

# Bonner County Planning Department

*"Protecting property rights and enhancing property value"*

1500 Highway 2, Suite 208, Sandpoint, Idaho 83864

Phone (208) 265-1458

Email: [planning@bonnercountvid.gov](mailto:planning@bonnercountvid.gov) - Web site: [www.bonnercountvid.gov](http://www.bonnercountvid.gov)



## **BONNER COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**IMPLEMENTATION COMPONENT: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

**SUGGESTED UPDATE – APRIL 29, 2025**

## Table of Contents:

IMPLEMENTATION COMPONENT: GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES SUGGESTED UPDATE – APRIL 29, 2025.....	1
<b>Implementation: .....</b>	<b>1</b>
POLICIES: .....	1
<b>Property Rights .....</b>	<b>2</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	2
POLICIES: .....	2
<b>Population: .....</b>	<b>3</b>
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	3
POLICIES: .....	3
<b>School Facilities and Transportation: .....</b>	<b>4</b>
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	4
POLICIES: .....	4
<b>Economic Development: .....</b>	<b>5</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	5
POLICIES: .....	5
<b>Land Use: .....</b>	<b>6</b>
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	6
POLICIES: .....	6
<b>Natural Resources:.....</b>	<b>8</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	8
POLICIES: .....	8
<b>Hazardous Areas: .....</b>	<b>9</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	9
POLICIES: .....	9
<b>Public Services, Facilities and Utilities: .....</b>	<b>10</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	10
POLICIES: .....	10
<b>Transportation: .....</b>	<b>11</b>
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	11
POLICIES: .....	11
<b>Recreation: .....</b>	<b>12</b>

GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	12
POLICIES: .....	12
<b>Special Areas or Sites: .....</b>	<b>13</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	13
POLICIES: .....	13
<b>Housing: .....</b>	<b>14</b>
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	14
POLICIES: .....	14
<b>Community Design: .....</b>	<b>15</b>
GOAL AND OBJECTIVE: .....	15
POLICIES: .....	15
<b>Agriculture: .....</b>	<b>16</b>
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES: .....	16
POLICIES: .....	16

## **Implementation:**

### **POLICIES:**

1. The County should keep the comprehensive plan current to avoid costly, belated revisions to the plan. The County needs to set aside a meeting once a year to examine the plan and determine whether updates/revisions are needed. This meeting should be scheduled at the beginning of each year and prior to the county's budgeting sessions so that adequate funding can be addressed, if need be.
2. The County needs to develop and maintain an effective zoning enforcement program so that the County can ensure that its land use laws are met.
3. Implementing the Comprehensive Plan will require financial support, an actively engaged Planning Commission, Zoning Commission, and Board of County Commissioners, and systematic coordination with other county and state agencies and departments.

# **Property Rights**

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Protect property rights and enhance property values through conscientious land-use planning that complies with state law relevant to all county land use actions.
2. Private property should not be taken for public uses without just compensation or due process of law.
3. Impacts on other properties should be taken into account when considering land use proposals, policies and codes.

## **POLICIES:**

1. The County should follow the attorney general's checklist, prescribed at Idaho Code §67-8003 and provided in the "Property Rights" component of the county's comprehensive plan, for all land use decisions.
2. For all land use decisions, findings of fact and conclusions of law should be adopted that reflect the justifications for exactions, conditions and restrictions and should confirm that a taking of private property has not occurred.
3. The property rights of the applicant, adjoining and nearby landowners and future generations should be considered, as well as the short-term and long-term consequences of decisions.
4. The County should review all rezoning requests (down-zoning and up-zoning) pursuant to the Idaho State Code, Title 67, Chapter 65 – Local Land Use Planning Act. The approval of conditional rezoning or denial of a request for rezoning may be subject to the regulatory taking analysis provided for by Idaho Code Section 67-8003.

## **Population:**

### **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. Ensure that the impact of demographic changes including generational issues and economic diversity are identified and considered during planning activities and decisions.

### **POLICIES:**

1. Population projections should be analyzed regularly to determine if changes need to be made to the Comprehensive Plan goals, objectives and policies and/or the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the public and community needs are being met through land use decisions.
2. Population forecasts and census data should be used to evaluate housing, school needs, and impacts to the transportation system and other county services.
3. The County should cooperate with its incorporated cities and neighboring counties to address growth challenges within the city's Area of Impact areas and coordinate planning efforts whenever possible.

# **School Facilities and Transportation:**

## **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. Proposed developments and county land use decisions should not adversely impact the local school districts and their ability to provide adequate school facilities and transportation systems.

## **POLICIES:**

1. Current data regarding school capacity and transportation issues as provided by the School Districts will be included in the assessment of all land use proposals.
2. The county should consider the impacts of land use proposals on the school system and should seek mitigation from developers such as providing facilities, safety features, or other measures as permitted by Idaho Code, to address the impact of the proposals.
3. The county should encourage school districts to proactively review development applications to determine particular school needs and concerns.
4. The county roads, trails and bicycle paths should be designed and maintained to allow safe passage of students to schools.
5. Long-term consequences of land use proposals should be considered, including the adequacy of existing facilities and the siting of future schools.

# **Economic Development:**

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Support and encourage economic development.
2. Support small businesses such as markets, restaurants, recreational activities, campgrounds, and marinas that provide services which support resort residents and visitors in their local communities.
3. Enable development of small-scale cottage industries and home-based occupations while protecting the surrounding areas from adverse impacts.

## **POLICIES:**

1. Small scale cottage businesses and home occupations should be allowed in all areas of the county. Reasonable conditions on such uses should be set to minimize adverse impacts to the neighborhood based on factors including, but not limited to, hours of operation and traffic volume generated by the business.
2. Develop land use regulations to allow the county's agricultural heritage to be maintained by enabling local food production, distribution, congregation, and retail sales. Examples include community gardens, school gardens, farm related education programs, farmers or public markets, and other small-scale, collaborative initiatives.
3. Develop standards for commercial and industrial development that are appropriate for the surrounding community, including: appropriate site sizes, use types, buffering and design standards that encourage both attractive and efficient function, while protecting the environment.
4. Review and update land use regulations for employee housing to support the goal of enabling this use in proximity to commercial, industrial and agricultural uses.
5. Mitigate the potential impacts of economic development activities that cause adverse factors such as noise, light glare, odors, fumes and vibrations on the surrounding community.
6. Support local economic development by increasing support for outdoor recreation in the county. Encourage and protect public access to public lands and water, campgrounds, and recreational areas.
7. Support local businesses by enabling development of workforce housing in proximity to commercial, industrial, agricultural, and recreational uses.



# **Land Use:**

## **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. The County intends to balance and integrate its land use policies and proposed land use map with the components of the comprehensive plan to enable the community to grow while retaining its rural character and protecting its unique natural resources.

## **POLICIES:**

1. The county should develop and maintain a future land use map and land use codes that acknowledge and preserve its agricultural, timber and mining lands, water and wildlife resources, and identifies and avoids hazard areas. It should provide areas for economic growth, encourage affordable housing and center growth in areas where adequate public and private services can be provided.
2. Encourage clustered development for medium and large scale commercial and industrial uses.
3. Commercial and industrial uses should be located and operated in a manner to ensure the protection of our natural resources including clean air and water, dark skies, and overall environmental quality and rural character of the county.
4. Commercial and industrial uses, in areas identified in the Comprehensive plan suitable for such development, should be unconditionally permitted. Evaluation of suitability should be based on availability of urban services, adequate access to hard surfaced publicly maintained roads and other factors that may impact the surrounding community.
5. Commercial and industrial uses may be conditionally permitted in areas not identified for such uses in the Comprehensive Plan if a critical review of the proposed use determines that with appropriate conditions the use will not adversely impact the surrounding area.
6. Based upon the land use analysis, a sufficient number of residential parcels exist or could be created within current zoning density. Therefore, modification of zoning to provide increased density should be rare.
7. All land use applications should first be reviewed, evaluated, and/or approved by the applicable state agency for sanitary services.
8. The County should consider avenues to create incentives for land conservation through its zoning and subdivision laws to preserve various significant archaeological, ecological, historical, wildlife, and scenic sites that have been recognized in the county as unique and important to preserve.
9. Minimize the creation of lots that cannot receive the appropriate sanitary services.

10. The Alpine Village zoning district should be maintained to provide for adequate design and development standards for the high-density recreational community with steep slopes and heavy snowfall at elevations above 3500’.
11. Urban development is better suited in urban areas. Idaho Code 67-6502 (a through m) promotes the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the state. Subsection (f) encourages urban and urban type development within incorporated cities. All nine cities within the county provide or are associated with urban water and sewer systems which allow and depend on higher density to make the services fiscally feasible and sustainable.
12. Due to the wildfire threat in the county, evacuation routes should be considered when making land use decisions and updating land use code.
13. The mapping of land use designations should have homogeneity with the surrounding area. Areas have specific, individual land use designations which results in homogeneity across the landscape. Islands of different land use designations defy the sense of rural context, especially if the land uses are markedly dissimilar.
14. The land uses describe the general uses and characteristics of each of the map designations. Since the Comprehensive Plan Map covers approximately 1.1 million acres, the map is general in nature, and it is recognized that some areas may have or may lack features and characteristics that cause them to differ somewhat from what is in their land use description. It is not reasonable to expect that every parcel within a land use designation will conform to every detail of the geographic characteristics of the area as a whole.

# **Natural Resources:**

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Protect, enhance and maintain the County's natural resources such as air, water, forest, minerals, plants and wildlife for long-term benefits to the public.
2. Acknowledge and consider agency comments regarding natural resources.
3. The County's system of lakes and waterways is one of its greatest assets, and the County should strive to preserve both the quality and quantity of its water resources.
4. The County values its productive agricultural lands and forests, mining lands, its fisheries, wildlife, wetlands and aquifer recharge areas and should provide measures to protect and maintain these natural features.
5. The County should protect its water resources by requiring adequate sewer treatment systems based on soil, density, and intensity of use to reduce impacts to water resources.

## **POLICIES:**

1. Best management practices for waterway setbacks should be instituted to reduce erosion and sedimentation into waterways.
2. Development standards should be designed to encourage clustered development resulting in the preservation of open space and wildlife habitat.
3. The County should recognize its critical wildlife habitat and create development standards to protect these areas and mitigate development impacts to these habitats.
4. Protect water quality by creating standards for development in close proximity to shorelines.
5. The County should provide a copy (physical or link) of the Lake Assist guidebook to property owners or their representatives applying for a building location permit on shoreline properties. The County should also make a link to the guidebook available via the Planning Department web site.
6. The County should implement shoreline development land use regulations that address those areas where the county can enforce such regulations effectively.
7. To the extent of the County's jurisdiction and consistent with the Clean Water Act, delineated wetlands should be protected. Productive farmland, timberland and mining lands should be identified and protected from adverse effects of adjoining developments.

# **Hazardous Areas:**

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Protect the County from loss of lives and property due to natural hazards.
2. Reduce public and private financial losses due to floods, fires, landslides, avalanches, and excessive slopes by setting standards for development in high hazard areas.

## **POLICIES:**

1. Flood mitigation standards should be adopted that meet or exceed the National Flood Insurance Program minimum requirements.
2. Residential, commercial or industrial development within the floodway should be discouraged.
3. Fill within the floodplain should be discouraged.
4. The county's wildland fire, wildland urban interface policies and plans should be integrated into development standards.
5. Excessive slopes should be identified and development discouraged by providing lower densities within these areas.
6. The County intends to regulate the location and density of new development in floodplain to reduce the potential for the loss of lives and property within flood hazard areas.
7. Land divisions should be designed to reduce exposure to wildland fire and to provide for adequate ingress and egress routes as determined by the applicable fire authority having jurisdiction.
8. Issuance of building location permits within areas of excessive slopes, unstable areas and avalanche zones should be discouraged.

## **Public Services, Facilities and Utilities:**

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Future development approvals should require adequate services and should not adversely impact the services or utilities of the utility provider.
2. Require adequate public services, facilities, and utilities in future development approvals.

### **POLICIES:**

1. Encourage high-density development to take place within the boundaries of existing sewer and water districts with adequate capacity.
2. The County should seek comments from existing service providers on their ability to serve future developments without adversely impacting the ability of the utility providers to serve current users.
3. The County should provide adequate facilities for responsible disposal of solid waste to protect the health and welfare of the public as well as the County's natural resources.
4. New development should be adequately served by fire protection, roads, sanitary services, schools, law enforcement, ambulance, power and emergency services, and other public services.
5. Require the developers to provide infrastructure, utilities or financial support to offset the capital costs of expansion of services required by the proposed development.
6. The County shall require adequate provisions for future utility services in areas of commercial, industrial, residential or other similar uses.

# **Transportation:**

## **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. Provide a transportation system that is safe, uncongested, and well maintained.

## **POLICIES:**

1. A long-term transportation system plan should be developed and regularly updated to ensure reasonable levels of service can be maintained in the future, and that needs for future road extensions or transportation corridors are identified as early as possible.
2. Development in areas that are not served by county standard roads or where transportation is inadequate should be discouraged.
2. Future development should not adversely impact the existing transportation system by reducing the quality or level of service or creating hazards or congestion.
3. Roads within new development should be built to county standards and at the expense of the developer.
4. Roads within new development should provide adequate access for fire and emergency vehicles as well as routes of escape.
5. Future access roads should be designed and built to integrate with the state and county system of roads without overburdening the transportation system.
6. To reduce transportation costs, road building and environmental impacts, cluster development should be encouraged.
7. The county intends for certain intense land use developments to provide hard surfaced roads.
8. Bike ways and pedestrian paths should be considered in development plans to provide an integrated community transportation system wherever possible.
9. To communicate and work cooperatively with other jurisdictions within the county to ensure the best possible flow of traffic county-wide.

## **Recreation:**

### **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. Strive to promote our need for diverse recreational opportunities while preserving the area's scenic character and ecological systems.

### **POLICIES:**

1. The County is encouraged to develop a waterways and public land access program to preserve and develop access to public recreational lands and waterways. The program should include retaining access parcels that may be acquired from tax sales or private donations.
2. Protect and encourage public and private recreational opportunities as an important asset that supports a key segment of the County's economy.
3. A plan for a system of green belts and pathways (bike and pedestrian) should be considered as areas develop, so that a connected system can be developed and preserved. Under no circumstances will the County require recreational access easements on private property as a condition of development. This policy does not preclude providing voluntary incentives to developers in return for recreational access easements.
4. Ensure the public's legal recreational accesses and amenities are not obstructed or adversely impacted by future development.

## **Special Areas or Sites:**

### **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. To protect, preserve and maintain special areas and sites both natural and man-made in relation to land use.
2. Future developments should not adversely affect or destroy culturally or ecologically sensitive sites.

### **POLICIES:**

1. A generalized map of the known pre-historic and historic sites should be developed so that future developments are aware of special areas of concern and are connected with the historical society and Native American tribes for appropriate preservation and protection.
2. The County should implement roadside development standards for recognized scenic byways to protect the view sheds.
3. Special areas should be recognized and addressed when development is proposed in these areas.
4. The County should affirm that no historical structures or sites exist within a land use application area.



# **Housing:**

## **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. Provide an environment that enables opportunities for diverse housing needs.

## **POLICIES:**

1. Encourage development of a variety of housing options including manufactured home parks, and tiny home communities located in areas that are compatible with their density.
2. Work with municipalities and private parties to find solutions for all types of housing projects and developments.
3. Clustering of housing in developments to save on infrastructure and transportation costs should be encouraged through mechanisms such as density bonuses.
4. The County recognizes opportunities should be made for assisted living and group shelters.
5. Enable workforce housing in direct proximity to agricultural, commercial, recreational, and industrial uses.

# **Community Design:**

## **GOAL AND OBJECTIVE:**

1. To enable a variety of lifestyles while maintaining the rural character in the future development of the County.

## **POLICIES:**

1. To promote and preserve the natural features and rural atmosphere of the community, the county should enact development standards that address development within scenic byways and design standards that account for waterfront setbacks, wildlife corridors, commercial and industrial landscaping, requirements for reduced lighting, cluster development, rural rather than urban setback standards and other design objectives aimed at preserving the rural, natural character of the community.
2. Allow unique and flexible design standards such that new development within older neighborhoods and historic settlements is compatible with those unique neighborhoods.
3. Allow particularized design standards to address the unique environmental conditions of waterfront and mountaintop developments which may differ from standard design objectives.
4. New development should be located in areas with similar densities and compatible uses.
5. The adverse impacts of new development on adjacent areas should be minimized.
6. Consider the protection of natural resources, rural features and surrounding uses of the community in the design and location of new development.

# **Agriculture:**

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:**

1. Protect the rural character and agricultural heritage of the County by retaining large-scale and small-scale commercial agriculture and hobby farms as viable uses.
2. Discourage fragmentation of very large productive agricultural lands.

## **POLICIES:**

1. Residential uses should continue being permitted in Agricultural zoning districts.
2. Protect agricultural uses and activities from land use conflicts or interference created by residential, commercial or industrial development
3. Land use regulations should support home occupations, cottage industries and farm-based family businesses on agricultural parcels. Examples include farm stands and other agri-business pursuits.
4. The County acknowledges the provisions of Idaho State's Right to Farm Act. Those shall be considered in the land use decisions.
5. Support the local economy by encouraging production, distribution, and retail sales of locally grown food and other agricultural products.
4. Protect environmental quality so that agriculture continues to be a viable use in the County.