

CITY OF ST. MARIES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

ADOPTED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE
CITY OF ST. MARIES

August 24, 2026

RESOLUTION #2026-363

INTRODUCTION

COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING FOR THE CITY OF ST. MARIES, IDAHO

August 24, 2026

This comprehensive plan sets forth the goals and objectives determined by the citizens of the City of St. Maries to guide their community in future growth and development decisions. These carefully conceived goals reflect many hours of discussion and contemplation on the City's future and the desires of its residents over a period of several years. They are intended to provide and protect a "quality of life" and standard of living for residents and visitors alike and set tasks to be accomplished to achieve these goals.

It is the intent of the City to use the plan as a framework that will promote sound land development, a safe and healthy living environment, and a successful economic climate.

Therefore, the plan will be used as a "working" document, referred to in each land use and growth decision made. It will be responsive to the ever-changing environment of the community and will be subject to amendment to address those changes. It will continue to be a truly public document, requiring full public participation in its continued use and future changes.

The development of a comprehensive plan is required by Idaho law and the Local Land Use Planning Act. This plan contains a narrative of thirteen planning components, each with goals and objective statements, and a concluding implementation plan. The fourteen (14) components required under current Idaho law are as follows:

Property Rights

Population

School Facilities and Transportation

Economic Development

Land Use

Natural Resource

Hazardous Areas

Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities

Transportation

Recreation

Special Areas or Sites
Housing
Community Design
Implementation

GOALS: Are defined as statements that indicate a general aim or purpose to be achieved.

Goals usually are stated in broad terms to reflect citywide values. They provide St. Maries general direction but not specific objectives.

OBJECTIVES: Are defined as guidelines that establish a definite course to guide present and future decisions.

Objectives express the manner in which future actions will be taken. They are, however, not inflexible rules that cannot be adapted to different situations and circumstances.

Amendments to the plan will be made following the requirements set in Idaho Code 67-6509 summarized as it is written in 2005, as follows:

The plan may only be amended once every six months.

Upon any request to amend or repeal the plan, the Planning Commission/City

Council shall set a public hearing, giving at least 15 days public notice in the local newspaper or by mail.

The Planning Commission/City Council shall hold the public hearing to hear

comments on the proposed change. They will consider such comments and make a decision on the plan's amendment.

No amendment shall be effective unless adopted by an ordinance or resolution, of which three copies shall be on file at City Hall.

1. PRIVATE PROPERTY RIGHTS

The City of St. Maries wishes to insure that land use policies, restrictions, conditions and fees do not violate constitutional private property rights, adversely impact private property values or create unnecessary technical limitations upon the use of the property which will constitute an unlawful taking of private property rights.

Each land use action considered by the City should utilize the Attorney General's checklist and evaluation criteria as revised from time to time to assure the action complies with the

"Idaho Regulatory Takings Act". Questions such as the following will help in determining the impact on private property rights.

Does the regulation or action result in the permanent or temporary physical occupation of the property?

Does the regulation or action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of property or grant an easement?

Does the regulation deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of the property?

Does the regulation have a significant impact on the landowner's economic interest?

Does the regulation deny a fundamental attribute of ownership?

Does the regulation serve the same purpose that would be served by directly prohibiting the use or action; and does the condition imposed substantially advance that purpose?

1.1 GOAL

To establish policies the City will follow to balance private property rights with community planning, public health and safety needs within the accepted confines of the federal, state and local laws. Land use policies should be designed to protect and enhance private property rights and values in accordance with overall considerations of public health, safety and general welfare.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

To review all land use decisions policies, procedures and ordinances following the adopted City policies.

To utilize the Attorney General's checklist and evaluation criteria, as periodically revised to insure that all land use actions do not violate the "Idaho Regulatory Takings Act."

Existing and historical uses should be protected and take precedent if possible when there is a conflict with a proposed use.

2. POPULATION

St. Maries is the most populated community in Benewah County. It has 2,652 inhabitants and represents about 29% of the county's total population. It is interesting to note that St. Maries' population had remained virtually unchanged for the past 50 years.

The following table shows St. Maries recent population history and 20-year projected changes.

Year	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	2571	2794	2442	2652	2900	3200

The following table depicts the population of St. Maries by age from 1980 to 2000 and forecast changes through 2020. **

	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Median Age	30	35	40	45	50
Under Age 18 Years %	32	30	27	23	20
18 – 64 Years %	57	57	59	61	62
65+ Years %	11	13	14	16	18
Person per Household	2.8	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.3

The following table shows income from 1980 to 1999. **

	1980	1985	1990	1999
Per Capita Personal Income	\$8201	10,749	13,992	19,064
% of National Average	80.5%	73.1%	71.5%	66.8%
Percent of State Average	93.9%	92.3%	88.2%	83.4%

** Idaho Department of Commerce Data document IDC01 33120

2.1 GOAL

To insure that the population growth within the City of St. Maries will be adequate to accommodate future economic and social opportunities and provide for associated financial requirements.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

Obtain additional land, primarily by annexation of adjacent properties and development of existing real estate to encourage population and economic growth within the city limits.

Ensure that adequate housing and building sites are available to meet needs of personnel and prospective employers.

Encourage population growth within the city by providing attractive social, economic and governmental incentives.

Consider the requirements of an aging population to ensure that adequate housing, medical, social, economic and other related facilities are available to attract and retain senior citizens.

Improve highways to provide better and easier access to St. Maries.

Plan for growth within the city limits and in adjoining areas by the development of adequate water and sewer facilities so that public utility infrastructure does not limit or inhibit population growth, housing and business development.

3. SCHOOL FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION FOR SCHOOLS

The City of St. Maries lies within St. Maries Joint School District 41. From time to time, private schools have operated in St. Maries, serving a limited student population.

Local businesses are working closely with the school districts on a school-to-work project. The ultimate goal is to keep the area's young people in the area with jobs that will support them. The St. Maries School District has implemented a program where work-based learning and careers are integrated into the curriculum.

A cooperative effort among several local agencies including the St. Maries School District, county commissioners, prosecutor, the district and the juvenile probation officer resulted in the development of an alternative education center for young people in the fall of 1996. Known as the Community Education Center, the purpose is to offer instruction and counseling, and to integrate these students back into the public schools whenever possible.

3.1 PUBLIC

The St. Maries Joint School District #41 serves students in the eastern half of Benewah County and the southern portion of Shoshone County. The school administration building is located at 720 Main Avenue in St. Maries. The facilities consist of an elementary school (Heyburn Elementary) serving kindergarten through fifth, St. Maries Middle School, serving

grades sixth through eighth, and St. Maries High School with grades ninth through twelfth. UpRiver Elementary in Fernwood has kindergarten through eighth grade students and is part of School District #41. These students attend High School in St. Maries.

Enrollment in St. Maries School District #41 remained constant at about 1350 students until the 1997-1998 school year. Enrollment has gradually decreased each year since.

1996-97	1,328
1997-98	1,290
1998-99	1,282
1999-00	1,252
2000-01	1,137
2001-02	1,141
2002-03	1,153
2003-04	1,096
2004-05	1,113

Certain facilities improvements to the public school system have been undertaken in the last decade, with much of the work provided through donations, fundraisers and volunteer work. A new track and football field was completed in 2004 at St. Maries High School, which is located outside the city limits, just north of town. The current infrastructure (water and sewer) is provided by the City of St. Maries. However, the system is inadequate to provide sufficient water to the high school. A coordinated effort by the City of St. Maries, Benewah County and the School District has been undertaken to develop a plan and funding to increase water service and fire protection capacity to the high school. This is just one of many examples where city utility services for water and sewer have been extended outside the city limits. When the old system becomes inadequate for current use, planning and funding have become issues for the City of St. Maries.

3.2 NON-PUBLIC

Headstart operates a pre-school at 1230 Main with 18 children enrolled. Area churches also operate schools. Locations and enrollment vary from year to year.

3.3 GOAL

Ensure the continued support of our schools and the quality of education.

3.4 OBJECTIVES

Integrate schools with land use, transportation, recreation and other community objectives and plans in order to realize maximum benefit for the citizenry.

Cooperate and coordinate with school administrators to determine the locations of new schools that are consistent with the land use plan, the concepts of urban growth areas, and available utilities.

Support involvement in the school system by encouraging participation on various committees to advise the school districts.

Help meet the need for school facilities by the identification and planning of future building needs, expansion sites and infrastructure availability and preserving such needed sites during the planning process.

Provide the safe transportation of children both to and from school.

Support joint use of school and recreational facilities by the public as available and appropriate.

Support the improvement of the education system.

Make land use decisions that help address the needs of youth in our community.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The City of St. Maries is located in Benewah County at the junction of Highways 3 and 5. The area's economy consists of manufacturing (including lumber and wood products), services, with retail trade being the third largest employment sector. St. Maries is directly tied to the timber industry. Other entities that make up the local economy are health care, manufacturing, education, government, mining, recreation, and tourism.

The close proximity of large metropolitan centers such as Coeur d'Alene and Moscow provides employment to the county residents. Per capita income for the county in 1996 was \$17,576 (about 88.5% of the state average and 71.9% of the national average).

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe has a gaming facility in Kootenai County providing an increasing number of jobs for St. Maries' residents and support for the schools in District 41. The Tribe operates a convenience store, gas station, entertainment hall, motel, restaurant, conference center, and golf course. The Tribe continues to plan for expansion of this facility.

The Greater St. Joe Development Foundation was founded in 1989 by a group of business and community leaders hoping to stabilize the county's economy. It is a non-profit, volunteer organization deriving operating funds through donations and memberships dues. It represents a partnership between business, industry, elected officials and service

organizations. The focus is on infrastructure improvement, business retention and expansion, and recruitment. The goal is to diversify the economy in providing a variety of businesses and services to the residents.

Other local organizations assisting in economic development activities are the St. Maries Chamber of Commerce and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe Planning and Development Office.

Outside resources include the Panhandle Area Council's two direct financing programs, an EDA funded Revolving Loan Fund and the Small Business Administration's Certified Development Company 504 loan program. The staff also has access to several banks for use with the Small Business Administration's 7(a) guaranty program. With these tools the district can package a wide variety of financial assistance to entice and facilitate business growth in the area.

There is the Small Business Development Center in Lewiston and Coeur d'Alene that provide direct consulting and training services to individual small businesses through a sustained and effective higher education. This involves several colleges and universities in the area which provide assistance to St. Maries economic development efforts. These include North Idaho College (Coeur d'Alene), Lewis and Clark State College (Lewiston) and the University of Idaho (Moscow).

Finally, such state agencies as the Idaho Department of Commerce can offer technical and financial assistance in helping to locate businesses in St. Maries.

4.1 GOAL

To encourage growth and diversification in the economy through emphasis on improving and increasing infrastructure and public utility capacity, business retention, expansion and recruitment promoting a stable, economic base for the City of St. Maries.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

1. Promote the retail sector of St. Maries, encouraging residents, tourists and boaters to shop and eat. Develop a historical walking tour of St. Maries.
2. To continue to develop signage directing tourists to points of interest and tourist services in the City of St. Maries. Continue to develop facilities to serve the tourism industry.
3. Research suitable areas for industrial parks in or adjacent to the City near appropriate services.

4. Work with County, State and federal officials in flood control and relief with a goal to have such occurrences minimally affect City business operations.
5. Work with appropriate governmental entities in the county to coordinate all efforts in economic retention and recruitment.
6. Support and encourage community efforts to beautify the downtown and City center areas.
7. Promote the availability and affordability of housing through methods listed in the Housing component of this plan.
8. Support and improve support systems such as health care and education, recreation and cultural facilities.
9. Establish and maintain communications and cooperation with the major industries in the County.
10. Continue the close relationship with the Greater St. Joe Development Foundation and the Chamber of Commerce and business groups in recruiting and siting businesses in areas which will be economically efficient, environmentally sound and in conformance with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan.
11. Establish industrial area with the objective of expanding manufacturing.

5. LAND USE

All land within the City Limits has been zoned for use. Zones are:

Parks and recreations

Industrial

Commercial

Residential:

- i. Mobile home park
- ii. Multiple residence, high density
- iii. Single residence, medium density
- iv. Single residence, low density

A Zoning Map is included in this plan.

Areas that are considered historically significant are identified in the Special Areas or Sites component of the plan.

It is recognized that certain uses have existed prior to the establishment of zones, which may not conform to the requirements of that zone. Such uses shall be allowed to continue to exist but will not be able to be expanded nor replaced without a conditional use permit.

5.1 Other Land Uses

The City may establish special land use categories to address unique characteristics of the land or environment. This may include identifying floodplain areas and areas of critical concern such as historical sites, geographic features, wildlife areas, and natural resource areas. These are discussed more fully in the Natural Resource, Hazardous Areas and Significant Sites elements of the plan.

Tribal land is located throughout Benewah County. Efforts are being made to coordinate developments on tribal, city, and county lands and to open lines of communication between these two groups.

5.2 Area of Impact

The Area of City Impact Ordinance has been adopted and was developed with Benewah County, for the purpose of reviewing and approving growth and development outside of the city limits that might affect the City. These Areas of Impact have been delineated on the attached map.

The City works with the County in this area. It is important to both the City and the County that we avoid development that could have negative impact on County and City residents. Major concerns include drainage, flood control, adequate water and septic considerations.

5.3 GOAL

To provide land use types that will meet the needs of St. Maries residents and businesses; provide for standards under which land is developed to insure quality development and to minimize the costs of growth from falling upon current residents.

5.4 OBJECTIVES

1. Work with the County to develop joint zoning areas that would provide for an orderly transition from urban to rural areas.

2. Provide a reliable basis for private investment by establishing such standards and conditions as zoning, building and subdivision codes, criteria for school bus routes and policies for utility extensions.
3. Avoid future problems by addressing adverse impacts and meeting them in a positive way.
4. Periodically review the Land Use Plan to ensure that it is consistent with the desires of the majority of citizens.
5. Appropriately protect private property rights which would be affected by land use decisions.
6. Coordinate with groups which have programs or interests that affect the physical development of City of St. Maries.
7. Ensure that adequate sites of sufficient acreage for present use and future expansion of commercial or industrial uses are provided for in the land use plan.
8. Encourage the viability of the transportation system for commercial and industrial operations, avoiding use of local streets that will affect residential areas.
9. Encourage the establishment of industrial parks around the City.
10. Locate industrial activities to minimize conflicts with surrounding use and to maintain the industry's efficiency.
11. Encourage commercial development in established commercial districts.
12. Residential areas should be developed in such a manner that necessary services can be efficiently provided.
13. High density residential should be confined to areas or places where adequate utilities are, or can be made available.
14. Encourage development of residential subdivisions in urban growth areas include adequate public access for each lot, paved streets, curbs, gutters, community water, storm drainage, utility lines, sewer systems, sidewalks and street lights. Underground utilities are desirable.

15. Locate housing so that it is fully integrated with land use, transportation, public facilities and in conformance with the comprehensive plan.
16. Evaluate carefully the creation of wildlife reserves, wetlands, or other areas of limited access to lands and uses, to assess the impact upon economic development and protect private property rights.
17. Encourage placement of housing and housing developments so as to least interfere with surrounding agricultural and timber uses.

6. TRANSPORTATION

The City of St. Maries has four main transportation methods available. These methods include highways and roads, rail transportation, air transportation, and the St. Joe waterways. Highways, roads, and local streets are the main methods of local and inter-county transportation.

6.1 Roads

Two major thoroughfares affect St. Maries. Highway 3 provides the most direct route to Shoshone County and Coeur d'Alene to the north and also provides the major transportation route south to Santa, Fernwood, Emida, and Latah County. Another major thoroughfare is Highway 5, which connects St. Maries with the City of Plummer, and Highway 95 North and South.

The St. Joe River Road is another major transportation link. This is a Federal Hwy. 50 which connects St. Maries with Calder, Avery, and a large portion of southern Shoshone County. This road continues to St. Regis, Montana at Interstate 90 and was added to the Scenic Byways highway system in 2005.

Internal circulation within the City of St. Maries can be divided into three categories of streets. These are thoroughfares, collectors, and minor streets. The main thoroughfare of St. Maries is Main Street, including the jog on Fourth Street up to College.

This thoroughfare is also Highway 5, and after the jog on Fourth Street, intersects with Highway 3. There are no traffic control lights on Main Street, but traffic is regulated by the use of stop and yield signs. In 2003-2004, the City completed the Downtown Revitalization Project which was funded by the sale of tax exempt revenue bonds, a grant from the EPA and a local improvement district for those businesses located on Main Avenue within the LID. In addition to the replacement of water and sewer lines, Main Avenue was improved

with the addition of new sidewalks, curbs, gutters, street lights and street islands planted with trees and flowers.

There are a number of collectors within St. Maries, which serve various portions of the city. The southwest portion of the city is served by a loop collector system consisting of Coeur d'Alene Avenue, Washington Avenue, and Twenty-third Street. Both ends of the loop connect on to Main Street providing access to the city center, as well as Highway 5.

The northwest section of the city is served by a collector system that runs from Main Street north on Twentieth Street to Idaho Avenue, and then west to Twenty-first St. This collector also provides access to Main Street and Highway 5.

Fourteenth Street is a one-way street running south and Thirteenth Street is a one-way street running north. These collectors serve the central portion of St. Maries, and also connect with a major east-west collector for the remainder of the city with minor collector streets providing the north-south traffic collection.

The southeast section of the city is served by Second Street. Providing access to the Capitol Hill area, as well as Anderson Heights and Regans Addition. This north south collector connects to College Avenue and Highway 3.

Another major collector system that exists within the city is the industrial traffic collection system. Today, this system conflicts with the local traffic patterns, as well as train traffic across the Tenth Street crossing. The resolution of this industrial traffic will be the main thrust of the circulation plan. To date, access into the City of St. Maries is accomplished via College Avenue or Highway 3 south, Third Street across the Third Street Bridge, and via Highway 5. The traffic entering St. Maries from the east enters the industrial area north of the railroad tracks via a ramp from Third Street onto North Railroad Avenue. The traffic then goes north on Fifth Street until the intersection with St. Joe Avenue, then follows St. Joe Avenue until Tenth Street, then becomes Mill Road. Traffic from the west enters via Highway 5 and Main Street and turns north onto Tenth Street into the industrial area.

The last major links in the circulation system of St. Maries are the minor streets. The majority of these streets within St. Maries are recently paved and in good condition. The greatest factor influencing the conditions of the streets is the relatively extreme slope of the majority of the city. Also, the underlying geologic structure of St. Maries is an ancient landslide, which does not provide a stable base for roads and streets.

6.2 RAILROAD

A second means of non-passenger transportation into and from the City is via railroad. The St. Maries River Railroad operates a switching yard at St. Maries. The major products

handled include logs, rough and finished timber, wood chips, grain, and garnet sand. The railroad is a vital link in the transportation system of St. Maries, connecting with the Union Pacific railroad at Plummer, Idaho for the purpose of hauling timber products, grain, and garnet sand.

6.3 WATERWAYS

A fourth means of transportation into and from the City is by way of the St. Joe Waterways, the highest navigable river in the world. This waterway connecting St. Maries to Lake Coeur d'Alene represents a viable means of transportation, both industrial and recreational. Until 2001, the State of Idaho managed all of Lake Coeur d'Alene and the waterways within the lake basin. In April, 2001, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the lower third of the lake and certain segments of the St. Joe River are owned by the US Dept. of the Interior in trust for the Coeur d'Alene Tribe, including a portion of the St. Joe River located within the City limits.

6.4 GOAL:

To maintain, improve and promote the safety and function of the overall transportation system in and around the City consistent with growth, tourism demands and fiscal conditions.

6.5 Objectives:

1. Encourage private transportation systems to meet the needs of those in the county.
2. Provide major destination sources such as hospitals, schools, and business centers and industrial areas with adequate arterial design and capacity to accommodate their needs.
3. Utilize zoning and subdivision regulations to protect major arterials from traffic conflicts.
4. Encourage the development of a Countywide Transportation Plan.
5. Research funding alternatives which are acceptable and within the financial means of the citizens of the City, which may include the potential of grants, Local Improvement Districts and impact fees. Encourage growth to pay for itself, whenever feasible. Encourage businesses to contribute in mitigating impacts they might have on the country.

6. Develop cooperative relationships between county subdivision road associations, the county, the highway districts and the state in planning, construction and maintenance of transportation facilities both inside the county.
7. Promote better alignment, structure, and maintenance of the state highway system within and leading to the City.
8. Maintain the railroad, which is critical to the industrial and commercial uses in the county.
9. Encourage continued navigation on the St. Joe River for industrial use and landings. This will include coordinating with the Waterways Committee and the Coeur d'Alene Tribe as well as industry and transportation companies, so that land use consideration are taken into account in resolving problems such as:
 - a. The removal and disposal of debris from waterways and landings.
 - b. The sighting of landings
 - c. Recreational and industrial use conflicts.

7. PUBLIC SERVICES FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

The City of St. Maries contains numerous public and quasi-public facilities and services that serve the public. Each is identified below by description and with the help of various maps.

7.1 PUBLIC

1. County Courthouse - the County building is located at 701 College Avenue in central St. Maries. It is an older facility and contains courtrooms, a meeting area for County Commission, Planning commission and other public and quasi-public groups, office areas for conducting county business by the County commissioners and other appointed officials. The building contains public restrooms and is currently up to the American with Disabilities Act standards. There is a meeting room in the basement that serves numerous community organizations. In 2003, Benewah County purchased the federal building from GSA. The US Postal Service, US Forest

Service and Idaho Department of Health and Welfare are located in this publicly owned building.

2. City and County Shops - City and County shops located in St. Maries. These shops house road crews and equipment.
3. City and County Parks - Parks are covered in detail in the recreation component of this plan.
4. Water Systems - The St. Maries water system provides service to areas outside the city limits that include Hilltop area (state shops), the St. Joe Lagoon area and Potlatch complex, the community areas of Riverview Park, Sunset View, Milltown, and Riverdale and along the St. Joe River to Omega. Rochat Creek is the source of the water for the system. In 2004, the City completed a major improvement project to the City's water system, including the purchase of real property outside the City limits for the construction of a slow sand filtration plant, the relocation and replacement of the main transmission line from Rochat dam to the City, and the replacement of many of the distribution lines throughout the City. With additional funding from the US Army Corps of Engineers and Benewah County, the old Rochat line was also replaced, which allows property owners living along the St. Joe River upstream from the City to continue to be supplied water by the City and providing some additional capacity for the sale of new hook ups in order to enhance economic growth and development in the area.
5. Sewer Utilities for the City of St. Maries consists of sewer lines, lift stations, and two lagoons plus a polishing lagoon and a treatment plant. It is designed to serve a population of 6000. The City has a wastewater treatment and management agreement with Benewah County and currently extends City sewer services to St. Joe Lagoon, Benewah County Fairgrounds, Parkers Addition, Pangborn Airfield, St. Maries High School, Meadowhurst, Riverdale, Cottonwood Point, Evergreen Terrace, River Pine Estates, and east on Highway 3 to the Benewah County Landfill. The sewer infrastructure within the City limits was upgraded as part of the 2003 - 2004 Downtown Revitalization Project.

6. Library - The library located in St. Maries has over 15,000 volumes, 3,000 registered borrowers and is governed by a five-member board appointed by the City Council. Internet services are available. Improvements to the library were completed in 2005.
7. Cemetery - The City of St. Maries owns and operates Woodlawn Cemetery, which is located at the west end of St. Maries. The City also owns additional land across the highway from the cemetery which is dedicated for future cemetery use. However, because it is not needed at this time, the land is leased to Benewah County under a long term lease for use as the County Fairgrounds.
8. Schools - The public school system and its needs are addressed in the "Schools and Transportation" section.
9. Senior Center - There are three senior centers located in St. Maries. These centers provide meal and recreation sites for senior citizens.
10. Streets - These infrastructure needs are addressed more fully in the Transportation section of this plan.
11. Utilities - Currently there are several utilities serving St. Maries.
 - a. Electric - Electrical power is currently available to residents of the City through Avista
 - b. Telephone and Internet Services - Telephone and Internet services are offered by a variety of companies. Service is offered both through overhead telephone lines and underground lines as the circumstance dictate. Several cell phone and satellite phone services are also available in the area, although the service areas are limited by the geography surrounding the City.
 - c. Solid Waste Disposal - Benewah County owns the county transfer station and is responsible for transporting solid waste to a landfill site in Missoula, Montana. All City taxpayers (property owners) are charged landfill and solid waste taxes by Benewah County. In addition, the City contracts with a private solid waste company for the weekly collection and disposal of solid waste. These services are mandatory and every City property owner is required to pay for residential or commercial services.

- d. Television - Five stations in Spokane cover the Benewah County area. Three are affiliate stations, one is independent and one is public. There is a private cable company that serves the St. Maries area. Cable lines are placed on telephone poles or underground as the circumstances dictate. City residents can also purchase satellite services from private companies operating in the area.
 - e. Radio - St. Maries is home to KOFE radio, a local AM station that broadcasts local events and news.
12. U.S. Post Office - a post office is located in the "Federal Building" in St. Maries. This building is now owned by Benewah County.
13. Law Enforcement - Law enforcement is provided by the St. Maries Police Department. Mutual aid is provided by the Benewah County Sheriff's Office and the Idaho State Patrol. Population growth, increased tourism, economic development and other growth factors will determine the rate of increased law enforcement services in the future.
14. Fire Protection - Fire protection services are provided by
- a. St. Maries Rural Fire Protection District
 - b. Mutual aid agreement with the Department of Lands
 - c. Mutual aid with Potlatch Corporation
15. Ambulance Service - St. Maries Ambulance Service serves the City. Air ambulance service is also available when needed.
16. Health Facilities - St. Maries currently has several health care facilities located within the city limits. These include: Benewah Community Hospital, St. Maries Family Medical, Valley Vista Care Center and Cottage Care, and Panhandle Health. In addition, the City is served by a variety of other medical services including dentistry and optometry.

Regional facilities in Coeur d'Alene, Lewiston, and Spokane also serve the community.

7.2 QUASI-PUBLIC

Below is a list of quasi-public facilities in St. Maries:

- Churches
- Elks Lodge
- Eagles Lodge
- Masonic Hall
- Avista Building
- Cormana Building at City Park

7.3 GOAL:

To provide public and quasi-public facilities and services at a level that meets the needs of the public, to maintain health and safety standards for our citizens, and to provide these within the financial ability of our citizens and community.

7.4 OBJECTIVES

1. Support and improve the health care facilities in the City.
2. Continue to upgrade the City's services and equipment to keep up with the service demands of the City residents and those caused by growth.
3. Maintain and expand upon the City recreational opportunities and parks. Develop standards to guide the city in the future expansion and development of new parks and recreational facilities.
4. Work closely with Panhandle District Health to promote education and avoid environmental concerns, especially those caused by septic systems.
5. Encourage utility providers to anticipate and meet the needs of growth and to coordinate with the city on the expansion and placement of those utilities. Set standards on utility placement.
6. Update the existing water and sewer plans to reflect the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. Water and sewer plans should include a long range, phased program for the extension of those services to urban growth areas with capacities and patterns adequate to support the intensities of activities provided for in the Comprehensive Plan.
7. Encourage the providing of urban services to vacant land within developed areas.

- a. Plan public buildings and their locations so that current and future needs are considered, expansion space is available, joint or multiple uses with other agencies are considered, are central to other public facilities, and are not within hazard areas.
8. New streets, water and sewer facilities built to serve new housing should be designed and constructed to sufficient standards so as to be maintainable at a reasonable cost by the public service entity.
9. All new development within urban growth areas shall be connected to the public sewer system. Provision for and agreements to participate in the public system shall be made if immediate connection is not feasible. The extension of sewage disposal systems should be confined to urban growth areas.
10. Promote the establishment and/or improvement of sewage treatment systems to reduce or eliminate pollution of waterways.
11. Require that on-site sewage disposal is related to the soil characteristics and conforms to standards approved by the Panhandle Health District.
12. Water supply systems adequate in both quantity and quality should be required for all existing and planned developments.
13. Water supply systems for development within the city or within the city impact area must include considerations for domestic use, sanitation and fire protection.

8. HOUSING

Providing good quality, safe, and affordable housing is important to St. Maries to meet the basic needs of both individuals and families. A variety of housing needs to be available to maintain a quality of life and the traditional values of the citizens.

The 2000 Census provided the following information:

Total Housing Units	1,132
Occupied Housing Units	1,061
Owner Occupied	739
Rental	322

Building permits issued in St. Maries demonstrates the following trends:

	Site Built	Mobile/Mfg
1993	7	5
1994	12	1
2001	1	0
2003	4	0
2004	2	1

The average value in 2000 is \$79,700 compared to the average new house value for Benewah County of \$108,095.

The geography, flood plains, and city limits allows for little new housing in St. Maries.

8.1 GOAL

To allow for a wide range of housing options for City residents with respect to cost and type while protecting existing property values and maintaining high standards of construction safety and aesthetics.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

1. Continue to enforce International Building Code standards and related ordinances for new construction while encouraging upgrading of existing housing.
2. Encourage imaginative uses of existing structures as long as it fits within the uses allowed within the zone. Allow creativity within the building and zoning ordinances to provide diversity in life styles.
3. Encourage the renovation of older homes that will comply with current safety standards, building codes and energy consumption requirements.
4. Develop zoning and subdivision ordinance consistent with the goal and objectives listed above.
5. Increase available and affordable housing as the market demands. Cooperate and encourage private efforts to supply adequate housing for those people whose needs are not being met.
6. Encourage the upgrading of substandard housing. Analyze existing and proposed housing policies to ensure that they encourage upgrading and rehabilitation of homes rather than discourage or perpetuate existing problems.

7. Explore and assist in obtaining available assistance for the upgrading or rehabilitation of substandard housing.
8. Coordinate with local efforts and agencies involved in studying housing needs, telling of financial assistance or regulating housing construction.
9. Encourage building and zoning codes to utilize more economical methods for housing construction and development.
10. When multiple family dwellings are located adjacent to single family residences, care should be taken to protect the amenities of the single-family area.
11. Housing in hazard areas such as flood prone and slippage areas should be built to reduce the degree of risk the site imposes.
12. Housing should be integrated with affected land uses and in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
13. New streets, roads and sewer facilities built to serve new housing should be designed and constructed to sufficient standards so as to be maintainable at a reasonable cost by the public service entity.
14. Areas suitable for recreational housing should be designated taking into consideration the following:
 - a. In proximity to amenities such as waterways, panoramic views, or other natural features.
 - b. In areas where adequate protection from natural hazards can be incorporated in the building or site design.
 - c. On sites with adequate water supply and access built to City standards.
 - d. On sites of adequate size and with suitable conditions for onsite wastewater, subsurface sewage disposal and on site water sources except when suitable alternatives are provided.
 - e. Access to be built to City standards.
15. Recreational housing should be designed and sighted to be compatible with the resource it was built to use.

16. In 2001, the Coeur d'Alene Tribe passed a moratorium on all new construction of docks or other encroachments for any property located along those portions of Lake Coeur d'Alene and the St. Joe River lying within the exterior boundaries of the Coeur d'Alene Reservation. In 2004, permits and fees were required for all existing docks or encroachments. The moratorium and enforcement of tribal regulations and ordinances can be expected to have a negative impact on future recreational housing along this area.

9. RECREATION and TOURISM

St. Maries has numerous recreational opportunities available within its area. This includes organized activities and program, as well as opportunities for self initiated recreation. These are delineated below:

1. County Parks - The Benewah County Fairgrounds is adjacent to St. Maries and provides a year round facility for related activities. Cherry Bend Boat Park is a camping park for boaters and can be used for special events, including weddings, reunions, etc., It is owned and managed by Benewah County near the City of St. Maries.
2. Golf Course - The City of St. Maries and Benewah County jointly own and operate panoramic nine-hole golf course on par with any fine course anywhere.
3. Swimming - The City of St. Maries operates an outdoor swimming pool and aqua park open during the summer months. Aqua Park offers swimming and picnicking facilities.
4. School Districts - School district facility include ball fields, playgrounds and tennis courts for use by the public.
5. Historic Wall Murals - Celebrate the history of the area on public and privately owned buildings.
6. Hunting/Fishing Sports - The area has many public and private areas for hunting and fishing opportunities. The area is home to many big game animals, fish species, small game animals and furbearers, upland game birds and waterfowl

accessed by "sportsman" accesses. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe has managed the lower one third of Lake Coeur d'Alene and some portion of the St. Joe River since 2001, as the result of a United States Supreme Court case.

Other recreational facilities in the surrounding area include:

2. Parks and Public Lands: Heyburn State Boat Park, Emerald Creek Garnet Mines, St. Joe National forest, Cherry Bend Boat Park, Sportsman's Access at St. Maries River and St. Joe River, McCroskey Park, State ORV (Off Road Vehicle) Park/Xmas Hills, VIC Camm Park.
3. Historical: 1st St. Red Collar Dock Area, Mission Point, Coeur d'Alene Tribe Interpretive Center (Rocky Point)
4. Winter Sports: Five major ski resorts are within easy driving distance. Groomed snow mobile and cross-country skiing trails are found throughout Benewah County.
5. Tourism: S.M. Art Festival, Paul Bunyan Days, St. Joe Car Club Show, Benewah County Fair, Coeur d'Alene Tribe Cultural Display, Plummer Point, Hawley's Landing, Cherry Bend Boat Park, Historic Mullan Trails, Benewah County Airport, Historic Hughes House, RV Parks, bed and breakfasts, and many small community celebrations.
6. Lakes and Rivers - Recreational opportunities can be found on Lake Coeur d'Alene and adjacent parks and small lakes, including Heyburn State Park, Chatcolet, Round, Benewah, Porret, Bel, Swan, St. Joe River and St. Maries River.

9.1 GOAL

To create ample places and facilities for indoor and outdoor recreation to meet the needs of the local citizens and visitors alike and to preserve and utilize the natural resources in and around the City.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

1. Look into the development of recreational facilities as the community residents' desire.

2. Encourage more programs through all forums, such as the schools, private groups and other organized efforts.
3. Encourage efficient utilization of the operation and maintenance of all recreational and park facilities.
4. Develop more cultural opportunities.
5. Work with the state on the regional tourism plan, coordinating efforts and activities.
6. Cooperate with State and Federal agencies, cities, adjoining counties and private association in the planning and development of all types of recreational activities and facilities.
7. Encourage private recreational areas and facilities to be established to fulfill the recreational needs of the City residents and visitors.
8. Encourage reasonable public access to waterways; development along waterways should be designed to provide public access in specified areas.
9. Encourage the development of recreational areas in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.
10. Define areas not suitable for building and preserve them as open spaces. Areas with steep slopes, drainage ways and flood hazard areas are examples of areas not generally suitable for development. If, however, the limitations can be overcome on a sensitive site then it will be allowed if it is in conformance with the other goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan per the standards set in the zoning and subdivision ordinances.
11. Maintain and expand upon the City recreational opportunities and parks.
Encourage standards to guide the City in the future expansion and development of new parks and recreational facilities.

10. NATURAL RESOURCES

The City of St. Maries is situated at the confluence of the St. Maries River and the St. Joe River which flows into Lake Coeur d'Alene.

10.1 Soils:

The major type of soil located on the St. Maries site is the eutic glossoboralfs silt loam. There are smaller areas which consist of St. Joe silt loam and Lancy and Babbitt stony soils, as well as Mutch-DeVoignes association, which is located within the area north of town between the railroad tracks and the river. These soil types are suitable for some types of uses and limited in suitability for other types.

Soils are rated in their suitability for various types of uses by a classification system utilized by the Soil Conservation Service. This analysis consists of three classifications: severe, moderate and slight. A severe limitation indicates that a large amount of effort and expense must be expended to utilize a soil for a particular type of use. A moderate limitation indicates that very little added expense would be incurred to use the soils for a particular use. Generally the, soil limitations do not totally eliminate the possibility of use on a particular type of soil, but only limit in varying degrees by requiring more considerations and added expense.

10.2 Wildlife

The Idaho Fish and Game Department and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides a list of "Rare Elements" which includes sighting of rare birds, animals and plant life by county. This list includes endangered or rare species that have been sighted or reported. In Benewah County the Bald Eagle is listed as threatened.

Wildlife not listed as endangered residing in the area includes deer, elk, upland gamebirds and waterfowl, moose, cougar, bobcats, lynx, bear, wolverine and trout. These species can be observed throughout the county.

10.3 Streams

The streams and rivers in Benewah County have an intricate relationship with many environmental and economic factors. Rochat Creek serves as drinking water source for the City. Development in the watershed of streams, including land activities such as agriculture and forestry, can disrupt the natural environments if care is not taken. Increased runoff from developed land can lead to increased erosion, sedimentation, and nutrient loading and reduces water quality.

Increases in impervious surfaces, destruction of vegetation and wetlands can all increase the rate and volume of runoff, increasing the rate of stream flow and the quantity of water within the streams. This has become a problem for certain community centers and homeowners in Benewah County. Care must be taken in the development of any type of facility (roads, homes, subdivision, etc. near water resources.

10.4 GOAL

Encourage the protection of natural resources from intrusion by inappropriate and uncontrolled residential or non-agricultural uses.

10.5 OBJECTIVES

1. To remain aware of environmental impacts as growth occurs.
2. Continue to encourage on-site drainage to protect water resources and construction designs following best management practices to allow for natural drainage, including within manufactured home parks and other developments.
3. Protect streams by following appropriate management practices for the area that would adequately protect or enhance these resources.
4. Develop standards following appropriate management practices for the area for development around and above stream or wetland areas to avoid unnecessary erosion, poor water quality and damage to the environmental processes.
5. Prior to development of non-renewable resources areas, require plans for the restoration of said areas, and require reclamation of these areas upon completion of development.
6. Encourage the sound management through appropriate and standard management practices of all natural resources such as forest fiber, agricultural lands, minerals, lakes and rivers to maintain the economy, land productivity and provide recreational opportunities.
7. Minimize the adverse environmental impacts due to physical development such as:
 - river bank erosion
 - soil erosion
 - destruction of wildlife habitat
 - air and water pollution

11. HAZARDOUS AREAS

11.1 FLOODING:

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMS) for areas prone to flooding. This information can be used to identify areas that need special planning. Flooding may result in damage or loss of property, injury or loss of life, and contamination of waterways with debris and hazardous chemicals.

There is a map for Benewah County, which indicates flood prone areas within the county. Maps can be obtained at the Benewah County Courthouse and City Hall in St. Maries. The majority of the flood areas are located in the valley near each of the rivers (St. Joe and St. Maries).

Spring flooding, due to melting snow and rain, is common within the flood prone areas and affects homes and businesses within the flood prone areas. The City of St. Maries was affected by significant flooding in 1996 and 1997, which caused property loss and damage to the levee system, including two major breaches. In 2003, the City and the US Army Corps of Engineers began a project to repair the City owned floodwall, which is part of the St. Maries dike system. This project was completed in 2004.

City and County officials need to ensure that future construction in the flood zones be restricted unless clearly proven to be in the public interest. In addition, any homes or businesses already located in the flood prone areas need to be informed of the potential dangers. Also, businesses within flood prone areas should not be allowed to have large quantities of hazardous chemicals. Businesses that have hazardous chemicals should ensure they are stored in such a manner that they will not contaminate the water in the event of a flood.

11.2 WETLANDS

Wetlands are transitional areas between dry land and open water, identified by low topography, poor drainage and standing water. Historically these areas have been overlooked as a valuable water resource. Development near these areas often causes increased runoff and poor water quality, changing the function and environmental value of the wetland forever.

Again, care must be taken in allowing development in or near wetland areas in the city for fear of disrupting long time environmental communities and processes.

11.3 FIRES

An interface of the wildland with the city exists on the southern and western edges of the city limit, therefore the potential for wildfire threat to the City does exist.

11.4 MAN MADE HAZARDS

Potential man-made hazards in the city come from the following sources:

1. Underground storage tanks that have not been removed or do not meet the new federal requirements to prevent leakage/contamination into the groundwater.
2. Storage of grains and other agricultural products.
3. Storage and use of chemicals in residential, commercial or industrial operations.
4. Hazardous material transported on trucks, boats, or the railroad coming through the city.
5. St. Maries Creosote Site is currently moving to the remediation (clean-up) phase.

The St. Maries Rural Fire District is trained to respond to hazardous material incidents. The regional Haz-Mat team in Coeur d'Alene is also available to respond. The Idaho Department of Lands will assist in fighting range and timberland fires, but do not address structural fires.

11.5 GOAL

Recognize the potential risks of hazardous areas and carefully assess and consider these when making land use decisions.

11.6 OBJECTIVES

1. Educated elected officials and citizens as to the various man-made hazards associated with certain types of business and to encourage mitigation of such hazards.
2. Discourage development in any area determined to be hazardous, such as any flood or drainage areas in the county, without requiring mitigation of the risks of such hazard.

3. Identify and manage natural hazard areas to ensure the safety and welfare of the people of St. Maries by encouraging the study of natural hazard areas to determine the effects of potential hazards on land development.
4. Encourage the use of greenbelts at the urban/wildland interface.

12. SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES

The citizens of St. Maries have identified several sites within their community and county that have special or historical significance to them. These are:

1. Mullan Trail Park - denoting historic road from Ft. Benton, MT to Walla Walla, WA
2. Hemenway House
3. Hughes House
4. Herrick House in Silk Sox - built by owner of Millwood Lumber in Riverdale
5. Masonic Lodge - built in 1912
6. St. Maries waterfront - where paddle wheelers came in
7. Swing Bridge - drawbridge spanned river by the Becket house on north side of river
8. Railroad Depot

Exhibit 1 lists the historic sites in the City on the National Register of Historic Places.

12.1 GOAL:

To preserve and enhance the existing character and historical background that defines St. Maries.

12.2 OBJECTIVES:

1. Maintaining areas of interest in the city for educational, historical, or for a sense of community pride.
2. Encourage private owners of these sites to recognize their significance to the city and preserve them as much as possible.
3. Encourage the Historical Society to keep a historic record of each site for future generations.

4. St. Maries shall encourage those sites and structures which are deemed of historical importance to be identified, and if possible, restored and preserved.

13. COMMUNITY DESIGN

St. Maries currently has developed standards for the following areas in its community:

- Subdivision Development
- Junk yards
- Flood Prevention Standards
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Uniform Building Code
- Manufactured Home Park Standards
- Uniform Fire Code

13.1 GOAL:

To encourage the development of an aesthetically pleasing community protecting the quality of life St. Maries residents enjoy.

13.2 OBJECTIVES:

1. Encourage Community Forestry standards in the planting and care of appropriate trees and landscaping, particularly in industrial and commercial areas.
2. Encourage the proper maintenance of commercial, residential, and industrial building to avoid a "run down" look to the community.
3. Develop standards for such thing as commercial building site drainage, as the need arises.
4. Enhance the image of St. Maries as a good place to live, work, or visit.
5. Support the code enforcement program utilizing means under the Idaho Code to do the enforcement on individual properties that are not in compliance with City codes.
6. Beautify the existing communities, particularly the business districts.

CHAPTER 14: AGRICULTURE

14.1 Introduction and Purpose

The city's foundational resource economy has always been driven by timber, forestry, and manufacturing rather than traditional crop agriculture. However, to fully comply with state statute (Idaho Code § 67-6508(n)) and to acknowledge the economic and cultural relationship between the city and the surrounding rural landscape, this chapter evaluates the regional agricultural context and its specific role within St. Maries.

14.2 Agricultural Lands and Base of the Area

The agricultural base of Benewah County is heavily dictated by topography, creating a distinct geographic divide.

1. Inside City Limits

There are zero acres of commercial agricultural land or large-scale farming operations within the City of St. Maries. The land within city limits is fully allocated to residential, commercial, industrial, public, and recreational uses.

2. The St. Maries Vicinity (Eastern Benewah County)

The area immediately surrounding St. Maries consists of the St. Joe and St. Maries River valleys, characterized by rugged, forested mountains and narrow floodplains. Because of this topography, agriculture in the immediate vicinity is highly localized and small-scale. It primarily consists of hay production, small pasture tracts, livestock grazing, and hobby farms. The dominant land use and resource economy in this area is timber production.

3. Western Benewah County (The Palouse)

The vast majority of the county's agricultural land is located on the western side of the county (near Plummer and Tensed) on the rolling hills of the Palouse prairie. This region boasts highly productive dryland farming, yielding crops such as soft white and dark northern spring wheat, barley, oats, lentils, garbanzo beans, peas, and canola. While this sector represents a significant portion of Benewah County's overall economy, it is geographically separated from St. Maries and does not heavily influence the city's daily economic activities or municipal land use decisions.

14.3 Farming Activities and Farming-Related Businesses

Because commercial crop farming is practically nonexistent in the immediate St. Maries area, large-scale farming-related businesses within the city are limited. St. Maries does not

host grain elevators, heavy agricultural implement dealerships, or major crop processing facilities.

However, St. Maries does serve as the primary commercial and supply hub for the rural residents of eastern Benewah County. Farming-related business activities within the city are tailored to this localized market and include:

1. Retail Supply

Local hardware, auto, and feed stores that supply fencing, livestock feed, and basic equipment for small-scale ranchers and hobby farmers in the surrounding river valleys.

2. Horticulture and nurseries

Small businesses and retail centers providing seeds, soils, and garden supplies to residential properties.

14.4 The Role of Agriculture and Agricultural Uses in the Community

While industrial agriculture does not play a role inside the city boundaries, micro-agriculture, urban horticulture, and the preservation of rural character play a vital role in the community's quality of life.

Residents of St. Maries actively participate in residential gardening. The University of Idaho Extension for Benewah County operates a robust Master Gardener program that supports urban horticulture, provides community education, and utilizes volunteers to maintain public spaces like the St. Maries Main Street islands and local church grounds.

St. Maries residents value access to locally grown produce, relying on farmers markets, community events, and farm stands to access goods grown in the broader region.

The City recognizes that the preservation of the surrounding rural and timber lands is essential to the region's character and economic base. By encouraging infill development and accommodating growth within the existing city limits, St. Maries indirectly protects the county's working lands from unmitigated urban sprawl.

14.5 Goals and Policies

Goal 1: Protect the surrounding region's rural character and working lands by encouraging efficient land use within the city.

Policy 1.1: Encourage new residential and commercial growth in the existing city limits to prevent urban sprawl from encroaching on county agricultural and timber lands.

Policy 1.2: Ensure the municipal zoning code allows for agricultural-support businesses (such as feed, hardware, and ranch supply stores) within appropriate commercial and industrial zoning districts to serve the surrounding rural population.

Goal 2: Support local food access and urban horticulture within the city limits.

Policy 2.1: Support the establishment and continuation of community gardens, farmers markets, and local food initiatives within the city.

Policy 2.2: Ensure municipal ordinances reasonably accommodate appropriate, small-scale urban agriculture (e.g., residential gardens, greenhouses, and appropriately regulated backyard poultry) provided they do not create a public nuisance or health hazard for neighboring properties.

15. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of St. Maries is achievable. However, certain aspects of the plan must be considered to insure that the goals proposed in the plan reflect the public's best interest. The concerns of various agencies, jurisdictions, and other organizations pertaining to the Comprehensive Plan must be considered and evaluated. Proposed zoning, for instance, may impact the existing economic, educational, environmental, recreation or historical resources now in place in the City as well as the impact zone surrounding the City. Together with the Area of the City Impact legislation, zoning by the City or County or both cooperatively can regulate the type and timing of development in St. Maries Area of City Impact.

The Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendations, contained in the Comprehensive Plan, have resulted from issues submitted by the City Council, suggestions from the public and from within the Commission. It is the duty of the Commission to respond to new issues received from the Council, and public requests, and bring them to the attention of the Council.

In conclusion, the Idaho Land Planning Act of 1975 gives the St. Maries City Council the authority to establish standards and budget necessary funds for public and private development. In this regard a number of grant assistance programs for specific types of projects are available and should be pursued. This authority, supported by input from the Planning and Zoning Commission, will ensure an orderly implementation of the St. Maries Comprehensive Plan.

CHAPTER 16: NATIONAL INTEREST ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS

16.1 Introduction and Purpose

For the purposes of this chapter and state law, "high-voltage transmission lines" are defined as lines with a capacity of 115,000 volts (115 kV) or more, supported by structures of 40 feet or more in height. This chapter assesses the presence of these utility corridors in relation to the City of St. Maries and establishes policies for future coordination.

16.2 National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors (NIETCs)

Under federal law, the U.S. Department of Energy has the authority to designate NIETCs in areas experiencing electric energy transmission capacity constraints or congestion. Idaho Code requires cities to prepare an analysis of these corridors following notification by the Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) concerning the likelihood of a federally designated corridor.

16.3 Current Status

The City of St. Maries has reviewed the Department of Energy's most recent National Electric Transmission Congestion/Needs Studies. To date, the City has not received notification from the IPUC regarding the likelihood of a federally designated NIETC affecting the city. Currently, there are no proposed or existing NIETCs within the St. Maries city limits.

CHAPTER 17: PUBLIC AIRPORT FACILITIES

17.1 Introduction and Purpose

While the St. Maries Municipal Airport (FAA Identifier: S72), also known as the Jack A. Buell Airport, is owned by Benewah County, its location immediately adjacent to the City of St. Maries makes it a critical component of the city's transportation network, emergency response infrastructure, and economic base.

17.2 Facility Location and Characteristics

The St. Maries Municipal Airport is a public-use, General Aviation (GA) airport located approximately one mile northwest of downtown St. Maries, situated at an elevation of 2,131 feet above sea level.

The facility features a single runway. The runway measures 3,354 feet in length and 60 feet in width and consists of an asphalt surface. The runway has a single-wheel weight-bearing capacity of 12,500 pounds, sufficient for small to medium general aviation aircraft. It is equipped with Medium Intensity Runway Lights (MIRL) and a rotating beacon to facilitate night operations, and offers 24/7 self-service 100LL aviation fuel.

17.3 Scope and Type of Airport Operations

St. Maries Municipal Airport is classified by ITD Aeronautics as a Local General Aviation facility. It currently supports approximately 26 based aircraft and sees an estimated 1,900 annual flight operations. While it does not host commercial passenger airlines, the scope of operations is heavily weighted toward resource management, emergency services, and business aviation:

The U.S. Forest Service and the Idaho Department of Lands maintain offices in St. Maries and rely heavily on the airport for wildland firefighting operations and forest management.

The airport serves as a base for aerial timber spraying and agricultural applications. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game frequently utilizes the runway to conduct wildlife surveys in the surrounding wilderness.

The facility provides a critical staging area for air ambulance and medical evacuation flights, ensuring residents of St. Maries have rapid access to higher-level trauma centers in Coeur d'Alene or Spokane.

The airport acts as a gateway to the Idaho backcountry for recreational pilots and is utilized by regional businesses (such as insurance and regional management firms) for routine site visits.

17.4 Economic Impact to the Community

According to the 2020 Idaho Airport Economic Impact Analysis (AEIA) Update conducted by the ITD Division of Aeronautics, the St. Maries Municipal Airport is a significant economic driver for the community.

The airport's operations and capital improvements directly and indirectly support 15 jobs in the local area, generating over \$570,000 in total earnings.

When combining on-airport economic activity, off-airport visitor spending, and the multiplier effect of those dollars circulating through the local economy, the airport generates an estimated \$2.1 million in total economic output annually for the St. Maries region.