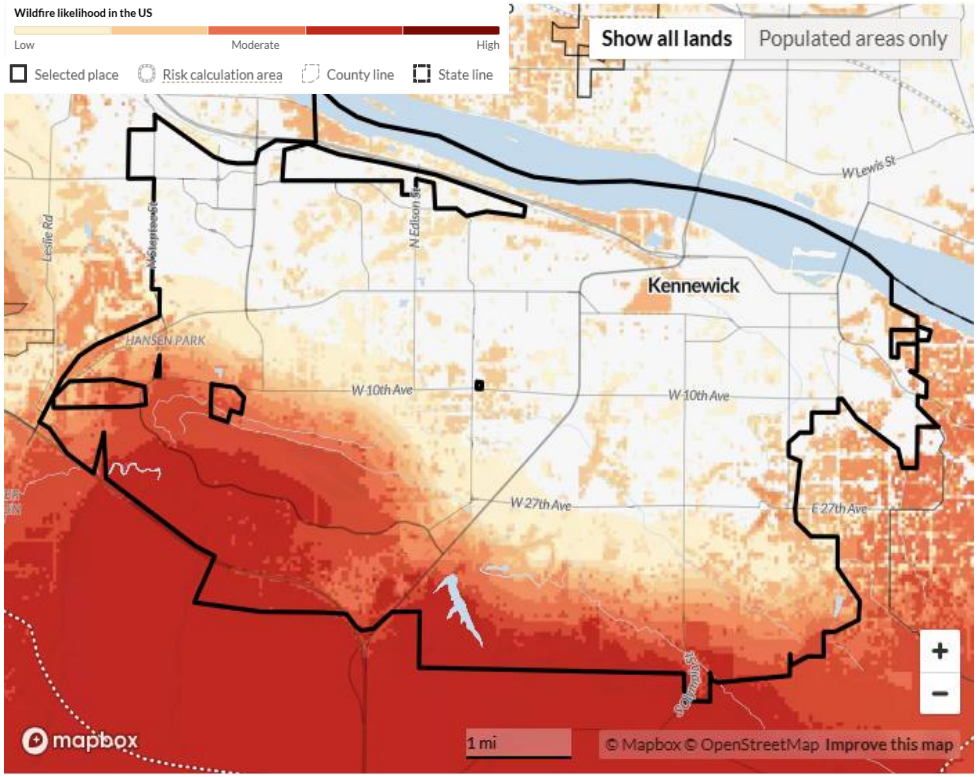
Due to location and other factors, the relative increase in the number of high fire danger days does not directly inform the wildfire likelihood. Each city can expect from five to eight additional fire danger days in the next few decades in a low emissions scenario, to upwards of 15 additional fire danger days by end of the century in high emissions scenarios (**Figure C-30**). Current wildfire hazard maps for the cities in this assessment depict this variation in **Figure C-31**. The values are representative of risk proportional to the entire country, highlighting the significant risk of wildfire in this region. The cumulative risk is assessed by combining the risk to homes, risk reduction zones, wildfire likelihood, and vulnerable populations. For example, in Kennewick, there is very high risk to homes, high wildfire likelihood, medium risk reduction zones, and highly vulnerable populations.

Figure C-30. Change in number of high summer fire danger days.

Wildfire	Kennewick	Kennewick
	2010-2039	2040-2069
Historical Baseline Number of Summer Fire Danger Days (1971-2000)	54	54
Change in Number of High Fire Danger Days (RCP 8.5)	5	9.5
Change in Number of High Fire Danger Days (RCP 4.5)	3.7	7.3

Accessed via Future Climate Dashboard: Climate Impacts Toolbox (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025).

Figure C-31. Current city wildfire risks showing the likelihood of fire.



Accessed 16 January 2025 from wildfirerisk.org.

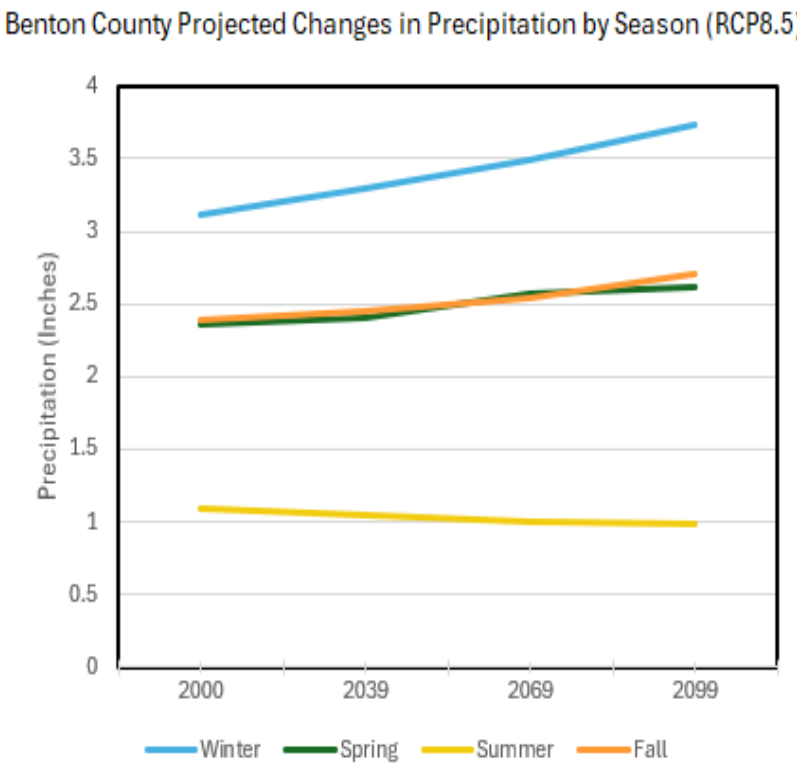
The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Precipitation and Flood Events

Historical average annual precipitation from 1971 to 2000 was 8.98 inches in Benton County (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). In a high emissions pathway, precipitation in the Tri-Cities Region is expected to increase an average of 1.09 inches in Benton County (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Figure C-32 shows the changes in precipitation under the RCP8.5 higher emissions pathway. Spring, fall, and winter precipitation will all increase, with the greatest increases in winter. Using RCP8.5 projections, winter precipitation in Benton County may increase 0.63 inches (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). In an RCP8.5 scenario, summer precipitation will decrease 0.11 inches in Benton County (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

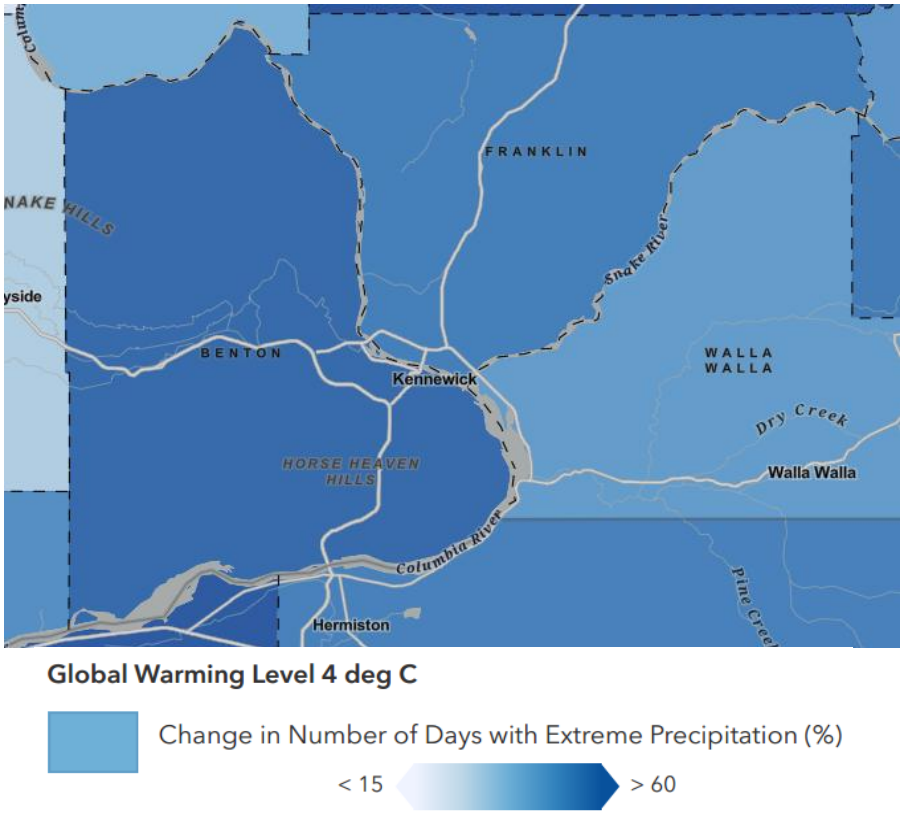
Figure C-32. Projected change in seasonal precipitation in Benton County from Historical Baseline (1971-2000).



Accessed 31 January 2025 from Climate Toolbox (Abatzoglou, 2013; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025). Figure by Cascadia.

Figure C-33 shows that the number of days with extreme precipitation will increase in Benton County. Extreme precipitation events are expected to increase 54 percent in Benton County (Hayhoe & A. Stoner, 2023). Higher intensity rainfall can quickly oversaturate soils and overwhelm stormwater systems, leading to more significant flooding events.

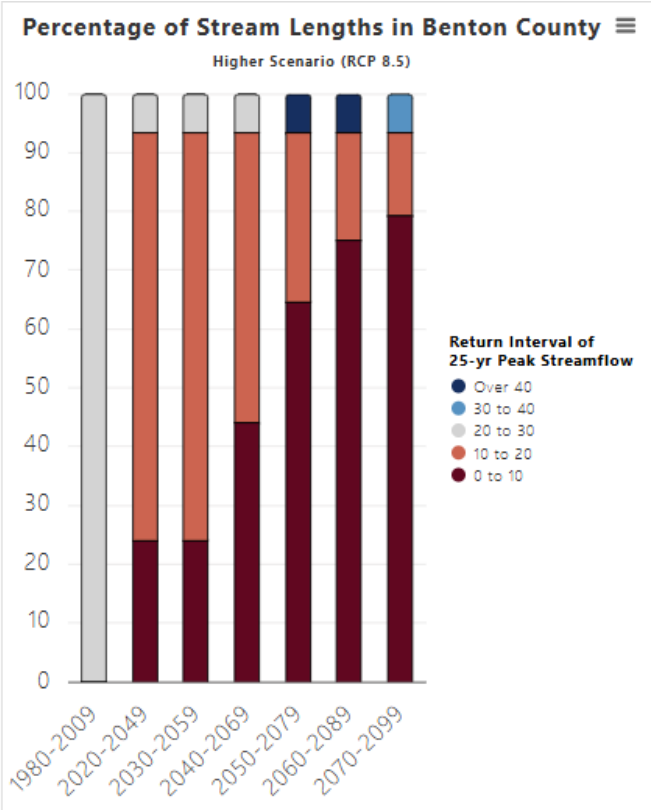
Figure C-33. Change in number of days with extreme precipitation.



Accessed 5 February 2025 from the National Climate Assessment Interactive Access Explorer (Hayhoe & A. Stoner, 2023).

Extreme precipitation events directly influence streamflows and flooding risks. **Figure C-34** shows the frequency of peak stream flows in Benton County. Peak streamflow is the daily maximum streamflow that occurs, on average, once every 25 years. The future frequency of high annual streamflow is an indicator of flooding potential. For example, 10 percent of the stream segments in the 10 to 16 category means that 10 percent of the streams in Benton County will have historical peak streamflow occur on average once every 10 to 16 years, rather than historical average once every 25 years (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Figure C-34. Peak streamflow intervals in Benton County.



(Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). Accessed 3 January 2025.

In **Figure C-34**, reds show stream segments with the historical peak streamflow value occurring more frequently and blue segments show historical peak streamflow occurring less frequently (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). Due to expected increases in extreme precipitation, Benton County can expect almost 80 percent of streams to have peak streamflows every zero to ten years by 2070-2099 in high emissions projections (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). This increase in extreme precipitation and the associated higher streamflows are likely to cause more flooding.

Sector Impacts of Precipitation and Flood Events

Precipitation and flooding events can affect physical infrastructure in the Tri-Cities Region with compounding impacts to emergency response capabilities and economic impacts to workers and businesses.

Sector Impacts

Cultural Resources and Practices

- Higher streamflows will affect salmonid populations and alter salmonid habitat, reducing the quantity of a culturally important species for Northwest Tribes.

Ecosystems

- Increased precipitation increases streamflows, which can scour streambeds and remove or crush salmon eggs, increasing mortality and reducing return rates.
- Higher streamflows reduce the availability of slow-water habitat and can increase sedimentation that affects habitat quality.

Economic Development

- Heavier precipitation will intensify flooding in low-lying areas, requiring higher capacity storm water drainage systems.
- More frequent flooding will affect businesses with disruptions to travel and shipping routes, and property damage.
- Increasing insurance premiums due to higher flood risks may make some properties more difficult to insure.

Emergency Management

- Increase riverine flooding within and beyond existing floodplains will increase the demand for emergency services to plan, prepare, and respond to flood events.

Waste Management

- Increased precipitation and flood events will generate more debris and waste and strain municipal cleanup and refuse capacity.
- Flooding of waste management facilities can release contaminants and hazardous materials.

Transportation

- Heavier precipitation events will intensify flooding, landslides, and erosion, which can interrupt transportation routes, damage infrastructure, and increase maintenance and repair costs.
- Flooding can damage roads, bridges, and railways and overwhelm drainage structures, such as culverts.

Zoning and Development

- Heavier precipitation events will intensify urban flooding and demands on storm water systems, affecting new construction zoning, and require revised building codes for developments in frequently flooded areas.
- Heavier precipitation and higher streamflows can expand the flood zone, damaging infrastructure and development not currently considered in flood zones.

Kennewick is expected to experience significant increases in winter precipitation. Additional analysis should assess the unique flood risks in each city to determine how increased extreme precipitation events will affect the region differently. Winter (December, January, February) precipitation will likely increase 9 to 12 percent in Kennewick (Abatzoglou, 2013).

Figure C-5. Extreme precipitation changes to winter precipitation.

Extreme Precipitation	Benton County	Benton County	Kennewick	Kennewick

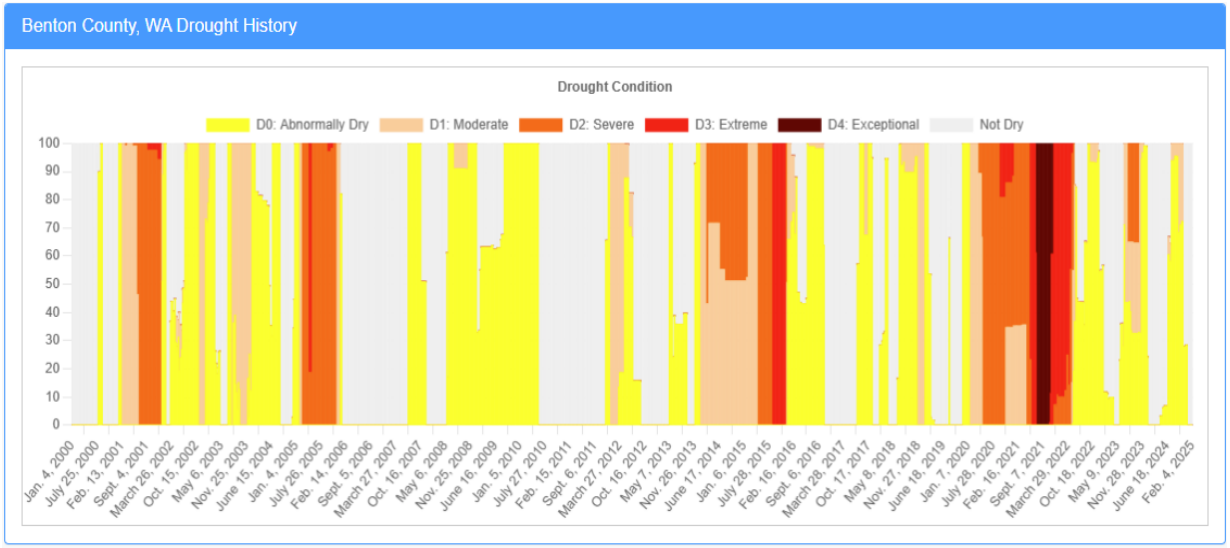
	2040-2069	2070-2099	2040-2069	2070-2099
Historical Baseline Average Winter Precipitation in Inches (1971-2000)	3.11	3.11	2.97	2.97
Average Winter Precipitation in Inches RCP8.5	3.49	3.74	3.3 (11.11%)	3.26 (9.76%)
Average Winter Precipitation in Inches RCP4.5	3.45	3.43	3.26 (9.76%)	3.25 (9.43%)

Data from Climate Toolbox Future Climate Dashboard (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012; Hegewisch & Rangwala, 2025).

Drought

Late summer drought is defined as summer precipitation at or below 75 percent of normal based on the historical average of summer precipitation from 1980 to 2009. In the past two decades, the Tri-Cities Region has experienced extreme and exceptional drought conditions during late summer and fall (**Figure C-35**) (US Drought Monitor, 2025). **Figure C-35** shows that drought severity and the frequency of severe drought are increasing, as indicated by the darker shades of red occurring more frequently (US Drought Monitor, 2025).

Figure C-35. US Drought Monitor graph for Benton County from 2000-2025.

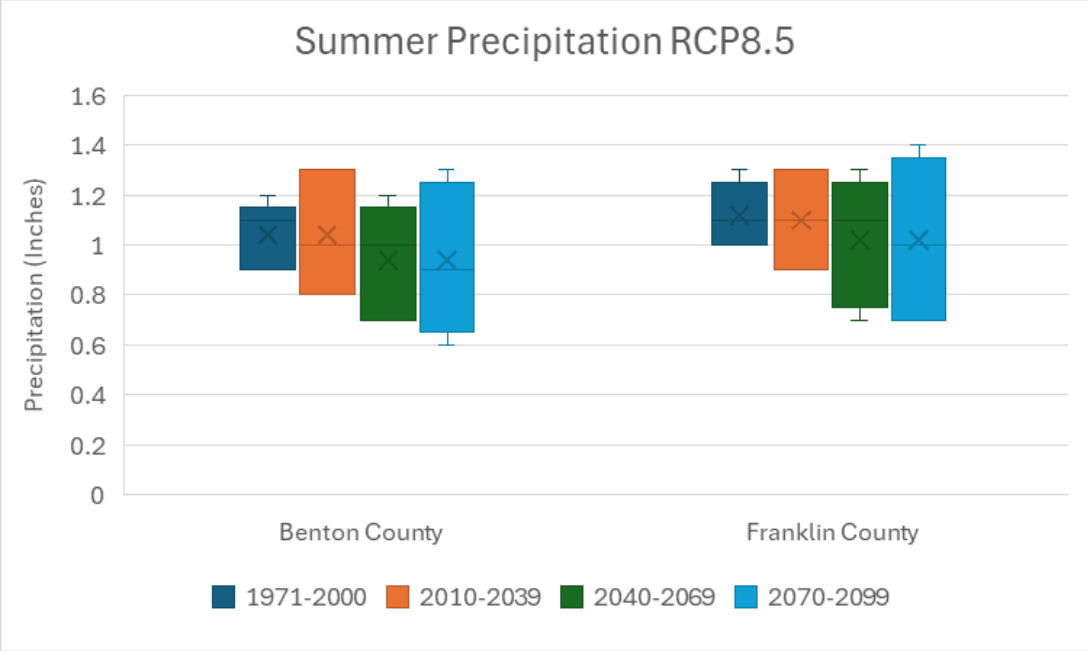


Accessed 5 February 2025 via Des Moines Register (US Drought Monitor, 2025).

From 1980 to 2009, Benton County received an average of one inch of rain from July to September. Despite historical increases in summer drought conditions, late summer (July through September) precipitation models east of the Cascade Mountains are uncertain. Some models predict an average increase of .05 inches (5.1 percent) in late summer precipitation in Benton County (Salathé & Leung, 2010). Other models, including those used by the Climate Toolbox, project summer

precipitation (June through August) to decrease (Rogers & Mauger, 2021). This model shows a 1-inch (10 percent) decrease in summer precipitation under RCP8.5 by the end of the century in Benton County (Abatzoglou, 2013). This uncertainty points to a need to prepare for multiple climate impact scenarios.

Figure C-36. County-level summer precipitation.

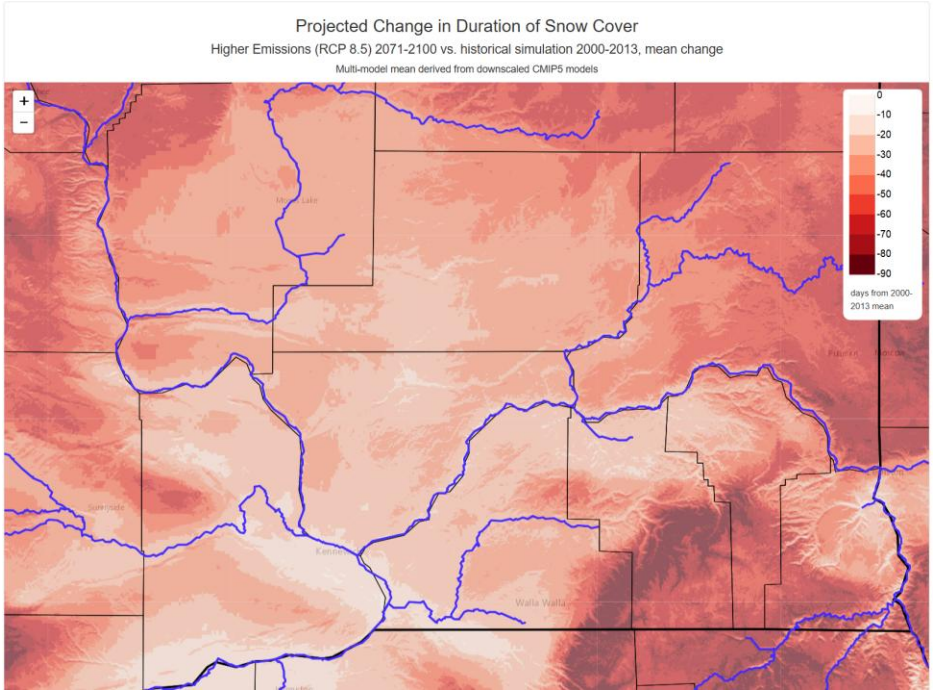


Graph by Cascadia Consulting (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012)

Summer streamflows are expected to decrease (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). Decreases in late summer precipitation can compound drought risk during a time of year when temperatures are warmest and the demand for water is highest. By 2099, summer streamflows are expected to decrease 50-70 percent in 27 percent of Benton County's streams (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Surface water in streams is also affected by melting snowpack from the previous winter's precipitation. Less snowfall or snowpack accumulation can contribute to drought conditions. Under RCP8.5 conditions, there is a near 100 percent likelihood that Benton County will have an April 1st snowpack below 75 percent of the historical norm by 2100 (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). **Figure C-37** demonstrates the expected change in the last day of snowpack for the region, indicating up to 30 fewer days of snowpack outside of Pasco and over 50 fewer days in the areas that feed the region's main rivers (Lute, 2022).

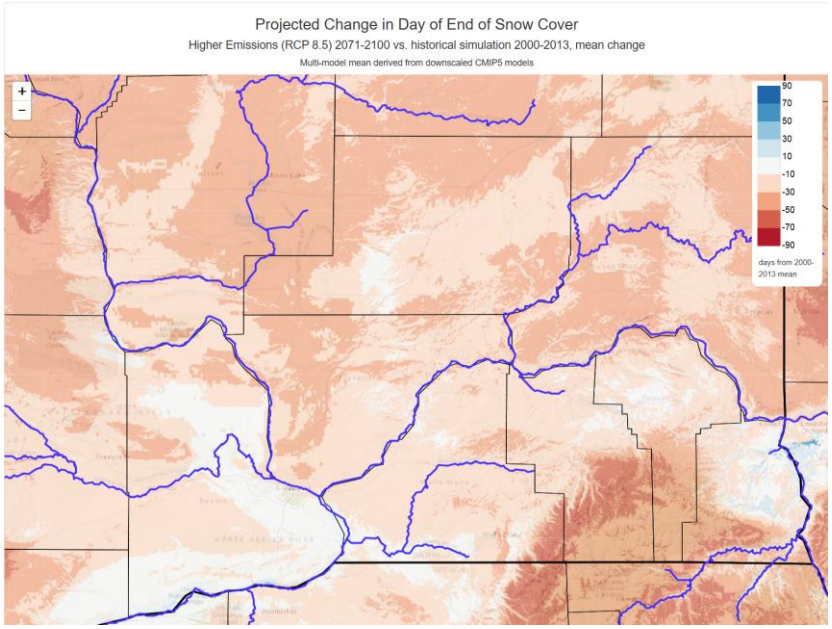
Figure C-37. Projected change in snowpack duration. Blue lines indicate major rivers.



Accessed 16 May 2025 from Climate Toolbox Climate Mapper (Lute, 2022)

Figure C-38 illustrates that the duration of snow cover decreases in the region, with the largest decrease occurring upstream of the region's major rivers (Lute, 2022). Reduced snowpack beyond the county's boundaries may not affect all rivers equally, as some, such as the Columbia River, have reservoirs to help manage water levels and reduce drought impacts. Snowpack decreases in Benton and Franklin Counties can affect soil moisture and some surface water availability.

Figure C-38. Projected changes in last day of snowpack. Blue lines are major rivers.



Accessed 16 May 2025 from Climate Toolbox Climate Mapper data (Lute, 2022).

Sector Impacts of Drought and Reduced Streamflow

The overall risk of severe drought is expected to be minimal due to minimal decreases in summer precipitation. Yearly changes in weather patterns may lead to some years experiencing greater drought. When it does occur, limited surface water in creeks and rivers will affect the agriculture sector's production and the availability and health of salmon populations. Water shortages can also affect residential and commercial users and lead to water quality issues.

Sector Impacts
Cultural Resources and Practices
• Drought may reduce habitat quantity and quality for salmonids and other aquatic species.
Ecosystems
• Drought may reduce amount and quality of habitat for salmonids and other aquatic species. • Lower streamflows can limit migration, increase competition for resources, and increase susceptibility to disease and predation. • In freshwater ecosystems, less summer precipitation will lower streamflows, reduce water quality, and increase water temperatures. • In terrestrial ecosystems, less summer precipitation will contribute to drought stress and reduce the growth of plants.

Economic Development

- Reduced snowpack will decrease winter outdoor recreation opportunities, shorten winter recreation season, adversely affecting community economies and character.

Emergency Management

- More frequent droughts caused by low snowpack are expected to increase the need for emergency services to plan, prepare, and respond to water shortages.

Water Resources

- Drought may lead to summer water shortages for commercial and residential uses.
- Drought, warmer temperatures, and reduced rainfall may decrease water quality.
- Reduced snowpack and more winter rain will increase water availability in winter for uses such as drinking water and hydropower generation.
- Water demand during late spring and summer is expected to increase, but water availability will decrease due to reduced snowpack and less summer precipitation.
- More frequent droughts caused by low snowpack are expected to reduce the water available in the warm season for commercial, residential, agricultural uses and hydropower generation.

Transportation

- Reduced snowpack may minimize snow-related road maintenance, road closures, and transportation delays.
- However, as more cold-season precipitation falls as rain rather than snow, transportation routes may experience more damage from heavier winter rainfall and associated flooding, erosion, and washouts.

Zoning and Development

- Reductions in snowpack are expected to decrease opportunities for winter outdoor recreation and shorten the winter recreation season with adverse effects on the economy and character of some communities. Warm season outdoor recreation opportunities are expected to increase, shifting tourism revenue from one recreation sector to another.

The impacts of drought are often most significant during the summer due to compounding factors of extreme heat and wildfire danger. It is helpful to understand expected changes to summer precipitation due to climate change. In this instance, summer is considered June, July, and August. Of the cities in the Tri-Cities Region, Pasco receives the least amount of summer precipitation. Historically, these cities received at most one inch of rain. This is expected to decrease 5 to 9% in the coming decades.

Figure C-39. Change in summer precipitation in inches.

Drought	Benton County	Benton County	Kennewick	Kennewick
	2040-2069	2070-2099	2040-2069	2070-2099

Summer Precipitation (inches) Historical Baseline (1971-2000)	1.09	1.09	.95	.95
Summer Precipitation (inches) RCP8.5	1.02	0.98	.88 (-7.37%)	.87 (-8.42%)
Summer Precipitation (inches) RCP4.5	1	1.06	.89 (-6.32%)	.94 (-1.05%)

Accessed 31 January 2025 from Climate Toolbox Future Climate Scenarios (Abatzoglou, 2013).

Social Vulnerability

Introduction

A core requirement of HB 1181 is to assess how climate policies identify, protect, and enhance community resilience. This includes social, economic, and built-environment factors that support climate adaptation consistent with environmental justice. In developing the Climate Element, a "one-size-fits-all" approach should be avoided. Instead, the process must actively involve affected communities, ensuring their voices and priorities are central. This requires public engagement and social vulnerability analysis methods that adapt to the unique needs and perspectives of community members and their representative organizations.

Social vulnerability refers to a community's ability to prepare for and respond to hazardous events, including natural disasters like floods or disease outbreaks, or human-caused threats such as toxic chemical spills. Assessing social vulnerability helps identify populations disproportionately affected by these hazards, enabling targeted interventions to enhance resilience, improve preparedness, and mitigate harm by addressing their specific needs and challenges.

Social Vulnerability Methodology

While there are several tools that aggregate data to measure climate change and its impact on humans via key indicators, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), along with The Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR) have developed a specific tool called the Social Vulnerability Index (SVI). This place-based index, database, and mapping application identifies and ranks communities by their social vulnerability to climate change. The CDC/ATSDR SVI County Map depicts the social vulnerability of communities at census tract level within a specified county.

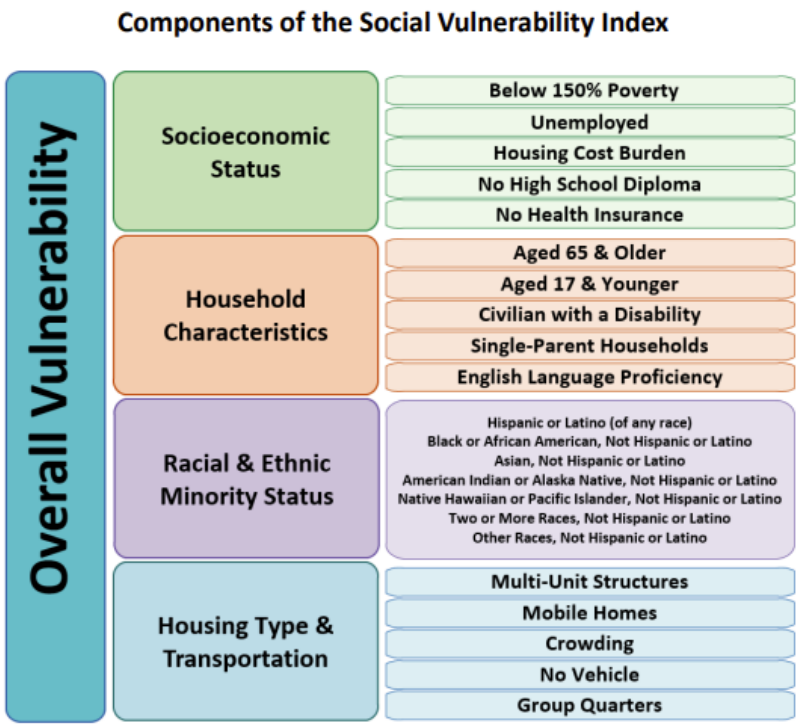
The CDC/ATSDR SVI data can help communities prepare for and recover from public health emergencies, and prevent adverse effects among socially vulnerable populations, such as emotional distress, loss of property, illness, and death.

There are several ways that the social vulnerability index can be used by the community, such as:

- Emergency planners can determine the number of emergency personnel needed, develop efficient evacuation plans, and account for socially vulnerable populations.
- Public health officials can identify areas in need of emergency shelters and estimate the number of supplies needed.
- State and local health departments can develop community-based health promotion initiatives.

The most recent SVI mapping tool released in 2022 groups sixteen census-derived factors into four themes that summarize the extent to which the area is socially vulnerable to disaster. The factors include economic data as well as data about education, family characteristics, housing, language ability, ethnicity, and vehicle access. An overall social vulnerability score combines all the variables shown in **Figure C-40**.

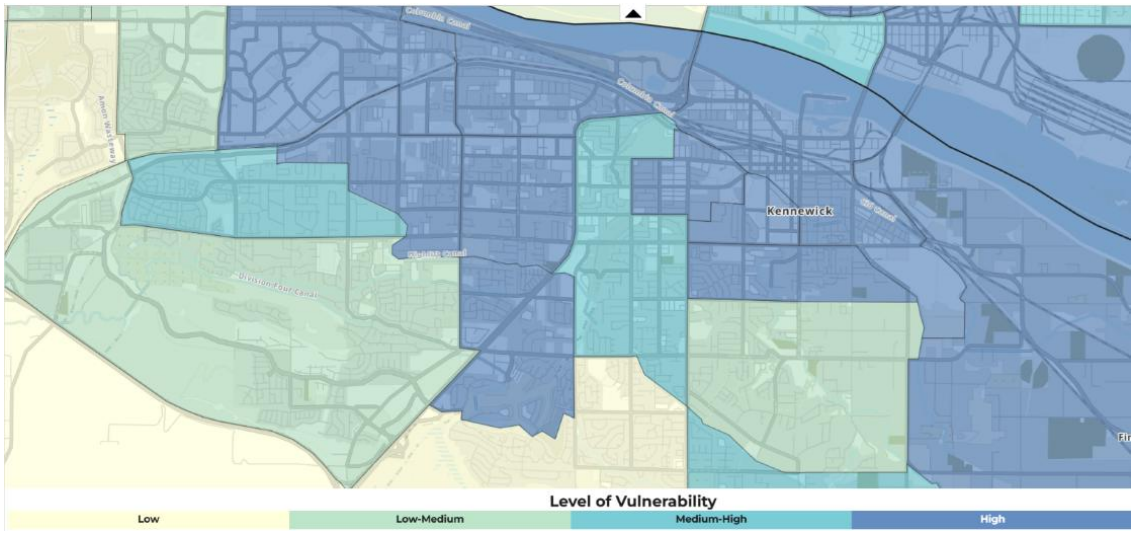
Figure C-40. Components of vulnerability



(Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, 2024).

State-level assessment tools can assess local social vulnerability measurements. The following map illustrate the social vulnerability of census tracts in Kennewick relative to other cities in Washington state. Many census tracts in Kennewick, particularly those along the Columbia River, have high social vulnerability, as indicated by the dark blue color in **Figure C-41**.

Figure C-41. Social vulnerability in Kennewick is high, as shown in the dark blue color.



(CDC, 2022).

VULNERABILITY ASSESSMENT

Glossary

Climate resilience: The ongoing process of anticipating, preparing for, and adapting to changes in climate and minimizing negative impacts to our natural systems, infrastructure, and communities.

Climate hazards: An event related to climate that can cause injury, illness, or death to people or damage to assets, such as wildfire, heatwave, or flood.

Climate stressor: A condition, event, or trend related to climate variability and change that can exacerbate hazards.

Frontline community: A group of people who experience the first and worst consequences of climate change. Such residents' health and livelihoods are often highly vulnerable to climate-exacerbated hazards and economic disruptions, and their communities often lack basic support infrastructure and suffer disproportionately from the compounding impacts of pollution, discrimination, racism, and poverty.

Overburdened community: A geographic area where vulnerable populations face combined, multiple environmental harms and health impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, highly impacted communities as defined by HB11 RCW 19.405.020.

Urban Growth Areas: Each county that is required or chooses to plan under RCW 36.70A.040 shall designate an urban growth area or areas within which urban growth shall be encouraged and outside of which growth can occur only if it is not urban in nature. Each city that is in such a county shall be included within an urban growth area. An urban growth area may include more than a single city. An urban growth area may include territory that is located outside of a city only if

such territory already is characterized by urban growth, whether the urban growth area includes a city, or is adjacent to territory already characterized by urban growth or is a designated new fully contained community as defined by HB11 RCW 36.70A.350.

Vulnerable populations: Including but not limited to: racial or ethnic minorities; low-income populations; populations disproportionately impacted by environmental harms; and populations of workers experiencing environmental harms as defined by RCW 70A.02.010 (14)(a)(b).

Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI): The geographical area where structures and other human development meet or intermingles with wildland vegetative fuels.

Executive Summary

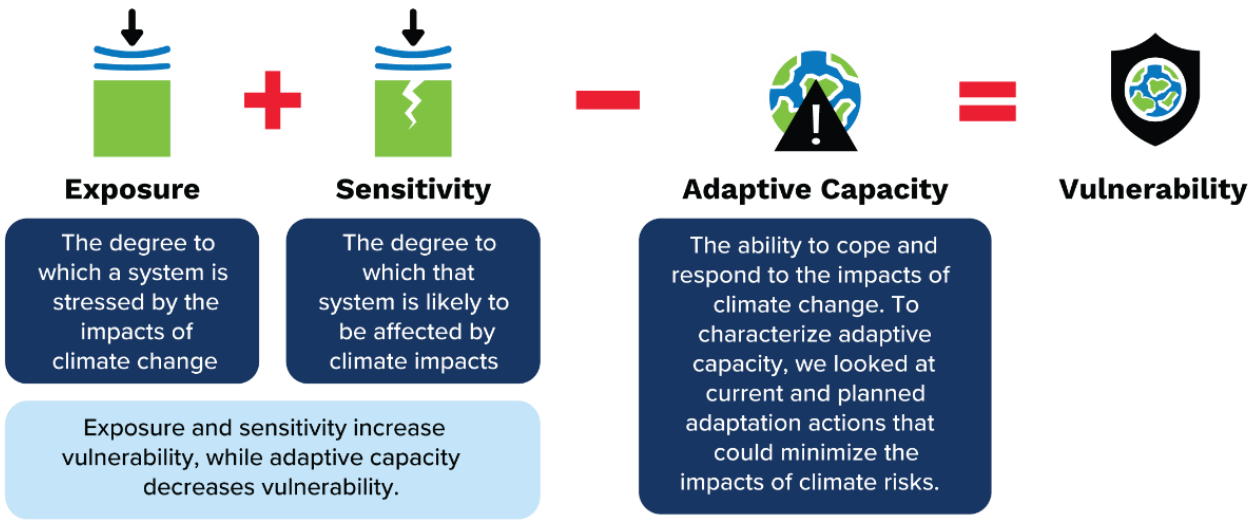
A full revision of the Vulnerability Assessment was not scoped for this project. As a result, the vulnerability assessment has had minor edits, including removing jurisdiction-specific materials for all jurisdictions except Benton County and Kennewick. This includes the removal of maps and figures when a Kennewick-specific version already exists.

Five jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region – Benton County and the cities of Pasco, Kennewick, Richland, and West Richland, with the support of the Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG)—are collaborating to develop a regional strategy to address natural hazards related to climate and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. This strategy is a unique opportunity to improve resilience across an interconnected region as many residents live, work, and travel between the different cities in the region.

The climate vulnerability assessment (CVA) utilized existing regional and jurisdiction planning documents, along with national, state, and local data sources—including hazard mitigation plans, comprehensive plans, transportation plans, and shoreline master programs. The project team worked with the participating jurisdictions to identify priority sectors, which include community health and wellbeing, ecosystems and water resources, built infrastructure, and land use. The results from this assessment can be used by jurisdictions to develop climate elements for their comprehensive plans.

Climate vulnerability is the degree to which climate change stressors may harm a system or community, also defined as the sum of exposure to climate change impacts and the sensitivity of people, infrastructure, and environment to those impacts, minus the ability to adapt or be resilient to those impacts (**Figure C-42**).

Figure C-42. Climate vulnerability framework.



OVERVIEW OF CLIMATE IMPACTS

The Tri-Cities Region currently experiences impact from several climate hazards, including drought, extreme heat, severe storms, wildfire smoke, and air and water quality issues. The following hazards are expected to become more frequent and severe from climate change:

Extreme Heat	Warmer year-round temperatures, including higher maximum summer temperatures and more frequent heat waves are expected.
Wildfires and Smoke	Higher risk of wildfires and increased wildfire activity are expected due to extreme heat and drought, resulting in increased smoke and poor air quality.
Extreme Precipitation and Flooding	Winter rainfall is projected to increase in frequency and intensity. Locally intense rain events are expected to increase, which can cause flash flooding, especially when they occur along with sudden snowmelt.
Drought	A slight decrease in summertime rainfall is projected. Declining summer precipitation can lead to more frequent, longer, and severe regional droughts. Declining summer precipitation is accompanied by a projected decrease in snowpack and reduced summer streamflows.

Key Takeaways

This section summarizes the key findings of the climate vulnerability index, and each of the sectors analyzed in the CVA.

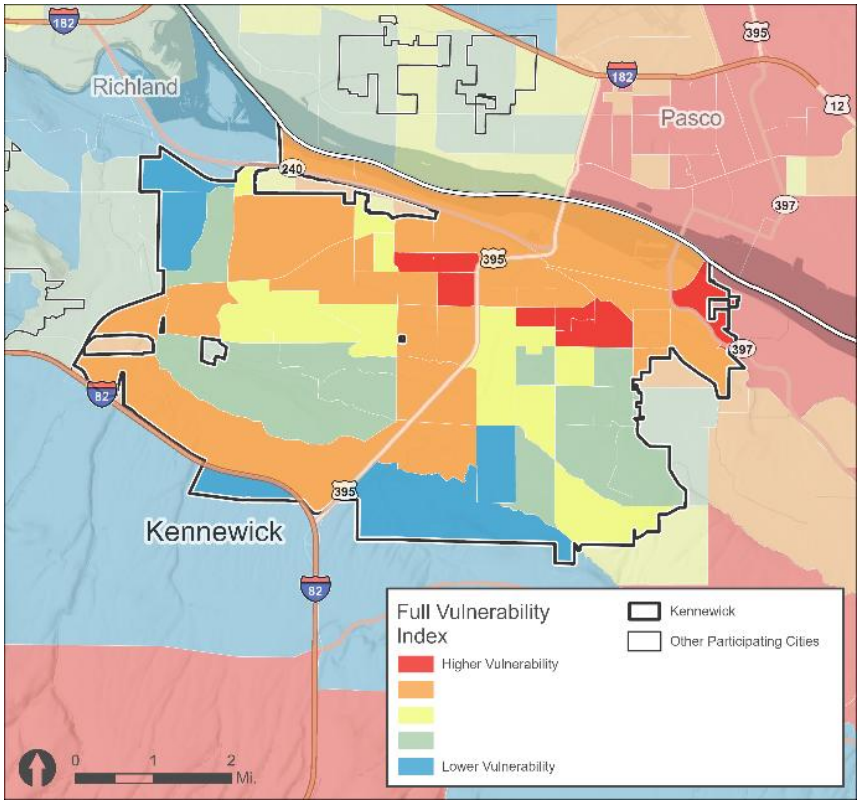
Climate Vulnerability Index

The vulnerability assessment used multiple sources as well as geospatial and census datasets to develop a vulnerability index comprised of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity subindices. These indices illustrated the spatial dimensions of climate risk across the Tri-Cities Region.

The climate vulnerability index can help identify specific areas of concern, based on a combination of high exposure, high sensitivity, and low adaptive capacity. These are communities that may have higher levels of vulnerability based on a combined set of factors, and the index can help identify the specific characteristics that are driving vulnerability in each area.

The climate vulnerability index mapped key climate hazards, jurisdiction assets, and demographic data to determine exposure, sensitivity, adaptive capacity, and overall vulnerability to climate hazards (**Figure C-43**).

Figure C-43. Overall climate vulnerability in Kennewick.



BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

The climate vulnerability index identified that, while the Tri-Cities Region is vulnerable to climate impacts, vulnerability is not distributed evenly among jurisdictions or residents. Half of Kennewick's residents are vulnerable to climate risks, the highest among the studied jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region. Richland has the lowest number of residents vulnerable to climate risks, with only three percent of the city's population (**Figure C-44**).

Figure C-44. Percentage of populations with high or very high exposure and sensitivity, or low and very low adaptive capacity, and overall vulnerability to climate hazards.

Kennewick		Population	% of Total
Sensitivity	Very High	18,644	21%

Kennewick		Population	% of Total
	High	23,677	27%
Exposure	Very High	16,032	18%
	High	22,132	25%
Adaptive Capacity	Very Low	10,530	12%
	Low	20,621	24%
Full Vulnerability Index	Very High	10,942	13%
	High	32,127	37%

Community Health and Wellbeing

Climate hazards such as wildfire and extreme heat can put residents' lives and health at risk and increase demand for community resources and emergency responses.

Public Health

- Climate impacts put public health at risk. Warmer temperatures can lead to higher health care costs associated with an increase in emergency room visits.
- People who work outside are at heightened risk of health issues due to extreme heat and poor air quality.
- Wildfires can cause poor air quality. High concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ and other air pollutants contribute to respiratory problems, long-term health challenges, and increased healthcare costs.
- Flooding is a risk to public health and can cause injury, death, and property loss and damages.

Community Resources

- Climate impacts put public health at risk. Warmer temperatures can lead to higher health care costs associated with an increase in emergency room visits.
- People who work outside are at heightened risk of health issues due to extreme heat and poor air quality.
- Wildfires can cause poor air quality. High concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ and other air pollutants contribute to respiratory problems, long-term health challenges, and increased healthcare costs.
- Flooding is a risk to public health and can cause injury, death, and property loss and damages.
- Schools can provide emergency shelter, support, and services to residents.

- Wildfires may cause mass evacuations, straining the capacity of community resources. As the regional population continues to grow, more resources may be needed to support residents before, during, and after wildfires, floods, and other events.

Emergency Management

- The Tri-Cities Region is a quickly growing region, which will increase demand for emergency services and increase the volume of vehicles using roads.
- Communication networks are crucial for emergency responses, especially as emergency service demand may increase during extreme events. The region's topography can impede radio message relay.
- Hospitals and emergency services may be inaccessible during extreme weather, flooding storms, or wildfire events due to damage or unsafe travel conditions.



Ecosystems and Water Resources

Changing temperatures and drought can raise water temperatures and reduce groundwater availability affecting the health of ecosystems, availability of water resources, and higher wildfire risk can impact access to cultural resources.

Cultural Resources

- Increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfires threaten historic sites, trails, and natural areas in high-risk areas like Badger Mountain and the Yakima Delta.
- Rising air and surface water temperatures are affecting some key species, and threatening access to vital cultural resources.

Water Resources

- Reductions in snowfall will decrease the potential for groundwater recharge in aquifers.
- The risk of drought is increasing. Benton County is one of nine counties most vulnerable to drought in Washington.
- Wildfires may cause damage to water distribution infrastructure and affect water availability.

Ecosystems & Critical Areas

- Warming temperatures can disrupt ecosystems. Warming air and water temperatures have contributed to algal blooms and allowed invasive species in the Columbia River Basin to thrive, out-competing important native species like Chinook salmon.
- Critical areas are susceptible to intense wildfires due to more extreme heat and drought in an already arid or semi-arid climate. Wildfires have the potential to damage soil, native vegetation, fish, and wildlife populations.
- Wetlands and floodplains provide important ecological functions including regulating water flow, improving water quality, and offering critical riparian habitat for fish. Climate change can affect the biodiversity and ecological services they support.



Built Infrastructure

Flooding and wildfire pose risks to roads, housing, and other key infrastructure in the Tri-Cities Region, while extreme heat can impact residents whose homes are without sufficient insulation or cooling systems.

Buildings

- Residential development is increasingly expanding into Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) zones, increasing exposure and sensitivity to wildfire.
- Flooding presents a persistent and growing threat to buildings in the region. Since 2005, Benton County has had nine flooding events, of which two were declared federal disasters.
- The Tri-Cities Region may experience longer and more intense heatwaves. Buildings that lack adequate insulation, reflective roofing, or cooling systems will be less able to maintain safe indoor temperatures.

Energy

- Wildfire damage to above-ground transmission or distribution lines is a concern, especially those in densely vegetated areas or near residential developments in the WUI. Aging infrastructure and inadequate vegetation management further elevate the risk of power lines igniting wildfires.
- Hydropower generation is expected to decline due to reduced snow, earlier snowmelt, and more frequent droughts
- Hotter summers will increase the demand for cooling, affecting homes and businesses that rely on air conditioning. Rising electricity costs could further burden low-income households.
- State energy code and the Climate Commitment Act are encouraging the electrification of buildings and transportation and are increasing demand for energy consumption This may increase electrical costs which can particularly affect low-income households.

Transportation

- Heavier rainfall events and rapid snowmelt will intensify flooding, landslides, and erosion, disrupting transportation routes, damaging roads and bridges, and overwhelming drainage systems like culverts. For example, in February 2017, rapid snowmelt and heavy rain resulted in flooding that eroded roadbeds and triggered landslides in Benton County.
- Heatwaves can cause roads to warp and buckle, damage bridge joints, and accelerate pavement deterioration. This can increase repair and maintenance costs and lead to service disruptions and delays.



Land Use

Increases in wildfire and extreme heat can impact local business, the safety of homes, and reduce agriculture production. Flooding also presents a risk to buildings and infrastructure in and near floodplains.

Local Industries & Businesses

- Drought can disrupt commerce through the closures of water-centered recreational businesses such as swimming pools and water parks. Water shortages and water quality issues related to drought can also impact recreation at parks, as well as swimming, boating, and fishing.

- Extreme heat can result in business closures. For example, in 2021, several businesses and other establishments in the region temporarily closed because of extreme heat, including food trucks, outdoor music events, outdoor farmers market, and wineries.
- Outdoor workers will experience higher exposure to poor air quality due to wildfire smoke.

Land Use, Zoning & Development

- Flooding can limit or constrain development, due to property and safety risks from flooding and required expenditures for repair.
- In the Tri-Cities region, any new development in the WUI will face risks from increases in wildfire frequency and severity.
- More frequent wildfires are expected to increase damage to homes and infrastructure and displace residents.

Agriculture

- Drought can threaten agricultural productivity and food processing, which impacts the people whose livelihoods depend on these industries.
- Flooding can negatively impact agriculture by delaying planting timelines, impacting crops, increasing erosion, and increasing susceptibility to disease.

Introduction

Purpose

The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments—along with Benton County and the cities of Pasco, Kennewick, Richland, and West Richland—are collaborating to develop a regional strategy to address natural hazards related to climate and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. This work complies with new growth management requirements (RCW 36.70A) for jurisdictions in Washington State to include climate policies in their comprehensive plans. As part of this effort, the Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA) provides an overview of the region's vulnerability of key sectors, assets, and people to key climate impacts—including drought, wildfires and wildfire smoke, extreme heat, and flooding.

The Tri-Cities Region is already facing changing weather and climate patterns, such as heat waves, wildfires, and floods. In recent years, the region has experienced:

Wildfires	Flooding	Extreme Heat
The August 11, 2018, Bofer Canyon Fire led to injuries for two Kennewick residents (Probert, 2018)(Figure C-45).	Over $26 million in damages resulted from flooding in the region between January 30 and April 21, 2017. Heavy rains and warm temperatures caused snowmelt flooding across the region, leading to the forth major disaster declaration in the region since 1956 (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018; Benton County Emergency Management, 2019)	During the 2021 Heat Dome event, temperatures reached 109°F, killing four people in Benton County and one in Franklin County (Culverwell, 2024)

The region is expected to face increasingly severe climate impacts, including higher temperatures, diminished water quality, more wildfire smoke days, more intense extreme weather events, reduced snowpack and variable precipitation, and longer and more frequent droughts. The findings from the CVA can help governments understand and communicate climate impacts and vulnerabilities to their communities. The CVA describes policies and initiatives already underway in the region and can inform planning efforts to build resilience in the climate element chapter of each jurisdiction's comprehensive plan.

Figure C-45. Smokey skies.



Smoke-filled skies in south Kennewick during the Bofer Canyon Fire in 2018.

Probert, 2018.

How to Read This Document

This document provides an analysis of climate vulnerability in the Tri-Cities Region, guiding readers through background information and key takeaways to a more detailed analysis organized by four key sectors:

- The Executive Summary provides a brief overview of the assessment process and highlights key vulnerabilities and climate hazards in the Tri-Cities Region.

The Methodology section describes the approach used to evaluate climate vulnerabilities, including data sources, framework for assessing exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity, and vulnerability index mapping. This section also outlines climate projections and scenarios used to develop the Climate Impact Summary (CIS), which is included as Climate Vulnerability Block Tables.

Figure C-46. Block groups with high or very high climate vulnerability

Block Group	Jurisdiction	% of Block Group in jurisdiction	Exposure Sub-Index	Sensitivity Sub-Index	Adaptive Capacity Sub-Index	Vulnerability Index Full	Drivers
530050113001	Kennewick	100%	High	High	Very Low	High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530050113002	Kennewick	100%	High	High	Low	High	Heat, extreme precipitation, age, health, transportation
530050112014	Kennewick	100%	High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, health
530050115013	Kennewick	14%	Very High	Very High	Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health, housing
530210204011	Pasco	100%	High	Very High	Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210204022	Pasco	100%	High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, age, health
530210204021	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	High	Heat, health, transportation
530210201012	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health, housing
530210204042	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, age, employment
530210204031	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, employment, transportation

530210204032	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210203004	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210202022	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210202012	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210202021	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530210201011	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health, transportation
530210202011	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530210201023	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, housing
530210201022	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, age, transportation
530210203003	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, age, health
530210203001	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530050117022	Unincorporated Benton	16%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health

530050117023	Unincorporated Benton	8%	Very High	High	Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, age, environment, health, socioeconomics
530050117011	Unincorporated Benton	37%	Very High	Very High	Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health
530050116001	Unincorporated Benton	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Fire/smoke, age, environment, health, housing
530050115041	Unincorporated Benton	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, age, environment, health

Figure C-47. Block groups with low vulnerability to climate hazards

Block Group	Jurisdiction 1	% of Block Group in jurisdiction 1	Jurisdiction 2	% of Block Group in jurisdiction 2	Index Exposure Full	Index Sensitivity Full	Index Adaptive Capacity Full	Vulnerability Index Full	Drivers
530050108092	Kennewick	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Employment, transportation
530050115061	Kennewick	98%	Unincorporated Benton	2%	Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment
530050102014	Richland	94%	Unincorporated Benton	6%	Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, socioeconomics, employment
530050102032	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050102012	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Low	Transportation
530050102033	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, socioeconomics, transportation
530050108202	Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment, transportation
530050108203	Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Environment, employment

530050107082	West Richland	86%	Unincorporated Benton	14%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050101001	Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Low	High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050103004	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Low	Environment
530050108091	Kennewick	100%		0%	Very Low	Low	High	Low	Employment
530050108112	Unincorporated Benton	63%	Richland	37%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment, housing
530050107081	West Richland	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics
530050107054	West Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050107072	West Richland	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics
530050102011	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Environment, transportation
530050120001	Unincorporated Benton	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Environment, socioeconomics, employment
530210206071	Pasco	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment, housing
530210206053	Pasco	99%			Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment, housing
530210206051	Pasco	99%			Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics
530210205014	Pasco	100%		0%	Low	Low	High	Low	Socioeconomics, housing
530219801001	Pasco	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment

- The Climate Impacts and Social Vulnerability section summarizes the region's key climate impacts and social vulnerabilities evaluated in the CIS.
- The Climate Vulnerability Assessment Findings are organized into four key sectors, each with three subsectors (**Figure C-48**). Each sector includes the following sections:
    - Sector overview: This section summarizes key vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities for the sector.
    - Summary of regional climate risks by sub-sector: This section outlines the exposure and sensitivity of the Tri-Cities to four key climate hazards: extreme heat, wildfire & wildfire smoke, extreme precipitation, and drought. This section highlights the key vulnerabilities in the jurisdiction.
    - Summary of regional adaptive capacity by sub-sector: This section outlines regional capacity to adapt to climate risks and reduce their impacts on the region. This section includes programs and policies already underway in the region that could be expanded and strengthened to better address climate risks.

- Summary of jurisdiction-specific vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities by sector: This section highlights key vulnerabilities and adaptive capacity measures unique to specific jurisdictions. This section can help inform jurisdictions to unique vulnerabilities related to specific sectors.

Figure C-48. Sectors and subsectors included in the vulnerability assessment.

Sector	Sub-sectors
Community Health and Wellbeing 	• Public Health: Physical and mental health, health disparities. • Community Resources: Social services, cultural resources, food access; and schools. • Emergency Management: Critical facilities, emergency services, communication systems.
Ecosystems and Water Resources 	• Cultural Resources: Parks, trails, open spaces. • Water Resources: Drinking water and aquifers. • Ecosystems & Critical Areas: Wetlands, riparian areas, flood hazard zones.
Built Infrastructure 	• Buildings: Single and multi-family residential buildings, commercial buildings, city buildings. • Energy: Electric substation and powerplants, transmission lines. • Transportation: Roads and highway systems, public transportation, active transportation (cycling and pedestrian) infrastructure.
Land Use 	• Local Industries & Businesses: Physical damage to businesses, economic health. • Land Use, Zoning, & Development: Development constraints, development in the WUI. • Agriculture: Agricultural lands, crops and animals, agricultural workers.

Methodology

Methodology Overview

The CVA was conducted at a regional and jurisdiction level and utilized national, state, and local data sources. Plans included hazard mitigation plans, comprehensive plans, transportation plans, and shoreline master programs (**Figure C-49**). The project team worked with the participating jurisdictions to identify what sectors in the Tri-Cities are highest priority. The sectors identified are community health and wellbeing, ecosystems and water resources, built infrastructure, and land use (**Error! Reference source not found.**).

In addition to conducting a document review, the project team compiled geospatial, demographic, and census data into a vulnerability index comprised of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity subindexes. The Climate Policy Advisory Team (CPAT) provided input on the preliminary CVA findings.

Figure C-49. Planning documents and data sources used for vulnerability assessment.

Jurisdiction and Regional Planning Documents
Benton County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan
Benton County Community Wildfire Protection Plan
Benton County Economic Development Plan
Benton County Comprehensive Plan
BFCOG Active Transportation Plan
BFCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan
Economic Development Plan Frankin County
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) Climate Adaptation Plan
Kennewick Water Comprehensive Plan
Kennewick General Sewer Plan
Kennewick Transportation System Plan
Kennewick Comprehensive Plan
Pasco Shoreline Master Program
Pasco Community Housing Survey
Pasco Comprehensive Plan
Pasco Transportation System Master Plan
Pasco Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Master Plan
Pasco Comprehensive Plan Vol 2
Richland Comprehensive Plan
Richland Clean Energy Implementation Plan
West Richland Comprehensive Plan
West Richland Shoreline Master Program
Yakama Climate Adaptation Plan
U.S. Department of the Interior Floods of May -June 1948 in Columbia River Basin
Web Tools and State and National Climate Data

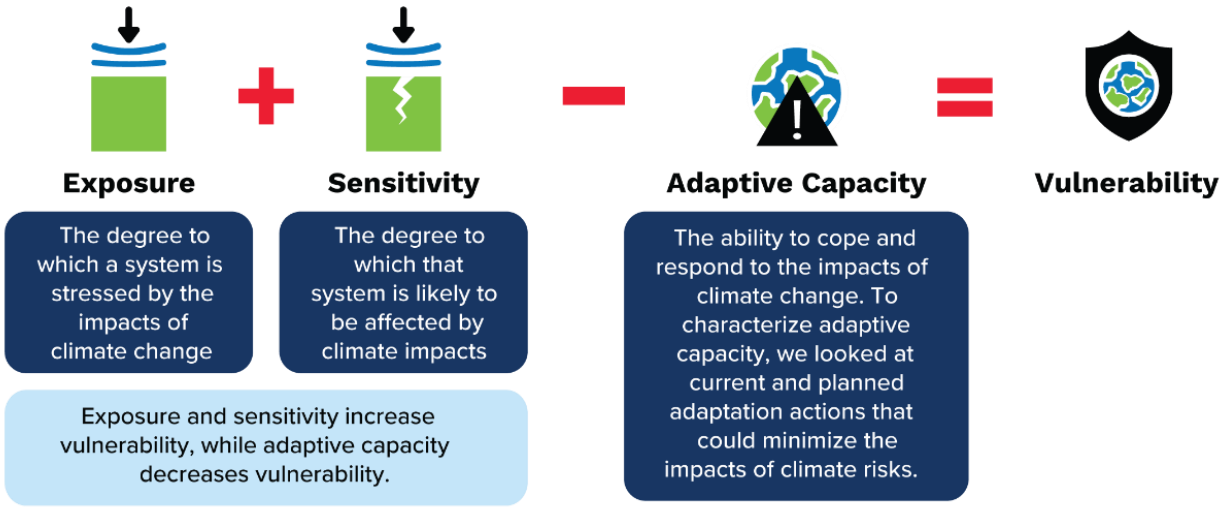
Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington
Fifth National Climate Assessment
Washington State Climate Summary
Pacific Northwest Temperature, Precipitation, and Snow Water Equivalent (SWE) Trend Analysis Tool
US CDC Social Vulnerability Index
Washington (WA) Environmental Health Disparities Tool
Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool

Climate Vulnerability Framework

Climate vulnerability is the degree to which climate change stressors may harm a system or community, also defined as the sum of exposure to climate change impacts and the sensitivity of people, infrastructure, and environment to those impacts, minus the ability to adapt or be resilient to those impacts (**Figure C-50**). This assessment used the following definitions of climate exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity to understand climate vulnerabilities in the Tri-Cities Region:

- Exposure is the degree to which a system is exposed to climate hazards. For example, low elevation coastal areas are more exposed to sea level rise and coastal flooding compared to higher elevation inland areas.
- Sensitivity is the degree to which that system is likely to be affected by climate change. For example, older adults are less able to regulate their body temperatures and are often more physically sensitive to extreme heat than younger people.
- Adaptive capacity is the ability to moderate the damage of, cope with, or adjust to climate change. For example, access to a vehicle and health insurance increases people's ability to manage health impacts from extreme heat, smoke, and any injuries related to climate hazards.

Figure C-50. Climate vulnerability framework.



Vulnerability Index Mapping

To support the sector-based vulnerability assessment described above, the project team created three spatial indices to reflect the components of climate vulnerability:

- Climate Exposure Index to understand the spatial variability of climate exposure in the Tri-Cities Region, based around exposure to heat, precipitation/flooding, and smoke/air quality/fire. This index is composed of seven indicators (**Figure C-51**).
- Sensitivity Index to understand the location of people with higher sensitivity to climate risks (due to health or demographic attributes) and the intersection of climate exposure against overall health and equity trends in the Tri-Cities Region. This index has eleven indicators (**Figure C-51**).
- Adaptive Capacity Index to understand how the ability of people, places, and community assets to cope with changing climate conditions varies across the city. This index has sixteen indicators (**Figure C-51**).

Figure C-51. Indicators utilized for each sub-index of the climate vulnerability index.

Sub-Index	Indicator
Exposure	Average land surface temperature Change in summer max temperature (°F) Area within wildland/urban interface Change in days of wildfire danger per year Average PM2.5 exposure Average ozone concentration Change in magnitude of heavy precipitation
Sensitivity	Population under 5 years old Population over 65 years old High blood pressure Asthma Coronary heart disease Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease Diabetes Poor mental health Poor physical health Landslide susceptibility Coverage by impaired waterbodies
Adaptive Capacity	BIPOC share of the population Limited English-speaking ability People living alone Population living in poverty Cost-burdened renter households No high school diploma Unemployment Median household income

No health insurance
Outdoor professions
Share of housing units built before 1960
Access to open space
Access to transit
No access to vehicle
Tree canopy coverage
Impervious surface area

In addition to mapping human vulnerability to climate hazards, regional assets (**Figure C-52**) were also mapped. These maps evaluate the vulnerability of key assets to climate hazards.

Figure C-52. Sectors and assets examined in climate vulnerability assessment maps.

Sector	Assets included in maps
Community Health & Well Being 	Hospitals and Clinics Schools Emergency Services (e.g., Fire, Police) Libraries
Ecosystems & Water Resources 	Parks Trails Wetlands Stormwater Facilities Reservoirs & Water Storage Tanks Wells Water mains Aquifer
Built Infrastructure 	Major Arterials & Highways Bridges & Culverts Affordable Housing Railroad Bike lanes Airports Electric Substation/ Powerplants Transmission Lines
Land Use 	Farms and Agriculture Commercial and Retail Locations

Refer to Vulnerability Index Methodology for full index methodology.

Climate Scenarios

This CVA uses climate change scenarios known as Representative Concentration Pathways (RCPs) to assess potential future climate conditions. Each RCP illustrates a possible level of carbon dioxide and other emissions in the atmosphere based on a range of possible human behaviors and climate processes (IPCC, 2022). This CVA uses both RCP4.5 and RCP8.5 to evaluate climate risks, in alignment with Washington State Department of Commerce's Climate Element Planning Guidance. RCP8.5 is a high emissions scenario that reflects a future where emissions continue their current trajectory and no significant mitigation efforts are enacted. RCP8.5 is often referred to as the 'business-as-usual' scenario that closely aligns with expected trends in GHG emissions. RCP4.5 is a lower emissions scenario that reflects a future where GHG emissions are significantly curbed due to global cooperation.

Utilizing both RCP8.5 and RCP4.5 provides a comprehensive understanding of the potential severity of climate impacts to the Tri-Cities Region. RCP8.5 ensures that informed adaptation and implementation policies will be robust enough to prepare for the severe potential impacts of climate change. RCP4.5 shows the potential impacts that may still occur in a reduced emissions scenario.

There are many known and unknown factors influencing the impacts of climate change; we do not yet know which scenario will become reality. However, the observed increase in GHG emissions of the past 15 to 20 years aligns with the projected high emissions scenario (Hayhoe, et al., 2017). In addition, in many areas, climate impacts are more severe than anticipated (Teirstein, 2021).

This approach will help the Tri-Cities Region effectively protect its communities, infrastructure, and natural resources against the most extreme climate risks. Moreover, the approach follows that of other assessments in Washington State and aligns with state guidance for climate resilience planning.

Climate Impacts and Social Vulnerability

The section provides a summary of the key climate impacts expected to affect the Tri-Cities Region and Kennewick in particular.

Warming Temperatures and Extreme Heat

Since 1895, the average annual temperatures in Benton County have increased 2.9°F (NOAA, National Centers for Environmental Information., n.d.). In Franklin County, the average annual temperatures have warmed 2.3°F (NOAA, National Centers for Environmental Information., n.d.). In a high emissions scenario, average high summer temperatures may reach 112°F in Benton and Franklin Counties by the end of the century (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012). The number of high heat days is also expected to increase in Benton County (**Figure C-53**). By the end of the century, both Benton and Franklin counties are expected to experience a minimum of 10 additional days of extreme heat, and upwards of 36 additional days of extreme heat in a high emissions scenario.

Figure C-53. Change in Number of Days Over 100°F in Benton County

Index Value	Level of Health Concern	What it Means
301 - 500	Hazardous	Health warnings of emergency conditions. The entire population is more likely to be affected.
201 - 300	Very Unhealthy	Health alert: everyone may experience more serious health effects.
151 - 200	Unhealthy	Everyone may begin to experience health effects; members of sensitive groups may experience more serious health effects.
101 - 150	Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups	Members of sensitive groups may experience health effects. The general public is not likely to be affected.

Climate Mapping for Resilient Washington; accessed 4 March 2025

Wildfire and Smoke

Historically, Benton and Franklin Counties experience an average of 53 days per year of high fire danger days, which are days when conditions are such that fires can easily start and spread quickly. By 2070, Benton and Franklin County may expect 15 to 16 more days of high fire danger on average, totaling 68 to 69 days per year (Abatzoglou & Brown, 2012).

Wildfire smoke is the largest source of particle pollution in Washington and can pose a significant health risk (State of Washington Department of Ecology, 2024). Wildfire smoke conditions are unique in the Tri-Cities region, as the mountains and prevailing winds can trap air at the surface (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). Throughout the region, topography and vegetation influence the severity of smoke and poor air quality that residents may experience (Benton Clean Air Agency). Wildfires often occur in summer and fall, while prescribed burns occur in spring and fall and can contribute to poor air quality (Benton Clean Air Agency).

Drought

From 1980 to 2009, Benton and Franklin Counties received an average of one inch of rain in late summer. The Tri-Cities Region can expect a slight decrease in summertime rainfall. Late summer precipitation may increase 0.05 inches in Benton County but decrease by 0.07 inches in Franklin County by 2070 (Salathé &

Leung, 2010). Summer precipitation impacts the availability of surface water during the hot, dry, and fire prone summer season. Summer precipitation and streamflows are expected to decrease (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). Decreases in late summer precipitation can compound drought risk during a time of year when temperatures are warmest and the demand for water is highest. By 2099, summer streamflows are expected to decrease 50-70 percent in 27 percent of Benton County's streams (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Declining summer precipitation can lead to more frequent, longer, and severe regional droughts. Projected decrease in snowpack and reduced summer streamflows can also worsen drought conditions. In a high emissions scenario, there is a near 100 percent likelihood that Benton County will have an April 1st snowpack below 75 percent of the historical norm by 2100 (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). By 2100, there may be up to 30 fewer days of snowpack in the region, and over 50 fewer days in the areas that feed the region's main rivers (Lute, 2022).

Precipitation and Flood Events

Winter rainfall is projected to increase in frequency and intensity, leading to increased flooding. Locally intense rain events are expected to increase, which can cause flash flooding, especially when they occur along with sudden snowmelt (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Historical average annual precipitation from 1971 to 2000 was 9.89 inches in Franklin County and 8.98 inches in Benton County (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017). In a high emissions pathway, precipitation in the Tri-Cities is expected to increase an average of 1.09 inches in Benton County and 1.14 inches in Franklin County by 2100 (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Spring, fall, and winter precipitation are projected to increase, with the largest increases in winter (**Figure C-54**). Under RCP8.5, winter precipitation in Benton County may increase 0.63 to 0.66 inches in Franklin County and summer precipitation will decrease 0.11 inches in Benton County and 0.12 inches in Franklin County by the end of the century (Chegwidden & B. Nijssen, 2017).

Figure C-54. Projected Change in Seasonal Precipitation in Benton County from Historical Baseline (1971-2000)



Figure by Cascadia Consulting Group (Climate Toolbox; accessed 31 January 2025)

Climate Vulnerability Assessment Findings

The CVA provides an overview of the region's vulnerability of key sectors, assets, and people to four key climate impacts: drought, wildfire and wildfire smoke, extreme heat, and flooding. The CVA includes policies and initiatives already underway in the cities or county that can be expanded or strengthened across the region to reduce the impacts of future climate risks.

The findings are divided into four key sectors and each sector has three subsectors. Each sector summary includes a sector overview, a summary of regional climate risks by sub sector, a summary of regional adaptive capacity by sub-sector, and a summary of jurisdiction-specific vulnerabilities and adaptive capacities.

Sector	Sub-sectors
Community Health & Well Being	Public Health: Physical and mental health, health disparities Community Resources: Social services; cultural resources; food access; and schools Emergency Management: Critical facilities; emergency services; communication systems
Ecosystems & Water Resources	Cultural Resources: Parks, trails, open spaces Water Resources: Drinking water and aquifers Ecosystems & Critical Areas: Wetlands, riparian areas, flood hazard zones
Built Infrastructure	Buildings: Single and multi-family residential buildings, commercial buildings, city buildings Energy: Electric Substation and powerplants, Transmission Lines Transportation: Roads and highway systems, public transportation, active transportation (cycling and pedestrian infrastructure)
Land Use	Local Industries & Businesses: Physical damage to businesses, economic health Land Use, Zoning, & Development: Development constraints, development in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) Agriculture: Agricultural lands, crops and animals, agricultural workers

Climate Vulnerability Index

The Climate Vulnerability Index allows jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region to assess which areas are most vulnerable to climate impacts, or likely to be most impacted. Block groups in each jurisdiction in the Tri-Cities Region were assessed for sensitivity, exposure, and adaptive capacity. The full block group tables are in Climate Vulnerability Index Block Group Tables.

Block groups in each jurisdiction were filtered for "very high" and "high" sensitivity and exposure and "very low" and "low" adaptive capacity. Within each jurisdiction, block groups were further filtered by all the index variables. Block groups were counted to determine the sensitivities, exposures, and adaptive capacities most common in the relevant block groups (**Figure C-56**).

The project team created three spatial indices to reflect the components of climate vulnerability. The indices were mapped at the census tract level to provide spatial visualization of areas that were most and least impacted.

Over 42,000 people, or almost 50 percent of Kennewick residents, live in block groups with high or very high sensitivity to climate hazards. Over 40 percent of Kennewick residents live in block groups with high or very high exposure to climate hazards and 36 percent of residents live in block groups with low or very low adaptive capacity. Overall, over 43,000 residents, 50 percent of Kennewick's population, have high or very high vulnerability to climate hazards.

*Figure C-55. Vulnerability Index map for Kennewick.*Error! Reference source not found.*BERK, 2025.*

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure C-56. Population and percentage of populations with high or very high exposure and sensitivity, or low and very low adaptive capacity in Kennewick.

Overall, 13 percent of the population have very high vulnerability to climate impacts and 37 percent have high vulnerability.

		Population	% of Total
Sensitivity	Very High	18,644	21%
	High	23,677	27%
Exposure	Very High	16,032	18%
	High	22,132	25%
Adaptive Capacity	Very Low	10,530	12%
	Low	20,621	24%
Full Vulnerability Index	Very High	10,942	13%
	High	32,127	37%

In Kennewick, block groups with high sensitivity to climate hazards, sensitivity was due to COPD, poor physical health, and asthma. For block groups with high exposure to climate hazards in Kennewick, high rates of exposure are driven by living in the Wildland-Urban Interface, potential future precipitation, and occurrences of ozone. Block groups with low adaptive capacity to climate hazards have higher vulnerability than block groups with high adaptive capacity. In Kennewick, residents living in poverty, having low median income, and racial identity contribute to low adaptive capacity (**Figure C-57**).

Figure C-57. Top three variables contributing to vulnerability in block groups with very high and high sensitivity and exposure, and very low and low adaptive capacity in Kennewick.

Very High / High Sensitivity	Very High / High Exposure	Very Low / Low Adaptive Capacity
COPD	Wildland-Urban Interface	Living in poverty
Poor physical health	Future heavy precipitation	Median income
Asthma	Ozone	Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)

The tables below presents all block groups in the region with high or very high exposure and sensitivity, along with low or very low adaptive capacity. It identifies the primary jurisdiction for each block group, along with the specific factors that are driving risk in that community.

For this set of communities with relatively high risk and relatively low adaptive capacity, common characteristics that lower resilience include:

- Higher prevalence of chronic health conditions
- Lower access to transit
- Larger share of sensitive age groups, including younger and older residents

Conversely, the index is also helpful in highlighting areas with lower relative risk and a higher prevalence of characteristics that may correlate with the ability to adapt to future climate shocks.

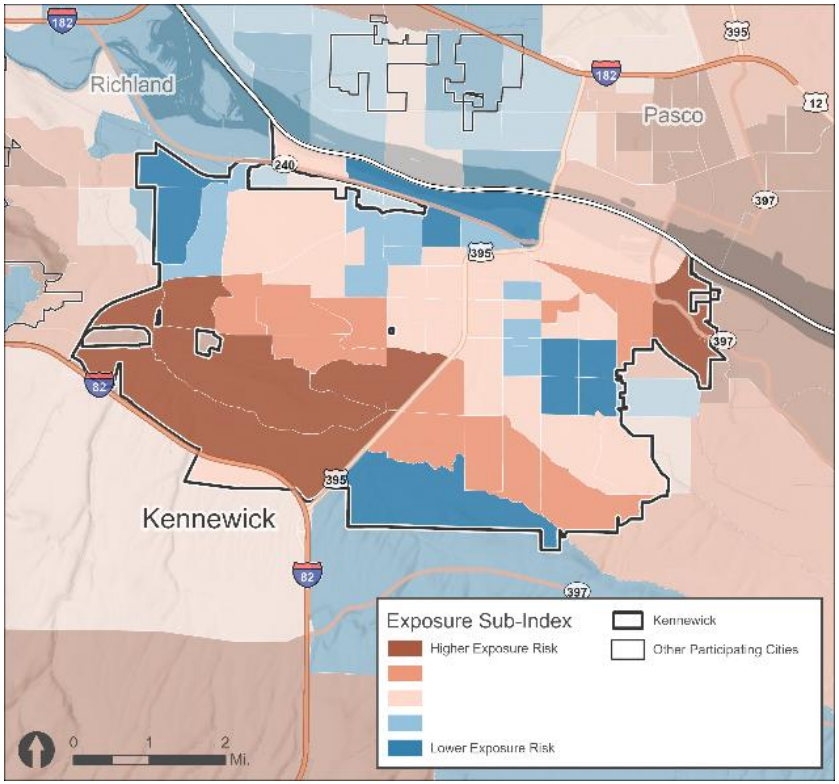
Exposure Index Key Findings

The Climate Exposure Index examines the spatial variability of climate exposure in the Tri-Cities, based around exposure to heat, precipitation/flooding, and smoke/air quality/fire.

Areas of higher overall exposure risk include southwest Kennewick and south Benson County. Primary exposures throughout the region include change in extreme heat, change in extreme precipitation, and exposure to fire and smoke (**Figure C-59**). Some of the drivers of areas with relatively high overall exposure risk include:

- Proximity to the wildland-urban interface
- Lower levels of tree canopy and higher levels of impervious surface
- Proximity to high-volume interstates and state highways and concentrated traffic (contributing to PM2.5 emissions and lower air quality)

Figure C-58. Exposure in Kennewick.



BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure C-59. Top Exposure Variables

High/ Very High Exposure
Wildland-Urban Interface
Future heavy precipitation
Ozone

The table above summarizes the top three exposure variables for block groups with high or very high exposure compared to exposure in the city or county. For example, in block groups in Richland with high exposure, living in the Wildland-Urban Interface, future wildfire risk, and average high summer temperatures were the main contributors to high exposure.

Figure C-60. Top Adaptive Capacity Variables

Low/ Very Low Adaptive Capacity
Living in poverty
Median income
Black, Indigenous, and People of Color

The table above summarizes the top three adaptive capacity variables for block groups with low or very low adaptive capacity compared to adaptive capacity in the city or county. For example, in block groups Pasco with low adaptive capacity, people with limited English language skills, Black, Indigenous or People of Color, and people without high school diplomas were the main contributors to residents lacking adaptive capacity.

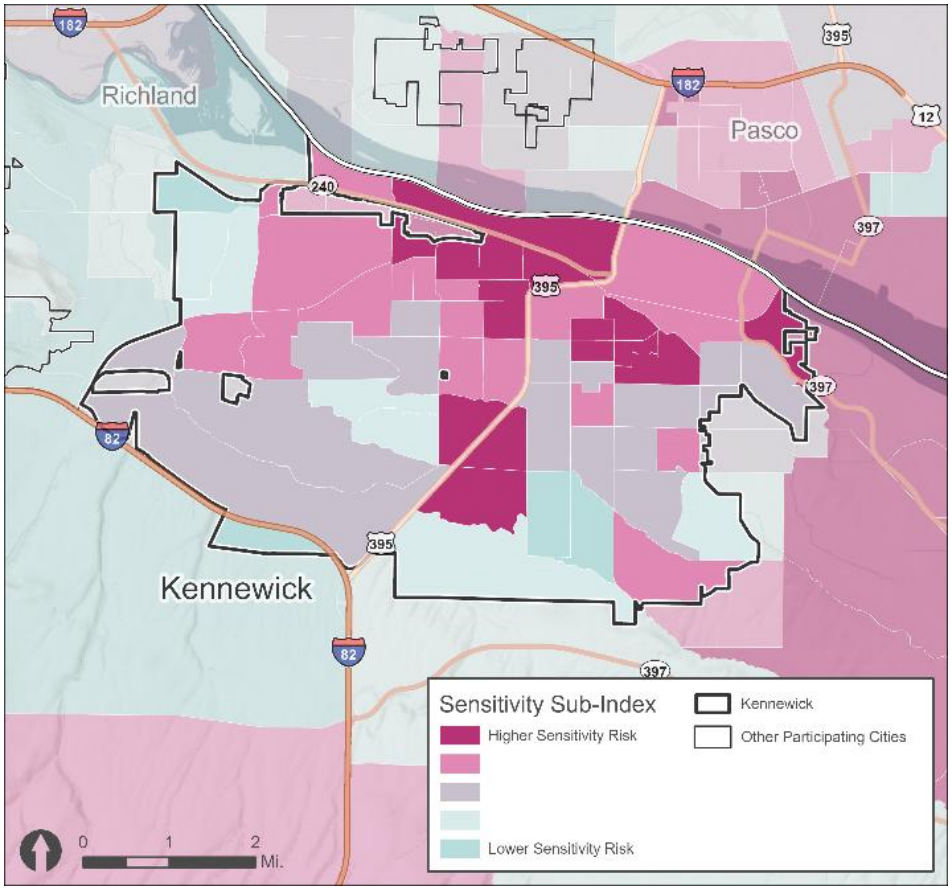
For block groups that have relatively higher resilience to climate impacts, environmental factors play a role in raising adaptive capacity. These include areas with more tree canopy, proximity to parks and open space, and communities with less impervious surface area. Other relevant factors include access to transit and motor vehicles, low unemployment, and lower overall levels of poverty, among others.

Sensitivity Index

The sensitivity sub-index focuses on populations and places that have characteristics that may increase susceptibility to certain climate exposures (e.g., health conditions, topography and landslide risk, etc.). Areas with higher relative levels of sensitivity include central Kennewick, central and southeastern Pasco, northwestern West Richland, and unincorporated areas of Benton to the east and south of Kennewick and to the west of West Richland (**Figure C-61**). Primary drivers behind higher levels of sensitivity include:

- Communities with a larger share of older or younger residents
- Higher levels of residents living with asthma or diabetes (but there is a high level of correlation between these and other chronic health conditions)

Figure C-61. Sensitivity in Kennewick.



BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

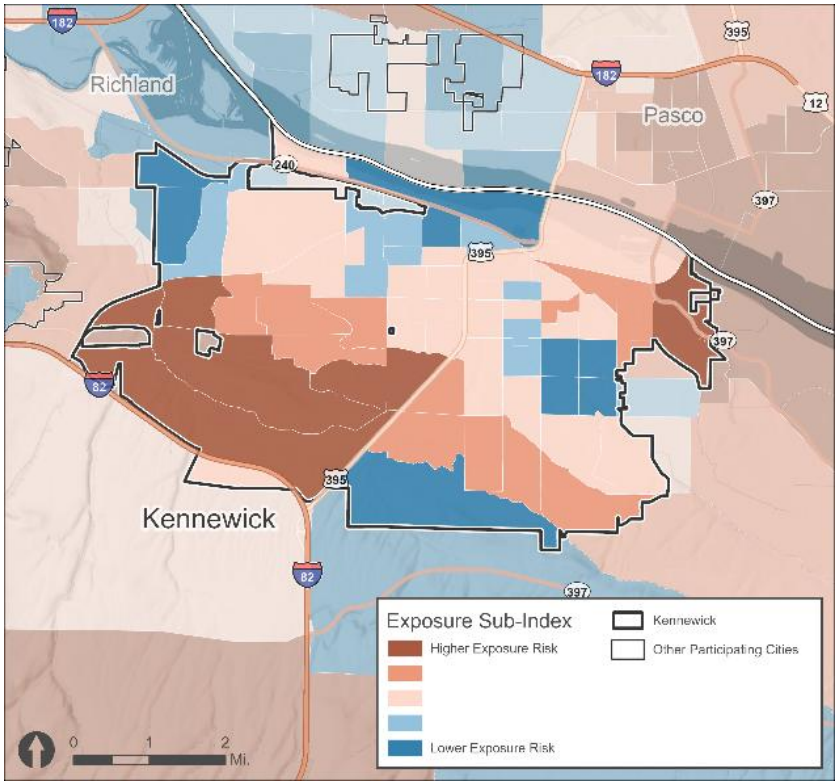
Figure C-62. Top Sensitivity Variables

High/ Very High Sensitivity
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)
Poor physical health
Asthma

The table above summarizes the top three sensitivity variables for block groups with high or very high sensitivity compared to sensitivity in the city or county. For example, in block groups in Benton County with high sensitivity, COPD, Coronary Heart Disease, and poor physical health were the top contributors to high sensitivity.

The most common variables with "very high" or "high" sensitivity include chronic health conditions such as poor physical health and diabetes. "High" and "very high" exposure block groups are often due to proximity to the Wildland-Urban Interface and potential future flooding. High sensitivity and exposure increases a block group's vulnerability, as does low adaptive capacity. The most frequent causes of low block group adaptive capacity include limited education, economic status, and racial identity.

Figure C-63. Exposure in Kennewick.Figure C-58. Exposure in Kennewick.



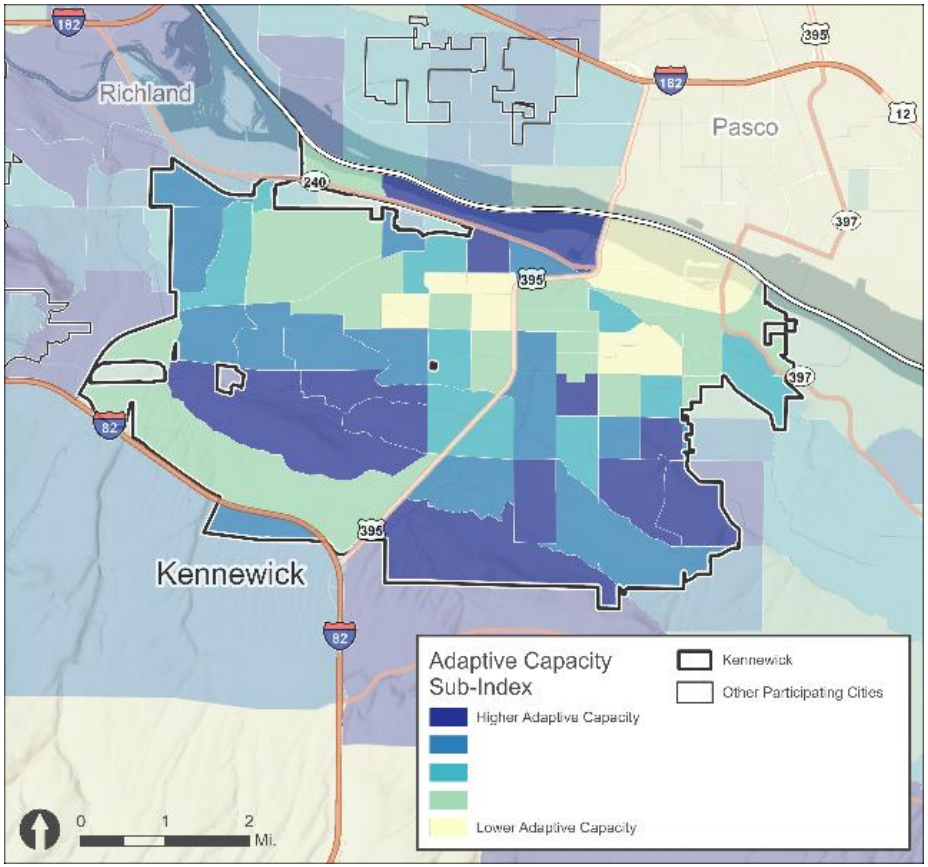
BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure C-64. Adaptive Capacity Index



BERK, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Adaptive capacity refers to demographic or place-based characteristics that may influence population-level resilience to certain climate hazards. Areas with higher relative levels of overall adaptive capacity include southern and western Kennewick, northwestern Pasco, central and northern Richland, and southeast West Richland. The primary drivers of this relative resilience include:

- Higher share of people living under the poverty level
- Higher levels of workers employed in outdoor professions
- Higher tree canopy coverage
- Higher share of people living near parks and open spaces

Figure C-65. High-Risk Population Areas for Sensitivity & Exposure

Focus	Risk	Kennewick Population	% of Total
Sensitivity	Very High	18,644	21%
	High	23,677	27%
Exposure	Very High	16,032	18%
	High	22,132	25%
Adaptive Capacity	Very Low	10,530	12%
	Low	20,621	24%
Full Vulnerability Index	Very High	10,942	13%
	High	32,127	37%

Percent of population living within very high / high block group risk areas for sensitivity and exposure, and very low / low for adaptive capacity. Red colors demonstrate disproportionately large share of the population. Blue colors demonstrate disproportionately small share of the population.

The vulnerability index highlights the distribution of climate exposures, sensitivities, and adaptive capacities across the region. In addition to demographics assessed in the index, residents under eighteen, over sixty-five 65, and living with chronic health conditions are often vulnerable to climate impacts (**Figure C-66**).

Figure C-66. Demographic information for the Tri- Cities Region.

	Kennewick
Total Population	87,089
Percent Over 65 Years Old	15.9%
Percent Under 18 Years Old	26.1%
Chronic health conditions	25%

Community Health & Wellbeing

Overview and Key Takeaways

Sector	Sub-sectors
Community Health and Wellbeing	• Public Health: physical and mental health, health disparities • Community Resources: Social services; cultural resources; food access; and schools • Emergency management: Critical facilities; emergency services; communication systems

Community health and wellbeing includes assets that help keep residents in the Tri-Cities Region healthy and safe. Climate hazards—such as flooding, wildfires, wildfire smoke, and extreme heat—can affect mental and physical health of the public and the access to and functionality of community resources.

Warmer temperatures can lead to higher health care costs associated with an increase in emergency room visits. People who work outside are at heightened risk of health issues due to extreme heat and poor air quality. Wildfires can affect residents' mental and physical health and require mass evacuations, straining the capacity of community resources. As the regional population continues to grow, more resources may be needed to support residents before, during, and after wildfires, floods, and other events.

Key Climate Risks			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Flood waters can carry diseases and damage infrastructure, leaving residents stranded and with unhealthy homes and communities.	More extreme heat days puts residents in the Tri-Cities Region at risk of heat-related illness and death.	Drought conditions can limit available water for people to stay cool and hydrated.	Residents in the path of a wildfire can be at risk of injury or death. Wildfire smoke can affect all residents, especially those without adequate insulation or with outdoor jobs.
Community Vulnerability			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Flooding can impact resources along major rivers including some fire stations along the Columbia River.	Extreme heat events can be managed by cooling centers and other community resources. Extreme heat can also strain emergency responses that may need to help more people suffering from heat-related illness.	Droughts can increase wildfire risk and increase the demand for emergency services.	Wildfires can damage or destroy community and emergency resources.

Risks & Adaptations

The risks and adaptations section provides an overview of current Kennewick climate risks and related efforts that are helping reduce risks and vulnerabilities. This section is not suggesting new policies, regulations, or programs.

Sector	Climate Risks & Adaptive Capacity

Public Health	Cross-Cutting ⚠ Risk: Interruptions to the wastewater utility due to natural hazards can present a public health risk (City of Kennewick, 2015). Wildfire ⚠ Risk: The WUI on the southern border of Kennewick puts the area and residents at risk of wildfire. There are also risks of wildfire along riparian. The city conducts strategic planning and management of riparian fuels. ⚠ Risk: The August 11, 2018, Bofer Canyon Fire led to injuries for 2 Kennewick residents. Social Vulnerability ⚠ Risk: Residents in NE Kennewick have high rates of asthma and exposure to particulate matter air pollution (PM2.5). These residents also face higher wildfire risk. North Kennewick has higher rates of low-income residents and residents with asthma than other areas of the city (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, n.d.).
Community Resources	Cross-Cutting Adaptive Capacity: The Kennewick School District planned or completed upgrades for aging buildings. Future remodels or new construction can improve the ventilation and cooling of buildings and protect student health (Benton County, 2024a). Wildfire Adaptive Capacity: Kennewick and the Kennewick Fire Department (KFD) have programs to increase wildfire preparedness. Youth and adult wildfire education programs and public information campaigns address wildland fire safety and maintaining defensible space. Adaptive Capacity: KFD and other area fire departments work with residents in the Zintel Canyon area to educate them about the fire hazard and actions they can take to make their properties more resistant to fire.
Emergency Management	Wildfire ⚠ Risk: Between 2013 and 2015, the number of fire and EMS calls responded to by the KFD increased by 15.7 percent. It is projected that fire and EMS call volumes will continue to grow at a steady rate, as the city grows. (City of Kennewick, 2021). Adaptive Capacity: KFD operates out of five fire stations. Kennewick also jointly owns and operates a central training facility with Benton County Fire District 1. Adaptive Capacity: KFD has mutual and automatic aid agreements between local jurisdictions and local communities, and a Pre-Hospital Mass Causality Incident (MCI) plan. Adaptive Capacity: The City of Kennewick can develop a fuels management program within the WUI and riparian zones to reduce community wildfire risk. Adaptive Capacity: The city created an Emergency Response Plan (ERP) in 2004 that includes a vulnerability assessment and contingency and emergency procedures (City of Kennweick, 2017). Adaptive Capacity: The Community Wildfire Protection Plan identifies steps Kennewick can take to increase preparedness and resilience to wildfire. These include: Using GIS technology to aid wildfire pre-incident planning and developing pre-attack plans including zone maps identifying key fire suppression actions. Dispatch deployment plans to ensure rapid deployment of the right type and number of resources to each zone to assist first responders before they arrive on scene and need to request resources (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).

Public Health

The public health sub-sector describes climate risks to physical health, mental health, and health systems. These systems and individuals are impacted by extreme heat, wildfire and wildfire smoke, and flooding events. The Tri-Cities Region has many medical centers and hospitals including: two hospitals in Kennewick, one in Richland, and one in Pasco. Mental health services are available through the Department of Social Health Services (DSHS) Mental Health Service Division.



Climate Risks

Extreme heat impacts can increase adverse health outcomes and affect some community groups more than others. Prolonged exposure to high temperatures stresses the body and contributes to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Individuals with chronic health conditions and people without adequate shelter, such as unhoused individuals are more at risk of injury and death from extreme heat. In addition, older community members, youth, and people with pre-existing health conditions (e.g., diabetes or heart disease) are more susceptible to adverse health outcomes (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025).

People who work outside are at heightened risk of health issues related to extreme heat and poor air quality. Working during extreme heat events increases risk of heat-related illnesses that may require emergency health care.

Warmer temperatures can lead to higher health care costs associated with an increase heat-related emergency room visits (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025). In 2021, a heat dome caused temperatures in the Tri-Cities Region to reach 109°F, killing four people in Benton County and one in Franklin County (Culverwell, 2024).

Warming winter temperatures can increase pest populations, especially for mosquitos. Benton County established a mosquito control district to eradicate *Culeax tarsalis*, the type of mosquito that carries sleeping sickness (Benton County, 2024a).

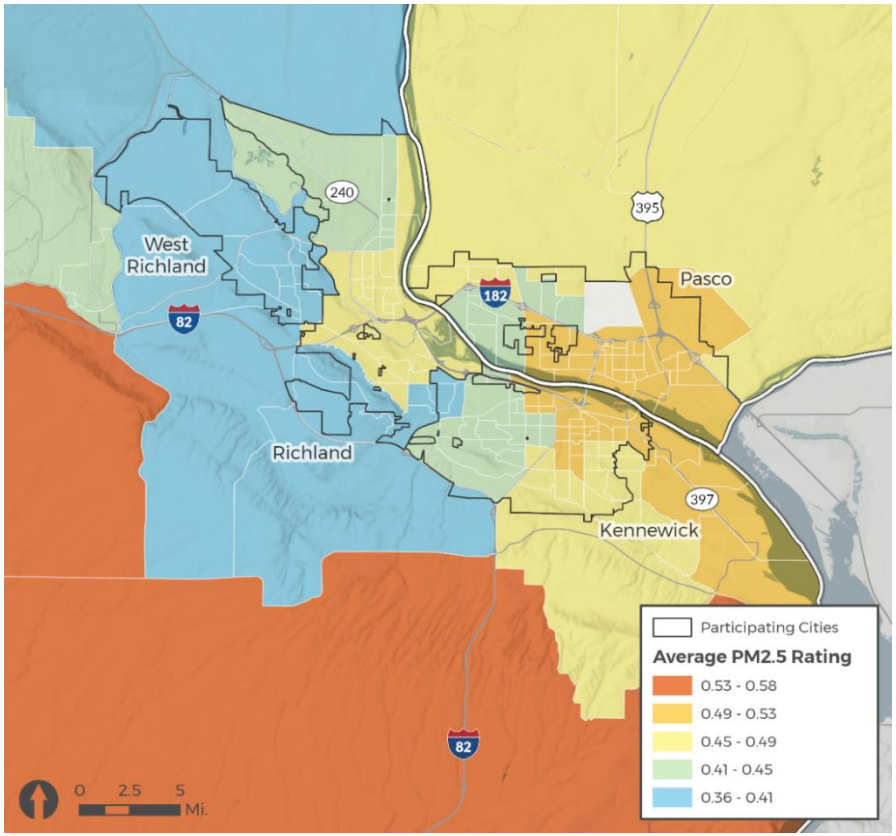
Tribal members may be impacted by extreme heat and poor air quality during harvest of traditional foods. For example, Tribal harvesters, who spend significant time outdoors, face disproportionate mental and physical health impacts of climate hazards, such has extreme heat (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).

Wildfires contribute to poor air quality. High concentrations of $PM_{2.5}$ and other air pollutants contribute to respiratory problems, long-term health challenges, and increased healthcare costs (Benton County, 2024b). Increased occurrences and severity of wildfire smoke can increase risks of respiratory diseases, such as asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Smoke exposure has also been connected to increases in some cancers, including lung cancer (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025). Overburdened communities are more vulnerable to these impacts due to socioeconomic status and higher levels of pollution in their communities.

Wildfires can contribute to mental health challenges. Stress from potential evacuation, displacements, and disruption can contribute to anxiety, depression, and trauma responses for residents (Eisenman, 2022). Wildfire and smoke can limit residents' ability to be outside, which can further worsen mental health.

Some areas may experience worse air quality during wildfire smoke events. A 2013 study by the Washington Department of Ecology and Washington State University found the Tri-Cities Region had elevated ozone, increasing risk of heart and lung diseases and even premature death (Washington Department of Ecology; BFCOG, 2024).In addition to ozone, $PM_{2.5}$ also contributes to poor air quality in the region (**Figure C-67**). There are high $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations in southwest Benton County, Pasco and Kennewick. South Richland and North Kennewick has moderate exposure to heavy traffic roadways that can increase air pollutants and increase risk of pollution-related diseases such as asthma.

Figure C-67. Department of Health relative PM2.5 scores.



Map by BERK. Source: Washington State Department of Health

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

High winds and blowing dust have caused car accidents, leading to deaths (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018). While wind events cannot be directly attributable to climate change, periods of extreme heat and low precipitation create more dry dirt and dust. Additionally, "Chinook winds," or warm winds from the Pacific Ocean that can exceed 30mph, can disturb dust and impact air quality (City of West Richland, 2017). Warm winds can also contribute to melting and flooding if they occur following a snow event.

Flooding is a risk to public health, particularly in areas where flooding is extreme and frequent. Northwest West Richland, an uninhabited, shrub-steppe habitat ranks in the 77th percentile for flood risk within 30 years and parts of eastern Richland are in the 90th percentile for flood risks (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, n.d.). Flooding can cause injury, death, and property loss and damages with varying degrees of economic effects.

Public health is often directly tied to social vulnerabilities, such as access to healthcare, low socioeconomic status, and age. These vulnerabilities can worsen during climate-related hazard events such as wildfires. Much of the Tri-Cities Region has a high percentage of populations without health insurance (Washington State

Department of Health, n.d.). There are 50 census tracts in Benton and Franklin counties with environmental disparities (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, n.d.). For example, more residents in Pasco and Kennewick have chronic health conditions and lack access to cars (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, n.d.).

The four cities of Kennewick, Richland, Pasco, and West Richland have a higher proportion of people over 65 living alone than rural areas in the region (Washington State Department of Health, n.d.). There is also a high proportion of people living with disabilities throughout much of the region (Washington State Department of Health, n.d.).

Kennewick, Richland, Pasco, and some parts of West Richland have high environmental health disparity rankings. Kennewick and Pasco have high social vulnerability rankings, along with parts of Richland and West Richland (Washington State Department of Health, n.d.). All four cities contain disadvantaged census tracts, as identified by the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, n.d.).

Adaptive Capacity

Robust public health and community wellbeing ensure residents of the Tri-Cities can stay healthy and safe during natural hazards. Planning efforts in the region seek to support public health by increasing opportunities for residents to lead healthier lifestyles and deal with fewer impacts from hazards such as flood, wildfire, and poor air quality.

Improved health and wellbeing

- The BFCOG Active Transportation Plan also includes efforts to increase active transportation such as walking and biking, which can increase public health while increasing transportation options. More active transportation helps reduce healthcare spending and reach public health goals (BFCOG, 2020). See Transportation for more.
- Finally, the Benton Clean Air Agency (BCAA) is dedicated to the preservation of public health as it relates to outdoor air quality. The BCAA works with industry, individuals, cities, the county, and other local entities, whose activities potentially affect air quality (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).
- The Confederated Tribe of Umatilla Indian Reservations Climate Adaptation Plan includes policies and programs aimed at increasing public health beyond traditional metrics, including foods, mental health, cultural practices. The connection and value of water, air, and land to "culturally sustainable practices" helps the Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Cayuse survive as nations (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).
- Benton-Franklin Health District has a website (https://www.bfhd.wa.gov/health_topics/healthy_environments) with resources and education materials about several health and environmental topics including air quality, water recreation, infectious diseases.
- The Benton County Comprehensive Plan includes policies to encourage healthier lifestyles and protect outdoor access to parks and trails through transportation and development strategies.

Reduced impacts of climate hazards

- Cooling centers are an important public health tool to protect people from heat-related illnesses and are important for people without air conditioning. (Huff, 2024). There are many locations throughout the region where residents can go to stay cool during extreme heat events. More information is included in the Community Resources section.
- The Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP) includes policies to protect community health from natural hazards such as flooding. It does not address the change in frequency or severity of hazards due to climate (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

Community Resources

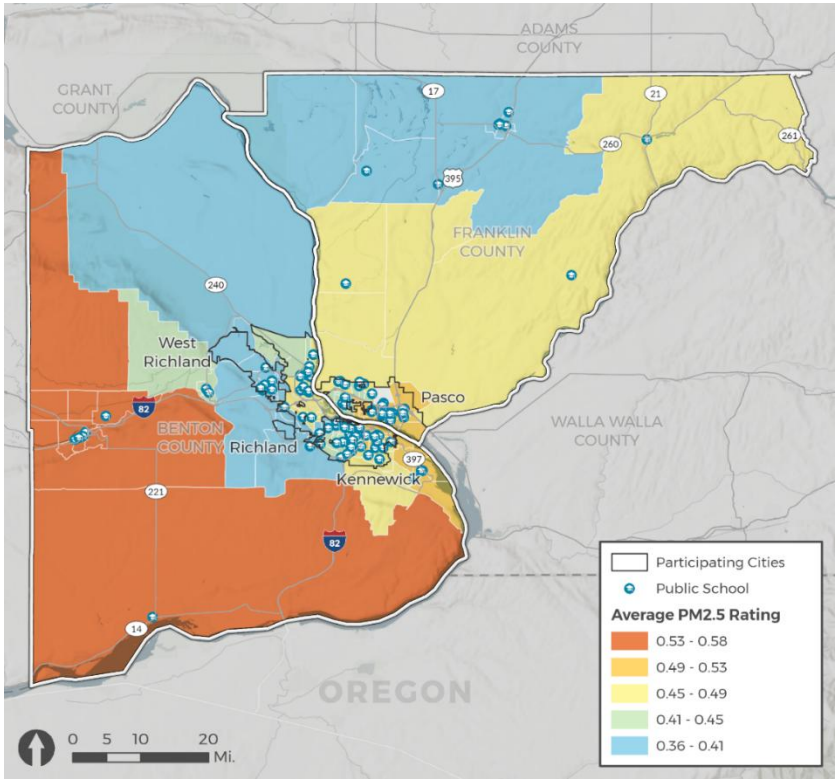
Flooding and wildfires can damage or limit access to structures, buildings, and spaces important for community gathering and wellbeing. These include government buildings, community centers, schools, food, libraries, and more. Community resources support residents' ability to access information, supplies, and in some instances, safety.

Climate Risks

Climate hazards including wildfire and flooding can impact the physical structure of community resources, particularly of those located near floodplains or in the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). Extreme heat, wildfire smoke, and other climate hazards may increase the demand for community resources to serve as shelters for residents of the Tri-Cities Region.

Public schools – an important community resources that can provide shelter, support, and services to residents – are located areas with poor air quality and expected increases in summer temperatures. Many schools, particularly in Kennewick and Pasco, are in areas with high $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations, which increases student and staff risk of health conditions related to poor air quality (**Figure C-68**).

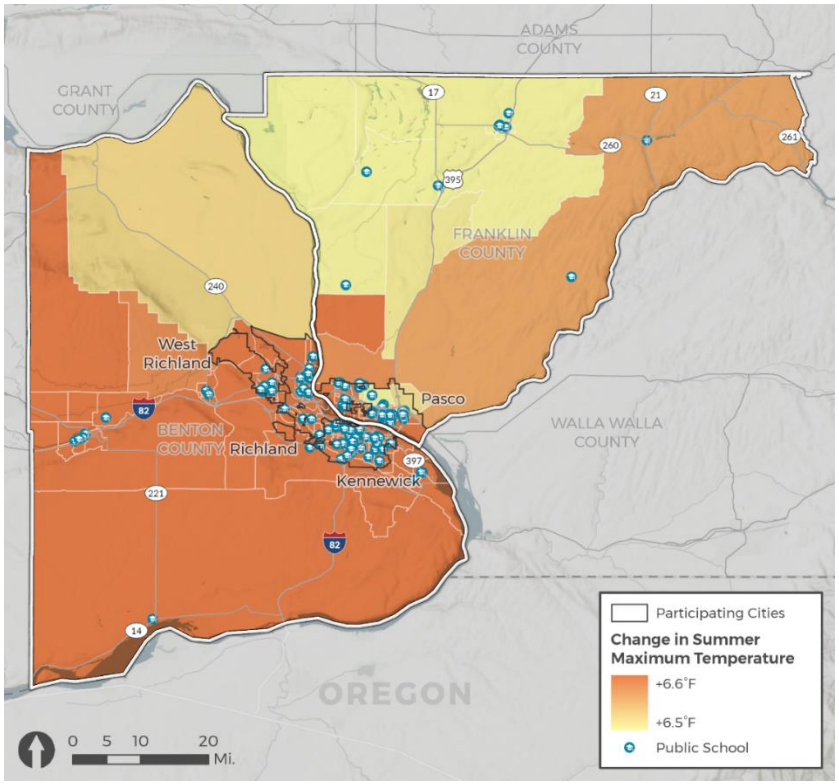
Figure C-68. Average PM2.5 rating and public schools in the Tri-Cities Region.



BERK, 2025

Schools throughout the Tri-Cities Region can expect increases in the maximum summer temperature (**Figure C-69**). Southern and central Benton County, Richland, and Kennewick schools can expect the most increases in summer temperatures. Temperatures in Pasco and northern Benton County will also see higher maximum temperatures, but to a slightly lesser degree. All schools can serve as cooling centers and other community resources if they have adequate air conditioning and insulation.

Figure C-69. Washington State public schools and expected changes in maximum summer temperatures.



BERK, 2025

Wildfires and floods may cause mass evacuations, straining the capacity of community resources (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018). As the regional population continues to grow, more resources may be needed to support residents before, during, and after wildfires, floods, and other events.

Climate hazards can impact the food supply, increasing food insecurity in the Tri-Cities Region. Wildfire and extreme heat can reduce agriculture production, while floods or wildfires can damage stores, storage facilities, and processing plants, impacting the food supply. The Tri-Cities Region has several food banks and pantries, including Second Harvest Tri-Cities and the Tri-Cities Food Banks. Climate impacts can reduce the availability of food and increase the number of people dependent on them.

Adaptive Capacity

Community centers, libraries, schools, and other community resources can support residents in Kennewick before, during, and after natural hazards related to climate. Community resources can provide programming, education, and supplies to support residents' preparations, and provide shelter during hazards, improving residents' ability to withstand climate hazards.

Education and Programming

- Community education and outreach programs can connect residents with resources to navigate extreme weather and climate hazards, especially wildfire. These programs can help residents reduce their risk of wildfire and help them prepare for shelter-in-place or evacuation. Education and preparation programs can empower residents to be independent and safe during an emergency, freeing up emergency resources for other purposes.
- The Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan includes an action item to create youth and adult wildfire education plans and public information campaigns on wildland fire safety and defensible space (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). In addition, Benton County fire departments visit schools and neighborhoods with education materials around fire hazards (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

Community Spaces

- Local nonprofits and organizations, which have relationships with residents, can support residents and partner with local governments to offer resources and shelter during natural hazards. Several programs and organizations support the wellbeing of residents in the Tri-Cities Region including:
- Franklin County Senior Information and Assistance – Provides information and referral on housing unit accessibility, health or personal care needs, and other housing factors for the elderly and persons with disabilities.
- Benton-Franklin Housing Continuum of Care – Promotes affordable housing programs, identifies needs, conducts information and education campaigns, and develops community partnership.
- Greater Columbia Accountable Community of Health – RoundTable composed of multiple health sectors around the state with a common interest in improving health and health equity.
- Salvation Army – Transitional living facility, rent and eviction notice assistance, and short-term shelter.
- Saint Vincent de Paul Society – Provides utility cut-off and eviction assistance.
- Tri-Cities Union Gospel Mission – Shelter for homeless men, women, and families with children.
- Benton-Franklin Community Action Committee Homeless Prevention Program – Shelter for very low-income homeless families with special needs. HOPE Home – Housing for homeless pregnant and parenting teens.
- Several regional community resources including libraries, community centers, and the Columbia Center Mall, are open to Tri-Cities Region residents as cooling centers during extreme heat events (Huff, 2024).
- Many buildings in the Yakama Nation can also be used as cooling centers and emergency shelters during poor air quality or extreme heat events (Yakama Nation, 2019).

Emergency Management

The emergency management sub-sector includes communication systems, critical facilities, emergency services such as hospitals and health facilities. The Tri-Cities Region is growing quickly, increasing the demand for emergency services while the risk of climate hazards such as wildfire, flooding, and extreme heat, are also growing.

Climate Risks

The Tri-Cities Region faces an increased risk of wildfire and flooding. The number of high-risk wildfire risk days may increase by 8-11 days per year. Wildfire and flooding can impact the accessibility of roads and bridges for emergency responders. Extreme weather events and climate hazards can increase emergency maintenance or repairs on critical facilities such as energy facilities (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).

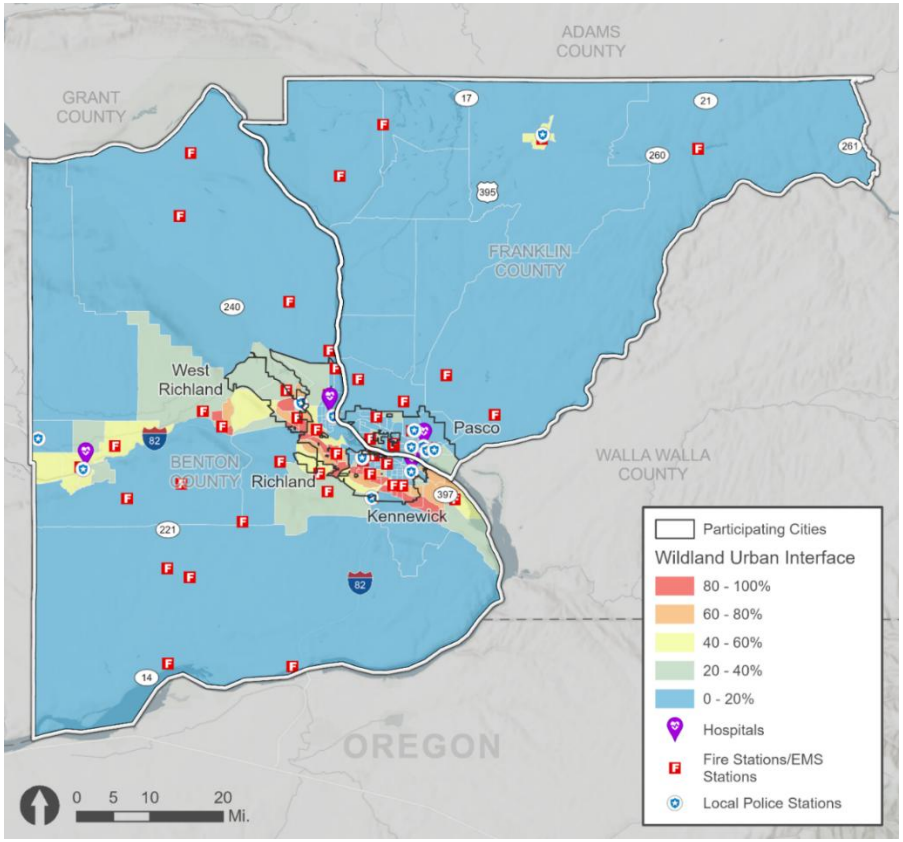
Jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region have mutual aid agreements to share resources during a wildfire. But as the region grows and the risk of wildfire grows, the ability to address wildfires may be limited.

The Tri-Cities Region is also a quickly growing region, which will increase demand for emergency services and increase the volume of vehicles using roads. This capacity issue can impact the ability to evacuate from climate hazards such as wildfire and flood. If emergency responders are unable to reach an area because of congestion or inaccessibility, people's lives may be in danger (City of West Richland, 2017).

There are emergency services located in the WUI (**Figure C-70**). Wildfires near emergency facilities can limit emergency responses, prevent first responders from attending to a fire, and prevent resident access to care.

Extreme heat events puts residents at risk of heat-related illnesses and can increase the need for emergency responses. Emergency responders are also vulnerable to heat-related illness and can face injury or death by working in extreme heat situations to respond to emergencies.

Figure C-70. Locations of emergency facilities and the WUI. Source: Washington Department of Natural Resources.



BERK, 2025



During a heat wave in 2021, firefighters had to take a break to cool off, drink water, and have their vitals checked after finishing one canister of compressed air while putting out a house fire in Pasco (Stormo, 2021).

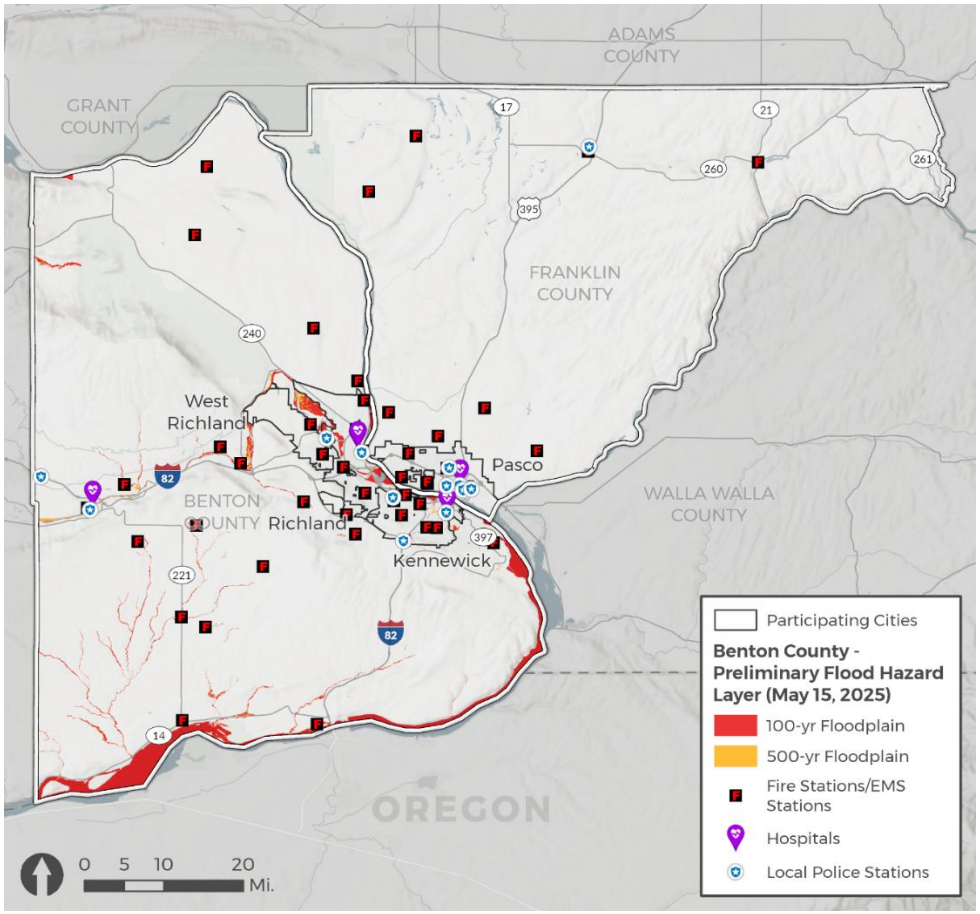
Due **to the region's geography, consistent radio communication** for emergency response can be difficult (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025). The SECOMM system used for emergency responses cannot cover all of Benton and Franklin Counties because of the region's topography, even though emergency personnel use multiple channels and repeater sites to amplify the signal (Benton County, 2024a).

Regular communication channels for regional residents, such as internet and phone, are also vulnerable to climate impacts. Telecommunications networks have cables and connection hubs that are threatened by climate change impacts and extreme events (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025).

Hospitals and emergency services may be inaccessible during extreme weather, flooding storms, or wildfire events. Regional hospitals and medical centers may be exposed to severe weather storms that damage buildings, preventing access to or use of them as shelter (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

The FEMA 100-year floodplain shows which emergency services are most at risk of flooding (**Figure C-71**). These include several fire stations throughout the Tri-Cities Region. Some hospitals, particularly in Kennewick, may also be at risk of flooding.

Figure C-71. FEMA flood plain for Benton County. Source: FEMA.



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Adaptive Capacity

Jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region have a history of established relationships to share resources to respond to emergencies. Climate related natural hazards, including extreme heat and flooding, are not included in most emergency planning documents. However, efforts to increase wildfire preparation can serve as models for adapting to other climate hazards.

Emergency responses and support:

- Benton County has goals to work with relevant agencies throughout the county to collaborate on maintaining and adding essential facilities in the region and UGA's as development increases to ensure public safety (Benton County, 2024a).
- Benton County has policies to increase the County's ability to respond to emergencies. Policies include ensuring sufficient resources to support emergency operations during and after a natural disaster, upgrading buildings to climate impacts, and upgrading communications systems to withstand natural hazards by improving radio availability and range (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- Regional short-, medium-, and long-term coordination and mitigation strategies aim to ensure responses to emergencies and natural disasters is effective. However, plans do not address emergency responses specific to climate impacts (BFCOG, 2021).
- Regional energy resilience planning is supported through hazard mitigation goals and infrastructure upgrades (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- Benton County has identified the need to encourage private-sector participation in hazard mitigation for the design and retrofit of energy and telecommunications systems. This includes ensuring that critical systems supporting emergency services can remain functional during disasters and, where necessary, be relocated or reinforced to withstand disruptions (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- Franklin County also participates in the national flood insurance program (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).

Wildfire management practices and programs:

- Mutual aid agreements between fire departments to support each other in emergencies. Benton County, Kennewick, Pasco. Jurisdictions are also improving emergency vehicle access to address wildfires. Richland Comprehensive Plan increasing emergency services and responses in city.
- There are five fire districts in Franklin County; District 3 serves area around and north of Pasco (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).
- The Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan outlines how the County is planning in high-risk fire areas to ensure adequate water resources, communication tools, and other pieces are in place to deal with wildfire (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).
- Franklin County distributes Firewise-type educational brochures with occupancy permits so residents and business owners can learn how to protect their properties from wildfire, reducing the burden on the fire districts.

Ecosystems & Water Resources

Overview and Key Takeaways

Sector	Sub-sectors
Ecosystems and Water Resources	Cultural Resources: Parks, trails, open spaces Water Resources: Drinking water, aquifers Ecosystems and Critical Areas: Wetlands, riparian areas, flood hazard zones

Ecological resources across the Tri-Cities Region are threatened by rising air and water temperatures, drought, wildfires, and flooding, which are exacerbated by a changing climate. Ecosystems and water resources in the Tri-Cities Region include:

- Areas with cultural significance to regional Tribes.
- Recreational areas.
- Sources for potable and household water.
- Critical areas that ecosystems and communities highly depend on.

Flood events threaten to contaminate key water resources, and drier conditions increase the susceptibility of culturally and ecologically significant riparian areas to wildfire. While the Tri-Cities Region has implemented a wide range of resource and habitat management efforts, it may strengthen its resilience to floods, extreme heat, and wildfire through additional or refined policies and regulations. More intentional collaboration with neighboring Tribes, flood hazard reduction projects, and greater public education could increase the region's ability to respond to climate hazards.

Key Climate Risks			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Greater frequency and severity of heavy precipitation events increase the region's susceptibility to flooding, and the Columbia River Basin has historically experienced devastating floods that contaminated water resources.	Warming air temperatures will disrupt the productivity of important ecosystems and critical areas through rising surface water temperatures, range shifts, and subsequent competition with invasive species.	Increasingly dry conditions reduce water availability and increase the region's susceptibility to wildfire through contribution to high fuel load areas.	Greater wildfire risk among the Tri-Cities threatens cultural resource areas and the ecosystems within them. Wildfire damage to critical areas will reduce ecosystem functions such as buffering effects, water filtration, and water storage.
Community Vulnerability			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
The Tri-Cities have implemented policies and regulations to increase water quality, conservation, and storage capacity over the past decade and continue to enforce water resource management. However, as water demands for a limited water supply continue to rise, further protection of key water resources (i.e., Columbia and Yakima Rivers, aquifer recharge areas) is needed.	As the number of extreme heat days rises, Tri-Cities communities are at a higher risk of heat stroke during recreational activities. Strategic messaging at parks and other gathering areas on how to regulate body temperatures, identify signs of heat stroke, and when to stay indoors could better equip Tri-Cities Region communities to adapt to warming temperatures.	The vulnerability of the Tri-Cities region to drought has risen as demand for water supplies increases with population growth, marking Benton County as one of nine counties most at risk and vulnerable to drought (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).	While some jurisdictions have incorporated fuels reduction projects in response to increased wildfire risk, the Tri-Cities region would benefit from additional regulatory and management efforts to protect communities, critical areas, and the ecosystems within them from wildfires.

Risks & Adaptations

The risks and adaptations section provides an overview of current Kennewick climate risks and related efforts that are helping reduce risks and vulnerabilities. This section is not suggesting new policies, regulations, or programs.

Sector	Climate Risks & Adaptive Capacity
Cultural Resources	*Cross-Cutting*

- Adaptive Capacity: The City of Kennewick does not identify climate hazards specific to cultural resources, but it has implemented measures in its Shoreline Master Program to improve recreational outdoor access and protect cultural resource areas. The Kennewick Shoreline Master Program includes measures that:
- Improve public access to designated areas of Lake Wallula in Clover Island for recreational purposes.
- Enhance the recreational facility potential of the shorelines.
- Protect and restore ecological functions of open spaces, floodplains and other sensitive lands that overlap or intersect with urban development, while allowing a variety of compatible uses (i.e., Urban Conservancy Environment) (City of Kennewick, 2017).

Water Resources	*Cross-Cutting* Risk: The City of Kennewick relies on the Columbia River for most of its water supply, making the city's water supply vulnerable to water quality contamination that can be exacerbated by drought conditions (City of Kennweick, 2017). Risk: The city's irrigation water is largely supplied by the Kennewick Irrigation District, which has junior water rights from the Yakima River and can experience water limitations during drought. Risk: The City has experienced a decreasing water demand per capita since 2007, primarily due to water use efficiency practices. • Between 2007 and 2014, Kennewick's water service area population rose by approximately 19 percent, but the volume of water supplied increased by only 5 percent. Water demand in Kennewick is expected to increase 33 percent by the end of its 20-year planning period (City of Kennweick, 2017). Adaptive Capacity: Kennewick has taken aggressive measures to minimize infiltration (groundwater entering the sewer) and has high confidence in the existing sewer flows collection model (City of Kennewick, 2015). The City has also employed preventative maintenance staff for water supply facilities. Adaptive Capacity: Additionally, Kennewick has incorporated other regulations, policies, and programs to: • Protect aquifers from activities that could adversely affect the recharging of aquifers or allow contaminants to enter. • Evaluate the expansion of the Columbia River WTP to meet the projected source capacity requirements (City of Kennweick, 2017). • Reduce water demand per capita and increase awareness about the importance of water conservation (City of Kennweick, 2017).
Ecosystems & Critical Areas	*Wildfire* Risk: Riparian areas and their ecological functions are highly vulnerable to a warming climate (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). Riparian areas in the City of Kennewick are at risk of wildfire. The City does not currently have funding for a fuels management program. *Flooding*

⚠ Risk: The City of Kennewick has experienced increases in wetland flood risk due to summer droughts and a rise in precipitation during other seasons (City of Kennewick, 2015).

Cross-Cutting

Adaptive Capacity: To protect wetlands and other critical areas across the city, the City of Kennewick has implemented policies that:

- Protect wetlands by requiring all proposed activities nearby to conform to the development of the wetland's performance standards.
- Require the development of a Critical Area Report and Habitat Assessment when proposing activities near critical areas and sensitive habitats.
- Restrict shoreline uses and other new developments that adversely impact the ecological functions of critical freshwater habitats.
- Reduce stormwater runoff in areas adjacent to riparian areas through requirements in the Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington.
- Require all structures and activities to be located outside of riparian habitat areas (RHAs).
- Implement riparian habitat area buffers based on the stream type (City of Kennewick, 2021) and ensure they are sufficiently wide to achieve the full range of ecosystem functions (e.g., protection of instream fish, preservation of fish and wildlife habitat, and connection between wildlife habitats) (City of Kennewick, 2007).

Cultural Resources

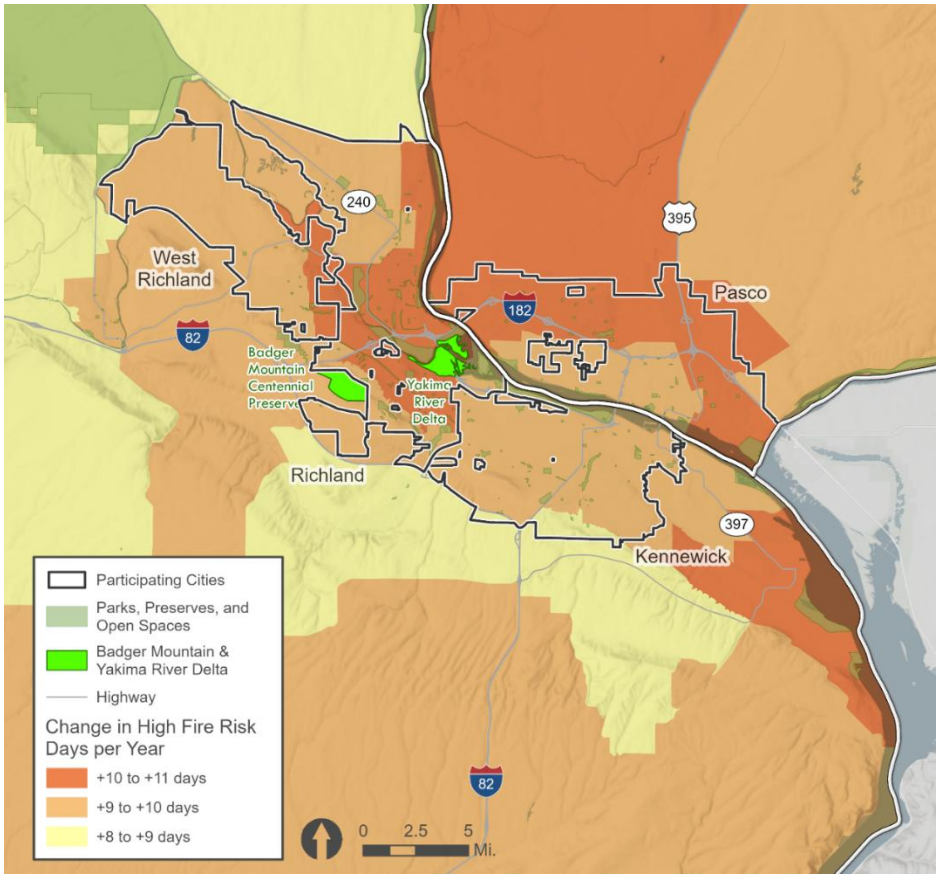
Cultural resources in the Tri-Cities Region include parks, trails, open spaces, and other areas that relate to culturally important foods or have historical significance to Tribes and residents. As areas like these are exposed to climate impacts such as drought, wildfire, and flooding, the ability for Tribes and residents to use and congregate in these spaces is diminished, with adverse effects on community health and wellbeing. The implications of these climate impacts will be felt particularly by Northwest Tribes and underserved communities (e.g., low-income communities and communities of color) (City of Pasco, 2023).

Parks and open spaces provide recreational benefits that improve Tribal and community wellbeing. Based on the necessary amount of acreage needed for parks and open spaces, Benton County, West Richland, Pasco, and Kennewick do not provide adequate park access. Richland has enough parks for its residents. Park accessibility is particularly important in considering the climate vulnerability of Tri-Cities Region communities, as just and fair access improves health, wellbeing, and resiliency in recovering from environmental, social and economic challenges (City of Pasco, 2023). Lack of access to natural areas has also historically impacted lower-income communities or communities of color.

Climate Risks

Increases in the frequency and intensity of wildfires in high-risk areas like Badger Mountain and the Yakima Delta threaten historic sites, trails, and natural areas, reducing access to culturally important spaces (**Figure C-72**) (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). These areas are in the Yakama Nation and CTUIR's ceded lands and hold cultural significance in providing space for ceremonial practices. Parks such as the Sacajawea Historic National Park are deeply rooted in Tribal history and feature trails that connect each of the Tri-Cities Region jurisdictions (Benton County, WA GIS Department, n.d.).

Figure C-72. Wildfire risk days, parks, and open space in the region, including Badger Mountain and the Yakima River Delta.



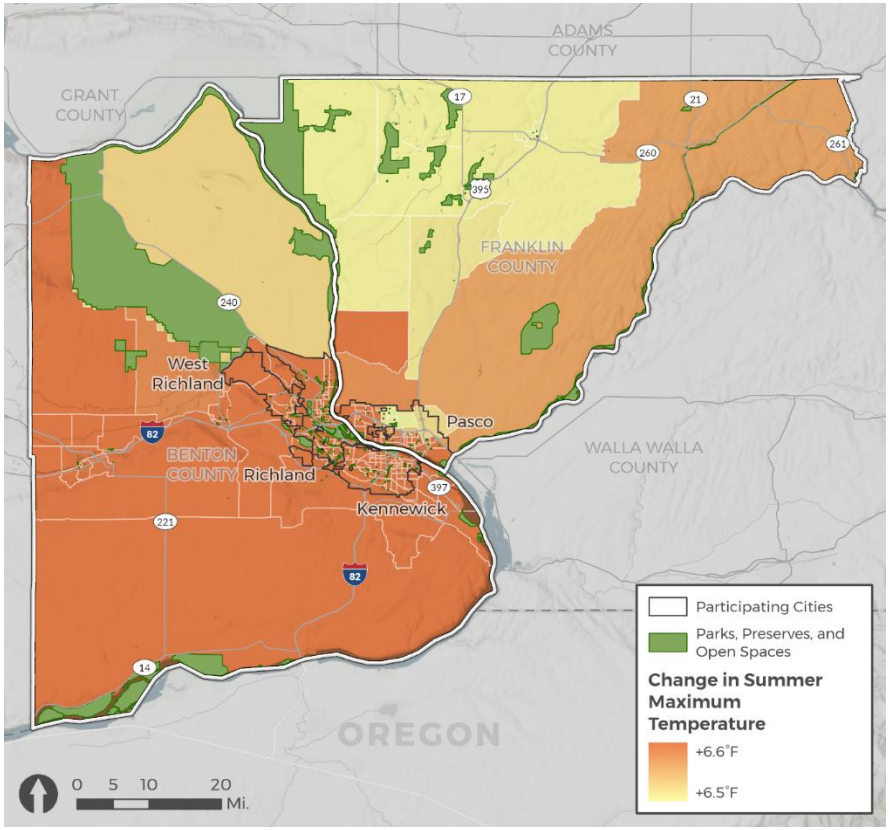
BERK, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Some high-risk areas are also used recreationally and are likely to experience more frequent conditions that make recreation unsafe. For example, Badger Mountain features eight miles of trails and is one of the most visited parks in the Tri-Cities Region, with over 200,000 visitors per year (Benton County, n.d.). Other notable trails at risk of wildfire include Bateman Island and the Chamna Nature Preserve–both of which provide paths for hiking, running and biking throughout the Tri-Cities Region. Consequentially, heavy smoke inundation events create poor air quality conditions over large areas, resulting in unsafe conditions for park users.

As extreme heat events become more frequent, Tribal members and other communities that spend time in these outdoors areas such as parks, trails, and open spaces face higher risk of heat stroke, dehydration, and other health complications (Sanders, et al., 2022). As culturally significant areas in the Tri-Cities Region overlap with recreational spaces and trails, extreme heat over these areas will negatively impact health across multiple communities (**Figure C-73**).

Figure C-73. Change in extreme heat days across cultural resources in the Tri-Cities.



BERK, 2025. Source: University of Washington, Washington Department of Natural Resources.

Rising air and surface water temperatures are disrupting the lifecycles and relationships of key species and threatening access to vital cultural resources. For example, algal blooms onset by rising water temperatures have contaminated shellfish such that they cannot be consumed during traditional seasons (IPCC, 2022).These disruptions not only affect the availability of First Foods but also undermine cultural and ceremonial practices of Tribes (IPCC, 2022). As access to cultural resources has already been reduced from privatization of land and agricultural development beyond reservation boundaries, developmental pressures and increased wildfire will compound these barriers for Northwest Tribes (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022). These changes have the potential to hinder the transmission of traditional knowledge, which plays a vital role in promoting Indigenous health and healing intergenerational trauma (IPCC, 2022).

Warming temperatures will stress sensitive species as ranges shift and competition with non-native species increases. This can reduce riparian functions, such as water filtering and flood control, for riverine communities. Undeveloped government and conservation lands are crucial to the habitat inventory and wildlife corridors of state candidate and monitored species (City of West Richland, 2021). Transitional zones like riparian areas are critical to maintaining overall ecosystem health and biodiversity but also feature high recreational use in the Tri-Cities Region. Recreation and development in these spaces can have

consequential impacts on ecosystems, critical areas, and water resources. Additionally, native riverine and riparian communities are adapted to and dependent on the dynamic conditions of these areas for their growth and survival (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025).

Flooding is a risk to salmon populations and to recreation infrastructure. Severe and devastating floods occurred in the 1940s and the 1990s in the Tri-Cities region, as well as other significant floods occurring as recently as 2017 (Benton County, 2024a). Some of these flood events resulted in physical damage to over 7,000 miles of trails (Paulsen, 1949). Flooding can lead to higher streamflows which can disrupt salmon habitats and reduce salmon populations—a culturally important species to Northwest Tribes.

Adaptive Capacity

There are several shared policies and regulations across the Tri-Cities Region to protect cultural resources, open spaces, and the key ecological functions within them.

Open and Natural Spaces

- Comprehensive and specific plans, such as jurisdiction-specific Shoreline Master Plans and the Pasco Parks, Recreations, and Open Spaces plan, outline restrictions on the development of trails, parks, open spaces, and archaeological areas. Policies and regulations in place throughout the jurisdictions support the following key goals:
- Develop, enhance, and maintain a public trails system to provide access to natural areas.
- Grant public access to trails, walkways, and corridors, unless it results in loss to net ecological function.
- Protect and conserve aesthetic, recreational and natural areas that are accessible to the community.
- Develop and improve parks systems.
- Conserve open spaces and their ecological functions.
- Preserve lands, sites, and structures that have historical or cultural significance.
- Protect native habitats and species by requiring Habitat Assessments prior to development.
- Maintain ecological functions, prevent degradation, and encourage recreational activities

Traditional knowledge and Tribal Rights

- Strengthen the resilience of cultural resources, reducing developmental pressure imposed on key areas for Tribal connection and First Food species.
- Respect traditional knowledge and the Northwest Tribes' right to land within the Tri-Cities Region.
- Collaborative efforts with Northwest Tribes, such as those outlined in the Benton County Comprehensive Plan, are necessary to establish shared priorities and goals in economic development, the preservation of cultural resources, and other issues of interest (Benton County, 2024a).
- The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) Adaptation Plan includes goals to promote first foods knowledge, access, processing, and safe harvest, as well as land management practices that prioritize Indigenous stewardship and reciprocal relationships (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).
- Continued mutual agreements and increasing collaboration with Northwest Tribes would strengthen the Tri-Cities Region' ability to respond to climate hazards as they relate to cultural resources.
- Ensuring the abundance of Tribal food resources is likely to benefit the wellbeing and culture of Tribal communities.
- To enhance and preserve these resources, the Tri-Cities Region would benefit from the implementation of policies that directly protect culturally important sites and species, as well as Tribes' access to them.

- These policies could be developed in conjunction with increased collaboration between city governments and Northwest Tribes to return Indigenous knowledge to ceded and traditional use lands.

Water Resources

Water resources are at risk of climate hazards including drought and flooding. The Columbia and Yakima Rivers are important water resources for the Tri-Cities Region. This section also includes drinking water and groundwater.

Climate Risk

Across the Tri-Cities Region, rising temperatures, drought, flooding, and population growth reduce water availability and projections for water supplies in the future. The Tri-Cities Region obtain water primarily from the Columbia River Basin and Yakima River. These rivers are dependent on shallow aquifers and other critical areas such as aquifer recharge zones and wetlands. Water resources are vulnerable to reduced snowpack, summer low flows, and increased contaminants from agricultural runoff and encroaching development.

Regionally, the Tri-Cities Region have experienced trends in declining groundwater levels and water quality in aquifers, attributed to agricultural production and other anthropogenic factors. Despite efforts over the past 10 years to implement water conservation plans, these areas are still facing uncertainty in future water supplies as climate impacts place additional stress on resources (Benton County, 2024a).

The risk of drought is increasing and Benton County is one of nine counties most at risk and vulnerable to drought in Washington (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). The Yakima River is an important water source for both residents and ecosystems across the Tri-Cities Region. Rising populations and water use, late summer low-flows, non-point source pollution from agricultural runoff, and other drivers are negatively affecting the Yakima River water quality and habitats.

Reductions in snowfall lead to a decrease in the potential for groundwater recharge in aquifers. Demands for freshwater will deplete groundwater sources, having negative impacts on surface-water base flows. As many communities in the Tri-Cities Region are dependent on groundwater from summer base flows for household and drinking water, climate impacts to shallow aquifers will limit availability of clean drinking water (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).

In addition to reductions in flow of potable drinking water, the Tri-Cities Region are increasingly susceptible to water contamination because of climate hazards. Changes in climatic conditions, such as heavy precipitation events, increase the region's susceptibility to flooding, which can pollute water resources and supplies through agricultural runoff. Heavy precipitation events can overwhelm stormwater facilities and cause stormwater runoff to enter nearby water bodies. This can degrade water quality by carrying pollutants and sediments into water sources like aquifers and the Columbia and Yakima Rivers. Likewise, Benton County has been identified as one of the top ten nitrate priority areas by Washington Department of Ecology for water management after experiencing an increase in nitrate pollution (Benton County, 2024a).

Increases in summer temperatures and reduced riparian vegetation are contributing to areas of higher heat along the river (Benton County, 2024a). Warmer stream temperatures may reduce the ability to meet water quality standards and effluent limits. However, less vegetation also lowers the amount of fuel available to burn in a wildfire, which can be more likely during high summer temperatures and drought conditions.

Increased wildfires will have both direct and indirect impacts on water availability across the Tri-Cities Region. Wildfires may cause damage to water distribution infrastructure. Wildfires can also lead to the loss of large amounts of vegetation. Vegetation loss will reduce water quality in reservoirs due to more runoff, erosion, and turbidity. It would also increase the risk of landslides and mudslides that deposit large amounts of mud and debris in streams, rivers, and irrigation channels (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

Adaptive Capacity

Water Conservation

Over the past decade, jurisdictions across the Tri-Cities Region have implemented policies to conserve, protect, and enhance water quality and availability.

- Policies protect surface and groundwater supplies as warming temperatures, reduced snowfall, and rising agricultural demand reduce water availability.
- Activities near aquifers and aquifer recharge areas are highly regulated to reduce harm to potable water resources and to prevent contaminants such as nitrogen and hazardous substances from entering (Benton County Planning Department, n.d.).
- Imposed regulations to protect water quality in rivers and streams, including specific restrictions on activities that could harm the nearby ecosystems.
- Adaptive capacity can be increased by collaborating with existing water conservation programs to incentivize residents and businesses to reduce water consumption could reduce additional stress on water resources.
- Policies to increase water storage capacity to keep up with growing demand include developing additional storage capacity in reservoirs, new above-ground water storage, aquifer storage and recovery, enhanced water recharge, and other groundwater management strategies.
- Implemented educational programs to promote water conservation and responsible household practices.

Flooding and stormwater management

In combination with flood hazard reduction efforts, Tri-Cities Region jurisdictions implemented stormwater management plans and policies to prevent stormwater runoff.

- These efforts often refer to the Ecology Stormwater Management Manual for Eastern Washington. The manual provides best practices to avoid contamination of stormwater facilities and nearby water bodies despite the projected increases in precipitation.
- Flood hazard reduction measures are also encouraged if they do not negatively impact ecological functions or can minimize ecological impacts. Restrictions to flood reduction strategies illustrate competing interests between ecosystems protection and stormwater management.
- Additionally, development to increase resilience to climate hazards can conflict with the protection of critical habitats and ecosystems. Management practices that balance the protection and conservation of life-sustaining, cultural, and ecological resources is crucial to increasing water resources adaptive capacity across the Tri-Cities Region.

To increase adaptive capacity and improve the resiliency of water resources to climate impacts, the Tri-Cities Region may consider additional policies and programs that build on the current management practices:

- Implement flood hazard reduction measures that do not negatively impact ecosystems, such as green infrastructure projects (e.g., installation of green roofs and rain gardens) would increase resiliency from flooding.
- Reduce contamination risks by restoring waterways and areas with flood reduction functions, such as wetlands.
- Diversify water resources to increase communities' resilience to climate hazards.

Ecosystems & Critical Areas

- Critical areas of concern among the Tri-Cities Region include wetlands, riparian areas, rivers, and flood hazard areas. While aquifers and aquifer recharge areas are also considered critical areas, information regarding their climate risks and adaptive capacity can be found in the Water Resources section.

Climate Risks

Ecosystems and critical areas in the Tri-Cities Region are susceptible to climate impacts from an increasing frequency and intensity of wildfires, extreme heat, and flooding associated with the combination of increased precipitation and drought. Climate impacts on both ecosystems and critical areas are interconnected, as the productivity of ecosystems (e.g., fish habitats and native vegetation) relies on the health and maintenance of relevant habitats (e.g., rivers, riparian areas, and wetlands).

Warming temperatures can lead to ecosystem disruptions to fish and wildlife. Warming air and water temperatures have contributed to algal blooms and allowed non-native invasive species in the Columbia River Basin to thrive, out-competing important native species like Chinook salmon (IPCC, 2022). Other climate hazards related to warming temperatures, such as winter flooding onset by shifts in the peak flows of rivers and streams, may contribute to a disconnection with aquatic ecosystem seasonal cycles in the Tri-Cities Region (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022). Similarly, species such as huckleberries and elk are expected to decline due to competition with invasive species or shifts in timing of forage growth. For example, big game females may experience a disconnection with native forage growth during their seasonal window to reproduce due to changing precipitation patterns. This has the potential to reduce the frequency of calving and fitness in some herds (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).

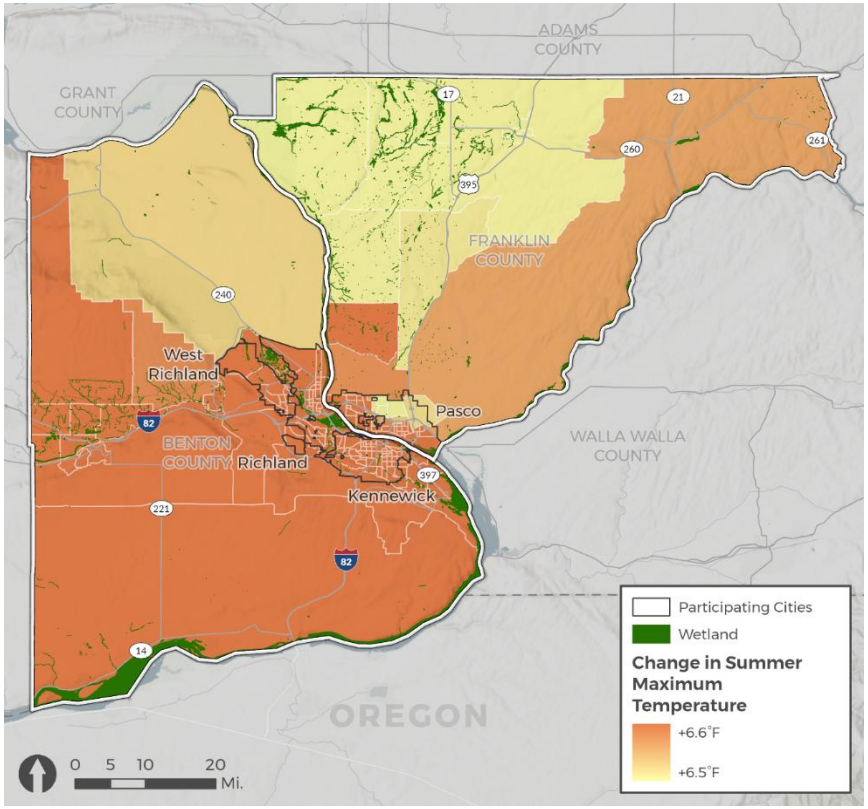
Warming temperatures over wetland regions may alter the biological functions and processes of wetlands, negatively impacting ecosystems dependent on them for productivity. The Tri-Cities Region holds a network of both natural and artificial wetlands along the Columbia and Yakima rivers and near irrigated agricultural areas. Ecosystems dependent on transitional zones, such as wetlands, are expected to experience high exposure to extreme heat (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). Plant and animal species within these zones are already living at the upper edge of their temperature ranges and will therefore be especially susceptible to temperature changes. In the Tri-Cities Region, more than 75 percent of Indigenous wildlife species within the central Columbia Basin are dependent on wetlands and other riverine corridors (Benton County, 2024a). Summer maximum temperatures are expected to increase significantly in areas with wetlands along the Columbia River (**Figure C-74**).

Critical areas in the Tri-Cities Region have become more susceptible to intense wildfires due to more extreme heat and drought in an already arid or semi-arid climate. Wildfires have the potential to damage soil, native vegetation, fish and wildlife populations. Riparian areas have become increasingly susceptible to wildfire, as cheatgrass, a non-native invasive species that has proliferated in shrub steppe areas under warming conditions, has contributed to high fuel loads in riparian areas (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).

Additionally, recreational activities concentrated near riparian areas—as evident in the locations of the Columbia Park, Bateman Island, Chamna Natural Preserve and Riverview Natural Preserve—pose threats of accidental ignitions (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). The combined fuel loads and potential for recreational ignition yield a high vulnerability among the Tri-Cities Region for wildfires, threatening the important ecological functions of riparian areas, such as protection of instream fish habitat and preservation and connection of fish and wildlife habitat (City of Kennewick, 2007).

Droughts in the Tri-Cities region may reduce water levels and the recharging effect of wetlands, leading to a decrease in Tri-Cities Region communities' access to potable water. However, while there has been a trend in loss of artificial wetlands resulting from water conservation projects, the results of water conservation may leave more water in the rivers as instream flow. This may benefit natural wetlands along the riverine corridor (Benton County, 2024a).

Figure C-74. Change in summer maximum temperature and wetlands.



BERK, 202. Sources: University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

Wetlands and floodplains, which provide important functions for fish species and can supply riparian habitats, are also at risk of flooding and water contamination. The Tri-Cities Region features many floodplains mapped along the Yakima and Columbia Rivers. Areas along the lower Yakima River are especially vulnerable to flooding due to their downstream position (Benton County, 2024a).

First Foods, their nutritional value, and the ecosystems they depend on are highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. While First Foods are extremely adaptive to climate change, the region must also manage land and resources for their success to promote resiliency (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025). Rising temperatures, including the warming of surface waters, are disrupting the lifecycles and relationships of key species and threatening access to cultural and recreational resources. These disruptions not only affect the availability of First Foods but also undermine cultural and ceremonial practices, which are critical to the mental, cultural, and physical wellbeing of Tribes. Such changes have the potential to hinder the transmission of traditional knowledge, which plays a vital role in promoting Indigenous health and healing intergenerational trauma (IPCC, 2022).

Adaptive Capacity

The jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region utilize their Critical Areas Ordinances and Shoreline Master Plans in regulating critical areas, ecosystems, and habitats. Throughout each jurisdiction, particularly sensitive species and habitats have been identified and prioritized for protection. These plans and their actions increase the resilience of these ecosystems to climate impacts. Management plans across the Tri-Cities Region align with the following key goals:

- Protect sensitive habitats and species listed under the Endangered Species Act, such as bald eagle habitats.
- Allow for the unobstructed passage of fish and wildlife.
- Ensure no net loss of ecological function across critical areas.

Wetland protection and management

- Specific policies and regulations, mostly regarding future development or activities, have been enacted by the Tri-Cities Region to achieve these goals.
- Provided that wetlands serve significant functions to the overall health and productivity of surrounding ecosystems, they are the most heavily regulated of all critical areas among the Tri-Cities Region.
- Requirements such as the establishment or maintenance of specific buffer widths have been implemented to ensure the protection of wetland values and functions, as well as regulations against the disposal of materials in or near wetlands that may hinder their resources.

Riparian protection and management

- The Tri-Cities enforce specific widths for riparian areas to achieve the full range of riparian and aquatic ecosystem functions (City of Kennewick, 2007).
- The broader Benton County Wildfire Management Plan notes future fuel reduction projects in riparian areas, but not all jurisdictions have the funding to fulfill such projects (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).
- Considering the susceptibility of riparian areas to wildfire, the Tri-Cities Region may benefit from seeking out additional funding to support jurisdiction-specific fuel reduction projects.

Floodplain protection and management

- The Tri-Cities Region have enacted policies to maintain the storage capacity of floodplains through regulated development, agriculture, and other activities that could increase the risk of flood hazards or diminish floodplain functions.
- Critical areas across the Tri-Cities Region are protected by a consistent policy that any development or activity in or near critical areas must not result in a net loss of ecological function, unless properly mitigated.
- Critical areas are further regulated through the requirement that a critical area report and/or habitat assessment be prepared prior to any development in close proximity:
- Habitat assessment - Evaluates the potential presence or absence of designated critical fish or wildlife species or habitat (Benton County, 2024a).
- Critical area report - Assesses potential impacts of a proposed development on critical areas, using the best available science and ensuring compliance with relevant environmental protection standards (Benton County, 2024a).

Critical Areas

- If critical areas or habitats are adversely impacted by development or other activities, compensatory mitigation is required. While the Tri-Cities Region has already implemented a variety of policies and regulations to maintain the ecological functions of important habitats and critical areas, it faces adaptation barriers, such as lack of funding and conflicting interests.

- Some ecosystems within the Tri-Cities Region were historically adapted to wildfire through controlled fires set by Indigenous Tribes. However, in the absence of these burning practices due to the privatization of land, the ecosystems that were once resilient to wildfire are no longer adapted today.
- If controlled fires were reintroduced to ecosystems under current conditions, the result could be damaging (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).

Built Infrastructure

Overview and Key Takeaways

Sector	Sub-sectors
Built Infrastructure	• Buildings: Single and multi-family residential buildings, commercial buildings, City buildings • Energy: Electric substation/powerplants, transmission lines • Transportation: Roads and highway systems, public transportation, active transportation (cycling and pedestrian) infrastructure

The built infrastructure in the Tri-Cities, including buildings, energy, and transportation, forms the physical foundation of the community. Each of these sub-sectors play a critical role in the livelihood, safety, mobility, and daily operations across the region. As climate change accelerates, this sector faces increasing exposure to hazards such as flooding, extreme heat, drought, and wildfire. These hazards threaten to degrade structures, interrupt essential services, and disproportionality impact vulnerable communities. These risks are heightened by rapid population growth, aging infrastructure, and a strong regional reliance on car-based transportation.

Key Climate Risks			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Damage to housing, road washouts, utility failures, constrained development.	Increased cooling demands, stress on older buildings and HVAC systems.	Reduced availability of hydropower electricity generation.	Damage to homes and utilities, reduced air quality, increased emergency demand.
Community Vulnerability			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Structures in floodplain, flooding of major commuting roadways.	Energy demand spikes, aging homes without efficient HVAC.	Higher energy costs due to lack of hydropower generation.	Homes in WUI zones.

Risks & Adaptations

The risks and adaptations section provides an overview of current Kennewick climate risks and related efforts that are helping reduce risks and vulnerabilities. This section is not suggesting new policies, regulations, or programs.

Sector	Climate Risks & Adaptive Capacity

Buildings	*Wildfire* ⚠ Risk: Wildland-Urban Interface WUI zones include Zintel Canyon, Blackberry Canyon, and other riparian areas including south Kennewick, adjacent to Canyon Lakes, Inspiration Point, and Thompson Hill. ⚠ Risk: No funding currently exists for fuels management programs, despite an identified need (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). Adaptive Capacity: The City of Kennewick prohibits most outdoor burning to help lower wildfire risk (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). *Flooding* Adaptive Capacity: Kennewick's drainage system is integrated with some irrigation canals managed by Kennewick Irrigation District and Columbia Irrigation District, helping to collect excess rainwater to extreme precipitation events (City of Kennewick, 2021). *Cross-Cutting* Adaptive Capacity: Policy goals include expanding ADA-compliant pedestrian networks and supporting transit access through enhanced crossings, shelters, and park-and-ride facilities (City of Kennewick, 2021). ⚠ Risk: Housing stock is older compared with neighboring jurisdictions. As of 2016, 79% of stock was built before 2000. (City of Kennewick, 2021).
Energy	*Cross-Cutting* Adaptive Capacity: The City developed a public education goal focused on managing windstorm impacts, including tree maintenance to reduce the likelihood of power outages (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). Adaptive Capacity: The City supports underground utility placement and coordination with other service providers to ensure compatibility with city street and landscape standards (City of Kennewick, 2021).

Buildings

This section includes commercial, residential, and jurisdiction-owned buildings in the Tri-Cities Region. The Tri-Cities Region is growing quickly. This requires the construction of additional housing and resources and provides the opportunity to integrate climate resilience into new and remodeled construction.

Climate Risks

The Tri-Cities Region is quickly growing, with new housing stock being built to match the population growth. Rising housing and rental costs have been identified as a regional weakness, while limited housing inventory and high rental rates are considered major threats (BFCOG, 2021). A recent survey of City of Pasco residents revealed that cost was the most common barrier for securing housing (City of Pasco, 2023).

Single-family homes make up most of the Region's housing stock, accounting for most residential units across all jurisdictions (**Figure C-75**). Manufactured homes comprise over nine percent of Benton County's total housing stock, which is 50 percent higher than the Washington state average. Multi-unit housing is concentrated in urban areas like the City of Kennewick and the City of Richland.

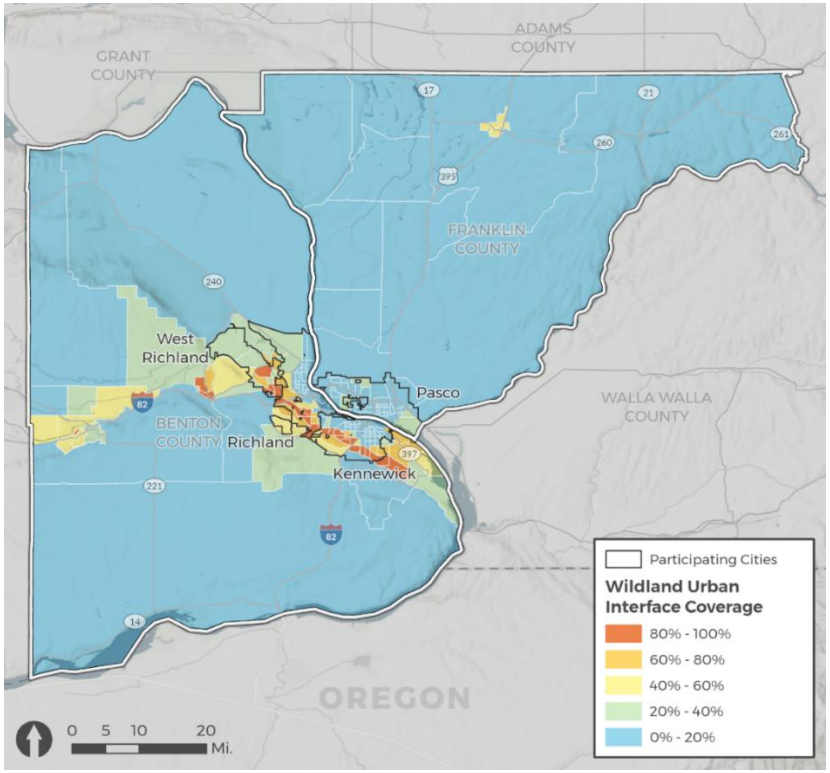
Figure C-75. Types and Quantities of Housing in the Tri-Cities Region (U.S. Census)

Housing Type	Kennewick
Single-Unit	21,415
Multi-Unit	9,307
Manufactured Home	1,773
Boat, RV, Van, etc.	0
Total	32,495

Buildings in the Tri-Cities Region, including single-family, multi-family, and manufactured homes, and municipal buildings, will face increasing hazards from climate impacts such as wildfires, extreme heat, flooding, and shifting precipitation patterns. These hazards can impact housing quality, safety, affordability, and long-term viability.

Residential development is increasingly expanding into WUI zones, where developed areas border fire-prone landscapes (**Figure C-76**). This expansion heightens exposure to wildfire and pushes existing fire protection systems beyond original or current design or capability (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).

Figure C-76. Area Within Wildland Urban Interface (WUI).





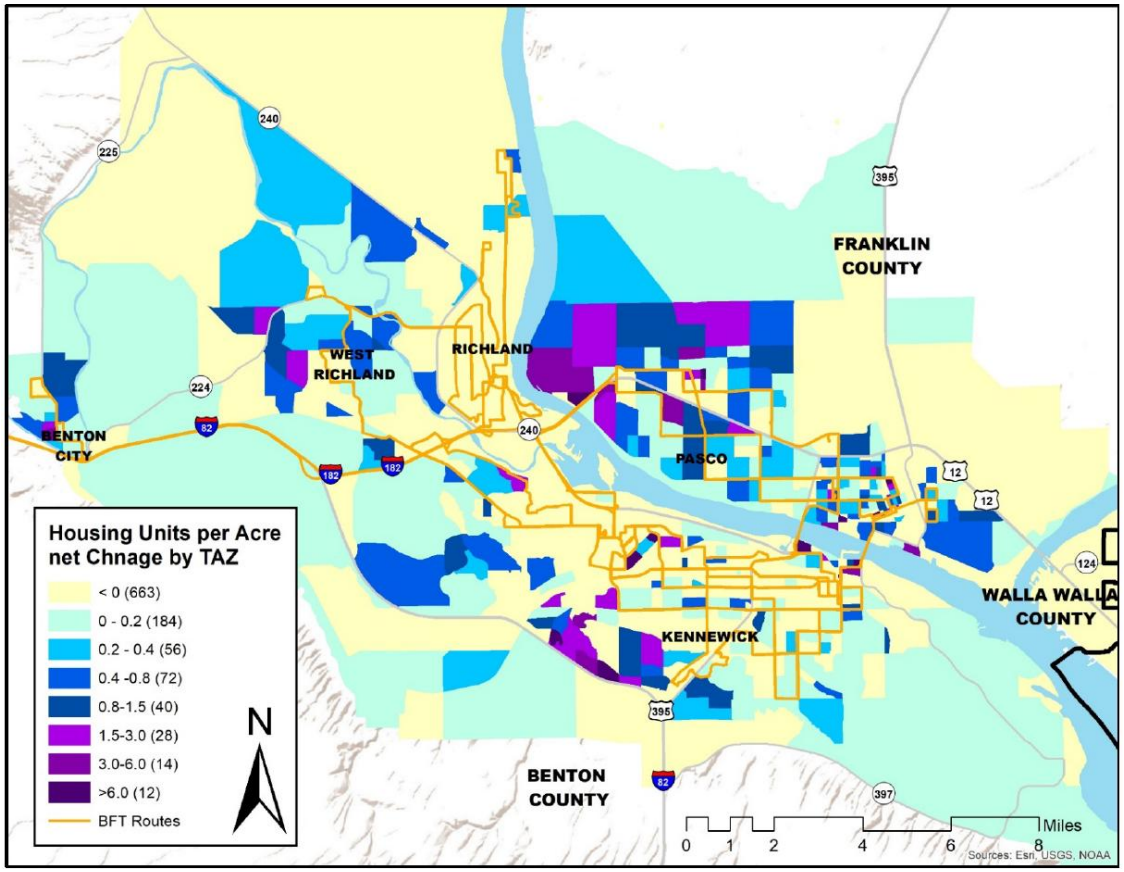
Bofer Canyon Fire (Kennewick, August 2018) destroyed five homes and damaged three. Photo Courtesy: Tri-City Herald (Probert, 2019).

BERK, 2025. Source: Washington State Department of Natural Resources.

A notable wildfire occurred in 2018, when the Bofer Canyon Fire in the City of Kennewick destroyed five homes and damaged four others. Wind-driven fire brought flames into the Canyon Lakes housing developments within minutes and spread east through several additional housing developments (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). Frequent winds from the southwest make this threat persistent and recurring (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

The continued expansion of residential development into previously undeveloped areas will significantly increase wildfire risk for homeowners and renters. According to the Tri-Cities Metropolitan Transportation Plan, housing unit density is expected to increase most significantly in Kennewick, Pasco, and northern Richland by 2045. Some areas are projected to exceed 3 to 6 net new housing units per acre (BFCOG, 2022). Many of these rapidly growing areas overlap with the WUI zones (**Figure C-77**). This spatial intersection raises concerns about fire safety, evacuation planning, and housing infrastructure resilience.

Figure C-77. Map of 2019-2045 Housing Unit Density Change



(BFCOG, 2020).

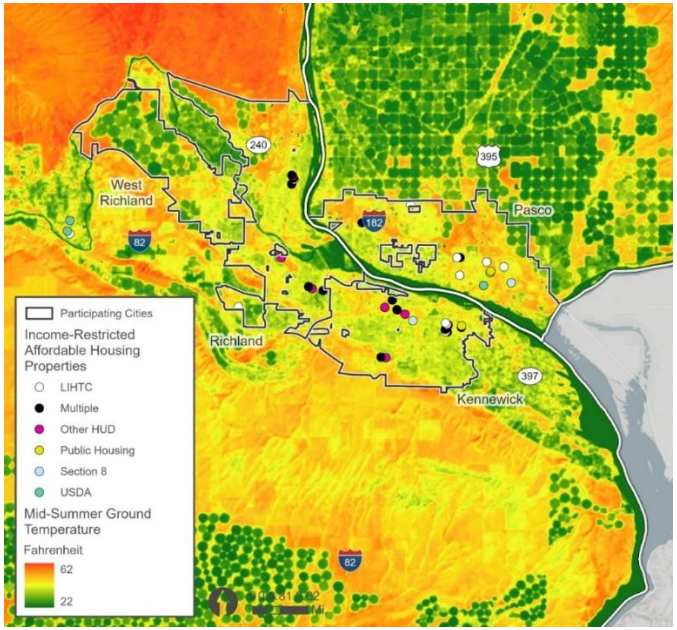
Flooding presents a persistent and growing threat to buildings in the Tri-Cities. Since 2005, Benton County has had nine flood events, of which two were declared federal disaster areas (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). The likely trend is for the frequency and magnitude of floods within the lower reaches of the Yakima River to increase as the upper watershed continues to urbanize and its natural storage capacity is diminished. Flooding in the Yakima River valley could cause property and infrastructure damage, evacuations of residents, and contamination of wells (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).

The Benton County Hazard Mitigation Plan outlined the number and value of appraised structures at risk in designated flood zones (**Figure C-78**). Structures at risk include 60 government structures and 957 private structures, with total property exposure exceeding $680 million in assessed value.

Figure C-78. Government structures and appraisal values in Flood Zones

	Appraised Gov't Structures	Value of Appraised Gov't Structure	Appraised Structures	Value of Appraised Structures
Kennewick	6	$64,781,660	108	$501,442,950

Figure C-79. Affordable housing and summer temperatures.

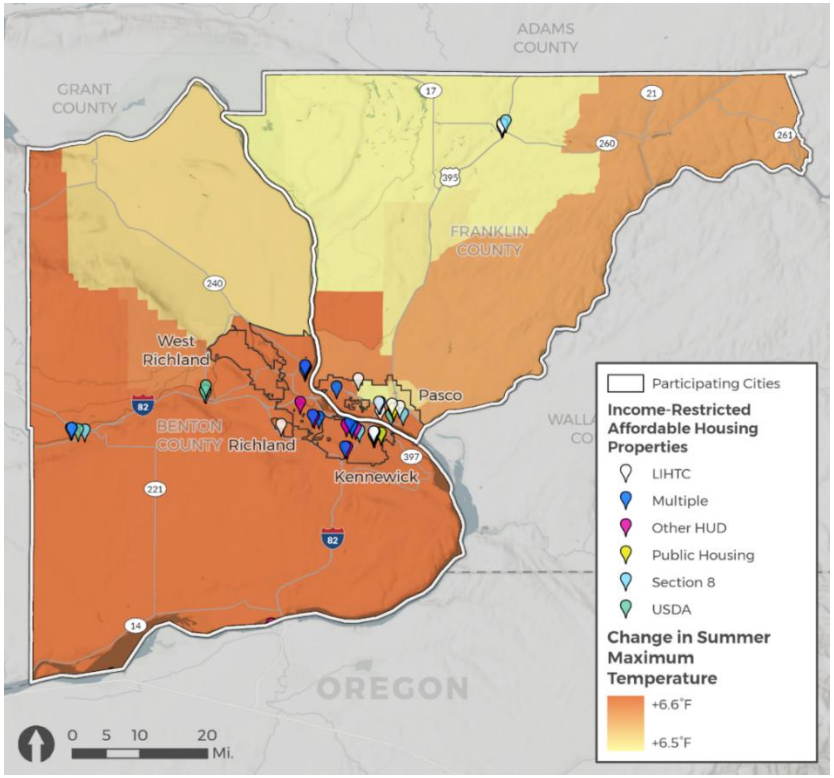


Sources: LANDSAT8, NASA, USGS, National Housing Preservation Database. BERK, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Climate projections show that the Tri-Cities will experience longer and more intense heatwaves. Buildings that lack adequate insulation, reflective roofing, or cooling systems will be less able to maintain safe indoor temperatures. Vulnerable populations, especially seniors, low-income residents, and people living in older or under-resourced housing, are disproportionately at risk. Areas projected to experience the most extreme heat can coincide with affordable housing developments amplifying risks for residents with limited resources to pay for cooling or retrofits (**Figure C-79**. Housing in Benton County is particularly vulnerable to rising summer temperatures (**Figure C-80**).

Figure C-80. Tri-Cities affordable housing and extreme heat.



BERK, 2025

Adaptive Capacity

Efforts in the Tri-Cities Region seek to reduce the impacts of flooding, wildfire, and extreme heat. Measures seek to protect the safety of residents and infrastructure but can cause increases in costs. Benton County's goal is to adopt and enforce the latest International Building Code which will help increase resilience to a range of natural hazards. The codes account for hazards such as wind, fire, landslides, and earthquakes, improving the durability of new construction.

Wildfire and smoke

- Many property owners within the WUI are not aware of the threats they face. While Firewise programs have been launched and fire districts conduct home assessments to promote fire readiness, public participation remains low (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).
- The region can further reduce potential loss due to wildfires by encouraging homes to be homes built outside of the WUI and to use defensible space measures (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- Adaptive strategies like air filtration and cooling systems will help keep residents safe during extreme heat and wildfire smoke events. However, these strategies can place additional financial strain on already vulnerable households (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).

Flooding

- Dams along the Yakima and Columbia Rivers reduce but do not eliminate flood risks (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- Flood control in the region is supported by levees on both banks of the Yakima River (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- There are limited flood control protection devices in operation or planned in the lower Yakima River (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). Policies discouraging development in flood-prone areas will be important to long-term risk reduction.
- While some jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region have initiated resilience measures for buildings, such as reflective roofing and tree planting to reduce heat impacts, adaptive capacity remains uneven, particularly among lower-income renters and manufactured home residents who may lack the means to retrofit their homes or access cooling during emergencies. Broader programs for weatherization and HVAC retrofits can prepare residents for the projected heat-related impacts of climate change.

Energy

A combination of public and cooperative utilities serve the Tri-Cities Region. In the City of Kennewick, Benton County Public Utilities District (PUD) provides electricity. Benton Rural Electric Association serves the City of West Richland. Richland operates its own municipal utility (Richland Energy Services). The PUD No. 1 of Franklin County and the Big Bend Electric Cooperative provide electricity to the City of Pasco.

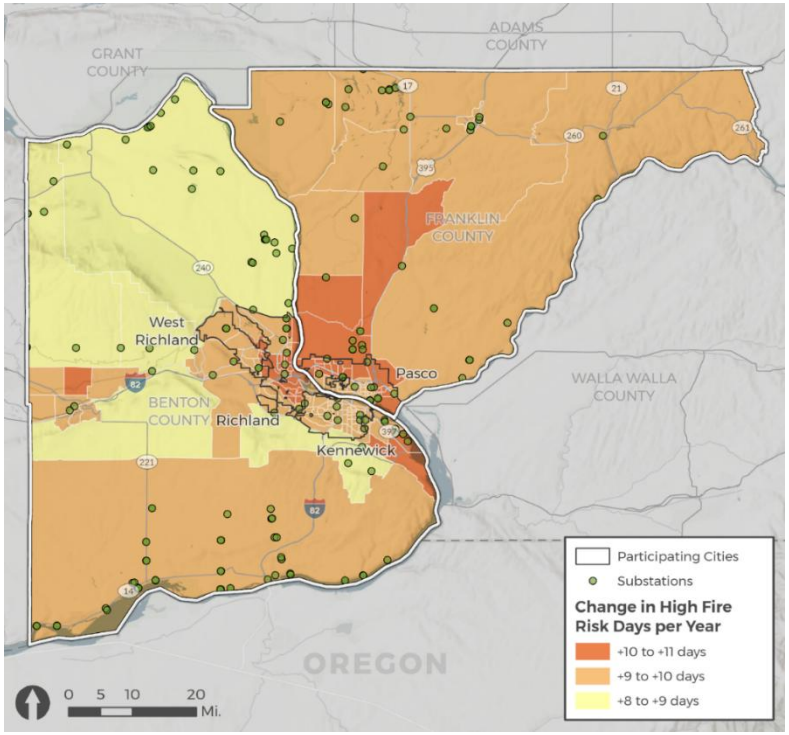
Cascade Natural Gas (CNG) provides natural gas across the Tri-Cities Region. This diversity in utility providers creates varied capacities and response strategies for managing climate-related disruptions. While public utilities may offer greater flexibility and local accountability, infrastructure vulnerabilities persist across the network.

Climate Risks

The energy sector in the Tri-Cities Region is vulnerable to climate change. Rising temperatures, shifts in seasonal precipitation and snowmelt, and increasing wildfire events threaten power generation, transmission, and distribution across the area. According to the National Climate Assessment, nearly every component of the energy system is susceptible to climate stressors (Chang M. L., 2023).

Energy systems, including substations, power lines, and pipelines, face risk from falling trees, snow and ice, windstorms and wind-driven debris, and increasingly from wildfire exposure (**Figure C-81**). Historically, these threats have caused power outages across the region, damaging property and disrupting services. In the summer, peak energy demand is increasing due to prolonged heatwaves and expanding air conditioning use, raising the likelihood of summer load issues and stressing older grid infrastructure.

Figure C-81. Substation Exposure to High Fire Risk Days.



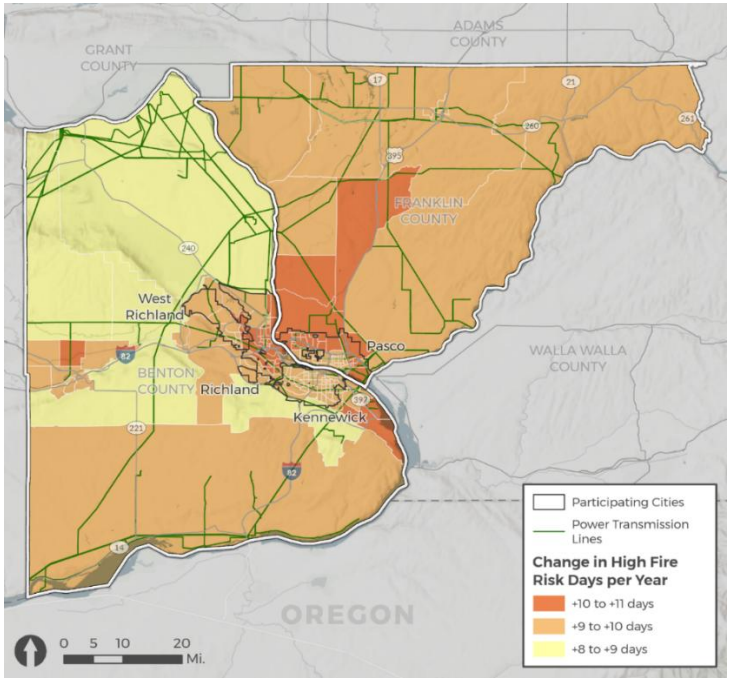
BERK, 2025. Source: University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

The BFCOG identified energy infrastructure as a regional weakness due to the vulnerability of the energy system (BFCOG, 2021). The Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan further underscored the impact of outages, including the loss of heating, refrigeration, lighting, cooking, computer systems, cash registers, fuel pumps, food service equipment, and critical agricultural operations such as milking machines and chicken warmers (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018). Disruptions to energy supply impact economic activity, food security, and public health.

Wildfire damage to above-ground lines is a growing concern, especially those in densely vegetated areas or near residential developments in the WUI (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). Substations, poles, and transmission lines in remote and dry areas are difficult to access during emergencies, reducing the ability to prevent or respond to outages effectively (**Figure C-82**) (Chang M. L., 2023). Energy infrastructure itself can be a direct source of wildfire ignition, particularly when vegetation management is insufficient and infrastructure is outdated (Washington State Department of Natural Resources, 2024).

Figure C-82. U.S. Electric Power Transmission Lines Exposure to High Fire Risk Days.



BERK, 2025. Source: University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, Homeland Infrastructure Foundation-Level Data,

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Decreased snowfall, earlier snowmelt, and more frequent droughts will alter hydropower availability (Chang M. L., 2023). Hydropower generation is expected to decline due to shifting hydrologic patterns, with more precipitation falling as rain rather than snow, reducing spring and summer runoff (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2025; Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Authority, 2022). Benton PUD, which sources the vast majority of its electricity from the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), a major hydropower plant for the Pacific Northwest region, is particularly sensitive to these changes (City of Kennewick, 2021; Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Authority, 2022). BPA has adjusted its long-term hydropower forecasts to account for earlier spring runoff and lower summer water levels (Department of Energy, Bonneville Power Authority, 2022). In public outreach events for the Tri-Cities regional Climate Element, residents voiced concern about the long-term reliability of hydropower and potential increases in electricity costs due to reduced supply (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).

Renewable energy sources such as wind and solar are variable and at risk of fire exposure or performance loss during smoke and extreme heat events. In 2023, a wildland fire burned more than 10 acres near some Nine Canyon Wind Project turbines, just south of Kennewick, but there were no reports of damage. As state requirements accelerate the electrification of buildings and transportation, electricity demand will increase. Higher electricity demand can strain the grid and raise energy costs, which can be particularly impactful to low-income residents in the Tri-Cities Region.

Hotter summers will increase the demand for cooling, which will particularly affect homes and businesses that rely on air conditioning. Increasing use of air conditioning depends on a stable, affordable electric supply. Rising electricity costs from climate-induced grid strain could further burden low-income households and rural communities. The region's growing population and aging infrastructure increase pressure on existing grid capacity (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).

Adaptive Capacity

Efforts across jurisdictions demonstrate a growing awareness of the importance of energy system reliability and diversification, but there remain notable gaps in implementation, coordination, and long-term investment.

Energy Generation

- The region benefits from growing investments in renewable energy. Energy Northwest is a utility consortium that manages carbon-free and renewable energy projects including the Nine Canyon Wind Project in Kennewick and the White Bluffs and Horn Rapids solar installations. Additional carbon-free energy sources include nuclear energy from the Columbia Generating Station operated by Energy Northwest.
- The BFCOG, through its 2021 Comprehensive Economic Development Plan, has identified clean energy as a core component of regional adaptive capacity (BFCOG, 2021).
- The plan supports efforts to develop resilient, future-ready energy systems that align with economic development goals and climate adaptation needs.
- Sustaining and expanding incentives for nuclear energy, particularly through the development of small modular reactors, to ensure a low-emissions, stable energy source.
- Supporting clean energy production and research to diversify supply and reduce dependence on vulnerable infrastructure.
- Preserving and improving the lower Snake River dams, maintaining a key source of hydropower for the region amid shifting hydrologic patterns.
- Advancing technologies in alignment with the Washington Clean Energy Transformation Act, supporting the transition to 100 percent clean electricity.

Energy Transmission and storage

- Opportunities for strengthening resilience include increasing investment in microgrids and distributed energy systems, improving energy storage capacity, accelerating undergrounding of vulnerable distribution lines, and expanding public outreach to promote residential energy efficiency and emergency preparedness.
- To mitigate wildfire-related energy risks, electric utilities and land management agencies in the Northwest are increasingly using tools like public safety power shutoffs and fast-trip programs that reduce the risk of grid-related ignitions. While these practices can limit fire starts, they may also cause temporary power losses, creating equity and health challenges for communities reliant on continuous energy access (Chang M. L., 2023).
- Utilities and regional planning bodies, such as the BFCOG, can also work together to assess and upgrade critical facilities and infrastructure with a focus on equity and long-term reliability.



A four-foot-deep washout on Selph Landing Road in Franklin County caused by rapidly melting snow and ice during the 2017 flooding events. Culverwell, 2017.

Transportation

- The Tri-Cities Region is an important transportation hub for the movement of people and goods. Flooding, wildfire, and extreme heat can have short- and long-term impacts the rivers and road networks throughout the Region.

Climate Risks

The Tri-Cities region serves as a critical transportation hub in the Pacific and Inland Northwest. The areas roads include I- 82, which provides direct links to major transcontinental highways including I-5, I-84, and I-90. Additional federal and state highways, as well as mainline rail freight services by both BNSF and Union Pacific, support the movement of goods and services across the region. The Columbia-Snake River System connects the Tri-Cities to the Pacific Ocean, enabling international commodity transport via barge through the Port of Benton (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).

Ben Franklin Transit is the region's public transportation service and includes fixed routes, paratransit, and a well-used vanpool program. Active transportation infrastructure includes 44 miles of bike lanes, 66 miles of shared-use paths, 40 miles of paved shoulders, and 19 miles of soft trails in the urbanized area (BFCOG, 2020).

This transportation network faces growing challenges from climate change risks such as flooding, extreme heat, and wildfires, which threatens infrastructure integrity, service reliability, and community safety. These challenges are compounded by rapid population growth, urban sprawl, road congestion, and aging infrastructure, which are placing additional strain on infrastructure capacity (BFCOG, 2021; Chang M. L., 2023).



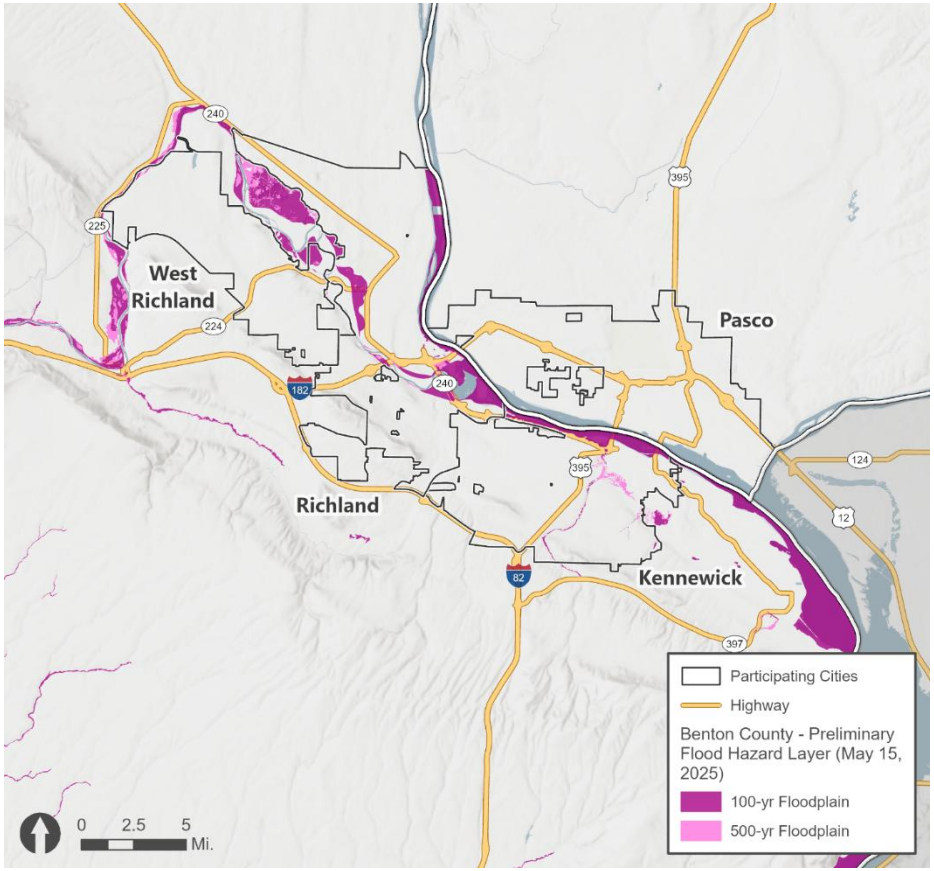
Road flooded in Richland near the Yakima River in 2017. Cary, 2017.

Flooding and increased precipitation are among the most significant threats to the transportation network in the Tri-Cities. In February 2017, rapid snowmelt and heavy rain resulted in flooding that eroded roadbeds and triggered landslides in Benton County. In West Richland, the east approach to the Van Giesen Street Bridge and the south span of the Old Twin Bridges became impassable, significantly disrupting access to the Hanford Site and the broader Tri-Cities region (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

Similarly, in December 2022, a sudden rise in temperatures, following a week of snow and below-freezing conditions, caused rapid snowmelt across the Tri-Cities. The melt overwhelmed storm drains in Richland, flooded streets in Kennewick and Pasco, and forced the closure of Keene Road in West Richland (Probert, 2018).

Heavier rainfall events and rapid snowmelt will intensify flooding, landslides, and erosion, disrupting transportation routes, damaging roads and bridges, and overwhelming drainage systems like culverts. Several critical intersections of transportation infrastructure are in designated floodplains, making them vulnerable to climate-related flooding (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018). There are key transportation infrastructure located within the floodplain, such as 395 and 240 (**Figure C-83**). These impacts result in increased maintenance and repair costs and can severely affect connectivity across jurisdictions.

Figure C-83. Highways and floodplains in Benton County.

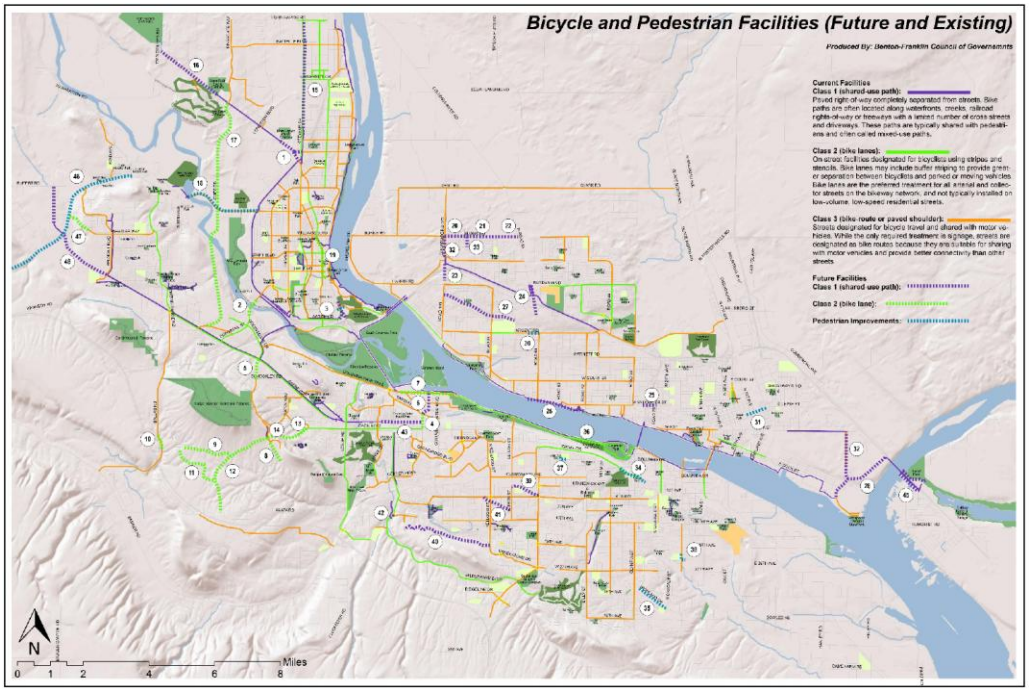


Sources: Washington State Department of Transportation, FEMA. BERK, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Tribal communities, including members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, also face elevated risks where forest access roads used to reach cultural and subsistence areas are threatened by stream-related flooding and washouts (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).

Figure C-84. Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities (Future and Existing) in the Tri-Cities Area.



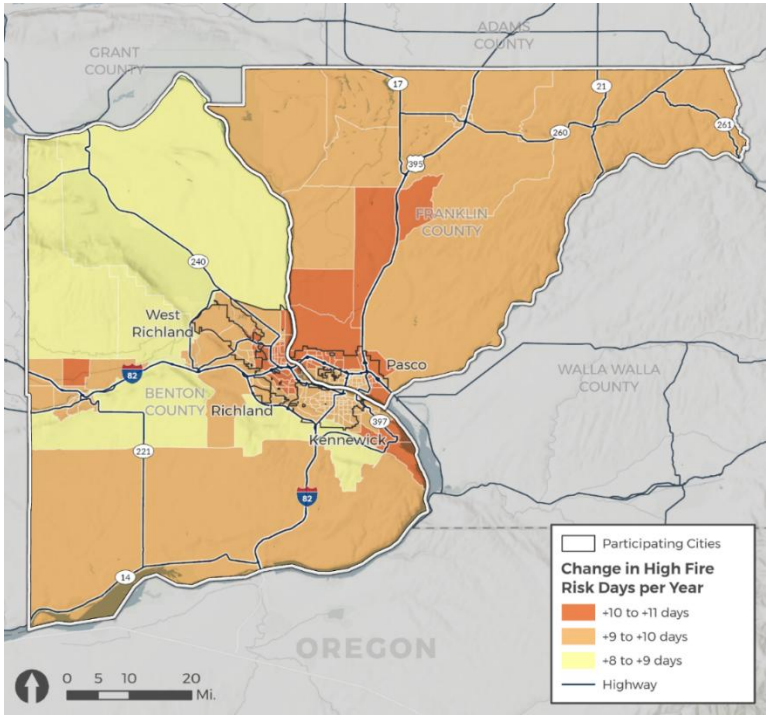
BFCOG, 2020.

Wildfires, expected to become more frequent and severe, could lead to road closures, travel disruptions, and construction delays. Roadside brush fires present a direct safety hazard and can render transportation corridors impassable during emergency events. Rural and remote areas are especially vulnerable due to poor road conditions, limited signage, and restricted access for fire suppression teams (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). **Figure C-85** overlays key transportation routes in relation to the change in high-risk fire days.

Prolonged periods of high temperatures can cause roads to warp and buckle, damage bridge joints, and increase deterioration of pavement. This not only raises repair and maintenance costs but also leads to service disruptions and delays, particularly for emergency vehicles (Chang M. L., 2023).

Hotter summers and extreme weather events threaten safe access to shade, safe crossings, and well-maintained sidewalks, bike lanes, and bus stops. Residents without access to a car depend on safe, connected options for walking, biking, and public transit. Extreme heat events can impact the safety of these activities due to the potential health impacts of spending active time outdoors and because heat can cause pavement to deteriorate and crack more quickly.

Figure C-85. State Routes of Washington State and Change in High Fire Risk Days.



Source: Washington State Department of Transportation. Map by BERK, 2025.

Adaptive Capacity

Across the Tri-Cities Region, several programs and policies are already helping to address transportation vulnerabilities to climate hazards. The region's broader economic and infrastructure planning efforts, as outlined in the BFCOG Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, include goals focused on preserving transportation infrastructure, supporting logistics for industry, and enhancing walkability and bike ability to reduce dependence on vulnerable roadways (BFCOG, 2021).

Active Transportation

- Ben Franklin Transit has improved resilience by adding bike racks to all buses and installing bike lockers at selected stops.
- Enhancing heat-resilient design for active transportation users (e.g., adding trees, cooling shelters, and permeable surfaces) will also be critical to reducing heat exposure for vulnerable road users.

Public Transit

- New transit shelters that include seating, protection from the elements, and ADA-accessible features help make public transit more viable for a broader segment of the population (BFCOG, 2022).

- Expanded transit services, safe multimodal infrastructure, and equitable access planning will be critical next steps to reduce transportation-related climate vulnerability while meeting the expected growth in population and vehicle traffic.
- Strategic, climate-resilient infrastructure will be key to ensuring continued connectivity, safety, and mobility under future climate conditions. Looking forward, it will be essential to incorporate climate risk, particularly from flooding, wildfire, and extreme heat, into the planning, siting, and design of future transportation projects. This includes identifying corridors at risk of fire closures, flood-prone intersections, or infrastructure at risk of heat degradation.

Land Use

Overview and Key Takeaways

Sector	Sub-sectors
Land Use	• Local industries & businesses: physical damage to businesses, economic health • Land use, zoning, & development: development constraints, development in the WUI • Agriculture: agricultural lands, crops and animals, agricultural workers

Local industries and businesses, developments, and agriculture are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change:

- Local industries and businesses can be physically damaged or forced to close because of flooding, wildfires, and wildfire smoke.
- Climate impacts can constrain development because of safety and property risks from flooding and wildfire.
- Crops and agricultural lands can be damaged by wildfire, flooding, extreme heat, and drought. These are major components of the region's land use and economy.
- Outdoor workers, including farm workers, experience higher exposure to climate hazards like wildfire smoke and extreme heat.

Key Climate Risks			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Closed or damaged local businesses. Limits on development. Crop impacts.	Local business closures. Crop and livestock impacts.	Vulnerability to wildfire (through water availability to fight fires). Agricultural vulnerability and disruptions. Increased irrigation water demand.	Closed or damaged local businesses; fewer people visiting businesses. Limits on development. Crop and rangeland impacts.
Community Vulnerability			
Flooding	Extreme heat	Drought	Wildfire
Property, land, and business owners may experience economic losses from flood damage or closures.	Outdoor and agricultural employees are more exposed to harmful extreme heat conditions.	Agricultural landowners and employees may experience economic losses from drought damage.	Outdoor and agricultural employees are more exposed to harmful wildfire smoke conditions.

	Land and business owners may experience economic losses from extreme heat damage or closures.	Property, land, and business owners may experience economic losses from wildfire damage or closures.

Risks & Adaptations

The risks and adaptations section provides an overview of current Kennewick climate risks and related efforts that are helping reduce risks and vulnerabilities. This section is not suggesting new policies, regulations, or programs.

Sector	Climate Risks & Adaptive Capacity
Local Industries & Businesses	*Cross-Cutting* Adaptive Capacity: The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan contains a goal to "support regional efforts to attract and retain target industries to market the Tri-City region." It also encourages partnerships to strengthen economic development (City of Kennewick, 2021).
Land Use, Zoning, & Development	*Flooding* Adaptive Capacity: Current plans protect life and property from flooding and erosion by directing development away from flood hazard areas (City of Kennewick, 2021). Wildfire Risk: The number of fire and emergency calls to which the Kennewick Fire Department responded increased 15.7 percent between 2013 and 2015. Call volumes are expected to continue to grow alongside growth of the city's population (City of Kennewick, 2021).
Agriculture	*Cross-Cutting* Adaptive Capacity: The Kennewick Comprehensive Plan includes a goal to phase out existing agriculture zoning in the city and the urban growth area.

Local Industries & Businesses

The employees, operations, and infrastructure of industries and businesses in the Tri-Cities Region are at risk of climate hazards including extreme heat, wildfire, and flooding. Employees who work outside are at risk during extreme heat and wildfire smoke events, while infrastructure and operations can be impacted by physical damage from floods or wildfire.

Climate Risks

Agriculture, food processing, outdoor recreation, tourism, transportation, research and development, healthcare, manufacturing, and engineering services are some of the key industries in the Tri-Cities region (BFCOG, 2021; City of Richland, 2017; City of Pasco, 2021). As the region's population grows and development increases, it is expected that recreational industries, tourism, and the wine industry will continue to grow (BFCOG, 2021). Additionally, as the agricultural industry grows and matures, the region will need more supportive facilities and businesses (e.g., plant processing and handling (Benton County, 2024a). Minimizing climate risks to current and future industries and businesses will be important for the region's continued economic health.

Figure C-86. Top 10 Industries in Benton and Franklin Counties by percentage of economy.

Table 3: Benton and Franklin Counties Top 10 Industries

Benton County		Franklin County	
Industry	%	Industry	%
Healthcare and Social Assistance	15%	Government	19%
Government	13%	Agriculture	19%
Administrative and Waste Services	12%	Manufacturing	11%
Retail trade	11%	Retail trade	10%
Professional and Technical Services	10%	Healthcare and Social Assistance	9%
Construction	8%	Construction	6%
Accommodation and Food Services	8%	Accommodation and food services	6%
Agriculture	7%	Wholesale Trade	6%
Manufacturing	5%	Transportation and Warehouse	4%
Finance and Insurance	2%	Administrative and Waste Services	3%

BFCOG, 2022.

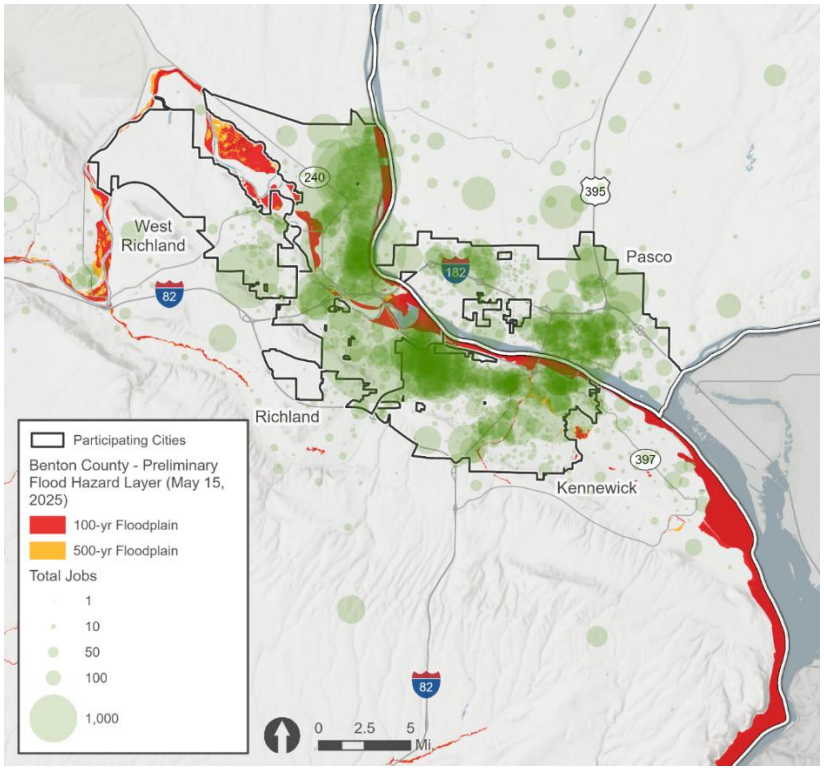
Climate risks can impact regional industries and businesses by destroying property, forcing business owners to temporarily close storefronts, and discouraging people from purchasing goods and services in-person due to unfavorable or dangerous conditions (BFCOG, 2021).

Flooding has damaged the regional and local economies. The Columbia River Basin floods of 1948 damaged or destroyed an estimated 387 business structures and 117 industrial properties in the region (Paulsen, 1949), and a 2011 flood event damaged farmland and businesses from Prosser to Richland, including the West Richland Golf Course (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

The degree to which any businesses and economic development in the Tri-Cities region will be affected by heavier precipitation and intensified flooding will depend on the extent of flood protection infrastructure, the capacity of stormwater systems, and relative isolation of individual communities susceptible to flooding (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). In eastern Washington, flooding can result in economic disruptions and increased taxpayer costs for repairs and cleanup (City of West Richland, 2017).

Most jobs in the Tri-Cities Region are likely outside of the floodplain. However, the City of Kennewick and the City of Richland have concentrations of employers located in the floodplain that could be impacted (**Figure C-87**).

Figure C-87. Floodplain and job concentrations in the Tri-Cities.



Source: FEMA, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics 2022. Map by BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Extreme heat can also result in business closures. For example, in 2021, several businesses and other establishments in the region temporarily closed because of extreme heat, including food trucks, outdoor music events, the downtown Kennewick farmers market (**Figure C-88)**, and the Barnard Griffin winery patio in Richland (Stormo, 2021).

Figure C-88. Kennewick farmers market closure notice in July 2024.



(Metcalf, 2025).

Wildfire and wildfire smoke can impact regional and local economies, as people are more likely to stay home when air quality is poor (BFCOG, 2021). Wildfires and smoke can also result in more frequent closures of local businesses and recreation areas, which can negatively impact tourism (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018; Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). Businesses located in and near the WUI and those who depend on land in the WUI, such as outdoor industries, will be most at risk of negative economic impacts from wildfire (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025).

For the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), climate-related disasters and displacement can reduce tourism and disrupt businesses and supply chains (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022).

Historically overburdened workers will face higher exposure to climate-related hazards (BFCOG, 2021; Chang M. L., 2023). Community member attendees at three public meetings in March 2025 expressed concern over smoke, poor air quality, and extreme heat exposure for outdoor workers, as well as potential impacts of heat on outdoor recreation (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).

Adaptive Capacity

Strengthen and Diversify local economies

- Many regional and city-level planning documents include goals and policies such as economic diversification, resiliency, equity, expansion, and innovation; retention of target industries and attraction of new industries; and workforce training, education, and capacity building.
- The BFCOG 2021-2025 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy includes recommendations for building economic resilience for future pandemics. These strategies are applicable to planning for future climate impacts and economic resilience, including:
- Increase and improve communication between economic development organizations and small businesses about funding and technical assistance (BFCOG, 2021)
- Encourage small businesses to utilize e-commerce and develop strategies to conduct business if in-person business is prohibited (BFCOG, 2021)

- Collaborate with small business owners and entrepreneurs in applying for funding opportunities to grow existing and start new businesses (BFCOG, 2021)
- Engage with BIPOC business owners and entrepreneurs in applying for economic relief (BFCOG, 2021)
- Economic development staff in the region have identified the need for proactive financial literacy education and responsive technical assistance in planning for equitable economic recovery and resilience (BFCOG, 2021).

Land Use, Zoning, & Development

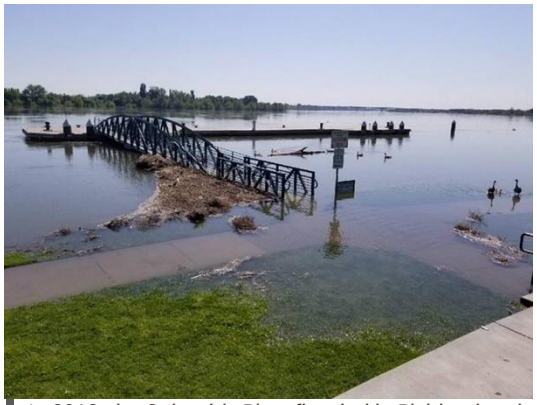
Development can be impacted or limited by climate risks, including flooding, wildfire, and drought that pose safety and property risks. Frequent wildfire or flood can require land use changes to minimize infrastructure damage or risks to residents' lives.

Climate Risks

Flooding can limit or constrain development, due to property and safety risks from flooding and required expenditures for repair (Benton County, 2024a). Intensified urban flooding can affect zoning restrictions on new buildings and require revised building codes for development (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). Paved and urbanized areas can worsen flooding, so any development that occurs in flood areas should ensure that buildings can withstand flood events (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).

In Benton County, areas that are especially vulnerable to flooding include those along the lower Yakima, which extend from Benton City through West Richland to the delta (Benton County, 2024a).

In the Tri-Cities region, any new development in the WUI will face risks from increases in wildfire frequency and severity. There are some undeveloped areas outside the Red Mountain American Viticultural Area, which would be at high risk for wildfires if developed into housing (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).



In 2018, the Columbia River flooded in Richland and submerged the River Trail and the dock bridge at Howard Amon Park
Dorsey & Cary, 2018.

More frequent wildfires are expected to increase damage to homes and infrastructure and displace residents (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). Adequate water system availability is critical for firefighting abilities (City of Kennewick, 2021). The ability to fight wildfires is connected to water availability, which may be impacted by drought.

Adaptive Capacity

Land use policies can facilitate climate adaptation and resilience by mandating or encouraging structures to be protected from climate hazards, restricting new development in areas that are at greater risk from climate impacts, and enhancing design or development standards for facilities in hazardous locations, like flood zones (Chang M. L., 2023).

Land Use development

Some jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities Region have policies that aim to support safe, resilient development and land use in the face of climate impacts, including:

- Franklin County does not plan to develop in flood-prone areas (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018)
- The City of West Richland notes that potential climate adaptation measures include flood control measures and encouragement of defensible space for wildfire risk reduction (City of West Richland, 2017)

- The CTUIR includes the following as some of its measures of success in its Climate Adaptation Plan:
- Land development codes maintained and updated by TPO to provide guidance
- Multi-use development zoning for carbon-free commutable neighborhoods (Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, 2022)
- Benton County's Comprehensive Plan includes policies that:
- Encourage green infrastructure in new developments and redevelopments to address flooding and storm water runoff
- Prevent development within floodways and unstable slopes
- Reduce fire risk for development (Benton County, 2024a)

Agriculture

- Agriculture is a major economic force in the Tri-Cities Region. The sector is at risk of many climate hazards, including drought, wildfire, extreme heat, and flood. The agriculture sector depends on workers but extreme heat and wildfire smoke conditions can threaten the safety of this workforce. Water supply issues, particularly in times of drought, can present significant risks to agriculture in the Region.

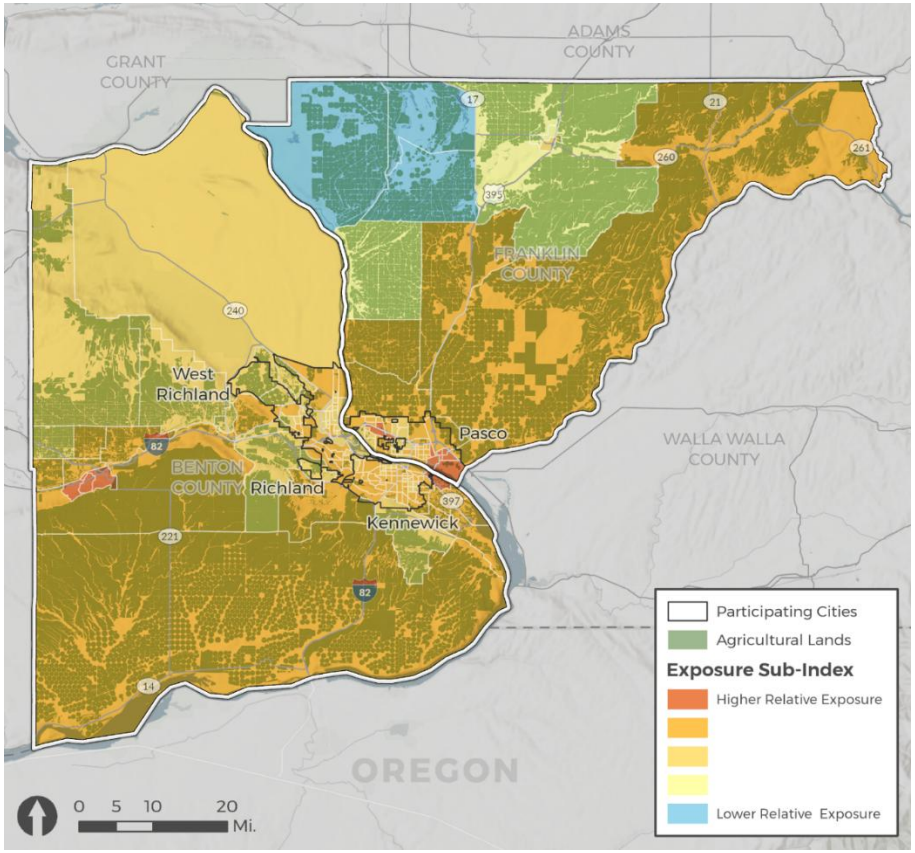
Climate Risks

Benton County land is predominantly used for agriculture, with about 94 percent of privately-owned land classified as agricultural and about 63 percent of total land area in the county classified as agricultural (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). In 2018, Benton County was one of the top ten agricultural counties in Washington, based on the total value of all agricultural products. Benton County has significant crop production and food processing and a growing wine industry (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).

Franklin County ranked fourth in terms of 2012 statewide total market value of agricultural products sold (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018), and agriculture represents 18.7 percent of total employment in Franklin County (BFCOG, 2021). Around 85 percent of the county's land area is used for agriculture (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).

Agriculture land in south Benton and southern Franklin Counties have the highest exposure to climate hazards (**Figure C-89**). Across the region, the expected agriculture loss rate (declines in agricultural value from natural hazards) is not very high (Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, n.d.). In Benton County, agricultural lands have a small intersection with identified critical areas, such frequently flooded areas (Benton County, 2024a). Still, agricultural lands and industries may be at risk from climate impacts like drought, wildfire, and flooding.

Figure C-89. Exposure index and agricultural lands.



Source: Washington State Department of Agriculture. Map by BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Drought conditions are expected to become longer and more extreme in the Northwest, which can disrupt agricultural production (Chang M. L., 2023). The Northwest region—and the Tri-Cities area—has experienced impacts to agriculture from drought in the past decade, including reduced yields and forage availability (Chang M. L., 2023). In 2025, Washington declared a drought in central Washington for the third year in a row, impacting the agricultural economy throughout the region served by Yakima Valley reservoirs (TCAJOB, 2025). Community attendees at public meetings in March 2025 expressed concern over water availability for agriculture (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).



Dry apple trees in Benton County during a 2015 drought (Venter, 2024).

In Franklin County, agriculture is the most vulnerable industry to drought impacts. The state's Enhanced Hazard Mitigation Plan identifying Franklin County as one of nine counties most at-risk and vulnerable to drought (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018). A growing population will increase the pressure on water sources in Benton County, causing an increased sensitivity to drought conditions (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). Demand for irrigation water is also expected to increase because of climate change, due to less streamflow in the warm season and warmer summer temperatures, though irrigation water availability is expected to decrease due to drought (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025).

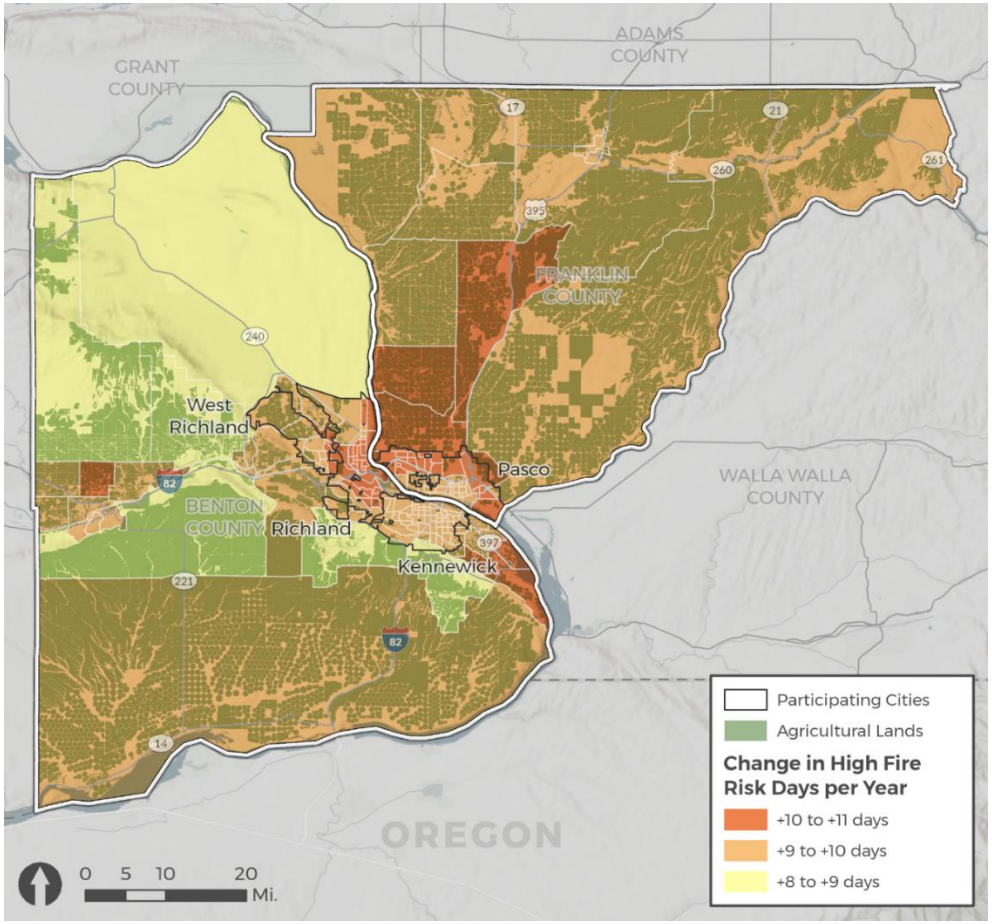
Drought can threaten agricultural productivity and food processing, which impacts the people whose livelihoods depend on these industries (BFCOG, 2021). Drought conditions can also have cascading impacts. A reduction in hydro-electric power generation due to drought could increase the price of electricity, diesel, and natural gas for farms (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018), an impact that community members are concerned about (Public Meetings Summary, 2025). The compounding impacts and increases in operational costs can be especially difficult for smaller farms (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).

Warmer summers increase irrigation demands and put heat stress on certain agricultural crops and livestock. Warmer summers may result in better conditions for certain agricultural pests (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). Warmer autumns may result in higher risk of honeybee colony failure, which can negatively impact crops that need honeybees for pollination (Chang M. L., 2023).

Outdoor agricultural workers are especially vulnerable to heat impacts (Rosenthal, 2024; Chang M. L., 2023). Some research has shown that agricultural workers are thirty-five times more likely to die from heat stress than people working in other industries (Rosenthal, 2024).

Wildfire can spread quickly in agricultural areas and rangelands in certain conditions, such as high winds and extreme drought (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018). Franklin County's agricultural lands—which make up 85 percent of land area—are vulnerable to wildland or WUI fires (**Figure C-90**) (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).

Figure C-90. Agricultural lands and the change in high fire risk days per year.





An agricultural worker near Kennewick working outdoors during a wildfire smoke event (Quinlan, 2020).

Sources: University of Washington Climate Impacts Group, Washington State Department of Agriculture. Map by BERK, 2025.

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

The impacts from a large fire could include loss of crops and land, lost pay for agricultural employees, and even layoffs, if a business has been heavily impacted (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019). Wildfire smoke can also damage crops and impact agricultural employees who work outdoors (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025).

Flooding can negatively impact agriculture by delaying planting timelines, damaging crops, increasing erosion, and increasing animals' and crops' susceptibility to disease (Climate Mapping for a Resilient Washington, 2025). The Columbia River Basin floods of 1948 damaged or destroyed an estimated 2,083 farm structures in the region, and loss and damage to crops and pasture was estimated at about $8,000,000 (Paulsen, 1949). Damage to agricultural land from the floods stemmed from inundation, streambank erosion, deposition, and topsoil loss (Paulsen, 1949).

Adaptive Capacity

Preparing the agricultural industry for future climate impacts can result in benefits like improved productivity and resilience (Chang M. L., 2023). Efforts throughout the region seek to address and minimize the impacts from wildfire, drought, and extreme heat.

Wildfire

- The 2019 Benton County Natural Hazard Mitigation Plan attributed the relatively small amount of annual wildland fires to irrigation, improved fire spotting, better equipment, and trained personnel (Benton County Emergency Management, 2019).
- The 2018 Benton County Community Wildfire Protection Plan identified the need for additional water resources for water suppression throughout the county's agricultural lands (Benton County Emergency Management, 2018).

Drought

- In Franklin County, some farmers and orchardists have backup wells or water pumping options to make up for water shortages brought on by drought (Franklin County Emergency Management, 2018).
- The 2024 Benton County Comprehensive Plan contains an agricultural policy to improve water supply during drought conditions for irrigation districts and other water right holders (Benton County, 2024a).
- Community member attendees at three public meetings in March 2025 recommended increasing agricultural water efficiency by shifting from spray irrigation to drip systems and improving water-use monitoring (Public Meetings Summary, 2025).

Extreme heat

- To protect outdoor workers from the impacts of extreme heat, the Center for American Progress recommends prioritizing the most at-risk communities, raising awareness among employers, and expanding existing worker protection measures (Rosenthal, 2024).

Vulnerability Index Methodology

The climate vulnerability index (CVI) leverages research available across city, county, state, federal, and scientific sources to assess how communities and systems across the region are vulnerable to a changing climate. Based on literature on impacts of a changing climate the CVI presents a planning level tool to identify the places, people, and infrastructure in the greater Tri-Cities region that may be more vulnerable to climate hazards (e.g. heat islands, wildfire risk areas, predisposed to health risks due to heat, smoke, etc.). The project team used local, regional, and national datasets, and reported data at different scales such as in block groups, neighborhoods, or in broader regions.

An index is a calculation used to summarize multiple sets of data into one tool and allows for an "apples-to-apples" comparison of different data. The CVI combines over 30 indicators of climate vulnerability and identifies which census block groups are more or less vulnerable to extreme heat, extreme precipitation, and wildfire/smoke risk *relative* to other areas in the Benton-Franklin bi-county area. It groups indicators into three categories – exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity – and each category becomes a sub-index that contributes to the final index score. Because the index normalizes all indicators to allow for relative comparisons, both the sub-indexes and the final index show scores in a range from "very high" to "very low."

The CVI allows decision-makers and community members to explore climate exposures and identify places and communities with factors that relate to the capacity for resilience or adaptation to changing climate patterns and hazards.

Below is a full list of CVI indicators by sub-index.

Sub-Index	Indicator
Exposure	Average land surface temperature Change in summer max temperature (°F) Area within wildland/urban interface Change in days of wildfire danger per year Average PM2.5 exposure Average ozone concentration Change in magnitude of heavy precipitation
Sensitivity	Population under 5 years old Population over 65 years old High blood pressure Asthma Coronary heart disease Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease Diabetes Poor mental health Poor physical health Landslide susceptibility Coverage by impaired waterbodies
Adaptive Capacity	BIPOC share of the population Limited English-speaking ability People living alone Population living in poverty Cost-burdened renter households No high school diploma Unemployment Median household income No health insurance Outdoor professions Share of housing units built before 1960 Access to open space Access to transit No access to vehicle Tree canopy coverage Impervious surface area

Climate Vulnerability Index Block Group Tables

Figure C-91. Block groups with high or very high climate vulnerability.

Block Group	Jurisdiction	% of Block Group in jurisdiction	Exposure Sub-Index	Sensitivity Sub-Index	Adaptive Capacity Sub-Index	Vulnerability Index Full	Drivers
530050113001	Kennewick	100%	High	High	Very Low	High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530050113002	Kennewick	100%	High	High	Low	High	Heat, extreme precipitation, age, health, transportation
530050112014	Kennewick	100%	High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, health
530050115013	Kennewick	14%	Very High	Very High	Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health, housing
530210204011	Pasco	100%	High	Very High	Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210204022	Pasco	100%	High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, age, health
530210204021	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	High	Heat, health, transportation
530210201012	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health, housing
530210204042	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, age, employment
530210204031	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, employment, transportation

530210204032	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210203004	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210202022	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210202012	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health, transportation
530210202021	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530210201011	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health, transportation
530210202011	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530210201023	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, housing
530210201022	Pasco	100%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, age, transportation
530210203003	Pasco	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, age, health
530210203001	Pasco	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health
530050117022	Unincorporated Benton	16%	Very High	High	Very Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, health

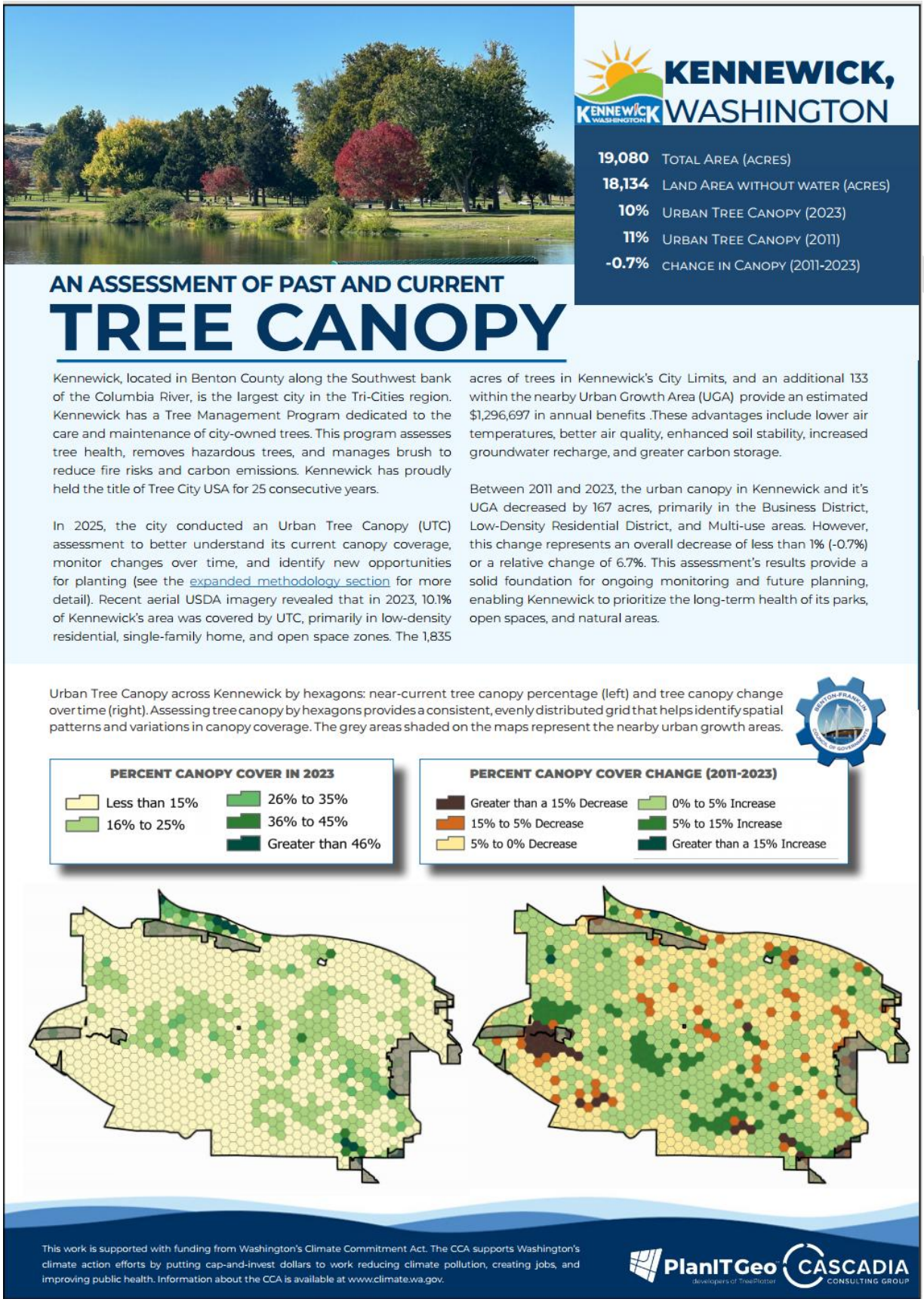
530050117023	Unincorporated Benton	8%	Very High	High	Low	Very High	Heat, extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, age, environment, health, socioeconomics
530050117011	Unincorporated Benton	37%	Very High	Very High	Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, health
530050116001	Unincorporated Benton	100%	Very High	Very High	Very Low	Very High	Fire/smoke, age, environment, health, housing
530050115041	Unincorporated Benton	100%	High	High	Very Low	Very High	Extreme precipitation, fire/smoke, age, environment, health

Figure C-92. Block groups with low vulnerability to climate hazards.

Block Group	Jurisdiction 1	% of Block Group in jurisdiction 1	Jurisdiction 2	% of Block Group in jurisdiction 2	Index Exposure Full	Index Sensitivity Full	Index Adaptive Capacity Full	Vulnerability Index Full	Drivers
530050108092	Kennewick	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Employment, transportation
530050115061	Kennewick	98%	Unincorporated Benton	2%	Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment
530050102014	Richland	94%	Unincorporated Benton	6%	Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, socioeconomics, employment
530050102032	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050102012	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Low	Transportation
530050102033	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, socioeconomics, transportation
530050108202	Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment, transportation
530050108203	Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Environment, employment

530050107082	West Richland	86%	Unincorporated Benton	14%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050101001	Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Low	High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050103004	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Low	Very High	Low	Environment
530050108091	Kennewick	100%		0%	Very Low	Low	High	Low	Employment
530050108112	Unincorporated Benton	63%	Richland	37%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment, housing
530050107081	West Richland	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics
530050107054	West Richland	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Environment, employment
530050107072	West Richland	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics
530050102011	Richland	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Environment, transportation
530050120001	Unincorporated Benton	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Environment, socioeconomics, employment
530210206071	Pasco	100%		0%	Low	Very Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment, housing
530210206053	Pasco	99%			Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment, housing
530210206051	Pasco	99%			Very Low	Low	Very High	Very Low	Socioeconomics
530210205014	Pasco	100%		0%	Low	Low	High	Low	Socioeconomics, housing
530219801001	Pasco	100%		0%	Very Low	Very Low	High	Very Low	Socioeconomics, employment

TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT



OVERALL CHANGE IN CANOPY

Urban forests continuously grow as existing trees mature and new ones are planted. However, this growth often faces challenges such as natural disasters, pest infestations, diseases, and urban development. Evaluating the overall impact from the ground can be difficult, but high-resolution aerial imagery allows for detailed analysis of changes in the canopy.

Since 2011, the city of Kennewick has experienced a net loss of 133 acres of canopy cover within its limits, which represents a 1% loss, or a 7% relative decline in canopy cover since 2011. Additionally, the urban growth areas have lost 34 acres of canopy. In total, this results in a combined loss of 167 acres of canopy across the study area, translating to a 1% loss and an 8% relative decline in canopy cover. The most significant declines occurred in the western and southern sections of the study area. Kennewick's urban forest faces pressure from development, making it essential to incorporate water-smart and sustainable planting practices alongside infrastructure projects to reverse this trend of canopy loss.

Only 10% of the City's impervious areas are shaded by canopy, which makes the city more vulnerable to increased stormwater runoff and higher summer temperatures.

METRICS BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS

Largest Canopy Increase: The block group containing Canyon Lakes Park: **+19 acres**

Largest Canopy Decrease: The block group south of the Division Four Canal **-168 acres**

Largest Canopy Potential: The block group containing Southridge Highschool: **1,125 acres of plantable space**

ECOSYSTEM BENEFITS OF KENNEWICK'S CANOPY

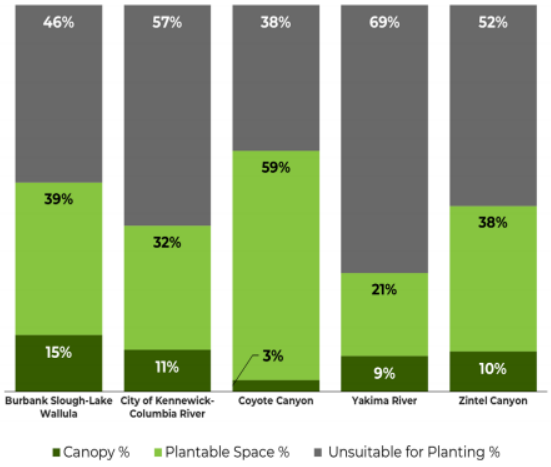
TOTAL ECOSYSTEM BENEFITS VALUE
$1,296,698

STORMWATER
$181,536 — 20 MILLION GALLONS OF AVOIDED RUNOFF

CARBON SEQUESTRATION
$956,153 — 2,209 TONS OF CARBON SEQUESTERED

AIR QUALITY
$159,008 — 54 TONS OF POLLUTION REMOVED

CANOPY POTENTIAL BY WATERSHEDS



CANOPY METRICS BY ZONING

Kennewick has 43 zoning classes. The Residential Low Density (RL) zone, mostly made up of single-family homes, covers about one-third of the city's land. This zone holds 35% of the city's tree canopy (628 acres) and 36% of plantable space (2,536 acres), making it important for maintaining and expanding tree cover.

Between 2011 and 2023, the Residential Suburban (RS) zone had the most significant increase in tree canopy, growing by 27%. However, this was not enough to balance out canopy losses in other parts of the City. The RL zone lost 17% of the trees it had in 2011. Replacing the benefits that these 128 acres of tree canopy provided will take years.

Because water resources are limited in this region, preserving existing tree canopy is a priority. Expanding the urban canopy should prioritize the wise use of water. As the City examines plantable areas, it should refine planning to support drought resilience and water conservation. One method is to use tree-focused xeriscaping, which involves replacing non-essential grass with drought-tolerant landscaping that prioritizes tree health. These practices can reduce water use and maintenance while keeping a healthy urban forest.

This work is supported with funding from Washington's Climate Commitment Act. The CCA supports Washington's climate action efforts by putting cap-and-invest dollars to work reducing climate pollution, creating jobs, and improving public health. Information about the CCA is available at www.climate.wa.gov.

PlanITGeo developers of TreePlotter · CASCADIA CONSULTING GROUP

VMT STUDY

Executive Summary

This study is part of the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Change Approach and provides a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) travel market assessment, analysis, and overview of potential reduction strategies for the Tri-Cities Region. The study focuses on Benton County, Kennewick, Richland, West Richland, and Pasco within the Tri Cities Region who have partnered on the broader Climate Change Approach project. The intent of this document is to set the stage for VMT reduction in the Tri-Cities Region. Specific recommended reduction strategies for each jurisdiction to include in their Climate Element are part of a separate technical analysis related to the review of goals and policies.

Travel Market Assessment

The travel assessment key findings related to VMT reduction for the Tri-Cities region are:

High Drive Alone with Short Travel. 95% of travel in the region is via automobile. Future travel is projected to be the same without implementing strategies to shift modes.

Over 70% of commute trips by residents are completed alone and about 70% drive less than 25 minutes to work. Given these short commutes, there is an opportunity to provide transit service and improve non-motorized conditions locally to reduce VMT. The region will need to consider implementing smart growth principles where communities are planned to reduce the need for long-distance travel by integrating residential, commercial, and employment areas.

Transit Service. Current transit service generally serves higher population and employment areas except for the Hanford site and Richland Airport. Future investment in transit will be needed to serve existing areas with dense housing and employment as well as anticipated growth in housing and employment in areas including West Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco.

Transit service frequency in most of the region is low, with buses coming once every half hour (30 min headways). Increasing bus frequency to 15 minutes or less in areas already served by transit may be a more cost-effective way to reduce VMT when compared to service expansions.

Bike Network. The planned bike network generally serves the region for both the existing and future as currently identified except for the Hanford site. As land use plans are developed, bike network expansion will need to be considered in new development areas.

Increase in Trips. Most daily trips stay within West Pasco and Kennewick, which provides an opportunity to use transit service and non-motorized facilities to reduce VMT.

VMT Analysis

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is a transportation metric that calculates the total travel distance of all vehicles in a specific geographic region over a given period of time.

The VMT metric can be used to understand changes in driving behavior over time. HB 1181 requires a measurement of annual per capita VMT for cars. **Figure C-93** summarizes the per capital VMT for the Tri-Cities region. Along with the five jurisdictions that are participating in this study, VMT is also presented for the other areas in the Tri-Cities region to provide a full understanding of the region's VMT.

Figure C-93. Tri-Cities Region Annual Per Capita VMT (1,000s)[1]

Location	Base 2022	Future 2045

Unincorporated Benton County	3.98	3.98
Unincorporated Franklin County	16.52	16.52
Benton City	9.88	12.50
Kennewick	5.85	6.68
Pasco	5.14	6.50
Richland	7.53	7.54
Prosser	7.52	7.52
West Richland	5.68	6.52
Benton County	6.12	6.59
Franklin County	7.37	8.52
Benton Franklin Region	6.52	7.25

Notes: VMT = vehicle miles traveled

[1] VMT per capita (in 1,000s) represents the VMT for cars (i.e., light duty and passenger vehicles) divided by the population shown in **Figure C-93**

Per-capita VMT will increase by 11% without reduction strategies as the region grows due to planned housing and job growth.

Introduction

The Washington State law HB 1181[1], adopted in 2023, requires jurisdictions to plan for natural hazards related to climate as part of their comprehensive plan updates. Jurisdictions are required to adopt a climate change and resiliency goal, and policies designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance resilience, and avoid adverse impacts of natural hazards. Jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region will update their comprehensive plans by 2026 and the Tri-Cities Regional Climate Change Approach will provide guidance in comprehensive planning for natural hazards.

Transportation, including on-road and off-road (rail) vehicles, air travel, and water travel, all contribute to the region's greenhouse gas emissions which drive climate change impacts. Reducing transportation emissions in the region will be accomplished partly through widespread adoption of cleaner vehicles and by reducing the average vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita.

Background

The Washington Department of Commerce Climate Element Planning Guidance, released in December 2023, describes a base year of 2022 for the VMT study. The future year of 2045 has been identified for this VMT study consistent with the Benton Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) travel demand model. The Tri-Cities region covers Benton and Franklin Counties. **Figure C-94** summarizes the 2022 and 2045 population for the Tri-Cities region. The base year of 2022 is used in alignment with the Washington Department of Commerce Climate Element Planning Guidance and the greenhouse gas analysis.

1 Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill (E2SHB or HB) 1181 effective July 23, 2023, and is an act related to improving the state's climate response. https://lawfilesext.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2023-24/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/House/1181-S2.SL.pdf?q=20231025165918 accessed March 7, 2024

Figure C-94. Tri-Cities Region Population

Location	2022 (base year) Population[1]	2045 Projected Population[2]
Unincorporated Benton County	37,445	46,920
Unincorporated Franklin County	19,570	28,589
Benton City	3,710	4,933
Kennewick	85,320	107,995
Pasco	80,180	113,361
Richland	62,220	81,618
Prosser	6,195	8,171
West Richland	17,410	26,091
Benton County	212,300	275,737
Franklin County	99,750	141,950
Benton Franklin Region	312,050	417,687

[1]*Based on 2022 population from the Washington State Office of Financial Management (OFM).*

[2]*Estimated population based adjusting 2046 Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) population projections provided by BERK Consulting to 2045.*

This Tri-Cities Regional Climate Change Approach focuses on the region and five jurisdictions within this region:

- Unincorporated Benton County
- Kennewick
- Pasco
- Richland
- West Richland

VMT data is provided for both counties and all incorporated cities in the region for this study; however, the travel assessment and reduction strategies for the Climate Change Approach focus on the region as a whole and the five jurisdictions listed above.

Study Overview

This study provides a travel market assessment, VMT analysis, and potential VMT reduction strategies for the Tri-Cities region. The travel market assessment reviews how population and employment in the region are served by non-auto modes to help determine potential strategies that could reduce VMT. The VMT analysis summarizes the baseline (2022) VMT and future (2045) VMT for the jurisdictions. The intent of this document is to set the stage for VMT and potential reduction strategies for the Tri-Cities region. Specifics related to what reduction strategies are recommended for each jurisdiction to implement are part of a separate technical analysis related to the review of goals and policies.

Travel Market Assessment

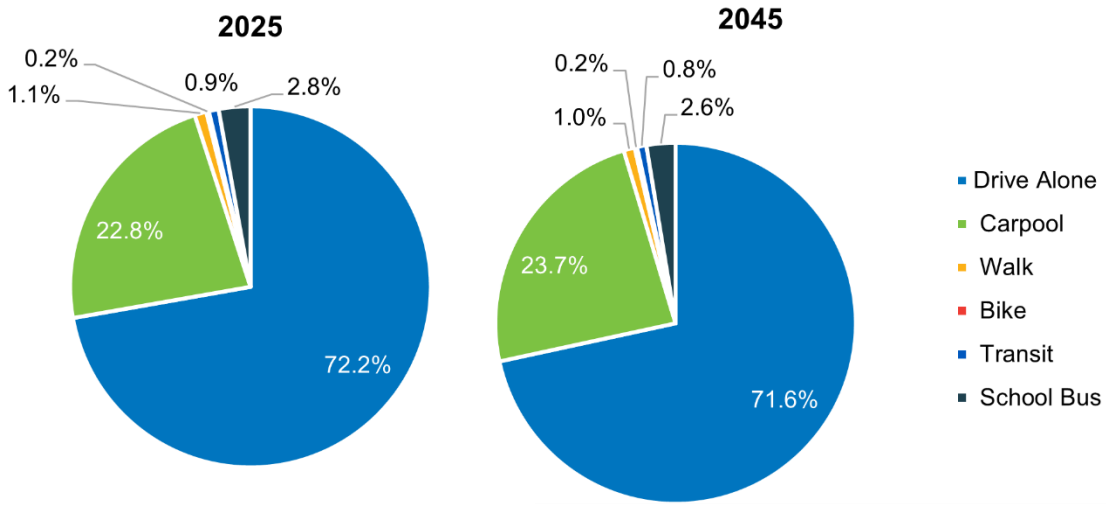
The travel market assessment identifies the locations of population and employment and key travel markets for trips in the Tri-Cities region. Understanding travel markets and how people travel in the region helps to identify potential strategies that would be most effective in reducing VMT for the cities and counties in the region.

Travel Modes

The Benton Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) travel demand model has a mode choice element that is used to calibrate the region's travel modes with existing data. **Figure C-95** illustrates the travel modes for the region based on the BFCOG model. The model shows that almost all travel in the region is via auto (drive alone and carpooling) today and in the future.

The model also predicts, without strategies to discourage auto travel and enable other modes of travel, 95% (drive alone + carpool) of the travel in the region will continue to be via auto. This high auto travel for trips contributes to the VMT levels in the region and without reduction strategies VMT in the region will increase.

Figure C-95. Tri-Cities Region Modes of Travel



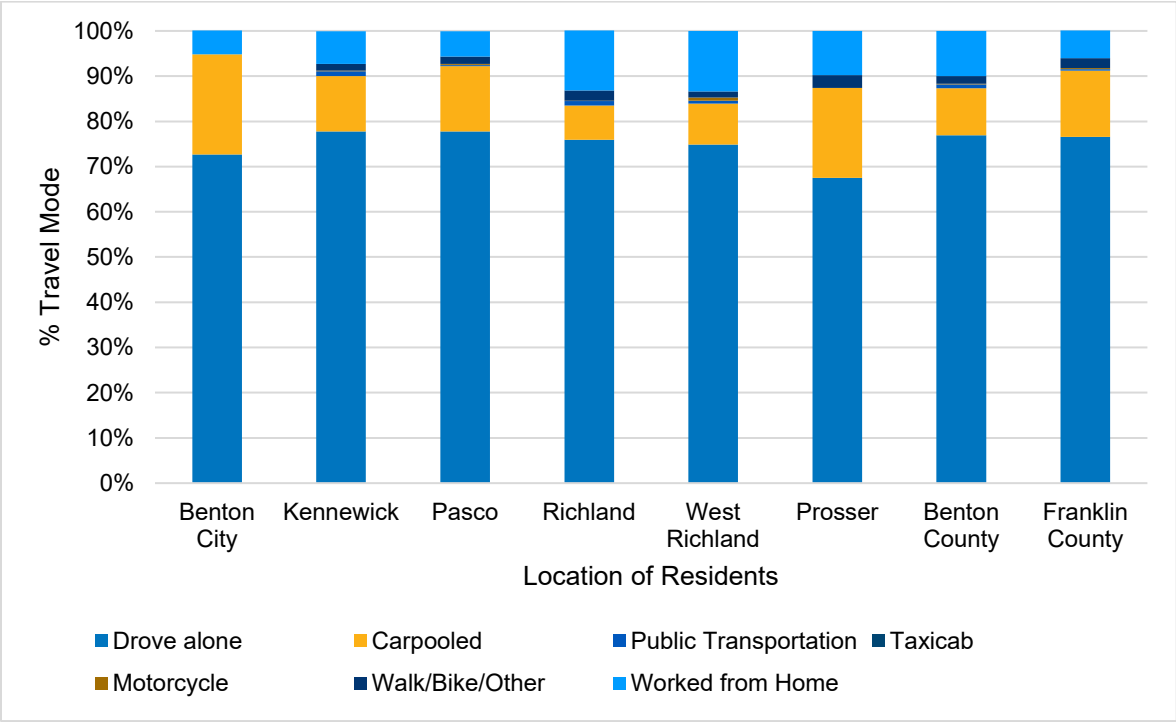
Source: Benton Franklin Council of Governments Travel Demand Model, 2025.

A review of individual areas shows Benton County and West Richland currently have higher drive alone (79 and 77%, respectively) and carpool (16 and 18%, respectively) rates compared to the region. Travel in Pasco and Richland is about the same as the region. Franklin County and Kennewick have about 70% drive alone trips and 25% carpool trips. The comparison is similar when future 2045 conditions are examined.

Commute Travel

Commuting to work accounts for 15 to 25% of overall travel. Data was reviewed to understand modes of travel to work for the region. The US Census Bureau American Community Survey (ACS) Means of Transportation to Work 5-year Estimates 2018-2022 for the region are presented on **Figure C-96**. The 2022 estimates are used because this is the base year for the VMT analysis.

Figure C-96. Tri-Cities Region Means of Transportation to Work

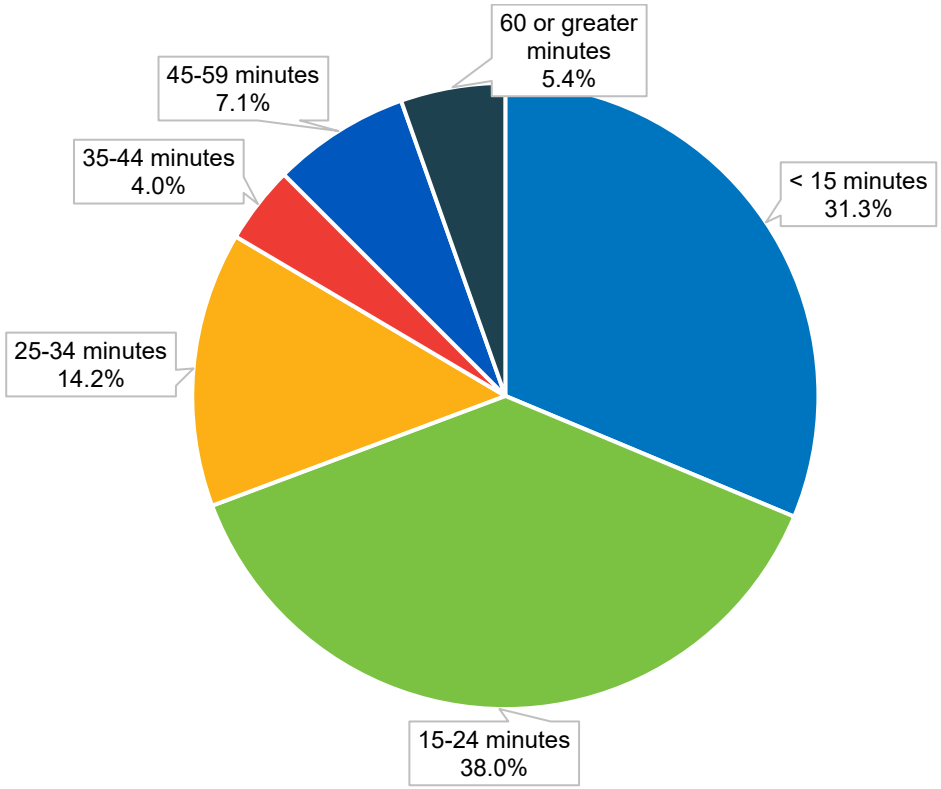


Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022 5-Year Estimates, Means of Travel to Work, US Census Bureau.

As shown in **Figure C-96**, for all areas of the region, drive alone travel accounts for about 70% or more of commute travel. Carpool and work from home are the next most common travel modes with less than 1% commuting via public transportation.

The ACS 5-Year Estimates 2018-2022 were also reviewed to determine travel time to work for all driving trips including drive alone and carpool. **Figure C-97** shows the commute times to work for all driving trips in the Tri-Cities Region.

Figure C-97. Tri-Cities Region Travel Time to Work via Auto



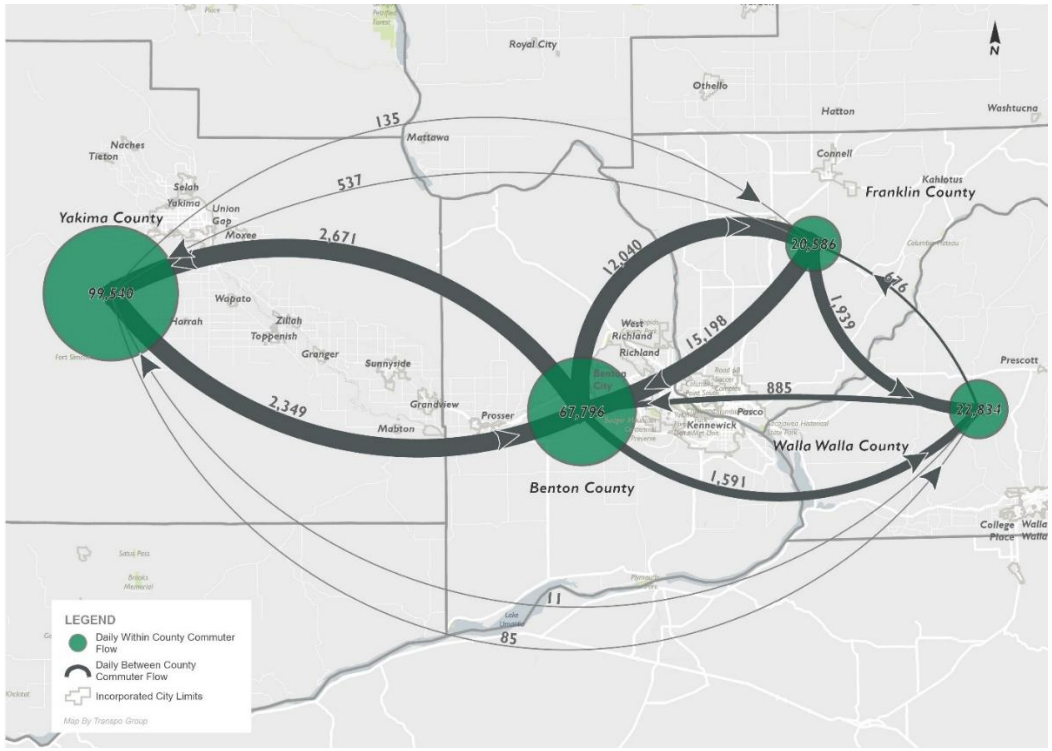
Source: American Community Survey 2018-2022 5-Year Estimates, Means of Travel to Work by Travel Time to Work, US Census Bureau.

As shown in **Figure C-97**, about 69% of driving trips to work are less than 25 minutes and about 18% of driving trips to work are 25 to 45 minutes. The travel review shows most commuting is driving for the region; however, many trips are short. Given the high portion of driving coupled with short trips, VMT related to commute trips could be reduced by providing opportunities for use of non-motorized and transit modes.

Cities with more jobs like Richland and Kennewick have a higher portion of shorter commute times compared to other locations in the region. For Kennewick, about 75% of commute trips are less than 25 minutes compared to the region average of 69%. 20% of Kennewick's commute trips are more than 30 minutes.

Figure C-98 illustrates the daily commute trips within the region. The data shows that most trips stay within the counties with Benton County having the highest number of trips in the Tri-Cities region. Most commuting in Benton County and the cities within the county stay local to the county. The daily commute pattern is consistent with the finding that most commute trips are less than 25-minutes. For longer commute trips, the data shows that most daily commuting is between Benton and Franklin Counties with about 27,000 daily commute trips (i.e., approximately 78% of the region's daily commute trips). Most of this intercounty commuting between Benton and Franklin Counties is to/from Pasco. The data also shows that about 5,000 daily commute trips or 15% of the overall Benton County commute trips are to/from Yakima County.

Figure C-98. County Level Daily Commute Trips



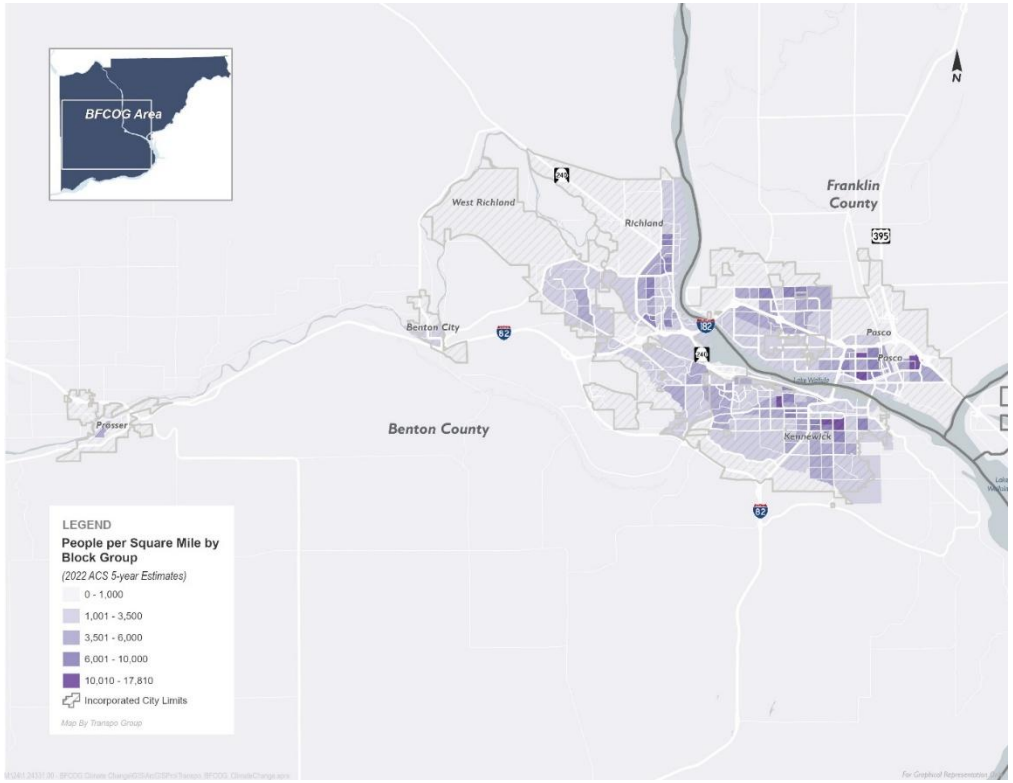
Source: Transpo Group, 2025

Population

Understanding where people live identifies areas of the region to plan multimodal improvements and options for non-driving that contribute to a reduction in VMT. **Figure C-99** shows the population per square mile by block group for the study area. High Population densities in the region are confined to the cities of Richland, West Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco. Kennewick's highest population densities are in the West and South Highlands neighborhoods.

The highest levels of travel occur in these denser cities of the Tri-Cities region, indicating that these will also be the areas where reduction strategies are likely to have the highest impacts.

Figure C-99. Existing Population Density by Block Group for the Tri-Cities Region Study Area



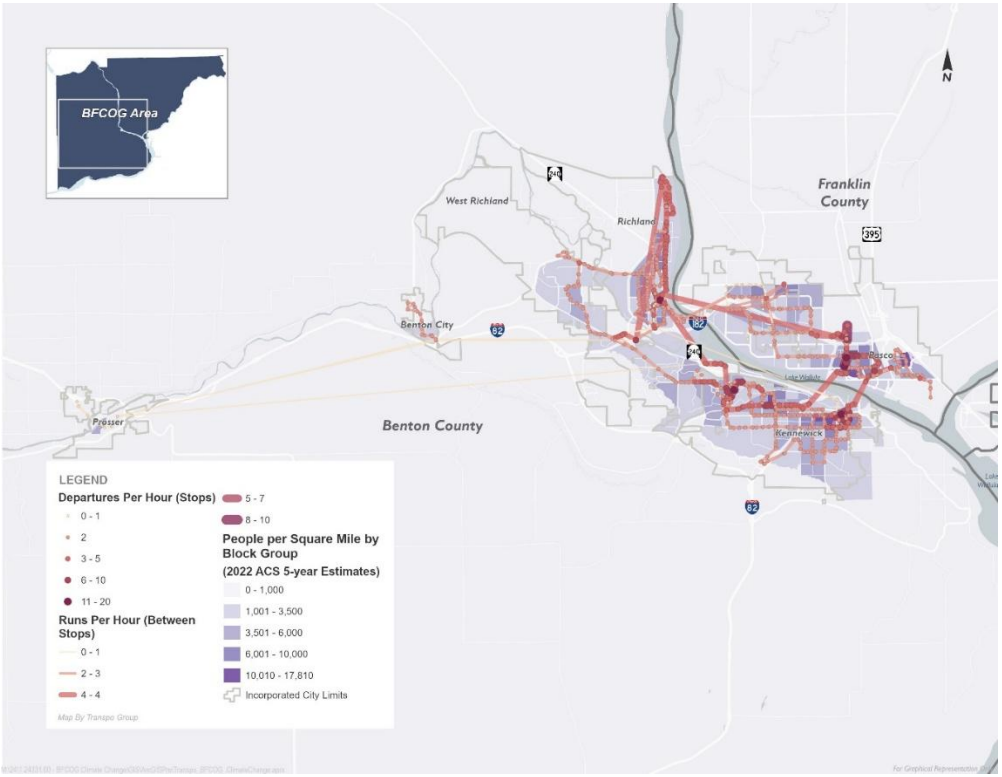
Source: Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

How Transit Serves the Population

Figure C-100 shows population density overlayed by the Benton Franklin Transit (BFT) network of routes and stops based on the most recent available data from BFT (December 2024). The figure shows the hourly frequency of weekday service to stops and between stops. Residents within Richland, Pasco, and Kennewick, where there is the highest population, are generally well served by transit with service running through or near all areas with higher population densities. The frequency of bus service is generally higher in the downtown areas and lower in the surrounding neighborhoods. The highest frequency is at the main transit centers, which include the West Richland, Knight Street, Three Rivers, Dayton, and 22nd Avenue transit centers. Connections between population centers are also strong with frequent (5-10 trips per hour) service linking the three major cities and major destinations such as the Pasco airport and Columbia Center Mall.

Figure C-100. Existing Population Density Related to Benton Franklin Transit Service



Source: Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

As the region grows and as new high density population areas are built, providing transit service and increasing frequency will be key to reducing VMT.

Specific to the jurisdictions that are part of this study, with limited service today, Unincorporated areas of Benton County have little to no service, including general on-demand and rideshare services. The smaller incorporated cities of Benton County, Prosser and Benton City, do have general on-demand transit services that riders can schedule. Benton County should work with BFT to determine transit needs and the appropriate types of service to provide for the more rural community.

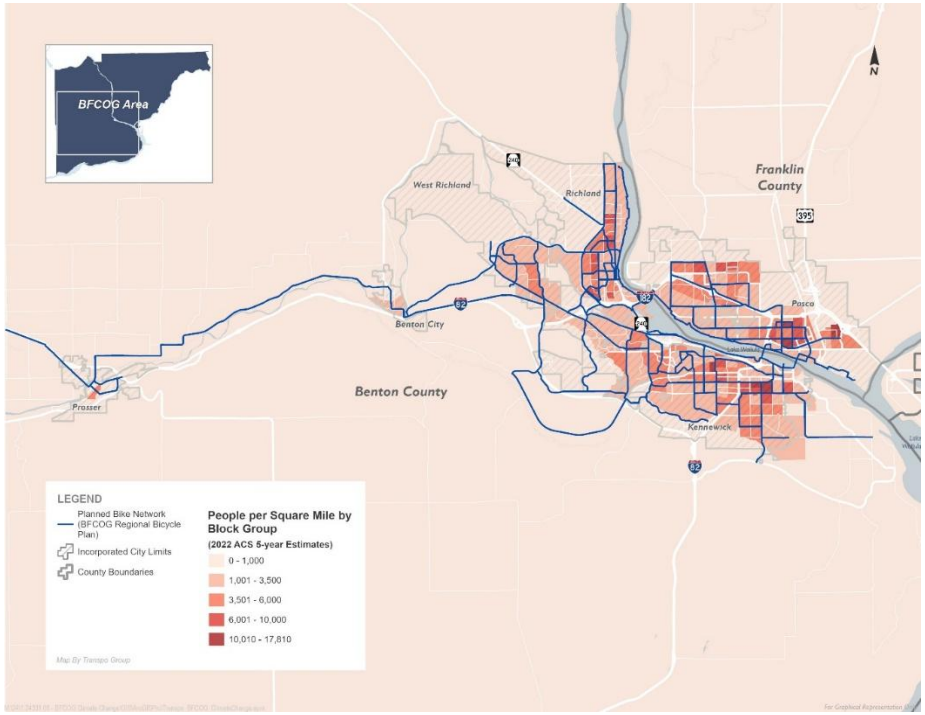
How the Bike Network Serves the Population

Figure C-101 shows population data overlayed with the planned bicycle network from BFCOG's 2024 Regional Bicycle Plan. The map represents the planned extent of the future bicycle network as envisioned at the end of the 20-year planning period. In partnership with local jurisdictions, BFCOG aims to complete the network with facilities that have a bicycle level of traffic stress (LTS) 1 or 2, which corresponds to bike lanes and paths with some degree of separation and/or barrier from vehicular traffic. The plan acknowledges that additional funding would be needed for a complete buildout of all routes shown on the map. The planned

network shows a greater density of bicycle routes in high density areas and spreads out in lower density areas. The plan also links the area's river and highway trail network to provide connections between the major population centers.

As the region grows, providing a well-connected bike network will be a key strategy to reducing VMT. **Figure C-101** shows that the planned network serves the key areas of the region. Expansion of this network should be considered as new areas are developed in the cities and unincorporated Benton County.

Figure C-101. Existing Population Density Related to Planned Bike Network



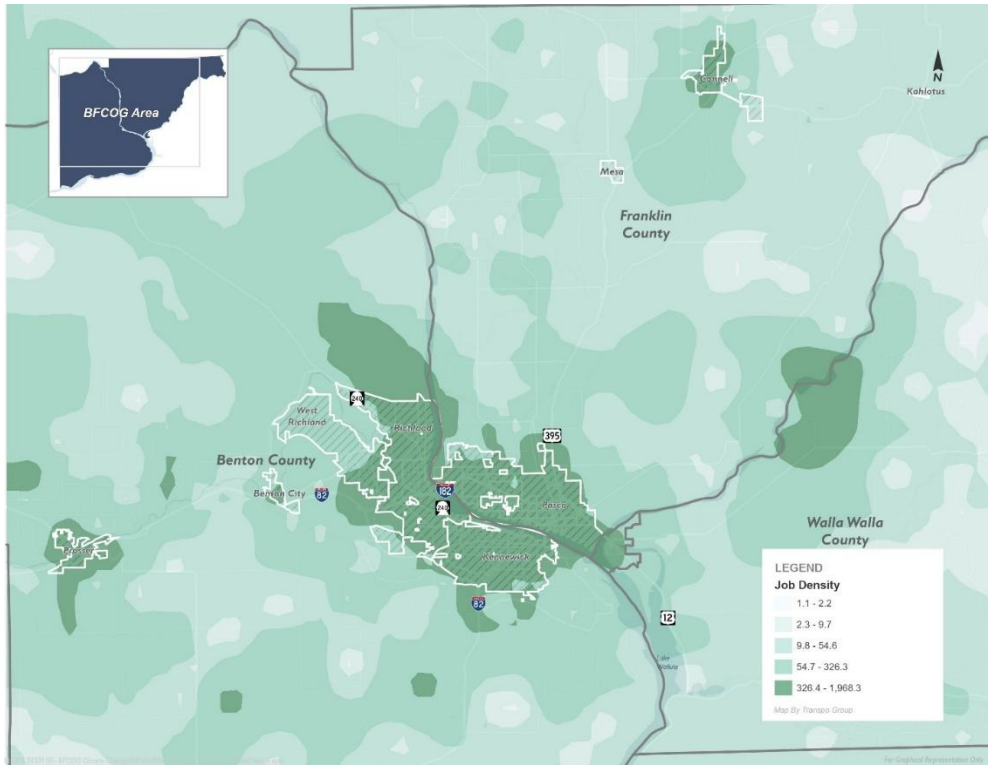
Source: Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Employment

Reviewing employment in the region highlights regional employment centers and opportunities for multimodal connections between residential and employment areas to reduce VMT. **Figure C-102** shows the larger context of employment in Benton and Franklin Counties.

Figure C-102. Existing Employment Density for Benton and Franklin Counties



Source: 2022 Longitudinal Employer Household Dynamics (LEHD) Work Area Profiles, United States Census Bureau

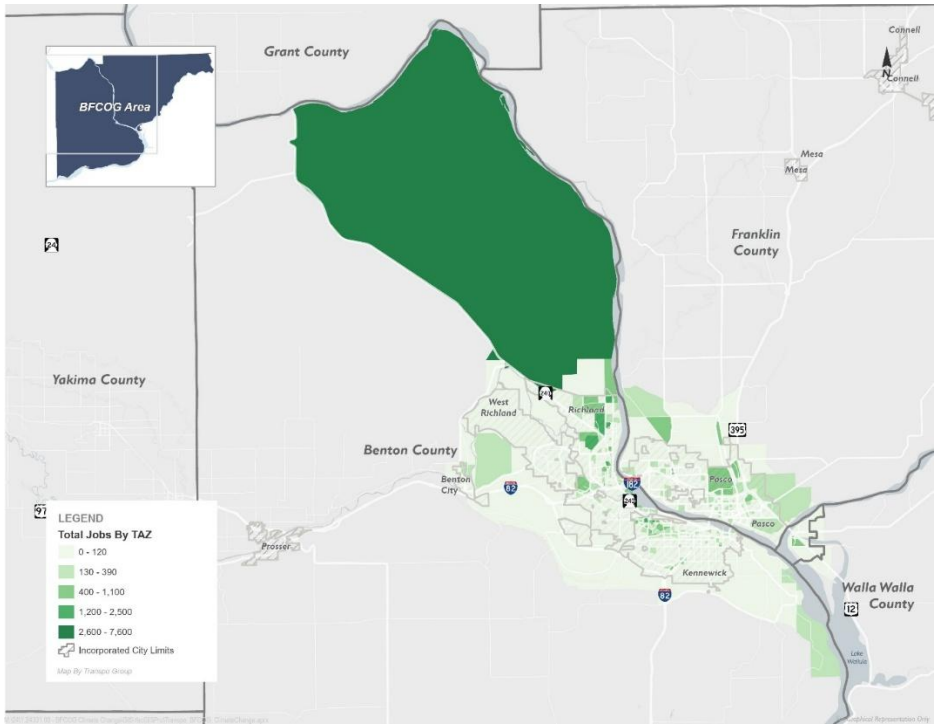
The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

The denser employment areas in both Benton and Franklin Couties are generally within incorporated cities including Richland, Kennewick, Pasco, Benton City and Prosser. The exception is the Hanford site and a few other small pockets of higher job density within the unincorporated Benton County area (see **Figure C-102**).

Employment in rural county areas is dominated by agriculture jobs except for the Hanford site, which employs over 10,000 residents in various industries. VMT reduction for agricultural jobs may be more difficult given the location in the more rural parts of Benton County whereas the Hanford site represents a major opportunity for VMT reduction including partnerships with the incorporated cities to provide non-auto commuting.

Figure C-103 shows the distribution of employment for the region by traffic analysis zone (TAZ) based on data from the BFCOG travel demand model.

Figure C-103. Existing Employment by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ)



Source: BFCOG Travel Demand Model Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

As shown in **Figure C-103**, the largest employment in the region is within Benton County at the Hanford site.

In Pasco, high density employment areas are generally farther apart when compared to Kennewick and Richland. This makes for long travel times between home and work for those commuting in the city and can mean that employees are more auto dependent. High numbers of jobs are located at Pasco Airport and surrounding industrial areas as well as along Pasco's major arterials and highways which are predominantly zoned for business and retail use.

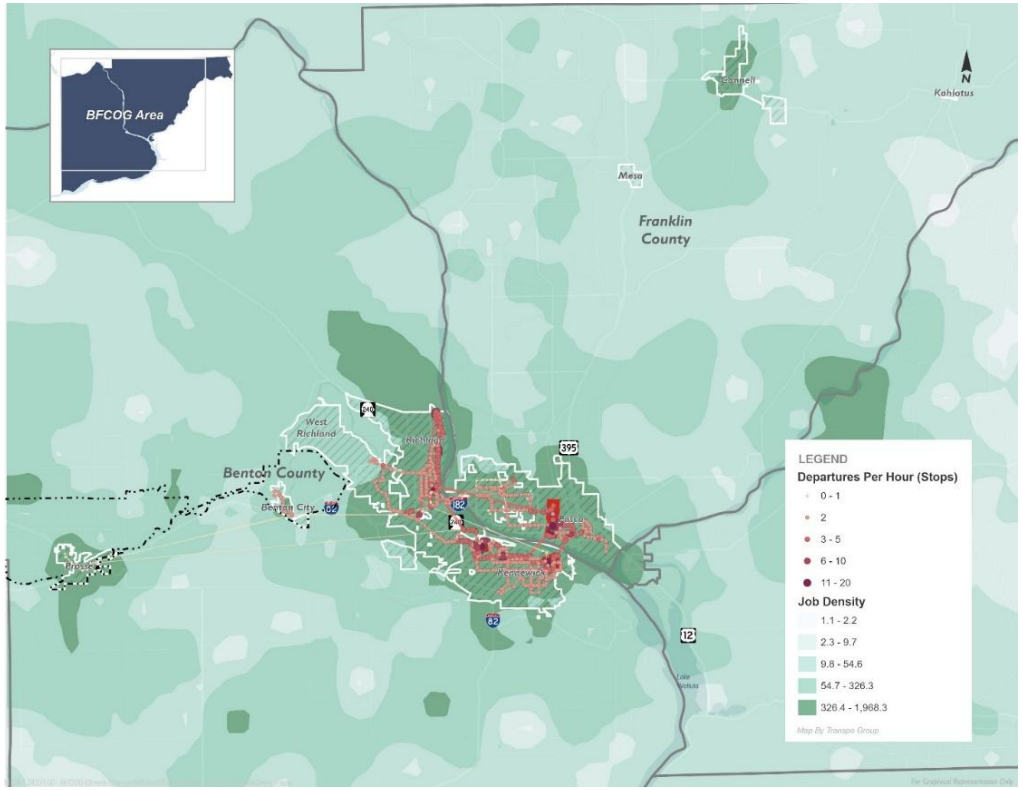
In Kennewick, most jobs are around the commercial hub of the Columbia Center Mall, with other employment centers in commercial zones along major roads. The Hanford site provides the greatest number of jobs, which is outside the city limits to the north of Richland. Multimodal connections from Kennewick's highest population densities, West and South Highlands neighborhoods, are important to reduce VMT.

There are limited jobs in West Richland. Providing additional job opportunities in these areas as well as multimodal travel options to jobs outside the jurisdiction will help reduce VMT.

How Transit Serves Employment

Figure C-104 and **Figure C-105** shows employment overlaid by weekday transit service frequency between and to stop locations. Many employment centers coincide with BFT's transit center locations and are served by relatively frequent bus service with connections to other transit centers. Notable areas not served or infrequently served by transit include the Hanford site, Richland airport vicinity and industrial areas in the north, and areas of southeast Pasco where large warehouses and fulfillment centers are located, as well as northwest Pasco. The review shows there are opportunities to provide transit services to high density employment areas to help reduce VMT.

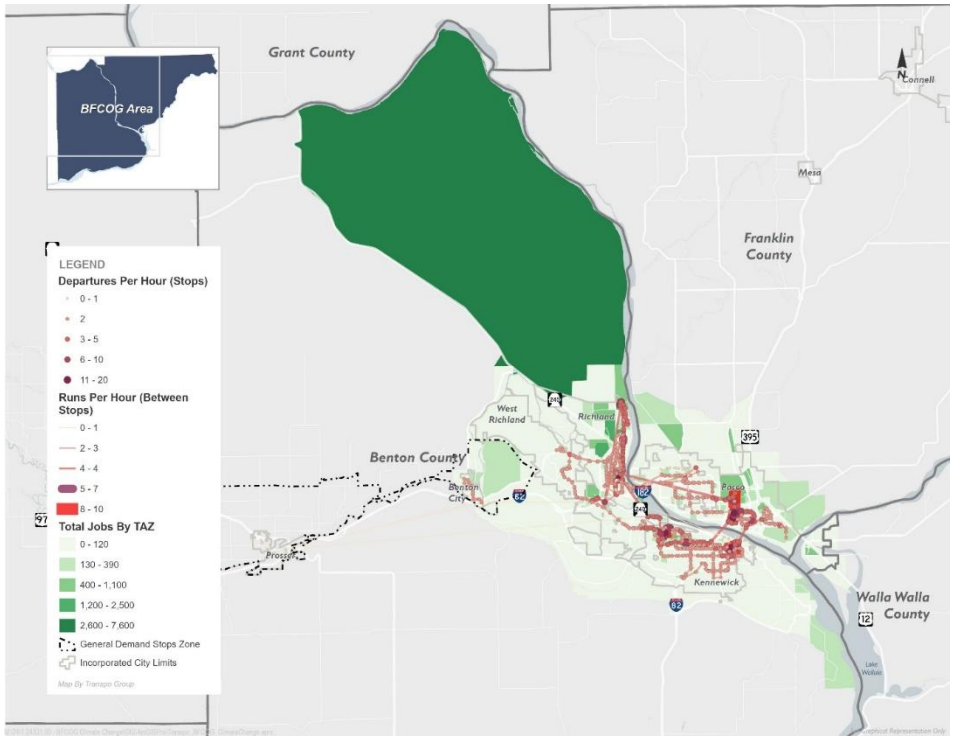
Figure C-104. Existing Employment Density for Benton and Franklin Counties Related to Transit Service



Source: LEHD Work Area Profiles, United States Census Bureau. 2022

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure C-105. Existing Employment by TAZ Related to Transit Service



Source: Transpo Group, 2025

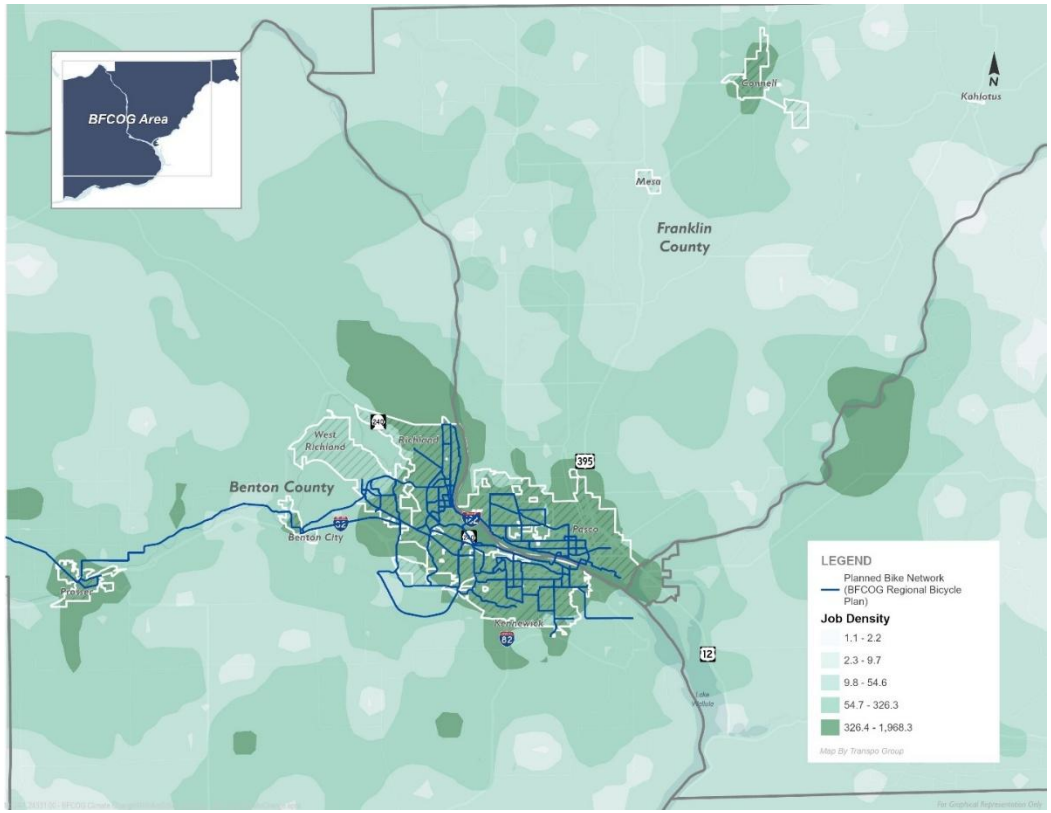
The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

How the Bike Network Serves Employment

Figure C-106 and **Figure C-107** show employment data overlayed with the planned bicycle network from BFCOG's 2024 Regional Bicycle Plan. The planned network shows many connections in and between zones with high employment. The plan also links the area's river and highway trail network to provide connections between the major population centers.

Providing opportunities to bike to employment and services is a strategy for reducing VMT in the region. Similar to transit, bike facilities are not planned to serve the Richland airport vicinity and industrial areas to the north, and areas of southeast Pasco where large warehouses and fulfillment centers are located, as well as northwest Pasco. Expansion of this network should be considered to serve existing uses where practical, specifically the Hanford site, and as new areas are developed in the cities and unincorporated Benton County.

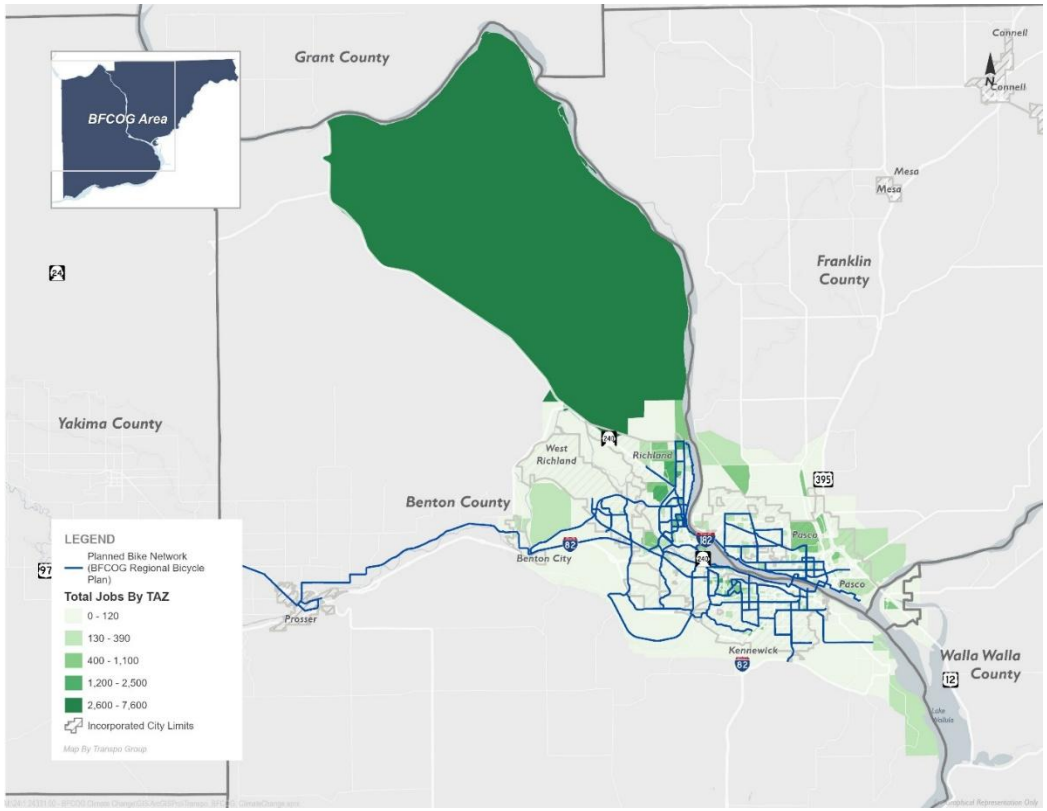
Figure C-106. Existing Employment Density for Benton and Franklin Counties Related to the Bike Network



Source: 2022 LEHD Work Area Profiles, United States Census Bureau

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Figure C-107. Existing Employment Density Related to the Bike Network



Source: Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

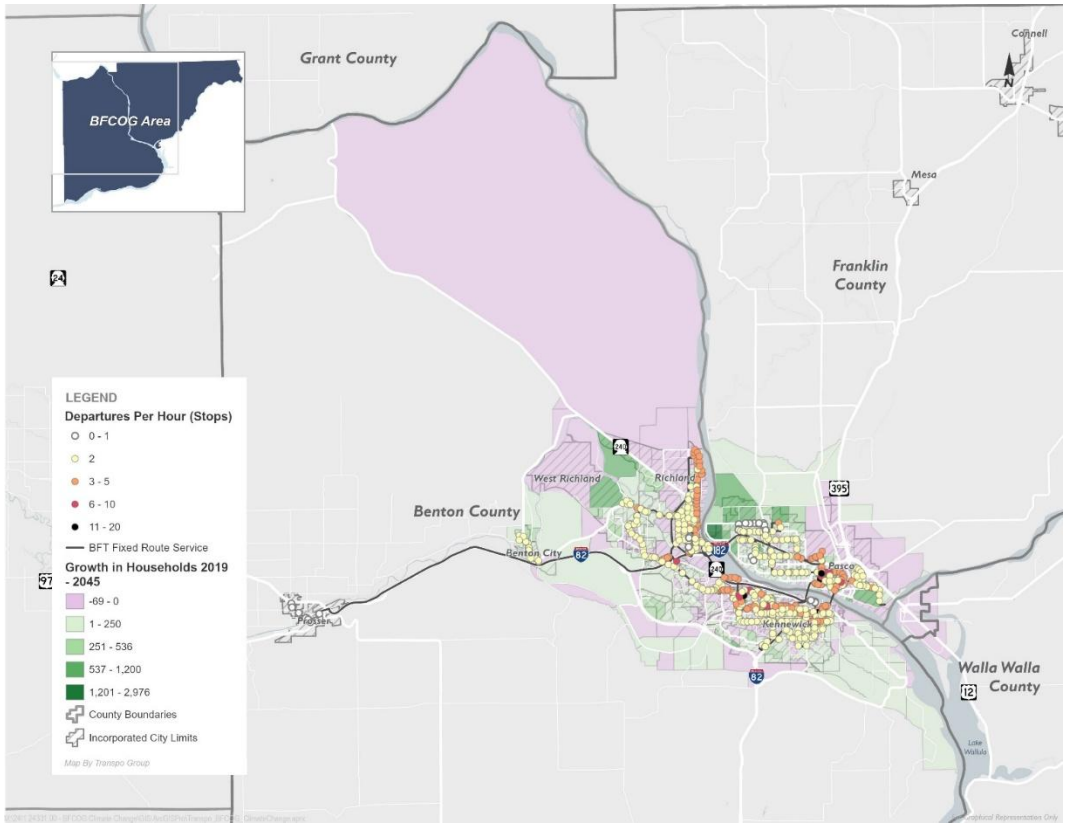
Future Growth in the Region

This section reviews how the region's housing and employment is anticipated to grow by 2045 and the resulting increases in travel.

Household

Figure C-108 shows the areas of growth in households by traffic analysis zone (TAZ) from 2019 to 2045 based on the BFCOG travel demand model. West Richland and Pasco have the highest planned growth in housing for the region while Kennewick will have moderate growth in housing. Richland's planned housing growth is much less compared to the surrounding areas. Growth patterns in the Tri-Cities region are generally focused outward and away from the city centers, which means that transit services and non-motorized connections will have to be expanded to these areas to reduce VMT. Growth in areas currently served by BFT will likely result in increased ridership for the routes serving them, especially if frequency is increased. However, growth in outlying areas will likely mean an increase in VMT unless new transit routes are developed and funded.

Figure C-108. Household Growth and Transit Routes



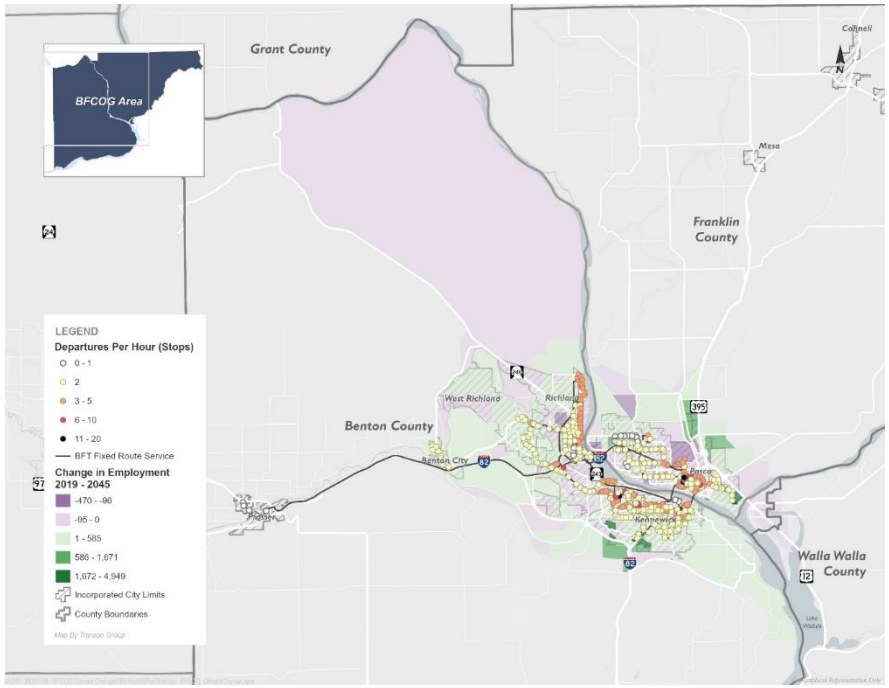
Source: Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Employment

Figure C-109 shows the change in employment by TAZ from 2019 to 2045 based on the BFCOG travel demand model. The areas with the highest growth are Kennewick just south and north of the I-82 and US-395 interchange, and south and northeast Pasco. Most of the outlying areas, as well as Kennewick and Pasco will experience moderate jobs growth throughout their incorporated city limits. Moderate job losses are seen in the industrial areas of Richland and Pasco. Most of the growth in the Tri-Cities region will occur in areas not currently served by transit or areas that are not served with frequent transit service.

Figure C-109. Employment Growth and Transit Routes



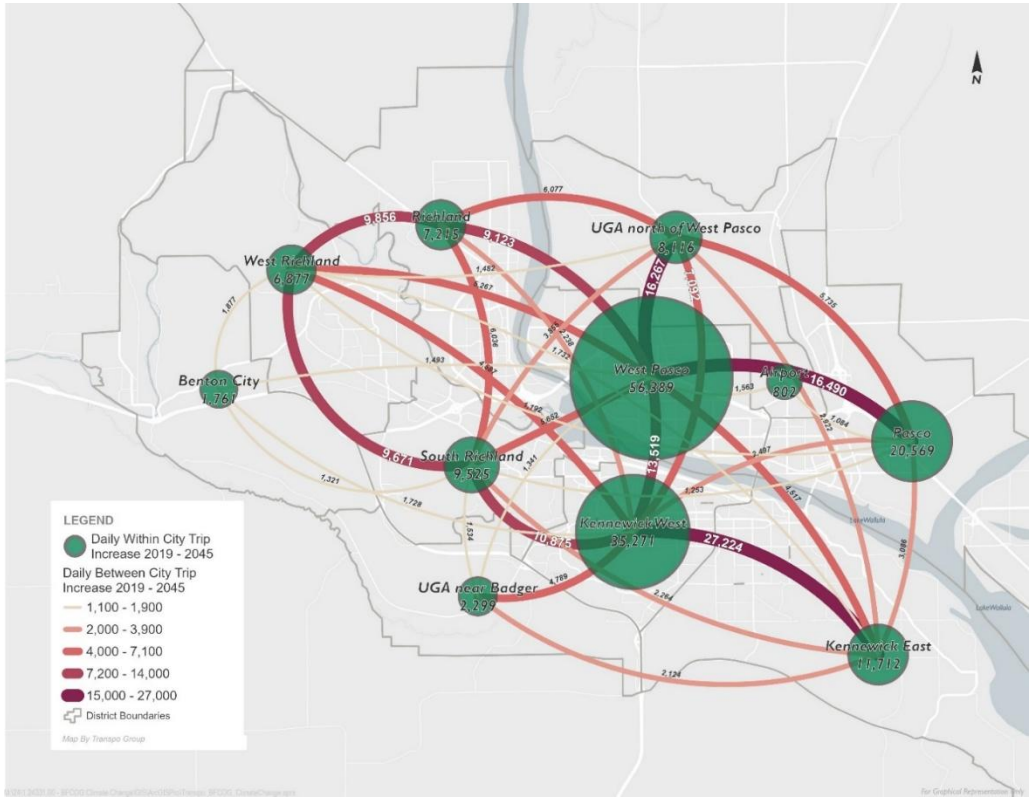
Source: Transpo Group, 2025

The city limits on this map are those existing at the time the map was created, and have since had minor changes due to annexation.

Trip Growth

Growth in households (i.e., population) and employment will result in growth in travel within the region. **Figure C-110** shows growth in travel patterns of greater than 1,000 daily trips for the Tri-Cities region. Trip data was modeled using Replica. The region is divided into districts, which are defined as subsets of the various jurisdictional boundaries including cities and counties that contain major hubs for travel within the region. Travel growth between the districts is shown with red lines, which indicate cumulative travel in both directions, while travel growth within districts is shown using green circles. Travel between all districts is expected to grow from the base year through 2045. Kennewick and Pasco will see the most growth in trip volume within and between districts due to higher increases in population and employment in those areas. Notable areas of trip growth include East Kennewick, which is largely due to the high number of new jobs and households expected near the I-82 and US-395 interchange.

Figure C-110. Growth in Total Vehicle Travel: Base Year to Year 2045



Transpo Group, 2025

Key Findings

The travel assessment key findings related to VMT reduction for the Tri-Cities region are:

- High Drive Alone with Short Travel. 95% of the travel in the region is via auto. About 72% of these are drive alone trips and 23% are carpool trips. Future travel modes are projected to be the same as current conditions for the region without implementing strategies to shift modes.
- Over 70% of the commuting trips by residents are drive alone and about 70% drive less than 25 minutes to work. Given these short commutes, there is an opportunity to provide transit service and improve non-motorized conditions locally to reduce VMT. The region will need to consider implementing smart growth principles where communities are planned in a way that reduces the need for long-distance travel by integrating residential, commercial, and employment areas.
- Transit Service. The current transit service generally serves the higher population and employment areas, except the Hanford site and Richland Airport. Future investment in transit will be needed to serve existing areas with dense housing and employment as well as anticipated growth in housing and employment including West Richland, Kennewick, and Pasco.

- Transit service frequency in most of the region is low, with buses coming once every half hour (30 min headways). Increasing frequency to 15 minutes or less in areas already served by transit may be a more cost-effective way to reduce VMT when compared to service expansions.
- Bike Network. The planned bike network generally serves the region for both existing and future trips as currently identified except for the Hanford site. As land use plans are developed with the comprehensive plan updates, bike network expansion will need to be considered in new development areas.
- Increase in Trips. Significant increases in daily trips that stay within West Pasco and Kennewick are anticipated, which provides an opportunity to use transit service and non-motorized facilities to reduce VMT.

VMT Analysis

Vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is a transportation metric that calculates the total travel distance of all vehicles in a specific geographic region over a given period of time. VMT is a key metric in transportation planning because it provides a measure of total travel that can be used to understand changes over time or differences amongst areas.

The scope of the VMT analysis is limited to on-road transportation sources that travel within the Tri-Cities region. In addition, transit VMT is captured separately and for the region. The base year for the VMT inventory is 2022 consistent with the Washington Department of Commerce Climate Element Planning Guidance (December 2023). Analysis of future year 2045 VMT provides an understanding of potential VMT per capita assuming current 20-year planning.

Method

This section describes how VMT is determined and the calculation of VMT per capita.

VMT Approach

There are two approaches used to determine VMT. The first approach is related to the greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions inventory and the second is related to tracking and setting reduction targets for VMT.

The GHG Emissions Inventory uses regional on-road VMT, which includes all vehicle travel on roads within the region. This accounts for local trips as well as through trips that do not have an origin or destination in the community. While this approach is suitable for a comprehensive emissions inventory, it can overstate the VMT that local jurisdictions can influence.

Based on HB 1181, VMT for cars (or non-freight vehicles) is monitored on an annual per capita basis. For the purpose of target setting, car VMT is measured as residential or population-based-VMT. Residential or population-based VMT includes all trip types taken by the population of the region, aligning with the per capita VMT metric required by the State. Using residential or population-based VMT provides a more meaningful basis for local planning and target-setting efforts because it directly ties to all VMT generated by the residents living in the region. Communities do not have direct control over through trips using the State highway or regional roadway system since they do not manage these roads or have a direct connection on these users.

Figure C-111. VMT approach definitions

	Regional On-Road VMT	Residential VMT
Definition	Total vehicle miles traveled on all roads in the region	Total vehicle miles traveled by residents in the region
Through trips	Included	Excluded

Jurisdictional control	Limited ability	Higher ability
Use	GHG inventory and forecasting	VMT target setting

For both approaches, the VMT analysis relies on the Replica data and BFCOG travel demand model. The 2022 VMT is based on Replica data. The BFCOG travel demand model has a base year of 2019 and a future year of 2045. The foundation of the travel demand model is the number of households and jobs in the region and is reflective of the population outlined in the Background section of this study. Future VMT for areas that are outside the BFCOG travel demand model were determined by growing the 2022 VMT. The future on-roads VMT was based on the regional growth from the 2045 travel demand model. The future residential VMT was based on population growth for the specific jurisdiction. The VMT presented represents the VMT that occurs on the roadway system within each jurisdiction for the regional on-road VMT and the VMT generated by residents within the jurisdiction for the residential VMT.

The BFCOG travel demand model is used to determine daily VMT. The annual VMT was then determined by multiplying daily VMT by 364.9 days per year, which is consistent with the ratio between daily and annual VMT based on the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) 2023 Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) Miles and VMT by County, Owner, and City for Benton and Franklin Counties. The WSDOT 2023 HPMS and VMT provides daily and annual VMT for Benton and Franklin Counties, but this data does not capture all VMT on the region's streets and the use of Replica and the travel demand model captures all trips and allows forecasting of future VMT.

The systemwide VMT for transit in the region is also presented. The transit VMT is based on 2022 revenue miles data provided by BFT. Based on coordination with BFT, the 2045 VMT was forecasted assuming growth consistent with the BFCOG travel demand model.

VMT Per Capita Calculation

The VMT measurement used by the State for assessing compliance is per capita VMT. HB 1181 says "The calculation of this value [per capita VMT] excludes vehicle miles driven conveying freight." WSDOT's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Targets Final Report June 2023 recommends that heavy-duty (freight) vehicle VMT should be monitored, estimated, and forecast, but no per capita VMT reduction targets for these freight vehicles is required because this travel is non-discretionary and closely associated with economic activities. Replica and the BFCOG travel demand model were used to determine separate VMT for cars or light trucks and then heavy trucks, which are associated with freight.

HB 1181 outlines that jurisdictions are to support reduction of per capita VMT. It also defines "Per capita vehicle miles traveled" as "the number of miles traveled using cars and light trucks in a calendar year divided by the number of residents in Washington." The per capita VMT for the region is calculated as the number of miles traveled using cars and light trucks in a calendar year divided by the population.

Results

Along with the five jurisdictions that are participating in this study, VMT is also presented for the other areas in the Tri-Cities region to provide a full understanding of the region's VMT.

Figure C-112 summarizes the annual VMT on the region's roads for cars and trucks.

Figure C-112. Tri-Cities Region Base and Future Year Annual VMT (in 1,000s)[1] – Regional On-Roads

	Base 2022 VMT[2]	Base 2022 VMT[2]	Future 2045 VMT[3]	Future 2045 VMT[3]
Location	Cars VMT	Trucks VMT	Cars VMT	Trucks VMT
Unincorporated Benton County	808,223	111,475	1,208,607	180,665
Kennewick	430,709	46,230	595,931	68,178
Pasco	445,137	65,891	781,993	115,811
Benton County	1,872,812	221,438	2,679,149	343,909
Benton Franklin Region	3,077,166	351,570	4,596,616	563,525

Notes: VMT = vehicle miles traveled

[1]Annual VMT shown in 1,000s

[2]VMT based on Replica data and representative of VMT on the road within the jurisdiction.

[3]VMT based on BFCOG travel demand model for 2045 except for areas outside the model, which were determined by applying the 2022 to 2045 overall model growth rate to the base 2022 VMT.

Figure C-113 summarizes the annual residential VMT for the region's car travel as well as the annual per capita VMT. As described previously, per capita VMT for cars is what HB 1181 requires jurisdictions target for reduction.

Figure C-113. Tri-Cities Region Base and Future Year Annual VMT (in 1,000s)[1] - Residential

	Base 2022 VMT[2]	Base 2022 VMT[2]	Future 2045 VMT[3]	Future 2045 VMT[3]
Location	Cars VMT	Per Capita VMT[4]	Cars VMT	Per Capita VMT[4]
Unincorporated Benton County	149,017	3.98	186,723	3.98
Kennewick	499,207	5.85	721,263	6.68
Pasco	411,729	5.14	737,313	6.50
Benton County	1,298,889	6.12	1,816,983	6.59
Benton Franklin Region	2,033,957	6.52	3,026,649	7.25

Notes: VMT = vehicle miles traveled

[1]Annual VMT shown in 1,000s

[2]VMT based on Replica data and is representative of residential VMT for those living in the jurisdiction.

[3]VMT based on BFCOG travel demand model for 2045 except for areas outside the model, which were determined by applying the 2022 to 2045 population growth rate to the base 2022 VMT.

[4] VMT per capita (in 1,000s) represents the VMT for cars (i.e., light duty and passenger vehicles) divided by the population shown in **Figure C-94**.

Figure C-114 shows that VMT increases as the region grows between 2022 and 2045. Per capita VMT is forecasted to increase by 11% for the region without the implementation of reduction strategies. Reviewing VMT per capita the five jurisdictions that are the focus of this study shows:

- Benton County. No change is predicted between 2022 and 2045 for the unincorporated county due to the limited growth assumed. The overall county VMT per capita is predicted to increase 8% by 2045 due to growth in jobs and housing.
- Kennewick. Increase of 14% is predicted by 2045 due to the growth in jobs and housing resulting in increased daily trips.

Figure C-114 shows VMT for BFT systemwide. The service area covers both Benton and Franklin Counties. BFT does have some electric buses in their fleet such that some of the VMT can be attributed to low emissions vehicles.

Figure C-114. Ben Franklin Transit Systemwide Annual VMT (in 1,000s)[1]

Transit Service Type	Year 2022[2]	Year 2045[3]
Bus	3,456	5,201
Demand Response (Small buses)	2,677	4,029
Vanpool (Passenger vans for 6 to 5 people)	1,495	2,250
Total	7,628	11,480

Notes: VMT = vehicle miles traveled

[1]Annual VMT shown in 1,000s

[2]VMT provided by Ben Franklin Transit.

[3]VMT determined by applying 2045 projected growth from the BFCOG travel demand model.

Target

WSDOT's Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Targets Final Report (June 2023) recommends local per capita VMT targets be set at the regional scale by Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) based on what is feasible and likely to occur over the timeframe of long-range plans.

The VMT per capita for each jurisdiction is provided for information purposes. The tools used to determine VMT by jurisdiction are based on regional level data and lack detail at the county and city level. It is recommended that the VMT targets be set at the regional level and that the jurisdictions implement strategies and policies to contribute to the overall regional VMT target. The VMT target for the region will be determined based on coordination with agency staff and reduction strategies implemented through goals and policies in the specific jurisdiction Climate Element.

Reduction strategies

The intent of this section is to provide the full range of potential VMT strategies that may be considered for implementation in the Tri-Cities Region now or in the future. This section should be considered a resource that jurisdictions can use to determine new/additional strategies to implement if VMT targets are not achieved.

The reduction strategies are intended to reduce per capita VMT and are identified specifically for the region based on the travel market assessment and the VMT analysis. The consideration of reduction strategies will help inform goals and policies for the jurisdictions as well as the VMT target.

Updates to the comprehensive plans as part of the Climate Elements should include goals and policies that reduce VMT and overall greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (where VMT contributes to GHG). Overall VMT reduction strategies and associated policies will be most effective when public works and planning efforts are coordinated. Goals and policies in transportation, land use and housing elements should be consistent and complementary. comprehensive plans and subareas plans should be amended to facilitate reduction strategy implementation. Specifics related to goals and policies are provided in a separate technical analysis on goals and policies.

The matrix (**Figure C-115**) below summarizes potential VMT reduction strategies and policy considerations recommended for the Tri-Cities region, many of which are applicable to the City of Kennewick.

Figure C-115. Potential Tri-Cities Region VMT Reduction Strategies

Strategy	Description	Policy Consideration
Increase Residential Density	Increased densities affect the distance people travel and provide greater options for the mode of travel they choose. Increasing residential density results in shorter and fewer trips by single-occupancy vehicles.	Prioritize infill development. A jurisdiction could encourage infill by including incentives such as reduction of impact fees or reduction of permitting fees. Counties and cities can adjust impact fees and impact fee programs through comprehensive plans. Increase or remove density limits in areas well-served by transit and other services within the urban growth area or increase residential densities near (within 600 feet) high-use transit stations and centers. This measure refers to allowing middle housing types or multifamily developments in areas that may currently not be zoned for those uses. This policy is consistent with current requirements of middle housing State legislation. Establish form-based codes where appropriate to better integrate higher-density development. Form-based codes can and should be intentionally used to facilitate greater density in urban areas (including UGAs) and to allow a mix of uses. Allow middle housing types, such as duplexes, triplexes, and ADUs, on all residential lots. This policy is consistent with current requirements of middle housing State legislation. Amend SEPA exemptions to allow residential infill development projects outright. SEPA exemptions may also be necessary for corresponding transportation projects. Implement complimentary, mixed land uses versus traditional zoning, such as locating business districts, parks, and schools in neighborhoods to promote cycling and walking and reduce driving. Creating walkable,

		accessible communities with mixed-use developments. Establish minimum residential densities within urban growth areas. Allow or encourage micro-housing units. Such compact housing units—typically about 250-400 square feet and located in urban, multistory buildings—will help reduce air and water pollution associated with building energy use and transportation. Micro-housing units support housing supply, diversity, and affordability. Plan for and invest in capital facilities to accommodate infill development.
Increase Job Density	Increased densities affect the distance people travel and provide greater options for the mode of travel they choose. Increasing job density results in shorter and fewer drive alone trips.	Similar policies as increasing residential density but also considering: Facilitate the siting of complimentary destinations such as commercial-employment centers, schools or education centers, and residential developments. Jurisdictions should use zoning to co-locate complimentary developments that help reduce VMT and encourage transit ridership.
Provide Transit-Oriented Development	This measure would reduce project VMT in areas that have easy access to public transit, ideally in a location with a mix of uses, including housing, retail, offices, and community facilities. Transit-oriented development (TOD) site residents, employees, and visitors would have easy access to high-quality public transit, thereby encouraging transit ridership and reducing VMT.	Prioritize permitting for transit-oriented development proposals.Transit-supportive residential densities provide shorter trips and increase transit and nonmotorized usage. In some locations, such as freeway transit stations, the location of land uses may be best when tangential to the station and not concentrated within 600 feet.See also policies to increase residential density.
Integrate Affordable and Below Market Rate Housing	This measure requires below market rate (BMR) housing. BMR housing provides greater opportunities for lower income families to live closer to job centers and achieve a job to housing balance near transit. BMR also addresses the limited availability of affordable housing that might force residents to live far away from jobs or school, requiring longer commutes.	Prioritize integrating affordable and BMR housing with project proposals and set incentives for these housing types. See also policies to increase residential density.
Implement Commute Trip Reduction and Demand Management Programs	This measure involves implementing a commute trip reduction (CTR) and transportation demand management (TDM) program with employers. CTR programs discourage drive alone trips and encourage alternative modes of transportation such as carpooling, taking transit, walking, and biking.	Commute trip reduction (CTR) programs and strategies are required for large employers (100+ employees). These programs could be scaled to fit smaller businesses to allow for voluntary participation. The jurisdiction would facilitate participation in the employer commute trip reduction program and expand the program beyond large employers. Employers would voluntarily provide workers with flexible work schedules and guaranteed rides home. CTR should be an integral part of expanding existing demand management programs. Encourage major employers to establish satellite offices, as well as remote and telework programs.

Reduce Parking Requirements	This measure will reduce the total parking supply required for a project. Limiting the amount of parking available creates scarcity and adds additional time and inconvenience to trips made by private auto; therefore, disincentivizing driving as a mode of travel. Reducing the convenience of driving results in a shift to other modes and decreased VMT. Evidence of the effects of reduced parking supply is strongest for residential developments. This measure is not effective when there is unrestricted street parking or other off-site parking available.	Limit parking spaces near transit-oriented development to encourage use of transit and decrease single-occupancy vehicle travel. This policy is consistent with what is already required by State legislation. Local government response to House Bill 1923 (laws of 2019) may provide an example of how to implement this measure. House Bill 1923 amended RCW 36.70A.620 to limit the amount of parking local governments planning under RCW 36.70A.040 may require for low-income, senior, disabled, and market-rate housing units located near high-quality transit service. Eliminate parking minimum requirements, and establish parking maximums. This policy, which could be implemented in a development code, could help reduce impervious surfaces that exacerbate stormwater runoff and the urban heat island effect. This policy also could encourage active transportation (walking, biking, riding transit) alternatives to driving automobiles; this reduces emissions, improves community health, and supports other co-benefits. Reduce parking requirements where there are multimodal options available.
Improve Street Connectivity & Design	This measure accounts for the VMT reduction achieved by a project that is designed with a higher density of vehicle intersections compared to the average intersection density in the U.S. Increased vehicle intersection density is a proxy for street connectivity improvements, which help facilitate a greater number of shorter trips.	Update street network plans to consider high density network of intersections.
Provide Pedestrian Network Improvements	This measure will increase the sidewalk and other pedestrian facility coverage to improve pedestrian access. Providing sidewalks and an enhanced pedestrian network encourages people to walk instead of drive.	Develop mode-specific plans, such as bicycle and pedestrian plans, adopt complete streets policies and ordinances, and a multimodal transportation concurrency program. Transportation and multimodal improvement considerations should be part of the permitting process beyond housing and road impact fee assessments. Implementation of this policy could include a strategy to reduce pedestrian or bicycle and car collisions, beginning with overburdened communities with the highest rate of injury or death. Key to the success of this policy is to establish a safe and welcoming environment that includes lighting, visibility, landscaping, and active uses. Address active transportation and other multimodal types of transportation options in concurrency programs—both in assessment and

		mitigation. Integrate "Complete Streets" principles into roadway designs of residential developments. Complete Streets are roadways that are designed and operated to provide safe, accessible, and healthy travel for all users of our roadway system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, and motorists. A complete street may include sidewalks, bike lanes (or wide paved shoulders), special bus lanes, comfortable and accessible public transportation stops, frequent and safe crosswalks, median islands, accessible pedestrian signals, curb extensions, narrower travel lanes, roundabouts, or related structures.
Expand Bike Network	This measure will increase the length of a city bike network. A bicycle network is an interconnected system of bike lanes, bike paths, and bike routes. Providing bicycle infrastructure with markings and signage on appropriately sized roads with vehicle traffic traveling at safe speeds helps to improve biking conditions (e.g., safety and convenience). In addition, expanded bike networks can increase access to and from transit hubs, which expands the "catchment area" of the transit stop or station and increases ridership. This encourages a mode shift from vehicles to bicycles resulting in reduced VMT for the city and may also reduce maintenance and infrastructure cost for the street network because more bikes and less auto travel reduces the wear and tear on the street network.	See policies for pedestrian network improvements.
Mobility Center/Hub	Mobility hubs are centralized locations where people can access multiple transportation modes (e.g., bike share, transit, and micromobility devices). Mobility hubs need to be adapted to specific contexts and settings both in terms of the type of components and their scale. For example, a city center rail hub may offer more space to public transport and bike share bikes whereas a hub in a market town center or transport corridor interchange may focus on providing a smaller number of vehicles but a greater choice of flexible travel options between housing and jobs. Mobility hubs should be planned as network-integrated with public transport and other active transportation components as a key part of planning strategies for optimal impacts. The development of mobility hubs may be an incremental upgrade of sites as opportunities arise such as new or refurbishment of middle and multifamily housing plus commercial development; upgrade of rail, trolley, bus, or rapid-	Establish micromobility centers wherever plausible (e.g., hubs for shared bikes and scooters). Prioritize, develop, and maintain mobility hubs in transportation-efficient locations, especially in overburdened communities experiencing a scarcity of transportation alternatives.

	bus route stops; utility service work; introduction of electric vehicle infrastructure.	
Dedicate Land for Bike Trails	This measure requires projects to provide for, contribute to, or dedicate land for the provision of off-site bicycle trails linking the project to designated bicycle commuting routes in accordance with an adopted citywide or countywide bikeway plan. Existing desire paths can make good locations, as it represents a community-identified transportation need.	Develop non-motorized and Park plans. Require frontage and multimodal connectivity improvements consistent with the adopted non-motorized plan.
Extend Transit Network Coverage or Hours	This measure will expand the local transit network by either adding or modifying existing transit services or extending the operation hours to enhance the service near the project site. Starting services earlier in the morning and/or extending services to late-night hours can accommodate the commuting times of alternative-shift workers. This will encourage the use of transit and therefore reduce VMT and associated GHG emissions.	Work with Benton Franklin Transit to expand public transit through additional routes, frequency of stops, and other mechanisms as identified by the community needs. Invest in ensuring 30-minute headways throughout all bus routes. This measure could also include developing new transit routes and expanding the transit service. Implement "last-mile" strategies (shuttles, ridesharing, bike-sharing), beginning with frontline communities, people with physical impairments, children, and elderly transit riders.
Improve Transit Access, Safety, and Comfort	This measure requires improving transit access and safety through sidewalk/crosswalk safety enhancements, bus shelter improvements, improved lighting, and other features. Work with the community to determine barriers to use, most desired improvements, and other access challenges.	Ensure public transit stops and stations are located at or near (e.g., within 600 ft.) dense commercial and employment areas. Successful implementation of this measure should be coordinated with subarea or corridor planning to ensure that housing is near these transit facilities.
Implement Transit-Supportive Roadway Treatments	This measure will implement transit-supportive treatments on the transit routes serving the plan/community. Transit-supportive treatments incorporate a mix of roadway infrastructure improvements and/or traffic signal modifications to improve transit travel times and reliability. This results in a mode shift from single occupancy vehicles to transit, which reduces VMT.	Consider transit needs and improvements as part of implementing the Transportation Improvement Program and development of the street system plan.Work with transit agency on potential route locations.
Locate Project in Area with High Destination Accessibility	The measure requires development in an area with high accessibility to destinations. Destination accessibility is measured in terms of the number of jobs or other attractions (e.g., schools, supermarkets, and health care services) that are reachable within a given travel time or travel distance. Accessibility tends to be highest at central locations and lowest at peripheral ones. When destinations are nearby, the travel time between them is less, thus increasing the potential for people to walk and bike to those	Ensure ADA accessible design is considered when permitting development projects. See also policies for increasing residential and job density.

	destinations and, therefore, reducing the vehicle miles traveled (VMT). As an implementation consideration, projects should consider accessibility by people of all functional abilities and incorporate design principles such as Universal Design.	
Improve Destination Accessibility in Underserved Areas	This measure accounts for the VMT reduction that would be achieved by constructing job centers or other attractions (e.g., schools, supermarkets, and health care services) for residents in underserved areas (e.g., food deserts). When destinations are nearby, the travel time between them is less, thus increasing the potential for people to walk and bike to those destinations, reducing VMT and associated GHG emissions. As an implementation consideration, projects should consider accessibility by people of all functional abilities and incorporate design principles such as Universal Design	Consider underserved areas in developing the land use plan. See also policies for increasing residential and job density.
Provide Traffic Calming Measures	This measure requires projects to include pedestrian/bicycle safety and traffic calming measures above jurisdictional requirements. Roadways should also be designed to reduce motor vehicle speeds and encourage pedestrian and bicycle trips with traffic calming features. Traffic calming features may include marked crosswalks, count-down signal timers, curb extensions, speed tables, raised crosswalks, raised intersections, median islands, tight corner radii, roundabouts or mini-circles, on-street parking, planter strips with street trees, chicanes/chokers, and others. Providing traffic calming measures encourages people to walk or bike instead of using a vehicle. This mode shift will result in a decrease in vehicle miles traveled.	Consider developing a traffic calming program.
Install Park-and-Ride Lots	This measure requires projects to install park-and-ride lots near transit stops and high occupancy vehicle lanes. Park-and-ride lots also facilitate car- and vanpooling. Parking lots can also incorporate cool pavements, tree canopy, or solar photovoltaic shade canopies to reduce the urban heat island effect as well as evaporative emissions from parked vehicles and dedicated electric vehicle parking spots and/or charging infrastructure.	Work to identify potential park and ride locations. Coordinate with transit agency on potential locations. When implementing park and ride projects ensure vehicle charging infrastructure is provided consistent with Washington State requirements.
Provide Community-Based Travel Planning	This measure will target residences in the plan/community with community-based travel planning (CBTP). CBTP is a residential based approach to outreach that provides households with customized information, incentives, and support to encourage the use of transportation alternatives in place of single occupancy vehicles, thereby reducing household VMT.	Explore the feasibility of community-based travel planning including costs for the city or county to implement commute planning for the community.

Implement Market Price Public Parking (On-Street)	This measure will price on-street parking, with a focus on parking near downtown, employment centers, and retail centers. Increasing the cost of parking increases the total cost of driving to a location, incentivizing shifts to other modes and thus decreasing total VMT to and from the priced areas.	Use demand-based methods to reflect the actual cost of existing parking. Demand-based methods could include demand-based pricing and dynamic processing. This measure could assist with alleviating parking shortages by encouraging other modes of travel to their destination if parking costs reflect the premium value. Alternatives to vehicle travel must be provided to be successful. Prioritize making it easier to not need a car by designing walkable and accessible neighborhoods and providing affordable public transportation.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Executive Summary

Washington State House Bill (HB) 1181, passed in 2023, requires cities and counties to add climate elements to their comprehensive plans. To support this effort, this report analyzes greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the City of Kennewick. This report also projects future emissions and models strategies to reduce GHG emissions and strengthen climate resilience. This GHG analysis supports local jurisdictions' efforts to integrate climate action and resilience into long term planning.

Communitywide GHG Emissions Inventory

The Kennewick communitywide GHG emissions inventory identifies and quantifies GHG emissions from residents, businesses, and institutions within each jurisdiction's geographic boundary for the 2022 calendar year. The inventory includes a variety of emissions sources recommended by established protocols and relevant to local governments, including building energy consumption (electricity and natural gas), industrial processes, on-road and off-road transportation, and solid waste. The inventories serve as a baseline to support target setting, policy development, and future progress tracking.

Results from the GHG emissions inventory suggest the largest sources of emissions from Tri-Cities jurisdictions in 2022 were transportation and building energy use (**Figure C-116**). For most jurisdictions, on-road passenger vehicles were the largest source of emissions, followed by industrial natural gas consumption.

GHG Targets & Emissions Forecast

The Washington State Department of Commerce (Commerce) *Intermediate Planning Guidance for Climate Elements* includes the following requirements and recommendations related to target setting and progress tracking and reporting:[2]

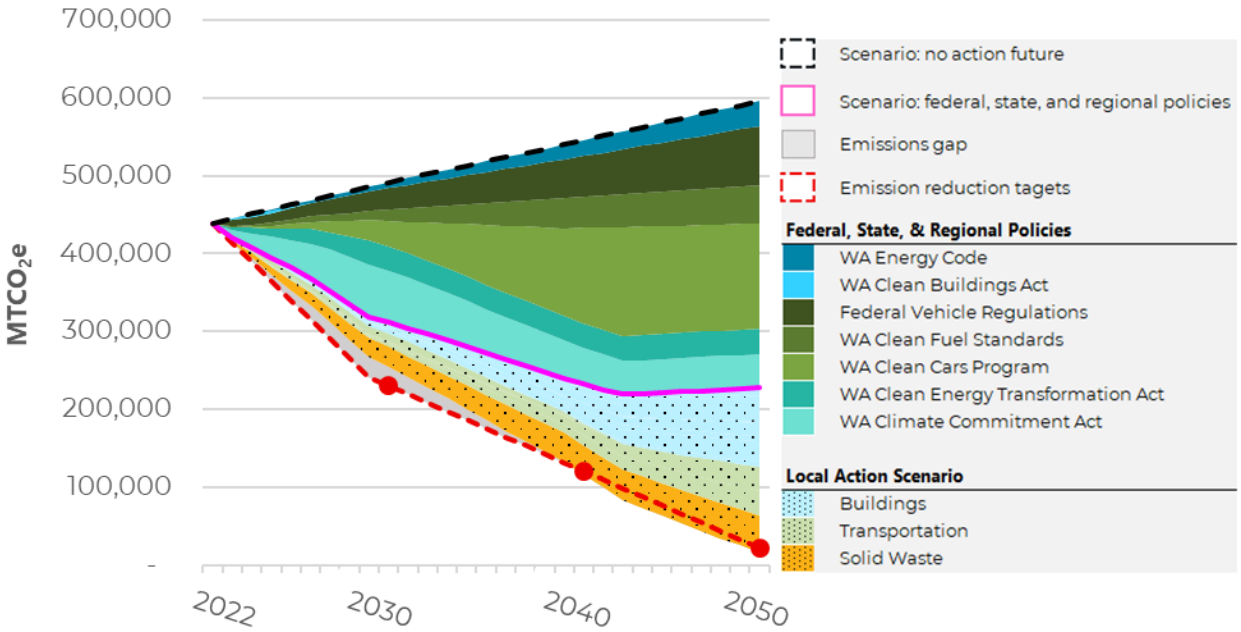
- The GMA requires cities, counties, and Commerce to report progress every five years toward implementing comprehensive plan commitments, including those in the climate element.
- Jurisdictions will need to set incremental targets toward achieving net zero emissions in 2050, consistent with Washington's statewide target.
- Reports to Commerce should show jurisdiction progress implementing policies to reduce emissions and per capita VMT to achieve local goals and targets.

[2] https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/climate-planning/

To inform the region's local GHG emission reduction targets and policies, results from the 2022 communitywide GHG inventory were used to forecast future emissions and emission reduction scenarios for Kennewick. Specifically, the analysis forecasted communitywide GHG emissions to 2050 under three scenarios:[3]

- No Action: Without federal, state, or local climate action, Kennewick's emissions will grow 36% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as depicted by the dotted black line in **Figure C-116**
- State/Federal Policy: When considering the anticipated impacts of federal, state, and regional policies, communitywide emissions will decrease 48% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as depicted by the pink line in **Figure C-116**
- Local Action: With the implementation of additional local action strategies, communitywide emissions could be reduced by an estimated 96% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as shown by the Local Action scenario reductions in **Figure C-116**

Figure C-116. Kennewick forecasted GHG emissions and reductions under three scenarios ($MTCO_2e$).



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025

Analysis of current and projected GHG emissions provides insight into local policy options for reducing GHG emissions in Kennewick. As presented in the Local Action scenario, key GHG emission reduction strategies include:

[3] The forecast scenarios shown in this report are shown as examples of potential emission reduction pathways and may not reflect the scenarios represented in the Tri-Cities jurisdictions' Climate Element or associated analyses.

- In Kennewick, on-road passenger vehicles were the largest source of 2022 communitywide emissions (38% of total emissions), followed by commercial natural gas use (15% of total emissions) and on-road freight and service vehicles (14%). The next largest contributors to 2022 emissions were residential natural gas (9%), and solid waste generation and disposal (9%). **Figure C-119** shows the breakdown of communitywide GHG emissions by source.
- Reducing energy consumption in new and existing residential, commercial, and industrial buildings by supporting clean building energy sources, energy efficient building design, and retrofits. Local actions for decarbonization and energy efficiency would reduce Benton-Franklin Region's buildings emissions, which made up 39% of 2022 communitywide emissions.
- Reducing passenger vehicle travel within the Benton-Franklin Region, including through changes to land use, transportation infrastructure (transit, walking, bicycling), and commuting options/modes. A reduction in passenger VMT would reduce Benton-Franklin Region's communitywide on-road emissions from passenger vehicles, which made up 36% of 2022 emissions.
- Facilitating the transition to electric vehicles through expansion of reliable EV charging infrastructure and public education on options and available incentives/rebates. Local action to support transitioning passenger and freight vehicles to electric would reduce Benton-Franklin Region's passenger and freight vehicle on-road emissions, which made up 50% of 2022 communitywide emissions.

Introduction

Washington State signed House Bill (HB) 1181 into law in 2023, requiring cities and counties to incorporate a Climate Element into local Comprehensive Plans to build resilience and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. An analysis of current and future GHG emissions is a critical step in meeting these requirements. Greenhouse gas inventories and related analyses help jurisdictions understand emissions trends and identify effective reduction strategies.

This Tri-Cities Greenhouse Gas Emissions Analysis report summarizes communitywide GHG emissions for the following Tri-Cities jurisdictions: Benton-Franklin Region (Benton and Franklin Counties), Benton County, Kennewick, Richland, West Richland, and Pasco. County-level data includes both incorporated and unincorporated areas within each county's boundary.

This report also presents projected future emissions and recommended reduction strategies to support the development of Climate Elements for local comprehensive plan updates.

Methodology

The GHG analysis was guided by the following principles:

- Replicability and transparency – to enable future updates and ensure analytical processes are clearly documented.
- Consistency – across counties and cities within the Tri-Cities region to allow for regional comparisons and aggregation.
- Accuracy – through inclusion of all relevant sectors, use of locally specific data where available, and alignment with industry best practices.

Communitywide emissions were quantified for the 2022 calendar year to align with Washington State Department of Commerce ("Commerce") guidance and to remain consistent with recent inventories conducted by Commerce for Benton and Franklin counties.[4]

All analyses were conducted using Microsoft Excel.

[4] The Commerce-led GHG inventories for Benton and Franklin Counties includes a broader range of emissions sources that are excluded from this Tri-Cities inventory due to data limitations and/or lack of city-level jurisdictional control.

GHG Emissions Inventories

The Tri-Cities communitywide inventories were performed using guidance from ICLEI's U.S. Community Protocol for Accounting and Reporting of GHG Emissions (USCP) and The Greenhouse Gas Protocol's Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories (GPC). These protocols represent the industry standards for quantifying GHG emissions from community activities.[5, 6]

Emissions Sources

The GHG emissions analyses included a variety of emissions sources recommended by established protocols and relevant to local governments, including building energy use (electricity and natural gas), industrial processes, on-road and off-road transportation, and solid waste (see **Figure C-117**). Sources excluded from the inventory—due to data limitations, relatively minor contributions, or lack of jurisdictional control—include other building fuels, air travel, rail transport, wastewater treatment, agriculture, tree loss, and refrigerant leakage.

Figure C-117. Communitywide GHG analysis emissions sources.

Sector	Included Sources	Excluded Sources[7]
Buildings	Electricity Natural gas Industrial processes	Other fuels
Transportation & Mobile Sources	On-road vehicles Public transit Off-road equipment	Aviation Marine & rail
Solid Waste	Landfilled waste Compost	Wastewater
Other		Agriculture Tree Loss Refrigerants

While emissions from land use, refrigerants, air travel, and other sources were not included in these GHG emissions analyses, the Tri-Cities jurisdictions can still address these sources through Comprehensive Plan policies. Such policies can generate important co-benefits, including cleaner air and water, enhanced climate resilience, and economic opportunities, such as strengthening local food systems.

More detailed information regarding the GHG analysis methodologies and data considerations are provided in Detailed Methodology.

GHG Emissions Forecast & Scenario Analysis

The communitywide GHG emissions forecast and scenario analysis estimated emissions from 2022 to 2050 under three scenarios:

- No Action: Assumes no additional action to reduce GHG emissions.

5 Greenhouse Gas Protocols | ICLEI https://icleiusa.org/ghg-protocols/
6 Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories | GHG Protocol https://ghgprotocol.org/sites/default/files/standards/GPC_Full_MASTER_RW_v7.pdf
7 These excluded sources are included in the Commerce GHG inventory for Benton and Franklin counties.

- State/Federal Policy: Reflects expected emissions reductions from existing federal, state, and regional policies.
- Additional Local Action: Identifies the level of local action needed to meet GHG emission reduction targets.

These analyses were conducted using a user-friendly Microsoft Excel-based tool that allows for custom inputs and real-time scenario planning to support the development of effective local GHG emission reduction policies. Detailed assumptions for the State/Federal Policy scenario are provided in Emissions Forecast & Scenario Analysis Methodology.

Policy Implications

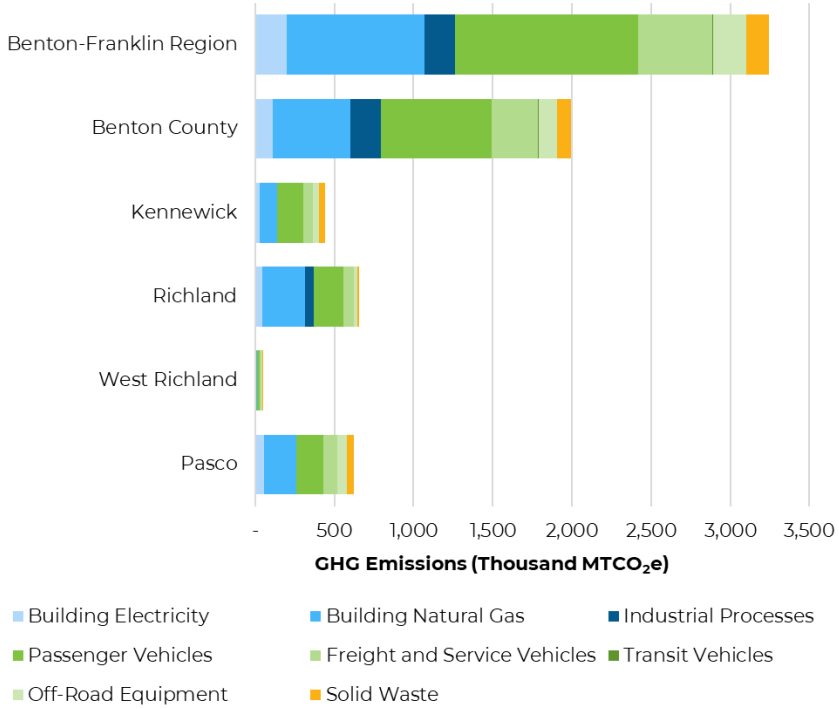
Outputs from the Tri-Cities GHG emissions inventories, forecast, and scenario analysis informed the development of jurisdiction-specific and region-wide policy options. These policies were shaped through consultation with City, County, and BFCOG staff and aim to address the most significant sources of current and future GHG emissions.

GHG Emissions Inventory

All Tri-Cities Jurisdictions

According to this 2022 GHG emissions inventory, the largest sources of emissions in the Tri-Cities jurisdictions were transportation and building energy use. For most jurisdictions, on-road passenger vehicles were the largest source of emissions, followed by industrial natural gas consumption. **Figure C-118** and **Figure C-119** summarize 2022 communitywide emissions across all Tri-Cities jurisdictions.

Figure C-118. Total communitywide GHG emissions across Tri-Cities jurisdictions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Figure C-119. Communitywide GHG emissions in Kennewick ($MTCO_2e$).

Sector	Benton-Franklin Region	Benton County	Kennewick
Buildings	1,260,626	792,037	139,568
Electricity	199,305	111,430	28,304

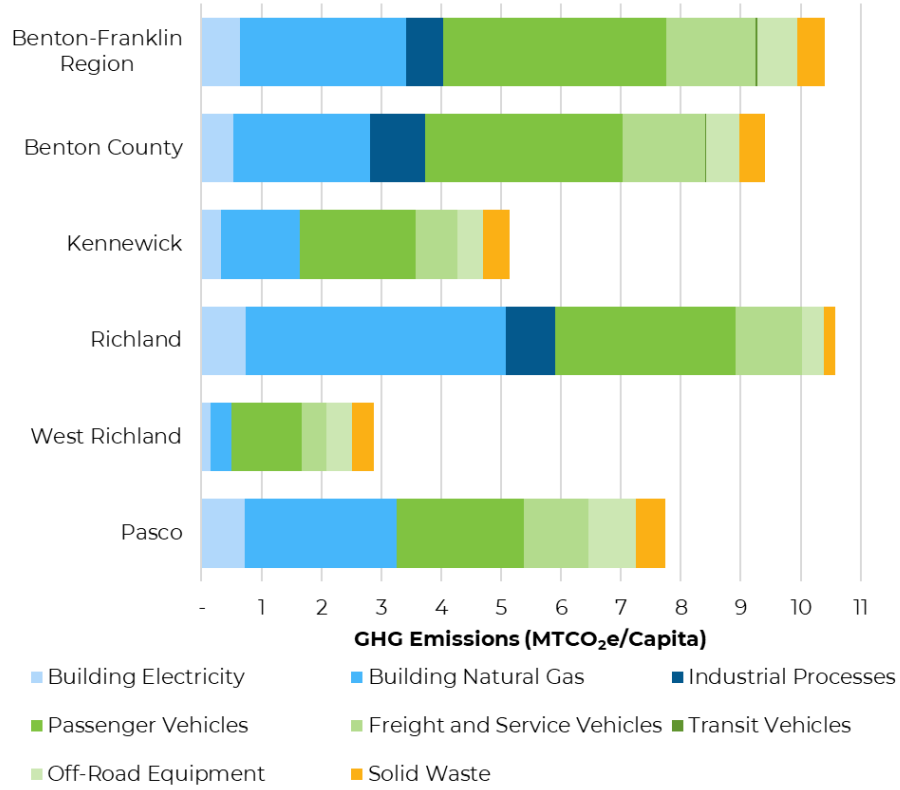
Residential	82,916	48,163	16,382
Commercial	75,055	38,986	11,913
Industrial	41,334	24,282	9
Natural Gas	868,142	487,427	111,264
Residential	139,799	85,233	37,980
Commercial	208,949	142,900	63,635
Industrial	519,394	259,294	9,650
Industrial Processes	193,180	193,180	-
Transportation	1,839,897	1,113,850	261,371
On-Road Vehicles	1,634,118	996,673	225,423
Passenger Vehicles	1,160,577	699,702	164,832
Freight Vehicles	463,321	291,860	60,592
Transit Vehicles	10,221	5,110	-
Off-Road Equipment	205,779	117,177	35,947
Solid Waste	146,401	90,894	37,661
Landfill	146,395	90,888	37,657
Compost	5	5	4
Total Emissions	3,246,924	1,996,781	438,600

Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Per-capita GHG emissions refer to the average GHG emissions produced per resident within a jurisdiction. Per-capita emissions help compare the environmental impact of communities regardless of their total size.

When viewed on a per-capita basis (**Figure C-120** and **Figure C-121**), West Richland has the lowest emissions, due to relatively low building natural gas and electricity use and on-road vehicle emissions. Of the cities in this analysis, Richland has the highest per-capita emissions, driven by higher building natural gas use and on-road vehicle emissions.

Figure C-120. Per-capita communitywide GHG emissions across Tri-Cities jurisdictions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Figure C-121. Per-capita communitywide GHG emissions across Tri-Cities jurisdictions ($MTCO_2e$/capita).

Sector	Benton-Franklin Region	Benton County	Kennewick
Buildings	4.04	3.73	1.64
Electricity	0.64	0.52	0.33

Residential	0.27	0.23	0.19
Commercial	0.24	0.18	0.14
Industrial	0.13	0.11	<0.01
Natural Gas	2.78	2.30	1.30
Residential	0.45	0.40	0.45
Commercial	0.67	0.67	0.75
Industrial	1.66	1.22	0.11
Industrial Processes	0.62	0.91	-
Transportation	5.90	5.25	3.06
On-Road Vehicles	5.24	4.69	2.64
Passenger Vehicles	3.72	3.30	1.93
Freight Vehicles	1.48	1.37	0.71
Transit Vehicles	0.03	0.02	-
Off-Road Equipment	0.66	0.55	0.42
Solid Waste	0.47	0.43	0.44
Landfill	0.47	0.43	0.44
Compost	<0.01	<0.01	<0.01
Total Emissions	10.41	9.41	5.14
Population	312,050	212,300	85,320

Electricity emission factors vary by utility, depending on the mix of energy sources used to generate electricity (e.g., hydropower, nuclear). Utilities in the Tri-Cities region source around 70% of their electricity from hydropower.[8,9,10,11,12,13] **Figure C-122** identifies the electricity and natural gas providers for each jurisdiction and ***Includes** both regular and green program electricity

Figure C-123 compares emission factors across electric utilities.

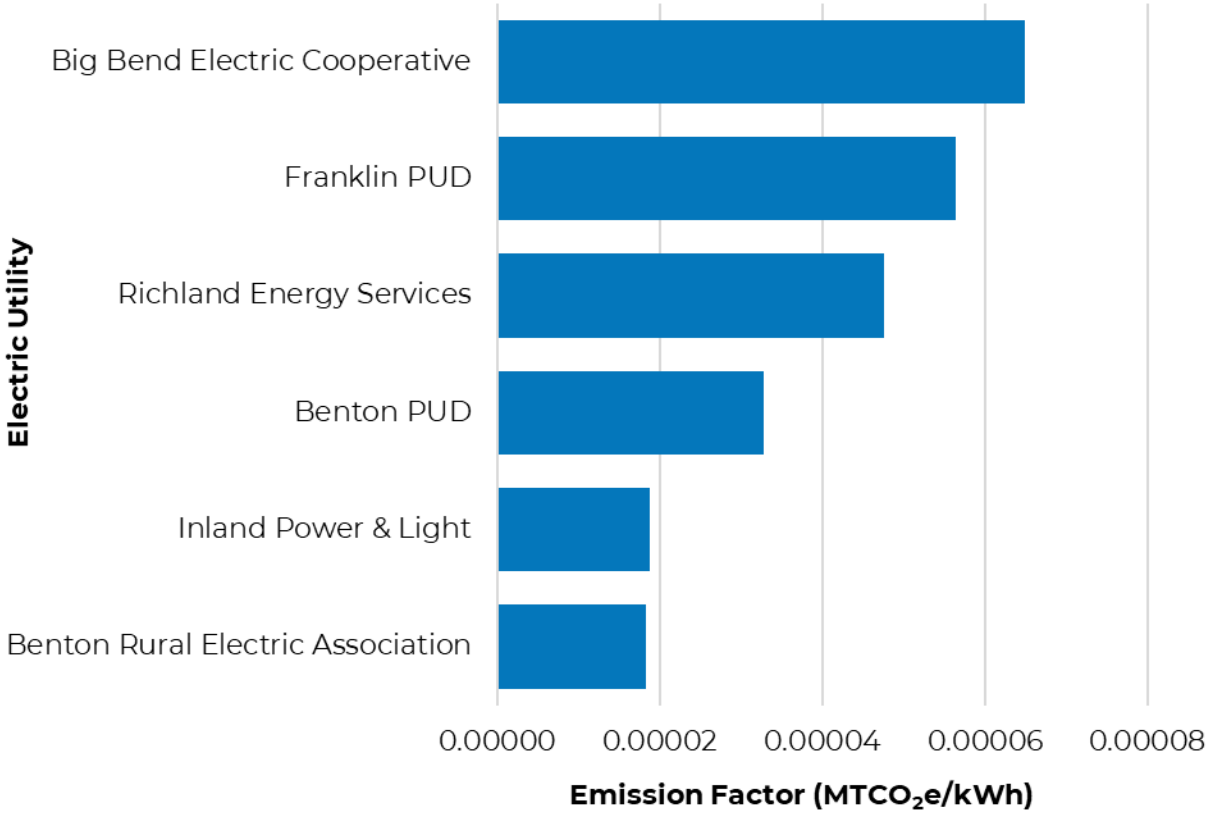
Figure C-122. Electricity and natural gas utilities, by jurisdiction.

Jurisdiction	Electricity Utilities	Natural Gas Utility
Kennewick	Benton PUD*	Cascade Natural Gas
Benton County	Benton PUD* Richland Energy Services Benton Rural Electric Association*	Cascade Natural Gas
Benton-Franklin Region	Benton Public Utility District (PUD)* Franklin PUD Richland Energy Services Benton Rural Electric Association* Big Bend Electric Cooperative Inland Power & Light	Cascade Natural Gas

*Includes both regular and green program electricity

8 Benton PUD Energy Fuel Mix | Benton PUD https://www.bentonpud.org/about-benton-pud/energy-fuel-mix
9 Franklin PUD Energy Fuel Mix | Franklin PUD https://www.franklinpud.com/rates-power-services/fuel-mix/
10 Richland Energy Services Energy Fuel Mix | Richland Energy Services https://www.ci.richland.wa.us/departments/energy-services/community-news/fuel-mix-and-carbon-emissions
11 Benton Rural Electric Association Energy Fuel Mix | Benton Rural Electric Association https://www.bentonrea.org/fast-facts
12 Inland Power & Light Energy Fuel Mix | Inland Power & Light https://www.inlandpower.com/fuel-mix
13 Big Bend Electric Cooperative Energy Fuel Mix | Big Bend Electric Cooperative https://www.bbec.org/about-bbec/fuel-mix/

Figure C-123. GHG emission factors for regional electricity providers.



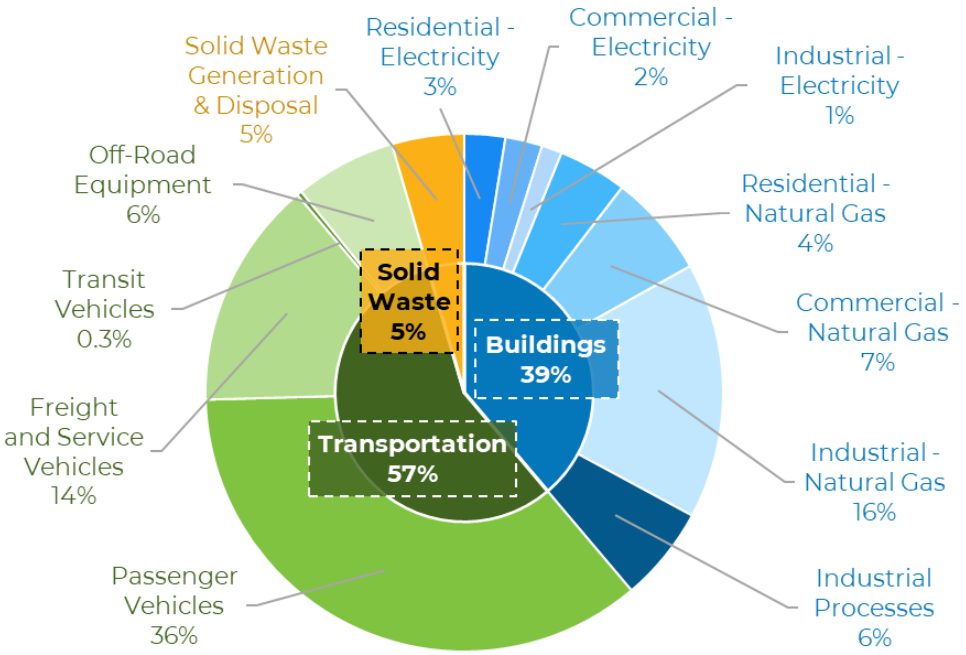
Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Benton-Franklin Region

In this report, the "Benton-Franklin Region" includes both Benton County and Franklin County, including the cities and unincorporated areas within those counties. Findings from this GHG emission inventory suggest that the Benton-Franklin Region's residents, businesses, and visitors generated an estimated 3,246,924 $MTCO_2e$ in 2022—or approximately 10.41 $MTCO_2e$ per capita (**Figure C-119**).

In the Benton-Franklin region, on-road passenger vehicles were the largest source of 2022 communitywide emissions (36% of total emissions), followed by industrial natural gas (16% of total emissions). The next largest contributors to 2022 emissions were on-road freight and service vehicles (14%), commercial natural gas (6%), and off-road equipment (6%). **Figure C-124** shows the breakdown of communitywide GHG emissions by source.

Figure C-124. Benton-Franklin Region communitywide GHG emissions summary.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

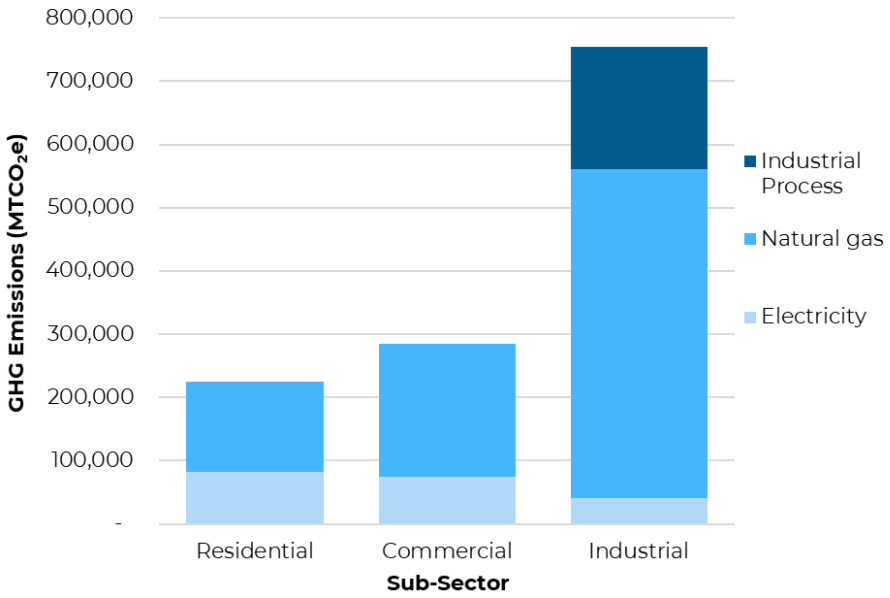
Buildings



The buildings sector includes emissions from electricity and natural gas consumption and industrial processes within residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

In 2022, the Benton-Franklin Region generated an estimated 1,260,626 $MTCO_2e$ from buildings, accounting for approximately 39% of total communitywide emissions. The largest source of building emissions was industrial natural gas, which accounted for 16% of total communitywide emissions within the region (**Figure C-125**).

Figure C-125. Benton-Franklin Region building GHG emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

The Benton-Franklin Region consumed electricity from Benton PUD, Franklin PUD, Richland Energy Services, Benton Rural Electric Association, Big Bend Electric Cooperative, and Inland Power & Light, as shown in ***Includes** both regular and green program electricity

Figure C-123**.** This included Green Program electricity from Benton PUD and Benton Rural Electric Association.

Electricity emission factors depend on the energy sources a utility uses to generate electricity (e.g., hydropower, wind, natural gas) and will likely continue to change as those energy sources—and related regulations—evolve over time. Refer to ***Includes** both regular and green program electricity

Figure C-123 for an emissions factor comparison across utilities in the Tri-Cities region.

Transportation



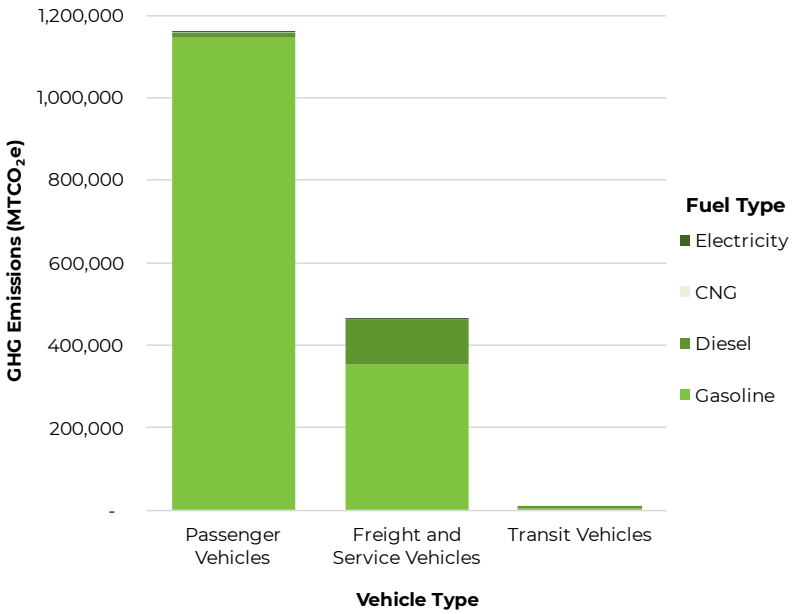
The transportation sector includes emissions from on-road vehicles (including passenger vehicles and freight and service vehicles), public transit, and off-road vehicles and equipment.

In 2022, the Benton-Franklin Region generated approximately 1,839,897 $MTCO_2e$ from transportation and other mobile sources, accounting for approximately 57% of total communitywide emissions. The largest source of transportation emissions was on-road passenger vehicles, which accounted for approximately 36% of total communitywide emissions within the region. On-road freight and service vehicles accounted for 14% of emissions in the region. Off-road vehicles and equipment accounted for 6% of emissions in the region, and transit vehicles accounted for the remaining less than 1%.

In 2022, passenger vehicles in the Benton-Franklin Region traveled an estimated total of 3.1 billion miles (9,861 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita). Freight and service vehicles traveled an estimated 352 million miles (1,127 VMT per capita). Passenger vehicles accounted for 90% of all on-road VMT in the region.

Figure C-126 provides a summary of on-road vehicle emissions by vehicle and fuel type.

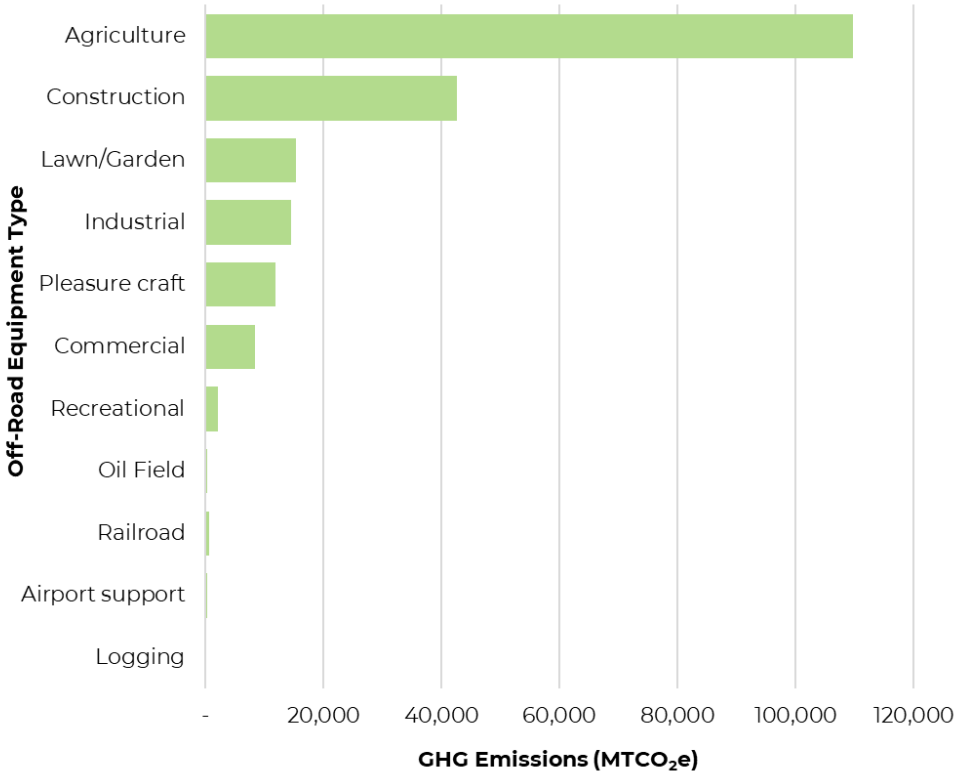
Figure C-126. Benton-Franklin Region on-road transportation emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Off-road vehicles and equipment include the following equipment types: recreational, construction, industrial, lawn/garden, agriculture, commercial, logging, airport support, oil field, pleasure craft, and railroad. Off-road vehicles and equipment produced an estimated 205,779 $MTCO_2e$, making up 6% of communitywide emissions. The largest source of off-road emissions was agricultural equipment, producing 53% of all off-road vehicles and equipment emissions (**Figure C-127**) within the region.

Figure C-127. Benton-Franklin Region off-road equipment emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Solid Waste

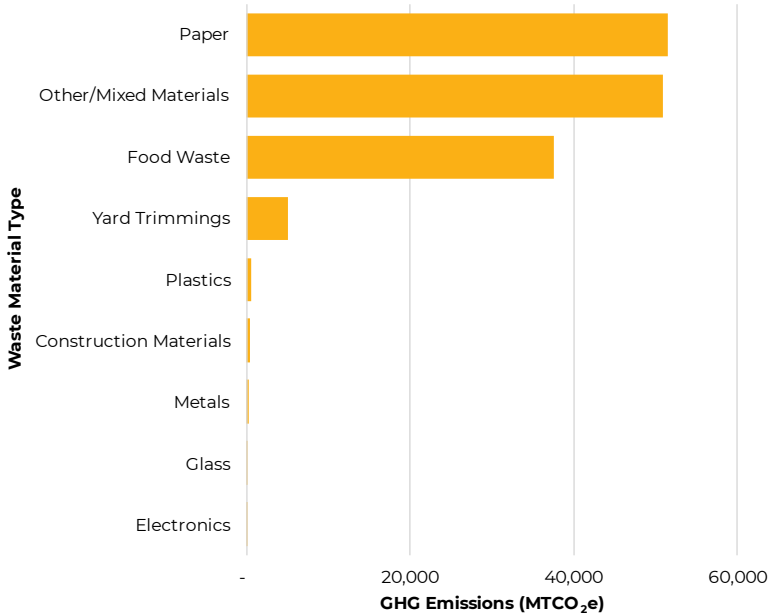


The solid waste sector includes emissions from the generation and disposal of landfilled waste and commercially processed compost (if available).

In 2022, the Benton-Franklin Region generated an estimated 146,401 $MTCO_2e$ from solid waste, accounting for approximately 5% of total communitywide emissions within the region. Landfilled waste made up almost all solid waste emissions, while compost made up less than 1%.[14] The largest identified material contributions to landfilled waste emissions were from paper, food waste, and yard trimmings (**Figure C-128**).

[14] Note that the only composting data identified for the Benton-Franklin Region compost data consisted of only was for Christmas tree composting tonnage; no other composting data was provided available for general composting at the time of this analysis. See *Approach and Data Limitations* for more information.

Figure C-128. Benton-Franklin Region landfilled solid waste emissions.



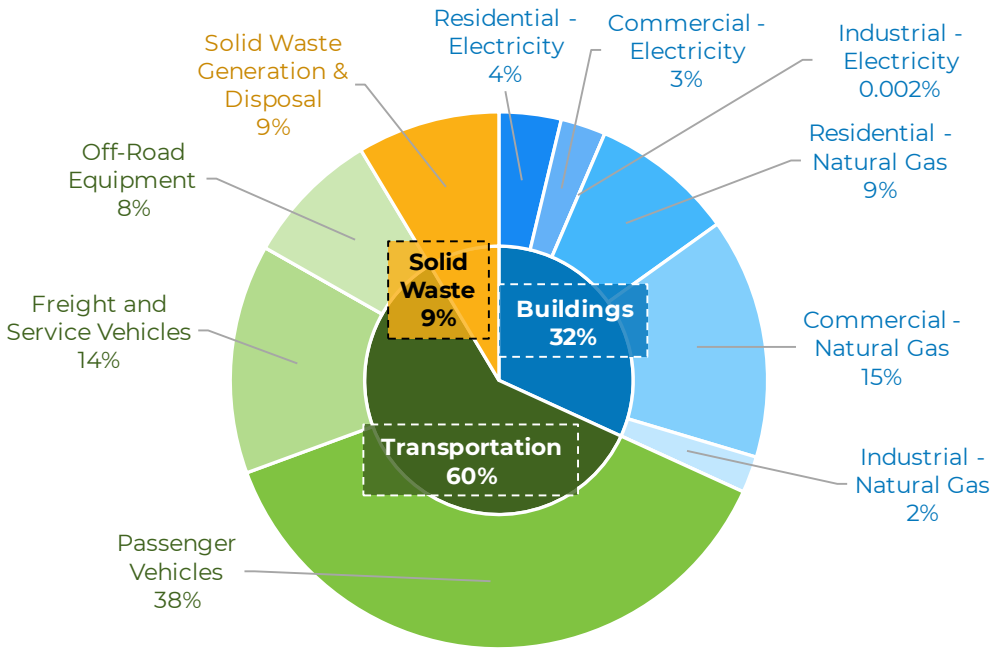
Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Kennewick

Findings from this GHG emission inventory suggest that Kennewick's residents, businesses, and visitors generated an estimated 438,600 $MTCO_2e$ in 2022—or approximately 5.1 $MTCO_2e$ per capita (**Figure C-119**).

In Kennewick, on-road passenger vehicles were the largest source of 2022 communitywide emissions (38% of total emissions), followed by commercial natural gas use (15% of total emissions) and on-road freight and service vehicles (14%). The next largest contributors to 2022 emissions were residential natural gas (9%), and solid waste generation and disposal (9%). **Figure C-129** shows the breakdown of communitywide GHG emissions by source.

Figure C-129. Kennewick communitywide GHG emissions summary.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

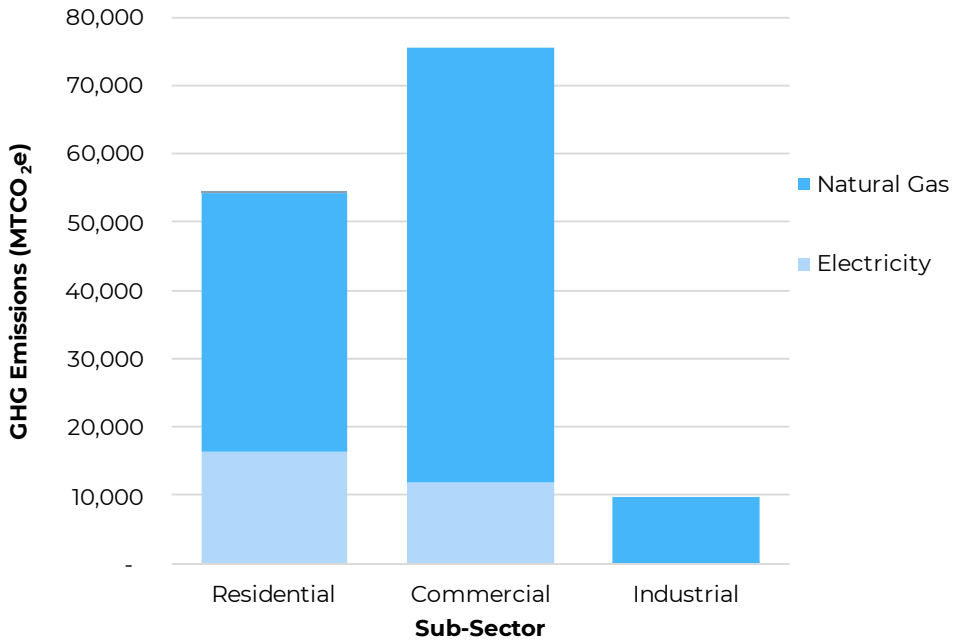
Buildings



The buildings sector includes emissions from electricity and natural gas consumption and industrial processes within residential, commercial, and industrial buildings.

In 2022, Kennewick generated an estimated 139,568 $MTCO_2e$ from buildings, accounting for approximately 32% of total communitywide emissions. The largest source of building emissions was commercial natural gas, which accounted for 15% of total communitywide emissions within the city (**Figure C-130**).

Figure C-130. Kennewick building GHG emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Kennewick consumed electricity from Benton PUD, as shown in ***Includes** both regular and green program electricity

Figure C-123. This included Green Program electricity from Benton PUD.

Electricity emission factors depend on the energy sources a utility uses to generate electricity (e.g., hydropower, wind, natural gas) and will likely continue to change as those energy sources—and related regulations—evolve over time. Refer to ***Includes** both regular and green program electricity

Figure C-123 for an emissions factor comparison across utilities in the Tri-Cities region.

Transportation



The transportation sector includes emissions from on-road vehicles (including passenger vehicles and freight and service vehicles), public transit, and off-road vehicles and equipment.

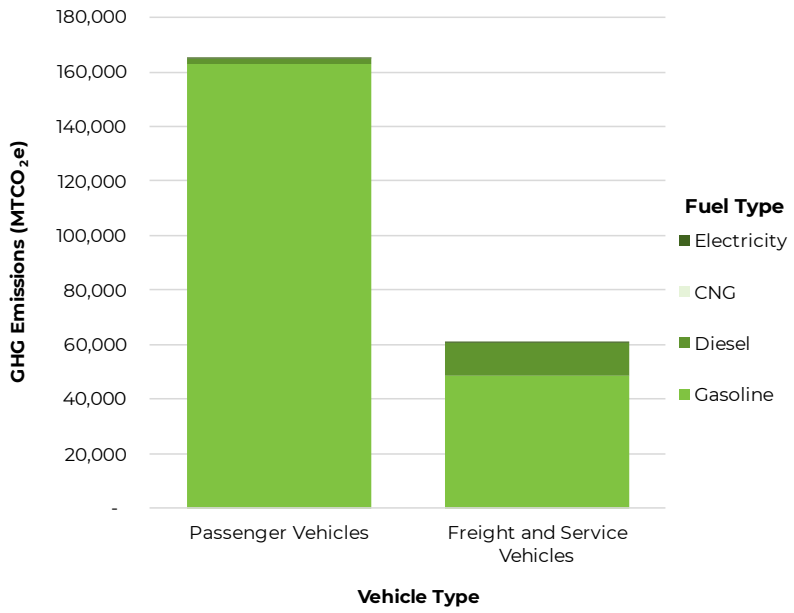
In 2022, Kennewick generated approximately 261,371 $MTCO_2e$ from transportation and other mobile sources, accounting for approximately 60% of total communitywide emissions. The largest source of transportation emissions was on-road passenger vehicles, which accounted for 38% of total communitywide emissions within the city. On-road freight and service vehicles accounted for 14% of total communitywide emissions, and off-road vehicles and equipment accounted for 8% of emissions in the city. No data was provided for transit vehicles at the city-scale; see

Approach and Data Limitations for more information.

In 2022, passenger vehicles in Kennewick traveled an estimated total of 431 million miles (5,048 vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita). Freight and service vehicles traveled an estimated 46 million miles (542 VMT per capita). Passenger vehicles accounted for approximately 90% of all on-road VMT in the city.

Figure C-131 provides a summary of on-road vehicle emissions by vehicle and fuel type.

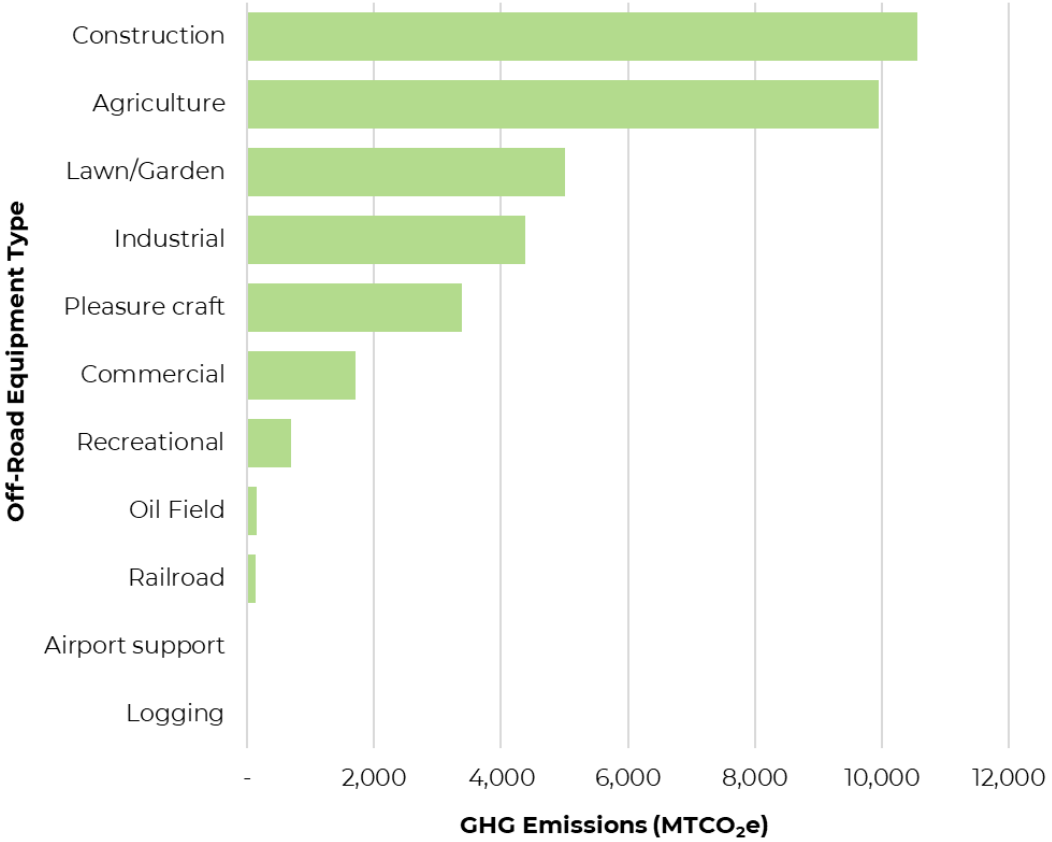
Figure C-131. Kennewick on-road transportation emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

Off-road vehicles and equipment include the following equipment types: recreational, construction, industrial, lawn/garden, agriculture, commercial, logging, airport support, oil field, pleasure craft, and railroad. Off-road vehicles and equipment produced an estimated 35,947 $MTCO_2e$, making up 8% of communitywide emissions. The largest source of off-road emissions was construction equipment, producing approximately 29% of all off-road vehicles and equipment emissions (**Figure C-132**) within the city.

Figure C-132. Kennewick off-road equipment emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

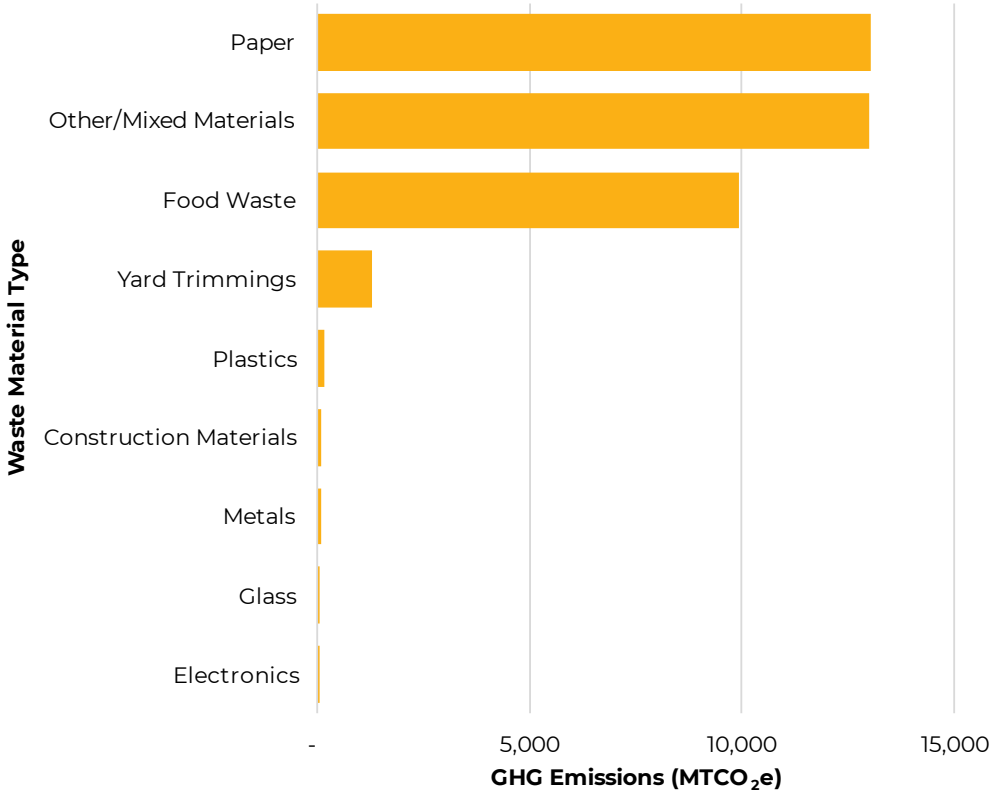
Solid Waste



The solid waste sector includes emissions from the generation and disposal of landfilled waste and commercially processed compost (if available).

In 2022, Kennewick generated an estimated 37,661 $MTCO_2e$ from solid waste, accounting for approximately 9% of total communitywide emissions within the city. Landfilled waste made up almost all solid waste emissions, while compost made up the remaining less than 1%.[15] The largest identified material contributions to landfilled waste emissions were from paper, food waste, and yard trimmings (**Figure C-133**).

Figure C-133. Kennewick landfilled solid waste emissions.



Cascadia Consulting Group, 2025.

GHG Targets & Emissions Forecasts

Target Setting Context

[15] Note that Kennewick compost data consisted of only Christmas tree composting tonnage; no data was provided for general composting. See *Approach and Data* Limitations for more information.

GHG reduction target setting is an essential foundational step for effective local climate action. Clear, locally adopted targets provide a roadmap for both near-term policy development and long-term emissions reductions, ensuring that planning efforts are measurable, goal-oriented, and aligned with broader climate objectives.

In accordance with the requirements of Washington State HB 1181, the Washington State Department of Commerce requires jurisdictions to establish realistic and achievable GHG reduction goals as part of their comprehensive planning processes. Commerce also recommends that these goals consider broader community objectives—such as resilience, public health, and environmental justice—when setting these targets.

Local targets should be ambitious yet feasible, reflecting the unique characteristics, opportunities, and constraints of each jurisdiction, while aligning with Washington State's statewide GHG reduction goals. Consideration of targets set by peer communities can also promote regional consistency and support coordinated action.

In developing local targets, it is important to consider a range of factors, including:

Technological feasibility of available or anticipated emissions reduction solutions;

Equity and environmental justice implications, particularly for frontline communities;

Availability of funding and resources to support implementation;

Consistency with adopted local plans (e.g., comprehensive plans, sustainability or transportation plans); and

Community input and priorities gathered through public engagement.

Such considerations are summarized in **Figure C-134** and will help ensure that the GHG reduction targets adopted by jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region are actionable, equitable, and aligned with state and regional goals.

Figure C-134. Target setting considerations.

Consideration	Description
Baseline Year and Data Availability	Jurisdictions must determine a defensible baseline year (e.g., 1990 or most recent inventory) and ensure data availability for tracking progress over time.
State Alignment vs. Local Context	While state law outlines long-term targets (e.g., 95% reduction by 2050), cities may choose interim targets (e.g., 2030, 2040) that reflect local capacity, growth forecasts, and emissions profile.
Sector-Level Opportunities	Cities should assess emissions contributions by sector (transportation, buildings, solid waste, etc.) to prioritize high-impact strategies and set sector-specific benchmarks if helpful.
Technological Feasibility	Target-setting should consider the current and anticipated availability of technologies needed to achieve emissions reductions, including infrastructure readiness and market adoption.
Equity and Community Priorities	Target-setting should reflect community values and be developed with meaningful engagement, especially with historically overburdened or underserved populations.
Implementation Tools and Funding	More ambitious targets should be paired with a realistic assessment of policy tools, staffing, regional partnerships, and funding opportunities (e.g., grants from the Climate Commitment Act).

Coordination with Plans & Regional Partners	Aligning targets with other local plan and county or regional plans can improve effectiveness, especially in transportation and land use, and support regional consistency for cross-jurisdictional issues.
Tracking and Accountability	Jurisdictions should ensure that adopted targets are measurable, trackable, and tied to metrics in implementation plans or capital improvement programs.

State Requirements and Guidance

HB 1181

Under HB 1181, the Tri-Cities jurisdictions are required to:

- Adopt a GHG emissions reduction sub-element that includes goals, policies, and actions to reduce emissions in line with state targets.
- Include in the GHG emission reduction sub-element goals, strategies, and actions focused on reducing per-capita vehicle travel through land use and transportation strategies.
- Incorporate environmental justice by avoiding disproportionate impacts on overburdened communities and ensuring meaningful public engagement.

Furthermore, WA Department of Commerce *Intermediate Planning Guidance for Climate Elements* provides the following requirements and recommendations related to target setting and progress tracking and reporting:[16]

- The GMA requires cities, counties, and Commerce to report progress every five years toward implementing comprehensive plan commitments, including those in the climate element.
- Jurisdictions will need to set incremental targets that lead to achieving net zero emissions in 2050, consistent with Washington's statewide target.
- Reports to Commerce should show jurisdiction progress implementing policies to reduce emissions and per capita VMT to achieve local goals and targets.

State Climate Targets

Washington State's GHG targets call for a reduction in statewide emissions below 1990 levels, including:[17]

- 45% by 2030
- 70% by 2040
- 95% (net-zero) by 2050

VMT Reduction Target Guidance (WSDOT)

In 2008, Washington state established a statewide per capita vehicle miles traveled (VMT) goal to reduce annual per capita VMT by 2050 (RCW 47.01.440)[18]. Benchmarks are set using the statewide baseline of 75 billion VMT minus VMT from vehicles over 10,000 pounds. The benchmarks are to decrease VMT:

[16] https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growth-management/climate-planning/
[17] https://ecology.wa.gov/air-climate/climate-commitment-act
18 RCW 47.01.400 https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=47.01.440 (accessed June 28, 2025).

- 30% by 2035
- 50% by 2050

WSDOT's June 2023 Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Targets Final Report recommends local per capita VMT targets be set at the regional scale by Regional Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) based on what is feasible and likely to occur over the timeframe of long-range plans. The per capita VMT target is for light duty (passenger)vehicles. It is recommended that heavy duty (freight and/or service) vehicles VMT be monitored, but no target is set.

Peer Jurisdictions

These statewide GHG and VMT reduction targets reflect Climate Commitment Act (CCA) goals. Several jurisdictions across Washington have adopted targets consistent with or, in some cases, exceeding these state goals. **Error! Reference source not found.** below summarizes other jurisdictions' targets.

Figure C-135. Targets and focus areas of other Washington jurisdictions.

Jurisdiction	Notable Targets & Focus Areas
City of Spokane, WA	GHG reduction targets (2016 baseline): 45% by 2030 70% by 2040 Net-zero (95%+) by 2050 Codified in ordinance; requires triennial GHG inventories and reporting
City of Ellensburg, WA	2021 Sustainability and Energy Plan (SEP) includes actions to reduce emissions commensurate with Washington State's target of a 95% reduction in statewide GHG emissions by 2050
Spokane County, WA	Draft county policies aligned with state law: Net-zero GHG emissions by 2050 Interim reduction targets through 2050 Coordination with SRTC to set per-capita VMT targets

VMT: Current and Future Context

Decreasing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita (population) contributes to reducing emissions. VMT is a transportation metric that calculates the total travel distance of all vehicles in a specific geographic area over a given period. The VMT metric can be used to understand changes over time. HB 1181 requires targeting a reduction in annual per capita VMT for cars and light duty trucks. Heavy vehicles/freight are excluded from the requirement.

The GHG Emissions Inventory uses regional on-road VMT, which includes all vehicle travel on roads within the region. This accounts for local trips as well as through trips that do not have an origin or destination in the community. While this approach is suitable for a comprehensive emissions inventory, it can overstate the VMT that local jurisdictions can influence.

For the purpose of target setting, VMT is measured as residential or population-based-VMT. Residential or population-based VMT includes all trip types taken by the population of the region, aligning with the per capita VMT metric required by the State. Using residential or population-based VMT provides a more meaningful basis for local planning and target-setting efforts because it directly ties to all VMT generated by the residents living in the region. Communities do not have direct control over through trips using the State highway or regional roadway system since they do not manage these roads or have a direct connection on these users.

Figure C-136. VMT approach definitions

	Regional On-Road VMT	Residential VMT
Definition	Total vehicle miles traveled on all roads in the region	Total vehicle miles traveled by residents in the region
Through trips	Included	Excluded
Jurisdictional control	Limited ability	Higher ability
Use	GHG inventory and forecasting	VMT target setting
Per capita VMT (1,000s) for Benton-Franklin Region	9.86	6.52

Figure C-137 summarizes the per capita VMT for the Tri-Cities region and Benton County, Kennewick, Richland, West Richland and Pasco. Additional details on VMT for the region is provided in the *Tri-Cities Regional VMT Study (2025)*[19].

Figure C-137. Tri-Cities Region annual per capita VMT (1,000s)..[20]

Location	Base 2022	Future 2045
Unincorporated Benton County	3.98	3.98
Kennewick	5.85	6.68
Pasco	5.14	6.50
Richland	7.53	7.54
West Richland	5.68	6.52
Benton-Franklin Region	6.52	7.25

The VMT will increase as the region grows without reduction strategies. Per capita VMT without the implementation of reduction strategies will increase by 16% for the region due to planned housing and job growth.

As described previously, WSDOT recommends local per capita VMT targets be set at a regional scale based on what is feasible and likely to occur over the timeframe of long-range plans. The Benton-Franklin Region jurisdictions are currently updating their Comprehensive Plans and BFCOG will be updating the long-range transportation plan. These long-range plans will adopt goals and policies related to the commitment to reduce VMT and GHG emissions. VMT is impacted by goals and policies related to land use and transportation including housing and job density, transit-oriented development, transportation management and commute trip reduction, street system connectivity and design, multimodal transportation design and options and parking.

The recommended VMT targets for the region are based on scenario testing using the BFCOG travel demand model and research related to VMT reduction with shifts to other modes. The scenarios evaluated land use growth over a 20-year period to 2045 assuming – (1) current trend, (2) all growth on downtown

19 The *Tri-Cities Regional VMT Study,* developed by Transpo in 2025, provides a VMT travel market assessment, analysis, and overview of potential reduction strategies for the Tri-Cities region.

20 VMT per capita (in 1,000s) represents the VMT for cars (i.e., light duty and passenger vehicles) divided by the projected population.

core/central city district area (i.e., downtown and denser neighborhoods), (3) residential growth in core areas, (4) minor increase in housing density in core areas and remaining growth in the edge areas of the cities, and (5) transit oriented development with growth focused on regional transit centers.

GHG: Current and Future Context

To inform the region's local GHG emission reduction targets and policies, results from the 2022 communitywide GHG inventory were used to forecast future emissions and emission reduction scenarios. Specifically, the analysis forecasted communitywide GHG emissions to 2050 under three scenarios, detailed in the sections below:[21]

- No Action, which assumes no action is taken and assumes the projected population and economic growth.21F[22],22F[23],23F[24]
- State/Federal Policy, which models estimated emissions reduction from existing federal, state, and regional policies.
- Local Action, which models estimated emissions reduction from local strategies such as VMT reduction and building energy efficiency.

Findings from these scenarios can be referenced to support measurable and realistic GHG reduction target setting.

Benton-Franklin Region

The 2022-2050 forecast and scenario analysis revealed the following key findings, as summarized in **Figure C-138** and **Figure C-139**.

- No Action: Without federal, state, or local climate action, Benton-Franklin Region's emissions will grow 41% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as depicted by the dotted black line in **Figure C-139**.
- State/Federal Policy: When considering the anticipated impacts of federal, state, and regional policies, communitywide emissions will decrease 48% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as depicted by the pink line in **Figure C-139**.
- Local Action: With the implementation of additional local action strategies, communitywide emissions could be reduced by an estimated 95% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as shown by the Local Action scenario reductions in **Figure C-139**.

Figure C-138. Benton-Franklin Region findings from the forecast and scenario analysis.

Scenario	2030 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2035 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2040 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2045 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2050 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline
No Action	+14%	+21%	+27%	+34%	+41%

[21] The forecast scenarios shown in this report are shown as examples of potential emission reduction pathways and may not reflect the scenarios represented in the Tri-Cities jurisdictions' Climate Element or associated analyses.

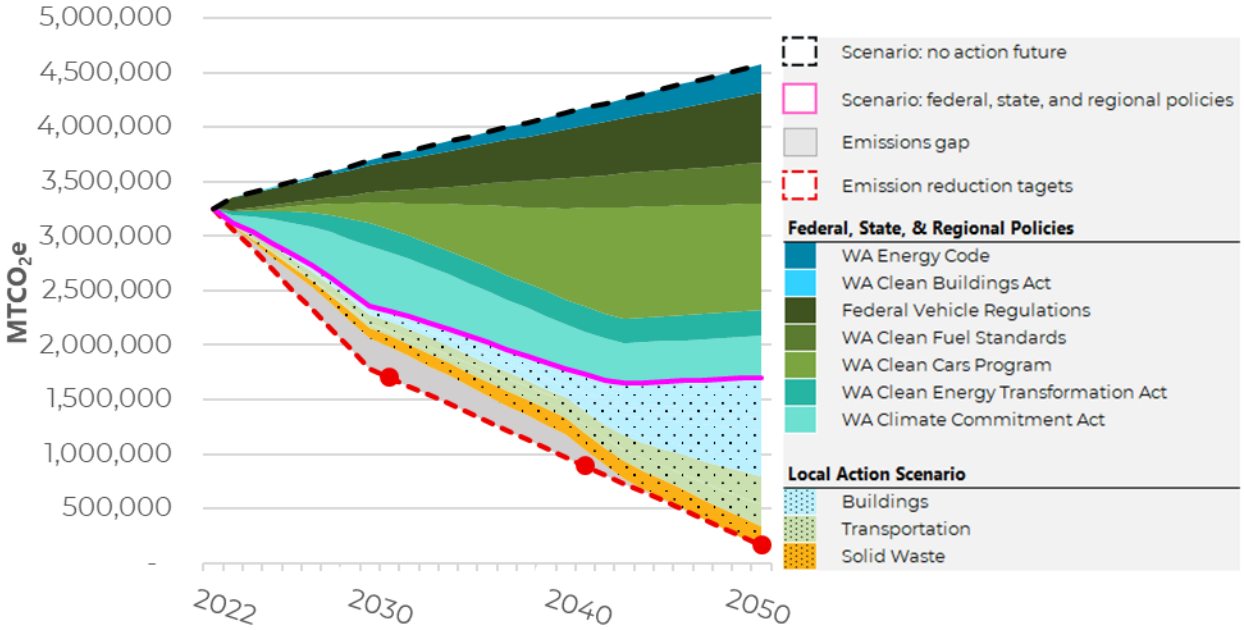
[22] Washington Office of Financial Management (OFM) Growth Management Act population projections, "Middle" scenario for Benton County and Franklin County. For Kennewick, Richland, and West Richland, the population projections align to the Housing for All Planning Tool (HAPT) output. For Pasco, the Franklin County projections were scaled down based on the assumption that Pasco contributes 80% of the County-wide population. The Benton-Franklin Region population was calculated by adding the County-level projections together.

[23] Future employment estimated using WA Employment Security Department (ESD) employment projections for the Benton Franklin Region. Average annual growth rate for 2022-2027 and 2027-2032 was used to estimate regional growth rate. The regional growth rate was applied to each jurisdictions' 2022 employment estimate.

[24] Please note that the growth forecasts used in this analysis were selected to achieve consistency between Washington counties and may not reflect the growth forecast used in any Tri-Cities' Comprehensive Plan updates.

State/Federal Policy	-27%	-36%	-45%	-49%	-48%
Local Action	-36%	-50%	-64%	-82%	-95%

Figure C-139. Benton-Franklin Region forecasted GHG emissions and reductions under three scenarios ($MTCO_2e$).



The following sections provide a detailed summary of each scenario, including underlying assumptions and policy-specific findings.

No Action Scenario

The No Action scenario projects emissions based on a "no-action future" that assumes no federal, state, regional, or local policies or actions influence future emissions. Future emissions under the No Action scenario are modeled based on estimated population and economic growth. Population and economic growth estimates can be found in **Figure C-140**.

Figure C-140. Benton-Franklin Region demographic projections.

Demographic	2022	2030	2040	2050
Population	312,050	350,084	395,517	439,857
Employment	130,474	146,877	163,792	182,654

State/Federal Policy Scenario

The State/Federal Policy scenario estimates emissions reductions resulting from established federal, state, and regional policies. Together, the implementation of identified policies results in an estimated 48% reduction in communitywide GHG emissions by 2050 compared to 2022 levels.

The State/Federal Policy scenario considered the following federal, state, and regional policies. Emissions Forecast & Scenario Analysis Methodology provides additional information regarding policy interpretation and assumptions.

- Washington State Energy Code (SB 5854)
- Washington Clean Buildings Act (HB 1257)
- Federal Vehicle Regulations (CAFE)
- WA Clean Fuel Standard (HB 1091)
- WA Clean Cars Program (SB 5974)
- WA Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA)
- WA Climate Commitment Act (E2SSB 5126)

Note, to avoid double-counting, the analysis sequentially models each policy, so the order of modeling influences a policy's indicated GHG emission reductions. **Figure C-141** shows the modeled emissions reductions associated with each policy. Policies contributing the largest cumulative GHG reductions under this scenario include: 1) the WA Clean Cars Program and 2) the WA Climate Commitment Act.

Local Action Scenario

The Local Action scenario estimates additional emissions reductions achievable through regional-level strategies that go beyond state and federal policies. These local strategies include electrifying new and existing residential, commercial, and industrial buildings; reducing energy use in existing buildings; electrifying passenger, freight, and transit vehicles; reducing passenger vehicle travel; decarbonizing offroad equipment; and diverting construction and demolition materials as well as other recyclable and compostable waste from landfill.

This scenario is designed to help identify and prioritize specific local policies for inclusion in a GHG emissions reduction sub-element. While it represents just one of many possible pathways for reducing emissions, the Local Action scenario provides a potential approach for supporting the state's GHG reduction target of a 95% decrease in emissions by 2050 relative to 2022 levels. It is important to note that several of these strategies address emission sources that are also expected to decline under existing federal, state, and regional legislation, which may make their individual impact appear less significant. **Figure C-141** and **Figure C-142** below summarize the Local Action scenario strategies, assumptions, and associated reductions.

Together, the implementation of identified local strategies results in an estimated 95% reduction in communitywide GHG emissions by 2050 compared to 2022 levels. The local strategies with the greatest modeled cumulative GHG emission reductions were 1) reducing energy use in existing buildings, 2) diverting recyclable and compostable materials, and 3) electrifying freight and service vehicles.

Figure C-141. Local strategy assumptions used in all forecasting analyses.

Strategy	2030	2040	2050
Electrify new residential buildings (% fossil fuel use converted to electricity)	25%	50%	100%

Electrify new commercial buildings (% fossil fuel use converted to electricity)	15%	50%	75%
Electrify new industrial buildings (% fossil fuel use converted to electricity)	5%	25%	50%
Reduce energy use in existing residential buildings (% reduction in energy use)	10%	30%	50%
Reduce energy use in existing commercial buildings (% reduction in energy use)	5%	25%	50%
Reduce energy use in existing industrial buildings (% reduction in energy use)	3%	10%	30%
Electrify existing residential buildings (% fossil fuel use converted to electricity)	5%	30%	100%
Electrify existing commercial buildings (% fossil fuel use converted to electricity)	5%	20%	100%
Electrify existing industrial buildings (% fossil fuel use converted to electricity)	5%	15%	100%
Reduce industrial emissions (% reduction in emissions)	2%	5%	90%
Reduce passenger vehicle travel (% reduction in VMT)	1%	3%	5%
Electrify passenger vehicles (% new vehicles sold that are EV)	25%	50%	100%
Electrify freight/service vehicles (% new vehicles sold that are EV)	10%	60%	90%
Electrify transit vehicles (% new vehicles sold that are EV)	20%	35%	50%
Decarbonize offroad equipment (% reduction in emissions)	10%	35%	95%
Divert C&D materials (% of C&D waste diverted)	25%	75%	75%
Divert other recyclable and compostable materials (% reduction in waste to landfill)	50%	75%	90%

Figure C-142. Benton-Franklin Region emissions forecast & reduction scenarios (in $MTCO_2e$).

Description	2022	2030	2040	2050

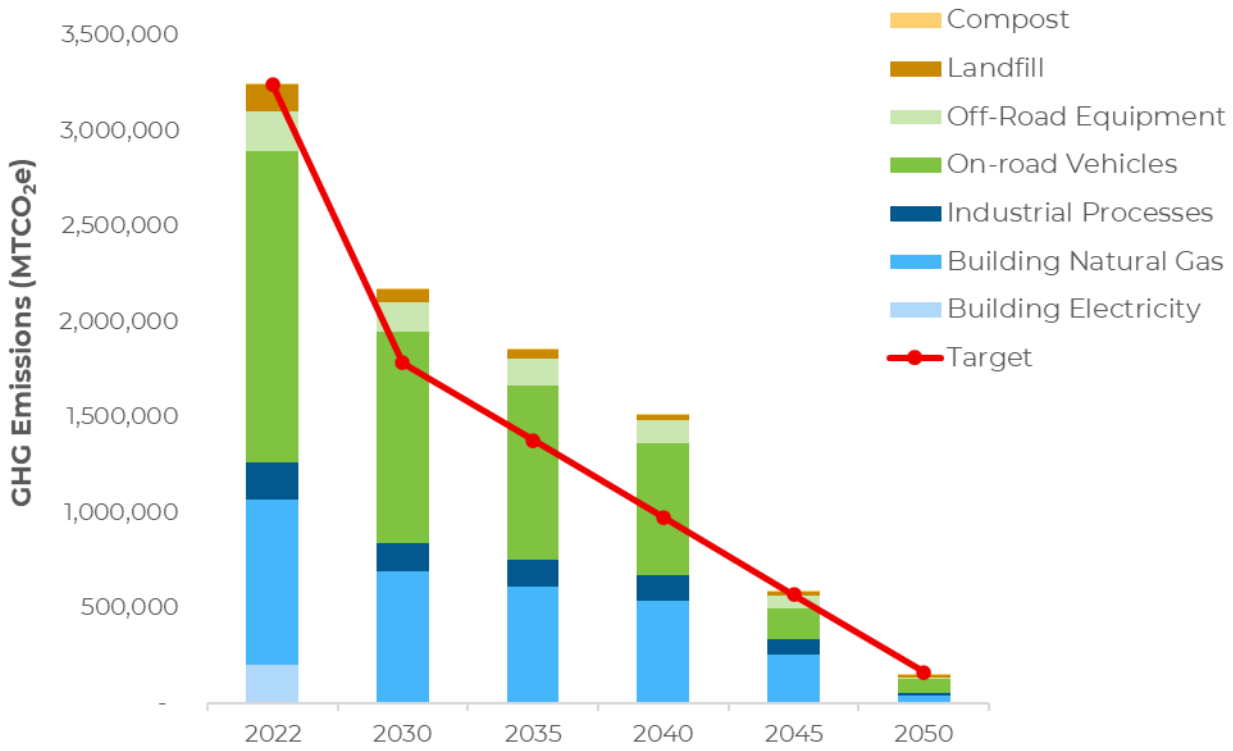
No Action Scenario emissions	3,246,923	3,698,446	4,129,496	4,576,342
State/Federal Policy scenario emissions*	3,246,923	2,356,535	1,785,688	1,703,867
WA Energy Code & Clean Buildings Act	-	50,039	149,740	257,820
Federal Vehicle Regulations	-	249,124	445,287	649,083
WA Clean Fuel Standards	-	88,238	281,737	369,017
WA Clean Cars Program	-	189,531	831,664	982,181
WA Clean Energy Transformation Act	-	216,462	225,941	235,950
WA Climate Commitment Act	-	548,517	409,439	378,425
State/Federal Policy scenario reductions (from No Action scenario)	-	1,341,911	2,343,809	2,872,476
Local Action scenario emissions	-	2,066,137	1,181,396	152,304
Electrify new buildings	-	5,703	28,016	70,512
Reduce energy use in existing buildings	-	33,127	120,910	271,596
Electrify existing buildings	-	33,845	107,546	438,438
Reduce industrial emissions	-	2,961	7,403	133,263
Reduce passenger vehicle travel	-	90,505	37,314	-
Electrify passenger vehicles	-	-	-	-
Electrify freight/service vehicles	-	9,907	86,819	250,449
Electrify transit vehicles	-	528	2,251	5,414
Decarbonize offroad equipment	-	17,679	63,721	192,501
Divert other recyclable and compostable materials	-	96,143	150,311	189,390
Local Action reductions (from State/Federal Policy scenario)	-	290,398	604,292	1,551,563

*To avoid double counting, scenario modeling is stacked sequentially based on the No Action scenario, State/Federal Policy scenario, and action-level assumptions. The $MTCO_2e$ reductions maybe dependent on the order in which they are modeled.

Remaining Emissions

By 2050, on-road vehicles, building natural gas, and industrial processes are expected to be the largest sources of remaining emissions under the Local Action scenario. Figure C-143 presents the remaining emissions by source for key milestone years (2030, 2035, 2040, 2045, and 2050).

Figure C-143. Benton-Franklin Region forecasted remaining GHG emissions under Local Action scenario.



Policy Implications & Options

The analysis of current and projected GHG emissions provides a foundation for identifying and prioritizing local policy options for reducing GHG emissions across the Benton-Franklin Region. The Local Action scenario highlights several priority areas for the comprehensive plan update and coordinated regional action. Local actions with the greatest modeled cumulative GHG reductions include:

- Reducing emissions from new and existing residential, commercial, and industrial buildings by supporting clean building energy sources and energy efficient building design and retrofits. Local actions for decarbonization and energy efficiency would reduce Benton-Franklin Region's buildings emissions, which made up 39% of 2022 communitywide emissions.
- Reducing passenger vehicle travel through improved land use, expanded transportation infrastructure (transit, walking, bicycling), and alternative commuting options and modes. A reduction in passenger VMT would reduce Benton-Franklin Region's communitywide on-road emissions from passenger vehicles, which made up 36% of 2022 emissions.

- Facilitating the transition to electric vehicles through expanded reliable charging infrastructure, public awareness campaigns, and access to financial incentives. Local action to transition vehicles to electric would reduce Benton-Franklin Region's passenger and freight vehicle on-road emissions, which made up 50% of 2022 communitywide emissions.

Regional Policy Modeling

To further evaluate the GHG impacts of specific strategies, five policies were modeled at the regional level. The policies were selected based on the Department of Commerce's Climate Policy Explorer[25] and were reviewed and approved by the Tri-Cities client team for modeling:

- Building decarbonization. Implement state building and energy code development and implementation specific to decarbonization. Educate and support building officials, partners, and staff to implement energy and building codes for new and remodeled buildings that reduce energy use, expand EV charging infrastructure, and support a variety of energy sources, including renewable sources. Examine options for exceeding state-level code requirements, where feasible.
- Energy efficiency retrofits. Support and provide community outreach for public programs that incentivize or encourage energy efficiency retrofits for commercial and residential buildings.
- Transit improvements. Support the improvement of transit speed, frequency, coverage, and reliability.
- High-intensity land use. Foster higher-intensity land uses in mixed-use urban villages and transit corridors.
- Bicycle and pedestrian transportation network. Create a safe, well-connected, and attractive bicycle and pedestrian transportation network to encourage active transportation.

In the Benton-Franklin Region, the modeled local policy with the greatest emissions reduction potential was energy efficiency retrofits, as shown in **Figure C-144**.

Figure C-144. Benton-Franklin Region policy assumptions and cumulative GHG impacts.

Policy	Key Modeling Assumptions	Cumulative Emissions Reductions by 2050 ($MTCO_2e$)
Building decarbonization	Assumes phased adoption of all-electric new construction: Residential: 15% by 2030, 35% by 2040, 75% by 2050 Commercial: 5% by 2030, 25% by 2040, 60% by 2050 Industrial: 2% by 2030, 15% by 2040, 25% by 2050	14,844
Energy efficiency retrofits	Residential retrofit participation projected at 1.5% per year and commercial at 1% from start of implementation (2026), based on utility program trends.[26]	358,858

[25] Climate Policy Explorer

[26] Cluett, R., & Amann, J. (2016, October). Scaling up participation and savings in residential retrofit programs (Report A1605). American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy. https://www.aceee.org/research-report/a1605

	Assumes average energy savings per retrofit of ~30% (residential) [27] and 30–35% (commercial)[28], in line with Department of Energy (DOE) estimates.	
Transit improvements	Increased transit speed, frequency, and coverage to meet forecasted 30% rise in trips by 2045. [29]	68,567
High-intensity land use	Assumes 5% of new development will be located in high-intensity, transit-oriented development (TOD) areas by 2050.	41,397
Bicycle & pedestrian transportation network	Assumes a 30% increase in Tri-Cities bicycle and pedestrian network. Improvements could cut GHG by up to 6.4% (walking improvements) and an additional 0.5% (bike network).[30]	63,667

Sector-Specific Targets & Key Performance Indicators

Outcomes from the Local Action scenario analysis suggest a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) and corresponding targets to monitor and track local climate action progress over time, detailed in **Figure C-145** below.

Figure C-145. Benton-Franklin Region key performance indicators and targets for monitoring local climate action progress.

Key Performance Indicator	2022	2030	2040	2050
Overall GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	3,246,923	2,066,137	1,181,396	152,304
Per-capita GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$/capita)	10.41	5.90	2.99	0.35
Building GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	1,260,625	836,567	675,119	54,367
Overall building energy consumption (MMBTU)	47,407,366	46,877,405	37,674,674	16,121,490
Building natural gas consumption (MMBTU)	15,797,939	15,395,476	11,940,289	891,618
On-road transportation GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	1,597,056	997,944	353,295	76,116
Overall vehicle miles traveled (passenger + freight 1,000 vehicle miles).[31]	3,428,736	3,440,494	3,428,393	3,416,970
Passenger vehicle miles traveled (1,000 vehicle miles)	3,077,167	3,046,395	2,984,852	2,923,309

27 Franconi, E., Tillou, M., Rosenberg, M., & Perry, C. (2024, December). *Methodology to establish performance targets for building energy codes*. U.S. Department of Energy. https://www.energycodes.gov/sites/default/files/2025-01/Performance_Targets_Methodology.pdf

28 U.S. Department of Energy. (2024, April). *Commercial Buildings Integration Program*. U.S. Department of Energy. https://www.energy.gov/eere/buildings/about-commercial-buildings-integration-program

29 Benton-Franklin Council of Governments. (2022, May). *Transition 2045: Metropolitan transportation plan*. https://www.bfcog.us/DocumentCenter/View/201/Transition-2045

30 California Air Pollution Control Officers Association. (2021). *Handbook for analyzing greenhouse gas emissions reductions, assessing climate vulnerabilities, and advancing health and equity*. https://www.caleemod.com/documents/CAPCOA%20CalEEMod%20GHG%20Handbook%20October%202021.pdf

31 The current and future vehicle miles traveled (VMT) metrics are based on regional VMT totals and differ from the resident-based VMT reported in the regional VMT study. For more detail on these different approaches, please refer to the VMT: Current and Future Context section.

Per-capita passenger VMT (1,000 VMT/capita)	9.86	8.70	7.55	6.65
Solid waste GHG emissions (MTCO2e)	146,401	68,268	34,726	16,556
Landfilled waste (tons)	322,606	188,814	115,017	77,036

Kennewick

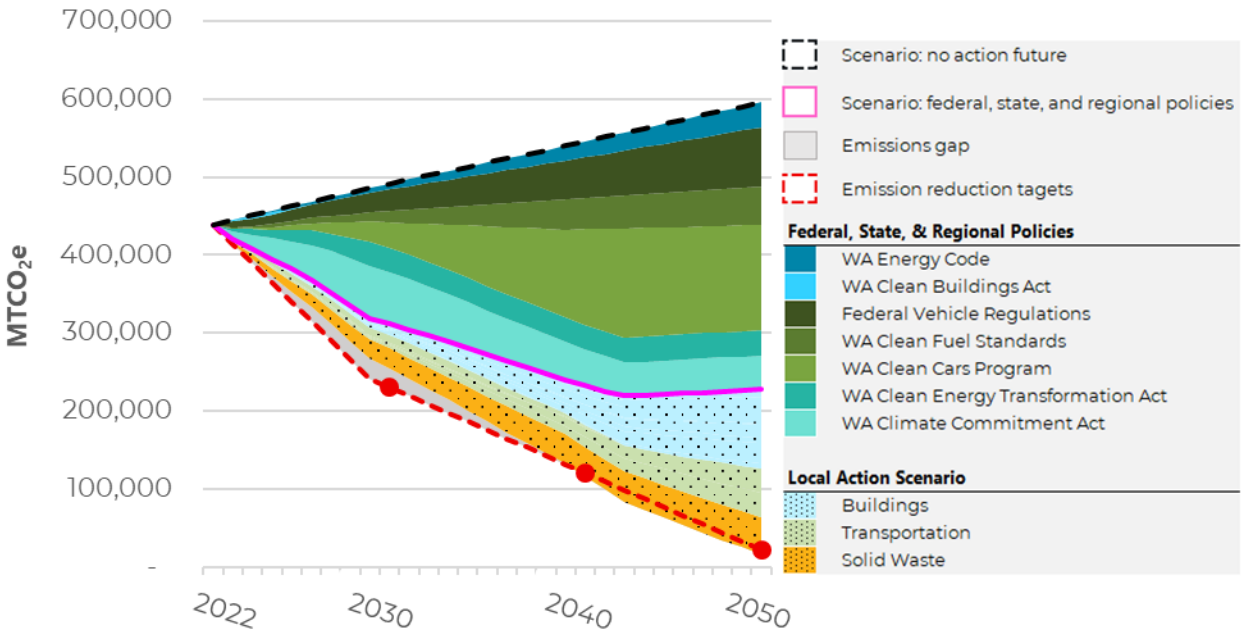
The 2022-2050 forecast and scenario analysis revealed the following key findings, as summarized in **Figure C-146**.

- No Action: Without federal, state, or local climate action, Kennewick's emissions will grow 36% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as depicted by the dotted black line in Figure C-147.
- State/Federal Policy: When considering the anticipated impacts of federal, state, and regional policies, communitywide emissions will decrease 48% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as depicted by the pink line in Figure C-147.
- Local Action: With the implementation of additional local action strategies, communitywide emissions could be reduced by an estimated 96% by 2050 (compared to a 2022 baseline), as shown by the Local Action scenario reductions in Figure C-147.

Figure C-146. Kennewick findings from the emissions forecast and scenario analysis.

Scenario	2030 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2035 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2040 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2045 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline	2050 % Change in GHG Emissions from 2022 Baseline
No Action	+11%	+17%	+23%	+30%	+36%
State/Federal Policy	-28%	-36%	-45%	-49%	-48%
Local Action	-39%	-54%	-70%	-86%	-96%

Figure C-147. Kennewick forecasted GHG emissions and reductions under three scenarios ($MTCO_2e$).



The following sections provide a detailed summary of each scenario, including underlying assumptions and policy-specific findings.

No Action Scenario

The No Action scenario projects emissions based on a "no-action future" that assumes no federal, state, regional, or local policies or actions influence future emissions. Future emissions under the No Action scenario are modeled based on estimated population and economic growth. Population and economic growth estimates can be found in **Figure C-148**.

Figure C-148. Kennewick demographic projections.

Demographic	2022	2030	2040	2050
Population	85,320	93,084	103,025	112,743
Employment	45,955	51,733	57,691	64,334

State/Federal Policy Scenario

The State/Federal policy scenario estimates emissions reductions resulting from established federal, state, and regional policies. See Emissions Forecast & Scenario Analysis Methodology for detail on the policies modeled. Policies contributing the largest cumulative GHG reductions under this scenario include: 1) the WA Clean Cars program and 2) the WA Climate Commitment Act. Together, the implementation of identified policies results in an estimated 48% reduction in communitywide GHG emissions by 2050 compared to 2022 levels, as shown in **Figure C-149**.

Local Action Scenario

Local action strategies can further reduce emissions beyond what is achieved through state and federal policies. The strategies with the greatest modeled cumulative GHG emission reductions are 1) diverting recyclable and compostable materials, 2) reducing energy use in existing buildings and 3) decarbonizing existing buildings. Together, the implementation of identified local strategies results in an estimated 96% reduction in communitywide GHG emissions by 2050 compared to 2022 levels, as shown in **Figure C-149**.

Figure C-149. Kennewick emissions forecast & reduction scenario (in $MTCO_2e$).

Description	2022	2030	2040	2050
No Action scenario emissions	438,600	486,457	540,199	596,133
State/Federal Policy scenario emissions*	438,600	317,943	239,426	227,320
WA Energy Code & Clean Buildings Act	-	6,402	18,870	32,174
Federal Vehicle Regulations	-	25,040	49,986	75,526
WA Clean Fuel Standards	-	12,225	38,662	50,056
WA Clean Cars Program	-	26,046	112,700	134,176
WA Clean Energy Transformation Act	-	30,470	31,715	33,014
WA Climate Commitment Act	-	68,330	48,840	43,867
State/Federal Policy scenario reductions (from No Action scenario)	-	168,514	300,773	368,813
Local Action scenario	-	267,515	133,076	16,576
Electrify new buildings	-	986	4,143	9,644
Reduce energy use in existing buildings	-	5,925	22,980	43,738
Electrify existing buildings	-	4,254	15,397	47,262
Reduce industrial emissions	-	-	-	-
Reduce passenger vehicle travel	-	10,977	4,903	-
Electrify passenger vehicles	-	-	-	-

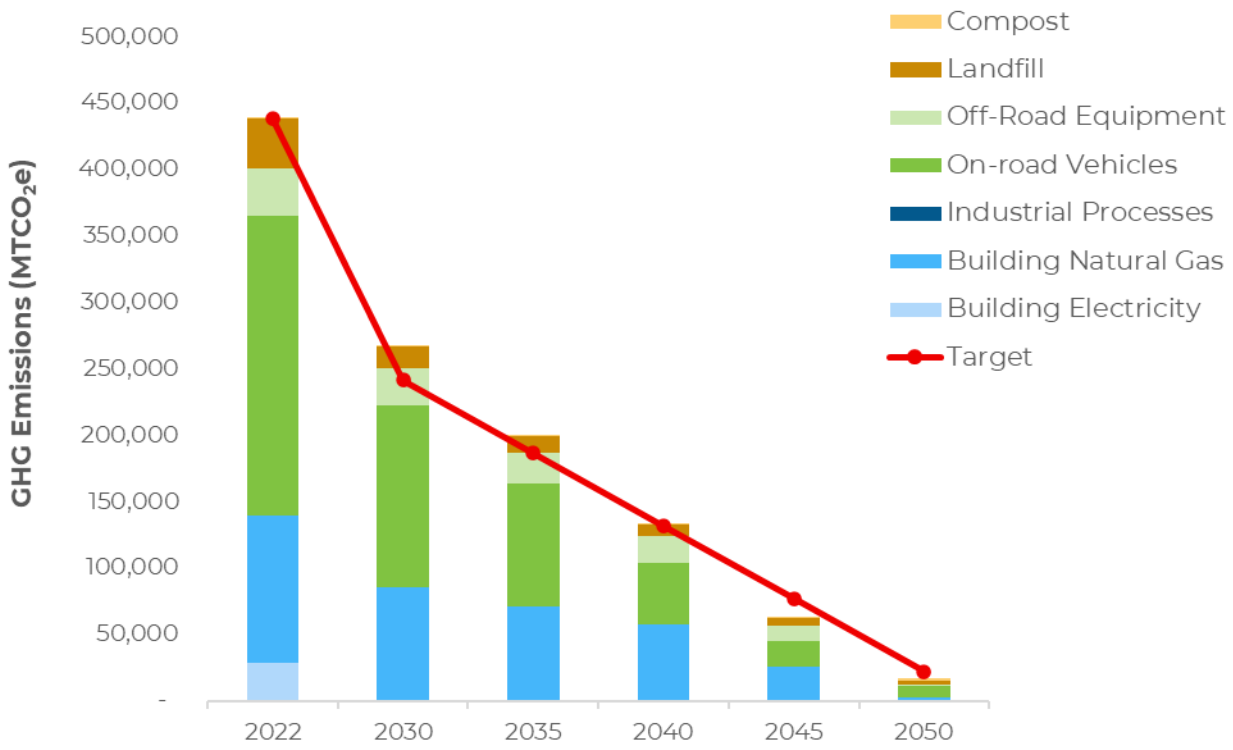
Electrify freight/service vehicles	-	1,267	10,950	31,270
Electrify transit vehicles	-	-	-	-
Decarbonize offroad equipment	-	3,034	10,782	32,245
Divert other recyclable and compostable materials	-	23,985	37,194	46,584
Local Action reductions (from State/Federal Policy scenario)		50,428	106,350	210,744

* To avoid double counting, scenario modeling is stacked sequentially based on the No Action scenario, State/Federal Policy scenario, and action-level assumptions. The MTCO2e reductions maybe dependent on the order in which they are modeled.

Remaining Emissions

By 2050, on-road vehicles, landfilled waste, and natural gas are expected to be the largest sources of remaining emissions under the Local Action scenario for Kennewick. Figure C-150 presents the remaining emissions by source for key milestone years (2030, 2035, 2040, 2045, and 2050).

Figure C-150. Kennewick forecasted remaining GHG emissions under Local Action scenario.



Policy Implications and Options

The analysis of current and projected GHG emissions provides a foundation for identifying and prioritizing local policy options for reducing GHG emissions in Kennewick. The Local Action scenario highlights several priority areas for the comprehensive plan update and coordinated regional action. Local actions with the greatest modeled cumulative GHG reductions include:

- Diverting recyclable and compostable materials from the landfill. Local action to keep these materials out of landfills would help reduce Kennewick's solid waste emissions, which made up 9% of 2022 communitywide emissions.
- Reducing emissions from new and existing residential, commercial and industrial buildings by supporting clean building energy sources and energy efficient building design and retrofits. Local actions focused on decarbonization and efficiency would reduce Kennewick's buildings' emissions, which made up 32% of 2022 communitywide emissions.

For additional policy strategies and assumptions relevant to the region, see the Policy Implications & Options section for Benton-Franklin Region.

Sector-Specific Targets & Key Performance Indicators

Outcomes from the Local Action scenario analysis suggest a set of key performance indicators (KPIs) and corresponding targets to monitor and track local climate action progress over time, detailed in **Figure C-151** below.

Figure C-151. Kennewick key performance indicators and targets for monitoring local climate action progress.

Key Performance Indicator	2022	2030	2040	2050
Overall GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	438,600	267,515	133,076	16,576
Per-capita GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$/capita)	5.14	2.87	1.29	0.15
Building GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	139,568	85,635	57,278	2,350
Overall building energy consumption (MMBTU)	6,996,229	6,773,823	5,176,739	2,309,772
Building natural gas consumption (MMBTU)	2,024,724	1,904,806	1,270,901	51,670
On-road transportation GHG emissions ($MTCO_2e$)	220,517	136,386	46,592	8,257
Overall vehicle miles traveled (passenger + freight 1,000 vehicle miles).[32]	476,939	477,299	474,272	471,408
Passenger vehicle miles traveled (1,000 vehicle miles)	430,709	426,402	417,788	409,174
Per-capita passenger VMT (1,000 VMT/capita)	5.05	4.58	4.06	3.63
Solid waste GHG emissions (MTCO2e)	37,661	17,561	8,913	4,217
Landfilled waste (tons)	82,748	48,363	29,501	19,708

[32] The current and future vehicle miles traveled (VMT) metrics are based on regional VMT totals and differ from the resident-based VMT reported in the regional VMT study. For more detail on these different approaches, please refer to the VMT: Current and Future Context section.

Proposed Targets for Benton-Franklin Region

Recommended short- and long-term targets for the Benton-Franklin Region are presented in **Figure C-152** below. These targets are based on consideration of state requirements, regional and peer jurisdiction context, and quantitative modeling.

Figure C-152. Proposed GHG emissions and per-capita VMT reduction targets for Benton-Franklin Region.

Category	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050	Notes
Communitywide GHG Emissions (% below 2022 levels)	36%	50%	64%	82%	95%	Short-term (interim) targets are less aggressive than state targets to accommodate slow ramp-up and reflect local action assumptions Long-term (2050) targets align with state targets
Per-Capita VMT (% below 2022 levels)	1%	2%	3%	4%	5%	

Detailed Methodology

This appendix details the methodology used to conduct the communitywide GHG emissions inventories summarized in this report. It describes the data sources, key assumptions, and analytical methods used in the analysis, and identifies data limitations and uncertainties to provide context for interpreting the results.

Data Sources

GHG emissions data are drawn from a variety of federal, state, and local sources. Whenever possible, locally specific data sources are used to improve the accuracy of emissions estimates.

GHG emissions are calculated by applying emission factors to activity data:

- Activity data represents the level of activity that generates emissions. Examples include kilowatt-hours of electricity consumed, vehicle miles traveled (VMT), and tons of waste generated.
- Emission factors quantify the amount of a specific GHG released per unit of activity. Examples include metric tons of carbon dioxide (CO_2), nitrous oxide (N_2O), or methane (CH_4) emitted per kilowatt-hour of electricity, per ton of waste, or per VMT.

A summary of the activity data and emissions factors used for each sector of the GHG inventories are presented in **Figure C-153** below.

Figure C-153. Data sources for Tri-Cities communitywide GHG emissions inventories.

Sector	Activity Data	Emission Factors (EFs)
Buildings		
Electricity	Consumption (kWh) provided by utilities	Utility-specific emission factors (from Department of Ecology Clean Fuel Standard program utility-specific carbon intensity values for electricity)

Natural Gas	Consumption (therms) provided by utilities	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) EF Hub average EFs (where utility-specific EFs were not available)
Industrial Processes	EPA Facility Level Information on Greenhouse Gases Tool (FLIGHT)	N/A - data reported in emissions
Transportation		
On-Road Vehicles	Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) travel demand model and VMT based on the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) 2023 Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) Miles and VMT by County, Owner, and City for Benton and Franklin Counties.	U.S. EPA Emission Factors Hub vehicle EFs (by vehicle & fuel type)
Public Transit	Reported transit vehicle miles traveled by fuel type for each transit agency from the National Transit Database (NTD)	U.S. EPA Emission Factors Hub vehicle EFs (by vehicle & fuel type)
Off-Road Equipment	EPA Motor Vehicle Emission Simulator (MOVES) model outputs, by county. Scaled by city population and employment.	N/A (data reported in emissions)
Solid Waste		
Landfill	County-wide and city-wide waste tonnage and 2020 WA Department of Ecology regional waste characterization study	EPA Waste Reduction Model (WARM) EFs, customized for landfill attributes
Compost	County-wide and city-wide waste tonnage and 2022 WA Department of Ecology regional recycling & organics characterization study	EPA WARM EFs

Methodology

The following section outlines detailed methodology used to estimate GHG emissions.

Buildings

Electricity

Emissions from electricity consumption were calculated by multiplying 2022 electricity consumption within each jurisdiction by utility-specific emission factors for the same year. Residential, commercial, and industrial electricity consumption data were gathered directly from the utilities serving each jurisdiction. Emissions from transmission and distribution (T&D) losses were included in the utility-specific emission factors used for these inventories, provided by the WA State Department of Ecology.

Natural Gas

Emissions from natural gas consumption were calculated by multiplying 2022 natural gas consumption within each jurisdiction by the U.S. EPA emission factors for the same year. Residential, commercial, and industrial natural gas consumption data were gathered directly from Cascade Natural Gas. Emissions from natural gas

leakage were calculated using a default leakage rate from the Environmental Defense Fund's *User Guide for Natural Gas Leakage Rate Modeling Tool* and other default values consistent with the *U.S. Community Protocol*.[33]

Industrial Processes

Emissions from industrial processes were sourced from EPA's online *Facility Level Information on Greenhouse Gases Tool* (FLIGHT). This tool provides downloadable data for large facilities emitting over 25,000 $MTCO_2e$ annually, as required by the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reporting Program. To avoid double counting with other inventory sectors such as solid waste and buildings, emissions from landfill facilities and facility energy consumption (e.g., electricity, natural gas) were excluded from the FLIGHT dataset.

Transportation

On-Road

On-road GHG emissions were estimated using VMT analysis from Replica data and the BFCOG travel demand model. The model incorporates 2023 VMT activity data from Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS), which estimated annual VMT for all public roadways in each jurisdiction. The WSDOT 2023 HPMS and VMT provides daily and annual VMT for Benton and Franklin Counties, but this data does not capture all VMT in the region; the use of Replica and the travel demand model captures all trips within the Tri-Cities jurisdictions and allows forecasting of future VMT.

Replica and the BFCOG travel demand model were used to determine separate VMT for cars or light trucks and heavy trucks, which would be associated with freight. For heavy-duty freight emissions, VMT was multiplied by fuel- and vehicle-specific emission factors from the 2022 EPA Emission Factors Hub. For light-duty vehicles, 2022 vehicle registration data from each county was used to estimate VMT by fuel type, which was then multiplied by fuel-specific emission factors from the EPA Emission Factors Hub. Electric vehicles (EV) emissions were estimated by using electric efficiency standard provided by U.S. Department of Energy and weighted emission factors for all utility companies within each jurisdiction.

Off-Road

Off-road emissions were estimated using EPA's Motor Vehicle Emissions Simulator (MOVES) model, version 4.0. The model's NONROAD module was run at the county level to generate 2022 daily emissions for all available off-road sectors, including agriculture, airport support, commercial, construction, industrial, lawn and garden, logging, oil field, pleasure craft, railroad, recreational, and underground mining.

These sectors encompass both self-propelled vehicles (e.g., construction equipment) and handheld equipment (e.g., chainsaws). MOVES outputs were provided separately for weekdays and weekend days for each month. To estimate annual emissions, daily results were multiplied by the number of weekdays and weekend days in 2022. The model produces CH_4 and CO_2 emissions by sector and fuel type (gasoline, diesel, LPG, and CNG).

To scale emissions from the county to city level, population and employment-based scaling factors were applied. Different off-road sectors were scaled using the most appropriate metric—such as agricultural employment for agriculture equipment emissions (see **Figure C-154** for details).

Figure C-154. Scaling factors used for each off-road sector.

Off-Road Sector	Scaling Factor
Recreational	Population

[33] Environmental Defense Fund | User Guide for Natural Gas Leakage Rate Modeling Tool https://www.edf.org/sites/default/files/US-Natural-Gas-Leakage-Model-User-Guide.pdf

Construction	Commercial Employment
Industrial	Industrial Employment
Lawn/Garden	Population
Agriculture	Agriculture Employment
Commercial	Commercial Employment
Logging	Industrial Employment
Airport Support	Population
Oil Field	Population
Pleasure Craft	Population
Railroad	Population

For each jurisdiction, 2022 employment data were sourced from the U.S. Census Bureau. Employment was categorized into three sectors—agriculture, industrial, and commercial—to calculate total employment for each category within each jurisdiction. These jurisdiction-level totals were then divided by the corresponding county-level totals to generate scaling factors for each sector.

Public Transit

Transit emissions were calculated using 2022 data on annual fuel use and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for each transit agency, sourced from the National Transit Database. Fuel use was multiplied by standard fuel- and vehicle-specific emission factors from the EPA Emission Factors Hub to estimate total emissions.

Solid Waste

Solid Waste Generation and Disposal

Emissions from the generation and disposal of landfilled solid waste were estimated by multiplying the tons of waste generated in 2022 by material-specific emission factors from the U.S. EPA WARM v16 model. When city-specific solid waste tonnage data were unavailable, county-level totals were scaled by population to estimate city-level waste generation.

Waste and compost generation data were obtained from local waste haulers serving each jurisdiction, where available. Regional data from the WA Statewide 2020 Waste Characterization Study were used for all jurisdictions. These characterization data were mapped to U.S. EPA WARM material categories to estimate emissions by material type. Emission factors were applied based on each landfill's methane capture scenario to estimate methane emissions.

Emissions from transportation of waste to landfills were estimated using travel distances (estimated from Google Maps) and default emission factors from the U.S. Community Protocol.

Approach and Data Limitations

While the GHG inventories sought to include the most accurate, locally specific data available, in some cases data availability was limited and scaling or approximations were necessary. Notable limitations in the data and resulting approaches are summarized below.

Buildings

Electricity

- No notable limitations of approach or data sources.

Natural Gas

- No notable limitations of approach or data sources.

Industrial Processes

- The U.S. EPA FLIGHT tool only includes emissions reported from facilities emitting over 25,000 MTCO2e. Excluded emissions from industrial fuel combustion to minimize double counting other building energy sectors (e.g., natural gas).
- Emissions from U.S. EPA FLIGHT reporting were used to avoid potential double counting, due to lack of data granularity within WA Department of Ecology reporting (Ecology data does not distinguish emissions by fuel type or application).
- Excluded landfill and stationary combustion emissions to minimize double counting with solid waste and building energy emissions estimates.

Transportation

On-Road

- Future VMT estimates for areas outside the BFCOG travel demand model were determined by applying a growth factor to the base year (2022) VMT.
- The growth factor was based on the overall travel demand model VMT increase between 2022 and 2045 for the GHG VMT estimates.
- The growth factor was based on the population growth for the residential VMT estimates used for the target setting.

Off-Road

- City-level off-road emissions were scaled from county emissions.

Public Transit

- Transit VMT data was only available at the county level for Benton and Franklin Counties through the National Transit Database (NTD); therefore, public transit emissions were only calculated at the county level.

Solid Waste

Solid Waste Generation and Disposal

- Landfill: Local tonnage estimates for Richland were unavailable, so scaled based on total Benton County waste tonnage. Residential tonnage was scaled by population and commercial and industrial tonnage was scaled by employment.
- Compost: Compost waste tonnage data was only available for Benton County and Kennewick. Compost tonnage data was only available from Waste Management's Christmas tree composting program within the residential sector.

Sensitivity to Local Conditions

Not all inventory values are based on locally derived data. **Figure C-155** below summarizes some of the limitations and sensitivities of data used in the inventory. Note that the sensitivity of data to local conditions does not relate to a jurisdiction's ability to influence emissions from that sector. For example, although fuel oil

and propane values are based on scaled regional/state data, emissions from those sources could be influenced through building/energy code and local energy efficiency and electrification retrofit incentive programs.

Figure C-155. Summary of data sensitivity to local conditions.

Sector	Values are sensitive to local conditions	Values are sensitive to local conditions, with some exceptions	Values are based on scaled regional/state data	Values are based on scaled national data
BUILDINGS				
Electricity	ü			
Natural Gas	ü			
Industrial Processes	ü			
TRANSPORTATION				
On-Road Vehicles		ü		
Public Transit		ü		
Off-Road Equipment		ü		
SOLID WASTE				
Landfill[34]		ü		
Compost	ü			

Emissions Forecast & Scenario Analysis Methodology

State/Federal Policy Scenario Assumptions

The State/Federal Policy scenario included consideration of the following federal, state, and regional policies:

- Washington State Energy Code (SB 5854)
- Washington Clean Buildings Act (HB 1257)
- Federal Vehicle Regulations (CAFE)
- WA Clean Fuel Standard (HB 1091)

[34] The city of Richland did not provide data on landfilled solid waste. The waste tonnage was scaled based on total population and the number of commercial and industrial employees. For solid waste tonnage, all jurisdictions included in this analysis, except Richland, fall under the category "Values are sensitive to local conditions," while Richland is categorized as "Values are sensitive to local conditions, with some exceptions." All jurisdictions used a regional waste characterization study, which is why the table indicates "Values are sensitive to local conditions, with some exceptions."

- WA Clean Cars Program (SB 5974)
- WA Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA)
- WA Climate Commitment Act (E2SSB 5126)

Additional information regarding policy interpretation and assumptions are provided below.

WA Energy Code (SB 5854)

Interpretation: SB 5854 requires residential and nonresidential construction permitted under the 2031 state energy code to achieve a 70% reduction in annual net energy consumption (compared to a 2006 baseline). State energy codes will be adopted from 2013-2031 to incrementally move towards achieving the 70% reduction by 2031.

Modeling Assumptions: New construction in 2031 and beyond will consume 70% less energy than the 2006 baseline. Scaled 2022 data to 2006 to use a 2006 baseline for this policy analysis. Assumed this baseline applies to all jurisdictions. Using 2022 energy consumption rates, modeled a straight-line reduction in energy consumption rate from 2022 to 2031 to achieve the 70% reduction from baseline (in new buildings only). Assume that any additional energy consumption under the No Action scenario compared to 2022 is from new buildings.
All new commercial buildings must use electric heat pumps for space heating and electric water heating for 50% of water (reflects updates to the 2021 WA State Energy Code).

- Assume commercial water heating accounts for 9% of building energy use; assume space heating accounts for 23% of building energy use (total = 32%; Source: EIA 2015).
- Assume 75% of current commercial buildings use fossil fuel space/water heating.

WA Clean Buildings Act (HB 1257)

Interpretation: Requires all new and existing commercial buildings over 50,000 square feet to reduce their energy use intensity by 15%, compared to the 2009–2018 average.

- Buildings greater than 220,000 square feet must comply by June 1, 2026
- Buildings greater than 90,000 square feet must comply by June 1, 2027
- Buildings greater than 50,000 square feet must comply by June 1, 2028

Modeling Assumptions: Using 2022 county level commercial energy consumption data, calculated energy consumed per sq ft of commercial building space to arrive at average energy use intensity (EUI: energy consumed per sq ft). Scaled 2022 data to 2019 as a proxy for 2009-2018 baseline. Modeled a straight-line reduction in energy use intensity (up to 15%) for Bins 1–3 below for 2023 through respective compliance dates.

- Bin 1: >220K sq ft
- Bin 2: > 90K sq ft
- Bin 3: > 50K sq ft
- Bin 4: 50K sq ft and under (rule does not apply)

Federal Vehicle Regulations (CAFE)

Interpretation: Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards are regulated by the DOT and supported by the EPA, calculates average fuel economy levels for manufacturers and sets related GHG standards. Passenger cars and light trucks require an industry-wide fleet average of approximately 49 mpg for passenger cars and light trucks in model year 2026, increasing fuel efficiency 8% annually for model years 2024–2025 and 10% annually for model year 2026. This will also increase the estimated fleetwide average by nearly 10 miles per gallon for model year 2026, relative to model year 2021.

Modeling Assumptions: Based on PSRC Vision 2050 modeling, scaling 2022 data to 2018 for these assumptions, assumed the following changes in vehicle emissions intensity (g CO_2e/mile):

- Light duty vehicles: 33% reduction from 2018 to 2050.
- Heavy duty vehicles: 26% reduction from 2018 to 2050.

WA Clean Fuel Standard (HB 1091)

Interpretation: The Clean Fuel Standard requires a 20% reduction in the carbon intensity of transportation fuels by 2038, compared to a 2017 baseline level. Reductions in carbon intensity may be achieved through cleaner fuels or by purchasing clean fuel credits from cleaner producers such as those providing electricity as fuel. Boats, trains, aircraft, and military vehicles & equipment are excluded.

Modeling Assumptions: Model assumes the 2022 transportation fuel emissions factors are applicable for 2017–2023 (2017 is policy baseline year). Overall, policy calls for 20% reduction in carbon intensity of transportation fuels by 2038.

EV/fuel contributions: Since there are concerns with WA's short-term ability to scale up low carbon fuels, for 2030 the split of clean fuel/EV is closer to 35%/65%, compared to 50%/50% by 2038.

Therefore, compared to baseline, we modeled the following for fuel carbon intensities:

- 3.5% reduction in per-gallon gasoline & diesel vehicle (passenger, heavy duty, transit) emissions from cleaner fuels (NOT EVs) by 2030.
- 10% reduction in per-gallon gasoline & diesel vehicle (passenger, heavy duty, transit) emissions from cleaner fuels (NOT EVs) by 2040.
- Maintain 10% reduction levels to 2050.

Given ICE ban, compared to baseline, we will model the following for EV use:

- 6.5% transition of gasoline/diesel passenger vehicles to EV by 2030.
- 10% transition of gasoline/diesel passenger vehicles to EV by 2040.
- Maintain 10% reduction levels to 2050.

WA Clean Cars Program (SB 5974)

Interpretation: Establishes a target that, "all publicly owned and privately owned passenger and light duty vehicles of model year 2030 or later that are sold, purchased, or registered in Washington state be electric vehicles."

Modeling Assumptions: As part of Move Ahead Washington program, WA would ban sale of gasoline/diesel ICE passenger vehicles starting in 2030. For this policy, assuming a 15-year vehicle turnover rate, with the following proportion of new sales EV (a conservative estimate given that the ICE ban is currently a goal and lacks a clear accountability mechanism):

- 25% by 2026

- 65% by 2030
- 100% by 2035
- Maintained by 100% thereafter

WA Clean Energy Transformation Act (CETA)

Interpretation: CETA applies to all electric utilities serving retail customers in Washington and sets specific milestones: By 2025, utilities must eliminate coal-fired electricity from their state portfolios; by 2030, utilities must be greenhouse gas neutral, with flexibility to use limited amounts of electricity from natural gas if it is offset by other actions; by 2045, utilities must supply Washington customers with electricity that is 100% renewable or non-emitting, with no provision for offsets.

Modeling Assumptions: Electricity will be GHG neutral (electricity emissions factor equals zero) in 2030 and beyond with a straight-line emissions factor reduction from 2022 to 2030. For utilities that rely on coal for electricity generation, additionally model straight-line reduction to 0% coal by December 31, 2025. Assume coal is replaced by renewables. This action impacts electricity emissions factors (reduces emissions per unit of energy consumed).

WA Climate Commitment Act (E2SSB 5126)

Interpretation: The Climate Commitment Act (known as Cap and Invest) places an economy-wide cap on carbon to meet state GHG reduction targets and remain consistent with best available science, while minimizing the use of offsets to meet those targets. Every polluting facility covered under the program needs to hold one allowance for every ton of greenhouse gas that it emits. Based on an environmental justice review, 35–40% of investments must be made in overburdened communities to reduce health disparities and create environmental benefits, with an additional 10% allocated for tribal programs and projects.

Modeling Assumptions: State estimates that CCA will account for 26.2 million $MTCO_2e$ in statewide reductions by 2030. 2018 total emissions = 99.57 million $MTCO_2e$. Scaled 2022 data to 2018 to obtain a proxy baseline.

Key regulated CCA sectors relevant to the geographic inventory include:

- Natural gas (however, this sector will receive directly allocated no-cost allowances).
- Industrial processes (however, Emissions-Intensive Trade-Exposed facilities will receive directly allocated no-cost allowances).
- Transportation fuels (however, already covered to some extent by Clean Fuels Standard).

Therefore, assume the following for CCA:

- Assume CETA addresses emissions reductions in electricity sector.
- Apply -10% emissions factor adjustment to natural gas (assuming increase in hydrogen or RNG in fuel mix) to 2030.
- Apply -15% emissions reduction estimate (consider applying a reduction factor) to industrial process emissions to 2030.
- Apply -23.5% fuel emissions factor reduction estimate (consider applying a reduction factor) to transportation emissions to 2030 and -30% to 2040 (includes reductions from CFS).

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Richland
Columbia River
Pasco
Columbia Center
Vista
Clearwater
Bridge-to-Bridge
Downtown
Southridge
Canyon Lakes
South Highlands

LEGEND

2025 Future Land Use Designations

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed
- Industrial
- Public Facility
- Open Space

- Kennewick City Limits
- Kennewick Urban Growth Areas
- Parcels
- State Highway Routes
- Rail Lines
- Columbia River
- Irrigation Canal

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

KENNEWICK WASHINGTON

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Richland
Columbia River
Pasco
Columbia Center
Vista
Clearwater
Bridge-to-Bridge
Downtown
Southridge
Canyon Lakes
South Highlands

LEGEND

2046 Future Land Use Designations

- Low Density Residential
- Medium-High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed
- Industrial
- Public Facility
- Open Space

- Kennewick City Limits
- Kennewick Urban Growth Areas
- Parcels
- State Highway Routes
- Rail Lines
- Columbia River
- Irrigation Canal

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

KENNEWICK WASHINGTON

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Richland
Columbia River
Pasco
Columbia Center
Vista
Clearwater
Bridge-to-Bridge
Downtown
Southridge
Canyon Lakes
South Highlands

LEGEND

2046 Future Land Use Designations

- Low Density Residential
- Medium-High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed
- Industrial
- Public Facility
- Open Space
- Area-Specific Designation Change

- Kennewick City Limits
- Kennewick Urban Growth Areas
- Parcels
- State Highway Routes
- Rail Lines
- Columbia River
- Irrigation Canal

0 0.5 1 Miles

N

KENNEWICK WASHINGTON

City of Kennewick

HOUSING ACTION PLAN



Public Review Draft July 2026

PUBL

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to the Kennewick community for sharing your time, knowledge, and energy to shape this housing action plan that meets your needs and interests.

City Council

Jason McShane, Mayor
Chuck Torelli, Mayor Pro Tem
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Brad Klippert
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Columbia Basin Veterans Center: Kristopher Dahir
Domestic Violence Services: Angie Pacheco
Elijah Family Homes—Addiction and Recovery Housing: Lisa Godwin
Habitat for Humanity (Tri-County) & Community Action Connections: Jet Richardson
Home Builders Association: Jeff Losey
Kennewick Housing Authority: Hermelinda Sierra
Numerica Credit Union: Michelle Morales
Seasons Housing: Jason Bliss
Senior Life Resources: Brian Kinner
SnipesH3 Transitional Housing: Tobaski Snipes
Tri-City Association of Realtors: Andrew Magallanez
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Executive Summary

Kennewick's Housing Action Plan (HAP) identifies strategies and implementing actions to promote greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels. It is an actionable policy document that outlines a toolkit of concrete steps the City and its partners can take over the next 5 years to meet local housing needs. The HAP takes a comprehensive approach to leverage resources and previous and current planning efforts and provide options to implement cohesive, effective, and feasible housing strategies tailored to the Kennewick community. Early and continuous public engagement was conducted to create a HAP that meets the needs and interest of the whole Kennewick community.

The HAP was developed concurrent with the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and builds on policy direction in the plan (most notably in the Land Use and Housing elements). Strategies and implementation actions—such as revisions to development regulations, housing programs, and infrastructure spending priorities—are aligned between the two documents, with additional detail or future phases incorporated into this HAP. The proposed strategy options in this HAP are based on data and analysis vetted and grounded through an inclusive and robust public conversation. **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan** contains the full Housing Needs Assessment including the community profile, engagement summaries, displacement and racially disparate impacts analysis, and assessment of current and future housing needs.

Objectives

The HAP objectives listed below were developed by identifying current and future housing needs and listening to community ideas and feedback. These objectives drive the recommended regulatory, programmatic, citywide planning, and funding strategies.

1. Make it easier to build affordable ownership and rental housing to **increase housing variety and choice** for more people.
2. Ensure opportunities for **affordable, safe, and properly sized housing** for families with children and older adults.
3. Adopt new **financial tools and incentives** to promote development of affordable housing, smaller units, and middle housing types.
4. **Partner** with housing educators, providers, and other groups to find equitable housing solutions and remove systemic barriers.

Housing Actions & Strategies

The housing actions in **Exhibit 1** are organized by broader strategy sections of this plan. More details on the specific actions, suggested prioritization, and estimated timeline, cost, and lead(s) for each strategy are discussed in **Section 5**. There are also many sub-sections which may require different timelines if additional community outreach is needed, alignment with the City's annual budget process is necessary, or there is a desire to roll policy updates into future planning efforts.

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Exhibit 1. Summary of Housing Actions and Strategies

Strategy
Regulatory Strategies
1.1 Expand the allowed uses.
1.2 Adjust form and intensity standards.
1.3 Adjust other standards.
1.4 Streamline the permitting process.
Programmatic Strategies
2.1 Anti-displacement strategies.
2.2 Homelessness strategies.
2.3 Support staffing needs.
Citywide Planning Strategies
3.1 Five-year implementation progress report.
3.2 Public land for affordable housing.
Funding Strategies
4.1 Adopt a multifamily tax exemption program.
4.2 Adjust development fees.
4.3 Local bank funding.
4.4 Taxation strategies.
4.5 City funding.
4.6 State advocacy.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

Next Steps

Rapidly increasing housing costs, mismatches between housing supply and needs, and racially disparate impacts for Hispanic or Latino households are common in the Tri-Cities region and are not unique to Kennewick. The scope of both regional and local housing challenges demand that Kennewick pursue a variety of strategies and actions immediately and simultaneously. This HAP informs and recommends high priorities for 2026/2027 and beyond, such as raising SEPA thresholds (**Strategy 1.4.1**), building capacity amongst staff to implement the HAP (**Strategy 2.3.1**), and adopting a multifamily property tax exemption ordinance (**Strategy 4.1**).

Implementation of the HAP will be a collective effort. The City will continue to work in partnership with stakeholders and the community to support housing that is affordable, safe, and accessible for residents of all income levels—both in Kennewick and in the broader Tri-Cities area. See **Section 5** for more details on implementation priorities.

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Background Information

Project Purpose

Kennewick is a great place to live, but it is getting more expensive. Housing costs are typically the largest expense for a household. When a household can afford where they live, it enables them to purchase other essentials (such as food, healthcare, and transportation) without making difficult tradeoffs. A sufficient supply of housing which is affordable across the income spectrum supports economic vitality and a high quality of life in Kennewick.

This Housing Action Plan (HAP) is a five-year plan with a toolkit of strategies and implementation actions to promote greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels in the City of Kennewick. It is an actionable policy document that outlines concrete steps the City and its partners can take to meet local housing needs. The HAP takes a comprehensive approach to leverage resources and previous and current planning efforts and provides options to implement cohesive, effective, and feasible housing strategies tailored to the Kennewick community. Its proposed strategy options are based on data and analysis vetted and grounded through an inclusive and robust public conversation.

The HAP was developed concurrent with the City's Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. Strategies and implementation actions are aligned between the two documents, with additional detail or future phases incorporated into this HAP. **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan** contains the full Housing Needs Assessment including the community profile, engagement summaries, displacement and racially disparate impacts analysis, and assessment of current and future housing needs. A summary of these is provided below.

Housing Needs

Kennewick is expected to see demand for an additional 12,626 housing units through 2046 as well as 57 emergency housing beds (**Exhibit 2**). The greatest need for new units is at the lowest end of the affordability spectrum. An estimated 6,889 units will need to be affordable to households with incomes at or below 80% area median income (AMI), with an estimated 5,117 of these units requiring subsidies or incentives to produce. A total of 2,604 units are needed for households earning 30% AMI or less, including 1,597 units of permanent supportive housing that include wrap-around services for people who need support to maintain residency. These estimates are future-looking based on expected net population growth.

Exhibit 2. City of Kennewick Adopted Housing Growth Targets (2020–2046)

Total Housing Need	0-30% AMI Non-PSH	0-30% AMI PSH	>30 to ≤50% AMI	>50 to ≤80% AMI	>80 to ≤100% AMI	>100 to ≤120% AMI	>120% AMI	Emergency Housing Beds
12,626	1,597	1,007	2,513	1,772	974	1,104	3,659	**57**

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.
Notes: While additional units have been built since 2020, the affordability level of those units is unknown at this time. These units have therefore not been deducted from the overall target to ensure the analysis doesn't imply less remaining need than actually exists. Emergency housing includes emergency housing and shelter and is in addition to permanent housing needs.
Sources: City of Kennewick, 2025; Benton County, 2025.

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Housing Affordability

Housing costs in Kennewick have increased significantly in recent years. As of early- to mid-2025, an average 1-bedroom apartment cost $1,235 to rent and an average 2-bedroom apartment cost $1,494 to rent.[1] The median sales price of a townhome was $376,000, and the median sales price of a single-family home was $428,000.[2]

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a home as affordable if the household is spending less than 30% of their gross income on housing costs (inclusive of both rent or mortgage as well as utilities). By this standard, **nearly a third (30%) of all households in Kennewick were cost-burdened in 2021 or about 9,200 households in total.** About 3,700 of these were severely cost-burdened, meaning they spend more than half of their income on housing.[3] Escalating housing costs are a concern for both renters and owners. Since 2020, housing costs have increased faster than incomes, so the number of cost-burdened households has likely grown since these estimates.

- **Market-rate rental housing is not meeting the needs of residents with lower incomes.** A limited supply of rental housing options in many neighborhoods combined with low apartment vacancy rates has resulted in additional upward pressure on market rents and rents have increased significantly since 2020. As of summer 2025, a household needs to have an income equivalent to 58% of MFI to afford to rent the average 1- or 2-bedroom apartment, but about 25% of all households have an income below 50% MFI (and about 44% of renters have an income below 50% MFI).[4]
- **The cost to own is out of reach for most households and there is a shortage of homes available to own.** Housing values have been rising faster than incomes and there is a lack of supply compared to demand, resulting in increasingly limited home ownership opportunities. The existing housing inventory also consists primarily of larger detached homes with minimal supply of smaller units. A household needs to have an income equivalent to 99% of MFI to afford to buy a median priced detached single-family home, but only 46% of all households have an income above MFI.
- **Housing affordability needs are disproportionate across tenure, income groups, and racial and ethnic groups.** Renters, lower-income households, and Hispanic or Latino households are more likely to be cost burdened and face other challenges in finding

Household Income: AMI vs. MFI

AMI: Area median income is calculated based on the incomes of all households, including one-person households. A household's income determines what kinds of housing and which locations are affordable to them. As of 2023, the median household income in the city was nearly $73,000 for all households, but this varies considerably based on tenure, household type, and race and ethnicity.

MFI: Affordable housing policies often classify all households by income level relative to the HUD-area median family income, or MFI. Benton County's MFI was $105,600 in 2025; this represents the median income of a 4-person household. When classifying households by income level, HUD adjusts for household size. So, for example, the threshold for determining 80% MFI is lower for a 2-person household than it is for a 4-person household. Note that MFI is a different measure than median household income. They are not comparable because median household income includes all households, not just family households.

Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S1901); HUD Income Limits.

[1] WCRER Housing Market Data Toolkit: City Rental Dashboard and Housing Market Data Dashboards, 2025; Zillow, 2025; BERK, 2025.

[2] Redfin Monthly Housing Market Data, 2025; BERK, 2025.

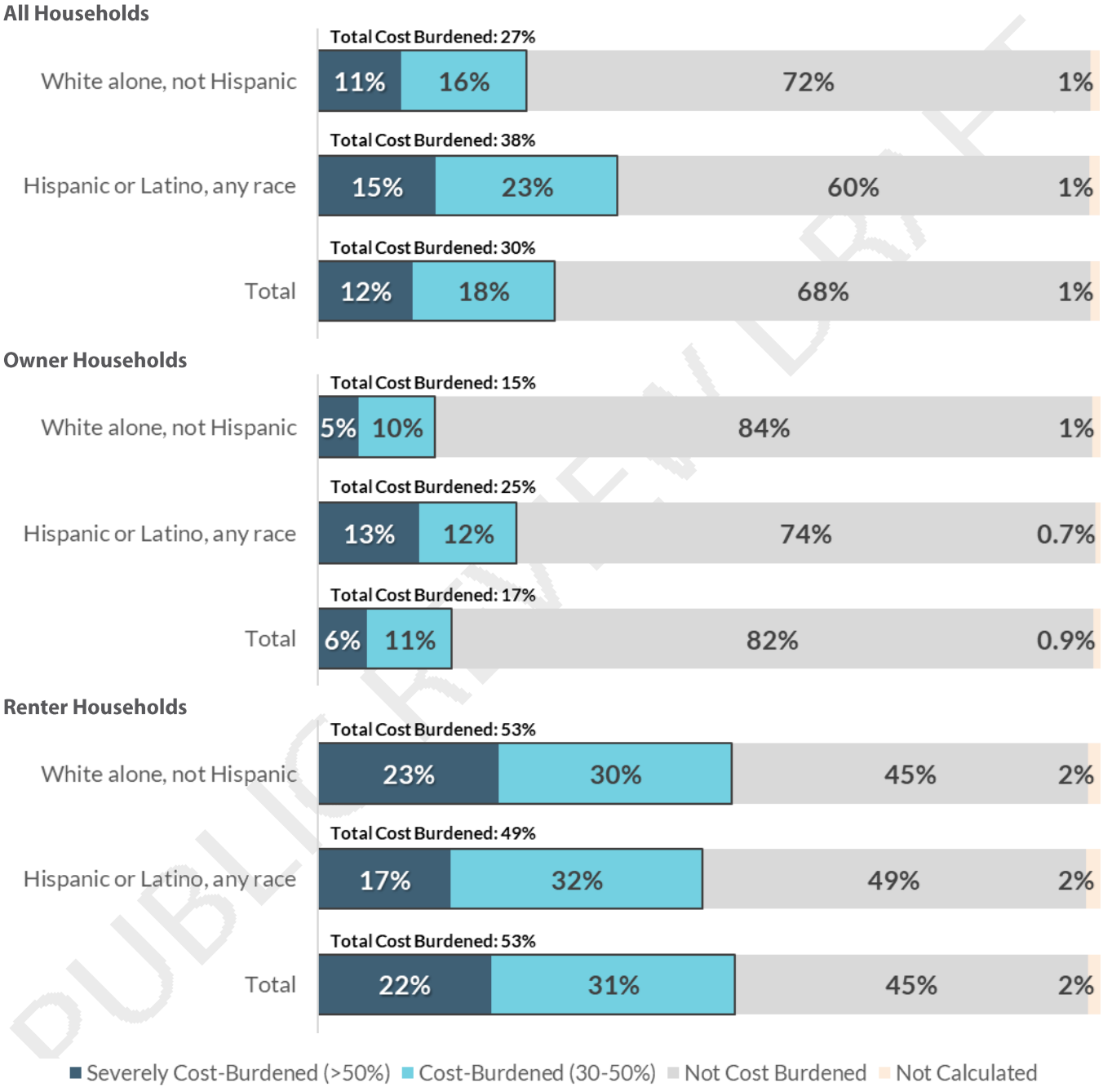
[3] HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 8).

[4] A portion of renter households in the 50-80% MFI range likely also have household incomes below the 58% MFI needed to afford an average 1- or 2-bedroom rental, but the exact amount is unknown.

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affordable housing. For example, renter households were much more commonly cost burdened than owner households (53% versus 17%), and Hispanic or Latino households (particularly Hispanic or Latino owner households) are more likely to be cost burdened (**Exhibit 3**).

Exhibit 3. Cost Burden Status of Households by Tenure and Racial and Ethnic Group (2021)



Note: HUD does not calculate cost burden status for households with zero or negative income. These are represented as "Not Calculated" in the chart.
Sources: HUD CHAS, 2017-2021 (Table 9); BERK, 2025.

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- **Diversifying the city's housing stock to include more smaller unit, multiunit, and rental housing could potentially lower housing costs overall.** The real estate market in Kennewick is moving in this direction but likely not at the pace required to meet housing needs. Affordable land is scarce in the city (particularly for multifamily and affordable housing), land prices and development costs are high, and assembling a development site from multiple adjoining parcels is challenging. Low density limits for multifamily development, high parking requirements, lack of alignment between landscaping/open space standards and other community goals, and aging water infrastructure in the city's older northern neighborhoods have also hindered the diversity of housing production in Kennewick. Single-family houses also remain a strong market preference, especially for young families, but most stakeholders agree a wider variety of housing is needed to serve different incomes and populations and engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP found strong community support for more infill housing.
- **More than half of new housing units produced in Kennewick by 2046 need to be affordable for households with incomes below 80% AMI to rent or buy (6,889 units; Exhibit 2).** For the lowest income households, often the market does not produce affordable housing even if a diverse range of housing types are built. Over 5,000 units will likely require subsidies or incentives to produce, and about 2,600 units are needed for households earning 30% AMI or less (including about 1,600 units of permanent supportive housing with wrap-around services for people who need support to maintain residency).
- **More affordable housing incentives and additional City support and/or investment are needed to help make affordable housing more feasible.** The City estimates there is a funding gap of about $50 million per year to support affordable housing production over the 20-year planning period if no new funding strategies are pursued.[5] Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP found strong community support for incentives for affordable projects or for projects that reserve some units as affordable. Stakeholders and the public expressed desire for flexible zoning standards, pre-approved plan permitting, fee waivers, and other incentives that speed up affordable housing development. Some developers suggested that less regulations overall from the City would incentivize additional affordable housing development. New opportunities to build affordable housing on public land (e.g., surplus City, County, School District, or State lands) are also viewed as promising but should be balanced with concerns about losing public open space and preserving sites for future capital facilities.
- **Homelessness in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities region is a real problem not confined to any one sector of the population, but shelter capacity remains limited.** The unhoused population includes those that are accommodated in emergency shelters, stay temporarily with family or friends or other transitory housing, or are "unsheltered" living on the streets, in vegetated areas, in vehicles, or other conditions that do not provide safe shelter. A limited number of emergency housing beds are currently available in Kennewick, although several partners assist with temporary or rapid re-housing for individuals currently experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness.[6] Stakeholders also expressed a need for additional measures that help prevent people from losing stable housing in the first place.

[5] Commerce, Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026, pg. 64-65.

[6] Benton County Homeless Shelters and Partner Agencies, 2025; Safe Harbor Support Center My Friends Place, 2025; Snipes H3 About and Programs & Services, 2025.

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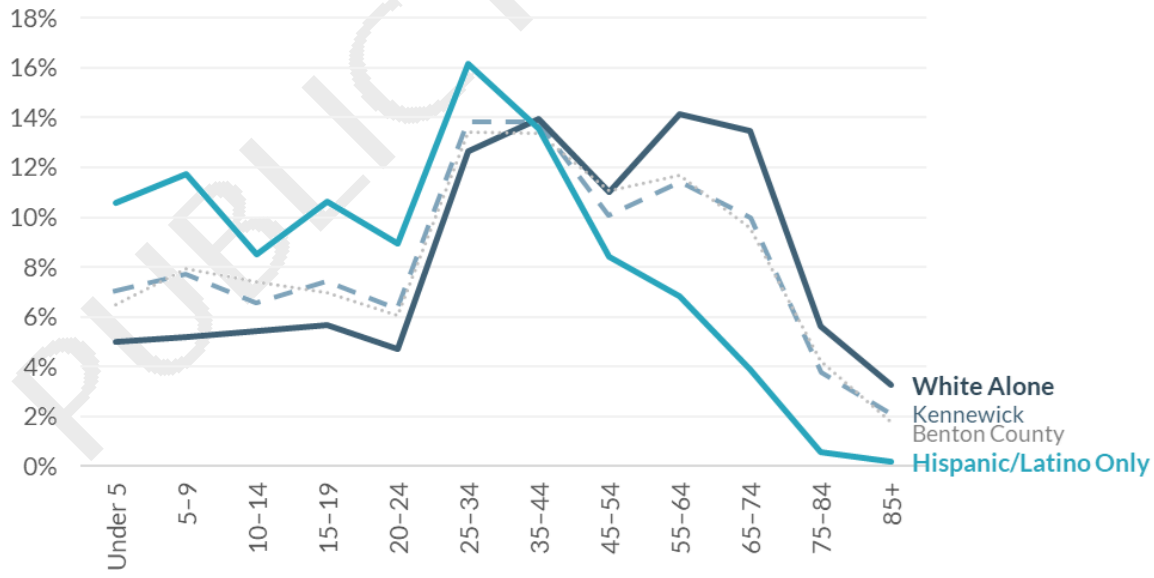
Housing for People of Different Ages & Abilities

Housing for young families, older adults, people with disabilities, and those experiencing homelessness is particularly important in Kennewick and the broader Tri-Cities region. Diversifying the city's housing stock consistent with changing demographic needs and desires could help meet unique needs across Kennewick households while also lowering housing costs overall.

- **Meeting the housing needs of an aging population will be an increasingly important issue in the next 20 years.** About a third of households include one or more people aged 65 or over and the proportion of adults 65 and older countywide is expected to increase through 2050.[7] Demand for accessible supportive housing and services will likely increase over time. Older adults may desire single-family homes at retirement age, but as their abilities and needs change, other forms of housing with smaller lots, townhomes, or assisted living may be attractive for maintenance, accessibility, and affordability purposes (particularly for older adults on fixed incomes). These forms of housing are denser and encouraged in Downtown and other mixed-use parts of the city where residents would also have more access to healthcare and other supportive services.
- **Kennewick is a hub for young families** with nearly half of the city's population under the age of 35 (49%). About one quarter of the population is under age 18 (26%) and one third of households include one or more people under 18. This is about the same as the county as a whole but higher than statewide, which suggests that housing for families with children is particularly important in Kennewick and the surrounding area. This need is likely greater amongst Hispanic or Latino households given the variation in the distribution of age and in the total population by race and ethnicity (**Exhibit 4**).

> "I am a millennial with a graduate degree and a professional job. With the current housing market and interest rates, **I'm unable to afford to buy a home for my family of four."**
>
> —Amanda, renter

Exhibit 4. Population by Age Range and Race and Ethnicity (2023)



Note: While alone population is exclusive of persons who identify as Hispanic or Latino.
Sources: ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2019-2023 (Table S0101, B01101H, and B01001I); BERK, 2025.

[7] From 17% in 2022 to 21% in 2050 according to OFM projections (GMA 2022 Medium Series Projections, 2022).

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Racially Disparate Impacts (RDI)

Since 2018, the percentage of Kennewick's population who identify as Hispanic or Latino has grown while the percentage of White, non-Hispanic persons declined, and this trend is likely to continue.[8] As of 2023, about 32% of Kennewick residents identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) and 24% speak Spanish at home, higher than several neighboring communities (Richland and West Richland), countywide, and statewide.

"Racially disparate impacts" occur when policies, practices, rules or other systems result in a disproportionate effect on one or more racial groups (e.g., Hispanic or Latino households in Kennewick). Many past and present zoning policies used in cities across the nation have racially disparate impacts, reflecting a systemic issue because of federal laws, programs, and economic and housing policies dating back half a century or more. A housing action plan can and should proactively address the history of racial and income inequality.

Common racially disparate policies and practices at the local level include the following:

- Minimum lot sizes.
- Lack of available land zoned for multifamily housing and middle housing (like duplexes and townhomes).
- Excessive minimum setbacks, building height limits, parking standards, historic preservation standards, and other restrictions that limit the housing capacity on individual sites, especially for multifamily and middle housing.
- Multifamily housing not allowed near amenities like parks, schools, grocery stores, and healthcare facilities.
- Multifamily housing only allowed in busy commercial districts, polluted industrial areas, in hazardous areas like floodplains, and/or near loud or unsafe arterial roads.
- Excessive fees, complicated processes, or unclear regulations, especially for small projects commonly undertaken by local homeowners and small investors like adding an accessory dwelling unit (ADU) or building a duplex.
- Complete prohibitions on low-cost building materials.
- Lack of trees and park space in areas near multifamily housing or neighborhoods with lower incomes.
- Lack of low-cost transportation options like pedestrian/bike routes and transit service connecting multifamily housing to jobs and services.

Methods of dividing people by race and class largely rely on differences of wealth, income, and tenure between people's race and ethnicities. In Kennewick, for example, 37% of all households are occupied by renters. About 31% of White households are renters, while 55% of Hispanic and Latino households are renters.[9] Policies that restrict the supply and price of rental housing therefore have a disproportionate impact on Hispanic or Latino residents. Further, more than half of all renter-occupied households are considered cost-burdened, while just one in five owner-occupied households are considered cost-burdened.

Hispanic or Latino populations experience a moderate level of segregation within Kennewick and compared to Benton County overall. While there is not complete exclusion in neighborhoods, White, non-Hispanic residents are more likely to live in the Columbia Center area and southern neighborhoods (e.g., Creekstone and Canyon Lakes) while residents who identify as Hispanic or Latino (of any race) are more likely to live in and

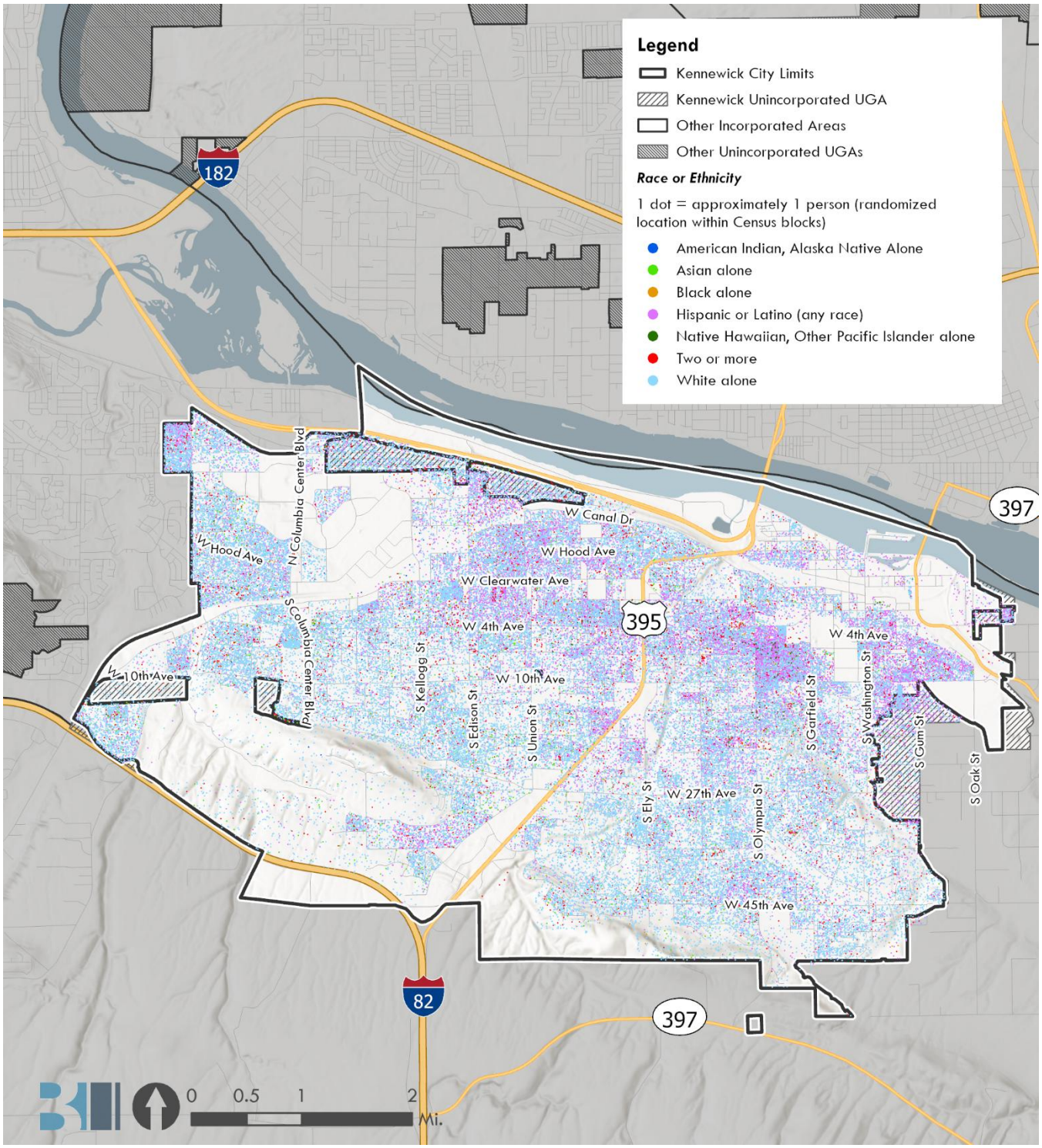
[8] ACS 5-Year Estimates, 2014-2018 and 2019-2023 (Table DP05); OFM Projections of the state population by age, sex, race and Hispanic origin (2010-2040), 2018.

[9] HUD CHAS, 2017–2021 (Table 9).

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around Downtown and in the West Highlands area (**Exhibit 5**). Health disparities generally rank higher in the northern portions of the city and current noise levels are highest along major arterials, near the railway, and under the flight path of the Tri-Cities airport where Hispanic or Latino residents are more likely to live.

Exhibit 5. Population Density by Race and Ethnicity (2020)



Sources: US Decennial Census, 2020; BERK, 2026.

Racially disparate impacts have been gaining much-needed attention across the state and country, even earning a statement on zoning from the White House in 2021. Other types of racially disparate impacts have historically included: redlining, where people of color were not able to access loans and credit in certain neighborhoods; highways built through communities of color; and disinvestment in infrastructure like transit, schools, and parks in communities of color.

Under RCW 36.70A.070(2), cities in their comprehensive plans must identify "local policies and regulations that result in racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing." This mandatory work is part of the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (see the **Housing Element** and **Volume II**) and **shows evidence of racially disparate impacts and exclusion in housing for Hispanic or Latino households in Kennewick as discussed above.** This HAP provides a number of strategies to address most of these issues, which focus on easing regulations and streamlining standards to make it easier to build middle housing and multifamily housing in more locations.

Public Engagement

This HAP was informed by early and continuous public engagement integrated with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**). Engagement was conducted to create a plan that meets the needs and interest of the whole Kennewick community with themes integrated into the **Housing Needs** section above. Key activities included:

- **One-on-one interviews** with 10 stakeholders, including 4 interviews and 1 email correspondence with City Councilmembers to understand their priorities and vision for housing policies and 5 interviews with community organizations and City entities to speak to housing needs.
- **Visioning survey** with housing specific questions (802 responses between June – September 2025).
- **Targeted housing questionnaire** to better understand the needs of renters and lower-income households, distributed by the City via partnerships with community-based organizations (60 responses between December 2025 – February 2026).
- **Housing Work Group** comprised of 18 individuals from 15 organizations, including affordable and emergency housing providers, market-rate developers, and representatives from City Departments—to help identify housing barriers, provide input on strategies and policies to address impacts and begin to undo racially disparate impacts in housing, and ensure the Housing Element and HAP reflect Kennewick's unique context and needs (three meetings between October 2025 – May 2026).
- **Planning Commission and City Council briefings** on identified needs and proposed strategies for the Housing Element and Housing Action Plan (October 2025 and March 2026)
- **Draft plan presentations** at the May 2026 Open House and Planning Commission Workshop (Scheduled for August 2026)
- **Public hearing** at Planning Commission (Scheduled for August 2026)
- **City Council review and adoption** (Scheduled for September 2026)

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State Law Updates

Since 2019, the Washington State Legislature has passed several housing-related preemptions and other housing regulations, with many of the biggest changes in the last few years. Below is a subset of legislation that impacts Kennewick's approach to housing most significantly. Cross references to HAP strategies are provided where actions Kennewick should or could take are recommended to meet new requirements.

State Preemption

State preemption is the invalidation of some action by, or the wresting of power from, a local government by the state legislature.

Direct Effects to City Government

- HB 1377 (2019): Provide a density bonus for low-income affordable housing on properties owned by religious organizations. This was updated by HB 1859 (2026) to reduce the minimum affordable housing requirement from 100% of units to 20-50% of units. See **Strategy 1.2.5** and related **Strategy 3.2.3**.
- SB 5258 (2023): Also, impact fees for residential development must be lower for smaller units. See **Strategy 4.2.4** for recommendations to comply.
- SB 5491 (2023): Cities are encouraged to allow single-stairway residential buildings up to six stories tall and with up to four units per floor (currently such buildings can only be up to three stories tall). See **Strategy 1.3.3** for recommendations.
- HB 1042 (2023): Cities cannot use development regulations (such as density limits or parking) to prevent additions of housing with an existing building envelope in a zone that allows multifamily use.
- HB 1181 (2023): Comprehensive Plans must include a Climate Change & Resiliency Element.
- HB 1293 (2023): Establishes standards for local design review. See **Strategy 1.2.4** for recommendations.
- SB 5184 (2025) and SB 6015 (2024): Sets limits on how much minimum parking can be required for residential and commercial uses, and sets limitations on parking space dimensions. See **Strategy 1.3.1** for recommendations.
- HB 1757 (2025): Cities cannot require a change of use permit for a proposed conversion of an existing building to an allowed residential use in commercial, mixed use, or residential zones.
- HB 1096 (2025): Cities must allow administrative lot splits. See **Strategy 1.3.4**.
- HB 1183 (2025): Cities may not require minimum off-street parking spaces or building façade modulation for affordable housing and other types of projects.
- SB 6026 (2026): Cities must allow residential in commercial and mixed use zones. See **Strategy 1.1.1**.

Indirect Effects to City Government

- SB 5412 (2023): Provides the option for cities to categorically exempt all project actions with one or more residential housing units that meet certain criteria within incorporated UGAs from additional environmental review under SEPA, also known as the SEPA infill exemption bill. SB 5412 is optional and one of several way a jurisdiction may raise SEPA categorical exemption thresholds.
- HB 1771 (2023) and SB 5198 (2023): Rules are strengthened for giving mobile home park residents an opportunity to purchase the property when it is proposed for closure or conversion, and for displaced residents to receive relocation assistance. See **Strategy 2.1.3**.

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- HB 1474 (2023): Creates statewide down payment assistance program for first-time homebuyers with income less than the AMI who were themselves, or are descendants of someone who was, excluded from homeownership in Washington by a racially restrictive real estate covenant prior to 1968.
- HB 1074 (2023) and SB 5197 (2023): Strengthened tenant protections upon move out or eviction. See **Strategy 2.1.1**.
- HB 1326 (2023): Authorizes waivers for utility connection charges for nonprofits, public development authorities, housing authorities, or local agencies that provide emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or affordable housing. See **Strategy 4.2.3**.
- E2SSB 6175 (2024): Allows sales and use tax deferral programs to encourage conversion of underutilized commercial land (including surface parking lots) into affordable housing. See **Strategy 4.4.2**.
- HB 1217 (2025): Sets a limit on how much a landlord may increase a tenant's rent over a 12-month period. See **Strategy 2.1.1**.
- HB 1353 (2025): Allows cities planning under GMA to establish and administer programs in which registered architects can "self-certify" that the development of a detached ADU complies with applicable building code requirements. See **Strategy 1.4.3**.
- SB 5298 (2025): Adds notice of sale requirements when a manufactured or mobile home community owner intends to sell or consider a purchase offer (must also notify local jurisdictions, any known tenant organizations, and any relevant housing authority). See **Strategy 2.1.1** and related **Strategy 2.1.2**.
- SB 5148 (2025): Provides the option to request that Commerce review and certify the City's Housing Element and development regulations for compliance with GMA.
- SB 6027 (2026): Gives more flexibility in how local governments use tax dollars for affordable housing (for example, to fund maintenance and operations of existing buildings or for rental assistance).
- HB 1974 (2026): Helps reduce the time it takes to secure land for housing development through local land banking authorities in cities and counties. See **Strategy 3.2.2**.
- HB 2442 (2026): Provides local governments tax resources and fund flexibility, such as extending levy lid lifts for up to 10 years and reenactment of RCW 82.46.035 which allows using REET 2 funds for affordable housing.
- HB 2418 (2026): Clarifies that a local government's determination of whether a project permit application is complete is procedural, rather than substantive. See **Strategy 1.4.4**.

Other Legislation Already Addressed by Kennewick

Other significant housing legislation passed since 2019 that Kennewick has already addressed or is addressing concurrent with the Periodic Update are listed below. Cross references to HAP strategies are provided where the City could (but is not required to) take additional actions to further support the intent of the legislation.

- HB 1754 (2020): Places new limitations on the ability of jurisdictions to regulate temporary housing for unhoused individuals on religious organization property. See KMC 18.12.255.
- HB 1220 (2021): Requires local jurisdictions to plan for and accommodate housing affordable to all economic segments of the population and to begin to undo identified racially disparate impacts, displacement, and exclusion in housing. This mandatory work is part of the City's 2026 Comprehensive

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Plan Periodic Update, and is further supported by several HAP strategies, including **Strategy 1.1**, **Strategy 2.1**, **Strategy 3.1**, and **Strategy 4.1**.

- HB 1110 (2023): Reduces other zoning and permitting barriers to middle housing. Kennewick updated its code in 2025 via Ord. 25-6102 to comply with HB 1110, but could make additional revisions to support middle housing as discussed in **Strategy 1.2**.
- HB 1337 (2023): Preempts common regulations on ADUs. Kennewick updated its code in 2023 via Ord. No 6037 to comply with HB 1337, but could make additional revisions to support ADUs as discussed in **Strategy 1.4.3**.
- SB 5258 (2023): Cities must provide a short plat procedure for unit lot subdivisions, which is a division of a parent lot into separately owned unit lots (this is often a useful tool for middle housing). This was updated by SB 5559 (2025). Kennewick updated its code in 2026 via Ord. No 26-6167. See KMC Chapter 17.14 and related **Strategy 1.3.4** regarding lot splits.
- HB 1998 (2024): Must allow co-living on lots that allow at least six multifamily residential units, including mixed use zoning. Kennewick updated its code in 2025 via Ord. No 25-6155, Ord. No 25-6162, and Ord. No. 25-6164 to comply with HB 1998.
- HB 2266 (2026): Aims to make it easier to site supportive, transitional, and emergency housing and shelters (STEP) by regulating permanent supportive housing and transitional housing as residential uses and indoor emergency shelters and housing as uses with external impacts. This mandatory work is part of the City's 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update (see **Strategy 1.1.2**).

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1 Regulatory Strategies

The City of Kennewick does not directly supply or control the private housing market but does shape what is possible on Kennewick's land through zoning and development regulations.

1.1 Allowed Uses

1.1.1 Residential Use Standards

Action: Promote more housing types in more zones to enhance housing choices and affordability.

Allowing a variety of housing types to be developed across the city is an important strategy for encouraging housing construction. Kennewick currently allows a mix of housing types in commercial and residential zones, but some adjustments to the permitted use standards could help some technical barriers and increase the land market available to housing developers. This action proposes amendments and additional footnotes for Residential Use Table 18.12.010 A.1.

> When buying our first home in Kennewick, **we struggled to find one that matched our criteria for a livable and walkable downtown.** As a busy family, we did not want a big yard and the responsibility to take care of it; we wanted our young child to walk and bike to shops and parks and the library; we wanted a bike lane on our street; we wanted a cozy neighborhood without walls and sprawling grass lawns that disconnect people."
>
> —Emily, homeowner

Multifamily

SB 6026 passed in 2026 mandates several changes for regulating multifamily use in Kennewick. The law prohibits cities with at least 30,000 population from "excluding residential uses in areas zoned for commercial or mixed-use development." **Kennewick's deadline to comply with the law is 18 months after the effective date, or December 11, 2027.**

To implement, multifamily must be allowed outright in the Commercial Auto Row (CAR) and Business Park (BP) zones. While multifamily is only one type of "residential use" referenced by the law, it is anticipated this would satisfy the intent of the law and single-family use would not need to also be allowed in those zones. Note that deletion and consolidation of some commercial zones, including CAR and BP, is also under consideration (see **Strategy 1.1.5**)

Under the same law, multifamily use in all commercial zones with building height limits less than 85 feet need to have this footnote added: *Residential development (any residential land use) is not required to comply with the mixed-use requirements of the Commercial Design Standards (KMC 18.78) on any site with a maximum building height limit of less than 85 feet per RCW 36.70A.XXX [update citation when available].* Currently this applies to the Commercial Neighborhood (CN), Commercial Marina (CM), Historic Mixed Use (HMU), and Business Park (BP) zones. The law exempts commercial zones with no height limits from a new limitation on requiring ground-floor commercial uses.

Note that this HAP recommends changes to height limits in some commercial zones to promote affordable housing (see **Strategy 1.2.2**), which may change the relevance of this proposed footnote for some zones.

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If lower height limits are implemented in zones like Commercial Community (CC) and Commercial Regional (CR) and ground floor commercial requirements become void under the state law, Kennewick could consider mitigation to preserve commercial capacity. One possible strategy is requiring that any residential use is setback a minimum distance from certain major streets to allow space and visibility for commercial business. This would have the secondary benefit of reducing residents' exposure to nuisances like traffic noise and air pollution on busy streets. A residential use setback of 50, 100, or 150 feet from a few select streets like these may be reasonable:

- West Clearwater Avenue (east of North Kellogg Street)
- West Canal Drive (west of North Kellogg Street)
- West Gage Boulevard
- North Columbia Center Boulevard (north of West Grandridge Boulevard)
- Highway 395

Preservation of existing grocery stores is also a critical consideration due to the importance of food access and recent national trends in consolidation and store closures. To reduce redevelopment pressure on grocery stores in the CC and CR zones, the following footnote could be added to multifamily use as mitigation: *Multifamily use that requires demolition of existing commercial structures is prohibited on parcels with an active certificate of occupancy for a grocery store of 25,000 square feet or larger. Multifamily use is permitted on such parcels two years after a grocery store closes.* This provides a cooling off period after a store closure and gives another grocery operator an opportunity to reuse an existing building.

Any mitigating tool should be carefully analyzed to balance the demand for commercial and residential development in Kennewick and meet other community objectives around walkability, placemaking, economic development, and sustainability.

Middle Housing

Kennewick recently adopted new allowances for middle housing under a state law that passed in 2024. Traditional single-family neighborhoods now have zoning that allows middle housing with up to six units per lot. This primarily affected the Residential Mobile Home (RMH) Residential Suburban (RS), Residential Low Density (RL), Residential Medium Density (RM), and Residential High Density (RH) zones.

Similar revisions could be adopted for the Historic Mixed Use (HMU) zone. The HMU zone is predominantly developed with single-family structures and it is one of the few commercial zones that allows ADUs, indicating it is "zoned predominantly for residential use" and a location that may be subject to the new state law (RCW 36.70A.635). If City staff determine the HMU zone is applicable, **Kennewick's deadline to comply with the middle housing law is 6 months after the periodic update deadline, or June 30, 2027.**

Co-Living

Kennewick recently adopted new allowances for co-living housing under a state law that passed in 2024. However, one minor adjustment is needed to comply with RCW 36.70A.535(2)(c). Co-living housing in all commercial zones needs to have this footnote added: *Co-living housing development is not required to be mixed-use per RCW 36.70A.535(2)(c).* This clarification is needed because currently the table refers to the

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Commercial Design Standards (footnote #8), which require residential development in commercial zones to include commercial use, but cities cannot require co-living housing to have any other use associated with it.

Nursing Homes & Congregate Care Facilities

These uses should be permitted in more zones, including at least in the Urban Mixed Use (UMU) zone, and should be permitted outright instead of making them a conditional use, especially in the RM and RH zones. Nursing homes and assisted living facilities typically have similar size, appearance, and impacts as regular multifamily development and play an important role in supporting underserved populations, such as seniors and people with disabilities.

Group Living

The City should consider adding a definition for Group Living to refer to Residential Care Homes and Residential Care Centers, and provide more clarity on the difference of this use from Congregate Care Facilities. New state legislation passed in 2020 (RCW 70.128.066) provides a way for adult family homes to have seven or eight beds, so the definitions and standards under Residential Use Table 18.12.010 A.1, footnotes #5 and #6, should be updated accordingly.

1.1.2 Emergency, Transitional, & Permanent Supportive Housing

Action: Add emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing as separate use types in the code and reduce code barriers for these housing types.

HB 1220 (2021) and HB 2266 (2026) directed all jurisdictions to make changes to regulations regarding emergency shelters, transitional housing, emergency housing, and permanent supportive housing (also known as STEP housing). **These changes are due for Kennewick concurrent with the Periodic Update.** Under RCW 35A.21.430 and RCW 35.21.683, Kennewick must allow transitional and permanent supportive housing by right in all zones that allow residential or hotels, and must allow indoor emergency shelters and housing by right in all zones where hotels are allowed. Ancillary office uses and other support spaces should also be clearly allowed within transitional or permanent supportive housing buildings.

Conditions for these housing types cannot be more restrictive than those for other types of lodging or residential development within the same zone, and the City may only require administrative design review (without a public pre-decision hearing) for STEP housing. In addition, standards the City may impose on affordable housing providers are limited to income qualification, coordinated entry, reporting, and monitoring. The City can, however, require prospective operators of indoor emergency shelters or housing to hold a community meeting, notify local residents, and provide further information. If the shelter will be within 500 feet of a school, the City can also negotiate additional "reasonable requirements" related to health and safety for the site.

The City of Kennewick currently considers emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing as "Special Needs Housing" per KMC 18.09.2020:

> *"Special Needs Housing means all housing that is designed for 13 or more individual or family members who require supportive social services in order to live independently or semi-independently, including emergency, transitional and permanent housing. Special needs groups include, but are not*

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limited to the homeless, elderly, AIDS victims, single parents, runaway and homeless youth, severely physically handicapped, mentally and emotionally disturbed, chronically mentally ill, developmentally disabled, farm workers (migrant labor households) and persons with substance abuse problems."

However, the City's code does not currently address "Special Needs Housing" or emergency, transitional, or permanent supportive housing as specific use types in the use tables in KMC Chapter 18.12.

Emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing should be defined separately in KMC Chapter 18.09 and the definition of special needs housing should be updated to remove the minimum 13-person threshold. These housing types should also be added to the residential use table in KMC 18.12.010 A.1 consistent with state law (e.g., allow transitional and permanent supportive housing by right in all zones that allow residential or hotels, and allow indoor emergency shelters and housing by right in all zones where hotels are allowed). The City's review process is already administrative, but the existing residential design standards could be updated to clearly state that standards apply equally to STEP housing (see **Strategy 1.2.4**).

1.1.3 Tiny Homes

Action: Explore tiny homes as temporary and permanent affordable housing options.

Consider formalizing and expanding tiny homes as a relatively affordable housing option in certain locations. The City has previously partnered with the Kennewick Housing Authority to build a successful tiny home community in eastern Kennewick. The City could further allow or promote tiny homes in partnership with property owners with available land, such as at a religious facility or vacant commercial sites. The City can also anticipate the Washington Legislature passing a future bill on tiny homes or "mobile dwelling units" on residential lots after a bill was introduced in the 2026 session (HB 1443).

Regulation considerations and potential categories of tiny homes are shown in **Exhibit 6** on the next page.

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Exhibit 6. Regulation Considerations and Potential Categories of Tiny Homes

Tiny Home Type	Considerations	Photo Example
Permanent ADU	When a permanent tiny home is placed on a lot with a principal structure, treat the tiny home as any other type of detached ADU. Such homes must be on permanent foundations with all required utility connections.	
Permanent cluster	When more than one permanent tiny home is placed on a lot, apply permanent tiny home cluster standards. Such homes must be on permanent foundations with all required utility connections. Consider providing basic design standards similar to cottage housing. Consider whether tiny homes should be able to use a unit lot subdivision to create homeownership opportunities. See example standards from Langley.[1] Limit permanent clusters to low density residential zones such as RL and RS. Consider density provisions, such as limiting tiny homes to 400 square feet of floor area and counting each home as one-fifth or one-quarter of a dwelling unit for density purposes, which distinguishes them from cottage housing/middle housing.	 
Mobile	When a tiny home is on wheels, apply the same standards for parking, sanitation, and other provisions that the City would apply to recreational vehicles. The City maya also apply location standards. Allow mobile tiny homes to transition to permanent status, provided they meet applicable standards.	
Temporary transitional housing	Create standards for temporary tiny homes intended as transitional housing for homeless residents. These would primarily be intended for location on vacant land and parking lots and focused on religiously-owned land and commercial areas with transit access. Consider standards such as the maximum number of tiny homes in one location, types of community structures allowed, and required sanitation services. Discussions with potential operators of tiny home villages are recommended when writing new regulations or updating KMC 18.12.255. Other cities' standards for "transitional encampments" could also be consulted.[2]	

1 Langley Municipal Code 18.22.290.
2 Seattle Municipal Code 23.42.054 and 23.42.056.
Source: MAKERS, 2026.

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1.1.4 Limit New Single-Family Uses in Some Zones

Action: Consider options to reduce underdevelopment and preserve suitable lands for multifamily, commercial, and mixed-use construction.

Residential Zones

The Residential High Density (RH) zone makes up only 2% of developable land in Kennewick city limits, but it allows the highest-density residential development. Similarly, the Residential Medium Density (RM) zone makes up about 5% of developable land (before a potential consolidation with the Residential Mobile Home zone). Consider limiting development of new detached single-family uses in at least the RH zone to ensure those lands are available for middle housing and multifamily development, with smaller units that are less expensive and more land efficient.

According to the 2026 Land Capacity Analysis, the Residential Suburban (RS) and Residential Low Density (RL) have capacity for nearly 10,000 new units. By comparison, the RH zone has capacity for 1,702 new units under existing conditions, making it a critical resource for multifamily supply and affordable housing needs amid a 20-year need for over 12,000 new housing units (per the Comprehensive Plan). The RM zone has capacity for nearly 7,000 new units under existing conditions. See related suggestions for removing density limits in the RM and RH zones concurrent with the Periodic Update under HAP **Strategy 1.2.1**, which would increase capacity in the RH zone to 2,886 units and in the RM zone to 7,082 units.

Commercial Zones

Single-family use is allowed in all of Kennewick's commercial zones except for Commercial Auto Row (CAR). This may accommodate historical situations where residential plats become surrounded by commercial development, but this can cause long-term compatibility issues and somewhat reduce the amount of available land for new commercial development, especially if a new subdivision with multiple lots were to occur in a commercial area. Limiting new detached single-family uses would ensure commercial lands are available for job-producing uses and economic opportunities.

According to the 2026 Land Capacity Analysis, under existing conditions, the commercial zones with the greatest capacity for residential development over the next 20 years are Urban Mixed Use/UMU (614 units), Commercial Community/CC (590 units), and Commercial Regional/CR (223 units). With code revisions proposed concurrent with the Periodic Update, capacity in these zones increases to 1,026 units in the UMU zone, 1,147 units in the CC zone, and 433 units in the CR zone. The Central Business District could also be targeted since it is the heart of Kennewick and a key commercial center. The zoning of Urban Mixed Use at Vista Field, where single-family uses are assumed in an adopted master plan, could be an exception to a single-family limitation.

Regulatory Options

Either or both of the options below could be considered. These options focus on limitations for "detached" single-family residences, not the "attached" single-family residences that take the form of duplexes, townhomes, or similar middle housing.

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In any of these options, it is important for the code to clarify that the limitations would not apply to existing detached single-family residences in the affected locations. These could continue and could be expanded or renovated.

Option 1: Add a footnote to the selected zones in Residential Use Table 18.12.010 A.1: *New detached single-family uses are prohibited as of [DATE OF THIS ORDINANCE]. Existing single-family uses are permitted.* Alternatively, the "Residences, single-family" use could be prohibited for the selected zones and a new use called "Existing detached single-family residence" could be added.

Option 2: Add a minimum residential density requirement for the selected zones in Table of Residential Site Development Standards 18.12.010 A.2 and Table of Non-Residential Site Development Standards 18.12.010 B.2. A minimum density standard sets a minimum number of dwelling units or floor area that must be developed on a parcel, depending on the parcel size. It should be set at or slightly below what the market can support to avoid unintended consequences. A minimum site size threshold to apply the standard, such as ¼ or ½ acre (preferably net acres to exclude critical areas), can also preserve development flexibility for small infill projects in transitioning areas.

A minimum density of 12-25 dwelling units per gross acre could be considered, depending on the zone and neighborhood context. A minimum of 15 units per gross acre would be consistent with Washington state guidelines for the multifamily tax exemption program (see **Strategy 4.1**). This is also the rough threshold for density that supports fixed-route transit service.

Accessory Dwelling Units: The implications for ADUs would need to be considered for both Option 1 and 2 (or other options the City creates). State law requires that "all lots that are located in all zoning districts within an urban growth area that allow for single-family homes" to permit at least ADU's (RCW 36.70A.681(1)(c)). Based on the Legislature's findings of HB 1337 (2023), this is only referring to "detached" single-family residences, so any zone that prohibits that use would not be required to allow ADU's. In such zones Kennewick would have a choice in whether it allows property owners of existing single-family residences to add ADU's or not, and this could differ based on zone, property size, or other criteria.

1.1.5 Consolidate Zones

Action: Consolidate some zones to simplify development regulations and improve clarity.

Residential Zones

The Residential Mobile Home (RMH) zone primarily represents individual fee simple lots with manufactured single-family homes, as opposed to site-built homes. The RMH zone is proposed to be deleted, with its parcels mostly rezoned to Residential Low Density (RL). The RL and RMH zones have the same development standards, including minimum lot sizes of 5,550 square feet and the same setback requirements. State law also requires that manufactured homes be treated the same as site-built homes in other aspects of zoning regulations (RCW 35.21.684).

By contrast, the Residential Trailer Park (RTP) zone mostly represents very large lots with dozens of manufactured single-family homes on rental pads in a single "trailer park" property. This is a different situation because residents do not own the land beneath their homes. These properties are more susceptible to large-scale redevelopment, making residents more vulnerable to displacement. Consolidation of the RTP is not

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proposed, as this zone can be used as an anti-displacement tool. See recommendations to preserve trailer parks in **Strategy 1.2.2** and **Strategy 2.1.2**.

Non-Residential Zones

There are also opportunities for some consolidation of non-residential zones (commercial and industrial). These changes would have limited direct impact on housing goals, but would contribute to a broader interest of streamlining zoning and making regulations easier to use and understand by all code users:

- **Deleting the CO zone.** This zone has modest use in the city and adjacent zones generally permit the same businesses it is intended for, including professional offices, medical clinics, research laboratories, and a limited amount of retail sales.
- **Deleting the CN zone.** The CN zone has limited use and is not considered to have met its goals. Its purpose may be met through Comprehensive Plan policies that promote house-scale commercial uses in residential zones.
- **Deleting the CG zone.** The CG is a hybrid commercial-industrial zone, and there are some differences from the CC zone that would need to be resolved if they were merged. For example, the CC zone prohibits heavy commercial and light industrial uses such as construction yards, lumber sales, vehicle repair, and warehousing. These would simply become non-conforming uses. Alternatively, to avoid non-conforming situations, the CC zone could be amended to allow these uses.
- **Deleting the CAR zone.** The CAR and CC zone have almost the same permitted uses. If there is still strong interest in promoting the retention and development of car dealerships in the Bridge-to-Bridge area, consider other actions/investments outside of zoning that might better achieve that goal.
- **Deleting the BP zone.** This is a small zone used in one location, and potentially its purpose could be met with other commercial and light industrial zones.
- **Deleting the IP zone.** This zone was created to apply to large scale research institutions, labs, and manufacturing complexes. However, this zone has never been applied to the Kennewick zoning map.
- **Deleting the JF zone.** This zone has only two parcels. Rezone to Public Facilities (PF) which meets the purpose of providing correctional facilities.
- **Deleting other zones.** There is cleanup needed across the code and the zoning map for what appear to be unused or undefined zones. These include Parking (P), A-1, Multi, and a variety of zones on the map with hyphenated names that have no explanation, such as CC-L and RM-6-1. Deleting unnecessary zones helps with overall code and map useability.

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1.2 Form & Intensity Standards

1.2.1 Density Limits

Action: Remove maximum density limits in residential zones in favor of a form-based approach to regulating development.

Medium and High-Density Residential Zones

This action proposes removing the maximum density limits in at least the RM and RH zones. Density limits determined by "units per acre" are increasingly misaligned with Washington's housing policy framework, which encourages housing capacity determined through dimensional standards rather than assigning unit caps. In Kennewick's Residential Medium Density (RM) and High Density (RH) zones, density limits can constrain otherwise code-compliant projects, limiting flexibility and discouraging efficient land use.

For example, in the RM zone middle housing buildings with 2-6 units are now allowed on a 4,000 square foot lot. A fourplex on such a lot is about 43 units per acre. However, a larger apartment building (with seven or more units) would still be subject to the much lower current density limit of 13 units per acre, which is lower than what a typical 3-story garden apartment complex can achieve.

In the RH zone where 4-story apartments are allowed, a typical density of 30-45 units per acre for such a building is not achievable under the current density limit of 27 units per acre. For example, the Park Place Apartments in the adjacent city of Richland, which opened in 2020 with a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom units, achieves a density of 39 units per acre.

Removing density limits would promote a form-based approach that focuses on the size, shape, and appearance of residential buildings—rather than how many units are allowed inside. This provides developers much more flexibility when designing a project, and allows flexibility as construction trends and economic conditions change. This approach allows denser development while maintaining compatibility through other controls. There are already other tools in place—including maximum height, minimum setbacks, and minimum open space—that effectively manage compatibility issues, along with citywide concurrency standards that require new developments to provide infrastructure scaled to the size of the project. Some development standards may require thoughtful adjustments to ensure intended neighborhood compatibility is maintained, and these are referenced in other HAP strategies.

See related opportunities for a minimum density in the RM and RH zones under **Strategy 1.1.4**.

Low Density Zones

Washington state does not mandate a minimum density in urban growth areas, but 4 units per acre is widely considered by urban planners to be the threshold of what makes a place "urban" and necessitating public infrastructure and services like water, sewer, and paved roads. Kennewick has some existing and future developments that are extremely low density at 3 units per acre or less. For single-family development, a modest minimum density of 4 units per acre, and/or a maximum lot size of about 10,000 square feet, may be considered for the Residential Low Density (RL) and Residential Suburban (RS) zones to encourage more efficient use of the limited land in Kennewick city limits. Middle housing standards may require more flexibility in these zones.

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1.2.2 Height Limits in Residential Zones

Action: Revise height limits to encourage mid-rise projects and affordable housing.

Kennewick currently has relatively generous building height limits, especially with unlimited heights in most commercial zones for at least the past 20 years. While this has not resulted in many developments taking advantage of the opportunity, with the tallest recent multifamily development topping out at four stories (Resort at Hansen Park in a CC zone) and some hotels being up to five stories (SpringHill Suites in a CR zone), the City likely wants to retain these flexible standards. Therefore, this strategy focuses on residential zones.

Updated height limits and height bonuses in a few key residential zones is recommended to help attract and accommodate the thousands of new homes Kennewick needs to accommodate over the next 20 years. At the same time, height limits need to be calibrated to match development trends and the economics of construction.

The majority of recent multifamily development has been 3-stories, which is typical for small cities and suburban environments. Developer stakeholders have reported openness to building midrise buildings (4–7 stories) and mixed-use development, but there is currently limited incentive to do so in Kennewick's current zoning framework. Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP also found strong community support for incentives for affordable housing projects or for projects that reserve some units as affordable (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**).

Changing the RTP zone height limit from "none" to "30 feet or 2 stories, whichever is less" is intended to reinforce this zone as a protective tool for manufactured home parks. See related anti-displacement information in **Strategy 2.1.2**.

New bonus height limits allowing an additional one or two stories are proposed for developments providing a certain number of affordable housing units in RM and RH zones as allowed in RCW 36.70A.540. This could apply to private developers participating in a multifamily tax exemption program (MFTE), if adopted **(Strategy 4.1**), or an alternative affordable housing program created by the City, or to public or nonprofit affordable developers who exclusively build affordable units. This would incentivize greater production of multifamily housing in general and also income-restricted affordable housing that Kennewick needs to meet its growth targets. Importantly, the property tax exemption that comes with MFTE participation, if adopted, helps offset the cost of reduced income from affordable units and development risks in creating larger buildings with more complex construction methods. See other recommendations for a new MFTE program in **Strategy 4.1**.

A summary of proposed changes is shown in the **Exhibit 7**.

Exhibit 7. Summary of Height Changes for Consideration

Zone	Current Base Height Limit	Proposed Base Height Limit	Proposed Bonus Height Limit with Affordable Units
RTP	None/Unlimited	30 feet or 2 stories, whichever is less	—
RM	35 feet	35 feet	45 feet
RH	45 feet	45 feet	65 feet

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

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Increased height limits and potentially larger buildings will be complemented by the broad set of multifamily and commercial design standards Kennewick already has in place (updates to design standards are recommended in **Strategy 28**). These include standards to provide façade articulation, light and air access to dwelling units, attractive entries, and other provisions. In the RM and RH zones, the City could implement a setback mechanism as mitigation for the potential impact of increased height limits—buildings (or portions of buildings) within 25, 50, or 100 feet of a property line adjacent to a low-density RL or RS zone would be limited to the base height limit.

Note that height limits in the 35–45 feet range, or three to four stories, can create feasibility challenges for light wood frame construction (the most common material for multifamily buildings in the region). Construction costs per square foot for wood buildings between three and seven stories are relatively constant, regardless of building height. Another key cost item is elevators, which cost at least $100,000 each and are typically provided for buildings four stories and taller.

1.2.3 Residential Setbacks

Action: Reduce key setback standards to align with the Washington Middle Housing Model Ordinance.

Current setback standards may limit the feasibility of middle housing developments, even where such uses are permitted or encouraged. Standard single-family oriented setbacks can make middle housing types (duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, etc.) difficult to efficiently design on typical lots. Key changes to incorporate in the RM and RH zones include:

- Reduce both front and rear setbacks from 15 feet to 10 feet for middle housing with a unit density of three or more units (consideration of Public Works easement standards will be necessary).
- Allow middle housing to have 0-feet setbacks from alleys, but require a 3-feet setback for garages accessed from alleys (designs with roof eaves would still need some amount of setback).

1.2.4 Design Standards

Action: Update the residential and commercial design standards to improve flexibility, align with construction market trends, and meet state requirements.

Kennewick needs to update all of its design standards to reflect contemporary best practices, construction market trends, and a variety of state law updates. The updates can also incorporate lessons learned from development locally and other communities since Kennewick's standards were adopted two decades ago. Updates should include graphic and formatting improvements to improve readability and navigation of the documents, including best practices for consistency with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The City should also consider adopting the standards directly into the municipal code, instead of with freestanding documents, to provide code users more direct access to the current standards. Currently, the single-family and multifamily residential design standards are in two separate documents adopted in 2004 and in KMC Chapter 18.75. Separately, KMC Chapter 18.78 introduces commercial design standards but the content of the standards are in a separate document adopted in 2006. Urban mixed-use design standards are integrated into KMC Chapter 18.80 and apply only to the UMU zone.

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Residential Design Standards

Existing residential design standards apply to all new single-family and multi-family residential developments within the city except for the UMU district. Notably, the single-family standards apply to middle housing under recent ordinance, which is consistent with HB 1110 (2023), and the standards were updated with a focus on the street frontage/driveway provisions (link). However, the definition of "multifamily" needs to be updated (currently two or more families) to be consistent with Kennewick's new middle housing provisions and for the applicability of the multifamily residential design standards to be internally consistent with the code.

The scope of the existing standards is generally appropriate, though there is some overlap with basic zoning code and public works standards that may prove confusing for administration. For example, street standards for sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, etc. should be applied on a citywide basis in code rather than in piecemeal fashion through residential developments (whether streets are public or private).

The residential design standards largely comply with recent state legislation (HB 1293) that requires clear and objective standards. Most of the required standards are objective, and while there are some subjective standards these are mostly "recommended" and not required, which is permissible. However, there are some subjective required standards such as a sign standard to "minimize the potential to vandalism" and multifamily entry standards for "safe pedestrian access from the street" and "building entrances must be prominent and clearly visible." The multifamily standards have significantly more subjective required standards, such as for transit stops and building colors.

There are also numerous requirements for homeowner associations to create maintenance agreements, but no model language or criteria for approving those agreements.

Commercial Design Standards

The applicability of Kennewick's commercial design standards in KMC Chapter 18.78 needs to be clarified. Per KMC Chapter 18.78, the standards apply to all commercial zones except for the CBD, CM, and UMU "when the cost of remodeling and/or expansion is equal to or exceeds 50 percent of the current assessed value of the structure." The applicability of smaller remodels/additions, and in what zones, is unclear.

The scope of the existing standards is generally appropriate, including corridor-specific (block frontage) standards. However, there is some overlap with basic zoning code and public works standards that may prove confusing for administration. For example, there are duplicative standards for parking lot landscaping, shared parking, outdoor lighting, and signs.

The "standards" are actually a mix of guidelines (recommended provisions) and standards (mandatory provisions). The commercial document allows "departures" to any standard, provided the Director determines that the design meets the intent, objectives, and design principles of the standards. Most of the mandatory standards are prescriptive. Some, however, are subjective and arguably do not comply with recent state legislation (HB 1293) that requires clear and objective standards, or are simply not clear. For example, massing standards require that facades more than 50-feet long be treated with all the following: (a) change in roof or wall plane (4-feet minimum), projecting or recessed elements (no metric provided), and varying roofline (4-feet minimum).

The mixed-use standards (starting on page 51) contain density, height, and lot coverage standards that are usually located in the zoning code's dimensional chapter. The 50% ground-floor commercial standard and

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20% sitewide commercial standards should be compared against recent developments that have been reviewed under these standards. Such standards should be reconsidered given market and design challenges for mixed-use buildings. The floor area ratio provision is also challenging to interpret.

At minimum, the corridor-specific standards should be updated to reflect recent growth. The document could also be better organized for navigation and to reduce duplication.

UMU Design Standards

Urban mixed-use design standards are integrated into KMC Chapter 18.80 and apply only to the UMU zone. They are organized around a street frontage (block frontage) approach with designated "A" streets and "B" streets. The map of these streets could not be immediately located online, which is an issue for code users.

The UMU design standards largely comply with recent state legislation (HB 1293) that requires clear and objective standards. However, some standards may be excessive or could be addressed in a different way, such as the provisions for minimum size and spacing of windows. There are some subjective standards, such as "Vestibules, entries, windows, and other architectural features shall provide further visual definition and reduce the visual mass of buildings." The City could also add graphics and photo examples to enhance code users' understanding of the intent of the standards.

1.2.5 Religiously-Owned Land Density Bonus

Action: Implement a density bonus for low-income affordable housing on land owned by religious organizations.

Under 2019 state law (RCW 35A.63.300 and 36.70A.545) cities must, upon request, allow an increased density bonus on land owned by religious organizations when they propose to build affordable housing. With a 2026 update to the law, the density bonus must be contingent upon at least 50% of units being set-aside for low-income households or at least 20% of units being set-aside for very low-income households (cities can require higher set-aside rates). The minimum duration of affordability is 50 years. Eligible residential development is any type of housing, ranging from single-family to multifamily.

An informal review finds Kennewick is home to approximately 30-40 churches and other religious facilities. Most are on properties ranging from 0.25 to 5.5 acres. About two-thirds are in residential zones and one-third are in commercial zones. Most of these properties are actively used for religious purposes and the property owners will not be looking to develop housing in the near future or ever. However, the density bonus opportunity could be of interest to some religious organizations in a variety of situations, such as those with missions related to community wellness, congregations with declining membership, those with underutilized land such as surplus yards or parking lots, or those facing significant maintenance issues with their buildings and needing new income. For example, several religious organizations who are facing a mix of these challenges in King County have used the bonus for new affordable housing development.

The provisions of the density bonus only needs to be developed upon request, but cities can opt to be proactive and craft the bonus to prepare for future use. Kennewick should continue to reach out to religious organizations to see if they are interested in developing or working with another entity to develop affordable housing on their properties (see related **Strategy 3.2.3**)—this role could be further supported by building staff capacity as described in **Strategy 2.3**.

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The bonus could be implemented in several ways, with options including:

- **Option 1:** Update the underlying zoning (Tables 18.12.010.A.2 and 18.12.010.B.2) to add an increased maximum density for qualifying religious organization developments. To be enticing and offset the cost of providing affordable housing, the density bonus may need to be at least 50-100% above the regular maximum density.

  In a situation where a zone has no maximum density, as with commercial zones or as may occur in residential zones following the recommendations of this Housing Action Plan (**Strategy 1.2.1**), other parameters can be adjusted to create a bonus, such as reduced minimum lot sizes, reduced setbacks, increased height limits. In places like the Residential Low Density (RL) and Residential Suburban (RS) zones, permitting multifamily use where it is currently prohibited could be considered a bonus as long as development standards are accommodating.
- **Option 2:** Require a development agreement to work out the details on a case-by-case basis. This may be a preferred option if use of this bonus is expected to be rare. The Housing Element and/or zoning code may need to set a minimum expectation to qualify for a bonus, such as a minimum number of affordable housing units depending on the zone, and from there negotiations between the City and the applicant would negotiate other issues.

1.3 Adjust Other Standards

A miscellaneous set of other standards can be updated to streamline the development regulations, potentially reduce construction costs and reducing barriers to housing production.

1.3.1 Parking

Action: Revise parking requirements to be consistent with new state law.

RCW 35A.21.445, established in 2025, sets the limits on minimum parking requirements for residential and commercial uses. The following summarizes what can be required by cities:

- Residential uses
  - Single-family residences (presumably including townhomes): Up to 1 space
  - Multifamily residential units over 1,200 square feet: Up to 0.5 spaces
  - Multifamily residential units under 1,200 square feet: Zero spaces
  - Affordable housing units: Zero spaces
  - Senior housing units: Zero spaces
  - Change of use from nonresidential to residential: Zero spaces
- Commercial uses
  - Commercial space under 3,000 square feet of floor area: Zero spaces
- Childcare centers: Zero spaces
  - Ground level non-residential space in mixed use buildings: Zero spaces
  - Change from one commercial use to another: Zero spaces
  - All other commercial space: Up to 2 spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area
- Industrial uses: No changes required by the law
- Public and civic uses (including religious facilities): No changes required by the law
- Loading spaces and accessible parking spaces may continue to be required

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Kennewick's deadline to comply with this law is January 27, 2027.

Regardless of state and city laws on minimum parking, other factors will require developers to provide parking in new commercial and residential development. Developers have a close understanding of the market demand for parking by residents, visitors, employees, and customers across a variety of land use types. The banks and financiers who work with developers also often require certain levels of parking as a condition of providing a loan in order to reduce investment risk. City policy that encourages compact and walkable development in key locations, along with future investments in the multimodal transportation network, can help influence the private market to reduce its expectations for parking over time.

In addition to code amendments for consistency with the state law requirements, the list of off-street parking requirements in KMC Chapter 18.36 should be greatly simplified while adjusting numerical standards. Note that the CBD and UMU zones already have exemptions for commercial uses less than 3,000 square feet.

RCW 36.70A.622, established in 2024, also sets limitations on parking space dimensions. KMC 18.36.030 should be updated accordingly to not require residential parking spaces larger than 8' x 20', allow tandem parking, and other provisions.

1.3.2 Multifamily Open Space Standards

Action: Adjust multifamily open space standards to improve feasibility of midrise development.

Kennewick requires useable open space for multifamily developments in some zones. For multifamily development with seven or more units in the RM, RH, and UMU zones, developments currently must provide 300-700 square feet of open space for 1-3 bedroom units. A comparison of Kennewick standards to other eastern Washington jurisdictions is in **Exhibit 8**.

Exhibit 8. Multifamily Open Space Standards in Kennewick and Peer Jurisdictions

City	Current Multifamily Open Space Size Standard	Other Provisions
Kennewick	1-bedroom unit: 300 square feet 2-bedroom unit: 500 square feet 3-bedroom unit: 700 square feet	Must be outdoors, have average dimensions of at least 15 feet, and be at least 500 square feet in area.
Richland	None.	
Pasco	For developments with 4-9 units, 100 square feet per unit. For larger developments, minimum 800 square feet total plus 50 square feet for each unit over 10 units.	May include playgrounds, courtyards, indoor community rooms, and rooftop decks.
Wenatchee	100 square feet per unit or 10% of residential unit floor area.	May be in the form of common open space, balconies, roof decks, indoor recreation spaces, or similar features
Walla Walla	None citywide. In the Highway Commercial zone, 100 square feet per unit and a minimum 2,000 square feet total.	Playgrounds, balconies, and similar facilities.
Yakima	None.	

Source: MAKERS, 2026.

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Kennewick's relatively high open space requirements work for lowrise "garden apartments" on large sites, but for more compact developments envisioned by the Comprehensive Plan and this HAP they will likely be a barrier to growth. The standards are also inflexible and do not count typical multifamily development features like porches and stoops, balconies, rooftop decks, or interior recreation spaces. Further, open space is not required for multifamily use in most commercial zones, but commercial zones should be applicable for equal treatment with residential zones and to promote livability and amenities in higher density or mixed-use developments. Engagement conducted for the Comprehensive Plan and this HAP indicate open space is highly valued in Kennewick (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**)—any adjustments to open space standards will need to be carefully considered and communicated to the public in a clear and accessible way.

A straightforward standard such as Wenatchee's may be workable for both residential and commercial zones in Kennewick. This would require 100 square feet of useable open space per unit, or alternatively 10% of residential unit floor area (not counting space like hallways and lobbies). For example, a 50-unit building could need to provide at least 5,000 square feet of useable open space for its residents.

Wenatchee allows a variety of features to count towards the minimum, including outdoor yards and courts, shared roof decks, indoor recreation space, and private balconies. Kennewick could place limits on how much certain features can count in order to encourage variety—for example, only allowing balconies and indoor space to each count for 25% of the minimum total required.

1.3.3 Building Code Updates

Action: Evaluate potential building code amendments to support middle housing and small multifamily buildings.

New multifamily housing under modern building codes have the lowest fire risk of any type of new residential construction, but the application of standards intended for very large buildings to smaller buildings has been found to have unintended consequences for economic feasibility.[10] Several efforts at the state level are working to address this challenge. Kennewick can opt to amend its building code proactively or wait for the next state updates expected in 2027 and 2030. Key updates include:

- **International Residential Code applicability to middle housing.** This pending update will allow middle housing buildings with 3-6 units to be designed and built under the less-strict provisions of the International Residential Code (IRC), which is only intended for single-family and duplex buildings in most jurisdictions. The International Building Code (IBC) is used for developments with three or more units and comes with more expensive design requirements. Moving 3-6 unit buildings to the IRC could modestly reduce their costs. HB 2071 (2024) initiated this effort.
- **Single-stair multifamily buildings.** This pending update will allow small multifamily buildings with up to 24 units to feature a single stairwell, as opposed to the current IBC which limits this to 12 unit buildings. When two or more stairwells are required for even modestly sized buildings, developers are driven towards the economy of scale that comes from providing larger buildings on large sites. The reform is expected to reduce costs and open up more small sites for infill development, while still ensuring safety. SB 5491 (2023) initiated this effort, and relatedly HB 2228 (2026) aims to allow larger buildings to arrange two staircases in a compact scissor arrangement.

[10] Pew, Modern Multifamily Buildings Provide the Most Fire Protection, September 2025

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- **Small elevators.** This pending update will allow small multifamily buildings with up to 24 units to have elevators that are minimally sized to meet federal accessibility requirements. Elevators can be one of the most expensive elements of a new multistory building, and typical standards in the United States require larger elevators than other countries which results in a fragile parts supply chain. This update is expected to reduce costs of development and maintenance and open up more small sites for infill development. SB 5156 (2026) initiated this effort.

1.3.4 Lot Splits

Action: Integrate a residential lot split process.

New state legislation passed in 2025 requires cities to permit lot splits (RCW 58.17.145) in residential zones. This is a new administrative process for property owners to subdivide an eligible residential lot into two lots concurrent with application for a building permit. This may modestly promote housing affordability by reducing the time costs of development for single-family and middle housing residences.

The law allow cities to limit the use of this process. A key factor is the original lot and the newly created lots can be required to meet the minimum lot size required by zoning (cities can also opt to provide different minimum lot sizes for the purpose of lot splits). For example, in the Residential Medium Density (RM) zone where the minimum lot size is currently 4,000 square feet, an eligible lot would be at least 8,000 square feet in size to start.

The RM zone has about 2,300 lots that meet this criteria, but most are probably disqualified for other reasons such as having an existing building that is located in a way that prevents a new lot from being formed. New lots must be able to meet other development standards such as minimum setbacks. New lots must also have certified availability of water and sewer service, which may preclude lots with on-site septic systems from qualifying.

Kennewick's deadline to comply with the lot split law is July 27, 2027.

1.3.5 Planned Residential Developments

Action: Adjust Planned Residential Development (PRD) standards to support other community priorities.

Planned Residential Developments (PRDs) are allowed in all residential districts for 5+ acre sites and provide considerable design flexibility. Per KMC Chapter 18.45, PRDs are exempt from lot size minimums and setback minimums provided they meet applicable zoned density limits, and allow flexibility for mixing housing types and have some opportunities for integrating commercial on large sites. Up to a 20% density bonus is also allowed when developments dedicate at least 15% of land for open space and comply with open space design standards (which require some land be suitable for active recreation. PRDs are approved by the Hearing Examiner.

It is recommended that the City add some minimum usable open space standards to support other community goals. For example, require minimum 15' x 15' spaces to ensure usability with flexibility to locate such spaces even in the front yard provided they are relatively flat and defined by a low wall for single and middle housing types. Exemptions should be allowed, however, for PRD lots directly adjacent to a park. PRD's and other large subdivisions should also have a requirement to integrate connected trails in the open space system, including

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implementation of adopted trail plans. Finally, with the allowed density bonus, the City could add a provision requiring better connectivity with reduced block sizes which could be met by system of street and trails.

1.4 Streamline the Permitting Process

Strategies included in this section provide for a smoother, faster, and more predictable permitting process for developers seeking to build housing that is consistent with the community's goals. By streamlining the review process, the City can reduce the level of uncertainty and risk for potential developers. This can make it easier to get project financing on favorable terms and reduce constructions costs due to delays. Shorter permit processing can also save significant money when there are costs associated with holding property until it is put to productive use (known as administrative carrying costs). Below are four ways in which Kennewick could improve the clarity, speed, and consistency of its permit review process without sacrificing adequate review and still adhering to local standards.

1.4.1 SEPA Categorical Exemption Thresholds

Action: Adopt higher SEPA exemption thresholds for multifamily developments and smaller single family units.

SEPA flexible exemption thresholds allow local jurisdictions in Washington to raise the size limits for "minor new construction" projects, bypassing full SEPA environmental review and improving development feasibility—it is much more likely for both market-rate and affordable housing developers to access financing and construct projects if there is little risk of a lengthy permitting process or legal appeal. Per WAC 197-11-800, cities can set thresholds up to 30 units for attached or detached single family, 100 units for single family with the total square footage less than 1,500 square feet, and 200 units for multifamily. Kennewick's current exemption thresholds in KMC 4.08.110 are set at 30 units for single family (the maximum allowed) and 60 units for multifamily, with no variation for smaller single family units. WAC 197-11-800(1)(c) describes the process for raising the limits.

Adopting higher SEPA exemption thresholds would remove the requirement for environmental review of smaller attached or detached single family housing (e.g., middle housing) and multifamily construction projects up to the thresholds allowed in WAC 197-11-800.[11] This would reduce permitting time (by eliminating the extra steps required by the SEPA process) and removes risk of appeal (since a SEPA appeal would no longer be possible for an exempt SEPA action), thus incentivizing developers and financers to build project types prioritized in the Comprehensive Plan. While not required, it is recommended that exemptions are noted in the permit file to help track units facilitated through SEPA exemptions.

If exemption levels are raised, the City should continue to ensure that adequate notice of new development project applications continues to be provided to the public and other governmental agencies. In particular, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and the Yakama Nation typically rely on notices of SEPA determinations to become aware of development projects in Kennewick.[12] The City should

[11] The exemptions do not apply if any portion of the housing proposal involves lands covered by water, if a license is needed for a discharge to air or water, or if a rezone is required. Thus, the tool is less helpful in areas with greenfield development because the exemptions can be limited where there are lands covered by water and critical areas.

[12] MRSC SEPA Exemptions, 2025.

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continue to implement alternative methods of providing adequate notice to the tribes and other interested parties outside of the SEPA process if higher exemption thresholds are adopted (for example, the City implements development notification protocols and discovery procedures as outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding with the CTUIR). Note that as part of developing the ordinance or resolution adopting higher SEPA thresholds, the City would need to document how specific adopted development regulations and applicable state and federal laws provide adequate protections for cultural and historic resources when exemption levels are raised (WAC 197-11-800(1)(c)).[13]

To support the ordinance raising exemption levels, the City would need to develop documentation and findings demonstrating that existing codes, laws, and rules address potential impacts. The City would also need to address notice and comment opportunities associated with increased exemption levels.

Under SB 5412 (2023), also known as the SEPA infill exemption bill, the City could alternatively decide to categorically exempt all project actions with one or more residential housing units that meet certain criteria from additional environmental review under SEPA (citywide or in a defined area). If this option were pursued, the City would need to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that considers the proposed use or density and intensity of use consistent with RCW 43.21C.229. An infill exemption can be more cost efficient than a planned action (**Strategy 1.4.5**) in addressing development patterns that achieve higher densities since it can be more programmatic and less detailed. However, an infill exemption has less flexibility to address stand-alone uses that are not covered by the exemption. If the City wants to incentivize a mixed-use neighborhood where some developments are employment only while others are residential or mixed use, a planned action may be a more appropriate tool.

1.4.2 Express Permits & Pre-Approved Plans

Action: Consider additional express permit options and pre-approved plans.

Express permit review of pre-approved plans for certain types of development Kennewick wishes to encourage, such as infill development or affordable housing, improves the speed of the permit review process and provides clarity for developers (e.g., completion of residential plan review within 48 hours per the City's website). Kennewick currently offers an express permit program for all new single-family residential projects via online submittal at a rate of 120% of the non-express permit fee. Per the express permit application form for new single family residences, this includes detached single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes with 1-2 units, and detached structures (e.g., ADUs). However, this should be clarified under the "Qualifications" section of the City's Express Building Permit website, potentially also renaming the "single family" express permit option to further clarify. The City could also expand express permits to include additional middle housing types (see related **Strategy 4.2.1** regarding middle housing development fees) or for affordable multifamily housing projects, potentially waiving the express permit fee for affordable housing projects (**Strategy 4.2.2**)—potential building code updates (see **Strategy 1.3.3**) could simplify review of structures larger than duplexes, but this would likely require additional staff capacity (see **Strategy 2.3.1**). For example, Vancouver offers expedited permit review for infill development.

Another way to expedite the permit review process and reduce design costs and permitting fees is by offering "pre-approved" or "permit-ready" plans for certain housing types. Property owners utilizing these building

[13] WAC 197-11-800(1)(c) describes the process for raising the limits.

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plans would go through a simplified and expedited review process, as the plans have already been pre-approved, designed, and engineered consistent with the City's code, providing a cost savings that can be applied toward construction. For example, the City of Wenatchee, recently developed a variety of permit ready cottage housing and ADU plans that range in size (between 400–1,200 square feet) and architectural style to encourage infill and ADU development in the city. The layout and structural elements of the pre-approved plans cannot be altered to qualify, but certain design aspects may be changed including siding, color, window design (not size/location), and roof material.

1.4.3 Improve Feasibility for ADU Construction

Action: Explore the possibility of streamlining or additional funding sources for ADU development and permitting processes, particularly for lower-income homeowners.

HB 1110 (2023) and HB 1337 (2023) directed all jurisdictions to make significant changes to ADU regulations, including allowing two ADUs per lot in all GMA urban growth areas, and reducing barriers to ADU development related to occupancy, sale, lot size, and parking. Kennewick updated its code in 2023 via Ord. No 6037 to comply with these provisions, including amendments to KMC 18.12.020 which lists development regulations for ADUs. The City could make additional revisions to further reduce ADU development costs and increase ADU construction and feasibility—for example, the City could consider additional flexibility for key standards such as maximum building height and parking. The City could also establish and administer a program in which registered architects can "self-certify" that the development of a detached ADU complies with applicable building code requirements (HB 1353) to simplify the development process.

Cities across the U.S. have adopted a variety of programs designed to reduce the cost of ADU development for homeowners, including minimizing design review, waiving permit or utility fees, providing technical assistance, and providing sources of financing.[14] Numerous municipalities including Boston, Los Angeles, Montpelier, VT, and Santa Cruz County, CA have established programs which incorporate equity and loan assistance as well as technical assistance and simplified permitting processes.[15] Funding sources for these programs include CDBG funding, cities, philanthropists, and partnerships with nonprofits such as Habitat for Humanity.

Many of these programs are targeted at lower-income renters, requiring either that the ADU be made available to households earning 80% AMI or lower, or to households using Housing Choice (Section 8) Vouchers. Onerous income reporting requirements can be a disincentive for property owner participation (especially single property owners or smaller developers), and so should be simplified as much as possible. In some cases, these programs have been targeted at lower-income homeowners as well, such as the Small Homes Northwest community ADU demonstration project implemented by Hacienda CDC in Portland and funded by the Oregon legislature, which helps income eligible homeowners develop ADUs in neighborhoods at risk of gentrification.

[14] Chapple, Karen, Wegmann, Jake, Mashood Farzad, and Coleman, Rebecca (Urban land Institute), Jumpstarting the Market for Accessory Dwelling Units.

[15] Villa Homes, ADU Aid Programs Across the U.S., 2026.

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1.4.4 Improve Permitting Communication & Clarity

Action: Consider a uniform chapter for land use development application procedures and provide better communication to applicants about permitting processes, approval criteria, and fees.

Consider a Uniform Chapter for Land Use Development Application Procedures

KMC Chapter 18.42 covers land use development application procedures in the city. While most of the provisions of this chapter are reasonable, supplemental use standards could complicate the process (e.g., standards for animals, home occupations, and homeless encampments are located alongside universal standards for permit application and compliance). Moreover, Section 18.42.040(1) states "Permits may be subject to any condition…," which affords broad, subjective powers to the Planning Director even for land use developments that may be permitted outright (there is a separate section for conditional uses under 18.42.100) and for design and compatibility issues that are generally covered by other sections of Title 18 (or should be if not already).

The City could adopt a unified chapter for land use development application procedures (see for example Anacortes) to simplify the process and clarify expectations for applicants.

Monitor Permit Delivery Times

The City of Kennewick currently reviews most civil plans within 10 working days and most land use permits within 15 working days.[16] However, the volume of permit applications fluctuates with economic cycles, making it very difficult to predict. Kennewick should aim to maintain its relatively fast project review times to support housing development. It can be extremely helpful to base future projections on detailed historical data. Such data should include, at a minimum, the volume of various types of permits, staffing levels, cost of review, and economic conditions (such as interest rates for construction loans, rental vacancy rates, and the numbers of home sales).[17] The City should continue to monitor the volume of permit application and permit delivery times to identify any short-term issues and proactively manage staff workloads to ensure that any effects of temporary short staffing can be managed.

The City is also required to prepare annual performance reports regarding development permit applications per the Local Project Review Act (RCW 36.70B.080(4)b)). Kennewick currently publishes a monthly report of permits issued by work class, but the information could be presented in a more user-friendly format to help the public and officials recognize growth trends and activity, measure performance, and flag potential areas for improvement of the permitting process. For example, Clark County publishes quarterly and annual reports and Kitsap County has an interactive annual dashboard showing trends over time.

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[16] The City is required to issue a final permit decision for most residential projects within 65 days per the Local Project Review Act (see RCW 36.70B.080(1)(d)), and there is a 20% refund requirement per State law for missing review deadlines to help reduce costly delays and provide clarity for builders. HB 2418 also recently amended the Local Project Review Act to clarify that a local government's determination of whether a project permit application is complete is procedural, rather than substantive. Kennewick Civil Plan Review Requirements for Private Development, 2026; City of Kennewick, 2026.

[17] Some jurisdictions establish a separate fund for permit application fee revenues and expenditures within their adopted budget, including the cities of Spokane, Bainbridge Island, Olympia, and Medina; MRSC, Tips for Timely and Predictable Local Government Permitting, 2024.

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Update the Relevant Webpages with Accurate and Clear Estimates

Consistent, easy-to-access communication and assistance is key to helping potential applicants understand which type of permit is required for their project and what information is needed to submit a complete application. Overall, the City provides accurate and clear estimates for residential projects on the Residential Project webpage and via the City's Self Service Portal for active applications. However, the City should review its Development Services website to ensure information is user-friendly, clear, and internally consistent. For example:

- The traffic and park impact fee fact sheets on the Estimate Fees portion of this site do not match the 2026 rates and this site has not been updated to include fire impact fees in Southridge—linking to the Master Fee Schedule instead (which is under "City Services" and not linked to from the Development Services website) along with the fee estimator would reduce confusion and simplify any annual fee updates.
- The Residential Project webpage could be more user-friendly. This could include a flow chart showing the steps visually, or showing all steps on one page so applicants can review information without having to open each step individually. Step 2 (Apply for Building & Public Works Permit) also does not mention express permit options (see also **Strategy 1.4.2**).
- City staff could create a "glossary" of terms to be used across permitting materials---this would involve identifying any confusing and interchangeable terms (e.g., zoning vs. land use) and then working to ensure all written materials, codes, permit portal text, and verbal communications use the same (jargon-free) terms consistently.

1.4.5 Subarea Plans & Planned Actions

Action: Consider new subarea plans and/or planned action ordinances.

Kennewick's Comprehensive Plan is a long-range policy instrument that primarily keeps to the "big picture" view regarding community-wide goals and issues of future land use, housing, infrastructure, and other needs. However, the city is made up of smaller areas, each with its own set of unique attributes, issues, opportunities and challenges that contribute to the whole. Subarea plans implement the broader citywide Comprehensive Plan via detailed, localized guidance for specific smaller geographic areas within a community. They enable more tailored strategies than the Comprehensive Plan and address local issues at a scale that engages residents. Subarea plans are often used for directing revitalization, ensuring economic stability, or addressing specific challenges like changing demographics or transportation needs within a specific geographic area.

A planned action takes subarea planning a step further to encourage, expedite, and clarify development consistent with local plans and mitigation measures. Planned actions involve detailed SEPA review and preparation of EIS documents[18] in conjunction with subarea plans, consistent with RCW 43.21C.440, RCW 43.21C.031, and WAC 197-11-164 to 172.[19] Detailed and comprehensive environmental analysis is completed

[18] A planned action "threshold determination" can be made for mixed use or residential development near a major transit stop instead of a planned action EIS. This allows a jurisdiction to either prepare a determination of non-significance (DNS) and checklist, or a determination of significance (DS) and EIS in association with a plan. Where a DNS is prepared with a checklist, it can be less expensive than an EIS. However, this flexibility in planned action threshold determinations applies only to areas in proximity to high-capacity transit, and the land uses must focus on residential and mixed-use development—there are currently no major transit stops in Kennewick, so this option would not apply.

[19] MRSC, Planned Action, December 2025.

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by the jurisdiction upfront during the planning stage for a study area. Future projects in the designated planned action area do not require SEPA determinations at the time of permit application if they are consistent with the type of development, growth and traffic assumptions, and mitigation measures studied in the EIS. Such projects are still required to comply with adopted laws and regulations and undergo review pursuant to the community's adopted land use and building permit procedures; however, the advanced work streamlines the development review approval process and removes a potential layer of appeal.[20] This can reduce the overall costs for developers, which may translate into lower final housing costs, and can help attract growth to a priority planning area of a community.

The City's existing land use policy supports more subarea planning to achieve quality development in line with the Comprehensive Plan. Kennewick adopted a subarea plan for the Bridge-to-Bridge/River-to-Rail (BB/RR) subarea in 2010 and is working on plans for Downtown and the civic campus vicinity. A Southridge subarea plan was also drafted but was not fully implemented. Kennewick has not adopted any planned actions but could consider pursuing this strategy concurrent with planning for Downtown or the civic campus vicinity. The City could also adopt a planned action for subareas with known surplus public lands to help jump start housing and mixed-use development in an area with limited housing at desired densities (**Strategy 1.4.5**). At a minimum, formally adopting or informally mapping neighborhood names in the city (ensuring alignment with existing plans and processes underway) would help clarify future subarea planning efforts.

Longer term (in the next 5-10 years), the City could consider new subarea plans for the Columbia Mall/Convention Center, Clearwater Avenue, and East Kennewick areas to encourage additional development and investment consistent with the citywide land use plan.

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[20] Commerce, Guidance for Developing a Housing Action Plan (p.121), June 2020.

2 Programmatic Strategies

In addition to regulatory considerations, this section discusses a menu of strategy options Kennewick can consider for increasing housing opportunities through programs addressing displacement, tenant protections, and homelessness as well as building staff capacity.

2.1 Anti-Displacement Strategies

Action: Adopt local tenant protections and consider other regulatory and programmatic anti-displacement actions to improve the stability of renter households.

As discussed above under **Racially Disparate Impacts (RDI)**, exclusionary zoning practices have led to numerous facets of housing inequity across the nation. Redevelopment programs implemented in earlier decades also resulted in both intentional and unintentional displacement of lower-income residents and people of color in many communities. To address these historic inequities, strategies to mitigate or prevent displacement have gained much attention in recent years and a variety of approaches have emerged. Overall, the effectiveness of anti-displacement strategies is highly neighborhood- and community-specific, and recent academic research has found decidedly mixed results of many approaches.[21] While most strategies have focused on minimizing displacement pressures, it should be noted that not all displacement is involuntary (there is always some movement in the housing market), and displacement can sometimes mean moving "up" to a higher opportunity neighborhood. Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP indicates community support for anti-displacement strategies that help residents stay in their existing homes (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**).

Increasing housing production overall, including market-rate housing production, is an important tool to moderate price increases and therefore make housing more affordable for low-and moderate-income households and prevent displacement.[22] This is particularly true in hot housing markets and if the new housing units are comprised of a variety of housing types. A study in California found that both market-rate and subsidized housing production reduced displacement rates in San Francisco, but subsidized housing production decreased displacement risk more significantly.[23] The same study also found that the positive effects of production on displacement at a hyperlocal neighborhood scale may differ depending on the complex neighborhood context.

One downside of increased production is the time it takes to build new housing, which can be lengthy not only for construction but also design and permitting. The most comprehensive academic survey of anti-displacement strategies to date suggests that in addition to production, neighborhood stabilization and tenant protection policies have the most immediate impact on mitigating displacement.[24]

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[21] Chapple, Karen and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (Prepared for the California Air Resources Board), *White Paper on Anti-Displacement Strategy Effectiveness*, February 2021.

[22] Been, Vicki, Ingrid Gould and Katherine O'Regan (New York University Furman Center), *Supply Skepticism: Housing Supply and Affordability*, August 2018.

[23] Zuk, Miriam and Karen Chapple (UC Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies), *Research Brief. Housing Production, Filtering, and Displacement: Untangling the Relationships*, May 2016.

[24] Chapple, Karen and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (Prepared for the California Air Resources Board), *White Paper on Anti-Displacement Strategy Effectiveness*, February 2021.

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A study from Common Good Labs analyzed data on thousands of U.S. neighborhoods over 15 years (2000 to 2015) to understand how poverty is reduced without community displacement.[25] It found eight indicators that are associated with inclusion, increased prosperity, and decrease in poverty. Three of these indicators can be most directly affected by municipal policies, noted in **Exhibit 9** below.

Exhibit 9. Inclusion Indicators

Inclusion Indicator	Priority
Increased housing density.	Zoning standards that directly regulate the density of residential development.
Higher rates of homeownership.	Zoning and subdivision standards that allow and encourage a greater variety of small and attached housing types (e.g., small single-family, cottages, townhomes, flats, condos). A New York Times report finds that the production of entry/starter homes has never been lower than today (particularly homes smaller than 1,400 square feet).
Presence of community organizations.	Financial and/or staffing support for community organizations. Zoning standards that provide low-cost commercial space and/or municipal facilities with space for community organizations to have offices, host events, run recreation and cultural programs, etc.

Source: Brookings, Reducing poverty without community displacement: Indicators of inclusive prosperity in U.S. neighborhoods, September 2022; New York Times, Whatever Happened to the Starter Home?, September 2022.

The following are suggestions for proactive policies the City of Kennewick could adopt or encourage to further prevent displacement. These are primarily focused on reducing displacement pressure on low- and moderate-income households that rent, but may also apply to homeowners who, for example, wish to age in place after retirement, need financial help for home rehabilitation, or rely on transit service as a primary means of transportation.

2.1.1 Local Tenant Protections

Washington State sets the baseline for the landlord-tenant relationship through the State Residential Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 59.18) and State Manufactured/Mobile Home Landlord-Tenant Act (RCW 29.20). The Washington State Legislature regularly amends these acts and has adopted several new tenant protections over the last few years. See **Exhibit 10**. According to the Attorney General's Office, there is no centralized enforcement mechanism for the RCW, and so it is incumbent upon landlords and tenants to either self-remedy violations, seek counseling or low-cost legal help from non-profit organizations, and/or resolve disputes through the courts.

Exhibit 10. Recent State Landlord-Tenant Regulations

Year	RCW	Topic	Effect
2018	59.18.255	Prohibition on source of income discrimination	Prohibits source of income discrimination against a tenant who uses a benefit or subsidy to pay rent.

[25] Brookings, Reducing poverty without community displacement: Indicators of inclusive prosperity in U.S. neighborhoods, September 2022.

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Year	RCW	Topic	Effect
2019	59.18.200	Notice of demolition	Tenants must be provided a 120-day notice of demolition or substantial rehabilitation of premises.
2019	59.18.140	Rent increase timing	Rent increases may not take effect until the completion of the term of the current rental agreement.
2020	59.18.610	Initial deposits and fees	Tenants may request paying initial deposits, nonrefundable fees, and last month's rent in installments (may be spread over 2-3 months, depending on lease length).
2021	59.18.650	Just cause evictions	Landlords must specify a reason for refusing to continue a residential tenancy, subject to certain limited exceptions.
2022	59.18.670	Security deposit	Allows landlords to offer a tenant the option of paying a fee in lieu of a full security deposit.
2023	59.18.260 & 59.18.280	Move out protections	Landlords must provide documentation for withholding any part of a security deposit, cannot withhold for "wear resulting from ordinary use" (such as minor wear or carpet cleaning), and mandates invoices or repair receipts to substantiate costs.
2023	59.18.057 & 59.18.410	Eviction protections	Technical changes to eviction notice forms and modified certain eviction processes.
2025	59.18.140 & 59.18.700-720	Rent stabilization	Landlords may not increase rent by more than 10% (or 7% per the consumer price index (CPI), whichever is less) over any 12-month period), mobile home parks may not increase the cost to rent a space by more than 5% annually, rent cannot be raised by any amount in the first 12 months of tenancy, and tenants must be provided 90 days' notice of a rent increase.
2025	59.20.235 & 59.20.335	Notice of sale	Notice of sale or lease requirements when a manufactured or mobile home community owner intends to sell or consider a purchase offer (must also notify local jurisdictions, any known tenant organizations, and any relevant housing authority).
2026	59.18.060	Flood disclosure	Landlords must disclose flooding history and flood risk to renters.
2027*	TBD	Smart access systems	Sets standards for the use of a smart access system in a residential property and requires alternative key options for tenants if requested.

* SB 5937 passed in 2026 and takes effect January 1, 2027. New sections of the bill have not yet been added to the RCW.
Sources: Attorney General Landlord-Tenant, 2025; RCW 59.18 and RCW 59.20, 2026; MAKERS, 2026; BERK, 2026.

Cities are free to adopt additional or more stringent regulations than those provided by the state (with the exception of market-rate rent control which was banned at the state level in 1981; RCW 35.21.830), and numerous Washington communities have done so. Local ordinances are enforced by the local jurisdiction.

Kennewick has not adopted any local landlord-tenant regulations. Several Washington cities and counties (for unincorporated areas) have recently adopted local tenant protections which could be informative for future

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discussions and recommendations; most of these are west of the Cascades except for the City of Spokane. The extent of local tenant protections varies but commonly includes the following:[26]

- **Notice or rent increases:** Many cities require 180 days' notice for significant increases rather than the state-mandated 90 days in RCW 59.18.140.
- **Late fees:** RCW 59.18.170 prohibits landlords from charging late fees until the rent is more than 5 days late, but there is no statewide cap on late fees. Some cities and counties have caps on late fees and bans on notice service fees.
- **Caps on move in costs:** There is no cap on the amount of move-in costs under RCW 59.18.610. Some cities and counties cap the amount of move-in costs such as deposits, non-refundable fees, and last month's rent (often capped at one month's rent).
- **Rent increase bans when repairs are needed:** Some cities prohibit landlords from raising the rent or evicting a tenant if the rental unit has habitability issues ("defective conditions" or conditions that "endanger or impair health and safety"). Usually, the tenant is required to notify the landlord in writing about the conditions for the ban on rent increases to be in effect.
- **Rental unit registration and inspection:** Many cities required landlords to register their rental units with the city, have a rental business license, or both. Some cities require rental unit health and safety inspections or conduct inspections of the rental units every year.

Other less common local tenant protections include:

- **Relocation assistance:** Some cities require payments for tenants evicted due to large rent increases or for renovations.
- **Eviction limitations:** Some cities place bans on evictions during winter months or for families with children during the school year.
- **Requiring leases to allow rent to be paid on different days of the month:** This allows tenants to adjust the due date of rent payments if the tenant has a fixed income source (e.g. a paycheck lag after the first of the month or a social security payment). A landlord shall not refuse to lease to tenants who request this. Evictions and Discrimination
- **Banning discriminatory, deceptive, and unfair practices in the rental market:** Prohibits inquiries or verification requirements based on immigration or citizenship status, using social security numbers as a method of proving financial eligibility, and representing that a unit is not available when it is in fact available. Also prohibits requiring that a lease be signed by children and deceptive omissions and practices like confusing lease terms or taking advantage of a lack of understanding by tenants.
- **Rental unit registration and inspection programs:** The purpose of such programs is to ensure rental housing meets standard living conditions. Registration includes property address, contact information, list of rental units, and condition of the housing units. Fees may be imposed and re-registration is required with new ownership.

No specific set of tenant protections is recommended as part of this HAP. The Kennewick community and decision makers are encouraged to use the "menu" of options above and to review other local ordinances as a

[26] The Seattle Times, Five Seattle suburbs added new landlord-renter laws this year. Here's what they do, December 15, 2022; NPR, WA cities expanded renter protections as state efforts stalled, January 3, 2025; Northwest Justice Project (WashingtonLawHelp.org), Some cities and counties have stronger protections for renters, May 3, 2025.

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basis for continued discussion. Kennewick can look to other communities like Burien and Kenmore that have adopted some of these protections. Longer rent increase notice time, move-in fee caps, and economic/physical relocation assistance are some of the strongest anti-displacement strategies available for low-income residents forced to move, giving them an opportunity to find new housing in the same community within a reasonable amount of time.

Any new regulatory action would require some degree of effort, ranging from education and outreach to increased staffing and resources for monitoring and enforcement. Regulatory action could also be considered at the regional level to provide consistency for landlords and property management companies working across multiple Benton County, Franklin County, or Tri-Cities jurisdictions (see related **Strategy 2.3.2**).

2.1.2 Mobile Home Park Redevelopment Protections

Mobile home parks can be prime locations for higher density redevelopment in communities with strong demand for new housing. However, they also provide relatively affordable housing to residents in lower-income brackets, so some communities use strategies to preserve mobile home parks and avoid displacing residents. For example, King County's Skyway-West Hill Community Service Area Subarea Plan stipulates that any proposal to redevelop an existing mobile home park includes evaluation and mitigation of residential displacement impacts.[27]

Some existing manufactured/mobile home/trailer parks in Kennewick are not zoned as Residential Trailer Park (RTP) but are zoned as Residential High Density (RH). This potentially puts those communities at a higher risk of redevelopment and resident displacement because the RH zone allows other high-value land uses like multifamily apartments and hotels. These communities include Columbia Mobile Village, Desert Pines, Whispering Winds, and Sun Meadows. Most or all of these communities should be rezoned to RTP, and have added criteria for future rezones to include anti-displacement provisions. Alternatively, some communities use an overlay zone that limits development (see the City of Bothell's Manufactured Home Park Overlay). See related zoning considerations in **Strategy 1.2.2**.

Another option would be to promote conversion of existing mobile home parks to cooperatives (similar to **Community Control of Land** discussed below). The Washington State Housing Finance Commission, in partnership with Resident Owned Communities (ROC) Northwest and ROC USA, offers the financial tools and expert guidance for manufactured-housing ("mobile-home") communities to become self-owned cooperatives. The commission works in partnership with ROC USA to provide financing for the purchase, and sometimes improvement, of the property. This financing is in the form of a bank loan with favorable terms for the cooperative.[28] Mobile home parks with seniors on fixed incomes may be less interested in this strategy.

In some cases, displacement of mobile home park residents cannot be prevented. Commerce offers a manufacture/mobile home relocation assistance program that provides financial resources to assist displaced residents, particularly those who meet low-income thresholds. However, these funds are not always available and are limited in what they can cover (e.g., typically enough to fund moving the home but not enough to also purchase a new lot and hook up utilities). This is a mitigation measure that should be used only in circumstances where preventive actions to preserve mobile home parks are unsuccessful.

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[27] Policy SWH-23 (p.35), 2022.

[28] Washington State Housing Finance Commission, Preserving Manufactured Housing Communities, 2026.

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2.1.3 Other Anti-Displacement Strategies

[Final HAP may identify a few key anti-displacement strategies from this section and move them up one heading level (effectively prioritizing some strategies that seem more likely to work or be pursued in Kennewick and reducing the list of "other" strategies). TBD pending public feedback and discussion with Council.]

Other anti-displacement strategies the City could pursue are summarized below. Some of these would be new to the City of Kennewick, while others would be an expansion of existing services offered by the Tri-Cities HOME Consortium or other housing partners in the area.

Tenant Legal Services

Eviction rates have been shown to drop when tenants facing eviction have access to legal representation. The Washington State Office of the Attorney General has a comprehensive list of resources for tenants facing legal issues, including free phone assistance from the Northwest Justice Project and Benton-Franklin Legal Aid for low-income tenants statewide.[29] Contacts and guidance could be provided alongside or in addition to the homeless services directory (see strategies under **Section 2.2**).

Rental Assistance Programs

Rental assistance programs help low-income tenants pay rent in moments of hardship. Such a program can be very helpful in preventing families and individuals from becoming homeless and help stave off eviction and displacement. However, rental assistance programs are also relatively expensive and may have limited reach in Kennewick. One option would be to investigate a temporary rental assistance fund for eligible low-income renters which can provide assistance for 1-3 months when a tenant is experiencing a financial crisis.

HOME funds may be used to provide tenant-based rental assistance contracts of up to 2 years to low-income households if such activity is consistent with the community's Consolidated Plan and justified under local market conditions.[30] Kennewick offers rental assistance via the Tri-Cities HOME Consortium (see **Strategy 2.3.2**), but all spots are currently full and the waitlist for new rental assistance is long. The City could pursue additional funding strategies like an affordable housing sales tax (**Strategy 4.4.1**) to help fund additional rental assistance opportunities.

Housing Rehabilitation

Some low-income households are unable to afford ongoing maintenance on their homes, particularly older housing units. This can lead to displacement if the homes become uninhabitable or the home is sold at a low price. Many cities and counties in Washington—including Vancouver, Spokane, and Pierce County for example—provide no- or low-interest loans to qualifying low-income homeowners to help repair and rehabilitate their homes.

Some programs do not require repayment of the loan until after the house is sold, and others defer payments if residents cannot afford them, or waive interest for disability modifications. These programs are funded by a variety of sources, including city or county affordable housing funds, Community Development Block Grant

[29] Washington State Office of the Attorney General, Residential Landlord-Tenant Resources, 2026.

[30] HUD HOME Overview, 2026.

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(CDBG) funds from HUD, or HOME Investment Partnership programs. Kennewick currently offers loans for low to moderate-income owner occupants of single family residential properties within city limits to address code and safety issues via the Tri-Cities HOME Consortium (see **Strategy 2.3.2**) but could pursue additional funding strategies like an affordable housing sales tax (**Strategy 4.4.1**) or expand these loans to more than single family properties. Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP indicates community support for home repair programs that help residents stay in their existing homes (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**).

Community Control of Land

There are several models of cooperative or shared land ownership which have been used to remove land speculation and market pressures from ownership housing and to provide affordable and stable ownership opportunities for lower- and moderate-income households. Such organizations have mostly taken the form of cooperatives and community land trusts (CLT), or a combination of both approaches.

In a community land trust, the land is held in trust by a nonprofit or city and only the housing unit is bought and sold, usually with permanent affordability restrictions in the covenant. Although this can reduce the amount of equity which can be built by buying and selling a home in a CLT, it does create opportunity for households whose incomes would typically exclude them from homeownership.

In a co-op model, residents own shares in the land or buildings (depending on the model) and pay affordable monthly payments with limited equity to residents. One Oregon model showed that combining a CLT and co-op yielded opportunities for homeownership for households earning 30–60% AMI.[31]

Overall, the largest barrier to community land control models is lack of funding for ownership affordable housing to jumpstart these types of organizations.[32] CLTs and co-ops are often funded through a mix of public grants and private support and can eventually build in revenue from other sources like lease fees and membership dues to sustain the work.[33] For example, Common Roots Housing, a CLT in Walla Walla, received a $770,000 grant from Commerce to purchase a parcel of land in the city where it plans to build seven 2- and 3-bedroom units.[34] Public policy can support CLTs or co-ops by land donation or contributing funds for land acquisition. Using public resources to empower trusted institutions, as authorized in RCW 35.21.685, can preserve or create affordable housing and space for community-serving organizations and businesses. Municipal and other funds like grants can assist these institutions in land and property acquisition efforts that preserve affordable housing and prevent displacement within a neighborhood.

Notice of Intent to Sell / Sale Ordinance

A "Notice of Intent to Sell" ordinance requires owners of multifamily buildings to provide official notification to tenants and local housing officials. This ordinance can apply specifically to properties with rents at or below certain income levels. The notice gives public authorities the opportunity to plan for a potential purchase in the interest of preserving housing that serves low- or moderate-income residents. It also acts as a mitigation

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[31] SquareOne Villages, A Case for Public Investment in Shared-Equity Homeownership, September 2020.

[32] Gabobe, Nisma (Sightline Institute), How Can Cities Move The Needle on Community Land Trusts?, August 2021.

[33] MRSC, Building Affordable Housing Through Community Land Trusts, September 6, 2023.

[34] Northwest Public Broadcasting, Walla Walla's first community land trust gets big boost, January 29, 2025; Common Roots Housing, FAQ, 2026.

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measure for residents, providing additional time to prepare for a potential need to move. Note that SB 5298 (2025) added notice of sale or lease requirements when a manufactured or mobile home community owner intends to sell or consider a purchase offer.

Foreclosure Assistance

Foreclosure assistance can take the form of financial support to homeowners facing foreclosure (similar to the rental assistance programs described above) or technical assistance and counseling to households at risk. Foreclosure intervention counselors serve as intermediaries between homeowners and financial institutions to advocate for at-risk homeowners in need of budgeting assistance, refinanced loan terms, or repaired credit scores. Cities can use affordable housing funds to support these programs, or community land trusts can step in to purchase foreclosed property, helping to restore ownership for residents. A study conducted by the Urban Institute during the Great Recession found that households that received counseling were more likely to avoid default and modify their loans to be able to keep making payments.[35] Such a program could be provided by the City of Kennewick or in partnership with another organization. Links to existing resources could also be added to the City's Programs for Low-Income Families & Individuals web page.

Living Wage Ordinance

As of summer 2025, a household needed an annual wage of $59,760 (an hourly wage of about $28.13 per hour assuming full-time employment) to afford the average 2-bedroom apartment or an annual wage of $104,079 (an hourly wage of about $50.04 per hour assuming full-time employment) to afford the average single family home in Kennewick.[36] The minimum wage in Kennewick is the default 2026 Washington State minimum wage of $17.13 per hour.[37]

The City could adopt a living wage ordinance requiring a higher minimum wage than that required by state law, which can help reduce housing cost burden and homeownership opportunities. Local ordinances are not widespread in Washington but are becoming more common; as of 2026, the cities of Bellingham, Burien, Everett, Renton, SeaTac, Seattle, and Tukwila as well as unincorporated areas of King County currently have minimum wages higher than the statewide minimum.[38]

Local Transit Service Support

Amid state preemptions on minimum parking requirements and housing growth targets, additional transit service at all times of the day and week should be available to support a variety of resident and worker needs. Today transit service in Kennewick is modest, with limited destinations, frequency, and span of service. As Kennewick continues to grow and traffic increases, enhanced transit service can provide a foundation for a more resilient transportation system and connecting people between their homes, jobs, schools, and other daily destinations.

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[35] Chapple, Karen and Anastasia Loukaitou-Sideris (Prepared for the California Air Resources Board), *White Paper on Anti-Displacement Strategy Effectiveness*, February 2021.

[36] WCRER, 2025; BERK, 2025.

[37] Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, Minimum Wage, 2026.

[38] Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, Local Minimum Wage Rates, 2026.

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Ben Franklin Transit provides transit service in Kennewick. The City of Kennewick does not have direct control over transit service, but has the authority to improve transit with roadway improvements (such as pedestrian facilities and bus priority features) and funding contributions through an interlocal agreement (i.e. operating subsidies for service). Cities' primary funding mechanism for these efforts is a Transportation Benefit District (TBD), of which Kennewick established in 2024. The Kennewick TBD generates funding through a 0.1% sales tax (the maximum is 0.3%). It has not opted to charge a vehicle license fee (allowed up to $50 without voter approval, and up to $100 with voter approval).

Improved transit service could be focused on route frequency and expanded hours, along with connecting Kennewick's multifamily neighborhoods to commercial areas and public facilities. Funding could also be used for sidewalk improvements to help people safely walk to and from transit stops. The City should continue regional conversations and partnerships on ensuring transit planning is well-connected to the Kennewick's land use and housing planning.

2.2 Homelessness Strategies

Homelessness is a government concern because it relates to the health, safety, and welfare of individuals and the community at-large.[39] Engagement conducted for the Comprehensive Plan and this HAP also found homelessness and the associated community impacts as one of the community's top concerns (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**). This HAP addresses homelessness because the production and price of housing, which is affected by City policy, is directly correlated to the rate of homelessness.[40] At the national level, every $100 increase in median rent is associated with a 9% increase in the estimated homelessness population, even after accounting for demographic and economic characteristics.[41]

Benton and Franklin counties conduct a point-in-time count of people experiencing homelessness across the two counties each year, typically in January. The count encompasses both sheltered and unsheltered people and is conducted during one 24-hour period each year. Therefore, the number is generally considered to be an undercount of the true population experiencing homelessness. In 2025, 124 individuals were experiencing homelessness across the two counties, of which 80 were in transitional housing or emergency shelters and 44 were unhoused.[42] The Kennewick School District also documented approximately 1.6% of students experiencing homelessness at some point during the 2025-26 school year (just under 300 students), lower than the statewide percentage of 2.9%.[43]

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[39] Commerce, Homelessness – Common Questions & Answers, January 2019.

[40] Greg Colburn and Clayton Page Aldern, Homelessness is a Housing Problem, March 2022.

[41] U.S. Government Accountability Office, How COVID-19 Could Aggravate the Homelessness Crisis?, August 2020.

[42] Commerce, Point in Time Count Results, 2025.

[43] Students experiencing homelessness include those who are doubled-up (e.g., sharing housing with other people or families due to loss of their own housing), sleeping in hotels/motels, sleeping in public or private shelters, or unsheltered. OSPI Kennewick School District Report Card 2025-26 School Year, data last updated November 24, 2025.

2.2.1 Strengthen Relationships with Service-Providers

Action: Strengthen coordination between the City and local homelessness support services.

The City does not directly offer any homeless shelters or transitional housing but should continue to strengthen partnerships with Benton County and existing service providers to provide outreach and offers for service and shelter for homeless individuals. For example, the City should continue to maintain its directory of support services with available times and contact information (such as food banks, shelters, counseling, public transit, etc.) listed on the City's website and should continue to coordinate distribution in print with local service providers. The City could also decide to invest more resources towards its partnerships, such as assigning a staff person to ensure the City's website is coordinated with countywide directories (e.g., Benton County's Housing Resource Center site) or to contact services more frequently to maintain and update the directory

City staff should also continue to monitor the annual point-in-time count and support the two counties as necessary to ensure consistent data collection on the extent and changes in the homeless population in the city and region.

2.2.2 Adopt a "Housing First" Approach

Action: Adopt a Housing First approach that couples housing with services.

Decades of research have found that helping homeless people move off the street and into a home of their own is the most effective way to reduce long-term (chronic) homelessness for the most vulnerable people.[44] This is because it is extremely difficult or impossible to address the personal, financial, mental, or physical problems that underlie homelessness while simply trying to stay alive.

The "housing first" approach eliminates bureaucratic steps and places no criteria on sobriety, employment, criminal history, or completing a religious program before individuals are moved into a home. Or to put another way, when someone is drowning it doesn't help if a rescuer insists the victim learn to swim before bringing them to shore. Individuals experiencing homelessness can address their issues once they are on solid ground with private space, a stable address, and the dignity of meeting basic needs like food, warmth, and bathing.

This approach is less costly to taxpayers than the combined costs of roving service contacts, emergency room visits, jail and shelter stays, towed vehicles, and maintenance of public spaces. Success stories and lessons abound from places as varied as Wenatchee and East Wenatchee, WA, Houston, TX, Columbus, OH and Salt Lake City, UT.

The provision of homes can be done indirectly through vouchers, in which public funding directly subsidizes the cost of a market-rate rental unit, or directly through publicly owned housing. The type of housing is oftentimes and preferably in the form of apartments which are the cheapest type of housing to build and operate per unit. Sometimes existing apartment or motels are purchased, or a warehouse can be renovated for residential use. "Tiny home villages," which are rapidly constructed on vacant sites or parking lots, may be appropriate but only on a temporary basis since they are not as durable, weather-proof, or livable as permanent structures.

[44] Brendan O'Flaherty, Homelessness research: A guide for economists (and friends), 2019.

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"Permanent supportive housing" features intensive wraparound social services and case management for the residents, either on-site or off-site. These services usually include support for people living with complex and disabling behavioral health or physical health conditions, addiction treatment, and employment assistance. Research has found that an overwhelming majority of permanent supportive housing residents eventually stabilize their lives and health enough to move to market-rate housing.

The "housing first" policy has its limitations—it can only work if housing and service providers agree on the approach, if there is enough supply of housing available to work with at different income levels, and there is adequate long-term funding. All three requirements will require strategic planning and time to develop. **To that end, this HAP recommends the following:**

- Convene a meeting of all relevant homelessness stakeholders to discuss the "housing first" approach.
- Adopt a "housing first" policy in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Continue to regularly survey and monitor the scale of the homeless population.
- Consider ways to provide additional or seek new funding for supportive housing such as rent vouchers or a City-owned supportive housing development.
- Study alternatives for providing supportive housing with City funding or grant funding.
- Inventory hotels/motels which could be candidates for purchase and conversion to permanent supportive housing.
- Explore programs and partnerships that could enable more social, health, and human care services to establish branch locations in Kennewick (such as the recently opened Columbia Valley Center for Recovery).

2.3 Support Staffing Needs

2.3.1 Build Staff Capacity

Action: Build capacity amongst staff to help implement this Housing Action Plan, connect and collaborate with housing stakeholders, and promote more market-rate and affordable housing development in Kennewick.

The City could dedicate additional staff, build capacity to support existing staff, or expand current staff roles to promote implementation of the HAP and provide long-term policy support and relationship-building among Kennewick's residents, landlords, developers, human service providers, and City staff.

Existing staff could also be supported by hiring additional staff if needed to implement the HAP. Key responsibilities related to housing for staff should include:

- Implement a selection of the actions and strategies of the HAP.
- Plan, organize, coordinate, and implement the work plan and policies related to the City's housing policies, projects, and programs. Study, evaluate, and recommend housing policies and procedures.
- Serve as the City liaison to other departments and advisory boards on housing issues related to housing policy and provide citywide leadership and coordination on housing policy issues.

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- Apply for housing grants including from County sales tax housing set asides and CDBG funds and manage grant implementation. Monitor other state funding and grant opportunities and write applications for funding, including joint applications with partner agencies.
- If adopted, administer and monitor an MFTE program and provide guidance for property owners (see **Strategy 4.1**).
- Monitor housing production, the number and location of affordable housing units, and the number of unhoused people in Kennewick and support Community Development reports on housing and demographic trends.
- Build relationships with community partners in the non-profit, public, and private sectors, including acting as liaison to the Kennewick Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, and others.
- Market Kennewick to the residential real estate industry and manage inquiries, with a focus on promoting the qualities of the city, economic development opportunities, the friendly regulatory environment, and any financial incentives available
- Recruit human service providers and senior housing developers to locate and build facilities in Kennewick.
- Connect businesses and prospective residents to housing listings and providers.
- Connect tenants and landlords to resources help resolve disputes.
- Educate property owners and developers on development regulations and site-specific opportunities and share resources such as case studies, best practices, property maintenance standards, and property tax resources.
- Monitor changes to the Growth Management Act and related State laws on housing.

2.3.2 Continue Regional Housing Coordination Efforts

Action: Continue to coordinate with other Tri-Cities jurisdictions via the Tri-Cities Continuum of Care to promote more housing development in Kennewick and the Tri-Cities area (particularly affordable housing).

Kennewick should continue to coordinate with other Tri-Cities jurisdictions via the Tri-Cities Continuum of Care to support more housing in the area (particularly affordable housing). Expanding the capacity or regional role of the existing Tri-Cities Continuum of Care would have similar benefits as building City staff capacity—for example, the coalition could administer the MFTE program proposed in **Strategy 4.1** as well as other affordability programs proposed in this HAP—but continuing to work together to coordinate public resources would more effectively address gaps in the current delivery systems and could attract greater private investment into affordable housing in the Tri-Cities overall. The regional coalition also provides one clear point of contact for affordable housing, and allows jurisdictions to share technical resources and staff to refine a sound and predictable base of housing policies and programs for developers and providers working across multiple Benton County, Franklin County, or Tri-Cities jurisdictions.

For example, King County and the cities of Bellevue, Redmond, and Kirkland established ARCH (A Regional Coalition for Housing) in 1992 via an interlocal agreement. ARCH has since expanded to include the County and 15 cities within and works to preserve and increase housing for low- and moderate-income households in King County and East King County Cities. ARCH supports its members to develop housing policies, strategies and regulations; efficiently administer housing programs; coordinate city investments in affordable housing;

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and assist people looking for affordable rental and ownership housing. Funding for the organization comes from a combination of local government (contributions from each jurisdiction), state (e.g., Commerce funding tied to LIHTC), and private funding entities.

> "…**Parents with adult children who have disabilities have very few options** in getting these individuals a chance at independence and integration into the community."
> —Sean, homeowner

Note that the Tri-Cities Continuum of Care and suggested expansion of capacity or regional role would also be broader than the existing Tri-Cities HOME Consortium. The Tri-Cities HOME Consortium is a partnership between the cities of Kennewick, Pasco, and Richland which is limited to administering HUD funded affordable housing opportunities to low-income residents via the HOME Investment Partnerships Program (HOME) program. The HOME program provides formula grants to states and localities that communities use (often in partnership with local nonprofit groups) to fund a wide range of activities including building, buying, and/or rehabilitating affordable housing for rent or homeownership or providing direct rental assistance to low-income people. It is the largest Federal block grant to state and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low-income households.[45] The Tri-Cities HOME Consortium currently uses HUD funds for down payment assistance, home rehabilitation, rental/utility assistance, and support for those experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

See also related **Strategy 3.2.3** regarding coordination to identify surplus lands for affordable housing or capital facility co-location opportunities.

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[45] HUD HOME Overview, 2026.

3 Citywide Planning Strategies

These actions relate to other citywide planning strategies, including the Comprehensive Plan Five-Year Implementation Progress Report, public land for affordable housing, and encouraging redevelopment of vacant properties or underused surface parking lots.

3.1 Five-Year Implementation Progress Report

Action: Adjust housing strategies as needed to address any misalignments identified in the 2031 Five-Year Implementation Progress Report required by HB 1241.

In 2031, five years after the 2026 Periodic Update, HB 1241 requires Kennewick to submit an implementation progress report to Commerce detailing progress achieved in implementing the Comprehensive Plan. Amongst other criteria, the progress report must cover the following related to housing objectives and priorities (RCW 36.70A.130(9)(b)):

- The implementation of previously adopted changes to the housing element and any effect those changes have had on housing affordability and availability within the city.
- Permit processing timelines.

The City should complete this implementation progress report consistent with upcoming guidelines from Commerce, and should adjust its Comprehensive Plan (particularly the Housing and Land Use elements) and development regulations in the annual amendment cycle if needed based on the results. For example, the City may further adjust the future land use map or form and intensity standards should it find housing production trends are not keeping pace with housing growth targets.

3.2 Public Land for Affordable Housing

The cost of land can be a major cost for any housing development, and acquiring suitable land can add significant expense to an affordable housing project. Under RCW 39.33.015, public agencies (local governments or utilities) can discount or gift land they own for "public benefit," defined as affordable housing up to 80% AMI. These agencies must adopt rules to regulate the transfer of property (see **Strategy 3.2.1**). The City does not currently own much surplus land, but could consider land assembly or land banking (**Strategy 3.2.2**) and opportunities to work with other public agencies that may be willing to sell, trade, or donate land for a public purpose (**Strategy 3.2.3**).

3.2.1 Disposition Policy

Action: Consider adopting a surplus land disposition policy.

Providing a discounted land lease or sale is one way to help some projects become economically viable. The City could formally adopt a surplus land disposition policy that gives the right-of-first-refusal to affordable housing developers or other community-determined uses, consistent with the allowances of RCW 39.33.015 (note that some modifications to the affordability provisions of the statue were made in 2023 under HB 1695).

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The policy could be adopted by City Council resolution and embedded within the Comprehensive Plan's Housing Element during future annual amendments.

3.2.2 Land Acquisition

Action: Consider land assembly and pre-development activities to promote use of surplus public land for affordable housing.

Land assembly can be a powerful tool for putting together larger sites that can be redeveloped at a more economically feasible scale. The City could identify and purchase suitable underutilized or vacant properties that could be developed as affordable housing.[46] This strategy could be focused on close-in locations (e.g., Downtown where land ownership is fragmented or where acquiring suitable land for affordable housing is particularly difficult. Once acquired and assembled, the City would then lease or sell the land for affordable housing consistent with RCW 39.33.015. Adopting an affordable housing sales tax as described in **Strategy 4.4.1** could help fund land acquisition for affordable housing.

Kennewick may also focus on acquiring vacant, abandoned, or tax-delinquent properties.[47] These sites usually have negative impacts on surrounding properties and the City's role would include resolving ownership issues and/or addressing tax liens or land encumbrances that otherwise deter developers from pursuing these properties.[48] Alternatively, the City could work with a public corporation, the Kennewick Housing Authority, or other nonprofits to establish and operate a local land bank to acquire, hold, manage, and redevelop such properties for affordable housing. A nonprofit regional housing coalition, as described in **Strategy 2.3.2**, could also serve as a local land bank. Land banks benefit the community by managing abandoned or underutilized properties, allowing developers to purchase land and preserve it for later development of affordable housing.[49]

3.2.3 Surplus Lands & Co-Location

Action: Continue to coordinate amongst City departments and with other agencies and organizations to identify and promote use of surplus lands for affordable housing development or co-location opportunities.

While the City does not currently own much surplus land, other agencies, jurisdictions, and organizations who own surplus or underutilized land in the city may be willing to sell, trade, or donate land for affordable housing (e.g., the Kennewick School District, State and Federal agencies, other jurisdictions, the Port of Kennewick, utility providers, and religious organizations). Staff should continue to coordinate with these

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[46] Note this should include assessing environmental or other constraints that may inhibit project suitability prior to site selection.

[47] Abandoned property is no longer occupied or maintained by the owners. Vacant property has no legal occupants. Tax-delinquent property has past due property taxes or municipal bills.

[48] Family Housing Fund, Support the Reuse of Abandoned, Vacant, & Delinquent Properties, December 2015.

[49] New legislation passed in 2026 (HB 1974) helps reduce the time it takes to secure land for housing development through local land banking authorities in cities and counties. Per HB 1974, land banks may also transfer real property, including transfers at less than fair market value in exchange for affordability requirements, and can eliminate some of the property's liabilities similar to the City (e.g., title defects, outstanding liens or taxes, and undertaking predevelopment activities). Habitat for Humanity, Why they matter: Land banks, 2026.

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groups to identify underutilized or vacant lands that could be suitable for housing development (which could be pursued with additional staff capacity described in **Strategy 2.3.1** or the regional coalition to support affordable housing in the Tri-Cities area described in **Strategy 2.3.2**). For example:

- School district-owned land can be leased for affordable housing per HB 2617 (2020) which removed recapture provisions when used for affordable housing under RCW 39.33.015. For example, this change facilitated affordable housing development on an Everett School District property which leased a ballfield for an affordable housing complex.
- Kennewick is home to a number of churches and other religious facilities. The City could pursue opportunities to encourage affordable housing on property owned or developed by religious organizations in the city (see related **Strategy 1.2.5** regarding density bonuses for affordable housing on religiously-owned land). HB 1859 (2026) allows more financing options for this type of development and reduced the set aside requirement for affordable housing projects on property owned by a religious organization from 100% affordable units to 50% or 20%, depending on the project's income restrictions.
- Lands purchased as staging areas for major construction may be turned toward housing at the end of the project, whether those lands were purchased by the City of Kennewick or another public agency.

Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP indicates community support for identifying and using surplus or vacant lands to support affordable housing opportunities (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**). The City could also adopt a planned action for subareas with identified surplus public lands to help jump start housing and mixed-use development in an area with limited housing at desired densities (**Strategy 1.4.5**).

Another way to "find surplus land" for affordable housing is by building housing with other community facilities. Co-location builds housing above or adjacent to ground-level community facilities (such as government administrative offices, daycares, libraries, or recreation or community centers) on the same property. There are many examples of co-location across the Pacific Northwest.[50] This strategy takes advantage of land and utilities already planned for the main use, but requires the zoning allows for such mixed uses with adequate building height limits.

[50] Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, A New Chapter: Cities Are Tackling the Housing Crunch—by Building Above the Library, September 2019; SCIDpda, Domingo Vernes Apartments, 2026.

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4 Funding Strategies

The City estimates there is a funding gap of about $50 million per year to support affordable housing production over the 20-year planning period if no new funding strategies are pursued.[51] The set of potential actions below relate to the financing and funding of affordable housing and related issues like taxes, fees, and State law. Funding could come from an increase in tax revenues, new or additional grant awards from expanded partnerships, re-prioritization of existing City revenues or reframing of existing categories (e.g., affordable and homeless transitional housing becomes a component of public safety), or a combination of these strategies. New construction and development over time also generally increases Kennewick's tax base, and growth in revenues could be directed towards housing as much as possible. Additional conversations with the community, developers and stakeholders elected officials, and staff will be needed to help prioritize which funding strategies to pursue.

4.1 Multifamily Tax Exemption Program

Action: Study and adopt an MFTE program to help meet Kennewick's affordable housing targets.

4.1.1 MFTE Overview

Cities are authorized to offer a multifamily tax exemption (MFTE) under a 1995 state law, RCW 84.14. Cities can grant 8-24 year property tax exemptions for multifamily development with four or more units meeting certain criteria. Longer exemption periods are available for property owners who set-aside some residential units for low-moderate income households. The general options under state law are:

- **8-year exemption** for any type of multifamily project. This can be used to promote market-rate housing construction. No affordable housing is required under state law for the first 8 years, but cities may choose to require it. A 12-year extension is allowed if affordable housing is provided.
- **12-year exemption** when at least 20% of units in a multifamily project are affordable to households earning up to 115% AMI. A 12-year extension is allowed.
- **20-year exemption** when at least 20% of units in a rental project are permanently affordable to households earning up 80% AMI. Only allowed within one mile of certain transit service.
- **20-year exemption** when at least 25% of units in a homeownership project are permanently affordable to households earning up 80% AMI.

Under these exemptions a property owner does not owe property taxes on the residential portion of a project but still owes tax on non-exempt property like land and commercial space. When a project "graduates" at the end of the exemption period the property owner begins paying full tax on the residential portion and is allowed to return affordable rental units to market rates.

The local government has significant power to tailor their local programs. Key parameters are the location or zones the programs are available, the required quantities of affordable units and how many years they must be affordable (may be higher than state law), and eligible income levels for affordable units (may be lower

[51] Commerce, Guidance for Updating Your Housing Element, updated January 2026, pg. 64-65.

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than state law). Some cities adopt other standards intended to ensure affordable units are comparable in design to market-rate units.

Washington state's complex property tax system means the MFTE program has obscure fiscal implications for cities and other local taxing districts. MFTE results in some foregone tax revenue to government and some shift of taxes to all other non-participating property owners. Cities' regular property tax revenue cannot grow more than 1% per year, but the value of new construction is exempt from this limit and new construction also brings new revenues from sales tax on the construction itself and spending by new residents, real estate excise tax, impact fees, utility connection charges, and an increase in non-exempt property taxes.[52]

The amount of tax exemption, new market-rate units, and new affordable units all factor into the cost-to-benefit of MFTE programs. The City of Kirkland (population 95,499) recently conducted a study of its MFTE program that illustrates an example of the tradeoffs. Kirkland estimates a total $581,000 in exempted property taxes for the year 2025, and a shift of $277,000 to other property owners. The owner of a median assessed value home in Kirkland (a value of $1.18 million) is estimated to pay an extra $25.72 per year from this shift, representing less 1% of property taxes paid to the City and less than 1% of total property taxes paid to all taxing districts for that owner. Since 2011, 2,078 total units and 210 affordable units have been produced with Kirkland's MFTE program.

The Comprehensive Plan Visioning Survey found incentives like MFTE may be broadly supported. The idea for "Government incentives for private housing projects to reserve some units for low- moderate-income households" ranked third in a list of ten affordable housing strategies presented in the survey, behind "Infrastructure incentives for low- and moderate-income projects" and "Encouraging more homes on existing residential lots."

The past several years have seen unprecedented increases in construction costs, which have a major impact on development feasibility. There is likely interest in the program among development stakeholders. If tailored well to match the real estate economics in Kennewick, it would likely make Kennewick more competitive and attractive to housing development since no other jurisdictions in the Tri-Cities region have adopted an MFTE program. Several other eastern Washington cities have adopted MFTE programs, including Walla Walla, Spokane, Wenatchee, Ellensburg, and Yakima.

4.1.2 Recommendations

Exhibit 11 contains preliminary recommendations on MFTE program characteristics for Kennewick.

Exhibit 11. Preliminary MFTE Recommendations for Kennewick

Program Characteristic	Recommendation
Exemption duration offered	Offer the 8- and 12-year exemptions (with 12-year extension options) to provide flexibility and meet a range of housing needs. The base 20-year exemptions could potentially be added later after assessing the initial program usage.
Eligible properties	Rental or homeownership properties with a minimum of 10-20 multifamily residential units that are either new construction or make rehabilitation improvements (as defined by state law).

[52] This concept is very complex and more information can be found in Commerce's What is Tax Shift? guide sheet as well as Commerce's MFTE guidebook (starting on p.37).

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Program Characteristic	Recommendation
Affordable housing criteria	**8-year exemption:** No affordability requirement. An affordability requirement could be added later after assessing the initial program usage. **12-year exemption:** At least 25% of units affordable for households earning up to 80% AMI, or at least 20% of units affordable for households earning up to 60% AMI. Various alternatives could be considered in these ranges. Rental rates, including utilities, are capped at 30% of household income based on Benton County's AMI (adjusted for family size). Rents do not need to be regularly updated based on changes in the income of individual tenants.
Residential target area (eligible locations)	**8-year exemption:** CBD, UMU, CR, CC. **12-year exemption:** RM, RH, CBD, UMU, CR, CC. The 12-year exemption is recommended for more zones to encourage a wide spread of affordable housing throughout the city. MFTE projects must be in "urban centers" as defined by RCW 84.14.010, which describes compact districts with a variety of shops, a mix of uses, and public facilities, but there is otherwise no guidance and most cities refer to their zoning map for ease of administration. Small cities may only adopt MFTE in zones with a minimum average density of 15 units per acre, but this is also a useful guideline for larger cities in coordinating MFTE standards with development regulations.
Design requirements	Affordable units must be distributed throughout the development to avoid concentrations of poverty. In new developments with 20 units or more, at least 15% of units must be 2-bedrooms or larger.

Source: MAKERS, 2026.

4.1.3 Considerations

Some cities in Washington allow increased building height in exchange for the provision of affordable units in their MFTE programs. Kennewick should also consider this strategy to improve development feasibility. See **Strategy 1.2.2** for more details.

MFTE programs with income-restricted units require ongoing administration to ensure that rental rates and resident incomes are meeting the criteria. To reduce the screening and monitoring workload of City staff a partnership could be explored with the Kennewick Housing Authority or another affordable housing agency which has the infrastructure and skills in place to conduct income verifications.

Staff should audit the MFTE program regularly to ensure that the cumulative benefit to income-restricted residents is greater than the foregone revenue from the tax exemption, and City Council should receive an annual report on program costs and benefits.

4.2 Development Fee Adjustments

Kennewick, like many municipalities, levies impact and development fees on new construction to fund improvements in infrastructure as well as hookup and general facilities charges for water and sewer connections to new developments. Combined, these fees run in the thousands per unit for residential properties and can limit the feasibility of affordable housing developments. Many fees in Kennewick are already relatively low compared to peer jurisdictions. However, the following four strategies discuss ways to adjust development fees to encourage more desired housing types (e.g., middle housing in **Strategy 4.2.1**

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and affordable housing in **Strategy 4.2.2** and **Strategy 4.2.3**) and to align with State legislative changes regarding proportional impact fees for residential development (**Strategy 4.2.4**).

4.2.1 Middle Housing Development Fees

Action: Consider adjusting development fees for 2-4 unit buildings or specific middle housing types.

Building permit fees in Kennewick (KMC 15.08.010) are currently based on improvement value and do not account for the type of development; land use permit fees (KMC 18.42.020) likewise do not account for the type of development.[53] To encourage development of a wider variety of housing types (specifically missing middle housing), the City could waive or adjust these fees for 2-4 unit buildings or other specific middle housing types. For example, Port Angeles eliminated 26 building permit fees for 16 different housing types as part of the City's effort to encourage infill, multifamily, and affordable housing units (see also **Strategy 4.2.2**). The City could also rename the "single family" express permit option to clarify this includes duplexes and 1-2 unit townhomes or could offer an express permit option for additional middle housing types (see **Strategy 1.4.2**).

> "My children have all grown and moved out. **I would like to downsize my home, but it would cost me double the monthly mortgage payment to get into a *smaller* home."** I'm actually looking into building a multiplex so I can get the smaller home I want and have additional units to rent out just so I can afford to downsize.
>
> —Jenna, homeowner

4.2.2 Affordable Housing Impact or Permit Fee Waivers

Action: Consider offering permit or impact fee waivers for all affordable housing projects.

Waiving impact or permit fees for income-restricted units, especially those in larger multifamily project, can be a valuable incentive for encouraging the creation of affordable units as fee waivers reduce the up-front cost of construction for residential development. Kennewick does not currently offer any impact or permit fee waivers for affordable housing.

RCW 82.02.060 authorizes jurisdictions to grant impact fee exemptions for affordable housing serving households making up to 80% AMI. Jurisdictions may choose a partial exemption of not more than 80% of impact fees, in which case there is no explicit requirement to pay the exempted portion of the fee from public funds other than impact fee accounts; or provide a full waiver, in which case the remaining percentage of the exempted fee must be paid from public funds other than impact fee accounts (RCW 82.02.060(3)). Examples of local governments that offer such impact fee waivers or reductions for affordable housing include Bellingham (multimodal transportation impact fee exemption), Wenatchee (exempts low-income housing and ADUs from all impact fees), and Vancouver (exemptions or waivers from all impact fees).

Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP found strong community support for incentives for affordable projects or for projects that reserve some units as affordable (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**). In particular, affordable housing developers felt the City could be more proactive in supporting affordable housing development by reducing permitting fees and offering additional

[53] Kennewick Master Fee Schedule, January 2026.

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incentives to encourage development. Per guidance from Commerce, fee waiver incentives (see also **Strategy 4.2.3**) are most effective when paired with a larger incentive package for affordable housing.

RCW 36.70A.540 authorizes affordable housing incentive programs including fee waivers or exemptions.[54] Reduced or waived project application fees, while usually not as large as impact fees (see above) or utility connection fees (see **Strategy 4.2.3**), still reduce the costs for an affordable housing developer. The City could waive all building and land use permit fees for affordable housing, a portion of all fees, or particular fees (for example, the City could waive express permit fees for affordable housing projects as discussed in **Strategy 1.4.2**). Kennewick's existing permit fees are already relatively low compared to other peer jurisdictions, so this strategy may not be as effective as adjustments to impact fees or other incentives. Examples of local governments that offer such fee waivers or reductions include:

- Lakewood reduces land use and building permit fees for affordable housing using a sliding fee reduction scale based on how much of the development is dedicated to affordable units and the affordability level of those units.
- Puyallup waives building permit fees when the structure is intended for low-income families, construction of the structure involves some volunteer labor, and the structure is being constructed by nonprofit.

While these fee exemptions could encourage more affordable housing, this would also represent a loss of revenue for other public amenities including parks, fire, and infrastructure improvements that would need to be rebalanced elsewhere for market-rate development. Building permit fees also remain within the Building Safety Fund and are not used for other City services.

4.2.3 Affordable Housing Utility Connection Fees

Action: Consider adopting waived or discounted utility connection fees for all nonprofit and housing authorities building affordable housing.

HB 1326 (2023) authorizes waivers for utility connection charges for nonprofits, public development authorities, housing authorities, or local agencies that provide emergency shelter, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or affordable housing (RCW 35.92.385). Connection charges must be funded using general funds, grant dollars, or other identified revenue streams.

The City currently defers water and sewer connection fees for affordable housing (affordable to less than 60% AMI for rental units and 80% AMI for homeownership units) if Kennewick Housing Authority is the developer and provided Kennewick Housing Authority secures sufficient grant funds to fully reimburse the City for the waived charges (KMC 14.25.020), but there is no such agreement for other affordable housing developers. At a minimum, Kennewick should expand this option to all nonprofits, public development authorities, housing authorities, or local agencies building affordable housing, and could potentially expand the wavier to apply to emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. The City could also establish additional eligibility criteria (such as a minimum number or percentage of units that must be affordable and/or the time period within which these units must remain at the set affordability level), could decide to

[54] Affordable housing incentive programs enacted or expanded under this law must serve households under 50% AMI for rental units and under 80% AMI for homeownership units. The thresholds can be increased to 80% AMI for rental units and 100% AMI for homeownerships units via a public hearing process if the city finds higher income levels are needed to address local housing market conditions.

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dedicate a portion of City funds (see **Strategy 4.5**) to support waiving or discounting these fees if providers do not have identified grant funding, or could adjust utility connection fees to be proportional to dwelling unit size to support more affordable smaller units.[55]

As noted under **Strategy 4.2.2**, fee waiver incentives are most effective when paired with a larger incentive package for affordable housing. A partial or full utility fee exemption would also represent a loss of revenue for water and sewer service that could (nominally) increase connection fees for market-rate development or system users.

4.2.4 Proportional Impact Fees

Action: Adjust the impact fee structure to comply with 2023 State legislative changes regarding proportional impact fees for residential development.

Amendments to RCW 82.02 based on SB 5258 (2023) introduced proportionality requirements for impact fees (particularly in relation to residential unit size) to support a broader range of housing types, including duplexes, townhouses, and other muti-unit housing. Revisions to RCW 82.02.060(1) specifically require that impact fees imposed on future development, as set by the local ordinance, must be calculated to reflect the proportional impact based on one of the following three metrics:

- Square footage
- Number of bedrooms
- Trips generated

Kennewick currently charges impact fees for transportation, parks, and fire.[56] Transportation impact fees (KMC 13.16) for residential development are calculated based on the net new PM peak hour trips per unit of detached single family (0.99 net new trips), multifamily (0.56 net new trips), mobile home park (0.59 net new trips), or senior housing (0.30 net new trips) unit. As a result, transportation impact fees are less for multifamily (2+ units), mobile/manufactured, senior housing, and ADUs than for single family housing. The 2026 base TIF rate per unit varies across four districts in the city, with the highest base rate in Southridge ($1,739.00 per trip) followed by the balance of the city ($1,302.21 per trip), Vista Fields ($1,138.79 per trip), and Downtown ($446.00 per trip). No revisions are needed to this fee structure to comply with SB 5258.

Park and fire impact fees for residential development are currently based on land use type and historical call volumes (rather than square footage or number of bedrooms):

- Park impact fees (KMC 3.90) for residential development are calculated based on the type of development and whether development is west (Service Area 1) or east (Service Area 2) of I-395:
  - Single-Family: $1,064 per unit in Service Area 1, $878 per unit in Service Area 2
  - Multi-Family: $625 per unit in Service Area 1, $520 per unit in Service Area 2
  - Mobile Home Units: $763 per unit in Service Area 1, $636 per unit in Service Area 2
- Fire impact fees (KMC 3.95) for residential development in the Southridge Service Area only are based on historical fire and emergency medical call volumes. The current fee schedule is $1,144.81 per single family home and $1,277.58 for each multifamily unit.

[55] MRSC, Want More Affordable Housing? Reducing Infrastructure Costs Could Help, 2024.

[56] Kennewick Master Fee Schedule, January 2026; City of Kennewick, Estimate Fees, 2026.

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Both should be updated consistent with Commerce's Residential Proportional Impact Fees and System Development Charges Guidebook to comply with SB 5258. **Kennewick's deadline to comply with SB 5258 and adopt proportional impact fees is 6 months after the periodic update deadline, or June 30, 2027 (RCW 82.02.060(10)).**

4.3 Local Bank Funding

Action: Encourage local banks to create a fund for affordable housing finance.

Under the Community Reinvestment Act (CRA), banks are required to meet the credit needs of low- and moderate-income households in communities in which they operate. Many banks meet their CRA requirements by investing in Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), providing capital to nonprofit affordable housing providers who use the capital to build regulated affordable housing, usually for households earning under 60-80% AMI. Outside of LIHTC, some banks are also working with cities across the country to fund other types of affordable housing, including "workforce" housing for households earning between 80–120% AMI, through non-tax credit programs.[57] For example, the Charlotte Housing Opportunity Fund combines city bond money with private investment from banks to provide gap funding for affordable housing projects. The fund has doubled the city's affordable housing finance pool since 2019, creating or preserving 1,047 housing units in the city.[58] The Washington Housing Initiative Impact Pool is a similar nonprofit-run fund which targets housing for low- and moderate-income African American residents of Washington D.C.[59]

Kennewick could consider working with local banks to create such a housing fund which could be used for gap financing of affordable housing projects and which would encourage local banks to invest in the Kennewick community. Outreach to and coordination with the local lending community could be part of the work for additional staff capacity or regional housing coalition described in **Strategy 2.3**. This strategy could also be combined with City funding described in **Strategy 4.5**. Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP indicate community support for prioritizing financing mechanisms that help ensure meaningful access to homeownership (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**).

4.4 New Taxation Strategies

4.4.1 Affordable Housing Sales Tax

Action: Consider adopting an affordable housing sales tax (RCW 82.14.530 and .540).

The housing and related services sales tax (RCW 82.14.530) is a sales tax of up to 0.1% that can be adopted by council vote only.[60] Cities, towns, and counties are allowed to impose the housing and related services sales tax, but cities and towns may *only* impose the tax if the corresponding county *has not* already imposed the sales tax. Neither Benton County nor Kennewick have imposed this sales tax as of April 2026 (this sales tax is

[57] Mattson-Teig, Beth (WealthManagement.com), Banks Focus CRA Dollars on Affordable Housing, Jan 2, 2020.

[58] LISC Strategic Investments, Charlotte Housing Opportunity Investment Fund creates affordable housing and model for the future, June 14, 2022.

[59] JBG Smith, Washington Housing Initiative Impact Pool: 2021 Impact Report, 2021.

[60] MRSC, Funding Local Affordable Housing Efforts, August 2022.

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currently imposed by 20 cities and 13 counties).[61] Other jurisdictions that have implemented this tax include Wenatchee, Spokane, and Whatcom County (via council vote) and Anacortes, Ellensburg, Olympia, and Port Angeles (via a voter ballot measure).

At least 60% of the revenue from this tax must be used for:

- Constructing or acquiring affordable housing (which includes emergency, transitional, and supportive housing) for households at or below 60% AMI. This housing must be for people with disabilities or behavioral health disabilities, veterans, seniors, people experiencing homelessness or those at risk of becoming homeless, unaccompanied youth or young adults, or domestic violence survivors.
- Constructing or acquiring behavioral health-related facilities.
- Acquiring land for these purposes (see related **Strategy 3.2.2**).
- Funding the operations and maintenance costs of new or existing affordable housing units and facilities within which housing-related programs are provided.

The remaining 40% must be used for rental assistance or the operation, delivery, or evaluation of behavioral health treatment programs and services, affordable and supportive housing operation and maintenance, or housing-related services. SB 6027—adopted earlier this year and effective June 11, 2026—gives more flexibility in how local governments use the housing and related services sales tax dollars, allowing jurisdictions to fund maintenance, operations, or rehabilitation of *existing* (not just new) affordable housing and to use a portion of the money for rental assistance.

With these funds, Kennewick would be able to finance loans or grants to nonprofit organization or public housing authorities to carry out the purposes of the bill and may pledge the tax proceeds for repayment of bonds in accordance with debt limitations imposed by the state constitution or statute. The City could also enter into an interlocal agreement with other cities, counties, and/or housing authorities to pool and allocate these tax revenues (RCW 82.14.530(7)).[62]

Note that Benton County adopted a similar but separate affordable housing sales tax credit in 2020 per HB 1406 (RCW 82.14.540).[63] Under this program, Benton County receives 0.0146% of the state's portion of sales and use tax revenues through 2040 to be used for investments in affordable and supportive housing. No city within Benton County elected to participate in this program by the 2020 deadline, so the County receives the full credit for sales and use tax revenues in all unincorporated and incorporated areas (including Kennewick city limits)—Kennewick and other cities in the county opted not to participate to ensure the County could use these funds for an inpatient recovery facility to serve the Tri-Cities (Columbia Valley Center for Recovery).[64]

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[61] MRSC, Local sales tax rates & components – effective April 1, 2026, 2026.

[62] RCW 82.14.530 part 6 and 7; MRSC Revenue Guide for Washington Cities and Towns (p. 65 and 71), April 2026.

[63] Benton County Ordinance No. 623, 2020 (see BCC Chapter 8.12D); Association of Washington Cities, Implementing HB 1406, 2020; Commerce, Affordable and Supportive Housing Sales and Use Tax, 2026.

[64] Benton County, Columbia Valley Center for Recovery, 2026.

4.4.2 Affordable Housing Property Tax Levy

Action: Consider adopting an affordable housing property tax levy (RCW 84.52.105).

The affordable housing levy (RCW 84.52.105) is a property tax that can be imposed by cities, towns, and counties and which requires voter approval by a simple majority. The property tax can be imposed for up to 10 consecutive years and is an additional levy of up to $0.50 per $1,000 of assessed valuation. Revenues from an affordable housing levy can only be used for programs that promote affordable homeownership, assist with owner-occupied home repair, or prevent foreclosure for low-income households. The local government must adopt an affordable finance plan for how the levy funds will be spent and the plan must be consistent with a locally adopted or the state-adopted comprehensive housing affordability strategy required under the National Affordable Housing Act.[65]

The property tax levy has been less popular than the sales tax authority amongst other jurisdictions in Washington (**Strategy 4.4.1**). The cities of Bellingham (most recently renewed in 2018 through 2028), Vancouver (most recently renewed in 2023 through 2033), and Seattle (most recently renewed in 2023 through 2030) have successfully passed affordable housing levies. Only one Washington county, Jefferson, has attempted to pass an affordable housing levy but this effort was not successful.

Implementing a citywide affordable housing property tax levy received minimal support in engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP. Only about 12% of respondents to the 2025 citywide vision survey said they would support this strategy, and about 28% of respondents in a follow up housing questionnaire (targeted to better understand the needs of renters and lower-income households) said they would support this strategy. See **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**.

4.4.3 Sales & Use Tax Deferral for Underutilized Land

Action: Consider adopting a sales and use tax deferral program to encourage housing in underutilized commercial and mixed-use areas.

Washington State offers a sales and use tax deferral program (E2SSB 6175) to convert underutilized commercial land (including surface parking lots) into affordable housing (RCW 82.59).[66] These programs defer sales and use tax payments during construction, reducing upfront costs to improve project viability. Projects must include at least 10% low-income housing units (affordable to households at 80% AMI) to qualify for a deferral on sales or use taxes on the construction costs of residential improvements. If a project maintains the specified qualifications for at least 10 years, the sales and use taxes don't need to be repaid. The property owner would still pay sales and use tax on non-residential improvements, like the commercial portion of a mixed-use building. Applicants must apply and be approved by both the local jurisdiction and the State Department of Revenue for the sales tax deferral program.

Cities must take local action (to put a program in place in order for developers to be eligible for the Department of Revenue deferral certificate (RCW 82.59.020). To create a sales and use tax deferral program in

[65] MRSC, Funding Local Affordable Housing Efforts, August 2022.

[66] Note that SB 5755 authorized a similar but slightly different program in 2022 for surface parking lots only in cities with a population between 135,000 and 250,000 (RCW 82.92); in 2024, E2SSB 6175 expanded this option to all underutilized commercial property in cities of all sizes in targeted urban area (RCW 82.59).

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Kennewick, Council would need to adopt a resolution of intention which generally describes the proposed program including the application, approval, and appeals process and the City would need to hold a public hearing prior to adopting code to implement the program. Kennewick may also choose to establish additional eligibility criteria to tailor the program's use specific to local needs, provided the requirements are consistent with RCW 82.59.

As of April 2026, only the cities of Spokane and Seattle have incorporated this deferral program. Spokane estimates owners can expect to save approximately $900 for every $10,000 spent on eligible taxed goods and services under their program. Four projects in Seattle expected to provide more than 400 units combined are currently taking advantage of this program, and the City expects the program to create 1,000–2,000 new units over the next seven years (including 100–200 affordable units). Note that other cities such as Vancouver offer a similar program under SB 5755 (2022), which allows for a sales and use tax deferral program for surface parking lots only in cities with a population between 135,000 and 250,000 (RCW 82.92). In addition to "underdeveloped property" applying only to surface parking lots, SB 5755 requires at least 50% of units affordable to households with 80% AMI for rental units or 115% AMI for homeownership unit. Vancouver estimates owners can expect to save approximately $875 for every $10,000 spent on eligible taxed goods and services under their program. Spokane also offers a "Parking 2 People" sales and use tax deferral program under RCW 82.92 but the newer "Commercial Conversion" program under RCW 82.59 could be used by more properties.

4.4.4 Tax Increment Financing

Action: Explore the potential to use Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for identified sites, neighborhoods, or projects.

In 2021, Washington State granted new powers of tax increment financing (TIF) to the state's cities, counties, and port districts (RCW 39.114).[67] This funding mechanism allows municipalities to establish a geographic district (called the increment area) that is expected to benefit the most from a proposed new infrastructure investment. Typically, bonds are issued at the outset and the additional tax revenue resulting from the increased land and property values are then captured to pay for the new infrastructure and pay off the bonds.

TIF is widely used in other states across the country, but Washington's new program has some specific guidelines which differ from other states. In Washington, the state school levy and some other local taxes used to repay general obligation bonds are exempt. Additionally, TIF financing can only be used for specific authorized public improvements which are expected to encourage private development and increased assessed valuation which would not otherwise happen without the improvements. These improvements may be located inside or outside the increment area and include streets, water and sewer systems, sidewalks, streetlights, parking facilities, parks and recreational areas, broadband service, or brownfield mitigation. TIF can also be used to pay for long-term affordable housing, childcare service, providing maintenance and security for public improvements, and acquiring property for historic preservation. Unlike in other states, TIF funding in Washington can only be used for the specified projects or improvements set forth in the initial application, and project lists cannot be modified later. Thus, TIF is only applicable to existing and well-defined

[67] MRSC, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), last updated April 25, 2025.

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projects with specific infrastructure needs. The TIF district must have a maximum sunset date of 25 years and not have an assessed valuation greater than $20 million, and each city may not have more than two districts.[68]

The best locations for a TIF program are typically in undeveloped and underdeveloped areas because this program depends on an increase in property value. For example, the City could explore the possibility of using TIF in all or parts of Downtown, Bridge-to-Bridge, or East Kennewick to catalyze redevelopment projects and street or active transportation investments. TIF could support infrastructure or utility investments in planned denser mixed-use areas such as Vista Field or to help increase housing supply in particular neighborhoods like Southridge.

4.5 City Funding

Action: Consider City funding for a revolving construction loan fund for affordable housing projects or down payment assistance for low-income households.

> "The modest home (1800 sq. ft) I bozught 20 years ago in Kennewick, unmarried in my mid-20s, has nearly tripled in value since. That's great for my equity, but my income has not tripled in that time…**had I not bought back then, I don't know how we'd afford a home now**… I know lots of people in our situation who feel the same."
>
> —Chris, homeowner

Direct housing investment and support from the City can be one of the most effective ways to support affordable housing and prevent resident displacement. Kennewick's public tax dollars are limited, but the scale and urgency of the housing challenge require more resources to be dedicated to housing initiatives. The City could dedicate a portion of its budget to a revolving construction loan fund for affordable housing projects or additional down payment assistance for low-income households, using the same qualification and assistance amounts as HOME funds provided via the Tri-Cities HOME Consortium.[69] These would be in addition to any state or federal funds already administered by the City and its partners for affordable housing in Kennewick, and could come from reprioritizing existing City funds or via new funding sources (see . Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP indicate community support for prioritizing down payment assistance and other financing mechanisms that help to ensure meaningful access to homeownership (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**).

A revolving construction loan fund could provide low interest loans to developers undertaking affordable housing projects in Kennewick to help bridge the gap between traditional financing (e.g., bank loans) and total project cost. This could help some projects become economically viable, especially combined with other strategies in this HAP aimed at reducing development costs for affordable housing like surplus lands (**Strategy 3.2.3**) or fee waivers or reductions (**Strategy 4.2**). This strategy could also be combined with increased access to local bank funding for affordable housing (**Strategy 4.3**) or expanded to help fund utility fee waivers for affordable housing developments (**Strategy 4.2.3**).

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[68] Denis Wright Tremaine, Washington State's Expanded TIF Authority Creates Powerful Catalyst for Public-Private Partnerships, May 2022.

[69] City of Kennewick, Programs for Low-Income Families & Individuals, 2026.

The City could also dedicate a portion of its budget to down payment assistance for low-income households, using the same qualification and assistance amounts as HOME funds provided via the Tri-Cities HOME Consortium.[70]

Specific housing actions that would benefit from dedicated City budget or impact the City budget include:

- Streamlining the permit process, including express permits and pre-approved plans (**Strategy 1.4.2**), funding for ADU development (particularly for low-income homeowners; **Strategy 1.4.3**), improving communication and clarity (**Strategy 1.4.4**), and subarea plans and planned actions (**Strategy 1.4.5**).
- Anti-displacement strategies (**Strategy 2.1.3**), including strategic acquisition of existing multifamily housing, rental and foreclosure assistance, and housing rehabilitation.
- Contribute additional funding or staff time toward permanent supportive housing (**Strategy 2.2.2**).
- Increasing staff capacity to implement the HAP (**Strategy 2.3.1**).
- Sale or lease of public land for affordable housing (**Strategy 3.2** and **Strategy 3.2.2**).
- City-funded revolving construction loan fund for affordable housing projects or additional down payment assistance for low-income households (**Strategy 4.5**).

Management of these City funds could be part of the work of increasing staff capacity as described in **Strategy 2.3.1**.

4.6 State Advocacy

Action: Advocate for additional state investment in the Housing Trust Fund, condominium law reform, and Growth Management Act updates.

Engagement done for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP found support for City advocacy for more county, state, or federal funding for affordable housing projects (see **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan**). Primarily, this should involve lobbying the Legislature for more funds in the state's Housing Trust Fund, which provides capital funding.[71] The trust has helped build or preserve more than 59,000 affordable housing units statewide since 1986. The Legislature appropriates funding to the trust every biennium. More money in the trust would help mid-size communities like Kennewick (and the affordable housing providers who work in Kennewick) have a greater chance of receiving funding. In 2025, lawmakers invested $600 million into the Housing Trust Fund in the state's two-year budget and recently earmarked another $123 million to be added to that in March 2026.

Some developers interviewed for the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and this HAP also reported difficulties when projects overlapped with state requirements, particularly critical areas such as shrubsteppe mitigation requirements. Interviewees felt the City could play a stronger role in coordinating with Benton County, the State, and other local jurisdictions to address these issues. Commerce expects the 2027 legislative session will bring additional discussion on shrubsteppe habitat.[72]

[70] City of Kennewick, Programs for Low-Income Families & Individuals, 2026.
[71] Commerce, Housing Trust Fund, 2026.
[72] Commerce, Planners' Newsletter: Legislative update 2026, April 2, 2026.

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Kennewick could also update its legislative agenda with condominium legislation reform. Condos are rarely built in Washington State due to the liabilities placed on developers under state law.[73] The main barriers are a requirement for a 10-year warranty against construction defects and additional building code and inspection requirements that do not apply to rental apartments. SB 5258 (2023) and SB 5058 (2023) encourage construction of small condominium buildings (including townhouses) by modifying the procedures for construction defect actions and warranty claims, exempting buildings with 12 or fewer units and two or less stories from condo defect provisions such as extra inspections, and adding a new exemption to the real estate excise tax for first-time homebuyers of condominiums. Recent updates allow an "express warranty" for small buildings with 12 units or less and four or less stories, which is an important incremental step.[74]

The City may also comment on SEPA reform, which can add significant delay and complications to approval of residential development. Advocacy might involve exempting all residential development from SEPA review if the development intensity is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

In addition, the City may comment on updates to State law that affect land use, housing, zoning, and transportation (as noted under the **State Law Updates** section above). The City should provide input on proposals that affect the implementation of the HAP, either independently or through its involvement in statewide organizations like the Association of Washington Cities.

Continued coordination and involvement with regional partners (such as Benton County, Franklin County, and other Tri-Cities) and the federal government is also recommended to promote and fund affordable housing.

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[73] Spokane Journal of Business, Washington state's condo law changes could ease restrictions, November 2021; The New York Times, As Gen X and Boomers Age, They Confront Living Alone, November 2022.

[74] HB 1403 (2025) and HB 2304 (2026); Association of Washington Cities, Condo liability reform redux passes Legislature, February 2026.

5 Implementation

The planning matrix in **Exhibit 12** organizes the actions of this Housing Action Plan. The City Council will be involved in most or all action implementation through ordinances, resolutions, budgeting, and partnerships with other agencies. This matrix should be used as a framework for regular progress reports on implementation and could be a live document on the City website.

Exhibit 12. Housing Actions and Strategies Planning Matrix

	Strategy	Priority	Lead	Timeline	Cost	Method
1	**Regulatory Strategies**					
1.1	**Expand the allowed uses.**					
1.1.1	Residential use standards.	High	Community Planning	Concurrent with Periodic Update, 0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinances
1.1.2	Emergency, transitional, & permanent supportive housing.	High	Community Planning	Concurrent with Periodic Update	$	Development regulation ordinances
1.1.3	Tiny homes.	Low	Community Planning	1-2 years	$	Development regulation ordinances
1.1.4	Limit new single-family uses in some zones.	Medium	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinances
1.1.5	Consolidate zones.	Medium	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinances
1.2	**Adjust form & intensity standards.**					
1.2.1	Density limits.	High	Community Planning	Concurrent with Periodic Update, 0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.2.2	Height limits.	High	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.2.3	Residential setbacks.	Medium	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.2.4	Design standards.	Medium	Community Planning	1-2 years	$$	Development regulation ordinance; usability updates to the single family, multifamily, and commercial standard documents
1.2.5	Religiously-Owned Land Density Bonus.	Low	Community Planning	1-2 years	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.3	**Adjust other standards.**					
1.3.1	Parking.	High	Community Planning	Concurrent with Periodic Update	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.3.2	Multifamily open space standards.	Medium	Community Planning	6-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinance

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	Strategy	Priority	Lead	Timeline	Cost	Method
1.3.3	Building code updates.	Low	Community Planning	1-2 years	$	Development regulation ordinances
1.3.4	Lot splits.	Medium	Community Planning	0-6 months	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.3.5	Planned residential developments.	Medium	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinance
1.4	**Streamline the permitting process**					
1.4.1	SEPA categorical exemption thresholds.	High	Community Planning	0-12 months	$$ - $$$	Ordinance with SEPA review
1.4.2	Express permits & pre-approved plans.	Medium	Community Planning	1-2 years	$$	Further study, City budget, future ordinances, partnerships
1.4.3	Improve feasibility for ADU construction.	Medium	Community Planning (with City Treasurer)	1-2 years	$	Further study, future ordinances
1.4.4	Improve permitting communication & clarity.	Medium	Community Planning	Ongoing	$	Development regulation ordinance; staff reports and website updates
1.4.5	Subarea plans & planned actions.	Low	Community Planning	2+ years	$$$	Further study, City budget, future ordinances, partnerships
2	**Programmatic Strategies**					
2.1	**Anti-displacement strategies**					
2.1.1	Local tenant protections.	High	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Tenant Protection Ordinance and future amendments as needed
2.1.2	Mobile home park redevelopment protections	High	Community Planning	0-12 months	$	Development regulation ordinance
2.1.3	Other anti-displacement strategies.	High	Various	Ongoing	Varies	Further study, City budget, future ordinances, partnerships
2.2	**Homelessness strategies**					
2.2.1	Strengthen relationships with service-providers.	High	Community Planning	Ongoing	$	Partnerships
2.2.2	Adopt a "housing first" approach.	High	City Council	0-12 months	$	Partnerships
2.3	**Support staffing needs**					
2.3.1	Build staff capacity.	High	Community Planning	Ongoing	$	City budget
2.3.2	Continue regional housing coordination efforts.	High	Community Planning	Ongoing	$	Partnerships
3	**Citywide Planning Strategies**					
3.1	**Five-year implementation progress**	Low	Community Planning	2+ years	$ - $$	Consistent with upcoming guidance from Commerce

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	Strategy	Priority	Lead	Timeline	Cost	Method
3.2	**Public land for affordable housing.**					
3.2.1	Disposition policy.	Low	Community Planning	12+ months	$	Ordinance
3.2.2	Land acquisition.	Low	City Council, Community Planning (with Finance)	Ongoing	$$$	Further study, City budget, future ordinances, partnerships
3.2.3	Surplus lands & co-location.	High	Community Planning (with Public Works and other City departments)	Ongoing	$$	Partnerships
4	**Funding Strategies**					
4.1	**Adopt a multifamily tax exemption program.**	**High**	**Community Planning (with Finance and City Council)**	**6-18 months**	**$$**	**MFTE Ordinance**
4.2	**Development fee adjustments.**					
4.2.1	Middle housing development fees.	Medium	Community Planning	6-18 months	$	Fee schedule updates, ordinance
4.2.2	Affordable housing impact or permit fee waivers.	High	Community Planning	6-12 months	$	Fee schedule updates, ordinance
4.2.3	Affordable housing utility connection fees.	High	Community Planning (with Public Works)	0-12 months	$	Fee schedule updates, ordinance
4.2.4	Proportional impact fees.	High	Community Planning	0-6 months	$	Fee schedule updates, ordinance
4.3	**Local bank funding.**	**Medium**	**Community Planning**	**2+ years**	**$**	**Partnerships**
4.4	**New taxation strategies.**					
4.4.1	Affordable housing sales tax.	Low	Community Planning (with Finance and City Council)	6-18 months	$	Ordinance
4.4.2	Affordable housing property tax levy.	Low	City Council (with Finance and Community Planning)	2+ years	$	Ballot measure
4.4.3	Sales & use tax deferral for underutilized land.	Low	Community Planning (with Finance and City Council)	6-12 months	$	Ordinance

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	Strategy	Priority	Lead	Timeline	Cost	Method
4.4.4	Tax increment financing.	Low	Community Planning (with Finance)	2+ years	$$	Further study, future ordinances, partnerships
4.5	**City funding.**	**Low**	**Community Planning (with City Treasurer and City Council)**	**6-18 months**	**$$$**	**City Budget**
4.6	**State advocacy.**	**Medium**	**City Council**	**Ongoing**	**$**	**Legislative agenda and engagement with American Planning Association WA & Association of Washington Cities**

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

5.1 High Priority Implementation

It is important to set priorities given the limited resources of government. The following items are highest priority for implementation over the next year, presented in order of strategy number (not by priority). This list does not include strategies proposed for adoption concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update.

- **Height Limits/Height Bonus:** Make small revisions to height limits in the lower-density residential zones and add height bonuses of one or two stories in medium- and high-density residential zones for developments providing a certain number of affordable units as described in **Strategy 1.2.2** (potentially aligned with an MFTE or other bonus system).
- **Raise SEPA Thresholds:** Adopt higher SEPA categorical exemption thresholds for multifamily development and smaller (attached or detached) single family development as described in **Strategy 1.4.1** to increase housing diversity and affordability.
- **Tenant Protections Ordinance:** Priority tenant protections for Kennewick are requiring longer rent increase notice time, move-in and late fee caps, and rent increase bans when habitability repairs are needed. Several other tenant protection options described in in **Strategy 2.1.1** could be bundled into a single ordinance and amended or expanded over time as needed.
- **Staff Capacity:** Build staff capacity to help implement this Housing Action Plan as described in **Strategy 2.3.1**.
- **MFTE Ordinance:** Implement the recommendations of **Strategy 4.1** to adopt a multifamily property tax exemption ordinance with 8- and 12-year exemptions to provide flexibility and meet a range of housing needs.
- **Impact Fee Waivers:** Implement impact fee waivers or reductions for income-restricted units to encourage the creation of affordable units. **Strategy 4.2.2** describes options for how these exemptions can be structured.
- **Proportional Impact Fees: Strategy 4.2.4** adjusts the parks and Southridge fire impact fee structure to comply with 2023 State legislative changes regarding proportional impact fees for residential development. *Due by June 30, 2027.*

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- **Affordable Housing Sales Tax:** Adopt a sales tax of up to 0.1% as described in **Strategy 4.4.1** to support affordable housing.

5.2 Market Kennewick's Housing Incentives

Kennewick has already adopted measures to encourage a great supply, diversity, and affordability of housing, and is poised to do more in the implementation of this HAP. The next step is to advertise Kennewick's housing opportunities and incentives to developers and property owners. Marketing work would ideally be supported by increased staff capacity (see **Strategy 2.3.1**), could be managed by the City's marketing team, or could be managed by an outside marketing firm.

A website and StoryMap are good ways to collect all of the relevant information, such as:

- Newly streamlined zoning standards, relaxed ADU standards, bonus heights programs, and other housing-friendly regulations.
- The multifamily tax exemption program (if implemented).
- Monitoring data on number of permitted and constructed units and median housing and rental prices (to help the public keep track of the housing challenge and real estate market trends).
- Case studies showing drawings, photos, and financial data for recent and high-quality development in Kennewick and nearby cities, especially multifamily housing and middle housing like cottages and townhomes.
- Location of vacant or underutilized land that is available for development.
- Recent and ongoing infrastructure investments.
- This HAP and its related housing reports should be summarized and linked.

Printed brochures with similar information could be mailed to all property owners.

The City should also continue to network and build connections with private and non-profit developers, co-ops, land trusts, and other housing creators in Kennewick. This will involve sharing information about the ease of working with Kennewick's regulations and housing programs. This would start by providing basic education to developers already working in Kennewick and bringing them up to speed on recent changes. Further connections to regional developers not yet working in Kennewick would help bring new business and potentially greater housing production.

All marketing should communicate the City's desires and intensions for new and innovative affordable housing, define the benefits and development potential within the community, and tell the story of Kennewick. Marketing should promote the qualities of Kennewick, the friendly regulatory environment, and financial incentives.

5.3 Monitoring

The only way to know if housing actions are successful is to measure and report on outcomes. By developing a monitoring program, Kennewick can track progress toward achieving housing goals and identify where more work or changes are needed. Interviews with housing developers one year after HAP adoption (or at other regular intervals) can also be helpful to get feedback on what HAP actions are working well and where there may still be barriers.

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Monitoring would be a key role of existing staff and integrating monitoring into existing work and activities could help preserve limited staff time. Monitoring the HAP implementation could be merged into:

- Community Development's annual or monthly reports to the City Council
- Monitoring of population growth and development permits
- Comprehensive plan monitoring

Monitoring could be further supported by building additional staff capacity and through increased regional coordination.

Potential performance metrics based on the Housing Needs Assessment in **Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan** are proposed in **Exhibit 13**.

Exhibit 13. Draft HAP Performance Metrics for Monitoring

HAP Objective	Performance Metric	Target
Make it easier to build affordable ownership and rental housing to **increase housing variety and choice** for more people.	Number of single-family, cottage housing, townhouse, condominium, and other ownership units permitted.	Higher average annual rate of units permitted over the next 5 years than in the last 5 years, particularly middle housing and multifamily housing types.
	Housing diversity	50% or less of new housing units are detached single-family dwellings
	Rental vacancy rates	At least 6% rental vacancy
	Number of ADUs permitted	Average of at least 14 ADUs permitted per year.
Ensure opportunities for **affordable, safe, and properly sized housing** for families with children and older adults.	Home price increases	Annual median home price increases are lower than regional, state, or national increases
	Rental price increases	Annual median rental price increases are lower than regional, state, or national increases
	Number of senior, assisted living, and nursing home units permitted	
Adopt new **financial tools and incentives** to promote development of affordable housing, smaller units, and middle housing types.	Number of income-restricted affordable housing units built or preserved for low-income households (80% AMI and below)	Higher average annual construction or preservation of affordable units per year over the next 5 years than in the last 5 years.
	Amount of MFTE program participation (if adopted)	Use of MFTE program.
Partner with housing educators, providers, and other groups to find equitable housing solutions and remove systemic barriers.	Number of emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing units permitted.	Construction or preservation of 14-15 emergency housing beds and about 250 permanent supportive housing units over the next 5 years.
	Rates of cost-burden and severe cost-burden.	Decreased rates of cost-burden at all income levels, across tenure, and by race and ethnicity.

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; BERK, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

CHAPTER 18.09 DEFINITIONS

18.09.010: Definitions Generally.

The purpose of the definitions provided below is to define those words and terms that have a specialized meaning and/or may be used in an unfamiliar way for the purposes of this title. In addition, the following definitions, where deemed necessary, include examples or clarifications that will assist in the understanding of the terms and in the application and enforcement of the zoning code. The following definitions shall pertain to the regulations, processes, and standards contained within this Title only. Definitions found in other adopted titles, ordinances, resolutions, codes, and/or regulations shall be subordinate in meaning to the definitions contained herein in applying the provisions of this title.

For the purposes of this title, certain words are defined as follows: Words in the present tense include the future tense; words in the singular shall include the plural; the word "shall" is mandatory; the word "should" indicates that which is recommended but not required; the word "may" is permissive. All words in this Title shall have their plain and ordinary meaning unless otherwise defined herein below.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.015: Academy.

Academy means a school for a special field of study such as dance, art and martial arts.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.020: Accessory.

Accessory means a use, activity, structure or part of a structure that is subordinate and incidental to the main activity or structure on the subject property.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.030: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Attached.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Attached means a second dwelling unit added to or created within an existing single-family dwelling to use as a completely independent or semi-independent unit with provisions for cooking, eating, sanitation and sleeping. Attached for purposes of "attached" ADUs means the accessory dwelling unit has one or more vertical and/or horizontal wall(s) in common with, or attached to the principal dwelling unit. Connected by a breezeway or similar structure does not constitute an attached structure.

(Ord. 5527 Sec. 1, 2013; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.035: Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Detached.

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), Detached means a freestanding ADU that is not attached or physically connected to the principal dwelling unit.

(Ord. 5527 Sec. 2, 2013)

18.09.040: Accessory Structure.

Accessory Structure means a subordinate structure detached from but located on the same lot as the principal structure, the use of which is incidental and accessory to that of the principal structure and will not create a nuisance or hazard.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.050: Accessory Use.

Accessory Use means a use that is located on the same lot and incidental to a principal use.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.060: Adjacent.

Adjacent means a lot or parcel of land that shares all or part of a common lot line with another lot or parcel of land. Properties separated by public rights-of-ways are not considered adjacent.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.070: Adult Concessions.

Adult Concessions for the purposes of regulation, Adult Concessions are divided into two subcategories:

(1) Adult Entertainment; and

(2) Adult Retail for the purpose of zone assignments in the General Code, Section (18.09).

Adult Concessions means any activity regulated under Chapter 6.35, but is not limited to:

(1) Adult Entertainment:

(a) *Adult Hotel or Motel* is a hotel or motel wherein material is presented which is distinguished or characterized by an emphasis on matter, depicting, describing or relating to "specified sexual activities" or "specified anatomical areas" or where rooms are routinely let for less than one day or which advertises or holds itself out as specializing in sexual activity;

(b) *Adult Motion Picture Theater* means an enclosed or drive-in theater with a capacity of ten or more persons used for presenting material distinguished or characterized by an emphasis on matters depicting, describing or relating to "specified sexual activities" or "specified anatomical areas" for observation by patrons therein;

(c) *Adult Mini Theater* means an enclosed or drive-in theater used for presenting material distinguished or characterized by an emphasis on matters depicting, describing or relating to "specified sexual activities" or "specified anatomical areas" for observation by patrons therein;

(d) *Adult Panorama Theater or Arcade* means any place to which the public is permitted or invited and where coin operated or slug operated or electronically, electrical, or mechanically controlled still or motion picture machines, projectors, or other image producing devices are maintained to show images to persons in booths or viewing rooms where the images so displayed depict or describe "specified sexual activities" or "specified anatomical areas."

(e) *Artist - Body Painting Studio* means an establishment or business which provides the services of applying paint or other substance whether transparent or nontransparent to or on the human body when such body is wholly or partially nude;

(f) *Live Adult Entertainment Establishment* means any building or portion of a building wherein any employee or entertainer is unclothed or in such attire, clothing or costume as to expose to view any specified anatomical areas and which is for the benefit of members of the adult public, or advertised for the use or benefit of members of the adult public.

(g) *Specified Sexual Activities* means:

(i) Human genitals in a state of sexual stimulation or arousal;

(ii) Acts of human masturbation, sexual intercourse, or sodomy;

(iii) Fondling or other erotic touching of human genitals, pubic region, buttocks or female breast.

(h) *Specified Anatomical Areas* means:

(i) Less than completely or opaquely covered:

(I) Human genitals, pubic hair, vulva;

(II) Buttocks, anus;

(III) Female breasts below a point immediately above the top of the areola; and

(IV) Human male genitals in a discernibly turgid state, even if completely or opaquely covered.

(ii) "Entertainment" means any exhibition or dance of any type, pantomime, modeling or any other performance.

(2) *Adult Retail:*

(a) *Adult Bookstore* means an establishment having as a majority of its stock in trade, books, films, photographs, devices, magazines or other periodicals which are distinguished or characterized by their emphasis on matters depicting, describing or relating to "specified anatomical areas" or "specified sexual activities" or an establishment with a segment or section devoted to the sale or display of such material;

(b) *Adult Packages* means an establishment having as a majority of its stock in trade is, clothing, garb, costumes, novelties, videos, gift packages etc., or an establishment with a segment or section devoted to the sale or display of such material.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.075: Affordable Housing.

Affordable housing means, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise, residential housing whose monthly costs, including utilities other than telephone, do not exceed thirty percent of the monthly income of a household whose income is:

For rental housing, 60 percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development; or

For owner-occupied housing, 80 percent of the median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (RCW 36.70A.030(5))

18.09.080: Airports or Airfields.

Airports or *Airfields* means any area of land designed and set aside for the landing and takeoff of aircraft, including all necessary facilities for the housing and maintenance of aircraft.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.090: Alcohol Beverage Sales (Packaged).

Alcohol Beverage Sales (Packaged) means stores selling primarily alcohol beverages.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.100: Alley.

Alley means a public or private way permanently reserved as a secondary, but not primary, means of access to abutting property.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.110: Alteration.

Alteration means any change, addition, or modification in construction or occupancy.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.120: Amateur Radio.

Amateur Radio means the non-commercial operation and use of broadcast and/or radio transmission facilities for public or private uses. No provision of this Title shall fail to conform to the limited preemption entitled Amateur Radio Preemption, 101 FCC 2nd 952 (1985) - issued by the Federal Communication Commission.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.130: Antenna.

Antenna means any system of wires, poles, rods, reflecting discs, or similar devices used for the transmission or reception of electromagnetic waves external to or attached to the exterior of any building.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.140: Aquifer.

Aquifer means a water bearing layer of permeable materials such as rock, sand, or gravel.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.145: Art Gallery.

An establishment or other private or public place intended primarily for art exhibitions where people may view and/or purchase paintings, sculptures, or other works of art.

(Ord. 5461 Sec. 3, 2012)

18.09.150: Automobile Oriented Use.

Automobile Oriented Use means any use which is primarily intended for light vehicle maintenance, including, but not limited to, car washes, lube centers, car detailing, and tire sales/service.

(Ord. 5851 Sec. 1, 2020; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.160: Automobile Wrecking Yard.

Automobile Wrecking Yard means a secure lot used for the purpose of dismantling used motor vehicles or trailers, or the storage, sale, or dumping of dismantled or wrecked vehicles or their parts. The presence on any lot or parcel of land of three or more motor vehicles, which, for a period exceeding 30 days, have not been capable of operating under their own power and from which parts have been or are to be removed for reuse or sale, shall constitute prima facie evidence of an automobile wrecking yard.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.170: Available Public Facilities.

Available Public Facilities means that facilities or services are in place or that a financial commitment has been made to provide the facilities or services within a specified time. In the case of transportation, the specified time is six years from the time of development.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.180: Banks and Financial Institutions.

Banks and Financial Institutions means those businesses engaged in the provision of financial services including the provisions of financial services for individuals and corporations, such as banks, credit unions, saving and loans, mortgage and brokerage agencies, and saving and investment consultants. Provision of drive-through services may be allowed consistent with traffic safety concerns.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.190: Barbers and Beauty Shops.

Barbers and Beauty Shops means those businesses operated by a state licensed barber or beautician, which provide personal hygiene services to individuals including hair care, manicures, and pedicures. Other personal care services allowed by state license may be offered. Incidental sale of hair and beauty products is allowed.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.200: Bars and Taverns.

Bars and Taverns means any premises wherein alcoholic beverages are sold at retail for consumption on the premises and minors are excluded therefrom by law. It should not mean premises wherein such beverages are sold in conjunction with the sale of food for consumption on the premises and the sale of said beverages comprises less than 25 percent of the gross receipts.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.210: Basement.

Basement means that portion of a building that is partly or completely below grade as defined by the International Building Code (IBC) current version.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.212: Battery Charging Station.

Battery Charging Station means an electrical component assembly or cluster of component assemblies designed specifically to charge batteries within electric vehicles, which meet or exceed any standards, codes, and regulations set forth by Chapter 19.28 RCW and consistent with rules adopted under RCW 19.27.540.

(Ord. 5571 Sec. 1, 2014)

18.09.215: Battery Exchange Station.

Battery Exchange Station means a fully automated facility that will enable an electric vehicle with a swappable battery to enter a drive lane and exchange the depleted battery with a fully charged battery through a fully automated process, which meets or exceeds any standards, codes, and regulations set forth by Chapter 19.28 RCW and consistent with the rules adopted under RCW 19.27.540.

(Ord. 5571 Sec. 2, 2014)

18.09.220: Bed and Breakfast.

Bed and Breakfast is a single-family structure with five or less available rooms for rent, common dining facilities, and duration of stay for guests of less than 30 nights.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.230: Best Management Practices.

Best Management Practices means a physical, structural, or managerial practice which has gained general acceptance for its ability to prevent or reduce environmental impacts.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.240: Block and Block Front.

(1) *Block* means a group of lots, tracts, or parcels within well-defined and fixed boundaries.

(2) *Block Front* means that portion of a block along a single street frontage but usually not more than 600 feet long.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.260: Reserved.

Editor's note(s)—Sec. 1 of Ord. No. 25-6157, adopted December 2, 2025, repealed § 18.09.260, which pertained to boarding house, and derived from Ord. 5180 adopted 2007.

18.09.270: Boat Building and Repair (Commercial).

Boat Building and Repair (Commercial) means any business established for the purposes of building and repairing boats. Building and repair of a single boat for use of the property owner, renter, or lessee shall not be considered commercial boat building and repair.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.280: Boat Marinas.

Boat Marinas means those facilities established for the purpose of providing rental slips and storage for commercial and pleasure marine craft. Incidental uses allowed at a marina facility may include fuel sales, marine sewage disposal, facility management offices, and meeting spaces.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.285: Brewpub.

Brewpub means a restaurant-brewery that sells 25 percent or more of its beer on site. The beer is brewed primarily for sale in the on-site restaurant or bar.

(Ord. 5541 Sec. 1, 2014)

18.09.287: Brewery, Micro.

Brewery, Micro means a brewery that produces less than 15,000 barrels of beer per year with 75 percent or more of its beer sold off-site. Microbreweries can sell directly to the public or to either a wholesaler or retailer.

(Ord. 5541 Sec. 2, 2014)

18.09.290: Buffer or Buffer Zone.

Buffer or *Buffer Zone* means a neutral area between two areas of concern of sufficient width and quality to ensure that activities on one property do not negatively impact the other.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.300: Building.

Building means any structure used or intended for the supporting or sheltering any use or occupancy (International Building Code (IBC) current edition). When a use is required to be within a building, or where special authority granted pursuant to this Title requires that a use shall be entirely within an enclosed building, then the term "building" means one so designed and constructed that all exterior walls of the structure shall be solid from the ground to the roof line, and shall contain no openings except for windows and doors which are designed so that they may be closed, and required exhaust and ventilation ducting.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.310: Building Official.

Building Official means a duly appointed officer of the City of Kennewick who administers and enforces the Kennewick Municipal Code Title 15 (KMC), International Building Code (IBC), current version, and other relevant codes.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.320: Building Line, Front.

Building Line, Front means the line, parallel to the property line, which passes through the point of the principal building nearest the front lot line.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.330: Bus Stations and Terminals.

Bus Stations and Terminals means those public and private stations and terminals which serve the regional transportation needs of the community, including accessory uses such as cafes, gift stores and lockers, intended for the use of travelers. Transit stops are not considered bus stations and terminals.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.340: Campground.

Campground means an area or tract of land on which accommodations for temporary occupancy are located or may be placed, including cabins, tents, and major recreational equipment, and which is primarily used for recreational purposes and retains an open air or natural character.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.345: Cargo Container.

See KMC 18.09.2095, Transportable Unit.

(Ord. 5557 Sec. 1, 2014)

18.09.350: Carport.

Carport means a covered space for the housing of vehicles, boats, trailers, etc., and enclosed on no more than two sides.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.360: Car Wash.

Car Wash means a drive through facility; automated, attended or coin operated, for the purposes of washing vehicles.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.370: Cemetery.

Cemetery means land used or intended to be used for the burial of the dead and dedicated for cemetery purposes, including columbarium, crematories, mausoleums, and mortuaries when operated in conjunction within the boundaries of such cemetery.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.380: Church or Place of Religious Worship.

Church or Place of Religious Worship means a building or buildings intended primarily for public religious worship including ancillary activity and improvements such as schools providing part-time religious education in association with religious services, assembly rooms, kitchen, reading room, recreation hall and may include a residence for church staff. For the purposes of this title, schools being operated for primarily nonreligious education and those portions of churches or places of religious worship which house such schools shall not be considered churches or places of religious worship.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.390: Clearing.

Clearing means the destruction or removal of vegetation, ground cover, shrubs and trees, including, but not limited to, root material removal and/or topsoil removal.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.400: Clinic.

Clinic means a building designed and used for the diagnosis and treatment of human outpatients excluding overnight care facilities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.410: Closed Record Appeal.

Closed Record Appeal means an administrative appeal on the record following an open record hearing on a project permit application when the appeal is on the record with no or limited new evidence or information allowed to be submitted and only appeal argument allowed.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.415: Co-Living Housing.

Co-Living Housing means a residential development with sleeping units that are independently rented and lockable and provide living and sleeping space, and residents share kitchen facilities with other sleeping units in the building.

(Ord. 25-6155, Sec. 1, 2025)

18.09.420: Combustible.

Combustible means a material with a flashpoint of 100° Fahrenheit to 1,100° Fahrenheit.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.425: Commercial Use.

Commercial l Use means use for nonresidential business purposes, including retail, office, wholesale, general merchandise, and food services.

18.09.430: Commercial Vehicle.

Commercial Vehicle means any vehicle, the principal use of which is the transportation of commodities, merchandise, tools, spare parts, produce, freight, animals, or passengers for hire.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.440: Communication Relay or Transmission Facilities.

Communication Relay or *Transmission Facilities* means telephone, telegraph, television, radio, cable, commercial broadcasting, microwave, transmission or retransmission facilities and substations, and any other communication conveyance for commercial purposes.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.450: Community Center.

Community Center means an assembly place, structure, area, or other facility used for and providing fraternal, social, and/or recreational programs generally open to the public and designed to accommodate and serve significant segments of the community.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.460: Comparable Uses.

Comparable Uses means a land use that is equivalent or similar to permitted uses within a given zoning district.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.470: Comprehensive Plan.

Comprehensive Plan means the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Kennewick, including all adopted sub-area plans, as may be amended.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.480: Condominium.

Condominium means an estate in real property consisting of an undivided interest in common with other purchasers in a portion of a parcel of real property, together with a separate interest in space in a residential building, such as an apartment and may include a separate interest in other portions of such real property.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.490: Construction Yard.

Construction Yard means a facility for the storage of construction related materials and equipment.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.500: Convenience Store.

Convenience Store means any commercial establishment offering for sale pre-packaged food products, including limited on-site food preparation, household items, and other goods commonly associated with the same and having a gross floor area of less than 5,000 square feet.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.504: Cottage Housing.

Cottage Housing means residential units on a lot with a common open space that either:

(a) Is owned in common; or

(b) Has units owned as condominium units with property owned in common and a minimum of 20 percent of the lot size as open space.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 1, 2025)

18.09.508: Courtyard Apartments.

Courtyard Apartments means up to four attached dwelling units arranged on two or three sides of a yard or court.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 2, 2025)

18.09.510: Critical Areas.

Critical Areas means areas which including wetlands, areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and geologically hazardous areas such as unstable slopes.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.520: Day Care Center.

Day Care Center means an agency licensed by the State which regularly provides care for 13 or more children during part of the 24-hour day.

(Ord. 5461 Sec. 1, 2012; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.530: Density.

Density means a measure of the intensity of development, generally expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre or in terms of population (i.e., people per acre).

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.540: Development.

Development means any change in use, enhancement of use, or extension of the use of the land, including, but not limited to, land disturbing activities, structural development, including construction, installation or expansion of a building or other structure; creation of impervious surfaces; subdivisions, short subdivisions and binding site plans, as defined in RCW 58.17.020 as well as redevelopment of an already developed site.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.545: Distillery, Craft.

Distillery, Craft means a distiller that produces alcoholic beverage spirits by distillation or by infusion through distillation or re-distillation to a maximum of 60,000 proof gallons or less consistent with WAC 314-28-050.

(Ord. 5541 Sec. 3, 2014)

18.09.550: Domestic Water Systems.

Domestic Water Systems means potable water, supply infrastructure and source as provided to customers and others who place anticipated and approved demands on the system.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.560: Drainage.

Drainage means the collection, conveyance, containment, including retention and detention, and/or discharge of surface and stormwater runoff.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.570: Drainage Control.

Drainage Control means a pipe, swale, natural feature or manmade improvement for the purpose of carrying and/or retaining drainage.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.580: Dry Cleaners and Laundries.

Dry Cleaners and *Laundries* means facilities which provide services for the cleaning of clothing and household items. Laundries include coin-operated laundries.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.585: Duplex.

Duplex means a residential building with two attached dwelling units.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 3, 2025)

18.09.590: Dwelling Unit.

Dwelling Unit means one or more rooms physically arranged so as to create an independent housekeeping establishment for occupancy by one family with separate toilets and facilities for cooking and sleeping.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.592: Dwelling, Attached Zero Lot Line.

Dwelling, Attached Zero Lot Line or *duplex zero lot line* means a single-family dwelling on its own lot, which shares a common wall on a side lot line with a similar adjoining dwelling on a separate parcel.

(Ord. 5365 Sec. 5, 2011)

18.09.594: Dwelling, Detached Zero Lot Line.

Dwelling, Detached Zero Lot Line means a detached single-family dwelling, on its own lot, with one wall built to one side lot line and provided with easements to benefit the adjacent zero lot line parcel.

(Ord. 5365 Sec. 6, 2011)

18.09.596: Middle Housing.

Middle Housing means buildings that are compatible in scale, form, and character with single-family houses and contain two or more attached, stacked, or clustered homes including duplexes, triplexes, fourplexes, fiveplexes, sixplexes, townhouses, stacked flats, courtyard, apartments, and cottage housing.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 4, 2025)

18.09.600: Dwelling, Multi-Family.

Dwelling, Multi-Family means a building used for occupancy by two or more families living independently of each other.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.605: Dwelling, Single-Family Conventional.

Dwelling, Single-Family Conventional means a single-family dwelling, on its own lot, separated from adjoining lots and generally in conformance with residential zoning.

(Ord. 5365 Sec. 7, 2011)

18.09.610: Dwelling, Single-Family Detached.

Dwelling, Single-Family Detached means a residential building containing not more than one dwelling unit entirely surrounded by setbacks on the same lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.620: Easement.

Easement means a covenant (binding agreement) which grants or restricts a specific right of use.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.625: Electric Vehicle Infrastructure.

Electric Vehicle Infrastructure means structures, machinery, and equipment necessary and integral to support an electric vehicle, including battery charging stations, rapid charging stations, and battery exchange stations.

(Ord. 5571 Sec. 3, 2014)

18.09.627: Emergency Housing.

Emergency housing means temporary indoor accommodations for individuals or families who are homeless or at imminent risk of becoming homeless that is intended to address the basic health, food, clothing and personal hygiene needs of individuals or families. Emergency housing may or may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. (RCW 36.70A.030(14))

18.09.628: Emergency Shelter.

Emergency shelter means a facility that provides a temporary shelter for individuals or families who are currently homeless. Emergency shelter may not require occupants to enter into a lease or an occupancy agreement. Emergency shelter facilities may include day or warming centers that do not provide overnight accommodations. (RCW 36.70A.030(15))

18.09.630: Essential Public Facilities.

Essential Public Facilities, mandated by the GMA, include airports, public educational facilities, state and regional transportation facilities, state and local correctional facilities, and other facilities of statewide significance. For the purpose of this title, wastewater reuse facilities shall be considered to be essential public facilities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.640: Espresso Stands (Drive Through).

Espresso Stands (Drive Through) means a retail business which offers primarily coffee beverages (hot or cold) and related merchandise to the traveling public.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.650: Espresso Stands (Sidewalk).

Espresso Stands (Sidewalk) means a retail business which offers primarily coffee beverages (hot or cold) and related merchandise and are established in a cart or other portable structure.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.655: Event Center.

Event Center is an area or structure that contains a social event, reception or happening which may include serving food and/or alcohol, and providing entertainment.

(Ord. 5204 Sec. 19, 2007)

18.09.660: Facade.

Facade means the exterior wall of a building exposed to public view or that wall viewed by persons not within the building.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.670: Facility.

Facility means both the physical structure or structures in which a service is provided, and the property within the parcel boundaries of its location.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.680: Family.

Family means one or more persons living together as a single housekeeping unit.

(Ord. 5407 Sec. 1, 2012; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.690: Family Day Care Home.

Family Day Care Home means a person regularly providing care during part of the 24-hour day to six or fewer children in the family abode of the person or persons under whose direct care the children are placed.

(Ord. 5461 Sec. 2, 2012; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.710: Fence.

Fence means an artificially constructed barrier of any material or combination of materials erected to enclose or screen areas of land.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.720: Fire Flow.

Fire Flow means a measure of water flow and pressure at a specific location as required or determined by the Fire Department.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.730: Fire Flow Requirement.

Fire Flow Requirement means a minimum level of water discharge at a specified location as determined by the Fire Department.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.735: Fiveplex.

Fiveplex means a residential building with five attached dwelling units.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 5, 2025)

18.09.740: Flammable.

Flammable means any combustible material, be it solid, liquid, or gaseous form as determined by the Fire Department.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.750: Floor Area.

Floor Area means gross measurement in square feet of floor on a single plane in or a part of a given structure. Such measurement is taken on the horizontal plane outside and along the exterior walls of the structure being measured.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.760: Floor Area Ratio.

Floor Area Ratio is determined by dividing the gross floor area of all buildings on a lot by the area of that lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.765: Fourplex.

Fourplex means a residential building with four attached dwelling units.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 6, 2025)

18.09.770: Frontage.

Frontage means that side of a lot abutting on a street or public or private right-of-way and ordinarily regarded as the front of the lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.775: Functionally Disabled.

Functionally Disabled means, with respect to a person who has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities; has a record of having such an impairment, or being regarded as having such an impairment. Such term does not include current, illegal use of or addiction to a controlled substance.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 1, 2010)

18.09.780: Garage, Private.

Garage, Private means a building for the private use of the owner or occupant of a principal building situated on the same lot of the principal building for the storage of motor vehicles with no facilities for mechanical service or repairs of a commercial or public nature.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.790: Gas Station.

Gas Station means a facility which provides fuel for automobiles. Gas stations may include limited service facilities for the provision of emergency repairs, and retail sales of auto related supplies and equipment. Facilities, which combine convenience stores and fast food, will be required to locate where those uses are permitted.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.800: Geologically Hazardous Areas.

Geologically Hazardous Areas means areas that because of the susceptibility to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events, are not suited to the siting of commercial, residential, or industrial development consistent with public health or safety concerns. (See RCW 36.70A.030)

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.810: Grade.

Grade means the lowest point of elevation of the finished surface of ground, paving or sidewalk within the area between the building and the property line or, when the property line is more than five feet from the building, between the building and a line five feet from the building at any point around the building.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.820: Grading.

Grading means the physical manipulation of the earth's surface and/or drainage pattern in preparation for an intended use or activity.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.830: Grocery Stores.

Grocery Stores means retail stores selling primarily food and household goods.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.840: Group Living.

Group Living means living facilities for groups of unrelated individuals that include at least one person residing on the site who is responsible for supervising, managing, monitoring and/or providing care, training or treatment of residents. Descriptions of types of facilities are as follows:

(1) Type I: Any state or federally approved dwelling used as a residence for the care or rehabilitation of dependent children, the elderly, and the physically and/or mentally handicapped. Residential care homes shall provide care for six or fewer residents.

(2) Type II: Any state or federally approved facility, other than a clinic, used as a residence for the care or rehabilitation of dependent children, the elderly, and the physically and/or mentally handicapped. Residential care centers shall provide care to seven or more residents.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 2, 2010; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.860: Growth Management Act (GMA).

Growth Management Act (GMA) means the Growth Management Act as enacted in 1990 and amended by the State of Washington (RCW 36.70A).

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.870: Habitat.

Habitat means the location where a particular species (or identified subspecies) of plant or animal lives and its surroundings, both living and non-living. Habitat includes the presence of a group of particular environmental conditions surrounding an organism including air, water, soil, mineral elements, moisture, temperature, and topography.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.880: Hardware Stores.

Hardware Stores means retail stores which sell tools and equipment used in the building, maintenance, and repair of homes and businesses.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.890: Hazardous Waste.

Hazardous Waste means all dangerous and extremely hazardous waste as defined by RCW 70.105.010 except for moderate-risk waste.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.900: Hazardous Waste Treatment and Storage Facility, Off-site.

Hazardous Waste Treatment and Storage Facility, Off-Site means a treatment and storage facility that treats and stores waste from generators on properties other than those on which the treatment and storage facility is located. Such materials are subject to State of Washington siting and handling criteria.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.910: Hazardous Waste Treatment and Storage Facility, On-site.

Hazardous Waste Treatment and Storage Facility, On-Site means a treatment and storage facility that treats and stores waste generated on the same geographically contiguous or bordering property. Such materials are subject to State of Washington siting and handling criteria.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.920: Hazardous Waste Storage.

Hazardous Waste Storage means temporarily holding hazardous waste.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.930: Hazardous Waste Treatment.

Hazardous Waste Treatment means the physical, chemical, or biological amelioration of hazardous waste.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.935: Hearing Examiner.

Hearing Examiner means the Hearing Examiner of the City of Kennewick.

(Ord. 5322 Sec. 48, 2010)

18.09.940: Height of Building.

Height of Building means the vertical distance from the grade to the highest point on the roof.

(Ord. 5742 Sec. 1, 2018; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.950: Home Occupation.

Home Occupation means any occupation or business carried on within a residence by the occupant thereof, which activity is clearly incidental to the use of the residence as a dwelling and does not change the residential character thereof.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.960: Hospitals and Sanatoriums.

Hospitals and Sanatoriums means any facility specializing in giving clinical, temporary, and emergency services of a medical or surgical nature to human patients and injured persons, and licensed by state law to provide facilities and services in surgery, obstetrics, and general medical practice including overnight and extended stays.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.970: Hotel.

Hotel means a facility offering transient lodging accommodations on a daily rate to the general public and may include additional services, such as restaurants, meeting rooms, and recreational facilities. (See Transient accommodations).

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.980: Household.

Household means all persons who occupy a housing unit which is intended as separate living quarters and having direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall. The occupants may be a single-family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements. (U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.)

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.990: Impervious Surface.

Impervious Surface means any material that substantially reduces or prevents the infiltration of stormwater into previously unimproved land, including driveways and parking areas.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1000: Industrial Park.

Industrial Park means a facility which is designed as a coordinated environment for a variety of industrial and related activities, and shall be developed and/or controlled by a single management entity with special attention given to traffic, parking, utility needs, aesthetics, and compatibility with surrounding properties. Industrial parks shall have appropriate master plans and/or covenants, conditions, and restrictions as required.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1010: Industrial Use.

Industrial Use means any activity that is involved in the production, processing, manufacturing, fabrication, or assembling of goods and materials, including the storage of material used in the industrial process, including warehousing, wash-down facilities, blacksmithing, welding, wholesale bakery, recycling facilities and distribution centers.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1020: Industrial Use, Heavy.

Industrial Use, Heavy means a use engaged in the basic processing and manufacturing of materials or products predominantly from extracted or raw materials, or a use engaged in storage of, or manufacturing processes using flammable or explosive materials, or storage or manufacturing processes that potentially involve hazardous or commonly recognized offensive conditions.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1030: Industrial Use, Light.

Industrial Use, Light means a use engaged in manufacturing, typically having low impacts on the environment, in which articles are either produced, assembled, finished and/or packaged from prepared materials made at another location, or raw materials, such as pre-milled wood, paper, wool, textiles, leather, cork or semiprecious metals or stones. For the purposes of this definition, light industrial uses shall include the canning or

bottling of food or beverages for human consumption using a mechanized assembly line, and printing plants. The incidental storage, sales, and distribution of products manufactured onsite shall be permitted.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1032: Infill.

Infill development is the process of developing vacant or under-used parcels within existing urban areas.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1035: Infrastructure.

Infrastructure means facilities, utilities and services needed to sustain industry, residential, and commercial activities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1040: Intensity.

Intensity means a measure of land use activity based on use, mass, size and impact, relative to adjacent land uses, locally and regionally.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1050: Junk.

Junk means scrap or abandoned metal, paper, building material and equipment, bottles, glass, appliances, abandoned household goods, rags, rubber, motor vehicles, and parts thereof.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1060: Junk, Auto.

Junk, Auto means any auto, truck, or other motor vehicle which is inoperative due to lack of wheels, motor, running gear, or any combination thereof.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1070: Kennel.

Kennel means any lot or premises on which six or more dogs or cats over six months of age are kept for purposes of boarding or keeping.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1080: Laboratories for Research and Testing.

Laboratories for Research and Testing means a location and facility, often designed and built under State and Federal regulatory oversight, where scientific inquiries and experiments are conducted.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1090: Landfill.

Landfill means a disposal site employing an engineered method of long-term storing of solid wastes in a manner that minimizes environmental hazards by spreading, compacting to the smallest volume, and applying cover material over all exposed waste at the end of each operating day.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1095: Library.

A place in which literary and artistic materials, as books and periodicals are kept for reading, referencing, or borrowing, but generally not for sale.

(Ord. 5461 Sec. 4, 2012)

18.09.1100: Lock and Gunsmiths.

Lock and Gunsmiths means retail and service business engaged in the sale and repair of locks, keys, guns, and incidental retail.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1110: Lot.

Lot means a designated parcel, tract, or area of land established by plat, subdivision, or as otherwise permitted by law, to be used, developed, or built upon as a unit.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1120: Lot Area.

Lot Area means the total area enclosed within the boundary lines of a lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1130: Lot, Corner.

Lot, Corner means a lot at the junction of and fronting on the intersection of two or more streets.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1140: Lot Coverage.

Lot Coverage means the percent of ground coverage of all buildings or structures on a site measured from the outside of external walls or supporting, but not to include, at grade, off-street parking lots; deck areas; terraces; swimming pools; pool deck areas; walkways; roadways; and driveways.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1150: Lot Depth.

Lot Depth means the horizontal length of a straight line drawn from the midpoint of the front property line to the midpoint of the rear property line.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1160: Lot, Flag.

Lot, Flag means a lot with access provided to the bulk of the lot by means of a narrow corridor.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1170: Lot, Interior.

Lot, Interior means a lot fronting only on one street.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1180: Lot Line, Front.

Lot Line, Front means any property line of a lot which abuts a public street, private street or dedicated vehicular access easement is considered a frontage and shall meet the minimum front yard setback requirements of this code. On a corner lot, or lot bounded by more than one public or private street or dedicated easement, the front lot line" shall be the lot line providing principal access from the adjacent street.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1190: Lot Line, Rear.

Lot Line, Rear means the property line of a lot that is most opposite or most distant from the designated front lot line and that does not intersect any front lot line. In the case of a triangular lot, it means a line ten feet in length within the lot parallel to and at the maximum distance from the front lot line. In the event that the front lot line is curved, then the rear property line shall be assumed to be a line tangent to the front property line at its midpoint.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1200: Lot Line, Side.

Lot Line, Side means any lot line that is not a front or rear lot line, or any lot line that intersects a front lot line.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1210: Lot of Record.

Lot of Record means a lot whose existence, location, and dimensions have been legally recorded or registered in a deed or a plat.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1220: Lot, Substandard.

Lot, Substandard means a lot or parcel of land that has less than the required minimum area or width as established by the zone in which it is located and provided that such lot or parcel was of record as a legally created lot on the effective date of this title.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1230: Lot, Through.

Lot, Through means a lot having its front and rear yards each abutting on a street, alley, or right-of-way.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1240: Lot Width.

Lot Width means the horizontal distance between side lot lines, measured at the required front setback line, or in an irregularly shaped lot, the dimension across the lot at the building line.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1250: Lumber Yards.

Lumber Yards means facilities for the storage and sale, retail, and wholesale of primarily wood building products.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1255: Managing Agency.

Managing Agency means an organization that has the capacity to organize and manage a temporary homeless encampment. A "managing agency" may be the same entity as the sponsor.

(Ord 5728 Sec. 1, 2017)

18.09.1260: Manufactured Housing.

Manufactured Housing means a factory assembled structure intended solely for human habitation installed on a permanent foundation with running gear removed and connected to utilities on an individual building lot and which meets the adopted minimum building code requirements of the City.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1270: Marina.

Marina means a facility that may include areas for storing, servicing, fueling, berthing, securing and launching of private pleasure craft, including the sale of fuel, incidental supplies, retail goods, watercraft and associated products for boat owners, crews, and guests.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1275: Mass Timber Construction.

Mass Timber Construction means a building with structural components primarily made of mass timber products as defined in RCW 19.27.570.

18.09.1280: Master Planned Community.

Master Planned Community means a self-contained and fully integrated development intended to provide a mix of uses to provide jobs, housing, and services to residents, including protecting critical areas and preserving significant areas in open space.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1285: Mini-Day Care Center.

Mini-Day Care Center means a person or agency providing care during part of the 24-hour day to 12 or fewer children in a facility other than the family abode of the person or persons under whose direct care the children are placed, or for the care of seven through 12 children in the family abode of such person or persons.

(Ord. 5461 Sec. 5, 2012)

18.09.1290: Mini-Storage.

Mini-Storage means a facility which provides storage spaces for the storage of domestic goods. Units may not be used for commercial or residential purposes.

(Ord. 5407 Sec. 2, 2012; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1300: Mitigation.

Mitigation means the process of avoiding, reducing, or compensating for the environmental impact(s) of a proposal.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1310: Mixed-Use.

Mixed-Use means development that combines two or more different land uses on the same lot or contiguous lots in the same zone, such as retail uses and residential uses.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1320: Mobile Home.

Mobile Home means a factory assembled structure intended solely for human habitation and equipped with the necessary service connections and made so as to be readily movable as a unit on its own running gear. It is without a permanent foundation.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1330: Mobile Home Park.

Mobile Home Park means a tract of land designed and maintained under a single ownership of unified control where two or more spaces or pads are provided solely for the placement of mobile homes for residential purposes, with or without charge.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1335: Modular Construction.

Modular Construction means a multistory residential building constructed of standardized components produced off-site, which are transported and assembled at a final location.

18.09.1340: Motel.

Motel means a building or group of detached buildings designed or used primarily for providing sleeping accommodations for automobile travelers and having a parking space adjacent to a sleeping room.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1350: Multi-Family Residential Development.

Multi-Family Residential Development means developments containing buildings with two or more residential dwelling units on one lot. Multi-family residential developments are those that are designed and intended for residential occupancy in multi-family structures regardless of the type of building or ownership in which such use occurs. Examples include, but are not limited to, townhouses, duplexes, multiplexes, condominiums, and apartment houses. Accessory dwelling units shall not be considered multi-family residences.

(Ord. 25-6158, Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1360: Multimodal.

Multimodal means two or more modes or methods of transportation such as bicycling, driving an automobile, walking, bus transit, equestrian and pedestrian trail, or rail.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1370: Multi-Tenant Business.

Multi-Tenant Business means one business location that involves at least two separate business license holders which are physically separated by interior or exterior building features. This definition does not include beauty, barber, and sun tanning salons or shops.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1375: Museum.

An institution operated by a nonprofit organization or governmental agency as a repository of natural, scientific, historical, cultural, or literary objects of interest or works of art, and where collection of such items is systematically managed for the purpose of exhibiting them to the public.

(Ord. 5461 Sec. 6, 2012)

18.09.1380: Nonconforming Structure or Use.

Nonconforming Structure or Use means an existing structure or use that was in conformance with effective existing code at the time or annexed prior to the adoption, revision, or amendment of the comprehensive plan and/or this Title, but which now does not conform to the requirements of the comprehensive plan and/or this Title and/or to the requirements of the zoning district in which it is located.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1390: Nursery, Landscaping Material.

Nursery, Landscaping Material means a business which offers retail and wholesale sales of landscaping materials including plant materials, gardening supplies, and building materials. Plant materials may be grown on site or purchased wholesale.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1400: Nursing Homes and Congregate Care Facilities.

Nursing Homes and Congregate Care Facilities means those facilities which provide for the residential care of ambulatory and non-ambulatory patients, and which include assisted-living facilities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1410: Office.

Office means a structure that generally houses a business, government, professional, special purpose district, medical or financial institution for the non-resident needs of individuals, groups or organizations.

(Ord. 5450 Sec. 1, 2012; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1420: Off-Street Parking.

Off-Street Parking means any space specifically allocated to the parking of motor vehicles that is not located within a public right-of-way, a travel lane, a service drive, or any easement for public use.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1430: Open Record Hearing.

Open Record Hearing means a hearing, conducted by a single hearing body or officer that creates the record through testimony and submission of evidence and information. An open record hearing may be held prior to a decision on a project permit to be known as an "open record pre-decision hearing." An open record hearing may be held on an appeal, to be known as an "open record appeal hearing," if no open record pre-decision hearing has been held on the project permit.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1440: Open Space.

Open Space typically implies a landscape that is primarily unimproved, such as wooded areas; parks; golf courses, trails; privately owned nature reserves; abandoned railroad lines; utility corridors; and other vacant rights-of-way.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1450: Outdoor Storage.

Outdoor Storage means the keeping, in an unroofed area, of any goods, junk, material, merchandise, or vehicles, in the same place for more than 24 hours.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1460: Overlay District.

Overlay District means a specially designated zoning district containing additional standards and requirements, which is applied on top of an underlying zoning classification.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1470: Parcel.

Parcel means a continuous quantity of land in the possession of or owned by, or recorded as the property of, the same person or persons.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1480: Parks.

Parks means playgrounds, golf courses, recreation centers, swimming pools and similar public and private facilities consisting of open space or enclosed space developed for the use of the general public and reserved for recreational, educational, entertainment, gathering or scenic purposes.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1490: Parking, Shared.

Parking, Shared means the development and use of parking areas on two or more separate properties for joint use by the residents or businesses on those two or more properties used for parking.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1500: Parking Space.

Parking Space means an area, which is improved, maintained and used for the sole purpose of temporarily accommodating a motor vehicle that is not in use.

(Ord. 5204 Sec. 2, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1510: Passive House Requirements.

Passive House Requirements means the criteria for certification as a passive house by Phius or the international passive house institute.

18.09.1505: Pawn Shop.

Pawn Shop means an establishment engaged in the buying or selling of new or secondhand merchandise and offering loans in exchange for personal property.

(Ord. 5204 Sec. 3, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1510: Performance Standards.

Performance Standards means criteria that are established and must be met before a particular use will be permitted. These measures are designed to guide development of property and include, but are not limited to, open space requirements, water and wastewater requirements, buffer zones, screening, size and height limits for buildings, noise, vibration, glare, heat, air or water contaminants, and traffic.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1513: Permanent Supportive Housing.

Permanent supportive housing is subsidized, leased housing with no limit on length of stay that prioritizes people who need comprehensive support services to retain tenancy and utilizes admissions practices designed to use lower barriers to entry than would be typical for other subsidized or unsubsidized rental housing, especially related to rental history, criminal history and personal behaviors. Permanent supportive housing is paired with on-site or off-site voluntary services designed to support a person living with a complex and disabling behavioral

health or physical health condition who was experiencing homelessness or was at imminent risk of homelessness prior to moving into housing to retain their housing and be a successful tenant in a housing arrangement, improve the resident's health status, and connect the resident of the housing with community-based health care, treatment or employment services. Permanent supportive housing is subject to all of the rights and responsibilities defined in chapter 59.18 RCW. (RCW 36.70A.030(31))

18.09.1515: Person with Functional Disabilities.

Person with Functional Disabilities means a person who, because of a recognized chronic physical or mental condition, or disease, is functionally disabled to the extent of:

(1) Needing care, supervision, or monitoring to perform activities of daily living or instrumental activities of daily living;

(2) Needing supports to ameliorate or compensate for the effects of the functional disability so as to lead as independent a life as possible;

(3) Having a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more of such person's major life activities;

(4) Having a record of having such an impairment;

(5) Being regarded as having such an impairment, but such term does not include current, illegal use of or active addiction to a controlled substance.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 4, 2010)

18.09.1517: Pet Grooming.

Pet Grooming shall mean the hygienic and cosmetic care of dogs, cats, or other domestic or partner animals. Services may include, but are not limited to, fur trimming and styling, shampooing, bathing, nail trimming and other procedures. This does not include boarding or kenneling of animals.

(Ord. 5541 Sec. 4, 2014)

18.09.1520: Pharmacy, Dispensing.

Pharmacy, Dispensing means a retail or wholesale establishment which sells drugs by prescription, and may include sales of over the counter medications and incidental health-related products.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1530: Photographic Studio.

Photographic Studio means an establishment for the purpose of taking pictures and developing film and film-related products, including printing. May include incidental retail sales of photography-related supplies, equipment, and products.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1540: Planned Development.

Planned Development means a development of land that is under unified control and is planned and developed as a whole in a single development operation or programmed series of development stages. Planned developments may include predetermined combinations of residential, commercial and industrial uses within the project area. The development may include streets, circulation ways, utilities, buildings, open spaces, and other site features and improvements. (See Master Planned Community Section 18.09.1280).

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1550: Planning Department.

Planning Department means the Community Planning Department of the City of Kennewick.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1555: Planning Director.

Planning Director means the appointed Director of Kennewick's planning staff, or his or her authorized representative, with review, decision making and other regulatory authority as specified by provisions of the Kennewick Municipal Code, including other such responsibilities and authorities, as specified by an appropriate representative of the City.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1560: Planning Commission.

Planning Commission means the appointed members of the Planning Commission of the City of Kennewick.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1570: Plant Nursery.

Plant Nursery means a commercial or private facility where botanical produce and/or ornamental fauna is incubated and grown either as seed stock or through the full growth cycle to harvest or sale to the public, as a wholesale concern, or for private use.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1580: Plumbing Shops and Yards.

Plumbing Shops and Yards means facilities engaged in the wholesale and retail sale of plumbing and building supplies.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1590: Principal Use.

Principal Use means the main use of land or structures, as distinguished from a secondary or accessory use.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1600: Printing, Publishing, and Reproduction Establishments.

Printing, Publishing, and Reproduction Establishments means establishments for the purpose of producing printed materials, including newspapers, books and advertising material. These establishments may include self-service reproduction facilities, and include incidental sales.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1605: Prohibited Marijuana Uses.

The production, processing and retail sales of marijuana and marijuana-infused products, all as defined in Initiative Measure No. 502, as codified in Revised Code of Washington Chapter 69, and implementing regulations in Chapter 314-55 of the Washington Administrative Code, are each prohibited and not allowed in any zone in the City of Kennewick.

(Ord. 5566 Sec. 2, 2014)

18.09.1610: Public/Quasi Public Uses.

Public/Quasi Public Uses includes any use of land, whether publicly or privately owned, for transportation, utilities, or communication, or for the benefit of the general public, including streets, schools, libraries, fire and police stations, municipal and county buildings, powerhouses, recreational centers, parks, churches and cemeteries.

(Ord. 5851 Sec. 2, 2020; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1620: Public Services.

Public Services means services provided by a public agency which include fire protection and suppression, law enforcement, public health, education, recreation, environmental protection, and other governmental services. (See RCW 36.70A.030)

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1630: Radio, Television, and Small Electronic Repair and Services.

Radio, Television, and Small Electronic Repair and Services means service establishments which primarily provide repair and service of household appliances and consumer electronics. Incidental sales of parts and used equipment are allowed.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1640: Radio, Television Broadcasting Stations.

Radio, Television Broadcasting Stations means facilities for the production and broadcasting of radio and television programming.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1645: Rapid Charging Station.

Rapid Charging Station means an industrial grade electrical outlet that allows for faster recharging of electric vehicle batteries through higher power levels, which meets or exceeds any standards, codes, and regulations set forth by Chapter 19.28 RCW and consistent with rules adopted under RCW 19.27.540.

(Ord. 5571 Sec. 4, 2014)

18.09.1650: RCW.

RCW means Revised Code of Washington.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1660: Recreation Facility.

Recreational Facility means any development designed and intended for day use and/or overnight recreational uses, operated as a business, or as part of a business, and/or operated by a non-profit organization or public entity, including amusement parks, picnic areas, and campgrounds.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1670: Recreational Vehicle.

Recreation Vehicle means a vehicular-type unit designed or used for temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, or travel use, which either has its own motor power or is mounted on or drawn by another vehicle and which has a body width of no more than eight feet and a body length of no more than 45 feet when factory-equipped for the road. "Recreational vehicle" shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

(1) Travel Trailer. A vehicular, portable structure built on a chassis and drawn by a motorized vehicle and which is designed to be used as a temporary dwelling for travel, recreational and vacation uses;

(2) Camper. A structure designed to be mounted on a truck chassis for use as a temporary dwelling for travel, recreational, and vacation uses;

(3) Motor Home. A portable, temporary dwelling to be used for travel, recreational and vacation use constructed as an integral part of a self-propelled vehicle;

(4) Camping Trailer. A folding structure mounted on wheels and designed for travel, recreational, and vacation uses.

(5) Any structure inspected, approved, and designated as a recreational vehicle by, and bearing the insignia of the State of Washington, or any other state or federal agency having the authority to approve recreational vehicles.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1680: Recreational Vehicle Park.

Recreational Vehicle Park means a lot or parcel of land occupied or intended for occupancy by recreational vehicles or tents for travel, recreational or vacation usage for short periods of stay subject to the provisions of this title.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1690: Recreational Vehicle Park, Seasonal.

Recreational Vehicle Park, Seasonal means those recreational vehicle parks that are approved for stays of no more than 180 days (cumulative) within a consecutive 12-month period.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1700: Recreational Vehicle Park, Transient.

Recreational Vehicle Park, Transient means those recreational vehicle parks approved for transient stays of not more than 30 consecutive days. These parks are "tourist-oriented" and usually have recreation and other facilities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1710: Recycling Facilities.

Recycling Facilities means any lot, lots, or portions thereof, or building, or structure commercially used for the storage, collection, processing, purchase, or sale of wastepaper, rags, scrap metal, or other scrap or discarded goods, materials, and machinery including junkyards and wrecking yards. Excluded from this definition shall be areas used for the storage of materials or objects accumulated by the manufacturer as an integral part of the manufacturing process, and non-commercial recycling centers or substations established for the collection of materials for transport to a commercial recycling facility.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1720: Recycling, High Intensity.

Recycling, High Intensity means a facility that is not a junkyard and in which recoverable resources, such as newspapers, magazines, books, and other paper products, glass, metal cans, and other products are recycled, reprocessed, and treated to return such productions to a condition in which they may again be used for production.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1730: Recycling, Low Intensity.

Recycling, Low Intensity means an incidental use that serves as a neighborhood drop-off point for temporary storage of recoverable resources. No processing of such items would be allowed. This facility would generally be located in a shopping center parking lot or in other public/quasi-public areas, such as in churches and schools.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1735: Religious Organization.

Religious Organization means the federally protected practice of a recognized religious assembly, school, or institution that owns or controls real property.

(Ord 5728 Sec. 2, 2017)

18.09.1740: Research and Testing Laboratory.

Research Laboratory means a building or group of buildings in which are located facilities for scientific research, investigation, testing, or experimentation, but not facilities for the manufacture or sale of products, except as incidental to the main purpose of the laboratory.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1745: Residential Care Center.

Residential Care Center means any state or federally approved facility, other than a clinic, used as a residence for the care or rehabilitation of dependent children, the elderly, and the physically and/or mentally handicapped. Residential care homes shall provide care to seven or more residents.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 5, 2010)

18.09.1748: Residential Care Home.

Residential Care Home means any state or federally approved dwelling used as a residence for the care or rehabilitation of dependent children, the elderly, and the physically and/or mentally handicapped. Residential care homes shall provide care for six or fewer residents.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 6, 2010)

18.09.1750: Residential Hotels.

Residential Hotels means hotels which provide fully furnished apartments or rooms for longer temporary stays, usually not to exceed six months, and which are located and designed consistent with hotels. For the purpose of this code, residential hotels shall be considered to be hotels.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1760: Residential Use Sign.

Residential Use Sign means a sign displayed on the side of a residential structure or inside of a window, not more than one square foot and unilluminated.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1770: Resort.

Resort means a facility which includes hotels or motels that serve as a destination point for visitors, and generally provides recreational facilities for persons on vacation and provides self-contained personal services customarily furnished at hotels, including the serving of meals.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1780: Restaurant.

Restaurant means an establishment that serves food and beverages primarily to persons seated within the building, such as cafes, tea rooms, buffet diners, and diners.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1785: Restaurant, Drive-In.

Restaurant, Drive-In means a restaurant where food or beverages are sold primarily for consumption by customers in motor vehicles.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1790: Restaurant, Fast Food.

Restaurant, Fast Food means an establishment that offers quick food service, which is accomplished through a limited menu of items already prepared and held for service, or prepared, fried, or griddled quickly, or heated in a device such as a microwave oven, and where orders are not generally taken at the customer's table, and food is generally served in disposable wrapping or containers. Fast food restaurants may include both drive-in and sit-down services.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1800: Retail Sale.

Retail Sale means the sale of merchandise, services, or commodities for use or consumption by the immediate purchaser and not meant for resale.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1810: Retail Store.

Retail Store means business engaging in the sale of merchandise, services, or commodities for use or consumption by the immediate purchaser and not meant for resale, including department stores, and drug stores.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1820: Right-of-Way.

Right-of-Way means land owned by a government or an easement for a certain purpose over the land of another, used for a road, ditch, electrical transmission line, pipeline, or public facilities such as utility or transportation corridors.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1830: Road or Vehicular Rights-of-Way.

Road or *Vehicular Rights-of-Way* means a specific right-of-way dedicated or conveyed for a public or private road including the adjoining area designated for road expansion or utility purposes as specified by recorded easements, recorded ownership instruments, or dedications.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1840: Road, Private.

Road, Private means a right-of-way or easement allowing vehicular ingress and egress established as a separate tract for the benefit of certain, adjacent properties, not including private driveways.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1850: Road, Public.

Road, Public means all public rights-of-way reserved or dedicated for street traffic.

(Ord. 5204 Sec. 4, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1860: Reserved.

Editor's note(s)—Sec. 1 of Ord. No. 25-6159, adopted December 2, 2025, repealed § 18.09.1860, which pertained to the definition of Rooming House, and derived from Ord. 5180, adopted 2007.

18.09.1865: Reserved.

Editor's note(s)—Sec. 1 of Ord. No. 25-6160, adopted December 2, 2025, repealed § 18.09.1865, which pertained to the definition of Rowhouse, and derived from Ord. 5365, adopted 2011.

18.09.1870: Sanitary Sewer Systems.

Sanitary Sewer Systems means all facilities, including approved onsite disposal facilities, used in the collection, transmission, storage, treatment or discharge of any water borne waste, whether domestic in origin or a combination of domestic, commercial or industrial waste. (WAC 365-195-210)

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1880: Satellite Dish Antenna.

Satellite Dish Antenna means a round, parabolic antenna intended to receive signals from orbiting satellites and other sources. Non-commercial dish antennas are defined as being less than 12 feet in diameter. Commercial dish antennas are larger than 12 feet.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1890: School, Public.

School, Public means a building whose primary use is as a facility where instruction is given to young persons to enhance their knowledge or skills, owned and operated by a public school district.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1900: School, Private or Parochial.

School, Private or Parochial means a building whose primary use is as a facility where instruction is given to persons of any age to enhance their knowledge or skills, not including buildings where instruction is given primarily on religious matters. For the purposes of this title, buildings belonging to churches but used primarily for the education of children ages five to 18, Monday through Friday, shall be considered schools.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1910: Screen or Screening.

Screen or *Screening* means the method by which a view of one site from another adjacent site is shielded, concealed, or hidden, utilizing techniques that include fences, walls, hedges, berms, or other such sight obscuring features.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 7, 2010; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1915: Second-Hand/Consignment Store.

Second Hand/Consignment Store means retail business which sells merchandise on a consignment basis or outright.

(Ord. 5204 Sec. 20, 2007)

18.09.1920: Self-Service Storage Facility.

See "Mini-Storage" KMC 18.09.1290.

(Ord. 5407 Sec. 3, 2012; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1925: Senior Housing.

Senior Housing means rental or occupant-owned dwelling units designated for residents aged fifty-five years or older. It does not include assisted living facilities regulated under Chapter 18.20 RCW.

18.09.1930: SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act).

SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) means the environmental requirements of the State to consider environmental factors when making permit decisions for development proposals of a significant scale.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1940: Service Station.

Service Station means facilities and premises where the primary use is the retail supply and dispensing of motor fuels, lubricants, batteries, tires, and motor vehicle accessories, and may include the minor mechanical service and repair of motor vehicles.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1950: Setback.

Setback means the minimum distance of a structure from the road right-of-way line or any other lot line to the nearest projection of a structure placed on the property, excluding eaves of less than 36 inches.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1960: Shopping Center.

Shopping Center means a grouping of commercial/retail facilities on a single lot with common parking facilities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1970: Shoreline Management Act.

Shoreline Management Act means state rules which detail the local requirements necessary to protect the state shorelines. (RCW 90.58 and WAC 173-18-020).

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1975: Shoreline Master Program.

Shoreline Master Program (SMP) means the comprehensive use plan and related use regulations which are mandated by the Shoreline Management Act, and used by local governments to administer and enforce the permit system for shoreline management. The City's master program includes establishment of a jurisdiction for applicability of the program for all lands within 200 feet of Kennewick.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1980: Shorelines.

Shorelines means those lands adjacent to, and within a distance of 200 feet from the identified waterline where such waters are identified as having "State-Wide Significance." Shorelines other than those of State-Wide Significance are locations where water and land meet, as defined by State law.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.1990: Sign.

Sign is any object, device, display, structure or part thereof, situated indoors or out which is used to identify, display, advertise, direct, or attract attention to an object, person, organization, institution, business, product, service, event, location or message by any means including words, letters, figures, designs, symbols, fixtures, colors, illumination, or projected images.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2000: Sign Painting and Manufacture.

Sign Painting and Manufacture means a facility for the production and sale of signs.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2005: Single Housekeeping Unit.

Single Housekeeping Unit means one person or two or more individuals living together sharing household responsibilities and activities which may include sharing expenses, chores, eating evening meals together and participating in recreational activities and having close social, economic, and psychological commitments to each other.

(Ord. 5407 Sec. 12, 2012)

18.09.2007: Sixplex.

Sixplex means a residential building with six attached dwelling units.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 7, 2025)

18.09.2010: Solid Waste.

Solid Waste means all putrescible and non-putrescible solid and semi-solid wastes, including, but not limited to, garbage, rubbish, ashes, industrial wastes, swill, demolition and construction wastes, abandoned vehicles or parts thereof, and recyclable materials.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2020: Special Needs Housing.

Special Needs Housing means all housing that is designed for 13 or more individual or family members who require supportive social services in order to live independently or semi-independently, including emergency, transitional and permanent housing. Special needs groups include, but are not limited to the homeless, elderly, AIDS victims, single parents, runaway and homeless youth, severely physically handicapped, mentally and emotionally disturbed, chronically mentally ill, developmentally disabled, farm workers (migrant labor households) and persons with substance abuse problems.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2025: Sponsor.

Sponsor means an entity that has an agreement with the managing agency to provide basic services and support for the residents of a temporary homeless encampment and liaison with the surrounding community and joins with the managing agency in an application for a temporary homeless encampment permit. A "sponsor" may be the same entity as the managing agency.

(Ord 5728 Sec. 3, 2017)

18.09.2027: Stacked Flat.

Stacked Flat means dwelling units in a residential building of no more than three stories on a residential zoned lot in which each floor is a separate dwelling unit and may be separately rented or owned.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 8, 2025)

18.09.2030: Story.

Story means that portion of a building included between the surface of any floor and the surface of the floor next above it, or if there is no floor above it, the space between such floor and the ceiling above it. A basement shall be counted as a story if its ceiling is over six feet above the average level of the finished ground surface adjoining the exterior walls of such story, or if it is used for business or dwelling purposes. (See IBC definition.)

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2035: Story, Half.

Story, Half means the portion of a building between the top floor and a sloping roof, with at least two opposite exterior walls meeting the sloping roof not over three feet above such floor level.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 9, 2025)

18.09.2040: Structure.

Structure means that which is built or constructed. A structure is an edifice or building of any kind, or any piece of work artificially built up or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner, which requires an approval.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2050: Subdivision.

Subdivision means the division of a lot, tract, or parcel of land into two or more lots, plats, sites, or other divisions of land for the purpose, whether immediate or future, of sale or building development.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2060: Temporary Commercial and Industrial Activities and Structures.

Temporary Commercial and Industrial Activities and Structures means those structures, facilities, or uses that occur on a seasonal or sporadic basis and involve the processing and/or sale of commodities such as the sale of farm produce, firewood, fireworks, Christmas trees, and temporary rock crushing activities.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2065: Temporary Homeless Encampments.

Temporary Homeless Encampment means a group of homeless persons temporarily residing either indoors or out of doors on a site with services provided by a sponsor and supervised by a managing agency.

(Ord 5728 Sec. 4, 2017)

18.09.2070: Temporary Use.

Temporary Use means a use, intended for limited duration, to be located in a zoning district permitting or not permitting such use, and not continuing a nonconforming use or building.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2075: Tiny Houses.

Tiny houses, including tiny houses on wheels, are defined as dwellings to be used as permanent housing with permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation built in accordance with the state building code. (RCW 35.21.686)

18.09.2080: Tower.

Tower means a structure situated on a non-residential site that is intended for transmitting or receiving television, radio, or telephone communications, excluding those used exclusively for dispatch communications.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2085: Townhouse.

Townhouse means a single-family dwelling on its own lot, in a series of three or more similar dwellings in one structure but on separate lots, with interior units sharing common walls along both side property lines and end units sharing a common wall on one side property line.

(Ord. 25-6161, Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 5365 Sec. 9, 2011)

18.09.2090: Reserved.

Editor's note(s)—Sec. 1 of Ord. 5747, adopted Feb. 6, 2018, repealed Section 18.09.2090, which pertained to Transient Accommodations, and derived from Ord. No. 5180, 2007.

18.09.2093: Transitional Housing.

Transitional housing means a project that provides housing and supportive services to homeless persons or families and that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless persons and families into independent living, generally in less than two years. (RCW 84.36.043(3)(c), updated by Commerce)

18.09.2095: Transportable Unit.

Transportable Unit (also referred to as a "cargo container") means a standardized, reusable vessel that is or appears to be:

(1) Originally, specifically or formerly designed for or used in the packing, shipping, movement or transportation of freight, articles, goods or commodities; and/or

(2) Designed for or capable of being mounted or moved on a rail car; and/or

(3) Designed for or capable of being mounted on a chassis or bogie for movement by truck trailer or loaded on a ship.

(Ord. 5557 Sec. 2, 2014)

18.09.2097: Triplex.

Triplex means a residential building with three attached dwelling units.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 10, 2025)

18.09.2100: Truck Stops/Recreational Vehicle Travel Centers.

Truck Stops/Recreational Vehicle Travel Centers means a facility that provides fuel and travel services for long haul trucking, travel trailers, recreational vehicles and the general traveling public. These facilities include fuel sales, sanitary waste disposal sites for recreational vehicles, and truck stop/recreational vehicle travel center development. These facilities may include supporting uses such as convenience stores, smaller restaurants and limited transient accommodations providing that they are secondary uses, and are supportive of the primary function of providing fuel.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2105: Unit Density.

Unit Density means the number of dwelling units allowed on a lot, regardless of the size of the lot.

(Ord. 25-6100 Sec. 11, 2025)

18.09.2110: Urban Growth Area.

Urban Growth Area means those areas designated for urban growth as established by Benton County pursuant to RCW 36.70A.03.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2120: Urban Level of Facilities and Services.

Urban Level of Facilities and Services means those urban governmental services as defined within the capital facilities element of the Kennewick Comprehensive plan.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2130: Use.

Use means any legal activity pursued on a piece of property, with or without any improvements.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2140: Utilities.

Utilities means fixed improvements, including structures and facilities that convey, generate, transmit or distribute power, gas, oil, water, sewage, surface drainage or communication signals.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2150: Variance.

Variance means approval to deviate from the dimensional requirements of this title.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2160: Vehicle Repair and Service.

Vehicle Repair and Service means facilities and premises where the primary use is the retail supply and dispensing of lubricants, batteries, tires, and motor vehicle accessories, and includes the mechanical service and repair of motor vehicles.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2170: Vehicle Sales, Repair, and Service.

Vehicle Sales, Repair, and Service means facilities and premises where the primary use is the retail sale of vehicles, including cars, trucks, farm vehicles, and boats and includes the supply and dispensing of lubricants, batteries, tires, motor vehicle accessories, and includes the mechanical service and repair of motor vehicles.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2180: Veterinary Hospital.

Veterinary Hospital means any facility specializing in giving clinical, temporary, and emergency services of a medical or surgical nature to animals, especially domestic animals, and licensed by state law to provide such facilities and services.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2190: WAC.

WAC means Washington Administrative Code.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2200: Warehouse/Warehousing.

Warehouse/Warehousing means terminal facilities used for handling freight for redistribution.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2210: Wholesale Sales.

Wholesale Sales means the sale of materials, services, or merchandise, primarily for the purpose of resale, manufacture, or remanufacture.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2215: Wineries.

Wineries means establishments for making wine. A winery is a facility specifically designed for a combination of the following activities: tasting, fruit processing, fermentation, barrel aging of wine and packaging, depending on the categories mentioned below:

(1) Type A: Wineries with retail sales and services and on-site tasting, but without primary fruit processing or bulk fermentation.

(2) Type B: Wineries with retail sales and services and on-site tasting, with primary fruit processing and/or bulk fermentation.

(3) Type C: Wineries with either on-site primary fruit processing or bulk fermentation or both.

(Ord. 5244 Sec. 1, 2008)

18.09.2220: Wireless Communication Facility.

Wireless Communication Facility is any commercial facility for the receipt or transmission of communications by electromagnetic radiation.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2230: WSDOT.

WSDOT means Washington State Department of Transportation.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2240: Yard.

Yard means a required type of setback on a lot adjoining a lot line.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2250: Yard, Front.

Yard, Front means a required setback extending across the full width of a lot lying between front lot line to the front building line in depth. Front yard width shall be measured at right angles to the front of the lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2260: Yard, Rear.

Yard, Rear means a required setback extending across the full width of a lot and lying between the rear lot line and the nearest line of the building. Rear yard depth shall be measured at right angles to the rear of the lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2270: Yard, Side.

Yard, Side means a required setback lying between the side of a lot line and the nearest line of the building and extending from the front yard to the rear yard, or in the absence of either of such front or rear yards, to the front or rear lot lines. Side yard widths shall be measured at right angles to sidelines of the lot.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2280: Zone.

Zone means a mapped area to which a uniform set of regulations applies. The City of Kennewick official zoning map describes the extent and boundaries for the zones described within this Title.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.09.2290: Zoning.

Zoning means the process by which a county or municipality legally controls the use of property and physical configuration of development upon tracts of land within its jurisdiction.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.12.010 A.1: - Residential Use Table.

The following table lists uses allowed by zone and the applicable City review process as follows: Review Process I = Staff review, Review Process II = Conditional Use Permit, Review Process III = Temporary Homeless Encampment Permit. If a use is listed with a blank, it shall be prohibited in that zone. For certain categories of uses, additional requirements are also noted:

Residential Use Table	RMH	RS	RL	RM	RH	RTP	UMU	CN	CO	CBD	CC	CR	CAR	CG	CM	HMU	BP	IP	IL	IH	JF	PF	OS
Accessory Dwelling Units (See Title 18.12.020)	I	I	I	I	I		I			I						I							
Accessory uses and structures	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I
Animal Keeping (See Title 18.12.040)	I	I	I	I	I	I										I							
Bed and breakfast inns (5 guest rooms or less)	I	I	I	I	I		I			II						I							
Co-Living Housing	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I~~(8)~~	I~~(8)~~	I~~(8)~~	I~~(8)~~	I~~(8)~~	I	I~~(8)~~	I~~(8)~~	I	I					I(2)	

Churches or religious places of worship	II	II	II	II	II	II	II		I		I	I		I	I	II						
Day Care Centers (See Section 18.12.060)				II	I		I	I	I		I	I		I		I	I	I	I	I		I	I
Emergency Housing					I		I		I	I	I	I		I	I	I	I						
Emergency Shelter					I		I		I	I	I	I		I	I	I	I						
Family Day Care Home (see Section 18.12.070 and footnotes)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)		(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)

Farm Animals (see footnote 9)		I																				
Group Living I (See footnote 5)	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I					I(2)	
Group Living II (See footnote 6)				I	I				I		I	I		I								I(2)	

Home occupation	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		I	I	I							
Mini-Day Care Center (Located in Family Abode - Section 18.12.060)	II	II	II	I	I	II	I	I	I	I	I	I		I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I

Mini-Day Care Center (Not located in Family Abode - See 18.12.060)				I	I		I	I	I		I	I		I	I	I	I				I	I
Mini Storage (See 18.12.130)					I						I	I		I					I	I			
~~Motels (See Title 18.12.140)~~					~~II~~					~~I~~	~~I~~	~~I~~		~~I~~	~~I~~								

Nursing homes and congregate care facilities (over 10 residents)				II	II				I		I	I		I							
Nursing homes and congregate care facilities (up to 10 residents)	II	II	II	II	II		I		I		I	I		I		I					
Permanent Supportive Housing	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		I	I	I	I				I	

Recreational vehicle park, transient (up to 30-day stay) (See Title 18.12.170, 180) (see also, footnote 7)																					I	I
Residences, Middle Housing	I	I	I	I	I																	

Residences, multi-family				I	I		I	I(~~8~~3)	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)	I(~~8~~3)	I(~~8~~3)	I(3)					I(2)	
Residences, single-family	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)	I(8)		I(8)	I(8)	I(8)						I(2)	
Swimming Pools (See Title 18.12.240) (see footnote 10)							I														I	I

Temporary Homeless Encampments (See Title 18.12.255)	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III	III
Trailers, Boats, Camper Tops, Travel Trailers, Recreational Vehicles (See Title 18.12.260)	I	I	I	I	I																	
Transitional Housing	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I	I		I	I	I	I				I	

FOOTNOTES for Table 18.12.010 A-1 Residential Use Table:

(1) No permit required for a family day care home (up to six charges). Per 18.12.070, if alterations are made a building permit will be required. A state license and city business license is required.

(2) Residential development is permitted in the PF zone when the land will be owned and/or operated by the Kennewick Housing Authority or other public or governmental agency. Residential developments in the PF zone shall meet all requirements of this title as though it were developed in the RH zone.

(3) ~~Not used~~Residential development (any residential land use) is not required to comply with the mixed-use requirements of the Commercial Design Standards (KMC 18.78) on any site with a maximum building height limit of less than 85 feet per RCW 36.70A.XXX.

(4) Not used.

(5) Residential Care Homes, state or federally approved, with six or fewer residents and any required on-site residential staff permitted by right; all larger group living uses prohibited.

(6) Residential Care Centers are permitted outright, subject to all of the applicable provisions of this title.

(7) Recreational vehicle storage in R districts shall refer to Title 18.12.180 and shall be subject to special provisions applicable to Master Planned subdivisions.

(8) Subject to KMC 18.42.140 and KMC 18.78.

(9) In "RS" zones, agriculture and animal husbandry are permitted including keeping of farm animals such as horses, cows, and sheep, but maintained only on lots of at least 30,000 square feet. The keeping of farm animals must not exceed one animal per half acre.

(10) Swimming pools considered an accessory use.

(Ord. 25-6162, Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 25-6110 Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 25-6102 Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 6007, Sec. 1, 2023; Ord. 5748 Sec. 1, 2018; Ord. 5729 Sec. 1, 2017; Ord. 5712 Sec. 1, 2017; Ord. 5558 Sec. 2, 2014; Ord. 5528 Sec. 2, 2013; Ord. 5462 Sec. 3, 2012; Ord. 5434 Sec. 4, 2012; Ord. 5309 Sec. 8, 2010; Ord. 5262 Sec. 2, 2009; Ord. 5204 Sec. 5, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.12.010 A.2: Table of Residential Site Development Standards.

Minimum and maximum residential standards are identified in the following table.

	RS[5,8,9]	RL[5,8,9]	RM[3, 4, 5, 6,8,9]	RH[3, 4, 5, 6,8,9]	RTP[3, 4, 5]	RMH[6,8,9]	UMU[3, 7]
Max. Density[1]	N/A	N/A	~~13~~ N/A	~~27~~ N/A	~~13~~ N/A	~~4~~ N/A	N/A
Unit Density[1a]	6	6	6	6	N/A	6	N/A
Min. Lot Size	8,000 sf	5,500 sf	4,000 sf	3,500 sf	1 acre	5,500 sf	N/A
Min. Lot Size (Townhouse)	1,800 sf	1,800 sf	1,800 sf	1,600 sf	N/A	1,800 sf	N/A
Min. Lot Width[2]	50'	45'	35'	N/A	N/A	45'	N/A
Min. Lot Width[2] (Townhouse)	24'	24'	20'	20'	N/A	24'	N/A
Min. Front Yard/ Street Setback[2]	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	See KMC 18.80
Min. Garage Setback[2]	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	N/A
Min. Side Yard Setback[2]	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	0'
Min. Rear Yard Setback[2]	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	15'	5'
Max. Height	35' or 2.5 stories, whichever is less	35' or 2.5 stories, whichever is less	35'	45'	N/A	35' or 2.5 stories, whichever is less	N/A
Min. Lot Frontage[2]	30'	30'	30'	30'	30'	30'	20'
Min. Lot Frontage[2] (Townhouse)	N/A	N/A	20'	20'	N/A	N/A	N/A

FOOTNOTES for Table 18.12.010 A.2 Residential Standards Table:

(1) Maximum Density - The maximum permitted number of lots/units ~~in the RM and RH zone is determined by dividing the gross area of the parcel in square feet by 43,560 square feet, multiplied by the allowed maximum density under table 18.12.010. The closest whole number is the permitted maximum number of lots/units.~~will be number that can be feasibly built under the constraints and regulations in place at the time of project approval. If the unit density is greater than the maximum density ~~as calculated~~allowed under the constraints and regulations in place on a parcel, then unit density will be used to determine the maximum number of middle housing units permitted on the lot.

(~~a~~2) Unit density for RS, RL, RMH, RM, and RH zones is four middle housing units unless the lot is less than 1,000 square feet in size.

(~~i~~a) Accessory Dwelling Units, as permitted in KMC 18.12.020, apply towards the total number of units permitted.

(~~ii~~b) Six middle housing units per lot may be approved if at least two of those units are affordable housing meeting the following requirements, unless zoning permitting higher densities or intensities applies:

(~~A~~i) Dwelling units that qualify as affordable housing shall have costs, including utilities other than telephone, that do not exceed 30 percent of the monthly income of a household

whose income does not exceed the following percentages of median household income adjusted for household size, for the county where the household is located, as reported by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development:

(~~I~~A) Rental housing: 60 percent.

(~~II~~B) Owner-occupied housing: 80 percent.

(~~B~~ii) The units shall be maintained as affordable for a term of at least 50 years, and the property shall satisfy that commitment and all required affordability and income eligibility conditions.

(~~C~~iii) The applicant shall record a covenant or deed restriction that ensures the continuing rental or ownership of units subject to these affordability requirements consistent with the conditions in chapter 84.14 RCW for a period of no less than 50 years.

(~~D~~iv) The covenant or deed restriction shall address criteria and policies to maintain public benefit if the property is converted to a use other than that which continues to provide for permanently affordable housing.

(~~E~~v) The units dedicated as affordable housing shall:

(~~I~~A) Be provided in a range of sizes comparable to other units in the development.

(~~II~~B) The number of bedrooms in affordable units shall be in the same proportion as the number of bedrooms in units within the entire development.

(~~III~~C) Generally, be distributed throughout the development and have substantially the same functionality as the other units in the development.

~~(b) Where maximum density exceeds unit density, maximum density will [be] used to determine the number of units permitted on a lot.~~

(2) Yards:

(a) Street: Building setback lines will be measured from the back of the sidewalk. Where no sidewalk exists and in the UMU district, building setback lines will be measured from the right-of-way line. (See fig. 1a-b)

(i) For garages that face a no-street abutting property line (side-entry garages,) the garage setback may be reduced to 15 feet from the back of the sidewalk. The street facing façade of the garage shall be treated with windows, modulations and/or architectural design elements and features that mimic the remainder of the house. Landscaping shall also be required along the street-facing façade. (See fig. 2a-b)

(ii) In no instance shall a vehicle or any other object be allowed to obstruct a pedestrian walkway/sidewalk.

(b) Rear: As measured from an existing lot line or alleyway.

(c) Side: Shall be five feet from the nearest side yard property line.

(i) Single-family attached and zero-lot line housing shall have no setback on the side where the property line follows a common or zero-lot line wall.

(ii) End units shall have a five-foot setback from the nearest side yard property line and no setback on the common wall side.

(d) Lot Frontage: Lot frontage lines will be measured from the right-of-way line.

(e) Where no street frontage exists, building setback and lot frontage lines will be addressed during the site plan or plat review process and must be approved by the Planning Director.

Fig. 1.a.

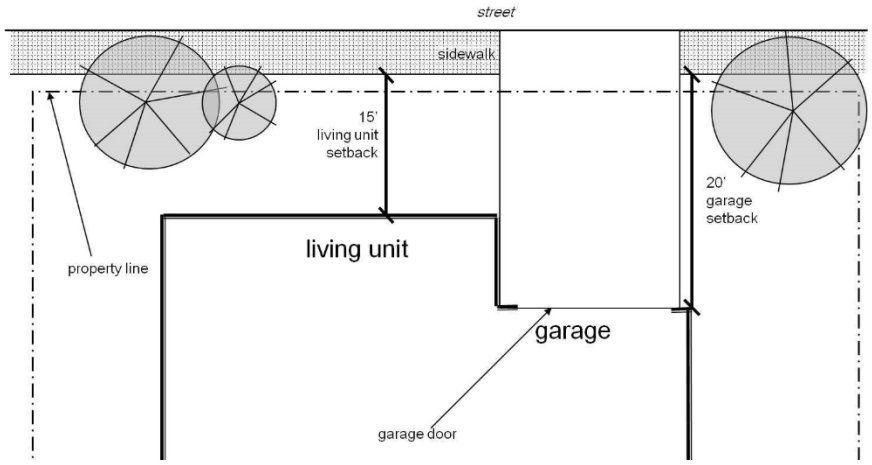


Fig. 2.a.

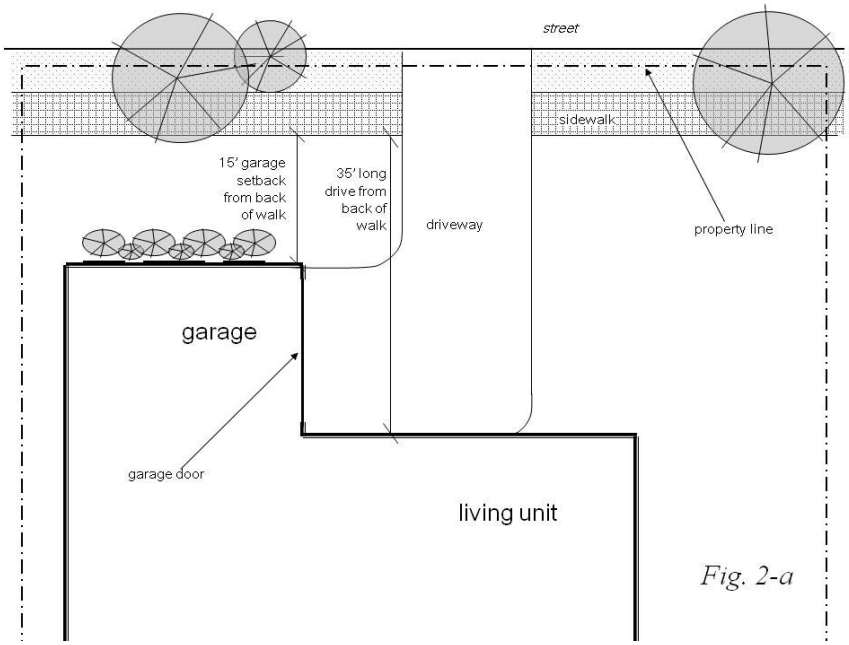
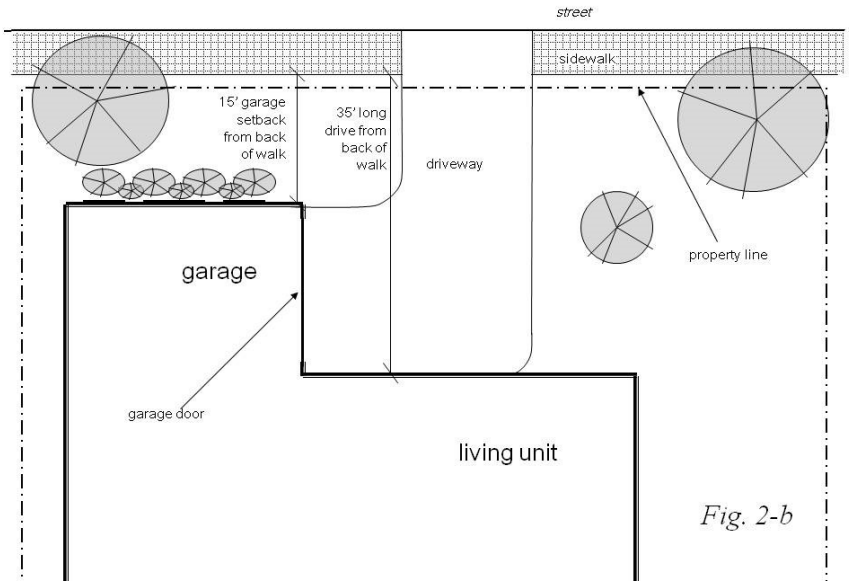


Fig. 2.b.



(3) Open space calculations.

(a) In multi-family developments, where the density exceeds seven units per acre and more than six units are proposed, the amount of required common open space shall equal or be greater than the minimum aggregate area of provided bedrooms based on the following formula: 300 square feet for the first bedroom and 200 square feet for each additional bedroom; exclusive of required street frontage setbacks and required parking areas. "Open area" is an area with average dimensions of not less than 15 feet by not less than 500 square feet. More than one open area may be provided in a given development. Any interpretation of this Section will be made by the Director.

(b) Within the UMU district, new developments with a lot area of more than 20,000 square feet shall provide a pedestrian-oriented space (plaza, courtyard or similar space) of at least one percent of the site area as described below. Buildings that front on a public sidewalk and have a pedestrian-oriented commercial use facing that sidewalk are exempt from this open space requirement.

(i) Pedestrian-oriented space must include:

(A) Visual and pedestrian access including barrier-free access) to the abutting structures from the public right-of-way or a non-vehicular courtyard.

(B) Paved walking surfaces of either concrete or approved unit paving in areas intended for foot traffic.

(C) On-site or building mounted lighting providing at least 0.6 foot-candles (average) on the ground.

(D) At least three feet of seating area (bench, ledge, etc.) or one individual seat per 60 square feet of plaza area or open space.

(E) Landscaping to enhance the area.

(F) At least 25 percent of the plaza or courtyard must be shaded by structure or tree canopy (at least ten years after planting).

(ii) Outdoor pedestrian-oriented space shall not include:

(A) Asphalt or gravel pavement (Exception: decomposed granite and other architectural surface treatments).

(B) Adjacent unscreened parking lots.

(C) Adjacent chain link fences.

(D) Adjacent "blank walls".

(E) Adjacent dumpsters or service areas.

(F) Outdoor storage or retail sales (shopping carts, potting soil bags, firewood, etc.) that do not contribute to the pedestrian environment.

(iii) In-Lieu Provisions—Pedestrian-Oriented Space Requirement in Urban Mixed Use (UMU) District: Provided all of the following requirements are met, required publicly accessible open space in the Urban Mixed Use (UMU) District will be provided on the site containing the permitted land use.

(A) The proposing owner or developer shall improve and may, at their and the city's discretion, dedicate land to provide the pedestrian-oriented space requirement in accordance with the approval of the planning official, or shall pay a fee in lieu of such improvement and dedication if the planning official determines that the dedication and improvement of land is not feasible or desirable due to the physical characteristics of the site.

(B) The property owner or developer shall either:

(I) Provide and construct (and optionally dedicate) the on-site pedestrian-oriented space requirement to city design and construction standards subject to city approval or:

(II) Enter a voluntary agreement with the city to pay an amount equal to the city's cost of acquiring and constructing the pedestrian-oriented space requirement in another location within the same UMU District as identified and approved by the planning official.

(4) Mobile Home Park Requirements:

(a) New Mobile Home Parks: For Residential Trailer Parks developed after January 1, 1998, the following spacing standards may be utilized:

(i) When each primary structure has a 20-foot front and rear yard (18.09.1950) or open space, the following spacing standards apply: side-by-side, end-to-end and parallel - ten feet between each primary structure; accessory structures that meet provisions of the International Building Code must have a minimum four-foot setback between the primary structure unless attached to the primary structure, and must have a minimum six-foot setback between adjacent primary and accessory structures.

(b) Ten feet setback from all property lines; 20 feet from an existing right-of-way line or proposed right-of-way line whichever is greater.

(c) Spacing: 20 feet between mobile homes located side-by-side, end-to-end and parallel. End-to-end, ten feet if the extended outside edge does not project beyond the extended centerline of the adjacent unit. There must be 20 feet between any mobile home and any permanent structure; ten feet between any mobile home and any accessory structure unless attached to the mobile home in accord with the State of Washington and the International Building Code; ten

feet between any occupied travel trailer and any mobile home, accessory structure or permanent building. The average distance between adjacent, angular mobile homes must not be less than 20 feet with the closest point no less than ten feet.

(d) Mobile Home Roadways: Each manufactured home must be served by at least one 30-foot-wide roadway for two moving lanes of traffic and a three-foot delineated, pedestrian walkway. If on-roadway parking is allowed, the roadway width must be increased accordingly. All roadways must be improved with asphalt, bituminous surface treatment or an equivalent.

(5) Single-Family Homes (attached and detached); Manufactured Homes; Middle Housing:

(a) Intent: It is the intent of the section to set forth the terms and conditions under which single-family homes (which includes manufactured homes) and middle housing may be sited.

(b) Minimum siting standards: The following standards apply to the siting of all single-family homes and middle housing, whether site-built homes or manufactured homes. Where any conflict arises between these regulations and the adopted building code, the stricter standard shall apply.

(i) Foundation: All dwellings shall be placed on permanent foundations;

(ii) Minimum width: A dwelling shall not be less than 14 feet in width at the narrowest point of its first story;

(iii) Age of dwelling (for manufactured homes only): no manufactured home more than three years old on the date of installation or previously lived in shall be permitted on any lot.

(6) Townhouse Development:

(a) There must be at least ten feet on end between groups. This space may either be end unit lots or common open space, and, if so, there may be openings in the end units;

(b) The number of connected units may not exceed eight;

(c) All units with a common wall must be constructed concurrently and be under the same ownership at the time of initial construction;

(d) Common walls must follow property lines and have no openings.

(7) Urban Mixed Use District:

(a) Legal lots of record existing as of June 1, 2017, shall be deemed to be in compliance with the lot size restrictions, however after June 1, 2017, no lot intended for single-family use shall be created in excess of 5,000 square feet.

(b) Setbacks for all residential uses shall be measured from property lines.

(c) Building setback from front and side property lines are not required, except as mandated by the applicable local, state and federal codes.

(8) Cottage Housing:

(a) Open Space. Open space shall be provide equal to a minimum 20 percent of the lot size. This may include common open space, private open space, setbacks, critical areas, and other open space.

(b) Common Open Space.

(i) At least one outdoor common open space is required.

(ii) Common open space shall be provided equal to a minimum of 300 square feet per cottage. Each common open space shall have a minimum dimension of 15 feet on any side.

(iii) Orientation. Common open space shall be bordered by cottages on at least two sides. At least half of cottage units in the development shall abut a common open space and have the primary entrance facing the common open space.

(iv) Parking areas and vehicular areas shall not qualify as common open space.

(v) Critical areas and their buffers, including steep slopes, shall not qualify as common open space.

(c) Entries. All cottages shall feature a roofed porch at least 60 square feet in size with a minimum dimension of five feet on any side facing the street and/or common open space.

(d) Community Building.

(i) A cottage housing development shall contain no more than one community building.

(ii) A community building shall have no more than 2,400 square feet of net floor area, excluding attached garages.

(iii) A community building shall have no minimum off-street parking requirement.

(9) Courtyard Apartments.

(a) Yard or Court.

(i) At least one yard or court is required.

(ii) The yard or court shall be bordered by attached dwelling units on two or three sides.

(iii) The yard or court shall be a minimum dimension of 15 feet on any side.

(iv) Parking areas and vehicular areas do not qualify as a yard or court.

(b) Entries. Ground-related courtyard apartments shall feature a covered pedestrian entry, such as a covered porch or recessed entry, with minimum weather protection of three feet by three feet, facing the street or yard or court.

(Ord. 25-6163, Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 25-6102 Sec. 2, 2025; Ord. 24-6074 Sec. 1, 2024; Ord. 5764 Sec. 1, 2018; Ord. 5743 Sec. 2, 2018; Ord. 5712 Sec. 2, 2017; Ord. 5647 Sec. 1, 2016; Ord. 5542 Sec. 1, 2014; Ord. 5504 Sec. 1, 2013; Ord. 5407 Sec. 4, 2012; Ord. 5365 Sec. 3, 2011; Ord. 5309 Sec. 9, 2010; Ord. 5204 Sec. 6, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.36 OFF-STREET PARKING

18.36.010: Purpose.

This Chapter sets forth special conditions and requirements for parking and applies to all permitted and additional uses.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

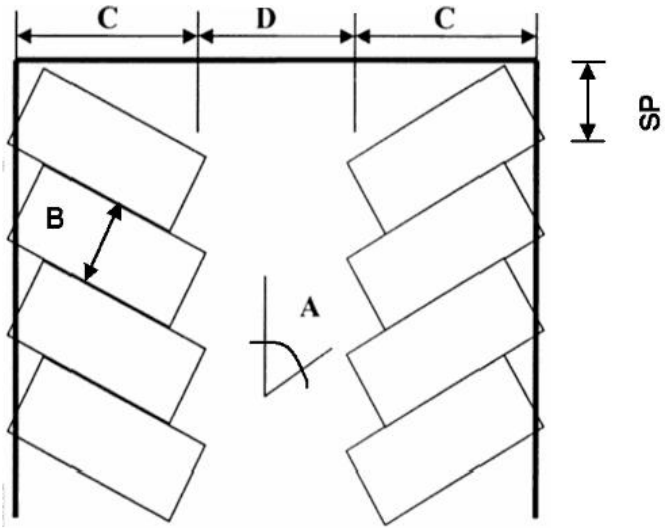
18.36.020: Applicability.

Except as provided elsewhere in this Title, all buildings, structures or uses must have adequate off-street parking in accord with this Chapter and applicable construction standards.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.030: Dimensional Standards.

Parking areas shall meet the following minimum standards:



Parking Angle (in degrees)	Standards				
	Stall Projection	Minimum Stall Width	Minimum Stall Depth	Minimum Aisle Width D[1]	
A	SP	B	C	One-Way	Two-Way
0(parallel)	8'~~6"~~	22'	8'	20'	20'
30	17'	8'~~6"~~	17'	20'	20'
45	12'	8'~~6"~~	17'6"	20'	20'
50	11'1"	8'~~6"~~	18'	20'	20'
55	10'5"	8'~~6"~~	18'6"	20'	20'

60	9'6"	8'~~6"~~	19'	20'	20'
65	9'5"	8'~~6"~~	19'6"	20'	21'
70	9'1"	8'~~6"~~	19'6"	20'	21'6"
75	8'10"	8'~~6"~~	19'	20'	22'
90	8'~~6"~~	8'~~6"~~	18'	20'	22'6"

[1] Fire lanes must meet applicable standards for width and turning radius.

(Ord. 5359 Sec. 1, 2011; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.040: Access.

(1) There must be adequate access to all parking and loading spaces. If a parking lot does not abut a public street or easement to a public street, an unobstructed easement at least 20 feet wide to a public way must be maintained. The Planning Director may require a wider easement, if necessary, for safety and efficiency. Except in R districts, egress must be such that no vehicle backs out onto a public way.

(2) Multi-family developments must be in conformance with applicable provisions of Chapter 18.75.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.050: Minimum Parking Requirements—General.

Off-street parking is required ~~as follows or with a specific use,~~ in accord with Section 18.36.060~~: R district: Two spaces per dwelling unit, which may be unenclosed, or within a garage or carport. CN district: One space for every 200 square feet of gross floor area; CC, CR, CG, and CO districts: One space for every 400 square feet of gross floor area: minimum parking requirements do not apply in the CM zoning district:~~.Unlisted Commercial uses: One space for every 1,000 square feet of gross floor area; Industrial uses ~~districts~~: One space per employee on the maximum working shift.

(Ord. 5212 Sec. 1, 2008; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.060: Specific Parking Requirements.

Except for the CBD zoning district, off-street parking is as follows for the uses indicated in the following table:

Uses	Required Parking
Agricultural processing plant, warehouse	1 per employee
Ambulance service	1 per ambulance plus 1 per employee on the largest shift
Animal clinic/veterinary	1 per ~~250~~ 1,000 square feet of gross indoor floor area
Animal processing facility	1 per employee
Appliance and furniture sales/service	1 per 1,000 square feet of display area
Assisted living facility	1 per 4 residents plus 1 per staff on largest shift
Auction yard (excluding livestock)	1 per 300 gross square feet
Auditoria, theatres, stadia (including religious sanctuaries)	1 per 4 fixed seats or 1 per 150 square feet of floor area

Automobile impound yard	1 per 500 gross square feet of building area plus 1 per 5,000 gross square feet of outdoor storage area
Automobile sales/rental	1 per ~~400~~ 1,000 gross square feet of inside display area, 1 per 2,000 gross square feet of outside display area
Automobile/truck/RV/motor-cycle service, painting, repair, body and fender works	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per 300 gross square feet plus 2 per service bay (each space in a service bay counts as a parking space)~~
Bank, savings/loan and other financial institutions	1 per ~~300~~ 1,000 gross square feet~~; if a drive-through window is provided may be reduced to 1 per 400 gross square feet~~
Barber/beauty shop	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per chair and 1 per employee~~
Bed and breakfast	1 per guest room
Bowling alley	4 per lane plus additional required spaces for other uses
Brewery, winery and/or distillery	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per each employee on the maximum shift plus 1 space per 4 seats in any tasting room or other visitor facility~~
Building supply and home improvement	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per 300 gross square feet of retail area, 1 per 1,000 gross square feet of warehouse area, 1 per 600 gross square feet of assembly or light manufacturing area~~
Call center, telephone	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per employee~~
~~Carnival, circus~~	~~1 per 400 gross square feet lot area~~
Carpenter shop	1 per ~~600~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Carwash, self-service	2 spaces for drying and cleaning purposes per stall, plus 3 reservoir spaces in front of each stall
Casino	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per 50 gross square feet of dining, bar, gaming and dance space, plus 1 per 2 employees~~
Church or other place of worship	1 per 4 seats or 8 lineal feet of bench seating; plus additional required spaces for other uses
College or university	1 per 600 gross square feet of classroom and 1 per 5 seats in principal assembly room
Community hall, club or lodge	1 per 200 gross square feet
Community recreational facility	1 per 200 gross square feet
Community residential facility	2 plus 1 per employee on maximum shift
Composting storage/ processing, commercial	3 plus 1 per employee
Contractor's yard	1 per employee
Convalescent home, nursing home	1 per 2 beds
Convenience store	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per 350 gross square feet, plus 2 for every 2.5 seats of on-site seating, but not less than 10.~~ Service area at gas pumps shall not be counted as parking spaces
Dance, exhibition and assembly halls	1 per 75 square feet of gross floor area of main assembly room
Day care, child and adult	1 per employee, plus 1 per 10 children or adults
Dry cleaning, retail	1 per 1,000 square feet~~The greater of 3 spaces or 1 per 300 square feet except where located in a shopping center.~~
Dry cleaning, laundry, linen supply plant, commercial	1 per ~~600~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Dwelling, accessory ~~apartments~~ dwelling units	1 per dwelling unit; also see 18.36.090

Dwelling, congregate/co-living housing	.25 per sleeping room; also see 18.36.090
~~Dwelling, elderly or handicapped (two or more units)~~	~~1 per 1.5 units; a reduction of the number of parking to 1 per 2 units allowed if:~~ ~~a) Public transportation directly available; and~~ ~~b) Essential services, specifically shopping, is available within ½ mile of site; and~~ ~~c) A notarized agreement to provide additional off-street parking in conformance with applicable regulations if all or portion of complex converts to complex not restricted to elderly or handicapped~~
Dwelling, middle housing See (4) below	1 per dwelling unit; also see 18.36.090 ~~on lots no greater than 6,000 square feet before subdivisions or lot splits; and~~ ~~2 per dwelling unit on lots greater than 6,000 square feet before subdivisions or lot splits~~
Dwelling, multifamily	0.5 per dwelling unit; also see 18.36.090
~~Studio and 1 bedroom~~	~~1 per dwelling unit, plus 5% of total for guests~~
~~Two or more bedrooms~~	~~1.5 per dwelling unit, plus 5% of total for guests~~
Dwelling, senior housing	See 18.36.090
Dwelling, single-family	~~2~~ 1 per dwelling unit; also see 18.36.090
Electrical/electronic/computer component and system manufacturing/assembly	1 per 600 gross square feet
Entertainment/recreation facilities, indoor	1 per ~~250~~ 1,000 gross square feet ~~for areas not covered below, except when located in a shopping center~~
Skating rink	1 per 200 gross square feet
Swimming pool/jacuzzi	1 per 100 gross square feet of water surface area
Tennis, racquetball and similar courts	2 per court
Entertainment/recreation facilities, outdoor	
~~–~~Golf course	4 per hole
Golf driving range/training center	2 per designated driving station on driving range and 1 per 500 square feet of putting/chipping green
Skating rink	1 per 200 gross square feet
Sports field	20 per acre of site
Swimming pool/jacuzzi	1 per 100 gross square feet of water surface area
Tennis, racquetball and similar courts	2 per court
Equipment rental shop	1 per ~~300 gross square feet of retail, office or shop use, 1 per~~ 1,000 gross square feet ~~of outdoor storage or display area~~
Equipment sales, repair, and maintenance	~~3~~ 1 per 1,000 square feet~~plus 1 per employee~~
Espresso/latte stand (no seating)	1 ~~plus 1 per employee~~ per 1,000 square feet
Exercise facility/gym athletic club	1 per 1,000 gross square feet
Fire station	1 space per employee on the maximum shift
Freight forwarding	1 per 2,000 square feet
Fueling station	1 per 1,000 square feet~~4 pumps~~
Funeral home	1 per 4 seats or 8 feet of lineal bench in chapel area

Greenhouse/nursery, commercial	~~1 per 400 gross square feet of indoor retail,~~ 1 per 1,000 gross square feet ~~of outdoor display or storage area~~
Hospital	1 per 4 patient beds; plus one space per doctor; plus 1 per each 3 additional employees
Hotel/motel	1 per guest room; plus additional required spaces for other uses
Kennel/animal boarding/shelter	1 per 1,000 square feet~~3 plus 1 per each employee~~
Laboratories	1 per ~~600~~ 1,000 gross square feet of office~~, 1 per 600 gross square feet of laboratory or shop area~~
Landscape materials sales	1 per 1,000 square feet~~3 plus 1 per employee~~
Laundromat	1 per 1,000 square feet~~250 square feet~~
Manufactured (mobile) home park	~~2~~ 1 per dwelling unit ~~plus 5% total for guest parking~~
Manufacturing	1 per employee on the maximum shift
Medical/dental clinic	1 per 1,000 square feet~~5 per each doctor or dentist~~
Model home sales	1 per 2,000 gross square feet of sales area
Motor vehicle parts sales/service	1 per ~~300~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Museum, libraries	1 per 800 gross square feet
Office, professional and general	1 per ~~250~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Office, professional and general with drive-thru window service	3 stacking stall spaces plus 1 per ~~250~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Post office, postal center	1 per ~~200~~ 1,000 gross square feet ~~of floor area plus 1 employee~~
Print shop	1 per ~~400~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Racetrack	1 per each 4 fixed seats
Recreational vehicle park/campground	1 per RV park/campsite
Recreational vehicle sales and service	1 per 3,000 gross square feet of display area
Restaurant	1 per 1,000 gross square feet~~4 seats, except when located in a shopping center~~
Restaurants with drive-in facilities	1 per 1,000 gross square feet~~for each auto serving space plus 1 for every 4 seats outside the vehicle~~
Restaurant with drive-through window service	6 stacking stall spaces plus 1 per 1,000 gross square feet~~1 for every 4 seats outside the vehicle~~
Retail sales, indoor	1 per ~~200~~ 1,000 gross square feet~~, except when located in a shopping center~~
Retail sales, outdoor	1 per 5,000 gross square feet of retail sales area in addition to any parking requirements for buildings, except when located in a shopping center
Schools, professional, vocational and trade	1 per each 3.5 seats in classroom area
Schools, public and private, 7 through 12	1 per teacher; plus 1 per each other employee; plus 1 per 6 students
Schools, public and private, K through 7	1 per teacher; plus 1 per other employee
Services, retail	1 per ~~250~~ 1,000 square feet ~~except when located in a shopping center~~
Shopping centers	1 per 1,000 square feet~~4.5 per 1,000 square feet of gross leasable area (GLA) for centers having GLA less than 400,000 gross square feet, and 5 per 1,000 gross square feet of GLA for centers having a GLA of over 400,000 gross square feet~~

Showroom, industrial	1 per ~~5~~1,000 gross square feet of display area
Solid waste recycling/transfer site	3 plus 1 per each employee
Specialized training/learning schools or studios	1 per ~~300~~ 1,000 gross square feet
Storage, general - indoors, warehousing	1 per each 3,500 gross square feet
Storage, general - outdoors, display	3 plus 1 per each employee
Personal services	1 per ~~250~~ 1,000 square feet
Tavern	1 per 1,000 square feet~~1 per 4 seats, except when located in a shopping center~~
Transit center	1 per each 200 gross square feet
Warehousing	1 per each 3,500 gross square feet
Wrecking, recycling, junk and salvage yards	1 per each employee plus 3 visitor spaces

(1) Unlisted uses: The Planning Director shall determine parking requirements for any use not specifically included in the table above based on similarities with listed uses.

(2) Single- and multi-family developments must conform to the applicable provisions of Chapter 18.75 KMC.

(3) Commercial developments must conform to the applicable provisions of Chapter 18.78 KMC.

(4) Middle housing parking requirements in portions of the City for which the Department of Commerce has certified a parking study in accordance with RCW 36.70A.365(7)(a), shall comply with the off-street parking requirement provided in the certification from the Department of Commerce.

(Ord. 25-6165, Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 25-6104 Sec. 1, 2025; Ord. 5854 Sec. 1, 2020; Ord. 5716 Sec. 1, 2017; Ord. 5434 Sec. 10, 2012; Ord. 5359 Sec. 2, 2011; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.065: Parking Requirements for the CBD Zoning District.

The following parking standards shall apply to properties zoned Central Business District:

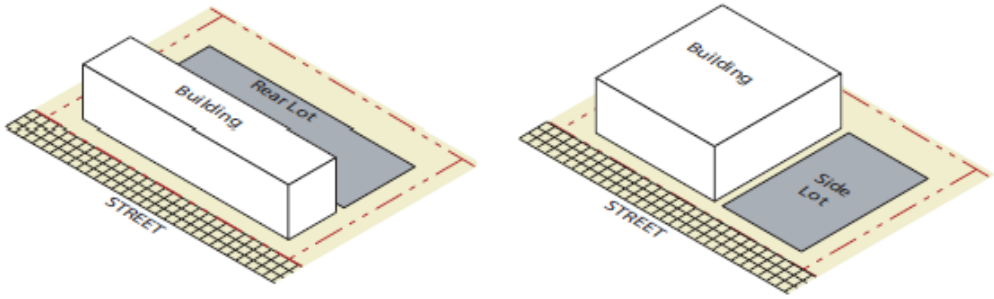
(1) Any business with 3,000 square feet of gross floor area or less is exempt from off-street parking requirements;

(2) Businesses with more than 3,000 square feet of gross floor area shall provide one off-street parking stall per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. Adjacent on-street parking may be used to meet this requirement.

(3) The following land use shall supply off-street parking consistent with KMC 18.36.060:

(a) Vocational schools.

(i) Off-street parking lots shall not be located between streets and buildings but shall be located either behind buildings (preferred) or to the side of buildings.



(Ord. 5434 Sec. 11, 2012)

18.36.067: Parking Requirements for the UMU Zoning District.

In the UMU district both on-street and off-street parking stalls shall be credited towards the applicable parking space requirements. The following parking standards shall apply to properties zoned Urban Mixed-Use:

(1) Any business with 3,000 square feet of gross floor area or less is exempt from parking requirements;

(2) Businesses with more than 3,000 square feet of gross floor area shall provide one parking stall per 1,000 square feet of gross floor area. Adjacent on-street parking may be used to meet this requirement.

(3) ~~The following~~ Residential land use shall supply off-street parking consistent with KMC 18.36.060~~:~~ .

~~(a) Dwelling, accessory apartments;~~

~~(b) Dwelling, elderly or handicapped (two or more units); and~~

~~(c) Dwelling, multi-family.~~

~~(4) One- and two-family dwelling and townhomes shall provide at least one parking space per unit.~~

(Ord. 5716 Sec. 5, 2017)

18.36.070: Mixed or Separate Occupancies.

In the case of mixed or separate uses on the same parcel, the total off-street parking will be the total required for the various uses computed separately. A 15 percent off-street reduction may be permitted for parking areas greater than 16,000 square feet. Off-street parking for one use does not provide parking for any other use except for cooperative uses.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.080: In-Lieu Provisions.

On any parcel which because of the size, shape or location will not have adequate parking, parking requirements may be satisfied as follows:

(1) In C, UMU or I districts parking may be located within 500 feet on other property:

(a) Section 18.36.080 applies;

(i) If the parking facility is under different ownership, a written agreement or lease is required; and

(ii) The parking area shall be designated as P on the zoning map and not used for other than off-street parking.

(2) If the Planning Director finds that parking demands on the use may be sporadic or seasonal, he may reduce the required parking by 50 percent if the decreased parking is available when needed within 500 feet.

(3) If adjoining facilities can be developed and designed efficiently and economically as one facility, and the total parking area will be 10,000 square feet or more, the total combined required parking may be reduced by ten percent.

(4) In addition to any of the above, if any use in any district, except RS and RL districts, includes an improved, permanent on-site public bus stop, the required number of parking stalls may be reduced by ten percent. Provided, however, the bus stop must be on a transit system route and be developed in accord with requirements of the Transit Authority.

(Ord. 5716 Sec. 2, 2017; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.090: Exceptions.

The following are exceptions to the provisions of Chapter 18.36:

(1) ~~(1)~~ An existing commercial structure in C or UMU districts may be replaced, altered or remodeled without adequate parking if the Planning Director finds that the use will not create additional parking demands and that the new remodeled structure will have a total floor area no more than the ground floor area of the previous structure; or~~.~~

(2) Residences that:

a. Are under 1,200 square feet; or

b. Meet passive house requirements, whether new construction or the retrofit of existing buildings; or

c. Are modular construction; or

d. Are mass timber construction; or

(3) Commercial spaces under 3,000 square feet; or

(4) Affordable housing; or

(5) Senior housing; or

(6) Child care centers as defined in RCW 43.216.010 that are licensed or certified by the Department of Children, Youth and Families; or

(7) Ground level nonresidential spaces in mixed-use buildings; and

~~(1)~~(8) A building undergoing a change of use from a nonresidential to a residential use or a change of use for a commercial use.

(Ord. 5716 Sec. 3, 2017; Ord. 5359 Sec. 3, 2011: Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.100: Development and Maintenance of Parking Areas.

Every public and private parking area must be developed and maintained as follows (if an adjacent property is a parking area, this provision may be waived):

(1) Surfacing. The area must be surfaced with asphalt or Portland cement binder pavement to provide a durable and dustless surface, be graded and drained for the on-site disposal of all surface water; and be arranged and marked for the orderly and safe loading, unloading, parking and storage of vehicles and constructed to applicable construction standards. For residential zoning districts the driveway to the primary parking structure/area for each dwelling unit must be surfaced with asphalt or Portland cement binder pavement, or an alternative hard surface as approved by the Planning Director. The driveway for accessory structures not used for primary parking and not used as a dwelling in residential zoning districts can be surfaced with a minimum three-inch compacted gravel. The Planning Director may allow parking to be completed within six months after issuance of a certificate of occupancy for good cause. Any further extensions are to the approval of the Planning Commission.

(2) Parking Area Lighting. Lighting for off-street parking must be directed and shielded to not illuminate surrounding residential areas.

(3) Other Improvements. Barriers, curbs or tire stops must be installed if a parking area abuts a structure, adjacent properties, except when such property is a parking area, or public right-of-way. Traffic controls must be installed if deemed necessary by the City Engineer for public safety.

(4) When a parking lot is to be landscaped, the landscaped areas are to be surrounded by a minimum six-inch high curb, be serviced by a sprinkler-head water system, be maintained and kept free of all weeds and debris.

(5) Screening from R Districts. If an off-street parking lot abuts any R district, it must be screened by a masonry wall, tight board fence or screened chain link fence, at least three but not more than six feet high.

(6) Driveways. Driveways in C, UMU or I districts must be at least 28 feet from pedestrian crosswalks and surfaced with asphalt or Portland cement binder pavement, or an alternative hard surface as approved by the Planning Director. Driveway widths should not be less than 30 feet in width.

(Ord. 25-6104 Sec. 2, 2025; Ord. 5716 Sec. 4, 2017; Ord. 5574 Sec. 1, 2014; Ord. 5463 Sec. 1, 2012; Ord. 5204 Sec. 13, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.110: Loading Space Requirements.

Off-street loading spaces, accessible to a public way, are required for all uses with deliveries or shipments. The spaces must be adequate to accommodate the maximum number and size of vehicles simultaneously loading or unloading. No part of a vehicle using the loading space may project into a public way.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.120: Parking for Handicapped.

Parking for the handicapped shall be provided in accord with the American's with Disabilities Act and the edition of the International Building Code most recently adopted by the City.

(Ord. 5309 Sec. 16, 2010; Ord. 5204 Sec. 14, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.36.130: Compact Car Spaces.

Any parking lot of four or more spaces, may have 25 percent of the required spaces marked for compact cars. Compact car spaces must be seven and one-half feet wide and 15 feet long with adequate back-up space to efficiently and safely negotiate the parking area.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.58 CRITICAL AREAS—GENERAL PROVISIONS

18.58.010: Definitions.

Words not defined in this Title shall be as defined in the Kennewick Municipal Code, the Washington Administrative Code, or the Revised Code of Washington. Words not found in these codes shall be as defined in the Webster's Third New International Dictionary, latest edition. The definitions are as follows:

(1) *Adaptive Management.* Adaptive management relies on scientific methods to evaluate how well regulatory and non-regulatory actions protect the critical area. An adaptive management program is a formal and deliberate scientific approach to taking action and obtaining information in the face of uncertainty.

(2) *Adjacent* means immediately adjoining (in contact with the boundary of the influence area) or within a distance that is less than that needed to separate activities from critical areas to ensure protection of the functions and values of the critical areas. Adjacent shall mean any activity or development located:

(a) On a site immediately adjoining a critical area;

(b) A distance equal to or less than the required critical area buffer width and building setback;

(c) A distance equal to or less than 660 feet the protection standards listed in the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act [USFWS 2007]) from a bald eagle nest;

(d) A distance equal to or less than 200 feet upland from a stream, wetland, or water body;

(e) Bordering or within the floodway, floodplain or channel migration zone; or

(f) A distance equal to or less than 200 feet from a critical aquifer recharge area.

(3) *Advance Mitigation.* Mitigation of an anticipated critical area impact or hazard completed according to an approved report or other applicable information and prior to site development.

(4) *Alteration.* Any human induced change in an existing condition of a critical area or its buffer. Alterations include, but are not limited to grading, filling, channelizing, dredging, clearing (vegetation), construction, compaction, excavation or any other activity that changes the character of the critical area.

(5) *Applicant* is a person who files an application for permit under this Title and who is either the owner of the land on which that proposed activity would be located, a contract purchaser, or the authorized agent of such a person.

(6) *Aquifer* is a geological formation, group of formations or part of formation that is capable of yielding a significant amount of water to a well or spring.

(7) *Aquifer, Confined* is an aquifer bounded above and below by beds of distinctly lower permeability than that of the aquifer itself and that contains ground water under sufficient pressure for the water to rise above the top of the aquifer.

(8) *Aquifer Recharge Areas* are areas that, due to the presence of certain soils, geology, and surface water, act to recharge ground water by percolation.

(9) *Aquifer Susceptibility* means the ease with which contaminants can move from the land surface to the aquifer based solely on the types of surface and subsurface materials in the area. Susceptibility usually

defines the rate at which a contaminant will reach an aquifer unimpeded by chemical interactions with the vadose zone media.

(10) *Aquifer, Unconfined* means an aquifer not bounded above by a bed of distinctly lower permeability than that of the aquifer itself and containing ground water under pressure approximately equal to that of the atmosphere. This term is synonymous with the term "water table aquifer."

(11) *Base Flood* means a flood event having a one-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, also referred to as the 100-year flood. Designations of base flood areas on flood insurance map(s) always include the letters A or V.

(12) *Best Available Science* means a current scientific information used in the process to designate, protect, or restore critical areas that is derived from a valid scientific process as defined by WAC 365-195-900 through 925. Sources of best available science are included in "Citations of Recommended Sources of Best Available Science for Designating and Protecting Critical Areas" published by the state Office of Community Development.

(13) *Best Management Practices (BMPs)* means conservation practices or systems of practices and management measures that:

(a) Control soil loss and reduce water quality degradation caused by high concentrations of nutrients, animal waste, toxics, and sediment;

(b) Minimize adverse impacts to surface water and ground water flow, circulation patterns, and to the chemical, physical, and biological characteristics of wetlands;

(c) Protect trees and vegetation designated to be retained during and following site construction; and

(d) Provide standards for proper use of chemical herbicides within critical areas.

The City of Kennewick shall monitor the application of best management practices to ensure that the standards and policies of this Title are adhered to.

(14) Buffer or Buffer Zone is an area contiguous to and protects a critical habitat that is required for the continued maintenance, functioning, and/or structural stability of a critical area. that protects the integrity or functions and values of a critical area from potential adverse impacts, or areas that are an integral part of an affected resource’s ecosystem. Called riparian habitat buffers for streams.

(15) *Channel Migration Zone* means the area within which a river channel is likely to migrate and occupy over a specified time period (e.g., 100 years).

(16) Clearing means the removal of timber, brush, grass, ground cover or other vegetative matter from a site, which exposes the earth’s surface of the site.

(17) *Compensation Project* are actions necessary to replace project-induced critical area and buffer losses, including land acquisition, planning, construction plans, monitoring and contingency actions.

(18) *Compensatory Mitigation* means replacing project-induced critical wetland habitat losses or impacts, and includes, but is not limited to, the following:

(a) Restoration: Actions performed to reestablish wetland functional characteristics and processes that have been lost by alterations, activities, or catastrophic events within an area that no longer meets the definition of a wetland.

(b) Creation: Actions performed to intentionally establish a wetland at a site where it did not formerly exist.

(c) Enhancement: Actions performed to improve the condition of existing degraded wetlands so that the functions they provide are of a higher quality.

(d) Preservation: Actions taken to ensure the permanent protection of existing, high-quality wetlands.

(19) *Creation* means the manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics present with the intent to develop a wetland that did not previously exist at an upland site. Creation results in a gain in wetland area and functions. A typical action is the excavation of upland soils to elevations that will produce a wetland hydroperiod and hydric soils and support the growth of hydrophytic plant species.

(20) *Critical Aquifer Recharge Area* is an area designated by WAC 365-190-100 that are determined to have a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water.

(21) *Critical Areas* include any of the following areas or ecosystems: Aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and wetlands, as defined in RCW 36.70A and this Title.

(22) *Critical Facility* is a facility for which even a slight chance of flooding, inundation, or impact from a hazard event might be too great. Critical facilities include, but are not limited to, schools, nursing homes, hospitals, police, fire and emergency response installations, and installations that produce, use or store hazardous materials or hazardous waste.

(23) *Cumulative impacts* are the combined, incremental effects of human activity on critical area functions and values. Cumulative impacts result when the effects of an action are added to or interact with the effects of other actions in a particular place and within a particular time. It is the combination of these effects, and any resulting environmental degradation, that should be the focus of cumulative impact analysis and changes to policies and permitting decisions.

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(24) *Development* means any activity upon the land consisting of construction or alteration of structures, earth movement, dredging, dumping, grading, filling, mining, removal of any sand, gravel, or minerals, driving of piles, drilling operations, bulk heading, clearing of vegetation, or other land disturbance. Development includes the storage or use of equipment or materials inconsistent with the existing use. Development also includes approvals issued by the City of Kennewick that binds land to specific patterns of use, including, but not limited to, subdivisions, short subdivisions, zone changes, conditional use permits, and binding site plans. Development activity does not include the following activities:

(a) Interior building improvements.

(b) Exterior structure maintenance activities, including painting and roofing.

(c) Routine landscape maintenance of established, ornamental landscaping, such as lawn mowing, pruning and weeding.

(d) Maintenance of the following existing facilities that does not expand the affected area: septic tanks (routine cleaning); wells; individual utility service connections; and individual cemetery plots in established and approved cemeteries.

(25) *Development Permit* means any permit issued by the City of Kennewick, or other authorized agency, for construction, land use, or the alteration of land.

(26) *Enhancement* means actions performed within an existing degraded critical area and/or buffer to intentionally increase or augment one or more functions or values of the existing critical area or buffer.

Enhancement actions include, but are not limited to, increasing plant diversity, increasing wildlife habitat, installing environmentally compatible erosion controls, or removing noxious or non-native plant or animal species.

(27) *Erosion* is the process whereby wind, rain, water, and other natural agents mobilize and transport particles.

(28) *Erosion Hazard Areas* are at least those areas identified by the United States Department of Agriculture National Resources Conservation Service as have a "severe" rill and inter-rill erosion hazard.

(29) *Extreme Slope Hazard Areas* are those areas with pre-development slope greater than 40 percent.

(30) *Fill material* means a deposit of earth material.

(31) *Filling* means the act of transporting or placing by any manual or mechanical means fill material from, to, or on any soil surface, including temporary stockpiling of fill material.

(32) *Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas* are areas necessary for maintaining species in suitable habitats within their natural geographic distribution so that isolated subpopulations are not created as designated by WAC 365-190-130. These areas are guided by the State's Priority Habitats and Species list and include the following:

(a) Areas with which state or federally designated endangered, threatened, and sensitive species have a primary association;

(b) Habitats of local importance, including, but not limited to, areas designated as priority habitat by the Department of Fish and Wildlife;

(c) Naturally occurring ponds under 20 acres and their submerged aquatic beds that provide fish or wildlife habitat, including those artificial ponds intentionally created from dry areas in order to mitigate impacts to ponds;

(d) Waters of the state, including lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington;

(e) Lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers planted with game fish by a governmental or tribal entity;

(f) State natural area preserves and natural resource conservation areas; and

(g) Land essential for preserving connections between habitat blocks and open spaces.

(33) *Fish Habitat* is an area or environment that is used by fish at any life stage at any time of the year, including potential habitat likely to be used by fish which could be recovered by restoration or management and includes off-channel habitat. (See WAC 222-16-010.

(34) *Flood* or *Flooding* is a general and temporary condition of partial or complete inundation of normally dry land areas from the overflow of inland waters and/or the unusual and rapid accumulation of runoff of surface waters from any source.

(35) *Flood Insurance Map* is the official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated the areas of special flood hazards and include the risk premium zones applicable to the community. Also known as "flood insurance rate map" or "FIRM."

(36) *Flood Insurance Study* is the official report provided by the Federal Insurance Administration that includes flood profiles, the Flood Boundary-Floodway Map, and the water surface elevation of the base flood.

(37) *Floodplain* is the total land area adjoining a river, stream, watercourse or lake subject to inundation by the base flood.

(38) *Floodway* is the channel of a river or other watercourse and the adjacent land area that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the surface water elevation more than one foot. Also known as the "zero rise floodway."

(39) *Formation* means an assemblage of earth materials grouped together into a unit that is convenient for description or mapping.

(40) *Formation, Confining* means the relatively impermeable formation immediately overlying a confined aquifer.

(41) *Frequently Flooded Areas* means lands in the floodplain subject to a one-percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year and those lands that provide important flood storage, conveyance and attenuation functions, as determined by the Planning Director in accordance with WAC 365-190-110. Frequently flooded areas perform important hydrologic functions and may present a risk to persons and property. Classifications of frequently flooded areas include, at a minimum, the 100-year floodplain designations of the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the National Flood Insurance Program.

(42) *Functions and Values* means the beneficial roles served by critical areas including, but not limited to, water quality protection and enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat, food chain support, flood storage, conveyance and attenuation, ground water recharge and discharge, erosion control, wave attenuation, protection from hazards, historical and archaeological and aesthetic value protection, and recreation. These beneficial roles are not listed in order of priority.

(43) *Geologically Hazardous Areas* means areas include areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events. They pose a threat to the health and safety of citizens when incompatible commercial, residential, or industrial development is sited in areas of significant hazard. Types of geologically hazardous areas include: erosion, landslide, seismic, mine, and volcanic hazards.

(44) *Ground Water* means water in a saturated zone or stratum beneath the surface of land or a surface water body.

(45) *Growth Management Act* means RCW 36.70A, and 36.70B, as amended.

(46) *Habitat management* means management of land to maintain species in suitable habitats within their natural geographic distribution so that subpopulations are not isolated. This does not imply maintaining all habitat or individuals of all species in all cases.

(47) *Hazard Areas* means areas designated as frequently flooded areas or geologically hazardous areas due to potential for erosion, landslide, seismic activity, extreme slopes, or other geological condition.

(48) *Hazardous Substances* means any liquid, solid, gas, or sludge, including any material, substance, product, commodity, or waste, regardless of quantity, that exhibits any of the physical, chemical or biological properties described in WAC 173-303-090 or 173-303-100.

(49) *High Intensity Land Use* means land uses which are associated with high levels of human disturbance or substantial habitat impacts including, but not limited to, commercial uses, industrial uses, and residential uses with five or more units per acre.

(50) *Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA)* means a permit issued by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife for projects that affect the bed or flow of waters of the state in accordance with Chapter 77.55 RCW and WAC 220.660.

(51) *Hydric Soil* means a soil that is saturated, flooded or ponded long enough during the growing season to develop anaerobic conditions in the upper part. The presence of hydric soil shall be determined

following the methods described in the US Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987)and the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Version 2, or as amended).

(52) *Hydrophytic Vegetation* means Macrophytic plant life growing in water or on a substrate that is at least periodically deficient in oxygen as a result of excessive water content. The presence of hydrophytic vegetation shall be determined following the methods described in the US Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987) and the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Version 2, or as amended).

(53) *Impervious Surface* means a hard surface area that either prevents or retards the entry of water into the soil mantle as under natural conditions prior to development or that causes water to run off the surface in greater quantities or at an increased rate of flow from the flow present under natural conditions prior to development. Common impervious surfaces include, but are not limited to, roof tops, walkways, patios, driveways, parking lots or storage areas, concrete or asphalt paving, gravel roads, packed earthen materials, and oiled macadam or other surfaces which similarly impede the natural infiltration of stormwater.

(54) *In-Kind Compensation* means replacement of the same species, habitat type, and function impacted. If the impacted habitat is disturbed, it means replacement with the natural habitat that would occur. It does not mean replacement "in-category." (55) *Isolated Wetlands* means those wetlands that are outside of and not contiguous to any 100-year floodplain of a lake, river, or stream, and have no contiguous hydric soil or hydrophytic vegetation between the wetland and any surface water.

(56) *Infiltration* means the downward entry of water into the immediate surface of soil.

(57) *Injection well(s)* means:

(a) Class I - A well used to inject industrial, commercial, or municipal waste fluids beneath the lowermost formation containing, within one-quarter mile of the well bore, an underground source of drinking water.

(b) Class II - A well used to inject fluids:

(i) Brought to the surface in connection with conventional oil or natural gas exploration or production and may be commingled with wastewaters from gas plants that are an integral part of production operations, unless those waters are classified as dangerous wastes at the time of injection;

(ii) For enhanced recovery of oil or natural gas; or

(iii) For storage of hydrocarbons that are liquid at standard temperature and pressure.

(c) Class III - A well used for extraction of minerals, including, but not limited to, the injection of fluids for:

(i) In-situ production of uranium or other metals that have not been conventionally mined;

(ii) Mining of sulfur by Frasch process; or

(iii) Solution mining of salts or potash.

(d) Class IV - A well used to inject dangerous or radioactive waste fluids.

(e) Class V - All injection wells not included in Classes I, II, III, or IV.

(58) *Intentionally created surface water systems* means surface water systems created through purposeful human action, such as irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, farm ponds, detention/retention facilities, and landscape/ornamental amenities. Purposeful creation in an upland area must be demonstrated through documentation, photographs, statements and/or other evidence. Intentionally created surface water systems do not qualify as regulated wetlands in Washington State, as stated in WAC 36.70A.030(48), except those systems intentionally created from nonwetland areas to mitigate conversion of wetlands.

(59) *Joint Aquatic Resource Permits Application (JARPA)* means a single application form that may be used to apply for hydraulic project approvals, shoreline management permits, approvals of exceedance of water quality standards, water quality certifications, coast guard bridge permits, Department of Natural Resources use authorization, and Army Corps of Engineers permits.

(60) *Lake* means a naturally existing or artificially created body of standing water, including reservoirs, which exists on a year-round basis and occurs in a depression of land or expanded part of a stream. A lake must be greater than one acre in size, greater than 6.6 feet in depth at the deepest point, and have less than 30 percent aerial coverage by trees, shrubs, or persistent emergent vegetation. A lake is bounded by the ordinary high water mark or the extension of the elevation of the lake's ordinary high water mark with the stream where the stream enters the lake.

(61) *Land Use, High Intensity.* See "High Intensity Land Use."

(62) *Land Use, Low Intensity.* See "Low Intensity Land Use."

(63) *Land Use, Moderate Intensity.* See "Moderate intensity land use."

(64) *Landslide Hazard Areas* consistent with WAC 365-190-120(6), are areas at risk of mass movement due to a combination of geologic, topographic, and hydrologic factors.

(65) *Low Intensity Land Use* means land uses which are associated with low levels of human disturbance or low habitat impacts, including, but not limited to, passive recreation uses, open space uses, and residential uses with four or fewer units per acre.

(67) *Minerals* mean materials including gravel, sand, and valuable metallic substances. RCW 36.70A.030(29); WAC 365-190-030(124).

(68) *Mitigation* means avoiding, minimizing or compensating for adverse critical areas impacts. Mitigation, in the following order of preference, is:

(a) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;

(b) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps, such as project redesign, relocation, or timing, to avoid or reduce impacts;

(c) Rectifying the impact to wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas by repairing, rehabilitating or restoring the affected environment to the conditions existing at the time of the initiation of the project;

(d) Minimizing or eliminating the hazard by restoring or stabilizing the hazard area through engineered or other methods;

(e) Reducing or eliminating the impact or hazard over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action;

(f) Compensating for the impact to wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, and habitat or critical areas by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; and

(g) Monitoring the hazard or other required mitigation and taking remedial action when necessary.

Mitigation for individual actions may include a combination of the above measures.

(69) *Moderate Intensity Land Use* means land uses which are associated with moderate levels of human disturbance or substantial habitat impacts including, but not limited to, low density residential (no more than one home per five acres), active recreation, and moderate agricultural land uses.

(70) *Monitoring* means evaluating the impacts of development proposals on the biological, hydrological, and geological elements of such systems and assessing the performance of required mitigation measures throughout the collection and analysis of data by various methods for the purpose of understanding and documenting changes in natural ecosystems and features, and includes gathering baseline data.

(71) *Native Vegetation* means plant species that are indigenous to the area in question. Plants that are not listed in Chapter 16-750 WAC.

(72) *Native Growth Habitat Area* means an area where native vegetation is preserved for the purpose of preventing harm to property and the environment, including, but not limited to, controlling surface water runoff and erosion, maintaining slope stability, buffering and protecting plants and animal habitat;

(73) *Natural Waters* means waters, excluding water conveyance systems, that are artificially constructed and actively maintained for irrigation, or any waters of the state. See WAC 222-16-030(1.

(74) *Nonconformity* means a legally established existing use or legally constructed structure that is not in compliance with current regulations.

Noxious weed is the traditional, legal term for any invasive, non-native plant that threatens agricultural crops, local ecosystems or fish and wildlife habitat. Noxious weeds include non-native grasses, flowering plants, shrubs and trees, and aquatic plants that invade wetlands, rivers, lakes and shorelines. Because of their aggressive growth and lack of natural enemies, these species can be highly destructive, competitive or difficult to control. Noxious weeds are listed on the state noxious weed list.(75) *Off-Site Mitigation* means to replace critical areas away from the site on which a critical area has been impacted. For off-site mitigation to be acceptable, it must be demonstrated that greater habitat, water quality and hydrologic functions can be achieved off-site.

(76) *On-Site Mitigation* means on or adjacent to the project impact site or in the same stream reach, based on resource needs. It is not to be limited to property ownership or city or county boundaries that do not limit the needs and uses of the resources.

(77) *Ordinary High Watermark (OHWM)* consistent with WAC 173-22-030(5) and RCW 90.58.030, means that mark which is found by examining the bed and banks and ascertaining where the presence and action of waters are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, that the soil has a character distinct from that of the abutting upland in respect to vegetation as that condition exists on June 1, 1971, as it may naturally change thereafter, or as it may change thereafter in accordance with permits issued by a local government or the department.

(78) *Permeability* means the capacity of an aquifer or confining bed to transmit water. It is a property of the aquifer or confining bed and is independent of the force causing movement.

(79) *Planning Director* is the city official for of the City of Kennewick planning department or other responsible official or other city staff granted the authority to act on behalf of the director.

(80) *Pond* naturally occurring ponds under 20 acres and their submerged aquatic beds that provide fish or wildlife habitat. Naturally occurring ponds do not include ponds deliberately designed and created from dry sites, such as canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farmponds, temporary construction ponds (of less than three years duration) and landscape amenities. However,

naturally occurring ponds may include those artificial ponds intentionally created from dry areas in order to mitigate conversion of ponds, if permitted by a regulatory authority, per WAC 365-190-130.

(81) *Potable Water* means water that is safe and palatable for human use.

(82) *Practical Alternative* means an alternative that is available and capable of being carried out after taking into consideration, cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes, and having fewer impacts to critical areas.

(83) *Preservation* means actions taken to ensure the permanent protection of existing, ecologically important critical areas and/or buffers that the city has deemed worthy of long-term protection.

(84) *Priority Habitat* means habitat type or elements with unique or significant value to one or more species as classified by the Department of Fish and Wildlife. A priority habitat may consist of a unique vegetation type or dominant plant species, a described successional stage, or a specific structural element (WAC 173-26-020(30)).

(85) *Priority species* means species requiring protective measures and/or management guidelines to ensure their persistence at genetically viable population levels. Priority species are those that meet any of the criteria listed in WAC 173-26-020(31). Current information on priority habitats and species provided by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife priority habitats and species program, including lists of habitats (2008, updated 2023).

(86) *Project Area* means all areas within 50 feet of the area proposed to be disturbed, altered, or used by the proposed activity or the construction of any proposed structures.

(87) *Qualified Professional* means a person with experience and training in the pertinent scientific discipline, and who is a qualified scientific expert with expertise appropriate for the relevant critical area subject qualified professional must have obtained a B.S. or B.A. or equivalent degree in biology, engineering, environmental studies, fisheries, geomorphology or related field, and two years of related work experience.

(a) A qualified professional for habitats or wetlands must have a degree in biology and professional experience related to the subject species.

(b) A qualified professional for a geological hazard must be a professional geologist (preferred) or engineer, licensed in the state of Washington.

(c) A qualified professional for critical aquifer recharge areas means a hydrogeologist, geologist, engineer, or other scientist with experience in preparing hydrogeologic assessments.

(88) *Recharge* is the process involved in the absorption and addition of water to ground water.

(89) *Re-establishment* means the manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of returning natural/historic functions and environmental processes to a former wetland. Re-establishment results in rebuilding a former wetland and results in a gain in wetland area and functions. A type of restoration.

(90) *Reclaimed Water* means municipal wastewater effluent that has been adequately and reliability treated so that it is suitable for beneficial use. Following treatment it is no longer considered wastewater (treatment levels and water quality requirements are given in the water reclamation and reuse standards adopted by the state Departments of Ecology and Health).

(91) *Regulatory Flood* means a level of flooding that a regulatory agency's design regulations apply to.

(92) *Rehabilitation* means the manipulation of the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of a site with the goal of repairing natural or historic functions and processes of a degraded wetland, stream or

other fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. Activities could involve breaching a dike to reconnect wetlands to a floodplain, restoring tidal influence to a wetland, or breaking drain tiles and plugging drainage ditches. Rehabilitation results in a gain in critical area function(s) but does not result in a gain in critical area acres. Rehabilitation is a type of restoration.

(93) *Repair or Maintenance* is an activity that restores the character, scope, size, and design of a serviceable area, structure, or land use to its previously authorized and undamaged condition. Activities that change the character, size, or scope of a project beyond the original design and drain, dredge, fill, flood, or otherwise alter critical areas are not included in this definition.

(92) *Restoration* means measures taken to restore an altered or damaged natural feature including:

(a) Active steps taken to restore damaged wetlands, streams, protected habitat, or their buffers to the functioning condition that existed prior to an unauthorized alteration; and

(b) Actions performed to reestablish structural and functional characteristics of the critical area that have been lost by alteration, past management activities, or catastrophic events.

(c) Restoration can include restoration of wetland functions and values on a site where wetlands previously existed, but are no longer present due to lack of water or hydric soils.

(d) Includes rehabilitation and re-establishment.

(94) *Riparian Habitat* is any area adjacent to surface water which possesses elements of both aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems that mutually influence each other. The width of these areas extends from the OHW to that portion of the terrestrial landscape that directly influences the aquatic ecosystem by providing shade, fine or large woody material, nutrients, organic and inorganic debris, terrestrial insects, or habitat for riparian-associated wildlife. It includes the entire extent of the floodplain and the extent of vegetation adapted to wet conditions as well as adjacent upland plant communities that directly influence aquatic ecosystem. Riparian habitat areas include those riparian areas severely altered or damaged due to human development activities.

(95) *Scientific Process* is a valid scientific process that produces reliable information useful in understanding the consequences of a decision. The characteristics of a valid scientific process are as follows:

(a) Peer review. The information has been critically reviewed by other qualified scientific experts in that scientific discipline.

(b) Methods. The methods that were used are standardized in the pertinent scientific discipline or the methods have been appropriately peer-reviewed to assure their reliability and validity.

(c) Logical conclusions and reasonable inferences. The conclusions presented are based on reasonable assumptions supported by other studies and are logically and reasonably derived from the assumptions and supported by the data presented.

(d) Quantitative analysis. The data have been analyzed using appropriate statistical or quantitative methods.

(e) Context. The assumptions, analytical techniques, data, and conclusions are appropriately framed with respect to the prevailing body of pertinent scientific knowledge.

(f) References. The assumptions, techniques, and conclusions are well referenced with citations to pertinent existing information.

(96) *Section 404 Permit* is a permit issued by the Corps of Engineers for the placement of dredge or fill material or clearing in waters of the U.S., including wetlands, in accordance with 33 USC § 1344.

(97) *Seeps* is a spot where water oozes from the earth, often forming the source of a small stream.

(98) *Seismic Hazard Areas* are areas that are subject to severe risk of damage as a result of earthquake-induced ground shaking, slope failure, settlement, or soil liquefaction.

(99) *Serviceable* means presently usable.

(100) *SEPA* is the Washington State Environmental Policy Act, Chapter 43.21C RCW.

(101) *Shorelines* means all of the water areas of the state as defined in RCW 90.58.030, including reservoirs and their associated shorelands, together with the lands underlying them except:

(a) Shorelines of statewide significance;

(b) Shorelines on segments of streams upstream of a point where the mean annual flow is 20 cubic feet per second (20 cfps) or less and the wetlands associated with such upstream segments; and

(c) Shorelines on lakes less than 20 acres in size and wetlands associated with such small lakes.

(102) *Shorelines of the State* is the total of all "shorelines," as defined in RCW 90.58.030(2)(g), and "shorelines of statewide significance" within the state, as defined in RCW 90.58.030(2)(f).

(103) *Shorelines of Statewide Significance* are those areas defined in RCW 90.58.030(2)(f).

(104) *Shorelands* or *Shoreland Areas* are those lands extending landward for 20 feet in all directions as measured on a horizontal plane from the ordinary high water mark; floodways and contiguous floodplain areas landward 200 feet from such floodways; and all wetlands and river deltas associated with the streams, lakes and tidal waters which are subject to the provisions of Chapter 90.58 RCW.

(105) *Shrub-Steppe* are habitats that are a non-forested vegetation type consisting of one or more layers of perennial bunchgrasses and a conspicuous but discontinuous layer of shrubs.

(106) *Significant Portion of its Range* means that portion of a species range likely to be essential to the long-term survival of the population in Washington.

(107) *Soil Survey* means the most recent soil survey for the local area or county by the National Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture.

(108) *Species* means any group of animals classified as a species or subspecies as commonly accepted by the scientific community.

(109) *Species, Endangered* means any fish or wildlife species that is threatened with extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range and is listed by the state or federal government as an endangered species.

(110) *Species of Local Importance* means those species of local concern due to their population status or their sensitivity to habitat manipulation, or that are game species.

(111) *Species, Priority* means any fish or wildlife species requiring protective measures and/or management guidelines to ensure their persistence as genetically viable population levels as classified by the Department of Fish and Wildlife, including endangered, threatened, sensitive, candidate and monitor species, and those of recreational, commercial, or tribal importance.

(112) *Species, Threatened* means any fish or wildlife species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout a significant portion of its range without cooperative management or removal of threats, and is listed by the state or federal government as a threatened species.

(113) *Stream*, as defined in WAC 173-22-030(8) means a naturally occurring body of periodic or continuously flowing water where the mean annual flow is greater than 20 cubic feet per second and the water is contained within a channel. A channel is an open conduit either naturally or artificially created. This definition does not include artificially created irrigation, return flow, or stock watering channels. Streams are classified as Type S (Shoreline of the State), Type F (fish-bearing streams), and Type N (non-fish-bearing streams) by the "Wate Typing System" criteria listed in WAC 222-16-030

(114) *Sub-Drainage Basin* or *Subbasin* means the drainage area of the highest order stream containing the subject property impact area. Stream order is the term used to define the position of a stream in the hierarchy of tributaries in the watershed. The smallest streams are the highest order (first order) tributaries. These are the upper watershed streams and have no tributaries of their own. When two first order streams meet, they form a second order stream, and when two second order streams meet they become a third order stream, and so on.

(115) *Substantial Damage* means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

(116) *Substantial Improvement* means any repair, reconstruction, or improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure either: before the improvement or repair is started; or if the structure has been damaged and is being restored, before the damage occurred.

(117) *Take* means to harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.

(118) *Unavoidable* means adverse impacts that remain after all appropriate and practicable avoidance and minimization have been achieved. See RCW 90.84.010(9).

(119) *Vulnerability* means the combined effect of susceptibility to contamination and the presence of potential contaminants.

(X) *Watershed approach* means an analytical process for making compensatory mitigation decisions that support the sustainability or improvement of wetlands in a watershed. It involves consideration of watershed needs, and how locations and types of compensatory mitigation projects address those needs. A landscape perspective is used to identify the types and locations of compensatory mitigation projects that will benefit the watershed and offset losses of wetland functions and services caused by authorized activities. The watershed approach may involve consideration of landscape scale, historic and potential wetland conditions, past and projected wetland impacts in the watershed, and terrestrial connections between wetlands when determining compensatory mitigation requirements.

(120) *Water Dependent* means a use or portion of a use that cannot exist in a location that is not adjacent to the water, but is dependent on the water by reason of the intrinsic nature of its operations. A use that can be carried out only on, in, or adjacent to water. Examples of water dependent uses include ship cargo terminal loading areas; fishing; ferry and passenger terminals; barge loading, ship building, and dry docking facilities; marinas, moorage, and boat launching facilities; aquaculture; float plane operations; surface water intake; and sanitary sewer and storm drain outfalls.

(121) *Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA)* means one of 62 watersheds in the state of Washington, each composed of the drainage areas of a stream or streams, as established in Chapter 173-500 WAC as it existed on January 1, 1997.

(X) *Waters of the State* consistent with RCW 90.48.020, include lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington.

(122) *Water Table* means that surface in an unconfined aquifer at which the pressure is atmospheric. It is defined by the levels at which water stands in wells that penetrate the aquifer just far enough to hold standing water.

(123) *Water Table Aquifer.* See "Aquifer, unconfined."

(125) *Well* is a bored, drilled or driven shaft, or a dug hole whose depth is greater than the largest surface dimension for the purpose of withdrawing or injecting water or other liquids.

(126) *Wellhead Protection Area (WHPA)* is the portion of a zone of contribution for a well, wellfield or spring, as defined using criteria established by the state Department of Ecology.

(127) *Wetlands* consistent with RCW 36.70A.030(48), are those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from non-wetland sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street, or highway. Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from non-wetland areas to mitigate the conversion of wetlands.

(X) *Wetland buffer* means a designated area contiguous or adjacent to a wetland that is required for the continued maintenance, function, and structural stability of the wetland.

(128) *Wetland Category* are wetlands that are categorized into Category I, II, III or IV based upon the categorization procedures in the Washington State Wetland Rating System for Eastern Washington: 2014 Update (Ecology Publication No. 14-06-030) (Hruby 2014), or as updated by Ecology.

(129) *Wetland Classes, Classes of Wetlands, or Wetland Types* are the descriptive classes of the wetlands taxonomic classification system of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Cowardin, et al. 1979).

(X) *Wetland creation* means the producing or forming of a wetland or surface water system through artificial means from a dry upland site.

(X) *Wetland delineation* is the method used to establish the existence (location) and physical limits (size) of a wetland for purposes of federal, state, and local regulations.

(131) *Wetlands Mitigation Bank* means a site where wetlands are restored, created, enhanced, or in exceptional circumstances, preserved expressly for the purpose of providing compensatory mitigation in advance of authorized impacts to similar resources. See RCW 90.84.010(5).

(X) *Wetlands with special characteristics for Eastern Washington* means alkali wetlands, vernal pools, pothole wetlands (glacial depressions) and Wetlands of High Conservation Value. Detailed information about these individual wetland types is found in the Washington State Wetland Rating System for Eastern Washington: 2014 Update (Hruby 2014, or as updated by Ecology).

(132) *Zone of Contribution* means the area surrounding a well or spring that encompasses all areas or features that supply ground water recharge to the well or spring.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.020: Purpose.

(1) The purpose of this Title is to designate and classify ecologically sensitive and hazardous areas and to protect these areas and their functions and values, while also allowing for reasonable use of private property.

(2) This Title is to implement the goals, policies, guidelines, and requirements of the City of Kennewick (City) Comprehensive Plan and the Growth Management Act.

(3) The City finds that critical areas provide a variety of valuable and beneficial biological and physical functions that benefit the City and its residents, and/or may pose a threat to human safety or to public and private property. The beneficial functions and values provided by critical areas include, but are not limited to, water quality protection and enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat, support of trophic relationships, flood storage, conveyance and attenuation, ground water recharge and discharge, erosion control, wave attenuation, protection from hazards, historical and archaeological and aesthetic value protection, and recreation. These beneficial functions are not listed in order of priority.

(4) Goals. By identifying development impacts to critical areas, this Title seeks to:

(a) Protect members of the public and public resources and facilities from injury, loss of life, or property damage due to landslides and steep slope failures, erosion, seismic events, volcanic eruptions, or flooding;

(b) Protect unique, fragile, and valuable elements of the environment, including ground and surface waters, wetlands, and fish and wildlife and their habitats;

(c) Direct activities not dependent on critical area resources to less ecologically sensitive sites and

(d) Mitigate unavoidable impacts to critical areas by regulating alterations in and adjacent to critical areas; and

(e) Prevent cumulative adverse environmental impacts to water quality, wetlands, and fish and wildlife habitat, and the overall net loss of wetlands, frequently flooded areas and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas.

(5) This Title is intended to protect critical areas in accordance with the Growth Management Act and through the application of best available science, as determined according to WAC 365-195-900 through 365-195-925, and in consultation with state and federal agencies and other qualified professionals.

(6) This Title is to be administered with flexibility and attention to site-specific characteristics. It is not the intent of this Title to make a parcel of property unusable by denying its owner reasonable economic use of the property.

(7) The City's enactment or enforcement of this Title shall not be construed for the benefit of any individual person or group of persons other than the general public.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.030: Authority and Applicability.

(1) As provided herein, the Planning Director is given the authority to interpret and apply and the responsibility to enforce this Title to accomplish the stated purpose.

(2) The City shall not approve any permit or otherwise issue any authorization to alter the condition of any land, water, or vegetation, or to construct or alter any structure or improvement in, over, or on a critical area or associated buffer, without first assuring compliance with the requirements of this Title.

(3) The provisions of this Title shall apply to all lands, all land uses and development activity, and all structures and facilities in the City, whether or not a permit or authorization is required, and shall apply to every person, firm, partnership, corporation, group, governmental agency, or other entity that owns, leases, or administers land within the City. No person, company, agency, or applicant shall alter a critical area or buffer except as consistent with the purposes and requirements of this Title.

(4) Approval or denial of a permit or development proposal pursuant to the provisions of this Title does not discharge the obligation of the applicant to comply with the provisions of this Title.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.040: Relationship to Other Regulations.

(1) These critical area regulations shall apply as an overlay to the City's subdivision and zoning code (Title 17 and 18) and other applicable regulations adopted by the City, including, but not limited to permitting processes, construction standards, building code, shorelines management program, and environmental review (SEPA) procedures. In the case of conflict among regulations, whichever provision or regulation provides the greater protection to the critical area involved shall apply

(a) Kennewick Code Title 4 - Administrative Procedures:

(i) Chapter 4.08 State Environmental Policy Act implements the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and establishes procedures for public review of impacts of public and private development actions.

(ii) Chapter 4.12 Permit Process establishes a mechanism to enable compliance, conformity and consistency of proposed projects with respect to adopted comprehensive plans and development regulations.

(b) Kennewick Code Title 5.56 - Public Works Construction Standards

(c) Kennewick Code Title 15 - Buildings and Construction. This title provides uniform development and construction standards, primarily through adoption of the Uniform Building Codes by reference.

(d) Kennewick Code Title 18 - Zoning Code:

(i) Chapter 18.42, Land Use Permits, sets forth procedures and guidelines for review and approval of land use permits, including conditional uses (Chapter 18.42.100) and site plans (Chapter 18.42.110). Contents of the site plans include, but are not limited to, a site plan showing lot lines and dimensions, location of existing and proposed building or improvements, parking lot drainage, landscaping and fencing.

(ii) Chapter 18.45, Planned Development Permit, provides a set of flexible standards for development of large parcels of property, provided that the deviation better accommodates the physical conditions of the property.

(e) Kennewick Code Title 18.60 - Shoreline Management. Sets forth policy and requirements for protecting and regulating activities within 200 feet of the Ordinary High Water Mark for the City of Kennewick shorelines. The following exceptions to the applicability of this Title in Shoreline Jurisdiction shall apply:

(i) If provisions of this Title and other parts of the master program conflict, the provisions most protective of the ecological resource shall apply, as determined by the City.

(ii) Provisions of this Title that are not consistent with the Shoreline Management Act Chapter, 90.85 RCW, and supporting Washington Administrative Code chapters shall not apply in Shoreline jurisdiction.

(iii) The provisions of this Title do not extend Shoreline Jurisdiction beyond the limits specified in this SMP.

(iv) The "reasonable use determination" of this Title shall not apply within Shoreline Jurisdiction. Specifically, KMC 18.58.120 does not apply.

(f) State of Washington Department of Ecology - Inspection Procedures for Underground Storage Tanks. This manual sets forth procedures for inspection, installation, monitoring, closure, and site remediation methods for underground storage tanks.

(2) These critical area regulations shall apply concurrently with review conducted under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), as locally adopted.

(3) Compliance with the provisions of this Title does not constitute compliance with other federal, state, and local regulations and permit requirements that may be required (for example, Shoreline Substantial Development Permits, Hydraulic Project Approvals permits, Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permits, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permits). The applicant is responsible for complying with these requirements, apart from the process established in this Title. Where applicable, the Planning Director will encourage use of information such as permit applications to other agencies or special studies prepared in response to other regulatory requirements to support required documentation submitted for critical areas review. The City's Shoreline Management Program (KMC 18.60) regulates all activities within the 200 feet of the Columbia River.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.050: Administrative Procedures.

The administrative procedures followed during the critical area review process shall conform to the standards and requirements of the City's Administrative Procedures Code (Title 4) and Zoning Code (Title 18). This shall include, but not be limited to, timing and appeals associated with applications covered by this Title.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.060: Severability.

If any clause, sentence, paragraph, section, or part of this Title or the application thereof to any person or circumstances shall be judged by any court of competent jurisdiction to be invalid, such order or judgment shall be confined in its operation to the controversy in which it was rendered. The decision shall not affect or invalidate the remainder of any part thereof and to this end the provisions of each clause, sentence, paragraph, section, or part of this law are hereby declared to be severable.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.070: Interpretation.

In the interpretation and application of this ordinance, the provisions of this Title shall be considered to be the minimum requirements necessary, shall be liberally construed to serve the purpose of this ordinance, and shall be deemed to neither limit nor repeal any other provisions under state statute.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.080: Jurisdiction—Critical Areas.

(1) The City shall regulate all uses within 200 feet (based on the maximum buffer size recommended in this Title. See Chapter 18.59 for additional information) of, or that are likely to affect, one or more critical areas, consistent with the best available science and the provisions herein.

(2) Critical areas regulated by this Title include:

  (a) Wetlands as designated in Chapter 18.59;

  (b) Critical aquifer recharge areas as designated in Chapter 18.60;

  (c) Frequently flooded areas as designated in Chapter 18.61;

  (d) Geologically hazardous areas as designated in Chapter 18.62; and

  (e) Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas as designated in Chapter 18.63.

(3) All areas within the City meeting the definition of one or more critical area, regardless of any formal identification, are hereby designated critical areas and are subject to the provisions of this Title.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.090: General Provisions for Mitigation.

Any mitigation action taken pursuant to this Title shall result in equivalent or greater functions and values of the critical areas associated with the proposed action, as determined by the best available science. All actions and developments shall be designed and constructed in accordance with Mitigation Sequencing requirements in Section 18.58.160 to avoid, minimize and restore all adverse impacts. Applicants must first demonstrate an inability to avoid or reduce impacts, before restoration and compensation of impacts will be allowed. No activity or use shall be allowed that results in a net loss of the functions or values of critical areas.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.100: Best Available Science and Mapping.

(1) Best Available Science to be Used Must be Consistent with Criteria. The best available science is that scientific information applicable to the critical area prepared by local, state or federal natural resource agencies, a qualified scientific professional or team of qualified scientific professionals that is consistent with criteria established in WAC 365-195-900 through WAC 365-195-925. In the context of critical areas protection, best available science must also be based upon a valid scientific process as defined in WAC 365-105-905.

(2) Kennewick's critical area maps provide an indication of where potential critical areas are located within the City. The actual presence or location of a critical area, along with the applicable protection and buffer areas, are determined through the procedures set forth in this Title. Not all critical areas or their

buffers have been discovered, mapped, or delineated. Indicators of potential critical areas may be discovered through other means such as field observations. In the event of a conflict between a critical area location shown on the City GIS data, or other publicly available database and that of an on-site determination by a qualified professional, the on-site determination will apply.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.110: Allowed Activities.

(1) Process. The Planning Director shall allow activities that are verified to comply with this section. The Planning Director shall provide a copy of this section, including any future updates, and the maps of critical area designations to city departments and other potential affected agencies as determined by the Planning Director. City Departments and other local agencies when conducting allowed activities (except for 18.58.110(3)(c) and (d)), will notify the Planning Director in writing in advance of the planned activity, when it will occur, and steps that will be taken to comply with the provisions of this Title. Emergency activities or any other activities that occur without advance notice will be followed up with a report to the Planning Director describing how provisions of this Title are being met. Documentation of allowed activities shall be maintained on file at the Planning Department.

(2) Allowed Activities shall Avoid Impacts to Critical Areas. All allowed activities shall use mitigation sequencing to avoid potential impacts to critical areas, using best management practices that result in the least amount of impact to the critical areas where practicable. Designation as an allowed activity does not give permission to degrade a critical area or ignore risk from natural hazards. Best management practices shall be used for tree and vegetation protection, construction management, erosion and sedimentation control, water quality protection, fish and wildlife protection, and regulation of chemical applications. The City shall monitor the use of best management practices to ensure that the activity does not result in degradation to the critical area. Any incidental damage to, or alteration of, a critical area that is not a necessary outcome of the exempted activity shall be restored, rehabilitated, or replaced at the responsible party's expense within one growing season.

(3) Allowed Activities. The following developments, activities, and associated uses are allowed and shall be exempt from the provisions of this Title except as noted in provisions below, provided that they are otherwise consistent with the provisions of other local, state, and federal laws and requirements:

(a) Emergencies. Emergency activities are those activities necessary to prevent an immediate threat to public health, safety, or welfare, or that pose an immediate risk of damage to private property and that require remedial or preventative action in a timeframe too short to allow for compliance with the requirements of this Title.

Emergency actions that create an impact to a critical area or its buffer shall use "reasonable methods" to address the emergency; in addition, they must have the least possible impact to the critical area or its buffer. The person or agency undertaking such action shall notify the City within one working day following commencement of the emergency activity. Within 30 days, the Planning Director shall determine if the action taken was within the scope of the emergency actions allowed in this Subsection. If the Planning Director determines that the action taken, or any part of the action taken, was beyond the scope of an allowed emergency action, then enforcement provisions of Section 18.58.190 shall apply.

After the emergency, the person or agency undertaking the action shall fully restore and/or mitigate any impacts to the critical area and buffers resulting from the emergency action in accordance with the critical area report or other applicable information, and mitigation plan. The

person or agency undertaking the action shall apply for review, and the alteration, critical area report or other applicable information, and mitigation plan shall be reviewed by the City in accordance with the review procedures contained herein. Restoration and/or mitigation activities must be initiated within one year of the date of the emergency, and completed in a timely manner;

(b) Operation, Maintenance or Repair. Operation, maintenance or repair of existing structures, infrastructure improvements, utilities, public or private roads, dikes, levees or drainage systems, that do not require a permit or are covered under a programmatic permit from an authorized agency, if the activity does not further alter or increase the impact to, or encroach further within, the critical area or buffer and there is no increased risk to life or property as a result of the proposed operation, maintenance, or repair;

(c) Passive Outdoor Activities. Recreation, education, and scientific research activities that do not degrade the critical area, including fishing, hiking, and bird watching.

(d) Permit Requests Subsequent to Previous Critical Area Review. Development permits and approvals that involve both discretionary land use approvals (such as subdivisions, rezones, or conditional use permits), and construction approvals (such as building permits) if all of the following conditions have been met:

(i) The provisions of this Title have been previously addressed as part of another approval;

(ii) There have been no material changes in the potential impact to the critical area or buffer since the prior review;

(iii) There is no new information available that is applicable to any critical area review of the site or particular critical area;

(iv) The permit or approval has not expired or, if no expiration date, no more than five years has elapsed since the issuance of that permit or approval; and

(v) Compliance with any standards or conditions placed upon the prior permit or approval has been achieved or secured.

(e) Modification to Existing Structures. Structural modification of, addition to, or replacement of an existing legally constructed structure that does not further alter or increase the impact to the critical area or buffer and there is no increased risk to life or property as a result of the proposed modification or replacement, provided that restoration of structures substantially damaged by fire, flood, or act of nature must be initiated within six months of the date of such damage, as evidenced by the issuance of a valid building permit, and diligently pursued to completion;

(f) Activities within the Improved Right-Of-Way. Replacement, modification, installation, or construction of utility facilities, lines, pipes, mains, equipment, or appurtenances, not including substations, when such facilities are located within the improved portion of the public right-of-way or a City authorized private roadway except those activities that alter a wetland or watercourse, such as culverts or bridges, or results in the transport of sediment or increased stormwater;

(g) Public and Private Pedestrian Trails. Public and private pedestrian trails not in wetlands, or fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, where the trail surface meets all other provisions of this chapter as well as requirements for stormwater.

(h) Select Vegetation Removal Activities. Select vegetation removal activities are allowed upon review and approval of the Director. Accepted vegetation removal activities include: a) removing and controlling invasive plants or noxious weeds; b) removal of trees that are hazardous, posing a threat to public safety, or posing an imminent risk of damage to private property and measures

to control a fire or halt the spread of disease or damaging insects consistent with the State Forest Practices Act, Chapter 76.09 RCW. Unless otherwise provided or as a necessary part of an approved alteration, removal of any vegetation or woody debris from a fish and wildlife habitat conservation area or wetland shall be prohibited;

(i) Chemical Applications. The application of herbicides, pesticides, organic or mineral-derived fertilizers, or other hazardous substances, if necessary, provided that their use shall be conducted in accordance with applicable local, state and federal law. (More information on commercial and residential use of chemicals can be found in Department of Ecology " Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Guidance", Publication #05-10-28, or as updated; and from the state Department of Agriculture, http://agr.wa.gov/.);

(j) Minor Site Investigative Work. Work necessary for land use submittals, such as topographic surveys, soil logs, percolation tests, and other related activities, where such activities do not require construction of new roads or significant amounts of excavation. In every case, impacts to the critical area shall be minimized and disturbed areas shall be immediately restored; and

(k) Navigational Aids and Boundary Markers. Construction or modification of navigational aids and boundary markers.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.120: Exception—Reasonable Use.

(1) If the application of this Title would deny all reasonable use of the subject property, the property owner may apply for an exception pursuant to this Section.

(2) Exception Request and Review Process. An application for a reasonable use exception shall be made to the City and shall include a critical area report, including mitigation plan, if necessary; and any other related project documents, such as permit applications to other agencies, special studies, and environmental documents prepared pursuant to the State Environmental Policy Act (Chapter 43.21C RCW) (SEPA documents). The Planning Director shall determine whether an exception request shall be granted based on review of the submitted information, a site inspection, and the proposal's ability to comply with reasonable use exception criteria. The Planning Director shall approve with conditions, or deny the request based on the proposal's ability to comply with the following reasonable use exception review criteria:

(a) The application of this Title would deny all reasonable use of the property;

(b) No other reasonable use of the property has less impact on the critical area;

(c) Any alteration is the minimum necessary to allow for reasonable use of the property;

(d) The inability of the applicant to derive reasonable use of the property is not the result of actions by the applicant after the effective date of this Title; and

(e) The proposal meets the review criteria set forth in this Title.

(3) Burden of Proof. The burden of proof shall be on the applicant to bring forth evidence in support of the application and to provide sufficient information on which any decision has to be made on the application.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.130: General Review Process.

(1) The City shall begin the process discussed below and outlined in Figure 1, within 90 days after permit application:

(a) Verify the information submitted by the applicant for the applicable permit;

(b) Evaluate the project area and vicinity for critical areas;

(c) For wetland and/or fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, the City may require that boundaries be verified and mapped by a qualified professional. The scale of the boundary information shall be the same as the City maps, and such boundaries shall be submitted to the City as part of the application for the applicable permit if the project is:

(i) Within 200 feet of a wetland, or fish and wildlife critical area for which the boundaries have not been certified and depicted by the City on the online critical areas map ; and

(ii) Will not be receiving a no-impact waiver as provided in Section 18.58.130(2) below.

(d) Determine whether the proposed project is likely to impact the functions or values of critical areas; and

(e) Determine if the proposed project adequately addresses the impacts and avoids impacts to the critical area associated with the project.

(2) Critical Areas Present, but No-Impact Waiver. If the Planning Director determines that there are critical areas within or adjacent to the project area, but that the proposed activity is unlikely to degrade the functions or values of the critical area, the Planning Director may waive the requirement for a report or other applicable information. If the waiver involves a wetland, the Planning Director may require a wetland category rating be completed prior to determining whether a waiver can be granted. A waiver may be granted if there is substantial evidence that all of the following requirements will be met:

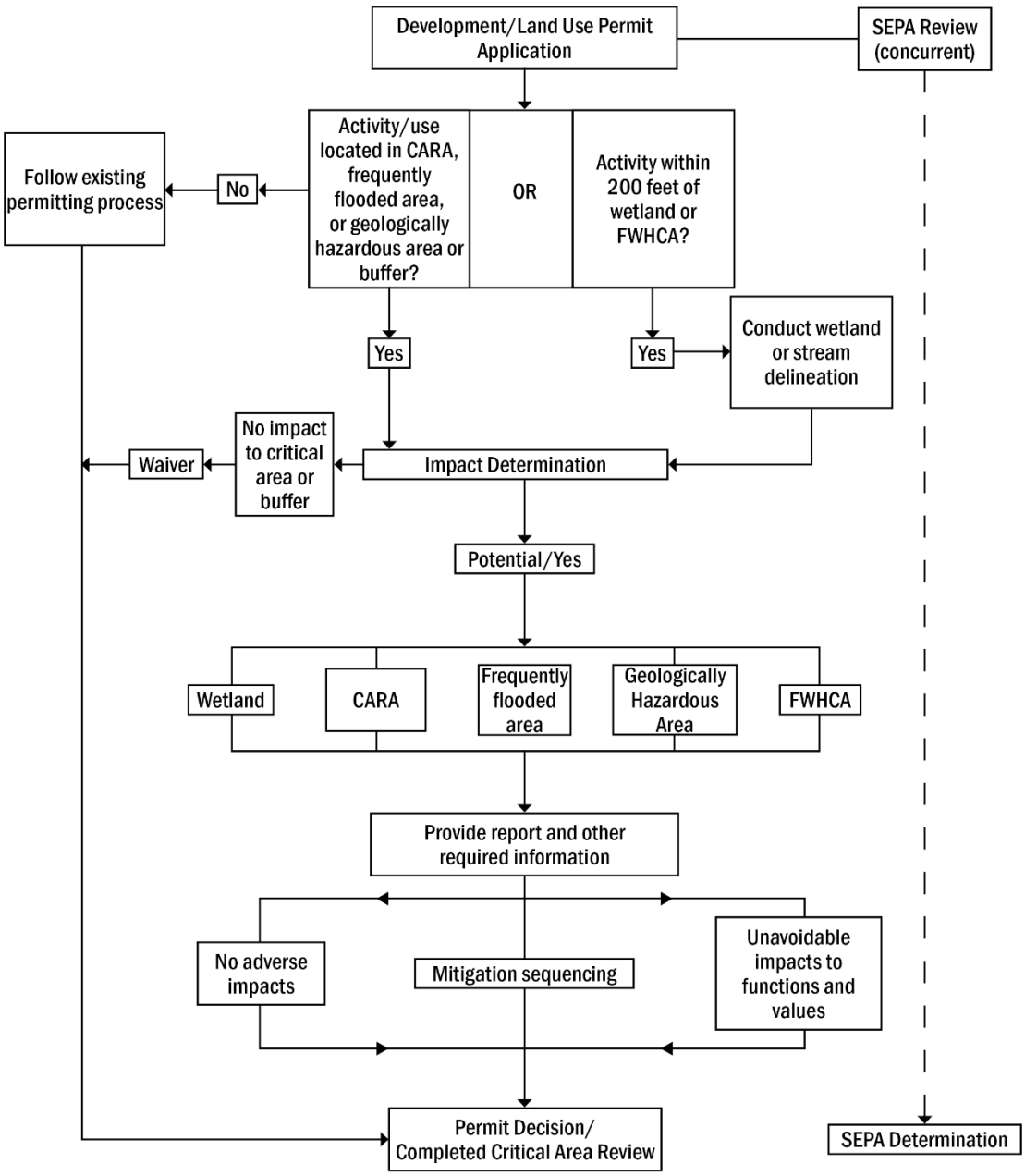
(a) There will be no alteration of the critical area or buffer;

(b) The development proposal will not impact the critical area in a manner contrary to the purpose, intent, and requirements of this Title; and

(c) The proposal is consistent with other applicable regulations and standards.

A summary of this analysis and the findings shall be included in any staff report or decision on the underlying permit.

Figure 1: City of Kennewick Critical Areas Permit Procedures and Coordination with Existing Permit Processes



NOTE: Appeal process follows route of associated permit. Appeals of administrative decisions regarding provisions of the Critical Areas code use the administrative appeal process contained within the City's Zoning Code.

(3) Critical Areas Present and Potential Impact Likely. If the Planning Director determines that the proposed project is within, adjacent to, or is likely to impact a critical area, the Planning Director shall:

(a) Notify the applicant that a critical area report, SEPA checklist, and other applicable information must be submitted prior to further review of the project, and indicate each of the critical area types that should be addressed;

(b) Require a critical area report or other applicable information from the applicant that has been prepared by a qualified professional;

(c) Review and evaluate the critical area report and other applicable information to determine whether the development proposal conforms to the purposes and performance standards of this Title;

(d) Assess potential impacts to the critical area and determine if they are necessary and unavoidable;

(e) Determine if any mitigation proposed by the applicant is sufficient to protect the functions and values of the critical area and public health, safety, and welfare concerns consistent with the goals, purposes, objectives, and requirements of this Title; and

(f) A summary of this analysis and the findings shall be included in any decision on the underlying permit(s). Critical area review findings may result in: a) no adverse impacts to critical area(s); b) list of applicable critical area(s) protection conditions for the underlying permit(s); or c) denial of permit based upon unavoidable impacts to critical area(s) functions and values.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.140: Wetland, Geologically Hazardous Areas, and Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas—General Report Requirements.

(1) Prepared by Qualified Professional. If required by Section 18.58.130, the applicant shall submit a report prepared by a qualified professional as defined herein.

(2) Incorporating Best Available Science. The report shall use scientifically valid methods and studies in the analysis of data and field reconnaissance and reference the source of science used. The report shall evaluate the proposal and all probable impacts to critical areas in accordance with the provisions of this Title.

(3) Minimum Report Contents. At a minimum, the report shall contain the following:

(a) The name and contact information of the applicant, a description of the proposal, and identification of the permit requested;

(b) A copy of the site plan for the development proposal showing:

(i) Identified critical areas, buffers, and the development proposal with dimensions;

(ii) Limits of any areas to be cleared; and

(iii) A description of the proposed stormwater management plan for the development and consideration of impacts to drainage alterations, consistent with the current edition of the City of Kennewick Construction Standards.

(c) The names and professional qualifications of the persons preparing the report and documentation of any fieldwork performed on the site;

(d) Identification and characterization of all critical areas, wetlands, water bodies, and buffers adjacent to the proposed project area;

(e) A statement specifying the accuracy of the report, and all assumptions made and relied upon;

(f) An assessment of the probable cumulative impacts to critical areas resulting from development of the site and the proposed development;

(g) An analysis of site development alternatives;

(h) A description of reasonable efforts made to apply mitigation sequencing pursuant to Section 18.58.170 to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to critical areas;

(i) Plans for adequate mitigation, as needed, to offset any impacts, in accordance with Section 18.58.160 through 18.58.190, including, but not limited to:

(i) The impacts of any proposed development within or adjacent to a critical area or buffer on the critical area; and

(ii) The impacts of any proposed alteration of a critical area or buffer on the development proposal, other properties and the environment;

(j) A discussion of the performance standards applicable to the critical area and proposed activity;

(k) Financial guarantees to ensure compliance, if applicable; and

(4) Unless otherwise provided, a report may be supplemented by or composed, in whole or in part, of any reports or studies required by other laws and regulations or previously prepared for and applicable to the development proposal site, as approved by the Planning Director.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.150: Wetland, Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation, and Geologically Hazardous Areas—Modifications to Report Requirements.

(1) Limitations to Study Area. The Planning Director may limit the required geographic area of the critical area report as appropriate if:

(a) The applicant, with assistance from the City, cannot obtain permission to access properties adjacent to the project area; or

(b) The proposed activity will affect only a limited part of the subject site.

(2) Modifications to Required Contents. The applicant may consult with the Planning Director prior to or during preparation of the report to obtain City concurrence on modifications to the required contents of the report where, in the judgment of a qualified professional, more or less information is required to adequately address the potential critical area impacts and required mitigation.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.160: Mitigation Sequencing.

Applicants shall demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been examined with the intent to avoid and minimize impacts to critical areas. When an alteration to a critical area is proposed, such alteration shall be avoided, minimized, or compensated for in the following order of preference:

(1) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation, by using appropriate technology, or by taking affirmative steps, such as project redesign, relocation, or timing, to avoid or reduce impacts;

(2) Rectifying the impact to wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, and habitat conservation areas by repairing, enhancing, or restoring the affected environment to the historical conditions, or pre-development, or the conditions existing at the time of the initiation of the project;

(3) Minimizing or eliminating the hazard by restoring or stabilizing the hazard area through approval engineered or other methods;

(4) Reducing or eliminating the impact or hazard over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action;

(5) Compensating for the impact to wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, and fish and wildlife habitat, and vegetation conservation areas by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; and

(6) Monitoring the hazard or other required mitigation for a reasonable period of time and taking remedial action when necessary.

Mitigation for individual actions may include a combination of the above measures.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.170: Mitigation Requirements.

(1) The applicant shall avoid all impacts that degrade the functions and values of a critical area or areas. Unless otherwise provided in this Title, if alteration to the critical area is unavoidable, all adverse impacts to or from critical areas and buffers resulting from a development proposal or alteration shall be mitigated in accordance with the critical area report and SEPA requirements.

(3) Mitigation shall not be implemented until (a) after City receipt of a report or other applicable information that includes a mitigation plan, and mitigation shall be in accordance with the provisions of the report or other applicable information; and (b) city approval of the underlying permit(s).

(2) Mitigation shall be (a) in-kind and on-site, when possible, and sufficient to maintain the functions and values of the critical area, and to prevent risk from a hazard posed by a critical area. If not possible due to physical constraints of the site, the burden of proof shall be on the applicant to demonstrate that mitigation cannot be provided on-site. (b) When mitigation cannot occur on-site, it shall be provided within the watershed (for wetlands and streams) on site such that the mitigation can be protected in perpetuity. This may be a property owned and controlled by the applicant, a mitigation bank approved by the city or other method approved by the Director.

(4) Mitigation monitoring shall be required for a minimum of five years. The mitigation plan shall include monitoring elements that ensure certainty of success for the project natural value and functions. If the mitigation goals are not obtained within the initial five-year period, the applicant remains responsible for restoration of the natural values and functions until the mitigation goals agreed to in the mitigation plan are achieved. Monitoring methods should include an adaptive management approach.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.180: Mitigation Plan Requirements.

When mitigation is required, the applicant shall submit to the City a mitigation plan as part of the critical area report or other applicable information. The goals and objectives will be related to the functions and values of the impacted critical area, they include:

(1) Environmental Goals and Objectives. The mitigation plan shall include a written report identifying environmental goals and objectives of the compensation proposed and including:

(a) Steps taken to avoid and minimize impacts to critical areas and demonstrate the mitigation sequencing was followed.

(b) A description of the anticipated impacts to the critical areas and the mitigating actions proposed and the purposes of the compensation measures, including the site selection criteria; identification of compensation goals; identification of resource functions; and dates for beginning and completion of site compensation construction activities; and

(c) An analysis of the likelihood of success of the compensation project.

(2) Performance Standards. The mitigation plan shall address the applicable performance standards identified in this Title.

(3) Detailed Construction Plans. The mitigation plan shall include written specifications and descriptions of the mitigation proposed, such as:

(a) The proposed construction sequence, timing, and duration;

(b) Grading and excavation details;

(c) Erosion and sediment control features;

(d) A vegetation planting plan specifying plant species, quantities, locations, size, spacing, and density; and

(e) Measures to protect and maintain plants until established.

These written specifications shall be accompanied by detailed site diagrams, scaled cross-sectional drawings, topographic maps showing slope percentage and final grade elevations, and any other drawings appropriate to show construction techniques or anticipated final outcome.

(4) Monitoring Program. The mitigation plan shall include a program for monitoring construction of the compensation project, and for assessing a completed project. A protocol shall be included outlining the schedule for site monitoring in years one, three and five after site construction, and how the monitoring data will be evaluated to determine if the performance standards are being met. A monitoring report shall be submitted as needed to document milestones, successes, problems, and contingency actions of the compensation project. At a minimum, a monitoring report shall be submitted to document mitigation plan performance in year five after site construction.

(5) Contingency Plan. The mitigation plan shall include identification of potential courses of action, and any corrective measures to be taken if monitoring or evaluation indicates project performance standards are not being met.

(6) Financial Guarantees. The mitigation plan shall include financial guarantees, if necessary, to ensure that the mitigation plan is fully implemented. Financial guarantees ensuring fulfillment of the compensation project, monitoring program, and any contingency measures shall be posted in accordance with Section 18.58.230.

(7) Other Permits. Other local, state, and federal regulatory jurisdictions may require permits for habitat mitigation projects. The applicant shall comply with all other appropriate regulatory permits, agreements, and authority, as required by each respective jurisdiction.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.190: Unauthorized Critical Area Alterations and Enforcement.

(1) When a critical area or its buffer has been altered in violation of this Title, all ongoing development work shall stop and the critical area shall be restored. The City shall have the authority to issue a stop work order to cease all ongoing development work, and order restoration, rehabilitation, replacement or where determined appropriate by the Planning Director, mitigation measures at the owner's or other responsible party's expense to compensate for violation of provisions of this Title and other applicable city codes governing the underlying permit(s). Administrative procedures including, but not limited to, review and appeal of City actions related to unauthorized critical area alterations are outlined in Section 18.58.050.

(2) Restoration/Mitigation Plan Required. All development work shall remain stopped until a restoration/mitigation plan is prepared and approved by City. Such a plan shall be prepared by a qualified professional and shall describe how the actions proposed meet the minimum requirements described in Subsection (3) and/or mitigation requirements outlined in Sections 18.58.160, 18.58.170, and 18.58.180, if mitigation is determined to be appropriate by the Planning Director. The Planning Director shall, at the violator's expense, seek expert advice in determining the adequacy of the plan. Inadequate plans shall be returned to the applicant or violator for revision and resubmittal.

(3) Minimum Performance Standards for Restoration or Mitigation.

(a) For alterations to critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, wetlands, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas the following minimum performance standards shall be met for the restoration or mitigation of impacts to a critical area, provided that if the violator can demonstrate in a restoration/mitigation plan that greater functional and habitat values can be obtained, these standards may be modified by the Planning Director:

(i) The historic structural and functional values shall be restored, including water quality and habitat functions;

(ii) The historic soil types and configuration shall be replicated;

(iii) The critical area and buffers shall be replanted with native vegetation that replicates the vegetation historically found on the site in species types, sizes, and densities; and

(iv) The historic functions and values should be replicated at the location of the alteration.

(b) For alterations to flood and geological hazards, the following minimum performance standards shall be met for the restoration of a critical area, provided that, if the violator can demonstrate that greater safety can be obtained, these standards may be modified:

(i) The hazard shall be reduced to a level equal to, or less than, the pre-development hazard;

(ii) Any risk of personal injury resulting from the alteration shall be eliminated or minimized; and

(iii) The hazard area and buffers shall be replanted with native vegetation sufficient to minimize the hazard.

(4) Penalties. Any person, party, firm, corporation, or other legal entity convicted of violating any of the provisions of this Title shall be guilty of a misdemeanor. Each day or portion of a day during which a violation of this Title is committed or continued shall constitute a separate offense. Any development carried out contrary to the provisions of this Title shall constitute a public nuisance and may be enjoined as provided by the statutes of the state of Washington. The City may levy civil penalties against any person, party, firm, corporation, or other legal entity for violation of any of the provisions of this Title. The civil penalty shall be assessed at a rate consistent with Section 1.12.030 of the

Kennewick Municipal Code. Daily fines shall not be levied until after a violator has received a notice of violation and shall not be levied while the violator is making a good faith and diligent effort to correct the violation in cooperation with City enforcement personnel nor while a notice of violation is under appeal through the applicable appeal process.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.200: Critical Area Markers and Signs.

The critical area or buffer shall be identified with temporary signs prior to any site alteration. Such temporary signs may be replaced with permanent signs, as determined appropriate by the Planning Director.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.210: Native Growth Habitat Areas.

(1) Unless otherwise required in this Title, native growth habitat areas shall be used in development proposals for subdivisions, short subdivisions, planned unit developments, and binding site plans to delineate and protect those contiguous critical areas and buffers listed below:

(a) All landslide hazard areas and buffers;

(b) All wetlands and buffers;

(c) All fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; and

(d) All other lands to be protected from alterations as conditioned by project approval.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.220: Building Setbacks.

Unless otherwise provided, buildings and other structures shall be set back a distance of 15 feet from the edges of all critical area buffers or from the edges of all critical areas, if no buffers are required. The following may be allowed in the building setback area:

(1) Landscaping;

(2) Uncovered decks;

(3) Building overhangs if such overhangs do not extend more than 18 inches into the setback area; and

(4) Impervious ground surfaces, such as driveways and patios, provided that such improvements may be subject to requirements provided in the most current edition of City's Construction Standards.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.230: Bonds to Ensure Mitigation, Maintenance, and Monitoring.

(1) Mitigation required pursuant to a development proposal should be completed prior to City final permit approval. When it is not feasible for mitigation to be completed prior to City final permit approval, such as final plat approval or final building inspection, the City shall require the applicant to post a performance bond in a form and amount deemed acceptable by the City.

(2) The bond shall be in the amount of 125 percent of the estimated cost of the uncompleted actions or the estimated cost of restoring the functions and values of the critical area that are at risk, whichever is greater.

(3) The performance bonds shall remain in effect until the City determines, in writing, that the standards bonded for have been met. Bonds shall be held by the City for a minimum of five years to ensure that the required mitigation has been fully implemented and demonstrated to function, and may be held for longer periods when necessary.

(4) Depletion, failure, or collection of bond funds shall not discharge the obligation of an applicant or violator to complete required mitigation, maintenance, monitoring, or restoration.

(5) Public development proposals shall be relieved from having to comply with the bonding requirements of this section if public funds have previously been committed for mitigation, maintenance, monitoring, or restoration.

(6) Any failure to satisfy critical area requirements established by law or condition including, but not limited to, the failure to provide a monitoring report within 30 days after it is due or comply with other provisions of a mitigation plan shall constitute a default, and the City may demand payment of any financial guarantees or require other action authorized by the City code or any other law.

(7) Any funds recovered pursuant to this Section shall be used to complete the required mitigation.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.58.240: Critical Area Inspections.

Reasonable access to the site shall be provided to the City, state, and federal agency review staff for the purposes of inspections during any proposal review, restoration, emergency action, or monitoring period. Additionally, the City or its agent shall have reasonable access to the site for completing necessary remediation work in the event of noncompliance.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 1, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.59 CRITICAL AREAS - WETLANDS

18.59.010: Designation, Rating and Mapping Wetlands.

(1) Designating Wetlands. Wetlands are those areas, that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street, or highway. Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland areas created to mitigate conversion of wetlands. All areas within the City of Kennewick meeting the wetland criteria, regardless of any formal identification, are hereby designated critical areas and are subject to the provisions of this Title.

(2) Wetland Ratings. Wetland shall be rated according to the Department of Ecology's Washington State Wetland Rating System for Eastern Washington:2014 Update (Hruby 2014), or as updated by Ecology.

This document contains definitions and methods for determining if specific criteria are met by a particular wetland. Wetland ratings are valid for five years.

(3) Mapping. The approximate location and extent of known wetlands are shown on the adopted critical area map. This information is to be used as a guide for the City, project applicants and/or property owners, and may be updated as new information becomes available.

The exact location of a wetland's boundary shall be determined through the performance of a field investigation by a qualified professional applying the current US Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual (Environmental Laboratory 1987), and the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region (Version 2, or as amended).

(Ord. 5928, Sec. 1, 2021; Ord. 5206 Sec. 2, 2007)

18.59.020: Activities Allowed in Wetlands.

The activities listed below are allowed in wetlands in addition to those activities listed in, and consistent with, the provisions established in Section 18.58.110, and do not require submission of a critical area report, except where such activities result in the loss to the functions and values of a wetland or wetland buffer. These activities include:

(1) Conservation or preservation of soil, water, vegetation, fish, shellfish, and other wildlife that does not entail changing the structure, or functions of the existing wetland.

(2) The harvesting of wild crops in a manner that is not injurious to natural reproduction of such crops and provided the harvesting does not require tilling of soil, planting of crops, or alteration of the wetland by changing existing topography, water conditions or water sources.

(3) Boat mooring.

(4) Recreational and educational activities.

(5) Research.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 2, 2007)

18.59.030: Wetlands—Additional Requirements.

(1) Prepared by a Qualified Professional. A qualified professional shall prepare a critical areas report for wetlands. The City shall determine whether a person is a qualified professional based on criteria established in KMC 18.58.010.

(2) Area Addressed in Critical Area Report. The following areas shall be addressed in a critical area report for wetlands:

(a) The project area of the proposed activity;

(b) All wetlands and buffers within 200 feet of the project area (critical area reports should consider wetlands and other critical areas within 200 feet due to the maximum potential buffer for wetlands); and

(c) All shoreline areas, water features, floodplains, and other critical areas, and related buffers within 200 feet of the project area.

(3) Wetland Analysis. In addition the minimum required contents of critical area reports in Section 18.58.140 and 18.58.150, a critical area report for wetlands shall contain an analysis of the wetlands including the following site and proposal-related information at a minimum:

(a) A written assessment and accompanying maps of the wetlands and buffers within 200 feet of the project area, or one-half mile upstream or downstream if the wetland is a riverine wetland, including the following information at a minimum:

(i) Wetland delineation and required buffers;

(ii) Existing wetland acreage;

(iii) Wetland category; vegetative, faunal, and hydrologic characteristics;

(iv) Soil and substrate conditions; and

(b) A discussion of measures, including avoidance, minimization and mitigation, proposed to preserve existing wetlands and restore any wetlands that were degraded prior to the current proposed land use activity.

(c) Proposed mitigation, if needed, including a written assessment and accompanying maps of the mitigation area, including the following information at a minimum:

(i) Existing wetland acreage and proposed impact area;

(ii) Vegetative, faunal, and hydrologic conditions;

(iii) Relationship within watershed and to existing waterbodies;

(iv) Soil and substrate conditions, topographic elevations;

(v) Existing and proposed adjacent site conditions;

(vi) Required wetland buffers; and

(vii) Property ownership.

(d) A discussion of ongoing management practices that will protect wetlands after the project site has been developed, including proposed monitoring and maintenance programs.

(4) Additional Information May be Required. When appropriate, the City may also require the critical area report to include an evaluation by the Department of Ecology or an independent qualified expert regarding the applicant's analysis and the effectiveness of any proposed mitigating measures or programs, and to include any recommendations as appropriate.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 2, 2007)

18.59.040: Performance Standards—General Requirements.

(1) Activities may only be permitted in a wetland or wetland buffer if the applicant can show that the proposed activity will not degrade the functions and values of the wetland and other critical areas.

(2) Activities and uses shall be prohibited from wetlands and wetland buffers, except as provided for in this Title.

(3) Wetland buffers.

(a) Standard Buffer Widths. The standard buffer widths are based on wetland category, intensity of impacts, and wetland functions or special characteristics. The buffer is to be vegetated with native plant communities that are appropriate for the site conditions. If vegetation in the buffer

is disturbed (grazed or mowed) proponents planning changes to land that will increase impacts to wetlands need to rehabilitate the buffer with native plant communities that are appropriate for the site conditions. The width of the buffer is measured in horizontal distance.

Table 1. Types of Proposed Land Use That Can Result In High, Moderate, and Low Levels of Impacts to Adjacent Wetlands	
Level of Impact from Proposed Change in Land Use	Types of Land Use Based on Common Zoning Designations
High	• Commercial
	• Urban
	• Industrial
	• Institutional
	• Retail sales
	• Residential (more than 1 unit/acre)
	• High-intensity recreation (golf courses, ball fields, etc.)
	• High-intensity farms
Moderate	• Residential (1 unit/acre or less)
	• Moderate-intensity open space (parks with biking, jogging, etc.)
	• Conversion to moderate-intensity agriculture (orchards, hay fields, etc.)
	• Paved trails
	• Utility corridor or right-of-way shared by several utilities and including access/ maintenance road
Low	• Low-intensity open space (hiking, bird-watching, preservation of natural resources, etc.)
	• Unpaved trails
	• Utility corridor without a maintenance road and little or no vegetation management

Table 2. Width of Buffers Needed to Protect Category IV Wetlands		
Wetland Characteristics	Buffer Widths by Impact of Proposed Land Use	
Score for all 3 functions is less than 16	Low—25 ft Moderate—40 ft High—50 ft	

Table 3. Width of Buffers Needed to Protect Category III wetlands (for Wetlands Scoring 16-18 based on Functions or Isolated Vernal Pools)		
Wetland Characteristics	Buffer Widths by Impact of Proposed Land Use	
Moderate score for habitat (6-7)* *If scores 8-9 for habitat use table 4 for Category II wetlands.	Low—75 ft Moderate— 110 ft High—150 ft	
Low score for habitat (less than 6)	Low—40 ft Moderate—60 ft High—80 ft	

Table 4. Width of Buffers Needed to Protect Category II and I Wetlands		
Wetland Characteristics	Buffer Widths by Impact of Proposed Land Use	
high score for habitat (8-9)	Low—100 ft Moderate—150 ft High—200 ft	
Moderate score for habitat (6-7) or Vernal Pool or Alkali Wetlands	Low—75 ft Moderate—110 ft High—150 ft	
Low score for habitat (less than 6)	Low—50 ft Moderate—75 ft High—100 ft	
Wetlands of High Conservation Value, Natural Heritage Wetland or Bogs, Calcareous Fens	Low—125 ft Moderate—190 ft High—250 ft	

*For all wetlands recommend maintaining any existing connections with other wetlands, open space or fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas

(b) Measurement of Wetland Buffers. All buffers shall be measured from the wetland boundary as surveyed in the field. The width of the wetland buffer shall be determined according to the wetland category and the proposed land use. The buffer for a wetland created, restored, or enhanced as compensation for wetland alterations shall be the same as the buffer required for the category of the created, restored, or enhanced wetland.

(c) Functionally Disconnected Buffer Area. Buffers may exclude areas that are functionally and effectively disconnected from the wetland by an existing public or private road or legally established significant development, as determined by the Planning Director. Functionally and effectively disconnected means that the road or other significant development blocks the protective measures provided by a buffer. The significant development must be at least 15 feet wide and extend at least 30 feet.

Significant developments shall include built public infrastructure such as roads and railroads, and private developments such as homes or commercial structures. The Planning Director shall evaluate whether the interruption will affect the entirety of the buffer. Individual structures may not fully interrupt buffer functions. In such cases, allowable buffer exclusion should be limited in scope to just the portion of the buffer that is affected. Where questions existing regarding whether a development functionally disconnects the buffer, or the extent of that impact, the Planning Director may require a critical area report to analyze and document the buffer functionality.

(d) Buffer Averaging. Buffer widths may be averaged by reducing the width of a portion of the buffer and increasing the width of another portion of the same buffer when all of the following are met:

(i) No feasible alternatives to the site design could be accomplished without buffer averaging;

(ii) The averaged buffer will not result in degradation of the wetland's functions and values as demonstrated by a critical area report from a qualified professional;

(iii) The total buffer area after averaging is equal to the area required without averaging; and

(iv) The buffer at its narrowest point is never less than either 75 percent of the required width or 25 feet f, whichever is greater.

(e) Signs and Fencing.

(i) Temporary markers. The outer perimeter of the wetland buffer and the clearing limits identified by an approved permit or authorization shall be marked in the field with temporary high-visibility fencing in such a way as to ensure that no unauthorized intrusion will occur. The marking is subject to inspection by the Planning Director prior to the commencement of permitted activities. This temporary marking shall be maintained throughout construction and shall not be removed until permanent signs, if required, are in place.

(ii) Permanent signs. As a condition of any permit or authorization issued pursuant to this chapter, the Planning Director may require the applicant to install permanent signs along the boundary of a wetland or buffer.

a. Permanent signs shall by made of an enamel-coated metal face attached to a metal post or another non-treated material of equal durability. Signs shall be posted at an internal of one every 50 feet, or one per lot of the lot is less than 50 feet wide, and shall be maintained by the property owner in perpetuity. The signs shall be worded as follows or with alternative language approved by the Planning Director:

Protected Wetland Area

Do Not Disturb

Contact the City of Kennewick

Regarding Uses, Restrictions, and Opportunities for Stewardship

b. The provisions of Subsection (a) may be modified as necessary to assure protection of sensitive features or wildlife.

(iii) Fencing. The applicant may also be required to install a permanent fence along the boundary of the wetland buffer when adjacent activities could degrade the wetland or its buffer. Examples include domestic animal grazing, unauthorized access by humans or pets, etc.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 2, 2007)

18.59.050: Performance Standards—Mitigation Requirements.

When the acreage required for compensatory mitigation is divided by the acreage of impact, the result is a number known variously as a replacement, compensation, or mitigation ratio. Compensatory mitigation ratios are used to help ensure that compensatory mitigation actions are adequate to offset unavoidable wetland impacts by requiring a greater amount of mitigation area than the area of impact. Requiring greater mitigation area helps compensate for the risk that a mitigation action will fail and for the time lag that occurs between the wetland impact and achieving a fully functioning mitigation site.

(1) Definitions of Types of Compensatory Mitigation. The ratios presented are based on the type of compensatory mitigation proposed (e.g., restoration, creation, and enhancement from Wetland Mitigation in Washington State Part 1 (Ecology Publication #210-60-03) (Ecology, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District, and U.S Environmental Protection Agency Region 10 2021)

Table 4: Mitigation Ratios For Projects in Kennewick					
Category of Wetland Impacts[a]	Re-establishment or Creation	Rehabilitation	Preservation[c]		Enhancement
Category IV	1.5:1	3:1	6:1		6:1
Category III	2:1	4:1	8:1		8:1
Category II	4:1	8:1	12:1		10:1
All Category I	4:1	8:1	16:1		16:1

[a] The category of impacted wetland is based on scores for functions. Compensation ratios in this table generally do not apply when impacts involve a wetland whose category is based on special characteristics. See recommended ratios described in Wetland Mitigation in Washington State Part 1, or as updated, for impacts to wetlands with special characteristics.

[b] Types of mitigation may be combined following the guidance provided in Wetland Mitigation in Washington State Part 1, or as updated.

[c] All proposed preservation sites need to meet the preservation criteria described in Wetland Mitigation in Washington State Part 1, or as updated.

(2) Mitigation Maintenance and Monitoring. Mitigation areas will be maintained and monitored for a minimum of five years after the mitigation has been completed. Annual maintenance and monitoring reports will be submitted to the City and shall include:

(a) Descriptive data for vegetation, soils, and hydrology;

(b) Itemized list of dead, dying, and replaced vegetation;

(c) Quantitative assessment of invasive species;

(d) Descriptive photographs;

(e) Statement of overall success of mitigation;

(f) Schedule of activities for the next year of maintenance and monitoring.

The City may extend maintenance and monitoring for mitigation projects that fail to achieve performance standards outlined in the mitigation plan.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 2, 2007)

18.59.060: Performance Standards—Specific Activities and Uses.

The following activities may be permitted within a wetland buffer in accordance with the review procedures of this Title; provided they are not prohibited by any other applicable law and they are conducted in a manner so as to minimize impacts to the buffer and adjacent wetland:

(1) Conservation and Restoration Activities. Conservation or restoration activities aimed at protecting the soil, water, vegetation, or wildlife;

(2) Passive Recreation. Passive recreation facilities designed and in accordance with the critical area report, including:

(a) Walkways and trails, provided that those pathways that are generally parallel to the perimeter of the wetland shall be located in the outer 25 percent of the buffer area;

(b) Wildlife viewing structures; and

(c) Fishing areas accessed by foot.

(3) Stormwater Management Facilities. Stormwater management facilities are not allowed in buffers of Category I or II wetlands. Stormwater management facilities, limited to stormwater dispersion outfalls and bioswales, may be allowed within the outer 25 percent of the buffer of Category III or IV wetlands only, provided that:

(a) No other location is feasible; and

(b) The location of such facilities will not degrade the functions or values of the wetland.

(4) Subdivisions. The subdivision and short subdivision of land in wetlands and associated buffers is subject to the following:

(a) Land that is located wholly within a wetland or its buffer may not be subdivided;

(b) Land that is located partially within a wetland or its buffer may be divided provided that an accessible and contiguous portion of each new lot is:

(i) Located outside of the wetland and its buffer; and

(ii) Meets the minimum lot size requirements of the City zoning code (Title 18).

(c) Access roads and utilities serving the proposed subdivision may be permitted within the wetland and associated buffers only if the City determines that no other feasible alternative exists in and when consistent with this Title.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 2, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.60 CRITICAL AREAS - CRITICAL AQUIFER RECHARGE AREAS

18.60.010: Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Designation.

Critical aquifer recharge areas (CARA) are those areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water as defined by WAC 365-190-030(3). CARA has prevailing geologic conditions associated with infiltration rates that create a high potential for contamination of ground water resources or contribute significantly to the replenishment of ground water. The following areas have been identified based on local conditions:

(1) Wellhead Protection Areas. Wellhead protection areas shall be defined by the boundaries of the 6-month, one-, five- and ten-year time of ground water travel and their buffers, or boundaries established using alternate criteria approved by the Department of Health in those settings where ground water time of travel is not a reasonable delineation criterion, in accordance with WAC 246-290-135.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 3, 2007)

18.60.020: Mapping of Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas.

(1) The approximate location and extent of critical aquifer recharge areas are shown on the City GIS data

(2) This map is to be used as a guide for the City, project applicants and/or property owners, and will be updated by the Department of Health as new information becomes available.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 3, 2007)

18.60.030: Regulation.

The following are in place to protect critical aquifer recharge areas and regulate activities that might potentially impact these areas.

(1) City of Kennewick Construction Standards (KMC 5.56).

(2) City of Kennewick Wellhead Protection Plan.

(3) State and federal regulations applicable to specific uses including but not limited to those provided in Sections 18.60.050 and 18.60.060.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 3, 2007)

18.60.040: Performance Standards—General Requirements.

(1) Activities may only be permitted in a critical aquifer recharge area if the applicant can show that the proposed activity will not adversely affect the recharging of the aquifer and that the proposed activity will not cause contaminants to enter the aquifer.

(2) The proposed activity must comply with the water source protection requirements and recommendations of the federal Environmental Protection Agency, state Department of Health, and the Benton County Health Department, and as provided in the City's wellhead protection plan.

(3) The proposed activity must be designed and constructed in accordance with erosion control and surface/stormwater management requirements in current City regulations.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 3, 2007)

18.60.050: Performance Standards—Specific Uses

(1) Storage Tanks. All storage tanks proposed to be located in a critical aquifer recharge area must comply with local building code requirements and must conform to the following requirements:

(a) Underground Tanks. All new underground storage facilities proposed for use in the storage of hazardous substances or hazardous wastes shall be designed and constructed so as to:

(i) Prevent releases due to corrosion or structural failure for the operational life of the tank;

(ii) Be protected against corrosion, constructed of noncorrosive material, steel clad with a noncorrosive material, or designed to include a secondary containment system to prevent the release or threatened release of any stored substances; and,

(iii) Use material in the construction or lining of the tank that is compatible with the substance to be stored.

(b) Aboveground Tanks. All new aboveground storage facilities proposed for use in the storage of hazardous substances or hazardous wastes shall be designed and constructed so as to:

(i) Not allow the release of a hazardous substance to the ground, ground waters, or surface waters;

(ii) Have a primary containment area enclosing or underlying the tank or part thereof; and

(iii) A secondary containment system either built into the tank structure or a dike system built outside the tank for all tanks.

(2) Vehicle Repair and Servicing. Vehicle repair and servicing must be conducted over impermeable pads and within a covered structure capable of withstanding normally expected weather conditions. Chemicals used in the process of vehicle repair and servicing must be stored in a manner that protects them from weather and provides containment should leaks occur.

(3) Spreading or Injection of Reclaimed Water. Water reuse projects for reclaimed water must be in accordance with the adopted water or sewer comprehensive plans that have been approved by the departments of Ecology and Health.

(a) Surface spreading must meet the ground water recharge criteria given in Chapter 90.46.080 RCW and Chapter 90.46.010(10).

(b) Direct injection must be in accordance with the standards developed by authority of Chapter 90.46.042 RCW.

(4) State and Federal Regulations. The uses listed below shall be conditioned as necessary to protect critical aquifer recharge areas in accordance with the applicable state and federal regulations:

Statutes, Regulations, and Guidance Pertaining to Activities Impacting Ground Water

Activity	Statute - Regulation - Guidance
Above Ground Storage Tanks	Chapter 173-303-640 WAC
Animal Feedlots	Chapter 173-216 WAC, Chapter 173-220 WAC
Automobile Washers	Chapter 173-216 WAC, Best Management Practices for Vehicle and Equipment Discharges (WDOE WQ-R-95-56)
Below Ground Storage Tanks	Chapter 173-360 WAC
Chemical Treatment Storage and Disposal Facilities	Chapter 173-303 WAC
Hazardous Waste Generator (Boat Repair Shops, Biological Research Facility, Dry Cleaners, Furniture Stripping, Motor Vehicle Service Garages, Photographic Processing, Printing and Publishing Shops, etc.)	Chapter 173-303 WAC
Injection Wells	Federal 40 CFR Parts 144 and 146, Chapter 173-218 WAC
Junk Yards and Salvage Yards	Chapter 173-350 WAC, Best Management Practices to Prevent Stormwater Pollution at Vehicles Recycler Facilities (WDOE 94-146)
Oil and Gas Drilling	Chapter 332-12-450 WAC, WAC, Chapter 173-218 WAC
On-Site Sewage Systems (Large Scale)	Chapter 246-272A WAC
On-Site Sewage Systems (< 14,500 gal/day)	Chapter 246-272B WAC, Local Health Ordinances
Pesticide Storage and Use	Chapter 15.54 RCW, Chapter 17.21 RCW
Sawmills	Chapter 173-350 WAC, 173-304 WAC, Best Management Practices to Prevent Stormwater Pollution at Log Yards (WDOE 95-53)
Solid Waste Handling and Recycling Facilities	Chapter 173-350 WAC
Surface Mining	Chapter 332-18WAC
Waste Water Application to Land Surface	Chapter 173-216 WAC, Chapter 173-200 WAC, WDOE Land Application Guidelines, Best Management Practices for Irrigated Agriculture

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 3, 2007)

18.60.060: Uses Prohibited From Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas.

The following activities and uses are prohibited in critical aquifer recharge areas (prohibited uses are based on "Guidance Document for the Establishment of Critical Aquifer Recharge Area Ordinances," by Ecology, July 2000, Publication #97-30):

(1) Landfills. Landfills, including hazardous or dangerous waste, municipal solid waste, special waste, wood waste, and inert and demolition waste landfills;

(2) Underground Injection Wells. Class I, III, and IV wells and subclasses 5F01, 5D03, 5F04, 5W09, 5W10, 5W11, 5W31, 5X13, 5X14, 5X15, 5W20, 5X28, and 5N24 of Class V wells (Chapter 173-218 WAC), unless approved by state or local authorities as part of an approved remediation action (Federal 40 CFR Parts 144 and 146, Chapter 173-216 WAC);

(3) Storage, Processing, or Disposal of Radioactive Substances. Facilities that store, process, or dispose of radioactive substances;

(4) Mining including metals and hardrock;

(5) Wood treatment facilities that allow any portion of the treatment process to occur over permeable surfaces (either natural or manufactured);

(6) Chemical manufacturing, including but not limited to organic and inorganic chemicals, plastics and resins, pharmaceuticals, cleaning compounds, paints and lacquers, and agricultural chemicals;

(7) Other uses as determined by the director that:

(a) Would significantly reduce the recharge to aquifers currently or potentially used as a potable water source;

(b) Would significantly reduce the recharge to aquifers that are a source of baseflow to a regulated stream; or

(c) Would significantly affect the ground water quality.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 3, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.61 CRITICAL AREAS—FREQUENTLY FLOODED AREAS

18.61.010: Classification.

The flood areas in the City of Kennewick are classified as either one of two types:

(1) Floodway: Floodways are defined as the channel of a stream and adjacent land areas which are required to carry and discharge the flood water or flood flows of any river or stream associated with a regulatory flood.

(2) Flood Fringe: The flood fringe is defined as that land area which is outside a stream's floodway, but is subject to periodic inundation due to flooding, associated with a regulatory flood.

These flood areas have been accurately delineated based on hydrologic and hydraulic studies completed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency in 1981, and as subsequently revised and amended.

The methodology and detail of these studies is accepted as the best available.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 4, 2007)

18.61.020: Designation.

(1) All areas within the City meeting the frequently flooded designation criteria in the Identification and Delineation Manual, regardless of any formal identification, are hereby designated critical areas and are subject to the provisions of this Title.

(2) The approximate location and extent of frequently flooded areas are shown on the adopted online Critical Areas Map. Maps from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as part of the National Flood Insurance Program (completed May, 1981; last revised June 15, 1994), clearly delineate frequently flooded areas. The present boundaries of the floodway and 100-year floodplain are those designated on the flood boundary and floodway maps contained in the Federal Emergency Management Agency report entitled, "Flood Insurance Study - City of Kennewick, Washington" (completed May, 1981; last revised June 15, 1994) and areas of special flood hazard outlined on the City of Kennewick Zoning Map.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 4, 2007)

18.61.030: Regulation.

Title 15 (Buildings and Construction) and Chapter 18.66 (Flood Damage Protection) of the City of Kennewick Code regulate proposed activities adjacent to or within frequently flooded areas. If allowed, any structures permitted in the designated flood areas are subject to the floodproofing regulations provided in Title 15 and Chapter 18.66.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 4, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.62 CRITICAL AREAS—GEOLOGICALLY HAZARDOUS AREAS

18.62.010: Designation of Geologically Hazardous Areas.

Geologically hazardous areas include areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events. They pose a threat to the health and safety of citizens when incompatible development is sited in areas of significant hazard. Such incompatible development may not only place itself at risk, but also may increase the hazard to surrounding development and use. Areas susceptible to one or more of the following types of hazards shall be designated as a geologically hazardous area (See WAC 365-190-120:

(1) Erosion hazard;

(2) Landslide hazard;

(3) Seismic hazard;

(4) Extreme slope hazard;

(5) Other geological events including mass wasting, debris flows, rock falls, and differential settlement.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.020: Designation of Specific Hazard Areas.

(1) Erosion Hazard Areas. Erosion hazard areas are those areas identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) as having a "moderate to severe,"

"severe," or "very severe" rill and inter-rill erosion hazard (see WAC 365-190-120(5). Rill erosion tends to occur on slopes, particularly steep slopes with easily-erodable soils or poor vegetation. Erosion hazard areas also include those areas with slope greater than 15 percent.

(2) Landslide Hazard Areas. Landslide hazard areas are areas potentially subject to landslides based on a combination of geologic, topographic, and hydrologic factors. They include areas susceptible because of any combination of bedrock, soil, slope (gradient), slope aspect, structure, hydrology, or other factors. Example of these may include, but are not limited to the following:

(a) Areas of historic failures, such as (see WAC 365-190-120(6)

(i) Those areas delineated by the USDA-NRCS as having a "severe" limitation for building site development for factors other than slope for one or more types of building development;

(ii) Those areas mapped by the Department of Ecology (Coastal Zone Atlas) or the Department of Natural Resources (slope stability mapping) as unstable ("U" or class 3), unstable old slides ("UOS" or class 4), or unstable recent slides ("URS" or class 5); or

(iii) Areas designated as quaternary slumps, earthflows, mudflows, lahars, or landslides on maps published by the U.S. Geological Survey or Department of Natural Resources;

(b) Areas with all three of the following characteristics:

(i) Slopes steeper than 15 percent; and

(ii) Hillsides intersecting geologic contacts with a relatively permeable sediment overlying a relatively impermeable sediment or bedrock; and

(iii) Springs or ground water seepage;

(c) Slopes that are parallel or subparallel to planes of weakness (such as bedding planes, joint systems, and fault planes) in subsurface materials;

(d) Slopes having gradients steeper than 80 percent subject to rock fall during seismic shaking;

(e) Areas potentially unstable because of rapid stream incision, stream bank erosion, and undercutting by wave action;

(f) Areas located in a canyon or on an active alluvial fan, presently or potentially subject to inundation by debris flows or catastrophic flooding; and

(g) Any area with a slope of 40 percent or steeper and with a vertical relief of ten or more feet except areas composed of consolidated rock. A slope is delineated by establishing its toe and top and measured by averaging the inclination over at least ten feet of vertical relief.

(3) Seismic Hazard Areas. Seismic hazard areas are areas subject to severe risk of damage as a result of earthquake induced ground shaking, slope failure, settlement, soil liquefaction, lateral spreading, or surface faulting. One indicator of potential for future earthquake damage is a record of earthquake damage in the past. Ground shaking is the primary cause of earthquake damage in Washington. The strength of ground shaking is primarily affected by (see WAC 365-190-120(7):

(a) The magnitude of an earthquake;

(b) The distance from the source of an earthquake;

(c) The type of thickness of geologic materials at the surface; and

(d) The type of subsurface geologic structure.

Settlement and soil liquefaction conditions occur in areas underlain by cohesionless, loose, or soft-saturated soils of low density, typically in association with a shallow ground water table.

(4) Extreme Slope Hazard Areas. Extreme slope hazard areas have severe erosion potential and a high probability of slope failure and landslide occurrence.

(5) Other Hazard Areas. Geologically hazardous areas shall also include areas determined by the Planning Director to be susceptible to other geological events including mass wasting, debris flows, rock falls, and differential settlement.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.030: Classification of Geologically Hazardous Areas.

The level of risk for each geologic hazard type is described in this section. Documentation of specific areas in which a known or suspected risk exists for each of the following hazard areas is provided in the City Critical Areas GIS Map . The provisions of this Title apply only to those areas for which a known or suspected risk exists.

Classification	Documentation and Data Sources
Known or Suspected Risk	Documentation or projection of the hazard by a qualified professional exists.
Low or No Risk	Documentation exists by a qualified professional regarding low hazard risk or lack of hazard.
Risk Unknown	Documentation, data, or projection of the hazard risk by a qualified professional are not available or sufficient to determine the presence or absence of a geologic hazard.

(1) Erosion hazard areas - Known or suspected risk in steep areas.

(2) Landslide hazard areas - Known or suspected risk in areas with slope > 15 percent.

(3) Seismic hazard areas - Low or no risk.

(4) Extreme slope hazard areas - Known or suspected risk in areas with slope > 40 percent.

(5) Other hazard areas - Other geologically hazardous areas may be designated by the City if documentation thereof is available.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.040: Mapping of Geologically Hazardous Areas.

(1) The approximate location and extent of geologically hazardous areas containing known or suspected risk are shown on the adopted Critical Areas GIS Map . The hazard areas outlined on this map are based on the following data:

(a) USGS 10-meter Digital Elevation Model (slope);

(b) USDA Soil Survey of Benton County Area, Washington;

(c) Additional data as determined necessary by the City.

(2) This map is to be used as a guide for the City, project applicants and/or property owners, and may be updated as new information becomes available. It is a reference and does not provide a final critical area designation.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.050: Activities Allowed in Geologically Hazardous Areas.

The following activities are allowed in geologically hazardous areas pursuant to Section 18.58.110, and do not require submission of a critical area report provided that the activity will not increase the risk of the hazard:

(1) Erosion and Landslide Hazard Areas. Except as otherwise provided for in this Title, only those activities approved and permitted consistent with the critical area report in accordance with this Title shall be allowed in erosion or landslide hazard areas.

(2) Extreme Slope Hazard Areas. Installation of fences may be allowed within an extreme slope hazard area.

(3) Other Hazard Areas. The following activities may be allowed within other geologically hazardous areas:

(a) Construction of new buildings with less than 3,500 square feet of floor area or roof area, whichever is greater, and which are not residential structures or used as places of employment or public assembly;

(b) Additions to existing residences that are 250 square feet or less; and

(c) Installation of fences.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.060: Critical Area Report—Additional Requirements for Geologically Hazardous Areas.

(1) Prepared By a Qualified Professional. A critical areas report for a geologically hazardous area shall be prepared by a geotechnical engineer or geologist, licensed in the state of Washington, with experience analyzing geologic, hydrologic, and ground water flow systems; or by a geologist who earns his or her livelihood from the field of geology and/or geotechnical analysis, with experience analyzing geologic, hydrologic and ground water flow systems, who has experience preparing reports for the relevant type of hazard. Preparation of these reports by a state of Washington registered geologist is preferred.

(2) Area Addressed in Critical Area Report. The following areas shall be addressed in a critical area report for geologically hazardous areas:

(a) The project area of the proposed activity; and

(b) All geologically hazardous areas within 200 feet of the project area or that have potential to be affected by the proposal.

(3) Geotechnical Assessment. A critical area report for a geologically hazardous area shall contain an assessment of geological hazards including the following site and proposal-related information at a minimum:

(a) Site and Construction Plans. The report shall include a copy of the site plans for the proposal showing:

(i) The type and extent of geologic hazard areas, and any other critical areas, and buffers on, adjacent to, within 200 feet of, or that are likely to impact the proposal;

(ii) Proposed development, including the location of existing and proposed structures, fill, storage of materials, and drainage facilities, with dimensions indicating distances to the floodplain;

(iii) The topography, in two-foot contours, of the project area and all hazard areas addressed in the report; and

(iv) Clearing limits.

(b) Assessment of Geological Characteristics. The report shall include an assessment of the geologic characteristics and engineering properties of the soils, sediments, and/or rock of the project area and potentially affected adjacent properties, and a review of the site history regarding landslides, erosion, and prior grading. Soils analysis shall be accomplished in accordance with accepted taxonomic classification systems in use in the region. The assessment shall include, but not be limited to:

(i) A description of the surface and subsurface geology, hydrology, soils, and vegetation found in the project area and in all hazard areas addressed in the report;

(ii) A detailed overview of the field investigations, published data and references; data and conclusions from past assessments of the site; and site specific measurements, test, investigations, or studies that support the identification of geologically hazardous areas; and

(iii) A description of the vulnerability of the site to seismic and other geologic events.

(c) Analysis of Proposal. The report shall contain a geotechnical analysis including a detailed description of the project, its relationship to the geologic hazard(s), and its potential impact upon the hazard area, the subject property and affected adjacent properties; and

(d) Minimum Buffer and Building Setback. The report shall make a recommendation for the minimum no-disturbance buffer and minimum building setback from any geologic hazard based upon the geotechnical analysis.

(4) Incorporation of Previous Study. Where a valid geotechnical report has been prepared within the last five years for a specific site, and where the proposed land use activity and surrounding site conditions are unchanged, said report may be incorporated into the required critical area report. The applicant shall submit a geotechnical assessment detailing any changed environmental conditions associated with the site.

(5) Mitigation of Long-Term Impacts. When hazard mitigation is required, the mitigation plan shall specifically address how the activity maintains or reduces the pre-existing level of risk to the site and adjacent properties on a long-term basis (equal to or exceeding the projected lifespan of the activity or occupation). Proposed mitigation techniques shall be considered to provide long-term hazard reduction only if they do not require regular maintenance or other actions to maintain their function. Mitigation may also be required to avoid any increase in risk above the pre-existing conditions following abandonment of the activity.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.070: Critical Area Report—Additional Requirements for Specific Hazards.

In addition to the general critical area report requirements of Section 18.58.140, critical area reports for geologically hazardous areas must meet the requirements of this Section. Critical area reports for two or more types of critical areas must meet the report requirements for each relevant type of critical area.

(1) Erosion, Landslide and Extreme Slope Hazard Areas. In addition to the basic critical area report requirements, a critical area report for an erosion hazard or landslide hazard area shall include the following information at a minimum:

(a) Site Plan. The report shall include a copy of the site plan for the proposal showing:

(i) The height of slope, slope gradient, and cross section of the project area;

(ii) The location of springs, seeps, or other surface expressions of ground water on or within 200 feet of the project area or that have potential to be affected by the proposal (a distance of 200 feet is suggested so that geological features that might affect the proposal are included in the critical area report. It may be necessary to include features further than 200 feet from the project area in some instances, such as a series of related geological features that extend more than 20 feet); and

(iii) The location and description of surface water runoff.

(b) Geotechnical Analysis. The geotechnical analysis shall specifically include:

(i) A description of the extent and type of vegetative cover;

(ii) An estimate of load capacity including surface and ground water conditions, public and private sewage disposal systems, fills and excavations and all structural development;

(iii) An estimate of slope stability and the effect construction and placement of structures will have on the slope over the estimated life of the structure;

(iv) An estimate of the bluff retreat rate that recognizes and reflects potential catastrophic events such as seismic activity or a 100-year storm event;

(v) Consideration of the run-out hazard of landslide debris and/or the impacts of landslide run-out on down slope properties.

(vi) A study of slope stability including an analysis of proposed angles of cut and fill and site grading;

(vii) Recommendations for building limitations, structural foundations, and an estimate of foundation settlement;

(viii) An analysis of proposed surface and subsurface drainage, and the vulnerability of the site to erosion;

(c) Erosion and Sediment Control Plan. For any development proposal on a site containing an erosion hazard area, an erosion and sediment control plan shall be required. The erosion and sediment control plan shall be prepared in compliance with requirements set forth in the City's Construction Standards;

(d) Drainage Plan. The report shall include a drainage plan for the collection, transport, treatment, discharge and/or recycle of water. The drainage plan should consider on-site septic system disposal volumes where the additional volume will affect the erosion or landslide hazard area.

(e) Mitigation Plans. Hazard and environmental mitigation plans for erosion and landslide hazard areas shall include the location and methods of drainage, surface water management, locations and methods of erosion control, a vegetation management and/or replanting plan and/or other means for maintaining long-term soil stability.

(f) Monitoring Surface Waters. If the Planning Director determines that there is a significant risk of damage to downstream receiving waters due to potential erosion from the site, based on the size of the project, the proximity to the receiving waters, or the sensitivity of the receiving waters, the critical area report shall include a plan to monitor the surface water discharge from the site. The monitoring plan shall include a recommended schedule for submitting monitoring reports to the City.

(2) Other Geologically Hazardous Areas. In addition to the basic report requirements, the Planning Director may require additional information to be included in the critical area report when determined to be

necessary to the review the proposed activity and the subject hazard. Additional information that may be required, includes, but is not limited to:

(a) Site Plan. The site plan shall show all hazard areas located within 200 feet of the project area or that have potential to be affected by the proposal; and

(b) Geotechnical Analysis. The geotechnical analysis shall include a complete discussion of the potential impacts of the hazard on the project area and of the proposal on the hazard.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.080: Performance Standards—General Requirements.

(1) Alterations of geologically hazardous areas or associated buffers may only occur for activities that:

(a) Will not increase the threat of the geological hazard to adjacent properties beyond pre-development conditions;

(b) Will not adversely impact other critical areas;

(c) Are designed so that the hazard to the project is eliminated or mitigated to a level equal to or less than pre-development conditions; and

(d) Are determined to be safe as designed and under anticipated conditions by a qualified engineer or geologist, licensed in the state of Washington.

(2) Critical facilities shall not be sited within geologically hazardous areas unless there is no other practical alternative.

(3) In addition to the provisions of this Title, alterations of geologically hazardous areas or associated buffers must conform to City Construction Standards and building codes.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

18.62.090: Performance Standards—Specific Hazards.

(1) Erosion and Landslide Hazard Areas. Activities on sites containing erosion or landslide hazards shall meet the following requirements:

(a) Buffer Required. A buffer shall be established from all edges of erosion or landslide hazard areas. The size of the buffer shall be determined by the Planning Director to eliminate or minimize the risk of property damage, death or injury resulting from erosion and landslides caused in whole or part by the development, based upon review of and concurrence with a critical area report prepared by a qualified professional.

(i) Minimum Buffer. The minimum buffer shall be equal to the height of the slope or 50 feet, whichever is greater.

(ii) Buffer Reduction. The buffer may be reduced to a minimum of ten feet when a qualified professional demonstrates to the Planning Director's satisfaction that the reduction will adequately protect the proposed development, adjacent developments and uses and the subject critical area.

(iii) Increased Buffer. The buffer may be increased where the Planning Director determines a larger buffer is necessary to prevent risk of damage to proposed and existing development.

(b) Alterations. Alterations of an erosion or landslide hazard area and/or buffer may only occur for activities for which a geotechnical analysis is submitted and determines that:

(i) The development will not increase surface water discharge or sedimentation to adjacent properties beyond pre-development conditions;

(ii) The development will not decrease slope stability on adjacent properties; and

(iii) Such alterations will not adversely impact other critical areas.

(c) Construction Standards. Development within an erosion or landslide hazard area and/or buffer shall be designed to meet the following basic requirements unless it can be demonstrated that an alternative design that deviates from one or more of these standards provides greater long-term slope stability while meeting all other provisions of this Title. The requirement for long-term slope stability shall exclude designs that require regular and periodic maintenance to maintain their level of function. In addition to those requirements outlined in Section 18.62.080, the basic development Construction Standards within geologically hazardous areas are:

(i) The proposed development shall not decrease the factor of safety for landslide occurrences below the limits of 1.5 for static conditions and 1.2 for dynamic conditions. Analysis of dynamic conditions shall be based on a minimum horizontal acceleration as established by the current version of the Uniform Building Code.

(ii) Structures and improvements shall be clustered to avoid geologically hazardous areas and other critical areas;

(iii) Structures and improvements shall minimize alterations to the natural contour of the slope and foundations shall be tiered where possible to conform to existing topography;

(iv) Structures and improvements shall be located to preserve the most critical portion of the site and its natural landforms and vegetation;

(v) The proposed development shall not result in greater risk or a need for increased buffers on neighboring properties;

(vi) The use of retaining walls that allow the maintenance of existing natural slope area is preferred over graded artificial slopes;

(vii) Development shall be designed to minimize impervious lot coverage.

(d) Vegetation Shall be Retained. Unless otherwise provided or as part of an approved alteration, removal of vegetation from an erosion or landslide hazard area or related buffer shall be prohibited;

(e) Utility Lines and Pipes. Utility lines and pipes shall be permitted in erosion and landslide hazard areas only when the applicant demonstrates that no other practical alternative is available. The line or pipe shall be located above ground and properly anchored and/or designed so that it will continue to function in the event of an underlying slide. Stormwater conveyance shall be allowed only through a high-density polyethylene pipe with fuse-welded joints, or similar product that is technically equal or superior.

(f) Point Discharges. Point discharges from surface water facilities and roof drains onto or upstream from an erosion or landslide hazard area shall be prohibited except as follows:

(i) Conveyed via continuous storm pipe downslope to a point where there are no erosion hazards areas downstream from the discharge;

(ii) Discharged at flow durations matching predeveloped conditions, with adequate energy dissipation, into existing channels that previously conveyed stormwater runoff in the predeveloped state; or

(iii) Dispersed discharge upslope of the steep slope onto a low-gradient undisturbed buffer demonstrated to be adequate to infiltrate all surface and stormwater runoff, and where it can be demonstrated that such discharge will not increase the saturation of the slope;

(g) Subdivisions. The division of land in erosion and landslide hazard areas and associated buffers is subject to the following:

(i) Land that is located wholly within an erosion or landslide hazard area or its buffer may not be subdivided. Land that is located partially within an erosion or landslide hazard area or its buffer may be divided provided that each resulting lot has sufficient buildable area outside of, and will not affect, the erosion or landslide hazard or its buffer.

(ii) Access roads and utilities may be permitted within the erosion or landslide hazard area and associated buffers if the City determines that no other feasible alternative exists.

(h) Prohibited Development. On-site sewage disposal systems, including drain fields, shall be prohibited within erosion and landslide hazard areas and related buffers.

(2) Extreme Slope Hazard Areas. Activities on sites containing extreme slope hazards shall be considered unbuildable. This includes, but is not limited to, construction of buildings, sewage disposal systems and roads. Construction of facilities shall not be permitted in extreme slope hazard areas unless under an exception provided consistent with Section 18.58.120 of this Title. If an exception is granted, the provisions of Sections 18.62.080 and 18.62.090(1) must be satisfied.

(3) Other hazard areas. Activities on sites containing or adjacent to seismic or other geologically hazardous areas, shall meet the standards of Section 18.62.080.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 5, 2007)

CHAPTER 18.63 CRITICAL AREAS—FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT CONSERVATION AREAS

18.63.010: Designation of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.

(1) Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (FWHCA) include:

(a) Areas where state or federal designated endangered, threatened, and sensitive species have a primary association.

(i) Federal designated endangered and threatened species are those fish, wildlife, and plant species identified by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service that are in danger of extinction or threatened to become endangered. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service should be consulted for current listing status.

(ii) State designated endangered, threatened, and sensitive species are those fish, wildlife and plant species native to the state of Washington identified by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife, that are in danger of extinction, threatened to become endangered, vulnerable, or declining and are likely to become endangered or threatened in a significant portion of their range within the state without cooperative management or removal of

threats. State designated endangered, threatened, and sensitive species are periodically recorded in WAC 220-610. The state Department of Fish and Wildlife maintains the most current listing and should be consulted for current listing status.

(b) State Priority Habitats and Areas Associated With State Priority Species. Priority habitats and species (PHS) are considered to be priorities for conservation and management. Priority species require protective measures for their perpetuation due to their population status, sensitivity to habitat alteration, and/or recreational, commercial, or tribal importance. Priority habitats are those habitat types or elements with unique or significant value to a diverse assemblage of species. A priority habitat may consist of a unique vegetation type or dominant plant species, a described successional stage, or a specific structural element. Priority habitats and species are identified by the state Department of Fish and Wildlife and can be found on the PHS website.

(c) Naturally Occurring Ponds Under 20 Acres. Naturally occurring ponds are those ponds under 20 acres and their submerged aquatic beds that provide fish or wildlife habitat, including those artificial ponds intentionally created from dry areas in order to mitigate impacts to ponds. Naturally occurring ponds do not include ponds deliberately designed and created from dry sites, such as canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, temporary construction ponds, and landscape amenities, unless such artificial ponds were intentionally created for mitigation.

(d) Waters of the State. Waters of the state includes lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters, and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington, as classified in RCW 90.48.020.

(e) Lakes, ponds, streams, and rivers planted with game fish by a governmental or tribal entity.

(f) State natural area preserves and natural resource conservation areas. Natural area preserves and natural resource conservation areas are defined, established, and managed by the state Department of Natural Resources.

(2) All areas within the City meeting one or more of these criteria, regardless of any formal identification, are hereby designated critical areas and are subject to the provisions of this Title.

(3) Mapping. The approximate location and extent of conservation areas are shown on the Critical Area GIS map adopted by the City as most recently updated and the following critical area maps hereby adopted:

(a) Department of Fish and Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species Maps;

(b) Resident salmonid distribution maps contained in the Statewide Washington Integrated Fish Distribution (SWIFD);

(c) Department of Natural Resources State Natural Area Preserves and Natural Resource Conservation Area Maps; and

(d) Additional data as determined necessary by the City.

The City of Kennewick Critical Areas Map is to be used as a guide for the City, project applicants and/or property owners, and may be continuously updated as new critical areas are identified. In some instances, it is a reference and does not provide a final critical area designation.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 6, 2007)

18.63.020: Critical Area Report—Additional Requirements for Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas.

(1) Prepared by a Qualified Professional. A critical areas report for a FWHCA shall be prepared by a qualified professional who is a biologist with experience preparing reports for the relevant type of habitat.

(2) Area Addressed in Critical Area Report. The following topics shall be addressed in a critical area report for FWHCA within 200 feet:

  (a) The project area of the proposed activity;

  (b) All FWHCAs and recommended buffers within 200 feet of the project area; and

  (c) All shoreline areas, floodplains, and other critical areas, and related buffers within 200 feet of the project area.

(3) Habitat Assessment. A habitat assessment is an investigation of the project area to evaluate the presence or absence of a potential FWHCA. A critical area report for a FWHCA shall contain an assessment of habitats including the following site and proposal-related information at a minimum:

  (a) Detailed description of vegetation on and adjacent to the project area;

  (b) Identification of any species of local importance, priority species and habitats (PHS), or endangered, threatened, sensitive or candidate species that have a primary association with habitat on or adjacent to the project area, and assessment of potential project impacts to the use of the site by the species;

  (c) A discussion of any federal, state, or local special management recommendations, including Department of Fish and Wildlife habitat management recommendations, that have been developed for species or habitats located on or adjacent to the project area;

  (d) A discussion of measures taken, including avoidance, minimization and mitigation, proposed to preserve existing habitats or restore any habitat that was degraded prior to the current proposed land use activity and to be conducted in accordance with Section 18.58.170; and

  (e) A discussion of ongoing management practices that will protect habitat after the project site has been developed, including proposed monitoring and maintenance programs.

(4) Additional Information May be Required. When appropriate due to the type of habitat or species present or the project area conditions, the City may also require the habitat management plan to include:

  (a) An evaluation by the Department of Fish and Wildlife or qualified expert regarding the applicant's analysis and the effectiveness of any proposed mitigating measures or programs, to include any recommendations as appropriate. Should comments be required, the Department of Fish and Wildlife shall respond in writing to the Director with review comments or a request for additional information within 15 days from the date of issuance of a draft habitat management plan. If review comments, a request for additional information, or an extension is not received in the prescribed time frame, the state review comments on the habitat management plan shall not be required. The Director shall have the authority to approve habitat management plans or require additional information.

  (b) An evaluation by the local Native American Indian Tribe; and

  (c) Detailed surface and subsurface hydrologic features both on and adjacent to the site.

(d) For shrub-steppe habitats, detailed vegetation conditions including species present, including invasive species, habitat quality, connections to neighboring vegetation communities, potential habitat for priority or listed species shall be provided. Habitat assessment should follow Management recommendations for Washington's priority habitats: managing shrubsteppe in developing landscapes (Azerrad et al. 2011), as updated or other best available science.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 6, 2007)

18.63.030: Performance Standards—General Requirements.

(1) Alterations shall not degrade the functions and values of habitat. A FWHCA may be altered only if the proposed alteration of the habitat or the mitigation proposed does not degrade the quantitative and qualitative functions and values of the habitat. All new structures and land alterations shall be prohibited from FWHCAs, except in accordance with this Title.

(2) Non-indigenous species shall not be introduced. No plant, wildlife, or fish species not indigenous to the region shall be introduced into a FWHCA unless authorized by a state or federal permit or approval.

(3) Mitigation shall result in contiguous corridors. Mitigation sites shall try to achieve contiguous functioning habitat corridors in accordance with a mitigation plan that is part of the critical area report to minimize the isolating effects of development on habitat areas, so long as mitigation of aquatic habitat is located within the same aquatic ecosystem as the area disturbed.

(4) Approvals of activities may be conditioned. The City shall condition approvals of activities allowed within or adjacent to a FWHCA or its buffers, as necessary to minimize or mitigate any potential adverse impacts. Conditions may include, but are not limited to, the following:

(a) Establishment of buffer zones;

(b) Preservation of critically important vegetation;

(c) Limitation of access to the habitat area, including fencing to deter unauthorized access;

(d) Seasonal restriction of construction activities;

(e) Establishment of a duration and timetable for periodic review of mitigation activities; and

(f) Requirement of a performance bond, when necessary, to ensure completion and success of proposed mitigation.

(5) Subdivisions. The subdivision and short subdivision of land in fish and wildlife FWHCAs and associated buffers is subject to a "take" under the following provisions:

(a) Land that is located wholly within a FWHCA or its buffer may not be subdivided.

(b) Land that is located partially within a FWHCA or its buffer may be divided provided that an accessible and contiguous portion of each new lot is located outside of the FWHCA or its buffer and meets the minimum lot size requirements of City's Zoning Code - Title 18 and Subdivision Code - Title 17.

(c) Access roads and utilities serving the proposed may be permitted within the FWHCA and associated buffers only if the City determines that no other feasible alternative exists and when consistent with this Title.

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 6, 2007)

18.63.040: Performance Standards—Specific Habitats.

(1) Endangered, Threatened, and Sensitive Species.

(a) No development shall be allowed within a FWHCA or buffer with which state or federal endangered, threatened, or sensitive species have a primary association.

(b) Whenever activities are proposed adjacent to a FWHCA with which state or federally endangered, threatened, or sensitive species have a primary association, such area shall be protected through the application of protection measures in accordance with a critical area report prepared by a qualified professional and submitted to the City. Approval for alteration of land adjacent to the FWHCA or its buffer shall not occur prior to consultation with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and the appropriate federal agency.

(c) Bald eagle habitat shall be protected pursuant to the Washington State Bald Eagle Protection Rules (WAC 220-610-100). Whenever activities are proposed adjacent to a verified nest territory or communal roost, a habitat management plan shall be developed by a qualified professional. Activities are adjacent to bald eagle sites when they are within 660 feet both inside and outside the breeding season. The City shall verify the location of eagle management areas for each proposed activity. Approval of the activity shall not occur prior to approval of the habitat management plan by the Department of Fish and Wildlife.

(2) Wetland Habitats. All proposed activities within or adjacent to FWHCAs containing wetlands shall, at a minimum, conform to the wetland development performance standards set forth in Chapter 18.59, in addition to meeting the FWHCA standards in this Chapter.

(3) Streams. Waters of the state classified pursuant to WAC 222-16-030. Streams shall be designated Type S, Type F, Type Np, and Type Ns according to the following criteria:

Stream Type	Definition
Type S (Shoreline)	Streams identified and regulated as “Shorelines of the State”, as defined in RCW 90.58.030 pursuant to WAC 173-18-030 and the City of Kennewick Shoreline Master Program. Within the city limits and the urban growth area, the only Type S stream is the Columbia River
Type F (Fish)	Natural streams that are not Type S streams and are either perennial or seasonal, and are known to be used by fish or meet the physical criteria to be potentially used by fish. Potential use shall be determined based upon species life cycle requirements, habitat suitability, presence or lack of natural barriers, and a reasoned evaluation of current, historic, and future fish use by a qualified professional.
Type Np (Non-fish perennial)	Streams with year-round flow and include intermittent dry reaches of the perennial channel below the uppermost point of perennial flow. They do not meet the physical criteria of a Type F stream and are not used by anadromous fish.
Type Ns (Non-fish seasonal)	Streams that do not have surface flow during at least part of the year, and do not meet the physical criteria of Type F stream.

(4) Riparian Habitat Buffers. Unless otherwise allowed in this Title, all structures and activities shall be located outside of the riparian habitat buffers (RHBs).

(a) Establishment of Riparian Habitat Buffers. RHBs shall be established for habitats that include aquatic systems.

(b) Riparian Habitat Buffer widths. Recommended buffer widths are shown in the table below. A riparian habitat buffer shall have the width recommended, unless a greater width is required pursuant to Section 18.60.030(3), or a lesser width is allowed pursuant to Section 18.60.030(4). Widths shall be measured outward, on the horizontal plane, from the ordinary high water mark or from the top of bank if the ordinary high water mark cannot be identified. Buffers should be sufficiently wide to achieve the full range of riparian and aquatic ecosystem functions, which include but are not limited to protection of instream fish habitat through control of temperature and sedimentation in streams; preservation of fish and wildlife habitat; and connection of riparian wildlife habitat to other habitats.

Riparian Habitat Buffers	
Stream/Type	Recommended Buffer Widths
Type S	See KMC 18.68 Shoreline Management
Type F	75 feet
Type N	50 feet

(Ord. 5206 Sec. 6, 2007)

(c) Functionally Disconnected Buffer Area. Buffers may exclude areas that are functionally and effectively disconnected from the stream by an existing public or private road or legally established significant development, as determined by the Planning Director. Functionally and effectively disconnected means that the road or other significant development blocks the protective measures provided by a buffer. The significant development must be at least 15 feet wide and extend at least 30 feet.

Significant developments shall include built public infrastructure such as roads and railroads, and private developments such as homes or commercial structures. The Planning Director shall evaluate whether the interruption will affect the entirety of the buffer. Individual structures may not fully interrupt buffer functions. In such cases, allowable buffer exclusion should be limited in scope to just the portion of the buffer that is affected. Where questions existing regarding whether a development functionally disconnects the buffer, or the extent of that impact, the Planning Director may require a critical area report to analyze and document the buffer functionality.

(d) Buffer Averaging. Buffer widths may be averaged by reducing the width of a portion of the buffer and increasing the width of another portion of the same buffer when all of the following are met:

(i) No feasible alternatives to the site design could be accomplished without buffer averaging;

(ii) The averaged buffer will not result in degradation of the stream's functions and values as demonstrated by a critical area report from a qualified professional;

(iii) The total buffer area after averaging is equal to the area required without averaging; and

(iv) The buffer at its narrowest point is never less than either 75 percent of the required width or 25 feet, whichever is greater.

(e) Signs and Fencing.

(i) Temporary markers. The outer perimeter of the stream buffer and the clearing limits identified by an approved permit or authorization shall be marked in the field with temporary high-visibility fencing in such a way as to ensure that no unauthorized intrusion will occur. The marking is subject to inspection by the Planning Director prior to the commencement of permitted activities. This temporary marking shall be maintained throughout construction and shall not be removed until permanent signs, if required, are in place.

(ii) Permanent signs. As a condition of any permit or authorization issued pursuant to this chapter, the Planning Director may require the applicant to install permanent signs along the boundary of a stream or buffer.

a. Permanent signs shall by made of an enamel-coated metal face attached to a metal post or another non-treated material of equal durability. Signs shall be posted at an internal of one every 50 feet, or one per lot of the lot is less than 50 feet wide, and shall be maintained by the property owner in perpetuity. The signs shall be worded as follows or with alternative language approved by the Planning Director:

Protected Stream Area

Do Not Disturb

Contact the City of Kennewick

Regarding Uses, Restrictions, and Opportunities for Stewardship

b. The provisions of Subsection (a) may be modified as necessary to assure protection of sensitive features or wildlife.

Fencing. The applicant may also be required to install a permanent fence along the boundary of the stream buffer when adjacent activities could degrade the stream or its buffer. Examples include domestic animal grazing, unauthorized access by humans or pets, etc.

(5) Shrub-steppe habitat. No development will be permitted in shrub-steppe habitat without a City-approved habitat assessment that addresses current habitat conditions and ensures the proposed project will have no adverse impacts to the shrub-steppe habitat.

CHAPTER 18.66 FLOOD DAMAGE PREVENTION

18.66.010: Purpose.

Floods are inimical to the public health, safety, and welfare. This Chapter is intended to prevent flood damage and maintain community eligibility in the National Flood Insurance Program. It is also intended to minimize public and private losses due to flood conditions in specific areas by provision designed: To protect human life and health; to minimize expenditure of public money and costly flood control projects; to minimize the need for rescue and relief efforts associated with flooding and generally undertaken at the expense of the general public; to minimize prolonged business interruptions; to minimize damage to public facilities and utilities such as water and gas mains, electric, telephone and sewer lines, streets, and bridges located in areas of special flood hazard; to help maintain a stable tax base by providing for the sound use and development of areas of special flood hazard so as to minimize future flood blight areas; to ensure that potential buyers are notified that property is in an area of special flood hazard; and to ensure that those who occupy the areas of special flood hazard assume responsibility for their actions.

(Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.66.020: Definitions.

(1) *Accessory Structure* means nonresidential structures such as garages, sheds, garden buildings, pole buildings, grain bins, and barns, which are considered normal for farming or ranching activities.

(2) *Appeal* means it requires a review of the interpretation of any provision of this Chapter, or a request for a variance.

(3) *Area of Shallow Flooding* is designated AO or AH Zone on the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM), has a base flood depth ranging from one to three feet, no clearly defined channel, an unpredictable and indeterminate path and evidence of velocity flow. AO is characterized as sheet flow and AH indicates ponding.

(4) *Area of Special Flood Hazard* is land with a one-percent or greater chance of flooding in any given year. Designation on maps always includes the letters A or V.

(5) *Base Flood* is the flood with a one-percent chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year, also referred to as the "100-Year Flood." Designation on maps always includes the letters A or V.

(6) *Basement* means any area of the building having its floor sub-grade (below ground level) on all sides.

(7) *Best Available Information* means information from Federal, State or other sources that has been generated using technically defensible methods or is based on reasonable historical analysis and experience in the absence of official Flood Insurance Rate Map data.

(8) *Breakaway Wall* means a wall that is not part of the structural support of the building and is intended through its design and construction to collapse under specific lateral loading forces, without causing damage to the elevated portion of the building or supporting foundation system.

(9) *Critical Facility* means a facility for which even a slight chance of flooding would be too great. Critical facilities include, but are not limited to, schools, hospitals, police, fire and emergency response installations, nursing homes, installations which produce, use or store hazardous materials or hazardous waste.

(10) *Development* is any manmade change to real estate such as buildings, mining, dredging, filling, grading, paving, excavating or drilling operations or storage of equipment and materials located within the area of special flood hazard.

(11) *Elevated Building* means for insurance purposes, a non-basement building, which has its lowest elevated floor raised above ground level by foundation walls, shear walls, posts, piers, pilings, or columns.

(12) *Existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision* means a manufactured home park subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including, at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) is completed before the effective date of the adopted flood plain management regulations.

(13) *Expansion to an existing Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision* means the preparation of additional sites by the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads).

(14) *Flood* or *Flooding* is a general and temporary, partial or complete inundation of normally dry land caused by overflowing inland waters or the unusual and rapid accumulating of runoff of surface waters from any source.

(15) *Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM)* is the official map on which the Federal Insurance Administration has delineated both the areas of special flood hazards and the risk premium zones for the community.

(16) *Flood Insurance Study* is the official report of the Federal Insurance Administration that includes flood profiles, the Flood Boundary-Floodway Map, and the water surface elevation of the base flood.

(17) *Flood Protection Elevation* means to or above the base flood elevation.

(18) *Floodway* is the area that has been established in effective Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) flood insurance rate maps or floodway maps. The floodway does not include lands that can reasonably be expected to be protected from flood waters by flood control devices maintained by or maintained under license from the federal government, the state or a political subdivision of the state.

(19) *Lowest Floor* is the lowest floor of the lowest enclosed area (including basement). An unfinished or flood-resistant enclosure used only for parking of vehicles, building access or storage in an area other than a basement is not considered a building's lowest floor provided that such enclosure is not built so as to render the structure in violation of the applicable non-elevation design requirements found in Section 18.66.060(2)(a).

(20) *Manufactured Home* is a structure, transportable in one or more sections, which is built on a permanent chassis and is designated for use with or without a permanent foundation when connected to the required utilities. The term "manufactured home" does not include a recreational vehicle.

(21) *Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision* is a parcel (or contiguous parcels) of land divided into two or more manufactured home lots for rent or sale.

(22) *New Construction* means structures for which the "start of construction" commenced on or after the effective date of this ordinance.

(23) *New Manufactured Home Park or Subdivision* means a manufactured home park or subdivision for which the construction of facilities for servicing the lots on which the manufactured homes are to be affixed (including at a minimum, the installation of utilities, the construction of streets, and either final site grading or the pouring of concrete pads) is completed on or after the effective date of adopted floodplain management regulations.

(24) *Recreational Vehicle* means a vehicle which is built on a single chassis; 400 square feet or less when measured at the largest horizontal projection; designed to be self-propelled or permanently towable by a light duty truck; and designed primarily not for use as a permanent dwelling but as temporary living quarters for recreational, camping, travel, or seasonal use.

(25) *Special Flood Hazard Area* is an area subject to a base or 100-year flood; areas of special flood hazard are shown on a flood hazard boundary map or flood insurance rate map as Zone A, AO, A1-30, AE, A99, AH, VO, VI-30, VE, or V.

(26) *Start of Construction* is the date the building permit was issued, provided the actual start of construction, repair, reconstruction, placement, or other improvement within 180 days after the permit date. The actual start means either the first placement of permanent construction of a structure on a site, such as the pouring of slab or footings, the installation of piles, the construction of columns, or any work beyond the stage of excavation; or the placement of a manufactured home on a foundation. Permanent construction does not include land preparation, such as clearing, grading and filling; the installation of streets or walkways; excavations for basements, footings, piers, or foundations or the erection of temporary forms; nor the installation of accessory buildings, such as the garages or sheds not occupied as dwelling units or not part of the main structure. For a substantial

improvement, the actual start of construction means the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of a building, whether or not that alteration affects the external dimensions of the building.

(27) *Structure* is a walled and roofed building including a gas or liquid storage tank that is principally above ground.

(28) *Substantial Damage* means damage of any origin sustained by a structure whereby the cost of restoring the structure to its before-damaged condition would equal or exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure before the damage occurred.

(29) *Substantial Improvement* is any repair, reconstruction, or improvement of a structure, the cost of which equals or exceeds 50 percent of the market value of the structure either before the improvement or repair is started or if the structure has been damaged and is being restored, before the damage occurred. A "substantial improvement" occurs when the first alteration of any wall, ceiling, floor, or other structural part of the building commences, whether or not it affects the external dimensions of the structure. A "substantial improvement" does not include an improvement to comply with health, sanitary, or safety codes that have been identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living or to a structure listed on the National Register of Historic Places or a State Inventory of Historic Places.

(30) *Variance* means a grant of relief from the requirements of this Chapter, which permits construction in a manner that would otherwise be prohibited by this Chapter.

(31) *Water Dependent* means a structure for commerce or industry, which cannot exist in any other location and is dependent on the water by reason of the intrinsic nature of its operation.

(Ord. 5824 Sec. 1, 2019; Ord. 5309 Sec. 17, 2010; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.66.030: General Provisions.

(1) Lands to which this Chapter Applies. This Chapter applies to all areas of special flood hazards within the City. It is an overlay zone imposed in addition to the provisions of the Zoning districts in which it is located.

(2) Basis for Establishing the Areas of Special Flood Hazard. The areas of special flood hazard identified by the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA) in the FIRM Flood Insurance Rate Map Kennewick, Washington, dated May 5, 1981, and revised June 15, 1994. Maps available on the FEMA Flood Map Service Center. The best available information for flood hazard area identification as outlined in Section 18.66.040(4)(c) shall be the basis for regulation until a new FIRM is issued that incorporates data utilized under Section 18.66.040(4)(c). Areas within Benton County which are annexed into the City, are within such areas, if shown upon studies and maps prepared by the Federal Insurance Administration for Benton County. Areas of special flood hazard will be shown on the Kennewick Zoning Map.

(3) Compliance. No structure or land may be constructed, located, extended, converted, or altered without full compliance with the terms of this Chapter. Violations of the provisions of this Chapter by failure to comply with any of its requirements (including violations of conditions and safeguards established in connection with conditions) shall constitute a misdemeanor. Any person who violates this Chapter or fails to comply with any of its requirements shall, upon conviction, be punished in accord with KMC 18.54. Nothing herein contained shall prevent the City of Kennewick from taking such other lawful action as is necessary to prevent or remedy any violation.

(4) Greater Restriction Applies. This Chapter is not intended to repeal, abrogate, or impair any existing easements, covenants, or deed restrictions. If this Chapter and another ordinance, easement, covenant, or deed restriction conflict or overlap, the more stringent prevails.

(5) Interpretation. In the interpretation and application of this Chapter, all provisions are minimum standards and liberally construed in favor of the City's regulatory powers; and deemed neither to limit or repeal any other powers granted under State statutes.

(6) Warning and Disclaimer of Liability. The degree of flood protection established by this Chapter is reasonable for regulatory purposes and based on scientific and engineering research. Larger floods can and will occur on rare occasions. Flood heights may be increased by manmade or natural causes. This Chapter does not imply that land outside the areas of special flood hazards or uses permitted within such areas will be free from flooding or flood damages. This Chapter does not create liability on the part of the City of Kennewick, any officer or employee thereof, or the Federal Insurance Administration, for any flood damages that result from reliance on this Chapter or any administrative decision, or variance made thereunder.

(Ord. 5824 Sec. 2, 2019; Ord. 5309 Sec. 18, 2010; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.66.040: Administration.

(1) Floodprone Area Development Permit Required. A Floodprone Area Development Permit must be obtained before construction or development begins within any area of special flood hazard established in Section 18.66.030(2). The permit will be for all structures, including manufactured homes, as set forth in Section 18.66.020 and all other development including filling and other activities, also as set forth in Section 18.66.020.

(2) Application. Application for a Floodprone Area Development Permit must be made on forms furnished by the Planning Director and include all information required for any other development application with which it may be filed. The application must include a copy of the construction drawings and elevations, in duplicate, of a site plan (one copy, if no larger than 8½" x 14") drawn to scale and showing lot lines and dimensions of existing and proposed structures, landscaping, fences or walls, ground elevations of the area, proposed fill or grading, storage of materials, drainage facilities, and any other information deemed necessary by the Director. Specific information must show precisely the elevation, in relation to mean sea level, of the lowest floor (including a basement) of existing and proposed structures, the elevation, in relation to mean sea level to which any non-residential structure has been floodproofed. A certificate by a professional engineer registered in the State of Washington that the floodproofing methods for any nonresidential structure meet the floodproofing criteria in Section 18.66.060, and a description of the extent to which any watercourse will be altered or relocated is required.

(3) Designation of the Director. The Planning Director shall administer and implement this Chapter. He or she may require proof that conditions of approval and the standards of this Chapter have been met or that certification be provided and, if not forthcoming, may revoke the Floodprone Area Development Permit and require that development discontinue or the structure be vacated. When the first floor of a residential structure is required to be elevated, as provided in Section 18.66.060, the Planning Director will require that the applicant submit a statement from a professional surveyor indicating the elevation to which the first floor was actually constructed.

(4) Review. Duties and responsibilities of the Planning Director shall include, but not be limited to:

(a) Review all Floodprone Area Development Permits to determine that the permit requirements of this Chapter have been satisfied. If they are located in the floodway, assure that the

encroachment provisions of Section 18.66.060(2)(f) are met and that all necessary permits have been obtained;

(b) Review all Floodprone Area Development Permits to determine that all necessary permits have been obtained from those Federal, State, or local government agencies from which prior approval is required (i.e. Section 404 wetlands permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers);

(c) When base flood elevation data has not been provided (in A or V Zones) in accordance with Section 18.66.030(2) Basis for Establishing the Areas of Special Flood Hazard, the Planning Director shall obtain, review and reasonably utilize any base flood elevation and floodway data available from a Federal, State or other source, in order to administer Section 18.66.060(2) Specific Standards, and Section 18.66.060(2)(c) Floodways;

(d) Where base flood elevation is provided through the Flood Insurance Study or is required by this Chapter, obtain, record, and maintain the records of the actual elevation (in relation to mean sea level) of the lowest floor (including basement) of all new or substantially improved structures, whether or not the structure contains a basement; and the floodproofing certification required in Section 18.66.060(2)(a) and (b), including the actual elevation in relation to mean sea level;

(e) For all new or substantially improved floodproofed nonresidential structures where base flood elevation data is provided through the FIS, FIRM, or as required in Section 18.66.040(4)(c):

(i) Obtain and record the elevation (in relation to mean sea level) to which the structure was floodproofed,

(ii) Maintain the floodproofing certifications required in Section 18.66.040(2).

(f) Alteration of Watercourses. Notify adjacent communities and the Department of Ecology, prior to any alteration or relocation of a watercourse, submit evidence of such notification to the Federal Insurance Administration, and require that the watercourse be maintained so that its flood carrying capacity is not diminished;

(g) Make interpretations where needed, as to exact location of the boundaries of the areas of special flood hazards (for example, where there appears to be a conflict between a mapped boundary and actual field conditions). The person contesting the location of the boundary shall be given reasonable opportunity to appeal the interpretation. Such appeals shall be granted consistent with the standards of Section 60.6 of the Rules and Regulations of the National Flood Insurance Program;

(h) If the conditions of this Chapter or any permit are not met, revoke the permit and cause the vacation or demolition of any nonconforming structure; and

(i) Maintain for public inspection all records pertaining to the provision of this Chapter.

(Ord. 5824 Sec. 3, 2019; Ord. 5204 Sec. 17, 2007; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.66.050: Variance and Appeal Procedure.

(1) Hearing Examiner. The Hearing Examiner shall hear and decide appeals from decisions of the Planning Director and requests for variances. The procedure and requirements for a variance or appeal shall be in accord with Chapters 18.51 and 18.54.

(2) Consideration of the Hearing Examiner.

(a) In passing upon applications, the Hearing Examiner shall consider all technical evaluations, all relevant factors, and standards specified in other sections of this Chapter, and:

(i) The danger that materials may be swept onto other lands to the injury of others;

(ii) The danger to life and property due to flooding or erosion;

(iii) The susceptibility of the proposed facility and its contents to flood damage and the effect of such damage on the owner;

(iv) The importance of the services provided by the proposed facility to the community;

(v) The necessity of a waterfront location to the facility, where applicable;

(vi) The availability of alternative locations which are not subject to flooding or erosion damage;

(vii) The compatibility of the proposed use with existing and anticipated development;

(viii) The relationship of the proposed use to the Comprehensive Plan and floodplain management program;

(ix) The safety of access to the property in times of flood for ordinary and emergency vehicles;

(x) The expected heights, velocity, duration, rate of rise, and sediment transport of the flood waters and the effects of wave action, if applicable, expected at the site; and

(xi) The costs of providing governmental services during and after flood conditions, including maintenance and repair of public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical, and water systems, and streets and bridges.

(b) Generally, variances may be issued for the new construction or substantial improvements to be erected on a lot of one-half acre or less in size contiguous to and surrounded by lots with existing structures constructed below the base flood level, providing the items in Section 18.66.050(2)(a) have been fully considered. As the lot size increases, the technical justification necessary for issuance of a variance increases.

(c) Variances shall not be issued within a designated floodway if any increase in flood levels during the base flood discharge would result.

(d) Variances shall only be issued upon a determination that the variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief.

(e) The Hearing Examiner may attach such conditions to a variance as it deems necessary to further the purposes of this chapter.

(f) Variances may be issued for the reconstruction, rehabilitation or restoration of structures listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the State Inventory of Historic Places, without regard to the remainder of this Section.

(g) Other variances may be approved by the Hearing Examiner upon:

(i) No increase in flood levels during the base flood discharge will result;

(ii) The variance is the minimum necessary, considering the flood hazard, to afford relief;

(iii) There is good and sufficient cause for the granting of the variance;

(iv) A failure to grant the variance will result in exceptional hardship to the applicant;

(v) Granting of the variance will not result in increased flood heights, additional threats to public safety, extraordinary public expense, create nuisances, cause fraud on or victimization of the public or conflict with existing laws or ordinances;

(vi) Variances as interpreted in the National Flood Insurance Program are based on the general zoning law principle that they pertain to a physical piece of property; they are not personal in nature and do not pertain to the structure, its inhabitants or their economic or financial circumstances. They primarily address small lots in densely populated residential neighborhoods. As such, variances from the Flood Hazard Regulations should be quite rare;

(vii) Variances may be issued for nonresidential buildings in very limited circumstances to allow a lesser degree of floodproofing than watertight or dry floodproofing, where it can be determined that such action will have low damage potential, complies with all other variance criteria except Section 18.66.050(2)(b), and otherwise complies with Section 18.66.060.

(3) Responsibilities of the Director.

(a) Any applicant to whom a variance is granted will be given written notice that the structure will be permitted to be built with a lowest floor elevation below the base flood elevation and that the costs of flood insurance may be commensurate with the increased risk.

(b) The Planning Director will maintain records of all appeal actions and report any variances to the Federal Insurance Administration upon request.

(Ord. 5322 Sec. 63, 2010; Ord. 5309 Sec. 19, 2010; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

18.66.060: Standards for Flood Hazard Reduction.

(1) General Standards. In all areas of special flood hazards the following standards apply:

(a) Anchoring.

(i) All new construction and substantial improvements must be anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement.

(ii) All manufactured homes must be anchored to prevent flotation, collapse, or lateral movement by providing the over-the-top and frame ties to ground anchors. Over-the-top ties must be provided at each of the four corners of the mobile home with two additional ties per side at intermediate locations, but mobile homes less than 50 feet long need have only one additional tie per side. Frame ties must be provided at each corner of the home with five additional ties per side. All components of the anchoring system must be capable of carrying a force of 4,800 pounds. Any additions to the mobile home must be similarly anchored.

(iii) An alternative method of anchoring may be used provided it complies with the standards contained in FEMA's "Manufactured Home Installation in Flood Hazard Areas" guidebook; incorporated herein by reference.

(b) Construction Materials and Methods. All new construction and substantial improvements must be constructed with materials and utility equipment and by methods and practices that resist and minimize flood damage.

(c) Mechanical Equipment and Utilities.

(i) Electrical, heating, ventilation, plumbing, and air conditioning equipment and other service facilities shall be designed and/or otherwise elevated or located so as to prevent water from entering or accumulating within the components during conditions of flooding;

(ii) All new and replacement water supply systems must be designed to eliminate or minimize the infiltration of floodwaters into the system;

(iii) All new and replacement sanitary sewage systems must be designed to minimize or eliminate infiltration from and discharge into floodwaters;

(iv) On-site waste disposal systems must be located and designed to avoid impairment or contamination during flooding; and

(v) Water wells shall be located on high ground that is not in the floodway.

(d) Subdivision Proposals.

(i) All subdivision proposals shall be consistent with the need to minimize flood damage;

(ii) All subdivision proposals shall have public utilities and facilities such as sewer, gas, electrical and water systems, located and constructed to minimize or eliminate flood damage;

(iii) All subdivision proposals shall have adequate drainage provided to reduce exposure to flood damage;

(iv) Base flood elevation data must be provided for subdivision proposals and other proposed developments which contain at least 50 lots or five acres (whichever is less).

(e) Review of Building Permits. The Planning Director shall obtain, review and reasonably utilize the best available information as criteria for requiring that new construction, substantial improvements, or other development in Zone "A" conform to applicable provisions of this Chapter. Where elevation data is not available either through the Flood Insurance Study or from another authoritative source (Section 18.66.040(4)(c)), applications for building permits shall be reviewed to assure that proposed construction will be reasonably safe from flooding. The test of reasonableness is a local judgment and includes use of historical data, high water marks, photographs of past flooding, etc., where available. Residential and commercial structures in unnumbered "A" Flood Hazard Zones must be elevated with their lowest floor at least two feet above grade. Failure to elevate at least two feet above grade in unnumbered "A" Zones may result in higher insurance rates. All applicants for building permits within special flood hazard areas are encouraged to elevate the lowest floor at least one foot above the base flood level. Elevating to at least one foot above the base flood will further substantially reduce the damage potential in the event of a 100-year flood; and, will have a lessening effect on the fees or rates for required flood insurance.

(2) Specific Standards. In all areas of special flood hazards where base flood elevation data has been provided, as set forth in Section 18.66.030(2) or 18.66.040(4)(d), the following standards apply:

(a) Residential Construction.

(i) New Construction and substantial improvement of any residential structure must have the lowest floor, including basement, elevated one foot above the base flood elevation. Fully enclosed areas below the lowest floor that are subject to flooding are prohibited, or shall be designed to automatically equalize hydrostatic flood forces on exterior walls by allowing for the entry and exit of floodwater. Designs for meeting this requirement must be certified by a registered professional engineer or must meet or exceed the following minimum criteria: A minimum of two openings having a total net area of not less than one square inch for every square foot of enclosed area subject to flooding shall be provided; the bottom of all openings shall be no higher than one foot above grade; and openings may be equipped with screens, louvers, or other coverings or devices, provided that they permit automatic entry and exit of floodwaters.

(ii) Manufactured Homes. All manufactured homes to be placed or substantially improved within Zones A1-30, AH, and AE on the community's FIRM on sites: Outside of a

manufactured home park or subdivision in an expansion to an existing manufactured home park or subdivision, in a new manufactured home park or subdivision, or in an existing manufactured home park or subdivision on which a manufactured home has incurred "substantial damage" as the result of a flood shall be elevated on a permanent foundation such that the lowest floor of the manufactured home is elevated one foot above the base flood elevation and be securely anchored to an adequately designed foundation system to resist flotation collapse and lateral movement. Manufactured homes to be placed or substantially improved on sites in an existing manufactured home park or subdivision with A1-30, AH, and AE on the community's FIRM that are not subject to the above manufactured home provisions be elevated so that either: the lowest floor of the manufactured home is elevated one foot above the base flood elevation, or the manufactured home chassis is supported by reinforced piers or other foundation elements of at least equivalent strength that are no less than 36 inches in height above grade and be securely anchored to an adequately designed foundation system to resist flotation, collapse, and lateral movement.

(iii) Residential structures that contain fully enclosed areas below the base flood level must meet the same standards for such areas as described in Section 18.66.060(2)(b)(i).

(b) Nonresidential Construction. New construction and substantial improvement of any commercial, industrial or other nonresidential structure must either have the lowest floor, including basement, and attendant utility and sanitary facilities, elevated one foot above the base flood elevation; or floodproofed so that below one foot above the base flood level the structure is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water, has structural components capable of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and the effects of buoyancy, be certified by a registered professional engineer that the design and methods of construction are in accordance with accepted standards of practice for meeting provisions of this subsection based on their development and/or review of the structural design, specifications, and plans. Such certifications shall be provided to the official as set forth in Section 18.66.040(2).

(i) Nonresidential structures that are elevated, not floodproofed, must meet the same standards for space below the lowest floor as described in Section 18.66.060(2)(a)(i).

(ii) Applicants floodproofing nonresidential buildings shall be notified that flood insurance premiums will be based on rates that are one foot below the floodproofed level (a building floodproofed to the base flood level will be rated as one foot below that level).

(c) Floodways. Located within areas of special flood hazard established in Section 18.66.030(2) are areas designated as floodways. Since the floodway is an extremely hazardous area due to the velocity of floodwaters that can carry debris, and increase erosion potential, the following provision apply:

(i) Encroachments are prohibited, including fill, new construction, substantial improvements and other development; unless certification by a registered, professional civil engineer is provided demonstrating through hydrologic and hydraulic analyses performed in accordance with standard engineering practice that the proposed encroachments will not increase flood levels during the occurrence of the base flood discharge.

(ii) Construction or reconstruction of residential structures is prohibited within designated floodways except for (1) repairs, reconstruction, or improvements to a structure which do not increase the ground flood area; and (2) repairs, reconstruction or improvements to a structure, the cost of which does not exceed 50 percent of the market value of the structure either before the repair, or reconstruction is started, or if the structure has been damaged and is being restored, before the damaged occurred. Any project for

improvement of a structure to correct existing violations of state or local health, sanitary, or safety code specifications which have been identified by the local code enforcement official and which are the minimum necessary to assure safe living conditions, or to structures identified as historic places, may be excluded in the 50 percent.

(iii) If Subsection (c)(i) is satisfied, all new construction and substantial improvements shall comply with all applicable flood hazard reduction provisions of this section.

(d) Standards for Shallow Flooding Areas (AO Zones). Shallow flooding areas appear on Flood Insurance Rate Maps as AO zones with depth designations. The base flood depths in these zones range from one to three feet above ground where a clearly defined channel does not exist, or where the path of flooding is unpredictable and where velocity flow may be evident. Such flooding is usually characterized as sheet flow. In these areas, the following provisions apply:

(i) New construction and substantial improvements of residential structures and manufactured homes within AO zones shall have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated above the highest grade adjacent to the building, one foot or more above the depth number specified on the FIRM (at least two feet above the highest adjacent grade to the structure if no depth number is specified).

(ii) New construction and substantial improvements of nonresidential structures within AO zones shall either:

(A) Have the lowest floor (including basement) elevated above the highest adjacent grade of the building site, one foot or more above the depth number specified on the FIRM (at least two feet if no depth number is specified); or

(B) Together with attendant utility and sanitary facilities, be completely floodproofed to or above that level so that any space below that level is watertight with walls substantially impermeable to the passage of water and with structural components having the capability of resisting hydrostatic and hydrodynamic loads and effects of buoyancy. If this method is used, compliance shall be certified by a registered professional engineer.

(iii) Require adequate drainage paths around structures on slopes to guide floodwaters around and away from proposed structures.

(iv) Recreational Vehicles. Recreational vehicles placed on sites within Zones A, AO, A1-30, and AE in the community's FIRM either must: Be on site for fewer than 180 consecutive days, or be fully licensed and ready for highway use, be on its wheels or jacking system, be attached to the site only by quick disconnect type utilities and security devices, and have no permanently attached additions; or meet the requirements of Section 18.66.060(2)(a)(ii) and the elevation and anchoring requirements for manufactured homes.

(e) Critical Facilities. Construction of new critical facilities shall be, to the extent possible, located outside the limits of the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) (100-year floodplain). Construction of new critical facilities shall be permissible within the SFHA if no feasible alternative site is available. Critical facilities constructed within the SFHA shall have the lowest floor elevated three feet or more above the level of the base flood elevation (100-year) at the site or to the height of the 500-year event, whichever is higher. Access to and from the critical facility should also be protected to the height utilized above. Floodproofing and sealing measures must be taken to ensure that toxic substances will not be displaced by or released into floodwaters. Ingress and egress routs, elevated to or above the base flood elevation, shall be provided to all critical facilities to the extent possible.

(f) Encroachments. In areas with base flood elevations (but a regulatory floodway has not been designated), no new construction, substantial improvements, or other development (including fill) shall be permitted within Zones A1-30 and AE on the community's FIRM, unless it is demonstrated that the cumulative effect of any proposed development, where combined with all other existing and anticipated development, shall not increase the water surface elevation of the base flood more than one foot at any point.

(Ord. 5824 Sec. 4, 2019; Ord. 5309 Sec. 20, 2010; Ord. 5180 Sec. 1, 2007)

DATE:	April 17, 2026
TO:	Matt Halitsky, City of Kennewick, Anthony Muai, City of Kennewick
FROM:	Claire Hoffman, PWS, and Bri Hines, Parametrix
SUBJECT:	Best Available Science Review
PROJECT NUMBER:	5532274014
PROJECT NAME:	Kennewick Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update – CAO Update

Introduction

The City of Kennewick (City) is updating its Comprehensive Plan as required by the Growth Management Act of Washington (GMA). Cities and counties are also required to update their critical areas regulations (Revised Code of Washington [RCW] 36.70A.130.1.c) and base these updates on best available science (BAS) as well as give consideration to the conservation and protection of anadromous fisheries (RCW 36.70A.172.1):

"In designating and protecting critical areas under this chapter, counties and cities shall include the best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas. In addition, counties and cities shall give special consideration to conservation or protection measures necessary to preserve or enhance anadromous fisheries."

The purpose of this memorandum is to document BAS used in the City's update of its critical areas regulations. BAS is defined in Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 365-195-900 to 925 and is generally based on peer-reviewed literature, standard methods, logical conclusions and quantitative analysis, and reliable references. This review focused on state regulations and guidance from state agencies and includes recommendations for critical areas updates.

The Department of Commerce (DOC) Critical Areas Handbook (DOC 2022) was the primary guidance document for the BAS review and subsequent code updates. This BAS review is not exhaustive and focuses on areas where the BAS required a change in the Kennewick Municipal Code (KMC) 18.58 Critical Areas.

As part of the BAS review, the following checklists were completed, and corresponding changes were made in the CAO:

- Department of Commerce Critical Areas Checklist (DOC 2024).
- Riparian Management Zone Checklist for Critical Areas Ordinances (WDFW 2023).

As part of the City's upcoming periodic update, staff reviewed current DOC climate guidance, and Ecology technical resources for guidance in updating the CAO. Staff also reviewed emerging best practices for integrating climate resilience into local developmental regulations.

Mapping

The minimum guidelines are minimum requirements for critical areas classification and designation (DOC 2022). The guidelines refer to the statutory requirement to include best available science and

recommend that counties and cities designate critical areas using maps and performance standards. WAC 365-190-080(4) states:

Maps may benefit the public by increasing public awareness of critical areas and their locations. County and city staff may also benefit from maps which provide a useful tool for determining whether a particular land use permit application may affect a critical area. However, because maps may be too inexact for regulatory purposes, counties and cities should rely primarily on performance standards to protect critical areas. Counties and cities should apply performance standards to protect critical areas when a land use permit decision is made.

What this means is the city is not required to inventory all critical areas within their jurisdiction nor maintain maps of critical areas.

Recommended Changes

- Add text acknowledging lack of mapping information and that streams and wetlands are ecological processes which change over time. We also recommend including a five-year expiration of wetland delineations (See wetlands section below).
- Change references from exhibit maps in the appendices to the City-hosted GIS maps as these are more recently updated.

Wetlands – KMC 18.59

Wetlands are defined in WAC 365-190-030(24) as follows:

Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland sites, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street, or highway. However, wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland areas to mitigate conversion of wetlands, if permitted by the county or city.

Five Year Limit on Delineations

Current scientific understanding and regulatory practice recognize that wetland boundaries can shift over time due to hydrologic variability, vegetation succession, land use changes, and climate-drive alterations in site conditions (Ecology 2026; Ecology 2022; Sheldon et al, 2005). The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) limits the validity of Approved Jurisdictional Determinations (AJDs) to five years, because they recognize that wetland boundaries and jurisdictional status change over time (USACE 2016). Many local jurisdictions adopt a similar validity model because it aligns with federal practice, is supported by BAS, and improves the accuracy and defensibility of critical areas permitting.

Buffer Reduction and Averaging

There are regulatory pathways that allow jurisdictions to protect wetlands while simultaneously supporting their residents in their development pursuits. Based on BAS, two of the pathways to accomplish this goal are to recognize functional buffers and use buffer averaging. The functional role of a buffer is based on its position immediately adjacent to a wetland. Ecology has shown that paved surfaces, such as a busy road, interrupts the functionality of said buffer and disconnects it from the

habitat beyond the paved surface. This disconnected buffer provides limited to no function, and it is recommended by Ecology to prioritize the preservation of functional buffers adjacent to wetlands (Ecology 2022).

One option to prioritize functional buffers but also support landowners to develop on their property is buffer averaging. Buffer averaging is the variation of standard buffers from a wetland or stream. The total buffer area remains the same but changes where the buffer is located and thus allows for a more useable area for development without compromising the functionality of the buffer habitat. Buffer averaging provides more options to developers and encourages on-site protection of the wetland being directly impacted.

Recommended Changes – Wetlands

- Add the requirement that wetland delineations must be no more than five years old at the time of application review.
- Added methods to reduce buffers:
    - Functionally disconnected buffer area.
    - Buffer averaging.

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas – KMC 18.60

Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARAs) are defined in WAC 365-190-030(3) as follows:

"*… areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water, including areas where an aquifer that is a source of drinking water is vulnerable to contamination that would affect the portability of the water, or is susceptible to reduce recharge*."

Kennewick provides drinking water to approximately 90,000 residents within the city limits and Urban Growth Area (UGA). The source of this drinking water comes from two (2) Ranney collectors that withdraw groundwater from an aquifer recharged primarily by the Columbia River. CARAs are areas where precipitation infiltrates into the soil and recharges the underground aquifer. When water infiltrates, it can easily carry pollutants and contaminate the groundwater, and it is difficult—if not impossible—to clean groundwater once it is contaminated. Soil infiltration is critical to maintain the quantity of water available for drinking water as well as in-stream flow. While CARAs are designated and protected to ensure availability of potable water, the quantity of groundwater also influences local stream flow (DOC 2022, DOH 2026b). Not all areas are equally susceptible to contamination; areas with high soil permeability are most susceptible. BAS recommends protecting areas that have hydrogeologic susceptibility and areas where groundwater can travel to wells where water is extracted for potable uses (Ecology 2021, DOH 2017). The Department of Health (DOH) maintains a map of wellhead protection areas in Washington state, which are identified by drinking water purveyors (DOH 2026a). The City currently protects the 10-year ground water travel areas for the two Ranney wells. There are other Group A wells (wells serving more than 15 connections) within the City (Ecology 2021) that are not currently protected.

KMC outlines the CARA designations in 18.60.010, which is generally consistent with state WAC 365-190-030(3).

Ecology (2021) describes land uses that pose higher risk of contamination and suggests prohibited uses within CARAs. Most of these are listed in 18.60, however it is recommended to expand the list of prohibited uses within CARAs to include all those identified by Ecology.

Recommended Changes – CARAs

- Add 10-year ground water travel areas for other Group A wells identified on DOH map.
- Expand uses prohibited in CARA to better protect groundwater quality.
- Consider adding a CARAs checklist, as many people may not even know they are in a CARA. This can be added as an addition to the CARA section, or as part of the report requirements stated in 18.58.140.
- Update the CARAs map and wellhead protection areas map with additional Group A DOH wellhead protection areas. Include reference to the DOH's map as the primary source of information for groundwater wells.
- Consider pursuing grant funding to update the Kennewick Wellhead Protection Plan

Geologically Hazardous Areas – KMC 18.62

WAC 365-190-120 defines geologically hazardous areas (GHAs) as

"Areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events. They pose a threat to the health and safety of citizens when incompatible commercial, residential, or industrial development is sited in areas of significant hazard. Areas that are susceptible to one or more of the following types of hazards shall be classified as a geologically hazardous area: erosion hazard, landslide hazard, seismic hazard, areas subject to other geological events such as coal mine hazards and volcanic hazards including mass debris flows, rock falls, and differential settlement."

Geologically hazardous areas designation, mapping, and classification in KMC are in alignment with WAC standards, USGS, and WDNR recommendations.

Recommended Changes – GHAs

- Add reference to WDNR geologic information portal (WDNR 2026) as the most up-to-date information regarding GHAs.
- Update definitions in both KMC 18.58.10 and 18.62 to reflect currently used language found in WAC 365-190-120.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas – KMC 18.63

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas are defined in WAC 365-190-030(6) as follows:

(6)(a) "Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas" are areas that serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem, and which, if altered, may reduce the likelihood that the species will persist over the long term. These areas may include, but are not limited to, rare or vulnerable ecological systems, communities, and habitat or habitat elements including seasonal ranges, breeding habitat, winter range, and movement corridors; and areas with high relative population density or species richness. Counties and cities may also designate locally important habitats and species.

(b) "Habitats of local importance" designated as fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas include those areas found to be locally important by counties and cities.

(c) "Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas" does not include such artificial features or constructs as irrigation delivery systems, irrigation infrastructure, irrigation canals, or drainage ditches that lie within the boundaries of, and are maintained by, a port district or an irrigation district or company.

Fish and wildlife habitat provides critical resources to various species including shelter, food, places to escape from predators, etc. Streams—an important fish and wildlife habitat conservation area (FWHCA)—transport water, sediment, and organic material and provide floodwater storage and attenuation as well as habitat. FWHCAs are further defined in WAC 365-190-130.

Stream Typing

The stream type system, through the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), has been under evaluation for several years. In 2006, the Forest Practices Board developed an interim system for determining stream type (Type S, F, Np, Ns), which is described in WAC 222-16-030. Although the water typing system is still under review, the interim system is the preferred method. KMC currently classifies streams using the numbering stream type system (Types I-V), and we recommend updating the stream type to the DNR system.

Stream Buffers

In 2020, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) published updated guidance for protection of streams and riparian areas: Riparian Ecosystems, Volume 1: Science Synthesis and Management Implications (Rentz et al. 2020) and Riparian Ecosystems, Volume 2: Management Recommendations (Quinn et al. 2020). These documents present the basis of the use of "riparian management zones" (RMZs) for stream protection. A RMZ is defined as "… a scientifically based description of the area adjacent to rivers and streams that has the potential to provide full function based on the site potential tree height (SPTH) conceptual framework."

WDFW recommends assigning an RMZ width of 100 feet at a minimum based primarily on what is needed to provide full riparian functions such as pollution removal and habitat-related functions including shade and wood recruitment. A 100-foot RMZ is estimated to achieve 95% pollution removal (Rentz et al. 2020). Kennewick is located in the "Dryland Ecosystem" classification (WDFW 2026b), in which it is less common to find riparian vegetation (Rentz et. A. 2020). In dryland ecosystems where trees are not present, WDFW recommends full protection of the entire riparian vegetative community, regardless of width. In dryland ecosystems where trees are not present and the riparian vegetative community is less than 100 feet wide, WDFW recommends a riparian management zone of 100 feet in order to ensure pollution removal of phosphorus, sediment, and most pesticides (Rentz et al, 2020). WDFW recommended that the City adopt 100-foot RMZ in their comments on the Shoreline Master Program (WDFW 2021) for all non-fish-bearing stream systems.

Shrub-Steppe Habitat

Shrub-steppe is an arid, sagebrush-dominated ecosystem found primarily in eastern Washington, characterized by big sagebrush, bunchgrasses, and a suite of wildlife uniquely adapted to its dry climate. It is one of the state's most diverse and imperiled habitats, supporting species including Greater sage-grouse, sagebrush sparrow, and burrowing owl. Roughly 80% of its historic extent converted to agriculture and development since non-Native settlement (WDFW 2026c). Stamaintainal agencies emphasize that conserving intact shrub-steppe and restoring degraded

areas are key to maintaining biodiversity, cultural values, and resilient working landscapes across eastern Washington (USFWS 2022).

The City contains mapped shrub-steppe habitat and protects it as a priority habitat under 18.63.010(1)(b), although shrub-steppe is not identified specifically. To protect shrub-steppe habitat, WDFW in their shrub-steppe guidance document (WDFW 2020) recommends adding shrub-steppe specific definitions, explicitly designating shrub-steppe as a regulated fish and wildlife habitat conservation area, creating clear Habitat Management Plan triggers for shrub-steppe habitat, and prioritizing the protection of large, contiguous blocks of existing shrub-steppe habitat.

Recommended Changes – FWHCAs

- Update stream typing to be consistent with WAC 222-16-030.
- Consider updating stream buffers to be at least 100 feet for non-fish-bearing streams to improve pollution removal and maintain critical buffer functions.
- Add shrub-steppe habitat as an explicit habitat regulated under the FWHCA section.
- Add management recommendations for shrub-steppe habitat as well as habitat-specific mitigation recommendations based on WDFW guidance.
- Add special requirements for a critical areas report if the project is in an area that contains shrub-steppe habitat.
- Change references from exhibit maps in the appendices to the City-hosted GIS maps as these are more recently updated.

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SEPA[1] Environmental Checklist

Purpose of checklist

Governmental agencies use this checklist to help determine whether the environmental impacts of your proposal are significant. This information is also helpful to determine if available avoidance, minimization, or compensatory mitigation measures will address the probable significant impacts or if an environmental impact statement will be prepared to further analyze the proposal.

Instructions for applicants

This environmental checklist asks you to describe some basic information about your proposal. Please answer each question accurately and carefully, to the best of your knowledge. You may need to consult with an agency specialist or private consultant for some questions. **You may use "not applicable" or "does not apply" only when you can explain why it does not apply and not when the answer is unknown.** You may also attach or incorporate by reference additional studies reports. Complete and accurate answers to these questions often avoid delays with the SEPA process as well as later in the decision-making process.

The checklist questions apply to **all parts of your proposal**, even if you plan to do them over a period of time or on different parcels of land. Attach any additional information that will help describe your proposal or its environmental effects. The agency to which you submit this checklist may ask you to explain your answers or provide additional information reasonably related to determining if there may be significant adverse impact.

Instructions for lead agencies

Please adjust the format of this template as needed. Additional information may be necessary to evaluate the existing environment, all interrelated aspects of the proposal and an analysis of adverse impacts. The checklist is considered the first but not necessarily the only source of information needed to make an adequate threshold determination. Once a threshold determination is made, the lead agency is responsible for the completeness and accuracy of the checklist and other supporting documents.

Use of checklist for nonproject proposals

For nonproject proposals (such as ordinances, regulations, plans, and programs), complete the applicable parts of sections A and B, plus the Supplemental Sheet for Nonproject Actions (Part D). Please completely answer all questions that apply and note that the words "project," "applicant," and "property or site" should be read as "proposal," "proponent," and "affected geographic area," respectively. The lead agency may exclude (for non-projects) questions in "Part B: Environmental Elements" that do not contribute meaningfully to the analysis of the proposal.

[1] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/Checklist-guidance

A. Background

Find help answering background questions[2]

1. Name of proposed project, if applicable:

City of Kennewick Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update, Development Regulation Updates, Housing Action Plan (HAP), and Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO)

2. Name of applicant:

City of Kennewick

3. Address and phone number of applicant and contact person:

City of Kennewick Community Planning Department
Anthony Muai, AICP, Community Planning Director
210 W 6th Avenue
Kennewick, WA 99336
Ph: (509) 585-4386
E: anthony.muai@ci.kennewick.wa.us

4. Date checklist prepared:

July 13, 2026

5. Agency requesting checklist:

City of Kennewick

6. Proposed timing of schedule (including phasing, if applicable):

Planning Commission Hearing in August and City Council consideration of adoption by December 2026.

7. Do you have any plans for future additions, expansion, or further activity related to or connected with this proposal? If yes, explain.

The proposal is a non-project action. Future developments and infrastructure implemented by public and private applicants would be subject to their own environmental review. The City may review additional sections of its development regulations for consistency with the proposed Comprehensive Plan amendments and Housing Action Plan, including zoning, building, and subdivision regulations.

8. List any environmental information you know about that has been prepared, or will be prepared, directly related to this proposal.

No additional environmental information will be prepared that are directly related to this proposal. A DNS will be prepared for subsequent annual updates to the Comprehensive Plan.

9. Do you know whether applications are pending for governmental approvals of other proposals directly affecting the property covered by your proposal? If yes, explain.

Not applicable to this non-project action. Future development activities may submit applications and would be subject to the plans and regulations in place at the time.

[2] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-A-Background

10. List any government approvals or permits that will be needed for your proposal, if known.

The City Council will adopt the 2026 Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update materials (plan and code updates), Housing Action Plan, and Critical Areas Ordinance following a recommendation by the Planning Commission and a 60-day review by the Washington Department of Commerce. Prior to adoption, the City will also request review from Benton County. The City will work to address agency feedback.

11. Give brief, complete description of your proposal, including the proposed uses and the size of the project and site. There are several questions later in this checklist that ask you to describe certain aspects of your proposal. You do not need to repeat those answers on this page. (Lead agencies may modify this form to include additional specific information on project description.)

The City of Kennewick is conducting a periodic review of its Comprehensive Plan consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA, RCW 36.70A), Benton County Countywide Planning Policies, and City Guidance. The proposal includes updates to the:

- Comprehensive Plan's vision, goals, policies, background information, and appendices.
- Comprehensive Plan's various chapters with maps, charts, and tables to reflect the updated requirements under the Growth Management Act. This includes an updated Housing Element consistent with new state planning requirements, Future Land Use Map, Capital Facilities Plan to address a range of services and infrastructure, and a new Climate Element. No adjustments to the City's Urban Growth Area (UGA) are proposed.
- KMC Title 18 Zoning for consistency with the Periodic Update and new state requirements, including the following updates to ensure capacity for housing at all income levels:
  - Revise residential use standards to promote more housing types in more zones (HAP Strategy 1.1.1).
  - Clarify regulations for emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing to be consistent with state law (HAP Strategy 1.1.2).
  - Remove maximum density limits in medium- and high-density residential zones (HAP Strategy 1.2.1).
  - Revise parking standards to be consistent with state law (HAP Strategy 1.3.1).

In addition, the City is updating its CAO concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The CAO update included a review of Best Available Science and other local CAOs, and was prepared in coordination with the Periodic Update to ensure consistency between the CAO and related goals and policies in the Comprehensive Plan. Proposed updates to the CAO include minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas, adding clarification for mitigation sequencing in land use development, an updated stream classification system, methods for stream and wetland buffer reduction, a requirement for habitat assessment within shrub-steppe habitat, and increased protections for groundwater.

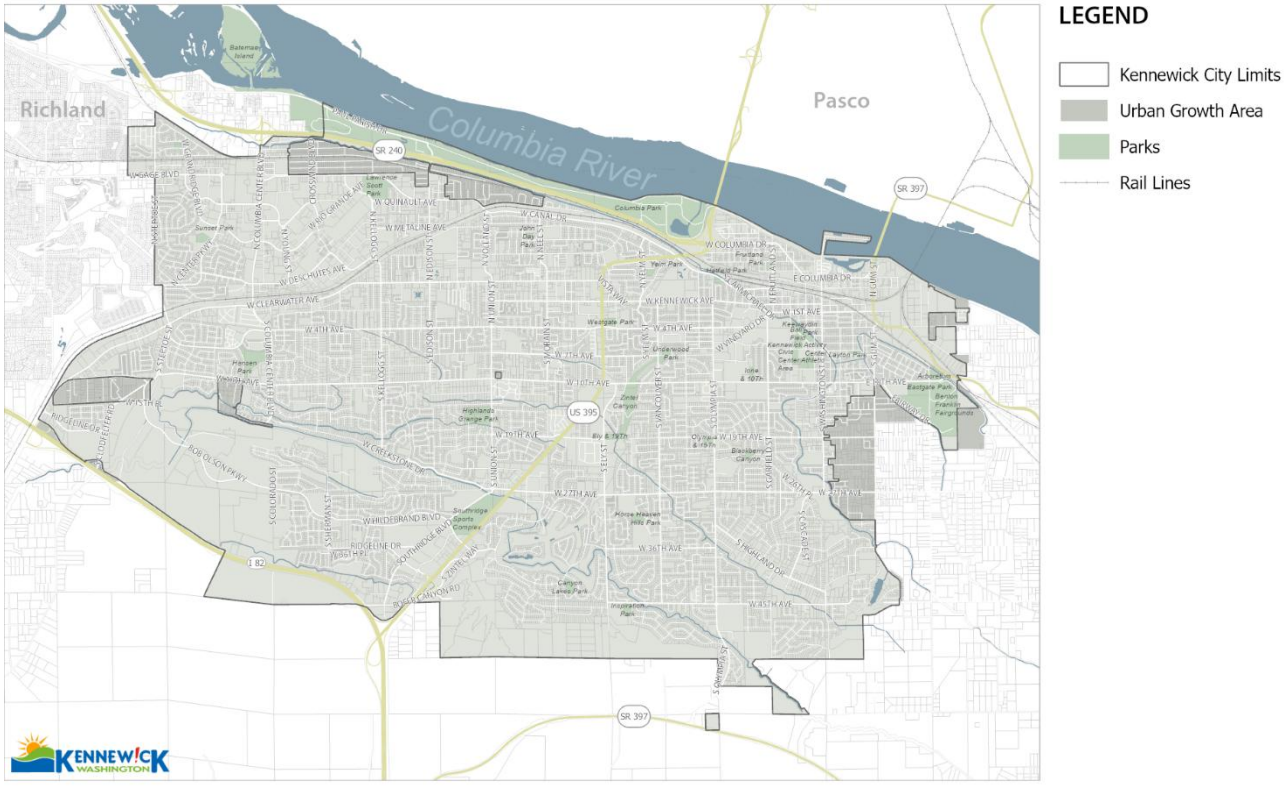
The City is also preparing a new Housing Action Plan concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. The HAP is a toolkit of strategies and implementation actions to promote greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels in the City of Kennewick. Strategies and implementation actions are aligned between the two documents, with additional detail or future phases incorporated into the HAP.

12. Location of the proposal. Give sufficient information for a person to understand the precise location of your proposed project, including a street address, if any, and section, township, and range, if known. If a proposal would occur over a range of area, provide the range or boundaries of the site(s). Provide a legal description, site plan, vicinity map, and topographic map, if reasonably available. While you should submit any plans required by the agency, you are not required to duplicate maps or detailed plans submitted with any permit applications related to this checklist.

The proposal includes the entire jurisdiction of the City of Kennewick (**Exhibit 1**). Kennewick is in Benton County in the southeastern part of Washington. The city is situated between the Horse Heaven Hills to the south, Rattle

Snake Mountain to the west, the Columbia River to the north, and the broad plains of the Columbia Basin and Blue Mountains to the east. The Yakima, Snake, and Columbia rivers, the agricultural industry, and the desert lying just outside irrigated boundaries define the Tri-Cities region physically and naturally.

Exhibit 1. City of Kennewick Urban Growth Area



Source: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

B. Environmental Elements

1. Earth

Find help answering earth questions[3]

a. General description of the site:

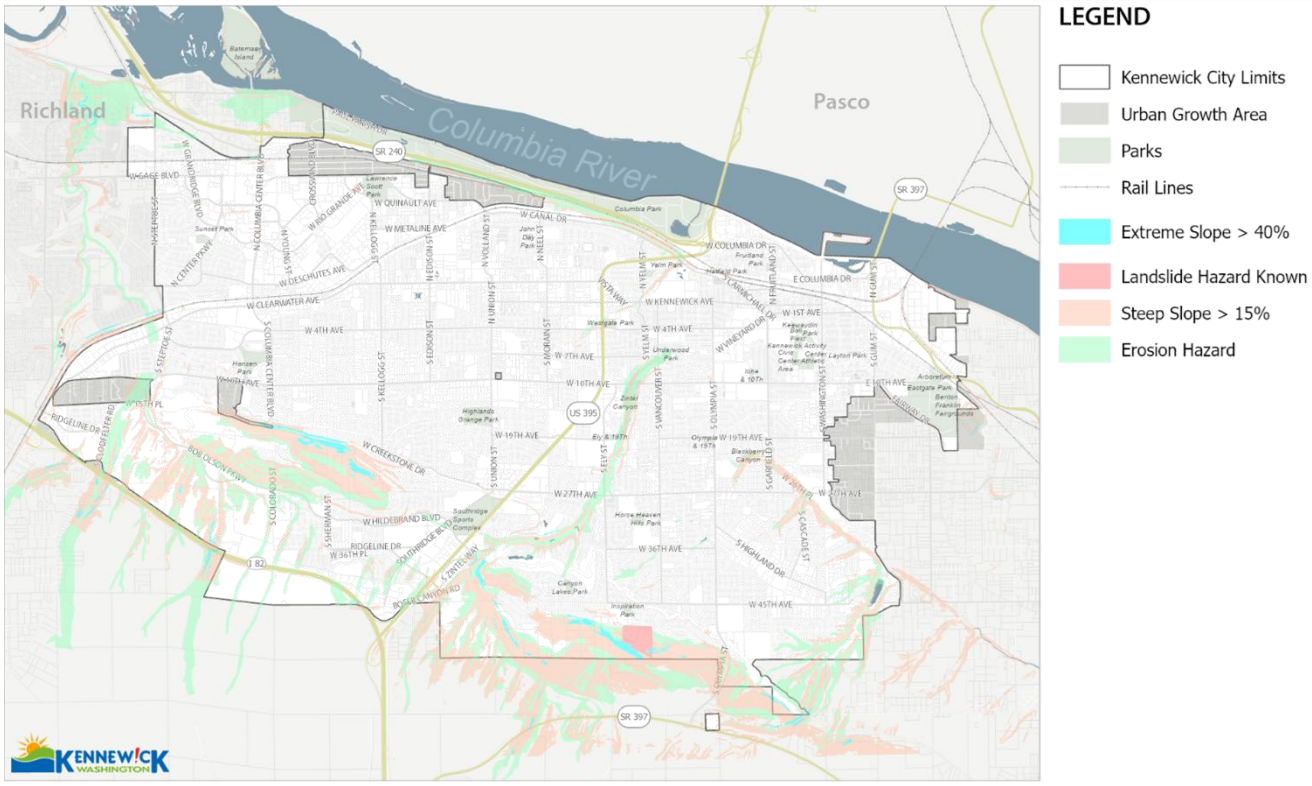
Circle or highlight one: Flat, rolling, hilly, steep slopes, mountainous, other:

Kennewick is in the southeastern part of Washington along the southwest bank of the Columbia River, opposite Pasco and just south of the confluence of the Columbia and Yakima rivers. Elevations range from approximately 340 feet above sea level at the Columbia River to approximately 1,200 feet above sea level in hilltop areas in the south.[4] Much of the city is relatively flat with land sloping gently to riverbanks and streams. In some areas, hills are more pronounced where ridges and ravines cut through the land including in Southridge (Thompson Hill), south of Canyon Lakes (Perry Monument), and Zintel Canyon where slopes above 15% are common.

b. What is the steepest slope on the site (approximate percent slope)?

Some slopes associated with Thompson Hill and Perry Monument in the southern portion of the city may be up to 65% per the USDA Web Soil Survey. See **Exhibit 2**.

Exhibit 2. Steep Slopes



Source: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026; BERK, 2026.

[3] https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-earth

[4] topographic-map.com (accessed June 2026); PeakVisor (accessed June 2026).

c. What general types of soils are found on the site (for example, clay, sand, gravel, peat, muck)? If you know the classification of agricultural soils, specify them, and note any agricultural land of long-term commercial significance and whether the proposal results in removing any of these soils.

Kennewick sits within the semiarid Columbia Basin and features primarily silt loam and sandy loam soil types. These soils are generally well-drained and highly productive when irrigated. The potential exists for siltation where there are Loess soils, particularly during construction. Loess soils are wind-blown and extremely fine. As a result, these soils compact well but may be subject to some erosion, although siltation from runoff after construction is not normally an issue because of low rainfall in the Tri-Cities area. Soils transition to very loose silty sand and coarse alluvial gravel close to the Columbia River.[5]

Agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance are generally not present within the developed urban portions of the City of Kennewick. Existing agricultural resource lands are primarily located outside the city's urbanized areas in unincorporated Benton County.

d. Are there surface indications or history of unstable soils in the immediate vicinity? If so, describe.

Geologic hazards include areas susceptible to erosion, sliding, earthquake, or other geological events. There are steep slopes and unstable slopes subject to erosion in southern Kennewick. See **Exhibit 2**.

e. Describe the purpose, type, total area, and approximate quantities and total affected area of any filling, excavation, and grading proposed. Indicate source of fill.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no filling or grading would occur as part of this non-project legislative action.

f. Could erosion occur because of clearing, construction, or use? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no erosion would occur because of clearing, construction, or use from this non-project legislative action.

g. About what percent of the site will be covered with impervious surfaces after project construction (for example, asphalt or buildings)?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no new impervious surface would result as part of this non-project legislative action.

h. Proposed measures to reduce or control erosion, or other impacts to the earth, if any.

Not applicable to this non-project legislative action. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control erosion are required. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards, including continued application of the City's critical area regulations, stormwater management regulations, and dust control standards. The proposed Land Use Element includes goals and policies to protect geologically hazardous areas, and the new Climate Element includes goals and policies that seek to protect natural resources and ecosystems vulnerable to climate change impacts, such as erosion. In addition, the updated CAO includes minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas (including geologically hazardous areas to reduce or control erosion).

[5] USDA Web Soil Survey (accessed June 2026); Washington State University Subterranean Termite Distribution Based on Associated Soil Type Tri Cities, WA.

2. Air

Find help answering air questions[6]

a. What types of emissions to the air would result from the proposal during construction, operation, and maintenance when the project is completed? If any, generally describe and give approximate quantities if known.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no specific emissions would result from this non-project legislative action. Future development would use construction equipment and new households, employees, and visitors would likely use motorized vehicles. Any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

b. Are there any off-site sources of emissions or odor that may affect your proposal? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no specific emissions or odors would affect this non-project legislative action.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control emissions or other impacts to air, if any:

Not applicable to this non-project legislative action. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control emissions are required. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards. Promoting growth in the UGA with mixed uses in Downtown and other more urban areas of the city as well as local opportunities for workforce and affordable housing could reduce commuting and reduce air emissions. The proposed Land Use Element includes goals and policies to protect the environment (including air quality), and the new Climate Element includes goals and policies that seek to protect natural resources and ecosystems vulnerable to climate change and to improve air quality.

3. Water

Find help answering water questions[7]

a. Surface:

Find help answering surface water questions[8]

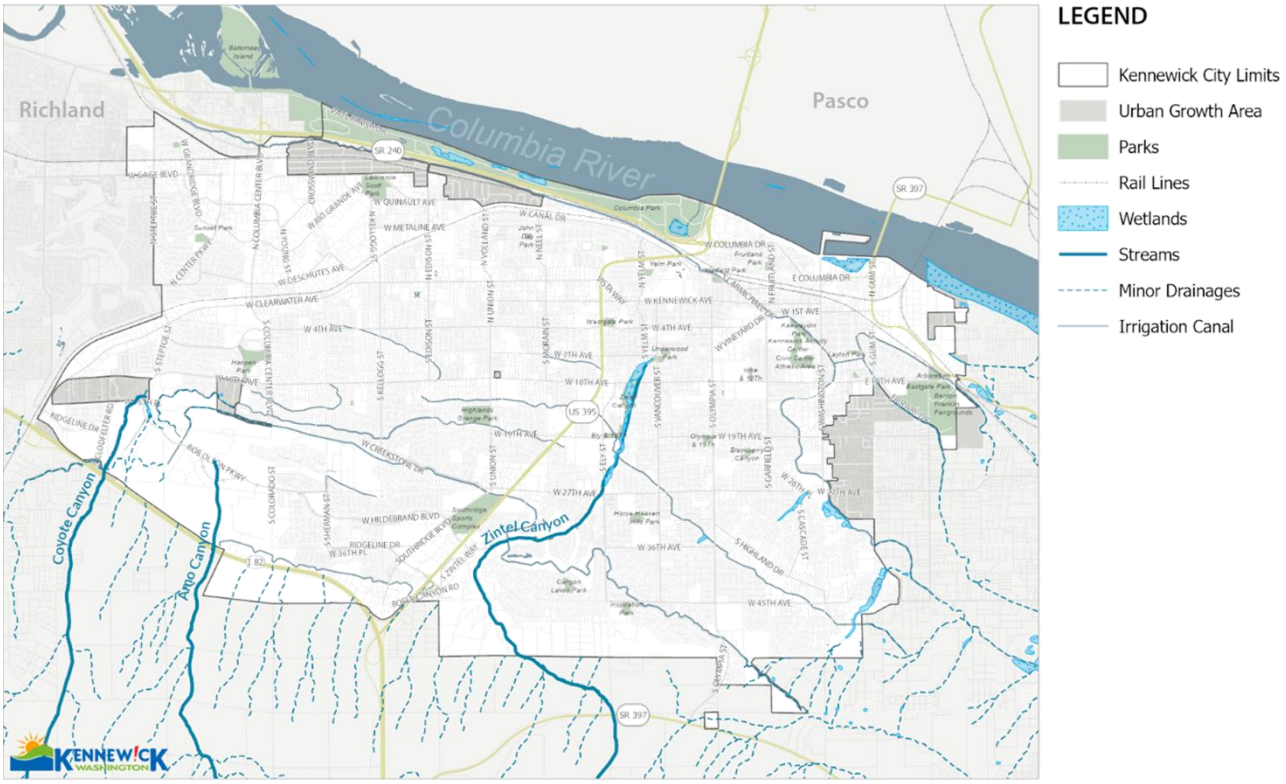
1. Is there any surface water body on or in the immediate vicinity of the site (including year-round and seasonal streams, saltwater, lakes, ponds, wetlands)? If yes, describe type and provide names. If appropriate, state what stream or river it flows into.

The northern boundary of Kennewick borders the Columbia River and the city is mostly within Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 37 (Rock-Glade) with portions of western Kennewick in WRIA 37 (Lower Yakima). Within the city, there are year-round and seasonal streams as well as several smaller drainage channels and basins. Surface water is also present in artificial irrigation canals used to transport irrigation water. Kennewick contains few wetlands and the most significant ones have been evaluated using the Department of Ecology's Washington State Wetland Rating System for Eastern Washington. These include: the wetlands associated with Elliot Lake, Zintel Canyon drainage way, wetlands around 36th and Olympia,

[6] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-Air
[7] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water
[8] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Surface-water

and 27th and Washington; and wetlands within Columbia Park and the Columbia River shoreline zone, including Duffy's Pond near Clover Island. These wetlands all classify as Category III Wetlands See **Exhibit 3**.

Exhibit 3. Surface Waters and Wetlands



Source: City of Kennewick, 2026; Benton County, 2026; MAKERS, 2026; BERK, 2026.

2. Will the project require any work over, in, or adjacent to (within 200 feet) the described waters? If yes, please describe and attach available plans.

Not applicable to this non-project legislative action. Future development or activities in the City's shoreline jurisdictions will continue to be subject to the City of Kennewick's Shoreline Master Program, and surface waters (including but not limited to rivers, streams, ponds, and wetlands) would continue to be regulated under the proposed CAO updates.

3. Estimate the amount of fill and dredge material that would be placed in or removed from surface water or wetlands and indicate the area of the site that would be affected. Indicate the source of fill material.

Not applicable to this non-project legislative action. Future development projects that require placing or removing fill and dredge material from surface waters or wetlands will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards, including Kennewick's wetland and shoreline regulations designed to avoid impacts to critical areas. The updated CAO also includes minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas to avoid impacts to surface waters and wetlands.

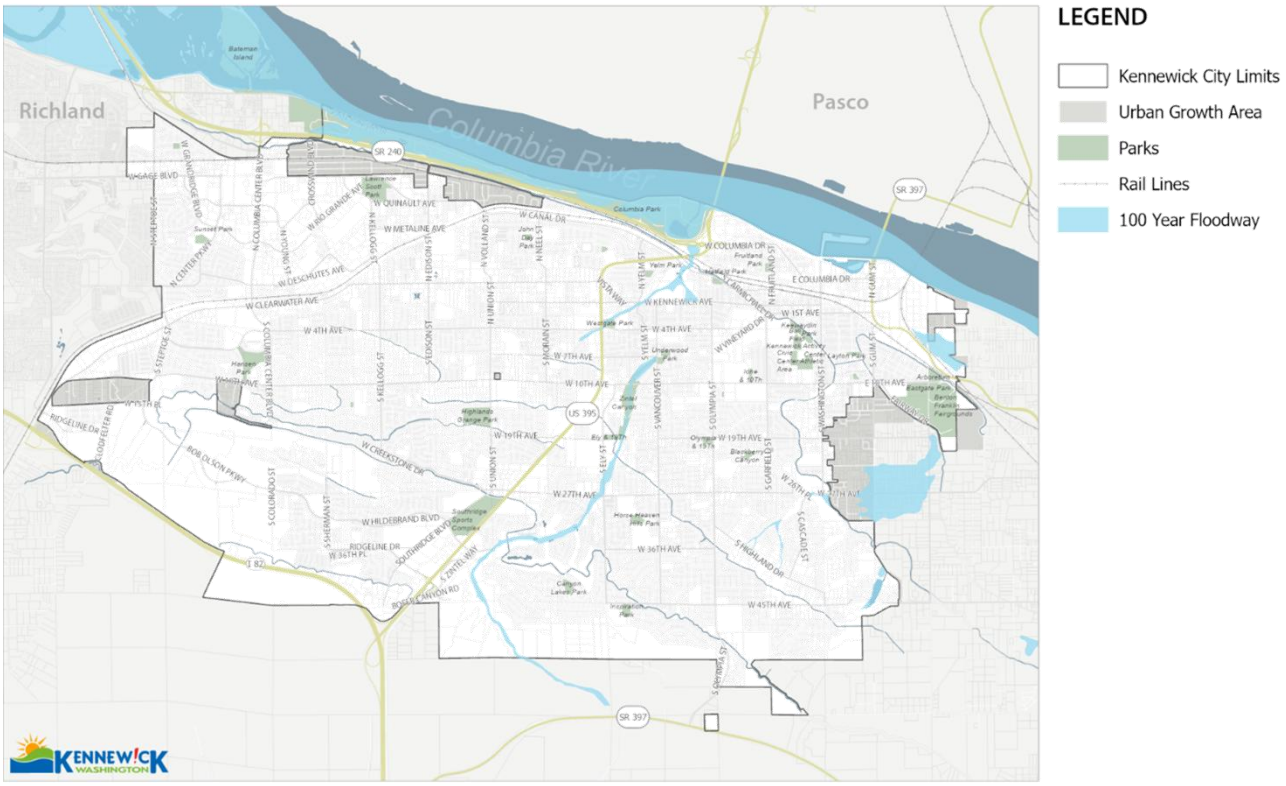
4. Will the proposal require surface water withdrawals or diversions? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no new surface water withdrawals or diversions would occur as part of this non-project legislative action.

5. Does the proposal lie within a 100-year floodplain? If so, note location on the site plan.

Exhibit 4 shows areas of the city within the 100-year floodplain, primarily along the Columbia River and Zintel Canyon. The updated CAO includes minor revision to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas (including frequently flooded areas).

Exhibit 4. Flood Hazard Areas



Source: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026; BERK, 2026.

6. Does the proposal involve any discharges of waste materials to surface waters? If so, describe the type of waste and anticipated volume of discharge.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no new discharges of waste materials to surface waters would occur as part of this non-project legislative action.

b. Ground:

Find help answering ground water questions[9]

1. Will groundwater be withdrawn from a well for drinking water or other purposes? If so, give a general description of the well, proposed uses and approximate quantities withdrawn from the well. Will water be discharged to groundwater? Give a general description, purpose, and approximate quantities if known.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no groundwater would be withdrawn or discharges made to groundwater as part of this non-project legislative action. Proposed updates to the CAO are intended to protect groundwater, while allowing for potable water use for future development.

[9] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-3-Water/Environmental-elements-Groundwater

2. Describe waste material that will be discharged into the ground from septic tanks or other sources, if any (domestic sewage; industrial, containing the following chemicals…; agricultural; etc.). Describe the general size of the system, the number of such systems, the number of houses to be served (if applicable), or the number of animals or humans the system(s) are expected to serve.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no new discharges of waste materials to ground waters would occur as part of this non-project legislative action.

c. Water Runoff (including stormwater):

1. Describe the source of runoff (including storm water) and method of collection and disposal, if any (include quantities, if known). Where will this water flow? Will this water flow into other waters? If so, describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no new runoff would occur as part of this non-project legislative action. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards, especially the City's Stormwater Management Plan.

2. Could waste materials enter ground or surface waters? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no new waste materials would enter ground or surface waters as part of this non-project legislative action. Proposed updates to the CAO are intended to protect ground and surface waters.

3. Does the proposal alter or otherwise affect drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site? If so, describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no drainage patterns in the vicinity of the site would be affected as part of this non-project legislative action.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control surface, ground, and runoff water, and drainage pattern impacts, if any:

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control surface, ground and runoff impacts are required. The proposal involves non-project legislative actions, and any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards. The proposed Land Use Element and new Climate Element also include goals and policies that preserve water quality and quantity while addressing the challenges posed by climate change, such as drought, reduced snowpack, sea level rise, and increased precipitation and flooding. In addition, protection standards in the proposed CAO update that incorporate the most recent Best Available Science are intended to avoid impacts to wetlands and to maintain existing drainage patterns, such as adding clarification for mitigation sequencing in land use development, an updated stream classification system, methods for stream and wetland buffer reduction, an added requirement for habitat assessment within shrub-steppe habitat, and increased protections for groundwater.

4. Plants

Find help answering plants questions

a. Check the types of vegetation found on the site:

- ☒ deciduous tree: alder, maple, aspen, other
- ☒ evergreen tree: fir, cedar, pine, other
- ☒ shrubs
- ☒ grass
- ☐ pasture
- ☒ crop or grain
- ☒ orchards, vineyards, or other permanent crops.
- ☒ wet soil plants: cattail, buttercup, bullrush, skunk cabbage, other
- ☒ water plants: water lily, eelgrass, milfoil, other
- ☒ other types of vegetation: shrub-steppe habitat

b. What kind and amount of vegetation will be removed or altered?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no vegetation would be removed or altered as part of this non-project legislative action.

c. List threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

State and federal agencies list threatened and endangered species that have the potential to be present in the City of Kennewick. Error! Reference source not found. summarizes threatened and endangered plant species in Benton County as identified by the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). DNR indicates that Kennewick is located in the Columbia Plateau ecoregion. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) online database does not list any plant species in Kennewick as threatened or endangered.

Exhibit 5. Threatened and Endangered Plants in Benton County

Species	Federal Status	State Status	Listing Agency
Wormskiold's northern wormwood	Sensitive	Endangered	DNR
Pauper milkvetch	Sensitive	Threatened	DNR
Thompson's sandwort	—	Threatened	DNR
Umtanum desert buckwheat*	Threatened	Endangered	USFWS, DNR
Gray cryptantha	Sensitive	Endangered	DNR
Columbia yellowcress	Sensitive	Threatened	DNR

*Listed by DNR in Benton County but not included in IPaC search results for the City of Kennewick.
Source: DNR 2024 Washington Vascular Species of Conservation Concern Report, 2024.

d. Proposed landscaping, use of native plants, or other measures to preserve or enhance vegetation on the site, if any.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no changes are proposed to landscaping or vegetation as part of this non-project legislative action. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards. The proposed Land Use Element and new Climate Element also include goals and policies that seek to protect ecosystems, including those vulnerable to climate change.

e. List all noxious weeds and invasive species known to be on or near the site.

The Benton County Noxious Weed Control Board[10] have identified the following Noxious Weeds as a top priority to address specifically within the county:

- **Class A:** flowering rush
- **Class B:** camelthorn, common reed, Dalmatian toadflax, Eurasian watermilfoil, hairy willow-herb, houndstongue, indigobush, diffuse knapweed, Russian knapweed, spotted knapweed, Bohemian knotweed, Japanese knotweed, kochia, purple loosestrife, perennial pepperweed, poison hemlock, puncturevine, rush skeletonweed, saltcedar, myrtle spurge, musk thistle, Scotch thistle, velvetleaf, white bryony, yellow nutsedge, yellow starthistle, and ravenna Grass
- **Class C:** baby's breath, buffalobur, cereal rye, common St. Johnswort, field bindweed, fragrant water lily, hairy whitetop, hoary cress, jointed goatgrass, longspine sandbur, pampas grass, reed canarygrass, spikeweed, bull thistle, Canada thistle, and yellow flag iris.

5. Animals

Find help answering animal questions[11]

a. List any birds and other animals that have been observed on or near the site or are known to be on or near the site.

Examples include:

☒ Birds: hawk, heron, eagle, songbirds, other:
☒ Mammals: deer, bear, elk, beaver, other:
☒ Fish: bass, salmon, trout, herring, ~~shellfish~~, other:

b. List any threatened and endangered species known to be on or near the site.

A variety of federal and state listed birds, mammals, and aquatic species are known to be or have habitat in the City of Kennewick (**Exhibit 6**). The list is based on the unofficial species list obtained from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) online database and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration – Fisheries (NOAA) website. USFWS identifies two listed species that are potentially present in the city: yellow-billed cuckoo and bull trout. Two ESA-listed species under the jurisdiction of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) are also listed as present in the city: Chinook salmon and steelhead trout. Within the city, critical habitat is designated by the USFWS for bull trout and by NOAA for both listed species. Critical habitat for the other four federally listed species is not designated by USFWS within the county. USFWS also identifies two proposed threatened or endangered species that are potentially present in the city: monarch butterfly and Suckley's cuckoo bumble bee—critical habitat for these species is either not present in the city or not designated.

Exhibit 6 also identifies priority species in the county as reported in the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitat and Species (PHS) data. WDFW maintains the PHS database to inventory potentially significant and endangered species and habitats. One additional state-listed endangered species has priority habitat in the city (ferruginous hawk). The state-listed endangered sandhill crane and greater sage-grouse are also known to occur in Benton County but no priority habitat or sitings are documented in the city by WDFW. WDFW also documents two candidate endangered species (burrowing owl and Townsend's ground squirrel) and one species not at risk (waterfowl) with priority habitat in the city. Shrub steppe is the most common priority

[10] See https://www.bentonweedboard.com/what-is-a-noxious-weed for a full list of every noxious weed in WA state and priorities in Benton County.
[11] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-5-Animals

habitat mapped throughout the city by WDFW (see also **Exhibit 12** in **Part B.8.h**). Other parts of the city—including freshwater habitat, vegetation patches, and documented and undocumented wetlands[12]—have the potential to provide habitat for state priority species and may be associated with federally listed species.

Given that this is a non-project action, and no development is proposed, there would be no measurable effects to listed species.

Exhibit 6. USFWS Threatened and Endangered Animal Species in Benton County (State Status)

Species	Federal Status	State Status	Critical or Priority Habitat	Listing Agency
ESA-listed				
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	Threatened	Endangered	Designated—none present in Kennewick	USFWS, WDFW
Bull Trout	Threatened	Candidate	Designated and present in the Columbia River	USFWS
Chinook Salmon	Endangered	—	Designated and present in the Columbia River	NOAA Fisheries
Steelhead Trout	Threatened	Candidate	Designated and present in the Columbia River	NOAA Fisheries
Monarch Butterfly	Proposed Threatened	Candidate	Designated (proposed)—none present in Kennewick	USFWS
Suckley's Cuckoo Bumble Bee	Proposed Endangered	—	*No critical habitat has been designated for this species*	USFWS
State-listed, Essential Fish Habitat, or PHS Only				
Burrowing Owl	—	Candidate	PSH listed species or habitat present in Kennewick	WDFW
Ferruginous Hawk	—	Endangered	PSH listed species or habitat present in Kennewick	WDFW
Greater Sage-grouse	—	Endangered	PHS listed species or habitat—none present in Kennewick	WDFW
Sandhill Crane	—	Endangered	PHS listed species or habitat—none present in Kennewick	WDFW
Townsend's Ground Squirrel	—	Candidate	PSH listed species or habitat present in Kennewick	WDFW
Waterfowl	—	—	PSH listed species or habitat present in Kennewick	WDFW

Sources: USFWS IPaC, 2026; NOAA West Coast Region Species and Habitat App, 2026; WDFW Priority Habitat and Species Statewide List and Distribution by County, 2023, WDFW Priority Habitats and Species on the Web App, 2026; BERK, 2026.

c. Is the site part of a migration route? If so, explain.

The City of Kennewick is part of the Pacific Flyway for birds and salmonids migrate through the adjacent Columbia River.

[12] Other types of priority habitats mapped in the city include freshwater emergent wetlands, freshwater forested/shrub wetlands, freshwater ponds, riverine habitat, and wetlands.

d. Proposed measures to preserve or enhance wildlife, if any.

Not applicable as this is a non-project action. Individual development projects will conduct wildlife surveys as necessary during the environmental review process to determine the presence of federal or state listed species or habitat. The proposed Land Use Element and new Climate Element also include goals and policies that seek to protect ecosystems, including those vulnerable to climate change. The CAO will also continue to regulate fish and wildlife conservation areas, wetlands, and all other critical areas, with proposed updates to incorporate the most recent Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas. Proposed updates to the CAO and some targeted re-designations to lower intensity districts on the future land use map (see **Exhibit 11** in **Part B.8.f**) would better protect wildlife and habitat areas as the city continues to grow.

e. List any invasive animal species known to be on or near the site.

State agencies identify animal species that are invasive in Benton County. According to the Washington Invasive Species Council, the following priority invasive animal species are known to occur in Benton County,

- Bullfrog: found throughout the lowlands of Washington.
- Invasive zooplankton: in the Columbia River
- New Zealand Mud Snail: first discovered in the lower Columbia River in 2002
- Nutria: first introduced into Washington for the fur-farming industry in the 1930s, found in lakes, wetlands, sloughs, drainage ditches, and irrigation canals along the Columbia River

According to WDFW, none of the three aquatic invasive species of greatest concern (the European green crab, northern pike, or zebra and quagga mussels) are known to occur in Benton County.

6. Energy and Natural Resources

Find help answering energy and natural resource questions[13]

a. What kinds of energy (electric, natural gas, oil, wood stove, solar) will be used to meet the completed project's energy needs? Describe whether it will be used for heating, manufacturing, etc.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no energy will be used from this non-project proposal.

b. Would your project affect the potential use of solar energy by adjacent properties? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no potential solar use would be affected by this non-project proposal.

c. What kinds of energy conservation features are included in the plans of this proposal? List other proposed measures to reduce or control energy impacts, if any.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no energy conservation features are required. The proposal involves non-project legislative actions, and any future development projects will be evaluated subject to building and energy codes and local regulations and standards. The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to protect natural resources, increase energy reliability and resilience, and improve building energy efficiency.

[13] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-6-Energy-natural-resou

7. Environmental Health

Health Find help with answering environmental health questions[14]

a. Are there any environmental health hazards, including exposure to toxic chemicals, risk of fire and explosion, spill, or hazardous waste, that could occur because of this proposal? If so, describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no environmental health hazards will result as part of this non-project legislative action.

1. Describe any known or possible contamination at the site from present or past uses.

Exhibit 7. City of Kennewick Contaminated Sites

Site Name	Address	Site Status
Twin City Metals	455 E Bruneau Ave	Cleanup Started
Kennewick U HAUL	800-812 W Columbia Dr	Cleanup Started
Verizon Kennewick Garage	4916 W Clearwater Ave	Cleanup Started
BNRR Dairygold	229 N Fruitland	Awaiting Cleanup
Columbia Center Dry Cleaner Space 873	1321 N Columbia Center Blvd	Cleanup Started
Sun Mart 11	7707 W Deschutes Ave	CC-Perf. Monitoring
J Lieb Foods	10 E Bruneau Ave	Awaiting Cleanup
Tri Cities Minit Mart 2	1400 W 27th Ave	Cleanup Started

Source: WA Dept of Ecology Contaminated Site List, 2026.

2. Describe existing hazardous chemicals/conditions that might affect project development and design. This includes underground hazardous liquid and gas transmission pipelines located within the project area and in the vicinity.

According to the Department of Transportation Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration jurisdiction GIS site, two hazardous gas transmission lines run through the City of Kennewick (one runs north-south to the west of US-395 and one runs east-west along the southern edge of the city generally east of US-395). There are no hazardous liquid transmission lines in the city.

The proposal involves non-project legislative actions, any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

3. Describe any toxic or hazardous chemicals that might be stored, used, or produced during the project's development or construction, or at any time during the operating life of the project.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no toxic or hazardous chemicals will be stored, used, or produced as part of this non-project legislative action.

4. Describe special emergency services that might be required.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no special emergency services are required as part of this non-project legislative action.

[14] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-7-Environmental-health

5. Proposed measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards, if any.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control environmental health hazards are required. The proposal involves non-project legislative actions, and any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards. The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to prepare the City of Kennewick and its residents for hazards exacerbated by climate change, including increased flooding and precipitation, wildfires and wildfire smoke, extreme heat, and more.

b. Noise

1. What types of noise exist in the area which may affect your project (for example: traffic, equipment, operation, other)?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no additional noise would be created as part of this non-project legislative action.

2. What types and levels of noise would be created by or associated with the project on a short-term or a long-term basis (for example: traffic, construction, operation, other)? Indicate what hours noise would come from the site)?

Although this proposal is for a non-project action, it is anticipated that growth and development in the city and surrounding areas will inevitably result in heightened traffic, consequently elevating noise levels along main transportation routes and potentially affecting nearby properties. Potential future developments within the city may further exacerbate background traffic noise, introduce operational noise, or overall increase ambient noise levels. While short-term noise stemming from the construction of individual projects is expected, these effects will be temporary and transient. The City will continue to assess noise impacts arising from individual development and construction as part of the environmental review process for each specific project.

3. Proposed measures to reduce or control noise impacts, if any:

Future site-specific development would be subject to State noise regulations. The City's development regulations also reduce the potential for conflicts such as noise between various incompatible use types. No additional measures to reduce or control noise impacts are required as the proposal involves non-project legislative actions and no development is proposed.

8. Land and Shoreline Use

Find help answering land and shoreline use questions[15]

a. What is the current use of the site and adjacent properties? Will the proposal affect current land uses on nearby or adjacent properties? If so, describe.

Kennewick contains a wide range of land uses. Most parts of the city are developed, with approximately 3,000 acres of vacant land as of 2025 (or about 18% of all estimated parcel acres in the Kennewick UGA). Vacant parcels are primarily located in the southern half of the city.

One of the oldest areas of Kennewick is Downtown, located in the northeast sector of the city. Downtown and some surrounding older neighborhoods have a grid of streets and alleys, and most of the city is characterized by residential subdivisions with large lots and disconnected streets. The city has a grid of arterial streets that connect residential and commercial areas. Highways and railroads provide regional transportation access and also create some notable boundaries. The city is also laced with miles of open-water irrigation canals that deliver water and collect stormwater runoff. Key land use conditions in Kennewick include:

- Downtown is the traditional focus of the city's commercial and cultural development, but in recent decades it has competed with outlying commercial areas for retail and office jobs. It is south of a freight rail line and part of the district includes light industrial uses. Kennewick City Hall is located south of Downtown on the other side of a canal and public park.
- Bridge-to-Bridge is between the U.S. 395 and Benton-Franklin Intercounty Bridges and located north of the freight rail line across from Downtown, and reaches the Columbia River waterfront. It is one of Kennewick's most eclectic districts with a wide mix of residential, commercial, and light industrial uses. The area is adjacent to Clover Island and other economic development properties owned by the Port of Kennewick.
- Columbia Park is a unique 4.5 mile-long, 400-acre shoreline park along Kennewick's riverfront west of US 395. It is the largest park in the city and contains a variety of recreation features.
- Entertainment District is the informal name for the area of northwest Kennewick containing a regional mall, the Toyota Center (used for hockey and concerts), and the City-owned convention center. The area has a variety of other retail shopping centers and office parks, and it has the city's largest concentration of hotels.
- Vista Field is a 103-acre Port of Kennewick property that aims to be a dense and mixed-use town center adjacent to the Entertainment District. Formerly a general aviation airport that closed in 2013, the site remains mostly vacant as of 2026. The Port is planning for about 1,100 dwelling units and 750,000 square feet of non-residential development.
- Southridge is a growing area of residential and commercial development on the south edge of the city, and contains the most significant remaining vacant land within the city limits. Substantial infrastructure investments have been made over the past 20 years, including the roadway and utility network, parks, and a relocation of the city's main hospital.
- Other commercial districts or corridors are limited to a few locations, including the W Clearwater Ave corridor in central Kennewick, Gage Boulevard in west Kennewick, and the intersections of US 395 at W 27th Ave and W 10th Ave.

Residential neighborhoods throughout the rest of the city are generally low-density with predominantly single-household dwellings. There are several pockets of rural-size lots that are still using on-site septic systems, and only a handful of parcels remain in agricultural use. While most existing housing is detached single-family residences, Kennewick also has an increasing number of attached middle housing and multifamily buildings. The city also has twenty mobile home parks. The 26 schools in city limits are mostly located in these residential areas.

Industrial areas are concentrated in a few locations along railroads and highways. One is a cluster of industrial businesses transitioning from the north side of Downtown towards the northeast, including parts of Bridge-to-

[15] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-8-Land-shoreline-use

Bridge, and this area includes the city's public works yard and wastewater treatment plant. There is another industrial cluster on the east side of Vista Field. The newest industrial area is in Southridge north of I-82, and the City is actively seeking to expand this area south of I-82 by extending utilities to new development sites.

See **Exhibit 8** for a breakdown of current land uses based on land use types used in the Benton County Countywide Planning Policies (CPPs) defined formula for determining UGA sizing.

Exhibit 8. Current Land Use Inventory (2025)

CPP Use Category	Total Acres	Developed Acres	Buildable Acres: Underdeveloped	Buildable Acres: Vacant
Residential	10,659	4,446	4,144	2,068
Parks and Recreational	719	719	—	—
Public Facilities	402	402	—	—
Schools	516	465	10	41
Commercial	1,603	976	191	436
Industrial	834	323	69	441
Open Space	435	435	—	—
Public Service ROW	390	390	—	—
Critical Areas	678	—	—	—
Subtotal	**16,235**	**8,156**	**4,414**	**2,987**

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; Benton County, 2025; BERK, 2026.

No development is proposed as part of this non-project legislative action. However, currently vacant, underdeveloped, or non-conforming properties may redevelop over time as parts of the city transition to uses consistent with the proposed future land use map (see **Exhibit 11** in response to **B.8.f** below).

b. Has the project site been used as working farmlands or working forest lands? If so, describe. How much agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted to other uses because of the proposal, if any? If resource lands have not been designated, how many acres in farmland or forest land tax status will be converted to nonfarm or nonforest use?

There are no long-term commercially significant farmlands or forest lands within the city. There are a few "hobby farms" within the city and one working commercial orchard in the southeast portion of the city (currently zoned RL). The City's agricultural zoning classification (A-1) is limited to a single parcel that is currently an easement within a developed subdivision. No agricultural or forest land of long-term commercial significance will be converted as part of this non-project legislative action.

Benton County's Comprehensive Plan mineral resource map designates mineral resource lands within the county. Two locations within and near Kennewick's UGA identified in this map contain major high-grade sand and gravel deposits. These locations are southeast of Kennewick (south of 27th Avenue and as far east as the Finley area) and East Kennewick (east of Oak St at the Benton County Fairgrounds). The south Kennewick gravel pit is outside the City's UGA. The Oak Street gravel pit at the fairground site is closed for mining with the northern portion owned by the City and the southern portion owned by Benton County. No other sites in Kennewick are known to have long-term commercial significance for mining.

1. Will the proposal affect or be affected by surrounding working farm or forest land normal business operations, such as oversize equipment access, the application of pesticides, tilling, and harvesting? If so, how?

See response to question **B.8.a** and **B.8.b**. No development is proposed as part of this non-project legislative action. Future development will continue to be regulated by the Kennewick Municipal Code.

c. Describe any structures on the site.

See response to question **B.8.a** for a description of land use patterns in the city. Structures in the city are consistent with its land use pattern.

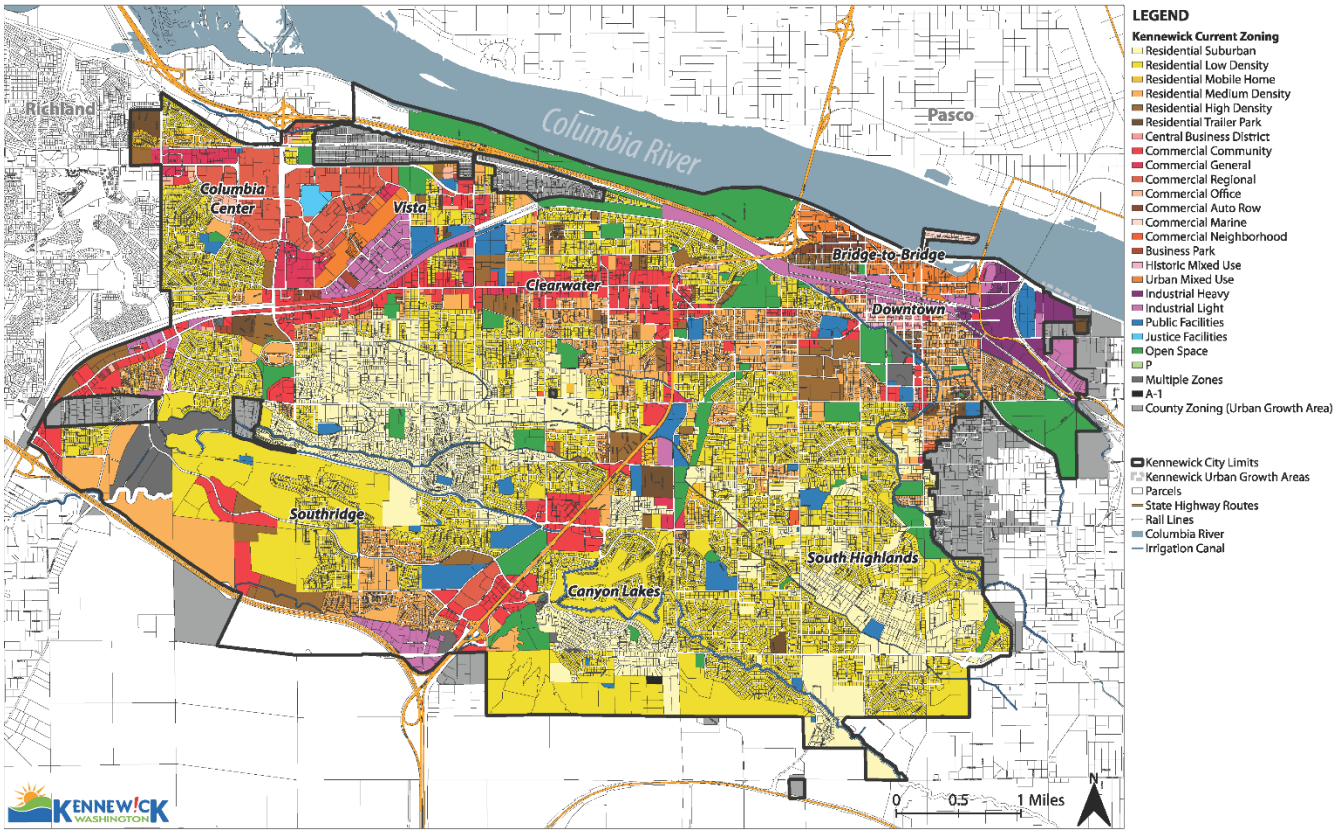
d. Will any structures be demolished? If so, what?

Not applicable. This non-project legislative action does not include demolition of any structures. Current uses could convert to other uses allowed under the zoning code as development occurs consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and implementing regulations. Any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

e. What is the current zoning classification of the site?

The City's current zoning map is shown in **Exhibit 9** (also available online). Citywide, the predominant zoning districts are lower density residential, including the RL and RS zones. Other extensive designations include commercial zones along major arterials (CC) and in the northwest portion of the city (CR), mixed use and higher density residential zones in Downtown, the Bridge-to-Bridge area, and Vista Field (CBD, UMU, and RH), and industrial zones northeast of Downtown (IH and IL).

Exhibit 9. Existing Zoning



Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

f. What is the current comprehensive plan designation of the site?

The existing Future Land Use Map (FLUM) is available online. Citywide, the predominant land use districts are Low Density Residential (LDR) with moderate and higher intensity uses designated along the major arterials and in commercial and mixed-use parts of the city (e.g., Downtown, Bridge-to-Bridge, Columbia Center, and Vista Field). The Public Facility and Open Space land use designations are applied to City owned and non-City owned public facilities, parks, and open space needed to provide the full range of services to the public.

The City is proposing an updated FLUM map as part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. This includes consolidating the existing Medium Density Residential (MDR) and High Density Residential (HDR) districts into one Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR) district and redesignating targeted areas on the FLUM based on the land capacity analysis, community priorities, and adopted growth targets. **Exhibit 10** summarizes the proposed land use designation updates as well as potential future zone consolidations the City may pursue at a later date. The left column shows the proposed changes to the land use designations, the middle column shows the proposed re-arrangement of implementing zoning districts to match the updated land use designations, and the right column includes additional information and options for future zone consolidation.

Exhibit 10. Summary of Proposed Land Use Designation Updates and Potential Future Zone Consolidations

Future Land Use Map Designation	Implementing Zones	Notes
Low Density Residential	RS, RL	This designation continues to provide for low-density residential development on lands now characterized by single-family development, are constrained by sensitive areas, are distant from existing/planned commercial services, community facilities, public transit service, and/or provide a transition to rural areas.
~~Medium Density Residential~~	~~RM, HMU, RMH, RTP~~	See new designation below.
~~High Density Residential~~	~~RH, RTP~~	See new designation below.
Medium-High Density Residential	RH, RM, HMU, RMH*, RTP	This new category is recommended to combine Medium and High designations/zones because even together they represent a relatively small share of the city land area, they have similar criteria for location, and most of the zones allow multifamily use. * The RMH zone is being considered for deletion, and those parcels could be rezoned to RL.
Commercial	CN*, CO*, CBD, CC, CR, CG*, CM, CAR*, HMU, BP*	This designation provides for a variety of commercial and mixed-use districts that serve local and regional customers. These districts are centrally located along transportation and transit routes. * Multiple commercial zones that cover relatively small land area and/or have overlapping standards with other zones are being considered for deletion. These parcels would be rezoend to other commercial zones in this category.
Mixed	UMU	This designation provides for a variety of commercial and residential uses in areas with subarea plans or master plans, including Bridge-to-Bridge and Vista Field.
Industrial	BP*, IP*, IL, IH	This designation provides for a mix of industrial, service, and limited commercial uses that do not compete with uses in the Commercial designation. These districts are located on the periphery of the city and have access to highways or railroads. * The BP zone is being considered for consolidation with other commercial zones, and the IP zone is not used on the zoning map.
Public Facilities	PF, JF*	This designation provides for City-owned and non-City public facilities * The small JF zone is being considered for deletion, and those parcels could be rezoned to PF.
Open Space	OS, PF	This designation provides for public parks, golf courses, shorelines, ravines and canyons, and other open spaces that are restricted for development.

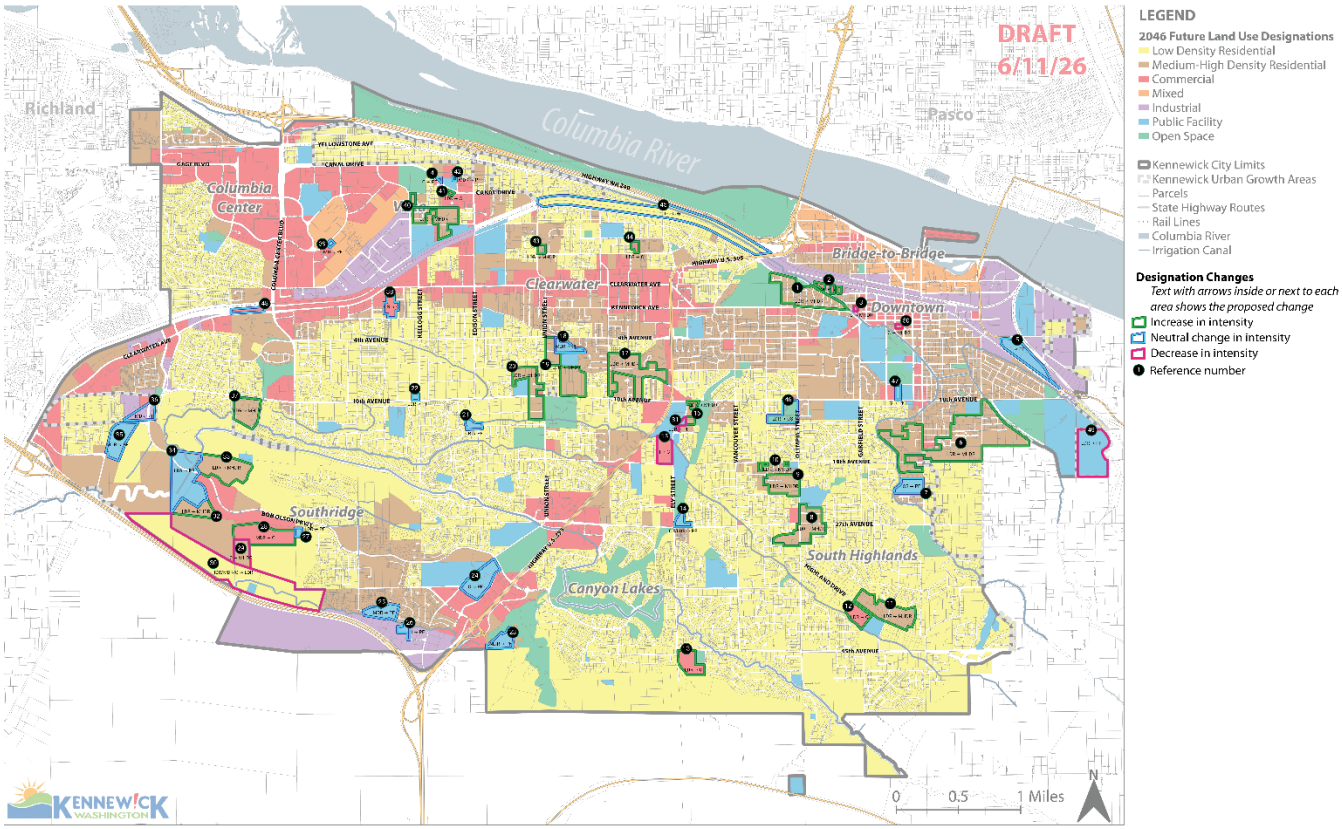
Zoning Abbreviations
RS - Residential Suburban
RL - Residential Low Density
RM - Residential Medium Density
RH - Residential High Density
RMH - Residential Mobile Homes
RTP - Residential Trailer Park
HMU - Historic Mixed Use
CN - Commercial Neighborhood
CO - Commercial Office
CBD - Central Business District
CC - Commercial Community
CR - Commercial Regional
CG - Commercial General
CM - Commercial Marine
CAR - Commercial Auto Row
BP - Business Park
UMU - Urban Mixed Use
IP - Industrial Park
IL - Industrial, Light
IH - Industrial, Heavy
PF - Public Facility
JF - Justice Facility
OS - Open Space

Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

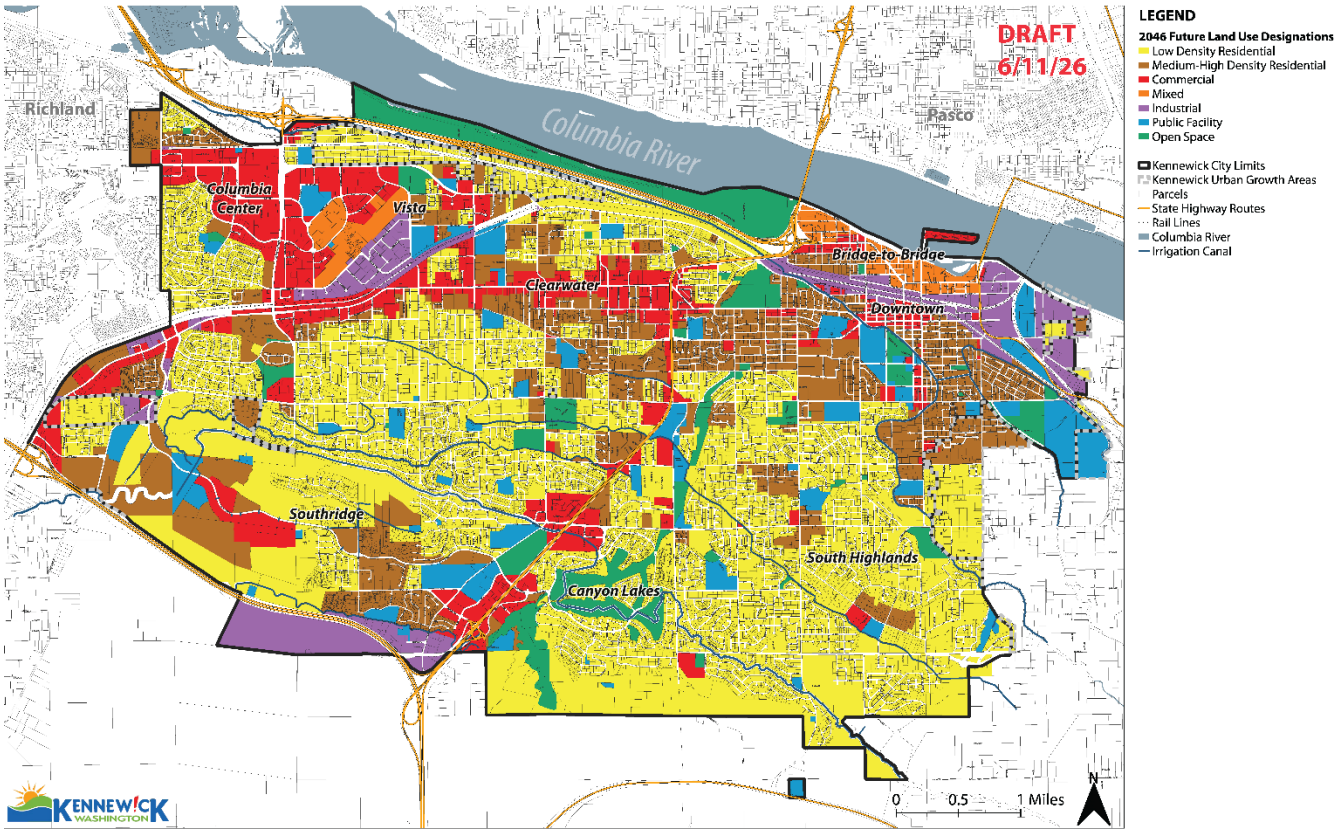
Exhibit 11 highlights areas proposed for redesignation and presents the full proposed FLUM. Areas where there is a proposed increase in intensity are outlined in green. These changes consist primarily of areas going from LDR to the new MHDR district and are focused in parts of the city near existing transit, business districts, parks, schools, or other amenities or in underdeveloped areas with large lots and limited critical areas (e.g., parts of South Highlands, north and west of Downtown, south of Clearwater Ave, and Southridge). Other proposed changes include decreases in intensity in areas that are heavily encumbered by critical areas (e.g., parts of Southridge outlined in pink to reflect a decrease in intensity) or changes to align with current land uses (e.g., changes from a residential to commercial designation outlined in green or redesignations to public facility generally outlined in blue to reflect a neutral change in intensity).

Exhibit 11. Proposed Changes to the FLUM and Proposed FLUM

Proposed Changes



Proposed FLUM



Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026.

g. If applicable, what is the current shoreline master program designation of the site?

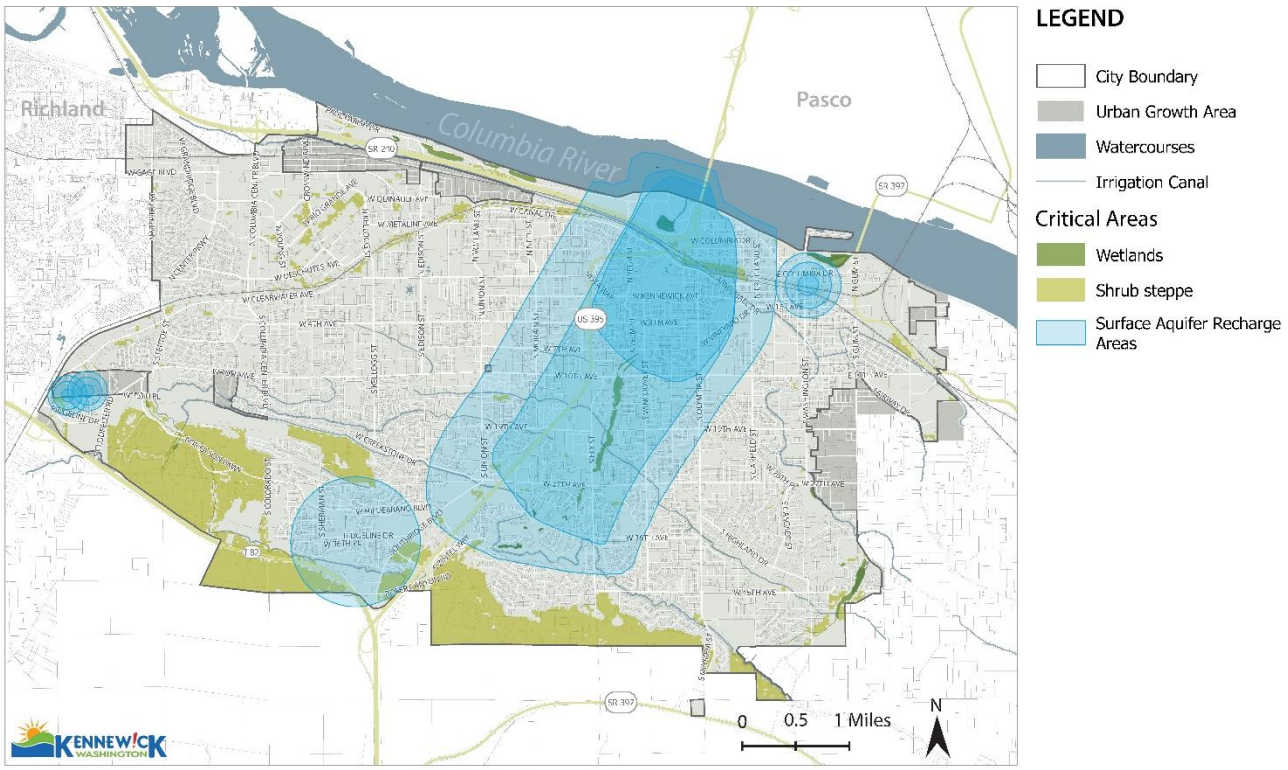
The Shoreline Master Program, contained in KMC 18.68 Shoreline Management, protects Shorelines of the State (the Columbia River in Kennewick). Parallel shoreline environments of aquatic, urban conservancy, and high-intensity use divide the shorelines into different sections generally running parallel to the Columbia River.

h. Has any part of the site been classified as a critical area by the city or county? If so, specify.

Critical areas in Kennewick include geologically hazardous areas, wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, frequently flooded areas, and areas of critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water (aquifer recharge areas). Steep slopes and erosion hazard areas are mapped in **Exhibit 2**, wetlands and surface waters are mapped in **Exhibit 3**, flood hazard areas are mapped in **Exhibit 4**, and critical aquifer recharge areas are mapped in **Exhibit 12**. **Exhibit 12** also shows the location of wetlands and shrub steppe habitat areas.

The proposed Land Use Element includes goals and policies to protect critical areas, and the new Climate Element includes goals and policies that seek to protect natural resources and ecosystems vulnerable to climate change impacts. In addition, the proposed CAO update includes minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas, adding clarification for mitigation sequencing in land use development, an updated stream classification system, methods for stream and wetland buffer reduction, a requirement for habitat assessment within shrub-steppe habitat, and increased protections for groundwater.

Exhibit 12. Critical Areas: Wetlands, Shrub Steppe, and Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas



Sources: City of Kennewick, 2026; MAKERS, 2026; Parametrix, 2026.

i. Approximately how many people would reside or work in the completed project?

In 2025, Benton County and cities developed population projections for the incorporated and unincorporated areas based on the State's 2022 Medium projection. The agreed upon population forecast is summarized in **Exhibit 13**, including a projected population of 108,989 in the City of Kennewick by 2046.

Exhibit 13. Benton County 20-Year Population Projection and Distribution (2024–2046)

Jurisdiction	2020 Population	2024 Population	Projected 2046 Population	Projected Growth (2020-2046)	Projected Growth (2024-2046)
Kennewick	83,921	87,120	108,989	25,068	21,869
Richland	60,560	64,190	82,448	21,888	18,258
County (unincorporated)	36,556	37,805	47,355	10,799	9,550
West Richland	16,295	18,280	26,387	10,092	8,107
Prosser	6,062	6,610	8,292	2,230	1,682
Benton City	3,479	3,845	4,985	1,506	1,140
Total	**206,873**	**217,850**	**278,456**	**71,583**	**60,606**

Sources: OFM, 2025; City of Kennewick, 2025; Benton County, 2025.

The County and City of Kennewick do not adopt formal employment growth targets. However, the Benton County CPPs require the City to compare estimated capacity for commercial and industrial/manufacturing jobs as part of the City's UGA inventory. The City is planning for an estimated 59,814 jobs in Kennewick by 2046, or job growth of 12,893 over 2023 employment estimates. This includes an estimated 44,300 commercial jobs and 3,091 industrial jobs in the city by 2046, or job growth of approximately 10,819 commercial jobs and 414 industrial jobs by 2046.

j. Approximately how many people would the completed project displace?

The intent of the Comprehensive Plan update is to address how to accommodate Kennewick's projected growth by 2046. The plan includes future land use designations to accommodate both existing and future residential and commercial uses. No displacement is expected as a direct result of this non-project legislative proposal.

k. Proposed measures to avoid or reduce displacement impacts, if any.

Not applicable. The intent of the comprehensive plan update is to address how to accommodate Kennewick's projected growth by 2046. The plan includes future land use designations to accommodate both existing and future residential and commercial uses. Specific policy language is also proposed to reduce residential and commercial displacement risk. The proposed Housing Action Plan (HAP) also includes potential strategies the City may pursue to minimize residential displacement.

l. Proposed measures to ensure the proposal is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans, if any.

The County's Comprehensive Plan is designed to be consistent with land use guidance in the GMA and the Benton County CPPs. The proposed 2026 Comprehensive Plan includes updated future land use designation definitions and policy language to support land use compatibility (see the Land Use Element).

m. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts to agricultural and forest lands of long-term commercial significance, if any:

Not applicable. See response to **B.8.b**. There are no agricultural or forest lands of long-term commercial significance in the city, and the limited mineral resource land (the Oak Street gravel pit at the fairground site) is no longer a working mine, is owned by the City and County, and is not planned for future development. The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to promote climate resiliency within the city and for the broader agricultural and natural resources in the Tri-Cities region against impacts such as extreme heat and drought.

9. Housing

Find help answering housing questions[16]

a. Approximately how many units would be provided, if any? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

No housing units will be constructed as part of this non-project legislative action. However, the GMA requires that Benton County and the cities within allocate a fair share of housing over a 20-year period through the Benton County CPPs. The City of Kennewick's housing growth targets overall and by income band are summarized in **Exhibit 14** as set in the Benton County CPPs. The greatest need for new units is at the lowest end of the affordability spectrum (less than or equal to 80% AMI). A total of 2,604 units are needed for households earning 30% AMI or less, including 1,597 units of permanent supportive housing that include wrap-around services for people who need support to maintain residency. Emergency housing targets are in addition to permanent supportive housing.

Exhibit 14. City of Kennewick Adopted Housing Growth Targets (2020–2046)

Total Housing Need	0-30% AMI: Non-PSH	0-30% AMI: PSH	>30 to ≤50% AMI	>50 to ≤80% AMI	>80 to ≤100% AMI	>100 to ≤120% AMI	>120% AMI	Emergency Housing Beds
12,626	1,597	1,007	2,513	1,772	974	1,104	3,659	57

Legend: PSH = Permanent Supportive Housing; AMI = Area Median Income.
Notes: While additional units have been built since 2020, the affordability level of those units is unknown at this time. These units have therefore not been deducted from the overall target to ensure the analysis doesn't imply less remaining need than actually exists. Emergency housing includes emergency housing and shelter and is in addition to permanent housing needs.
Sources: City of Kennewick, 2025; Benton County, 2025.

b. Approximately how many units, if any, would be eliminated? Indicate whether high, middle, or low-income housing.

Not applicable. This non-project legislative action does not include elimination of any units. Any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control housing impacts, if any:

The proposed Comprehensive Plan contains goals and policies intended to meet the housing needs of all Kennewick residents. Specific policy language is included to address racially disparate impacts and displacement risk, consistent with new state and regional policy guidance that has been adopted since the City's last periodic Comprehensive Plan update. The City is also proposing changes to residential use and development standards to ensure capacity for housing at all income levels, to encourage more mid-rise projects and affordable housing, and for consistency with new state law concurrent with the Periodic Update. These include:

- Revise residential use standards to promote more housing types in more zones (HAP Strategy 1.1.1).
  - Allow multifamily in the CAR and BP zones and ensuring new multifamily development in commercial zones with height limits less than 85 feet are not subject to the mixed-use requirements of the City's Commercial Design Standards.
  - Ensure co-living housing development is not required to be mixed-use.
- Clarify regulations for emergency, transitional, and permanent supportive housing to be consistent with state law (HAP Strategy 1.1.2).

[16] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-9-Housing

- Remove maximum density limits in medium- and high-density residential zones (HAP Strategy 1.2.1).
- Revise parking standards to be consistent with state law (HAP Strategy 1.3.1).

In addition, the HAP outlines other potential strategies and implementation actions the City may pursue after the Periodic Update to promote greater housing diversity, affordability, and access to opportunity for residents of all income levels in the city. It is an actionable policy document that outlines concrete steps the City and its partners can take to meet local housing needs. The HAP takes a comprehensive approach to leverage resources and previous and current planning efforts and provides options to implement cohesive, effective, and feasible housing strategies tailored to the Kennewick community.

10. Aesthetics

Find help answering aesthetics questions[17]

a. What is the tallest height of any proposed structure(s), not including antennas; what is the principal exterior building material(s) proposed?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no buildings or structures are proposed as part of this non-project legislative action. Any future development projects would need to be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and implementing regulations, including allowed heights and building materials found in KMC Chapter 18.12. Individual projects will continue to be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

Kennewick currently has relatively generous building height limits, especially with unlimited heights in most commercial zones for at least the past 20 years. However, this has not resulted in many developments taking advantage of the situation, with the tallest recent multifamily development topping out at four stories (Resort at Hansen Park in a CC zone) and some hotels being up to five stories (SpringHill Suites in a CR zone). Height limits in residential zones range from 35 to 45 feet.

After the Periodic Update, the City may make small revisions to height limits in the lower-density residential zones and add height bonuses of one or two stories in medium- and high-density residential zones for developments providing a certain number of affordable units (HAP Strategy 1.2.2).

b. What views in the immediate vicinity would be altered or obstructed?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no views would be altered or obstructed as part of this non-project legislative action.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts, if any:

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control aesthetic impacts are required. The proposal involves non-project legislative actions, and any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards, including the City's development regulations and design standards for residential and commercial development.

[17] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-10-Aesthetics

11. Light and Glare

Find help answering light and glare questions[18]

a. What type of light or glare will the proposal produce? What time of day would it mainly occur?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no light or glare would be produced as part of this non-project legislative action.

b. Could light or glare from the finished project be a safety hazard or interfere with views?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no light or glare would be produced as part of this non-project legislative action.

c. What existing off-site sources of light or glare may affect your proposal?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no off-site sources of light or glare would affect this non-project legislative action.

d. Proposed measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts, if any:

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control light and glare impacts are required. The proposal involves non-project legislative actions, and any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

12. Recreation

Find help answering recreation questions

a. What designated and informal recreational opportunities are in the immediate vicinity?

Kennewick Parks and Recreation (KPR) maintains 28 parks sites including 25 developed city parks and 3 undeveloped sites. These parks are of varying sizes and types, including neighborhood parks, community parks, premiere parks (also known as regional parks), special use parks, and natural parks. See **Exhibit 15**. In total, KPR maintains 684 developed acres of parkland and nine miles of pathways and trails.

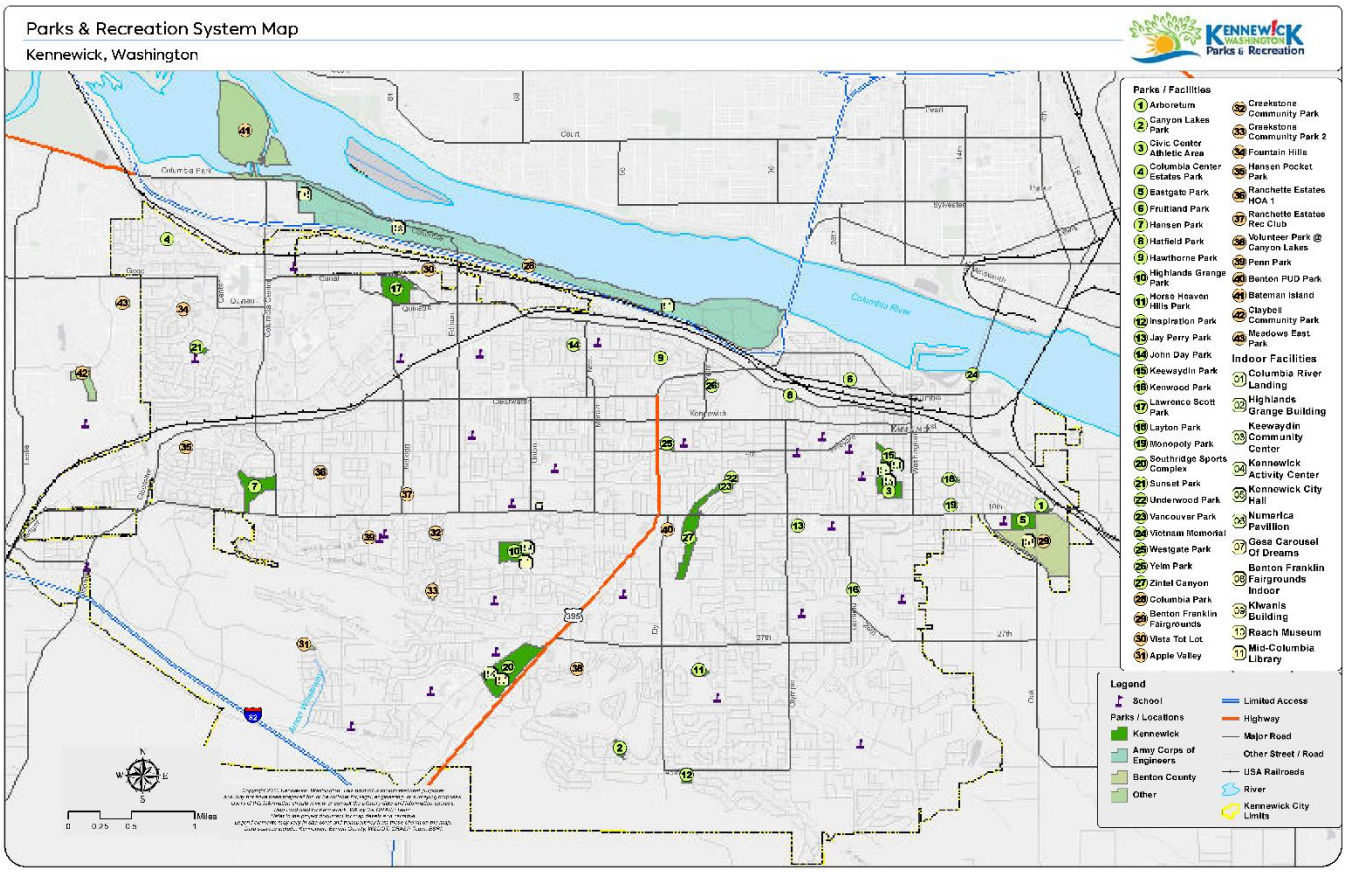
Open space corridors in Kennewick include lands that can be used for recreation, such as parks and golf courses, wildlife habitat areas, trails, lands that are unsuitable for development, and identified critical areas and the connections between them. Some open spaces in Kennewick are currently not designated as parkland and were not included in the City's inventory; however, these spaces offer recreational value to the community and have been identified as critical areas in the Comprehensive Plan and CAO. Many of these areas are currently being preserved as open space.

School sites owned by the Kennewick School District also offer open space and playfields for residents. However, KPR programs have not utilized non-City grounds for specific programs in the recent past. In several places, park sites are located adjacent to the school sites.

The City also offers recreational programs on a year-round basis to meet the needs of the community. In addition to general recreation programs, KPR provides senior citizen programs and activities at the senior center located at the Keewaydin Park.

[18] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-11-Light-glare

Exhibit 15. Parks and Recreation System Map



Source: City of Kennewick Parks & Recreation Comprehensive Plan (Map 1: System Map), 2023.

b. Would the proposed project displace any existing recreational uses? If so, describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no existing recreational uses would be affected as part of this non-project legislative action.

c. Proposed measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation, including recreation opportunities to be provided by the project or applicant, if any:

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control impacts on recreation are required. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards. The proposed Land Use and Capital Facilities elements include goals and policies to ensure a healthy and equitable recreational and open space environment for all users in the city. The Capital Facilities Element also proposes updating the parks level of service standards for consistency with the current effective level of service in the adopted 2024-2029 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan (PROS Plan). The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to protect ecosystems and open spaces vulnerable to climate change impacts, and the updated CAO includes minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas (including many open space areas).

The City's PROS Plan will continue to guide acquisition, development, and improvement of park areas and facilities and the provision of recreational service throughout Kennewick. In addition, to offer varied recreational opportunities while providing additional parkland per capita, the City encourages that all new developments address the issue of providing open space. This can be accomplished with parkland dedication, designation of lands for open space, or the availability of open space areas in commercial areas. Master-planned areas such as

Hansen Park and Southridge have identified land for open space and parks as a method to protect critical areas and provide this necessary requirement.

13. Historic and Cultural Preservation

Find help answering historic and cultural preservation questions[19]

a. Are there any buildings, structures, or sites, located on or near the site that are over 45 years old listed in or eligible for listing in national, state, or local preservation registers? If so, specifically describe.

Several buildings, structures, and sites in Kennewick are listed in or eligible for listing in national and state preservation registers as well as the local Kennewick Historic Register. Currently listed resources include the Kennewick Fruit & Produce Company Building (National Register and Washington Heritage Register), the Pasco-Kennewick/Columbia River Northern Pacific Railroad Bridge and Pioneer Memorial Bridge "Blue Bridge" (Washington Heritage Register), and the Charles Conway House (Washington Heritage Register). Known cultural resources and historic structures are documented in the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation's online WISAARD map, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation share published traditional places and educational resources with the City (see below).

b. Are there any landmarks, features, or other evidence of Indian or historic use or occupation? This may include human burials or old cemeteries. Are there any material evidence, artifacts, or areas of cultural importance on or near the site? Please list any professional studies conducted at the site to identify such resources.

The City of Kennewick is located within the ancestral territories of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR; made up of the Umatilla, Cayuse, and Walla Walla tribes) and the Yakama Nation (made up of the Kah-milt-pah, Klickitat, Klinquit, Kow-was-say-ee, Li-ay-was, Oche-chotes, Palouse, Pisquose, Se-ap-cat, Shyiks, Skinpah, Wenatshapam, Wishram, and Yakama tribes).[20] Because of the area's mild weather and the availability of river water and grazing land, early Native American tribes gathered in the Kennewick area for winter quartering and as a convenient area for the trading of goods and food. Their horse herds grazed on the surrounding hillsides, and fishing brought relative prosperity to the tribes that frequented the area. Tribal land was ceded in 1855 at a meeting known as the Walla Walla Council, opening the area to non-Native settlement. Known cultural resources are documented in the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation's online WISAARD map.

c. Describe the methods used to assess the potential impacts to cultural and historic resources on or near the project site. Examples include consultation with tribes and the department of archeology and historic preservation, archaeological surveys, historic maps, GIS data, etc.

No impact on cultural or historic resources are anticipated as part of this non-project legislative action. The City maintains a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the CTUIR to establish a government-to-government relationship centered on good faith voluntary commitments to perpetuate cultural heritage, promote economic development, and otherwise work in partnership for the mutual benefit of the City and the CTUIR (City Resolution No. 21-07). The MOU includes direction for consulting with the CTUIR regarding ground disturbing work in Columbia Park as well as required and voluntary development notification protocols and discovery procedures, particularly for SEPA notifications or shoreline development permits and for development on City-owned or

[19] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-13-Historic-cultural-p
[20] Native Land Digital (accessed June 2026).

managed land within 1,320 feet of the Columbia River. In addition, the CTUIR voluntarily share information with the City on published traditional places and educational resources.

d. Proposed measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to resources. Please include plans for the above and any permits that may be required.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to avoid, minimize, or compensate for loss, changes to, and disturbance to cultural and historic resources are required. The City maintains an MOU with the CTUIR to work in partnership for the mutual benefit of the City and the CTUIR and provides for the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic resources in KMC Chapter 18.57. The proposed Comprehensive Plan includes policies to protect cultural resources and to preserve historic structures. New policies in the Capital Facilities Element aim to minimize impacts to cultural and historic resources in the siting of capital facilities, and the new Climate Element includes policies to ensure cultural and historic resources and traditions are resilient to extreme weather and climate-related impacts. Future development proposals will be evaluated for impacts to any historic sites and subject to comply with the Comprehensive Plan as well as local, state, and federal regulations.

The following state laws also provide protection of archaeological resources:

- Chapter 27.44 RCW provides for the protection of Native American graves and burial grounds, encourages voluntary reporting of said sites when discovered, and mandates a penalty for disturbance or desecration of such sites.
- Chapter 27.53 RCW governs the protection and preservation of archaeological sites and resources and establishes the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) as the administering agency for these regulations.
- Section 36.70A.020 RCW includes a goal to identify and encourage "the preservation of lands, sites, and structures that have historical, cultural, and archaeological significance." This goal must be considered and incorporated into comprehensive plans and the implementing development regulations.
- Chapter 68.60 RCW provides for the protection and preservation of abandoned and historic cemeteries and graves.

14. Transportation

Find help with answering transportation questions[21]

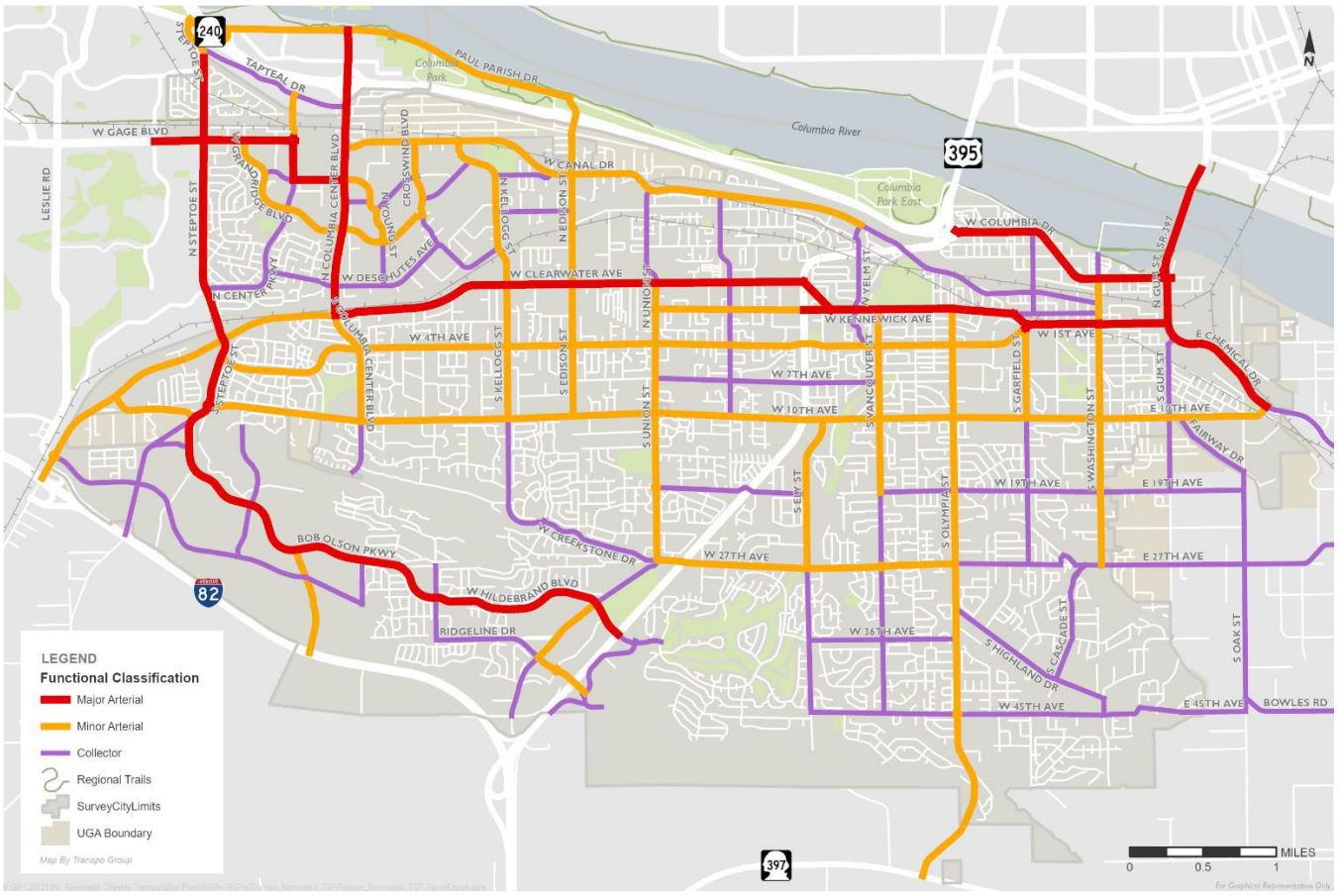
a. Identify public streets and highways serving the site or affected geographic area and describe proposed access to the existing street system. Show on site plans, if any.

Kennewick is served by the City's existing public streets system and by major state highways. Streets are divided into four functional classifications, including Principal Arterials, Minor Arterials, Collectors, and Local Access (see **Exhibit 16**). Major north-south thoroughfares on the City owned street network include Steptoe Street, Columbia Center Boulevard, Center Parkway, Edison Street, and Washington Street. Major east-west streets include Gage Boulevard and Canal Drive, Clearwater Avenue, Kennewick Avenue, 4th Avenue, 10th Avenue, and Bob Olson Parkway. Three roadways owned and operated by WSDOT and identified as highways of statewide significance also provide for regional and interregional travel in the city:

- SR 240 from the northwest city limits to US 395
- US 395 from the southern city limits to the Franklin County line
- I-82 from its junction with US 395 to the western city limits

[21] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-B-Environmental-elements/Environmental-elements-14-Transportation

Exhibit 16. Kennewick Functional Classification



Source: City of Kennewick, 2026; Transpo Group, 2026.

No new access to the existing street system is proposed as part of this non-project legislative action. Any future development proposals with site-specific access changes will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

b. Is the site or affected geographic area currently served by public transit? If so, generally describe. If not, what is the approximate distance to the nearest transit stop?

Kennewick is currently served by Ben Franklin Transit (BFT) which is a municipal corporation that provides public transportation services in a 624-square mile area known as the Public Transportation Benefit Area (PTBA). BFT's PBTA covers portions of Benton and Franklin counties including the jurisdictions of West Richland, Prosser, Benton City, Richland, Kennewick, Finley, and Pasco.

Fixed-route buses operate Monday through Saturday from 6:00 am to 11:00 pm and Sunday from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. Additionally, BFT offers two on-demand services: CONNECT, which allows riders to travel to fixed route stop locations within 6 zones, and General Demand Service, which connects riders in Benton City and Prosser to predesignated fixed route stop locations. Dial-A-Ride (DAR) is specialized door-to-door transportation for people whose disabilities limit their ability to use the fixed-route bus system.

BFT's Vanpool program is a ride share alternative for those with long commutes. Volunteer drivers and riders share the cost of fuel, maintenance, and insurance through a monthly fare to utilize BFT vans.

Transit centers located in Kennewick are the Dayton Street Transit Center and the Three Rivers Transit Center on Okanogan Place. Kennewick has two "park and ride" facilities located at 27th Ave / S Union St and at W Falls Ave within the US 395 right-of-way.

c. Will the proposal require any new or improvements to existing roads, streets, pedestrian, bicycle, or state transportation facilities, not including driveways? If so, generally describe (indicate whether public or private).

No new road, street, pedestrian, bicycle, or state transportation facilities or improvements are proposed or required as part of this non-project legislative action. The proposed Transportation Element and City's separately maintained six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) include planned improvements to roads and non-motorized infrastructure. The TIP, which is updated annually, is available from the Public Works Department. The proposed Transportation Element identifies long-term updates to the Transportation Systems Plan. Proposed improvements include intersection projects, new roadways, and off-street bicycle routes. Improvement projects are focused on bringing the primary connections into compliance with the City's level of service standards for each travel mode. Any future public or private transportation improvements will be evaluated at the time of a specific proposal and through the City's applicable review process.

d. Will the project or proposal use (or occur in the immediate vicinity of) water, rail, or air transportation? If so, generally describe.

No new construction or use of air, rail, or water transportation facilities is proposed as part of this non-project legislative action. Kennewick is near a major air transportation hub and existing rail lines run through the city. Future development in the immediate vicinity of these facilities will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

- The Tri-Cities Airport operated by the Port of Pasco is in the City of Pasco just north of the junction of US 395 and I-182 and across the river from Kennewick.
- The Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) and Union Pacific Railroads offer mainline rail service in Kennewick. BNSF maintains about eight miles of mainline track and a complex of sidetracks within the city. Each intersection of mainline track with a city street is signalized. The sidetracks are not signalized. Union Pacific owns about eight miles of mainline track in Kennewick, with seven signalized crossings, but own no additional property within the city. The Port of Kennewick owns one track section and the Port of Benton owns approximately 1-1/2 mile of industrial track within city limits. Amtrak also provides intercity passenger rail service. The Amtrak station is located in Pasco and shares tracks with BNSF, with the route between Pasco and Portland traveling through the northeast portion of Kennewick.
- The Kennewick UGA contains eight miles of Columbia River shoreline on the northern side of the city. There is no public transportation on the Columbia River owned or operating from Kennewick. Private barge services have Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) authority to serve the area and are available for shipping bulk agricultural products, containerized storage, and liquid fuels and fertilizers.

e. How many vehicular trips per day would be generated by the completed project or proposal? If known, indicate when peak volumes would occur and what percentage of the volume would be trucks (such as commercial and nonpassenger vehicles). What data or transportation models were used to make these estimates?

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no specific number of vehicle trips per day would result because of this non-project legislative action. However, future transportation system needs were analyzed as part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update considering the updated land use designations and projected growth. The Benton-Franklin Council of Governments (BFCOG) travel demand forecasting model was used to assist in defining future transportation system needs. The model was calibrated to match existing base year traffic volumes and then used to develop a 2046 traffic forecast. City, County, and State transportation improvement projects included in the BFCOG travel demand model were also assumed in the baseline 2046 forecasts. Travel forecasts for 2046 were largely derived based on changes in households and employment within the study area. This growth was added to the existing land use assumed in the BFCOG travel demand model to forecast future traffic volumes.

Future 2046 traffic forecasts were developed through the modeling process, which converts the land use estimates of housing and employment into daily person trips by trip purpose. The daily person trips are then converted into weekday PM peak hour vehicle trips based on factors in the BFCOG regional travel demand model. Based on the traffic forecasts, daily volumes on arterial roadways are expected to have an annual growth rate of 1.3–2.8% for the next 20 years. The resulting 2046 travel forecasts were used to identify additional future transportation needs.

See the Transportation Element and supporting appendix for an evaluation of future transportation conditions and needs based on the updated land use designations and projected growth. Any future development projects that could generate measurable traffic impacts will be evaluated when a specific proposal arises, using project-specific information (such as project-level trip generation, peak hour volumes, or truck percentages) and, as applicable, standard transportation analysis methods.

f. Will the proposal interfere with, affect, or be affected by the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area? If so, generally describe.

Not applicable. No development is proposed; therefore, no specific freight movements, including the movement of agricultural and forest products on roads or streets in the area, would affect this non-project legislative action. Any future development projects that could affect or be affected by freight movement will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

g. Proposed measures to reduce or control transportation impacts, if any:

Not applicable to this non-project legislative action. No development is proposed; therefore, no measures to reduce or control transportation impacts are required. Any future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards.

The technical information and policies in the proposed Transportation Element do provide guidance for maintaining and improving the City's transportation system to accommodate projected growth and mitigate any transportation impacts over the next 20 years. It includes LOS standards and goals and policies intended to limit negative environmental impacts and encourage multimodal transportation choices. New active transportation LOS standards are proposed as part of the Periodic Update to the Comprehensive Plan. The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled and increase resiliency to climate change impacts.

An LOS evaluation for the average weekday PM peak hour was also performed for major intersections within the city to identify future vehicle LOS deficiencies. Deficiencies were determined based on the City's vehicle LOS standards. During 2046 Baseline conditions, 14 intersections would not meet the adopted LOS standard. For 12 of these locations, projects that could address the deficiencies are proposed to be added to the long-range transportation improvement project list. The City is proposing to update its LOS standard for the other two intersections to LOS F as further widening of these intersections would be infeasible or not desirable from long-range multimodal system planning perspective. Most of the US 395 intersections studied are expected to operate at LOS E or F in the future. These will be studied in a future corridor study (2026) to further refine improvements.

The Transportation Element also includes a recommended long-term list of transportation improvement projects and programs based on an evaluation of existing and forecast traffic volumes, traffic operations, safety, and circulation needs. The long-term project list is organized into the following categories: intersection/spot, major/new roadway, active transportation, other agency improvements, and citywide programs. Guidance includes proposed new roadways and intersection projects to improve traffic flow in areas where travel demand is set to increase, as well as new multimodal connections and support for transit levels of service to provide options and reduce demand for travel by cars and trucks alone within the city and the surrounding communities. Concurrency also applies to City roads—if any proposed development were to cause the LOS to significantly fall below adopted levels, proponents of the development would be required to mitigate the deficiency prior to development approval.

15. Public Services

Find help answering public service questions[22]

a. Would the project result in an increased need for public services (for example: fire protection, police protection, public transit, health care, schools, other)? If so, generally describe.

Future growth under the proposed 2026 Comprehensive Plan would increase demand for public services as described in Volume II of the Comprehensive Plan. This includes increased demand for emergency services (fire, emergency medical, and police), public transit, health care, and schools.

b. Proposed measures to reduce or control direct impacts on public services, if any.

The Capital Facilities and Transportation elements provide a framework for planning for and meeting public service needs over the 20-year planning period. This framework includes adopted level of service standards and capital improvement plans of City and non-City service providers. Implementation of this framework would mitigate impacts to public services associated with future growth.

The proposal involves non-project legislative actions. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards, including the collection of park and fire (in Southridge only) impact fees.

16. Utilities

Find help answering utilities questions[23]

a. Circle utilities currently available at the site: electricity, natural gas, water, refuse service, telephone, sanitary sewer, septic system, other (irrigation water)

Electrical: Public Utility District No.1 of Benton County, also known as Benton PUD, provides electricity to the City of Kennewick and various outlying areas. The Kennewick Urban subsystem is supplied by ten miles of 115kV transmission line, eight substations located throughout the city, and 54 electric distribution feeders.

Natural Gas: Cascade Natural Gas Corporation provides natural gas services to residential and commercial customers in the Kennewick area.

Water: The City of Kennewick provides drinking water to approximately 90,000 residents within the city limits and unincorporated UGA. The City is the sole provider of drinking water except for some private and community wells. Drinking water comes from two Ranney collectors that withdraw groundwater from an aquifer recharged primarily by the Columbia River. Potable water is treated at the City's Water Treatment Plant.

Irrigation water is provided by the Kennewick Irrigation District and the Columbia Irrigation District. Kennewick Irrigation District delivers irrigation water to most of the city, has 117 local improvement districts, and operates and maintains one domestic water system. Columbia Irrigation District serves about 700 acres in 2,000 parcels in the north and east sides of the city.

Sanitary Sewer: The City of Kennewick is the sole provider of sanitary sewer services within city limits and the unincorporated UGA. Approximately 76,220 residents are served by Kennewick's sanitary sewer system, which serves a retail service area of 8,178 acres or over 12 square miles.

Septic Systems: An estimated 10,600 people within the service area currently utilize onsite septic systems and drain fields.

[22] https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-15-public-services
[23] https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-b-environmental-elements/environmental-elements-16-utilities

Stormwater services: Kennewick's stormwater management system is comprised of over 8,050 catch bases in a network of over 163 miles of piped storm sewers and open ditches and three outfalls within the city to the Columbia River. The drainage system is integrated with multiple tiers of irrigation canals, owned and operated by Kennewick and Columbia Irrigation Districts.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers also owns and operates approximately 3 miles of levees along the south shore of the Columbia River in Kennewick, stabilization of the level of Wallula Lake through operation of the McNary Dam, the Zintel Dam, and a regional pump station at Duffy's Pond. Benton County operates the Elliot Lake detention facility in southwest Kennewick.

Solid waste, recycling, and yard waste: Waste Management (WM) provides garbage collection services under a franchise agreement with the City due to expire in 2035. It includes residential and commercial garbage collection on a scheduled basis, as well as curbside residential recycling. WM also operates a transfer station within the city limits. WM serves the city based on demand and has no future plans for major facility expansion.

Internet, telephone, and cable services: Ziply Fiber provides wireline voice and broadband services and has expanded its services to most of the Kennewick UGA. Charter Communications provides cable television and broadband services within the city by franchise agreement. Additional broadband services may be available from fixed wireless and other competitive providers, subject to location and infrastructure availability. In addition to landlines, Kennewick is served by various cellular phone companies, with cell phone towers regulated through the Kennewick Municipal Code.

b. Describe the utilities that are proposed for the project, the utility providing the service, and the general construction activities on the site or in the immediate vicinity which might be needed.

The proposal involves non-project legislative actions. Future development projects will be evaluated subject to federal, state, and local regulations and standards. Kennewick's utility service needs and plans are also described in the Capital Facilities Element, Utilities Element, and in Volume II Appendices.

Electrical: Benton PUD assumes each new residential customer will contribute 10 kW to the distribution feeder (or an estimated new feeder line for every 800 new single residential buildings dwelling units). Benton PUD estimates an average annual rate of growth of 0.19% across its entire service area within Benton County, which would result in an annual average power increase of 4 average megawatts (aMW) over the 2026 load of 213 aMW at the Bonneville Power Administration Points of Delivery.

Natural Gas: Cascade Natural Gas expands its services to businesses and neighborhoods based on demand and estimates a new feeder line is needed for every 800 new residential dwelling units.

Water, Sewer, Stormwater: The City annually updates its Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), which includes numerous water, sewer, and stormwater projects to ensure adequate facilities are in place to serve existing and new growth. The City's 2025-2030 CIP details these projects and a summary is included in the proposed Comprehensive Plan Capital Facilities Element. Details about planned sewer, stormwater, and drinking water facilities are contained in their respective adopted functional plans. Kennewick Irrigation District and the Columbia Irrigation District are not currently planning for any major expansion of the facilities.

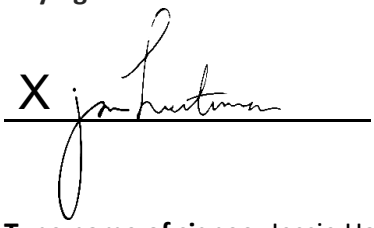
Solid waste, recycling, and yard waste: WM expands its service based on demand and has no future plans for major facility expansion.

Internet, telephone, and cable services: Provisioning of communication facilities to new commercial and residential development occurs concurrently with growth, typically underground.

C. Signature

Find help about who should sign[24]

The above answers are true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I understand that the lead agency is relying on them to make its decision.

X 

Type name of signee: Jessie Hartmann
Position and agency/organization: Associate Principal, BERK Consulting
Date submitted: July 13, 2026

[24] https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/SEPA/Environmental-review/SEPA-guidance/SEPA-checklist-guidance/SEPA-Checklist-Section-C-Signature

D. Supplemental sheet for nonproject actions

Find help for the nonproject actions worksheet[25]

Do not use this section for project actions.

Because these questions are very general, it may be helpful to read them in conjunction with the list of the elements of the environment.

When answering these questions, be aware of the extent the proposal, or the types of activities likely to result from the proposal, would affect the item at a greater intensity or at a faster rate than if the proposal were not implemented. Respond briefly and in general terms.

1. How would the proposal be likely to increase discharge to water; emissions to air; production, storage, or release of toxic or hazardous substances; or production of noise?

*See also parts **B.2**, **B.3**, and **B.7**.*

As a non-project legislative action, the proposal would not directly impact water, air, hazardous substances, or noise. Future development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and implementing zoning code could result in the following impacts:

- Fill and grade proposals, new impervious surfaces, or vegetation removal could result in altered surface water flows, increased stormwater flow, localized flooding impacts, and generation of non-point source pollution to local surface waters.
- Increased vehicle trips could increase air emissions or result in additional noise. As projects identified in the Transportation Element are implemented, an increase in stormwater may be generated due to the increases in impervious surfaces from future roadway widening. Short-term, minor increases in noise and exhaust emissions may occur. The impacts may occur with each individually proposed project at the time of project construction.
- Project construction activities may temporarily produce toxic or hazardous substances, generate noise from the use of standard construction equipment, or result in additional exhaust and fugitive dust (on site or along hauling routes or nearby local streets).
- Some commercial or industrial uses may handle hazardous materials, though the International Fire Code and state and federal laws would continue to apply.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce such increases are:

The Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update provides a policy framework intended to protect water and air quality, minimize excessive noise, and prevent pollution such as the release of toxic substances. See specific goals and policies in the Land Use Element. In addition, the adopted Shoreline Master Plan (SMP) and updated Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) will continue to regulate shorelines and critical areas in the city (including critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, fish and wildlife conservation areas, and wetlands). The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to improve air quality, protect natural resources and ecosystems vulnerable to climate change, preserve water quality and quantity while addressing the challenges posed by climate change, and prepare the City of Kennewick and its residents for hazards exacerbated by climate change.

2. How would the proposal be likely to affect plants, animals, fish, or marine life?

*See also parts **B.4** and **B.5**.*

[25] https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/sepa/environmental-review/sepa-guidance/sepa-checklist-guidance/sepa-checklist-section-d-non-project-actions

Future development allowed by the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations could affect plants and animals in Kennewick through land clearing for construction of housing and infrastructure, stormwater runoff, and human disturbance associated with future growth. Environmental resources subject to risk of direct and indirect impacts include numerous species of plants and animals (including federal and state designated threatened or endangered species and their habitat). As projects identified in the Transportation Element are implemented, there may be impacts to roadside vegetation due to widening of existing roadways. Impacts will be analyzed for each individually proposed project at the time of project construction.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve plants, animals, fish, or marine life are:

The Land Use Element and new Climate Element include goals and policies that support key environmental features in Kennewick (including wildlife habitats) and seek to protect ecosystems, including those vulnerable to climate change. These goals and policies would together with local, state, and federal environmental regulations—such as KMC Chapters 18.58 through 18.63 (Critical Areas), storm (KMC Chapter 14.28 which adopts the Stormwater Management Manual of Eastern Washington), and SMP (KMC Chapter 18.68)—to continue to protect plants and wildlife in Kennewick as development occurs. The updated CAO also includes minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas. Impacts to plants and wildlife from specific development projects would be further evaluated during individual environmental review. For example, required environmental review could include wildlife or wetlands surveys to evaluate the presence of specific species or critical/priority habitats.

3. How would the proposal be likely to deplete energy or natural resources?

*See also **Part B.6**.*

As a non-project action, the proposal would not directly deplete energy or natural resources. Individual projects will typically require oil and electricity during the construction phase to operate equipment and periodically thereafter for routine maintenance and repair activities. Demands for energy and natural resources (such as heating, light, and electricity for residential units or commercial uses) will increase along with population growth and associated development irrespective of the proposed updates.

Proposed measures to protect or conserve energy and natural resources are:

The proposed update to the Comprehensive Plan supports the natural resource protection principles articulated in the GMA. In particular, goals and policies in the Land Use, Capital Facilities, Utilities, and Transportation elements emphasize conservation of resources, and the new Climate Element includes goals and policies that seek to protect and conserve natural resources, increase energy reliability and resilience, and improve building energy efficiency. Other measures in place or proposed as part of the Periodic Update to avoid or reduce such increases are:

- Concentration of development under these Comprehensive Plan policies will enable existing infrastructure to be more intensely and efficiently utilized.
- Public transportation and non-motorized modes of movement are promoted by plan policies, which may result in a reduction in the use of oil energy used by automobiles.
- Application of existing building and energy codes.

4. How would the proposal be likely to use or affect environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for governmental protection, such as parks, wilderness, wild and scenic rivers, threatened or endangered species habitat, historic or cultural sites, wetlands, floodplains, or prime farmlands?

*See also **Part D.2** regarding plants and animals and parts **B.1**, **B.2**, **B.3**, **B.4**, **B.5**, **B.6**, **B.7**, **B.8**, **B.12**, and **B.13**.*

No direct impacts to environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated (or eligible or under study) for government protection are expected as a result of this non-project action. Population and employment growth would likely increase demand for parks and place additional pressure on environmentally sensitive areas irrespective of the proposed updates. Future development projects may dredge or fill surface waters or wetlands or affect other environmentally sensitive areas or areas designated for government protection. Known cultural resources and historic structures are documented in the Washington Department of Archeology and Historic Preservation's online WISAARD map, and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) share published traditional places and educational resources with the City. Any impacts will be determined with each individually proposed project at the time of project design.

Proposed measures to protect such resources or to avoid or reduce impacts are:

The Land Use Element and new Climate Element include goals and policies to conserve the city's natural resources. These goals and policies work together with local, state, and federal environmental regulations, such as the City's SMP and CAO. The existing and proposed CAO update includes regulations intended to protect city resources, with provisions for no net loss of area and functions, which provides a balance between protecting city resources and allowing development and uses to be approved. The Capital Facilities Element also includes goals and policies to help ensure a diversified recreational and open space system in the City of Kennewick.

The Land Use Element and new Climate Element aim to avoid and minimize losses and changes to historic and cultural resources, and include goals and policies to support and protect historic resources. Historic and cultural sites would remain protected by federal, state, and local regulations and policies (including KMC Chapter 18.57 which provides for the identification, evaluation, and protection of historic resources). Historic or cultural sites will be evaluated during the environmental review of individual projects and, if necessary, mitigation measures to avoid or minimize potential impacts will be developed. Any alterations to existing historic or cultural sites would also require evaluation and mitigation during individual development process. The City also maintains an MOU with the CTUIR to establish a government-to-government relationship centered on good faith voluntary commitments to perpetuate cultural heritage, promote economic development, and otherwise work in partnership for the mutual benefit of the City and the CTUIR. The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to protect valued cultural resources vulnerable to climate change impacts.

Any roadway projects identified in the Transportation Element will be designed to avoid and reduce impacts wherever possible. Additional measures will be evaluated and proposed during the design phase of each individual project.

5. How would the proposal be likely to affect land and shoreline use, including whether it would allow or encourage land or shoreline uses incompatible with existing plans?

*See also parts **B.8**, **B.9**, **B.10**, and **B.12**.*

The City of Kennewick currently contains numerous zoning and future land use designations. Citywide, the predominant land use districts are Low Density Residential (LDR) with moderate and higher intensity uses designated along the major arterials and in commercial and mixed-use parts of the city (e.g., Downtown, Bridge-to-Bridge, Columbia Center, and Vista Field). The Public Facility and Open Space land use designations are applied to City owned and non-City owned public facilities, parks, and open space needed to provide the full range of services to the public.

Based on the community's vision, land characteristics, and provisions of the GMA, the City is proposing an updated FLUM map as part of the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update. This includes consolidating the existing Medium Density Residential (MDR) and High Density Residential (HDR) districts into one Medium-High Density Residential (MHDR) district, re-designating targeted areas on the FLUM based on the land capacity analysis, community priorities, and adopted growth targets, and rearranging implementing zone districts to match the

updated land use designations. The City may pursue zone consolidations in the future to simplify the code in alignment with the updated land use designations.

Proposed measures to avoid or reduce shoreline and land use impacts are:

The Comprehensive Plan Update is designed to be consistent with the GMA, the Benton County CPPs Policies, and new state planning requirements. The Land Use Element includes goals and policies intended to ensure new development is compatible with existing land uses and an analysis of future land use needs and projected growth demands to guide future land development (see also Volume II appendices).

Existing regulations ensure future development is compatible with existing and projected land uses and plans via zoning standards (e.g., appropriate locations for various land uses as well as height, bulk, setback, and landscaping requirements). Individual development projects will be subject to local, state, and federal regulations and must be consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan (including the Land Use Element goals and policies), the adopted SMP (KMC Chapter 18.68) which protects Shorelines of the State (the Columbia River in Kennewick), and the GMA. In addition, the adopted SMP and proposed CAO update will continue to regulate shorelines and critical areas in the city, including critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas, and wetlands. The updated CAO will be incorporated into the SMP by reference (as an appendix) and will continue to support no net loss requirements for development within shoreline jurisdiction. No other changes are proposed to the SMP.

6. How would the proposal be likely to increase demands on transportation or public services and utilities?

*See also parts **B.14**, **B.15**, and **B.16**.*

As a non-project action, the proposal will not directly increase demand on transportation, public services, or utilities. However, the Comprehensive Plan Update would guide the type, location, and intensity of development within the city and demand for transportation, public services, and utilities is likely to increase as new development and growth occur.

Proposed measures to reduce or respond to such demand(s) are:

The proposed Transportation, Capital Facilities, and Utilities elements as well as the associated technical appendices (Volume II Appendices) provide a framework for planning for and meeting demands on transportation, public services, and utilities over the planning period.

- Technical information and policies in the **Transportation Element and technical appendix** provide a framework for planning for and meeting transportation demand for the next 20 years. Based on an evaluation of existing and forecast traffic volumes, traffic operations, safety, and circulation needs, a recommended long-term list of transportation improvement projects and programs was defined. The long-term project list is organized into the following categories: intersection/spot, major/new roadway, active transportation, other agency improvements, and citywide programs. Concurrency also applies to City roads (but does not apply to Highways of Statewide Significance). If any proposed development were to cause the LOS to significantly fall below adopted levels, proponents of the development would be required to mitigate the deficiency prior to development approval.

  Key policy concepts in the proposed Transportation Element include supporting multimodal transportation options, meeting LOS standards, and ensuring that adequate funding for the transportation systems is in place. Implementation of individual projects included within the Transportation Element will reduce and respond to such demands. The City is also proposing to update its LOS standard for two intersections to LOS F based on the LOS evaluation, as well as new active transportation LOS standards. The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled and increase resiliency to climate change impacts.

- The **Capital Facilities Element and technical appendix** inventory existing facilities, detail adopted level of service standards, detail specific projects identified to mitigate impacts of growth, and call for providing adequate capital facilities and public services necessary to support existing development and new growth. Policies under the element recognize the need for collaboration with non-City providers to plan for and ensure continued provision of quality services (such as schools and irrigation water). Applicable plans, as amended and listed in the element, are adopted by reference.

  The Capital Facilities Element also proposes updating the parks level of service standards for consistency with the current effective level of service in the adopted 2024-2029 Comprehensive Parks & Recreation Plan (PROS Plan). The new Climate Element also includes goals and policies that seek to protect ecosystems and open spaces vulnerable to climate change impacts, and the updated CAO includes minor revisions to incorporate Best Available Science for protecting and managing critical areas (including many open space areas).
- The **Utilities Element and technical appendix** summarize existing facilities and plans of utilities owned and operated by entities other than the City, such as electricity, telecommunication, and natural gas. Policies support responsible and resilient utility planning in coordination with external providers.

7. Identify, if possible, whether the proposal may conflict with local, state, or federal laws or requirements for the protection of the environment.

In general, the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update and associated code revisions, the HAP, and the CAO update seek to protect the environment and so would not conflict with any local, state, or federal laws for the protection of the environment. The Comprehensive Plan Update and development regulations have been prepared in accordance with the provisions of the GMA and Benton County Countywide Planning Policies to ensure coordinated planning. The HAP and CAO update were prepared concurrent with the Comprehensive Plan Periodic Update to ensure consistency between the documents.