

Provide for a Diverse and Balanced Community and Economy (Theme 6)

Statement of Ideal

The region will balance its commercial, resort and housing growth, and limit commercial growth that creates additional housing demand and allow for continued viable populations of *all native* species. It will actively support viable local business and support efforts to sustain an agricultural economy. *All resort language needs to be consistent in this document.*

What does the theme address?

The intent of this Plan is to create conditions for a sustainable economy and community that reflect the unique small-town, Western commercial character of Jackson, the wildlife and natural resource values of our residents and visitors, and the outdoor recreational opportunities of Teton County. A sustainable economy is one that is healthy and strong across multiple sectors and that is in balance with other objectives of this Plan for housing and stewardship of the environment. One of the fundamental concepts of this theme is the concept of “community first; resort second” and striving for better balance between economic development and other community needs, including workforce housing. – *and protection of our wildlife and natural resources. The community’s top priority should be mentioned.*

Future actions will recognize the changing trends in the local, regional, national, and global economy (*and climate*) that are affecting the west and the lifestyle choices of its current and future residents. Outdoor-based recreation and tourism will remain an important part of the community’s economy, but tourism is no longer the primary economic “backbone”. *Define the “backbone.” Natural resources are the backbone on which other industries thrive..* This Plan supports maintaining diverse retail, tourism, professional and government, resource, and other sectors to provide quality jobs to residents and maintain a dependable tax base to support services and infrastructure. It also encourages supporting existing and new local businesses that fit Jackson Hole and Teton County and that make it unique. – *What about commitment to environmental stewardship - as not only an ethical obligation, but also an economic strategy?*

Summary of this Theme’s Topics

This theme addresses the following topics:

Maintain Teton County and Jackson as a “community first and resort second”,

Balance economic development and workforce housing and community needs (sustainable community), and

Support diverse economic sectors that fit the region and community.

What about CONSERVATION? NATURAL RESOURCES? All of the above should be measured in relation to their impact on the “backbone” of the region – our natural resources.

Where is this theme a priority?

The Future Land Use Plan depicts locations for commercial, office

and mixed-use development and future housing. Balancing development in designated locations outside of Natural Resource Priority areas and Conservation Focus Areas is a priority of this plan. *Again, define...*

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How does the theme relate to core values?

Environment: Limited commercial growth, predictable growth locations, greening businesses ? ?

Community: Locally owned businesses, housing needs, agricultural viability

How can natural resources not be mentioned in a discussion about a balanced community and economy in Jackson Hole?

Guiding Principles

The following guiding principles support these objectives:

Principle 6.1—Maintain Jackson and Teton County as community first and resort second

Why is This Important?

The 1994 Plan promoted the idea of “remaining a community first and a resort second,” and calls for a balance between resort development and the community.

The sense of community has always contributed to the quality of life in Jackson Hole and continues to be valued characteristic in the face of pressures that are forcing change. *We do have the capacity to manage these pressures so that the change that occurs is positive for our community and ecosystem.*

Since 1994, the community structure has shifted a great deal due to discovery of the community as a highly desired, amenity-rich place, with shifting housing costs and commuting patterns, and five approved resort master plans with over 9,500 projected lodging/residential units.

Despite the resort approvals (anticipated in 1994), the ratio of housing to lodging has grown in favor of housing and the community housing stock is growing faster than lodging growth. However, the housing that has been built has served a recreating, lifestyle population rather than local workers.

To support the idea of a balanced community, this principle suggests that the county and town will not approve additional resorts, will monitor residential growth, and will place additional emphasis and resources on addressing workforce housing and transportation needs. *What about conservation efforts and improving development standards to protect natural resources? The policy language in this Plan is all about development!! “Monitor” residential growth is weak language. Why monitor? Spell it out.*

Policy 6.1a: Do not approve new Planned Resorts

The Future Land Use Plan designates locations where existing planned resorts have approved master plans (including Teton Village, J.H. Golf & Tennis, Snow King (in Jackson), Snake River Canyon Ranch (formerly Astoria Hot Springs), and Grand Targhee). The county and town will not approve additional planned resorts that are not designated on the Future Land Use Plan.

What about expansion? As stated in the previous section, all policies regarding resorts need to be consistent.

Policy 6.1b: Limit new lodging to the Lodging Overlay District and existing Planned Resorts

New lodging and short-term rentals will only occur in the Lodging Overlay and the existing Planned Resorts.

Policy 6.1c: Provide opportunities to develop workforce housing to keep pace with demands of approved resorts

Providing strategies and incentives that focus on increasing employee housing in existing resorts is a critical policy. Planned resorts are major generators of jobs and demand for workforce housing. Key to **the** achieving the community goal of housing 65% of the workforce is the need for resorts to house a substantial portion of their employees through employee housing. *How will these needs be met with already approved master plans? Where will the burden fall?*

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Policy 6.1d: Maintain and support opportunities for new small locally owned businesses and neighborhood businesses

Maintaining local ownership of businesses is a key element of sustaining a community and its neighborhoods. Promoting businesses that share with visitors and residents the unique amenities and qualities of Jackson Hole is important in maintaining the community's character, particularly businesses that promote the non-consumptive enjoyment of the area's outdoor amenities and the community's western heritage, and provide services to nearby neighborhoods. **As the community grows and enjoys greater affluence**, land prices, rents and other economic forces increasingly challenge the sustainability of locally owned businesses, making it necessary for the town and county to seek tools to support small businesses. *Define "greater affluence". How are community expansion and affluence linked?*

Policy 6.1e: Seek ways to facilitate viability of unique locally owned and operated businesses in Downtown Jackson

(Discuss whether to introduce forward-thinking ideas of assisting or subsidizing locally owned businesses, especially on the town square, such as through affordable ground leases. This may still be worth discussing and exploring additional strategies.)

Principle 6.2—Balance economic development with workforce housing and community needs

Why is This Important?

Theme 5 addressed housing and reasons why workforce housing is an important component of a balanced community. Housing is also linked to other themes, such as transportation and economic vitality and sustainability. *What about wildlife habitat protection and conservation?*

Analysis of zoning and buildout suggests that the town, in particular, has much greater capacity for non-residential commercial development than it does for housing—further increasing the imbalance between commercial development and housing.

Some rebalancing will be necessary through the Future Land Use Plan and future zoning (*How has "rebalancing" been applied in the Future Land Use Plan?*) to

Limiting further commercial development to certain locations and then monitor the balance to ensure commercial development will not outpace the community's ability to resolve housing needs, or conflict with other goals, such as wildlife habitat protection.

This Plan strives to balance the economy and social needs in the context of a **healthy Environment**. *The context should include viable wildlife populations.*

Policy 6.2a: Balance quantity of housing, workforce housing, commercial development, resorts, and civic uses (*What about conservation?*)

The town and county will use the Future Land Use Plan and policies of this Plan as the main tools for guiding decisions about development and growth. *and conservation? Where is the planning analysis?* The Future Land Use Plan

provides for a diverse and integrated mix of uses, including a balance of mixed-use and non-residential areas, and locations for housing. The town and county will continue to **actively monitor the levels of new development** - *Has this ever been done?* and reserve or reallocate

lands for future commercial, industrial, and residential areas, as necessary to ensure that an adequate amount of housing for the workforce is provided in pace with job growth, and that job growth does not further “tip the scales” to create additional demand for housing. The town and county will monitor trends in the community using indicators (see Sustainability chapter) to determine if the community as a whole is achieving a more balanced community and land use pattern and meeting its housing goals. *And goals to protect wildlife and wildlife habitat?*

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Policy 6.2b: Limit commercial development consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and as a percentage of mixed-use developments

Commercial and mixed-use areas are important destinations for the town, communities, and region. Commercial and mixed-use is designated on the Future Land Use Plan map in such a way to be central and limit further proliferation of strip commercial development and sprawl. The town and county will approve commercial development only where it appears on the Future Land Use Plan—as either straight commercial or mixed-use category. In addition, the plan and LDRs will aim to limit commercial growth as a percent of total square footage allowed in mixed-use development projects. *Elaborate. Why is limited commercial development so important?*

“Limit” will mean different things to different people. How much?

Policy 6.2c: The Future Land Use Plan identifies suitable locations for light industry and business

The Future Land Use Plan identifies areas suitable for light industry and business. The town and county will only approve light industry where it is designated on the Future Land Use Plan. (Note: The plan may need to identify other areas and add additional criteria to site light industry, even though the 1994 Plan says the County has criteria.)

Policy 6.2d: Encourage mixed-use development with commercial and housing as identified on the Future Land Use Plan (in what proportions?)

Recently geographic modeling of the town indicates it has far more commercial zoning than will be needed to accommodate 20+ years of growth, considering the ratio of residential to commercial zoning. The Future Land Use Plan will allow mixed-use development and encourage desirable increased amount of residential in targeted areas, such as the greater “Y” area. Mixed-use categories will establish minimum and maximum types of residential and non-residential to ensure adequate amounts of housing are built. *When will it be clear what it being proposed?*

Policy 6.2f: Allow small neighborhood-serving commercial if it meets locational and design criteria

This Plan supports local convenience commercial services in proximity of residential developments and in small communities (e.g., Buffalo Valley) if it meets criteria. (Note: Need to establish criteria to ensure compatibility with existing neighborhoods and in small communities and to guide LDR revisions. To be added to next draft of Future Land Use Plan chapter.) Some of the 1994 Plan “Business Conservation” businesses are long-time owners and long-established businesses. This Plan proposes to continue to allow the commercial non-conforming Business Conservation businesses as “non-conforming uses”.

These criteria are critical. Who determines these criteria? Depending on the nature of “neighborhood-serving commercial”, it could actually work against smart planning. In some cases, commercial expansion can also be characterized as sprawl. With this policy, the “devil is in the details.”

Policy 6.2g: Commercial and mixed-use development will be sensitive to existing context and design

The town and county will continue to require quality commercial and mixed-use developments with an appearance that fits the quality of the environment and western character. The “Town

of Jackson” section of this Plan addresses scale, building massing, design character and the fabric of neighborhoods. The town will encourage continued redevelopment of these places as rich, vibrant mixed-use areas through a combination of design guidelines and standards, and possibly incentives. **Commercial and mixed-use areas should be strongly pedestrian oriented, provide ample winter solar exposure and wind protection and summer shade** and use architecture that is inviting and comfortable for pedestrians.

Define “sensitive.” Based on current decision-making, it is clear that that word means very different things to different people. Many recent developments have not been sensitive to the existing context of Jackson.

How do some of the currently proposed building scales “provide ample winter solar exposure”?
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Principle 6.3—Continue to support diverse economic sectors that fit the region and community

Why is This Important?

Jackson Hole and the region’s economic base is becoming more vital and diverse economic base in recent years—shifting from a predominantly tourism-based economy to a variety of sectors.

The economy is enviably strong but is totally dependent on service jobs that tend to be lower paying. *Are our current land-use decisions reinforcing this dependence?*

Diverse economic sectors provide quality jobs and a dependable tax-base.

Challenges include maintaining local businesses and balancing future commercial and retail growth with workforce housing, and supporting agriculture as part of the diverse mix. *What about the natural resources and character of Jackson hole?*

Over time it will be important to be sure that **no one business sector over-dominates.** *Clarify.*

Policy 6.3a: Continue to support businesses that are unique and enhance our “sense of community”

Enhance the vitality of businesses that are unique to Jackson and county communities that enhance our sense of community and identity and maintain a local economic base. Support maintenance and expansion of locally-owned businesses that create not only economic, but also environmental and social benefits.

Policy 6.3b: Promote “Green” businesses

The town and county will promote stewardship of resources and the environment and conservation of resources by business and industry. Promote sustainable business practices that reduce water and energy consumption. *“Promote” is weak language.*

Policy 6.3c: Voluntarily preserve the agricultural economy, western heritage, and character of Alta as well as Buffalo Valley and Kelly

The county will continue to provide for and remove obstacles to agriculture through its codes and regulations and recognize the community’s heritage and western character by seeking ways to support remaining farms and ranches, such as through education and recognition of historical events and practices of ranching. Agricultural use provides an effective means of conserving large intact lands. As the community pursues reduced density in many outlying areas and the preservation of open space, the proper management of the open lands can be supplemented with active agriculture.

Teton County has, in part, a western heritage of farming and ranching. Agriculture was the economic base of Jackson Hole’s original settlers, and that heritage is an important part of the community’s character. Farmland and ranchland is also important for environmental quality in Alta, Buffalo Valley, and Kelly, and other locations in the Snake River Valley.

Policy 6.3d: Diversify economic sectors by attracting higher paying jobs and non-service sector jobs

(Discuss this policy further in the community. The community occasionally discusses the idea of diversifying the economy by attracting higher paying jobs and non-service sector jobs. The --- start page 68 ---

economy is enviably strong but totally dependent on low paying service jobs. Seeking to diversify may be an unneeded growth stimulus.) *Why do we need additional commercial growth potential?*

Suggested Strategies (Theme 6—Balanced Community)

(Note: The planning team will work with the community to complete the strategies sections during the next phase of work as they relate to policies. Strategies are included in this draft for discussion purposes.)

Theme 6 Suggested Strategies

Use Indicators - Refine and implement indicators of sustainability for decision-making and to monitor plan progress on “balanced community”. Indicators should address the environment and community (social and economic aspects).

Adopt and Use Future Land Use Plan/Amend LDRs - Use the Future Land Use Plan as guide for development locations and quantities. Amend the LDRs to be consistent with directions of the Future Land Use Plan.

Amend LRDs - Modify zoning districts for town to promote workforce residential units in certain commercially zoned areas of town.

No Planned Resorts - No additional Planned Resort approvals and no expansion of current plans, except to provide employee housing. *Clarify what this means. Would expansion be allowed if some element of the expansion included employee housing, or would expansion be restricted to the form of employee housing units only?*

Modify Discretionary Zoning Options - Modify or remove discretionary development options that allow increased commercial development, such as the Planned Mixed Use Development (PMUD), and focus on incentives for housing. *Discretionary options that allow increased commercial development are not appropriate.*

Building Green Program and Codes – Establish programs to recognize “green” businesses and promote energy conservation. Develop a Green Building code.

Agriculture Conservation Programs – Develop program to help conserve viable agriculture and agricultural lands, including possible purchase of development rights to

leverage land trust activities.

Possible Indicators (Theme 6—Balanced Community)

Possible indicators to monitor how well the community is achieving the goals of this theme include:

comments below duplicate Theme 5

1. Ratio of commercial square footage to residential units.
2. Ratio of resort/lodging accommodations to residential units.

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3. Ratio of protected acres of open space to residential units. *???? Wildlife population viability*
4. Agricultural lands and operating ranches in Alta.
5. Number (or %) of businesses practicing green business practices and number of buildings meeting green building standards.

Again, indicators need to reflect theme goals in a more integrated way.