

A ULI ADVISORY SERVICES PANEL REPORT

Teton County, Wyoming
Strategies for Addressing Future Growth

Sponsored by
Teton County and the Town of Jackson

October 3 – 7, 2000



Urban Land Institute
1025 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007

ABOUT ULI—THE URBAN LAND INSTITUTE

ULI—the Urban Land Institute is a nonprofit research and education organization that promotes responsible leadership in the use of land in order to enhance the environment.

The Institute maintains a membership representing a broad spectrum of interests and sponsors a wide variety of educational programs and forums to encourage an open exchange of ideas and sharing of experience. ULI initiates research that anticipates emerging land use trends and issues and proposes creative solutions based on this research; provides advisory services; and publishes a wide variety of materials to disseminate information on land use and development.

Established in 1936, the Institute today has some 16,000 members and associates from 50 countries, representing the entire spectrum of the land use and development disciplines. Professionals represented include developers, builders, property owners, investors, architects, public officials, planners, real estate brokers, appraisers, attorneys, engineers, financiers, academicians, students, and librarians. ULI relies heavily on the experience of its members. It is through member involvement and information resources that ULI has been able to set standards of excellence in development practice. The Institute has long been recognized as one of America's most respected and widely quoted sources of objective information on urban planning, growth, and development.

This Advisory Services panel report is intended to further the objectives of the Institute and to make authoritative information generally available to those seeking knowledge in the field of urban land use.

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ABOUT ULI ADVISORY SERVICES

The goal of ULI's Advisory Services Program is to bring the finest expertise in the real estate field to bear on complex land use planning and development projects, programs, and policies. Since 1947, this program has assembled well over 200 ULI-member teams to help sponsors find creative, practical solutions for such issues as downtown redevelopment, land management strategies, evaluation of development potential, growth management, community revitalization, brownfields redevelopment, military base reuse, provision of low-cost and affordable housing, and asset management strategies, among other matters. A wide variety of public, private, and nonprofit organizations have contracted for ULI's Advisory Services.

Each panel team is composed of highly qualified professionals who volunteer their time to ULI. They are chosen for their knowledge of the topic of the panel and screened to ensure their objectivity. ULI panel teams are interdisciplinary and are developed based on the specific scope of the assignment. ULI teams provide a holistic look at development problems. Each panel is chaired by a respected ULI member who has previous panel experience.

The agenda for a panel assignment is intensive. It includes an in-depth briefing composed of a tour of the site and meetings with sponsor representatives; interviews of key people within the community; and a day and a half of formulating recommendations. Long nights of discussion precede the panel's conclusions. On the final day on site, the panel makes an oral presentation of its findings and conclusions to the sponsor. At the request of the sponsor, a written report is prepared and published.

Because the sponsoring entities are responsible for significant preparation before the panel's visit, including sending extensive briefing materials to each member and arranging for the panel to meet with key local community members and stakeholders in the project under consideration, participants in ULI's panel assignments are able to make accurate assessments of a sponsor's issues and to provide recommendations in a compressed amount of time.

A key strength of the program is ULI's unique ability to draw upon the knowledge and expertise of its members, including land developers and owners, public officials, academics, representatives of financial institutions, and others. In fulfillment of the mission of the Urban Land Institute, this Advisory Services report is intended to provide objective advice that will promote the responsible use of land to enhance our environment.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Much appreciation is given to the Teton County Board of County Commissioners and the Jackson Town Council for their support during the panel's time on site. The county and town staffs, especially county planning director Bill Collins and his staff, and the town planning director Charlene Gallina and her staff, were extremely helpful and responsive to the panel's needs. Both the town and the county worked together to ensure that the panel members had what they needed to complete their task.

Special appreciation is given to the many citizens; business owners; developers; state, county and local officials and agency representatives; and others who contributed their time to share their thoughts and ideas about the future of Teton County with the panel.

THE PANEL

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SUMMARY

The saying “growth is inevitable” is true almost everywhere, including Teton County, Wyoming. However, a community does have control over how this growth occurs, and for that reason, Teton County and the Town of Jackson asked a ULI panel to provide advice on future growth in the county. During four days the panel toured the town and county, and spoke with more than 80 people, all of whom are actively engaged in some phase of the business or civic life of Teton County. The panel found the problems besetting the valley that prompted the panel’s visit are not unique. Across the nation prosperity has created new jobs and nurtured extraordinary affluence, which has raised expectations for larger homes, second homes, and more recreation. These positive outcomes of growth are a blessing in many communities. However, in those communities where increased demand confronts limited supply, growth has a less-positive side—increased traffic, rising housing costs, loss of open space, and unwelcome changes in the social texture of the community.

In Jackson and a few other places uniquely blessed by Mother Nature, and uniquely constrained by geography and public lands, market dislocations have risen to extreme levels that threaten the very social fabric of the community by pricing out of the market whole cohorts of the population. The average wage in Teton County is \$21,000 per year. In 1999, the average single-family home sold for \$775,000. The least expensive single-family lot on the market today is approximately \$200,000. Although progress is being made in providing employee housing, the demographics of Jackson could soon resemble the demographics of the third world—the very rich, the heavily subsidized poor, and the transient including both visitors and workers. The middle class, the young families, and the community service personnel who want ownership housing or who desire single-family homes will be gone, and the community will be permanently changed because of it.

The price of commercial property is causing dislocations as well. The panel was told that service commercial lots sell for up to \$25.00 per square foot, or \$1 million per acre. By comparison, service commercial and light industrial land in the suburban San Francisco Bay area sells for \$8.00 to \$15.00 per square foot. The lumberyard, the auto shop, the cabinet shop cannot afford these prices and will either stay where they are or leave the valley. They cannot expand or move. Consequently, their parcels cannot move to a higher and better use, provide sites for needed urban housing, be consolidated for mixed-use projects, or otherwise allow the town to renew itself. Service personnel will be forced out of the valley, compounding traffic problems and further stratifying the Town of Jackson and the population of the valley.

Are these the inevitable consequences of saving the environment, sparing the wildlife, and preserving the western character of the town in the face of this onslaught of demand? The panel does not think so. Are these the inevitable results of conflicting visions? Of too many stakeholders? Of newcomers against old timers? Of rich against poor? The panel does not think so.

The very extremity of the problems has created a consistent vision of the basic things that must be done, but which for, whatever reason, have not been done. The roots of the problems lie in this lack of execution. This is not to say divergent opinions, narrow-mindedness, wishful thinking, inconsistent actions, poor communications, or unwarranted distrust among stakeholders do not exist.

The panel believes smart growth exists: growth that will preserve the distinctive qualities of Teton County; growth that will allow for a broader range of housing options; growth that will maintain a sense of community. Cities and towns are organic by nature. They are growing, renewing, shrinking, or dying. Western towns are extreme examples of the process. In one of the interviews the panel was told “Fifteen years ago Jackson was a poor town in a poor county in a poor state.” Today the average home sells for almost \$800,000. Yet some in this county cling to a past that seems more comfortable, more charming, and more permanent. If being in the West means anything, it means change, and dramatic change is happening. It is just not being accommodated effectively.

The panel was asked to look at three issues: growth strategies, transportation, and affordable housing. These issues were looked at in four parts, all of which are interrelated: planning for growth, providing affordable housing, addressing transportation conflicts, and structuring government and providing services. In addition, the panel looked at the proposed annexation of the Porter property and provided some recommendations on that issue.

PLANNING FOR GROWTH

Land for future development in Teton County is limited because of extensive federal ownership and the strong community desire to preserve the extraordinary natural and scenic resources of this special place. Under these conditions, the town and county face the challenge of how to grow in a manner that provides affordability and prosperity for local residents and maintains the strong tradition of community. The task is becoming more complicated under the ever-increasing pressure from wealthy homebuyers seeking a rural lifestyle and from travelers to Teton County and the national parks seeking lodging and services. Past community focus has been on controlling growth and protecting the natural environment. The next chapter in the Jackson Hole story must focus on balancing protection with community development. Jackson's future will depend on how the town and county develop. The ability of future development to meet expectations for affordability and environmental protection depends on the collective efforts of all sectors of the community (town, county, developers, merchants, public interest groups, and citizens).

The panel has attempted to consolidate its observations and the wide variety of opinions that it heard into some basic planning themes for action. The panel's conclusions focus on the following four areas:

- Additional land for development is required in the county.
- Exciting potential exists for infill and redevelopment within the Town of Jackson.
- More precise resource and program information is required to resolve conflicts between development and the natural environment as the population grows.
- Existing town and county zoning and land development regulations are not adequate for the task ahead.

These discussions are organized as applying to Teton County, the satellite communities, and the Town of Jackson.

Teton County

Preservation

Jackson has a long tradition of using conservation and scenic easements to protect the rural areas of the county. This tradition continues through the efforts of the Jackson Hole Land Trust, but limits exist to the level of protection possible through zoning. The efforts of the Land Trust and other conservation organizations will continue to be critical in protecting natural and scenic resources. The conservation organizations should also collaborate with other sectors of the community to infill and redevelop areas of the town, to create satellite communities in the county, to develop area transportation plans, to provide affordable housing, and to support joint town and county programs.

County Zoning

Current county zoning for large rural landholdings provides the ability for landowners to receive density bonuses in return for clustering development. The purpose of this incentive is to create open space that preserves scenic and natural resources. Current economic conditions and the need to accommodate additional development in the county require that the current zoning approach be re-examined. Challenges to this include:

- The high value of large-acreage residential lots has created a situation where cluster zoning is not effective in the market. Both the lower prices of smaller lots and the time and effort required to acquire approvals for clustering have eliminated the incentive of clustering except in a few areas, such as Teton Village, where the location provides high value for clustered development.
- The cluster mechanism does not provide affordability. New development, although clustered, still results in relatively large and expensive lots that are not affordable for permanent members of the community.
- In many situations cluster development does not fulfill the conservation or visual quality objectives for which it was originally intended. According to some people interviewed, cluster development has created negative impacts on natural and scenic resources.

Recommendations for addressing these challenges include the following:

- Apply cluster bonuses only in situations where the clustering conserves identified natural and scenic resources or fulfills the principles of satellite community development.
- Improve resource mapping, interpretation, and development standards to identify clearly areas most suitable for development.
- Provide affordable housing in rural areas of the county by allowing accessory units with large homes and by encouraging onsite housing for workers and families that operate ranches and other large landholdings.

Satellite Communities

The idea of clustering development is not new in the county. As already described, county zoning encourages clustering large lots. In 1996, the Planned Unit Development for Planned Resort District took clustering to the next level by zoning concentrated resort centers in the county. The concept evolved further with the 1999 transportation addition to the Town and County Comprehensive Plan that requires that development in the county be provided in transportation-efficient nodes. The panel agrees that concentrated community nodes in the county are a good mechanism for accommodating growth; provided they are properly designed, developed, and serviced.

This development plan faces challenges that include the following:

- A need for additional development in the county to respond to growth pressures and provide quality affordable housing;
- A demand for additional development that does not reduce the importance to the community of protecting natural and scenic resources;
- A lack of capacity by the county to provide the services required to support higher-density node development;
- A concern of citizens that growth is threatening the strong sense of community that is the Jackson tradition; new growth in the county needs to be in a form that creates community.

Recommendations for addressing these challenges include the following:

- Implement the 1999 Transportation Plan recommendations to develop the following nodes of concentrated development in the form of satellite communities:
 - Teton Village
 - Teton Pines
 - Wilson
 - Porter Ranch
 - Rafter J/Melody Ranch/Seherr-Thoss area
- Provide adequate land area and density in the satellite communities so they can support some level of community facilities and services and provide affordable housing.
- Develop satellite communities that embrace the following principles:
 - Higher density
 - Mixed use
 - Residential diversity that includes affordable housing
 - Village or neighborhood pattern
 - Walkability
 - Community and commercial services
 - Transit connections
 - Sewer, water and other infrastructure
- Develop a county mechanism to provide a municipal level of infrastructure and services to satellite communities.
- Establish development regulations to facilitate community development that meets the prescribed principles.

Town of Jackson

Those interviewed by the panel expressed a consensus that the town is a good location for growth to occur without compromising expectations for conservation and affordability. Everyone also understands that Jackson symbolizes the American West in the eyes of the nation, the world, and, most importantly, the people who live there. Growth should not compromise the character of the place. Both apprehension about what change might bring and frustration from a lack of action exist. The question is how to proceed.

Issues

Several issues related to future growth and development of the Town of Jackson emerged. These issues include the following:

- The town's land resources are economically underused. Many areas of Jackson within walking distance of the town square are low density and appear to be underused, considering the extremely high land values.
- An opportunity exists to use infill and redevelopment. The remoteness of Jackson has protected the town from some of the massive boom-time development that has overwhelmed portions of mountain communities like the western edge of Telluride and Lions Head at Vail in Colorado, and much of Park City, Utah. The general quality of the development industry, as well as architecture, in mountain communities has improved significantly in recent years. Fortunately, the scale and pattern of development in Jackson have remained intact while the state of quality development in western mountain communities has matured.
- It appears that the ability exists in Jackson to design and develop individual buildings that have the character and quality consistent with the community's expectations. The addition to the Presbyterian church, the Friess building, and the Yellowstone Garage Restaurant demonstrate those capabilities.
- Most of the people interviewed agreed that the current land use regulations will not facilitate high-quality mixed-use infill and redevelopment.

Observations and recommendations for addressing these issues include the following:

- The panel agrees with the general consensus that properly executed infill and redevelopment within the existing town is a good growth strategy.
- Infill and redevelopment is a new approach in Jackson and will require collaboration among developers, citizens, and the government to establish a process and plans that provide growth that is both affordable and in character with the town.
- Although there is community consensus for appropriate infill and redevelopment, adequate clarity of expectations suitable to guide such development appears to be lacking. The design professionals articulated clear visions for the future beyond those documented in the Comprehensive Plan. The town should engage local professionals to document the community vision and to establish design and development principles, design guidelines, and downtown design plans that integrate program elements and serve as a measure to evaluate infill and redevelopment proposals.

- After clarity for the future has been established, land use regulations should be updated to facilitate developments that implement community desires.
- Planners and developers should provide examples of the community's expectations by using existing projects in town or from other mountain communities and by collaborating to develop a model project.
- The town needs to look at publicly owned land like the maintenance yards for redevelopment opportunities.

PROVIDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Providing affordable housing is a challenge nation wide. All communities want and need to have a balanced community representing the people who live, work, own businesses, volunteer, and retire in the area. Jackson it is no different, but providing housing that is affordable is becoming increasingly difficult. This difficulty is manifest in employee recruitment problems, overcrowding in what housing there is, inability of grown children of longtime residents to buy into a community, and families choosing to leave for more affordable locations. In coping with the effects of lack of affordability, every community faces a hard choice: to either increase density or provide subsidies for housing. In Jackson, the opportunity still exists to address the housing need by choosing density and strategically using subsidy where gaps exist in the provision of housing.

This panel identified five challenges to creating housing that supports a community: (1) high land values, (2) regulatory mismatches, (3) inadequate delivery systems, (4) scattered efforts, and (5) the not-in-my-backyard (NIMBY) syndrome. Each of these items influences housing prices and production. Described below are some of the challenges associated with each of these and recommended solutions that address the challenges and that will help Jackson achieve a more balanced community.

High Land Values

Challenges

- Lowering density in the county contributed to higher land values. Higher land values have been exacerbated by higher demand, a strong national economy bringing in outside money, and the amount of land subject to conservation easements.
- Town land use regulations discourage redevelopment. Of particular concern in terms of housing are the downtown core and surrounding residential areas, which appear ripe for redevelopment.
- Little or no land or floor-area inventory exists on which to develop the low- to middle-priced housing stock.
- Low floor/area ratio in the downtown inhibits the ability to include housing in the development mix for the town core.
- Low wages for some employment sectors prohibit those workers from obtaining housing in the community.

Proposed Solutions

Higher land values have been caused by a variety of factors, some of which are within the control of the local community, and some of which reflect strong locally held values regarding open space and the western character of the valley and Jackson. These open-space values are often portrayed as being pitted against affordable housing. Sometimes the two vie for the same land. The panel believes that both open space and housing goals can be maintained, especially because open space conservation efforts have been highly successful to date. The expressed desires to maintain the character and community of Jackson can be

met, but change must still happen. Much of what Jackson values can be retained by implementing land use regulations that guide new development into the cluster land use pattern and satellite communities described in the Planning for Growth section of this report.

The single most effective way to address high land values and bring down the cost of housing, without using a subsidy approach, is to increase the inventory of land available for housing development. In particular, land available for small-lot single-family development and for multifamily development should be augmented by increasing density through zoning districts with minimum densities rather than maximum densities. This zoning strategy diminishes the opportunity for development of larger, more expensive homes on larger lots that usually occurs with the more traditional maximum-density approach of most zoning districts.

The panel also recommends increasing the floor/area ratio for the downtown core of the town, which is currently 0.65. A floor/area ratio of at least 2:1 in the downtown core would allow developers of a downtown parcel the flexibility of adding an extra floor (in Jackson this equates to a third story). This floor-area bonus should be for housing only. The housing should represent a mix of price ranges: not all affordable housing and not all market rate. This strategy is recommended simply because the community needs that mix to support a robust downtown and to meet other community wide objectives. The land development regulations should address the potential effect of taller buildings on the street, especially during the winter months (snow, ice buildup, shadows), and should set up a mechanism to allow that price mix to occur.

Land banking can be used to acquire land specifically for future housing. This tool has the effect of stabilizing land cost for future development. It should be noted that land banking does compete with the free-market response by taking land out of the inventory of land available for current development. This competition could again increase land prices. Nevertheless, land banking is a useful tool in preserving key parcels for future housing needs.

Regulatory Mismatches

The term regulatory mismatches is used here to describe all those cases in which the community knows what it wants to do, everyone thinks the plan makes sense, but the land development regulations or other regulations prevent the community from getting there. This kind of regulatory mismatch between the community's goals and its tangible actions depresses the reuse of outdated development in the town core and can result in less-than-desirable redevelopment.

Challenges

- Zoning for small lots is inadequate.
- No mixed-use zoning exists.
- Town and county zoning codes are inconsistent.
- HUD (Department of Housing and Urban Development)-code mobile homes or manufactured homes are thought to be no longer allowed.

- Dormitory and seasonal housing competes with other more economically viable uses in the zoning districts where such housing is allowed.
- The amount of housing required as mitigation does not keep up with either need or demand for housing.
- The approval process for development is difficult, lengthy, and unpredictable.

Proposed Solutions

As indicated above, small-lot zoning is recommended to provide more land inventory for the affordable housing. The land development regulations also need a mixed-use zone or planned-development overlay that includes housing. These should be included in *both* the town and the county land development regulations.

The land development regulations should clearly state that housing constructed off site (often called “manufactured housing”) is allowed. As well, locations appropriate for seasonal and dormitory housing should be identified and complementary regulations should be established to allow this housing type.

Accessory dwelling units are another important housing type that will increase available housing stock and that can foster the variety in lifestyles wanted in Jackson. Accessory dwelling units are appropriate for both the town (over garages, as “in-law apartments,” converted attics, or lofts) and the county (for ranches as well as the satellite communities). Again, accessory dwelling units should be clearly defined and regulations should be written to encourage them throughout the community.

The definition of “family” for certain zoning districts, limiting the number of unrelated persons who can live in a residential unit, is of some concern. The desire to minimize overcrowding is understandable, but other mechanisms to address that concern should be used.

The town and the county must be partners in the efforts to provide affordable community housing. The land development regulations for each should mirror one another in terms of any similar zoning districts as well as in housing definitions. This congruence will minimize confusion regarding what is allowed, where it is allowed, and how housing development occurs. It sends a clear message that both the town and the county are partners in providing for the range of housing needed for all community members. This partnership will also minimize opportunities to play the town and the county against one another in the development approval process.

As well as common land use regulations, the town and county need to have a joint housing plan that addresses housing in the town and identified county development nodes. This plan should be used to guide the distribution of housing, that is, the mix and type of units desired and acceptable. Specifically, this plan should illustrate different housing types, including off-site constructed units, to give potential developers and the community a visual picture of what housing and affordable housing will look like. This vision will lower anxiety and misinterpretations about what the community wants when affordable housing is being considered.

The dispersion of affordable housing throughout the community is important to overcoming the fears about creating a dumping ground for affordable housing. Both the town and the county should contribute to meeting the affordable housing goals of the community. When everyone contributes, a mix of housing types and prices is produced, with a broader range of choice in housing for the community as a whole.

Some interviewees indicated concerns with the level of mitigation for housing required from new development. A perception exists that the requirement varies, but generally housing mitigation for 15 percent of the employees generated by the development is required. In the panel's view, this level is not enough to provide the volume of housing needed to meet employee demand for housing. Grave consequences arise from not requiring mitigation at a level that addresses actual demand. Costs to construct housing are constantly going up, especially in resort communities. Falling behind now limits choices about where employees can live in the future. As land becomes scarcer in Teton County, employees will be forced to live farther away and commute, adding to the traffic congestion. The appropriate level of mitigation should be determined by working with employers to identify the amount of housing they are already providing to meet their employment needs.

A 100 percent mitigation requirement (that is, every employee generated must be housed) is neither practical nor realistic. It fails to recognize that not everyone who works in the town or the county would choose to live there even if unlimited housing were available. The requirement should also be adjusted as local economics and needs change. Balance employers' and business owners' costs to provide required housing against their standard business costs—the mitigation requirement should not be so great as to chill desired business change and growth.

Unpredictability in the development approval process translates into project delays and increased costs. The approval process needs to be straightforward with minimal points for negotiation or litigation. Clearly defined land use approval requirements and time frames for review of development proposals will help to minimize delays in the development of housing. Establish requirements for off-site improvements, such as utility improvements and fees, early in the development review process. This procedure will keep housing development moving and reduce costs. Streamline or fast-track the construction permitting process—one way is to give a priority review to any project with an affordable housing component. Identify what standard public utilities the town and the county are willing to contribute to affordable housing to help get it built. Be willing to adjust design standards for streets and lighting and to use innovative solutions for drainage to make an affordable housing project work. Find ways to be a partner with all affordable housing providers, to say “yes, we can make it happen.”

Inadequate or Inefficient Delivery Capacity

Challenges

Being able to deliver affordable housing has always been a challenge in most communities. In Jackson, the reasons for this difficulty include:

- Lack of cooperation among public and private sector, and nongovernmental organization efforts;
- Lack of construction labor, particularly for price-restricted segments of the market;

- Low employer sponsorship of housing (estimated at 25 percent of the employers).

Proposed Solutions

Potential solutions for addressing these challenges include the following:

- Create a seed-capital fund for employer provision of housing. Employers have the largest vested interest providing housing. It affects the economic viability of their businesses, the experience of the resort guest or client, and the perception of Jackson as a friendly, hospitable western place to be. In other words, the benefits of making sure that employees are adequately housed can be quantified in most cases, and the cost probably pays off in improved profits or cost savings. Estimates of costs being incurred to subsidize housing ranged widely, but the following are examples of what employers are doing now:
 - Buying bus passes;
 - Paying \$300 “cost of living” bonuses for living costs;
 - Buying units in the market and charging \$0 to “market” to ensure availability of housing.

For employer housing strategies to be successful, the employer must have the discretion to use the housing for its own employees. Most employers have a difficult time justifying participation in housing creation schemes that produce general housing stock because such schemes do not relate to the productivity of their own business. Therefore, engaging the energy and resources of the employers requires making it easy for them to help themselves.

The public sector could stimulate employer sponsored housing by providing resources to employers such as seed capital for predevelopment expenses (planning, architectural, engineering, etc.) to jointly build/redevelop housing. By helping employers cooperatively build their own housing, the “seed capital” support could:

- Facilitate matching seasonal needs of employers;
- Reduce the image of “company town” housing;
- Provide an economy of scale for smaller employers who typically cannot economical produce housing.

The seed capital for such an effort could be collected from the businesses themselves as sponsors, contributed from public coffers, and paid back from production of housing, or could be a combination (matching) program, thus illustrating the value of the cooperation between both of the sectors.

Taking the concept of seed capital one step further, the county and town housing plan could include a fund for employer assistance housing. The fund which could be established from multiple sources (private contributions or assessments, facilities taxes, sales tax contributions, etc.), could provide employers with matching funds for their own

provision of housing in return for something that guarantees the long-term creation of housing, such as deed restrictions limiting residency and income of the housing's beneficiary or limitations on the percentage of income used by them for housing or lease payments.

- Use off-site construction techniques to provide housing. The single biggest economic engine in Jackson is the construction industry. To diminish the employment-generating attributes of building housing for the community, encouraging the use of quality off-site construction may be helpful. Idaho, Washington, and Oregon have centers for the production of high-quality housing, particularly housing that conforms with the Uniform Building Code, which may increase the quality and decrease the cost effects of the housing construction.
- Encourage the concept of a “location-efficient mortgage”. By helping and encouraging people to live closer to work and services, Jackson and Teton County have the opportunity to underscore their commitment to environmental concerns and resource conservation, specifically by minimizing the tremendous social and personal cost of long commutes.

Banks can underwrite loans held in portfolio at higher underwriting limits (e.g., 35 percent instead of 28 to 30 percent as the percentage of housing costs to total income) *if* the homebuyer lives in town or at one of the county's transportation “nodes.” Fannie Mae is experimenting with this concept in several larger markets elsewhere in the United States. In the near future, the concept may be broadly accepted for loans that qualify for the secondary market.

Banks are providing loans to employers for the rental housing that they are providing employees. Banks may be able to create further incentives for employers by participating in the construction financing of employer-sponsored housing—perhaps increasing the loan to cost/value ratios permitted in general construction financing—and by recognizing the high demand for lower-cost housing and the ability to easily resell units to other employers if the sponsor cannot meet the loan obligations.

Scattered Efforts

Challenge

No apparent torchbearer exists for the affordable-housing mission in the Town of Jackson or in Teton County. Because of this, there are dispersed regulatory and oversight responsibility, diluted coordination of future opportunities, and heightened distrust among the various providers of housing—particularly between the public sector and the various private sector responses to housing needs.

Proposed Solutions

Potential solutions for addressing the issues related to the scattered efforts to provide affordable housing include the following:

- Establish a single entity (e.g., the Housing Authority) as a resource center for both the town and county housing plan for all housing developers, including the private sector.

The Housing Authority might pull together both standard and nonstandard resources, such as:

- Low-income housing tax credits;
 - Funds for purchasing homes;
 - Facilities tax recipient and “donor/allocator”;
 - Lands purchased or given to public entities;
 - Seed capital;
 - Tax-exempt bonding.
- Underscore the commitment of the Housing Authority to be the “houser of last resort.” If gaps occur in the responses to housing from the private for-profit, nonprofit, and employer sectors, the Housing Authority can help identify not only the funding resources, but also the production resources.
 - Even with the most stalwart of efforts, filling the current gap in housing demand and keeping up with future growth in demand will be daunting. Supporting an ongoing public relations and public education effort will help sustain the incredible commitment needed for political will.

“Not in My Backyard”—NIMBYism

Challenge

NIMBYism is a major constraint to locating and providing affordable housing in communities around the country. It leads to delays in the permitting process and significantly increases costs, scares the providers of housing (both public and private sector), demoralizes the volunteers who advocate for equitable treatment of all citizens, and uses an inordinate amount of public meeting time (and newspaper column inches).

The flexibility that the automobile provides individuals in their choice of housing has led to severe economic segregation of our population. It is this expectation of segregation that has heightened NIMBY behavior throughout the country. Although some neighbors probably will continue to raise objections to housing that is not just like theirs, several strategies can lessen the pain of NIMBY behavior.

Proposed Solutions

Possible solutions for getting beyond NIMBYism include the following:

- Create a housing district overlay in the town and satellite communities that gives “by right” housing approval for building activities that conform to the terms of the district. The overlay could define a type of building or home that can be provided on lots that would be too small and inefficient to use for the public residential development zoning application process or the mixed-use zone that is currently being considered. The building or home allowed might grant a higher density than is available in the underlying district in return for a deed restriction; it might be a preapproved design and it would encourage a diversity of housing in neighborhoods. To encourage the acceptance of such an overlay district in the community at large, the district may require that housing be located in a dispersed format within the district (e.g., no more than four buildings in a

prescribed subarea). Projects that have a larger impact would still be required to go through the public hearing process required of PUD-type developments.

- Build housing before other development, where possible. Phasing development can help avoid NIMBY behavior by requiring affordable housing to be built before, or at least in parallel with, the production of the alternate uses surrounding or adjacent to the affordable housing. Most people find affordable housing quite acceptable once it is in place. The residents are people who are known to the neighbors, the designs (hopefully) are attractive, and the horrors typically described in public hearings are not realized. The more good-quality, well-designed, and well-managed examples of housing that exist in the community, the more confidence people have in accepting the density and income restrictions “next door.”
- Actively recruit and involve all members of the community—particularly the “old guard” and “new guard” wealthy—to endorse and encourage integration of housing. Providing equitable housing opportunities within the community can become a fashionable campaign.

ADDRESSING TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

The Town of Jackson and Teton County are facing some complex issues related to transportation and traffic. A high summer population has led to significant traffic increases during peak times. High land and home prices in the valley have forced some people into long-distance commuting. However, it must be understood that people make rational choices about their personal travel. It is not wrong, or a sin, to drive a car.

Even if no more people moved to the valley, traffic volumes would continue to grow. Transit is not the sole answer to the transportation problems. The town and county must deal with traffic issues in an ongoing and innovative fashion. First, everyone needs to face up to the problem; and then, start taking many steps in many directions. There is no one answer, and there will always be some traffic congestion. The key is to take the many small steps needed to keep traffic demand at manageable levels.

Primary Challenges

At least one transportation planner is needed on staff. The town and county should arrange to hire the transportation planner under a sharing agreement. Because of the constant need for updated data on parking, traffic patterns, pedestrian flow, transit use, congestion issues, travel patterns, and seasonal patterns as well as the constant need to talk to the community at large, build consensus, and understand special issues and problems, a person (or persons), in addition to the existing planning and public works staff, is needed to address transportation issues. This person will perform duties such as the following:

- Negotiate with the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT), federal agencies, conservation groups, and citizens.
- Develop creative ways to reduce tourist circling downtown.
- Obtain needed funding for projects of all kinds.
- Work with existing staff to coordinate land use/transportation crossover.
- Develop a reasonable set of parking requirements that people can rely on when developing or redeveloping parcels.
- Develop an effective shared-parking program.
- Analyze the economics of parking garages.
- Identify logical locations for future parking, in case demand outstrips projections.
- Develop and implement innovative programs to reduce local trips (create cyber cafés; encourage delivery systems for grocery stores, cleaners, and services; introduce DSL/fiber optics into homes for better Internet ordering; encourage demonstration projects of all kinds). Also, the panel recommends going forward with home postal delivery service. Trips to the post office represent four to five percent of all daily trips. This is as much as might be captured by transit.

- Find innovative programs to help construction and other service employees get to work from outlying areas (e.g., it is often impractical for construction workers to use transit because they need their tools).
- Represent the town and county as a unified, agreeable partnership because federal agencies tend to forego funding in areas where little or no local consensus exists.
- Organize and assist with matching fund programs.
- Work on long-term issues such as spot widening and alternative routes.
- Coordinate with other counties and states.
- Work with the START bus providers and private transit providers.
- Work continuously with the National Park Service.

Another challenge is the large disconnect between public perception and opinion: most people do not want roads widened, but most people also think there is or will be too much traffic congestion. Over time, such congestion in Jackson may become unbearable. The congestion levels discussed during the interviews would not be considered insufferable in many areas, but the panel's instinct is that these levels would be unacceptable here. People have a choice to make: either suffer congestion over several months of the year (summer and probably increasingly in the early fall), or take steps to provide some road widening and some alternative routes; however, these decisions must be made soon. The lead times for road improvements are enormous. Public opinion may sway overnight from "absolutely no widening/no new roads" to "we've got to do something now." Such improvements take time, possibly 5 to 10 years before any relief would be available, because of required studies, funding cycles, and construction schedules.

No one can stop people from driving. The trip-generation rate per household in Jackson is higher than the national average, and much higher than in dense urban areas. And widening roads does not create traffic. Traffic is caused by people driving their cars to a logical destination. No new road capacity has been added in Seattle in 30 years (with the exception of the bridge section of I-90), but traffic volumes have more than doubled. The result is an untenable situation. The same is true in Portland and the San Francisco Bay Area. (Although South Bay has added roadway capacity, but was not built for 20 years after it was needed, and therefore immediately filled to capacity.)

It appears that sufficient right-of-way and access rights in the public domain do not exist to widen parts or all of Wyoming 22 and 390. That means the lead time for any future widening will be quite long and probably contentious because the access must be acquired.

Potential Solutions

Recommendations for addressing some of these issues include the following:

- The town and county need to coordinate with WYDOT. This coordination does not mean that WYDOT should make the decisions. The transportation planner can go a long way

toward creating a workable relationship and making sure that the county and town needs are met.

- Within six months, the town and county need to start identifying areas for spot widening and turn-lane locations that will address short-term congestion issues. These would ideally be located where public right-of-way already exists or is easily accomplished and should be constructed within five years.
- The county should identify, within six months, logical bypass routes for residents. Such routes are key for both downtown and some of the fringe areas. The county possibly could carry out these projects without having to involve WYDOT. Relief from traffic congestion may never be achieved if this type of planning is not done. The process is not easy and some landowners may fight it. Route choices must be logical for travel and must be constructed in a way that minimizes effects on surrounding landowners (e.g., keep speeds down through careful design).
- The town and county should start the process of determining workable highway improvements. Widening roads is just one possible solution. The decision to widen roads does not need to be made today; however, the planning should begin so that if widening is needed in some places in the future, it can happen in a timely fashion.
- The town and county should start immediately working proactively to establish positive relationships with conservancy groups. Many easements are held along the public roadways. The policy reaction of these groups may be “no way, no widening.” But people are part of the environment, and safety and quality of life should not be sacrificed completely to land conservation. Traffic will continue to grow even if no one else moves to Jackson, and increasing congestion problems and perhaps safety problems will arise.
- The town and county should start working on establishing great relationships with appropriate agencies in Washington, D.C. Congressional support may be needed for some road improvements.
- The town and county must start a good working relationship with the State Transportation Board. The board needs to understand the value to the state of tourism and other economies of the valley for the economic health of the entire state. The town and county should invite members of the board to Jackson and help them understand the limitations of the taxing structure. Help them learn that the roads carry a large percentage of all state tourism dollars.
- The town and county should look for line-item projects, such as recreational highways and tourism areas, that can be funded through T21 funds.
- The town and county should keep in mind the problems that might be caused if Wyoming 22 is more than two lanes at the point where the road rises toward the pass. Teton Pass Road will likely never be widened. Multiple lanes on the westbound approach could cause real congestion because of last-minute merging.
- In all road improvement plans, the town and county should keep walking and bicycling in mind. Make under- and overpasses part of such projects, to the extent possible. Because of clearance requirements for trucks on highways, Americans with Disabilities Act

requirements for maximum slopes on ramps, a high water table, and freezing or ice conditions, constructing these improvements calls for creativity.

- The town and county should coordinate with the National Park Service, because it has seen a dramatic increase in traffic along the road north from Teton Village.
- The town and county must balance concerns about congestion with concerns about speeding. No one can really project speeding behavior, but the single largest contributor to speeding is a physically wide road with a wide visual road (which is common in Jackson).

Downtown Traffic Congestion

The highest projected future traffic volumes run right through the middle of town, where the road has the lowest capacity (caused by low speeds and 90-degree turns). Downtown traffic may be the biggest challenge. Some have suggested removing on-street parking along the highway route and adding more lanes, but this plan discourages pedestrians, and merchants likely will not accept it. Opportunities for reducing traffic issues downtown include the following:

- Build intercept parking lots.
- Strongly encourage walking, biking, and using transit (which may mean keeping the shuttle free of charge and maintaining a very high level of service).
- Identify alternative routes for local residents to use during peak months (but do not make them obvious to tourists).
- Increase parking and traffic control during summer months; possibly use manual traffic control and direction during peak summer weekend days.
- Develop an ongoing information program for peak season. Remind residents of peak tourism days and times, and discourage them from traveling through the town's heart at those times. Encourage people to use flex days and vacations when feasible during the summer. Work on delivery systems so that several people could be served by one delivery vehicle.

The 5-Way

The area where West Broadway, Pearl Avenue, and Flat Creek Drive come together will become increasingly congested over time; however, drivers really have no other options. Two possible remedies exist to relieve some of the pressure at this area.

- Introduce a roundabout. This solution may not be acceptable for either the local population or tourists. The new transportation planner will need to evaluate carefully success stories in other tourism areas. The danger is that because of the lack of experience, everyone slows down so much as they approach the roundabout that delays actually get worse. But given the volumes and multiple legs of the existing intersection, the roundabout is a viable option.

- Remove one or more legs of the intersection. Five-legged signalized intersections are inefficient. Because every leg has a signal phase, a lot of “green time” is lost over the course of an hour. In other words, more time is wasted for yellows, reds, and driver reaction to move on green. Closing off a leg is possible, but such action needs careful planning to maintain reasonable access.

Alternative Modes of Transportation

Jackson does very well with respect to carpooling (28 percent of all trips are two or more people), bicycling, and walking. To date, public transit has not been as popular. There seems to be broad public sympathy for transit, but no transit ridership history. This situation is not unusual. Most people, if asked if transit is a good idea, will say yes. That response is not the same as saying they will use transit. The following recommendations will help meet transit goals:

- Treat transit as a marketing issue. To get people to ride buses and to keep them riding buses, transit must be sold. START seems to have many good ideas about this. The Pathways programs are also a good example of marketing to users, although they could do more to reach both residents and tourists.
- In Jackson, as in most areas, transit seems to work well for the journey to work. It will not ever carry many other trips, with the possible exception of tourists.
- Tourists are a great market for transit. They are on vacation and are more likely to do the unexpected—like ride a bus.
- Start very small and expand as ridership increases. Do not make huge capital expenditure until there is proof of ongoing demand. START seems to use this strategy.
- Offer many types of transit, not just big ugly urban buses. Again, START seems to use this approach.
- Share resources. A larger demand exists in the summer for long-haul routes, and a high demand for ski shuttle service exists in the winter.
- Keep in mind that transit does not make money. It is an ongoing public subsidy. No public transit system in this country pays its own way. The community must weigh the cost of subsidy against the benefit to the community as a whole. Keep an eye on ridership. Transit is not a good public investment if it is not capturing trips (e.g., if it carries only 1 percent of all daily trips).
- To charge or not to charge. It does not seem fair that people use a bus for free, but at least in the downtown area, they probably will not ride it unless it is free. Because the fare box capture tends to be low, the question becomes is it better just to have people on the bus or to have fewer people who have to pay.

Transit ridership will be low unless:

- Few alternatives exist (e.g., charge for parking or make parking extremely scarce).

- Traffic congestion gets truly awful.
- Transit is free and easy to use (no more than an average seven- minute wait for buses).
- Even with five percent ridership, transit will have only a minor effect on daily vehicle trips. The town and county still need to explore long-term road improvement options, as discussed previously.
- As a community, the town and county should evaluate the cost/benefit ratio of transit as compared to other alternative modes of transportation.. Currently, nine percent of all trips are by walking and six percent are by bike—more than transit will ever reach. Yet public investment in pedestrian and bike modes is quite low. The town and county should continue to fund good linkages for pedestrians and bikes.
- Be realistic in expectations. Some people may be able to ride their bikes in the snow or walk to the grocery store to do major shopping, but this does not work for a lot of people.
- Encourage alternative modes not yet explored, such as private systems, delivery systems, or telecommuting (these are small but could grow through services). The zoning code also can be modified to allow home offices and combined work-live spaces, if it does not do so already.
- Continue to encourage carpooling. Rewards, such as good parking spaces and perhaps cash incentives, can go a long way. Currently, carpooling is contributing more to trip reduction than transit, biking, and walking combined.
- A busway along Highway 390 is not a good investment. At \$1 million per two-lane mile capital cost, this expense is difficult to justify. The busway would likely be needed only 30 to 40 days per year, on the very busiest skiing days. It would not be needed at all outside of ski season. Teton Village will have enough parking during the summer months to accommodate most people who want to drive all of the way there. Investigate offering incentives, such as discounts on the tram, to encourage transit use in the summer from the interceptor lot at the intersection of Wyoming 390 and 22.
- Investigate a single, changeable carpool lane, which would be used much more heavily.

Second Snake River Crossing

Although a second crossing over the Snake River might be needed in the future, it is not feasible at this time due to a number of factors, such as regulatory requirements, public controversy, potential litigation, and the high cost of land acquisition. The travel demand needed to compete for funding is also difficult to demonstrate. Although concern is expressed about a catastrophic failure on the existing bridge, services and alternative routes are available on both sides of the river. However, the town and county need to continue to look for ways to provide sufficient services and emergency services on both sides of the river.

Parking

With respect to parking, the panel discovered that more data are needed: seasonal, annual, turnover, duration. Surveys on who is parking where and why will help to solve the parking problem. The town and county also need to rewrite the parking regulations. They need to analyze, for instance, whether demand justifies requiring three or four parking spaces per thousand square feet of development. Employees probably do need to park away from downtown during peak summer season, but in the off-season they should be allowed to park closer in. Over time, off-season tourism may grow and there may be a need for a workable long-term location for employee parking. The town and county should also identify additional tourism parking interceptor lots on the north side of town for tourists who are traveling to the village from the north. The Stilson lot, thought designed to serve as a satellite parking lot for Teton Village, may also be used as an interceptor lot for tourists in the summer, but it probably will serve visitors arriving only from the west. The town should also find ways to get advance information to tourists about interceptor parking locations. In addition, better signage is needed to off-street parking, especially for visitors.

The public now does not favor charging for parking downtown. However, this view may change over time. The panel suggests reevaluating this issue in two years, in light of data to be gathered during the next two summer seasons.

Conclusions

All in all, the panel believes that the traffic issues in Teton County are solvable. Creativity and patience are needed, but with the community working together, the situation can, and will, improve.

STRUCTURING GOVERNMENT AND PROVIDING SERVICES

The panel was charged with addressing three subjects –growth patterns, affordable housing, and transportation. At the core of the effectiveness of public policies and programs in these three areas is an appropriate governmental structure. The panel strongly believes that unless the subject of governmental structure is addressed, effective policies and programs in these areas have only a limited chance of long-term sustainability. Further, many of the panel’s recommendations involve joint initiatives by the town and county but at present no formal structure for pursuing joint efforts exists.

The panel was impressed with the thoughtful efforts of Teton County and the Town of Jackson in the areas of planning for future growth and initiatives to date on the delivery of affordable housing. On the other hand, the panel was less impressed, and indeed, in some cases disturbed, that policies and programs of the county and town are either at direct cross-purposes, or worse, negatively affect each other.

In the panel’s opinion, the policies and programs of the county and town in the areas of future growth patterns, affordable housing, and transportation are integrally connected. The panel recognizes this general statement could be applicable in virtually thousands of counties and towns across the country. However, the physical geography and the limited amount of privately owned land in the county establish a dynamic of connectivity that is more pronounced than in other jurisdictions of which the panel is aware. For example, the county’s 1994 Comprehensive Plan eliminated small-lot zoning and shifted emphasis exclusively to large-lot development. Although the panel has not seen clear empirical data, the anecdotal information reviewed by the panel suggests that the current “crisis” in affordable housing can be attributed in part to the county’s adoption of its 1994 Comprehensive Plan with revised lot development standards. After the adoption of the 1994 Comprehensive Plan, the absorption of the inventory of unsold small lots, which were not replaced, correlates to the escalating price of housing. This factor, along with a strong economy during the 1980s and 1990s that created an external demand for second homes, contributed to the lack of affordable housing. Similarly, annexing the South Park area—in whole or in part—will affect profoundly countywide growth patterns for decades as well as shift fiscal resources between the county and the town.

In light of the close connectivity between the policies and programs of Teton County and the Town of Jackson in the areas of growth patterns, affordable housing, and transportation, the panel has elected to include this additional section on governmental structure. In the panel’s view, significant opportunities exist for the county and town, as well as the town and downtown merchants and land owners, to develop effective long-term policies and programs through retooling, on a selective basis, governmental structures.

The Basis for Collaboration

Throughout the interview process, a large number of commonly held concerns were expressed by representatives of the county and the town. In reflecting on these common concerns, the panel was struck by how closely aligned the county and town are in five areas of mutual concern, as outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Areas of Concern to Teton County and the Town of Jackson

Area of Concern	Issues
Tax Base	Both jurisdictions principally rely on sales taxes as their primary source of revenue. Given that population residing within each jurisdiction is the basis for allocating this revenue source, both jurisdictions expressed concerns about the location of future growth.
Delivery of Public Services	Both jurisdictions expressed concern over their respective ability to deliver services to their residents, although the level and type of services differs.
Housing Affordability	Both jurisdictions expressed concern on the immediate and long-term production of affordable housing. The town expressed the additional concern that it not serve as the de facto dumping ground for all the affordable housing needs of the valley.
Growth Patterns	Both jurisdictions expressed concern about the pattern of growth. The town's concerns were largely confined to how to provide for future expansion capability, principally through annexation. The county's concerns were expressed through a focused effort to develop new "growth nodes."
Natural Resources	Both jurisdictions expressed deep concerns that future growth patterns and their overall planning and development process preserve the valley's unique natural resources.

In the panel's opinion, the close alignment of areas of concern provides a strong basis on which to craft, on a selected basis, retooled governmental structures. To create retooled governmental structures, the conflicts that separate the county and the town will need to be resolved.

The panel observed the following areas of conflict, which presently impede creating governmental structures that can effectively address the areas of future growth patterns, affordable housing, and transportation. (See Table 2.)

Table 2: Areas of Conflict Between Teton County and the Town of Jackson

Areas of Conflict	County	Town
Annexation–Tax Base Control	The annexation of the Rafter J subdivision is estimated to shift eight percent of the sales tax collections to the town; no replacement revenue resources have yet been identified. The county will need to increase taxes or reduce services or do both to offset the loss of revenue from an annexation of Rafter J.	The Rafter J annexation is estimated to shift eight percent of the sales tax collections to the town; all revenue gain in the early years is proposed to be expended for capital outlays for repairing Rafter J’s sewer system.
Scope and Level of Service Delivery	The county presently does not provide water and sewer; numerous private districts exist in the county, but their long-term economic viability is unknown. The county’s future “growth nodes” policy does not now address the financing of water and sewer service delivery.	The town has water and sewer capacity that can accommodate a 100% increase in use.
Affordable Housing	The county chiefly relies on an ad hoc system of exactions from new development to produce affordable housing.	The town chiefly relies on an ad hoc system of exactions from new development to produce affordable housing.
Plans And Development Regulations	The current master plan and development regulations are out of sync with town’s.	The current master plan and development regulations are out of sync with the county’s.
Data and Standards for Land Use Decision Making	The Planning Department lacks adequate data and standards for land use decisions and associated effects.	The Planning Department lacks adequate data and standards for land use decisions and associated effects.

Opportunities for Retooling—the County and Town

To the panel, the areas of mutual interest between the county and the town substantially outweigh the nature and depth of the present conflicts in these areas. Indeed, the strength of the shared areas of mutual concern are compelling and offer the very framework of opportunities for examining and crafting retooled governmental structures.

The panel identified three potential areas for retooling governmental structure between the county and the town. In the panel’s opinion these areas represent a starting point and,

accordingly, are not presented as definitive. For discussion purposes, these opportunities are organized into three categories, each of which contains specific opportunities for retooling existing governmental structures.

1. Common Programs Bound by Intergovernmental Agreements.

A number of areas exist in which the county and town could achieve more effective use of existing resources and reduce conflicts through a series of intergovernmental agreements. These areas include the following:

Area	Potential Benefits
Common zoning and development regulations	Removes distortions in private land use decisions favoring location or development in one jurisdiction versus the other; provides tighter ordinances to direct future growth
Combined departments of engineering	Reduces budget stress and lowers cost by reduced overhead; consolidation could better deploy existing resources and improve service capabilities and quality
Common growth strategy	Eliminates conflicts in development plans; permits joint allocation of resources to better service future growth
Annexation	Defines standards and terms where it is in the mutual interest to permit annexation; potentially provides the basis to address fiscal dislocation (revenue shift and assumption of liabilities) precipitated by an annexation
Consolidation of water and sewer service	Eliminates the potential conflict if and when private districts fail; increases service and delivery and improves standard of maintenance by using the town's well-functioning, existing operations; provides the framework and potential funding basis to install and maintain water and sewer systems in the county's "growth nodes"

2. Sharing of Resources (by Program or by Function).

Similarly to common programs bound by intergovernmental agreements between the county and the town, opportunities exist to share or reallocate existing resources to achieve improved effectiveness in current programs and activities. Some of these areas include the following:

Area	Potential Benefits
Planning department information systems (e.g. GIS and others/ development approval standards)	Provides a uniform point of reference in evaluating new development proposals and analyzing policy implications of land use decisions
Building permits and approvals	Provides a uniform basis for approvals; lowers costs and can provide for one stop permitting

3. Joint Capital Facilities Financing Program.

The capital facilities financing structure in place offers opportunities for the county and town to raise capital for joint programs and initiatives that equally benefit each.

Area	Potential Benefits
Affordable housing	Provides an immediate capital fund to acquire land and begin a joint program to close the current gap in the inventory of affordable housing
Water and sewer	Provides an equitable basis to address the needs of subdivisions such as Rafter J as well as to fund capital investment in water and sewer systems within county "growth nodes"
Contract water and sewer service	Provides the basis for the town to operate a contract basis water and sewer facilities in the county's "growth node areas"; the town has the in-place expertise, while the county currently devotes no resources to this area. Contract services to operate new systems could yield substantial operating saving over setting up a countywide program or a series of independent operations.

The panel believes that each of the areas discussed in this section affords a realistic opportunity to improve delivery of services and programs in the areas of growth patterns, affordable housing, and transportation. Of the areas outlined here, the panel strongly recommends that a priority effort begin in (1) development regulations, (2) affordable housing and (3) water and sewer. The panel recognizes that the lead time to retool completely existing structures may involve several years. However, if the county and town do not commence the effort immediately, the likelihood of continued conflict and programmatic impasses is highly probable.

Town of Jackson—Special Opportunity Areas

Separate from combined initiatives between the county and the town, the panel recommends the town address two opportunities focusing on the downtown area in terms of governmental structures.

A Special Purpose Business Improvement District

The panel's interviews with downtown merchants indicated their desire and willingness to develop a complete, improved parking and transportation system for the downtown area. Merchants reported to the panel that prior efforts in this area that were sponsored by the town were either incomplete or one-sided.

The panel recommends the downtown merchants and the town form a limited purpose Business Improvement District (BID) to fund and operate public parking and a downtown transportation system. Establishing and operating the BID would include the following basic elements:

- The town and downtown merchants prepare a plan of action and a needs assessment; the town would provide the funding for this effort.
- Upon completion of the plan, the merchants would form a legal entity to operate the BID and establish an assessment rate structure; the town would be a member of the BID.
- The town would provide an initial capital contribution, matched by an assessment of benefiting merchants and businesses in the downtown core. This initial capital funding would be used for the acquisition of land for additional parking areas as well startup and working capital.
- The cost of on going operation, maintenance, and other outlays not covered by operating revenue would be funded by the BID by assessing benefiting merchants and businesses.

A Downtown Development Planning Committee

A number of the panel's recommendations are targeted at planning, design, zoning, and related issues for the core downtown area. The panel observed that, although new development in the downtown area has occurred in the past decade, it is not nearly as extensive as in other mountain resort areas with which the panel is familiar. The panel also recognizes and agrees with the strongly stated position of many of those interviewed regarding the historic and one-of-a-kind character of the core area of Jackson. Yet, as

described in earlier sections, serious impediments exist to realizing the potential of the town's core. The panel recommends that the town form an action-oriented development and planning committee to address these issues and to set the stage for a well-conceived plan and program for the core. In this regard, the panel recommends:

- The committee would be formed of no more than seven members; the committee can form subgroups and bring in others to participate in the process.
- The town would provide both staff resources and some funding for the group's planning efforts. Major landowners would be encouraged to donate additional funding, if needed.
- If the town's planning staff is constrained by lack of staff resources or expertise, the committee would retain a prominent planner or urban designer, highly experienced in downtown core area development, to advise and assist the committee.
- The committee should set a timetable and scope for completing its activities and making recommendations to the town.
- The scope of the committee effort would be to address future development patterns in the downtown, to identify key development parcels, and to review and recommend specialized zoning needs and design guidelines for new development.
- Last, the committee would be charged with oversight of the adoption of new regulations and the implementation of development plan recommendations.

Combined, the two opportunities, if structured correctly, could result in the realization of many of the panel's recommendations for the town's core.

ANNEXING OF THE PORTER FAMILY ESTATE

The logical future boundaries of the Town of Jackson extend to the limits of the South Park Loop Road. The panel heard this consistently from most of the people whom were interviewed. Concern exists about the type of development, the density of development, the extent of commercial development, the preservation of scenic values, and other important considerations, but people clearly accept this as the direction of growth of the Town of Jackson. It seems logical to the panel as well. Thus, annexing the Porter family property is appropriate for the Town of Jackson.

The property should have business park and commercial zoning. Although the panel did not do the analysis to determine how much business and commercial zoning can be supported, it does believe such zoning ought not to be too little because the panel could not identify any other sites that will have future town services and are appropriate for the growth of the Jackson business community. Sixty acres (total business park and commercial) does not sound like too much for the future of this town. As previously mentioned, the extraordinarily high prices being charged for land for service users is double or triple the price paid by such service users in suburban areas where the market for services is much larger and the business volumes are greater. Service this valley with the kinds of things that commercial businesses need, construction businesses need, and public entities need will not be possible without significant future business park zoning. If the community fears the effect of big-box retailers on the character of Jackson and the valley, those concerns should be dealt with head on, rather than by restricting the future availability of commercial and business park zoning.

The community should not fear the motives of the property owners. They have conflicted feelings about their property. They know the property and love it more than any open space advocate in the valley. They are clearly not rushing to develop it.

There is a desire on the part of the town, and frankly it is an understandable desire, to complete the annexation. The family feels the same urge; it wants assurance that in the highly charged development atmosphere of the valley its rights are not trampled on. No property owner would feel otherwise. Good reasons exist for the town and others to move ahead with this annexation now. The town needs land to grow. This is the logical place to grow. Utilities and access are available. The annexation of the Rafter J subdivision appears to be in the best interests of the town and of the subdivision itself. The planning of the Porter family property and the annexation of the property have created a cloud of uncertainty that is affecting the decision making of the town and county in other areas. There is a natural urge among many to put this uncertainty to rest.

The panel is concerned, however, that the annexation in its current form would create more uncertainty than it would resolve. The property owners are uncertain about the nature, the extent, or the timing of their development. The panel recognizes that the proper use and development of this land in a way that will meet the needs of the family, the town, and the valley will require the efforts of the finest land planners, environmental planners, mixed-use developers, and community developers. Public facilities, infrastructure, phasing and critical mass, mixed-use principles, and transit considerations are uncertain now and will remain uncertain after the annexation. Because this annexation was initiated by the town, it is not clear to the panel that even after annexation this land will contribute in any significant degree to alleviating the immediate shortage of housing and commercial sites. The zoning that is part of this package is inappropriate for the future development of this property. It is applied

to the property for expediency alone and will not guide in any meaningful way the appropriate planning and development for the future.

In summary, it is the panel's recommendation that the town stop the annexation process until the preceding issues are addressed. The initiative for annexation should come from the property owner when it is prepared to move forward. The postponement will allow the town and the county to develop a vision for the entire South Park area and to provide the property owner with some certainty about future use of the land. The county has a planning grant to work with property owners to design a transportation-efficient satellite community. The panel recommends that the Rafter J/Melody Ranch/Seherr-Thoss area be the subject of the planning test, in the context of the entire South Park area. The panel believes that the town, county, landowners, and citizens of the South Park area should participate in this plan. To protect the interests of the property owner, the county should formally amend its master plan to designate the property as a satellite community and to declare that the entire South Park Loop is within the sphere of influence of the Town of Jackson. Until such time as an annexation application is made by a property owner in the South Park area, all planning within that sphere should be done jointly between the town and county because one day it should all be within the Town of Jackson.

CONCLUSION

Teton County will continue to grow. This growth is inevitable but now the town and the county are at a point where they can direct this growth in a manner that it will benefit all parties. Planning for controlled growth outside the town core, anticipating housing needs, planning for increased year-round traffic, developing new ways for the county and town to work together, and addressing annexation in a logical manner will help the county and town maintain the Jackson area as one of the premier places in the United States to live, work, and visit. By planning for the future and not reacting to it, the town and county have the opportunity to guide the future of the county so that it will withstand changes in the economy and be a place for all its citizens.