



# Community Council

## 2019 Annual Report

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This Annual Report highlights Community Council's work to foster a trusted gathering place where people engage in dialogue, inquiry, and advocacy to build a vibrant region for everyone.

### Study Highlights

#### Affordable Housing Study Committee

The Study Committee met for 26 weeks, from late September of 2018 to the spring of 2019. The committee members included planners, educators, service providers, public sector employees, farmers, and other interested community members. The committee learned from a wide variety of speakers, including state-level policy experts for both Oregon and Washington, developers, planners, lenders, government agencies, and individuals struggling to secure affordable housing. After 17 weeks of learning from speakers, the study committee drafted their findings, generated conclusions, and crafted recommendations. Watching this group of individuals work towards consensus was particularly remarkable, given the diversity of perspectives in the room. Over 400 community members celebrated their work and the release of their study report at our annual luncheon in June.

Study findings show that we face a serious challenge – 41% of all households in our region who rent or pay a mortgage do not live in housing that is affordable (they pay more than 30% of their income on housing costs). The lack of affordable housing reflects, in part, the fact that increases in wages have not kept up with increases in housing prices, and a lack of production of new units, especially multifamily homes.

The lack of affordable housing is a complex issue, and the study recommendations respond to a number of different challenges. For example, several recommendations are directed at creating more diverse housing types, such as multi-family units, accessory dwelling units, and cottage housing. Other recommendations support increasing mixed-use development (locating housing, services, and employment opportunities in close proximity), and establishing flexible parking standards to suit household needs and neighborhood characteristics. While producing new housing units is crucial, the committee also recommended expanding access to weatherization and repair programs, which can reduce housing costs by making homes more energy efficient. To address some of the barriers that renters face in a tight rental market, such as multiple application fees and large deposits, the committee recommended exploring the creation of a single rental application process, and supporting rental assistance programs. All told, the recommendations seek to address the full spectrum of need – from market rate housing for median income earners to government-supported housing for low-income households.

Chaired by Meagan Anderson-Pira, Study Committee members were:

Cindy Boen	Tom Glover	Laura Prado	Roger Trick
Louise Bourassa	Renee Harms	Nadean Pulfer	Kelly Trop
Micki Breitenstein	Norma Hernandez	Gustavo Reyna	Yesenia Trujillo
Brian Burns	Gretchen Hormel	Jon Rickard	Bob Waring
Elizabeth Chamberlain	Brian Hunt	Nancy Riggle	Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer
Larry Clinton	Paul Ihle	Mike Rizzitiello	Kathryn Witherington
Sharon Clinton	Ted Koehler	Toby Salazar	Ellen Wolf
Sheryl Cox	Tim Payne	Terri Silvis	Michele Wyres
Erendira Cruz	Deborah Peters	Barbara Stubblefield	
Mike Fredrickson	Cheryl Pira	Dick Swenson	

### Affordable Housing Implementation Task Force

The advocacy phase for the Affordable Housing study began with the Implementation Task Force (ITF) kick-off meeting in September 2019, with over 60 people in attendance. Attendees learned about Community Council’s study process, the Affordable Housing Study Committee’s work, the study report and its specific recommendations, and what the advocacy phase entails. Everyone was invited to join the Implementation Task Force and asked to encourage others to join.

Prior to the kick-off meeting, Affordable Housing Study Committee members developed a strategic plan to guide advocacy efforts. They grouped the recommendations into six overarching themes, which became the ITF subcommittees: 1) multi-jurisdictional task force on affordable housing; 2) local policies & regulations; 3) state and federal policy, regulation, and legislation; 4) expanding, exploring, and creating new solutions; 5) inventory, data, and measurement; and 6) public outreach and education. Each of these subcommittees began meeting regularly in October, and started by identifying which recommendations to prioritize, and then began actively working on them.



*Grouping recommendations into themes.*

Early in the advocacy phase, Community Council helped facilitate multi-jurisdictional collaboration among the cities of College Place, Dayton, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla to pursue a Washington state grant for the development of a regional affordable housing plan. The four cities were recently awarded a \$110,000 grant. The first step in the development of their regional affordable housing plan will be a regional housing needs assessment, which will include needs identified in our study report. By providing a picture of the specific needs in each of these cities, the assessment will have a direct impact on many other recommendations in our study report, and allow solutions to be tailored to the identified needs.

Another recommendation that has moved forward quickly is exploration of a community land trust. A community land trust provides affordable housing opportunities by removing the cost of land from the price of housing. Within a community land trust, a nonprofit organization owns the land, and leases it for a small fee to the homeowner. The Expanding, Exploring, and Creating New Solutions subcommittee

began working with the Walla Walla County Council on Housing Community Land Trust Task Force to support this approach to creating more affordable housing.

Affordable housing is an essential foundation of a vibrant and healthy community. The ITF will continue to work on the study recommendations in order to increase access to safe and affordable housing in our region.

Chaired by Gustavo Reyna, Affordable Housing Implementation Task Force members are:

Yazmin Bahena	Paul Ihle	Norm Osterman	Anne Swant
Meagan Bailey	Samantha Jackle	Laura Prado	Laurel Sweeney
Matt Bona	Judy Jones	Nadean Pulfer	Roger Trick
Micki Breitenstein	Ted Koehler	Jon Rickard	Ynez Vargas
Karen Carman	David Locken	Nancy Riggle	Douglas Venn
Erendira Cruz	Dena Martin	Mike Rizzitiello	Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer
Marcus Frey	RL McFarland	Lily Seaman	Catherine Wiberg
Sundown Hazen	Steven Moss	Nikki Sharp	Cindy Widmer
Brian Hunt	Byron Olson	Terri Silvis	Leanna Yenney

### Education Implementation Task Force

This was the last year of advocacy for the Education as a Path to Economic Growth Implementation Task Force (ITF), and we hosted a Full Circle Celebration in October to recognize and celebrate their outstanding work. Much of the work over the past year focused on building a regional Educational Attainment Alliance. The Educational Attainment Alliance is a coalition of stakeholders working collaboratively to increase educational attainment by eliminating barriers to success and building better alignment across the educational continuum within our region. The ITF worked closely with United Way to establish the Educational Attainment Alliance steering committee – a group of institutional leaders and community representatives who will set priorities and strategize implementation. In May, the steering committee identified the middle school years as their first area of focus. The group agreed that the middle school years are a critical transition from elementary to high school, and success in middle school can lead to success in high school, and beyond.

Given the significance of this recommendation and its potential to create a positive, systemic impact, the subcommittee will continue to work with United Way to support the work of the Educational Attainment Alliance for an additional year. The next step is to identify a specific goal in relation to the middle school years, and put together a working group that can help craft and implement strategies. Moving forward, the steering committee will work with the working group to monitor progress and troubleshoot challenges, and then move on to identify another priority area. Additional working groups will be convened to support additional priorities as they are identified.

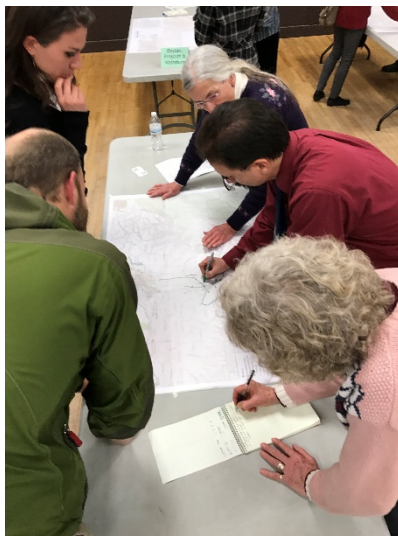
Community Council also continues to advocate for the creation of an entrepreneurial ecosystem, which includes access to resources and fosters a culture of innovation. A subcommittee has facilitated the gathering of approximately 35 business leaders, representatives from government and institutes of higher education, and entrepreneurs from around the region to discuss this important topic. This initial group met twice last year to inventory existing supports and identify outstanding needs, in order to foster a culture of innovation. There is a lot of community energy around this recommendation, and the group plans to expand and continue to meet and begin to develop strategies.

Chaired by Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer, Education as a Path to Economic Growth Implementation Task Force members were:

Matt Bona	Gretchen Hormel	Jim Peterson	Kim Rolfe
Samantha Bowen	Helen Kim	Nelly Pilaes	Amanda Trejo
Tony Cabasco	Steve Owens	Beth Powers	Nick Velluzzi
Ben Case	Jaenemy Perez de Luengas	Maria Remington	
Chris Crowder	Deborah Peters	Katy Rizutti	

## More Highlights of 2019

### Washington Governor's Smart Communities Award for Smart Partnership



*Public providing input on trail locations.*

Community Council, along with over 30 federal, state, regional, and local public entities, received the Washington Governor's Smart Communities Award for Smart Partnership for the unprecedented collaborative effort of the Blue Mountain Region Trails Plan (Plan). The creation of a regional trails plan was a recommendation in our Enhancing Outdoor Recreation Opportunities study. The Plan is a region-wide, non-motorized trail and transportation network that integrates existing and planned urban sidewalks and bike routes with urban and regional trails. This network will provide access to outdoor recreation opportunities, increased walking and biking options, and connectivity among community centers and cultural, historical, and natural resource sites throughout the region. Development of the Plan is the result of massive community input and coordination by numerous public entities. The Award was presented by Lisa Brown, Director of the Washington Department of Commerce, at a community celebration on October 30th.

The Washington Governor's award is the second award that this collaborative planning effort has received. In a prior year, the Washington Chapter of the American Planning Association recognized this planning achievement with its award for Citizen Involvement. This unprecedented collaborative effort was also highlighted in the US National Park Service's national newsletter.

### Updated Website

Community Council's updated website was launched in 2019, thanks to Coffey Communications, which donates design services and web hosting.

### Legacy Gift

Community Council received its first legacy gift, from Pat Soden and Marilyn Trueblood, in memory of Pat's brother, Jim Soden. Jim Soden was a beloved Professor of German language and literature, who taught at Whitman College for 40 years. The Jim Soden Memorial Fund is a testament to Jim's love for this region, and Pat and Marilyn's belief in investing in places we care deeply about.

## 2019 Community Support

This work is made possible because of the generous support of our volunteers, donors, sponsors, and grantors, including our 2019 Annual Sponsors:

Anonymous	Larry and Sharon Clinton
Associated Veterinary Medical Center	Coffey Communications
Baker Boyer Bank	Hayden Homes
Charles Schwab	Port of Walla Walla
City of Walla Walla	Zalaznik & Associates

Special thanks to Ynez Vargas, Profesionales Bilingues, who donates her translation and interpretation services to produce Spanish-language versions of written materials and make our events more inclusive.

## Board of Directors

Board of Directors Officers for Community Council's Board of Directors in 2019 were:

Cheri Heafy, President	Debbie Dumont, Secretary
Mario Delgadillo, President-elect	Ben Currin, Treasurer

Directors serving, with the officers, during 2019 were:

Sharon Clinton	Norma Hernandez	Jeff Reynolds	Kristi Wellington-Baker
Mike Denny	Sergio Hernandez	Kim Rolfe	Kathryn Witherington
Katie DePonty	Randy James	Kelly Trop	Ynez Vargas
Trevor Dorland	Keith Nerdin	Yesenia Trujillo	

## Staff

Mary A. Campbell, Executive Director  
Catherine Veninga, Study Coordinator  
Rachel Elfenbein, Advocacy Coordinator (August 2019 to present)  
Ruthell Martinez, Advocacy Coordinator (through February 2019)  
Georgia Lyon, Whitman College Community Fellow Intern (September 2018 to April 2019)

**Community Council**  
**Statements of Financial Position**  
**Unrestricted and Temporarily Restricted Funds Combined**  
**December 31, 2019 and 2018**

	2019	2018
<b>ASSETS</b>		
Cash and Equivalents	\$ 319,176.93	\$ 240,986.11
Grant & Accounts Receivable	100.00	-
Equipment-Net of Depreciation	1,849.44	895.50
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	\$ 321,126.37	\$ 241,881.61
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
Accounts Payable	\$ 3,425.31	\$ 1,732.29
Other Current Liabilities	4,313.57	9,945.67
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>	7,738.88	11,677.96
<b>NET ASSETS</b>	313,387.49	230,203.65
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS AND LIABILITIES</b>	\$ 321,126.37	\$ 241,881.61

**Statements of Activities**  
**Unrestricted and Temporarily Restricted Funds Combined**  
**Years Ended December 31, 2019 and 2018**

<b>STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES</b>		
<b>External Support (Contributions &amp; grants)</b>		
Contributions & Grants	\$ 260,872.11	\$ 237,211.75
Special Events	11,400.00	13,040.00
Sponsorships	63,500.00	45,000.00
In-Kind Donations	26,350.40	24,228.75
Total External Support	362,122.51	319,480.50
<b>Revenues</b>		
Interest Income	897.89	231.82
Total Revenues	897.89	231.82
<b>Total External Support &amp; Revenues</b>	363,020.40	319,712.32
<b>Expenses</b>		
Personnel	208,763.93	215,412.96
Occupancy	9,669.24	6,962.08
General & Administrative	15,602.77	16,991.98
Marketing & Promotion	19,829.87	15,073.60
Program Materials & Other Costs	25,970.75	22,458.43
Total Expenses	279,836.56	276,899.05
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	\$ 83,183.84	\$ 42,813.27