

Land Use Draft Component

PLANNING COMMISSION OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOPS

Intent of the Open House Workshop

Relevant State Law

Intent of the Workshop:

- The Planning Commission requests public input regarding the proposed Land Use Component, including the modified land use designations.

Idaho Code §67-6508 Planning Duties:

- It shall be the duty of the planning or planning and zoning commission to conduct a comprehensive planning process designed to prepare, implement, and review and update a comprehensive plan, hereafter referred to as the plan. The plan shall include all land within the jurisdiction of the governing board. The plan shall consider previous and existing conditions, trends, compatibility of land uses, desirable goals and objectives, or desirable future situations for each planning component. The plan with maps, charts, and reports shall be based on the following components as they may apply to land use regulations and actions unless the plan specifies reasons why a particular component is unneeded.

Idaho Code §67-6508 (E) requires the following for the Land Use Component:

- An analysis of natural land types, existing land covers and uses, and the intrinsic suitability of lands for uses such as agriculture, forestry, mineral exploration and extraction, preservation, recreation, housing, commerce, industry, and public facilities. A map shall be prepared indicating suitable projected land uses for the jurisdiction.

Land Use Analysis Application



While drafting the Land Use component the Planning Commission met with the GIS Department and Planning Department staff to develop a way to analyze previous growth in the unincorporated county and to project future growth. The commission desired to complete a more thorough analysis based on historical data that led to the creation of the Land Use Analysis application. Due to data constraints, all the data contained in the app is for 2019 through 2023. The county was divided into nine geographic areas to review the growth by area in the county. Historical vacant properties were reviewed to determine vacant land by zone and area. Potential growth scenarios were developed to determine the total number of potential properties based on current zoning.

Component Update Overview:

- The draft component is made up of four chapters to include: Natural Land Types, Existing Land Cover, Use, and Density, Land Suitability, and Proposed Land Use.
- Currently in draft form, the Land Use component update incorporates Planning Department, GIS, and Assessor data which has been analyzed to create the tables, graphs, and maps that are found in the draft component.
 - Section 2.2, Existing Land Use contains a table of current Land Use Designation and Zoning District by total acres.
 - Section 2.3, Existing Parcel Density contains several graphs depicting total and vacant parcels by zone and acreage.
- Chapter 3 contains an analysis of the Intrinsic Land Suitability in a variety of uses: Agriculture, Forestry and Mineral Exploration & Extraction, Preservation, Recreation, Housing, Economic Development, and Public Facilities.
- Chapter 4 is the Proposed Land Use Designations and Land Use Matrix

Conclusions:

- About 40 percent of Bonner County is private land, while the remainder is held by the federal government (44.4 percent), the state (15.2 percent) and municipalities (1%).
- From 2019 to 2023 parcels with improvements have increased 8.95%. Total number of parcels increased 5.03% and the number of vacant parcels decreased 2.00%.
- Based on historical trends there appears to be a sufficient land supply to accommodate anticipated residential growth within the current zoning for the next ten years.
- Parcel size and associated maximum dwelling unit densities are appropriate regulatory tools to maximize the public health, safety and welfare of the county's residents.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Transition: The Transition classification is reserved for those areas of the County where a mixture of land uses can occur which may include higher density residential uses, commercial, industrial and light industrial uses. Due to the intensity of land use, these areas require primary transportation routes, urban- like water and sewer services, fire and police services.

Proposed:

Mixed-Use: This classification is for areas where a combination of higher-density residential, commercial, industrial, and light industrial land uses can coexist. Uses require adequate water and sewer services (as determined by relevant agencies such as IDEQ, PHD, IDWR), public safety services, and primary transportation systems such as the state highways or major/minor collector roads.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Neighborhood Commercial: The Neighborhood Commercial area is designed to provide light commercial uses to serve the needs of the rural communities and tourist trade without adversely affecting residential neighborhoods. Urban services and primary transportation systems, such as the state highways or major/minor collector roads are required.

Proposed:

Neighborhood Commercial: Designed to provide low-impact commercial services to rural communities and tourists without adversely affecting residential neighborhoods. These areas require adequate water and sewer services (as determined by relevant agencies such as IDEQ, PHD, IDWR), and access to primary transportation systems such as state highways or major/minor collector roads.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Recreation: The Recreation classification is intended to allow for urban residential densities in remote and scenic areas of the County centered around winter sports, lakes and rivers. If seasonal recreation areas can be developed without requiring year-round public services, the cost to taxpayers of servicing these remote areas can be minimized.

Alpine Community: The Alpine Community is established to recognize the challenges of higher density development in higher elevations of Bonner County generally above 3,500 feet elevation, where urban services are provided, but a range of road types developed in mountainous conditions serve the area. Specific design standards to address steeper slopes and heavy snowfall will govern these areas.

Proposed:

Recreational Resort Community: Allows for urban densities in areas centered on recreational facilities for winter sports, water sports, golf, hiking, and other activities, where adequate water and sewer services (as determined by relevant agencies such as IDEQ, PHD, IDWR) are provided. These areas provide adequate access to primary transportation systems such as state highways or major/minor collector roads.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Suburban Growth Area: The Suburban Growth Area is located on the edges of the incorporated cities or higher density developed communities or areas, where urban sewer and water services may not be available or are not likely to be extended. Access to primary transportation routes and a system of hard-surfaced roads are expected.

Urban Growth Areas: The Urban Growth Areas are designed to recognize the historic developments of communities and neighborhoods which are served by either urban water or sewer services or are located within the fringes of incorporated cities where such services have or can be extended to serve these areas. These areas are general level to moderately slopes and serve by a network of primary transportation systems.

Proposed:

Suburban Residential: Primarily located on the outskirts of incorporated cities or higher-density communities, and areas where urban services may not be available. Requires access to primary transportation routes and a system of paved roads.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Rural Residential: The Rural Residential area provides for residential development in areas where urban services are not available and slopes may vary up to 30%. These areas include hazard areas and critical wildlife habitats, where lower densities reduce potential impacts to resources and exposures to loss of property or lives. Small-scale agricultural uses and residential development are permitted.

Proposed:

Rural Residential : Provides for residential development in areas to promote rural character and pursuits. Urban services are typically not available. Soil and topography are conducive to individual or small scale septic systems, as determined by Panhandle Health Department or Idaho Department of Environmental Quality. These areas may also include agricultural protection areas per Idaho Code 67-97. Small-scale agricultural, forestry uses, low impact recreation, and residential development are permitted if compatible with neighboring uses and wastewater treatment is feasible. These areas are characterized by proximity to major/minor collector roads and may already be developed to or near one single family dwelling unit per 5 acres. Commercial uses may be conditionally permitted if shown to be compatible with the neighboring uses. Rural residential development is acceptable in areas with multiple access routes that meet fire safety road standards and adequate water for fires suppression, as determined by the applicable fire district. These areas are appropriate nearer to populated areas, so as to optimize the cost-effectiveness of providing county services and infrastructure.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Ag/Forest Land: The Ag/Forest Land designation recognizes areas where steeper slopes prevail (30% or greater) and transportation is provided by private roads or U.S. Forest Service or state roads. Urban services are not available and residential development challenges are present due to slope, poor soil conditions, hazard areas and lack of police or fire services.

Prime Ag/Forest Land: The prime agricultural/forest land is designed to preserve the productive farm and ranch land and timber land to promote its important economic and environmental contributions to the County. This area may have a range of road systems serving it and is generally served by individual sewer and water systems. These areas generally have prime agricultural land soils and soils of recognized state importance and active farm and ranch operations.

Proposed:

Ag/Forest: The purpose of this land use designation is to protect, preserve, and maintain areas that are rural in character and the integrity of forest/woodland areas where viable agricultural is feasible and to avoid fragmentation of forests and farms. These areas are suitable for agricultural and forestry pursuits, including livestock production, horticulture, floriculture, viticulture and accessory uses for treating, storing, and processing agricultural products. Nonagricultural uses should be limited to those compatible with agriculture. These areas may include hazardous areas and critical wildlife habitats. Lower densities are maintained to reduce potential impacts on agriculture resources, natural resources, and exposure to property damage or loss of life, and maintain parcel sizes of 10 acres or greater. These areas may contain prime agricultural soils or soils where agricultural and forestry remain viable. These areas may include agricultural protection areas per Idaho Code 67-97. Allowable parcel density is related to adequate access to nearby minor collector roads and the existence of substandard road systems or where large tracts of land may be devoted to ag/forest production. Residential uses are generally limited to low densities to support these primary uses, protect the county's water quality and wildlife populations, reduce the financial burden on the county, and to minimize vulnerability to hazards, such as wildfires and flooding.

Proposed Designations and Descriptions

Current:

Remote Ag/Forest Land: The remote Ag/forest land is located on mountaintops and remote areas of the County where few or no access roads have been constructed. Included in these areas are most of the state and federal lands, which are managed for forest production or recreation.

Proposed:

Remote Ag/Forested Land: Encompasses remote areas of the county. These lands are typically remote, held and managed by Federal/State agencies, or private entities. These areas may include agricultural protection areas per Idaho Code 67-97. Residential uses are few and access roads are limited.

Public Comments

Please leave a written comment either on the forms provided at this open house or email it to Planning@bonnercountyd.gov.

Please make a comment on the proposed map! The county GIS team created a map for the public to comment on, ask a Planning Commission or staff member if you need help to comment on the map.