

Community Development Department

Budget Narrative Fiscal Year 2022

Fund: Current Expense
Department: 518 Facilities
524 Building Inspection
558 Planning

Staff #: 4 FTE

Division Mission:

The Community Development Department's (ComDev) goals are to promote and sustain a high quality of life for the residents of the community, while encouraging viable commercial and light industrial development. This can be accomplished by planning for and accommodating the anticipated growth and development of the City, directing development and land use following the goals and policies established in the City's Comprehensive Plan, Development Regulations, Building Codes, College Ave Design Standards, and Historic Preservation.

Budget Summary:

Revenues come primarily from the city's current expense fund. Some revenue is realized through permit/application fees.

Budget Requests for Fiscal Year 2022:

Consultants

GR Dohrn & Associates for miscellaneous planning issues like our Urban Growth Area (UGA), annual Comprehensive Plan review, Martin Airfield, Exclusive Agriculture Zone, development code tweaks, and assisting in review of the outdated Countywide Planning Policies. JUB Engineers conduct civil plan reviews overseen by ComDev. Additional planners and GIS specialists are available through JUB as needed.

Historic Preservation consultants will do additional historic property research to create a self-guided tour of historic properties.

The City will participated in a Department of Commerce grant to update the 1993 Countywide Planning Policies. Walla Walla will act as lead agency and will be responsible for administering the grant.

Other outside consultants include the Hearing Examiner, City Attorney, and a Licensed Surveyor. Much of the surveyor's work, hearing examiner, and JUB civil plan review are a third party pass through expense paid for by the applicant.

Training & Seminars

There will be training and certification courses for the Building Inspector and Building Official along with continuing education course needed to maintain their respective certifications. The 2018 International Building Codes became effective February 1, 2021 that also included the Washington State Amendments, and Washington State Energy Code, these changes will require a substantial investment in training. Course updates were limited or not offered in 2021 due to the pandemic. The Administrative Assistant requires Permit Technician training. The Community Development Director is proposing to attend the Washington State Planning Directors annual conference, the Washington State American Planning Association Conference and the Revitalize WA Conference. The flowing training is planned if COVID-19 restrictions are lifted or online training is offered:

- Training offered by WCIA.
- Utilization of free too little cost webinar opportunities and no cost training provided by different agencies.
- Administrative Assistant – Permit Technician training, WSAPT.
- Building Division
 - Code update classes for IRC, IBC, IFC, IMC, IFGC, IEBC, UPC, WA State Amendments and WA State Energy Code updates for 2018
 - Certification for Commercial Inspector – Building; includes a week of training.
 - Certification for Certified Building Official – Building Codes & Standards; includes a week of training.
 - Certification for Legal & Management Module; includes a week of training.
- Planning
 - Historic Preservation – Revitalize WA
 - American Planning Association WA Conference.
 - Planning Directors Conference.

Equipment

Small tools and minor equipment.

- Facility maintenance tools

Personnel

The CDD currently consists of four FTE's, the Community Development Director, Building Official/Facility Manager, Building Inspector, and Administrative Assistant. The Building Official/Facility Manager primarily oversees plan reviews and commercial building inspections, facility maintenance projects, and provides supervision and backup to the Building Inspector. The Building Inspector conducts backup plan reviews and is the primary inspector of residential projects. The Administrative Assistant coordinates the application process for the Community

Development Department and Public Works Department and provides backup to the Utility Clerk. The position also serves as the clerk for the Planning Commission and Historic Preservation Commission. The Administrative Assistant is on the city Wellness Committee and Safety Committee and also assists at Farmers Market as financial staff (EBT program).

Committees

The CDD oversees two volunteer commissions, the Historic Preservation Commission and the Planning Commission. The Historic Preservation Commission meets the third Thursday of each month at 4pm. The Planning Commission meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7pm. All meetings are planned to be conducted via Zoom.

2021 Milestones

- Successful RCO Grant - Lions Park – WWRP - \$500,000; LWCF - \$500,000; YAF - \$349,500; Sherwood Trust grant – \$500,000.
- Adoption of the Regional Housing Action Plan.
- Manufactured Housing Zoning & Comprehensive Plan Amendments relating to Affordable Housing
- Environmental Review and Public Notice for several public projects including:
 - Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements
 - Well No. 6 Construction
 - Water System Plan Update
 - Davis Elementary Modular Buildings
- All Commercial and Residential reviews are coordinated through ComDev in conjunction with JUB Engineers doing the civil plan reviews.
- Burger King Site Plan Decision issued.
- Homestead Village PUD Phase 3F Civil Plan Review
- Davis Elementary School Modular Buildings
- Draft 75th Anniversary Book
- Ground Penetrating Radar of Poor Farm
- This Place Has History self-guided tour grant – DAHP Grant
- Police Department Evidence Building Construction
- RFP – Council Room AV Design & Remodel

2022 Projects, Goals and Recommendations

The major projects affecting Community Development as a whole are outlined here in general. These projects will all be occurring within the same time frame and will require major coordination and challenge the resources of Community Development. Application processing, SEPA, public outreach, plan reviews, inspections, monitoring and contract administration on each project will be substantial. With several major projects occurring at the same time additional technical assistance is highly recommended to assist during this time. This list does not address the day to day work, but is intended to show the major challenges ahead.

Departmental projects for 2022 are:

1. Coordinate with Walla Walla, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla County to update the 1993 Countywide Planning Policies. The three cities in coordination with the County hope to apply and receive a grant from the WA State Department of Commerce to update these polices.
2. Joint Study with Walla Walla & County – Exclusive AG Zoning Designation
3. Implementation phase - Regional Affordable Housing Study. Work with Planning Commission and Council to bring forward identified affordable housing tactics and incorporate them into our zoning and development standards.
4. Work with the property owners located in the Martin Airfield Area UGA to develop a suitable Land Use.
5. International Building Code Updates (effective February 1, 2021) – Building Official & Inspector training and certifications.
6. Historic Cemetery Grant – Suitable cemetery signage honoring those buried there.
7. Complete the 75th CP Anniversary Book
8. Continued UDC adjustments
9. Selection of suitable permitting program
10. Administrative Assistant – permit technician training
11. Lions Park Renovation – the Community Development Director will coordinate Project Management for this project
12. Historical Data Scanning – Admin Assistant
13. Manage Hearing Examiner System – There are possibly three developments that would require public hearings in 2022
14. GIS
15. Maintain the Business Registration Program through the BLS
16. Annexations
17. Boundary Line Adjustments
18. Building Permit Processing
19. SEPA Coordination
20. Permit Reporting to outside agencies
21. Participation in the Community Council – Affordable Housing Implementation Task Force
22. Facilities:

City Hall

- Council Room audio visual system upgrades & Remodel
- Design work for jail cell remodel to office space

Police Department

- Maintenance

Fire Department

- Replace exterior staircase
- Replace air handlers

- Remodel Dorm Rooms

Summary/Conclusion:

Residential Building Permits activity will be slow in 2022 with Phase 3F of the Homestead development coming online winter 2022 with 47 Cottages, this is the last phase of the Homestead development. It is essential that the McKeirnan Christiansen property be under development to accommodate single family, multifamily and commercial development. The Village at Fort Walla Walla 180 dwelling unit apartment complex is still expected to be constructed based on conversations with the developer. The 40 dwelling unit apartment complex on Spitzenburg should be built in 2022 and the last 20 dwelling units being constructed by the Hamby's will be completed in 2022. There are also commercial projects on the horizon that look promising including the potential for commercial development near the College Place High School, once the sewer main and lift station is completed it is likely we will see increased interest in this site. Burger King should wrap up construction in spring 2022. Goodwill Industries is expecting to wrap up construction in summer 2022. Several public construction projects will be underway, including Well House No. 6, Well House No. 4 and completion of the Lift Station Building. New plan review software (Bluebeam Revu) is expected to help streamline internal plan review processes.

In order to prepare for the next round of urban growth, the City needs to collaborate with Walla Walla and Walla Walla County to take a holistic review of the exclusive agricultural land designations that are surrounding our communities and potentially limiting growth. In addition, the City will be urging Walla Walla County to revise the long outdated 1993 Countywide Planning Policies to include revisions to how each jurisdiction is allocated growth and the methodology for determining how much land that is suitable to accommodate the 20-year planning window. Hopefully the three cities and county will jointly apply for a grant to assist in this process in 2022.

As our buildings age and staffing of FTE's increase there is the continued need for space and upgrading of facilities. The list of projects is long; staff is prioritizing the need for additional space, failing mechanical systems, and interior upgrades across all municipal facilities.

I'm looking forward to what the coming year will bring and feel confident that the Community Development Department is prepared to serve the community and overcome any obstacles we may face in 2022!

Respectfully Submitted,

Jon Rickard
Community Development Director