

Introduction



Figure I.01 - Cheney has a remarkable number of factors favoring economic prosperity, including a large college presence, scenic setting, strong recreational opportunity - and in the case of downtown and nearby neighborhoods - adaptive and highly interconnected infrastructure. (Image source: Studio Cascade, Inc.)

Overview

As mandated by Washington State's Growth Management Act (GMA), the City of Cheney is updating its comprehensive plan adopted in 1997 and most recently updated in 2006-2010. This update revises policies from that plan, includes new policies informed by public participation in this process, and incorporates policy direction from newer documents adopted following the 1997 plans adoption. It has been crafted in accordance with GMA

requirements for mandatory elements found in RCW 36.70A.070, covering both the scope and content indicated in the code, and reflects review of Spokane County's Countywide Planning Policies.

As with all plans, this plan update is only a start. The City and the community at-large must begin implementing steps, including developing more specific departmental and area or topic-specific plans; adopting appropriate regulations; budgeting and initiating directed investments,

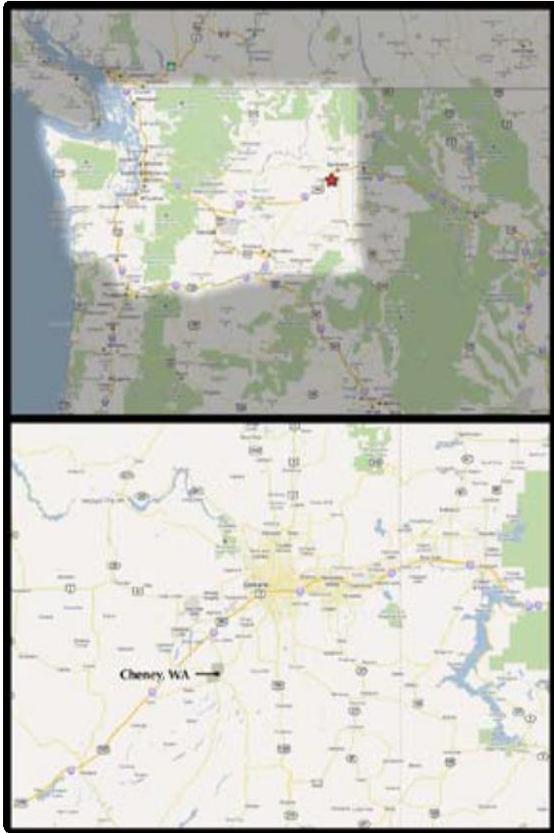


Figure 1.02 - The City of Cheney located in its regional context and among its immediate neighbors. (Image source: Google™ maps, Studio Cascade, Inc.)

and beginning programs - all designed to carry Cheney's long-term vision forward.

This update may be seen as containing five main components:

- 1) **Vision** – This component states a long-range community vision, suggesting how that vision relates to overall community objectives as well as to more specific topics addressed in individual elements
- 2) **Plan elements** – Elements, also referred to as chapters, update the land use, transportation, housing, capital facilities, parks, and essential public facilities chapters from the previous plan; develop new elements including natural assets, technology, and culture and the arts, and incorporate (largely by reference) the City's existing parks, open-space and recreation

plan. Each element introduces its topical focus, articulates key objectives the plan aims to address, and references all relevant goals and policies from the full policy framework

- 3) **Implementation** - This component lists the various programs, suggested time frames and leading agencies responsible for setting the plan into motion and keeping progress measurable and consistent over time
- 4) **Goal and policy framework** – This listing presents a compiled matrix of goals and policies for the plan's complete range of topics. While this update incorporates the existing parks and recreation plan by reference, it also includes parks-related goals and policies developed through this process for the sake of overall consistency. As a result, several policies are included in the framework that appears in an abbreviated parks and recreation element.
- 5) **Appendices** – The appendices include a glossary, the policy framework and implementation sections detailed above, plus an extensive "community profile" document used - and in some cases cross-referencing – portions of numbered plan elements. The appendices also include an index listing of the full range of documents, generated for the 2017- 2037 plan update, and the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) documentation developed for the plan's adoption.

This update process included numerous opportunities for community engagement, designed to acquire meaningful public influence on the plan update despite a relatively small budget. Through community outreach, A series of community interviews, a two- day community charrette, public newsletters, a project website, a citizens' advisory committee, ad hoc technical advisory committees and the Cheney Planning Commission all contributed

to the scope, nature and focus of this update. While the initial direction was to evaluate and amend the 1997 plan as necessary, the process revealed a more philosophical shift in vision and community priority than a simple update could easily accommodate. The public engagement process was critical to every component of the update, indicating a level of nuance and detail that the revised vision and policy framework convey. A chart of key topics discussed, including those plan elements they relate to, is provided in this section as Table I.01.

This plan update was developed around a goal, policy and program course intended to empower Cheney to achieve its desired future. It is based on the issues and priorities the community members brought to the process, establishing goals and policies the community will support as the City implements the plan. It offers a platform for reinforcing the positive aspects of the City while striving to overcome barriers to success, balancing the need to encourage growth and investment with the need to foster a quality living environment.

Each of the elements presents a summary of related existing conditions, the planning objectives the section strives to achieve, and a set of goals, policies and programs for the City to pursue. For purposes of this plan, these key concepts are defined as:

- **Goal** - Broad statements indicating a general aim or purpose to be achieved. A goal is a direction setter. It is an ideal future end, condition, or state related to the public health, safety, or general welfare toward which planning and implementation measures are directed. A goal is a general expression of community values and, therefore, is abstract in nature. Consequently, a goal is generally not quantifiable, time- dependent or suggestive of specific actions for its achievement.

- **Policy** - Guidelines establishing a definite course to guide present and future decisions. A policy is a specific statement that guides decision-making. It indicates a clear commitment of the local legislative body. A policy is based on a comprehensive plan's goals as well as the analysis of data. A policy is effectuated by implementation measures (such as zoning, land division, and environmental ordinances).
- **Program** - A set of specific actions envisioned or undertaken to implement plan policy. Programs may include the development of more detailed and localized plans, policy, formal agreements, regulations or strategies deemed necessary to achieve community objectives.

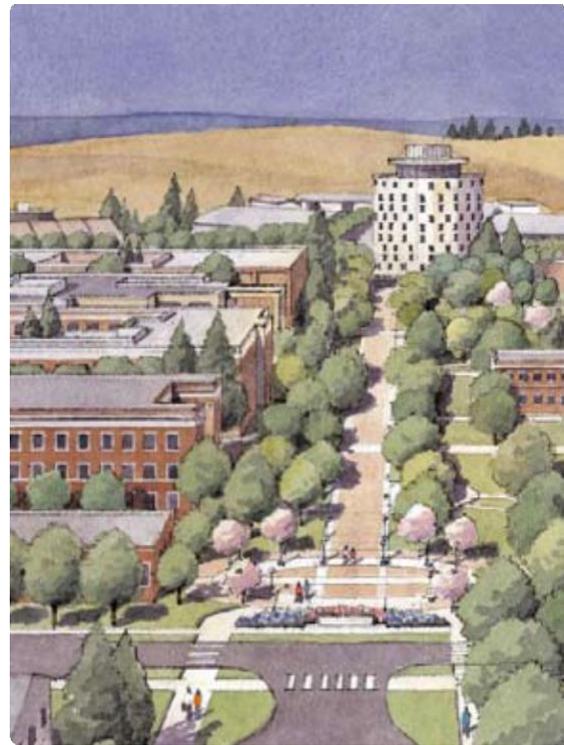


Figure I.03 - Much of Cheney's past - and its expected future - involves Eastern Washington University. Participants regularly stressed the need for greater cooperation between the City and EWU, especially regarding long-range planning. (Image source: 2005 EWU Master Plan Update.)

Using This Document

Towns and cities generally employ two types of instruments to guide and enact legislation – policy documents, such as comprehensive plans, and regulatory documents, such as zoning or development regulations. Each are intentionally distinct, but for obvious reasons, must be well- coordinated and complementary.

Citizens, often far more familiar with local regulations, may confuse the two. In using this document, it's important to understand that its intended role is, in brief:

- *An internal guide, providing City staff with set goals, policies and programs leading actions and budgeting activities*
- *A guide for elected and appointed leaders, providing direction on decision- making and in establishing regulations*
- *An outline agreement between residents and leadership, articulating and establishing expectations regarding key issues and city characteristics.*

It's also important to understand the limits of this or any other plan. Many assume plans are a type of “end-all,” holding legal sway over City activities or somehow extending automatically into land- use regulation. This is not the case. Instead, this document provides a first, comprehensive and coordinated step towards a

large variety of community goals. Further actions, just as essential as this one, include:

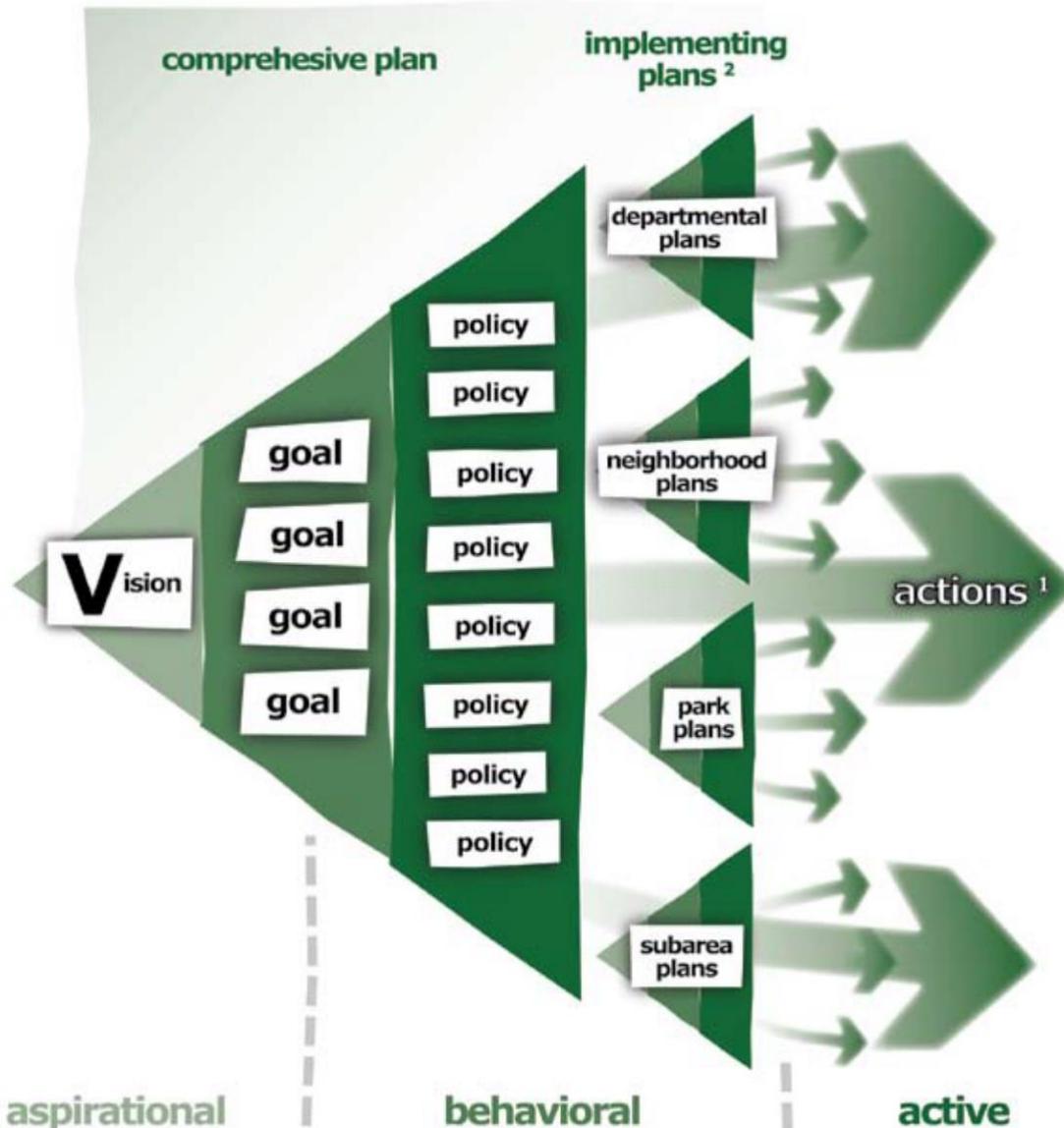
- **Further study** – *in some cases, the City will need to conduct relatively simple inventories or studies; in other cases, the creation of more topic-specific or sub-area plans will be necessary*
- **Consistency** – *the City's set of development and zoning regulations will need to be updated and/or revised to implement the plan. Other, department- specific plans such as those related to public works, recreation and parks, or utilities, may also require review*
- **Use and updates** – *City leaders and staff will need to internalize and use the plan, marking progress, considering revisions, and updating the plan regularly, on-pace with conditions*
- **Public involvement** – *expectations for this plan – as evidenced by the level of public input sought in crafting it – seem to mark the desire for a more participatory role for residents in the City's future. If so, residents will need to remain active in helping achieve goals and in monitoring the plan's progress over time.*

Table I.01 - Topic areas cited during planning process

| Issues | Vision | Land Use | Transportation Natural Assets & Sustainability | Technology Economic Development | Housing | Capital Facilities | Parks & Recreation | Culture & The Arts Essential Public Facilities |
|--|--------|----------|--|---------------------------------------|---------|--------------------|--------------------|--|
| Downtown vitality | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Collaboration with Spokane County | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Collaboration with EWU | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Wetland preservation | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | ● |
| Economic Development | ● | | ● | ● | | | ● | ● |
| Quality of life/ quality of place | ● | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Neighborhood reinvestment | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Fiscal accountability/planning | ● | ● | ● | | | ● | ● | ● |
| Historic & cultural preservation | ● | | ● | ● | | | ● | ● |
| Technological innovation/advancement | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Walkability | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | |
| Recreational opportunity | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● | ● |
| Resource conservation | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | ● |
| Corridor reinvestment | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | |
| Agricultural lands conservation | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| Permit review & regulation clarity | ● | | ● | ● | ● | ● | | |
| Plan implementation | ● | | ● | ● | | ● | | |
| Relationship with Turnbull Wildlife Refuge | ● | | ● | ● | | | ● | ● |
| Growth of arts and cultural activities | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| Greenbelt/trail network improvements | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| City's regional role | ● | | ● | ● | ● | | | ● |
| City communications | ● | | | ● | | | ● | ● |
| Education | ● | | | ● | ● | | | ● |
| Sustainability | ● | | ● | | ● | | | ● |
| Urban Growth Area (UGA) boundary | ● | ● | | | | | | |
| Land use compatibility | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| Property maintenance | ● | | ● | | ● | | | |
| Student issues | ● | | ● | | ● | | | |
| Parking | ● | | ● | | | ● | | |
| Public facilities | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● |
| Mixed-use opportunities | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| Affordable housing | ● | | | ● | ● | ● | | ● |
| Partnership with community groups | ● | | | ● | ● | | ● | ● |
| Demographic diversity | ● | | | | ● | | | ● |
| Community involvement | ● | | | ● | | | | ● |

Planning Schematic

From vision to action, typical plan structure



¹ Actions include programs, capital investments, regulations, etc.

² Implementing plans may include a wide variety of plan types

Figure I.04 - This image, developed from a slide presented at the first community workshop, shows the basic structure of this plan, including the relationship between broad-brush ideals (vision) leading to more specific action items including policies, implementing plans and program actions. (Image source: Studio Cascade, Inc.)



Figure I.05 - Scores of residents helped develop this plan update through meetings, questionnaires, photographs, and committee gatherings. This image shows residents taking part in a growth dispersal exercise. (Image source: Studio Cascade, Inc.)

Figure I.04 illustrates how this and most comprehensive plans are structured, flowing from broad-brush concepts expressed in the vision, to increasingly defined objectives presented as goals and policies, to implementation measures such as departmental plans, topical plans, and regulatory documents.

Caveat

Few, if any of the various goals, policies or programs in this or any plan should be considered isolated from the larger whole. Decisions which on the surface seem exclusively transportation- related, for example, may well have deep implications related to housing, commerce, land value, or even to social issues. Therefore, it's important to understand that although this plan attempts to order itself by chapter and subject for the sake of accessibility,

it does not imply that these orderings present a complete or even best representation, of the plan's comprehensive objectives. Some, such as City services staff, may wish to review individual chapters to assess project budgeting or compliance with plan objectives. Others may value individual chapters as a more immediate, accessible way of understanding topical objectives. But for those wishing to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the plan, it should be taken in its entirety; an excellent means of absorbing this plan's intent is provided with the full list of goals, policies and programs, included as Appendix B.