



90% Happens Locally

Presented by the League of Women Voters of Pullman
Serving all of Whitman County

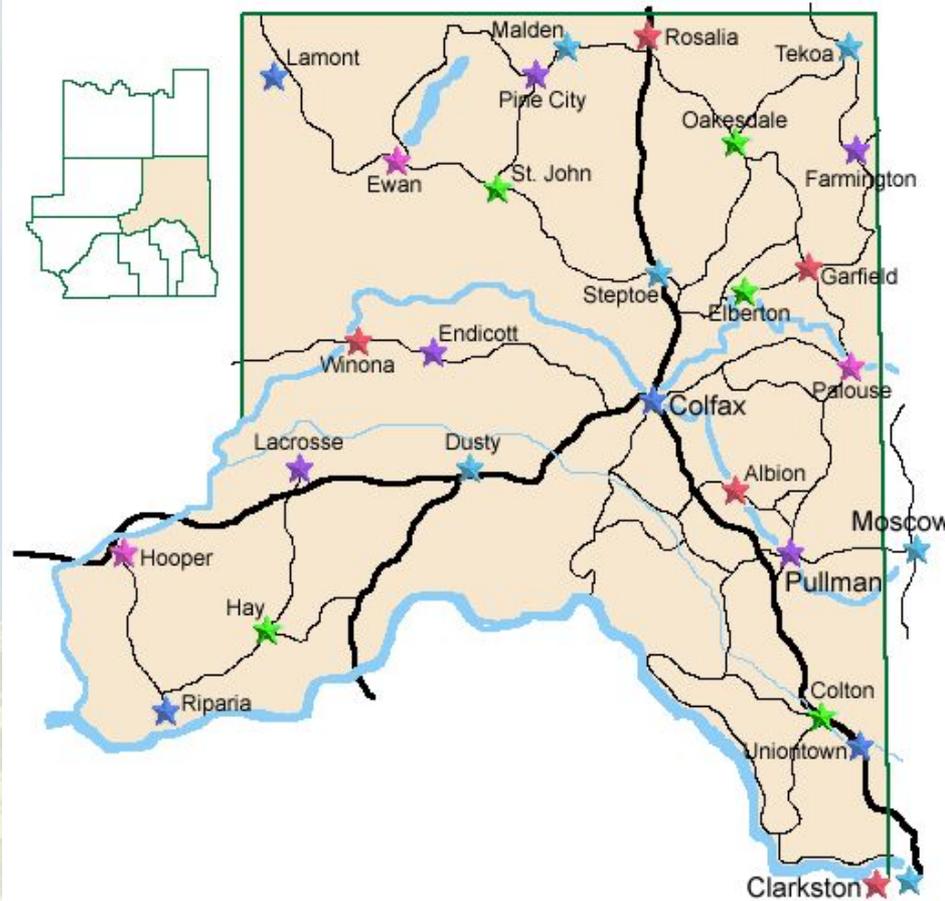


Introduction

- **Local government decides many things that are important to you**
- **Local governments legislate more than you might think**
- **Your vote also counts more when you're one out of a few!**
- **In America, you're one out of 300 million, but in your city you might be as much as 1 out of 76!**

Whitman County

- **Whitman County has 4 cities, 13 towns, 10 “unincorporated towns,” and 1 ghost town**
- **The difference between a city and a town is how many people it has when it’s incorporated - cities have over 1,500 people**
- **Incorporation is what makes a city “official”**





Unincorporated Towns

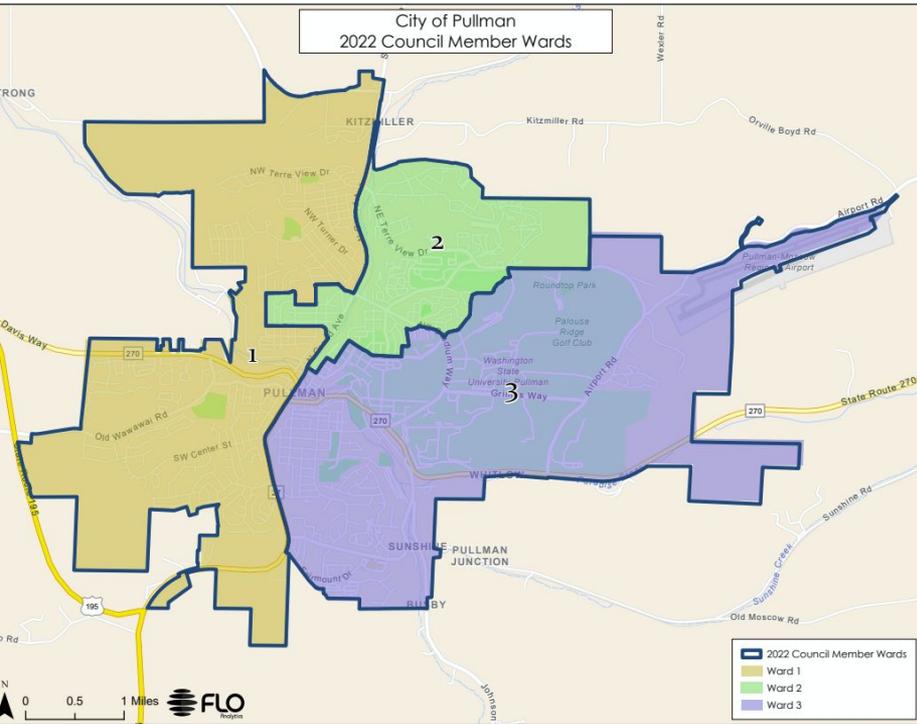
- Incorporated towns have their own government
- Meanwhile, unincorporated towns rely on the county for many services, like water and police
- They still get to vote in a government, but it's the same county government we all vote for

City/Town Councils

- Cities are run with “mayor-councils”
- 5-7 councilors get to vote on what ideas will become law, decide on budgets, and decide city priorities
- Mayors are responsible for making those decisions into policy



Wards



- Who gets to vote on these councilors varies from place to place
- In smaller cities, everyone gets to vote for every councilor
- In bigger cities, there are “wards,” which means everyone only votes on their ward’s candidate

County Government

- Counties are run similar to cities, but their government is called a “commission”
- Whitman County has 3 county commissioners
- They set laws and budgets for the whole county, and also provide services for unincorporated towns



Board of Whitman County Commissioners



Art Swannack
District 1 Commissioner



Tom Handy
District 1 Commissioner



Chad Whetzel
District 1 Commissioner



County Services

- The county is responsible for 4 important things
- Law enforcement, cops and jails
- Public health, vaccines and health clinics
- Infrastructure, roads and bridges
- Welfare, housing assistance and child welfare



County Offices

- There are 9 other elected county offices
- Assessor, Treasurer, Auditor, Clerk, Sheriff, Coroner, Prosecuting Attorney, and Superior & District Court Judges





Special Districts

- Some elections aren't related to cities or counties
- These are called "special elections"
- You vote for all the services that service your area
- These include things like school boards, fire departments, and the port district

State Oversight

- The state passes down laws to the counties, and it's the county's job to implement them
- County commissions get to decide how they enforce these laws, and how they'll be funded
- Counties can make things illegal that the state makes legal, but not the other way





Wrap-Up

- **Local government is a huge part of your daily life, and a system you have a huge role in!**
- **The job of city and county government is to hear YOUR voice, even if you can't vote yet!**
- **Imagine what kind of change you want to make in your local government, and then go and do it!**

Sources

INFORMATION:

<https://mrsc.org>

Information about local government structures, duties, and catalogs of Washington towns, cities, and unincorporated communities.

<https://www.pullman-wa.gov/>

Pullman's website, including information about city council and city laws.

<https://www.whitmancounty.gov/>

Whitman County's website, including information about the county commission and county laws.

Image Credits

SLIDE 1 : Carolyn Joswig-Jones

SLIDE 2: Carolyn Joswig-Jones

SLIDE 3: <https://www.whitmancounty.gov/360/County-Map>

SLIDE 4: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dusty,_Washington

SLIDE 5:

https://www.pullman-wa.gov/government/city_council/index.php

SLIDE 6:

https://www.pullman-wa.gov/government/city_council/2022_ward_redistricting.php

SLIDE 7: Carolyn Joswig-Jones

SLIDE 8:

<https://www.whmc.org/locations/whitman-medical-clinic-colfax/>

SLIDE 9:

<https://dailyevergreen.com/116799/news/whitman-county-courthouse-renovation-begins-monday/>

SLIDE 10: <https://www.facebook.com/portofwhitmancounty/>

SLIDE 11:

<https://capitol.wa.gov/discover/buildings/legislative-building>



5th Annual

Visual Arts Competition



Between state, county, and city governments, most of the decisions that affect your daily lives happen close to home. This year's competition highlights the power of our voices, our votes, and our actions to create change in our own communities.



A Civics Education Program



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