

2013

Priest River Comprehensive Plan



Photo courtesy of the Priest River Development Corporation

Planning Today For Tomorrow

2013

Greg Snow

12/16/2013

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

PRIEST RIVER: A CITY OF TWO RIVERS

Priest River is situated at the confluence of two rivers, the Pend Oreille and the Priest. It's located at an elevation of 2077 feet above sea level and covers an area of approximately 1.6 square miles. The Median resident age is 35.2 years. It has begun a transformation from a quiet rural mill and timber town into a vibrant urban community. The growing process is bringing new shopping, commercial, and employment opportunities, industrial expansion, and a basis for renovation of City utilities. And yet a "small town" atmosphere remains the essence of Priest River's character.

THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: INTENT

Priest River's first comprehensive plan was adopted in 1978. It was re-written in 2005, and in 2013 the City of Priest River re-initiated the process of updating it.

The comprehensive plan is a community document, which, through its goals and policies, provides direction that defines agreed upon values of Priest River as expressed within the Plan and is an official policy guide for the future.

A comprehensive plan provides a mechanism to maximize the efficient use of public funds by applying them to intelligently considered plans and designs of City operation and to guide growth into areas of common uses to the greatest long term public benefit.

This is intended to be a "living" document, growing and changing in response to the City's involvement to changing economic and societal conditions. Goal statements and policies will be reviewed as necessary and revised, in the manner prescribed by law, to reflect current conditions and projections.

PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

The comprehensive plan is the document through which the City of Priest River envisions future land development and redevelopment and how it should be managed. Basic goals of the plan are intended to maintain the vision and values of the community by:

- Designating adequate land to meet anticipated future growth demands for urban development in a logical and orderly manner;
- Providing an orderly process for the provision of public facilities and services as the framework for urban development;
- Promoting a capital improvement plan for public facilities;
- Contributing towards a stable and diversified economy in Priest River;
- Providing for the retention of natural and cultural resources which contribute to the livability of the community;
- Encouraging innovation in development techniques;
- Encouraging a balance of land uses to ensure that adequate revenues are generated to support necessary public services; and
- Promoting housing opportunities for all economic levels in Priest River.

USES OF THE PLAN

The Priest River Comprehensive Plan has several important uses:

- 1 *Legislative:*** To meet the requirements of the 1975 Land Use Planning Act of the State of Idaho, Title 67, Chapter 65, and to promote consistency of regulations (<http://www3.state.id.us/idstat/TOC/67065KTOC.html>).
- 2 *Policy:*** To present the policies and intentions of the City of Priest River with respect to the rights and expectations of the general public, private enterprise and local government.
- 3 *Educational:*** To enable local residents, public agencies, and economic interests to become informed of the community's values, plans and priorities.
- 4 *Coordination:*** To establish a basis for coordination and understanding among residents, economic interests, city officials, private land owners and public agencies within the Priest River Area of City Impact and to present Priest River's vision on growth and development issues in Bonner County and the region.
- 5 *Organizing productive efforts for maximum efficiency:*** To enact the vision for the community outlined in this plan three major components need logical coordination simultaneously with subsequent expertise retained in each component.
 - a) Planning/Design**
 - b) Funding**
 - c) Execution**
 - a) **Planning/Design:** The Engineers, Planners, and Attorneys required to:
 - 1) Design public utility improvement plans, transportation plans, and parks; and
 - 2) Enactment of the laws necessary to enable balanced, fair financial levies needed to fund future improvements.
 - 3) To collocate like uses and not create an undue burden on the City and/or its taxpayers by private development.
 - b) **Funding:** A professional grant writer to leverage collected taxes and fees through grant awards to cover the cost of millions of dollars of public utility upgrades and other city enhancements. The initiation of impact fees to ensure that all new construction and development that benefits from the City's resources and location also contribute to the City's development.
 - c) **Execution:** A full-time professional city staff supported by the city leaders and the citizens of Priest River to coordinate the work of these various professionals/specialists so that the different organizational elements that make a city work come together appropriately.

These three major components can't be developed separately. They must all be developed simultaneously because they rely on each other for success as well as the best fiscal use of government funds.

COMMUNITY VISION STATEMENT

Priest River respects its past, enjoys its present, and is planning its future to ensure that the feeling of community is preserved, its growth beneficial, its environment is clean, and its economic stability assured while maintaining a small town atmosphere and quality of life.

The City of Priest River will be a community recognized for:

- Leadership and citizen involvement.
- Quality services
- Educational opportunities
- Balanced and beneficial growth
- Healthy economic and natural environment
- Cultural/social/economic diversity
- Youth programs
- Family oriented events and services

COMMUNITY VALUES

1 Community

Priest River is a safe and secure place to live, work and play, with a stable and friendly environment that encourages citizen involvement, and instills within residents hope for the future.

2 Leadership

Priest River values leadership that respects and encourages differing views/creative solutions, models integrity to the citizens and all others outside the City's boundaries, and implements community goals.

3 Environment

Priest River is an environmentally aware community that preserves, conserves and appreciates its distinctive open spaces, natural resources, wildlife, habitats, parks and outdoor recreation.

4 Economic Development

Priest River encourages economic development that safeguards the environment, promotes community prosperity, and provides a diverse local economy for residents of all skill levels and abilities.

5 Diversity

Priest River is a community for all people, offering diverse cultural and educational opportunities, with varying land uses and unique neighborhoods.

6 Accountability

Priest River is dedicated to promoting fiscal responsibility, managed growth, and responsive community services. The residents of Priest River recognize that a consequence of the maintenance of a small local government is that full-service government benefits are not generally available. Community members also recognize the necessity of providing their active support to the City administration as it fulfills its mandated duties.

ELEMENTS OF THE PLAN

Chapter 1.2: Authority

This Plan is adopted under the authority of Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act (I.C. 67-6501, et seq.). I.C. Section 67-6508 requires a comprehensive plan to analyze and provide an implementation strategy on the following areas: population; school facilities and transportation; economic development; land use; natural resources; hazardous areas; public services, facilities and utilities; transportation; recreation; special areas or sites; housing; property rights; agriculture; and, community design.

In addition to the Introduction, the following elements are included in the Priest River Comprehensive Plan

1. **Property Rights:** encompasses the current vision for a mix of future land uses that will endeavor to protect and not infringe upon the rights of all property owners.
2. **Population:** analysis of present and future trends in population growth. Links to various demographic sources are included.
3. **School Facilities:** Identifies how Priest River and the West Bonner County School District # 83 will work together to maintain Priest River's superb educational program.
4. **Economic Development:** presents goals & policies for promoting a healthy economic environment and provides links to information resources and the city's economic profile.
5. **Land Use:** encompasses the current vision for a mix of future land uses that will realize the community's diverse goals by designating those land uses and graphically portraying those areas on the Future Land Use map.
6. **Natural Resources:** Identifies the natural resources of the area, methods for managing them, and the community development activities that affect them.
7. **Hazardous areas:** analysis of present and future trends in population growth. Links to various demographic sources are included.
8. **Public Facilities, Utilities, and Services:** Programming to manage public safety and infrastructure enhancements to strategically complement community development.
9. **Transportation:** describes the community's transportation infrastructure, identifies priorities, and outlines goals and policies for the future.
10. **Recreation:** Identifies local recreational resources and ensures the provision and maintenance of desirable recreational space and public programs.
11. **Special Areas or Sites:** Identifies areas of special importance, especially historical value, and plans for preserving and/or enhancing them.
12. **Housing:** Identifies housing needs and plans for improvement of housing standards, neighborhoods, and safe, affordable housing.
13. **Agriculture:** Identifies lands within the City that are being worked as agricultural uses, whether it be forestry, crop production, or any other agricultural use.
14. **Community Design:** A program to craft an orderly, attractive and comfortable community through systems of neighborhoods, transportation corridors, public spaces, commercial nodes, and natural areas.
15. **Implementation:** defines specific actions needed to implement and support the comprehensive plan.

1. PROPERTY RIGHTS

Idaho Code §67-6508 (a) requires the following for the Property Rights component: (a) Property Rights - An analysis of provisions which may be necessary to ensure that land use policies, restrictions, conditions and fees do not violate private property rights, adversely impact property values or create unnecessary technical limitations on the use of property and analysis as prescribed under the declarations of purpose in chapter 80, title 67, Idaho Code.

BACKGROUND

The property rights component includes an analysis of provisions which may be necessary to ensure that land use policies, restrictions, conditions and fees do not violate private property rights, adversely impact property values, or create unnecessary technical limitations on the use of property and analysis as prescribed in Idaho Code.

Idaho Code provides that the checklist applied to a takings analysis also applies to regulatory takings, whether the takings are total, partial, temporary, or permanent. It also provides for a system by which real property owners can require an agency to analyze whether an action it intends to take will constitute a taking. The appeals process will be outlined in the Staff Report associated with each potential City action.

The goal of producing this Property Rights component is to protect property rights by complying with State law relevant to any City action.

LEGAL HISTORY

In the 1995 Legislative Session, two amendments were made to existing statutes that affect Idaho Cities and counties regarding land use planning. These statutes, created to avoid the unconstitutional “taking” of private property by a governmental agency, require a review of existing and proposed comprehensive plans and local ordinances that establish standard which might affect private property. These statutes became effective July 1, 1995 (Idaho Association of Counties). (Larry Wasden 2012) Both the United States and Idaho Constitutions provide that private property may not be taken for use by the government without the just compensation for the value of that use. Courts have recognized situations in which just compensation is required:

- (a) When a government action causes physical occupation of property;
- (b) When a government action causes physical invasion of property; or
- (c) When government regulation effectively eliminates all economic value of property.

Any comprehensive plan policy, zoning provision or subdivision standard governing private property use should heavily depend upon the government’s authority and responsibility to protect public health, safety and welfare. Based upon this premise, the courts have supported the limitation of property use through land use planning, zoning ordinances, setback standards and environmental mitigations. However, if such regulations and/or laws destroy a fundamental property right or impose a substantial and significant limitation on the property, it could be considered a taking. (Idaho Association of Counties, undated)

in the 1994 legislative session, Chapter 80, Regulatory Takings was added to Idaho Code, Title 67, State Government and State Affairs. Sections 67-8001 through 67-8004 were adopted, imposing a duty upon state agencies to follow a “checklist” developed by the Attorney General’s office to ensure that land use standards did not result in a “taking” of private property. In the 2003 Legislative Session, Section 67-8002 was amended to provide that the checklist requirements apply in all cases of taking, including regulatory taking, and whether the taking is total or partial, temporary or permanent. At the same time, Section 67-8003 was amended to provide a system by which real property owners can require an agency to analyze whether an action it intends to take constitutes a taking.

ATTORNEY GENERAL’S CHECKLIST

1. Does the regulatory action result in a permanent or temporary physical occupation of private property?
2. Does the regulation or action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of their property or to grant an easement?
3. Does the regulation deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of the property?
4. Does the regulation have a significant impact on the landowner’s economic interest?
5. Does the regulation deny a fundamental attribute of ownership?
6. Does the regulation serve the same purpose that would be served by directly prohibiting the use or action, and does the condition imposed substantially advance that purpose?

LAND USE DECISIONS

Pursuant to and in accordance with the Attorney General’s Checklist and Idaho Code, the City Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council, in reviewing the potential impact of a regulatory or administrative action generally, or on private property specifically, conclude upon making each decision whether an action “results in the taking of private property”. The decision making process includes a “findings” framework for evaluating the impact proposed standards may have.

ISSUES

- **Ensuring every land use** application is able to be defended with regard to the taking of private property.
- **Perception** vs. Reality based on law, with regard to a taking.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- Evaluate every land use decision on its own merits with regard to the taking of private property.
- To be able to defend all regulatory actions against a legal challenge.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct a review of decisions to ensure they are thorough, legal and reasonable.
- Attach “findings” to each proposed action to bolster its legal position.
- Verify that the “findings” are in accord with the Attorney General’s checklist

2. POPULATION

Idaho Code §67-6508(b) requires the following for the population component: (b) Population – A population analysis of past, present and future trends in population including such characteristics as total population, age, sex, and income.

POPULATION

To plan for growth that is consistent with the community vision and within the city's fiscal and service capabilities. The city will endeavor to maintain and enhance the levels of services provided to Priest River's citizens. Understanding the makeup of the Priest River community and looking at how it has changed over the last 25 years will help us to understand what changes to anticipate over the next quarter of a century.

Statistical Information From: *American FactFinder, U.S. Census; Idaho Department of Commerce*

BACKGROUND

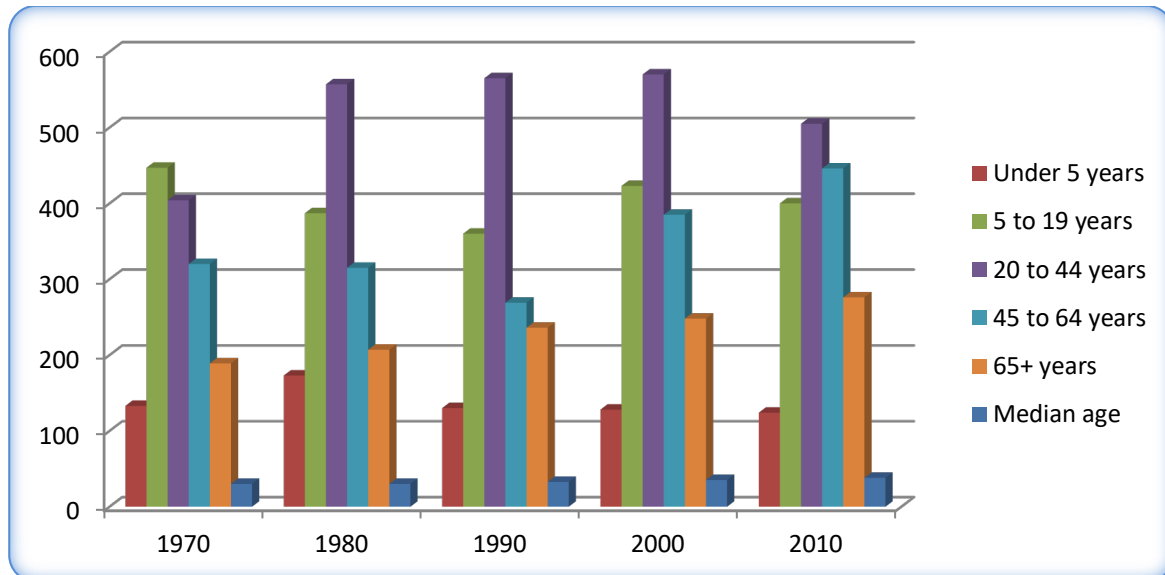
Public development policies concerning the timing, location and construction of facilities are based on population distribution and growth rate forecasting. In addition, private market decisions for commercial activities depend on the demographic information available within an urbanized area. Consequently, adequate knowledge of the anticipated population growth and its characteristics are necessary to determine and facilitate future land use decisions within Priest River.

Population forecasting is not an exact science and economic conditions frequently change, significantly influencing population growth rates. Population growth will be compiled annually through building permit data and other available demographic information.

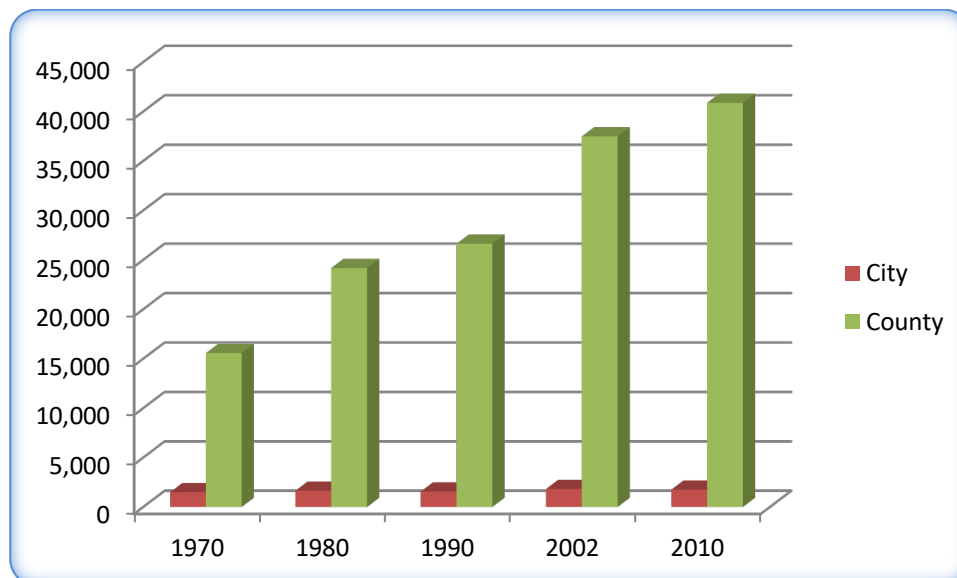
The decrease in population between 1980 and 1990 was typical in the western United States due to the depressed agricultural and natural resources economy in the 1980's. Like the rest of the western United States, Priest River and Bonner County experienced reductions in population during the 1980's. Comparative historical populations of Priest River and Bonner County are shown below in Table 1.

Table 1. Population data for the City of Priest River and Bonner County

Population by age group, City of Priest River



Total Population

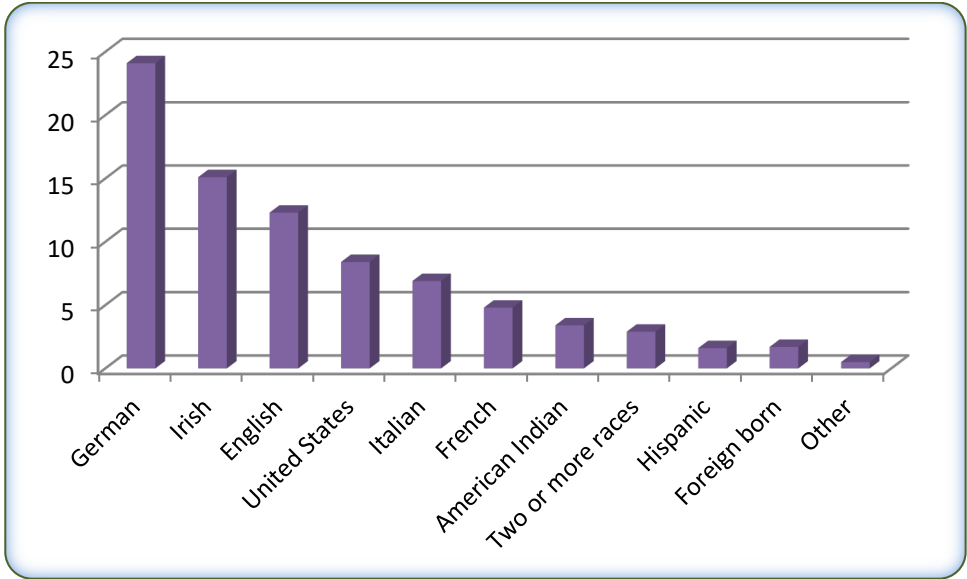


Idaho Department of Commerce, Priest River community profile, 1970 -2012

Demographic information is available from Idaho Department of Commerce and the US Census at the following sites: <http://idaho.zoomprospector.com/default.aspx?mode=COMMUNITIES> , and http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?pid=DEC_10_DP_DPDP1

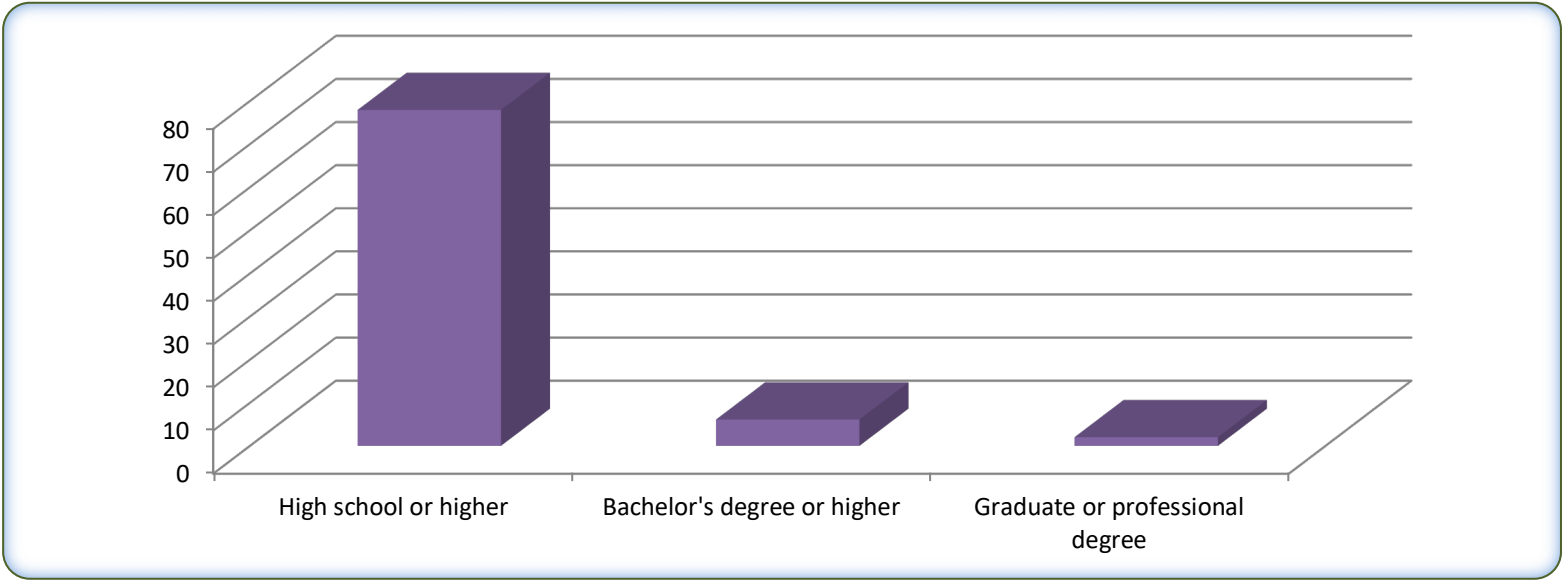
RESIDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Ethnic groups in Priest River in percentages:

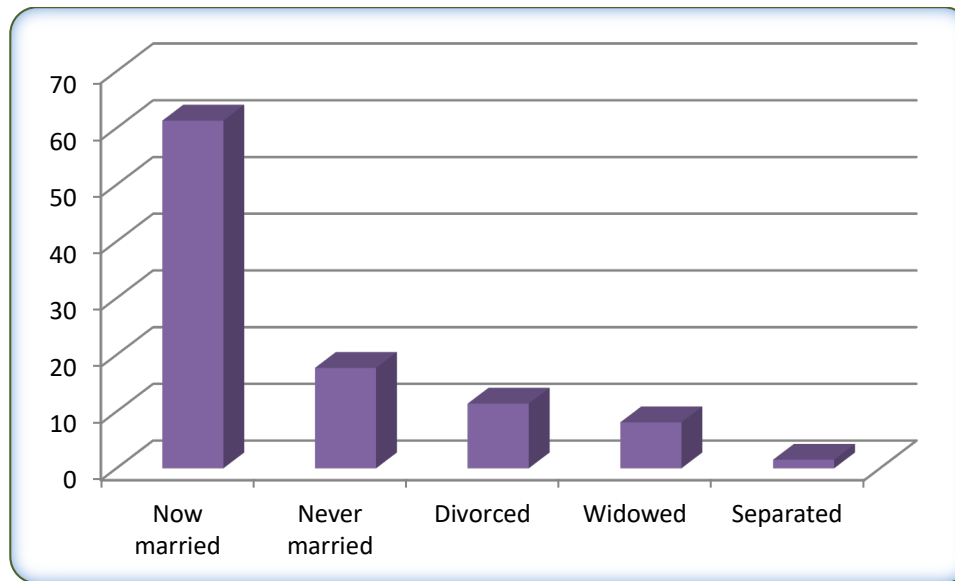


For population 25 years and over in Priest River:

Education in percentages:



For population 15 years and over in Priest River in percentages:



GROWTH FACTORS AND FORECASTING

New jobs created by businesses and industry in Priest River, housing availability, and a strategic location, between Newport, Washington and Sandpoint, Idaho are all contributing factors towards Priest River's growth. Regional demographic shifts also affect the rate of growth in the Priest River area. Establishing a rate of growth involves review of building permit information, demographic information from the census, City Transportation Plan, Community Improvement Plan, Impact Fee Study, and other sources, and local trends and forecasts. With the recent national recognition of the high quality of life available in Northern Idaho, relocation of individuals and business to the area has suddenly increased. This will have to be considered in growth projections and City development plans.

GROWTH STATISTICS

A reasonable long-range population forecast is necessary to plan properly. A forecast allows the city to plan its response to future demands for land and services, estimate its future income, and schedule its expenditures in order of priority. The projected rate of growth has a direct impact on the Capital Improvement Plan of the City.

ISSUES

- Growth vs. Change
- Aging Population
- Area of City Impact

OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

- Multi-generational, and multi-economic diversity should be encouraged
- Priest River should keep current with Census data, population estimates and projections and analyze community needs and project impacts
- Population projections should be regularly analyzed as new data becomes available
- Population projections and census data should be used to evaluate housing and school district needs, transportation and service impacts
- Priest River should cooperate with Bonner County to address growth challenges on a regular basis and coordinate planning efforts whenever possible

ACTION PLAN

- Informed decision making requires Priest River to keep current with data and trends.
- Decision makers must be armed with the most current population information
- Coordinate with Bonner County and participate in regional planning
- Cooperate with fire, schools, libraries, and other service providers

3. SCHOOLS AND TRANSPORTATION

Idaho Code §67-6508(c) requires the following for the School Facilities component – An analysis of public school capacity and transportation considerations associated with future development.

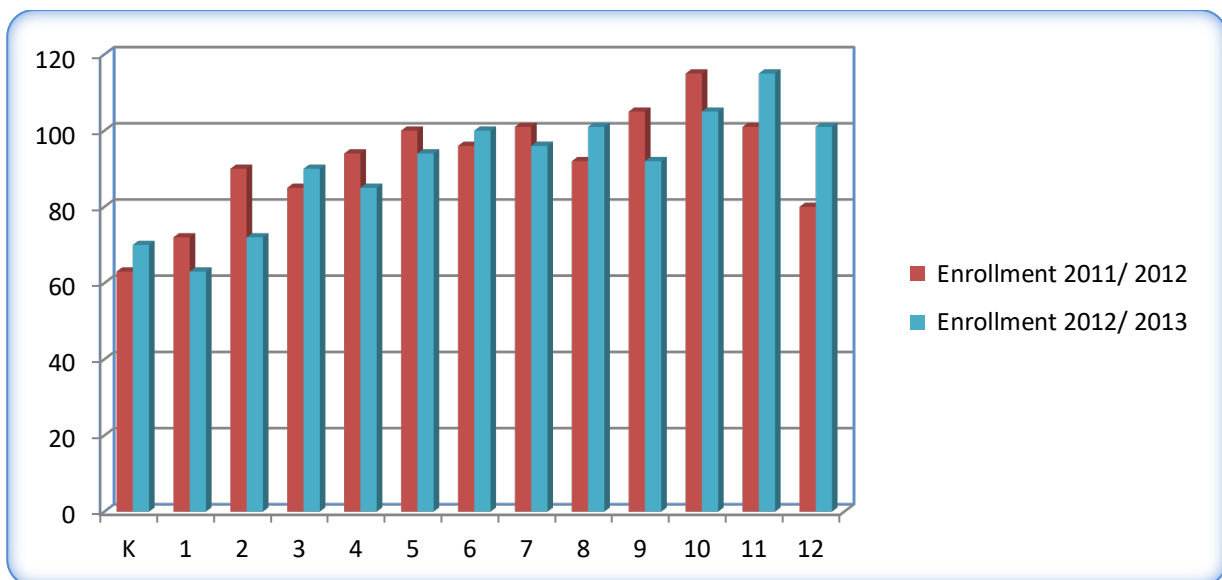
INTRODUCTION:

The West Bonner County School District serves students living in and around the communities of Priest River, Priest Lake, Oldtown and Blanchard (West Bonner County School District March 2012).

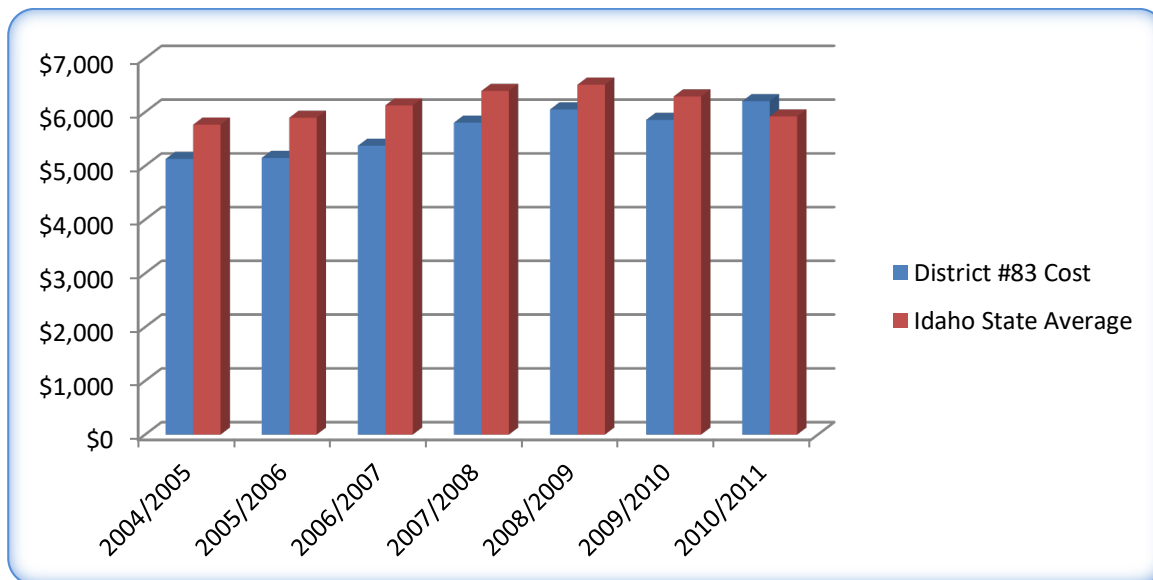
The West Bonner County School District system consists of 3 elementary schools, 1 junior high school, 1 high school and 1 alternative high school. In addition to schools, the district also operates administrative offices, maintenance facilities and transportation facilities, with 180 employees.

The West Bonner County School District has no schools that are over capacity in 2012.

Enrollment:



Cost to educate students compared to State average:



In recent years, the District has placed annual supplemental levy requests before voters in order to receive adequate funds to maintain facilities and fund extracurricular activities. Voters approved a \$2.35 million levy in 2011 (which provided approximately 17% of the District's funding) and \$2.35 million in 2012 (which provided approximately 21% of the District's funding)

SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION

The West Bonner County School District has approximately 14 school buses and logs approximately 1075 miles per day transporting students to and from school and school activities (West Bonner County School District March 2012).

PRIVATE AND CHARTER SCHOOLS

Within the Priest River area there are two private K-12 schools, House of the Lord Christian Academy with an approximate enrollment of 146 students, and Pend Oreille Valley Church School with an approximate enrollment of 12 students.

HOME INSTRUCTION

The State of Idaho does not regulate or monitor home instruction, but the state has a Compulsory Attendance Law. This law states that "Unless the child is otherwise comparably instructed (home instructed), the parent or guardian shall cause the child to attend a public, private, or parochial school during a period in each year equal to that in which the public schools are in session" (Idaho Code, Section 33-202, School Attendance Compulsory). The State of Idaho does not require home instructed students to be registered with the state, county, or district. Therefore, numbers or percentages of students who are home schooled are not available.

The Department of Education does not provide any funds or materials for home instruction, and there is no set curriculum required for home instruction in Idaho. Curriculum material/textbooks for home educators are available at school supply stores, mail order companies, or over the Internet. According to estimates, approximately 85 percent of students, once started in home instruction, are home instructed up through the end of their high school education. Most students obtain their GEDs and High School Equivalency Certificates from the Idaho State Board of Education.

UNIVERSITIES & COLLEGES

North Idaho College (NIC) has a satellite campus in Sandpoint which serves Bonner County residents, and has been doing so for over 40 years. There is an effort to begin offering two year degree programs at that facility in order to avoid the need to go to the main campus in Coeur d'Alene for classes.

Lewis and Clark State College collaborates with NIC to provide Bonner County students with further opportunities.

WORK FORCE TRAINING

The Priest River Development Corporation (PRDC) has now created a workforce training center in Priest River in order to help improve or increase the skills of the local labor force. The facility is known as the Priest River Institute for Education, Skills and Training (PRIEST). One of the other intended functions of PRIEST is to offer advanced opportunities for the local High School students in classes that the District can no longer offer.

Further, specific training programs can be put together in order to provide skilled labor for any specific employer.

Current courses include classes on word processing, databases, and accounting, while the facility is also used in the evenings for GED classes.

An executive board consisting of members from the business community, the school district superintendent, a school board trustee, and PRDC board members oversee the program. PRIEST is currently operating out of the old JD Lumber office on Bodie Canyon Road.

11 ISSUES

- **Impact of information technology advancements.** As increased internet speeds and bandwidth become more readily available, it is a distinct possibility that more and more distance learning may be offered, both at the high school and post high school level. At this time it is not known which way the State will go with technology initiatives.
- **Potential New Development Impacts.** New development, community growth, and demographic changes may have an impact on the coming years and are difficult to plan for.

Quite often new development tends to become more of a burden to school facilities, bussing and transportation. Careful steps should be taken to attempt to prevent this from happening.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- The City should take careful consideration with new land use policies and ordinances so that they allow technology advances to benefit local schools and encourage the construction of information technology infrastructure.
- The City should make sure to seek active involvement from the school district in review of new land use applications.
- City streets, trails, sidewalks, and bicycle paths should be designed and maintained in order to provide safe passage of students to the local school facilities.
- Long term consequences of land use proposals should be carefully considered to maintain and preserve the adequacy of existing school facilities.

ACTION PLAN

- The City should keep current with school capacity data and transportation issues associated with development.
- The City should seek mitigation from new developments that will cause a burden to the local school district through the use of impact fees, safety features or any other means available in State Code.
- The City should ensure that their policies encourage developments to consider land for use for new school facilities, roads, and trail systems for transportation of students and consistent with other City policy for on and off-site improvements.
- The City should make certain that new streets are constructed to withstand school bus traffic.
- The City should promote post secondary, vocational and continuing education needs.

Snow, Greg. *PRIEST Board President* (February 28, 2013).

Taggart, Tom. *Director of Business & Operations, Lakeland Joint School District #272* (November 21, 2012).

West Bonner County School District. Priest River, ID, March 2012.

4. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Idaho Code §67-6508(d) requires the following for the economic development component: An analysis of the economic base of the area including employment, industries, economies, jobs, and income levels.

INTRODUCTION:

This chapter consists of goals and policies that seek to promote and improve the economic well-being and quality of life for the community. Economic development policies should promote the creation and retention of jobs that provide a stable tax base while retaining the natural features and quality of life that residents expect and value.

Economic development within the Community provides essential jobs, services, recreation and shopping opportunities for the citizens. It also provides opportunities and support activities for people visiting the community.

Economic development can be difficult to forecast and influence through policy, yet economic development has a great deal of impact on overall quality of life within the community. It is greatly influenced by factors beyond the community, such as the state of the national economy, world event influence, and migration and demographics (local, regional, and national). Regulation, employment, legislation and taxation in Idaho and nearby states, also influences the regional economy.

While city government cannot “create” economic development, it can create a positive atmosphere where businesses are attracted and can thrive. The policies and regulations that are applied and the city’s infrastructure programs can have a tremendous positive impact.

The City of Priest River’s economic base has begun to grow and diversify through relocation of new small businesses to the City. New and retained jobs will continue to expand work options for area residents, and support the city’s fiscal stability. City leaders are planning for and managing growth through the Comprehensive Plan.

EMPLOYMENT

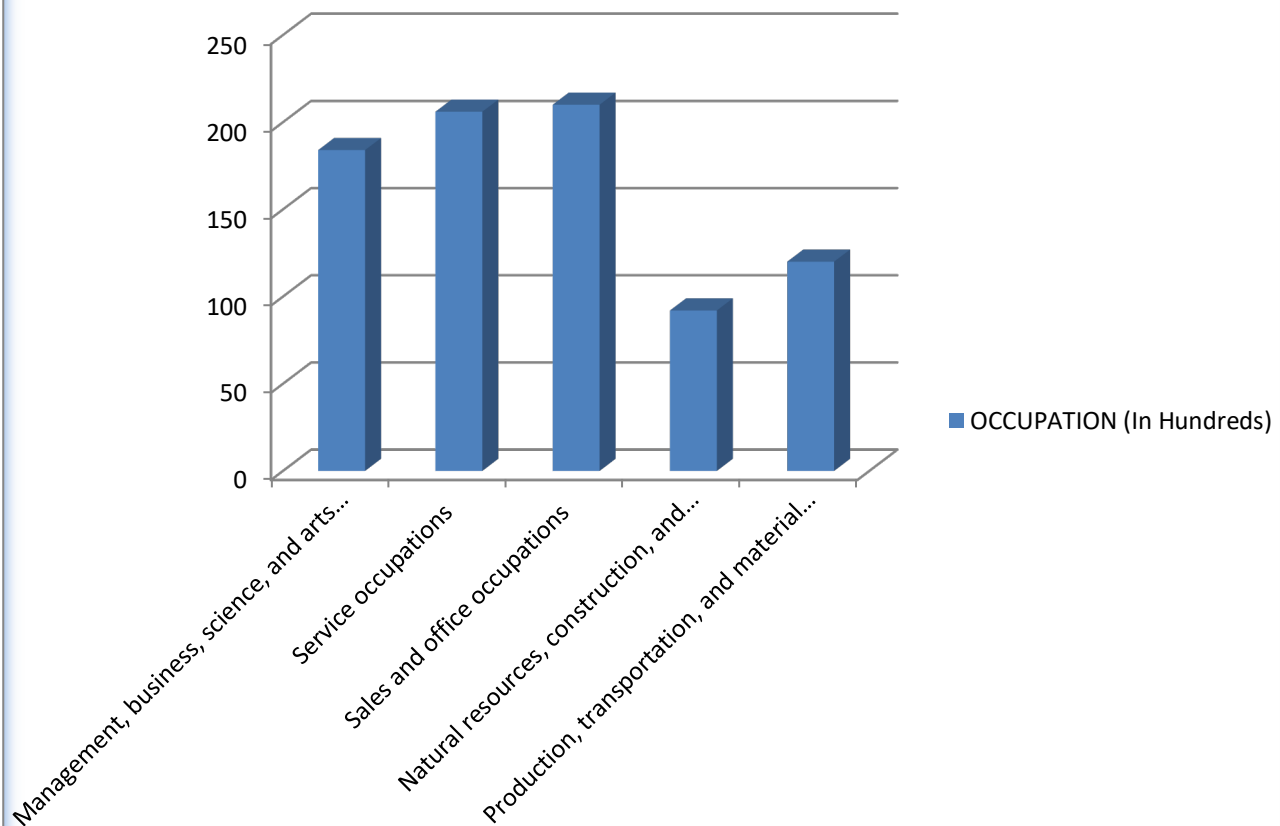
Historically, Priest River has relied very heavily on the timber industry, whether it be harvesting, trucking or processing. At one point, up until the late 1980's, there were 3 fully operational saw mills within the City, sadly, today there is 1. With the advancement of technology in the harvesting and processing of wood products, it takes fewer people to produce similar amounts of finished product as it did in years past.

Over time the local economy has become more dependent on the goods/services sectors and less dependent on the manufacturing sector.

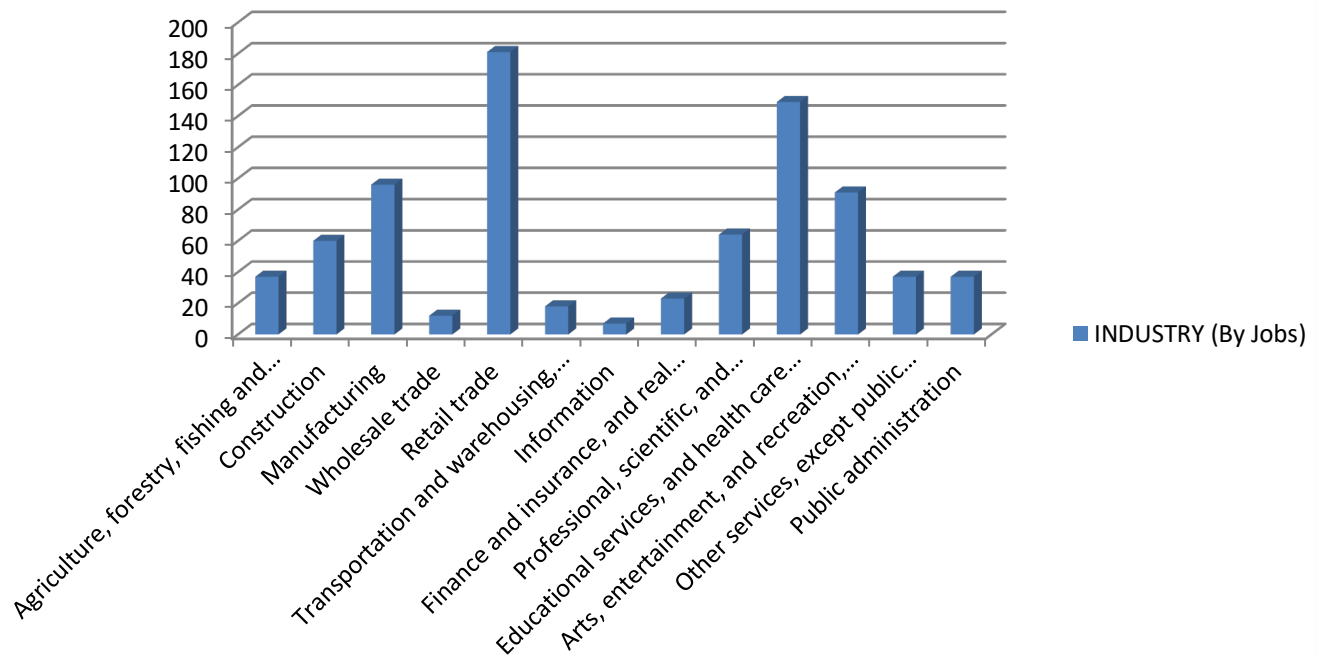
The following series of charts highlights conditions specific to Priest River as of 2011 and were compiled from data furnished by the American Fact-Finder website from the U.S. Census Bureau.



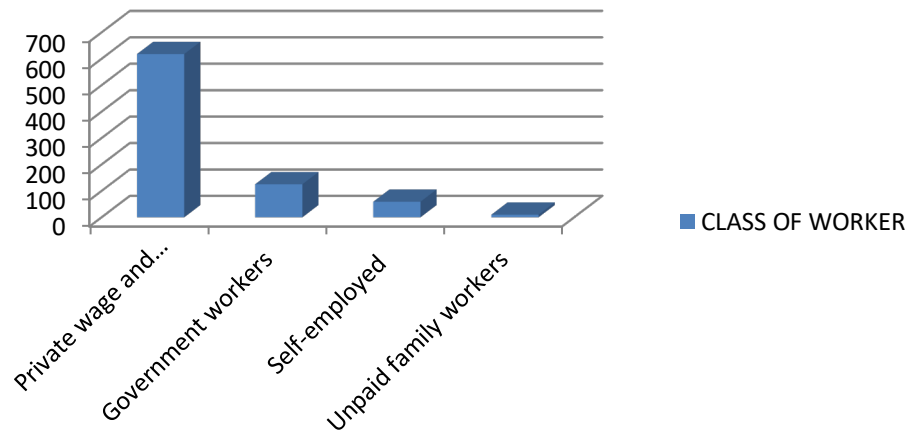
OCCUPATION (In Hundreds)



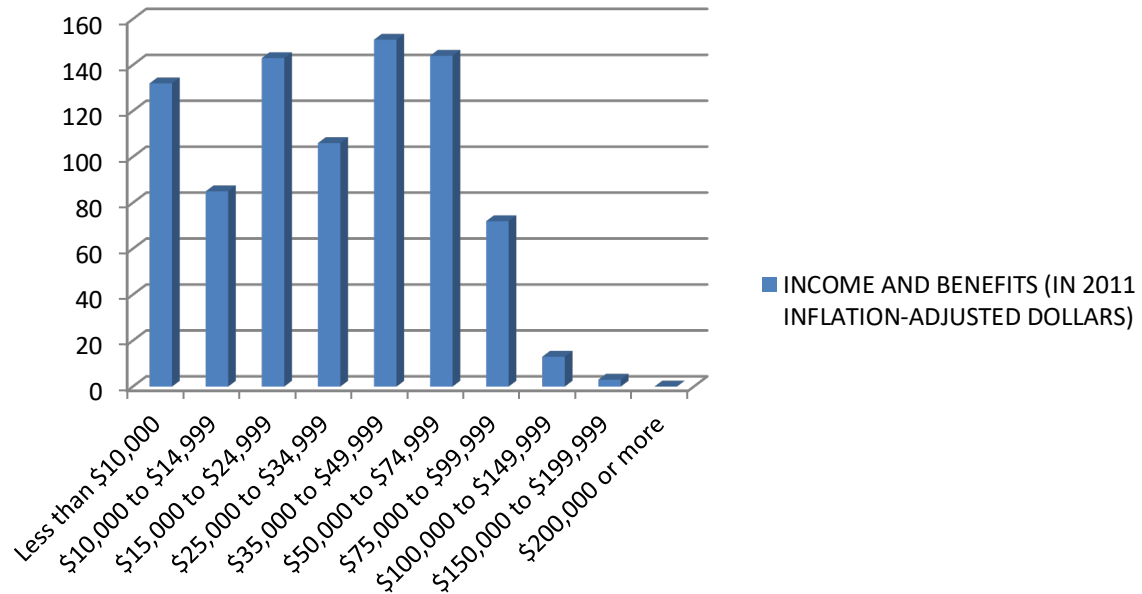
INDUSTRY (By Jobs)



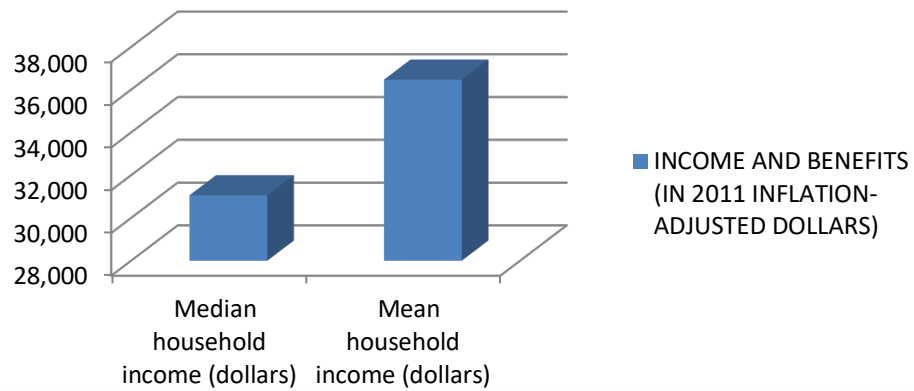
CLASS OF WORKER



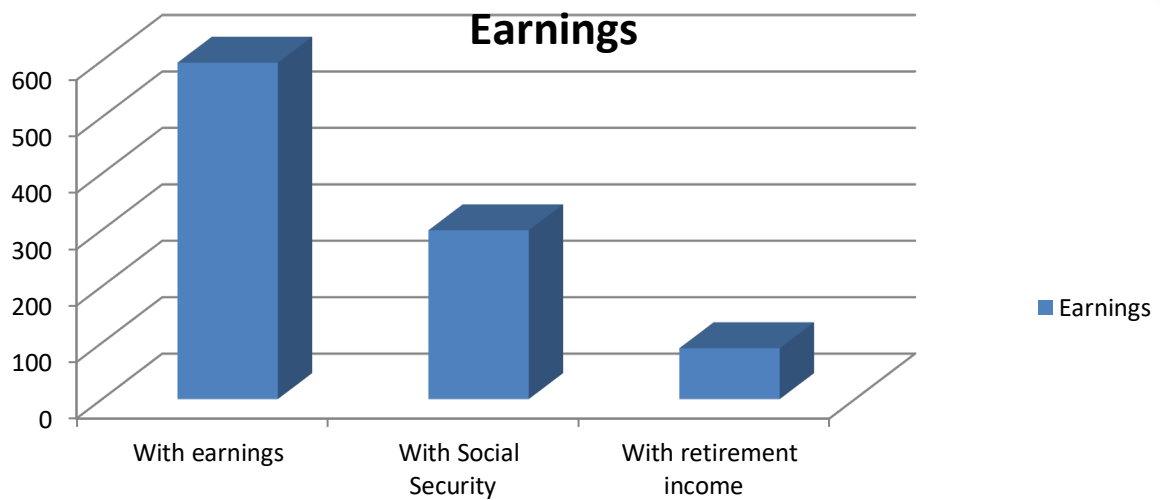
INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2011 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)



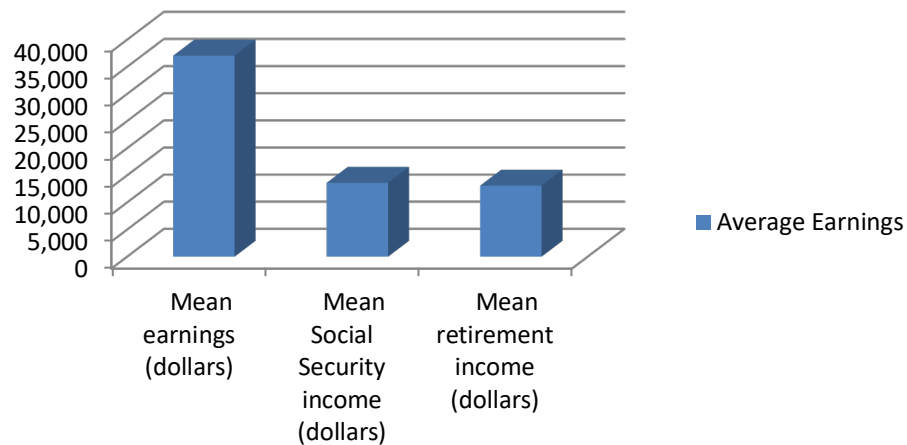
INCOME AND BENEFITS (IN 2011 INFLATION-ADJUSTED DOLLARS)



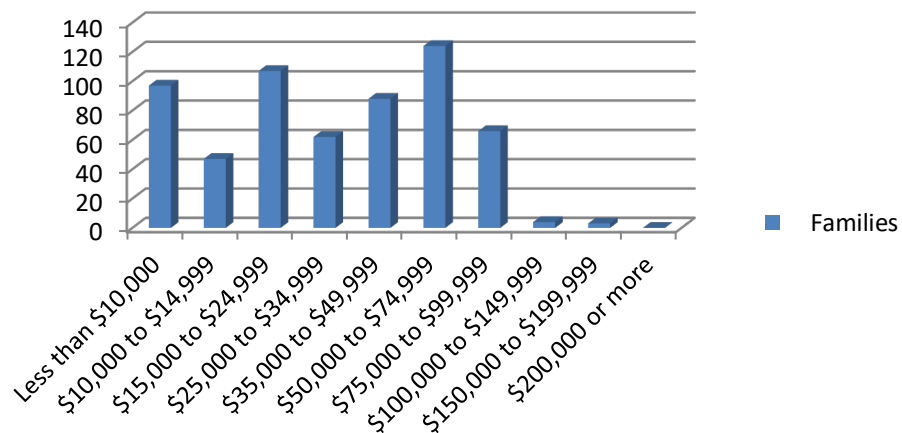
Earnings



Average Earnings



Families

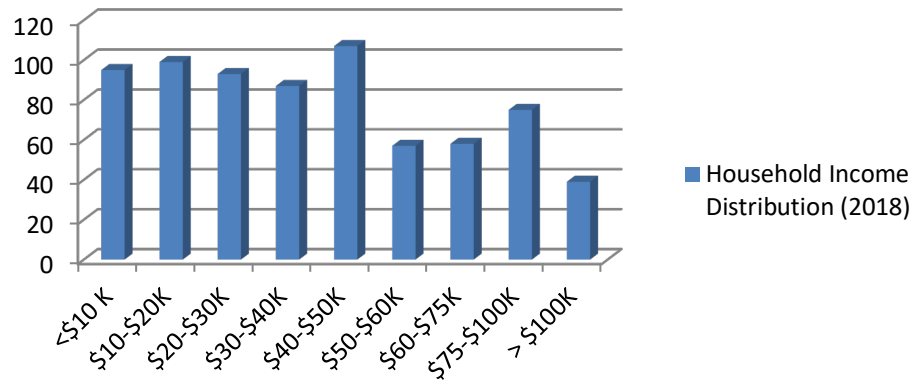


The previous charts display the data from 2011, it is also prudent to offer forecasted values so that educated decisions can be made towards projected future economical conditions. These factors should be given careful consideration in the planning process and also to be used as potential tools, or at least guidelines, for the creation of future ordinances which may affect future economic outcomes.

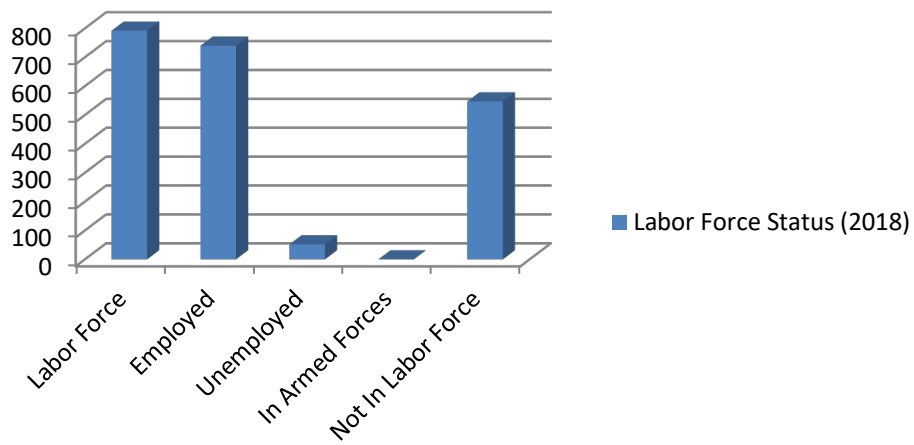
PROJECTIONS

Forecast data specifically for the City of Priest River is not as readily available from the Census Bureau but some limited data is available from the State agencies. The following charts were created using data projections provided by the Idaho Department of Commerce for the year 2018 and should be used as a reference guide for future decision making. It is critical to consider the potential impacts of new development as it relates to the future economics of the City.

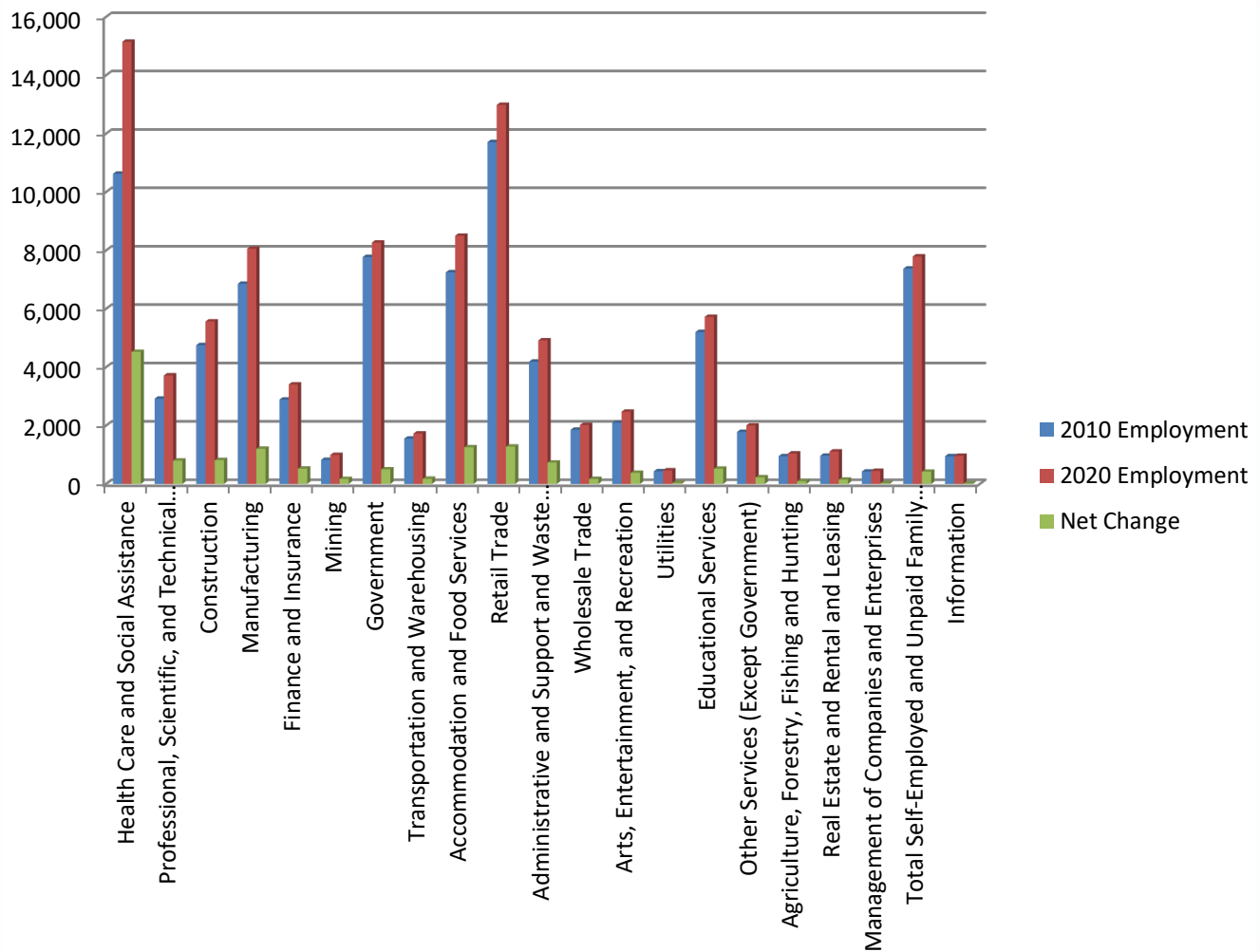
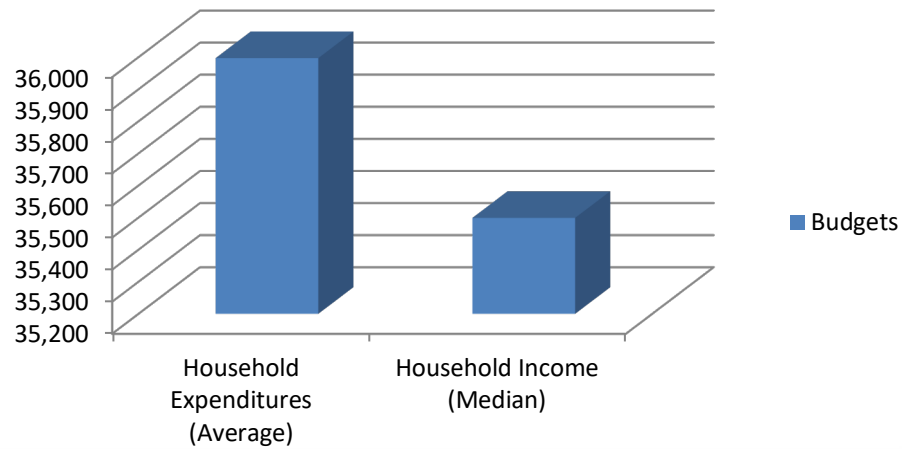
Household Income Distribution (2018)



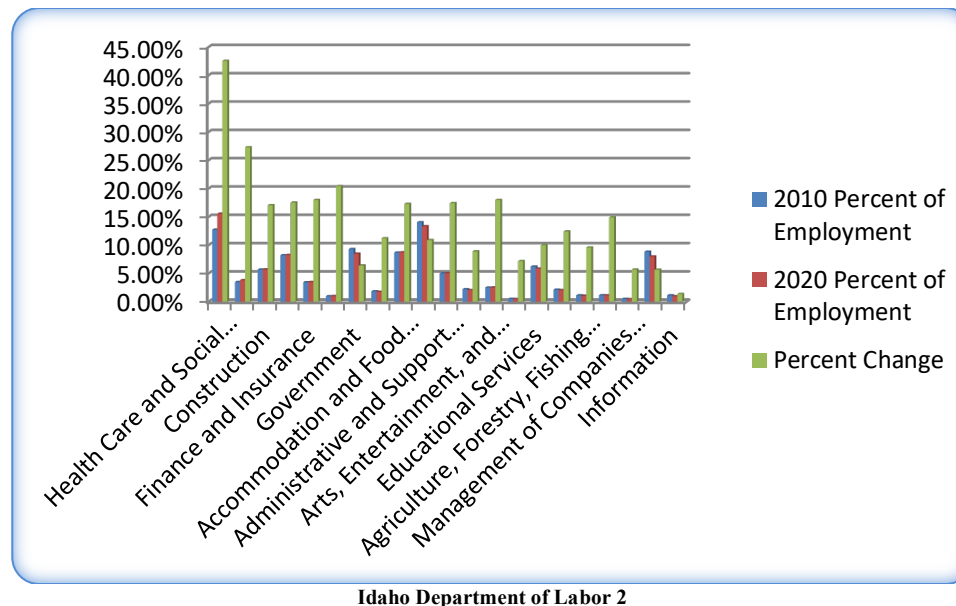
Labor Force Status (2018)



Budgets



Idaho Department of Labor 1



ISSUES

- **Attracting a sustainable manufacturing sector** has historically been a very difficult and daunting task.
- **Creating local jobs.** Right now the average commute to work is about 28 minutes; this leads one to think that people are traveling to other locations to find work.
- **Raising local income levels** in order to make working in Priest River more attractive and to provide a living wage for the residents.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To create incentives within the City Limits to encourage new manufacturers to relocate or locate in Priest River.
- To make sure our ordinances do not place a regulatory burden so restrictive that it hinders business.
- To create a "fast track" to approvals for new businesses to get approvals.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct a review of ordinances to ensure they are easy to understand, thorough, and reasonable.
- Explore and consider incentives for attracting business.

Chart data was gathered from the following sources:

Idaho Department of Commerce

Idaho Department of Labor

American Fact Finder, U.S. Census Bureau

5. LAND USE

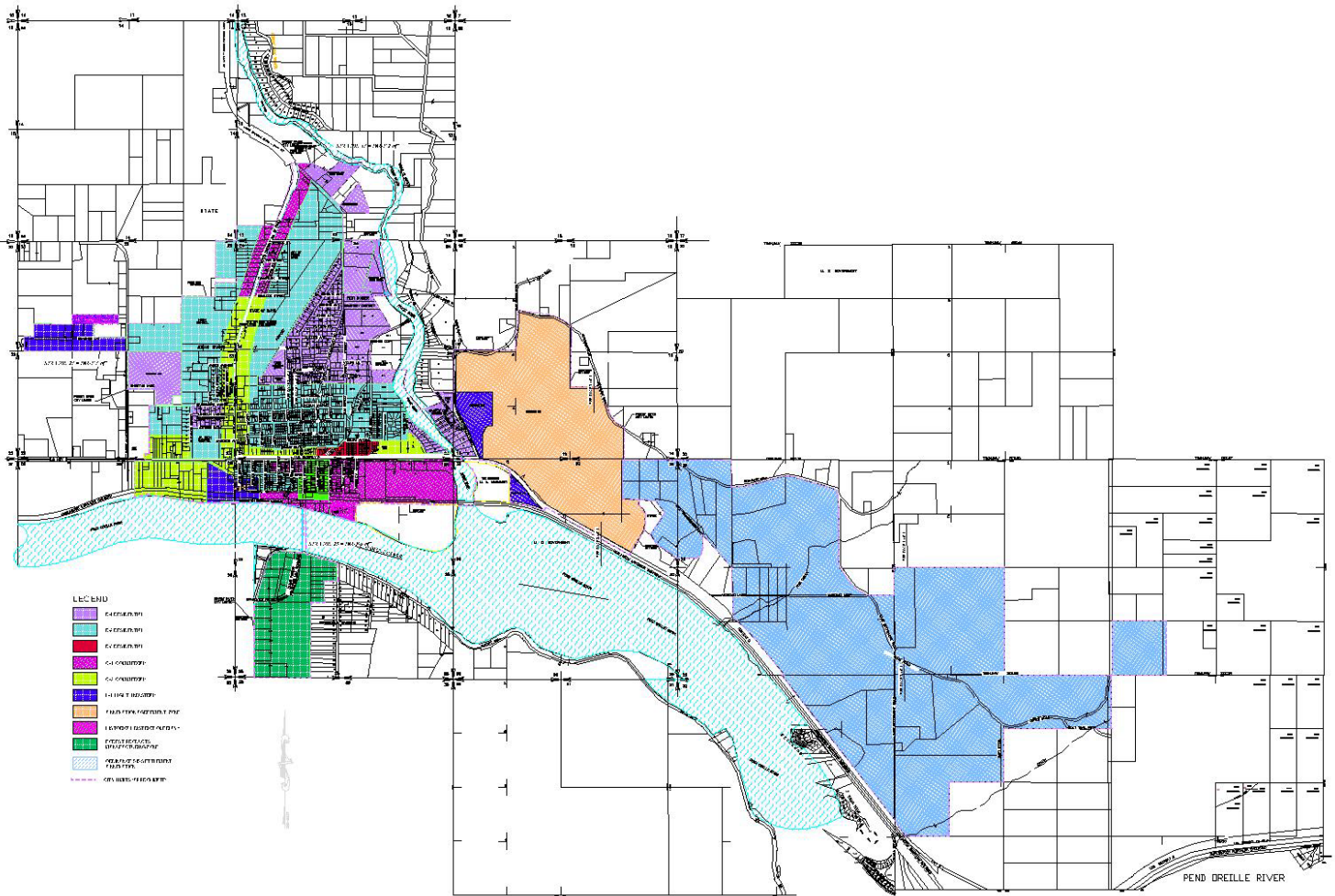
Idaho Code §67-6508(e) requires the following for the land use component: An analysis of natural land types, existing land covers and uses, and the intrinsic suitability of lands for uses such as agriculture, forestry, mineral exploration and extraction, preservation, recreation, housing, commerce, industry, and public facilities. A map shall be prepared indicating suitable projected land uses for the jurisdiction.

BACKGROUND

The Land Use chapter establishes land use designations to map an arrangement of uses that preserve the integrity and amenities of residential neighborhoods, as well as the economic vitality of industrial areas and commercial activity. The land use map graphically displays desired types of use. The chapter also establishes goals and policies that provide guidance for development within the land use designations portrayed on the map.

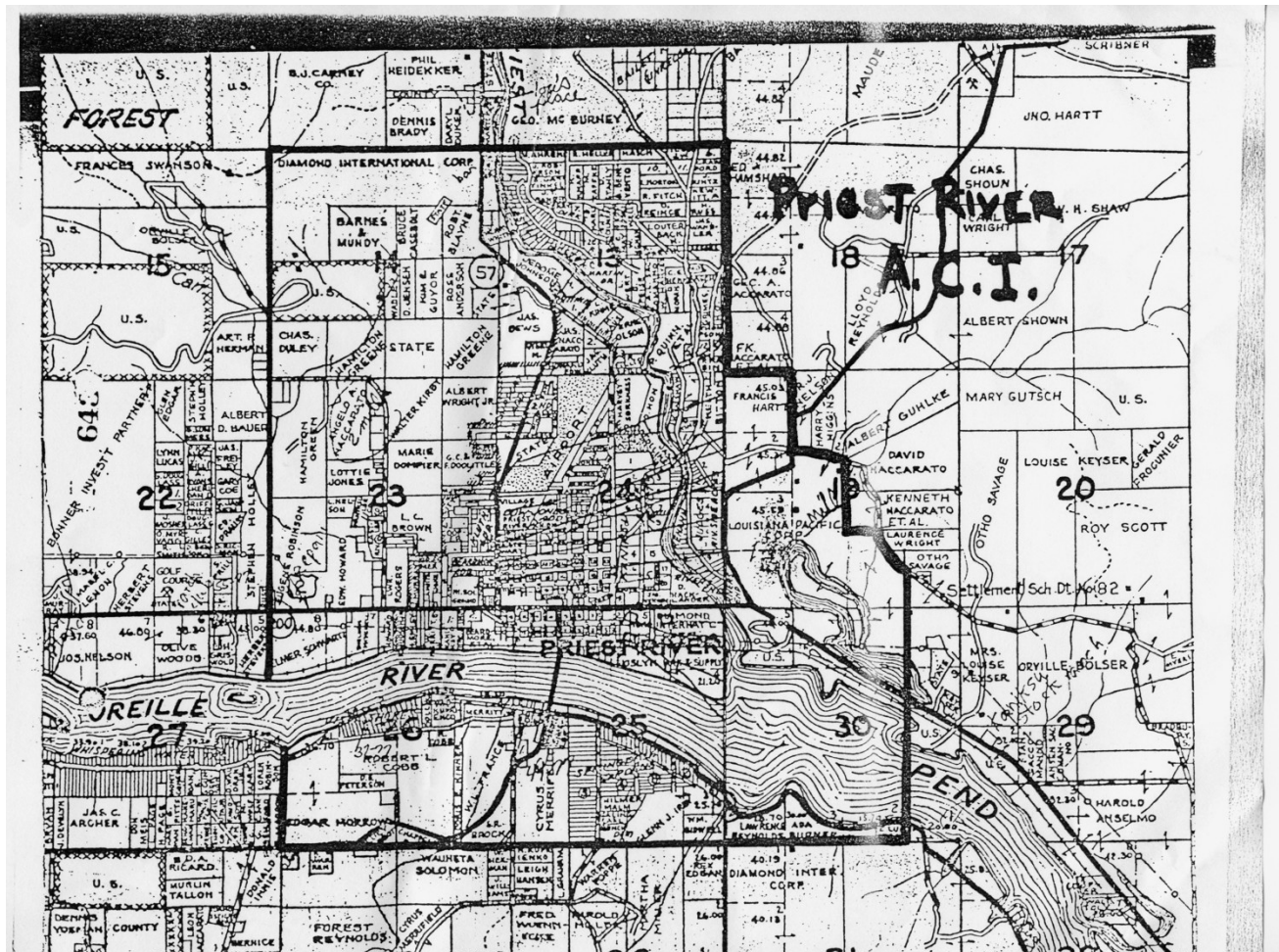
The Land Use Map indicates the desired mix of land uses that will foster the community's goals as expressed in the comprehensive plan. Land use recommendations as set forth in this plan emphasize the importance of land use planning and cooperation among the various jurisdictions and agencies in the area. The future land use map of the City's Area of Impact and within the City Limits will be developed and revised as planning efforts associated with City growth and infrastructure service delivery is developed.

CURRENT ZONING MAP



AREA OF CITY IMPACT

The Area of City Impact, (ACI) is the area between the existing city boundary and an agreed upon future boundary that is negotiated with the County and established by ordinance. The purpose of establishing a specific area is to identify fringe areas within the unincorporated area surrounding the City where there is potential for land use changes. These areas must be planned in an orderly way to insure timely and economical provision of public services. Primary considerations in determining this boundary are (1) trade areas, (2) geographic factors, and (3) areas that may be annexed into the City in the future.



As of this writing, and due to a number of annexations, the Area of City Impact is in need of renegotiation with Bonner County. The current City boundary now extends approximately 3 miles east beyond the above shown map. This could realistically extend the ACI another 4 miles east from what is shown. In addition, the west boundary could extend another mile west from what is shown as an offset of the recently annexed land at the Industrial Park.

NATURAL LAND TYPES

Within the City there are various types of natural land depending on your physical location. In the main, more densely populated areas of the City the land/soil consists largely of sands and river cobble. Hand excavation is challenging, and the natural water table is fairly shallow. This can be said for the areas of the City from the west boundary to the west side of the Priest River, and from the Pend Oreille River to the north boundary along the Priest River. On the east side of the Priest River, the land/soil is largely composed of a very deep sand and light clay. Hand excavation takes a minimal effort, and the water table is very deep.

Both of these soils are very conducive to structures but both also are susceptible to erosion so good temporary and permanent stormwater controls are very important.

EXISTING LAND COVERS AND USES

Existing land covers vary widely, from lawns and ornamental shrubs, trees and flowers, to native vegetation including trees, scrub and grasses in both the commercial and residential areas. The most recently annexed areas to the east are largely covered in native timber, scrub, and grasses and also include very large hay/pasture areas as well.

Land uses are consistent with most Cities in the region with the majority of the land along the highway corridors being used commercially, with some residential uses scattered throughout. An Industrial Park area is located in the northwest corner of the City with that land being zoned for light industrial uses.

Some consideration should be given to the approach of Commercial corridors along highway frontages as this tends to create "Commercial sprawl" and steers business away from the downtown area. Additionally, it potentially creates multiple high to moderate volume access points onto and off of the highways.

SUITABILITY OF LANDS

Given the large differences in soil types, land covers and land uses, there is a vast array of possibilities when it comes to the suitability of lands. Within each area, the soil types are quite capable of sustaining dwellings and commercial or industrial construction. With that said, the best uses of those soils may not be for utilization as building sites. Following is a breakdown of the general areas, soil types, existing uses, and potential uses.

West of the Priest River:

Residential – the overwhelming majority of this land is currently residential. There are no real areas of erosion that can't be controlled by the use of either channelization or even vegetation to slow or direct any run-off. The areas that experience erosion issues are generally confined to the Highway 2 corridor and the river bank of the Priest River. While there are some fairly steep areas along the Pend Oreille River, they are for short distances and erosion is generally not a problem. This is probably the best use of those lands, and future expectations are that these uses will not change.

Commercial – the Commercial uses are generally along the Highway 2 and Highway 57 corridors with the exception of the downtown area. As stated previously, the soil types in these areas are well suited for Commercial development and activity.

Industrial – industrial uses are generally confined to the Industrial Park and are not prevalent in other areas of the City. The Industrial Park was specifically set aside for Industrial uses and is very well suited for them. Soil types are once again quite suitable for the use.

Agricultural – there are no areas west of the Priest River that are used or suitable for Agricultural uses.

East of the Priest River:

Residential – with the exception of the plat of Judge’s Riverside Tracts, the areas east of the Priest River are generally sparsely populated with Residential uses. Soil types in this area are typically more of a sandy loam and the cobbled soils are not as prevalent. Surface slippage is not a threat and erosion is controlled by the residential lawns and native grasses that are present in this area. These soils are very well suited for development, are well drained, and show no signs of ponding or saturation.

Commercial – the only Commercial use on this side of the City is the former Industrial site located north of Highway 2 that was the majority of the parcels owned by Louisiana Pacific Corp, a lumber products manufacturing company. This parcel is now a Wetlands Mitigation Bank and also has a Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Conservation Easement, covering all but 10 acres, in perpetuity.

Industrial – there is an Industrial zone and use east of the Priest River and south of Highway 2. The site contains rail spurs and Highway access and is currently the site of Harrison Dock Builders. This land was historically Industrial with a Louisiana Pacific lumber mill located on the site for many decades.

Agricultural – the large parcels annexed in 2008 and generally known as “the Settlement” properties are largely composed of Agricultural lands. They have historically and currently are being used for hay production and livestock grazing. If these parcels are ever developed, the soil types are mostly sandy and well suited for development.

ISSUES

- **Keeping similar uses together in defined areas.** This has historically been a very difficult task, the City has had to undertake this action on an after the fact basis and try to get it under better control.
- **Providing enough leeway in Ordinance to have an adequate Commercial sector.** Finding this balance is going to take a real effort in the future Land Use Planning, while Commercial sectors must be created, one must be careful not to isolate the Downtown area.
- **Attracting Downtown commercial business** in order to make Priest River more attractive to tourists and residents.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To create incentives within the City to encourage new uses to “in-fill” or occupy areas of similar use.

- To make sure our ordinances do not place a regulatory burden so restrictive that it hinders business.
- To attempt to make certain that new development does pay for itself.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct a review of ordinances to ensure they are easy to understand, thorough, and reasonable.
- Explore and consider incentives for clustering of all uses.
- Emphasize the need for adequate ingress/egress and safe circulation in high traffic areas particularly in the Commercial Use areas, and make sure it meets the goals of the Transportation Component.

6. NATURAL RESOURCES

Idaho Code §67-6508(f) requires the following for the natural resources component: An analysis of the uses of rivers and other waters, forests, range, soils, harbors, fisheries, wildlife, minerals, thermal waters, beaches, watersheds, and shorelines.

BACKGROUND

Priest River is blessed with a plethora of natural resources, the community sits at the confluence of the Pend Oreille and Priest Rivers and they are key natural features in the city that provide recreation. The community is also located adjacent to mountains that capture large amounts of precipitation in the form of rain and snow that is naturally delivered to the local groundwater system. These mountains and rivers are cherished by residents and protected by local, State, and Federal agencies. The natural resources of the area also include the general categories of Geology, Hydrology, Soils, Climate, Vegetation, and Fish/Wildlife.

Priest River residents live within easy driving distance of Priest Lake, Pend Oreille Lake, Schweitzer ski resort, and numerous additional lakes, rivers, and streams. Although these natural resources are not within the City's area of impact, the residents and visitors to the City of Priest River are accustomed to accessing these areas and consider them part of their extended community.

Priest River's residents value the beauty of their surroundings: the mountains, forests, the river, and clean air. They value living in a community that is surrounded with these amenities and seek to build the future respecting them.

Priest River's residents consider parks, green spaces, trails, and recreation to be significant factors contributing to the overall quality of life within the City. By providing green space, constructive leisure opportunities, and recreational experiences, the city hopes to contribute to the total health of the individual and the entire community.

Population projections anticipate continued growth; further necessitating parks, park improvements and recreation facilities. A planned system of parks and green spaces can help mitigate the impacts of urbanization.

The community is also fortunate to not be burdened with natural or manmade hazardous areas that would be detrimental to growth and development. There are some flood plain areas along the Pend Oreille and Priest Rivers that impact a few properties.

RIVERS AND OTHER WATERS

Pend Oreille River: The Pend Oreille River bounds the south side of the City for the length of its entire east – west boundary. The river offers many activities including boating, swimming, fishing, water skiing, and diving to name a few. It also serves as a very enjoyable travel way for a boat trip to Sandpoint and Pend Oreille Lake.

Priest River: The Priest River is fed by Priest Lake and several tributaries. It enters the City from the north and then bisects it to the confluence with the Pend Oreille. There are many activities associated with the Priest River as well, including swimming, rafting, and fishing. The physical characteristics of the river and its low flow volume in the summer months render it not conducive to power boats after about the first half mile upstream from the Pend Oreille.

Crystal Lake: Located on the east side of the City, Crystal Lake is a popular spot for fishing year round. With the recent upgrades including paving, a boat ramp and restroom facilities, this has become even more popular. The lake is annually stocked with hybrid Rainbow Trout by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game and also contains spiny ray species. This is a no motor lake and is also very popular with ice fishermen.

PRESERVATION METHODS

Great care needs to be taken to protect and preserve these water bodies for the enjoyment by the citizens and visitors to Priest River. Adherence and enforcement of existing stormwater ordinances must be a priority. Erosion and sediment control and treatment must be held paramount with any construction activity near any and all water courses within the City. Cultivating and maintaining relationships with affected agencies like IDEQ, the Army Corps, EPA etc. is of great importance.

MOUNTAINS AND FORESTLANDS

Not only is Priest River surrounded by mountains and forestlands, but the City also contains them within the eastern City Limits. While these lands are private holdings, there is a responsibility of the City to consider any negative effects of development with any land use proposal that may come forward at any time in the future. Issues such as slope preservation, erosion control, and construction on slopes are some of the subjects that should be considered.

PRESERVATION METHODS

Maintaining slope stability and requiring approved, practical, and common sense methods of erosion control, based on proven methodologies, are of paramount importance when dealing with potential construction on sloped terrain.

RANGELAND

While it may not be in the best interest of the City to preserve rangeland, with regard to taxation rates and municipal uses, the fact is that there does exist several acres of it within the City limits. Careful planning and consideration should be given to the subject of having rangeland being preserved within the City. A decision should be made by the City leadership whether or not they want to include a rural lifestyle within City limits. Making this an allowable use may tend to decrease potential tax revenues.

PRESERVATION METHODS

If the City leaders determine that they do wish to include rangelands as an acceptable use within the City limits, then it may behoove them to create zoning criteria that makes it conducive and acceptable to the lifestyle of the residents that desire that life style and also desire to live within the City.

WILDLIFE and FISHERIES

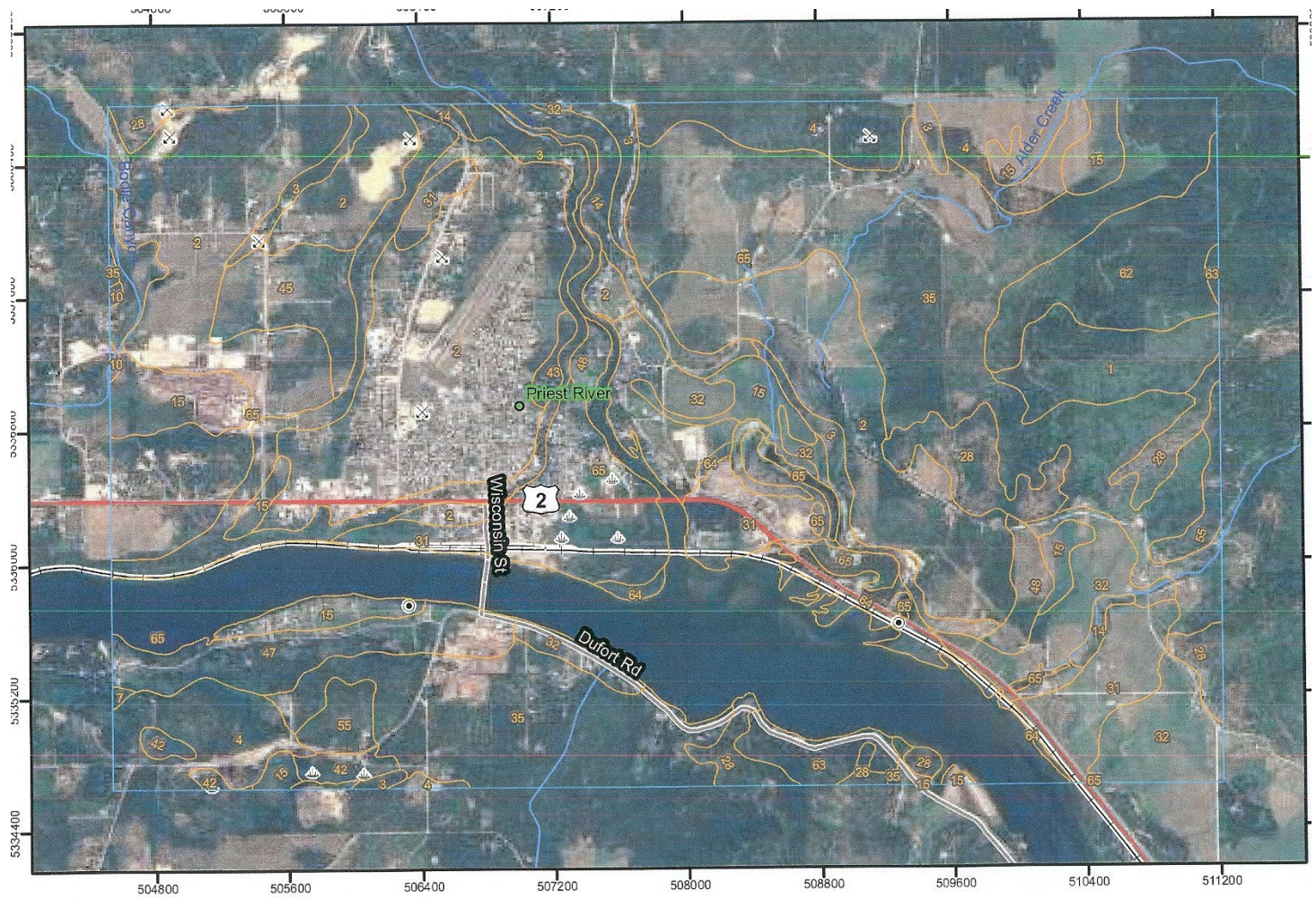
Wildlife is not only a way of life in Priest River, to many it is also a lifestyle. It is not uncommon at all to see moose, deer, elk, turkeys, black bears, or coyotes within the City limits. With 2 rivers inside the City limits, fisheries are also critical components to the citizens of Priest River. These rivers contain, Rainbow, Cutthroat, German Brown, and Brook trout, Largemouth and Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, Crappie, Perch, Sunfish and Bluegill as sport fish.

PRESERVATION METHODS

It is of paramount importance to protect and preserve these resources for the enjoyment of the citizens and visitors to Priest River. As a part of any land use application, great care must be taken to provide for unimpeded animal movements and the protection of water bodies from silt, erosion, contaminants, and garbage. A strictly enforced stormwater management ordinance is an absolute must.

SOILS

According to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), there are 21 different soil types within the City boundary, none of them are listed as Prime Agricultural Soils, and they all consist of sands and gravels. The following is the report downloaded from their website:



Soil Map—Bonner County Area, Idaho, Parts of Bonner and Boundary Counties
(Priest River)

MAP LEGEND

Area of Interest (AOI)	 Area of Interest (AOI)	 Very Stony Spot
Soils	 Soil Map Units	 Wet Spot
Special Point Features	 Blowout	 Other
	 Borrow Pit	Special Line Features
	 Clay Spot	 Gully
	 Closed Depression	 Short Steep Slope
	 Gravel Pit	 Other
	 Gravelly Spot	Political Features
	 Landfill	 Cities
	 Lava Flow	Water Features
	 Marsh or swamp	 Streams and Canals
	 Mine or Quarry	Transportation
	 Miscellaneous Water	 Rails
	 Perennial Water	 Interstate Highways
	 Rock Outcrop	 US Routes
	 Saline Spot	 Major Roads
	 Sandy Spot	
	 Severely Eroded Spot	
	 Sinkhole	
	 Slide or Slip	
	 Sodic Spot	
	 Spoil Area	
	 Stony Spot	

MAP INFORMATION

Map Scale: 1:36,300 if printed on A size (8.5" × 11") sheet.

The soil surveys that comprise your AOI were mapped at 1:24,000.

Please rely on the bar scale on each map sheet for accurate map measurements.

Source of Map: Natural Resources Conservation Service
Web Soil Survey URL: <http://websoilsurvey.nrcs.usda.gov>
Coordinate System: UTM Zone 11N NAD83

This product is generated from the USDA-NRCS certified data as of the version date(s) listed below.

Soil Survey Area: Bonner County Area, Idaho, Parts of Bonner and Boundary Counties
Survey Area Data: Version 7, Aug 7, 2012

Date(s) aerial images were photographed: 7/14/2004

The orthophoto or other base map on which the soil lines were compiled and digitized probably differs from the background imagery displayed on these maps. As a result, some minor shifting of map unit boundaries may be evident.

Map Unit Legend

Bonner County Area, Idaho, Parts of Bonner and Boundary Counties (ID604)			
Map Unit Symbol	Map Unit Name	Acres in AOI	Percent of AOI
1	Ardtoo gravelly sandy loam, 35 to 65 percent slopes	135.9	2.0%
2	Bonner gravelly silt loam, 0 to 4 percent slopes	1,576.0	23.3%
3	Bonner gravelly silt loam, 30 to 65 percent slopes	349.5	5.2%
4	Bonner silt loam, cool, 0 to 4 percent slopes	340.6	5.0%
7	Cabinet silt loam, 12 to 30 percent slopes	2.4	0.0%
10	Dufort silt loam, 5 to 45 percent slopes	4.9	0.1%
14	Haploxeralfs and Xerochrepts, 30 to 55 percent slopes	96.3	1.4%
15	Hoodoo silt loam, 0 to 1 percent slopes	313.1	4.6%
28	Lenz-Rock outcrop association, 30 to 65 percent slopes	215.9	3.2%
31	Mission silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	448.9	6.6%
32	Mission silt loam, 2 to 12 percent slopes	374.5	5.5%
35	Pend Oreille silt loam, 5 to 45 percent slopes	1,287.2	19.0%
42	Pywell-Hoodoo complex, 0 to 1 percent slopes	38.9	0.6%
43	Rathdrum silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	14.9	0.2%
45	Rathdrum-Bonner silt loams, 0 to 8 percent slopes	110.2	1.6%
47	Sagle silt loam, 5 to 30 percent slopes	157.8	2.3%
48	Selle fine sandy loam, 0 to 8 percent slopes	56.2	0.8%
55	Treble-Rock outcrop association, 20 to 65 percent slopes	70.4	1.0%
62	Vay-Ardtoo association, 20 to 35 percent slopes	201.3	3.0%
63	Vay-Ardtoo association, 35 to 65 percent slopes	61.0	0.9%
64	Wrencoe silty clay, 0 to 2 percent slopes	83.8	1.2%
65	Water	832.4	12.3%
Totals for Area of Interest		6,771.8	100.0%



WATERSHEDS

The City of Priest River is actually benefited by two large watersheds, the Priest River Watershed and the expansive Pend Oreille Watershed. Both of these are quite large in terms of land area and are difficult to control at best. The City is a voting member of the currently forming Priest River Watershed Advisory Group, comprised of members from Priest Lake, the forest industry, IDEQ and homeowners, and will be attempting to protect both water sources through the actions of that Board.

CONCLUSION

The City is blessed with an abundance of natural resources and managing them for preservation is a large but critical task. Good stewardship of these lands is of paramount importance.

ISSUES

- **Preserving and utilizing our Natural Resources** has historically been overlooked as an asset, with the emergence of Recreational lifestyles, this is key.
- **Creating local enjoyment.** The abundant Natural Resources are generally under-utilized by the local residents.
- **Raising awareness levels** in order to capitalize on the existing resources and generate their use by locals and tourists.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To create a trails plan that encompasses pedestrian trails, bicycle trails and water trails to allow people to better explore and enjoy the Natural Resources.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on preservation and connectivity.
- To create a sense and atmosphere of outdoor recreation and mobility that may help draw visitors to the area.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct a review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the use and preservation of Natural Resources.
- Explore and consider incentives for attracting recreational enthusiasts.

- Encourage alternative travel methods for locals to reduce pollution and encourage use and appreciation of our natural climate.

7. HAZARDOUS AREAS

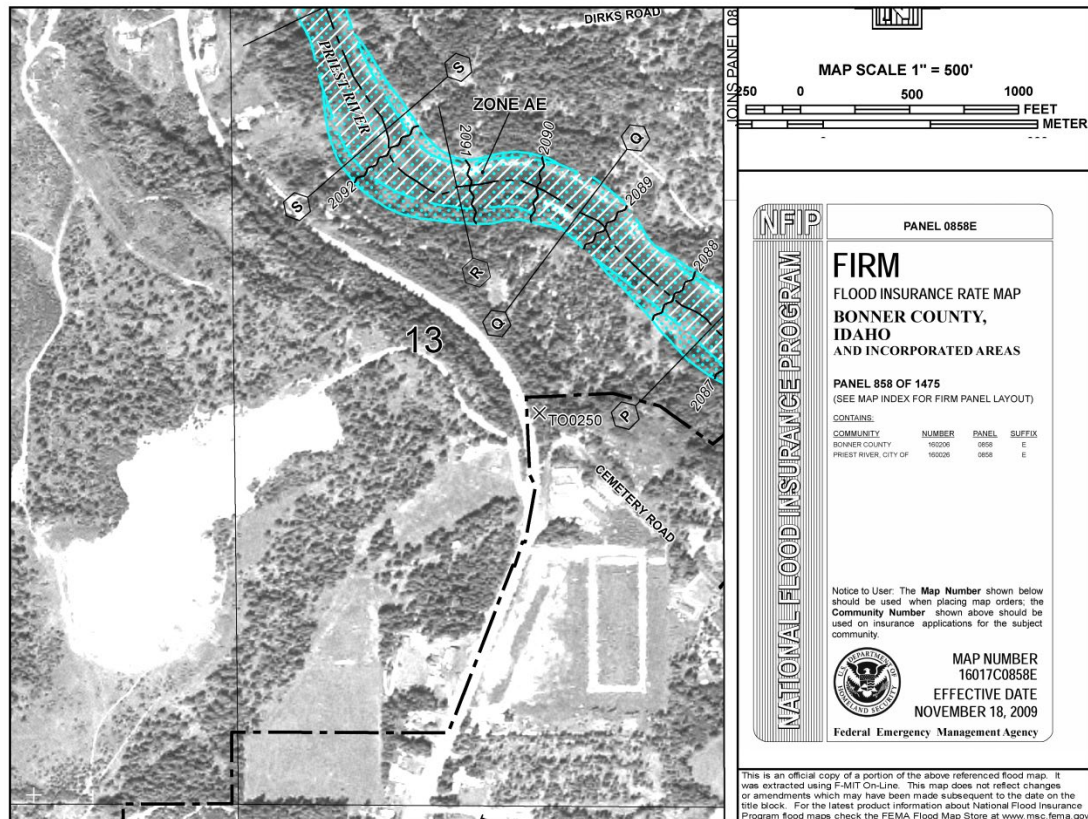
Idaho Code §67-6508(g) Hazardous Areas -- An analysis of known hazards as may result from susceptibility to surface ruptures from faulting, ground shaking, ground failure, landslides or mudslides; avalanche hazards resulting from development in the known or probable path of snowslides and avalanches, and floodplain hazards.

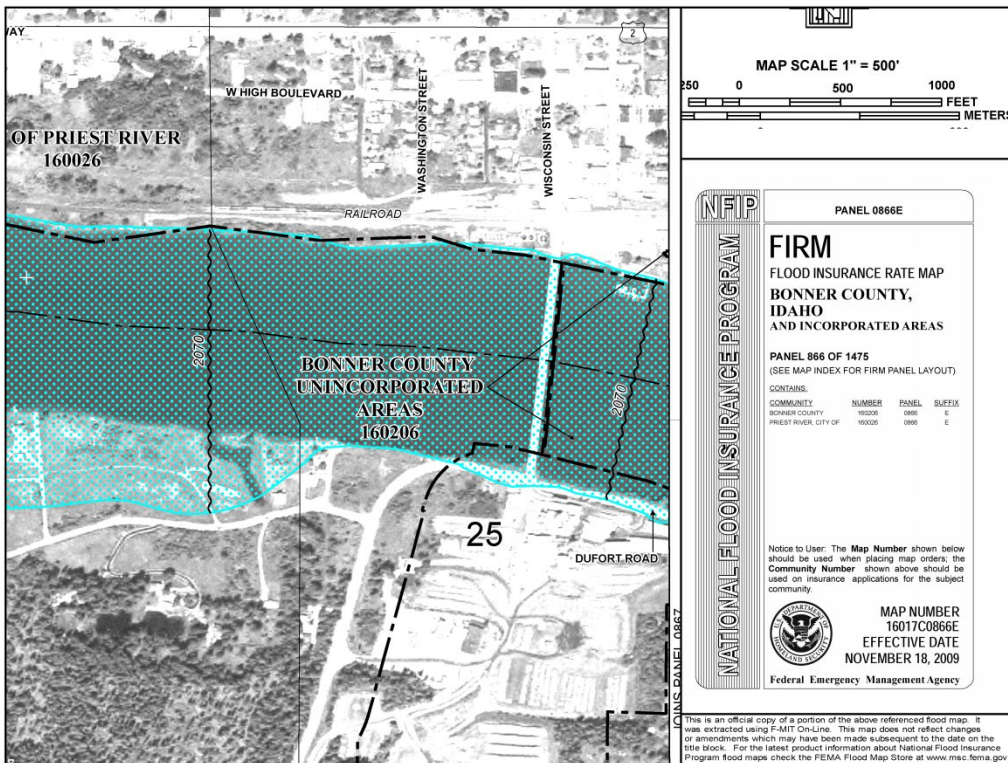
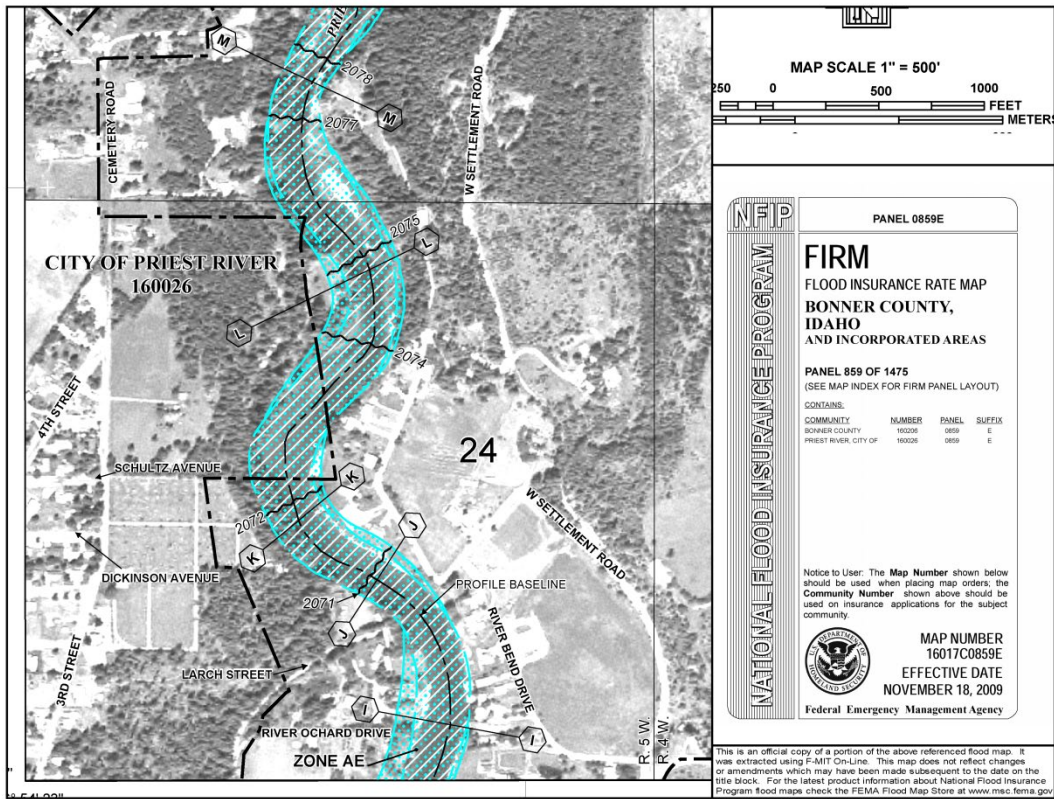
BACKGROUND

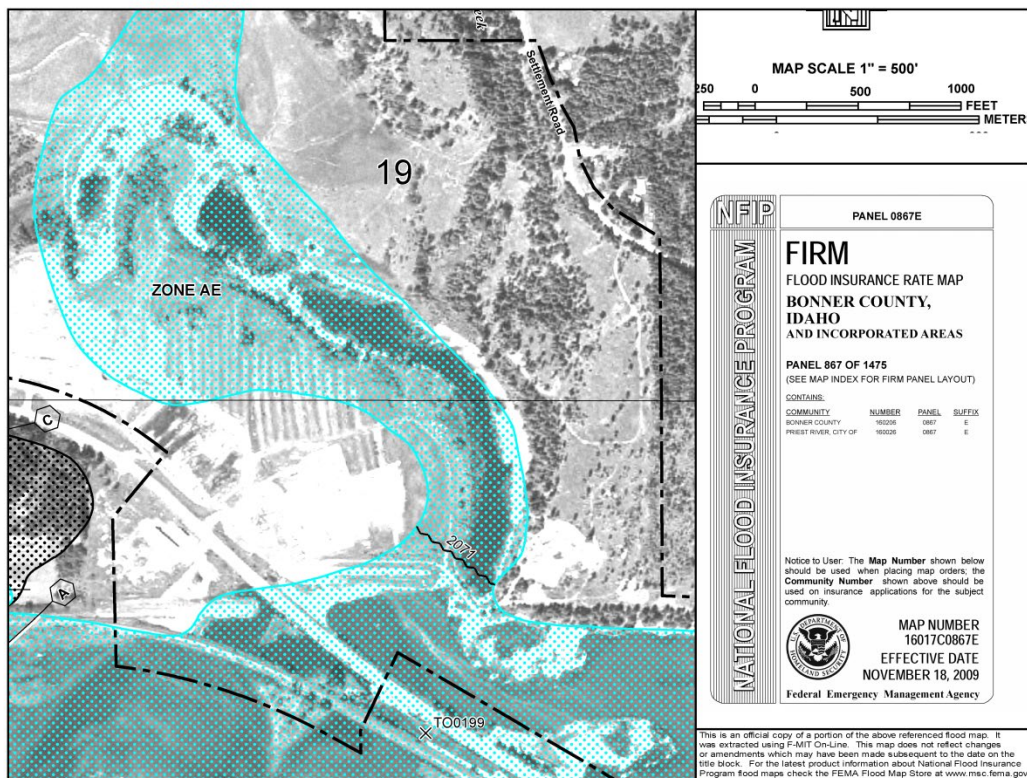
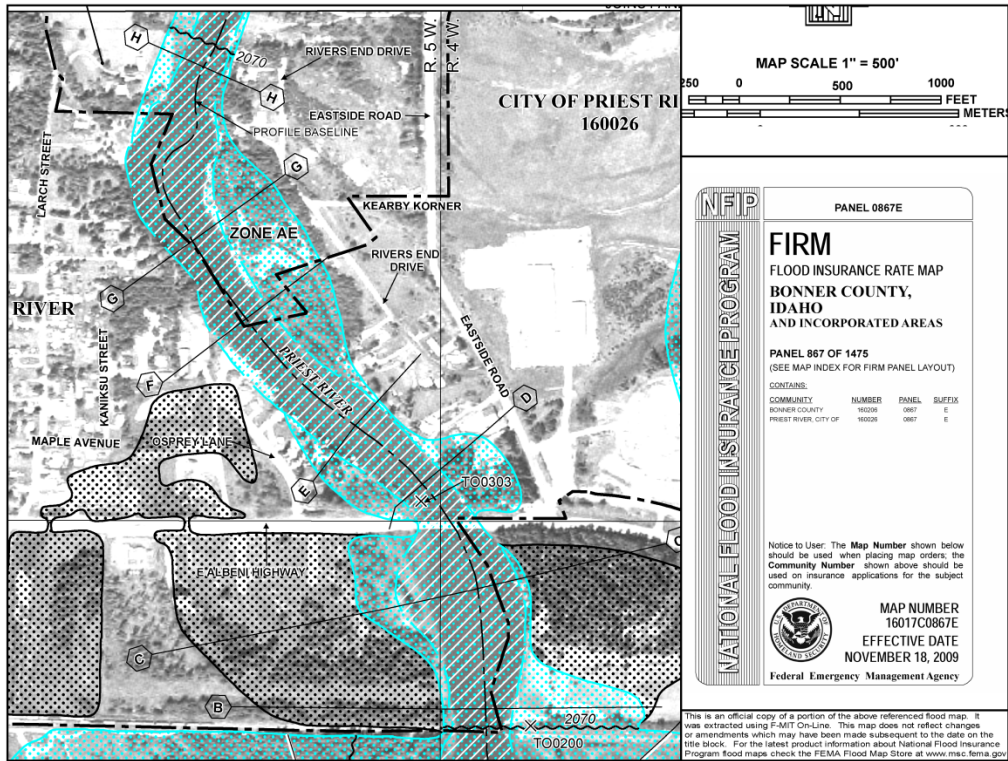
In general, the City of Priest River is void of any real hazardous areas as defined in the above quoted statute. However, this component does merit consideration to limit the possible creation of, or impact on certain areas that have the potential of being hazardous.

FLOODPLAINS

There are areas within the City that are mapped flood plains according to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The following series of maps from their website display the areas that are considered to be in a floodplain.







SURFACE SLIPPAGE AND AVALANCHES

Above US Highway 2 there is little concern for surface slippage; likewise, along the Priest River, with the exception of slippage caused by river bank erosion, which is a fairly uncommon occurrence. Below US Highway 2, and along High Street, there are a few occasions of slippage. Directly below what are known today as the Infinity Café and the Village Kitchen Restaurant, the existing bank is creeping down toward the High Street corridor. A short distance further down High Street, at the City Park, the retaining wall shows signs of the same thing. The City is in the process of reconstructing retaining and drainage facilities at this time. No new construction should be allowed within these areas until such time as the soil conditions are stabilized and not without the aid of a Geotechnical Engineer.

There is no risk of avalanche within the City limits.

RAILROAD FACILITIES

There is only one at grade Railroad crossing within the City, it is signalized and locomotive traffic is sparse and at low speeds. There are also a number of sidings or rail spurs within the City between the Downtown and the Pend Oreille River waterfront. With those, there are several hundred feet of track, and one trestle within the City that can be accessed and crossed by pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The City may want to consider a partnership with the local railroad operator to install signage for safety purposes.

BULK FUEL STORAGE

There is one bulk fuel storage facility that is located within a block of City Hall. All tanks are above ground and encompassed within a concrete spill containment area. The City should keep this in mind and have a section of their Emergency Management Plan that addresses possible catastrophes at this facility.

SEISMIC ACTIVITY

Priest River is ranked a "moderate" risk relative to seismic shaking hazard.

No seismic activity has ever been recorded with an epicenter in Priest River. Priest Lake, about 30 miles north of Priest River, is in an area of low volcanic hazard, which implies small seismic risk. An earthquake did occur in April 1965 and was documented with an epicenter in the Priest Lake vicinity. Documentation of the quake was based on "felt" data rather than instrument data.

Several earthquakes have been documented with epicenters near Rathdrum, Idaho, 38 miles south of Priest Lake. The largest of these events occurred in 1918, registering 5.5 on the Richter Scale. Several quakes have occurred since 1953 with epicenters near Bonners Ferry, Idaho, approximately 22 miles east of Priest Lake.

IRRIGATION DITCHES

There are no irrigation ditches or conveyance facilities within the City limits.

ISSUES

- **Regulating Flood Plain Development** is paramount, both for the citizens and for the City. Having a sound flood plain development policy, building policy, and ordinances will help to keep insurance rates lower and help to preserve and protect any development in those areas.
- **Raising awareness levels** in order to preserve public safety along railways would be a proactive step for pedestrian and bicycle safety.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update flood plain ordinances and procedures to keep current with FEMA standards.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on safety of property and human life.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.
- Consider incentives for developments that seek to remedy any hazardous conditions.
- Coordination with the local floodplain manager and continuing education of floodplain issues.

8. PUBLIC SERVICES

Idaho Code §67-6508 (h) Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities -- An analysis showing general plans for sewage, drainage, power plant sites, utility transmission corridors, water supply, fire stations and firefighting equipment, health and welfare facilities, libraries, solid waste disposal sites, schools, public safety facilities and related services. The plan may also show locations of civic centers and public buildings.

BACKGROUND

Priest River's existing public services such as water and wastewater services are aging. Upgrading and renovation of existing water and wastewater services will be required within the next decade to meet current and future growth. Other utility systems and Public services such as telephone, electric power, fiber optics, and telecommunication cable have expansion capabilities.

Priest River's projected growth rate will require corresponding expansion of public facilities and services. Policies concerning the manner in which public services and utilities are expanded can help determine the timing and location of future land uses.

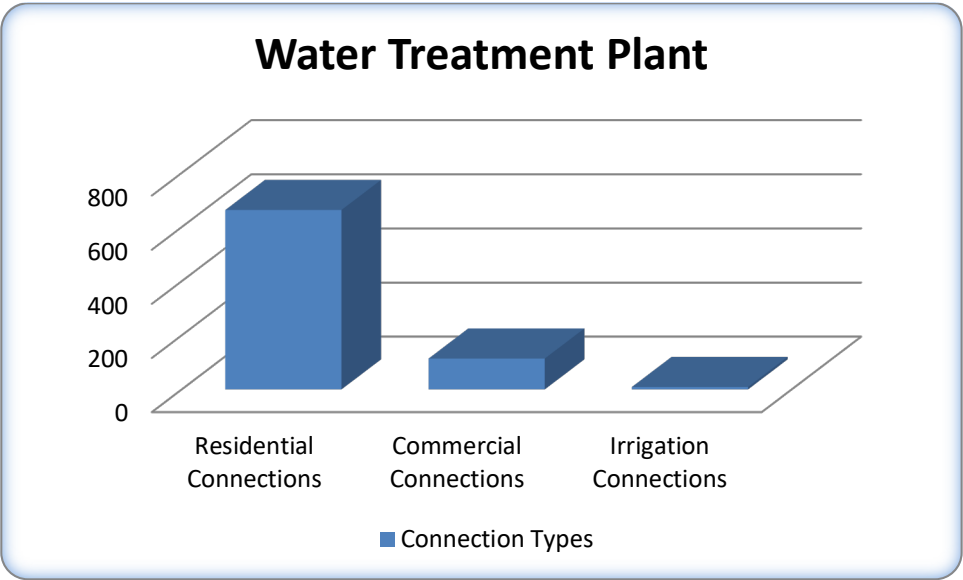
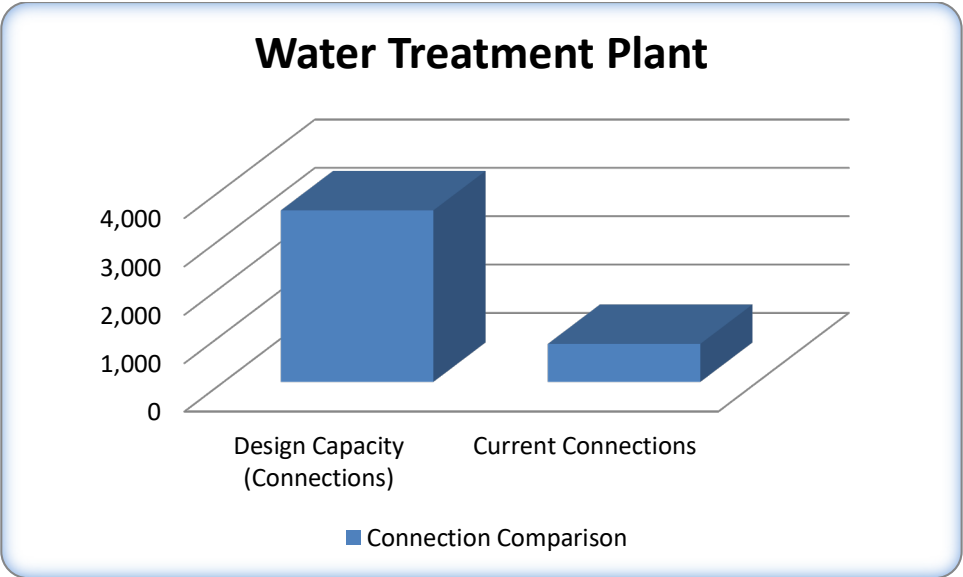
The goals and policies of this chapter address general issues related to public facilities and services as well as specific policies concerning utility services, fire protection, schools, libraries and local government facilities.

WATER

The City of Priest River is the sole provider of water and sewer service inside the City limits with the exception of the annexed lands to the east, commonly known as the Settlement area. At the time of development, those annexed lands are bound by Annexation Agreement to extend the services to the site and utilize them.

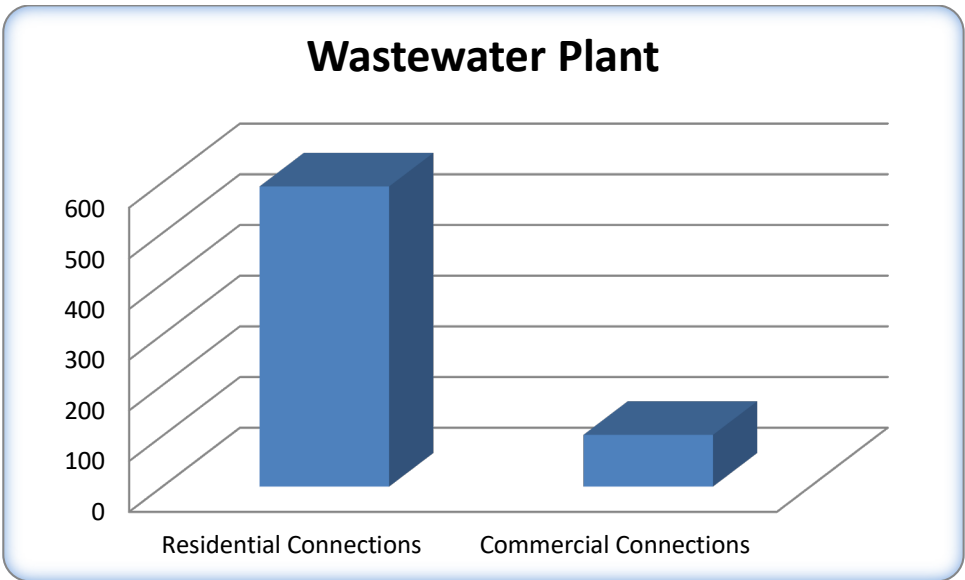
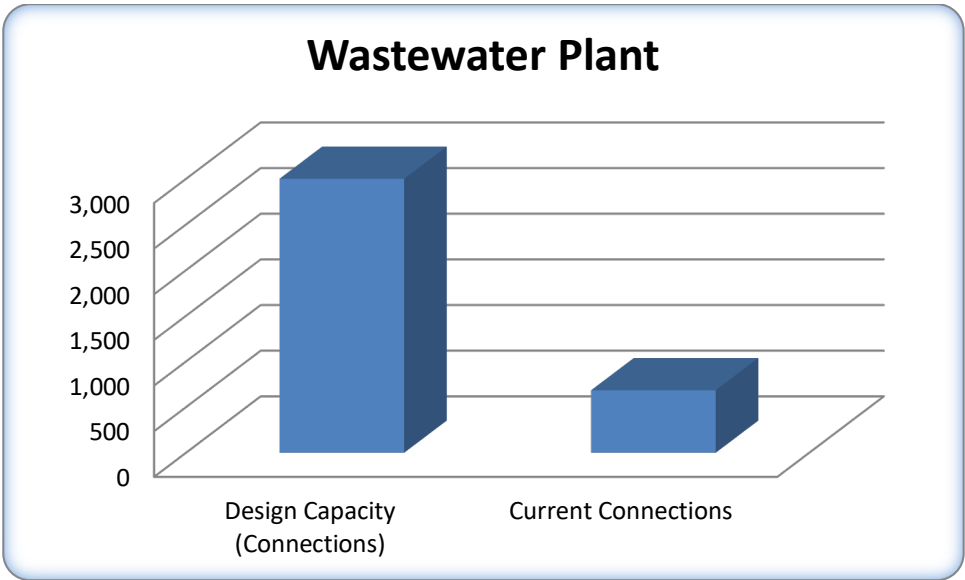
The City currently draws its domestic water from the Pend Oreille River as it has since the very early 1900's. In the late 1940's, the City installed chlorination facilities on the system to disinfect water pumped out of the Pend Oreille River. In 1976, the City constructed the existing water treatment facility on Montgomery Street east of Treat Street. This facility has served the City continuously since that time. In response to the Safe Drinking Water Act passed by the federal government, a major modification project was completed in 1996 that improved the quality of the water produced.

This year, 2013, a new 750,000 gallon water tower and an expansion of the existing water treatment facility to accommodate a new filtration system were installed and many of the distribution mains were replaced and some new ones installed. The new installations were to create looping of the system to a more consistent flow pressure in all parts of the City.



WASTEWATER

The City had no formal wastewater treatment facility until the 1950’s. Before that time, sewage was dumped into the Pend Oreille River below the bridge. In the 1950’s, a primary treatment facility was constructed that removed a major portion of the organic matter before the effluent was dumped into the river. Several upgrades have been completed since that time, the last being completed in 2000. The last upgrade enlarged the capacity to 0.5 million gallons per day. The plant now removes a minimum of 95% of the organic loading and suspended solids, because of these, the plant meets or exceeds state and federal requirements.



ISSUES

- **The City must** maintain a balanced rate structure to ensure that there is adequate reserves for necessary maintenance without being a financial burden on the citizens.
- **The City should** endeavor to keep the facilities in top working order at all times in order to not place themselves or their citizens in a position of a large capital outlay.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To routinely evaluate the rate structure to ensure there is an adequate balance.
- To make sure the routine maintenance is performed and documented to the satisfaction of the City leaders and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of rates versus maintenance funds.
- Consider implementation of a self-audit of maintenance activity with bi-annual reporting to the City Council to ensure that it satisfies the facility plans.

9. TRANSPORTATION

Idaho Code §67-6508(i) Transportation -- An analysis, prepared in coordination with the local jurisdiction(s) having authority over the public highways and streets, showing the general locations and widths of a system of major traffic thoroughfares and other traffic ways, and of streets and the recommended treatment thereof. This component may also make recommendations on building line setbacks, control of access, street naming and numbering, and a proposed system of public or other transit lines and related facilities including rights-of-way, terminals, future corridors, viaducts and grade separations. The component may also include port, harbor, aviation, and other related transportation facilities.

BACKGROUND

Like most cities, Priest River sees vehicular and bicycle traffic enter the City from all four directions. Traffic from the north travels on State Highway 57, from the east and west on U.S. Highway 2, and from the south on two Bonner County roadways, the Old Priest River Road and the Dufort Road. These two roads converge on the south side of the City and combine flows to use the Wayne Merritt Bridge for their access to the City streets. Pedestrian travel ways are present along both highways, with only U.S. 2 having sidewalks. Within the City system of streets, there is a sidewalk from U.S. Hwy 2 up Fourth Street to the Elementary School that was funded by a Transportation Grant under the Safe Routes to School project. The Downtown area also has sidewalks, but the majority of the City does not.

AUTOMOBILES

Automobile traffic throughout the City is generally adequately provided for with most of the internal City residential streets now being hard surfaced, and those that are not are graded and treated annually for dust control. While the residential streets are generally narrow, they are well controlled and have safe speed limits. With that said, if vehicles are parked on both sides of the street, pedestrian traffic and bicycles must use great caution to safely navigate with vehicular traffic. During the winter months, when combined with snow storage, this problem is intensified.

COMMERCIAL VEHICLES

Commercial vehicles are generally confined to the major highway routes throughout the City, and are well provided for. The exception to this is the current trucking routes and scale location. Corner radii at intersections, including the intersection of Highways 2 and 57, are entirely too small. The difficulty with free movement for truck traffic is well documented. With the pending trend of longer and heavier trucks, this problem will only be exacerbated.

PUBLIC TRANSIT

Currently, White Tail Transportation provides local citizens with transportation to Sandpoint, Coeur d'Alene, and Spokane and the Veteran's Administration provides local Military Veterans with transportation to the V.A. Hospital in Spokane.

PENDING INCREASE

With the completion of the North-South Freeway in Spokane, WA, traffic counts are expected to increase by up to 40%, including an increase of up to 600 commercial trucks per day. This information is according to the Idaho Department of Transportation planners.

ISSUES

- **Existing City streets are narrow.** Having a sound residential development policy and ordinances will help to keep this from being repeated in other parts of the City as it grows.
- **Raising awareness levels possibly** via signage at intersections in order to preserve public safety at intersections would be a proactive step for vehicle, pedestrian and bicycle transportation.
- **As a result of** the last Idaho Community Development Block Grant closeout, it was discovered that the City is required to have an existing or proposed system of public transportation or other transit lines. As of this writing they do not possess one and should seek to rectify that deficiency.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update development ordinances and procedures to keep current with modern traffic standards.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on safe transportation corridors and that new developments consider traffic flows and safety of property and human life.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.

- Consider incentives for developments that promote safe modes of travel for automobiles, pedestrians and commercial traffic where applicable.
- Work closely with ITD to facilitate the upgrades and repairs along their system of highways that feed into residential or other City streets.

10. RECREATION

Idaho Code §67-6508 (j) Recreation -- An analysis showing a system of recreation areas, including parks, parkways, trailways, river bank greenbelts, beaches, playgrounds, and other recreation areas and programs.

BACKGROUND

The City is blessed to be located on two of Idaho's cleanest rivers. Situated at the confluence of the Priest River and the Pend Oreille River, water based recreation is extremely important to the local citizens. Also a stone's throw from thousands of acres of heavily wooded evergreen forests and surrounded by mountains, the outdoor experience is readily available and achievable.

PARKS

Priest River has a multitude of parks, both large and small. The main City Park is equipped with covered sitting areas, barbecues, restrooms, numerous benches, and playground equipment. This is the location for most of the large events and gatherings in the City. It also has a fairly steep slope from Highway 2 and is a favorite with the local children for sledding in the winter months.

The newly constructed park on Cemetery Road is not yet complete as of this writing, but was a Brownfield Cleanup site and is destined to be very busy when completed with Priest River access.

The park on Jackson Street is equipped with tennis courts, basketball courts, and skateboard ramps and is a favorite summer hang out for the youth.

There are two small "pocket parks" in the downtown area that have turned into favorites with the visitors to the downtown area,

TRAILWAYS

As of this writing, there are very limited trail ways for pedestrian use in the City. There is currently an effort to acquire grant funding to construct a new section of trail from the intersection of High Street with Highway 2 and construct through town to connect to the only established section of trail that exists today, along the Highway 2 corridor on the east side of town. It would also be used to construct safe crossings of Highway 2 at the Junior High School and at the intersection with Larch Street.

WATERFRONT

Remarkably, the City currently has no publically accessible waterfront property.

In the event that they are able to negotiate for the West Bonner Park that lies within the City limits, but is owned by Bonner County, that would offer an excellent opportunity to broaden the City's recreational experiences. Coupling that with securing the waterfront at the new park on Cemetery Road would also provide an opportunity to create a water trail that would extend approximately 2 miles and could be a solid attraction for the City.

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Fish and wildlife are plentiful within minutes of the City limits, and offer outstanding opportunities for hunting and fishing. Also mere minutes away are the opportunity for rock climbing, hiking, mountain biking, and numerous other outdoor recreation experiences.

ISSUES

- **The City does not own any waterfront** and that is somewhat of a limiting factor in City sponsored recreational activity.
- **Grant funding for construction** of trail systems has proven to be somewhat elusive, but it is a priority to facilitate safety for pedestrians and bicycles.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update development ordinances and procedures to assure new development contributes to the recreational trails at least along their own boundaries.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on safety of bicycles and pedestrians.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.
- Consider incentives for developments that seek to remedy the lack of recreational opportunities.

- Actively seek funding for the construction of safe trailways throughout the City.

11. SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES

Idaho Code §67-6508 (k) Special Areas or Sites -- An analysis of areas, sites, or structures of historical, archeological, architectural, ecological, wildlife, or scenic significance.

BACKGROUND

Within the City limits, there are a few areas of significance that not only need to be preserved, they should also be enhanced by complimentary uses and designs to accentuate their unique features.

HISTORICAL STRUCTURES

The downtown area is where most of these are located and they include the newly renovated Beardmore (U.S. Historical Register), the Hotel Charbonneau is being renovated (U.S. Historic Register), and the Keyser House Museum to name just a few.

ECOLOGICAL

Of Ecological significance, the Old City Dump site, was recently cleaned up by a joint effort with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The funds were made available through the Brownfield Clean Up program and many decades worth of non-biodegradable debris and toxic soils were removed. The site was then capped to prevent further leaching and transport of any potentially harmful substances remaining and was turned into a park-like setting. As funds become available, the current owner, the Priest Community Forest Connection, will complete construction and donate the land as City Park to the Community.

The Valencia Wetland Bank is also a site of ecologic significance in that the site seeks to restore nearly 200 acres into functioning wetlands and is encumbered by a perpetual conservation easement held by The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. The site serves as a wetland bank where projects from the region that destroy wetlands can buy credits from Valencia and have at least an equal area of new wetlands constructed.

WILDLIFE

While the City limits are not a barrier to the free movement of wildlife, with regular sightings of deer, moose, bear, turkeys and even an occasional cougar, the easterly side of the City has some tremendous wildlife viewing opportunities and wildlife habitat. The resident elk herd

numbers near 80 animals, there are literally hundreds of whitetail deer, bear, moose, coyote, cougar, turkeys, osprey, and even an active bald eagle's nest. Historically all of these species have comingled with human residents without too much problem. However, great concern should be given to all design suggestions within this area to ensure the safe and un-encumbered passage of wildlife and undisturbed foraging areas.

SCENIC SIGNIFICANCE

There are many areas within the City with Scenic Significance, including the Pend Oreille Riverfront, the Priest Riverfront, the Settlement area, and the Valencia Wetland Bank.

The common thread with all of these is views of the two rivers flowing through the City.

It should be noted that most of the properties adjoining these rivers is privately held. Great care should be taken with any proposed development within these view corridors in order to maintain the natural beauty and to preserve the quality of these areas and the water bodies. It should be a priority to maintain these views for all of the local citizens as well as visitors to the area, and not have them blocked by construction activity and left only to those who may take residence there.

ISSUES

- **Preservation of the Downtown core** and attempt to make it a vibrant and welcoming area.
- **Grant funding for construction** Downtown improvements for visual and functional improvement are difficult to procure in the current economic climate.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update development ordinances and procedures to assure new development does not harm or deteriorate special areas.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on preservation of the desirable views and areas.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.
- Consider incentives for developments that seek to enhance special areas.

12. HOUSING

Idaho Code §67-6508 (l) Housing -- An analysis of housing conditions and needs; plans for improvement of housing standards; and plans for the provision of safe, sanitary, and adequate housing, including the provision for low-cost conventional housing, the siting of manufactured housing and mobile homes in subdivisions and parks and on individual lots which are sufficient to maintain a competitive market for each of those housing types and to address the needs of the community.

BACKGROUND

Throughout its history, the City has been largely composed of hard working, middle class individuals. As a result, the current housing situation is a direct reflection of that. Homes within the original plats in town are generally smaller and were constructed in the 1930's through the 1950's. As the City grew, housing variations became the norm and in the areas adjacent to the original plats, you will find homes that are generally larger and more modern and were constructed in the 1970's and late 1980's. Throw in the most recent trend of building much larger homes within or on the Priest River corridor and a wide variety and style of home now exists within the City bounds.

STANDARDS

As the City has grown, a Building Department was formed to assure that safe, sanitary, and adequate housing was constructed. It is mandated by the State of Idaho that any City issuing Building Permits is to have a certified Building Inspector at their disposal and to adopt, at a minimum, the same version of the Building Codes as accepted by the Idaho Division of Building Safety. The current codes governing construction within the City and State are the International Building Codes.

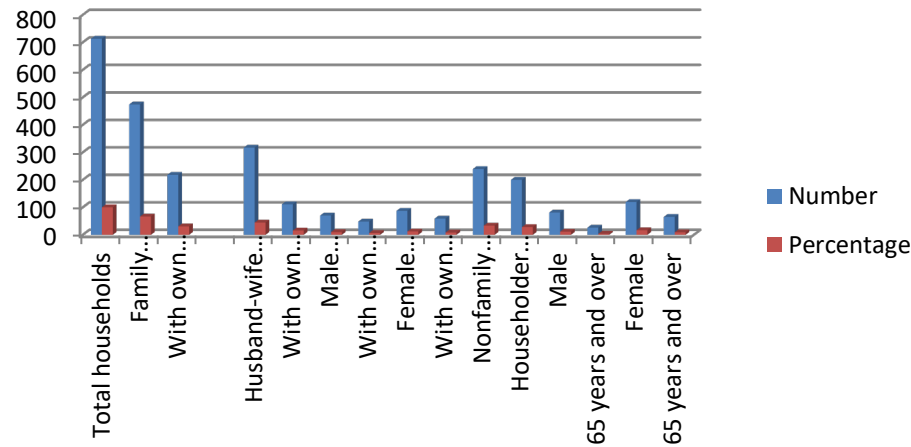
LOW COST/MANUFACTURED HOUSING

Manufactured housing is generally allowed in residentially zoned areas of the City, provided that they are permanently affixed to the ground (or foundation) and all running gear and towing apparatus is removed. As such, they are then considered permanent and "real property" for taxing purposes.

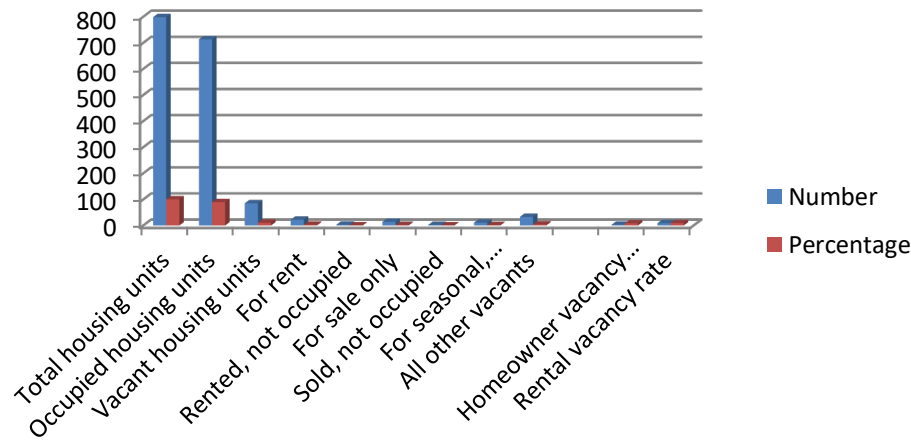
Low cost housing in the real sense of the term, is generally non-existent in the City as of this writing. With that said, some of the newer, large scale, developments do have areas dedicated to "Workforce" housing which satisfies the need. Unfortunately due to the "Great Recession" these currently lay dormant. An effort should be made with proposals for new development to

consider the very real need for “Workforce” housing and provide for those needs whenever it is feasible.

Households by Type



Housing Occupancy



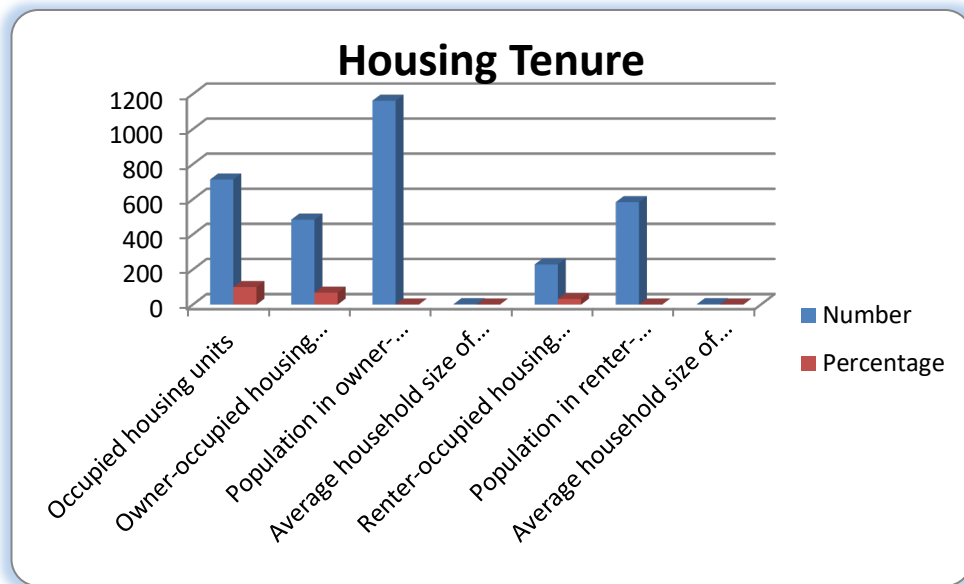


Chart data courtesy of the US Census

ISSUES

- **The City does not currently** have any areas dedicated to privately owned “Workforce” housing.
- **Federal funding for construction** of these areas is available but there is enormous competition for those funds.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update development ordinances and procedures to assure new development contributes to meeting the demand for low cost, privately owned housing.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on a diversification of housing types in order to meet the needs of existing and new residents.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.
- Consider incentives for developments that seek to remedy the lack of “Workforce” housing.

13. COMMUNITY DESIGN

Idaho Code §67-6508 (m) Community Design -- An analysis of needs for governing landscaping, building design, tree planting, signs, and suggested patterns and standards for community design, development, and beautification.

BACKGROUND

Historically, community design was never much of a consideration in the City, with the exception of the Historic District encompassing the Downtown.

LANDSCAPING

The only time landscaping plans were necessary was when two different uses were proposed adjacent to each other and as an overlay in the Commercial Zones. Since then, there has been a landscape requirement added to any commercial use application. Landscaping should be a vital component in any proposed new development, whether commercial, industrial, or residential, governing street trees, shrubs, and decorative plantings. Typically it is suggested to use plant species that are native to the area or specifically developed for similar climates. For public lands, the city should develop a master street and park tree planting and management plan.

SIGNAGE

The City has a pretty good handle on signage at the present time. With that said, it should always be desired that whenever possible, commercial endeavors share sign space and make sure that the signs do not interfere with the public safety or passage. All commercial signs should continue to require the certification of an Idaho licensed engineer, and have light levels that do not become a visual nuisance to neighbors or the public in general.

COMMUNITY DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT

In an effort to discourage sprawl and keep infrastructure to a minimum, clustering should be encouraged in any new development, regardless of use.

Industrial uses may be the most difficult to cluster, but in the interest of controlling heavy truck traffic, and maximizing public safety, this should be something that is encouraged at every opportunity.

Commercial uses not only may benefit from clustering, with the public being able to visit multiple establishments with one stop, but also tends to lessen the impact of multiple

entrances onto the public highway system, thereby creating a safer and less congested traffic flow.

Residential uses should be given the most serious attention with respect to clustering. The creation of functional neighborhoods should be given top consideration. There should be density bonuses for clustering and leaving open space that is maintained and useful to the development. Curvi-linear streets should be encouraged as a traffic calming element and sidewalks should be required. There are no advantages to the City to discourage clustering, and in fact the opposite is true. By not clustering, the City maintenance department and budget are left with more infrastructure than is necessary to accommodate the same number of dwellings under the design practices of years gone by. Creative design should be encouraged.

BEAUTIFICATION

To be blunt, this is something that has been given much consideration but not enough action throughout the years. In fairness, this is more of a cultural phenomenon than it is a lack of governance.

Perhaps an incentive program could be started that gave property owners a slight tax break and earn them an annual window decal proclaiming their "Clean and Green" standing. Standards should be developed and strictly enforced that could include, lawns mowed, shrubs trimmed, all clutter screened from public view, visible vehicles in good running order etc. This may also prompt the many landlords in the City to demand better care of their rentals.

ISSUES

- **The City does not currently** have an Urban Forestry plan or guide.
- **Many residences along major traffic routes** have debris, unkempt yards, abandoned vehicles, construction materials etc. in plain public view.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update development design criteria to assure new development contributes to the beautification and safety of the City.
- To make sure our ordinances place a priority on clustering, collocation of signage, Urban Forestry, and creative and unique design.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.
- Consider incentives for landowners to keep their property clean and presentable to the other residents and visitors to the City.
- Update current ordinances to provide enforcement actions that are more likely to achieve the desired result.

14. AGRICULTURE

Idaho Code §67-6508 (n) Agriculture -- An analysis of the agricultural base of the area including agricultural lands, farming activities, farming-related businesses and the role of agriculture and agricultural uses in the community.

BACKGROUND

Within the City limits Agricultural uses have never been anything other than local citizens with their backyard garden plots. This changed however when the City agreed to annex the approximately 800 acre Settlement area on the east side of the City.

AGRICULTURAL LANDS

The only agricultural lands currently within the City are the lands located at the Settlement area on the east side of the City. These lands are comprised of two former cattle ranches that operated in Bonner County for several generations. Upon their annexation, they were, and are used for the production of hay, the grazing of cattle, and occasionally harvesting of timber.

These are the only true agricultural activities conducted within the City at this time and the cattle that are there today actually are trucked in from the Sandpoint area for the summer and fall grazing seasons, after the hay is harvested.

AGRICULTURE'S ROLE

The role of agricultural within the City is very limited, but should be preserved and encouraged as an important part of the history of the region. Agricultural uses as they pertain to the food supply can serve as a mini economic engine. As such, the local agricultural trade should be encouraged and supported. A farmer's market should be a consideration as well as potential agricultural tax exemptions for any City lot that is used 100% for the production of produce that benefits the entire community either by goods for sale or donation to the less fortunate. This would not include the same benefits for the production of produce for the sole benefit of the owner. However, Agricultural uses solely for grazing are not necessarily in the best interest of the City and serious consideration should be given before granting this as an allowed use.

ISSUES

- **The City does not currently** encourage local agricultural uses through its tax structure or a farmer's market.

- **The current agricultural uses** do not have a public benefit for the City or its residents.

OBJECTIVES & POLICIES

- To review and update policies that would encourage agricultural uses that serve a public benefit.
- To make sure our ordinances do not discourage or hinder any potential use for agricultural purposes.

ACTION PLAN

- Conduct an annual review of ordinances to ensure they are promoting the desired policies.
- Consider incentives for landowners that conduct an agricultural endeavor for the benefit of the community as a whole.
- Patrons should be encouraged to take advantage of the City program offering irrigation meters for no connection fees.

15. IMPLEMENTATION

Idaho Code §67-6508 (o) Implementation -- An analysis to determine actions, programs, budgets, ordinances, or other methods including scheduling of public expenditures to provide for the timely execution of the various components of the plan.

BACKGROUND

Historically, the City, as is true with most municipalities in the region, did not place a priority on the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for future development and growth. As a result its functionality and usefulness was not a real priority.

ACTION PLAN

The City will review the Comprehensive at regular intervals to assure that it is still in step with local and current land uses and the wishes of the City Father's and Citizens. Public input will be gathered, and changes made when they are warranted. Attempt to utilize an expanded portion of the population to develop and refine the Comprehensive Plan components. This could include the Leadership classes within the local High School for example, as they are going to inherit and manage the City in the future as their insights could prove to be invaluable.