

# Gooding County Comprehensive Plan

## INTRODUCTION

The Gooding County Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) serves as a decision-making framework and policy guide for decisions concerning the future physical development of Gooding County and facilities and services that support that development. It indicates, in a general way, how the County should grow in the next 15 to 20 years. The purpose of the Plan is to guide and balance development in the most efficient, economical and well-planned manner possible.

The Comprehensive Plan states the values and vision of County residents as expressed through a public participation process that involved the general public, other government agencies, members of the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners. It identifies overall goals and objectives, as well as more specific policies related to future growth, development and service provisions, as well as actions needed to implement the goals, objectives and policies.

Consistent with Idaho Code Title 67 Chapter 65, Local Land Use Planning, the Plan provides the policy basis for the County's Zoning Ordinance, which contains the specific standards, requirements and processes for making land use and development decisions. In reviewing and applying Comprehensive Plan policies, zoning ordinance requirements, and state and federal laws, the County must balance its responsibility to provide for the good of all County residents with individual private property rights protected by the Idaho State Constitution and laws.

As part of the larger Gooding community, Gooding County works with cities, other services providers, state and federal agencies, community groups, the development community and citizens to help guide growth and manage land and resources in the future. The Plan was updated in cooperation with these partners and includes a variety of policies and actions aimed at improving collaboration and coordination among them.

In addition to incorporating the results of these processes, the Plan builds on the following vision and values expressed by County residents early in the public participation process of the Plan update.

## Vision and Values

*"Growth and development in Gooding County are balanced and integrated with protection and management of natural resources. We support diversity, value and protect our cultural and historical heritage and have access to a variety of choices in how we live, work, learn, play, shop and travel. We enjoy a high quality of life in safe, healthy and clean neighborhoods that we call home."*

This vision for the future reflects the following attributes of life in Gooding County that participating residents stated they value:

- A variety of housing choices that accommodate a range of lifestyles, needs and incomes.
- Preservation of and access to high quality open spaces in close proximity to and within the built environment.
- A range of transportation options that allow people to get from one place to another safely and efficiently.
- Coordination between transportation and land use planning.
- A sustainable, responsible, healthy business environment, that provides diverse opportunities for all residents.
- A safe, clean, healthy environment where people are respectful of others, themselves and their community.
- A variety of educational opportunities for people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds.
- A rich heritage of cultural and historical resources.
- Access to urban amenities, outstanding recreational experiences and quiet rural settings in a County with a small community atmosphere.
- Gooding County's diverse recreational resources and opportunities.
- Effective and efficient implementation of plans and policies that achieve the community's vision and consider environmental and other resource limitations.
- Protection of wildlife and its habitat.
- Preserve, to the extent possible, our agricultural heritage and economy.

## Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan

In addition to providing the policy basis for future planning decisions, the Gooding County Comprehensive Plan serves the following specific purposes:

*Legislative:* To meet the requirements of the Local Land Use Planning Act, Idaho Code, Title 67, Chapter 65.

The County envisions the plan serving the following purposes:

*Policymaking:* To develop and explain the public policies and intentions of Gooding County with respect to the rights and expectations of the general public, private enterprise and local government.

*Educational:* To enable local residents, public agencies and economic interests to become informed of the County's long-range and short-range planning goals and policies.

*Coordinating:* To establish a basis for coordination, understanding and negotiation among citizens, economic interests, City officials, private investors and public agencies within Gooding County and, as appropriate, to establish a position on regional growth and development issues.

## Comprehensive Plan Components

The plan includes the following components required by the Local Land Use Planning Act as amended:

- Property Rights - an analysis of the provisions that may be necessary to provide that land use policies, restrictions, conditions and fees do not violate private property rights, adversely impact property values or create unnecessary technical limitation on the use of property.
- Population and Growth - an analysis of the past, present, and future trends in population, including such characteristics as total population, age, sex and income.
- School Facilities and Transportation - an analysis of public educational goals and facility capacities, plus school and school transportation facilities with future development.
- Economic Development - an analysis of the economic base of the area for maintaining a positive growth rate, including employment, industries, jobs and income levels.
- Land Use - an analysis encompassing the current vision and planning framework for a mix of future land uses.

- Natural Resources and Hazardous Area - an analysis identifying the soils, water, vegetation, watersheds, and known hazards within the County.
- Public Service, Facilities, and Utilities - an analysis of the general plans for sewage, water supply, fire stations, health and welfare facilities, waste disposal sites, public safety facilities, and general public services.
- Transportation - an analysis of existing and future transportation infrastructure necessary for efficient mobility of people, goods and services.
- Recreation - an analysis showing a system of recreation areas, including parks, parkways, trail ways, greenbelts, beaches, playgrounds and other recreation areas and programs.
- Special Areas or Sites - an analysis of the areas, sites, or structures of historical, archaeological, architectural or scenic significance.
- Housing - an analysis of housing conditions and needs, and plans for improving housing standards, and supporting development of safe, sanitary, adequate and affordable housing.
- Community and Sustainable Design - an analysis of the need for governing landscaping, site design and beautification using sustainable practices and goals.
- 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.
- National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors - an analysis showing the existing location and possible routing of high voltage transmission lines based upon the United States department of energy's most recent national electric transmission congestion study.
- Public Airport Facilities – an analysis prepared with assistance from the Idaho Transportation department division of aeronautics, if requested by the planning and zoning commission, and the manager or person in charge of the local public airport identifying, but not limited to, facility locations, the scope and type of airport operations, existing and future planned airport development and infrastructure needs, and the economic impact to the community.
- 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.

## I. PROPERTY RIGHTS

*Gooding County strives to balance regulation of public health, safety and welfare with individual property rights.*

### **Existing Conditions**

The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution states that private property shall not "be taken for public use, without just compensation." In the context of land use planning, the Fifth Amendment has historically been interpreted to mean that if a land use regulation or action is so restrictive that it denies a landowner all economically viable use of his or her property then the property has been "taken" by "inverse condemnation." Such takings are considered unconstitutional, unless the landowner is provided just compensation. Numerous state and federal courts have issued rulings on whether or not certain land use actions constitute a taking, including several rulings from the U.S. Supreme Court. However, these cases have not resulted in any set formula for determining whether the economic injuries caused by a planning decision or other government action require government compensation. The question of whether a particular action constitutes a taking is decided by factual inquiry on an ad hoc (i.e., case-by-case) basis.

Idaho Code Section 67-8001 et. Sec. outlines the process whereby owners of real property in the state can request a written takings analysis. This analysis evaluates whether proposed regulatory or administrative rules established by state agencies or local government may result in a taking of private property without due process of the law. It gives property owners the right to seek judicial determination if the government agency does not provide the written analysis in a timely manner. It also charges the attorney general with establishing and maintaining a checklist that state agencies or local governments can use to evaluate proposed regulatory or administrative actions and ensure that those actions do not result in an unconstitutional taking of private property. The Attorney General has established guidelines to evaluate whether a contemplated land use action or decision may result in an unconstitutional taking of private property

### **Compatibility with Land Uses**

- *Balancing regulation of health, safety and welfare with individual property rights.* The County needs to continue to balance its responsibilities to protect the interests of the entire community with the rights of individual property owners.
- *Balancing rights among affected property owners.* Planning regulations and decisions must balance impacts of regulation on regulated property owners, as well as adjacent property owners that may be affected by allowed uses of a neighboring property.

- *Growth pressures and impacts.* Continued high growth places pressure on sensitive areas, public services, and other conditions that may result in new or revised comprehensive plan policies and implementation measures.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 1.1:** All planning decisions and implementing ordinances pursuant to this Plan balance the interests of the community with the protection of private property rights.

**Goal 1.2:** Each property owner is responsible, as a steward of the land, to use his/her property wisely, maintain it in good condition, and preserve it for future generations

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Conduct training with County staff to enable them to properly adhere to and apply provisions of Idaho Code 67-8003 in land use planning and development review processes.

Continue to apply the County's policies and procedures on a case-by-case basis with guidance from the state Attorney General and County legal counsel. Provide such information to community members in response to inquiries or claims.

Prepare informational materials (e.g., brief fact sheets or newsletters) for property owners stressing the need to properly care for properties by minimizing environmental degradation or contamination and other long-term adverse impacts on natural resources on or adjacent to the property, as well as links to other resources that provide similar guidance.

## II. POPULATION

The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan's population component is to examine past trends and current conditions regarding demographic characteristics such as total change, age, and ethnicity of an area of population. Forecasts regarding the magnitude of the County's population change over time.

Current and future population characteristics are needed to determine the demand for public services including schools, housing, law enforcement, and transportation, as well as health and social services. Population analysis and forecasts also may be used to promote economic development in the County. Private sector applications of population forecasts include determining the level and location of service and retail activities.

Age distribution and age characteristics of a County's population also impact the provision of public services. A relatively young population places higher demands on school, new housing units, and infant care facilities. An older population may require higher levels of in-home care, assisted living facilities and transportation services.

A current picture of Gooding County's dynamic population and demographic status can be reviewed in the appendix of this Comprehensive Plan.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 2.1** Review population census and other pertinent information to estimate population growth and/or decline.

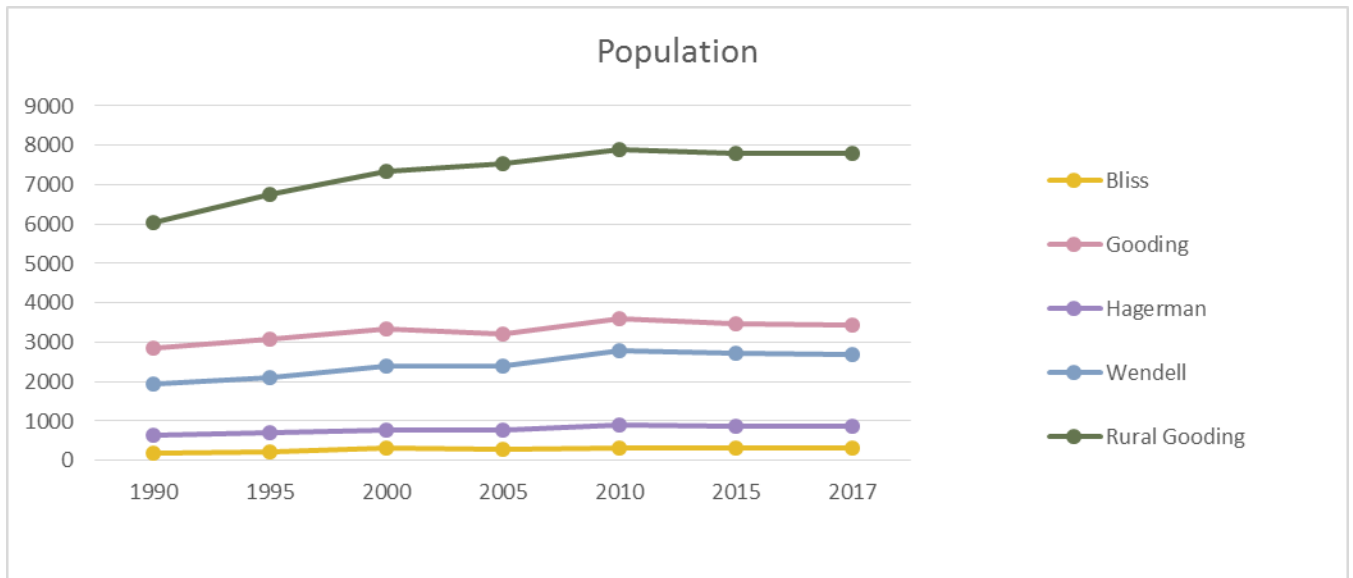
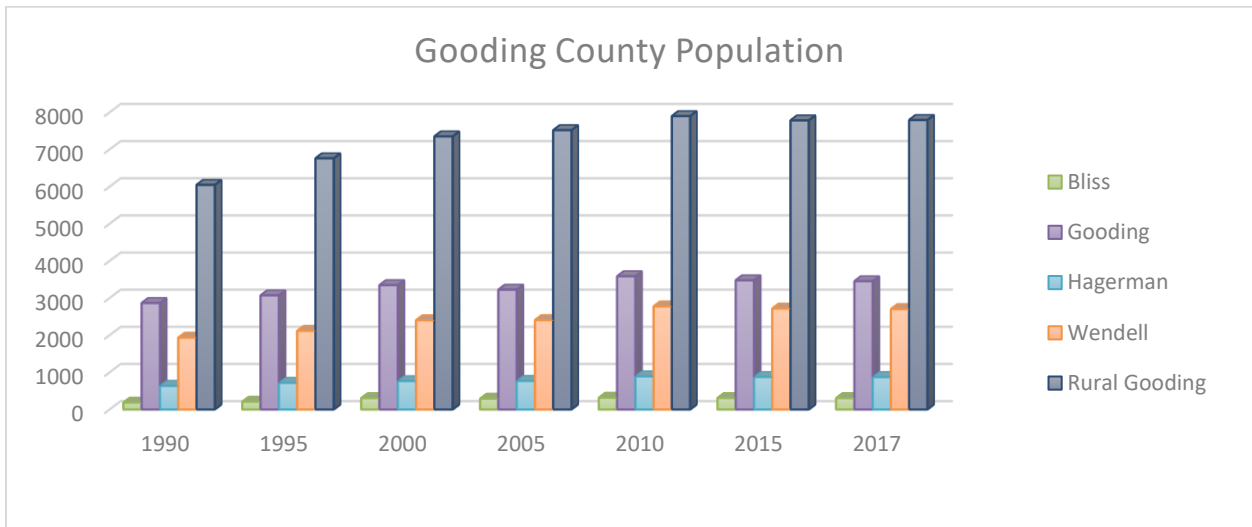
### **Desirable Future Situations**

Future comp plans will update population forecasts based on the population census and other pertinent information

Monitor changes in population demographics by periodically reviewing relevant indicators to help determine future impact of public services.

Trends - Gooding continues to see growth throughout the entire county. (See Chart on Next Page)

Population - Census Bureau								
	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2017	% Increase from 1990 to 2017
Bliss	185	208	305	290	315	308	306	65
Gooding	2865	3070	3346	3224	3,585	3,477	3,452	20
Hagerman	635	716	764	768	893	874	872	37
Wendell	1932	2117	2401	2405	2,773	2,717	2,702	40
Rural Gooding	6,045	6,760	7,350	7,519	7,896	7,781	7,792	29



### **III. School Facilities and Transportation**

#### **Existing Conditions**

Six school districts provide K-12 service in Gooding County. The six school districts in Gooding County receive some county revenue. They are #231-Gooding, #232-Wendell, #233-Hagerman, #234-Bliss, #412-Buhl and #261-Jerome. Gooding County is also served by one charter school, located in the city of Gooding.

The College of Southern Idaho – Gooding Center is located on the campus of the Idaho School for the Deaf and the Blind at 202 14th Ave. E., Gooding. The center is a local connection to higher education and lifelong learning. A student can work towards a degree, improve job skills, or take an enrichment class just for fun.

#### **IESDB - Idaho Educational Services for the Deaf and the Blind**

Transportation is provided currently 3 ways; school provided bus services, private transportation or students walk/ride bike to school.

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 3.1:** Work with school districts, cities, other agencies and community members to better coordinate siting of, accessibility to and compatibility of school facilities with surrounding areas.

**Goal 3.2:** Promote that school facilities are safely accessible by automobile, transit, walking and bicycling.

**Goal 3.3:** Support siting of schools to be complementary and compatible with surrounding neighborhoods and to avoid conflicts with incompatible land uses or adverse conditions.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Update the County's zoning ordinance, as needed to provide consistency with policies related to school siting, access to school from existing and new developments, and permitting processes for development of new school sites.

Assist school districts, as needed, in identifying future school sites including providing information about potential future developments proposed in unincorporated portions of the County.

**Desirable Future Situations (Cont.)**

Update County development review procedures, as needed to provide that school districts are informed about and have the opportunity to participate in development review processes related to developments.

## IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

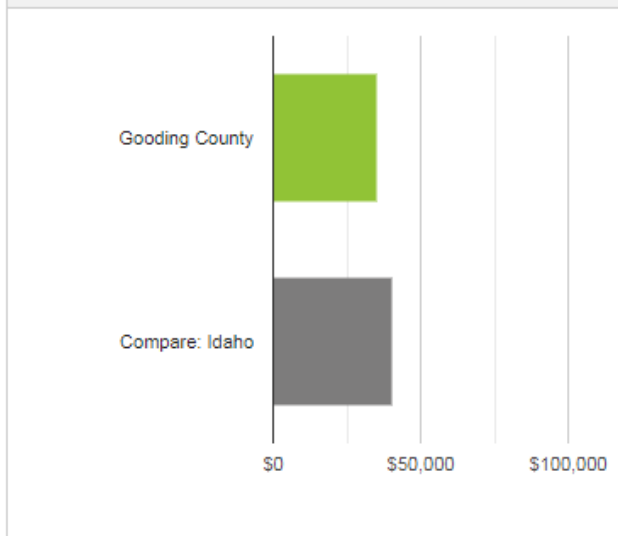
### Existing Conditions

Economic development issues are highly important in Gooding County, impacting population and development patterns, transportation and public facility needs, and overall quality of life.

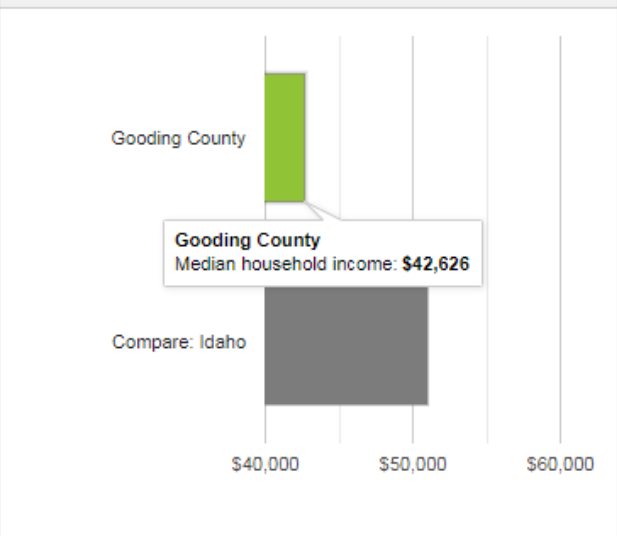
As of 2018, Gooding County’s unemployment rate was 2.8%. The median household income was \$42,626. That is an increase of 4.72% from 2016.



**Figure 1: Gooding County, ID Median Earnings per Worker**



**Figure 2: Gooding County, ID Median Household Income**



### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 4.1:** Increase the economic diversity, employment base and tax base of the County to improve employment opportunities for its residents.

**Goal 4.2:** Designate sufficient land to meet the County's current and projected future commercial and industrial needs. Locate and zone such land consistent with objectives in the land use chapter of this plan.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Periodically review economic forecasts and available county land zoned for employment uses to ensure there is an adequate supply of land zoned to meet those uses; update zoning ordinances and maps, as needed to achieve this goal.

Continue to require that needed services are or can be made available to accommodate proposed or planned commercial or industrial land uses.

## V. LAND USE

### **Existing Conditions**

Gooding County manages land use and development in the following areas:

- In unincorporated areas through application of the Comprehensive Plan and County zoning, subdivision and other ordinances and standards.
- In negotiated Areas of City Impact outside city limits through the application of the Area of City Impact agreement.

This Plan identifies the following major land use categories to plan for development in existing and future areas of growth, and to preserve the integrity and amenities of residential areas as well as the economic vitality of industrial and commercial activity centers:

- Residential - single family attached and detached units, duplex units, apartments and manufactured homes.
- Commercial, Office and Retail - neighborhood, community and regional retail, wholesale, service, and office businesses. These land uses are typically established along major arterials.
- Industrial - warehousing, manufacturing, railroads and industrial business parks constitute the majority of uses in this category. Light industrial includes a wide range of manufacturing establishments, research, supplies and sales.
- Public/Quasi-Public Facilities - government offices, public schools, private schools, health care facilities, churches, utilities, libraries, cemeteries and airports.
- Parks, Recreation and Open Space - parks, recreation areas, private and public lands, irrigation and drainage ditches, and other waterways.
- Agriculture - farms, ranches, pastures, orchards, confined animal feeding operations (CAFO's). This category also includes uses that are related to agriculture, such as granges, elevators, storage facilities and packaging/processing facilities.
- Common Areas - lands typically located within residential subdivisions or other developments and designated for common use among residents (e.g., open space, landscaped or other similar areas).
- Other - this accounts for a substantial amount of land in the County, primarily under state or federal ownership and includes the following types of land:

- Rangeland - both open and closed rangelands primarily located in rural Gooding County, located primarily in northern portion of the County. Rangeland, as used in this document, refers to open and undeveloped lands, both public and private.
- Other publicly owned land designated for multiple uses, including rangeland or recreational uses.

### **Land Ownership**

Land in the County is under a mix of public and private ownership, with a significant amount of land owned by state and federal agencies. Following is a summary of land ownership by major category:

- City. A relatively small percentage of land, .2% is actually owned by incorporated cities. Most city-owned land is used for city facilities, including city halls, parks, sewer treatment and other public facilities.
- County. The County owns .06% of all land within the County.
- Other local service providers. Water, sewer, irrigation, fire, school and other special districts collectively own approximately .15% of land in the county.
- State. The Idaho Department of Lands (IDL), Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), and other state agencies have substantial land holdings.
- Federal. BLM is the largest landowner. Other federal agencies, include, Army Corps of Engineers and US Fish and Wildlife Service.

### **Areas of City Impact**

Areas of City Impact (or future city planning areas) are the unincorporated areas surrounding existing cities where future development, annexation or incorporation is anticipated to occur. Impact boundary adjustments are made by mutual agreements between the affected jurisdiction and the County and are based on the following criteria established in the Idaho State Code: relationship of local trade area, geographic features and potential for future annexation. Under the current agreements between Gooding County and each of the incorporated cities, any new development within an Area of City Impact is subject to the following conditions.

- The comprehensive plan as negotiated pursuant to the Local Land Use Planning Act (LLUPA) applies within each respective Area of City Impact.

- Gooding County zoning, subdivision and development regulations apply to the unincorporated areas within Gooding County. In the future, city ordinances and/or jointly developed city/county ordinances may be applied in some Areas of Impact as may be negotiated pursuant to LLUPA.

### Rural Residential and Agricultural Areas

Outside of Areas of City Impact, most land is zoned for a combination of rural residential. The types of uses allowed in these areas include the following:

- Ag Production and rangeland uses
- Selected industrial, commercial and resource extraction uses compatible with surrounding residential or agricultural use and consistent with plan policies and locational criteria
- Transportation Corridors and Improvements
- Other dedicated open space, park or recreation facilities or areas

### Comprehensive Plan Map

The generalized map of future land uses identifies the current vision for a future mix of land uses to implement the counties many diverse goals. Generalized land use recommendations set forth in this plan emphasize the importance of cooperative planning and development among the various jurisdictions and agencies throughout the county. The major types of land uses reflected on the Comprehensive Land Use Map are as follows:

- Cities and Areas of City Impact. The map shows the locations of currently negotiated Areas of City Impact.
- Rural area. The unincorporated portion of Gooding County outside of the areas of impact

### Desirable Goals and Objectives

**Goal 5.1:** Encourage urban growth within cities and Areas of City Impact.

**Goal 5.2:** Encourage cooperative land management efforts among public agencies and private land owners.

**Goal 5.3:** Encourage dialogue between the cities and the county.

**Goal 5.4:** To have compatible growth with each cities plan.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Work with cities and other agencies to establish a process for regular communication and coordination about the location and provision of services to areas where future growth is expected to occur. Also address the sequence and timing of future growth, particularly potential or planned expansions of Areas of City Impact.

Develop and/or amend County Zoning ordinances to ensure that public facility and other related costs of new development are born primarily by new residents and/or developers.

Work with individual cities to develop consistent zoning and development regulations that implement the applicable comprehensive plans in Areas of City Impact.

Update the County's zoning ordinance as needed, to require provision of open space, greenways, bicycle paths and pedestrian linkages between existing or planned parks, schools, neighborhoods and shopping areas as new development and growth occur.

Update the County's subdivision regulations to include open space requirements to clarify that storm water drainage facilities, irrigation ditches districts and similar facilities do not count toward open space requirements within PUD's.

Work with cities to explore the implementation of an urban separator designation that could be used to help provide buffers and gateways between adjacent jurisdictions.

### **Areas of City Impact**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.5:** Areas of City Impact should retain the potential for future urban growth and be planned and developed in an orderly and cost-effective manner.

**Goal 5.6:** Encourage commercial development in Areas of City Impact that is consistent with adopted comprehensive plan policies, location of existing and planned public facilities and services, and that is compatible with existing and future adjacent development.

**Goal 5.7:** Encourage well-planned, orderly, and industrial development that is necessary to achieve the County's economic needs in Areas of Impact, consistent with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Negotiate Area of City Impact boundaries to promote partnership in the planning process and timely review and adoption, consistent with the goals and policies of this plan.

Work cooperatively with the public and other service providers (e.g., water and sewer providers) and South Central Health Department to define a consistent methodology for estimating future land needs, determining the supply of buildable or developable land within a given Area of City Impact, and preparing short and long-term capital facility plans.

Work with each city to agree on the process for applying zoning ordinance and development codes within each Area of City Impact (i.e., whether City or County standards and regulations will apply and the process for joint review and/or coordination of land use review and decision processes).

Work with cities and other service providers to develop a process and procedure for determining ultimate boundaries, including service boundaries between cities.

Encourage small-scale or specialized agricultural operations in rural and rural transitional areas.

### **Rural areas - Transitional**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.8:** Allow for planned developments in Areas of City Impact, rural transitional and rural residential, consistent with the adopted comprehensive plan policies and county zoning ordinance provisions.

### **Rural areas – Residential Development**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.9:** Encourage preservation of open space and a rural residential lifestyle with limited development in areas that cannot reasonably be served by central sewer systems.

**Goal 5.10:** Allow for a limited amount and range of commercial uses in rural areas consistent with the County Ordinances.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Replace non-farm subdivision development with provisions that allow for limited rural residential development that will not interfere with future urban development as rural areas are urbanized as part of Area of City Impact expansion.

Allow commercial land uses in rural areas as needed to provide consistency with updated Comprehensive Plan goals.

### **Rural Areas – Commercial/Industrial Development**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.11:** Allow for a limited amount and range of industrial uses in rural areas, consistent with County Ordinances.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Comply with county zoning regulations for industrial land uses in rural areas to provide consistency with updated Comprehensive Plan goals and policies

### **Rural Areas - Agricultural Use**

The economy of Gooding County is closely tied to agriculture. The primary crops grown in the county are hay, improved pasture, grains and seed crops, corn, potatoes, beans, sweet corn and sugar beets. Trout production is a major industry in the Hagerman Valley. Gooding County has a majority of its acres in dry land that is being grazed by cattle and sheep. Milk production is the fastest growing agricultural industry in the county.

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.12:** Gooding County will continue to encourage the agricultural industry and preservation of prime agricultural land, in areas designated as agriculture on the Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Follow County Ordinance criteria for allowing for permanent farm-worker residences in rural areas.

Comply with the County Ordinance siting standards and regulations for Confined Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO's).

### **Canyon Lands Development**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.13:** Provide for protection and preservation of the canyon lands in Gooding County.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Preserve canyon rims and canyon lands per the County Ordinance.

Support State Department of Parks in promoting the beneficial use of these public facilities.

Prohibit construction in areas previously determined to be geographically unsafe.

### **Airport Area of Influence**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.14:** Provide for land uses that are compatible with aircraft noise, approach zones, and operation activities and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the general public.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Coordinate with the City of Gooding to be consistent with the city and county development regulations in the Gooding Airport Influence Area.

### **Rural Areas - Rangeland**

Rangeland, as used in this document, refers to open and undeveloped lands, both public and private.

The rangeland is an extremely important segment of the economy. It furnishes grazing for sheep and cattle.

Wildlife also uses this range. Deer, elk and antelope are the main big game species. Sage grouse use it all year, but parts of it are particularly important for wintering grounds.

The rangelands are also extremely important from a watershed standpoint. Since water measurements started in about 1912, the peak stream flows have nearly doubled.

Moisture conditions in the last thirty to forty years have been in a slight decline, so it would seem reasonable to assume that the range conditions have an influence on peak flows. Floods occurring on Clover Creek, Dry Creek, Black Canyon Creek, and Thorn Creek originate strictly on rangeland, and flooding to some extent occurs nearly every year.

### **Bureau of Land Management**

**Fish and Wildlife:** Fishing and hunting occur on these lands. Sage-grouse and other threatened, endangered and/or sensitive species also rely on the public land for survival.

**Rangeland:** Idaho BLM continues to conduct assessments of grazing allotments to ensure that grazing practices are consistent with BLM's Standards and Guidelines for Rangeland Health.

**Wildland Fire:** Idaho conducts the largest wildfire management program in BLM, outside of Alaska. Partnerships formed between BLM, local/county fire departments, private businesses and individual citizens have helped reduce wildfire impacts on Idaho's communities, economy and natural resources. These partnerships also address rehabilitation of lands after fire.

**Restoration:** Increasing wildfire and invasive noxious weeds threaten the health of public lands. The restoration of land and watersheds, while protecting healthy areas, is one of Idaho BLM's most important priorities.

**Wilderness Study Areas:** There are five WSA's located in Gooding County. Only Congress can designate an area as wilderness. The BLM recommends areas suitable or non-suitable for preservation as wilderness. Those recommendations are subject to the final consideration by the Secretary of the Interior and the President before being submitted to Congress.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal: 5.15:** To sustain programs that enhance the long-term value of undeveloped lands for the support of the county agricultural economy and discourage use practices on these lands that will lower the ability to support county agricultural industry.

### **Recreation**

The County of Gooding has the authority to levy a tax for parks and recreation and is authorized to acquire, develop, operate and maintain park and recreational areas. Use of this authority can result in the availability of park and recreation areas and facilities within the county which can satisfy the recreation needs not fulfilled within the city or supplied by the state. In fulfilling the need for county recreation facilities, all available resources of financial, technical, and planning assistance should be used so that a well-

planned economical facility is developed. Include concern for adequate park and recreation space into land use planning efforts of the county.

The county should cooperate with the appropriate agencies to encourage the development and management of recreation resources of statewide significance. The federal government owns land within the county; therefore, the governing body should, where appropriate, encourage the development of recreation opportunities on those lands. The county should encourage and cooperate with private efforts to develop recreation opportunities.

An inventory of recreational areas in Gooding County indicates that the area is rich in recreational opportunity. The county abounds in scenic, geological and historical lore. The unusual spring water resources, including Snake River, in addition to the rock formations and caves make for unusual recreation activities.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 5.16:** It shall be the goal of Gooding County to enhance and preserve recreational areas and facilities.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Gooding County should coordinate with state and federal agencies for the development and management of recreation for the protection of resources. Update ordinances to make sure setbacks are met.

## VI. NATURAL RESOURCES & HAZARDOUS AREAS

### **Background**

Open spaces, scenic high desert landscapes, mountains, canyons, and rivers characterize Gooding County's countryside and natural resources. The soil and water availability forged to a history based in agricultural. These natural resources and their protection are a concern to the citizens of Gooding County. By skillfully managing Gooding County's natural resources, future generations may be assured good air quality, clean and plentiful water, and safe living conditions. This section describes the condition of the area's geology, water, air quality, vegetation, and wildlife. Also included in this section is a description of hazardous areas. Hazardous areas are those areas that currently threaten or may have the potential to threaten, human health, property, or wildlife. It is important to identify these areas to prevent development in potentially hazardous areas.

### **Existing Conditions**

Gooding County is located within the Magic Valley, home to a wide variety of natural and scenic resources including mountains, prairies, buttes, canyons and rivers. Gooding County's natural resources include mineral resources, water wildlife habitat, high-quality agricultural soils, scenic areas and views, climate, and vegetation. County residents consistently express the opinion that they value these resources. Balancing growth with the need to protect or manage these resources is a critical issue.

### **Topography and Geology**

Gooding County lies within the Snake River Plain section of the Columbia Plateau Province where the lava's are the dominant rock exposed. Lava flowed into the synclinal valley of the Snake River area starting during the late Tertiary through recent time as this trough slowly sank. There is an estimated accumulation of at least 2,000 feet of basalt overlaying older rocks at places in the Snake River Plain. Gooding County varies in elevation from 2,800 ft. in the Hagerman Valley to a high of 6,082 ft. at Fir Grove Mountain.

Rocks exposed in Gooding County range in age from early Tertiary when the Challis Volcanic flowed over granites, gneiss and sedimentary rocks to present time when streams, rivers, lakes and the wind are depositing sediments. The youngest rock mapped in Gooding County has been named McKinney basalt (Omk) deposited during recent time from McKinney Butte eight miles northwest of Gooding. Most of the rock outcroppings in the county are of basaltic composition, which tends to be dark brown to black in color. Older and lighter colored Challis (Tov) and Idavada (Tiv) silicic volcanic, however, have been mapped at the surface in this county. Older volcanic, sedimentary, and granite rocks of the Idaho batholith lie buried beneath the lavas.

Abundant normal faulting within the lava beds has taken place in the northern half of the county. Most faults tend to be two or more miles long and have a general EW or NW-SE trend which reflects a zone of weakness between the Snake River Plain trough and the uplifted mountainous area a short distance to the north.

There is a large deposit of diatomaceous earth located on the upper portion of Clover Creek.

There is a large deposit of gravel in Hagerman Valley

## **Hydrology**

The Snake River borders the county on the south. The lower reaches of the Big and Little Wood Rivers enter Gooding County from the east and join together approximately four miles west of Gooding, forming the Malad River, which empties into the Snake River north of Hagerman. The other main drainages include Clover Creek on the west side of Gooding County, Dry Creek in the middle, and Thorn Creek on the eastern side.

Approximately half of Gooding County lies in the Snake River Aquifer. This aquifer has a large volume of water that results in springs along the Snake River Canyon from Blue Lakes to Bliss. The depth of the ground water varies from approximately 300 feet southeast of Gooding to less than 100 feet south of Wendell

Water rights on the Snake River Plain have become a focused state-wide issue and are currently being reviewed in the courts. The water rights adjudication process has resulted in a current moratorium by which no new deep well water rights are being permitted in the county for consumptive uses except for domestic wells. Although the moratorium has been established by IDWR, existing water rights can still be bought or transferred.

Surface water is the main source of water for irrigation use. The main source of surface irrigation water is from the Snake River and is diverted for this purpose at Milner Dam.

The American Falls Reservoir District No. 2 in Gooding County has water storage rights which average about 444,000 acre feet. The Northside Canal Company services Jerome and Gooding County and has storage rights that include Palisades (116,660 acre feet), Jackson Lake (312,007 acre feet), and American Falls (438,360 acre feet). The Northside Canal Company also has fifteen second feet right on the Big Wood River and rights on Snake River (river flow).

Groundwater is one of the most valuable resources on the Snake River Plain. One of the largest groundwater systems in the United States, The Snake River Plains Aquifer provides the majority of ground water for the county. The primary source of recharge to the groundwater system is snow pack and winter precipitation. A large secondary source of recharge to the groundwater is seepage of surface irrigation water from the different canal laterals. Groundwater is the main source for potable water supply of the

residents of Gooding County. The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ), in compliance with the 1996 revisions of the "Safe Drinking Water Act" has completed Source Water Assessments for all municipal drinking water systems.

### **Energy Sources**

Gooding County has many resources that can be used to produce energy; wind, water, solar, and biomass. These alternative energy resources should be explored and promoted as we move forward in a global economy.

### **Air Quality**

Air quality in a given location is based on the concentrations of various pollutants in the atmosphere. In general, air quality is affected by the type and amount of pollutants emitted into the atmosphere, the size and topography of the air basin, as well as meteorological conditions and prevailing climate. The pollutants for which limits have been set are ozone in the lower atmosphere, carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, lead, and particulate matter. Federal standards for criteria air pollutants have been established by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Clean Air Act's National Ambient Air Quality Standards. At the present time there is no real-time continuous monitoring in Gooding County. Odors and fugitive dust are currently under the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) except for odors originating from dairies and feedlots. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry has more information on ammonia, one of the common substances associated with agriculture.

### **Climate**

Gooding County has a four season climate with generally mild temperatures. The average high temperature is 76°, the hottest in July, 91° and the coolest in January, 29°. Precipitation averages 8 to 10 inches.

The threat of severe weather in Gooding County is considered a significant hazard, which will cause a threat to life or property. Severe storms can affect the entire state with varying degrees, due to the complex landscape and the influence from the Pacific Ocean. Although, Idaho's climate sees relatively few severe storms in comparison with the rest of the nation, it still poses a significant hazard to the state and local communities. Damaging storms do occur, however and casualties and extensive property damage result throughout the entire state. Two types of severe storms are of concern in Idaho:

- Winter storms with accumulations of snow and ice, extreme cold and reduced visibility.
- Thunderstorms with hail, lightning and high winds, with possibility of micro bursts and infrequent but possible tornadoes.

## **Soils and Agriculture**

Due to the combination of alluvial and loessial soils deposited at highly varying depths over fairly recent volcanic structure, any planning or subsequent development in Gooding County must consider the soil conditions of the particular area in question. Furthermore, areas with soil conditions highly suitable for the support of intensive agricultural practices are not in abundance and must be protected where possible from other uses. An extensive soil survey and mapping program has been completed to increase the effort to reap the highest benefit from this important component of Gooding County's natural environment. Prime farmland soils, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture are soils that are best suited to producing food, feed and foliage, fiber, and oilseed crops. Such soils have properties that are favorable for the economic production of sustained high crop yields. In general prime farmland has the following characteristics:

- Adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation
- Slopes ranging from mainly 0 to 6 percent
- Favorable temperatures and growing season
- Acceptable levels of acidity and alkalinity
- Acceptable levels of salt and sodium
- Few or no rocks
- Permeable to water and air
- Not excessively erodible
- Not saturated with water for a long period of time or flood frequently
- Soil depth adequate for plant roots and cultivation

Silt loam soils are generally good for sewage disposal systems but problems can be encountered with shallow soils in sites near the canyon rims and shallow bedrock and/or caliche layers. Irrigation canals and ditches are numerous, and systems must be sited so that they are not too close to the irrigation laterals and are not subject to being flooded by them.

## **Wildlife**

The Snake River and other sources of surface water provide important nesting and brood rearing habitat, migratory resting areas, and winter habitat for a wide variety of waterfowl, shore birds, and wading birds. Common breeding and nesting birds associated with this type of habitat include Canada geese, Mallards, Cinnamon Teal, Great-Blue Herons, double-Crested Cormorants, and Pied-Billed Grebes. Natural vegetation along rivers, streams, and reservoirs (known as riparian areas) are biologically diverse and productive systems. A number of species of special conservation concerns in Idaho are dependent on riparian habitats for breeding, nesting, and foraging. The Snake River and many of its major tributaries are characterized by deeply incised basalt canyons. These steep and rocky canyons provide ideal breeding and nesting habitat for a number of raptors, migratory song birds, and mammals. Concerns include:

- Developing near canyon habitats can negatively impact cliff-nesting and foraging raptors and other birds that breed, nest, and forage in these types of habitats.
- Continued development along the Snake River corridor has resulted in the loss of important wildlife habitat and movement corridors, recreational access, and increased homeowner/sportsmen conflicts.
- According to Idaho Department of Fish and Game in 2001 the Snake River has the greatest potential for increasing angler opportunity of any major water in the southern portion of Idaho. Daily load, lack of adequate in-stream flows, water quality issues, and loss of spawning areas appear to be the factors most significantly affecting fish populations in the mid Snake River.
- Scenic views and valued rural character are lost with development encroachments.

Big game animals within the county include the mule deer, elk, pronghorn antelope, mountain lion and bear. Predators within the county are coyotes, bobcats, foxes, bears, wolves and mountain lions. Fur-bearing animals are primarily the muskrat, mink, weasel, raccoon, fox, coyote and bobcat. Non-game or small animals are the jackrabbit, rock chuck, pima rabbit, cottontail rabbit, badger and various other species of small rodents. Game and non-game birds within the county include the pheasant, chukar, Hungarian partridge, sage grouse, California or valley quail and mourning dove. Some blue grouse, bobwhite, and mountain quail are also found. The birds of prey include hawks, falcons, golden eagles, bald eagles, great horned owls, burrowing owls, barn owls, kingfishers, pelicans and osprey.

At present the recreational value of the wildlife resources of Gooding County are highly utilized both for consumptive and non-consumptive uses. Wildlife is therefore considered a valuable resource.

### **Rangelands**

See "Rangelands" – Section 5

### **Scenic/Historic/Backcountry Roads, Byways and Trails**

Scenic or historic byways are located in Gooding County along the following State and Federal routes: U.S. Hwy 30, Thousand Spring Byway; Oregon National Historic Trail portions in Gooding County.

"Gooding City of Rocks", located North of Gooding contains scenic rock sculptures and canyons. In the Bennett Hills region, high gradient, deeply entrenched streams flow southward. The largest creek is known as Clover Creek.

## **Hazardous Areas**

A hazard may be defined as any substance, situation, or condition that is capable of doing harm to human health, property, or system functioning. This definition does not say that the hazard will do harm but merely that it has the capability. Also, it does not say how much harm might be done. Thus a situation or material that can only result in a slight irritation and only under unlikely circumstances is a hazard just as is a situation or material that can result in a fatality and that is very likely to do so. In other words, the term "hazard" does not discriminate very well about how serious a potential harm might be or how likely to occur.

As demonstrated by the Bliss landslide, during 1993, the canyon rims of the Snake River and the Tributaries coursing Gooding County have the most unstable slopes in the county. Rock falls and landslides occur here. Construction may be allowed after a determination that the construction is viable. Considerations may include such factors as soils and engineering studies and/or geological reports, or other relevant information. Gooding County establishes a land slide hazard area for all property in Gooding County within two miles of the Snake River.

## **Floodplains**

Gooding County has been assessed by FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program. The regulatory flood zone includes many populated places in Gooding County, including the cities of Bliss, Gooding, Hagerman and Wendell. Approximately 16,514 acres have been identified in either the 100-year flood zone (15,869) acres, the 500-year flood zone (466 acres), or in inclusions (180 acres) within the flood zone.

While Gooding County has no high water dams, the American Falls, Minidoka and Milner dams to the east will affect Gooding County at the time of total dam failure or full capacity spillage. The American Falls Dam is the largest reclamation storage dam in the Snake River Basin. If the American Falls Dam were to fail, it could result in the failure of Minidoka and Milner Dams. The water breaching Shoshone Falls would then run 11 river miles in 4 hours to reach the Lower Salmon Dam in Gooding County. The flooding we experience, if severe enough, could cause loss of property, damage to the environment and the need for evacuation of citizens.

## **Soil Erosion**

Exposed surface soil materials are prone to erosion by wind and water. Ground disturbing activities such as construction, quarrying, scraping, and tillage can increase soil erosion. Soil erosion occurs from running water, as in flooding and irrigation, and wind. Soil properties and slope affect erosion. The National Resources Conservation Service ((NRCS) conducts National Resources inventory every five years that includes information on soil erosion by water and wind throughout Idaho.

## **Airport Clear Zones**

Within the airport areas, noise and vibrations generated from aircraft adversely affect humans who live or work continuously under these conditions. The Department of Housing and Urban Development has set a specific limitation of 65 dba on noise and safety. The Gooding Municipal Airport is located about 3 miles west and elevated 130 feet above the City of Gooding. The existing Airport Zone District protects the airport from incompatible land use encroachment.

## **Wildfire**

In Gooding County, due to hot, dry climate and low moisture, wildfires are a threat on a yearly basis whether caused by natural or man-made situations. Wildfires may cause significant damage to open range feeding grounds, wildlife habitat, cultural sites, personal property and recreation areas.

Current warming trends and below normal precipitation levels in the past ten years is causing severe drought conditions. These droughts are causing severe water losses to the area aquifers as well as municipal water supplies.

Furthermore, early spring growth to the areas vegetation followed by lack of moisture is increasing the risk of wildfires and generating extreme fire behavior. Gooding County has an approved Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan and a Fire Wise Plan.

## **Seismic**

Geological and seismological studies suggest that Idaho could experience earthquakes in several activity areas. Idaho ranks fifth in the nation behind California, Nevada, Utah, and Arizona for earthquake risk. The fact that the largest earthquakes in the contiguous United States were in Idaho, Borah Peak 1983, or very near Idaho, Hebgen Lake 1958, graphically demonstrates the threat. Most of the seismic activity comes from events that happened outside Gooding County, generally to the northeast and southwest, including Utah.

## **Hazardous Materials Incidents**

Hazardous chemicals, hazardous material or substances, as they are variously called have been used for many beneficial purposes in homes, businesses, and industries throughout the nation. However, every year there are accidents that involve these substances. Few are catastrophic, but even the small ones can disrupt a community. Emergencies involving hazardous materials occur within the transportation industry where they transport on local, state and federal highways. In addition, Union Pacific Railroad and Eastern Idaho Railroad run daily throughout the county transporting large quantities of hazardous materials.

## **Underground Storage Tanks**

Most underground storage tanks (UST) in the County are located within the cities and their areas of impact. Underground storage tanks in other parts of the County are most limited to petroleum products. In any location, however, the main concern with UST is leakage or rupture and potential groundwater contamination. All UST are, therefore, regulated under appropriate EPA structural, contamination, and remediation requirements.

## **Power Lines**

Power lines generate both electrical and magnetic fields, based on the voltage or thrust of electricity through wires and the actual amount of current in the wires.

## **Pollutant Sources**

According to the Comprehensive State Water Plan (1993) and the IDEQ 1995 Draft Middle Snake River Nutrient Management Plan, the primary sources of water quality degradation in the mid-Snake River area are aquaculture facilities, confined animal feeding operations, public wastewater treatment plans and irrigation return flows. An additional concern for Gooding County due to lava flows, geology, underlying soil composition and other factors, is the creation of "sink holes" (see USGS definition).

Zoonotic disease: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in 2007 organized the National Center for Zoonotic, Vector-Borne, and Enteric Disease. This organization seeks to understand, prevent, control and eliminate infectious diseases within a larger ecologic context including humans, animals, and plants interacting in the complex, ever-changing natural environment. Recognizing the potential for spread of disease to humans is the first step in prevention as we maintain vigilance in the protection of human health and welfare.

## **Future Trends**

Throughout the County, residents and workers face potential threats from both natural and manmade sources. Current setbacks and building restrictions help to reduce conflicts; however, with anticipated growth, areas such as airports and the rim of the Snake River face increased pressure from development. Growth and population increases are expected to threaten the quality of the existing natural resources found in the County. Water quantity is already an issue in the Snake River Plain with court cases projected in the future. Degrading water quality standards of both ground and surface water are appearing and the trends are difficult to reverse. "For further reading regarding Water Quality, see the Middle Snake Coordinated Water Resource Management Plan which is incorporated herein by reference".

Many county residents value and support protection of natural resources in Gooding County as sources of scenic beauty, opportunities for recreation and wildlife habitat. Streams, rivers and creeks and wildlife are areas to manage and protect.

Historic and cultural resources help define Gooding County's identity and are also important to residents to preserve and manage as growth and development occur.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.1:** Protect and manage natural resources to retain the benefits they provide to County residents.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Explore measures for protection of resources.

Support buffers and development standards for development adjacent to natural areas, consistent with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management Plan.

### **Policies**

- Policy 6.1-1: Use appropriate zoning designations and other strategies to minimize the impacts of development encroaching on natural resource areas.
- Policy 6.1-2: Protect and preserve the natural beauty and habitat of the Snake River and land abutting the river and canyon.
- Policy 6.1-3: Protect and preserve the natural beauty and habitat of the Big and Little Wood River and the cottonwood and land abutting the river.
- Policy 6.1-4: Support the City of Gooding in its efforts to work with State and Federal Agencies to both improve the condition of the River Wall and create a scenic river path way through the city.
- Policy 6.1-5: Protect and preserve the natural beauty of all spring water sources and streams, including the Thousand Spring regions.
- Policy 6.1-6: Minimize development allowed within critical winter range areas, the wildlife habitat of federal and state listed or sensitive species, rare plant species, and/or minimize the impacts of development on those areas.
- Policy 6.1-7: Manage development to maintain wildlife habitat migration and movement corridors.

- Policy 6.1-8: Encourage preservation of existing healthy trees throughout the County.
- Policy 6.1-9: Coordinate with state and federal regulatory agencies, as needed to ensure that new development that produces air emissions complies with applicable air quality standards.

## **Floodplains**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.2:** Protect human life and property and reduce public and private expenditures resulting from floods.

### **Policies**

- Policy 6.2-1: Reduce and prevent flood damage by minimizing alterations to the 100-year floodplain through the development permitting process.
- Policy 6.2-2: Discourage structural development within floodways, with the exception of bridges or other selected public facilities.
- Policy 6.2-3: Design and construct all river and stream crossings to withstand at minimum the flows and velocities of the 100-year flood.
- Policy 6.2-4: Floodplain areas should be maintained and not be altered in any way that would flood surrounding properties, either up or downstream or across the stream.
- Policy 6.2-5: Tributary floodways should not be altered in any way that would increase flood damage of surrounding properties either up or downstream or across the stream.
- Policy 6.2-6: Prohibit the manufacture and/or storage of toxic, flammable, explosive or radioactive materials in the floodplain.
- Policy 6.2-7: Prohibit the location of critical facilities, e.g., school buildings, hospitals or other medical facility buildings within the floodplains. Require any buildings located within the floodplain to meet FEMA and other safety and mitigation requirements, including mitigation of floodwater displacement that could adversely impact surrounding uses.
- Policy 6.2-8: Discourage locations of industrial buildings or uses other than sand and gravel extraction in the floodplain. Require any such buildings located within the floodplain to meet FEMA and other safety and mitigation requirements, including mitigation of floodwater displacement that could adversely impact surrounding uses.

Policy 6.2-9: Planning of major transportation routes should take into consideration the hazards of locating in floodplain areas.

## **Water Management**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.3:** As an essential and limited natural resource, preserve and protect groundwater and surface waters.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Encourage the Idaho Department of Water Resources to conduct studies needed to continue to assess the availability and quality of water resources throughout Gooding County and in the Magic Valley.

Identify, adopt and implement groundwater protection practices.

## **Policies**

Policy 6.3-1: Promote objective and scientifically-based water quality standards for human consumption, agriculture, wildlife habitat and recreation.

Policy 6.3-2: Work with other jurisdictions, government agencies, water suppliers and interested parties to develop a comprehensive water management plan.

Policy 6.3-3: Support continued assessment of surface and groundwater supplies in Gooding County and the Magic Valley to assess long-term availability and quality of current and future supplies.

Policy 6.3-4: As a condition of approval of development, require new sub-surface sewage disposal systems proposed in areas with high soil permeability, shallow water tables, shallow aquifers or geologic hazards to meet IDEQ and South Central Public Health District regulations.

Policy 6.3-5: Consistent with state and federal regulations, require runoff created or affected by development to be controlled on-site or integrated into a watershed plan to maintain natural runoff rates, reduce erosion and flood hazards, and maintain the area's water quality and recharge capabilities.

- Policy 6.3-6: Require industrial wastes or hazardous materials be stored or located in a manner that will ensure that they will not enter surface water or groundwater systems.
- Policy 6.3-7: Prevent contamination of surface waters and groundwater from solid waste disposal by enforcing strict regulations on disposal activities at approved solid waste management sites.
- Policy 6.3-8: Prevent contamination of groundwater by managing storm water in developed areas.
- Policy 6.3-9: Prevent contamination of groundwater by managing potential agricultural related contaminants.
- Policy 6.3-10: Promote public awareness of techniques and practices individuals can adopt to protect water quality.
- Policy 6.3-11: Encourage the use of water-saving devices and techniques through conservation incentives.
- Policy 6.3-12: Encourage new and existing development to incorporate design elements that limit water use and water reuse requirements, including the use of native and low-water plant species in landscaping.
- Policy 6.3-13: Require that new development has adequate water supply for fire protection flow.
- Policy 6.3-14: Participate in efforts by Mid Snake Coordinated Water Resources Management to implement water quality protection plans.

## **Sand and Gravel**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.4:** Identify, protect and use Gooding County's sand and gravel resources while minimizing long-term negative environmental impacts and protecting or enhancing natural resources.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Update County zoning or other regulations, as needed, to be consistent with policies of this section of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **Policies**

- Policy 6.4-1: Require sand and gravel extraction and associated uses to mitigate adverse impacts on surrounding land uses and natural resources.
- Policy 6.4-2: All applications for sand and gravel extraction and processing for both new and expanded operations should include a copy of the reclamation plan for the site that will be approved or submitted for approval to State and Federal agencies having jurisdiction over reclamation of the site. Such approval, if not yet obtained, of that plan or a modified version thereof should be a condition of any permits granted for extraction.
- Policy 6.4-3: Implementation of site reclamation plans should be guaranteed, by bond, letter of credit or as otherwise required by any State or Federal agency having jurisdiction over reclamation, prior to and during the course of extraction and until the reclamation plan is completely implemented.
- Policy 6.4-4: Recycling of aggregate resources should be encouraged.
- Policy 6.4-5: Mineral extraction sites should be designed to facilitate their reclamation for future use.

## **Wildlife Management**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.5:** Protect, maintain and enhance the fish and wildlife resources and habitats of Gooding County.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Work with the Idaho Department of Fish and Game to document critical winter range habitat and the wildlife migration corridors, in sufficient detail to allow for conservation or protection of such habitat and corridors during the development review and permitting process.

## **Policies**

- Policy 6.5-1: Gooding County recognizes the land use and management policies defined by the Bureau of Land Management.
- Policy 6.5-2: Critical wildlife habitat areas identified and mapped by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game may be designated as Wildlife Preservation Areas, subject to review by County staff or a County designated third-party reviewer.

Policy 6.5-3: Development adjacent to Wildlife Preservation Areas should minimize and/or mitigate adverse impacts to critical wildlife habitat. Development may be denied or limited where critical wildlife habitats exist as defined in 6.5-2.

Policy 6.5-4: Direct development away from riparian areas through establishment of buffers, site design, conservation easements and creation of public open space areas.

### **Snake River, Malad River and the Big and Little Wood Rivers**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.6:** Promote the protection of the Snake River, Malad River and the Big and Little Wood Rivers and their management as valuable natural resources.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Update County zoning or other regulations as needed, to be consistent with policies of this section the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **Policies**

Policy 6.6-1: Preserve the quality of the Snake River, Malad River and the Big and Little Wood Rivers by protecting floodways, banks, ponds and canyon rims from incompatible development.

### **Hazardous Areas**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.7:** Protect the Citizens to the extent possible from Hazardous Areas.

#### **Policies**

Policy 6.7.1: Continue to provide an office of Emergency Management to help mitigate hazards such as flooding, wildfire, hazardous chemicals earth quake and severe storms.

## **Airport Clear Zones**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.8:** Any structures built within the inner ring of the airport map must have a letter from the airport manager and approval from the Planning and Zoning Administrator.

### **Pollutant Sources**

Gooding, Wendell, Bliss and Gooding municipal and residential sewage treatment plants operate under state and federal regulations and irrigation return flows are being addressed on an agency basis.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 6.9:** To protect public health and safety by guiding growth and development away from hazardous areas that pose a threat to people and property and by establishing appropriate safety standards for uses permitted in, or adjacent to, hazardous areas.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Define and map hazardous areas.

Adopt fire safety standards for new construction and access in rural/urban interface lands, where fire protection is inadequate or unavailable, to reduce the threat of loss of life and property from wildfire hazards.

### **Policies**

Policy 6.9-1: Protect public health and safety by guiding growth and development away from hazardous areas that pose a threat to people and property and by establishing appropriate safety standards for uses permitted in, or adjacent to, hazardous areas.

Policy 6.9-2: Maintain/update the County's map of rural/urban interface lands that pose a high wildfire risk to people and resources.

Policy 6.9-3: Refer to Gooding County Wildland Fire Mitigation Plan.

## VII. PUBLIC SERVICES, UTILITIES AND ENERGY

*"A well-planned and coordinated approach to providing public facilities and services is essential to orderly future growth and development."*

Most public services and utilities in Gooding County are provided by other jurisdictions or service providers. Gooding County does not directly provide or manage water, sewer, transportation or storm water facilities or services, although much of the development in the County, including unincorporated areas often require such services. The County does provide the following services.

- Law enforcement and related services through the County Sheriff's Department, 911 Emergency Dispatch system, adult and juvenile court systems, Prosecutor's office and Coroner's Office.
- Emergency medical services through Gooding County Ambulance Service.
- Solid waste disposal and recycling at Wendell Transfer Station through Southern Idaho Solid Waste including medical and pharmaceutical materials.
- Environmental health related issues through South Central Public Health District in cooperation with the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.
- Noxious weed management.
- Property tax assessment through the County Assessor.
- County finances and other information and personnel through the Treasurer's Office, Information Technology, Human Resources, Purchasing, Risk Management, Administrative Services, and Legal departments, as well as the Clerk/Auditor/Recorder. The collection of taxes is through the Gooding County Treasurer.
- Emergency Management and disaster preparedness.
- Management of Gooding County Fair at the Gooding County Fairgrounds.

This chapter describes existing conditions, future plans and issues related to provision of the following services which affect future development within the unincorporated portions of the county:

- Water
- Wastewater
- Storm water
- Public Safety (law enforcement and fire protection)
- Solid waste

- Energy and utilities
- Library services

## **Existing Conditions**

### **Water**

Maintenance of high quality water sources and adequate wastewater and storm water management are all of great importance in Gooding County. These services are provided within the County through a combination of municipal, public, and private service providers.

The water used in Gooding County comes from one of two sources: surface water, or ground water, which is drawn from wells.

Surface water is used primarily for irrigation, while ground water is the primary source of potable water and irrigation wells.

Availability of surface and groundwater in Gooding County also is related to irrigation. For example, surface water helps recharge shallow aquifers after leaking from canals and/or draining from irrigated fields. Increasing efficiency in these areas could lead to decreased discharge to drains that feed shallow aquifers. If ground water levels decline below these drains, the increased efficiency may lead to declines in shallow aquifer levels. This may impact some shallow wells. Some form of managed aquifer recharge may be required if increased efficiencies or reductions in irrigation associated with agricultural production lead to declining water levels.

Given these conditions and increasing growth and demand for water resources, opportunities for water conservation will need to be pursued to ensure an adequate source of future water supplies, especially if the source of water is the deeper, regional aquifer system.

The Magic Valley aquifer system is susceptible to contamination in a number of ways. Land use activities can lead to direct contamination of shallow aquifers. Wells completed with poor surface seals can allow contaminants to move into the aquifer from ground surfaces. Wells that draw from multiple aquifers, or wells with inadequate seals between aquifers, can allow contaminants in upper aquifers to migrate to deeper zones. Similarly, in areas with upward hydraulic gradients, these can lead to unnecessary flow from deeper zones to shallower zones.

### **Wastewater Treatment**

There are three wastewater providers in Gooding County. These plants treat wastewater from the cities of Gooding, Wendell, Hagerman and Bliss.

The use of community, or central septic systems, in some areas is an option when a municipal system is not available. A central system, which includes any system that serves two or more homes or greater than 2,500 gallons per day, allows communities to independently dispose, treat and in some cases, reuse their wastewater in the form of irrigation. This reclamation allows water to remain in the natural system and utilizes nutrients in the treated water that in turn may minimize the need for fertilizer.

The Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) maintains strict standards on all wastewater treatment systems (WTS), including community systems. IDEQ requires systems to meet or exceed minimum requirements as well as additional IDEQ Conditions of Approval, Soil and Site Requirements and Miscellaneous Requirements.

Operations and required maintenance of a central system is commensurate with that for municipal systems. When properly maintained, central systems generally have a similar lifespan to centralized (municipal) systems and the majority are modular in design, allowing additions as the community expands. Additionally, the use of a central sewer system allows later connection with a municipal system when available.

### **Storm Water Drainage**

Storm water drainage responsibilities and issues within Gooding County are split between multiple agencies, including drainage and irrigation entities, cities, and the County Highway Districts. Designated agencies frequently are under-funded and have limited ability to acquire adequate funding. Storm water management issues that impact both water quality and quantity tend to be resolved piecemeal as a result of fragmented authorities and limited funding. Region 10 of the EPA issues all the wastewater and storm water National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits within the State of Idaho. All existing wastewater treatment facilities in Gooding County have received permits and new facilities are required to apply for permits. Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL's) are pollution measurements for surface waters where water quality standards are monitored. TMDL requirements are incorporated into NPDES permits. As the population grows, or if new TMDL's are developed, storm water and wastewater NPDES requirements could become more stringent, resulting in increased treatment requirements and costs.

### **Solid Waste**

Southern Idaho Regional Solid Waste District built a transfer station one mile north of Wendell in Gooding County in 1994. The transfer station also manages a facility for hazardous waste disposal, and operates recycling programs for wood, tires, automotive batteries, refrigerators and air conditioners, as well as various recycling locations.

### **Public Safety**

Public safety in Gooding County is managed by several police, fire departments, SIRCOMM and EMS at both the city and county level.

**Table 7.1**

**Crime - Number of Offenses**

	1990	2000	2005	2018
Murder	1	0	0	0
Rape	1	2	9	4
Robbery	4	0	2	1
Aggravated Assault	12	14	19	19
Burglary	32	40	10	40
Larceny	131	106	97	92
Motor Vehicle Theft	14	12	19	21
Arson	2	3	1	1

**Crime - Rate per 100,000**

Source: Gooding County Sheriff

The Gooding County Sheriff's office provides police services to the citizens in Gooding County. The office and jail are both located in the Gooding County Courthouse.

There are four fire departments or districts serving Gooding County: Wendell, Hagerman, Bliss and Gooding. The U.S. Bureau of Land Management also is responsible for providing fire protection services to land it owns as well as providing support to other federal agencies. Some areas of the county are not within a fire district and have little fire protection. Residents of these areas assume a higher risk for property damage or destruction due to fire, including wildfires.

**Utilities and Energy**

The two main providers of utilities and energy to communities within Gooding County are Idaho Power, an electrical utility company, and Intermountain Gas Company, which provides natural gas. Other public utilities are telephone communications including cellular services, cable companies and satellite TV.

**Libraries**

There are three public libraries operated by local municipalities and service districts throughout Gooding County.

All libraries in the County offer lending services, computer access including online resources and internet, computer instruction, homework help, literacy and language instruction materials, readers advisory services, reference information and personalized assistance. Adult and children's programs and special events are also held at the library. Area libraries also offer services for the visually and hearing impaired.

## **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 7.1:** Gooding County will endeavor to provide public services and facilities related to solid waste management, emergency medical service, development review, law enforcement, community health and other services for which it is responsible in a fair, efficient and professional manner.

### **Policies**

- Policy 7.1-1: Continue to evaluate and improve the delivery of the public services it provides.
- Policy 7.1-2: Continue to employ a productive and efficient County staff and compensate them appropriately.
- Policy 7.1-3: Provide a safe and secure building for County staff, elected and appointed officials and citizens to conduct public business.
- Policy 7.1-4: Provide public safety, property protection and crime prevention services to citizens and visitors to Gooding County in a courteous, responsive and cost-effective manner.
- Policy 7.1-5: Coordinate with other organizations to encourage quality informational, educational, cultural, leisure and library services for all residents of Gooding County.
- Policy 7.1-6: Manage the collection, transportation and disposal of solid waste in a manner that will preserve the natural environment and minimize impacts to the community.
- Policy 7.1-7: Continue to provide and operate facilities needed for solid waste disposal.
- Policy 7.1-8: Coordinate with emergency service providers and residents during the development process so that new development has adequate protection from fire and hazardous materials emergencies.
- Policy 7.1-9: Work with solid waste management and collection agencies and private organizations to provide opportunities for paper, metal, plastic and electronic waste recycling at all County buildings.

## **Development Services**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 7.2:** Provide accurate information, conduct quality land use analysis, and administer development application processes in an efficient manner.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Continue to evaluate the County zoning ordinance and development code to identify opportunities to streamline or otherwise improve the efficiency and effectiveness of development review and permitting provisions; implement recommendations of that assessment.

Update the County zoning ordinance, as needed, to implement the results of future sub-area planning processes.

### **Policies**

- Policy 7.2-1: Conduct plan review, permitting and inspections processes in a manner that facilitates efficient and orderly development.
- Policy 7.2-2: Review and update the Comprehensive Plan as needed. Develop a process and criteria for administrative updates or new information in the Comprehensive Plan more frequently, as such initiatives are completed.
- Policy 7.2-3: Prepare specific or sub-area plans to identify compatible land uses and public service needs.
- Policy 7.2-4: Revise zoning and subdivision ordinances in accordance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and adopt, as necessary, specialized planning tools.
- Policy 7.2-5: Retain on file and make available to the public the final disposition of all development applications.
- Policy 7.2-6: Adopt or amend County ordinances, as needed, to implement policies including in this Plan.
- Policy 7.2-7: Provide ample opportunities for public participation in planning and permitting processes and decisions through public hearings, notification of affected residents and property owners, opportunities to provide written comments and other outreach tools.
- Policy 7.2-8: Provide ample public notification of planning and permitting activities through the use of a variety of media.

## **Energy Services and Public Utility Facilities**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 7.3:** Coordinate with providers to develop plans for energy services and public utility facilities for the long-term energy and utility needs of Gooding County.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Adopt and implement guidelines and standards for energy conservation practices within County facilities.

Incorporate energy conservation requirements as approval criteria for planned communities and planned unit developments.

### **Policies**

- Policy 7.3-1: Recognize public utilities obligations to serve all of its customers. The Idaho Public Utilities Commission (IPUC) provides a forum, available to the city, county and general public, for consideration and determination of matters involving appropriate levels of service and the allocation of costs associated with providing that service.
- Policy 7.3-2: Promote the development of energy service and public utility facilities to meet public needs.
- Policy 7.3-3: Recognize and support the long range planning and build-out of electricity infrastructure detailed in the Magic Valley Electric Plan (MVEP) and developed by a local Community Advisory Committee.
- Policy 7.3-4: Support longer term (10 to 15 year) special use permits to enable utilities to purchase sites well in advance of needing to build the facility as well as give notice to the public of the facility.
- Policy 7.3-5: Encourage the multiple-use of utility corridors by utility providers.
- Policy 7.3-6: Support siting of utility corridors so that they connect to similar facilities in adjacent jurisdictions.
- Policy 7.3-7: Support siting of utility corridors within identified or designated transportation corridors. Allow the appropriate placement of electric utility facilities on public right-of-ways.
- Policy 7.3-8: Support the protection of wetlands and other critical areas and recognize that electric facilities sometimes must cross these areas, and that access is essential for repair and maintenance of the facilities.

Policy 7.3-9: Promote cooperation with public utilities to develop and promote sustainability programs for new construction and development as well as for existing businesses and homes.

Policy 7.3-10 Encourage the enhancement of the capacity and reliability of renewable energy resources.

Policy 7.3-11: Promote conservation of energy through support of public education, incentives and other tools that encourage conservation.

### **Wastewater Facilities**

**Goal 7.4:** Assist in coordinating the provision of wastewater treatment and collection services and facilities in a cost-effective, efficient and environmentally sound manner.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Encourage all new rural residential development which is not connected to central sewer to dedicate easements for the future construction of trunk lines shown on regional sewer plans.

Encourage all existing developments served by septic systems to connect to central sewer once it becomes available.

### **Policies**

Policy 7.4-1: Proposed sewer disposal systems must be approved by the responsible agencies before final development approval.

Policy 7.4-2: In order to protect groundwater quality and to facilitate cost effective wastewater treatment and collection, recommend all high density residential developments be served by central wastewater collection and treatment facilities.

### **Water Facilities**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 7.5:** Assist in coordinating the provision of water treatment and distribution services and facilities in a cost-effective, efficient and environmentally sound manner.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Prepare and implement guidelines and requirements in partnership with the cities for coordination with water service providers in review of planned community applications, consistent with policies of this Plan.

Develop a process to improve coordination with water service providers in identifying long-term (20 years or beyond) water service and facility needs.

Develop procedures and requirements that can be used to assess the impact of proposed developments on the water supply of adjacent landowners or residents. Recognize and protect sensitive drinking water sources as identified by IDEQ.

### **Policies**

Policy 7.5-1: Involve water service providers in the development review process; encourage consideration of municipal service from the nearest adjacent city or district as one alternative to water service provision.

Policy 7.5-2: Coordinate with water providers so that water treatment and distribution facilities can be provided cost-effectively and efficiently over the long term (beyond 20 years) as unincorporated areas outside of Areas of City Impact are developed.

Policy 7.5-3: Require that development applicants demonstrate that they have an existing water right or can obtain water from groundwater (wells) or through acquisition from existing water service providers sufficient to serve proposed developments.

Policy 7.5-4: Require development applicants to demonstrate that use of water to serve proposed new development will not decrease the amount of water available to adjacent, existing residents below current, average levels of use of those residents.

Policy 7.5-5: Attempt to reduce water demand through drought-resistant or other low-impact landscaping, such as xeriscaping and other conservation measures. Promote reductions through public education, incentives, design guidelines or standards, and other appropriate measures.

Policy 7.5-6: Require proposed water supply systems to be approved by the responsible agencies before final development approval.

## **Storm Water Facilities**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 7.6:** Promote the cost-effective and environmentally sound management of storm water and other drainage facilities.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Update County zoning or other regulations, as needed for consistency with policies of this section of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Policies**

- Policy 7.6-1: Promote on-site filtration, reuse of grey water for irrigation and other innovative storm water drainage practices, in appropriate areas based on factors such as soil conditions, topography, groundwater levels and other conditions that affect drainage capacity.
- Policy 7.6-2: Promote preservation of downstream drainage courses, capacity and natural discharge locations in designing and managing drainage systems.
- Policy 7.6-3: Promote minimization of creation of new drainage infrastructure (i.e., drainage pipes and/or related facilities).
- Policy 7.6-4: Encourage irrigation districts and others to pursue and promote water conservation principles and programs.
- Policy 7.6-5: Proposed storm drainage systems, irrigation systems and other related improvements must be approved by the responsible agencies before final development approval.
- Policy 7.6-6: When using on-site filtration strategies, encourage use of a discharge point to surface water drainage course at its natural location.
- Policy 7.6-7: Consider public health, welfare and property rights in designing storm water management plans.
- Policy 7.6-8: Monitor land use activities within delineated Drinking Water Protection Areas and recognize that certain activities may impact the quality of municipal and other public drinking water resources. Prior to any changes in land use, consider any potential increase contamination of drinking water resources. Under the Clean Water Act, IDEQ establishes and EPA approves Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDLs) for pollutants in impaired water bodies.

## VIII. TRANSPORTATION

*"Gooding County residents value a range of transportation options that allow people to get from one place to another safely and efficiently".*

### **Existing Conditions**

The five Highway Districts in Gooding County, the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) Trans IV, Union Pacific and Eastern Idaho Railroad, and Gooding Airport are the primary agencies responsible for planning and maintaining the transportation system in Gooding County. Federal regulations require the highway districts to have a current long-range transportation plan. Transportation Master Plans and Highway Standards may be obtained through each individual County Highway District within Gooding County (Bliss, Gooding, Hagerman, Wendell and West Point).

This plan addresses anticipated transportation issues over the next 20 years, evaluating how projected population and economic growth and development patterns will impact current transportation facilities, as well as funding and expenditures for future transportation needs. The plan seeks to strike an appropriate balance between roadways and other transportation alternatives, such as transit, carpooling, bicycling, walking, and transportation demand management. It identifies needed long-range transportation improvements, anticipated funding availability, and sets priorities for seeking new funding opportunities.

### **Road System Conditions**

A planning Integration study continues to refine the functional classification for roadways within Gooding County, including orienting them to the land uses within which they occur.

The Highway Districts in Gooding County are responsible for maintaining approximately 2,500 miles of these roadways and 529 bridges in the County. The Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) has jurisdiction over state and interstate highways. Interstate 84 is the most significant roadway bisecting the county from west to southeast through Bliss and Wendell. Other major highways include State Highway 46 and U.S. Highway 30 and 20/26.

Funding for the transportation system in the County comes from many sources, including local funds, ITD (for federal and state funds).

## **Other Transportation Modes**

The Gooding Airport, the only public, general aviation and commercial airport located within Gooding County, has recently expanded adding hangars and purchasing more land to extend the runway west.

The Union Pacific Railroad owns most of the over 72 miles of rail lines running through the County. Eastern Idaho Railroad provides rail freight service, shipping potatoes, sugar beets, beans, grains, fertilizer and phosphate, among other goods. There are no passenger rail services, although Union Pacific still owns the rights to provide such service.

Public transportation services in Gooding County include Trans IV.

## **Issues**

- Regional connectivity. Additional, continuous, regional east/west and north/south routes, including river crossings and north/south connections to Interstate 84 are needed. Several corridors have been identified through the Communities.
- Freight movement. Efficient freight transport is important to the region's economy. Truck traffic also impacts local communities and neighborhoods. Designation and enforcement of freight routes can be problematic, given that it is difficult to require that trucks use certain roadways (due to freedom of Interstate Commerce regulations). At the same time, it is possible to negotiate use of certain routes via development approval processes. Trucks with excessive weight and speed are having negative impact on county roads. Existing county roads were not built for these loads.
- Land use and transportation coordination. Development, land use and transportation are inextricably linked and need to be coordinated so that facilities may be adequate to serve current and future residents.
- Corridor preservation. It is important to identify and preserve land for major transportation corridors early in the development process. The County, cities and ITD should identify and preserve corridors for major future facilities.
- Maintenance. Maintenance of the existing transportation system should be prioritized. In addition, local, regional and state jurisdictions should work collaboratively to document and monitor maintenance needs, funding and expenditures.

## **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 8.1:** Coordinate and assist the Highway Districts in Gooding County, Idaho Transportation Department (ITD), and cities, in developing and managing a well-

planned, sustainable, multi-modal transportation system that provides for the safe, efficient, cost-effective movement of people and goods and supports the region's residential, commercial, industrial and public development vision.

**Goal 8.2:** Promote and enhance traffic safety in the design and development, particularly for local and neighborhood facilities.

**Goal 8.3:** Support development of local transportation systems that are well-connected, both internally and to the regional transportation system.

**Goal 8.4:** Work with Highway Districts in Gooding County, ITD, cities and others to identify and implement financing mechanisms that pay for needed transportation improvements in a fair and equitable manner.

**Goal 8.5:** Coordinate with Highway Districts in Gooding County, ITD, cities and others in planning for, designing, developing and permitting new and/or expanded transportation facilities.

**Goal 8.6:** Help coordinate and integrate land use and transportation planning and development to support overall community goals and make efficient and cost-effective use of resources.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Use the collaborative planning process to plan for and design well-connected street and bike/pedestrian pathway systems, to preserve transportation corridors, future transit routes, road extensions, and to facilitate access management plan.

Update the County's subdivision code or other regulations, as needed, to improve safety and calm traffic on local streets as part of the development review and permitting process.

Update County zoning or other regulations, as needed, to improve connectivity of the collector and arterial road system, consistent with Highway Districts in Gooding County guidelines and policies of this Plan.

Participate in and support efforts led by Highway Districts in Gooding County, ITD, or others to identify new transportation funding mechanisms.

Continue to develop ordinances to preserve transportation corridors consistent with Highway Districts in Gooding County, Transportation Master Plan and Highway Standards, as needed.

## **Policies**

- Policy 8.1-1: Support agencies in evaluating alternate solutions that maximize the use and efficiency of the existing system fully (i.e., through safety, alignment or intersection improvements of limited capacity expansions) before major new transportation construction projects are funded or approved.
- Policy 8.1-2: Coordinate with highway districts, ITD and others to protect and enhance the traffic-carrying capacity of principal arterial roads designed for through traffic. Methods used may include:
- a. Frontage roads.
  - b. Clustering of activity or other land use planning techniques.
  - c. Limiting access via private driveways and local streets.
  - d. Sharing access.
  - e. Sufficient setbacks from rights-of-way.
  - f. Deceleration lanes.
  - g. Public transit and other alternative modes.
  - h. Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) infrastructure and management.
  - i. Ride-sharing, flexible scheduling and telecommuting.
  - j. Protect the integrity of existing roads.
  - k. Mobility study.
- Policy 8.1-3: Support programs that provide for the transportation needs of the elderly and persons with disabilities in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- Policy 8.2-1: Give a high priority to public safety transportation improvements, with particular attention to hazardous transportation conditions in areas with railroad crossings, major street intersections, major pedestrian crossings, geologic and hydrologic constraints, etc.
- Policy 8.2-2: Work with school districts, cities and developers to minimize or avoid transportation conflicts and hazards in the vicinity of schools and other areas frequented by pedestrians, especially children.
- Policy 8.2-3: Prohibit or discourage location or construction of schools on arterial or section line roads. Mitigate any impacts of expansion of existing arterials located adjacent to schools.
- Policy 8.2-4: Work with existing neighborhoods to manage traffic on local, neighborhood streets to promote safety through use of traffic calming and other measures.

- Policy 8.2-5: Support development and implementation of a long-term transportation system that maintains the public health standard for air emissions attainment.
- Policy 8.2-6: Work with agriculture community and land owners to prevent or reduce water or foreign materials on the road.
- Policy 8.3-1: Promote the design of continuous collector streets that discourage cut-through traffic on local streets and aid internal circulation for new developments.
- Policy 8.3-2: Require new developments to provide stub streets that will connect to future developments on adjacent lands wherever possible.
- Policy 8.3-3: Promote connectivity through design of well-connected local street systems and pathways. Discourage cul-de-sac developments wherever possible.
- Policy 8.3-4: Work with the Highway Districts in Gooding County and local jurisdictions to develop, implement and apply minimum connectivity requirements to improve traffic flow, pedestrian connectivity, bicycle access, transit access and to minimize projected vehicle miles traveled from new developments.
- Policy 8.3-5: Require that all new developments have adequate access to regularly maintained roads for fire protection and emergency service purposes.
- Policy 8.4-1: Require new developments that generate the need for transportation improvements to provide or fund their fair share of right-of-way and improvements as a condition of development approval in accordance with the requirements of Highway District in Gooding County or ITD.
- Policy 8.4-2: Work with ITD, Highway Districts in Gooding County and local jurisdictions to refine and use new or expanded funding sources for capital improvements, maintenance and operation of transportation facilities, including transit;
- Policy 8.4-3: Support alternative public and private sector funding opportunities for transportation investments.
- Policy 8.4-4: Encourage the enforcement of the appropriate use of existing highways, roads and bridges as they are constructed.
- Policy 8.5-1: Work with Highway Districts in Gooding County and local jurisdictions to develop, implement and apply street cross-sectional standards that convey existing and projected traffic in accordance with established

levels-of-service while promoting safety for all modes, integrating the street design with adjacent land uses, and improving visual appearance.

- Policy 8.5-2: Work with Highway Districts in Gooding County, ITD, cities and others to reserve rights-of-way for planned transportation facilities as a condition of approving development applications.
- Policy 8.6-1: Assist in coordinating land use and transportation planning and development review processes among the county, cities, Highway Districts in Gooding County and ITD.
- Policy 8.6-2: Transportation improvements, such as streets, curbs, gutters, drainage, if required, must be approved by and meet the standards of Highway Districts in Gooding County and/or ITD (as applicable). Such improvements shall not create excessive additional requirements at public cost and shall be funded by the developer.
- Policy 8.6-3: Require and accept traffic studies in accordance with Highway Districts in Gooding County procedures that evaluate the impact of traffic volumes, both internal and external, on adjacent streets and preserve the integrity of residential neighborhoods.

## **Airport**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 8.7:** Support continued improvements to the Gooding Airport to support Gooding County's aviation needs.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Update County zoning regulations and standards, including noise, odor, dust and lighting abatement as needed to promote compatibility between future possible airport expansion areas and surrounding land uses.

## IV. RECREATION

*"Gooding County residents value the areas of diverse recreational resources and opportunities, as well as preservation of and access to high-quality open spaces in close proximity to the built environment."*

### **Existing Conditions**

#### **Introduction**

Gooding County abounds with scenic, historic and geologic lore. The Snake River and its jagged-rimmed cliffs, the famous Thousand Springs, and the secreted caves under the desert surrounding Little City of Rocks. This county is home to a number of prime sites for anyone seeking an intense outdoor adrenaline rush – rock climbing, river rafting, canyon hiking, boating, water skiing, not to mention the Gooding Pro Rodeo, where for over 90 years, the region's best of the best roper, wranglers, and riders alike have marked their calendars, as have the wild crowd of spectators, for this once-a-year display of western heritage.

For the leisure and relaxation experience Gooding County has to offer, residents and visitors appreciate acres of parks, including Thousand Springs State Park, which encompasses Malad Gorge, Kelton Trail, Earl M. Hardy Box Canyon Springs Nature Preserve, Billingsley Creek, Ritter Island, Crystal Springs and Niagara Springs. Gooding County offers a diverse selection of recreation and relaxation choices, all within a short driving distance of each other. Geothermal hot springs, rarely seen birds and fossils, as well as a soon-to-be scenic bike trail, can all be appreciated within the Hagerman Valley, and living somewhere in between intense adrenaline seekers and those in pursuit of leisure are the many hunters and fishermen.

In keeping with the values of its residents, Gooding County's land use planning efforts should include priority for adequate park and recreation space. To fulfil the need for county recreation areas and facilities and the maintenance thereof, all available financial, technical, and planning resources should be utilized so that development proposals include the most economical, well-planned recreation areas and/or facilities.

Idaho Power Company keeps pristine parts of our area's scenic wilderness accessible to the public in that the Company's well-maintained hydro-electric parks and boating areas provide access to some of the county's unspoiled gems.

Gooding County has the authority to levy a tax for parks and recreation and is authorized to acquire, develop, operate and maintain park and recreational areas. Use of this authority can result in the availability of park and recreation areas and facilities within the county which can satisfy the recreation needs not fulfilled by other jurisdictions, however, Gooding County recognizes the important role the State of Idaho Department of parks and Recreation plays in maintaining state parks and is committed

to collaborate in the guardianship of our resources and the development of recreation opportunities, whether public or privately owned.

This chapter generally describes the following:

- A current inventory and description of Park and recreational facilities in Gooding County.
- Recreational uses and their compatibilities with other land uses.
- Proposed goals, policies and implementation measures to meet future needs.

### **Park and Recreation Facilities and Providers**

Park and recreation facilities in Gooding County are offered and maintained by a variety of providers, including Gooding County, local cities, schools, districts, state and federal agencies, and private organizations. Recreation programs and services are primarily offered by the cities.

- Natural open space/reserves. Multiple agencies own and/or manage these areas in Gooding County. This includes the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Idaho Fish and Game, Idaho State Parks, Idaho Power Company Parks, Gooding County Fairgrounds.

The County owns the Fairgrounds complex located in the City of Gooding. While not used primarily as a recreational facility, the Fairgrounds are used for the Gooding County Fair and Rodeo each year and for indoor and outdoor special events at other times during the year. The Fairground is used for class reunions, wedding receptions, etc.

### **Waterways**

Waterways (including the Snake, Big Wood, Little Wood, and Malad Rivers) play a significant role in Gooding County's overall park and recreation system.

The Snake River Corridor is certainly the most acclaimed recreational resource within Gooding County. The river itself is a source of abundant fishing and water sports activities. The Snake River Canyon is home to numerous parks, golf courses, and hiking areas. The views afforded from the canyon rim are among the most spectacular to be found anywhere. Many of these Snake River sites are inter-county in nature; that is, they are either physically located in adjacent counties or else reside within Gooding County while attracting many visitors from other counties. The Snake River provides historical sites; however, none of these are owned or operated by the county.

The property adjacent to the Snake River is held primarily in private ownership with some areas being owned by the federal and state government and Idaho Power.

### **Open Space**

- There is a significant amount of land within the County owned by local, state and federal agencies (340,071 acres of native range land). Much of this land can be expected to continue to be used primarily as open space.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 9.1:** To identify, prioritize, reserve, acquire, develop and maintain a system of recreation areas, including parks, pathways, trail ways, greenbelts, open space, playgrounds, bike paths, dog parks and other recreation areas and programs.

### **Policies**

Policy 9.1-1: Develop and enhance the variety of uses and enjoyment of Gooding County's parks and recreation areas for all age groups.

Policy 9.1-2: Provide accessible recreation opportunities for the disabled, handicapped and other segments of the community with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Policy 9.1-3: Involve volunteers and citizen support groups in the prioritization, coordination and implementation of recreation programs.

Policy 9.1-4: Within existing cities, and their designated Areas of Impact, where City Comprehensive Plan goals and policies apply, Gooding County will work with the cities so that the application of County zoning ordinance provisions and development review is consistent with city policies for parks and recreation.

### **Facilities and Land Acquisition**

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 9.2:** Support public recreation opportunities by acquiring and developing new parks and recreation areas, land or facilities consistent with identified community goals and priorities.

## **Policies**

- Policy 9.2-1: Consider new development, highway improvements, and changes of land use as potential opportunities to:
- a. Encourage development of open space, greenways, bicycle paths and pedestrian linkages between parks, schools and communities.
- Policy 9.2-2: Encourage the increased use of existing parks in the County through public awareness programs.
- Policy 9.2-3: Coordinate Park and Recreation planning with cities in Gooding County, state and federal agencies such as the BLM, and the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) and other non-governmental organizations.
- Policy 9.2-4: Use parks and open space to provide green area between land uses.
- Policy 9.2-5: Encourage local jurisdictions to develop and adopt Park and Recreation System Plans for serving the parks and recreation needs of existing and future residents living in Areas of City Impact.

## **Parks and Open Space**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

Encourage local jurisdictions to develop and adopt Park and Recreation System Plans for serving the parks and recreation needs of existing and future residents living in Areas of City Impact.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Identify opportunities to use County recreational facilities to host special events, promote environmental education and achieve other goals of this Plan and other adopted plans.

## **Waterways**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 9.4:** To increase access to, safety on and enjoyment of County Waterways through education about safety, rules and laws, and by providing additional facilities and services.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Work with other agencies to develop and implement strategies to preserve the Snake, Big Wood, Little Wood and Malad Rivers, such as; required setbacks, mandatory easements for pathways and river access, and educational signage.

Develop strategies to make boaters aware of opportunities on the Snake River.

Support Idaho Parks and Recreation and the state Legislature to create mandatory "boater Education" requirements for young operators.

Continue boater education efforts and outreach to recreational boaters, including non-motorized paddle sport boaters.

Support Idaho Parks and Recreation and the Legislature in updating boat registration fee schedules to reflect actual inflationary pressures

### **Policies**

Policy 9.4-1: Continue to maintain and improve boating facilities throughout Gooding County, such as parking, launch ramps, and restrooms.

Policy 9.4-2: Provide accessible recreation opportunities for the disabled, handicapped, and other segments of the community with special needs in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Policy 9.4-3 It shall be the policy of Gooding County to attempt to

- a. Preserve the canyon rim and canyon lands and their unique natural and archeological phenomenon.
- b. Establish setbacks from natural waterways.
- c. Provide that adequate sewage, waste facilities and water supplies are planned for at the same time boat docks, ramps, picnic tables and other improvements are planned. These sanitary facilities shall meet the federal, state and local requirements and regulations.

Policy 9.4-4: Continue to support law enforcement and search and rescue efforts provided by the Gooding County Sheriff's Office and local volunteers.

## X. SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES

*"Gooding County's character is defined by the events, places and personalities of its past. We cherish the richness and meaning it adds to our lives as we plan for the future."*

Gooding County has a unique, storied history. Preservation of that history is an important goal of Gooding County because of the richness and meaning that it adds to the lives of its residents and the link it provides between the past and future. This chapter provides a brief overview of the County's history and provides goals, policies and implementation strategies for historic preservation as it relates to land use decisions.

### **Existing Conditions**

#### **An Overview of Gooding County's History**

The Idaho Territory was organized March 3, 1863. At this time, it consisted of four counties, Shoshone, Nez Perce, Idaho and Boise, ten mining towns and approximately 20,000 people. A few months later, December 7, 1863 the first Idaho Territorial legislature meeting, at Lewiston, created three additional counties; Owyhee, Oneida and Alturas. Alturas County included all the lands north of the Snake River from the mouth of the Bruneau to the Little Lost River, and as far north as the Sawtooth Mountains. A diverse land, it attracted miners, trappers, ranchers and farmers. Alturas County was gradually reduced in size until it disappeared completely with the formation of Blaine and Lincoln Counties on March 18, 1895.

Gooding County was separated from Lincoln County on January 28, 1913, with the City of Gooding becoming the county seat. Gooding County was named after Frank R. Gooding, pioneer, sheep rancher, governor of Idaho and Idaho United States Senator. Within its boundaries, the cities of Bliss, Gooding, Hagerman, and Wendell are located.

Bliss, Idaho, sits on a free access portion of I-84 and U.S. Highway 30, eighty miles east of Boise. It is perched on the canyon rim above the Snake River on the edge of a vast sage and lava plain dotted with scattered farms. Bliss was originally a ranch homestead. It was homesteaded by David Bradley Bliss and his wife, Lydia H, along with their five young sons, in 1879.

The city of Gooding was once large open land covered with sage brush. Toponis, which means "Cherries" was an Indian term selected by the Oregon Shortline for one of its stops between the Big Wood River and the Little Wood Rivers. Toponis was established in 1883. The first post office for Toponis came in 1887.

On November 14, 1907, when the Carey Land Act opened the area for sale, the name was changed from Toponis to Gooding in honor of its founder, Frank R. Gooding. The

village of Gooding was incorporated on April 25, 1908 and Gooding City was incorporated on November 21, 1910. The official census at that time was 1,100 people.

Placer mining for flour gold brought the first people, followed by stockmen who would eventually become the first settlers in Hagerman. In 1878, miners gathered to form the Salmon Falls Mining District. That same year, the first placer claim was recorded. The last claim was in 1878 and the rush was over. Settlers arrived in the 1880's and "squatted" on the land. In 1885, the land was surveyed and folks turned to planting orchards, sturgeon fishing, farming and livestock raising for its livelihood. The post office eventually was established in a frame building built by Stanley Hagerman to sell groceries, dispense the mail and drugs. This would be the future town site of Hagerman. The post office of Hagerman was established May 6, 1892 and Jack Hess was the first post master. The original town of Hagerman grew up running east and west on Hagerman Avenue. A six room hotel was constructed by Schooler family and Billy Coltharp built his big rock saloon.

The town site of Wendell was chosen because the area was a vast expanse of grass where sagebrush had been burned off by a wildfire several years earlier as told by Harvey W. Hulebause in "Reminiscences of the North Side Project." He had visited the site on July 5, 1907. When the town site was surveyed, W.S. Kuhn had it named for his 15 year old son, Wendell Speer Kuhn. No one knows when the town was named "Wendell" but when it was dedicated in Lincoln County in July 1908, it was spelled with two "L's".

Wendell received the nickname of "Hub City", from Fred R. Reed. He had great dreams for this new town. Business began in Wendell in 1908. Schools began in the fall of 1908 in a wooden shack on the site of the current grade school with four boys and eight girls in attendance. In April of 1909, the Hub City Irrigationist began publishing the local news. In July 1909, wire was strung from the Shoshone Power Plant and Wendell was one of the first North Side Towns to get electricity. The village of Wendell was incorporated on October 12, 1909.

### **Summary of Past Preservation Efforts**

As development pressures in the county increase, rural historic resources throughout the county are at risk. As a result, historic preservation is important to retain individual community identities and preserve the area's quality of life.

Time, alterations, and development pressures for over a century have meant that very few structures built in Gooding County before 1900 have survived. However, through care, chance and circumstance, there are a few pre-1903 structures remaining.

Preservation efforts in Idaho began in earnest in 1966 with the passage of the National Historic Preservation Act. The National Historic Preservation Act eventually led to Idaho legislation (1975) that allowed for the creation of local historic preservation commissions.

## **The Gooding County Historical Society**

The overall aim of the Gooding County Historical Society, started in 1971, is to comprehensively assess the County's historic needs, goals, policies and objectives for future generations and to establish the basis for creating a five year strategic plan outlining immediate actions the County can undertake toward meeting these broader goals.

A primary goal of the Plan is to stabilize Gooding County's historic preservation efforts by clearly describing the roles and relationships of various local, state and national preservation groups. The Plan also details some of the resources available to the Council, summarizes the Council's past activities and accomplishments, and sets realistic, achievable goals for the Council, including a list of priority properties to recognize, protect and interpret for their important contributions to the identity of communities within Gooding County.

Special Areas: Special areas in the county which are recognized by this plan are: the Snake River Canyon and Rim; the Malad Canyon and Rim; geothermal areas which are privately owned near Bliss and Hagerman; areas with Indian writings and/or artifacts and the Oregon Trail. Some of the areas were not identified because of the possibility of vandalism. A complete list can be found on the National Register of Historic Places.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 10.1:** To assist in identifying, preserving, enhancing and protecting those cultural resources that are important to the people of Gooding County.

**Goal 10.2:** Encourage, enhance and celebrate Gooding County's ethnic and cultural diversity and heritage.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Support a resource management plan for historic roads in Gooding County.

Support preservation of historic properties.

- Encourage preparation of a historical/archaeological/cultural resource report for construction proposals that are covered by Section 106 of the Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Coordinate with the Gooding County Historical Society to identify financial and other incentives to encourage restoration and protection of historic resources in Gooding County and share information with property owners.

## **Policies**

- Policy 10.1-1: Encourage the rehabilitation and retention of existing historic structures in Gooding County.
- Policy 10.1-2: Encourage interagency planning efforts to address the evaluation and protection of historic resources. Encourage interagency adoption of a standardized evaluation process such as outlined by Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
- Policy 10.1-3: Review proposed developments to determine if they would destroy or impact any unique geological, historical or archeological site and to identify what steps may be needed to avoid or reduce negative impacts to the site. Provide a design review process for new construction impacting historical sites to encourage compatibility or design.
- Policy 10.1-4: Incorporate historic preservation concepts in planning and design of County facilities.
- Policy 10.1-5: Support efforts of the Gooding County Historical Society in providing information to the public about existing historic and cultural resources.
- Policy 10.2-1: Encourage activities and events that will celebrate the cultural heritage of Gooding County.
- Policy 10.2-2: Encourage international cultural exchanges among individuals, organizations and communities.
- Policy 10.2-3: Support and/or encourage community organizations to develop a variety of cultural facilities that meet the needs of all residents.

## XI. HOUSING

*Gooding County residents value a variety of housing choices that accommodate a range of lifestyles, needs and incomes.*

### **Existing Conditions**

This chapter describes existing conditions and recent trends related to housing, including:

- Past trends and future projections of needed housing units.
- Issues, goals, policies and implementation actions related to housing.

### **Housing Inventory and Conditions**

In 2010, there were 5,531 housing units in Gooding County according to the U.S. Census, a 20% increase over the 1980 total (4,591) and a 7% increase since 2000 to 5,969.

**Table 11.1**

<b>Housing Units</b>	<b><u>1980</u></b>	<b><u>1990</u></b>	<b><u>2000</u></b>	<b><u>2010</u></b>
Total	4,591	4,800	5,505	5,531
<b>Tenure</b>				
Owner Occupied Units	3,169	3,021	3,647	3,654
Renter Occupied Units	974	1,299	1,399	1,877

### **Age of Housing Stock - Year Structures Built**

Number Built 2005 - 2010	150
Number Built 2000 - 2004	234
Number Built 1990 - 1999	1,055
Number Built 1980 - 1989	419
Number Built 1970 - 1979	1,284
Number Built 1960 - 1969	854
Number Built 1950 - 1959	913
Number Built 1940 - 1959	548
Number Built 1939 or earlier	581

The vast majority of houses are heated with either gas from a utility company or electricity. The remaining uses include some other heat source such as bottled gas, fuel, oil, or wood. Gooding County encourages future trends of green energy and solar energy.

## **Housing Value and Costs**

According to the U.S. Census, median values for single-family housing in Gooding County increased to \$127,500 in 2010. Up from \$52,600 in 1996 and \$91,200 in 2007.

The population of Gooding County in 2010 was 14,155. There were 728.97 square miles.

## **Issues**

The following issues were identified during the Comprehensive Plan Update process in 2018/2019:

- Encourage preservation of agriculture lands and infilling of vacant property in the cities and areas of city impact.
- Housing affordability. While land and housing prices in Gooding County are still relatively reasonable, compared to many other areas of the country, prices have increased over the last ten years faster than the inflation rate. Many people with low income face burdens in finding housing they can afford, as well as over-crowding and other poor housing conditions.
- Efficient and sustainable use of resources. As housing and land costs increase, efficient use of land and public facilities will become even more important in planning to meet future housing needs, including the use of sustainable design and development practices.

## **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 11.1:** Future development provides for a mix of housing opportunities to meet the needs of individuals and families of all income groups.

**Goal 11.2:** Preservation of agriculture land and small town character which in turns attracts new development.

## **Desirable Future Situations**

Review and refine applicable County zoning ordinances to better preserve the existing stock of affordable housing.

Encourage innovative design and development of housing choices and for those with special needs.

Encourage cities to develop areas within the cities and impact areas with available water and sewer services to allow affordable housing.

## **Policies**

- Policy 11.1-1: Allow a wide range of housing types within Gooding County and choices between owner-occupied and rental units for all income groups in a variety of locations throughout the County.
- Policy 11.1-2: Work with county and community partners to conduct, review and implement the results of housing studies and reports to confirm an adequate supply of land and housing to meet identified community needs.
- Policy 11.1-3: Comply with requirements of the Fair Housing Act to help reduce or eliminate discrimination within the housing market.
- Policy 11.1-4: Support housing stock rehabilitation, maintenance and enhancement through enforcement of health, fire, zoning and building code regulations.
- Policy 11.1-5: Allow manufactured housing and other types of affordable housing in residential areas that provide home ownership opportunities and are consistent with County policies and goals related to land use and density.
- Policy 11.2-1: Encourage new development within city limits and their impact areas where water, sewer and transportation and other services are established.
- Policy 11.2-2: The developer shall pay the cost for needed water and sewer lines and for construction of roads outside of city limits.

## **XII. COMMUNITY DESIGN**

*We value a sustainable, responsible, healthy environment that provides diverse opportunities for all residents.*

### **Existing Conditions**

#### **Community Design**

Community design focuses on those elements of the natural and built environment that contribute to the attractiveness and livability of Gooding County. Community design is concerned with conserving and/or enhancing natural areas and historic features, protecting scenic vistas, improving community entrance corridors and providing guidance in developing methods to create and enhance unique areas within the County. It also is intended to encourage visually attractive buildings and environments for housing, businesses and other development in the County. Finally, these policies are intended to form the basis for the development and application of standards and guidelines for landscaping, site design, signs, development patterns and public improvements (e.g., streets and pathways) in the County.

Gooding County presently has four (4) clusters of urbanization which includes the cities of Bliss, Gooding, Hagerman and Wendell. In addition to these cities, there are rural housing developments located in the county.

The community design component provides a means to maintain the unique character of Gooding County's topography and vegetation, as well as to improve the built environment. Some key factors that affect and contribute to community design in Gooding County are:

- The relationship between urban and rural development and transitional areas between them.
- The large land areas that have been retained in rural or agricultural development patterns.
- The physical topography and natural features of the land, i.e. rivers, agricultural lands, rangeland and canyons.
- Connections and/or barriers between different areas within the County, including roads, rivers, hills, canyons, rail corridors, pathways and other similar features.

### **Gooding Community Image**

The irrigated agricultural lands of Gooding County are the magic of Magic Valley. As you view the County from the air, you will see irrigated grids of various shades of green, which identifies the lush irrigated agricultural green fields of the area. The County is

also known for its urban and canyon rims along the Snake River to the south, basin range lands; federal lands to the north and irrigated agricultural tracts and range land. In addition, community image landmarks include Little City of Rocks, Thousand Springs Scenic Route and others.

### **Canyon Rims**

The urban and rural canyon rims are unique and define the County from the south. Developments along the rims are a significant concern for the County for the view, life safety, and water quality reasons. Despite the setbacks for development in these area view corridors, the natural character of the canyons may become obscured or blighted in some locations.

### **Application of Community Design Principles**

Adoption and implementation of design review criteria and other processes for applying design guidelines and standards is one way of enhancing community design.

New or updated guidelines and standards to enhance community design should be considered by the County, in cooperation with other public sector agencies, the private sector and citizens in the following types of areas:

- Areas of City Impact. Currently, in all Areas of City impact, County zoning and development regulations apply. In some cases, the County alternatively could decide to approve the use of city standards in these areas. Until one of these approaches is more fully utilized, County zoning, subdivision and other standards will continue to affect community design in these areas.
- Unincorporated rural areas. The Comprehensive Plan in conjunction with County zoning and development regulations govern development of land and improvements. Design standards should be reviewed and amended to achieve community design objectives.
- Gateways or entry corridors. Design of improvements within a number of gateways or entry corridors in the County (Interstate 84, arterial roadways, state and U.S. highways) will have a significant effect on visitors' first impressions of the County, making community design in these areas of special importance. The County and cities should work cooperatively to guide development and redevelopment in these areas to enhance their appearance.

### **Rural Character**

Rural character is defined as the acknowledgment of the role of agriculture and ranching and the responsibility of those who use the land for that purpose. The definition also recognizes the small towns that are surrounded by and support both the agricultural and ranching uses of the land. Rural areas include the mixture of

agriculture uses, green fields, open space, range land, forest, high desert and other rural land characteristics with minimum residential development, unless it's associated with agricultural land use. Ordinances should take into account these attributes. To minimize the impacts to rural character, buffer zones, open space or better landscaping guidelines should be considered.

### **Issues**

- Compatibility between adjacent uses. Compatibility among adjacent land uses is a key concern among residents. Community design and appropriate zoning can minimize conflicts among different types of uses (e.g., residential areas and CAFO's) or between areas where densities differ significantly.

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 12.1:** Support a strong, viable community identity for specific areas in Gooding County.

### **Policies**

Policy 12.1-1: Maintain rural transition zoning around the city limits of Bliss, Gooding, Hagerman and Wendell to serve as an open-space buffer and provide specific area identity.

Policy 12.1-2: Support landscaping and beautification guidelines for State highways, arterial roads, and parking lots.

Policy 12.1-3: Encourage the preservation of trees as an important resource of each community for area beautification and wildlife habitat.

Policy 12.1-4: Work with residents to establish and use homeowners associations to help maintain private streets, common open space areas and landscaping along public rights-of-way in new developments.

Policy 12.1-5: Encourage new landscaping that is water conserving or drought tolerant in all residential areas to respect and incorporate distinctive elements of the natural or existing landscaping.

Policy 12.1-6: New development should be designed to be compatible with existing adjacent development and/or with future planning objectives and community goals for that area.

Policy 12.1-7: New development should contain construction debris on-site and prevent wind-blown debris from entering adjacent properties.

Policy 12.1-8: Promote recycling of construction debris.

## **Entrance Corridors**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 12.2:** Promote and encourage aesthetically pleasing entryways to the County through street design, land use, landscaping and signage.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Adopt and administer design standards for future land use and development within entrance corridors, as well as public improvements in those areas

## **Policies**

Policy 12.2-1: Support the development of appropriate signage and landscaping for each entryway corridors.

Policy 12.2-2: Jointly plan entryway corridors to Gooding County with incorporated cities, the Idaho Transportation Department and Highway Districts in Gooding County, as needed.

Policy 12.2-3: When possible and financially feasible, place all new and existing utility lines underground as part of new development.

## **Quality of Life**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 12.3:** Sustain, enhance, promote and protect those elements that contribute to the livability of Gooding County.

## **Policies**

Policy 12.3-1: Preserve the aesthetic resources of Gooding County.

Policy 12.3-2: Encourage all new development to enhance the visual quality of its surroundings, especially in areas of prominent visibility. Achieve through development and administration of design standards.

Policy 12.3-3: Encourage future development to maintain the character of Gooding County.

**County's historic and natural features.**

**Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 12.4:** Maintain rural character.

**Objectives**

- Preserve and/or establish areas of green space buffer to provide separation between conflicting land uses.
- Encourage compatible development.
  - Encourage and direct growth to urban areas and areas of impact.
  - Save public costs by encouraging new development to places contiguous to existing development where sewer, water, roads and other necessary services already exist, or are planned as part of a comprehensive plan to accommodate projected growth.
  - Encourage orderly planning for rims and canyon in the County.
  - Preservation and acquisition of recreation lands, particularly in canyon and river areas.
  - Coordination of land management objectives with federal and state agencies.
  - Preserve and protect open space, unique natural areas, riparian zones, wetlands, water and scenic views, areas of natural beauty and the rural character of Gooding County.
  - Preserve and protect:
    - open range and spaces;
    - waterways;
    - scenic views;
    - areas of natural beauty;
    - high desert;
    - irrigated farms;
    - wetlands;
    - preservation of large lot agricultural and
    - the rural character of Gooding County
    - roadways.

## **Policies**

- Policy 12.4-1: Develop code enforcement procedures.
- Policy 12.4-2: Develop rural standards for development.
- Policy 12.4-3: Encourage new subdivisions (planned unit developments or planned communities) and other development to preserve open space.
- Policy 12.4-4: Non-compatible land uses can impact adjacent properties and should be screened.
- Policy 12.4-5: Acquire land and easements for recreational and open space purpose.
- Policy 12.4-6: Encourage an ample amount of specialized open space in the form of buffer zones, open space, or parks.
- Policy 12.4-7: The development of landscaping guidelines should be considered.
- Policy 12.4-8: Develop design guidelines for land use.

## **Natural Resource Conservation**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 12.5:** Promote the conservation of natural resources by encouraging re-use or recycling of waste materials from residential or commercial construction.

**Goal 12.6:** Promote the protection and conservation of freshwater and riparian resources throughout the County.

### **Desirable Future Situations**

Continue to implement the County's plan and/or procedures for promoting and increasing use of recycling and other waste reduction programs by county residents and at County solid waste facilities.

Also see, Chapter 6 – Natural Resources

## **Policies**

- Policy 12.5-1: Promote the protection and conservation of important natural areas, fish wildlife habitat, historic resources, and open space throughout the County.

- Policy 12.5-2: Encourage use of innovative planning techniques such as conservation subdivisions, land transfers, transfer of development rights, purchases of land, conservation easements and other approaches to preserve open space and the rural environment as rural residential development occurs.
- Policy 12.5-3: Appropriate zoning designations, development standards and other strategies should be used to minimize the impacts of development encroaching on wildlife habitat and other natural resource areas.
- Policy 12.5-4: Protect agricultural activities from land use conflicts or undue interference created by residential, commercial or industrial development.
- Policy 12.5-5: Promote recycling of construction debris.
- Policy 12.6-1: Develop and implement strategies to preserve river corridors, such as requiring setbacks, mandatory easements for pathways and river access, educational signage, dumping enforcement, etc.
- Policy 12.6-2: Protect water quality and reduce flood damage by minimizing development within 100-year floodplains and prohibiting all structural development that will impede or alter the natural flow of waters within floodways.

## **Economic Development**

### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 12.7:** Promote sustainable economic development strategies that have positive environmental impacts and will support family-wage jobs.

### **Policies**

- Policy 12.7-1: Facilitate the expansion and diversification of existing businesses and industries that have positive environmental impacts or minimal negative impacts.
- Policy 12.7-2: Encourage the development of new sustainable industry clusters that are appropriate for the County's resource base and labor pool and have positive environmental impacts or minimal negative impacts.

Policy 12.7-3: Encourage industries to hire from the local labor force and to provide job training programs where needed to help create jobs for local residents.

### XIII. NATIONAL INTEREST ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION CORRIDORS

*Gooding County has to prepare for the designation of corridors for high voltage power lines*

During the 2007 Idaho State legislative session, the Local Land Use Planning Act was amended to require that comprehensive planning incorporate an additional element to address National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has been tasked with identifying transmission congestion and constraint issues nationwide. A National Corridor designation does not constitute a recommendation or a proposal to build additional transmission facilities; it simply serves to spotlight the congestion or constraints adversely affecting consumers in an area. At the time this Plan was drafted, the DOE issued two draft National Corridor designations; one in the Northeastern States and one in the Southwestern States. The state of Idaho is indirectly affected as several transmission facilities either cross the state or emanate from the state toward the congested area.

#### **Existing Conditions**

Idaho Power and Rocky Mountain Power are planning to build a high voltage transmission line across southern Wyoming and southern Idaho. This project will supply present and future needs of customers and improve electric systems reliability in the service territories of both companies. In addition, the project will enable delivery of new generating resources, including wind, to more customers in the region. This project will construct, operate and maintain approximately 1,150 miles of new 230 kilovolt (kV) and 500 kV electric transmission lines between the Windstar Substation near Glenrock, Wyoming to the planned Hemmingway Substation near Murphy, Idaho. Many upgrades to the current system will be necessitated by this endeavor.

#### **Desirable Goals and Objectives**

**Goal 13.1:** Work with power companies to establish a corridor which is in the best interest of both parties.

**Goal 13.2:** Promote public health, safety and general welfare in the designated corridors.

#### **Desirable Future Situations**

Update County Zoning Ordinances to accommodate utility providers' application for long term "special use permits".

A "Special Use Permit" will be required for power transmission lines.

Establish utility corridors to meet current and future needs.

## **Policies**

- Policy 13.1-1 Have representation at community meetings initiated by the power companies.
- Policy 13.1-2 Inform property owners who are in the potential corridors.
- Policy 13.1-3 Work with adjacent jurisdictions to ensure corridor connection continuity.
- Policy 13.1-4 Encourage multiple use of utility corridors by all utility providers.
- Policy 13.1-5 Encourage the power companies to remove old logistically ineffective lines.
- Policy 13.1-6 In exceptionally sensitive areas power lines should be placed underground.
- Policy 13.2-1 Continue to provide reliable power service to county residents.
- Policy 13.2-2 Locate power corridors in areas to minimize impact if possible.
- Policy 13.2-3 Locate power corridors in areas of least impact to extraordinary natural, wildlife, historical, recreational and cultural resources of the County.

#### **XIV. AIRPORT**

Gooding County has one public airport, located just South-West of the town of Gooding. Operations are limited to general aviation. Gooding County has created an airport overlay zone that is designed to protect the airport from development that would conflict with airport operations. The overlay regulates density of housing, structure heights and types of land uses that would create difficulty with airport operations on a daily basis. There are several private airport facilities within the County.

## XV. IMPLEMENTATION

*Effective and efficient implementation of plans and policies that achieve the community's vision is essential to the success of this plan.*

The Gooding County Comprehensive Plan update reflects a 10-20 year time horizon, although the Plan should be reviewed periodically to respond to emerging technologies and growth trends. This planning period allows adequate time to implement new development ordinances, land use patterns, transportation improvements and public development plans. Implementation of the Gooding County Comprehensive Plan will be accomplished through the following measures:

- Application of the Gooding County Zoning and Subdivision regulations, including adoption of amendments recommended in this Plan.
- Adopt and amend, as needed, the Area of City Impact agreements with the cities of Gooding County.
- Administration of the Gooding County development review process.
- Application of policies in this plan, and such other policies, resolutions, or ordinances as may be adopted by the Board of Gooding County Commissioners.
- Continued coordination with other local jurisdictions, state and federal government agencies, community groups and citizens.
- Education, adoption and practice of conservation measures both in County facilities and new development.
- Incentives for Private Enterprise provision of public services.

Implementation is the most important phase of the planning process. It is the process that is intended to transform the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan into actions. A comprehensive plan, no matter how well crafted, is of little value if it is not implemented and used by both County officials and the public.

There are several important planning tools to help citizens and County officials implement this Comprehensive Plan. Critical implementation tools are described in more detail below:

### **15.1 Community Involvement Program**

Citizen involvement and support is the most important implementation tool. The public should be aware of, involved in and ideally supportive of the County's planning decisions. The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners make their decisions based on public guidance, when not in conflict

with the law, and consistent with the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan. In effect, the decision-making process begins and ends with this Plan and an ongoing citizen involvement program.

If the Comprehensive Plan is to be useful and effective, it should be continually reviewed and updated periodically, as needed. The recommendations within the Comprehensive Plan should not be interpreted as unalterable commitments, but rather as a reflection of the best foreseeable direction at a given time. All Gooding County citizens are encouraged to contact County leaders at any time to review the Comprehensive Plan and implementation policies.

## **15.2 Gooding County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map**

The policies of the Comprehensive Plan establish the underlying direction for future amendments to the County's Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map. The text of the zoning ordinance identifies permissible land uses and establishes the conditions under which land may be used, such as the number of stories, location and uses of buildings, development densities and building setbacks. In some cases, existing uses of land and buildings are permitted to continue, even if they do not conform to Plan policies and associated land use ordinances although this usually occurs upon specific review and findings. The Zoning Map identifies the location of specific districts where various types of land uses may be located to form a compatible development pattern. Idaho State law requires that all zoning districts be consistent with the policies of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning and Zoning Commission is responsible for reviewing all new development proposals to ensure compatibility with the Zoning Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan and make appropriate recommendations on such proposals to the Board of County Commissioners. The Board then completes the review process by considering the Planning and Zoning Commission's recommendation and making final decision on each development proposal.

## **15.3 Comprehensive Plan Amendments**

From time to time, changing conditions as well as adoption of community plans, will result in a need for Comprehensive Plan Amendments. Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act identifies the process for amendments to the Comprehensive Plan. Any group or citizen may petition the County Planning and Zoning Commission for a plan amendment at any time. On its own initiative, the County Planning and Zoning Commission may also originate an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan. Text amendments may be made to the Comprehensive Plan at any time. However, the Planning and Zoning Commission may not recommend a Comprehensive Plan map amendment to the Board more frequently than every six months.

#### **15.4 Coordination and Communication with Cities and Affected Agencies**

The County regularly consults with cities and other public agencies to develop, review and administer plans and regulations that affect future development.

- Negotiating Area of City Impact agreements with the cities of Gooding County.
- Transportation planning through efforts managed by the five (5) County Highway Districts (each with their own board) and Idaho Department of Transportation (ITD).
- Natural resource planning and management by the Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Department of Fish and Game and Idaho Department of Environmental Quality.
- Public facility development and service provision by cities and local sewer, water, and irrigation districts.
- Siting and land use review for future school sites in cooperation with the school districts within Gooding County.

Continued participation in these and other processes will be essential to successful implementation of the goals and policies identified in the Comprehensive Plan.

#### **METHODS OF IMPLEMENTATION**

The goal of Gooding County will be to adopt and implement the Comprehensive Plan to provide policy and guidelines to assist in future land use decisions.

The present development regulations will be reviewed and revised as necessary to ensure compatibility with the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

The Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed at a minimum of every five years by the Planning and Zoning Commission to ensure that the Plan goals and policies continue to reflect community desires and circumstances. The Plan can be updated or amended every six (6) months if sufficient new data becomes available or unforeseen changes take place.

#### **RECOMMENDATION, ADOPTION, AMENDMENT AND REPEAL OF THE PLAN**

The Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission prior to recommending the plan, amendment or repeal of the plan to the governing board, shall conduct at least one (1) public hearing in which interested persons shall have an opportunity to be heard. At least fifteen (15) days prior to the hearing, notice of the time and place and a summary of the

plan to be discussed shall be published in the official newspaper or paper of general circulation within the jurisdiction. The Commission shall also make available a notice to other newspapers, radio and television stations serving the jurisdiction for use as a public service announcement. Notice of intent to adopt, repeal or amend the plan shall be sent to all political subdivisions providing services within the planning jurisdiction, including school districts, at least fifteen (15) days prior to the public hearing scheduled by the commission. Following the Commission hearing, if the Commission makes a material change in the plan, further notice and public hearing shall be held before the commission forwards the plan with its recommendation to the governing board. Upon completion of hearing process, the commission then recommends adoption of the plan to the governing board. A record of the hearings, findings made, and actions taken shall be maintained indefinitely.

The Board of County Commissioners, prior to adoption, amendment or repeal of the plan shall conduct at least one (1) public hearing using the same notice and hearing procedures as the Commission. The Board of County Commissioners shall not hold a public hearing, give notice of a proposed hearing, nor take actions upon the plan, amendments or repeal until recommendations have been received from the Commission. Following the hearing of the Board of County Commissioners, if the Board makes a material change in the plan, further notice and hearing shall be provided before the Board of County Commissioners adopts the plan. A record of the hearings, findings made, and actions taken shall be maintained indefinitely.

No plan shall be effective unless adopted by resolution or ordinance by the Board of County Commissioners. An ordinance enacting the plan or part of a plan may be adopted, amended, or repealed by reference as provided for in sections 31-715 and 50-901, Idaho Code, three (3) copies of which shall be on file with the county clerk.

The commission may recommend amendments to the plan to the governing board not more frequently than every six (6) months to correct errors in the original plan or to recognize substantial changes in the actual conditions in the area.

This being pursuant to Idaho Code 67-6509.

The terms and provisions herein enacted shall be deemed separable, and the invalidity of any section of this ordinance or resolution shall have no effect on the validity of any other section.

RESOLUTION 20-11-02a

WHEREFORE, PURSUANT to Title 67, Chapter 65 of the Idaho Code, the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission initiated a review of the existing comprehensive plan as adopted on May 3, 2010; and,

WHEREAS, the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission having reviewed the need for revision of the county wide comprehensive plan and a new plan having been prepared by the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission; and,

WHEREAS, all public meetings and hearings having been held to review the proposed new comprehensive plan for Gooding County; and,

WHEREAS, all findings of fact and other legal requirements having been fulfilled in the adopting of a new comprehensive plan;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Gooding County Commissioners repeal the Plan dated May 3, 2010 and adopt the newly revised Gooding County Comprehensive Plan, dated November 2, 2020, as recommended by the Gooding County Planning and Zoning Commission.

Resolution passed and adopted on the second day of November, 2020.

GOODING COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Mark E Bolduc

Mark Bolduc – Chairman

Susan M. Bolton

Susan Bolton – Commissioner

Ron Buhler

Ron Buhler – Commissioner



Attest:

Denise M. Gill

Denise Gill