

City of American Falls
Comprehensive Plan

Planning For Today & Tomorrow
2007-2027



Picture by Fred Harms



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Introduction

Comprehensive Planning for the next 20 years is an involved process, which at best reflects the needs and desires of the community it is to benefit. A plan should give the public, business and government agencies a clear understanding of the City's intentions and desires regarding its future development, which will lead to greater cooperation and minimize potential conflicts. The plan is intended to be a set of positive, rather than restrictive statements concerning What American Falls wishes to be and accomplish and to introduce long-range considerations into the determination of short-range actions.

Although the year 2020 is used as a planning reference date in the plan, it is related more to circumstances than to a specific future date. Because of the incremental, gradual, and often unpredictable nature of community development, no fixed date can apply to all the goals, policies and proposals expressed in a plan. The policies in this plan are designed to have sufficient flexibility to respond to changes in the rate, type and location of growth. At the same time, it calls for a pattern of urban containment and the preservation of highly productive agricultural land, with a circulation and urban service pattern that will reinforce the present compact pattern of urban development, arrest the sprawl development that is beginning, and provide for future growth consistent with the current environmental quality of the city. It also calls for directed growth in a manner which will allow maintenance of high levels of public service at reasonable cost.

Planning is a continuous process. As conditions change and new information becomes available, objectives and priorities of the city may change, and goals and policies may be modified. This plan is intended to be the public policy instrument for growth of American Falls and as such, must be responsive to change, forward-looking, understood, and publicly supported. It should be regularly reviewed and revised, if necessary, to reflect the community's changing attitudes and desires.

Further, the City of American Falls cannot be planned independently of Power County. Cooperation and communication with the County are important in the ongoing maintenance and implementation of both the City and the County Comprehensive Plans.

The comprehensive plan should not be viewed as a final statement of a city's vision. With time, its population will change, its goals may be redefined, and the physical environment in which its residents live and work will be altered. The plan simply represents a consensus at a particular time on planning issues and policies. As a result, it is recommended that the plan be periodically revised to respond to and reflect changing conditions.

The Goals, Objectives and Policies

The Comprehensive Plan contains a narrative element of thirteen planning components, each with goal, policy, and implementation statements and a graphic element of plan maps depicting land use and vehicular circulation. This plan is intended to facilitate the land use decision making process by covering the major categories of physical development in relation to the needs of the citizens. Each Comprehensive Plan element contains the following subsections:

* **Goals:** Goals usually are stated in broad terms to reflect community wide values. The ultimate purpose of a goal is stated in a way that is general in nature and immeasurable. They provide the community a direction in which to travel, not a location to reach.

* **Objectives:** The objective statement defines the meaning of the goal; describes how to accomplish the goal, and suggests a method of accomplishing it. It advances a specific purpose, aim, ambition or element of a goal. It can describe the end state of the goal, its purpose, or a course of action necessary to achieve the goal.

* **Policies:** Policies are specific statements that guide actions, imply clear commitment and express the manner in which future actions will be taken. They are, however, flexible rules that can adapt to different situations and circumstances.

Fourteen Elements of the Comprehensive Plan

A Comprehensive Plan is the official statement of a jurisdiction, setting forth its major goals and policies concerning desirable future physical development. The broad scope of the plan is reflected in its various elements – population, land use, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, and many more – all combined into one planning document. The Comprehensive Plan includes the following thirteen elements as required by law:

- â **Private Property Rights:** the property rights interpretation of this element is that of a warning to government and property owners to be aware of private property rights.
- â **Population and Growth:** is an analysis of past, present, and future trends in population.
- â **School Facilities and Transportation:** this element requires cities and counties to consider school capacities, facilities and transportation needs.
- â **Economic Development:** examines trends and presents policies for maintaining a positive growth rate, including employment, industries, jobs and income levels.
- â **Land Use:** encompasses the current vision for a mix of future land uses.
- â **Natural Resources:** an analysis of the uses of waters, forests, ranges and soils.
- â **Hazardous Areas:** an analysis of known hazards as may result from seismic activity, landslides or mudslides, floodplain hazards, and man-made hazards.
- â **Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities:** an analysis showing general plans for sewage, water supply, fire stations, public safety facilities, library, energy, and related services.
- â **Transportation:** an analysis showing the community's transportation infrastructure which addresses efficient mobility of people, goods, and services.
- â **Parks and Recreation:** ensures the provision of permanent open and recreational space, and identifies future facilities.
- â **Housing:** identifies housing needs and plans for improvement of housing standards and safe, sanitary, and adequate housing.

- â **Cultural and Historic Sites:** an analysis of areas, sites, or structures of historical, archaeological or scenic significance.
- â **Community Design:** an analysis of landscaping, site design, beautification, signage, and uniformity in residential development.
- â **Implementation / Policies:** an analysis of specific actions needed to implement and support the comprehensive plan.
- â **Electric Power Corridor.**

Format for the Comprehensive Plan

The 2007 updated American Falls Comprehensive Plan is printed in a three-column format for easy reading. The goals are in the top text box with the objectives in the left column and the policies in the right column in the lower portion of the page. For convenience, each of the thirteen elements are outlined as chapters, with a glossary of terms as an appendix in the back of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Area in Perspective

Power County is the 21st largest county in the State of Idaho in size and 34th in population. The total land area is 929,000 acres.

Private lands comprise about 47%. Roughly 17% is included within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation and the remaining 36% is in state or federal ownership.

The economy in the area is based upon agricultural uses and manufacturing. The County's industrial products include fresh-pack potatoes, frozen French fries, phosphate fertilizers, elemental phosphorus, soil sampling equipment, and potato harvesting and handling machines.

American Falls is the county seat for Power County. It is located 18 miles from Pocatello, and approximately 70 miles from Idaho Falls. American Falls is approximately 283 miles from Yellowstone, 170 miles from Sun Valley and 175 miles from Salt Lake city. With the residents in such close proximity to recreational areas, they are able to enjoy year-round outdoor activities such as alpine, cross-country and water skiing, hunting, fishing, camping, and snowmobiling.

American Falls is the hub of three highways and an interstate which makes the city easily accessible by cars, trucks, and buses. Interstate 86 runs parallel to the Southern boundaries of the city and provides highway access to the east and west. The construction of a bypass for State Highway 39 eliminated the heavy truck traffic through the middle of town. Union Pacific runs along the North and West edges of town, and transports freight traffic only.

History of American Falls

The name American Falls comes from the falls on the Snake River located immediately south of the city. The city has about 4,111 people. It is the largest city in Power County and is the county seat.

In 1925, the main part of the city was established in its present location, when construction of the American Falls Reservoir, which eventually covered the original townsite, began. The other incorporated city in Power County is Rockland, with a current population of about 316 people.

Chapter One Rights

Property

PROPERTY RIGHTS

The effects government agency policies and regulations have on individual property rights is an issue of importance reflected in Federal and State Constitutions. Idaho Code Section 67-6502 (a), states that one purpose of a comprehensive plan is to “protect property rights and enhance property values”. This plan recognizes this importance and also that a change in use of property can affect individual property rights and the community as a whole. The freedom to use one’s property comes with accepting responsibility for one’s actions and avoiding or mitigating adverse impacts. This Plan and City ordinances provide City Officials and landowners with tools to fulfill this responsibility.

Property rights include the protection of zoning, and the ability to redevelop property within zoning guidelines. A violation of private property rights in the regulation or action by a government agency is considered a “taking”. The U.S. Supreme Court has made several rulings on this subject. Land use planning law on this topic continues to evolve.

Goal 1: Protect private property rights when balancing development impacts on adjoining private properties and the general community.

Goal 2: Create ordinances that can be easily understood by the general public.

Short Term Action Plan

1. Amend the Zoning Code, Subdivision, and Planned Unit Development Ordinance to include a procedure and review of ‘taking’ claims against the City.
2. Revise and update the sign section of the Zoning Code to display the sign standards in a more understandable format, including continuity between zoning districts.
3. Revise the Zoning Code, Subdivision, and Planned Unit Development Ordinances as necessary so the standards reflect clearly the intent of the Ordinances.

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.

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.

Office of the Attorney General **Checklist**

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. A 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 of Tigard*, 114 U.S. 2309 [June 24, 1994]).

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

If a regulation prohibits all economically viable or beneficial uses of the land, it will likely constitute a “taking.” In this situation, the agency can avoid liability for just compensation only if it can demonstrate that the proposed uses are prohibited by the laws of nuisances or other pre-existing limitations 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 regulation. Although a reduction in property 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 recreational purposes where the harm to be prevented was to the flood plain was a “taking.” In finding this to be a “taking,” the Court stated;

The city never demonstrated why a public green way, 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 her ability to exclude others ... [T]his right to exclude others is “one of the most essential sticks in the bundle of rights that are commonly characterized as property.”

Dolan v. City of Tigard, 114 U.S. 2309 (June 24, 1994). The United States Supreme Court has also held that barring the inheritance (an essential attribute of ownership) of certain interest in land held by individual members of an 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?

A regulation 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 [June 24, 1994]).

In *Nollan*, the United States Supreme Court held that it was an unconstitutional “taking” to condition the issuance 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. Lacking 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.

Chapter Two Population and Growth

Public development policies concerning the timing, location and construction of facilities are based on population distribution and anticipated growth patterns. In addition, private market decisions for commercial and residential activities depend on projected population growth and demographic factors. Consequently, adequate knowledge of the historic population growth and the characteristics of that population are necessary to determine future land uses within the city of American Falls.

Population History

American Falls is the county seat for Power County. In 1990, Power County's population was 6,844, with 3,626 of the citizens residing within city limits. The population in the city remains a little higher than 50% of the county from 1970-2000.

Table 1: Population History

| | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 2006 |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| American Falls | 2,769 | 3,626 | 3,757 | 4,111 |
| Power County | 4,864 | 6,844 | 7,086 | 7,538 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, Idaho and Woods and Poole Economics Inc., 1998 State Profiles, ID and OR and WA. Idaho Department of Commerce, County Profiles of Idaho

* Projection is based upon .9.4% change in 1990-2000 according to the Bureau of Census, April 1, 2000.

A decrease in population between 1980 and 1990 was typical in the western United States due to the depressed agricultural economy in the 1980's. However, American Falls and Power County's population did not decrease. Even though the State was experiencing a decrease in residents in the 80's, by the late 80's and early 90's, Power County and the City of American Falls experienced a steady influx of people.

Population Projection

The population for the City of American Falls in 2005 is a projection reflecting to the percent change between 1990 to 2000 at a 9.4% increase. Between 1990 and 2000 the community experienced a 9.4% growth rate. The projection for Power County is based on a 6.4% growth rate between the years 1990 and 2000.

Table 2: Population Projection

| | 2005 | 2010 | 2020 |
|----------------|-------|-------|-------|
| American Falls | 4,150 | 4,345 | 4,753 |

Power County 7,153 7,382 7,854

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, Idaho and Woods and Poole Economics Inc., 1998 State Profiles, ID and OR and WA. Idaho Department of Commerce, County Profiles of Idaho

* Projections are based upon growth rate according to the Department of Commerce.

The population projection from 2005 to 2020 within American Falls is based upon a 9.4% growth rate. The projection for Power County is slightly lower with a 6.4% growth rate. With the projected increase of 603 residents in American Falls, the city will have to plan for the impact on city services, roads, schools, and housing in order to accommodate the increased growth.

The concentration of the American Falls population in the 25 – 44 year old range contains over 25 percent of the total population.

Age Distribution and Household Size

Table 3: Population by Age Group, 2000

| Age | American Falls | Power County |
|--------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| 0 – 4 | 392 | 632 |
| 5 – 19 | 1,109 | 2,126 |
| 20 – 24 | 251 | 421 |
| 25 – 44 | 1,021 | 1,916 |
| 45 – 64 | 836 | 1,660 |
| 65+ | 502 | 783 |
| TOTAL | 4,111 | 7,538 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, Idaho

When planning for growth in the city and county, it is important to review all segments of the population. The age group 5 – 19, is an important aspect when calculating the growth rate of area schools and in planning the development of new schools.

The elderly population is also an element of the population which needs to be considered when developing new services or programs. It is important to include the special needs of this age group in order to accommodate the specific needs of the older population. Some of the considerations are transportation, affordable housing, senior citizen centers, medical services, etc.

Table 4: Median age, Population 5 through 19, Population Age 65 and Over, 2000

| | Median Age | Percent Age 5 – 19 | Percent Age 65+ |
|----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| American Falls | 30.5 | 11.9% | 12% |
| Power County | 31.6 | 2.8% | 10% |
| Idaho | 31.5 | 23% | 12% |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, and Woods and Poole Economics Inc., 1998 State Profiles, ID and OR and WA.

Nationally the rate of household growth has exceeded population growth rates. In the 1970's and 1980's an increasing divorce rate and a delay in the age of first marriages stimulated household growth rates, according to Idaho Power census data.

The need for services to individual households changes depending on how many people on average live in a home. The age of the population, in turn, influences the household size and the need for certain services. Smaller household sizes, indicative of large percentages of retired and elderly residents, tend to increase the demand for housing and medical/emergency services and decrease the need for schools.

Table 5: Households and Household Size, 2000

| | Number of Households | Persons per Households |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| American Falls | 1,429 | 2.84 |
| Power County | 2,560 | 2.92 |
| Idaho | 360,723 | 2.73 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, Idaho.

Minority Population

Table 6: Minority Status in Power County and American Falls City, 2000

| | Power County | American Falls City |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|
| White | 5,592 | 2,886 |
| Hispanic or Latino | 1,638 | 1,144 |
| American Indian, Eskimo and Aleut | 280 | 64 |
| Other | 28 | 17 |
| All Persons | 7,538 | 4,111 |

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Population and Housing Characteristics, Idaho.

Power County's population consists of 5,592 white residents which is approximately 74.2% of the total population, while American Falls' white population consists of 2,886 residents or 70.2% of the total population. American Indians and Asians account for approximately 3.7% in the county and 1.6% in American Falls of the total population. There are 1,638 Hispanic residents in the county and 1,144 in the City of American Falls. (Total population and percentages may not total because Hispanic origin may be of any race, according to the Census Bureau definition.)

Summary

Population forecasting is not an exact science, and economic conditions frequently change, significantly influencing population levels. It is recommended that an update of the demographic data is revised after the 2000 census is published and on an annual basis thereafter. Based on population forecasts, significant additional infrastructure and community facilities and services will be required to maintain the quality of life standards in the community.

GOAL: Provide for population growth, which is consistent with community goals and objectives as expressed in the Comprehensive Plan and enhance the quality and character of the community while providing and improving amenities and services.

OBJECTIVE:

1. Coordinate with Power County regarding planning for areas within the area of city impact, addressing regional growth, and supporting the City of American Falls Comprehensive Plan.

POLICIES:

1. Population forecasts from the Idaho Department of Commerce should be one of the tools to guide the development of services and utility needs.

Chapter Three Use

Land

This element of the plan deals with land use and the projected patterns for future use of land. Urbanization and various types of economic development bring about changes in land use patterns. These changes account for problems concerning land use and are usually focused in the general vicinity of growing cities. In some areas, impact on the agricultural base of the county is also increasing.

Land use is an integral part of every other element in a comprehensive plan. Effective land use planning is essential for numerous reasons:

- reserves areas well suited for types of business or industry that may require special access,
- allows for large areas of land or special site conditions,
- provides efficient movement of goods and people among interdependent land uses (e.g., employees to work, resources to industry, children to school)

A well-integrated and coordinated mixture of residential, commercial and other types of land uses creates a more dynamic and compact community.

The goal of the comprehensive plan is to assist in the arrangement of existing and future land uses in order to make them harmonious with each other and with the policies of the comprehensive plan. Achievement of this goal will result in more favorable conditions that stabilize and enhance the land use patterns of the county.

The analysis of existing land use is an important process in developing a basis for the comprehensive plan. This is particularly significant in the urban and fringe areas of the city where pressure for development is greatest. It is also significant in the agricultural areas where agriculture versus urbanization becomes pertinent.

Current Land Use Patterns

American Falls is typical of many small rural communities found in the Western United States where land use is predominantly agricultural and residential.

American Falls zoning regulations focus on promoting the health, safety, and general welfare of people within the community. The ordinance provides guidelines which assist city staff, council members and planning and zoning members when making land use decisions.

The American Falls zoning ordinance outlines specifications that will enable the city to promote the health and safety of the community. They are stated as follows:

- ◇ To protect property rights and enhance property values.
- ◇ To ensure adequate public facilities and services are provided to the public at a reasonable cost.

- ◇ To ensure the economy of the state and city is protected and enhanced.
- ◇ To ensure the important environmental features of the state and city are protected.
- ◇ To encourage protection of prime agricultural, forestry, and mining lands for production of food, fiber and minerals.
- ◇ To encourage urban and urban-type development within the city and the impact area.
- ◇ To avoid undue concentration of populations and overcrowding of land.
- ◇ To ensure the development of 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.

Land Use Regulations

According to American Falls zoning regulations, no building or structure shall be erected or structurally altered or used, unless otherwise provided in this ordinance, except in conformity with the regulations herein set forth for the zone or use district in which such building or structure is located. In addition, the specific purposes of each zoning district shall be as stated "No residence or commercial building shall be erected or moved onto any lot, tract, or parcel of land in any use district or zone adopted under the provisions of this Ordinance unless said lot, tract, or parcel of land has been legally platted and a building permit is issued in accordance with the building code."

Area of City Impact

Pursuant to Idaho Code Section §67-6526 Areas of City Impact – Negotiation Procedure; "a separate ordinance providing for application of plans and ordinances of the area of city impact shall be adopted. Subject to the provisions of Section §50-222, Idaho Code, an area of city impact must be established before a city may annex adjacent territory." In defining an area of city impact, the following factors should be considered:

- (1) Trade areas;
- (2) Geographic factors;
- (3) Areas that can reasonably be expected to be annexed to the city in the future.

The City of American Falls shall have an agreement in place with Power County for land use decisions in pre-defined impact areas surrounding the city. The boundaries of the area of city impact are contingent upon negotiations with Power County. Consensus should be reached by both parties, in a timely fashion, on all matters regarding the public good.

Land Use Component

The city council and the Planning and Zoning Commission, as well as citizens and developers, are involved in questions of physical development. At each planning and zoning meeting and city council meeting, development decisions are made concerning annexation, re-zoning, subdivision developments, conditional use permits, zoning variances, etc.

Due to this responsibility it is necessary for the city to adopt policies and guidelines which provide a framework for making these decisions resolving issues. It is the comprehensive plan which provides this framework.

It is important to keep in mind the comprehensive plan is a representation of the future of American Falls. It must also be emphasized that while the land use component may represent a combination of other components within this plan, it is only one of the components to be considered when determining whether a particular proposal is consistent with the comprehensive plan. When determining what the comprehensive plan requires or permits, each component must be considered, and then a decision can be made.

GOAL: Provide a sound basis for urbanization by establishing proper relationships between residential, office, commercial, industrial, public, and high-tech land use and foster a development pattern that is compact rather than scattered in order to discourage urban sprawl, reduce the extent and cost of public services and preserve open space surrounding and within the city.

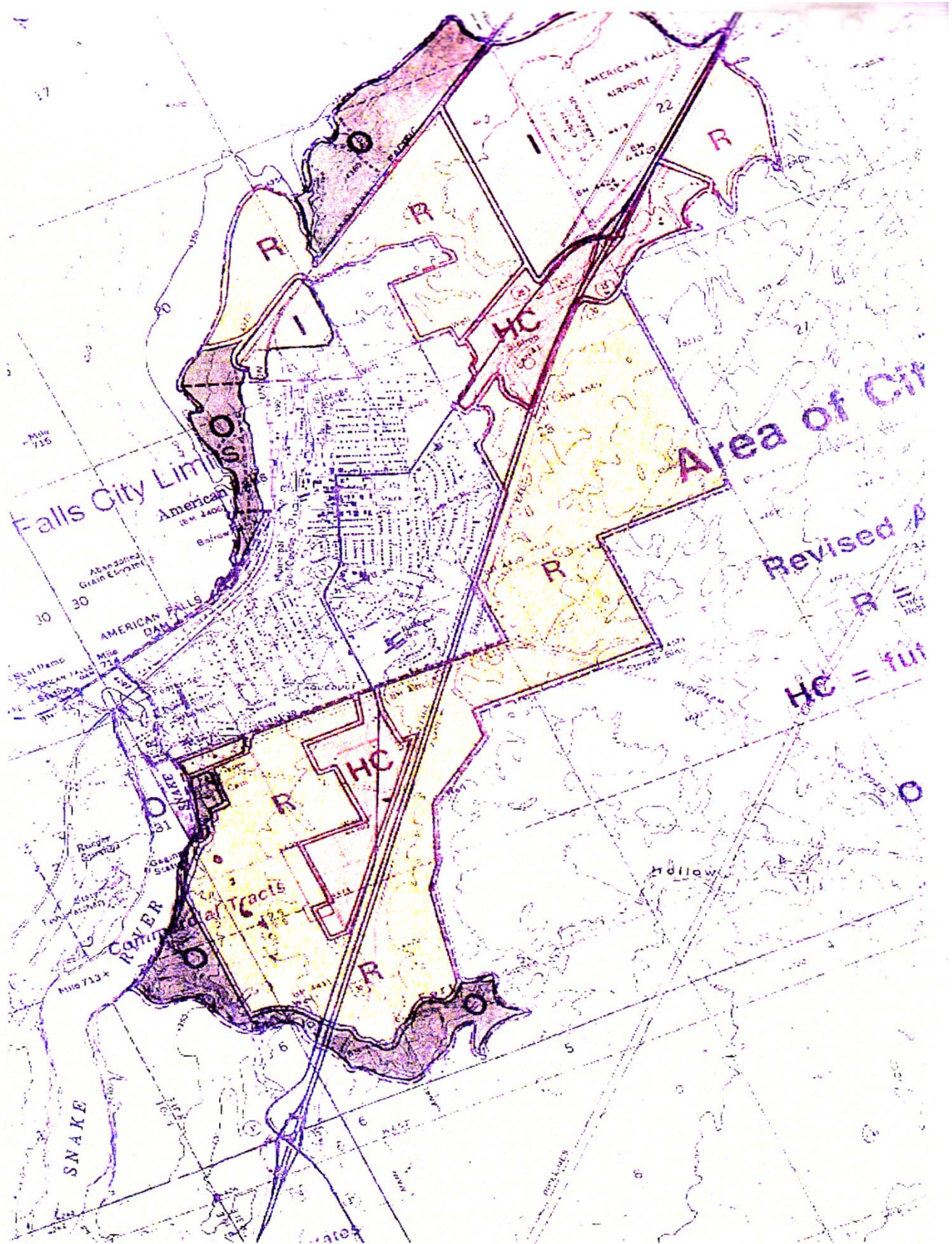
OBJECTIVES:

1. The land use map and comprehensive plan should be a guide for development of the planning area implemented through zoning, subdivision and other development ordinances.
2. Encourage the preservation of prime agricultural land.
3. Encourage the development of convenient, well designed neighborhoods and commercial areas.
4. Encourage the development of commercial and industrial land uses in areas that are not adverse to neighboring areas.
5. Maintain and enhance diverse building types and land uses in the central business district.
6. Establish and annually review the city's annexation plan.
7. Encourage infill development.
8. Encourage economic development activities in commercial areas.
9. Encourage the preservation of historic structures.
10. Maintain the central business district as the office, financial, retail and cultural center of American Falls.
11. Determine the fiscal impact of state and county programs on the City of American Falls infrastructure.

POLICIES:

1. Neighborhood and community shopping centers should be located on collectors and arterials.
2. Heavy and light industries that generate noise or odors should be located away from existing and future residential development.
3. Allow mixed-use development only under a Special Use Permit.
4. Develop an infill development ordinance.
5. Negotiate area of city impact agreement with Power County.
6. Develop downtown revitalization plan and budget for it.
7. Preserve and maintain open space within the city.
8. Develop an annexation plan and provide a budget for annexation.
9. Develop a historic preservation plan working with the county.
10. Encourage rehabilitation of the central business district.

11. Restrict lighting and encourage the use of down cast lighting of commercial uses, especially near residential areas.
12. Buffer areas should continue to be required between commercial and residential zones to reduce the effects of noise, lights and traffic caused by commercial activity.
13. The schools and parks already located within, or near, the City of American Falls create an established land use pattern which encourages some development and limits other types of incompatible uses near those facilities.



Chapter Four

Transportation

Mobility, or the ease and methods which people and goods are able to carry out daily functions on safe and reliable transportation routes is of paramount importance to the City of American Falls. This is because the transportation system serves a large area heavily dependent on automobiles and trucks for transportation means. The form of our community, the design of individual subdivisions and the ability to travel to places of residence all revolve around a network of roads and highways.

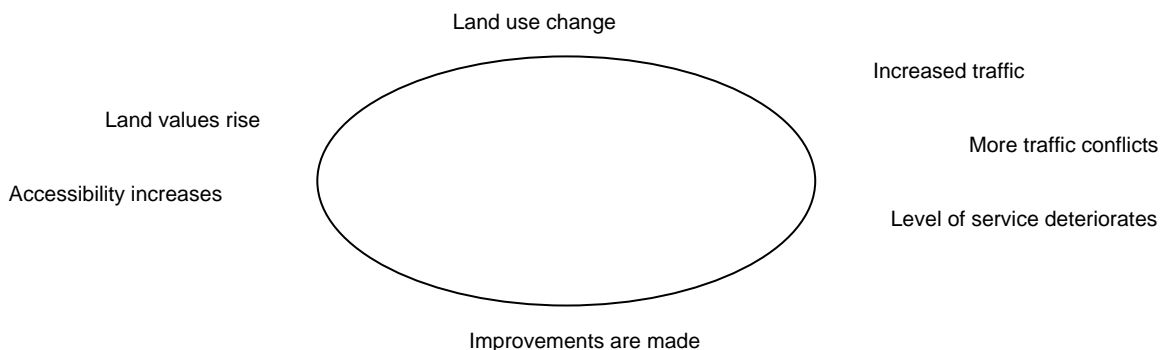
The comprehensive plan not only addresses both internal and external transportation, but also alternative modes of transportation, such as pedestrian, bicycle and public transit. Internal circulation refers to the transportation and mobility of people and goods within the city, while external circulation refers to transportation between American Falls and other locales in South Eastern ID.

American Falls is well connected to major state and federal road systems. Interstate 86, Idaho 37 and Idaho 39, provide excellent access to state and regional networks. The rail and bus systems and close proximity to the Idaho Falls and Pocatello Airports provide a nearly complete transportation system.

Gary Shaff and Associates developed the City of American Falls Transportation Plan, in January 1, 2003, which is a detailed transportation analysis of the American Falls area. The study assesses existing traffic conditions and forecasts future traffic conditions. As the city grows, it is important to develop and adopt standards for road improvements. A roadway inventory and pavement management program should be advanced by the city that will assist in prioritizing projects and assist in developing a complete maintenance program.

Transportation Cycle – Land Use:

The transportation plan identifies projects and provides recommendations for future improvements. The local transportation system links the community together by providing access to different land uses and public facilities. The relationship between the transportation component and the land use component within the comprehensive plan is best explained as a cycle. The cycle begins when a change in land use generates more traffic. The transportation cycle is illustrated as follows:



Source: Transportation in Your Local Comprehensive Plan, A Guide for Local Government Officials, Idaho Transportation Department.

Service deteriorates as traffic increases and citizens begin to complain to their elected officials about how long they had to wait to make a turn or cross the street. At some point, improvements are made; a turning lane or traffic signal is added at a busy intersection, a street is widened, a bridge is replaced. But the improvements increase the accessibility of the area, generating a demand for more intense land use, which generates more traffic, starting the cycle again.

The cycle of land use change, deteriorating service, and improvements followed by further land use change can happen anywhere. The impact of one small subdivision on a county that never before had to plow the road may be just as dramatic as the impact of a shopping center on the fringe of a city.

Economic Development

A community's transportation system is part of the framework within which its economy functions. A comprehensive plan that addresses economic development may need to include an effort to ensure access via highways, rail lines, and air.

Public Service and Facilities

Transportation interacts with other public facilities and services. All potentially affected service providers, including school districts and utility companies, should be involved in planning the transportation component of the comprehensive plan.

An example of a policy that addresses one of the several concerns shared by transportation and the local school district is:

New elementary schools should be sited so that students do not have to cross arterial streets.

Transportation concerns within the comprehensive plan also influence utility providers. Utility lines often run beneath or along streets and highways, linking their maintenance and improvements with the transportation system. Most Idaho cities, counties, and highway districts have a working relationship with the local power, telephone, and cable television providers which run utility lines in public right-of-ways.

Natural Resources

The improvement or construction of transportation routes and facilities can impact the environment. Information gathered for the natural resources, hazardous areas, and special areas components of the plan assess how planned transportation improvements will affect productive crop and forest lands; streams and lakes; floodplains, steep slopes, and other naturally hazardous areas; or historic and other special sites. The natural resource component of the comprehensive plan is also the place to address one of the fundamental needs of any jurisdiction which maintains trails, streets, highways, or runways: maintaining adequate sources of aggregate.

Multi-jurisdictional

The need for coordination in transportation planning will ensure that a safe, efficient transportation system is available to individual communities. Discussions among agencies will also help ensure that the components of the plan - transportation, land use, public facilities, utilities and others - effectively support one another.

Functional Classifications

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) classifies roadways as: interstate, arterials, collectors, and local streets. Function determines the difference in the road classifications. Ninety percent of our traffic is carried on the interstates and our arterial and collector streets. The classifications of the major roads in American Falls are:

⇒ **Interstate**

An interstate provides movement between different cities and between important centers of activity. In the American Falls urban area, Interstate 86 provides access to the region.

⇒ **Arterial Streets**

Arterials streets serve through-traffic between important centers of activity in a metropolitan area.

- Principal Arterial Roads: State Highway 39.
- Minor Arterial Roads: I-86 Business Loop; Lincoln Street, Fort Hall Avenue, Pocatello Avenue, and a portion of Harrison Street.

⇒ **Collector Streets**

Collector streets serve to gather and funnel traffic from local streets to arterial streets. They include medium traffic volume streets which collect traffic from local roadways and distribute traffic to other arterials. Generally, they can accommodate two lanes of traffic and parking is discouraged. They may serve as boundaries for neighborhoods, as well as buffers between incompatible land uses because of their 60-foot rights-of-way.

- Collector Roads: Pocatello Avenue and Lincoln Street.
- Minor Collector Roads: Fort Hall Avenue, Idaho Street, Harrison Street, and Roosevelt Street

⇒ **Local Streets**

Local streets serve residential developments and provide local access. They provide direct access to adjacent residential areas and provide local traffic movement. The roadways are generally two lanes with parking and a right-of-way width of 60 feet and a paved width of 42 feet. The use of cul-de-sac streets should be discouraged.

Transit

Cars, trucks, buses, pedestrians and bicyclists all use the roads. With an increase in population, traffic congestion is often the result. One solution to the congestion is to either expand existing roads or to build new roads. Another solution is to decrease use of roads by encouraging alternative routes and modes of travel. It is often difficult to construct new roads or widen existing roads within the city limits. Many of the current rights-of-way do not allow for expansion of many of the existing roads.

Summary

The timing, location and expansion of the transportation system are important factors affecting urban development. A major concern of the community regarding the transportation system is the need to maintain and improve the livability of the residential areas in the face of new population and transportation requirements.

Increases in population and related commercial and industrial expansion bring about demands for better transportation planning and implementation. Improvements required for the transportation network places a heavy burden on the county highway district's budget as they attempt to meet these demands.

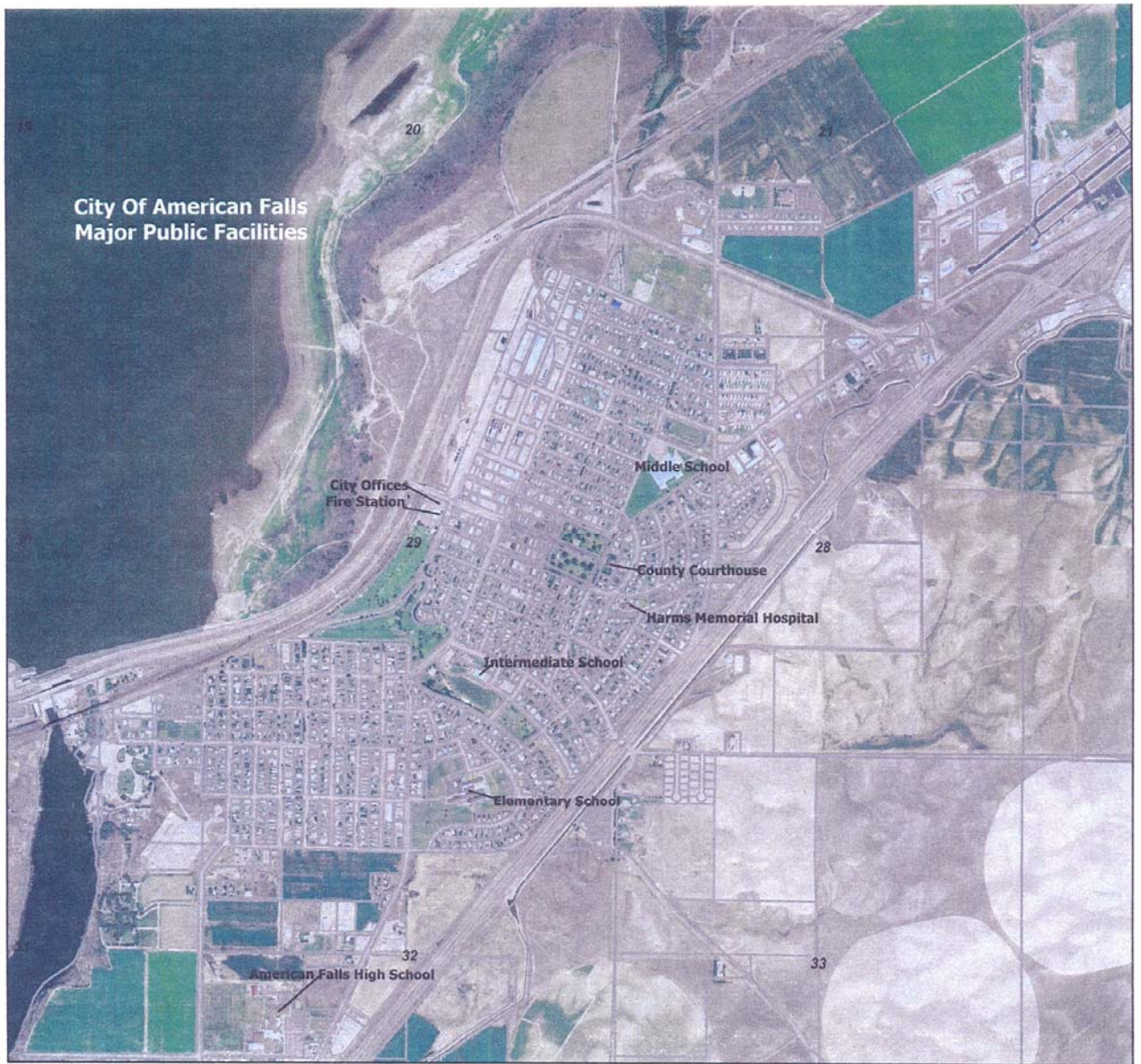
GOAL: Provide and encourage safe, convenient, aesthetic and economical transportation.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Promote ease of access in and through all portions of the city.
2. Improve the city's circulation plan.
3. Promote various modes of alternative transportation, which will reduce air pollution, noise and fuel consumption.
4. Provide a balanced, comprehensive transportation and circulation system coordinated with land use.

POLICIES:

1. Promote downtown circulation patterns that are pedestrian friendly.
2. Develop a street circulation master plan.
 - a. Prepare and maintain an operations maintenance program.
 - b. Prepare and implement a bicycle, pedestrian, and "alternative form" of transportation plan.
 - c. Develop a truck route master plan.
3. Reduce the number of curb cuts along arterial streets.
4. Develop an on- and off-street parking plan.
5. Facilitate the development of mass transportation.
6. Give continuing priority to the arterial farm-to-market thoroughfare system.
7. Encourage connectivity of streets and street patterns, e.g. limiting the use of cul-de-sacs.



Chapter Five

Community Design

Background and Vision

Community design is the organized fashion in which a community is developed in order that general mood or theme is established and maintained.

Elements of the American Falls community design include: (a) a rural transitional community with a shopping district functioning as the hub of the community; (b) transportation that is safe and functional; (c) the schools, parks, river, reservoir, city center and public facilities have and create an established structure in the community; and (d) an adjacent freeway and railroad tracks are on the perimeter of the City.

Development will occur in the downtown area, as well as along arterial roads. City growth and increased traffic levels on Pocatello Avenue and Lincoln Avenue will stimulate demand for new development along these entrances. These same corridors have great potential for more intensive mixed-use development.

Goal

Strive to create an aesthetically pleasing community and protect the unique natural beauty and small town character of the City.

Entry Corridors

Entryway corridors are arterial roadways that introduce both visitors and residents to American Falls. City entryways include State Highway 39 and Interstate 86. These entrances with their landscaping, or lack thereof, commercial signage and building character provide the first, and oftentimes the most lasting impressions, of the entire community. The City of American Falls has the responsibility to guide development and redevelopment that occurs along these entryway corridors.

Design review procedures should guide future development and redevelopment of existing uses. Depending on land uses and buildings, more extensive landscaping and fewer points of access may be required. The design review process will afford the opportunity to address the special features of each property and facility in the manner that will best address the overall intent of enhancing American Falls' entryways. American Falls should aggressively seek to improve and enhance the aesthetics of the entryway corridors.

Implementation Strategies

1. Establish and maintain a development pattern and design criteria in keeping with the rural transitional identity of American Falls. This includes growth within the Impact Area that discourages or precludes the establishment of other City centers.
2. The City limits shall be that area as defined by ordinance of the City of American Falls.

3. The floodway shall be reserved as a natural state, such as a greenbelt, wildlife habitat, and open space recreational area and for agricultural uses.
4. The City Development Code shall set forth criteria for building design, landscaping, signage and other aesthetic standards.
5. Developments that would establish or tend to establish another City center outside of the Central Business District should not be approved.
6. Excessively large single entity businesses that would jeopardize the competitive business environment should be discouraged.
7. New residential, commercial, and industrial development shall be required to meet minimum design standards as specified by City Ordinances.
8. The integration of historic structures should be encouraged within new developments.
9. Buffer and transition zones should be developed between conflicting types of land use.
10. The Urban Service Planning Area, as defined by ordinance, should be established as the prime urban development area of the City and Impact Area. Development should be allowed in the area on the condition that sewer and domestic water facilities would be provided to such development as described by the Water Supply and Sewer Policies of the Public Services Facilities and Utilities section of this Comprehensive Plan.
11. Encourage the preservation of natural resources such as creeks, drainages, steep slopes, and ridge lines as visual amenities.
12. Encourage the development of pathways and open-space corridors throughout the City.
13. Encourage the development of a strong community identity through urban design standards, downtown revitalization, cultural activities, and visual gateways to the City.
14. Prepare and adopt design guidelines and development standards to be the basis for design review of curbs, gutters, sidewalls, architecture, landscaping, signage and other visual impacts of developed projects. All new development must pay for itself and the placement by the developer of necessary infrastructure, including the water sewer system, curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, which are of critical of importance.
15. Encourage the planting and preservation of trees that will create beauty and add to the healthy environment of the downtown area (see American Falls Tree Plan).
16. Protect and enhance the small town character of the City by requiring signage which is creative and distinctive, compatible with its surroundings and an integral component of the style and character of the building to which it relates.
17. Maintain the rural residential character and open space environment in and around the City.

18. Consider development of an ordinance or other suitable measure to stimulate redevelopment in areas determined by the City Council to be in need of renewal.

American Falls Tree Plan

GOALS:

1. To establish and enhance areas of tree growth that will create beauty, add to a healthy environment, and increase economic stability.
2. To maintain an active "Tree Committee" to ensure quality urban forestry practices within the City of American Falls.

OBJECTIVES:

- A. To create an urban forest that will help reduce air and noise pollution, conserve water and reduce soil erosion, assist in modifying the local climate, increase property values, and improve American Falls' economy by providing a pleasant and more comfortable place to shop and live.
- B. To encourage economic growth by establishing a more inviting atmosphere for locations of business.
- C. To maintain an active "Tree Committee" with at least one City official to perpetuate the plan.
- D. To adopt an ordinance to provide for the future care and maintenance of the trees within the City of American Falls and also establish a guideline of types and sizes of trees to be planted.

Implementation Strategies

1. Establish an inventory plan to keep track of tree location, age, and desirable planting locations.
2. Establish a recommended maintenance program.
3. Provide a plan to plant 300 or more trees over the next several years in the downtown core area, in our City parks and long residential streets. The plan should be implemented in several phases over a period of time.

Community Structure Goal

American Falls' visual and physical environment should be comfortable with variety, character, and be expressive of the City's function, history, agricultural culture, and natural setting.

Policy: Examine all new development for appropriateness in regards to the character of the proposed area.

Implementation: Establish criteria for compatibility to area, construction, landscaping, signs, setbacks, open space, and parking. Recognize and establish

hazardous areas and consider all developments as they would affect the people and property in the area of the proposed development.

Policy: Encourage the rehabilitation and development of the downtown business district so as to provide a convenient and pleasant shopping atmosphere.

Implementation: Encourage cleanliness and the providing of benches, landscaping, and pleasant visual development while providing for adequate parking facilities and efficient traffic flow.

Policy: All neighborhoods and districts in American Falls should be encouraged to develop in a manner and way that expresses a concern and appreciation for qualities of environment, while maintaining unique characteristics which allow the area to be recognized as an individual entity.

Implementation: Encourage rehabilitation of existing structures, tree planting, landscaping, and preservation of ground cover, new construction of a design and nature to be compatible with the surrounding areas and, at all times, encourage neighborhood and community input during the consideration of proposed development.

Chapter Six

Cultural and Historic Sites

Historic Sites

This element of the plan addresses sites which are significant for their historical, archeological, and scenic value or have a special purpose within the community. Such sites should be identified and protected for the benefit of future residents.

Only one American Falls structure is currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places: The Power County Courthouse. The “East Shore American Falls Power Plants” site is also on the National Register, although not in the City limits. The 1924 plan for moving American Falls uphill from its original site represents an interesting part of planning history in the American West.

The City of American Falls has a fairly new City Hall that was built in 1994 and houses not only administrative offices but the water and sewer department, economic development, planning and zoning and building departments, as well as the American Falls Police Department.

Many of the religious institutions in the area also have historical significance to the community.

Other historic places not listed and buildings in the American Falls community include, but are not limited to:

- England Hotel (England Apartments)
- Schiltes Memorial Hospital (Power County Youth Center/Museum/Extension Office)
- Gardner Hotel

Future Conditions

American Falls has a number of architecturally and historically significant buildings and sites that continue to reinforce the character of the city. It is important to preserve and enhance this mixture of architectural styles and eras that maintain a sense of historic continuity and link with the past.

As the city continues to grow, it is time to designate and protect those sites and areas that are important to the city’s heritage and its character.

GOAL: Maintain and improve the quality of local cultural and historic sites.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Conduct a reconnaissance survey to identify and determine the location of historic structures.
2. Review and update the city’s historical preservation program by identifying any new special areas or sites.

POLICES:

1. Develop policies for the preservation of historic areas and architecturally significant.
2. Develop an oral, written and pictorial history of American Falls.
3. Identify and establish an inventory of historic, architectural, archeological, scenic and ecological sites.
4. Form a citizen committee to review and make recommendations to the City Council regarding the inventory of historic, architectural, archeological, scenic and ecological sites.

Chapter Seven

Economic Development

The economic development element of the comprehensive plan is to provide decision makers with goals and policies that recognize the necessity of economic development while retaining those attributes that make American Falls a desirable community. It focuses on the economic base of the area including employment, industries, and income levels.

Economic development is a vital part of the overall development and quality of life in the American Falls area. Location with respect to good agricultural land, suitable industrial ground, adequate rail transportation, an interstate freeway system through the area and proximity to Idaho Falls, Pocatello, Boise and Idaho State University are major assets which make economic growth in the area feasible.

The driving force of any local economy is the exchange of goods and services with other locales. Power County “exports” food processing products to other areas, while its residents “import” a variety of goods and services from other places. Basic industry that exports goods or services is considered to be basic because it generates the earnings needed to buy goods and services produced in other places. The identification of basic industries can be complicated, but local knowledge and analysis indicate that the basic sectors of the Power County economy are agriculture, manufacturing, and government. These sectors bring in the dollars from other areas and support local activity in the other sectors.

History of American Falls

The agricultural industry itself has undergone some healthy changes over the past 50 years. Sprinkling irrigation systems and better fertilizer products brought about an expanding capability for production. Food processing plants established in the area have assisted in strengthening the local agricultural economy. Agriculture directly and indirectly supports over 70% of all local economic activity. What affects agriculture, affects American Falls.

With the city’s growing population and job base comes the need for increased municipal services and the need to improve existing services. The cost of providing these services presents a fiscal challenge to American Falls. One of the ways American Falls can meet this challenge is by continuing to expand its economic base.

Existing Conditions

The Agribusiness Sector: Combining the direct and indirect impacts of jobs on the farm with employment in the manufacture of farm machinery and fertilizers, employment in food processing, and employment in the wholesale trade in agricultural commodities leads to the conclusion that agribusiness supports at least 72% of all economic activity in American Falls and Power County. The remaining 28% of local economic activity is supported by manufacturing, primarily the manufacturing of elemental phosphorus.

Major employers include Driscoll Potatoes, Arts’ Manufacturing and Supply (AMS), American Falls School District No. 381, Harms Memorial Hospital District, Double L Manufacturing, and Lamb-Weston. The county also has several small manufacturing enterprises, including a

machine shop that produces soil sampling equipment and irrigation equipment. Manufacturing directly and indirectly supports about 58.5% of all employment.

Production, transportation, and material moving occupations are the biggest in American Falls at 27.5% employing 493 workers with manufacturing being the second with 26.1% employing 468. Management, professional, and related occupations equals 21.7% employing 389. Educational, health, and social services equals 19.4% employing 348 workers.

American Falls is heavily dependent on agriculture and agriculture related industry. There are several large employers that comprise the agricultural related industry in the area. In 2000, 72% of all jobs in and around the American Falls area were agricultural related, 28% of local economic activity is supported by manufacturing.

Labor Force

- During the late 1970's and early 1980's employment decreased nearly one percent contributing to high unemployment.

TABLE 7: Power County Labor Force

| Labor Force | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 |
|----------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Civilian Labor Force | 3,183 | 3,201 | 3,376 |
| Unemployment | 293 | 300 | 311 |
| Unemployment | 9.2% | 9.4% | 9.2% |
| Total Employment | 2,890 | 2,901 | 3,065 |

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, April 2004

- Between 1993 and 2003, the Civilian Labor Force and employment fell at a much faster rate than the Civilian Labor Force, the unemployment rate increased to over 9.4 percent in 2003 from 5.4 percent in 1993.
- New retail businesses and business expansions in American Falls, and the opening of a call center in Rockland improved the labor market in the mid 1990's but the loss of Astaris LLC at the end of 2001 left many of the county's citizens without jobs.
- The composition of jobs did not change significantly between 1992 and 2002. The number of jobs fell by 191 over the decade.

Per Capita Income

TABLE 8: Per Capita Income

| Per Capita Income | 2000 | 2001 | % Change |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Power County | \$20,863 | \$19,905 | - 4.5 |
| State of Idaho | \$23,987 | \$24,506 | 4.6 |
| United States | \$29,469 | \$30,413 | 3.2 |

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, April 2004

TABLE 9: Income and Poverty Status in 2003: 2000

| | Per Capita Income (\$) | Persons Below Poverty Level | % of Persons Poverty Level |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Power County | 8,980 | 1,200 | 16.1 |
| Idaho | 9,474 | 5,804 | 15.6 |
| U.S. | 11,457 | 130,588 | 13.3 |

Source: Idaho Department of Labor.

- Average wages of workers covered under Idaho's Unemployment Insurance Law increased in all industries except for Construction, Manufacturing, Trade Utilities, and Transportation.
- Between 2001 and 2002, Power County's wages decreased 11.71%, compared to the 2% State increase.
- Professional, Manufacturing, and Construction paid the highest average wages in the county.

Average Wages Per Worker

TABLE 10: Average Wages Per Worker

| Average Wages Per Worker | 1992 | 2001 | 2002 |
|--|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Mining & Construction | \$17,137 | \$27,756 | \$ 27,735 |
| Manufacturing | \$29,274 | \$42,947 | \$ 35,337 |
| Transportation, Communication & Utilities Trade | \$15,767 | \$21,570 | \$ 21,275 |
| Finance | \$13,610 | \$19,403 | \$ 19,649 |
| Professional and Business | \$ 18,298 | \$ 21,008 | \$ 33,737 |
| Educational and Health | \$ 16,129 | \$ 19,823 | \$ 21,173 |
| Leisure and Hospitality | \$ 4,876 | \$ 5,709 | \$6,076 |

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, March 1999

Unemployment Insurance

Unemployment Insurance (UI) provides economic security to all Idaho communities, especially during times of high unemployment. The standard rate (the rate assigned to all new employers) for Idaho's state UI taxes in 2002 is 1.5%. Other employers pay a rate based on their experience with UI. Generally, the more UI benefits their employees receive, the higher their UI tax rate.

TABLE 11: Unemployment Insurance

| Unemployment Insurance | 2002 | 2003 |
|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Weeks Paid | 6,677 | 7,158 |
| Dollars Paid | \$1,394,284 | \$1,399,488 |

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, April 2004

Future Trends

The City of American Falls has a unique opportunity because it is located close to metropolitan cities. Pocatello and Idaho Falls, each recently surpassed a population of over 50,000. This is an asset to American Falls. As the two cities continue to grow, American Falls will also grow if it takes advantage of the opportunity to develop spin-off businesses which complement existing businesses in both cities. By establishing high-tech parks and providing the necessary infrastructure, American Falls can attract new businesses to the community and continue to diversify the economy.

The establishment of neighborhood commercial districts in appropriate locations in the city will enhance neighborhoods. In addition, American Falls has a Central Business District (CBD), which should be preserved. The CBD is the heart of the city, and in many cases the condition of the CBD will set the tone of the economic vitality of the city.

It is encouraged that city government, the American Falls Chamber of Commerce, Great Rift Business Development Organization, and other organizations focus on recruiting and supporting new and existing businesses and industries which are compatible with the current industry and economy of American Falls. It is also important to ensure those businesses and industries are compatible with the community and environment.

GOAL: Encourage private industry to diversify the economy and provide new and improved employment opportunities.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop an atmosphere to retain, expand and create business development in the City of American Falls.
2. Encourage cooperation with the City of Aberdeen and the City of Rockland.
3. Encourage tourism development.
4. Encourage expansion of the economic development base.
5. Encourage development of spin-off businesses which will expand American Falls economic base.
6. Encourage the retention and creation of more compatible agricultural uses including those that are manufacturing but agricultural related.
7. Annex land and encourage high-tech and/or industrial development in the area.

POLICIES:

1. Develop a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to promote economic development.
2. Work with the development community in upgrading community infrastructure.
3. Continue to support, providing resource for the Great Rift Business Development Organization.
4. Review zoning classifications for potential high-tech development opportunities.

Chapter Eight

Natural Resources

The purpose of this component is intended to establish a balance between development and the conservation of the natural resources and open space. Land in and around the community should be used for the purpose for which it is best suited, as defined by a combination of its natural characteristics, location and the goals of the city. The goals stated in this component are intended to establish a balance between development and the conservation of such natural resources such as wildlife, soils, clean water and air.

Natural resources are present which exhibit both opportunities and limitations to human use. The concern relates to the degree that they may allow or discourage certain land uses.

One of the most important ongoing planning challenges, however, is to adequately conserve and balance the natural resources of the City of American Falls with population growth and the protection of the life style which makes the city an attractive place to live.

Natural resources are an integral component when a community is approached with new development. Due to the rural nature and abundance of natural resources in the Snake River Valley, this is especially true. American Falls' natural resources are mainly waterways, which results in an abundance of wildlife. Geese, waterfowl, migratory birds, beavers, deer and various species of fish are the predominant wildlife in the area. It is important to consider the impact new development might have on their habitat.

Within this context, environmental conservation and protection serves many purposes. Conservation can protect the natural environment, such as water and air quality and wildlife habitat, as well as the quality of the urban environment in the community.

Climate

The climate in the American Falls area is generally mild with slight variations each year. According to the Western Regional Climate Center, the following average temperatures are based upon a time span between 1948 through 2003.

TABLE 12: Monthly Climate Summary

| Jan | Feb. | Mar | Apr. | May | Jun. | Jul. | Aug. | Sep. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Annual |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|----------|
| Maximum | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 33.0 | 38.7 | 48.0 | 59.1 | 68.6 | 77.9 | 87.3 | 86.2 | 76.2 | 62.8 | 45.7 | 34.9 | 59.9 f |
| Minimum | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 16.6 | 20.7 | 27.0 | 33.8 | 41.4 | 48.1 | 54.2 | 53.0 | 44.5 | 35.2 | 26.9 | 19.3 | 35.1 f |
| Precipitation | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.05 | 0.83 | 1.05 | 1.11 | 1.47 | 0.96 | 0.51 | 0.59 | 0.72 | 0.79 | 1.04 | 0.99 | 11.11 in |
| Snowfall | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 9.1 | 4.7 | 3.1 | 1.3 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.3 | 2.7 | 7.1 | 29.7 in |
| Snow Depth | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 in |

Source: Western Regional Climate Center, wrcc@dri.edu.

During the summer months, the temperature ranges between 87.3° for a high, and 41.4° for the lows. The temperature in the winter months runs between 35.2° for a high, with the lows averaging 16.6°. Overall, the average annual temperatures range between 59.9° and 35.1°.

The winter months, in general, are fairly moderate with the usual snowfall of 29.7 inches over a six-month period. Along with the mild snowfall in the winter months, the annual precipitation is typically 11.11 inches.

Land Characteristics

GEOLOGY:

The American Falls Reservoir borders the west side of American Falls and flows to the south west to the American Falls Dam to the Snake River.

The elevation of American Falls is 4406 feet above sea level and located 42.162 degrees north of the equator and 112.266 degrees west of the prime meridian.

The surface and subsoil ranges from clay to sand with some river wash near the riverbeds.

HYDROLOGY:

Canals were constructed years ago to irrigate agricultural land and are still an integral component to the economic health of the city and county. The canals provide water for farmers, ranchers and homes in the entire area and in turn, benefit the industries and employees which are dependent on agriculture. The main canal company in the American Falls Area is Falls Irrigation.

Surface water in American Falls includes Willow Bay Marina which is the main recreational hub of American Falls in the summertime for boating, water skiing, swimming, picnicking, walking and jogging along the bike path. The water for the reservoir is from the Snake River and is located along the western portion of town.

SOILS:

An understanding of soil properties makes it possible to predict suitability or limitations for present and future uses. Factors which affect soil uses include permeability, slope runoff potential, erosion hazard, high water table and susceptibility to flooding.

The main soil types in the American Falls area include:

- **Declo Loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes.** This very deep, well drained soil is on terraces at elevations of 4200 to 4600 feet. It was formed in medium textured alluvium or lacustrine sediments that have been somewhat reworked by wind. The average annual precipitation is about 9 inches, including about 2 feet of snowfall. The average annual soil temperature is about 50 degrees F. The average frost free season is between 100 and 140 days.
- **Declo loam, 2 to 4 percent slopes.** Up to 10 percent is included small areas of Declo fine sandy loam.

- **Declo loam, 8 to 12 percent slopes.** Up to 5 percent is included small areas of Delco fine sandy loam, Kecko fine sandy loam, and Escalante fine sandy loam. Mainly used for irrigated hay, pasture, potatoes sugar beets and small grain.

AGRICULTURE:

These soil types are ideal for irrigating hay, pastures, small grains, potatoes, and sugar beets which is why American Falls agricultural sector remains strong. For a detailed description and location of the soils described above, refer to the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Survey of Power County February, 1981.

The potential for growth, not only in agriculture but also in related industries, is of great importance to the local economy. Although agriculture is very important to the local economy, further expansion of the agricultural sector is limited by both availability of suitable land and water resources. Agricultural production in the American Falls area includes potatoes, alfalfa, sugar beets, and other crops. All of these require related services of shipping and handling, processing, and equipment and supplies.

SUMMARY:

It remains the responsibility of the American Falls community to protect its natural resources. Orderly and planned development will contain growth within manageable boundaries and greatly assist in protecting resources. Recognition of natural resources is extremely important and will ensure future development is harmonious with its natural environment.

GOAL: Preserve the environment for future generations by ensuring that land, air, water and wildlife are not diminished in quality or quantity by future activity.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Develop partnerships between the city and private industry to plan for future development that utilizes our natural resources at their highest potential without creating undue environmental degradation.
2. Preserve and manage the natural resources of the community for the use and benefit of present and future generations.
3. Preserve natural resources and wildlife habitat.

POLICIES:

1. Develop guidelines and/or regulations that would mitigate any adverse impact to land and water.
2. Identify natural resources and wildlife habitats and develop a program to preserve these areas through public/private partnerships.

Chapter Nine

Services

Public Facilities and

Existing Conditions

American Falls has traditionally provided a high level of public facilities and services. The projected population growth for American Falls will require a corresponding expansion of public facilities and services. Policies concerning the manner in which public facilities are expanded can help direct the location and intensity of future residential, commercial and industrial development.

The findings and policies of this component address general issues related to public facilities and services as well as issues concerning water, sewage disposal, police, fire protection, utilities, library, and airport services.

Community goals emphasize the desire to maintain the high quality of utilities, which are an important management tool in land development. Timely scheduling of adequate public utilities and services is necessary to support new development and meet community demands.

American Falls governing body consists of a mayor and six council members, overseeing the city's full-time and part-time employees. Elected by the community-at-large, the council functions as the board of directors for the municipal corporation. The council's primary responsibility is to set public policy for the city.

In addition to the city council, the City of American Falls also provides the expertise of a planning and zoning commission. The American Falls Planning and Zoning Commission is quasi-judicial in nature and provides recommendations regarding land use to the city council. The commission is a seven-member board consisting of members from the community.

Current Public Services

Administrative Services:

- ♦ Mayor - chief administrator with the assistance of city staff.
- ♦ City Clerk / Treasurer - includes treasury, accounting, personnel and utility billing services. The city clerk / city treasurer is responsible for these functions.
- ♦ Community Development Services - includes the building and zoning administrator who serves as the city's chief planning official. This department reviews all new development requests in the community, administers the zoning, subdivision, building and sign ordinances and provides technical assistance for the Planning and Zoning Commission.
- ♦ Legal - includes the services of a part-time city attorney providing both civil and criminal prosecution.

Emergency Services:

- ♦ Police - police services include traffic control, records, communication and investigations within law enforcement. The department is at about 80 % capacity in its current location in the City Hall building. Lack of space for evidence is the biggest concern that will need to be addressed in the near future.
- ♦ Fire - city employees and volunteers in the community provide fire services for American Falls and the surrounding area. The fire department has been able to maintain a Class-6 rating within the city limits and a Class-9 rating for rural areas (on a scale of 1 to 10, 1 being the best).
- ♦ Ambulance - the county and the ambulance district work together to provide emergency medical services to city and county residents.

Sanitation Services:

- ♦ Water Supply and Distribution – the maximum daily use is 5.5 million gallons with an average daily use of 2.3 million gallons per day. The water comes from seven wells and one spring with mainly 4" distribution lines. Improvements are continually being made to the water supply and distribution system, which will increase water pressure and capacity.
- ♦ Wastewater Treatment – The city has a fully functioning wastewater treatment plant that is currently operating at approximately 50% of capacity.
- ♦ Solid Waste - removal of solid waste is provided by the city and sent to the Power County Landfill Station which is located at 2950 Landfill Rd. Household waste is then reloaded and transported to the Milner Butte Landfill location in Cassia County.

Other Public Services:

- ♦ Airport - located on the east side of American Falls, the general aviation facility is owned and operated by Power County.
- ♦ American Falls Housing Authority – provides housing assistance.
- ♦ Energy - Idaho Power Company and Intermountain Gas Company supply reliable electricity and natural gas throughout the community.
- ♦ Library - the library provides books, movies, periodicals and computers for the Power County area. The library issues cards to all Power County residents, including those who live outside of the county.
- ♦ Parks and Recreation - this department manages seven parks in the community including baseball fields, soccer fields, a Frisbee golf course and a bike path. The American Falls Golf Course has a challenging nine-hole golf course. The course features one practice putting green, a clubhouse and a part-time golf pro.

Future Conditions

Based on population growth projections, it is evident that public services in American Falls will maintain the small growth pattern and the community's quality of life.

The City of American Falls has the potential to provide adequate services to meet demand. While transportation systems and utility services have potential deficiencies, they can be expanded if capital improvement programs are adequately funded. There is an important connection between the cost and quality of public services and the local economy. A financial hardship results if the cost of required services exceeds the public's ability to pay. If the city and other service providers do not maintain high quality and dependable services, it will limit economic growth.

Forecast Needs

Because the population of American Falls is expanding each year, every department will have to adjust to increased service demands. Given this positive growth trend, the city should consider expanding key services to meet future demands.

One of the major issues facing all cities will be identifying funding sources necessary to finance large capital outlays.

By planning ahead the city can realize the greatest benefit at the lowest cost.

GOAL: Plan and develop public facilities and services to serve as a framework for urban development.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide an efficient, cost-effective and environmentally sound central sewer collection and treatment facility and ensure that these facilities are upgraded as needed.
2. Meet or exceed Environmental Protection Agency standards for sewage collection, treatment and discharge in the American Falls area.
3. Develop a master plan.
4. Maintain effective police, fire and emergency medical service departments.

POLICIES:

1. Upgrade and improve sewage collection and treatment, as funding is available.
2. Approve new development only when there is sufficient sewer and water capacity.
3. All utilities should be located underground.
4. Improve the city's water system, provide additional training for fire department and emergency medical service personnel, improve fire fighting equipment to reduce fire rating and increase emergency medical services.
5. Upgrade sewer lines, water lines, curbs, gutters and sidewalks, widen streets and address other infrastructure needs.
6. Monitor businesses to ensure protection of infrastructure, rivers and land.
7. Storm water should remain on site.
8. The cost of new wastewater infrastructure improvements should be borne by those who benefit.

9. The cost of extending city services should be borne by developers.
10. Expand and improve Willow Bay Recreation Area.

Chapter Ten

Parks and Recreation

An appealing, livable community requires more than an orderly pattern of development. A balanced, healthy environment also requires parks, open spaces and ample opportunities for indoor and outdoor leisure activities. In addition, the community should be attractive so people enjoy and have pride in their surroundings. An important aspect of appearance is the way in which natural growth and landscaping provides a framework for man-made improvements.

In many instances, recreational facilities located within the city also serve residents in the surrounding area. Likewise, recreation areas outside the city serve more than just those living outside the city. The city provides facilities such as community parks, ball fields, and a golf course. The area outside the city provides recreation such as hiking, camping, fishing and boating.

Residents consider parks and recreation facilities to be significant factors contributing to their overall quality of life. Growth in and around American Falls during the last decade has placed additional demands on the city for new recreation facilities and projections anticipate continued growth. Providing park and recreation facilities requires not only maintenance of the current facilities, but the acquisition and development of new land and facilities.

Parks and Recreational Opportunities

The City of American Falls parks system includes five parks and three sporting field complexes. Each park varies in size, type and equipment available.

- A. City Park is located at the heart of American Falls as you come into town from all three directions. Facilities include two shelters with picnic tables, and a new play ground area for children to play. We also have three flower gardens and a small rose garden across from the courthouse.
- B. Stebbins Park is an open space with approximately five acres of grass and a large variety of trees. There is a nine-hole Frisbee golf course. Benches and picnic tables are going to be added in the near future.
- C. Vard Meadows Park is basically a sporting complex with two baseball fields. It also includes a play ground area and a shelter for picnics, parties, and reunions.
- D. Lee Street Park is a sporting complex park with two regulation size high school baseball fields, two youth baseball fields and three high school regulation size soccer fields. There is also a park with new playground equipment and two parking lots. Future plans include a BMX bicycle course, two shelters, restroom facilities, bicycle path and benches.
- E. Willow Bay Recreation Area is home to one of the worlds' premiere bird watching areas, ranked by the Audubon Society. A scenic bike path provides many bird viewing and recreation opportunities. The facility also includes two softball fields,

45 RV camping sites, 20 dry camping sites and a boat launch area capable of launching 200 boats per day into Idaho's biggest reservoir. Other possible activities available include playing horseshoes, volleyball, enjoying the beach, and eating out at the Willow Bay Cafe overlooking the reservoir.

F. Tennis Courts are a school district facility.

G. American Falls Golf Course consists of a municipal 9-hole golf course on 25 acres of beautiful green grass. The course offers many challenges including hills, trees, sand traps, and roads. There is also a putting green, a Pro Shop, and a part-time golf pro available at the golf course.

National Guidelines

According to national guidelines, it is recommended cities and counties offer both active recreation and passive recreation. The guidelines are outlined as follows:

➤ **Active Recreation**

- a. Neighborhood Parks - 2.0 acres / 1,000
- b. Community Parks - 3.5 acres / 1,000
- c. Regional Parks - 15 acres / 1,000
- d. Linear Parks (Greenbelt) - 1.3 acres / 1,000
- e. Tennis - Outdoor Basketball - Other Court Sports - 1.0 acres/ 1,000
- f. Swimming, One Pool - 25,000 population
- g. Golfing - 1 - 18 Hole Course per 50,000
- h. Indoor Recreation Facility - 1 acre / 10,000
- i. Hiking - Camping - Horseback Riding- Nature Study - 10 acres / 1,000

➤ **Passive Recreation**

- j. Passive water Sports - Fishing - Rowing - Canoeing - 1 Lake or Lagoon per 25,000 population
- k. Picnicking - 4 acres / 1,000

Planning for parks, playgrounds, and open space should be based on conservation needs, recreation requirements and aesthetics of community design. It is desirable to incorporate required open space into parks and playgrounds. Careful planning of open space enhances public health, safety and welfare.

GOAL: Provide and encourage parks, open space, trails, and recreation facilities for American Falls residents and offer safe and efficient recreation programs and activities that meet their needs and desires, while enhancing the appearance and environment through landscaping, trees and open space.

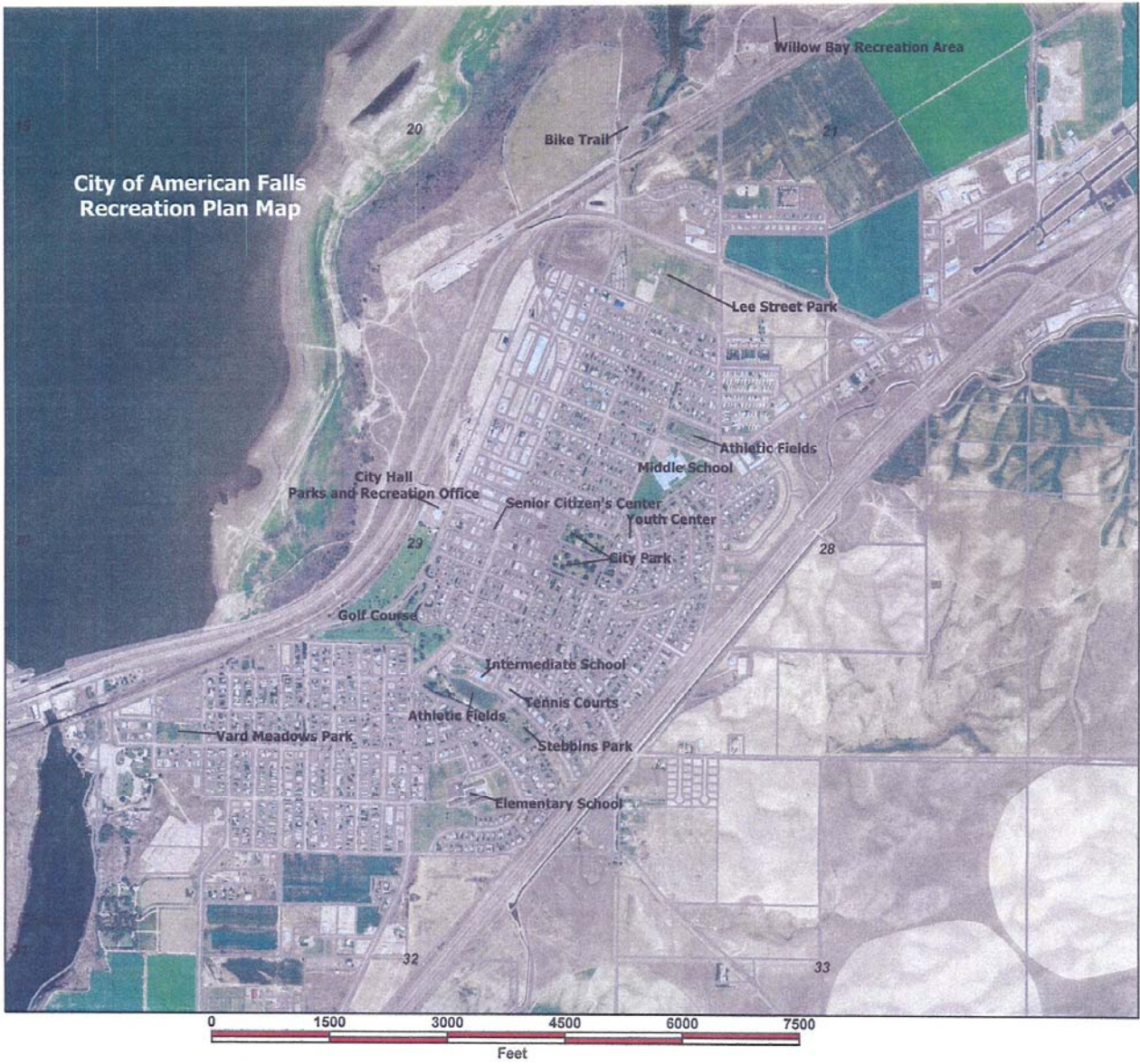
OBJECTIVES:

1. Provide a park system that includes many park types, each offering varied indoor and outdoor recreation.
2. Create public recreation opportunities by developing and expanding parks and indoor recreational facilities that meet the needs of all citizens.

3. Provide and encourage open space to meet passive and active recreational needs.

POLICIES:

1. Develop partnerships between the City of American Falls and the American Falls School District, Power County, non-profit organizations and private parties to acquire and develop lands for joint use.
2. Seek to acquire and develop parks through a variety of sources, including but not limited to general taxes, utility franchise fees, park impact fees, general obligation, local option tax, public and private partnerships, certificates of participation, and private grants and foundations.
3. For cost efficiency, develop multi-use facilities by implementing maintenance agreements.
4. Develop a maintenance and operations manual for the park system.
5. Develop a parks master plan to site future parks and open space.
6. Continue to financially support the Gerald Fehringer Youth Center.
7. As new subdivisions are developed, highways are expanded, or other land use changes occur, the city should use these opportunities to:
 - a. Provide greenways, bicycle paths and pedestrian walkways which will provide access to public parks, schools, commercial development, neighborhoods and places of employment.
 - b. Acquire park sites and encourage parks and open space as part of new developments by either donation or placing cash in a park fund.
8. Preserve and develop land along the Snake River and American Falls Reservoir for recreational use.



Chapter Eleven School Facilities and Transportation

The school facilities and transportation element of the comprehensive plan is meant to coordinate efforts of cities and counties when considering school capacities, facilities, and transportation needs.

When new development and subdivisions are reviewed, it is important to consider the impact on area schools. Questions to consider when reviewing new school development are:

- Where is the best location for the new school to accommodate the most students?
- Will the city's infrastructure (streets, sewer, and water) accommodate the school?
- Is the school located in an area of natural future growth?
- Will a majority of the students have to be bused?
- Is the area currently developed?
- Are there any special considerations for constructing in this location?

American Falls School District #381

The district maintains and operates five schools within the American Falls area: Hillcrest Elementary School, William Thomas Middle School, American Falls Intermediate School, American Falls Academy and American Falls High School, built in 2002.

Hillcrest Elementary: Grades K-3

American Falls Intermediate: Grades 4-5

William Thomas Middle School: Grades 6-8

American Falls High School: Grades 9-12

American Falls Academy: Grades 7-12 (For at risk students based on Idaho State School Board criteria)

GOAL: Provide students with a learning environment that is safe and functional and one that optimizes and enhances academic, social, emotional and physical development.

OBJECTIVE:

1. Protect the integrity of schools so that educational functions are not disrupted by incompatible land uses.
2. Support the maintenance and enhancement of the public educational system and place a strong emphasis on providing quality schools in conjunction with new development.
3. Develop schools that are not only safe and accessible to students, but located and designed to function as focal points for family and community activity.

POLICIES:

1. Develop and maintain a dialogue with the school district to arrange joint use of public facilities.
2. Develop a cooperative program to expand the use of schools, school land, and parks, by the general public as well as students.
3. Coordinate with the school district any school locations which will use existing or future city infrastructure.

Chapter Twelve

Hazardous Areas

Flood Hazards

Known hazards vary from earthquakes, surface rupturing, landslides, mudslides, avalanches and flooding. In American Falls, hazardous conditions that are known are limited to flood hazards that are identified as the flood plain and conditions that could arise as a result of erosion.

The topography of the surrounding area consists of mostly level, irrigated farmland of the Snake River Plain. The Snake River and American Falls Reservoir are parallel to the west boundary of the city.

This “lifeblood” can also be a hazard to the community. If a quick spring thaw occurs after a year of high precipitation, there is the potential for flooding. Winter flooding may also if warmer temperatures follow significant snow fall or other precipitation. There are several natural drainage areas in the City of American Falls that are or may be prone to flooding during winter snow melt and/or heavy precipitation.

The city is also threatened by possible hazardous spills along major transportation corridors.

The city regulates development and has adopted construction standards that are enforced within the city and the area of city impact. When hazardous conditions are present, additional safeguards should be imposed. Residential or other types of intensive development should not be permitted in hazardous areas, unless the hazards can be sufficiently mitigated.

In addition, hazards from flood plain, unstable soil, geological instability, airports, commercial and industrial zones, should be minimized with a buffer area of open space between the hazards and the development.

GOAL: Provide a safe living environment for residents which minimizes the loss of life and property from natural disasters and hazards.

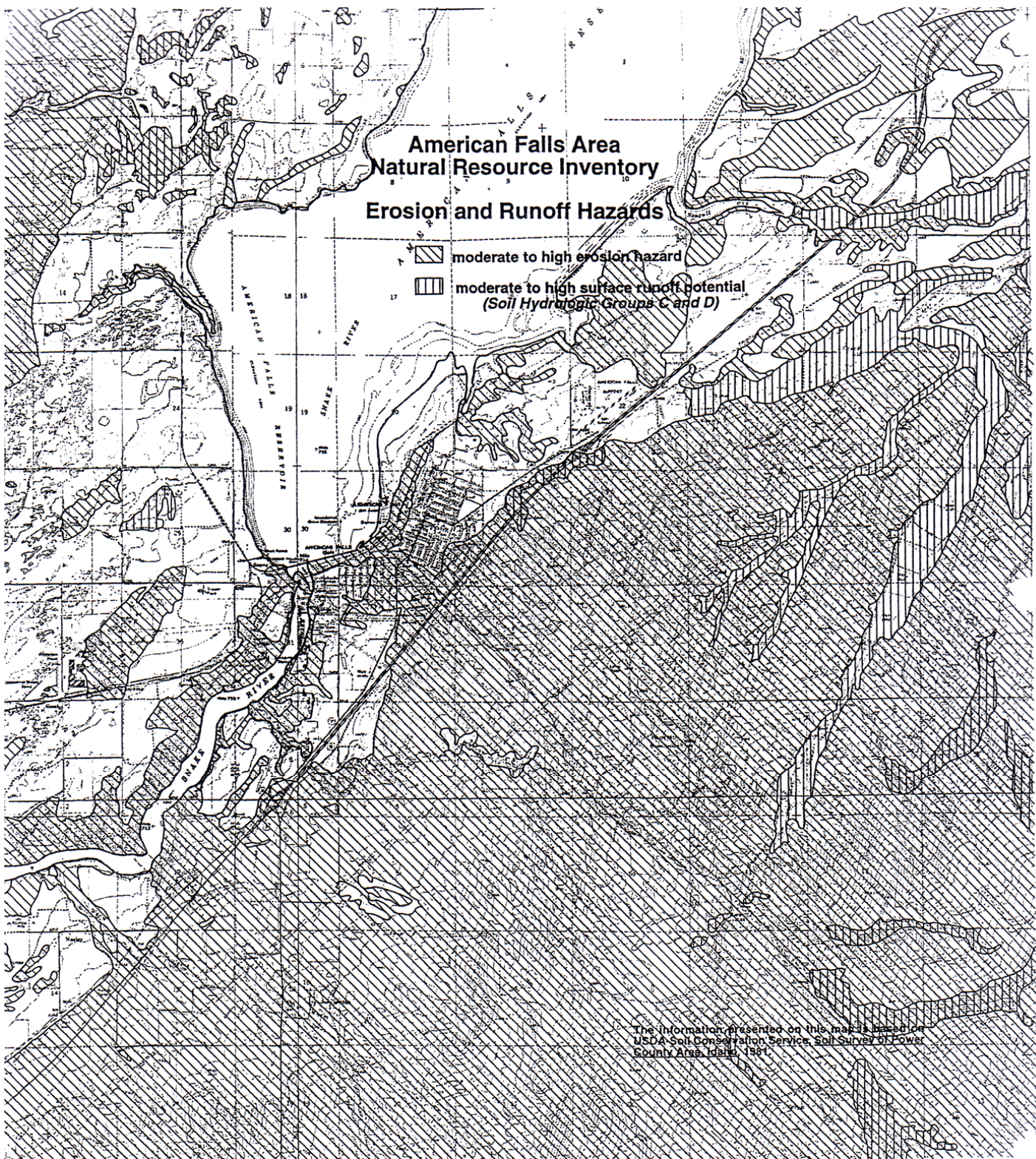
OBJECTIVES:

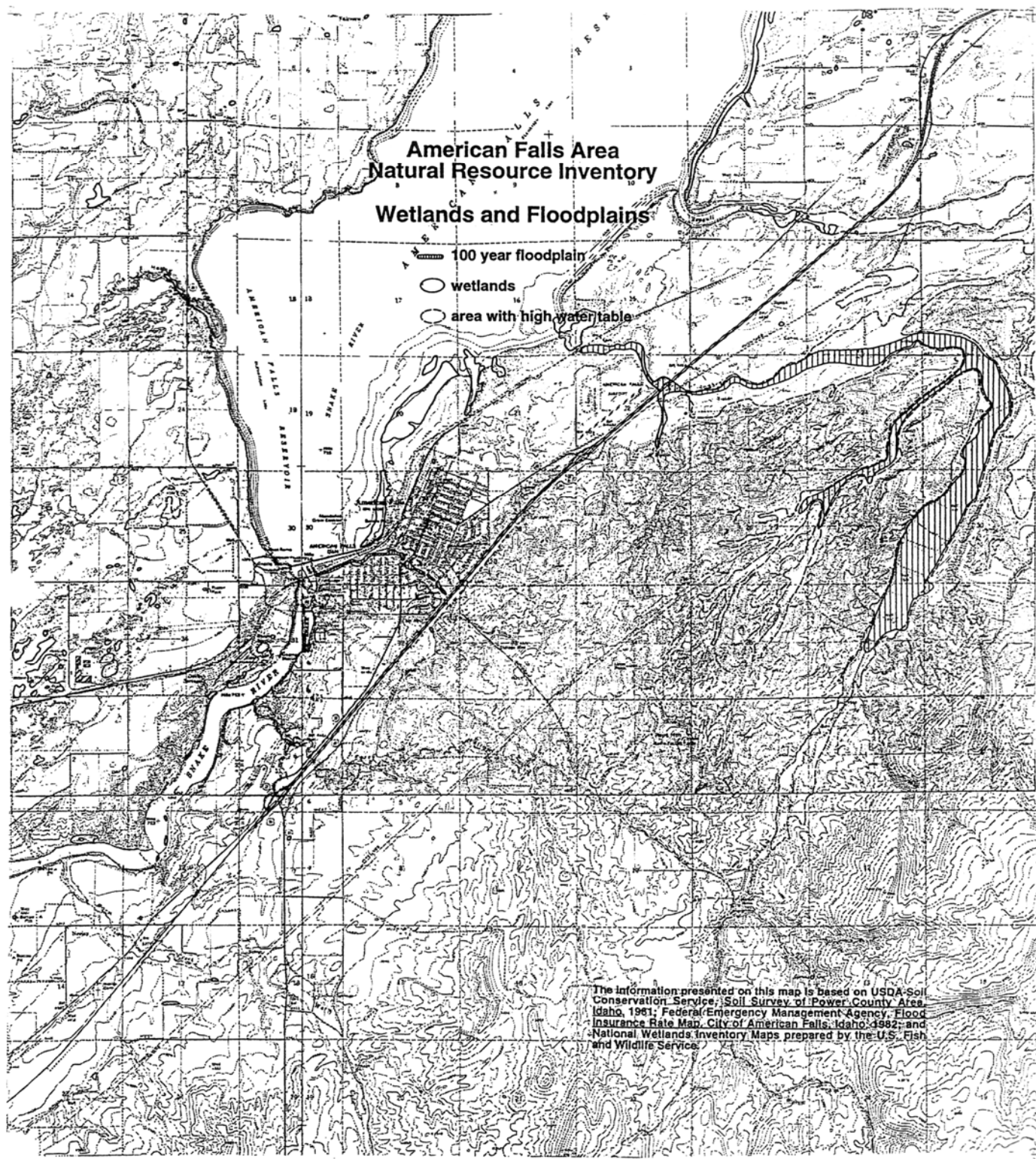
1. Ensure that new structures and development sites are designed to minimize the likelihood of damage resulting from geologic and seismic hazards and high wind velocities and ensure existing unsafe structures and sites are identified and retrofitted to reduce damage.
2. Ensure that flood prevention and floodplain development standards minimize financial loss and maximize protection of property in the event of flooding.

POLICIES:

1. Join with county and state disaster services to develop and maintain an adequate emergency plan.
2. Enhance emergency preparedness through public education, training, drills and exercises, and develop a contingency plan.
3. Ensure that American Falls floodplain development standards and practices provide satisfactory safeguards for public and private development (see flood plain maps).

4. Encourage the maintenance of the canal system and consider the option of requiring canals be covered when development around a canal creates a public safety hazard.





Chapter Thirteen

Housing

The housing component is an element of the comprehensive plan that assesses the housing needs of all economic segments of the city. In addition, it defines the goals and policies which will guide the city's approach to resolving those needs and recommends a set of programs which would implement those policies.

Housing needs vary by income level, age and family size. Other factors such as distance from employment, access to shopping centers and personal preference, complicate the housing market. It is also affected by the local and national economy.

Existing Conditions

Housing Characteristics

Residential land use represents the largest land use type in the planning area and will continue to be the dominant category. According to the U.S. Census Bureau in 2000, there were 1,205 occupied housing units in American Falls,

A majority of the housing stock in American Falls, approximately 680 units, were built between 1940 and 1980.

Natural gas or electricity fuels most homes.

Affordable and Assisted Housing

Several public agencies and private organizations provide housing assistance for those who qualify. Public housing authorities may provide rental units, housing vouchers or certificates for low-income families. There are also several federal programs available to help individuals and families secure affordable housing.

Affordable housing units are needed within the American Falls community. There are some affordable housing units in the city that consist of rental and owner-occupied housing.

Forecast Needs

Currently there are no shelters in American Falls.

Publicly assisted housing shortages are typical in that federally funded programs that subsidize housing cannot meet local demands. This requires a strong commitment by the private sector to upgrade housing that may be substandard so that rental units are decent, safe and affordable. Planning should encourage affordable housing for residents and young families who are attempting to purchase houses.

As the local economy expands, new jobs are created, and likewise an increased demand for housing. Continued construction of single family homes and multi-family units will offset a majority of the expected housing demand. Mobile homes, manufactured homes, and subsidized housing provide alternatives to conventional home ownership.

The rental market is expected to absorb more of this growth since a large number of households may not be able to afford home ownership and are turning to the rental market to meet their housing needs. Demands should be most noticeable in the low- to moderate-income and non-elderly rental markets. By comparison, upper income rental markets are expected to be flat.

The demand for subsidized housing is expected to increase for minority, elderly, and low-to-moderate income groups since wages usually fail to keep pace with increasing prices of real estate. Rehabilitation of existing dwellings in older neighborhoods is essential to meet the needs of low-to-moderate income residents.

Summary

Many people live in sub-standard housing because it is all they can afford. Sub-standard housing should be upgraded to meet the minimum requirements of the Uniform Housing Code. Aided by state and federal subsidies, local programs could be established through the joint efforts of local government, civic groups and the community.

Zoning regulations should provide areas for affordable housing units. Mobile homes, manufactured homes, multiple-unit housing and subsidized housing are also alternatives to conventional housing and should be provided for in residential zoning.

The City of American Falls can reduce the severity of housing shortages by encouraging the preservation and construction of affordable housing.

GOAL: Residents of the City of American Falls and the city's area of impact should have the opportunity to seek housing in a neighborhood of their choice.

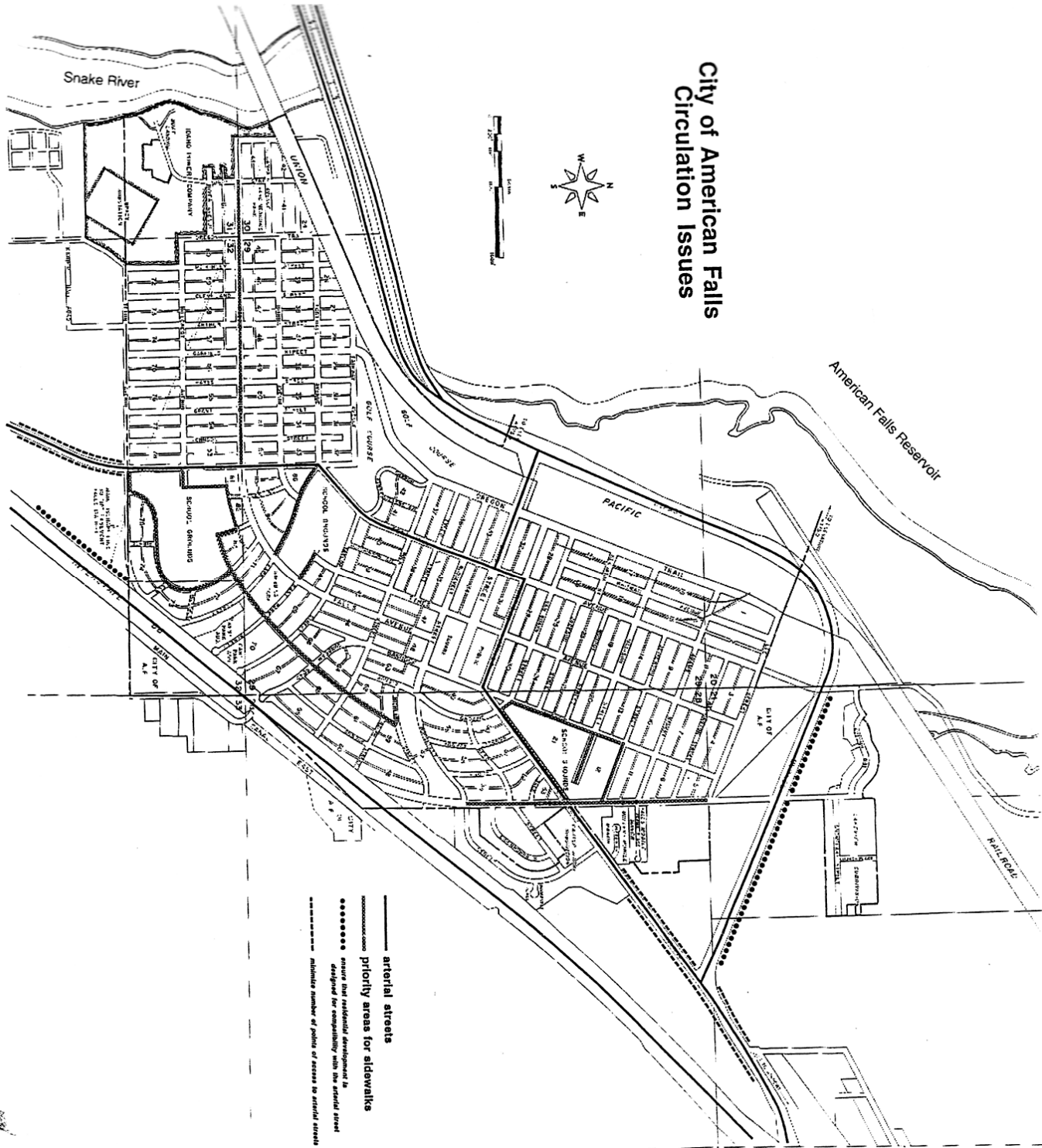
OBJECTIVES:

1. Promote the conservation and rehabilitation of existing housing stock.
 - a. Develop a housing rehabilitation and code enforcement program.
2. Encourage the development of neighborhood services.
3. Develop on existing residential lots to reduce urban sprawl.
4. Encourage the development and construction of various housing types.
5. Encourage senior housing development in locations close to services.

POLICIES:

1. Encourage the development of various housing types, including but not limited to single family residences, manufactured housing, duplexes and multi-family units.
2. Encourage rehabilitation of upper floors of downtown buildings for residential uses.
3. Encourage mixed use development by using the Planned Unit Development process.
4. Support fair housing goals by establishing a fair housing committee. Encourage the development of an adequate supply of safe, sanitary housing that provides diversity in type, density and location.
5. Encourage the development of residential units that are accessible and adaptable to the disabled.
6. Promote awareness among property owners and residents of the importance of property maintenance to long-term housing quality and value.
7. Develop ordinances to address issues for "challenged lots" to address extreme slopes, and/or public street access.
8. Variances in land use development should only be granted in extremely limited and the most exceptional circumstances.

City of American Falls Circulation Issues



- arterial streets
- priority areas for sidewalks
- ensure that residential development is designed for compatibility with the arterial street
- minimize number of points of access to arterial streets

Chapter Fourteen

Electric

National Interest

Transmission Corridors

Idaho Code Section 67-6508 provides:

After notification by the public utilities commission concerning the likelihood of a Federally designated national interest electric transmission corridor, prepare an analysis showing the existing location and possible routing of high voltage transmission lines, including national interest electric transmission corridors based upon the United States Department of Energy's most recent national electric transmission congestion study pursuant to sections 368 and 1221 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005. "High-voltage transmission lines" means lines with a capacity of one hundred fifteen thousand (115,000) volts or more supported by structures of forty (40) feet or more in height.

Located adjacent to the corporate limits of American Falls is the American Falls Dam, a U.S. Bureau of Reclamation project of water storage and hydro-power project. Also proposed in the area are wind-turbines for power production. Building is or should be limited and restricted in the corridors below the electric transmission lines.

GOAL: The city will work cooperatively with the Idaho Power Company and other appropriate electric providers to minimize conflict of land use in or near electric power corridors.

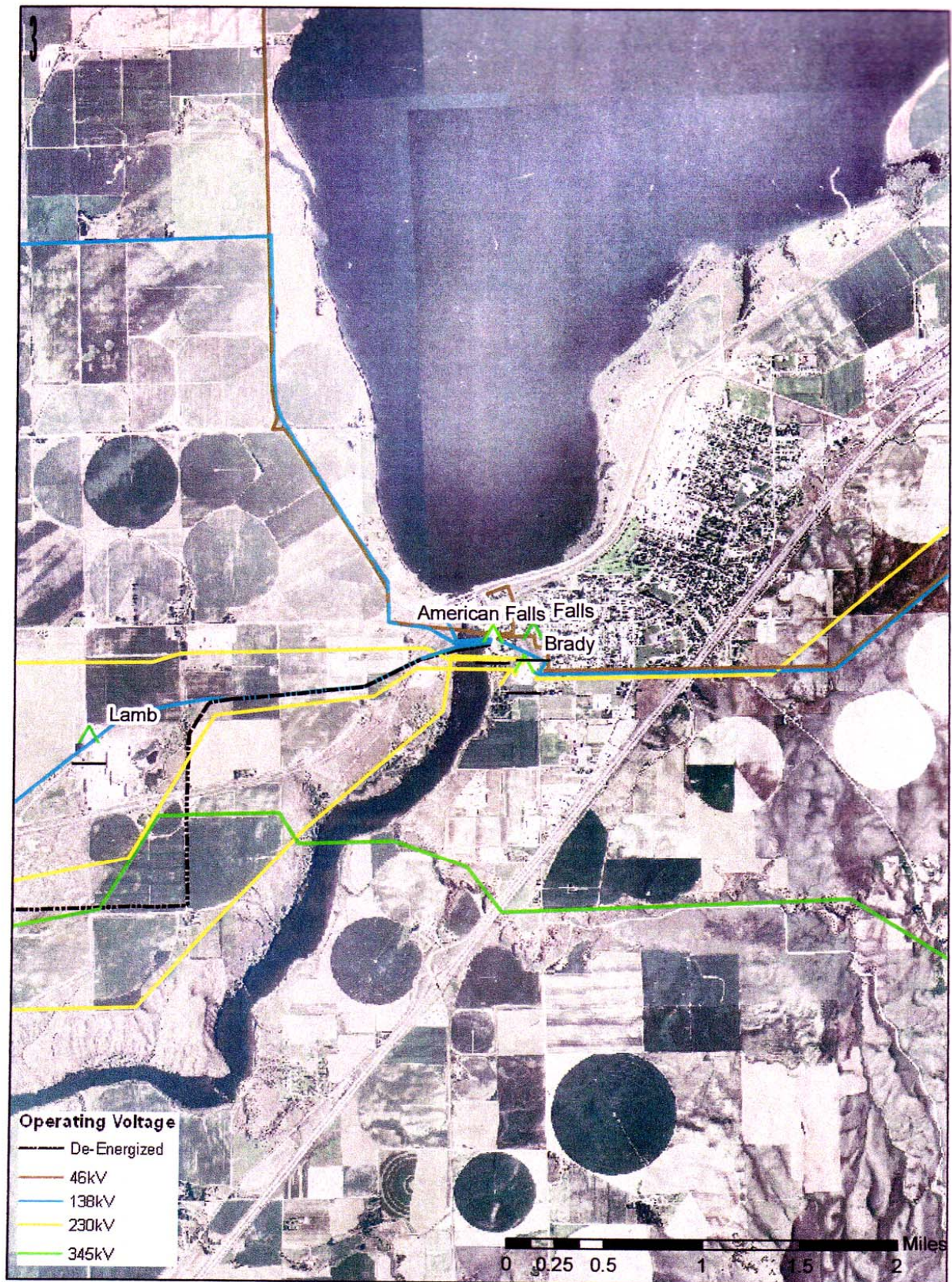
OBJECTIVES:

1. Promote the appropriate use of land to minimize conflict within electric power corridors.
2. Define and map the electric power corridors in or near the city corporate limits.
3. Analyze potential land use conflict among various land uses, including agricultural and non-agricultural uses and how they may be impacted by the high-power electric transmission lines in the power corridor.

POLICIES:

1. Develop regulation that minimizes conflict within designated electric power corridors.
2. Work with power providers to determine the specific needs within designated electric power corridors.
3. Promote awareness of the potential hazards and dangers inherent within electric power corridors.
4. As the city expands, seek input from the electric power providers for creation of compatible land use on or near electric power corridors, facilities and infrastructure.

American Falls Transmission System



Glossary

DEFINITIONS:

Accommodate - The ability of the community to adapt to change; particularly the ability of the community to meet the needs of future populations.

Agriculture Land - land primarily devoted to the commercial production of horticultural, viticulture, floricultural, dairy, apiary, vegetable, or animal products, or of berries, grain, hay, straw, turf, seed, or livestock and land that has long-term commercial significance for agricultural production.

Annexation - The incorporation of a land area into an existing community with a resulting change in the boundaries of that community.

Area of City Impact - Required by state law (§67-6526) requires cities to specify an area outside the city limits which it expects to annex or is part of its trade area. Land use authority for this area is negotiated between the city and county.

Bikeway - A facility designed to accommodate bicycle travel for recreation or commuting purposes. This is not always a separate facility but can be designed to be compatible with other travel modes.

Buffer - An area designed to provide attractive space or distance, obstruct undesirable views or generally reduce the impact of adjacent development.

Capital Improvement Program - A proposed timetable or schedule of all future capital improvements to be carried out during a specific period and listed in order of priority, together with cost establishments and the anticipated means of financing each project.

Central Business District - The major shopping center within a city usually containing, in addition to retail uses, governmental offices, service uses, professional, cultural, recreational and entertainment establishments and uses, residences, hotels and motels, appropriate industrial activities, and transportation facilities. This area is located within the Downtown area of the City of Blackfoot.

Circulation - Systems, structures and physical improvements for the movement of people, goods, water, air, sewage, or power by such means as streets, highways, railways, waterways, towers, airways, pipes, and conduits, and the handling of people and goods by such means as terminals, stations, warehouses, and other storage buildings or transshipment points.

Commercial - The distribution, sale, or rental of goods and the provision of other services.

Community - Used interchangeably to speak of the total planning area (verses the city or urban fringe) or an attitude such as "... a sense of community..." which implies a common identification on an issue by a group of citizens.

Community Parks - Community parks are large and intended to provide facilities of general community interest. These parks should provide for active and passive recreation for all ages and for family and organized recreation. They should be centrally located and readily accessible with approximately 3.5 acres per 1,000 people.

Compatible - The ability of different uses to exist in harmony with each other. "Making uses compatible with each other" implies site development standards which regulate the impact of one use on another.

Comprehensive Plan - A general policy statement of the city, including a general land use map which integrates all functions, natural systems and activities relating to the use of land which is required by state law (§67-6508).

Density - a measure of the intensity of development, generally expressed in terms of dwelling units per acre. It can also be expressed in terms of population density (i.e., people per acre). Density is useful for establishing a balance between potential service needs and service capacity.

Development - Making a material change in the use or appearance of a structure or land, dividing land into two or more parcels, creating or terminating a right of access. Where appropriate to the context, development refers to the act of developing or the result of development.

Diversity - Difference. Diversity implies the mixture of land use and /or densities within a given area.

Economic Base - The production, distribution and consumption of goods and services within a planning area.

Comment: Economic base, as used in planning is commonly thought of as the sum of all activities that result in incomes for the area's inhabitants. The definition, however, is significantly broad to include all geographic and functional elements which may have an impact on the planning area, although not physically part of the area.

Economic Development - The addition of a new economic activity.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) - EPA is the federal source agency of air and water quality control regulations affecting the community.

Established Areas - An area where the pattern of development has been fixed and where this pattern is anticipated to be valid over the planning period. Generally all developed areas within the city limits are considered to be established at this point in the planning process.

Floodplain - Lands which are within the floodway and the floodway fringe.

Floodway - The channel of a river or other water course and the adjacent land areas that must be reserved in order to discharge the base flood without cumulatively increasing the water surface elevation more than one foot.

Flood, 100 Year - A flood with a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. This is the flood most commonly used for regulatory purposes.

Freeway - A divided arterial highway designed for the unimpeded flow of large traffic volumes. Access to a freeway is strictly controlled and intersection grade separations are required.

Goal - A statement of intention expressing community values and attitudes intended to provide a guide for action by the community.

Greenway / Greenbelt - An open area which may be cultivated or maintained in a natural state surrounding development or used as a buffer between land uses or to mark the edge of an urban or developed area.

Group Home - "Group Home" means a small homelike facility staffed by qualified professionals, and designed to fit into the neighborhood. The purpose of the facility is to provide living quarters and services for people having a particular disability.

Impact - The consequences of a course of action; the effect of a goal, guideline, plan, or decision.

Impact Fees - A fee, levied by local government on new development, so that the new development pays a proportionate share of the cost of the facilities needed to service that development.

Implementation Programs - Actions, procedures, or techniques that carry out the Comprehensive Plan policy through implementing a standard. Each policy is linked to a specific action-oriented implementing program.

Infill Development - See Odd-Lot Development.

Infrastructure - Facilities and services needed to sustain industry, commercial and residential activities (e.g. water and sewer lines, streets, roads, fire stations, parks, etc.).

Interstate System - The system of highways that connects the principal metropolitan areas, cities, and industrial centers of the United States. The Interstate System also connects the U.S. to internationally significant routes in Mexico and Canada. The routes are selected by state department of transportation and subject to approval of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

Land Development Regulations - Generally, all ordinances and other tools (policies) used by the city to manage land use.

Land Trust - They are nonprofit organizations whose primary purpose is the preservation of undeveloped open land for conservation value to the community. Land trusts are concerned with all kinds of open space land, or they focus on specific resources, such as farmland, prairie, mountain ridges, watersheds, river corridors, lakes, parks, or community gardens. Land trusts can be rural, suburban, or urban, depending upon the geography they serve.

Land Use – A description of how land is occupied or utilized.

Land Use Map – A map showing the existing and proposed location extent and intensity of development of land to be used in the future for varying types of residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, educational and other public and private purposes or combination of purposes.

Livability - Those aspects of the community, perceived by residents, which make Blackfoot a nice place to live.

Long Range - Refers to a time span of more than five years.

Maintain - Support, keep, or continue in an existing state or condition without decline.

Manufactured Home - A double wide structure with a Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) label certifying that it was constructed in accordance with the National Manufactured Housing Construction and Safety Standards Act of 1974.

Master Plan - A comprehensive long-range plan intended to guide the growth and development of a community or region and one that includes analysis, recommendations and proposals for the community's population, economy, housing, transportation, community facilities and land use.

Mobile Home - A single wide structure which is constructed for movement on the public highways that has sleeping, cooking, and plumbing facilities, intended for human occupancy, which was constructed between January 1, 1962 and June 15, 1976.

Multi-Use Building - A building containing two or more distinct uses.

Natural Hazard - A natural characteristic of the land or combination of characteristics which, when developed without proper safeguards, could endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare.

Neighborhood - A local area whose residents are generally conscious of its existence as an entity. In planning literature, a "neighborhood unit" is a planned residential area organized on the principle that elementary schools, parks, playgrounds, churches and shopping are within walking distance of each residence. Heavy traffic is routed around the neighborhood, not through it.

Neighborhood Parks - A neighborhood park is medium sized, containing facilities primarily of interest to the immediate neighborhood. Facilities for a variety of activities should be provided. They should be approximately two acres per 1,000 residents.

Objective - The objective statement defines the meaning of the goal; describes how to accomplish the goal, and suggests a method of accomplishing it. It advances a specific purpose, aim, ambition or element of a goal. It can describe the end state of the goal, its purpose, or a course of action necessary to achieve the goal.

Odd- Lot Development - The development of new housing or other buildings on scattered vacant sites in a built up area.

Off-Street Parking - A temporary storage area for motor vehicle that is directly accessible to an access aisle and which is not located on a dedicated street right-of-way.

On-Street Parking - A temporary storage area for a motor vehicle which is located on a dedicated street right-of-way.

Open Space - Any parcel of land or water essentially unimproved and set aside, dedicated, or reserved for public use or enjoyment, or for the use and enjoyment of owners and occupants of land adjoining or neighboring such open space.

Pedestrian Walkway (Sidewalk) - A secured path for walking.

Planning Period - The period of time between 1999 and the year 2020 pertaining to the comprehensive plan.

Planned Unit Development (PUD) - An area of a minimum contiguous size, as specified by ordinance, to be planned and developed as a single entity and containing one or more residential clusters; appropriate commercial, public or quasi-public uses may be included if such uses are primarily for the benefit of the residential development.

Policy - A decision-making guideline for actions to be taken in achieving goals. The policy is the official position of the City of Blackfoot related to a given land use issue. Policies guide actions in recurring situations.

Public Land - Land owned by local, state, or federal government, used for purposes which benefit public health, safety, general welfare and other needs of society.

Public Participation - The active and meaningful involvement of the public in the development of the comprehensive plan.

Public Facility and Utilities - Refers to key facilities, types and levels of the following: fire protection, police protection, schools, libraries, sanitary facilities, storm drainage facilities, government administrative services, energy and other services deemed necessary by the community for the enjoyment of urban life.

Residential Area - A given area of the community in which the predominant character is residential. Uses which support residential activity such as parks, churches, schools, fire stations, and utility substations may also be permitted. In certain instances, existing lots of record and development patterns may exceed comprehensive plan densities.

Review - An inspection or examination for the purpose of evaluation and the rendering of an opinion or decision. Review by the city may involve public hearings, formal approval or denial of development proposals, etc., as provided for in city ordinances.

Right-of-Way (ROW) - The lines that form the boundaries of a right-of-way.

Rural Lands - All lands, which are not within an urban growth area and are not designated as natural resource lands having long-term commercial significance for production of agricultural products, timber, or the extraction of minerals.

Street, Arterial - A street which functions primarily to move large volumes of traffic and secondarily to provide access to abutting property. It is usually a continuous thoroughfare which connects major traffic generators. Curb cut, driveway and other regulations control access to adjacent properties.

Street, Collector - A street which functions primarily to move traffic from local streets to the arterial street system. It secondarily supplies abutting properties with the same degree of service as a local street.

Street, Local - A street which is intended solely for access to adjacent properties within local areas.

Strip Commercial and Industrial - A development pattern characterized by lots in a continuous manner fronting on streets and resulting in numerous access points to the street.

Study Area - That area within the proposed area of impact boundary.

Transfer Development of Rights Program - The removal of the right to develop or build, expressed in dwelling units per acre, from land in one zoning district to land in another district where such transfer is permitted.

Comment: Transfer of development rights, or transfer of development credits, is a relatively new land development control tool used to preserve open space and farmland. Presently, the most common use of this method has been for historic preservation in urban areas.

Urban Land - Land that is developed at urban densities or that has urban services.

Urban Service Boundary - That area that can be served economically and efficiently by City of American Falls utilities.

Urbanization - Process of converting land from urbanizable to urban.

Wetlands - areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from non-wetland sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities. However, wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally

created from non-wetland areas created to mitigate conversion of wetlands, if permitted by the county or the city.

Zone - The smallest geographically designated area for analysis of land use activity. An area or region set apart from its surroundings by some characteristic.

Zoning Map – The map or maps, which are a part of the zoning ordinance, and delineate the boundaries of zone districts.