



Development Services Department

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 28, 2026

TO: Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

FROM: Development Services Department (DSD)

SUBJECT: Comprehensive Plan

On April 16, 2026, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) directed DSD staff to identify top goals and priorities to update and implement the comprehensive plan. The following is a prioritized list, along with the associated general work plan and resource needs. BOCC input and guidance are requested before DSD staff begin implementing the work plans. In coordination with the proposed work plans, DSD staff intends to update data throughout the Comprehensive Plan. The data and priority updates could be adopted with a new horizon date for the Comprehensive Plan, along with any additional amendments needed to ensure that the proposed changes are cohesive and will serve the County's vision.

1. Agricultural Zoning Districts and the Intensive Agricultural Overlay

Overview:

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan outlines a list of zoning districts that are permissible within each future land use designation (see page 25 of the Plan). The Agricultural future land use designation includes the following zoning districts: RR, AC-5, AC-20, and AC-40. The Rural Residential Zone has been implemented into code and geographically identified on the Future Land Use Map (FLUM). The remaining commercial agriculture zones have not been implemented in the zoning ordinance or mapped on the FLUM. The Intensive Agricultural Overlay has been identified for a large portion of Canyon County, but in some situations, the overlay does not match the reality of how land has already developed in the county, and a more detailed review of the overlay area is warranted. Development standards for the intensive agricultural overlay have also not been implemented into the code.

General Workplan:

Task	Description/Work Products	Timeframe
Data Gathering	Collect data from USDA, Agricultural Census, irrigation access, historic use, existing conditions (slopes, development, area character, soil quality, lot size, tax information), etc. <ul style="list-style-type: none">Determine where various types of agricultural operations are occurring in Canyon County.	2 months

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine where land divisions and residential development have made agricultural use challenging? • Where have smaller lots been successfully used as hobby farms, and where have they become large estate lots? • What is the economic impact of various farming types, and what is needed to ensure development does not block future agricultural success? • Research agricultural zoning designations/approach in other Idaho counties. • Compile data in an accessible format for the public and decision makers. 	
BOCC check-in	Present data findings to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Advisory Committee	<p>Form an advisory committee/workgroup with key stakeholders to identify geographic areas and/or code standards for the applicable agricultural zoning districts and the intensive agricultural overlay. Data gathering results and initial proposals/options will be shared during the first committee meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders should represent agricultural operators, landowners, the development community, soil and irrigation/water experts. • Draft criteria for where AC-5, AC-20, AC-40 and intensive agriculture belong. • Anticipate two (2) stakeholder meetings to ensure draft criteria and/or geographic boundaries meet desired goals. Have one final workgroup meeting after the broader community engagement is complete. 	2-3 months
BOCC check-in	Present advisory committee findings to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Community Engagement	<p>Vet committee/workgroup product with the larger Canyon County community through a public open house, survey, etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare engaging graphics and materials for the public. • Develop mechanisms to capture and incorporate public sentiment into the final products. • Share outcomes with the advisory committee. 	2-3 months
BOCC check-in	Present public engagement outcomes with the Board and confirm next steps.	
Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalize draft code and maps based on advisory committee and public outreach. • Review Comprehensive Plan language with proposed text, map, and code changes, and determine if additional elements of the plan and or policies need to be updated as a result. 	2 months
Public Hearing Process	<p>Take the final comprehensive plan amendments and zoning map, and code text amendments through the formal public hearing process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update text and maps based on hearing outcome. • Formalize SOP, website information, etc., to ensure staff and public understand new code and plans. 	3 months

Resources:

- Consultant services could be beneficial to facilitate the advisory committee, develop graphics, and manage logistics for broader community engagement efforts.

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- Mapping services will be needed (in-house or from a consultant).
- Coordination with various agencies/stakeholders for initial data collection.

2. Area Plan for Agricultural Tourism/Sunnyslope Specific Area Plan

Overview:

Agritourism is an economic driver for the County that allows farmers to diversify their operations and supplement farm income. Page 27 of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan details overlay areas, including the Agritourism Exclusive Farm Use (AEFU) and Agritourism Business Use (ABU). The AEFU has been mapped to an area generally between Homedale and Marsing Roads, west of Farmway Road. The plan includes a variety of goals and policies aimed at allowing agritourism, particularly in the Sunnyslope Wine Region and along the Snake River Scenic Byway. Geographic boundaries for agritourism areas need to be refined along with the associated updates to the zoning ordinance to clarify allowed uses, scale, and development standards.

General Workplan:

Task	Description/Work Products	Timeframe
Data Gathering/ Key Stakeholder Engagement	<p>Develop an understanding of agritourism activities occurring in the county and build a list of operators. Map activities to better understand geographic context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reach out to the Sunnyslope Wine Trail and the Idaho Wine Commission to better understand wine-making and existing agritourism in this region and to identify a list of stakeholders. • Determine what the timeline looks like for the Sunnyslope American Viticultural Area (AVA). • Research other communities that have effectively implemented agritourism and agribusiness into their planning areas. • Develop and disseminate an agritourism survey to better understand desired uses, scale, and geographic context from those who would benefit from an agritourism overlay, as well as those living in the area who might not want increased activity/tourism. • Hold a focus group or conduct short interviews with operators engaged in agritourism to clarify survey responses. 	2 months
BOCC check-in	Present data gathered during the above process to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Community Engagement	<p>Hold an open house or pop-up events (ideally within or near the planning area) to share overlay area concepts, including proposed allowed uses, design considerations, scale of allowed uses, and code alternatives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare engaging graphics and materials for the public. • Work with Sunnyslope Wine Trail and Idaho Wine Commission. • Develop mechanisms to capture and incorporate public sentiment into the final products. 	2 months
Synthesis	<p>Finalize draft code and maps based on survey and public outreach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine what it means to be located within the Agri-tourism business use overlay. • Add Goals, Policies, and Actions to the “Special Areas & Sites” section of the Comprehensive Plan that directly point to Agri-tourism. 	1 month

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BOCC check-in	Present data gathered during the community engagement stage, as well as the draft code, to the Board of County Commissioners. Confirm next steps.	
Public Hearing Process	Take the final comprehensive plan amendments and zoning map/code text amendments through the formal public hearing process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update text and maps based on hearing outcome. • Formalize SOP, website information, etc., to ensure staff and public understand new code and plans. 	3 months

Resources:

- Consultant services could be beneficial in organizing community engagement events as well as designing final products (particularly if a full area plan document is desired).
- Determine if the Agricultural Advisory Committee is equipped and qualified to provide input into this effort.

3. Additional Overlay Areas

Overview:

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan envisions additional overlay areas (Wildfire Risk Areas, Archaeological and Historic Preservation District, Scenic Byway, Airport Overlay, and others). Some of these overlay areas have been mapped, but associated development standards have not been adopted into the zoning ordinance.

General Workplan:

Task	Description/Work Products	Timeframe
Data Gathering	Establish a foundation for overlay boundaries and development standards, ensuring all geographic and regulatory information is accurate and defensible. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate existing overlay layers to identify gaps, outdated information, or boundary inconsistencies. • Research overlay structures used by surrounding cities, neighboring counties, and regional plans to ensure regional alignment and standards of best practice. (2021 Canyon County All-Hazard Mitigation Plan). • Meet with subject experts to develop draft criteria and geographic areas, such as safety buffers, aesthetic standards, height restrictions, flight path zones, and corridor-specific setbacks. (Fire Departments, Historic Preservation staff, Scenic Byway Board, ITD aeronautics/pilots). • Incorporate data gathered from experts into GIS to produce updated draft overlays and outline suggested development standards. 	2-3 months
BOCC check-in	Present data findings to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Focused Engagement	Collaborate with community stakeholders to host pop-up events focused on specific overlay areas. These sessions will present proposed uses, standards, and code alternatives to the public. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with local fire departments, airports, Canyon County Historic Preservation Commission, Idaho Byways Advisory Committee/Idaho Transportation Department, Canyon County Parks and Rec, and other community organizations to plan pop-up events. 	2 months

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare engaging graphics and materials for the public. 	
BOCC check-in	Present data findings to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Community Engagement	<p>Following the pop-up events, a comprehensive survey will be distributed to property owners and the community to gather formal feedback on the proposed concepts and boundaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare a comprehensive survey on all the overlays and distribute it through county and partner communications. • Develop mechanisms to capture and incorporate public sentiment into the final products. 	1-2 months
BOCC check-in	Present data findings to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Synthesis	<p>Finalize draft code and maps based on survey and public outreach, and vet with subject matter experts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify common themes, concerns, and areas of strong community support between public preference and technical requirements and revise draft overlays accordingly. • Re-engage initial expert groups to review refined draft overlays and standards. • Review Comprehensive Plan language with proposed text, map and code changes and determine if additional elements of the plan and or policies need to be updated as a result. 	1 months
Public Hearing Process	<p>Take the final comprehensive plan amendments and zoning map/code text amendments through the formal public hearing process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update text and maps based on hearing outcome. • Formalize SOP, website information, etc., to ensure staff and public understand new code and plans. • Add overlays to online GIS maps and incorporate overlay review into land use decisions. 	3 months

Resources:

- Consultant services could be beneficial in organizing community engagement events/organizing subject expert input.

4. Area of Impact

Overview:

City Areas of Impact maps and code were updated at the end of 2025 due to a change in legislation (Idaho Code Section 67-6526). The boundaries still need to be formally amended in the comprehensive plan by resolution. Goals and policies such as (P4.04.02, A4.04.02a, P7.01.01, P7.01.02 & P12.01.02) should be reviewed to ensure county plans align with the changed legislation and communications with the cities. The result will require coordination with the cities to update agreements governing areas of impact.

General Workplan:

Task	Description/Work Products	Timeframe
Step 1: Comp. Plan Amendment		
Review	Review maps and policies in the Plan to assess required amendments. Depending on the necessary revisions, the process may only require an update to the comprehensive plan maps to reflect new areas of impact via resolution.	2 weeks

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If maps only need to be updated, GIS can provide the updated maps, and staff can process the amendment through the hearing process. If policies and actions need to be changed, coordination with affected agencies will be necessary. 	
Coordination	Coordinate with city and county officials to determine any policy and implementation revisions to the Plan.	1 month
Synthesis	Finalize draft based on coordination.	1 month
Public Hearing Process	Take the final Plan amendments through the formal public hearing process.	3-4 months
Step 2: Code Amendment - City/County Agreement		
Coordination	Coordinate with city and county officials to determine agreement language in the county code to be applied in areas of impact. Ensure that agreements are understandable and can be uniformly applied.	3 months
Synthesis	Finalize draft code based on coordination.	1 month
Public Hearing Process	Take the final text amendments through the formal public hearing process. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update text based on hearing outcome. Formalize SOP, website information, etc., to ensure staff and public understand new code and plans. 	3-4 months

Resources:

- Mapping services will be needed (in-house).
- Coordination with various agencies/stakeholders for initial data collection.

5. Pathways and Thoroughfare Plan

Overview:

The Canyon County Parks, Pathways, and Cultural Resources Plan was adopted in 2022, with pathways envisioned around Lake Lowell and along the Boise and Snake rivers. Not all of the planned pathways are included in our regional long-range transportation plan, Communities in Motion. The pathways have also not been adopted into our County Comprehensive Plan. Adoption of detailed plans and inclusion of those plans in the county's comprehensive plan, as well as the metropolitan planning organization plan, would better position the county to receive federal funding for pathway acquisition and development. Furthermore, with plan adoption, the county could elect to adopt ordinances that could ensure that planned pathways are included in applicable private developments.

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan includes a functional classification map for roadways within the county. However, future land use designations are not always aligned with the classifications. The development of a thoroughfare plan would allow the county to better align transportation needs with land use decisions.

General Workplan:

Task	Description/Work Products	Timeframe
Coordination	Coordinate with COMPASS, Canyon County Parks, Pathways & Cultural Resources, Highway Districts, and Cities to ensure long-term goals and plans are understood and available for adoption.	2-3 months

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt Canyon County Parks, Pathways, and Cultural Resources Plan into the County’s comprehensive plan and discuss opportunities to adopt the identified pathways into Communities in Motion. • Determine the desired subdivision code related to identified pathways. • Discuss pathway requirements with cities and how they incorporate them into their subdivision code to see if there is coordination that could be done within the Areas of City Impacts. • Meet with Highway Districts to better understand their classification maps, how they relate to COMPASS’s Functional Classification and pathways maps, and their vision for future land uses along their roadways. • Review Future Land Use Map and Functional Classification Map with COMPASS, Highway Districts, and Idaho Transportation Department to determine if any changes need to be made in Canyon County’s Comprehensive Plan or Code due to safety concerns, access requirements, or traffic impacts. 	
Community Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out a survey to the public and stakeholders to receive feedback on pathway proposals and on potential additions to code related to the functional classification map. • Hold an open house or pop-up event with the public and specific stakeholders. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Prepare engaging graphics and materials for the public. ○ Develop mechanisms to capture and incorporate public sentiment into the final products. 	2 months
BOCC check-in	Present data findings to the Board of County Commissioners and confirm next steps.	
Synthesis	Finalize draft code based on coordination and community engagement responses.	2 months
Public Hearing Process	<p>Take the final text/map amendments through the formal public hearing process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update text based on hearing outcome. • Formalize SOP, website information, etc., to ensure staff and public understand new code and plans. • Add necessary changes to online GIS maps and incorporate overlay review into land use decisions. 	3 months

Resources:

- Consultant services could be beneficial in organizing the community engagement survey/events, as well as organizing subject expert input and drafting code standards.