

Uphold Jackson as “Heart of the Region” (Theme 3)

Statement of Ideal

Residents and visitors will continue to rely on Jackson as the center of the community and primary location for jobs, housing, shopping, educational, and cultural activities.

What does this Theme address:

- 3.1 - Town of Jackson as the population center of the region
- 3.2 - Vital retail/mixed-use core in Jackson
- 3.3 - Healthy Residential Districts
- 3.4 - Targeted Residential Growth within town mixed-use districts
- 3.5 - Civic spaces and social functions
- 3.6 - Historic structures and sites



Jackson is the retail, civic, housing, and cultural hub of the region.

Why is this theme addressed?

“As the sole municipality, Jackson is the commercial hub where people live, work, and play.”

The concept of Jackson as the “heart of the region” recognizes and plans for the concentration of development, particularly workforce housing and commercial services, within the Town of Jackson. Maintaining town as the nucleus of the region is a major theme of this Plan, and steering development into the town helps implement many other themes of this Plan. For instance, it helps reduce vehicle trips and conserve natural areas and wildlife habitat in the region.

The “heart” idea is also an emotional, cultural, and values-driven concept that refers to the role

that the town plays as the region’s central gathering place. However, it is also crucial that the character and charm of Jackson be protected and enhanced, for they too maintain the heart of the region concept. Future development in town must be sensitive to maintaining our community character as a small town with a distinct heritage and legacy that is linked to our connection with the surrounding natural environment.

Jackson as Population Center

Jackson always has been the population center, even as Teton County’s population and smaller communities grew outward from town. Approximately 48% of the County’s population is located within the two square miles of town. This concentration of people creates exciting opportunities including a vibrant downtown; enjoyable neighborhoods in which to live, work and play; accessible retail and service amenities; and abundant recreational activities. Directing future town-level development into the Town of Jackson and other identified areas in the county maintains Jackson as the population hub and prevents a sprawling pattern of development that degrades natural resources and wildlife habitat.

Jackson as Retail Center

Jackson has also historically been the retail and business center of the region. Most of the county’s shopping opportunities and jobs are located in a centralized, compact area. The community relies on sales tax revenue generated in the Town of Jackson as a significant portion of local government funding. A large part of the economic strength and “heart” of the town is tied to preserving the unique Town Square and character of the surrounding buildings.

Jackson as Cultural and Social Hub

The Town of Jackson has long served as the cultural and social hub for the region and Teton County. It is the primary location for municipal and county governments as well as regional headquarters for many state and federal agencies. It is also a major tourist destination and a “gateway” to the national parks and Bridger-Teton National Forest.

Jackson with Stable Neighborhoods

Jackson residents value their stable neighborhoods and are concerned about seeing too much change too quickly. Areas of town will redevelop and infill over time, but many neighborhoods will remain stable in scale, image, and uses over the long-term. The preservation of existing neighborhoods will help maintain an existing inventory of workforce housing and keep workers near the region’s major employment center while maintaining the unique character of many areas of the community.

Jackson as Historic Preservation Heart

Jackson Hole has a great opportunity to promote historic preservation through heritage tourism and to share the colorful western history of the community with community members and guests. Historic preservation as a local, state, and national movement has matured over the past few decades and has proven to be a sound economic development strategy in addition to conserving resources.



Photo caption

What the community has said about this theme

During the Comprehensive Plan update public outreach effort, the community expressed a desire to maintain the Town of Jackson as the “Heart of the Region,” although a variety of opinions emerged regarding the meaning of this phrase. It is clear that the community identifies with the Town of Jackson as the civic, retail, cultural, and emotional hub of the region and that future changes to the town in all areas should be handled carefully. In addition, the public feels strongly about the sense of community created by the compact physical town design and layout. In addition, throughout the planning process, the community strongly expressed their support for the concept of a strong town core.

2008 Polling indicated that:

- Most of the community agrees with limiting development in the county rural and resource areas while increasing development in the Town of Jackson.
- A large majority agrees with promoting long-term redevelopment of the “Y” area by improving the road network, making it pedestrian oriented, and providing incentives for additional workforce housing.
- Most of the community supports limiting building heights to three stories along major corridors outside of Town Square.
- A majority of the community agrees it is appropriate to keep home and lot sizes stable in existing single-family neighborhoods in Jackson to preserve neighborhood character.

Principles and Policies

Principle 3.1—Maintain the Town of Jackson as the population center of the region

Jackson has historically served as the primary population center of the Valley, around which other small communities have evolved. One of the core ideas of this Plan is to direct future town-level development into the Town of Jackson, in a way that is compatible and that enhances the town and creates a variety of housing types.

Policy 3.1.a: Promote mixed-use redevelopment in designated districts within Jackson

A principal land use tool supported by this Plan will be to promote mixed-use neighborhoods in appropriate locations throughout the town. To be successful, these neighborhoods should generally include provisions for: municipal utilities (water, sewer and storm sewer), schools, complete streets including transit, local commercial services, a variety of housing types, recreational amenities, and other facilities and uses as appropriate.

Policy 3.1.b: Redevelopment and infill should enhance Jackson as an enjoyable place to live

The Town of Jackson contains many pleasant neighborhoods and living opportunities, and future development should reinforce and create new vital neighborhoods within the town. Design guidelines and neighborhood plans will steer the physical development of town into targeted areas while preserving its physical and social character desired. They will also establish a targeted vision when appropriate.

Policy 3.1.c: Emphasize a variety of housing types, including deed-restricted housing

The town currently has the greatest diversity of housing and the most workforce housing in the county. As the regional population center, maintaining this diversity of housing types and styles (single family homes, duplexes, condos, carriage homes, lofts, and apartments), including deed restricted housing of all types is critical to accommodate a diversity of households.



This Plan supports a variety of housing types, including deed restricted.

Principle 3.2—The Town of Jackson will continue to be the regional hub for retail and lodging development in the county

Jackson has historically been the retail and business center of the region with a majority of the shopping opportunities and local jobs. The town will continue to be the center for community-wide services for residents and visitors. The downtown and Town Square are major draws and need the highest level of design guidelines for future development.

Policy 3.2.a: Protect the image and function of Town Square

Town Square is Jackson’s major tourism draw and visitor retail center. It is also the area that evokes the greatest amount of sentiment and concern over architecture, scale, and community character. The town square area will have the highest level of design standards to guide future development and preservation efforts.

Policy 3.2.b: Promote a balanced mix of uses including commercial throughout Jackson

The community will continue to support Jackson as the retail center with a variety of mixed-use and commercial districts. The town is vitally important for civic functions, retail, commerce, lodging, and housing. The town will seek to maintain a balance between visitor amenities and an appropriate amount of community benefit received from redevelopment in the future in all commercial districts, including, Southern Highway 89, Central Business District, South Cache and Snow King Corridor, and Snow King Resort.

Policy 3.2.c: Maintain downtown Jackson as the retail center of the region

Downtown Jackson is not only the emotional center of the community but also functions as the community’s economic center. The sales tax revenue generated in this area is essential to the funding of most public and community services and functions and will need to be maintained or expanded in the future.

Policy 3.2.d: Maintain lodging as a key component in the downtown

A key element of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan was the establishment of the Lodging Overlay District. The purpose of the overlay was to concentrate lodging into the downtown where guests could access tourist-orientated amenities without a vehicle. In addition, the overlay was intended to protect the remainder of the community from expansion of tourist related amenities. The original intent of the overlay is supported in this Plan, but the boundary has been revised to reflect the desired future land use pattern.

Principle 3.3—Foster healthy residential neighborhoods

The Town of Jackson residents value their neighborhoods and are concerned about seeing too much change too quickly. Many neighborhoods will remain stable in terms of their scale and image. Infill will be compatible in scale and use, particularly in the West Jackson, East Jackson, and Southern Hillside neighborhoods.

Policy 3.3.a: Preserve stable neighborhood districts

The Town of Jackson will emphasize regulations that enhance and stabilize established neighborhood districts. Design standards and guidelines will direct infill and redevelopment projects and encourage housing diversity and rehabilitation. The Future Land Use Plan (FLUP) identifies stable districts as West Jackson, East Jackson, and the Southern Hillside.

Policy 3.3.b: Promote compatible infill that fits Jackson’s neighborhoods

Infill should be compatible in scale and use with the existing neighborhoods and the Future Land Use Plan. Key considerations should include the identification of appropriate transitions between land uses and developments of varying intensities, and incorporation of roadway, park, open space, and trail/pedestrian connections that enhance the quality of neighborhood. In stable districts future development will mirror the existing development pattern.

Principle 3.4—Promote targeted residential growth within identified town growth districts

Future residential development into targeted areas in the community will help to efficiently achieve the identified community vision. The Future Land Use Plan identifies five targeted growth districts, including the Y, Karns Meadow, the Rodeo Grounds, the Southeast Mixed-Use neighborhood, and NoBro.

Policy 3.4.a: Encourage growth districts for residential growth

The districts identified for targeted residential growth currently contain or are in close proximity to all the amenities necessary to create a mixed-use neighborhood, including retail, civic, and social facilities, and parks and recreation. Additional residential density identified for the town above that allowed by the current zoning will occur in the targeted growth districts.

Policy 3.4.b: Mixed-use districts will be guided by the Future Land Use Plan

In districts targeted for residential growth, future development will be guided by the FLUP and to a lesser extent the existing development pattern. Key considerations should include the identification of appropriate transitions between land uses and developments of varying intensities. In some cases, neighborhood plans will be a means of providing a greater level of detail for specific areas than what this Plan can provide.

Principle 3.5—Recognize the importance of civic spaces and social functions as a part of maintaining a sense of community

Historically, the Town of Jackson has served as the cultural, social, and civic hub for the region and Teton County. Maintaining and enhancing public spaces and making strategic investments, increases the important role of Jackson as the regional center for tourism, government offices, and as a gateway to the nation’s parks and forests.

Policy 3.5.a: Maintain and improve public spaces

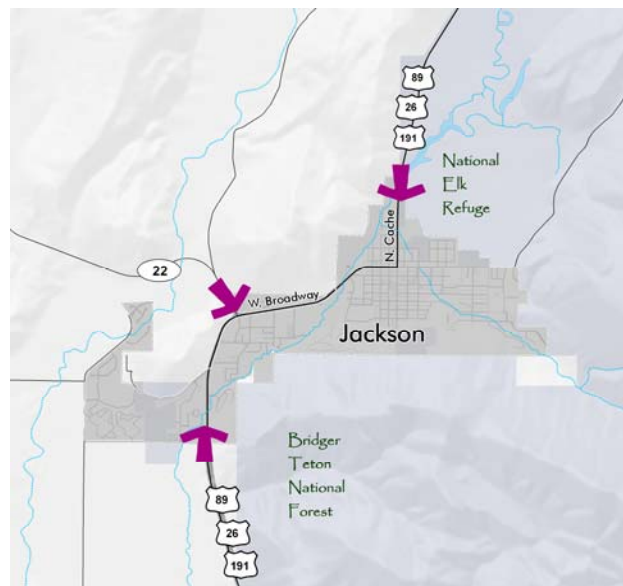
Public spaces are the building blocks of a thriving community. Jackson’s public spaces and civic facilities should be interesting, memorable, and reinforce our sense of community. The town will continue to promote high quality design of public spaces, including creating attractive gateways, preserving views, and providing attractive public right-of-way amenities. New developments in the Town of Jackson should contribute to quality public spaces—including but not limited to sidewalks and walkways, parks, outdoor squares, and landscaped areas.

Policy 3.5.b: Make public investments in strategic locations

The community will continue to invest in public facilities such as government buildings, parks, recreation, trails, workforce housing, arts and cultural facilities, in locations in town that enhance the town as a civic and cultural hub. Specifically, public amenities should first be located in Downtown Jackson, second within the Town of Jackson limits, and third within greater Teton County. This priority is only intended for public facilities with the primary function of directly serving the public and not for ancillary or support facilities.

Policy 3.5.c: Enhance Jackson gateways

The town gateways play a special role in setting the community tone and atmosphere for the millions of guests that visit the Town of Jackson every year. The town will work to enhance the three major gateways including upgrades to both the public realm and on private property.



Town of Jackson’s three major gateways.

Policy 3.5.d: Continue traditions and community events

The community will continue to sponsor and support community events in the Jackson downtown that celebrate the unique character of the region and provide a strong sense of community to local residents.

Principle 3.6—Preserve historic structures and sites

Our community is proud of its history. Encouraging the preservation and awareness of historic structures and sites contributes to economic development, helps to conserve resources, and maintains our culture and awareness of history.

Policy 3.6.a: Identify and preserve historically-significant structures and sites

The community will establish and support existing local historic districts to meaningfully preserve historically-significant buildings and sites.

Policy 3.6.b: Support the Historic Preservation Board

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board (TCHPB) has several on-going programs that include identifying historic properties, and nominating the most significant structures for National Register designation. The county and town will continue to support the Historic Preservation Board in its efforts to document and preserve historic buildings and sites.

Policy 3.6.c: Enhance historic preservation education, outreach, and awareness

The Teton County Historic Preservation Board and the Jackson Hole Historical Society and Museum undertake many programs to inform the public about the community’s historic features and history. The county and town will continue to support these and other organizations in their education efforts to advance awareness beyond current levels.



Identify and preserve historically-significant structures and sites

Strategies

The Town of Jackson, primarily, will undertake the following strategies in initial implementation of the policies of this theme. The town and county should periodically update strategies as tasks are completed or when additional action is necessary, based on monitoring of the Theme’s indicators.

Strategy 3.1: Amend Land Development Regulations (LDRs)

- Amend LDRs and zoning to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan. This is the highest priority implementation strategy to ensure this Plan will be implemented.
- Complete an area plan for the Town Square district. The plan should include design standards and use descriptions.
- Initiate gateway plans for the three community entrances.
- Update the design guidelines to provide more specificity, and predictability.
- Amend PUD and PMD to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

Strategy 3.2: Develop Neighborhood Plans

- Initiate neighborhood district plans for the targeted growth areas.

Strategy 3.3: Identify Criteria for Historic Buildings/Sites

- Define criteria to identify historic buildings and sites.

Indicators

The community will use the following indicators to monitor achievement of this theme’s values.

Jackson as “Heart of the Region” Indicators	Goal	Review Period
1. New dwelling units by district	Consistent with FLUP	1 yr
2. New nonresidential square footage by district	Consistent with FLUP	1 yr
3. Proportion of population in town to the unincorporated county and nodes	Consistent with FLUP	1 yr
4. Number of annual community events	monitor	1 yr
5. Number of historic buildings/sites identified	monitor	1 yr
6. Investment in civic and gateway projects	monitor	1 yr