

# Blackfoot Community Review Phase I Report

May 7-9, 2019

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# Sponsoring and Participating Organizations

University of Idaho



## Additional Contributors

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Idaho Department of Commerce

Greater Blackfoot Area Chamber of Commerce

Blackfoot Movie Mill

The Bashful Buffalo

Blackfoot School District

Bingham County Senior Center

Pocatello Regional Transportation

Alsco

XII Stone Café

Kesler's Market

Tommy Vaughn's

Mr. Pizza

McTucker Trucking

# Acknowledgements

In addition to the participating sponsors identified on the previous page, the visiting team would like to thank Mayor Marc Carroll, Lisa Tornabene, and Kurt Hibbert with the City of Blackfoot for their leadership. The team also thanks Julie Buck with University of Idaho Extension, Bingham County, for her valuable contributions.

We also thank the following individuals who did an excellent job of inviting individuals to participate in community listening sessions and other activities described by this report:

Jace Katseanas	Business owners & Agriculture
Cindy Tinoco	Hispanic residents
Pam Beus	Senior citizens
Roger Thomas	High school students
Jason Lish	High school students
Randy'L Teton	Sho-Ban Tribal members
Kevin Oliveres	Faith leaders
Becca Freeburne	Social service providers
Wes Wheatley	First responders
Bryon Howell	First responders

Finally, the visiting team thanks the following individuals for their contributions to the Blackfoot Community Review: Marci Miller (U of I), Soren Newman (U of I), HELPS Lab at Montana State University, Brian Dale (U.S. HUD), Jerry Miller (ID. Dept. of Commerce), Erik Kingston (ID. Housing and Finance Association, and Lori Porreca (Federal Highway Administration).

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# Introduction

This report summarizes the results of activities associated with Phase I of the Blackfoot Community Review. It is intended to inform and lay the foundation for Phase II activities, provided the community is ready to move forward to this next phase. Phase I activities were initiated in March and completed in early May, 2019. These activities included:

- Completion of an economic and demographic profile
- Conducting a survey of residents in Blackfoot and surrounding area
- Completing a bus tour
- Conducting a series of community listening sessions

Most of these activities occurred during the May 7-9, 2019 visit to Blackfoot by the visiting team. A detailed schedule of activities for this visit is found in Appendix A. Contact and biographical information for visiting team members is found in Appendix B.

## The Community Review Process: A Brief Overview

The Idaho Community Review is the flagship program of the Idaho Rural Partnership (IRP), a non-partisan collaborative effort to make rural Idaho stronger, healthier and more prosperous. Our public and private sector member organizations and other partners work closely with rural residents and leaders to identify solutions at a local and regional level. We listen and observe, share perspectives, and explore technical assistance and resources appropriate to each community. The process leaves community residents and leaders better prepared to build on shared strengths and work together to achieve common goals.

The Idaho Rural Partnership is part of the Western Community Assessment Network (WeCan) a 3-year, USDA-funded collaboration between IRP and peer organizations in Montana and Wyoming to understand, evaluate, and improve how community assessments work and to help participating communities see greater success in achieving their goals. Go to [www.communityreview.org](http://www.communityreview.org) for more information about WeCan. Additional information about the Idaho Rural Partnership and the Community Review program is also found on our website at [www.irp.idaho.gov](http://www.irp.idaho.gov) and our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/IRP4Idaho/>.

The community review process begins when the community submits a completed application to the Idaho Rural Partnership. Received in March, 2019, Blackfoot's application is found in Appendix C.

Each of the three phases of the community review process provides numerous opportunities for community residents and leaders to share their experiences, knowledge, opinions, and ideas with visiting community and economic development professionals. These professionals comprise what we call the "visiting team." The information gathered throughout the process is recorded (without using

names) and used to develop observations, recommendations and resources applicable to the community. A summary of the three phases of the community review process are provided below.

#### Phase 1: Listen

The **Listen** phase of the community review includes completing a community satisfaction survey, a series of community listening sessions, and an economic and demographic data profile of the community. This profile is included as Appendix D.

To support these activities, Phase I also includes identifying home team leaders and additional residents to serve on the initial home team to help coordinate activities and arrange meals for the visiting team.

#### Phase 2: Learn

The **Learn** phase of the community review involves a 3-day visit by a larger visiting team of experts from around the state; these experts will help the community explore and develop strategic actions regarding the focus areas identified at the end of Phase I. A second written report containing recommendations, resources, and next steps will be produced upon the completion of Phase II.

#### Phase 3: Launch

The **Launch** phase provides assistance needed to implement recommendations identified and prioritized during Phase 2. The exact nature of this assistance depends on community needs and issues and is facilitated by IRP and/or partner agencies and organizations. Assistance may include, but is not limited to the following:

- Plan community conversations about issues that need further exploration before charting a direction
- Leadership development training to expand the leader base in the community
- Technical assistance by Phase 2 visiting team members to move projects forward
- Organizational development for teams and steering committees



# Survey Results

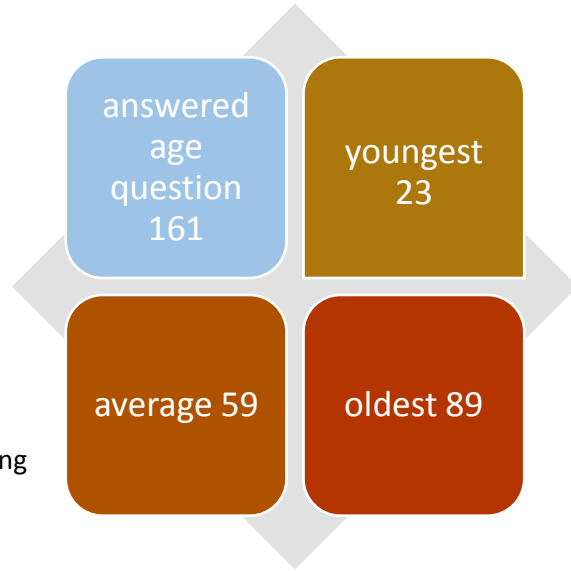
A “Community Satisfaction Survey” was conducted in Blackfoot prior to the community review team visit to conduct the community listening sessions. The survey was conducted by University of Idaho and the HELPS Lab at Montana State University. The survey forms is included as Appendix E.

Survey results serve a number of purposes and serve communities in multiple ways. Results can be used to bolster community grant proposals and demonstrate support for new policies or the status quo. Citizen groups and municipalities can also use this data as a guide for planning and identifying future initiatives.

In addition, community review delivery organizations and partnering universities use this data to identify common interests and concerns across multiple communities, which in turn helps these organizations develop programs and resources to better assist rural communities like yours. In order to identify commonalities and differences across communities, surveys need to be relatively standardized. Therefore, some questions in a standardized survey may be more or less relevant to particular communities. That said, a majority of the questions on the survey are relevant to Blackfoot, which we will illustrate in this section. We appreciate Blackfoot’s willingness to assist these service organizations with this important effort.

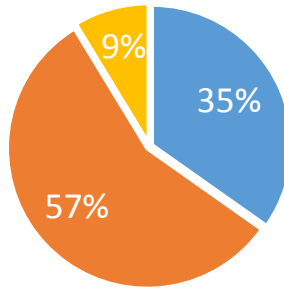
Postcards Mailed: 1500  
Postcards Returned: 34  
Surveys Mailed: 1436  
Surveys Completed: 119  
Response Rate: 8%  
Online Surveys: 30  
Paper Surveys: 89

Respondents tended to be older, female, working or middle class and long-term residents.



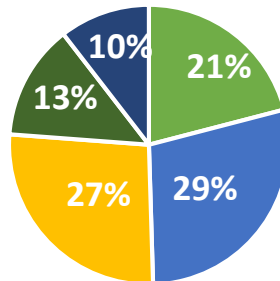
## Sex

■ Male ■ Female ■ Prefer Not to Answer



## Income

■ Under \$25,000 ■ \$25,000-\$49,999 ■ \$50,000-\$74,999  
■ \$75,000-\$100,000 ■ Above \$100,000



Survey responses to the following open-ended questions are representative of comments from 44 respondents:

Q2: *“Would you like to comment or explain why you rated your satisfaction with any of these public services and community amenities in the way you did?”*

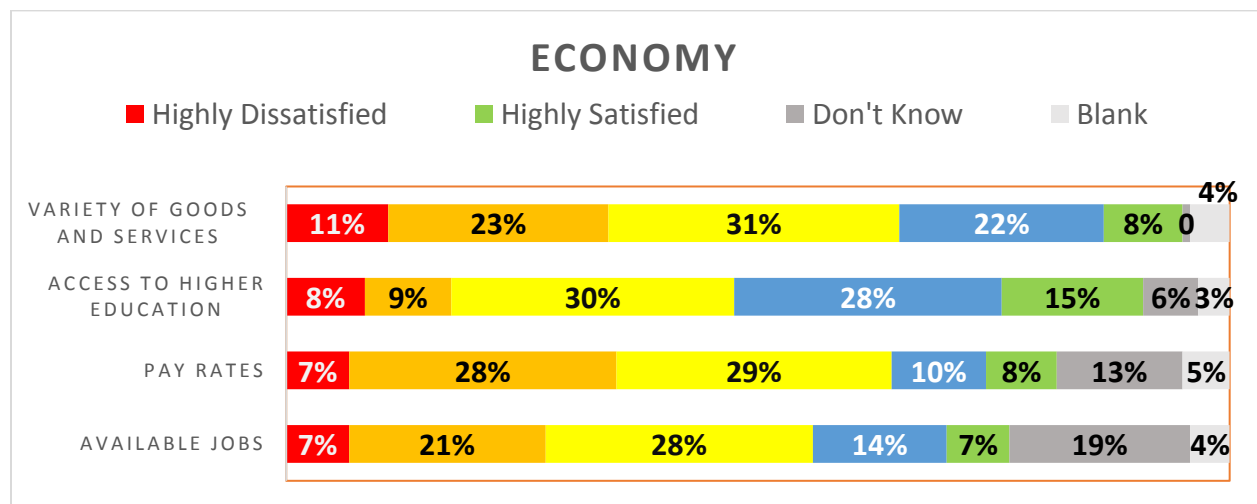
Q3: *“Would you like to comment on your level of satisfaction with any other public services or community amenities that are not listed above?”*

## Economy

Most respondents were generally more dissatisfied than satisfied with economic indicators in Blackfoot, with the exception of Access to Higher Education, where respondents were more satisfied (43%) than dissatisfied (17%).

### Satisfaction Tables Key

Highly Dissatisfied	<span style="color: red;">■</span>
Dissatisfied	<span style="color: orange;">■</span>
Neutral	<span style="color: yellow;">■</span>
Satisfied	<span style="color: blue;">■</span>
Highly Satisfied	<span style="color: green;">■</span>
Don't Know	<span style="color: gray;">■</span>
Blank	<span style="color: lightgray;">■</span>



Survey respondents' comments related to the economy centered on jobs, pay, goods and services and downtown primarily.

Availability of jobs that pay a living wage was a big concern of survey respondents:

*“Pay rates, not livable even though I have a BA.”*

*“Only low paying jobs available.”*

Several comments focused on increasing the vibrancy of downtown:

*“Schools, medical services and basic retail needs are more than adequate; however, cultural, arts and recreational attractions could use a significant boost. Love the Potato Museum and Eastern Idaho State Fair, but we need more! More diversity in shops downtown would improve the attraction.”*



*One of the first businesses in Blackfoot*

While respondents said Blackfoot needs more businesses downtown, many are pleased with the efforts that have been made so far:

*“Downtown area languishes compared to other cities/towns in the region. The addition of the new movie theater is most welcome. Investments in Blackfoot's older downtown area needs incentives, as the potential is enormous.”*

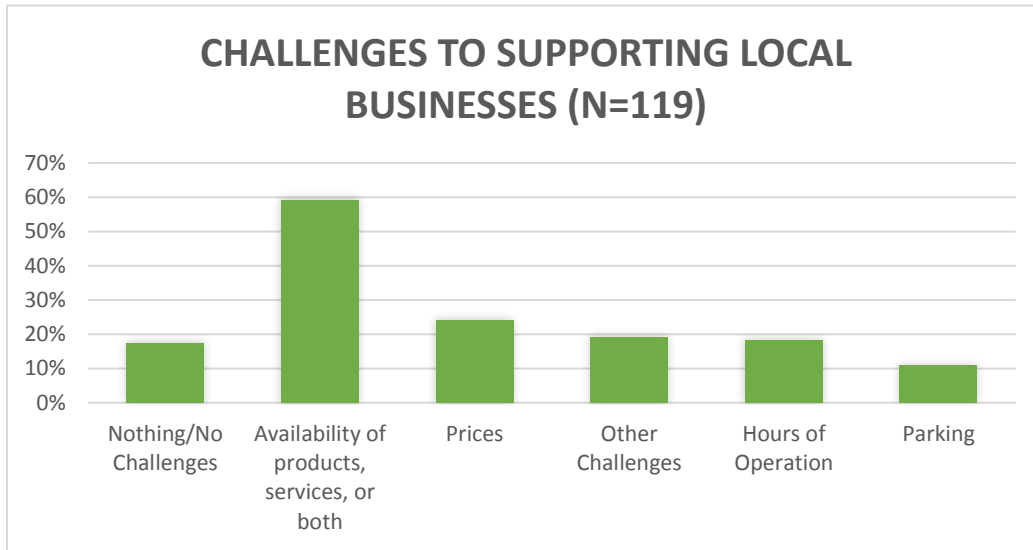
*“I think Blackfoot is a great place to live. We have a lot of good things going on; downtown looks better with the murals and the expansion of the Nuart is amazing. It's too bad that it's hard to keep businesses thriving downtown.”*

Given the proximity to larger communities, economic leakage is likely to continue to be a concern, although we learned that people are coming to the new downtown movie theater from nearby communities. Finding more reasons for people to come to Blackfoot can help offset leakage on other goods and services.

*“There aren't very many places to shop. I travel to Idaho Falls or Pocatello to buy groceries. I save enough to make it worth it.”*

Another survey question provides more insight into reasons why residents do not always buy goods from local businesses.

Survey Question: Do any of the following factors challenge your ability to support Blackfoot’s locally owned businesses? (Select all that apply)



Availability of products and services appears to be what primarily drives people to shop in other communities near Blackfoot.

“Other” challenges listed by respondents include friendliness (2), Walmart (4), gas prices (4), and convenience or habit of shopping elsewhere (3). Several commented that they do shop in Blackfoot when what they need is available there. A few comments speak to ways in which Walmart presents challenges to local businesses:

*“Walmart doesn't stock books or the craft supplies I need. If a local store starts to stock them, Walmart will then stock them at a cheaper price and drive the stores out of business. Then, Walmart stops stocking them again.”*

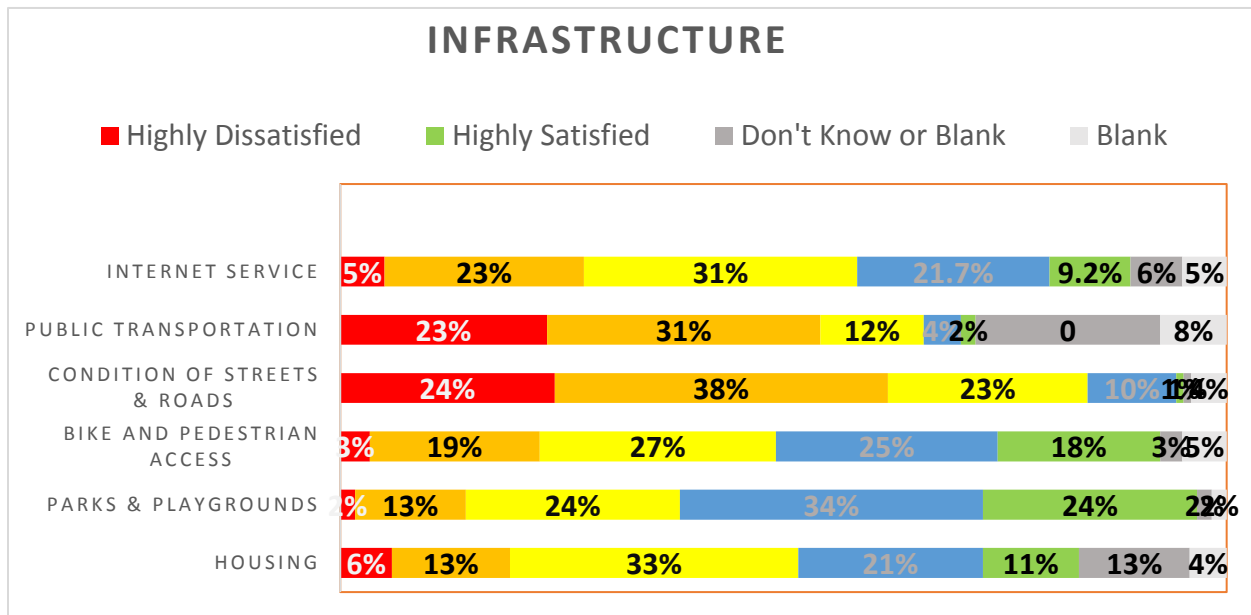
*“Since Walmart moved in, I don't know what else is available.”*



Inside Kesler's Market

## Infrastructure and Housing

Of all types of infrastructure, Blackfoot residents are most dissatisfied with public transportation and the condition of streets and roads, while they report most satisfaction with parks, playgrounds, and bike and pedestrian access.



Some of the reported concern about roads could be the amount of road construction going on around the core of the city at the same time. If that had not been happening at the time the survey was administered, results may have been slightly different, however there were many comments about the condition of roads in Blackfoot.

*“There are several streets in the city that are degrading and need help.”*

*"They could definitely keep the streets in better repair."*

Several comments had to do with how well streets are repaired.

*"Streets, potholes never repaired properly."*

*"Repairing streets with gravel dumped on top of tar is very poor practice."*

Others focused on curbs and sidewalks:

*"Unable to walk w/strollers in areas w/out new corner curbs. really like new crosswalk by Potato Museum."*

*"Street condition - many of the older neighborhood streets need curbing installed or repaired. Perhaps Blackfoot could provide some kind of rebate to those homeowners that wish to repair/replace damaged curbs and sidewalks."*

Though not all 25 comments were negative,

*"Parsons Street is so much better after all the work last summer. Thanks for trying to make our city better."*

it is probably fair to say that many residents would agree with this sentiment:

*"More of The City budget should be dedicated to the street department."*

There were quite a few comments about trains and railroad crossings, which is not surprising given the amount of train traffic, timing of train operations, the unwillingness of the railroad to work with the City and the potential for delay in ambulance and law enforcement response to emergencies.

Comments about internet service almost universally were that it is slow:

*"Limited providers, frequent slowness and interruptions."*

Housing issues appear to be about quality, availability and affordability.

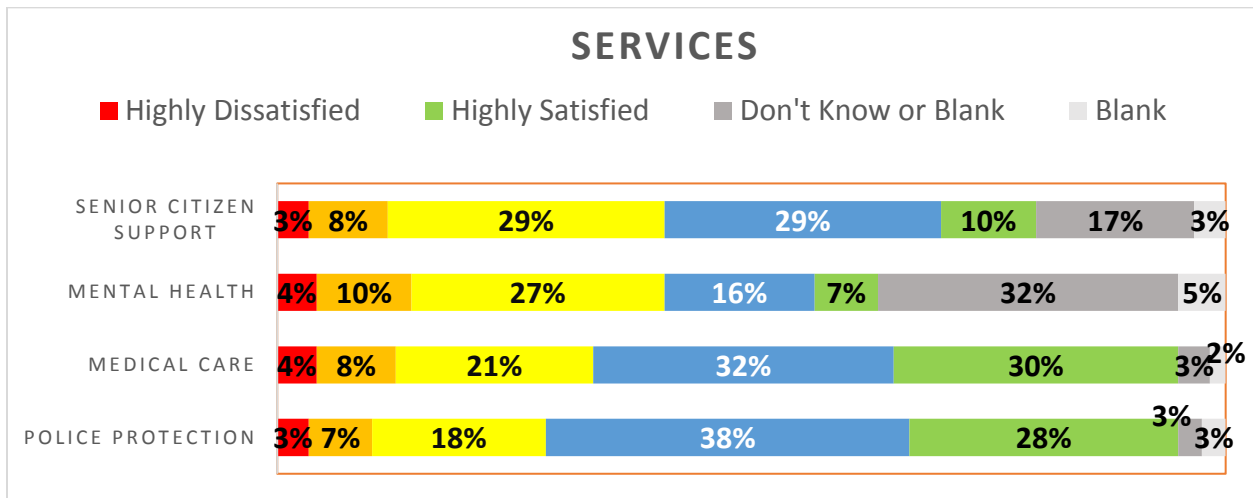
*"Cost of homes higher than surrounding areas."*

*"Need more housing."*

*"Landlords are not being required to keep up on the property. Homes need to be painted. Nothing is done. This lowers the value of homeowners who are taking care of their property."*

This is consistent with what was shared in listening sessions where we heard there are some neighborhoods that are particularly run down.

## Community Services



Residents who took the survey are most satisfied with police protection and medical care and in general are satisfied with all services listed in the table above. The few written responses tended to focus on a perception that taxes are too high, although one comment reflected some of what we heard during listing sessions:

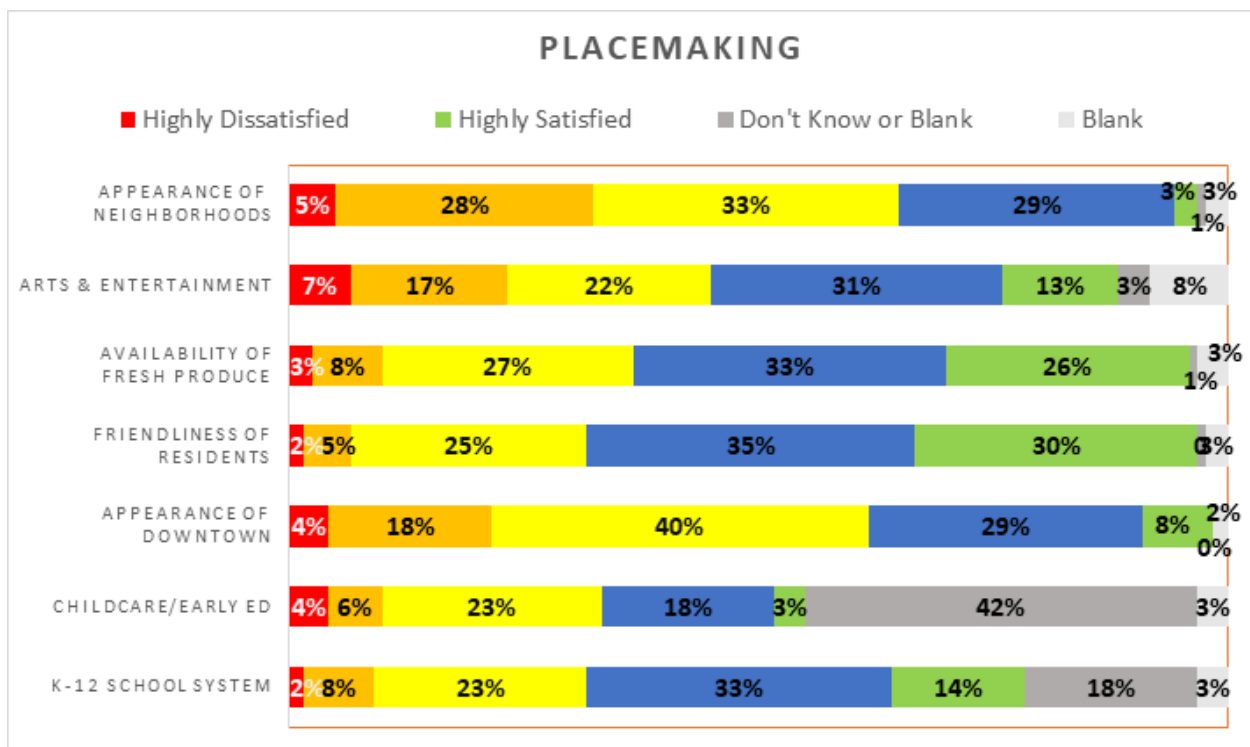
*“There are no mental health resources in our city. If there is an issue they are taken to BMH. Patients will be admitted to ICU until a “bed” becomes available in Pocatello, Twin Falls, or Boise. Southeast Idaho needs more options for mental health. We are way behind.”*





# Placemaking

Though residents are relatively satisfied with all placemaking indicators, the three issues that give the most pause are “Arts & Entertainment,” “Appearance of Downtown,” and Appearance of Neighborhoods.” A few written comments speak to these issues.



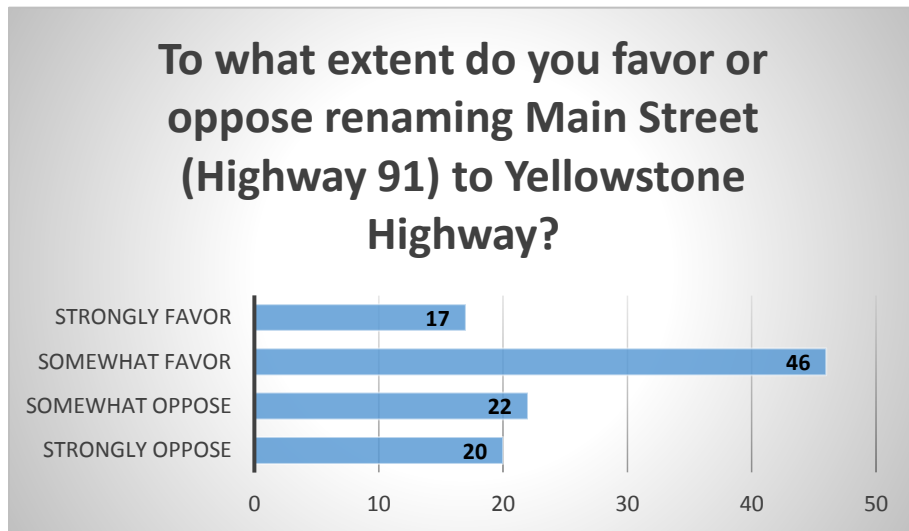
*“Downtown area languishes compared to other cities/towns in the region. The addition of the new movie theater is most welcome. Investments in Blackfoot's older downtown area needs incentives, as the potential is enormous.”*

*“Too many residents or landlords don't ensure that their outdoor space is kept free of garbage and debris. Perhaps some kind of incentive or other programs could be developed to teach people the importance of outdoor cleanliness/maintenance along with low/no cost assistance keeping areas clean.”*

*“Schools, medical services and basic retail needs are more than adequate; however, cultural, arts and recreational attractions could use a significant boost. Love the Potato Museum and Eastern Idaho State Fair, but we need more!”*

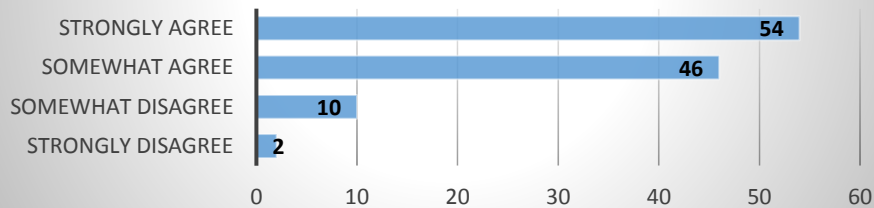


Display inside the Potato Museum



Overall, most respondents do not seem to have strong feelings about this idea, though most do approve of making the change.

**To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I am proud to be part of the Blackfoot community?"**



According to survey respondents, **community assets** included:

- "Church and school facilities are great and accessible"
- "The auditorium is a wonderful asset."
- "Athletic facilities including the golf course, lake, baseball and soccer fields are real assets"
- Parks and biking/pedestrian access
- The Nuart and the Movie Mill
- Downtown murals

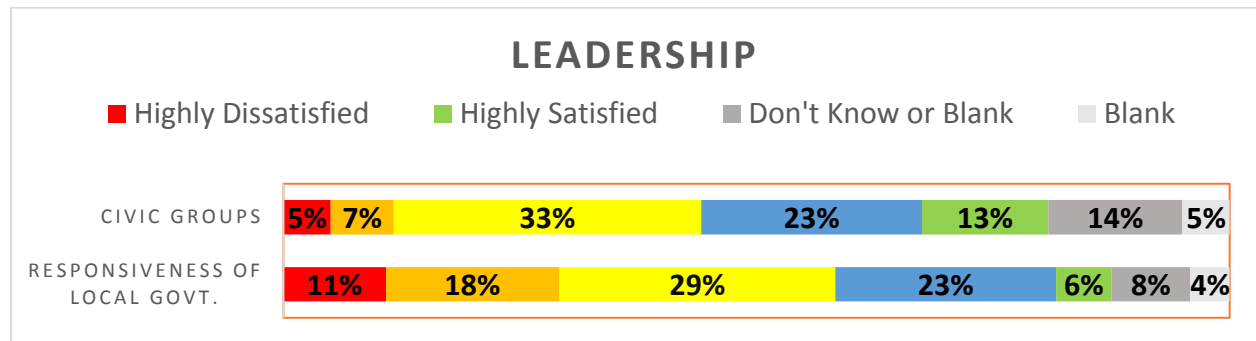
According to survey respondents, **community liabilities** included:

- A perception of decline
- Few opportunities for arts and culture
- Few activities for teens
- Limited shopping
- Train traffic
- A few unkempt neighborhoods

If a **community wish list** was created based on respondents' comments, it would include a revival of the downtown; a recreation complex with an indoor/outdoor pool, splash pad, and pickle ball courts; more activities for youth, including a recreation center and place to hang out; an overpass (or underpass) at the railroad crossing; better roads; more pride in appearance of neighborhoods, and more living wage jobs.

## Leadership

Residents are less satisfied with responsiveness of local government than with civic groups, although looking at satisfaction levels, there is only a small difference, which indicates a lack of civic engagement and/or awareness of what civic groups there are or what they do.

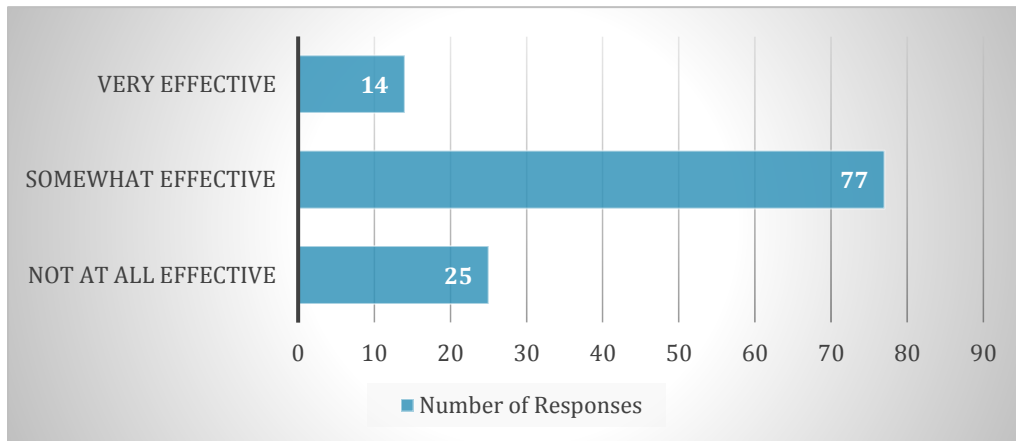


Though there are typical ‘I wish the city would do this or that’ kind of comments, especially regarding current and potential work on city roads relative to city tax levels, and one or two comments suggesting not everyone in the community has equal input (e.g., “Stop listening to special interest groups and give everyone a voice in government of the city”), there also were several comments recognizing and appreciating city efforts:

*“I think the Blackfoot officials are doing a good job trying to help the community with services that are needed at a cost that is fair to all concerned. Yes, we all would like the costs to individual households to be lower, but it all costs money and I think they are doing the best they can.”*

Leadership was a topic of another survey question with two parts: one that asked respondents to rate how effective residents are at working together to solve challenges as “very effective,” “somewhat effective,” or “not at all effective,” and the second asked for respondents to explain their choice.

Survey Question: In general, how effective do you think the residents of your community are at working together to solve challenges?



It seems that the lack of resolution on the swimming pool is the main reason that more didn't choose "very effective" as their answer.

*"Community is very good at supporting those with illness or needs. I feel we have a harder time coming together on issues like the pool."*

The Community Dinner Table is cited many times as a great model of collaboration and may be part of what inspired the previous comment.

*"Depending on the cause. Community Dinner Table involves many and serves many. Music in the park and community plays and productions nice."*

*"Everyone wants things to be better, but it's hard to find enough people who will stay committed to putting in the time and effort to make it happen. The Community Dinner Table is an amazing example of what can happen when you get a group of people who are passionate about making a positive change. There are some very devoted people who are willing to put in hours and hours of their time and energy. Many of us want to help, but don't want to be a leader or to be overly obligated."*



In a similar vein, apathy or a lack of a culture of involvement is cited by some:

*“There doesn't seem to be a major sense of ownership in most quarters among residents, with a few great exceptions. More publicity, advertising and creation of incentives to invest in Blackfoot is needed. I'd love to be part of a greater downtown revitalization effort, to bring additional theatre (live stage), museums, concerts (hey, how about a symphony?), more retail and unique visualization of Blackfoot's strengths to the forefront.”*

*“Lots of people don't like to get involved or aren't aware of ongoing volunteer opportunities.”*

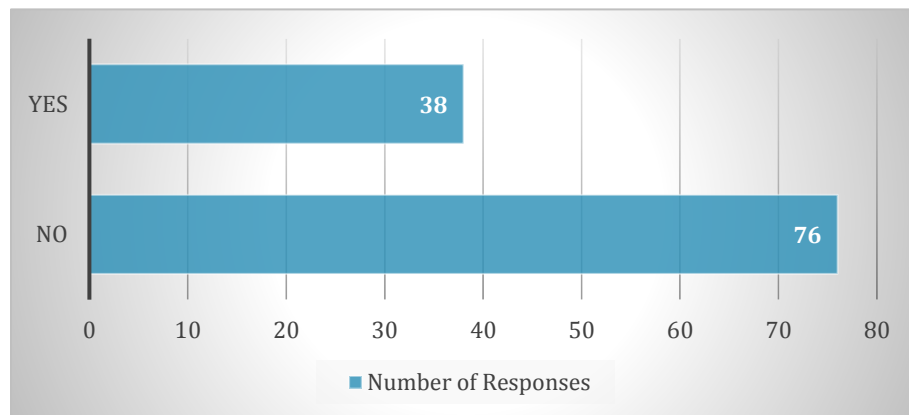
In fact, many shared comments that they did not know what was happening, if anything, or that they don't know their neighbors. This could be due in part to having a population of over 10,000 as there tends to be more anonymity and less connectivity in larger communities.

Some feel social, economic and religious differences are the source of inability to cooperate effectively.

*“Blackfoot has a lot of very low-income residents. These people don't seem to be involved or aren't participating in community work groups or organizations. Not sure if it is a lack of knowledge of how they can participate, if they haven't been invited to 'come to the table' or if they don't have the time/resources to get involved.”*

*“Members of the LDS church and non-members won't work together for some reason.”*

Survey Question: Have you been involved in a neighborhood or community project in the last 12 months? (For example, youth development, community beautification, fund raiser, etc.)



One of the follow-up questions was **“Please complete this sentence: “I would be involved in more community projects if...”**

By far the most common response had to do with time. 29 responses were along the lines of *“... I had more time,”* or *“I was in better health.”* For some this is related to workload and schedule. The second most common response had to do with awareness of opportunities or not being asked to help (24

comments). Two other less frequent responses had to do with the focus and impact of efforts or feeling that input and time would not be appreciated. The following are quotes that demonstrate these sentiments.

*"I would be involved in more community projects if I heard about them. How are projects advertised? How can I learn more about current or upcoming projects?"*

*"... I were asked directly to do so by someone I know."*

*"... I knew about, felt accepted. it was worth helping. I would like to help."*

*"... it contributed to a lasting improvement that makes our town more beautiful and added to quality public spaces... trees, public parks, walks, etc."*

*"... it wasn't always about the businesses (especially downtown). Actually start helping and developing the run-down neighborhoods (like mine). Help us to have real pride in our neighborhood, then maybe we would have pride in our city."*

Survey Question: Please tell us the type(s) of projects you have been involved in.

<p><b><u>Cultural</u></b>          Christian Women United 2          Church 2          Christmas Tree Fantasy</p>	<p><b><u>Economic Development</u></b>          Fundraisers 5</p>	<p><b><u>Health and Safety</u></b>          Community Dinner Table 9          Food Pantry 4          Meals on Wheels          Red Cross Blood Drive          Neighborhood Watch          Blackfoot Marathon</p>
<p><b><u>Community Quality of Life</u></b>          Pool          Helping Hands          Friends of the Library          Disc Golf          Senior Citizens Center 3          Help Neighbors          Mayor's Resource Council          Community Clean Up 2          Cemetery Clean Up          Soroptimist Club</p>		<p><b><u>Youth</u></b>          Boy Scouts 2          Youth Development / Projects 2          Scholarships          Sports Fundraising          Kids' Corner          Youth Ministry          BH Youth Coalition</p>

# Bus Tour

After Lorie Higgins and Dave Doran arrived in Blackfoot on May 7<sup>th</sup>, the visiting team members were guided on a one-hour bus tour by Mayor Marc Carroll, Kurt Hibbert and Lisa Tornabene with the City of Blackfoot and Julie Buck with University of Idaho Extension. The bus tour was made possible by the services of Pocatello Regional Transit, one of the public transportation providers who service Blackfoot and Bingham County.

We started at city hall and first discussed the renovation of the **Nuart Theater** made possible by the Blackfoot Urban Renewal District. City officials discussed project details including the building expansion, new electronic marquee, safety improvements, and HVAC upgrades that allow for year-around performances.



Next, we passed by **Blackfoot Canvas Company**, which is one of the oldest businesses in Blackfoot. This business is located on the Broadway redesign project which changed traffic to a one-way street, which included diagonal parking to enhance accessibility and volume. Broadway connects the downtown core to the Eastern Idaho State Fairgrounds.

Next, we traveled down Main Street and talked about the subject of a community survey question, which was whether the community supports changing the name of the street back to **"Old Yellowstone Highway"** (they do!). Main Street ends at the fairgrounds, home of the **Eastern Idaho State Fair**, which had 240,000 visitors last year! Next, we drove by the **Idaho Potato Museum**, another major attraction in



Blackfoot. We learned the building was originally a depot for the Oregon Short-Line, a former subsidiary of the Union Pacific Railroad. The Union Pacific Railroad leases the property to the City for \$1 per year.



From there our path went by **Rupe's Burgers**, a popular restaurant in Blackfoot, especially with High School students. We heard a bit about the many contributions' owner Kevin Rupe makes to the community (which is why he was singled out by name in listening sessions time and again as a beloved community asset!).

Passing by the **VFW**, we learned that they have plans to remodel and expand. During this stretch of the tour we passed **Mountain View Middle School** and saw the **Blackfoot Soccer Complex**, learning there are three soccer organizations that host many tournaments there. We also learned there are 46 acres of fields and 20 of those are leased from the State Hospital. **State Hospital South**, a big economic driver in the community, is in the midst of a \$35 million expansion.

Next we drove to the site of the **State Veteran's Cemetery**, which will be one of only two veteran cemeteries in the state.

Driving by the closed **Blackfoot city swimming pool** facility, we learned about how thorny the issue has become, something we heard much about on the survey.



The Shilling Street **Historic District**, **Blackfoot High School** and attached **Blackfoot Performing Arts Center** were next on the tour, followed by a drive over to the south end of town where we

toured neighborhoods and discussed Yellowstone Highway housing redevelopment opportunities. There are some older trailer courts in this area that the City hopes could be turned into affordable housing. We also learned that Blackfoot is one of the growing number of Idaho communities that has passed a **tiny house ordinance**. See more about that here: <https://www.eastidahonews.com/2018/12/tiny-home-subdivisions-possibly-coming-to-blackfoot/>



*Lobby, Blackfoot Performing Arts Center*

Businesses we drove by include **Glanbia**, the Ireland-based dairy products company, **Grimm Growers Seed Company**, **Premier Technologies**, the **Movie Mill** and **Basic American Foods**.

Places that support community residents in various ways were also on our itinerary, including the **Blackfoot Community Pantry** with their sign announcing the date of the next increasingly popular **Community Dinner Table** event, **Dawn Enterprises**, **Bingham Memorial Hospital** (which was recently granted a request for a street closure that will provide a safer pedestrian campus environment) and the **Bingham County Courthouse**.

Other highlights of the tour included **Jensen's Grove**, the most frequently mentioned asset by listening session participants, **Patriot Field Park**, the **Dog Park** (complete with retired fire hydrants!), the city-owned **Airport**, **RV Park**, **Baseball Fields**, **Community Garden** and **Blackfoot Municipal Golf Course**, where we capped off the tour with burgers, pasta salad and fries at the **Golf Course Clubhouse**. The food was delicious and the café is open to the public!



*Patriot Field*

# Community Listening Sessions

## Purpose of Community Listening Sessions

Community listening sessions provided residents an opportunity to express their opinions, experiences, and hopes for the community in an inclusive, non-judgmental setting in which participants feel comfortable speaking openly and honestly about their ideas and concerns. Our goal is to provide the visiting team and the community with the best, most complete information we can about perceptions and priorities of residents and other stakeholders.

The listening sessions are conducted in stake holder-specific groups to allow the identification of themes that are similar and dissimilar among the groups. We conduct them to learn what's on the minds of a broad cross section of the community. Participants do not debate or compare their responses as each session is conducted. Rather, steps are taken to ensure each participant has equal opportunity to verbally respond to the listening session questions.



*Business & agriculture listening session*

The three questions discussed during each listening session are as follows:

- What don't you want to see in Blackfoot over the next five years?
- What do you want to see in Blackfoot over the next five years?
- What, who, and where are assets that can benefit Blackfoot?

## Identification of listening session groups

Listening sessions with senior citizens, youth, faith leaders and first responders are conducted in every community and additional groups are jointly identified by the local and visiting planning team members. Discussion with Blackfoot home team leaders in February – April 2019 resulted in listening sessions with the following groups:

- Senior citizens
- High school students (members of student council)
- Faith leaders and social service providers

- First responders and law enforcement
- Hispanic residents
- Tribal residents
- Business owners (including agriculture)

In addition to the eight listening sessions identified above, there was an additional community-wide listening session open to all residents of Blackfoot that took place at the Senior Citizen Center on Tuesday, May 7th.

The table below identifies the approximate number of people who attended each listening session. A combined total of 109 people participated in the listening sessions. The visiting team thanks the home team leaders and other individuals identified below for their efforts to invite people to the various listening sessions.



*Student council listening session*

<b>Community Listening Session Group</b>	<b>Local Coordinator(s)</b>	<b>Number of Participants</b>
Hispanic residents	Cindy Tinoco	16
Senior citizens	Pam Beus	9
High school students	Roger Thomas & Jason Lish	17
Social service providers	Becca Freeburne	14
Tribal residents	Randy'L Teton	6
Business owners and agriculture	Jace Katseanes	10
First responders/law enforcement	Wes Weatley & Byron Howell	12
Community-wide session	Home team leaders	11
Faith leaders	Kevin Oliverez	9
<b>Total participants</b>		<b>109</b>

### How were the listening sessions conducted?

Each listening session lasted up to 75 minutes. The four members of the visiting team facilitated each session and recorded verbal responses to the listening sessions question on computer and flip chart paper. Listening session participants were also invited to write down their responses to the listening session questions on a form created for that purpose.

What DON'T you want to see in Blackfoot over the next five years?

We also talked with community members and stakeholders about what they “don’t want” to see in Blackfoot over the next five years. The most-frequently given responses are summarized in the word cloud and text below.



Loss of small businesses, population and Blackfoot’s unique character

Community members from various groups talked about the value of small town businesses (e.g., Kesler’s Market) and how they did not want to see them go away. Having small businesses and a “small town environment” provides Blackfoot with a unique identity and character and citizens did not want to lose



sight of the great things they have in the community. Sentiment towards downtown improvements was noted frequently, and concern regarding the Blackfoot Swimming Pool was echoed through every listening session. The historic water tower was also mentioned frequently, suggesting that residents felt a connection towards such icons as an important part of the community’s identity.

*“Let’s not lose sight of who we are and the goodness that we have.”*

Residents also expressed concern regarding run down and vacant buildings, blighted neighborhoods and general stagnation through the community. “

*“When businesses close and the storefronts fall into a state of disrepair, it negatively affects community members and visitors’ perceptions of our community.”*

A variety of comments from the listening sessions described concern for ongoing population loss. Residents do not want to see kids graduating and then leaving town for work, and the workforce leaving town for more competitive jobs in neighboring communities (e.g. Pocatello and Chubbuck).

#### Community divisions and disconnection

Several cultural, religious, and socio-economic groups were represented at listening sessions. Each respective group was recognized for their strong community presence and how they did not want to see this community diversity go away. Unfortunately, many residents identified divisions and noticeable inequalities between different (racial, social, religious, and economic) groups. According to many listening session attendees, discrimination was present between many of these different groups in the community. There is so much pride and cultural representation among the groups, community members voiced that they do not want to see further division among the people. Common values such as care for elderly, children, food security, cultural identity was noted by the visiting team.

Numerous listening session participants talked about many people in the community being isolated, lonely or excluded (or at-risk being so). Residents do not want to see different populations in such circumstances and/or in need of support – especially senior citizens. Having awareness of and supports for different at-risk populations and their needs was voiced as being very important in all listening sessions.

Also of concern is labeling of others and a lack of acceptance and bullying in the schools. Many youth who participated identified how diversity is a good thing and they do not want to see bullying and isolation of individuals or groups anywhere in the community.

#### Crime and drug use

Overwhelmingly, nearly all residents who participated in listening sessions were vocal about not wanting to see crime, gangs, or graffiti in the community. The presence of law enforcement throughout the community was noted as having a positive influence in reducing crime and in building relationships with youth.

Law enforcement officers noted the different types of crime present in the community and how working on the force provided new officers with high level experience not typically found in rural Idaho.

With the popularity of vaping, community members were concerned about vaping’s proliferation (especially with the youth) and did not want to see this or other drug use in the community.

### Sprawling, rapid, haphazard growth

Residents expressed concern for future growth. Many expressed their view that growth should be happening from inside existing city limits, as opposed to annexing currently unincorporated areas.

Residents noted how growth is a positive indicator of the community's success; however they did not want to see more fast-food restaurants, bars, etc. Traffic congestion was noted as a concern and some residents were frustrated with multiple road construction projects happening at the same time (too close and happening all at once).

Residents expressed how they did not want to see community growth happen in ways that are not strategic. Residents expressed the need to better align resources and land-use. Residents expressed concerns with low-income housing on the south end of town and other similar neighborhoods falling into disrepair.

### Community amenities going unused or underused

Existing public amenities being unused or underused was a concern of listening session participants. Many people noted how the fairgrounds were used for only a few events during the year and how that asset could be better utilized consistently throughout the year. They do not want to see fairgrounds sitting vacant or unused.

As mentioned previously, residents from all listening sessions overwhelmingly identified the pool as being a community asset that needs to be addressed. Past efforts to fund pool improvement efforts by passing a bond have narrowly missed the required 2/3<sup>ds</sup> approval by Blackfoot voters. Still, many listening session participants do not want the community to be without some type of pool or similar water recreation amenity. Views about whether to repair the existing pool or build something new were mixed.

### Transportation and other infrastructure falling into disrepair

Residents do not want to see the roads fall into a state of disrepair. They noted a perception that priorities seem unclear and funding for maintenance of bridges and improvement of streets and sidewalks is insufficient.

Residents do not want to see the train switching tracks in the center of town during busy hours (morning commutes, lunch, 5:00-after work). Train traffic was not only a safety concern but has been a common inconvenience for most residents for 20+ years. Track switching should occur more north or south of town to avoid intersection delays (sometimes lasting 15 minutes or more).



*Train holding up morning traffic*

## What DO you want to see in Blackfoot over the next five years?

Residents participating in listening sessions had many good ideas for ways to improve life in and around Blackfoot, so many that trying to convey them all was difficult for report writers. In addition, the list will come in handy when city and community leaders come together to begin an action planning process to implement some of these great ideas, so instead of a word cloud, we include the entire list of “Wants” in Appendix F. Items mentioned more than once are indicated by hash marks and items mentioned four or more times are indicated by bold text.

Overall, participants in the Blackfoot listening sessions wanted to further facilitate community engagement bringing the diverse cultures together and also support youth. Residents love Blackfoot and would like to focus improvements on Community Places and Spaces, Social Services, Business Development, and Infrastructure.

### Community Places and Spaces

We heard many times that participants wanted more and different types of community spaces to enhance community connections and togetherness.

*“I’d like to see more opportunities for collision with people you don’t know so ideas can be born – random interactions.”*

Participants want a community center that can provide space for events and celebrations, sports activities for the community – perhaps most importantly -- recreational opportunities for older youth. Listening sessions discussed the current facilities for younger kids but there were no facilities or programs for older youth. An inclusive community center would also be a great opportunity to bring



together the various cultures to share in community events. This was an observation made by a local Tribal member:

*“We have the Mormons, The Native Americans and the Hispanics and we’re all family oriented.”*

Participants also want city beautification events and additional parks such as a splash pad park, dog park, and nature park. People also discussed better utilization of their current assets such as the fairgrounds and Jensen Grove. Residents would also like to see the city develop winter activities for the community such as a skating rink on the lake, cross country ski areas, and snowmobiling trails. All these improvements would enhance the community and provide places and opportunities for groups to gather and have positive interactions.

*“I think a recreation center would be the most promising thing we could have in this community. It would keep the youth out of trouble, as well as giving families a place to spend their time. It would bring in money for the community and create jobs, solving many of the problems brought up today.”* -Blackfoot HS Student Council Member

### Social Services

Improved social services was another desire expressed throughout the listening sessions. Residents across all groups showed a genuine desire to help people in their community. Providing a short-term transitional facility was a dominant focus. This could include the transition for mental health patients (vs. police custody watch) or for homeless people. Improving access to food was another want. Participants would like to see an expansion of their ‘Community Dinner Table and Pantry’ program to help citizens 7 days a week.



*Friendly people!*

*“It’s such a blessing of a start to come together as a community.”*

Participants also would love to see more rehabilitation programs for drug and alcohol treatment and better educational programs in the corrections facilities. Residents feel that often people come out of Blackfoot’s mental health facility or prison without any options or places to go. Increasing transitional housing, educational resources, and access to meals would help while also improving the community as a whole. Residents would also like to see improved public transportation and recreational opportunities

for their high population of people with disabilities. Community programs for troubled youth would also benefit the community and help kids in need.

### Business Development

Another way residents suggested to improve the community is to improve the business climate. Finding new uses for vacant and underused buildings would create jobs while also contributing to downtown beautification was the most-discussed idea to help businesses. Residents would like to see a synergy with new businesses where all the businesses support each other and provide positive, healthy competition. We heard from a lot of people that more diversified businesses would be an asset to the community. People want to see family-owned restaurants and businesses that could provide family entertainment. Local examples to emulate were Rexburg Rapids and the Squealers Fun Park in Rigby. More businesses in Blackfoot would result in increased jobs, potentially bring in new workers, and increase the City's tax base.



*Downtown property for lease*

### Improved Infrastructure

The train was the most mentioned issue during Phase I. This has been an extremely long-discussed issue without much progress in the past. Residents are frustrated because it affects commuting in the entire town. Trains can be stopped upwards of 20 minutes at intersections causing significant delays with getting to work and school. The trains also affect first responders' ability to access properties. Alternative plans have to be considered, since discussions with



*Street construction project*

Union Pacific have not been successful in the past. Participants discussed moving the switching station or constructing an overpass. Residents also wanted better project management of road construction projects. Often, entire streets in certain sections of town are closed, limiting access to businesses and

needed services. Sidewalk and parking lot repairs were a desired improvement. Residents would like more ADA accessible sidewalks. People would also like increased awareness of the transit system services available to residents and visitors for only \$1 per ride. However, people would also like to see clearly-identified bus stops with benches. The listening sessions emphasized that the growth of Blackfoot is limited by the current lack of infrastructure.

*“We should have a plan in place. That has a lot to do with what was said about following through on things”*

### Blackfoot’s Image and Reputation

Residents love the small town feeling of Blackfoot while also having options for a variety of services. Everybody enjoys living here and we heard several stories of people moving away but coming back because they missed the “feeling” of Blackfoot. Although they love the community, they do want to see the image improved. They talked about a stigma or poor reputation about Blackfoot and they believe it can be improved if the community’s “curb appeal” was improved. They would like to clean up the outskirts of town and also improve Main Street. They feel citizen ownership of Blackfoot’s image is critical and the Blackfoot Movie Mill is a great example of a business taking pride in the community.



*Blackfoot Movie Mill*

### Leadership and Services

Throughout the listening sessions we heard a need for improved coordination and communication with the community, city council, and the County. A key concern was developing a sustainable growth plan for the City. This also ties into the desire for improved communication between the City and County planning and zoning efforts. Residents would like to see a consolidated calendar of events posted online so community engagement can be increased. Participants requested better communication between

the Fair board and the City for additional opportunities with the fairgrounds. People would like to see stricter enforcement of codes to help improve the city’s image.

At the end of each listening session participants were given the opportunity to identify their highest priority item on the WANT list they generated. Votes were captured with sticky dots. The following table reflects the 25 items voted for by listening session participants. High vote items (4 and above), with a few exceptions, were identified and voted for across multiple listening sessions, which indicates shared priorities across groups in the community.

Desired Item/Change	Votes
Recreation Center (YMCA, Boys & Girls, more for youth and families to do)	14
Infrastructure plans and improvements	10
Improve schools, facilities, consolidate district administrations	6
Homeless shelter	6
Jobs, recreation & housing for people with disabilities	6
Blackfoot image/reputation improvement	5
Traffic safety (light at 39 & W. Collins; move train switching station north; stricter speed limits; enforce speed limits).	4
Transition Living Center	4
Transportation (partner with tribe; designate bus stops; for people with disabilities)	4
Caring adults to mentor and otherwise be positive role models for youth and those with challenges	4
Infill or annexation	4
City & County partner better – equitably	3
Synergy in new businesses (mutual support, positive, good competition)	3
Pool, splashpad, improvements to parks	3
Advocacy for Spanish speakers (translator in court system)	3
Equity in use & association taxes	2
Build social capital (more connections and inclusion among people and groups)	2
More inclusion and representation of diverse cultures in community image, art & events	2
Proactive law enforcement (active shooter training)	1
City Government Accountability (measurable)	1
Calendar of events – central website	1
Increase connections between college work and Latino community (and student researchers)	1
Family Restaurants	1
Better communication – one stop shop for people in need	1
Soup kitchen open every day	1
Zero-based budgeting	1

What, who, and where are assets that can benefit Blackfoot?

The last listening session question asked participants to identify assets that could be used and improved upon to realize things residents want for Blackfoot’s future. The word cloud below represents the assets identified by listening session participants. The largest items were mentioned most often.



### People

Blackfoot residents were described by listening session participants as friendly, caring, helpful, talented and generous people – people of quality who make a difference. The Community Dinner Table was often cited as an example of the generosity and sense of community among residents. “Close-knit” was another term to describe Blackfoot. Blackfoot’s youth were identified as an asset numerous times, as was Blackfoot’s multicultural diversity (Native American, Latino, and strong faith community).

*“People are... friendly and nice. This place is just a gem.”*

*“Diversity – it’s really cool!”*

Of the many individuals mentioned as assets, Kevin Rupe, owner of Rupe's restaurant, was most often mentioned for his generosity and community spirit (and great burgers!). The people who give their time to be youth sports coaches are much appreciated by the community, as are first responders (police, fire and EMT) and social service providers. What we heard, especially from youth, is that Blackfoot is a safe community and that speaks to the goodness of residents in general.



*Blackfoot Senior Center*

Youth are also seen as one of Blackfoot's most important assets and youth are very much aware they are viewed in this way. It was reflected in comments they shared during the listening session with the High School Student Council.

*"If you get the youth involved, you get families, children and other friends involved."*

## Places

It's clear that Blackfoot is wealthy when it comes to special places that make it a good place to live and work. Jensen's Grove was mentioned most often among all of Blackfoot's assets. The bike/walking path was sometimes mentioned in conjunction with Jensen's Grove and may be its most popular feature. Others mentioned the Grove as an example of something that reflects positively on Blackfoot's image.



*Jensen's Grove*

Other places most often mentioned include the Movie Mill, Potato Museum, Blackfoot Performing Arts Center, Golf Course, Airport, Veteran’s Memorial, Patriot Field, Soccer Fields, Rupe’s, Kesler’s, Daisy’s and other small businesses, Hawker Funeral Home, Nuart Theater, and the Fairgrounds (some feel they could be utilized for more events throughout the year). An event very much identified with a particular place is the Eastern Idaho State Fair, which was mentioned even more than the Fairgrounds.



*A local landmark*

Many other places were mentioned less often but were still prominent:

- Senior center
- River
- Library
- Frisbee golf
- Community gardens
- Millmore building
- Casino & event center
- Fort Hall
- Railroad park
- Courthouse park
- Agricultural lands
- Rose ponds
- The historic district
- Skate park
- Dog park
- Archery range
- Murals
- Wolverine canyon
- Craters of the Moon
- Location close to national parks, mountains, lakes, rivers and opportunities for outdoor recreation



*Fairgrounds*



Local "Route 66" -style landmarks



Some noted that Blackfoot's central location between two larger (Idaho Falls and Pocatello) communities makes it ideal as a place to live and locate businesses.

Other community characteristics that lend a strong sense of place to residents include the air and water quality, train heritage, music in the park, and "nostalgia," which is supported by a retro vibe at the fairgrounds, old car collections, in downtown buildings and murals, and the many neon signs and other "Route 66" -style landmarks in Blackfoot.

### Organizations

SO many organizations, businesses, and events were mentioned as Blackfoot's most important assets.

### Community-based organizations

Faith groups and social and community service organizations often mentioned include the following:

- SEICAA
- Community Council of Idaho
- The Elks
- American Legion
- VFW
- Mayor's Community Resource Council
- Chamber of Commerce
- DI
- DAWN
- SSA
- LIFE Inc.
- Blackfoot Pantry
- ISU
- Bingham Crisis Center
- Bingham County Protection Services
- Bingham County Drug Court
- Awareness Center for Counseling
- Pre-School & Head Start
- Faith Groups (including Blackfoot Christian Fellowship)
- State Hospital

### Entertainment, Events, News & Recreation

In addition to the State Fair, residents also appreciate the sports and cheer clubs, competitive dance, dart competition benefit, and Christmas events such as the Downtown Christmas Walk and Nativity at the Beach. Residents feel lucky that their small town boasts the Blackfoot Community Players and newly renovated Nuart Theater, a movie theater that is a regional draw, and many events held at BPAC. Tournaments utilizing Blackfoot's many high-quality sports fields and having two local newspapers are sources of pride for residents.

### Government and Agencies

Bingham County, the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes - the "largest land-based Tribe," Blackfoot Urban Renewal Agency, the police, sheriff and fire departments and schools are important assets according to listening session participants, with several comments noting the recent work that police have been doing with youth as well as the ability to keep up with technology and equipment needs.



*Park in front of Potato Museum*

### Local Businesses

As mentioned earlier, small businesses such as Rupe’s and Kesler’s are widely appreciated around Blackfoot. Young people like the many fast food opportunities in town as well. Larger business enterprises providing some living wage jobs includes INL, Spudnik, the hospital(s), Idaho Central Credit Union, and Premier. Though there are complaints about slow internet currently, we were told broadband capacity in the region is among the highest in the nation. Retail establishments and facilities such as Les Schwab, Pratt Lumber, Walmart, Riverside Plaza and the car wash were also mentioned as assets.



*A popular mom and pop business*

# Selection of Focus Areas for Phase II

Largely based on our analysis of responses to the question, “*What DO you want to see in Blackfoot over the next five years?*”, the visiting team identified the following potential focus areas for Phase II of the Blackfoot Community Review. These potential focus areas were identified after the listening sessions were completed and prior to the visiting team’s presentation to the community at the Performing Arts Center on Thursday, May 9, 2019, in no particular order:

1. Poverty, homelessness, people in need
2. Support schools
3. Transportation, trains, safety, planning for future growth
4. Recreation center, pool, YMCA (esp. for older youth)
5. Improving Blackfoot’s image and identity (e.g., empty buildings)



Residents who attended the May 9 presentation were invited to write their name under the potential focus area they personally would be most interested in addressing. The largest number of people put their name under “Improving Blackfoot’s image and identity”, followed by “Poverty, homelessness, people in need”, and “Recreation center, pool, YMCA”.

In addition to the potential focus areas above, the visiting team offers the following topics that also received considerable attention during the community listening sessions:

- Celebrate Blackfoot’s cultural diversity
- Downtown revitalization
- Business development, improve business climate, increase living-wage jobs
- Neighborhood revitalization/beautification
- Mental health services/facilities

- Improved coordination and communication among residents, the City, Bingham County, and other entities such as the Fair Board.

The visiting team acknowledges the community has been successfully working on many if not most of the topics or goals above. Phase II of the community review offers an opportunity to substantially increase citizen involvement and attract additional funding and other resources to the focus areas of greatest interest to the community.

Here are a few questions offered by the visiting team that might help facilitate agreement about the areas that will be the focus of Phase II of the community review:

1. Are there some focus areas important to address before others?
2. Which focus area(s) is the community confident it can impact positively in the near term?
3. What has the community already started?
4. What do city council leaders view as the most important focus areas at this time?
5. What groups can be formed and/or what groups exist that can address specific focus areas?

# What Next?

Phase II, the “Learn” phase of the Community Review process, involves expanding the home and visiting teams to do more focused assessment and strategic planning regarding the most prominent concerns and goals identified through Phase I. Again, potential focus areas for Phase II are described on the previous page.

The visiting team suggests the near-term steps associated with Phase II:

- 1) Establish agreement that the community is ready for and wants to proceed with Phase II.
- 2) Agree on the two-three most significant, highest priority community concerns and goals that will be the focus of Phase II.
- 3) Set the date for the Phase II visit. This visit will likely happen in late 2019 or early 2020.
- 4) With designated focus areas in mind, recruit up to 20 additional people to the home team. The visiting team will likewise be expanded.
- 5) Invite people who completed “sign me up” cards during Phase I to participate in Phase II.
- 6) Continue raising local financial and other forms of support for Phase II.

## Proposed Community involvement roundtable

In recent community reviews, the Idaho Rural Partnership and our other partner organizations have seen significant value in conducting a community involvement roundtable with leaders of community organizations before or during the Phase II visit. The purpose is to discuss how existing organizations can work together more effectively and how to increase participation among Blackfoot residents generally. The exchange of experiences and ideas that occurs during this roundtable helps increase and sustain community participation during Phase II and beyond.

A sample agenda for the 90-minute community involvement roundtable that has been used as part of other community reviews is found below.

- 1) INTRODUCTION - participants introduce themselves and give a brief (60 second) overview of their organization and projects (all captured on flip chart).
- 2) DISCUSSION QUESTION - Talk to neighbor for 5 minutes “How would you describe the state of community involvement in Blackfoot? Add 15 minutes to gather ideas in large group setting.
- 3) APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY: What are the projects or events of the last 5-10 years that successfully involved a large number of people and what can we learn from this past success?
- 4) DISCUSSION QUESTION: Small groups spend 15 minutes discussing: “How can we increase the number of residents involved in community improvement activities?”
- 5) Report out, debrief and next steps

# Appendices

Appendix A Blackfoot Community Review Schedule of Activities, Phase I

Appendix B Contact and Biographical Information for Visiting Team Members

Appendix C Community Review Application from City of Blackfoot

Appendix D Economic and Demographic Profile

Appendix E Community Satisfaction Survey Form

Appendix F: List of ‘Wants’ identified by Listening Session Participants

## Appendix A

### Blackfoot Community Review Schedule of Activities, Phase I

DATE	TIME START	TIME END	ACTIVITY	LOCATION	LISTENING GROUP DEMOGRAPHIC
<b>Tuesday, May 07, 2019</b>	3:00 PM		Visiting Team Arrives	City Hall Conference Room	
	4:00 PM	5:00 PM	Driving/walking tour of the City w/ Home Team Leaders	City of Blackfoot	
	5:15 PM	6:15 PM	Dinner		
	6:30 PM	7:45 PM	Listening Session 1	City Hall Council Chambers	Hispanic Residents
<b>Wednesday, May 08, 2019</b>	8:00 AM	8:45 AM	Breakfast		
	9:00 AM	10:15 AM	Listening Session 2	City Hall Council Chambers	Tribal Residents
	10:30 AM	11:45 AM	Listening Session 3	Blackfoot Senior Center	Senior Citizens
	12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Lunch		
	1:15 PM	2:30 PM	Listening Session 4	(Room TBD) Blackfoot HS	Blackfoot HS Student Council
	2:45 PM	4:00 PM	Listening Session 5	City Hall Council Chambers	Social Service Providers
	4:15 PM	5:30 PM	Listening Session 6	City Hall Council Chambers	First Responders
	5:45 PM	6:45 PM	Dinner		
<b>Thursday, May 09, 2019</b>	7:00 PM	8:30 PM	Community-Wide Listening Session	Blackfoot Senior Center	Community
	8:00 AM	8:45 AM	Breakfast		
	9:00 AM	10:15 AM	Listening Session 7	City Hall Council Chambers	Faith Leaders
	10:30 AM	11:45 AM	Listening Session 8	City Hall Council Chambers	Business/Agriculture
	12:00 PM	1:00 PM	Lunch		
	1:00 PM	5:30 PM	Visiting Team Prep	City Hall Council Chambers	
	5:30 PM	6:30 PM	Dinner		
7:00 PM	8:30 PM	Community Meeting	Blackfoot Performing Arts Center (BPAC)	Community	
<b>Friday, May 10, 2019</b>	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Breakfast/Debrief	City Hall Council Chambers	

## **Appendix B**

### Contact and Biographical Information for Visiting Team Members

**Jon Barrett**

**Idaho Rural Partnership**

**208-332-1731 - office**

**208-383-9687 - cell**

**jon.barrett@irp.idaho.gov**

Jon grew up in Colville, Washington. His career in community and economic development began soon after graduating from Washington State University with a degree in Landscape Architecture. He has worked on staff and in a consulting capacity with numerous rural Idaho and Washington communities. He was the Co-Executive Director of Idaho Smart Growth from 1997-2006. He created Clearstory Studios, LLC in 2007 to provide services to government agencies, tribes, and nonprofit organizations. He became the Executive Director of Idaho Rural Partnership in 2015.

**Dave Doran**

**Southeast Idaho Council of Governments**

**208-233-4535**

**daved@sicog.org**

David Doran is the Executive Director for the Southeast Idaho Council of Governments, a 501(c)3 non-profit, member organization of cities and counties throughout SE Idaho. David guides the organization in small business lending, public relations, strategic planning, and coalition building to create solutions for rural community issues. David graduated with a Master of Public Administration from Idaho State University and previously worked with the State of Idaho's Department of Health and Welfare, Idaho Regional Medicaid Services, and the Idaho Transportation Department. David is a proud father (Micah – 10) and loves to float, fish, hike, bike and ski with family and friends. With insatiable curiosity, David loves to travel and can often be found wandering the backcountry with his dog (BOB).

**Juta Geurtsen**

**Idaho Commission for the Arts**

**208-891-8474**

**juta.geurtsen@arts.idaho.gov**

Juta Geurtsen has worked for more than 15 years in nonprofits, arts, and community organizations both in Idaho and New York City. Juta serves the Idaho Commission on the Arts as the Community Development Director and works with local arts agencies, arts organizations



and administrators to strengthen communities around the arts. This includes support through quarterly and annual grants, and the design and facilitation of programs, services and evaluation processes for a largely rural state. Having been certified as an Idaho Change Leader, she now manages the statewide professional development program, Idaho Change Leader Institute. The institute links together arts administrators around the state, with emphasis on tying together arts leaders from geographically and socio-economically underserved communities. She enjoys photography, writing and being in nature.

**Lorie Higgins**

**University of Idaho Extension**

**208-669-1480**

**[higgins@uidaho.edu](mailto:higgins@uidaho.edu)**

Lorie is an Associate Professor in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology at University of Idaho. As an Extension Specialist in community development, Lorie's primary role is to assist Idaho communities and organizations with a broad range of programs and projects. Current work includes a regional effort called Two Degrees Northwest, to develop, support and promote cultural industries, building an entrepreneurship training program, identifying impacts of the Horizons community development program, participating in the Idaho Community Review program as a steering committee member and listening session coleader, and conducting social assessments as part of the UI Waters of the West program. Nationally, Lorie is a leader in the Enhancing Rural Capacity Extension Community of Practice.

**Shannon Madsen**

**U.S. Small Business Administration**

**208-334-9635**

**[shannon.madsen@sba.gov](mailto:shannon.madsen@sba.gov)**

Shannon Madsen is the U.S. Small Business Administration's (SBA) Deputy Director for the Boise District Office. Shannon began her career as an International Trade Specialist with the U.S. Commerce Department in Dallas, TX and later transitioned to the private sector where she focused on international business development for small and emerging companies traveling extensively throughout Asia, Europe, and South America. In 2006, she joined the Idaho USDA Rural Development team as a Business Program Specialist. She worked closely with the private sector and community organizations to facilitate investment in America's small businesses and rural communities. She joined SBA as a Lender Relations Specialist prior to becoming Deputy Director. She received her BA from Eastern Washington University in International Affairs: Business Concentration with minors in Economics and German and her MBA from West Texas A&M University.

## Appendix C

### Community Review Application from City of Blackfoot

Please complete this application by **3/2/18** and return to:

Idaho Rural Partnership

1090 E. Watertower Street Ste. 100, Meridian, ID 83642

## Idaho Community Review Application Form

The Community Review Program is coordinated by the Idaho Rural Partnership in collaboration with the Idaho Department of Labor, Idaho Department of Commerce, Idaho Transportation Department, Idaho Housing & Finance Association, Federal Highway Administration, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, Idaho National Laboratory, University of Idaho, U.S. Department of Agriculture – Rural Development, and Association of Idaho Cities.

Communities with populations under 10,000 are eligible to apply, including those communities in which a community review was conducted prior to 2007. Please review the Idaho Community Review Application Guide before completing this application. Type-written responses are preferred to handwritten. Use as much space as needed to answer the narrative questions as completely as possible. **Complete applications must be postmarked or received via email by 5:00 pm Mountain, Friday, March 2, 2018.** Our mailing address is 1090 E. Watertower Street, Ste. 100, Meridian, ID 83642. Applications can be emailed to [irpcommunityreview@irp.idaho.gov](mailto:irpcommunityreview@irp.idaho.gov). Call 208-332-1730 with questions.

Name of Community: City of Blackfoot, Bingham County, Idaho

The community review process includes up to three phases. This is the application form for Phase 1.

### Home Team Leaders

Below please provide the name and contact information for up to two home team leaders. A minimum of one home team leader must be identified at the time of application.

Name of Home Team Leader #1 (Required): Kurt Hibbert M.P.A., Planning and Zoning Administrator

Mailing address: 157 N. Broadway, Blackfoot, ID 83221 Email address: khibbert@cityofblackfoot.org

Phone number: Cell (208) 681-1211 Work (208) 785-8600 ext. 4

Name of Home Team Leader #2 (Optional): Julie Ann Goodrich, Economic Development

Mailing address: 157 N. Broadway, Blackfoot, ID 83221 \*Email address: mayor@cityofblackfoot.org

\*Phone number: Work (208) 785-8600

*\*temporary – new position*

## Identification of Listening Session Groups and Coordinators

Phase 1 of the community review process includes conducting listening sessions with up to eight specific stakeholder groups in your community. The four stakeholder groups below are required:

- High school students
- First responders and law enforcement
- Social service providers and faith leaders
- Senior citizens

Listening sessions must have a respective coordinator who leads the effort to invite individuals to participate in each session. Below, please provide the names and contact information for four people who have agreed to serve as a coordinator for the required listening sessions:

<u>Required Listening Session Groups</u>	<u>Coordinator</u>	<u>Phone</u>	<u>Email</u>
High school students	<u>Greg Austin</u>	<u>(208) 785-1235</u>	<u>gaustin@co.bingham.id.us</u>
First responders & law enforcement	<u>Ben Hirschi</u>	<u>(208) 785-8605</u>	<u>bhirschi@cityofblackfoot.org</u>
Social service providers & faith leaders	<u>Lee Hammett</u>	<u>(208) 785-3622</u>	<u>lee@communitydinnertable.org</u>
Senior citizens/elders	<u>Pam Beus</u>	<u>(208) 785-4714</u>	<u>pambeus@seniors4ever.com</u>

## Other Listening Session Stakeholder Groups

In addition to the required stakeholder groups above, listening sessions are also conducted with 3-4 others stakeholder groups in the community. Examples of optional stakeholder groups we have conducted listening sessions with in past community reviews are listed below. Please use an "X" to select up to four groups in your community you would like us to conduct listening sessions with during Phase 1 (in addition to the groups named above). This is a preliminary identification; the listening session stakeholder groups will be reviewed and finalized and coordinators for these optional listening sessions will be identified during the planning process.

- Hispanic residents\*
- Current or former elected officials
- Business owners
- Agriculture
- Teachers & school administrators
- Artists/craftspeople
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

\*Required in communities that have a significant percentage of residents who are Hispanic.

## Community Issues and Opportunities

Using a 1-5 scale, with 1 meaning not a priority and 5 meaning very high priority, please indicate how the following issues and opportunities should be prioritized for discussion during the community review process.

- 5 Retaining & expanding existing businesses
- 4 Supporting creation of new businesses
- 2 Tourism and marketing
- 2 Infrastructure
- 2 Housing
- 5 Land use planning
- 5 Community design & identity
- 4 Education & workforce development

- 3 Community health and wellness
- 5 Seniors and youth
- 3 Arts, historic, & recreation resources
- 4 Civic life & community involvement
- 2 Downtown revitalization
- 2 Transportation
- \_\_\_Other(s):\_\_\_\_\_

**Please describe the most significant strategic planning, business development, marketing, infrastructure, and other community improvement efforts that have occurred in your community in the last three years? (Attach additional sheets, documentation, brochures, or report summaries as necessary)**

The City of Blackfoot does not have a Master Strategic Plan in place; however, they do have a Comprehensive Plan that was last fully re-written and updated in 1988. Several amendments have occurred since that time, the last being in 2015. The City also has a Transportation Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan (2014), Airport Master Plan (2014), Blackfoot Downtown Master Plan (1999), and a Greater Blackfoot Area Economic Development Plan (1988).

The most significant improvements the City of Blackfoot has been pursuing and/or addressing over the last three years pertain to downtown development and tourism, business development, demographic changes and housing, mobility and recreation, and infrastructure.

- Downtown Development and Tourism

Currently, there are three downtown development agencies: Blackfoot Downtown Business Development Association, Blackfoot Urban Renewal Agency (BURA), and the Greater Blackfoot Area Chamber of Commerce. Each organization is actively involved in creating strategies for change in the downtown.

BURA offers the Blackfoot Façade Improvement Grant to property owners or business tenants who want to make improvements their building’s façade in the downtown area. In addition, BURA offers the Blackfoot Urban Renewal Blight Removal Grant to help property owners improve on eligible properties. Last year, the Downtown Business Development Association hired an outside contractor to help create themed blocks. Each block caters to a specific era. Building facelifts to include murals and window wrappings were created to complement the appointed theme and to encourage visitors to explore and share in the history of Blackfoot.

The Greater Blackfoot Area Chamber of Commerce reorganization has brought additional resources to the community. There are several interested downtown revitalization/business groups operating and coordinating with the consultant, BURA, and the Idaho Potato Museum on a tourism enhancement initiative.

Blackfoot is the "Potato Capital of the World" because Bingham County grows more potatoes than any other county in the U.S. Over 25,000 tourists visited the museum and cafe last year with more expected this year due to expanded hours and renovation. Just recently, the Potato Museum moved their famous caboose to the north-east side of their building to help utilize parking, provide extra bathroom facilities, and open up the surrounding area to the downtown for easier access to the museum.

Blackfoot is also the home of the Eastern Idaho State Fair. The entrance to the state fair is 0.4 miles from the main downtown area. In 2017, the 9-day fair had a record high attendance of 239,103. Other opportunities the fairgrounds present is an extra 105 days of events. The top 5 main events are East ID Spring Classic Dog Show (brings in 1,100 handlers), O-MOK-SEE National Championship every other year in Blackfoot (10 different states participate, over 275 registrants), Bingham County 4-H Fair (over 500 youth participate), and the District 4 High School Rodeo (9 schools participate).

The City is beginning to apply a series of improvements in the downtown area to re-implement the "go to" downtown of Blackfoot's historic past. Traffic calming, entertainment and activity centers, a downtown trolley route, and a downtown walking tour are some of the other actions being implemented, which in turn should assist with tourism.

- Business Development

Blackfoot Economic Development has partnered with other Economic Development organizations to bring better job and business growth and expansion to the community. The Chamber has been working with the City to develop an economic development information "Blackpack," to respond immediately to requests for information from outside business interests and from expanding business in the community.

There are approximately 1,299 number of companies in the Blackfoot area (2012 Survey of Business Owners); 52 of those companies operate in the downtown district. The Chamber is currently working private investors to develop a 2-block area of the downtown. A new 7-plex movie theater, using the original building facades, will be partially completed by Memorial Day weekend. New apartments are also being remodeled above old buildings in the downtown to lease from \$350-\$650.00 each. The future creation of a thematic water feature near the downtown at Courthouse Square Park is also in the works.

Blackfoot is a growing community. There are many new economic development opportunities that will bring jobs and manufacturing to the area along with opportunities for expansion. Since 2015, the City has been working with a Canadian mining company, eCobalt Solutions Inc, to build a cobalt refining

company near Pioneer Road. The facility is expected to employ 60 to 90 people. Premier Technology, the area's largest engineering, manufacturing and construction company, was just granted a larger contract to expand its home base and increase its labor force. Bingham Memorial Hospital is also the first hospital in Eastern Idaho to offer knee and hip surgeries with Mako Robotic-Arm Assisted Surgery System. Many companies support the community of Blackfoot with their generous contributions and active participation in annual events.

- Demographic Changes and Housing

There are positive and negative demographic changes shaping the Blackfoot community. Currently, there is a high demand for skilled labor and an increasing need for construction. The City is seeing growth in local manufacturing too. Company contracts are requiring plants to expand and staffing needs to be filled. Hiring events for local businesses are being advertised locally and recruited from within the community's local talent pool. Blackfoot also has a 92% graduation rate; however, graduates are seeking employment elsewhere as opposed to staying. Part of this is due to the housing situation. Housing availability right now is scarce and it's a seller's market. In an effort to mitigate this issue, the City has approved and is working with developers to build two new subdivisions: the LNR Subdivision will offer approximately 100 lots for single family residential homes and Harborside Subdivision will offer approximately 30 units. In addition, three other potential subdivisions are also under review.

Blackfoot has a low tax rate. Recruitment efforts have netted many opportunities for business expansion within the area's market which will develop the tax base considerably. There are long term projects in the works, but gains will not be seen for years to come. Efforts are being made to keep people employed long term and retire in the community.

- Mobility and Recreation

Mobility needs were initially identified in 2014 when Blackfoot City leaders and officials held a preliminary stakeholder meeting, organized site visits, and then held a public meeting and art contest to gain insight from residents, parents, and children of the community. In response, the City created a "Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan" which includes a plan of action to improve local pedestrian and bicycle network systems.

Since then, the City has been awarded two HAWK system grants to address safety and mobility needs. They were also recently awarded two other LHTAC grants to provide sidewalks and other infrastructure support on the west side of Airport Road. The addition of the sidewalks and protected pedestrian crossings not only remove a mobility barrier for residents but also expand mobility access to important community destinations. Jensen's Grove Pond is a 55-acre pond located within Jensen Grove Park in the heart of Blackfoot. The added sidewalk allows interconnectivity between Veteran Memorial Park, newly completed Butch Hulse Dog Park, Blackfoot Skatepark, Blackfoot Disc Golf Course, Jensen's Grove and the local Blackfoot Area Greenbelt. The Greenbelt is a multi-use, paved 9.6-mile trail connecting the City of Blackfoot's schools, businesses and neighborhoods to innumerable recreational opportunities. The

City continues to pursue grants to help support and grow their outdoor recreation system, which could potentially become an economic driver in the Blackfoot area.

Other mobility issues the City is currently working on include:

- o starting discussions on traffic calming and pedestrian plaza design in the downtown
- o turning lane improvements on Rich Lane
- o grade crossing safety with emergency services and the school districts
- o new enhanced signage for the Potato Museum
- o new directional signage for the Chamber of Commerce
- o continued coordination on the I-15 corridor upgrades

- Infrastructure

The City has been working with the Idaho Transportation Department to replace the old bridge near Premier Technology. In January, the City applied for LHTAC funding to replace the bridge which will allow Premier Technology to take advantage of a significant economic opportunity in addition to improving mobility for Bingham County, the City of Blackfoot, and local industrial users. With the new bridge in place, Premier Technology, in collaboration with NuScale Power, will be able to secure a contract for the production of small modular reactors (SMRs) that will grow the economy of Southeast Idaho by \$57M annually. It has been estimated by the Transportation Economic Development Impact System (TREDIS) that this project will not only add 250 jobs at Premier Technology but will also add an additional 546 jobs to the area.

In May 2017, the City of Blackfoot was selected as the second site for the new State Veterans Cemetery which will be located on Cromwell Lane about 2,500-feet east of the Cromwell - Pendlebury intersection. The new 40-acre Veterans Cemetery is expected to provide burial services for over 20,000 Veterans and their families. They anticipate up to five funeral services a day, Monday thru Friday, and roughly twelve average funeral services a week. In addition, the Cemetery will host special ceremonies to honor veterans during Memorial Day and Wreaths Across America, which could potentially attract hundreds and possibly thousands to their site. The City applied for and received a grant to re-align the intersection of Cromwell Lane and Pendlebury Lane to help improve traffic safety and flow. The project will also construct a new 26-foot wide roadway with an additional 2-foot gravel shoulder on Cromwell Lane.

The City has and is continuing to make much needed improvements to their Waste Water Treatment Plant. The City of Blackfoot owns, operates, and maintains its wastewater collection, pumping, and treatment system that serves 14,054 persons in and around the existing City limits, to include wastewater from the Groveland Sewer District and Moreland Sewer District

Starting in 2012, the City had to notify EPA of numerous National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) violations. Then in February 2013, the City experienced a 24-inch sewer line collapse and blockage to its main sewer line. As a result, seven homes and buildings near the collapse had sinks,

toilets, tubs and basements flooded with raw sewage. In 2013, the City hired an engineering firm to complete a WWTP and Collection Facility Plan Study. The 2014 Plan identified multiple deficiencies which were deemed necessary and urgent. The City has since sought and been awarded judicial confirmation to incur debt for the two-phase project. Phase 1 will be complete summer of 2018; Phase 2, which is currently in design, will be complete in 2020.

**Every community we visit faces disconnects or conflict among groups. We understand this, and we aren't interested in taking sides or judging. Please identify (in general terms) any recent or anticipated controversies involving local leadership or civic organizations that might be come up during the community review. Are there any circumstances that might limit local participation or implementation of the review or resulting recommendations? How might they be addressed during the review?**

Coordinating the visions between leaders, agencies and community might be a particular issue for Blackfoot. The City needs help knowing what to focus on first. Over the years, there has been interest in revitalizing the downtown, building an economic development force, and tackling transportation obstacles; however, with so many partners and entities involved, it's been difficult to organize thoughts and maintain direction. The community also does not have a current vision or brand; as a result, it is hard to create an identity or an image of what Blackfoot should look like or represent.

There are several social media locations where the public actively discuss, sometimes passionately, their desires for the future of Blackfoot. These pages have become sounding boards for residents to express their ideas of where Blackfoot should focus attention. Many of the issues raised on these forums have been picked up by the City and integrated into the City work program. The sensitivity of the community to their history was recently manifest in the desire to save the Historic City Water Tower. A community organization stepped up and purchased the tower to assure its long-term presence in the town. This controversy was perceived as City Hall not listening.

Another recent controversy is the renovation of the Blackfoot Municipal Swimming Pool. The City has tried twice, unsuccessfully, to pass a \$5 million bond to renovate the 45-year old pool and facility. There are groups in town that want something brand-new or something different at that location.

Generally speaking, the greatest asset of Blackfoot are the people who reside there. They are active, diverse, and largely interested in making suggestions to improve the processes and policies to help strengthen their community. The City does not foresee any circumstance that might limit local participation or implementation of the review. Instead, the review should be well received. It will help the community of Blackfoot discuss, prioritize, and reach desired goals which in turn will provide positive social and economic outcomes for all to enjoy.

**Thinking back over the last five years, would you say that citizen participation and the community's ability to identify and accomplish goals has:**

Increased  
 Decreased



\_\_\_ Stayed about the same

\_\_\_ Not sure

**Anything else you want to add about leadership and volunteer capacity in your community?**

The City of Blackfoot has the proper leadership in place to support and initiate change. The Mayor, City Council, and City personnel have all been included and are in support of a community review application. The City continues to move forward with implementing change through planning and development strategies. The City is currently receiving federal and state grant funds for ongoing community and infrastructure improvements. Personnel also continue to participate in multiple steering committees and organizations to stay connected to pertinent issues at hand.

Volunteerism in Blackfoot is inculcated from an early age in its adults and youth. Between church groups, youth sports groups, the community dinner table, and business support and sponsorship, the community is primed to assist and benefit from this Community Review. The Mayor also has a youth advisory council, persons with disabilities committee, and Mayor’s scholarship committee that are committed to youth and elderly support. The desire to partner and learn in an effort to enhance the quality of life in the community for everyone is strong.

**Describe any specific economic development projects or opportunities the community would like the visiting team to examine. For the purpose of this question, an economic development project is any initiative to attract new business, help retain or expand existing business or improve infrastructure to encourage economic development. In your description of the project, identify any funders and partners contacted and/or involved with the project.**

One of the main challenges facing Blackfoot residents and government leaders today is that Union Pacific Railroad uses Blackfoot as a switching station that bisects the City and blocks residents from getting to either side of town five times per day. The duration of the switch can last 45 minutes or longer. Although Blackfoot is a large economic and industrial driver in the region, the lack of access to get across the tracks is a long-standing issue that threatens the sustainable growth and vitality of the City.

In November 2016, city personnel and stake holders attended a 2016 Community Mobility Workshop in Idaho Falls to address this ongoing issue: the lack of access over the railroad tracks on the east side of town. However, at the conclusion of that workshop, those attending realized there were smaller but greater obstacles to overcome. Questions regarding Blackfoot’s identity, where to start with the visioning process, and how to get the community involved became the larger issues. A steering committee was created to discuss those particular issues and to create an action plan to resolve them.

Since then, the steering committee has met on seven different occasions at City Hall. Presentations to the City Council, Planning & Zoning Commission and other agencies has occurred to build momentum for the above-mentioned projects and support. The steering committee has been comprised of local

public and City officials to include: treasurer, planning & zoning, public works, grant writer, Executive Director of the Business Chamber, Executive Director of the Potato Museum, Chair of the Blackfoot Transportation Commission, and General Manager of the State Fair. Other representatives from BURA, civic clubs, school district, downtown merchants, property owners, police and fire departments, and an engineering firm have also participated in various meetings to provide input, ideas, and suggestions for growth and change to the community at large.

Some questions we need help answering are: what features does the Blackfoot area possess, as compared to other towns in the region, that will generate regional interest? How can Blackfoot capitalize or leverage their assets to make the community greater?

Blackfoot, a growth community, is located midpoint between two other growing population centers – Pocatello and Idaho Falls. Due to the location of the I-15 corridor, residents and tourists alike find it easy to drive to the nearest larger cities for their shopping and entertainment needs. A paradigm shift is needed. If the City can provide more recreational activities, entertainment, events, and cultural/education experiences then it can become a “go to” destination for residents and tourists alike.

There are three goals or objectives the City of Blackfoot would like the visiting team to examine: develop a vision and identity for Blackfoot, develop placemaking strategies, and the creation of a strategic action plan. The City believes, once these goals are achieved, the City can successfully proceed forward with funding an under/over pass across the railroad tracks, working with local and out of state businesses to retain and expand job growth, creating new opportunities for the youth and elderly, and partnering with the Tribes to sponsor economic development opportunities.

The CMI workshop in November generated much enthusiasm and momentum amongst the stakeholders. Conversations are still occurring. The Community Review has the ability to lift us forward and act. The ultimate goal the City has is to develop a realistic Master Strategic Plan of the Blackfoot community that will identify the underlying culture, quantify assets, provide connectivity, promote tourism, and elevate the quality of life in the Blackfoot area.

**Briefly describe major community funding initiatives (e.g., grassroots fundraising, grants, levies, bond elections) in the past five years, including outcomes.**

The City is currently receiving federal and state grant funds for ongoing community and infrastructure improvements. Attached is a Grant Application Tracking Sheet which lists the 30 grants the City has been awarded since 2016, which total approximately \$6.5M. Two other grants are still pending: \$12M for the Bridge Rehabilitation Project and the \$17.5K for the RV Park Project.

In addition to the grants, the City sought and was awarded judicial confirmation to incur the \$3.8M debt/loan from DEQ for the 1<sup>st</sup> phase and \$12.1M debt/loan for the 2<sup>nd</sup>. The Idaho Transportation Department has also agreed to cost share an estimated \$1.1M for boring under the Interstate, which pertains to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase of the project.

When would you prefer community review activities begin in your community?

As soon as possible

Spring 2018

Summer 2018

Fall 2018

2019

With the Mayor's signature below, our community agrees to accept the responsibilities described in this application form and in the Community Review Application Guide to ensure the success of our community review.

Mayor's Signature

Date: March 2, 2018

## Appendix D

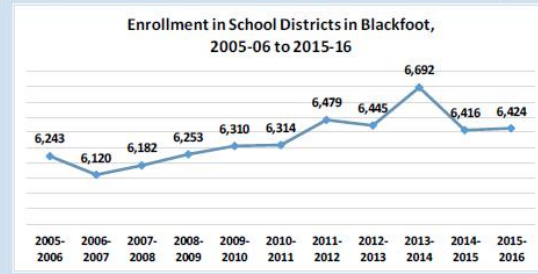
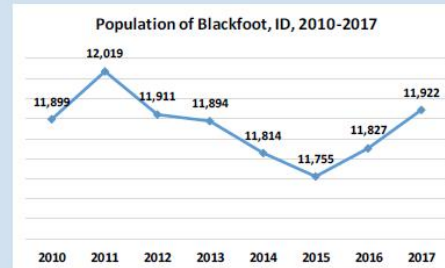
### Economic and Demographic Profile

# BLACKFOOT, IDAHO COMMUNITY PROFILE



## POPULATION

	Blackfoot City	Bingham County
<b>Total population</b>		
2017, number	11,922	45,927
2010, number	11,899	45,607
Change 2010-2017, percent	0.2	0.7
<b>Components of population change, 2010-2017</b>		
Net migration change (in-migrants minus out-migrants)		
Number	---	-2,548
Percent	---	-5.6
Natural change (births minus deaths)		
Number	---	2,834
Percent	---	6.2
<b>Population by race, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>		
White	89	83
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	6
Other	10	11
<b>Population by ethnicity, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>		
Non-Hispanic	81	82
Hispanic	19	18
<b>Population by age group, 2013-2017 average, percent of total</b>		
Under age 18	32	32
Age 18-64	55	55
Age 65 and older	13	13
Median age, 2013-2017 average, years	31.4	33.3

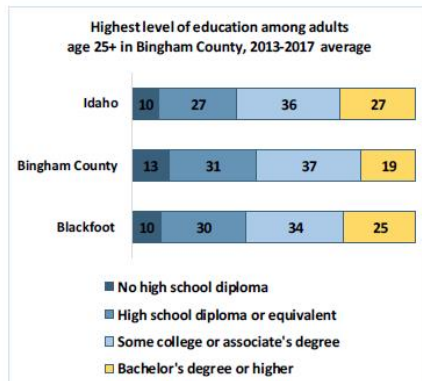


SOURCES: US Census Bureau, US Department of Education

## SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

	Blackfoot City	Bingham County	Idaho State
<b>Income</b>			
Per capita income, 2013-2017 average, dollars	21,083	20,720	25,471
Median household income, 2013-2017 average, dollars	43,007	51,307	50,985
<b>Poverty</b>			
Overall poverty, 2013-2017 average			
Number	2,101	5,905	236,000
Rate, percent	18.2	13.1	14.5
Children living in poverty, 2013-2017 average			
Number	867	2,489	76,426
Rate, percent	23.1	17.6	17.8
<b>Food insecurity</b>			
Overall rate, 2016, percent	---	10.8	13.2
Rate among children, 2016, percent	---	15.9	16.7

SOURCES: US Census Bureau, Feeding America



This project is supported by USDA's Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (AFRI) of the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Grant #2016-10945. It is part of the AFRI Foundational program.

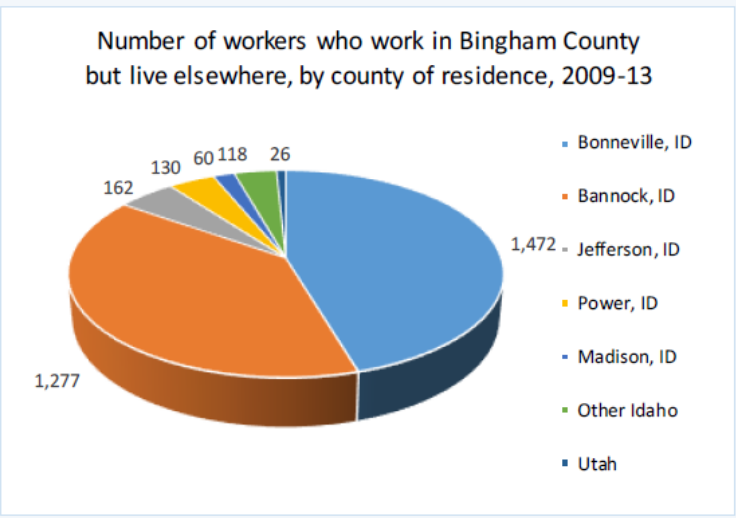
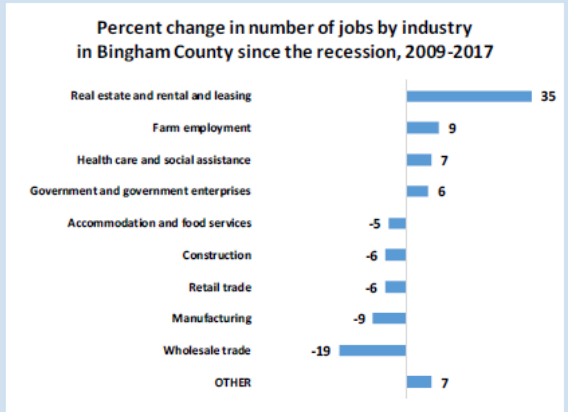
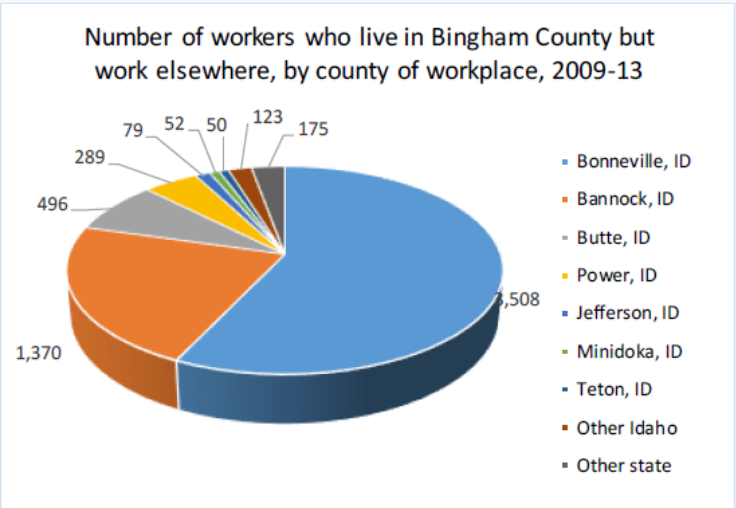
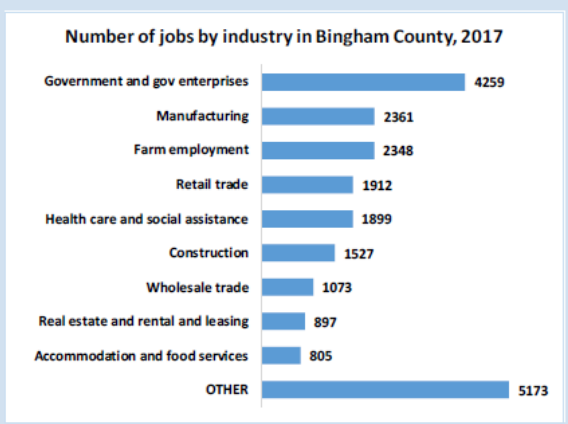
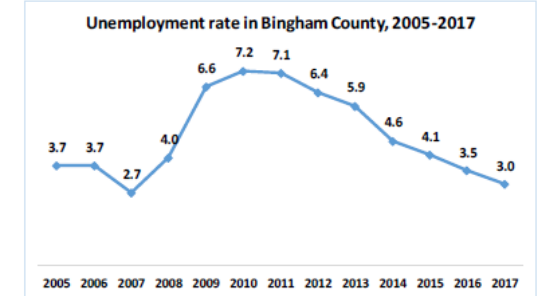
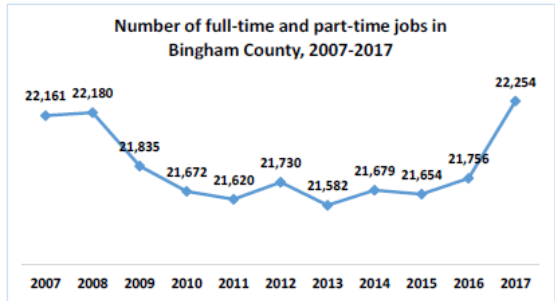


University of Idaho  
Extension



# ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

	Blackfoot City	Bingham County
<b>Full- and part-time jobs</b>		
Total number, 2017	---	22,254
Total number, 2012	---	21,730
Total number, 2007	---	22,161
Change, 2012-2017, percent	---	2.4
Change, 2007-2012, percent	---	-1.9
<b>Employment characteristics</b>		
Labor force participation rate, 2013-2017 average, percent	65.6	63.3
Unemployment rate, 2013-2017 average, percent	4.0	5.2
Self-employment rate, 2017, percent	---	30.0
Average annual pay, 2017, dollars	---	35,228
<b>Business establishments with paid employees, by size, 2015</b>		
All establishments, number	---	843
Establishments with 1-4 paid employees, number	---	493
Establishments with 5-9 paid employees, number	---	151
Establishments with 10-19 paid employees, number	---	93
Establishments with 20-49 paid employees, number	---	76
Establishments with 50 or more paid employees, number	---	30



NOTE: "Other" industries include forestry, fishing, and related activities; mining, quarrying, and oil and gas extraction; utilities; transportation and warehousing; information; finance and insurance; professional, scientific, and technical services; management of companies and enterprises; administrative and support and waste management and remediation services; educational services; arts, entertainment, and recreation; and other services.

## HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

	Blackfoot City	Bingham County
<b>Total housing units, 2013-2017 average</b>		
Number of housing units	4,801	16,513
<b>Housing tenure, 2013-2017 average, percent of housing units</b>		
Owner-occupied units	59	75
Renter-occupied units	41	25
<b>Housing type, 2013-2017 average, percent of housing units</b>		
1 unit, attached or detached	65	75
2-4 units	18	8
5 or more units	12	4
Mobile home, boat, RV, van, etc.	5	13
<b>Housing affordability, 2013-2017 average</b>		
Households spending 30% or more of income on housing costs		
Owner-occupied units, percent	17	16
Renter-occupied units, percent	47	37

SOURCES: US Census Bureau



## RESOURCES

Headwaters Economics, Economic Profile System

<https://headwaterseconomics.org/tools/economic-profile-system/>

- Blackfoot City – Demographics
- Bingham County – Multiple topics
  - Demographics
  - Socioeconomic measures
  - Agriculture, timber, and mining, including oil & gas
  - Services and tourism
  - Government
  - Non-labor income
  - Public land amenities
  - Federal land payments
  - Wildland urban interface

### PROJECT PARTNERS

University of Idaho

Idaho Rural Partnership

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Jon Barrett

[Jon.Barrett@irp.idaho.gov](mailto:Jon.Barrett@irp.idaho.gov)

<http://irp.idaho.gov>

## Appendix E

### Blackfoot Community Survey

**Q1. Listed below are public services and community amenities. Thinking about availability, cost, quality, and any other considerations important to you, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects of your community? Please circle a number from 1 (highly dissatisfied) to 5 (highly satisfied), or “don’t know.” If you believe an item is not applicable to your community, please feel free to skip it.**

	Highly dissatisfied		Highly satisfied			Don't know
a. Local K-12 school system	1	2	3	4	5	DK
b. Childcare/early childhood education programs	1	2	3	4	5	DK
c. Housing	1	2	3	4	5	DK
d. Parks & playgrounds	1	2	3	4	5	DK
e. Bicycle & pedestrian access	1	2	3	4	5	DK
f. Condition of streets & roads	1	2	3	4	5	DK
g. Public transportation	1	2	3	4	5	DK
h. Internet service	1	2	3	4	5	DK
i. Appearance of downtown	1	2	3	4	5	DK
j. Appearance of neighborhoods	1	2	3	4	5	DK
k. Police protection/law enforcement	1	2	3	4	5	DK
l. Medical care services	1	2	3	4	5	DK
m. Mental health services	1	2	3	4	5	DK
n. Senior citizen support services	1	2	3	4	5	DK
o. Available jobs	1	2	3	4	5	DK
p. Pay rates (salaries/wages)	1	2	3	4	5	DK
q. Access to higher education (e.g., college, technical)	1	2	3	4	5	DK
r. Variety of goods & services available	1	2	3	4	5	DK
s. Responsiveness of local government	1	2	3	4	5	DK
t. Civic & nonprofit organizations	1	2	3	4	5	DK
u. Arts, entertainment, & cultural activities	1	2	3	4	5	DK
v. Friendliness of residents	1	2	3	4	5	DK
w. Availability of fresh fruits & vegetables	1	2	3	4	5	DK
x. Acceptance of minorities	1	2	3	4	5	DK

**Q2.** Would you like to comment or explain why you rated your level of satisfaction with any of these public services and community amenities in the way you did? If so, please provide your comments/explanation here:

**Q3.** Would you like to comment on your level of satisfaction with any other public services or community amenities that are not listed above? If so, please explain here:

**Q4.** In general, how effective do you think the residents of your community are at working together to solve challenges?

- Very effective       Somewhat effective       Not at all effective

**Q5.** Please briefly explain why you answered the previous question (Q4) in the way you did:

**Q6.** Have you been involved in a neighborhood or community project in the last 12 months? *For example, youth development, community beautification, fund raiser, etc.*

- Yes → If yes, please tell us the type(s) of projects you have been involved in:  
 No

**Q7.** Please complete this sentence: "I would be involved in more community projects if..."

**Q8.** Do any of the following factors challenge your ability to support Blackfoot's locally owned businesses? *Please select all that apply.*

- Prices  
 Hours of operation  
 Parking  
 Availability of products, services, or both  
 Nothing/no challenges  
 Other challenge(s)—please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q9.** To what extent do you favor or oppose renaming Main Street (Highway 91) to Yellowstone Highway?

- Strongly favor       Somewhat favor       Somewhat oppose       Strongly oppose

**Q10.** To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: "I am proud to be part of the Blackfoot community"?

- Strongly agree       Somewhat agree       Somewhat disagree       Strongly disagree

**Q11.** What is your sex?

- Male       Female       Prefer not to answer

**Q12.** What is your race? *Please select all that apply.*

- African American/Black       American Indian/Alaska Native       Asian/Pacific Islander       White       Other

**Q13.** What is your ethnicity?

- Hispanic       Non-Hispanic

**Q14.** In what year were you born?

\_\_\_\_\_ birth year

**Q15.** What is your annual household income?

- Under \$25,000       \$25,000-\$49,999       \$50,000-\$74,999       \$75,000-\$100,000       Above \$100,000



**Q16.** Do you live within or outside the Blackfoot city limits?

- Within city limits
- Outside city limits

**Q17.** How many years have you lived in Blackfoot or the immediate area?

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-20 years
- More than 20 years

## Appendix F

### List of ‘Wants’ Identified by Listening Session Participants

#### Community Places and Spaces

**### ### ////New pool, not fix old one**

///Splashpad/waterpark

**Recreational center for families and older youth ### ### #### ### //**

//Community Center

///More Entertainment

Reopen pool

Recreation Programs for People with Disabilities

Bowling Alley

Boys & Girls Club

Event Center

Outdoor showers at lake

River Access

//Park Improvements (picnic areas, playgrounds)

/Recreation & healthy activities

Winter Recreation Programs

Lodging options

Wolverine Canyon Scenic Byway

Potato Tours

Historical markers on buildings

Beautification Events

Dog Park Improvements

**### ///Curb appeal – improve image, reputation & look of town**

- Wow factor. People say “we got the potato museum” but we don’t have the wow factor. What do we have that other people don’t have?
- Find something like the fair but that is all year round. “Boom!”

#### Infrastructure

Freeway improvements

**### ###Overpass/underpass**

//Move train switching station

RR better community partner

Traffic Safety

Home construction

///Diversify housing stock – for range of income levels

///Infill

**###Jurisdictional Partnerships**

- Housing
- Sewer
- Planning
- Policing
- Fair Board & City

//Zero-based budgeting

///Sustainable practices – green building  
Increase Ordinance Enforcement  
Improve low income housing stock  
Recycling Program  
Fair time auction traffic management & Fair parking  
Tribe and city work together  
City and P&Z coordinate  
Accountability  
Designated bus stops  
/Public transportation to surrounding small communities  
Better Road Construction Management  
//Improve existing assets & maintenance plan

- Schools
- Parks & Fields
- Roads
- Weeds along RR tracks

Housing & transportation discussion  
Own Police Station

### **Business Development**

//Youth Employment & Businesses  
///School Business Partnership  
Downtown vitality  
//Healthy Food Options  
///Support Small Biz  
///More Diverse Business / Synergy in New Businesses  
Fiber Optic Access for Businesses  
Use Fairgrounds all year (like Ft. Hall)  
**////High paying jobs**  
More areas for leased offices. Fix up Riverside Plaza (spaces, parking lot, lights)  
Lower gas prices  
Family Restaurants  
Lower taxes

### **Social Service**

Food banks for people in need  
//Youth volunteer opportunities  
Demonstrate youth are valued  
**////Care about, mentor & believe in people**  
Neighborhood level projects  
Place where people can go to feel safe  
Opportunities to Serve & Connect / More use of [www.justserve.org](http://www.justserve.org)  
Grow Community Dinner Table & Pantry  
//Youth Involvement  
Summer school lunch program  
Small clinic/Wellness center/Free clinic  
Translator in court system for Spanish speakers / Translator training & pay increase

Mental health services for Latinos

**////Transition living center**

Education in corrections system

//Coordination of Services

Job coaching

Proactive law enforcement / presence in schools / Community Policing

Officer Retention

Increase jail space

//Decriminalize substance abuse – use funds for treatment, housing, voc rehab, prevention

Support Kids & Families at Risk

Sex ed for teens

**////Homeless Shelter/Housing**

//Food Resources for Low/No Income Every Day

Life Skills Programs

Community Aid Program

Resources for People with Disabilities

**Education**

Support for teachers

//Support for education

School district consolidation (admin level)

Spanish-speaking college prep for parents

Link college work and Latino community

UI & ISU Courses in Blackfoot

**Comm(unity)**

Action Plan

Shared Vision / Work together for common goals

Better communication

Community Pride

Latino action group

Diversity events/celebrations

Diversity in city / school leadership

Cultural diversity in library events

//Interdenominational Partnerships

Intergenerational Connectivity

Unconditional Love

Less systemic discrimination

Representation of tribe & culture in public art