



Port of Whitman County

2024-2025 ADO Report Card

In April 2023, the Port of Whitman County was named by the Whitman County Commissioners as the county's Associate Development Organization (ADO) for the period of July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2025. ADOs are a key part of the economic development landscape in Washington State and aim to further their region or county's economic development goals, in partnership with Washington State's Department of Commerce (Commerce).

We are grateful to everyone who engaged with the Port of Whitman County (Port) in our role as the ADO during the 2024-2025 fiscal year and to the County Commissioners for this designation. We are honored to continue this crucial work on behalf of the communities and businesses in Whitman County.

The Port's ADO work encompasses six elements, covering small business support to infrastructure development to advocacy. The following pages of this report card describe the projects that were completed or continued this year and how they relate to these elements.

Karl Webber
District 1

Kristine Meyer
District 2

Tom Kammerzell
District 3

1. Small Business Development



Completed Projects

- Supported the Washington State University Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in serving 49 clients, including 18 pre-venture and 13 start-up businesses (\$35,000)
- Partnered with the City of Pullman to assist 14 startups and 95 businesses with retention and expansion activities
- Supported the SBDC's workshop on cybersecurity best practices for small businesses
- Supported the Colfax Chamber of Commerce's workshop on web design and social media management (28 attendees)
- Facilitated a digital marketing workshop for artisans and art-related businesses at the Dahmen Barn in Uniontown (20 attendees)



Juan Garcia of the SBDC presents at an Economic Development Informational Meeting



Ongoing Projects

- Partner with the City of Pullman, Pullman Marketing, and the Pullman Chamber of Commerce to host monthly Business Blend networking meetup for small businesses
- Promote business utilization of the Washington State University SBDC
- Share virtual and in-person workshops with area business professionals and chambers of commerce
- Support relevant training for businesses spanning a variety of topics
- Assist eligible businesses with obtaining certifications for minority, women, socially or economically disadvantaged, veteran, and/or small businesses
- Meet one-on-one with businesses as relevant



The Colfax Chamber of Commerce's Social Media Workshop



Business Blend networking event in Pullman



Social Media for Artisans at the Dahmen Barn in Uniontown

2. Economic Profiling



Completed Projects

- Hosted Dr. Patrick Jones of Eastern Washington University's Institute of Public Policy & Economic Analysis for a presentation on Whitman County economic trends at a quarterly Economic Development Informational Meeting

Dr. Jones presents on Whitman County economic trends at an Economic Development Informational Meeting



Ongoing Projects

- Maintain and promote the Whitman County Trends website
- Work with Eastern Washington University on the quarterly Whitman County Trends Blog newsletter
- Ensure updated economic data is available on the Port's website
- Share Whitman County economic data at Economic Development Informational Meetings



*Visit
Whitman
County
Trends*



*Follow the
Port on
Social
Media*

3. Existing Business Retention and Expansion



Completed Projects

- Completed Commerce's Evergreen Growth Manufacturing Grant in partnership with Alternative Energy Materials, resulting in 6 new jobs and increased production capabilities
- Expanded rail and water infrastructure at the Port of Central Ferry to support AGROW Solutions facility expansion
- Completed a Commerce-funded feasibility study on a childcare facility in Colfax as a strategy for workforce retention and recruitment



Ongoing Projects

- Support businesses expansion and new business creation that would employ local talent in Whitman County
- Profile relevant local businesses at Economic Development Informational Meetings
- Develop partnerships with regional workforce development organizations

*Rail extension
at Central
Ferry*



*Potential site
for Colfax
childcare
facility*



4. Business Recruitment, Marketing and Advertising



Completed Projects

- Created marketing materials for hydrogen-sector businesses for the Tekoa site
- Updated ADO marketing plan for 2024-2025 fiscal years
- Hired Port communications director
- Signed 4 leases at Port-owned sites
- Met with target-industry startup businesses at RE+ Charge Conference and WSU Symposium
- Presented to all town and city councils in Whitman County



Community members give feedback as part of the Oakesdale feasibility study

Presentation to Pullman City Council



Future home of the industrial park northwest of Tekoa



Ongoing Projects

- Execute a planning study for future business and economic development uses of Oakesdale Mill site
- Utilize Commerce and other business recruitment sources in obtaining appropriate business leads for Whitman County
- Continue industrial site planning for Port-owned sites, identifying key industries and potential businesses to recruit
- Explore opportunities in the value-added agriculture and bioengineering sectors, with an emphasis on technology transfer
- Identify and market to emerging and expanding businesses and industries
- Work with local municipalities on recruitment and site selection efforts
- Market Whitman County as a place to relocate or expand businesses
- Maintain an existing inventory of ready-to-go industrial and service-related buildings and land in Whitman County on the Port website through Choose Whitman property search tool

Visit the Port's property search tool



Learn more about Port property available for lease



Two t-hangar leases signed at the Port of Whitman Business Air Center outside of Colfax

5. Site and Infrastructure Development



Completed Projects

- Acquired the Oakesdale Mill from Innovia Foundation
- Purchased property in St. John for future Whitman Hospital and Medical Clinics site
- Assisted communities with relevant infrastructure, facility, and other grant applications through Commerce's ADO Grant Writer Program
- Received Commerce's Green Jobs Grant to fund technology transfer & commercialization scaling facility project design (\$2M)



The Oakesdale Mill, the last surviving flour mill in Whitman County

Future home of Whitman Hospital and Medical Clinics site in St. John



Ongoing Projects

- Identify existing underutilized, vacant, or brownfields properties to conduct community-wide brownfields assessments through an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) funded project (\$500,000)
- Expand fiber infrastructure to 109 unserved and underserved locations in Whitman County through a Commerce broadband grant (\$2.49M)
- Complete infrastructure for Tekoa site, including earthwork, utilities, and building pad construction (\$4.2M)
- Clean up St. John site for future reuse through an EPA grant (\$500,000)
- Improve infrastructure and develop additional hangar areas at the Port of Whitman Business Air Center through a Washington State Department of Transportation loan (\$1.2M)
- Advocate for public infrastructure funding in Whitman County
- Secure suitable sites and/or buildings for development
- Work to improve critical infrastructure required for businesses county-wide
- Collaborate with Whitman County on the Economic Development (.09) Funds process



Rendering of the future Technology Transfer and Commercialization Scaling Facility in Pullman

6. Economic Development Advocacy



Completed Projects

- Hosted a regional workshop on federal grant writing and administration in partnership with the Washington State Department of Commerce (60 attendees)
- Partnered with regional ports for the annual M-84 Marine Highway Corridor workshop
- Supported Clearwater Economic Development Association's annual Dream It Do It regional youth workforce conference with approximately 340 attendees, including 90 from eastern Washington (\$5,000)
- Facilitated a social media training workshop for municipalities and government entities



Federal grant writing workshop at The Center in Colfax

Economic Development Meeting at The Center in Colfax



Ongoing Projects

- Meet with regional Associate Development Organizations (ADOs) to support economic development projects in eastern Washington
- Develop and communicate positions on economic development issues important to the economic health of the region
- Support Southeast Washington Economic Development Association in regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy plan
- Meet regularly with Whitman County economic development entities to share information, coordinate planning to maximize each entity's efforts, and identify gaps and areas for improvement
- Administer Economic Development & Tourism Agreements to support economic development and promote tourism activity within Port district
- Participate in regional tourism efforts, including the Palouse Scenic Byway
- Work with municipalities, chambers of commerce, and downtown associations on projects of common interest



Port Commissioners at the spring Inland Northwest Partners Meeting in Colfax



Government social media workshop at The Center in Colfax