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## Chapters Adopted by Resolution

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*Eagle Creek Canyon in Fall - Carol Waller*

# Introduction

## Vision

We are a world-class rural resort county that protects our pristine natural features as one of our highest priorities. We treasure our open undeveloped hillsides, agricultural lands, clean air and water, wildlife, and unparalleled recreational opportunities. We are proud of our success in directing new growth into our cities, keeping the County rural in nature. We will continue to build on our high quality of life for our permanent and visiting population by providing efficient and effective public services, and maintaining state-of-the-art standards for new growth. We will succeed in retaining and growing our diversified economy, which includes partnerships with the cities for job and housing opportunities. We have a strategic eye on the future, and are nimble in responding to a changing world around us. We value above all the special character of Blaine County, and aim to protect that character for future generations.

## The Key Guiding Principles

Blaine County places the highest possible value on its natural environment, including the scenic vistas, the hills and mountains, the clean water and air, and the abundant fish and wildlife that share our waters and our lands. This pristine environment defines Blaine County. It is the heart and soul of our community. Our natural environment is the source of the community's economic sustainability, including the agricultural, recreational and tourism industries. We recognize that our economic and cultural sustainability is wholly dependent upon the carrying capacity of the County's natural environment and the conscientious stewardship and conservation of it. Thus, preservation of our natural environmental heritage is of paramount importance. All land-use planning decisions in Blaine County are required to protect and enhance these priceless assets through careful regulation.

Regarding the built environment, the community has identified important principles that reduce the human footprint, protect the County's financial capability to provide services, foster a sense of community, preserve the historic character of rural and open-space environments and promote economic strength and security for all who live, visit and work in Blaine County.



*Big Wood River Winter Snow – Carol Waller*

**Natural environmental attributes, including scenic vistas, public open space, healthy forests, clean water and air, and abundant fish and wildlife are the heart and soul of our community.**

In addition to contributing to our high quality of life, these natural environmental assets are the driver of our local and visitor economies. Conservation and stewardship of these assets are therefore more important than extraction of resources (e.g., timber production and mining). Understanding the carrying capacity of the County's natural environment, based upon reliable scientific study and analysis, enables our leaders to make sound decisions that will help to protect it.

**The hills and mountains of our community are to be preserved in their natural state, and land uses on them shall be strictly regulated.**

The County's Mountain Overlay District is intended to preserve the beauty and integrity of our mountains and foothills. Primary purposes of the County's strict hillside regulations include preserving the natural character and aesthetic values of our hillsides, protecting wildlife habitat, maintaining slope and soil stability, and preventing unsafe development in areas at risk from wildfire and avalanches or debris flows.

**Land uses in hazardous areas and sensitive areas shall be closely regulated.**

Development in hazardous areas such as avalanche zones, floodways and floodplains, and wildland-urban interface locations leads to higher public costs and greater risk to human safety. These include provision of emergency services, as well as potential loss of property or life. Development in sensitive areas like critical habitat and movement corridors for wildlife, wetlands, and riparian zones is in direct conflict with the preservation of valued natural environmental assets.

## Recreation is the centerpiece of the local and visitor life experience.

Activities that enhance the public recreational experience, while recognizing and upholding other values such as the protection of the natural environment, are goals of our community. Balancing the needs and desires of multiple user groups becomes more challenging as population and visitor numbers increase. Important factors in future development are responsibly adding to recreational facilities in proximity to the people who need to be served, maintaining our existing assets, and preserving access to public lands and waters.

## Agricultural land uses are an important historic and community heritage and an important economic resource for our community. The County intends to preserve productive agricultural lands.

Blaine County's history is closely tied to its agricultural lands. Farming and ranching continue to contribute to our economy through the production of high quality crops, local produce, and livestock. In addition, its working landscapes have contributed to today's open space, bird and wildlife habitat and corridors, and wetland sanctuaries throughout the County. Preserving eco-systems and sustaining the health of the land benefit both agriculture and the environment. These goals support the economic contribution agriculture provides to the County, while recognizing and upholding other critical values such as the protection of the natural environment. Land use regulation should encourage Best Management Practices (BMPs) in partnership with farmers and ranchers on the land.

## Terms used in this plan

**Vision** - A vision is a mental picture of what we want our community to look like tomorrow. It incorporates our highest standards and values. It's our ideal and unique image of the future for the common good.

**Key Guiding Principles** - These are guidelines for the development of the Plan and will serve as the foundation for ordinances and policies. They represent those common beliefs we share as a community and reflect community concerns, needs and priorities.

**Setting** - The setting is an overview of current conditions, which "set the stage" for our desired outcomes and policies.

**Desired Outcomes** - Desired outcomes (aka "goals") are the intended result of our planning efforts. They are statements that respond to relevant community needs. Each Plan component will establish a reasonable number of outcomes that directly support the County's visions. Desired outcomes address the most critical and/or relevant issues facing the community.

### Action Plans

Action plans make outcomes tangible and therefore should have the following "SMART" characteristics:

- **Specific:** indicate exactly what result is expected so that the performance can be judged accurately.
- **Measurable:** something that can be measured and reported in quantitative and/or clear qualitative terms.
- **Accountable:** "owned" by a specific department or entity.
- **Results-oriented:** track an important value or benefit needed to advance the community vision and achieve the end results.
- **Time-bound:** set a specific time frame for the results to be produced.

Several other terms are defined in the glossary.

### **Development in remote areas creates higher costs and significant time challenges for the provision of public and emergency services and is discouraged by existing zoning.**

Housing and other development in proximity to infrastructure and emergency services is appropriate and cost-efficient. Costs and times for delivering services increase as distance from incorporated cities increases, especially in locations off the main transportation corridors. Response times for emergency services are longer and depletion of sufficiently trained responders becomes a concern. Low-density zoning makes economic and safety sense for remote areas, and requirements for adequate mitigation are appropriate for development there.

### **Most commercial and institutional uses belong in the incorporated cities.**

Businesses such as retail stores, banks and offices help to create a vibrant downtown core for cities. Such uses outside the cities can compete with and detract from the vitality of a city's downtown. Commercial, institutional and urban-type land uses also create the need for many public services, especially emergency services, and therefore should not be located in remote areas. Commercial uses in the unincorporated County should be limited to activities such as agricultural businesses, clean and light industries that require larger land areas, home occupations and other uses that do not require significant services or detract from the cities' commercial areas. These generally are allowable only with a conditional use permit. The County does not want to compete with its cities for commercial uses, but does want to be able to consider commercial and institutional uses that need more physical space than cities can provide. Future ordinance or zoning amendments that would allow schools, institutes, and light industry should take many factors into consideration. These include proximity to services, impact on water resources, access and parking

needs, land-area needs, feasibility of annexation into incorporated areas, and other relevant criteria.

### **A balanced and diverse economy is necessary for a sustainable community.**

Managing growth was a priority for the County and its communities in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the first few years of this century. Since the Great Recession, however, efforts to create a more diverse economy – one that is not reliant only on population and tourism growth and related construction activity – have gained visibility. The County should do its share in supporting economic opportunity that upholds its values of conservation and responsible use of public funds, while contributing to a business environment that has supported the County's residents in the past and will nourish the economic drivers of the future. Blaine County has fine public, private and alternative education systems that are important assets to our current and future economy. Balancing our priorities for a healthy economy requires thoughtful planning tools and supporting infrastructure.

### **Social and cultural diversity and historic preservation are community goals.**

Stated objectives of County leaders have included honoring the County's heritage and being mindful of its legacy to future generations. Our County has a rich history. Preservation of historic buildings and sites helps us remember our heritage, and tells the story of our past. Blaine County's history also includes a diverse culture that continues and evolves today. A wide range of ideas, customs, culture, and wisdom enrich community life. Quality community services, both public and private, are important to support our diverse population.

### **A variety of housing types, prices and locations is required for the community's long-term viability.**

Housing that is available to all income levels is critical to a healthy and vibrant society. An important County goal is to ensure the provision of housing

that is affordable to those with low and moderate incomes, including seniors. The availability of a variety of housing prices and types (single- and multi-family dwellings, including rental units) means that households have choices and that our residents can continue to live in Blaine County.

**Integrated multi-modal transportation is necessary to maintain and enhance our quality of life.**

Our transportation system will provide excellent mobility for citizens, visitors, and the workforce. A network of integrated countywide roads, transit routes and pathways will ensure a safe and efficient system for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, automobile and truck drivers, transit riders, and air travelers. Multi-modal transportation helps to mitigate traffic, is good for the economy, and puts less strain on the environment than the current automobile-oriented system.

**Cooperation between jurisdictions enhances our quality of life and contributes to sound and effective land use planning and implementation.**

Regional planning becomes possible when the County, its incorporated cities, government agencies and non-governmental organizations cooperate. Many influencing factors know no “municipal” boundaries — watersheds, aquifers, transportation “travel sheds,” and trade areas, to name a few.



*The “Old County Courthouse,” still in use today*

Working together on regional issues is smart and cost-effective.

**Sound land-use decisions benefit the general health, welfare, and safety of the public and the local economy.**

Clear and unambiguous ordinance language leads to defensible decisions on land-use applications and promotes responsible development. The Comprehensive Plan must lay a solid foundation for land-use ordinances, including zoning and subdivision regulations as well as public policies. Blaine County recognizes and supports private property rights, which include the property rights of applicants as well as neighbors and the larger community. All land use policies, regulations, and land use decisions are made in accordance with these national and state constitutional protections.

**Climate-adaptation planning and strategies will increase our resiliency.**

Blaine County recognizes that predicted changes in climate will impact Blaine County significantly in many ways. The Intermountain West may see impacts such as reduced mountain snowpack levels, earlier spring runoff, increased wildfires, and more insect damage in our forests. Planning for climate change is a new and critical challenge, and Blaine County will work in partnership with other entities to help educate decision-makers and the public about the potential climate effects in our region and devise adaptation strategies for coping with those effects.

**History**

Blaine County has a long and fascinating history, beginning some 4,000 years ago when Native American tribes followed big game into southern Idaho. See the timeline of highlights on the following page and the Appendix for additional historical context and interesting details.





The Shoshoni and Bannock tribes lived in the valleys and mountains of southern Idaho for thousands of years before European-American settlers arrived.

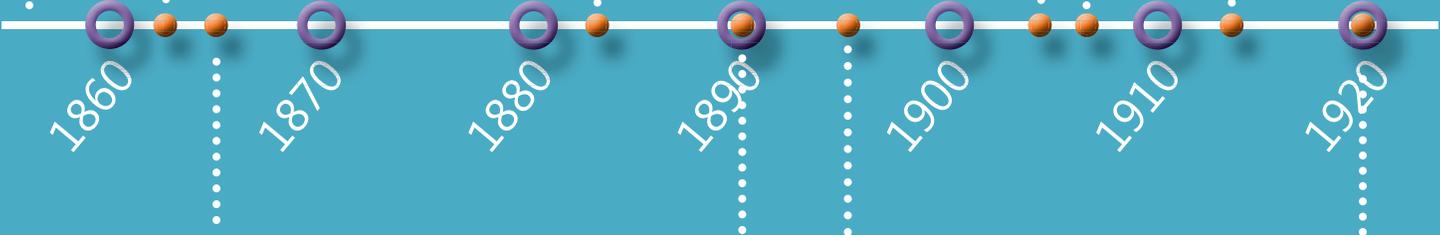
1883 – The Union Pacific Railroad (originally the Oregon Short Line) makes its first stop in Hailey; and in 1884 it is extended to Ketchum. Also in 1884, the original wagon road to Trail Creek Summit connects mining and grazing lands with the Union Pacific railhead.

1907 – The Hayspur Fish Hatchery is constructed on Loving Creek near Picabo. It is the first hatchery operated by Idaho's Fish & Game Commission.

1863-1864 – Idaho Territory is formed. Alturas County becomes the largest territorial county, including most of southern Idaho from the mouth of the Bruneau River to the Little Lost River.

1905 – The Sawtooth National Forest is established.

1914 – Sawtooth Park Highway construction begins from the Lincoln County line north through the Wood River Valley.

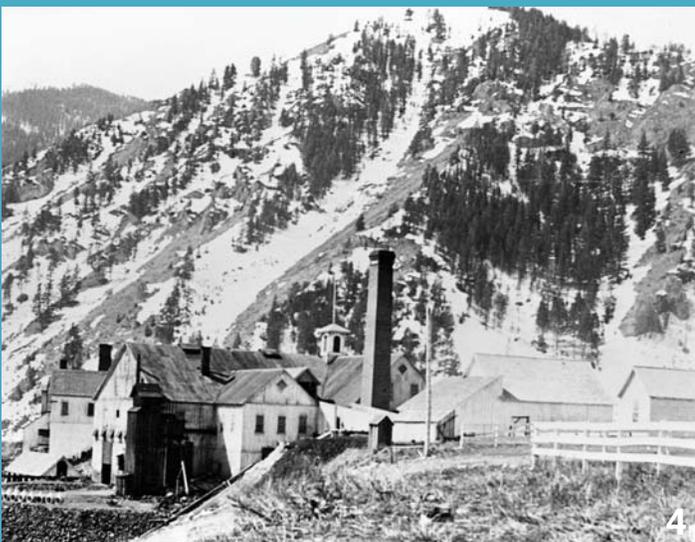


1865 – The mining boom begins. Lead and silver lode discoveries spawn numerous mining camps and supply centers throughout the Wood River Valley.

1890-1900 – The sheep industry booms in Idaho, growing to an estimated 2.1 million head. Basque immigrants are hired as sheepherders and come to the Wood River region.

1895 – Blaine County is created, formed out of portions of Alturas County and named after former congressman, James G Blaine. Hailey is the county seat.

1920 – The sheep industry becomes the wealth of Wood River Valley, due to the drop in value of silver after not being tied to the US currency.





1927 – The Triumph Mine between Hailey and Ketchum reopens. A flurry of redevelopment at old mining sites begins and ends after World War II.



1972 – The Sawtooth National Recreation Area is established. At 756,019 acres, it is one of the largest and most magnificent National Recreation Areas in the United States.



1936 – The Sun Valley Resort opens, a ski resort run by the Union Pacific Railroad. It becomes a "destination" for the rich and famous

1930's – During the Great Depression, federal public works programs help construct numerous roads, bridges, public buildings and Forest Service recreation sites throughout Blaine County

1958 – In the First Wagon Days Parade, "The Big Hitch" and a few dozen Lewis Ore Wagons roll down Ketchum's Main Street.

*Photograph captions/credits are on the following page.*

*Special thanks... to The Community Library for their help gathering these photos.*





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## Historic Photograph Captions and Credits

1. Bannock people in Idaho. Public domain Wikipedia Commons
2. Hailey High School band greeting Arturo Toscanini at the Ketchum depot. Donated to the Community Library by Dorice Taylor.
3. A caravan of cars traveling on the unpaved road to Galena Summit. Donated to the Community Library by Miriam Breckenridge.
4. Philadelphia Smelter. Photograph taken by Eugen Antz, circa 1885. Donated to the Community Library by Jayne Smith.
5. Two men and a Border Collie posing with a specimen Panama sheep at the townsite of Muldoon. The man on the right is possibly Mr. Laidlaw of the Flat Top Sheep Co. Photograph taken by Martyn Mallory, circa 1900s. Donated to the Community Library by I.A.W./William and Rose Mallory.
6. View of Sun Valley Lodge and Trail Creek. Donated to the Community Library by Wellman and Vera Jones.
7. Big Smokey ranger station circa 1941. Donated to the Community Library by Hunter Nelson.
8. All female survey crew – Minidoka Project, Idaho 1918. Photo from the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, of the U.S. Department of the Interior. Wikipedia Commons
9. Wagon Days Parade staging area north of Ketchum. Donated to the Community Library by Lou Holliday.
10. Man in hat and suit posing outside of a mining cabin. Donated to the Community Library by Mary Lemon Brown.
11. Early photo showing hand feeding of fish in raceways constructed in 1922.
12. Court House – late 1800s to early 1900s. Credit: Blaine County
13. Suffolk cross with brockle face sheep and lambs to be sold in the Ogden, Utah market, circa 1940s. Donated to the Community Library by Miriam Breckenridge and John W. "Bill" Jones.



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*Photo courtesy of Blaine County Recreation District*

# Community Profile

**Population** Demographics are the quantifiable statistics about population. Demography is used widely in land use planning as a way of understanding the community. Commonly examined demographics include gender, age, ethnicity, knowledge of languages, disabilities, mobility, home ownership, employment status, and location. Demographic trends describe the historical changes in demographics in a population over time. Demographics can be viewed as the essential information about the population of a region and the culture of the people there.

The two major sources of demographic data in this overview are the U.S. Census Bureau (generally from the 2010 Census) and the Idaho Department of Labor. Woods & Poole, a private firm that specializes in long-term county economic and demographic projections, has provided certain projections. The Employment section of this Plan also contains several data sources, which are noted. These data sources cannot always be directly compared with U.S. Census data, due to different assumptions and time periods for data collection. This Plan is a 10- to 15- year comprehensive plan, and data trends are of more importance than actual numbers in any given year. Because these different data sources are important in interpreting trends, they are used for such purposes in this Plan.

Unless specified otherwise, "Blaine County" or "County" data refers to the entire County, including unincorporated areas and areas within the cities. Definitions of key terms are found in the appendices.

## Local Demographic Trends

The following key demographic topics have been noted for Blaine County, and are further described in this chapter:

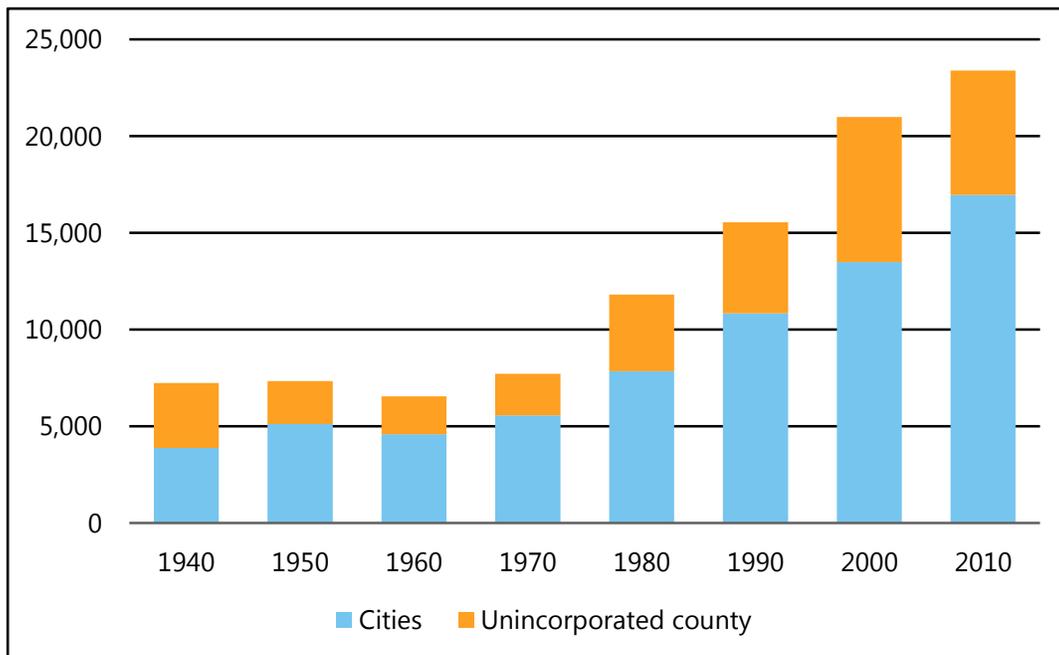
Population Distribution. Blaine County population is increasingly located in the valley cities. The share of the population living in the cities has grown from 37% in 1940 to 70% in 2010.

Age of Population. The proportion of residents age 55 and over has grown over the last two decades at a greater rate than the national average.

Diversity of Population. The Hispanic population has increased significantly over the past two decades.

Commuters. The number of workers commuting from neighboring counties has grown over the past two decades.

**Chart 1: Historical Population 1940 to 2010: Cities and Unincorporated Areas**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

## Population Distribution and Trends

Most Blaine County residents live in the Wood River Valley along State Highway 75 in the western half of the County. This area includes all of the County's incorporated cities except Carey, which is located in the south-central part of the County. The County's southeastern panhandle, known locally as the Yale area, is very sparsely populated. Map 1.1 shows private land with dots indicating improved parcels, generally indicating residential locations.

Blaine County's permanent population, on the whole, has increased over past decades. Current projections show population growth continuing, but likely at a more moderate pace than the booming decades of the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s as shown in Chart 1.

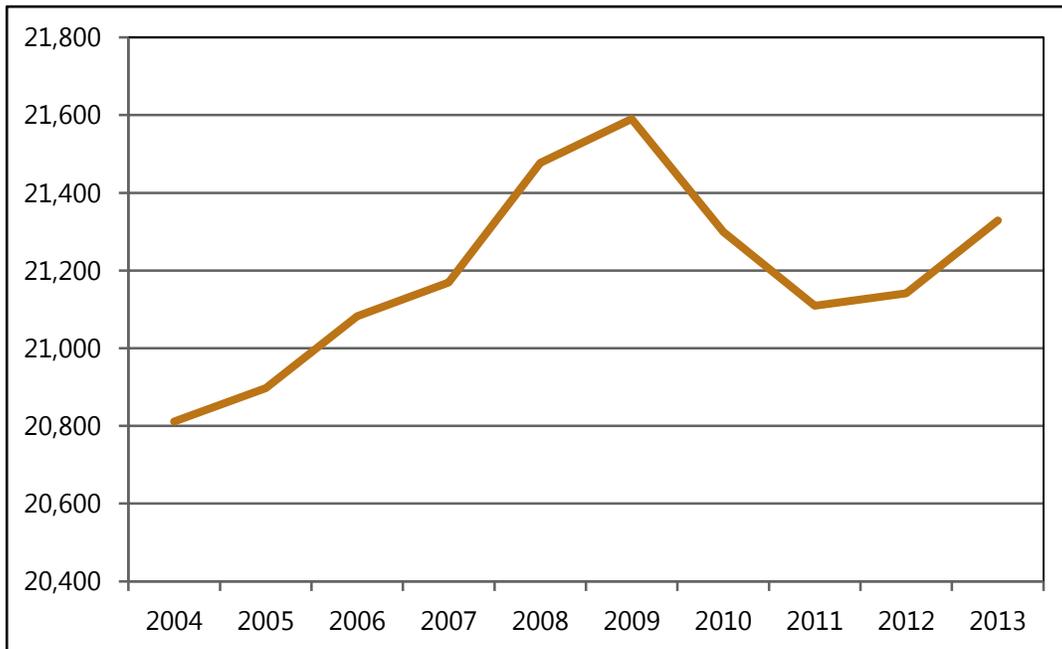
The majority of the population growth has occurred in valley cities. Unincorporated Blaine County accounted for only 20% of the population growth from 1990 to 2010. The 2010 Census showed nearly 70% of the population living within the incorporated

cities. Nevertheless, 30% of the population represents over 6400 people who live in the unincorporated County, placing a significant responsibility on county government to provide infrastructure and services over a vast geographic area.

The Housing and Land Use chapters suggest that growth patterns over the next 10 years should follow the current trend, which has most of the new population growth occurring in the cities within Blaine County.

From 2003 to 2013, the County's population grew by 6% (from 20,557 in 2003 to 21,789 in 2013). The data shows that population growth in Blaine County has been nonlinear, with the County growing in "spurts" that have generally followed national economic growth and recession trends. It is useful to look at the peaks and valleys in population growth over the past 10 years. Chart 2 shows the higher growth period of 2003-2008, with loss of population

**Chart 2: Blaine County Population over Prior Decade**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

from 2009-2011, and growth picking up again in 2012 and 2013. The post-recession decline may explain the modest growth forecast by Idaho

Department of Labor, discussed under Population Projections below. Impacts of the Great Recession are also outlined in Chapter 2, Housing.



*Oinkari Basque Dancers - Carol Waller*

## Population Projections

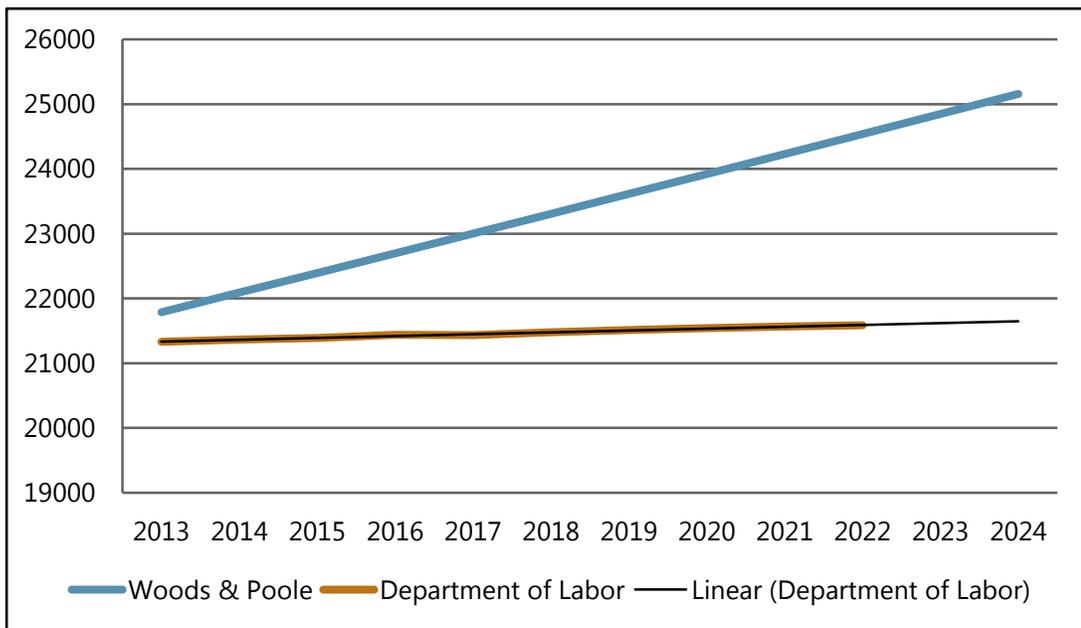
Population projections for Blaine County are developed from a variety of sources such as the Idaho Department of Labor and private nationally based demographic consultants. All sources are based on U.S. Census data, but different assumptions create a range of projections for the future. Unfortunately, population forecasts are becoming more difficult to obtain because of the lack of public money and funds in general dedicated to statistics and research.

Two demographic forecasts are presented in this Plan. One forecast is from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., which has a database containing more than 900 economic and demographic variables for every county in the U.S. for every year from 1970 through projections for 2040. The other forecast is from Idaho Department of Labor (IDL), which uses the services of an economic modeling company, EMSI, Inc., for industry and occupational projections

and population projections. Demographic data sources include annual population estimates and population projections from the U.S. Census Bureau, birth and mortality rates from the U.S. Health Department, and projected regional job growth. EMSI utilizes data from Idaho Department of Labor as its state data source. Population and job growth correlate heavily in the EMSI forecasts. While EMSI does not divulge its model, it appears likely that the model looks at fewer and more recent years of population and economic activity. Specific Idaho data sources also may affect the projections.

These forecasts vary significantly and this Plan presents them as high and low estimates for future growth (Chart 3), considering them a range within which to plan. Frequent updating of population and economic forecasts are critical, particularly during this post-recession period.

**Chart 3: Total Blaine County Population Projections to 2024**



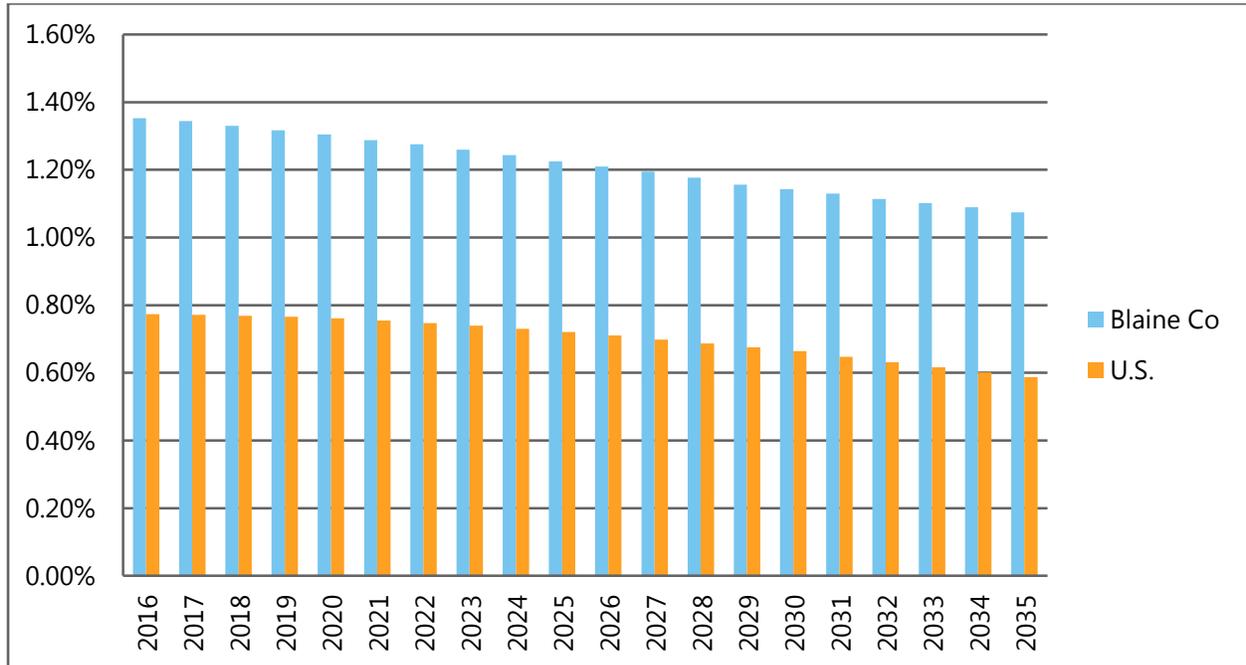
Sources: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., and QCEW Employees - EMSI 2014.2 Class of Worker

## Rate of Population Growth

Blaine County's slowing growth rate is similar to the slowing rate nationwide, although it is notable that Blaine County's growth rate continues to be much

higher than the national average, as shown in Chart 4.

**Chart 4: Projected Rate of Population Growth**



Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.



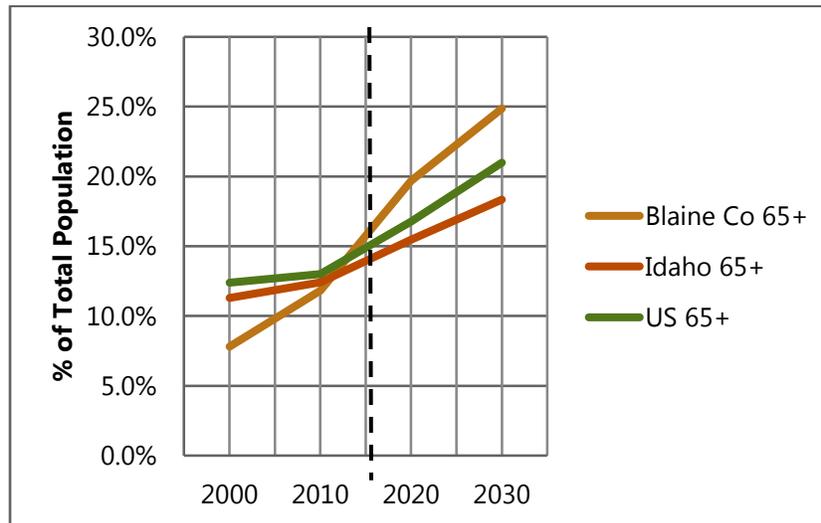
## An Aging Population

Blaine County's population is aging at a more rapid pace than national average. This trend parallels the growth in second home ownership in the County, as well as national trends for retirees seeking lifestyle communities. Most projections see this trend continuing for Blaine County. Chart 5 shows projections by the U.S. Census and by Woods & Poole for the percentage of Blaine County residents age 65 and over, as compared to Idaho and the nation. (The Idaho Department of Labor does not

project out to 2030, but has projected very similar aging projections for 2020: 20.6% of the population age 65+.)

Implications of this trend will be considered in this Plan. The primary impacts of an aging population affect housing choices (including the desire to live closer to amenities and services), the need for tiered care and other medical service needs and a shift in income away from wage earners to passive income.

**Chart 5: Age 65+ Population and Projection Comparisons**



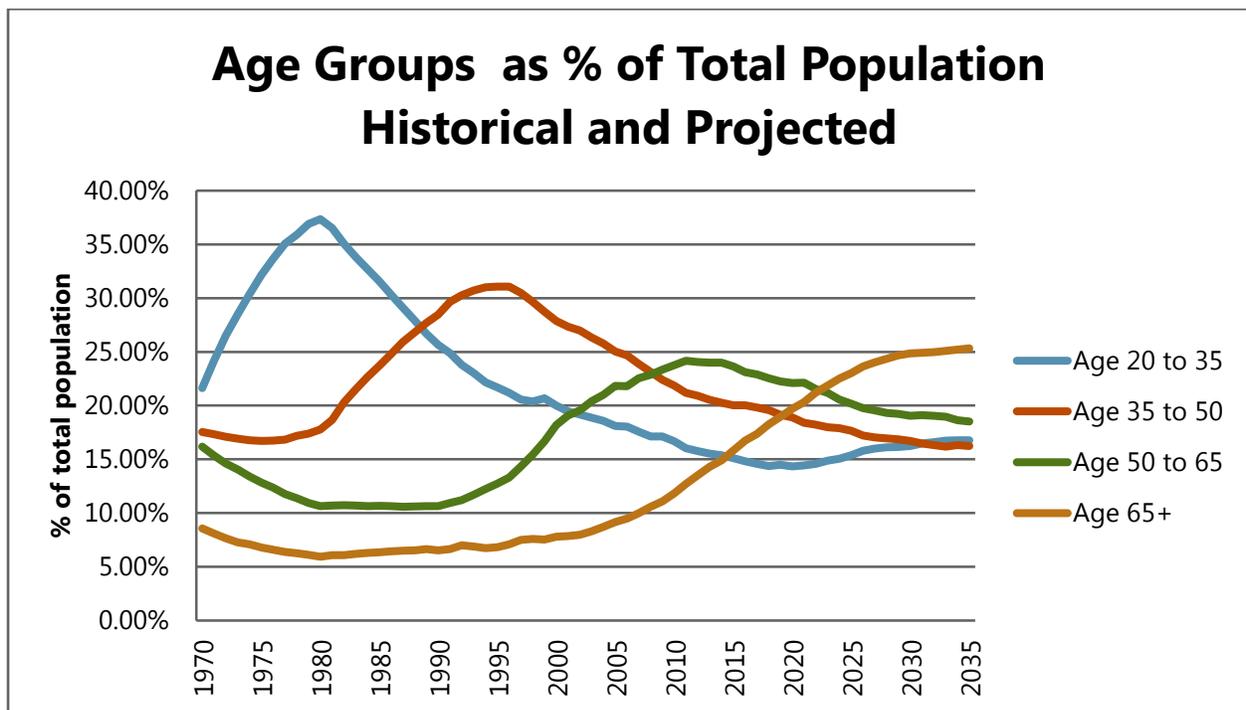
Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. (Blaine Co.) and U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division and CDC Wonder (Idaho and U.S).

Chart 6 shows the shift since the 1970's and projections to 2035 for Blaine County adults age 20-35 (the historically typical age when people make decisions about where to live and begin to have families) as compared to adults in the 35- to 65-age group, and those over age 65. The percentage of those aged 20-35 has decreased significantly since 1980, and is projected to level out. Those aged 35-65 have decreased since 2000, with a significant decline projected to continue. Conversely, the percentage of those aged 65 and over has been increasing steadily

since 2000, and is projected to continue at least to 2030.

According to the 2010 Census, Blaine County had a smaller percentage of children (persons under 20 years of age) at 26% of the population than Idaho (29%) or the nation (27%). If the leveling out of the percentage of adults aged 20 to 35 holds true, the percentage of children is also likely to remain relatively level.

**Chart 6: Blaine County Adult Age Groups as % of Population: Historical and Projected**



Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

## An Increasingly Diverse Population

The ethnic diversity has changed dramatically in Blaine County since the 1990s, with a large shift in the Hispanic population, as shown in Table 1. The 1990 Census showed a 2.9% Hispanic population, which grew to 20% by 2010. By contrast, all other ethnic groups grew by less than 1% from 2000 to

2010. The highest percentage of Hispanics is found in the communities of Bellevue and Hailey, which each have over 30% Hispanic population. The growing Hispanic population affects the workforce and the need for services in English as a Second Language.

**Table 1: Blaine County Hispanic Population Growth**

	1990	2000	2010
Total Population	13,552	18,991	21,376
Hispanic Origin	397	2,030	4,272
Share	2.9%	10.7%	20.0%

Source: US Census Decennial

## OUR PAST AT A GLANCE

### 1994

In the 1994 Comprehensive Plan our roadway goals were:

- To provide safe and efficient circulation systems in the County.
- To minimize disproportionate public expenditures that may be the result of poorly planned and executed development.
- To preserve the scenic characteristics of Blaine County.
- To fully evaluate transportation components as part of land use planning.

**In 1994**, Highway 75 was a two-lane road. We were concerned about the future capacity of this main spine through the valley to meet our growth needs. However, we remained committed to keeping commercial growth only in the cities and unincorporated communities of Gannett, Picabo and Smiley Creek.

We wanted to retain access to public lands. We had a public transit system only in Ketchum/Sun Valley. We hoped to expand mass transit service throughout the County.

We recognized in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan the tremendous economic value of the airport. Because of the importance of air service to the local economy, a separate section on Air Service in the Comprehensive Plan was added. The extensive, multi-year study by the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority (FMAA) relating to airport relocation and upgrades made that section an ideal candidate to commence the Comprehensive Plan update process in 2009.

### 1975

**In 1975**, we recognized similar goals to those stated above. We called our road and transportation network the "lifelines" that connect our community to the outside world. Our only transit system was the Sun Valley Stage Line, which provided one daily trip from Sun Valley to Twin Falls.

**In 1975**, we were still considering using the Union Pacific Right of Way (now the Wood River Trail) for road and/or transit improvements!

**In 1975**, we were considering a regional airport north of Jerome to serve both counties.

Key Statistics from the Past	Highway 75 Average Daily Vehicle Trips through Ketchum	Highway 75 Average Daily Vehicle Trips Lincoln/Blaine co line	Miles of Roadway Maintained by the County
1975	4,720	1,550	372
1994	12,000	2,100	443
2010	12,500	2,800	449 total (130 paved, 280 gravel, 39 other)

## Employment

Blaine County has a relatively diverse work force spread over a variety of industry sectors, as shown on Chart 7. The largest sector is leisure/hospitality, followed by government. These sectors account for 41% of the 11,508 industry jobs accounted for in 2012. (Most employment data in this section is from 2012, which is the most recent year for which complete data is available.)

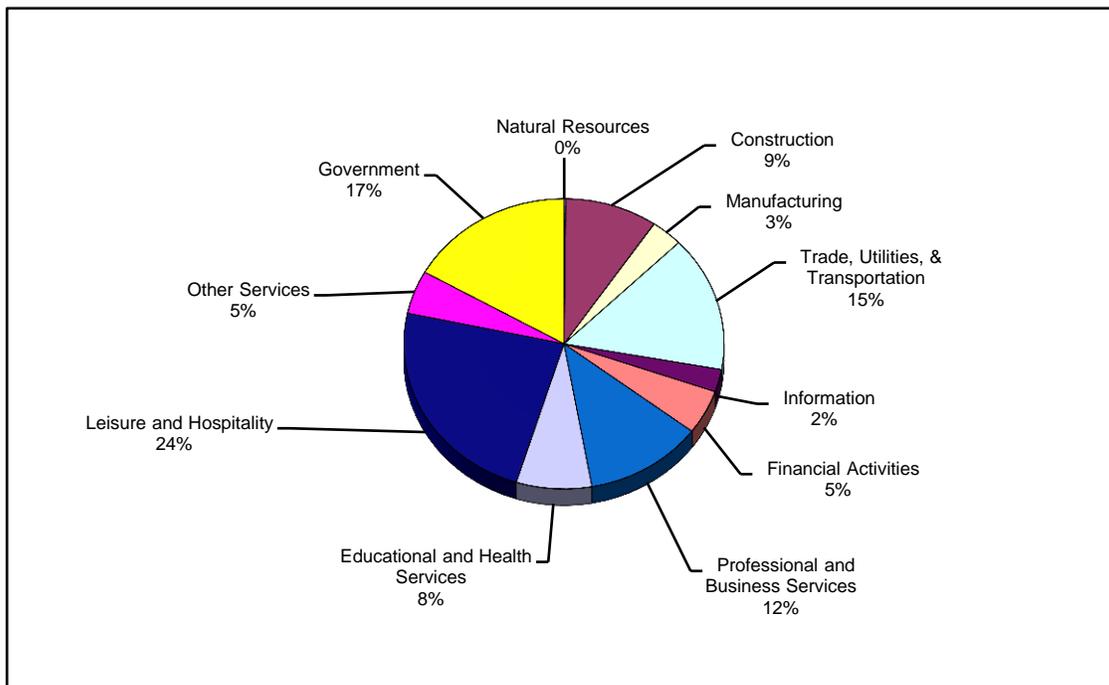
Of interest to note are the additional 3,374 sole proprietor jobs discussed further in this section. These workers are accounted for separately by the Idaho Department of Labor for tax reasons. Adding these jobs together with the industry jobs brings the Blaine County job total to 14,882. Worker categories, including "self-employed workers," as defined by the Department of Labor can be found in the Appendix.

The top employers in Blaine County (in alphabetical order) are as follows: Atkinsons' Market, Blaine County School District, Power Engineers, Rocky

Mountain Hardware, St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center, Sun Valley Resort (aka Sinclair Company) and Webb Landscape, Inc.

Historically, the majority of jobs in Blaine County were located in Ketchum/Sun Valley, with the focus on resort-related jobs. The 2012 labor numbers show that job growth has shifted towards Hailey. In 2012, the northern cities (Ketchum and Sun Valley) comprised 51% of the job base in Blaine County, with Hailey comprising 36% of the County job base. Another way to look at these numbers is that most jobs are in Ketchum and Hailey. These two towns comprise 75% of the jobs in Blaine County. A limited number of jobs (4%) are located in unincorporated Blaine County.

**Chart 7: Blaine County Workers: Nonfarm Jobs by Sector 2012**

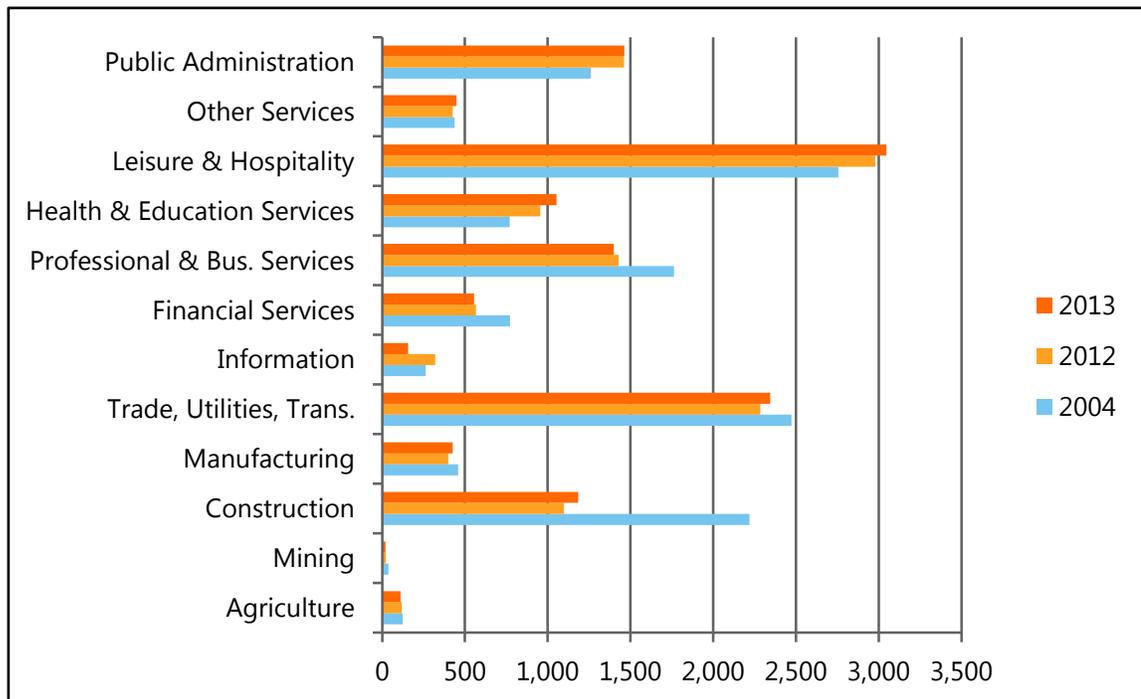


Source: Current Employment Statistics, Idaho Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics

Looking back over the past 10 years, there has been a dramatic loss of construction-related jobs in Blaine County, similar to national recession trends. Chart 8<sup>1</sup> shows employment in several key years: 2004 shows

the robust pre-recession employment numbers; 2012 shows the job loss by industry caused by the recession; 2013 shows the economy rebounding with modest job growth in some sectors.

**Chart 8: Blaine County Employment by Industry Sector**



Source: Current Employment Statistics, Idaho Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics

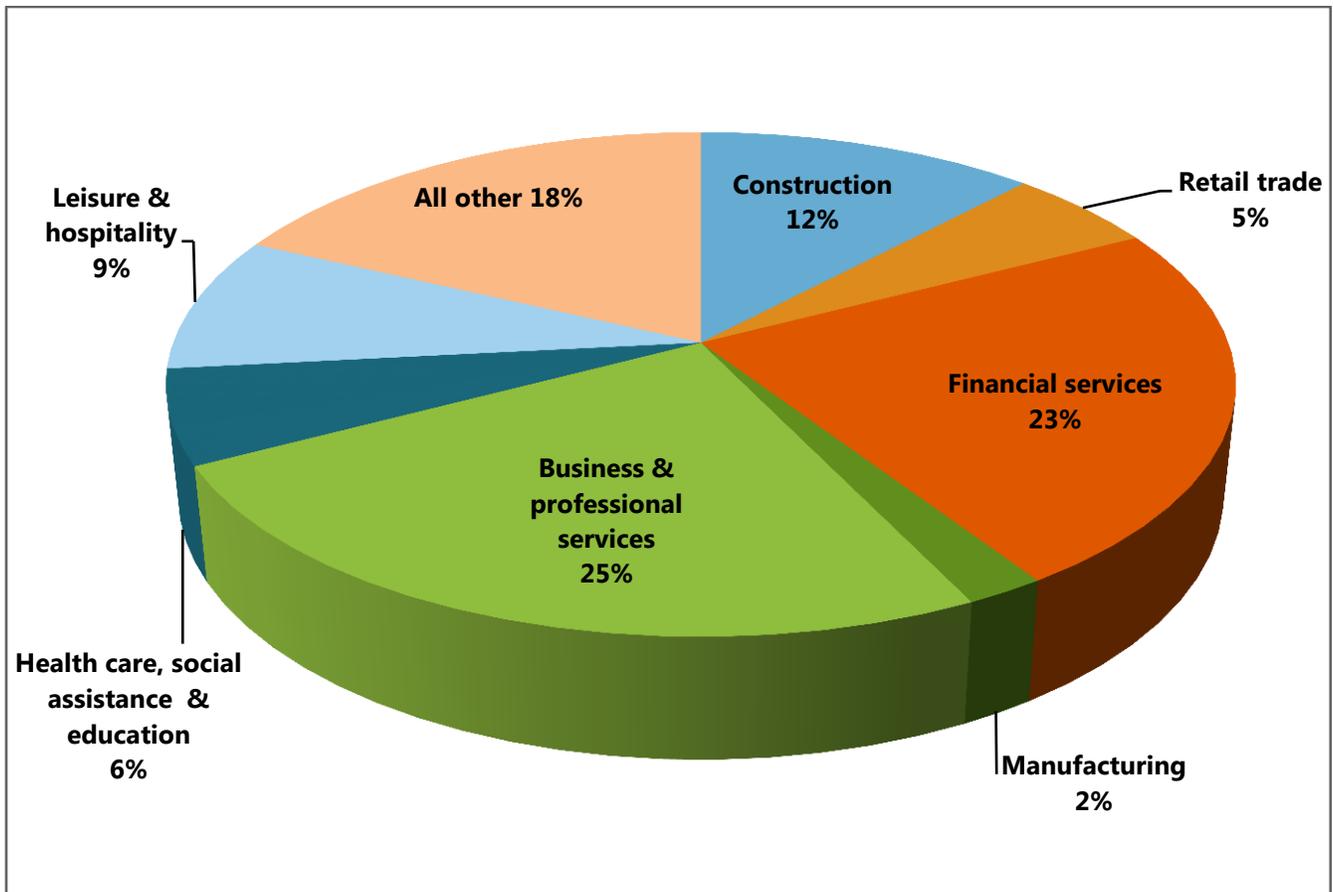
<sup>1</sup> Charts 7 and 8 use different data sources, so they are not exactly comparable. Chart 7 includes a survey of businesses combined with the Quarterly Census for Employment and Wages, while chart 8 does not include the survey, but adds in employees contributing to the Unemployment Insurance Fund. Chart 8 is a valuable way of comparing our current employment categories with pre-recession numbers.

## Sole Proprietors

Blaine County contains a high number of sole proprietors and self-employed workers who are accounted for separately by the Department of Labor. Included in this category are real estate professionals, technical science, the arts, finance,

construction and other categories, as shown in Chart 9. These workers accounted for 3,374 jobs in 2012, and make up 23% of the total Blaine County workforce. These workers contribute \$175 million in wages to the Blaine County economy.

**Chart 9: Blaine County Sole Proprietors 2012**



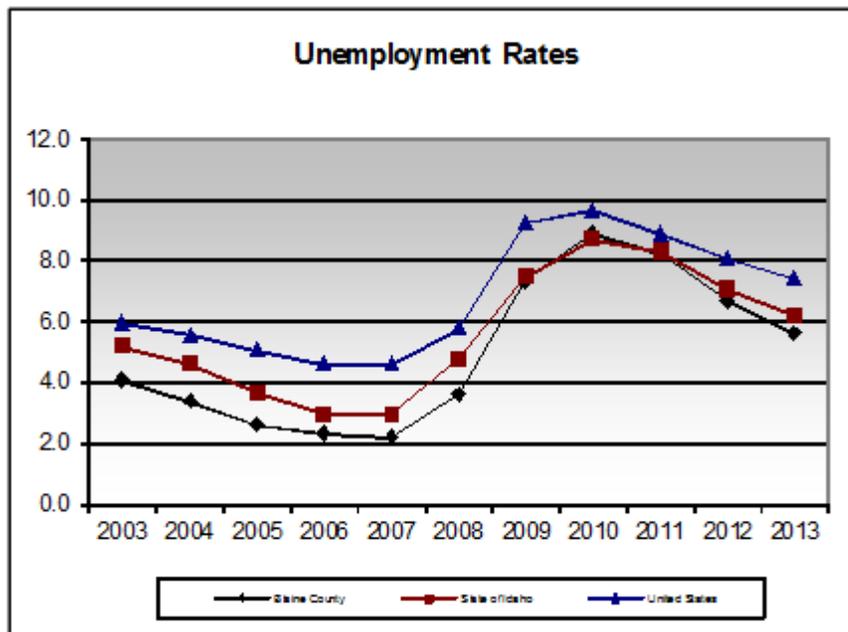
Source: *Current Employment Statistics, Idaho Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics*

## Unemployment

Unemployment in Blaine County hit a low of 2.2% in 2007, and climbed to a high of 8.9% in 2010. Unemployment has stabilized at 4% for May of 2014,<sup>2</sup> as compared to Idaho overall at 4.9% and the national unemployment rate of 6.3%.

It is also important to note that Blaine County has high seasonal unemployment, as a large percentage of the workforce is employed in the resort industry. Idaho Department of Labor reports a high of 12% of the total workforce as seasonal workers in 2004, and a lower number of 8% of the workforce as seasonal in 2012, likely due to the recession. Although many of the seasonal jobs are in leisure and hospitality, construction accounts for the majority of seasonal jobs, correlating with the drop in construction jobs shown in Chart 8.

**Chart 10: Blaine County Unemployment Rates**



Source: Current Employment Statistics, Idaho Department of Labor/Bureau of Labor Statistics

<sup>2</sup> Idaho Department of Labor

## Wages and Median Income

It is important to understand the difference between wages and median income. **Median income** is the amount that divides the income distribution into two equal groups, half having income above that amount and half having income below that amount. This term is used extensively by professionals analyzing housing costs and affordability. It has proven to be a good benchmark to compare costs across varied geographic regions. **Wages** are defined as income earned from work or services, usually compensated by the hour, day or week.

While median income is higher in Blaine County than state and national averages, wages are lower than the national average. When compared to area median home prices, this creates an “affordability gap.” Median household income in Blaine County is \$57,955, as compared to the national median

income of \$51,371. However, the national median home price in 2014 was \$212,400, as compared to \$300,000 in Blaine County. (It is also important to note the significant price difference in Blaine County; the median home price in the Sun Valley/Elkhorn area was \$450,000). This affordability gap is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 2, Housing.

The average annual wage in Blaine County was \$38,225 in 2012, as compared to \$36,149 for the state of Idaho and \$49,289 nationally. These wages are affected by the higher cost of living in Blaine County, where housing costs are higher than Idaho as a whole. Table 2 summarizes these key economic data statistics.

**Table 2: Wages and Median Household Income (2012)**

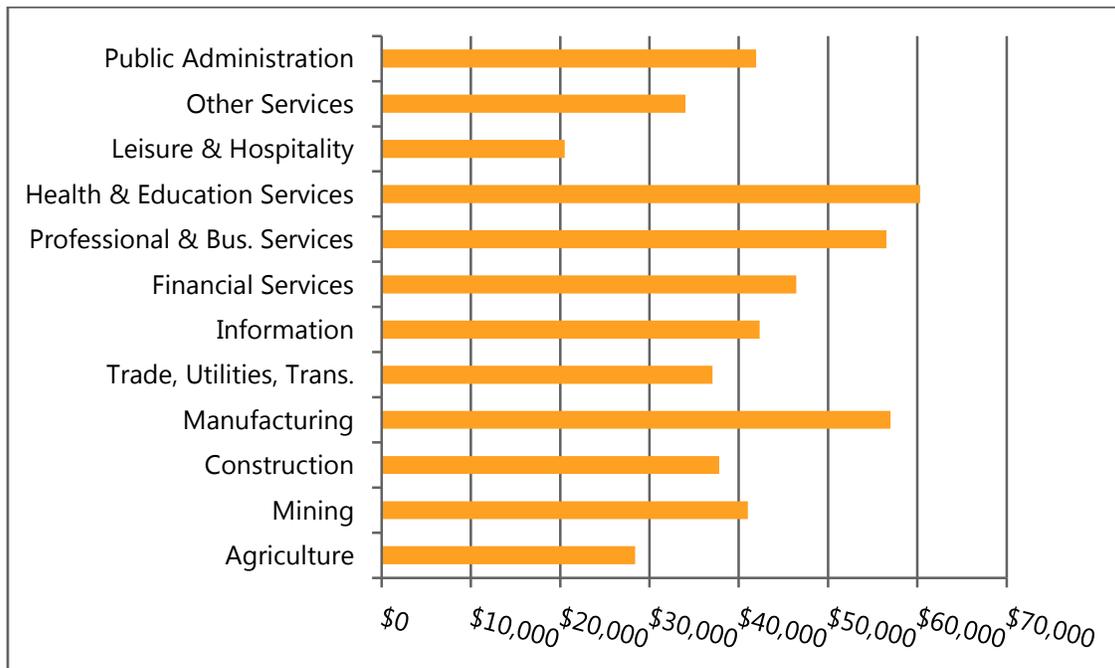
	<b>Average Wages</b>	<b>Median Household Income</b>
<b>Blaine County</b>	\$38,225	\$57,955
<b>Idaho</b>	\$36,149	\$45,489
<b>United States</b>	\$49,289	\$51,371

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, US Census

Chart 11 shows the range in wages by industry in Blaine County, with health and education, business/professional and manufacturing being the

highest wage-earning categories, and leisure/hospitality being the lowest wage-earning category.

**Chart 11: Blaine County Wages by Industry (2012)**



Source: Idaho Department of Labor

## Workforce Trends and Projections

Similar to population projections, workforce trends are analyzed by a variety of professionals, with a range of projected outcomes. The Idaho Department of Labor's jobs projections by industry currently show an increase of 3% in the total number of jobs in Blaine County between 2013 and 2023. This can be contrasted with estimates from Woods & Poole, which projected a 17% increase in jobs for the County for that time period. In this instance it is worth noting that the Woods & Poole numbers for 2013 are projected from U.S. Department of Commerce data through 2010, while Idaho Department of Labor numbers for 2012 are based on actual historic data through that year and therefore may be more accurate than the Woods & Poole's projection.

The Idaho Department of Labor Occupational Report reviews the categories of workers (not including self-employed) and shows a significant decrease in some job categories offset by increases in others. Overall it appears that there is a modest but discernible trend toward more diversification in employment, with greater growth (both in percentage and in absolute numbers) in what are currently smaller occupation categories in terms of number of jobs. Three of the five fastest-growing occupations (Table 3) represent high-wage jobs. While the number of total workers in these categories remains relatively low, the percent increase is notable.

**Table 3: Fastest Growing Occupations (Forecast), Blaine County**

<i>Description</i>	<i>2012 Jobs</i>	<i>2022 Jobs</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>	<i>Median Hourly Earnings</i>
Nursing, Psychiatric, Home Health Aides	86	126	40	<b>47%</b>	\$11.54
Engineers	151	214	63	<b>42%</b>	\$41.61
Health Diagnosing and Treating Practitioners	251	347	96	<b>38%</b>	\$36.89
Other Protective Service Workers (not Law Enforcement or Firefighting)	79	108	29	<b>37%</b>	\$12.43
Social Scientists and Related Workers	14	19	5	<b>36%</b>	\$28.98
<b>Subtotal these categories</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>814</b>			
<b>Total jobs all categories</b>	<b>11,909</b>	<b>12,638</b>			
<b>Percent of total</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>6%</b>			

Source: Idaho Department of Labor, QCEW Employees & Non-QCEW Employees - EMSI 2014.1 Class of Worker

The top five most numerous occupations in Blaine County represent a surprisingly large percentage, 30%, of all jobs (Table 4). Of these, three low-wage categories (Food & Beverage Serving Workers, Building Cleaning Workers, and Cooks & Food

Preparation Workers) are expected to grow at a higher rate than the overall 6% growth rate for all categories. Construction workers are projected to decrease by 24%, which also represents a loss in a more highly paid category.

**Table 4: Most Numerous Occupations (Forecast), Blaine County**

<i>Description</i>	<i>2012 Jobs</i>	<i>2022 Jobs</i>	<i>Change</i>	<i>% Change</i>	<i>Median Hourly Earnings</i>
Food and Beverage Serving Workers	946	1,051	105	11%	\$9.53
Retail Sales Workers	820	826	6	1%	\$10.34
Construction Trades Workers	791	598	(193)	(24%)	\$17.18
Building Cleaning & Pest Control Workers	568	624	56	10%	\$10.56
Cooks and Food Preparation Workers	461	491	30	7%	\$10.57
<b>Subtotal these categories</b>	<b>3,586</b>	<b>3,590</b>			
<b>Total jobs all categories</b>	<b>11,909</b>	<b>12,638</b>			
<b>Percent of total</b>	<b>30%</b>	<b>28%</b>			

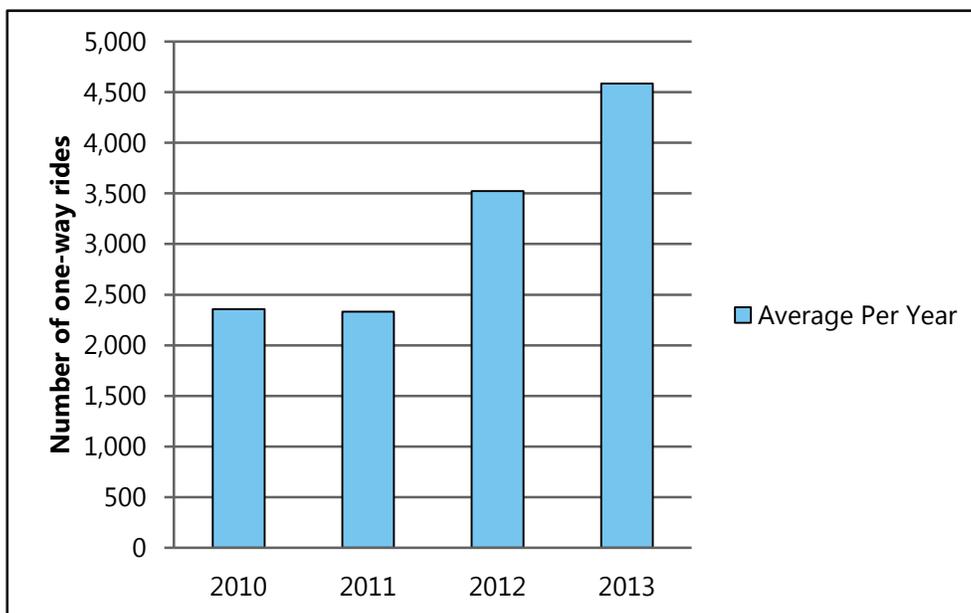
Source: Idaho Department of Labor, QCEW Employees & Non-QCEW Employees - EMSI 2014.1 Class of Worker

## A Commuting Population

The high cost of housing in Blaine County has resulted in a large influx of commuting employees from other areas, primarily Lincoln County. Data sources on commuting numbers are limited, with varying margins of error. The American Community Survey 2006-2010 estimates 1,365<sup>3</sup> commuters from Camas, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln and Twin Falls counties. A Blaine County Housing Needs Assessment Survey from 2006 estimated that 17% of the Blaine County workforce commuted in to Blaine County. Both surveys found most commuters coming from Lincoln County.

Mountain Rides Transportation Authority also keeps data on vanpool commuters. Vanpool ridership has increased significantly over the past few years. Approximately 75% of those vanpool riders work for two large employers: Sun Valley Company and Webb Landscaping. Mountain Rides vanpoolers come into Blaine County from the Shoshone, Gooding, Fairfield, Jerome and Twin Falls areas, with a small number coming from Carey.

**Chart 12: Mountain Rides Vanpool Ridership**



Source: Mountain Rides

<sup>3</sup> Margin of error: 419

## Widening Income and “Affordability” Gap

The cost of living in Blaine County has increased since the 1990s, outpacing Idaho and the nation for necessities such as food and fuel as well as housing. Blaine County ranks 25<sup>th</sup> in the United States for personal income, but 104<sup>th</sup> in the United States for wages/salaries.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the Idaho

Department of Labor projects that the number of jobs at the lower end of the wage scale will increase. The combined effect of these two trends is a growing gap between high-income and low-income segments of the community and the ability of low income wage earners to live in Blaine County.

**Table 5: 2012 Hispanic Population Monthly Wage Differentials**

Quarter	Not Hispanic or Latino	Hispanic or Latino
1 <sup>st</sup>	\$3,033	\$1,860
2 <sup>nd</sup>	\$3,185	\$2,110
3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$3,254	\$2,326
4 <sup>th</sup>	\$3,943	\$2,343
Average Monthly Wage	\$3,353	\$2,159

Source: Idaho Department of Labor

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<sup>4</sup> Youngman Structural Analysis of the Sun Valley Resort Economy, 2009



## County Build-Out Study

Comprehensive Plans require a look at existing development patterns to see where development can occur. A study of residential build-out will guide several chapters, including but not limited to Housing, Public Facilities, Economic Development, and Land Use. The Geographic Information Services (GIS) and Land Use Services departments worked together to produce a study that is a snapshot in time from September 2014.

To create the study, the GIS Department utilized tax parcel data as well as other informational layers. Beginning with all parcels in the County, the first step was to remove parcels within the incorporated cities, public lands, and parcels with no land associated with them (e.g., cabins on leased land, condominium units, and mobile home parcels). This is an important step in Blaine County, as a high percentage of our land base is public land. By removing the public lands and land within the cities, the study area was reduced by over 80% from 1,693,990 acres to 310,468 acres. The remaining parcels are referred to as “Study Parcels” (Map I.2).

*Fall color on Highway 20 ranch - Carol Waller*

By utilizing the zoning district GIS layer, the number of acres within each zoning district was quantified (column G). Then, by employing the appropriate divider (e.g., “20.00” for 1 unit per 20 acres in the A-20 district), the number of dwelling units potentially allowable within each district was calculated (column I).

Blaine County has two overlay districts that affect the allowable density: Mountain Overlay District (MOD) and Floodplain (FP). Land with slopes in excess of 25% within the MOD have a maximum allowable density of one unit per 40 or 160 acres, depending upon location. Land within the FP has a maximum allowable density of one unit per 5 acres. The next two steps were to decrease the number of potential units according to these slope and floodplain constraints (columns K and L). See Maps I.3 and I.4.

Additionally, a significant amount of land in the County is under conservation easements that restrict residential development. With assistance from the conservation entities, these areas were mapped and the corresponding development constraints further decreased the potential number of units (column M).

Map I.5 shows the areas in which developable units are decreased by conservation easements as well as the slope and floodplain constraints.

By subtracting the units in the corresponding zoning districts according to these three constraints, the "Build-out Potential Units" were calculated (column N). The number of existing units within each district was estimated by identifying parcels with improvements upon them, from the Assessor's information layer (column O). Finally, the existing units were subtracted from build-out potential units to get the remaining potential units (column P).

While this build-out study cannot be 100% accurate, it is a very good estimate and an extremely powerful tool for planning purposes. It is obvious that with 9,416 remaining potential units in the unincorporated County, projected population growth can easily be accommodated. The location of the remaining potential units with regard to proximity to employment, services and facilities, and so on will be examined in depth in the Land Use chapter of this Plan.

Assumptions and limitations of the build-out study include the following:

1. Address points are assumed to represent residential units, and are used to calculate the "Existing Units" in a zoning district.
2. All constraints have an impact except where they are coincident; then the most restrictive constraint takes precedence. E.g., in locations where Floodplain and Mountain Overlay District and Conservation Easement, only the Conservation Easement constraint was applied to calculate allowable density.
3. The number of units allowable on land subject to conservation easements is an estimate only, with assistance from the conservation entity.
4. Accessory dwelling units (ADUs) are allowed in most zoning districts on lots over 2 acres. Thus, the number of potential units may be underestimated. However, only a

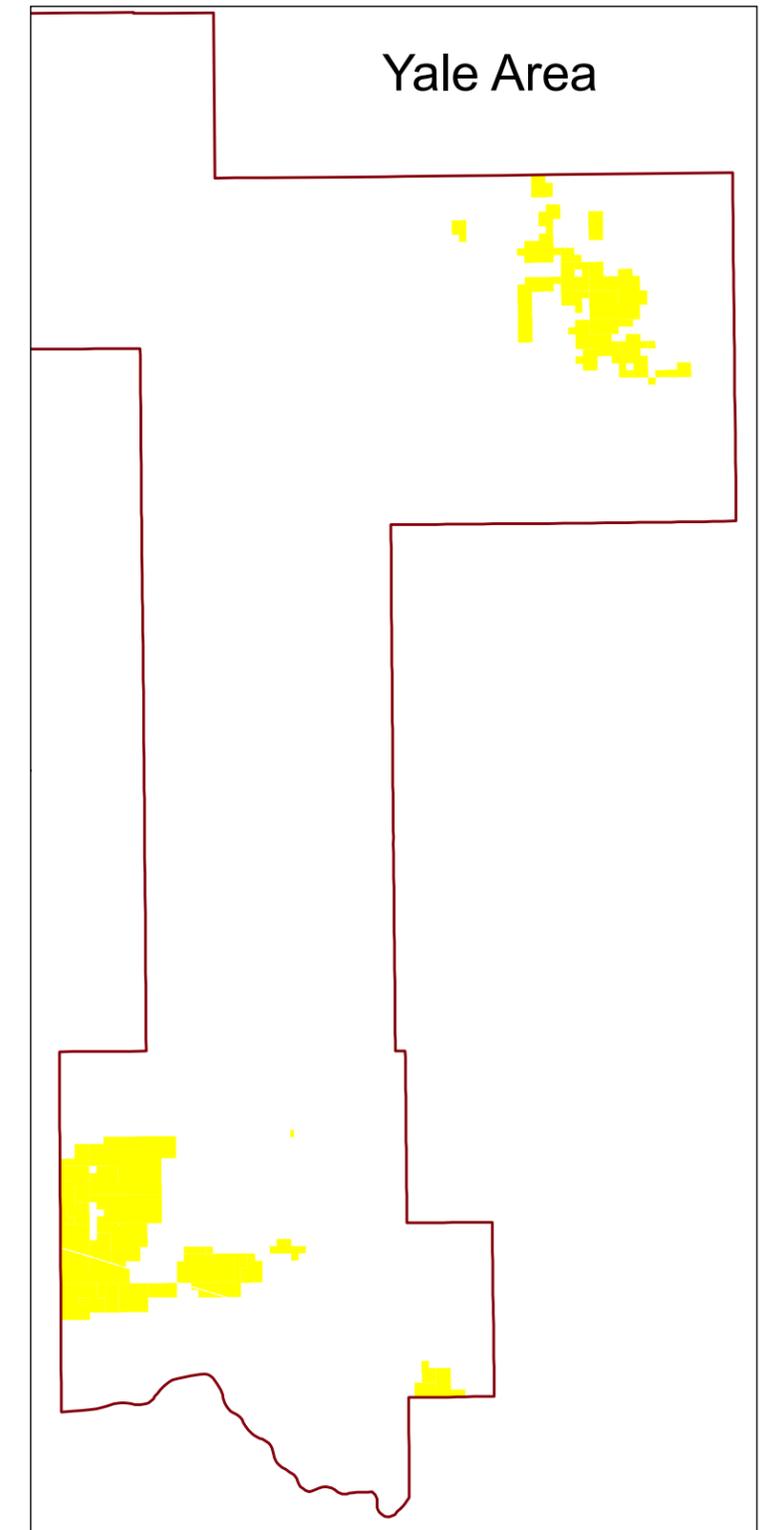
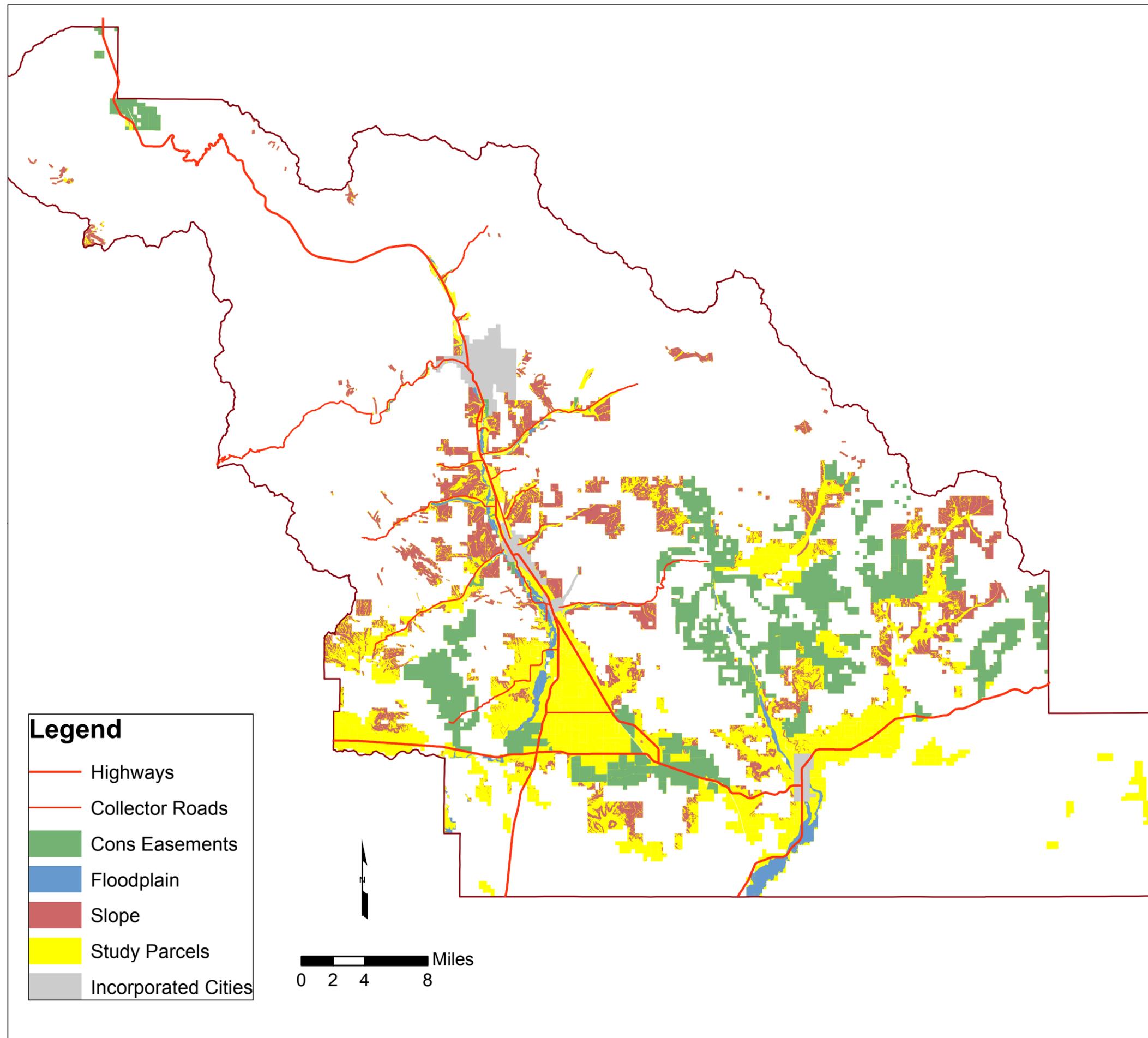
portion of all parcels allowed an ADU actually have one, and many ADUs are used as private guest quarters rather than as a rental unit which could be considered to be an additional unit.

5. Potential units are based on the zoning of parcels. There are, in fact, several subdivided lots which are significantly larger than zoning allows, yet will not be resubdivided. E.g. an 8-acre parcel in R-5 cannot be divided under that zoning, or a 10-acre lot may be precluded from resubdividing by plat note or CCR's. Thus, number of potential units may be overestimated.

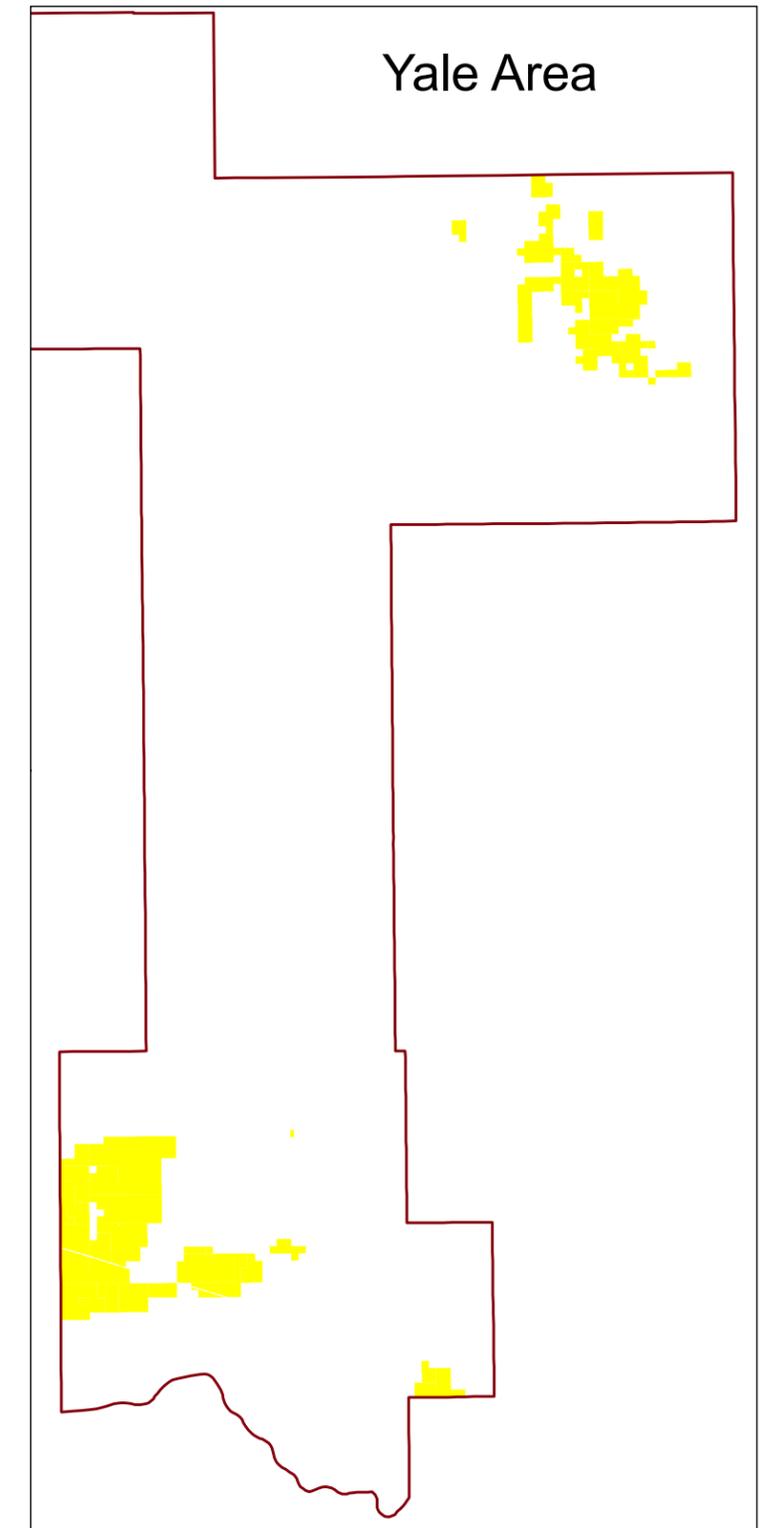
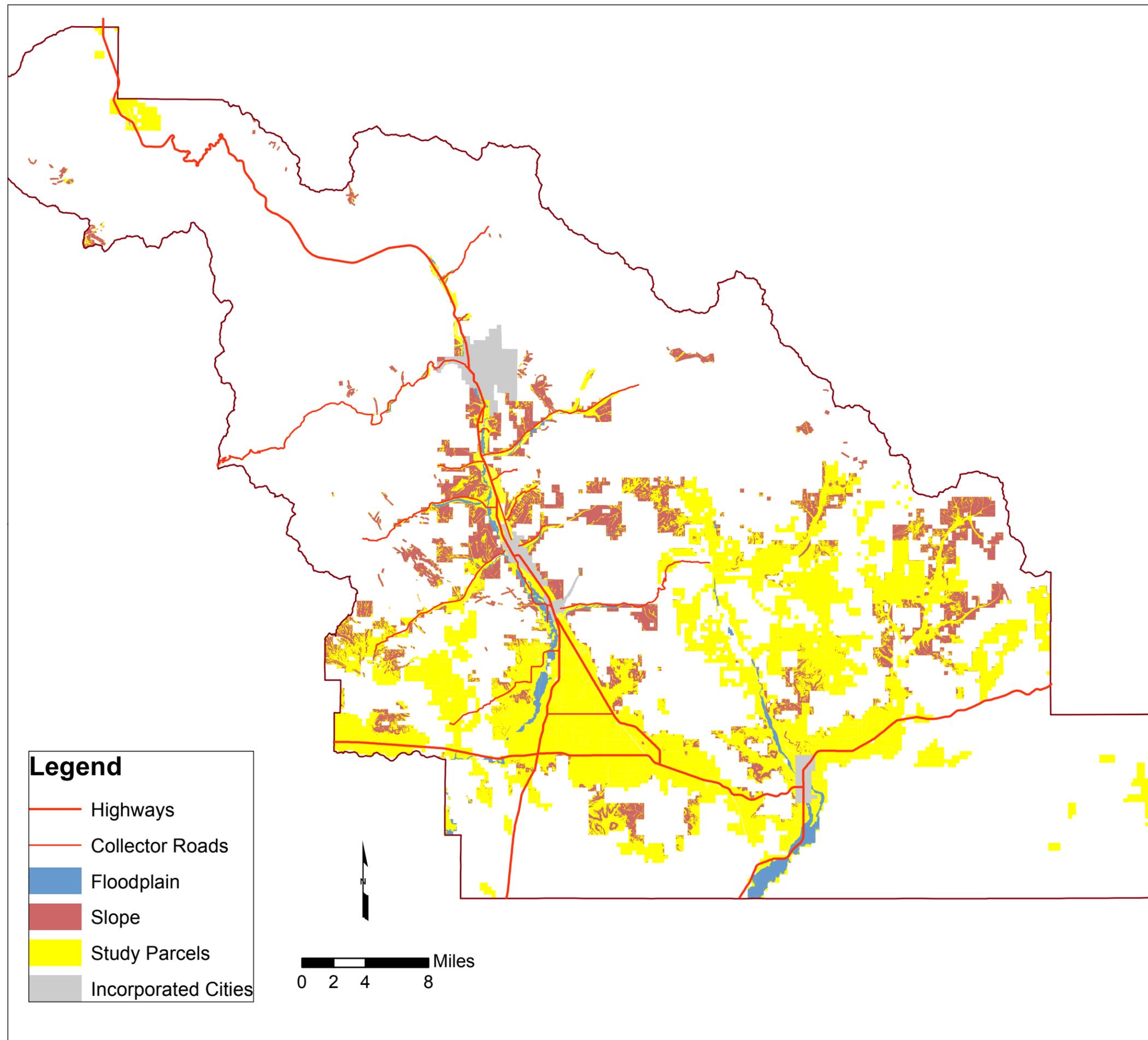
**County Buildout Study - September 2014**

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q
1		Total County				Study Parcels					Slope Decrease	Floodplain Decrease	ConsEase Decrease	Buildout Potential	Existing	Remaining Potential	
2	Zone	Acres	Divider	Units	Zone	Acres	Divider	Units			Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	Units	
3	A-20	19,591.52	20	980	A-20	19,028.47	20.00	951			3	0	71	876	223	653	
4	A-40	74,533.87	40	1,863	A-40	69,998.47	40.00	1750			6	0	355	1,388	233	1,155	
5	C	20.32	0.4	51	C	17.47	0.40	44			0	0	0	44	23	21	
6	CITY	13,617.14	0	0	CITY	17.16	0.00	0			0	0	0	0	0	0	
7	HI	1,383.79	0	0	HI	1,254.77	0.00	0			0	0	0	0	14 *	0	
8	LI	179.2	0	0	LI	149.28	0.00	0			0	0	0	0	34 *	0	
9	R-40	362.47	0.4	906	R-40	282.48	0.40	706			1	1	0	704	508	196	
10	R-1	2,400.69	1	2,401	R-1	2,088.34	1.00	2088			46	191	159	1,692	828	864	
11	R-10	9,304.16	10	930	R-10	3,282.56	10.00	328			251	0	0	77	12	65	
12	R-10(UIB)	70,665.11	10	7,067	R-10(UIB)	16,593.36	10.00	1659			879	0	34	745	77	668	
13	R-2	2,729.43	2	1,365	R-2	2,183.17	2.00	1092			24	72	19	976	556	420	
14	R-2.50	888.91	2.5	356	R-2.50	781.30	2.50	313			4	18	1	290	227	63	
15	R-5	11,970.88	5	2,394	R-5	10,810.72	5.00	2162			100	0	50	2,012	540	1,472	
16	RD	819.91	0.25	3,280	RD	533.13	0.25	2133			228	128	0	1,777	191	1,586	
17	RR-40	1,490,402.73	40	37,260	RR-40	183,352.45	40.00	4584			872	0	1,508	2,204	96	2,108	
18	SCC	13.47	0.4	34	SCC	13.47	0.40	34			0	11	0	23	2	21	
19	SCR.4	106.03	0.4	265	SCR.4	80.99	0.40	202			0	10	0	192	69	123	
20																	
21	Total	1,698,989.63		59,152		310,467.59		18,046			2,416	430	2,199	13,001	3,585	9,416	
22																	
23	Study parcels are unincorporated County (no Cities), minus exempt property (category code 81, which includes public land),																
24	minus parcels with no land (mobile homes, cabins, condominiums and leased real property).																
25																	
26	Slope 25% in MOD Acres in Study Parcels:				Floodplain Acres in Study Parcels:				Conservation Easement Acres in Study Parcels:								
27	62,036				9,348				80,264								
28																	
29																	* Does not contribute to study calculation

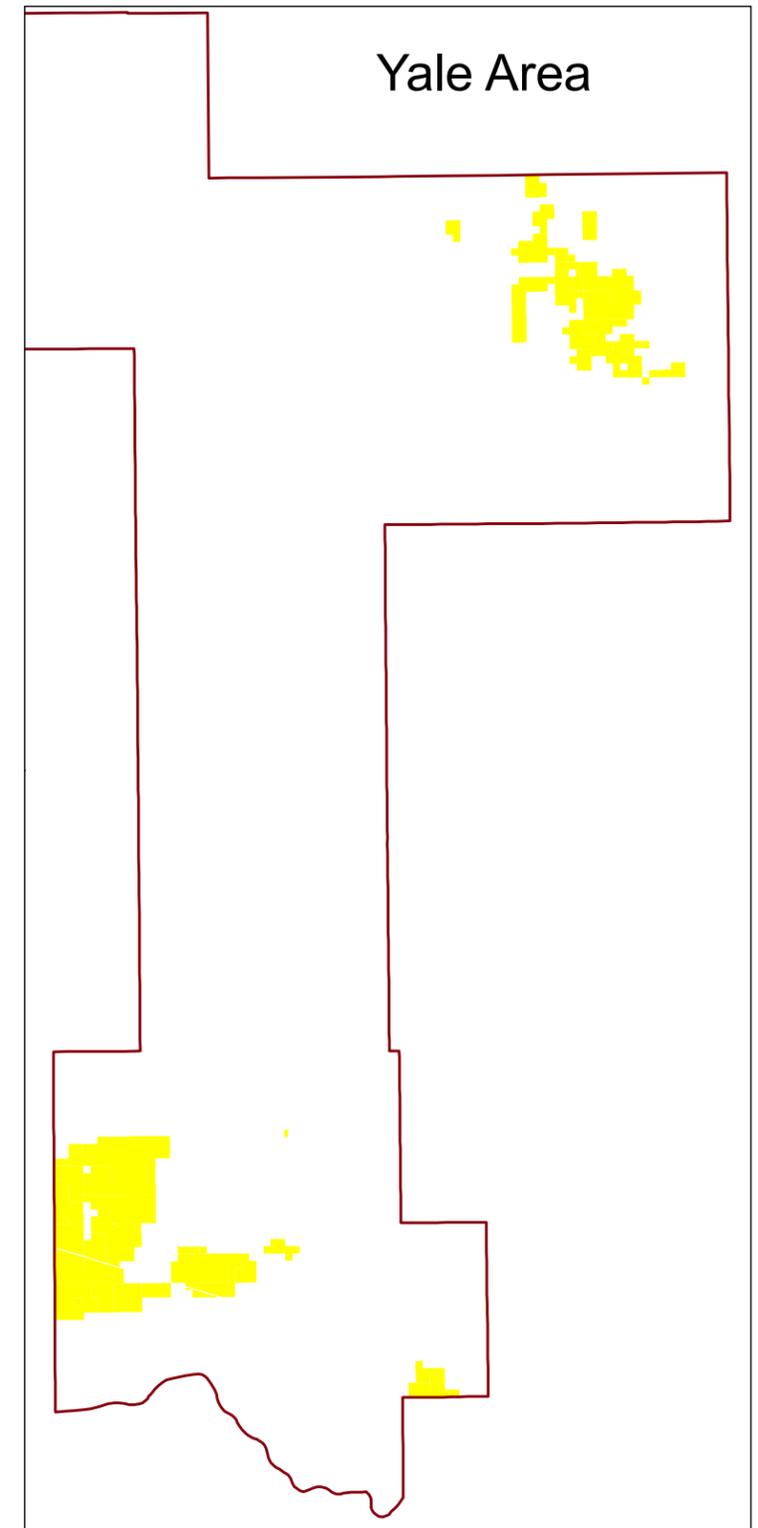
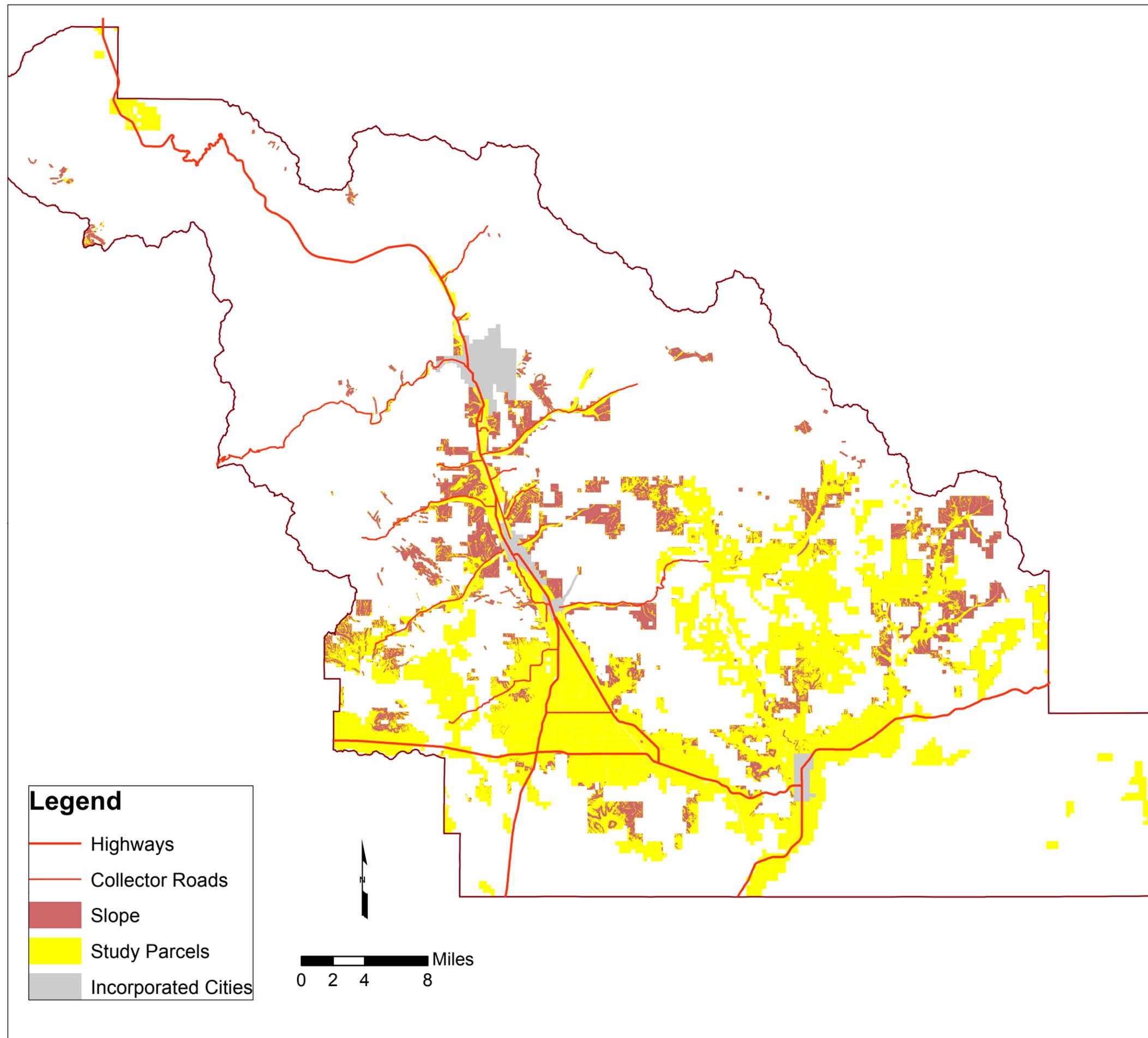
**Map I.5  
County Buildout Study  
September 2014**



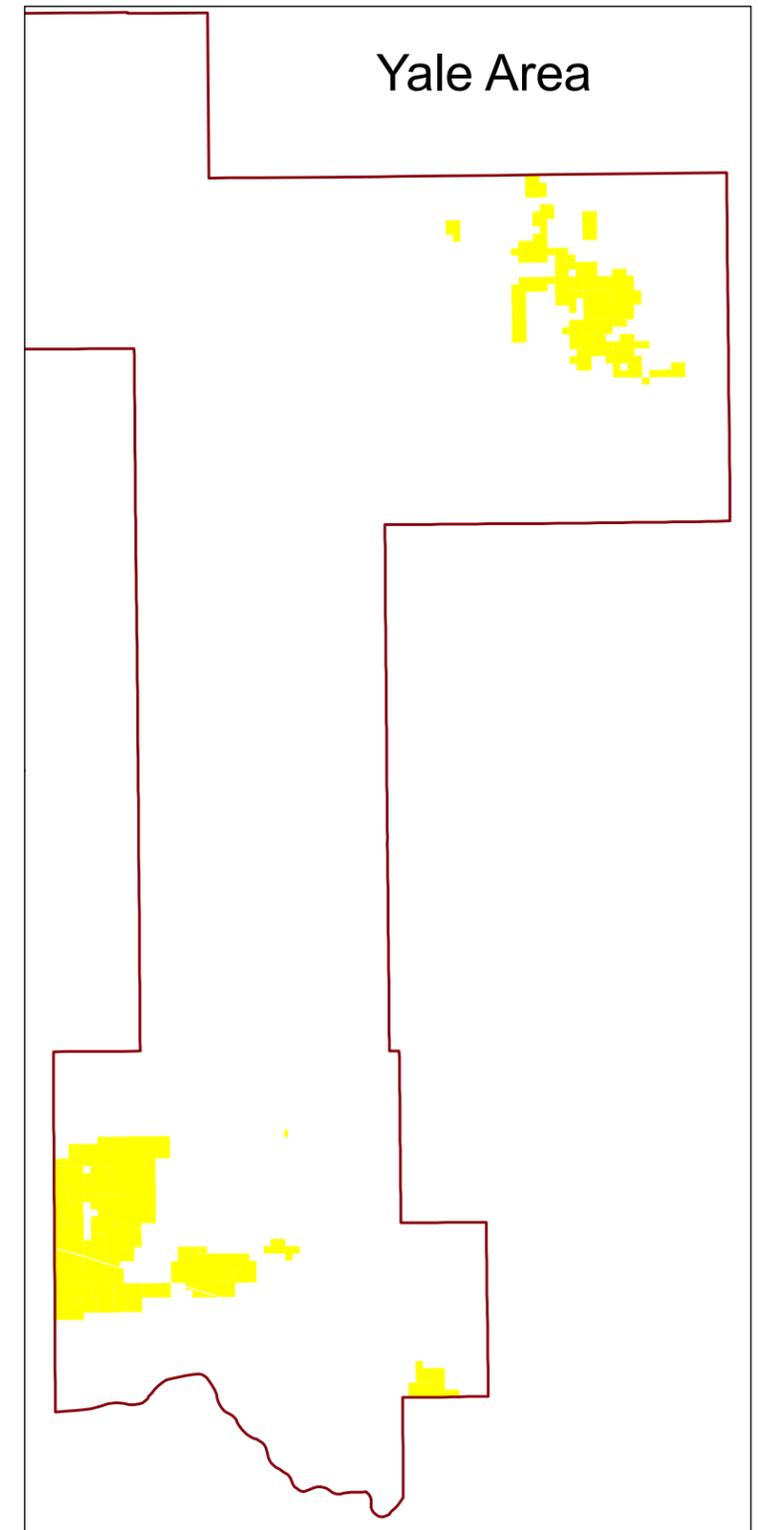
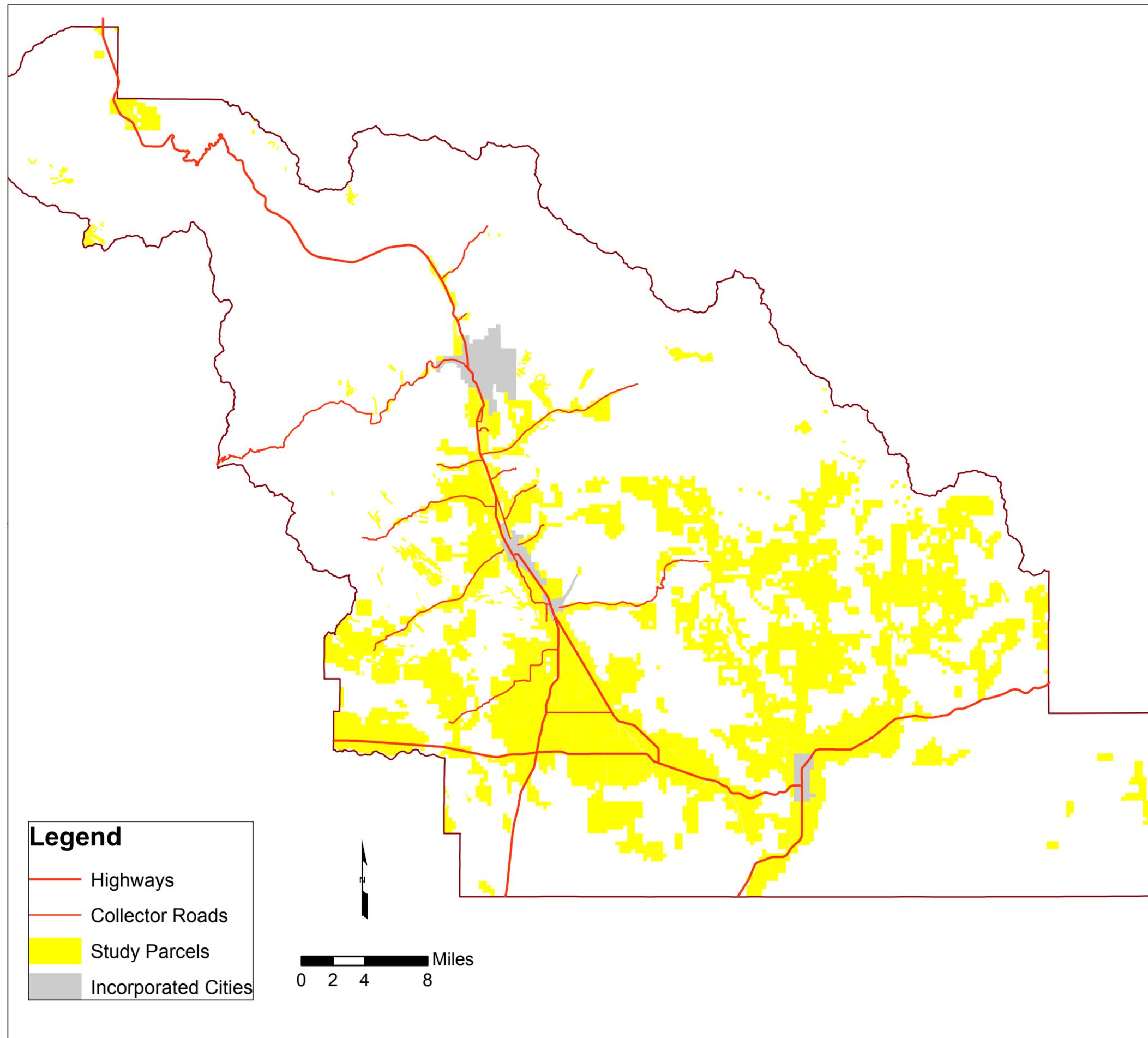
**Map I.4  
County Buildout Study  
September 2014**



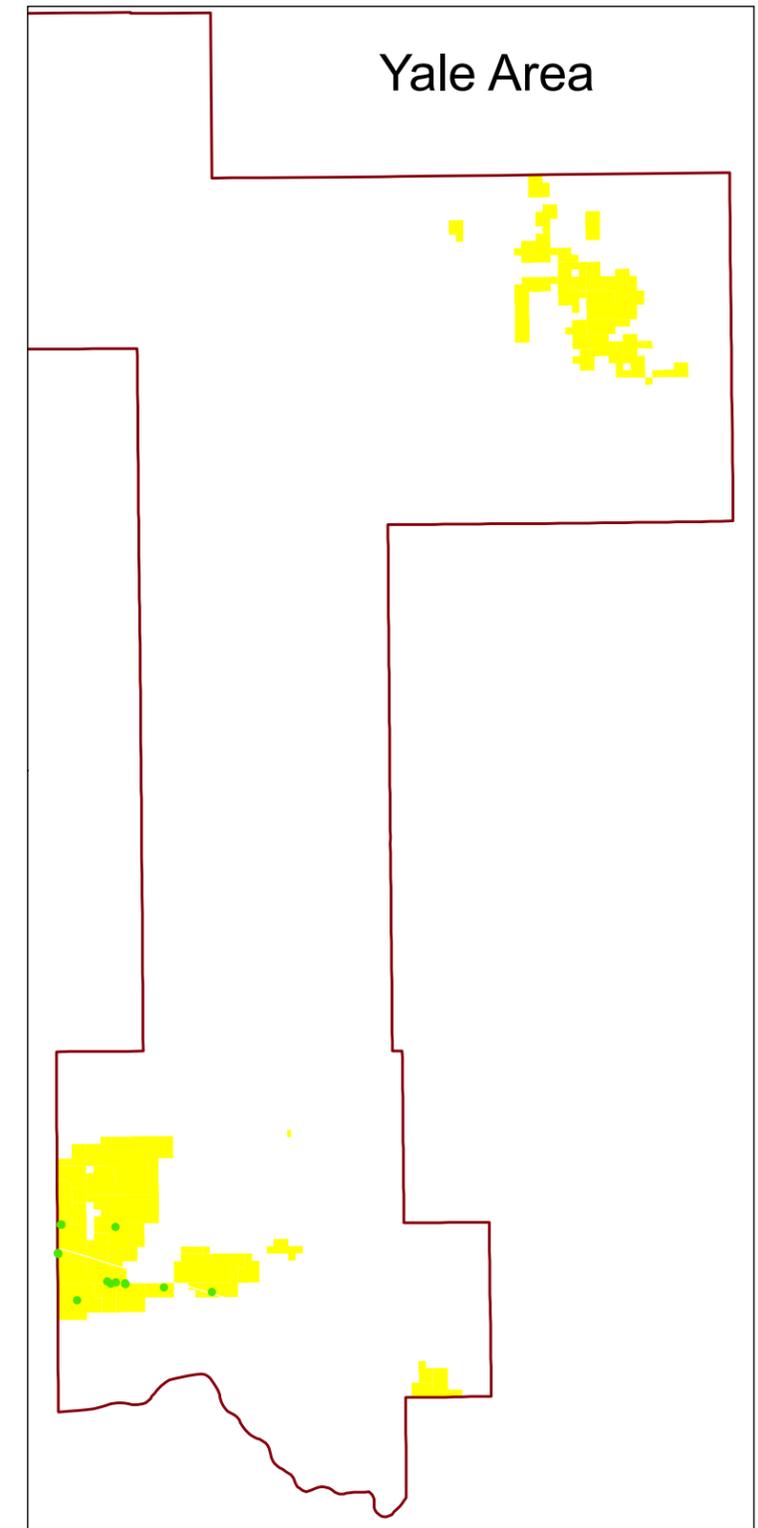
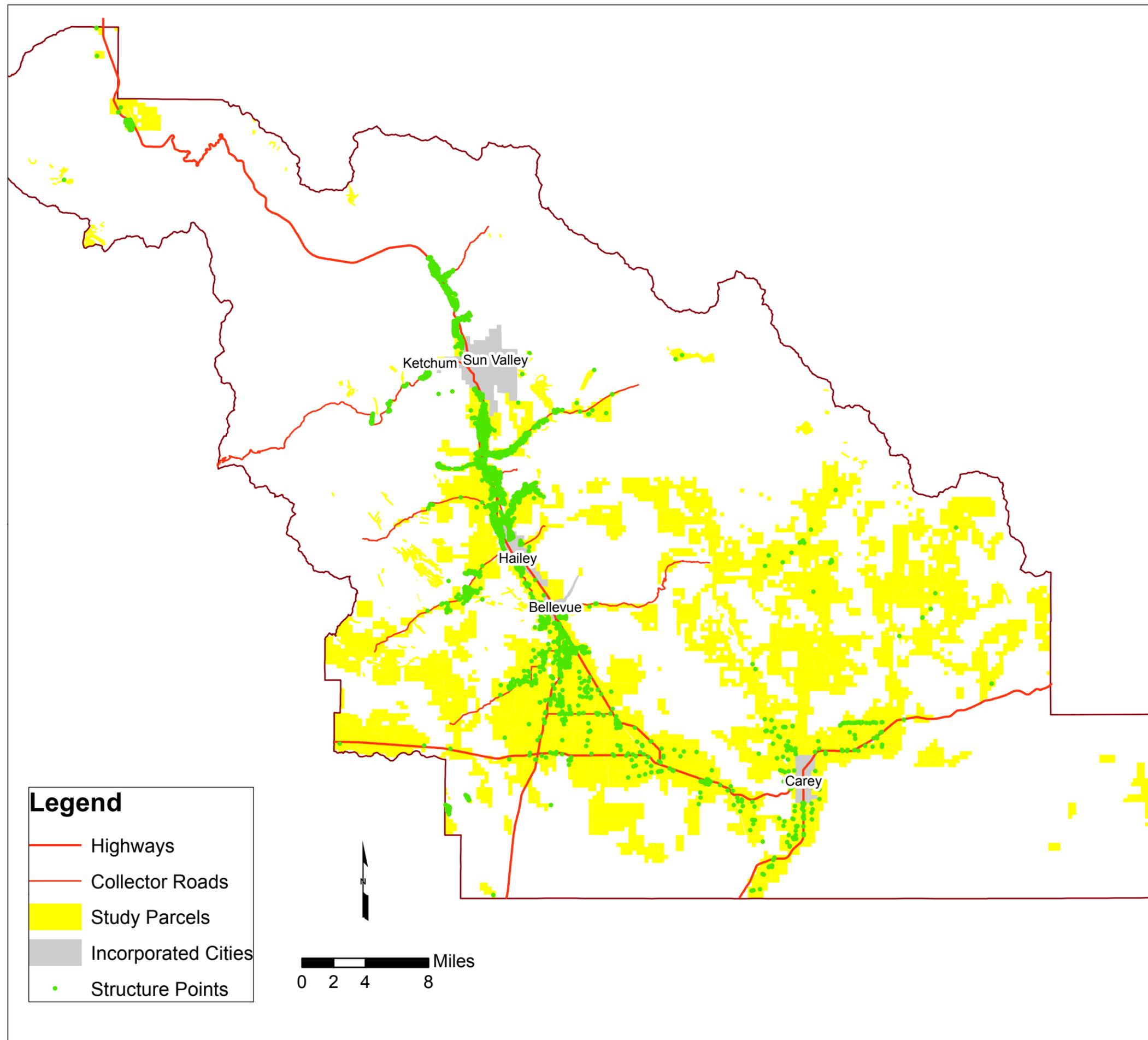
**Map I.3  
County Buildout Study  
September 2014**



**Map I.2  
County Buildout Study  
September 2014**



**Map I.1  
Population Distribution  
September 2014**





Near Lucky Peak in Ketchum - Carol Waller

# Chapter 1 - Transportation

**Vision** Blaine County is a user-friendly community for all travelers: pedestrians, transit riders, bicyclists, auto and truck drivers and air travelers. It has a convenient, safe, affordable, coordinated and efficient multi-modal transportation system for County residents and visitors - "moving people and not just cars."

## Key Guiding Principle

***Integrated, multi-modal transportation is necessary to maintain and enhance our quality of life.***

Our transportation system will provide excellent mobility for citizens, visitors and the workforce. A network of integrated roads, transit routes and pathways will ensure a safe and efficient system for all users, including vehicle drivers, transit riders, air travelers, pedestrians and bicyclists. Multi-modal transportation helps to mitigate traffic, supports our economy and puts less strain on the environment than a wholly automobile-oriented system.

## Setting

This Plan addresses four components of Blaine County's transportation system: vehicular travel, public transportation, aviation and nonmotorized travel. These systems are often referred to in this chapter as the "multi-modal" system. These components create an integrated system of access, each with unique conditions and needs. A summary of the current conditions of each follows.

Blaine County's major travel spine is Highway 75, which runs north-south through the center of the County for approximately 79 miles from the Lincoln County line in the south to the Custer County line in

the north. This scenically designated roadway provides access to the major recreational and tourist amenities of the Wood River Valley, links the major valley towns and schools and is the primary commuter route for valley workers. The County is also served by U.S. Routes 93, 20 and 26. Primary pedestrian and bicycle movement runs parallel to Highway 75 on the Wood River Trail. Transit routes utilize Highway 75 and local roads in the towns of Hailey, Ketchum and Sun Valley. Key roadways and airports are shown on Map 1.1, and transit routes and the Wood River Trail are shown on Map 1.2.

Blaine County's commitment to "moving people and not just cars" began in the mid-1970s when planning began for a public transportation system in Ketchum, as well as a "rails-to-trails" project to convert the Wood River Valley's railroad right-of-way into the bicycle, pedestrian and ski trail that is now the Wood River Trail. During this same period, Highway 75 was designated a Scenic Highway by the state. The community realized it needed to be

proactive if it wanted to avoid strip development, billboards, traffic congestion from unregulated growth and more highway lanes. Air service became more critical to Blaine County in the mid-seventies after the Union Pacific "ski trains" were discontinued. The idea for a regional airport emerged.

Blaine County, its cities and the Idaho Transportation Department (ITD) have participated since the 1990s in an interagency group now called the Blaine County Regional Transportation Committee (BCRTC). This group meets monthly to discuss transportation issues of regional interest, prioritize transportation projects for funding and make recommendations to ITD and others on transportation topics, including review of comprehensive plans such as this one.



*Sheep wagon meets truck - Carol Waller*

## Future Transportation Trends

Transportation and mobility planners are looking towards the future, which is likely to bring smart cars, alternative fuel sources, changing modes of travel and other innovative concepts. This chapter recognizes the importance of well-maintained, safe roads and bridges and seeks to embrace alternatives that reduce carbon footprint, respect wildlife and the natural environment and achieve other goals.

## Public Transportation

The County's commitment to public transportation began with the completion of the "Blaine County Public Transportation Feasibility Study" in 2001, which outlined an incremental approach to creating a regional public transportation system. Blaine County, the cities of Sun Valley and Ketchum and major private employers launched the Peak Bus, which provided commuter bus routes from as far south as Bellevue to Ketchum and Sun Valley. This effort evolved into Mountain Rides Transportation Authority.

Mountain Rides is now the full-service public transportation provider for Blaine County and its cities. Formed in 2007, it combined three separate organizations (KART, Peak Bus, and Wood River Rideshare) into a single provider of all public transportation options. Mountain Rides operates as a public agency under a Joint Powers Agreement partnership that includes Blaine County and the cities of Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum, and Sun Valley.

Mountain Rides offers a variety of services. These include the Valley Commuter Bus Service, serving Bellevue, Hailey, Ketchum, and Sun Valley; the Around Town Bus, a free fixed-route service that serves commercial areas in Ketchum and Sun Valley, as well as Elkhorn, Warm Springs, and River Run; the Hailey Town Bus; and eight vanpool service routes



*Bikes ride the bus too! - Nils Ribi*

that run from Twin Falls, Shoshone, Jerome and several other locations to Hailey and Ketchum. It also facilitates a variety of other programs such as ride-matching, paratransit, Safe Routes to School and a bike-share program. Local needs include rights-of-way for future corridors, shelters, park-and-ride lots and other facilities.

In 2015, ITD launched a new public transportation program, which delineates the roles and responsibilities of various agencies in advising the Department of Transportation on public transportation planning, coordination and services. The District Coordination Council and Local Mobility Management Network plans prepared for Blaine and surrounding counties are no longer operative, but ITD plans to develop a Statewide Public Transportation Plan as required by statute beginning in 2015.



*Photo courtesy of Mountain Rides*



*Passenger celebrates the first nonstop flight from Denver - Carol Waller*

## Aviation and Air Service

Air service is critical to sustaining the regional economy, particularly the resort economy. Blaine County's regional economic development organization, Sun Valley Economic Development, estimates that visitors and residents traveling by air account for 20% of the Blaine County economy. Due to the high importance of air service, the County updated the Air Transportation Section of the Comprehensive Plan in 2009. That section is the County's land use development guide for air transportation (a link is provided here).

The Friedman Memorial Airport Authority (FMAA), comprised of three representatives appointed by the city of Hailey, three appointed by the County and a seventh member unanimously approved by the six owner-appointed members of the Authority, is the governance board for Friedman Memorial Airport. County officials have adopted Airport Guiding Principles (see Appendix) reflecting the County's perspective, including support for a replacement airport as a long term solution to reliability and surrounding area impacts.

In September 2014, FMAA started the planning process for a new airport master plan that will take two years to complete. Following its completion, a "Public Airport Facilities" section will be written and added to this Plan as required by Idaho code.

For the last ten years, the nonprofit organization Fly Sun Valley Alliance has worked to improve air service to Friedman Memorial Airport. The group includes county, city, airport, resort and business representatives. In 2013, voters in Ketchum, Sun Valley and Hailey approved an additional 1% local-option tax dedicated to supporting air service development and related marketing. Fly Sun Valley Alliance has been successful over the past decade in securing new nonstop contract flights from Los Angeles, Seattle and, recently San Francisco and Denver.

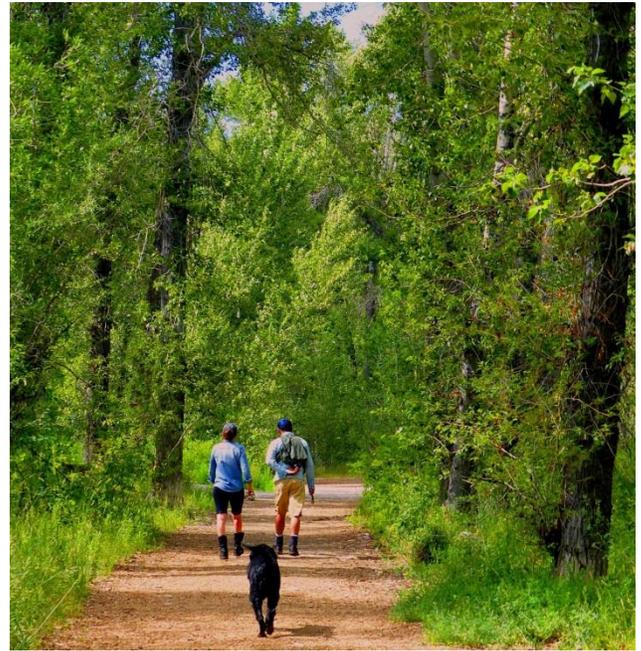
Blaine County's Aviation System includes both public and private air facilities. Friedman Memorial Airport is the County's only airport serving both general aviation and commercial air carriers. Other small public use airfields are located in Carey, near Smiley Creek, and at West Magic. Public-use airfields are shown on Map 1.1. Private use airstrips are located at Picabo and south of Bellevue off Glendale Road (Sluder airstrip).

## Bicycle, Pedestrian and Other Nonmotorized Travel

Blaine County residents and visitors place a high value on nonmotorized travel, with pedestrians, bicyclists and cross country skiers constituting the top user groups. The railroad right-of-way between Bellevue and Ketchum was purchased in the 1970s, ultimately becoming the 20-mile Wood River Trail (WRT), a separated multi-use path linking cities in the Wood River Valley. Feeder trails off this spine exist in Ketchum, Sun Valley and Hailey. In 2013 voters approved a \$3.5 million levy for path resurfacing, with over 82% support. The WRT accommodates 300,000 visits each year for recreation and commuting<sup>5</sup>.

Each jurisdiction also has pursued local bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Historically, these efforts were only loosely coordinated between jurisdictions, resulting in varied standards and practices. In 2013, Blaine County, the cities of Hailey and Ketchum, the Blaine County Recreation District, Mountain Rides and Friends of Mountain Rides sponsored the development of the Blaine County Community Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan that has the goal of “providing a cohesive and comprehensive [inter-jurisdictional plan] for developing, standardizing and growing bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, amenities and policies in Blaine County.”

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan identifies economic and mobility benefits and current needs and issues. It recommends bicycle and pedestrian mobility guidelines, prioritizes projects and cites the recreational and health benefits of biking and walking. It concludes with a “difficulty matrix” for both incorporated and unincorporated areas. Important needs and issues include:



*Walk in the woods with the dog – Carol Waller*

- ◆ Connections/Missing Links - including a number of missing links in the unincorporated county.
- ◆ Safety – including pedestrian crossings, pathway intersections, vehicle and bike road-sharing, traffic calming, and missing sidewalks.
- ◆ Consistency – including pavement markings, pathway surfacing, wayfinding and treatment of pedestrian crossings, which should be consistent between the jurisdictions.
- ◆ Amenities – including restrooms and parking areas.
- ◆ Design Guidelines.

County-related needs such as safety improvements and right-of-way acquisition are addressed in the Desired Outcomes portion of this Plan.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan has been reviewed and adopted by most of the jurisdictions of the County. It was adopted in concept by Blaine County on October 21, 2014. The priority matrix and a link to the full master plan are included in the Appendix.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Blaine County Recreation District.

## Vehicular Travel

The primary function of most Blaine County roads is local vehicular, truck and bus circulation between the cities, movement of labor, goods and materials into and out of Blaine County, tourism throughout the County and farm and ranch traffic. Blaine County residents travel to shopping and employment outside the County, although studies estimate that 12-17% of the Blaine County workforce commuted from points outside of Blaine County from 2000 to 2006 (see Community Profile). Most commuting and shopping trips occur on State Highway 75, U.S. Routes 20 and 93, with SH 75 serving as the “backbone” of travel up and down the Wood River Valley. ITD is responsible for construction and maintenance on SH 75 and US Routes 93, 20, and 26 and for snow plowing except within incorporated cities.

County roadways south of Bellevue, in what is commonly referred to as “The Triangle,” provide access to farms, ranches and limited rural residential development. Blaine County’s agricultural industry is also served by US Routes 20 and 93/26 and by county roadways in the Carey area in the eastern portion of the County and in the expansive Minidoka area to the south. These paved and gravel county roads are utilized by large farm machinery, trucks hauling heavy loads of grain, hay, livestock, compost, equipment and other goods. These uses are vital to agricultural users, but they take a serious toll on roadways and bridges that in most cases were not originally constructed to carry such loads, especially as load weights have increased. Light and heavy industrial activities are accessed west of State Highway 75 on Glendale Road. The County lacks the funds to reconstruct these rural roads and bridges to be adequate for heavy farm and industrial use.

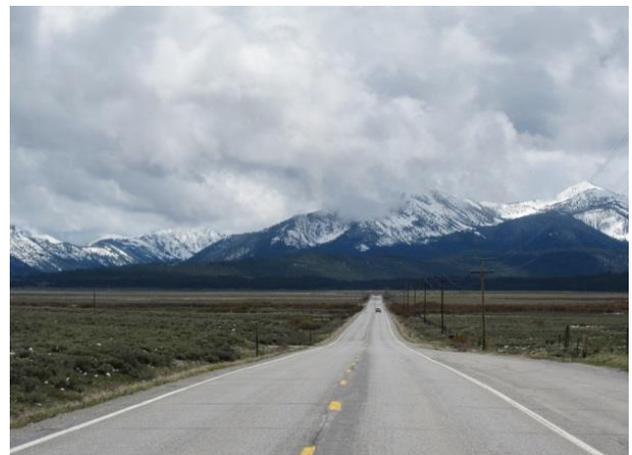
Rural residential development and recreational activities are the primary uses of improved county roads accessing the side canyons of the Wood River Valley. Magic Reservoir, Little Wood Reservoir,

Smiley Creek and, to a lesser extent, Yale are other recreational areas accessed by more remote county roads. Through cooperative agreements, the County maintains some roads under the jurisdiction of other entities, such as the US Forest Service. Avalanche, flooding and other natural hazards affect the ability of the County to maintain these roads. Lack of funding also impedes improvements on and maintenance of remote roads.

## Highway 75 Scenic Byway

State Highway 75 from Shoshone to Stanley is designated as the Sawtooth Scenic Byway. This includes all portions of the highway through Blaine County. Blaine County has protected the Scenic Byway designation by such practices as: 1) prohibition of billboards; 2) limitations on commercial development outside of cities; 3) hillside protection through its Mountain Overlay and Scenic Corridor Districts; and 4) management of berms and other landscape features through its Scenic Highway Overlay District.

State Highway 75's traffic volume is an average ten times more vehicle trips than any other state or local road in Blaine County. The highest traffic counts occur in Hailey and Ketchum, dropping again north of Ketchum (see Table 1), in part due to workforce commuter traffic. These statistics confirm a pattern of traffic dispersal off of Highway 75 in Hailey and Ketchum.



*Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons*

**Table 1: Blaine County Highway 75 2014 Vehicle Counts, Idaho Transportation Department**

Location of Traffic Counter	2014 Average Daily Traffic
#14- north of Shoshone (south of Blaine County line)	2,368
#68- north of Hailey	10,514
#28, north of Ketchum	1,036

In 2008, ITD completed a significant public planning process and study of the State Highway 75 corridor from Timmerman Hill (US Route 20) to Ketchum. Major improvements outlined in the study are now underway. The major challenge in this effort and in future planning is balancing the need to accommodate travel growth with its associated impacts. Strategies that maintain or increase overall safety and efficiency should continue to be explored through the Blaine County Regional Transportation Committee. Examples are encouraging a shift from single-occupant vehicle (SOV) trips to other modes,

shifting auto trips out of peak periods and managing access points onto the highway.

## Wildlife

Vehicle and wildlife conflicts are highest on State Highway 75, US Route 20, and Gannett Road, with resident and migrating elk and deer herds causing a high number of vehicle/animal accidents. ITD and other stakeholders began studying this issue on Highway 75 in more depth in 2012, with a goal of reducing automobile/wildlife conflicts. A study of crashes in the 2.5-mile section north of Hailey showed more than 50% of crashes involved wildlife, with most of the collisions occurring in dark (non-daylight) conditions. Based on recommendations from the study group, in the fall of 2013 the speed limit on Highway 75 was reduced from 55 mph to 45 mph during non-daylight hours between Mc Kercher Boulevard and Zinc Spur Road. Future improvements to Highway 75 and to other major corridors will carefully consider impacts to wildlife in roadway design and management.



*Elk preparing to cross Hwy 75 - Mountain Express*

## County Road Classifications

Road classifications describe different categories of roads that guide corridor use and roadway design. Road classifications are developed by usage (movement of people and goods) and traffic volume, with an emphasis on connectivity. The County defined road classifications in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, including a list of County roads by classification. (See Appendix.) For administrative application, the County should adopt updated classifications by ordinance.

## Blaine County 2012 Transportation Plan

Blaine County adopted a Road and Bridge 5-Year Needs Assessment and Maintenance Plan (Transportation Plan) in 2012, which provides detailed analysis of county transportation infrastructure. The 2012 Transportation Plan describes the existing system's current conditions as of October 2010 and evaluates system needs. It presents a capital improvement plan, including a funding component, a prioritized list of capital improvement projects and a five-year capital improvement program. This Plan is an important planning tool and an eligibility requirement for the County to receive certain grants.

Some key statistics from the Plan include:

- ◆ Blaine County maintains 449 miles of roadway, of which 130 miles are paved, 280 are gravel and 39 are other surfaces.
- ◆ For paved roadways, the dominant roadway defect was cracking, with transverse and edge cracking comprising 70% of all paved roadway defects. Only routine maintenance is recommended for 49% of the paved roadways in Blaine County. The report notes that the County is underfunded for routine paved road maintenance.

- ◆ 22% of gravel roadways need more than routine maintenance. The report also notes that the current county budget for gravel roadway maintenance is underfunded as compared to best practices.
- ◆ No roadway improvements related to traffic volume on county roads are called for at this time.
- ◆ Regarding safety statistics, the report notes that Gannett Road has a higher number of crashes. A safety audit will be conducted for this road in 2015.

## Future Needs

The 2012 Transportation Plan analyzes future needs based on a variety of studies noted in the document. A general conclusion is that "existing traffic volumes on county roads are low enough that traffic could generally double or triple without significant issues."

Roadways that may need improvement as a result of future growth are generally south of Bellevue between State Highway 75 and Gannett Road and Broadford Road. The plan recommends no action at this time, as the roads in the areas outlined above have additional capacity, the pace and location of future growth is difficult to predict at this time and funding options are limited.

The 2012 Transportation Plan identifies several needs and considerations:

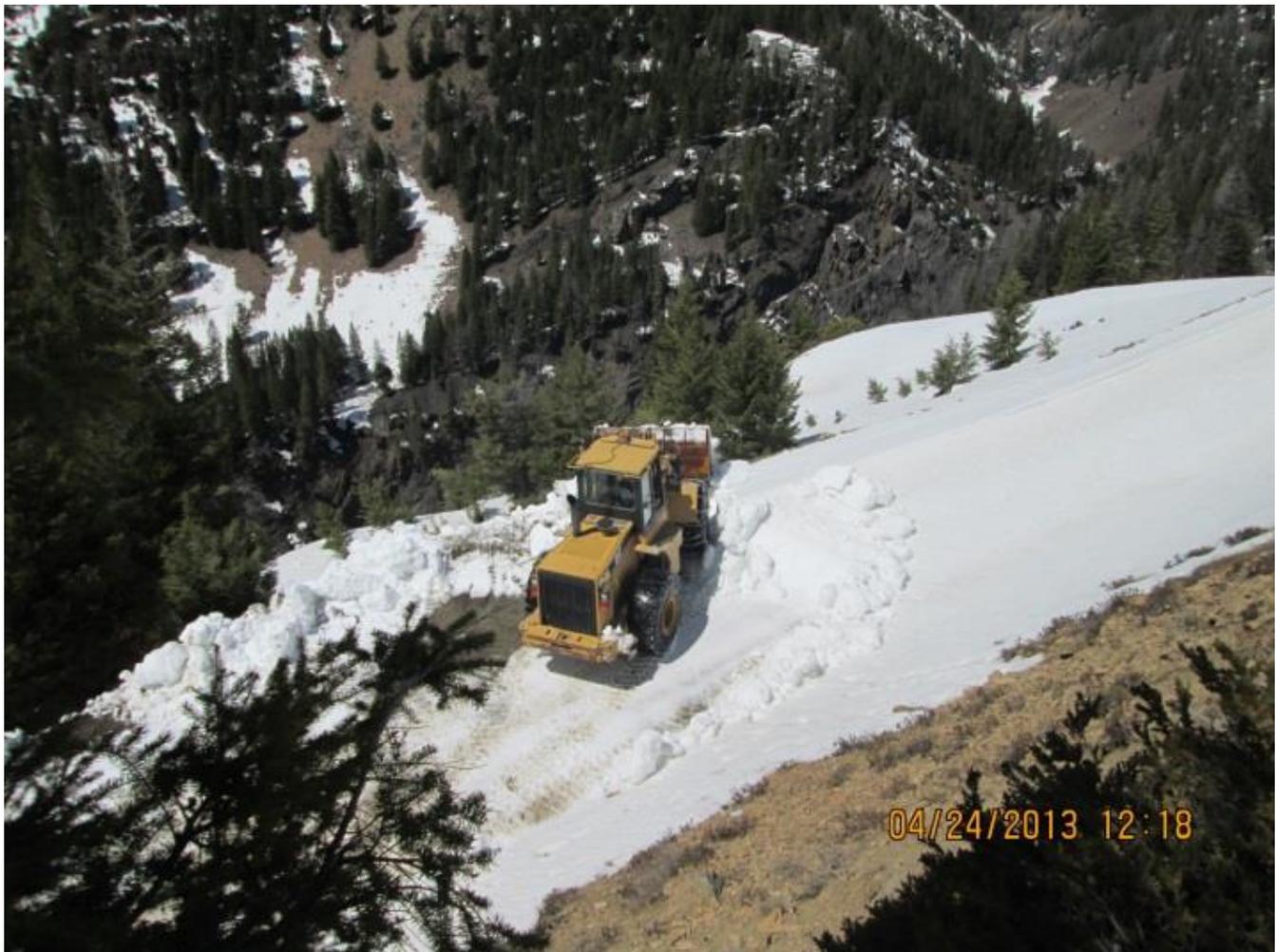
- ◆ Funding. Funding for Blaine County roads is a critical issue; the amount received from state and federal fuel taxes is inadequate to cover needs. The analysis of roadway needs and the identified capital improvements in the Plan both highlight a long-term funding deficit for roadway maintenance in Blaine County.
- ◆ Maintaining the Roadway Inventory Database. The County maintains a database of all roadway conditions in the County, using a software program. One of the key purposes of the program is to estimate the

remaining service life of the roadways, so that maintenance can be performed before roadways deteriorate to unsafe conditions. It is critical for the County to keep the database current as part of its road network management system.

- ◆ Access Management. County planners should address access points onto key arterials and highways for safety and traffic flow. Planning is best before development is approved because retrofitting is costly and can compromise both safety and efficiency of roadways.

- ◆ Rural and Remote Development. Residential developments in outlying areas place an undue burden on limited road budgets. The County should consider local improvement districts in these areas and establish baseline responsibilities for both the County and landowners in these outlying areas.

This chapter was created in consultation with valley cities and their Comprehensive Transportation Plans. The county transportation and mobility planning process follows engineering best practices and required laws such as Americans with Disabilities Act.



*Photo courtesy of Blaine County Road & Bridge*

# OUR PAST AT A GLANCE

## 1994

In the 1994 Comprehensive Plan our roadway goals were:

- To provide safe and efficient circulation systems in the County.
- To minimize disproportionate public expenditures that may be the result of poorly planned and executed development.
- To preserve the scenic characteristics of Blaine County.
- To fully evaluate transportation components as part of land use planning.

**In 1994**, Highway 75 was a two-lane road. We were concerned about the future capacity of this main spine through the valley to meet our growth needs. However, we remained committed to keeping commercial growth only in the cities and unincorporated communities of Gannett, Picabo and Smiley Creek.

We wanted to retain access to public lands. We had a public transit system only in Ketchum/Sun Valley. We hoped to expand mass transit service throughout the County.

We recognized in the 1994 Comprehensive Plan the tremendous economic value of the airport. Because of the importance of air service to the local economy, a separate section on Air Service in the Comprehensive Plan was added. The extensive, multi-year study by the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority (FMAA) relating to airport relocation and upgrades made that section an ideal candidate to commence the Comprehensive Plan update process in 2009.

## 1975

**In 1975**, we recognized similar goals to those stated above. We called our road and transportation network the "lifelines" that connect our community to the outside world. Our only transit system was the Sun Valley Stage Line, which provided one daily trip from Sun Valley to Twin Falls.

**In 1975**, we were still considering using the Union Pacific Right of Way (now the Wood River Trail) for road and/or transit improvements!

**In 1975**, we were considering a regional airport north of Jerome to serve both counties.

Key Statistics from the Past	Highway 75 Average Daily Vehicle Trips through Ketchum	Highway 75 Average Daily Vehicle Trips Lincoln/Blaine co line	Miles of Roadway Maintained by the County
1975	4,720	1,550	372
1994	12,000	2,100	443
2010	12,500	2,800	449 total (130 paved, 280 gravel, 39 other)



*Backcountry afternoon - Carol Waller*

## Desired Outcomes

Desired outcomes are the intended result of our planning efforts. Each desired outcome includes several active policy statements that will guide future decision-making.

### A. General Transportation

**Desired Outcome: an integrated, safe and well-maintained multi-modal transportation system that stays current with emerging travel trends.**

- A-1: Encourage public participation in transportation-related decisions.
- A-2: Explore and implement emerging travel and mobility options that reduce the environmental impacts of vehicles and support other goals and outcomes in this Plan. Implement these concepts where possible.
- A-3: Create, implement and periodically update transportation and capital improvements plans that address all modes of transportation in all areas of the unincorporated County.
- A-4: Encourage land use development within or adjacent to cities and other developed areas that increase the opportunities for walking, bicycling, and transit ridership and reduce the impacts of vehicle use.
- A-5: Review and update County subdivision, road and other related standards to ensure that development helps to provide the infrastructure needed for a balanced and integrated multi-modal transportation system.

- A-6: Partner with cities, Blaine County Recreation District, Mountain Rides, ITD, Local Highway Technical Assistance Council and other agencies to fund improvement projects and programs that increase mobility and travel safety for residents, commuters, and visitors.
- A-7: Explore methods and funding sources for developing and improving alternative modes of transportation, which may reduce the number of single-occupancy vehicle trips.
- A-8: Regularly maintain and improve transportation infrastructure, including dust abatement, marking, drainage, sealing and structural improvements on roads and bridges and pathways in all areas and zones in the County.
- A-9: Review and update as needed available safety data, Level of Service (LOS), and Remaining Service Life in order to help prioritize county road system maintenance and improvements.
- A-10: Prioritize roadway solutions that reduce wildlife/vehicle conflicts. Continue interagency collaboration on solutions that respect wildlife migration corridors and habitat areas.
- A-11: Support community investments in active (non-motorized) transportation systems and programs that contribute to human health.
- A-12: Advocate for appropriate state and federal funding.

## B. Public Transportation

**Desired Outcome: an excellent public transportation system that serves county residents, commuters, and visitors. Sufficient funding has been allocated to enhance and expand these services.**

- B-1: Work collaboratively with adjoining jurisdictions and ITD through the Blaine County Regional Transportation Committee to preserve rights-of-way necessary for future transit when planning or upgrading corridors.
- B-2: Plan transit shelters and facilities in developments along arterials and collector routes.
- B-3: Seek and facilitate acquisition of land for park-and-ride lots at selected locations.
- B-4: Support Mountain Rides and other transportation providers that offer services to commuters, visitors and those with limited mobility and limited access to traditional modes of transportation.
- B-5: Advocate for appropriate state and federal funding for public transportation.

## C. Vehicular Transportation

**Desired Outcome: a complete highway and road system that enables mobility and connectivity to other means of travel for residents, visitors, commuters, and commerce throughout the County with a goal of maximizing safety and efficiency of vehicular travel.**

- C-1: Ensure that county roads function as safely and efficiently as possible year round. Work with ITD through the Blaine County Regional Transportation Committee and other public planning processes to ensure that State Highway 75 and US Routes 20, 26, and 93 function safely and efficiently in all seasons. On these routes, seek to address the mobility needs of all users.
- C-2: Planning for Blaine County roads should be considered with respect to the County's economy and its importance as a world-class tourist destination.
- C-3: Support work on Highway 75 consistent with the 2008 Timmerman to Ketchum Environmental Impact Statement, including scheduling construction (such as weekend and night work) to minimize disruption to travel.
- C-4: Identify and protect secondary north-to-south access roads that can serve as alternatives to Highway 75.
- C-5: Minimize future road and driveway accesses and consolidate or close existing accesses onto Highway 75 when possible.
- C-6: Interconnect private and county roads in future developments.
- C-7: Regularly update and adopt the county road classification system.
- C-8: Adopt access management standards to address approaches to county roads.
- C-9: Adopt right of way management standards to address encroachments into county roads.
- C-10: Enhance safety and mobility on county roads, especially in residential zones, by adopting county road standards that allow automobiles at safe speeds, encourage pedestrian and bicycle use, that provide for adequate travel lanes, appropriate surfacing (gravel or paved), access by emergency personnel, on-site mail distribution, snow removal/storage and adequate storm water drainage.
- C-11: Adopt a development impact ordinance and fee schedule for county roads.
- C-12: Adopt guiding principles for accepting the dedication of public roads in new subdivisions, abandoning or re-aligning existing public roads, or other actions.

## D. Air Transportation

**Desired Outcome: air service that provides robust transportation connections to key locales outside of Blaine County, with efficient ground transportation to cities within Blaine County.**

- D-1: Support the Friedman Memorial Airport Authority Master Plan, including the “dual path” policy: addressing deficiencies at Friedman in the short term, while pursuing a replacement airport in the long term.
- D-2: Promote public transit service and facilities connecting Friedman Memorial Airport to cities within Blaine County.

## E. Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation

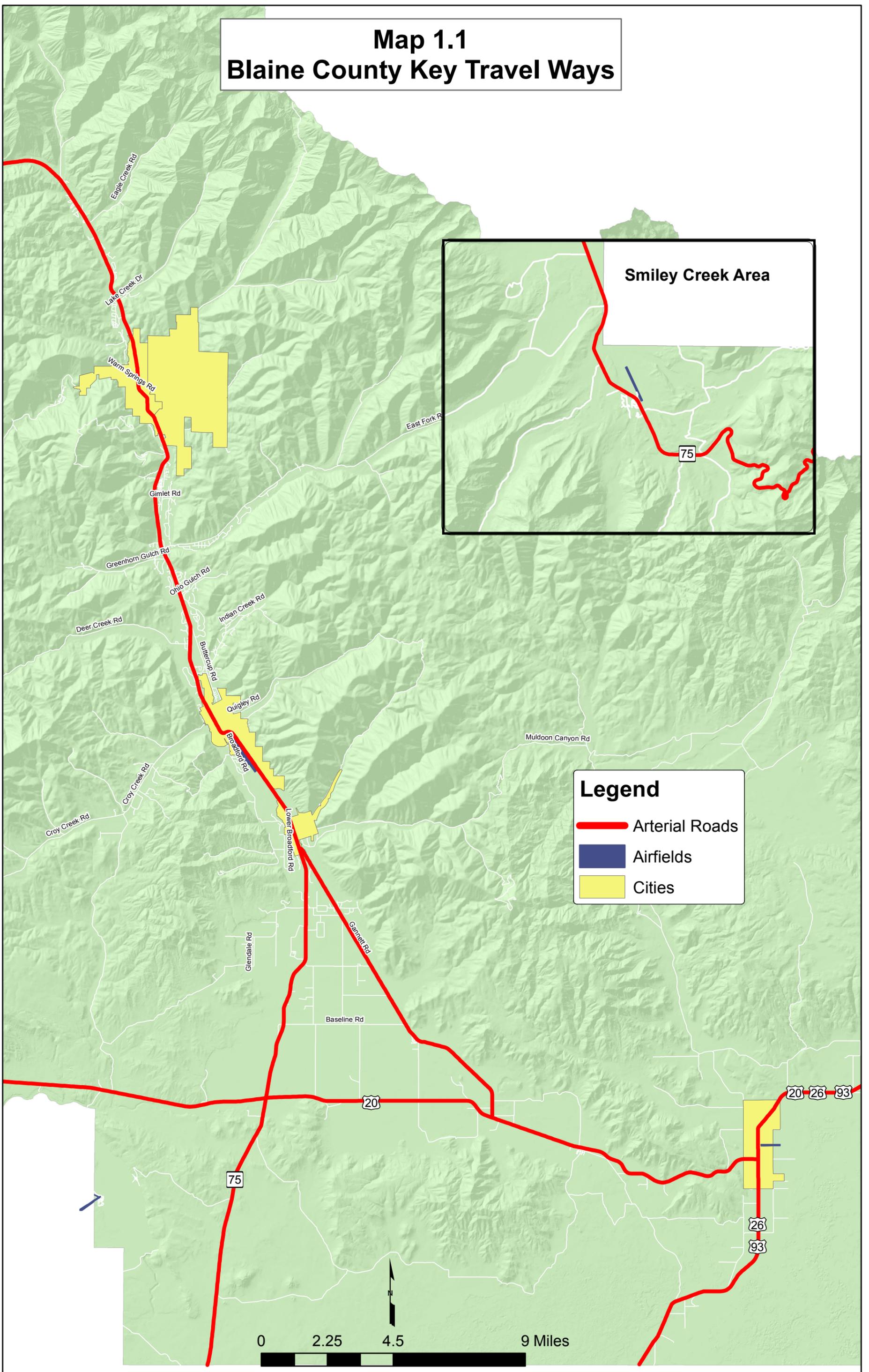
**Desired Outcome: an interconnected community with adequate routes and accesses to accommodate different users, resulting in world-class nonmotorized facilities.**

- E-1: Provide safe corridors for pedestrians and bicycles by utilizing adopted industry standards for multi-use path and roadside bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- E-2: Through the Blaine County Regional Transportation Committee and in coordination with ITD, utilize the 2014 Community Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan as a reference for best practices and capital projects, with an emphasis on bike safety improvements along popular road biking routes such as Highway 75 north of Ketchum.
- E-3: Seek and facilitate rights of way dedication for pedestrian and bicycle paths adjacent to existing or proposed developments, consistent with Blaine County Recreation District or other bike/ped strategic plans.
- E-4: Support bicycle and pedestrian routes that interconnect neighborhoods, communities and recreational opportunities.
- E-5: Prioritize improvements of pedestrian and bicycle facilities in areas served by transit and in areas that access public lands.
- E-6: Implement and enforce best practices for pedestrian safety at highway and road intersections and crossing locations.
- E-7: In cooperation with the Blaine County Regional Transportation Committee and ITD, designate appropriate locations for future pedestrian and bicycle crossings on Highway 75 at key locations such as Deer Creek Road.



*A western welcome for the train arriving at the Ketchum Depot. Circa 1930s.  
Photo courtesy of the Community Library, donated by Jeanne Lane Moritz*

# Map 1.1 Blaine County Key Travel Ways



# Map 1.2 Blaine County Bike and Bus

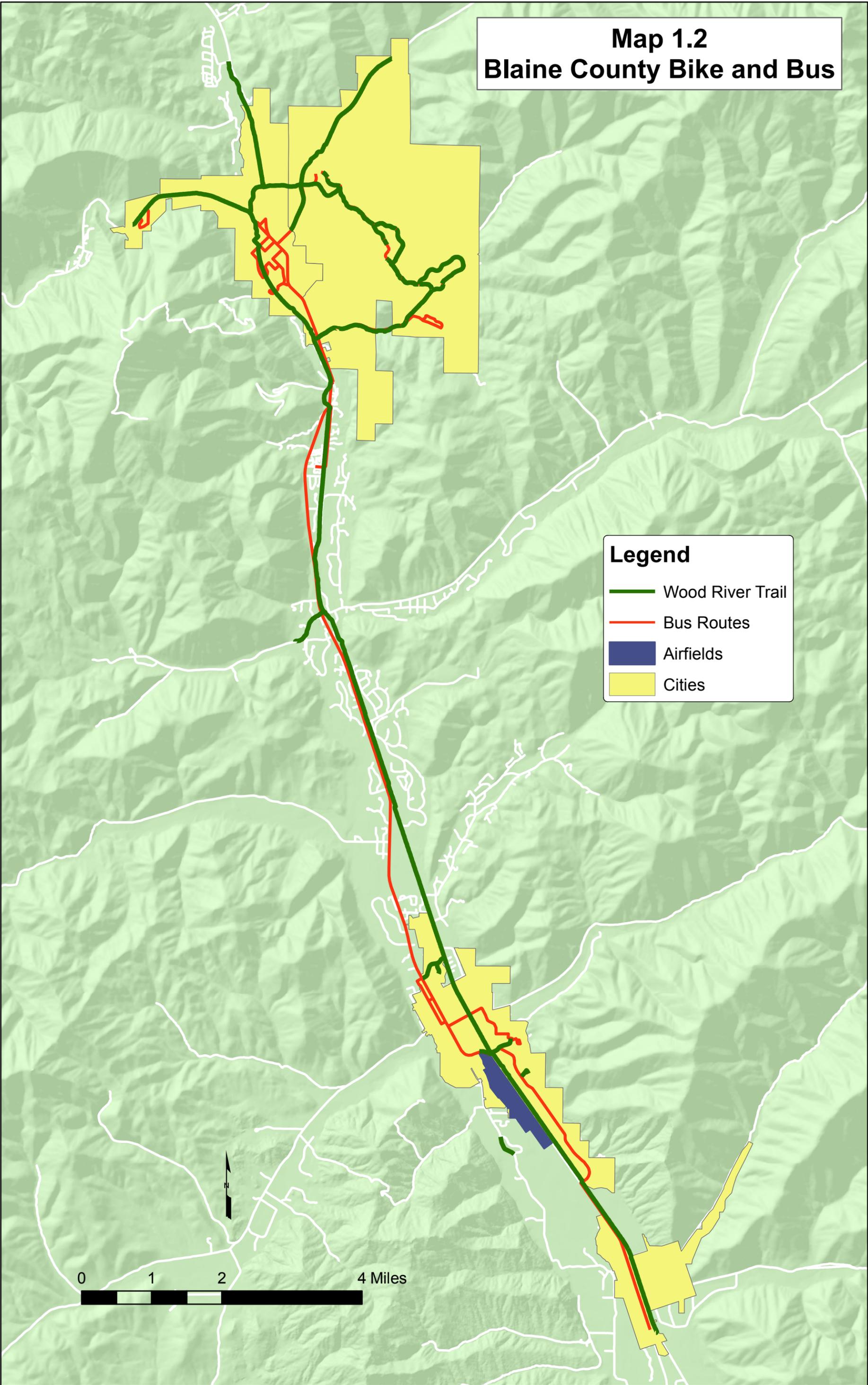




Photo courtesy of ARCH Community Housing Trust

## Chapter 2 - Housing

**Vision** People who work in Blaine County can afford to live in Blaine County. People who have lived in Blaine County for many years will be able to afford to stay. Our attention to ensuring a variety of housing choices will continue to improve our economic sustainability. All residents--from renters to working families in starter homes to second-home owners--add great value to our economy and to the social and cultural vibrancy of our community.

### Key Guiding Principle

***A variety of housing types, prices and locations is required for the community's long-term viability.***

Housing that is available to all income levels is critical to a healthy and vibrant society. An important County goal is to ensure the provision of housing that is affordable to those with low and moderate incomes, including seniors and people with disabilities. The availability of a variety of housing prices and types (single- and multi-family dwellings, including rental units) means that

housing prices and types (single and multi-family dwellings, including rental units) gives households choices so that residents can continue to call Blaine County home.

### Setting

Housing is one of the largest costs borne by American households. National, state and local policies on housing have far-reaching impacts, and are of critical importance. The unique nature of Blaine County's resort economy and high housing costs further heightens the importance of strong housing policies.

The greatest factors affecting land and housing costs are the remote, alpine setting and resort-based economy. Like other resort counties, land costs are higher than the national average, pushing the cost of housing to the forefront of public policy debate. (Tables 1A and 1B compare Blaine County median home price with other Idaho counties and western resort counties.)

Blaine County contains 15,050 housing units (2010 Census). The majority (72 percent) of housing units are located in the incorporated cities. Of the units in the unincorporated county, the majority are located within the Wood River Valley, primarily in proximity to Highway 75 and, to a lesser extent, in the smaller communities of Gannett and Picabo. Most of the County's 2,644 square miles of land is not available for housing, as it is either public land (81 percent of

land area), permanently protected by conservation easements, and/or hazardous or sensitive areas where ordinances restrict development. Map 2.1 shows the general distribution of housing units and population in the County and its incorporated cities.

The major source of data in this section is the US Census Bureau (primarily the 2010 Census). Other data sources are not always able to be directly compared with US Census data, due to different assumptions and time periods for data collection. This Plan is a 10- to 15-year comprehensive plan, and data trends are of more importance than actual numbers in any given year. Because these different data sources are important in interpreting trends, they are used for such purposes in this Plan.

**Table 1A: Median Home Price in South-Central Idaho Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Median Home Price, First Quarter 2014</b>
<b>Blaine County (MSA<sup>6</sup>: Hailey)</b>	\$321,000
<b>Cassia County (MSA: Burley)</b>	\$131,000
<b>Elmore (MSA: Mountain Home)</b>	\$137,000
<b>Gooding County (non-metro)</b>	\$139,000
<b>Twin Falls County (MSA: Twin Falls)</b>	\$155,000

**Table 1B: Median Home Price in Western Resort Counties**

<b>County</b>	<b>Median Home Price, First Quarter 2014</b>
<b>Blaine County, ID (Sun Valley)</b>	\$321,000
<b>Bonner County, ID (Schweitzer Mountain)</b>	\$181,000
<b>Teton County, ID (Targhee Resort)<sup>7</sup></b>	\$504,000
<b>Teton County, WY (Jackson Hole Mountain Resort)</b>	\$504,000
<b>Routt County, CO (Steamboat)</b>	\$339,000
<b>Pitkin County, CO (Aspen Snowmass)</b>	\$625,000
<b>San Miguel County, CO (Telluride Ski Resort)</b>	\$308,000
<b>Flathead County, MT (Whitefish Mountain Resort)</b>	\$220,000

Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development 2014 County Median Sales Price

<sup>6</sup> "Metropolitan Statistical Area" (Camas and Lincoln Counties share the same MSA as Blaine Co (Hailey). Jerome County shares the same MSA as Twin Falls.)

<sup>7</sup> Teton County, ID shares same MSA as Teton County, WY (Jackson, WY)



*Photo courtesy of ARCH Community Housing Trust*

## Seasonal Housing Units and Housing Occupancy

Of the County’s total housing units, as many as 32 percent are used only seasonally – either by second homeowners or short-term renters. Like other resort counties, Blaine County as compared to the nation has a higher than average percentage of second homes. The highest concentration of second/seasonal homes is located in the north valley, particularly in and near the cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley.

The number of seasonal units has increased slightly between 1990 and 2000, as shown in Table 2. (The US Census combines “seasonal, recreational and occasional use” as one type under “vacant” unit. Other vacant units are not included in Table 2, so the percentages do not add up to 100. See Appendix for a breakdown of the 2010 total.)

**Table 2: Blaine County Housing Usage by Type**

	Population	Occupied Ownership Units	Percent of Stock	Occupied Rental Units	Percent of Stock	Seasonal Units	Percent of Stock	Total Housing Stock
1990	13,552	3,535	37%	1,971	21%	2,933	31%	9,500
2000	18,991	5,357	44%	2,423	20%	3,723	31%	12,186
2010	21,376	5,939	39%	2,884	19%	4,766	32%	15,050
<b>Net Gain (loss)</b>	<b>7,824</b>	<b>2,404</b>	<b>2%</b>	<b>913</b>	<b>(2%)</b>	<b>1,833</b>	<b>1%</b>	<b>5,550</b>

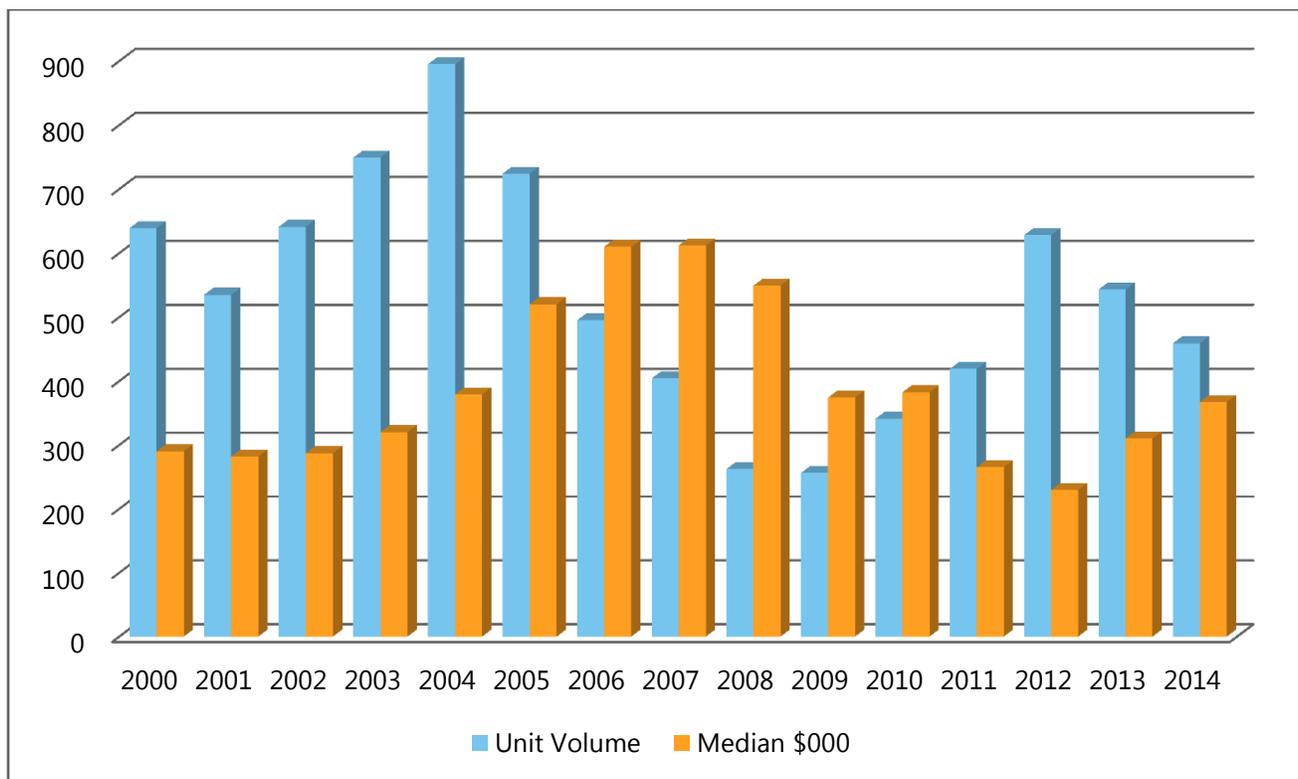
Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## Impacts of the Great Recession

The Great Recession, December 2007 to June 2009, (US National Bureau of Economic Research) significantly affected Blaine County residential real estate through both reduced unit sales volume and reduced median prices. These changes introduced an increased level of housing affordability in certain submarkets within Blaine County. As is shown in Chart 1, sales went from a high of 895 homes sold per year in 2004 to a low of 256 in 2009, and from a peak median price of \$612,000 in 2007 to a low median price of \$229,500 in 2012. In each of these time periods the peak-to-trough cycle took five

years, with median prices lagging by approximately three years. After the 2009 low point there was a rebound in unit sales volume through 2012, partially due to an increased number of bank-owned or financially distressed properties available on the market. The overall County trend indicates a slower rate of increase for these market indicators when compared to the years immediately preceding the recession. To provide context relative to present market conditions, the 2014 median price and unit volume values represent 60% and 51% respectively of their 2007 and 2004 pre-recession peak values.

**Chart 1: Blaine County Residential Unit Sales Volume and Median Price**



Source: Sun Valley Board of Realtors

## Age and Condition of Housing Stock

Blaine County Housing Authority (BCHA) periodically commissions reports that address the age and condition of housing stock in the County. The 2011 data indicate that the Blaine County assessor identified 26 percent of the housing stock in unincorporated areas and 6-8 percent in the cities as “in poor condition.”

Local aesthetic codes and homeowner association guidelines tend to be well defined. Architectural styles of both residential and commercial structures often exhibit originality, variety, and quality and fit with the local culture and mountain scenery. These factors are viewed as important to quality of life.

## Fair Housing

All Blaine County housing, land use, and zoning ordinances shall address equal access to housing for all and shall support the goals of the Fair Housing Act of 1968. The Board of Commissioners annually approves and records a proclamation declaring “Fair Housing Month.” Local housing organizations, other jurisdictions and private sector housing developers follow national Fair Housing practices and regulations

## Local Housing Trends

The following data trends and key topics have been noted over the last two decades:

Location of population and housing. The majority of new population and housing growth over the past 20 years has occurred in the incorporated cities, accounting for 80 percent of the population growth.

Affordability. Despite the fact that median home prices are lower than they were prior to the Great Recession, prices are rising again and out of reach



*Village of Triumph - Daphne Coble*

for many wage earning families, creating a growing affordability gap. Housing costs vary greatly between different geographic areas, with the higher costs in the Sun Valley/Ketchum area and lower costs generally in the south county.

Housing Types. Housing types include single-family, condo/apartment (multifamily), and a limited number of manufactured and mobile homes. Sixty-six percent of housing county-wide (including the cities), remains single-family. A higher percentage of single-family housing exists in the unincorporated area. Accessory dwelling units provide limited housing opportunities because many have not been made available for rent but are used as private guest quarters. These units accounted for nearly 20 percent of building permits in the unincorporated county during the past 10 years. Inquiries about non-traditional housing types such as yurts and wheeled “tiny homes” are becoming more common and will need to be addressed; some of these are not allowed as dwellings.

Occupancy. Blaine County, like many resort areas, has a high percentage of housing that is vacant for much of the year. This creates both positive and negative effects. Construction and maintenance of second homes contribute to the local economy and tax base. Second-home owners often participate in and contribute to local social and cultural causes and activities. Seasonal occupancy generally means lower demand for local government services. On the other

hand, large numbers of vacation homes reduce the vibrancy and social cohesion of neighborhoods, compared with neighborhoods of full-time residents.

Shift towards rental housing. Blaine County has mirrored a slight national shift towards rental versus ownership housing.<sup>8</sup> Locally, this trend was precipitated by the recession, when home values fell below purchase prices, causing record foreclosures. In the last few years of economic recovery, there has been some shift back towards home purchase, but stricter lending regulations have caused many residents to remain renters. The high number of seasonal workers influences the need for rental units. Seniors also transition from owning to renting. Information collected by the BCHA shows that vacancy rates have been dropping and rental costs have been rising since 2012.

Economic impact of housing and construction industry. The housing and commercial construction industry (including architecture/design, real estate, and support services) have been an economic driver and provided leading job categories for much of the last twenty years. The Great Recession underscored the vulnerability of an economy overly dependent on the construction industry. Efforts have been made towards more economic diversification. Concern about the environmental impacts of large homes caused the county to re-examine its building codes and land use policies.

Energy-Smart Homes. The trend towards energy efficiency has taken hold. Most new construction is being built to higher standards for both sustainable building practices and energy efficiency. The County has adopted the BuildSmart energy regulations that exceed the requirements of the 2009 International Energy Conservation Code.

Employer-provided housing. Some major employers have begun to contribute to housing for their employees. As in other resort counties, they find that

housing assistance helps with employee retention. For example, the Sun Valley Company dormitories house a significant number of seasonal employees during peak seasons. Other major employers, such as St. Luke's Wood River Medical Center and Blaine County School District, offer a higher pay scale to employees, in recognition of high local housing costs. Some municipal jurisdictions have offered housing stipends to manager-level employees and emergency responders in order to enable those employees to live within city limits.



*Photo courtesy of Blaine County Building Services*

## National and Regional Housing Trends

Various sources track trends regarding where people want to live, and differences between demographic groups regarding changing housing preferences. Studies that are national in scope usually do not take into account the characteristics unique to resort counties, but are described here to provide broader context.

The National Association of Realtors (NAR) conducts a nationwide Community Preference Survey, which notes a decreased preference for single-family houses and an increased preference for condos and apartments. Other key preferences noted in the 2013 NAR survey include:

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<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau

- Desire for privacy from neighbors
- Walkability: places to take walks, and locations within an easy walk of community amenities
- Access to good schools
- A community with people from all stages of life: older people, children, families and young adults
- Smaller homes and lots
- Established neighborhoods; large trees
- Access to transit
- Short commute to work

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) in their “America in 2015” survey also found that while single-family homes are still the most preferred housing type at 61 percent, that is down from 67 percent in 2013. The ULI also notes a shift towards denser housing, and toward rental versus ownership housing for persons under 35 and those over 65.

Blaine County and its cities will particularly want to track the housing needs of seniors, the fastest-growing segment of our population. Some local realtors and builders have confirmed the trend towards smaller homes that are close to town and/or within walking distance of cultural amenities.

## Housing Forecast for Blaine County

Population forecasts, which are shown in the Community Profile Section of this Plan, affect how the County plans for future housing needs. The Idaho Department of Labor’s forecast shows the County’s population increasing by 207 additional persons by 2022, while Woods and Poole projects 3,162 additional persons by that year. Using these widely differing population forecasts to project housing needs, Table 3 shows the number of additional housing units that would be needed within the unincorporated county and in the cities, assuming the current split of approximately 30-70 percent between county and city residents, respectively.

**Table 3. Additional Housing Units Needed by 2022 under Two Forecast Scenarios**

	ID Dept. of Labor	Woods & Poole
In Unincorporated County	26	392
Within Cities	60	911

*\*Assumes 2.42 persons per unit in unincorporated areas and 2.43 persons per unit in cities, the average household size reported in 2010 Census data.*

To meet the forecasted demand for additional housing, either new housing will be built or some of the existing second homes (as much as 32 percent of the housing stock) will be converted to full-time residences. The housing and location preference trends identified above suggest that cities may be accommodating a greater percentage of new residents, lessening the demand for development in the unincorporated county.

As part of this Plan Update, the County has conducted a Build-out Study, described in the Introduction. In summary, the study shows that even if the highest number of projected housing units were to be built in the unincorporated county, enough land exists under current zoning to accommodate this growth.

## Housing Affordability

Housing that is affordable for wage earners is vitally important to the economic and social success of our County and continues to be a critical planning topic for county and city leaders. The post-WWII housing policies of the US government and financial sector have had a deep and lasting effect on the lives and well-being of individuals and families across multiple generations. Some policies have had unintended consequences of decreasing housing affordability – such as those favoring single family homes on larger lots in suburban settings – and housing availability for ethnic minorities. Housing costs in resort counties are higher than average, compounding the

need for effective housing policies to address the affordability gap. Local officials have struggled for years to establish policies that will facilitate the provision of housing affordable to wage-earning families. Many believe that the provision of affordable housing (often called “community housing” or “workforce housing” locally) is a community-wide responsibility that should be borne not only by developers but also by employers, government and non-governmental organizations.

A common way to discuss the costs of housing relative to income is “the affordability gap.” The affordability gap is defined as the difference between the price that the median household can afford to pay to rent or buy a home and the median price of housing available for purchase or rent. This gap leads to another commonly tracked statistic: “housing cost burden.” Cost-burdened households are those spending more than 30 percent of their income toward ownership or rental housing costs. This burden affects their ability to pay for other basic needs. Map 2.2, Housing Affordability, 2013, shows the percentage of cost-burdened households in the US. Within Idaho, Blaine County stands out as one of two counties with the highest proportion of cost-burdened households. Table 4 compares the affordability measures and shows an upward trend in the number of cost-burdened households.

Another key statistic used in measuring housing affordability is Area Median Income (AMI), as published by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development. AMI is the figure at which half

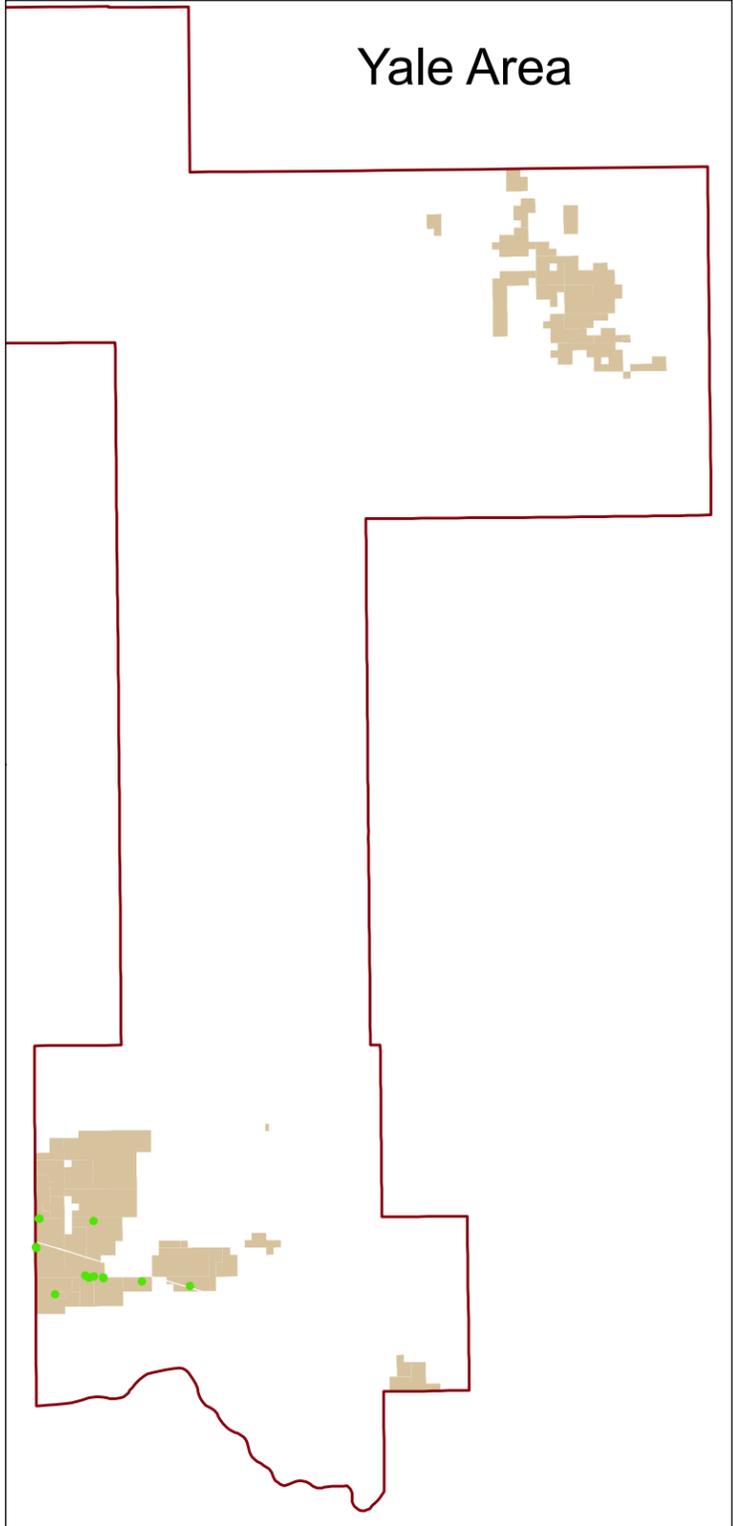
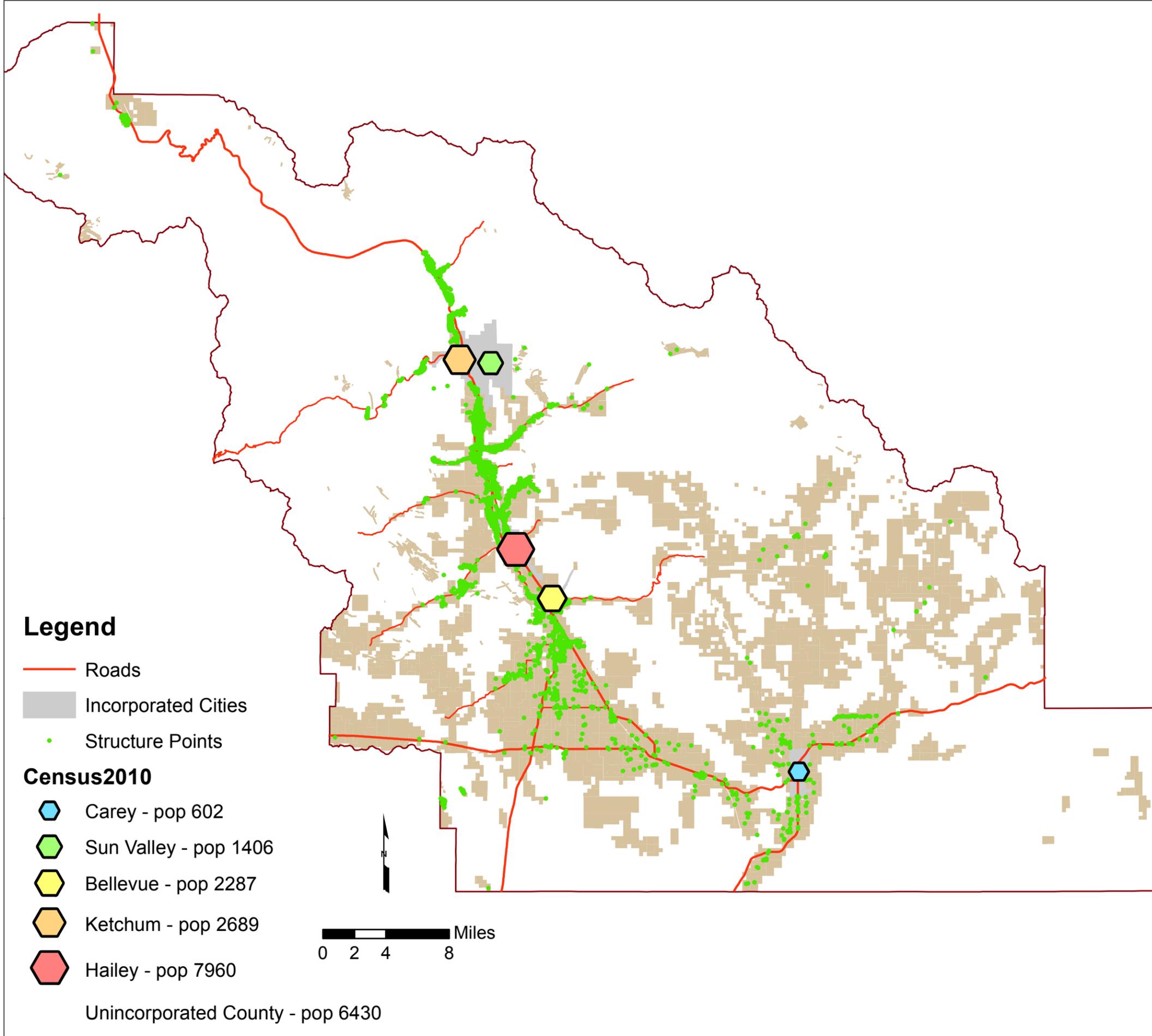
the households have higher income and half have lower income. This can be compared to the median price of all housing sales within the County. The Appendix provides links to housing reports that include affordability analyses.

While current median home prices and rental rates are lower on average than during the pre-recession years, home prices and rents are now rising. Finding affordable housing is challenging, especially in the north part of the County, for county residents who depend solely on wages for their income. As shown in the Community Profile of this Plan, average wages are more than \$10,000 lower per household than the national average even though median household income in Blaine County exceeds that of the nation. The County’s high median income figures reflect the wealth found here, but work against the County’s affordable housing providers seeking grants.



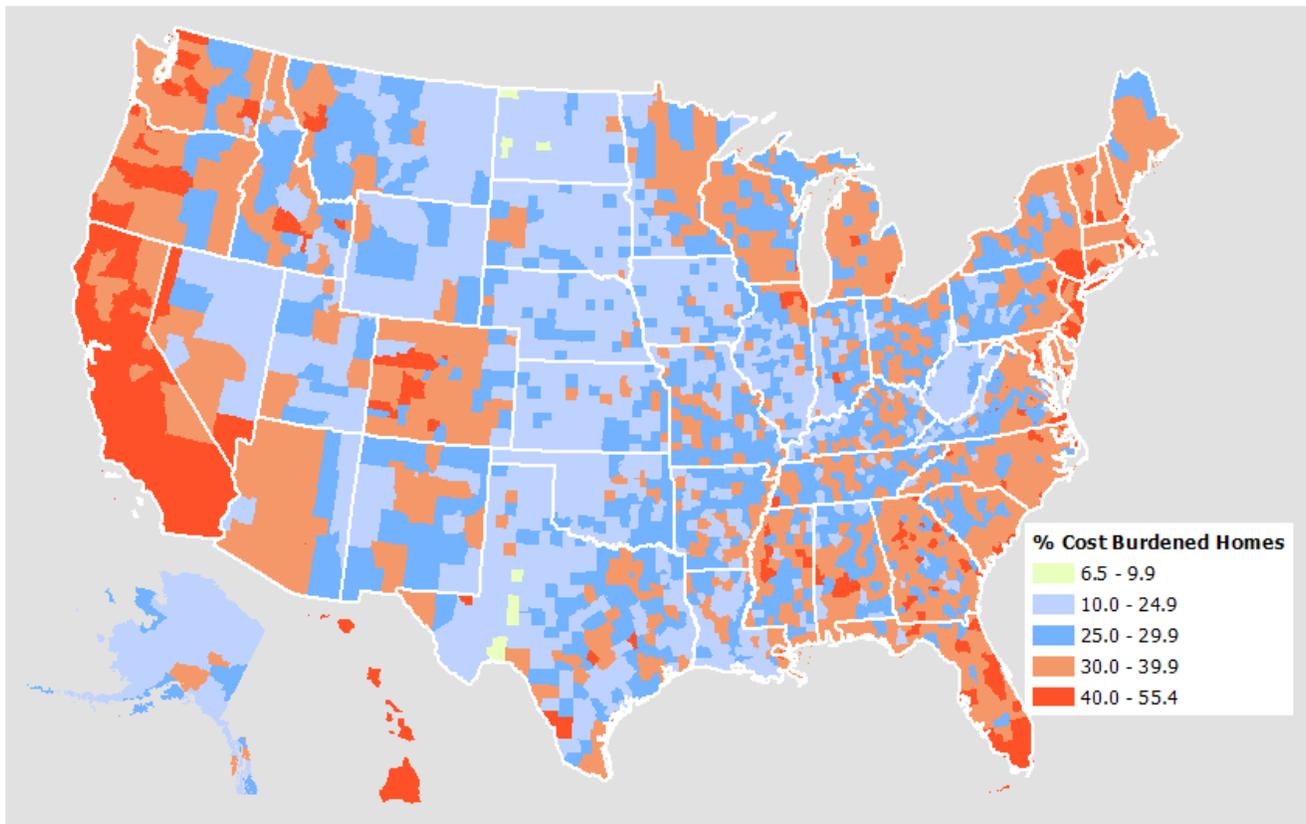
*Photo courtesy of Blaine County Housing Authority*

**Map 2.1  
Housing & Population Distribution  
September 2014**



# Housing Affordability in the United States, 2013

Housing cost burden is the ratio of a household's monthly income used for housing costs. A household is considered 'housing cost burdened' if they pay 30 percent or more of their monthly income towards housing costs.



Source: Housing Assistance Council (HAC) Tabulations of 2009-2013 American Community Survey (ACS) Data



**Table 4: Blaine County Affordability Gap**

Year	Median Household Income	Median Home Value	Median Gross Rent	Percent of households paying more than 30% of income towards housing	
				Owners	Renters
1990	\$31,199	\$127,400	\$408	(not reported)	(not reported)
2000	\$50,496	\$288,800	\$740	31.5%	33.7%
2010	\$57,330	\$466,000*	\$894*	49.8%*	34.3%*

Source: US Decennial Census and (\*) American Community Survey 2008-2010

## Housing Organizations

The County relies on the Blaine County Housing Authority (BCHA), a quasi-governmental entity, and housing nonprofit groups such as ARCH Community Housing Trust for the full range of housing planning, development and management services. This includes promoting new housing policies, developing new affordable housing, refurbishing existing housing stock, managing existing community housing units, pursuing new funding opportunities for affordable housing and educating the community on housing issues.

BCHA maintains a wide variety of statistics regarding housing needs and affordability. The benchmarks in BCHA's report relate to the make-up of its applicant list for deed-restricted affordable housing in the County. BCHA's statistics are compiled and reported on a quarterly and/or annual basis. (See the Appendix for the 2014 BCHA Annual Report.)



*Photo courtesy of Blaine County Housing Authority*

## Comparison to Other Mountain Resort Counties

Other mountain resort communities provide housing for their workforces through a variety of tools, such as inclusionary zoning, commercial linkage, and real estate transfer taxes (these are defined in Appendix). Many of these programs are not permitted under Idaho law.

A common measurement is to look at housing that is price-restricted, either via a deed restriction for ownership units or rent restriction. Table 5 compares Blaine County to other resort counties in terms of deed/rent-restricted housing.

**Table 5: 2012 Resort County Comparisons, Deed Restricted and Rent Restricted Housing**

County	Number of Deed Restricted/Rent Restricted Homes	% of Deed Restricted/Rent Restricted Homes as compared to County Population
<b>Blaine County, ID: pop. 21,378 (Sun Valley)</b>	525	2.46
<b>Bonner County, ID: pop. 40,877 (Schweitzer Mountain)</b>	(not reporting)	(not reporting)
<b>Teton Co, ID: pop 10,170 (Grand Targhee Resort)</b>	102	1.00
<b>Teton County, WY: pop. 21, 294 (Jackson Hole Mountain Resort)</b>	1,128	5.30
<b>Routt County, CO: pop. 23,509 (Steamboat)</b>	135	0.57
<b>Pitkin County, CO: pop. 17, 148 (Aspen, Snowmass)</b>	2,800	16.32
<b>San Miguel County, CO: pop. 7,359 (Telluride Ski Resort)</b>	1,126	15.30
<b>Flathead County, MT: pop. 90,928 (Whitefish Mountain Resort)</b>	89	0.1

## Community Housing Overlay

Each jurisdiction in the County has the responsibility for regulatory programs and incentives to facilitate the development of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households. The Blaine County Commissioners have, over the past several years, expressed their commitment to ensuring the provision of a share of the needed affordable housing county-wide.

One result of this commitment is the Community Housing Overlay District located in the vicinity of St Luke’s Wood River Medical Center, which provides for significant density bonuses and other incentives for developments that include affordable housing. This overlay could be utilized in other areas of the County to promote construction of additional affordable housing units.

# OUR PAST AT A GLANCE

## 1994

**The 1994 Comprehensive Plan** set forth several goals and recommendations, several of which have been met.

**1** Identify areas suitable for the provision of affordable housing

Incentivize lower- and middle-income housing adjacent to incorporated cities

Establish design review criteria for affordable housing units

**Community Housing Overlay District ordinance adopted in 2004 and reviewed and revised in 2009 and 2013**

**2** Allow for long-term rental of caretaker and guesthouse units

**Accessory Dwelling Unit provisions are now set forth in Chapter 3 of the zoning code**

**3** Create organizations to provide mortgage information to consumers

Create deed restrictions to ensure preservation of affordable housing

Identify and monitor existing and anticipated needs for resident housing

Create a program by which contributions from agencies, private parties, and developers can be turned into affordable housing units

Identify and evaluate for use available federal and state programs for housing

**The Blaine County Housing Authority (BCHA) and ARCH Community Housing Trust now provide these services**

**4** Utilize building and fire codes to ensure that housing is safe and sanitary

**International Building Codes and International Fire Codes are adopted and updated regularly**

Several other recommendations speak to

creation of a range of housing types and sizes for all residents and workers of Blaine County and review and consideration of zoning regulations that act as an impediment to affordable housing. These are ongoing goals.

Many of the issues and challenges identified in the plan still apply, including a high number of cost-burdened households and high land and construction costs. New challenges have arisen since the Great Recession, which caused record numbers of foreclosures as well as severe negative impacts on the construction sector of the economy.

## 1975

**The 1975 Plan** noted that 90 percent of the residential development occurred in the upper Wood River Valley corridor, though it stated that in 1971 developed lots in the Ketchum area “hit a

marketable ceiling of approximately **\$10,000**” and residential demand began to move southward! This Plan intended to keep most residential growth near the towns, protecting southern areas for agricultural uses.

The 1975 Plan identified an issue of housing for wage earning families, referred to in the Plan as “low-cost” or “service” housing, in spite of the fact that the 1970 median home value was identified as \$15,600. The Plan encouraged the cities of Ketchum and Sun Valley to evaluate this issue and find ways to stimulate the development of service housing. The Plan also identified the need for senior housing.

**The 1975 Plan** also sought to reduce allowed density to reflect the carrying capacity of the land.

Key Statistics from the Past	Building Permits (Unincorporated County)	Total Assessed Values (All of Blaine County)	Zoned Capacity
1975	84	(not available)	240,000 residents (Cities included)
1994	197	\$ 2.5 billion	(undetermined)
Most Recent	150 (2013)	\$ 8.5 billion (2014)	31,462 residents (Unincorporated County, Cities TBD)

## Challenges

Blaine County faces the following challenges with regard to housing. The Desired Outcome(s) that most specifically address each challenge are listed below.

Affordability gap. Limited housing choices for wage-earning families due to high home prices or rental rates. (Desired Outcomes B-3, B-4, B-6, B-7, B-9, C-1, C-2)

Land prices and construction costs. The high cost of housing is related to both high land prices and a higher cost of construction due to factors such as labor costs, costs for transporting materials, and snow load, seismic and energy requirements (BuildSmart). (Desired Outcomes A-3, A-5, B-3, C-6, C-8)

Housing for an aging population. As our population continues to age, the need grows for tiered-care, fixed-income housing with accessible services and housing designed appropriately for older residents. (Desired Outcomes A-3, B-1, B-5, B-10, B-11)

High unoccupied unit rate. Due to second-home ownership, a higher than average numbers of units are vacant, which can lead to “dark” neighborhoods. (Desired Outcomes B-4, D-1)

Environmental restrictions on developable land. Federal public lands (81 percent of the County) are not available for private development. Much of the remaining land has limitations due to natural constraints such as floodplain areas and hillsides, or is permanently restricted from development via conservation easements. Public lands, hillsides and riparian areas are highly valued by the community. (Desired Outcomes A-1 through A-6)

Wildfire potential. Many outlying areas are unsuitable for housing density because of proximity to fire-prone slopes. (Desired Outcome A-4)

Limited areas with water and sewer infrastructure. Existing water and sewer infrastructure is very limited outside of the cities. This limits development opportunities for housing denser than one unit per acre in the unincorporated County where development of such infrastructure is either financially or physically infeasible. (Desired Outcomes A-3, A-5, C-6)

Neighborhood pressure to maintain the status quo. The development of affordable housing is challenging in many neighborhoods, particularly if mixed housing types are proposed. Neighborhood resistance can delay or stall the provision of much needed housing. (Desired Outcomes A-1, A-2, C-4, C-5)

Limited rental housing. Market-rate rental apartments have been uneconomical to develop because of high land and development costs. (Desired Outcomes B-4, B-5, B-8, B-9, C-3, C-5)

Lack of legislative tools and funding sources in Idaho. Idaho counties are allowed to do only what is authorized by the state. Idaho laws do not provide for certain funding and community housing development opportunities that are available in resort counties in other states, including a real estate transfer tax, inclusionary zoning, commercial linkage, and tax advantages. (Desired Outcomes D-1, D-2)

Competition for federal funding. The mechanisms for allocating federal funds for housing are frequently not aligned with the housing needs of Blaine County due to the high area median income. (Desired Outcomes B-1, C-3, D-1, D-2)



*Cold Spring Crossing – Kevin Syms*

## Desired Outcomes

### A. Location of Housing

**Desired Outcome:** housing that is located close to jobs and services. Cooperation between the County and its cities is a high priority when planning for new growth. Such cooperation is essential to the success of housing policies.

- A-1: Engage in long-range planning with the cities relative to population and job projections with a goal of directing the majority of new growth towards the cities. The jurisdictions should create a collaborative planning process to accomplish this goal and the means and methods of increasing density in city cores.
- A-2: Continue cooperative planning efforts with each city regarding the accommodation of new housing in Areas of City Impact. Planning in these areas should anticipate future housing growth.
- A-3: The majority of new housing should be located close to job centers, particularly in the incorporated cities where municipal infrastructure, other services and amenities are available.
- A-4: Continue to protect hillside, avalanche-prone, riparian and other sensitive or hazardous areas from housing development. Implementation of Firewise practices should be augmented in existing lots near wildfire-prone areas and defensible spaces should be established in new subdivisions.
- A-5: Denser housing should be located in or near areas where municipal infrastructure and services such as water, sewer, and/or transit exist or are planned.
- A-6: In collaboration with the cities, review population projections every five years to assess the availability of land in locations that meet the goals of this Plan and to ensure that enough appropriately zoned land is available in these locations for anticipated growth.

## B. Types of Housing

**Desired Outcome:** a balanced mix of housing types meeting the needs of residents, responding to economic demand and aligning with our overall principles of energy conservation, efficient land use planning, careful use of natural resources, and respect for the natural environment.

- B-1: Consider demographic changes when looking at a balanced mix of housing types, including both rental and ownership housing.
- B-2: Continue support for the BuildSmart Energy Code. Seek and support additional funding programs that facilitate the development of energy-efficient homes.
- B-3: Facilitate the development of smaller houses, dwelling units, and lots through zoning and other tools.
- B-4: Continue to encourage the development and use of accessory dwelling units as housing for workers and full-time residents.
- B-5: Address the need for housing options for seniors, particularly in areas adjacent to transit and other services. Encourage the development of housing appropriately designed for seniors, including tiered care, retrofit of existing units, and accessibility features.
- B-6: Recognize the importance of starter homes as a critical component of economic infrastructure and a component of a healthy and diverse housing stock. Adopt policies and zoning codes, where appropriate, to support the development of starter homes (generally defined as the first which a person or family can afford to purchase).
- B-7: Support efforts to address the age and condition of existing housing stock in the unincorporated County through a variety of land use, building and incentive programs. Consider more flexible regulations for existing nonconforming buildings and lots that provide housing for year-round residents, including zoning changes, flexibility in energy codes and other modifications, recognizing that continuing to live in existing homes is the most sustainable practice.
- B-8: Continue to allow for the development and upkeep of employee on-site housing in rural and agricultural zones, and support employer-provided housing in areas proximate to employment.
- B-9: Allow for development, continued use and maintenance of manufactured homes and mobile home parks in appropriate areas as a viable affordability alternative.
- B-10: Recognize the needs of multigenerational households with regard to housing choices.
- B-11: Make provisions for persons with disabilities with regard to housing choices.

## C. Housing Affordability

**Desired Outcome:** adequate housing opportunities for Blaine County residents and workers in all wage ranges and income levels. Organizations providing community housing are well-supported in their efforts to fund, enhance, expand, and diversify affordable housing.

- C-1: Increasing housing affordability using the guideline of households paying no more than 30 percent of their income toward housing costs is of the highest priority. Develop benchmarks to measure progress towards this goal.
- C-2: Review and report on data at least every two years that will measure progress towards diversified housing opportunities including tracking the percentage of cost-burdened households as those figures become available from the Census Bureau.
- C-3: Seek to balance the mix of housing stock, and seek to reduce barriers to owning and renting housing for low-, moderate- and median-income households.
- C-4: Expand education and outreach efforts to the community at large about the need for affordable housing.
- C-5: Recognize the critical function of organizations focused on housing issues. Continue to fund organizations focused on providing, managing and growing the affordable housing stock, including the identification of expanded funding sources for these organizations.
- C-6: Consider additional areas for the Community Housing Overlay District or other zoning tools that increase allowable density for affordable housing where community housing planned unit developments would be appropriately located in proximity to jobs and adequate infrastructure.
- C-7: Provide additional flexibility in the development review process when community housing is proposed.
- C-8: Reduce plan/permit fees for community housing developments.

## D. Funding

**Desired Outcome:** more dedicated funding sources for the development of housing and related infrastructure for low-, moderate- and median-income households.

- D-1: Pursue local, state and federal legislative and program options that could result in dedicated revenue streams for the development of housing for low-, moderate- and median-income households, such as local option real estate transfer taxes.
- D-2: Lobby at the state level for new funding sources or local incentives for the development of housing and related infrastructure.



*Courtesy of the Ralph Harris/Fuld Collection in the Regional History Dept. of The Community Library.*



*US Highway 20 ranch field in fall - Carol Waller*

# APPENDIX

This Comprehensive Plan references many related documents and plans that have served as background materials in its creation. While many of these also help to guide the future of Blaine County, they are not formally incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan and are not law unless and until they become ordinances. Many of them may be updated from time to time and the County will make every effort to add the updated documents after they become available.

## Glossary

**Acre Foot** – The volume of one acre of surface area to a depth of one foot, or 43,560 cubic feet (1,233 m<sup>3</sup>).

**Aquifer** - A body of permeable rock that contains and transmits ground water, usually underground.

**Community-Supported Agriculture (CSA)** – An alternative, locally based economic model of agriculture and food distribution. CSA members, or subscribers, pay at the onset of the growing season for a share of the anticipated harvest; once harvesting begins, they periodically receive shares of produce. In addition to produce, some CSA services may include additional farm products like honey, eggs, dairy, fruit, flowers and meat.

**Conjunctive Management** - Legal and hydrologic integration of administration of the diversion and use of water under water rights from surface and ground water sources, including areas having a common ground water supply.

**Deed Restricted** - A deed restriction is a legal document that places limitations or restrictions on real estate. An affordability deed restriction is placed on a property to preserve it for low- and moderate-income housing. This means it can only be sold to a buyer whose household meets certain income requirements and at a price that is affordable to that household.

**Domestic Exemption** - (a) The use of water for homes, organization camps, public campgrounds, livestock and for any other purpose in connection therewith, including irrigation of up to one-half (1/2) acre of land, if the total use is not in excess of thirteen thousand (13,000) gallons per day, or (b) any other uses, if the total use does not exceed a diversion rate of four one-hundredths (0.04) cubic feet per second and a diversion volume of twenty-five hundred (2,500) gallons per day. Idaho Code §42-111

**First in Time** - A legal doctrine that says that whomever put the water resource first to “beneficial use” has the first right to it. While legal details vary from state to state, the general principle is that water rights are unconnected to land ownership, and can be sold like other property. The first person to use a quantity of water from a water source for a [beneficial use](#) has the right to continue to use that quantity of water for that purpose. Subsequent users can use the remaining water for their own beneficial purposes provided that they do not impinge on the rights of previous users.

**Inclusionary Zoning** – A policy that operates through the land use approval process to require the provision of affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households.

**Linkage** - Linkage fees help meet a housing need that may be produced when new development occurs. For instance, the development of an office or retail complex will bring employment opportunities to an area, including lower wage jobs. Linkage fees, most often charged to developers on a square foot basis, can supplement an affordable housing funding program.

**Multi-Modal Transportation** - A transportation system that includes various modes (walking, cycling, automobile, public transit, etc.) and the connections among modes.

**Prime Farmland** – (As defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture) Prime farmland is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops, and is also available for these uses (the land could be cropland, pastureland, rangeland, forest land, or other land, but not urban built-up land or water). It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when treated and managed, including water management, according to acceptable farming methods. In general, prime farmlands have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. They are permeable to water and air. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated with water for a long period of time, and they either do not flood frequently or are protected from flooding.

**Real Estate Transfer Tax** – A fee imposed by states, counties or municipalities on the transfer of title of real property within the jurisdiction. Real estate transfer taxes can be used for specific purposes, such as affordable housing and open space development.

**Sagebrush Steppe** - A type of shrub-steppe, a dry-xeric environment and plant community found in the Western United States and western Canada. It can be identified by the sagebrush—*Artemisia tridentata* shrubs and the short bunchgrasses that grow in it. The *Sagebrush steppe* name comes from the most dominant plant found in the ecosystem, the "sagebrush" - and "steppe," which describes a largely treeless, dry, level grassland.

**Traditional (or Conventional) Zoning** - Zoning that focuses on the segregation of land-use types (typically three main categories - residential, commercial, and industrial), permissible property uses, and the control of development intensity through numerical parameters (e.g., dwellings per acre, height limits, setbacks, parking ratios).

#### **Worker Categories (EMSI Definitions)**

**EMSI, Inc.** - An economic modeling company that prepares industry and occupational projections and population projections for the Idaho Department of Labor.

**QCEW Workers - "Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages"** - Workers covered by state of Idaho unemployment insurance laws and federal workers covered by the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees program. QCEW covers approximately 98 percent of total employment in the United States and over 90 percent of employment in Idaho.

**Non-QCEW Workers** -Jobs which fall under an employer-employee relationship but are not covered by QCEW. The major types of employment covered in this set include military jobs, railroad jobs, many nonprofit and religious workers, certain salespersons, miscellaneous Federal Government and some other government workers.

**Self Employed Workers** - Covers people who, when responding to Census surveys, consider self-employment to be a significant part of their income or time spent working.

**Extended Proprietors** - Covers the same types of jobs as the "Self-Employed" dataset, but these jobs represent miscellaneous labor income for persons who do not consider it a primary job. This includes minor or underreported self-employment, investments trusts and partnerships, certain farms and tax-exempt nonprofit cooperatives.

# Bibliography –

## Population/Employment/Housing

Idaho Department of Labor

Including:

- QCEW Employees & Non-QCEW Employees - EMSI 2014.1 Class of Worker
- QCEW Employees, Non-QCEW Employees, Self-Employed & Extended Proprietors - EMSI 2014.2 Class of Worker

U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division

Including:

- Summary File 1, Tables P12, P13, and PCT12
- Intercensal Estimates of the Resident Population for Counties of Idaho: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2010 (CO-EST00INT-01-16) Release Date: September 2011
- Annual Estimates of the Resident Population: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2013. Release Dates: For counties, municipalities, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and combined statistical areas, March 2014. For Cities and Towns (Incorporated Places and Minor Civil Divisions), May 2014.
- Population Projections, United States, 2004 - 2030, by state, age and sex, on CDC WONDER On-line Database, September 2005.
- 2006-2010 American Community Survey

Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Washington, D.C. Copyright 2013. Woods & Poole does not guarantee the accuracy of this data. The use of this data and the conclusion drawn from it are solely the responsibility of Licensee (Blaine County).

- Woods and Poole projections for each county are done simultaneously so that changes in one county affect growth or decline in others, with the U.S. projection the control total. Demographic forecasts follow a traditional cohort-component analysis (a method of population analysis that begins with groups that have common initial demographic characteristics), with "demand" for total population estimated from an economic model. Individuals and families are assumed to migrate in response to employment opportunities, except that for college/military age and ages 65 and over, migration patterns are based on historical net migration rather than economic conditions. Blaine County is included within the "Twin Falls, ID" Economic Area (contiguous counties, with Camas, Cassia, Gooding, Jerome, Lincoln, Minidoka, and Twin Falls counties).

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD.gov

- CY 2014 FHA Mortgage Limits, CHUMS Data Files

National Association of REALTORS® *2013 Community Preference Survey*, American Strategies and Myers Research | Strategic Services, LLC.

Urban Land Institute: *America in 2015: A ULI Survey of Views on Housing, Transportation, and Community*. Washington, D.C.: the Urban Land Institute, 2015

# Introduction

## History

**Approximately 4,000 years ago...** The Shoshoni and Bannock tribes moved into southern Idaho, following large game. In general, the Shoshoni and Bannock lived in the valleys during the winter and traveled into the mountains throughout the spring and summer. As more European-American settlers migrated west, tensions rose with the indigenous people. Wars occurred throughout the second half of the 19th century.

- 1819** Trapper and trader Andrew Henry (one of the founders of the Missouri Fur Company) explores the area between Little Lost River and Camas Prairie. Donald Mackenzie of Hudson's Bay Company's Snake River Brigade also traverses the lower Wood River region.
- 1824** Alexander Ross of the Snake River Brigade travels over Trail Creek Summit and the area between Wood River and the future site of Little Camas Reservoir.
- 1852** A wagon road is established from Fort Hall through the southern area of future Blaine and Camas counties.
- 1860s** After the 1860s mining discoveries in Boise Basin and Rocky Bar, a few former Oregon Trail emigrants settle in Camas Prairie and Wood River Valley.
- 1862** Trapper/trader Tim Goodale takes emigrant wagons on a cutoff route through the southern half of future Blaine County to the Salmon River gold rush. The cutoff was located approximately 2 ½ miles north of the present-day crossroads of Idaho highways 20 and 75.
- 1863** Idaho Territory is officially organized on March 4, 1863, by Act of Congress and signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln. Alturas County becomes the largest territorial county, including most of southern Idaho from the Bruneau River's mouth to the Little Lost River. Alturas has an area of over 19,000 square miles, or larger than Vermont and New Hampshire combined. Alturas is a word of Spanish origin signifying heights or mountains, which was sometimes given the more figurative interpretation of "heavenly heights."
- 1864** The mining camp of Rocky Bar, located about eight miles north of Featherville, becomes the county seat of Alturas. It is known today as a Ghost town, and part of Elmore County.
- 1865** Big Camas and Black Cinder are the earliest recorded mining claims in what is known today as Blaine County. The Wood River hills were full of high grade silver and lead ores.
- 1873** Prospector Warren Callahan discovers gold south of the future Bellevue townsite near Goodale's Cutoff.

**1878** Bannock Indian War. Regional Native American tribes, angry over broken treaties and settlers' agricultural disturbance of their traditional camas grounds, start the "Bannock Indian War." Part of the war took place on the Camas Prairie and in the Wood River Valley. Federal troops put an end to the war and moved tribes to smaller reservations in southeastern Idaho and southeastern Nevada.

**1879** Levi Smiley- a prospector discovers the riches of ore. In November mining camps opened in, Sawtooth City of Beaver Canyon & Vienna of Smiley's Canyon.

**1880** Lead and silver lode discoveries spawn numerous mining camps and supply centers in the Wood River area, including Galena to the north and Jacob City (later called Broadford) to the south.

Originally the smelting center of the Warm Springs mining district, Ketchum is first named Leadville in 1880. The postal department decided that was too common and renamed it for David Ketchum, a local trapper and guide who had staked a claim in the basin a year earlier.

Development of hot springs begins near Ketchum (Guyer Hot Springs) and Croy Gulch (Croy/Smith/Hailey Hot Springs) for medicinal and recreational purposes.

Construction of the Galena Toll Road started from Ketchum north to Stanley Basin.

The town of Bellevue is platted. Owen Riley, merchant and first postmaster, erected the first building in the town. Approximately 2,000 mineral patents were located in the hills west of town.

**1881** Townsite of Hailey is platted, named after John Hailey, a stage-line operator and territorial delegate to the U.S. Congress. It wins the Alturas county seat designation over Bellevue in a controversial election.

Sarah (Mrs. Lafe) Griffin starts a store near what is later called Timmerman Hill Stage Station.

Wood River Times is founded by T.E. Picotte

**1882** John Hailey and his business partners sell most of the Hailey townsite to the Idaho-Oregon Land Improvement Company, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad.

The Philadelphia Smelter, located on Warm Springs near Ketchum, begins production. It becomes the largest smelter in the region.

**1883** The Philadelphia Smelter doubles in size and the first electric light plant in Idaho is established there.

A group of Mormon colonists settle in the southeastern corner of present-day Blaine County. First called "Marysville," their settlement was renamed "Carey" in 1884.

The Oregon Short Line (OSL) railroad tracks reach Picabo from Blackfoot in 1883. A spur was built to Hailey by mid-1883. The OSL was later consolidated into the Union Pacific Railroad.

**1884** The Union Pacific Railroad is extended from Hailey to Ketchum.

The Ketchum & Challis Toll Road Company builds the original wagon road to Trail Creek Summit to connect mining and grazing lands with the Union Pacific railhead at Ketchum.

**1885** This date marks the apex of mining development in the Wood River area. Later, falling silver prices cause "busts" in production during 1888 and again in 1892.

The agricultural industry, especially ranching, becomes an important part of the area's economy.

Ezra Weston Loomis Pound is born in Hailey Idaho. He became an expatriate American poet and critic who was a major figure of the early modernist movement.

**1886** Alturas Hotel (later Hiawatha Hotel) opens to the public in May with a grand ball. It was said to have cost \$35,000; furniture \$8,000, not including the \$5,000 bar and fixtures connected with the billiard hall. Hailey Hot Springs (about two and a half miles west of town) is piped in and the hotel is heated throughout with this water which has a temperature of 136 degrees F.

**1888** Union Pacific Railroad promoter Robert Strahorn acquires the hot springs in Croy Gulch and builds The Hailey Hot Springs Hotel. It became a favorite resort for railroad magnate Jay Gould and his family, who also owned interests in several area mines. It burned down seven years later.

First National Bank of Hailey, with a capital stock of one hundred thousand dollars, is founded by W.B. Farr of St. Louis, Missouri.

**1889-1890** Many cattle herds are decimated during a harsh winter, and hardy sheep became the main livestock raised in the Wood River and Little Lost River valleys.

**1895** Blaine County is formed out of portions of Alturas County on March 5 and named after former congressman, James G Blaine, the "plumed knight from Maine", Secretary of State in the Garfield and Harrison administrations. Hailey remained the county seat.

**1890-1900** The sheep industry booms in Idaho, growing from an estimated 614,000 head in 1890, to 2.1 million head. Basque immigrants are hired as sheepherders and come to the Wood River region.

**1905** The Sawtooth National Forest is established.

**1907** Hayspur Fish Hatchery is constructed on Loving Creek; it is the first hatchery operated by Idaho's Fish & Game Commission.

**1909-1911** The mining industry tapers off in the Wood River region.

**1914** Sawtooth Park Highway construction begins from the Lincoln County line north through the Wood River Valley.

- 1910-1920** Ketchum becomes one of the largest stock shipping centers in the United States.
- 1915-1920** James McDonald, a Standard Oil heir, builds a house in Hailey and a vacation compound at Petit Lake. He produced films to help develop tourism in the Wood River and Stanley basins. McDonald also provided money for fish eggs to be placed in Hayspur Hatchery and helped transport fingerlings to local mountain lakes.
- 1920** Sheep Herding becomes the wealth of Wood River Valley, due to the drop in value of silver after not being tied to the US currency.
- 1925** The State of Idaho establishes the Warm Springs Game Preserve near Bald Mountain.
- 1927** The Triumph Mine between Hailey and Ketchum reopens; a flurry of redevelopment at old mining sites begins and ends after World War II.
- 1930s** During the Great Depression, federal public works programs help construct numerous roads, bridges, public buildings and Forest Service recreation sites throughout Blaine County.
- 1934** Taylor Grazing Act limits stock grazing access to public lands. The sheep and cattle industry in Idaho, which suffered from poor markets since WWI, went into decline.
- 1936** Averill Harriman, son of Union Pacific Railroad president E. H. Harriman, buys the Brass Ranch east of Ketchum and in less than a year develops it into a ski resort run by the Union Pacific Railroad. The world's first alpine skiing chairlift located in Sun Valley was built on Proctor Mountain. Built by Union Pacific Railroad engineers, it was designed after a banana-boat loading device. The 1936 fee: 25 cents per ride. Sun Valley becomes a "destination" resort for the rich and famous.
- 1937** Sun Valley International Open Harriman Cup is held, the first major international ski competition in North America. It was held in the Boulder Mountains north of Sun Valley until 1939.
- 1939** Ernest Hemingway arrives in Sun Valley to work on his novel, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. Idaho offered wide open spaces for Hemingway to indulge in his passions for hunting, skiing, fishing, and other outdoor activities.
- 1940** Bald Mountain and the base River Run lift areas are developed, expanding the Sun Valley resort's recreational services.
- 1941** Sun Valley is featured and promoted in the movie Sun Valley Serenade.
- 1941-1946** Sun Valley Lodge closes during World War II and is used as a convalescent hospital by the U.S. Navy. The Moritz Hospital facility was named after Dr. John Moritz when he retired in 1973.

- 1946-1949** Warren Miller winters in Sun Valley, first living in a small teardrop trailer in the River Run parking lot. Miller later rented an unheated garage for \$5 per month and sublet floor space to friends to pitch their sleeping bags (at 50 cents per night). One of these friends was Edward Scott, the future inventor of the lightweight aluminum ski pole. This extra cash helped Miller purchase his first rolls of 16 mm movie film, jump-starting his motion picture career.
- 1958** In the First Wagon Days Parade, "The Big Hitch" and a few dozen Lewis Ore Wagons roll down Ketchum's main street.
- Ed Scott invents the first ski pole made of aluminum. He is the founder of Scott USA, now Scott Sports headquartered in Switzerland.
- 1961** Hemingway is buried in Ketchum, Idaho where he died on July 2.
- 1964** Union Pacific sells Sun Valley Resort to the Janss Investment Company of Southern California. During this Janss era of ownership, the north-facing Warm Springs area was developed, as well as Seattle Ridge, and condominium and home construction increased significantly. Seven chairlifts were added, and the number of trails increased from 33 to 62. The first two double chairs on Warm Springs were installed in series in 1965; the upper "Limelight" had a 2,200-foot (670 m) vertical rise, the greatest in the U.S. at the time for a chairlift.
- 1969** Sun Valley Center for the Arts & Humanities is initiated by Mrs. Glenn Cooper, a non-profit focused on ceramics, photography and fine arts.
- 1972** The 756,019-acre Sawtooth National Recreation Area (SNRA) is designated by federal law, banning mining within it. Its headquarters are established eight miles north of Ketchum. As part of this legislation, the Sawtooth Primitive Area became the Sawtooth Wilderness covering 217,088 acres and part of the National Wilderness Preservation System under the Wilderness Act of 1964. The SNRA is one of the largest and most magnificent National Recreation Areas in the United States. The SNRA contains four mountain ranges with 40 peaks over 10,000 feet high. There are more than 1,000 high mountain lakes, as well as the headwaters of four of Idaho's major rivers, including the world famous "River of No Return" - the Salmon River.
- 1977** Earl Holding purchases Sun Valley Resort through his company, Sinclair Oil. He was chief of operations until April 2013. His family now runs the resort.

### Interesting Historical Facts:

The odd shape of Blaine County, with its projection south to Lake Walcott and the Snake River Plain, was engineered in 1890 so that the mainline of the Union Pacific railroad would pass through the county, so as to send tax revenue into the county. Mining interests controlled early Idaho politics.

Variant names of the Big Wood River, according to the USGS, include Malad River, Malade River, Wood River, Poisonous Beaver River, and Sickley River

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## Community Profile

### Population

#### Blaine County Population Growth 1940-2010

Historic Census Results								
	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
Bellevue	502	528	384	537	1,016	1,275	1,578	2,287
Hailey	1,443	1,464	1,185	1,425	2,109	3,687	5,577	7,960
Sun Valley	n.a.	428	317	180	545	938	1,024	1,406
Ketchum	n.a.	757	746	1,454	2,200	2,523	2,765	2,689
Carey	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	427	541	604
Unincorporated	3,350	2,207	1,966	2,153	3,971	4,702	7,506	6,430
Blaine County total	5,295	5,384	4,598	5,749	9,841	13,552	18,991	21,376
Blaine County Growth		1.7%	-14.6%	25.0%	71.2%	37.7%	40.1%	12.6%
Average Annualized Growth		0.2%	-1.6%	2.3%	5.5%	3.3%	3.4%	1.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

# Chapter 1. Transportation

## Aviation (Air Service)

**8-1-1-3: SECTION 2. AIRPORT SERVICE SYSTEM (Adopted to Comprehensive Plan in 1999)** is found at this link: [http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book\\_id=450](http://www.sterlingcodifiers.com/codebook/index.php?book_id=450)

### Airport Project Guiding Principles (of the Blaine County Board of Commissioners)

**Guiding Principle 1** - Robust commercial and general aviation transportation service and infrastructure are vital to the economy of Blaine County.

**Guiding Principle 2** - Meeting federal design and safety standards in air and ground operations is paramount in planning for air service and related infrastructure.

**Guiding Principle 3** - Air service and infrastructure improvements are affordable and achievable.

**Guiding Principle 4** - Minimizing environmental impacts is a high priority in planning for and implementing air service and infrastructure improvements.

**Guiding Principle 5** - Air Service is an important and interconnected mode of transportation for Blaine County and the region.

**Guiding Principle 6** - A replacement airport south of Bellevue along State Highway 75 is the long term solution and objective.

**Guiding Principle 7** - Airport governance issues are addressed timely, including Amended Joint Powers Agreement implementation and further amendment as needed.

## Bicycle, Pedestrian and other Nonmotorized Travel

**Blaine County Community Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (June 27, 2014)** is found at this link:

[http://www.co.blaine.id.us/index.asp?SEC=7C001DE9-001B-4461-AB65-5629A9D4AC87&DE=1FF054B2-28E5-43CC-93A0-9EB9109885D0&Type=B\\_BASIC](http://www.co.blaine.id.us/index.asp?SEC=7C001DE9-001B-4461-AB65-5629A9D4AC87&DE=1FF054B2-28E5-43CC-93A0-9EB9109885D0&Type=B_BASIC)

Within Chapter 6, "Making it Happen", the projects described in the Master Plan are prioritized based on a number of criteria. The prioritization matrix is shown on the following page:

## PROJECT PRIORITIZATION MATRIX

	PROJECT ID	PROJECT NAME	CONNECTS MISSING LINKS	SAFETY IMPACTS	COMMUNITY DESIRE	ECONOMIC IMPACTS	HEALTH IMPACTS	OVERALL PRIORITY SCORE
		weighting factor	4.7	4.7	3.75	3.75	3	
NORTH VALLEY	N1	Connect WRT to Harriman Trail with Separated Pathway	5	4	5	5	3	89
	N2	Improve Surface of Harriman Trail	1	3	4	3	4	57
	N3	Biking Improvements over Galena Summit	1	4	5	4	3	66
	N4	Improvements around Galena Lodge	1	5	3	5	4	70
KETCHUM AREA	K1	4th Street Safety Improvements	3	5	5	5	4	87
	K2	River Run Connections	2	1	4	4	3	53
	K3	Pathway Routing Improvements in Downtown	5	5	4	4	3	86
	K4	Ketchum Downtown Sidewalks/Complete Streets	5	4	5	5	4	92
	K5	Alternate Routes to Downtown	5	3	4	3	3	73
	K6	Site Distance Improvements	1	5	3	2	4	59
	K7	Separated Path Saddle Road to Knob Hill Inn	5	3	3	2	3	65
	K8	Warm Springs Road Improvements	3	5	2	2	3	62
	K9	Wayfinding	3	3	2	2	3	52
SUN VALLEY AREA	SV1	Trail Creek Path Surface Improvements	3	4	5	5	3	79
	SV2	Trail Creek Path to Boundary Campground	3	4	4	3	3	68
	SV3	Boundary Campground to base of Trail Creek Pass	1	3	4	2	3	50
	SV4	Bitterroot/Gopher Gulch Connection	2	1	1	1	3	31
MAIN VALLEY	M1	East Fork Bike Lanes and Intersection Improvements	3	4	4	3	3	68
	M2	Deer Creek Road Improvements	3	2	3	3	3	55
	M3	Croy Creek Road Improvements	3	4	5	4	3	76
	M4	Broadford Road Improvements	3	4	5	3	3	72
	M5	Bike Lanes along SH-75	3	3	2	2	3	52
	M6	"Toe of the Hill" connection Hailey and Bellevue	3	1	4	3	3	54
	M7	Wayfinding	3	3	2	2	3	52
HAILEY AREA	H1	River Street roundabouts	3	4	3	5	3	72
	H2	Connections to the Visitor's Center and Skate Park	5	4	4	5	4	88
	H3	Hailey Downtown Sidewalks/Complete Streets	5	4	5	5	4	92
	H4	Connections to Trails and Parks	3	3	5	3	5	73
	H5	Safe Routes to School Improvements	4	5	5	3	5	87
	H6	Wayfinding	3	3	2	2	3	52
SOUTH VALLEY AREA	S1	Roundabout at Gannett Road and SH-75	2	3	3	2	3	51
	S2	WRT and Street intersection improvements in Bellevue	3	4	1	3	5	63
	S3	Gannett Road Improvements	2	4	4	2	3	60
	S4	SH-20 Pathway Improvements to Carey	2	2	3	2	3	47
	S5	City of Carey Pathway Connectivity	5	3	2	3	5	71

## Vehicular Travel

The road classifications described in the chapter are contained in the following excerpt from the 1994 Plan.

### **8-1-1-16, Section 15 County Roads**

County roads are those roads or portions of roads that are designated by, and agreed to by, the State and the county as comprising the county road system. There are two types of road designations under this system: 1) those that meet the standards for "grade and drain, or better"; and 2) those that do not meet this standard. (See Idaho Department of Highways - Improved Roads)

The county receives money from the State to maintain "grade and drain roads". Approximately forty-five percent (45%) of the money received from the State for county road maintenance is based on these roads. The State pays the county \$770.00 per mile for "grade and drain" roads, the funds come from gasoline taxes collected by the State. The county annually reports any changes in its road mileage, and these changes are verified by the State. Every seven (7) years the State inspects and reclassifies the county road system. Presently there are three hundred sixty-nine (369) miles of "grade and drain" roads. Another seventy-four (74) miles of county roads fail to meet this standard.

Funds returned to the county, through the State, provide sixty percent (60%) of the annual road and bridge budget for the county. The remaining forty percent (40%) comes exclusively from property taxes.

There is one additional classification of county roads: "Gated Roads". These are roads that have gates across them, locked or unlocked. About 16.6 miles of county roads are gated. The county receives no funding for these roads and they are generally plowed and maintained privately. Where such roads were part of a traditional public access route, the county is actively pursuing prescriptive easements to continue that public access.

Approximately four hundred forty-three (443) miles of local roads are maintained by the county. These roads, of which approximately eighty-five (85) miles are paved, service a large geographical area.

Most of the county's original roads serviced the first settler's farms or accessed mines. They primarily follow section lines dividing farms and ranches, or run up the canyons off the Big Wood River. Several of the roads from Bellevue, Hailey, and Ketchum, were constructed as toll roads for access from the old mines to the railroad. Many of these roads were improved with Federal Aid Secondary System Funds.

Blaine County roads may be categorized as Collectors Roads, Local Roads, Private Roads and Driveways. In some cases, a road may provide more than one level of service and could have more than one designation. For example roads may be both public access and privately owned. This has led to current county subdivision policy requiring that roads leading to public lands be dedicated for public use.

### **Collector Roads**

The present collector roads include, but are not limited to: Baseline Road, Glendale Road, Picabo-Gannett Road, Muldoon Road, Broadford and Lower Broadford Road, Buttercup Road, Croy Creek Road, Quigley Gulch Road, Deer Creek Road, Ohio Gulch Road, Greenhorn Gulch Road, East Fork (North Star) Road, Gimlet Road, Broadway Run Road, Warm Springs Road, Eagle Creek Road, Indian Creek Road, Lake Creek Road. These roads serve as collectors of local or private roads to access the main highways or cities.

Current county subdivision ordinance requires collector roads and arterials, in new subdivisions, to be offered for dedication to the county for public use. County policy is to accept the dedication if the subdivision property leads to public lands or if future through-use is anticipated, and if the road is built to county standards.

The condition of the collector roads varies greatly depending upon the Right-of-way (prescriptive use, private, or fully dedicated), age, alignment, traffic counts, and maintenance. Among priority collector roads by prescriptive use, for which the county is currently acquiring deeded rights-of-way, are Broadford Road and Croy Creek Road.

Roads which may require widening and other improvements for future increases in traffic include Glendale Road, Gannett Road, Broadford Road, Buttercup Road, Croy Creek Road, and East Fork Road. A narrow bridge on Glendale Road needs replacement. Several collector roads need turn-lanes at their approaches to the Highway.

The pattern of future collector roads has not been formally adopted or mapped by the county. A wider than normal right-of-way (80 feet) is desirable for collector roads to pile snow. Relatively straight, continuous systems increase the speed and efficiency of snow removal. Since the longevity of any road surface is proportional to its intensity of use, improvement standards should relate to anticipated traffic volumes.

Future collector road location and design will depend upon specific development design and intensity of use. The irregular development and subdivision of farms and ranches in the Wood River Valley has changed historic roads into collectors. That evolution, and the location of the Big Wood River and the highway/railroad corridor within the valley, has defined the natural locations for collector roads.

For planning purposes, collector roads serve to:

- 1.Restrict side access onto main arterial highways to designated well-spaced points of entry.
- 2.Generate an orderly and logical pattern of residential and related development in those areas appropriate for such use.
- 3.Create a safe and continuous system of residential access roads which increase efficiencies in maintenance and snow removal.
- 4.Eliminate patterns of development along the highways which threaten the scenic character of the county.
- 5.Provide public access to public lands.
- 6.Provide alternate traffic movement to state arterials.

### Local Roads

In addition to collector roads, local roads are required for access within subdivisions or to larger parcels and ranches.

Proper right-of-way width and improvement standards are required for dedicated public roads:

- 1.To provide continuity of the road system with other collector or local road access for a minimum potential user ratio of dwelling units per mile.

### Private Roads and Driveways

Largely due to factors of terrain and ownership, numerous developments occur in areas where access is difficult and which result in exorbitant maintenance costs. Also, some developers and residents desire to limit traffic and access through their neighborhood by the public.

Private roads which serve two to four lots have minimum width requirements. County ordinances allow private roads where maintenance responsibilities are clearly defined through communal ownership agreements (CC&R's).

Conflicts occur when tax payers demand county maintenance of substandard roads, or when developers refuse to install major road improvements into limited development areas.

Current county policy regarding private roads is to require minimum width and base, but to allow gravel rather than paving in certain subdivisions: small lot subdivisions and subdivisions in isolated areas where requiring paving can add a disproportionate cost to the subdivision. For large lot subdivisions and those close to other road systems, paving is generally required.

Private driveways are capable of having considerable impact on road safety and movement. Improperly designed driveways, without adequate sightlines or with view-impairing vegetation, create accidents and slow traffic flows. When private driveways cannot handle emergency vehicles, the risks of failed fire protection for the residence as well as neighbors is increased.

#### Public Land Access Roads

Forest Service and BLM roads which provide access to isolated seasonal residence areas are not maintained during the winter season. However, permanent residents are replacing former summer occupancies in the Warm Springs Canyon and other areas. Pressures on the county are increasing to keep these roads open for access and for bussing of school children. In 1974, the county assumed maintenance responsibility into the Lower Board Ranch area.

The nature of these roads, the distances involved, and the frequent avalanche hazards create excessive maintenance requirements, disproportionate public expenditures and safety risks for the county. In addition, these trends are encroaching on critical wildlife winter range. The seasonal use district recommendations are primarily intended to define the county's responsibility in these areas.

Non-federal roads which provide access to public lands, across private land, exist throughout the county. Public use of such roads is legally defined by historic use and public improvement. However, conflicts have arisen due to threatened or actual road closures by private owners. New ownership and/or proposed development sometimes seek to prevent public use of established major access roads through specific properties.

The county is concerned about preserving and restoring public access to public lands. A limited inventory of traditionally used roads and access has been made and steps are being taken to determine the legal rights of the county, on behalf of its residents, to protect this vital community asset. This inventory is a continuing process, with additions being made as time permits.

## Blaine County 2012 Transportation Plan

The **2012 Transportation Plan** is found at this link: [http://www.co.blaine.id.us/index.asp?SEC=7C001DE9-001B-4461-AB65-5629A9D4AC87&DE=1FF054B2-28E5-43CC-93A0-9EB9109885D0&Type=B\\_BASIC](http://www.co.blaine.id.us/index.asp?SEC=7C001DE9-001B-4461-AB65-5629A9D4AC87&DE=1FF054B2-28E5-43CC-93A0-9EB9109885D0&Type=B_BASIC)

The priority matrix for Capital Improvement Plans is shown below:

**Table 17**  
Blaine County Transportation Plan  
**Prioritized List of Capital Improvements Projects**

	Total Priority Score	Rank	Safety Concerns	Surface Condition	Roadway Width	Traffic Volume	Recreational Value	Road Use	Existing Development	Future Population / Employment Increases
Roadway	Weighting Factor		3	5	1	3	2	4	4	1
West Glendale Rd	149	1	24	15	4	27	12	36	24	7
Gannett Rd	148	2	30	0	6	27	16	40	24	5
Croy Creek Rd	134	3	21	5	6	21	20	40	16	5
East Fork Rd	125	4	6	0	8	24	16	40	28	3
Buttercup Rd	111	5	15	0	6	27	4	36	20	3
Ohio Gulch Rd	107	6	3	0	4	21	4	40	32	3
Trail Creek Rd	106	7	9	40	10	12	18	12	4	1
Muldoon Rd	101	8	9	40	10	6	14	12	8	2
Broadway Run Rd	97	9	0	0	6	24	4	36	20	7
Broadford Rd	92	10	9	5	6	12	10	40	8	2
Baseline Rd	85	11	3	20	6	12	2	32	8	2
Indian Creek Rd	85	12	0	0	6	12	12	40	12	3
West Magic Rd	80	13	0	10	6	12	10	32	8	2
Little Wood Rd	69	14	3	0	6	15	8	32	4	1

## Chapter 2. Housing

### Seasonal Housing Units and Housing Occupancy

HOUSING OCCUPANCY	# of units	% of units
Total housing units	15,050	100.0
Occupied housing units	8,823	58.6
Vacant housing units	6,227	41.4
For rent	642	4.3
Rented, not occupied	60	0.4
For sale only	432	2.9
Sold, not occupied	50	0.3
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	4,766	31.7
All other vacants	277	1.8
Homeowner vacancy rate (percent) [8]	6.7	( X )
Rental vacancy rate (percent) [9]	17.9	( X )
HOUSING TENURE		
Occupied housing units	8,823	100.0
Owner-occupied housing units	5,939	67.3
Population in owner-occupied housing units	14,048	( X )
Average household size of owner-occupied units	2.37	( X )
Renter-occupied housing units	2,884	32.7
Population in renter-occupied housing units	7,070	( X )
Average household size of renter-occupied units	2.45	( X )

Source: U.S. Census 2010. DP-1: Profile of General Population and Housing Characteristics: 2010

### Housing Organizations

BCHA performs an affordability analysis twice per year in its reports to the community, including the Annual Report (link below). The ownership markets for the north and south valley are reported and analyzed as well at the rental market for each city in the Wood River Valley. These analyses measure affordability in the current Blaine County markets and compare the current conditions to results from the previous analyses, giving an indication of affordability trends throughout the county.

**BCHA FY 2014 Annual Report** is found at this link: [http://www.co.blaine.id.us/index.asp?SEC=7C001DE9-001B-4461-AB65-5629A9D4AC87&DE=1FF054B2-28E5-43CC-93A0-9EB9109885D0&Type=B\\_BASIC](http://www.co.blaine.id.us/index.asp?SEC=7C001DE9-001B-4461-AB65-5629A9D4AC87&DE=1FF054B2-28E5-43CC-93A0-9EB9109885D0&Type=B_BASIC)

BCHA Table of Affordable Units in Blaine County (2014)

Affordable Owned Units in Ketchum	Affordable Owned Units outside Ketchum	Affordable Rental Units in Ketchum		Affordable Owned Units outside Ketchum (Within Blaine County)		
		#	name	#	name	location
60	23	4	Copper Ridge	4	Cold Springs Crossing	127 Hospital Drive, Ketchum
		1	Parkside	191	Balmoral	851 Shenandoah Dr, Hailey
		1	600 2 <sup>nd</sup> Street E Condos	40	Snow Mountain	2011 Woodside, Hailey
		32	Northwood Place	24	River Street - <b>Seniors Only</b>	731 N River Street, Hailey
				24	Tanglewood Apartments	2781 Winterhaven Drive, Hailey
				20	Summit - <b>Seniors only</b>	251 W Carbonate Drive, Hailey
				48	Sunnyside Apartments	620 Willow Drive, Hailey
				27	Baldy View Apartments	1771 Woodside Blvd, Hailey
				24	Valley View Apartments	800 Second Ave., Hailey
						1
				1	Nichols Landscape	Hospital Drive, Ketchum
		38		404		

Source: Blaine County Housing Authority