

City of Bingen Comprehensive Plan Assistance

CPAT FINAL REPORT January 2023



A collaboration with the Washington State APA's (American Planning Association) CPAT (Community Planning Assistance Team) stemming from the October 20, 2022 workshop



American Planning Association
Washington Chapter

Creating Great Communities for All

Executive Summary

This report provides recommendations for Bingen's new comprehensive plan and subsequent implementing steps. The recommendations build on the content and community input of the October 2022 CPAT visit and Roundtable Event. Concepts for goals and policies are provided, along with recommendations for the plan's organization. This report is intended to give the City a path forward for additional community engagement, analysis, and plan development with the goal to adopt the new Comprehensive Plan in 2023.

This report provides initial recommendations for all parts of an updated Comprehensive Plan, including summary sections on:

- **Plan Introduction** – describes Bingen's view of the future through the policies and strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- **Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Element** - defines how land uses will develop within the City, address opportunities for expanding housing opportunities for existing and future residents, and outlines necessary actions to support commercial activities both large and small within the City.
- **Transportation, Public Facilities & Utilities Element** – These policies and practices provide guidance on the infrastructure necessary to support Bingen's future development to enable the Comprehensive Plan implementation.

Key Recommendations:

- Update Bingen's vision of the future. Many things have changed in Bingen since the adoption of the last Comprehensive Plan. As a result, there's a need to adopt new Comprehensive Plan policies that reflect the communities' goals and recognize current regulatory priorities.
- Create a Comprehensive Plan that's more "user friendly" and has a simpler format than the current plan. We recommend combining Plan elements that work together and can be implemented together.
- Prioritize responses to current community challenges. It's clear from our work in Bingen that there are several issues of high priority. Increasing housing affordability, diversity, and access is a top priority. Balancing future growth while maintaining Bingen's small-town atmosphere and environmental assets is important to the community. In addition, making necessary improvements to accommodate tourism and allow greater access to the Columbia River is a high priority. Articulating these community goals through the Comprehensive Plan is one way to address community expectations.

- Encourage community engagement to develop the vision, future land use map, and specific goals and policies. This is a high priority. Using community outreach to gather input, evaluate challenges and opportunities are best done with strong community input. Engagement should also focus on the needs of people who are traditionally underrepresented in planning processes and government decisions.
- Develop an integrated transportation plan that addresses safety and access issues between neighborhoods, and to surrounding White Salmon and the Columbia River. This will require partnerships with WSDOT, Burlington Northern, and other agencies to accomplish but will enable improved vehicular, pedestrian, and bike access throughout the City and to nearby recreational opportunities.
- Expand residential opportunities for current and future residents within existing zones, while identifying future areas where residential uses could be expanded. Promote infill by allowing Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU's), cottages, duplexes/triplexes, and townhouses on existing lots. Limit competing uses in these zones like short-term rentals and commercial uses.
- Adopt and encourage environmental guidelines that encourage individual outcomes, like energy conservation, recycling, etc. as well as larger community priorities, such as stormwater retention, habitat preservation, and promoting energy conservation/transformation.



CPAT Bingen Background

Purpose & Study Area

The City of Bingen, Washington invited the Washington State's American Planning Association Chapter to bring a Community Planning Assistant Team (CPAT) to help create goals and policies that can be used to update Bingen's Comprehensive Plan. The goal is to help Bingen document the current state of the city and to address future changes that will benefit the community through an updated Comprehensive Plan.

Who is CPAT?

The Washington chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) offers communities (cities, towns, neighborhoods, rural villages) the assistance of professional planners and specialists in articulating visions, solving problems, or developing solutions. The CPAT team was invited by the City and consists of professional volunteers with extensive experience in urban design, urban strategy, planning, economic development, and transportation planning.

Participants

CPAT Volunteers

- **Bob Bengford, AICP – MAKERS, Land Use Planner, CPAT Co-Chair**

Bob is a partner at Makers with more than 25-years of community planning and urban design experience. He has become a national leader in crafting form-based zoning and design provisions to meet community objectives, completing over 65- such projects at MAKERS. Bob and his co-chair Patrick Lynch have been leading CPAT events for over ten years. He also brings public sector planning experience in multiple California cities and in rural Bonner County, Idaho.



- **Patrick Lynch, AICP – Transpo Group, Transportation Planner, CPAT Co-Chair**

Patrick is a Principal with Transpo Group, a transportation planning and engineering services firm headquartered in Kirkland, WA. He is an experienced transportation planner with over 20 years of experience preparing multimodal transportation plans throughout the pacific northwest. His multimodal plans integrate the needs of a diverse set of users and provide direction for street and highways, transit, freight, pedestrian,

and bicycle system improvements. Having served as both a public agency planner and a senior-level consultant, Patrick offers unique expertise and thoughtful insights that result in effective transportation planning, realistic funding strategies, and forward-thinking transportation policies to accommodate all modes of travel and people with varying levels of mobility. Patrick and Bob have been co-chairs leading the Washington APA Chapter CPAT program for over 10 years.

- **Jackie Churchill – Eastern Washington Graduate Urban Planning Student**

Jackie is a second-year graduate student in the Eastern Washington Urban and Regional Planning Program. She is interested in affordable housing, transportation planning, and placemaking in urban design.

- **Chris Zahas – Leland Consulting – Real Estate Strategist**

Chris Zahas is a real estate strategist and project manager with an emphasis on urban corridors, downtown revitalization, employment districts, and transit-oriented development. As president of Leland Consulting Group, Chris guides the firm's strategic position as a national leader in public-private partnerships and private-sector development strategies. By mentoring staff and leading multidisciplinary teams, he helps clients find the balance between smart growth principles, economic and market realities, and the human relationships that lead to successful, innovative projects. He brings over 22 years of experience working for communities of all sizes across the U.S. and Pacific Northwest.

- **Jim Stanton, AICP – Retired Land Use Planner**

Jim Stanton has over four decades of planning experience, first as a Planner, Sr. Planner and Building Official with the City of Redmond, WA, and for the last twenty years with the Microsoft Real Estate & Facilities Dept. working on the company's master planning, development entitlements, transportation, energy, and affordable housing initiatives. Jim retired in July, 2021.

- **Scott Bonjukian, AICP - MAKERS, Land Use Planner**

Scott is a planner at MAKERS with nearly 10 years of experience in Washington. His expertise is zoning reform and design standards for small and mid-sized communities. His ongoing work includes comprehensive planning, housing action plans, and design review.

Project Stakeholders

Project stakeholders will be identified for targeted engagement efforts. Stakeholders may include key property owners and major employers, notable business owners (key sites and/or long-time neighborhood business), community organizations, local service providers, and other interested residents. As the plan is developed, stakeholders and contacts may be added. The chart below takes the interested parties and community

groups identified by city staff and the consultant team, and prioritizes them into four categories, based on how they are potentially impacted by the project, and by their level of influence over the planning process.

This group has been working with the Mayor of Bingen Catherine Kiewit and City Administrator Krista Loney to assemble a core team of varied interests and stakeholders with whom to have focused discussions

Core Discussion Group

With the Mayor's input, a core group of approximately 16 community individuals is being assembled to provide guidance on a future land use and development strategy for the City.

This group includes:

- Catherine Kiewit – City of Bingen, Mayor
- Joe O'Sullivan – City of Bingen, Council Member
- Britany Spratt – City of Bingen, Council Member
- Ryan O'Connor – City of Bingen, Council Member
- Krista Loney – City of Bingen, City Administrator
- Alan Peters – Skamania County, Community Development Director & Bingen's Planning Consultant
- Dylan Bass – SW Region Development Review Planner, WSDOT
- Lori Call – Homeless Housing Department Director of Washington Gorge Action Programs (WAGAP)
- Dale Robins – SW Washington Regional Transportation Council, Planning Manager
- Adam Fiss – SW Washington Regional Transportation Council, Planning Associate (observer)
- Chris Childers – SDS Lumber Company Bingen, Plant Manager
- Matt Stevenson – PBS Land Co., Partner
- Paul Rudinsky – McKenzie River Development Company, Owner
- Nika Kermani - Business Owner (NK Studios) and Resident
- Jonathan Cohen – The Society Hotel, Owner & CFO
- Blaire Carr – Mugs Coffee, Trellis Florals, Owner

Community & Regional Stakeholders

Community and regional stakeholders were invited to the event's welcoming session at the beginning of the day. This included public officials and staff from the City of Bingen, local experts and community leaders in real estate, business, health, education, environment, transportation, utilities, wine industry, and recreation, and active Bingen residents.

General Community Members

Members of the public were invited to the late afternoon open house to hear the results from the event and were encouraged to comment on the concepts and strategies.

Why Bingen?

The City of Bingen submitted an application of CPAT assistance in February 2022. The application emphasized that the City had the ambition and need but not the financial resources to complete a Comprehensive Plan. Bingen's existing plan was completed in 1995. Much has changed in those 27 years, notably the housing market, economy, and community demographics and preferences. Updated data is also needed to inform decisions.

A developer purchasing several acres of farmland within Bingen City limits with plans to create a 160-180-unit housing development has been a notable challenge given the City's outdated Comprehensive Plan and zoning code. The City stressed the need for expertise in developing a vision for the community along with goals and policies to help guide growth that aligns with the community's personality and resources.



CPAT Events and Agenda

Thursday

The CPAT team arrived in town and met at the Society Hotel between 4:00-4:30pm, when City staff took the team on a walking tour of community and then hosted dinner while discussing the events for the full CPAT event the next day.



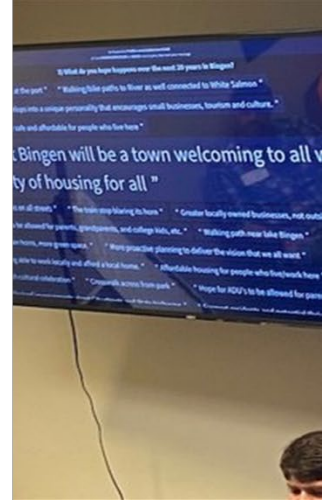
Friday events

I. Mayor welcome and group introductions (9:00 to 9:30)

The mayor welcomed the participants and introduced the project. Secondly, the participants and CPAT team went around the room with self-introductions. Then, the CPAT team described the day's agenda and goals, provided a brief overview of comprehensive planning, and encouraged creative and resourceful participation from all attendees.

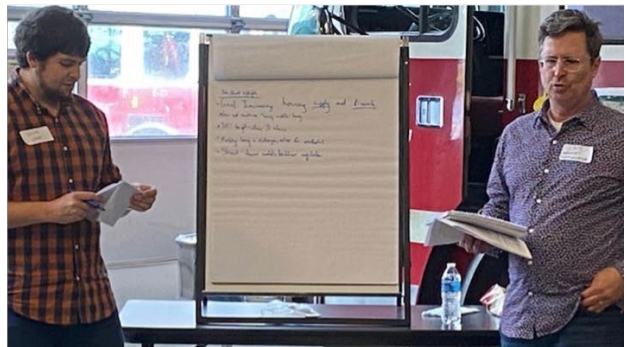
II. Round robin discussion to identify Bingen's vision & big picture goals (9:30 to 10:30)

Facilitated by the CPAT team. The group will begin to brainstorm Bingen's loves, concerns, and hopes/dreams (over 20 years). With a group of 25-30 participants, the team used Poll Everywhere that used cell phones to record individual poll answers. Paper copies were also made available with instructions in English and Spanish for those without smart phones or simply choosing to write in responses. After reviewing the poll responses, the CPAT team dove deeper into land use, housing, infrastructure and capital facilities, and environmental issues.



III. Break out groups and walking tours (10:30 to 12:00)

The CPAT team coordinated with Core Group members to determine optimal break-out groups to most effectively cover a broad range of comprehensive planning issues and elements. The breakout groups included (1) land use and housing, (2) transportation, infrastructure, and public facilities, (3) economic development, and (4) climate change and sustainability.



IV. Working lunch (12:00 to 1:30)

Over lunch, the breakout groups continued to work on goals and policy concepts. By the end of lunch, the groups identified key questions or issues to bring back to the larger group.

V. Combined Work Session (1:30 to 2:30)

Each breakout group reported out to the larger group. Each group identified preliminary goals and policies along with key questions and issues for the larger group. The deliverable from this session was consensus on some goals/policies – and which items do not have consensus, but worth consideration. The group also created strategies for the City to carry forward comprehensive planning activities following the CPAT event.

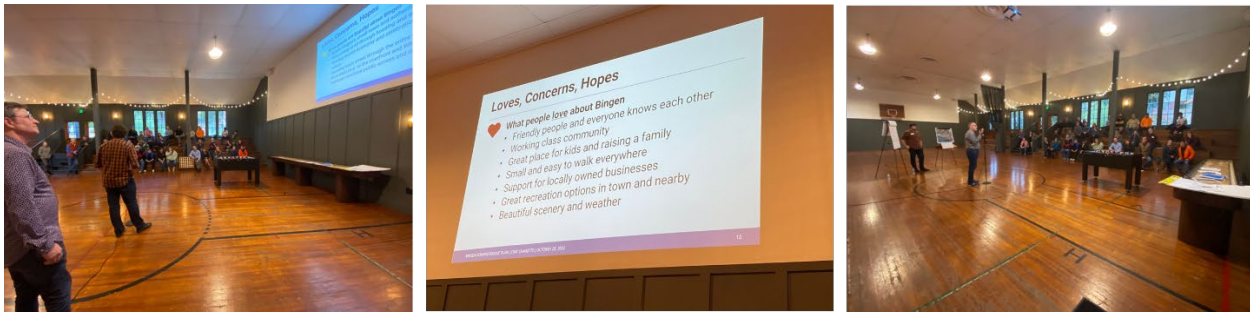


VI. Develop presentation of draft goals and policies and next steps (2:30 to 4:00)

The CPAT team drafted goals, policies, and next steps. They also identified consensus and non-consensus items. The CPAT team made a PowerPoint presentation of these items to present during the public open house.

VII. Public open house (4:15 to 5:45 p.m.) at the Society Hotel gym.

The CPAT team presented the preliminary comprehensive plan recommendations in a PowerPoint format, discussed the day's work, and emphasized the next steps on the part of the City of Bingen and CPAT. A brief question-and-answer session was had with the audience.



Post Event

In the weeks following the event, the CPAT team prepared a summary of the day's discussions and a list of recommendations for the comprehensive plan. This includes suggestions on a new vision statement, draft goals and policies for some or all plan elements, and suggested next steps in refining and finalizing the plan.

Bingen Vision

A vision statement is a one-paragraph summary of a community's aspirations and ideal future conditions. It is commonly found in Comprehensive Plans and used as a unifying theme tied to all elements of the plan. Bingen's existing plan does not have a vision statement and it is recommended to create one.

At the October 28 event, the CPAT team developed one possible vision statement for Bingen. It was informed by discussions with community stakeholders (including a "loves, hopes, and concerns" exercise) and discussions with Town staff throughout the process. This version was shared at the evening presentation open to the general public:

Bingen is a vibrant, friendly, diverse, and walkable small town in the scenic heart of the Columbia River Gorge. We embrace and celebrate our entrepreneurial and working-class spirit, diverse housing choices, and outdoor recreation opportunities that make Bingen a great place to live, work, and visit.

The audience liked this version, and the CPAT team emphasizes this is also just a starting point. Bingen is invited and encouraged to examine this closely and to develop one or two alternatives. The precise words are important and should be chosen with care. For example, some of the key words in this initial were chosen for these reasons:

- **Vibrant** – refers to Bingen's energetic business environment, along with its active social and civic life, that make Bingen a special place
- **Diverse** – acknowledges the racial, age, and class diversity of Bingen's residents
- **Town** – while Bingen is legally classified as a city, the word "town" emphasizes Bingen's small size, independence, and connection to rural settings
- **Scenic heart** – the natural setting and landscape of Bingen was heavily emphasized by stakeholders, and Bingen's central location in the heart of the Gorge gives it a strategic advantage for business and tourism development
- **Diverse housing choices** – a need to diversify the housing supply with more size and price options has been a key theme (perhaps a different word is needed, such as "range", to avoid duplicating "diverse" in the vision statement)
- **Entrepreneurial and working-class** – these qualities of Bingen's economy and workforce were frequently cited by stakeholders as what sets Bingen apart from other Gorge communities

The vision was partially informed by a “loves, hopes, and concerns” exercise conducted with community stakeholders. This exercise asked people to send in their answers by text message to three questions:

- What do you love most about Bingen?
- What are you most concerned about for Bingen?
- What do you hope happens over the next 20 years in Bingen?

Dozens of answers were received and have been submitted to the City. The results were summarized at the evening presentation as the following:

- Loves

- Friendly people and everyone knows each other
- Working class community
- Great place for kids and raising a family
- Small and easy to walk everywhere
- Support for locally owned businesses
- Great recreation options in town and nearby
- Beautiful scenery and weather



- Concerns

- Housing supply and affordability (especially for young and working class people)
- Sustainable growth and development
- Losing farmland and agricultural identity
- Gaps in walking/biking infrastructure (car dependence)
- Becoming a highway strip mall, non-diverse economy
- Lack of access to the river from Bingen
- Train horn noise

- Hopes

- Retain Bingen’s small town and authentic character
- Welcoming to all through housing and services
- Thriving tourist economy and celebration of local culture
- Beautiful main street through the entire town
- More trails (e.g. to the riverfront and White Salmon)
- Improved riverfront public access and development

Plan Introduction

It is recommended to create a formal “Introduction and Vision” chapter in the Comprehensive Plan. Key considerations and an outline of this chapter follow.

- Include the Vision Statement as early as possible, preferably on the first page of the plan.
- Provide a land acknowledgement to show respect for the people of the land immemorial.
- Include a brief overview on what a comprehensive plan is and why it matters. Potential text partly adapted from the old plan is shown below, and comprehensive plans from other cities can be reviewed for inspiration or other ideas.
 - This Comprehensive Plan guides the future growth, character, and development of the City of Bingen for the next 20 years. The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to bring together everything that a community needs to chart its course for the future. It addresses the entire community and all its values, activities, and functions and contains information about the community's preferences related to physical growth and preservation. It records important facts and context about contemporary and future challenges and. It provides tools and action steps to achieve the plan's goals.
 - Above all, the mission of the plan is to unite the community's efforts to make sure everyone is rowing in the same direction. It also important to recognize the plan is not a rigid document and remains flexible; situations and issues will undoubtedly arise which were unanticipated when this was plan was created. The plan should be reviewed annually for updates and revisions as the need arises.
- Integrate an updated version of the “History” section in the introduction. Consider trimming it down to no more than two pages and add historical images if possible.
- List engagement activities that went into creating the Comprehensive Plan, starting with the CPAT event. Keep this to a page or less and potentially include photos of community events.
- Finally, a section on implementation can be helpful. This explains the tools used to implement the Plan's vision, goals, and policies. Comprehensive Plans are achieved through development regulations (such as zoning and critical areas ordinances), capital improvement plans and projects (such as for sewer, water, parks, and transportation), and the City's regular operating budget (affecting issues like maintenance, staffing levels, permit processing, and civic programs).

Land Use, Housing & Economic Development Element

The Land Use Element should be central to all other elements. It provides for the distribution of land use meeting Bingen's needs for residential, commercial, recreation, public facilities, and other land uses. This element also needs to describe development patterns that support Bingen's vision for the future. Include policies that promote compatible pedestrian-oriented development, resource protection and sustainable design, economic vitality, and the development of inviting and distinctive public spaces.

Goals and Policy explanation. The suggested overarching goals are clearly labeled. Goal subject titles are **bolded** for easy quick viewing while the full goals statement is listed in regular text. Policies and sub-policies are listed in bullets and sub-bullets below each goal. Again, the goals and policies below and in other elements are our initial suggestions and considerations based on the CPAT team's analysis and discussion and community input during the roundtable event. Thus, they should be considered a starting point for the City in developing the plan. For that reason, the goals and policies are not numbered, as they should be in the actual plan (which is critical for easy referencing).

Where a particular goal or policy is drawn from the existing plan, we've added the word OLD followed by the goal or policy number in brackets, such as [OLD 4.A]. Otherwise, everything else is new material.

Goal - Land Use Pattern and Growth Management. Establish and manage a pattern of development which is consistent with the community's vision.

Explanation: This starts the Land Use element with a general overarching goal about land use patterns. This goal would include a simple-to-use land use designation matrix with descriptions of the purpose, density/intensity of development, and implementing zones for each designation. A potential matrix with considerations is shown below.

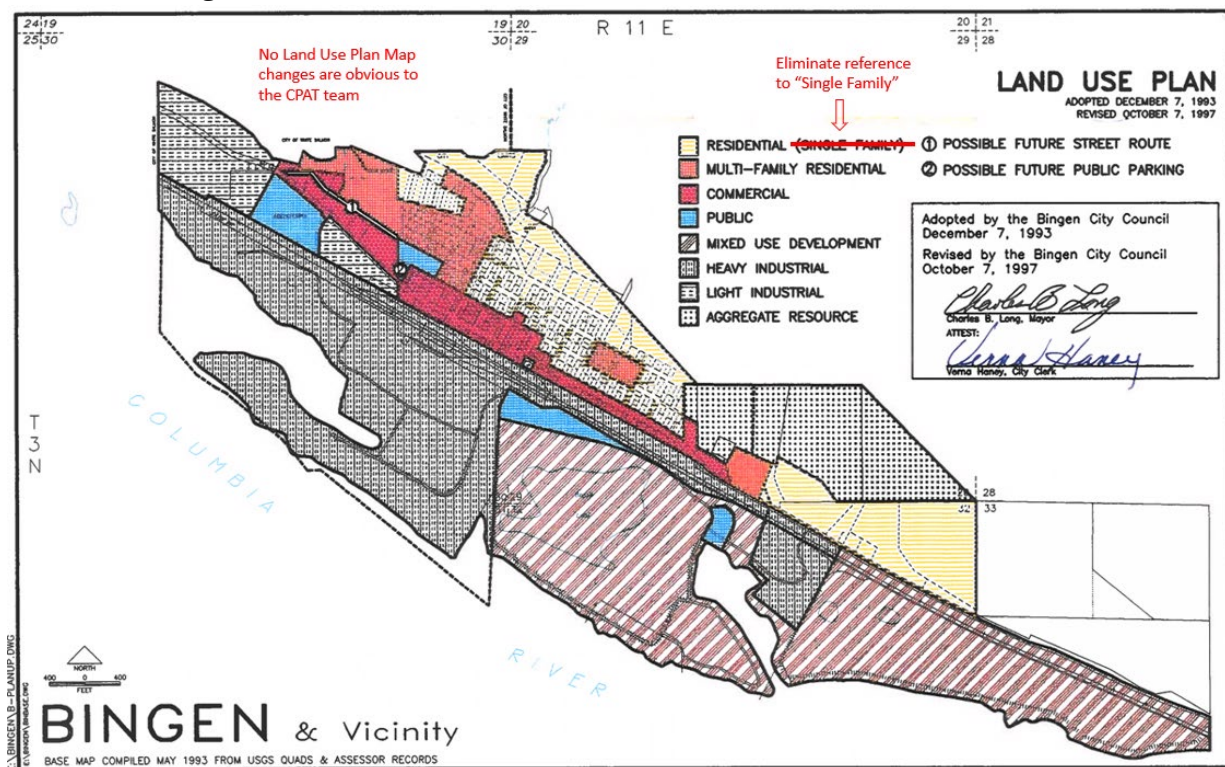
Supporting policies:

- Promote opportunities for a well-balanced mix of land uses, including residential, commercial, public services, recreational, and cultural uses through the Future Land Use Map adopted with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Provide a reasonable supply of development capacity through the Future Land Use Map and zoning standards to provide a variety of opportunities for residential development, redevelopment and infill, housing choice, and housing affordability.
- Create basic commercial and multiple-family design standards to address relationships between buildings and streets, pedestrian access, massing standards, integration of usable open space, and service element location and design.

- [OLD 4.A] Encourage the efficient use of existing buildings and improved lots before allowing development to occur outside of existing water and sewer service areas.
- Promote a contiguous city boundary to provide for consistency in land use jurisdiction, infrastructure planning, and provision of public services. Proactively evaluate annexation of the WSDOT maintenance yard and properties east of the mill. [OLD 4.C follows] Annexation requests by property owners should be supported if they meet the other goals and policies of this plan.

Future Land Use Map

No land use map changes are specifically suggested, other than eliminating the “single family” reference in the yellow “Residential” plan designation (see the corresponding Future Land Use Designation Table below).



Future Land Use Designation Table

Explanation: The Future Land Use Map together with the Future Land Use Designation Table arguably form the heart of the Comprehensive Plan. The table below is a suggested update of Bingen's designations in the current comprehensive plan. We've added "purpose" and "land use and intensity" sub-headers to provide for more details – but not so much that it might overly constrain implementing zoning approaches. It's somewhat of a delicate dance, but the content below is our suggested starting point. Including the "Implementing Zones" for each designation is an important functional element. For Bingen, all but the base "Residential" designation have just one implementing zone.

Also note that we've recommended removing the term "single-family" from the base residential designation. This is a worthy trend in other cities to welcome much needed flexibility for more than just detached single-family housing types in these areas.

Future Land Use Designation	Description	Implementing Zones
Residential	<p>Purpose: This designation provides for low to moderate density residential development largely within established neighborhoods.</p> <p>Land use and intensity: Whereas detached single family dwellings have traditionally been the predominate housing type, this designation also allows duplexes and accessory dwelling uses as well as triplexes and townhouses in certain circumstances. There is no prescribed maximum density.</p>	R1, R2
Multi-Family Residential	<p>Purpose: This designation provides for moderate to high density residential development in areas already characterized by this type of development and in areas capable of accommodating such development. These areas are conveniently located in relation to traffic routes, public utilities, and community facilities.</p> <p>Land use and intensity: Apartments and townhouses are the predominate intended housing types. Buildings up to three-stories in height are appropriate. There is no prescribed maximum density.</p>	R3
Commercial	<p>Purpose: This designation provides for a wide variety of general service, retail, wholesale, commercial, and mixed-uses associated with the central business district of Bingen and the SR 14</p>	C

business thoroughfare. The designation provides protection of the local economy by assuring the continuing utilization of those areas which are suitable and desirable for commercial business activities.

Land use and intensity: A wide variety of general service, retail commercial, and professional office uses. Multifamily uses are encouraged on upper floors, along the side streets (all streets other than Steuben), and portions of on-site buildings not adjacent to the street. Buildings up to three-stories in height are appropriate. There is no prescribed maximum density.

Mixed-Use	<p>Purpose: This designation provides for a wide mix of compatible light industrial, commercial, recreational, and residential development, which can be developed in a master planned setting complementary to existing uses and natural amenities (Bingen Lake, Columbia Riverfront, and associated wetland areas).</p> <p>Land use and intensity: A mix of light industrial uses (a mix of agricultural services, manufacturing, transportation, and public utilities), recreational uses complementary to the riverfront setting, a limited amount of supportive commercial uses, and multifamily uses. Buildings up to three-stories in height are appropriate. There is no prescribed maximum density.</p>	MU
Public	<p>Purpose: To provide areas for protection and enhancement of public uses on publicly owned lands which serve community or governmental functions.</p> <p>Land use and intensity: Public parks and recreation facilities, open space, single family residences under certain circumstances, schools, and other public facilities. Buildings up to three-stories in height are appropriate.</p>	P
Light Industrial	<p>Purpose: To provide areas suitable and desirable for those industrial activities which do not create objectionable conditions to urban activities, such as noise, smoke, odor, etc.</p>	M1

	Land use and intensity: A mix of agricultural services, manufacturing, transportation, public utilities, and incidental commercial uses (to avoid competition with commercial areas).	
Heavy Industrial	Purpose: To provide areas where diverse industrial development can occur that will foster economic growth and stability consistent with maintaining environmental and community quality. Land use and intensity: A mix of heavy construction, heavy manufacturing, transportation and public utilities, wholesale trade, and retail trade (building materials, garden supply, and related uses).	M2
Explanation: Consider adding residential zones as a possible implementing zone to provide an opportunity for more housing should existing quarry activities terminate.		
Aggregate Resource	Purpose: To provide areas for protection and continued utilization of existing rock and aggregate resources and assure the eventual reclamation of such areas to uses compatible with neighboring lands. Land use and density: Mineral resource removal and reclamation. Once such activities cease and reclamation has been completed, residential uses may be appropriate for the site at density levels based on the context of the site (including surrounding uses, onsite slopes, and quality of access to the site).	AR, R1, R2, R3

Goal: Residential use mix. Provide for a wide variety of housing types within the city to meet the full range of housing needs for Bingen’s evolving population.

Explanation. This goal and its policies may include “middle housing” as a major focus. Middle housing refers to moderate-scale housing between the size of single-family homes and large multifamily (apartment) buildings. It is often described as the “missing middle” because it has mostly been prohibited by contemporary zoning and it has lagged behind production of other housing types for many decades. Middle housing includes accessory dwelling units (often known as mother-in-law units or backyard cottages), duplexes, triplexes, cottage housing, townhouses, and smaller multifamily buildings. Encouraging development of middle housing is an important opportunity for neighborhoods and housing affordability because they can offer a more moderate price-point for renters and homeownership and reduce construction and land costs while still fitting into existing neighborhoods.

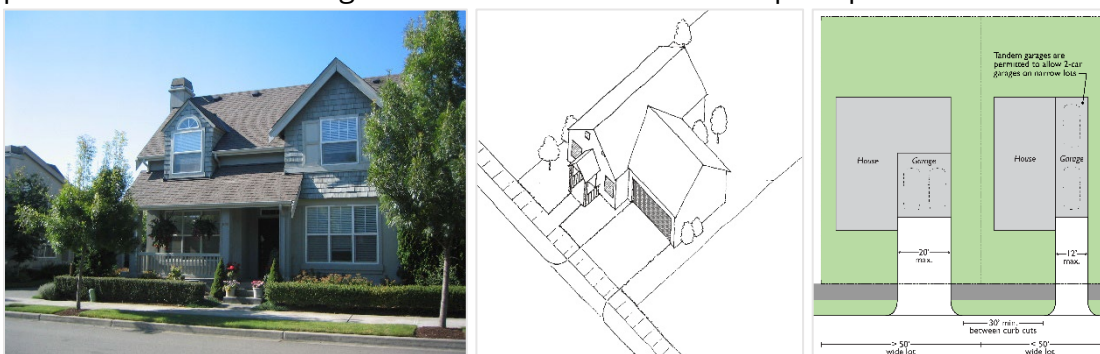


Provide some detailed considerations for each of the primary types of residential land use, such as the following:

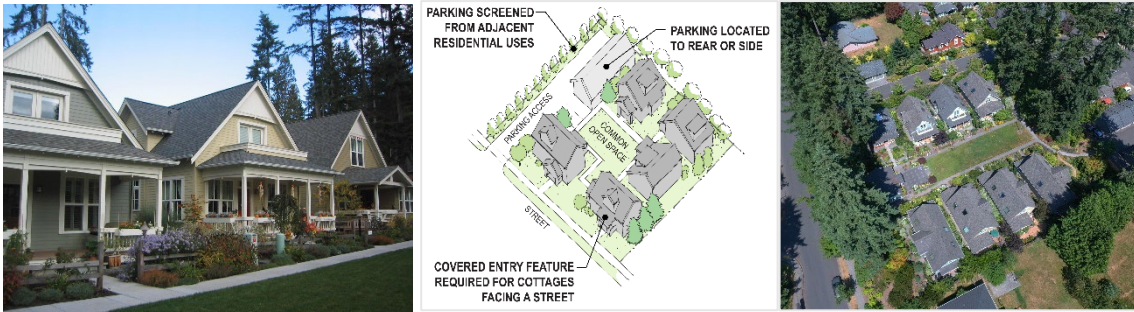
- Accessory dwelling units (ADU). Allow for attached and detached ADU's on all single-family residential lots provided size, design, and other provisions are included to promote compatibility with surrounding uses.



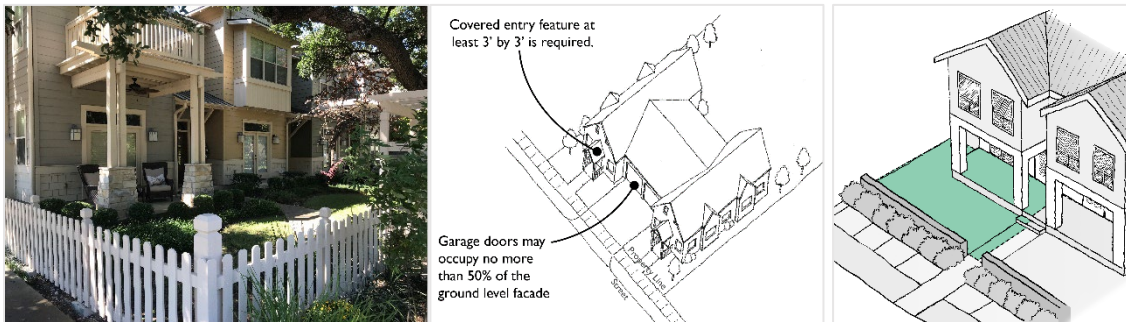
- Small lot single family. Allow for small lot single family development (lots between 3,000-6,000 square feet) in the R1 zone provided design provisions that emphasize a pedestrian-oriented design and the inclusion of usable open space are included.



- Cottage housing. Encourage the development of cottage housing (a cluster of small homes around a common open space) in all residential zones as an increasingly popular housing type, provided special design provisions are included to ensure a pedestrian-oriented design, inclusion of common open space, and strict cottage size limitations.



- Duplexes & triplexes. Encourage these housing types in all residential zones provided the scale and design of buildings fit into the neighborhood context (require porches or covered entries and consider a maximum floor area ratio per lot) and each unit includes some minimum usable open space.



- Townhouses. Encourage townhouses with two to three attached units on lots in all residential zones. Provide for townhouses with up to six attached units in the R2 zone and without attached unit limitations in the R3 zone. Create simple design standards emphasizing pedestrian-oriented design, façade articulation, and usable open space to ensure neighborhood compatibility and livable design.



- Senior and assisted housing. Encourage these housing types in the R3 zone. Create simple design standards emphasizing pedestrian-oriented design, façade articulation, and usable open space to ensure community compatibility and livable design.

- Walk up apartments and stacked flats. Encourage these multiple-family housing types in the R3 and MU zones and in the C zone above shops, behind shops, and on side streets. Create simple design standards emphasizing pedestrian-oriented design, façade articulation, and usable open space to ensure community compatibility and livable design.



- Existing housing. Encourage the preservation and upkeep of existing housing. Conserve existing housing stock through continued investment in adequate public services, appropriate zoning, design standards, and encouragement of rehabilitation programs.

Goal: Compatible residential development. Promote infill residential development that is compatible with Bingen’s small town character and scale.

Supporting policies:

- Evaluate options to allow three-story buildings in the R2 and R3 zones to provide additional capacity and flexibility for townhouses and multiple-family housing types.
- Update zoning provisions in the R1 and R2 zones to encourage a graceful integration of “middle housing” into existing neighborhoods in ways that maintain general neighborhood scale and compatibility, while emphasizing livability. Possible approaches:
 - Create maximum floor area ratios for residential zones to maintain modest scale; but consider allowing slightly greater FAR for integration of missing middle housing types.
 - Requiring covered entries – as a basic functional design feature that reinforces historical designs and adds integrity to a home
 - Providing for some minimum amount of useable open space for all dwelling units (a common standard is at least 10% of lot area with minimum dimensions of 10 feet where there’s more than one unit on a lot and 15 feet where there’s one unit on a lot.
 - Limit the number and width of driveways (maximum width of 20 feet and no more than one per lot 50 feet wide or less, no more than two per lot up to 100 feet wide).

- Emphasize living areas over garages in the design of residential frontages by requiring a 20 foot setback for garages facing the street, setting the garage at least 5 feet further than front face of the house or covered porch, and limiting garage doors to no more than 50 percent of width of a ground floor dwelling or dwellings).
- Evaluate options to relax minimum off-street parking requirements for residential uses. Specifically:
 - Consider requiring one space per dwelling unit for all housing types, except where otherwise suggested below.
 - For accessory dwelling units, allow available on-street parking in front of the lot to be used for the required off-street parking.
 - Consider exempting residential uses in the Commercial Zone from off-street parking requirements.

Explanation: Related to the below policy, we suggest the Society Hotel gets rezoned to R-3 as part of City's zoning map changes after Comprehensive Plan adoption. The site has had a Multifamily Land Use Designation for over 20 years, but has never been rezoned to fit the designation.

- Allow for compatible lodging uses in the R3 zone as a conditional use (suggesting the Society Hotel gets rezoned to R-3 as part of City's zoning map changes after Comprehensive Plan adoption).
- Adopt a unit lot subdivision ordinance to encourage the development of townhouses and related forms of housing that support home ownership.
- Allow flexibility in the design of new subdivisions, provided the lots can accommodate permitted housing types allowed in the district.
- Consider adopting and allowing pre-approved housing plans for housing types and forms desirable for integration in Bingen (a statewide grant program to develop such plans is being considered by the Legislature).
- Permit and encourage the development of manufactured, prefabricated, and modular housing as an affordable housing option so long as such housing has similar character and appearance as traditional site-built housing in Bingen.
- Develop standards for short-term rentals (STR) that balance the opportunity for supplemental homeowner income, neighborhood nuisances, and preserving housing stock for long-term residential use. Some options include:
 - Clearly defining STR's.
 - Prohibiting STR's in residential zones.
 - Only allow in residential zones where the property owner lives on site; prohibit STR's in multifamily buildings.
 - Cap the number of STR business licenses that may be issued, such as equal to 1-5% of total housing units.

- Provide performance standards and cap the number of guests.
- Provide resources for enforcing business license and registration requirements.
- Also see the [American Planning Association's guidance](#).

Goal: Affordable housing. Actively encourage affordable housing options.

Supporting policies:

- Consider density bonuses and tax and fee exemptions to promote affordable housing.
- Continue and strengthen partnerships with regional agencies (such as Mid-Columbia Economic Development District) and jurisdictions to support regional solutions to the current housing affordability problem.
- Engage with non-profit housing organizations.
- Evaluate surplus publicly-owned land for affordable housing.
- Seek and advocate for regional, state, federal, and philanthropic funding options to support development of housing for low- and moderate-income households.
- Work with other jurisdictions and health and social service organizations to develop and implement a coordinated, regional approach to homelessness.

Other policy considerations relate to housing, but may not fit specifically under the goals above.

- Encourage the construction and upgrade of housing with increased standards for soundproofing and weatherproofing to mitigate railroad and industrial noise, adapt to the effects of climate change, and improve energy efficiency.
- Provide resources to help older residential buildings convert to electric heating and heat pumps.
- Enhance the accessibility of Bingen's housing and connections to other land uses, especially for the elderly, people with disabilities, and people using mobility support devices. Specifically:
 - Encourage housing choices with single-level units on the ground floor or elevator-accessed multifamily housing.
 - Support continuation and expansion of transit services which help seniors living in Bingen travel around the gorge without a car (such as for shopping and medical services), especially those who cannot physically drive or afford to drive.

Explanation: There's probably an argument that this is two separate goals, but it sounded good and fit with our suggested policies.

Goal: Business Incubator. Strengthen Bingen's economic resilience and role as a business incubator (role in small business development).

Supporting policies:

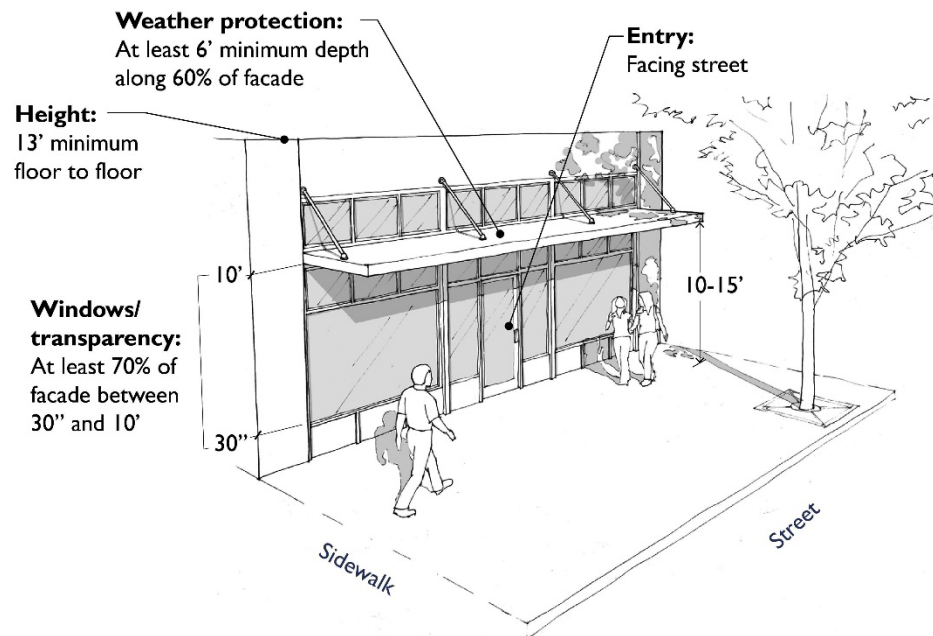
- Support the retention, growth, and new location of small and locally-owned businesses.
- Promote economic resilience by encouraging a diversity of businesses not reliant on a single business sector or large employer. Include strategies for increasing business sector diversity.
- Encourage new commercial development to be mixed-use with residential components. Consider eliminating the 50% residential limitations in the Commercial zone and only require non-residential use on the ground floor building frontage.
- Review the amount of parking required for commercial uses and make code adjustments if there are barriers to development and local entrepreneurship.
- Support establishment of affordable childcare services for children of all ages via potentially expedited permit review processes, providing support for grant applications, and other means.
- Develop a tourism management plan that promotes sustainable tourism in Bingen. Support tourism marketing including active cooperation with those efforts that promote Bingen during the "off-season."
- Continue to allow flexibility for standalone and home-based business in residential areas.
- Work with local and regional educational institutions to encourage job training that matches the needs of Bingen's employers.
- Support the preservation of existing commercial and industrial buildings to ensure a supply of affordable business spaces.



Goal: Downtown & Highway Corridor. Retain and strengthen Bingen's authentic small town character.

Supporting policies:

- Adopt simple design standards to reinforce and enhance the pedestrian-oriented character of downtown. Example provisions include:
 - Require that new buildings on core downtown blocks facing Steuben integrate storefront designs integrating the some or all of the following features:



Explanation: Again, the above provisions are a starting point. Integrating some extra flexibility (from the standards shown herein) be considered. For example, dropping the transparency requirement down to 60% or 50%, but certainly no less than that. For weather protection, it appears less critical for Bingen than communities further west, but we suggest requiring weather protection over entries at a minimum. Such standards should only apply to new buildings. Provide much more flexibility for remodels and even additions.

- Require large buildings to integrate façade articulation techniques to effectively reinforce Bingen's scale of modest storefronts. This could include offering a list of design options, such as a change in weather protection features, roofline change, change in façade materials, change in window pattern, integration of vertical columns, or use of horizontal building modulation, and requiring new buildings to incorporate at least three articulation features at intervals no more than 40 feet.
- For core downtown blocks, prohibit new surface parking lots adjacent to Steuben.

- For highway corridor frontages outside of the downtown core, create some basic site and building design standards that reinforce Bingen's authentic small town character. Considerations:
 - Adopt a simple but predictable landscaping ordinance with a focus on plantings between the building/parking areas and the street.
 - Consider a requirement for pitched roofs.
 - Integrate basic façade articulation standards that effectively break down the scale of large buildings into smaller storefront components. For example, provide a list of options and require the integration of two articulation features at intervals no more than 40-50 feet (to retain a modest scale).

Current sign code allows for signs up to 30 feet tall! Consider updating sign ordinance to prohibit tall freestanding signs over 8 or 10 feet tall to avoid the visual pollution of such tall signs.

- Emphasize low monument and building-mounted signs over tall freestanding signs.



Goal: Industrial lands. Protect and enhance Bingen's industrial lands and uses.

Supporting policies:

- Encourage expansion of existing employers and attraction of new employers that pay wages sufficient to support family households and fund needed public services.
- Support the continued operations of major employers like the mill and Port of Bingen.
- Encourage infill and promote efficient utilization of vacant land within areas that are designated for industrial uses.
- [OLD 8.C] Non-industrial uses are discouraged in the industrial area.
- [OLD 15] Continue to allow for rock and gravel extraction by surface mining while minimizing conflicts with neighboring uses (such as vegetative buffers, limiting hours of operation, traffic control, and dust and erosion control).

Transportation, Public Facilities & Utilities

Element

Transportation, Public Facility & Utility Element establishes a the framework for making decisions that supporting implementation of the City's vision and land use goals. Coordination of these elements ensures that all existing and future developments are adequately served by a multimodal transportation system and necessary utility capacity. The regional nature of the system will require continued interagency coordination with surrounding agencies to improve the system.

Bingen's **transportation system** includes two State highways and a network of local neighborhood streets. SR-14 that goes east to west through downtown and provides regional connectivity along the north side of the Columbia River. SR-141 that goes north up the hill to and through White Salmon. Both highways provide connectivity and traffic impacts to Bingen. In our discussions with City staff and residents there many comments about providing safer pedestrian and bicycle access to White Salmon and surrounding recreational opportunities on SR-141. In addition, there were numerous comments about the impacts of commercial and tourist traffic through downtown on SR-14 focused on better traffic control, sidewalks and pedestrian crossings. In neighborhoods that was desire to expand the sidewalk system for safer access. Finally, connectivity between downtown the industrial operations and the Port are limited by the Burlington Northern main line that runs from Vancouver east along the river. Current surface crossings require train warnings at all hours and cut off access during the day and night. On the positive side, the city has an Amtrak station which we could be a catalyst for future redevelopment along Railroad Street.

The City of Bingen provides a variety of **public utilities** for its residents and business, some independently, and some with surrounding jurisdictions. Water and sewer services are coordinated with the City of White Salmon with joint connections between the two cities. The waste treatment plant for both cities is located in Bingen.

For **public safety**, Bingen and White Salmon have had an interlocal agreement since 2000 that provides police services for both communities, with stations located in both cities. Both city councils have a police subcommittee that governs budget and operations, and there is an interjurisdictional agreement for service with the Klickitat County Sheriff's Office. Bingen and White Salmon both have their own volunteer Fire Departments. Power is provided to the city by the Klickitat PUD. Daubenspeck Park is a 3-acre city park located in the center of Bingen.

Finally, given Bingen's size and location we are recommending several **sustainability** opportunities worth considering. Enhancing local recycling and energy conservation

programs for both commercial and residential uses can be iterative and community wide. Currently the only EV charging in this area are at the Society Hotel, predominantly for their guests use. Adding several fast-charging stations in walking distance to the downtown commercial district could benefit the community, travelers, and downtown businesses. Finally, since power is provided is largely carbon free hydro power from BPA through the local PUD there may be opportunities to secure Bingen's long term energy efficiency and costs through this partnership.

Goal: Safe and efficient multimodal transportation system. Develop an integrated and balanced transportation system in Bingen that provides safe, efficient, and reliable multimodal transportation and helps address climate change goals.

Explanation. This goal and its policies/strategies address different existing and future demands on the Bingen transportation system. Key themes include implementing the SR 14 grade separation project and improving citywide pedestrian connectivity and safety.

Supporting policies:

- Improve connections to the waterfront pathway system and Port property from central Bingen, i.e. implement a grade-separated railroad crossing to address emergency response and disruptions to traffic (particularly the SR 14/Elm Street Roundabout and railroad grade separation project).
- Develop an Active Transportation Plan to address non-motorized system connectivity gaps, with potential projects such as:
 - Plan and construct an Oak Street (State Route 141) pedestrian/bike facility to better connect Bingen with White Salmon.
 - Enhance the uncontrolled pedestrian crossings (such as with solar-powered rapid flashing beacons).
 - Improve pedestrian access and amenities at Amtrak Station.
 - Enhance transit stops.
 - Improve access to recreation areas.
 - Improve handicap accessibility (per the Americans with Disabilities Act).
- Support electric vehicle infrastructure, such as new charging stations on private properties, converting vehicle fleets to electric, and enhancing the capacity of the electrical grid.
- Improve transit service to/within Bingen.
 - Improve temporal and spatial gaps in service.
 - Add weekend service.
 - Improve pedestrian and bike connections to transit stops.
 - Review transit stop locations relative to key pedestrian generators.

- Continue to coordinate with Mt. Adams Transportation Services (MAT) and the City of Hood River on public transportation.
- Maintain a street grid system to support efficient pedestrian circulation. Where street connections are not feasible, non-motorized connections should be considered.

Goal: A transportation system that supports the Land Use Element. Provide a multimodal transportation system that supports the Land Use Element and is consistent with countywide and regional planning efforts.

Explanation. This goal and its policies/strategies addresses the connection between land use and transportation. The transportation system should compliment and be supportive of the City's land use and economic development plans. Strategies include improving the SR 14 corridor through downtown to improve walkability and business vitality. In addition, improved development review tools and processes can help guide developer mitigation to meet the City's vision.

Supporting policies:

- Develop a citywide parking strategy and plan
- Reform residential parking standards to better balance demand, supply, and cost of constructing parking
- Beautification of SR 14 Downtown Corridor. Develop a plan to reimagine how the City's main downtown commercial corridor can best look and function. Elements may include:
 - Gateway treatments (roundabouts provide an opportunity)
 - Reconfigured travel lanes and parking
 - Wider sidewalks and enhanced pedestrian crossings
 - Street trees and decorative lighting
 - Traffic calming
- Develop local development review requirements and design standards to improve the efficiency and effectiveness in guiding developer mitigation to improve the transportation system. Elements may include:
 - Traffic Impact Analysis requirements and guidelines
 - Local street design standards
 - Developer frontage improvement requirements (sidewalks, pathways, etc.)
 - Site access and safety standards
 - Addressing off-site traffic impacts

Goal - Public Facilities and Utilities. Establish and maintain adequate public facilities to meet the demands for current and future growth and economic development.

Supporting policies:

- Develop and maintain plans for the adequate provisions of public utility services.
- The development of public utilities shall be planned and coordinated with White Salmon, Klickitat County, WSDOT, and the Klickitat PUD to enable the timely delivery of services for current and future residents and businesses within the city.
- Levels of service shall be developed, adopted, and updated for water, sanitary sewer, storm water, police, and fire services based on level of service standards, forecasted growth, and financial capacity to support land and economic development policies. A related funding plan will be developed and adopted by City Council.
- The city will situate emergency service facilities to maximize ease of access and minimize response time.
- The design and development of public facilities and utilities will meet adopted State and local standards, while being consistent with City of Bingen's community character.
- Encourage coordination between public and private utility providers as they undertake improvement projects to minimize impacts of utility infrastructure on the community.

Question: Are there existing utility plans or service level standards that should be referred to here or adopted by reference?

Goal - Sustainability. Encourage sustainability and the preservation of the natural environment.

Supporting policies:

- Promote a compact, mixed-use, and walkable development pattern to reduce the energy expended by vehicles and buildings and support walking and bicycling trips.
- Support energy conservation through the use of energy efficient building design and land use standards.
- Facilitate clean energy production at the site, neighborhood, and community scale. This could include streamlining and maintaining regulations for permitting rooftop solar and wind energy systems, for example.
- Coordinate with the Klickitat PUD for the long-term provision of affordable, carbon-free energy to enable future economic growth in the city.
- Support recycling of municipal and household waste as part of the City's commitment to sustainability.

- Encourage private development to include on-site features which enhance stormwater retention, reduce landslide hazards, and preserve natural habitat.
- Encourage water conservation measures in the zoning standards, including drought tolerant landscaping and use of native vegetation.

Goal: Capital Improvements Plan (CIP).

Supporting policies:

- The City Council will take public input each year to update and adopt a six-year vision for city wide priorities that will be incorporated into the CIP plan.
- Each CIP priority will be included in a list with steps necessary for implementation, tentative timetable, and prospective funding sources, if known.
- An annual report to City Council will be done for the prior year (or budget) with a progress report on each priority, adjustments where needed, and future opportunities for consideration with the next CIP update.

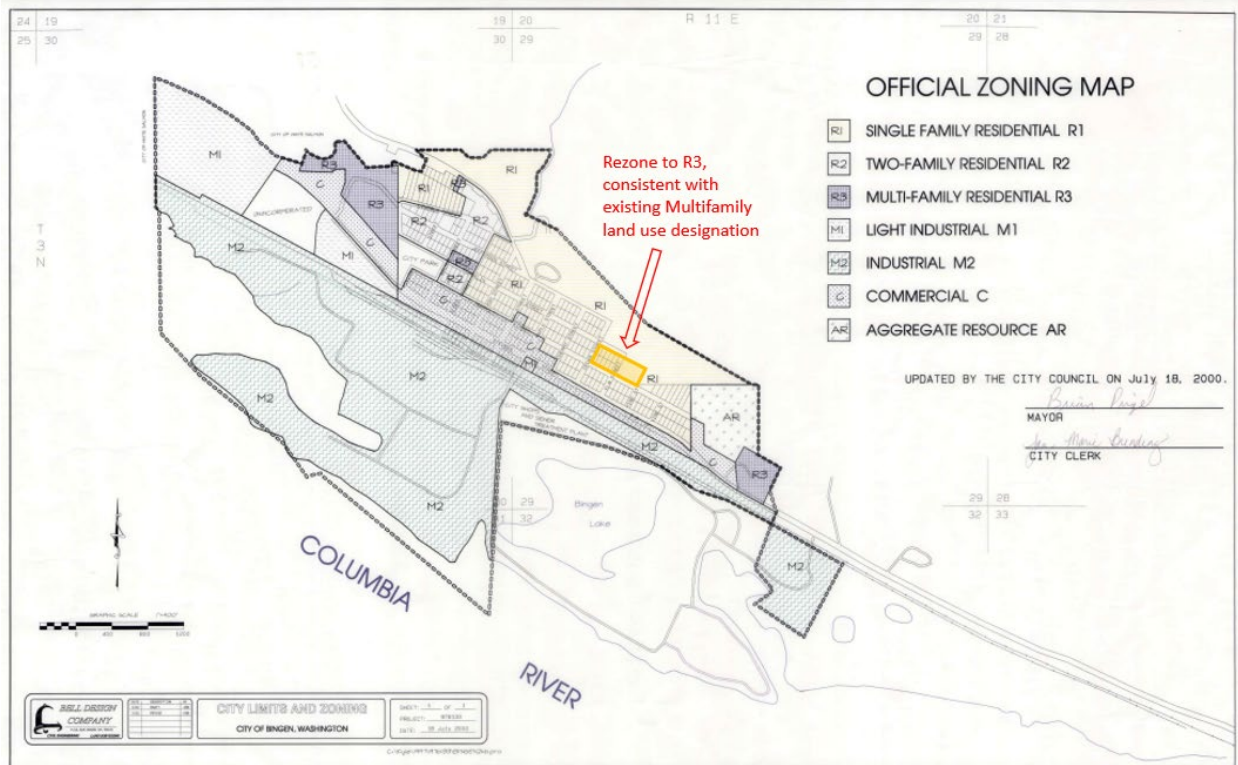
Subsequent Implementation Tools

Once the Comprehensive Plan is adopted there will be need to develop new zoning regulations and other implementation actions to accomplish the vision and goals of the plan. Below is a partial list of actions the City should discuss and consider prioritizing.

- Update locally-adopted building and construction codes to current State standards (in process)
- Adopt an ordinance that develops requirements and limitations on short-term rentals
- Update zoning map and confirm consistency between the Comprehensive Plan and zoning map designations.
- Update development standards in residential zones to encourage more housing options (setbacks, height limitations, ADU's, basic design guidelines, etc.)
- Create tip sheets for minor construction activities, such as for accessory buildings, and accessory dwelling units, home expansions, new porches/decks, fences, retaining walls, and driveways, etc. (see [Guidelines and Tip Sheets | MBP \(mybuildingpermit.com\)](https://mybuildingpermit.com))
- Update/refine the existing definitions sections in the municipal code to clarify key land use and development terms
- Reduce variances and conditional development approvals by developing legally-defensible decision criteria and approval processes. Provide for predictable and fair land use decision procedures.

Zoning Considerations

Starting with the zoning map, we found only one obvious change that is needed - rezoning the site of the Society Hotel to R-3. This would make the site consistent with the current use and Multifamily land use designation.



Consider the zone specific provisions below largely as a package – as the more detailed design features are important mitigation features that help to ensure compatible Bingen integration and livability. Also note Suggested Residential Design Standards section below – as these would apply to non-single family development in all zones.

R-1 Suggestions

- Change the name of the district from “Single Family Residential District” to the “Low Density Residential District” to deemphasize the “single family” term.
- Broaden the permitted housing types to allow for accessory dwelling units (attached and detached), cottage housing, duplexes, and triplexes.
- Reduce the minimum lot size from 6,000 square feet to 3,000 square feet to accommodate small lot single family development; Reduce the minimum lot width to 30 feet.

- Reduce the minimum front yard setback from 20 feet to 15 feet and allow covered entries and porches to project into the front setback up to six feet (to better encourage the integration of such neighborhood-friendly and functional features).
- Eliminate the building coverage standard (maximum 35 percent) and create minimum usable open space standards noted in the Residential Design Standards noted below.
- Create maximum floor area ratio (FAR) standards as the primary tool to manage the perceived bulk and scale of new residential structures. Include garages in the calculations (perhaps exempt them where they are in detached structures placed behind a home and towards the back of the lot).
 - 0.45 FAR for one single family dwelling on a lot. This equates to a 4,500 square foot structure on a 10,000 square foot lot.
 - 0.50 FAR for a duplex or the combination of a single family dwelling and an accessory dwelling unit on a lot.
 - 0.55 FAR for a triplex on a lot.

R-2 Suggestions

- Change the name of the district from “Two-Family Residential District” to the “Medium Density Residential District” to deemphasize the “two-family” or duplex aspect.
- Expand the list of permitted housing types to allow for triplexes and townhouses or multiplexes with up to six units in one building.
- Eliminate the requirement for additional lot area for buildings with more than one unit.
- Reduce the minimum front yard setback from 20 feet to 15 feet and allow covered entries and porches to project into the front setback up to six feet (to better encourage the integration of such neighborhood-friendly and functional features).
- Eliminate the building coverage standard (maximum 35 percent) and create minimum usable open space standards noted in the Residential Design Standards noted below.
- Consider allowing for three-story dwellings.
- Create maximum floor area ratio (FAR) standards as the primary tool to manage the perceived bulk and scale of new residential structures. Include garages in the calculations (perhaps exempt them where they are in detached structures placed behind a home and towards the back of the lot).
 - 0.50 FAR for one single family dwelling on a lot. This equates to a 4,500 square foot structure on a 10,000 square foot lot.
 - 0.60 FAR for a duplex on a lot.
 - 0.70 FAR for a triplex or greater on a lot.

R-3 Suggestions

- Consider allowing for three-story dwellings.

Residential Design Standards

Consider the following standards that would apply to all residential development, except for those below that are specific to one particular housing type.

- Requiring covered entries – as a basic functional design feature that reinforces historical designs and adds integrity to a home.
- Consider special articulation standards for duplexes, triplexes, and multiplexes in the R-1 and R-2 zones. For example, where multiple dwelling unit entrances are facing the street, each unit shall feature a unique roofline or roofline change to help articulate the façade (add visual interest) and reduce the perceived scale of the building.
- Limit the number and width of driveways (maximum width of 20 feet and no more than one per lot 50 feet wide or less, no more than two per lot up to 100 feet wide).
- Emphasize living areas over garages in the design of residential frontages by requiring a 20 foot setback for garages facing the street, setting the garage at least 5 feet further than front face of the house or covered porch, and limiting garage doors to no more than 50 percent of width of a ground floor dwelling or dwellings).
- Parking – require only one off-street parking spot per unit – to apply to all housing types, to keep provisions simple.
- Create minimum usable open space standards for all development in R-1 and R-2 zones and single family, duplexes and triplexes in other zones:
 - At least 10 percent of the lot area (regardless of the number of units on the lot).
 - Minimum dimensions of 15 feet where there's one unit on the lot and 10 feet where there's more than one unit on a lot.
 - May be located anywhere on the lot. However, when located in the front yard, the space must be enclosed towards the street by a low wall or fence between 18 -42 inches in height.
- Create minimum usable open space for townhouses and multifamily uses outside of the R-1 and R-2 zones:
 - At least 20 percent of the net floor area (gross floor area minus enclosed parking and shared service and circulation areas).
 - Common outdoor open spaces and private balconies may be used to meet the requirement.
 - **MAKERS to share example design standards** with City to ensure that the open space is well integrated into the development and usable.
- **MAKERS to share other multifamily design standards** (for large site development) considerations to the city addressing:
 - Ground level frontages.

- Service element location and design.
- Internal vehicular circulation standards.
- Internal pedestrian circulation standards.
- Building articulation and massing standards.
- Building materials standards.
- **MAKERS to share sample accessory dwelling unit standards**
- **MAKERS to share sample cottage housing standards**

See additional zoning related suggestions integrated into the policies of the Land Use, Housing, and Economic Development Element.