

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of County Commissioners
Mayor and Town Council

Cc: County Planning & Zoning Commission
Town Planning & Zoning Commission

Fr: Tyler Sinclair, Town Planning & Building Director
Jeff Daugherty, County Planning & Development Director

Re: Comprehensive Plan Update

Date: April 13, 2009

We are pleased to present a proposed Comprehensive Plan that reflects a concerted effort to reassess and update our community's principles and policies, and revise them with new ideas where appropriate. A seamless effort between the Town and County, at both the staff level and among our planning commissions and elected boards, has led us to this point. The community can be assured that this joint effort has produced a plan that transcends the jurisdictional boundary between the Town and the unincorporated County.

Maximizing the public's involvement in this Plan update was among our earliest objectives and has produced a plan that reflects the overall community sentiment. Planning and development topics always generate controversy in any community, and debates will continue over this plan, but the public's comments have significantly shaped the Plan content.

This update is based on a comprehensive perspective of our community with principles and policies that flow from a communitywide review. The planning effort has been sensitive to the views of specific neighborhoods and balanced them with the overall goals, but this plan also remains true to the thorough focus of a Comprehensive Plan. Several critical points are highlighted in the following overview.

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- A Comprehensive Plan establishes the Vision, Principles and Policies to guide future land use decisions. It provides a policy basis for continued planning efforts.
- This Plan is not the end of a planning process; rather it refocuses and redirects the community's continuing planning process.

What does this Comprehensive Plan do?

- Builds on community sentiment expressed through remarkable public involvement.
 - 1,720 survey responses; 575 respondents were selected by a scientific random sample; the remaining respondents were self-selected.
 - 5 Community workshops.
 - 5 Town open houses.
 - 4 Town neighborhood meetings.
 - 6 County sub-area meetings.
 - 7 meetings of a Stakeholders Advisory Committee.
 - 5 meeting of a Technical Advisory Committee.

- 6 Joint meetings of the Town Council & County Commission
 - Numerous Planning Commission meetings.
 - Interviews of key community groups, organizations and individuals.
- Provides a clear and measurable vision statement to guide the community's plan
 - The Community Vision Statement: "Preserve and protect the area's ecosystem and meet the community's human needs in a sustainable and predictable manner," expresses the public's desire to strike a balance between the complex and interrelated ecological, social, and economic challenges of our community.
- Tests and revalidates the long-standing community vision from past planning efforts that include:
 - Stewardship responsibilities for wildlife and the ecosystem;
 - Managed growth;
 - Balanced community's goals; and
 - A sound legal basis.
- This plan is not a "no growth" plan but rather a "growth management plan."
 - The community was consistent in all surveys that they did not support a "no growth" plan.
 - The theoretical build out under the LDR's is not increased but redirected to locations that match the community's planning principles.
 - A regional perspective is included that recognizes forcing growth into neighboring communities leads to an unsustainable community. Specifically, this Plan recognizes that displacing housing, transportation, and industry to neighboring communities may have a greater impact on the ecosystem than provision for those elements locally.
- Prioritizes the community's seven (7) primary themes.
 - It provides guidance and predictability to future decision-making by prioritizing the plan's themes at multiple levels of geographic specificity.
 - The Plan's two primary community values are; (1) stewardship of wildlife and natural resources, and (2) responsible growth management and acknowledges that wildlife and natural resource protection depends on both conservation and responsible and sustainable growth patterns.
- Development is directed to protect wildlife and natural resources while meeting our community's needs.
 - Only 3% of the land in Teton County is privately owned.
 - 60% of future growth is guided to only 4% of the private land available for development.
 - 96% of the private land is targeted for conservation and minimal development.
 - Community character principles and design policies will shape the development on private land.
- Clearly describes future character and levels of development and conservation.
 - Land use maps and written descriptions for 25 sub-areas of the town and county.
 - First ever land use plan and policies specific to the Town of Jackson.
 - Density increases allowed only in targeted areas and only in return for workforce housing or open space conservation.
- Focuses on a sustainable Town and County.
 - Creates policies to reduce the regional affects of exporting our community's impacts to neighboring communities.
 - Establishes policies for reduced energy consumption, smarter growth and an enduring economy.

- Target housing 65% of our workforce by promoting a balance between the retention of existing housing stock and the construction of new housing while defining appropriate areas for increased housing.

This Plan evolves the community's goals; it does not simply repeat them.

- The community's vision is not simply restated; rather it is implemented in more complete and bold ways.
 - Land use maps locate development to better protect wildlife and natural resources.
 - The first comprehensive Plan based development rights on land characteristics such as soil types and slope gradient.
 - The second Plan clustered development on parcels to create open space on the same parcel.
 - This Plan clusters development on a community-wide scale, steering growth to only 4% of the private land.
 - The 1994 Plan created the Natural Resource Overlay to protect major big game species.
 - This Plan protects a focal group of species to better reflect overall health of the ecosystem.
 - This Plan establishes an Environmental Commission to provide scientific support for improved policies, regulations and programs.
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 - Plan clearly defines conservation and managed growth areas in the unincorporated County.
 - This Plan provides detailed maps and descriptions for 12 sub-areas dividing the County into conservation areas and growth nodes.
 - Principles and policies address conservation strategies, neighborhood character, and managed growth.
 - Past Plans included the Town of Jackson only in broad county-wide policies and regulations.
 - This Plan provides detailed maps and descriptions for 13 sub-areas dividing the town into stable, targeted growth and mixed use commercial districts.
 - Principles and policies address redevelopment, neighborhood. character, design objectives, community events and public spaces.
 - The vision of "Town as Heart of the Region" is more fully defined.
 - The Plan describes a more predictable and focused future outcome.
 - A Future Land Use Map and written descriptions present planning goals for 25 sub-areas in the town and county.
 - A formal amendment process is created to review proposed changes to the plan.
 - A timeline schedules regular evaluations and updates.
 - Greater emphasis is placed on implementation.
 - Specific strategies are listed to implement principles and policies.
 - Measurable indicators are included to monitor progress implementing the Principles and Policies.
 - This Plan establishes a timeline for regular updates and additional detailed studies.
 - Accountability and monitoring are key elements.
 - Responsibilities for implementation are assigned.

- Measurable indicators provide tangible methods for monitoring implementation progress.

Where we go from here?

The plan is now available to the public to download at www.jacksontetonplan.com or hard copies may be purchased at Staples. All sections of the plan including an executive summary will be provided for review and comment. The first phase of public comment will be taken through Friday, May 15, 2009. During this period planning staff, elected and appointed officials from the Town of Jackson and Teton County will be making presentations at numerous locations throughout the county to explain the Plan's themes, policies and future land use patterns with focus on educating the public on the plan and answer questions regarding its content. All public comments received by May 15, 2009 will be summarized and provided to the Town and County Planning Commissions to assist in their initial review and recommendation. All comments provided after May 15, 2009 up until final action by elected and appointed officials will continue to be summarized and provided, as they are received. In order to easily produce a summary of public comment, all comments should be made through the plan website. If persons do not have access to the website, comments may be submitted directly the planning team.

Spring 2009 Meeting Schedule

April 13 - Joint Information Meeting – Town Council Chambers - 3:00 PM
 April 15 – Joint Planning Commission – Town Council Chambers – 6:00 PM
 April 20 – Open House – Town Council Chambers – Noon
 April 21 – County Neighborhood Meeting – Alta Episcopal Church – 5:30-7:00 PM
 April 21 – Town Neighborhood Meeting – Library Auditorium – 6:00 – 7:30 PM
 April 22 – Open House – Town Council Chambers – 8:00 AM
 April 23 – County Neighborhood Meeting – River Crossing Church – 6:00-7:00 PM
 April 23 – Town Neighborhood Meeting – Senior Center – 6:00 – 7:30 PM
 April 27 – Open House – Town Council Chambers – Noon
 April 28 – County Neighborhood Meeting – Airport Administration Bldg – 6:00-7:30 PM
 April 28 – Town Neighborhood Meeting – Center for the Arts (Center Theater) 6:00 – 7:30 PM
 April 29 – Open House – Town Council Chambers – 8:00 AM
 April 30 – Town Neighborhood Meeting – St. John's Episcopal Church – 6:00-7:30 PM
 May 5 – County Neighborhood Meeting – Nick Wilson's – 6:00 – 7:30 PM

Upon completion of the above meetings a summary of public comment received to date will be provided the Town and County Elected Officials for informational purposes only to assist in further evaluating the plan as it works its way through the review process. It is important to note that the plan will not be revised by the Planning Team prior to review by the Planning Commissions.

Also, the Stakeholders Advisory Group (STAG) will be convening in April to review and make recommendations to the Planning Commissions and Elected Officials on the plan.

The Town and County Planning Commissions will receive the plan and a summary of public comment received to date and STAG recommendations for review and recommendation to the elected officials in early June. It is anticipated that a series of joint Town and County and separate jurisdictional meetings will take place in June leading to a recommendation including proposed changes to the plan by both Commissions by the end of June. Public comment will be taken at the Commission meetings but the public is still encouraged to submit comments through the website. It is important to note that the plan will not be revised by the Planning Team prior to forwarding the plan to the elected officials for final review and final action. Proposed revisions to the plan from the Planning Commission will be provided to the elected officials in a summary memorandum for consideration.

The Town Council and Board of County Commissioners will receive the plan, summary of public comment, STAG recommendations and the Planning Commissions recommendations in July. It is anticipated that a series of joint Town and County and separate jurisdictional meetings will take place in July and August leading to final modification of the plan for consideration by the joint elected bodies for final action. Public comment will be taken at the Council and Commissioner meetings but the public is still encouraged to submit comments through the website.

It will take strong leadership, and diligence on behalf of elected Officials, planning commissioners, and advisory boards to see this extremely important document for the community through the upcoming public review process and ultimately to adoption. It is the responsibility of all members of the community to approach their review of the plan in a positive, comprehensive and respectful manner to ensure all voices are considered and heard equally. We look forward to entering this final stage of the Comprehensive Plan update started some 18 months ago and discussing the proposed plan with the public, elected officials, and advisory commissions leading to the adoption of an updated plan for the community by early fall 2009!