



Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The City of Colville is located in Stevens County which is in the northeastern part of Washington State, bounded on the north by Canada and on the west by the Columbia River. (See Figure 1.1) The City is in the central portion of the County at the junction of US 395 and State Route 20. By automobile, Colville is just 52 miles from the Canadian border and 72 miles from the City of Spokane.

Colville is the County Seat and the primary governmental, commercial, educational, and medical center for the region. Traditionally the region's economy has been dominated by timber, mining, and agriculture with Colville serving as the chief commercial hub for the whole county. As these traditional industries have declined, the primary employment sectors have become retail, medical, and governmental jobs. Growth in the City is fueled by immigration of retirees as opposed to younger job seekers. Retirees are drawn to Colville by its attractive recreational opportunities and friendly small town atmosphere.

The City chose to participate in Growth Management planning and to update its Comprehensive Plan. The economy of the region is changing, and land use, housing, and infrastructure requirements need to be reassessed to anticipate future needs. The community was concerned that the development occurring in unincorporated areas outside of the city was not compatible with the land uses inside the city limits. Growth Management is an opportunity to work with Stevens County to jointly plan for growth in the region.

A. Community History

The Native Americans were the first citizens of the northeastern territory of Washington. They were made up of 12 aboriginal tribes that travelled throughout the region based on weather and food availability. In general, the local tribes occupied the area from Kettle Falls south to the Spokane River. The reintroduction of horses by incoming Europeans helped the natives to mitigate the threat of famine by increasing their ability to hunt, trade, and to transport goods and belongings.

The language spoken is "interior Salish"; the most common being an Okanogan dialect. The Colville Indian tribe is known to be a peaceful people, with no war dances. The natives' garments were made from the skins of the animals and were adorned with extensive beadwork. The women wore skirts that hung down to their calves, wearing long leggings for warmth during the snowy winter season. They lived in lodges made of bark or woven tules (a grass that is found by bodies of water). They used separate birthing houses, in which the expectant mother would tend to her own delivery.

The diet of local tribes consisted of animals such as bear, deer, rabbits, grouse, ducks, and geese; plants, wild flowers, and vegetables such as camas root, cattail shoots, peppermint, black moss, carrots, onions, and a variety of berries. They also made pemmican, a high-energy fat/protein snack made with meat and berries. Pemmican could be kept for use over a long

period if it was prepared and stored properly. Wild herbs and plants were used for medicinal purposes. (*References for Indian History: The Peoples History of Stevens County, Fred C. Bohm & Craig E. Holstine, Stevens County Historical Society, 1983; Indians of the Kettle Falls Area, Stevens County Historical Society, 1981; Colville Indian Reservation, Wikipedia internet website, 2009*).

David Thompson was the first white man in the Colville area. He came in 1811 to explore the Columbia River for the Northwest Fur Company. After a water route was opened from Astoria up the Columbia River through Canadian waters, a major Hudson's Bay Company fur-trading post and farm were established near the present city site. (These are now underwater at Roosevelt Lake Bay.) This outpost was called Fort Colvile, and it was the major European center between the Rocky Mountains and the Cascade Mountains. After prospectors found gold near Fort Colvile, Americans began pushing for a survey of the international boundary so that they could claim a clear title to land. In 1846 a survey was conducted that showed the post to be deep within U.S. territory. The Hudson's Bay Company continued to operate the post until 1871.

An army post with the same name, but a different spelling, was established a few miles southeast of the old fur-trading fort. In 1855, battles started when native people started trying to prevent intrusion of white miners and ranchers. Fort Colville was established in 1859 to keep the peace. Its main activity was moving native people onto reservations and arbitrating disputes concerning land rights. A town called Pinkney City sprang up next to the site in the early 1860s as a civilian supply point for miners, settlers, off-duty soldiers, and Native Americans.

President Grant created the first Colville Indian Reservation of several million acres on April 9, 1872, by Executive Order. The reservation, located west of Colville on the west side of Lake Roosevelt, still exists today -- although its area has been reduced to approximately 2,117 square miles (approximately 1,355,000 acres).

In 1880, the army decided to close Fort Colville. When the fort closed, the residents and business men in Pinkney City decided to move a few miles west to a site with river access. They tore down the buildings of the city and the fort and carried them off to create a new town before the army could salvage them for its new post at Fort Spokane. The townspeople even took the fort's flag. As a result, the City of Colville was born in 1883.

Colville was strongly promoted by boosters who opened an office in Spokane Falls to answer questions for prospective new citizens. The railroad magnate, D.C. Corbin, circulated 50,000 copies of a promotional booklet extolling Colville as "An Open Door to a Magnificent Country." Interest in the city was lukewarm at first, but grew after the railroad was established and the first train rolled into town on October 18, 1889. The railroad was used to transport freight related to lumber and mining, and passengers. Even though the railroad continues to be used for freight, the passenger service was discontinued on December 31, 1940.

B. Population, Household, and Employment Trends

The growth of Colville has been characterized by substantial spurts and moderate declines. This fluctuation reflects those of the mining and resource based industries that have traditionally been the backbone of its economy. Due to an influx of retirees and people leaving larger cities to live near the outdoor recreational opportunities the region provides, a higher growth was experienced during the 90s. This was short-term and the actual growth rate has been at a moderate to low level

starting in 2000. In the last decade, Colville has declined in their proportion of Stevens County's population from approximately 12.45% to 11.39% in 2010. Table 1.1 shows the population growth since 1980 and population projections through the year 2030.

**Table 1.1
Population Trends**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Population</u>	<u>Percent Change</u>
1980	4,510	21%
1990	4,360	-3%
2000	4,988	14%
2005	4,980	-.001%
2010	5,045	1%
2020	*6,004	19%
2030	*6,740	12%

Source: U.S. Census and Office of Financial Management

*Based on 11.96% of OFM's low growth projections for Stevens County (2007)

The number of households has increased more rapidly than the population, because the trend has been towards a smaller average household size. (A household is everyone living in a housing unit, whether they are related or not.) In 2000, the average household size in Colville was 2.3 people. This is lower than the average for the County (2.6) and the State (2.5), and reflects the greater number of retirees in the community. Roughly 18.5 percent of the people living in Colville are 65 years old or older, compared to 12 percent for the County and 11 percent for the State as a whole. Colville also has the highest percentage of single people in the County at 35.5 percent.

Just as the population fluctuated over the years, employment has also varied, tied largely to the fortunes of resource-based industries such as farming, timber, and mining. The health of these industries strongly impacts another of Colville's key sources of employment -- retail trade. Colville serves shoppers from a wide area including parts of Canada, many of whom depend on resource jobs for their living and buying power.

Colville is also the governmental and medical center of the County with medical institutions, like the Mount Carmel Hospital, and governmental agencies as major employers, such as the Colville National Forest Supervisor's Office, the Colville School District, Stevens County, NE Washington Rural Resources, the Department of Natural Resources, the City of Colville, Department of Transportation, and the Department of Social and Health Services. There are other major employers in the region (outside of the city limits) that remain resource based, such as Stimson Lumber, Boise Cascade, and Vaagen Brothers. Table 1.2 lists some of the major employers located within the city limits of Colville and their staffing levels as of September 2009.

Residents of the City would like to increase employment opportunities in the region. One strategy for doing so is diversifying the economy to avoid the boom/bust cycles typically associated with resource industries. Attempts continue to be made to diversify Colville's economy. Emphasis has been placed on developing light industrial sites, revitalizing the central business district, and attracting tourists to the City and region.

**Table 1.2
Major Employers**

Employer	Employee Count	Full Time Employees (FTE) vs Part Time Employees (PTE) or Other
Buena Vista Assisted Living	77	57 FTE, 20 PTE (FTE=24+ hours/wk)
City of Colville	52	All FTE
Colmac Coil	116	115 FTE, 1 PTE
Colmac Industries	31	All FTE
Colville School District	300	All FTE
Dept of Natural Resources	140	120 Permanent / 20 Seasonal
Dept of Social & Health Services	59	All FTE
Hearth & Home	254	All FTE
Hewes Marine Company	109	104 FTE, 5 PTE
Mount Carmel Hospital	261	78 FTE, 183 PTE
National Forest Supervisor's Ofc	72	62 FTE, 10 PTE
NE Washington Medical Group	158	112 FTE, 22 PTE, 24 Supplemental
Parkview Senior Living	33	6 FTE, 27 PTE
Pinewood Terrace	115	99 FTE, 16 PTE
Rural Resources	170	125 FTE, 45 PTE
Safeway	72	12 FTE, 60 PTE
Stevens County	267	293 FTE, 74 PTE
Super One	80	74 FTE, 6 PTE
Wal-Mart	280	60% FTE, 40% PTE
WSDOT	45	44 FTE, 1 PTE

Source: City of Colville Building & Planning direct contact to employers (2009)

C. The Planning Process

Colville's first Comprehensive Plan was adopted in January 1976 and updated in 1980 and 1986. The City made further efforts to update and improve the plan to meet new state requirements from 1989 to 1993. This process included an extensive citizen survey conducted by the Colville Planning Commission in 1989, numerous public planning commission work sessions, an open house, and a planning commission retreat. Information gathered was used to compose a vision of the City, develop a set of goals, and create steps to achieve the goals.

Colville supported Stevens County's decision to opt in to growth management planning under the Growth Management Act of 1990 (GMA). In 1994, Colville joined with the five other incorporated cities in Stevens County to create the Small Cities Consortium of Stevens County and hired outside consultants to assist with the development of comprehensive plans that would meet all the requirements of GMA. Public input and involvement was solicited and provided during the update process. Goal 11 of the GMA is "Encourage involvement of citizens in the planning process and ensure coordination between communities and jurisdictions to reconcile conflicts." Colville has worked diligently to achieve this goal.

Prior to the adoption of the 1997 version of the Comprehensive plan, the Small Cities Consortium, with representatives from each community, held monthly meetings over the course of more than three years. At these meetings, each step of the GMA planning process was discussed and cooperative decisions were reached for all cities. These meetings were open to

the public and minutes of the meetings were distributed to elected officials in each city and town.

As a part of the most recent update, a series of planning commission workshops and/or public information meetings were held for each element. Input was solicited and received from affected stakeholders. Minor modifications were made to the overall vision of the plan; the consensus has been to keep its original vision of maintaining the small town environment. Many of the goals were achieved from the 1997 plan; therefore, new goals have been established to replace what has been accomplished.

D. Relationship to State and Federal Laws

This comprehensive plan is primarily intended to guide the growth and development of the City of Colville over the next twenty years. The planning has been completed in the context of recent changes in state law related to land use planning and development regulation. The key laws which have shaped the content and format of the plan are briefly described below. (Copies are available at the City Hall for those who want more detail.)

1. Growth Management Act

The Growth Management Act of 1990 (GMA) was enacted to “reduce the inappropriate conversion of land to sprawling, low-density development.” The protection of finite resources such as land, air, potable water, fisheries, and sensitive natural resources was mandated by this legislation. The law was amended in 1991 to require the designation of interim and final Urban Growth Areas around each city. The key features of GMA reflected in this plan are:

- A “bottom up” planning process -- that is, extensive public involvement in developing a vision for the community and the tools to achieve it;
- Designation and protection of critical natural resource areas within each city and resource lands (prime farm and forest land, mineral resource lands, etc.) in rural areas;
- Development of regionally consistent plans to accommodate the growth projected by the Office of Financial Management over the next 20 years. GMA mandates that most growth occur in urban areas where infrastructure to serve it is already in place;
- Development of zoning regulations that are consistent with and implement the comprehensive plan. Under GMA, the comprehensive plan takes precedence over zoning in determining how land may be used and developed;
- Programs that ensure concurrent provision of infrastructure and public services at an adequate level of service as development occurs.

The GMA also requires internal consistency of the comprehensive plan elements. This means that the plan elements and the future land use map are consistent with each other, as well as the land use and capital facilities elements.

Government agencies within Washington State are required to assure that their regulatory or administrative actions do not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property. The Washington State Attorney General’s office published the following “Warning Signals” that would provide guidance to agencies in evaluating proposed regulatory or administrative changes.

- a. Does the regulation or action result in a permanent or temporary physical occupation of private property?
- b. Does the regulation or action deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of the property?
- c. Does the regulation or action deny or substantially diminish a fundamental attribute of property ownership?
- d. Does the regulatory action have a severe impact on the landowner's economic interest?

2. Shoreline Management Act

The Shoreline Management Act (SMA) was adopted in 1971 to protect "shorelines of the state" from inappropriate development. The SMA applies to approximately 230 cities and counties having shorelines of the state within their jurisdiction. The Colville River is a shoreline of the state. The City of Colville does not now include any "shoreline" area (as defined by state law), but streams that cross Colville flow into the river and the City's UGA. They extend into Stevens County's Colville River SMA planning area (land within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark). The City will work with Stevens County to develop policies and a management plan to protect this resource. Shoreline Master Plans within Stevens County are required to be completed by the end of 2014, as applicable to each jurisdiction.

3. Regulatory Reform Act (ESHB 1724)

The Regulatory Reform Act of 1995 requires local governments planning under the Growth Management Act to make environmental review a key component of land use planning. It encourages combining regulatory review under SEPA, SMA, and plans adopted under the GMA into one streamlined process. The GMA plan is intended to serve as the integrating framework for all other land use related laws. GMA provides a means to effectively combine certainty for development decisions, reasonable environmental protection, long-range planning for cost-effective infrastructure, and orderly growth and development.

Regulatory reform will primarily affect the procedures used in development review and approval. This plan contains policies and guidelines to ensure effective integration of impact review with environmental planning, zoning, and subdivision review in Colville.

4. State Environmental Policy Act

The State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) of 1971 is Washington's fundamental environmental law. SEPA requires local jurisdictions to analyze the potential environmental consequences of proposed actions prior to making a decision. SEPA does not directly affect government decisions; it simply ensures that environmental issues are considered in making the decision.

As part of the Comprehensive Plan amendment process, a SEPA checklist is completed as a non-project action. Typically, the project receives a Determination of Non-Significance (DNS), which would not outline any necessary mitigation. When development does occur, project review and mitigation are applied, as appropriate.

When the November 1997 Comprehensive Plan was being prepared, an SEPA/EIS was prepared with the cooperation of affected government agencies, stakeholders, and the public. The results of this process is kept on record at City Hall and may still used as the basis for environmental review within the designated city limits and UGA.