



DEFINING ISSUES & CONCEPTS

The Jackson/Teton County Comprehensive Plan update is being prepared in a series of distinct tasks. Part of the initial task is intended to identify and verify key issues and concepts that will form the foundation for the updated Plan. This document builds on work town and county elected and appointed officials have done in the past year and is intended to help citizens appreciate the diversity and complexity of issues and opportunities that will impact the future of the region. It will also help to focus the planning process on the plan's role, and relative key issues and opportunities for each of the major elements of the Plan update, as well as the physical, social, and economic consequences that must be considered.

1. Plan's Role

A Realistic, Achievable Vision

- 20 year future vision, at a regional level
- Articulate vision in 5-year increments
- Determine community priorities among existing goals and policies
- Create a plan that helps guide timely, realistic choices
- Create a plan that represents a consensus between preservation and growth
- Cohesiveness between Plan sections is critical
- Implementation: Identify conflicts between Comprehensive Plan and zoning and areas where zoning needs to be amended. Also identify non-regulatory mechanisms to implement the plan.

Recognize Role of Individual Communities

- Create a detailed sub-area plan for the Town of Jackson, to provide needed direction for the specific issues the Town is confronting. Determine if the Town's role is changing, and if so, what the implications are.
- Integrate into the Comprehensive Plan the needs and sub-plans of the other communities in the County.
- Identify whether and where services should be located in nodes outside of Jackson.

Update and Evaluate Demographic Changes and Overall Growth Impacts

- Evaluate consequences of overall growth in the County (fiscal, environmental, social, infrastructure, transportation, public services, visual, etc.).
- Bring about environmental sustainability that balances growth and open space.
- Evaluate changes in the characteristics of our population, and how this might impact our community in the future.

2. Key Issues to Address During the Plan Update

Community Sustainability and Build-Out

- Evaluate how the concept of 'sustainability' should apply to Teton County; might serve as an overarching theme for the plan update.

- Model what the County might look like at ‘build-out’, and consider the implications for infrastructure needs, quality of life, and the environment.

Community Character

- Define desired community character for the key areas of the County.
- Define and retain the desired character for the Jackson core area.
- Identify how to enhance the sense of community, capturing and identifying the emotional aspect of this topic as well as more tangible, built form.

Density, Built Form, and Redevelopment

- Determine if higher density is a viable alternative to sprawl in the valley, and if so, where higher density development (or redevelopment) can best be accommodated. Can aesthetics and design standards overcome resistance to density?
- Determine how density reduction can be accomplished in areas not appropriate for growth.

Affordable Housing

- Using the 2007 Housing Needs Assessment and FTE Study as a starting point:
 - Identify realistic targets for affordable housing.
 - Clearly identify appropriate locations.
 - Create an achievable plan to bring about affordable housing for the County.
 - Determine the roles and contributions of each community, development, and business owners with regard to affordable housing.

Preservation/Conservation of Wildlife Habitat and Resources

- Wildlife habitat preservation is a key defining issue for the region.
- Identify realistic objectives, and methods for protecting other resources, such as:
 - Hillsides (Identify their susceptibility s to development and appropriate methods for preservation),
 - Ecologically sensitive lands,
 - Natural and scenic resources,
 - Air and water quality, and
 - Working ranches.

Transportation Needs

- Determine what our traffic infrastructure needs are for the future, in order to attain our vision for the valley. Do we need a bypass for Jackson, or are our level-of-service expectations unrealistic?
- Evaluate realistic alternatives for reducing automobile dependence.
- Define pedestrian corridor standards for the Jackson core area.
- Determine under what conditions traffic could affect the growth of the community.
- Recognize that much of our traffic growth now results from commuters rather than tourists.

Fiscal/Economic Considerations

- Evaluate how we can create a community that can sustain both low and high-income populations.
- Determine what we need to do to protect the Town’s economic sustainability.
- Evaluate whether the Town and County can afford the public commitments in the Comprehensive Plan, and that revenue is greater or at least equal to the cost of services.