

RESEARCH CONCEPTS

INTRODUCTION

The dawn of a **new energy era**, influenced by climate change, peak oil, water scarcity, and an era of fragile social systems, of which obesity and an aging population are of primary importance, is upon us. These global pressures call for a restructuring of government policy, business practices, and human interaction in ways that **link communities and resources** throughout the Palouse bioregion.

Mass transit systems, including passenger rail, will need to connect urban and rural communities for mutual benefit. Regions must become **energy independent** while conserving resources, including water. Communities will need to bolster their **local economies** if they want to adopt development patterns that improve public health.

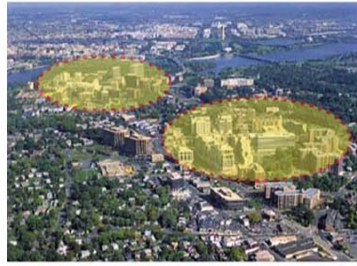
People will need to rediscover a **sense of place**, both in the context of locale and culture, that encourages cooperation and self-affirmation. Our conclusion is that existing and future communities must be designed around **mass transit systems and interdependent bioregional resource networks**.

PROJECT GOALS

1. Design for a shift in businesses and increase the opportunities for employment
2. Increase access to a range of better foods via regional and local agricultural cooperatives
3. Bring outside dollars into the community to bolster the economy
4. Protect and restore environmentally sensitive areas
5. Promote transit options and community interconnectivity
6. Improve and diversify living conditions for all demographics
7. Retain and enhance aspects of the urban and rural character
8. Develop a culture of environmental and social responsibility
9. Implement sustainable growth management strategies

PRIMARY RESEARCH SUBJECTS

Transit Oriented Development (TOD)

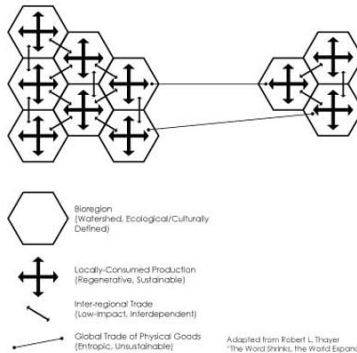


According to the American Public Transport Association, TOD is compact, mixed use development near new or existing public transportation that serves housing, transportation and neighborhood goals. Its pedestrian-oriented design encourages residents and workers to drive their cars less and ride mass transit more. The basic elements of TOD are:

- Moderate to higher density development
- Easy walking distances
- A mix of land uses
- Pedestrian-scale
- Increased transit ridership

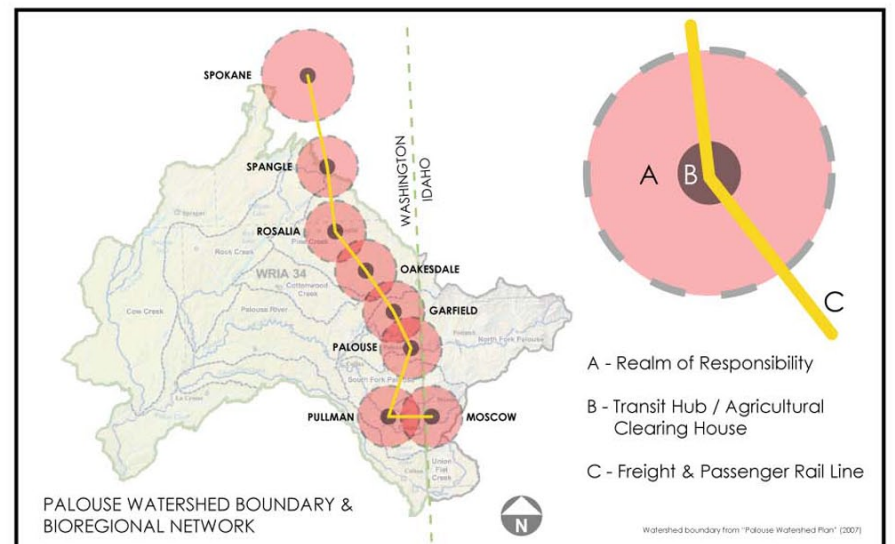


Bioregionalism



A bioregion, as defined by Peter Berg of the Planet Drum Foundation, is a "geographical province of marked ecological and often cultural unity often delimited by watersheds (water divides) of major streams." Its cultural aspect, or local "terrain of consciousness," is formed by the environmental limitations of place and informs ideas about how someone should live in that place. The benefits of such an approach to planning are crucial to living successfully as a small town in the face of mounting resource constraints. Its critical components involve:

- Self reliance
- Appropriate technology
- Local control over energy, economy, equity
- Responsible stewardship of the land,
- A strong sense of place



A Master Plan Set in the Palouse Bioregion

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