

2023

City of Fairfield, Idaho Comprehensive Plan



DRAFT

Compiled by the Fairfield
Planning & Zoning Department

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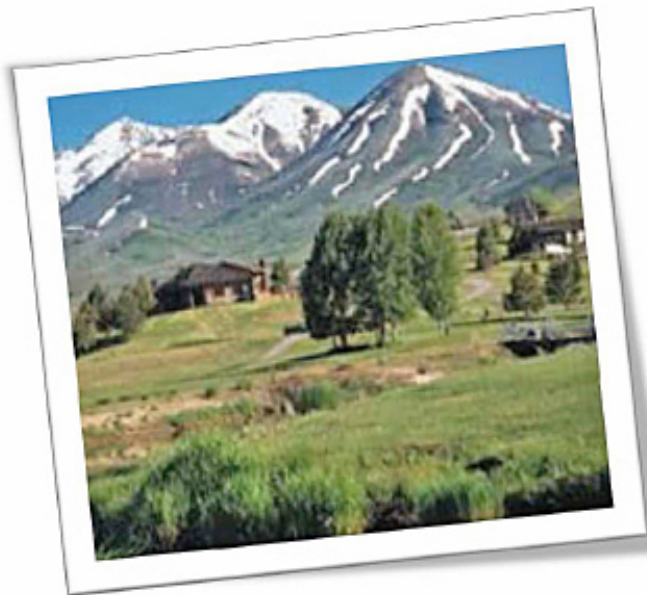
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Purpose

The City of Fairfield, Idaho Comprehensive Plan serves as an ever evolving decision making tool for the City's leaders, as well as a framework and policy guide for actions concerning future development of facilities and services that support Community and Economic Development. As economic conditions change, objectives and priorities of the City will change, goals and policies will be modified. This plan is intended to be the instrument for growth and must be responsive to change, forward-looking, understood, and publicly supported.

This Plan is adopted under the authority of Idaho's Local Land Use Planning Act (Idaho Code Sections 67-6501et. seq.) Idaho Code Section 67-6508 requires a Comprehensive Plan that considers previous and existing conditions, trends, desirable goals and objectives, or desirable future situations for each of the following planning components:



- ◆ Property rights
- ◆ Population
- ◆ School Facilities and Transportation
- ◆ Economic Development
- ◆ Land Use
- ◆ Natural Resources
- ◆ Hazardous Areas
- ◆ Public Services, Facilities, & Utilities
- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Recreation
- ◆ Special Areas or Sites
- ◆ Housing
- ◆ Community Design
- ◆ Implementation

Two of the componets listed in Idaho Code Section 67-6508 are not specifically addressed in this plan. Section 67-6508(q) Public Airport Facilities is omitted because the local airport is owned and managed by Camas County. Section 67-6508(p) National Interest Electric Transmission Corridors is omitted because none exist in the area.

To maintain the currency and effectiveness of the plan, periodic review is essential. This should be the responsibility of the Planning and Zoning Commission, who should review the plan on an annual basis.

Any person may petition the City of Fairfield to request a change to the text of Comprehensive Plan. Such amendments to the Plan may not be made more frequently than every six (6) months. Said six (6) month period shall be measured from the date that the Commission submits the recommendations to the Council.

Persons may petition the City of Fairfield to request a change to the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Such amendments to the Land Use Map may not be made more frequently than every six (6) months unless combined with a request to change the Zoning Map.

The Fairfield Planning and Zoning Commission may recommend amendments to the Comprehensive Plan and to other ordinances authorized by this chapter to the governing board at any time (Idaho Code 67-6509).

An amendment to the Comprehensive Plan is initiated by submitting a written request to the Planning and Zoning Commission. The Commission shall hold at least one public hearing to receive public comments on the proposed change. Upon receipt of the recommendation by the Planning Zoning Commission on the proposed change, the Fairfield City Council may hold a public hearing on said change. If the Council makes a material change to the recommendation by the commission, the Council shall conduct a public hearing following the same procedure as the commission before adopting, amending or repealing the plan.

The Plan or any amendment thereto shall be effective upon adoptions by resolution by the Fairfield City Council.



idea The goals and objectives as listed in each component of this plan are the means by which the City of Fairfield intends to implement its desire to improve the city for current and future residents. While it is impossible to anticipate every circumstance that the City might face, this Plan is an attempt to imagine what might be rather than simply reacting to future events.

Maintaining and upgrading basic public services should always be a top priority, but future development needs to be considered on a regular basis. In general, the city can absorb the impacts of a single house or business, however, major developments will need long term commitments from both the developers and the city. The primary purpose of this plan is to make growth - in whatever form it may take - manageable and beneficial to those who desire to make the City of Fairfield their home.

Introduction

At the turn of the 20th century, there were 10 settlements with post offices on or near Camas Prairie. Soldier was the largest settlement, due to being located on the Old Immigrant Road (Goodale's Cutoff). The Oregon Short Line Railroad crossed Camas County and became an important part of the area's early growth.

Because the railroad was not built along the Old Immigrant Road, but two miles south, a new settlement emerged. First called New Soldier, a town sprung up where the rail was laid. However, the land filing office did not like this new name, so on August 12, 1912, the town's name was changed to Fairfield.

The railroad made it possible for the agriculturally based economy to thrive, despite insects, harsh weather and a short growing season. A grain cooperative was built next to the tracks which allowed even the smallest farming operations to successfully transport their products to market. However, the railroad's location made it necessary to move the hub of the community closer to the transportation. Any building that could be moved from Soldier was relocated, by horse and sled in winter or rolled on logs in summer. By 1920, Soldier had become a fringe community of Fairfield.

Most buildings were constructed between 1910-1915. While many buildings were moved from Soldier, the courthouse building (which originally housed a bank) was built in place. When the bank went broke in the early 1930s, Camas County moved its county offices into the building and still occupies it today.



The railroad left the prairie in the early 1980s, and the railroad depot building was donated to the Camas County Historical Society. The depot was moved to its present location adjacent to the Legion Hall on East Camas Avenue.



Fairfield has a strong sense of community and brotherhood. This is evident on many facets. In 1919, the Legion Hall was built with funds collected through the community. There is an annual Pioneer Picnic, begun in 1915 to gather all the pioneering families for fellowship and good food. Soldier Mountain Ski Area was first developed by a local family for local families. The airport was opened in 1945 to increase the local defense. Camas Lily Days is an annual event that celebrates community spirit.

Property Rights

Private property rights encompass not only the right to develop, invest, and profit from property, but also the right to hold and enjoy property as well. As population increases and a greater number of people live nearer each other, the opportunities for land use conflicts become greater. The City must balance each individual's rights with a respect for the property rights of neighboring owners.

The Idaho State Legislature has, in Title 67, Chapter 80 of the Idaho Code, enacted statutory provisions requiring state and local governments to ensure land use policies do not result in a taking of private property without just compensation. Land use policies, restrictions, conditions, and fees of the City of should not violate private property rights or create unnecessary technical limitations on the use of property.

In order to insure that land use policies, ordinances, restrictions, conditions and fees do not constitute an unconstitutional taking of private property rights, the City of Fairfield will ask the following questions of any action. If any question is answered in the affirmative the action will need to be reexamined:

- 1) Does the regulation or action result in the permanent or temporary physical occupation of all or a portion of private property?
- 2) Does the regulation or action require a property owner to dedicate a portion of property or grant an easement without full compensation?
- 3) Does the regulation deprive the owner of all economically viable uses of all or any part of the property?
- 4) Does the regulation have a significant impact on the landowner's economic interest?
- 5) Does the regulation deny a fundamental attribute of ownership: Does it deny the right to possess, exclude others, or dispose of all or a portion of the property?
- 6) Does the regulation or action serve the same purpose that would be served by directly prohibiting the use or action; and does the condition imposed substantially advance that purpose?

GOAL:

It shall be the policy of the City of Fairfield to protect, enhance and insure private property values and rights within the accepted confines of the national, state and local laws.

OBJECTIVES:

In order to protect and preserve private property rights, all land use decisions, policies, procedures and ordinances are to be in compliance with the City's policy as stated above.

Population

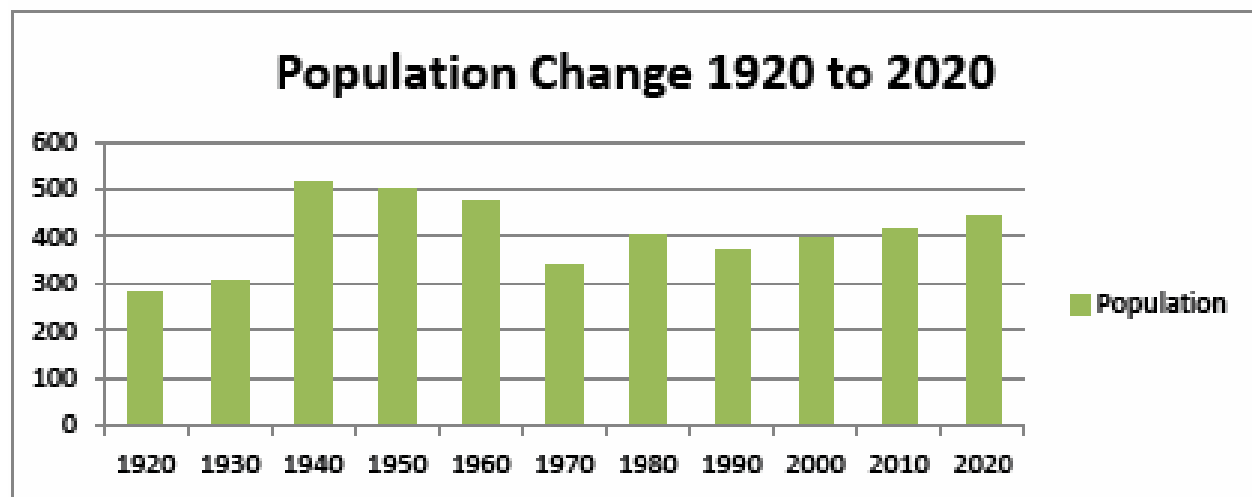
During the last 100 years, the City of Fairfield has experienced wide variances in population. In the 1930s, the city exploded to its highest population - 511. Over the next 20 year the population slowly declined. Then, in the 1960s, there was a loss of nearly 30% of the population. This was due mostly to the loss of the sawmill located on the west side of town.

Since the year 1990, the city has had a slow but steady increase in population due to several new subdivisions being created. The recession of 2007-2009 halted all new building projects, and a number of homes went into foreclosure. From 2016 to 2020 economic recovery began to bring population back to the community.

Fairfield is considered a “bedroom community” for the Wood River Valley, but individuals also commute to other areas for work. The price of homes and rentals the Blaine County area, as well as the cost of gasoline, push families back and forth between the two areas. Over the last couple of years, there have been few rentals available in Fairfield, perhaps because low interest rates have encouraged families to buy.

Fairfield Population - 1920 to 2020

	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Population	280	306	511	502	474	336	404	371	395	416	441
Percent Change	0	9.3	67	-1.8	-5.6	-29.1	20.2	-8.2	6.5	5.3	6



Goals:

To understand reasons for changes in population and its impacts on city growth.

Objectives:

- 1) Monitor the quality and location of growth within the area.
- 2) Evaluate regional population data and demographic forecasts.
- 3) Research opportunities for higher density in appropriate areas as the population increases to provide for the low to moderate-income population.

School Facilities and Transportation

The Camas County School District #121 includes the City of Fairfield. The school campus is located on two city blocks at the north end of the city's Central Business District. The site consists of an elementary school serving grades K-8, and a high school serving grades 9-12, bus facilities, and outdoor recreation areas. A football field is located three blocks west of the main campus at the end of Ponderosa Avenue.

The high school was built in 1929 and the full-size gym in 1951. A new elementary school, lunch room and second gym were completed in 2005 as an ad-on to the high school. The old grade school (built in



1913 and added onto in 1951) located on the east end of the campus has housed the district's music classrooms for the last 15 years. It was demolished in October of 2022 due to structural problems. Music classrooms have been moved to the old shop/ag building. The maximum capacity of the current classrooms is 190-200 students - current number of students is 180.

Rural students are transported into Fairfield by a district bus system utilizing 6 busses for transportation. Older students often drive themselves to school but parking is limited. Children within the city limits generally walk to school using the streets because walkway are not available except along Soldier Road. Since Soldier is the main roadway through the city, the safety of students coming and leaving school is a major concern.

Broadband connection is important to the school district and has facilitated online courses through the Idaho Digital Learning Academy. Dual credit classes with the College of Southern Idaho are also offered.

GOALS:

1. Ensure safe vehicular and pedestrian access for students and teachers.
2. Plan for future growth in the community which may affect student population.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Improve traffic safety along Soldier Road adjacent to the school complex.
- 2) Communicate with the school district regarding development project that might impact student population.
- 3) Plan for additional campus locations.
- 4) Support improvements to broadband improvements.

Economic Development

For most of its history, the economic base of Camas County has been agriculture with many of Fairfield's businesses providing support for this industry. Over the last twenty years, agriculture has fallen to about 12% of the area's employment.

Today, manufacturing and construction account for over 20% of area employment. Service and retail jobs make up nearly 35% of jobs in the area with many workers commuting to other communities for employment. Education, health care, and social services employ about 15% of area workers. Employment rates are currently 58% for the county and 47% in the City of Fairfield with a median household income of \$37,000.

Government (federal, state, and county agencies) employs 15% of the local workforce. Federal agencies include the BLM, the Postal Service, Soil Conservation Service, Idaho Department of Fish & Game, and U.S. Forest Service. Local government includes Camas County, the City of Fairfield, and the Camas County School District.

While agriculture is still an important part of the ongoing economy of Fairfield, tourism and recreation add a considerable benefit to Fairfield's retail and food businesses. The area is noted for numerous winter time activities as well as hunting and fishing during the spring, summer and fall - all of which bring visitors from various locations across the Northwest. There is one major manufacturing business near Fairfield, but the economic health of the community could benefit from more industry and small businesses. To attract such growth to the city, solid infrastructure is needed.

The City of Fairfield provides both water and sewer services. In the last ten years, both of these systems have been and are currently being upgraded. According to Idaho DEQ's most recent approved facility plan (circa 2009), the city's sewer system can support up to 376 EDUs. In 2009, there were 334 EDUs (equivalent dwelling units) which generally relate to hookups to the city's system. With the recent upgrades, a new facility study will likely increase the maximum number of EDUs.

Most other community infrastructures are adequate for the residents, however, broadband is limited. Some companies advertise high-speed internet in the area, but actual speeds rarely if ever reach 20 Mbps. Slow internet limits the types of business and/or industry that can locate in the community. Efforts are being made to improve broadband service in the area.

GOALS:

1. Attract new business, industry and home builders.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Improve infrastructure within the city.
- 2) Provide incentives to retain and attract businesses to the community.

Land Use

»» Introduction

The City of Fairfield is the county seat of Camas County, and as such, provides a central location for area businesses, churches, government services, and urban living. Soldier Road (the primary street within the city and the location of most businesses) is a gateway to the Sawtooth National Forest. Being only a hundred miles from the capital city of Boise, and about an hour from most locations within the Wood River Valley and the Magic Valley, Fairfield attracts a wide variety of people - commuters and vacationers, as well as retirees.

Residential growth should be encouraged to proceed north of Fairfield, along Soldier Road towards the townsite of Soldier, and to the west of the city. Commercial development should be encouraged within the Central Business District, along Highway 20, and along other identified major roadways. Industrial uses should be limited to areas with adequate access to Highway 20.

No lots shall be developed without proper access to a public street or road. Should such street or road not be improved, it shall be the responsibility of the owner of the property being developed to improve the street or road to City standards. Off street parking shall be adequate to meet the needs of the designated use. These standards will be enforced through the issuance policies of building permits. The city may establish other design standards for public infrastructure which will be required of the developers/property owners.

»» Map

The City of Fairfield's Land Use Map may be approved or changed separately from the Comprehensive Plan. The Land Use Map may be changed concurrently with the Zoning Map. It is the intent of the Comprehensive Plan that land use designations on the Land Use Map be a visual representation of desired development within the City of Fairfield and the Area of City Impact. Land use designations in undeveloped areas should not be interpreted as solid lines of demarcation.

»» Area of City Impact:

The Area of City Impact agreement (ACI) with Camas County defines the area surrounding the city in which reasonable and orderly urban growth should be encouraged. While land within the ACI is under the jurisdiction of the county, the City of Fairfield needs to be actively involved with all development in that area to assure a smooth transition when those areas are annexed into the city. This agreement will need to be amended from time to time as the City grows.

Any development within the ACI shall meet the requirements of South Central Public Health District and the Department of Environmental Quality. Residential development within the ACI and adjacent to the city boundaries, may be required to connect to the city's sewer and water system.

»» **Agricultural Land Use (AG):**

Agriculture is defined as any facility for the growing, raising or production of agricultural, horticultural and viticultural crops and vegetable products of the soil, poultry and poultry products, livestock, field grains, seeds, hay, apiary and dairy products, and the processing for commercial purposes of livestock or agricultural commodities.

Fairfield is still of the size and inclination to allow agricultural related uses within its borders and the ACI. However, heavy agricultural uses, such as CAFOs (confined animal feeding operations), should not be allowed in either area. Current agricultural activities within the Area of Impact should be protected. Agricultural uses in undeveloped areas of the City should be protected with certain limitations. As the City grows agricultural land use will leave the City.

»» **Open Space (OS):**

The purpose of this land use designation is to provide areas for recreational activities, including existing and future park areas, paths, trails, and preserving open space. Soldier Creek is of great recreational and aesthetic value. Undeveloped areas next to the creek, and within designated flood plains and/or identified wetlands should be preserved. Development in these areas is not appropriate and should be discouraged.

»» **Residential Land Use:**

The purpose of this land use is to promote the development of residential neighborhoods to meet the demands of the population. All development in this zone shall connect to city services.

Areas designated as R1 are suitable for single-family dwellings. Areas designated as R2 allow for multi-family residential living such as duplexes, triplexes, and other shared-wall dwellings. R1 and R2 areas may be commingled. Manufactured homes are allowed in these areas provided certain building requirements are met. Cottage industries or home occupations which have minimal impact on the neighborhood are allowed in these areas as well as public or semi-public facilities compatible to the residential use and necessary utility installations.

Higher density residential buildings are only allowed by rezoning specific properties and/or areas to R3 zone as defined in the city's zoning ordinance.

»» **Commercial Land Use:**

Commercial use in the City of Fairfield serves individuals traveling through the area, and the consumer needs of the residents of the city and the surrounding area. Commercial use is defined as retail, wholesale and manufacturing, food & beverage establishments, and/or businesses which provide a service for a fee.

The expansion of commercial areas should depend upon, but be not limited to such factors as the development's impact upon roads (traffic flow), utility impacts, impact on residential areas, and impacts upon natural resources. The city's Central Business District (CB) should be limited to retail, financial and/or personal services, public and cultural facilities, restaurants and bars. Commercial development along Highway 20 is encouraged, but other areas for commercial development should be identified.

Commercial use should have minimal impact on residential areas, but existing residential use within commercial areas are considered "Grandfathered" and will be allowed to continue, provided there is no expansion of nonconforming uses. Residential units connected to commercial buildings may be allowed in this zone as long as they are clearly subordinate to the building's commercial use.

»» **Industrial Land Use:**

Industrial uses within the city includes light industries, small manufacturing plants, processing plants and other related uses that do not yield any objectionable vapors, liquids, or solid waste materials. Heavy industrial uses should be located within the ACI south of Highway 20 where city services may become available, but safely distanced from residential areas. The City should encourage the grouping of industrial uses in land developed as an industrial park.

GOAL:

To provide for a variety of land uses that meet the needs of the residents of Fairfield and the surrounding area while protecting the unique rural and historic character of the City, and the quality of life residents now enjoy.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Residential uses shall be encouraged in areas adjacent to city services.
- 2) Commercial development on Soldier Road will be encouraged to preserve historic character of the town by establishing a Central Business District.
- 3) Encourage commercial development along Highway 20 and along the road adjacent to the Camas Medical Clinic.
- 5) Light Industrial use will be encouraged within specific areas of the city with easy access to Highway 20 and have minimal impact on residential areas.
- 7) Development plans should only be approved if the city can provide the public service necessary for the health, safety and welfare of those individuals who are being served.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The City of Fairfield lies in the center of the Camas Prairie, an alluvial valley about 30 miles long and 5 miles wide. The elevation of Fairfield is 5,060 feet. The valley's most prominent feature is Soldier Mountain which stands on the north side of the valley at just over 10,000 feet in elevation. Along the south side of the valley are the Bennett Hills which range in elevation from 6200 to 6800 feet.

Multiple streams flow out of the mountains. Collectively known as the Camas Creek Drainage, this water feeds into Magic Reservoir at the east end of the valley. Soldier Creek, the primary stream associated with the City of Fairfield, runs along the east side of the city and often causes spring flooding. Other drainage ditches exist within the city and are essential to carrying excess spring run-off safely through the city.

Weather on the Camas Prairie is designated as Humid Continental Climate, typified by four distinct seasons and large seasonal temperature differences - warm to hot summers and freezing cold winters. Precipitation is distributed throughout the year but there are often dry seasons. Fairfield gets about 15 inches of precipitation per year. Snow accumulation averages just over 60 inches per year. While it varies greatly from year to year, there are 90 to 120 days with at least 1 inch of snow on the ground.

Wind on the Camas Prairie is relatively constant with mild seasonal variation over the course of the year. The annual average mean wind speed 9.5 mph. The windier months are February to June with mean wind speeds just over 10 mph. Average maximum wind speed (gusts) is 47.5 mph with June experiencing the highest speeds.

TEMPERATURE DATA FOR FAIRFIELD RANGER STATION (NOAA normals, 1971–2000)

Month	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Year
Record High	48	63	70	83	94	99	101	100	96	87	69	55	101
Average High °F	30.8	36.2	44.5	56.9	67.1	76.1	85.3	84.9	75.6	63.4	43.3	31.5	58
Average Low °F	5.9	9	18.6	28.5	35.9	41.9	47.4	45.5	36.5	27.5	18	7.2	26.8
Record Low °F	-42	-38	-24	-3	15	19	26	23	11	-8	-21	-40	-42
Average Precipitation	2.22	1.71	1.45	1.05	1.33	0.83	0.6	0.42	0.69	0.82	1.77	1.98	14.87

GOAL:

Natural resources must be carefully assessed and considered in making any development decisions in the community.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Discourage development in floodplains or drainage areas of the City, and require mitigation of such hazards by new development.
- 2) Encourage on-site drainage for melting snow and construction designs that account for large accumulations of snow.
- 3) Encourage development that preserves views of landscape and night skies.
- 4) Encourage projects that mitigate the effects of or utilize wind for local benefit.

HAZARDOUS AREAS

Introduction

The Local Planning Act of 1975 found in Chapter 65 of the Idaho Code Volume 11 requires that city and county planning be addressed in a comprehensive plan. The purpose of this act is to promote the health, safety and general welfare of residents in the State of Idaho.

Section 67-6508(g) of the Local Planning Act of 1975 defines hazardous areas as “An area of known hazards as may result from susceptibility to surface ruptures from faulting, ground shaking, ground failure, landslides or mudslides; avalanche hazards resulting from development in the known or probable path of snow slides and avalanches; and floodplain hazards.” The following hazards have been identified.

»» Natural Hazards

Natural hazards include, but are not limited to, seismic, flooding, and range/forest fires. This section will identify hazards that need to be included in the City of Fairfield comprehensive plan.

① Seismic

Camas County is located on the southern end of the Centennial Tectonic Belt. Seismic activity has been observed north of the county, but none identified within the county. This is a part of Idaho that has been classified as an area that could receive medium damage from seismic event. Complete seismic information for Fairfield can be obtained from the Geology Department at Boise State University.

② Flooding

In 1938, 1956, 1960, 1964 and 1997 major floods occurred resulting in water depths of 24 inches within areas of the city. The City of Fairfield experiences some degree of flooding annually. The water which contributes to this problem comes from the melting snow from within the city and from runoff of the watershed north of town. Flooding may result in damage or loss of property, injury or loss of life, and contamination of waterways with debris and hazardous chemicals. (See FIRM map for the City of Fairfield).

③ Winter Weather

Winter weather conditions can create driving hazards and survival conditions. Heavy snowfall and drifting snow can quickly close roads with whiteout conditions, stranding travelers and isolating local residents. Stranded motorists can die from carbon monoxide poisoning if they keep their car engine running and snow drifts confine exhaust fumes in their car. Also, snowmobilers and Nordic skiers may become disoriented and lost under these conditions. Cold temperatures and wind result in chill factors that are dangerous if proper clothing is not available.

④ **Fires**

The City is, relative to the County, a densely populated area, with mostly older residences. For City planning, the fire hazard cannot be avoided. It is recommended that City of Fairfield officials continue to support and improve its fire department.

»» **Manmade Hazards**

Manmade hazards cover a vast range of hazards that have resulted as a part of the advancement of industry and agriculture. It is not the intent of this section to identify all manmade hazards but to indicate likely hazards based upon current conditions in Fairfield. Hazards associated with any new industry should be considered by city planners before allowing the industry into the city. Transportation of hazardous materials over Highway 20 should also be considered.

① **Underground Fuel Storage Tanks**

Underground fuel storage tanks constitute a hazard in that leakage from these tanks can result in contaminating ground water supplies. Fires and explosions are typically mitigated by locating such tanks underground but these could still impact surrounding homes, schools, and residential areas. Locating fuel storage tanks above ground should be encouraged.

② **Hazardous Chemical Storage**

Hazardous chemicals stored properly do not pose an immediate hazard to the public. However, the public may be exposed to chemicals if they are spilled or are involved in an accident (i.e., fire, explosion, etc.) that leads to a release. City officials need to know the type of chemicals that are stored in businesses to protect emergency personnel and the public from undue hazards in the event of an accident. Businesses are responsible for compliance with Local, State, and Federal license guidelines.

③ **Air Pollution**

Air pollution is not typically a problem in rural areas. However, any potential problems should be identified. Local farmers are allowed to have controlled burns of the fields and ditch banks during the spring and fall, thus creating a potential air pollution hazard at that time. Usually the smoke is quickly dissipated and is not a continuous hazard. Before burning, the farmers must have a permit and the local fire department must be alerted. In addition, city officials may need to warn the public if it is anticipated that dense smoke will pass over populated areas.

④ **Propane Tanks**

Propane is highly explosive when heated under confined conditions and is also a fire hazard. Propane is used to heat many homes and businesses within the City of Fairfield. Propane tanks should be located away from traffic areas and potential heat sources. Any propane tanks owned by city agencies need to be checked for leaks and any ignition sources removed. Also, information should be made available to the public explaining the hazards of propane.

⑤ **Grain Elevators**

From 1900 to 1980, more than 1,200 grain elevator explosions occurred in the United States. Occupational Safety and Health Administrations (OSHA) estimates that between 1974 and 1984, there were nearly 200 explosions at U.S. mills and grain elevators, resulting in more than 600 deaths and injuries. Often poor housekeeping, especially uncontrolled grain dust, has been suspected as the cause of these explosions. Several grain elevators and other grain storage sites are located in the City. City planning should address development around these structures and/or the repurposing of these buildings.

⑥ **Septic Systems**

Septic systems are not allowed within the Fairfield City limits, but they may be allowed in the area of impact. These septic systems must be approved by the South Central Health District. Without proper planning, including consideration of soil types, drainage, and well-water recharge areas, ground water contamination is a possibility.

GOAL:

To protect public health and safety, growth and development should be guided away from hazardous areas.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Establish specific actions to address emergency situations within the city.
- 2) Prohibit future construction near the creeks and water areas that are prone to flooding unless clearly proven to be in the public interest and will not adversely affect the drainage of neighboring properties. Continue to improve the storm water drainage system through the city to mitigate flooding.
- 3) Encourage residents to maintain an adequate heating fuel reserve, food and medicine to survive power outages and isolation due to closed roads. Also prepare a plan to help travelers that may be stranded on the road or stopped in Fairfield due to ordered road closures.
- 4) Industrial areas should not be reclassified as residential areas unless any known spills or hazards have been removed.
- 5) Businesses and/or agencies dealing with hazardous chemicals should be identified.
- 6) Encourage retention of hazardous areas as open space: For example, old landfills should not be developed.

TRANSPORTATION

Intrastate access to and from Fairfield is provided by U.S. Highway 20 which passes along the southern boundary of the City. Fairfield is also served by a small county airport located south of Highway 20. Because the incorporated area of city does not include any property south of Highway 20, the city has no direct control over speed limits on that roadway.

The main thoroughfare through town is a paved street - Soldier Road - which intersects with US Highway 20 and runs north through the city. Soldier Road provides access to the City's local roads connecting east and west. There are eight miles of road in the City with the majority of the roads consisting of compacted dirt and gravel, which causes excessive dust in the summer and mud during spring and fall. The streets surrounding the school campus and one block of Willow Avenue West (accessing the fire department and the senior center) have been paved with recycled asphalt.

In August 2013, the City Council adopted the Community Revitalization Plan (CRP) which envisioned connecting US Highway 20 to the downtown area along Soldier Road while providing ADA accessibility. The plan noted the need to repair and construct new sidewalks and improved street lighting from Highway 20 to the Central Business District. Grant money from Idaho's Local Highway Technical Assistance Council (LHTAC) has been used for sidewalks and lighting in the downtown area. Additional grants will be needed to complete these projects. The CRP also noted the importance of developing a plan for bicyclist and pedestrians along Soldier Road north of the city.

GOAL:

To provide safe and efficient roadways and paths for motorized and non-motorized traffic as well as pedestrians with in the city.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Upgrade the sidewalks and street lights when the opportunity become available. Camas Avenue leading to the clinic should be paved.
- 2) Work with ITD to improve safety at the intersection of Soldier Road and Highway 20 by asking for flashing lights.
- 3) Maintain and improve existing streets and drainage.
- 4) Required new development to conforming to uniform engineering standards and to address drainage, paving, curbs, sidewalks, streetlights, and other improvements.
- 5) Develop an integrative plan for safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian ways. Plan should provide for mobility impaired persons, as well as youth and elderly.
- 6) Continue to research and seek funding for replacement of damaged sidewalks and drainage areas as well as funding for new sidewalk, lighting, and improvements for the safety of pedestrian and bicyclist.

HOUSING

Housing within the City of Fairfield is predominately single-family homes, either stick-build or manufactured. In general, newer homes are three-bed, two-bath with an integrated garage. Older homes may have a detached garage or none with individual rooms being smaller than normal. The average home has 2 to 3 bedrooms. Very few multi-family dwelling (duplexes) exist within the city, and there is only one apartment building consisting of 6 rent-assisted units. One RV park exists next to Highway 20 and provides year-round housing for a few individuals/families with limited water and sewer service during the winter months.

There are about 230 dwelling units in Fairfield with about 20% vacancy. Vacancies may be due to units having seasonal use, but a few houses are not livable. Home ownership in Fairfield is 75%. A quarter of homes are rental properties. Median Gross Rent is \$950 per month. This slightly higher than the state average, but the per bedroom cost is nearly 30% less than other places in Idaho. For many families, housing in Fairfield seems affordable in raw dollars, but the cost of transportation to work and other services is often overlooked when deciding to relocate.

Affordable housing is generally defined as rent being less than 30% of income and no more than one person per habitable room. Given the lack of housing diversity, Fairfield's biggest need is housing for single individuals. Areas should be identified for apartment buildings with dwelling units designed for one and two person families. Other options for affordable housing might include Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU), non-traditional housing types such as yurts and tiny homes, and single-wide manufactured homes.

GOAL:

- 1) Promote diverse housing opportunities for present and future Fairfield residents.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Duplex housing should be limited to lots which are large enough to provide for the additional parking required by multiple families.
- 2) High-density housing should be encouraged to locate in areas with access to collector and arterial streets, and in close proximity to commercial activities.
- 3) Encourage development of apartments, townhouses, smaller houses, and ADUs in specific areas of the City through zoning and other tools.
- 4) Discourage the year-round use of Recreational Vehicle (RV) Parks and prohibit the use of RVs as residential homes outside RV Parks. Temporary occupancy of an RV located on private property should have clear start and end dates. RV parks should be considered a commercial use.

RECREATION

A wide range of recreational activities are available to the residents of Fairfield. There is access to both water and snow skiing, camping, fishing, hunting, swimming, snowmobiling, biking, horseback riding, hiking and many other outdoor recreational opportunities.

Within the City of Fairfield, there are several city maintained parks. The City Park (AKA, the 4-H Park) is the largest of the city parks and has picnic areas, a playground area for children, a 4-H animal shelter for shows during the 4-H fair, restrooms, a bandshell, and a large playing field with volleyball courts. Zahnor Edwards Park, also known as Steam Engine Park, is located on Soldier Road next to the Camas County Library. It has restrooms, a small picnic area, and a basketball court. The Caboose Park is located at the south end of town which is home an old Union Pacific caboose that serves as the city's Information Center. Hidden Willow playground is located at the end of 4th Street West, the northeast corner of Soldier Mountain Estates.

At the west end of Ponderosa Avenue, there is property jointly owned by the City and the County which serves as a football field for the school district. Just north of the football field is a tennis court, also jointly owned. The Camas County School district has playgrounds for students and allows the public limited use of their indoor gym and exercise equipment.

GOAL:

To encourage a wide variety of recreational opportunities and develop recreational programs based on local needs.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Support the formation of a county recreational district by providing city equipment and personnel in the development and maintenance of new or existing facilities within the city limits of Fairfield.
- 2) Encourage volunteer support for summer and winter recreation programs.
- 3) Cooperate with local groups such as 4-H in the development of youth programs.
- 4) Continue to maintain and improve existing recreational facilities.
- 5) Cooperate with the School District to meet the recreational needs of students.
- 6) Support annual recreational events within the community.
- 7) Encourage the creation of open spaces within new development which provide walking and biking paths that connect to other open space areas inside and outside the city.

COMMUNITY DESIGN

Fairfield has no established design standards for architecture, however, most of the downtown buildings reflect the 1920s and 1930s when many of those structures were built. While some of the newer commercial buildings have copied that historical flavor with square facades, other buildings have a more modern look. One architectural design that has performed poorly is flat roofs due to buildup of snow and ice. Residential designs vary widely with a mix of metal and composition roofing.

With the exception of construction standards, the design of city streets has been largely static as the city has existed within its original 1929 plat until the recent development of two small subdivisions on the northwest corner of town. A seasonal floodway, sometimes referred to as the west fork of Soldier Creek, facilitated the need for an angled street and non-rectangular lots. Additional subdivisions in that area will have to work around that floodway and its associated floodplain. Street design in Fairfield is greatly impacted by snow, or more to the point, the removal of snow. Most right-of-ways are 80 feet wide with an actual roadway of 50 to 60 feet. In places where city right-of-ways are only 50 feet, snow removal can be difficult because the roadway is often constricted to around 40 feet. Cul-de-sacs are also difficult to plow in the winter.

Street lighting is important for the safety of vehicles and pedestrian traveling at night, but creative lighting can enhance a city's visual appeal. Fairfield has used lampposts in its Central Business District to create a welcoming feeling, as well as providing a place to display seasonal banners and flags. That said, one of Fairfield's natural resources is the ability to see the night sky. New development should strive to preserve this rare commodity while providing for the safety of travelers.

GOAL:

To encourage well designed growth and development within the City, and to preserve the attributes that make Fairfield special.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) New buildings and remodels within the Central Business District should be encouraged to incorporate the historical architecture of Soldier Road.
- 2) The need for snow removal should strongly influence street designs within new development. Right-of-ways should be no less than 60 feet in width with actual roadways no less than 50 feet in width. Deadend streets should be discouraged.
- 3) Continue to enhance the visual image of downtown.
- 4) Lighting within all areas of the city should be evaluated and replaced when possible to reduce any interference with the viewing of the night sky.

Special Areas or Sites

The citizens of Fairfield have identified several sites within the community that have special or historical significance. These are:

- 1) Old Depot - Fairfield
- 2) Soldier Creek
- 3) Manard Hall (Meeting place)
- 4) UPRR Caboose - Visitors Center
- 5) Opera House and Bank - Soldier
- 6) Numerous Private Homes in the area
- 7) Downtown Fairfield with its older buildings

GOAL:

To maintain areas of interest in our community whether for lessons in education, historical preservation or to maintain a sense of community.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Encourage private owners of these sites to recognize their significance to the community and preserve them as much as possible.
- 2) To keep a historic record of each site for future generations.
- 3) To research the possibility of additional sites being named on the National Historic Register.
- 4) Promote a map of the area with local road signs for a self-guided tour of places of interest.
- 5) Preserve scenic, historic and recreational areas of interest within the county.

Public Services, Facilities & Utilities

The City of Fairfield provides all the basic public services required for normal city operations: water, sewer, snow removal, police and fire protection, as well as maintenance of the city streets and city properties. Electricity, garbage collection, telephone and internet service are provided by independent vendors.

»» Water:

The City currently has three active wells which provide potable water for residential and commercial use, as well as fire protection within the city.

Well #1 - Developed in 1980 and located in Block 22, lots 26 & 27. It is 400 feet deep and has an approximate output of 2,000 gallons per minute.

Well # 2 - Developed in 1952 and located in Block 22, lot 24. This well was decommissioned in 2012.

Well #3 - Developed in 1960 and located in Block 4 Lot 6. It is at a depth of 500 feet and its output is 500 gallons per minute.

Well #4 - Developed in 2015 and located at 403 Spruce Ave West (Mill Park Subdivision). Depth is 400 feet and its output is approximately 2000 gallons per minute. This well includes a 256,000 gallon water tank.

At present, the City water supply is not being treated chemically. The water is tested monthly for contamination. As many as 1500 to 2000 customers could hook up to this system.

»» Sewer:

The City of Fairfield has a central sewer system, which serves city residents. Storm drains are not connected to this system, however, because of the area's high water table, infiltration of ground water into the system is an ongoing issue. In 2000 the capacity of the sewer system was stated at 600 hookups. According to Idaho DEQ's most recent approved facility plan (circa 2009), the city's sewer system can only support up to 376 hookups, or in their terminology, EDUs (equivalent dwelling units). Currently, there are 340 to 350 EDUs within the city. A sewer improvement project was done during 2022 to reduce infiltration. This will likely increase the maximum number of EDUs, but more upgrades will be needed to provide service to new development projects.

»» Solid Waste Disposal:

The City is currently served by a private garbage company hauling all solid waste to a transfer station owned and operated by Timberline Trash located south of Fairfield.

»» **Electric:**

Idaho Power is currently the only source of electrical power available to residents of Camas County. While power can be provided to part of the county from Anderson Ranch Dam, the Moonstone Substation (18 miles east of Fairfield) is the primary supply of power to all of Camas County as well as most of rural Bellevue Triangle in Blaine County and south to Burmah Road in Lincoln County.

According to the Wood River Electrical Plan (WREP) Moonstone is currently rated at 40MW but is scheduled to be upgraded to 80MW as part of the effort to improve electrical service to the Wood River Valley. The WREP report (2011) indicates that the Historic Winter Peak Load for Moonstone is 8MW and Historic Summer Peak Load 12MW. When the WREP is completed (total buildout) Moonstone substation will only serve the areas around Magic Reservoir and Camas County.

This means the City of Fairfield is well situated for future power needs - current estimated power usage by the city is just under 1.2MW (based on 5kw per dwelling). The only limitation is the powerline from Moonstone to the city and the substation located on the north side of Highway 20, one mile west of Fairfield. Idaho Power can provide 3-phase power to industrial locations within the city, and should be able to accommodate any future subdivisions.

»» **Telephone & Internet:**

Land based telephone service is currently provided by Zply Fiber through underground lines. Telephone lines are mostly 4-conductor copper wire, but T-1 lines may be available to select customers. Zply also provides DSL internet service.

Wireless telephone service is provided from two towers on Johnson Hill (about 9 miles southeast of Fairfield) and one tower in Fairfield. Multiple carriers are available including Verizon, ATT and T-Moble. Verizon has the best coverage due to owning the tower in Fairfield. These companies all provide data plans for internet service.

Internet service is provided through the above phone companies, as well as wireless providers like Anthem Broadband and satellite providers like HughesNet and Viasat.

»» **Television:**

Cable/Satellite Television is available from DirectTV and Dish TV but most residents are using their internet service to stream programs.

» Public Services:

Postal Service - offered to city residents through the U.S. Post Office at 518 Soldier Road in Fairfield.

Public Library - operated by a library district and is located at 607 Soldier Road.

Cemeteries - four cemeteries serve Camas County and are operated by a cemetery district. The district maintains the Hill City Cemetery, the Corral Creek Cemetery, the Manard Cemetery, and the main cemetery, Mountain View, located north of Fairfield on Soldier Road.

Schools - public school system is addressed in another component of the plan. There are no private schools currently located in Camas County, but there is a large number of homeschooling families.

Senior Center - provides space for senior activities, meals and other public gatherings. It is equipped with a full kitchen and restroom facilities and is ADA accessible.

Tourist Information Center - located on Soldier Road, just north of Highway 20, the center provides information to travelers throughout the summer months.

Medical Clinic - located at 401 Camas Avenue West, Family Health Services provide medical services three days a week and dental services two days a week.

Sawtooth National Forest - the Fairfield Ranger Station is located at 102 1st Street East. They provide year-round information for travelers to the National Forest which comprises most of the north part of Camas County.

» Public Safety

Law Enforcement - provided by the Camas County Sheriff Department. Mutual aid is provided by the Idaho State Patrol, which concentrates on traffic enforcement on the state highway. The County currently hires three full time officers, along with the elected sheriff's position, to provide services within the county's jurisdiction. The Sheriff's Department operates out of a facility located at 119 Willow Avenue West. This facility is shared with the Fairfield Fire Department.

Fire Protection - provided by the Fairfield Volunteer Fire Department which serves both the community of Fairfield as well as outlying areas. The department is all volunteer and currently boasts 15 volunteer firefighters. The department's main focus is fire protection, but they are working towards having all members being certified as First Responders for medical emergencies.

Ambulance Service - provided by Camas County. Two ambulances (housed at the medical clinic) are staffed by eight volunteers which includes two Advanced EMTs. This service transports to Wood River Medical Center in Hailey and to North Canyon Medical Center in Gooding. The clinic has a helipad to accommodate Air St. Luke out of Ada County and Twin Falls County.

Search & Rescue - an all volunteer service trained to respond to searches and rescue calls. There are 30 volunteers, many who also are Fire Department volunteers.

All of the above services are dispatched by a county wide radio system operating out of the sheriff's office through the 911 emergency number.

»» **Airports:**

There are several private airstrips located in Camas County. The only public facility is the Camas County Airport (U86) located just south of Highway 20 at the junction of the highway and Soldier Road. Also known as Frostenson Field, this airport was established in 1946 and is a bare-bones facility with no tower, lights or beacon. There are three hangers along the south side of the dirt runway which is just over a half mile long and 40 feet wide. Power lines along Highway 20 and at the east end of the runway present obstacles for pilots, however because of the proximity to the City of Fairfield, it is a common sight to see individuals fly in and walk into town for lunch or breakfast.

GOAL:

To maintain and improve public facilities and services needed by visitors and the residents of the City of Fairfield.

OBJECTIVES:

- 1) Prevent and/or minimize risks to water quality. Upgrade water & sewer systems to maintain and increase capacity.
- 2) Support law enforcement and encourage more police presence within the city.
- 3) Support the continued improvement of fire protection equipment and training of volunteer firefighters. Research the possibility of forming a fire district.
- 4) Support ambulance services and encourage training toward providing EMRs.
- 5) New development must address any and all impacts on fire protection, law enforcement, telecommunications, solid waste pickup, and other public services.