

City of
BLOOMINGTON

Comprehensive Plan



Acknowledgements

Mayor

David Madsen

City Council

Roy Bunderson

Ted McGhee

Shaun Turner

Rich Kearl

Planning and Zoning Commission

Richard Nelsen – Chairman

Stacey Bateman

David Bee

Heber Dunford

Brenda Taylor

Shawn Turner

City Clerk

Debbie Thomas

Prior City Clerk

Winston Hart

City Treasurer

Marilyn Wilkes



Technical assistance provided by the Bear Lake Regional Commission

INTRODUCTION

The local land use planning act I.C. §67-6509 governs community planning in the state of Idaho. Purpose: The purpose of a comprehensive plan shall be to promote the health, safety and general welfare of the people of the state of Idaho as follows:

- To protect property rights while making accommodations for other necessary types of development such as low-cost housing and mobile home parks.
- To ensure that adequate public facilities and services are provided to the people at reasonable cost.
- To ensure that the economy of the state and localities is protected.
- To ensure that the important environmental features of the state and localities are protected.
- To encourage the protection of prime agricultural, forestry and mining lands and land uses for production of food, wood products, and minerals, as well as the economic benefits they provide to the community.
- To encourage urban and urban-type development within incorporated cities.
- To avoid undue concentration of population and overcrowding of land.
- To ensure that the development on land is commensurate with the physical characteristics of the land.
- To protect life and property in areas subject to natural hazards and disasters.
- To protect fish, wildlife and recreation resources.
- To avoid undue water and air pollution.
- To allow local school districts to participate in the community planning and development process so as to address public school needs and impacts on an ongoing basis.

A comprehensive plan is to be developed based on citizen input to establish broad planning goals that guide development of more detailed ordinances and policies to govern land use within a community. There have been two significant public input events that were used to support the goals and objectives of this document. Several years ago a survey was distributed to the citizens of Bloomington. Topics addressed in the survey ranged from economic development to animal control. A significant number of responses were submitted to the city for evaluation. Of the 119 surveys distributed, 92 were returned for a response rate of 77%.

In 2010 the Bear Lake Valley engaged in a “visioning” process which is a “once in a generation” opportunity to evaluate those things which residents and visitors value. Town hall meetings, mapping exercises and scenarios were developed in response to input from attendees. Consequently, in 2012 communities in the Bear Lake Valley worked with students from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department at Utah State University to develop *charrettes*. *Charrettes* are intensive designs based on community input. Both of these exercises are incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Bloomington.

The Plan shall consider previous and existing conditions, trends, compatibility of land uses, desirable goals and objectives, or desirable future situations for each planning component. The Plan with maps, charts, and reports shall be based on the following components as they may apply to land use regulations and actions unless the plan specifies reasons why a particular component is unneeded.

- Property Rights
- Population
- School Facilities and Transportation
- Economic Development

- Land Use
- Natural Resources
- Hazardous Areas
- Public Services, Facilities and Utilities
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Special Areas or Sites
- Housing
- Community Design
- Agriculture
- Implementation

BACKGROUND

Bloomington is a small incorporated community with approximately 206 full-time residents. Situated on the west side of the valley against the Bear River Range foothills, this community is mid-way between the City of Paris and the City of St. Charles.

On August 23, 1863, Brigham Young called a council meeting for the purpose of making plans to take immediate possession of the Bear Lake Valley by exploration. He sent a company led by Charles C. Rich to select the site for settlement.

The party came from Franklin to Mink Creek and over the mountain and into the valley through Emigration Canyon. Apostle Rich reported that the country possessed an abundance of water for irrigation, favorable locations for towns, good soil, abundant hay land, fish and game, and a climate favorable for hardy grains and vegetables. He felt it was well worth an attempt at colonization.

On September 22, 1863, a company of ten men and one woman left Franklin making a forty-six mile journey to Bear Lake. The journey was accomplished in seven days, at which time the settlement of Paris was established. Seven months later a small company of men and women arrived in Bloomington on April 18, 1864, followed shortly by a large company which traveled by Cache Valley and Emigration Canyon. The namesake of the community was a tribute to the enterprise and industry of the pioneers that settled the area.

Using the North Star as a guiding line, the streets of the town were laid out by Charles C. Rich and Joseph C. Rich. The area was laid out into ten acre blocks which were divided by ten into lots one acre in size. The original streets were eight rods wide but have since been mostly reduced to six. Lots in the city were distributed by lottery system. Numbers were placed in a hat, and each family head was given the lot corresponding with the number he drew. Men drew according by lot. Until the country was opened for homesteading, titles to the area were never issued or thought of.

Education was of prime importance to the settlers, who believed it was their religious duty to educate their children. A log building measuring 16 by 20 feet with a dirt roof was constructed near the site of the present school building. Divided into two rooms by a canvas wagon cover, heated by a huge fireplace, and completed with rough slab seats, the building was opened during the winter of 1864-65 by the efforts of James H. Hart and George Osmond, who conducted classes during the winter.

The school year was very short, only four or five months. School would begin the last of October and continue through March, with intervals of no school because of severe weather.

Most children stayed in this school nine or so years, as terms were short and no grading system was followed. When students were considered to be of the eighth grade level, they could attend Fielding Academy in Paris, which was finished and ready for use in 1901. A new brick school building was constructed in Bloomington in 1917-18.

Every person in the valley had left loved ones in other valleys and foreign countries, and keeping in touch with them was a difficult problem. The summer was easier because of the travel back and forth for purposes of trade, but with the coming of winter, the valley became snowbound. During the first few years, mail was carried over the mountains to and from Franklin by Edward M. Patterson, who made thirteen trips on snowshoes during the winter of 1866-67. Letters were carried at the rate of one dollar each.

In 1871, the Deseret Telegraph line was extended from Franklin to Paris through Bloomington Canyon. The Bell Telephone was ready for use on March 27, 1901. Before that time a one-line wire was used.

In 1880, a toll road was completed through Logan Canyon, which improved mail facilities and became a popular route to lower valleys.

The Oregon Short Line Railroad came to Montpelier in 1878-79. In 1911, it came to Paris because of the progress of the phosphate mining industry. The railroad brought improved communications and transportation to the settlements.

Until the year 1916, there had been no community organization. As president Brigham Young and his party had taken the valley by exploration, it was ruled by Church government only.

In 1933, plans were made for a village water system. It was completed and water turned on in 1936. This system became too small; therefore, in 1970 an additional system was laid by the side of the old one.

The street lights were turned on June 1, 1955, although electricity had been here since 1904.

All incorporated villages in the state of Idaho were changed by the legislature to become cities, and Bloomington is now under the mayor-council form of government. The city still maintains its small, quiet rural community character. The main activity is ranching and farming around the city. There is some farming inside the city limits.

PROPERTY RIGHTS

Among the inalienable rights established by the Constitution of the State of Idaho is the right to own and use property. Conversely, the use of the property cannot infringe on the rights of neighboring property owners. Comprehensive planning seeks to strike a balance between these two potentially competing rights in an effort to balance and maintain uses among neighboring landowners.

A land use regulation or action must not be unduly restrictive so that it causes a “taking” of landowners’ property without just compensation. The Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution states “Nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.” In land-use control contests, the argument is that if the land-use ordinance, regulation or decision is so restrictive as to deprive the owner of all economically viable use of the property, then the property has for all practical purposes been taken by “inverse condemnation.”

FEDERAL RIGHTS

Whether or not a land-use decision amounts to a taking prohibited by the Fifth Amendment to the United States Constitution, has been a difficult task for the courts, including the U.S. Supreme Court, to resolve. Determining when a government action amounts to a taking, requiring either compensation or invalidation of the action for violation of due process, is not a simple undertaking. The U.S. Supreme Court itself has candidly admitted that it has never been able to develop a “set formula” to determine when “justice and fairness” require that economic injuries caused by public action be compensated by the government, rather than remain disproportionately concentrated on a few persons” (Penn Central Transportation Co. v. New York City, 436 U.S. 104 124 [1978]). Instead, the high court has observed that, “whether a particular restriction will be rendered invalid by the government’s failure to pay for any losses proximately caused by it depends largely upon the particular circumstances [in that] case” (id., at 488). The question of whether a regulation has gone too far and a taking has occurred has been an ad hoc, factual inquiry (id.).

STATE REQUIREMENTS

In 1994, the Idaho State Legislature amended Section 67-6508 of the Idaho Code to include “an analysis of provisions which may be necessary to insure that land-use policies, restrictions, conditions and fees do not violate private property rights, adversely impact values or create unnecessary technical limitations on the use of property...” [Idaho Code §67-6805(a)]. Although a comprehensive plan that contains such language does not provide an absolute defense to a taking claim, some courts give weight to comprehensive plans when they consider taking problems. They are impressed by a City’s efforts to plan, and the usual planning process that strives to comprehensively balance land-use opportunities throughout a given community.

Office of the Attorney General Checklist

In an effort to provide guidance with regards to “takings,” the Office of the Attorney General of the State of Idaho has prepared the following checklist in reviewing the potential impact of regulatory or administrative actions upon specific property.

1. Does the regulation or action result in a permanent/temporary physical occupation of private property?

Regulation or action resulting in a permanent or temporary physical occupation of all or a portion of private property will generally constitute a “taking.” For example, a regulation that required landlords to allow the installation of cable television boxes in their apartments was found to constitute a “taking” (see *Loretto v. Teleprompter Manhattan CATV Corp.*, 458 U.S. 419 [1982]).

2. Does the regulation or action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of property or to grant an easement?

Carefully review all regulations requiring the dedication of property or granting of an easement. The dedication of property must be reasonably and specifically designed to prevent or compensate, for

adverse impacts of the proposed development. Likewise, the magnitude of the burden placed on the proposed development should be reasonably related to the adverse impacts created by the development. The court will also consider whether the action in question substantially advances a legitimate state interest. For example, the United States Supreme Court determined in *Nollan v. California Coastal Commission*, 483 U.S. 825 (1987), that compelling an owner of waterfront property to grant a public easement across his property that does not substantially advance the public's interest in beach access, constitutes a "taking." Likewise, the United States Supreme Court held that compelling a property owner to leave a public green way, as opposed to a private one, did not substantially advance protection of a floodplain, and was a "taking" (*Dolan v. City Tigard*, 114 U.S. 2309 [1994]).

3. Does the regulation deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of property?

If regulations prohibit all economically viable or beneficial uses of the land, it will likely constitute a "taking." In this section, the agency can avoid liability for just compensation only if it can demonstrate that the proposed uses are prohibited by the laws of nuances or other pre-existing limitation on the use of the property (See *Lucas v. South Carolina Coastal Council*, 112 S. Ct. 2886 [1992]).

It is important to analyze the regulation's impact on the property as a whole, and not just the impact on a portion of the property. It is also important to assess whether there is any profitable use of the remaining property available. (See *Florida Rock Industries, Inc. v. United States*, 18 F.3d 1560 [Fed. Cir. 1994]). The remaining use does not necessarily have to be the owner's planned use, a prior use, or the highest and best use of the property. One factor in this assessment is the degree to which the regulatory action interferes with a property owner's reasonable investment-backed expectations.

Carefully review regulations requiring that the entire particular parcel of land be left substantially in its natural state. A prohibition of all economically viable uses of the property is vulnerable to a takings challenge. In some situations, however, there may be pre-existing limitations on the use of property that could insulate the government from takings liability.

4. Does the regulation have a significant impact on the landowner's economic interest?

Carefully review regulations that have a significant impact on the owner's economic interest. Courts will often compare the value of property before and after the impact of the challenged. Although a reduction improperly values alone may not be a "taking," a severe reduction in property value often indicates a reduction or elimination of reasonably profitable uses. Another economic factor courts will consider is the degree to which the challenged regulation impacts any development rights of the owner. These economic factors are normally applied to the property as a whole.

5. Does the regulation deny a fundamental attribute of ownership?

Regulations that deny the landowner a fundamental attribute of ownership – including the right to possess, exclude others and dispose of all or a portion of the property – are potential takings.

The United States Supreme Court recently held that requiring a public easement for recreation purposes where the harm to be prevented was to flood plain was a "taking." In finding this to be a "taking," the court stated:

The city never demonstrated why a public greenway, as opposed to a private one, was required in the interest of flood control. The difference to the petitioner, of course, is the loss of the ability to exclude

others. This right to exclude others is “one of the most essential sticks in the bundle of right that is commonly characterized as property.” *Dolan v. City of Tigard*, 114 U.S. 2309 (1994). The United States Supreme court has also held that barring in inheritance (an essential attribute of ownership) of certain interest in land held by individual by members of and Indian tribe constituted a “taking.” (See *Hodel v. Irving*, 481 U.S. 704 [1987]).

6. Does the regulation serve the same purpose that would be served by directly prohibiting the use or action; and does the condition imposed substantially advance the purpose?

Our regulations may go too far and may result in a takings claim where it does not substantially advance a legitimate governmental purpose. (*Nollan v. California Coastal Commission*, 107 S.Ct. 3141 [1987]; *Dolan v. City of Tigard*, 114 U.S. 2309 [1994]).

In *Nollan*, the United States Supreme Court held that it was an unconstitutional “taking” to condition the insurance of a permit to landowners on the grant of an easement to the public to use their beach. The Court found that since there was no indication that the *Nollan’s* house plans interfered in any way with the public’s ability to walk up and down the beach, there was no “nexus” between any public interest that might be harmed by the construction of the house, and the permit condition. Taking this connection, the required easement was just as unconstitutional as it would be if imposed outside the permit context. Likewise, regulatory actions that closely resemble, or have effects of a physical invasion or occupation of property, are more likely to be found to be takings. The greater the deprivation of use, the greater the likelihood that a “taking” will be found.

POPULATION

Population data for the City of Bloomington has been collected since 1940. The general trend is that of a declining population. In 1940 there were 418 residents while 2010 showed a population of 206 or a decrease of nearly 50% in 70 years. An increase of 14% was observed in 1980 but returned to a declining population in the 2000’s. Population data is shown below.

Table 1: Population of Bloomington over seventy years -

| <u>1940</u> | <u>1950</u> | <u>1960</u> | <u>1970</u> | <u>1980</u> | <u>2000</u> | <u>2010</u> |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 418 | 302 | 254 | 186 | 212 | 256 | 206 |

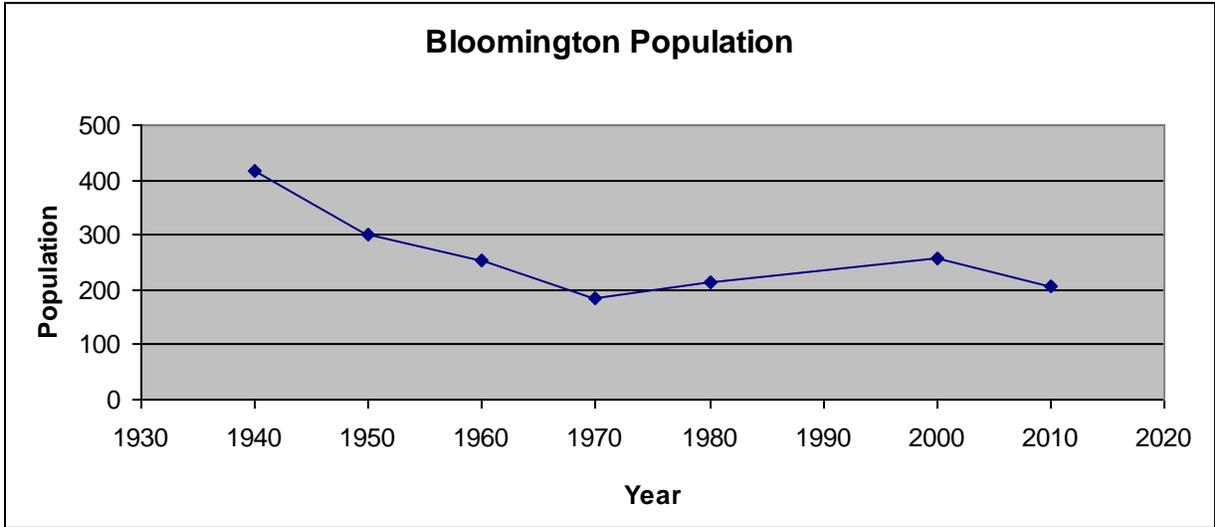


Figure 1. Graphical representation of population trends over a seventy year period for the City of Bloomington.

As of 2010 there were 206 residents of the City of Bloomington and evenly split between male and female. There are 111 males and 95 females. However the median age of males is 55 while the female median age is 44.7. No population data was available for 1990.

Ethnically, the City of Bloomington is predominantly white with small percentages of Native American and Hispanic residents. The composition of the ethnicity by percentage can be seen in figure 2.

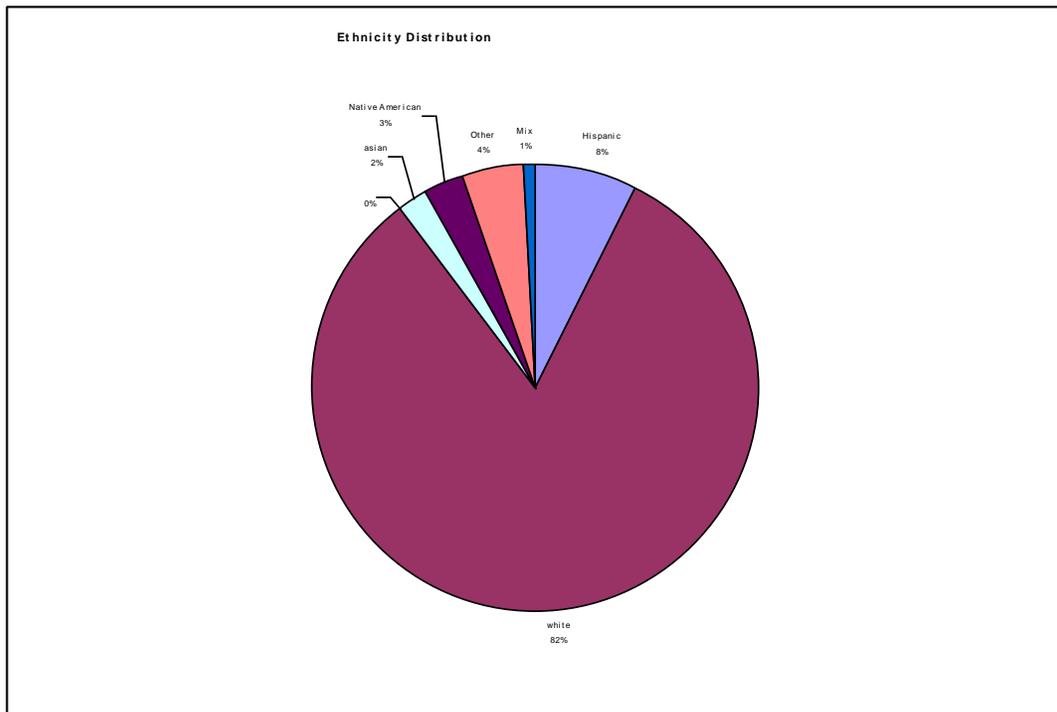


Figure 2. Ethnic distribution among the population of Bloomington

HOUSING

Housing stock in Bloomington and other areas of Bear Lake County maintain an unusually high percentage of vacant homes compared to the state of Idaho. Figure 3 shows the percentage of homes that are owner occupied, rented, and vacant. The percentages of homes that are owner-occupied in Bloomington are similar to that of the state (See Figure 4). However, the numbers of vacant and rental percentages are significantly different from those statewide. The high number of vacant homes in Bloomington could be attributed to the recreational housing market associated with Bear Lake. In Bear Lake County, 90% of the homes within close proximity of Bear Lake do not qualify for the homeowner's exemption. One could reasonably assert that the high number of "vacant" homes in Bloomington could be due to the proximity to the lake. Those "vacant" homes are used occasionally for vacation purposes.

Home values in Bloomington are lower than those for the state of Idaho. The median home value for Bloomington as of 2009 was \$141,624 while the median value for the state was \$171,700.

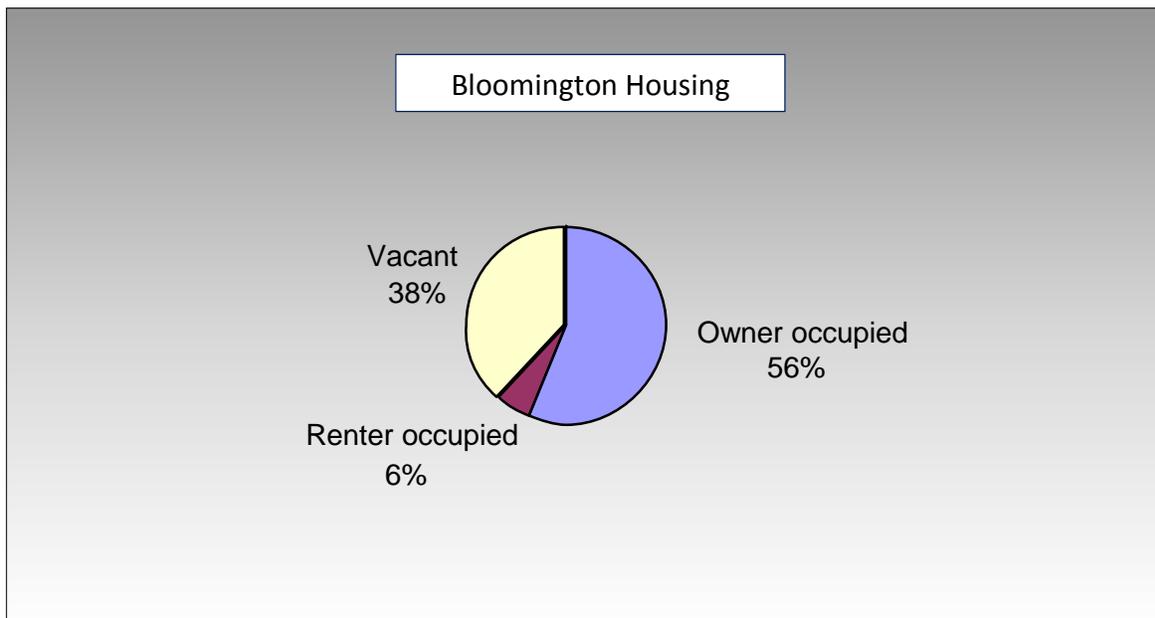


Figure 3. Bloomington House Occupations

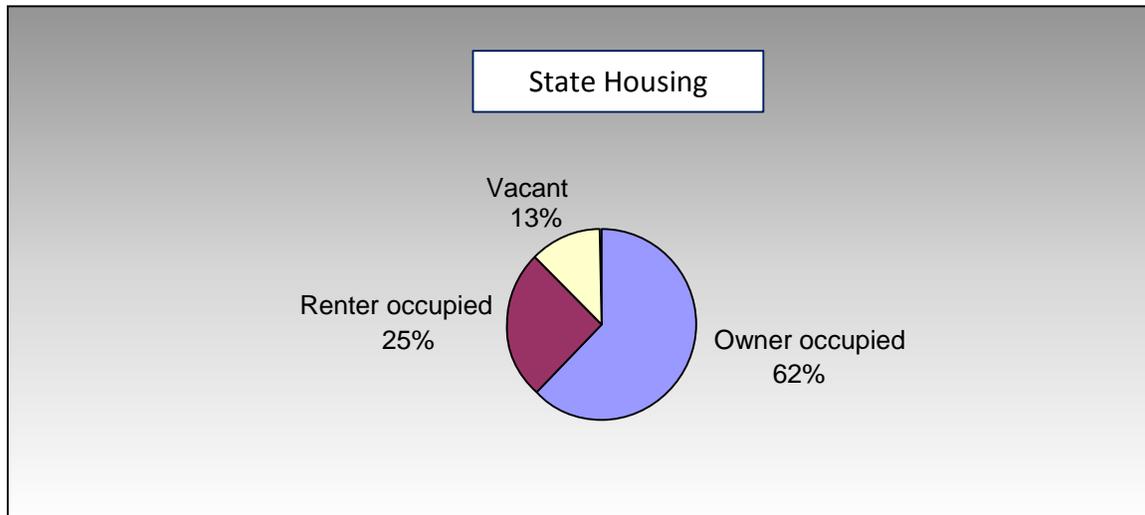


Figure 4. Housing occupancy in the State of Idaho by percentage.

SCHOOL FACILITIES AND TRANSPORTATION

All kindergarten through 12th grade students are bused to schools outside the City. Kindergartens through 5th grade are bused to Paris Elementary in the City of Paris and A.J. Winters in the city of Montpelier. Grades six through eight are bused to the middle school on Main St. in Montpelier. Grades nine through twelve are bused to the high school on the north end of town in Montpelier.

Each school is far from capacity. This trend is observed in schools throughout the valley. The high school has a capacity of 650 which was observed in 1994. Currently, enrollment at the high school is approximately 307 students which represent a decrease in student population over 18 years of nearly 50%.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Currently, there are few drivers of economic development in the community. A post office is located on the corner of US 89 and Canyon St. Construction in the valley provides opportunities for contractors. Presently, Bear Lake Construction is located in Bloomington and is one of the largest single employers in the valley.

Economically, the City of Bloomington has a number of opportunities that could provide additional revenue to the City and residents. Of particular interest is US Highway 89 which is oriented north/south and serves as a main collector for traffic movement in and out of the city to destinations north and south. Approximately, 500,000-700,000 vehicles travel US 89 each year to destinations such as Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks. US Highway 89 is designated as the National Park Byway and has also been designated as part of the National Oregon Trail/Bear Lake Scenic Byway. A management plan has been adopted for this stretch of highway to boost tourism and identify nearby attractions.

Bloomington Lake is 12 miles west of town via Canyon Street. Bloomington Lake is a day trip destination for outdoor enthusiasts seeking hiking, biking, horseback riding, swimming, and fishing during the summer. Winter brings the opportunity for snowmobiling, and other outdoor activities. There is also a yurt available through Weber State University for those looking for overnight accommodations. With these types of activities the

potential exists for establishments such as a convenience store, tackle shop, outdoor equipment rental, and other hospitality ventures. Recently, the USDA Forest Service made considerable improvements to the Bloomington Lake Area. The parking lot was expanded considerably to accommodate greater volumes of visitors. Restroom facilities were also upgraded as part of improvements to the area.

Although, not in the corporate city limits, a phosphate mine is being proposed in the foothills west of the City of Bloomington. Soil cores are being extracted as part of a prospectors permit to conduct evaluations on mineral content and extent of the bed. Exploration in the 1950's suggested this area had significant quantities of phosphorus and vanadium. Recent surges in phosphate values have reignited interest in this area as a potential production site. Preliminary estimates suggest mineral quantities that would require an approximate 15 year time frame for extraction. Potentially, there are a number of mining related opportunities that could be capitalized on. Examples would be: professional services, machining, welding, construction.

Direct Communications has installed fiber optic cable along US Highway 89 and to hubs in certain neighborhoods. Download speeds of up to 20 megabytes per second are available with the expansion possibilities to 1 gigabyte per second. The availability of infrastructure for communications provides the backbone for numerous technology opportunities such as: call center, or occupations where telecommuting is an option.

With proper planning, potential economic development could be leveraged to provide a sustainable economic base for residents throughout the year and help support a sustainable community.

LAND USE

Land use in Bloomington is primarily used to support agriculturally based businesses. Most lands are used as grazing for milk cows or production of alfalfa with a few minor feedlots. In total, there are 305.5 acres in Bloomington used for agricultural purposes. There are presently 50.54 acres used to support grazing of livestock while 110.91 acres are used to produce alfalfa for winter support of grazing animals. The remaining acres are unreported. Grazing animals are contained in fenced enclosures during the winter where water and food are easily accessible. Animals are turned out to forage on summer pastures supported by leases on public lands. The proportion of land uses is found in the table below. Existing land uses have been documented and identified in Figure 5. To accommodate future growth and provide for a more diversified housing mix using sustainable methods, the future land use map in Figure 6 could be considered.

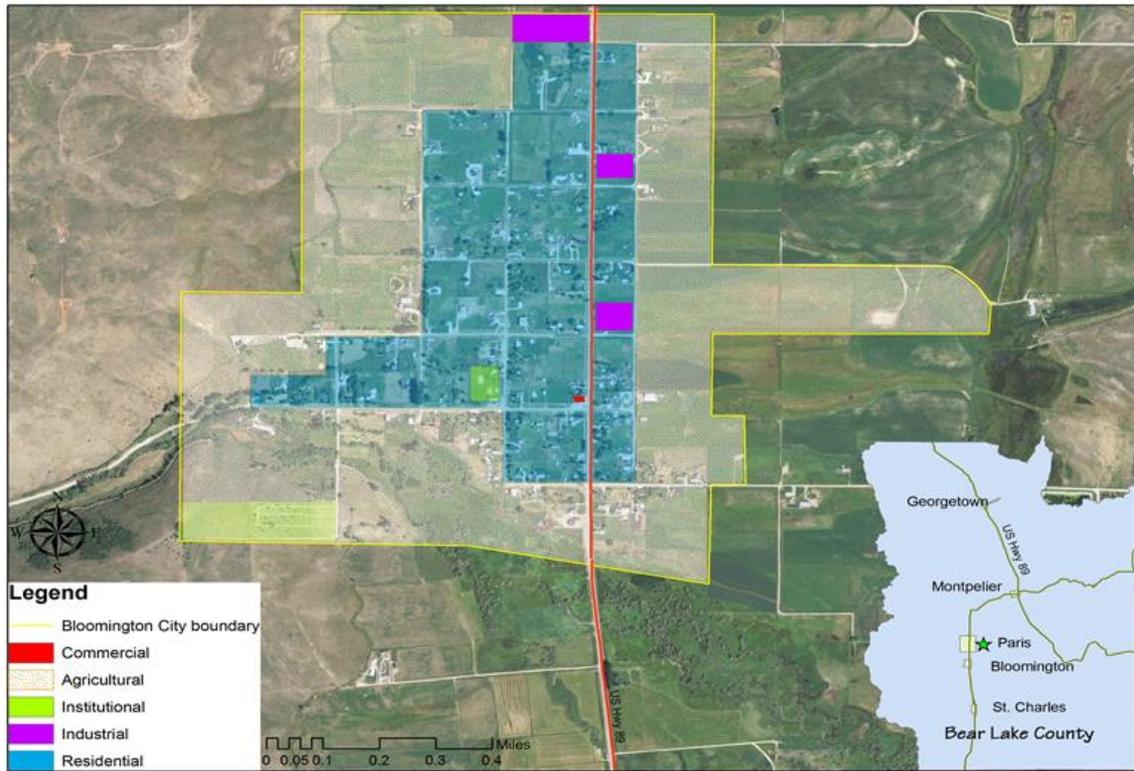


Figure 5. Current land use within the incorporated city limits of Bloomington.

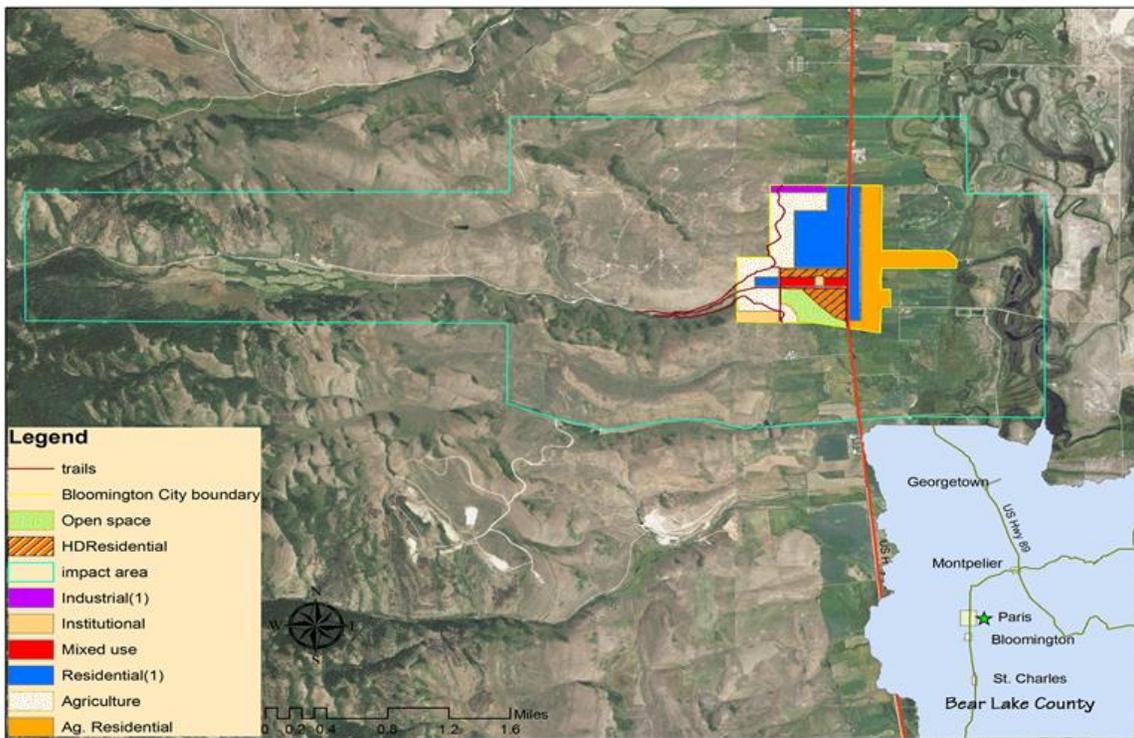


Figure 6. Future land use designations that could be used address a variety of land use issues for the city of Bloomington.

The climate of Bloomington is one of warm days and cool evenings during the summer with often bitter cold temperatures and deep snow during the winter. Average winter temperatures are 19.8 degrees F with average lows of 7.9 degrees F. The lowest recorded temperature was -34 degrees F on February 6, 1989. The average daytime temperature during the summer is 62.5 degrees F. The average daily maximum temperature is 80.3 degrees F. Lows in the winter can drop to sub-zero for extended periods of time. Climate data can be found in the table below.

Bloomington receives approximately 12 inches of moisture each year primarily during the winter. Thunderstorms are common during the late summer months.

Table 2. Climate data collected by the Natural Resource Conservation Service near the City of Bloomington.

| | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Annual |
|------------------------------|------|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------|
| Average Max. Temp. (F) | 29.5 | 34 | 40 | 52.9 | 65 | 74 | 85 | 83 | 73 | 61 | 43 | 32 | 56 |
| Average Min. Temp. (F) | 6.3 | 8.6 | 16 | 26.7 | 35 | 41 | 47 | 45 | 36 | 28 | 18 | 11 | 26.6 |
| Average Total Precip.(in.) | 1.2 | 1.2 | 1.3 | 1.32 | 1.4 | 1.5 | 0.8 | 0.9 | 1.2 | 1.1 | 1.1 | 1.2 | 14.09 |
| Average Total Snowfall (in.) | 13.4 | 12 | 9.4 | 3.9 | 0.8 | 0.1 | 0 | 0 | 0.2 | 1.6 | 7.1 | 13 | 61.6 |
| Average Snow Depth (in.) | 10 | 12 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 5 | 3 |

WILD LIFE

Many species of wildlife are found in abundance around the City of Bloomington. In the eastern foothills are winter range for deer, elk and moose. East of the City is the Bear Lake National Wildlife Refuge. The refuge is a 19,000 acre wetland complex which is managed for the express purpose of providing nesting habitat for waterfowl. Over 161 species of waterfowl have been identified on the refuge.

HAZARDOUS AREAS

A comprehensive inventory of natural resources in Bear Lake County was conducted by the Bear Lake Regional Commission in 1979. Review of available maps suggests several hazardous areas around the perimeter of Bloomington. Outside the City of Bloomington to the east lies faults that trend north/south on the west side of the Bear Lake Valley. To the west are steep slopes in excess of 25%. To the east are significant wetland soils that have liquefaction when subjected to ultra-low frequency waves produced by ground temblor associated with earthquakes.

There are no documented hazardous areas created by man such as underground storage tanks or superfund sites within the boundaries of the City according to the Department of Environmental Quality Division of Hazardous Waste.

PUBLIC SERVICES FACILITIES

Water is provided to the residents of the city of Bloomington from a spring located in Bloomington Canyon. Water is diverted from a spring in Bloomington Canyon and contained in two water tanks with a combined volume of

375,000 gallons at an elevation sufficiently high above the community to provide adequate hydrostatic pressure. A six inch line conveys water throughout the town to individual connections. There is plenty of room for expansion as the city has a water right for 5.25 second feet and is currently using one second foot. Currently there are 144 connections within the city. This system provides water for culinary purposes and for fire suppression.

Sewage is collected and conveyed by gravity to a total containment facility outside the city limits. A pair of evaporative lagoons east of the City collects sewage for settling. The treatment cells are three acres and provide treatment to 130 connections. Full capacity is currently under evaluation.

Solid Waste is collected by the Bear Lake County through an agreement for services with the City. The County provides a 50 gallon receptacle and collects on Tuesday of each week. Solid waste is transferred to the County landfill located 10 miles east of the City of Montpelier.

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Infrastructure for telecommunications is provided singularly by Direct Communications. Direct Communications home office is located in Rockland, Idaho and provides service to southeastern Idaho. Lines providing communication capability in the City of Bloomington are primarily copper cable with fiber optic nodes within close proximity of neighborhoods. Download speeds of 20 megabytes per second are available to customers. Infrastructure is in place to accommodate download speeds of one gigabyte per second. Attractive business packages are available through the marketing department of Direct Communications to accommodate opportunities such as call centers or other bandwidth intense businesses.

Wireless facilities are widely available to citizens of Bloomington through a majority of nationwide carriers. There are no existing wireless communication facilities located within the incorporated limits of Bloomington. However, a tower owned by Direct Communications was erected in 2008 east of town near the sewer lagoons. There are several towers in the County within close proximity of Bloomington, which provides good coverage to wireless users. Syringa Wireless, through Direct Communications is the only telecommunication provider with a retail presence in the area.

TRANSPORTATION

Truck Routes (Agricultural Community)

Moving agricultural products via truck has been, and will continue to be, the main source of moving produce products.

RECREATION

Outdoor recreational opportunities are in abundant supply year round within close proximity of Bloomington.

Five miles south of the City is Bear Lake, a 110 square mile freshwater lake that is cherished for the turquoise blue hue reflected by particles in the water. Pristine waters and miles of exposed beach lure many from Logan, Utah and the Wasatch Front on weekends to enjoy water skiing, fishing, swimming and riding of personal watercraft. Local communities provide a range of restaurants and boutique shopping.

Twelve miles west at an elevation of 8,186 feet is Bloomington Lake which is a popular day trip for recreational users seeking a place to hike, fish, and swim. Recently, the USDA Forest Service expanded parking at the trailhead

and improved bathroom facilities and campsites. Other campsites for primitive camping can be found along the road between Bloomington Lake and the City.

The Bear Lake National Wildlife Refuge is an 18,000 acre wetland management complex east of the City Limits. The refuge is managed to accommodate migratory waterfowl production. Opportunities afforded by this facility include: fishing, bird watching, hunting, wildlife viewing, hiking and biking.

Many of the canyons near Bloomington host an abundance of trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, off-highway vehicles (OHV) and snowmobiles. For a trails map see the Bear Lake Convention and Visitors Bureau or local Forest Service Office.

Planned correctly, the recreational opportunities available near Bloomington could provide a source of economic development and quality of life for residents of the City of Bloomington.

SPECIAL AREAS OR SITES

As a community that was pioneered not many years ago, there are still a number of historical homes that have been well preserved over the years. The houses are architecturally beautiful, and their history, of that of the builders, may be interesting.

HOUSING COMMUNITY DESIGN

Efforts have recently been completed that will help to guide development and community design by establishing a community identity within the City of Bloomington and how that identity integrates with other communities in the region. In August 2011, the Bear Lake Valley Blueprint was completed after conducting significant community outreach through surveys and mapping exercises. Surveys were completed during “town hall” type meetings where participants were asked to respond to future conditions. Mapping exercises were also used as a problem solving tool to facilitate brainstorming amongst participants. This effort was facilitated by Envision Utah to help establish those issues that are most valued by the residents of the Bear Lake Valley. Those elements that relate to community design are the construction of pathways, development of sustainable communities and preservation of open space.

As a continuation of the Blueprint and stepping closer to implementation, Utah State University was contacted to assist with design elements for the communities. Students from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department worked with communities in the Bear Lake Valley on individual challenges facing each community and solutions to those problems. These efforts should be given significant consideration and reviewed regularly for progress toward implementing those design solutions. An example of the proposed designs to encourage community identity can be found in figure 7.

FIGURE 7



Figure 7. Conceptual renderings of a “placemaking” gateway for the City of Bloomington.

AGRICULTURE

Agricultural uses remain a predominant land use within the corporate limits of Bloomington. Animal Husbandry, alfalfa production and grazing are the primary agricultural uses. Most of the agricultural property within the city limits is irrigated through diversion canals or mechanical means such as wheel line irrigation.

IMPLEMENTATION

Any plan without implementation is merely a good inventory of the existing conditions. This Comprehensive Plan lays the foundation of good community planning through broad goals and objectives articulated to express information gleaned from public surveys and other planning studies. These goals and objectives will be detailed in subsequent land use and subdivision ordinances developed by the Planning Commission and adopted by the City Council.

Housing

Goal: To maintain the look and feel of the community by encouraging construction materials and architectural styles associated with the rural/mountain environment and provide safe, well-constructed dwellings.

Objective: Adopt the International Building Code and contract with Bear Lake County to share resources.

Objective: Develop architectural control standards that will promote the rustic/rural feel of the community while allowing for a range of building sizes and styles.

Goal: To encourage growth by allowing a range of housing suitable for a range of incomes and sizes.

Transportation

Goal: Provide for an orderly system of traffic movement, construction, and maintenance to accommodate future users.

Objective: Develop road standards.

Objective: Develop a capital improvement plan.

Objective: Work with the County to develop the impact area and provide linkages to other communities other than US Highway 89.

Goal: To provide for a range of transportation modes and reduce vehicle trips.

Objective: Participate with the County on a pathway connecting Montpelier and Bear Lake.

Objective: Develop a plan to maintain and add additional sidewalks along surface streets in Bloomington.

Objective: Develop trail networks that connect residential to commercial and scenic areas.

Goal: To improve air quality of the City of Bloomington.

Objective: Incorporate paving of segments in a capital improvement plan.

Objective: Engage in controlling dust on surface streets.

Goal: Improve the safe use of surface streets.

Objective: Install speed bumps on Canyon Street.

Objective: Educate OHV riders on safe use of equipment.

Goal: Provide for a diversity of transportation options.

Objective: Participate and encourage development of bicycle pedestrian pathways linking communities and points of interest in the City.

Objective: Prioritize improving Pole Line Road.

Natural Resources

Goal: Protect existing hydrologic resources.

Objective: Legislate to restrict development within close proximity of community water supplies through the adoption of a source water protection plan.

Objective: Identify and protect productive wetlands.

Objective: Identify and protect critical stream corridors.

Task: Adopt and enforce buffer requirements on valuable water resources.

Land Use

Goal: Promote land uses consistent with the existing character of the City of Bloomington.

Objective: Adopt standards and ordinances that will promote a sustainable community.

Objective: Develop ordinances to promote prudent care of agricultural animals in a sustainable manner.

Objective: Promote zoning that will preserve the existing pastoral character of the City of Bloomington.

Goal: Work with Bear Lake County on uses allowed within close proximity of the City of Bloomington.

Objective: Develop and adopt a map identifying the impact area of the City of Bloomington.

Objective: Work with the County on adopting ordinances to manage uses within the impact area.

Infrastructure

Goal: To develop a plan to construct and maintain water and wastewater facilities.

Objective: Develop a maintenance program for water and wastewater infrastructure.

Objective: Engage in proactive planning to accommodate future growth.

Economic Development

Goal: Enhance business development in the City of Bloomington.

Objective: Capitalize on existing infrastructure and commerce opportunities.

Objective: Identify regulatory barriers to commerce and seek institutional reform.

Objective: Study the potential and fit of agri-tourism for Bloomington.

Objective: Coordinate with Stonegate Agricom on value added businesses to support mining operations.

Property Rights

Goal: To protect property rights from infringement by others.

Objective: Develop a framework where property rights are protected and citizens treated equally.

Objective: Allow the highest and best use of the land that the natural resources will support.

Population

Goal: To prepare for and encourage a diversified population.

Objective: Allow and encourage housing that would benefit lower income residents.

Objective: Promote self-help housing as an option that would benefit lower income residents and give them a stake in construction.

Recreation

Goal: Provide access via roads and trails for summer and winter sports.

Objective: Maintain and allow access to mountain roads and trails maintaining the rural atmosphere and development.

Community Design

Goal: Preserve open space in usable quantities and locations.

Objective: Promote and encourage the use of existing irrigation easements as pathways.

Objective: Encourage development around commercial centers to reduce sprawl and maintain open space and agricultural production.

Goal: Seek to make Bloomington a walk-able, sustainable community.

Objective: Utilize guidance from the Bear Lake Valley Blueprint in community development.

Objective: Encourage commercial development off of US 89 to reduce congestion and vehicular conflict.

Goal: encourage commercial centers to reflect history of the community through appropriate design standards.

Objective: Develop storefront standards that reflect the rural nature of the community including materials, lighting, and colors.

Agriculture

Goal: Preserve the agricultural lifestyle enjoyed by many who reside and visit the area.

Goal: Continue to value agriculture as a way of life.

Goal: Assess environmental conditions to promote diversified agriculture.

Sources

www.census.gov

soils.usda.gov/survey/online surveys/Idaho/ID712/BearLake.pdf

www.wcc.nrcs.usda.gov/ftpref/support/climate/soil-nar/id/bearlake.doc

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service 1993 Birds of Bear Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Idaho U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Unpaginated.

Jamestown, ND: Northern Prairie Wildlife Research Center Online.
<http://www.npwrc.usgs.gov/bearlake.htm>
(Version 26 MAY 1998)

"History of Bloomington, Idaho," by Alfred B. Hart, compiled May 12, 1933, and also facts researched by Letha D. Madsen and Nadine D. Nelson.

www.city-data.com