

Chapter 2 – Relationship to Other Plans

In 1990, responding to increased pressures from unprecedented population growth in this state, the State Legislature passed the Growth Management Act (GMA). The GMA requires all cities and counties in the State to develop long-range plans. The GMA required the fastest growing counties, including Chelan County, to adopt new comprehensive plans in compliance with the new law. Transportation is one of the elements that the County Comprehensive Plan is required to address. The original Chelan County Transportation Element, developed in 2000, needed to be updated to reflect recent changes in population and regional economic conditions, and to ensure that the Transportation Element is well aligned with current and projected land use patterns.

Land use and transportation are strongly interrelated. The Transportation Element establishes this vital link between land use and County transportation facilities and services needed to meet current system deficiencies and to support future growth, economic development, recreation, and the full range of activities anticipated in the County. The anticipated types, intensity and timing of land development in Chelan County will largely determine the need for transportation improvements and their nature.

The Transportation Element builds off the County Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan and a series of subarea plans developed for various communities throughout the County. Chelan County has the responsibility of determining what portions of the County will be included in an urban growth area (UGA). Stand-alone subarea plans have been prepared to guide the development within existing and proposed UGAs within the County. Other community plans have been developed to address growth in limited areas of more intense rural development (LAMRIDs). These are areas not designated as a UGA, but allow for higher densities of land use than are typically allowed for rural unincorporated areas. These planning documents include policy direction and recommended implementation actions. It is important that the County Transportation Element be consistent with the land use elements of the comprehensive plans developed for the jurisdictions within the County.

The Transportation Element also builds off other transportation planning documents adopted at the state, regional and local levels. Transportation improvements need to be coordinated across jurisdictional boundaries. The County Transportation Element needs to be consistent with and support the objectives identified in the *Washington State Transportation Plan*, the *Wenatchee Valley Transportation Plan (Confluence 2025)*, Cities' transportation elements and LINK Transit's development plan.

Regional Land Use Growth

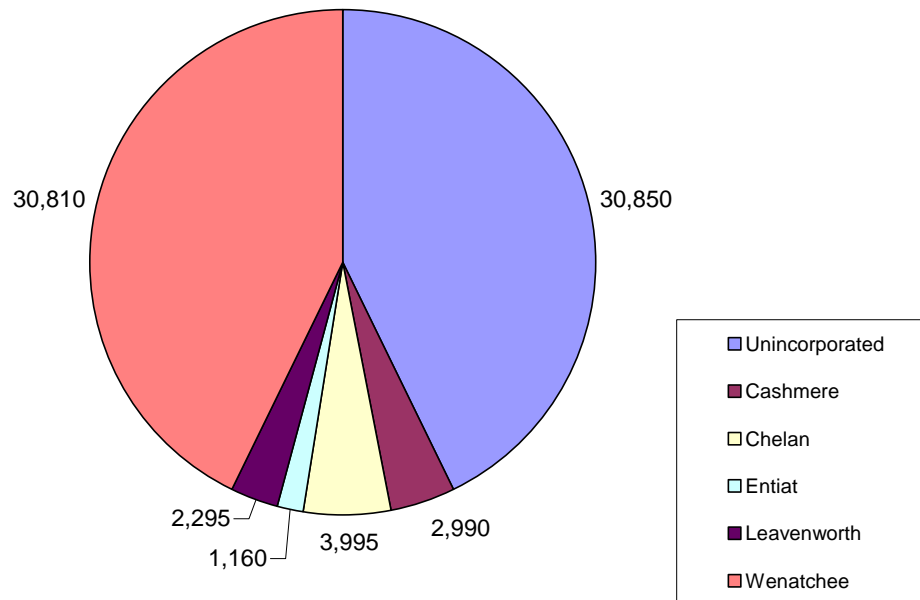
While historic trends are important to establish the background for the Transportation Element, future land uses and growth patterns will strongly affect transportation improvement needs within the 20-year planning horizon. The following summarizes the general growth patterns for Chelan County as a whole, based on information presented in the County's land use plan. Additional discussion of land use growth for each subarea is presented in Chapter 6.

Residential Growth

The 2008 population of Chelan County is 72,100 persons based on data provided by the Office of Financial Management (OFM). Figure 2-1 illustrates the distribution of the County population among the various cities and unincorporated areas. The five Cities represent 41,250 persons (or 57 percent) of the total population. The largest City is Wenatchee with a current population of 30,800 persons, representing more than 40 percent of the total County population. The 2008

population of the unincorporated areas of the County of about 31,000 people is essentially equal to the population of the City of Wenatchee.

Most of the recent growth has occurred in incorporated areas. Over the last ten years, the five Cities have experienced an increase of over 5,000 people, while the unincorporated areas have added only 500 persons¹.



Source: State Office of Financial Management, 2008

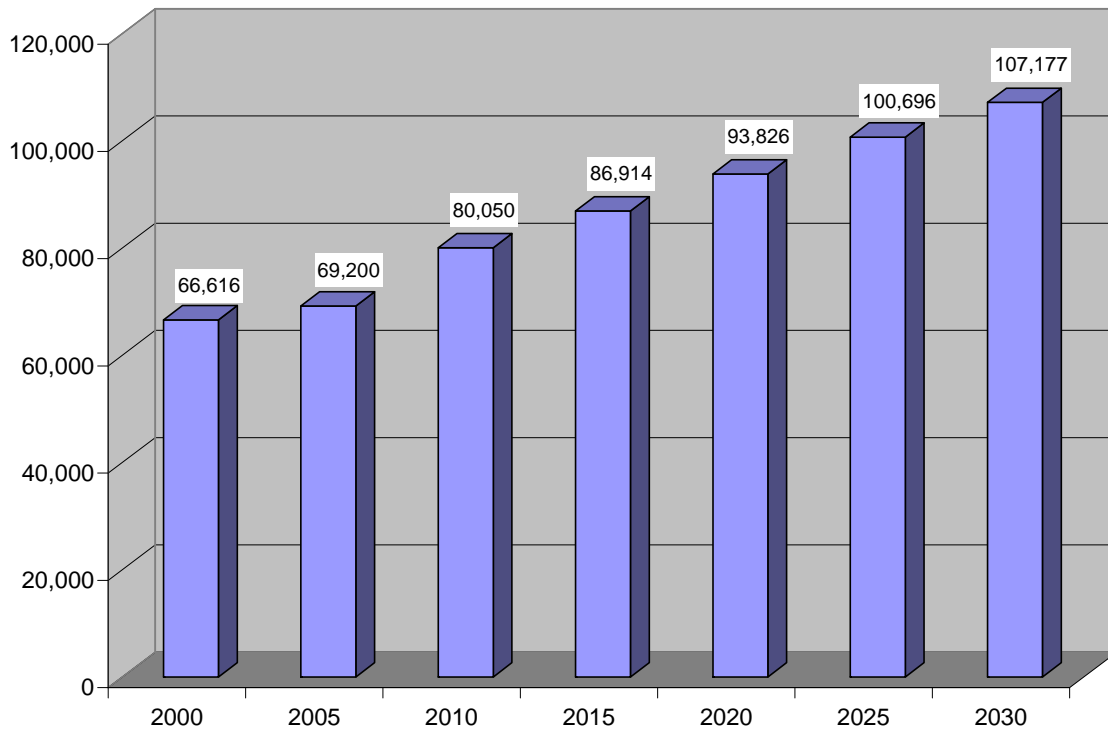
Figure 2-1. 2008 Population by Cities

According to the latest projections from the OFM (released in 2007), the population of Chelan County is projected to increase from 72,100 in 2008 to approximately 100,700 by 2025. This represents an increase of 28,600 persons over the 17-year period resulting in an average annual growth rate of 2.0 percent.

The OFM projections provided three alternative growth scenarios for Chelan County and the incorporated Cities to consider; a high, medium, and a low projection. Chelan County officials selected the high end growth projections as the County planning target in the Land Use Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

Figure 2-2 shows the 2000 Census population and the high-end projections for the period 2000 to 2030.

¹ Office of Financial Management population data



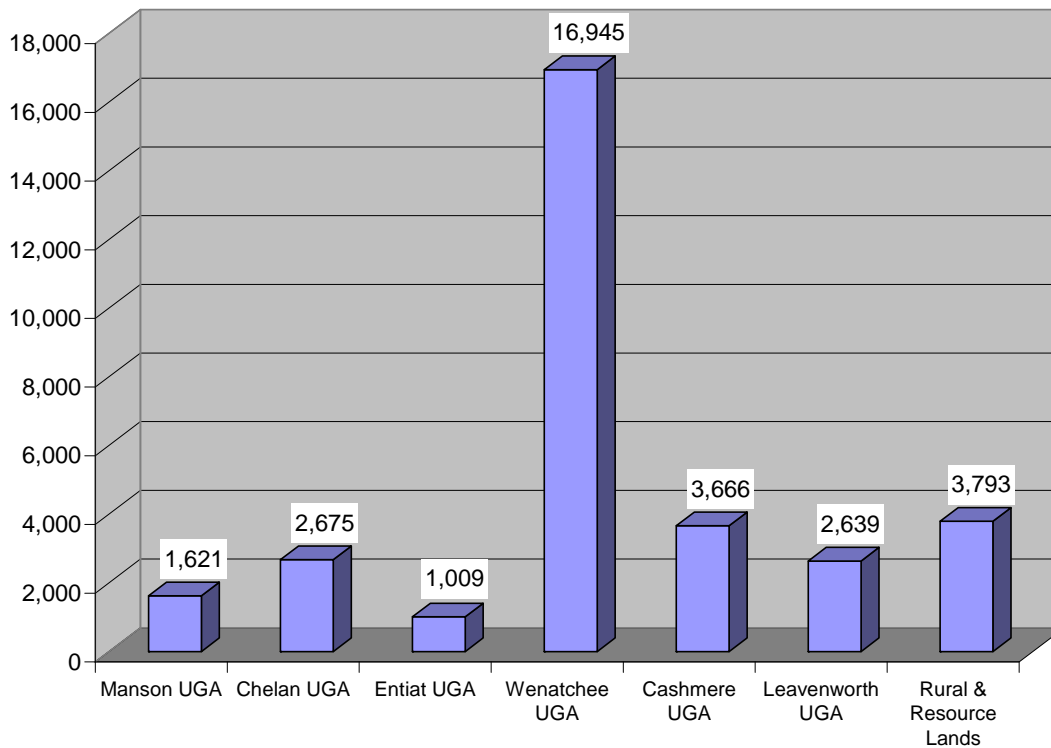
Source: State Office of Financial Management

Figure 2-2. Population Projections for Chelan County

The forecast population growth rate (2.0 percent) for the high scenario is higher than the County's historical population growth of 1.2 percent between 1960 and 2008². The higher growth rate will result in additional demands on the transportation system. A large majority of the growth is expected to continue to occur in or near the Cities.

As reported in the County Land Use Element, the County and Cities have allocated a portion of the population growth to each UGA. The allocation of projected population growth between 2000 and 2025 is shown in Figure 2-3. Almost 90 percent of the anticipated population growth is targeted to occur within the Cities and the six designated Urban Growth Areas.

² Office of Financial Management population data



Source: Chelan County Land Use Element

Figure 2-3. Projected Population Growth (2000-2025) for Cities & UGAs, and Rural & Resource Lands

Employment Growth

In October 2008, the total labor force in the County was 43,000 with an unemployment rate of 4.5 percent³. Agricultural jobs in the County account for about one-third of overall employment. Farming and tree fruit industries have been an important part of the Chelan County economy for over a century. The local tree fruit industry employs thousands of local and migrant farm workers every year in the harvest season between June and early November.

The agriculture industry is expected to continue to be the main driving force in the Chelan County area for many years to come. With most of the tree fruit processing plants located in North Central Washington, many job seekers can count on these firms to provide them with jobs. However, over the last several years, farming and agricultural production have declined in North Central Washington compared to Washington State agricultural levels, while non-farm employment has edged up. This trend is likely to continue, especially in Chelan County where more and more agricultural land is being converted to residential properties.

Employment projections prepared by the Washington State Employment Security Department are available for Chelan/Douglas counties. Within the two-county area, the total non-farm jobs are expected to grow from 39,000 in 2006 to 45,200 in 2016 (average annual growth rate of 1.5 percent)³. The sectors expected to create the most new jobs in the counties include education,

³ Washington State Employment Security Department, Chelan and Douglas Counties Profile (September 2008)

health services, government, and retail. Manufacturing employment in the counties is expected to decline.

Subarea Plans

Chelan County prepared several subarea plans to guide the development of various unincorporated areas within the County. It is critical that these various plans be considered in the process of updating the County Transportation Element. Subarea plans have been developed for Wenatchee Foothills, Sunnyslope, Malaga, Manson and Peshastin, in addition to the Countywide Land Use Element. The County is completing a regional plan for the Lower Lake Chelan Basin including the communities of Chelan Falls and Howard Flats. In addition, the County plans to complete a subarea plan for Monitor in the coming years. Each of these communities are either urban growth areas (existing or proposed) or limited areas of more intense rural development (LAMIRD), and represent areas where the most intense growth is expected to occur outside of the Cities.

A brief overview of each subarea plan is provided in this section, focusing on how each document was used for developing the County Transportation Element.

Sunnyslope

The Sunnyslope Subarea Plan was jointly prepared in 2007 by Chelan County and the City of Wenatchee. The document sets guidelines for future development of a 1,415-acre portion of the newly expanded Wenatchee Urban Growth Area (UGA). The Sunnyslope subarea is located to the north of Wenatchee at the confluence of the Wenatchee and Columbia Rivers. The subarea extends north to the foothills known as Eagle Rock and west toward the community of Monitor. The Subarea Plan refines the 2006 Wenatchee Urban Area Comprehensive Plan by proposing a preferred land use scenario and a number of goals and policies for Sunnyslope. It also updated and changed the land use designations within the UGA.

The transportation section of the Subarea Plan describes the existing transportation system and identifies a series of issues and concerns. The analysis led to the identification of specific transportation improvements, and implementation actions intended to facilitate agency budgeting and to aid in evaluation of progress in plan implementation.

The land use forecasts used in the Subarea Plan were used as a basis for the County Transportation Element. Many of the recommended transportation projects identified for Sunnyslope presented in Chapter 8 are consistent with the Subarea Plan.

Malaga

The Malaga Vision Plan documents the planning process undertaken in 2005 by the Malaga Community Council and the Chelan County Commissioners. The Vision Plan recognizes that many components of the growth and development of a community, such as transportation facilities, overlap political and jurisdictional boundaries, and must be coordinated among adjoining jurisdictions. The Malaga Vision Plan was prepared, in part, to respond to a number of community members expressing concerns over development in the Malaga area and the need to evaluate local preferences for the future direction of the community. The process resulted in a comprehensive land use designations map and zoning map amendments to be implemented through development regulations adopted by Chelan County. It also resulted in a "Logical Outer Boundary" for the LAMRID designation. It was recognized that most Malaga residents want to retain the rural atmosphere of the community and provide for limited opportunities for development of the area.

The Vision Plan provides only limited information regarding the transportation system for the subarea. It is mentioned that the anticipated traffic increase raises additional concerns regarding the single access/entry to the Malaga area from the rest of the County via the Malaga-Alcoa Highway. The community foresees an expansion of the transportation systems to allow efficient movement of goods, services and people within the planning area and connecting with the rest of Chelan County, but no specific projects are identified in the Vision Plan. The direction of the Vision Plan was incorporated into the Transportation Element for the Malaga Subarea.

Manson

The Manson subarea plan was prepared in 2008. It is still in draft form and was subsequently put on hold after completion of the Transportation Element update technical work program. The purpose of the plan is to identify land use related policies, help facilitate growth in the planning area which includes the Manson UGA and outlying rural areas, and establish updated land use designations and zoning. The draft plan evaluated the possible expansion of the existing UGA boundary. The growth expected from such an expansion was incorporated and analyzed as part of the Transportation Element.

The overall objective is to ensure that Manson and its surroundings grow as the community envisions. The vision for growth entails protection of the resources, the lakes, and the environment for current and future generations and the provision for sustainable economic growth. The subarea plan is designed to be an integral subset of the Chelan County Comprehensive Plan.

For the transportation system, the community's priorities and hopes for its future include the following:

- Make Manson more pedestrian friendly
- Connect walking routes to schools
- Reduce traffic hazards
- Promote pedestrian circulation
- Enhance the SR 150 corridor
- Enhance community entries
- Provide alternative truck routes

The walkable community concept emphasized in the specific goals and policies identified for the transportation element of the subarea plan. Another important policy is to "Identify and develop long-term opportunities to establish a secondary automotive route to/from Manson." These policies were used to guide development of transportation projects for the Manson subarea, as presented in Chapter 8.

Peshastin

The Peshastin subarea plan was developed by Chelan County in 2008. The subarea plan development regulations and new UGA are intended to provide the framework and policy direction for land use decisions while also regulating future development activities in the subarea. In preparing the subarea plan, the community defined an UGA and assigned new land use designations within the defined boundary. The Peshastin Subarea includes the historical community of Peshastin along with the surrounding rural and agricultural areas.

As part of the planning process, the Peshastin community has been working to identify desired future land uses, and to encourage those future land uses by implementing new comprehensive land use designations and corresponding zoning districts within the UGA.

The goals and policies section calls for coordinated planning efforts between the different agencies responsible for providing different modes of transportation to the subarea. These build from the Countywide Planning Policies and the North Central Regional Transportation Planning Organization (RTPO) plans. No specific transportation improvement projects were identified in the subarea plan, however regulations require new development to build frontage improvements such as new sidewalks. In addition, planned development must incorporate possible designs to allow for or connect to the proposed regional trail system. These policies were used to guide development of the transportation improvements to support growth in the subarea.

Wenatchee Foothills

A joint City and County study was performed in 2008 to provide information on potential transportation improvements to consider in the Wenatchee Foothills area as part of development of a subarea plan for the surrounding unincorporated areas. The study is still draft and is expected to be adopted in 2009. The intent of the study was to provide a comprehensive review of the traffic impacts anticipated as a result of the potential expansion of the City of Wenatchee UGA boundary westward into the Wenatchee Foothills area.

As a result of public comment, two alternatives were identified to be further analyzed as potential development options in the Foothills area. Alternative one is to keep the UGA at its current location and analyze the 20-year impacts of growth occurring at its current trend within the City and County at densities allowed by current zoning. The second alternative analyzed the traffic impacts due to the expansion of the UGA in the Number One Canyon, Number Two Canyon and Squilchuck study areas. It is anticipated that the land use will consist of primarily low density residential.

The purpose of this traffic analysis was to determine the anticipated future impacts of the two alternatives on the existing roadway network, specifically at the first major intersections in the City for each of the three canyons mentioned above as well as the Appleatchee and Broadview/North Road canyons. The preliminary improvement recommendations for those locations along County maintained roadways were incorporated into the County Transportation Element.

Lower Lake Chelan Basin Regional Planning Study

This study was led by the County, but jointly prepared with the City. It was completed in early 2009. The goal is to guide future growth and development in the region and to develop a common vision that ties together and builds on the diverse public, stakeholder and jurisdictional viewpoints and opinions in the Basin. It balances important but sometimes competing issues of urban growth, agriculture, natural resource protection and open space and recreational amenities. It developed and encouraged efficient land use patterns, creative and complementary development regulations, strategic public infrastructure investments and active and passive recreational features that benefit the community.

The County Transportation Element is consistent with and builds off of the land use plans developed as part of this study effort. The Regional Planning Study was closely coordinated with the update of the County Transportation Element since both efforts were ongoing at the same time. The transportation improvements in the Transportation Element were incorporated into the final study.

Other Transportation Planning Efforts

The Chelan County Transportation Element builds from and supports other transportation planning efforts including the *Washington State Transportation Plan*, the regional transportation

plan, corridor plans, local agency transportation plans, and the LINK Transit development plan. The following summarizes how the County Transportation Element relates to these other plans.

Washington Transportation Plan

The *Washington Transportation Plan 2007-2026* (WTP) adopted in November 2006, and the associated *2007- 2026 Highway System Plan* (HSP) from December 2007, provide the umbrella for all metropolitan and regional transportation plans.

The WTP's vision is:

“Washington’s transportation system should serve our citizens’ safety and mobility, the state’s economic productivity, our communities’ livability, and our ecosystem’s viability.”

As presented in Chapter 7, the priorities set by Chelan County for its Transportation Element align with these state guidelines. The WTP priorities focus on preservation, safety, economic vitality, mobility and environmental quality and health. The process for establishing the County’s priorities and identifying transportation improvement projects support and are consistent with these WTP objectives.

The Highway System Plan is an element of the WTP. The HSP identifies highway system improvement projects and programs consistent with the WTP priorities. The HSP is constrained by available funding forecast for the next 20 years. Improvement projects listed in the HSP were incorporated into the strategies and projects recommended in the County Transportation Element. Chelan County will continue to work with WSDOT in establishing the HSP funding programs and priorities to serve the regional transportation needs.

Wenatchee Valley Transportation Plan

In August 2005, the Wenatchee Valley Transportation Council (WVTC) adopted a strategic transportation plan for the Wenatchee Valley. The WVTC is a local government consortium responsible for regional transportation planning in the Wenatchee Valley. The WVTC is also the lead agency for the North Central Regional Transportation Planning Organization (NCRTPO), a separate but similar entity with the responsibility to coordinate transportation planning in the non-metropolitan areas of Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan counties.

As a regional council, WVTC provides a collaborative forum for the agencies that serve the region to develop the best strategies for solving transportation problems. The 2005 regional plan (Confluence 2025) represents their combined effort to describe a vision and strategy for improving transportation in the Wenatchee urban area over the next 20 years.

The regional transportation plan identified what is needed and sets priorities. It recognizes that the needs far exceed available revenues. WVTC led an extensive effort to evaluate the long list of transportation needs and decide which will address the most critical problems and maximize benefits for the region.

The geographical coverage of the metropolitan plan is the Greater Wenatchee urban growth area. It includes unincorporated areas that are directly under Chelan County’s responsibility such as Sunnyslope and the Wenatchee Foothills subareas. For these particular areas, the list of transportation projects identified in the regional transportation plan, and the priorities set forth, provided information directly applicable to the development of the County Transportation Element. In these unincorporated areas located in Chelan County, most of the projects identified in the regional plan are included in the County Transportation Element. The County

Transportation Element can be used to help guide future updates of the metropolitan and regional transportation plans, as applicable.

Corridor Plans

The most relevant corridor plan is the US 2/97 Corridor Safety Study conducted by WSDOT and completed in June 2002. The study identifies short- and long-range safety improvements on US 2/97 between Blewett Junction in Peshastin and Easy Street in Wenatchee (a 14.4-mile segment). Many Chelan County roads intersect with the State Highway within the study area, and Chelan County was a primary participant to the study. The study noted that the Blewett Junction, Cotlets Way, Main Street/Easy Street, and Easy Street intersections each had 27 or more accidents from the beginning of 1994 to the end of 2000.

Proposed recommendations were developed based on projected traffic volumes and anticipated corridor needs for the future. It was recognized that safety on the US 2/97 facility, access to the US 2/97 facility, and corridor mobility were important considerations needing to be addressed as traffic continues to increase in the corridor.

Short-term recommendations included intersection improvements such as restriping left-turn pockets, adding pavement for right-turn lanes or turn-pockets, and adding illumination. Longer term recommendations were also made and typically included providing additional control of movements at existing intersections, using either a signal or creation of a new interchange. The recently completed "Big Y" interchange in Peshastin was one of the numerous corridor study recommendations WSDOT has since completed.

All of the US 2/97 Corridor Safety Study recommendations were reviewed in the development of the County Transportation Element. Most of the relevant improvements are identified in the list of future projects presented in Chapter 8 of this document. The County Transportation Element is consistent with and supportive of the US 2/97 Corridor Safety Study.

Local Agency Transportation Plans

Pursuant to RCW 36.70A.100, Chelan County strives to develop a Comprehensive Plan that is consistent with neighboring jurisdictions. There are five cities within Chelan County (Cashmere, Chelan, Entiat, Leavenworth, and Wenatchee) and all of them have developed and adopted comprehensive plans including transportation elements in accordance with the Growth Management Act (GMA).

These transportation elements set the communities' priorities and improvement strategies to address existing and future transportation needs. These plans primarily focus on arterials and collectors within the agency's jurisdiction; however, needs in designated urban growth areas (UGA) and connecting routes in other jurisdictions are also described in some of the plans.

Development of the County Transportation Element included a review of cities' comprehensive plan goals and policies. The objective was to ensure that the County goals and priorities were in alignment with local plans and policies. The analysis confirmed that local agency transportation goals are consistent with and support the County transportation goals.

The local transportation elements were also reviewed to identify possible improvements and programs related to the unincorporated areas for potential inclusion in the County plan.

The County Transportation Element is consistent with and builds off of local land use plans and forecasts from the City's Comprehensive Plans. This process provides consistency between the local land use plans and the County transportation system needs. The County Transportation

Element was closely coordinated with the update of the City of Leavenworth Transportation Element and the Chelan Regional Planning Study which were both ongoing at the same time.

Public Transportation Plans

Two recent transit plans were used in the process of developing the County Transportation Element:

- LINK Transit's Transit Development Plan
- Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan

LINK Transit adopted a six-year transit development plan covering the period 2008 to 2013. The document highlights a set of action strategies organized around the following items:

- Preserve existing public transportation service levels
- Preserve existing public transportation facilities and equipment
- Integrate public transportation services into a coordinated system linked by intermodal facilities
- 2008 service expansion.

These strategies guided the development of the transit strategies of the County Transportation Element.

In 2007, WVTC led the development of a Coordinated Human Services Transportation Plan for the North Central Regional Transportation Planning Organization which covers Chelan, Douglas and Okanogan counties. The document describes existing transit services available and identifies service gaps and overlaps. Specific projects to address existing and future needs are described, and ranked into three categories to assist in defining which projects should be funded in priority through federal grant programs. The list of proposed projects was reviewed and some of these projects were included in the list of transportation improvements presented in Chapter 8 of the County Transportation Element.

Upper Valley Regional Trails Plans

An Upper Valley Regional Trails Plan was completed in 2009, with the City of Leavenworth as the lead agency. The new plan integrates existing planning processes occurring in the upper valley area of the Wenatchee River. Plan proponents intend to build a community in which residents and visitors, in a safe and enjoyable manner, can travel for leisure or work, from corner to corner by their own force. This plan incorporates multiple modes of travel through four seasons and includes, but not be limited to: pedestrian, bicycle, equestrian and cross-country ski travel. The plan links and enhances existing and planned trails and determines the necessary locations for new trails--all within urban, rural, and public lands settings. Where possible, it includes development of pathways pursuant to Smart Growth initiatives such as "Green Infrastructure". This plan includes the creation of capital improvement plans and goals and policies for the City of Leavenworth, Peshastin Community, and Chelan County Comprehensive Plans, and also created development standards for the identified facilities. Ultimately the plan will further each partner's goals for development of open space, recreation, and healthy communities.