



Community Council

2020 Annual Report

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. Our region includes Columbia and Walla Walla counties and the Milton-Freewater area.

Study Implementation Highlights

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

In 2020, Community Council continued to facilitate the work of the Affordable Housing Implementation Task Force (ITF) as it advocated for the implementation of the recommendations from the *Affordable Housing Study Report*.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, the ITF pivoted to address immediate housing needs within our community, while at the same time continuing to work on the long-term goals established through the study. In coordination with other state and national housing advocacy groups, the ITF paid close attention to state and federal policy issues as they related to housing within the context of the COVID crisis. The subcommittee wrote and submitted a number of letters to state and federal representatives, advocating for immediate housing relief in relation to the COVID-19 crisis, such as extensions to eviction moratoria and the establishment of emergency rental assistance to keep low-income renters stably housed during the pandemic. The ITF produced and continually updated and distributed its English-language and Spanish-language COVID-19 Housing & Utility Relief Information Sheet, which briefly explains state, federal, and regional relief measures that have been enacted in response to the pandemic to protect residents from eviction, foreclosure, and displacement.

Other highlights of the Implementation Task Force's work include:

- Advocacy for manufactured housing park residents' opportunity to purchase legislation in Washington State. The compilation of a packet of resources for manufactured housing park owners, informing them about the opportunity to sell to resident-owned cooperatives in the event that they want to sell their parks. The production of a report to local governments on local policies that can be adopted to help preserve manufactured housing communities and protect the residents within them.
- The development of a multi-media public awareness campaign on the benefits of affordable housing for our community. This included publishing articles in local newspapers, developing social media posts on affordable housing facts, and producing a short video on our region's affordable housing crisis. These can be found on our website: www.wwcommunitycouncil.org.
- The preliminary development and graphing of affordable housing measurements for our region, such as the number of affordable homes available to households per income bracket.
- Learning from multi-jurisdictional affordable housing coalitions from other regions, as the ITF considered how to form a lasting coalition that can advance affordable housing priorities in our region.



The Implementation Task Force also carried out much of the preliminary work necessary to establish our region’s first community land trust, which will be called Common Roots Housing Trust. A Community Land Trust (CLT) is a nonprofit organization that owns land and develops housing for the purpose of creating permanently affordable homes. Homes on CLT land are owned or rented by households, and the land, which is owned by the CLT, is leased to the residents for a modest fee. CLTs also provide financial services, such as counseling and access to lenders, to support their residents so as to prevent foreclosure. Common Roots Housing Trust, will acquire land on which to develop a portfolio of affordable homes to meet the specific needs of residents of our region. It will create lasting home ownership opportunities for community members who have

steady incomes but cannot afford to buy safe, market-rate homes in our region. The ITF chose the name “Common Roots” for the CLT, and developed Common Roots’ mission, vision, and values statements. In Fall 2020, Common Roots began receiving a year of technical assistance in CLT formation from the Northwest Cooperative Development Center (NWCDC), which won a United States Department of Agriculture Rural Cooperative Development Grant to provide this assistance. In 2020, Common Roots was awarded a total of \$18,000 in grant funds from five local funders. Grant funds were used to: hire a nationally recognized CLT consultant to assist with market, pricing, and subsidy analysis; develop Common Roots’ logo and website; and organize a virtual town hall for January 2021 introducing Common Roots to the region. You can learn more about Common Roots Housing Trust by visiting their website, <https://www.commonrootshousing.org/>

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

Yazmin Bahena	Sundown Hazen	Laura Prado	Peter Swant
Matt Bona	Paul Ihle	Nadean Pulfer	Laurel Sweeney
Micki Breitenstein	Samantha Jackle	Jon Rickard	Bonnie Szuch
Karen Carman	Judy Jones	Nancy Riggle	Roger Trick
Riley Clubb	Ted Koehler	Mike Rizzitiello	Ynez Vargas
Cameron Conner	Amber Larsen	Lily Seaman	Douglas Venn
Erendira Cruz	Dena Martin	Nikki Sharp	Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer
Laura Dixon	RL McFarland	Terri Silvis	Catherine Wiberg
Marcus Frey	Steven Moss	Joy Smith	Cindy Widmer
Jennifer Glynn	Byron Olson	Tom Stokes	Trish Wilder
Meagan Hayes	Norm Osterman	Anne Swant	Leanna Yenney

EDUCATION AS A PATH TO ECONOMIC GROWTH IMPLEMENTATION

Educational Attainment Alliance

Community Council staff and two volunteers have continued to work with United Way staff to support the work of the Educational Attainment Alliance. The Educational Attainment Alliance is a regional partnership that seeks to increase educational attainment by eliminating barriers to success and building better alignment across the educational continuum in our region. Over the past year the partnership has worked on building institutional capacity, community outreach, and developing working groups around priority areas.



The Educational Attainment Alliance (EAA) worked with consultants to develop a brand identity that captures the essence of the initiative in a recognizable logo, and craft a meaningful tagline. As a result, the EAA is now known as Elevate, and the tagline is: Building Strong Communities

Through Education. The partnership also crafted a set of values statements that will be used to guide its work. The values statement, logo and tagline all compliment the EAA's vision of change and framework for action, which was developed earlier.

Prior to the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, Elevate hosted a series of Community Roundtable events designed to provide community members with up-to-date information in preparation for the new school year within the context of the pandemic. Roundtable events were hosted in College Place and Walla Walla; Dayton and Waitsburg; Milton-Freewater; and Touchet; and featured speakers from education, government, childcare, business, mental health, and public health. The events provided a forum for leaders from each sector to convey critical information and a venue for community members to ask questions, and set a foundation for collaborative problem solving. One outcome of the roundtable events was a successful grant application to the Washington State Department of Commerce for a study of childcare needs in our region.

In early 2020, Elevate identified family and community engagement at the middle school level as its first priority area. The Elevate partners agreed that strong family and community engagement is key to student success, and that providing middle schoolers more opportunities can increase student engagement. Elevate has assembled a Middle School Working Group, which will launch in 2021 and will work on devising strategies for increasing middle school family and community engagement.

Elevate is also convening a second working group to develop an Equity Fellows program. The purpose of the Equity Fellows program is to build institutional capacity around equity from pre-k through postsecondary. The working group, which will begin meeting in 2021, will develop a program framework that meets the needs of the various educational institutions in our region, with an eye to launching the Equity Fellows program in the fall of 2021.

The Elevate partners have worked hard to support students and their families during the pandemic, and look forward to resuming in-person learning, working, and socializing once it is safe to do so.

Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

Community Council continued to advocate for the development of a vibrant entrepreneurial ecosystem, which includes access to resources and fosters a culture of innovation, which was a recommendation in our *Education as a Path to Economic Growth* study. Since 2019, Community Council has facilitated conversations with business leaders, entrepreneurs, and representatives from government and institutes of higher education from around the region to discuss this topic. In 2020, the group decided to create subcommittees around the four general areas they saw as critical to creating a vibrant innovative ecosystem: Online Portal, Mentoring and Education, Financing/Access to Capital, and Infrastructure, which includes everything from physical structures to broadband. The Online Portal has been a primary focus because it could incorporate aspects and information about the other three groups.

More Highlights of 2020

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE REGION

The 2020 flooding and pandemic brought major challenges to our region's businesses. In an attempt to assist these businesses, Community Council convened and facilitated the economic development entities from across the region together to identify ways to support our businesses. One of the outcomes of this collaboration was the Think Local campaign, which utilized ideas brought by a local business owner as well as several of the individual entities but took on a regional scale with these meetings. The group continues to meet to identify and implement efforts to support businesses in our region.

LEGACY GIFT

Community Council received the second installment of its first legacy gift, from Pat Soden, in memory of his 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's belief in investing in places we care deeply about.

2020 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

This work is made possible because of the generous support of our volunteers, donors, sponsors, and grantors! Special thanks to Ynez Vargas, Profesionales Bilingues, who donates her professional translation and interpretation services to produce Spanish-language versions of written materials and make our programs and events more inclusive.

Board of Directors

Board of Directors Officers for Community Council's Board of Directors in 2020 were:

Mario Delgadillo, President
Ynez Vargas, President-elect

Debbie Dumont, Secretary
Ben Currin, Treasurer

Directors serving, with the officers, during 2020 were:

Sharon Clinton	Cheri Heafy	Gustavo Reyna	Andrea Weckmueller-Behringer
Jessica Cook	Norma Hernandez	Kim Rolfe	Jim Wilson
Katie DePonty	Keith Nerdin	Kelly Trop	Kathryn Witherington
Trevor Dorland	Julie Perron	Yesenia Trujillo	

Staff

Mary A. Campbell, Executive Director	Catherine Veninga, Study Coordinator
Rachel Elfenbein, Advocacy Coordinator	Laska Fitzhugh, Whitman College Community Fellow Intern

For more information about Community Council or to get involved, please visit us at

<https://www.wcommunitycouncil.org/>

or

<https://www.facebook.com/CommunityCouncil>

Thank You!

Community Council
Statements of Financial Position
Unrestricted and Temporarily Restricted Funds Combined
December 31, 2020 and 2019

	2020	2019
ASSETS		
Cash and Equivalents	\$ 452,020.21	\$ 319,176.93
Grant & Accounts Receivable	-	100.00
Equipment-Net of Depreciation	2,370.53	1,849.44
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 454,390.74	\$ 321,126.37
LIABILITIES		
Accounts Payable	\$ 25.30	\$ 3,425.31
Other Current Liabilities	47,639.82	4,313.57
TOTAL LIABILITIES	47,665.12	7,738.88
NET ASSETS	406,725.62	313,387.49
TOTAL NET ASSETS AND LIABILITIES	\$ 454,390.74	\$ 321,126.37

Statements of Activities
Unrestricted and Temporarily Restricted Funds Combined
Years Ended December 31, 2020 and 2019

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES		
External Support (Contributions & grants)		
Contributions & Grants	\$ 313,574.02	\$ 260,872.11
Special Events	-	11,400.00
Sponsorships	24,500.00	63,500.00
In-Kind Donations	17,368.50	26,350.40
Total External Support	355,442.52	362,122.51
Revenues		
Interest Income	232.87	897.89
Total Revenues	232.87	897.89
Total External Support & Revenues	355,675.39	363,020.40
Expenses		
Personnel	218,915.10	208,763.93
Occupancy	13,841.07	9,669.24
General & Administrative	14,346.54	15,602.77
Marketing & Promotion	8,535.60	19,829.87
Program Materials & Other Costs	6,698.95	25,970.75
Total Expenses	262,337.26	279,836.56
Change in Net Assets	\$ 93,338.13	\$ 83,183.84