

**BONNEVILLE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

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## **INTRODUCTION: AS BONNEVILLE COUNTY GROWS, PLANNING ISSUES INTENSIFY**

This is the Bonneville County Comprehensive Plan of 1994. It is a response to the increasing intensity of planning issues that accompanies the growth and changing geographic distribution of Bonneville County's population.

There were 52,457 people in Bonneville County in 1970, 65,980 in 1980, and 72,207 in 1990. The overall growth rate of 1.9% per year is not overwhelming, but does represent the addition of nearly 1,000 people to the local population each year. The demand for land for urban and suburban use grows with the population, as does the pressure on public facilities and services.

In 1970, 23.0% of Bonneville County's population lived outside city limits. That number jumped to 29.6% in 1980 and continued its increase to 30.5% in 1990. This dispersal of the local population places additional demands on the county and other rural service providers. It also increases the potential for land use conflict in formerly rural, agricultural areas.

This comprehensive plan is designed to provide practical guidance for local land use decision making and an internally consistent, defensible basis for the county's administration of land use controls. The policy statements adopted here are intended to assure that all land use decisions made by Bonneville County require the adequate provision of public facilities and services in all developments, protect the county's natural resources and assure that future developments are generally compatible with neighboring land uses and environmental quality. This plan also recognizes that certain areas within the county have special planning needs and calls for cooperative planning with the county's incorporated cities.

**Structure of this Plan.** The Bonneville County Comprehensive Plan addresses many policy areas, some of which are: 1. Citizen Participation; 2. Public Facilities and Services; 3. Agricultural Lands; 4. Environmental Quality; 5. Land Use Compatibility; 6. Land Use and Site Planning in Arterial Corridors; 7. Historic Resources; 8. Special areas, including the adopted areas of city impact, rural planning areas, Commercial, Industrial, Residential, Economic development and diversification and 9. Plan Implementation.

**Planning Background Studies.** The factual basis for this comprehensive plan is contained in six background studies, which are cited, where appropriate, throughout the policy statements. A brief description of each study follows.

A Social and Economic Profile of Bonneville County and Idaho Falls. This study, which was updated in February 1990, profiles the population and economy of Bonneville County. Several hundred copies have been distributed to interested citizens and potential investors in the community. The most important function of the profile is to help decision makers understand the demographic and economic trends that influence future land use patterns.

Bonneville County Public Facilities Inventory, Including the City of Idaho Falls. This document provides a brief description of the major public facilities serving the people of Bonneville County and Idaho Falls. Completed in December 1989, this inventory helps decision makers understand the capacity of local public facilities to accommodate population growth and land development.

Bonneville County Fiscal Impact Analysis. This July 1988 study supplements the public facilities inventory with an analysis of the fiscal consequences of rural residential development.

Bonneville County Land Use Inventory. The land use inventory consists primarily of nearly 60 current land use maps and a summary document. The maps, most of which were prepared during the summer of 1990, provide a detailed basis for understanding land use patterns and trends throughout the county.

Bonneville County Natural Resource Inventory. The natural resource inventory consists of more than 200 map overlays and a summary document. The natural resource inventory describes the principal natural limitations on development in eight landscape units within the county and provides a sound basis for implementation of the Environmental Quality policy statement of this plan.

A Survey of Community Attitudes: Land Use and Planning in Bonneville County. This brief document reports the results of a 1989 survey of a random, stratified sample of Bonneville County residents. Survey respondents were asked to share their opinions about planning issues and priorities.

In addition to the studies undertaken specifically for this comprehensive plan, the Bonneville County Planning Commission made use of the Sunnyside Road Corridor Study prepared for the City of Idaho Falls. The extensive factual background supporting this comprehensive plan enhances its utility and defensibility.

**Local Planning Act Compliance.** The Local Planning Act (see I.C. 67-6508) includes a list of one dozen required plan components. This comprehensive plan fulfills the requirements of the Local Planning Act.

## **CITIZEN PARTICIPATION POLICY**

This plan is based on research and discussion by the county planning commission, and on an active program of public involvement. This policy calls for continuing public participation in the county's planning process.

**Enabling Authority.** Citizen participation in the planning process is mandated by law. The Idaho Local Planning Act requires two public hearings, one before the planning commission, and one before the board of county commissioners, on the

adoption or change of a comprehensive plan (see I.C. 67-6509) or zoning ordinance (see I.C. 67-6511). The comprehensive plan can be changed only once every 6 months. The Local Planning Act also specifically authorizes additional citizen participation activities, including citizen meetings, hearings, surveys, and other methods (see I.C. 67-6507).

**Citizen Participation in the Development of this Plan.** The Bonneville County Planning Commission used four principal citizen participation techniques in the formulation of this comprehensive plan: a public opinion poll, advisory committees, community information meetings, and the formal public hearings required by law.

**Citizen Participation Goal.** Bonneville County will continue to encourage citizen participation in its planning functions.

**Citizen Participation Strategies.**

1. **Bonneville County will continue to implement the due process requirements of state law in the administration of this plan and the supporting development code.** Specific due process requirements need not be listed here. They include requirements for adequate notice of hearings, fair hearing procedures, timely decisions, a record of decisions made, and the right to appeal.

2. **The county shall post planning and zoning commission meeting agendas.** Posting of planning and zoning commission agendas 48 hours in advance of the meeting will facilitate public participation in the planning process.

**PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES POLICY**

**Enabling Authority.** The Idaho Local Planning Act authorizes counties "To ensure that adequate public facilities and services are provided to the people at reasonable cost." (see I.C. 67-6502(b)). Counties are also authorized "To encourage urban and urban-type development within incorporated cities." (see I.C. 67-6502(f)).

**Planning Studies.** Several of the background studies prepared for this comprehensive plan provide useful information about public facilities and services provision in Bonneville County.

The demand for public facilities and services will grow. The Social and Economic Profile of Bonneville County and Idaho Falls suggests that the local population will increase at an annual rate of about 2% through the year 2000. If those projections are accurate, Bonneville County and other service providers will be required to accommodate more than 10,000 additional people during the next decade.

The Bonneville County Public Facilities Inventory shows that the availability of public services diminishes with distance from urban areas.

It also shows how access for public safety vehicles or school busses may be adversely affected by landscape features. In addition to these geographic limitations on services provision, the inventory identifies deficiencies in the capacity of existing facilities, including crowding in many schools and the county jail.

The Bonneville County Fiscal Impact Analysis compared the cost of providing services to rural residential developments with the revenues generated by those developments. It clearly demonstrates that the average rural residence requires a substantial subsidy from other tax-paying properties.

The Bonneville County Land Use Inventory and Idaho Falls land use inventory data indicate that the anticipated population increase could be accommodated on undeveloped lands in the Idaho Falls urban area, where it could be served by the appropriate extensions of the existing framework of arterial streets, interceptor sewers, and other facilities.

**Public Input.** Residents of Bonneville County assign a high priority to public facilities planning. The Bonneville County Planning Commission found that meeting the need for public facilities was rated as most important by more (25%) respondents than any other local planning issue (see A Survey of Community Attitudes: Land Use and Planning in Bonneville County). The community meetings added some specifics on public facilities provision. Iona-Bonneville Sewer District board members indicated that their district needs additional development to help pay for currently under utilized facilities (see the policy statement for the Iona-Bonneville Sewer District In-Fill Area). The Rural Fire Protection Advisory Committee also provided the planning commission with recommended standards designed to facilitate fire prevention and fire fighting efforts.

#### **Public Facilities and Services Planning Goal**

**To Assure adequate public facilities and services are provided for all Bonneville County residents by encouraging the location of high density developments within urban areas** the installation of a sound basic infrastructure in all new developments and discouraging development where terrain or a remote location make services provision difficult.

The facilities required in new developments will vary with their location and density, but the initial costs of providing the necessary infrastructure shall, be borne by the developer. All facilities installed in new developments shall meet the design and construction standards of Bonneville County, the appropriate service provider, and other regulatory agencies.

In addition to requiring adequate facilities and services provision in new developments, Bonneville County should utilize land use controls to protect the substantial public investment in existing facilities. The continued utility of many public facilities, including Fanning Field and major arterial roads, can be diminished, or even lost, as a result of the thoughtless development of neighboring lands.

## **Public Facilities and Services Planning Strategies**

1. **Encourage in-fill development.** Implementation of this strategy may require adoption of an area of city impact agreements.
2. **The proposed Bonneville County Zoning Ordinance should include public facilities standards appropriate for the different kinds and intensities of development anticipated in the county.** Those standards will establish the minimum facilities and services that must be available to protect public health and safety in different development situations. Complete implementation of this strategy will require funding of a staff or consulting effort to codify Bonneville County's road standards and add standards for other facilities (on-site storm water management would be one example), as needed.
3. **Require developers to provide appropriate on-site facilities at their expense, with those facilities being installed before the development is offered for sale, lease, or occupancy.** Phased provision of facilities as development occurs should be allowed, but only pursuant to a properly executed development agreement.
4. **Require developers to establish a reliable mechanism for perpetual maintenance of quasi-public improvements, including parking areas and common open space.** Developers of multi-parcel projects will normally implement this strategy with the formation of a community association.
5. **Protect the public investment in Fanning Field (the Idaho Falls municipal airport), as well as the safety of aircraft pilots and passengers, by continuing to enforce the airport zoning requirements recommended by the Federal Aviation Administration.** This strategy is an extension of current policy.
6. **Protect the efficient functioning of arterial streets by continuing to apply the standards recommended in the Sunnyside Corridor Study on all arterial roads.** See the policy statement on Land Use and Site Planning in Arterial Corridors.
7. **Permit compatible uses in areas surrounding public facilities.**
8. **Participate in the formation of a metropolitan transportation planning organization (MPO) for the Idaho Falls urbanized area.** County participation in a MPO will lead to the creation of useful tools for the analysis of the traffic impacts of proposed developments and the development of an area-wide transportation improvement program.
9. **COMMUNITY FACILITIES, GENERAL**
  - A. **Community Facilities** (public and semi-public facilities and services) are essential for the liveability and vitality of any area. They provide the basic services expected by people in today's society. Services and facilities of many kinds are directly related to a comprehensive plan, and to the development of an



area water, sewerage drainage, health facilities, schools, police and fire protection, solid waste disposal, and utilities of all types.

New enlarged or modified public facilities will be required continuously during the years ahead, and each facility will require its own special planning. The comprehensive plan provides the basis for integrating these special plans to achieve the greatest general benefit and economy. The plan makes it possible for city, county, public officials and those supplying such facilities to meet these growing changes more effectively.

In order for the County to have an effective Community facilities plan the following factors must be considered. The county must:

1. Provide and make provisions for the facilities, utilities, and services which are necessary for the well being of Bonneville County and its cities, will enrich the lives of all citizens, and will help to guide development into conformance with the comprehensive plan.
2. Promote facilities and services, particularly water and sewer systems, to all areas as development intensifies.
3. Insure that the capacities and patterns of utilities and other facilities are adequate to support the residential densities and land use intensities of the comprehensive plan.
4. Cooperate with other local public agencies in planning and constructing unified utility systems for areas greater than a single urban area, in accordance with the comprehensive plan.
5. Avoid the provision or expansion of public service and facilities in sparsely settled rural areas, when this would tend to encourage development or intensification of uses, or to create the need for additional urban services.
6. Encourage Bonneville County to establish detail sewer, water and road standards.
7. Even when individual septic tank systems would perform satisfactorily in certain urban soils, the general economy of public systems and the tendency for higher land values that result in smaller lot sizes will make sewage treatment plants the most satisfactory method for disposal of sewage.
8. Although septic tank drainage fields have worked well when properly installed in suitable soils, future performance is unpredictable because conditions are usually uncertain. In addition the long term cumulative effect of multiple drain fields in urban areas cannot be accurately foreseen.
9. It is in the best interests of all the citizens of Bonneville County to require residential developments to locate in areas which can be

serviced by a secondary treatment plant so that monies expended for reducing the pollution of the aquifer will not be wasted by allowing additional amounts of untreated sewage to be a further danger to the underground water supply. It is expected that sewerage system expansion and improvement will continue in urban areas as a consequence of population growth and development.

10. Provide all residents of urban areas with sewerage systems and to carefully regulate development and waste water disposal in rural areas to avoid pollution of ground water and receiving streams.

11. Eliminate local flooding and ground water problems in urban areas by providing separate storm drainage systems. This will also help avoid overloading sewage treatment facilities. To eliminate open irrigation systems in urban areas where feasible.

12. Have all possible development within urban growth areas connected to public sewer systems. Where immediate connection is not feasible, a commitment to participate in connecting to the system when available will be required.

13. Require that necessary on-site sewage disposal is related to soil characteristics, conforms to applicable health standards and is approved by health officials. Development outside of urban growth areas, where soil conditions are suitable for use of septic tanks, should be at sufficiently low density that individual disposal systems can operate indefinitely without hazard to public health. Gradual development in low density rural areas must not bring about conditions which will require construction of a sewerage system, unless it has been determined that the area will be included within an adopted urban growth area.

14. Provide for orderly conversion of undeveloped land to urban uses in close proximity to urban areas.

15. Expand the base employment level for Bonneville County by diversifying and expanding the economic and industrial base.

16. An area-wide plan for water, sewer and storm water run off and pollution abatement should be designed and developed and implemented.

17. Provide public utilities to all urbanizing areas. Where public utilities are available connection will be required.

18. A housing program for the area to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing to all persons at all levels of economic life.

19. Encourage the development of a variety of residential types, prices, and densities within the county.

20. Provide for expansion of recreation needs and areas as the population expands. This would be encouraged through the development of

small recreational facilities by the developer of a project and maintained by the local home owners.

21. Encourage the preservation of historic and scenic areas, critical game management areas, recreation areas and open space.

22. It is intended that the plan will provide reasonable growth and development guidelines, thus permitting the private sector to operate with maximum flexibility within these guidelines while also requiring that the public interest be met.

23. Plan and carry out all public construction and development programs so that they are compatible with the comprehensive plan. This is essential if private development is to be planned in an overall way.

24. A community facilities program should be developed on a county-wide basis involving all the entities in the county not just a single jurisdiction.

25. Define the needed community facilities within the county and develop an appropriate level of Community Facilities to service designated land uses in line with current standards and plan for expansion to meet future needs.

26. Develop facilities on an intra-jurisdictional basis.

**B. WATER SUPPLY - Goals**

Safe water for public consumption and other uses is one of the essential pre-conditions of community living. Although many county residents still use water drawn from individual wells, it is expected that future urban growth will largely depend upon public water systems which can best be provided by the extension of existing public systems.

1. A good public water supply is needed which is adequate for domestic and industrial purposes, to all areas which are planned for future development.

2. Where the underground aquifer is the only viable supply of domestic potable water in the county efforts must be made to protect it and maintain the resource.

**C. SCHOOLS - Goals**

Schools within the county continue to have an importance beyond their educational value. The playground, gymnasium, auditorium, and meeting rooms which can be used by the community after school hours are valuable community resources.

1. We must integrate schools with land use, transportation, recreation, and other community objectives and plans in order to realize their optimum

value for the citizenry.

2. Locate urban area schools in relation to surrounding residences and arterial streets so that the school may function as a residential neighborhood center with maximum safety for school children.

3. To develop parks and playgrounds adjacent to schools when possible in order that activities at this neighborhood center can include a wide range of outdoor, as well as indoor pursuits.

4. Cooperate with school officials in determining the location of new school sites which are properly related to the comprehensive plan. Utilities and urban area concepts are primary concerns.

**D. OTHER PUBLIC FACILITIES**

In addition to water, sewerage, and schools, urban growth will require many other public works, facilities and utilities. None of these can be planned independently. In addition to its essential public service function, each must be properly related to an overall pattern of public and private development.

1. We must manage the disposal of solid wastes in the county and its cities so that: air, land, and water resources are not contaminated, and so that the health and safety of the general public is protected.

**E. FIRE PROTECTION**

Fire protection is one of the most essential services provided by the cities and the county. The location and equipping of fire stations are key factors in determining the fire insurance rating assigned to any building, residential or commercial. Savings for all property owners in the county can be realized by the lower insurance costs which accompany a good fire protection rating. The relative need for fire protection and the time distance from the fire station to the areas served are the major criteria in determining the location of fire stations.

1. The number, location and type of fire stations will depend upon the direction and degree of density of future developments. The anticipated increase in population will require an equal increase in fire fighting facilities to maintain the excellent fire protection rating the area now enjoys.

**F. POLICE PROTECTION**

Police protection will have to be expanded as the population increases. The outmoded facilities of both Bonneville County and the City of Idaho Falls are sadly in need of replacement. Careful consideration should be given to provide cost saving to the area taxpayers by establishing joint facilities wherever possible. Excellent cooperation by mutual consent or by contract has been established between the Sheriff's Office and the

Police Department of the City of Idaho Falls. Agreements have been entered into between the City of Ammon and the Bonneville County Sheriff's Department for police surveillance in the Ammon area.

1. We must provide police protection to all residents of Bonneville County.

**G. LIBRARY - Goals**

1. The Idaho Falls Library is the only public library in Bonneville County.

2. The Idaho Falls Public Library is also headquarters for the Nine County Regional Library. Eighteen small libraries look to the Idaho Falls Public Library for reference and inter-library loan service. It is also the headquarters for the Eastern Idaho Library Region Six Bookmobile and the Bookmobile Librarian.

3. Rural residents may use the Idaho Falls Public Library services, but in order to borrow books they must possess a library card.

4. To cooperate with the City of Idaho Falls in providing library service to county residents.

**H. PARKS - Goals**

Adequate amounts of appropriately located parks and permanently committed open space are becoming more necessary and important as the county develops outward from the incorporated cities. The usage of the parks and recreation areas within the cities will become more intense as gasoline costs rise and as the picnic areas within the outlying open space in the national forests become over-saturated.

Parks should be considered as part of a system, not as unrelated areas. Each portion of the system plays a definite role in the entire plan. Elements of this system to be considered are the neighborhood community parks, golf courses, tennis courts, swimming pools, bike trails, and equestrian trails as well as the recreational facilities available in the nearby national forests (which constitute over 41 percent of the county area). Scenic open space is provided for at this time by the agricultural and grazing land areas; however, there is no guarantee as to how long this will remain.

In addition to the definition of needed community facilities, development and implementation of the plan will consider probably priorities, on a county-wide basis, to assure procurement and development of desired facilities in a timely manner. Adequate recreation facilities in a new subdivision would be a benefit to all persons involved.

1. We must provide adequate parks, playgrounds, play fields, bikes trails and equestrian trails for the present and future population of

Bonneville County.

2. We must expand, improve and fully utilize existing parks and recreational areas so that they receive maximum use and are adequate for future demand.

3. Cooperatively involve cities, county, school districts, state and federal agencies in the development of local recreational resources.

4. All recreation facilities of a local nature should be planned, to the greatest extent possible, in conjunction with existing and planned school facilities so that they may complement each other in function, thus avoiding costly and wasteful duplication of facilities.

5. A greenbelt system along the Snake River should be developed as a desirable goal of the County Comprehensive plan. However, until such time as a specific, feasible, plan is developed, the policy statements listed below should be pursued.

**I. RIVERS AND STREAMS - Goals**

1. A distance of 75 feet on all rivers, creeks and streams be kept between any future building and natural streams high water mark. Irrigation installations and recreational facilities shall be permissible when certain standards and criteria are met for this development. These standards will be developed in the near future.

2. Water quality must be preserved, natural scenery, fish and wildlife habitat, irrigation water, open space and recreation.

3. We recognize that many people are attracted to our natural streams that are virtually unpolluted yet. Many of the natural free flowing streams provide the only source of water for domestic livestock, wild animals and birds.

4. Greenscapes must be maintained or enhanced on all waterways where possible.

**J. DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY PATTERNS**

Leapfrog, peripheral expansion also confronts cities and the county with heavy new responsibilities. The plan is intended to be a guide for directing growth into more beneficial patterns and for achieving the following.

1. We must protect and promote the livability and vitality of the cities of the county. Cities are intended to continue to be centers of civic, social, cultural, and economic life and the primary sources of goods and services.

2. Multiple uses of open space land should be encouraged, provided that the uses are compatible and adequate area is provided for each specific function.
3. Work with other counties, the state and federal agencies when appropriate to provide park and recreation areas having inter-county, regional, state or federal recreational benefit.
4. We must regulate and guide private development by establishing clear and uniform standards and conditions under which development may occur.
5. We must anticipate the problems which will confront the area and to meet them in a positive way.
6. We must pursue general community improvement so that individual citizens will take greater pride in maintaining their own properties.
7. We must provide a more predictable and reliable basis for private investments and for public improvements.
8. We must maintain conditions favorable for a healthy, growing, diversified business and industrial climate.
9. We must cooperate with local groups whose programs of economic development are consistent with the comprehensive plan.
10. We must maintain a productive and profitable level of agriculture by preserving agricultural land for farming. To cooperate with agricultural activities.
11. We must secure agreement and coordination in planning matters between different local governments. To closely interrelate comprehensive plans, zoning, subdivision regulations, utility services, annexation, and other mutual concerns.
12. We must cooperate and assist local units of government in comprehensive plan development to encourage sharing of common objectives and facilitate intergovernmental coordination.
13. A policy is established to carefully review existing and future regulations in this regard to eliminate divisions or agriculture parcels for purposes other than bona fide agricultural activities.

**REQUIRED IMPROVEMENTS**

**A. Required Improvements.** All developments shall provide the improvements required by the following Table. The residential development types are defined in subsections 1. through 5.

**REQUIRED INFRASTRUCTURE MATRIX**

<b>Infrastructure Element</b>	<b>Urban Residential</b>	<b>Low Density Urban</b>	<b>Resort Residential</b>	<b>Rural Residential</b>
<b>Safe Access to Public Roads</b>	required	required	required	required
<b>Paved Roads</b>	required	required	may be required	may be required
<b>Graded, Drained Gravel Roads</b>	paving required	paving required	required	required
<b>Sidewalks or Pedestrian Trails</b>	required	may be required	may be required	may be required
<b>Central Water System</b>	required	may be required	may be required	may be required
<b>Central Sewerage System</b>	required	may be required	may be required	not required
<b>Fire Department Response Time</b>	10 minutes	20 minutes	may be required	no maximum
<b>Stormwater Disposal Facilities</b>	required	required	required	required
<b>Neighborhood Parks</b>	may be required	may be required	may be required	may be required
<b>Utilities and Easements</b>	required	required	required	required



1. **Urban Residential** developments have an average density greater than 3 dwelling units per acre. They are urban in appearance and require urban facilities and services to ensure public health and safety. The Cloverdale Subdivision east of Idaho Falls is an example. Future in-fill of existing Urban Residential projects shall be permitted where adequate facilities are provided. Where such in-fill occurs within an adopted area of city impact, all facilities installed shall meet the adopted standards.

2. **Low Density Urban Residential** developments are distinguished from Urban residential developments by larger lot sizes and, frequently, the presence of pastures, livestock, and outbuildings like tack sheds and stables. Low Density Suburban Residential developments have an average density of less than 3 dwelling units per acre. Examples include Canyon Creek Estates, west of Idaho Falls, and Country Life Estates, west of Ucon. Future developments of this kind shall be permitted within areas of city impact. City improvement standards may be required.

3. **Resort Residential** developments will be found in the county's scenic landscapes, particularly Swan Valley. They may be of any density and may have central water and sewerage systems, sidewalks, and other urban facilities. The facilities required will vary with the location and intensity of development. Resort Residential projects may include both year round and seasonal dwellings and may be integrated with commercial developments, including guest ranches, recreational vehicle parks, and marinas. Infrastructure needs shall be determined independently for each proposed resort development, depending on its proposed design and density.

4. **Rural Residential** development includes a limited number of other dwellings based upon the A-1 agricultural growth rings.

Note: Only a few examples of detailed required improvement standards are provided here.

a. **Safe Access to Public Roads.** All developments, and all lots within developments, shall have safe direct access to a public road or to a private road that meets the adopted standards.

b. **Central Water Systems.** Central water systems shall be designed and constructed in compliance with state standards or by standards adopted by the county. Central water systems may be required to provide adequate flows and hydrants to support fire fighting efforts.

c. **Central Sewerage Systems.** Central sewerage systems shall be designed and constructed in compliance with state standards or standards adopted by the county.

d. **Utilities and Easements.** Utilities and easements include electric power, natural gas, telephone, cable television, and private water or sewer utilities, as required.

## **AGRICULTURAL LANDS POLICY**

Agriculture is Bonneville County's dominant land use. Just under 96% of all private lands in the county are used for farmsteads, primary processing of agricultural commodities, cropland or rangeland. Agriculture and agribusiness enterprises are also the second largest source of employment and personal income in the county, falling just behind the Idaho National Engineering Laboratory and its associated firms. The maintenance of agricultural land and water resources, and of viable farm units, is essential to the county's continued prosperity. Agriculture is also an integral part of Bonneville County history and the principal contributor of the pastoral open spaces that compose much of its scenic landscape. This policy statement establishes a goal and strategies that address the need to minimize adverse impacts on agricultural operations and the agricultural resource base as Bonneville County grows.

**Enabling Authority.** Idaho's Local Planning Act authorizes counties, "To encourage the protection of prime agricultural, forestry, and mining lands for production of food, fiber, and minerals." (I.C. 67-6502.(e).).

**Planning Studies.** Supplemental information on agriculture in Bonneville County may be found in A Social and Economic Profile of Bonneville County and Idaho Falls and the Bonneville County Land Use Inventory.

### **Agricultural Lands Planning Issues**

There are three major issues in planning for agricultural lands, all of which were raised and discussed by the planning commission and participants in the community meetings:

1. The need to maintain the agricultural resource base.
2. The need to protect farm operations from the adverse impacts of urban or suburban development; and
3. The need to provide agricultural landowners with some flexibility in the disposition of their property.

### **Agricultural Lands Planning Goal**

Protect the viability of Bonneville County's agricultural industry by limiting potential conflict between agriculture and other land uses. Some quality croplands will be converted to urban and suburban use, but a compact pattern of land development that is determined, in part, by the quality of the croplands affected can minimize the premature conversion of croplands to other uses and protect operating farms and ranches from conflict with nonagricultural neighbors.

It is intended that the viable agriculture areas of the county be preserved and maintained, consistent with existing and future needs for agricultural products, forest and open space. In particular, productive lands with fertile soils under irrigation must not be unnecessarily diverted from farm use.

### **Agricultural Lands Planning Strategies**

**1. Limit the potential conflict between agriculture and other land uses by encouraging a compact pattern of land development centered on urban areas.** This strategy is also an important element in the implementation of the Public Facilities and Services and Areas of City Impact policies.

**2. Provide flexibility for agricultural landowners by permitting the limited development of rural homesites in agricultural areas, in a cluster pattern..** Residential development can be integrated into agricultural areas, if it is confined and limited in scale to minimize adverse impacts on adjoining farm operations and minimize the demand for additional public facilities and services. The principal elements needed to implement this strategy in the proposed Bonneville County Development Code are listed below.

a. Assignment of a base density to all lands. The base density should be similar to that which characterizes the county's predominantly agricultural areas (about 10 to 60 acres per dwellings with a minimum lot size of 1/3 of an acre). It should also be low enough to severely restrict the development of naturally hazardous and sensitive lands, and to preserve the landscape character that attracts people to rural living.

b. A provision that the base density from productive croplands and naturally hazardous or sensitive areas may be transferred to cluster developments on suitable sites. Such transfers may be to suitable sites within the holdings of the same landowner.

c. The clusters may be required have a single entrance from the public road to help maintain the visual integrity of the local agricultural landscape.

**3. Require that all new residences in agricultural areas record a resource management easement protecting the continuing operations of neighboring farms and ranches.** This easement also protects gravel mining and similar rural resource development activities that are important elements of the county's economy, but may be perceived as undesirable by inhabitants of nearby homes.

**4. Notify the affected irrigation company or district on all proposals for the conversion of irrigated lands to other uses.** Enforce the state law that controls the subdivision of irrigated lands. I.C. 31-3805., et. seq. requires that water rights be transferred from the land or that the developer provide an adequate system for the distribution of irrigation water to individual lots.

**5. Permit home occupations to help support the farm economy.** Home occupations

are also addressed in the Land Use Compatibility policy.

**6. Permit the development of agricultural wholesale and processing uses at appropriate sites in agricultural areas. Also permit gravel mining and other resource development activities that are compatible with the surrounding farm and ranch operations.** Development of such uses must be consistent with the other policies of this plan.

### **Other Agricultural Categories**

#### **Rural Center Planning Goals**

Rural centers are intended for outlying locations which have traditionally been an activity center for a dispersed, rural population. Such centers will usually be isolated and distinct from any urban center and located at a junction of principal rural roads or at other strategic places within a rural settlement.

The Rural Center is for application to selected rural locations, particularly those having business establishments which cater to the regular needs of surrounding rural residents for convenience goods and services, and to the traveling public.

1. The rural center could potentially provide for the sale of agriculturally related products and services and the storage and transfer of agricultural products may appropriately occur in the vicinity. It is desirable that such intensive farm related activities be grouped together to reduce their impact on productive farm land and rural residents.

2. Provide for the continuation of services and conveniences at established rural centers.

3. Maintain and foster social activities, community feeling, and local identity through appropriate land uses and activities.

4. Other appropriate uses would include schools, a hall or church, and uses permitted in urban neighborhood commercial locations. Lot sizes will be subject to approval by the health department and whatever entity distributes the appurtenant irrigation water rights to the land, if septic tanks are to be used. The particular use in the rural zone should also comply with the general ordinance requirements of the zone in which they would normally be found.

5. For commercial, service, and other intensive uses, access and visibility from roadways should be designed to preserve safety.

6. Existing identifiable Rural Centers within Bonneville County are shown on the comprehensive plan map.

#### **Rural Residential Goals**

Intended for limited application in outlying rural locations to provide suitable places and conditions for non-farm homesites. These areas are intended

for permanent rural residential character. Incidental farming is allowed, but an economic scale of farming will not be practical because of small parcel size and other limitations. Urban services such as a public water system, public sewerage system, will normally be absent as a separate and identifiable requirement for an area where there are rural residential type activities.

1. The Rural Residential zone identifies places where dwellings for non-farmers may be built in a generally suburban setting under conditions which will protect the public health, preserve the rural character of the area as much as possible and permit productive agriculture in surrounding areas to continue unimpeded.

2. Location Criteria: The Rural Residential land use category is shown on the land use plan map in a general way. The comprehensive plan map also indicates areas that have been significantly committed to rural residential development. This type of development may be deemed appropriate where overriding amenities are present to warrant rural residential activities in specific and identifiable location. Zoning maps, adopted to implement the comprehensive plan will define the category as to its application to land parcels following the general location guidelines of the plan. This is intended to discourage premature land acquisition for residential development purposes in areas not identified for rural residential development. The rural residential land use category is applied to the comprehensive plan with the intention that future proposals will be reviewed and be required to meet all or part of the general criteria.

3. To be identified as a rural residential area there should be a significant amount of preexisting rural residential type development in the immediate vicinity.

4. Development Criteria: Subdivisions for Rural Residential home site are acceptable, particularly when the impact upon agriculture can be minimized by grouping home sites on non-farm land.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY POLICY**

Bonneville County's decision to develop a new comprehensive plan was motivated, in part, by environmental planning issues. The South Fork of the Snake River, which provides critical habitat for bald eagles and is rapidly becoming known as one of the West's premier fisheries, is foremost among the county's many environmental assets. Fisheries, wildlife habitat, scenic vistas, clean water, and other environmental resources provide a tremendous amenity for Bonneville County residents. They are also a major attraction for visitors and potential investors in the local economy. The purpose of this policy is to assure that insensitive land development does not diminish the county's environmental assets.

**Enabling Authority.** The Local Planning Act gives Idaho counties a broad mandate "To ensure that the important environmental features of the state and localities

are protected and enhanced." (I.C. 67-6502(d)), "To ensure that the development on land is commensurate with the physical characteristics of the land." (I.C. 67-6502(h)), "To protect life and property in areas subject to natural hazards and disasters." (I.C. 67-6502(i)), "To protect fish, wildlife, and recreation resources." (I.C. 67-6502(j)), and "To avoid undue water and air pollution." (I.C. 67-6502(k)).

**Planning Studies.** The background studies prepared for this comprehensive plan provide a great deal of information about natural resources and environmental quality.

The Bonneville County Public Facilities Inventory reports on the status of public facilities designed to protect environmental quality, including sewage and solid waste disposal systems. Among other findings, it indicates that many of the county's rural people rely on individual wells and on-site sewage disposal systems.

The maps of the Bonneville County Land Use Inventory show how the county's residents use their landscape: for farming, ranching, outdoor recreation, homesite, and other purposes.

The occupancy patterns described by the land use inventory are a reflection of the opportunities nature provides (and the limitations nature imposes) in different landscape settings, as explained in the Bonneville County Natural Resource Inventory.

**Public Input.** The Bonneville County Planning Commission found that county residents place substantial value on environmental quality: residents felt that the county should plan to "avoid development of natural hazard areas such as floodplain . . ." and it should plan to "avoid development of such environmentally sensitive areas as wetlands . . .". Environmental quality was also a major topic in the community meetings held in the Swan Valley area and planning commission discussions with the city councils of Irwin and Swan Valley. The principal environmental planning concerns in the Swan Valley Irwin area are the potential for contamination of the local aquifer and maintaining the special qualities of the corridor along the South Fork of the Snake River.

### **Environmental Quality Planning Goal**

Maintain environmental quality and open space that characterizes the Bonneville County landscape, by requiring compliance with state and federal environmental laws and directing development away from hazardous and sensitive lands. The county should limit the density of development or impose standards where necessary to protect surface and groundwater quality, wetland and riparian corridors, and other natural resources.

### **Environmental Quality Planning Strategies**

**1. Require that all proposed developments demonstrate continuing compliance with**

state and federal laws controlling air and water pollution, the disposal of solid waste, and the use and disposal of hazardous substances. Bonneville County should also address the storage and handling of solid waste as part of the Land Use Compatibility policy.

**2. Require that all developments be designed to minimize soil erosion and address storm or melt water runoff.** Implementation of this strategy will require that a runoff and erosion control plan be prepared for developments.

**3. Require central sewerage or permit only low density development in areas of groundwater vulnerability.** Groundwater can best be protected by encouraging sequential development with central sewerage. Outside the urban area (or inside it, when development precedes provision of central sewerage) only low density development should be permitted in areas of groundwater vulnerability.

**4. Direct development away from such hazardous areas as floodplains and unstable slopes.** Only limited base density should be assigned to sites that may be subject to flooding, slope failure, and other natural hazards. All density assigned to hazardous areas should be transferred to sites that are suitable for development. The essential elements in the implementation of this strategy are the same as those listed for the similar strategy recommended to implement the Agricultural Lands policy.

a. Land along Sand Creek and the Snake River and tributary streams is subject to inundation during periods of high water. Areas where flooding occurs regularly have generally not been used for urban and industrial uses, but farming and grazing of flood land is common.

In certain cases records of past flood levels and profiles of possible future floods of varying severity have been developed. Where precise boundaries are available for areas subject to different degrees of flood risk, these will be the basis for flood plain regulation and flood insurance programs.

b. We must identify lands subject to the possibility of future flooding so that losses can be kept to a minimum in such areas.

c. We must limit construction, investment, and activities in order to avoid property loss, hazard to human life, obstruction of floodways, and the dispersal of dangerous materials into floodwaters.

d. We must establish land use controls and other measures which will qualify such areas for the national flood insurance program.

e. Limited development will be allowed along rivers and streams where a potential for future flooding exists. The best available data will be utilized to establish the boundaries of flood plain areas to be regulated by appropriate zoning controls. Diked land may be excluded from flood plain boundaries depending upon dike elevations and status of flood protection devices.

Farming and recreation would be appropriate uses of such lands. Housing, structures, and activities which would suffer loss if inundated, present hazards for human life, or obstruct the floodway will be prohibited or required to provide floodproofing.

**5. Continue Bonneville County's participation in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP).** The floodplain development regulations required for participation in the NFIP limit the potential for on-site and downstream flood damage when development is permitted within a flood hazard area.

**6. Encourage development away from sensitive lands, including wetlands and stream corridors.** The limited base density assigned to sensitive lands should reflect the potentially negative impacts of their development on the county's environmental assets. All density assigned to sensitive lands where possible should be transferred to sites suitable for development.

**7. Protect all streams, rivers, and lakes with development setbacks.** Development setbacks should be used along all Bonneville County watercourses. All corridors should include the 100 year floodplain and all areas of wetlands or riparian vegetation associated therewith. Only minimal disturbance (pedestrian trails, utility crossings, etc.) should be allowed in the corridors.

**8. Protect wildlife resources and the public investment in habitat development by permitting only compatible use of lands bordering the Tex Creek Wildlife Management Area and Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge.**

## LAND USE COMPATIBILITY POLICY

The members of the Bonneville County Planning Commission cumulatively have more than 50 years experience in planning administration. They have devoted dozens of hours to public hearings at which land use compatibility was the principal issue. The goal and strategies adopted here are based on the commission's experience and the detailed knowledge of Bonneville County assembled during the preparation of this comprehensive plan. They also reflect input received from the public, both during the development of this comprehensive plan and at numerous past hearings on specific land use changes.

**Enabling Authority.** The Idaho Local Planning Act authorizes counties to promote the general health and safety and "To protect property rights and property values." (I.C. 67-6502(a)). Counties are also authorized "To avoid undue concentration of population and overcrowding of land." (I.C. 67-6502 (h)).

**Planning Studies.** Land use compatibility is one of the most fundamental planning concerns and it is addressed in several of the background studies prepared for this comprehensive plan.

The Bonneville County Public Facilities Inventory notes the need to protect certain facilities, like landfills, from the liability and nuisance claims that can be generated by incompatible neighboring uses. It



also points out the potential loss of function that can result when incompatible uses are permitted near outdoor recreation areas or inappropriate development patterns are allowed along major roads.

The maps prepared for the Bonneville County Land Use Inventory provide a basis for the understanding of current land use patterns and the evaluation of proposed land use changes, but land use maps can only point toward compatibility issues. The details of project sighting and design are extremely important in determining the compatibility of different uses.

**Public Input.** The Bonneville County Zoning Commission has conducted a number of hearings where the compatibility of different uses (gravel pits and solid waste transfer stations are recent examples) was debated, but land use compatibility tends to be a site-specific issue. The community meetings (especially in Iona) produced a great deal of input on the compatibility of residential development with agriculture, but few other specific compatibility issues were mentioned.

#### **Land Use Compatibility Planning Issues**

The list of land use compatibility issues in Bonneville County begins with the conflict between residential development and neighboring farm operations. Other compatibility issues do merit some attention, including:

1. Conflict between gravel mining operations and nearby residences.
2. Conflict between residential and other industrial uses (with the nature of the conflict varying substantially, depending on the use proposed); and
3. The impact of increasing traffic on residences that adjoin arterial roads and the impact of those homes on traffic flows (see the Policy on Land Use and Site Planning Along Arterial Roads for more on this topic).

#### **Land Use Compatibility Planning Goal**

Maintain property values and provide a secure basis for investments in business, industry, and housing by requiring the mitigation of potential nuisances and adopting standards to ensure that neighboring land uses are reasonably compatible. We must arrange the uses which are made of land so that they are orderly, convenient, and suitably related to each other and to their natural setting; fulfill the requirements of the people served; and are adequately supported by public facilities.

#### **Land Use Compatibility Planning Strategies**

1. **Adopt general land use compatibility standards.** These standards should eliminate or require the mitigation of any public health and safety hazards or nuisances that may be generated by new developments, and help maintain neighborhood stability by maintaining property values. The general land use compatibility standards may require landscaped buffers and structural screening,

property line setbacks, shared points of access to public roads, shared parking, limited building heights, limited hours of operation, the proper handling of solid waste, and other appropriate measures to ensure compatibility. They may also integrate the basic provisions of the current zoning in fully developed areas.

**2. Adopt land use compatibility standards that help protect the working landscape on which the Bonneville County economy is based.** See the Agricultural Lands policy for the specific strategies needed to protect agricultural operations from conflicting development. Implementation of this strategy also requires that special standards be adopted for the sighting and operation of gravel mines, which are a common land use in the Idaho Falls urban area and other populated parts of the county. The general compatibility standards should be sufficient to address the compatibility issues associated with other industrial and commercial developments.

**3. Adopt standards for home occupations.** Home occupations should be permitted but only where they comply with standards designed to protect neighboring homes and maintain a residential atmosphere.

**4. Protect public facilities from incompatible neighboring uses.** Implementation of this strategy is further detailed in the Public Facilities and Services Policy statement. See also the Policy on Land Use and Site Planning Along Arterial Roads.

**5. The following should be considered in all compatibility decisions:**

a. All proposals should facilitate the grouping or clustering of compatible uses and those which support or depend upon each other. Grouping will also permit public services to be provided most economically.

b. New uses should prevent undue concentrations of uses which would destroy living quality, congest thoroughfares, or overload public facilities.

c. The plan establishes a close relationship between private land use and the public facilities, such as streets, sewers, water supply, and fire protection, which serve these uses.

d. The proposal should relate the use of land to the characteristics, limitations, and suitabilities of the natural environment such as soils, wind, view, slope, and vegetation.

e. Establish, where necessary or desirable, a separation or buffer between conflicting or incompatible land uses. This should be done by utilizing natural or man-made features, or through the use of zoning categories. The proposal must protect the adjoining uses lot compatibility qualities by requiring landscaped screening or buffering between lesser and more intensive adjacent uses.

f. The plan must permit a variety of dwelling types which will mix or distribute the population of neighborhoods. Major residential areas should not be unduly stereo-typed or exclusive. Planned unit development procedures are expected to achieve variety and other living amenities.

g. The proposal should permit flexibility in residential site design and a mixture of housing types.

h. Established density standards in the vicinity will serve as the basis for the overall density of standard and planned developments. Special review and approval by the Planning Commission will be required. Projects will be expected to provide usable open space, community facilities and other special amenities.

i. Designate separate areas for multi-family residences. Appropriate locations for these may conform to the listed conditions and criteria.

j. Establish multi-family residential areas should be located functionally convenient to a major street. Adequate arterial and collector streets should exist prior to, or be developed concurrently with, the establishment of such uses.

k. Establish near city centers, or other concentrations of shopping, employment, recreation, conveniences, amenities, and attractions intended for intensive community-wide use and enjoyment.

l. Establishing high-density multi-family projects may have a character distinct from traditional low or medium density neighborhoods. The plan may identify areas suitable for these development, however they will be subject to special review and design standards under zoning and other applicable ordinance.

## **POLICY ON LAND USE AND SITE PLANNING ALONG ARTERIAL ROADS**

Increasing development pressure along arterial roads in Bonneville County poses a number of challenges for land use decision makers. The purpose of the arterials, and the reason for the major public investment they represent, is to move traffic from one part of the county to another as rapidly and efficiently as possible. Residential development with direct access to these roads severely limits their capacity, as does congestion created where commercial developments are attracted to busy intersections.

**Enabling Authority.** The Idaho Local Planning Act authorizes counties "To ensure that adequate public facilities and services are provided to the people at reasonable cost." (see I.C. 67-6501(b)).

**Planning Studies/Public Input.** Extensive development along road corridors raised questions about the desirable land use pattern for area's, the capacity of the existing roads to safely carry projected traffic flows, and the adequacy

of other public facilities in the area. Those questions were addressed in a Sunnyside Road Corridor Study prepared for Idaho Falls' Division of Planning and Building in October 1988. That study proposed general goals and specific land use and site planning policies for the Sunnyside Corridor. Those recommendations were reviewed by the city and county planning and zoning commissions, county commissioners, area landowners and developers, and the general public.

**Goals for Development Roads.** Provide for efficient movement of traffic on arterial roads, but accommodate the increasing traffic flows in sustainable residential environments by adopting land use and design strategies to eliminate the traffic conflicts and other conditions that can cause neighborhood decline and pressure for land use transitions. Also, provide for safe pedestrian movement and bicycling along arterial roads and into adjoining neighborhoods, and enhance the livability of those neighborhoods by adopting standards for landscaping in new developments.

#### **Land Use and Site Planning Strategies along Arterial Roads**

Strategies 1. and 2. apply to Sunnyside Road. Strategies 3. through 7. apply to all roads in Bonneville County.

**1. Land development in the Sunnyside Corridor should occur primarily through annexation to Ammon or Idaho Falls.** Any development permitted in unincorporated portions of the corridor East of 5th West should be entirely residential and fully compatible with annexation to one of the cities. Apartments and similar high-density residential uses should be concentrated along collector streets.

**2. Sunnyside Road should be improved to an arterial section of two lanes with improved shoulders and left and right turn lanes at all intersections.** The arterial section may be expanded to four or five lanes as traffic increases.

**3. Proposed commercial, industrial, and platted residential uses should have indirect access to arterials via collector streets.**

**4. Direct access to arterials should not be permitted, except where the option of indirect access has been eliminated by existing land use patterns.** New points of access to rural arterial roads should be via collector streets. Minor exceptions to the access policy may be necessary for existing individual parcels.

**5. Sidewalks should be provided along arterials wherever they adjoin platted residential developments. Pedestrian connections into platted residential neighborhoods are essential.** Sidewalks should be provided along collector streets and the development of off-street trail systems should be encouraged.

**6. Platted residential lots adjacent to a rural arterial must have reverse frontage and be deep enough to allow for a substantial yard between the house and outdoor living spaces and the road.** Appropriate lot depth will vary with the terrain and the buffering provided.

**7. All platted residential, commercial, and industrial uses should provide effective landscaped buffers along the arterial.** The buffers would be required as on-site improvements (just like roads within a subdivision). Standards for buffering should be included in the revised zoning and subdivision ordinances. Existing trees should be retained, wherever possible, as street trees, in the required buffers, or in individual yards.

**8. The county road standards.** County-wide street and road standards should be adopted by the county and the cities within the county. These standards should be of comparable design for the convenience of local units of governments, as well as developers. As discussed in the areas of city impact agreements section, in preparing these standards, it is important to bear in mind that those areas in close proximity to incorporated cities will probably become a part of the city in the near future, and streets should be developed to meet the standards of the city. In areas expected to remain rural, a different set of criteria should apply.

**9. The following objectives should be reviewed before the development on any existing or new road. The plan should:**

- a. Provide facilities for transporting people, raw materials, and products, and for their transfer from one mode of transportation to another.
- b. Insure that road and other transportation systems have the capacity for expansion and extension to adequately serve current and future needs.
- c. Provide special protected routes, particularly in urban areas, for walking, bicycles and equestrian usage. Where possible, these should be part of a system within linked greenways.
- d. Develop for all of Bonneville County, an adequate integrated system of major and minor streets and roads, including rural roads, which give adequate access to outlying areas.
- e. Protect future arterial rights-of-way identified in the plan until they can be acquired.
- f. Require that all newly established streets and highways are of proper width, alignment, design, and construction and are in conformance with this plan and adopted street standards.
- g. Regulate and restrict development within areas required for future widening of rights-of-way.
- h. Control or eliminate hazards and traffic conflicts along road rights-of-way through building setbacks, dedications, constructing frontage roads or regulation of access at the time of subdivision, zone change, or construction.
- i. Consideration should be given to the number of cuts made in improved

streets when connecting to utilities. Sewer and water lines should be periodically stubbed outside the right-of-way in sufficient size to serve adjacent property, thereby negating the need to cut the pavement for individual services.

j. Provide a coordinated transportation program for the region.

k. Develop an integration of highways, rail and air transportation within the area.

l. Provide for expanding and extending the transportation network as the population grows.

#### **10. Local Streets - Goals**

a. The principal purpose of a local street is to provide access to property abutting the public right-of-way; this includes vehicular and pedestrian access.

b. Moving traffic is a secondary function of local streets, and traffic is generally so light that the land access function is not impaired. Since land service is their primary function, local streets should not be allowed to carry through traffic; buses and heavy trucks should be excluded except where the local street is in a commercial or an industrial district.

c. The local street serves as a dedicated right of way for all types of utilities, including sewers, water lines, gas mains, electrical and telephone conduits or poles, and so on.

d. The local street serves as an open space between buildings to provide light and air to adjoining properties and to serve as a fire break.

e. The local street functions as an urban design element. The street is a site for buildings, and its arrangement in curves or straight lines, with trees, shrubbery, grass, and flowers, can be part of a large-scale design composition. Alleys are not considered to be streets and should not be included in any street plan for new residential areas.

f. Cross-sections of local streets vary with building practices, abutting land uses, parking, weather conditions, planting of street trees, and other considerations.

#### **11. Collector Streets - Goals**

a. The collector street is primarily a residential phenomenon, serving to drain traffic off local streets before volumes get too high, and leading the traffic to arterials or to local generators such as schools, shopping centers, or community centers. In commercial areas, traffic

volumes build up too fast for efficient use of collectors, and the local or land-access street should therefore connect directly with an arterial. In large industrial areas, a collector street may be needed occasionally.

b. The major function of the collector is to bring traffic from local residential streets to arterials or freeways. Land access is, or should be, a secondary function of collectors, and the design and operation of this type of street should reflect the traffic emphasis. Parking should be discouraged, and residential buildings preferably should not face onto, or have driveways entering, the collector. Like the local street, a collector street functions as an easement or location for utilities and communications, as an open space furnishing light and air, and as a design element in the residential community.

c. Land access should be a secondary function of arterials; it, however, is a legal right. Historically, traffic meant people, people meant trade, and trade meant commercial development. Zoning has perpetuated this concept, but the design of streets and platting of abutting properties has not kept pace with the problems brought on by increasing traffic volumes. Consideration for the use of land adjacent to arterials must be given at the time of design and location of the street. Recommendations, such as frontage roads or double-frontage lots, should be an integral part of the street plan.

## **12. Parking - Goals**

Parking is an integral part of the automotive transportation system; it is the terminal storage of vehicles while drivers and passengers are occupied elsewhere. Where terminal storage capacity is inadequate, back-ups in streets and excessive hunting for parking spaces may affect the street system. It is one object of a good transportation plan to determine and provide a balance between circulation of motor vehicles and terminal storage, with due regard for other types of transportation and for buildings and land values.

The ordinances must require that off-street parking be provided at the developer's expense. Off-street parking is required by the zoning ordinance for residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional activities as well.

## **HISTORIC RESOURCES POLICY**

**Enabling Authority.** The Idaho Local Planning Act requires that all local governments consider historical areas, sites, or structures in their comprehensive plans (I.C. 67-6508(i)). Additional authority for the protection of historic resources is provided by I.C. 67-4612, which states:

"In addition to any power or authority of a city or county to regulate by planning and zoning laws and regulations or by local laws and regulations, the governing body of any county or city is empowered to provide by ordinances, special conditions or restrictions for the protection, enhancement and preservation of historic properties."

**Planning Studies/Public Input.** While a handful of sites have been listed on the National Register of Historic Places, only one systematic study of historic buildings has been conducted in rural Bonneville County. Jennifer Eastman Attebery is preparing an extensive report on the Swedish-American settlement in the New Sweden area west of Idaho Falls. While the public did not identify protection of historic resources as an issue at any of the community meetings or public hearings conducted during the development of this plan, the planning commission concluded that the identification and protection of historic resources should be a goal of this comprehensive plan.

#### **Historic Resources Planning Goal.**

Bonneville County should inventory local historic resources and, where appropriate, recognize the contribution of individual historic sites or structures to the community's heritage by nomination to the National Register of Historic Places or a local register of historic sites that would become a part of this plan. The county should also consider adding measures to protect important historic sites to its development code.

#### **Historic Resources Planning Strategies**

- 1. Add a historic resources inventory to the background studies accompanying this comprehensive plan.** As funds permit, Bonneville County should prepare a historic resources inventory. Partial funding for such an effort could possibly be obtained through participation in the Certified Local Governments program operated by the Idaho State Historical Society.
- 2. Consider development code amendments that will protect significant historic sites from demolition, alterations that diminish their historic value, and incompatible neighboring uses.** The adoption of regulatory measures to protect local historic resources should await a more complete inventory of those resources. Effective protection of historic resources will necessitate the appointment of an historic preservation commission, as authorized in I.C. 67-4603, et. seq. Such a commission could work with the owners of designated historic properties to find alternatives to demolition or incompatible alterations. It would also have the power to issue certificates of appropriateness for new developments in any designated historic districts.

### **URBAN AREAS PLANNING POLICIES**

This plan includes additional goals and policies for the proposed areas of city impact and a proposed suburban in-fill area in the Iona-Bonneville Sewer District (IBSD). The areas of city impact policy is intended to encourage sequential urban development, to facilitate county/city cooperation in planning, and to help implement other policies of this plan, including the Public Facilities and Services and Agricultural Lands policies. Its implementation would result in the adoption (or, in the case of Ammon, update) of area of city impact agreements between Bonneville County and each of its seven incorporated



cities. The IBSD in-fill policy recognizes that the availability of central sewerage service combined with the existing development pattern eliminates continued agricultural use as a reasonable policy choice for the IBSD service area.

#### **URBAN AREA GOALS**

The following material describes land uses appropriate for urban areas. Urban (or urbanizing) areas are generally described as those areas adjacent to or in close proximity to cities where existing or contemplated development is occurring at a relatively high density. General conditions for residential land uses are covered, followed by criteria for high density residential. Commercial and industrial land uses are also treated in this section.

#### **Urban Residential Goals**

1. The plan is intended as a guide for dealing with various and changing residential conditions and for creating more livable residential areas for the residents of Bonneville County.
2. The zone should create and maintain residential living areas which are safe, convenient, and attractive and give personal satisfaction to the residents.
3. The zone should allow for the use of housing types ranging from single-family homes and manufactured homes to multi-family apartments and providing for variation in the design of these areas and their related facilities, consistent with the availability of supportive services.
4. The zone should permit a variety of dwelling types which will mix or distribute the population of neighborhoods. Major residential areas should not be unduly stereo-typed or exclusive. Planned unit development procedures are expected to achieve a variety living amenities.

#### **Commercial Goals**

This zone is intended for a wide variety of retail, repair, services, and professional business which are required for urban and rural areas of the county. The zone should provide general patterns and guidelines for county commercial development which can be applied to local governments through zoning. It should allow for major and minor business concentrations and commercial development of arterials which will have a minimum adverse effect upon surrounding and adjacent streets.

1. The commercial zone should preserve the Idaho Falls Urban Area as the Regional Shopping Center for the Eastern Idaho area.
2. Commercial service areas should be located near residential areas to serve the every day needs of the county's population, consistent with the intended service areas and its needs.

3. The goal is to establish commercial areas which provide maximum service to the public while still being properly integrated into the physical pattern of communities, and contribute to a sound and stable business climate while still protecting the neighboring uses.
4. The plan is to encourage commercial activities to locate within urban areas, in close proximity to the population centers to be served, and developed with the proper utilities and services required for the commercial establishments.
5. The plan encourages the grouping of commercial activities into clusters or centers, in order to provide adequate parking and control points of ingress and egress on major and minor streets.
6. The goal of the plan is to avoid indiscriminate "strip" commercial development along roadways, and to encourage business to locate at designated strategic places. To develop only designated commercial portions of arterials so that property owners may develop residential or other uses without fear of disruptive business intrusions.
7. The locating of isolated businesses along highways which could create pressures for additional development without adequate public services is strongly discouraged by the plan.
8. The zone should insure that business establishments have sufficient land. The size and dimensions of sites should be adequate for buildings, off-street parking, loading and on-site vehicular circulation which will permit street access at appropriate locations for safety.
9. The goal is to preserve commercial areas for business use by limiting residential, industrial, and other incompatible uses within or adjacent to them.
10. The plan map should indicate areas for all types of business development. Locally applied zoning may distinguish between commercial areas which have distinct functions. These subcategories of commercial uses would be designed to establish a limited range of compatible and mutually supporting kinds of business appropriate to particular locations and markets, such as Residential Shopping Center, highway and general commercial.
11. The plan should allow for small commercial centers in residential settings that were within walking or short driving distance of patrons, and should be designed to have a minimum impact on surrounding uses.
12. The plan may allow for small rural commercial centers which will exist in certain outlying areas to meet the special needs of farmers and agricultural operations. These uses must be handled on an individual basis, considering each proposed center on its own merits.

## **Industrial Goals**

The plan attempts to allocate land for diversification of the industrial base without disturbing adjacent land use, and to protect industrial investments as well as adjacent uses. Industrial and manufacturing land use is a significant element in the economy. Most industries are related to the county's predominantly agricultural economic base. Existing industries range from small establishments to large plants which have a major impact upon transportation, the environment and the visual character of their surroundings.

1. The goal is to provide for industrial areas which are: suitable for the purpose; properly located with respect to transportation and other land uses; and adequate in extent for predictable industrial demands.
2. The plan encourages new industries to locate in the vicinity of existing industries where a predominantly industrial character has become established.
3. The goal is to confine most industrial uses to urban growth areas where water supply, waste disposal, power, fire protection, and other required services and facilities can be most economically provided.
4. The area should have an established distinct and separate character for industry so that other urban land uses will not be adversely affected and industries will not be affected by encroachment of other uses.
5. The area should provide good isolation or separation from residential areas with the capability of screening unsightly operations. Location with respect to wind patterns that will not subject living areas to smoke, odors, or dust will be taken into consideration.
6. The plan will establish industrial zoning districts suitable for different types of manufacturing, wholesaling, and other industrial activities. Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial, and Industrial Park zones may be established in local areas to accomplish this.
7. The plan may permit agriculturally oriented industry in rural farm areas where such location is necessary for successful operation.
8. The plan requires that extraction industry makes adequate provision for safety, appearance, and environmental impacts, and for rehabilitation of excavated sites, particularly those near residential areas or visible from main roads.
9. The plan will require livestock feeding operations be in locations where residential living quality is not affected and where pollution of groundwater and streams does not occur.

## **Mixed Use Goals**

The purpose of the Mixed-use designation areas in the comprehensive plan is to allow for the integration of compatible uses within a neighborhood fabric.

The area should allow for shopping and employment centers to be located within easy access to residential areas. Residential uses could also be incorporated within these commercial areas as second floor living units. Care should be given to assure that appropriate buffering is provided between heavier commercial and light manufacturing uses and the residential areas. As a part of the plan it will require that appropriate green scape be provided for open space and buffering. Zones appropriate for use in the Mixed-use area would be R-1, R-1.5, R-2, R-3, R-P, PB, LNC, HC-1, SC-1, C-1, M-1, and M-1A. Under appropriate design the C-2 zone could be allowed. In that these areas are densely developed central water with fire flow and central sewer will be required.

## **<sup>2</sup>Suburban Mixed Use Area Goals**

The Suburban Mixed Use Area is intended for limited application in close lying rural locations that are near to substantially developed areas outlying to Urban Areas. The purpose is to provide a more open and mixed use development zone and to provide suitable places and conditions for non-farm home sites and limited service commercial uses. These areas are intended for permanent suburban residential character. Incidental farming is allowed, but an economic scale of farming will not be practical because of small parcel size and other limitations. Services such as a public water system, public sewerage system, will normally be required for the more densely developed areas of the land use.

1. The Suburban Residential & Limited Commercial zone identifies places where dwellings and limited commercial uses may be built in a generally suburban setting under conditions which will protect the public health, preserve the more rural character of the area as much as possible and permit productive agriculture in surrounding areas to continue unimpeded.

2. Location Criteria: The Suburban land use category is shown on the land use plan map in general areas. The comprehensive plan map will indicate areas that have been significantly committed to conversion from agricultural development to residential development. This type of development may be deemed appropriate where overriding amenities are present to warrant suburban residential activities in specific and identifiable location. Zoning maps, adopted to implement the comprehensive plan will define the category as to its application to land parcels following the general location guidelines of the plan. This zone is intended to recognize that certain areas of the county are changing from predominant agricultural use because of changing market conditions and the impracticality to continue to farm smaller tracts of land.

3. Development Criteria: Subdivisions for Residential home sites are acceptable, as well as limited commercial use particularly when the impact upon agriculture can be minimized.

4. The plan is intended as a guide for dealing with various and changing residential conditions and for creating more livable residential areas for the residents of Bonneville County.

5. The zone should create and maintain residential living areas which are safe, convenient, and attractive and give personal satisfaction to the residents.

6. The zone should allow for the use of housing types ranging from single-family homes and manufactured homes to multi-family apartments and providing for variation in the design of these areas and their related facilities, consistent with the availability of supportive services. Planned unit development could be utilized to achieve a variety of living amenities.

7. Commercial service areas should be located near residential areas to serve the everyday needs of the county's population, consistent with the intended service areas and its needs.

8. The goal is to establish commercial areas which provide maximum service to the public while still being properly integrated into the physical pattern of communities, and contribute to a sound and stable business climate while still protecting the neighboring uses.

9. The plan encourages the grouping of commercial activities into clusters or centers, in order to provide adequate parking and control points of ingress and egress on major and minor streets.

10. The zone should insure that business establishments have sufficient land. The size and dimensions of sites should be adequate for buildings, off-street parking, loading and on-site vehicular circulation which will permit street access at appropriate locations for safety.

11. The plan should allow for small commercial centers in residential settings that were within walking or short driving distance of patrons, and should be designed to have a minimum impact on surrounding uses.

#### **Suburban Mixed Use Goals Allowed Zones**

The purpose of the Suburban Mixed-use designation areas in the comprehensive plan is to allow for the integration of compatible uses within a neighborhood fabric. The area should allow for shopping and employment centers to be located within easy access to residential areas. Care should be given to assure that appropriate buffering and landscaping is provided throughout the area in particular along the rivers and streams and between limited commercial areas and residential areas. As a part of the plan it will require that appropriate green scape be provided for open space and buffering. Zones appropriate for use in the Suburban Mixed-use area would be R-P, R-1, R-1.5, R-2, R-3, RA-1 RA-2, RA-3, RA-4, PB and SC-1. The landscaping area of the SC-1 Zone shall be a minimum of 20%. In areas that are densely developed central water with fire flow and central sewer may be required.

## AREAS OF CITY IMPACT POLICY

Nearly 71% of Bonneville County's people live within the incorporated cities of Ammon, Idaho Falls, Iona, Irwin, Ririe, Swan Valley, and Ucon. With the exceptions of Irwin and Swan Valley, these cities provide water and sewer utilities, streets, parks, and other municipal services to their residents. All seven cities also have planning and zoning responsibilities. Expansion of the county's cities (and they are expanding: Idaho Falls annexed more than 1,500 acres during the 1980s) will be facilitated if Bonneville County and the cities cooperate in imposing consistent requirements on development in each urbanizing area.

**Enabling Authority.** The Idaho Local Planning Act, I.C. 67-6527, requires county/city cooperation in planning through the adoption of area of city impact agreements. Even without that legal mandate, cooperation between county and city governments is a common sense requirement for any community that values the efficient provision of public services and wishes to encourage a functional pattern of land development on the urban fringe.

**Planning Studies.** Only a brief additional factual background accompanies this policy statement. The planning studies needed to understand the issues associated with urban development in Bonneville County have been described in support of other policies. Land use inventory data were used to estimate the development capacity of the areas of city impact for Ammon, Idaho Falls, and Iona (calculations were not made for Ucon and Ririe, due to limited development pressure, or for Irwin or Swan Valley). Because that information is best presented in a city-by-city format, it has been woven into the strategy statements.

**Public Input.** During the preparation of this plan, the Bonneville County Planning Commission conducted two community information meetings that were advertised as being for the Idaho Falls urban fringe. The first of those meetings was on February 23, 1989, the second on March 21, 1990. The need for an area of city impact was also discussed at the March 6, 1990 community meeting in Iona and subsequent meetings with Iona city officials. The commission (or in the case of Ucon, its consulting planner) met at least once with the planning and zoning commission or city council representatives from each of the county's cities.

### Area of City Impact Issues

A number of issues arise as cities expand into the surrounding countryside. Public discussion of the impact of urban development on farm operations, irrigation systems, traffic congestion, stormwater management, the compatibility of proposed and existing uses, the loss of wildlife habitat, and similar issues fills many pages of planning and zoning commission minutes in Ammon, Idaho Falls, and Bonneville County. Area of city impact agreements provide a framework within which these issues can be more effectively addressed. The mapping of areas of city impact should also help avoid future friction over the conversion of rural to urban uses by clearly delineating the areas expected to urbanize in the near to mid-term future.

### **Area of City Impact Planning Goal**

Bonneville County should work with incorporated cities to adopt area of city impact agreements, as required by state law. While the agreements will differ with the size, growth potential, and planning goals of the cities, all should provide for reciprocal notification of planning, zoning, and subdivision review actions within the designated area of city impact. All area of city impact agreements, should require that subdivisions and other development within the designated area of city impact be compatible with eventual expansion of the city's street network and utility systems. Bonneville County will encourage a sequential pattern of development within the areas of city of impact. Compatibility with urban expansion will be demonstrated by compliance with the county's subdivision regulations.

While Bonneville County anticipates eventual development of the areas of city impact, the transition from agricultural to urban uses will be regulated so as to minimize the impact on remaining farm operations. Those regulations will require the proper handling of surface runoff and protect irrigation systems from disruption. All building permits issued in the areas of city impact should bear a note explaining that the normal activities of existing farm operations are protected by Idaho's "right to farm" law (I.C. 22-4501. et. seq.), but the county will not require resource management easements for residential development within areas of city impact, as it does in other rural areas. Bonneville County will also urge the cities to provide neighborhood parks and playgrounds that attract children away from nearby croplands and pastures.

### **Areas of City Impact Planning Strategies**

**1. Delineate areas of city impact using several factors, including:** a. projected population growth and current land development trends (i.e. where land is being platted and developed at present); b. the need for greenbelts, parks and other open space ; c. municipal property ownership and the location of existing municipal facilities; and d. the known development plans of both the public and private sector.

<sup>32</sup>. Impact area agreements have been signed with all the cities located within Bonneville County. There are slight variations found between the various areas of impact and each has its own unique impact area map.

**3. All area of city impact agreements should be reviewed on a regular basis.** Area of city impact agreements should be reviewed, at a joint meeting of the county and city planning and zoning commissions. The agreements should be revised to reflect changing conditions when necessary.

### **IONA-BONNEVILLE SEWER DISTRICT IN-FILL POLICY**

The Iona-Bonneville Sewer District (IBSD) was formed in the mid-1970s to provide central sewage collection in the suburban area east of Idaho Falls, including the City of Iona. The design criteria called for a system capable of

serving 25,000 people, but the projected development has not materialized. The system now serves only about 7,000. The presence of central sewerage and accessibility have made a policy of continued agricultural use for that area infeasible. This policy statement permits the development of the area serviced by IBSD.

#### **Iona-Bonneville Sewer District In-fill Planning Goal**

Development should be permitted in the designated Iona-Bonneville Sewer District in-fill area.

#### **IBSD In-Fill Planning Strategies**

1. Strict enforcement of the county's policy for development in arterial corridors will be needed to prevent traffic congestion as this area in-fills.
2. A major landscaped buffer should be provided by the initial development (residential or industrial) where the IBSD In-Fill area future industrial areas. The IBSD shares a long border with an industrial area to the west.

### **RURAL PLANNING AREA POLICIES**

This plan includes additional goals and strategies for three rural areas: Grays Lake, Jackknife, and Swan Valley. The policies for the Grays Lake and Jackknife planning areas reflect the current land use pattern and expense of public services provision in these relatively remote locations. The policies for the Grays Lake Planning Area also acknowledge the presence of Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge and associated wildlife habitat values. The additional policies for the Swan Valley Planning Area are more complex, reflecting the need for joint planning with the valley's incorporated cities and the need to protect its natural amenities as growth occurs.

#### **GRAYS LAKE PLANNING AREA ERRATA**

The Grays Lake Planning Area is located in the upper Willow Creek watershed of Southeastern Bonneville County.

**Landscape.** The Grays Lake Planning Area includes the Grays Lake Lowlands and portions of two of the other landscape units described in the Bonneville County Natural Resources Inventory: the Willow Creek Foothills and the Caribou Mountains.

The *Grays Lake Lowlands Landscape Unit* is the high (elevation about 6,385') mountain valley that lies between the Little Valley Hills and the Caribou Mountains. The center of this valley is occupied by an extensive marsh. There has not been a "real" lake since 1906, when the Bureau of Indian Affairs constructed a diversion from Grays Lake into the Blackfoot River watershed. The importance of the marsh as migratory waterfowl habitat



was recognized by the establishment of Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge in 1965.

The southern portion of the *Willow Creek Foothills Landscape Unit* includes the Little Valley Hills, west of Grays Lake, and Outlet Valley along Grays Lake Outlet Creek. The topography of this area results from lava flows that were mantled with layers of wind-blown soil. High points, like White Mountain, consist of sedimentary formations similar to those found in the Caribou Mountains. This landscape unit consists primarily of rangeland interspersed with stands of timber on north-facing slopes.

The Grays Lake Planning Area includes the steep western slope of the *Caribou Mountains Landscape Unit*, which consists of a series of northwest to southeast trending mountain ridges. The high point is Caribou Mountain (9,803'), the slopes of which bear the scars of gold mining that began in the 1870s and has continued, sporadically, into the present. In addition to gold, small quantities of silver, copper, and iron ores have been found in this mining district. The Caribous are also part of the Overthrust Belt, a geologic province in which natural gas and oil have been discovered in neighboring states. The thrust faulting that may have trapped hydrocarbons in these mountains also left a legacy of seismic activity: several minor earthquakes have been recorded in the area.

Each landscape unit offers certain opportunities for sustainable human use. Each also imposes certain limitations on that use. The natural resources inventory provides a detailed discussion.

**Land Use.** Agriculture and wildlife habitat are the principal land uses in the Grays Lake Planning Area, which consists predominantly of public lands. In addition to the extensive national forest, BLM, and state lands, Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge currently occupies about 18,300 acres of wetlands and could eventually be expanded to its authorized size of 32,000 acres. As Table 2 suggests, the private lands in this planning area include small acreages of irrigated pasture and dryland grain fields, but consist predominantly of rangeland interspersed with stands of timber. Privately owned wetlands, most of which are used as pasture, are included in the rangeland category. The acreage in the mining and manufacturing category includes mining claims on Caribou Mountain.

**Population.** The current land use inventory found approximately 30 dwelling units in the Grays Lake Planning Area, many of which are vacant or occupied on a seasonal basis only. The local population is quite small.

**Public Facilities.** The Grays Lake Planning Area is not in a fire protection district or the Bonneville County Ambulance District. Children from the area attend schools in the Soda Springs School District. There is a rural elementary school at Wayan, just across the Caribou County line, but secondary schools are roughly 40 miles distant, in Soda Springs. There are no developed recreation facilities in this planning area. Caribou National Forest lands do receive some dispersed recreational use and a few hundred people visit Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge each year.

**Grays Lake Planning Area Issue.** The Bonneville County Planning commission conducted community information meetings in the Grays Lake area on March 22, 1989 and March 8, 1990. The concerns expressed at these meetings included local road maintenance and the difficulty of sustaining community functions, like an elementary school or store, in a remote area with a small population. Those issues are outside the scope of this comprehensive plan, but the area residents attending the 1990 community meeting were given an opportunity to review a draft land use policy statement that concentrated on two planning issues.

1. Protecting water quality and wildlife habitat values in the Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge, and
2. Limiting development to the minimal level consistent with the difficulty of public services provision in the area.

There was no specific objection to draft policies that addressed these issues, but some of those present did request that more flexibility than is permitted by the county's current zoning ordinance be allowed for occasional lot sales to family members.

**TABLE 2 -- USE OF PRIVATE LANDS IN THE GRAYS LAKE PLANNING AREA**

<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent of Total</i>
Mining (claims)	243	0.4%
Roads - T.C.U.	217	0.3%
Services	2	--
Farmsteads	106	0.1%
Irrigated Cropland	2,703	4.1%
Nonirrigated Cropland	6,701	10.1%
Rangeland	51,823	77.9%
Timberland	4,765	7.2%
Total Private Lands	66,559	100.0%

*Notes: Acreages approximate. "--" means less than 0.1%. T.C.U. means transportation, communication, and utilities.*

**Grays Lake Planning Area Goal**

The Grays Lake Planning Area is a remote one, where adequate provision of public services to even a small development would be difficult. Much of this planning area also has special importance as wildlife habitat. The historical, agricultural land use pattern of the Grays Lake Planning Area should be continued. Significant land use change should be permitted only after intensive public review and appropriate amendment of this plan. Limited residential development may be permitted, provided that it does not conflict with water quality, wildlife habitat, or neighboring land uses.

## **Grays Lake Planning Area Strategies**

1. Limit residential development with the minimum lot size being controlled by state health regulations or county regulations. Development will be limited to one dwelling unit for each 60 acres consistent with other provisions of this plan and ordinances.
2. Permit small scale resort uses and home occupations.
3. Prohibit any use that potentially diminishes the habitat value of Grays Lake National Wildlife Refuge by degrading water quality in refuge wetlands or tributary streams.
4. Require development in the Grays Lake Planning Area to respect wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, and other wildlife habitat values through appropriate locational decisions and site planning.
5. Renewed mining activity could substantially increase the demand for public facilities and services in the Grays Lake Planning Area. This industrial activity could also result in conflict with existing land uses or degradation of the area's water and wildlife resources. Mining should be permitted, by special use permit, but only upon a finding that: a. the developers will bear the costs of any necessary improvement or expansion of public facilities, b. potential conflicts with other uses (including those potentially impacted by mine traffic as well as those near the mine) will be mitigated, c. environmental quality will be protected during the mine's construction and operation, and d. all areas disturbed will be reclaimed for wildlife habitat, grazing, or another compatible use. Bonneville County may rely on NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) compliance documents prepared by federal agencies and state agency permit determinations in its evaluation of special use permits for mining operations.

## **JACKKNIFE PLANNING AREA ERRATA**

The Jackknife Planning Area lies along the Wyoming border in far southeastern Bonneville County. This planning area encompasses only about 14 square miles of private land and is, geographically and socially, part of Star Valley, Lincoln County, Wyoming.

**Landscape.** The boundaries of the Jackknife Planning Area and the Salt River Landscape Unit described in the Bonneville County Natural Resources Inventory are identical. The Salt River Landscape Unit includes a portion of the Caribou Mountains (distinguished from the Caribou Mountain Landscape Unit only by being in the watershed of the Salt River) and part of the western edge of Star Valley Wyoming. Jackknife Creek originates on the slopes east of Caribou Mountain (9,803'), then flows southeast and east toward its confluence with the Salt River. Minor tributaries, including McNeel and King creeks, flow directly from the Caribous into the Salt River. The slopes of the Jackknife Creek Valley and western fringe of Star Valley are made up of silty clay loam soils used for grazing and nonirrigated crops. Gravelly alluvial soils along the Salt River and Jackknife Creek are used as irrigated cropland and pasture.

**Land Use.** Table 3 summarizes the pattern of use on private lands in the Jackknife Creek Planning Area. With the exception of some mining claims on Caribou Mountain, the mountainous portion of the planning area is entirely within the Caribou National Forest.

**TABLE 3 -- USE OF PRIVATE LANDS IN THE JACKKNIFE PLANNING AREA**

<i>land use</i>	<i>acreage</i>	<i>percent of total</i>
Manufacturing and Mining	146	1.6%
Roads	45	0.5%
Farmsteads	44	0.5%
Irrigated Cropland	1,868	21.1%
Nonirrigated Cropland	1,205	13.6%
Rangeland	3,504	39.5%
Timberland	2,318	23.1%
Total Private Lands	8,861	100.0%

*Note: Acreages approximate.*

**Population.** The Bonneville County Land Use Inventory found a total of 12 dwelling units in the Jackknife Planning Area.

**Public Facilities.** The Jackknife Planning Area is included in the Alpine Fire Protection District, where ambulance service and fire protection are provided by the Alpine, Wyoming Fire Brigade. This area is included in Swan Valley School District #92, but local students attend schools in Wyoming. Caribou National Forest lands in the Jackknife Planning Area receive some dispersed recreational use, but there are no developed recreation facilities.

### **Jackknife Planning Area Issues**

The Bonneville County Planning Commission conducted community information meetings for the Jackknife Planning Area, on March 16, 1989 and March 15, 1990. Those present did not identify any local planning issues (except one in adjoining Caribou County), but did express a desire to be involved in the review of any proposals for development in their area. Northern Star Valley is beginning to be impacted by the rapid growth of Teton County, Wyoming (roughly 65 miles away), with local people commuting to jobs in Jackson. This trend may eventually result in interest in rural residential development in the Jackknife Planning Area.

### **Jackknife Planning Area Goal**

The traditional pattern of agricultural land use should be maintained in the Jackknife Planning Area. Significant land use change should be permitted only after intensive public review and appropriate amendment of this plan. Limited residential development may be permitted, provided that it does not conflict with agricultural activities on adjoining lands, water quality, or Bonneville County's limited capacity to provide public services in this area.

### **Jackknife Planning Area Strategy**

1. Permit no significant change from the existing agricultural land use pattern without an amendment of this plan. Limited residential development and home occupations should be permitted to supplement the farm economy.
2. Limit residential development with the minimum lot size being controlled by state health regulations or county regulations. Development will be limited to one dwelling unit for each 60 acres consistent with other provisions of this ordinance.
3. Mining activity could substantially increase the demand for public facilities and services in the Jackknife Planning Area. This industrial activity could also result in conflict with existing land uses or degradation of the area's water and wildlife resources. Mining should be permitted, by special use permit, but only upon a finding that: a. the developers will bear the costs of any necessary improvement or expansion of public facilities, b. potential conflicts with other uses (including those potentially impacted by mine traffic as well as those near the mine) will be mitigated, c. environmental quality will be protected during the mine's construction and operation, and d. all areas disturbed will be reclaimed for wildlife habitat, grazing, or another compatible use. Bonneville County may rely on the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act) compliance documents prepared by federal agencies and state agency permit determinations in the evaluation of special use permits for mining operations.

## SWAN VALLEY PLANNING AREA ERRATA

The best overview of the Swan Valley Planning Area is from the top of Palisades Dam. Upstream, mountain slopes merge into the waters of Palisades Reservoir. Downstream, the ridgelines of the Caribou Mountains and snow-capped peaks of the Snake River Range surround a widening valley. The Pine Creek Bench and Big Hole Mountains enclose the distant, downstream end of the valley, and a line of cottonwoods marks the course of the South Fork as it winds along the base of the Caribous.

**Landscape.** The Swan Valley Planning Area includes the entire Swan Valley Landscape Unit described in the Bonneville County Natural Resources Inventory and parts of the Big Hole-Snake River Range and Caribou Mountains landscape units as well.

The *Swan Valley Landscape Unit* encompasses the floodplain of the South Fork, the alluvial terraces of the valley floor, and the alluvial fans deposited by such tributary streams as Rainey Creek. Gravelly soils reflect the alluvial origins of this landscape unit. The area is underlain by a shallow aquifer that is the domestic water supply for the people of the valley.

The *Big Hole-Snake River Range Landscape Unit* adjoins the Swan Valley Landscape Unit on the north and east. Within the Swan Valley Planning Area, this unit includes the Pine Creek Bench, an area of productive eolian croplands at the base of the Big Hole Mountains, the southeast fringe of the Big Hole Mountains, including Stouts Mountain, and the glaciated summits of the Snake River Range, where Palisades Peak reaches an elevation of 9,778 feet.

The *Caribou Mountains Landscape Unit* consists of a series of northwest-southeast trending mountain ridges that lie south and west of Swan Valley. The high point in this part of the Caribous is Big Elk Mountain (9,478'). The Caribou Mountains and Big Hole-Snake River Range Landscape Units are both part of the Overthrust Belt, a geologic province in which oil and natural gas have been discovered in neighboring states. The thrust faulting that may have trapped hydrocarbons in these mountains also left a legacy of seismic activity: a number of minor earthquakes have been recorded in the area.

Each landscape unit offers certain opportunities for sustainable human use. Each also imposes certain limitations on that use. The natural resources inventory provides a detailed discussion.

**Land Use.** The traditional pattern of land use in the Swan Valley Planning Area is one of agriculture and outdoor recreation. Table 4 offers a statistical summary of the local land use pattern. Most of the area's people live in the Swan Valley Landscape Unit, where homesite mingle with irrigated pastures, fields, and a scattering of small recreation-oriented businesses. The Pine Creek Bench is a nonirrigated grain farming area, with a handful of farmsteads.

The private holdings along the shores of Palisades Reservoir include a number of second home developments. Those seasonal homes and small "resort" businesses are complemented by the recreation facilities provided by the Targhee National Forest. The forest reported more than 125,000 recreation visitor-days for its Palisades Reservoir Management Unit in 1986 and projects that recreation use will grow at a rate of about 2% per year during the next 20 years. There is little private land in the mountainous parts of the planning area, but most national forest lands are used for grazing and there is extensive dispersed recreational use

**Population.** There are no useful trend data on the population of the Swan Valley Planning Area. There is a Swan Valley CCD (County Census Division), but it covers all of eastern Bonneville County. There are population data for the cities of Irwin and Swan Valley. The 1980 population of the two cities was 248: 46% lower than the 1970 figure and 54% less than in 1960. The 1990 count for Irwin and Swan Valley was 249, which suggests that the area's year-round population has stabilized. The trend in the two cities may not be duplicated in the surrounding unincorporated areas: there are no current data. In any case, the importance of year-round population figures is diminished by the seasonal, recreational nature of the Swan Valley economy. Land use and facilities planning for the Swan Valley Planning Area should be based on the estimated population during the recreation season.

**Peak Population.** The peak population of the Swan Valley Planning Area may be estimated by adding the residents of its second homes and the visitors accommodated at local recreational vehicle parks, campgrounds, and motels, to the year-round population.

The 1990 Census identified 429 second homes in the Swan Valley Planning Area. If each second home houses an average Bonneville County household (2.94 persons) during peak season, 429 second homes would accommodate a peak population of about 1,260.



**TABLE 4 -- USE OF PRIVATE LANDS IN THE SWAN VALLEY PLANNING AREA**

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
Single Family Residential	73	0.9%
Manufacturing and Mining	17	--
T.C.U.	61	0.2%
Roads	626	1.6%
Retail Trade	44	0.1%
Services	24	0.1%
Outdoor Recreation	76	0.2%
Farmsteads	378	0.9%
Irrigated Cropland	5,682	14.3%
Nonirrigated Cropland	16,526	41.5%
Rangeland	12,003	30.1%
Timberland	3,983	10.0%
Vacant Land	40	0.1%
Total Private Lands	39,833	100.0%

*Note: Acreages approximate. Includes the cities of Irwin and Swan Valley. "--" means less than 0.1%. T.C.U. means transportation, communication, and utilities.*

PAOT (persons at one time) capacity of the Targhee National Forest campgrounds, boat launches, and trailheads in Swan Valley Planning Area is about 1,800.

The 1990 Census found 97 occupied year-round dwelling units in Irwin and Swan Valley. It is estimated that there are another 50-60 year-round units in the remainder of the planning area. The permanent 1990 population is estimated at roughly 500.

A conservative estimate of the peak season population of the Swan Valley Planning Area is approximately 3,600. The private sector recreational vehicle parks, motels, and youth camps add to the potential peak population, but no accurate estimate of their capacity is available.

**Public Facilities.** The public facilities and services available in the Swan Valley Planning Area are described in the Bonneville County Public Facilities Inventory. The Targhee National Forest maintains most of the developed recreation sites, although Bonneville County, the Idaho Fish and Game Department, and the BLM are also involved. Other services are provided by the county, fire protection districts, School District 92, and volunteers. The two cities offer limited municipal services. There is some excess capacity in the local elementary school, a new Emergency Services Center houses the equipment of the Greater Swan Valley Fire Protection District and the area's emergency medical technicians. Significant growth in the number of permanent or seasonal residents may require additional investments in public services.

**Swan Valley Planning Area Issues.** Important land use issues for the Swan Valley Planning Area were identified in community meetings conducted by the Bonneville County Planning Commission on March 15, 1989, March 20, 1990, and February 27, 1991. Two principal issues emerged from these meetings: water quality and city/county cooperation.

*Water Quality.* Water quality is the priority issue for the Swan Valley Planning Area. All three community meetings focused on the need to prevent contamination of the shallow aquifer that provides the water supply for local homes and businesses. Surface water quality is also an important issue. Clean water is an essential foundation for fishing and the other forms of water-related recreation that support the Swan Valley economy.

*City/County Cooperation.* The incorporated cities of Swan Valley and Irwin occupy about 15% (or approximately 6,100 acres) of the private land in the Swan Valley Planning Area. The cities include areas that are critical to local environmental quality and to the area's image as a recreational attraction. More than half the U.S. Highway 26 frontage (roughly nine miles) through the valley is within city limits. The cities also include more than three miles of frontage on the South Fork. Because they include so much highway frontage, virtually all "develop-able" land in the valley could be annexed to one of the cities. City/county cooperation is necessary to assure that annexation is not used as a means to evade land use controls.

*Other Issues.* Other land use issues raised at the Swan Valley community meetings included: 1. minimize adverse impact on the area's cropland resource and existing farming operations as development occurs; 2. protecting the scenic, wildlife, recreational, and water quality values of the area's stream corridors and wetlands; and 3. avoiding commercial "strip development" along Highway 26, lying outside of incorporated cities.

The continuing growth of the Idaho Falls urban area is expected to generate additional development in the Swan Valley Planning Area in the near future. The planning area goal and strategies are intended to assure that Swan Valley retains its natural attractions as the anticipated development proceeds.

**Swan Valley Planning Area Goal.** The Swan Valley Planning Area is an important recreational "playground", a productive agricultural area, and a community that supports a unique rural lifestyle. This plan envisions a gradual expansion of recreational developments, both residential and commercial, in the area. The purpose of the strategies adopted here is to assure that water quality is rigorously protected, that existing agricultural uses continue with minimum disruption, and that the area's natural amenities are not lost as that expansion occurs.

**Swan Valley Planning Area Strategies.** The county-wide implementation strategies are supplemented by the following strategies designed specifically for the Swan Valley Planning Area.

**1. All jurisdictions should adopt similar comprehensive plans in the Swan Valley Planning Area.** Bonneville County should recognize that a cooperative implementation effort offers the best chance of assuring that its planning goals are realized in this area.

**2. The croplands of the Pine Creek Bench should be covered by the county-wide agricultural lands policy, which strongly discourages conversion of productive lands to other uses.** This properly accounts for the higher elevations (5,600-5,800') of the Pine Creek Bench.

**3. Low density residential development, for year-round or seasonal occupancy, should be permitted in the remainder of the Swan Valley Planning Area,** but only where it is adequately planned to avoid disturbance of sensitive areas and conversion of productive croplands to nonfarm use. Cluster developments must also be sited and designed with respect for the vulnerability of the area's surface and groundwater resources, the vulnerability of existing farm operations to disruption by development, and the open space resources that form the foundation of the area's recreational attractions.

**4. All commercial development, except home occupations, should be confined to the designated commercial nodes.**

**5. Landscaped buffers should be required as a means of mitigating potential land use conflicts and enhancing the area's appearance.**

6. All commercial, industrial and home occupation uses, the Swan Valley Planning Area shall require a special use permit.

### **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION POLICY**

Implementation strategies have been adopted in each of the previous policies of this comprehensive plan. The purpose of this final policy statement is not to repeat those strategies, but to summarize them, and to emphasize the importance of implementation.

**Enabling Authority.** Idaho counties are empowered to implement their comprehensive plans through zoning ordinances (see I.C. 67-6511.) and subdivision regulations (see I.C. 67-6513.). The Local Planning Act also provides specific authorization for special use permits and other plan implementation tools.

**Planning Studies/Public Input.** The background studies and public input that form the basis for the implementation strategies adopted in this comprehensive plan have already been described.

**Plan Implementation Goal.** Maintain the usefulness of this comprehensive plan with regular updates and policy reviews. Bonneville County should not only update this plan, but continue to expand on the informational background available to support its planning efforts. The county should also adopt detailed design and construction standards for required improvements and the most current building codes.

#### **Plan Implementation Strategies**

1. **Adopt and enforce a Bonneville County Development Codes that is fully consistent with this comprehensive plan.** The proposed Bonneville County Codes will be tailored to fit the strategies adopted in this plan.
2. **Update the background studies accompanying this comprehensive plan on a regular basis.**
3. **Conduct an annual policy review hearing.** The Bonneville County Planning and Zoning Commission should amend its by-laws to dedicate one monthly meeting each year to a review and hearing on the policy statements adopted in this comprehensive plan and their enforcement. Annual review of area of city impact agreements is also suggested in the areas of city impact policy statement.
4. **Bonneville County should fund, or participate in the funding of, additional planning studies.** Effective implementation of this plan will require participation in the metropolitan transportation planning organization for the Idaho Falls urbanized area.
5. **Bonneville County should develop and adopt design and construction standards for required improvements, including roads and storm water management.**

A detailed set of design standards will make implementation of the proposed codes easier and more defensible. Design approval is currently delegated to the county engineer. That practice can continue, but should be guided by written standards.

**6. Develop a future lands acquisition map for road rights-of-way and other uses.**

**7. Bonneville County should retain additional professional staff to conduct development reviews and maintain this comprehensive plan.**

**The Bonneville County Commissioners hereby adopt the Comprehensive Plan of Bonneville County as written above.**

**Dated this 5th day of January, 1995.**

*/s/ Roger Christensen*

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**Roger Christensen**

*/s/ Dave Radford*

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**Dave Radford**

*/s/ Lee Staker*

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**Lee Staker**

<sup>1</sup> Amended 10/3/2013

<sup>2</sup> Added 10/3/2013

<sup>3</sup> Amended 10/3/2013