Introduction

Eastern Region
SR 276 Route Development Plan
Jct. US 195 To Jct. SR 270
WSDOT Planning

Planning at the WSDOT is a continually evolving, and flexible process that seeks to facilitate the development and implementation of sound and innovative strategies, incorporating the dynamic issues and needs that face our transportation system. The goal of WSDOT planning is to create an integrated transportation system capable of supporting a vital economy while maintaining sensitivity to the surrounding environment and promoting a positive quality of life. We endeavor to accomplish this goal by integrating the needs of WSDOT with those of stakeholders including cities, counties, the public, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and Regional Transportation Planning Organizations. During implementation of recommendations, WSDOT will strive to employ design elements that are sensitive to the surrounding environment.

**Mission Statement**

*Washington’s transportation system should serve our citizens’ safety and mobility, the state’s economic productivity, our communities’ livability and our ecosystem’s viability.*

Route Development Plans are part of the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) Eastern Region long-range planning program and are also intended to support local jurisdictions in implementation of the Growth Management Act (GMA) *RCW 36.70A*. The RDP also supports the mission of the Washington State Department of Transportation.

Ultimately, the objective of the RDP is to provide:

- Guidance for regional decision makers regarding future projects on a state route;
- Direction for determination of mitigation measures for proposed developments;
- Inclusion of improvement solutions in the State Highway System Plan;
- Guidance for interim projects to ensure the progression towards the long-range objectives;
- Coordination with the public and stakeholders on the future development of this state route;
- Adoption of RDP solutions into regional comprehensive plans.
Pullman Bypass Planning Study History

- 1969 Advance Planning Study SR 195 and SR 270 Pullman Bypass
- 1969 Advance Planning Report Sign Routes 195 and 270 Pullman Bypass
- 1971 Design Report No. 1 SR 270N Pullman Bypass
- 1971 SR 276 Campus Loop Road Design Summary
- 1972 Design Hearing SR 270 Pullman Bypass
- 1973 Design Report SR 270 South Pullman Bypass
- 1978 Whitman County Comprehensive Plan
- 1980 SR 195 Pullman to Colfax Legislative Study
- 1993 Spokane Regional Council Pullman Bypass Transportation Study
- 1994 Pullman/Colfax Advance Planning Study
- 1999 City of Pullman Comprehensive Plan
- 2005 Whitman County Comprehensive Plan Amended
- 2007 SR 276 North Pullman Bypass Route Development Plan

Eastern Region Route Development Public Participation

Timely and consistent stakeholder and public involvement fosters the open exchange of information, and promotes a greater understanding of the needs and concerns of WSDOT, stakeholders and the public. Initially a Technical Advisory Committee was formed to review past studies and plans for the study area, and to identify existing problems and potential improvements. A larger Advisory Group was also established as part of the SR 276 RDP process comprised of representatives from the WSDOT, City of Pullman, Whitman County, Port of Whitman, Washington State University, as well as private developers and engineers, resulting in up to 20 representatives. Ultimately, this public involvement effort leads to RDP alternative solutions supported by WSDOT, stakeholders and the public.
Pullman Vicinity Trend Analysis

Based on data from the Washington State Office of Financial Management, Unincorporated Whitman County has experienced a negative rate of growth. The overall population decreased by 4 percent between 1990 and 2000 and has shown a 0.60 percent overall decrease in population from 2000 to 2005. With this trend, the anticipated development growth within the unincorporated County is low to moderate, consisting primarily of residential development.

Incorporated Whitman County is experiencing moderate growth, with the City of Pullman experiencing the most aggressive expansion. Pullman is the largest city in Whitman County located in the southeast portion of the county and home of Washington State University, which has an enrollment of about 18,000 students at the Pullman campus.

Historically, Pullman’s economy has closely paralleled the growth of Washington State University, but in the last few years the economic base has diversified and the city is experiencing increased growth from new business and research sectors. Schweitzer Engineering Laboratories has experienced healthy growth and has over 1000 employees. WSU remains the primary employer in the county with approximately 6300 full and part-time employees.

The following data summarizes the trends in Whitman County, WSU, and the City of Pullman:

### Population Change

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Area</th>
<th>1996</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>Annual Increase</th>
<th>Overall Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Pullman</td>
<td>23,932</td>
<td>27,030</td>
<td>1.29%</td>
<td>12.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whitman County</td>
<td>39,590</td>
<td>42,800</td>
<td>0.81%</td>
<td>8.11%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Washington State Overall</td>
<td>5,483,100</td>
<td>6,375,600</td>
<td>1.63%</td>
<td>16.28%</td>
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*Based on Office of Financial Management April 2006 statistics and estimates*
**Washington State University Enrollment: Pullman Campus**

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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Enrollments</td>
<td>16,589</td>
<td>16,437</td>
<td>16,743</td>
<td>17,020</td>
<td>17,266</td>
<td>17,707</td>
<td>17,912</td>
<td>18,031</td>
<td>17,982</td>
<td>18,013</td>
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*Source: WSU Institutional Research Data*

**Comparison of Population Growth Rates**

- **Washington State**
- **Whitman County**
- **City of Pullman**

Based on Office of Financial Management April 2006 statistics

**Projected Population Growth**

*Source: OFM; Whitman County Population Forecast*
Historic trends have shown only modest growth in Whitman County and the City of Pullman. Over the last five years Pullman has seen moderate expansion, and forecasts for the next 20 years predict continued growth in the region.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Area</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2025</th>
<th>Annual Increase</th>
<th>Overall Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*City of Pullman</td>
<td>27,030</td>
<td>33,650</td>
<td>1.29%</td>
<td>24.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**Whitman County</td>
<td>42,800</td>
<td>46,811</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
<td>9.37%</td>
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<tr>
<td>**Washington State Overall</td>
<td>6,375,600</td>
<td>7,975,471</td>
<td>2.34%</td>
<td>24.49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Based on City of Pullman Comprehensive Plan Growth Forecast
**Based on Office of Financial Management 2002 Intermediate Growth Forecasts

Growth Management and Land Use

Whitman County and the City of Pullman have developed Comprehensive Plans to define policies and regulations in growth elements including Land Use, Transportation, and Environmentally Critical Resource Areas. These plans provide decision making guidelines, goals, and implementation plans to manage expected growth over the next 5 to 20 years.

The Transportation element’s purpose is to provide a statement of planned roadway locations, function, capacity, level of service, environmental impacts, and mobility of goods and people that is cost efficient and economically feasible for all transportation facilities and services. Transportation is closely tied to Land Use growth patterns, especially where expansion in the employment base is taking place. The Transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Pullman identifies much of the urban traffic congestion occurring on SR 27 and SR 270 through the city core. The SR 276 North Pullman Bypass is considered to be a major mitigation factor in relieving regional traffic and freight movements through the downtown area. The City arterial plan will continue to develop a ‘ring route’ around the municipality by using existing arterials such as Terre View Drive and Bishop Boulevard. The City of Pullman Land Use Map is included in (Appendix E).