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## Priest River/Oldtown Community Subarea Plan

Draft 6/27/2019

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### INTRODUCTION

#### A Community-Based Local Area Plan

The Priest River/Oldtown Community Subarea Plan, hereafter known as “The Plan”, is an amendment to the Bonner County Comprehensive Plan. The Plan provides guidance to meet the needs and desires of the community. While the Bonner County Comprehensive Plan contains general goals and policies that are applicable county-wide, the content of The Plan is tailored specifically to the designated geographic boundary of the Priest River/Oldtown subarea. The Plan gives the public, businesses, and government agencies an account of the community’s intentions for future development and land-use. The Plan is designed to enhance the positive characteristics of the community while moving it toward the future envisioned by its people.

#### Vision Statement:

Our vision is to retain our rural character, history, and culture by protecting our unique natural resources, while balancing private property rights and land-use regulations.

The Plan’s vision is founded on these principles:

- respecting the history and culture of our communities,
- understanding the value of our natural resources
- defending the ongoing pursuit of liberty
- supporting future generations who embrace the aforementioned principles

The purpose of The Plan’s vision is to:

- Promote stewardship of the land
- Encourage multi-use access to public lands
- Support small scale (family) agriculture and forestry
- Preserve the context and character of communities
- Balance private property rights with accountability to one’s neighbors
- Exercise caution in regards to growth and expanding development particularly in terms of environmental impacts (air, water, view sheds) (Guide growth and development as it relates to environmental impacts (air, water, view sheds))

## RURAL CHARACTER

Rural areas include the mixture of agricultural uses, green fields, open space, range land, forest, and other rural land characteristics with minimum residential, commercial and industrial development. High-density development threatens rural character. "Rural character" refers to the patterns of land use and development described below. Ordinances and land use decisions shall take into account these valuable attributes of rural character as listed below:

1. Preserving open space, natural landscapes, and vegetation predominate over the man-made, built environment;
2. That eliminates the conversion of undeveloped land into sprawling, low-density development;
3. That foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies, and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas, supporting working farms, ranches, and forestry.
4. Compatible with wildlife habitat.
5. Traditional rural roads and transportation; such as passenger vehicles, tractors and other farm equipment, and trucking.
6. Encourage more intensive land-use (commercial/industrial) and higher density developments (suburban) only within the Area(s) of City Impact.
7. That do not require the extension of urban governmental services beyond the limits of the Area(s) of City Impact.

## CHAPTER 1: POPULATION

This chapter provides demographic and population data used to inform the dialogue throughout The Plan. This summary is intended to provide a baseline of the present, an analysis of the past, and a projection of future trends including such characteristics such as total population, age, sex, and income that is useful in planning for future growth.

The boundary of the Priest River/Oldtown subarea is divided by the Pend Oreille River corridor, while also abutting the incorporated cities of Priest River and Oldtown proper. Due to the unique boundary extents, data specific to the subarea was difficult to obtain. Population and demographic information was captured for the Priest River/Oldtown subarea using various techniques in an effort to capture the major trends of the area. In order to provide a frame of reference much of the data summarized is compared to other towns in Bonner County which feature similar population trends and geography.

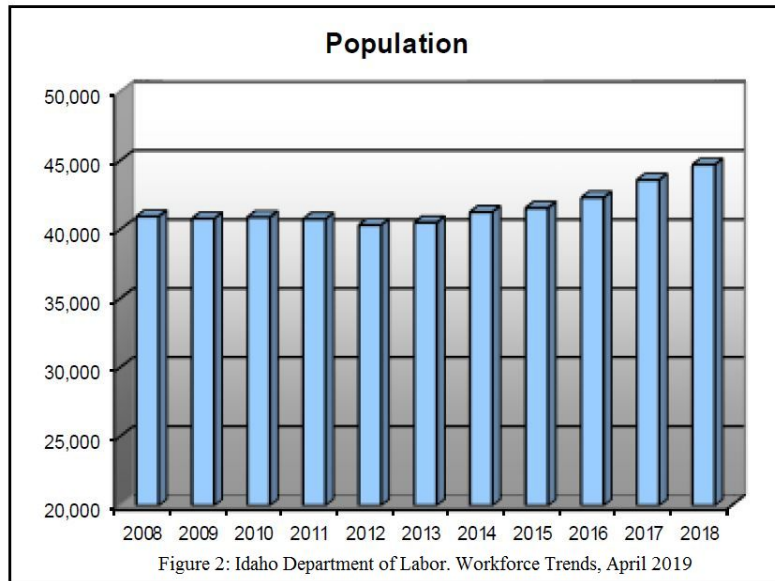
### Population

In the last five years the population within Priest River’s zip code area has increased moderately compared to other zip code boundaries in the county. According to a private economic study published by the group EMSI, the general population of the Priest River zip code area increased 13.6%, while Blanchard grew 16.6%, and Sandpoint grew 8.4% . Figure 1 compares the population trends of various zip code boundaries in Bonner County in relation to the Priest River zip code area.

Zip Code Boundary	Population (2013)	Population (2018)	Percent Increase
Nordman (83848)	240	253	2.2%
Sandpoint (83864)	41,468	43,946	8.4%
Sagle (83860)	6092	6,885	13.0%
Priest River (83856)	6,250	7,101	13.6%
Blanchard (83804)	1,492	1,740	16.6%

Figure 1: Adapted from EMSI Q2 Data Set, Economic Overview. [www.economicmodeling.com](http://www.economicmodeling.com)

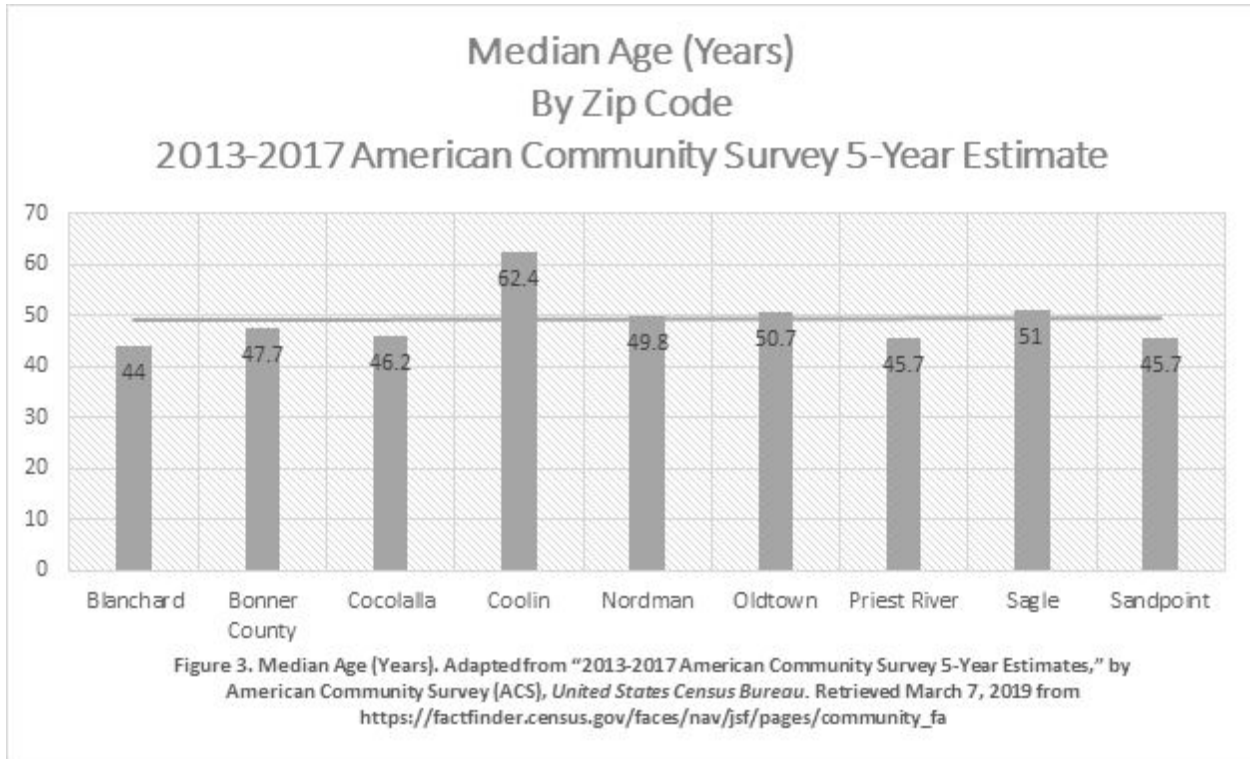
Although the Priest River area has seen a considerable increase in population over the last 5 years, trends across Bonner County show that the area as a whole has been growing at a slower pace compared to the state over the course of a 10 year period. From 2008 to 2018 the county grew 9% as opposed to 14.3% throughout Idaho. Even though Bonner county has seen a below average growth trend over the last decade, Figure 2 shows a marked increase in growth during the last five years which coincides with the five year population trend of the Priest River zip code area.



### Demographic Influence

According to the Idaho Department of Labor, Bonner County is considered a rural county. In this study Idaho has been divided into four classes based off of an area’s economic profile, population density and distance to major cities. Of the four classes, three are considered to be rural counties and Bonner county has been ranked as a Rural Center County [Figure 3].

Classification	Attribute(s)	# of Counties
Urban County	A county in which the largest city has >20,000 residents	9 out of 44 counties
Commuting County	Rural County where at least 25% of the working population commutes	8 out of 44 counties
Rural Center	Rural County where the largest city has a population between 7,500 to 20,000	5 out of 44 counties
Open Rural	Areas that have neither a commuting population nor a large city center.	22 out of 44 counties



### Future Conditions

The community plan for the Priest River/Oldtown area must be designed to protect the quality of the environment and the quality of life for its citizens, including opportunities to live and work in the area. Priest River/Oldtown must be able to provide for community services such as law enforcement, fire protection and adequate sewer and water facility. The residents of the area desire to preserve rural character as future development occurs.

### Goals:

- Multi-generational, multi-economic diversity shall be encouraged within [--].
- To promote land use policies which encourage and support a diversified economy, living-wage jobs and a high quality of life.
- [--] shall keep current with county census data, population estimates and projections and shall use the data to analyze community needs and project impacts.

- To maintain and encourage the preservation and development of those cultural and recreational resources that contribute to the community's character, while promoting a stable economy through managed growth.

**Policies:**

- Population projections shall be analyzed annually.
- Population forecasts and census data shall be used to evaluate housing and school needs, transportation and service impacts.
- [--] shall cooperate with its incorporated cities and neighboring counties to address growth challenges on a regional scale and coordinate planning efforts whenever possible.
- Monitor and analyze employment and population data to identify trends affecting the [--] area.
- Apply the results of this analysis, as appropriate, to the [--] subarea plan and its objectives.