

Comments on Proposed County Land Use Plan

I am Marilyn Robertson; I have lived in Bonner County for 27 years. When I lived in Boise, I served on the Ada County Planning Commission as we were writing a new Comprehensive Plan. So, I know that you have had a challenging assignment. I began my preparation to comment on these proposed updates to the Land Use Plan because of my involvement in the Earth Care Team at First Presbyterian Church. Limited advance time from newspaper announcement until these Workshops made it difficult to get the needed consensus and approval to speak for the congregation. So, I am speaking as an individual. I am limiting my comments to the Title page, and the sections on Property Rights, Land Use, and Natural Resources.

Title page: Add to the “Protecting” phrase: “and protecting the public interests of our residents.”

Page 4 under Property Rights- Goals: Add “Prepare for projected impacts of extreme weather conditions.’ This is one aspect of protecting the long-term public interest, as well as the property rights of individuals and maintaining health and safety.

Policies: Examples of preparation for extreme weather events and increased summertime heat would include: “Require new developments and major remodels to maintain open spaces and to preserve large trees (unless they create hazards).”

My personal experience with increased summertime heat began in 1994, when we had a home built at Kaniksu Shores, & moved there from Boise. We did not have a sprinkler system put in, because in our first few years there, we only needed to water our lawn area in August & September. In recent years, especially the last 3, I have needed to water everything in my yard from June thru September. So, in June, I had a sprinkler system put in for my lawn area.

I was pleased with most of the wording of Goals and Objectives, on page 16, concerning Land Use. However, many of our residents want to maintain the rural character of Bonner County, as a priority, and do not want to “encourage growth”; a more neutral phrase should be used. I suggest “to ALLOW the community to grow while retaining its rural character”.

No Policies were listed under Land Use, but a potential Policy could be: “Changing trends of weather, increased frequency and severity of extreme weather, and hotter summers should be considered in Land Use decisions.” I also suggest this Policy: “These weather factors should also lead to an emphasis on insulation, heat pumps, and basement living spaces (rather than air conditioners) in future building codes.”

Page 17 under Natural Resources: Objectives: Add to the first Objective: “Designated wetlands shall be maintained and protected.”

Policies: second Policy: change the verb from “should” to “shall”, when describing the use of best management practices--- to reduce erosion and sedimentation into waterways.

Thank you for your service to the County, and for allowing these opportunities for public input.

Replace Deleted second statement: “The interests of the public shall be protected.

Page 17, under Objectives: First statement, add: Federally designated wetlands shall be maintained and protected.

Do not delete last Objective.

Under Policies: Second Policy : Use the verb shall instead of should.