

# Washington APA

## Zillah

### Community Planning Assistance Program



A report prepared for the City of Zillah summarizing the outcome of the APA Community Planning Assistance Team of May 5, 2007.

## **Zillah – Community Planning Assistance Team**

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**Jill Sterrett, FAICP**, *Urban Design and Planning*

## **Executive Summary**

### **Introduction**

In February 2007, the City of Zillah submitted a proposal to the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA) for a Community Planning Assistance Team to assist the town and its citizens in addressing key issues facing the community. The issues ranged from historic preservation and economic development to connectivity.

The APA accepted the proposal and, after a preliminary meeting with the Mayor, Gary Clark, in April, the team members arrived in Zillah on May 5th, 2007, for a one-day work session.

Through-out the work session, the team members, local officials, community leaders, technical experts, and citizens came to understand the key issues and used their expertise to frame a wide range of recommendations, which are presented to the community in this report.

Mayor Gary Clark kicked off the work session with an overview of opportunities and challenges. Jill Sterrett and Eric Olson reviewed

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#### **Work Session Objectives:**

- **Connect plans and actions.**
- **Recognize and describe the qualities of a place by preserving the best elements of the past, addressing the needs of the present, and planning for the needs of future generations.**
- **Help the community understand the structure of the place at various scales and contexts—from regional resources to the neighborhood scale.**
- **Visualize potential futures.**
- **Explore and articulate the larger contexts and interactions of ecological, sociological, economic, and physical systems.**
- **Inform the community of opportunities and encourage them to take action to protect local and regional resources.**
- **Identify and describe choices and consequences.**
- **Advance the principles of *APA for a Livable Washington*.**
- **Help the community define the roles of stakeholders.**
- **Develop a roadmap for implementation of plans and policies.**

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work done to date and existing Comprehensive Plan policies related to economic development and historic preservation.

This report reflects the key issues identified during the work session, including:

- Historic Preservation
- Main Streets
- Economic Development
- Community Design/Transportation Connectivity

A closing section of this report offers some thoughts on how the community can best move forward to address the range of issues and recommendations covered in the report. In the end, the citizens of the community are the critical players, both for their insights and observations during the team visit and for their support for the new directions that emerge from the process.

### The Work Session

APA selected a Community Planning Assistance Team comprised of experts in economic development, historic preservation, main street development and urban design. These volunteers included:

- **Kristian Kofoed, J.D.**, *Team Lead*
- **Timothy Bishop**, *Main Streets Implementation*
- **Teri Cameron**, *Economic Development*
- **Greg Griffith**, *Historic Preservation*
- **Ben Frerichs, PhD**, *Strategic Economic Development*
- **Eric Olson**, *Student – University of Washington*
- **Paula Reeves, AICP**, *Transportation Connectivity*
- **Jill Sterrett, FAICP**, *Urban Design and Planning*



*Timothy Bishop, Ellensburg's Mainstreet Manager, Presenting at the Zillah CPAT*

Greg Griffith opened by providing invaluable comments and conclusions based on his experience in historic preservation. He is working closely with the City of Zillah to help them preserve the historic Teapot Dome Filling Station constructed in 1921 by Jack Ainsworth at the time of the famous Teapot Dome oil scandal of the Harding administration.

Timothy Bishop, Main Streets Program Director for the City of Ellensburg, discussed the basic principles of Main Street communities:

**Four Principles of Main Street Communities:**

- **Organization** *involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program.*
- **Promotion** *sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play and invest in the Main Street district.*
- **Design** *means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets.*
- **Economic Restructuring** *strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base.*

Following Greg's and Timothy's inspirational remarks and some discussion of the day's agenda, the participants spent some time brainstorming issues and opportunities. A summary of the statements produced during this session is included in Appendix A of this report. The agenda included a working lunch to allow the team to discuss what they heard during the brainstorming session and organize those thoughts for the afternoon discussion.

After the working lunch, work session participants split into two groups for a walking tour of downtown and a driving tour of new development. One group discussed options for locating the Teapot Dome Filling Station. The other group reviewed economic development and opportunities for improved connectivity.

When work session participants reconvened at City Hall, they were asked to give an overview of some of the immediate work elements that had come from the walking tours. The work session participants reviewed the existing action strategies and identified a number of immediate next steps during the afternoon brainstorming session.



*Zillah CPAT Worksession Participants*

**Existing Action Strategies:**

- Initiate a Historic Preservation Plan
- Establish a Preservation Organization/Historical Society
- Nominate the Main Street Corridor to the National Register
- Establish a Historic District Commission
- Establish a Local Historic District
- Apply Design Guidelines
- Rehabilitate the Streetscape of Main Street
- Provide Off-Street Parking
- Remove Existing Power Poles

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The team summarized the outcome of this discussion of immediate next steps in Table 1 below and presented it along with a discussion of resources, responsibility, and research for each action item. The workshop participants agreed that in order to proceed with the immediate next steps, a Committee would need to be established. The Committee would need to meet at least monthly and maybe more frequently to accomplish these task items and hold each other accountable.

**Table 1. Immediate Action Steps**

<b>THEMES</b>	<b>ACTION</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<b>RESEARCH</b>
Historic Preservation – Teapot Dome Filling Station	Form Action Committee to: (1) establish 501c3 status (2) develop goal and objectives for the project (3) conduct promotions and apply for grants (4) raise funds	DAHP, CTED, APA	Committee, Historic Preservation Commission, Chamber, City, Lions Club	(1) Requirements for 501c3 Status (2) Grant opportunities
Economic Development	(1) Conduct a more detailed study of Zillah’s population and market – possibly as part of a Regional Economic Growth Study. (2) Coordinate with adjacent cities and wineries for marketing & events	CTED	Committee, City	Contact CTED
Main Streets	Integrate relevant Main Street concepts into Comprehensive Plan	CTED, DAHP	Committee, City	Contact CTED
Connectivity	Develop concept plan for downtown streetscape	WSDOT, CTED, DAHP	Committee, City, Chamber, Downtown Businesses	Contact WSDOT
Urban Design	Develop concept plan for “Town Square” and city center park	WSDOT, CTED	Committee, City	Contact property owners for acquisition options

## **The Report**

### **Community History**

In 1892, several officials from the Northern Pacific Railway and Yakima Irrigation Company visited a chosen but unnamed townsite along the north bank of the Yakima River. Among the party was Thomas F. Oakes, president of the Northern Pacific Railway, along with his wife, Abbey, and 19-year old daughter. After much debate and speculation, the group decided the town would be named after Oakes' daughter Zillah. Officially incorporated in 1911, the town is still small enough that every public institution bears Zillah's name.

Once the settlement was named, the mission of turning the arid dessert into a lush agricultural region began. Using the nearby Yakima River to irrigate the land through the construction of the Sunnyside Canal, and with support from the expanded railway, the town began to grow rapidly. Soon after, local amenities were constructed, such as a hotel, general store, drug store, and a blacksmith. In 1894 School District #32 was organized and a schoolhouse was built. Once the rail line came through Zillah, there were two stage lines and two telephone companies. After incorporation, Zillah grew to a population of 647 by 1920. This period of growth was facilitated by the combination of railway expansion and the delivery of irrigation water.

Later, notoriety found the Yakima Valley, and Zillah especially, when the Teapot Dome Filling Station was constructed in 1921. Built by Jack Ainsworth at the time of the Harding administration's famous Teapot Dome oil scandal, the Teapot Dome Filling Station was originally located on Highway 410. It was the only 24-hour station east of Seattle. In 1978 the Teapot Dome Filling Station was moved to make way for I-82. It currently resides just east of the city limits along Highway 12 just south of I-82.



Today, Zillah can best be described as a growing rural community. Being part of a strong agricultural region, the new wine industry is making room for new residents and tourists. The region has plans to grow at a quick rate with the introduction of new housing developments, potentially doubling the size of the community in the next five to ten years. The city is concerned with putting these trends to their advantage and witnessing positive growth for the future.

### **Zillah's Interest in Community Planning Assistance**

Zillah's interest in a Community Planning Assistance program stems from the momentum that was created by a University of Washington student project in the fall, aimed at finding a way to preserve the town's historic Teapot Dome Filling Station. The town had asked a student group to research innovative ways to help acquire the teapot structure, as it did not reside on property owned by the town at the time, and make a recommendation from a list of potential future sites that could be utilized by the town. With interest in using the structure as a tourist site, the town envisioned it being a place where visitors could find brochures and information on local attractions. From site analysis and local input, the university students made a recommendation of placing the structure on a parcel of land that was located downtown and owned by the city. It could serve to attract tourism to the underperforming downtown economy, and if need be, the structure could be moved later to a more historically relevant location. Since making this recommendation in December, the town has negotiated a purchase agreement with the landowner and by December 31, 2007 must develop a financing plan to pay for the land and Teapot.

In addition to incorporating the Teapot into the city's new vision of tourism, the town is interested in finding a way to draw on the tourism that is brought in by the local wine industry. Located in the agricultural epicenter of Yakima County, the Rattlesnake Hills AVA is the organizational body of the region's wine industry. Recent accreditation and accolades has led to a growth in wine producers and those interested in visiting the wine region. The Rattlesnake Hills Association runs a tourist trail that brings many visitors through Zillah while going between different wineries surrounding the town.

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Capitalizing on this traffic to bring more tourism into the downtown is a goal for Zillah businesses. In the interest of economic development, a relationship between local authorities and tour organizers has been established.

Lastly, the need of addressing the potential growth of the area derives from a large housing development and golf course that has begun construction on the west side of the town. The development, named Zillah Lakes, will have 654 residential units, and Zillah's current population will be doubled once all of the units are occupied. In addition to the nine-hole golf course, a 16-acre manmade lake is in construction and will feature three elevations and two small waterfall dams. By capturing a "water-in-the-desert" feeling, Zillah Lakes brings in a new population of residences from retirees to commuters to children going to the local schools. The town is concerned about inclusion of growth and how the expanded community may become cohesive. New economic opportunities may accompany the growth, but mostly the town's interest in Zillah Lakes is assuring connectivity between the new and old Zillah.

As outlined in their letter of request, the community of Zillah is in a state of transition. With new residences moving in and old business going out of business, the town is concerned with finding a way to preserve its heritage and traditional appeal, while still looking forward with new development and tourism possibilities.

## **Historic Preservation Opportunities**

### **Background**

The Teapot Dome Filling Station was listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1985, recognizing both its historic and architectural contribution to the nation's heritage. Originally located east of Zillah on old U.S. Highway 12, the station was moved in 1978 to its present location by the Washington State Department of Transportation in order to avoid its loss due to construction of Interstate 82 through the lower Yakima Valley.

While properties that have recently been moved are typically not considered to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, the Teapot Dome's rare, if not unique, characteristics were overriding considerations when it was formally listed in the National Register. Indeed, the National Register nomination form makes it clear that the new site closely resembled the historic location in its setting, siting, and configuration. Included with the move were other features of the historic property including an old outhouse and sign pole.

Following relocation to its present site, gasoline continued to be sold from the quirky teapot building, although gas was dispensed from modern pumps. However, by the late 1990's consolidation in the petroleum industry combined with rising wholesale costs began to squeeze out small independent gas station dealers like those who operated from the Teapot Dome Filling Station. These circumstances led to the closing of the station a few years ago and placement of the property on the real estate market. Although the property has not been sold, the station and its historic features are deteriorating without any maintenance. Also, the property is unsecured and subject to vandalism. Most worrisome is the unknown future of the station once it comes under new ownership.

## **Analysis**

The City of Zillah and its citizens are to be commended for identifying the preservation of the Teapot Dome Filling Station as a local civic priority. They are also to be commended for having the vision of using the station as a tool to bring visitors off I-82 and into town and support downtown's economic viability. Additionally, as leaders sense that Zillah is entering a new phase of development and change, preservation of the station and its re-use as a visitor's center is seen as a means to establish a sense of place and identity that will distinguish the town from others in the region.

To assist in reaching these goals, the City has worked with a team of University of Washington planning students under the direction of adjunct professor and planning consultant Jill Sterrett. The student team produced a report to the City supporting its efforts to move the facility within City limits and adapt the building as a visitor's center for disseminating tourism information and local history.

Finally and most important, the City has secured the property (located outside city boundaries) through a purchase agreement for a one-year period. During this period, the City needs to raise \$200,000 to purchase the property. From that point, the intent is to move the service station within the city for rehabilitation and visitor center use. At the May 5 CPAT worksession, team members learned that the City is working with a building mover who is willing to move the facility as a donation or at reduced cost. There are two primary locations being considered:

- The 'downtown' Zillah location - This option for location maybe more beneficial for community identity and image than specific economic impact. This location option would be more to provide a central focus and identity as a part of an overall refurbishment of the community than for its economic impact. At this location the filling station would help make the current downtown a more pleasant place to transact business in order to attract those existing

households and the projected new residential community's population to Zillah and only tangentially related to tourists.

- The highway retail location – This location is within the business area at the western freeway exit/entry from Zillah near the service stations, restaurants, and lodgings facilities. This location could ensure fulfillment of the promise of the regional advertising and benefit from tourist business related to the freeway. Collocation with or close relationship to other themed attractions of characteristics of the Zillah community (e.g., the tortilla restaurant/factory; the wine and agricultural produce industries) would be desirable.

## **Resources**

Much of the CPAT worksession was devoted to brainstorming funding options for purchasing the existing Teapot Dome Filling Station property and assessing the merits of the two sites proposed for the relocation. In regard to funding options, the following programs were identified as potential sources for assisting in purchasing the current gas station property:

- Transportation Enhancement Grants---Contact the Washington State Department of Transportation and the Regional Transportation Organization (RTPO) for Yakima County for information about application time frames, processes, and project eligibility.
- Heritage Capital Grants---Contact the Washington State Historical Society for more information. Grant periods are based on the State's biennial budget and require a 2 for 1 match.
- Save America's Treasures (SAT) Grants---Contact the National Park Service for application time frames, processes, and project eligibility.
- Community Development Block Grants---Contact the Washington State Department of Community, Trade and Economic Development (CTED) for information about project eligibility, application time frames, and other state/federal funding programs applicable to the Teapot Dome purchase and rehabilitation.

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- “Brownfields” Remediation Grants---Contact Sharon Kophs at CTED for more information about funding opportunities to remediate potential hazardous waste contamination at the existing or proposed site.
- U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development---Contact the regional USDA Rural Development office for information about USDA funding opportunities applicable to preservation of the Teapot Dome Filling Station.
- Lodging Tax Revenues
- The Trust for Public Land---Contact the Northwest Regional Office at 206-587-2447 for information about funding opportunities and technical assistance.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) ---Contact the Western Regional Office of the NTHP for funding or low-interest loans appropriate for this project.
- Washington Trust for Historic Preservation (WTHP) ---Contact the WTHP for information about the “Washington Preserves” grant program to assist in rehabilitation of the gas station.

### **Other Historic Preservation Related Recommendations**

- Form a non-profit organization to assist in fund-raising and planning for the Teapot Dome move and rehabilitation.
- Develop a goal and objectives for the Teapot Dome Filling Station project.
- Address potential “brownfields” issues early at both the sending and receiving sites.
- Secure the existing property to prevent vandalism.
- Begin site planning and historic rehabilitation as soon as possible. Contact the NTHP for possible site planning assistance.
- Work to maintain the National Register status of the service station. To this end, strive to re-assemble the component elements of the service station as closely as possible to the original configuration.

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- Related to the above, acquire the services of qualified and experienced historic preservation consultants. The Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) maintains a list of such consultants at their website ([www.dahp.wa.gov](http://www.dahp.wa.gov)). Preservation professional expertise will be particularly important in completing site planning for the relocated service station, the new foundation, and its associated structures as well as rehabilitation of the historic Teapot. Rehabilitation work should be done in accord with the *U.S. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* (Standards). Contact DAHP's Historic Architect Stephen Mathison ([Stephen.mathison@dahp.wa.gov](mailto:Stephen.mathison@dahp.wa.gov)) for more information about the Standards.
- Historic photos available at the work session provide excellent documentation of what the Teapot looked like historically. Investigate restoring lost historic features such as the canopy and signage. Also, investigate adding historically appropriate gas pumps.
- Keep in mind potential for archaeology at both the sending and receiving sites. Contact DAHP Archaeological Resources staff for further direction and potential for discovering archaeological resources.
- Contact the Rosalia Chamber of Commerce and/or the Downtown Issaquah Association (DIA) regarding their efforts to preserve historic gas stations in those communities. In Rosalia, contact Diane or Jim Nebel at [jcnebel@aol.com](mailto:jcnebel@aol.com) or Greg Spranger at the DIA at 425-391-1112. Both communities have undertaken successful preservation efforts taking full advantage of partnerships and volunteer/in-kind donations.
- Plan to include displays or exhibits at the service station or in the downtown vicinity to interpret local/regional history as well as early automobile history and culture.
- Investigate opportunities for using the Teapot Dome Filling Station as a teaching tool about 20<sup>th</sup> century history.
- Involve Zillah's State Legislative and Congressional delegation representatives and their staff about the project.
- Develop and implement a long range local historic preservation plan to implement after preservation of the Teapot Dome is secured. Contact DAHP for more detailed information about possible strategies.
- Follow the NTHP's Main Street Approach™ to enhance activity in the downtown area.

With regard to the potential site for the relocated Teapot Dome Filling Station, a majority of the CPAT worksession participants arrived at the recommendation to acquire the full block bounded by First and Railroad Avenues and Sixth and Seventh Streets. See Figure 1.

The block is currently undeveloped and covered by gravel and was the former site of the Zillah railroad depot and associated rail facilities. This site was preferred over the other two since it would provide ample room to accommodate the service station plus associated features and area for vehicles. Aside from the Teapot Dome Filling Station, the remainder of the block could then be developed as a public park or “town square.”

In comparison, the other sites were either too constrained in size or diverged too much from the historic setting and character of the historic or present gas station location. Other advantages of relocating the gas station to the proposed “town square” site:

- It provides a community focus and civic space.
- It would economically support, even boost, Zillah’s downtown retail and restaurant business activity.
- The older buildings and downtown streetscape more closely relates to the Teapot Dome Filling Station in terms of its historic context, age, and historic character.
- The downtown “town square” would provide an opportunity for greater civic engagements and public interaction as a space for festivals and events as well as new uses and redevelopment in blocks surrounding the square.



*Potential site for Teapot Gas Station and possible “Town Square” development.*



**Figure 1. Preferred Location for Zillah Teapot Dome Filling Station**



## **Main Streets**

### **Background**

The Main Street Approach is a community-driven, comprehensive methodology used to revitalize older, traditional business districts or main streets throughout the United States. It is a common-sense way to address the variety of issues and problems that face traditional business districts. The underlying premise of the Main Street approach is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation in ways appropriate to today's marketplace. The Main Street approach advocates a return to community self-reliance, local empowerment, and the rebuilding of traditional commercial districts based on their unique assets: distinctive architecture, a pedestrian-friendly environment, personal service, local ownership, and a sense of community. While becoming a Main Street community as defined by Washington State and the National Trust for Historic Preservation may not be a next step for Zillah, many of the principles and concepts may be applied to support the ongoing efforts and goals of the community.

### **Analysis**

The National Trust Main Street Center offers a comprehensive commercial district revitalization strategy that has been widely successful in towns and cities nationwide. Described below are the four points of the Main Street approach which work together to build a sustainable and complete community revitalization effort.

**Organization** involves getting everyone working toward the same goal and assembling the appropriate human and financial resources to implement a Main Street revitalization program. A governing board and standing committees make up the fundamental organizational structure of the volunteer-driven program. Volunteers are coordinated and

supported by a paid program director as well. This structure not only divides the workload and clearly delineates responsibilities, but also builds consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders.

**Promotion** sells a positive image of the commercial district and encourages consumers and investors to live, work, shop, play, and invest in the Main Street district. By marketing a district's unique characteristics to residents, investors, business owners, and visitors, an effective promotional strategy forges a positive image through advertising, retail promotional activity, special events, and marketing campaigns carried out by local volunteers. These activities improve consumer and investor confidence in the district and encourage commercial activity and investment in the area.

**Design** means getting Main Street into top physical shape. Capitalizing on its best assets — such as historic buildings and pedestrian-oriented streets — is just part of the story. An inviting atmosphere, created through attractive window displays, parking areas, building improvements, street furniture, signs, sidewalks, street lights, and landscaping, conveys a positive visual message about the commercial district and what it has to offer. Design activities also include instilling good maintenance practices in the commercial district, enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging appropriate new construction, developing sensitive design management systems, and long-term planning.

**Economic Restructuring** strengthens a community's existing economic assets while expanding and diversifying its economic base. The Main Street program helps sharpen the competitiveness of existing business owners and recruits compatible new businesses and new economic uses to build a commercial district that responds to today's consumers' needs. Converting unused or underused commercial space into economically productive property also helps boost the profitability of the district.

Coincidentally, the four points of the Main Street approach correspond with the four forces of real estate value, which are social, political, physical, and economic.

## Recommendations

During the Zillah CPAT worksession, the team members and the town leaders identified several specific strategies to pursue. These include:

- *Downtown Streetscape Improvements.* Develop design concepts for downtown streetscape improvements through a design workshop or similar method. Include elected officials, city staff, local business owners, citizens and other interested parties. Visit WSDOT's website for additional resources:  
<http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/TA/Operations/LocalPlanning/>
- *Incorporate Main Street Concepts into Comprehensive Plan.* Development standards should be established to ensure that new development meets Zillah's goals for the area in terms of use, scale (height and bulk) -- commercial square foot maximum size, consistency with neighborhood context, character, and integration with other recent "Main Street" improvements. Work with regional agencies to establish regulations for regional retail that will be consistent with the community's objectives.
- *Signage, Directional Improvements.* Participants from Zillah identified better signage to downtown as a priority. WSDOT's Scenic Byways program has funding for signage and other features. See <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/TA/ProgMgt/Byways/>.
- *Storefront Improvements.* Resources for further investigation to accomplish these improvements include CTED's Main Streets program, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the Washington State Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation at <http://www.dahp.wa.gov>.

### **Funding Opportunities and Resources**

Zillah should be aware of other potential funding sources to help implement economic development programs. Reference has been made elsewhere in this report to some of these resources. The following list is provided as a starting point for further research and investigation. Please note that the contact information provided here should be used as a starting point in researching and determining an appropriate funding strategy.

- CTED provides loans through the “Rural Washington Loan Fund” for projects creating new jobs. ([http://www.cted.wa.gov/portal/alias\\_\\_CTED/lang\\_\\_en/tabID\\_\\_87/DesktopDefault.aspx](http://www.cted.wa.gov/portal/alias__CTED/lang__en/tabID__87/DesktopDefault.aspx)).
- Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) (<http://www.dahp.wa.gov>) for the Certified Local Government Program, providing information about this process and its benefits. For example, listed properties may be eligible for various tax incentives.
- Funding may also be available from Heritage Capital Projects Funds through the Washington State Heritage Resource Center (<http://www.wshs.org/wshs/hrc/grants.htm>).

## **Economic Development Opportunities**

### **Background**

Located along highway I-82 in Yakima County, Zillah has increasingly become a bedroom community for commuters working in the Yakima area. Based on April 2006 reports from the Washington State Office of Financial Management, 2,198 people live within the city of Zillah, but in the near future a large housing development is set to double the population. Almost as many people live within the City's travel shed or on the outskirts of Zillah and this population is growing as well. With the area's agricultural industry, the neighboring communities of Wapato, Toppenish and Granger compete with Zillah to attract visitors to enjoy the fruits of the area. Although it prides itself on being a safe and ideal place to raise a family, Zillah is struggling to find a way to successfully absorb the new populations as well as maintaining their traditional identity, while supporting the town's economic development.

### **Analysis**

Recognizing that economic development means many things to many people and organizations within the community, most people participating in the APA Community Planning Assistance workshop agreed that the Teapot Dome Filling Station held promise for economic development. Whether or not the Teapot Dome Filling Station will be able to contribute to the local economy is a function of its ability to attract or supplement other economic opportunities/strengths/attributes of the community and its location. The Teapot could facilitate households and businesses to spend their incomes in the Zillah community. The filling station would probably not by itself have a large economic impact. The filling station may be more important for what it adds or contributes in other important non-economic benefits for the community.

There are at least two primary strategic economic opportunities for the Zillah economy that may be associated with the Teapot Filling Station including:

- Tourism - attracting business (revenue) for local firms from tourists to and through the Yakima Valley area., and
- Local retail spending and/or expansion of local businesses.

**Tourism** - Zillah is in the midst of an area of growing tourism. The wine culture, agricultural production areas along the Yakima River, and general tourism activity into and within the Pacific Northwest is growing as a significant economic trend. This growth is especially obvious in the areas along I-82 in the valley that extends from Yakima to the Tri-Cities. The challenge that Zillah has is the competition from other Yakima valley communities similarly located. Zillah has an opportunity to distinguish itself in order to attract a reasonable share of the amount of potential mobile economic energy available. The Teapot Dome Filling Station may assist this strategy, but will not be able to accomplish it alone.

**Local Retail Spending** - The second source of potential economic growth in the community will be leveraging market support from the proposed/planned new residential developments. While planned and proposed new developments will increase the local populations available to support retail services and businesses, the increase may not translate into enough economic power to support or initiate much new private business investment. The towns of Toppenish and Yakima will still attract a significant share of the retail trade beyond groceries, household/hardware goods, auto-related, professional and personal services. There is currently a 'leakage' challenge for Zillah. The economic impact of the new households will be positive, but may still be less than needed to support typical sizes of firms in consumer-oriented industries. Existing local businesses that currently serve the market will be able to expand either in amount of business or size of facilities.

Zillah's goal and a description of objectives for the Teapot Dome Filling Station project needs to be created. The objectives have to be clear, but they also have to be susceptible to "tweaking" to fit the programmatic objectives of potential external partners, public and private. This effort will help with grant writing and securing other kinds of support for this project.

### **Recommended Tools for Getting a Better Understanding of Zillah's Economic Development Opportunities**

The National Trust for Historic Preservation Main Street program <http://www.mainstreet.org> is the only national economic revitalization program that works everywhere and anywhere. Cities, business associations, chamber of commerce, and/or volunteer non-profit organizations anywhere can apply its Four-Point approach (Design, Organization, Promotion, and Economic Restructuring) to revitalization. The Economic Restructuring point highly recommends that revitalization organizations conduct economic development analysis frequently. Main Street recommends the "Downtown and Business District Market Analysis Guidebook," which is a collaborative effort between the University of Wisconsin - Extension (UWEX) and the Wisconsin Main Street Program of the Wisconsin Department of Commerce <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cced/downtowns/dma/intext.cfmmodel>. The Wisconsin model is a step-by-step method outlined in a book titled *Step-by-Step Market Analysis: A Workbook for Commercial District Business Development*, can easily be used. The Wisconsin model comes with free database downloads and a download for a demand calculator; these are very useful tools that anyone can use but not everyone can create, which is why the Wisconsin model is the most recommended economic development analysis process for do-it-yourselfers. You do not have to be a Main Street organization to use the Wisconsin model. Economic development analysis needs to be repeated frequently, every 2-4 years, by those living, working, playing, and shopping in the area because the business and consumer markets change.



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When conducting economic development analysis using the Wisconsin model you are creating an in-depth demographic and economic profile of the market area, which could be a business district, city, or region. In a traditional economic development analysis, the availability (supply, measured in sales within the market area) of a certain product or business type is compared with the demand for the products (the purchasing power of the demographic living within the market area). Until you look deeply into your existing conditions (what is your consumer market, how many businesses do you have, where are the major retailers located, how many square feet of commercial space do you have, how much can the consumers buy, do you have the right amount of commercial space zoned, can that commercial district expand as the population expands) you will never know the economic health of your commercial district or what it can be. The Wisconsin model guidebook walks you through everything on how to create a business district inventory to how to put together a business recruitment plan.

After you have gathered all the information about your commercial area and the surrounding market (consumer demographic information) you will compare the supply and demand numbers using the demand calculator. You will then end up with a positive or negative number (what is leftover after you subtract the demand from the supply). A negative number means that you have more supply than the consumers can purchase, and the sales for this business category are drawing from a larger market area (possibly the entire county or regionally). For example, if you have a regional farm equipment dealership within your market area, you will find that the supply far exceeds the demand for that industry type. However, maybe your demand for a grocery store exceeds your supply (the result is a positive number).

Maybe you need an additional grocery store? Maybe not. Bob Gibbs of the Gibbs Planning Group, an expert in retail development, reported at a recent conference that a grocery store needs about 8,000 homes within a 2-mile radius to consider opening (<http://www.gibbsplanning.com>).

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Following the Wisconsin guide, you will gain a true understanding of your commercial district, which is crucial in creating a successful assessment of your existing conditions and the economic vitality of your downtown. The Wisconsin model bases the supply and demand results on national trends using population and income demographics. Currently, the City of Spokane is using this model for conducting a neighborhood business district. However, we are also using the Claritas demographic and Retail Market Power information (<http://www.claritas.com>) along with the Wisconsin guidebook. With the Claritas information, we are able to input our actual "local" supply and demand data. By doing this, we are inputting the existing local sales and local purchasing power of our neighborhood market area.

Neighborhood market and demographic level data is not readily available, but it can be purchased, which is what we have done. However, this is not necessary when you are looking at city level data. Zillah's demographic and retail sales data and demographic information is readily available through the Census Bureau (<http://www.census.gov>), the Economic Census (<http://www.census.gov/epcd/www/econ97.html>), and the Washington State Department of Revenue web site (<http://dor.wa.gov/content/home>). However, you will also find Zillah's demographic and market information from Claritas in Appendix C.

At the neighborhood level, this extra step gives us a better picture of how the neighborhood is performing and a better understanding of our true retail opportunities. If you are using the Wisconsin model and not supplementing it with local data, you will need to subtract the square footage of your existing businesses to glean a reliable understanding of your commercial area.

Also, consider a similar step even when you use the Claritas data or local data. No one will know your market area and future plans better than you. At the workshop, we shared the City of Zillah's Claritas data, which is also in Appendix C of this report. We started by pointing out some of the business opportunities (where the demand far exceeds the supply), but then we asked that everyone help identify whether there is a large supplier within a 5-10 mile area or in the

neighboring cities. In addition to this local analysis, you will need to include the incoming demographic information of the housing development at Zillah Lakes.

Because the population density is low in the surrounding area, you also need to consider that consumers will travel a greater distance to make their purchases. With a high altitude unsupported (meaning the data needs to be input into the steps in the Wisconsin model) look at the data. Zillah has some opportunities for business recruitment and expansion.

Using the Wisconsin model allows you to make determinations on how many square feet of specific types of businesses you should have in your downtown and helps you lay out a recruitment or expansion plan to reach your target goals. However, be certain that you do not over zone your commercial district or downtown with too much available space. If there is too much commercial property for the market to support you will end up with a district that is sporadic and full of holes. Consumers will not walk more than 30-40 feet to reach the next store.

If a district or downtown is full of vacancies, consumers will quickly become discouraged and leave if they have to walk past vacant buildings to reach the next shop. Keep your downtown a compact enjoyable space for people of all ages to frequent by not over zoning, but you do need to balance that commercial space with room for businesses to expand as they grow. Healthy vacancy rates are below 10% but in a smaller downtown with 50 businesses a 10% vacancy rate is five vacant spaces, and five holes in that size of a downtown would be too many.

Once complete, an economic development analysis, either done locally or regionally, should be used as a marketing piece for your community. It will speak to your assets; it will show that you are proactively planning your future. It will show that you know your commercial and consumer markets, and that you are a City protecting and working with your business community for a stronger economic outlook.

## **Community Design/Transportation Connectivity**

### **Background**

The CPAT work session participants discussed Zillah as a “community in transition”. It is experiencing a growth in housing development that is reshaping the town by bringing in a new population of residences from retirees to commuters to children going to the local schools. Work session participants recognized this as an opportunity for Zillah to grow and become more cohesive and connected at the same time.

### **Analysis and Recommendations**

*Developing a Town Square* -- One of the challenges Zillah’s faces in its core downtown is the lack of a focal point or a community gathering place that denotes the center of town. Because the commercial uses front only one side of the main street, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, they do not create a strong sense of place that a two-sided main street or a town square could provide.

The CPAT team encourages Zillah to acquire the gravel lot located along the main street, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue (identified in Figure 1.), and also look at ways to use the lot to create a “town square” – a central green surrounded by streets and retail businesses. The Teapot would be a feature item within this town square and include the gas pumps, signs, canopy, outhouses

(possibly upgraded for public restrooms) and driveways. The Town Square could also be a great place for city events, such as crafts fairs, 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnics, antique car shows. It may be possible to negotiate with the public use (County Fire District) to relocate some of their storage areas to make more space for downtown retail.



*Zillah’s Main Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, with commercial frontage on one side*

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*Main Street Improvements* -- Zillah's main street, 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, currently does not have sidewalks on both sides, clearly marked crossings, or pedestrian level lighting. It appears to be designed for through traffic. It is wide enough to accommodate median treatments and sidewalks without compromising safety.

The City should develop a streetscape design through a charrette or other similar process that creates a more walkable downtown core along 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from 4<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup>. These improvements will help support and encourage additional commercial development in the downtown area.

*Parking* – During the CPAT work session, participants raised concerns about the perceived shortage of parking in the downtown area. Currently, angled parking is available on both sides of 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue from at least 6<sup>h</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> and along 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>. A formal parking inventory and occupancy study is needed to ensure that parking demand is being addressed. Municipal Research and Services Center website offers more information about parking studies and parking management at: <http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Transpo/Tpark/transsolut.aspx> .



*Zillah's Main Street. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave.. gateway today*

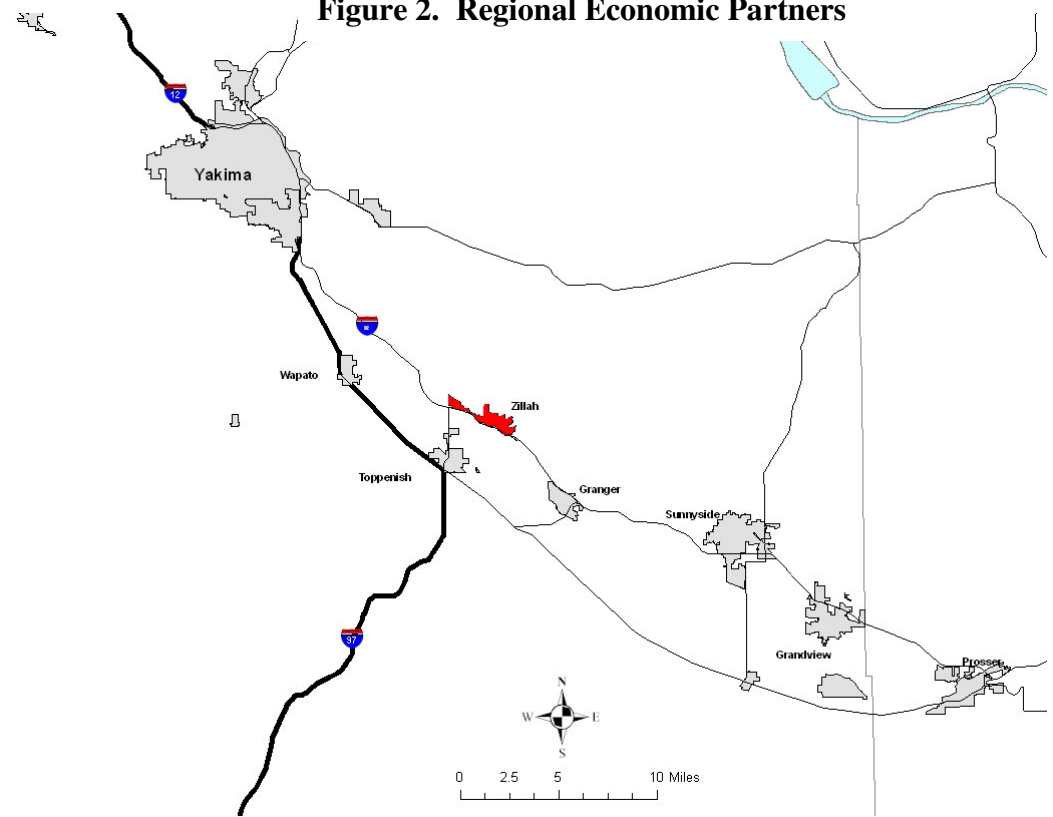


*Vision for Streetscape and Frontage in Downtown Zillah*

*Regional Economic Growth Strategy* – Because of its proximity to several communities of similar size, the CPAT team advises working with neighboring communities to develop a Regional Economic Growth Strategy that would maximize resources of all the communities pictured in Figure 2.

*Future Development* -- Development standards should be established to insure that new development meets the City's goals for the area in terms of use, scale, consistency with context and character. Include infill residential and potentially larger scale retail development (<https://www.newrules.org/retail>). Establish policies to ensure that new residential development meets Zillah's objectives with respect to environmental regulations, the urban growth or sub-area boundary, storm water management, PUD ordinances, and community access (especially pedestrian and bicycle safety and mobility).

**Figure 2. Regional Economic Partners**

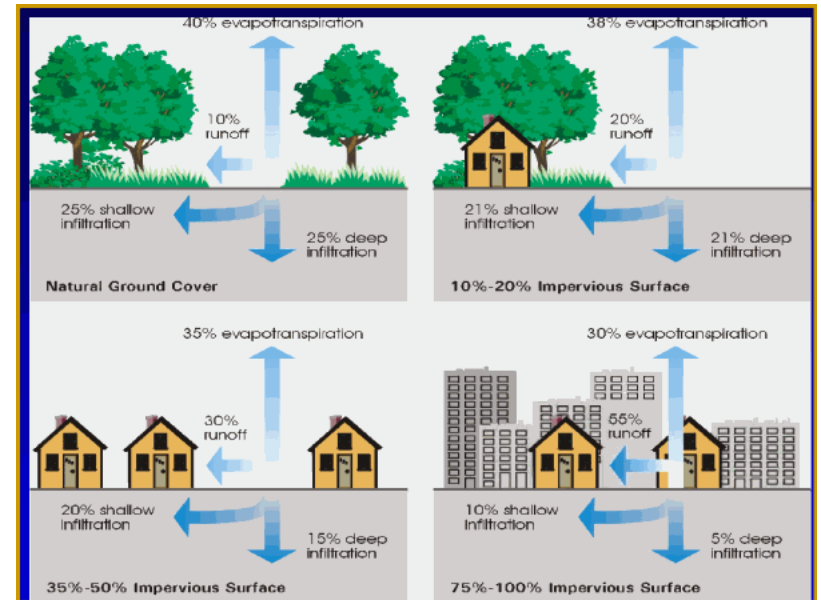


### Connections to Other Issues

Stormwater management and water conservation are common concerns for many communities in Washington. With the potential for additional new development, Zillah has an opportunity to review codes and design standards and incorporate “Low-Impact Development” practices that will help the community introduce low cost options for managing storm water, as well as water conservation practices.

New research conducted at both the national and state levels point to opportunities to reduce negative impacts of storm water using a combination of regional and site level techniques to prevent, treat, and store runoff and associated pollutants. Many of these practices use low-impact development methods, such as rain gardens, bio-retention areas, and grass swales. Others go further by changing site-design practices to maximize existing infrastructure by focusing development, reducing parking spaces, narrowing streets, and eliminating cul-de-sacs.

Conventional storm water conveyance systems concentrate water runoff in detention ponds and sewer systems until it is discharged through an outfall back into the natural hydrologic system. Unlike in the pre-development cycle, the discharged water is released far from its point of inception, and is altered in terms of its quantity, speed, and quality. Lack of infiltration causes groundwater depletion, and collected pollutants are not filtered before being released into receiving waters. Water pollution resultant from stormwater outfalls is increasing with development, and is currently one of the major challenges faced in the effort to reclaim the biological integrity of Washington’s waters.



Innovations in stormwater management, such as bio-retention, bio-swales, and rain gardens, allow for new development to have fewer impacts to natural systems than conventional practices. Additionally, existing urban development can be retrofitted using similar practices to dramatically lessen its historic hydrologic disruptiveness.

### **Resources**

Several documents that provide additional detail related to low impact development and water conservation including:

US EPA, *Protecting Water Resources with Higher Density Development*  
[http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/protect\\_water\\_higher\\_density.pdf](http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/protect_water_higher_density.pdf)

Low Impact Development Center  
<http://www.lowimpactdevelopment.org/home.htm>

Puget Sound Action Team – Technical Guidance and Grants  
<http://www.psat.wa.gov/Programs/LID.htm>

Municipal Research and Services Center  
<http://www.mrsc.org/Subjects/Environment/water/wc-measures.aspx>



*Bio-Swale next to neighborhood street*



## **Appendix A: Brainstorming Session**

### **Morning Brainstorming Session**

Issues related to relocating the Teapot Dome Filling Station

- Limited Funding - \$200,000 (property acquisition, site maintenance and development, etc...)
- Match for Grants
- Land acquisition
- Site preparation
- Need to form local committee - 501c3 Status

Other issues/challenges

- Streetscape revitalization
- Connection between lower and upper Zillah

Ideas/Responses

- In-kind donations: Construction company, Mover, Professional hours= \$18/hour
- Grants – WSDOT (Transportation Enhancement Grants), CTED (CDBG Grants)
- Capital Grants for Washington Heritage WSHS - 50% match
- WA Trust for Historic Preservation
- National Park Service – Save America's Treasures
- Congressional Delegation Site Visit
- USDA – economic diversification
- Hotel/Motel Tax
- Ideas about publicity and funding

**Afternoon, Post Walking Tour Brainstorming Session**

Publicity for the Teapot Dome Filling Station Preservation

- Develop a 'Friends of the Teapot' Committee effort
- Festivals
- Cable station donation
- Granger, Toppenish, Wapato, partner with surrounding tourist areas
- Hotels/Wineries
- Tourist Brochures
- Other media – newspaper, radio
- Echo Teapot theme in other parts of community
- Rattlesnake Hills Tourist Trail: Maps, Periodicals
- Yakima Valley Visitors and Convention Bureau
- Destination Days, Heritage Days, car shows
- Realtors Association

Revitalization Partners (People) – Potential Committee Members

- Chamber of Commerce
- Banks/Credit Unions
- Historical Societies
- Schools
- Planning Commission
- Artists/Designers/Architects
- Wineries, Hotels
- Lions Club
- Legislators
- Boy Scouts

## Business Retention & Expansion

- Commercial area near freeway – redevelopment opportunities – review codes
- Look for competing edge that is economically sustainable, not necessarily competing with other business areas on price point
- Annexation
- Adequate public facilities ordinances
- Affordable Housing?
- Infill Housing/Infill Development?
- Distinguish yourselves among other cities in the area

## **Appendix B: Existing Strategies and Comprehensive Plan Policies**

### **Existing Action Strategies:**

- Initiate a Historic Preservation Plan
- Establish a Preservation Organization/Historical Society
- Nominate the Main Street Corridor to the National Register
- Establish a Historic District Commission
- Establish a Local Historic District
- Apply Design Guidelines
- Rehabilitate the Streetscape of Main Street
- Provide Off-Street Parking
- Remove Existing Power Poles

### **Economic Development Policies:**

Economic Development Policy #1.8: The City should explore strategies and opportunities to connect the downtown with the commercial district near the north freeway interchange (Exit # 52).

Economic Development Policy #1.9: It is the intent of the City to establish a tourism center/park as a gateway to the community in the vicinity of Exit #52 from I-82.

Economic Development Policy #1.10: Encourage development of a wide range of commercial uses to support local and regional needs, including those of the traveling public.

Economic Development Policy #1.11: The City should actively seek to support winery and fruit industry related tourism and business development opportunities in the community.

**Main Streets/Historic Preservation Policies:**

Economic Development Policy #1.2: Encourage commercial design that will maintain the traditional downtown area as a focal point for community life and promote face-to-face interaction.

Economic Development Policy #1.3: The City should actively seek to support family oriented activities in the downtown.

Economic Development Policy #1.4: Encourage the redevelopment/revitalization of rundown and/or underutilized commercial areas.

Economic Development Policy #1.7: The City, in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce and affected business and property owners, should:

- Identify and prioritize opportunities to improve the appearance of public facilities and places in the downtown.
- Define and establish a Tuscan "Old World" theme and/or design standards to guide future development and the renovation of buildings in the downtown;
- Establish landscape standards for all non-residential areas;
- Promote shared parking in the Downtown; and
- Encourage the use of fountains or other inviting public features in new developments.

**Connectivity Policies:**

Land Use Policy #1.1: The City shall encourage master planned developments and the phased implementation of approved plans.

Land Use Policy #1.4: The City should adopt policies to guide future annexations of land within its Urban Growth Area.

Transportation Policy #1.2: The City shall not issue development permits to proposed projects that will not meet the adopted Level of Service Standard unless necessary improvements in transportation facilities and services are provided.

Transportation Policy #1.3: The City shall require developers to construct or improve streets in order to adequately serve new development, and/or pay a fair-share fee for specific off-site improvements needed to mitigate the impacts of development.

## **CITY VISION STATEMENT**

The following statement has been adopted by the Zillah City Council as an official expression of City policy regarding the desired future for the community:

*With our eyes toward the future, our ears on the past, and our feet in the present, our vision for the City of Zillah is to remain a small, rural, family-oriented town where everyone can enjoy a feeling of safety and community ownership.*

*This will be accomplished by:*

- ✓ *Providing strong fiscal leadership and management;*
- ✓ *Developing and maintaining the infrastructure and public services necessary to support a diverse economy and that will enhance our high quality of life;*
- ✓ *Strengthening the partnership between the City and the Zillah School District to expand educational and recreational activities in the community;*
- ✓ *Providing opportunities for constructive and positive activities for our youth;*
- ✓ *Maintaining a supportive and healthy environment for our senior citizens;*
- ✓ *Actively supporting winery and fruit related tourism and business development opportunities; and*
- ✓ *Promoting effective communications within the community.*

## **Appendix C: Zillah Demographic Profile**