



## Community Conversations

The future of our community is in the hands of its residents. Community Council, in collaboration with United Way of Walla Walla County, Sherwood Trust, Blue Mountain Community Foundation, and Pomegranate Center, is inviting residents to a series of workshops to learn together, identify shared values and priorities, and develop a vision of our region's future. Information generated through this process will inform efforts to improve the quality of life in Community Council's region, which includes Columbia and Walla Walla counties and the Milton-Freewater area.

### Goals:

- Identify Community Treasures that represent shared values and regional assets;
- Create a vision of the future and develop regional priorities;
- Initiate activities to support the vision and promote the priorities; and
- Enhance civic engagement, participation, and leadership capacity.

### Results:

- A vision of the future and set of priorities to support the ongoing efforts of local governing agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations to build a better future for everyone in the region;
- A set of indicators that will measure the quality of life in our region and assess progress towards regional priorities;
- The foundation for an annual Community Conversation to review regional priorities and evaluate progress towards goals; and
- A more informed and engaged public.

The first two sets of Community Conversations will take place over the spring and summer of 2016, and a regional Community Conversation will be held in the fall of 2016. In order to engage as many community members as possible, the first and second sets of workshops will be hosted in three different locations. The workshops will begin at 5 pm with refreshments, and the conversation will run from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Childcare and Spanish translation will be provided. These workshops are open to the entire population of the region, and everyone is welcome to attend any or all of them.

- Workshop 1. Community members will come together to engage in a general conversation about what they want their community to look like. Community values and regional assets will be identified, and a vision of the future will begin to emerge.
  - May 23: Walla Walla: County Fairgrounds Community Building, 363 Orchard St.
  - May 24: Milton-Freewater: Community Building, 109 NE 5<sup>th</sup> St.
  - May 25: Dayton: Elementary School, 302 E Park St.



- Workshop 2. Findings generated at the first workshop will be reviewed and refined into more narrowly-defined topic areas and community priorities will emerge.
  - June 20: Walla Walla: County Fairgrounds Community Building, 363 Orchard St.
  - June 21: Milton-Freewater: Community Building, 109 NE 5<sup>th</sup> St.
  - June 22: Dayton: Elementary School, 302 E Park St.

Additional smaller workshops may be convened in order to ensure broad community participation.

A third workshop, designed to bring everyone in the region together in one location, will be held in the fall. At that workshop, the findings will be approved by community members, and the vision and priorities will be organized into actionable work.

The regional vision and action plan will provide a foundation from which to develop a set of indicators that can be used to measure and track progress towards the community's priorities. The indicators will be made available to the public so that governing agencies, businesses, and non-profit organizations throughout the region can use them in their efforts.

Community Conversations will be the foundation for Community Council's annual conversation around this community-developed vision and action plan; the indicators will be maintained as a tool for tracking progress towards the community's priorities in the years to come.

The Pomegranate Center, which has a strong record of community engagement around our region and beyond, will provide a framework for discussion and will moderate all of the Community Conversations.

Financial support for the Community Conversations is provided, in part, through a generous matching grant from the Sherwood Trust; additional funds will be raised to support this important regional effort.

For further information and to sign up for any or all of the events, please email [director@wwcommunitycouncil.org](mailto:director@wwcommunitycouncil.org) or call 509-540-6720.