

## PUBLIC SERVICES AND UTILITIES

### Community Vision 2028

*“Provide a well thought out infrastructure plan that will provide for these needs in a quantitative way for generations to come” – Kezziah Watkins Report*

### Overview

County residents rely on a number of basic services, facilities, and utilities that help define their quality of life and maintain their health and well-being.

Many of the public services in the County are not provided through County government (e.g., public road maintenance, fire protection), but are delivered by special service agencies or districts. The County is not directly responsible for the planning and provision of these services; however, the County coordinates and maintains communication with many different service providers. County departments and facilities provide a variety of administrative, maintenance, justice, welfare, and public safety services to the citizens of the County. County government is funded through tax monies, permit fees, and grant funds.

Some basic demands and needs have been identified regarding the provision of public services. Inadequate space in existing County facilities appears to be improving; however, the jail, juvenile detention, and the Sheriff’s department are still struggling to meet the current needs of the growing population. Future growth will result in increased demand on public services, thus adequate facilities and staff will become increasingly critical.

Fire protection is an important public service, particularly in a community with high urban-wildland interface. In the County, fire protection services are provided through a number of different entities, principally fire protection districts. Most of the districts utilize volunteers. The services offered by and the training provided to firefighting personnel differ from district to district. The State Department of Lands and the

United States Forest Service provide protection in this area for timber and wildland fires only.

Public utilities are essential if a community is to function and grow in a world where innovation and rapidly changing technology have become commonplace. Although not necessarily publicly owned or operated, these services (water, sewer, energy, and solid waste) are considered “public” because they have become a necessity for most communities to function. Other than solid waste services, the County is not a direct public utility provider.

The County’s energy needs are provided for by electricity, natural gas, and petroleum-based products. There are 2 major electricity providers, 2 major natural gas pipelines, 1 natural gas supplier, and 1 petroleum pipeline located within the County.



### *Installation of underground utilities.*

Water utilities are regulated by the state’s Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The majority of drinking water systems use groundwater as their water source. It is estimated that the remainder of the rural population utilizes private wells for domestic water.

State agencies are also responsible for the majority of sewage disposal system regulation. There are several types of sewage disposal systems in the County community septic tank soil absorption systems, mechanical treatment plants, lagoons, and individual subsurface sewage disposal systems.

### Septic Suitability

Not all parts of the County are suitable for the use of subsurface sewage treatment systems

(septic systems). The Panhandle Health District (PHD) determines septic system appropriateness on a case-by-case basis based on the conditions set forth in the State of Idaho's Individual/Subsurface Sewage Disposal Rules (IDAPA 58.01.03) and PHD's Environmental Health Code (IDAPA 41.01.01). Where those requirements cannot be met, septic permits are not issued. Such areas are not suitable for development with present technology, and are considered hazardous for health and sanitation reasons.

IDAPA 58.01.03 sets out the criteria by which all waste disposal systems need to be designed and constructed. DEQ is the state agency tasked with oversight of these regulations with local health districts administering and enforcing the regulations. The key component is set forth in section 007, subsection 08, detailing wastewater flows from various establishments. Single-family residences must accommodate a minimum flow of 150 gallons/day for a 1-bedroom home with an increase of 50 gallons/day for each additional bedroom. The information in this section also includes a number of unit-specific flow rates for multiple residences and institutional and commercial establishments, as well as minimum sizes for septic tanks. These regulations mirror the intent of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) for developing on-site waste treatment systems (EPA, 1980). Under a mandate of national environmental laws, the EPA strives to formulate and implement actions that lead to a compatible balance between human activities and the ability of natural systems to support and nurture life.

### **Solid Waste**

Various components of the County's solid waste management system are operated by the County's Solid Waste Department and by private industry, with collection in some incorporated areas regulated through city hauling contracts. The Department of Environmental Quality and Panhandle Health District regulate and monitor the disposal and treatment of the County's waste stream. Idaho code specifically identifies that it is the County's responsibility to provide solid waste disposal for its citizens. The code further allows

the County to select whatever means they desire to pay for solid waste disposal.

In 1992, the Federal Government promulgated new solid waste rules, 40 CFR 258 that outlined the criteria for construction of Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) Landfills. In anticipation of this event, the County constructed a new Municipal Solid Waste Landfill along US 95 approximately 13 miles south of the City Limits of Coeur d'Alene. Idaho quickly followed the Federal Government and promulgated the Idaho Solid Waste Facilities Act, 39-7400 et. al. The EPA acceptance of the Idaho Solid Waste Facilities Act resulted in Idaho becoming an approved state for Solid Waste Management within its boundaries. This decision allows Idaho regulatory authority over all solid waste systems within the state.

The authority for the establishment of all County Solid Waste rules, policies, contracts, facilities, procedures and ordinances pertaining to solid waste disposal is derived from the Idaho Code, the Solid Waste Facilities Act and the Solid Waste Rules. Under the existing rules, the County is not required to offer any solid waste services for out of County patrons. There is no State requirement, statute or rule that requires recycling in any form.

The County's MSW Landfill and the full service transfer stations have been developed under the guidelines listed above. In addition, the County has taken a proactive stance in developing recycling services within the county.

The transfer stations provide for transfer of recycled material, household hazardous waste collection, and the transfer and disposal of MSW from private collection routes within the Cities and County. Recycled material and HHW are sent to approved processing facilities where they can be remanufactured or disposed of properly.

As of 2008, either private haulers collect residential and commercial garbage within the Cities and County boundaries or the private citizen brings it to a county operated facility. Household Hazardous Waste Collection is provided to the County's private citizens on a

limited basis. The County does not accept commercial hazardous waste. Commercial hazardous waste disposal is provided through customer contracted services with a private company.

There are four municipalities that have mandatory garbage collection; they are Coeur d'Alene, Harrison, Post Falls and Worley. The other incorporated communities and many unincorporated areas within the County have solid waste curbside garbage collection available.

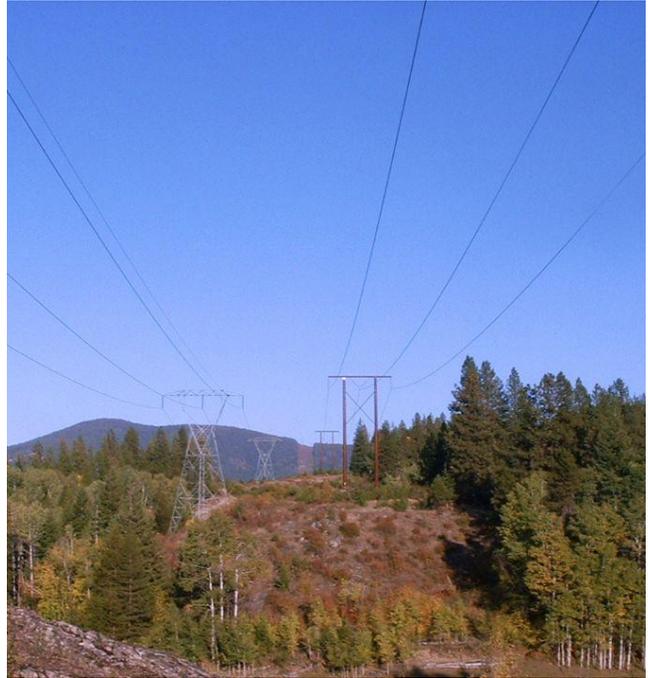
As of 2008, the County also offers 14 rural garbage collection sites. It is expected that in the coming years, these sites will be consolidated into regional rural transfer stations with recycling opportunities.

The County's extensive recycling services are not requirements under the Idaho rules but are coordinated by the County's Solid Waste department. Curbside recycling programs are located in the cities of Coeur d'Alene and Post Falls. The County also operates limited recycling drop-off centers located at each of the 44 public schools as well as full service transfer stations that provide extensive recycling options. Many of the county's commercial activities recycle some or all of their waste. This helps with their waste disposal cost and keeps it out of the landfill.

### **National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors**

There are high-voltage electric transmission corridors located within the County that were acquired in the early 1930s by the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA). These high-voltage transmission corridors were acquired by securing either perpetual easements or property in fee throughout Kootenai County. The County has on file a BPA map locating these corridors. These transmission corridors are not designated as "National Corridors" by the Department of Energy (DOE). If DOE determines that an electric corridor in Kootenai County warrants designation as a "National Corridor", it will issue a draft designation that will provide a period for public comment. Designation as a "National

Corridor" gives the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) additional siting authority for transmission corridors that supplement existing state siting provisions.



### ***BPA Transmission Lines***

The high-voltage transmission corridors located, in the County range from 125 to 500 feet in width. The BPA imposes certain conditions on the portions of these lots encumbered by its high-voltage transmission line right-of-way. BPA does not allow structures to be blocked to any transmission facilities. BPA does not allow any digging, burning, building, or planting within the right-of-way. BPA has two equally important reasons for restricting any non-permitted use within its right-of-way: safety and system reliability the present and future ability to operate, maintain, and upgrade our high-voltage transmission system. In those situations where BPA has only a perpetual easement, permission must be sought from the underlying fee owner for a proposed land use. BPA will consider land use applications on a case-by-case basis for walking, biking, and nature trails within its corridors. However, permission must be sought from the underlying fee owner. BPA's desire is to help carry out proposed land uses in ways that are safe and satisfactory for everyone. Therefore, BPA encourages individuals and developers to make prior arrangements with BPA through the Land Use Application process for proposed land uses.

The County has expressed to BPA that it believes these corridors offer the county an opportunity to connect noncontiguous open spaces, especially over the Rathdrum Prairie, via a user-friendly trail network as long as the underlying fee owners approve of the proposed land use.

**GOALS AND POLICIES**

The goals and policies in this chapter are intended to articulate the community vision toward the region’s public services and not to be regulatory but, provide specific guidance for the adoption and implementation of development regulations which will ensure conformity with the Plan.

**GOAL 1:** Identify, plan, and consolidate efficient, convenient, and effective government services.

**Policies and Implementation Strategies**

- PS-1 A. Encourage the consolidation of public services to eliminate duplication.
- PS-1 B. Plan for future acquisition of needed County facilities.
- PS-1 C. Encourage public service providers to identify and evaluate their ability to meet the needs arising from land development proposals.

**GOAL 2:** Develop and support efficient and effective police, fire, and other emergency services.

**Policies and Implementation Strategies**

- PS-2 A. Develop regulations which emphasize fire prevention and protection for all areas of Kootenai County.
- PS-2 B. Support adequate water supply for fire protection in community, public and private, water systems.
- PS-2 C. Develop fire and crime-prevention plans among concerned agencies, development industries, and the public.
- PS-2 D. Propose development regulations which support law enforcement, EMS, and fire district response times in evaluating development proposals.
- PS-2 E. Support the Local Emergency Planning Committee and encourage region-wide emergency response capabilities.

PS-2 F. Support the expansion of critical public services concurrent with population growth.

**GOAL 3:** Protect the operation and orderly expansion of the Coeur d’Alene Airport.

**Policies and Implementation Strategies**

- PS-3 A. Protect Airport Master Plan approach and protection zones when reviewing, analyzing, and deciding development proposals.
- PS-3 B. Encourage cooperation and coordination among all jurisdictions that impact airport activity by renegotiating Area of City Impact agreements with appropriate cities.

**GOAL 4:** Identify and provide adequate, well-located public facilities that are needed for public purposes.

**Policies and Implementation Strategies**

- PS-4 A. Encourage public service providers to obtain or secure sites needed for public facilities as early as possible in the development of an area, to ensure that the facilities are well located to serve the area and to minimize acquisition costs.
- PS-4 B. Coordinate regional efforts in identifying shared needs for lands for public purposes to maximize the efficient use of public capital resources.
- PS-4 C. Implement impact fees authorized by Idaho statute.
- PS-4 D. Seek appropriate financing methods for all new growth to pay their proportionate share for fire, police, water systems and school facilities.
- PS-4 E. Develop regulations, which solicit comprehensive input from relevant entities when processing any application for building.

**GOAL 5:** Promote energy and communication facilities and services that are necessary to support current and future development.

**Policies and Implementation Strategies**

- PS-5 A. Discuss and exchange population forecasts, development plans, and technical

data with the agencies and utilities identified in this Plan.

PS-5 B. Coordinate planning activities of electrical, telephone, natural gas, cable and wireless technology providers to ensure that providers of public services and private utilities refer to the Land Use chapter of this Plan when planning for future facilities.

PS-5 C. Encourage energy conservation by informing citizens of available conservation programs.

PS-5 D. Allow utility facilities in all land use designations as necessary when and where utility franchises or easements exist and if they are in compliance with applicable development regulations.

**GOAL 6:** Coordinate with applicable utility companies regarding the siting, development and operation of utility services and facilities in order to reduce negative neighborhood impacts.

#### **Policies and Implementation Strategies**

PS-6 A. Encourage electric power substations to be reasonably sited, designed, and buffered.

PS-6 B. Develop regulations which support implementation of resource conservation practices and best management practices during the construction, operation, and maintenance of utility systems.

PS-6 C. Work cooperatively, with surrounding municipalities in the planning and development of multi-jurisdictional utility facility additions and improvements.

PS-6 D. Encourage underground utility installation where appropriate.

PS-6 E. Develop regulations which promote the joint use of transportation rights-of-way and utility corridors.

PS-6 F. Propose development regulations which require utility providers to avoid placement of facilities in areas designated as environmentally sensitive or critical areas unless no feasible alternative exists and only after a site assessment and mitigation plan has been approved by Kootenai County and other applicable agencies.

PS-6 G. Develop regulations to minimize wireless technologies unique visual and noise impacts. Siting requirements should address

using existing sites and structures, setbacks, buffering, landscaping and other design standards where appropriate.

**GOAL 7:** Promote the use of public wastewater systems and discourage the use of individual on-site waste water systems.

**GOAL 8:** Manage the solid waste system to maximize diversion and operate in a manner that is cost effective, safe and flexible to preserve the environment and protect public health.

#### **Policies and Implementation Strategies**

PS-8 A. Site solid waste disposal services at optimum locations in the most cost-effective manner. Environmental and economic impacts should be considered and balanced when determining disposal practices.

PS-8 B. Increase the County recycling program with goals that emphasize reducing or recycling the County's waste.

PS-8 C. Promote recycling programs for all County homes by extending the availability of recycling.

PS-8 D. Develop regulations which require applicants for new developments of greater than 25 residential lots to identify a residential garbage collection plan.

PS-8 E. Encourage the school recycling program beyond public schools to established community centers; such as private schools, churches, and civic organizations.

PS-8 F. Promote the recycling of commercial, household, or residential materials.

**GOAL 9:** Promote development that maintains or improves current levels of essential public facilities and services.

#### **Policies and Implementation Strategies**

P-9 A. Recognize the need to assess the land use, public service, environmental and transportation impacts associated with major new private or public development or activity centered outside cities for development that anticipates employment and/or population shifts away from existing cities.