



Rexburg Community Review

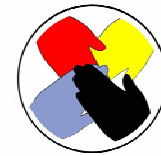
September 8-10, 2004



With grateful acknowledgement to the following organizations who served on the visiting team as outstanding resources:



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Preface

The Community Review Program provides on-site observations through a community review team's interviews and interaction with local residents and a variety of focus groups. This and an extensive survey process is the basis for identifying challenges and opportunities community leaders will consider in their planning and decision-making processes.

Recommendations, strategies and resources are provided to the community at a public meeting at the end of the review and with a final written report.

The Program is a partnership between the Association of Idaho Cities, the Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor, the Idaho Rural Partnership, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Boise State University, University of Idaho, Mountain States Group, and the Idaho Housing and Finance Association. Additional partners are also acknowledged for their contributions to this report and its findings.

The process is an excellent example of collaborative partnerships among public and private sector individuals who represent the visiting team. This was also the case between the city, the home teams and the visiting teams, who together provided a range of perspectives and ideas that were openly expressed through the process

Rexburg is the tenth community review since 2000. Reviews were completed in the following communities:

- Heyburn-September 2000
- Jerome-March 2001
- Hayden-April 2001
- Kooskia-May 2001
- Priest River-September 2001
- Weiser-March 2002
- Buhl-May 2002
- Emmett-May 2003
- Salmon-May 2004
- Rexburg-September 2004

This report does not represent all of the ideas and opinions of Rexburg residents, nor does it hold all the answers. It simply contains the thoughts and perceptions of individual residents and representatives from a wide variety of local groups and their vision for the future and the strength of the visiting team member's perceptions based on their own expertise in community development.

It is our sincere hope that the information provided in this report will generate thoughtful discussion and reflection for the planning and important decisions that need to be made in this fast growing community. It is also our hope the implementation of the recommended strategies and use of resources will benefit the entire region.

Introduction and Overview

“Rexburg is a community that is experiencing rapid growth and I believe the timing for this community review is ideal. We are truly at a crossroads in our community’s history and the decisions we make now can make a positive impact for years to come.”

Mayor Shawn Larsen

Luck is the residue of design and good planning. This community review report is the result of our invitation from the City of Rexburg and is only one of many actions City officials have taken to collect internal and external feedback related to growth in the following three focus areas:

Land-Use Planning with an emphasis on development in the Area of City Impact; zoning; mixed use zoning; design review standards; comprehensive planning; green space and planned residential developments.

Community Design and Identity with an emphasis on economic development and the revitalization of the downtown area with recently adopted Design Review Standards; Development of a City Brand or presentation to provide immediate Community recognition; the need for gateways enhanced for community recognition; the presentation or theme of the City and help with the creation of a City theme.

Civic Life and Community Involvement with an emphasis on items to explore for better city government, specifically communications with citizens for better government; communication within the organization for community involvement; city organizational functions to improve communications; volunteer committees and how they should function and community interests related to family education, public health and diversity.

This report provides the results of the Rexburg Community Review conducted September 8-10, 2004. Nineteen community development professionals were welcomed by the City to meet with community leaders, residents and various focus groups to collect information and discuss the City’s past, present and future development.

Mayor Larsen and City staff provided the teams with vital information and a well-planned itinerary prior to the review. The City also used its website to inform residents of the community review process and encourage them either to participate in the process or, at the very least, complete the community survey.

With the exception of public survey data and interview results, the perspectives contained in this document represent the personal observations and perceptions of the Visiting Team based on their interactions with Home Team members, Rexburg and Madison County residents and other community leaders. Visiting Team comments in no

way mean to characterize or define Rexburg categorically, they simply reflect a point in time visit with those participating in review activities and our brief tour of the area.



Visiting Team Chair Brian Dale speaks with Rexburg City Finance Officer Richard Horner at one of many gatherings for conversation about Rexburg during the Community Review.

Executive Summary

The Visiting Team had an outstanding experience during the Rexburg Community Review. Home Team members were knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and well prepared for the event. City staff members, elected leaders and citizens were available at every turn to assist the Visiting Team in gathering information and reaching out to the community. The citizens and leaders of Rexburg are to be commended for outstanding participation in the review process.

Visiting Team members observed many things in two days of listening to the thoughtful ideas of Rexburg citizens and leaders. Each of the three focus teams noted a wide variety of specific items for the City to pay attention to, but all noted that one theme seemed to predominate in the minds of leaders and citizens alike, the theme of communication. Communication could be strengthened at many levels: citizen to elected leader; city to University; student to full-time resident; ecclesiastical organization to ecclesiastical organization.

The Land Use Planning Focus Team noted that the City is actively engaged in updating the comprehensive plan, a process vital to future land use decisions. The team goes on to note that the community is blessed with many things that make future planning more productive. There is a strong traditional street grid, a good mix of housing options and clustered civic buildings that lend vitality to downtown. The Land Use Team also sees strength in public satisfaction with public services and increased recreational opportunities.

The Land Use Planning Focus Team noted several challenges for the City as well. The foremost challenge was sprawling multi-family housing projects inundating certain parts of the city. Additional challenges were noted in insufficient land zoned for industrial use, annexation policies, growth management, traffic congestion and parking.

The members of the Community Identity and Design Focus Team were asked to look at and noted a number of local concerns. These concerns included: gateways into Rexburg; public image/city brand/theme; downtown revitalization; downtown parking; tourist amenities; business vitality; downtown physical appearance; downtown housing and downtown ties to BYU-Idaho. For each area, the focus team lists a wide variety of options for Rexburg to consider.

The Community Identity and Design Focus Team are also aware of a parallel downtown study conducted by Tom Hudson and Associates. The team recommends the City closely study the detailed recommendations of that study as it considers the suggestions put forth in this community review report.

The Civic Life and Community Involvement Focus Team were asked to look at issues related to family, education, public health and diversity in Rexburg. Team members observed numerous assets the city has to draw on as it addresses these concerns,

including an exceptional quality of life, an outstanding environment in which to raise children, progressive community leadership, natural beauty in the City and surrounding environment, and well-educated hardworking citizens.

Along with these assets, Civic Life and Community Involvement Focus Team members also observed challenges for Rexburg leaders and citizens. Foremost among the challenges, the double-edged sword effect that growth is having on the city. Additional challenges were also noted in communication with citizens, mobilizing senior citizens, channeling the energy of youth, maintaining and updating school facilities, optimizing the talents of faith-based communities, job training and support of the women's crisis center.

Certainly Rexburg faces a number of challenges in the immediate future, but make no mistake, in the long run, with good planning and open minds, Rexburg faces a bright future. The community simply has too many assets to not find a formula for success and a path for the future.

History of Rexburg

Interest in the Rexburg area seemed to pick up pace as early as 1879. Between 1879 and 1882 a man named John Poole spent time hunting around Menan while working for the Utah Northern Railroad. Mormon Church members heard about fertile farmland in the region and became interested in the site for a settlement. John Taylor, the Mormon President at the time instructed William Preston, President of the Cache Valley Stake, and Thomas E. Ricks, who was ordained Bishop of the New Bannock to scout the site and form a settlement.

In March of 1883, the first log house was constructed. Rexburg began as a Mormon colony with thirteen settlers that year. In 1883, in a foot of snow, the town was surveyed into lots at the direction of William Preston. Preston gave the community its name based on the German ancestral name 'Rex' which is a surname to Thomas Ricks. Thomas Ricks ultimately became the founder of Rexburg and Ricks College, which would eventually become Brigham Young University-Idaho. By May of 1884 there were 875 people living in the town site.

Homesteaders continued to flock to the area despite the hard winters. William F. Rigby introduced saw lumber into Rexburg, and in 1883, opened the first lumber mill. He also opened the first mercantile in 1884. Henry Flamm was the founder of a commercial enterprise known for its lenient credit policy. Flamm was Rexburg's Chairman in 1893 and 1894, and became the first Mayor when City status was achieved in 1903.

The valley grew considerably because of the Northern Railroad. Travelers would use the railroad to go to Market Lake, Roberts, and Eagle Rock, now known as Idaho Falls. A slower form of transportation was used to get to Rexburg until a branch line was created in 1899.

Beginning in 1883, ditch and canal work brought much needed irrigation water to the semi-arid desert and bench land. The Rexburg Irrigation Company was organized in 1884 and by 1900 there were 97 canals in the area.

Dry farming began in 1898 and by 1905 was considered a profitable endeavor. The town's first municipal water system was constructed in 1906 at a cost of \$25,000. The first water pipes were made of wood. In 1913 board sidewalk started being replaced by paved sidewalks. Street paving started in 1917. Rexburg still has the distinction of having the widest main street in the state.

The Bannock Stake Academy was established as the town's first school in 1888. College courses were added to the curriculum resulting in Ricks Academy which was the first Junior College in the Inter-mountain region. The school became well-known as Ricks College.



Historic Downtown Rexburg

In 2001 the college was upgraded to a four-year school and was called Brigham Young University (BYU) Idaho. A number of bachelor degrees are now offered at the school and is a thriving institution of higher learning.

The Madison Memorial Hospital opened in 1951. Prior to that time, private residences were used as hospitals.

On June 5, 1976 at 11:57 a.m., Rexburg faced one of the most catastrophic events that ever happened in the area, the Teton Dam flood. The flood released 80 billion gallons of water into the valley. Houses could be seen floating through town. The damage was overwhelming but the city made a miraculous recovery and within two years everything was cleaned up and rebuilt. Some residents say, "Time in Rexburg is measured before the flood and after the flood." The Teton Flood Museum, located in the old tabernacle, offers artifacts and pictorial displays of the disaster.

Historical accounts show the residents of the village of Rexburg under the direction of Thomas Ricks and his associates seemed to accomplish more in two years building canals, roads, schools and making general improvements than was usually accomplished in five years anywhere else.

This is a testament to the spirit and determination of early Mormon settlers.

Land Use Planning

Like all Idaho cities, Rexburg is required to engage in land use planning under Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act of 1975. Communities seeking to maintain and improve their quality of life, enjoy sustained economic vitality, and protect property values engage in land use planning regardless of this state requirement. It strikes the Land Use Planning Team that Rexburg is such a community.

Land use planning involves assessing how various land uses – residential, commercial, industrial, public, etc. are currently distributed throughout the community and identifying how this distribution should be supported, expanded, and adjusted to meet the changing needs of current and future residents. This distribution determines the distance between where people live, work, go to school, conduct business, and recreate. Consequently, there is a direct relationship between the distribution of land uses and the community's transportation system because the greater the distance between land uses, the farther residents will have to travel to meet daily needs.

Current planning theory suggests that a community should first determine how and where it would like to grow from a land use perspective, and then identify the transportation facilities and services needed to support this growth.

Updating the comprehensive plan was underway at the time of this community review. This process gives Rexburg residents and leaders an excellent opportunity to reflect and reach consensus on how and where it would like to encourage certain land uses and public investments like parks, schools, and roads.

General Community Comments and Concerns

Community designers would say Rexburg has good “bone structure”. There is a relatively intact traditional Main Street surrounded by the University and primarily residential neighborhoods that include a mix of housing types available to a variety of incomes. Local civic buildings remain clustered in one or two areas, as opposed to other communities that are more sprawled.

The network of arterial, collector, and local streets are laid out in a relatively consistent grid pattern which helps disperse traffic and increase walk ability. All of these elements are assets that should be appreciated for what they represent – classic and irreplaceable traditional American town design from the early 20th century. This American tradition values what modern suburban development tends to forget about, that is, the importance of public spaces and streets that are as comfortable for walking and bicycling as they are for driving. These elements help build a sense of community and, though Rexburg has grown, it still has them. Many towns Rexburg's size and larger do not.

The focus team is particularly impressed with Rexburg's adopted design standards for multi-family housing and commercial development outside the city center. Wise communities take it upon themselves to set the standard for new large-scale development, rather than allowing interests from outside the community to define them.

The Land Use Team appreciates the many Rexburg citizens and leaders who shared their observations and ideas with us during this community review. Here is a brief summary of what people shared:

- There seems to be a high level of satisfaction with the public services and infrastructure being provided to the residents. Given local growth over the last five years, the community should be commended for the capital improvement and maintenance planning we presume was initiated long before BYU-Idaho announced its expansion. Still, there was some concern that the city would be able to maintain this level of service as growth continues.
- We heard several people endorse relatively recent efforts to increase opportunities for walking and bicycling for both recreational and transportation purposes. “Keep it up!” is the sentiment we heard on this topic.



Many people were extremely pleased with the development of the walking path at Smith Park.

- More than a few people expressed concern that multi-family housing is being overbuilt, raising the fear that an oversupply will cause some of them to fail. The concern was that potentially empty, bankrupt apartment complexes are

not good for the city's image or the tax base. We also heard opinions that this housing, especially that which pre-dates current design standards, has a barracks-like appearance that is not attractive.



Some residents we spoke with expressed concern about the appearance of the City's gateways and first impressions for visitors arriving in Rexburg because of housing units constructed prior to design standards.

- In a similar vein, citizens and leaders perceive that a large number of properties that have been historically used for industry or are currently zoned for industrial use are sitting idle. Some shared an opinion that there is not enough land zoned for industry.
- There was acknowledgement that Rexburg is becoming a regional shopping destination. In its development as such a destination, perhaps Rexburg is now where Idaho Falls was 10-15 years ago.
- At an evening meeting at the Junior High, citizens concerned about the city's annexation policies and procedures shared their views. They clearly felt unfairly treated at the time of annexation but also acknowledged relations with the city have improved subsequently. We appreciated learning the nature of this controversy from their perspective and it caused us to think more deeply about the relationship between city administration and citizens.
- Several people expressed frustration about traffic congestion and speeding, especially as related to 2nd Ave. East and N 12th W.

- Several people communicated concern about the lack of public gathering areas – places where residents and University students could interact, for example.
- When queried, more than one person expressed doubt that the City of Rexburg and BYU-Idaho could or would collaborate to build joint-use facilities or establish joint use agreements for facilities despite interest in this possibility.
- One member of the home team told us many people in the community place a high value on the view of Rexburg with the farmland in the foreground as seen from the U.S. Highway on the City’s north side and between Rexburg and Sugar City.
- Our observation (confirmed by community leaders) was that development pressure seems to be moving to the City’s west side, in the vicinity of N. 12th W. Development pressure will likely increase south of the BYU-I campus as the LDS Temple is constructed and if the proposed southern “by-pass” is built. Primarily commercial big box and national chain development continues along N. 2nd Ave. East as well.
- Residents living near the BYU-I campus expressed dismay about the impact of increasing population density due to the demand for conveniently located housing. A perception that the neighborhood is being overrun with parked cars was a specific concern mentioned.
- Several citizens shared with us that they feel there’s room for considerable improvement in the way the City communicates information and seeks involvement and input from citizens on community issues. Some citizens are particularly sensitive to the feeling of being left in the dark or not taken seriously given the challenges that are coming with growth. There’s also a perception that the opinions of long time residents have more validity and carry more weight than the opinions of relative newcomers. These perceptions keep residents from fully participating in the life of the community and don’t allow community leaders to understand how the citizens want the community to change for the better as it grows.

Visiting Team Observations

The Visiting Team invites the citizens of Rexburg to reflect on the six issues described as follows. For each issue, we’ve included a description, challenges, and possible strategies. Potential sources of further assistance follow the discussion of the six issues.

Infill Development

Infill development is development within city limits on property that is currently undeveloped or underdeveloped. An “underdeveloped” property is one in which the zone district would allow significantly greater density than is currently found on the property. Infill development makes good financial sense. It increases the taxable value of property and reduces the tax burden on the existing residents. At the same time, relative to subdivisions on former agricultural land, infill development does not increase infrastructure costs that must be paid by the community. In other words, infill development allows the community to enjoy financial benefits while not being saddled

with significant new costs because public services like water and sewer, police and fire protection, and schools are already in place.



This commercial strip under construction in the heart of downtown is one example of infill development.

Our observation is that Rexburg has ample vacant land suitable for infill development. Unless it enters into some kind of partnership with a land owner or purchases land outright, the city can not determine when individual properties are developed. However, the city can and should educate itself about the barriers that discourage infill development. With this information, the city can then make policy changes and public investment can be applied to remove these barriers and increase the likelihood of infill. For obvious reasons, development and real estate interests can play a significant role in this process. Specific strategies to encourage infill development include:

- Form advisory committee of developers, realtors, landowners, and residents that live near infill properties to identify barriers to infill development and to develop strategies to remove them.
- Conduct thorough inventory of properties suitable for infill development. If applicable, seek funding through Idaho Department of Environmental Quality to assess potential for brownfield sites (currently unused lands that have a history of industrial uses.)
- Describe in as much detail as possible the location and type of infill development desired. Think beyond housing. Think about how infill could add neighborhood

amenities like parks, neighborhood-scale retail, public art, and walk able streets. The comprehensive plan is an excellent place to start.

- Locate public facilities in areas where infill development could be attracted.
- Share the cost of infrastructure improvements with such entities as the already established urban renewal agency if within their revenue allocation areas.
- Consider reducing or delaying fees for infill development until such development sees a positive cash flow. (Again see urban renewal participation options.)
- Encourage or require developers of infill projects to meet with surrounding residents early in the development process.
- Give priority, fast-track processing to infill projects, making sure permitting and processing requirements do not put an unnecessary burden on projects.

Teton River Corridor as a natural, recreational, and economic asset

Many cities in Idaho are re-discovering and investing in their natural creeks and rivers as community assets. Examples include Moscow, Idaho Falls, Caldwell, Post Falls, Kuna, and Pocatello. All of these communities can be consulted for more information about their individual greenbelt or greenway projects. If conceived and implemented properly, such efforts can be a successful economic development strategy. In Rexburg's case, the Teton River corridor represents such an opportunity, especially since the City owns a sizeable piece of property near the river at the former Louisiana Pacific site. We suggest that the community think of the river corridor as a non-motorized linear recreation and natural amenity that could connect future residential neighborhoods on either side of the river to commercial areas on N. 2nd E. and to the current high school. Specific strategies that could advance the idea of a Teton River Greenbelt include:

- Complete biological and physical inventory of the Teton River corridor. In many cases, this involves simply assembling information that's current and available.
- Have one or more representatives of the community attend "Trailink 2005", the International Trails and Greenways conferences being held July 27-30, 2005 in Minneapolis/St. Paul (see www.railstrails.org)
- Organize a community field trip to increase awareness of opportunities afforded by the river corridor.
- If one does not exist, initiate a 'Friends of the Teton River' organization.
- Seek funding necessary to develop a Teton River Greenway Master Plan. (See 'Resources' section for possible funding sources.)
- Apply for an Idaho Recreational Trails Program Grant. The National Recreational Trails Fund Act (Symms Act) authorizes funding to help develop recreational trails. Grants can be made to private individuals, organizations, or government entities and the projects must be included or referenced in the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan. More information at http://www.idahoparks.org/about/grants_trails.html.
- Employ a variety of public/private partnerships to acquire, protect, maintain and improve all or selected stretches of the corridor. A detailed listing of community

authorities and partnership opportunities can be found at http://www.pps.org/topics/funding/greenway_sources.

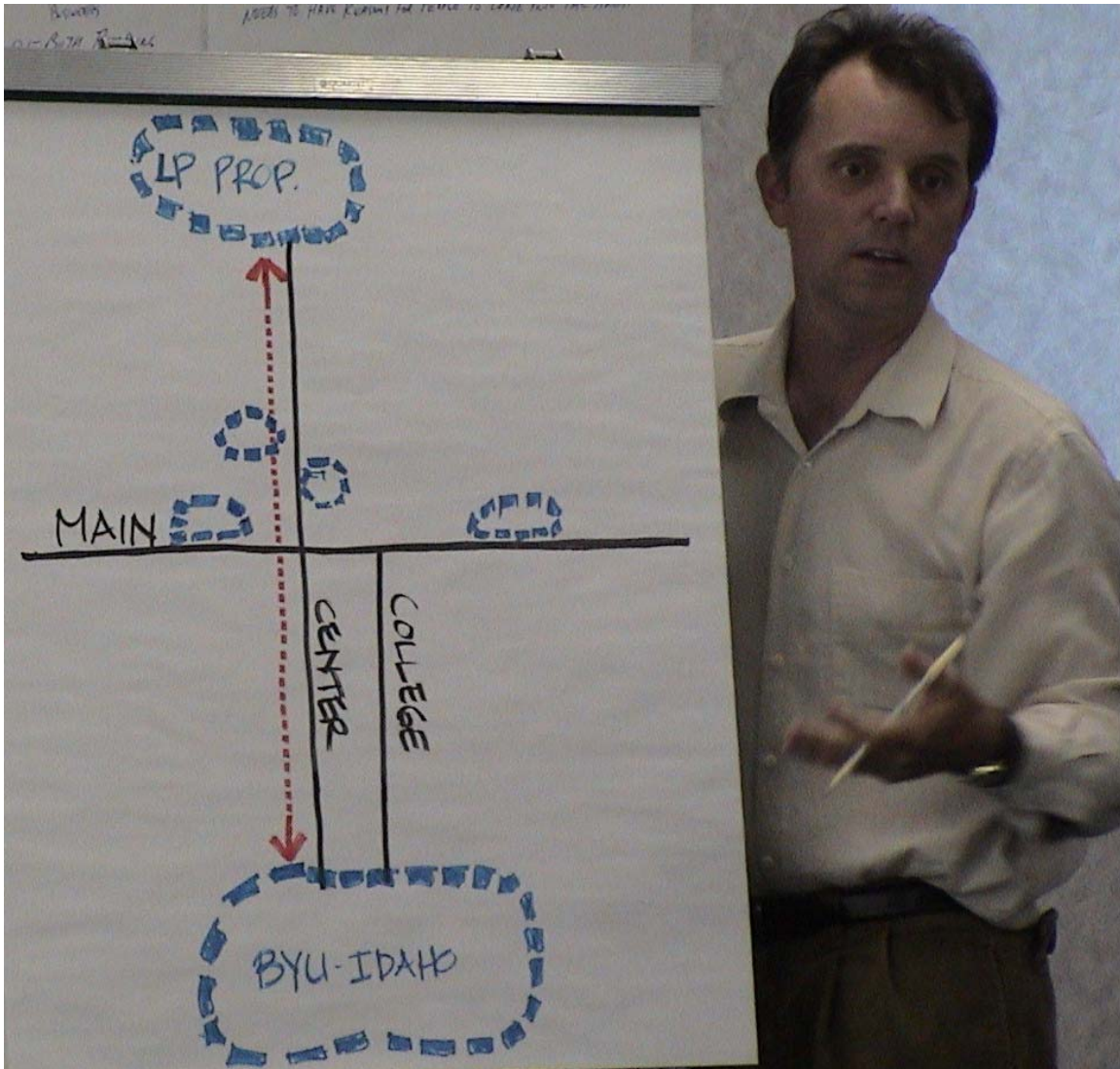
- Make extensive use of volunteers of all ages eager to assist with a community beautification project such as the Teton River corridor. Information about how to organize, limit liabilities, recognize and reward volunteers working on corridor and greenbelt projects can be obtained from the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation Volunteer Services Coordinator. More information is also available at <http://www.takepride.gov>.
- Look into the creation of a recreation district, in partnership with Madison County that could help to fund both capital construction and the operations and maintenance of the greenbelt. Idaho Code Section 31-4304 further defines this process and opportunity.

City-wide pathway/bikeway system

Rexburg has made an impressive start on a city-wide pathway/bikeway system. We encourage continued efforts in this area because of the clear positive association people (including many local residents) make with walk ability, healthy lifestyles, and livability. The previously described Teton River Greenbelt should be part of the community's pedestrian circulation system.

We suggest that the efforts to make the community more walking and biking friendly should focus on Main Street, the north-south streets connecting BYU-Idaho campus to Main Street, and streets connecting multifamily housing to commercial areas.

We see the potential to develop College Avenue and Center Street into walk able, tree lined, lighted boulevards with bike lanes and on-street parking, and possibly a landscaped median as particularly noteworthy. These streets connect important activity centers (i.e. campus, Main Street, city hall, LP property,). Tom Hudson's Downtown Conditions & Revitalization Assessment should be fully explored in the community, because we saw many of the same strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities in our assessment.



Jon Barrett of Idaho Smart Growth describes one possible vision for more community inter-connectedness focusing on the downtown core and pathways connecting area assets.

Specific strategies to continue development of the city's pathway and bikeway system include:

- Create a pedestrian and bicycle advisory committee that can help implement the city's plan, identify problem areas, and otherwise be consulted on an as-needed basis.
- Conduct a community wide walkability/bikeability audit (if one has not been done). Amend it regularly. Enlist neighborhood associations in this effort.
- Organize participation in International Walk to School Day (see www.walktoschool.org).
- Review street and subdivision design standards and make them more pedestrian friendly if necessary.

- Develop a traffic calming program that identifies appropriate traffic calming measures for given situations.
- Avoid creating bike lanes and building sidewalks for the sake of creating bike lanes and building sidewalks. Rather, use these improvements to connect desired DESTINATIONS.

The future of the Louisiana Pacific, Jr. High, and Courthouse properties

If there is community consensus about the future use of these three publicly-owned properties, the Land Use Team didn't hear it during the review. Decisions about the future of public properties of this importance and visibility should be made in public with public involvement. The citizens who paid for these properties deserve this opportunity.

At least two of the properties (the Jr. High and Courthouse block) could and should be thought of as an important part of downtown revitalization efforts. Housing on at least one of these properties should be among the possibilities contemplated, as housing on and adjacent to Main Street will bring more energy and vitality to the downtown area. Recreational and school uses should be among the possibilities considered for the LP property. Its future should also be considered in the context of a Teton River Greenbelt. That is, its future use should be integrated with the Greenbelt. Future uses for all three properties should include the possibility of land exchanges (either public for public or private for public land) and selling the public property for development and using the proceeds for some other community purpose. For example, one parcel could be sold and the proceeds used to fund improvement of one of the other parcels.

Specific strategies to identify future uses of the LP, Jr. High, and Courthouse properties include:

- Survey of residents to solicit opinions on the future of the school, LP, and courthouse properties.
- Conduct Study Circles as a method of public input. The City of Kuna is nationally recognized for its progress.
- Conduct community charettes (i.e. design workshops) to develop alternative development scenarios for the properties. Utilize BYU-Idaho students.

Land Use Implications of new LDS Temple and by-pass south and west of town

It was communicated during the review that the LDS Church intends to build a new Temple adjacent to the south part of the BYU-Idaho campus. At the time of this writing some site development is underway. Home Team members also shared that there is interest in building a "by-pass" road or highway that skirts around the south end of town and then turns north to follow the alignment of N. 9th E. We're using the term by-pass, because it was the term we heard repeatedly during the community review. We heard very little discussion of how these changes would encourage land use change in the south part of town, however.

Due to its proximity to the campus, we think moderate density single family housing (e.g. 6-8 units per acre) and multi-family housing could be appropriate uses east and west of the Temple site. Certainly new Temples in other communities have stimulated housing in surrounding neighborhoods. A neighborhood scale, walk able commercial center would also be an appropriate consideration in this area.



When members of the team returned to Rexburg in November 2004, the future site of the LDS Temple was bustling with activity.

Before fully embarking on a by-pass project, we encourage the citizens and leaders of Rexburg to understand the problem the by-pass is intended to resolve and to reach agreement this project is the most appropriate way to solve that problem. Many communities have built by-passes to increase mobility for through traffic; only to realize years later that commercial strip development and related traffic congestion along the by-pass essentially renders the by-pass dysfunctional. In addition, commercial big box development along bypasses often conflict with downtown revitalization goals and can even cause older commercial corridors (picture N 2nd E. 10-20 years from now) to fall into disinvestment. In other words, by-passes that seemed like a good solution at one time can become a liability down the road...literally.

The potential for strip commercial development along the proposed by-pass between the Yellowstone Highway and the campus is of particular concern to the Land Use Team. The view of campus and the community just after exiting U.S. 20 is a very important “first impression” and gateway to Rexburg. Does Rexburg want the first impression people have of the community when approaching from the south to be akin to Hitt Road

in Idaho Falls or Blue Lakes Boulevard in Twin Falls? Only local citizens can answer this question. Approach the issue of a by-pass with great caution and be careful what the community asks for, because Rexburg will live with the consequences for a long, long time. Rather than list specific strategies, we leave local leaders and citizens with questions we urge to be honestly considered.

Specific strategies to address the land use implications of the proposed Temple and by-pass include:

- What problem(s) is the southern by-pass intended to solve? What is the certainty that this is a problem?
- What other solutions have been tried and deemed inadequate to address this problem?
- If built, who would really use the new by-pass? Through traffic? Local traffic? If the objective is to get through traffic around town, will through traffic actually use the by-pass?
- Would a more modest scale street design solve the problem just as well as a high speed, limited access by-pass?
- Would a combination transportation and green-belt easement facilitate enough land to buffer commercial development from immediately locating along the by-pass? Could the City and County afford such an easement acquisition?

If the City and its residents do determine that a by-pass is warranted to facilitate traffic in and around the City, and there also exists a desire to limit the amount of commercial development along said by-pass, the land-use planning team recommends that the City look at, and/or even visit other communities throughout the country that have built such by-passes. Fairfax County in Virginia is one of those communities that have constructed a bypass that limits commercial development along its public way through both a combination transportation and green-belt easement. (See <http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/>) The team recommends that Rexburg City planners contact Fairfax County officials for more information and assistance.

Multi-family housing

The recent increase in multi-family housing was obvious to the Land Use Team. We specifically asked to see multi-family housing built before and after design standards were adopted by the city.

In general, multi-family housing should be located adjacent to commercial areas, adjacent to and within the BYU-Idaho campus, and along major transportation corridors. Though we didn't hear it come up as an idea during the review, we encourage the community to think 20-30 years in the future and imagine a fixed transit route or routes in the community. If such a system were in place, which areas would it serve; along which transportation corridors? Since transit seeks density, designate areas for multi-family housing within ¼ mile of transportation corridors that could be served by transit in the future.



Idaho cities the same size and smaller than Rexburg (e.g. Moscow, McCall) currently have successful fixed route transit service. Our suggested strategies regarding multi-family housing focus on its location and design. These strategies are as follows:

- Inventory and map university-approved and non-university approved housing to help protect the city from Title 9 (fair housing) violations.
- Make sure multi-family housing is not only allowed but encouraged in areas designated for “mixed use” on the proposed comprehensive plan land use map.
- Due to its proximity to campus, designate areas east and west of the LDS Temple site for multi-family.
- Cluster future multi-family housing adjacent to and within commercial areas and along major transportation corridors. Is multi-family housing currently a permitted use in commercial zones?
- The City’s relatively new design standards for multi-family housing are a great start, but can always be improved. See available resources for additional sources of model design standards.
- Amend zoning ordinance to allow accessory dwelling units in single-family homes.

Available Resources for Land Use, General Planning, Community Design, Economic Development and Growth Management Issues

- Idaho Department of Commerce. Ask for “*Smart Towns: A Guide to Downtown Revitalization*” and “*Smart Towns: A Guide to Growth Management for Idaho City and County Officials*”, 334-2470, www.idoc.state.id.us.
- Idaho Smart Growth, isg@idahosmartgrowth.org, www.idahosmartgrowth.org, 208-333-8066.
- University of Idaho Urban Research and Design Center, Sherry McKibben, Director, 208-343-7851, mckc@rmci.net.
- *The Rural Town: Designing for Growth and Sustainability*, edited by Wendy McClure, Center for Business Development and Research, University of Idaho, 1997.
- National Trust for Historic Preservation, 202-588-6296, www.nthp.org and its National Main Street Center program, 202-588-6219, www.mainstreet.org.
- The Institute for Local Self Reliance, 612-379-3815, www.ilsr.org, publisher of New Rules magazine and excellent book “*The Hometown Advantage*” which has useful advice and case studies about what communities across the country are doing to strengthen locally owned businesses.
- Local Government Commission, www.lgc.org, 916-448-1198. Excellent source of publications on smart economic development, infill development, traffic calming and street design guidelines, model development regulations, and other topics related to community design and downtown revitalization.
- *Rural by Design: Maintaining Small Town Character*, by Randall Arendt, APA Planners Press, 1994.
- *Crossroads, Hamlet, Village, Town*, by Randall Arendt, 1999, American Planning Association.
- *Best Development Practices*, by Reid Ewing, American Planning Association, 1996.
- *Community Rules: A New England Guide to Smart Growth Strategies*, by Beth Humstone, Conservation Law Foundation, www.clf.org/pubs/community_rules.htm.
- *How Superstore Sprawl Can Harm Communities: and What Citizens Can Do About It*, Constance Beaumont, Washington, DC: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1994.
- American Planning Association, www.planning.org, (visit website or call to learn about “Growing Smart” program).
- American Farmland Trust, NW Regional Office, www.farmland.org, 253-446-9384
- Congress for the New Urbanism, www.cnu.org, 415-495-2255
- National Trust for Historic Preservation, www.nthp.org, 202-588-6296

- Western Rural Development Center, <http://extension.usu.edu/WRDC/>, 435-797-9732. Based at Utah State University, the WRDC publishes excellent “*Western by Design Resource Toolkit*”.
- “*Model Development Code and User’s Guide for Small Cities*”, Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program, 503-373-0050.
- International City Manager’s Association Website, On-Line Resources, <http://www.icma.org/main/sc.asp>



The vacant Cenex station on Main Street downtown has excellent potential for redevelopment based on its location.

Resources for Infill Development and Redevelopment

- EPA Brownfield’s Redevelopment Program, 378-5761, masarik.mark@epa.gov. Source of information and assistance regarding redevelopment of former industrial sites that contain hazardous waste.
- Local Government Commission, www.lgc.org, (916) 448-1198. Publication: “*Building Livable Communities, A Policymakers Guide to Infill Development*”.
- *Smart Infill: Creating More Livable Communities in the Bay Area*, Greenbelt Alliance, 415-398-3730, www.greenbelt.org.
- “*The Infill and Redevelopment Code Handbook*”, Oregon Transportation and Growth Management Program, 503-373-0050.

Resources for Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Greenbelt Planning and Design

- Idaho Transportation Department, 208-334-8272,. Funds for pedestrian, bicycle, and historic preservation of transportation under the Transportation Enhancements grant program. <mailto:mmcneese@itd.state.id.us>
- Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Kathryn Hampton, Volunteer Services Coordinator, 5657 Warm Springs Avenue, Boise, ID 83716, 334-4199, Khampton@idpr.state.id.us
- Local Government Commission, www.lgc.org, (916) 448-1198. Two excellent publications of note: “*Street Design Guidelines for Healthy Neighborhoods*” and “*Streets and Sidewalks, People and Cars: The Citizens Guide to Traffic Calming*”.
- Walkable Communities, Inc., www.walkable.org (excellent website), (904) 454-3304.
- *Main Street: When A Highway Runs Through It, A Handbook for Oregon Communities*, Oregon Transportation Growth Management Program, 503-373-0050, www.lcd.state.or.us/issues/tgmweb.
- Rails to Trails Conservancy, www.railstrails.org, 202-331-9696.
- *A Casebook for Successful Urban River Projects*, American Rivers. This book uses case analysis to describe the characteristics of successful efforts to conserve urban rivers. 1025 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20005. 202-547-6900.
- “*Conservation Options: A Landowner's Guide*” by the Land Trust Alliance. This booklet describes the full range of conservation tools available to landowners including conservation easements, land donations, bargain sales, and other protection techniques, 202-638-4725.
- “*Construction and Maintenance of Horse Trails*, Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism, Outdoor Grants Office, One Capitol Mall, Little Rock, AR 72201, 501-682-1301.
- “*Guide to Planning Greenway Trails*” and “*Design and Maintenance Guidelines for Hard Surface Trails*”, PATH Foundation, 404-355-6438.
- “*Directory of Technical Assistance Materials for Trails Development and Maintenance*” by Thomas R. Harvey. Developed for the American Hiking Society and the National Park Service, this trails-related directory lists technical assistance publications, articles and visual aides, and groups with technical expertise, American Hiking Society, P.O. Box 20160, Washington, DC 20411-2160, 301-565-6704.
- “*Guide to Federal Funding and Assistance for Rivers, Trails and Open Space Conservation*” and “*Guide to Foundation Funding for Rivers, Trails and Open Space Conservation*”, National Park Service, National Center for Recreation and Conservation, 202-565-1200.

Resources for Citizen Leadership and Involvement

- Idaho Smart Growth, <mailto:isg@idahosmartgrowth.org>, www.idahosmartgrowth.org, 208-333-8066. Most of the resources above are available on loan from Idaho Smart Growth. Ask for “*Toolkit of Alternative Choices*” from Treasure Valley Futures project.

- “*Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference*”, by David Chrislip and Carl Larson, Jossey-Bass, 1994.
- “*Facilitator’s Guide to Participatory Decision-Making*”, by Sam Kaner, et al, New Society Publishers, 1996, www.communityatwork.org

Community Identity and Design

Identity can mean lots of things. When our team was in town we heard from community members that Rexburg's identity means a combination of issues encompassing quality of life, local arts, history, tradition, faith, and family. We would like to share some of the community comments we heard next to some of our observations and hope the following will be insightful.



Gateways

The City requested the Visiting Team review their existing Gateways into Rexburg. The gateways of the community are the roads and highways leading from the edge of town or neighborhood into the Central Business District. Gateway programs do two things: 1) They enhance the entrance to the community to project a positive image of the community (physical improvements) and 2) They encourage appropriate types of development (land use controls). One of the most important reasons for a Gateway Program is to build a positive image to visitors and residents by promoting community pride. It also promotes a concept to make the community unique and to distinguish itself to visitors and prospects. The City's Gateways offer an incredible opportunity to express pride in the City's preferred way to be recognized as "America's Family Community."

The City's gateways could be enhanced to pull people into Rexburg. The site review indicated signage to navigate people around town or to a specific location inadequate, unclear or in some cases non-existent. This is extremely important in drawing people to downtown, navigating them around town, and helping them find specific public locations such as parks and trailheads, the library, the hospital, historic buildings, government buildings, festival sites, and other areas of interest. Esthetically the

gateways could also be enhanced so there are cleaner, well-maintained areas, made appealing with additional landscaping and public art. Again the visiting team refers the community to Tom Hudson's Downtown Conditions & Revitalization Assessment for additional thoughts about primary, secondary, and minor gateways with specific improvement suggestions.

Strategies

The first step in establishing a gateway program might be for the city to create an oversight committee who will generate a gateway image and communicate that image to the community to see if it fits with Rexburg. The next step would be to identify critical gateways that most need attention and then assess these gateways. The third step is to choose a design theme and coordinate it with a master plan. Funding and implementation of the gateway plan does not have to be expensive and could be through volunteers, sponsors, local government funds, private donations, fundraisers or state or federal grants and other resources.

Gateways are assessed by walking or driving around town with a scrutinizing attitude.

Ask questions such as:

- What would a newcomer to the community think about this area?
- Is signage clean and readable?
- Do road signs direct visitors to information centers or places of interest?
- Are billboards tastefully placed or do they clutter the roadway?
- What is the condition of privately owned buildings?
- Are sidewalks and bicycle lanes safe and well-lit?
- Are posted speed limits safe for pedestrian and bicycle traffic?
- Do weeds or trash exist in the area?

The City can do the following in the development of gateways:

- Adopt an overall community theme. How does the City brand of America's Family Community apply to the City's gateways? One way to do this is to consider a design that reflects a certain era. Recognition and respect for the architectural and historic character of the buildings is appealing to residents and visitors alike. We like the idea of the 'Welcome to Rexburg' signs at entryways. How can they be designed to enhance community character?
- Plant lots of trees and ground cover. Some experts even suggest including plants that require higher than normal maintenance to insure routine landscaping.
- Use decorative trash receptacles, flowerpots, and sitting benches. A 1% public art ordinance can help address costs for public art.
- Install brick pavers instead of concrete sidewalks
- Make sure there are location signs for pedestrians.
- Add decorative lighting.
- Creating or enhancing city gateways does not have to be expensive. High School or University students can do the work as part of a class project. Students from the art and landscaping department can work together with instructors and

- community leaders. This can build a strong sense of community investment in local youth.
- Volunteers can be recruited from non-profit organizations and service clubs.
 - Chambers of Commerce members, Local Government Planning Committees, and local Businesses have a strong stake in the outcome.

Once the Gateway Committee has envisioned how the entryways of the community will look, it is important to take steps to maintain standards so that responsible growth can occur without negatively affecting adjacent neighborhoods.

Ongoing reviews of the community's current zoning, growth, and land use policies and regulations are important. We've seen communities wait for over a decade to update comprehensive plans and the outcome can be devastating. The most successful communities treat their comprehensive plan as a living document. Establish rapport with officials of local, county and state government licensing and regulatory agencies to learn as much as possible about what can and cannot be done.

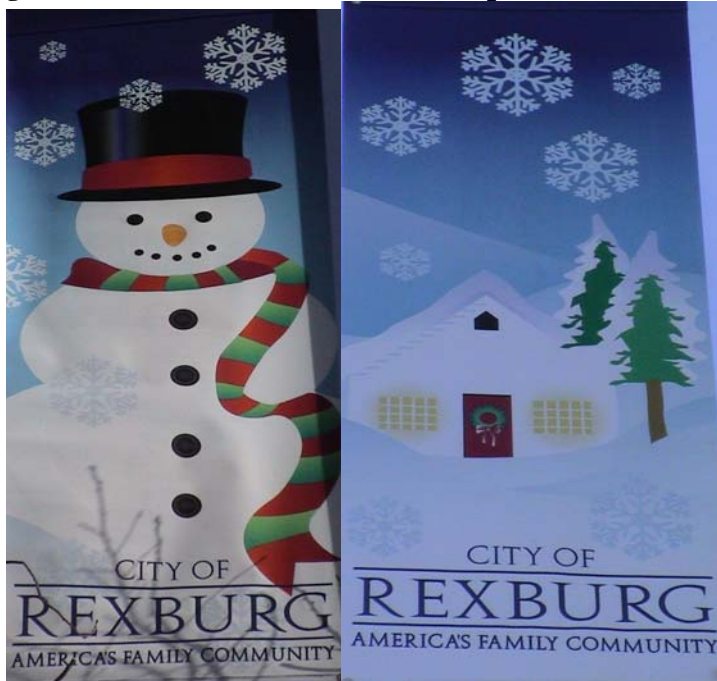
Land Use control strategies for Gateways include:

- Incorporation into the Comprehensive Plan – This item is progressing
- Zoning – This item is progressing
- Transfer of Development Rights-This transfer will protect valued areas of the community at little or no cost to the community by concentrating development away from designated areas, such as a gateway.
- Conditions, Covenants and Restrictions-These rules may insist on design and construction standards, signage and lighting stipulations that will enhance and maintain a point of entry or other vital area of the community.
- Cluster development-This is intended to protect some areas of land by requiring that development be concentrated on a specified area. Gateways can be considered as undeveloped areas, whereas the land around it may be used more productively while maintaining a suitable entryway.
- Infill considerations-Infilling steers development toward existing facilities and vacant lots near the community's core areas. See the land use section for a more complete discussion about infill.
- Overlay zoning-For communities that have not included a gateway clause in their established zoning ordinance, this classification creates an additional set of land use requirements that are specific to an overlay districts, such as a gateway.

While the City may have begun to address many of these areas, it is a continuous process to assess them and assure consistency with the community's desired vision and values. Visitors will leave your community with a vision of the locations you want to showcase and your gateways in their minds. How will the community shape that vision? More importantly, residents will build a vision for Rexburg based on those showcase areas and gateways. This vision will become the primary source of public image and community pride.

Public Image /City Brand/Theme

The team believes the City of Rexburg has a wonderful opportunity to improve the downtown's image and draw. From our conversations, some newcomers weren't sure what the City's image is, while other long-term residents longed for the Rexburg of yesteryear. This is an exciting and crucial time for Rexburg, largely due to local efforts to make changes, existing expertise on hand, population growth, and the unlimited potential of the region. Now is the ideal time for Rexburg to determine how future generations will benefit from their experience in the community.



We like the theme “America’s Family Community,” and believe more can be done with it to expand its potential influence and impact. A well-chosen City brand or theme will enhance a City’s appeal. A brand or theme creates a positive association. Brands become residual, easily recalled memories of experiences. Music is a familiar and powerful way to communicate a brand or theme. How many commercials can be recalled based simply on music and the associated jingle lyrics?

We’re not necessarily suggesting a public service announcement with a ‘Rexburg Jingle,’ but it is worth thinking about how visitors will think about the community and how local community pride will manifest. With a more general brand statement like ‘America’s Family Community,’ the graphic associated with it could describe something unique about Rexburg. The Chamber and local economic development groups can utilize this brand very effectively in business recruitment and retention. The brand can become a beacon for the region.

Strategies

Once the community has its theme, signs, symbols, slogans, and statements that create visual and memorable recognition for the City, they should be used in absolutely everything associated with the community; from tourism advertisements and city signs to publications and press releases. The message should be brief, clear, dignified, and graceful.

Once a city brand is established, there are many other ways to disseminate information that feature the brand.

- How can Brigham Young University-Idaho enhance Rexburg's brand? There is incredible partnership opportunity between the City and the University in considering this question. Shared futures = shared vision.
- Prominent public art at community gateways and in City Hall, the Community Development Building, and other sites depicting the brand
- Issuing frequent public service announcements and press releases about local activities to area media that always include the brand.
- Attractive, quality t-shirts depicting the brand can be distributed throughout the community on any number of occasions; to participants in a local half-marathon, to community volunteers participating in 'paint the town,' or as prizes for an elementary school poetry contest or a naming contest associated with a public building.
- Connect the brand closely to community pride and identity, especially through the positive progress already made with Rexburg Pride Days.
- Producing a newsletter on brand letterhead, perhaps on the part of the Chamber, economic development group, or other business-oriented organization, that is widely distributed to national and international businesses targeted for recruitment or local businesses targeted for retention
- Leading with the brand in a brochure that describes all amenities and areas of Rexburg and nearby Madison County that feature historic, cultural, and recreational resources. (Also see strategies for Downtown Revitalization).

Every component of this plan should reinforce the idea that Rexburg is the place to be. The brand should be the easiest thing to remember about Rexburg, it's that simple.

How does Rexburg live up to the expectations created by the brand? Leading into our next section, historically speaking, where did people go when they wanted to get anything done in the community; shopping, grabbing a meal in a restaurant, seeing an attorney or tax specialist, getting a haircut, filing a claim, attending a festival, or just feeling connected? Communities have an important core from which all these good things emanate; downtown. Downtown is a core or center, a gathering place, and an economic identity. It is crucial in establishing a sense of place.

Downtown Revitalization

Webster defines revitalization as "...giving new life or vigor to something." Certainly invigorating a community will increase its livability and sustainability. Some of the people we talked to expressed sadness by the loss of energy and vitality of Main Street.

“It used to be the place to be”, said one elder citizen. There’s recognition that suburban commercial development that started in the 1980’s (e.g. K-Mart), as well as the growth of Idaho Falls, has hurt Main Street specifically and locally-owned businesses generally. There seems to be strong support for downtown revitalization efforts.



Downtown Rexburg

Downtown is meant to be the gathering place where residents and visitors alike connect and provide each other with a sense of community. Our review of Rexburg’s downtown focused on seven major areas:

- Main Street
- Parking
- Amenities
- Business Vitality
- Physical Appearance
- Downtown Housing and
- Downtown connection with Brigham Young University-Idaho.

The downtown area has tremendous assets. With the significant growth in population, there are multiple opportunities to create a dynamic and robust Central Business District and gathering place for residents and visitors alike.

Main Street

Main Street is great, if you're in a car. Somehow, Rexburg has to reclaim its downtown for pedestrians if businesses in the area are going to flourish. Some of our favorite pedestrian communities, like Salmon and Kooskia, were places where cars screeched to a halt when people glanced at the street or began to make a move to cross. In Rexburg, in its current state, there are serious concerns for people trying to cross the street. The volume and speed of traffic poses a significant safety threat to pedestrians.



To the wary eye of the pedestrian, automobiles dominate Main Street.

The city has the distinction of having the widest Main Street in the state. It is so wide, flags have been placed at the sides in hopes that those attempting to cross the street will grab a flag and wave it when making their journey from one side to the other. Similar systems exist in places of high traffic volume on highways, such as downtown Ketchum. In such environments pedestrians are secondary and automobiles are primary.

Some senior citizens reported that at times students can be inconsiderate and aggressive drivers. They also reported areas such as Main Street and Second East Street are quite challenging for them as drivers because of increased traffic. The Idaho Transportation Department reports about 18,000 cars pass through the intersection on an average day.

With factors anticipated such as increased tourism traffic to Yellowstone, the growing size of the University, family visits to students, potential students visiting the school, the

LDS temple soon to be under construction, and other factors, traffic and parking issues in Rexburg will only increase. An attractive traffic corridor into town will entice temple visitors to extend their visit to Rexburg and increase revenues for visitor dependent businesses. Averting traffic issues will reduce the likelihood of accidents and avoid negative environmental impacts, mainly noise and air pollution, often associated with “strip” development.

“Making downtown a pedestrian destination is our number one priority,” says Jon Weber, Chairman of the Downtown Vision Committee.

Strategies

We propose the following strategies to realize this vision:

- Slow down the traffic on Main Street to no more than 25 miles an hour.
- Consider routing major truck traffic off of Main Street.
- Assertively enforce speeding violations and unsafe driving behavior.
- Incorporate traffic calming concepts into a reconstruction of Main Street. Landscaped medians, sidewalk pavers, “bulb” extensions of sidewalks on corners interfacing with Main Street, bike lanes, park benches, planter boxes, more trees, and old fashioned looking street lights are all ideas that will slow down motorists while making the downtown pedestrian friendly.
- Add countdown features to pedestrian stoplights so people know how much time they have left to cross Main Street.
- The wide main street may provide an opportunity to create a bike lane, which would decrease the traffic flow, and perhaps increase the access of students and young people to the downtown area. Don’t forget to include bike racks for securing bicycles.
- Signs directing traffic through town and to points of interest would be advantageous. These signs would incorporate the design elements established and accepted by the city. The city should consider adopting strict sign standards to promote the aesthetics and safety of the corridor. Sign height, width, and setback requirements should be standardized. At the same time the city and chamber should ensure that signage directing visitors to the downtown and other community landmarks is not overshadowed by commercial signage.
- Develop a corridor plan for University Boulevard. Include in the plan design and landscaping standards for buildings as well as egress standards to get motorists safely to and from the businesses likely develop along the corridor.

Parking

We received numerous conflicting opinions about downtown parking. Some felt the parking supply was fine, especially if business owners and their employees would avoid using diagonal spaces more suited for customers on Main Street. Others clearly felt a lack of parking was one reason they do not shop downtown, citing off-street parking conditions in particular. Based on our tour of the downtown area, it is clear the parking situation must be addressed soon. The City has diagonal parking on Main Street and regular parking in alleys and on some side streets that seems to work well. However, the perception is there is a parking problem which means parking spots are hard to find due

to a lack of signage, inconvenience to business locations, maintenance or safety, or there is a shortage of parking.

It is important downtown become a destination. This cannot happen until residents, employees and visitors feel comfortable with the parking situation. Senior Citizens reported street parking was difficult enough to find, but is exacerbated when students block driveways or park in accessible or senior parking areas.

The Downtown Vision Committee Chairman reported that 40 percent of downtown is public parking. By using some parking management techniques, the parking can be significantly improved. These strategies are easy to implement and should be reasonable in cost:

Strategies

- First and foremost, signs should be installed to direct motorist to parking areas. Include viable alley parking in signage for customers
- Striping, re-striping, and maintaining on-street and in-lot parking
- Designating employer/employee parking so prime spots reserved for customers
- Well-maintained and well-lighted parking areas throughout downtown
- Continuously communicating the availability of parking in downtown brochures and ads
- Consider installing parking meters (some cities allow the first 20 minutes at no cost), enhancing penalties for parking violations, and alternative parking meter configurations, such as multi space parking terminals, which will allow greater versatility for the motorist at less expense to the city

Amenities

While tourism is an industry that often impacts businesses outside of the central business district, it cannot be overlooked for its economic benefit to the downtown area. Types of tourism affecting downtowns include:

- Entertainment/Spectator Events
- Community Events and Festivals
- Business Conventions and Conferences
- Visits by Friends and Relatives
- Historic and Cultural Activities
- Shopping
- Commuters Passing Through

In addition to bringing life to the downtown area, tourism benefits local businesses, brings in new money, tax dollars, creates jobs and supports youth opportunities. Some tourism experts posit that one-dollar spent locally in a community turns over nine times.

Heritage tourism is taking in history, culture, traditions, and nature and is widely regarded as a very popular and fast-growing pastime. Knowledge about heritage leads to increased community pride for local residents, many of whom are newcomers to the area. Through awareness of community history, culture, local traditions, food, customs,

dialect, art, architecture, music, and more, residents acquire knowledge of and respect for what distinguishes their neighborhood, city from other places. As a result, they become better ambassadors and stewards for their community.



Rexburg's Tabernacle is a historic and cultural landmark of unparalleled distinction.

There appears to be a strong market demand for quality restaurants in the city. Fine dining can become an asset for attracting visitors and income into Rexburg. While residents we spoke with during the review were not immediately supportive of changing city ordinances barring the sale of “liquor by the drink”, they were open to a public discussion of the issue provided that any proposed discussions were limited to full service dining establishments. In the survey conducted as part of the review, 497 people or 61.9% were in favor of allowing liquor licenses in restaurants, while 306 or 38.1% were not. Some residents also expressed the desire for what they called ‘good clothing and shoe stores,’ adding that in their absence, they must go to Idaho Falls to shop.

The Downtown can appeal to a variety of uses. The college consumers present a market for youth oriented clothing, restaurants, and recreational activities. The downtown area may appeal to businesses that do not have to be in a specific location, especially small businesses that utilize the internet to reach a broader market. These “location neutral” businesses are attracted to an area for personal, aesthetic, and quality of life considerations, and Rexburg has a good chance of capturing that type of entrepreneur. We were impressed to hear of one call center operating several TI lines out of

downtown. This is a strong incentive to technology-oriented businesses. It may be necessary to consider rezoning in order to allow for a healthy mix of residential and business interests in downtown.



This historic building is an outstanding example of a renovated structure housing a thriving downtown business. Subway has successfully connected with University students and other community residents.

- Given Madison County's agricultural heritage, downtown (College Street) could serve as home for a weekly farmers market. Street fairs, car shows, and performances are just a few ideas of activities that could be conducted at little or no cost to the city and downtown business community.
- Rexburg has a rich and colorful history. Historic buildings provide visible signs of the past that can be retained and stories that can be passed on to the next generation. Local history is an important part of community identity and investment, and historical plaques in strategic places would provide a very nice walking tour through the downtown area.
- Rexburg's strong agricultural roots make it a prime place to host a farmers' market. A farmers' market, located around downtown and occurring on a weekly or a bi-monthly basis would provide a gathering place for the community, enhance pride and recognition of locally produced goods, and attract people to the downtown area. Organization of a farmers market would primarily involve the recruitment of vendors, advertisements, and parking arrangements. Community planners would determine the parameters of the types of goods that would be sold, whether strictly produce or other local goods.

Farmer's markets are successful in many cities. A few Idaho examples are Buhl, Moscow, and Boise. In some cities, the street designated for the market is closed to traffic and vendors sell a variety of goods, from apple cider to art. In Fairbanks, Alaska there is a farmers market located in a large open barn-like building with vendors both inside and outside. Goods for sale range from produce, baked goods, home-cultivated honey and fresh baked bread to pottery, glasswork and paintings. The farmers market has been so successful that in the last 15 years it has doubled in size and has a waiting list of vendors. It is a popular attraction for both local residents and visitors. For detailed information on structure, policies, vendors, and products, navigate to their city website.

- Many communities have a monthly open house event in their downtowns, called First Thursday, or First Friday. The event is held on the first chosen day of the month. Downtown businesses collaborate and stay open late that evening, provide refreshments, live music, and have special sales to attract people to the downtown area who might not have the time or inclination to visit regularly. The combination of excellent customer service during these events, as well as the festive atmosphere introduces people to a fun side of downtown.
- Consider hosting events that deal specifically with the history of Rexburg, such as a parade on the date that the city was founded; a reenactment of the events that lead up to Rexburg's founding, or other important dates in community history. Capitalize on the City's agricultural tradition and crown a Miss Rexburg or Mr. Potato at the parade. An event like this would increase community participation as well as enhance the community's awareness of the roots of the City. Such celebrations increase local pride and are eagerly anticipated by local adults and children.
- Downtown areas can be greatly enhanced by public art. Nationally acclaimed artist Leon Parson is a resident of Rexburg, and could be approached to participate in public artwork. Murals are a wonderful way to depict local flavor, as well as attract tourists. The downtown area would be well suited to this endeavor, and artists from Rexburg, BYU-ID, and across the state could be recruited to this type of beautification project.
- Other public art, including sculpture, fountains, etc. would enhance the downtown area. Public funding may be available for such projects, and volunteers and art students may also be used. Public art is good publicity for up and coming artist, providing them with exposure that they may not otherwise receive. Publication of pictures of the art work, online and in government/city publications, would provide positive reinforcement and publicity for the artists.
- Public space along the corridor could be set aside for public art.

Business Vitality

Second Street East continues to develop as new businesses continue to locate here. Businesses include large, national chain stores, such as Wal-Mart, local franchises, and one-of-a-kind shops. Business parks are also being developed all the way to Highway 20. The development on Second Street East has had a significant impact on the downtown area. The Downtown Vision Committee has been working on these issues. The Committee has invited business owners to join focus groups that will look at each

block's improvement needs. In other communities we've heard loud and passionate arguments about the tension between preserving rural heritage/ small community identity and inviting in big-box retailers. Both have their merits and challenges. Buying locally can keep dollars in a community and contrasts with spending money in corporate big-box stores, who may siphon money out of the region to a corporate location. However, costs for smaller retailers are typically higher and are passed on to consumers, who follow big-box prices and economies of scale. This conflict can create intense pressure for community leaders who feel both the need to protect local businesses and provide much-needed amenities and lower costs to consumers. Only community dialogue can determine the appropriate balance.

Strategies

- Idaho Commerce and Labor in cooperation with the Rexburg Chamber of Commerce and Idaho Small Business Development Center could help the community design a business-mentoring program.
- Financial institutions through the auspices of the East Central Idaho Planning and Development Association could provide financial resources required to launch and expand downtown business
- City Leaders, the downtown business association, the historic preservation group, the Chamber of Commerce, BYU-Idaho and the community at large need to work together to develop near and long term visions for downtown Rexburg.
- The city could conduct a public examination of all ordinances that might pose an undue barrier to business development including the community's liquor laws. The City may want to take a taskforce approach and appoint a representative cross section of citizens to the committee. All of the taskforce's work should be conducted in public forums.
- For more information on specific businesses and services that appeal to the college consumer, specific market research should be conducted. University business classes or service learning programs may be a resource for market research. Bruce Kusch of the Business Management Department at BYU-Idaho expressed an interest in having his students work on such a project. The City can call 496-1479 or <mailto:kuschb@byui.edu>
- The City can conduct a county wide market demand study of what permanent residents and students would like to have in the community and then isolate those opportunities that might best fit downtown.
- The City in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, banks, East-Central Idaho Planning and Development Association, BYU-Idaho, Idaho Small Business Development Center and Idaho Commerce and Labor could form a partnership to encourage business retention and entrepreneurship.



The East-Central Idaho Planning and Development Association is a crucial local asset to advancing regional economic development opportunities.

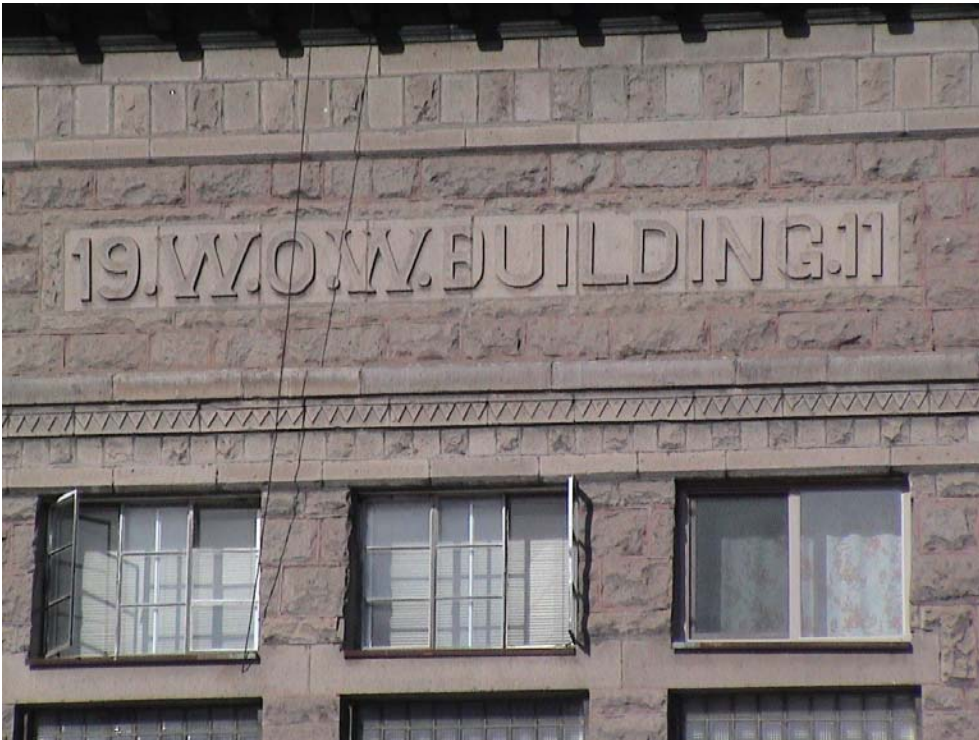
- The City in partnership with BYU-Idaho could locate a business incubator in the downtown area to help student entrepreneurs get going and grow viable businesses in the community.

Physical Appearance

Infrastructure improvements and building rehabilitation to create an environment conducive to business development and to enhance the downtown's physical appeal will provide unlimited opportunities. We commend the city for the hanging flower pots on Main Street and the wintertime lights and holiday banners. While most buildings are occupied and in good physical condition, there are some businesses in need of maintenance. Some residents commented that some stores are dark and dingy, and some are not structurally sound. Some buildings in the downtown appear to be teetering on the brink of disrepair while others are vacant due to the costs of renovation. Sidewalks in some sections of the downtown are cracked and need repair. In contrast, there are some beautiful examples of modern businesses operating in restored historic structures.

- The City, architects with backgrounds and experience in restoration, and perhaps even University students could meet with building owners to discuss the possibilities and benefits of building rehabilitation. The city has an excellent 3-D database that can model any structure in the downtown area and show what a remodeled building may look like.
- Financial institutions with business and real estate lending experience could be encouraged to market their services to downtown property owners. Building

- owners could also be educated on the tax credits and low interest loans available for historic restoration and energy efficiency improvements.
- The City could seek out grant opportunities from Idaho Commerce and Labor to share the costs of public infrastructure improvements. In-kind support may be available from Utah Power for lighting improvements. We understand the City has applied for an Idaho Transportation Beautification grant as well.
 - Tap into construction trade training programs to assist with some of the building restoration and infrastructure projects. Likewise, county inmate labor may be used for clean up and other small public improvements.
 - Develop a capital improvement plan for fixing up the public infrastructure in downtown Rexburg.



Upper levels of numerous historic downtown structures are ideally suited to residential renovation.

Downtown Housing

Downtown residential areas make a downtown much more than simply a place to work or shop. Downtown residents incorporate a dynamic community feel to the downtown area. Converting older hotels or office buildings into relatively inexpensive apartments creates a living situation particularly attractive to young single people.

The market for downtown housing has been proven across the country in downtowns of all sizes. In successful and healthy downtowns, housing is mixed with retail, restaurants, offices and entertainment and recreational facilities.

The Idamont Hotel and the apartment building across the street from the Idamont on Carlson Avenue could be real opportunities to provide attractive and unique residential units.

Downtowns that have long-term sustainability and are defined as successes for local businesses almost always have residential housing located within them. Rexburg has few residential units available in the immediate downtown area.

- Develop a renovation/remodeling plan for these buildings to create residential units upstairs with supportive retail businesses on the ground level.
- When creating affordable housing, utilize low-income housing tax credits, construction loans from local lenders and long term financing from conventional lenders with special programs for affordable housing. Having residents live in downtown creates an immediate market for businesses to serve.

Having said this, one outcome of rapid growth of Rexburg and BYU-Idaho is an explosive development of additional rental housing units in the city outside the immediate downtown area. The result has been an over-supply of market rate housing, creating vacancies in the range of 30% to 40% for apartment units. This over-availability of market rate housing may lead to foreclosure on some properties. A simultaneous short supply of affordable housing for purchase leaves few options for non-student citizens of the community. Perhaps a short-term moratorium on additional apartment development and a market analysis can determine the current and future need for apartments, especially non-subsidized units.

Downtown Ties with BYU-Idaho

The physical proximity of the downtown area and the University provide excellent opportunities for collaboration, yet they currently seem quite independent of one another.

BYU-Idaho is a nicely landscaped, self-contained center of attractions for almost 12,000 students. Students from all 50 states and nearly 40 countries attend. Students represent about half of the city's population and the growth has created new opportunities and challenges for city planners. From 2000-2003 Rexburg's population increased by 27%, or 4,605 people. The University offers 20 Associate Degrees and 29 Baccalaureate Degrees. The University is privately owned by the Church and operates independently of the city. Several programs and buildings have been added in the last few years.



The John Taylor Building, completed in 1997, houses the departments of religion and humanities. It is one of many beautiful buildings on campus and seats over 400 people in its chapel bathed in natural light. Many amenities of BYU-Idaho are open to the public, such as the Planetarium, Museum of Natural History, and performing arts auditoriums. The Spori Building, currently under construction, will face the City of Rexburg in recognition of the community's contribution to the vitality of the school.

Founded in 1888 as Bannock Stake Academy, Ricks College became Brigham Young University-Idaho in August 2001. BYU-Idaho is affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. The university is situated on a beautiful hillside campus of more than 250 acres with 27 major buildings and residence halls. Enrollment is projected to increase in 2005.

University facilities include:

- An assembly hall with seating for 1,625 including a new chapel seating 475
- A 700-seat acoustically renowned concert hall
- A 540-seat theatre with revolving stage and orchestra pit
- Chair and bleacher seating for up to 4,500 in the auditorium/athletic facility
- A 5,000-seat football, track & field stadium
- A 960-seat auditorium/performing center
- A 60-seat planetarium
- Horticulture Research and Demonstration Gardens
- Arboretum (under development) south of campus
- KBYI-FM, a 100,000 watt noncommercial classical radio station

The University will continue to expand in the future, and this growth will affect the community of Rexburg. With the anticipated growth of the University, it is more important than ever to integrate the University and the City; the potential benefits for both entities are great.

College Avenue directly links Downtown's Main Street to the University. The street consists of a vacant lot and several residential homes closer to the University side of the street. Approaching downtown, primary occupants along the street are businesses. Porter's, ultimately, is a downtown anchor.

BYU-Idaho offers its students a full complement of goods and services, keeping student shopping dollars on campus. Students indicated that when they leave campus it was for quick meals or to shop for discount items one might find at Wal-Mart or for youth oriented clothing and specialty items housed in a "mall" or "box store" setting. While some downtown activities do currently involve students, there may be too few events to capture the interest of larger numbers of the student body.



The Hogi Yogi and Pizzeria enjoy a high volume of student traffic because their marketing targets University students and they are located in close proximity to BYU-Idaho and student housing.

- The University has incredible facilities and a wealth of talent, and could be a large market for local events with cultivated involvement. Gather information about events that interest community members and students at the University, provide

ample time to publicize events, and evaluate successes to provide feedback for the next event. This may be another excellent collaborative effort for Business and Marketing students.

- Work with the University to make sure that events at the University that are available to the public are well communicated, as much of the community shares the common faith and values of the University. Methods of publication include a reader board, perhaps near one of the gateways to the community, and another in a central downtown location, public service announcements on the local radio stations (including BYU-Idaho's radio station) notices in the local paper, or newsletters, and flyers at local businesses and grocery stores.
- Consider reader board signs along corridors, visitor's kiosks or any other idea which could promote both community and BYU Idaho events.

Accessibility Resources

Idaho Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (IDVR)
Pocatello Regional Office
1070 Hilina, Suite 200
Pocatello, ID 83201-2947
Phone: 208-236-6333
Fax: 208-236-6304

Technical Assistance and Training on ADA Compliance
Idaho Task Force on the ADA
Contact: Bobby Ball
350 N. 9th St., Suite 102
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: 208-344-5590
Fax: 208-344-5563

Downtown Funding Sources

Idaho Dept. of Commerce and Labor
Contact: Dianna Clough
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0093
Phone: 208-334-2470
Fax: 208-334-2631

Idaho Transportation Department
Contact: Nester Fernandez
P.O. Box 7129
Boise, ID 83707-1129
Phone: 208-334-8495
Fax: 208-334-8025
Electronic Fax: 208-332-4192

Idaho Commission on the Arts
Contact: Maria Estrada or Delta Smith
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, ID 83720-0008
Phone: 208-334-2119
Fax: 208-334-2488

Idaho Heritage Trust
Contact: Gaetha Pace
P.O. Box 830
Weiser, ID 83672
Phone: 208-549-1778

Economic Development Administration
Contact: Rick Tremblay
304 N. 8th St. Rm. 441
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: 208-334-1521
Fax: 208-334-1533

State Historic Preservation Office
Contact: Don Watts
210 Main St.
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: 208-334-3861
Fax: 208-334-2775

Small Business Administration
Contact: Rod Grzadzieleski
380 E. Park Center, Suite 330
Boise, ID 83706
Phone: 208-334-1696
Fax: 208-334-9353

Foundation Funding Information Center
Contact: Mary Kay Aucutt
715 S. Capital Blvd.
Boise, ID 83702
Phone: 208-384-4024
Fax: 208-384-4025

Technical Assistance

Southeast Idaho Council of Government

Contact: Susan Lorenz

P.O. Box 6079

Pocatello, ID 83205-6079

Phone: 208-233-4032

Fax: 208-233-4841

Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor

Contact: Dianna Clough

P.O. Box 83720

Boise, ID 83720-0093

Phone: 208-334-2470

Fax: 208-334-2631

Association of Idaho Cities

Contact: Ken Harward

3100 S. Vista Ave, Suite 310

Boise, ID 83705

Phone: 208-344-8594

1-800-344-8594

Fax: 208-344-8677

Idaho Transportation Department

Contact: Nester Fernandez

P.O. Box 7129

Boise, ID 83707-1129

Phone: 208-334-8495

Fax: 208-334-8025

Electronic Fax: 208-332-4192

Public Utilities Commission

P.O. Box 83720

Boise, ID 83720-0074

Phone: 208-334-0300

Fax: 208-334-3762

Division of Environmental Quality

Contact: Chaz Ariss

1410 North Hilton

Boise, ID 83706

Phone: 208-373-0502

Fax: 208-373-0576

Idaho Rural Partnership
Contact: Executive Director Dale Dixon
317 Main Street
Boise, ID 83735
Phone: 208-334-3131
Fax: 208-334-6430

National Main Street Center
West Office
Contact: Michael Buhler
National Trust for Historic Preservation
1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20036
Phone: 415-956-0610
Phone: 202-588-6000
Fax: 202-588-6038

Other Resources

Artist Live-Work District. Both historic and low-income housing tax credits can be utilized for this type of project. Other resources include HOME funds, USDA Rural Development, Gem Community Implementation Grants and Community Development Block Grant funds.

Public Art. Americans for the Arts has recently issued a helpful monograph about public art development that can be purchased for just over six dollars off of their website at www.americansforthearts.org

National Endowment for the Arts. Grants for collaborative cultural tourism and/or cultural district development are available through their Challenge America Fast Track Grants program. Visit their website at www.nea.gov.

Idaho Commission on the Arts. Grants for arts events, cultural facilities, and public artworks and advise on public art development, audience tracking strategies, fundraising, etc. www2.state.id.us/arts 1-800-ART-FUND

Idaho Department of Commerce Division of Tourism. Grants for tourism initiatives and helpful advice on developing cultural tourism. www.visitid.org

National Association of State Arts Agencies. Helpful cultural tourism statistics, trends, and links are available on this web site. www.nasaa-arts.org

Design. Contact the Department of Landscape Architecture at BYU-Idaho, the University of Idaho or Utah State University. The expertise of professors and students can be used to provide design ideas and park master plans at no cost to the City.

Funding. Apply for grant funding from any source available, especially federal and state grants. The Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation (IDPR) administers the following grants: Land and Water Conservation Funds, Idaho Recreational Vehicle Program, Waterways Improvement Fund, and Recreational Trails Fund. For funding questions and technical support contact the IDPR East Region Grant Specialist at (208) 525-7121.

Several resources are available to support housing affordability, both tenant- and property- based. Others exist that can subsidize new construction or rehabilitation of existing structures. As with anything tied to government, these subsidies generally come with strings firmly attached, hoops to be jumped through and complex use restrictions. Conventional financing is also available, as is support from charitable trusts and private or public foundations. Affordable or market-rate housing development can be undertaken by the private, public or nonprofit sectors or any combination of the three. Rexburg should work inclusively with

all interested parties on a long-term housing strategy, and then consider all funding options and weigh the trade-offs before pursuing a course of action.

Federal Partners

USDA Rural Development (www.rurdev.usda.gov)

Single-Family Housing

[Mutual Self-Help Technical Assistance Grants](#)

[Rural Housing Site Loans \(Sections 523 and 524\)](#)

Multi-Family Housing Development

[Rural Rental Housing - Direct Loans \(Section 515\)](#)

[Rural Rental Housing Guaranteed Loan Program \(Section 538\)](#)

[Farm Labor Housing](#)

[Housing Preservation Grant Program \(Section 533\)](#)

[Housing Application Packaging Grants](#)

Community Facilities

[Community Facilities Direct Loan Program](#)

[Community Facilities Guaranteed Loan Program](#)

[Community Facilities Grant Program](#)

U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) (www.hud.gov)

HUD offers a variety of information on various subsidies available to local government and nonprofits. The primary type of assistance for multifamily construction and rehabilitation is through the HOME Program. Funds are available to for-profit developers wishing to create affordable housing along a mixed-use downtown revitalization model, or a non-profit organization wishing to create a land-trust or special needs housing development.

State-level partners

Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA) (www.ihfa.org)

IHFA is a private, not-for-profit organization that administers HUD funds to non-entitlement communities throughout Idaho. Idaho Housing and Finance Association through tax credits, and loans could help private owners finance affordable housing projects. Banks under the auspices of their Community Reinvestment Act responsibilities should also be encouraged to partner in developing downtown housing. Fannie Mae should also be included in any partnerships created to develop downtown housing. Faith based organizations and secular non-profits could be recruited to help develop and manage affordable downtown housing. Projects owned by public entities (non-profits, housing authorities etc.) could apply for Idaho Community Development Block Grants through Idaho Commerce and Labor or obtain Home grants through Idaho Housing and Finance.

IHFA administers programs that offer local communities choices in preserving or developing housing affordability:

Grant Programs (www.ihfa.org/grantprograms.asp)

Multifamily Development (www.ihfa.org/multifamily.asp)

Individual Residential Lending (www.ihfa.org/homeloans.asp)

Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (www.ihfa.org/rentalassistance.asp)

IHFA administers low-income housing tax credits and has provided financing and technical assistance for a variety of affordable and special needs housing projects throughout the state, each of which involves multiple funding sources to address local needs. These primarily include senior and multifamily housing complexes. IHFA has been involved in downtown historic renovation and residential development in Boise (the Idanha) and other Idaho communities, where projects are being proposed that will likely employ a combination of low-income housing and historic tax credits (along with tax increment financing and other funding sources). Definitions follow:

Tax Increment Financing. Rehabilitation that will likely increase the assessed value of downtown buildings can be used as a source to bridge funding gaps presented by high rehabilitation costs. This typically requires a commitment of other financing sources, and a demonstrated need for the housing or commercial space.

Tax Credit Financing. Eligible projects (involving affordable housing and/or historic renovation) may apply for tax credits, which are then sold on the national market to syndicated investors seeking tax benefits. A typical tax credit of \$100,000 or more over ten years would amount to over \$1 million, which will generate approximately \$650,000 (at 65 cents on the dollar) for construction and development costs. The value of historic credits is higher than that of housing tax credits.

Façade Donation. Building owners can deed the street façade to the city, which makes the property owners eligible for additional tax benefits. This enables the local historic district or other public entity to ensure maintenance and preservation of the historic qualities of the downtown streetscape.

State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) (www.idahohistory.net/shpo.html)

SHPO provides evaluation of historic projects and can help secure financial and technical assistance to move projects forward.

Community Forestry Program
Idaho State Department of Lands
David Stevenson, Program Manager
3780 Industrial Avenue South,
Coeur d'Alene ID 83815
Phone (208) 769-1525
FAX (208) 769-1524

Idaho State Historic Preservation Office
Idaho State Historical Society
1109 Main Street, Suite 250
Boise, Idaho 83702
Phone 208-334-3861
Fax 208-334-2774

Master Gardener Program
District III Coordinator, University of Idaho Extension Service
JoAnn Robbins
Phone 208-788-5585
Email jrobbins@uidaho.edu

Shoshone-Bannock Tribal Planning Office
P.O. Box 306
Fort Hall ID 83203
Phone (208) 478-3837
Jon Norstog, Planning Director

Society of Municipal Arborists
P.O. Box 641

Watkinsville, GA 30677
Phone (706) 769-7412
Fax (706) 769-7307
E-mail urbanforestry@prodigy.net

USDA Rural Development
9173 W. Barnes Drive, Suite AI
Boise, ID 83709
Phone (208) 378-5600
Fax (208) 378-5643
www.rurdev.usda.gov/id/

Economic Development Resources

For information on building partnerships around economic development, please see <http://www.pew-partnership.org/viableeconomies/printable.html>

For a model business incubator approach, please see <http://rtc.ruralinstitute.umt.edu/RuEcD/Coop2.htm>

Utilize BYU-I students to help develop business plans, and a strategic plan to create more living wage jobs. Partners for Prosperity is also a great potential partner in working to increase living wage jobs, and have started a region-wide Prosperity Creation Working Group, which focuses on economic development efforts across the 16 counties of Eastern Idaho and the Fort Hall Reservation.

Additional economic development training resources are available from:

- Northwest Community Development Institute – Idaho Commerce and Labor Certified Community Developer Program - Gloria Mabbutt, Rural Development Manager
- Gem Community Program – Hank Ebert, Idaho Commerce and Labor
- Economic Development Readiness Assessment – Jerry Miller, Idaho Commerce and Labor
- Small city leadership trainings – Association of Idaho Cities – Ken Harward
- Partnerships with the Idaho Department of Agriculture
- Leadership Idaho Agriculture – Idaho Rural Partnership – Dale Dixon

Civic Life and Community Involvement

The Civic Life team was asked to look at issues related to family, education, public health, and diversity in Rexburg. Community leaders expressed concerns about these issues, especially in light of the rapid growth being experienced by the City and the University. Don't forget, however, that growth is a great problem to have, especially considering the great condition of Rexburg's infrastructure and leadership potential to address growth. Some Idaho cities would love to have growing pains and are instead struggling with a declining population, disappearing tax base, and agricultural, timber, or mining industries that are no longer viable. These communities are undergoing a difficult transition to more diversified economies.



Mayor Shawn Larsen facilitates a meeting with BYU-Idaho student leadership and the Visiting Team.

Some specific facilities and programs the team visited were: Madison School District including Central High School, Madison Memorial Hospital, the Women's Crisis Center, Upper Valley Industries, Appletree Learning Center, the Senior Citizens Center, and the Youth and Family Renewal Center. The visiting team held a number of focus group discussions and a meeting with representatives of the faith groups represented in the community. In addition, review team members made a point of getting out into the community to visit one-on-one with individual residents to get their insights, better understand their concerns, and hear about their hopes for the community. Team

members also studied the results of the community wide survey conducted as part of the review process.

Rexburg is Rich with Assets

Among the first things the review team experienced was the abundant community assets of Rexburg and the quality of life enjoyed by citizens. Rexburg feels like a caring and friendly community with an exceptional quality of life. Citizens expressed and demonstrated genuine pride for their property and surroundings. There was little visible trash on primary streets, and neighborhoods and parks were remarkably well maintained. Few residential lots were not cared for or vacant.

Rexburg is a community that has suffered and overcome tragic loss with dignity and hard work. When we saw the video about the collapse of the Teton Dam and heard some personal stories from residents who witnessed the destruction and worked on reconstruction, we had a better understanding of what it means to be a survivor and why citizens of Rexburg treat their community with such respect.

The team also observed that Rexburg appears to be an excellent place to raise a family and is well suited as 'America's Family Community.' Physical and psychological safety seemed genuinely important to the community leaders we spoke with. All the essential elements are in place for an outstanding community. Crime and unemployment are low, residents appear to share many similar values, high quality schools are present at all levels, great local healthcare is available near the downtown core, and neighbors care deeply for one another.



Rexburg has found a great balance of work, play, and quality of life.

Another positive observation was the existence of progressive community leadership. Seeking an external assessment of Rexburg's concerns and opportunities is a sign of interested, open, and dedicated leaders. As one small example, the City is working to address ongoing quality of life issues in recreation, such as the perimeter pathways around several parks and federal funding for the Louisiana Pacific property as part of a larger trail system connected to the river corridor and other cities in the area. We applaud this regional thinking.

While we were in the community the team also witnessed several indicators of cooperation between government and quasi-governmental entities, such as regular face-to-face meetings, which are critical to a healthy community. A fleet of BYU-Idaho buses provided our transportation throughout the community during the review. Leadership of the school district, hospital, BYU-Idaho, senior center, local businesses, and local government impressed us with their commitment to the future of Rexburg. We heard some extremely positive things about how these entities are working together to address complicated issues and improve their relationships. We encourage continuous, intentional, face-to-face meetings to improve communication and share information, particularly between the City and BYU-Idaho and the City and Madison School District to address future challenges.

One of Rexburg's most important natural assets is its gateway location and proximity to regional outdoor recreation opportunities such as skiing, fishing, hunting, and hiking in several destinations of international renown. The team believes that this characteristic will continue to drive the growth of the community in the future as more and more newcomers seek to live in and near such amenities. Additional significant strengths of the community include the bustling University and cultural events (the Folk Dance Festival, Spud Fest, Winter Fest, concerts, and other activities like the Tree Lighting) that were fondly described and are cherished by residents. Successfully capitalizing on these components of Rexburg's identity and their connection to the people of the community will be a critical key to the future.

The review team observed that Rexburg has a well-educated workforce, a factor of great importance to industries and businesses seeking to relocate or expand operations. This potential draw for economic growth impacts Rexburg's future, while a strong foundation of agriculture gives the community its roots and flavor. One visiting team member recalled viewing the recently constructed housing units on the side of the City near Highway 20 and seeing tractors moving down residential roads to access nearby fields. How the community handles this state of transition will be yet another important component in the realization of the goals and objectives in Rexburg's comprehensive plan and the success of the community.



Rexburg's state of transition was evident to the visiting team as we toured the community.

Communication with Citizens for Better Government

Rexburg has some unique characteristics that play an important factor in how communication networks are structured in the community and how they must continue to evolve. Rexburg is one of the fastest growing cities in Idaho, outpacing cities such as Moscow and Post Falls. By virtue of a ten-fold increase in development, city staff potentially face a thousand percent increase in workload addressing everything from building permits and planning and zoning to public health and safety. Measures are underway to address these issues, such as organizational structure changes and permitting software. Rexburg's rate of growth can create significant communication issues. Projected growth models suggest that between 2010 and 2020 the population of Rexburg could soar to as many as 30,000 people.

The current 21,000+ person population is extremely diverse in terms of community 'rooted ness,' which further complicates communication. Around 6,500 in the population are registered voters and taxpayers, around 3,000+ are children, and around 12,000 are current BYU-Idaho students whose time spent in the community may be more limited. Communication networks must use different approaches to reach all of these customers and incorporate different levels of language, understanding, need, and ease of use of technology such as email. The medium may be just as important as the message. We would like to commend the City for its work disseminating its newsletter with utility bills and the new City website which provided us with so much preliminary information about the review prior to our visit.

We heard a wide range of beliefs and concerns about public participation from many citizens. Questions we asked ranged from volunteer recruitment to providing input at public meetings. Some comments we heard suggested that citizen involvement in terms of volunteerism in the community is exceptional; while others felt public participation in community input meetings was crisis-driven and reactionary. Some people said they don't get involved because they are more focused on their family than their community, are too busy between work and school responsibilities, or are not confident community leaders would do anything useful with their input. In one case we heard concerns about a potential conflict of interest. Regardless of validity, perception creates reality and additional discussion is necessary to more fully explore and resolve these issues.

We heard about a failed school bond and swimming pool bond. Some citizens expressed the desire for more forthcoming and complete information about items involved with these bonds such as feasibility studies, estimated costs, revenue projections, and breakeven estimates. Others wanted more information about alternative locations, parking issues, and lower cost options. Still others requested more time for public discussion or negotiations related to 'wants' vs. 'needs' to be able to make an informed decision. Data from the community review survey indicated 249 or 61.9% supported the pool bond, while 155 or 38.4% did not.

We recommend that Rexburg's leadership work to invite citizens more fully into the difficult process of successfully passing such bonds. Some communities have said that it takes three attempts to pass a bond simply because of the time it takes for a critical mass of people in the community who must learn about it to respond affirmatively. Perhaps the members of the community requesting the information can be enlisted in obtaining it. One member of our team wondered whether an aquatic facility could be incorporated into the construction of a new school in an effort to minimize costs and provide a covered pool facility that could operate year round instead of a few months per year.

Effective citizen education and participation programs, particularly those targeting taxpayers bearing the brunt of community infrastructure improvements, empower residents to think more critically about their lives in relationship to the larger community. Residents voting affirmatively for bonds are investing in their community for the long haul and must have faith in the path chosen by entity holding the bond. Citizens must become the subjects of community activity and change rather than passive observers, critics, or victims. Citizen education enables the affirming identification and discussion of participants' concerns. People learn by figuratively walking in each other's shoes.

The City of Kuna has had outstanding success in public participation through its use of Study Circles, and perhaps this can be of value in Rexburg. Study Circles involves a short public information gathering with a series of presentations, followed by round table discussions with a volunteer facilitator, timekeeper, and recorder. The notes are compiled, summarized, and disseminated to all participants with an eye for future dialogue. (www.studycircles.org)

Appreciative Inquiry is yet another method (www.appreciative-inquiry.org). Appreciative inquiry is a method of visualizing and acting for powerful, purposeful change in communities. It operates under the assumption that whatever you want more of already exists in all organizations and communities. Instead of dissecting separate pieces of a system, it generates images that affirm the forces which give life and energy to a system. The method, proven in communities such as the South Bronx and in numerous countries, works not by asking 'What kind of problems are you having?' which tends to amplify community concerns, but rather by asking 'What is going well around here?' 'What ideas can you tell me about that I can share with others?' and 'How are you documenting your excellence?' It has been successful with economic development, housing, and education. The method has a 'four-D cycle:' Discover, Dream, Design, and Deliver.

Finally, citizens should be given opportunities to design, evaluate, and comment on citizen education and involvement activities so they continuously improve and trust is built over time. Citizens should know their suggestions are welcome and be invited to own the process. Invite them to inquire about the kind of process that makes sense to them. If key sectors of the community are not participating, find representatives of those sectors who can help you understand why and take corrective action.

Specific strategies for the City to increase the commitment to and quality of public involvement are as follows (we understand some of these measures are already underway):

- Pass a resolution demonstrating commitment to and support for a high quality citizen involvement and communication program that defines a sample process and invites modification.
- Take some field trips to observe best practices in other communities.
- Convene focus groups with incentives for participation.
- Establish a telephone hotline on which individuals can provide information anonymously.
- Conduct pre-development application meetings with affected parties to get all issues out on the table and minimize being blind-sided by unknown information.
- Hold regular neighborhood meetings and meet individually with citizens to continue to develop a strong neighborhood-planning program.
- Regularly distribute newsletters, press releases, and other public communication through utility bills, flyers, email, and other communication channels.
- Create a new resident/new student welcome program.
- Extend community-policing initiatives and consider a citizen's police academy.
- Continue to strengthen the Mayor's Youth Advisory Board.
- Regularly assess community strengths and map assets.
- Celebrate even the smallest victories and recognize individuals who make a positive difference.

Additional Resources

“The question of participation: toward authentic public participation in public administration” Author: Cheryl Simrell King, Kathryn M. Feltey, and Bridget O’Neil Susel. 1998 American Society for Public Administration.

“Community and the Politics of Place” Author: Daniel Kemmis.

Senior Citizens

Rexburg’s seniors, approximately 850 residents over the age of 60, are worth their weight in gold to the community because of their knowledge of area history, culture, and free time to commit to volunteer activities that directly benefit the region. Warren Porter is one example of a local senior who impressed us with his knowledge of the rich history of Rexburg.



Rexburg’s Senior Center

Many seniors we talked with noted and were very appreciative that the City takes care of their van by paying for license plates and maintenance. Some seniors felt representatives from the City could visit the Senior Center more often, and perhaps even have lunch with them, noting, “We have great balanced meals for \$4.00 with food you could not find at a restaurant.” Consider this an open invitation to lunch with the seniors!

Some seniors we spoke with felt left out of the communication loop with City leaders and would value more participation in the government process. Seniors also expressed the desire for representation on the City Council, Planning and Zoning Commission, and in County government. Others believed the City could do more to recruit senior citizens into the community as permanent residents. Seniors specifically requested help from the City in promoting their activities to the rest of the community and are interested in having their meeting notices acknowledged in the local newspaper. They believed signs should be at both sides of the city directing people to the Senior Center.

Seniors frequently mentioned a lack of amenities in Rexburg, specifically citing a good sit-down restaurant, dress shop, shoe shop and grocery store as items they were interested in. When asked if they would be concerned about a restaurant that sold liquor by the drink, the response we heard was “No, because we do not have to drink alcohol.” Seniors reported the only place to buy a dress or shoes are in the big box stores, such as Wal-Mart and Kmart.

A wide variety of other comments fielded by the team ranged from requests to have more art supplies at Porter’s and appreciation for regular ice cream socials for sunbirds to a request for a traffic light at the intersection of Airport Road and the highway for safe access. Several seniors mentioned that they would like to see improved winter road maintenance in Rexburg and Madison County, and others mentioned that expanding the library and increasing community education opportunities would be welcome projects. Some seniors were cautiously optimistic about the prospects for growth in Rexburg, while others expressed desire for a return to the traditional, small town community of the past. Seniors were split in terms of feeling like they are a valued and respected segment of the population, and had little knowledge of any ongoing opportunities for inter-generational interaction in the community. We submit the following suggestions:

- One successful intergenerational activity in other communities has been for seniors to participate in reading programs with area elementary schools and at the public library.
- If informal lunches at the senior center are not sufficient to improve communication, perhaps the community can form a Senior Committee enabling seniors to communicate directly with the City Council on senior/government issues.
- A historical project involving seniors and students of all ages could strengthen the bond between generations, and has been effective in other communities. Oral and written histories could be compiled by students of all ages, with elementary students interviewing family members and more formal interviews between seniors and high school/university students. Results can be shared in all classrooms. Funding for such projects is available through the Idaho Commission on the Arts, Idaho Humanities Council, Idaho Community Foundation, and Idaho State Historical Museum. Costs would be relatively low with most work done by students and volunteers.

- Seniors could work with the Chamber of Commerce and take the lead in developing a walking tour of Rexburg's historic areas, starting and ending at one of the community's most prominent and underutilized historic and cultural landmarks; the Tabernacle. Additional work to ensure the Tabernacle is compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) can be addressed by the Idaho Task Force on the ADA, who regularly conducts such assessments.
- Retired seniors from corporate environments involving technical writing might be excellent sources of volunteer assistance in writing grants to address economic and community development projects.
- Seniors would be outstanding sources of input in the development of a high quality videotape that could be used as a promotional recruitment tool to bring sunbirds to Rexburg, provided that housing concerns for sunbirds are addressed.
- Recruit seniors to help with community projects such as gardening projects at entryways, the Children's Museum, Dam Marathon, and First Day Celebration. Don't forget to treasure your volunteers with an inaugural picnic, end of season celebration, and awards ceremony as a gesture of appreciation for dedicated service.

Youth

Here's the good news: Developmental Assets among Madison County Youth Surveys, conducted in 2000 and 2002 indicate that Rexburg youth believe they have more assets in their lives in EVERY category than youth in other places around the country. Rexburg was especially strong in areas such as positive communication with parents, neighbors taking responsibility for monitoring behavior of young people, friends modeling responsible behavior, spending a few hours per week involved in religious activities, being truthful, taking personal responsibility, resisting peer pressure, not being sexually active, avoiding alcohol and other drugs, and strong feelings of having a purpose in life.

Here is the not so good news...there is still lots of room for improvement in other categories, particularly in having knowledge of and comfort with other people of different cultural, racial, and ethnic backgrounds, planning ahead and making decisions, reading for pleasure several hours per week, practicing music, theater, or other arts, seeing parents and adults model responsible behavior, feeling valued by the community, and feeling like youth have been given a useful role in the community.

Youth who accompanied us during the community tours were invaluable sources of information and assistance about how youth are perceived in the community and what young people do for fun. It was clear that Rexburg youth very much enjoy the skateboard park, movie theater, and businesses that cater to a youth clientele like the downtown Subway and recently constructed Coldstone Creamery.

Students we met with at Central High Alternative School loved the supportive environment that embraced them when they arrived at the alternative school and

contrasted it with feelings of being an ‘outsider’ when they were at the High School because of the tendencies of groups there to run in ‘cliques.’ We did hear some concerns expressed by the youth that their presence in the community feels ‘punitive’ at times, whether associated with a label by being an ‘alternative school student,’ or a lack of alternative sentencing or choices when doing things such as dealing with a parole officer.



Civic Life and Community Involvement team met with students at Central High School.

Other youth we spoke with suggested that there are not enough recreational opportunities in the area, but this may be a matter of insufficient knowledge of community amenities. For example, several youth at the high school and students at BYU-Idaho had never heard of Eagle Park and had no idea that there were areas to fish and campsites available so close to the community. Perhaps the Mayor’s Youth Advisory Board could develop a ‘Things to Do in Rexburg’ brochure targeted toward healthy community amenities and recreational pursuits available for young people in the immediate area and disseminate it to regional schools.

The visiting team was impressed by the Youth and Family Renewal Center, which formed in 1996 at the request of the Department of Juvenile Corrections and is housed in a building originally obtained for the Center by the City. The Center received funding assistance from U.S.D.A. Rural Development and the East Central Idaho Planning & Development Association, and engages in behavior modification, family therapy and drug and alcohol treatment programs for up to 30 severely emotionally troubled boys. The

Center would be a grateful beneficiary of many forms of community donation, since the economic downturn in Idaho and the Department of Health and Welfare has negatively affected treatment placements.

Role models and mentors are crucial keys to youth success. BYU-Idaho provides a perfect pool of potential mentors for Rexburg youth, as does the Senior Center. Programs such as Big Brothers, Big Sisters also have the ability to effectively utilize youth in the community. Mentoring programs can be just as healthy and meaningful (perhaps even more so) for the mentors as for the young people who are mentored. More intergenerational and intercultural activities would greatly benefit Rexburg youth, as would meaningful opportunities for community involvement. The visiting team did not hear about any non-church sponsored service-oriented activities that happen regularly in the community.

School Facilities

While the visiting team was in Rexburg we heard about some of the complexities associated with the Madison School District considering the purchase of a 160 acre parcel of land at 1000 S., 2000 West, inside the City of Rexburg's impact zone. School officials cited school crowding and safety as major factors in the proposed decision due to increases in enrollment, as well as a desire on the part of the District to engage in 20-year long range planning in a cost-effective manner.

Some of the concerns we fielded from City officials about the proposed site related to a lack of infrastructure in the vicinity, traffic safety, and the loss of community cohesiveness associated with keeping the High School in close proximity to the downtown core as the city worked to make the area more pedestrian friendly.



With great respect for the District's clear need to upgrade facilities, especially after hearing citizen comments that the High School was too small and Junior High was not really viable as an educational facility, we recommended at our September debriefing

that every option be considered to keep the high school within the core of the city. Since the review the District has indicated there have been no viable options for a school location within the city and has taken steps to purchase the aforementioned property. We believe ongoing communication and the spirit of cooperation will enable the City of Rexburg and Madison School District to effectively move forward together.

A Community of Faith

Rexburg has a vibrant faith community, and a rich culture and heritage dating back to the thirteen Mormon settlers who decided to make the area their home in 1883. Rexburg is different than many communities because it continues to have a dominant culture and history through the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. Today it is estimated that 95% of the population in Rexburg is LDS or Mormon. As with any dominant culture, this can create perceptions in which the remaining 5% may feel marginalized, isolated, or excluded from the community mainstream. Non-LDS newcomers we spoke with expressed some of these feelings. Recent Rexburg newcomers are those whose ancestors did not settle in Rexburg, who didn't experience the flood, and have not lived in the region or learned its history.



During the review, members of the Civic Life and Community Involvement Team had an opportunity to meet with local ecclesiastical leaders representing several faiths; LDS, Baptist, Catholic, and Presbyterian. We had an opportunity for thoughtful and direct communication, and learned that several faith leaders had been quite reliant on one individual who was a communication maven and departed the community immediately prior to the review, resulting in a vacuum of information exchange. Faith leaders explored a number of positive ways for future collaboration.

The visiting team proposes that Rexburg's ecclesiastical leaders make an effort to establish regular opportunities for communication, either informally or formally:

- Informally, faith leaders could agree to meet over breakfast or other venues at a relaxed pace. More formally, faith leaders could work together to set up a local Ministerial Association or ministerial alliance with regular meeting dates and times.

- An Interfaith group can look at community issues which must be addressed together in a systems approach, such as homelessness, hunger, the Women's Crisis Center, after school issues for youth, or other items.
- One program that has been instituted and shared across faith lines in many other communities offers help and services to homebound and elderly people; shoveling snow, delivering groceries, helping with small chores, and other tasks that allow people to maintain the dignity of staying in their own homes.
- Have a few events in Rexburg that all faiths could work on together. For example, Pocatello gets together for a community Thanksgiving Service and a Martin Luther King Jr. /Idaho Human Rights Day service in which all of the various voices of the community are represented.

Finding reasons to gather across faith lines helps people appreciate and experience the diversity that exists in the community. We encourage Rexburg to continue to find ways to experience diverse ideas and peoples. Richard Florida has written some excellent books on the value of diversity and how it is integral to ensuring that a community will thrive. See [The Rise of the Creative Class](#). Partners for Prosperity are working on eliminating poverty in Eastern Idaho and are creating a library of resources for the sixteen County Eastern-Idaho regions.



Employees and staff at Upper Valley Industries enjoying their work

Job Training

One facility visited by the Visiting Team, Upper Valley Industries (UVI), is a fantastic example of an underutilized asset nestled in the heart of Rexburg. UVI is a vocational rehabilitative school that helps people in the region of all abilities. In addition to taking referrals from Deseret Industries and Job Service (Idaho Commerce and Labor) and

engaging in job development, job training, and human resource information system training from their 19,000 square foot facility, UVI runs life skills development programs and teaches production work and assembly skills to individuals with disabilities. Individuals placed with UVI learn valuable job training skills, regularly engage in community experiences like dog sled races and University events, and have an opportunity to participate in Special Olympics. They are seeking committed volunteers, especially during the winter months.

Women's Crisis Center

The Women's Crisis Center has been in operation since 1999 and services Clark, Fremont and Madison counties. The Center is perceived by vulnerable citizens in the area as having been of valuable service to the community. Much of the information about Center services has been through word of mouth, with additional success targeting warehouses and the free clinic with brochures and posters. Madison County holds the Center's title and helps with utilities, taxes and maintenance on the shelter by sharing FEMA money. Other funding sources are a Rural Domestic Grant, United Way, Idaho State Police, and State of Idaho Council on Domestic Violence Prevention. The Ferguson Foundation Diet Center has also helped with improvements. Private donations are about 3%, although state and federal agencies say private donations should be in the 50% range. The Visiting Team offers the center as another community asset very worthy of support and assistance.

About half of the Center's cases are referred to the facility by police. The Center values its relationship with law enforcement, and has indicated that officer response, immediate intervention, increased arrests, protective orders and prosecutions are very much appreciated. Comments related to prosecuting crimes that come to the attention of the Center give high marks to the Deputy Prosecutor, who "...is excellent and does victimless prosecutions."

Reportedly, Hispanic/Latina women are becoming more of a permanent population. The Center supports a battered women's treatment program in Spanish and there are bi-lingual staff in the office.

Community Survey Results

A 76-item survey gauging Rexburg and other Madison County residents' perceptions about the quality of various aspects of their community were made available prior to, during, and following the community review. Paper surveys were distributed to a diverse sample of residents by members of the home and visiting teams, as well as other community members. An electronic version of the survey was posted on the web site of the Center for Health Policy at Boise State University; this web-based survey was advertised to members of the community and was available for completion from late August to early October of 2004. To ensure a diverse sample, paper surveys were distributed to and the web-based survey was advertised to students at local schools, to business owners, to shoppers at major grocery and retail outlets, and to seniors. Members of the home team and Rexburg city employees entered the responses from the paper surveys into the format provided on the BSU website to facilitate statistical analysis. A total of 1,022 usable surveys were completed.

The survey instrument was modeled on that used during Idaho Community Reviews in other communities, including Emmett, Hayden, Heyburn, Jerome, Kooskia, Priest River, Salmon, Weiser, and Buhl. Questions on the survey addressed a wide variety of community features, including infrastructure, education, housing, neighborhood appearance, availability and quality of local services, and employment. The survey items were grouped into conceptually distinct categories (e.g., transportation and roads, educational resources, social climate, and jobs and industry) allowing for ease in responding and in analyzing the responses.

The respondents were asked to give a quality rating to each of the 76 community features listed on the survey. A 7-point Likert-type scale response format was used, where respondents could present their assessments of each community feature as "very poor" (a rating of 1) to "very good" (a rating of 7), or anywhere in between (numbers between 1 and 7 represented varying degrees of perceived quality).

To better understand the demographics of the respondents, several introductory questions preceded the 76 community feature items on the survey. These questions asked respondents to indicate: 1) their gender; 2) their age; 3) their ethnicity; 4) how many years they had lived in the community; 5) whether they lived in Rexburg or in another community; 6) whether they commuted to work in another city or town; and 7) to what city or town they commute to work in (if applicable). Overall responses to these questions are presented below.

Gender: Surveys were completed by 592 women and girls (59.8% of the respondents who indicated their gender) and 398 men and boys (40.2%). Thirty-two respondents (3.1% of the total sample) did not indicate their gender.

Age: The average (median) age of the respondents was 40 years, with a range of ages from 16-91. Surveys were completed by 14 persons aged 14-18 years (1.5% of the respondents who indicated their age), 846 adults aged 19-59 (92.9%), and 51 seniors aged 60-91 (5.6%). Fifty-six respondents (5.5% of the total sample) did not indicate their age.

Race/Ethnicity: When asked to specify their race/ethnicity, 886 respondents (96.0% of the respondents who indicated their race/ethnicity) reported being White. Thirteen (1.4%) reported being Hispanic/Latino. Less than 1% of those who completed the survey reported being of Asian descent (four people) or Native American (three people). Ninety-nine respondents (9.7% of the total sample) did not report their race/ethnicity.

Years lived in community: The average (median) length of time that the respondents had lived in their Rexburg or nearby community was 15 years. The range of time respondents reported living in their community varied from a few weeks to 85 years.

Residential location: Rexburg appeared to be the home community of the vast majority of the respondents. Seventy-one (7.0%) of the respondents reported living in another community, led by Idaho Falls (with seven respondents reporting living there), Rigby (seven), and St. Anthony (six).

Commuter status: Only 14.8% of the respondents who completed an item concerning whether they commuted to work in another city or town indicated that they did so. Thus, it appears that a clear majority of those respondents who lived in Rexburg and who worked, work in Rexburg.

Mean quality ratings for all survey respondents (listed by survey item number in their respective conceptual categories) are presented in Table 1, and community features ranked by mean quality ratings are presented in Table 2. Overall, there were many community features that the respondents were highly satisfied with (as evidenced by high mean quality ratings). The 10 features that received the highest mean quality ratings were: 1) water quality; 2) access to hospitals; 3) water supply; 4) higher education opportunities; 5) activity of churches in the community; 6) availability of emergency care; 7) sewage collection and disposal; 8) ambulance service; 9) fire protection; and 10) banking and financial services. Thus, the respondents seemed to agree that there are a number of diverse features of Rexburg that are of high quality, including city (or county) services, level of community involvement especially for churches, and health care services.

There was also a number of community features that the respondents did not appear satisfied with (as evidenced by low mean quality ratings). The 10 features that received the lowest mean quality ratings were: 1) parking around the university; 2) quality of places to eat out; 3) quality of available local jobs; 4) variety of local industry; 5) parking downtown; 6) recreation for teenagers; 7) availability of local jobs; 8) condition of school buildings; 9) the airport; and 10) planning and zoning. Thus, it is clear that the respondents felt that the lack of quality, available jobs and viable industry were weaknesses of the greater Rexburg area, as were parking in the city and particularly around the university campus.

Table 1: Overall Mean Quality Ratings of Community Features			
Item	Community Feature	Quality Rating	
		Mean	Standard Deviation
Transportation and Roads			
1.	City streets and roads	3.90	1.29
2.	Airport	3.62	1.39
3.	Traffic	3.83	1.44
4.	Parking downtown	3.29	1.50
5.	Parking around the university	2.39	1.40
6.	Bicycle and pedestrian access	3.86	1.53
Community Protection			
7.	Police protection	5.26	1.27
8.	Crime prevention programs	5.10	1.29
9.	Fire protection	5.49	1.14
10.	Building code enforcement and inspection	4.44	1.49
Water/Wastewater Resources			
11.	Water supply	5.71	1.15
12.	Water quality	5.83	1.19
13.	Sewage collection and disposal	5.59	1.19
14.	Flood control measures	5.11	1.22
Recreation			
15.	Community parks and playgrounds	5.14	1.40
16.	Sufficient planning for future recreational facilities	3.69	1.68
17.	Recreation for children 12 and under	4.01	1.63
18.	Recreation for teenagers	3.44	1.61
19.	Recreation for adults	3.65	1.67
Local Leadership			
20.	Responsiveness of local government	4.27	1.45
21.	Cooperation among local government and civic groups	4.44	1.37
22.	Community involvement in decision making	3.98	1.60
23.	Cooperation between city and county	4.15	1.44
24.	Effective community leadership	4.32	1.47
25.	Long-range planning	3.69	1.54
26.	Planning and zoning	3.63	1.57
Educational Resources			
27.	Quality of local library	4.84	1.45
29.	Local arts and cultural opportunities	4.65	1.62
30.	Condition of school buildings	3.46	1.63
31.	Quality of elementary education	5.01	1.43
32.	Quality of middle school education	5.01	1.35
33.	Quality of junior high school education	4.77	1.45
34.	Quality of high school education	5.02	1.38
35.	Vocation education – Job training opportunities	3.68	1.45
36.	Higher education opportunities	5.71	1.46

Note. Standard deviations indicate level of agreement in ratings across respondents (higher standard deviations indicate less agreement in respondent ratings). All ratings were made on 7-point scales where 1 = “Very poor” and 7 = “Very good”; thus, higher numbers reflect greater perceived quality.

Table 1: Overall Mean Quality Ratings of Community Features			
Item	Community Feature	Quality Rating	
		Mean	Standard Deviation
Health Resources			
37.	Ambulance service	5.58	1.14
38.	Availability of emergency care	5.64	1.19
39.	Access to hospital(s)	5.73	1.24
40.	Availability of doctors	5.21	1.43
41.	Availability of mental health care	4.34	1.60
Housing			
42.	Availability of homes to purchase	5.02	1.40
43.	Condition of homes available	4.67	1.27
44.	Availability of rental housing options	5.17	1.66
45.	Condition of rental housing	4.71	1.49
46.	Availability of low income housing options	3.72	1.57
47.	Condition of low income housing	3.79	1.51
Community Appearance			
48.	Appearance of downtown	4.37	1.44
49.	Appearance of public buildings	4.97	1.28
50.	Appearance of neighborhoods	5.06	1.13
51.	Appearance of gateways into community	3.83	1.51
Social Climate			
52.	Friendliness of residents	5.42	1.38
53.	Progressive community spirit	4.80	1.55
54.	Welcome given to newcomers	4.77	1.60
55.	Acceptance of minorities	4.23	1.67
56.	Activity of churches in the community	5.66	1.36
Jobs and Industry			
57.	Availability of local jobs	3.45	1.49
58.	Quality of available local jobs	3.15	1.42
59.	Variety of local industry	3.22	1.36
Local Goods and Services			
60.	Business involvement with community	4.42	1.37
61.	Variety and quality of goods in stores	4.15	1.54
62.	Number of places to eat out	3.68	1.88
63.	Quality of places to eat out	3.10	1.60
64.	Accessibility of community for people with disabilities	4.45	1.39
65.	Availability of child care for children	4.44	1.36
66.	Availability of senior programs	4.43	1.39
67.	Availability of drug and alcohol treatment programs	4.27	1.43
68.	Banking and financial services	5.46	1.18

69.	Local newspaper service	5.03	1.51
70.	Hotel and motel accommodations	4.82	1.37
71.	High speed internet access and quality	4.68	1.55
72.	Entertainment options	3.87	1.59
73.	Garbage collection and disposal	5.34	1.36
74.	City staff response to problems	4.35	1.45
75.	Usability and helpfulness of city website	4.75	1.36
Overall Perceptions			
76.	Overall community quality	5.12	1.15

Note. Standard deviations indicate level of agreement in ratings across respondents (higher standard deviations indicate less agreement in respondent ratings). All ratings were made on 7-point scales where 1 = “Very poor” and 7 = “Very good”; thus, higher numbers reflect greater perceived quality.

Table 2: Ranked Mean Quality Ratings of Community Features			
Item	Community Feature	Quality Rating	
		Mean	Standard Deviation
1.	Water quality	5.83	1.19
2.	Access to hospital(s)	5.73	1.24
3.	Water supply	5.71	1.15
4.	Higher education opportunities	5.71	1.46
5.	Activity of churches in the community	5.66	1.36
6.	Availability of emergency care	5.64	1.19
7.	Sewage collection and disposal	5.59	1.19
8.	Ambulance service	5.58	1.14
9.	Fire protection	5.49	1.14
10.	Banking and financial services	5.46	1.18
11.	Friendliness of residents	5.42	1.38
12.	Garbage collection and disposal	5.34	1.36
13.	Police protection	5.26	1.27
14.	Availability of doctors	5.21	1.43
15.	Availability of rental housing options	5.17	1.66
16.	Community parks and playgrounds	5.14	1.40
17.	Overall community quality	5.12	1.15
18.	Flood control measures	5.11	1.22
19.	Crime prevention programs	5.10	1.29
20.	Appearance of neighborhoods	5.06	1.13
21.	Local newspaper service	5.03	1.51
22.	Availability of homes to purchase	5.02	1.40
23.	Quality of high school education	5.02	1.38
24.	Quality of middle school education	5.01	1.35
25.	Quality of elementary education	5.01	1.43
26.	Appearance of public buildings	4.97	1.28
27.	Quality of local library	4.84	1.45
29.	Hotel and motel accommodations	4.82	1.37
30.	Progressive community spirit	4.80	1.55
31.	Welcome given to newcomers	4.77	1.60
32.	Quality of junior high school education	4.77	1.45
33.	Usability and helpfulness of city website	4.75	1.36
34.	Condition of rental housing	4.71	1.49
35.	High speed internet access and quality	4.68	1.55
36.	Condition of homes available	4.67	1.27
37.	Local arts and cultural opportunities	4.65	1.62
38.	Accessibility of community for people with disabilities	4.45	1.39
39.	Availability of child care for children	4.44	1.36
40.	Building code enforcement and inspection	4.44	1.49

Note. Standard deviations indicate level of agreement in ratings across respondents (higher standard deviations indicate less agreement in respondent ratings). All ratings were made on 7-point scales where 1 = “Very poor” and 7 = “Very good”; thus, higher numbers reflect greater perceived quality.

Table 2: Ranked Mean Quality Ratings of Community Features			
Item	Community Feature	Quality Rating	
		Mean	Standard Deviation
41.	Cooperation among local government and civic groups	4.44	1.37
42.	Availability of senior programs	4.43	1.39
43.	Business involvement with community	4.42	1.37
44.	Appearance of downtown	4.37	1.44
45.	City staff response to problems	4.35	1.45
46.	Availability of mental health care	4.34	1.60
47.	Effective community leadership	4.32	1.47
48.	Responsiveness of local government	4.27	1.45
49.	Availability of drug and alcohol treatment programs	4.27	1.43
50.	Acceptance of minorities	4.23	1.67
51.	Cooperation between city and county	4.15	1.44
52.	Variety and quality of goods in stores	4.15	1.54
53.	Recreation for children 12 and under	4.01	1.63
54.	Community involvement in decision making	3.98	1.60
55.	City streets and roads	3.90	1.29
56.	Entertainment options	3.87	1.59
57.	Bicycle and pedestrian access	3.86	1.53
58.	Appearance of gateways into community	3.83	1.51
59.	Traffic	3.83	1.44
60.	Condition of low income housing	3.79	1.51
61.	Availability of low income housing options	3.72	1.57
62.	Long-range planning	3.69	1.54
63.	Sufficient planning for future recreational facilities	3.69	1.68
64.	Vocation education – Job training opportunities	3.68	1.45
65.	Number of places to eat out	3.68	1.88
66.	Recreation for adults	3.65	1.67
67.	Planning and zoning	3.63	1.57
68.	Airport	3.62	1.39
69.	Condition of school buildings	3.46	1.63
70.	Availability of local jobs	3.45	1.49
71.	Recreation for teenagers	3.44	1.61
72.	Parking downtown	3.29	1.50
73.	Variety of local industry	3.22	1.36
74.	Quality of available local jobs	3.15	1.42
75.	Quality of places to eat out	3.10	1.60
76.	Parking around the university	2.39	1.40

Note. Standard deviations indicate level of agreement in ratings across respondents (higher standard deviations indicate less agreement in respondent ratings). All ratings were made on 7-

point scales where 1 = “Very poor” and 7 = “Very good”; thus, higher numbers reflect greater perceived quality.

Several open-ended (or “write-in”) items were included at the end of the survey, asking the respondents for their perceptions on the strengths of the Rexburg community, its short- and long-term challenges, and regarding things they would like to see the community accomplish in the future. The common themes isolated in these responses are discussed below.

Strengths of the community

It was clear that the respondents considered there to be many strengths concerning the community of Rexburg; answers to the item asking them to identify these strengths were many and varied. However, several common themes emerged. These included:

- The safe nature of the community and its low crime rate
- The strong values of the community
- The small-town atmosphere
- That Rexburg is a great place to raise a family
- The good, friendly people
- The resources and cultural opportunities offered by BYU-Idaho
- The cleanliness of the community

It is noteworthy that these features can be considered largely interrelated, and that several of these themes often existed in individual respondent’s responses. For example, it is likely that the safety of the community, along with its strong values and friendly people, ultimately make Rexburg a great place to raise a family. In any case, the fact that so many themes consistently appeared in response to this item suggests that most of the respondents believe that there is a great deal for Rexburg to be proud of.

Short-term community challenges

The respondents also recognized a number of challenges that they believe face Rexburg in the short term. The common themes that were found in response to an item asking them to list these challenges are presented below.

- Managing growth; many of these comments suggested that rapid and haphazard growth threatened to erode the very strengths listed in response to the previous item
- Traffic problems (2nd East was mentioned particularly often in this context)
- Lack of maintenance of roads during winter
- A sense that too many apartment complexes were being built
- That the condition of K-12 schools needed to be improved

Certainly, several of these themes are also interrelated. For example, as a community experiences growth, streets and roads receive more heavy usage and methods of traffic control may need to be modified. Also, growth leads to the construction of new housing units, some of which may not be to the liking of current residents.

Long-term challenges

Not surprisingly, some of the issues that were considered to be short-term challenges for Rexburg were also considered to be long-term challenges. However, as shown below, several additional issues were frequently reported to be long-term challenges facing the Rexburg community.

- Managing growth (a perceived need for improved planning and zoning was mentioned particularly often in this context)
- A need to offer better recreational opportunities, particularly for adolescents
- Addressing traffic problems
- Improving local job opportunities
- Maintaining a small-town atmosphere

Things for Rexburg to accomplish

The responses to an item asking respondents to list things they would like to see Rexburg accomplish in the near future were also many and varied; however, several common themes were easily discernable. These themes included:

- To address current traffic problems
- To develop recreational opportunities for children and teens (a pool and a recreation center were often mentioned in this regard)
- To bring in better commercial establishments and restaurants
- To fix schools or build new schools
- To focus on enhancing the downtown of Rexburg
- Stimulating job growth

Other open ended responses in the survey related to questions about whether residents were in favor of liquor licenses for some restaurants: 'Yes' responses came from 497 (61.9% of those who responded), while those voting 'No' totaling 306 (38.1%).

With regard to the open-ended question about support for the pool bond, those who indicated they had supported the pool bond totaled 249 (61.6%), while those who said they had not supported it totaled 155 (38.4%).

Rexburg Community Review Visiting Team

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Tanya Albán is the Regional Labor Economist for the Idaho Department of Labor, covering nine counties in Northeast Idaho. Tanya worked in a variety of businesses before graduating from Idaho State University in 1995 with a Bachelor of Business Administration degree, double majoring in marketing and finance. She went to work for the Department of Labor and has worked in both Job Placement and Unemployment Insurance before taking her current job. As a Regional Labor Economist, she oversees data related to the workforce and all other duties that come with the Public Affairs division of the Department. Although a native of Texas, Tanya moved to Rexburg in 1986 and later to Idaho Falls in 1990. A mother of four children, she resides in Idaho Falls with her husband and family, staying very active in their lives.

Joni Amen

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Joni Amen has spent 3 years with the City of Ashton and is currently City Clerk. Previously employed in private industry, she has been through numerous trainings with the Association of Idaho Cities. She is presently working to help coordinate the upcoming community review of Ashton.

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Jon Barrett has 15 years experience in regional and town planning. He became associated with Idaho Smart Growth as Project Assistant in 1997. He became Co-Executive Director of the agency in 2000. He worked as a city planner and as a planning consultant from 1991-1997. During this time he developed expertise in comprehensive, recreation, and open space planning and community development. He holds an undergraduate degree in landscape architecture from Washington State University (1986). In his role with Idaho Smart Growth, Jon was a focus team leader for the Emmett Community Review.

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Lori Benfiet is a Technical Assistance Specialist with Idaho Housing and Finance Association (IHFA). She regularly works with developers, cities (except Boise), counties and non-profit agencies to develop capacity through one on one training and classroom settings. She also works to create and maintain projects like homeless shelters, transitional housing, and permanent housing, including homeownership. She has 15 years experience in banking, working her way up to Vice President/Community Development officer. She has also worked as a licensed real estate agent, licensed general contractor and controller.

Debbie Bloom

Operations Manager, Community Partnerships Association of Idaho
600 N. Curtis Ste. 175; Boise, ID 83706
208 375-7382, dbloom@cableone.net

Debbie Bloom is the Operations Manager for the Community Action Partnership Association of Idaho. She has 10 years of experience serving Idaho communities during her tenure at the Association of Idaho Cities. She was a Visiting Team Member in the Heyburn, Hayden, and Rexburg community reviews. Debbie holds a Bachelors Degree in Business from the University of Arizona (1980).

Trent Clark

Co-Chair - Idaho Rural Partnership, Monsanto
Hwy 34 North; Soda Springs, ID 83276
208 547-1348, trent.l.clark@monsanto.com

Trent L. Clark is Public Affairs Director for Monsanto, an agricultural technology company whose western U.S. manufacturing is based in Soda Springs, Idaho. He was elected Co-Chair of the Idaho Rural Partnership in both 1997 and 2002 representing rural manufacturing. His involvement with the Partnership started in 1992 when he was invited by the White House to serve as a representative to the Conference on the President's Rural Development Initiative. In 2000, he was asked by Senator Larry Craig of Idaho to draft what became the National Rural Development Partnership Act of 2000 (S. 3175, 106th Congress).

Brian Dale
 Operations Specialist/Faith-Based Liaison, U.S. Dept. of Housing & Urban Development
 800 Park Blvd. Ste. 220; Boise, ID 83712
 208 334-1088 ext. 3005, brian_dale@hud.gov
 Brian has been involved with the Idaho Community Review process since its inception. He is currently a member of Idaho's Governor's Coordinating Council for Families and Children. Additionally, he has worked with many local and national disability councils, advisory committees and coalitions, and he has directed work of the Utah Statewide Independent Living Council and Salt Lake Impact 2002 and Beyond Committee. A certified community developer, Brian has a B.A. from Westminster College (in Missouri) and attended Community Builder training at the John F. Kennedy School of Government in Boston.

Henry Evans
 Program Planning & Development Specialist, Partners for Prosperity
 625 W. Pacific, Ste. 1; Blackfoot, ID 83221
 208 785-0059, evanhenr@isu.edu
 Henry Evans is a Program Planning and Development Specialist with Partners for Prosperity. He has been with the organization for the past 2 years holding his current position since last April. During the planning phase of the organization he was the Field Supervisor, helping to direct the interview and asset-mapping teams. Henry is trained as a political scientist, currently pursuing his doctorate at Idaho State University.

Mike Field
 State Director, U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development:
 9173 W Barnes Dr, Suite A-1; Boise, ID 83709
 208 378-5601, mike.field@id.usda.gov
 Mike Field has over 31 years of government service at the federal and state level. He has served as State Director for USDA Rural Development since April 2001. He also served in that capacity from 1987-1993. Mike is a strong advocate of rural partnerships and believes in the strength of rural communities. Executive Director, United Way of Southeastern Idaho

Margaret Ganyo
 P.O. Box 911, Pocatello; ID 83204
 208 232-1389, mganyo@ida.net
 Margaret Ganyo has a law degree from Santa Clara University School of Law and is a licensed attorney in the states of California, Washington, and Utah. Prior to becoming the executive director of the United Way of Southeastern Idaho in 2004, Ms. Ganyo's experience includes being Director of Pro Bono Services for Utah Legal Services; an adjunct professor at the University of Utah's College of Law; director of the Volunteer Center at Westminster College in Salt Lake City; and community development senior staffer with Pocatello Neighborhood Housing Services.

Janie Gebhardt
 Pastor, First Congregational United Church of Christ
 1200 Aspen Dr. Pocatello; ID 83204
 208 232-3056 (Church), JanieGebhardt@cableone.net
 Janie is currently the Pastor of First Congregational United Church of Christ in Pocatello. She has served in the post since March 2000. Ordained in Connecticut in 1985, she served several churches in that State and Rhode Island as well as being on Staff at the American Church in London for over 2 years. In Pocatello she is part of the Portneuf Valley Interfaith Fellowship, serves as Chair of Healthy Pocatello - Healthy Youth, is on the Board of Directors for Silver Sage Girl Scout Council and serves on other community groups such as the Domestic Violence Task Force and the Hospital's ethics committee.

Lance Holmstrom
 Senior Transportation Planner, Idaho Transportation Department
 P.O. Box 97, Rigby; ID 83442
 208 745-5608, lholmstr@itd.state.id.us
 Lance Holmstrom is the District 6 Senior Transportation Planner for the Idaho Transportation Department. He holds a Masters Degree in Urban Planning from the University of Oregon and has over 20 years experience in community development, land use planning, and transportation planning. Currently, Mr. Holmstrom is busy creating corridor plans for the major highway systems in District 6. Corridor planning is a comprehensive approach that involves the general public, elected officials, and other stakeholders in identifying highway needs over a 20-year horizon.

Dwight Johnson
 Administrator of Public Affairs, Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor
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Dwight is the Interim Executive Director of the Idaho Rural Partnership and has served as the Administrator of the Public Affairs Division for the Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor for ten years. He has a Masters Degree in Public Administration and has served on various efforts including as a member of the Governor's Welfare Reform Advisory Committee, as a lead staffer for the Governor's 2020 Blue Ribbon Advisory Committee and as a long-time member of the Community Review Steering Committee.

Richard Juengling

Administrative Support Manager, Idaho Office on Aging

P.O. Box 83720, Boise; Idaho 83720-0007

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Richard has a BA degree from the University of Wisconsin with an emphasis on Urban and Regional Planning. He worked on land use planning in Wisconsin and then founded and directed a non-profit civil rights organization. He moved to Boise in 1990 to direct the Idaho office of the Land and Water Fund (a non-profit legal assistance organization). Richard then worked with the State Library managing grants for local libraries around Idaho, and moved to his current position managing fiscal and administrative functions. Including funding for Area Agencies on Aging and local organizations providing services to older Idahoans statewide.

Gloria Mabbutt

Rural Development Manager, Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor

P.O. Box 83720, Boise; ID 83720-0093

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Gloria Mabbutt is the Rural Development Manager for the Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor. Her responsibilities include programs and projects that are designed to build local leadership skills for elected officials, staff, community and economic development practitioners, non-profits and community volunteers. Prior to accepting her current positions, she was the Community Development Manager, responsible for approximately \$10 million dollars in Idaho Community Development Block Grant funds, primarily for economic and infrastructure development and \$2.5 million in state block grant funds for economic development for distressed communities. Gloria graduated in 1979 from Boise State University with a Master's Degree in Public Administration.

Jerry Miller

Rural Development Specialist, Idaho Department of Commerce & Labor

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Jerry manages the Gem Community Implementation Grant and National Fire Plan - Economic Action Grant Programs - for the Idaho Department of Commerce and Labor. He is editor of "Show Me The Money" a weekly statewide bulletin highlighting funding opportunities for rural communities and non-profit organizations. Additionally, he represents the department on the State's National Fire Plan and Renewable Energy Committees and he provides project development technical assistance to rural communities. Prior to his current assignment he spent four years managing Idaho Community Development Block Grant projects. He has a B.A. in Political Science and History and a M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning, from the University of Iowa.

Craige Naylor

Senior Deputy Director, Fannie Mae Partnership Office

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J. Craige Naylor is the Senior Deputy Director of the Fannie Mae Idaho Partnership Office and is responsible for Fannie Mae's five-year American Dream Commitment investment plan to invest \$4 billion in affordable mortgage and rental financing to serve 41,000 Idahoans. He works closely with local lenders, real estate professionals, homebuilders, nonprofit representatives, and government leaders to carry out Fannie Mae's statewide investment plan. He directs Fannie Mae's outreach efforts and develops partnerships throughout the state to increase low, moderate and middle-income families' access to affordable homeownership and rental opportunities. He brings to Fannie Mae 15 years of senior management experience in the mortgage lending industry, most recently serving as vice president and regional production manager for a major regional real estate lender. He is a graduate of New Mexico State University in Las Cruces; the Mortgage Bankers Association of America's School of Mortgage Banking and is a designated Housing Development Finance Professional from The National Development Council.

Tom Putnam

Program Planning & Development Specialist, Partners for Prosperity

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Tom has worked with Partners for Prosperity for the past two years, during which time he has been engaged in community development work and research at a grass roots level. His experience has been in researching and addressing the issues and indicators associated with poverty. His current job position requires community development work, especially organizing and developing viable working groups across Eastern Idaho. Tom then works with these regional groups to discuss and address the issues of poverty as it affects the region.

John Riker

Multi-Family Housing Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture - Rural Development:

725 Jensen Grove Dr. Ste. 1, Blackfoot; ID 83221

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John Riker has worked for the U.S. Department of Agriculture for 27 years. Currently a multi-family housing specialist, John is an expert at conflict resolution and problem solving in rural communities. He holds an Associates Degree in Graphic Arts and has a B.S. in Animal Science (Minor in Business) from Washington State University in Pullman.

Michael Shaw

Human Rights Coordinator, Association of Idaho Cities

3100 S. Vista Ave. Ste. 310, Boise; ID 83705

208 344-8594, mshaw@idahocities.org

Michael currently facilitates statewide intercultural events and provides leadership, conflict resolution and facilitation, community building, survival Spanish, employment discrimination, hate crime, racial profiling, and diversity training to city officials, schools, and human rights groups across Idaho. He has a B.A. from Colorado College and an MBA from Northwest Nazarene University and has worked as a child therapist, civil rights investigator, human resource specialist and consultant.

Jay Townsend

City Administrator, City of Salmon

200 Main St. Salmon; ID 83467

208 756-3214, jtown@centurytel.net

Jay Townsend presently serves as the City Administrator for Salmon, Idaho. A graduate of the University of Idaho and Harvard University, Jay has held a number of key positions focused on organizational performance throughout his career. Career highlights include eleven years of service in the United States Army as an officer and key management positions with Fortune 500 Companies that included Applied Materials Inc. and Booz Allen & Hamilton. Jay serves as an advising board member for the Association of Idaho Cities Legislative and Finance Committee and the Task Force on City and County Relations.

City of Rexburg Community Review Itinerary

September 7-10, 2004

Tuesday, September 7, 2004

7:00-8:30 p.m. Small Orientation meeting- City Hall Council Chambers
12 North Center

Wednesday, September 8, 2004

7:30-8:30 a.m. Breakfast

9:00-9:10 a.m. Welcome, Mayor Shawn Larsen- City's Citizen's Committees
Working to make a better community for you.

9:10-9:20 a.m. A History of Rexburg and the Area – Mayor Shawn Larsen

9:20-9:30 a.m. Purpose of Community Review – Kurt Hibbert

9:30-9:35 a.m. Introduction of Home and Visiting Teams – Craig Rindlisbacher

9:35-9:40 a.m. Community Review Logistics – Richard Horner

9:40-9:45 a.m. Community Review Instructions – Brian Dale & Gloria Mabbutt

9:45-10:00 a.m. Tour Overview & Itinerary:
Community Design & Identity - Craig Rindlisbacher
Land Use Planning - Kurt Hibbert
Civic Life & Community Involvement – Blair D. Kay

10:00 a.m.-Noon Community Tours- (Details attached)

Noon-1:30 p.m. Lunch at the Nature Park

1:30-4:30 p.m. Community Tours: (Details attached)
Community Design & Identity
Land Use Planning
Civic Life & Community Involvement

5:30-8:00 p.m. Dinner and State of the City Overview- Mayor Shawn Larsen
Further Interviews and Networking

Thursday, September 9, 2004

7:00-9:00 a.m. Community Breakfast

9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. Visiting Team Work Session

5:00-7:30 p.m. Dinner and Community Debriefing, City Hall
The visiting team leaders will lead the debriefing and provide a general report on the team's observations, interview and survey results, and team recommendations. The visiting team will field questions.

Focus Groups

Land Use Review Team

Kurt Hibbert
Galen Jensen, BYU-Idaho University
Lynn Wilcox, Floyd Wilcox & Sons Potato
Van Elg, Rexburg Housing
County Commissioner Muir
Gerry Jeppesen, Madison County P&Z

Civic Life & Community Involvement Review Team

Blair D. Kay
Tom Kennelly
Bob Carlson
Kevin Miyasaki, BYU-Idaho University
Donna Benfield, Rexburg Chamber of Commerce
Jay Rush, BYU-Idaho University, Communications Dept.

Community Design & Identity Review Team

Craig Rindlisbacher
Terrell Arnold, Museum Director
Marsha Bjornn, Historical Society
Byron John, BYU-Idaho University