

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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“The Good, the Bad and the Ugly” is a term covering public perceptions about economic development and the growth associated with it. It is important to understand the necessity of aggressive, positive and well-planned efforts. The cost of simply maintaining a community’s infrastructure and service delivery escalates regardless of increased population or business growth. The cost is far more dependent on increased costs of technological and government legislative demands, cost of raw goods, equipment and labor; as well as the citizen’s demands for better, more improved services.

Economic Development provides concentrated efforts to keep business healthy and growing with the community to: a.) provide jobs for the residents; and b.) provide a tax revenue base to offset the individual tax burden for infrastructure demands. That business base must be well-balanced to insure against demographic and social changes in future years.

We are seeing very aggressive growth patterns in Kittitas County. And, we are seeing the population and leadership rise to the occasion.

Major regional impact projects like Burlington Northern, Trendwest, several area recreational facilities, Olympic Pipeline, the John Wayne Trail, decreases in agricultural activities, the Washington State Horse Park Authority, and new legislation to protect wildlife and resources are happening simultaneously.

Along with those regional impact projects, we have several community impact projects; the Cities of Cle Elum and Kittitas have held town meetings and intensive studies, hired consultants to assess and plan for community revitalization. They will identify priorities and fund needed improvements that include: all utilities and sewer treatment facilities; street improvements that include first-ever paving, access and traffic control; downtown storefronts; parks, new or remodeled school facilities, and the list goes on. Other major projects underway such as the Airport Industrial Park, renovations of the Fairgrounds, Fred Meyer, the Safeway expansion,