

## Kootenai County Planning Commission Comprehensive Plan Policy Implementation Progress Report

One of the concerns the Planning Commission heard from the public throughout the process of updating the Kootenai County Comprehensive Plan was that, in the past, policies established with their input were never implemented. In response, and with the ultimate passage of the 2020 Comprehensive Plan Update, the Planning Commission began the process of implementing policies. We hope that posting information will demonstrate Kootenai County’s commitment to use the comprehensive plan as a road map for addressing concerns expressed by the public.

<u>Foundation for Policy</u>	<u>Policy Statement</u>	<u>Action</u>
Public comment expressed concern that county regulations remain responsive to and informed by emerging technologies.	<b>Land Use General Policy 4</b> Review new and emerging technologies for possible inclusion in county regulations.	The technology under review was Wireless Communication Facility towers. Under existing county code, WCF towers must comply with applicable requirements of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and other agencies with jurisdiction. No modification of code is required.
Some land use regulations have potential impacts on the County budget which need to be recognized and communicated. In particular, if regulation is adopted, it is important to keep faith with the public by funding regulatory enforcement.	<b>Implementation Goal 2, Policy 5</b> Communicate budget needs for costs associated with enforcement of zoning and land use regulations to County Commissioners on an annual basis.	The Planning Commission Chair and Community Development Director will meet yearly prior to the budget process to discuss and determine the budgetary impact of land use regulations.
Established farmers and timberland owners expressed concern about conflict between their land-based operations and new residential development.	<b>Agricultural Policy 2</b> Create a guide to reduce conflicts between residential uses and agricultural and timber operations in the county.	The guide was created and approved by the Planning Commissioners, and in April 2021 it was distributed by posting to the Keeping Kootenai and Information Briefs websites, to social media and through press releases. Click here to read the guide: <a href="https://keepingkootenai.com/good-neighbors-guide">https://keepingkootenai.com/good-neighbors-guide</a>
The goal is to produce a clear, comprehensive summary of shoreline regulations for waterfront property owners, county planners, pertinent public agencies and the general public.	<b>Land Use Objective 7A, Policy 3</b> Create a document summarizing current shoreline regulations.	The guide to shoreline regulations was completed and shared with the public in February 2021 via the Keeping Kootenai website, social media and press releases distributed to local media. Click here to read the guide: <a href="https://keepingkootenai.com/shoreline-management-area">https://keepingkootenai.com/shoreline-management-area</a>

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Many homes are being constructed in forested areas of the county while summer drought, temperatures and combustible fuels are increasing. It is important to provide residents with factual and helpful wildfire risk reduction information.	<b>Land Use General Policy 5</b> Develop wildfire reduction guidelines.	In February 2021, A Firewise Checklist and several publications with varying levels of detail on how to reduce the risk of wildfire when living in the Wildland Urban Interface were added to the Information Briefs Community Development and Keeping Kootenai websites and distributed on social media platforms. Click here to read the information: <a href="https://keepingkootenai.com/fire-safety-resources">https://keepingkootenai.com/fire-safety-resources</a>
The goal is to encourage the voluntary retention of open space by giving willing private property owners information on keeping their property undeveloped should they wish to do so.	<b>Land Use Objective 1A, Policy 1; Land Use Objective 1B, Policy 1; Land Use Objective 4, Policy 2; Natural Resources Objective 2, Policies 2 and 3; Natural Resources Objective 4, Policy 1</b> Develop guidelines for retaining open space through voluntary means, such as Conservation Easements.	<i>Securing the Future of Your Land</i> , a guide to private conservation easements, was posted to the Keeping Kootenai website, shared on social media, and press releases were distributed to local media in December 2020. Click here to read the guide: <a href="https://keepingkootenai.com/conservation-easements">https://keepingkootenai.com/conservation-easements</a>
Many property owners expressed the desire to learn about and give opinions and suggestions on proposed development in their neighborhoods early in the planning review process.	<b>Land Use Objective 4, Policy 1; Community Design Policies 1 and 2</b> Develop guidelines for conducting and reporting the results of neighborhood meetings.	The Planning Commission developed a Guideline for Conducting and Reporting the Results of Neighborhood Meetings. The Board of County Commissioners approved moving forward on draft code language to implement this guideline.
The goal is to provide an easily accessible public format for data (e.g., census, employment, education, transportation) which can be readily updated as needed. This keeps the comprehensive plan up-to-date so regulations can be evaluated.	<b>Implementation Policy 6</b> Work with Community Development Department to review and update relevant Comprehensive Plan data.	A basic version of the data dashboard is viewable at <a href="https://kcgov.us/989/Comprehensive-Planning-Data-Dashboard">https://kcgov.us/989/Comprehensive-Planning-Data-Dashboard</a> . More information will be added as it becomes available.
Many property owners expressed a desire to start home-based businesses, and both property owners and planners wanted clarification on what constitutes a home-based business, as well as what standards need to be met.	<b>Economic Development Policy 4</b> Review regulations for Home Based Businesses in the rural county.	The Planning Commission has drafted impact driven code language for Home- Based Businesses. These will be reviewed by the Community Development Department and County legal counsel.

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This policy was adopted to assess and, as land use regulations are developed, to protect the county's most valuable natural and economic resource.	<b>Land Use Objective 7A, Policies 1 and 2, and Natural Resource Objective 3, Policies 1 and 2</b> Determine areas adjacent to water bodies that are environmentally sensitive and to develop appropriate land use regulations to protect water quality.	Planning Commissioners met with Idaho Department of Environmental Quality (IDEQ) to exchange data on areas near sensitive water bodies in the County. IDEQ is preparing a shape file for County use, and will provide more specific scientific data when asked by the County for comment on development applications. Commissioners are exploring the same type of data exchange with Idaho Department of Lands (IDL).
It is important to gather reliable information from citizens on issues of broad community interest in order to guide the Planning Commission as it makes recommendations and decisions.	<b>Property Rights Objective 1, Policy 1; Economic Development Policy 3; Land Use Objective 1A, Policy 2</b> Survey the public to gather opinions on property rights; public health, safety and welfare; commercial and industrial development in unincorporated areas; and to define "rural character".	Community Development Director David Callahan has sought advice on public outreach from consultant Taryn Hecker. Director Callahan and Planning Commission Chair Levine will discuss next steps.
Many landowners expressed concern that new development is jeopardizing existing water supplies.	<b>Land Use General Policy 2, Land Use Objective 7A, Policy 8 and Natural Resources Objective 3, Policy 6</b> Identify areas of ground water insufficiency in Kootenai County.	Locating specific areas of ground water insufficiency through well logs and anecdotes is both challenging and expensive. Community Development Director Callahan is pursuing funding to allow work to begin prior to Fiscal Year 22. He is also exploring possible funding through the Idaho Water Resource Board.