

FINAL

WALLA WALLA COUNTY
2026 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PERIODIC
UPDATE

Project Charter

June 12, 2025

PROJECT CHARTER

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Charter Purpose

A project charter is a communication and project management document to help ensure project objectives and timelines are met. This project charter has been developed for the 2026 Walla Walla County Periodic Comprehensive Plan Update and outlines the:

- ✓ Background and framework for the project
- ✓ High-level project approach, outcomes, and deliverables
- ✓ Project schedule and key milestones
- ✓ Project team members along with their project roles and responsibilities
- ✓ Key to project success, and
- ✓ Potential risks and strategies to address those risks

Having a project charter is especially vital for a project that involves:

- ✓ Multiple departments, working groups, and agencies
- ✓ A multi-layer recommendation and approval process

Project Background and Framework

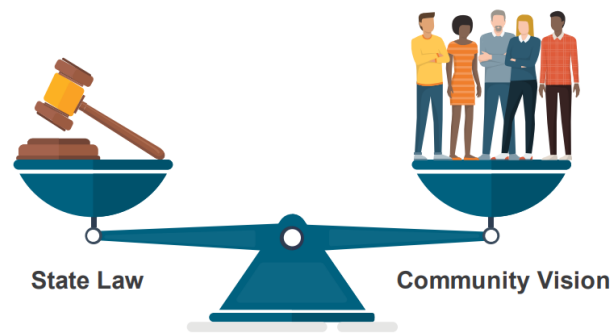
The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires cities and counties to update Comprehensive Plans and implementing development regulations every 10 years ([RCW 36.70A.130](#)). Comprehensive Plans are 20-year policy documents that guide and plan for growth (population and employment), housing, transportation, capital facilities and utilities, parks, recreation and open space, rural areas, and protection of natural resource lands ([RCW 36.70A.070](#)). Walla Walla County is required to complete the periodic comprehensive plan update by June 30, 2026.

Approach, Outcomes, and Deliverables

Defining the project approach, outcomes, and deliverables ensures that all Walla Walla County departments/staff and the consultant team are on the same page throughout the project. How the project is viewed, what must be accomplished, the steps, and the schedule to get the project completed on time are all important factors that will help define project success.

Project Approach

Every ten years “a county or city shall take legislative action to review, and if needed, revise its comprehensive land use plan and development regulations to ensure the plan and regulations comply with the requirements” of the GMA ([RCW 36.70A.130](#)). Plan Updates are an opportunity to revise, not re-write, the existing Plan to ensure consistency with state laws/case law since the last update, Best Available Science (BAS) for incorporation into critical areas regulations, and changes in local conditions.



Balancing requirements

This project will focus on compliance with applicable state laws and empower the community to include the community vision into the comprehensive plan. The Growth Management Act (GMA) was created as a bottoms-up planning process meaning the policies that will guide the next twenty years cannot exist without a robust public process. To foster a transparent and inviting planning process the following will guide the project approach:

- Using multiple methods including in-person and virtual engagement.
- Acknowledging local conditions as they relate to state requirements and emergent issues.
- Providing education on the limitations in state law and the freedoms in local visioning and goal setting.

Project Outcomes

Desired project outcomes will be further refined during the project check-ins and work sessions between the county and the consultant team throughout the update process while incorporating community feedback generated through the public engagement process. A Public Engagement Plan (PEP) will be created for this project. As the project moves forward, public engagement will shape the final outcomes of the planning process. High level outcomes set at this point will help direct the project team and ensure the project approach, schedule, and individual and group responsibilities are aligned.

The desired project outcomes which will drive this project include meeting state requirements while also ensuring the updated policies reflect local conditions and the vision of the region. They include:

State and Regional Outcomes

1. Meet Growth Management Act (GMA) requirements for the Plan update as outlined in [RCW 36.70A.130](#), [WAC 365-196](#) and the [Department of Commerce Periodic Update Checklist for Fully-Planning Counties](#); and
2. Consistency with the [Walla Walla Countywide Planning Policies](#); and
3. Update the Walla Walla County Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) consistent with updated Best Available Science (BAS); and
4. Update development regulations to ensure consistency with updated policies.

Local Outcomes

1. Create a Plan based on diverse public engagement from all areas and backgrounds of Walla Walla County.
2. Create a Plan that recognizes the distinct characteristics of Walla Walla County that are unique from other communities in the State of Washington. The Comprehensive Plan should reflect the County vision for the future and provide policies and implementing regulations to guide future growth consistent with that vision.
3. Build a thorough record and develop strong reasoning for changes to the existing plan.

Create an implementation plan for each comprehensive plan element to ensure that the goals and policies expressed in the Plan are implemented prior to the next Periodic Comprehensive Plan update.

Project Deliverables

The following high-level deliverables have been identified in the project scope of work and are required as part of the GMA Periodic Update Grant and 2024-2026 Climate Planning Grant administered through the Department of Commerce.

Deliverables:

- Public Engagement Plan
- Plan Audit Document and Updated Commerce Checklist

- Land Capacity Analysis
- Agricultural Lands – Comprehensive Countywide Analysis and Recommendations
- Housing Affordability and Availability Needs Assessment
- Comprehensive Plan
- Climate Resiliency Element (new)
- Capital Facilities Plan update
- Environmental Impact State (EIS)
- Development Regulations update (changes needed to implement new and revised policies) and meet community goals
- Best Available Science (BAS) Review and Gap Analysis
- Critical Areas Ordinance update
- Code Amendments

Other deliverables will be distributed throughout the process including attending public meetings and hearings, providing draft deliverables for review, and creating meeting agendas, meeting notes, and engagement activity reports. Analysis reports including the policy gap analysis, commerce checklist, land capacity analysis, and housing needs assessment will be given to Walla Walla County in draft for review and included in the final deliverables.

Project Team Workplan Objectives

Project Team

The project team is made up of the consultant team from Kimley-Horn, consultants listed in Table 1 on page 7-8, and staff from Walla Walla County. Clay White, Project Manager, is the primary project contact for the consultant team and is responsible for ensuring that tasks assigned to the consultant team are produced on time, schedule, and meet quality standards. Lauren Prentice and Melissa Shumake are the primary contacts for the County team and are responsible for communication with other County departments who are participating in the project. The consultant team will be executing a substantial portion of the tasks associated with this project. However, there are several tasks where there are shared responsibilities between the consultant team and Walla Walla County. The project scope of work defines project roles and the project schedule provides a high-level overview of when those deliverables will be due. (see Appendix A).

The following are high level principles the project team shares to ensure the project can be completed by the June 30, 2026, deadline.

- Meet regularly to discuss the status of project tasks and timelines.
- Meet timelines for established project deliverables.
- Commitment to provide quality work product.
- Where established schedules or commitments cannot be met for tasks, provide early communication to the consultant Project Manager, Clay White and County Project Manager, Lauren Prentice.

Project Organization and Communication

Successful projects are built on clearly defined roles, efficient execution of tasks, and strong communication. The contacts for the County and consulting team members, as well as their roles and responsibilities, are listed in the tables below. It is important to identify the way work will be completed by the project team, checked for quality assurance, and shared with others.

The following will be used for coordination between the County and consulting team to ensure coordination between deliverables:

Project Team Meetings (Bi-weekly Check-Ins) – Bi-weekly check-in meetings have been scheduled to mitigate the risk of lack of communication between the consultant team and the County. These meetings will be with the consultant team project manager and County staff. The project manager may involve other consultant team members during the bi-weekly check-ins, when necessary, but it is not anticipated they will be needed at every meeting.

Bi-weekly work sessions have been scheduled for an hour every other week to collaborate on topics and issues related to the project. It is not expected that the entire team attend every meeting. Consultant team members need only attend a bi-weekly work session when issues arise related to an immediate task for the project that they are responsible for. The team will communicate on anticipated agenda items ahead of time for these meetings.

Internal Review Schedule – The consultant team will strive to produce drafts with enough time for County review. The allotted review time will be proportional to the size and detail of the draft being delivered. When larger documents and reports are ready for review, the project team will provide multiple weeks of review to accommodate county staff time.

Draft Document Sharing – The consultant team and Walla Walla County will have a SharePoint website for file sharing and reviews. Data related to the project may be stored here, as well as any work related to the project tasks. The consultant team will organize the folders by tasks. Deliverables need not be added to the project SharePoint until the task lead has determined the deliverable is fully assembled and meets the expectations outlined in the scope of work.

Individual Coordination – At times, individual consultant team members or task leads may coordinate with county staff on their own to complete work related to their tasks. It is anticipated that this coordination be limited to small requests or quick questions that will allow the team member to complete a task under deadline. Larger coordination that may take longer is encouraged to be completed in consultation with the project manager and reserved for bi-weekly work sessions to efficiently utilize staff time.

Task Tracker – The task tracker will be used to consistently monitor the status of tasks for the project. The task tracker identifies all current tasks being worked and their status. Status being whether the task is on-track to be completed within the allotted deadline. If the task is not on schedule the task tracker will identify immediate actions needed to get the task back on schedule. The task tracker will be sent to the county primary contact on a bi-weekly basis or other schedule determined between the project manager and the primary contact.

Document Sharing and Reviews

As encouraged by the state, comprehensive plan elements are meant to be consistent with one another and support the same community vision. It will be necessary for the project team to share documents and coordinate on elements to produce quality deliverables that meet state standards. The consultant team will create a SharePoint site, a secure place to store, organize, and access information across organizations through a web browser. The project team will be allowed access to the SharePoint site. The project team will use the site as a repository for draft versions and final versions of the deliverables. The project manager or designee will implement the following standards to mitigate the risk of losing information or important documents.

Document Creating, Sharing, and Review Standards

It is unlikely the project team will be creating “new” documents in the project SharePoint. Each task lead will work with the staff within their organization on their

deliverables. Once the draft deliverable has been fully assembled, meets the expectations outlined in the scope of work, and is approved by the task lead, the task lead can place a copy of the document in the appropriate task folder or the “to county” folder on the SharePoint following the correct naming standards. Once it is placed on the SharePoint, the task lead should communicate to the project manager the reviews needed to keep the deliverable moving forward.

Document Naming & Versioning

The minimum requirement for document naming is to identify the deliverable and then assign a unique identifier to know which version of the document is being produced. Most of the documents will also include the name Walla Walla County because of the nature of consultants working with multiple jurisdictions during this process.

Document Naming and Versioning Standards

Document Name with Date: WallaWallaCo_{DeliverableName}_{month}{day}{year}

Document with First Draft Version: WallaWallaCo_{DeliverableName}_V1.0

Document Final/Second Draft Version: WallaWallaCo_{DeliverableName}_V2.0

Document Public Draft: WallaWallaCo_{DeliverableName}_V3.0

SharePoint Folders

The project SharePoint will be organized in the following folders for the entire project.

From County – Any materials provided by the County will be stored in this folder. This includes adopted plans, policies, data, and other documents that County made prior to or during the project's initiation.

Meetings – All meeting agendas, minutes, notes, and materials will be in this folder.

Project Final Deliverables – The repository for the final version of all deliverables.

Project Management – This folder contains the updated project schedule, project tasks, project contacts, task tracker, and scope of work to keep team members informed on the project.

Project Tasks – This folder is used for the consultants to share preliminary draft versions and work collaboratively before deliverables are reviewed by the County.

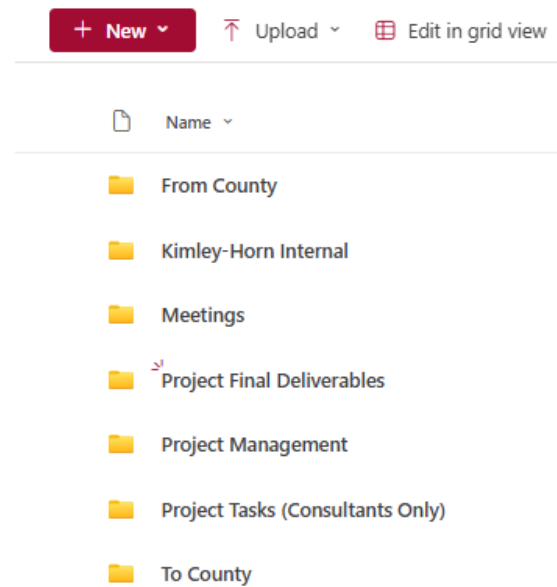
To County – This is the repository for draft deliverables that need review by the County. These draft deliverables will also be tracked with the task tracker in the project management folder.

County staff will have access to SharePoint files for the duration of the project. At the project's close, final deliverables, analyses, and data will be packaged up and delivered to the County.

Reviews

The consultant team will need to coordinate on reviewing each other's work and reaching out to county staff for reviews when necessary. Table 1 is meant to direct the consultant team toward who needs to be reviewing the work as it becomes ready for review.

Documents



Roles and Responsibilities

Setting roles and responsibilities is a key component for project success including adherence to the project schedule. The following tables outline the key project personnel, contact information, and high-level roles and responsibilities.

Table 1. Walla Walla County Staff

Department	Name	Contact Information	High-Level Roles and Responsibilities
Community Development	Lauren Prentice	lprentice@wwcowa.gov	SharePoint Access Reviews all materials
	Melissa Shumake	mshumake@wwcowa.gov	SharePoint Access Reviews all materials
	Calvin Alexander	calexander@wwcowa.gov	SharePoint Access And Coordinate with Consultants
	Jamie Serrano	jserrano@wwcowa.gov	Coordinate as needed
Public Works	Joy Bader	jbader@wwcowa.gov	SharePoint Access And Coordinate with Consultants
Public Health	Rick Dawson	rdawson@wwcowa.gov	Coordinate with as needed
GIS/IT	Kendall Corn	kcorn@wwcowa.gov	SharePoint Access

			And Coordinate with Consultants needed
Department of Emergency Management	Chris Lee	clee@wwcowa.gov	Coordinate with as needed
Facilities Management	Rob Grandstaff	rgrandstaff@wwcowa.gov	Coordinate for Capital Facilities and other elements as needed

Table 2. Consultant Team

Company	Name	Contact Information	High-Level Roles and Responsibilities
Kimley-Horn	Clay White (Project Manager)	Clay.White@kimley-horn.com	Project Administration/Background Reports/Comprehensive Plan/ EIS/Climate and Resiliency
	Rachel Granrath	Rachel.granrath@kimley-horn.com	
	Erin O'kelley	Erin.OKelley@kimley-horn.com	
	Joel Farias	Joel.Farias@Kimley-Horn.com	
	Sam Matterazzo	Sam.Matterazzo@kimley-horn.com	
	Olivia Bitton	Olivia.bitton@kimley-horn.com	
Facet	Dan Nickel	DNickel@facetnw.com	Critical Areas Ordinance update and assistance with Comprehensive Plan tasks
	Matt Covert	Mcovert@facetnw.com	

Project Tasks and Leads

The following is a general outline of project tasks with associated actions, timeframes, and deliverables. While it is important to keep to the schedule, the project team will remain flexible and maintain communication regarding schedule changes and related mitigation. The project tasks listed below will be used for the project tracker. As each project tasks begins, it will be added to the project tracker and the status of the task will be reviewed during the bi-weekly check-ins and bi-weekly work sessions. A complete project schedule is provided in Appendix A.

Table 3. Tasks and Leads

Tasks and Actions	Phase to Complete Task	Consultant Team Lead(s)	County Team Leads
Task 1 Project Kickoff, Charter, and Project Coordination			

Bi-Weekly Meetings	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Kickoff Meeting	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Bi-Weekly Work	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Project Charter Draft & Final	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 2 Public Engagement Plan			
Draft Engagement Plan	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Review of plan and comments	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Final Engagement Plan	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 3: Project website, Community Outreach, Public Meetings/Hearings			
Project Website	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Jamie
Stakeholder Interviews	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Public Engagement Program	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Public Engagement Final Report	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 4 Best Available Science (BAS) review and gap analysis			
Memo on CAO updates	Data Collection	Facet	Lauren
Task 5 Plan Audit and Commerce Checklist			
Updates to checklist for fully planning counties	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa

Countywide Planning Policy gap analysis	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Plan Audit	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 6 Land Capacity Analysis (LCA)			
LCA Draft and Final	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Task 7 Housing Affordability and Availability Needs Assessment (HNA)			
HNA Draft and Final	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 8 Draft Comprehensive Plan			
Draft Comprehensive plan	Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 9 Agricultural Lands – Comprehensive Countywide Analysis and Recommendation (ALCCA)			
ALCCA Draft and Final	Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Task 10 Capital Facilities Plan (CFP)			
CFP Draft and Final	Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 11 SEPA EIS			
Draft SEPA Document	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Final SEPA Document	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Task 12 Final Comprehensive Plan			
Final Draft	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 13 Development Regulations			
First Draft and Final	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 14: Climate Element project Kickoff, Charter, and coordination			
Project Charter	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa

Coordination and Meetings	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Project Schedule	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 15: Climate Element Public Engagement Plan			
First Draft and Final	Kickoff	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 16: Project website, community outreach, public meetings/hearings			
Comprehensive Public Engagement Plan	Ongoing	Kimley-Horn	Jamie
Task 17: Climate Impacts Assessment			
First Draft and Final	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 18: Audit Plans and Policies			
First Draft and Final	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 19: Assess Vulnerabilities and Risks			
First Draft and Final	Data Collection	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 20: Draft Climate Element with Resiliency Sub-Element			
First Draft	Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 21: Final Climate Element with Resiliency Sub-Element			
Final Draft	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Melissa
Task 22: SEPA EIS			
Draft SEPA Document	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Lauren
Final SEPA Document	Final Plan Drafting	Kimley-Horn	Lauren

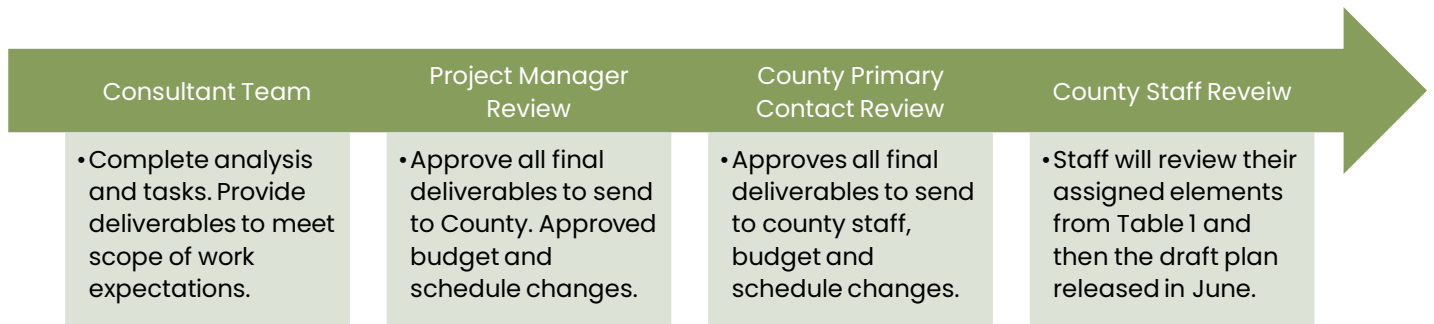
Project Coordination/Decision Making Process

The consultant team will work on their own tasks and coordinate with county staff for data collection. Complete draft deliverables, (deliverables that meet the scope of work

expectations) will be sent to the project manager for review. After the review by the project manager, drafts will be forward to the County primary contacts, director and deputy director, and the county team leads as described in Table 3. Then after review, may be forward to other county staff for review. The flow chart below demonstrates the general process.

A project task tracker will be developed and updated bi-weekly by the project leads so that the project manager is continually updated on the status of each deliverable.

All draft deliverables must be reviewed and approved by the project manager, or the designee assigned by the project manager, before being finalized. Draft stamps should remain on all documents until reviewed. However, it is anticipated that individual meetings will be set up by the deliverable lead and include those working on the deliverable and the project manager to ensure work is reviewed and approved.



Project Branding

Project branding is essential for planning and community engagement, ensuring recognition, trust, and effective communication. A strong, consistent identity helps residents easily identify the project, fostering familiarity and encouraging participation. Clear branding streamlines information sharing, reduces confusion, and strengthens collaboration among stakeholders. It also builds credibility, making the initiative feel accessible and trustworthy. When a project is easily recognizable, it creates a sense of community ownership, increasing involvement and support. Branding unifies diverse groups under a shared vision, enhancing engagement and ensuring the project's success.

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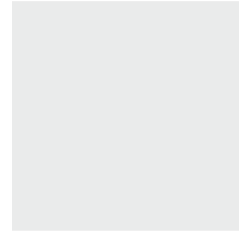
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Other Branding

All materials for climate-related engagement are required by the State to include Climate Commitment Act Branding found on the Climate Commitment Act website.



Expectations and Keys to Success

At the project kick-off meeting the consultant team asked county staff “what is project success?” and this is what was shared:

Compliance with State Laws: It is a high priority for Walla Walla County and the consultant to remain consistent with the Growth Management Act (GMA) and compliant with applicable regulations.

Improvement for Administration: Through this process, Walla Walla County would like to improve and streamline policy, development regulations, and administration which in turn can provide transparency and efficient permitting to property owners and residents.

Project Opportunities

Action-Oriented Comprehensive Plan

At the kickoff meeting, the County discussed taking the current goals and policies to a more detailed level that can assist the staff with accomplishing implementation over the next ten-year period until the next periodic update.

Consistency Across County Plans

At the kickoff meeting, the County mentioned that the Comprehensive Plan could be better integrated and consistent with the County’s other adopted plans, like the Burbank Subarea Plan.

Consistency with Other Plans/Projects

A key regional project is the completion of Phase 8 of the Highway 12 realignment and widening project. This project is critical for improving transportation infrastructure and eliminating problematic intersections. How can the

Comprehensive Plan and this new project work together to provide more opportunities for the community.

Streamline Agricultural Land Administration

Refining agricultural land designations that protect agricultural lands of long-term commercial significance while identifying areas where non-significant ag lands can be repurposed. The plan should include recommendations for agritourism regulations and secondary uses of agricultural land.

Alignment of Rural Land Uses

Updating rural zoning to match city future land use maps, particularly around College Place and Walla Walla, where water services may allow for infill development.

Project Risks and Mitigation

Implementation of State Law changes/state guidance

The goal is to implement state requirements while doing so in a way which aligns with the community vision as Walla Walla County plans out to 2046. This requires balance and a strong record. The consultant team will mitigate any risks by consistently reviewing deliverables against state laws and expectations of the state. The consultant works closely with state departments and will continue to consult with them throughout the process to provide a product that will meet state standards.

Build a Defensible Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations

It is the consultant team's priority that this plan will build a strong record of reasoning for changes to policies based on best available science, accurate analysis, and public engagement. The reasoning for comprehensive plan changes will be thoroughly recorded in analyses performed by the consultant team and will be included in the final deliverable and eventually in the public record.

Community Concern to Land Use Changes

- Risk: Public opposition to zoning changes, agricultural land use modifications, and UGA adjustments.
- Mitigation: Implement a robust public outreach strategy, including open houses, news updates with direct links to County information, and engagement through tourism and community meetings.

Political Sensitivity and Stakeholder Coordination

- Risk: Lack of early involvement from elected officials and key stakeholders may create roadblocks.
- Mitigation: Engage County Commissioners, local officials, and planning boards early in the process to align goals and expectations.

Capacity and Infrastructure Limitations in Unincorporated UGAs

- Risk: Assigning development capacity to areas without urban services could lead to unsustainable growth.
- Mitigation: Ensure growth aligns with available infrastructure, and work with city partners on infrastructure expansion plans.

Project Timing and Community Engagement Challenges

- Risk: Low public engagement if engagement efforts don't align with community schedules.
- Mitigation: Conduct outreach during active outdoor sports seasons (baseball, football, soccer) when community attendance may be higher.

Incomplete or Outdated Data for Decision Making

- Risk: Lack of current data on capital facilities, transportation infrastructure, and land use.
- Mitigation: Ensure data requests are comprehensive, including commercial and pipeline permits, concurrency planning, and GIS updates.

Appendix A – Project Schedule

Inserted on next.

Appendix B – Public Engagement Plan

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Appendix C – Public Engagement Schedule