

Implementation Strategies

While there are numerous actions that can be taken by the City to implement this plan, resources are limited, and as a result, difficult decisions must be made to establish priorities to guide the allocation of resources, such as [the](#) time, creativity, and the energy of community leaders. Based on the feedback provided by the City Council during this planning process, the following is a recommended list of implementation priorities. Over time, [these](#) priorities may change as windows of opportunities present themselves, but in general terms, it is recommended that the implementation measures be categorized as Highest Priority, High Priority, or Important as described below. In addition, activities that were identified as having future potential benefit, have been placed in a reserved category. Actual priorities will be set through the City's annual budget process by the Mayor, City Council, and City Administrator, in consultation with City staff, the Planning Commission, business and property owners, interested residents, key stakeholders, and funding agencies.

Highest Priority Activities/Projects - includes activities or projects to be initiated during the next 12-18 months. Resources will be allocated accordingly:

- Naches Road Extension/Interchange Study;
- Goodlander Road Improvement Project/Interim Truck Route;
- South Third Street Improvement Project;
- Local Business Directory (underway);
- Actively Market Low Interest Business Loan Program (underway);
- Annual Economic Development Summit; and
- Continue Special Events (ongoing).

High Priority Activities/Projects - includes activities or projects that should be initiated as time and resources permit, or can readily be accomplished:

- Consolidate Commercial Zoning Districts;
- Alternative Development Standards, including Landscaping, Parking, and Signage;
- Revise SEPA Thresholds Applicable in Central Urban Area;
- Promote Mixed-Use Development in the B-2 Zoning District;
- Welcome to Selah Sign;
- Wayfinding Signs;
- Actively Market Opportunity Sites;
- Expand Commercial Areas/Integrated SEPA Review; and
- South Third Street/Bartlett Avenue Overlay Districts.

Important Activities/Projects - includes beneficial activities or projects awaiting additional resources or for completion of higher priority activities and projects:

- Speed Study at South City Entrance/Exit;
- South First Street/Southern Avenue Intersection Control Study;
- Naches Avenue/First Street Safety Improvements;
- Naches Avenue Public Parking Improvements;

- Decorative Street Lighting;
- Yakima Trolley Terminus Location Study;
- Small Business Incubator;
- Civic Center Evaluation;
- Consolidate City Facilities; and
- City Financial Report.

Potential Activities/Projects Reserved for Future Consideration – includes activities or projects that were considered but were not recommended for implementation at this time:

- Enhanced Code Enforcement;
- Military Housing; and
- Alternative Post Office Location.

Highest Priority Activities/Projects

Currently, there are only two interchanges that connect Selah with Interstate 82 (I-82), and neither provides a direct or convenient route to the Central Urban Area. The interchange at Milepost 26 is an indirect route providing access for residents and visitors traveling to and from Ellensburg, and points to the north and west. The interchange at Milepost 30, is the most heavily traveled, as it provides the most direct access to Yakima and points to the south. There is however a third interchange on I-82 located at Milepost 29 providing limited access to a mining operation and an area east of Selah. Historically, the full utilization of this interchange may have been overlooked because the Yakima River and associated wetlands lie between the interchange and the City of Selah. But for the Yakima River crossing, this interchange could provide direct access to the heart of Selah through the extension of Naches Avenue. The **suite of network analyses** WSDOT identified and Selah is seeking funding for, could begin to analyze whether an extension of Naches Avenue would relieve traffic on South First Street. **{Is there a non-jargon way to say this?}**

Constructing a new connection to I-82 ~~using this~~ **utilizing** this underutilized interchange would provide a direct route for trucks between the fruit warehouses and storage facilities, which forms the economic base of the community. This would also reduce traffic volumes on South First Street, as well as address the safety concerns due to truck/car/pedestrian conflicts occurring today. Additionally, there is one large, privately-owned property near the interchange that may be suitable for a business park or possibly a mixed-use freeway-oriented development that could **further** diversify the economic base of the City.

Recent conversations with Yakima County staff suggest they may be inclined to look favorably upon a request from the City to add this interchange to the Selah Urban Growth Area. Furthermore, preliminary discussions with WSDOT and natural resources agencies indicate a crossing of the Yakima River and associated wetlands, while expensive, is not impossible. A project of this magnitude may take 10-20 years to research, identify, and evaluate potential environmental impacts, develop mitigation strategies, design, secure funding, and construct, but given the potential positive impacts to the City, it could be well

worth the investment. As a result, this project, potentially referred to as the Naches Road Extension, has been added to this Sub-Area Plan as the most significant activity that could be undertaken to strengthen the central urban area of the City.

In conjunction with the Naches Road Extension project, it is recommended the City initiate a series of actions to formally expand the Selah Urban Growth Area to the east to include the Proposed Urban Growth Expansion Area 1 as depicted on **Figure 1**. Area 1, which includes the land between existing city limits and I-82 to the east, contains the potential corridor alignment for the Naches Road Extension project. Other benefits for considering Area 1 include keeping an important segment of the Yakima River and associated wetlands under a single jurisdiction, enabling the City to identify and plan for areas suitable for development, and to effectively protect the critical areas not suitable for development. In addition, adding Area 1 to the Selah UGA will promote planning for the efficient delivery of urban services and enable the City to capture the economic benefits of the Naches Road Extension Project, which are extremely important considerations.

It is also recommended that the Selah UGA be expanded to include Area 2, which lies between I-82 and East Selah Road. This area should be targeted for business and industrial park development to take advantage of access to I-82 at both the north and south ends, as well as some limited commercial activities. The existing WSDOT maintenance facility and the mining activities suggest this area may be desirable for commercial or industrial activities that require ready freeway access and/or high visibility. Currently, the City does not serve these areas with water or sewer, but there are no engineering constraints that would preclude doing so. The construction of a bridge to extend Naches Road would provide a cost-effective means of extending water and sewer mains to serve these areas as opposed to tunneling under the river. An appropriate lift station will be required to return sewage to the City's treatment plant and given the acreage involved this may be cost effective, particularly if a large-scale development project were to emerge that met state or federal economic development funding priorities.

It is further recommended that the Goodlander Road Improvement Project be designated as a highest priority activity due to timing considerations. Goodlander Road from Wenas to Jim Clements Way is scheduled for improvement in 2020, but it is possible this project will be delayed. At least one fruit company has identified the intersection of Goodlander and Jim Clements Way as a limiting factor in their expansion plans, specifically the turning movement of trucks from southbound Jim Clements Way to eastbound on Goodlander Road. The City will need to coordinate and cooperate with WSDOT to further explore whether a study is necessary and what signal equipment and timing might need to be changed out to provide for a protected left-turn for this movement. If business expansion plans are indeed contingent upon the intersection improvements, there may be the potential to secure County SIED and/or state CERB funding for the expanded scope of this project. As a practical matter, studying the necessary intersection improvements may will not align with the scheduled 2020 WSDOT improvement, but if a delay does occur, then adding to the scope of this project should definitely be considered. {If this can't be implemented, then it should be deleted. But why isn't it practical?}

Initiating coordination with WSDOT for intersection improvements at Goodlander and Jim Clements Way, would enable the City to explore the potential for designating an interim truck route utilizing the interchange at Milepost 26 on I-82, and potential routing solutions providing access to the industries located along Park Drive and Railroad Avenue.

The City has secured federal funding to improve South Third Street from Southern Avenue to Valley View Avenue in 2022. The South Third project includes two 14' automobile travel lanes, curb, gutters, a 6' sidewalk on the west side of the street, and street lights. Perhaps as a second phase, consideration should be given to extending improvements to Naches Avenue, designating South Third Street as a signed bike route with signage, and completing a connection between South Third Street and the Yakima Greenway.

During the stakeholder interviews local businesses consistently identified special community events such as Selah Days as being a particularly valuable activity that should be continued. It was also suggested that new events be added to provide additional opportunities to bring the community together in the heart of the city and to create opportunities to support local businesses. It was also noted that the Selah Downtown Association has finalizing a directory of Selah businesses. As this directory is completed, it should be widely distributed and updated on a regular basis. Continuation of the low interest low program administered by the Selah Downtown Association is also recommended as a highest priority activity. Several businesses have received loans to make façade improvements, and it was noted during the stakeholder interviews that many businesses were not aware of the program, so there is an opportunity for the Downtown Association to enhance their outreach and marketing activities.

The final activity recommended as a highest priority is for the City to sponsor an annual economic development summit meeting. This meeting should include business, government, education, and civic leaders. The purpose of the summit is to provide a shared forum to highlight accomplishments of the past year, identify priorities for the coming year, discuss how best to coordinate efforts, thus maximizing the return on the investment of local resources. While this is a relatively simple task to undertake, the benefits should not be understated. Oftentimes, it is helpful to have a neutral third party serve as the facilitator of the discussions and to provide the participants with a follow-up report.

High Priority Activities/Projects

The recommended High Priority Activities/Projects are by and large, smaller scale items that could be accomplished relatively quickly with City resources and are considered “low hanging fruit.” The high priority activities and projects provide tangible benefits and can be accomplished while highest priority projects are being developed. As noted in the Preliminary Report, the Development Regulations in the Selah Municipal Code are outdated. One immediate activity would be to merge the B-1 Business Professional zoning district with the B-2 General Business zoning district. The merger would increase

flexibility as to where businesses can locate in the Central Urban Area. This would also provide the framework by which regulations can be amended to promote mixed-use and master planned developments. Additionally, numerous revisions to allow greater flexibility to business owners and developers in meeting the standards for parking, landscaping, signage, and related improvements can be made at the same time. The current City regulations are oriented for new suburban type developments on vacant parcels rather than infill development and redevelopment, which is what the City will likely encounter in future years. One other regulatory change that could be made at this time would be to increase the SEPA Thresholds applicable to project specific development proposals in the Central Urban Area. State law authorizes cities to adopt several different levels of exemptions, such as for different geographic areas or for mixed-use projects. Given that the Central Urban Area is all built out, the expansion or redevelopment of previously developed sites are not likely to present adverse impacts on the environment that cannot reasonably be addressed by the City's Development Regulations. Raising the SEPA Thresholds to the maximum permitted under the law would however, save project sponsors time and money, and enable the City to expedite the permitting process in the Central Urban Area. Examples of these revisions have been included in Appendix E, for consideration by City Staff and the City Planning Commission.

One of the advantages of living in a smaller community is that residents can easily find their way around, oftentimes without even knowing names of the streets they are traveling on. Visitors, on the other hand, frequently need assistance, and while cell phones are becoming increasingly helpful in providing directions, they don't necessarily make travelers aware of all the business and recreational opportunities in the community. Given the number of families that travel to Selah to attend youth sports events at the local ballfields, parks, and swimming pool, a uniform system of signage directing visitors to these venues is important. As one business person noted, they don't expect someone to stop by between softball games and buy a new truck, but if they are reminded we are here and can see some of our inventory as they drive by, they may make a point of coming back to see us. Along with wayfinding signs, a new Welcome to Selah sign at the southern entrance to the City, at a more visible location, was discussed as a small, but important accomplishment.

Another High Priority activity involves the marketing of economic development opportunity sites. During the stakeholder interviews it was clear that there was not a common understanding of what public and privately-owned properties suitable for development are available for acquisition. It would be relatively easy to identify these sites and to contact each property owner to learn the status of the property. By establishing a template that highlights the attributes of each site, they could be advertised on the city website as well as the website of the Yakima County Development Association (YCDA), which would provide greater exposure. In addition, it is recommended that a tour of these sites be organized for the YCDA staff and local realtors.

The final High Priority Project is one that may be best implemented in phases. The current City Comprehensive Plan identifies a need for 21 acres of commercial land to support the projected population growth through the year 2037. The Plan notes however that much

of the vacant commercial land in the city is not suitable for development and highlights the need to conduct a more detailed land use analysis to determine how much land is in fact suitable for development. In anticipation that there may not be sufficient vacant land, one option is to expand the areas zoned for commercial development in the Central Urban Area. This would enable the City to maximize the return on the infrastructure investments made in the Central Urban Area and could have the potential to create enough critical mass to see the emergence of commercial areas that are less auto-oriented and more walkable. The two most likely areas where this could occur would be on the eastside of South Third Street between Selah and Southern Avenues. The other would be in the vicinity of Bartlett Avenue between North First Street and North Wenas Road. The South Third Street Corridor abuts commercial property fronting on South First Street and establishing an overlay zone applicable to these rezoning properties to permit in this area ~~for~~ commercial and mixed-use development, may enable existing businesses to expand and more intensive uses of underutilized properties. The properties in the Bartlett Avenue area may prove to be a logical extension of the downtown area at some time in the future, especially if the Naches Road Extension Project becomes a reality. In the near term, it is recommended that the City meet with property owners to explore their interest in establishing an overlay zone that could permit mixed-use developments in this area. In addition, it might be appropriate to explore the interest in a rezone to Commercial, with the property owners in this area fronting North Wenas Avenue. It should be noted however, that if these areas are rezoned before there is a market for more commercial and mixed-use development, that these areas could further decline, so timing is an important consideration. If the City were to pursue this activity, it is recommended that the land use analysis be completed, and the findings be used, if appropriate, to support an amendment to the future land use map designating these areas as suitable for commercial development in the future. This would set the stage for a rezone when property owners are ready, or when the Naches Road Extension Project becomes more of a reality, or perhaps when additional population growth occurs on the outskirts of the city. Given the closer proximity of the South Third Street properties, it might be appropriate to proceed with the rezone first in this area, and then proceed with the rezone of the Bartlett Avenue properties, starting with the properties that front North Wenas Avenue.

Important Activities/Projects

Among the important projects the City could undertake to strengthen the Central Urban Area, there are a series of proposed improvements to South First Street. Since South First Street is a state highway, active consultation and participation of WSDOT will be required prior to designing any improvements. Given the potentially significant benefits of developing a new direct connection to I-82, putting these projects on standby and concentrating City efforts on the Naches Road Extension Study may be appropriate. Some of the following activities may not be necessary or can be incorporated into the Naches Road Extension Project if that project is shown to be viable and is actively pursued. The Intersection Control Analysis will shed light on whether installing a signal or roundabout at the Southern Avenue intersection is advisable. Preliminary cost

estimates indicate that signaling the intersection may cost close to \$1.1 million while a roundabout would cost closer to \$3.5 million.
{Need to insert discussion of Speed Study.}

Safety improvements at the intersection of Naches Avenue and First Street could be incorporated in the Naches Road Extension Project or designed to be a concurrent project. The need for the South First Street Access Improvements could be lessened by the Naches Road extension, however a project of that magnitude could take ten or more years to complete. Exploring low cost measures like adjusting the signal phasing to create breaks in the traffic for left turn movements or slowing traffic entering and exiting on South First Street, may require improvements identified in the traffic **analyses suite discussed previously.** {User friendly terminology?}

Studying a potential relocation of the Yakima Avenue Trolley Terminus warrants further consideration. The possibility and benefit of collocating the trolley stop with the end of the Yakima Greenway extension could be done ahead of the South First Street/Southern Avenue Intersection Control Study. Findings from a trolley relocation study can be integrated into any improvements evaluated for the intersection at South First Street and Southern Avenue. Currently, the trolley operates on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays. **{Verify, I thought we heard that it only operates once a year}** Any discussions about vacating right-of-way would involve the Yakima Avenue Trolley Board, the cities of Yakima and Selah, and interested stakeholders. Maintaining right-of-way for the trolley is affecting traffic safety along South First Street and complicates design of future safety improvements. By relocating the trolley terminus, options considered by the City, WSDOT, and affected property owners may be more flexible while preserving a means for the trolley to continue its operations.

The installation of Decorative Street Lighting along South First Street could be initiated at any time funding becomes available. These aesthetic improvements to the City's gateway would improve the appearance on South First Street, but would not likely have a significant economic impact.

The remaining Important Projects could become higher priorities over time, especially if aligned with available grant funding. The development of a small business incubator could be an excellent way to promote formation of new local businesses. Identifying an area on or near Naches Avenue for a City-owned parking facility could be beneficial to existing businesses and attract new businesses into the focus area. The recent decision to close the Wells Fargo Bank at the corner of Naches Avenue and South First Street becomes a variable in this equation. There is some underutilized City-owned parking just south of the bank that could become part of a land exchange or redevelopment proposal. The City can also explore joint use parking options, perhaps in conjunction with construction of a new City Hall facility or a consolidated municipal facility.

The City currently owns two facilities in the Central Urban Area, the City Hall and the Civic Center, and leases a third facility for use by the Police Department. The City purchased

land to relocate City Hall to the west. If City Hall moves, the City can sell its current property in the heart of “downtown” to a developer.

The community made clear during the stakeholder interviews that the Selah Civic Center building is an extremely important community asset. The building is aging and will be needing improvement at some point. Repairing or replacing the facility at its current location is an option, as the location is well suited. The park and ride lot is currently being expanded to increase public transportation options for the community in this central location. The location becomes even more community friendly if a continuous connection is made between the Civic Center and nearby Wixson Park.

Since the Civic Center facility is located on prime property fronting South First Street, another possibility would be to rebuild the facility at a new location. Collocating the Civic Center with other City facilities provides the City an opportunity to create a Civic Center Campus. This campus could be located in an underdeveloped area near or outside the Central Urban Area and could encourage additional development near in the campus. Financial assessment is recommended before the City decides whether renovation or relocation of the Civic Center is preferable.

The final Important Activity/Project is to prepare and maintain an easy to read City financial report. The report could include primary sources of City revenues, analysis results of types of businesses that have the greatest economic impact on the community, and could be available for public review. The readily available report could aid in decision-making on how best to use the City’s limited resources.

Potential Activities/Projects Reserved for Future Consideration

During the planning process, there were a few potential projects or activities that were identified as having potential benefits, but the timing might not be right, or they simply aren’t priorities at this time. Instead of dismissing these activities, they have been reserved for consideration in the future. These activities include enhanced code enforcement by the City, which would involve hiring additional staff and setting aside additional funding for the City Attorney to more actively enforce the City’s health and safety regulations. Another idea that was identified involves reaching out to the Yakima Firing Range and exploring the potential for the construction of housing in the city for members of our armed forces assigned there, perhaps as a way of making mixed use developments more viable. Finally, it was noted that the Post Office is located in the heart of the city in a leased building and that federal requirements for security are increasing. As a result, there may be an opportunity when the lease comes up to potentially identify alternative sites that would better lend themselves to meeting the security requirements and opening up another prime development site in the community.