

IV.E. FINDINGS AND POLICY CONSIDERATIONS

The draft findings contained in this report support the following conclusions and policy considerations for the City of White Salmon:

Overall Findings

1. Under the Washington OFM high-growth forecast, the average long-term population growth rate for Klickitat County is forecasted at 0.96%. Since this growth rate forecast is below the actual population growth rate that occurred in Klickitat County between 2010 and 2018 (1.2%) it is used in this study for long-term urbanization planning. Based on this growth rate, the population in Klickitat County is projected to increase by 4,719 residents over the next 20-30 years.
2. After accounting for group quarters housing population, seasonal housing demand and average household size characteristics, approximately 2,260 dwelling units will need to be added throughout Klickitat County over the next 20-30 years.
3. The west portion of Klickitat County (including White Salmon, Bingen, Husum and Lyle) is expected to capture about 59% of the overall housing demand. The central portion of the county (including Goldendale, Dallesport, Murdock and Wishram) is projected to capture 37% of the demand, and the east portion of the county (including Alderdale and Roosevelt) is projected to capture 3% of the County housing demand over the next 20 years.
4. White Salmon is the fastest growing city (in terms of population and housing) within the County, and the City is likely to capture the majority of demand for housing within the west portion of the County, as long as developable residential-zoned land and adequate water, sewer and transportation infrastructure is available. If developable land continues to diminish in the City and land prices increase relative to other areas of the county, single family housing growth will likely be “pushed” further away into Bingen, Husum, Trout Lake, or Lyle (to the extent those areas can accommodate future demand).
5. These long-term forecasts support demand for approximately 1,020 housing units in the west portion of Klickitat County over the next 20-30 years, of which 75-79% would be accounted for in the White Salmon/Bingen Urban Exempt Area. As noted above, to the degree developable land diminishes and land prices increase relative to other areas of the county, this capture rate could be lower as housing demand “seeps” into other portions of county.

6. Long-term housing demand in the White Salmon Area will require approximately 600 detached homes, 80 mobile/manufactured homes, and 338 middle housing types (such as townhomes, plexes, accessory dwelling units and apartments).⁴
7. This amount of new housing in White Salmon Area will require approximately 150 buildable acres of low density or PUD zoned land area, 8 acres of mobile home park acres, and 24 acres of medium density (R1-R3) land area.
8. The existing supply of buildable land (zoned for housing) within the existing White Salmon City limits includes approximately 73 acres of low and very low-density land, and 19 acres of medium and high-density land area. This remaining vacant land supply within the City appears to be enough for addressing single family detached housing demand but may not be enough for addressing longer-term land needs for middle housing types, such as townhomes, cottages and apartments.
9. The commercial/industrial land supply within the City of White Salmon appears to be adequate for meeting long-term growth requirements. Over time, the City should encourage commercial and mixed-use redevelopment opportunities that result in a net new housing and employment opportunities.

Policy Considerations

The City of White Salmon is in the process of evaluating potential regulatory changes that are intended to address current barriers and support additional “middle housing” development, such as townhomes, plexes, cottages, ADUs and apartments. Please refer to **Appendix D** for a more detailed review of existing barriers to development along with a description of policy recommendations. The findings contained in this study support the following recommendations.

City of White Salmon

1. **Allow accessory dwellings (ADUs) and cottage developments outright** in the R-1, R-2 and R-3 zones and consider adopting new design guidelines for ADUs and cottages that are compatible with the local area to preserve neighborhood character as infill development occurs.

⁴ During review of the draft Urbanization Study, the Planning Commission noted that most single-family detached housing demand can be accommodated outside the City limits within the County area, and that the City should focus on land use policies that can address the demand for other housing types.

2. **Consider revisions to the residential standards to mitigate barriers**, including changes to building setbacks, heights, coverage requirements and minimum lot sizes while maintaining “village” feel.
3. **Consider rezoning portions of land near downtown** and the hospital district to R3, General Commercial or mixed-use, while preserving the character of historic areas and neighborhoods.
4. **Allow Rezoning of Low-density Land to Allow Middle Housing**. The City should evaluate the potential for rezoning and/or annexing areas to R-2 or R-3 to allow medium and higher-density residential uses. Criteria for rezoning could include availability of water/sewer, access and proximity to services, schools and commercial uses, and maintaining “village” feel.
5. **Limit or disallow new single-family detached housing within the R-3 zone**.
6. **Consider adopting minimum-density standards for R-3 zones**.
7. **Develop IGA for Urbanization**. The City of White Salmon and Klickitat County staff have expressed a need for an intergovernmental agreement (IGA) between the City and the County to ensure that development standards between the two communities more cohesive as development of the urban exempt area occurs.
8. **Plan for and Support Future Annexations for Housing Developments**. Based on these findings, the City may need to expand its service boundary to accommodate new housing development. Within the urban exempt area, the City should plan on annexing adjacent lands that can be efficiently served by adequate public utilities, with input from property owners, especially if these areas can include diverse housing or employment opportunities.
9. **Update Public Facility Master Plans**. The availability of infrastructure is a limiting factor. Critical services, such as water, sewer, and high-speed internet, are not available in some areas of the UEA that have buildable land. It is recommended that the City work with Klickitat County to develop long-term water and sewer master plans.

Klickitat County

1. **Update zoning code and development standards** to permit urban land uses and densities within the Urban Exempt Area once the IGA is established.
2. **Establish a new mixed-use commercial node** within the Urban Exempt Area (UEA) for long-term development of a commercial and neighborhood center within the framework of the IGA, if extension of services is feasibility and if supported through a larger visioning effort. Priority should be given to development within the downtown and current commercial districts, while planning for longer-term commercial uses in the UEA.
3. **Explore new Funding Tools and Techniques**. It is also recommended that the City of White Salmon coordinate with Klickitat County staff to explore new public funding sources and development incentives for attainable housing construction. Many of the funding tools/techniques that are available in Washington state for the construction of housing for middle and low-income residents are summarized in **Exhibit 4.18**.