

# “State of the County”

Walla Walla County recognizes April 2018 as National  
County Government Month



# Elected Offices:

County Commissioners Jim Duncan, Todd Kimball, and Jim Johnson make up the Board of County Commissioners. These elected officials are empowered to set county policy, adopt and implement laws and, except for the responsibilities of the other separately elected officials, carry out the day-to-day operations of the county. The commissioners also fix and adopt the county's annual budget, impose the taxes and set the fees to fund that budget. In addition, they make decisions on a wide variety of other subjects affecting the general health, safety, and welfare of county residents.

County Assessor Debra Antes' office maintains county parcel maps, assesses agricultural, commercial and residential property and sets levy rates.

# Elected Offices:

County Auditor Karen Martin's office provides a range of services, including elections and voter registration, vehicle and vessel titling and licensing, issues marriage licenses, records documents and is responsible for payment of all county-incurred expenditures.

County Treasurer Gordon Heimbigner's office is the bank for the county, school districts, fire districts, irrigation and water districts and other local governments. In addition, the treasurer is charged with the collection of various taxes that benefit a wide range of governmental units.

# Elected Offices:

County Sheriff John Turner's office is the conservator of the peace and deputies shall arrest and commit to jail all persons who break the peace and all persons guilty of public offenses. They defend the county against those who, by riot or otherwise, endanger the public safety and execute the process and orders of the courts.

County Coroner Richard Greenwood's office investigates unattended, accidental, suicide, homicide or suspicious deaths, and authorizes autopsy, toxicology and other testing as necessary, as well as tracks, identifies and notifies next-of-kin.

County Prosecuting Attorney Jim Nagle's office represents the State of Washington in all criminal cases, represents Walla Walla County in all civil cases, and is the legal advisor to all county offices and departments. Each year the County Prosecutor's Office processes 350-400 adult felony cases, 100-200 juvenile criminal cases, and 800-1,000 gross misdemeanor and misdemeanor cases.

# Elected Offices:

County Clerk Kathy Martin's office is responsible for maintaining Superior Court records and case filings, tracking exhibits and processing adult and juvenile legal financial obligations for the Court as well as assisting with passport applications.

District Court Judges Kristian Hedine and John Knowlton cover the City of Walla Walla, City of College Place and the County of Walla Walla. They have jurisdiction over misdemeanor and gross misdemeanor criminal cases and civil cases, including injury to individuals or personal property and contract disputes.

Superior Court Judges John Lohrmann and Scott Wolfram may consider all civil and criminal matters occurring within the county. They act as a court of appeal for District Court cases. Juvenile court is a division of superior court. They preside over adult, juvenile, and family drug courts which are specially designed to achieve a reduction in recidivism and substance use through various forms of treatment and oversight.

# Departments:

Public Works Department is responsible for the planning, engineering, design, construction, operation and maintenance of approximately 1000 miles of county roadway, 200 bridges and over 6 miles of flood control channel. They also coordinate design and construction of new development transportation infrastructure, provide county-wide GIS (Geographic Information Systems) support, oversee the County storm water management program and manage the County's vehicle and equipment fleet.

Community Development Department in 2017 approved 1,110 Building Permits, 44 of which were for construction of new single-family homes. Total valuation of all projects approved via the permits was over \$30 million. On the land use planning side, approvals were granted to 118 land use applications, including 16 subdivisions, 15 critical area permits, 14 boundary line adjustments, and 28 SEPA reviews.

# Departments:

Community Health Department provides environmental health, personal health, public health administration, WIC, mental health, substance use and homeless services within all of Walla Walla County including the cities. They are the regional lead for marijuana prevention efforts.

Emergency Management Department assists with emergency preparedness planning and provides coordination in the case of natural or man-made disasters creating emergency and possibly life-threatening situations. They issue alerts to citizens of imminent threats to safety in their area.

Emergency Medical Services Department works with funds from the EMS levy and in conjunction with the Medical Program Director, evaluates the quality of Emergency Medical Services in Walla Walla County. They ensure that approximately 170 EMS providers meet their annual training requirements to maintain their certifications.

# Departments:

Corrections Department includes both the Juvenile Justice Center and the County Jail and is unique in the State of Washington in that regard. The Juvenile Justice Center is responsible for supervising and providing therapeutic programs for at risk adolescents in Walla Walla and Columbia Counties.

Human Resources/Risk Management Department recruits qualified applicants for open county positions and administers the personnel policy and employee benefit programs. They are also responsible for risk management and safety oversight.

Technology Services Department Technology Services is a full-service support group lending information technology (IT) support and backup to Walla Walla County technology users.

# Departments:

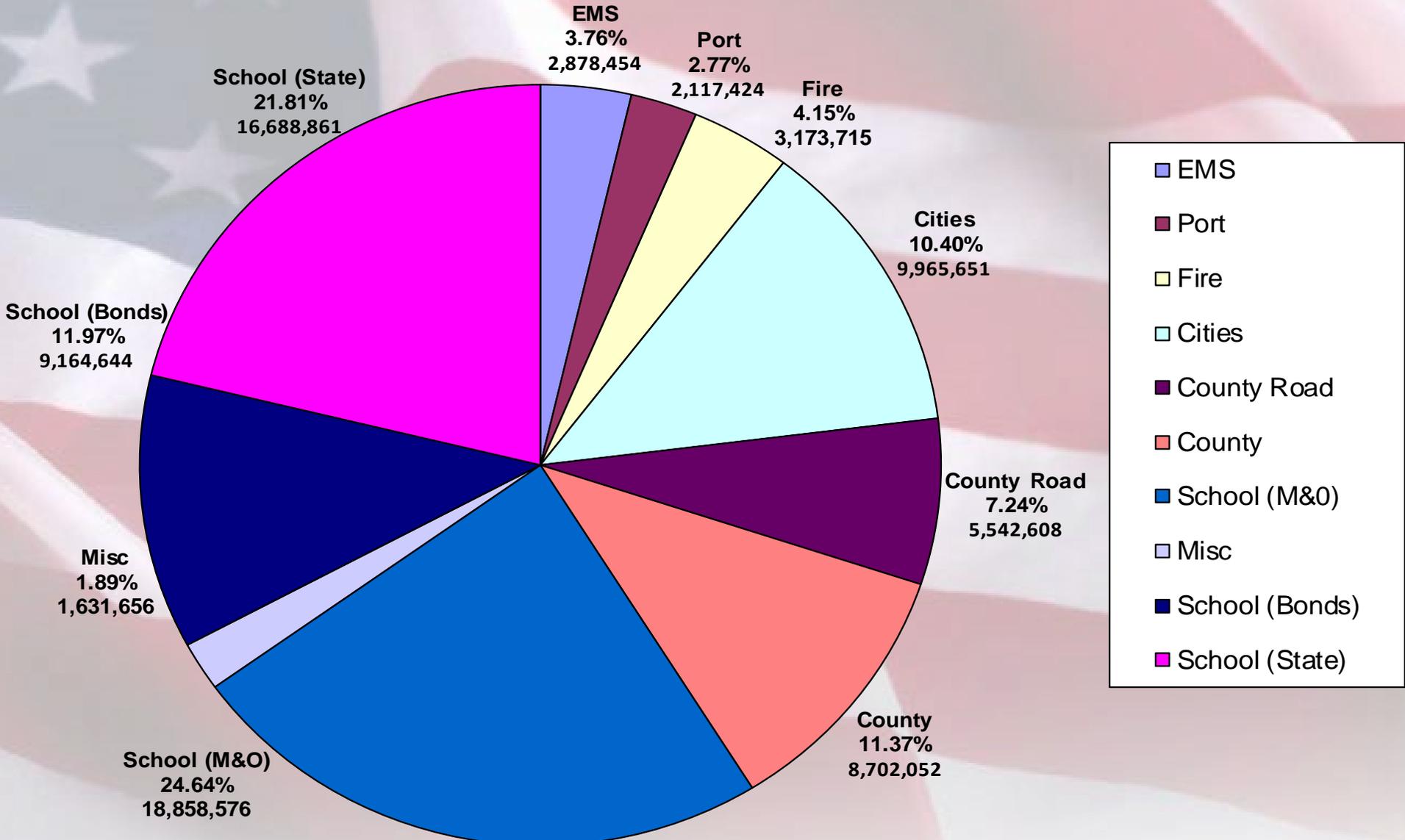
Facilities Maintenance Department is responsible for the cleaning, repairs, renovations, major improvements and grounds maintenance for all 12 county buildings.

Walla Walla County WSU Extension has had an office here since 1913. They engage people, organizations, and communities to advance knowledge, economic well-being and quality of life by fostering inquiry, learning, and the application of research. They provide support and expertise to Walla Walla County with researchers and specialists ready to assist in the areas of youth, families, food safety, agriculture, nutrition, gardening to safeguard our community's economic wellbeing and the health of our community members.

# Departments:

Fairgrounds Department is the home for the single largest annual gathering of county residents and has hosted a showcase for the products, talents and culture at the county fair for **152 years**. Year round the facilities are busy hosting activities serving the diverse interests of county residents performing a significant role in driving economic activity and commerce benefitting the whole Walla Walla Valley.

# 2018 TAX DISTRIBUTION



TOTAL TAX \$76,992,637

# 2018 Projected Revenues and Expenses:

- County Sales Tax: \$3,500,000
- Public Safety .03% Sales Tax: \$1,500,000
- Juvenile Justice Center .01% Sales Tax: \$960,000
- Mental Health and Substance Use .01% Sales Tax: \$960,000
- Total Sales Tax: \$6,920,000
- Total Property Tax \$14,244,660 + Sales Tax \$6,920,000 = \$21,164,660
- Total Expenses \$66,013,624 – Tax Revenues \$ 21,164,660 = \$44,848,964
- Remaining Balance of Expenses Covered by Revenues from Fees for Service, State and Federal Grants

# In the Next Few Years: County Economy?

- The future of Walla Walla County's economy is looking good
- Transitioning from years of slow growth to moderate growth
  - Population
  - Housing
  - Businesses
  - Family wage jobs
  - Tourism
- Not a boom or unmanageable sprawl
  - Traffic problems
  - Stress on services

# In the Next Few Years: County Land Use?

- Manage growth and balance priorities
  - Protect agriculture
  - Affordable housing and multifamily housing
  - Promote economic development
  - Promote tourism
  - Recreation
  - Protect ecosystem
- Comprehensive Plan and Development Regulations 8 year mandatory update
  - Public participation
  - Coordinate with cities
  - Due June 30<sup>th</sup> 2018

# In the Next Few Years: County Infrastructure?

- Fairgrounds
  - Remove racetrack to better utilize the space
  - Tear down old horse barns
  - New fairgrounds office
- County Campus
  - Secure the courthouse with superior and district court co-located
  - County central customer service center
  - Relocate 911 Dispatch and Emergency Management
- Mill Creek USACE General Investigation Study
- US Highway 12 Phase 8

# “State of the County”

Walla Walla County Commissioner Jim Duncan

314 W. Main St. Room #203

Walla Walla, WA 99362

[jduncan@co.walla-walla.wa.us](mailto:jduncan@co.walla-walla.wa.us)

(509) 524-2505

