



## Staff Report

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To: Planning & Zoning Commission  
From: Planning Staff  
Report: March 15, 2019  
Meeting: March 19, 2019  
Item: Comp Plan Update

### General Information

**Requested Action:** Familiarize and review elements of the Comprehensive Plan and to advise staff on defining the scope of updating the plan.

**Staff Report Sections:**

- A. Overview of Comprehensive Planning
- B. Elements of a Comprehensive Plan
- C. Chapter 1 - Introduction
- D. Chapter 2 – Community Profile
- E. Topic of Area – Area of City Impact (ACI)

**Attachments:**

- 1. ACI Toolkit
- 2. ACI context Area Map
- 3. ACI / Water Service Area Map
- 4. Existing ACI Agreement

## A. Overview

A City’s Comprehensive Plan is a document that considers previous and existing conditions, compatibility of land uses, trends, goals and objectives that are intended to *guide the day-to-day decisions of elected officials and local government staff* typically for a 20-year horizon. Although a comprehensive plan is a vision document rather than a regulatory one (such as a zoning ordinance) it is a *required prerequisite* to zoning decisions. It considers various existing conditions such as, but not limited to population, schools, natural resources, transportation, housing, and airports, etc. In essence it is a community’s *over-arching vision for the future*. Sandpoint’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan can be accessed here: <http://www.sandpointidaho.gov/compplan>.

## B. Comp Plan Elements

Idaho statute §67-6508 requires a total of 17 elements within a City’s comprehensive plan. Below is a list of all required elements with the **current missing elements in bold**. A comprehensive plan, may, however contain additional components as well, such as a chapter on community health, for example.

- Property Rights
- Population
- School Facilities and Transportation
- Economic Development
- Land Use
- Natural Resources
- Hazardous Areas
- Public Services, Facilities, and Utilities
- Transportation
- Recreation
- Special Areas or Sites
- Housing
- Community Design
- **Agriculture**
- Implementation
- National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors
- **Public Airport Facilities**

### **Missing Elements and their requirements:**

Agriculture — An analysis of the agricultural base of the area including agricultural lands, farming activities, farming-related businesses and the role of agriculture and agricultural uses in the community.

Public Airport Facilities — An analysis prepared with assistance from the Idaho transportation department division of aeronautics, if requested by the planning and zoning commission, and the manager or person in charge of the local public airport identifying, but not limited to, facility locations, the scope and type of airport operations, existing and future planned airport development and infrastructure needs, and the economic impact to the community.

## C. Chapter 1 - Introduction

The introduction of the comprehensive plan lays out the intent and the process undertaken in 2009 as well as providing for the historical context of Sandpoint’s past planning and public outreach efforts that were conducted. It also addresses the required property rights and National Interest Electric Transmission Corridor components. Various plans have been developed since 2009 and changes to Idaho State requirements since the plan’s adoption.

## D. Chapter 2 – Community Profile

This chapter is an overview of some of Sandpoint’s history and outlines some basic characteristics such as geographical and climate conditions. This component also contains population statistics from the 2000 census as well as population forecasts for both the City and the ACI. The forecasts incorporated into the plan have not materialize for the City of Sandpoint, despite more recent growth trends.

## E. Topic Area – Area of City Impact (ACI)

Many components of the Comprehensive Plan reference the area of city impact. An Area of City impact is a geographic area where a city is predicted to grow in the future and is a way for Counties and Cities to plan for growth, as required by Idaho Code §67-6526. The statute requires that these three factors be considered when designating an ACI. *1) Trade area 2) Geographic factors and 3) Areas that can reasonably be expected to be annexed to the city in the future.* These “areas of impact” are negotiated with the surrounding County and are intended, at the most basic statutory level, to provide a method for cities to grow in a way that is cost effective for residents. In essence, ACIs set the stage for potential annexations in the future. The reason that cities have certain (though limited) authority to annex, per Idaho code §50-222, is to:

*“...assure the orderly development of Idaho’s cities in order to allow efficient and economically viable provision of tax-supported and fee-supported municipal services, to enable the orderly development of private lands which benefit from the cost-effective availability of municipal services in urbanizing areas and to equitably allocate the costs of public services in management of development on the urban fringe.”*

It is important to note, however, that although Cities and their respective Counties are required to enter into agreements pertaining to ACIs, the County has primary jurisdiction over these areas until and only when such areas are annexed into the city.

The current negotiated ACI geographic area in Bonner County was updated in 2007 while the current agreement dates back to 1994 (see attachment 4). The agreement specifies that Bonner County zoning and subdivision ordinances as well as the County’s comprehensive plan applies to the ACI but that the City of Sandpoint is provided an opportunity to review and comment on certain types of development applications within the area of impact. Idaho code (§67-6526) requires a review by the governing boards every 10 years. Bonner County has recently initiated a review.

### ***Reasons why Planning for the ACI is important (see attachment 1-ACI Toolkit):***

1. It provides a way for various jurisdictions, service providers and property owners to have some level of predictability—a vision for the future.
2. It helps to ensure, to the degree possible, that quality of life and levels of service (roads, police, fire, parks, etc.) are maintained.
3. It is a way to plan for and protect critical natural resources, to mitigate wildfire risk, preserve water quality, and maintain agricultural lands.
4. A vision for the ACI helps to predict where future public facilities and services will be needed so that they can be coordinated in order to minimize duplication, inefficiency, confusion and ultimately excessive costs to taxpayers—for both City and County residents.
5. An ACI planning process is a way to engage with stakeholders beyond city limits who may be substantially affected by actions of an adjacent City.

### **The 2009 Comp Plan and the ACI**

Sandpoint’s current area of city impact is primarily to the west and north of existing city limits (see attachment 1). According to the design directives of the 2009 Comp Plan:

*“...Based on community discussion and the evolution of the plan’s vision, these directives reflect the community’s desire to temper outward expansion into the Area of City Impact (ACI), to provide for a more compact pattern of land development within city limits, to provide public services at a level that’s both sustainable and consistent with community demand, and to promote a healthy and balanced local economy that keeps Sandpoint prosperous.” (3-7)*

*and...*

*“Direct growth into Downtown Sandpoint and other emerging higher intensity districts: As population growth occurs, Sandpoint residents wish to resist the temptation to push that growth into the Area of City Impact. Instead, the directive here is to focus a large share of that growth into the community’s downtown and other designated higher intensity districts. This will take advantage of the population influx to stimulate reinvestment in these areas, creating exciting community centers where people can live, work, shop, meet, and mingle.” (3-8)*

Similar to other areas within city limits, the 2009 Sandpoint Comprehensive Plan identifies various context areas within the ACI (see attachment 2):

#### **CA-1**

CA-1 is the lowest intensity development pattern in the Sandpoint plan, characterized as predominantly rural with some farms, a few residences and no service or commercial activity. Because this rural pattern is inconsistent with the vision of a sustainable, compact city, the plan discourages CA-1 areas within city limits. CA-1 is indicated in areas adjacent to “very rural” areas in the ACI, and abutting industrial lands west of the Great Northern tracks near the airport.

#### **CA-1.5**

CA-1.5 is a low intensity development pattern occurring primarily in Sandpoint’s ACI. This development pattern encourages preservation of wildlife habitat and open space through the utilization of cluster development that prefers congregation of dwelling units at slightly higher density in exchange for protection of larger areas of open space.

#### **CA-2**

CA-2 is the lowest density development pattern located in the City, characterized by Sandpoint’s historic single-family neighborhoods set on a traditional street grid with small Accessory Dwelling Units, an urban forest, active alleys, on-street and alley parking, walkable streets and a variety of housing types intermixed on the same street. Individual structures should respect the scale and character of the built environment with the bulk, mass and architecture of new structures being harmonious with existing residences in their vicinity. Neighborhoods such as those comprising South Sandpoint or in the vicinity of Sixth Avenue for example already feature CA-2 style development and are identified as such on the comprehensive plan map. Similarly, areas to the north and east of the airport, given their existing form and distance from the City’s center, are designated CA-2 in this comprehensive plan. Beyond the City, much of the ACI immediately adjacent to CA-2 designations within city limits has been designated CA-2, to facilitate a more seamless transition should those areas be annexed in the future.