



Whitman County Economic Development Informational Meeting (EDIM)

July 30, 2025
12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.
The Center
110 S. Main St.
Colfax, WA

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www.portwhitman.com

Update on Congress & Federal Policy

- Representative Michael Baumgartner (WA-05)



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Whitman
County

2025 ADO Report Card

Small Business Development



Existing Business Retention



Oakesdale Mill Project



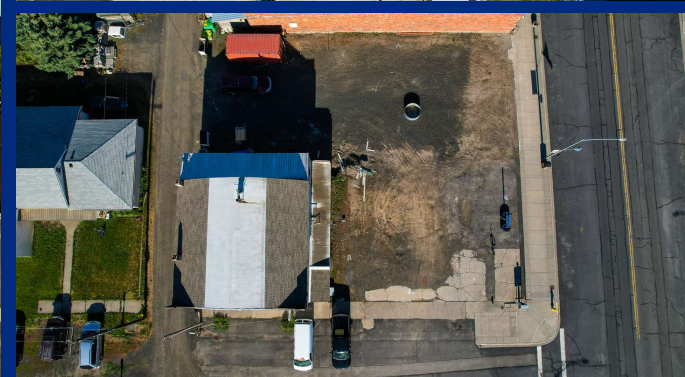
AGROW Solutions Expansion



Colfax Childcare



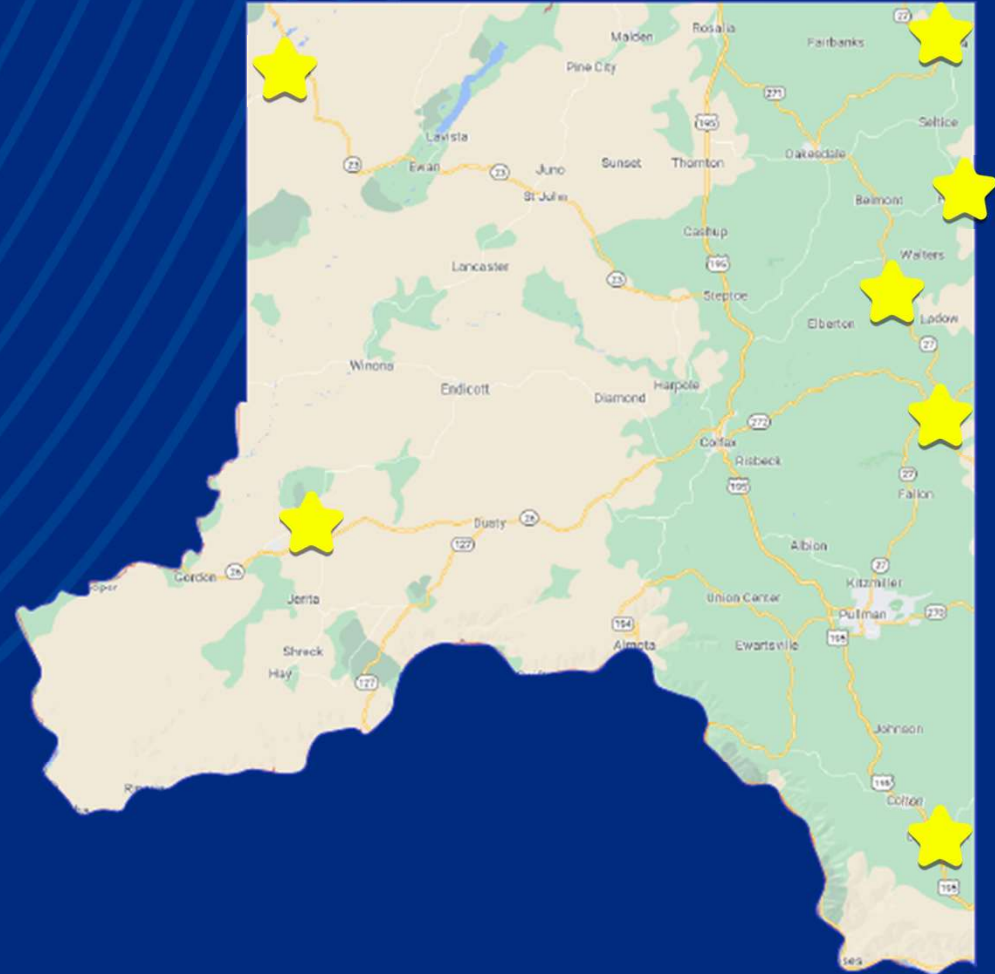
St. John



Economic Development



ADO Grant Writer Program



Community Outreach



Economic Profiling

Select Economic Indicators:

- Labor Market
- Nonfarm Employment Estimates
- 2024 Economic Diversity
- Retail Sales Tax Distributions

Want additional data?

Visit www.whitmancountytrends.org.



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Labor Market

Whitman County remains within normal historical ranges

- Unemployment has increased to 3.8%
- Below the county average of 4.3%

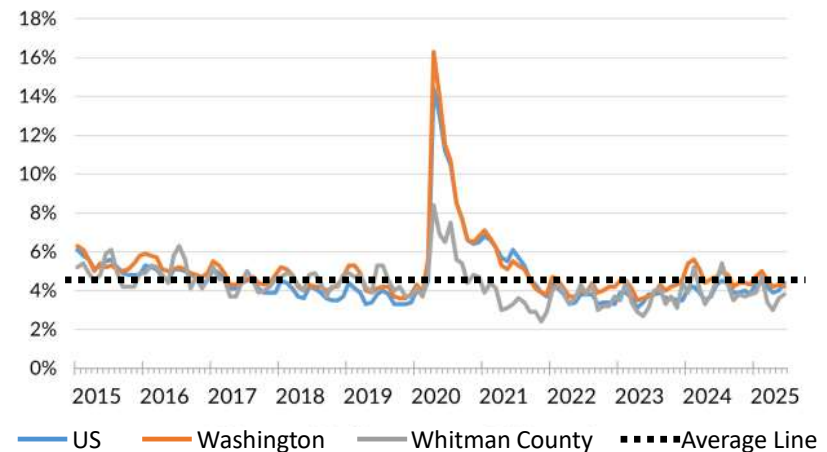
Rank	State	County	Civilian labor force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment rate
1	WA	San Juan	7,947	8,190	221	2.60
2	WA	Asotin	9,545	9,367	262	2.70
3	WA	Benton	9,545	9,367	262	2.70
4	WA	Walla Walla	27,599	28,854	919	3.10
5	WA	Chelan	36,564	39,263	1,326	3.30
6	WA	Columbia	1,913	1,782	60	3.30
7	WA	Adams	8,418	9,306	328	3.40
8	WA	Kitsap	118,691	115,896	4,113	3.40
9	WA	Spokane	253,597	246,649	8,639	3.40
10	WA	Kittitas	21,422	21,186	762	3.50
11	WA	Klickitat	9,150	9,447	346	3.50
12	WA	Thurston	140,705	136,135	4,983	3.50
13	WA	Whatcom	109,360	107,526	3,949	3.50
14	WA	Garfield	908	785	29	3.60
15	WA	Island	34,551	33,310	1,261	3.60
16	WA	Skamania	5,876	5,620	210	3.60
17	WA	Clallam	30,204	28,867	1,113	3.70
18	WA	Clark	250,476	241,590	9,268	3.70
19	WA	Douglas	21,145	20,112	763	3.70
20	WA	Okanogan	18,754	18,142	689	3.70
21	WA	Skagit	57,734	56,721	2,212	3.80
22	WA	Whitman	20,939	18,254	714	3.80
23	WA	Franklin	44,913	45,351	1,864	3.90

1. List of Washington counties ranked from lowest to highest unemployment rate—table in packet.

Data Source(s):

1. [Monthly employment report | Employment Security Department](#)
2. [Whitman County profile | Employment Security Department](#)

Unemployment rate, not seasonally adjusted



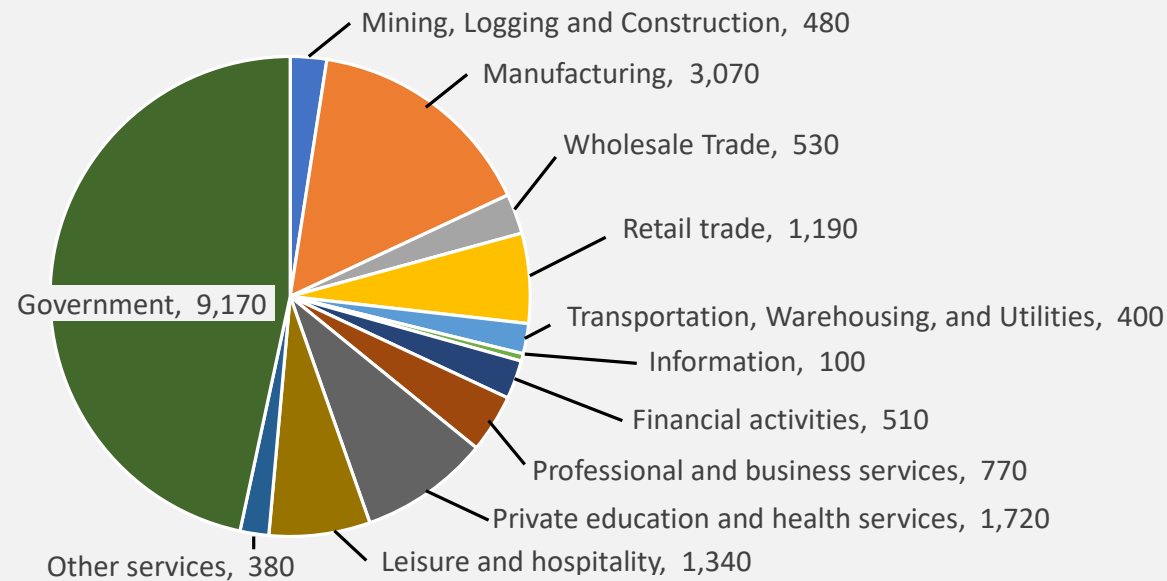
2. Unemployment rate comparison between the US, Washington, and Whitman County. Average line indicates the average unemployment rate for Whitman County along the same timeline.

Nonfarm Employment Estimates

Whitman has decreasing employment across most sectors, with the Government experiencing a rapid loss of jobs

- Government
 - **April to June: -2,720 jobs**
 - June to June: -520 jobs
- Services (less Government)
 - April to June: -100 jobs
 - June to June: -230 jobs
- Goods
 - April to June: +40 jobs
 - June to June: +160 jobs

Employment Estimates in Whitman County for June 2025



3. Nonfarm, non-seasonally adjusted estimates for the number of jobs per NAICS codes in June 2025.

2024 Economic Diversity

Whitman County's economy is vulnerable to local, state, and federal policy changes and changes within individual companies.



Industry (2-digit NAICS)	Average Firms	Employment	Average Annual Wage	
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting	207	454	\$41,354	
Mining	*	*	*	2-3 firms employ more than 80% of the industry's workforce
Utilities	*	*	*	2-3 firms employ more than 80% of the industry's workforce
Construction	96	494	\$63,345	
Manufacturing	*	*	*	2-3 firms employ more than 80% of the industry's workforce
Wholesale trade	48	537	\$73,473	
Retail trade	81	1,300	\$36,140	
Transportation and warehousing	24	315	\$52,869	
Information	27	98	\$88,001	
Finance and insurance	25	163	\$84,967	
Real estate and rental and leasing	46	292	\$40,643	
Professional, scientific, and technical services	116	633	\$92,063	
Management of companies and enterprises	*	*	*	2-3 firms employ more than 80% of the industry's workforce
Administrative and waste services	35	137	\$41,223	
Educational services	*	*	*	2-3 firms employ more than 80% of the industry's workforce
Healthcare and social assistance	97	1,638	\$51,807	
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	15	115	\$28,128	
Accommodation and food services	111	1,533	\$22,896	
Other services, except public administration	82	306	\$36,725	
GOVERNMENT	92	8,064	\$71,965	
NOT ELSEWHERE CLASSIFIED	55	3,077	\$87,204	

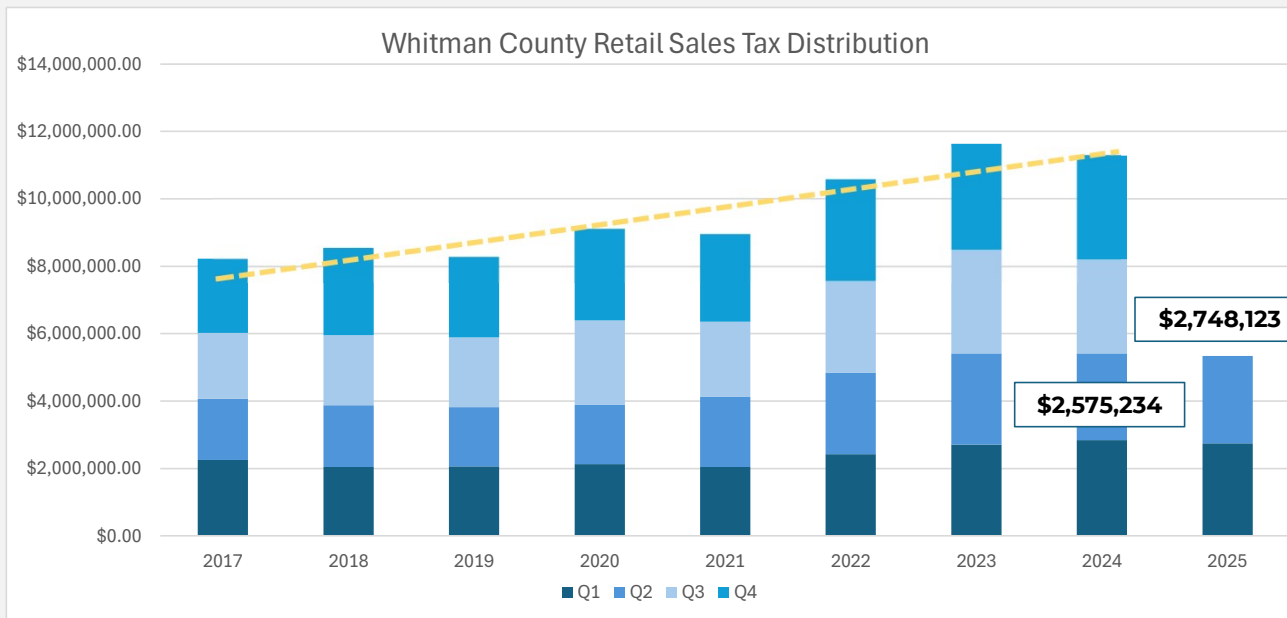
4. Average firms, employment, and wages for Whitman County in 2024. Raw data contains redacted information to keep employer information confidential. *Guidelines for redaction are done on a case-by-case basis.

Data Source(s)

4. [Covered Employment \(QCEW\)](#) | [Employment Security Department](#)

Retail Sales Tax Distributions

Whitman County continues to have stable retail sales tax revenue within normal historical growth patterns.



Compound Period Growth Rate

- 2017 – 2024 4.62%
- Q1 of 2017-2025 2.53%
- Q2 of 2017-2025 4.55%
- Q3 of 2017-2024 4.55%
- Q4 of 2017-2024 4.26%

5. Whitman County Retail Sales Tax Distribution with comparative Q2 data from 2024 and 2025.

Data Source(s)

5. [Covered Employment \(QCEW\)](#) | [Employment Security Department](#)

Technology Transfer and Commercialization Scaling Facility Update



Pedestrian & Bicycle Project Grants

- Rebecca Couch, Palouse Regional Transportation Planning Organization Director

<https://palousertpo.org/>





Economic Development Informational Meeting

Port of Whitman County 7.30.2025



Clean Energy Property Tax Impacts



Problem

Fluctuating values result in tax shifts from clean energy projects to other taxpayers.



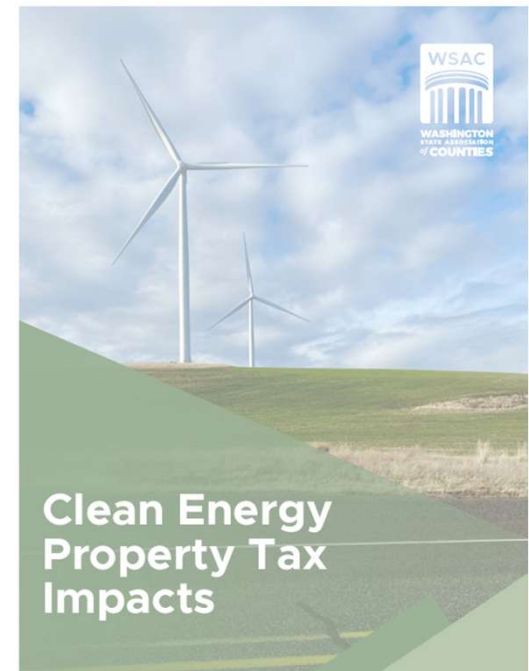
Causes

Washington's property tax system, including assessment methods.



Options

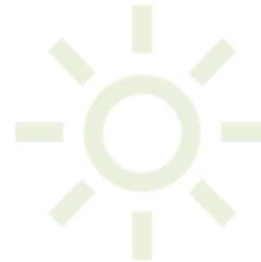
Our state isn't the only one to confront this issue.



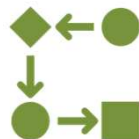
Key Finding: Increased Clean Energy Development



State Legislative Policy Creating
Demand



State Legislative Policy Facilitating
Development

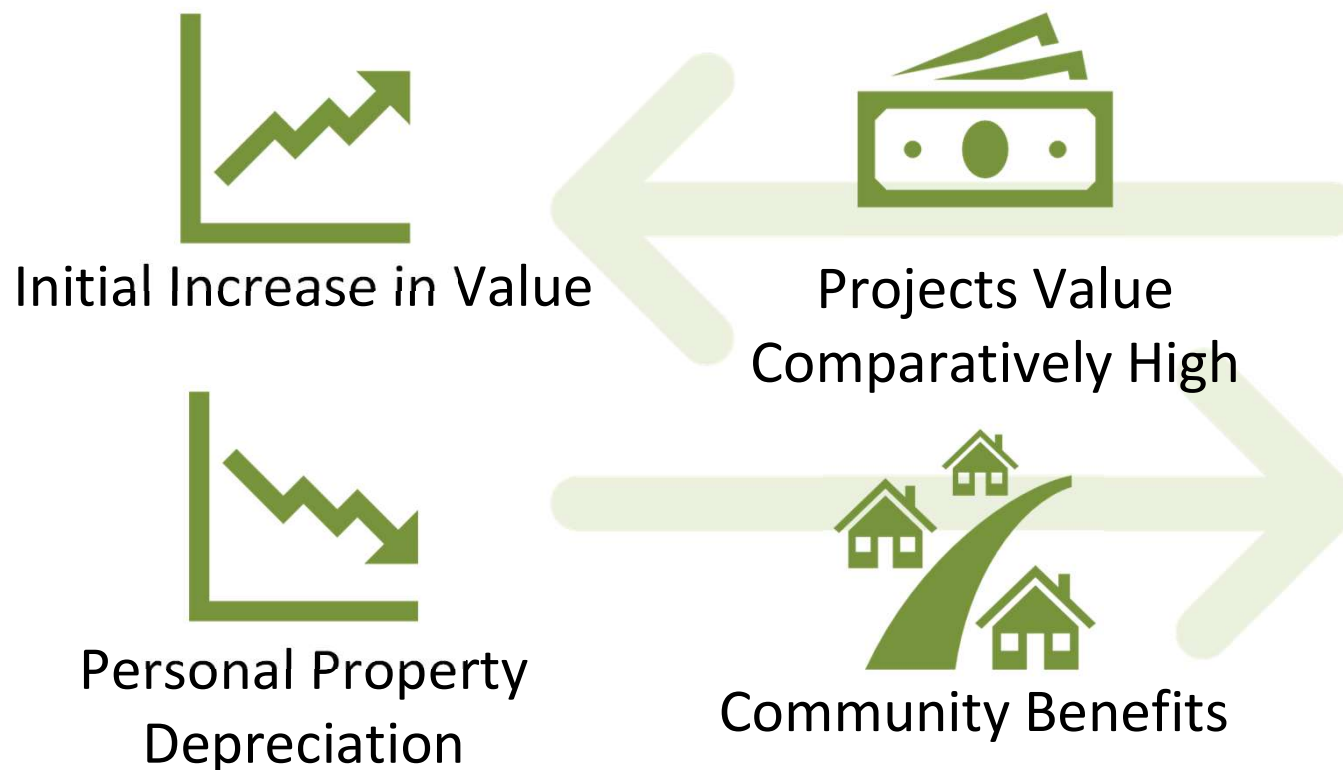


Local Government Policies

Key Finding: Inconsistent Property Tax Assessments

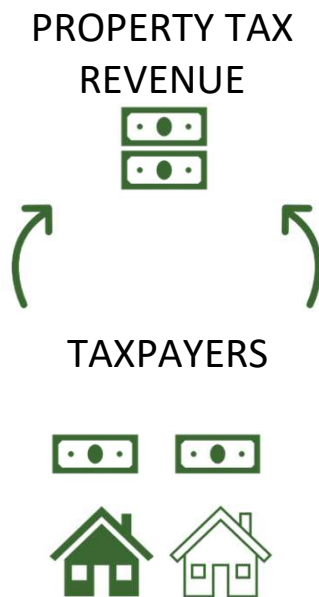


Key Finding: Tax Burden Shifts

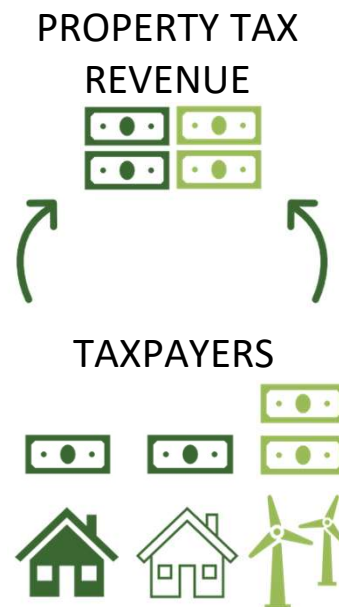


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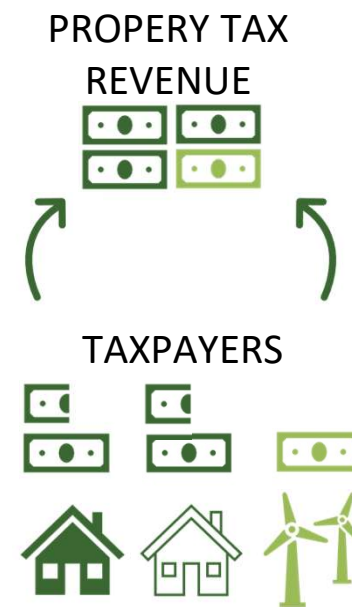
PRE-PROJECT



YEAR 1



YEAR 10



Key Finding: Tax Burden Shifts

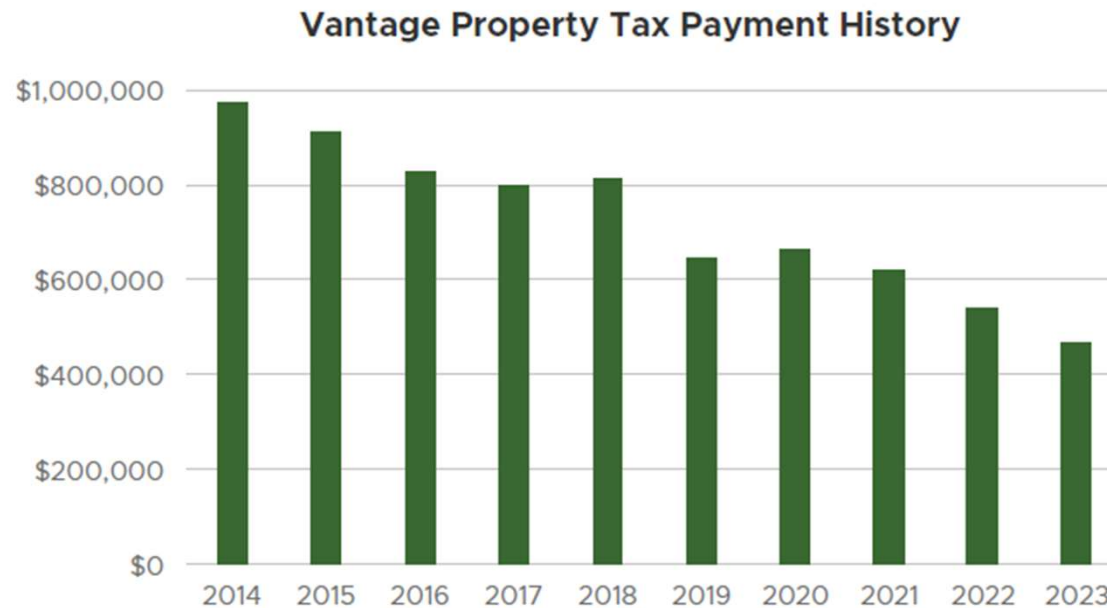


Table 1 – Vantage Wind Farm Property Tax Payments (Kittitas County)

Key Finding: Tax Burden Shifts



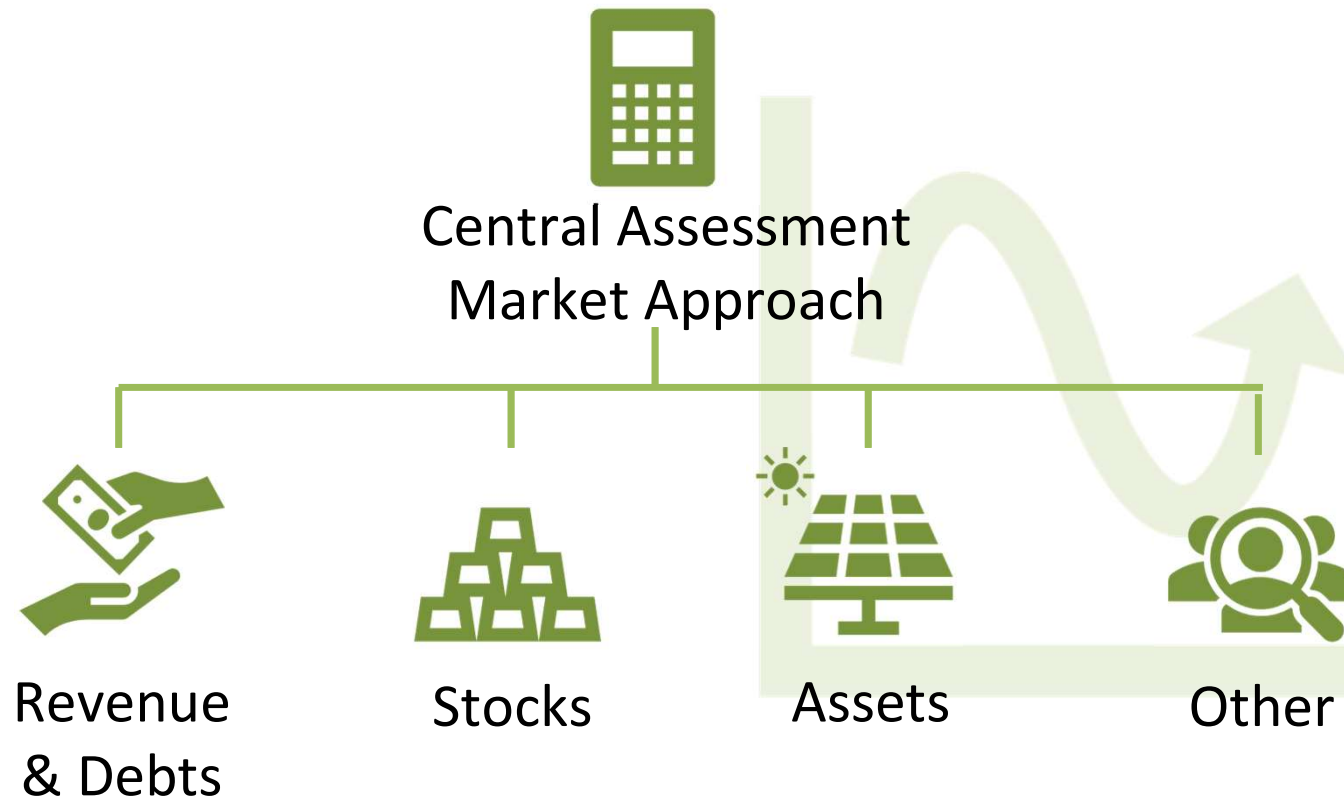
Tax Appeals

Kittitas County

\$350,000 Reduced Property Tax Payment

9.9% Levy Rate Increase

Key Finding: Fluctuating Assessed Values



Key Finding: Fluctuating Assessed Values

Marengo 1 & 2 Annual Tax Payments to Columbia County

YEAR	PROPERTY TAX PAYMENT	ANNUAL CHANGE
2018	\$1,893,256.46	N/A
2019	\$1,867,416.79	- \$25,839.67
2020	\$1,754,311.63	- \$113,105.16
2021	\$2,383,383.47*	+ \$629,071.84
2022	\$1,351,603.28 **	- \$1,031,780.19
2023	\$1,234,851.47	- \$116,751.81
2024	\$1,315,567.17	+\$80,715.70

*Repowering

**COVID Restrictions



Key Finding: Escalating Problem



Home
Affordability



Taxpayer
Confidence



Local
Services



100% Clean
Energy by 2045



Policy Driving
Greater Demand

Key Finding: Alternative Models

ALTERNATIVES	EXAMPLES
Community Benefit Agreements	Oregon & New York
Production Tax	Minnesota & Washington State HB 1756 (2023)
Nameplate Capacity Tax	Nebraska & South Dakota
Special Valuation	Iowa
Payment In Lieu of Taxes	Washington State & New York
Build-Ready Siting	New York

Potential Solution: HB 1970 (2025)





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Policy Coordinator

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Legislative Coalition

Working together to advocate for the collective interests of Whitman County



IACC Technical Assistance Requests

- Infrastructure Assistance Coordinating Council (IACC) helps bring infrastructure projects to reality
- Technical Assistance Meetings
 - Offered in-person at IACC conference (applications open in July)
- IACC Conference
October 7-9, 2025
Wenatchee Convention Center



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Infrastructure Technical Assistance Request

Use this form to request technical assistance throughout the year. Please share as much information about your infrastructure challenge as possible. Complete information will allow us to bring together the right regulatory, technical, and funding assistance to address your unique challenge.

Jurisdiction/Entity *

County *

Select or enter value

Contact Person *

Phone Number *

Email Address *

Project or System Type *

Select or enter value

Project / Problem

What project or problem is your community working on?

Small Business Development Center (SBDC) Update

- Juan Garcia, Business Advisor, juan.garcia@wsbdc.org

<https://wsbdc.org/small-business-training/>



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Closing

Follow us on
social media:



Email: ado@portwhitman.com
Next EDIM: September 24, 2025



www.portwhitman.com